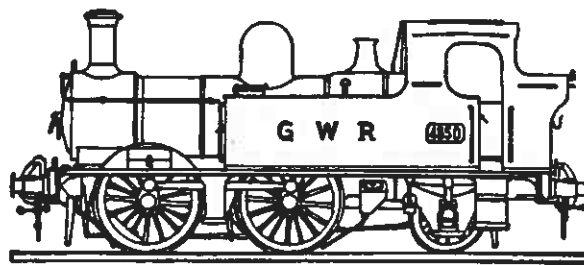


THE MARLOW DONKEY



DECEMBER 1986

Newsletter of the MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all Members



The Marlow Donkey gets the right-away, 1448 in charge, on 21 June 1952.

FROM THE CHAIR

As I mentioned in our September Newsletter, ten years ago a course of lectures on the Great Western railway, given by a Mr. R.D. Bowen in a Marlow secondary school, came to an end. From this weekly gathering was born the idea of forming a local railway society. A comparison of the membership lists of March 1977 and September 1986 shows that of the original 26 members only 9 survive to enjoy our tenth birthday. Others have moved away, or possibly lost interest, and at least two have died. There were soon around 50 paid-up members and this figure has been the average strength of our numbers ever since. After a general meeting in January 1977, at which rules and regulations were finalised, the Society held its very first open meeting in the Marlow Donkey hostelry on the 24th of February 1977.

I was sorry to hear recently that one of our surviving nine founder members is forsaking Marlow Bottom for the Cotswold Hills. Ron Brooks will be greatly missed. He has been one of our keenest members and has also done some excellent work at Fawley. No doubt he will remain a MDRS

member and will be with us from time to time. Who knows, he may even continue his excellent book reviews and Christmas fantasies!

Although it is not perhaps the Chairman's function to review recent publications in the railway press, I feel I must recommend a 1986 purchase. Ian Allen Ltd. have produced a series of 'Rail Centres' and their latest is OXFORD. As a resident of this city for forty years I was delighted to find Mr. Laurence Waters had written an excellent history. The locomotives of all the Big Four companies could be seen at Oxford station. The main station was GWR, the smaller terminus station alongside was LMS; a daily King Arthur or a West Country (even T9's before the War!) would bring in a cross-country express from Poole. An occasional LNER engine would come south from Banbury.

The Wycombe Railway Company reached almost to Oxford. In 1864 the line from Thame to Kensington Junction was opened and part of this line still connects with the car factories at Morris Cowley.

When steam traction finally died in August 1968 we little thought of a future when there would be a substantial provision of railway preservation centres and even steam-hauled specials on our main lines. Continental steam enthusiasts must envy our good fortune in this country.

During recent years I have read from time to time 'Barry to recommence cutting up', 'Woodhams' Yard to close', or 'final notice to would-be purchasers'. I have now read 'Barry to close next March'. There cannot be much of value remaining. However, what a marvellous source of restorable steam locos Woodhams of Barry Island have been in the past eighteen years.

Last week I passed the home of the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway Preservation Society. Four years ago they purchased the truncated branch which formerly ran from Cholsey and Moulsoford Station into the town of Wallingford. A rash of factories and small houses has spread over the area where Wallingford Station once stood. However, the NEW Wallingford Station is in being, they possess two small diesel locos, an ex-GW 2-3-0T, and a small quantity of rolling stock. No doubt with the GWS at nearby Didcot attend-

ance on open days must be a constant problem. We wish them well and hope they will continue to prosper.

Both Roger Bowen and Pete Grestorex have provided a programme of guest speakers over the past ten years. I congratulate them both - I wouldn't know where to start looking! A very high standard of both speakers and visual aids has been maintained. We look forward to our next ten years, more guest speakers, more excursions, and plenty of material please for our quarterly newsletters.

A very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all our members.

Bas

MEETINGS PROGRAMME

All meetings are held at The Chequers, High Street, Marlow, at 7.45 for 8.00 pm.

Thur. 15th Jan. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The agenda for the meeting is given on page 2. The formal business will be followed by a programme of members slides this year with a theme "1977 and the early years of the LDRS".

Thur. 19th Feb. PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Slightly revised this year, full details appear on page 2. Please enter as many classes as possible to ensure a successful evening.

Thurs. 19th Mar. THE SWANNAGE RAILWAY

Our 1987 summer trip will take us to view the Swenage Railway. As a precursor a talk about the history and development of this ex-LSWR line.

Thur. 23rd Apr. THE MARLOW DONKEY

Chris Turner and Paul Karau are currently putting the finishing touches to the definitive history of our local line. At this meeting they will describe something of the colourful story of the "Donkey" using the rare illustrations assembled for the book. Please note the revised DATE!

SOCIETY NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome many new members to the Society. Mr. Boot and Mr. Wimbush both of Marlow, Mr. & Mrs. Cubley of Bisham, Mr. Box from Bourne End, Mr. Schroeder of High Wycombe and Mr. Fair from Chesham. Welcome to you all, we hope you enjoy our activities and look forward to seeing you at future meetings. This brings our membership up to the 60 mark for the first time.

FAREWELL RON

With regret we say goodbye to Ron Brooks, one of our founder members and well known as our regular book reviewer and author of the Christmas stories, to say nothing of being the chief signal engineer at Newley. Ron has moved to Winchcombe in Gloucestershire and his new house adjoins Winchcombe station on the Glos & Worcestershire Railway. Should any members be in the area they are invited to drop in for a cuppa, phone first on 0242-603352.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The autumn season meetings have been subject to some disruption due to the continuing work at the Chequers, we trust this has not marred your enjoyment.

Brent Hudson started the season with a further look at the railways of China and Hong Kong together with the usual degree of background colour

October was an unusual meeting when Inspector Price told us something of the history and work of the British Transport Police.

Another Society regular, Tony Hall-Patch entertained us in November with a further selection from the archives of the NRM. These included the Lynton & Barnstaple, various long forgotten lines and colour film of the pre-war streamliners.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Treasurer has indicated that he does not wish to increase our annual subscription rate which falls due on 1st January 1987. We look

forward to your continuing support and would ask you to send your £5 to John Sears at 32 West Fryerne, Parkside Road, Reading RG3 2BY. Cheques should be payable to the M & DRS.

THE NORMAN ASTON-SMITH TROPHY

Another year end ritual is voting for the best article in the year's "Donkeys". Ballot papers will be distributed at the AGM as usual, so spend the Christmas break refreshing your memory.

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED

With this issue we say farewell to two regular features, Ron Brooks' book reviews and Len Stroud's memories of Marlow. Your editor is thus looking for additional material - so come on pens out chaps.

APRIL MEETING DATE

Your attention is drawn the fact that our April meeting will be on the 23rd, the fourth Thursday instead of the third, which is the day before Good Friday.

THE TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given that the 10th Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 15th January 1987 commencing at 8.00pm at the Chequers. The agenda is as follows:-

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of 9th AGM (these were published in the March '86 Donkey, copies available from the Secretary).
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Election of Committee - see below.
8. The 10th Anniversary Programme.
9. Any Other Business.
10. The Norman Aston-Smith Trophy.

The 1986 Committee has been:-
Bas Woodward - Chairman

Mike Norris - Vice-Chairman
 Peter Greatorex - Secretary
 John Sears - Treasurer
 Alan Wheeler - Publicity
 Peter Robins - Social Secretary
 Mike Walker - Editor
 Roger Bowen
 Roger Woodham

In accordance with the rules, Roger Bowen, Roger Woodham and Alan Wheeler are standing down and due to other commitments none are offering themselves for re-election.

We therefore invite nominations for new committee members to be received by the Secretary, Peter Greatorex, 9 Wessex Gardens, Twyford, Reading RG10 0BA, tel. Reading 345490, not later than 31st December 1986.

The formal meeting will be followed by a members slide show for which contributions are invited. The theme is general shots taken in 1977 and the early years of the Society. Contact Pete Greatorex

The Annual Photographic Competition

Now an established annual event, this year's competition has undergone further fine tuning. Please support the event strongly with a large entry. This year the classes are as follows:-

- A - Colour Slides - UK subjects
- B - Colour Slides - Overseas subjects
- C - Colour Prints - up to and inc. 5"x7" all subjects
- D - Colour Prints - size above 5"x7" all subjects
- E - B & W Prints - all subjects

A prize of a £5 book token is awarded to each of the class winners, who will then compete for the "Edie Lewcock Cup". Judging will be by

ballot of members present.

There are a few rules:-

1. All entrants must be paid up members.
2. Entrants may enter any number of classes, with a maximum of 5 entries per class per member.
3. All entries must be the entrants own original work.
4. There is no time limit, shots taken in 1920 or 1986 are eligible.
5. All entries must have a railway theme.
6. Slides should carry the entrants name but prints to be unmarked.

Entries should be handed to a member of the committee by 8.00pm on the night.

VIDEO IDEAS

Many members now possess video recorders and no doubt read the various adverts in the railway press with interest but are possibly put off purchase by the high cost involved. With this in mind the committee have discussed the idea of a Video Library being operated within the club. This would involve the club owning tapes which would be rented out to members, the revenue raised being used to buy further tapes. A number of points need investigation (copyright etc.) but at this stage we are interested in establishing if members are sufficiently interested to justify further study.

LOUDWATER RECALLED

During the recent MIPA exhibition our stand was visited by Derrick Llewellyn who presented the Society with a collection of colour slides he took whilst he was Station Master at Loudwater between 1958 and 1963. These will be shown after the AGM.

SOCIETY'S TENTH



BIRTHDAY PLANS

10 years ago Roger Bowen was completing a series of lectures in Marlow. His "students" had regularly adjourned to the Marlow Donkey and from those gatherings the idea of a Railway Society was born, leading to an exploratory meeting in January 1977. Thus was formed the Marlow & District Railway Society. Few of those original members remain but in the meantime the Society has grown, endured a change of premises, and gone from strength to strength.

Now we have reached our tenth birthday its time for some celebration and mild self-congratulation. Accordingly the committee have arranged a number of special events during the coming months in addition to our usual monthly meetings.

APRIL will see a week long display promoting the Society in the Anglia Building Society office in Marlow.

MAY hopefully restores a MDRS tradition, the long weekend, with a trip to the Isle of Man over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. It is intended to visit all the lines on the island which will be celebrating its annual Transport Week. Members interested in joining the party are asked to contact Pete Greatorex.

JULY is reserved for our family excursion, this time the venue is the Swanage Railway which expects to double its length in 1987. As with this year's trip there will be options for the family with the seaside and Corfe Castle.

SEPTEMBER's Marlow Donkey will be a special commemorative edition recalling the highlights of our first decade.

OCTOBER will be a busy month. Saturday 10th sees the "Great Marlow Railway Exposition" an all day exhibition of railways at Court Gardens, featuring some of the nation's finest model railways, a display of live steam models, a passenger carrying line, various historical displays and trade stands. This will be followed by a public meeting on Thursday 29th at which the speaker will be David Shepherd. This again will be at Court Garden.

Finally the year will end with a celebration dinner and social evening during DECEMBER which we ask all members to make a special effort to attend.

As the year unfolds, further details will be given at meetings and in the "Donkey".

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT Notes & News

NETWORK DAY AT BOURNE END

In conjunction with the MIPA exhibition on 25th September a Network SouthEast display, opened by Chris Green, was put on at Bourne End. The chocolate and cream W55020 ran a popular free shuttle to Marlow whilst L417, the first 117 class unit in NSE livery, operated to and from Maidenhead. NSE liveried 50.035 "Ark Royal" was on display in the station, the first class 50 to venture up the branch. C922YOR a Bedford-Bruff recovery vehicle, with the ability to run on roads or rails, gave demonstrations in the forecourt. Peter Robins did a roaring trade all morning in the ticket office.

STRANGER AT BOURNE END

An unusual DMU was noted operating the Maidenhead - Marlow branch on Tuesday 23rd September this being one of the 3 car sets normally used on the Reading - Gatwick service. This is not an isolated incident, however, as on Thursday 16th October a similar unit was in use on the branch and, as on the earlier occasion, worked throughout the day. These units are more comfortable and ride much better than our normal single unit railcar or Class 117 sets, so it is hoped they will be more frequently used on the branch.

David Gardner

AFTER NETWORK SOUTHEAST....

MIDLINE is the latest name to emerge in BR's continuing devolution. This time the target area is the West Midlands in a major marketing drive in conjunction with the West Midlands PWS. Another striking pop-art livery is emerging on dmu's.

PRESIDENT NAMES 37

Our President recently performed a unique double naming ceremony involving recently refurbished class 37/4, 37.425. First, at Port William he unveiled one plate commemorating his great grandfather, Sir Robert McAlpine, then the engine hauled a special train along the Mallaig extension to the Glenfinnan Viaduct where a second nameplate, on the other side, was unveiled displaying "Concrete Bob", a reference to Sir Robert's pioneering use of this material in building this line in the 1890's.

NEW BR RECORD

During a special trial on Sunday 9th November a new BR diesel speed record of 144.9 mph was achieved between York and Darlington. HST power cars 43109 and 43118 were matched with an international coach (fitted with the new T4 bogie), a Mk.III coach and two research cars, Lab 15 and Argus, the latter just commissioned and rebuilt from the prototype buffet car. The previous record of 143 mph was set on the same route in June 1973.

APTIS ON LINE

BR's new computerized ticket system, APTIS, is starting to appear locally. Didcot is already on line, Goring starts this month, whilst Slough and Reading are scheduled for early in the new year. John Sears is an Accounting Assistant at Paddington helping to introduce the new machines.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

An unofficial strike by maintenance staff at Cow Lane, Reading disrupted local services in late September, early October. The dispute concerned the conditions for refuelling dmu's and lasted about a week.

MORE 59's POSSIBLE, 39 DEBUT

Another WR based quarry operator, ARC, has expressed an interest in owning its own locomotives like Foster-Leoman. Although the WR would like these to be more 59's, ARC would prefer British built equipment. This time we can expect BREL to be more competitive. The Railfreight sector is reported to be preparing a case and order for 100 class 59's from BMD. Meanwhile the prototype 89.001, a Co-Co 25kV electric has finally emerged from the Brush works at Loughborough. The 7,000 hp unit has HST style cabs at both ends and wears Inter City livery. After initial trials it will go into WGLL service.

EVENING CLASSES

Roger Bowen is presenting a series of 10 lectures on the "History of Railways" at Mill End Road School, High Wycombe, starting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 23rd January. Further details from Adrian Taylor, Bucks WEA Officer, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Tel. 83648, or Roger Bowen on H.W. 713887.

NEWS FROM FAWLEY

The former Bourne End waiting room is now safely installed at the lower junction at Fawley (christened Bourne Again Junc. - ooh!) and is undergoing painstaking restoration. Major repairs continue on the 0-6-OST no.31 whilst an ex-BR class 03 0-6-ODM shunter is due for early delivery.

JOINT LINE



STEAM UPDATE

The highlight of the autumn was the appearance of "Mallard". The record breaking A4 performed perfectly during its stay, which was blessed by fine weather, and proved a commercial success for BR with virtually every seat sold. As a confirmed GW supporter, even your editor has to admit that two A4's or an A4 and A3 an hour apart was quite a sight.

The High Wycombe Santa Specials are in full swing with "Sir Lemiel" and "Clan Line" working on 20/21st December, leaving Marylebone at 11.00 and 13.55, and returning from High Wycombe at 13.04 and 16.04. "The Shakespeare Limited" will

operate to Stratford-on-Avon on 23th December. The good news is that the specials will continue to operate during the summer of 1987, but the bad news is that David Ward has indicated he intends to use the same locomotives as this year, that's "Sir Lemiel", "Clan Line", "Flying Scotsman" and "Sir Nigel Gresley". Hopefully wiser council will prevail and some other locos will be seen, not only to bolster our interest but also to give other loco owners a share of this lucrative business to help offset the enormous cost of maintaining locomotives to main line standards.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ron Brooks

Having waited so long for the summer to arrive this year, the arrival in October coincided with the first signs of Christmas in the shops. It also coincided with my wife and I finding a house we liked adjacent to the site of Winchcombe Station, which the Gloucestershire & Worcestershire Railway intend to re-open and connect to their existing set-up at Toddington. I hope that both my readers will enjoy this review of a last selection from my library.

The Royal Road
Philip Rees

British Rail (Western)
ISBN 0 905466 63 3
£2.95

Western Handbook
Geoffrey Body

British Rail (Western)
ISBN) 905466 70 5

These two volumes were published to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the GW. The first is a most readable potted history and the second is a mine of general information of things Great Western. They are well worth a place on your shelf.

100 years of the Great Western
D. Nicholas & S.J. Montgomery

Oxford Publishing Co.
SBN 86093 123 4

A series of magnificent black & white pictures with informative captions, starting with broad gauge. More than two hundred pictures, I found a picture of Sudely Castle. Sudely Castle is in Winchcombe! The pictures are grouped into sections, which are relevant, but all deserve looking at again and again.

Twixt London & Bristol
Michael Hale

Oxford Publishing Co.
SBN 0-86093 364 4

Lots of maps and black & white pictures of stations. The 'Swindon' pictures are particularly interesting as is the picture of the water tower and engine shed at MARLOW.

Truly the Great Western
Maurice Earley

Oxford Publishing Co.
SBN 902888 53 6

A further series of superb black & white pictures of the GWR in action. Puffs of steam in every photo except 44, 45, 46 which, even so, should not be missed. Have you ever seen an AEC Regal Bus on rails, or pneumatic tyres on rail? After that a flying banana is hardly worth mentioning.

Reflections of the Great Western
R.J. Blenkinsop Oxford Publishing Co.
ISBN 902888 52 8

Yet more pictures, taken in '58 & '59, of steam on the GWR. Just the thing for a nostalgic peep

into the past. Over a hundred and twenty pictures beautifully photographed and reproduced.

I have provided notes on six books this time as my papers are all packed for removal and I am not absolutely sure that I haven't reviewed any of these before.

By the way, before I sign off, don't forget there is a very good private railway museum at Winchcombe but the opening times are a bit erratic and should be checked. My best wishes for the continued success of the M & DRS.

VIDEO REVIEWS

Mike Norris

Railscene No.7 90 mins VHS/Beta £17.95

Subjects covered in this video include the following:-

Newsline Re-opening of Barmouth Bridge
Movement of stone/ballast on BR -
classes 45, 27 and 20 at Shap,
Millerhill and Buxton.

Cab Ride Portsmouth to Cardiff.

Dutch Weekend Ex BR EM2 Electrics in Holland.

Preserved Rly Keighley & Worth Valley.

Archive Film Filmed in 1951/52 at these loca-
tions or lines:-
Lancaster to Heysham
Vale of Rheidol
Huddersfield
Bury to Holcombe Brook
Great North of Scotland
Kings Lynn

World News South African steam in 1986.

News 'Sir Lamiel' & 75069 on the Mary-
lebone to Stratford line.
'Hagley Hall' at Andover.
Black Five 5305 at Blea Moor.
'Hastings' units on the Settle
& Carlisle.
W.D. 90775 at Alton.

Railscene No.8 105 mins VHS/Beta £17.95

Newsline New liveries for Network SouthEast

Cab Ride St. Pancras to Sheffield.

Isle of Wight Ryderail festival in 1986 plus
interesting vintage film taken
in the 1950's and 1962. Shots of
Haven Street now and then!

Preserved Rly Festiniog Railway.

Archive Film Mainly filmed in 1950/54. Includes
Cromford & High Peak
'T9' at Havant
Last GW 'Star'
Dukedog at Dovey Junction
GC Director' at Penistone
Industrial locos at Dinorwic
Quarries

News Longer than usual section, includ-
ing film of the following locos on
Specials etc. earlier this year:-
Burton Agnes Hall, City of Truro,
King George V, Clun Castle,
Kolhapur, Sir Nigel Gresley, City
of Wells, Evening Star, Maude,
Union of South Africa and 73050.

In addition visits are made to
Didcot and Tyseley Depots. Finally
the first run by Mallard on the
Scarborough Spa Express is reported

As with other Railscene tapes, the picture and
sound quality are excellent on both tapes.
Whether your preferences are for diesel or steam
there is something for everyone amongst the many
subjects covered. Good value and a must for your
collection.

TWENTY - FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

The most significant feature of our period 25
years ago was the moving on the 20th November
1961 of the second reading of the new Transport
Bill. In his opening speech the Minister of
Transport, Mr. Ernest Marples, emphasised that
the future of British Railways depended on its
ability to adapt itself to modern circumstances,
and that sweeping changes and contractions of
the system would be necessary.

New rolling stock was still appearing however.
The first of a new series of diesel-hydraulic
locomotives, to be known as the "Western" class
was undergoing trials on the Western Region. It
was numbered D1000 and named "Western Enterprise"
and was in an experimental "Desert Sand" colour.
It was built at Swindon Works, which was due to
build a further 34, and a further 39 from Crewe
Works make a total of 74. The loco was of 2,700
h.p. of Co-Co wheel arrangement with the Bristol
Siddley-Mayback MD655 engines and two Voith-Worth
British hydraulic transmissions.

Other developments of the period. On 17th Novem-
ber 1961 St. Helens Shaw Street Station was re-
opened after reconstruction. In acknowledgement
of the glass industry in the area over 10,000
sq. ft. of glass of 12 types was used in the

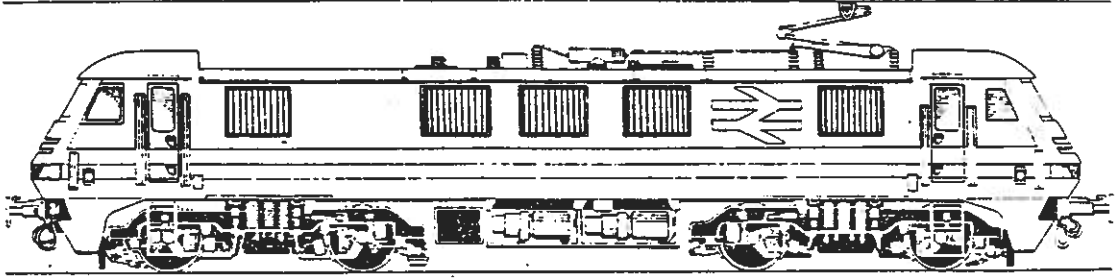
main cladding of the building. On November 6th
the famous steam driven Cornish beam engines,
which kept the Severn Tunnel clear of water,
were brought to a standstill when their task was
taken over by modern electrical pumping equipment
Closures, unfortunately, were more the order of
the day. On 11th November 1961 the Western Region
closed the line from Merthyr Tydfil to Portsti-
cill Junction, on 20th October 1961 the Southern
Region closed the Dunton Green to Westerham
branch. On December 30th 1961 passenger services
were withdrawn between Bedford (midland Road)
and Hitchin, and on the same date from Chappel
and Wakes Colne to Maverhill. The 4th December
1961 saw the closure of the line from Hoo Junc-
tion to Grain to passengers.

For those interested in the local scene page 105
of the February 1962 "Railway Magazine" depicts
the Marlow Branch pull-and-push trains with 0-4-2
tank No.1472 leaving Loudwater on its daily
though working to High Wycombe on 11th March
1961.

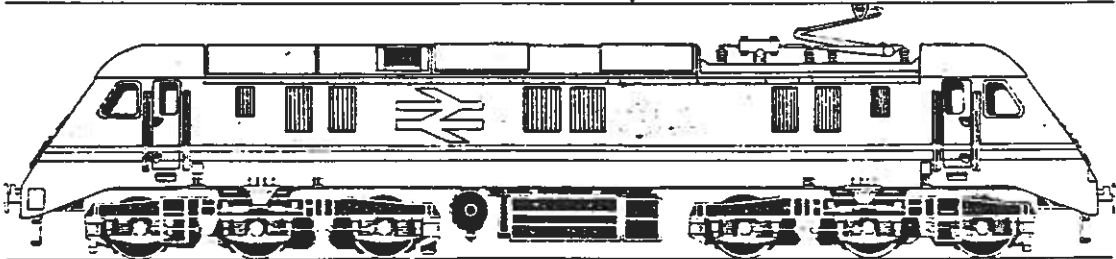
Slowly then the railways were changing from the
old traditional image to today's leaner, diesel-
ized and electrified system

BR's NEW ELECTRICS

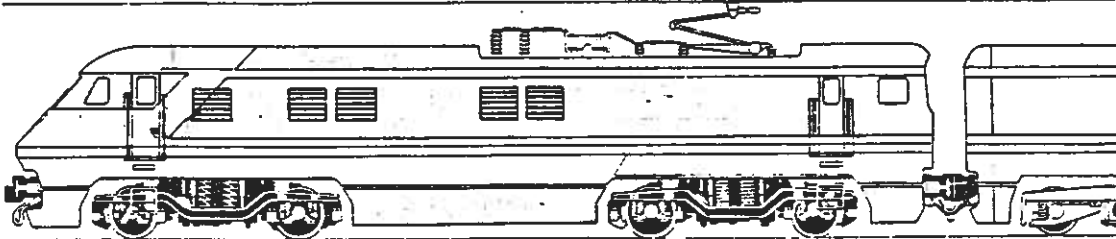
CLASS 87/2
 Power (continuous)
 3620kW (4850hp).
 max speed
 175km/h (110mph).
 length over
 buffers 18800mm
 (61.67ft).



CLASS 89
 Power (continuous)
 4350kW (5800hp).
 max speed
 200km/h (125mph).
 length over
 buffers 19780mm
 (64.91ft).



CLASS 91
 Power (continuous)
 4530kW (6000hp).
 max speed
 200km/h (125mph).
 length over
 buffers 19400mm
 (63.64ft).



TRAIN CONTROL BY SATELLITE

Mike Walker

Science fiction perhaps, but now science fact as this autumn 20 locomotives on the Burlington Northern Railroad have been equipped with special transmitters to enable them to communicate their exact locations to the Dispatcher at the control centre in Minneapolis-St Paul via the US Dept. of Defence's Navstar satellites.

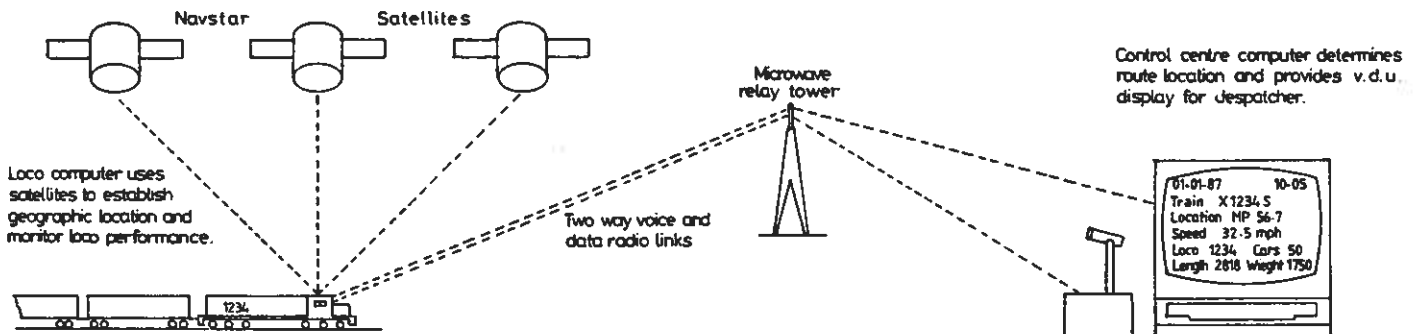
Known as Advanced Railroad Electronic System (ARES) it is the result of a four year development programme by Rockwell-Collins Air Transportation Division and Harmon Industries. It enables the control centre to continuously monitor a train's speed to within 1 mph and its location to an accuracy of 150'. Whilst normally used only for monitoring it can, in an emergency, bring a train to a stop.

Harmon supplies the railroad communications equipment, including voice and data radios, whilst Rockwell supplies the Global Positioning System (GPS) and the necessary computers. Initially the experiment is confined to approximately 200 miles of track and is restricted to 6 hours a day windows as at present there are only four satellites, but when the planned 18 satellites are deployed in geo-stationary orbits a 24 hour

service will be possible throughout the world. Through a small antenna on top of the locomotive, the Navcore receiver, using the GPS commercial acquisition codes, consults each of the satellites in turn for a period of 1 second to determine range direction and speed, information which is then transmitted to the control centre, which in turn regulates and controls traffic by verbal instruction backed by a visual display unit on the locomotive driven by the on-board computer.

ARES will do more than merely locate and control trains. A further Rockwell development, Locomotive Analysis Reporting System (LARS), employs discreet sensors and interrogates trackside sensors to monitor locomotive efficiency and health. Fuel level, oil pressure, engine temperature and brake performance data will be fed through a Rockwell microprocessor to inform and alert as necessary both crew and dispatcher.

Using a combination of ARES and LARS the future possibilities are, to say the least, exciting. By comparing train progress with computer simulation of a given route it becomes possible to introduce automatic control to operate locomotives in the most energy efficient way. In theory



total automatic control becomes possible but is unlikely because of tunnels etc.

Readers may be wondering why such systems are necessary. Well in North America large areas of track are still what is known as "Dark Territory" that is to say unsignalled, with traffic being regulated and controlled by written train order.

The great distances involved and light traffic density makes continuous track circuiting and signalling, as we know it in Europe, hopelessly uneconomic except on a few very busy main lines. However ARRS will provide the same information

on train progress as a track circuit, over hundreds of miles for comparatively little cost. In return dispatchers will be able to control trains more efficiently, adjusting meeting points on single lines, advising track repair crews, safe in the exact and continuous knowledge of the position of every train under their control. Accidents should become a thing of the past, for if a train crew should ignore a stop instruction, they can be overridden by the dispatcher who can remotely put a train into an emergency brake application, and that could be very useful on our West Coast Main Line!

Network SouthEast

David Gardner

On 21st June as part of its re-vamping of the old London & South East Sector, now renamed Network SouthEast, BR celebrated 'Network Day' with unlimited travel anywhere in its sector including the London Underground for just £3 per adult and £1 each child. This provided a wonderful opportunity to plan out a route to maximum advantage. However, being without transport of my own and living in Bourne End did put me at a slight advantage, as I was entirely dependant on the Branch Line to get anywhere and this meant a rather later departure than I would have wished at 7.52 am.

I could have chosen to travel on Southern Lines with their generally more frequent service and thereby covered a very high mileage, but in the event I decided to stick mainly to LMR lines running out of Euston, St. Pancras and Marylebone and connecting branch lines. Firstly though I wanted to sample the delights of the North London line from Richmond to North Woolwich and, depending on the time factor, to travel on a number of former Eastern Region and London transport branch lines. How I got on is described in the following text. The fact that I had previously travelled over all the main lines was purely incidental. It was the only way to get to the lines I wanted and anyway it was interesting to make comparison.

Having purchased my bargain ticket I set out as previously stated on the 7.52 am from Bourne End to Maidenhead, then on to Windsor & Eton Central via Slough. With only a minute to spare between my arrival at 8.39 and a possible departure from Riverside at 8.40 am there was hardly any chance of catching this train and, in any case, at the time I had no knowledge of Southern departure times.

Discovering I had nearly an hour to wait I decided to explore the station. Windsor & Eton Riverside, built in 1851, is an attractive building and with its horse carriage entrance doors along its full length, is most unusual. It still retains its original booking hall and ticket office, though the latter is no longer used for that purpose. Apart from loss of its goods facilities the station has not been rationalised in any way, unlike its Western equivalent. It had been at least 25 years since I last travelled from this station and I was pleasantly surprised how little the station and indeed the majority of the line had changed, still retaining much of its branch line character. Just before departure I took a snap of the EMU with the castle in the upper background.

The journey time to Richmond was 1 hour 25 mins, stopping at all stations, plus a 5 minute wait outside St. Margarets near Twickenham while a 'class 33' came by with the Orient Express in tow, and the first time I'd seen it too!

Richmond station and forecourt has been re-modelled and repainted in the new Network South East colours, complete with bright red girder bridge, but looking very smart for all that.

North London Line trains run every 20 minutes headed by 2-EPB Bullied Southern Electric sets, complete with bars across all the windows to prevent passengers from losing their heads in tunnels. The GLC used to subsidise this service

but with its demise who does so now? I had never travelled over any of this 22½ mile line and it has largely been its promotion which prompted me to do so and I was not disappointed. Passing Willesden I could see condemned class '501' EMU sets. It seemed uncanny that these 29 year old units should be displaced by 2-EPB's (now 416/3) of a much older design.

North Woolwich was a delight as the original station building is now restored as a Museum giving a glimpse of what a station interior looked like before modernisation changed everything. There are also old photographs, models and other railway relics to glow over, plus a sales stand. Outside the main building is the preserved GER 0-4-0 saddle tank No.229, but so closely hemmed in by a wall onside and gates each end that it was very difficult to photograph. Alongside was the cab of 'Black 5' 45293 being restored by BR railwaymen and further along the platform two 0-6-0 saddle tanks, one from the KESR. It really is a worthwhile place to visit and there are steamings every 2nd Sunday of the month, all free too.

I could easily have caught the Free Ferry across the river from here and then travelled via the SR to Charing Cross, but only found this out later so returned back as far as Highbury with a woman driver and guard in charge! Here I took a GN Electric No.313056 to Moorgate intending to connect with another GNE to Kings Cross. However despite arriving with time to spare my train had gone, indeed this particular system's clocks seemed to differ from the rest of BR. Rather than wait, I opted for a Circle Line train to Kings Cross then the Northern Line to Euston, having decided against St. Pancras for the outward trip. At Euston I had a cup of BR tea in a plastic cup which was wet and warm and little else, then boarded my chosen train the 13.21 stopper to Milton Keynes. As we left I glimpsed 87021 Robert the Bruce and 83616 Wigna Pier interestingly named locos but not quite like a Jubilee or Scott. This was to be my longest between stations journey at 46½ miles on a route I had covered many times over in both steam and diesel days but I doubt that a Duchess locomotive or Peak class diesel could have matched such timings even given less than the 3 intermediate stops involved to Bletchley, my destination. Here I had 17 minutes to have a decent cup of tea and chat with a local engineer before departing on an ancient DMU known as the Bedford Rattler. The branch from Bletchley to Bedford St. Johns is part of the former LNWR line from Oxford to Cambridge but is the only section remaining open for passenger service. The part from Oxford to Bletchley is now single track and normally used only by freight traffic, while the final section from Bedford to Cambridge is closed completely. The B and B however is 16 miles long and double track throughout. Despite this it is possibly one of the last really rural lines left in the S.E. sector and there can be few to rival it anywhere. Of the 9 intermediate stations (most of which have great charm) there are 5 manually operated crossing gates and of course semaphore signals. There was also a brickworks with several wooden wagons amongst lines of old steel mineral/coal trucks. No modern stuff here. Beyond Bedford St. Johns there is now a ¾ mile single line extension

which takes the line past the former BR engine shed into the modern Midland Road station.

From here I took an EMU to St. Albans City then strolled through the 'Old Town' with a quick excursion into the Abbey before making for the station of that name.

Unlike the Bedford branch with its neat stations and rural charm the 6½ mile line from St. Albans Abbey to Watford Junction has little to please the eye. Its platforms are almost all bare of any buildings apart from Garston which is boarded up and vandalised. Grass and weeds grow everywhere. What a contrast.

Having arrived at the Junction station I asked directions to the Metropolitan station from a railwayman going off duty and, although his instructions were clear enough, I got hopelessly lost and had to ask for help in finding my bearings several times before finally discovering this well hidden LT terminus.

I spent 1½ hours and must have walked a great many miles along the UP market estates on the fringe of Watford. Now just when I was dying for a cupper I couldn't get one. The journey to Moor Park and then onto Chalfont was pleasant enough but the Chesham branch was a delight to travel over.

I did not linger at Chesham though, merely taking a photograph and reboarding the train for its return journey. Back at Chalfont I had a

very short wait before taking a DMU to Aylesbury. Beyond Amersham the LT was left behind and also almost any indication of any large inhabitation of the surrounding area. On arrival at Aylesbury I took a walk into the town downing a much appreciated pint at The White Swan pub. On returning to the station I took the 20.42 to Marylebone, travelling the full length of a line I had, until this day, not travelled on before. At the London terminus I took the Bakerloo Line to Oxford Circus where fast work produced a connection on a Central Line train in less than two minutes. I was homeward bound now but an eight minute hold up at North Acton set me worrying when the tube train doors gave trouble and every one had to wait on a rather chilly platform until things were put right.

It was an 15 minute wait at Ealing Broadway then onto Maidenhead where the last Bourne End train of the evening was waiting, but as the Reading - London train was late coming in we had to wait until 2317, or 3 minutes late, to finally arrive back in Bourne End at 2329, still 3 minutes late.

To sum up it was a great value for money day out which, apart from my misadventure in Watford, I thoroughly enjoyed, particularly my trip over the Bletchley to Bedford line. I travelled approximately 232 miles which can't be bad for just £3, but next time I must get better organised first!

A list of train times is given below:

	Arrive	Depart		Arrive	Depart
Bourne End	07.48	07.52	St Albans Abbey	-	16.38
Maidenhead	08.04	08.10	Watford Junct.	16.55	-
Slough	08.20	08.33	Watford (det)	-	18.36
Windsor Central	08.39	-	Moor Park	18.40	19.07
Windsor Riverside	-	09.40	Chalfont	19.19	19.22
Richmond	09.45	10.05	Chesham	19.29	19.32
N. Woolwich	11.05	11.35	Chalfont	19.39	19.43
Highbury	12.05	12.16	Aylesbury	20.09	20.42
Moorgate	12.22	12.40	Marylebone	21.42	21.46
Kings Cross	12.45	12.52	Oxford Circus	21.52	21.54
Euston	12.54	13.21	N. Acton	22.12	22.20
Bletchley	14.23	14.40	Ealing Broadway	22.25	22.43
Bedford	15.21	15.30	Maidenhead	23.07	23.17
St Albans City	16.02	-	Bourne End	23.29	-

DONKEY DAYS Part V

Len Stroud

I have tried, over preceding articles, to help in producing a vision of life on and around the old station at Marlow, both in GW days and the last days of BR Steam. One finds it hard to believe that all the bustle of staff going about their many duties can have declined into echoes in the memory of an old man waiting on a draughty unmanned concrete strip for a DMU to roll in for a brief few minutes to pick up a dozen or so travellers - and on its way again to the next truncated sacrifice of Bourne End.

The bright new red-white-blue of the Network SouthEast is of little consolation for times past. "Progress" is a word well used as a large umbrella covering all attempts (some misguided) to produce improvements both in customer service and track worthiness and it needs little comment when timetables are printed just in time to be foiled by crew or station staff shortages - often unannounced. Add to this reports of signal failures, points and line breaks and repairs, leading to even more morose thoughts of the oldtimer who feels the old GWR dedication has long gone.

So we come to my final dip into my 'memory bank' of sights, sounds and smells of the old days at Marlow. Do not please gather that I was obsessed with odours but they were part and parcel of everyday life in the environs of the station to the varied aromas of steam, smoke, cattle, horses, petrol, lamp oil and gum arabic, one more cannot be overlooked. Every Thursday morning was chosen for the arrival of fish for traders in the town - this delivery of course gradually decreased as freezer vans and road delivery took over but, in the late 20's - early 30's, large flat boxes were unloaded from the Guards vans of early trains and lay oozing water

and melting ice outside the parcels office to the annoyance of some passengers and 'ladies of refinement'. (Junior porters please note to have your bucket of water and broom to restore platform to normal) boxes were sometimes opened on the spot - sometimes broken in transit - for local fishmongers who collected their orders. Other boxes went by the GWR parcel delivery van - not to the olfactory advantage of other parcels aboard!

A flick of the switch will illuminate areas of station buildings and platforms in modern times. I think back to those once involved in cleaning their gas lamps over the platform at Marlow - occasional change of mantle - polishing the hinged glass globes, and the task of lighting them each night by pulling each lampchain and reversing the drill each morning as daylight came.

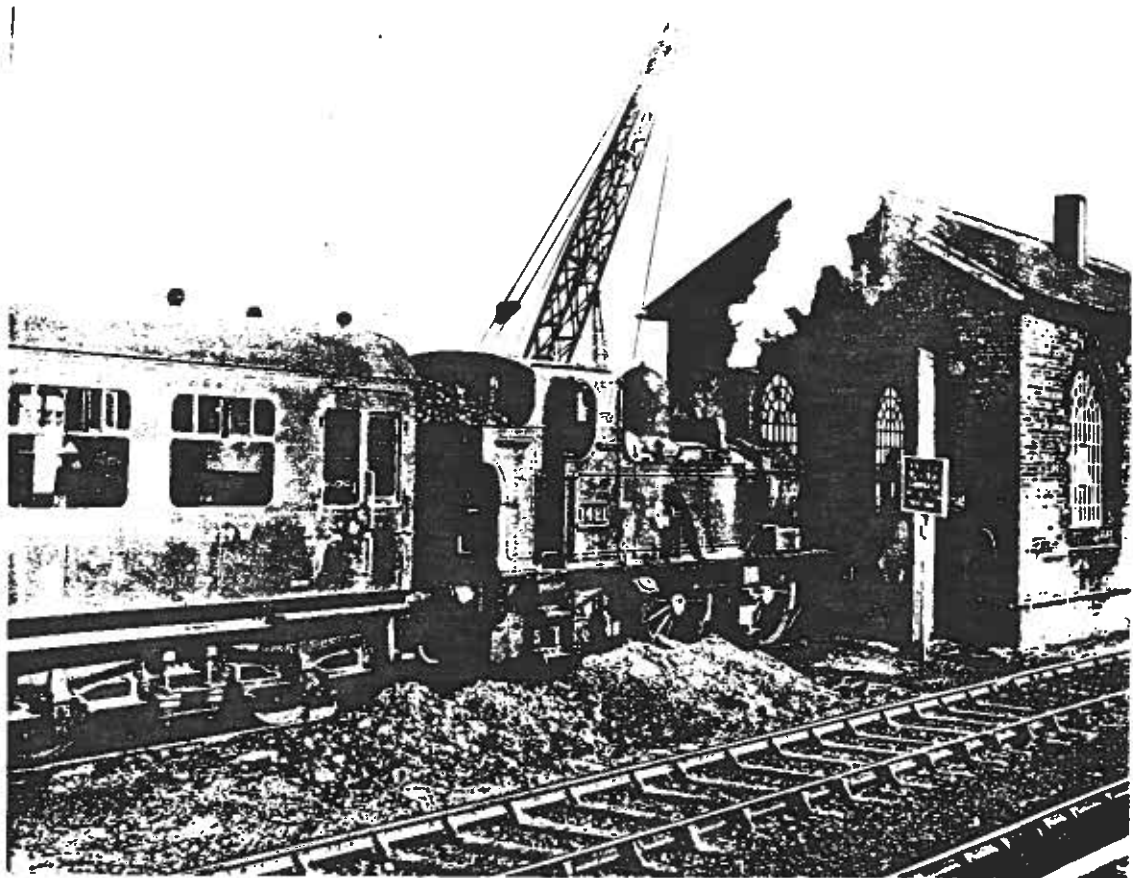
Another necessary duty was the maintenance of filling, cleaning and polishing handlamps used by Guards and other staff lamps used about the station after dark - not forgetting signal lamps. Together this was no small number which needed regular attention in the lamproom.

Nowadays it is only larger stations than can boast a taxi rank upon which the travelling public have immediate access. Lesser stations may have one or two who "might" be available to meet incoming trains. Many passengers have recourse to a phonebox to 'order up' a car recommended by station staff (if any - staff that is).

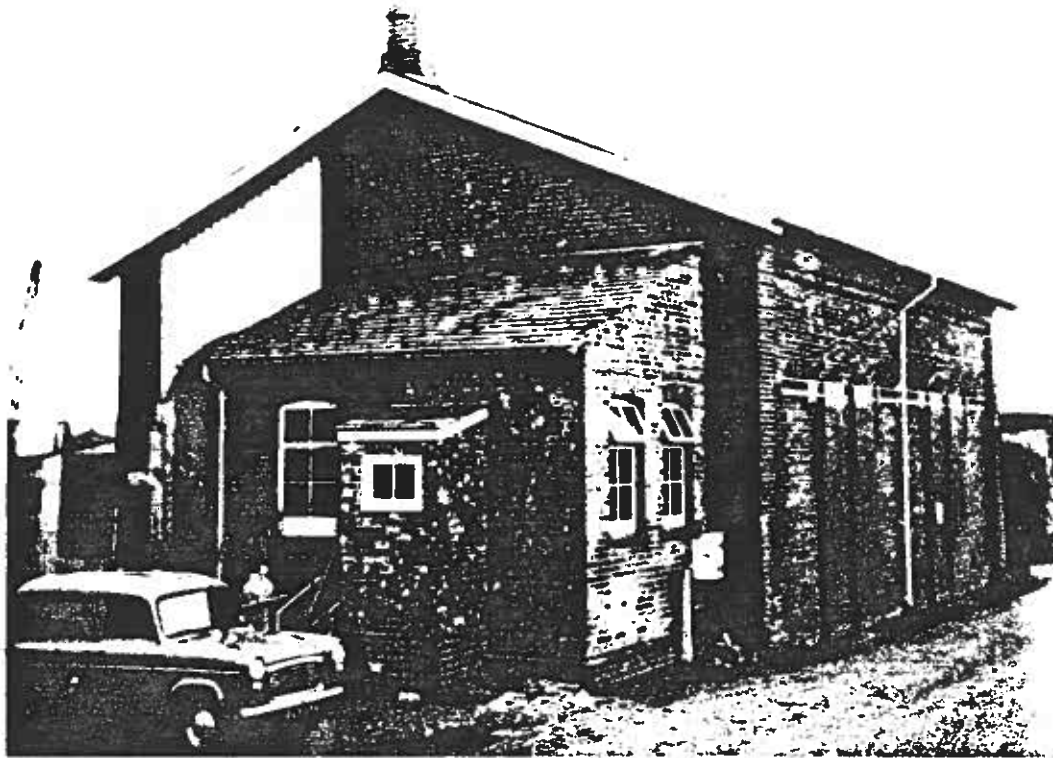
The outer canopy of the old Marlow Station was seldom empty of a waiting taxi. If empty it was only because some longer fares had accupied all taxis at one time - maybe a party arriving by



Not long before dieselisation in July 1962, the "Marlow Donkey", formed of Collett 0-4-2T no.1421 and BR built Auto-trailer W 229W, indulges in a little shunting at Marlow. The siding was known as Khartoum because it was installed at the turn of the century, around the time of the siege. Today the Maritz building stands on this very spot but the buildings in Dedmere Road are little changed.



Before resuming service 1421 is serviced at Marlow shed. Although allocated to Slough (81B) the engine was resident on the branch returning to the parent depot only for weekly washouts and examinations. The crane jibs belong to the neighbouring timber yard, served by private sidings, whose expansion led to the demolition of the old station in the summer of 1967.



Marlow's camera-shy goods shed viewed from the station forecourt.

train had split up among the cars all for the same destination outside town. Normally it was rare for anyone, either traveller or town-dweller, to be disappointed should they need transport. It was, of course, quite possible to find an empty taxi standing sans driver. He would not be far away - if he was not chatting in the parcels office then one should send a runner - as before - to the "Donkey" as we know it now. Present day question, in view of my remarks, do "they" breathalize taxi drivers? It might interest the reader if I recalled the bases from which came the several conveyances.

I recall Dryes Garage in the High Street (more recently Humphersons fitted kitchens), Horace Cheek taxis (being the house and yard next to the dental clinic in Station Road), Reg. Speller of the Three Runs in West Street (long gone but roughly in the area of Buckland Rafferty Estate Agents), with possible supplies from Curralls Garage in the High Street (whose showroom and workshop stood over a large frontage where several shops trade north of the pillared Docotrs House (offices). One has to remember the comparatively small number of private cars at that time and there was much less chance of being met privately. Thus the taxis often made runs to surrounding villages as well as 'town work' and the private cars one saw arriving or departing were more likely to carry "First Class" family members chauffeured in from Bisham, Medenham, Marlow Common, Hurley or wherever their particular stately home stood, be it great or small.

And so I reach my final paragraphs (I heard that Sir!) with the natural follow on to the above - a little name-dropping.

I doubt there is no station in the land which has not at some stage in its existence seen the regular arrival or departure of its local Lord or Lady of the Manor - for as I have hinted be-

fore, the train was well used in the pre-car era. Should the family be going on extended vacation no doubt some - or most - of the staff moved with them down country or up to town, and here we saw the double meaning to 'First Class' and 'Third Class' for family went 'First' and all below lady's maid went 'Third' - the "natural" order of things. So that is how they filled the trains, maybe!

Many - or most - stations saw to the needs of one or more important (maybe self-important) residents of the area. From Beaconsfield went G.K. Chesterton or Benjamin Disraeli from High Wycombe - perhaps Edgar Wallace from Bourne End and what of Marlow? Not to be outdone by the two Windsor Stations - why should they have the monopoly on Royalty? I will come to that later.

Many splendid members of the Arts lived around Marlow and some are known to have travelled from Marlow while in other cases it is a natural assumption as this was their nearest station. Where do we start? Dame Nellie Melba, she of the wonderful voice, occupied a fine house in Quarry Woods near Winter Hill. More recently Lillian Bayliss of theatre fame lived near the bridge. Jerome K. Jerome of literary Thameside connections once lived at Marlow Common and once I had Stanley Spencer pointed out to me and being told he sent a canvas away sometimes through the parcels office - famous days ahead for him!

Did I say something about Royalty? Oh that was the exiled King Zog of Albania and his retinue who dived into the woods somewhere round Marlow, and was known to use the train from time to time.

I must not forget those who come under the 'County' heading of famous families who lived around and together with the Town Folk, the Country folk and the visitor combined to make Marlow Station a centre of activity in the area. They were the days my friends.

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President: The Hon. W. H. Mc Alpine

Chairman:	Bas Woodward	40 Heath Road, Hallspar, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 1DG.	Tel: Beaconsfield 3476
Vice-Chairman:	Mike Norris	29 Riverpark Drive, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 1QT.	Tel: Marlow 5227
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Treasurer:	John Sears	32 West Fryme, Parkside Rd, Reading, Berks, RG3 2BY.	Tel: Reading 595476
Publicity:	Alan Wheeler	8 Spinfield Mount, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 2JU.	Tel: Marlow 2995
Social Sec.:	Pete. Robins	95 Broom Hill, Cookham, Berks, SL6 9LJ.	Tel: Bourne End 27870
Editor:	Mike Walker	"Sulgarth", Little Marlow, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 3RS.	Tel: Marlow 3899