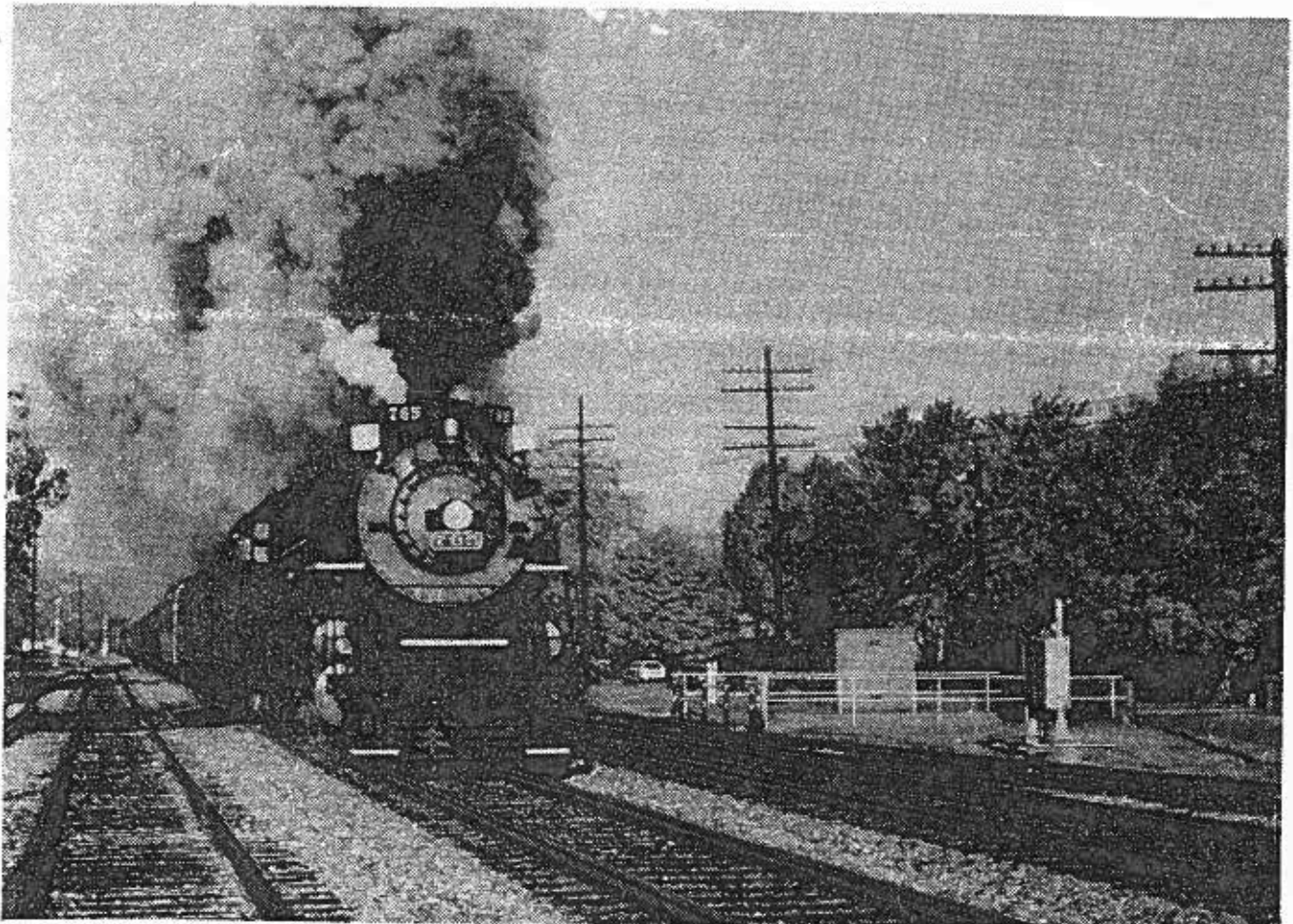


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DECEMBER 1991

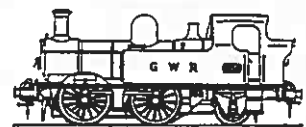
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# MARLOW DONKEY



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**THE FAWLEY ASS  
BOURNE END GALA  
SOUTH AFRICA 1991  
BASINGSTOKE MEMORIES**



# THE MARLOW DONKEY

Quarterly magazine of the  
MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

No.60 DECEMBER 1991

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Glance at the top of this page and you will see we have reached another milestone, the Diamond Jubilee issue of the Marlow Donkey, a convenient point to pause for reflection. A lot has happened since Stan Verrinder sat at his typewriter and tapped out the single page of issue 1 in March 1977, I wonder if he had any idea what he was unleashing? Looking back at past issues a remarkable collection of articles have graced our pages, many of the highlights being spotlighted by Roger Bowen in his "10 Years Ago" column. Roger often suggests we should reprint some of these. I am reluctant whilst there appears to be a steady trickle of articles on hand but so always I am always looking for more contributions. Looking back over the past year I find I find my name appears on five feature articles which, to my mind, is four too many! Preferably these articles should be by yourselves. Some are offered out of the blue, others happen when I discover a member has an interesting story to tell and is gently pushed to contribute. This issue contains examples of both.

At the year's end it is an appropriate moment to thank those who have contributed features; Roger Bowen, Tony Caton, David Gardner, Eddie Lewcock, Dave Little, Martin Pink, Peter Robins, Phil Searle, John Sears, Len Stroud, Stan Verrinder, Alan Wheeler and Rob Young. Finally we must not forget Ron Brooks who contributes his final book review column in this issue after a magnificent stint. I'm glad to report that Alan Costello has volunteered to take over in the next issue. Thanks also to those of you who have contributed the odd snippet for the news column. Writing however is the easy bit! We must not forget the hard work done by my mother who types the whole thing each quarter, Sue and Dave Little who prepare the photographs for reproduction and Peter Robins (and Network South-East) who now undertakes the printing. Without all these people's help we simply would not have a Donkey.

As I have said many times before, it would be nice to get some feedback from yourselves from time to time. Whilst I strive to make the Donkey as professional as possible given our resources, I do not seek praise just your honest opinion. Is the balance to your liking? What would you like to see? Do you actually read it? I'd really like to know.

As it is Christmas we have a rather unusual "faction" feature by Martin Pink. The challenge to you the readers is to decide where the dividing line between fact and fiction lies, you may be surprised. Additionally, try and identify the disguised Fawley characters, solicitors letters to Martin please not me! Sefiously though, it is a very clever piece of work.

Coincidentally, our Society also reaches a major milestone, completing 15 years of providing entertainment and education for its members. Our membership remains around the upper fifties, we seem to have difficulty in expanding above sixty although we started with under twenty. Only seven of our founder members remain on the roll. Meeting attendance remains buoyant, particularly during the winter months, but again there is the old problem of feedback or rather lack of it. We seldom hear what you think and there is a surprising lack of socialising. On the committee we notice that occasionally familiar faces stop turning up and we wonder why. Some people move away some find personal responsibilities or careers prevent them from attending which is understandable but some just get bored and lose interest. If you find yourself falling into this category don't give in, speak up and let myself or another committee member know what troubles you and how you think the

Society could improve. We obviously can't please all of you all of the time but we can and do strive to please all of you most of the time but it does need your input, it is YOUR club.

It is to help encourage a more social gathering that we are turning our pre-Christmas meeting into a buffet. Less formal than our old dinners, we hope it will attract wider support. There will be deliberate long breaks between presentations during the evening when we hope you will all get to know one another better, new friendships may well be founded. I certainly hope to meet as many of you as possible during the evening.

Looking ahead to the new year, what have we in store to entice you all to part with your hard won cash and renew your subscription? Well once again Eddie Lewcock has put together an excellent and varied programme which we hope will have a wide appeal. Subjects will include those fascinating Joint Lines, the Somerset & Dorset and Midland & Great Northern; the Isle of Wight yesterday and today; a profile of Network SouthEast in this area and of quarrymasters Foster Yeoman, a talk by well known Southern driver Bert Hooker and of course a look at the overseas scene. As always February is given to our Photographic Competition, an event entirely dependant on your support.

As always we are hoping to arrange a number of visits including the Isle of Wight and Merehead Quarry. A highlight will be the Irish weekend in May. This is part of the excellent RPSI event. Unlike BR steam specials where, as a passenger, you are now lucky to glimpse the loco, the RPSI and Irish Rail go out of their way to make the event a roaring success. Passengers are treated to numerous photo-runbys, sometimes even resorting to the use of buses to chase the train from spot to spot. Whilst the 1992 itinerary is yet to be settled, the expected cost of around £250 per head (including air fares) is remarkable value and I hope as many members as possible will join us for a memorable trip.

Closer to home we can look forward to a steamier 1992. Inter-City is operating further "Shakespeare Expresses" at least until March whilst LT is planning a summertime steam up at Amersham. After his talk in October; Dick Hardy, who is chairman of SLOA, confided that NSE are becoming very pro-steam and very easy to work with. He hinted that 1992 could be very steamy in parts of the former Western and Southern Regions. We look forward with interest and, who knows, they may actually start a full Chiltern Turbo timetable and start work on the Heathrow branch. Or is that too much to expect?

Finally, may I wish you and your families all a happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous new year.

### COVER

Oh for colour! If only to show the superb autumn colours in those trees as Nickel Plate 765, a 2-8-4 built by Lima in 1944, arrives at St Albans, West Virginia on 23rd October 1988, en route from Huntingdon to Hinton on the C & O main line which hosts these specials each fall to enable passengers to enjoy nature's end of season extravaganza. This photograph won Class B - Colour Slides Overseas in our 1991 Photographic Competition for Mike Walker.

# TIMETABLE

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS & EXCURSIONS

All meetings are held at the Royal British Legion, Station Approach, Marlow at 7.45 for 8.00 pm.

### MEETINGS

#### Thurs 16 Jan ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The agenda is shown in Society News and the formal business will be followed by a members slide session.

#### Thurs 20 Feb ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

See Society News for full details of classes and rules. This meeting is entirely dependent on your support - so please enter!

#### Thurs 19 Mar EAST GERMANY & INDIA ON CINE Frank Saunders

Frank and his cine camera have travelled the world in search of steam. Tonight a look at East German and Indian steam.

#### Rhurs 16 Apr NSE THAMES & CHILTERN - TODAY & TOMORROW D. Dodd Retail Manager Thames & Chiltern

A chance to find out more about how our local lines are operated and the exciting developments planned for the next decade.

#### Thurs 21 May ISLE OF WIGHT RAILWAYS (Provisional)

In advance of our summer trip, a review of the history of this unique system and current status

#### Thurs 18 Jun FOSTER YEOMAN - MOVING MOUNTAINS P.T. Chapman

Ever wondered where all that stone comes from and where it goes to? This evening provides an



overview of the entire operation and explains the part rail plays in distribution.

#### Thurs 16 Jul WORLD STEAM 2 Pete Greatorex

Peter continues his world wide steam safari.

#### Thurs 17 Sep SOMERSET & DORSET Mike Beale

#### Thurs 15 Oct AN EVENING WITH BERT HOOKER

### EXCURSIONS

#### Sat 11 Apr CAPITAL EXPLORER

A chance to explore the London network for the price of a Travelcard - see Society News.

#### Sat 9 - Mon 11 May RPSI IRISH WEEKEND

If you're quick you may still get a place on this unique tour. Contact Mike Walker for details.

#### Sun 26 July FAMILY TRIP TO ISLE OF WIGHT

By coach to Portsmouth, ferry to Ryde, the you will have the freedom of the BR and Steam railways for the day.

#### Sat 19 Sep FOSTER YEOMAN AND EAST SOMERSET RAILWAY

A rare chance to see the quarrying and rail operations at Merehead. After lunch we visit the East Somerset Railway. By coach, bring the family.

## SOCIETY NEWS

### VAL SPIVEY

It is with deep regret we must report that one of our long standing members, Val Spivey of Marlow, passed away in early November after a long illness which had prevented him from attending our meetings for the last year or so. Until his illness he had been an enthusiastic and active member at Fawley. Our condolences have been sent to his widow.

### PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The autumn season kicked off with a programme of 8mm film, mostly shot in the area, presented by Jim Gander at our September meeting.

One of the best known names in railway preservation, R.H.N. "Dick" Hardy chairman of SLOA, was our guest in October and gave a superb talk on his days in charge at Stratford shed in east London. As well as stories of the shed and its locomotives Dick introduced us to the many characters and their unique methods which kept the place going.

East-West balance was restored in November when, by popular demand, Wally Richards returned for another evening of stories and anecdotes relating to his career on Western Region foot-plates, this time concentrating on his period at Old Oak Common.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 16th Annual General Meeting will be held at the British Legion, Station Approach, Marlow on Thursday 16th January 1992 starting at 8.00 pm. The agenda is as follows:-

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM (see March '91 Donkey)
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Election of 1992 Committee
7. Any Other Business

### COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

In accordance with the rules, Eddie Lewcock, John Sears and Dave Cooke are standing down at the AGM. The latter two are not seeking re-election, John expects to be moving permanently to the north early next year whilst Dave, who moved to Bicester last year, finds the travelling difficult. We thank them both for their valuable service.

We therefore have two vacancies to fill and seek volunteers. Nominations should be made to Eddie Lewcock prior to the AGM. The Committee meets roughly 5-6 times a year.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

These fall due on 1st January 1992 and remain at £5.00 per annum, whilst, following the unanimous vote at the November meeting, the meeting fee will rise to £1.00 per month. However we are REDUCING the "all-in" subscription to £10.00. It pays therefore to take the "all-in" subscription if you expect to attend five or more meetings during 1992. The maximum possible saving is £6.00!

Please send your cheques, etc., payable to the M&DRS to the Treasurer, Peter Robins, 95 Broom Hill, Cookham, Berks SL6 9EL. Thank you for your continuing support.

### ANYONE FOR A SHORT TALK?

The formal business of the AGM will be followed by a programme of short talks lasting 15-20 minutes. Volunteers are requested. Your choice of subject and the projector will be available for slides. Interested? Please contact Mike Walker or Eddie Lewcock.

### NORMAN ASTON-SMITH TROPHY

During the AGM voting will take place for this sought after award which goes to the best article in the year's Donkey. This year we have a more manageable miniature signal arm, rather than the real thing, thanks to Alan Wheeler and Terry Dearling, whilst the high standard of articles will make the vote interesting.

### ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

As usual this will be held in February and we invite ALL members to enter to ensure a successful evening. In recent years entries have come from a small group of members but we are anxious to get as broad an entry as possible. The competition is judged not on technical merit but by the members on what appeals to them. So please enter something in at least one class. Remember the winners get to appear on the cover of the Donkey.

The classes this year are as follows:-

- A - Colour Slides - UK Subjects
- B - Colour Slides - Overseas Subjects
- C - Colour Prints - All Subjects (max 10" x 8")
- D - Black & White - All Subjects

There are a few simple rules:-

1. All entries must be the member's own original work.
2. A maximum of 5 entries per class per member.
3. Previous class winners are prohibited.

- Slides should be marked by the entrant for easy identification - prints must be unmarked.
- There is no time limit shots can have been taken at any time

Good Luck!

### CAPITAL EXPLORER

As noted in Timetable we intend running a different type of excursion on Saturday 11th April. The idea is to explore some

## RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

### NOTES AND NEWS

#### TURBO PROGRESS

Class 165/0 Network Turbos started revenue earning service on Monday 23rd September on the Aylesbury-High Wycombe-Marylebone services (route 13) by which time sets up to 165.008 were in service. By mid-November they had started working to Banbury and are no longer prohibited from the Amersham line. Deliveries reached 165.013 by the end of November and are expected to peak in March 1992 with completion of the 'Thames' batch by September 1992.

An interim timetable is currently in operation up until 19th January. The next day will see the introduction of the full, accelerated, service via High Wycombe. This will also mean the end of the last loco hauled services on the line, the 06.54 Banbury-Paddington and 17.38 Paddington-Banbury. Get those photos now!

Initial sampling of the Turbos in service shows them to be impressive. Compared to the Sprinter family they are surprisingly quiet and extremely smooth riding, they passed the Editor's pound coin on edge at 70 on jointed track test. The extruded bodyside construction lacking conventional framing gives a welcome extra couple of inches internal width. The seats are perhaps a little on the hard side but this is a commuter train whilst the heating is, if anything, too effective.

As with any new equipment there seems to be a few teething troubles including uncoupling problems, at least one total failure on the road (165.006 at Beaconsfield) and a recent journey on 165.008 revealed interior lighting tripping out when on full and doors reluctant to close properly. This unit also exhibited what appears to be a common, if minor, fault, the set numbers falling off the ends!

BREL and GEC (formerly Metro-Cammell) are both on target to deliver the first examples of the 4 car electric 'Networker I' units, 465.001 and 465.201 respectively, by Christmas. These have 20m bodies generally similar to the 165's but differing in detail, notably in having side buffers at the ends. The 465/2's also feature that Met-Cam signature - polished window frames.

Alan Costello reports that the 12.51 Aylesbury-Marylebone via High Wycombe on 5th December, a booked Turbo working, was formed of 47.484 "Isambard Kingdom Brunel" hauling a dead four car class 115 dmu.

### MEMORY CORNER

When I was just a schoolboy spotter, steam in this area was just about on its last legs; run down, derelict, neglected. The arrival of shiny new diesels seemed almost a blessing. (I hear cries of sacrilege!) But our diesels were different, they had torque converters not generators and motors and they looked different from the plain boxes or lumbering giants on other Regions, not least because of their bright attractive colour schemes.

Ultimately, Corporate Identity demanded these distinctive machines wear a standard coat of blue and eventually the national Traction Plan and air-conditioned stock would render the hydraulics as redundant as steam. Although few would linger at Barry, a handful were saved to allow us to remember the three principle classes.

So it was possible for this line-up to gather at Old Oak Common on 17/18 August 1991. Left to right D7018, did a diesel ever look finer in green than a Hymek? D821 "Greyhound" in the earliest manifestation of that awful blue and D1015 "Western Champion" in its original 'Improved Engine Green' (golden ochre) complete with the experimental warning panel originally carried for only one day.

Ah! What memories they bring!

M. W.

of the less well-known parts of the London rail network covered by the one day Travelcard scheme, it is surprising how far zone 6 covers.

At present the exact route and timing are still to be determined but the area south of the Thames is favourite and if successful we'll explore other areas later. Full details in the next issue. This will be a bargain trip all for the price of a Travelcard, currently £6.90 from Bourne End.



#### PADDINGTON RESIGNALLING

Preliminary work on this scheme is proceeding. Much cable ducting has been installed together with many new signals, several of which are protected by wire mesh cages in anticipation of electrification in connection with the Heathrow and CrossRail projects. Several gantries have been erected spanning the approaches to Paddington (including one growing out of the platform at Royal Oak) which will be dual purpose structures carrying both signals and the catenary.

Plans for the partial shut down of the station this winter to allow a "Big Bang" of track remodelling have been postponed due to the late delivery of the Turbos. These initially to replace the loco hauled Network Expresses, thus simplifying operation of the station. This will now take place later in the year. Included in the scheme is the singling of the line between Old Oak Common West Junction and Northolt Junction together with the closure of Greenford Signal Box.

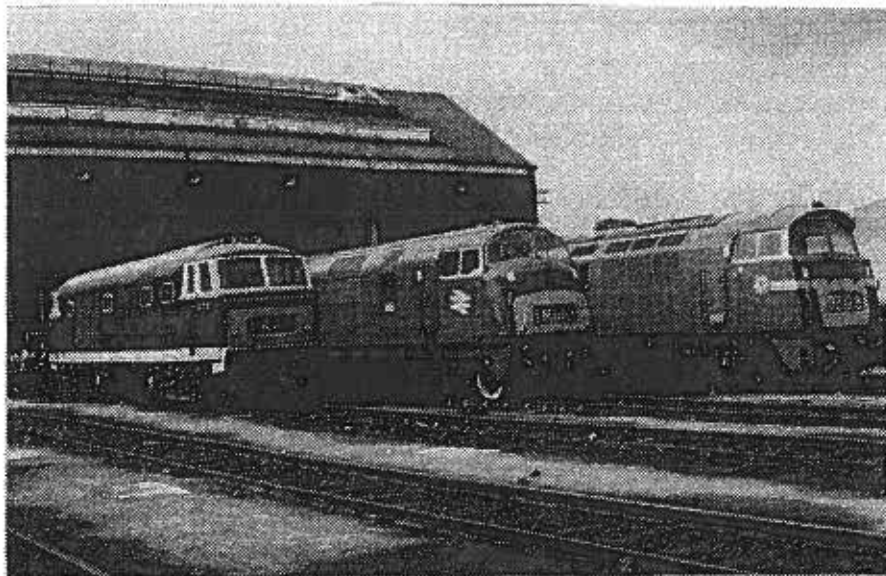
#### CROSSRAIL BILL PRESENTED

The Government has given the go ahead to British Rail and London Underground to promote a private bill seeking powers to construct the Paddington-Liverpool Street link before the current Parliamentary session. It is expected to take two years to pass although the forthcoming election could disrupt progress. The Bill also seeks to authorise the proposed new connections in the Neasden and Old Oak Common areas - see Marlow Donkey, March 1991.

Seeking to lose no time, NSE unveiled a mock-up of the proposed class 341 units for the service to the press on 2nd December. A further Networker derivation, they will have three sets of doors per car side and a whole host of advanced computerised control features. They will be the first British commuter trains to be fully air-conditioned.

Speaking at the launch Public Transport Minister Roger Freeman said CrossRail was only one of a range of projects to improve the capital's transport. He specifically mentioned "Thameslink 2000" as one of these only a week after he had refused BR permission to present a Bill to enable this major upgrade. Typical politician!

continued ▷



## JOINT LINE STEAM

5029 "Nunney Castle" made its debut on the Joint Line and opened a new season on 9th November. Hauling the BN91 Pullman set it made a fine sight, and sound, as it climbed to Saunderton in bright sun amid some beautiful autumn foliage. 6024 "King Edward I" made its debut on 7th December.

Further dates for the "William Shakespeare Express" are as follows: Sundays 2nd February (6024); 16th February (4472); 22nd March (6024) and 19th April (4472). All call at Gerrards Cross but not High Wycombe.

## MORE UNUSUAL DMU'S

Delivery delays to the Turbos continues to give NSE problems in allocating its Heritage dmu's. A recent visitor to Thames services was a "Three Counties" (Bletchley-Bedford-Corby) unit formed of class 108 Derby lightweight cars DMBS 53628 and DTCL 54279. On 17th October it appeared on the branch, first of its class to do so, in the company of class 101 DMBS 51443.

Generally the days of the matched sets are becoming rarer, all sorts of combinations of 101, 104, 117, 119 and 121 units can be enjoyed on Thames.

## GOING DOWN

In the December 1990 issue we reported that the New York Susquehanna & Western was the latest purchaser of an SY 2-8-2 from China's Tang-Shan Works. The loco was duly completed at the turn of the year but shipment was delayed by the Gulf War until May. Unfortunately on 7th June the 7620t Norwegian vessel "Braut Team" sank in 6000' of water just north of the equator in the Bay of Bengal taking the loco with it!

As it was insured a replacement will be built together with a fourth SY for the Western Maryland Scenic RR but not at Tang Shan which has now ceased steam loco production. However the Chinese are setting up a small shop to build for export.

## SAR 25 AT QUANTON

A North British built South African class 25 4-8-4, 3405, has been brought home and delivered to Quainton. The locomotive is in operational condition and came with a tender full of spares. It is intended to overhaul the loco and lay a 3'6" gauge demonstration line.

## CHANGING FACE OF THAMES

Not a TV station. Modernisation is changing the look of the line out of Paddington. Platform reconstruction has been completed at Ealing Broadway, West Ealing and Slough and is now underway at Southall and Hayes. In each case resurfacing is being carried out in the latest brick paving and clearances increased for the Turbos. Hanwell, a listed structure, has been refurbished again and retains its period charm, fake gas lamps, GW signs and new platform surfacing with traditional stone flags.

The North Pole International Train Depot is rapidly taking shape. By mid-November the buildings were largely complete and a class 60 and train of hoppers were noted on site on the 14th delivering fill to form the entrance line.

## DIESEL BUILDERS FOR SALE

Two of the best known names in diesel building are up for sale. Following the controversial takeover of the Hawker-Siddeley group by BTR it is expected that the new management will see to dispose of H-S subsidiary Brush Electrical Machines and : famous Falcon Works at Loughborough. Brush have co-operated with ABB (the merger of ASEA and Brown-Boveri) on a number of projects recently, so a sale in that direction could be likely. Brush still have several class 60's to build together with class 92's and shuttle train locomotives for the Channel Tunnel.

Over the pond the earth has been shaken by the announcement that General Motors seeks a "Strategic Partner" to help rescue EMD from total collapse or, even better, outright sale. Expect any of the big European names to show interest; ABB, GEC-Alsthom or Siemens, with whom EMD are currently developing a transmission in a desperate belated attempt to update their engineering. EMD's share of the depressed US market which has fallen from 70 to 25% in recent years and it is no longer viable. Its biggest drawback is its old fashioned fuel thirsty two stroke engines, recent tests showed a class 60 to be nearly 20% more fuel efficient than a class 59 and that means big money.

## CHINNOR UPDATE

Steady progress continues to be made by the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway, now enjoying limited company status, towards its goal of opening part of the line next year. 6000 facing bricks have been recovered from a platform at Fulwell Westbury on the former Verney Jct - Banbury line and will be used to build a platform at Chinnor. The Sentinel steam loco on loan from Quainton will now stay for a further 12 months and a further diesel has been acquired in working order, an O-6-0 Ruston-Hornsby from the MoD at Donnington.

## LAST TRACES VANISH

Redevelopment of Station Approach has led to the demolition of the last two landmarks from the old Marlow station, namely the former coal offices of Porters and Toomers, the latter having served in recent years as a cafe. Following the demise of the old stables a couple of years back the only surviving parts now are the base of the cattle dock which carries an electricity sub-station up by the cross roads and a short section of the platform facing the Maritz car park.

## "ADVERSE WEATHER EQUIPMENT"

We hear much these days of the effects of heat buckled rail in summer, falling leaves in autumn and the wrong snow in winter but it's good to know they're prepared on the branch. A small hut on Bourne End station is labelled "Adverse Weather Equipment" - broom and shovel!

Can anyone suggest the weather condition liable to take BR unawares in spring?

# WESTERN DAILY LIFE SEPT - NOV 1991

Alan Wheeler

You may recall that I closed my last quarterly review with the possibility of an internal move. Well the result is that I now reside in the back corner of the building with my back to the line, further several walls/trees obscure about half the section I could originally see. The result is that many trains "get away", indeed those on the up lines have to be seen before being heard. As a result this quarters report is somewhat brief.

September 16 saw all up traffic on the relief line, engineering work on the main up. The following day an HST came to a stand on the line outside, as no signals are present we must suspect either mechanical or passenger problems. The Pullman set continued to run throughout September, passing on a Wednesday about 11.15am, however it was spotted running on a Monday for a change one week. Mid September saw a Yeoman 59 with empties, followed less than 2 minutes later by a 60 with a Yeoman short-wheel based wagons full! Lunch time that day saw a 47 Intercity passing up fast with an orange/red glow under the centre leading bogie, not heat from the brakes. Shortly after the up HST's were using the up relief line. The last sighting of a class 50 was seen on Sept 20 when a 47 + 50 + Postal Train all in first-class condition passed by.

October 3 saw 47.4xx in dutch livery hauling a failed 3 car English Heritage DMU a few days later a Grey 56 hauling 2 + 3 car DMU sets wandered by. The 15th saw a class 58 hauling a dead 47. Class 60's have been hauling Bardonia gravel trains as well as the oil trains and the odd Yeoman and 60 gravel trains. Indeed they are so common now that they are hardly noticed.

Early November saw the Network Turbo on for a couple of trips as well as a class 33 in ex-works condition in blue travel up light and return a little later down fast on passenger duties. A class 37 with "Electrification" train passed up, and many PW trains have been evident in the last quarter. Two class 56's hauled the up Yeoman train (loaded) on the 27th and 2 days later a set of Chocolate and Cream coaches passed down slow. These I suspect are the ones being currently used on the Shakespear steam hauled trains out of Paddington, I shall find out on the 7th Dec when hopefully King Edward I will haul me to Stratford and return.

December 5 saw a grey 47 hauling 2 sets of Southern Electric suburban stock.

# BOURNE END GALA



Photograph: Mike Walker

The Bourne End Gala Day on 31st August was planned by the Marlow/Maidenhead Passengers Association and NSE to give the public a chance to ride on the new Turbo trains, unfortunately it became something of a comedy of errors. The much trumpeted delivery delays, overwidth bodies and lack of staff arrangements meant that the Turbo would appear on static display only but NSE didn't tell the MMPA or their own staff until the tickets and posters had gone to press. The consequent delay severely hampered publicity for the event and hence attendance was poor.

On the day 165.005 the unit chosen for display (above) arrived on time and was stabled at the end of platform 1, providing a striking contrast with the branch unit L211, the unique class 121/101 hybrid set (centre). As partial compensation for the non-operation of the Turbo, NSE had hired Regional Railway's celebrity class 117 in WR chocolate and cream livery (bottom) to operate a half hourly Bourne End-Marlow shuttle from 11.00 to 17.00. This unit, T305 comprising DMBS 51368, TCL 59520, DMS 51410 arrived at Maidenhead and awaited its turn to move to Bourne End.

Things now started to go wrong. On arrival at Bourne End with the 09.29 ex-Maidenhead it became apparent that L211 was unwell, the controller in the DMBS 53155 wasn't functioning properly. The unit limped to Marlow and then back to Maidenhead to be declared a failure. Control was asked to arrange a replacement from Reading, meantime, T305 left Maidenhead as the 10.29 and would work the entire branch until relieved.

With the Divisional Director, Retail Manager, Operations Manager, Movements Manager, Press Officer and Peter Robins - Acting Station Manager Slough - in attendance it was a clear case of too many cooks and confusion set in as to when relief would arrive. Consequently T305 was put to work on its special duty to soon resulting in a lost journey to Maidenhead and at least one very irate lady customer. Eventually class 117 set L415 arrived and things settled down for the rest of the day.

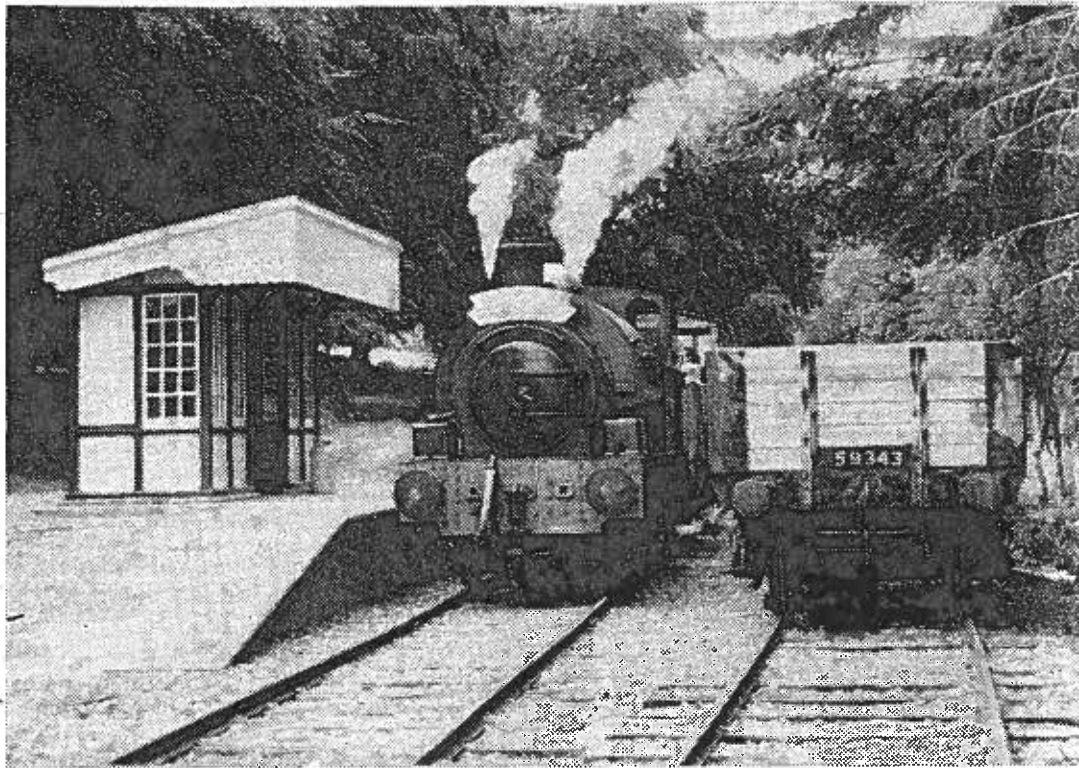
The Turbo was booked to leave at 17.55. Around 17.45 it became apparent that no driver had arrived. A phone call to Marylebone revealed they knew nothing about a Turbo at Bourne End and were taken aback. Fortunately one of the few 165 qualified drivers lived near Marylebone and was on standby that evening. He was summoned, put into a black-cab and sent to Bourne End. Even then fate took a hand, the cabbie was lost beyond the M25 and they had to phone in for assistance. 165.005 finally departed for Aylesbury at 19.20.



# THE FAWLEY ASS

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MARLOW - FAWLEY RAILWAY

by Martin Pink



"No.13" arrives at the Fawley Station in 1910.

Photography: Martin Pink

Back in 1988 a young couple, new to the Henley locality, decided to take a stroll out in the glorious Oxfordshire countryside. Both keen ramblers and armed with a crisp new Ordnance Survey map, they ambled out along the Fair Mile, through Lower to Middle Assendon. However at Crockmore Farm they became a little confused, wasn't that a Wallaby that just crossed ahead of them?

"Aren't those Llamas" said one to the other.

Walking on a little further, and out of a wooded area, they stumble upon a railway track. Now they're really flummoxed. So Malcolm (cos that's his name) consults the map. He scratches his head, then another part of his anatomy, then with a pained expression grumbles to his missis Tracey (cos that's her name) "Where the \*\*\*\*\* are we? the nearest railway is back in Henley I'm sure we can't have got us as far as Marlow!"

At this point there's a loud humming sound, followed by a creaking and clanking of metal on metal.

"Mind out luv" shrieked Tracey, as a large blue diesel locomotive propelled a couple of rusty looking wagons up the decidedly rickety looking track, that self same track that's been giving our ramblers so much consternation.

"Well" says our female walker "it sure looks like a railway are you sure that map isn't upside down?"

Malcolm's face creases in agony as he's just received a sharp jabbing pain in his nether regions. Turning round he's confronted by a cute but mischievous looking buck deer; head down with sharp little antlers pointing up, preparing for another assault. Fortunately the next second an old chap with a stooping gait, glasses and a kindly grin, popped out of nowhere and slapped the devious quadruped on the backside, who promptly trotted off.

Malcolm rubbing his bruised side, offered heartfelt thanks to his elderly rescuer. The old chap, answering with a pronounced Marlovian lilt apologises "bout Ashley, he's a shade playful. Still he's armless really. You lost?"

Our intrepid rambler, still sore and totally bewildered, admits to being so, thinking he thought he was near Fawley.

"Oh that's exactly where you are" our senior citizen answers "and this ere railway is what's left of the Fawley ASS"

"The Fawley ASS" Malcolm exclaims "there's no railway marked on here!"

"There wouldn't be would there, but there were a proper railway 'ere just eighty year ago" exclaims the old chap.

"Follow me to the station, an' I tell you all about it over a nice mug of tea"

Now the real history of the Fawley ASS, as it became known, dates back to the opening of the Great Marlow Railway in June 1873. This as most should know runs from Bourne End or Marlow Road as it was then, along the valley shared with old Father Thames into Marlow itself. Colonel Wehtered of Wethered Brewery was just one of the townfolk who championed the creation of this short but important line, he was indeed a share holder and director for many a year. In 1897 the railway, already operated by GWR tank engines, was fully amalgamated into the Great Western Railway; within just a few months the Greater Company unveiled ambitious plans to join the line with that of the recently double tracked Henley branch just nine miles upstream. This would enable through trains from High Wycombe or Paddington via Bourne End, through Marlow on and into Henley. The Maidenhead - Wycombe line and the Marlow branch, all single track, would be doubled, mere branch lines transformed to a new mainline. The new section would cross the Thames just below Marlow lock and weir, pass behind Bisham and Temple; by Hurley, Culham and Aston, to enter the Henley valley at Remenham. Here it would cross the Oxford-London Road, via a 28ft bridge and embankment then crossing the Thames halfway between Henley Bridge and Marsh Lock, whence it was to have joined the existing branch.

Now the reaction from the good folks in the two towns to be joined could not have been in greater contrast. The traders of Marlow, much passed by through the years, predicted great gains would come from being situated on what would no doubt become a much patronized main line. The hoteliers in particular thought great profits would be forthcoming if revellers from the Henley Regatta could be lured into residing in Marlow instead, just 12 minutes away on the new route.

However the inhabitants of Henley were far from pleased, the rowing fraternity passed around stories on how the Thames Valley would be irreversibly spoilt. Local landowners, with the prospect of compulsory land purchase, had particular cause for discontent, a prime example was Sir John Edwards Moss whose home lay where the new Henley station was proposed. As this was to be on the Berkshire side of the river it certainly seemed like salt was being rubbed into a very sore wound.

The furore was enormous and the national press reported riots and demonstrations; street fights between Henley and Marlow roughs eager to exacerbate the situation were rife. Feelings in Henley ran so high that when the Bill was finally passed in 1899 the local MP and Cabinet Minister Tim Messelthite resigned over the affair (although five years later he was reinstated after an unsuccessful leadership contest).

So the building of the new railway started in earnest. The new line left the existing Marlow branch just past Westhorpe Farm and a magnificent arched bridge (similar to that at Maidenhead) crossed the Thames at the same spot as the A404 does today. Progress on the line was swift and it had almost reached Remenham when the Henley action group against the line played their trump card.

It transpired that the area of the Thames where the Henley Railway Bridge was planned was the home of a very rare species of toad, and had given much inspiration to a famous book of the time. A local naturalist Cathy Wheel discovered a little known bylaw passed during the reign of Good Queen Bess, that made the said part of the Thames an independent territory belonging to our amphibious friends. The Queen was under a nursery inspired illusion that all toads were princes in waiting. The crux of the matter was that the law could not be reversed and the Great Western, in the light of no other suitable crossing point, local hostility and a bad dream the GWR Chairman had had after a particularly fine stilton, abandoned the project.

Now this could have been the end of the story but a local man and paint magnet Alfred Hatfield, owner of the Hatfield Paint Conglomerate (later part of ICI) had other ideas. The "Mad Hatter" as he was known resided in Fawley, a little Hamlet near Henley, where he purchased what had been constructed of the railway for a nominal 10 shillings, the GWR grateful to have devolved responsibility for their folly. He then proceeded to have the track diverted across the Thames at an area past Aston known as Temple Island, the track lightly laid utilising the down line of that previously used on the Marlow-Aston section. The new railway wound its way up a steep gradient from the river to 110 ft above sea level just short of Fawley itself.

To service the line Hatfield purchased a dozen wagons and a little Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 saddle tank engine from the contractor Joshua M. Jones, now bankrupted by the Great Western's abandonment of the Marlow Henley project.

The Marlow-Fawley line started services in 1903 but you may ask how did it pay its way, what use was a line from a small town to a smaller hamlet nestling in a quiet corner of the Chilterns? Well the mad hatter wasn't as silly as many locals assumed. In 1903 Queen Victoria died and her successor King Edward VII had quite a number of little foibles (other than Lillie Langtry that is). During his travels abroad the new king had acquired a taste for Llama milk, Llama meat and food grown out of Llama dung. Alf Hatfield had heard of this through his connections at Court and decided to capitalize on it. In 1901 he had a herd of Llamas shipped over to his farm at Fawley and making use of the railway folly at his disposal he now had a quick and cheap means of getting his produce to Court, via his very own Fawley ASS.

Modern motive power confrontation at Fawley. 03 diesel shunter meets EMU.

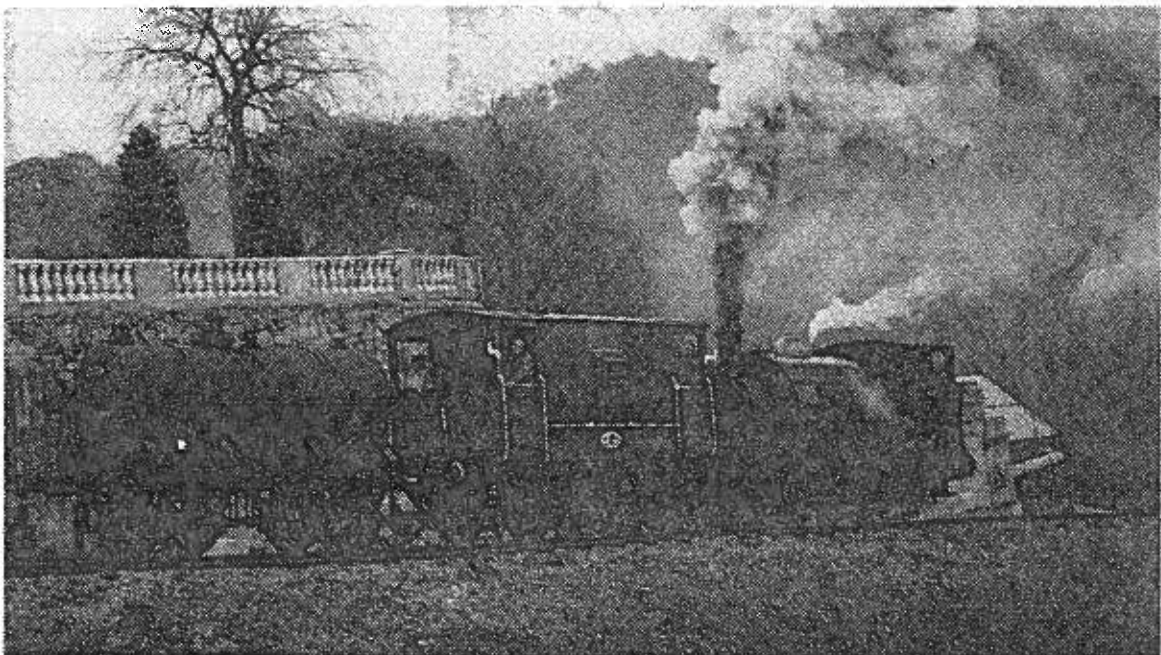
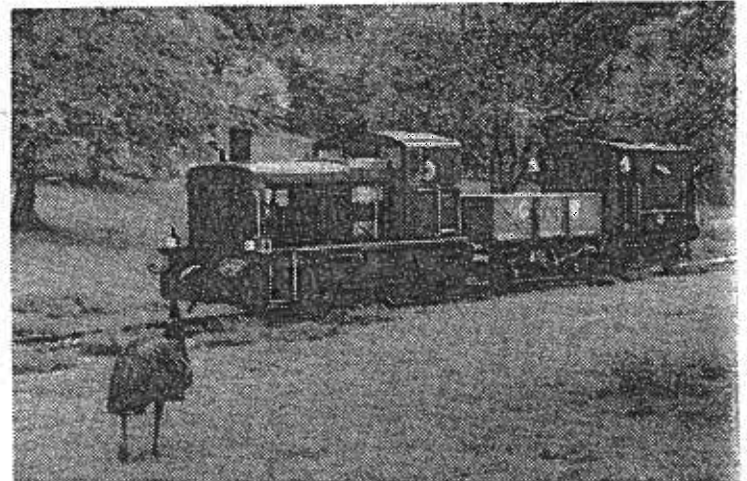
No.31 storms the infamous 1 in 13 gradient in 1989 with Mike Norris on the footplate. Wonder whats in the tanker?

Indeed a local horse breeder known as "Lucky Norris" contributed to the running of the line for transporting his blood stock to and from his stud to race courses all over the country.

Operation of the line was a very haphazard affair with the little engine numbered "Thirteen" negotiating the steep gradient between Temple Island and Fawley, with no more than two wagons at a time. Indeed many a time it had left Marlow with a train of five or six wagons, left most of its load at Temple Island and spent the remainder of the day chugging up and down to Fawley. The locomotive was stabled in a rickety old shed on the Berkshire side of Temple Island and with a couple of sidings located here, this rapidly became the heart of the line. To start, no passengers were carried but as a few locals hitched free rides on market days, the "Hatter" erected a wooden station at Fawley and a lean-to shelter on the side of the engine shed at Temple Island. Ironically many Henley residents then made use of these facilities. The GWR had had station buildings started at Hurley, Aston and Bisham, so these were completed (to a fashion) and also took good profit on market days. To cater for this unexpected traffic a couple of second hand brake vans were purchased from the Midland Railway, one of which was converted to a coach by placing extra windows in the sides and fitting church pews for seats.

In 1910 the "Mad Hatter", after approaches from the residents of Lower and Middle Assendon, embarked on an ambitious project to extend the line. A junction was created just short of Fawley station and a steep 1-13 embankment was cut into the hillside, taking the new line towards Crockmore Farm. At the top of this gradient a tunnel was started. This was to have gone under the farm and then out towards Middle Assendon. However disaster struck when a team of a dozen men and the "Mad Hatter" were lost when the roof gave way, bringing an abrupt and final stop to the Assendon extension.

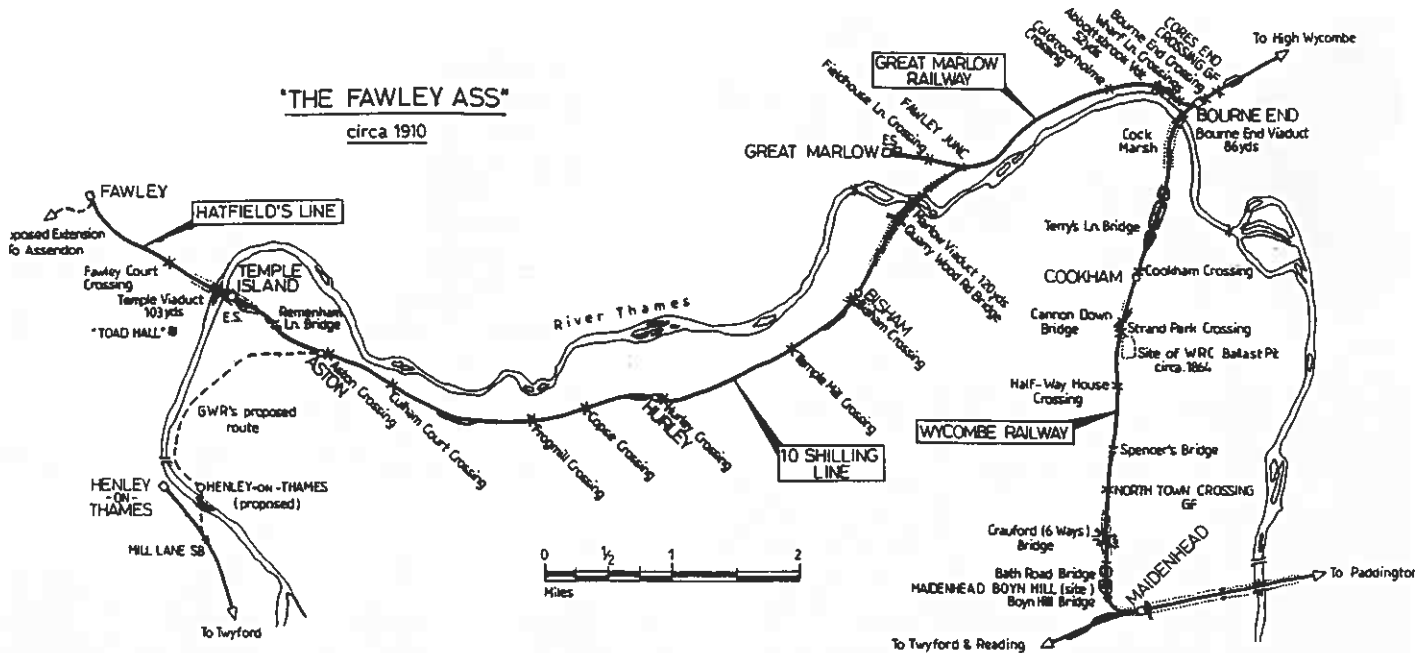
After Alfred Hatfield's death his second son "Clatter Hatter" took over the running of the llama business and operation of the "ASS". However he hadn't inherited his father's entrepreneurial skills, and when the Royal family tired of Llama Dung





## 'THE FAWLEY ASS'

circa 1910



he knew not where to create new markets. However the final end of the Fawley Railway came as quick as its inception in a dramatic and tragic love triangle involving one of the line's staff.

Number "Thirteens" driver at 40 was comparatively young for his position, having worked through the ranks on Hatfield's Estate; as labourer and chargehand. Taking a keen interest in the line's creation, Ernie Tuggle had persuaded Hatfield to give him that prestigious position. However Tuggle had fallen in love with a local milkmaid, Edna Twistle, and had, after twelve years courting, proposed to her in late 1913.

It came as a shock to Ernie when he learnt that Edna had been seeing another for almost 11 years, one Gordon Tugget, driver of the Estates Traction Engine "old incontinentible". Ernie was seething but kept his feelings all bottled up until one foggy morning in February 1914.

It was the first train of the day leaving Fawley, when Ernie heard the unique whistle of "old incontinentible" piercing the air in the gloom ahead. Although to this day nobody can be quite sure of the cause no doubt revolves around the consequence of Ernie's action that fateful morning, seventy odd years ago, Parts from "old incontinentible" and "Number Thirteen" were spread around an area over a mile radius and poor Ernie's false teeth were found miles away at Oakengrove.

And so came an end to this short lived but unique little railway. In the years that have passed virtually all of the line has disappeared under road improvements, or floods, one or two houses in Berkshire however do have an uncanny resemblance to Great Western stations. In fact most people in the Thames Valley had forgotten the line until Mr. (Bill) McAlpine (now Sir) started to have this little piece rebuilt a decade or more ago.

"So" piped up Malcolm "this bit of track is all that's left today?"

"Well" the old man replied "strictly speaking the only part of the line that's original, is that part running from Fawley station (now we call it 'Bourne Again') down to the Halt we call 'Inverernie' just past 'Invergordon' they being the spots the bodies were found after that sad event years ago".

"The most dramatic stretch we use is that part of the Assendon extension Mr. Bill has had resurrected, of course it stops inside the tunnel".

Our intrepid ramblers much impressed are then shown around by the old man, a not too uncommon occurrence these days. He shows them the vast collection of railwayana, the magnificent oil paintings, the splendid collection of vintage cars, the Burton Signal Box, the vintage rolling stock and the later day sister of "No.13" Fawley Hill's very own "No.31".

Finally our young couple decide to take their leave of Fawley's charms and start the walk back down the hill towards Toad Hall

The young man says to his spouse "Well Trace, it been quite a day".

"You're right there Malc, its given me an idea for your Christmas present".

"Really" Malcolm replies "what's that a train set?"

"No" his missus exclaims "I've seen a guide to all the preserved and private railways in Britain. I thought if I bought that, I could make damn sure we don't stray onto any more places like that and listen to any more 'cock and bull' stories like that old fogey came out with".

## ALFRED'S RED DRAGON HELPS SET A RECORD AND A BRUSH WITH STEAM

Rob Young

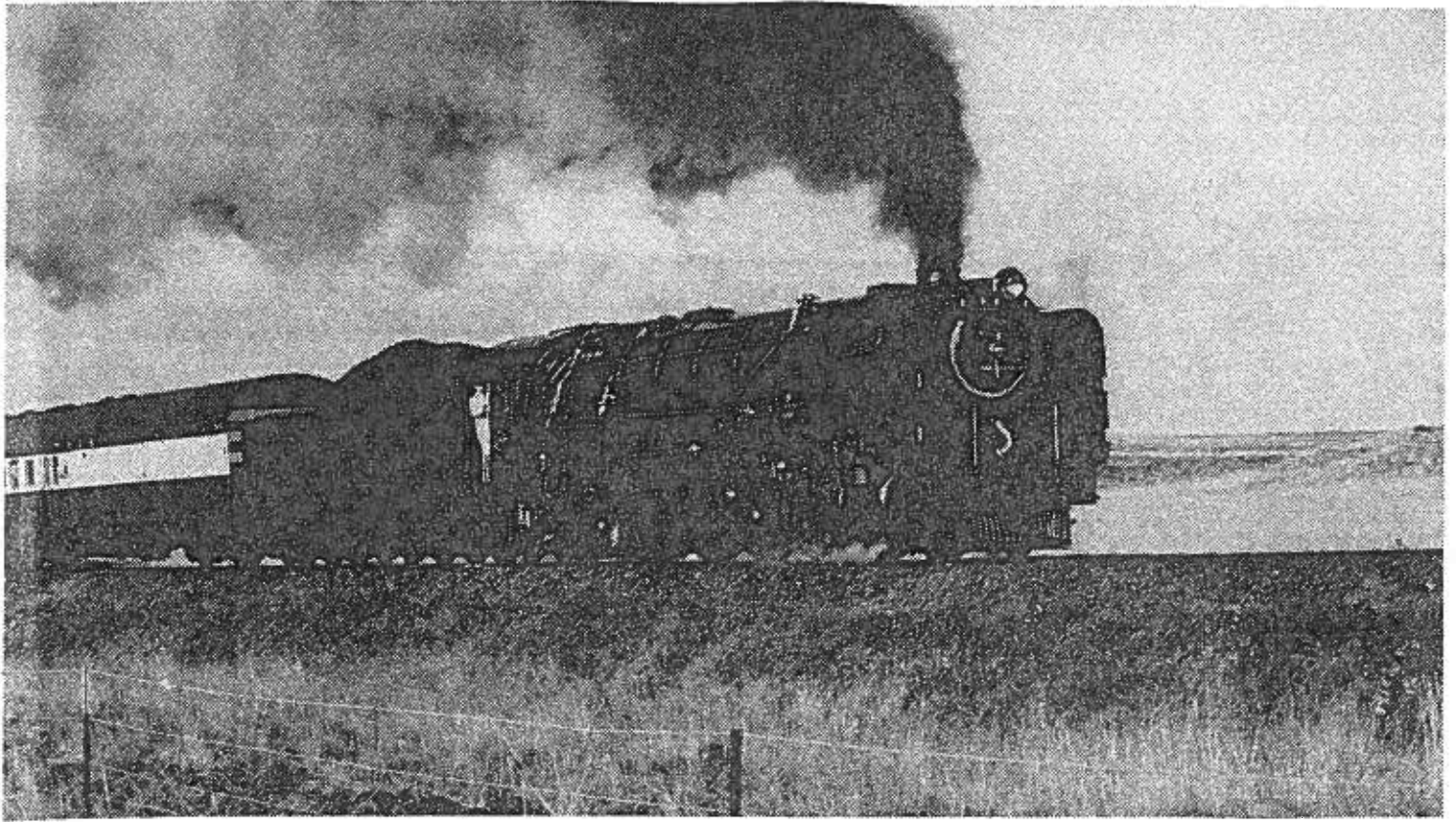
It might sound like a title for a 'Thomas the Tank' book, but these two events did take place in South Africa this year, and a MRS roving reporter was there to record it all.

The first being on March 15th 1991 when a narrow gauge Garrett nicknamed the 'Red Dragon' helped the Alfred County Railway (ACR) by hauling a record load on its 2ft gauge private line. A Brush with Steam was the title given to the Kimberley Steam Festival Week, with 70% of trains given over to steam, held at the end of July, when David Shepherd the artist presented South African Railways (SAR) with his painting of a North British Class 15F 4-8-2 No.3052 and in return received the real thing, over 200 tons in full working order, which is now making its way back to England to his East Somerset Railway.

The ACR is situated 80 miles south of Durban on the Indian Ocean and started life just before 1910. Hauling freight mainly timber from Harding 76 miles inland, 2,885 ft down to Port Shepstone on the coast where it is transhipped to the 3'6" gauge coastal line back to Durban. General freight and empties

are hauled back to Harding slogging up and down a ruling gradient of 1 in 44. SAR ran the line until 3½ years ago then decided to close it along with its other narrow gauge 2 ft lines in Natal as being uneconomic.

The Port Shepstone line has now re-opened as the ACR. A Private Railway, hauling as much wood as it can in competition with roads. It uses the same stock and Garrett locomotives as used by SAR which it bought with the line. There are 17 Garretts in stock but 3 have been rebuilt from the original Beyer Peacock Class NGG16 2-6-2+2-6-2 of the 1958 batch. Now designated Class NGG16A, they have been fitted with a gas producer combustion system (GPCS), a single lempor exhaust, improved spart arrestor, grate, valve timing, piston valves, and lubricators. The first Garrett to be so treated No.141 has been re-painted Red, hence the nickname 'Red Dragon'. The Garretts stand 10'4" tall on their 2'9" driving wheels and are 48' long weighing in at 62 tons their 180 lb boiler produces 18,850 lb T/E at 75% and remember the ACR is only 2' gauge, being the largest and most powerful to operate on this gauge



Class 23 4-8-2 built by Henschel in 1939 races south between Kimberly and DeAar.

Photography: Rob Young

a single Garrett's loading on the timber trains is 260 gross tons, whilst combined trains with the second loco cut in a few wagons behind (method as used on the Benguela Railway in Angola called a 'Duplas') can haul over 535 tons. The current record for the gauge in SA was, at the time of my visit, just over 600 tons, hauled by three CL.91 diesels on the Port Elizabeth NG line.

After a family holiday in Durban, I drove down to Port Shepstone for a three day stay near the line. I visited the running shed and met Phil Girdlestone the railways mechanical engineer, the man responsible for all the redesign work on the NGG16A. Phil told me all about the railways Garretts and good photo points on the line and finished with a real lucky gem "I hope you'll be around on this Friday to celebrate 3 years operation, its been decided to run a tripla! with three Garretts hauling 800 tons from Harding and as added bonus there's a Duplas up to Harding on Thursday". The new video camera had plenty of film in different conditions over the next three days, sun and light rain on the first day with two single Garrett trains that passed at Paddock Station  $\frac{1}{3}$  distance from Harding the rain adding to some superb slipping on the tight curves that line abounds in. The second day's sun drenched Duplas was easy to follow with the longer water stops for the two Garretts. the time was certainly needed, as it was very easy to get lost on the dirt roads that criss cross the line, and Zulu road signs are a bit thin on the ground!

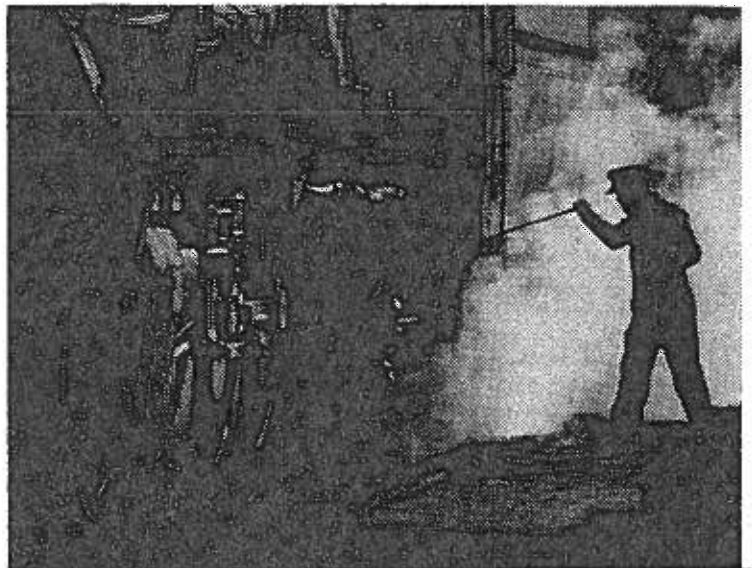
My last day, on Friday, started early at a drizzly 5 am to drive to Harding for the 6 am departure of the Tripla. The train consisted of NGG16 No.139 at the head end, four loaded timber wagons, behind was NGG16A No.155, another five loads, then NGG16A No.141 (Red Dragon) and finally 24 loaded wagons and a guards van, the latter well loaded with rerailling equipment 'just in case'. The train was soon lost in the vast damp misty forest around Harding and after wasting 10 minutes for a distant triple headed forest fire to move I found the train at the first water stop of Bongwana set deep down by a river and what a magnificent sight and sound it made, thrashing its way out of the valley into the sun. Each of the three Garretts motion units occasionally suffering alternative fits of violent slipping under such a load. The record load after three more wagons were added at Paddock was 820 to 835 tonnes. The train made Port Shepstone by sunset without any mishap, so maybe Phil can work up to a 1000 tonnes train, especially if his design of putting a much larger boiler from 3'6" gauge CL 24 onto a NG Garrett's motion and frame gets built!

All this previous escapade was a dry run for the main "Bash" of the year, so July 27th found me heading back to SA with a BA team of gricers for a 'Brush with Steam'.

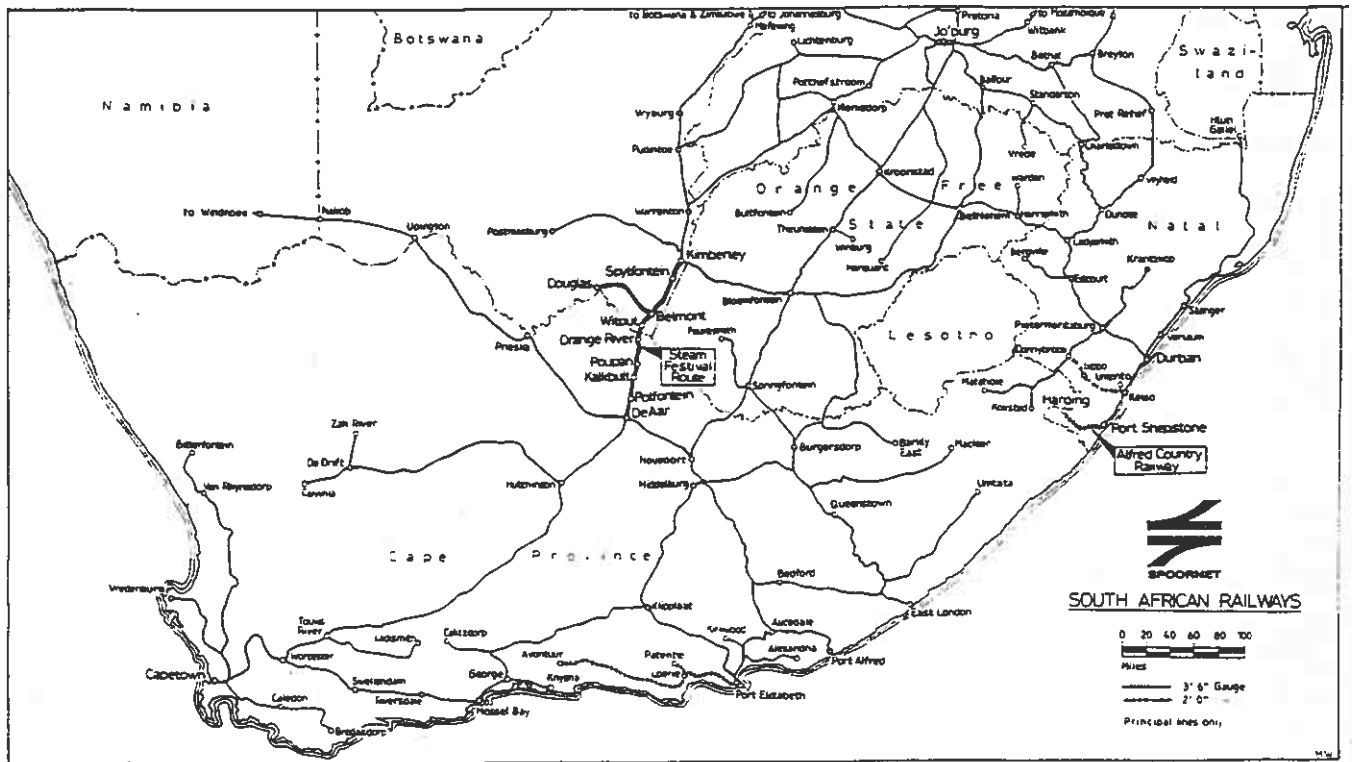
The Festival Week was held on the double track 3'6" gauge mainline between Kimberley and De Aar 150 miles in length, which is part of the Johannesburg to Cape Town line. A four hour car drive away, Kimberley is 320 miles from Johannesburg

and situated in the Karoo (anundulating semi desert, dry and arid region, with rocky outcrops called Koppies). The Kimberley area is 4,000 ft in altitude, and only having visited the area in summer when the temperature is up to 100°F the middle of the SA winter at this altitude comes as a shock. Ice had to be scraped off the windscreen on three mornings with overnight frost, the temperature would rise to the mid 60°F, only on the fourth day was a cloud spotted, and with deep blue skies the light quality was amazing. The best was at dawn, up at 5 am Mike! The first morning found us standing in a dark Beaconsfield Depot, Kimberley, freezing cold, with frost on the tracks waiting for a 6.10 am sunrise which shone directly through the cnetre of the shed, silhouetting engines with golden plumes of steam.

The shed is the northern outpost of steam operations on the main line, still housing 30 serviceable Class 25 non-condenser 4-8-4s for shunt work and 30% of workings south of De Aar. Working South African Railways museum (Transnet) locos are also kept here and get frequent runs at weekends on the main-



Early morning at Beaconsfield shed Kimberly. A class 19D 4-8-2 is cleaned over the ashpits in a scene once familiar the world over.



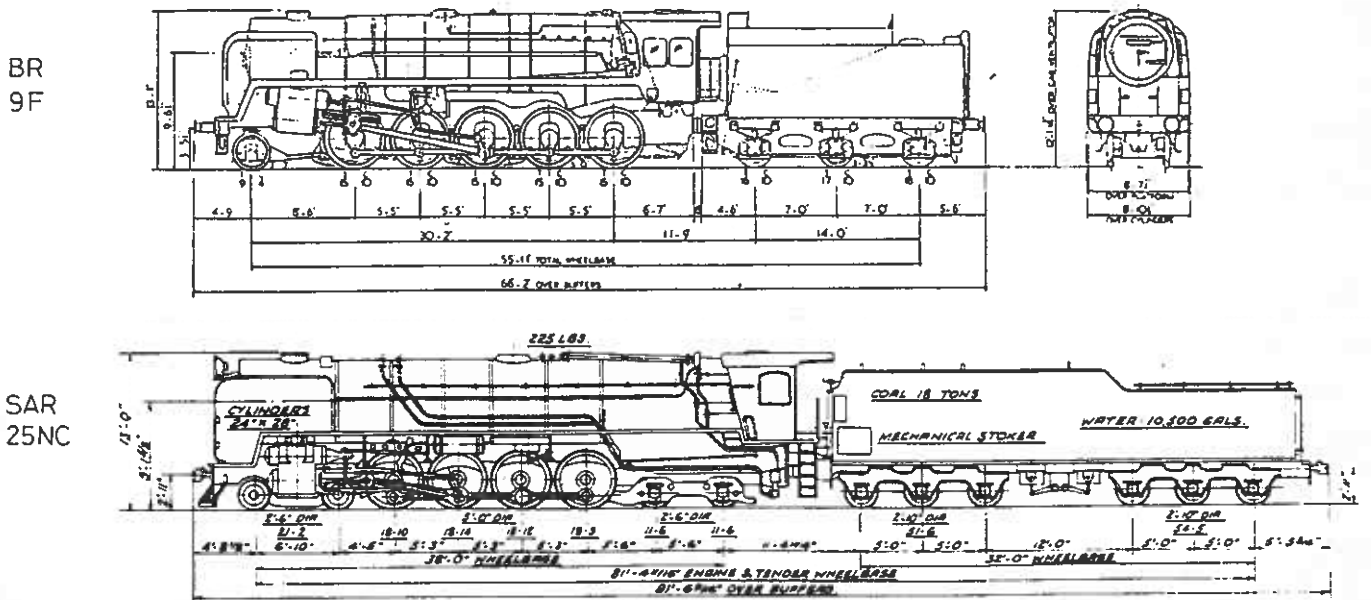
line. These locos were joined by others from the main museum at Millsite giving 13 Classes in all to run for the next five days, night and day, giving many different combinations of classes on double head freights, pick ups and passengers. A tour train arrived via Zimbabwe and parked at Belmont station for the week. The Festival drew gricers from all over the world, USA, Japan, Australia and many South Africans who we had met before, even Phil from the ACR had made the seven hour drive from Port Shepstone, the Class 25 North British 4-8-4 made even his Garretts look small being 13 ft in height 107 ft in length, 120 tons total weight and T/E of 45,360 lbs, compare that with one of our own 9Fs. One of the slightly

smaller 91 ft non condensing versions will arrive back at Quanton Road, courtesy of the NBL North British Locomotive Society in October, so you will be able to judge the size for yourselves.

The Class 25s can show a fair turn of speed, 70 mph even with 19 coaches on the Trans-Karoo express. If it was not for the one water stop at Orange River no one would have overhauled it on the dirt road. Some did not though, one hire car leaving its sump in one of the many potholes, still it was worth it in the end as the end of steam on the line may not be far away in 1992. I'm glad I've got a few hours of video to look back on.

In the foregoing article, Rob Young compares the South African class 25 with our own 9F. To allow you to judge for yourself

profiles of the two classes appear below. Both drawings are reproduced to the same scale.



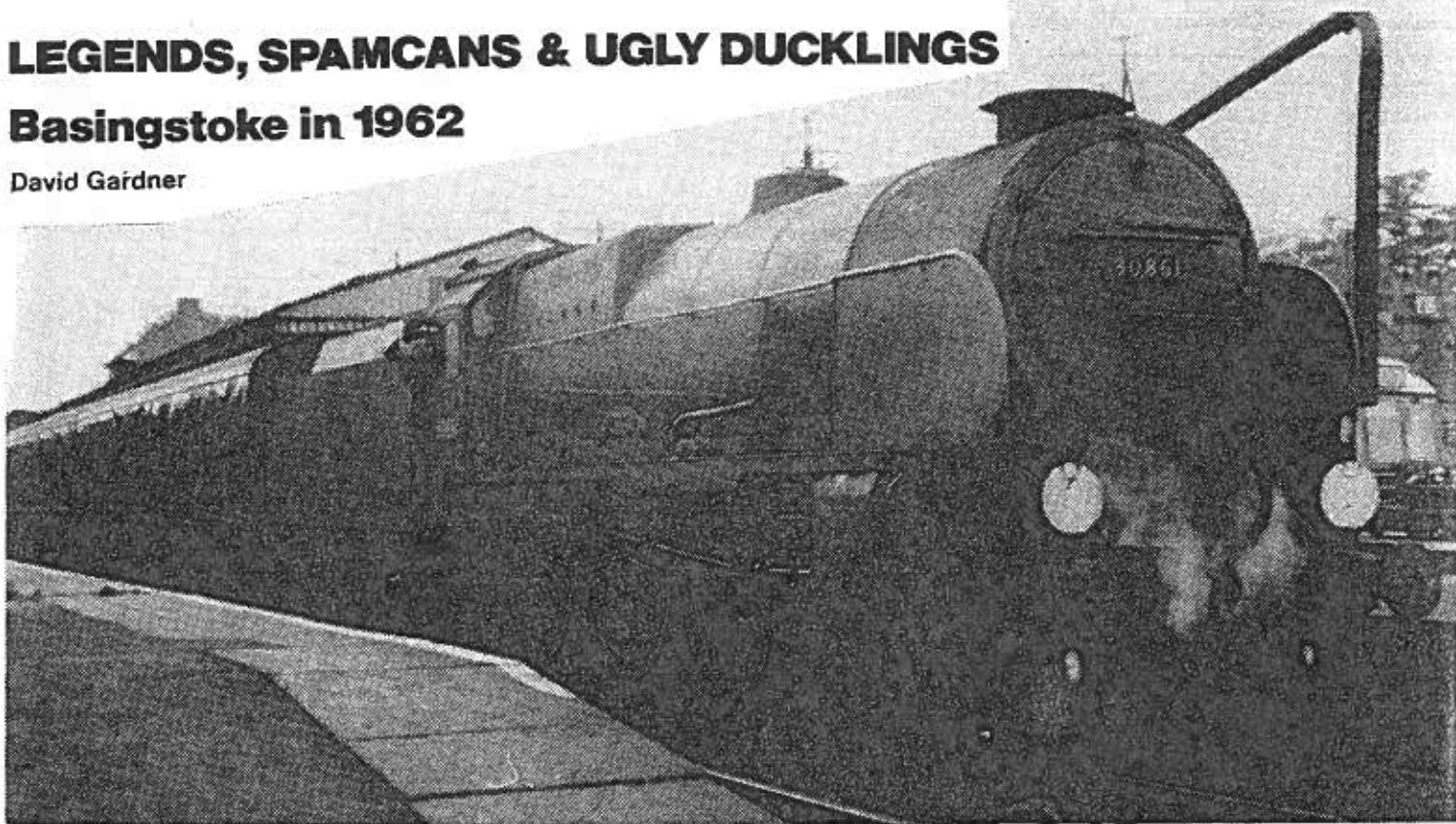
|                  | BR 9F                | SAR 25NC             | BR 9F                | SAR 25NC           |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Cylinders (2)    | 20" x 28"            | 24" x 28"            | 40.2 ft <sup>2</sup> | 70 ft <sup>2</sup> |
| Driving Wheels   | 5'0"                 | 5'0"                 | 138 @ 2 1/2" O.D.    | 158 @ 2 1/2" O.D.  |
| Leading Wheels   | 3'0"                 | 2'6"                 | 35 @ 5 1/2" O.D.     | 40 @ 5 1/2" O.D.   |
| Trailing Wheels  | -                    | 2'6"                 | 15'3"                | 19'0"              |
| Boiler Pressure  | 250 psi              | 225 psi              | 39,667 lbs           | 45,360 lbs         |
| Heating Surface  | 1836 ft <sup>2</sup> | 3059 ft <sup>2</sup> | 88t 10c              | 117t 9c            |
| Tubes            | 179 ft <sup>2</sup>  | 294 ft <sup>2</sup>  | 52t 10c              | 105t 11c           |
| Firebox          | -                    | 37 ft <sup>2</sup>   | Builders             | NBL & Henschel     |
| Circulators      | -                    | 4390 ft <sup>2</sup> | 1953-1960            | 1953-1955          |
| Total            | 2015 ft <sup>2</sup> | 630 ft <sup>2</sup>  |                      |                    |
| Superheater Area | 535 ft <sup>2</sup>  |                      |                      |                    |

And remember, the 25NC is 3'6" gauge!

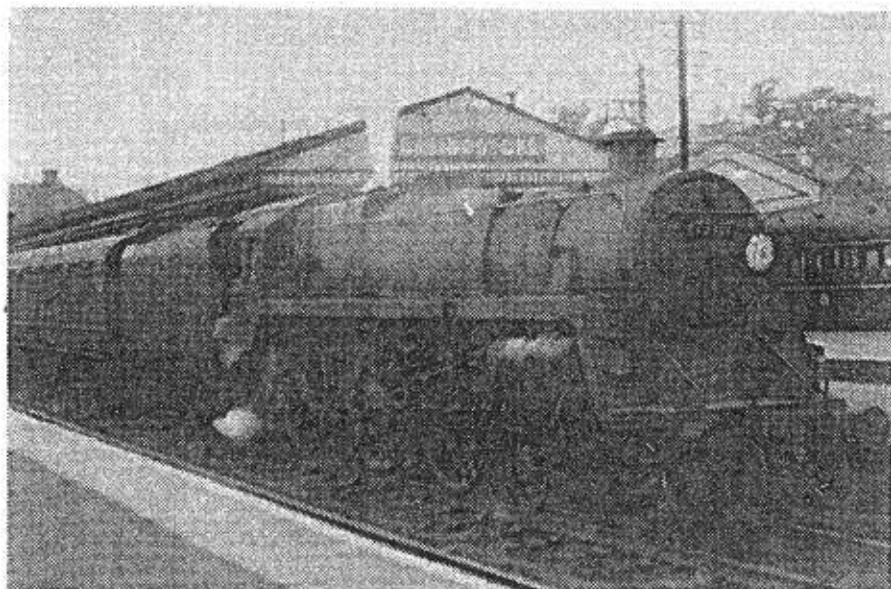
# LEGENDS, SPAMCANS & UGLY DUCKLINGS

## Basingstoke in 1962

David Gardner



### PHOTOLINE



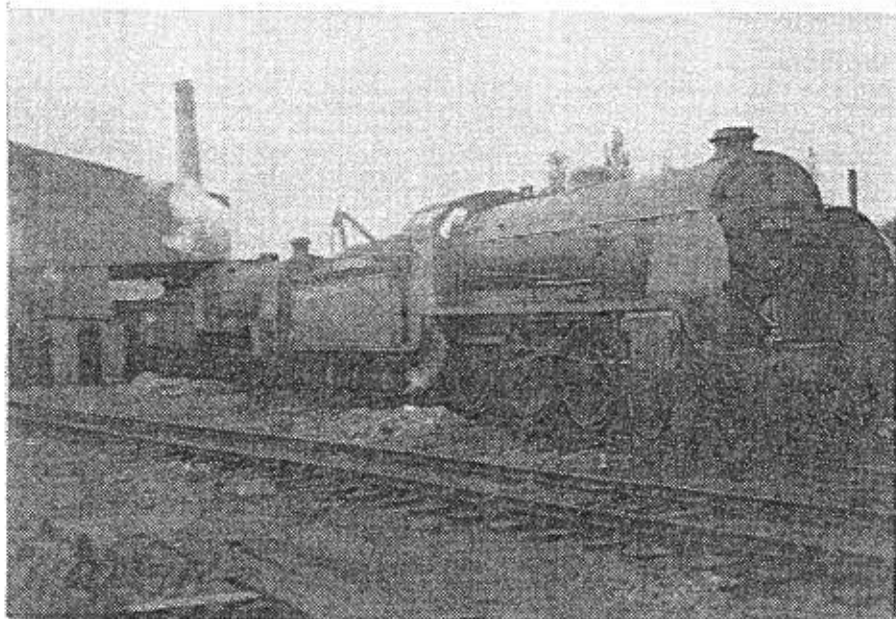
During the early 1960's my determination to cop as many steam engines as possible led me to travel far and wide so that in the summer of 1962 I decided to pay a visit to the Southern SW Section main line. My destination was to be Basingstoke and so on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June I set out bright and early so that on arrival at Reading I had time to go round first the SR then the WR sheds before continuing my journey. Basingstoke was a fairly busy station and my day was set to be full of action and interest as well as moments of excitement. 30861 'Lord Anson' (above) was however the only Lord Nelson class 4-6-0 I saw that day and was heading an up express from Weymouth to Waterloo. I expect almost everyone knows that it was from the design of the LN that the original LMS X Royal Scots were copied. To me though the small single chimney fitted to both classes when they were first built looked ridiculous but the multiple jet blast pipe and chimney later fitted by Bulleid which spoilt the appearance of other engines, at least gave the LN class a more powerful look.

Just about the most numerous types of locomotives on the day were Bulleid pacifics with a dozen Merchant Navy, four streamlined West Country or Battle of Britain class or "Spamcans" as they were generally known and ten rebuilt engines of the same class, of which 34026 'Yes Tor' (upper left) was one and was on a return run from Southampton. The dmu standing in the far platform was on the WR service to Reading.

The Southern at that time had 20 Standard class 5s which carried the names from withdrawn N15 King Arthurs. I saw a total of six of these newer engines while at Basingstoke and 73117 'Vivien' (lower left) was operating an up West of England to Waterloo working.

The SR had an odd policy when it came to engine duties, except on country branch lines, some banking duties and around city termini it didn't use tank engines. Certainly I didn't see any while I was at Basingstoke. The SR seemed to prefer tender engines for shunting, pick up goods and light passenger trains and it was nothing unusual to see a Bulleid pacific with just two or three coaches. It wasn't that they didn't have any tank engines they did, or rather lots of different types, but none apart from M7's in any great numbers and most were positively ancient. After all the 'Leader' class was to have been the M7's replacement which really would have been like using a sledge hammer to crack a walnut, or put another way the GWR using Hawksworth Counties or Gas Turbine locos instead of panniers.

No trip to Basingstoke would have been complete without a visit to the Locomotive Depot which I in fact went round early in the day. It was quite easy to bunk, I just walked straight in and nobody bothered to challenge me. There were 15 engines on shed which may not seem many but it was a weekday after all so I was quite satisfied. There were, however, 8 different classes including a brace of M.N's, three West Countries a couple of named standard 5s, one Standard 4, 4-6-0, a 'U' class 2-6-0 and an N15 30765 'Sir Gareth'. I always had a soft spot for the King Arthurs, and was to see four that day, so was pleased to be able to get a photo (upper right). There is an S15 30497 behind which like the H15 were very similar to the N15s in appearance and were also inter-dispersed within the numbering system. The Southern loco numbering was to say the least a shambles with only the newer engines being given complete blocks of numbers.

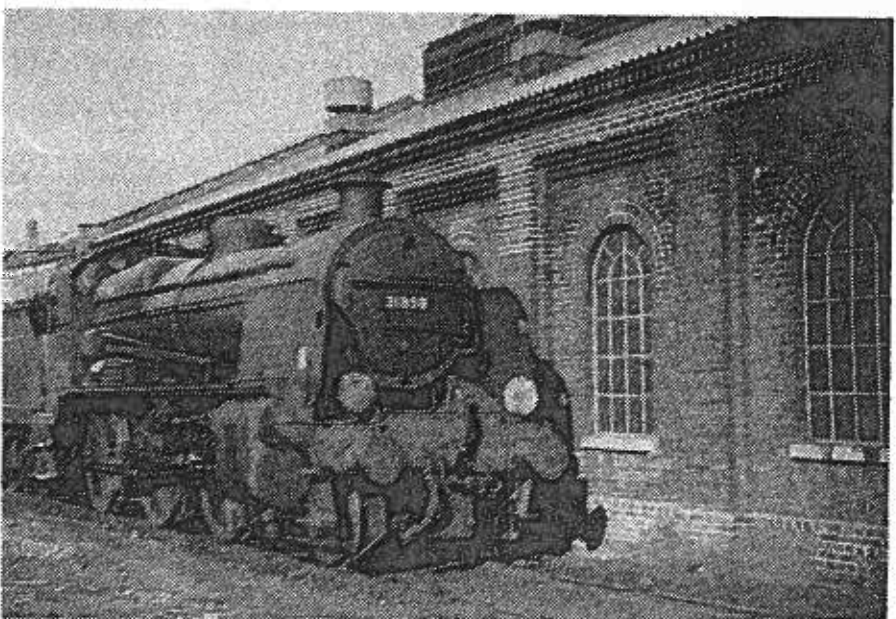


One of the oddest and most ungainly engines ever built was the Bulleid class Q1 of which there were 40 in all. Although powerful they apparently didn't have the best of brakes! Despite being such Ugly Ducklings I snapped 33023 (centre rt) with 7915 'Mere Hall' behind. Two other Halls, 5973 and 5980 were also on shed. Alongside the shed building is a diesel shunter, an 08 it seems but I wasn't into such humble fry in those days. Back at the station trains were coming in thick and fast, a '700' class 0-6-0 30368 went through with a goods working, a couple of Standard class 4 2-6-0s, four Schools Class including the now preserved 30925 'Cheltenham', the others being 30935-7 consecutively. Several more Standard 4 class 4-6-0s including the preserved 75078, two more 'U' class locos made an appearance including, remarkably, yet another destined to avoid the cutters touch 31806 which just happened to be a Basingstoke engine. All the time though Bulleid pacifics were coming through, then later in the afternoon a down West of England passenger train pulled into the platform hauled by a very clean 30453 'King Arthur'. I was absolutely ecstatic as for me this engine was a legend in its own right. At the time BR listed all the steam engines it hoped to preserve, this one was mentioned but when it was withdrawn it was discounted due, it was said, to having a cracked frame. I never understood that decision or why 30777 'Sir Lamiel' was chosen instead. The engine was after all going to be incarcerated in a museum so what difference would a cracked frame have made. Given that other parts were interchangeable between engines, why couldn't the frames have been swapped over. Anyway it didn't happen and we are, I suppose, lucky to have 'Sir Lamiel' which even if it does have the Eastern Section modified cab is at least a working N15.



Back on the platform a group of us had gathered around the loco and with the crew being quite friendly I even managed to get on the footplate. In talking to the crew I asked them if they felt proud to be in charge of such a wonderful engine. The answer that came back somewhat took me by surprise as the driver said "The sooner we get the b...y diesels the better!" Had I got a ticket I might have asked a lift to Winchester but as it was I couldn't even take a photo having used my last snap earlier.

Soon after 'King Arthur' headed on its way westward I decided to take my leave of Basingstoke which was then still a comparatively small town with little of the developing sprawl we know today. On arrival back at Reading I decided to visit the SR shed again but there were only a couple of 'N' class 2-6-0s that I hadn't seen during the morning. The rest including Q1 33025 were still there with only 'U' class 31799 having moved on. The photo lower right shows 'N' 31858 and was taken on one of my previous trips to the shed on 18th February 1962. I eventually got back home to Loudwater very tired but happy from my days excursion. Incidentally I forgot to mention that I cycled all the way there and back on my trusty old pre-war Raleigh. Rather a heavy machine for long journeys but it helped take me to quite a number of otherwise distant regions when money was short and I couldn't afford the train fare. Ah but when I look back those were very happy days.



# BOOKSHELF

Ron Brooks



As your chairman has indicated in his September notes, this will be my last "Bookshelf" not, I hasten to add, for any more complicated reason than a dearth of books. These days the price of books seems to have risen disproportionately and I now have to be very interested to fork out £12 or more for a slim volume. The railway books in the local library are always out and now that Thomas the Tank Engine has been declared chauvenistic there is little help from that quarter.

It has been a pleasure writing for you and I can think of no better way to end this, my last introduction, than with a comment by the Bard (1564-1616)

"Farewell! a long farewell to all my greatness"

HISTORIC WAGON DRAWINGS in 4mm scale  
F.J. Roche

Ian Allen  
SBN 7110 01847

When the railways were common carriers and the roads were not full of juggernauts and oversize loads, an immense number of wagons were required so that they could, and would, carry anything put up to them. This book contains some 68 detailed plans of the vehicles built to fulfil this obligation (or some of the vast number at least!). It is a must for the modeller and very informative for the 'general' railway reader.

DOWN THE LINE TO BRIGHTON  
M.V. Searle

BATON Transport  
ISBN 0 85936 2396

This is another of Muriel Searle's railway books - or perhaps it would be better described as "by" "about" "to" and "for" the railway! Brighton and its railway are inseparably bound together and the railway affects the whole of the area through which it goes. Brighton, almost overnight, turned from a Regency playground into London's seaside, and only an hour away!

This book has numerous B & W pictures which add much to the text which is always informative and eminently readable. It is much more a social history than a list of rivets and dimen-

sions and provides a view of the consequences of the railway both in building and operation.

THE SETTLE & CARLISLE  
Roger Siviter

Bloomsbury Books  
ISBN 1870630 26 2

This most evocative book is divided into three parts; Settle to Garsdale, Garsdale to Appleby, Appleby to Carlisle. Each section has a detailed map and introduction together with a series of very sharp B & W pictures of the route. There are occasionally interesting vehicles and all pictures have an appropriate caption. The book could well serve as a 'vade nuncum' for the journey.

EVOCATIVE STEAM  
Paul Richardson

Osprey  
ISBN 0 85045 654 1

This is a magnificent series of colour pictures of steam engines taken in the north of England and on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. That just says it all - but it really is a very pleasant picture book.

EUROPEAN NARROW GAUGE STEAM (Volz)  
D. Trevor Rowe

BRADFORD BARTON  
ISBN 0 85153 2179

It is all very well regarding 4'8½" (or is it 8½"? ) as sacrosanct but elsewhere there is an abundance of other gauges. Metre gauge now has all the characteristics of 'standard' gauge except, perhaps, high speed. 60cm is not uncommon, 75/76 pops up occasionally. 3', 3'6" and 4' can be found and there are pictures of all of these. It seems that whatever the distance between the wheels somebody somewhere can use it. Lots of the pictures show locomotives pretending to be trams so that they can amble down narrow streets with an obvious goods train following on. Just the book for a browse.

Thats it, then. Kindest regards and a Merry Christmas to all.  
Ron Brooks.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

As 1966 turned into 1967 the general feeling was of "doom and gloom" on the railways with further rail closures and withdrawal of steam services.

In January 1967 the British Railways Board announced that it had decided to discontinue all steam hauled special trains, after existing contractual obligations had been fulfilled. No further steam locomotive repairs were likely to be undertaken at any BR workshop with effect 1st January 1967. Final withdrawal of all steam motive power was planned for the end of 1967, except possibly in the north west.

Operation of a special farewell excursion between Belfast and Dublin on 29th October 1966 marked the withdrawal of steam traction from the Great Northern Section and the complete adoption of diesel power thereon. Unfortunately no ex-Great Northern Railway locomotive was available so an ex-Northern Counties Committee class WT 2-6-4T No.54 built in 1950 at the Derby Works of the London Midland Region of British Railways was used.

Announcement was made for two schemes for rail links between London Airport and the centre of the city being put for Parliamentary approval. One by British Railways was from Feltham (on the Clapham Junction to Staines, Windsor and Reading line) to Heathrow. The other by London Transport was for an extension of the Picadilly from Hounslow West with an intermediate station at Hatton Cross.

Passenger services over the 13 mile branch from Appledore to

New Romney and Littlestone-on-Sea were withdrawn from 9th January 1967.

The last steam locomotive to be overhauled at Eastleigh Works was No.34089 "602 Squadron" a Battle of Britain Class loco.

The 1,000th diesel locomotive to be completed at Derby Works left for traffic on 6th January 1967. It was No.D7667 a Type "2" of 1250hp painted in the then new livery of blue with white symbols.

At the end of October 1966 delivery was effected of three coaches forming the Thai Royal Train. the contract was for a metre gauge royal train of three coaches and had been placed with Cravens Ltd of Sheffield by the Thailand State Railways. This comprised of a day coach and a night coach for King Bhumibol Adulzadej and Queen Sirikit and a composite day-and-night coach for their children. The set left Sheffield on 29th October 1966 and shipment between Birkenhead and Bangkok took place in the November.

3rd December 1966 saw the closure of the Stubbins to Accrington branch whilst 2nd January 1967 saw withdrawal of passenger services between Manchester Central and Cheadle Heath. Also from 2nd January passenger services were withdrawn between Three Bridges and Tunbridge Wells West.

Coras Lompair Eireann took delivery from General Motors of La Grange, Illinois, USA, of 12 new "B" class diesels. They were delivered between 7th and 11th November 1966 and carried numbers B181 to B192.

## TEN YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

The Chairman's notes opened by reminding members that the Society would shortly be reaching its fifth birthday. The front cover was an illustrated one of a rotary snow plough in action in New Mexico. The issue was a "short" one and did not carry any resume of previous talks to the society. Only two

main articles appeared - Diesel Developments in Somerset by Mike Walker and a report on the use of a Southern Railover Ticket by Roger Bowen. Mike's article told us all about the General Motors SW1001 Switcher recently delivered to the Foster Yeoman quay at Merehead in Somerset.

