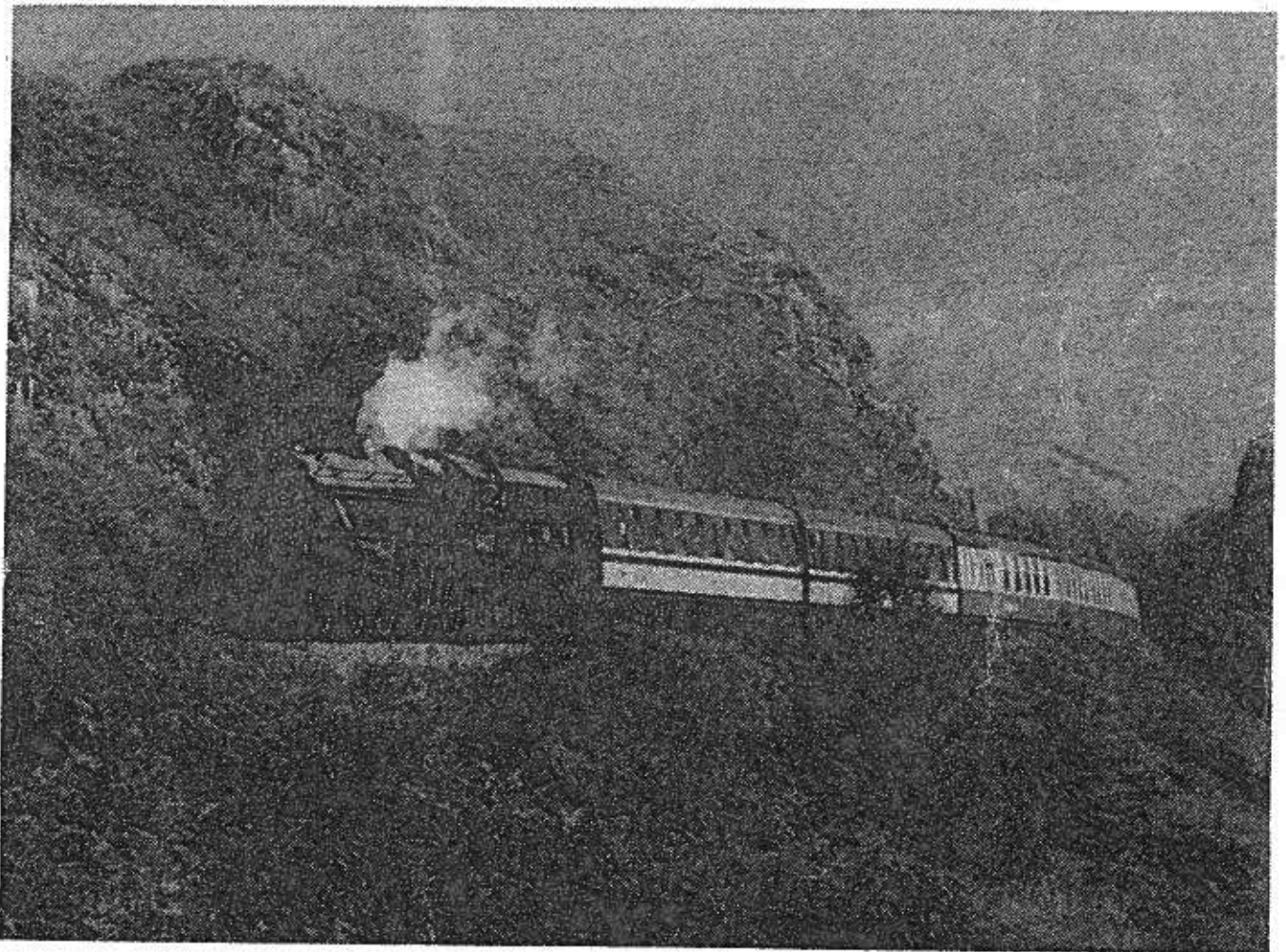


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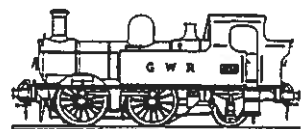
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MARLOW DONKEY



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THE GRAINNE UAILE RAILTOUR



THE MARLOW DONKEY

Quarterly magazine of the
MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

No. 63 SEPTEMBER 1992

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Once again summer draws to a close and it's good to see that despite all the prophets of doom, gloom and global warming, normal meteorological service has been resumed, both actual and forecast. This, of course, has led to some frustrations, several times this summer I've planned to chase a steam special only to decide against it based on the weather forecast, sat at home watching the rain fall, then looked at pictures of my intended quarry in seemingly decent conditions in the following month's Steam Railway. This is one of Sods Laws of railway photography!

There is one thing to be said for this typical English August of 1992, it removes the perceived fire risk which has led Regional Railways (North West) to become the "bad guys" by putting diesel pilots on trains with indecent haste at the merest suggestion of a lineside fire.

One of the best pieces of news I've heard for a long time is the announcement that BR are finally to allow certain preserved diesel locomotives to take to the main line once again. Whilst the details still have to be worked out we're told that, initially at least, only twin engine locomotives will be allowed which restricts us to the "creme de la creme" and will keep certain over rated monstrous heaps of shivering tin out of the picture! Seriously, the decision opens up the prospect of a whole new era for railtours, not just vintage diesel trips but combined diesel/steam tours which will surely appeal to a much larger audience. The prospect of a "West-ern" leaving Paddington with the maroon Mk.1's and handing over to a "King" or "Castle" at Didcot or Swindon; or of a green "Deltic" heading the same stock between Kings Cross and Leeds to meet "Blue Peter" is exciting indeed. I'll certainly be trackside at Sonning Cutting for a real nostalgia trip - pity about the wires over the ECML though.

It seems that steps are being taken to let the "punters" on steam specials get some action shots of the locomotive working their train. FSS are reportedly examining the idea of lineside chase buses a la the RPSI. Has someone "high-up" been reading this column recently and taking note? Now if we could persuade BR to allow photo runbys as well they might well get me out of the old Sierra and onto the cushions.

In theory the preservation movement should gain from the Government's proposals to "open up" BR. Access to the network for private locomotive and stock owners should be a lot easier and be freed of some of the seemingly petty rules laid down, particularly by InterCity. SLOA or FSS could become a franchisee able to operate freely across the network subject to meeting the agreed safety standards and trackage charges. Likewise certain preserved railways will be able to gain easier access to the main line allowing, for example, the South Devon Railway to return to Totnes, the West Somerset to get into Taunton at last and possibly the Isle of Wight Steam Railway access to Ryde. They, however, will be the only winners I fear, as I consider the Government's plans for the passenger business to be a recipe for disaster.

As Peter Robins reports elsewhere the Isle of Wight trip went off perfectly in my absence as did the July meeting. I was somewhat disappointed to be told on my return that the Terrier tank had been in operation during the Society's visit. Combined with the line's vintage rolling stock there would have been further opportunities to add to my collection of time machines.

I prepared my article for this issue before leaving for the US and whilst my remarks regarding that country stand, they came very close to being shattered this year. Once again the object of my travel was to chase main line steam in California and while Peter's favourite the Southern Pacific "Day-light" came pretty close it was Union Pacific's "Challenger" which created some terrific images if its train could be kept out of the picture. Why? Simply because this huge freight engine is absolutely filthy! It therefore looks totally natural. I congratulated UP's Steve Lee on the presentation of his charge and he replied "We ain't cleaned that baby for 15 months and we ain't gonna start now".

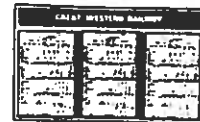
That's the spirit, certain British loco owners take note please!

COVER

DAVE LITTLE's family holiday in Scotland last August was highly successful as he shot two class winners in our Photographic Competition this year. The class C, Colour Prints, winner was this pleasant summer scene of Black Five 5407 climbing away from the Glenfinnan viaduct on one of the regular Fort William to Mallaig journeys.

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS & EXCURSIONS



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

MEETINGS

Thurs 15 Oct AN EVENING WITH BERT HOOKER
Continuing our programme of talks by retired BR motive power men, this time it is the Southern and Bullied Pacifics which are in the spotlight

Thurs 19 Nov MIDLAND & GREAT NORTHERN JOINT John Holden
The M&GN was one of Britain's less well known Joint Lines but had great charm with distinctive motive power and forgotten stations like its hub, Melton Constable.

Thurs 17 Dec CHRISTMAS BUFFET & SOCIAL EVENING
A repeat of last year's popular event. We still seek volunteers to give some short talks. There will be a free raffle for all who attend. £5.00 per person.

Thurs 21 Jan ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
As usual the formal business will be brief and followed by a programme of members slides - volunteers please!!

Thurs 18 Feb PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION
Don't forget the additional class this year for COLOUR SLIDES - PRE 1970 BR.

Thurs 18 Mar To be confirmed

Thurs 15 Apr GCR's LONDON EXTENSION S.W. Banks
A look at Britain's last main line which passes right through our patch and is now sadly run down or largely abandoned; or is it in limbo?

Thurs 20 May NENE VALLEY RAILWAY B. White
The NVR is our most unusual preserved railway given its cosmopolitan motive power and rolling stock.

EXCURSIONS

To reserve places on the following please contact Tony Cator on 0628 473723.

Sat 26 Sept FOSTER YEOMAN AND EAST SOMERSET RAILWAY
The talk in June showed how fascinating the operation at Merehead is, now a rare chance to see for yourself, followed by a visit to the ESR hosted by David Shepherd.
Depart HW 07.45, Marlow 08.00
Fare: Adult £10.00 Child £8.00 (inc. ESR)
NOTE REVISED DATE

Sat 3 Oct CAPITAL EXPLORER II
See Society News for details of our itinerary for another interesting day's exploring

SOCIETY NEWS

NEW MEMBER

Once again we are pleased to welcome another new member to the Society, Mr. D. Lynn of Booker.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

June's meeting was a triumph over adversity as we found out 48 hours before that Marlow Town Council had requisitioned the Legion. However we were well accommodated at Marlow Football Club.

The speaker Rory Graham, Marketing Manager of Foster Yeoman, who gave a fascinating account of the company's history and its quarrying operations at Merehead, Somerset and Glensanda in Scotland. His rivetting presentation proved talks can be interesting even if the railway content is limited. Remember you can see for yourself on Saturday 26th September.

In July, Peter Greatorex provided us with another feast of slides, this time on India, which he had toured extensively. The show included some dramatic end of day shots against the sun, along with a number showing the standard of life in India, including out of gauge loads carried on many Indian trains.

The second half of the evening was devoted to a dual presentation on a Russian Gricers Special De Luxe given by Dave Theobald and Brent Hudson. Steam, vodka and caviar flowed freely in a highly entertaining presentation, but your reviewer must correct one small detail. Safety rails around steam locomotives were introduced by Tsar Alexander II in the 1870's, not by Stalin. Possibly it was a Communist deliberate mistake!

YEOMAN TRIP DATE CHANGED

Please note that the visit to Foster Yeoman and the East Somerset Railway has been postponed for one week and will now be on SATURDAY 26th SEPTEMBER. This is because David Shepherd has approached us to say he'd like to personally host our visit afterwards to the ESR and he will be out of the country on the original date.

Newer members may be surprised by this, but David Shepherd and the MDRS have a special relationship, he has twice been our guest speaker at our meetings (he doesn't usually speak to such groups) and hosted us on a previous visit.

The combination of seeing behind the scenes at Merehead and being conducted around Cranmore by David himself makes this a tour not to be missed.

HELP WANTED PLEASE!

We urgently seek a number of volunteers to provide the entertainment during our Christmas buffet at the December meeting.

What we need is subjects of a railway theme but light hearted entertaining and non technical, remember the ladies will be present.

We also need volunteers to fill the second half of the AGM in January and on that occasion you can get as technical or otherwise as you like.

If you can help please contact Mike Walker or Eddie Lewcock. Don't leave it to the usual few as we're rapidly running out of material and ideas!

CAPITAL BECOMES NETWORK EXPLORER

We had intended doing a second Capital Explorer on Saturday 3rd October then "Rail" magazine announced it had arranged for its readers to have the freedom of the entire NSE system on that day for £10.50 plus a voucher obtained using tokens in the magazine. This was too good a chance to pass up.

At the time of writing we haven't finalised a route - there's so much to choose from - but thoughts include a farewell ride on NSE's last loco hauled trains on the Exeter line or possibly visiting East Anglia or Bedford. The possibilities are endless.

We have obtained a small number of additional vouchers if you wish to take part. Its strictly first come first served, contact us today.

TIME TO RETHINK EXCURSIONS?

Every year since the MDRS was founded in 1977 we have run a summer coach trip. This year's was, unfortunately, the least well supported in history resulting in a substantial loss. Having spoken to members a number of reasons come to light; many of our most loyal regulars have moved away; several more were away on holiday (the Chairman pleads guilty to that), whilst several others stated they simply couldn't afford it in these hard times, which is understandable.

However, the Society cannot take further heavy losses of this nature so the time has come to possibly reconsider our policy regarding such trips, which hopefully will continue. Therefore I propose to spend a few minutes at the beginning of the October meeting to sound out member's views on the following points:-

- Do you want excursions to continue?
- Where would you like to visit?
- What is the best weekend in July/August?
- What sort of price ceiling should we aim for?

These are important questions which require answering so give them some prior thought. If you cannot attend, please feel free to telephone or write to me. Please don't stay quiet!

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

NOTES AND NEWS



STEAMING TO HENLEY

Steam will return to the Henley branch on Sundays 8, 15 and possibly 22 November. On each day an hourly service will operate between Twyford and Henley from about 10.00 to 17.00 running non-stop except for Shiplake level crossing.

Motive power is expected to be SVR based Ivatt 2MT Mogul 46521 making its first appearance on BR since preservation. It will operate in push-pull in conjunction with a train of 4 or 5 NSE Mk.I's and a dmu driving trailer.

We will give you an update on the arrangements at the October meeting. The only other local operation in this quarter is on Sunday 27 September when 5029 'Nunney Castle' operates from Ealing Broadway to Stratford on Avon via High Wycombe.

THAMES LOCO HAULED FINALE

Regular locomotive haulage of passenger trains out of Paddington ended on Friday 3rd July 1992 when the 47's bowed out on Network Expresses. The very last working was the 19.20 Paddington-Oxford handled by 47.431 which was a disappointment as it carried no headboard or other marking. That honour strangely was accorded to the 17.48 Paddington-Bedwyn which was strengthened to 14 coaches and double headed by 47.701 and 47.423, complete with headboard. The last to call at Maidenhead was the 17.50 Paddington-Twyford behind 47.499 whilst 47.547 brought the last up train into Paddington, the 18.00 from Oxford.

All Thames Network Express services are now hauled by Turbo. Loco hauled specials will continue to be handled at Paddington and the good news is that a provisional date of 14th February 1993 has been set for the return of steam to Brunel's great station.

CHILTERN 115 FINALE

The last class 115 dmu left Marylebone on Friday 24 July as the 17.37 to Aylesbury via Amersham. It comprised 7 cars, an unusual formation, of the appalling class 115 dmu's introduced to this then unwanted line by the former London Midland Region in 1962. They were the last non-gangwayed dmus on BR and even had central doorless partitions. Few will regret their passing.

The event was publicised on the services at Marylebone and our attention was drawn to the dmu by our driver over the pa on the preceding 17.32 Turbo to High Wycombe.

Peter Bond

THEN REVIVED ON THAMES!

Following their disappearance from Chiltern, at least one 3 car set of class 115 cars has been transferred to the hard pressed Thames fleet. In deference to the latter's Conductor-Guard operation, the vehicles involved are all those which were modified with gangways some years ago.

TURBO UPDATE

All of the Thames 165/1 3 car fleet (165.101-117) had been received by early August with the two car units following immediately, allowing gradual introduction to main line stopping services, replacing Heritage dmu's and the return of 165/0's to Chiltern with the consequent withdrawal of the last class 115's in July.

The door problems appear to be largely overcome and have been described as a "calibration problem". A new difficulty concerns complaints about noise levels from residents overlooking Marylebone. However as it seems NSE accepted the units with noise outputs considerably above the specified limit they have little comeback on BREL. The problem of the disappearing set numbers seems no nearer resolution and appears to have spread to the Network Squadron Flashes.

There are suggestions that up to ten 165's may be transferred to the "North Downs" pool to cover the Reading-Gatwick/Tonbridge services for which electrification has been refused by the DoT.

HENLEY '92 - A TURBO AFFAIR

Peter Bond reports that NSE provided a similar service on the Henley branch during the regatta as last year (see last issue). However there was a difference, all services were operated by Turbos, a three car set for the captive branch

shuttle and a six car formation for the through workings to and from Paddington. Henley station itself was well decorated florally.

REGULAR TURBOS TO HENLEY

As from 28 Sept the 17.50 Paddington-Twyford Network Express will be extended through to Henley-on-Thames. This is the start of restoration of through commuter trains made possible now that the Thames Turbo fleet is becoming available. From next May, says Dick Fearn, Director - Thames & Chiltern, there will be one peak morning through train from Henley and two from London to Henley in the evening. Eventually, he says, the journey time from Maidenhead to Paddington will be cut by 15 minutes.

Peter Bond

LUCKY ESCAPE AT SLOUGH

The 13th August it may have been, but somebody "up there" was smiling on BR that morning. As the 06.45 Paddington-Bristol HST approached Farnham Road, west of Slough, the crew felt the power car lurch wildly. Fearing a derailment an emergency brake application was made which quickly brought the train to a stand as it had previously called at Slough and was only travelling at 35-40 mph.

On examining the train the crew were relieved to find there was no derailment but horrified to discover that a two foot long section of one rail now under the fifth car had completely disintegrated! The incident scene was attended by our own Peter Robins as acting Station Manager and a small army of InterCity managers and civil engineers and reduced the main line to a two track railway for much of the day.

The engineers and metallurgists amongst us can debate the cause and effect. A serious derailment was probably averted by a combination of the speed, or lack of it, and the fact that three wheels of each bogie would have been supported. It is the circumstances which caused the rail to literally break up into many small pieces rather than a clean break which invite serious investigation.

This was the second broken rail on the DML in the Slough area in a week, the previous, less dramatic incident, being at Dolphin Junction.

PADDINGTON MOVES AHEAD

The remodelling work at Paddington is now well under way. Starting on 12 August platforms 9-14 were taken out of service together with the associated approach trackwork east of Kensal Green for complete remodelling. The famous sagging signal gantries have been replaced by new more substantial looking structures.

Despite operating with only two approach tracks, services seem to be operating with a minimum of delay thanks to the very detailed plans drawn up by NSE and IC managers. During the work some trains are doubling up in platforms whilst others have quicker than normal turnarounds, shortest of which is a late evening HST set scheduled to spend only 9 minutes in the station!

The next big challenge is the weekend of 31 October/1 November when only one track and a handful of platforms will be available.

CROSSINGS COMMISSIONED

The Automatic Half Barrier installations at Cookham and Furze Platt were brought into use on 2nd July, somewhat later than the target dates of 31st May and 21st June respectively. Ironically the delay was not due to BR, the equipment was installed on time but awaited the installation of necessary road signs by Berkshire County Council who had been the prime mover in getting the barriers installed.

AIRPORT BRANCH BEGINS

The first preliminary work has been started on the Hayes-Heathrow branch, although it will be next year before the major earthworks begin. Target date for opening is now May 1995.

Detail designs for the stations, Terminals 1, 2 & 3 and Terminal 4, both underground have been unveiled together with the proposed trains. These are based on the Networker bodysell with higher spec interiors and a white-green-blue livery.

MAILBAG

Member's Letters

Dear Editor

In the last issue of "The Marlow Donkey", Roger Bowen had kind words in his regular spot, "Ten Years Ago", about the three pieces which I wrote for the June 1982 issue.

That mine were the only articles in the 1982 "Donkey", except for Roger's regular "Twenty-Five Years Ago", was due to the unusual absence of any material from members. For some strange reason all their pens had dried up, even Mike Walker's. So, it was either a very slim issue, or burn the midnight oil and write some myself. They were produced so late, that my messy two finger typescript had to be used in the printing, as there was no time for expert re-typing.

I winced when I read that Roger had spotted a missing bridge, in my "Railways across the Thames". It was the one over the infant river, where it is the Gloucestershire/Wiltshire boundary, between the now long closed Cricklade and South Cerney stations. Not only was my railway pride dented, but also my family history knowledge, though in 1982 this was negligible. I now know that this is the area where most of the earliest references to my family occur, and a will of 1578 made by Edward Verrinder, a husbandman of South Cerney, is one of my proudest possessions. My head hangs in shame.

Yours sincerely Stan Verrinder

Worse is to come Stan, read on! Ed.

TEN YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

From Marlow Donkey No.24 of September 1982

The editorial to the September issue recorded the threat to the Dovey Junction to the Pwllheli line due to the presence of gribble worm in the Barmouth Viaduct which BR claimed that they cannot afford to repair!!

The two main articles were one by Geoffrey Lowe on the annual

Dear Editor

Regarding Roger Bowen's comments about Stan Verrinder's Thames Bridges article (Ten Years Ago - June) there was yet another bridge over the Thames. This was the double bridge on the Cirencester Town (GW) branch about a mile from Kemble where it crossed a road, which in turn crosses the Thames. It's about a mile downstream from Thameshead. I imagine much of the time the stream is dry there, but it IS the Thames!

Turning to Peter Bond's enquiry (Chiltern Anomaly - Railway Roundabout - June), the 09.02 Paddington-Aylesbury runs as a public train because no closure application for Old Oak Common to Northolt Jct has been made.

Regards
John Sears

Mark Hopwood has made the same comment verbally regarding the 09.02. Under the rules only one train has to operate over a route for it to be open hence the return working is ECS. I think we have now recorded all Thames bridges - unless you know differently! - Ed.

club excursion to the Kent & East Sussex Railway and a North American Notebook. The latter was a detailed account of the 191,000 miles of railway in the USA and 44,000 in Canada.

The Chairman expressed concern for the Railways following industrial action which gave a major fillip to National Bus and road transport firms that had purchased 10,000 more lorries to cope with increased business!

MOLES & TERRIERS

Peter Robins

Yet again, a group of the Marlow & District Railway Society found themselves waiting by the Marlow Donkey on a Sunday morning in July. This year the destination was Portsmouth for the Isle of Wight and most unusually our illustrious chairman had forsaken us for a steam special in America.

After a good run down with Gavin Francis at the helm, we arrived at Portsmouth Harbour at 11.10. The timing was perfect because when I went to book the tickets for the ferry and train the travel centre was empty. Ten seconds later an army of French students invaded and proceeded to purchase about thirty tickets individually and without any sense of urgency. We boarded the 11.45 catamaran from Portsmouth which ambled through the confines of the harbour and then accelerated swiftly across the Solent, arriving at Ryde some fifteen minutes later. This was a much quicker journey time than the days of P.S. "Ryde". I was also very surprised to note that the catamaran had been built in Australia!

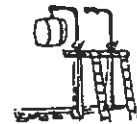
In the usual tradition of the Isle of Wight's railways, the "new" stock brought in to replace the aging 1923 built former underground stock, was itself fifty years old! Two of these two car "mole train" units took us from Ryde to Smallbrook where "Austerity" tank No.198 was waiting to take us on to Wootton, No.198 had only recently arrived on the island and was on a long term loan from the army. It had been fitted with a Westinghouse air pump to work the air braked trains. We ambled through the pleasant countryside on a route on which I last travelled in 1965, shortly before the line closed. We arrived at Havenstreet where, whilst on the family holiday nearly thirty years ago, I spent a very pleasant morning watching the trains cross each other as they worked between Ryde and Cowes. After a short pause, we continued on to Wootton where a new station has been built on the Havenstreet side of the infilled road bridge. We returned to Havenstreet where Stuart Duddy, who had given us an excellent talk in May, took us round the shed. Apart from a coach under

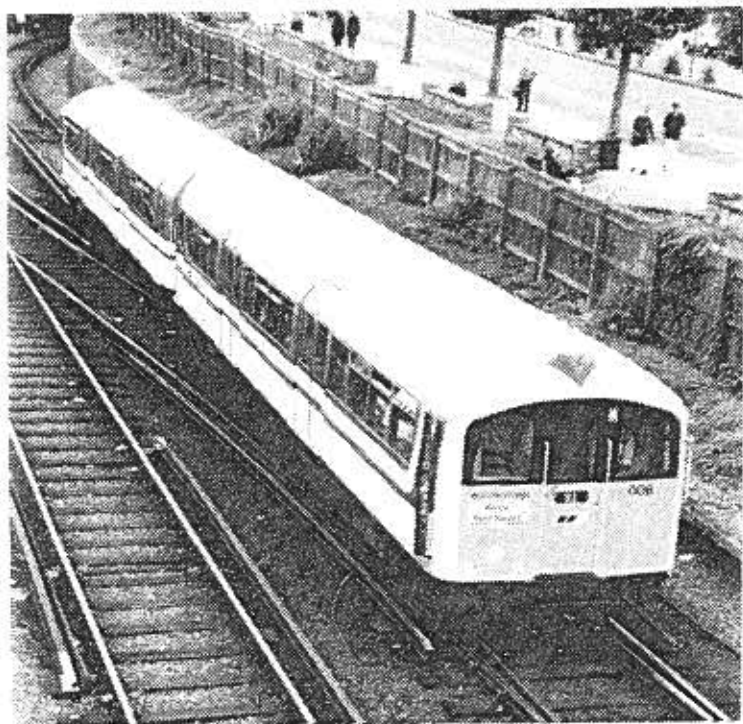
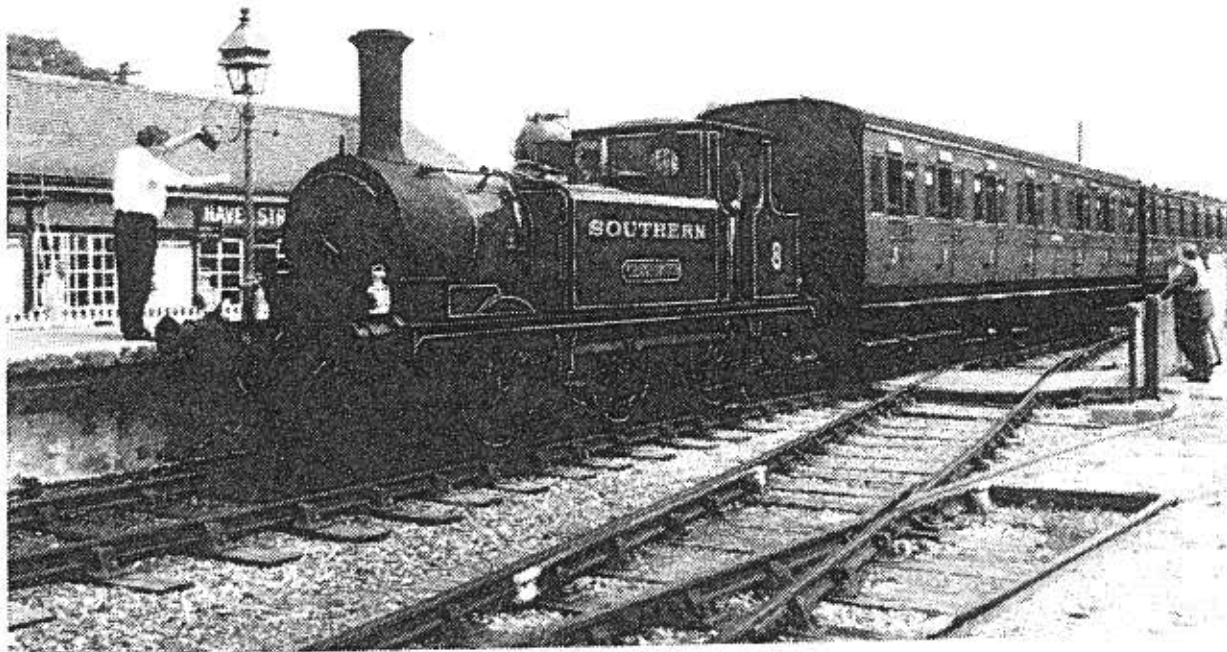
restoration the only occupant was 02 No.24 "Calbourne", which had been taken out of service prior to a major overhaul.

By this time our group had become fragmented and with the flexibility offered by the Wightline's day rover ticket, everyone was doing their own thing. After looking around the Havenstreet site, I took the train back to Smallbrook with the intention of taking a "mole train" to Shanklin and back. In the event, however, I decided on another return trip to Wootton behind "Terrier" No.8. The engine was obviously in top form and gave a very sprightly performance. I was later informed that the more powerful "Austerity" tank with its shorter wheelbase was less steady than the "Terrier" and so was not driven so fast. I wallowed in nostalgia as I travelled in a beautifully restored LBSCR compartment coach and thought back to my holidays of the 1960's.

The journey from Smallbrook to Ryde also brought back memories. Network SouthEast provided a two car "mole train" when a four car train would have been more appropriate. The resultant wedge of passengers - sorry British Rail - customers, was very reminiscent of the Bakerloo line in the rush hour. I squeezed myself off at Ryde Esplanade and took a walk along the pier. The pier tramway which had closed over twenty years ago had been lifted and the supporting girders were badly corroded. The British Rail trains still made the same rumbling sound as they had done in steam days. The only thing missing was the sound of the Westinghouse air pump from loco. like "Fishbourne", "Ningwood", "Whitwell" and, of course, "Ventnor".

All too soon we had to board the catamaran for the return journey to Portsmouth. Gavin was waiting for us outside the station and we were soon back in Marlow. Thus ended a very enjoyable day out. Despite comments made by some members that in the absence of the chairman the trip was doomed to failure everything went to plan. We do however look forward to seeing Mike on the next club trip.





The Isle of Wight Steam Railway put on a fine show for the MDRS visit on 26th July. Terrier tank W8 "Freshwater" put on a fine vintage display as it arrived at Havenstreet from Smallbrook Jct (ABOVE). The signalman is about to exchange the token. The party were given a conducted tour of the workshops (BOTTOM) by IoWSR director Stuart Duddy, foreground. 02 tank W24 "Calbourne" is in the background awaiting overhaul. Later in the day many of the party tried out the new "mole trains", one of which, 008, emerges from Ryde Tunnel and approaches Ryde Esplanade (CENTRE).

Photos: Alan Costello



Grainne Uaile



RPSI RAILTOUR 9-11 MAY 1992

Peter Bond

Grainne was a famous sea queen of the west coast of Ireland whose fort and headquarters were at Clare Island on Clew Bay. Goodness knows what Uaile means. The July Railway Magazine's report on this expedition was headlined "Grainne Uaile brings no luck for the Irish" and it ends with the observation that "this must have been the most difficult tour operationally ever undertaken by the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland; every detail, planned since August 1991, having to be scrapped and re-written".

All very true, as will emerge later, but now for the MDRS slant on the experience which it certainly was. Our contingent comprised Terry Dearling, Eddie Lewcock, Mike Walker, Mike Norris, Peter Creatorex who brought along two non-member friends, Brent Hudson and David Theobald, plus myself. We all flew to Belfast by various flights and airlines on Thursday or Friday, armed with very cheap tickets (especially for OAPs like Eddie and myself) on the Enterprise Express down to Dublin. Fine, but a bomb had exploded some days previously leaving a 30ft across and 20ft deep crater on the down line between Newry and Dundalk, seriously affecting the up line also (which is which in Ireland anyway?) and this had not yet been cleared by Security for repair. We covered the 25 mile gap in buses, crossing the border by unapproved roads, but the implications were already obvious.

Our tour in the republic was to run from Dublin to Westport in Co Mayo by an unusual route on Saturday and back to Dublin and on to Belfast on Sunday for a Northern Ireland tour on Monday. We were to have had two locos and a set of vintage preserved stock, allowing splitting and leap-frogging for run-past purposes. Fortunately, one loco (ex Dublin & SE Rly 2-6-0 No.461) was already in Dublin, but with the only surviving cross border line blocked there was now no chance of getting the more powerful ex GNRI 4-4-0 loco No.171 "Slieve Gullion" or the LMS (NCC) set of coaches down from the RPSI HQ at Whitehead on the NIR Larne line.

To make matters worse, Irish Rail, having apparently approved the entire operation, banned the use of wooden-bodied coaches West of Athlone so that an ex GSR set in green CIE livery could not be substituted. Consequently, RPSI had to operate with 461 only and six IR Cravens plus a generator van.

This was the formation, loaded with 250 enthusiasts, which left Dublin (Connolly), in the rain, at 10.00am on Saturday morning. The timetable had been re-cast by the hard-pressed RPSI organisers during the previous night whilst we participants had been drinking beer in Dublin pubs, eating dinner in local restaurants and sleeping peacefully in our hotels. Additional lineside buses and run pasts were included to compensate for the lack of splitting and leap-frogging. However, with only one goods engine, the journey was leisurely to say the least. The distance of under 200 miles to Westport now scheduled to be covered in eight hours, actually took eleven and a half hours!

Our progress across the peat bogs of Central Ireland, punctuated by at least twenty station stops was notable for the almost total lack of so-called "rationalisation". Almost all the station track layouts were still in situ, many including goods yards. Working water towers, fully operational manual signal boxes and a full range of semaphore signals were a joy to behold. The signal arms, both homes and distants, are red and white, the red being almost orange in colour. It was like a trip back in time.

We took the Sligo line as far as Mullingar where we entered the Galway platform to follow the "disused" section to the old Midland station at Athlone, joining the normal Westport route there after crossing the mighty Shannon. At 18.10 we arrived at Claremorris, a large junction station with five platform faces - and very few trains. Everything was still in place here too, and 461 executed several complex movements in the process of being watered, coaled, turned and having her fire cleaned. Almost unbelievably, though nobody had seen it there was indeed a turntable, concealed in the grass and weeds, at the far end of a long siding. Even more amazingly, it responded to manual strength and it worked. We should, by now have been in our hotels in Westport, getting ready for the IRPS annual banquet at 7.30.

It was already this time when 461 - tender first - pulled us out of Claremorris, still in the rain, on the last lap. Our arrival in Westport had its moments. Nobody in Ireland worries overmuch about a couple of hours lateness, of course, and we were told that the dinner would now be at 9.30. The drivers of the buses to our hotels having parked in the station yard had been waiting a long time too and returned to find the buses totally boxed in by parked cars. It took a lot of searching in pubs to find the drivers. We drove eventually into this small town in deepest far West Ireland and pulled up with a flourish outside the Central Hotel where some of us were staying.

We could hardly believe it when we saw that the Central Hotel had no front wall! The rooms were all there, sure enough, but it looked like a child's doll's house with the front off. And, in the gathering dusk we could just see two men and a boy, with a bucket on a rope. They were evidently trying to cement two breeze blocks on top of two others in the dark! People not staying at the Central were rolling about helplessly with laughter in the aisles of their coaches.

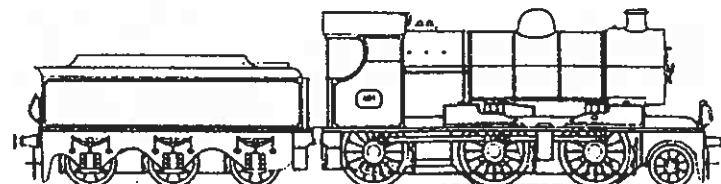
The banquet at the modern Westport hotel was superb. We had to have the Mayor's speech first as she was now late for another function, so it was after 10.0 when the food arrived but it was piping hot and delicious and so was the wine. Later, there were more speeches including one by the Westport Stationmaster. He has a tough job - there are four trains daily. A piper and "traditional entertainment" followed into the small hours.

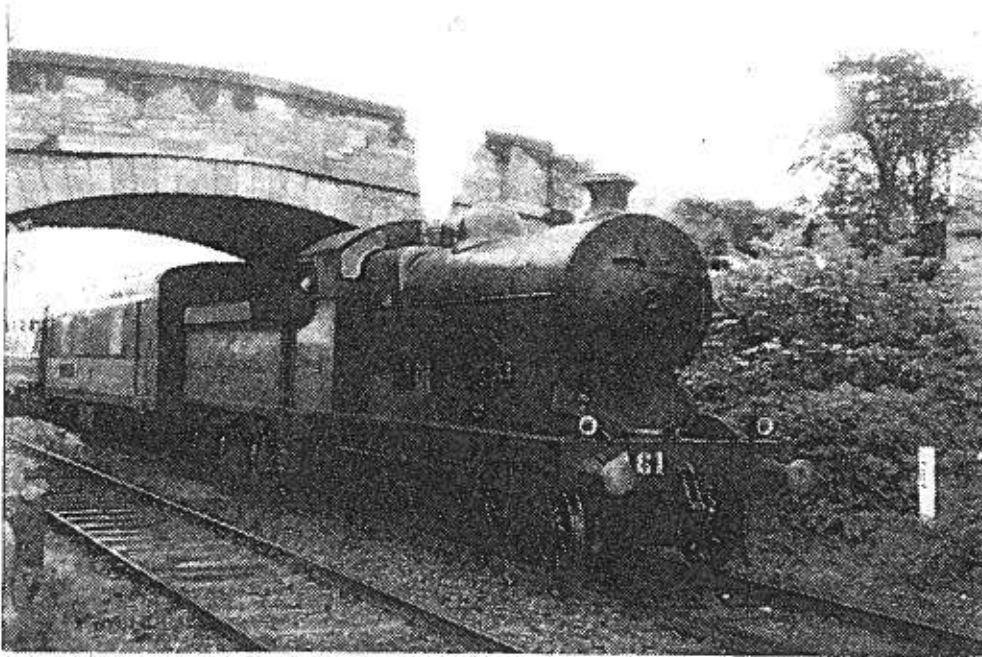
Our Sunday morning departure from a damp, cold, Westport was at 08.35 behind an IR diesel. 461 having run light to Manualla Junction to enable it to pull us tender-first over the rarely visited 38 mile Ballina branch and then "right way round" all the way back to Dublin. This, of course, was just one more ingenious improvisation by the now nearly frantic RPSI Operations Organiser - Michael. In the original plan

we'd have had a steam loco at each end. In true Irish fashion Manualla Junction, the only station on this line really needing run-round facilities, appears to have been the only one to be rationalised! So the Ballina branch train has to cover another 34 miles ECS to Claremorris to stable and run-round and come back again!

It rained heavily all the way along the Ballina branch and back again and it was still raining when we paused for an hour back once again at Claremorris for water, coal and servicing. We even noticed snow on the mountains! Our journey back to Dublin (Connolly) followed the same route as before, our ETA 6.0pm. Inevitably, we lost time again arriving, the now expected two hours late for our dinner specially laid on in the station restaurant. We were, however, informed that after this interval our coaches could now go through to Belfast, albeit pulled by an IR Diesel.

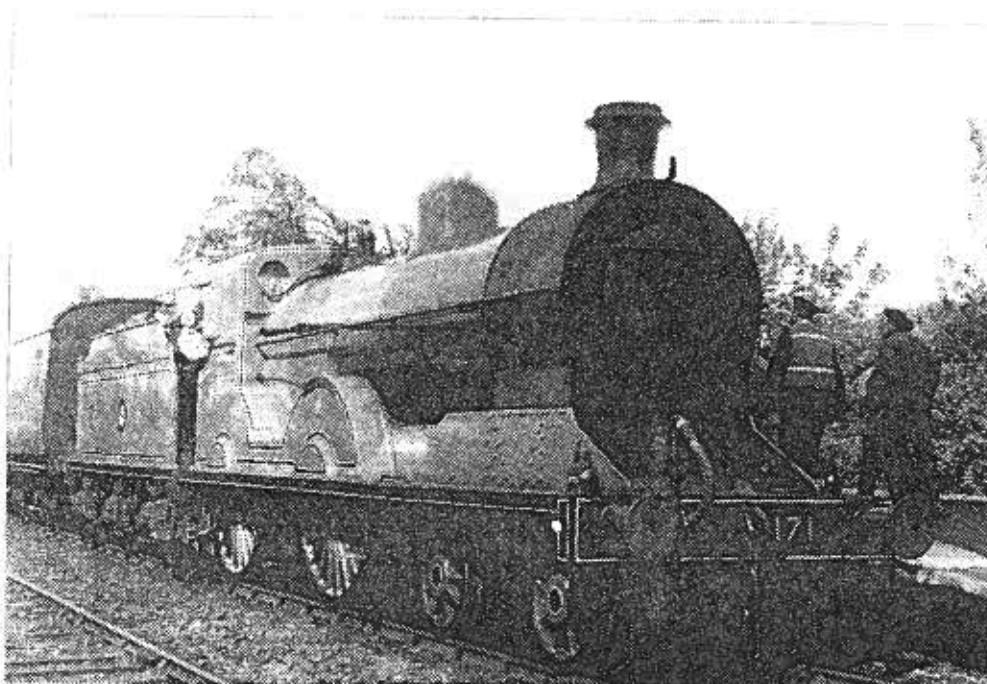
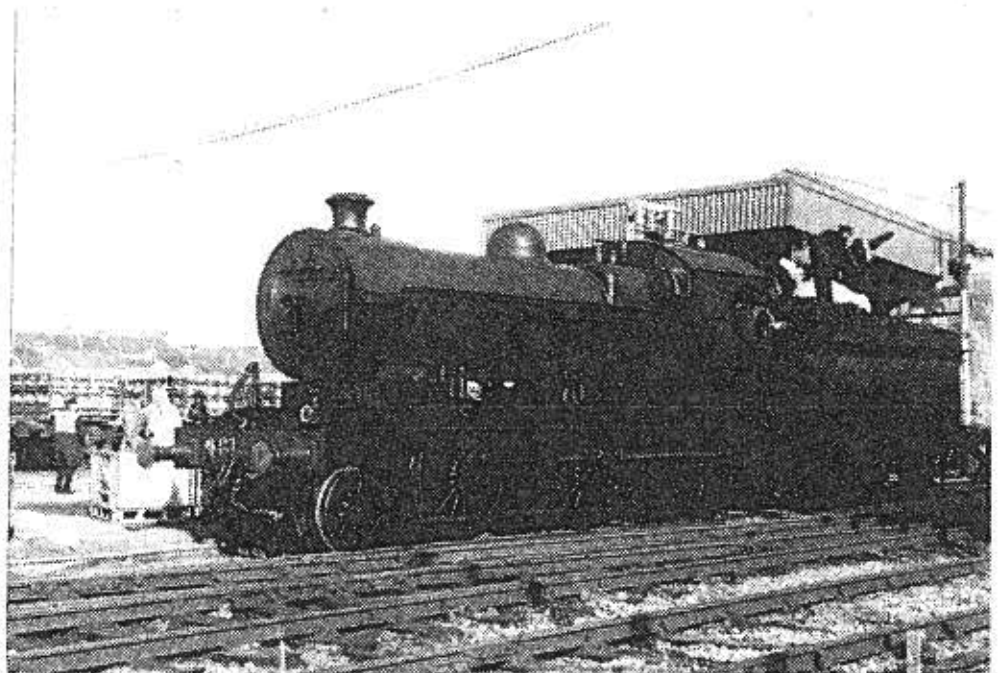
The dinner was excellent, even though, after the main course urgent cries from the organisers exhorted us to board the train if we wanted to get to Belfast that night. Sweet and coffee, they said, would be served on the train. Indeed they were, but Ireland is full of surprises and at Dundalk it transpired that the cross-border section was still closed, and we all piled into buses in the dark station yard. At Newry a special NIR DMU had come down from Portrush and we finished our day gratefully, if a little ignominiously, in a sliding door suburban train. At Belfast Central our buses to hotels were still waiting patiently and we arrived into the comfortable arms of the Europa and the Stormont around midnight.





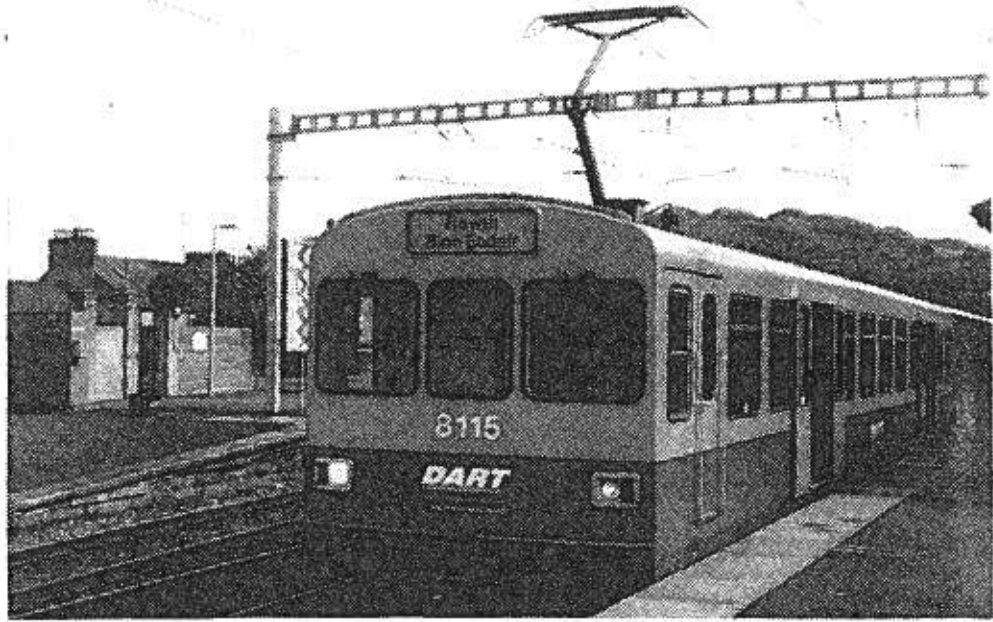
Only a few miles into its marathon journey D&SER 461 pauses for the days first photo stop at Broombridge in the Dublin suburban area on 9 May. The vehicle behind the locomotive is a steam generator van built by the Dutch company Werkspoor.

461 is coaled by hand and forklift before turning at Claremorris on 9 May. The mogul was built for the former Dublin & South Eastern Railway by Beyer Peacock in 1922. The pony truck looks like an afterthought, but look very closely; isn't there a hint of a Great Central "Pom-Pom" in there somewhere?



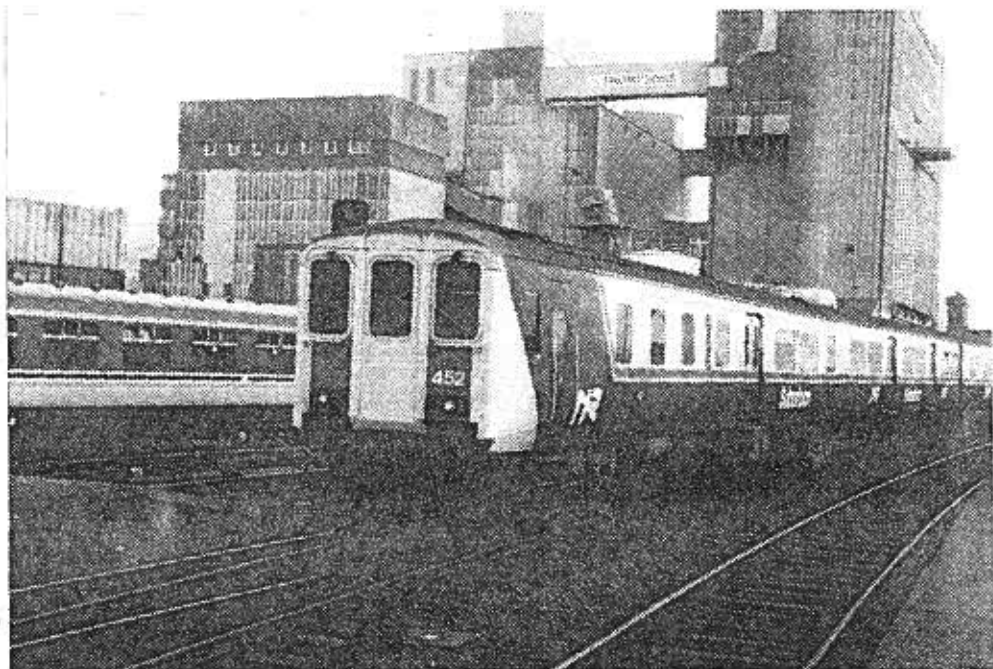
171 "Slieve Gullion" is one of the Great Northern Railway of Ireland's fleet of beautiful blue passenger 4-4-0's. Built by Beyer Peacock in 1913 is about the equal of the LSWR T-9 but a higher boiler pressure gives a tractive effort of 20198 lbs. It is seen at Carrickfergus during the highly improvised trip on 11 May. That's RPSI Operations Manager Michael McMahon wearing the HV vest and heading for a well earned nervous breakdown.

The MDRS party took the opportunity to examine the current Irish railway scene. This included a ride on DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) which runs around the coast from Howth to Bray. The 2 car emus were built by Linke-Hofmann Busch in West Germany and can be described as adequate and functional. Two tone green 8115 waits to leave Bray on 8 May.



Irish Rail's InterCity services are largely worked by 'Super-trains' formed of BR design Mk. III's disguised by orange and black paint. On 9 May EMD built JT22CW 2300hp Co-Co 078 had charge of train A807, the 13.40 Westport-Dublin Heuston arriving at Knockcroghery. Note the fine semaphores.

Looks familiar? No, it's not the ill fated BR210 but a similar BREL built bodysell with an English Electric power unit just like the SR denu's. Northern Ireland Railways call these their "Castle" class, 452 is "Olderfleet Castle" and they wear the cream, red and orange livery of its Suburban sector. It is seen arriving at Belfast York Road from Larne Harbour on 11 May.



Photos: Eddie Lewcock

Now that we were back in Northern Ireland, we could be united at last with 171 "Slieve Gullion" and the vintage set of LMS (NCC) coaches for our tour in the province on Monday. Yet another new schedule provided for a longer trip than originally proposed from Belfast (York Road) to Castlerock (on the North coast) and back, and then out to the RPSI base at Whitehead.

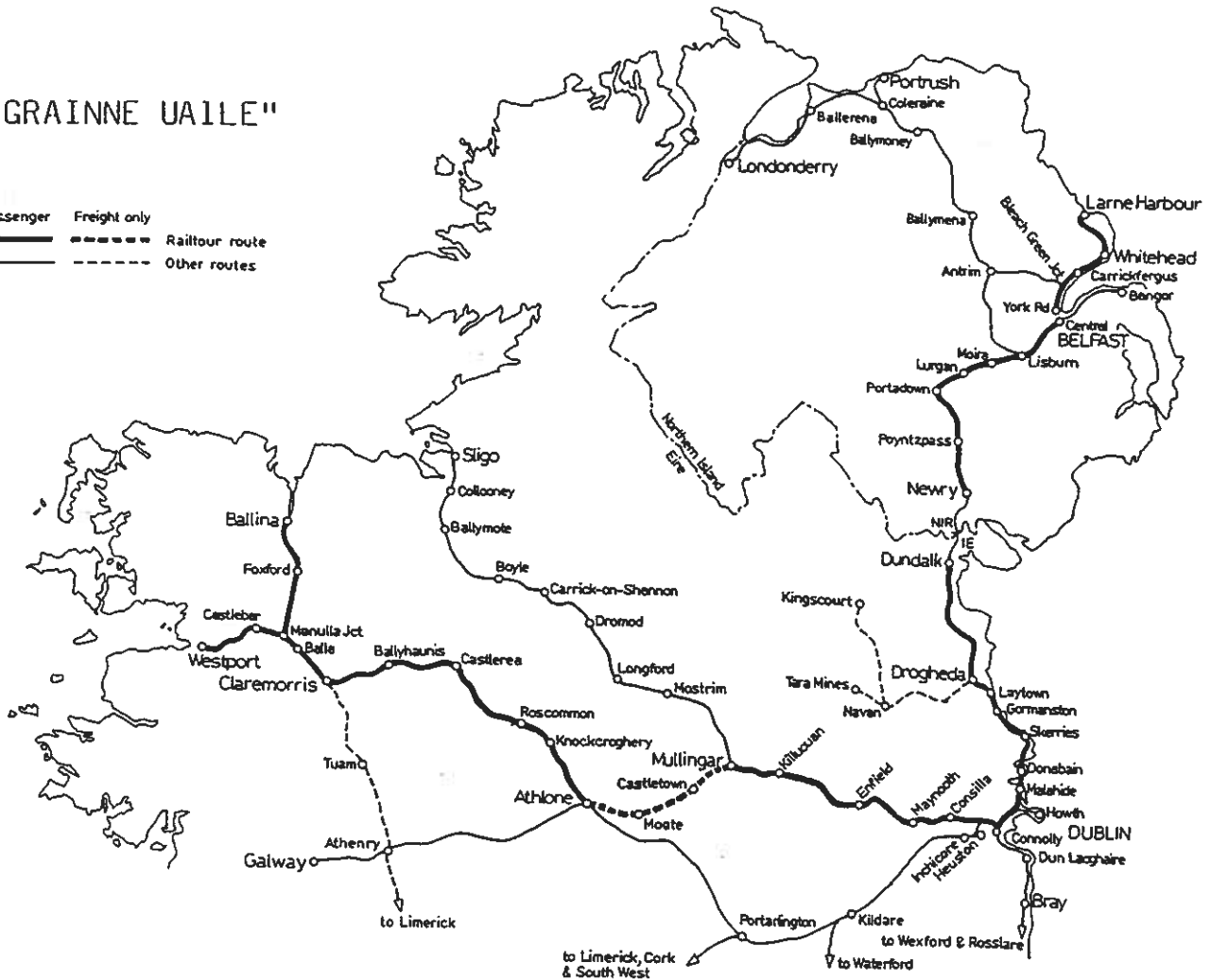
It was not to be. The beautiful blue GNRI loco with steam up and the superb set of coaches were graciously adorning a York Road platform in the morning ready for a 10.00am departure. We admired; we boarded; we waited. At 10.30, without ceremony, we departed. But at Bleach Green Junction, just outside Belfast, we took the Larne Harbour line and stopped at Carrickfergus, the first suburban station. A local newspaper had received a call claiming that a bomb had been placed on the little used link from Bleach Green to Antrim which would affect only the RPSI special. Enemies of the RPSI (or a mole? - it had happened before) were suspected, but, of course, the "all clear" was too late for the tour to take place as planned.

Amazingly - it could never happen on BR - another alternative was hastily improvised and our steam special was allowed to operate up and down between Carrickfergus and Larne Harbour sandwiched between a half hourly local service until early afternoon when it returned to the RPSI HQ at Whitehead. Leaving there, I asked Operations Organiser Michael what he was going to do now. "I am going home", he replied, "and I am going to have a nervous breakdown, and nobody is going to stop me".

Some of us visited the excellent Belfast Transport Museum - soon to be better still - before returning by our various flights to England (except that Eddie and Terry's flight couldn't get its undercarriage up so that they had to go back again and missed their dinner) after a very unusual weekend. All credit is due to the RPSI for the way they coped with crisis after crisis. And thanks Mike for arranging for us to go.

"GRAINNE UAILE"

Passenger Freight only
 ————— - - - - - Railtour route
 ————— - - - - - Other routes



RISBOROUGH VENTURER '91

Terry Dearling

No, it's not a misprint, the 1991 excursion organised by the Risborough & District Model Railway Club to the Mid-Hants took place on the 6th June 1992! The 12 months postponement was caused by the Chiltern Line modernisation during the last year. Confused? It gets worse.

The plan was to take a Class 33/1 push-pull Crompton and two 4-TC sets from Aylesbury via Princes Risborough to Alton (for the Mid-Hants Railway) and back.

The route was designed to make use of the push-pull facility with several reversals and to take in some freight only lines going via Greenford, Acton Wells, Mitre Bridge, North Pole, Latchmere Junction, Feltham to Reading for the first reversal. Then to Guildford by way of Ash for the second reversal back to Aldershot and Alton.

A CROMPTON CALAMITY

I arrived at Princes Risborough station at 07.10 in time for the 07.22 start, preferring to spend another 20 minutes in bed rather than have the Aylesbury - Risborough haulage. (Though this was achieved later unexpectedly). The proposed departure time passed, and dark rumours circulated about a 'failure'. This was soon confirmed by a public address announcement, that the Class 33/1 had failed during the night at Clapham and had been unable to work the empty stock to Aylesbury. Network SouthEast were hoping to get the loco going, and we were advised to catch the next service train which would connect with the excursion by making a special stop at West Ruislip.

The service train turned out to be the 07.48 two-car Turbo to Marylebone. This train was considerably overloaded compared

with a normal Saturday morning - two or three hundred Risborough trippers plus all their Trolleys of food.

During the journey further negotiations with Control took place over the cab radio, because another announcement was made to the effect that the excursion stock was at Waterloo and that we should stay on the Turbo into Marylebone and take the Bakerloo line to Waterloo (the railtour tickets would be valid!)

At Waterloo, 33102 was throbbing at the buffer stops of Platform 6 with 4TC's 417 and 410 leading. The loco looked in appalling external condition with faded blue paint and rust holes in the bodywork. Appearances were deceptive however, since the Crompton was now in fine mechanical fettle. Departure at 09.20 took the train via Wimbledon and the Kingston loop, to Twickenham (a nice surprise), for a reversal. From Twickenham, the train ran to Wokingham via Staines and Ascot for another reversal. (The run into Reading had been cancelled to make up some time). Guildford was the next stop and the train assumed it's original itinerary, with a third reversal.

Alton was reached at about the planned time. The Mid-Hants had suffered their own failure; instead of double heading the

reserved train with two steam locos, Swanage arrived in company with Class 27 diesel No.5353. Standard Class 4 Mogul having broken a tender spring earlier. The loco was repaired during the day and double headed with S15 No.506. Also in steam was the S160 'Franklin D. Roosevelt'.

After spending the afternoon changing trains between Alresford and Alton, including an excellent charge up Medstead Bank behind Swanage, the railtour left Alton at 17.48 with 33102 at the head. The return route was to be direct, without reversals, via Ash Vale, Ascot, Staines, Hounslow and the freight line from Brentford to Acton Central. From Acton Wells Junction, the freight line to Neasden South Junction was followed.

All went according to plan, until the train reached Princes Risborough. Instead of stopping to let the majority of the passengers off, the driver went straight through to Aylesbury. After a delay to allow a service train to come from Risborough, the excursion returned along the branch and stopped at Risborough. So the branch haulage was achieved.

The moral from the organiser is, if you think arranging a railtour totally within the Network SouthEast area should be straightforward, think again!

Network SouthEast DMU FORMATIONS

Mark Hopwood

The following list of NSE's Heritage dmu fleet is based on information from the Network Maintenance Engineer, Kings Cross and is correct to 31 July 1992.

Part 2 in the next issue will detail the class 165's and the non-revenue stock.

Class 121 Pressed Steel HD single cars

| Set | Pool | DMBS |
|------|--------|-------|
| L122 | NWRX-O | 55022 |
| L124 | " | 55024 |
| L125 | " | 55025 |
| L127 | " | 55027 |
| L128 | " | 55028 |
| L129 | " | 55029 |
| L130 | " | 55030 |
| L131 | " | 55031 |

Class 101 Metro-Cammell LD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DTCL |
|------|--------|--------|--------|
| L200 | NWRX-R | 51215 | 54081 |
| L202 | " | 51225 | 54372 |
| L205 | " | 51367* | 54385 |
| L207 | " | 51221 | 54396 |
| L212 | " | 53628+ | 54279+ |
| L213 | " | 51343* | 54223+ |
| L220 | NNEX | 51207 | 54405 |
| L221 | " | 51208 | 54402 |
| L222 | " | 51438 | 54382 |
| L223 | NGEX | 51444 | 54068 |
| L224 | NWRX-R | 51445 | 54362 |
| L225 | NGEX | 51222 | 54220 |

* Class 117 Pressed Steel HD

+ Class 108 Derby LD

Class 108 Derby LD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DTCL |
|------|------|--------|-------|
| L230 | NNDX | 51676* | 54257 |
| L231 | " | 51909 | 54271 |
| L232 | " | 51914 | 54228 |
| L233 | " | 51942 | 54194 |

* Class 115 Derby HD

Class 104/121 Birmingham LD/ Pressed Steel HD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DTS |
|------|--------|-------|--------|
| L263 | NWRX-O | 53540 | 54289 |
| L265 | " | 53539 | 54491* |

* Class 108 Derby LD

Class 117 Pressed Steel HD 3 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | TCL | DMS |
|------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| L400 | NWRX-R | 51332 | 59484 | 51374 |
| L401 | " | 51333 | 59485 | 51375 |
| L402 | " | 51335 | 59487 | 51377 |
| L403 | NWRX-O | 51336 | 59488 | 51378 |
| L405 | NWRX-R | 51340 | 59491 | 51381 |
| L406 | " | 51341 | 59493 | 51383 |
| L407 | NWRX-O | 51342 | 59494 | 51384 |
| L408 | NWRX-R | 53477* | 59115+ | 51385 |
| L409 | NWRX-O | 51344 | 59496 | 51386 |
| L410 | NWRX-R | 51345 | 59497 | 51387 |
| L411 | NWRX-O | 51346 | 59498 | 51388 |
| L412 | " | 51347 | 59499 | 51389 |
| L413 | " | 51349 | 59501 | 51391 |
| L415 | " | 51351 | 59503 | 51393 |
| L417 | NWRX-R | 51354 | 59506 | 51396 |
| L418 | " | 51355 | 59507 | 51397 |
| L419 | NWRX-O | 51356 | 59508 | 51398 |
| L420 | NWRX-R | 51358 | 59510 | 51400 |
| L421 | NWRX-O | 51359 | 59511 | 51401 |
| L423 | NWRX-R | 51361 | 59513 | 51399 |
| L424 | NWRX-O | 51362 | 59514 | 51404 |
| L425 | NWRX-R | 51363 | 59515 | 51405 |
| L428 | " | 51366 | 59518 | 51408 |
| L429 | NWRX-O | 55023+ | 54495° | 51409 |

* Class 108 Derby LD

+ Class 101 Metro-Cammell LD

+ Class 121 Pressed Steel HD single unit

° Class 108 Derby LD DTCL

Class 108/115/108 Derby LD/HD/LD 3 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | TS | DMCL |
|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| L490 | NWRX-R | 53599 | 59734 | 51572 |

Class 119 Gloucester CC 3 car

| Set | Pool | DMBC | TSL | DMSL |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| L575 | NWXX | 51060 | 59419 | 51088 |
| L588 | " | 51079 | 59437 | 51107 |
| L594 | " | 51073 | 59435 | 51104 |
| L595 | " | 51074 | 59430 | 51086 |
| L596 | " | 51076 | 59416 | 51099 |

Class 117 Pressed Steel HD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DMS |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| L701 | NGBX | 51350 | 51392 |

Class 104/117/108 3 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | TCL | DMSL |
|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| L730 | NWRX-R | 53455 | 59495 | 51571 |

Class 115 Derby HD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DMBS |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| L750 | NGBX | 51651 | 51878 |
| L751 | " | 51652 | 51679 |
| L752 | " | 51654 | 51656 |
| L753 | " | 51657 | 51855 |
| L754 | " | 51661 | 51866 |

Class 108 Derby LD 2 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | DMBS |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| L755 | NGBX | 51912 | 51916 |

Class 101 Metro Cammell LD 3 car

| Set | Pool | DMBS | TSL | DMCL |
|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| L830 | NNEX | 51190 | 59111 | 53333 |
| L831 | " | 51211 | 59072 | 53265 |
| L832 | NWRX-O | 51226 | 59570 | 51499 |
| L833 | " | 51425 | 59543 | 51504 |
| L834 | NWXX | 51431 | 59526 | 51501 |
| L835 | " | 51432 | 59530 | 51498 |
| L836 | " | 51434 | 59540 | 51503 |
| L837 | NNEX | 51437 | 59128 | 53751 |
| L838 | NWXX | 53308 | 59125 | 53331 |
| L839 | " | 53310 | 59306 | 53326 |
| L840 | " | 53311 | 59117 | 53322 |
| L841 | " | 53312 | 59091 | 53332 |
| L842 | " | 53314 | 59110 | 53327 |

Spare Vehicles

| Class | Pool | DMBS | DMBS | DMBS |
|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Class 101 DTCL | | 54381 | | |
| " 108 DTCL | | 54224 | 54499 | 54500 |
| " 117 TCL | | 59502 | 59519 | |

Pools

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------------|
| NWRX-O | Thames based at Old Oak Common |
| NWRX-R | Thames based at Reading |
| NWXX | North Downs based at Reading |
| NGBX | North London based at Bletchley |
| NNDX | Three Counties based at Bletchley |
| NGEX | Great Eastern based at Cambridge* |
| NNEX | West Anglia based at Cambridge* |

* to be transferred to NWRX 10/92

TIME MACHINES

Mike Walker

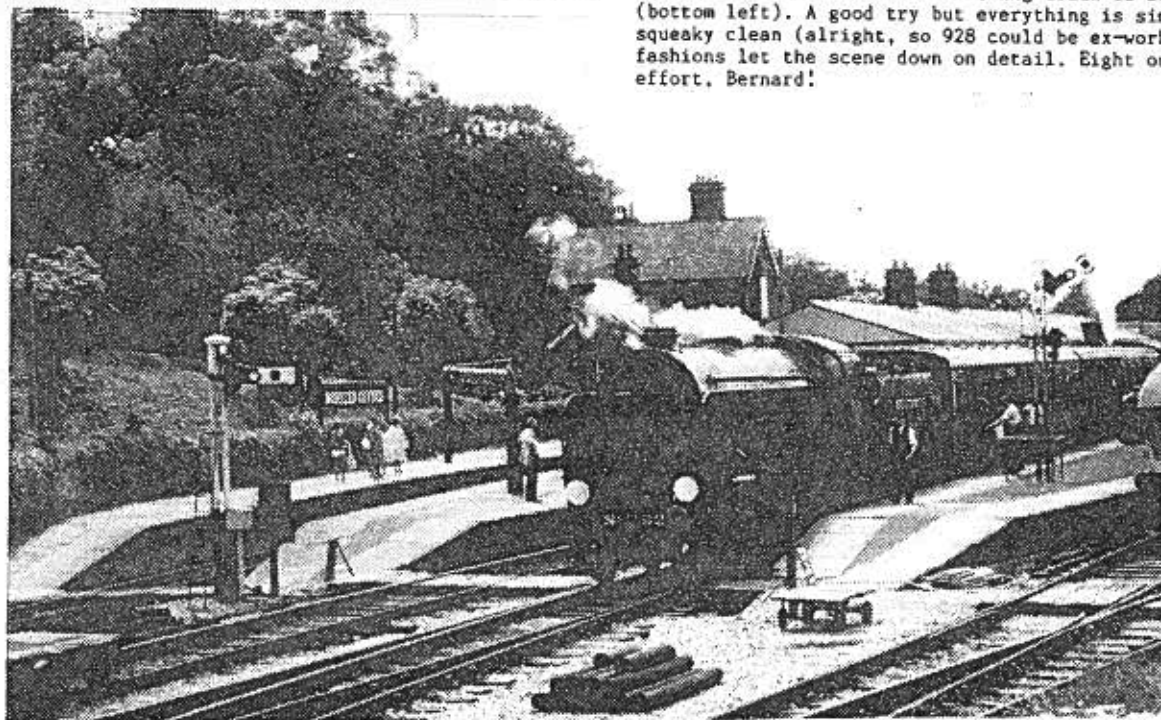


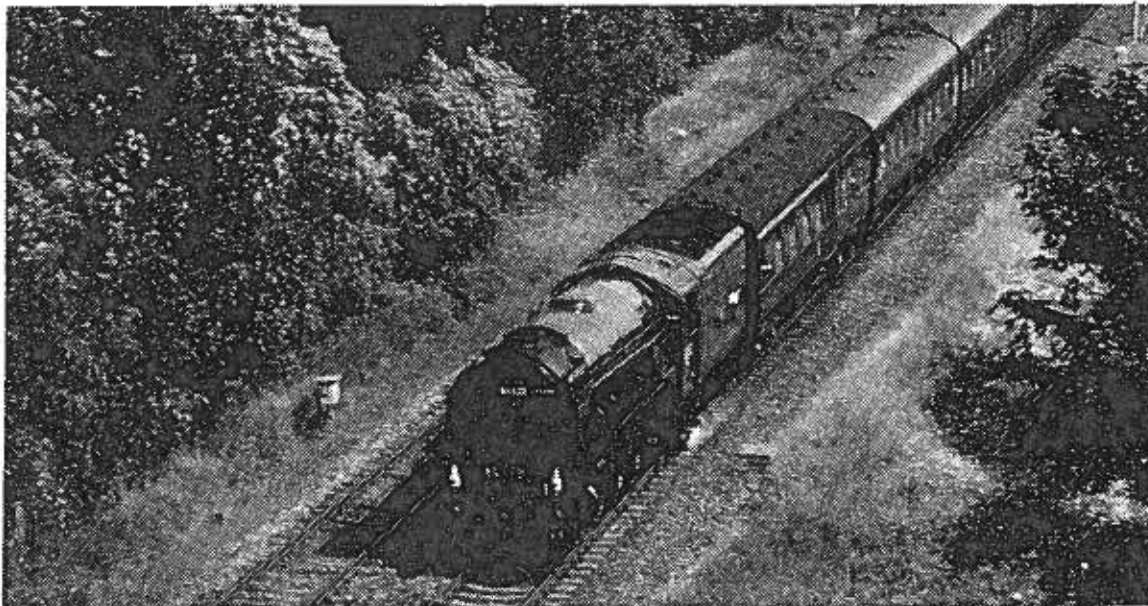
My regular reader who follows Chairman's Notes will know that I am regularly banging on about seeking authenticity in preservation. To me it's a kind of "Holy Grail", partly I suppose because I'm old enough to remember real BR steam but too young to have photographed it. So, in the absence of any of you offering to fill this slot this quarter, I've decided to lay before you some of my more successful examples.

Take exhibit A (top left). On 9th June 1985 7029 "Clun Castle" led the set of Mk.I's painted up for the GW150 celebrations out of Stratford-on-Avon. Add a GW semaphore and a total lack of modern intrusions and you've got a photograph which could have been taken a quarter century earlier. Incidentally, this was the last departure of a long, hot, tiring day and the crews were obviously eager to get home to Tysley, leaving town in full forward gear and the regulator wedged against the roof. A Castle never looked or sounded finer.

Preserved lines can be frustrating. They can often provide matched trains and locos but the backgrounds spoil the effect but occasionally there are exceptions. The NYMR was doing its best on 29th May 1988 (centre left) with 80135 in BR green with a lengthy rake of maroon Mk.I's restarting on the notorious 1 in 40 into Goatland after a sadistic signalman had stopped it unnecessarily. The footplate crew were totally professional, not a hint of a slip and a loud "I know I can" bark resounding off the surrounding countryside.

An uncharacteristic lack of public at Horsted Keynes on 7th July 1985 allowed the Bluebell Railway to have a go at time warping back to the pre-nationalisation era as Schools class 928 "Stowe" arrives with a matching train of Southern stock (bottom left). A good try but everything is simply too squeaky clean (alright, so 928 could be ex-works) and the fashions let the scene down on detail. Eight out of ten for effort, Bernard!





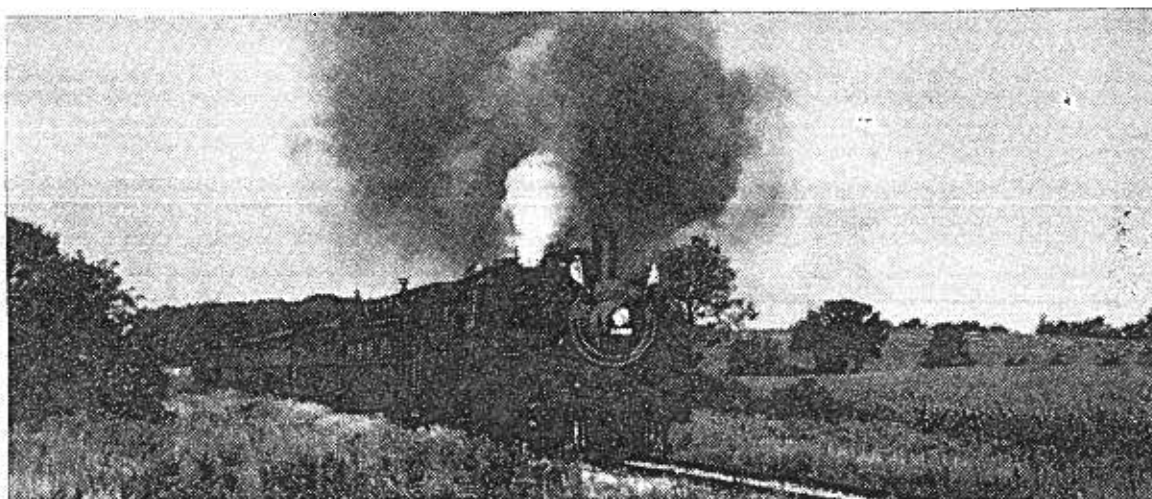
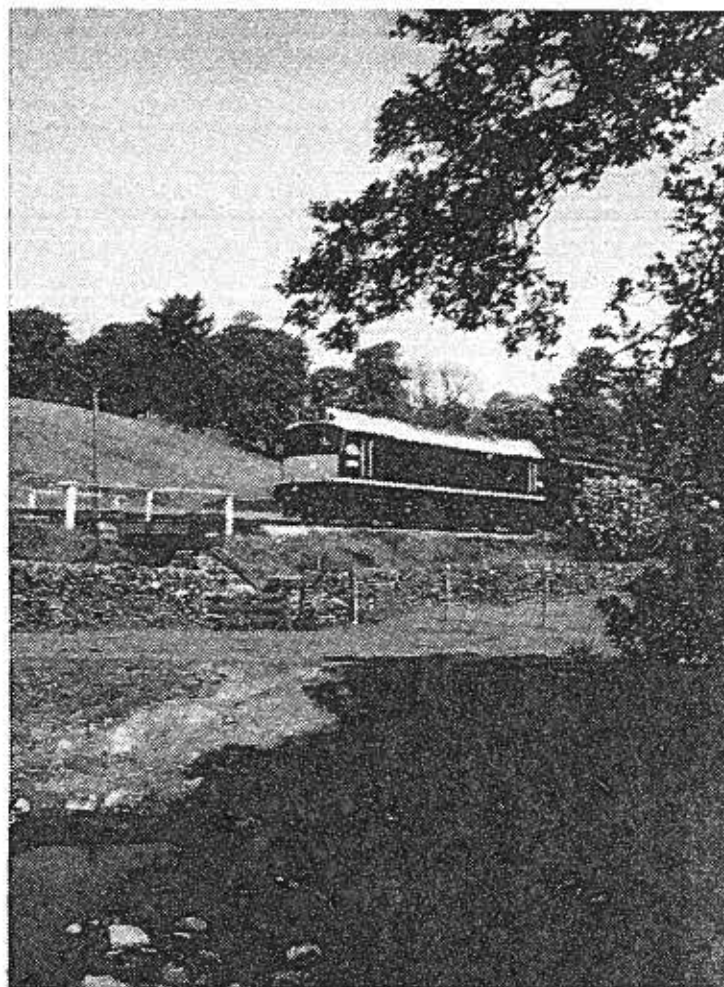
Whether it was our President personally or a minion in FSS who had the idea of painting the entire Mk.I set maroon, I can't say but it was inspired, especially when Bounds Green "accidentally" repainted InterCity's kitchen car to match. As a result we get new opportunities when BR liveried locos are employed - providing you select a position with care. On 13th June 1992 the much-hyped 60532 "Blue Peter" was in charge for a northbound trip over the Settle & Carlisle. It is seen (Top right) approaching Culgaith Tunnel, one of the less well known S&C locations but for these purposes "neutral". The much criticised window bars do prevent hundreds of unauthentic heads sticking out (I'm sorry, that's selfish!). Now what I'm waiting for is "Bahamas" to take this rake over the "Long Drag" - that WILL be a time machine.

Diesels must not be overlooked in the quest. In fact they can provide more authentic sixties images than steam, after all diesels were usually clean in those days! A diesel branch line scene is nicely recreated (Centre right) on the K&WVR as class 25 D5209 crosses a frail wooden bridge alongside Bridgehouse Beck near Oxenhope on 28th May 1990. Remember, not all dieselised branches relied on dmu's in the swinging sixties. This shot could take me onto my other quest, trains on bridges, but that's another article.

I started this selection with my favourite railway so why not finish with the close second? Come on did you really think I wouldn't take you Stateside? Actually, if it's difficult to get authenticity in the UK, it is almost impossible across the pond, with diesel helpers, auxiliary water tanks and multi coloured trains. However, here is a fair try (bottom right) as Chicago & North Western 1385, a 1907 ALCo 4-6-0, ambles along the tracks of the regional Wisconsin & Calumet RR near Edgerton WI on 15th September 1990 with a passable recreation of a prewar American local passenger train. Whilst these are former Milwaukee Road tracks, the CNW was never far away in the Badger State.

Well, there you have it as they say. You will observe that all the foregoing are passenger trains simply because I've yet to come across a preservation freight which meets my authenticity criteria. That's why I'm so keen for the Wind-cutter Project to succeed.

Meanwhile, I await offers from you to fill this photo feature!



BOOKSHELF

Alan Costello



PRESERVED BR DIESEL & ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES Howard Johnston
Silver Link Publishing ISBN 0-94797174-2

In 1961 the Middleton Railway bought a 0-6-0 ex LMS diesel shunter - this was the first British Railways diesel to be preserved. Since then the number of diesel and electric locos in museums and private hands have reached to over 230 with more being purchased all the time. The layout of this book is similar to the book about Barry reviewed in the last edition. Each engine is given a separate page with a short history and its subsequent preservation details. The most popular class is the 03 shunter and one of them shown is 03120 at Fawley. The book includes locos bought up to March this year, and the locations at the time of publication, but as the author says there is a tendency for the preservation groups to swap or move the engines around.

JOWETT'S RAILWAY ATLAS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
Patrick Stephens Ltd by Alan Jowett

Yet another atlas, but an unusual one. Completely hand drawn, the author has used the Railway Clearing House's Diagrams produced in the first part of the century as a basis. Each double page consists of a map on one side, and an index opposite, where details of stations, engine sheds, tunnels etc are given. All lines are colour coded as to originating company. Although based on the lines around 80 years ago, later lines are shown, and a difference in the writing of the station name indicates whether it is open or closed.

The maps run from northwest to southeast for easier reading but it is necessary sometimes to turn the pages through 90° when following a line.

The author says he took 6 months to plan the book and another 15 months working between 4 and 9 hours a day, I'm not surprised. With the large amount of detail included, and taking up 300 pages it must have been some undertaking. Rather expensive, around £30 but I enjoy looking at it.

AWAY FOR THE DAY Silver Link Publishers
Arthur & Elizabeth Jordan ISBN 0 947971 63 7

Within a year of opening in 1830, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway ran special trains to view the Sankey viaduct, charging 5 shillings first class, a reduction of 2 shillings on the normal fare. These were the first railway excursions, and the authors give an interesting look at the history of these trains.

11 years later, Thomas Cook organised a day trip from Leicester to Loughborough and so began his famous travel agency. Around that time, trains of up to 80 coaches carrying over 2000 people, including one or more bands.

Trips to chocolate and biscuit factories were popular as well as to the seaside, sporting events, religious meetings and even hangings.

A number of firms organised trips. For example in 1905, 14 trains left Portsmouth carrying employees of the Dockyard to various destinations.

With the withdrawal of large amounts of coaches, due to the increase in dmu and fixed formation trains, the number of ex-

cursions have decreased lately, but with sets of privately owned sets increasing hopefully they will not stop altogether

SUMMER SATURDAYS IN THE WEST David & Charles
David St John Thomas, Simon ISBN 0 946537 04 6
Rocksborough & Peter Gray

The book gives a comparison between two Saturdays in 1957 and 1971, of trains travelling to and from Devon and Cornwall. In the 1950's, Exeter was a trainspotter's paradise and a signalmans nightmare on a summer weekend. 27 July 1957 is thought to have been the most chaotic day ever in the west country, and the book gives an in depth look at what happened. Trains arriving from the north were already running late, and together with a signal box fire at Iver delaying traffic from London, most trains ran at least 2 hours late. One parcels train from Cardiff was thought to be 6 hours late when it reached Plymouth.

This day with all trains steam hauled is compared with a July day in 1971. Although less trains were run, problems were caused by diesel failure. An appendix gives each individual 1957 train's progress, giving engine number, load and time at various points between Taunton and Plymouth. Some black and white pictures are included.

The next two books bring to mind the saying - first the bad news then the good news.

REGISTER OF CLOSED RAILWAYS 1948-1991 Milepost Publications
Geoffrey Hurst ISBN 0 947796 18 5

From 1948, a large number of lines have been closed by British Rail. This book lists all the routes closed up to the end of last year. Each closure date is given by region, type of traffic (i.e passenger, goods or both) and a reference number. It takes over 65 pages of quite small printing to do this with over 3400 entries. The rest of the book comprises some further notes and an index.

About 40 black and white photos are included.

A-Z OF RAILWAY REOPENINGS Produced & Published by
the Railway Development Society
ISBN 0 901283 07

The good news is that since 1948 British Rail have opened over 250 stations, especially during the last few years, quite often in conjunction with local authorities.

The book starts off with an alphabetical list of stations that have been opened, together with an opening date and the line on which it can be found. The next chapter lists the opening dates in chronological order and then by county. Reopened freight and passenger lines are followed by 102 projected new passenger lines which may open in the next few years e.g. Cross-Rail.

Finally a list of over 600 stations that have been proposed for reopening in the future. 16 black and white photos are included.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

The autumn of 1967 saw the delivery of the first of what later became known as the class '50' locos.

Numbered D400 and finished in "rail blue" livery the first of a fleet of 50 type 4 2,700 hp locos of a new design was handed over by English Electric Co. Ltd to British Railways London Midland Region. The class was based on the English Electric owned 2,700 hp prototype No.DP2. The locomotive was constructed at the English Electric Vulcan Works, Newton-le-Willows, with electrical equipment manufactured at the English Electric Preston Works, headquarters of the Company's traction division.

On 4th August 1967 the Minister of Transport announced Government approval for the southbound extension of the Victoria Line from Victoria to Brixton.

The National Research Development Corporation was setting up a subsidiary, Tracked Hovercraft, which hoped to get a government grant to enable it to carry out full size hover train tests. Permission had been granted for the construction of an 18 mile long concrete track, raised 4 ft from the ground, from Earith, Huntingdonshire to Denver Sluice, Norfolk. Anyone any idea what happened to this one?

Work on a new signal box started at Marylebone. The box was to have 60 levers and deal with 160 trains daily.

The last morse transmitter on the London Midland Region was withdrawn from the telegraph office at Preston. There were once 280 such machines on the Region some dating back to the 1880's. They were replaced by the "STRAD" (signal, transmit, receive and distribute) teleprinter system.

Mrs Barbara Castle, Minister of Transport, decided not to grant the application of the Rother Valley Railway Company Ltd for a Light Railway Order authorising it to take over and re-open the former Kent & East Sussex Railway between Robertsbridge Sussex and Tenterden Kent. Mrs Castle said the effects on road traffic of re-opening seven level crossings on the route would be unacceptable.

Danish State Railways took delivery of ten 3,300 hp locos built by the Swedish Company Nydquist and Holm powered by General Motors engines of the EMD645 type, a co-operative deal between the two companies.

A fair mixture for autumn 1967.

