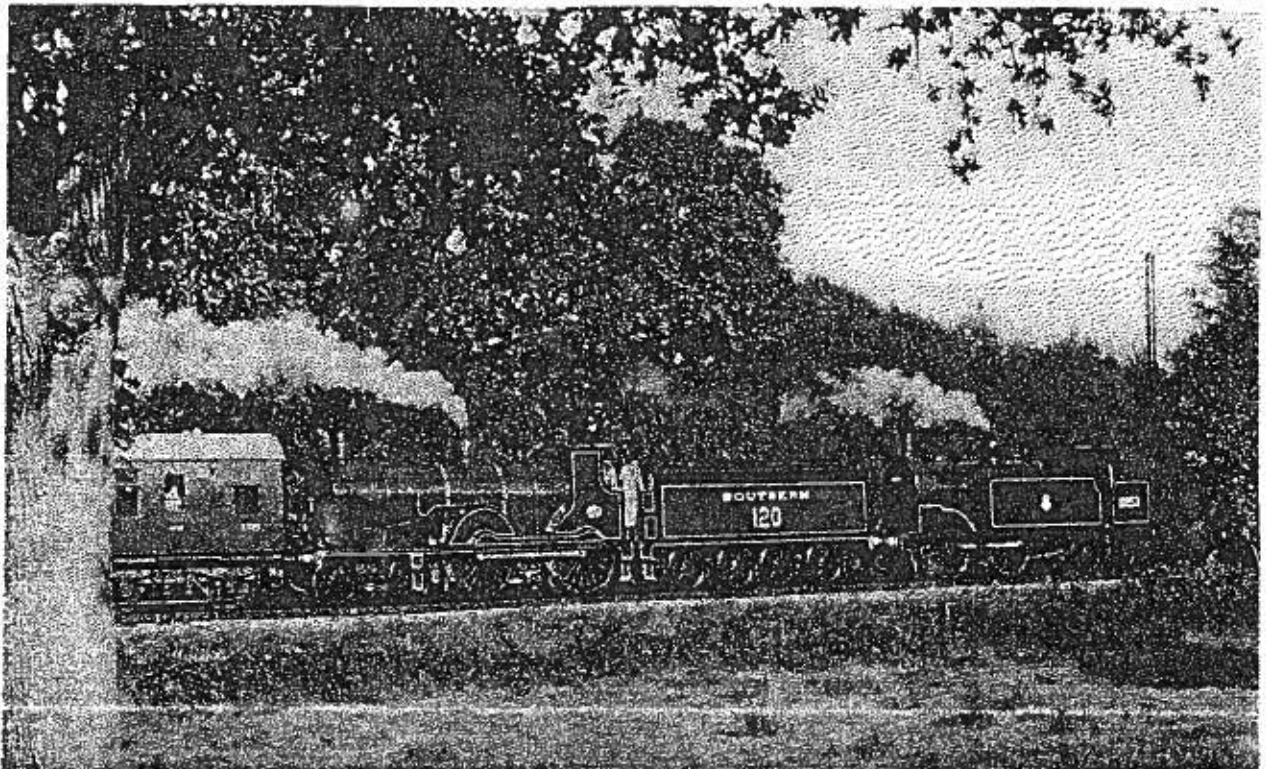


THE

DECEMBER 1993

68

MARLOW DONKEY



A Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
To All Our Members

IN THIS ISSUE... **MANX TALES**

STEAM OVER SUGARLOAF

NEW JERSEY - BY PRIVATE TRAIN

NOVICE AT EBBW JUNCTION SHED

MOTORMAN TRAINING - MER STYLE



THE MARLOW DONKEY

Quarterly magazine of the
MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

No.68 DECEMBER 1993

IN THIS ISSUE...

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES	Page	2
TIMETABLE/SOCIETY NEWS	3	
RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT Notes & News	4	
MAILBAG Members Letters	4	
CHRISTMAS QUIZZES Alan Wheeler & Mike Walker	5	
MOTORMAN TRAINING - MER STYLE Julian Heard	6	
STEAM OVER SUGARLOAF Gordon Rippington	7	
MANX TALES Eddie Lewcock	8	
NOVICE AT EBBW JUNCTION Stan Verrinder	10	
NEW JERSEY BY PRIVATE TRAIN Mike Walker	12	
BOOKSHELF Alan Costello	14	
25 YEARS AGO Roger Bowen	14	
10 YEARS AGO Roger Bowen	14	

PRESIDENT: Sir William McAlpine B1 VICE-PRESIDENT Bos Woodward

CHAIRMAN: Mike Walker Tel: 0628 483899
"Solgorth", Little Marlow, Marlow, Bucks., SL7 3RS

VICE-CHAIRMAN & SECRETARY: Eddie Lewcock Tel: 0494 525638
27 Rupert Avenue, High Wycombe, Bucks., HP12 3NG

TREASURER: Peter Robins Tel: 0628 527870
95 Brogsm Hill, Cookham, Berks., SL6 9LJ

PUBLICITY: Tim Speechley Tel: 0494 437428
11 Rydal Way, High Wycombe, Bucks., HP10 BAX

SOC. SEC.: Tony Colon Tel: 0628 473723
57 Hillside Road, Marlow Bucks., SL7 3LA

COMMITTEE: Mark Hopwood Tel: 0628 483487

Roger Wallis Tel: 0628 485463

Rob Young Tel: 0628 474649

EDITOR Mike Walker

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

During my autumn visit to the USA I gave a couple of talks to Chapters (Branches) of the NRHS on the subject of BR Today which of course included the topic of preservation and main line steam. Presenting such programmes and seeing the incredulous reaction to them serves only to remind us just how lucky we are here in Britain, thanks to the vision, determination and sheer hard work of those involved in the preservation movement. Americans find it hard to comprehend the sheer size and scope of the preservation movement here, the concept of rebuilding locomotives from Barry condition, replacing lost cylinders, coupling rods and motion, or wheels and even the proposal to build an A1 from scratch are totally beyond their comprehension. The total number of active steam locomotives in North America today is probably less than 50.

Yes, we were lucky. We did have that well known "used loco dealer" but there is no shortage of locomotives waiting to have life breathed back into them in North America. Every town and city out there it seems, particularly in the western states, has a locomotive "stuffed and mounted" in a park as a tribute to the iron horse which, in many cases, helped to found the community. Today, many of these are an embarrassment to local councils who would willingly give them to any group of enthusiasts who are prepared to take them away, whilst many have been vandalised and stripped of some high value non ferrous components, all are in far better condition than the average Barry hulk, yet Americans see them as beyond saving.

As here the American steam scene divides into main line and what we call preserved lines (tourist lines over there). In the former category activity is dominated by two companies, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific, who maintain and operate their own locos. Otherwise activity is restricted to just ten locomotives which operate excursions as and when the railroads (and insurers) permit. The tourist lines generally have only one locomotive in steamable condition at any given time, the notable exception being the Colorado narrow gauge lines but even they (with full time staff) cannot match the typical weekend turnout by the average British preserved line.

The moral here is that we should be grateful for what we've got. Too much time is spent arguing about details, for example the current debate about what colour "Flying Scotsman" should be painted. I am amazed that enthusiasts, most of whom seldom rise from their armchairs, can get so inflamed over such a trivial matter, after all both the apple green LNER 4472 and brunswick green BR 60103 identities are authentic for the locomotive. That said I must declare my preference for the latter and hope our President listens to the growing band of like minded souls when next the loco is shopped.

At least a little common sense has prevailed over allowing BR to bid for franchises under the new scheme of things beginning next April. Unfortunately the Government is once more piling up unfair obstacles on BR's tracks to prevent it from actually winning any franchises. The Government sees BR as inefficient and money wasting. Well compare the record of BR

with the lowest public subsidy in Europe, the best labour productivity in the world and a profitable InterCity network with things overseas. Compare a local commuter train in America with a 4-5 man crew and fuel thirsty equipment doing maybe 100 miles per day with our Turbos, run by one man (or woman!) and running as much as 800 miles a day. What more do these crazy people want? With a fraction of the funding lavished on the roads BR could be the real world leader but, instead, the Government proposes to spend £58m to rebuild junction 4 of the M40, almost as much as the cost of the Chiltern modernisation, whilst the current widening of the M6 in Lancashire is costing more than BR wanted to modernise the WCML infrastructure and buy a new fleet of trains!

Once again we find ourselves at the end of another successful year and I wish to thank all those who have contributed to the content and preparation of the Donkey, in particular those first time contributors. Unfortunately we seem to have lost, for now, the ability to produce photographs in this journal although there are ideas on that subject (see separate item). Meanwhile a very special word of thanks must go to Dave and Sue Little who have served us so well over the past few years. I must also thank my fellow committee members who have worked so hard to ensure the efficient working of the Society and an entertaining programme.

Next year's programme is already fully booked and is listed in Timetable. I trust this will be sufficient reason for you all to stay aboard in '94. As many of you will recall at the AGM last January I stated I wished to retire after my current term of office which ends in January '95. This remains the case so we would welcome new faces on the committee next year. Think about it.

Finally I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

Mike

COVER

Dave Little was assured of winning the black & white class of the 1933 Photographic Competition - he was the only entrant. Drummond duo M7 30053 and T9 120 create a wonderful sight as they head towards Swanage in October 1992. Now is the time to sort out your entires for next year.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Overheard whilst standing on a pile of rubble linesiding at Ronaldsway, Isle of Man.

"So the boss called me into his office and said - Bill, it seems that your work is interfering with your train spotting; can I suggest you think seriously about early retirement".

WANTED, A NEW EDITOR! MIKE IS RETIRING

After nine years editing and producing the Marlow Donkey it is time to hand on to somebody else. Unfortunately other demands on my time have increased dramatically in the last few months and I can no longer spare the time required. In an unrelated move, Dave and Sue Little are no longer able to produce the PMT's we need to reproduce the photographs.

Therefore I urgently seek YOUR help!

I'm pleased to say that one of our newer members, John Tuck, has volunteered to scan photographs and computer generate an image we can reproduce. In fact, most of the illustrations in this issue have been computer generated, although not by John. The technique looks promising but needs fine tuning. Meanwhile I'm very grateful to John for his offer of help.

Turning now to the post of Editor. Perhaps I should outline what the job involves as it's not just a matter of gathering and editing material, more often it's a case of filling holes. The raw material first has to be typed (I have been grateful to my mother for doing this for the whole of my nine year's editorship). A word processor would be an advantage here, if any member has use of one, but this is not a necessity. A typewriter and volunteer typist serves just as well, as proved by the present Donkey. The finished copy is then reduced to the column width and type size you see here.

Then comes the interesting and creative bit, cutting out the text and pictures and pasting up to produce the pages ready

for photocopying. This does take quite a bit of thought before diving in with scalpel and glue and can, at times, be a challenge but it's satisfying when done.

The duplication (we produce sixty copies) is handled by Peter Robins and Network SouthEast at Slough for the cost of materials. Peter has indicated this will continue, for which we are grateful. For my part, I will continue to submit material and do maps, headings etc if required. I will also work closely with my successor at least for the first couple of issues, while you find your feet, and will always be on hand for ideas and advice.

The Marlow Donkey is an ambassador for the Society, many members who have moved away continue their association with us simply to receive the magazine. We owe it to them to continue and better the Donkey. In both Stan's time and mine we've never missed an issue or even had one published late, I hope this record will continue.

John Tuck has been good enough to help in one important area now won't one of you please take on the rest. Among our fifty something members there must be at least one of you who has the talent to pick up the torch.

How about YOU?

I had no previous experience before taking on this job.

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 20 Jan ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
See Society News for details
- Thurs 17 Feb ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION
See Society News for details
- Thurs 17 Mar REPLICA LOCOMOTIVES Tony Hall Patch
Over the years many replica locomotives have been constructed for various reasons. Tony Hall Patch reviews these fascinating and controversial machines.
- Thurs 21 Apr LONDON'S UNDERGROUND P.R. Davis
We all use it and take it for granted. The London Underground is a historic and diverse system worthy of study.
- Thurs 19 May GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
A look at the reborn and expanding Great Central, venue for this year's summer trip.
- Thurs 16 Jun SETTLE & CARLISLE John Birkbeck
An in depth look at this famous and scenic



piece of railway reminds us that it's more than a steam route.

- Thurs 21 Jul TO BE CONFIRMED
- Thurs 15 Sep MORE FOOTPLATE TALES Wally Richards
- Thurs 20 Oct INTERCITY GREAT WESTERN IN THE 90's
John Cronin - Fleet Engineer ICGW.
- Thurs 17 Nov ASPECTS OF SIGNALLING Mike Hanscombe
- Thurs 15 Dec CHRISTMAS BUFFET & SOCIAL

VISITS

- Sun 10 Jul GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
Our summer coach trip takes us to the Great Central which has made great strides in its efforts to replicate a main line. Full details in the next issue.

AWAYDAY TO PARIS

Date to be announced (for obvious reasons!) We intend to have a day out by train all the way from Marlow to Paris and back - probably with 4-5 hours in the French capital. Full details as soon as possible.

SOCIETY NEWS

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Jim Jarvis took us on a superb journey at the September meeting, taking us from Douglas IoM to Durango Colorado by way of Ireland and Pennsylvania. The common theme was 3' gauge with wonderful images of four decades ago captured on Kodachrome. Truly one of the high spots of the year.

October saw the return of veteran engineman Dick Hardy who recalled the earliest days of his career.

Unfortunately Ron White was struck down by flu and was unable to entertain us in November so Mike Walker stepped in with a talk on North America which "he'd prepared earlier". We will reschedule Ron at the earliest possible opportunity.

DAVID GARDNER

Member David Gardner now lives in Chippenham where he is employed looking after the gardens at the local hospital, obviously very well for he was awarded first prize in this year's Chippenham in Bloom competition. When not at work David has been busy building model wagons as part of a charity sponsorship scheme. Whilst he didn't quite achieve his target of 50, he has never the less raised over £1,200, a formidable achievement. Well done, David.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

These fall due on the 1st January 1994 and remain unchanged that is £10.00 for the FULL (all-in) membership and £5.00 (plus £1.00 for each attendance) for the REGULAR membership.

We invite you to send your renewals to Peter Robins, Treasurer, 95, Broom Hill, Cookham, Berks SL6 9LJ. Cheques should be payable to the MDRS.

Thank you for your continuing support.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 18th Annual General Meeting will be held at the British Legion, Station Approach, Marlow on Thursday 20th January starting at 8.00 pm. The agenda is as follows:-

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the last AGM (see March '93 Donkey).
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Election of 1994 Committee.
7. Any Other Business.

COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

In accordance with the rules, Tony Caton, Roger Wallis and Rob Young are standing down at the AGM and offer themselves for re-election. Nominations are invited from any other members who wish to serve on the committee and should be submitted to Eddie Lewcock before the meeting.

NORMAN ASTON-SMITH TROPHY

During the AGM in January voting will take place for this much sought after miniature signal arm which goes to the author of the year's best article in the Marlow Donkey. Once again there has been a very high standard this year so it would be a good idea to review back issues and make your choice before January.

ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

As usual this will be held in February and ALL members are invited to enter. This year the subject for the fifth class is "Diesel and Electric Traction" which will throw a spot-

light on these machines which produce less dramatic pictures than steam. When did "modern traction" last feature in the winners? As always judging is by vote of your fellow members not technical merit, so please do enter - you may win a prize!

The classes this year:

- A - Colour Slides : UK STEAM
- B - Colour Slides : Overseas Steam
- C - Colour Slides : Diesel & Electric Worldwide
- D - Colour Prints : All subjects (max 10" x 8")
- E - B & W Prints : All subjects

As always a few simple rules:-

1. All entries must be the member's own original work.
2. A maximum of 5 entries per member per class.
3. Previous class winners prohibited.
4. Slides should be marked by the entrant for easy identification - prints must be unmarked.
5. There is no time limit, shots can have been taken at any time.

Good luck.

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

NOTES AND NEWS

LAST HERITAGE DONKEY

The last Heritage dmu to work the Marlow Donkey was class 117 set L401 on 30th September 1993. Our own Mark Hopwood, who was then working in control at Reading, arranged for the unit to replace the scheduled Turbo. As L401 spent the whole day on the branch the very last Heritage working was the 00.10 Marlow to Maidenhead, which was actually on 1st October. Since then the branch has been the exclusive domain of Turbos

Class 117's, or Pressed Steel High Density Units as they were then known, have been on the branch continually since the end of steam on 7 July 1962. They've been faithful workhorses, if unloved by most, but it will seem odd without their rattles and rasping exhausts.

A "Heritage Farewell" railtour was run on 27th November from Quainton Road to Bristol using 117 units. The route was via Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Greenford, Hanwell and Reading, then down the GW main line.

DONKEY DISRUPTION

During salvage operations at Bourne End on 5 November a road-rail vehicle caused damage to the ground frame and junction point. As a result the points leading into the former up platform were clipped and all services operated out of there with a connecting bus to and from Marlow. It took some time to repair the damage which included replacing a rail stamped 1923. Normal operations through to Marlow resumed on the evening of 8 November.

MARK HOPWOOD MOVES TO SLOUGH

Mark is now a Duty Manager at Slough working under Station Manager Peter Robins, that makes three members working for BR at Slough. Let's hope Peter lets Mark have Society meeting nights off!

MAILBAG

Member's Letters

Dear Editor,

How depressing I find the Tory insistence on the privatisation of railways in the face of all the evidence, and informed comment. If only some of the Tory MPs had stuck to their guns, and followed the example of the House of Lords. At least there is the promise that when Labour returns to power, that they will nationalise, the first privatisation where they have said they will unravel the Tory wrongdoings.

I tried to follow your "Privatisation Round Up" in the September issue of the "Marlow Donkey", but found it extremely difficult, not your fault, but the proposals, they are so labyrinthine. Where is it all going to end?

"Radio Sussex" last month followed the fortunes of the first day of local privatisation, that of the Gatwick Express. It was a real muck-up. On the two occasions I have been up to Victoria since then I have done my little bit to throw a spanner in the works. I have spared a few minutes and told

anyone queueing for Gatwick Express tickets that they ought to try British Rail, which is much cheaper, and only 3 minutes slower. I may have had some stares but I have had my successes.

I dislike the way potential BR customers are deterred at Gatwick. When my train arrives on the up platform they announce that it is for setting down only. There is not much I can do about that unless I change my habits, and not get in the front coach, but travel in one of the middle ones, where potential passengers are waiting on the platform. Needless to say there is no similar announcement on the return journey.

Who wrote the words to accompany the pictures in the article "100 Years of the Marlow Donkey"? A day I shall never forget and it happened just after I had been transferred to the Maidenhead Office.

Stan Verrinder



TAPLOW TURBO FIRE

The rear car of 165.114 caught fire as the 17.42 Reading - Paddington was arriving at Taplow on 16 November. The driver spotted the fire and used the pa to evacuate the train before any injuries could be caused. Two fire engines attended the incident which disrupted services for 1½ hours. The cause is understood to have been a burst pipe which carries hydraulic transmission oil. This dripped onto the engine exhaust system. Damage to the unit was only slight.

166's TO GATWICK

With all the 165 and 166 Turbos now delivered Thames & Chiltern is starting to fine tune its operations. Starting in May it is proposed to allocate 166 units to the Reading - Gatwick service, their use on the Kennet Valley line being replaced by 165's. We can expect some diagramming changes and perhaps timetable changes in May to make the best use of the relatively small fleet which are currently being worked extremely intensively.

HERITAGE RETURNS TO GREENFORD

Starting from 21 November until February, Heritage units have returned to working the peak hour extra diagrams Monday to Friday on the Greenford branch. This is to release two Turbo units for the Reading-Guildford service. The off peak service will remain Turbo operated, the sets involved switch to a Paddington-Slough shuttle in the peaks.

This change is necessary because currently Thames has a number of Turbos out of service with accidental damage and the transfer of 165.001-007 from Chiltern was delayed.



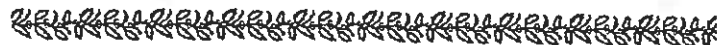
Christmas Quizzes

Compiled by Alan Wheeler & Mike Walker

20 questions for you to ponder over, some hard and some easy!

1. What radius in YARDS is a Chain curve?
2. What year did the Gt Marlow Railway a) Open, b) become absorbed in the GWR?
3. What railway - BWAH?
4. Why were the GW 0-4-2 tank locos in the class 48xx re-numbered 14xx.
5. Where was the longest platform in the UK?
6. What railway group CLC.
7. What is a Commonwealth Bogie?
8. Where is the road bridge directly above a canal bridge, which in turn is directly above a branch line (still in use) ie 3 bridges - a unique crossing (within 25 miles of Marlow).
9. What railway GNS?
10. From what point on the LT system are track mileage for the entire LT routes taken from? ie 'O' and why could there be problems over these mileages in the near future?
11. What was the boiler pressure of the LNER 4-6-4 experimental loco No.10,000?
12. What were the drive motors on the "Westerns"?
13. We all know the last steam locos on BR operated on the Vale of Reidol Railway, but when was it opened and when was it absorbed in the Cambrian Railway?
14. Which was the last LT line to be initially laid to 7'0" gauge and when?
15. OAT stands for? (local)
16. Could, however unlikely, O.V. Bullied have met Daniel Gooch?
17. No.17 was built in 1936 and initially allocated to the shed in the town where both it and I saw the light of day. Along with 17 others built there and a further 18 at Swindon they saw service to the end of steam, and 3 are preserved today - what are they and where were they built?
18. What railway S&H?
19. Why was Bourne End - then Marlow Road - a first and a significant pointer in rail safety in 1864 (January 18)?
20. What railway MSL?

Answers have been placed with the Editor, some with evidence of proof!



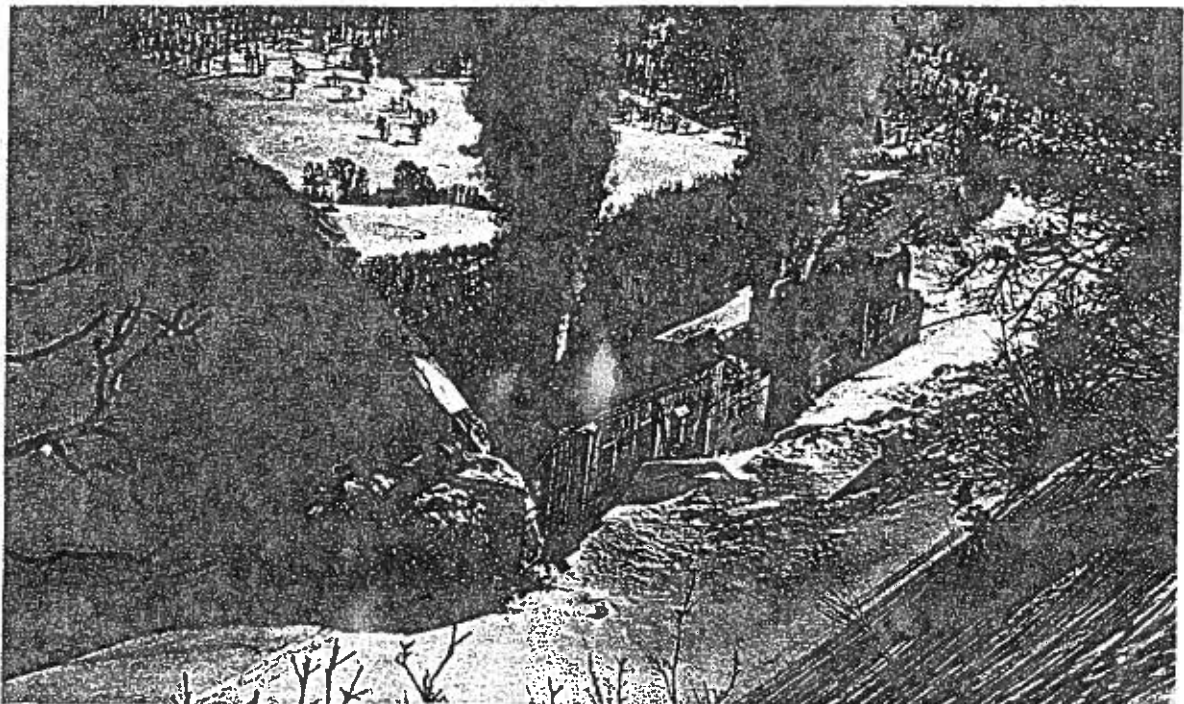
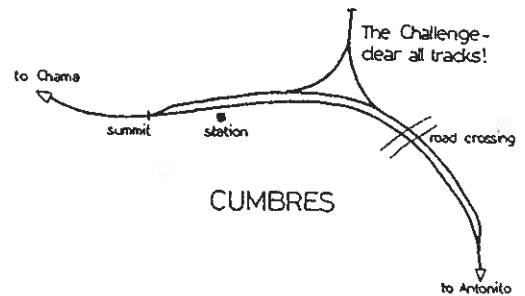
Earlier this year the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad in Colorado had to employ its rotary snowplough to clear deep drifts from its tracks, which include a turning triangle or wye.

This raises an interesting question, just how do you clear a wye with one single ended snowplough? This little brain teaser is offered as a diversion from turkey, pud and booze this Christmas and a pint is on offer to the first correct, or failing that best, solution received by the Chairman by the AGM.

Remember, all three sides of the triangle must be cleared and the plough only has a coupling at its blind end. You may employ up to three locomotives if you think it will help!

To set the scene, the wye in question is 10,000 feet above sea level and is approached by a 14 mile 1 in 25 climb from the west and a 50 mile 1 in 75 climb from the east.

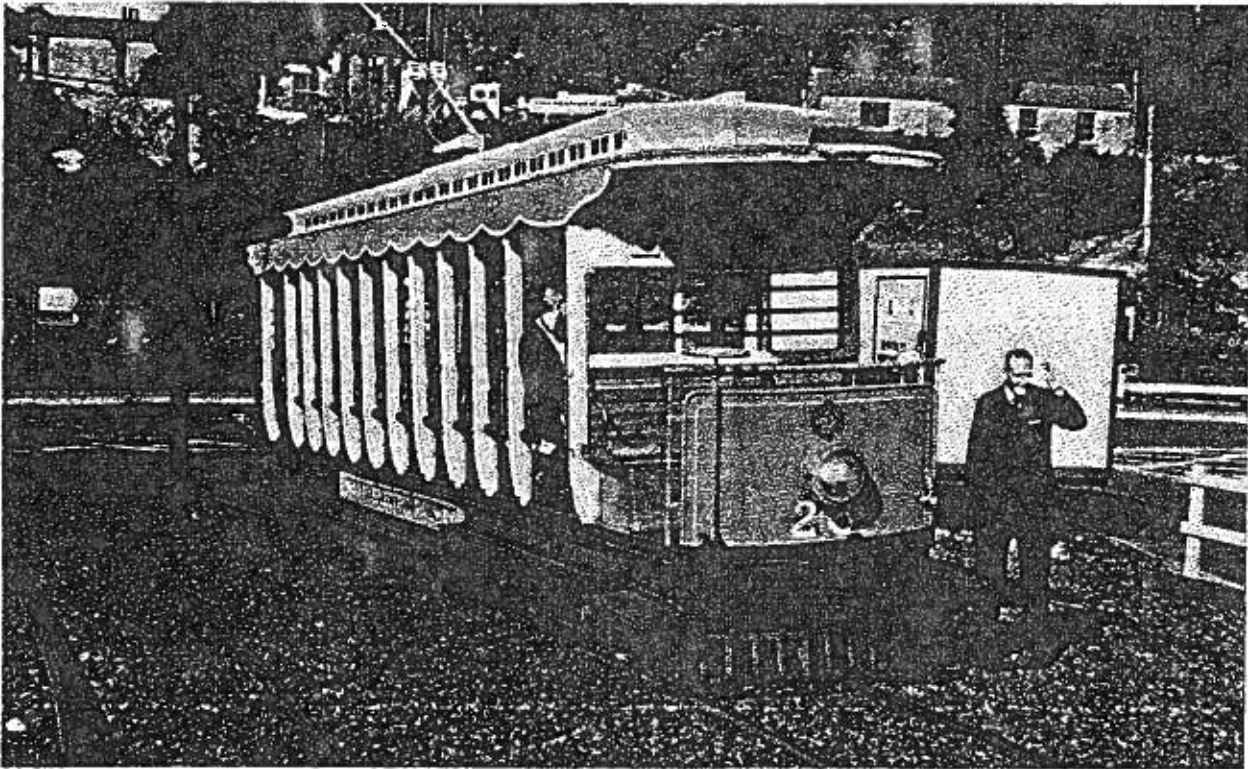
Give it a go - correct answer next time!



The rotary snowplough fights its way to Cumbres - but how will it tackle the wye?

MOTORMAN TRAINING - MER STYLE

By Julian Heard



Instructor Mike Goodwin awaits his trainees with MER car 26 standing in the special "steam siding" at Laxey.

Photo Julian Heard

1993 - The Isle of Man Year of the Railways primarily celebrates 100 years of the 3ft gauge Manx Electric Railway, linking the Island's Capital Douglas in the south with Ramsey in the north. The route is some 17½ miles in length traversing some of the most spectacular scenery to be found anywhere in the British Isles.

Although unable to attend any of the main events (or the TT) due to one of life's little problems called "children", I still decided to take the family over to the Isle of Man for a fortnight's holiday! By good fortune I had noticed the advertisement offering Motorman courses on the MER throughout July and August. Wasting no time, a cheque was despatched resulting in a course being offered for the morning of 26th July.

The day duly dawned with bright sunshine but a chilly wind. I arrived at Laxey Station for 9 am to meet the other three eager participants of the morning's course. Wesley Watson a Medical Laboratory Scientific Officer from Belfast, who was also researching information about the now closed Manx Northern Railway. Paul Warriner, a Chartered Accountant from York and Geoff McMullen, a Local Authority Engineer from Bolton. Like any group with a similar interest, conversation was no problem as we anxiously awaited the arrival of our vehicle for the session.

About 0910 Car Number 26, an open Toast-Rack Tram, built in 1898, rolled into Laxey from the sheds in the capable hands of our instructor Mike Goodwin. Mike is one of those guys who quickly puts you at ease and he instantly welcomed us aboard. Mike is not a native of the Island, but moved there 26 years ago from Lancashire, as an engineering draughtsman. He told me that although he had only been working on the MER for five years, he has been President of the MER Society for the last nineteen years. With the preliminaries over, Mike deftly moved the Car forward over two road crossings to take us round 180° so that we were out of the station boundaries on the road to Ramsey. The car was brought to halt and the instruction began with a run-down of the controls, with the trolley wheel disengaged. First there is the selector for forward and reverse which is interlocked with the main controller, a handle with nine notched positions. The cars are always started with the four motors paired off in series. Notches ONE to FOUR feeds in the power via resistances; notch FIVE is full series. i.e. no resistances.

Moving round to notch SIX the power is now fed to each motor in parallel, again using the resistances, until full power at notch nine. This is called a K type controller. To make optimum use of the electricity, full series or full parallel are the settings used as often impossible once underway. The most important feature of the controller is that it must never be

notched down, but should be brought smartly back to the desired setting if applicable. In the words of Mike "A nasty orange glow appears at the bottom of the control panel accompanied by a smoke screen above it". Not to be recommended if you want to pass the course! At least I now know how to make it go.

The only other lever is the valve, for the Westing House air brakes, moved to the right to feed air into the system, centre for running and left to dump the air. Now the hard bit; the brake is not progressive requiring deft "nibbles" to feed the correct amount of air in to slow the tram and then bleeding some off to ensure a smooth stop before applying full air to hold the car stationary. Believe me this requires a lot of practice to perfect and Mike stated that poor brake technique was the failing of many a potential Motorman, (three out of ten on average). The maximum speed for the trams is normally 18 mph.

Lesson one over, Paul took the controls for the first leg of the journey to Ramsey; a quick toot on the whistle to alert the conductor at the rear, and notch one engaged just before the brakes were fully released (this ensures the gears mesh without any clonks or bangs) the tram made a smooth start on the ascent away from Laxey. With a succession of rapid counts of 2, 3, 4, 5, full series is quickly reached as we gain momentum. This was then followed by a slightly slower count of 6, 7, 8, 9 to reach full parallel and power, all within about 30 seconds or so from the start. The first thing I noticed was a noticeable surge with the change over from series to parallel, rather similar to putting your foot down in an automatic car. The tram really seems to pick up much faster making steady progress on the steep gradients. Mike takes Paul steadily round the sharp curves until we reach the top, then it is time for the first of many brake applications. The brakes only need 5-10 lbs of pressure to bring the car to a stop; the compressor delivers 75 lbs so this is where quick "nibbles" come in. Inevitably inexperience shows as Paul feeds in too much air only to blow some off to stop the wheels locking and an expensive repair bill to boot - a mistake we ALL MADE AT FIRST. Anyway, after a few more goes, Paul soon proves to be quite proficient, and we make good progress under the watchful eye of Mike who clearly knows every inch of the road.

Whilst the rest of us take in some of the cliff top views, Mike has time to tell us about some of the many hazards encountered by tram drivers, particularly at road crossings. Apparently accidents with cars are alarmingly frequent, and

sometimes serious, as the front coupling conveniently lines up with the height of the driver's side window. In his own words "The driver used to get knocked about a bit, but less so now with the introduction of compulsory seat belts this year! It now makes a nasty inplant to the brain and they don't ever drive in front of trams again". He then recounted a recent story about an accident at what he referred to as "no hoper crossings". This is where the angle of the road and the height of the hedges make it impossible for the driver of a tram or car to see each other until the crossing is reached. A tram and trailer were approaching such a crossing and a car stopped after hearing the customary two long hoots on the whistle. Just as the tram was clearing the crossing the driver drove forward and collided with the running board of the trailer. The car driver's first words to the bemused crew were "You know as well as I do that that one should not be following so close."

Thirty minutes pass very quickly and Paul hands over to Geoff for the next stint to Ramsey. The journey was basically uneventful as skills were practiced on the tortuous route to the outskirts of the town. As we approached, a very heavily loaded car Number Seven and trailer was making slow progress towards Laxey. Mike said that he was already well down on time and ordered Geoff to run in full series for a while, so giving Number Seven more benefit on the shared power supply.

The turn-round at Ramsey was very brisk and we were back on the road for Laxey shortly after 10.30. Geoff covered a few more miles before handing over to myself. Again with instructions from Mike I got under way, sweeping round a smooth curve and on to a long straight on notch nine. The tram was riding well on newly rebuilt tracks, then we came to some sharp bends and awkward road crossings - plenty of practice with brakes and power controller here. Soon I reached a long straight uphill stretch towards Lewaigue; it was here that we did an interesting manouvre, rolling gently through a cross over onto the road for Ramsey again.

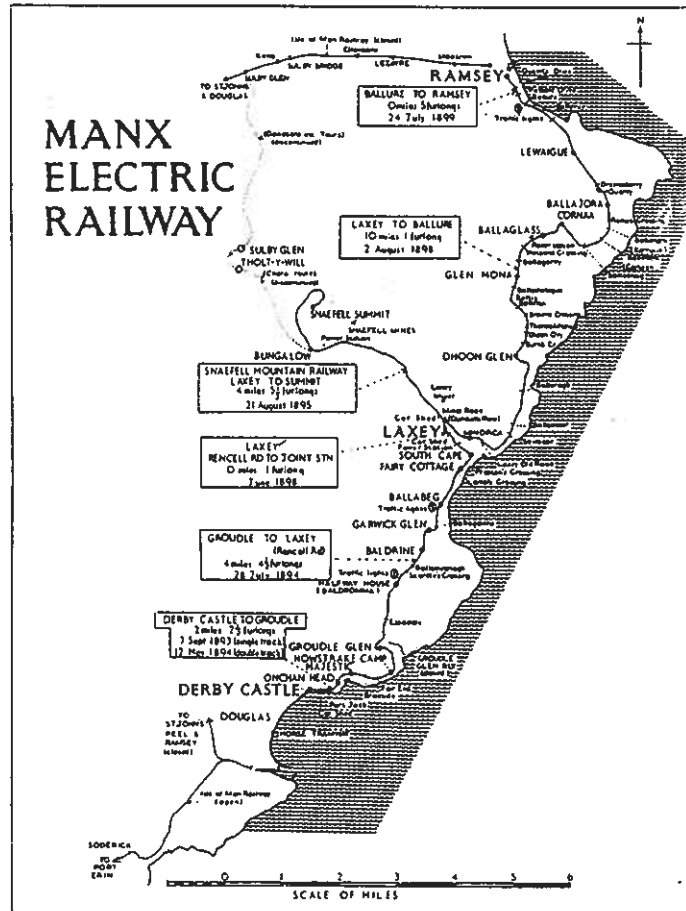
On the falling gradient I set off back down the line without power to Balla Jora Quarry. Here we planned to cross back over and resume to Laxey. Mike quipped that he had once been timed at 44 mph on this down gradient whilst trying to make up time. Cross overs can only be taken slowly and without power as there is no wire link. This one was also set on a steep uphill gradient. Obeying Mike's instructions to the letter, whilst he watched for obstructions in the little used points, I used just enough power to give sufficient momentum to get us through the cross over before stopping to allow the conductor to re-engage the trolley wheel - Mike had taken a head count before hand just in case a push had been required!

Continuing back towards Laxey, I was beginning to feel quite at home with controls, when Mike ordered me to stop as my time had elapsed. Why does time pass so quickly when you are having fun! Wesley took over for the last stint, with more steep gradients, sharp curves, and road crossings before reaching the long descent into Laxey. This was taken very

gently, before handing the car back to Mike for the final yards into the station arriving at 11.40.

We all received our certificates for completing the course and presented with named badges. Of course none of us is qualified to drive as normal training takes at least three weeks and that's for an employee who already knows the route. You have to remember that it is a Victorian system and is forgiving if treated with contempt.

Was the experience worth it? Definitely, "yes". As a matter of interest 12 ladies have taken up the course, some proving to be very capable whilst several male drivers from Crich museum did not impress Mike with their handling of the MER trams!



STEAM OVER SUGARLOAF

By Gordon W. Ripington

As Sunday June 6th 1993 dawned, it was evident by the cloudless sky that I was in for a hot journey to my destination. Departing at 7.30 am with the cool box suitably stocked with liquid refreshment (no longer the trusty dufflebag with Tizer or Dandelion & Burdock) I made my way westwards along the M40/A40 where I could afford to amble along once passed Oxford. As one approaches the region of Monmouth through to Brecon, the mind drifts back to the late 50's when somewhere along the route a pannier tank hauling probably a pair of Collett coaches with possibly no more than a dozen passengers could be seen shuffling along. Skirting Brecon I ask myself where was the site of the once 88K amongst that sprawl of new development. At Llandoverey I take the A483 north towards the local beauty spot/landmark known as "Sugar Loaf". Having climbed to the ridge one has a commanding view of the line as it winds its way towards the summit. It is now midday and very warm, already the ridge is filling with photographers, some 60-80 by this time. Between 14.30 and 15.00 hrs the ranks have swelled to some 200 plus. Tempers become frayed as those around jockey for positions, should any poor soul (and there were many) venture into the view of the massed ranks they were told in no uncertain terms to move. Those who refrained and stood their ground had their parentage questioned

on more than one occasion. The "chasers" have now arrived in force to the tune of "Oi Mate move over will yer!" This 'So you Jack I'm alright' attitude is fast becoming the norm at such events.

The time is now 15.30, in the distance comes the sound of two locomotives BR Class 4 Tank 80079 piloting class SMT 44 George Stephenson having just left Llandoverey after a water stop en route from Carmarthen to Shrewsbury. Now in sight the two locomotives are working hard as they approach the summit almost no exhaust visible due to the hot weather. Then the unthinkable happens, from behind a hill comes the roar of a helicopter. With hoots of derision from the gallery comes a plea "Does anyone have a ground to air missile handy?" Such is the roar from this airborne intruder that both engines fail to drown its noise.

Next stop the picturesque location of Knucklas Viaduct. Bathed in early evening sunlight the two locomotives, both whistling, sprint over the viaduct, with gleaming paintwork and whirling motion this fine spectacle is once again marred by the same unwanted airborne intruder. Having savoured the moment, it is now time to head homewards and reflect on the days events.

MANX TALES

By Eddie Lewcock

With some reluctance I take up my weary pen, having enjoyed Peter's saga of the Society's visit to the Isle of Man. However we are short of copy for the Donkey - so here goes!

A group of Gauge 'O' Guild members and their wives visited the Isle of Man this summer during the height of the good weather and stayed eight days, using the cheap public run-about ticket issued at a competitive £21 per head. The hotel that we stayed at had just had a £3 million face lift and gave very good value for money, providing comfortable sitting out areas enabling members to spend the evenings exchanging memories of the day's events.

As all readers will now well know, great celebrations have taken place this year, to celebrate the centenary of the Manx Electric Railway and much entertainment was provided, both on and off the railways. Preliminary reports indicate that the Islander's efforts have been well rewarded.

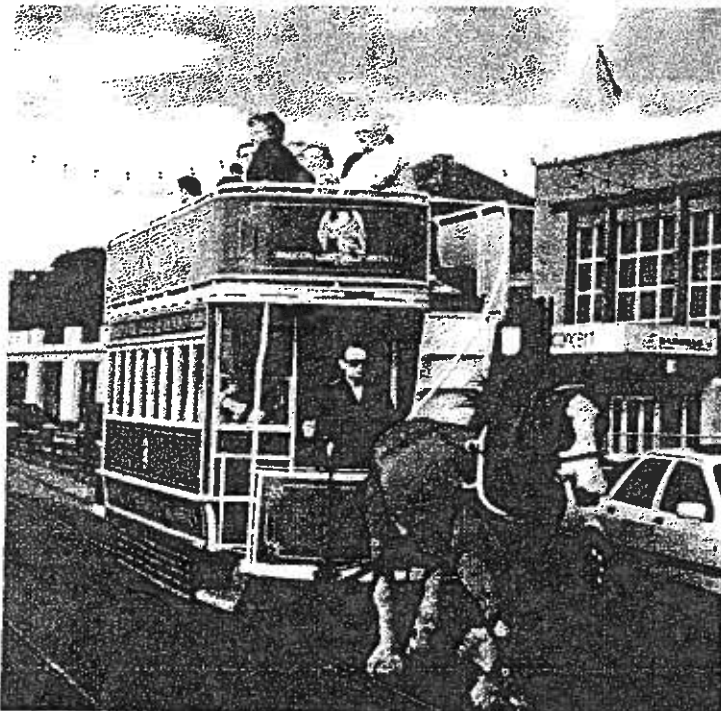
The holiday started with a gentle flight at no great speed from Luton Airport in one of those aircraft built by Shorts of Belfast, that must be reminiscent of pre-war flights.

Transport to the hotel was effected by a friendly lift in a hire car but could have been accomplished by bus or in a vague sort of way, by rail. However the latter connection is not recommended for those with luggage, rucksacks or of a nervous disposition as the airport tends to ignore this 19th century service!

Much has already been said about the steam railway and its charm and it in no way lets you down in creating a delightful atmosphere of the "has beens", even to the gas lamp shades which resemble goldfish bowls when half filled with water, except that their occupants are drowned flies as a cheap alternative to fish.

An interesting insight into the support services occurred when HUTCHINSON on the final leg back into Douglas, ran a hot box on the pony truck. Being immediately behind the locomotive (running bunker first) one could spot the gloom on the fireman's face, as he poured oil over the heated box during the out of course stop. Next day whilst visiting the workshops, I noted HUTCHINSON in blue sporting a green pony truck. Upon tackling the fitter about it, he, rather deprecatingly said that it had taken one hour to change the truck as he was by himself. Quite some going!

Whilst the charm of steam lies in the run from Douglas to Port Erin, complete with its old time stations, level crossings and courtesy; the prize for scenery must go to the Manx Electric, with its run to Ramsey, up and down 1:25 gradients using cars boasting four motors of 25 hp each. To sit in a "toast-rack" trailer and look down at the sea nearly 600 feet beneath you and then look back in land to views similar to the Settle & Carlisle, is unique in Britain.



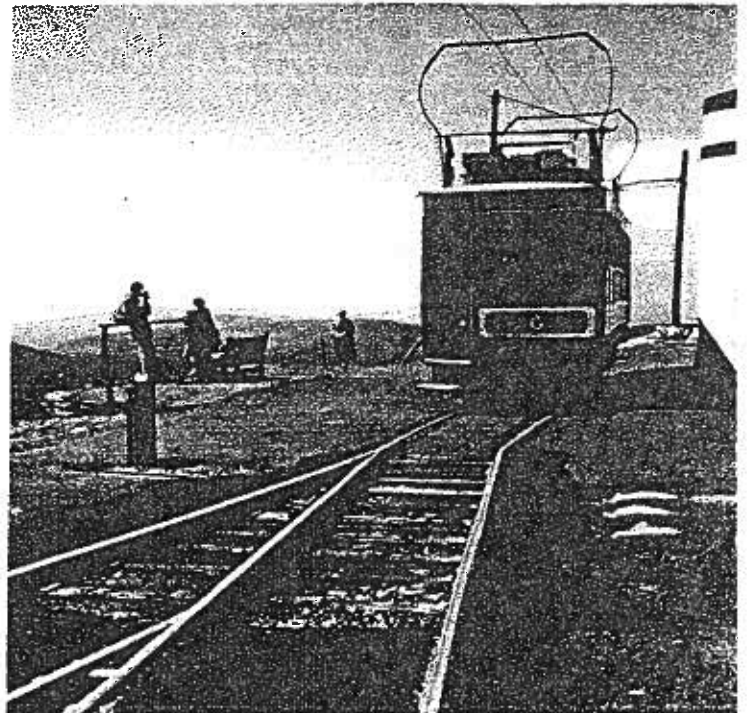
A visit to Derby Castle workshops showed machinery still driven by old fashioned overhead line shafting, whilst clearly great care was used in stretching the money to go as far as possible. Refurbishments of old cars was being carried out with great care and some of the cars had the early railway title.

Steam on the Manx Electric Railway was provided by "LOCH" and between Laxey and Dhoon Quarry the normal two tracks were run as two single lines, with tokens being used by the electric cars. The steam locomotive was not left behind on the hill climbing by the electrics and was polished up to the hilt. A reminder of old time quality on this run, was that all things Victorian worked happily but the modern temporary loo's at the quarry were broken down! The problem of incompatible braking between the vacuum on the locomotive and air braking on the two cars was simply overcome; the latter employed hand brakes!

A reminder that we were still in the British Isles despite different currency and stamps was provided on the second day of the Bus strike. The first stoppage was announced at the start of the day, so enabling arrangements to be altered. The second began at midday, without warning, whilst some of us were mooching around Peel. With the strike announced, we decided to visit the Castle alongside the jetty where we found the "Balmoral" tied up. She is a small and attractive steamer which plies around the British coastline.

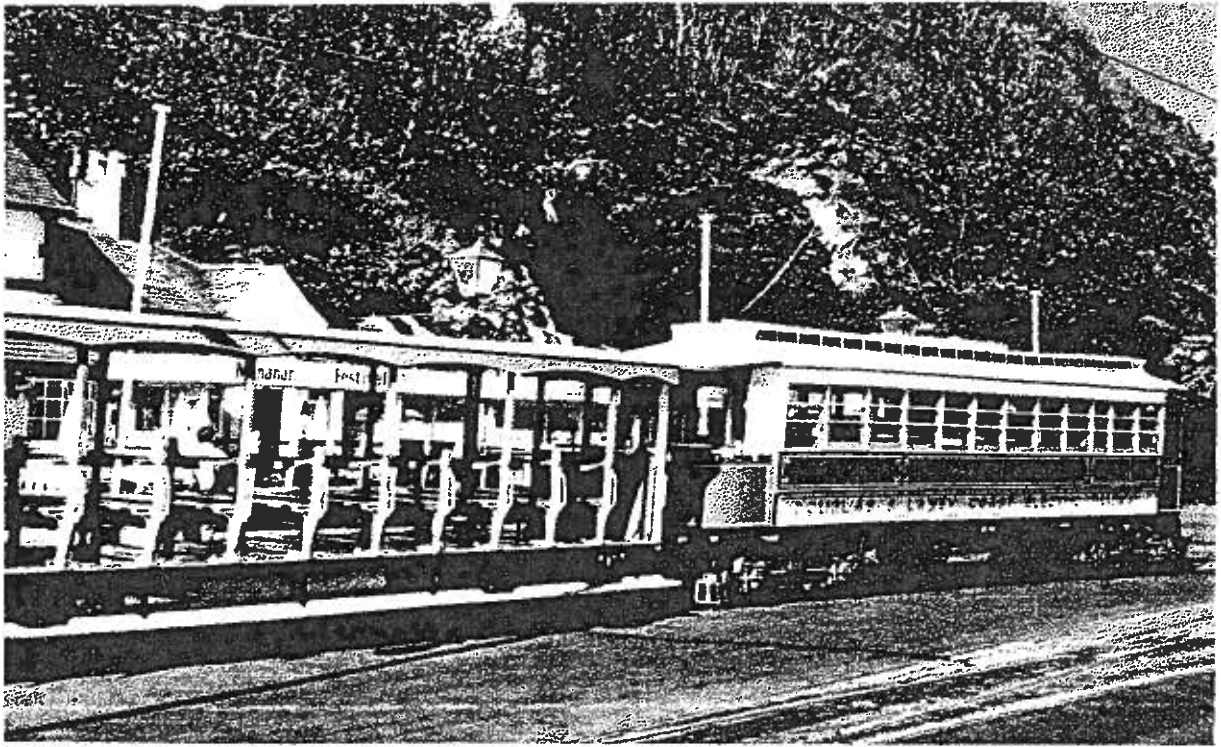
Enquiries of an Official at the head of a long queue of passengers, elucidated that she had just arrived from Dublin with passengers for Douglas who were waiting to board special coaches, some of them in preservation, and that is how our Group got back to Douglas in a vintage "Albion" bus, whose driver thought we were on board for Port Erin but who was soon put "back on the rails" at St Johns.

Linesiding was laid on by the authorities and after a change of three buses in ten minutes at Douglas; resulted in a hilarious chase of a south bound train with bus passengers of various nationalities and weights charging across main roads and fields, with little regard to life and limb. One was driven to the conclusion that the best linesiding is not possible by bus!



The Isle of Man is full of rare sights for the transport enthusiast. LEFT the Douglas Tramways' only double decker car takes its once daily trip along the promenade whilst at the summit of Snaefell ABOVE car 6 stands in front of the unique single bladed point.

Photos Eddie Lewcock



MER 1 is the world's oldest operating electric vehicle, celebrating it's centenary this year. Lettered for the original Douglas & Laxey Coast Electric Railway it stands at Derby Castle with a toastrack trailer.

A trip on the Grouldle Glen line fills in a happy hour. Volunteers who had rescued IOM steam in the first bout of preservation were left rather at a loose end when the Government nationalised their railways. This resulted in the but not only - steam loco.

Grouldle Glen line being refurbished. "Sea Lion" being the main - but not the only - steam loco. "Polar Bear" now being owned by the Amberley Chalk Pits Museum. One word of advice - choose a fine day for the trip.

Finally to Snaefell, with its remarkable old cars and unusual entrance doors. Good views of the Laxey Wheel are obtained just after the start of the journey whilst at the top a highly unusual point is provided to fascinate the enthusiast, along with stupendous views.

The Fell system is not a rack between the rails but a centre rail laid horizontally and is used for braking if necessary. Some of the sleepers on this line and the MER, are looking distinctly weary and do not bear close inspection. Incidentally its worth while watching the drivers using the brake valve on this and the MER. The valve is given a quick flip to left or right, using a technique called "fanning" to prevent the brakes going fully on or off. Also whilst the Snaefell line uses bow collectors, the MER uses trolley poles, as bow collectors couldn't always reach the overhead wire.

A trip to the Isle of Man is a delightful step back in railway history and the writer's only regret is that he did not go there years ago when St Johns was an important junction and the line to Ramsey up the West Coast was still open.



The pony truck which ran hot under "Hutchinson". The two curved supports which provide a self centering action between the truck and locomotive can be clearly seen.

NOVICE AT EBBW JUNCTION SHED

By Stan Verrinder

Forty seven years ago I left school and followed in my father's footsteps by starting work on the GWR, and reported for work in July at the age of 15 to Shed Foreman G.W. Thomas at Ebbw Junction Loco Shed.

For those of you who have no idea the where and what of Ebbw Junction, perhaps I had better explain. It took its name from the River Ebbw which flows about a quarter of a mile from the shed, which was the Divisional Loco Shed for the Newport Division of the GWR, which had nine such Divisions. It was about one mile south of Newport High Street Station and just off the Newport to Cardiff main line. The shed's main function was to provide loco power for the lines up the Gwent valleys, and was also the main workshops for the Division.

Ebbw was about one and a half miles away from where I lived, and was no stranger to me as I had haunted it in the perennial way of all small boys, trying to obtain engine numbers; on more than one occasion I had to make a quick getaway.

It was only natural during my first week that my sole idea was to get as many engine numbers as I could, although the shift foreman had the strange idea that I was there to do some work.

I had applied for a job on the clerical side but as my examination results were not known, and the fact that there was unlikely to be any clerical vacancies I had to do anything that came up.

For the first week I was broken in gently by being allowed to start at 9 am and finish at 5.30 pm, but from then on I was to work the usual shifts of 6 till 2, 2 till 10 and 10 to 6. I shall never forget my first shift which was 6 till 2 and had to get up at 5 in the morning. Luckily for me my father was working the same shift, although not at Ebbw but at Severn Tunnel, and got me out of bed that week.

For the first two months I did an assortment of odd jobs. About anything that could be found for me to do. I helped in the stores, and was just as mystified as the young cleaner who had called to obtain a left handed 1" spanner. My first attempt to light a loco fire was a complete disaster, and the second wasn't much better. When the shed foreman sent me to the enginemen's mess room to find one of the spare crews, they never seemed to be there, but magically appeared when the foreman came with me.

On one occasion when there were no cleaners on night turn and one of the knockers-up didn't turn up for duty, I had to go out. It was really eerie cycling around Newport at dead of night. I never realised how difficult the job was. I called up the wrong engineman at 4, and he wasn't in the best of tempers. There was a bonus, I received a mileage allowance for the use of my bicycle, the magnificent sum of $\frac{1}{4}$ a mile (0.2p).

There were compensations, as I was sometimes, if the engineman was in a good mood, allowed to ride on the footplate of the shed pilots. Both drivers and firemen thought my efforts at firing were more of a hindrance than a help but they were an understanding lot.

Enough of my brilliant career for a moment and let me tell you a little about Ebbw Shed. It was built in 1915 and was a Churchward 2 turntable shed constructed of brick with a slate roof. It was one of 8 turntable sheds built to a standard design between 1906 and 1926. The first was Old Oak Common in 1906, followed by Oxley (Wolverhampton) in 1907, then Aberdare, Tysely, St Phillips Marsh (Bristol), Llanelli, and finally Stourbridge.

The largest was Old Oak Common with 4 turntables, followed by the 2 turntable ones of Ebbw Junction, Oxley, Tysely, St Phillips Marsh and Llanelli.

The two main buildings were the engine shed 365' x 245' and 21' high and the Repair Shop 200' x 112'. There was the usual coal stage with the usual tank on top, and in the case of Ebbw this held 146,000 gallons.

The two turntables were of the largest type in use, each being 65' in diameter and turned electrically. They had a habit though of requiring manual help at times, and many the time I had to pit my puny strength with others. Once they were moving they were not too difficult.

One thing that stands out in my memory which you never seem to see in photographs are the huge stacks of coal often more than 10' in height stacked between the running rails.

The shed's allocation of engines was the second largest on the GWR, only Old Oak Common had more. There were 143 of them including two rail cars. As the concern of the shed was

mainly freight there was no allocation of Castles or Kings, but there were plenty of Saints, Halls and Granges. Among the 5 Halls were Lawton and Preston Halls, and among the Granges were Leaton and Bodicote. There were only 2 Saints, Cefntilla Court and Quentin Durward, after Walter Scott's famous novel. As you would expect the 57xx class formed the largest group of engines with 25 out of 143. This was followed by the 28xx class with 18. There was a large allocation of 72xx the largest and longest class ever built by the GWR at 93 tons.

Among the "oldies" were 4 engines taken over from Brecon and Merthyr in 1922, but the oldest was a 23xx Deans Goods built in 1895.

They were generally a sad looking lot, and showed the hard wear and lack of maintenance because of the war that had only ended the year before. There are but a few photographs of any of them, and so far I have come across 10 of them in any books which have been published.

Sadly not one of the 143 has been preserved. However, not all is lost as one from Pill Loco Shed, which was a sub shed to Ebbw, and only half a mile away, and even nearer my home as it was at the bottom of the street, has had one preserved. This is an ex Taff Valley 0-6-2T built in 1899 and on the Worth Valley line.

At Ebbw there were about 1000 men and women employed, with the Shed Foreman in charge. They were split into 4 groups:

Shift Foreman Locos	- drivers, firemen, cleaners and shed grades such as coalmen, firedroppers, toolmen
Chief Clerk	- office staff, timekeepers and store-keepers
Mechanical Foreman	- fitters, turners, coppersmiths and carpenters
Boilersmith Foreman	- boilersmiths, boilerwashers, tubers and brick archmen

The foremen could always be recognised by their badge of office which was a bowler hat, although one of them did cause a stir when he wore a trilby.

Returning to my career. After about two months one of the loco timekeepers left, and I took his place. There were 4 of us, 2 of whom were charming young ladies who had come during the war and stayed on. Both of them were courting firemen. We worked on a three shift basis with two days off in turns.

We were necessary because loco crews booked in at the time it was necessary to prepare their engines for the job it had to do. This could, of course, be at any odd time, and continued through the day and night. The lowest number of hourly bookings was 2 between 3 and 4 in the morning.

If a crew did not book in within a quarter of an hour after their due time it was the timekeeper's job to report to the loco shift foreman, so that he could fill the gap. Needless to say the locomen were up to all sorts of tricks with me, after all I was only 15, new, and fair game. They were supposed to come to the booking hall window and give their name and number. With the older timekeepers this wasn't necessary as they were known by sight, but except for a few I didn't. So what they did was to arrive at the window alright, mumble their name and number, so I couldn't hear and disappear, leaving me in a complete quandary. The shed foreman soon put an end to that with the threat of a half an hour's pay docking.

The loco timekeeper's job wasn't just sitting down, and booking men off and on. The time book had to be made up from the roster boards which lined the booking hall, together with a mass of notices. Every engineman had to be given his monthly Road Book, given special notices (always printed in red) and woe betide you if you didn't. Report to Movement Control any foreign enginemen reporting for duty at the end of their particular shift, and relay to them their assignment. Take from crews their daily reports, and on the night shift man the booking off shed telephone.

Every shed had its characters and Ebbw was no exception.

There was George William Read, whose number was 1, and a third generation driver. His father was proud of his son and the GWR, and when young George was christened he made sure his initials were GWR. I can still see his face after the passage of all these years. A big jovial man with a red face, and nearing retirement.

Mr. Hudson, I never knew his christian name, was the chief clerk, and he actually ran the shed, although the shed foreman thought he did. A thin ascetic man, who struck fear into everyone, even the most hardened fireman. I never heard anyone address him other than "Mr Hudson".

Fred Stilwell and Charlie Oakes, were two of the knocker-ups, and everyone called them the long and short of it. Fred was about 6'6" and Charlie around 5'3"; they were inseparable friends.

Tom Smith, one of the fire droppers, was known to everyone on the shed, because he was the unofficial hairdresser, not in official time, of course. He charged 9d (3.75p) for adults, and 6d (2.5p) to the likes of me.

I wonder if today's steam enthusiasts have any idea what life was really like in a large loco shed. Imagine walking through the shed on a bitterly cold winter's night with the all pervading smell of oil, grease and smoke; or on a hot summer's day when you could hardly breathe with the heat. You had to watch your footing because the floor was slippery with grease and many of the unwary lost their footing.

Who had the dirtiest job? My father always maintained, and probably rightly, that as a boiler washer, he had. I think my mother would support him in that, when I think of her trying to get his overalls clean, which she never really could. One of my memories of him, as a child, is him in the tin bath, at the end of a shift, the hot water for which had been boiled on the kitchen fire.

I suppose the day I remember best during my time at Ebbw was Christmas 1946. There was only a skeleton staff on duty, including myself. Every loco, except 7 were on shed, and when walked across the shed it was eerie being surrounded by silent engines, and not one of them was being prepared. All approach lines were similarly lined. The only loco in steam was a 57xx. At about midnight I received a message from movement control that a Castle had broken down at Newport High Street with a 13 coach train. The gallant 57 took off, and the few of us on duty, when we received the message from Ebb signal box, turned out to watch it go by. A gallant sight it was.

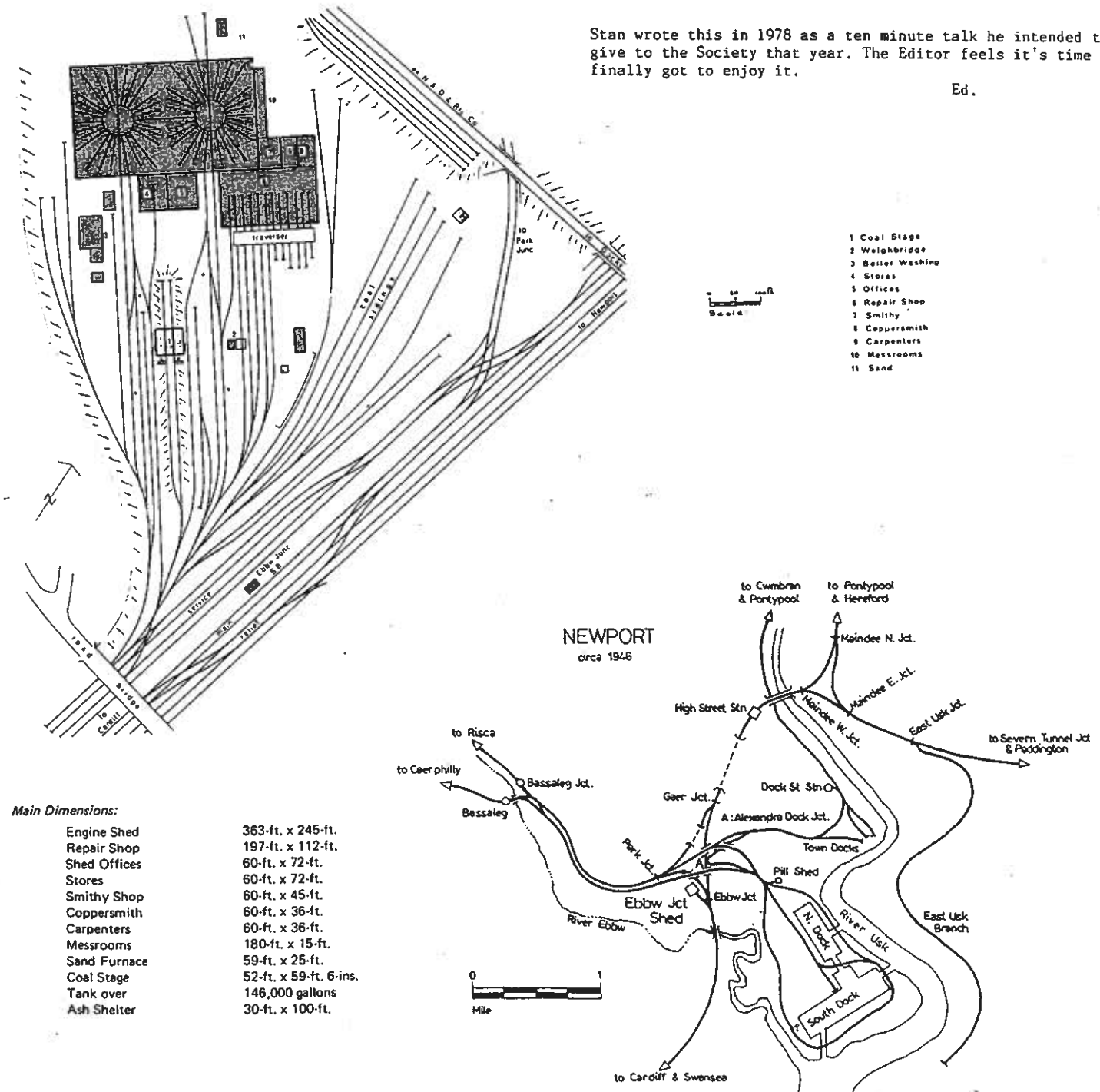
My family's association with Ebbw spanned the 50 years it was open for steam, from my grandmother, who was an office cleaner when it opened in 1915, and was still remembered by the older hands when I went there, to my father who left the shed when it closed in 1965.

Nothing remains, the site is now an industrial estate.

My part in the tradition came to an end in March 1947, when was disillusioned with the long hours I sometimes had to work including 12 hour shifts, and at one time for 2 weeks without a break, which at my age was no joke.

Stan wrote this in 1978 as a ten minute talk he intended to give to the Society that year. The Editor feels it's time you finally got to enjoy it.

Ed.



NEW JERSEY - BY PRIVATE TRAIN

By Mike Walker



MORRISTOWN & ERIE RAILWAY

As some of you know already, earlier this year I had a feature on the Isle of Man published in "Railfan", one of the leading American magazines. Unusually in a market which greets articles on Canada and Mexico as "foreign rubbish", it has been well received not least by members of the staff at the Morristown & Erie, who expressed a wish to meet me if I was ever in town. "Funny thing, he's coming next week" said Railfan associate editor Mike DelVecchio.

The Morristown & Erie is a typical American shortline. Built nearly a century ago to provide a 10 mile link between Morristown, New Jersey, and a connection with the Erie Railroad at Essex Fells. Later the east end was cut back to Roseland leaving the Delaware Lackawanna & Western at Morristown as the M&E's only connection to the outside world. Otherwise it led an unremarkable life until falling on hard times in the mid 70's. At this point Ben Friedland, a consultant, discovered the M&E and decided it was a worthwhile investment, so in 1978 he acquired control. Soon after Conrail, the federally owned carrier formed to salvage six major bankrupt roads in the north east, expressed a wish to abandon three branches in north west New Jersey. The State stepped in and purchased them, appointing the M&E as operator who in the process gained track rights over Conrail between Morristown and Dover. In 1983 Congress legislated to allow Conrail to quit the commuter business, it had been running commuter trains under contract to the states and could now hand over the trains and tracks and stations they used to those states. In New Jersey's case New Jersey Transit became a fully fledged railroad but, not wanting to become a freight hauler, gave the concession for that business in the northern part of the state to the M&E.

I mention all this only to explain the background to what follows. At 8.30 am on Wednesday 6th October I reported as arranged to the M&E's modest HQ behind the NJT station in Morristown. Today's M&E owns four locomotives, two ALCo C424s which were burbling away outside and a pair of rare ALCo C430's, one inside the shop the other stored outside. All are painted a dazzling fire engine red and so clean you'd swear they were the pride of a museum. I located the crew in the office amid the organised chaos that is shortline railroading. Conductor Al Hollifer (my original host) along with engineer Frank McKenna and brakeman Bill Mylar were discussing the day's work with President Ben Friedland. No 25 mph amble down the original M&E today, instead a full speed gallop down NJT's main was being planned to exchange cars with another legendary New Jersey line, the New York Susquehanna & Western. There was however a problem, NJT had temporary single working in force through Morristown and were not keen on having us add to their problems. Ben Friedland managed to negotiate a path via the northern Boonton line provided we got going by 10 am so we all moved sharpish to the yard where C424 No.19 was waiting.

Another problem delayed us. The M&E yard is on a sharp curve and therefore 19 refused to lock couplers with our cargo, NYS&W Budd diesel car M-1. Anyone who's tried to couple the old Hornby Dublo stock on curves will understand our problem but we couldn't rely on a huge hand to descend from the heavens so in desperation the next best thing was employed and a steel hawser wrapped around the knuckles allowing M-1

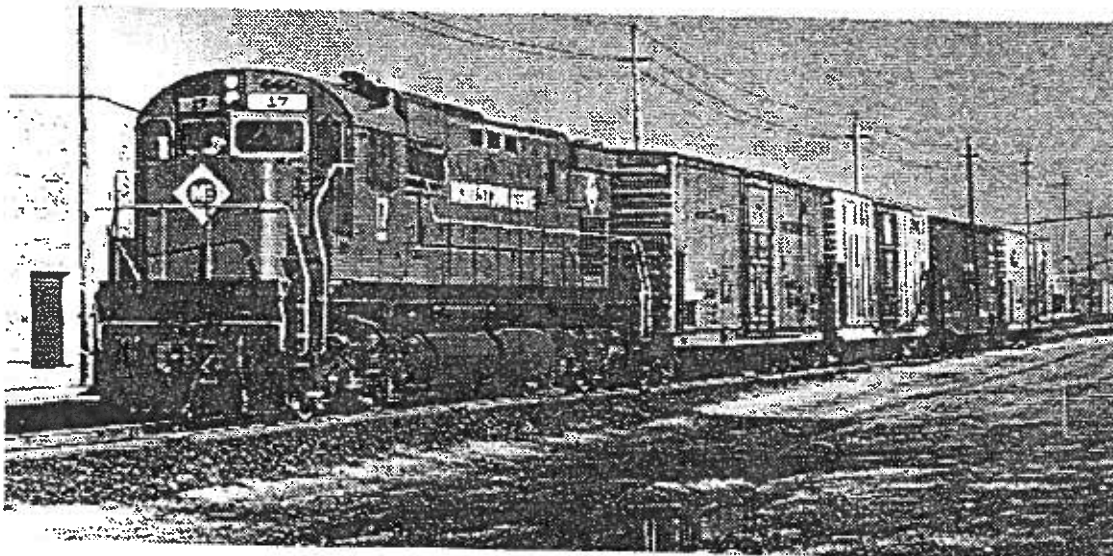
to be ignominiously dragged onto straighter track. Eventually coupled, brakes tested, we all climbed aboard 19 and propelled M-1 up the exchange track and sought NJT approval to enter their track.

After a pair of NJT emu's had passed the Hoboken operator lined the switches and Frank opened the throttle. With a throaty roar the old ALCo sprang to life and we were off propelling the M-1 for six miles to Denville where the former DLW Morris and Boonton lines rejoin. Here we reversed and headed east towards Hoboken. The choice of the Boonton line was most acceptable as I had never travelled it before as it normally enjoys only peak hour service, it also gave our crew a chance to remain qualified for the route. Even here NJT had a track crew working welding and grinding the eastbound line beyond Boonton requiring us to stop and pick up a Form D authorising us to run wrong road past the work crew. The Form D also instructed us to make much noise as we passed the crew so I discreetly slipped over to the engineer's side of the cab (the air horns are the other side) as I know the deafening blast those trumpets are capable of as we flashed by the startled track crew who had assumed they had the track to themselves!

A brief word about our locomotive. ALCo's are now rare in the US, the last of the steam builders to remain building diesels, it closed its doors in 1969. 19 is a 2400hp BoBo road switcher built in 1964 for the Toledo Peoria & Western. When the TP&W was absorbed by the Santa Fe in 1983 it was redundant and the M&E picked up a bargain. M-1 by contrast is about as close to a diesel railcar as you'll find in America. The gleaming stainless steel car was built by Budd for the NYSW in 1950 and sold to Jersey Central in 1958 ultimately passing to NJT and upon withdrawal to the Susquehanna Technical & Historical Society who have restored it to its original condition.

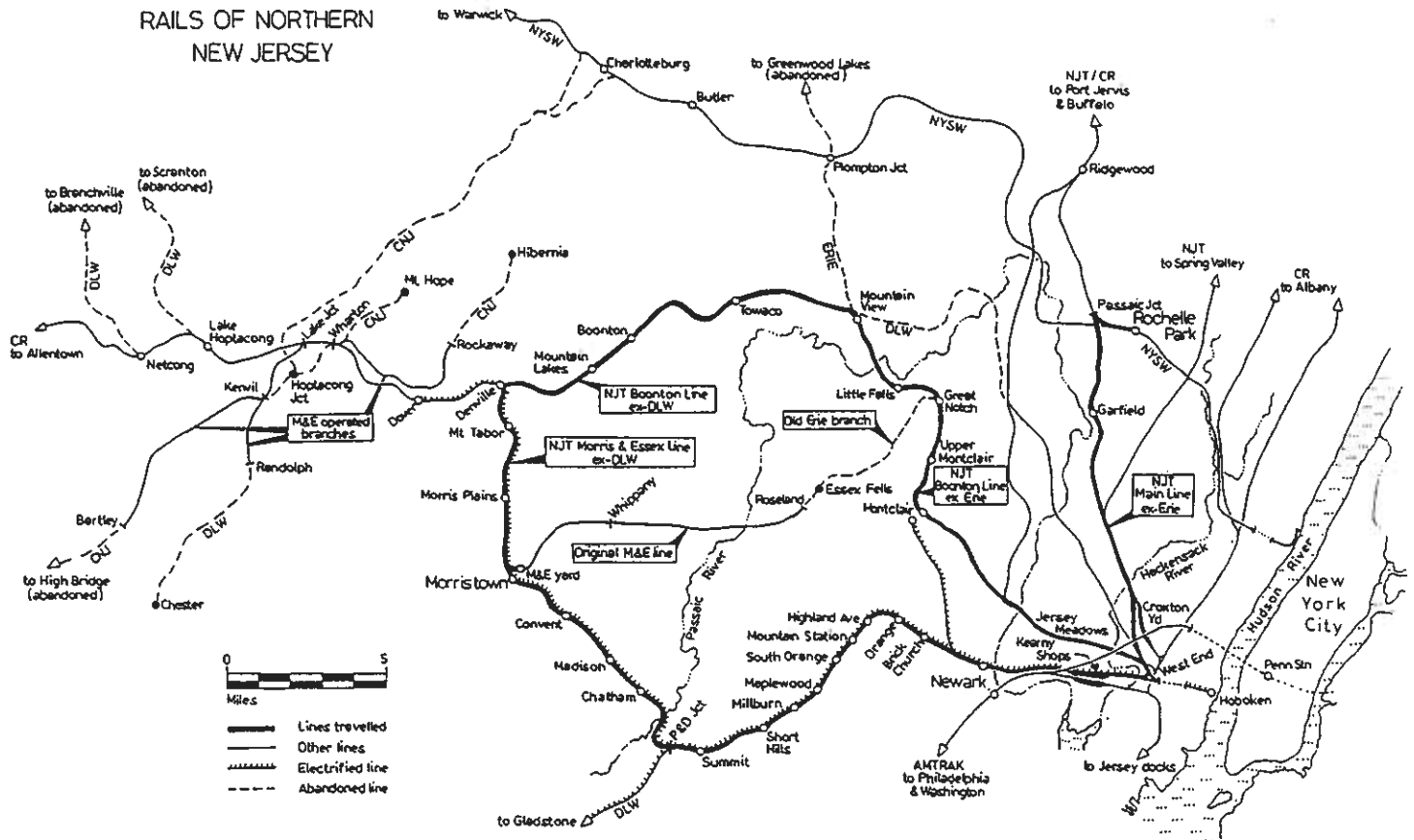
Meanwhile we'd reached Mountain View and taken a sharp curve to the right, all that remains of the diamond where the DLW Boonton line crossed the Erie's Greenwood Lakes line. Following the Erie-Lackawanna merger in 1960 duplicate trackage was abandoned and we now continued on the old Erie. Passing Great Notch the trackbed of the old branch to Essex Fells and the M&E could still be clearly seen. The crew remarked it would have made things a lot easier today if it were still in place but not nearly so interesting. Until now we'd been running through pleasant rural countryside but now we were entering suburbia through Montclair followed by the urban decay of north Newark. Having crossed the Passaic River we traversed a marsh area called the Jersey Meadows (which is nowhere near as idyllic as it sounds - believe me) and then over the Hackensack River, under the Amtrak main line and into the steel spaghetti that is West End.

West End is a complex of junctions and underpasses giving access to Hoboken terminal, the Jersey City docks and connecting lines. At one time the rails of five companies met here and even now after rationalisation it is difficult to follow on paper or on the ground. The heart of the complex is a triangle or wye which we used to turn our train, heading first back toward Morristown before reversing into the tunnels which lead down to NJT's waterfront Hoboken terminal then



M&E 17, one of the road's pair of rare ALCo C430's ambles along the original M&E at East Hanover. Built in 1967 for the NYC it is the only example of this 3000hp design still at work.

RAILS OF NORTHERN NEW JERSEY



finally set off north up NJT's Bergen County main line, another former Erie route. Passing the Erie's Croxton yard, now used by Conrail, we crossed the picturesque drawbridge over the Hackensack River overlooked by attractive modern houses and the Meadowlands sports arena then across more marshland and back into urban surroundings.

Some eight miles from West End we crossed over the NYSW mainline and stopped while Bill got down and threw the switch to allow us to reverse onto the NJT-NYSW interchange track at Passaic Jct. Most American locomotives have digital radios which allow them to use any of the 99 frequencies allocated for railroad use. M&E 19 isn't one of them so Bill had to go and telephone the NYSW dispatcher from a public phone. As this officer is located at Cooperstown in upstate New York this interstate, inter-phone company call required a good supply of silver. The good news was that the "Susie Q" wanted the M-1 taken to Rochelle Park a mile or so east where, as it happened, our return train was waiting. So we set off, propelling once more, along the Susquehanna's main line. The appearance of M&E on the NYSW is not an everyday event, even so it was a surprise to see a railfan appear and nail us on film - the jungle telegraph works well world wide.

Having placed M-1 on a very overgrown siding we coupled up to the pair of private cars we had to take back to Morristown. These were the "Morris County" and New York Central 3. The former was built by Budd for the NYC in 1947 as a regular coach (Second Open in BR speak) but is now owned by Ben Friedland who had outfitted it with 28 armchairs, a bar and a kitchen in addition to the usual facilities. NYC3 dates from the 1920's and is a superb heavyweight riding on six wheel bogies and featuring a brass railed platform at the rear. Finished in dark green, it is lavishly furnished.

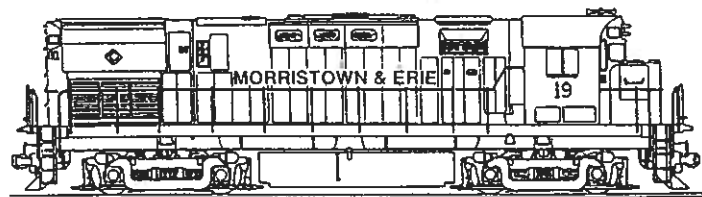
Returning to Passaic Jct our train was parked on the interchange track while we adjourned to a local diner for lunch. Cheeseburgers, fries and cokes all round. "What do you think this is McDonald's?" enquired the waitress in that typical Jersey manner. Because 19 would be returning to Morristown with its long hood leading and thus giving poor visibility from the cab (think of it as a class 20) it was suggested we make ourselves comfortable in the Morris County.

The return journey retraced our steps to West End but NJT's dispatcher allowed us to return west along the Morris line. Having recrossed the Hackensack we then passed NJT's new Keamy maintenance base with the preserved pair of Erie E8 diesels outside, then under Amtrak, over the Passaic, through Newark and the concrete trench which shields one from some of

the worst urban landscapes in Jersey. Suburbia resumed as we sped through Orange and Shorthills then we came to a stand at Summit to await our chance to pass over the temporary single line working back to Morristown. Sitting in our private luxury train with a vintage diesel at its head we did feel rather superior to the commuters outside awaiting their run of the mill emu's.

After the Gladstone branch swings off at P&D Jct we turn north west and head through the leafy suburbs of Chatham and Madison where the line is edged by expensive looking houses, this is New Jersey's stockbroker belt. The reason for the single line working was now revealed. Not believing that "leaves on the line" is an acceptable excuse for delaying its customers, NJT were busy removing all trees from their property. Today it was the eastbound side which was receiving attention and a fearsome array of road/rail machines were busy not only cutting but pulping the trees as we passed. These guys mean business, NSE should take a look.

Finally we reached Morristown and carefully reversed back onto home rails. Having run round and stabled the cars in the yard - more coupling troubles - 19 was parked in front of the shed alongside sister 18 (which had spent the day being serviced by M&E's dedicated mechanic) and was shut down. The crew prepared to head for home and farewells and thanks for a memorable day were made. As he was leaving I thanked Ben Friedland for allowing us to "play with his railroad". "You're welcome anytime, it's our pleasure" was the friendly and sincere reply.



BOOKSHELF

Alan Costello



THE BARRY LIST 8th EDITION
Urie Locomotive Society

If you do not want to spend £15 or more on a hard back book about the Barry Preservation Story, this 30 page booklet costing £1.50 gives you the main details. It lists all 217 locos in the yard in August 1968 and gives, in departure order, the whereabouts of the 213 locos that left the yard (4 were scrapped). Arrival and departure dates at Barry are given. A few black and white pictures are included.

BRITISH RAIL MAPS OF YESTERYEAR
Ian Allan Ltd

ISBN 0 7110 2019 1

The idea behind this book looks good. Ian Allan has printed a number of maps that come with timetables of both pre-Grouping and pre-war railways. Unfortunately, it does not always work. As members may know, the map that comes with the current BR timetable is over 2 ft long. In the book all maps are produced on A4 size pages making some of them so small that they are unreadable, even with a magnifying glass. A very good example of this is the map of the Highland Railways. Very few of the maps are dated, normally these are accompanied by the cover of the timetable.

CALLING CARLISLE CONTROL
Ian Allan Ltd

Peter Brook
ISBN 0 7110 1904 1

The author was based mainly in the Carlisle area during his railway career. In this book he recalls his footplate duties on trains both sides of the border. For a year he worked in one of the Carlisle signal boxes but in 1951 he became a cleaner at Kingmoor shed. He soon became a fireman and after spending 10 years there, transferred to Carlisle Canal for its last 3 years so he could work on the Gresley Pacifics there. It's not often you see pictures of Bridgette Bardot and Miss World in a book on railways. Where do they come into a railway story? The author worked for 8 months for the BR photographic department at Euston, and Miss Bardot was filming there at the time. Miss World was travelling north returning home. A good selection of black and white pictures (of trains) are included.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

A mixed bag of news for the first Christmas without BR steam. British Railways signed a contract with a consortium of American Railway interests to give them access to the new technology of the Advanced Passenger Train being developed for British Railways.

An incredible "oldest coach on BR" was scrapped in the autumn of 1968 following an accident. It was No. SC970113E, the inspection carriage of the District Civil Engineer, Edinburgh. Built in 1890 at Gorton Works, Manchester as Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway No.1033 it was originally Sir Edward Watkins private saloon. In recent years it had been fitted with Gresley bogies and a new galley but was otherwise in original condition.

Work began on singling 26 miles of double track on the former GWR Paddington to Birmingham main line from a point just north of Princes Risborough to Aynho, the junction with the Oxford-Birmingham line.

Also "singlified" was the Wareham to Swanage branch which became single throughout with a passing loop at Corfe Castle.

TEN YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

From "Marlow Donkey" No.26.

This was an illustrated edition! A photograph of 0-4-2T No.1421 at Marlow graced the cover.

The leading article was a fascinating tale by the Chairman, Bas Woodward, "the first 7 years - a progress report on the Marlow & District Railway Society". In a lighthearted vein

JOWETT'S RAILWAYS CENTRES Volume 1
P.S.L. Publications

ISBN 1-85260 420-7

After producing a hand drawn Atlas of the Railways of the British Isles, Alan Jowett has now come up with a map of the railway systems in 20 towns and cities, varying from London to Canterbury. Maps showing the development in each centre over the years are again hand drawn in various colours showing the different railway companies. Fascinating but expensive.

A ROMANCE WITH STEAM
Waterfront Publications

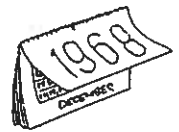
Chris Woods
ISBN 0 946184 77 1

Joining books on the paintings of other railway artists such as Terence Cuneo and Alan Fearnley comes this one by Chris Woods. Probably as he comes from Hampshire the majority of his paintings are placed on the Western or Southern Regions. He does not confine his pictures to steam. One shows an HST and another, as well as having steam engines in it, also includes the Gas Turbine loco No.18100. As the majority of the prints on my walls are by Chris, I have to recommend this book. 40 pictures are included with a description of the history of each one on the page opposite.

THE LOCOMOTIVES OF THE GREAT WESTERN
RAILWAY Part 14
R.C.T.S

ISBN 0 901115 75 4

In April 1990, Bill Peto gave us a talk on 'Things Great Western'. In it he mentioned that he was planning to publish a book on the origin of Great Western Loco names. The results of his research can be found in the latest RCTS series on the GWR. The book also contains a list of all the ex-GWR locos now preserved and where they can be seen. Main line runs by them are included in another article. The rest of the contents updates and corrects the previous 13 parts. One colour picture and a number of black and white photos complete the book.



Through portions of Waterloo-Swanage trains had to be worked by "push-pull" fitted class 33's and a 3-TC or 4-TC unit as there were no locomotive run-round facilities at Swanage.

The 3 "Brighton Belle" units had been given a reprieve and were to be refurbished and retained for a further 8 years.

The "new" Euston station was officially opened by the Queen on October 14th. The £15million scheme bore a striking resemblance to the 1935 rebuilding scheme of the LMS.

From January 6th, 1969 BR withdrew passenger services from the Uckfield to Lewes line of the Southern Region and the Eastleigh-Romsey line.

English Electric received an order from Ghana Railways for 10 2025 hp Co-Co diesel electric locos for 3'6" gauge freight routes.

The most important rail closure was on January 6th of the Waverly route from Carlisle to Edinburgh. The closure left Galashiels and Hawick 40 miles from the nearest station.

there was a Christmas story - "The Fawley Railway and the Fawley Junction Railway" a network of lines linking Fawley with West Wycombe, Watlington and Henley. The "Donkey" finished with a picture quiz.

I wonder what Christmas Fare there will be this year?