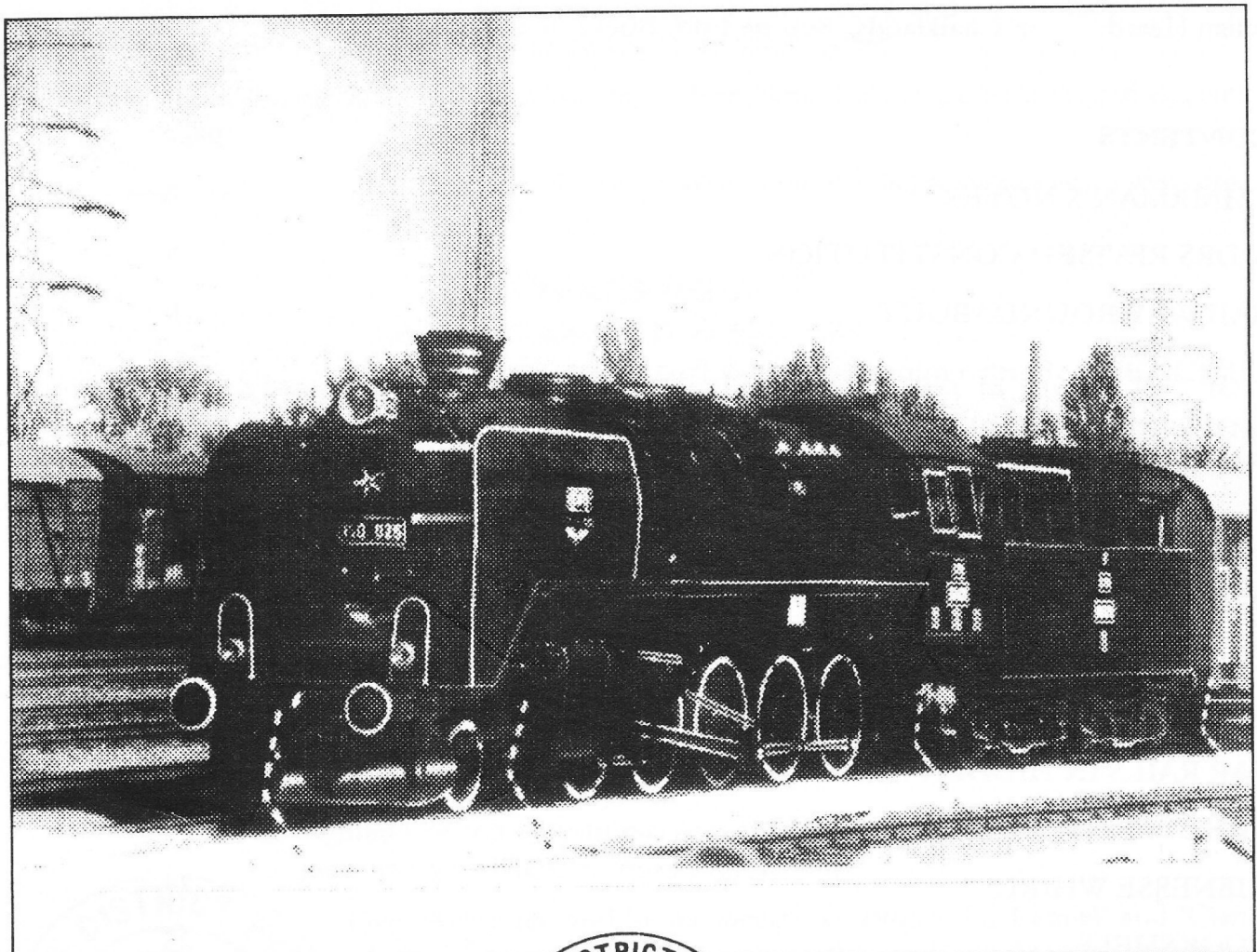


THE MARLOW DONKEY

79.



Edition

79

December 1996



Contents

Hungary 150

Steel Rail of Port Talbot

Railways on the Internet

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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH: *Eddie Lewcocks photograph of S.N.C.F.R.*

Roumanian 2-10 -0 No 150.025. at the Hungary 150 celebrations.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES.

It is with some surprise that I realised that 1996 is coming rapidly to an end, with the season of Santa Specials on the doorstep. Whilst anathema to many gricers they do help earn corn in a goodly way for the lines concerned whose livelihood relies on those who put bottoms on seats! Talking of earning money, I went to a talk on yet another new rail project this week via the new southern terminus of the Bakerloo line - Piccadilly Circus. The line is the London and Continental Railways which has now absorbed Union Railway, created to build the High Speed line from St Pancras to the Channel Tunnel by December 2002 (hopefully). Union Rail in turn will be a client to London and Continental Engineers who will design the line and act as a Project Manager. With a potential staff peaking up to 700 in one year, the mind goes into a spin at the complexity of modern operations but until the line is built, Eurostar will remain hamstrung in Britain by working over a route which prevents any expansion and is helping it to lose £5 million per week! Curiously there is a connection with the high speed freight derailment at Staplehurst in Kent recently, as track from various suppliers and under test for Union Rail, was damaged or destroyed in the derailment!

However one must look to the USA for large scale freight pile ups of which there had been ten in twenty seven months by last February, including a 46 car train in the famous Cajun Pass in February and one in April 95 on the Wisconsin Central! As railway braking occupied part of my career I have been interested to see the developments in electronically controlled braking being brought in over there for these huge trains of up to 10,000 tons or more. Already mandating in Canada, it is becoming thus in the USA and the problems should disappear provided the E.O.T (End of Train) units are on and the pipe properly connected!

Turning to matters nearer home, we look forward to our 20 years of existence next year and two special events have been set up, the first being a special day for our members and friends at Fawley. Not only do we get a live steam train but also the museum is packed with interesting railway exhibits from early tramway days until recent times. There is a lot to see in our half day there.

Additionally we have arranged an evening at Court Gardens with David Shepherd. This will be an Open Meeting with a mixture of railways and painting. Please support us at both these ventures if you possibly can.

A good series of meetings has been arranged for next year and we are fortunate in the range of speakers we have had over the years. They have covered and are covering a wide range of subjects in our hobby.

One further point - your committee has debated long on the subject of our photographic competition and have decided to change the format this January and drop the competition element. It is felt that a good many pictures are not getting shown as members may feel that they are not up to competition standard. To spread the input base therefore it has been decided that members should be invited to bring in a batch of pictures and give 10 minute chats about them. For slides there are of course no problems but I am anxious that we should get members colour prints on to a screen. There are two possibilities, the first is the use of an epidiascope, the second, the use of a camera, video and display screen, the VCR playing straight through the video on to the TV screen. The first is the least likely option as the rental charge is high although there is a remote chance we could get one in working condition. The second involves humping separate pieces of equipment about and tests would be necessary first, to establish the feasibility in the Legion Hall. Any volunteers?

I take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped out with Club affairs this year. The response has been marvellous and in this are included wives and girl friends, sons and daughters who have joined in to assist. We have deliberately spread the load around this year and the response has been most encouraging. Thank you Roger for the Secretarial work,

Peter for controlling the finances, Julian for your hospitality in August etc, John Tuck and Mark for editing the Donkey so well, Gordon and Tony for handling events and Tim for his work in publicity. Also to my wife, Roger's, Julian's and Gordon's for all the background work carried out with great efficiency. Reluctantly we say farewell to Mark on the Committee and as Editor, due to pressure of work.

The Seasons Greetings to all of you, may good health and luck be with you in 1997.

Eddie Lewcock

M. & D.R.S. - REVISED CONSTITUTION.

The Society's Constitution has been discussed at several Committee meetings this year with the result that certain changes are proposed by your Committee unanimously and the revised constitution will be placed before members at the next AGM for adoption.

The proposed revisions recommended by your committee are as follows:-

Section 3. 5. This originally was in conflict with Section 3.3. regarding election of the Chairman. Section 3.3. states that the Chairman shall be appointed by the Committee at its first post AGM meeting. Section 3.5 states the Chairman shall be elected by the AGM following nomination in writing. Now we can have either one method or the other but not both! This point has been raised twice in recent years, the last time being at the last AGM. On both occasions the members from the floor indicated a preference for the Chairman to be elected in accordance with 3.3. This arrangement has the added advantage that committee members do not have to work with a chairman wished on them from the floor.

Section 4. 1. It is felt that a tightening up should take place regarding the Annual Subscription which will now be decided by the committee only. This will provide for better control of the Society's finances by those who check the state of the finances at most committee meetings.

Section 4. 2. This has been simplified in the interests of operational clarity. Anyone now joining after September will be covered for the following year instead of Sept-Oct 50% of the year's subscription.

Section 5. 3. To ease the Treasurer's job and provide better control of the finances, expenses should be submitted currently rather than quarterly and all expenses submitted for the current year by the 31st December. This replaces the quarterly submission.

Section 6. 2. Second sentence has been deleted.

Section 6. 3. In the event of closure (a most unlikely event but one that must be allowed for), your committee considers it is impractical to call for the agreement of the full membership which floats up and down during the year. Therefore it is proposed to alter the wording to membership attending an Extra Ordinary General Meeting.

Section 8.1. The appendix 1 is deleted, being unnecessary.

If approved by the AGM the revised Constitution on the following pages will supercede all previous issues.

MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

1. AIMS

1.1. The Society exists to promote interest in all aspects of railways, narrow, standard or broad gauge; past, present and future; at home and overseas, by means of monthly meetings and field trips.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1. Membership is open to any person aged 14 and above on payment of the annual subscription.

2.2. Members are entitled to take part in all the Society's activities and receive the Society newsletter.

2.3. Members aged 14 and 15 are classed as Junior Members.

2.4. Honorary Life Membership and/or the non executive positions of President and Vice President may be bestowed upon a member in recognition of special or outstanding services to the Society by vote of the full Committee.

3. COMMITTEE

3.1. Shall consist of not more than 8 members, one of whom is the Chairman.

3.2. The three longest standing Committee members shall offer themselves for re-election at the AGM.

3.3. The officers shall be appointed by the Committee at its first post AGM meeting. Minimum officers shall be: Chairman. Vice-Chairman - to deputise for the Chairman. Meetings Secretary - to organise monthly meetings. General Secretary - to handle general correspondence. Treasurer - to control Society finances and membership records.

3.4. The Committee will meet a minimum of 4 times per year. The quorum for a meeting is 5.

3.5. Nominations for the Committee should be made in writing to the General Secretary prior to the AGM. The Committee may co-opt members if necessary.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

4.1. Each FULL member is required to pay the FULL annual subscription only. REGULAR members shall pay the REGULAR annual subscription and a MEETING subscription for each meeting attended. JUNIORS shall pay one half of the appropriate fee. All subscriptions run from 1st January to 31st December and the amount shall be decided by the Committee.

4.2. In the event of new members joining during the year the following pro-rata rates apply: January-July: Full yearly subscription. September-December: Monthly meeting fee for current year plus full subscription for following year.

4.3. Members not renewing by 31st March, after a reminder, will be deemed to have lapsed.

5. FINANCE

5.1. The funds of the Society shall be used for expenditures as approved by the Committee.

5.2. The accounts shall be presented annually to the AGM and copies distributed to all members.

5.3. Officers expenses shall be submitted currently, with receipts as necessary, and all expenses for the current year should be submitted by 31st December.

5.4. Any single item of capital expenditure in excess of £10.00 to be agreed in advance by the

Committee.

5.5. The annual accounts shall be independently audited by a person outside the Committee and approved by the Committee.

5.6. The Society's Financial Year is 1st January - 31st December.

6. ASSETS

6.1. The Committee shall maintain a complete register of all property owned by the Society (including accessories) its value and its normal keeper or location.

6.2. Society property may only be disposed of by the Committee.

6.3. In the event of closure the disposal of Society assets shall be decided by the membership attending an Extra Ordinary General Meeting.

7. AGM

7.1. The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held in February. Notice of the agenda will be distributed to all members at least two weeks in advance.

8. AMENDMENTS

8.1. The rules of the Society may be changed only at Annual General Meetings by a majority vote of the paid up members. _____

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

Notes and News

VICTORY FOR THAMES

Victory Railways, the MEBO led by Roger McDonald, was the successful bidder for the Thames Trains franchise which was awarded on 19 September but there's a twist in the tail. The backer is the Go Ahead Group of bus companies which has a 65% share of Victory giving it, rather than the existing management team, effective control of the company. This contrasts sharply with the 25% minority holding which First Bus has in Great Western for example.

The Thames franchise, which came into operation at 0200 on October 13, is for 7 years during which Victory pledges to introduce a half hourly Oxford - Paddington service in 1998 and more through trains between Newbury and Paddington from 1999. It also intends to provide better on train accommodation for luggage and bicycles - no doubt the latter promise is aimed at its well known customer from Cookham, Sir George Young, Transport Minister and cyclist! Victory also claims to reduce its need for public subsidy from £33.7 million in 1997/98 to zero in the final year of the franchise - we shall see. There will also be station and security improvements. The Thames Trains name is being retained and there are no plans to apply a new livery to the Turbos in the near future.

Go Ahead, which has its origins in the Tyneside based Northern General bus company, already owns both the City of Oxford and Wycombe Bus Companies and although the former already operates a successful Oxford - London express coach service, the company does not see this as a conflict of interest. Given that the awarding of the Midland Main Line franchise to National Express has been referred to the Monopolies & Mergers Commission because of a similar duplication, it will be interesting to see if this award is also referred.

CHILTERN ORDERS NEW TRAINS

Chiltern has placed its order for 12 three car units to be built by Adtranz at Derby and leased through Porterbrook. They will be known as Class 168 and will be a development of the Class 165/166 Turbos, geared for 100 mph, air-conditioned and with single class accommodation to be known as Club Class.

THE MERLIN HAS FINALLY LANDED

The new livery for Great Western had been a badly kept secret and a long time coming but it's finally in use. The first set to carry the new green and ivory colours went into service on Tuesday 1 October on a diagram covering the up and down Golden Hind Pullmans and a round trip to Bristol in between (1215 ex-Paddington and 1515 return). The power cars are 43183 and 43185, the latter carrying the name Great Western, and are embellished with additional brightwork on the nose. Over the next few years the new colours will be applied to all of GWT's fleet as they are refurbished.

MORE ON NEW EW&SR LOCOS

More details of the new GM built locos for EW&SR are to hand. They will all be known as Class 66, 66 001-220 being the freight version and 66 401-430 the high speed version. WC's head of motive power, Jim Fisk, and GM are working closely on the design which is providing some challenges. WC want an 1800 gallon fuel tank to increase range (the BR norm was around 900-1000 gallons) and availability but weight must be kept down to keep the loco within RA7 availability like the 56, 58 and 60. This means some careful design and GM are tailoring the new locomotive to suit UK conditions and expected loads rather than repackage the current US standard. As a result the alternator will be an AR8 and the motors D43. Both are much lower rated than those originally proposed but are much lighter and will still meet WC's performance specification. The cab will be almost identical to those on the 59 because it already has Railtrack and union approval.

The reasons for not going for AC motors are now clear. In simple terms it was not specified to avoid having to face Railtrack's notorious acceptance procedure. WC feel that whilst AC traction has many advantages in the high-load applications in the US - steep grades and 15000+ ton trains - conditions in the UK would not fully exploit it and was not worth the hassle. Also, in talking to WC in the US it is clear that they have experienced reliability problems with SP owned AC drive locomotives which run through onto their lines. The first two 66/0's will be completed in March 1998 with one coming here and one staying in the US for testing. Production gets under way in the summer of 1998 and will last about three years. The 66/4's will be the last to arrive as they need Railtrack's approval.

This begs the question, if, as seems likely, we are going to get new equipment on the privatised railway is it not going to progress technically beyond the mid-nineties for fear of the Railtrack bureaucrats?

STOPPING THEM AT BOURNE END

In mid-October a substantial red stop block was erected at the end of platform 2 at Bourne End in an effort to stop Turbos from attempting to cross the road. It is opposite the booking hall door and physically prevents more than a two-car unit working to Marlow (Although officially banned, the occasional three-car Turbo has appeared at Marlow in the past). The longer platform 1 has not been equipped as yet.

Thank-you to Mike Walker for Railway Roundabout

LOST CASTLE

Can any reader specify the location of Avondale Castle. Having located all the other 'Castle Class' GWR Locomotives this one 7010 from the last batch of Castles built has so far failed to appear in any reference books that I have researched.

Thank you for your help

Keith Brown

TIMETABLE
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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

1997

Thursday 16th January **MEMBERS PHOTOGRAPHIC EVENING**

Bring your Colour, Black & White prints and slides to our annual photographic evening

Thursday 20th February **AGM**

Thursday 20th March **INDIAN RAILWAYS** **Dr Brandham**

Thursday 17 April **ARMY FILM UNIT**

Thursday 15 May **DIESELISATION** **Dick Hardy**

Thursday 19 June **FILM SHOW** **Frank Branfield**

Thursday 17 July **TBA**

Monday 22 September **DAVID SHEPHERD** **20th Anniversary
Special**
COURT GARDEN

Thursday 16 October **THE HEATHROW EXPRESS** **Danny Martin**

Thursday 20 November **2' GAUGE RAILWAYS** **Fred Pugh**

DAY TRIPS 1997

Saturday 17 May By train to Kidderminster for Severn Valley Railway

Sunday 4 May **FAMILY DAY OUT AT FAWLEY**
20th Anniversary Special

Sunday 6 July By coach to Amberley Chalk Pits Museum

Marlow and District Railway Society
Accounts for year ending 31 December 1995

Income			Expenditure		
Subscriptions					
Full 40@ 10.00 =	400.00				
Ord. 11@ 5.00 =	55.00				
Donation	5.00	460.00			
Newsletter			Printing	50.00	
			Stationary	0.00	
			Postage	7.60	57.60
Meetings			Room Hire	330.00	
Meeting Fees 32 @ 1.00	32.00		Speakers Expenses	70.00	
			Donation	10.00	410.00
Trips/Functions					
Eurostar	1394.00		Eurostar	1394.00	
Manchester	286.00		Manchester	274.30	
(Surplus 11.70)					
Llangollen	444.00		Llangollen	450.00	
(Loss 6.00)					
Pendon	203.50		Pendon	194.00	
(Surplus 9.50)					
Xmas Buffet	165.00		Xmas Buffet/Bar	105.00	
(Surplus 26.09-			Prizes	33.91	
Less room hire)	2492.50				2451.21
Building Society Interest	20.50				
Prizes			Book Tokens	61.50	
					61.50
Club Ties (Loss 73.50)	142.50				216.00
Blue Peter Appeal	12.50				12.50
Officers Expenses			Postage/Telephone	44.12	
					44.12
Total Income	£3160.00		Total Expenditure		£3252.93
On Hand 01/01/95					
Building Society	468.48		Building Society	436.18	
Cheque Book	62.00		Cheque Book	2.00	
Cash	2.25		Cash	1.62	
	532.73			439.80	

I therefore record a loss of £92.93 for the year 1995, although 17 unsold MDRS ties remain on hand representing £127.50

P D Robins, Treasurer

HUNGARY 150

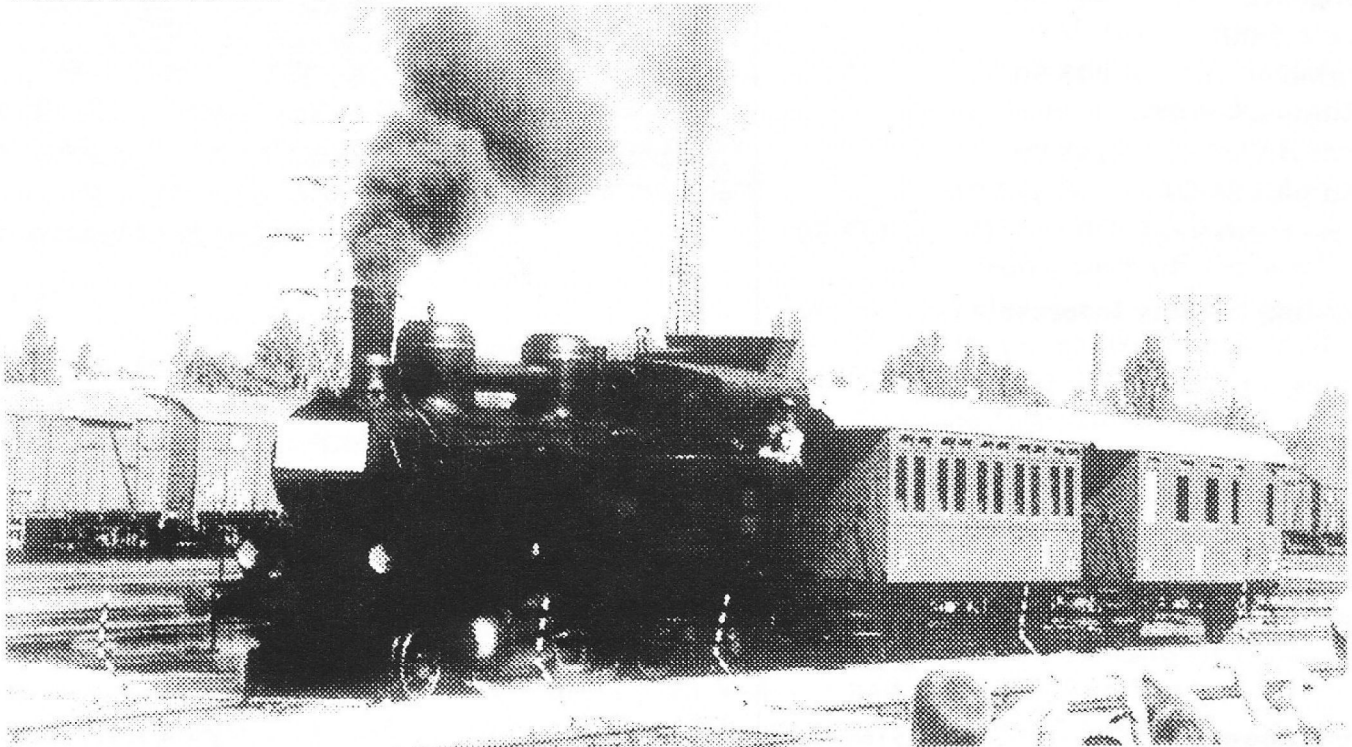
1996 is the 150th anniversary of the start of the Hungarian Railways and celebrations have been taking place during the year which have included a Grand Parade of locomotives, carriages and wagons at Budapest Angyafold Station on 12th July. It included vehicles from many European Countries ranging from the earliest existing Austrian locomotive, (Licaon built 1851) and Hungarian 0 - 6- 0 No 269 built 1870 through to a Fiat built Pendolino tilting train from Italy.

Additionally , numerous specials have been run in conjunction with the festivities and M.A.V - the Hungarian State Railways - are clearly taking preservation of their historical equipment very seriously indeed. Restoration is to a high standard and the shops at Istantelek Muheley overhaul locomotives from Hungary and other countries whilst Eszaki Roundhouse also in Budapest, houses historic vehicles. The fleet includes such coaches as a superb teak finish dining car of 1912 vintage which carries folding brass candle sconces in the interior doors.

It is only possible to show a small selection of the parade exhibits which included the re-streamlined German Pacific, the Golsdorf 2 - 6 - 4 Austrian express locomotive, the Roumanian built 2 - 8 - 4 of Austrian design, amongst many others.

The four photos show a cross section of the locomotives which took part in the parade.

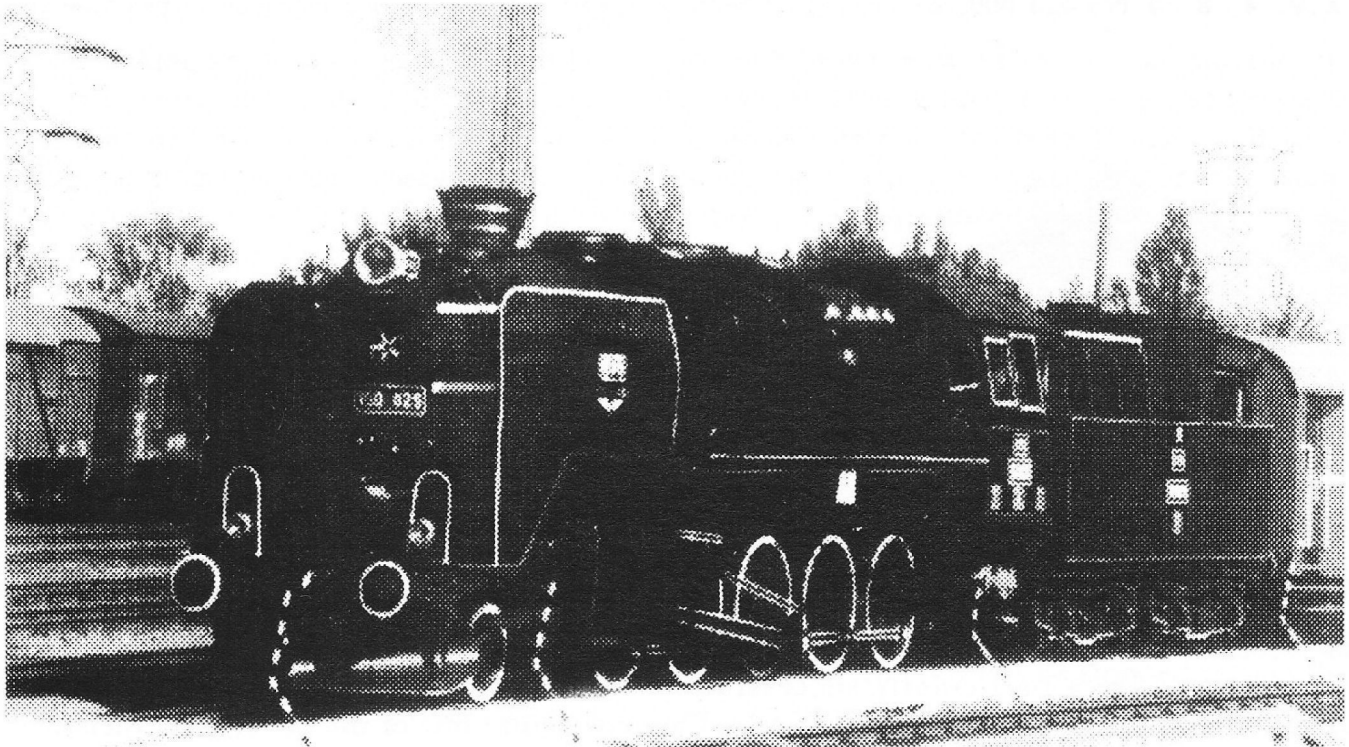
Vienna Stadtbahn 2 - 6 - 2 T.



Locomotive No 30.33 is one of a class of over 200 locomotives built from 1895 for use mainly on suburban trains on lines such as the Vienna Stadtbahn, although some fitted with the Holden's oil firing system worked on the Aalborg line with its heavy gradients.

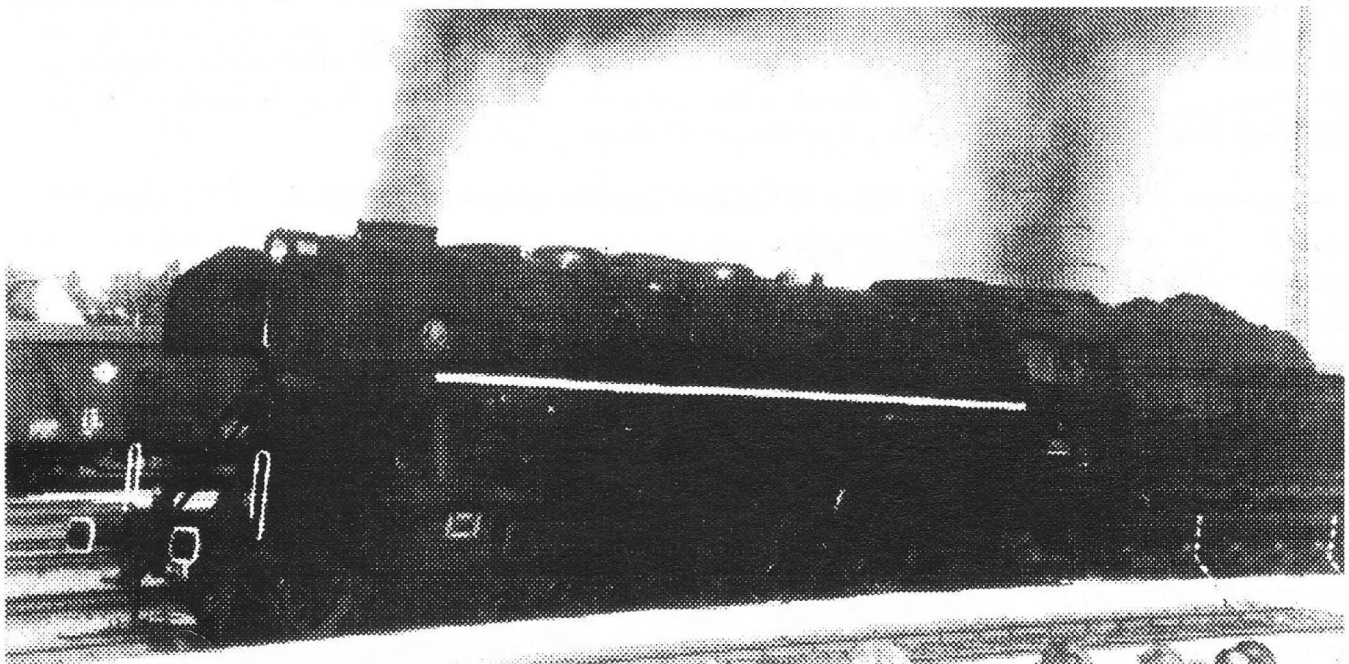
They were designed by the great Austrian engineer Golsdorf as 2 Cylinder Compounds with 195psi (13bar) boiler pressure and driving wheels 4 x 3 diameter. Their maximum rated speed was 36 m.p.h. and naturally enough in a class of this size numerous variations in detail design took place. The stovepipe chimney was not part of the original design, whilst the hopper type bunker on this particular locomotive extends above the cab roof. 30.33 ran also on the Ko Flacherbahn and units worked there until the 1960's. Nowadays she is shedded at the Strasshof-Vienna, a large steam shed in the suburbs devoted to steam preservation and containing an important collection of Austrian and German locomotives.

S.N.C.F.R. Roumanian 2 - 10 - 0 No 150.025.

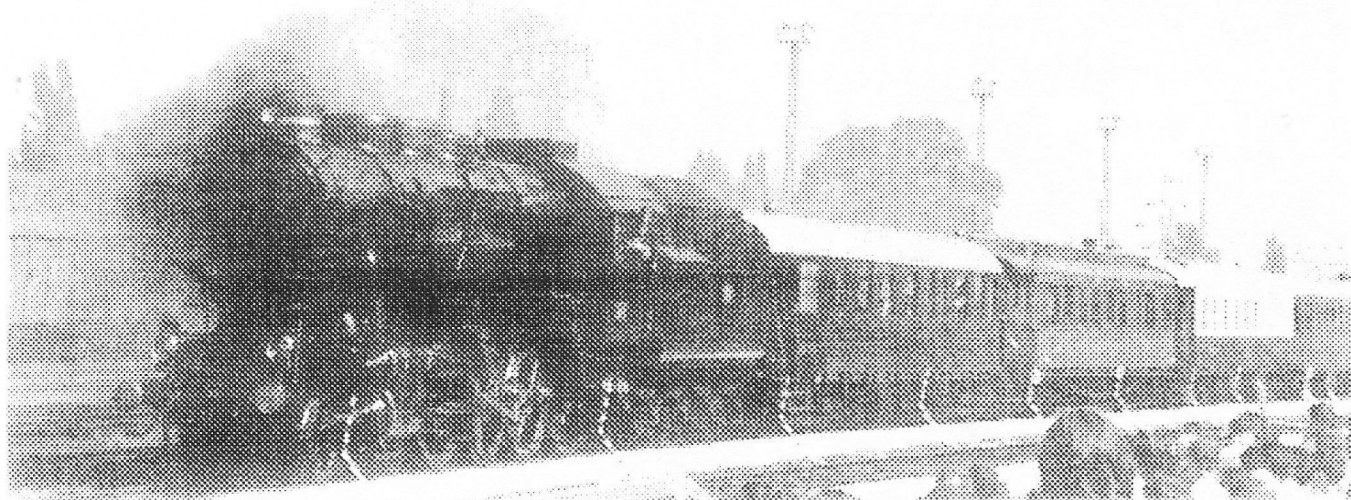


Designed for heavy freight usage No. 150.025 was built at the Resita works in 1951 during the final years of steam in Roumania. With a speed limit of 48 m.p.h, locomotives of this design could be seen working freights in the Carpathian mountains.

Czech State Railway 4 - 8 - 2 Locomotive No 498.106.



Locomotive No 498.106 of the Czech State Railways was one of the magnificent 4 - 8 - 2 express locomotives built by Skoda, the second in the parade being No 498.104 from Slovakia. The original series starting with 498.001 were outshopped from 1946, they were followed by the series on display in 1954 - 1955. They handled the fastest trains in the country and on the 27th August 1964, 498.106 ran at 162 km/hr on trials. For over 20 years they ran the express services alongside the lighter class 4751. Their tenders had a four wheel truck leading three rigid axles, a concept used on some American locomotives. Paint colour of both locomotive and tender was a dark blue.



This locomotive is one of a large class of heavy mixed traffic locomotives built from 1924 - 1958. They were a particularly successful class of locomotive earning the nickname BUFFALO because of their hauling power. The high centre line of the boiler gives them a powerful appearance, particularly when associated with the large Ister exhaust system. It is understood that nearly 50 of these fine machines still exist.

The locomotive hauled the most modern preservation train, complete with bogie corridor coaches and four wheelers with open gangways. An interesting older train exists called the 100 year old train although the average vehicle age is now 112 years.

The Hungarians are to be congratulated on organising an impressive International parade celebrating 150 years of history which went off with barely a hitch in superb weather conditions; it will be long remembered by those who were present .

Eddie Lewcock

THE STEEL RAILS OF PORT TALBOT

Mike Walker

One of the great things about being self employed in the rail-enthusiast hobby is the opportunities that arise. In early August I was lucky enough to be able to spend a day inside the Port Talbot works of British Steel, officially to cover the departure for Thame of their last surviving ALCo S1 switcher for a couple of American magazines but I also got the chance to explore and photograph this extensive and busy industrial operation - normally strictly off-limits to rail enthusiasts.

Steel making in Port Talbot dates back to the turn of the century but was originally undertaken by the Port Talbot Steel Co. at a works on the west side of the present Port Talbot Parkway station and the Margam Steel Co. just to the south. These eventually became the Steel Company of South Wales and after the Second World War they commenced the development of the present Abbey Works on a virgin site between the South Wales Main Line (SWML) and the sea, south of town. It is an "integrated" works, that is to say it undertakes the whole process from blast furnace to finished steel products leaving the plant. It was designed to service the post-war expansion of the car and canning industries and therefore its principle product is steel strip.

Today the site is owned by British Steel plc and is enormous, nearly 10 miles long and over 2 miles wide (When the ALCo left, it took half an hour just to circle and leave the north end of

the site!), employs 4000 people - down from 16000 in nationalised days - and currently produces around 80,000 tonnes of steel A WEEK!

To keep all this operating the works has its own extensive internal railway system. This is split into three divisions, Hot Metal, Cold Metal and Finished Product. Raw materials, iron ore, limestone, coal, sulphur, etc., arrive by sea at the work's own port and jetty capable of taking the largest bulk carriers and is stockpiled ready for use, movement to the blast furnaces and coke making plants being by conveyor systems. A Railtrack line enters this area and is used several times daily by EW&S who operate block trains of bogie-tippers hauled by Class 60's which take ore to Port Talbot's sister plant at Llanwern near Newport.

Rail activity starts at the two blast furnaces. The iron produced here is removed in huge, 80' long torpedo-shaped hot metal cars. There are various versions of these but loaded they typically weigh 250-300 tonnes and are carried on four 6-wheel bogies. When the furnace is ready to be tapped a car is pushed under and pouring begins. When full, the pour is plugged and the car removed and another immediately takes its place - the casting is a continuous process - with a total cycle time of around 10 minutes. The torpedo cars emerging from the furnace area is an awesome sight and experience. The cars are not capped and flame gushes from the filler hole. The heat is so intense you can feel it (even sitting in a car) from 50' away and a shimmering heat haze surrounds the car. It would be fair to assume that the car would be quickly moved to the next part of the process but no, it is parked and left ready for the next car to join it and maybe a third. There seemed to be no real urgency to move these fiery monsters and I'm told it is possible to leave them for several hours - indeed the contents stay molten enough to pour for up to 48 hours!

But.... What happens if the bearings at the car ends seize up and you can't pour it? It happens quite often it seems. The cure is to let it go solid then cut the entire car in two and, with a loco on each end, pull it apart like a giant Christmas cracker and allow the contents to drop out. This is then returned to "the pot" and the two halves are taken to the Boiler Shop where they are re-united and relined with refractory material - hey-presto, it's as good as new!

From the other side of the blast furnace slag is put into large ladles supported in cradles on a well wagon and taken away to be dumped alongside temporary trackage near the sea. We didn't get to see this vision of hell-on-earth though.

The torpedo cars eventually discharge their loads at the BOF Plant where Basic Oxygen Furnaces convert the iron into steel which is poured directly and cast as a continuous slab which cools as it progresses and is laser-cut into handy pieces. Handy? Typically these are up to about 50 tones in weight! Previously the steel was cast into ingots and then reheated before rolling into slabs and then finish rolling.

The Cold Metal division now takes over and moves these huge slabs around the site. This is done using a variety of cars. Some are the strange four-wheeled buggies coupled in sets of five with an adaptor car at each end once used to move the ingots, the well wagon frames once used to carry slag ladles and the beefiest flat cars you ever saw. Not all the slabs move directly to the rolling mill, there is a stock yard at the north end of the site where drag-line excavators, their buckets replaced by electro-magnets, toss these huge slabs around like pieces of card. Some of the slabs are sold by BSC either for use as is or finishing by other steel companies. During our visit a shipment was being readied for export to the USA. We couldn't help but muse as to whether it would return next year shaped like a Class 61!

Most of the slabs are moved eventually into the strip rolling mill, a two mile long building clearly visible from the SWML or the M4. After much squeezing and rolling it finally becomes finished steel plate or coil ready for the customer. Much leaves the site by road but a large amount is loaded onto Railtrack acceptable cars and moved through the "Knuckle Yard" to Margam Yard at the south end of the complex for interchange with EW&S.

The system operates with a fleet of distinctive diesel-electric locomotives. There are two main types, a small 0-4-0 and a larger Bo-Bo. All were originally built by Brush and the smaller units are rated at 335hp and were built between 1955 and 1957. They are numbered 501-514 and several have been modified as cabless slaves working paired to un-modified units, rather like the old BR Class 13's. Many are currently in store and are called "Willies" by the staff - "Will 'e pull it or won't 'e"! In appearance they closely resemble the experimental unit supplied by Brush to BR in 1957 as D2999.

The bigger units fall into two groups plus some rebuilds. 901-910 date from 1955-59, weigh 72-75 tons and have 515hp Rolls-Royce engines whilst 951-953, although identical to look at, weigh 88 tons and pack 750hp. They were built in 1957. These units have a slightly American look with a short hood behind the cab and a hump-backed long hood like an exaggerated EMD switcher and sound really superb - not unlike an elderly EMD in the 'States. Looking at the ALCo with my back to the action I felt I was a lot further west! During the mid-eighties three of the 901 class were rebuilt by Hunslet-Barclay with much lower hoods covering Cummins prime-movers. 907-909 are now 07-09 but the rebuilding will not be extended as they are deemed inferior to the originals!

Several locomotives are no longer on the site. The 701 class was a 400hp 0-6-0DE which, you will not be surprised to hear, was almost a copy of the 08 supplied by Brush. They were a fairly short lived part of the fleet as their rigid coupled wheelbase proved unsuitable to local conditions resulting in a number of derailments. But for me the stars of the show were the ALCo's. Five were supplied in 1950 and were, like the EMD SW1001 at Merehead, pure American domestic 660hp model S1 Bo-Bo's with only the buffers and drawgear as a concession to local needs. Because of the location many British enthusiasts were unaware of their existence. They last ran in the mid-eighties and two, 802 and 805, have been scrapped. 801 has gone to a private site in Shropshire, 804 is at Railworld in Peterborough whilst 803 (which bears the builder number 77777) is now being restored to active condition at Thame.

All the fleet, past and present, wears a smart livery of bright blue with yellow ends and cabs covered by black wasp stripes. Numbers are boldly displayed in big black digits on white panels each end and on the cab side so they can be easily spotted by the TV cameras used to assist the controller who directs operations by radio. All are kept fairly clean and well maintained, indeed 803 despite being idle for ten years was kept under cover, drained and in a remarkably good state of repair. The on-site locomotive shed can handle any repair.

Casual visitors to Port Talbot will not see much. Nobody gets beyond the main gate, which is the other side of the SWML, without a reason and an escort. There are no public roads around the perimeter of the complex from which shots can be had. However, applications by responsible groups such as ours are considered so it might be something different for a Society visit - if you're interested, lobby the committee! But for now I must record my thanks to George Matthews and Brian Evans of BSC's Transport Division at Port Talbot for making us so welcome, answering an endless stream of questions and allowing us to roam around this fascinating system.

EDITORS DETAILS

Donkey Editor, John Tuck,

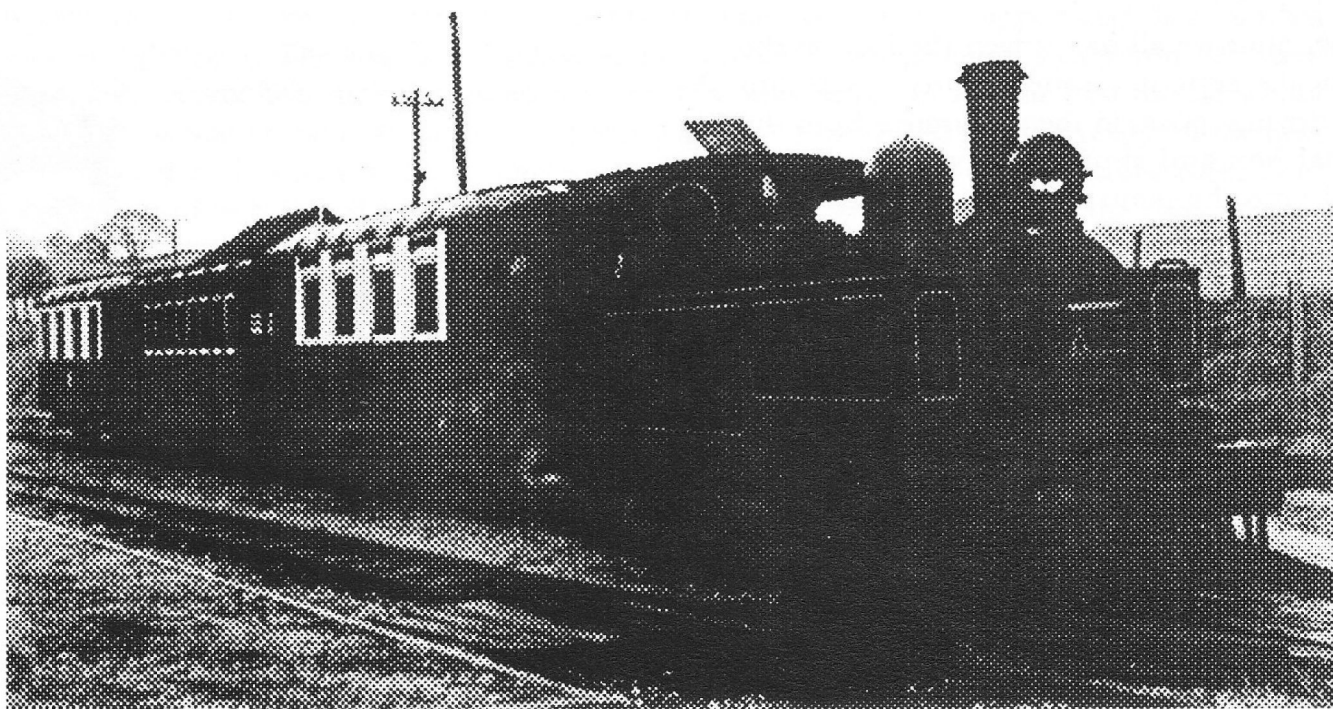
35A Danywern Drive, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks RG41 5NS

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WELSHPOOL AND LLANFAIR DRIVING EXPERIENCE.

A drizzly day, a damp drive up from our pleasant hotel in Welshpool to the rather well set up new mess and sleeping quarters for voluntary workers on the Welshpool & Llanfair Railway. This was the start of an interesting day which would culminate in a chance to drive a locomotive from Llanfair to Castle Caerinion and back. The line conceived in the mid-late nineteenth century and opened in 1903 has always been one of those fascinating minor railways. During its working life the Earl and the Countess locomotives were the mainstay of the line, but since preservation several other types have appeared since the official closure in 1956.

It was raised from complete desecration and destruction by a band of volunteers who, in 1957 under the inspired leadership of the late Sir Thomas Salt, managed to re-establish the beginnings of a workable preservation line with a minimal bank account. A major setback to the early restoration of the line occurred when the viaduct over the River Banwy was swept away in December 1964. Fortunately Sir Thomas fixed the Army to carry out major rebuild of the structure.



The object on the day I went was to give 4 people a driving course on this very wheely, windy line using the Sierra Leone Hunslet 2 - 6 - 2 as motive power for a train of ex Austrian coaches. Our four included my son and a husband and wife team from Sutton Coldfield who were deeply into locomotive driving both large and small.

At 9am. all four of us presented ourselves in the rig of the day for a coffee and general introduction to the risks and need for safety on the line. In this day and age of Health and Safety no one ignores what is said with impunity. Some advice seems unnecessary on the surface but has an inner significance only understood when a real emergency arises!

Following coffee and theoretical instruction we got down to the real thing and here I make a point - do not imagine if you have driven a locomotive before that the new one will behave in a similar manner. The steady rain made this engine light footed and skittish but one advantage was present, we had a steam chest pressure gauge fitted in the cab.

To the uninitiated this means that you get a clear picture of what the steam is doing when going into the cylinders and as the movement of the regulator has little relationship to the steam supply a gauge, as provided on only certain engines, is a great help to the driver. As a

for instance, I quickly learnt that in wet weather on this light engine it was impossible to put in more than 35-40 psi if wheel slip was not to occur in full forward or reverse gear.

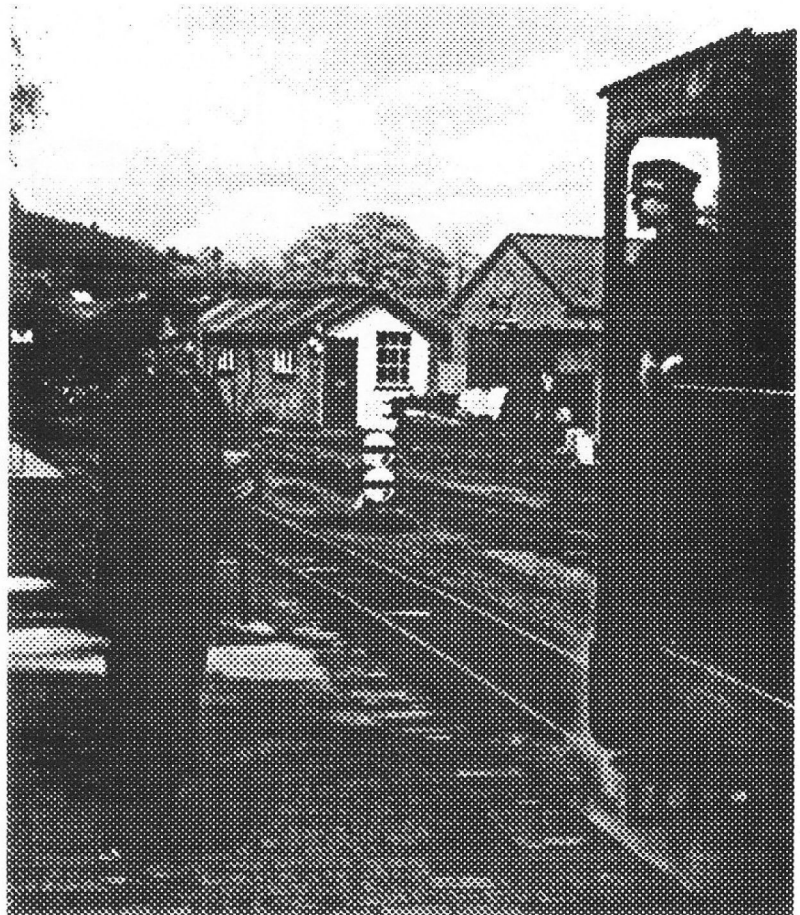
Our first run was up and down the yard to get a general feel of the locomotive, just a few minutes run each way. Starting with drain cocks open, full fore gear (or reverse), the regulator was cracked open gently, watching the steam chest pressure and waiting for things to happen. As they do - it may be necessary to check back the regulator to be sure that slipping does not occur.

After a few yards forward movement, close drain cock and wait for locomotive to pick up speed. On the first run of course with a light engine, a few pounds of steam suffice to take it down a yard to the shunting limits.

A gentle application of the vacuum brake brings the vacuum gauge back from the 21 vacuum setting to about 15 which is quite enough for normal stopping. On the first run, after stopping, the reverser was moved fully in the opposite direction and the regulator opened gently again after a quick blow on the whistle. No engine or train should start without the whistle being blown first.

Soon, after we all had driven the loco in the yard, the serious business starts. Up into the driving position then clearance from the signal box and shunter, forward from the yard onto the main line with cylinder cocks open. Stop, reverse, signal from the box, open regulator to set back gently onto the train, a move always watched with interest by any spectators, all eyes are on YOUR handling of the locomotive.

With the fire nice and bright - not your responsibility today- reverser in full gear, signal from the box, then from the Guard, you start, again gently opening the regulator, watching the steam chest gauge, ease back a shade as the pressure rises but be ready to quickly reopen it if the pressure falls. Listen to the exhaust, if all is well, let the engine gather speed but be ready to shut down if a slip occurs. Once clear of the station and down the first straight, past a lot of stored vehicles you can get up to 15 mph, but after a right hand curve a bridge approaches - 5 mph over the bridge please - shut down regulator, gently on with the brake until you judge that the train is going at a very quick walking pace, ease off the brake to 21 and coast over the bridge till all coaches are across. Right driver up to 15mph again, so the regulator is opened and with the speed rising, the cut off is brought to about 30% of the piston stroke after which the supply is cut off by the valves and the steam expanded in the cylinder. This is necessary for steam economy. Drift down here, driver is the call as we start down a short 1:70 easing to about 1:333 so the regulator is shut and the cut off lengthened to about 60%.



Easy driver this is Dolrhyd Corn Mill coming up, 5mph and whistle. A last minute change in the building of the line moved it from a nice route between the farm and the road to a very sharp 3 chain deviation curve between the mill and the river Banwy. A water tower with

disused ram pump still stands nearby but is not used by the railway.

After braking and coasting gently round the curve with brakes now off and a quick wave to the locals the regulator and cut off are adjusted for a steady 15mph till the slowing and whistling for Heniarth Gate where a stop is made with the vacuum dropped to about 15 again. By now a rapport is developing between you and the locomotive which is very necessary as the line is anything but straight and level. Over the various bridges a 5mph speed limit is in force and an unexpected and rather long delay occurred on most runs each way that day due to 2 aimless sheep who knew how to get into the fenced line but did not know how to get off. The zig zag sheep gallop causes the day to end one and a half hours late!

Whilst the first train run was divided into four sections so that we each had a reasonably lengthy drive on a run to Castle Caerinion and back, the real fun began after a very good lunch in the mess room, when each of us drove the train to Castle and back.

Interest is increased after the 7th milepost from Welshpool on the climb to Castle, four and three quarter miles from there. The gradients vary with 1:56 and 1:62 on the lower stretches culminating in a stretch of 1:32 just before Castle itself. With the speed restrictions, curves, gradients, whistle calls etc the driver's time is fully occupied. All roads are crossed using flagmen and with caution, the final one at Castle requiring the train to be stopped still on the 1:32 whilst the gate is opened and a flagman again posted.

The little Hunslet loco performed very well and proved a good engine to drive. The driver's vacuum brake valve was very positive in operation and the whole experience was very stimulating. The line provides a real training ground for driving skills as situations were constantly changing, unlike some lines where the regulator is just about opened and shut with no change of cut off from one end of the line to another. One day I will get back again and experience that feeling of satisfaction after a grimy day, on an interesting engine working on a challenging line.

Eddie Lewcock

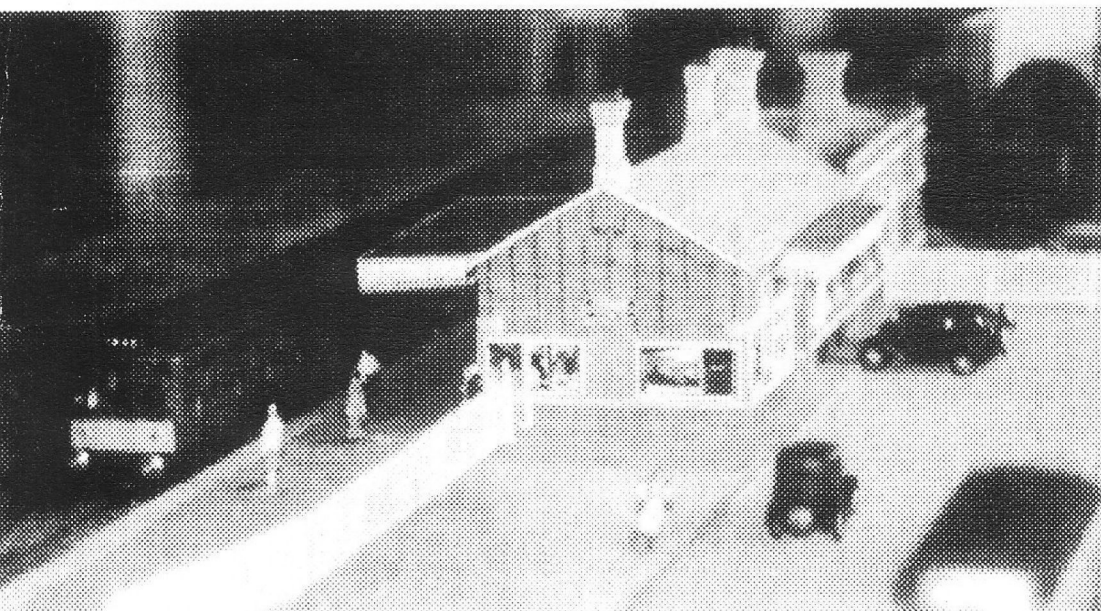
OLD MARLOW STATION REVISITED

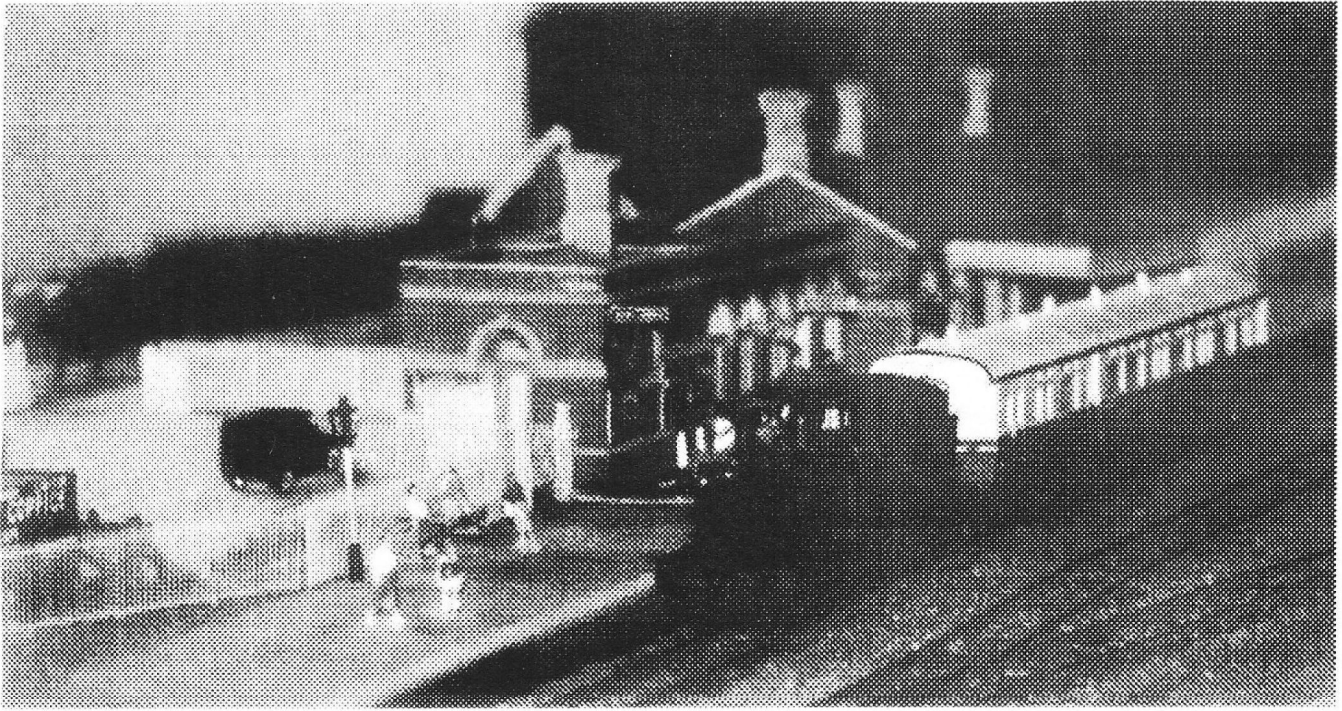
1968 saw the sad end to the original Marlow station as developers tore down the old buildings to pave way for what is now the Thames Industrial Estate. As you are all aware the current station is on what used to be a coal siding with a simple platform and modern brick shelter. For an all to brief moment the old station came alive again on the August Bank holiday (26/7/96) as the club model formed part of a display for the Marlow British Legion.

This arose from a request to the club to contribute to a charity event on that day. A few committee members scratched their heads for a while before our very own Mr Robins came to

the rescue. "What about the club layout" he said. To which some of us newer members retorted "What club layout?" It transpired that a complete working layout circa 1930/40 lay unused in the depths of one ex. chairmans loft.

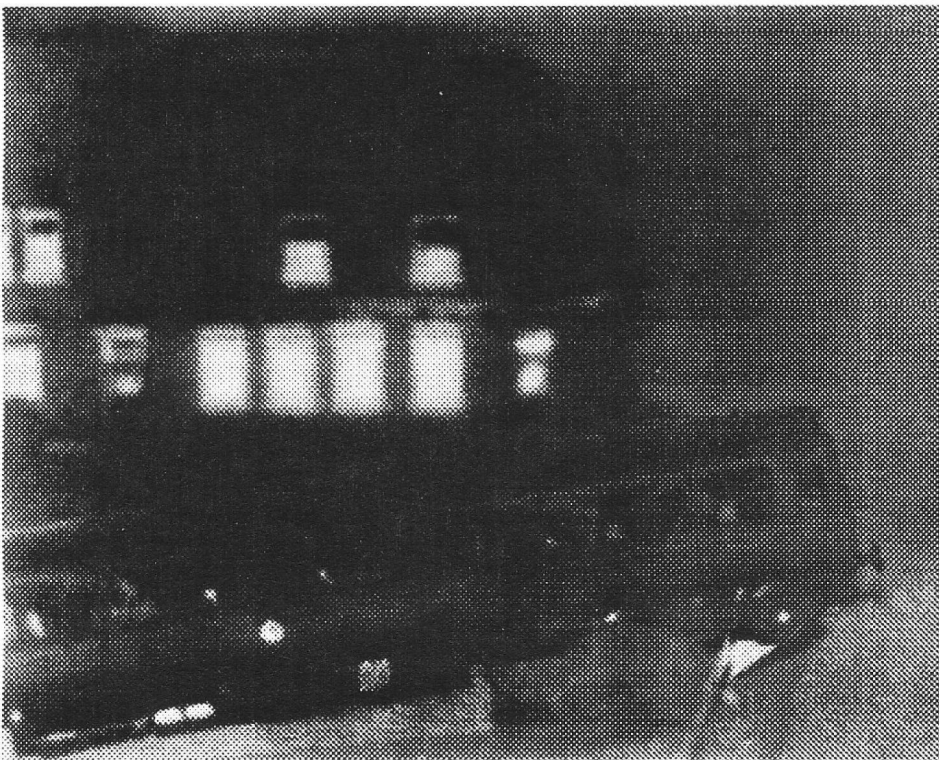
As per the normal course of events in





these situations the model was duly retrieved, squeezed, literally section by section into three cars and taken to the Legion on the eve of the event. Next followed assembly on the upper concourse of the area where we meet and thanks to the quality of the workmanship, a little track cleaning quickly saw train operations after a lapse of seven years!

The club does not own any rolling stock but this was not a problem as the LPD and the C&W works of Messers HEARD and ROBINS produced a collection of authentic GWR locos, an auto trailer, numerous wagons, a bubble car and a three car DMU. (and for the benefit of M Walker the DMUs now have white cab roofs). As will be appreciated our resources allowed us to run a series of prototypical trains from steam days through to when a solitary single car DMU shuttled to and fro from Bourne End. WE WERE EVEN ABLE TO HIT THE BUFFERS!!



The event itself ran very well, the quality and detail of the layout receiving constant praise from those visitors of sufficient maturity to remember the old station. It was particularly interesting to hear remarks from local people who remembered the staff or where they first met their husband or wife etc. The station was certainly a focal point in the good old days!

For the benefit of our membership we do hope to get the layout running again in the near future.

RAILWAYS ON THE INTERNET

I realise that most of our members will not have access to the internet but as this article will explain the range of information is so great I am sure you will find the subject of interest. Firstly a brief explanation of the internet. It is a method which allows computers to 'talk' to each other by using phone lines and a common language. The millions of pages that can be visited (the image that appears on your computer screen) could be on a computer anywhere in the world, we can access all these for the cost of a local phone call.

Internet: The collection of all the connected networks (computers) in the world.

WWW (World Wide Web): browsers that display text and graphics accessed over the Internet.

When I am on the internet I can search for pages of interest (surfing the net) and if I search for railways it will give me a list of over 5,000 pages! So when searching it is best to be specific ie. Garden Railways or better still if you have an address of the page you wish to visit you can go straight to that page such as the ARPS UK Railway Preservation Pages whose address is: <http://www.uel.ac.uk/pres/1278/Rly-Pres/info.html>. This is one of the most informative UK railway sites (a place where the pages are kept) and it highlights the real benefits of the internet.

UK Heritage Railways

These pages are produced in association with **The Association of Independent Railways and Preservation Societies Ltd**

My thanks to the **University of East London** for allowing these pages to be made available on their server.

- UK Heritage Railways**
- Other UK Railway Pages**
- Events Diary**
- Latest News**
- Railways Around The World**
- Locomotives Database**
- Preservation Picture Gallery**

These pages are intended to provide a guide to all UK heritage railways, preserved locomotives, preservation societies and railway museums in the UK. Like many things on the web it is constantly changing, as is the railway preservation scene itself. If anyone has details of any web sites or railway sites and events they would like to see here, please email M.Dewell@uel.ac.uk with the

Through these pages you can gain information on all preservation centres in the UK and abroad including; timetables, events, stock details and location details including how to get there, most have a brief history and some such as the Severn Valley have full details of all the stations including a short history for each, details of other nearby attractions and of course membership details. Railway timetables are available for the UK and other parts of the world, locomotive databases, garden railways and model railways are just a few of the subjects covered.











Imagine, you are going on holiday or off for the weekend. You can find all the information you will need by looking at the relevant pages, these can then be printed out to take with you or saved as text files, distribution with some exceptions. The laws of copyright are unclear and difficult to enforce on the WWW. As long as the

UK Railway Preservation Sites










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- [Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway](#)  [NRE](#)
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- [East Anglian Railway Museum](#)  [Std](#)

Part of the list of UK Railway preservation sites. Underlined text can be clicked on (selected) this will take you to another page giving further information. Note the use of symbols to denote gauge, running line(coach) etc.

until the Santa Steamings, so to visit the Severn Valley it had to be the first Sunday of the holiday. Of course I printed out the timetable whilst visiting their pages. Looking this up on the internet was quicker and cheaper than phoning round.

A closing note; by the time you read this article it will be out of date, pages on the web can be updated at anytime monthly, weekly or daily. How can a printed publication keep up with this?

The following was downloaded as a text file

Severn Valley Railway

Membership - How To Get Here -

Other Information - Timetables & Events -

Latest News

information is not sold for profit or kept for personal use.

Most pages have links to other pages, these might be in the same location (on the same computer) or on the other side of the world. Links are a word or an image on a page that you click on to take you to another page ie. if I was on the ARPS page and clicked on the words National Railway Museum or a image which maybe the museum logo, by this action I would then be connected to the NRM pages. Finding information is this easy.

I found this access to information very useful recently. It was half term week and we were off to Ironbridge, it had come to my attention that some schools were off the week before ours. So on to the internet to check out tourist information and railway timetables, I am glad I did as most tourist attractions including preserved railways were opening the week before our half term and in the case of the railways closing

be the first Sunday of the holiday. Of course I printed out the timetable whilst visiting their pages. Looking this up on the internet was quicker and cheaper than phoning round.

Bridgnorth Station was where in 1967, on rusted and heavily overgrown tracks, the pioneer members of the SVR first conquered the world by running a steam locomotive of their own - the first since BR pulled out five years earlier. Today on the same site, the railway has its own extensive engineering workshops, boiler works and motive power depot housing anything up to 16 working steam locomotives at a time, employs 14 full time engineering staff, and operates a thriving business in contract locomotive overhauls and repairs.

Hampton Loade station was the terminus of SVR steam operations from Bridgnorth from 1970 to 1974, when the railway only ran four and a half miles. Volunteers of the SVR Society spent three years extensively renovating the derelict 1862-vintage station building before it could be used again.

Idyllic Highley station lives in a time capsule of the 1860'2 - the perfect epitome of a country byway station of the old Great Western Railway. Like Arley, it has won the hearts and souls of countless film producers, appearing regularly on screens large and small. Only the 'Coronation Street' terraces in Highley village, a mile away, betray that here was once a big local coal mining industry, with five pits employing almost 1,000 miners. The last, at nearby Alveley, closed in 1969. The Severn Valley Country Park and Nature Reserve, managed by Shropshire County and Bridgnorth District Councils, shares a common car park with the railway, only a hundred yards or so from the station. A colliery pithead wheel in the Country Park stands as a permanent monument to the miners of Highley village, but otherwise there is scant trace of the sidings, cable inclines and aerial ropeways which brought coal from Billingsley, Kinlet, Alveley and Highley collieries down to the railway for onward shipment.

Arley, perhaps the most picturesque riverside village served by the 16 mile Severn Valley Railway. You've probably seen the station on television many times without realising it (currently featured in the BBC comedy series 'Oh! Dr. Beeching') - Arley has been a favourite haunt of film-makers for many years, from classical BBC dramas to big box-office hits. It's hard to imagine that until 1974 when it was re-opened by SVR volunteers, this award-winning station and track had been a weed-ridden wilderness for 11 years. Victoria Bridge, Arley, is without doubt, the SVR's most famous landmark. Immortalised in the film 'The Thirty Nine Steps' starring Robert Powell (the fugitive Richard Hannay is seen swinging from it!) - it is now over 130 years old, and when built in 1861 was the biggest cast iron span in the world.

Bewdley Station - the SVR's 'HQ' - was a country junction opened in 1862, which up until the Beeching closures of the 1960's, served branches to Tenbury and Stourport. Today, it's the location of Wribbenhall Junction - one of the most comprehensive working model railway layouts anywhere in the UK - and fittingly enough, it's to be found inside a former British Railways coach parked beside the buffet.

Kidderminster Town Station - where most people's adventure on the Severn Valley Railway begins. The terminus building is a classic example of century-old Great Western Railway architecture - but was actually only built in 1984. Kidderminster Railway Museum, approached from the station platforms, is a 'time warp' of how trains used to be in the days before the 'High Speed Train'. Try your hand at pulling signals and sending 'bell-code' messages down the line to the next signalbox, or just take a seat in the coffee bar and drink in the remarkable treasure trove of priceless relics and steam age antiquities.

This page continued with Membership information, How to get there, Special events and phone numbers for further information.

John Tuck

FAR RAILS IN HIDDEN PORTUGAL.

by E. W. Lewcock.

It was a hint in the Tour Guide that at Amarante, a small town tucked away near the Duoro River in Northern Portugal, that there was a chance of a narrow gauge rail trip. The tour was linked to the older and to the less frequented parts of Portugal, of which there are many and an out of the way rail trip was worth a try.

Following quick research at a station en-route an out and back run was confirmed, so that on the Sunday Mary and I set off to the station, found tucked away at the back of Amarante, very well painted but firmly locked, bolted and barred even including the Homens (Gents to you). However there on the metre gauge track, silent but much in service, stood one Nohah Railcar complete with both first and standard accommodation. One elderly Portuguese gent on the platform, who spoke no English was accosted by self, who spoke no Portuguese, with the exception of por favor, bilhete (ticket), ida e volta (return). Gesticulations indicated that tickets would be sold on the train, and this proved to be correct and we paid just over £1 per head for a return for 25 minutes run each way first class!

Soon a few more of our group arrived and all eight first class seats were taken, a rarity I suspect on this line, which had originally sauntered off from Livracao va Amarante (about 8 miles) to some remote spot called Celorica de Basto.

Eventually a senior official - well he had the keys to the Loo - arrived and a minute before departure time, both engines burst into life. At the start we ran past a Goods Yard, then squealed off round a sharp curve to enter complete countryside with vineyards and olive trees coming right up to the trackside. We gently trundled our way at about 20m.p.h past farmhouses with washing hanging out whilst old men chopped up wood or dried out the corn cobs. With much play on the horn we crossed unmade tracks and soon swung round a hillside to get a glorious view of the river down in the valley, way beneath us. This being Portugal, the ancient and modern vie with each other; on a previous day having watched a load of bracken move down the road with four legs beneath it, one could turn to a hole in the wall which asked what language you spoke and was more up-to-date than most bank versions in Wycombe or Marlow! Sure enough, having travelled through pure antiquity on the train, we suddenly came upon a brand new riverside hotel with outdoor pool, water slides, shutters, sunloungers etc - but no visible sign of any guests!

Pleasant vistas opened up along most of the run; dogs barked, children waved and John Betjamen would, I feel, have willingly accepted the railcar in the circumstances. The prime use of the guard's flag was to prop open the door of the driver's compartment for mutual companionship!

Eventually we ran past a small disused turntable, several maintenance wagons and hints of civilisation before running into a bay platform at Livracao, where, with a little more enterprise I could have taken train for Oporto or Tua and back, both trains arriving and leaving during the time we stayed there. It being Sunday and the time of Mass, the only local cafe was closed.

The C.P. (State Railways) seemed well used when I looked in at other broad gauge stations, the coastal line having a frequent service of electric trains, both multiple units and loco hauled, the latest batch of 43 locomotives of over 6000 H.P. having been supplied from 1993. Narrow gauge still exists between Vila Real and Regua, for instance but I got the impression that buses may be used on some services. This said, the N. G. railcar seen at Vila Real was extremely up to date even if the traffic might be light.

All too soon our return trip started and the photo shows one of the many pick-up platforms and shelters seen along the line. To me the journey was pure Emmet and one which ended all too soon, with the station homens at Amarente, now securely locked again of course!

MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

1995 AGM

Held on Thursday 15th February 1996 at 8pm at The Royal British Legion Hall, Marlow.

Chairman: Mike Walker

Apologies for absence: Alan Wheeler (whose letter was read out by the Secretary), Mark Hopwood and Bob Young.

In Attendance 27 Members.

The minutes of the 1994 AGM which had been published in 'The Marlow Donkey' were agreed and accepted.

Chairman's Report

It had been a good year for speakers and talks which included a selection from the Ken Nunn Collection, Dick Hardy's recollections of Stewarts Lane Depot, talks on the Llangollen Railway and also Bridges & Viaducts.

During a very hot July, Tim Speechly had given a show on Scottish Industrial Locos whilst later in the year Colin Miell gave a talk on the I.O.M. Pip Berston had spoken on Peru and Sri Lanka, whilst a vintage USA steam slide collection had been shown by Tim Jarvis. December had seen our 'Xmas Do'.

Four trips included: Manchester, East Lancs and mushy peas on one occasion, whilst later a trip on Eurostar to Paris was successful. Llangollen was visited on a glorious day and a vintage bus was used one evening on an outing to Pendon.

Thanks were extended to members of the committee and reference made to John Tuck taking over as Editor.

The Chairman was standing down after eight years in the Chair and also serving eighteen years on the committee. He was concerned about apathy and falling attendances, including outings. He felt that we should do more to welcome new members.

Bob Young was also standing down at the same time due to pressure of work.

Treasurers Report

The Treasurer presented his report. We had made a financial loss of £92.93 last year but had a stock of ties which partially offset this. Alan Morris and Tim Speechley proposed and seconded adoption of the report.

Secretary's Report

A review was made of the coming evening meetings and outings.

New Committee Members

A written application had been received from Gordon Rippington, proposed by Keith Brown and seconded by Bas Woodward.

A second application from Julian Heard was proposed by Brian Sparrow and seconded by Ernie Dove.

As no other candidates stood, they were duly elected to the committee at whose next meeting the officers' positions will be agreed in line with the constitution.

At this point in the meeting Mike Norris intervened to stress the importance of the Chairman's post and to thank Mike Walker for all his work in the past. The Chairman then proposed a trawl of the floor regarding the new position of Chairman. It was pointed out that the

constitution called for the Chairman to be elected by the committee and not from the floor of the AGM. Rules of the constitution could be changed with reasonable notice and subject to agreement by the members. However a proposal to elect the Chairman by a vote from the general members had been raised some years ago (1988) and had been turned down by that meeting.

Tim Speechley, John Tuck and John Sears all made contributions, the first named having been mentioned by Mike Norris.

A vote was taken and it was established that 7 members were in favour of the Chairmans proposal and 12 were against. It was agreed that the new Chairman would be elected at the next committee meeting. Roger Wallis proposed a time limit of three years be imposed on the Chairmanship.

Any Other Business

Bas Woodward was invited to come forward and present an inscribed plaque to Mike Walker for all the time he had spent on the committee and in the Chair. This was presented to general acclaim.

Roger Bowen proposed a vote of thanks to the committee.

John Tuck then said a few words about the Editor's post.

Roger Wallis mentioned the use of archival material and the point size could be increased.

The meeting closed at 9pm. _____

VIENNESE WHIRL

On a recent visit to Vienna, an interesting piece of operation was noticed at the Western terminus of U4 bahn in Hutteldorf, a suburb of Vienna. After arrival and the train emptied of passengers, the driver closed all doors and got out of his cab. He then moved to a wall mounted control panel. When the trains entered the single line terminal length of the line, it is stopped, the point was reversed and the train driven back automatically to the entrance to the station where it stopped with the driver's door by the driver, now on the opposite side of the platform. After getting on board, he moved the train into the platform for the passengers to get on board.

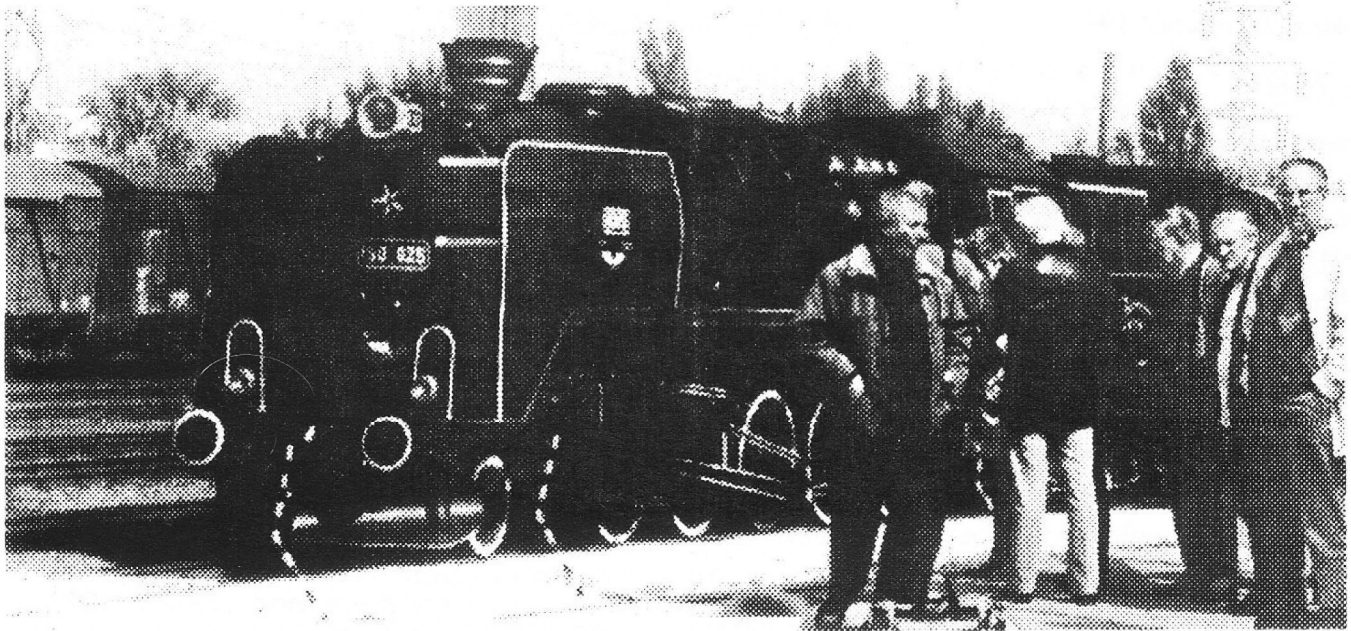
Interestingly enough, while this ensured a short headway between trains, I found that the turn round time at the new Picadilly Terminus of the Bakerloo line even quicker. Here only one platform is being used and speed is achieved by having a driver waiting to get on board at the rear of the arriving train. No sooner had the passengers got off and on, we started back Northbound, the whole process not being much longer than a minute.

Eddie Lewcock

This article will be reprinted in the next issue along with photographs. _____

THANK YOU

To all members who responded to the survey. The results show a 100% interest in steam and other useful information which will be considered by the committee. A review of the findings will be published in the next issue of The Donkey.



Eddie Lewcock with Society members in Hungary on the Society outing. This is in fact a photo montage but I know our Chairman has great plans for the 20th Anniversary celebrations!

BOOK REVIEW

Western Changes-Summer Saturdays in West 1957-1995

Paul Chancellor

R.C.T.S

ISBN 090 1115 789

This is, at least, the third book that looks at the trains on the Western Region on holiday weekends. This book covers nearly 40 years but concentrates on the years 1962-1965 at Taunton, Severn Tunnel, Gloucester and Bristol. Tables list trains passing these places on a Saturday in July giving (where known) loco number and times, but unlike the two other books no mention is given to whether the trains were on time. Trains in the 60's at Weston Super Mare are looked at in detail. Trains at Taunton in June 1974 and Aug 1980 are listed showing the decline of the holiday train.

The Southern Then and Now

Mike Esau

Ian Allan

ISBN 0 7110 2464 2

This is the third book in the series covering the British Rail Regions. The author travelled over 6000 miles by car and made extensive use of the NSE travel card in the London area to take pictures from Padstow in the west and Dover in the east. Most lines and branches are covered including the Isle of Wight and Lynton and Barnstaple Railways. A short history of the Southern Railway is followed by over 300 good quality black and white photos. My only criticism is the lack of maps so a copy of an atlas showing lines in 1948 would be useful.

Ashford from Steam to Eurostar

Vic Mitchell

Middleton Press

ISBN 1 873793 677

Another excellent book from the company that specialises in books on the Southern Region. This time Ashford is looked at, with the changes that have occurred over the years. The station has recently been rebuilt to cope with Eurostar trains whilst the old buildings of the South Eastern Railway can be seen at Chart Leacon Works. An interesting story includes the change in the track layouts and a number of photos are included.

Ian Allen

Have you heard the story of the train hit by a bungalow? It can be found in this Annual in the article about the East Coast Floods in 1953. A train on the Kings Lynn to Hunstanton line was hit by a wall of water including the home. The fire was extinguished but relit using the floorboards of the loco. Other subjects look at Cambridge, Southampton Docks, Welsh Valleys and the new signal box at York. 100mph Inter City trains are covered - not in this country - but the ones running between Chicago and St Paul and Minneapolis. As well as a good selection of black and white photos, 4 double page colour plates are included.

British Railway Disasters

Ian Allan Publishing

ISBN 07110 24707

One of two recent publications about railways accidents. It covers the period 1884 to 1988 and the subjects have been chosen to show how railway operations have been altered to make the present railways safer. Each entry includes a brief summary as well as a detailed description of the accident, a coloured diagram showing the track layout and the recommendations of the inquiry. A number of black and white photos are included.

25 YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

This edition will cover the happenings on the railways in the Autumn of 1971 and in to the winter period of that year.

This was a period when the "go-ahead" was given to two major rail schemes and the prototypes of a significant new design of rolling stock entered service.

On 18th August 1971 the Secretary of State for the Environment the Rt Honourable Peter Walker announced Government approval for the proposals by the British Railways Board to electrify the former Great Northern suburban services from Kings Cross and Moorgate to Royston via Welwyn Garden City and Hertford North, a distance of 70 route miles (211 track miles) at a cost of £35 million. Stage I the inner suburban route between Moorgate (Northern City Line) and Hertford North was due for completion by 1976 and stage 2 the outer suburban between Kings Cross and Royston was due for completion by 1977. The main electrification was to be @ 25kv but 3rd rail would be used in the Old Great Northern City tunnels between West Drayton and Moorgate.

The other scheme given the "go-ahead" by Peter Walker on the same date was a 75% infrastructure grant to London Transport for stage I of the Fleet line between Baker Street and The Strand. The Greater London Council also agreed to pay the 25% balance of the costs. Due for completion in 1977 the project involved taking over the Stanmore branch from the Bakerloo Line and linking it with the new construction.

The new rolling stock was 2 prototype 4 car sets delivered to the Southern Region, along with a similar 2 car set. These prototypes 4-PER and 2-PER Nos 4001, 4002, 2001 were constructed of lightweight steel fabrication with aluminium panneling and sliding doors. British Railways envisaged 25kv versions for the Great Northern electrification and for services through a projected tunnel beneath Central Manchester. A diesel electric version was being considered for Tyneside services.

British Rail Engineering was doing well with exports. Their three car diesel units were built and delivered to Sabah (formerly North Borneo) State Railways from Litchfield Lane Works, Derby. Also from Litchfield Lane were four coaches based on MK 2C design for the Guinea Bausite Mines Railway, Kamsa, West Africa. Finally a batch of 150 metre gauge palet vans were being built at Shildon works of B.R.E.h. for Malayan Railways.

On October 2nd "King George V" ran on the first stage fo the "Return to Steam" special from Hereford to Tyseley. This was the first relaxation of the notorious BR steam ban.

In France the SNCF were taking delivery of 10 Quadri-current Electric locos (1500v dc; 3000vdc, 15kv and 25kv ac) locos with a maximum permitted speed of 150mph.

Lineside apparatus for exchanging mail with passing Travelling Post Office trains was used for the last time early on 4th October 1971 when at a point just north of Penrith, Cumberland, pouches were dropped from the "West Coast Postal" from London. In its heyday in the 1920's the apparatus was installed at some 240 locations in Britain.

"Flying Scotsman" was still in America on 12th Setember it was at Cheney, New Spokane, Washington State, USA and later steamed 100 miles to Pasco and Eugene, Oregon. It was due to overwinter at San Diego, California.

On 1st October the 4-DD Bullied double-deck electric units 4901 and 4902 made their last revenue earning service on the 18.04 Charing Cross to Slade Green.

The Southern Region closed the branch line from Wareham to Swanage as from 3rd January 1972.

A wide ranging selection of happenings from 25 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO -

Marlow Donkey of December 1986

The Chairman Bas Woodward referred to the founding of the Society in January 1977 ten years previously. He commented that of the original 26 members only 9 were still members at the 10th Anniversary. Bas also referred to the new Ian Allan book 'Rail Centres - Oxford' an area well know to Bas as a resident of Oxford for 40 years.

The review of previous meetings included a talk and a slide show by Brent Hudson on the Railways of China and Hong Kong. Also an interesting talk by Inspector Price on the history and work of the British Transport Police. The November meeting was Tony Hall-Patch with his wonderful collection of archive film from the National Railway Museum.

News items included 'Network Day at Bourne End' where the chocolate and cream WSSO20 ran a free service between Marlow and Bourne End. 50.035 'Ark Royal' was on display at Bourne End, the first class 50 to venture up the track.

The highlight of the atutmnn was the appearance of No 22 'Mallard' on the joint line steam service from Marylebone.

High Wycombe and Santa specials in 1986 - 'Sir Lamiel' and 'Clan Line' being two locos involved on the service to Marylebone. The two main articles in the Donkey was one by David Gardner on 'Network South East' with reference to the first Network Day on 21st June and one by Les Strand, being part 5 of 'Donkey Days'.



DONKEY ARTICLES 1996

The articles and the contributors in 1996 were:

No. 76 March

The Central Railway Project
Some French Reminiscences
Somebody has to do it
Holiday '95
Railroading American Style

Roger Bowen
Eddie Lewcock
Mike Walker
Alan Costello
Mark Hopwood

No. 77 June

Quiz Line
What's the Difference
The Jubilee Line Extension
The Wisconsin Central Story

Keith Brown
Keith Brown
Eddie Lewcock
Mike Walker

No. 78 September

Holiday 1996
Meadowhall is not Just for Shopping
The Swanage Branch
Here Comes Class 61
T.E.B. Revolution
Polish Steam - A Time Warp

Alan Costello
Keith Brown
Phil Searle
Mike Walker
Peter Robins
Gordon Rippington

No. 79 December

Hungary 150
The Steel Rails of Port Talbot
Old Marlow Station Revisited
Welshpool & Llanfair Driving Experience
Railways on the Internet
Far Rails in Hidden Portugal
Vienesse Whirl

Eddie Lewcock
Mike Walker
Julian Heard
Eddie Lewcock
John Tuck
Eddie Lewcock
Eddie Lewcock

Which one did you find most interesting? Remember and vote for it at the AGM.

Contributions for the next Issue must be with the editor, John Tuck by the 10th February 1997. Please send to 35A Danywern Drive, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks RG41 5NS