



# The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 15

**South of England Group**  
Vice President - Captain Bill Smith VRD, RNR; Alan Pegler

July 1999

## CHANGE OF VENUE FOR EVENING MEETINGS

You will be aware that, for the last few years, we have held our evening meetings at the Training and Recruitment Centre of South Eastern Railways. This company has recently decided to rationalise its operations and, as a result, it will be terminating its lease of the building. Inevitably, this means that we have lost the use of the facilities. We have been very privileged to be able to use these well appointed facilities and the committee is grateful for the consideration shown to us by the manager, Mr Tony Manktelow, during our stay there.

Following investigations of a number of alternatives in the central London area, the committee has made arrangements to hold the next meeting at the V&A Bar in Marylebone Station. This is located at the western end of the station concourse so it is fairly easy to find - even more so if you arrive by either the Bakerloo or Chiltern Rail services. A map is on the reverse showing the surrounding area and the short walk from the Circle/Metropolitan/Jubilee station at Baker Street.

We will have private use of the Lounge bar, at the right as you enter from the concourse. The room is larger than our previous location, and is well appointed. Being a bar, refreshments are readily available for purchase - but don't be over indulgent otherwise you might miss the presentation!

Our first meeting will be held at the new venue on 13th September, when Richard Hardy will speak about his experiences as a shedmaster on the Southern - see over for more details. If we find the facilities suitable following this meeting, we will make the venue our regular meeting point. If for any reason they are not satisfactory, we still have some alternative sites to choose from. So be assured that the indoor meetings will continue for Friends in the South of England.

As always at our evening presentations, a voluntary donation is requested from those attending to help offset the costs of the event. But don't let that put you off attending, after all it is one of the benefits of your membership of the FNRM.

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## Centenary of the J52

On 13 May, the NRM engine GNR J52 No 1247, celebrated the centenary of its construction. The event was marked by a small ceremony at the Great Central Railway, where the locomotive is currently based. A photograph of the locomotive, in its BR livery as Number 68846, together with our President, Captain Bill Smith (who purchased it for preservation from BR) is shown above (photo by Mr P. Brown)

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## OUTREACH PROGRAMME

The past three months have seen an increasing level of activity in the outreach programme, where we aim to spread the word about the benefits of visiting the NRM at York. We also use the occasions to sell souvenirs from the museum and publications produced by the Friends, the profits from which are ploughed back into supporting the museum or helping the renovation of its collection.

Our visit to Marylebone in March was mentioned in the last Briefing (actually, the item was inserted just before printing so it was our first example of a stop-press article). Our presence to accompany Green Arrow's arrival in the South proved very successful. Over the three days of the event, which coincided with the centenary celebrations of Marylebone Station, we sold over £1000 of NRM related material, the new guide to Green Arrow proving particularly popular.

Although we had planned to accompany Green Arrow on its tours in the South, the withdrawal of Wessex Trains from the excursion market

caused the total cancellation of the planned itinerary shown in the last Briefing. However, just to prove that every cloud has a silver lining, another locomotive with LNER connections, "Sir Nigel Gresley", suffered boiler problems, and "Green Arrow" was pressed into service as a replacement. As a result, we found ourselves accompanying the locomotive on a spark testing run on 19 April, a visit to Plymouth on 25 April, and a trip to Par on 15 May. Again, there was substantial interest in mementos of the locomotive and the NRM during all of these tours and, as a result, we raised some £875 in sales.

Steam on the Met, as usual, proved to be a high revenue earner. This year loading on the trains were greater than ever, most being fully loaded throughout the five days of the event. Representative locomotives from all the Big Four were present and the service was as intense as ever, with an hourly service interspersed amongst the regular Metropolitan electrics and Chiltern Turbo DMUs. We did not get a visit from Queen Victoria (as last year); perhaps she was busy elsewhere!