



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 21

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

March 2001

2001 SUMMER OUTING

Each year we try to organise a special visit for Friends in the South of England. Last year, for various reasons, we were unable to organise one. To make up for this omission, this year we are planning a double event. If all goes as anticipated, we should be able to offer both a guided tour round the Great Western Society's museum at Didcot and the Pendon Museum, with the possibility of a vintage bus between the sites (a triple attraction if you like buses!). The GWS base needs no introduction, being the home of many GWR engines and artifacts (see the talk by Peter Lugg in *Briefing No 18* for a short synopsis). Pendon Museum, is home to arguably the best collection of operating fine scale model railways in the world, all surrounded by exquisite miniature representation of the landscape and buildings in this picturesque part of "Old England" in the 1930s. If you have never visited this, be prepared to be overwhelmed with the detail - and do bring a magnifying glass as its not just the rivets you can count! Those who have been before will need to further convincing that a return is in order.

The event is being organised for Sunday 29 July, commencing at Didcot railway station around 11 am. There will be a charge which is still to be finalised, as it depends on the number of participants and the discounts to be negotiated. It should still represent good value and provide additions which are not available to normal public visitors.

If you are interested in joining the visits, please send George Rutter a note stating how many tickets you would like and enclosing TWO stamped, self-addressed envelopes. The first will be used to notify you of the arrangements in the next few weeks, including the cost, and the second to supply tickets and final details nearer the date. There are no limits to numbers (other than how many we can get on the bus), so please consider bringing along a partner or friends; the Pendon Museum, in particular, has interests for all.

9th South Of England Group Annual General Meeting 15 January 2001

The AGM was held at the Station meeting room at Marylebone Station. Thirty members were present with apologies received from Alan Pegler and Capt. Bill Smith.

Following appropriately festive refreshments, George Rutter gave a brief review of the past year's activities. There were 5 evening meetings with an average attendance of 21 people - thanks were due to Philip Brown for the organisation of such a varied programme. There were 3 issues of the Briefing. The sales stand attended 10 events covering 18 days producing a surplus of £1200 after meeting overheads, e.g. attendance fees and improvements to the stand. This income allowed the Group to provide a grant of £850 to the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society towards the restoration of the National Collection's *Lord Nelson*, and £3313 to the National Railway Museum to cover the cost of a secure cabinet to display the collection's Railway Company seals. In addition we made payments to Enterprises of nearly £1400 and over £1200 to the museum shop for stock, both of which include a profit element which is returned to benefit the museum. This income has been generated through the efforts of the members of the Group who donate their time in manning the stand at the events.

In the past we have been very dependent on "Steam On The Met" which has generated increasing income, producing £1600 last year. Unfortunately, this very popular event will not be repeated this year, so we will be more dependent on model railway exhibitions to generate revenue. It would be appreciated if anyone knows of any other events which we could attend. The first big event will therefore be our attendance at the Festival of Model Railways at Alexandra Palace on 24/25 March. Finally, George thanked the committee for its support and put forward himself and Roy Bell for re-election. There being no other nominations, both were re-elected. The evening was concluded with the now traditional video competition produced by Ian Harrison.

OH MY LORD!

Question: which NRM loco is named after a peer of the realm and is in need of some Tender Loving Care? Answer: *Lord Nelson*

As you know, SR 850 *Lord Nelson* is at Eastleigh being restored by the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society - just outside the works where she was built in 1927. If you've read your March Steam Railway, you will have seen that ERPS discovered some unwelcome surprises once the boiler was lifted off and inspected. There are major cracks in the firebox wrapper and in the copper firebox itself that will require essentially the construction of a new firebox and foundation ring.

We, the SoE Group, have already donated 4 x £850 - £3400 in total - to the project from our "earnings" - some of the surplus from our sales stand activities. But that is a drop in the ocean compared to the £150,000+ that is now needed to repair the boiler. ERPS have, of course, received a donation from the National Lottery of more than £67,000, but that still leaves a lot to be raised - and fast if she is to steam again soon.

Steam Railway has said that it is willing to promote an appeal. A working group from ERPS is thinking about how to raise the cash; Ian Harrison is representing SoE Group. We welcome any ideas for raising serious amounts of money quickly. After the Steam Railway article, over £500 appeared in cheques through the post, entirely unsolicited. If

every reader of that periodical gave £1 the problem would be solved!

"Nellie" may not be the Museum's flagship loco, but she is unique and built here in the south by the parents and grandparents of the people now restoring her. We can feel proud of the contribution we have already made towards getting her back on the rails - can we take her the whole way? If you have any good ideas, contact Ian Harrison (01256 326081) and if you would like to make a donation, cheques made payable to ERPS should be sent to Graham Dickaty, 113 Captain's Place, Southampton SO14 3TF (please mention that you belong to the FNRM SoE Group.

Meanwhile, the latest news is that the engine is temporarily back on its wheels while it is rolled out of the shed. This will allow the rear driving wheel-set to be removed for machining of the thrust plates in the adjoining Alstom factory.

NEW GROUP WEB PAGE

Due to your Briefing editor changing internet provider, the Group's web pages have a new home. The opportunity has also been taken to update the contents with all the latest outreach events and reports on our indoor talks. Arrangements have been made to automatically redirect from the old web site for a year, but to avoid any difficulties modify your bookmark NOW to

<http://Homepage.ntlworld.com/ms.draper/index.html>