



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 22

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

June 2001

Shinkansen Arrives in Britain

Photographs included on the back page of *Review* No.95 depict the departure from Japan of the Museum's latest rolling stock acquisition Bullet Train (Series Zero) No. 22-141. That was on Friday 16th March and, after a port hopping journey halfway around the world, on Monday 14th May 'roll-on/roll-off' ferry Talisman arrived in Southampton. This type of ship is a slab sided cavernous monster.

We watched as 'buses and 4 by 4's were driven off through its great mouth and Jaguar cars were put on in their place. Then at about 9.30 a.m. a tractor appeared hauling our acquisition on accommodation bogies. We had had to wait for the tide to drop to reduce the angle, before the assemblage very cautiously descended the ramp,. The vehicles bogies quickly followed and were taken to an area outside the Queen Elizabeth II terminal.

There the bogies were craned on to the road trailer, a second crane arrived and after some delicate and exacting work the body and bogies were reunited. There followed some head scratching when it was realised that the vehicle was so low on the trailer that it would be impossible to run it off without fouling parts of the trailer. The problem was corrected by taking the strain with one of the cranes, and jacking the bogie to enable lengths of 50mm steel bar to be placed under the treads.

At 4 o'clock representatives of Japan Railways, the Museum, the sponsoring companies and the railway press witnessed the signing over of the vehicle and an exchange of gifts, one of which was a short length bullhead rail manufactured in Darlington in 1871 for the Imperial Japanese Railway.

The following day the Museum's own Shinkansen was moved to Wroughton for storage until late June from where we look forward to it going on exhibition at York on 12 July

Photo: George Rutter



Summer Outing

A reminder that the Group's summer outing will this year be for a visit to the GWR Centre at Didcot for a tour round their extensive collection and then to the Pendon Model Museum to see their exquisite 4mm layouts of "Old England". The outing will take place on Sunday 29th 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. We are having difficulties arranging the vintage bus link which we had hoped for; seemingly bus preservation groups are having difficulties accommodating paying users following action by the Charities Commission. Nevertheless, transport will be made available between the sites. More details were provided in the last *Briefing*, but if you've lost that and still wish to come, please send George Rutter (address overleaf) two stamped self-addressed envelopes which will be used to provide final details and tickets.

FNRM AGM 23rd June

The main Annual General Meeting of the Friends will take place at the NRM on Saturday 23rd June. You should have received a form with the last *Review* giving details and asking if you wished to attend. A number of the South of England Group will be attending. Perhaps we will see you there? This will also provide a good opportunity to see the display cabinet in *The Works* which was purchased with the help of the donation the South of England Group gave to the Museum last year.

There was a National Volunteers Week at the start of this month and The Friends at York had a major display in the Museum. We are grateful to them for giving publicity to the work of the South of England Group and will, of course, be pleased to welcome any new supporters as a result. I'm sure we will hear more about the week at the AGM and in the next *Review*.