

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

14th March 2005

The N.R.M. Knowledge and Collections Department

Helen Ashby, NRM

(NOTE CHANGE OF SPEAKER)

11th April 2005

The Railway Heritage Committee

Mr T. Neil Butters,

Strategic Rail Authority

2th September 2005

The work of the

Railway Mission since 1881

Ian Markey

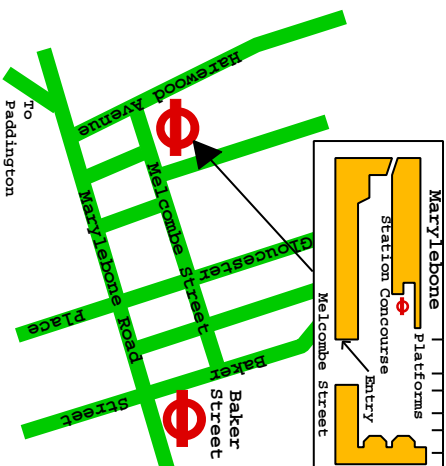
Chairman, The Railway Mission.

10th October 2005

The work and developments in the NRM Engineering Department

Jim Rees,

NRM Rail Vehicle Collections Manager.



The meetings will be held in the Conference Room at Marylebone Station. Please enter from the door at the left within the gateway at the entrance to the station concourse. The talks commence at 19.00 and there will be a person on the door to let you in from 18.30. If you arrive after 19.00 and find the door locked, please telephone 0771 554 9907. There will be a voluntary collection to help cover the cost - we suggest a donation of around £1 to £2 per head - tea or coffee included. Guests are welcome. Meetings usually finish by 21.00.

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The Friends of the

National Railway Museum

Briefing 37

South of England Group

March 2005

Vice Presidents - Captain Bill Smith VRD, RNR; Alan Pegler FRSA

TEN YEARS ON

Those of you with long memories may be aware that the South of England Group was formed in 1991, when a number of members based in the South East came together to form the Group. It wasn't until January 1995 that the first copy of the *Briefing* - then called a Newsletter - was published. Unlike today's edition, it was a two sided A4 sheet, although, even then, it was produced in colour - albeit without photographs.

It is interesting to look back on the contents. We were, at that time, holding our meetings in the BR South Eastern Career Development Centre. During the previous year, we had as speakers, Steve McColl (then director of BR Special Trains unit) and Peter Townend (of "Top Shed" fame). We also had made a pre-opening tour of the facilities at Waterloo International, just before the inception of the Eurostar service. The *Duchess of Hamilton* had just completed a season in the South, and our sales team had attended the Exeter Rail Fair and "Steam on the Met".

How things have changed in a decade. BR is no more (arguably along with rail open days and career development!), "Steam on the Met" is only a faded memory, Steve

McColl has had his ups and downs, the *Duchess* is back at York, and Waterloo International may well be about to close.

Some things don't change though. We were, and are, still active with our sales stand and the article about the Mike Turner rail prints, which we continue to sell on the stand, is still apposite. And, not forgetting, I'm still here as the editor! Amazingly, I'm still using the same computer to bash out the copy, an Acorn RiscPC (a British design which has outlasted any Windows box), although the software has been improved quite a bit.

For anyone wanting to wallow in nostalgia, you may like to know that all the back editions of our Newsletter/*Briefing* are on the Group web site (see address on back page)

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13TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The members arrived in the Marylebone Station meeting room on 10th January to be greeted by a sumptuous buffet set out by Margaret and George Rutter. Following a brief introduction, twenty members and guests set about demolishing the feast.

Having got us into a mellow mood, the serious business of the evening began. Ian Harrison, our chairman, gave us a brief review of the past year. There had been 7 evening meetings with an average attendance of twenty members who had enjoyed a varied programme organised by your reporter, ranging from the first developments of railways in north-east England to a talk showing how we were falling behind in modern developments of high speed trains. For the summer visit a party of eleven members had been to the STEAM Museum at Swindon and ridden on the Swindon and Cricklade Railway. To keep everyone informed of events there had been four issues of Briefing; thanks to the efforts of Mel Draper. The Group had played its part in the momentous events of 2004 - Railfest at York, the purchase of *Flying Scotsman* and the return to main line operation of *City of Turin*.

Ian concluded with some of the issues. The restoration of *Lord Nelson* was turning into a nail-biting thriller as it continued to be dogged by problems. Nevertheless, it was still expected to take part in the Trafalgar bicentenary celebrations in October. Following representations to York, the Group committee is now receiving an improved flow of information which allows us to plan coverage for the rail tours that use NRM locomotives, and give fuller advice to visitors to our stand on NRM activities. Finally Ian thanked the committee for all

their hard work over the past year.

George Rutter gave a report on the activities of the sales stand. The stand had been out to 14 events totalling 20 days in 2004 (compared with 16 and 24 last year). To this must be added the support by many from the Group during the nine days of Railfest. The efforts had seen a surplus of £3080 (£2577 in 2003), including £900 raised at Railfest. In addition to our surplus one should bear in mind payments to the Museum shop of £1184 and to Friends Enterprises of £1921, both of which will benefit the work of the Museum. George thanked all who have helped during the past year - more assistance was always welcome. Ian thanked George on behalf of the Group for all his hard work on the organising and planning of the stand outings. He noted that we had been more selective in our choice of venues - especially the high visibility events such as the London Festival of Model Railways at Alexandra Palace and the Wearley exhibition at the NEC - and had concentrated sales on more valuable items, with consequential improvements in surplus.

After this review of the past, there was a review of the plans for 2005. Bookings for the summer outing are going well, with only one single and one double room not spoken for. More details are given in a separate article. The 2005/6 programme of evening meetings is coming along nicely - again see separate item for the latest position.

The meeting moved on to the elections. On the three year cycle Ian Harrison & Alan Gosling were to stand down; both were re-elected. To finish of the evening, Ian Harrison showed a short film made in March 1963 with John Betjeman travelling on the

LECTURE PROGRAMME

The evening lecture programme is shaping up well and Phil Brown, our events coordinator, now has speakers or other activities, lined up through until April 2006. Overleaf are the talks in the next six months. You will see that we have a wide variety of subjects, starting with Helen Ashby, from the NRM. Her talk was postponed from February. Helen will give us an insight into the "Knowledge and Collections" department. This covers the majority of the holdings of the museum, so should be well worth attending.

Our next speaker, Neil Butters, will cover the work of the Railway Heritage Committee. This body is responsible for overseeing the disposal of redundant railway equipment from any of the multitude of owners or operators. It recommends when equipment is of historic merit and so provides the "feed" of new acquisitions to the NRM.

Our Autumn season commences with a very different subject, a look at the work of the Railway Mission. This body provides spiritual comfort to railway staff and customers. Its profile has been raised recently by the work it has done to support those involved in the accidents at Pottery Bar and elsewhere.

October sees another NRM speakers, this time by Jim Rees, manager of the Rail

Vehicles Collection - also known as the locos and rolling stock. Jim will bring us up to date on the recent developments, which no doubt includes some insights into the restoration work at York and Shildon.

Later in the session, we will hear of the activities of the Kent and East Sussex Railway, European Railways, and receive an insight into signalling systems. The actual subject of the latter still needs to be confirmed, but we have a year still to do that!

In February of next year, we will be holding another members' evening, this time of slides. So if you have any 35mm slides which you believe will be of interest to members, please dig them out and be prepared to bring them along. If you have photographs on other media (prints, digital or, even lantern slides!), please get in touch with myself (Mel Draper) and I'll discuss whether it is possible to convert them into a form suitable for projection to the audience.

As usual, details of the forthcoming events will be given on the back page of the Briefing nearer the date. And finally, if you know of a speaker who you think we should invite, or would like to suggest a topic which we should include in the programme, please get in touch with Phil Brown.

LORD NELSON

As you probably know, *Lord Nelson* is undergoing repair by the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society (ERPS). The locomotive restoration to mainline running order is virtually complete with the exception of the boiler. This is still at Roger Pritchard's works and is expected to be returned in April. Potentially, the target

operating date of June is still achievable. Once the locomotive is finished, it is scheduled to move to the West Somerset Railway for running in. As for the ERPS, you will be aware of the news of the closure of Eastleigh Works. However, the ERPS have been given assurances that they can stay at the Eastleigh site until 2007.

SUMMER OUTING 2005

Twenty-three members have booked for this year's trip to the north on 24th to 26th June. I still have one double room booked but not spoken for and am prepared to book more rooms if necessary. We gather at the King's Head Hotel in Darlington on the Friday evening. Some, no doubt, will take advantage of the trip to arrive early and spend some time exploring Darlington and its railway heritage (whether a brick-built A4 pacific really qualifies is questionable). I have not organised anything for the Friday since some will be arriving late after a day of toil, but no doubt others will join together for a meal or a drink.

On Saturday we make our own way south to York. The Friend's AGM starts after lunch and I have left it to individuals to decide how to spend their time, joining in the AGM and the AGM lunch as they desire. Please reply to Michael Wallace's AGM calling notice to let him know your intentions. There is no plan for "Partners Activities", but I can recommend a number of activities for those who are unfamiliar with the many attractions available in the city. All I ask is that everyone is down at the landing stage in good time for us to cast off promptly at 7.30pm for a cruise on the River Ouse. There will be a buffet on the boat and I

have invited Friends from the York area to join us for the cruise (on the understanding that South of England Group members have priority if we reach the boat limit of 35). The boat crew have promised to get us back in good time for our return to Darlington.

On the Sunday we start by travelling across town to North Road Station for a guided tour of the museum there, seeing "Locomotion" - the locomotive (from the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1825). We then travel up the valley to Shildon for a buffet lunch and tour of the "Locomotion" - the museum. Hopefully there will be plenty of time for members to explore the NRM's latest facility before returning to Darlington Bank Top station for the train back to London.

Full details will be sent out to participants early in June once all the final arrangements are in place. Meanwhile, if anyone has not booked but would like to join us please get in touch so that I can add their name to the list - see back page for contact details. I have a few copies available of the leaflet for the North Road Museum and the Darlington guide which I will be taking to our coming evening meetings.

Phil Brown



former Somerset & Dorset lines to Burnham. Whilst so much has changed or been lost we were struck by the way the commentary was still relevant to today in forecasting traffic jams on the roads and a

return to rail travel within ten years! The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to George and Margaret for the magnificent spread.

Phil Brown

THE LCGB'S KEN NUNN COLLECTION

On 14th February 2005 we welcomed one of our regular members to talk to us. Charles Firminger brought along 200 slides from the LCGB's Ken Nunn collection. Charles introduced the talk with some background information on the collection. Ken Nunn had worked for the GER (and later the LNER and BR Eastern Region), spending much time at Brentwood. This explained why there is a predominance of GER pictures in the collection! The collection, of about 11,800, is fully catalogued and copies of the lists are available - on disc or CD for the computer literate. It includes collections bought by Ken Nunn of photographs by H L Hopwood, R P Angus-Lewis and others, as well as some by his brother Cyril. Copies of the pictures can be bought at a reasonable price from Graham Stacey, 11 Braywood Avenue, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9LY.

The picture sequence started in Scotland with pictures from the Highland and Caledonian Railways. We were then taken around the LNER, LMS, SR, GWR and their constituent railways, not forgetting the Hundred of Man Steam Tramway. The pictures took us back to the end of the 19th century and forward to the locomotive exchanges of 1948 (a Bullied light pacific piloting a Liverpool express, on its way to trials in the Scottish Region).

Most of the pictures were from either the Edwardian period, or the inter-war years. Not all were as old as might appear - the

pictures of the Hetton Colliery locomotive and Hackworth's Royal Sovereign were not from the mid 19th century, but from the 1925 Stockton & Darlington Railway centenary celebrations. Also from this event, was a picture of the latest LNER traction in the form of A1 pacific 2563 *William Whitlaw* and electric locomotive number 13.

The pictures showed some interesting workings such as an ex-GCR locomotive at Bourne End with the *Northern Rubber Special* run by our vice-president Alan Pegler. Another picture showed the GNR Atlantics 990 *Henry Oakley* and 251 double heading what may have been a rehearsal for the famous *Plant Centenary* of September 1953. Also featured was a number of royal train workings, the condition of whose locomotives contrasted with the grimy subjects of many of the pictures.

Throughout the evening Charles was aided by comments and anecdotes on the pictures from other members. Some of these suggested that the information on the picture was not entirely correct: for instance one train seemed to be coming from Upminster, not going to it. This did not, however, spoil the enjoyment of the evening, more it enhanced it by encouraging discussion.

Charles has another sequence of slides concentrating on the London area which he has offered to show. We will be taking him up in a future programme.

Phil Brown

ROCKET DOWN-UNDER

The Internet is a wonderful thing. Some two years ago, John Heald contacted me by e-mail. He had noticed, on our Web Site, the report in Briefing 21 (March 2001) about the talk on "The Engineering History of Robert Stephenson's Rocket" by Michael Bailey and John P Glihero. As a model engineer, living in Rotorua, New Zealand, he was interested in the availability of design information from which he aimed to build a model. By coincidence, I was going to New Zealand a few months later, so I arranged to meet him, armed with a copy of the NRM Book on the subject.

Since then, John has made a visit to UK, travelling to York to view and photograph the Rocket replicas, both static and



The cylinders and valve assemblies, photographed with a packet of New Zealand matches to give an idea of scale.

working, and to the Science Museum to photograph original Rocket components. His model, for 7¼ inch gauge, is a representation of the rebuilt version, i.e. after the cylinders were lowered and a smokebox and buffers fitted. His latest e-mail to me shows it progressing well, and the chassis will be complete in the next month or two. Below are photographs of the cylinders and part of the chassis. When finished, the all up weight will be around 40 kg. Surely this must be the most distant model of Rocket from its "home", and can I claim the record for attracting a visitor to travel the furthest to visit the NRM?

I've asked John to keep us updated on progress.



Part of the chassis showing the driving wheel and eccentric for driving the valve gear.

OUTREACH REPORT

On 4th and 5th December we attended the National Model Railway Exhibition, organised by the Warley Model Railway Club at the N.E.C. Birmingham. Unlike last year, the weather was reasonably good, but train services to the N.E.C. were still patchy. On Sunday, when I attended, the 4 car EMU was so overloaded at Coventry that the brakes refused to come off and everyone had to de-train. The usual chaos ensued, at which point it was quite clear which of the passengers were for the clothes show (following the herd up and down the stairs) and who were the rail enthusiasts (ignoring the loudspeaker announcements, sitting put and watching the arrival/departure boards). The net result was that we let the grossly overcrowded local depart and reboarded our original, and now empty, train which followed immediately behind.

Once at the show the atmosphere was buzzing - the mixture of electric and live-steam power, with a slightly over-loaded public address system, had something to do with it! The main display was a Ffestiniog engine, rather than an NRM loco as last year (the Beatrice Well Tank).



A quiet period round the FNRM stand at the National Model Railway Exhibition, NEC

As a result, our stand was positioned down one of the aisles. It turned out that we were in a good position to attract passing customers - between the snack bar and the toilets. Over the two days, some 18,000 people attended the show which was well up on last year. As a result, so were our takings. Overall, a very successful event.

Our next event was the East Bedfordshire Model Railway Show at Biggleswade on 12th February. Like last year, we were in the main hall and, like Warley, attendance seemed to be much greater than last year. Takings were also up on previous years.

Our next event will be the London Festival of Model Railways at Alexandra Palace, London, on 2nd and 3rd April. Whilst not as big as the NEC event it is still the largest show of its kind in the South of England. So why not come along?

In addition, you will have seen from your copy of the FNRM Review that *City of Truro* is making a few more visits to the South. We are investigating whether we will have an opportunity to accompany her with sales support activities.

