

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

8<sup>th</sup> October 2007

"The little engines that went to sleep"

Mr John Tidmarsh

Sutton Coldfield Miniature Railway

12<sup>th</sup> November 2007

"NRM - Building our future from the past"

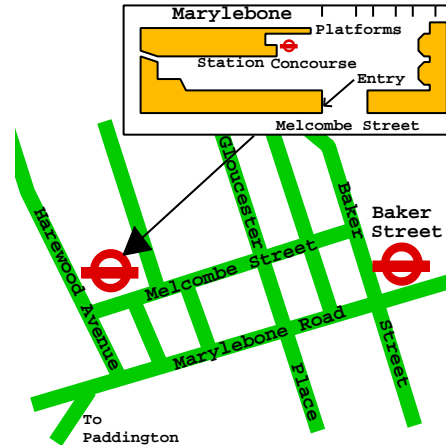
Mr Andrew Scott,

Head of the NRM.

14<sup>th</sup> January 2008

AGM and New Year Social

including seasonal buffet and railway entertainment



Meetings are held in the Conference Room at Marylebone Station. Please enter from the door at the left within the station entrance gateway. The talks commence at 19.00 but 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 is a voluntary collection to help cover the cost - we suggest a donation of around £1 to £2 per head - tea or coffee included. Meetings usually finish 21.00 and guests are welcome.

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## The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 47

South of England Group

October 2007

Vice Presidents - Alan Pegler OBE, FRSA; Sir William McAlpine Bt, FRSE, FCIT, FRSA

### SUMMER OUTING 2007 (PART TWO)

Sunday involved an early start, to arrive at York station for the 09:00 departure to Manchester Airport stopping at Leeds. This was the start of our exploration of West Riding. The main line to Leeds was under a possession, so local services were replaced by buses. However our Transpennine service was routed round the problem areas. Some of our party were not aware of this and announced at Church Fenton, to the consternation of the non-Group passengers who were sharing our coach, that the driver had lost his way! Female commonsense prevailed - one of our party asked the ticket inspector, and your editor was able to confirm the answer by pulling out the latest edition of Baker's purchased the previous day at the NRM. However, he added further concern to the other passengers, by pointing out that we were then travelling on a goods-only route. Travelling via Castleford and Methley Junction we arrived at Leeds in the opposite direction to the one we expected. We were not alone in being confused at this point. Our train had a spare 3-car set at the front but the signalman at Leeds was unaware of this and we were routed into platform 16a which unfortunately was only 3 and a half coaches long. Full marks to the ticket inspector however, by

announcing to all the passengers who were trying to get out that there was an "amusing incident" taking place and she then informed us of the problem. She suggested we all re-take our seats while she locked out the doors on the last two coaches, so that she could open the doors on the one remaining coach in the platform. We still had plenty of time to make the connection onto the 10.08 to Skipton, which deposited us on time at Keighley at 10:35. The stock comprised a new class 385 and was well patronised throughout.

At Keighley we were met by our guide, David Pearson. David is a long-serving volunteer on the KWVR and the Financial Director of FNRM Enterprises. We started our tour at the south end of Keighley station where David provided us with a short history of the origins of the

*continued overleaf*

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line, the chronology of Keighley station and its relationship with the Midland and Great Northern Railways. We then boarded our train for the trip along the line. We had a reserved compartment in the trailing vehicle of a twin-unit DMU. This gave us good views of the line as it made its way up the steeply graded and curving route. Although David had doubts about the long-term reliability of the unit, it made good progress and soon deposited us at Oxenhope, the end of the line. This we learnt was named after a manor house about half a mile away, and was only identified as the terminal when two local mill owners split the difference between the locations of their two mills. The KWVR took over a fairly derelict site in 1964, but with the injection of millions of pounds and much volunteer work, it stands as a testimony to what can be achieved. The original station buildings have been restored, the platforms and run-round extended, and the approach roads laid with authentic stone setts. The additions to the original layout are very impressive comprising: a shed holding a reserve collection of locos, rolling stock and small exhibits (which is open to the public); a carriage shed, capable of holding all the line's running passenger-stock; and a carriage restoration workshop. David took us on a tour of all of these to provide a full, behind the scenes insight into the working and maintenance of this operating department. Inside the workshop we were able to board the GNR inspection saloon which is known as the "old gentleman's carriage" from its starring role in the 1970 film *The Railway Children*.

At the end of the platform we photographed our train arriving, double-headed by L&Y Aspinall "A" class N° 957 (BR N° 52044) and LMS 2MT N° 41241. After running round, the L&Y

locomotive detached and moved to the carriage sheds to couple up to its (later) train. We boarded our train, hauled by the BR standard, for the short trip to Haworth, arriving at 12:51.

Here our party divided, some making their way up the hill to Haworth village for lunch, the rest following David in a tour round the running shed and workshops. One of the roads of the running shed was taken up with N° 34092 *City of Wells* and WD 2-8-0 N° 90733, the latter having just finished its overhaul, and the former still having some way to go. In the old goods shed, which now provides the main workshop, LMS Jinty N° 47279 was nearing "running chassis" stage, its boiler away for repairs. David explained that, although the KWVR workshops can undertake most mechanical work on their engines, they do not have boiler repair facilities. This is because their relatively small fleet cannot justify the investment, so they rely on contractors for this work.

Just half an hour for a quick lunch in the fish & chip shop (Dutch-owned) a few steps outside the station, before we returned to photograph the BR standard pulling up the gradient into the station. A quick look round the well-stocked shop in the station building gave the train time to go along to Oxenhope, turn round and return to Haworth to pick up our party at 14:21 for the trip to Ingrow. It was at this point that several of our team learnt that the buffer not only served real ale, but gave a discount to CAMRA members. Suitably lubricated, we detrained at Ingrow. Despite its period feel, with stone buildings, oil lamps, stone-sett approach road and enamel advertising, David explained that this station is the newest on the line, having been relocated, stone by stone, from Foulridge on the Skipton to Colne line, in 1989. Needless to say it has

## OUTREACH AND LORD NELSON

On 30<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July, the Group's stand was at the Sandy Toy Collectors exhibition. Unlike last year's equivalent event, the temperature was more comfortable and we were not in competition with the world football matches on the television. Consequently, there were a reasonable number of families passing through and we persuaded a number to pay a visit to the NRM over the school holidays.

However, the majority of our outreach events over the summer period have been with *Lord Nelson* on various mainline excursions. From its return to the mainline in March, we have been present on eight trips, including its return from Minehead (31<sup>st</sup> March), London to Bristol (9<sup>th</sup> May and 27<sup>th</sup> June), London to Canterbury (16<sup>th</sup> May), London to Weymouth (9<sup>th</sup> May, 13<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> August) and Folkestone (16<sup>th</sup> June). Even though the hoped-for booklet about the engine in the FNRM Enterprises series has not yet appeared, our sales were in excess of £1200 over the trips. We have shared the surplus with Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society as a contribution to

their costs on *Lord Nelson*. As you may have seen in the press, the boiler has now exhibited a serious failure. Several of the firebox stays have sheared resulting in the engine being declared unfit to run. The cause of the of the fault is currently being investigated and whilst this is going on it is proposed that the loco be moved to York (by road) for display in the Museum and secure storage. We do not yet know when and if it can or will be repaired.

With the early termination of our steam-runs we will have to fall back on our more traditional model railway exhibition outreach events. The next one that is scheduled is on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November at Colchester, followed by the Royston event on 17<sup>th</sup> November. The year will end with our major event at the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition at the NEC, Birmingham on 1<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Hope to see you at one of these and if you know of similar exhibitions or any event with a slight railway or transport connection which we might attend please let George Rutter know. Any advance notice of "open days" or similar would be particularly welcome.

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## NORMAN LEE

Norman Lee, a long time member of the Friends died on 4<sup>th</sup> April after a short illness. Norman was an active member of the South of England Group, and many members will recall that he regularly attended our indoor meetings, and helped on our outreach stand. He served on the committee of the Group from 2000 to 2005. He had a broad interest in transport studies and was a supporter of both the work of the Friends of the NRM and also

the equivalent group associated with the London Transport Museum. It was thanks to his contacts with the latter that we had some of the lectures on London railways over the last few years. He did not forget us either, as he bequeathed his collection of railway-related books and videos, which we will be selling via the outreach stand. We send Joan, his wife who regularly accompanied Norman on our summer outings, our condolences.

Evening meeting 10<sup>th</sup> September 2007

## “THE PRESERVATION OF ELECTRIC TRACTION”

### Mr Peter Staveley, Chairman of the Southern Electric Group

Peter began by outlining the history of electric traction in the UK, beginning with the Volks Electric Railway along Brighton front in 1883 and slowly spreading northwards to include the Waterloo and City railway in 1898, the Newcastle area in 1904, the district line to Wimbledon in 1905 and the LBSC's overhead system to Brighton in 1909. But it wasn't until the major SR electrification programme of 1933 that serious inroads were made into steam traction. And just as Sir Edward Watkin's "Metro-land" had transformed the "Chiltern uplands" of NW London, so the SR electrification brought new development to the south of the city, albeit in a different way as the railway were not acting as developers in their own right.

With the completion of electrification on the West London Line in 1994 (for Eurostar) and the Weymouth extension in 1998, the SR system became the largest electrified railway in the world.

In many ways the system is so successful that it is taken for granted. Peter pointed

out that 33% of route miles are electrified, 49 % of train movements are under electric traction, but only 21% of the NRM's vehicles relate to electric traction (that may also have something to do with relative ages).

Peter discussed the difficulties of electric preservation, particularly the desire to be able to run preserved electric units somewhere – but where? There are no suitable NR lines available nor are there preserved lines willing or able to install electric equipment. One solution that has been floated is the Ardingly branch of the Bluebell, but even this is something of a pipedream.

And there have been some disasters of non-preservation: the SR double-deckers, the initial problems with the 2-BIL at West Worthing; the Liverpool 506 units .....etc.

Ultimately the problem seems to be that electric trains don't have quite the "pulling power" of their dirtier, noisier rivals. One of the great ironies of the modern railway!

*Ian Harrison*

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## NEW GROUP WEB SITE

If you have access to the internet you may have noticed that the group website address, as shown on previous editions of the *Briefing*, no longer works. This was caused by the relocation of the main FNRM web site. The FNRM council has decided that we should take responsibility for our own site, the new address for which is shown on the rear of this edition. Although it is not drastically different from the old one, please make a note of it

in your bookmarks. Automatic e-mail routing to various members of the committee is also working again meaning you can click on the link on the page and immediately start up an e-mail message. The web site has also had a good clean and will be regularly updated. So if you want to find out what the group is up to, the answer is just a (web) click away. If you have any difficulties, or find any faults on the web site, please get in touch with me.

*Mel Draper*

won several awards. Just to the Keighley side of the station building is the old goods building, now used by the *Bahamas Locomotive Society*. It contains a well presented exhibition telling the history of railways but its main purpose is to provide locomotive repair facilities for this society. Some of you may know that they were originally based at Dinting in Staffordshire, and moved to Ingrow when the lease on their site expired. We had earlier seen N° 45596 *Bahamas*, itself, in the reserve collection shed at Oxenhope, awaiting its turn for an overhaul. The loco that is currently the focus of attention is LNWR "Coal Tank" N° 1054, which is undergoing some extensive firebox repairs. Although owned by the National Trust, the engine is in the care of the society and is expected to take its place shortly as part of the running fleet on the KWVR. *Bahamas* will then come down for its turn in the workshop.

A little further towards Keighley in the station yard is the *Vintage Carriage Trust* museum. Until now, David was at pains to point out that none of the sites we had visited were museums, but the VCT site is registered as a museum and regarded by many as the best collection of passenger rolling stock outside the NRM. Once we were inside it wasn't difficult to see why. The collection of wooden-bodied 6 wheel and bogie stock was impressively presented, accessible both at ground and platform level. The standard of finish was impeccable. We had the opportunity to tour the adjoining workshop to inspect a Bulleid TSO and Metropolitan bogie compartment undergoing restoration. The chairman of the VCT explained the painstaking effort they make to ensure that the work is done to the highest possible standard, inviting us to stroke the carriage side to feel the standard of preparation - several of our party couldn't

resist the opportunity to go carriage-groping! Inevitably all this attention to detail can only be devoted to the special vehicles but the effort is worthwhile. Without the Trust, many of these now-priceless exhibits would have been lost to the nation, most having been rescued in various stages of dilapidation.

All too soon it was time to leave, and we made our way back to the station just in time to see the L&Y engine make a spirited run up the grade and into the station with its Oxenhope bound train. We took the opportunity following its departure, to go into the station office to examine a photograph dating from just before the opening of the line. This showed Ingrow tunnel under construction and the adjoining chapel suffering a mysterious, and terminal case of subsidence. The company initially refused to compensate the congregation for the damage to their three-month old building, but sense finally prevailed and a replacement chapel was provided. However, it came at a cost - some £7000 (the whole line only cost £75000) and the resignation of the chairman of the chapel congregation and director of the railway (the same person!).

A few minutes later, having exchange the single-line token in Damems Loop, our train, hauled once again by N° 41241, emerged from Ingrow tunnel to take us back to Keighley. So with a quick, but well-deserved thank-you to David, we sadly had to leave the KWVR to catch our smart new EMU back to Leeds. Despite the rain showers, it was a very enjoyable day's visit. The lucky ones in our party made their way south immediately. Those who stayed over on the Sunday night, awoke to find the north of England flooded, with no trains south for some time. It was a really memorable summer outing!

## SWITZERLAND - ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

PHIL BROWN

Extending a town twinning visit to Germany last summer, we continued south to Switzerland. The chosen site was south of Interlaken in Wilderswil, close to the station which was to be our focus for the next 5 days as we used the free travel facilities of the local Regional Pass.

Next morning cloud was forecast with the risk of rain, so the first day out would be a lake level. The bus was taken down to Interlaken East station where we joined PS "Lötschberg" (Esher Wyss, Geneva, 1914) for a lunch cruise to Brienz and back. On lake Thun the PS "Blümlisalp" (Esher Wyss, Geneva, 1906) did an afternoon cruise, starting and ending in Thun. There was plenty of time to catch it in Interlaken, but it was not practical to take it all the way to Thun, so we disembarked at Spiez to return by train. I had overlooked the difference in height between the boat landing and the railway station at Spiez, a good half hour's walk. I should have realised this when a transfer bus met the boat!

On a previous holiday I had been unable to fit in the funicular up to Mürren. Now I never will since it was being replaced by a cable car. To get to Mürren it was necessary to take the bus to the Stockalp cable car, and get out at its intermediate station. The precision of Swiss transport was obvious when approaching Lauterbrunnen on the train, as the connecting buses moved out of their parking place. (Note "buses", the operators were ready for the anticipated volume of traffic.) Walking through the village of Mürren we reached the railway to the top of the funicular. One has to be nippy in getting on the train. At both ends of its route, the train only stopped long

enough for the driver to walk through the single carriage. The journey along the top of the cliffs above the Lauterbrunnen valley gave stupendous views of the mountains opposite. Returning to the valley floor on the cable car, there was barely time to reach the bus stop before the buses arrived to take us back to Lauterbrunnen station. From here, we took the train for Wengen. The town is pretty, with magnificent views, but a real tourist trap! A short walk brought us to the cable car for the Männlichen. When seen from Mürren in the morning, this ridge had been covered with fresh snow, and some still remained when we reached the top. The afternoon coffee was taken amid impressive views of the Bernese mountains before taking the gondola cable cars to Grund, near Grindelwald. Apparently the longest on the world, the gondolas are automatically transferred between cables at the intermediate station.

At Grund there were options for the return. The short way was to take the Wengeneralpbahn train the one stop to Grindelwald and then the Interlaken train to Wilderswil. However, the train going the long way via Kleine Scheidegg came first. In the timetable this was apparently a through train to Lauterbrunnen, but in fact a change of train was needed in Kleine Scheidegg. All day the Wengeneralpbahn had been running its older trains empty in advance of the service train. Now they needed these relief vehicles as everyone came down from the Jungfrauoch.

The high spot of the trip came next day when we took the express train to Brienz for the steam-powered rack railway up the Brienzer Rothorn. However, the smart

way to travel is to take the local train running in advance to make certain of a seat. We obtained almost the last seats on the coach being propelled by one of the superheated coal fired locomotives of 1933 - the other coach being propelled by a modern (1992), oil-fired locomotive. As the time for departure approached, a (diesel engined) relief train was sent down from the depot to collect those who were clearly not going to get on either of the steam powered trains.

Back from the top, we caught the train to Meiringen, the limit of our regional passes. First, a single coach train was taken to the far end of the Aare Gorges for a walk back through the impressive gorge before catching the train back to Meiringen from the other end. Then by bus to the Reichenbach Falls, reached by funicular. Here the fame is built on the death of Sherlock Holmes in a fight with the infamous Professor Moriarty. There is even a mark to show where the struggle took place! Shock, horror - the train from Lucerne to Interlaken was running 10 minutes late. Nevertheless, the evening commuters got home on time as a special train was run.

In 1991 we had travelled to Lenk from Montreux, passing through Gstaad. The Bernese Regional Pass made it possible to approach Gstaad from the north. At Interlaken West station there were special trains arriving from all around for an festival in Interlaken and then disaster - the train to Zweisimmen was going to be 20 minutes late! I was just contemplating how to use the delay when there was an announcement that the train was about to arrive. What appeared was an excursion set of coaches hauled by a freight

locomotive. Clearly, control wanted to dispose of one set! (The set was still at Zweisimmen as we came back on the regular EMU.)

Changing trains (from standard gauge to metre gauge) at Zweisimmen, we were directed to a set of coaches in Wagon-Lit colours - the Panorama Express Classic. What is more we found ourselves in the buffet car. There was just time for coffee in the coach, complete with all the normal Pullman fittings. Careful planning saw us on its return working and back in the buffet car for another coffee.

Travelling through the Lötschberg Tunnel from Interlaken some years ago, we had changed trains at Spiez only to see the coach we had left shunted onto the train we were joining. Now, with multiple unit stock, everyone has to change trains. The scenery was magnificent as the train climbed up to the tunnel. Through the other side, the track has been doubled as it drops down the side of the Rhone valley. (The line was built as a single line, but with bridges and tunnels capable of being widened to double track when traffic increased.) On the return journey it was possible to spot the work on the Lötschberg base tunnel, which will cut out much of the climb (and the views!). Our connection at Spiez turned out to be a German ICE set, which had left Berlin at 6.24am (on our seat was the "Reiseplan" with all the connections made by the train, including platform details - UK intercity TOCs please copy.) Back at Wilderswil there was just time to catch the last train up the Schynige Platte. The views were magnificent, but there was no time to get out of the train at the top.