

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

10th September 2007

"The preservation of electric traction"

Mr Peter Stavely

Chairman Southern Electric Group.

8th October 2007

"The little engines that went to sleep"

Mr John Tidmarsh

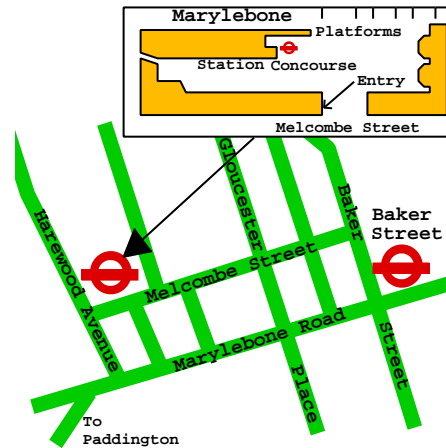
Sutton Coldfield Miniature Railway

12th November 2007

"NRM - Building our future from the past"

Mr Andrew Scott,

Head of the NRM.



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.



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 46

South of England Group

June 2007

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

BILL SMITH

As you will have read in the Review, it is with sadness that we have to report the loss of Bill Smith. As the founding Vice President of our Group, Bill always had a soft spot for us and used to make every effort to get to our events. For the first years of our existence, he always made a point of attending our New Year's Social and AGM, and dropped by our sales stands, especially when we were in the Bedfordshire area, as he was a resident of Willington. He spent his last days in Biggleswade Hospital where the local team of Phil Brown, Dorothy Brown and Mel Draper paid him several visits. The Group, as well as the Friends from York, were well represented at his funeral at the tiny church in Willington which was packed to overflowing with Bill's relations and friends. We left, with his widow, a framed photograph of Bill next to his beloved 1247 as a permanent memory of the association with our Group. He will be greatly missed.

We are delighted to report that Sir William McAlpine has agreed to fill the vacant Vice-President position, joining that other past-owner of *Flying Scotsman*, Alan Pegler. We anticipate a long association with all three of them - especially when "The Old Girl" returns to the main line in 2009.

OUTREACH REPORT

It's been fairly quiet on the model railway exhibitions after the Alexandra Palace event which, as usual proved both hectic and enjoyable. We had our usual stand position at the entry to the second hall and consequently had many visitors. Our next event, Trains at Trinity, at Biggleswade Methodist Church on 16th June was much quieter, but provided an opportunity to test out some of our new stand equipment. Our next event will be the Sandy Train & Toy Collectors Fair on 30th June/1st July, then a summer break before the Autumn season begins. Meanwhile, we have also been onboard several excursions hauled by Lord Nelson selling wares and ensuring that all know that the engine belongs to the NRM. There will be a full report of these trips in a later edition.

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EVENING MEETING REPORT 12TH MARCH 2007

For this meeting, we reverted to the technology of yesterday and had a programme of ciné films presented by Frank Banfield. Beginning with the earliest railway ciné known – scenes on a French station in 1895 - Frank took us on a tour in black and white silent film across the Tay Bridge (1897), the “Great Train Robbery” USA-style of 1903, and up the Catskill Mountains in 1906. This film was remarkable because every frame had had to be photographed and restored from a paper negative held in the US Library of Congress. Given that it’s about 15 minutes long that’s around 15,000 frames!

We saw one of the slightly dangerous practices of 100 years ago, upon which our dear Network Rail might frown: platelayers using home-made “sleds” to ride down the rack of the Washington cog railway - 4 miles in 4 minutes, and not much by way of brakes!!

Frank took us to Ireland to see the Listowel and Ballybunion MonoRail in 1920, a project whose inherent complexities - including locos with a boiler each side of the monorail and carriages where a ladder was necessary to

get from one side to the other, not to mention “bascule” road crossing bridges like those on Dutch canals – were all so great and unique as to have guaranteed its economic failure. But then it was Ireland after all.

And also in Ireland, a 1950 colour film, shot by Pat Whitehouse, of the Tralee and Dingle Railway. Delightful narrow gauge with all the infrastructure intact.

And so nearer home with a short film about “London’s River” made before the war and a 1937 SR film of the transport of fruit from Southampton Docks to London. We were flabbergasted to see the huge numbers of men off-loading, humping, carting, re-loading and stacking penny numbers of crates of orange boxes at each stage of a short journey. No wonder containers are popular!

“Firsts” and “lasts” were also featured. The first electric trains on the Liverpool Street – Southend Victoria line and the last trams and trolley buses in London.

It all seems so long ago now, but we felt privileged to have been able to remind ourselves of the strides that have been made. I wonder what 2007 will seem like in 50 years’ time?

Ian Harrison

SUMMER OUTING NUMBER TWO

Don't forget that we have a second summer outing planned for Saturday 11th August, to Frimley Green miniature railway - see the last Briefing for details. This is a mixed 3½", 5" and 7¼" line located near Farnborough, Hampshire. We will have a private tour of the site (it will not be open to the public), with the possibility to drive some of the engines. There will be a donation collection, rather

than a fixed charge. If you are interested in attending, it is not too late to join the party. Please contact Les Butler and say whether you will be driving there or coming by train (to Farnborough main-line station). Once we know who is coming and their modes of transport, we will arrange for lifts from the station for those travelling by train. Let's hope the weather is good to us.

AGM was held in the Walker Suite rather than the usual Lecture Theatre, because the latter had been temporarily gutted as part of the building of the Search Engine. A full report on the AGM will appear in due course in The Review. Your Chairman, Ian Harrison, gave a summary of the work of our Group, and it was pleasing to hear the strong message of support from all speakers, especially from Andrew who was most grateful for us flying the NRM flag in the South. Andrew also gave an insight into what will be happening in the future. With the Museum attendances at these high and stable levels, attention is being given to refreshing the displays to make sure there is something new for visitors to see. Even small professionally-built displays are expensive (the *Flying Scotsman* display cost £750,000), so you will understand that locating sources of money is essential if this work is to proceed. The Norwich Wheel is contributing to the cash flow, having attracted some 400,000 paying riders. The Great Hall will be the focus for attention - the Search Engine being the first of the innovations. However, Andrew pointed out that there is no threat to the turntable display, which is recognised as being the main attraction of the site. As for the engines, *Green Arrow* is nearing

the end of her boiler ticket, so after some time on preserved lines, she will have to take her place as a static exhibit. *Flying Scotsman's* firebox needs more attention than expected, so is unlikely to be back together until early 2009. Meanwhile, *Oliver Cromwell's* rebuild is moving ahead fast, and it is likely to be out in Spring 2008, the target is the May Bank Holiday commemoration of the 40th anniversary of end of BR Steam. The *Rocket* replica is being rebuilt with a brand new boiler, its original being time-expired. The opportunity is being taken to make its outline more authentic, using the results of the "Archaeological Survey" by Michael Bailey and John Glithero. It will raise a few eyebrows, but we'll have our three chronological models on our stand to explain it!. Finally, the "York Central" property development of the redundant part of the York site finally looks like it is about to begin. Keep an eye out for press reports over the next six months for the point when the land owners, the NRM being one, appoint the developers.

Following the AGM, we descended on a York restaurant for an evening meal before some free time in York.

The second part of the story of the outing - the visit to the K.& W.V.R. has been held over for the next edition.

LORD NELSON SAILS AGAIN

As you know, our Group has supported the return of SR 850 *Lord Nelson* to the main line. Since her inaugural run from Minehead to Eastleigh on 31 March, there have been 7 more trips. On each trip we man a joint sales stand with Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society (custodians of the locomotive) to raise funds for her upkeep. Your Chairman is a member of the support crew and can be observed on various duties at the midway point of the

trips, having previously cleaned and generally cosseted what is rapidly becoming “our” engine.

I have written a longer article for the next edition of the *NRM Review*. We welcome any member of the Friends to join the support crew or help with the sales effort. And you get a free trip into the bargain! If you are interested in either please contact me.

Ian Harrison

Lake Louise and Banff, but we were going north on the CNR route to Jasper. We did the Banff bit by coach later so that we could travel through the Columbia Icefields. The second day is better from the scenic point of view as you enter the Canadian Rockies proper, with much snow to be seen. All along the route we observed various forms of wildlife such as bald eagles, elk, mountain goats and deer, but approaching Jasper a shout went up of "bear on the left" and at long last I saw my first wild bear. Five minutes later there was another one (just like buses). It had been a long standing family joke that everybody had seen a bear in the wild except me. On our last visit there was even one outside my son's house one morning and I was the only one to miss it. Jasper is a pleasant small town

surrounded by mountains with interesting freight movements in the station yards. This station also has an excellent rail book and model shop. Not to be missed. In many ways the RM is a better bet than travelling all the way from/to Toronto, as the night is spent in a hotel. Also the less interesting part of the journey i.e. the Prairies and the Canadian Shield in Ontario is avoided as are two more nights on the train.

So give it a try. Canada is a very tourist friendly country and Vancouver is its cream (O.K.. I'm biased). Zoom airlines does some good deals from Gatwick but I would recommend booking Premium class, to have more leg room and a more padded seat. It will still cost less than the national airlines.

Roy Bell

SUMMER OUTING 2007 (PART ONE)

Our party of 16 members assembled at 18:30 at the NRM on 22nd June for the 30th anniversary dinner. Before the formal events began, there was a chance to ride the Norwich Union wheel. While around a third the size of the London Eye, the wheel at the NRM gives stunning views over York and the surrounding countryside. It travels somewhat faster than its big brother in the capital, but to compensate for this, you go round three times. Normally after ending the journey, riders are encouraged to visit the museum. We, of course, needed no such encouragement - especially as there was a welcoming glass of wine as an aperitif before the dinner. The start of the post-dinner events was a presentation of honorary membership for Donald Wilson, station master at Marylebone, to recognise his support to our South of England Group over the last 8 years. Donald retires from his post shortly. He attended the dinner as our guest and was a little

surprised to be called up to receive his award. The speaker was also associated with Chiltern Railways - its chairman Adrian Shooter. Adrian gave a stimulating talk about his involvement in preservation, and particularly his involvement with the Darjeeling and Himalayas Railway. The evening closed around 23:00 and we made our way back to the hotel along the banks of the River Ouse which was happily flowing within its banks, despite all the rain over the past two weeks.

Saturday dawned with a weather forecast of thundery downpours between 10:30 and 15:00 - and they were right. Luckily, we were safely undercover in the Museum as the heavens opened. Despite this, the Museum seemed well patronised. We found out from Andrew Scott in his address at the end of the AGM, that attendance last year was around 906,000 with a further 140,000 at Shildon. The

APRIL MEMBERS' EVENING

On 16th April, a small party gathered to share some video recordings. Our Chairman had arranged with the publishers to show some 1960s archive material. Mel Draper showed some of his

recordings including, as a tribute to Bill Smith, J52 N° 1247 on the East Somerset Railway. Other members provided recordings from around the UK and world, making for an enjoyable evening.

WHAT COLOUR LOCOMOTIVES - A REPLY

Responding to Ian Harrison's question in the last *Briefing* I think there are a few answers. First and foremost, if it is my loco and I pay all the bills, it can be any colour I like. On the other hand, if other people help pay the bills then their views should be considered - and then I still may paint it what colour I like. Now if the loco is owned by a group, a consensus will be reached - unless the group has an autocratic chairman. Readers may insert their own choice of name here. Next, if the loco is part of the National Collection then presumably we all agree that the livery should be authentic, but then it starts to become complicated, because it often is not. Take our own beloved 4472, or should that be 502, 103, or 60103?. Strictly speaking it can never be 4472, as that was an A1/A10, as was 502. 103 was both an A1/A10 and A3 (I told you it gets complicated). So with single chimney in LNER green it should be 103, but never has been in preservation probably because hardly anyone can relate to that number. Alan Pegler chose 4472, in apple green, because he bought the loco and could please himself. He also liked red nameplates and green cylinder covers. However as a National Collection engine it should only be 60103 as it has a double chimney, fitted in 1959. Taking up Ian's original point let us look at 4771/60800 *Green Arrow*. It was built as 637 with standard curved nameplates, but never left works in that condition. In LNER days it became 700 then 800. As it never had a

double chimney or separate cylinder castings any of the versions are acceptable, ignoring minor routine modifications which happen to all machines. Now let us look at *Mallard*. IT IS WRONG. In LNER blue it should be 4468, without the commemorative plaque, or 22 with the plaque, which was not fitted until March 1948 when in for a works overhaul, was repainted blue, revised to BR blue in 1949. It could also be 607 (sans plaque) and 4468 in black, not forgetting 60022 in BR green. There is one other point of contention which I think should be mentioned and that is the re-naming and re-numbering of preserved locos in spurious forms for photo shoots and steam galas. Again the owners are entitled to please themselves, but I feel there will be historical errors made in the future by researchers trawling through picture libraries. Many myths become perpetuated, e.g. *Rocket* was the first steam engine and was built by George Stephenson. People often tell us that they know both of these "facts" when they see our models on the sales stand. I am sure that you have now read enough and have other things to do but please send in your opinions. I am off to count rivets. One final thought, no doubt in a few years time when the Duchess has been running in its bathtub shell for sometime someone will want it to be black. Much of the above information has been gleaned from the RCTS green LNER volumes, so my thanks to them.

Roy Bell

TWO DAYS ON THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEER

I have been fortunate in travelling on several of the Canadian railways west of Montreal. Note that in Canada they are "railways". Railroads are in the USA.

On the "Canadian" route from Toronto to Vancouver, some of the best scenery, along the Thompson/Fraser rivers is passed during the night and is therefore not seen unless you do as I once did and go up to the dome car at midnight, when there was a full moon shining down the valley. The way to see this stretch in daylight is to travel on the "Rocky Mountaineer", which stops overnight in Kamloops. My wife, who like many other wives, does not usually appreciate railtours, spotted a good deal to Vancouver, where our son lives, and included the "RM" tour.

The booking was made and after spending three days with the family an early start was made to the station. I was most surprised when the coach drove past the ViaRail station (formerly CNR) and drove to a new station purpose built for the "RM". The start was not too thrilling as we ground our way out of the freight yards across town to New Westminster but then we were in the farmlands of the Fraser delta and it all turned green. You soon notice that you are passing huge freights, sometimes up to a mile long, often being hauled by three locos. Most of the time it is grain or timber and you see that there are tracks on both sides of the river. The reason for this is that when the CPR built its line across the Rockies, it took the easiest route (although that is relatively speaking) and when the CNR followed some 15 years later they were stuck with a less friendly terrain. Both CPR and CNR are now freight only, the only passenger trains in the West (apart from a small offering by BC Rail) are the

"RM" and ViaRail's "Canadian" and "Skeena". The latter runs from Jasper to Prince Rupert, up near Alaska.

Looking across the river to the tracks opposite, you notice there are many short tunnels and avalanche shelters as the lines climb into the mountains. The Fraser/Thompson is not known as "avalanche alley" for nothing. As we travelled in April there was still plenty of snow on the high ground which was why we went at this time of year. We travelled Red Leaf class, which is standard. Gold Leaf gives you modern double-deck observation cars and a separate dining car. In Red Leaf, food and refreshment is served at your seat, which is no problem thanks to the plentiful seat spacing and the Canadian loading gauge. The coach is about 10ft wide and the views through the windows are quite satisfactory, unlike some of our own modern units. The vestibules between the coaches are open above waist height and up to four passengers are allowed to ride there at any one time. As the train is usually doing 40/50 mph it is reasonably comfortable out there and is very popular with photographers. Each coach has its own steward who serves all the refreshments and gives a very informed commentary on the passing scene without being intrusive. The standard of customer care is very high and the train staff clearly enjoy their work, despite a quite long working day.

At Kamloops, near our overnight hotel, was a railway book and memorabilia shop which was open until 8.00 pm but as our arrival was a bit late there was not enough time to do it justice. If you are tempted to do the trip get in there asap.

Day 2 was an 8am start and we found that the train had been split overnight. Part went to Calgary on the CPR route via



The RM approaching the merging of the Fraser and Thompson rivers near Lytton. Rail bridge in background is one of two where the CNR and CPR change sides.



Freight yard at Jasper.



Rocky Mountaineer at Jasper.



Stuffed and mounted at Jasper.



The South of England Group at the FNRM AGM with the original Lord Nelson nameplate.



Donald Wilson receiving his honorary membership at the 30th Anniversary dinner from FNRM Chairman, Frank Paterson