

# THE OLD RUN



**JOURNAL OF  
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY  
LEEDS**

**August 1984**



Cover Picture: Peckett No.2003 busy shunting at Moor Road Depot whilst Nos 1310, 1309 and 3865 patiently await overhaul. (S.J. Roberts).

Editorial Address:

8, Manor Farm Drive  
Belle Isle  
Leeds LS10 3RW

The Editor invites all readers to contribute articles, news items, letters, photographs and drawings on subjects of interest! All contributions should include the reader's name and address. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd, The Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

All articles for the next issue should reach the Editor by 14th September 1984.

Details of rates and conditions for advertisements in The Old Run may be obtained from the Editor.

## EDITORIAL

I.B.Smith

It's operating time once again, and this time the signs are very promising. Whilst patronage is slightly up on last year, the takings are most definitely up! Due in part to our price increase perhaps, but more significantly a good proportion of our intake of cash has come from the new shop. This project has more than justified our faith in it since opening, and it will undoubtedly continue to make money and help ensure our success.

Another success was Joe Lee's Victorian Day event in June. For very little outlay, the railway took £91 in fares and over £55 in sales. With more publicity [from those who attended and enjoyed themselves and will probably encourage friends to come!] the next event should prove even better.

Yet another encouraging thing is the sight of our new loco shed being commenced. The foundations are now well under way, whilst Steve Roberts has overseen the manufacture of steel uprights. Once completed, we should have covered accommodation the equal of any other preserved line and hopefully be able to attract more members to the line.

Finally may I draw attention to Joe's report elsewhere in the magazine. I can only echo his sentiments and hope members will take heed of his last paragraph - particularly those councillors who seem hell bent on raising prices and reducing services as an answer to all our problems - this approach is fine in the short term but the public pay for a STEAM ride, and frequency of trains. Diesels do not attract customers for long unless they happen to be "WESTERNS", "DELTICS" or others of the same ilk!



A new job at Middleton is that of Gardener. Keith Hartley tends the garden outside the New Station Building. (S. Bye).

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The year 1984 marks a particular milestone in the preservation and development of the Middleton Railway.

There has been and will continue to be opportunity to continue work which will eventually place the Railway well and truly on the map in the preservation world, not thought possible until financial assistance in the form of an Inner City Grant brought about paid employment through Manpower Services.

The true preservationist may be of the opinion that this defeats the ideals of real preservation. It does however, complement the hard core of members who give many hours of their time at weekends and other occasions to retain a working railway. For the first time since 1960, there will be a complete station with all facilities, followed later this year by covered accommodation for some locomotives.

Additional locomotives have enhanced the stock list, providing further interest for members and visitors.

The site adjacent to the station is now open during the year, which will no doubt increase the number of people attending to work or view.

It is anticipated that further monies will be available to complete further work at Tunstall Road and Middleton Park, including tree and shrub planting in conjunction with Cockburn School pupils.

It is always difficult to mention individuals by name, however, the Council is particularly pleased to place on record the heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed in any way to the magnificent development programme, hoping that their example will inspire others who rarely attend to become involved as 'working' members. The future is never certain, consequently I sincerely hope that the coming years will see the railway not only as a lasting tribute to the locomotive industry and the preservationist but also as a viable and attractive working railway which will bring enjoyment to the visitor for years to come.

The possibilities are there - Tourism, Schools Days, Galas, Historical interest and of course, preservation of the World's Oldest Railway.

It is inevitable that rising costs of fuel will bring about fare increases; can we reverse this situation by attracting more members and visitors to cut our losses? A final thought - if each member endeavours to recruit one new member this year, our membership will double.

J.K.Lee B.E.M.  
Chairman, M.R.T.

## LETTERS

Dear Editor,

In the January 1983 issue of "The Old Run" (No. 105), I commented that I thought most diesel shunter designs were better looking than the BR "08" class, a view which Editorial enthusiasm for the "08" design has failed to shake!

In my letter I particularly mentioned the 525hp 0-8-0 shunters built by Hunslet (with a little help from Andrew Barclay and BR, Swindon) for Kenya railways in the late 1970s. The mention of a minor derailment to the Fowler diesel at Whittakers' turnout on 17th March ("Old Run" 109) was of interest because a few days ago on my way to work here in Mombasa, I discovered one of the Hunslet shunters (Kenya Railways "47" class, no. 4704) well and truly off the track having collided with a solid concrete buffer block and turned right on its side.

Kenya Railways duly provided an 80 tonne capacity breakdown crane - a luxury not readily available at most UK preserved railways! - and 4704 was quickly righted. Being a sound product of the Hunslet Engine Works, it appeared little the worse for the encounter, except for a few dents and scratches, but the concrete buffer block was well and truly out of position!

Yours sincerely  
Henry Gunston

## MEMBERSHIP

Those of you who attended the postponed A.G.M. will know that the proposal to increase membership subscriptions was carried and the new rates will become operative for those whose membership falls due for renewal on 1st January, 1985. The new rates are:

Full Trust member	£4.00
Junior/O.A.P. member	£2.00
Family Associate member	£0.50
Life member	£50.00

For those whose subscriptions fell due on 1st July, 1984, the rate remains unchanged. Some of you have been good enough to send your subs before you received the reminder, for which many thanks. For the other July renewals, a reminder is enclosed with this Old Run. Please renew promptly.



## OBITUARIES

### **Kenneth Earle Hartley An Appreciation of a Man Who Loved Railways by Ron Redman**

It is with a great sense of loss that we have to record the death on 27th January, 1984, after a short illness of Ken Hartley, at the age of 77.

Ken was born in Elland and after completing his education at the New School, Hopwood Lane, Halifax, he served his engineering apprenticeship at Karrier Motors Ltd., in Huddersfield.

After military service he settled in Selby in 1946 and worked for many years as a fitter at the Army's Barlow Depot near Selby. One of his many duties being the maintenance of the Decauville railway system and its diesel locomotives, he later recorded the line and its motive power in detail in the "Industrial Railway Record" No. 79, in October, 1978.

A quiet and rather reserved man he had a lifelong interest in minor railways, at home and overseas, with a special regard for the standard gauge light railways of the north of England. On retirement he found more time to devote to writing and continued his correspondence with friends all over the country. When a letter dropped through the letterbox with his distinctive and neat handwriting, you knew you were in for a treat!

His observations over the years led to the publication of many articles, one of the first being in the September 1928 Model Railway News entitled "Light Railways of Great Britain" and this included his beloved Sand Hutton, illustrated with two of his early views. In December, 1930, he was back in the same publication with a write-up on his summer holiday on the Welsh narrow gauge including visits to the Festiniog and Fairbourne railways, his short article being in fact a prizewinner in a holiday letter competition.

It was inevitable he would go on to write-up individual railways in detail and he has left the enthusiasts a legacy of excellent booklets on The Spurn Head, Easingwold and Cawood & Selby Railways, but probably his most popular was his study of the Sand Hutton Railway first published by the N.G.R.S. in 1964, and later expanded and re-released as a special issue of the Narrow Gauge (Nos. 95/96) in 1982.

For the last few years he spent considerable time writing up several volumes of his railway recollections all illustrated with his own very detailed sketches as well as producing a number of tiny "N" gauge models of light railway locomotives.

In addition to his work for the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, for which he was made an Honorary Life Member in 1982, Ken also wrote a number of articles for "Old Run", his last being an account of the Garstang & Knott End Railway under the title of "Quartet from Jack Lane".

He was also instrumental in the purchase of "Mary" and introduced the owners to Ron Redman who has since been of great help in the loco's restoration.

All those who came in contact with Ken will miss his friendly and detailed letters and our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife and family.

### **Editor's Note**

This obituary appeared in the N.G.R.S. magazine and has been altered slightly to include an appreciation from the Trust, with Ron Redman's permission.

It is with sadness that we announce the death last winter of three other members of the Trust, who were particularly helpful to us in its earlier days.

Frank Hellewell (Solicitor - senior partner in Hellewell, Pasley and Brewer) will be unknown to most active members. Indeed he rarely if ever visited the line itself, but in the first ten years of the Trust, was a right hand man to Fred Youell, in negotiations and constitutional affairs. Quietly and efficiently, behind the scenes, from his home in Gomersal he worked towards the Charitable, Limited Liability Company status that we hold today. We extend our sympathy to the family.

Charles E. Lee F.C.I.T. an honorary member and Transport Historian lived and died in the shadow of St.Pancras Station in London. He was on the editorial staff at various times, of both the Railway Gazette and Railway Magazine, and Vice Chairman of the Consultative Panel for the Preservation of British Transport Relics. He was particularly well known for his writings on early transport modes - the Horse Bus and the 1804 Swansea and Mumbles Railway. His encouragement of the Middleton Railway preservation scheme was due to our undoubted claims of historicity - his article in the Railway Magazine "Steam Locomotives in 1812" has undoubtedly helped put the railway on the map nationally, and the Trust purchased 1000 copies for sale at exhibitions etc. As part of the "Matthew Murray" celebrations of 1966, Charles Lee gave a masterly lecture at the University. His appearance remained that of the 1920's - special shaped trilby, double breasted suit, gloves, spats, high collar and a long cigarette holder.



He carried the 'golden age of railways' in his style and dress to the end. The Golden Age of Transport Historians and Charles E. Lee are synonymous.

**Professor Emeritus Johannes Korting** of Karlsruhe, West Germany, discovered the Middleton Railway whilst tracing the English ancestors of the late Mrs. Ingrid Seith-Blenkinsop great, great grand-daughter of John Blenkinsop.

His search in England initially via the Science Museum in London lead to a long correspondence and generous support of our Trust. Of particular value was his paper on "Three Great Engineers", describing John Blenkinsop of Middleton; his son, who became an engineer to the Braunschweig Railway having arrived with a 'kit' of locomotive parts from Britain, and his grandson John Stanley Blenkinsop who was engineer to the Kiel Canal.

In spite of his great age - he died just short of his 95th birthday - he wrote in perfect English, and translated articles from British journals on 'Gas Technology' for the use of their German counterparts. On my last visit in 1980 he bemoaned the fact that he was unable to take part in his daily morning swim - at 7 a.m.!! (The Archivist is normally elsewhere at that hour!)

He last wrote to me at the New Year 3/1/84 and described his failing health, as he sought to care for his wife who was also ill. "I may get better but I am not very confident of that. It is really too much of old age suddenly I shall not forget M.R.T as long as I live." We extend our condolences to Constance, his wife.

The Trust salutes the memory of three stalwart members who gave of their time and talents to secure a future for the World's Oldest Railway.

John Bushell  
with the assistance of Dr. R.F. Youell

## MOOR ROAD DEVELOPMENT

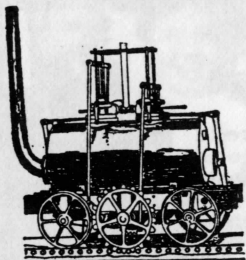
Although the last report was penned in March, there has been relatively little in the way of progress over the last few months, mainly due to problems of supervision of our Community Programme workforce. Our original (and very good) supervisor left the scheme shortly before Christmas and we have since had

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Left: The Lord Mayor waves his hat as he rides to Middleton Park on the footplate of Peckett No. 2003. (K. Crowther).

Below: Chairman Joe Lee presents a framed picture to the Lord Mayor & Lady Mayoress under the watchful eye of our special Guest of Honour, Miss Dorothy Briggs. (C. Rogers).





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long periods of having no supervisor to organise and control the workforce with the result that very little in the way of actual work has been carried out. A newly appointed supervisor proved to be very much of a liability as almost every job he started ended by creating more work for ourselves. This inadequate supervision has caused us considerable concern but we have been powerless to do much about it, partially because we do not control the labour or labour costs on the C.P. scheme but mainly because there has been no suitable person available to employ within the terms that are laid down. However, a new supervisor started work in mid-June and the signs are that our problems in this respect are resolved. Certainly, the work rate since has been far greater than at any time since the New Year.

The slow work rate during the first half of the year has, of course meant that the original objectives were not achieved by the time the C.P. scheme finished in May. A six month extension to the scheme was applied for and granted. This will enable the work to carry on until November and hopefully, allow the loco shed to be completed, along with other sundry jobs.

The station building was sufficiently complete for it to be in normal operation at Easter and it was officially opened by the Lord Mayor on the 29th April, after much hectic work and burning of the midnight oil. At last, after many years, we have Ladies and Gents Toilets for the public, a booking office and display area and an adequately sized shop to cater for the crowds who will hopefully come to use these facilities! Some work, inevitably, remains to be done but this is not sufficient to hinder the operations and will be left to the winter when indoor jobs are needed.

The front of the building has, thanks to the efforts of several members, been transformed into a flower bed which is slowly becoming an attractive blaze of colour. At the back of the building the Saxby & Farmer gate mechanism has been uncovered to show how the gates operated and the tidying up and grassing of this area will be completed in due course.

Last month's report stated that work had started on the loco shed foundation during February and it was optimistically assumed that they would soon be complete. However, due to the inadequate supervision previously referred to, this work is only now (July) being completed. The foundation holes have been dug, filled in, redug in their correct places (some of them!), dug too deep, or too shallow and too large; in fact almost anything but the correct size! However, the large amount of concrete for the foundations, some 30 cubic metres, has now been poured and the steelwork for the building is presently in course of erection. If all goes well, brickwork should commence within the next few days and progress should be reasonably rapid.

The steelwork erection is being done by the Trust and is proving an interesting exercise for our working volunteers who are normally much more at home with both feet firmly on the ground rather than twenty feet up in the air! It is probable that the work of cladding the roof will also be done with our own labour but this has not yet been decided.



## NOTES & NEWS

### CHANGE OF NAME

Tunstall Road Halt has been the name used for our northern terminus almost since the inception of passenger services. However, it has always been something of a misnomer and it has been decided to drop this name in favour of the name Moor Road now that we are permanently housed on the site. This is, of course, in line with the correct postal address and hopefully will avoid confusion.

### LOCO NOTES

As has been the case for some time, there has been so much work to do on other things that there is relatively little to report in the way of progress on this subject.

No.2003 is available for traffic and has required little attention other than in the way of routine maintenance. One minor problem has been a recurrence of leaking tubes in the firebox which have been re-expanded.

The firebox mouthpiece on Windle is now ready for rivetting, the necessary rivets having been obtained from the Hunslet Engine Co. It is hoped that this work will be carried out in early August to enable the loco to see service towards the back end of the season.

For some while now, steady, if unspectacular, work has been progressing on the Sentinel (No.59) and the locomotive has been stripped of a large number of parts, many of which have been overhauled. The boiler has been prepared for lowering out of the frame, a task that will be completed as soon as a suitable pit has been provided. The top flange of the boiler is severely corroded and will probably require replacement, work which will have to be carried out by a specialist firm. Considerable work remains to be done on the body (cab, tanks etc.) of the loco as there is considerable corrosion in places. However, this work will probably not be undertaken until the more important boiler work is complete.

Little work has been done on the Bagnall (No.2702) but descaling of the boiler barrel with a needle gun has revealed considerable pitting of the lower half. An ultrasonic thickness test is to be carried out to determine the severity of this problem as soon as time permits.

Some work has been carried out on the stays of No.385 but the locomotive's boiler is still not ready for an hydraulic test.

Of the diesel fleet, Nos. 138C, D631, 1786 and 4220029 are available for use as required. Fowler No. 4220038 is undergoing a top end overhaul of its engine but should be back in use by the time this is in print. Some trouble has been experienced with the forward/reverse gear change on 138C but hopefully this is now cured. D631 is starting to look rather scruffy and will require a repaint this winter.

### PLANT & EQUIPMENT

Several new items of plant have been obtained in recent months, all of which have been proving their worth as acquisitions.

A B.O.C. 'Pug' line burner was obtained relatively cheaply and has been a real asset when cutting the steel for the new building, enabling even unskilled hands to produce good jobs.

The C.P. scheme has been using a cement mixer since the start of work and this machine has been hired at not inconsiderable cost. It had always been our intention to buy a mixer but we have, until now been unable to obtain a suitable machine at a reasonable cost. However, one was recently located and purchased. It is in reasonable condition, having had an overhauled engine fitted shortly before its purchase.

We have for some time been trying to obtain a suitable compressor to enable us to use our growing collection of air tools but, although we have followed up several leads we have found nothing suitable. However, when purchasing the cement mixer, a mobile compressor was spotted in the yard of the vendor which, on enquiry, he was prepared to sell. It is a Broomwade 125 c.f.m. rotary vane type driven by a Ford diesel engine. Although it was in working order its condition could not be described as good and it needed some work on it to render it fit for further use. It is now in service and apart from a tendency to produce little oil pressure when warm it is performing satisfactorily.

Our search for a suitable lathe has, hopefully ended as the opportunity has arisen to purchase a suitable redundant machine from the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. Arrangements are in hand to complete the purchase and transport it to the line in the near future.

### NOT BAD BUT COULD BE BETTER!

The above title aptly sums up the first few months of the 1984 operating season. Easter got off to a fine start although no records were broken. Traffic levels are considerably up on 1983 although this is no cause for merriment as last year was not a good year for visitors. Our target for 1984 is 11,000 passengers and it is hoped that we might achieve this but it will be touch and go. This is still some way short of our best years

in the mid 1970's when we were achieving over 15,000 passengers per annum, albeit with a much longer season than we now have.

Saturdays have continued to be very quiet and have generally failed to justify the provision of a service. Even though it is generally diesel hauled and shows a profit, the man hours necessary for its provision are not inconsiderable. Sundays however have, for the most part, been fairly busy although not to the extent of making up for the poor Saturdays.

School days, once so important with regard to our revenue have been very poorly supported of late although the teachers dispute may have been a prime cause this year. However, we have been able to run a number of special charter trains which have helped make up for it.

Operationally, the service has been fairly satisfactory though there have been one or two minor teething troubles associated with operating from Moor Road, mainly centred around watering facilities and tidiness. The fact that we do not have to run empty stock trains to and from the depot has been a big benefit and has cut down on our fuel consumption considerably.

On the subject of fuel, our coal merchant has, so far, been able to supply us with coal as and when required but we have had to take pot luck on the quality. We have also been burning large amounts of wood which one of our members seems to be able to provide in vast quantities at no cost to the railway.

1984 is a make or break year for the Middleton Railway. It looks as though we have overcome our financial burden with regard to operating trains by increasing our passenger revenue to more satisfactory levels and by reducing our fuel costs but we must increase our passenger levels considerably if we are to expand our facilities beyond that which the recent grants have provided and provide sufficient money for the very necessary and overdue repairs to locos and track.

#### **Vacuum Brakes**

One of the requirements of the Railway Inspectorate is that we must have continuous brakes on our passenger trains and for some years now we have successfully used an air brake system of our own design using commercial vehicle parts. The air brake was chosen in preference to the more traditional vacuum brake as none of our passenger rolling stock was fitted and the cost of fitting an air system was considerably less than a vacuum system. However, the existing air brake equipment is now becoming worn out and in need of replacement. This, coupled with the fact that the P.M.V. is already vacuum fitted has caused a change in policy and we are now proceeding to fit vacuum brake systems to our locomotives. To this end a temporary system was recently fitted to the Peckett as a trial and proved quite successful. Arrangements are now being made to fit a permanent system to the traffic locomotives during the winter.

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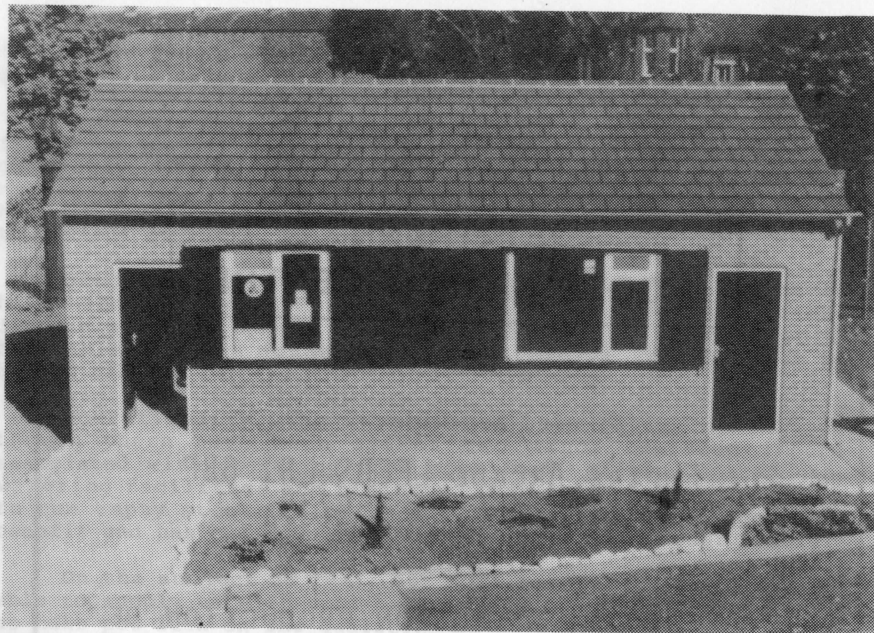
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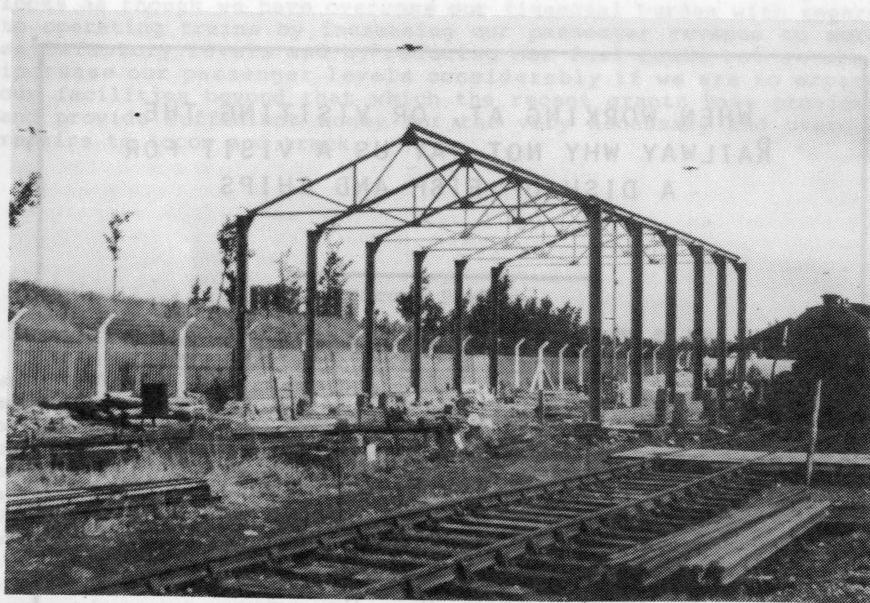
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PROPRIETOR BOB SCARTH





Complete at last; the shop on May 6th. (S.J. Roberts)



The shed steelwork was substantially complete by the end of July and work has started on the walls.  
(I.B. Smith)

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

It is not often the sun shines favourably on the Middleton Railway, but shine it did on Sunday, 29th April when our new station at Moor Road was opened by the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Martin Dodgson.

Preparations had been going on apace for several weeks beforehand to make the new station look sufficiently finished for this important day and the finishing touches were still being applied almost up to the moment of opening.

The various guests started to assemble shortly before the Lord Mayor's scheduled arrival at 2.00 pm. It was very pleasing to see Tom and Margaret Apperley once again amongst other familiar faces of our members. Representatives were also present from the City Council, Community Programme, Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, Hunslet Engine Co., and other associated organisations.

In true railway tradition, the Lord Mayor's Rolls Royce pulled into the depot a few minutes late to be greeted by Joe Lee who introduced the various Council members to the Lord Mayor before taking him to the station building and the assembled onlookers. After a short speech of welcome by our Chairman, Councillor Dodgson was invited to unveil a plaque commemorating the event.

In his reply the Lord Mayor commented that it was St.Catherine's day, a fact that became coincidentally appropriate when five year old Catherine Roberts then presented the Lady Mayoress with a bouquet of flowers. Our chairman then invited Miss Dorothy Briggs to say a few words on this historic occasion.

Miss Briggs, who was a special guest of Honour, is a life member of the society and is a direct descendant of Matthew Murray.

The speech making over, the Lord Mayor was asked to ceremonially unlock the door to the station building and the various guests toasted the future of the Railway with a glass of wine. The assembled party were then given a ride on the train to Middleton Park, the Lord Mayor riding on the footplate of Peckett No. 2003 and apparently thoroughly enjoying himself.

The ladies of our society are the unsung heroes at such events and once again they had excelled themselves to provide a buffet for the various guests at the nearby skill centre. This provided an opportunity for the guests to relax and meet each other and was a fitting end to what had been a successful, if hectic, day.

## PASSENGER VEHICLE CONVERSION

C. Rogers

Members will recall that some time ago work started on the conversion of a P.M.V. to a passenger vehicle. However, during a severe gale the roof canvas was torn off and an asbestos sheet blown from King's factory damaged the vehicle roof planking. Rain penetrating the damaged roof caused the planks to swell and become loose. This setback, coupled with the need to do more urgent work elsewhere led to the job being temporarily abandoned.

However, now that the sun had arrived, Graham Parkin and I decided that it was time to emerge from the cover of the Station building, where we had spent the winter, and this seemed an ideal job to tackle in the light summer evenings.

The first job to tackle was, of course, the roof. There are, however, problems when working on the roof of this type of vehicle, which is of the Southern semi-elliptical type, as they are rather high with very rounded edges. Work along one edge was achieved by parking it alongside the platform and erecting some staging that we had but the other side appeared more difficult as the staging was not high enough to reach from ground level. That is until we hit on the idea of parking a suitable vehicle in the adjacent loop at its convergence with the running line and using this to support the staging to provide a working platform.

The plank roofing, which had been able to dry out in the recent prolonged sunshine, was carefully scrapped to remove the remains of the old canvas cover and then a coat of aluminium wood primer applied. This was followed by the major part of the exercise, that of fixing down the loose planking (which happened to be most of it!) to the hoopsticks. Some 350 brass screws were used on this task alone. A coat of grey paint was then applied for good measure to further seal the roof. Finally, a plastic tarpaulin sheet, made up of woven polythene sandwiched between two plain sheets, was fitted and stretched tight across the roof before clamping all the way round the edge with timber battens. The covering was fitted in one day and it is hoped that it will prove a more efficient solution to the roof problem than the roofing felt that we have used in the past and which does not always endure for a satisfactory time.

Once the roof was complete and watertight, attention was turned to the sides. Most of the timber framework for the coach body had already been fitted but this required several evenings work to complete and prepare for the side panels. The panelling is a double skin construction, the outer skin consisting of 3/8" exterior quality plywood and the inner skin of 1/4" plywood. At the time of writing, most of the outer skin panels have been fitted, primed and sealed. Much work of course remains to be done but it is hoped that the vehicle will be complete for the start of next season when it will provide a much higher standard of accommodation for our visitors.

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## ONWARDS - TO MIDDLETON PARK!

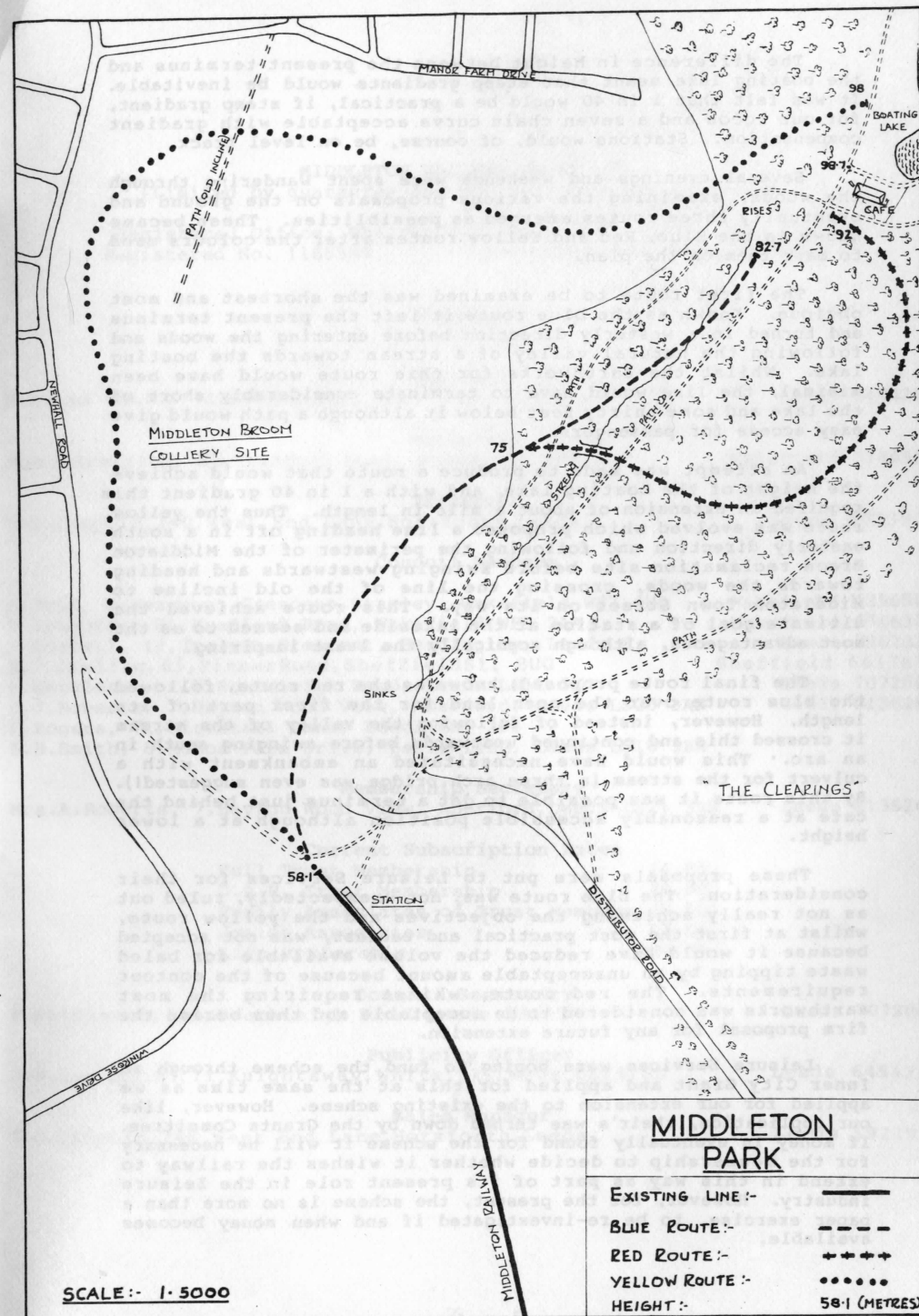
During 1983, we have attended several meetings with Bob Cotcroft, Principal Officer in the Leisure Services Department of Leeds City Council. Whilst these meetings have been concerned mainly with the Inner City Grant (Leisure Services are our sponsoring department and responsible for ensuring the money is spent in accordance with the terms of the grant), we have been able to discuss other subjects related to the Railway and in particular the Middleton Park end of the line. Leisure Services have some ambitious plans for Middleton Park which, although it is one of the largest in Leeds, is the Cinderella of its many parks. It was pleasing to learn that the Middleton Railway features prominently in these plans. However, we were somewhat surprised when asked for our views on the possibility of extending the line at the southern end. Bob Cotcroft felt that our present terminus would be very much in the middle of nowhere when the park is completed and he felt that it could be made to fulfil a useful function if it was extended to connect the various proposed facilities with a terminus as near to the existing cafe and boating lake as could be practically achieved.

A brief examination of a large scale plan of the area indicated that an extension of the line might be practical and we were asked to carry out a preliminary survey and report back as soon as possible in order that any preliminary works could be incorporated in the Leisure Services grant applications for the next year. The Trust Council agreed to back the initial examination of the project without committing the railway to any far reaching decisions.

The following parameters were given to us by Leisure Services:

- To provide an accessible terminus at, or near to the boating lake.
- To produce a realistic scheme that could be carried out using Community Programme or similar manpower and that did not have large earthworks.
- To fit in with the overall plan for Middleton Park.

Large scale plans of the area were obtained and several evenings of armchair study of these by Tony Cowling and myself produced several possible routes. The area of the park under survey could be conveniently split into two different sections - the general open space that constituted the old Broom pit and Fireclay works area and for which full contours were available on the plans, and the woodland area for which only a few spot heights were known.



The difference in height between the present terminus and the boating lake meant that steep gradients would be inevitable. It was felt that 1 in 40 would be a practical, if steep gradient, for our locos and a seven chain curve acceptable with gradient compensation. Stations would, of course, be on level track.

Several evenings and weekends were spent wandering through the woods, examining the various proposals on the ground and eventually three routes emerged as possibilities. These became known as the Blue, Red and Yellow routes after the colours used to mark them on the plan.

The first route to be examined was the shortest and most obvious. Known as the blue route it left the present terminus and turned in a westerly direction before entering the woods and following the natural valley of a stream towards the boating lake. Whilst the earthworks for this route would have been minimal, the line would have to terminate considerably short of the lake and some thirty feet below it although a path would give easy access for passengers.

An attempt was made to produce a route that would achieve the height of the boating lake, and with a 1 in 40 gradient this required an extension of about a mile in length. Thus the yellow route was evolved which proposed a line heading off in a south easterly direction and following the perimeter of the Middleton Broom reclamation site before swinging westwards and heading towards the woods, crossing the line of the old incline to Middleton Town Street on its way. This route achieved the ultimate goal of a station at the lakeside and seemed to us the most advantageous, although scenically the least inspiring.

The final route proposed, known as the red route, followed the blue route over the open land for the first part of its length. However, instead of following the valley of the stream it crossed this and continued westwards before swinging south in an arc. This would have necessitated an embankment with a culvert for the stream (a three arch bridge was even suggested!). By this route it was possible to get a terminus just behind the cafe at a reasonably accessible position although at a lower height.

These proposals were put to Leisure Services for their consideration. The blue route was, not unexpectedly, ruled out as not really achieving the objectives and the yellow route, whilst at first the most practical and easiest, was not accepted because it would have reduced the volume available for baled waste tipping by an unacceptable amount because of the contour requirements. The red route, whilst requiring the most earthworks was considered to be acceptable and thus became the firm proposal for any future extension.

Leisure Services were hoping to fund the scheme through an Inner City Grant and applied for this at the same time as we applied for our extension to the existing scheme. However, like our application, their's was turned down by the Grants Committee. If money is eventually found for the scheme it will be necessary for the membership to decide whether it wishes the railway to extend in this way as part of its present role in the leisure industry. However, for the present, the scheme is no more than a paper exercise, to be re-investigated if and when money becomes available.

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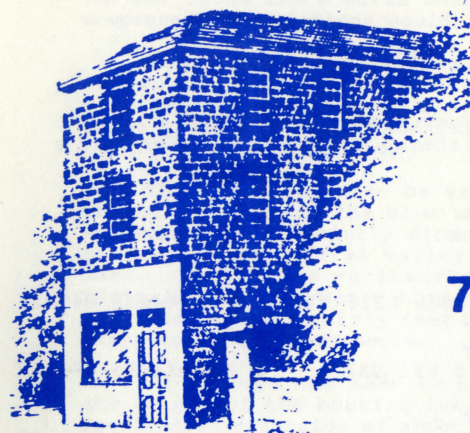
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