

1. To begin with, I must offer my apologies to members for the non-appearance of "Old Run" and the substitution of this Newsletter. This has mainly been due to transport problems associated with removing all the Editor's equipment from Rugby to Gosport, via Leeds. Although completed by early July, this did not leave sufficient time to produce a magazine before publication was due. It is hoped to produce a larger magazine in November to compensate for its non appearance this time.

2. SPECIAL TRAINS 1980

The first School specials of 1980 were run on two consecutive days 24th and 25th June. On these days we entertained about 1500 children from schools and playgroups in the area and they all thoroughly enjoyed the experience, despite the weather doing its best to dampen their enthusiasm with torrential rain, and thunderstorms particularly on the Wednesday. Two parties managed to lose themselves in Middleton Woods, but were retrieved safely by teachers.

Duty loco on both days was our veteran Hudswell Clarke loco "HENRY DE LACY II", which completed over 90 miles without a hitch, whilst Bagnall "MATTHEW MURRAY" and Hudswell Diesel "CARROLL" went down as static exhibits.

Takings for the two days were £350 for tickets and £160 for sales. Our thanks go to all who gave up their time to help with the quite difficult job of running the service and coping with hundreds of excited kids.

Two more specials are being organised, the first being on Wednesday 6th August when parties of children from various play schemes will be coming for a ride. This will be a steam service, and anyone with spare time available is welcome to come along and give a hand.

The other special is on Friday 15th August, and will be diesel Hauled. This consists of two round trips being made for a playgroup.

We need staff to help with this one, and all volunteers would be most welcome.

3. ROAD - RAIL - RIVER TOUR 20th & 21st SEPTEMBER 1980

An attractive weekend programme has been arranged on the above dates when a barge will depart from Water lane, destination Knostrop on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. From there, a bus will convey passengers along the Motorway to Tunstall Road for a ride on the Middleton Railway. The bus will not turn off the Motorway at exit 45, but will continue down to the Dewsbury Road exit in order to proceed up Jack Lane thereby passing the historic loco and engineering area of Leeds before reaching the railway.

The trips will commence at 1100 each day, the last one being at approximately 1700. Cost will be ~~£1.60~~ Adults and ~~80p~~ Children, and full details will appear in the local press.

This weekend revives the "Three Rs" tours which were a very succesful feature of our 1974 and 1975 seasons. We hope members will support the trips as much as they did then.

4. STOCK REPORT

The visitor's service has been very ably maintained by WB2702 "MATTHEW MURRAY" and HCI309 "HENRY DE LACY II", with EB53 "WINDLE" as spare loco, mainly due to her very limited water supply rendering her unsuitable for operation on the service at the present time. "WINDLE" will, however appear at the steam gala planned in September.

Of the other steam locos, P2003 has had all her tubes removed, and new ones inserted. Work is currently going ahead to expand these and prepare the loco for hydraulic test. She should be in steam before the end of the year in order to play an important part in our 21st Anniversary celebrations, as will be fully explained in the Winter Old Run.

The Steam Power Trust's Class Hs No 385 is still awaiting hydraulic testing, preliminary tests having revealed that a number of firebox stays require attention. Their other loco, NER class H No I3IO awaits retubing, and the tubes have already been obtained.

Swanscombe No 6 is currently being repainted, whilst Sentinel 59 has been the centre of much activity by the MRA restoration team.

The tank was lifted out on 1st July, and had been thoroughly cleaned out, and work continues in painting the outside. An inspection has been carried out of the external platework of the bunker, and a decision as to the type of repair to be carried out is expected shortly.

On the diesel side, HE I786 "COURAGE" has continued to give good service, being in daily use for the STEP scheme, but Fowler 3900002, which had not been too healthy for some time previously, finally gave up the ghost in June after blowing a head gasket on the engine causing same to fill up with water. Fortunately Hudswell Clarke "CARROLL" was completed in time to take over, her injectors having been overhauled just in time. As Fowler also requires complete repainting, she has been shunted to the back of the "Back Road", and will be stripped down for both overhaul and repainting.

The diesel fleet is due to be augmented shortly with the acquisition of another Hudswell Clarke loco. The loco is the oldest surviving standard gauge Hudswell diesel in existence, being only the third such loco built by that firm. She is HC D577/32 "MARY", and is powered by a 6cylinder Mirrlees engine developing 120hp. She has a two speed gearbox. "MARY" is not in working order, although preliminary inspection has shown that she can very quickly be made to work, and this will probably be done in order to provide a spare loco should we require one.

Finally, news on the crane front. The I880 Midland Hand Crane finally departed from the railway, bound for the Midland Railway Centre, Butterley, on 1st and 2nd July. The crane itself was finally winched aboard a low loader using its own crane to help! This came about when it was realised that the winch on the loader could only cope with a few tons, and the 13 tons of the crane overtaxed it.

Member Graham Parkin found the handles needed to operate the cranes jib, and by hooking the cable to the low loader, was able to provide assistance to the winch to enable the crane to be finally brought aboard. The two waggon were craned aboard a flat bed lorry the following day without difficulty.

The MRT now has the services of a 5 ton diesel crane, which has been purchased by MRA member Mark Caves from Glasshaughton Colliery near Castleford. The crane is in excellent condition and comes complete with a cab - real luxury in crane terms. However, the cab may need some modification before arrival, as it is a little large to go through our tunnel at the present time. Once it arrives, the crane will be invaluable in helping with the relaying programme we have planned for the main line.

5. PAINTERS PROGRESS

With the coming of Spring the final coat of China Blue was applied to "CARROLL", along with its white stripe to complete the livery scheme. The loco looks superb, and is a credit to all those who worked so hard to achieve the finished article, particularly the few MRA lads who did the often dirty job of scraping and derusting where needed, before painting could start. It was eventually decided that lettering would clutter the loco up as "CARROLL" is so small, and this has therefore been omitted.

Swanscombe No 6 is being painted at the present time, receiving a much needed protective coat of paint. The colour scheme is now bright Green, with red handrails as at present, and it is hoped to have the loco completed in time to be displayed at the next Gala.

Once No 6 is completed, attention will be turned to Fowler, which is to be given a full repaint, including the inside of the bonnet which is beginning to show signs of rusting. Colour scheme for this loco will remain Orange as at present, with the exception that the wheels will be orange, instead of Black as now. The black lining will also be reapplied. The loco received a very thorough paint job in 1970, and this will ease the job this time. Hunslet "COURAGE" is to receive a coat of China Blue once the STEP scheme finishes, sufficient paint being left over from "CARROLL's painting.

When the Editor's loco "MARY" arrives, it will be given a coat of paint since it is badly rusted, in a far worse state than any of our other locos, but she will ultimately appear in Hudswell's Standard Maroon Livery as applied to HENRY DE LACY.

6. CIVIL ENGINEERING NOTES

With the recovery of all the Kirkstall rail, the Civil Engineering staff, along with STEP personnel, have embarked on a major track replacement programme. The GN curve has already been relaid with 60ft rails instead of the 30 footers present. This now means that the entire main line, with the exception of the closure rails here is now composed of 60ft lengths. The 30ft rails released from the GN curve, along with some of the Kirkstall track, will now be moved below Moor Road and used to relay some of the worn lengths there. In their turn, the rails from there will be sorted out, and the good stuff used for the proposed Depot, the unserviceable stuff being sold for scrap. In addition to the plain track received from Kirkstall, the railway had been able to acquire three turnouts from Parkhill Colliery, Normanton, and these will be arriving shortly.

Finally, in connection with the depot, we have been able to purchase the required quantity of roof trusses, plus asbestos cladding, at a cost of some £600. Once these have arrived from Stockport, we can begin to look for suitable uprights, and then to actually commence erection of this much needed building.

7. FUND RAISING

As may be imagined, the purchase of all the Kirkstall rail, Roof Trusses and more important, the cost of their transport, has bitten deeply into our Depot Appeal Fund. In fact it was revealed at the last Council that, once all bills are paid, less than £50 will remain.

It is imperative, therefore, that we must appeal to members and public to assist in the raising of funds for the depot, since they cannot be provided from the General Account which is used exclusively for the normal expenses incurred in running the railway.

Any donations, no matter how small, would be greatly appreciated, along with any ideas you may have for fund raising.

Old newspapers can be sold to raise funds, so please don't just throw them away, bring them to the line if possible and turn them into a new depot. If you've any old scrap metal lying around, please bring it down for us to weigh in as every little helps.

Another way of helping with the depot project lies not so much in raising money, but in being able to provide facilities such as suitable plant (A JCB type digger would be very useful for digging the foundations for example) or materials (Does anyone know of a cheap, or free, source of bricks) for use in the project.

If you can assist with any of this, Civil Engineer Tony Cowling would be more than pleased to hear from you. He can be contacted by writing to 65, Pinner Road, Sheffield S11 8UG, or telephoning Sheffield 661763. Tony may also be contacted at the line, usually on Saturday afternoons.

8. RALLY & EXHIBITION NEWS

Exhibitions visited recently have included Harrogate Model Rly., Armly Mills Museum, Leeds, and Knottingley Open Day.

Coming Events include Horwich Works Open Day on 16th August, Bramham Park Rally 23/4/5 August; Wakefield Model Rly Exhibition 17/8/9 Oct; Leeds MRE Oct 30th to Nov. 1st, and Barnsley MRE 1/2 Nov.

As usual, Derek Plummer would be more than glad to hear from anyone willing to help at any of these events and give themselves an interesting day out at the same time. Derek's phone number is Horsforth 581851.

9. GALA DAYS

Despite a virtual absence of publicity caused by the newspaper dispute our Spring Gala Day was well attended, and most visitors appeared to enjoy themselves.

Another Gala Day has been arranged for Sunday 7th September, and Tony Bell, who is mainly in charge of the event would welcome offers of help and/or exhibits for display. His phone number is Wakefield 825658.

10. MRA TRIP TO HUNSLET ENGINE COMPANY SATURDAY 6th SEPTEMBER

Subject to final confirmation from Hunslets, the MRA are hoping to visit the Jack Lane works at 1000 on Saturday 6th September.

Cost will be 50p a person, and numbers will be limited to between 30 and 40 members, so it will be very much a first come first served basis. All interested members are asked to send SAE to Graham Parkin IO, Hopewell View, Middleton, Leeds IO. Money will be refunded if the trip doesn't run, whilst profits will go to the Sentinel Restoration Project.

11. MATERIAL FOR NEXT OLD RUN

This should reach me by October 31st please, and should be sent to my Gosport address, and not Leeds as in the previous Old Run. My address is now :- MA IAN B SMITH DI38047P, Staff Quarters RN Hospital, HASLAR, Gosport, Hants.

12. ASSOCIATION ADVERTISER

Will appear on 1st September along with the "News".

Ian Smith
19 July 1980