

CLD: RUN NEWS

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Newsletter of the Middleton Railway Trust

Number 42 July 1969.

READ ALL ABOUT US! A copy of the new transitional Prospectus is enclosed. Plenty more are available on demand. Please see, members, that copies reach the hands of all prospective members you know. Our membership is low for an operating society, raise it! VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED --- YOU, YOU & YOU! It may seem a great effort to carry Middleton Sales Material a long way to public events held by other organisations --- but we must face facts --- we are about the least known of all the active amateur railway operators. We have a good trumpet to blow, and our small membership should not prevent a good fanfare! At the Bank Holiday Weekend, we are appearing at Harrogate Model Railway Exhibition, Saturday Monday & Tuesday, and at Harewood Traction Engine Rally Saturday, Sunday and Monday. If you can help get in touch with John Edwards at 11 Drummond Court, Leeds 16 as soon as possible. We appeared at the Masham Traction Engine Rally this month, and the packed programme of events was well worth the effort of turning up as the guests of the Sponsors. Our Autumn Steam Gala on September 6th. needs every member we can summon up. Volunteers please contact John Bushell, 12 Trelawn Crescent, Leeds 6, quickly please. In support of our Appeal we are organising a Sponsored Walk along the Leeds and Liverpool canal from Leeds to Keighley departing 10 a.m. We hope there will be no fall out or splash down! Volunteers available for this on 27th September, please contact David Spencer, 26 Carr Manor Grove, Leeds 17.

PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL. We regret to say that we are below 20% of our target of £4000. Funds should be pouring in but there is barely a trickle. We must face facts, members, if we can't pay up, we don't get the line. Quite apart from the tragedy of seeing the line pulled up before our eyes, we should look ridiculous alongside the many younger Societies than ourselves which have poured in money to turn plans into facts. Our own organisation is partly to blame. Due to slackness of members, large batches of appeals have become out of date, and simply dumped on the Chairman. The whole lot will have to be opened up and corrected. This simply will not do, gentlemen. Anyone living locally should report to the Chairman to help get things moving. We also ask all members to think up any new ways of raising money and let us know.

PERMANENT-WAY PROGRESS. Chris Metcalfe, Civil Engineer (New Works) has done a mammoth piece of organisation. Length after length of 45 feet rails have been lifted, cleared of rubble and weeds, re-levelled, re-sleepered, re-chaired, and re-assembled. The nasty zig-zag at Parkside Bridge is now straight and another long length of track is "Up to Standard" and no longer a question mark on the records. BUT..... there has been only one response to our appeal in the last Newsletter for accommodation for weekend working parties, and the number turning up has been negligible. On Saturday 19th July, Chris Metcalfe worked singlehanded at the job. Surely any other Society which had just received access to a new main line would have members flocking to the site to get things moving. We must be able to entertain visitors by giving them a ride. We cannot do this safely until the track is completely overhauled, "Fit for Engineer's Train" does NOT mean "Safe to carry visitors". Every fishplate must be checked and replaced if defective. All sections must be brought up to the text-book standard Chris Metcalfe has produced so far. Don't kill your Civil Engineer by just watching him work, come and help! It takes Chris 2 days singlehanded to lift and overhaul one length of track --- there are 74 lengths still to be tackled. Weekend volunteers and offers of accommodation to Patrick M. Askie 221 Drake St. Rochdale. Weekday evening working party volunteers, willing to start at 6.30 p.m. contact Chris Metcalfe, Flat 5, 5, Kingston Terrace, Leeds 2.

LONDON AREA MEMBERS. We have been asked to produce literature and volunteers for the A.R.P.S. stand at the Model Railway Exhibition, Westminster, August 18 - 23rd. Any potential helpers please write to the Chairman.

MARATHON SURVEY. The work of Bill Barraclough and John Sugden deserves special mention and praise of the highest order. Faced with the need for urgent fact-finding, so that

work could start on the Middleton Park extension, they put in 4 days of painstaking surveying work. The levels all the way from Burton Road crossing to Park Gates were in agreement to better than an inch, except for a bench mark that was over a foot out of agreement due to mining subsidence, the same slip that has given Parkside G.N.R. viaduct an anything-but-level surface. Every rail has been measured, and we have been amazed at the facts that have come to light. Between Burton Road and Denison's Works foot crossing is a very easy climb of about 1 in 300. Denison's to Parkside GNR junction averages 1 in 50 and from the GNR to the Middleton Park catch point averages 1 in 55, easing thereafter to 1 in 165. The gradient is anything but uniform, at times outdistancing Lickey and Hemerdon banks! Alongside "The Alps" pit tip, the climb is 1 in 80, but the last section to the GNR bridge averages 1 in 40 with parts at 1 in 36, 1 in 33, and even 1 in 27!! Long term lifting and packing would ease drainage and stop pit tip overflow, easing the worst gradient to 1 in 47, which nevertheless beats the 1 in 49 of the famous Diversion line from Grosmont to Goathland. It has already been ruled that no wagons are to be left on the incline unless protected by a brake van with the brakes hard on, or a sleeper fixed across the track. Locos. must normally be on the downhill side of the train. All chairs and rails have been indexed on the new line. In general the lower part contains old worn 36-foot rails, followed by good 45-foot rails, then good 60-foot rails on first class supports, the higher the better in fact. The catch point at Middleton Park has been replaced by plain track, a safety over-run siding nearer the Dayhole End has been planned for future relaying.

TIP PROBLEMS. Unfortunately demolition work South of Parkside has caused burnt shale and pit tip to encroach on the track and much digging will be needed to clear decks for action. We are looking into this urgently since drainage should be away from the line, not on to it.

SCRAP HEAPS. A very substantial amount of steel scrap has accumulated along the line and help is urgently needed for loading it up for raising much needed hard cash.

HISTORIC WAGON DAMAGED. One of the brake controls of Middleton Wagon 350 was damaged while in Moor End works recently. It is repairable but will take time which we can ill spare.

SECURITY. A number of thieves have been stealing material from the National Coal Board, and even a load of "guilty" coal was dumped in the side of Old Run Road as the thieves made a getaway. The N C B have our sympathy, and all engineers working on the New Line are asked to report any suspicious loiterers at once without alarming the miscreants. Telephone Wakefield 751111 and ask for NCB Security Officers, tell them you are MRP members on the lookout, and give details.

VISITING PARTIES. have enjoyed the trip in the brake van to Middleton Park. The run over straight track with no level crossings or public access points is far less difficult to operate than the twists and turns down to Balm Road with several level crossing danger points. It must be emphasized no no visitors may be unleashed at the Broom Pit, and Middleton Park is the limit to which we may run for the time being even for track testing purposes. This is in fairness to N C B Generosity and the risks while closing the pit down. The only access permitted to the Colliery is by members doing essential work on measuring and surveying, and covered by a written agreement with the N C B specifying that this is at their own risk.

MOLEMANIACS AGAIN. Members will remember the alarm caused by a firm from Huddersfield suddenly digging under the line earlier this year without prior consultation. They were digging for a telephone pipe line. On a July weekend, David Hebden avoided a nasty accident by warning the train crew that a GPO Landrover was jammed between the line and the fence outside the Hunslet Vicarage, thereby preventing a train of scrap iron from Robinson and Birdsell's hitting it. It was hauling large cables into the GPO pipes. We read the Riot Act to the GPO. A week later, a GPO van blocked the level crossing. We read the Riot Act. The GPO went away.

MOTOR VEHICLES, including cycles must confine themselves to the proper roads in Dartmouth Works yard, must not be driven faster than walking pace, and parked out of the way.

THEFT OF LOCOMOTIVE PARTS. Breaking and entering has lost us valuable parts of Windle & other locos. All actual or suspected thefts MUST be reported at once to the Police.