

THE OLD RUN



**JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
LEEDS**

SPRING 1986

50p

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Cover Photo: P2003 crosses Moor Road with one of the all-line tours last June.

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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 1st April 1986.

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

EDITORIAL

The winter of 1985/6 must rank as the worst on record since 1947, at least as far as February was concerned. Bearing that in mind, the achievements of the all too few members at the line are well worth noting. We have two vacuum fitted locos, a run-round loop, a new platform and have arranged to get some new siding for our stores. In addition to this, P2003 has been hydrauliced and repainted (and the nameplates may even be fitted after 5 years - is this a record?). The same few people have also been involved with Council affairs, produced a new rule book and stock book, and done about 1001 other jobs too. Future jobs include the complete overhaul of Sentinel 59 for next season, and also the re-tube and reassembly of P2103 so that she might also see service next year. There are diesels to vacuum fit, also "WINDLE" to vac fit, and many more little jobs. The point of this little lot is to ask (again!) for volunteers to assist with all this work. More than one of our stalwart band are feeling the strain after their labours and any assistance would be more than welcome indeed!

On the traffic side of things, this year sees the start of pulling trains up to Middleton Park and back, using the loop installed this winter. This alone should be worth visiting the line for - there are new photographic possibilities too - watch 'centre spread' for details! We are beginning to appeal to enthusiasts too - the L.C.G.B. North West Branch has booked an all-line tour and the York M.R.S. are doing likewise. We hope to see the York Railway Circle again this year too. At £50 for the train, this is a cheap way to enjoy a ride around the system (the train carries over 50 people!) and travel over parts of the line not normally open to Visitors' trains. Anyone interested in these trains should contact Vernon Smith, whose phone number is at the back of the magazine.

Also being developed this year are our 'school day' trips. These take place on 14th May and 11th June this year. John Bushell, Joe Lee and myself are improving the educational value of these days, with some valuable help from Matthew Murray School, who are making some notices for our stock. What we need now are schools to visit us! If any member is a school teacher or governor, and would be interested in bringing a party to the line, please contact Joe Lee. Similarly we are running a playgroup day on August 6th. Again any interested parties should contact Joe Lee.

If this editorial seems like one big advert, I make no apology. The Trust is beginning to 'go places' in the preservation movement and it needs all the support it can get in order to make progress. Can we count on YOUR support this year?

Ian Smith

Tanks a lot

In September of last year, two oil tank vehicles arrived at the railway, courtesy of Shell-BP Ltd. One is of pre-war construction and the other somewhat later. Full details of these vehicles are not known but one is to be repainted in BP colours as a thank you to the firm for their generosity in donating them to Middleton, and paying their transport costs.

COMMUNITY HELP

Two local comprehensive schools have been giving us assistance in recent months. Garforth School pupils visited the line to plant some flower bulbs to brighten up the site at Easter, and have also been involved in tidying up the Moor Road site.

The other school involved is Matthew Murray High School at Brown Lane. Your Editor visited the school in September, to give a short slide show to pupils involved in a City & Guilds course. This was followed by a meeting with Headmaster Dr. Brian Dowson, who expressed an interest in getting the school involved on a community project. The school is currently tackling some notices, which will be placed on each locomotive at the line to inform visitors about them, and it is hoped that other projects will be forthcoming, in order to develop a good liason with a school which is so obviously connected with our Railway.

STEAD POWER TRUST NEWS

a) DSB Nr385 Continues in fine fettle, and SPT/MRT have agreed tenure and operation at Leeds.

b) NER Nrl310 Is to stay at Middleton and have a complete reservice and retube job conducted jointly by MRT/SPT, to have another "runner" available as soon as possible.

c) Addition to Stock - Person-og-Konduktorvogn The Danish loco now has a vintage coach of Berne Gauge dimensions (care how you shunt lads, with clearances). This is owned by SPT65, and has been brought to Leeds as long term companion for the Danish engine, with their blessing, for MRT use and final restoration. It is a rare vehicle, being one of only three built for the Norwegian State Railways (NSB) in Kristiania (now Oslo), 9th February 1911, and numbered 547,548,549.

The coach is varnished, vertical planked (old GCR style), and has clerestory roof and open end balconies with crosslink dropboards to link vehicles for conductor/guard access, and it is in excellent condition. It is 9.67m long over buffers, and is fitted for air and hand brake. It has dynamo light drives, passenger compartment (13 seats), guard and postal centre compartment, and rear portion as open guard's van with toilet and washbasin facilities. There is an oven/stove in the guard's quarters and, as the whole vehicle is double timber-lagged, it becomes like a sauna if the stove is on. (Still, Norwegian winters can be cold, -30c.) Speed limit is 80km/hr. International Code BFV.21.549.

The coach used to work in mixed trains on the Kongsberg to Rodberg Branch off the Oslo-Kristiansand line just after Drammen. A similar coach was on the train that the writer rode in on the branch in 1964 behind a Norwegian steam locomotive. Who knows, it may even have been coach Nr549!

All three coaches have been saved, one for the Norwegian State Railways historic/period train, one now with DSB Nr385 at Leeds, and the other at Loughborough (GC) where, regrettably, the coach body was removed from the chassis to be used as the engine shed messroom, and the chassis used for rail transfer purposes - maybe one day the two may come together once more!

The members of the Steam Power Trust '65 are very pleased that the two "continentals" are at last together, and look forward to seeing both going strong for many more years at Leeds.

Again, please remember chaps - the body is to Berne Gauge - so care with movements and clearances!

F.W. HAMPSON

PRESENTING THE RIGHT IMAGE

With the onset of the 1986 season, and the increasing number of attractions featuring steam engines at work and at rest (there are now 6 within 50 miles radius of Leeds), competition must increase also.

What does the visitor look for when arriving at the site?

Judging by the popularity of working railways, I would venture to suggest:-

A conventional set-up with big engines and real coaches, good facilities and value for money. Alternatively, something a little different.

Here at Middleton we provide just that:

History, unique travel, new and continuing development, industrial engines in an urban environment, improved facilities and value for money.

But in common with every attractive amenity, the first impressions are the lasting ones. Not necessarily in this order, here are a few pointers to encourage the return of visitors:-

- a) The attractiveness of the site, and cleanliness (especially toilets).
- b) A warm welcome, plus an interested response to enquiries.
- c) Refreshments and souvenirs.
- d) Timetables on display, and perhaps an invitation to view the site if the train has recently departed.
- e) Identification of staff by dress or name tag.
- f) At the conclusion of the visit, bading the visitor farewell - do come to see us again!

The visitor remembers the bad things that occur before the good. Our job is to ensure that he or she can never remember adverse things because THEY NEVER HAPPENED.

Our slogan should be:-

OUR
LONGEVITY
DEPENDS

ON

RELATIONSHIPS
UNUSUALLY
NOTABLE

MAKE
RESOLUTIONS
TODAY

SURPRISE SURPRISE !

Sunday, 1st December 1985 did not start off as a particularly good day. I set off for the railway at 9.30a.m. nursing a headache, which did not improve when I got a puncture on reaching Briggate!

When I finally arrived at the line, it was to find a gleaming DSB 385 in full steam, a sight to alleviate some of the "Why me?" thoughts I'd been having up to then. The loco was standing at the platform ready for the first Santa run, crewed by Andy McKenna and Phil Jones. I was most surprised when Andy asked if I wanted to be "third man" for the day. I was delighted, and jumped at the chance!

At 11.02a.m. (well, it's traditional for trains to be late), Guard Ian Smith blew the whistle and waved the green flag. Andy responded with Danish's whistle, and off we went, Andy looking out his side, Phil looking out his side, and me in the middle savouring every minute of it. Needless to say, it was my first footplate experience, and I watched both driver and fireman carefully.

On arriving back at Moor Road, Andy told me my duties, which were to keep the loco supplied with water and fuel, and to generally clean her as required. I would also be expected to do anything which the crew might want me to do - it's tough at the bottom as well as the top!

The highlight of my day, however, came after the service had finished. It is usual to shunt the stock after the service, and this occasion was no exception. There was, however, one difference - Andy allowed me to drive the loco under his supervision. It was unfamiliar, and certainly different from driving my car, but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it was a great ending to my first day on the footplate. I shall long remember it, and would like to thank Andy and Phil for a very enjoyable day.

G. Dinsdale

CONFUSIONS OF AN EDITOR

It would be fair to say that the last issue of 'Old Run' could be rated as a "Comedy of Errors", particularly as by the time the thing was published, a good amount of information contained in it was out of date. It would also be true to say that the Editor of said journal was not exactly happy with it either. A few questions were asked, and that famous institution, an "Internal Enquiry" was launched by a committee of one - the Editor! This may not seem a particularly impartial way of going about things, but it does sum up the whole scope of 'Old Run' - it's a one man band. What follows is the result of my enquiry into myself, and may serve to explain why your journal is sometimes a little late.

The first requirement of any journal is to inform. Old Run is no exception to this requirement, but there is one difference between it and the journals you buy from your local newsagent - this one is dependent on contributions from volunteers and it is also edited by a volunteer. It therefore follows that it is a spare time thing, and therein lies the major cause of failure. In addition to having full time jobs, I and my major contributors are also heavily committed to the railway in one form or another. When not actually down at the line, we carry out various duties for the Trust in addition to 'Old Run'. This tends to mean that 'Old Run' is fitted in with the 1001 other jobs to be done. When you add the extra responsibilities of those contributors who have a family, you begin to get the impression that it's a miracle the thing ever comes out at all.

As I said at the beginning of the last paragraph, the object of 'Old Run' is to inform you, the member, of what is happening at the line. Bearing in mind what has been said, the task of assimilating material to put into the magazine is quite daunting on occasion. There are two major components of the magazine - Notes & News, and a "lead article". Some news items are quite easy to get hold of, such as 'Loconews' and the more major events which have happened. Others have to be "dug out", such as the 'Rest in Peace' note in the last issue. It can be quite a task thinking of such small "filler" items to add to the almost finished magazine. The "lead article" can be a nightmare to find. By its very name, the article has to be the main part of the magazine. This means that it has to be both informative and interesting, and if it can be humorous as well, that's a bonus. The big thing about this item is that it takes a fair time to put together. It is perhaps for this reason that I don't get many sent in and end up doing one myself!

It should come as no surprise that I hadn't a lead article for this issue, and decided to confess all to provide one! There are no real rules about accepting a major article for 'Old Run', but I prefer to accept articles either about the Middleton Railway, its locomotives, or any article about Leeds built locos - which is why Henry Gunston's 'Made in Leeds' articles are very welcome.

Having sweated blood to get the relevant information, what do I do with it? Most articles require some form of editing to make them conform to space requirement or, as in the case of one member, to expand into a readable text. In that particular case, the member concerned knows that his work needs editing and readily gives his permission, but it's not always so. I well remember an article about a certain well-known maroon loco which I edited, only to be accused of changing it beyond all recognition! It's a hard life being an Editor!

Most of my editing is done at home using a portable typewriter to make life easier for the next stage, which is typesetting on a word processor, and is done by Colin and Sheila Bye in Bradford. There are both advantages and disadvantages with this process. The major advantage is a much neater finish which cannot be equalled using a normal typewriter. Its major disadvantage is the time it takes. I send the "cold print" to Bradford, where it has to be typed into the processor. A printout is then sent back to me for correcting before a final version is produced, which can then be printed. I normally go to Bradford to finalise this with Colin, and we have both been working until 9p.m. to get the finished product. On balance, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, and certainly the comments since using this method have all been favourable.

Once these sheets of text have been given to me, I have to have them titled where required and also numbered. Up to now, the titles have always been done by the printer, due to space limitations when living in Naval accommodation, plus my lack of artistic talent, which could lead to some interesting title shapes (one test title I did ended up like a view of the Atlantic Ocean, despite my using a straight line to line up the letters!). However, costs are increasing all the time and practice, they say, makes perfect, so I shall be taking on that task in future.

That done, there only remains the photographs. Yes, the photos! These have provided more problems than the rest of the magazine put together. When I took over 'Old Run' from Mervyn Leah in 1979, I thought that the old cover had had its day, and considered a photo cover to be very good - after all, many other societies do this. There are times when I've wondered if this was a good idea, as problems have always been apparent. The major one is that only certain types of photo will reproduce properly. They have to be very contrasty in order to print with any hope of seeing a good result. Regular readers will be only too well aware of the many photos which haven't reproduced at all well. Some are due to the contrast problem, and others are due to the process being used. I suspect that we will always have problems with photos until we can afford to have them reproduced in a different way.

As you will have gathered, the story of 'Old Run' appears fraught with strife and hassle, so why do I (or indeed any other of our previous editors) carry on with what seems like a soul-destroying, thankless task? The main reason is that it IS a challenge to produce a good magazine from all the bits and pieces that are sent in. I believe that 'Old Run' has improved over the years, each Editor bringing in his own ideas to further improve the product. We are beginning to get to the stage where further improvements will only be made by spending more money on production costs (improving paper quality etc.), because there cannot be many more significant improvements to the layout of the magazine. Certainly, the feedback I have received seems to give the impression that 'Old Run' is as good a magazine as any in the preservation world. What I need from the membership is some more articles and photos to keep the magazine where it is, so how about it folks?

I.B. SMITH

P.S. This Old Run will be out late so as to allow the AGM notices to go out with it - honest!

AGM 1986

It is in each individual member's interest to attend -

You may
provide new ideas

You will
be impressed at the progress

You can
become more involved

You are
capable of giving a little more effort

You most certainly will
leave with job satisfaction in the knowledge that your
effort has sustained further progress in preserving the
World's Oldest Railway.

REMEMBER TO BE A USEFUL MEMBER,

DON'T BE A SLEEPER,

GET UP FROM YOUR CHAIR,

REGULATE YOUR VISITS

AND SHOW YOU CARE.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The remains of the level crossing gates and fences are part of a set of three similar L.C.'s (2 on Moor Road and 1 on Burton Road). These gates were installed in 1903, after a prolonged period of unrest, and troubles on the line.

The railway was authorised in 1758, by the 1st Railway Act of Parliament. This offered reduced coal prices to the Parish of Leeds, but neither concession nor rents to the people of Hunslet. It was at this point running over Hunslet Moor, which was common ground. In 1877, the commoners of Hunslet found in William Emsley (Solicitor) a champion for their cause. He arranged a demonstration in which rails on the new branch to the Midland Railway (Balm Road) were lifted, and took High Court Action demanding rent for the Hunslet Commoners. The objections included the use of locos on an unfenced line, as well as constructing a railway without further recourse to Parliament.

Although the action was lost, the troubles continued. The Middleton Railway built high iron fences, and in 1903 Saxby and Farmer installed the unique gates, with their complicated equipment and revolving spikes.

Within 25 years, the need for this added security had gone, the gates rusted in their present position, and a flagman sufficed. In spite of the scrap drive of the 1939-45 War, and the increase in road traffic, no more modern equipment replaced them.

Courtesy of John Bushell

Typist's Postscript:- I was told many years ago by an "ancient inhabitant" that at some unspecified time - probably before the end of the 19th century - the colliery company maintained a coal heap on Hunslet Moor, from which the commoners could help themselves, as a "rent" for the line running across the common land.

LORD GARNOCK

We have recently received news from our president, Lord Garnock, of the death of his father, and we express our sympathy to him in this bereavement. One consequence of this is that he now assumes the title of Earl of Lindsay, and so he will be known from now on as Lord Lindsay instead of Lord Garnock.



DSB 385 saw service last year and performed very well. She is seen (top) through the trees near G.N. curve and again (below) later on the same day, in August last year.

Both Photos S.J. Roberts

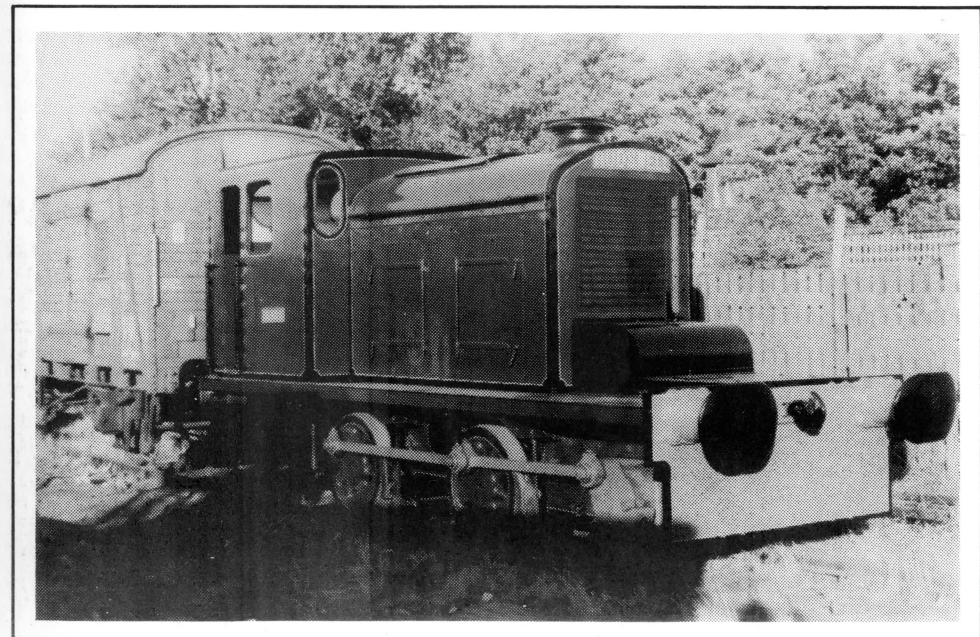
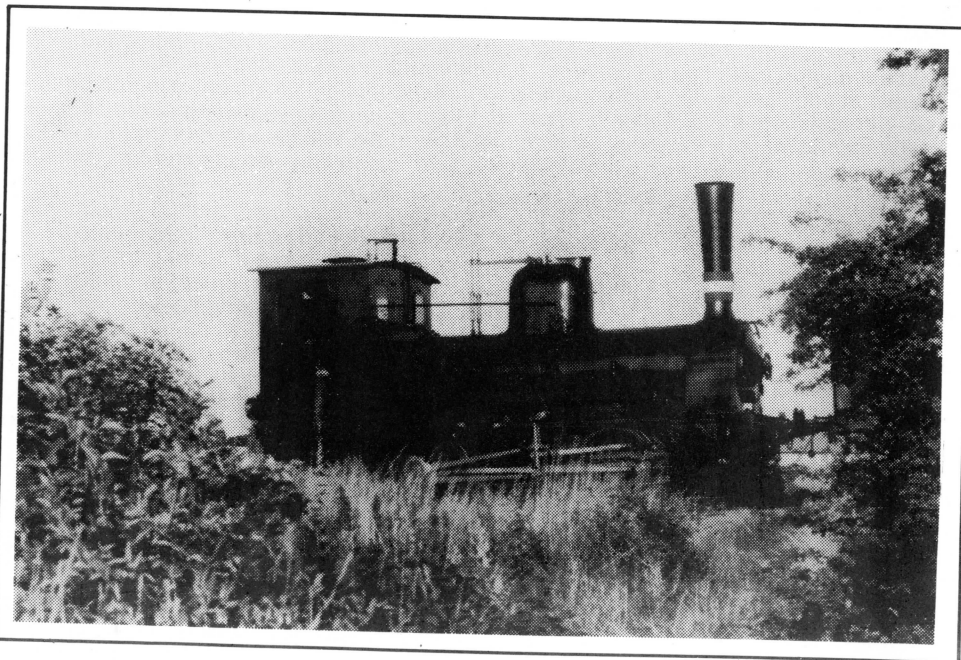


Windle poses in the yard on gala day, 1985, driven by Andy McKenna looking out.

S.J. Roberts

HC D577/32 "Mary" newly painted in Hudswell livery, at the gala. It is hoped that this little used loco may see some service this year now that major repairs are almost complete.

S.J. Roberts



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

| | |
|---|---|
| GRAND EASTER OPENING WITH FREE EASTER EGGS (whilst supplies last) | Saturday, Sunday & Monday March 29/30/31 from 2.00p.m. to 4.30p.m. |
| LITTLE ENGINES DAY | Sunday 27 April from 11.00a.m. |
| VICTORIAN DAY | Sunday 11 May from 11.00a.m. Visitors are invited to dress in Victorian apparel. |
| SCHOOLS STEAM DAY | Thursday 15th May 10.00a.m. until 3.30p.m. |
| SCHOOLS STEAM DAY | Tuesday 17th June 10.00a.m. until 3.30p.m. |
| CIVIC VISIT | To be arranged in June |
| DIESEL DAY | Saturday 12 July |
| ALL LINE TOUR | Sunday 13 July. Trains running on entire network. |
| PLAYGROUP/SCHEME DAY | Wednesday 6 August 10.00a.m. until 4.00p.m. |
| LCGB VISIT | Saturday 16 August. All line tour commencing 11.15a.m. Steam passenger service in afternoon. |
| TEDDY BEARS PICNIC | Sunday 17th August (Children invited to bring Teddy dressed up - Prizes). |
| GRAND GALA | Sunday 14 September from 11.00a.m. Attractions at Middleton Park via the Railway. |
| SANTA TRAINS | Sundays 30 November, 7/14/21 December from 11.00a.m. Presents, and seasonal fare for Mums & Dads. |

RETURN OF THE SCRAP WAGON

For many years, the Middleton Railway has possessed two 5-plank wagons. One of these, an ex-Great Western wagon, has been our passenger wagon since the demise of the 'Middleton Wagon' in 1970. The other vehicle, however, has been used for many a long year as a scrap wagon, and received little or no maintenance during this period. This wagon is an ex-BR 5-plank wagon, and is vacuum fitted. It is also the subject of this article.

The wagon has always been known as the 'Scrap Wagon', and over the years its condition has also resembled the function which it has performed. In particular, the floor has been extremely rotten for some years, and it was always a good bet that anything thrown in the thing would end up going through the floor and on to the track! Indeed, on one occasion one of our members fell through the floor.

It was always intended that the wagon would be repaired, but the hasty departure from Clayton's Yard in October 1983 meant that vehicle space was at a premium, and so a temporary floor was laid across what remained of the original planks, making it safe for loading with stores for removal to Moor Road.

Since the move, the vehicle has again been gradually filled up with scrap until, in November last year, it was shunted up into Robbie's for unloading. On its return, members repaired some end planks that had been damaged some time ago, and as the thing remained empty it was decided to get rid of that rotten floor, or what was left of its original 2½in. thickness, and replace it with the available 2in. planking which had been acting as the temporary floor. This work was completed just after Christmas, when it was suggested that it should receive a repaint after all the work done. Repaint? This wagon has never been repainted since it got here! It has been decided to return the wagon to its original BR 'Bauxite' livery, so that it will not only become a working wagon again, but will also look the part, in keeping with the Railway's new policy of returning vehicles to their original livery where possible.

There is just one minor problem - does anyone know the number which this wagon once carried? Over the years, the planks over which wagon details were painted have been replaced, and no stockbook carries the wagon's number. If anyone knows it, please let us know at the line!

C. Rogers

SANTA'S MEMORIES - 1985

You become aware of faces showing eager anticipation when they arrive accompanied by mums, dads, aunties, uncles, grandma and grandad.

There is a ripple of excitement from the time they leave the car park and make towards the ticket office before boarding the train. Sometimes, however, apprehension is apparent on the faces of those children who are meeting Santa for the first time.

Letters are handed over, requesting toys for Christmas, together with the occasional Christmas card wishing the "Old Gentleman" a Happy Christmas.

A "sing along" of popular Christmas carols and songs has become an added attraction during the ride, most people joining in to make the occasion a really happy one.

Although Santa is travelling on a steam train, some inquisitive travellers ask "where are the reindeers?". To which a reply is appropriately given, "they are in the woods having their dinner before going home to Lapland".

It is surprising the number of parents who travel on the train, no doubt eager to take part in the seasonal refreshments provided at the shop.

Photographs on the platform with Santa's engine standing in the background are popular, especially if the youngster can be persuaded to hold Santa's hand or sit on his knee!

The expression on the faces of the many visitors leaves a lasting impression on Santa, particularly when they ask "Will you be coming on Christmas Eve? I will leave you something to eat and drink" - can't be a bad job after all!

Joseph K. Lee

NEW TRAINS FOR OLD

Sunday, December 1st, was an historic day for the Railway, for it was on that date that the CCT entered service on the Santa trains: the very first coach to be used on the line since the Swansea & Mumbles tram-type vehicle in 1960. This was also the first time that vacuum brakes have been in use. On the day, the combination of DSB385 and her train looked very good, but visitors were unaware of the very hard work which had been done behind the scenes to ensure the success of the event.

The CCT had been virtually completed some weeks before, when it was noticed that water was leaking inside. Much investigation and discussion followed, during which it was decided to fibreglass the coach roof. This proved easier said than done as, when we started, the temperature outside the shed was near freezing, and both Graham and I had to spend several evenings scraping the old paint off the roof before starting the fibreglassing.

Whilst this was going on, the seats were being prefabricated off-site. These finally arrived, and several members then spent some considerable time sanding them down, assembling them, and finally fitting them. We managed 28 of the 32 seats required, and literally finished within hours of the first train!

All this work was carried out inside the coach, which was inside the shed. No such luck prevailed when it came to vacuum-fitting the Danish loco and the old passenger brake van. Both these jobs had to be carried out in freezing, dark conditions, and it is to the credit of all concerned that this was achieved successfully.

C. ROGERS

LOCO NOTES

It seems only yesterday that the 1985 running season came to a close, but as these notes are being written, the 1986 season is only seven weeks away and panic stations are just around the corner! Despite the need to concentrate labour on the installation of a run round loop at Middleton Park, we have been able to achieve much in terms of the work on locomotives. However, much remains to be done in order to start the season on a confident note.

The Santa Specials were the exclusive preserve of Hs No.385, newly fitted with a vacuum brake, and the loco performed faultlessly throughout the three weekends.

At the present time, it is hoped that Nos. 53, 385 & 2003 will see service in 1986, together with the ever-reliable diesels D631, 4220038, 138C & 1786, but only time will tell!

P2003 was taken into the repair shed immediately the season ended to enable repairs to be carried out. It had been hoped to complete these by the middle of January but, as usual, this has proved to be too optimistic. The fireman's cab side sheets and part of the bunker have been replaced because of corrosion. Because new platework has been fitted, and no matching paint was available for this, it has been decided to give the loco a complete repaint above the running plate and she is now resplendent in a livery identical in style to her old one, but in darker green.

The boiler has passed its visual examination, and a full hydraulic test will be carried out shortly, hopefully without problems.

A vacuum ejector has been fitted to the loco, and work is well in hand to complete the pipework.

Hs 385 The official re-entry into service of 385 is planned for 20th April, and much work is still necessary before this date. As noted above, vacuum brakes have been fitted, and the prototype system has performed satisfactorily. There are still many parts to refit, and the paintwork has to be completed. One baffling thing is the whereabouts of the handrail knobs, which were put into a P.M.V. when we left Clayton's Yard, and have yet to be relocated!

EB 53 The hot box noted in the last issue of the Old Run fortunately did not do any lasting damage. The blocked oilways were cleared, and the horsehair stuffing in the axlebox underkeeps has been replaced with a more modern oiling pad, and this appears to have cured the problem. The cylinder lubricator drive mechanism requires repair, following damage sustained when the loco was moved whilst "frozen up" during a cold spell, but otherwise Windle is serviceable. It is intended to fit vacuum brakes within the near future.

S8837 The Sentinel has been the "bad weather job" since its entry into the repair shed, work being carried out on this when the weather has prevented outside work. The bunker side and rear sheets, which are badly corroded, have been removed for replacement with new material, for which quotations have been obtained. An interesting discovery is that the handrails on the locomotive were at some time chromium plated. This may be perpetuated, depending upon costs. Once the necessary work on the traffic locos is completed, it is intended to begin work on the Sentinel in earnest, with a view to having it back in service in 1987.

WB 2702 A quotation for the overhaul of the loco's boiler has proved to be considerably more than expected - £10,000 to be precise! Alternative quotations are being sought, in the hope that they will be considerably less.

1310 The loco has now been shunted to the back of the repair shed to enable easy access to power, tools and equipment. The report in the last issue that work had now started was perhaps a bit premature, but it is hoped that work will start at Easter!

D631, 4220038, 138C & 1786 are all serviceable, and used as necessary. It is intended to fit vacuum brakes to the first three as soon as the equipment becomes available.

HCD577 This loco is currently being fitted with vacuum brakes.

JF3900002 After some years of inactivity work is to start on the rebuilding of our veteran Fowler diesel. Following this work she will be repainted bright orange as currently carried.

PLANT & MACHINERY

Our quest for a lathe has at long last ended! Well, not quite, as you will see when you read on. The tender for a 'Swift' lathe at the closed Ackton Hall Colliery was successful, and the machine is now installed in the repair shed. The tale of its removal and transportation could fill the magazine, but suffice it to say that it had to be manhandled around other machinery, past a locomotive (which itself had to be moved by hand), turned through an archway - which also necessitated partial demolition of some strong workbenches and cupboards, down a step, through another fitting shop, up some steps through a 90degree turn, and outside to a position where it was accessible for loading. Not an easy task with a machine weighing 3½ tons, and with no lifting equipment! The machine is in good basic condition, and has come complete with accessories such as faceplate, steadies, etc. With a swing of over 3'-0" in the gap bed, and a distance between centres of 6'-6", it is capable of handling most of the turning work that we are likely to do. It is, however, a bit large for the more delicate jobs, and thus we are now looking for a small lathe to complement it! Any offers?

We have also acquired, at reasonable cost, a Kangol percussion hammer, mainly for use when packing ballast under sleepers, but with many other uses too. A second machine is now being pursued to enable ballast packing to be more effectively carried out.

A second, smaller drill was acquired towards the end of last year, but, sadly, it did not stay with us long before mysteriously disappearing.

In the shed, Peter Nettleton has been busy installing the permanent wiring, and we shall shortly be in a position to have the three phase supply connected, enabling us to use the larger machine tools that we have acquired.

We have also obtained a 7½ KVA generator to go with the Lister diesel engine that we acquired some time ago. It is intended that this will be installed in the tool van in place of the existing 1KVA unit, which has proved to be a bit small for some jobs.

CREWS WANTED

As you will be aware the season is once more upon us. If there are any budding train crews (footplate staff or guards) could they please contact the Traffic Manager, Vernon Smith, at the address given on the back page. Training will, of course, be given to beginners. Likewise Shop Manager, John Chaplin, would like to hear from anyone interested in manning our shop this season. If you are interested, would you please contact him at the address given on the back page.

New Water Tower

The Santa trains of 1985 saw the partial commissioning of our new water tower. This was constructed using a brick base and the old Laporte Tank on top. DSB385, the train loco, tends to run short of water on these types of event and it was therefore decided to commission the water tower using a firehose that we had available. In the event, this did not prove particularly successful and we will acquire some reinforced hose which will allow a better water flow. This minor problem apart, the water tower functioned well and will prove very useful in the coming season.

Middleton Park News

Work has proceeded very well at this site despite some atrocious weather. The new run around loop, which is some 200ft long, has now been installed and ballasted. D631 was the first loco to use the loop, on Saturday 1st February.

Signals at Middleton

This is not a joke! We have recently acquired a four lever ground frame for use with the Moor Road loop. This has come complete with a ground signal of the 'dolly' type which will be installed at the tunnel end of the loop.

Annual General Meeting

This will take place on Wednesday 11th June, at 19.30. A members' special train will then be run to show participants progress being made at the line. The meeting will be held at the line itself or at a venue nearby. Full details of the meeting will be sent separately and will include directions to the chosen venue. It is hoped that the attraction of a special train will cause more people to turn up than last year.

Membership Fees to Rise

The Council has proposed that the membership fees be increased to £5 Adult, £3 Junior and £75 Life. This proposal is to be put to the membership at the AGM for approval or otherwise.

Is This a Record?

On the morning of Sunday 9th February, P2003 was in grey undercoat; by 18.00 the same day, the whole loco had received a coat of olive green paint and was well on the way to being fully lined out seven days later. It's amazing what can be done with a shed!

Norwegian Blues

Not something from a 'Monty Python' sketch, but the feelings encountered when the NSB coach was given a thorough inspection after arrival at the railway. A fair amount of rot has been found in the vehicle and it requires substantially more work than was first thought before it can enter passenger service. This does not mean that the coach has no role to play though. The work at Middleton Park has required a mess coach and the Norwegian has fitted the bill admirably, being the only vehicle with a stove! Once the better weather arrives and the amount of work required for restoration decided upon, the coach will undergo repairs.

Shedding a light on things

Through the good offices of member Tom Dawes, the railway has taken possession of a gas lamp. This has been converted to electric and will be mounted on the tunnel end of the shed to improve lighting in that area.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LTD

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered Office: The Station, Moor Road, Leeds LS10 2JQ
Registered No. 1165589 Registered Charity No. 230387

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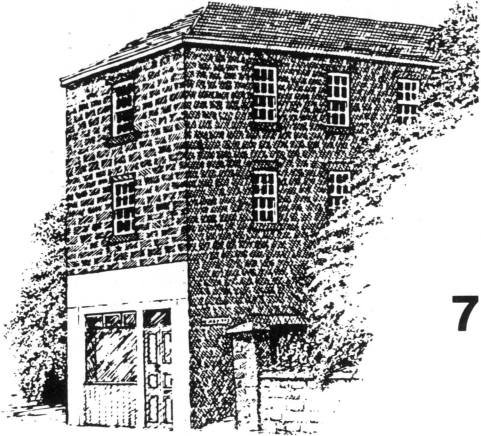
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