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© Tony Cowling

**No. 6 in February 2021.**  
**Doesn't she look grand!**

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# The Old Run

# Our Chairman speaks:

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## No. 250 APRIL 2021

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Unfortunately I have to start on a sad note. At the end of March a former Treasurer, Stan Holdsworth, passed away after a long period of ill health. He was an important figure on the Middleton Railway for many years and our condolences go to his wife Carole and his family, as well as our thanks for all that he did for the Trust. An obituary appears on page ??? of this issue.

At last we have a re-opening date - Sunday 23rd May. The extended delay has enabled work to be done in the Engine House to change the entrance hall and the shop and café area to make them more attractive to visitors and provide better facilities for the staff. All of this has been done in addition to building the Mezzanine Floor which is now close to completion. The last major item to be installed will be the access staircase which should arrive towards the end of April.

As the construction phase of the Mezzanine Floor Project comes to an end, the opportunity has been taken to deep clean the Engine House for the first time since it was built and this now sparkles again. After this all the exhibits will be cleaned and polished in readiness for their first public appearance this year.

The Mezzanine Floor provides an attractive exhibition space and is a tribute to the work of Mark Calvert and his team, as are the other changes made to the Engine House during the closed season. Thanks go to all those who have worked so hard on this project.

‘No. 6’ has been successfully steamed for the first time in over 30 years, and is being lined out and made ready for service, and the restoration of the Trust’s first wagon, the ex. LMS Brake Van, has advanced to the stage where it can be placed on display in the Engine House. The final stages of this project were brought to a conclusion by Roy Gunn and Steve Roberts and thanks go to them and the all the others who have worked on the Brake Van over the years. It is probably in better condition now than when

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## **Our Chairman speaks:**

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it was first delivered to the Railway.

The remaining work on the Brake Van includes installing a stove. An ex LMS Stove is currently in Edinburgh awaiting the end of travel restrictions before it can be delivered to the Railway. Following its installation, fitting out the interior will be completed by adding hand lamps etc. and lettering it as it was when first delivered. This might seem a simple task but a great deal of research has gone into trying to establish its livery when delivered, and there are still doubts about the colour of the lining. A lot of work was also undertaken to try and establish the diagram it was constructed to by the LMS in 1926. We are confident that this problem has now been resolved and we know the position of our brake van in the development of Midland Railway and then LMS Brake Vans.

These two issues might seem trivial but accurately recording and understanding the history of our rolling stock and other assets is a very important part of the work of the Trust. There is scant point in preserving any artefact if we do not trouble to establish and record its history. Without knowledge, an artefact becomes little more than ‘wall paper’; very attractive wall paper in the case of some steam engines, but ‘wall paper’ none the less. Much of the detail of this work will never be seen except by specialist historians, but it informs the way we describe our rolling stock and other exhibits and helps ensure that what we say about our collection is as accurate as possible so that we are not responsible for the perpetration of myths and falsehoods.

One of the results of the Trusts work as historians will be the new two volume history of the Railway which we are trying to make as good and true a history of the railway as possible. It may seem to be taking a long time to bring to completion but the authors and the editors have quite rightly taken the decision to make this book the best that it can be, rather than rush to get it published by some arbitrary date.

Because of all the uncertainties caused by the Covid pandemic we have decided not to hold any major events until September of this year. Instead the plan is to organise a series of small ‘pop up events’ to attract local visitors; these might include a model railway display, an exhibition by South Leeds Aero Modellers, and an exhibition by a local history group. Details of these events and of other activities that are being planned will be revealed on our Website and our Social Media Sites in due course.

We have now entered the final stage of the construction projects in the Engine House – the finishing and clean up stage. Always the least attractive and in many ways most demanding stage. Volunteers are needed to help Janet Auckland and the Commercial team prepare the shop and café for reopening – putting shelves back, putting pictures back, re-stocking etc., – as well as participating in the normal work of the shop and ticket office and helping arrange any ‘pop up’ exhibitions we might organise. Volunteers are also needed to help Tony Cowling, Robert Taggart and the Museum team clean and reinstate the exhibits which had to be temporarily removed to permit construction of the Mezzanine Floor, and to remodel some of our exhibitions.

The Commercial and Museum sides of the Railway require different skills and interests to the maintenance and operating sides and have different rewards – one of which is simply being there to serve the needs of our visitors as they enjoy the experience of visiting and travelling on our railway and learning about its history. So if any reader who has not already been ensnared by the Railway feels like volunteering in these or any other areas, please contact the Railway and come down; you can’t believe how much fun it can be.

Looking forward to seeing all our readers at the Railway this summer.

**Charles Milner**

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# THE OLD RUN 250

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*Here writes a former Editor of this esteemed epistle:-*

I'm not sure what issue of The Old Run I go back to, but it must be quite a long way.

My predecessor as Editor was Brian Ashurst (*still a member but living in the USA - Ed.*), who like me was a student at the University of Leeds. On graduating, he got a job as Editor of the Journal of the National Fish Friers Federation, which conveniently had its headquarters in Leeds. I came to Leeds in the Autumn of 1963, and took over from Brian a few months later.

Now I sit in front of my all-singing all-dancing laptop of today, struggling to keep up with all the features—many of them totally useless—that we have at our disposal in the 21st century. Not that we could imagine what the 21st century might actually look like. Ignorance is bliss!

Production was strictly analogue. Copy was typed into a mechanical typewriter, and was cut into shape and size, then glued on to the page masters ready for printing. Little or no margin for error.

One early improvement, however, was the purchase of an industrial-standard typewriter, replacing the flimsy portable. Photos were few, of poor quality and far between. Colour was just a pipedream.

Being a Modern Languages student meant that I spent large parts of 1964 and 1965 abroad, honing my practical skills, and I have to admit that I don't recall how we coped with the absences. Perhaps someone out there has a better memory?

But this was just a foretaste of things to come. On graduating in 1967, I failed in my objective of getting a job in or close to Leeds, and ended up back in my home town of Rugby. Large envelopes flowed between there and Leeds for a year or two, but soon we had to admit—with wife, son, mortgage and career taking increasing amounts of my time and energy—that something had to give.

Someone called Smith took it over. Whatever became of him, I wonder?

MERVYN LEAH

*Thanks Mervyn. We have all the copies of the Old Run in the Railway's Archives, so if/when there is ever a quiet moment, I will try to locate the 1964-65 era and find out who looked after things in your absence. Perhaps there was no-one? Or perhaps you managed to produce spasmodic editions as and when you found the time and energy? Ed.*

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## Alan Clark

We heard at the beginning of February that Alan Clark had died a short while before. He had been a regular passenger guard from the summer of 2011, when he was first passed out, up to the end of the normal operating season in 2016. We had heard that he had been ill at the end of that year, and so had not been involved with any of the Santa Specials, and he had not been able to return to the roster for 2017.

In notifying us of his death, his daughter thanked us “for all the fun times he had at the railway”, and said, “He always wanted to work with trains really but other careers got in the way.”. We send our sincere condolences to her and the rest of the family.

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## Searching for Fowlers, Part 3

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Fowlers galore? Well, not quite! In Parts 1 and 2 I described my trials and tribulations chasing John Fowler steam railway locos. Since those days, however, all has changed and several JF locos can be found in the UK. At the last count there were at least 9, all imported fairly recently. Of these some are secreted in private collections away from public scrutiny, but three are certainly not hidden but are fully operational and a further three are the subject of restoration efforts.

Of the operational three, the first to arrive was “SACCHARINE”, 0-4-2T JF 13355/12 from South Africa. The name “SACCHARINE” has always struck me as a rather strange name for a loco on a sugar plantation, but there was no thought of pleasing me when it was named! This loco went initially to the Alford Valley Railway in Scotland where restoration took place and the loco was in service until it required further attention. It was moved to storage at Alston on the South Tynedale Railway where it was intended to be repaired and used on the Green Dragon Railway in the Kielder Forest, but this scheme never progressed beyond the ideas stage. So the loco was acquired by the Statfold Barn Railway who wasted no time in restoring it to working order with their usual competence. It is now a regular and popular performer there. The photo below shows the loco at Statfold and readers’ attention is drawn to the unusual valve gear with its twin combination levers. The very high standard of restoration is obvious.



*“SACCHARINE” at Statfold Barn,  
following restoration, © Jim*

The other two were imported in 1998 as part of a sizeable batch of very out-of-use locos from the Sena Sugar Estates in Mozambique. These two were acquired by the late Bill

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## Searching for Fowlers, Part 3 - *continued*

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Best, restored to his usual extremely high standard and set to work on the Bredgar & Wormshill Railway where they remain to this day. The locos are 0-4-2T JF 13573/12 named “ZAMBEZI”, and 0-6-0T JF 18800/30 named “LIMPOPO”. The 0-4-2T had been built to 500mm gauge but was re-gauged to 600mm as part of the restoration process. The next two photos show these two locos and the beautiful finish is obvious.

Very sadly, Bill Best passed away early in 2020 but he will be remembered by all railway enthusiasts for his friendliness and for setting up the delightful B&WR.

Of the three currently under restoration, 0-6-0T JF 15991/23 was once displayed at the Armley Mills Museum which will be well known to MRT members. It was moved to the West Lancs Light Railway in 2013 for storage and eventual restoration. As mentioned in Part 2, this loco had been imported from Khatauli Sugar Mill in India in 1985. JF 15513/20, a 0-4-2T, formed part of the 1998 batch of imports and is also “allocated” to the WLLR but is presently stored elsewhere pending restoration. Finally, 0-4-2T JF 16341/24 was secretly imported from Australia and formed part of Jeremy Martin’s collection on the Richmond Light Railway in Kent but never on display there. It is now under active repair at S. E. Ward Engineering at Killamarsh in Derbyshire.

That leaves three more and all three are in a private collection. 0-4-2T JF 10249/05 was originally exported to Fiji but was imported from the USA in 1998. 0-4-2T JF 11938/09 and 0-6-2T JF 15515/20 were both part of the 1998 batch of imports from Mozambique. These locos are presently stored out of public view at Capel Bangor station on the Vale of Rheidol Railway and I have no idea of the current status of any of them because no visitors are allowed and requests to see them are firmly refused.

So, my personal Fowler saga comes to an end, at least until the locos currently under restoration are back in service or until those in the private collection are made available for display.



*“ZAMBESI” following restoration,  
at Bredgar. © Jim Ballantyne*



*“LIMPOPO” following restoration,  
at Bredgar. © Jim Ballantyne*

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## Searching for Fowlers, Part 3 - *continued*

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Finally, if any reader has comments or corrections, I would welcome them.

The pictures do not require much explanation but show “SACCHARINE” at Statfold and “LIMPOPO” and “ZAMBESI” at Bredgar.

Jim Ballantyne, August 2020, (during lockdown!)

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### **A Mystery explained**

The group photo on Page 15 of the last Old Run brings memories of "Ballast Mines" and other such activities we used to get up to in those early days.

The photo was taken around the mid-1970s and, sadly, no-one in that group actually works at the railway any longer.

In the top row, Graham Parkin is on the left, wearing the red hat and next to him is CME Jim Lodge. The lad in the boiler suit standing up is Philip Morgan, with Steve Dufton next to him. Not sure about the lad on the far right with the shovel - it may be Jonny Mann.

Sitting are the two Lavin twins, (I think one was called Philip) while in between the identical twins is David Bushell, no relation of John.

Lying in front is Dave Watson. Does this refresh any memories for anyone?

**Ian Smith**



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# MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS

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Work has continued at Moor Road on a reduced scale over the last three months with much volunteer effort being put into the mezzanine project, as well as specialist input by contractors. The work done has been tremendous, both in quantity and quality and we should be proud of what we are achieving. The work progresses but the end is in sight.

## LOCO NOTES

### 1601 MATTHEW MURRAY

Has remained stored, generally within the Engine House, as there has been no requirement for it in the present circumstances. It is available for traffic if needed, subject to a successful steam test following its period out of use.

#### No. 6

The loco had a first steaming during January and this was quite successful, with little in the way of remedial work being required. The safety valves were set and all the operational equipment, such as injectors, brakes and whistle, tested and found to be satisfactory. One of the drain cocks was found to have been fitted up incorrectly, such that when all the other cocks were open, it was closed. The Firehole doors, which are newly made, were sticking when the loco had a fire in it, although they operated smoothly when the loco was cold. These have now had some attention and will hopefully prove to be satisfactory when it is next steamed. The operating handle has also been altered to give a greater clearance between it and the fireman's side injector. Once we were satisfied everything was fine, the Boiler inspector was invited to come along and formally witness everything on 2nd March. This was all OK and No. 6 then made its first trip up the line to Middleton Park since 1975, mainly to check that all was well with the bearings. Again, all was satisfactory so the loco was once more retired to the workshops for the steady task of painting and lining out to continue.

Other outstanding jobs have been going on in the background. The rear windows are sliding with a timber frame. The existing ones were in poor condition and two new ones have now been made and fitted. A feature of the Swanscombe locos was an oil tray that sat under the Roscoe lubricators on the side of the smokebox. These were provided to catch the oil and water that came out of the lubricator drain and avoid messing up the running plate. The originals had long gone missing and two new ones have been made. Why the locos were not provided with a purpose built drain pipe is a question that will probably never be answered but the whole arrangement of the lubricators is not really the best design ever.

There are still one or two jobs outstanding before the loco can be regarded as finished. The principle one is painting, but the rear sanders still need connecting to the system and a front lamp bracket needs fitting, but the loco should be available for the start of train services on the 23rd May.

### 1210 SIR BERKELEY

With the essential completion of No. 6, work is starting to pick up on Sir Berkeley. All the axleboxes have now been shimmed up to eliminate excessive clearance with the hornguides and the time when the frames will be re-united with the wheels isn't too far away. One outstanding task preventing this happening is non-destructive testing of the axles. We have been trying to get this done for a few weeks but without success. The firms we have asked have all said that they will get back to us with a date but none of them have done so

The valve gear is now receiving attention to eliminate wear. The four eccentric rods have been machined out and bushed to suit the pins, which are hardened and virtually unworn.



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A similar exercise is being done on the four lifting links. This will leave only the expansion links and die blocks to be attended to. There is some slight wear to the expansion links which will require them to be ground to make the slots parallel once more. The die blocks are quite worn and these will be replaced with new. The valves and valve rods themselves have been removed for inspection and found to be satisfactory, which was not unexpected as the valves were new at the last overhaul.

Painting of the frames continues, largely being undertaken by the young volunteers.

Once the NDT of the axles has been completed, attention will turn to the boiler. Work on this has not yet started, principally because there would be little point in spending money on this if problems were found with the axles.

### **No.11**

Still nothing to report although the owner is formulating plans for its overhaul to re-start this year.

### **No.1310 (NER H)**

The boiler inspector duly examined the boiler on 2nd March with a view to it being given a 12 month extension to its boiler ticket. The inspector was minded to grant this but has asked for an 'in frames' hydraulic test of the boiler to support this. He also asked for several washout plug holes to be re-cut to improve the condition of the scree threads. This was all successfully achieved and formally witnessed by the inspector on 7th April. A formal steam test is yet to be arranged.

### **1544 SLOUGH ESTATES No.3**

The loco has spent the last few months in store in the Engine House. However, it is planned to use it for a crew refresher/training day on the 17th April, the day before its boiler ticket runs out. This will be the last time the locomotive will be in steam until completion of its next overhaul, planned to start once Sir Berkeley is finished and back in service.

### **SENTINEL No.54**

Like the majority of our working locomotives, the Sentinel has been stored for the last few months with little being done to it. On its last steaming it was obvious that the regulator valve was passing steam and the regulator box has been dismantled and the valve machined and ground in. A new copper pipe has been made up to go between the preheater box and the clack valve as the existing one had been kinked and repaired by brazing in the past and this repair was not of the best.

It is hoped to try the locomotive on some test trains in the next few weeks, before the start of our train services on 23rd May.

### **HE 2387 BROOKES No.1**

Time was found to attend to the leaking boiler plug in the smokebox during February. The screw threads in the smokebox tubeplate were found to be in very poor condition and it was necessary to re-cut these to bring the washout plug hole back to a suitable condition. Unfortunately, we did not have a suitable tap so we had to spend a significant amount of money on having one made as these are non-standard. Having enlarged the hole in re-cutting the screw thread it was necessary to make a new washout plug.

The boiler has been washed out and was examined by the boiler inspector on 2nd March. This examination gave it a clean bill of health and it was then prepared for a formal steam

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test on 7th April. This test was satisfactory so the locomotive is now available for service.

Plans for overhauling the injectors have been put on hold for the moment as it is considered that the loco needs to be available for the start of train operations, in case the painting of No.6 is not finished by then.

**Fowler 42200033 HARRY**

No progress with the repairs to the various gauges and the loco is currently outside in the compound whilst work progresses on the mezzanine floor.

**Peckett 5003 AUSTIN'S No.1**

Has been kept in working order and used as required.

**D2999**

Has been kept in working order and used as required..

**D577 MARY**

On display in the Engine House in working order.

**HE 6981**

Some small amounts of work have been carried out on the loco as manpower permits. The front and rear windows have been re-fitted, as has the explosion damper on the engine air intake. The pipework from the air compressor to the main air system has been re-fitted in a slightly different arrangement that does not clash with the vacuum exhauster mounting platform. This then enabled the vacuum exhauster to be re-fitted and the drive belts fitted. Except where it interfaces with the vacuum system, the compressed air system is once more complete, apart from the flexible pipes to the air operated sanders. The necessary parts for the modifications to the air brake and fitting of the vacuum-air proportional valve have now been obtained and work has started on this.

Cleaning and painting progress as time and manpower allow.

**D631 CARROLL**

The loco has been in storage in the Engine House and has not been used.

**L.M.S. 7051**

Still awaiting workshop space, which is currently not available.

**D1373 MD&HB No.45**

Has been kept in working order and used as required. The loco recently received a much needed deep clean and polish.

All other locos are stored, either on display in the Engine House or awaiting overhaul.

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# **CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES**

## **PMV 2223**

With the completion of the L.M.S. brake van and the pipe wagon, space became available in the old workshops to enable work to start in earnest on the PMV's conversion to a coach. However, the first task was to utilise this space to temporarily house the balcony brake coach and replace it in the carriage shed with No.2223. This was so that the floor could be removed in an isolated building and the arising debris contained, something that would not have been easily possible if the work had been carried out in the workshops. Removing the floor kept two people occupied for three days. Whoever designed the floor of these vans did not intend for them to be removed easily, even when they were in poor condition, as was the case with this vehicle. The basic construction comprised a layer of corrugated steel sheet which was bolted to the chassis at regular intervals. On top of this steel sheet was placed an expanded steel mesh grid topped up with five lengths of steel strip which ran from end to end of the vehicle. All this steel was then riveted together with randomly spaced rivets. The whole lot was then covered with a layer of lightweight concrete arranged so that it sloped slightly to the middle. Breaking it up involved first hitting the floor with a 14 lb hammer to try and break up some of the concrete then taking a long crowbar and forcing it between the mesh and the corrugated sheet and attempting to lever them apart. This was impossible due to the rivets but it did help to identify where they were, enabling us to grind them off. Once all the concrete and steel mesh had been removed it was possible to attack the corrugated steel sheets which randomly overlapped each other and were also riveted together. As we worked our way along the van from one end to the other there was nothing to stand on so we had to build a temporary floor to work off. Progress was made much easier because much of the floor was in poor condition breaking up but there were still pockets of resistance which refused to give in and took an age to beat into submission.

After the floor had been removed the van was shunted into the compound to allow the next phase of demolition to commence. This involved undoing a huge amount of bolts that held the timber sides in place. Undoing is probably not the right word as most of them refused to be undone and had to be attacked with an angle grinder as it is not a good idea to attack a wooden body with oxy-gas cutting gear. This work progresses as these notes are written but should be complete by the time that you read this. Work can then start on needle-gunning and painting the frames. The vacuum brake cylinder will also be removed for overhaul at an early stage, before the floor starts to go in, as it is much easier to do this when you can stand up or work from above and don't have to lie on your back working overhead.

Once all the dirty work has been done the van will be moved into the old workshop for the coach build to start in earnest.

## **LMS BRAKE VAN No. 158760**

Apart from the fitting of a stove and an odd bit of paint touching up the L.M.S. brake van is now finished and has been shunted out of the workshops and into the Engine House. The final jobs have been fitting of the handrails, wagon label clips and signwriting. The van is the subject of a separate article in this Old Run.

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### **PIPE WAGON No. B740883**

The rebuild of this wagon into a flat wagon has now concluded. The final task has been to fit the floor which consists of some 24 planks 10" x 2¾" and some 8'-10" long. A majority of the planks have had to have some joinery work done to them to make them fit around the steelwork of the chassis. These timbers have been tanalised and also given a coat of bitumen paint to protect them.

It will carry the number 2 along with 'Middleton Railway' However, the wagon has come to be known as Dorothy at the Railway and some nameplates have been made to this effect.

### **PALVAN**

This still requires a vacuum brake cylinder overhaul, which will be carried out when time permits.

### **PLANT AND MACHINERY**

After reporting a significant amount of acquisitions in the last Old Run, things have been relatively quiet in this period. The only new item of plant (well second or even fifth hand) has been the acquisition of a Permaquip ballast packer for use in permanent way work. Often referred to as jacker-packers these machines can lift the track and pack ballast under the sleepers. The operator controls various hydraulic rams which enable the machine to grip the track and lift it. Once lifted eight tines are lowered and squeeze the ballast under a sleeper by means of a pincer motion. The machine is quite basic and requires human skill to operate it and satisfactorily pack track. It can only pack one sleeper at a time so progress is inevitably slow. It is, however, much easier than doing it manually!

Our particular machine is B.R. plant number 74059 (Permaquip Works No. 0063) and is a Mk.5 version. It was built new in 1984 and was the penultimate machine built for British Railways although later ones were supplied to private contractors. It is fitted with a Lister TL3A engine developing about 30 horsepower. It had a peripatetic life with B.R. ending up in Bristol in 1991. It eventually passed into the hands of Jarvis then JFM plant hire in Doncaster before entering preservation on the Elsecar Heritage Railway. As many will know, Elsecar have had a lot of problems in recent times and, as a consequence, have re-appraised their operation and decided to get rid of various items of rolling stock and equipment. We were made aware of the availability of this machine and a deal was struck for its purchase. The machine had been working at Elsecar but we were unable to try it as the starter motor had been removed so it was 'sold as seen', although we were told that, if it didn't work, we could have our money back and the only loss would have been transport costs. In the event, once a new starter motor was fitted along with a battery, the engine started up and all the various hydraulic systems were checked over and found to function satisfactorily. There are various minor oil leaks and other problems to sort out but these can be attended to as time progresses as none of them will prevent it being used in the meantime, once we have trained ourselves in how to use it.

### **MESS ROOM**

The workshop mess room has come in for a bit of much needed TLC in the last month. The walls have been cleaned down and painted and the ceiling has benefited from the replacement of all the ceiling tiles with new ones. In addition, the ceiling lights have all

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been replaced with new LED fittings. The result is a much brighter and fresher environment for volunteers to take their breaks in. All we need now is for social distancing restrictions to be removed so that we can all benefit from it.

**Steve Roberts, Mechanical Engineer**

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## **John Roberts writes:**

Over the past few months it has been so gratifying to see the extensive coverage of MRT in the national railway press.

There has, of course, been the coverage about our own Ian Smith's well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award for services to preservation. We also had Sheila Bye's article, and in the March issue of Steam Days a very comprehensive and fascinating article by Ian (with quite a few rarely-seen photographs).

Back in October, I managed to get a letter published in "Bylines", the sister magazine of British Railways Illustrated, covering the often unsung backwaters of our railway history. They included with my letter some photographs by Mervyn Leah which documented the last operations in 1967 on the GN branch, which passed over the Middleton Railway. It was lovely to see that Mervyn replied in person to "Bylines" in a follow-up letter!

The Middleton Railway has had the odd bit of coverage over the years in the national railway press, but nothing on this scale; well-deserved recognition at last!

*Thanks for noting this John; we hope to be able to secure more exposure in the future. In the main, thanks are due to Ian Smith, who tries very hard not to miss a trick!*

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One of our members, **Darryl Foxwell**, is a keen railway modeller, as are several other members. He has exhibited at our Model Railway Exhibition on several occasions, and wondered if we would like to show a few of his models in the Old Run. So below and on other pages in this issue, you will find some examples of his work.



A camouflaged train during the Second World War.

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## A HAPPY VISITOR

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I spent a few days in your vibrant city last October in that period you were able to move around with reasonable freedom, and included in my itinerary was a visit to the Middleton Railway. I had duly booked online and on arrival was greeted with lots of Yorkshire charm and hospitality which impressed me immensely. After a look at the museum, I got on board one of your beautifully restored Southern Railway carriages. The timber bench seats and overall conversion work must have taken many hours of dedicated work.

The journey itself was pleasurable and I have to say, the whole experience was so positive, I took a membership form away with me and joined the Railway as soon as I got home. I too am a volunteer at a heritage railway, in this case the Epping Ongar Railway in Essex. This runs over six miles of a former London Underground branch which was built to standard gauge in Victorian times. No doubt your members are well aware of this line as they would be of all the heritage lines in the country.

I'm not technically skilled, so I took on the job of maintaining the flower beds at the two stations. Last year, as we all know was a strange year with closures and openings but I did manage to plant out all the beds to a good standard, mainly petunias, begonias etc which are colourful and easy to maintain. At the time of writing, I'm hoping to return shortly and get stuck in removing all the old growth and planting out again at the appropriate time. I did notice the beds at your Railway looked pretty good for the time of year.

I also took on the task of restoring a classic telephone box outside one of our stations which now looks as good as new. We have a happy and enthusiastic team of regulars keeping the whole operation going, no doubt just as the Middleton relies on similar input from volunteers. I have even written an article for our in-house quarterly magazine praising your achievements and outlining the history of the Middleton. I know that due to living 200 miles away, I'm unable to contribute to your Railway in a practical way, but I hope my annual sub will be put to good use, and I still feel part of your unique Railway, and plan to stay a member for the future.

Furthermore, whenever I am in Leeds, you will certainly see me enjoying the Middleton once again, but in the meantime, this volunteer wishes all you volunteers all the very best for this and future years.

P.S. If any of you venture south, don't hesitate to visit the Epping Ongar, you won't be disappointed!

Ivor Wiggett

Thank you for your glowing testimonial Ivor, and for the information about the Epping Ongar; some of us do have connections "down south", so will be sure to pay you a visit whenever possible. Thank you for becoming a member of the Middleton, and we look forward to seeing you next time you are up this way. Please make yourself known to the shop staff when you visit. Ed.

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My husband purchased a world map and then gave me a dart and said, "Throw this and wherever it lands—that's where I'm taking you when this pandemic ends." Turns out, we're spending two weeks behind the fridge.

Thank you, Cedric. Ed.

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## THE LMS BRAKE VAN

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In recent weeks we have finally finished the restoration of our LMS brake van, No.158760. The project has been relatively straightforward but along the way it has thrown up many interesting questions, several of which remain unanswered.

But first, why did we end up with this brake van in the first place? The answer to that comes from a visit by Col. Robertson from Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate in October 1960. During that visit he suggested that, for safety we should acquire and use a brake van when operating our goods service. Whether the Colonel pulled the necessary strings or not is not recorded but, a few weeks later, brake van M357620 duly arrived on loan from British Railways. The van was *en route* to Stourton wagon shops for repairs to a broken door window and was diverted to us.

M357620 was only a stop gap, destined to leave us after our 'own' van arrived. This was M158760, a Midland Railway designed van built by the LMS at Derby in 1926. How we actually acquired this van is not known for certain after all this time but it was formally gifted to us by Mr. Cowell, the Divisional Traffic Manager, at a ceremony on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1961. The van had gone through the wagon shops at Stourton prior to coming to Middleton but plates on it proclaimed that it had received a general overhaul at Derby in June 1960, some six months earlier.

Because of the practicality of using the brake van on our goods trains as there were no 'in' and 'out' sidings at Balm Road, (something the Colonel probably never realised) the van soon fell out of favour for its intended purpose. However, it was much used as the main base for the Society's volunteers and on Permanent Way (P.W.) works trains. The van stove was most welcome on those cold winter days. It was also much used on the special public open days that were a feature of early operations and came into regular use when the Railway first started operating a passenger service in 1969. This new found use wasn't to last, though, once we acquired the Ballast Brake Van. The ballast brake was much lighter than the 20 tons of M158760 and the latter soon fell into relative disuse, mainly being used for storage.

Over the years the brake van, with little in the way of maintenance, gradually deteriorated. Then in 2013 a member managed to obtain a grant for its restoration and, once space was available, it was shunted into the workshops for this to happen. The restoration has been a long one and well chronicled in the pages of the Old Run. Initially, it was intended that the van would be restored to British Railways grey livery with black underframes as was standard for these vehicles and this livery was applied to the van as restoration progressed. However, it was suggested that, as 2020 was the sixtieth anniversary of the preservation of the Railway, it would be a good idea to finish it in the livery it carried when it first arrived. It was known that B.R. had applied the legend 'Middleton Railway Preservation Society' on the van sides and it was decided that this would be re-applied. In the event, Covid-19 ruined any plans we had for our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, but Council decided that the van would still be painted in this way on the west side with its B.R. livery on the east.

The photographic archives were consulted in an effort to find detailed photographs of it when it first arrived and these clearly showed the lettering applied at Stourton wagon shops. However, they also showed that the solebars, headstocks and buffers were not black, as required by the B.R. standard, but actually grey. This raised a few questions. Did Derby works ignore the B.R. standard and simply continue to paint things to the L.M.S. standard or did the underframes remain unpainted from L.M.S. days? The paintwork did not look new so it is unlikely that Stourton did this, even less likely when it

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had received an overhaul at Derby only a few months ago. It is likely that the only painting done at Stourton was the signwriting required for its new role and, perhaps, a fresh coat of white paint on the handrails.

That should have been the end of our research. We knew how the van was painted externally when it arrived and we knew what the B.R. standard was for the internal paintwork. This was red oxide up to 3'-4" above floor level and light stone above that, including the roof. However, a colour photo of the interior of the van then turned up and this clearly showed that the red oxide was carried up to cantrail height and only the roof was painted light stone. More intriguing, though, was the fact that the van clearly showed the number 158786 painted on the inside. Was this in fact a third completely different van? Although it was an interior photograph, it was definitely taken in Claytons Dartmouth yard as Garnet Road is clearly visible through the van windows. A partial answer to this mystery is to be found in an article about the van's arrival the January 1961 edition of the Old Run, which states:

*"...She didn't really seem sure of her number – one side said 158786 and the other had a painted over 158760, while there was no number at all on the outside except a chalked 158760, the numberplates having been removed. However, the letters from B.R. refer to the number 158760."*

Unfortunately there is no more about this mystery in the Old Run so it will continue to intrigue. An unanswered question is why were the D plates, which had the van number, removed? This was at a time when collectors of such things were few and far between so it is unlikely to have been a theft. The painted numbers usually found on the outside of the van body would have been obliterated by the lettering done at Stourton in any case, so all external traces of the number would then have been erased. Speculation now takes over. Is the van that we have actually 158786 and not 158760? Is it possible that 158760 was actually written off in an accident and a late substitute found? Another possibility is that we have the frames from 158760 and, at the time of its overhaul at Derby, it was given the body from 158786 as it was in much better condition but the interior was not repainted? Either explanation is possible and no doubt there are others; we are unlikely to ever know.

The interior photograph has also highlighted other things unconnected with the van's identity or the way in which it was painted. The writer has always insisted that the desk was at what is now the south end of the van, although the official drawings show it as being at the opposite end. The photo proves that it was at the south end. The drawing shows the internal lamp brackets as being at what is now the north end but the photo shows them to be mid way along the side, near the stove. The original stove had long gone and, as part of the restoration, we have acquired a replacement L.M.S./B.R. style circular stove, which remains to be fitted. However, the photo shows that the van was actually fitted with an L.N.E.R. style rectangular stove when we acquired it. Such stoves are virtually impossible to obtain so, although we have endeavoured to restore the van to the condition in which we received it, the stove will be an anomaly.

Finally, the completion of the van's restoration has thrown up another question and that is what do we do with it? As was the case back in the sixties, we have no real use for it. It cannot be used on passenger trains as the design of the brakegear means that it cannot be vacuum braked and, in any case, it is not really suitable for this purpose. Our goods trains of any sort are few and far between and the van would spend 99% of its life simply



sitting in a siding and slowly deteriorating. Happily, this is one question for which we have an answer. The van is to be exhibited in the Engine House where the public will have access to it. The display will tell the story of both its importance to Middleton's early history and the purpose of brake vans in everyday service.

On the right here the picture shows the interior of the brake van complete with stove - and, of course, kettle!

Below, our picture shows the van with its B.R. livery on its east side.

When we re-open the Museum, you will be able to see the van in all its glory in our Display Hall.

**Steve Roberts**  
**Mechanical Engineer**



1960



2021



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## SENTINEL THROUGH THE AGES

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This coming season should see the long awaited re-entry into service of our ex-LNER class Y1 No 68153. It's a sobering thought to realise that 2021 sees the 60th anniversary of its arrival at the then infant Middleton Railway Preservation Society, or MRPS.

The locomotive arrived at Middleton on 24th September, 1961 and purchase was facilitated by a generous loan from the then society President, David, Lord Garnock. No 54 was soon put into working order for use on freight services and rapidly became a regular performer on such duties, being ideal for the job. Whilst obviously not as quick as firing up "JOHN ALCOCK", the loco could be steamed in as little as 45 minutes from cold and was thus readily available both in her own right and as a substitute for the Hunslet diesel if necessary.

As a young child I would often see 54 working traffic, living as I did in the 'Gasholders', now part of the Tulip Retail Centre and walking to and from school at Hunslet Moor and then Cockburn.

Shortly after I joined the Trust, we started passenger services and it was not long before 54 began operating those and much entertainment was provided! The engine was, and still is, very much on the limits of her performance and many was the time she had to stop for a "blow up" by the old Parkside Bridge, these days known as "GN Curve" – and she also set fire to quite a lot of the area around the line!

It was usual in those early days to put a huge fire in the loco, with many a photo at the time showing a towering thick, black exhaust. Then you would inject water into the boiler and wait until the injectors stopped working, meaning you simply couldn't get any more water in the boiler, before setting off. One fireman managed to get almost 300 psi against the safety valves until the loco set off and pressure began to drop! In those days, the loco didn't have feed water pumps and once you needed to inject water, the pressure just dropped spectacularly and you could easily stall through lack of pressure.

No 54 continued in use until 1977, with a short break for a boiler test and exhibition at "Stephenson 150" at Shildon, for which she was re-numbered 59, her original LNER number.

Her next period in service began in 1987. A huge amount of work went into this overhaul, including a new bunker, ventilation louvres and the overhaul and reinstatement of the two water pumps. She was also lettered as "Departmental Locomotive No 54" and a new "68153" number plate provided, painted black as per the original.

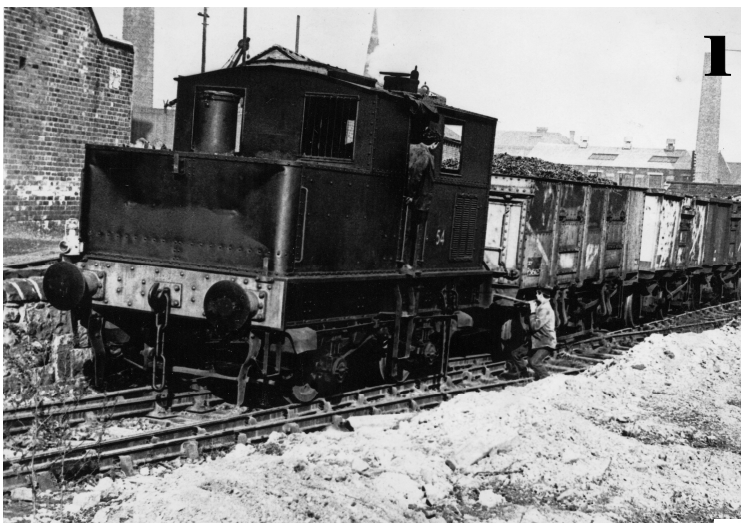
This 10 year stint saw the loco making quite a name for itself, being affectionately christened "The Potting Shed" by the magazine "Steam Railway", a name which has stuck with it in some circles to this day. She visited many other railways; East Lancs, Nene Valley and NYMR were three highlights, each of which produced some incredible sights. At the East Lancs, the loco appeared to haul an eight coach train into Bury Bolton Street on its own. What the crowds didn't see was the loco plus train was given a shove from the shed, and basically rolled into the station! At Peterborough, she shunted a huge "Kriegslok" 2-10-0 weighing in at 103 tons, surprising the watching crowds! But perhaps the most famous spectacle was at the NYMR in 1988 when the loco piloted the P3 loco up Grosmont Bank into Goathland and then brought the three coaches back to Grosmont on its own! A photo of the return trip features in the new History of MRT when it is published later this year.

The loco retired from service in 1998 and it was intended to return her to service in due course, but the road was long and convoluted this time. A scheme to have her overhauled at

another railway fell through after she had arrived there and we had to “rescue” her. Not entirely a waste of time as a firebox in good condition was acquired for use. Then a major incident occurred when a shunting move during winter revealed a major crack in the cylinder block. Fortunately the Trust was able to acquire a suitable spare from the Scottish Railway Preservation Society in exchange for the use of our set of Sentinel injectors as patterns for one of their locos. Andrew Parsley and I went to Scotland to remove and bring the replacement cylinders from Bo’ness.

After much effort, the loco first steamed in 2019 and since then has needed various “tweaks” to bring her back up to full operating condition, not helped of course by the Covid-19 restrictions imposed last year, but all being well the engine will be in action in 2021.

Ian Smith



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1. Goods train 1963
2. Sentinel 54 at Middleton park, with the small Fowler diesel in 1970.
3. No 54 at Grosmont
4. No. 54 shunts at Grosmont

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## Stan Holdsworth

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Members of the railway will be sorry to hear that Stan Holdsworth died in hospital in the evening of Monday 29th March, at the age of 87. Stan had become involved in the Middleton Railway in August 1992, not long after he had taken early retirement from his job as a quantity surveyor. He had seen an advertisement in the Yorkshire Evening Post asking for volunteers to help with the running of the railway, and responded to it.

At this time the railway was in a difficult position with managing its commercial activities. Steve Roberts was then the shop manager, but a few months earlier the previous treasurer had needed to resign at fairly short notice, due to pressure of work. While Steve had agreed to stand in as treasurer, he could not realistically do both jobs, which was why the newspaper advertisement had been placed. In replying to it Stan had indicated that he was willing to consider at least assisting with the treasurer's job, and also to help with jobs such as purchasing and collecting stock for the shop, and this was much appreciated. He visited the railway to find out more about what would be involved, and even after Steve had explained this to him he was still willing to assist. He was therefore co-opted on to the Council in September 1992, on the basis that he would initially work with Steve as assistant treasurer. Also, by this time a deputy shop manager had been found, which eased the whole situation.



This arrangement of Stan assisting Steve as treasurer worked out very well. Subsequently he used to say that, at that first meeting, Steve had told him "You don't have to come down every day". But in fact Stan DID come down to the railway extremely regularly, both to do this job and anything else with which he could help. Not surprisingly, Stan was duly elected as treasurer at the AGM in June 1993, and was to do the job for the next 20 years - which is by far the longest stint of any treasurer in the railway's history. As well as this, while he claimed to have little interest in the activities in the workshop, he was a very practical person when other things needed doing, as the accompanying picture shows. In all this he was well supported by Carole, even if she did not spend quite as much time at the railway as he did. By contrast he said comparatively little about his interests outside the railway, although it is known that he was the keyboard player in a jazz big band. Unfortunately, we never managed to arrange for the band to perform at the railway.

As treasurer, one of the first developments with which he was involved was the production of a monthly report on cash flow, which had been begun by George Lunn some time around 1980 and continued by John Chaplin up until 1991, but had then fallen away. Since this was an important tool for the Council in keeping track of the finances, it needed to be reinstated. Steve had started work on this, and Stan took this over, so that every month Council members were presented with a report showing income and expenditure, and comparing this with the budgets that had been set. Initially he produced these reports by hand, and indeed he kept the accounts by hand as well: we still have his neatly written analysed cash books in our archives. Eventually he entered the computer

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age, and from late 1999 on these cash flow sheets were produced by computer and circulated by email to those council members who could receive them in this way.

The most important project in which he was involved during his time as treasurer was the one to build a “resource centre” at Moor Road, where he was a key member of our team that managed this project. During 2004 this had involved assembling the bid to what was then the Heritage Lottery Fund (now the National Lottery Heritage Fund), and then from 2005 on actually managing the finances associated with the grant. In particular, this included setting up a debenture with the bank, so as to secure the overdraft facility that we needed. This was to cover the time delay between us paying bills to the contractors building the Engine House, and HLF paying the instalments of the grant that reimbursed us for these payments: serious cash flow management! He was also able to arrange for his son Jez to act as educational consultant to the project, helping to develop materials that our education team are still using.

By 2013 Stan was approaching his 80th birthday, and was beginning to feel that he had been doing the job for long enough. He therefore gave the Council plenty of warning that he wished to hand it over during that year, but was willing to continue on Council for another year to provide such assistance as his successor might need. The Council were very grateful to Ann Roberts for agreeing to take over from Stan on this basis, and so he ceased to be treasurer at the AGM on 20th June 2013, and finally stepped down from the Council at the following AGM. Unfortunately, by this time there were signs that his health was deteriorating, and it was only a few years later that he needed to move into a nursing home.

So the railway owes Stan a huge debt of gratitude for his contribution. We remember him and Carole with great affection, and we send our best wishes to Carole and the rest of the family.

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### Some more of Darryl’s models:



Everyone recognises a Tank;  
again WWII, 1945

No prizes for recognising this  
locomotive - especially as it is  
written on the side!



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## Train Spotting Days continued with Mike Cox

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Picking up from our July 2020 edition, Mike is now 19: From Edinburgh shed 64B Haymarket it was then onto 64A St Margaret's. On walking in 65234 was in use as a stationary boiler, but there were another 26 steam on shed including 65243 Maude which was stored along with a class mate 65319. There were plenty of Black 5s, V2s and standard tanks about. Next was 64F Bathgate, where only four steam were seen 61307, 65267, 78046 and 78047. The next day and 44720 took us into Aberdeen and D6147 onto Inverurie for the works which was all diesel with 11 of the problematic NBL type 2s present. We then returned to Aberdeen and on to Dundee and Tay Bridge shed with 12 steam including 60530 Sayajirao on standby. It was then onto 62A Thornton Junction and the jewel in the crown as far as steam was concerned with 36 steam locos with 65345 noted as a stationary boiler duties and plenty of Gresley J37s and J38s about the shed. It was only a little later in the day that I realised I had left my 35mm camera on the foot bridge at Thornton Junction, but not to worry I still had my trusty Brownie. The next day a trip to Aviemore and Inverness; we had not realised that Aviemore shed had closed, so we had a wait there for the train on to Inverness and on arrival there only six diesels were on shed. That day not a single steam loco was seen. The next day we set off for Glasgow behind D6101 and the first shed being 65B St Rollox with seven steam locos seen including 60034 Lord Faringdon with quite a few close up photos taken, before it went off shed and down to Buchanan Street station. It was then to Cowlairs works where 60041 Salmon Trout in bits was noted, also 57566(828) in preserved livery along with eight other steam locos, 44722, 44992, 61029, 61278.

61140, 60836, 62059 and 73096, at St Rollox works there was no steam to be seen. We then travelled on to 66B Motherwell where there were 15 steam locos on shed with 60528 Tudor Minstrel in store amongst them; it was then back to Stonehaven, being hauled by the same loco which had brought us to Glasgow in the morning. Next day Stirling was visited again, D6101 providing the traction. The shed 65J only had D6104 and D6108 on, then it was on to 65F Grangemouth which contained only diesels; from there to 65C Dumfermline with 70022 Tornado and 70036 Boadicea noted on the way, the shed here had 14 steam on shed. Afterwards it was the journey back to base at Stonehaven behind D6101 again. It was Perth next day with D6101 again up front (MUST HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE IN WORKING ORDER). 63A had plenty of steam; 60026 Miles Beevor was withdrawn and 60024 Kingfisher was under repair minus its tender, 60034 Lord Faringdon was also present looking as though some one had given it a wipe over since it was seen on 65B St Rollox two days before (looking at my photos). There were another 15 steam including two Britannias from Carlisle and so we boarded a train to Carlisle for the two sheds there, the first being 12A Kingmoor with 74 steam including 13 Britannias and then onto 12B Upperby with another eight Britannias on shed included in the 27 steam locos seen. It was then back to Stonehaven, the first part of the journey behind D379 with my notes giving 42274 as a banker up Beatock. The next day a trip into Glasgow and to 66A Polmadie where there were 34 of the Clayton type 1s on shed but also 35 steam, with Holbeck 45675 Hardy noted. We must have been getting tired with all the early morning starts so the next day we had a rest. The 16th August it was back to Glasgow and 67A Corkerhill with 26 steam on shed with most of them out of steam and withdrawn, we then went onto 67B Hurlford with seven steam on shed. We then took a rail bus journey from Kilmarnock to Ayr and the shed there where 25 steam locos were on shed, and of course most were out of steam, withdrawn, including Black 5s and Standard types. It was quite a good day as most of the steam seen were cops, and so it was back to Stonehaven. The next day we set off for Carstairs and 66E with 12 steam on shed and only one diesel, but half

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of the steam were withdrawn. From Carstairs we travelled to Cartsydyke for a visit to 66D Greenock but there were only three diesel shunters on shed. The next day was the last in Scotland and we just had a ride out to Arbroath, before making our way home the following day, passing 60530 Sayajirao on stand-by at Dundee Tay Bridge and on to Huddersfield with 431 cops but half being diesels.

It was not until 1st September and my next trip out to the Manchester area, the first shed being 9E Trafford Park where 27 steam were noted, with very few out of steam. Next was 9H Patricroft which only had eight steam on shed, but I did cop 82000, onto 9J Agecroft with 24 steam on shed and no diesels on site, it was the same at 9D Newton Heath where 49 steam locos on shed and four diesel shunters. What a big difference from Scotland where most of the steam seen was stored. The only real down side for steam in the Manchester area was 45654 Hood, withdrawn at Newton Heath awaiting the scrap man. On the day only seven mainline diesels were recorded seen. By now I was living in Leeds so I could work all the shifts associated with my job as a Chef. As I have said before, I had my railway pass with working at a British Transport Commission hotel i.e. the Queens in Leeds. I had a day off on 21st September and had a day at Doncaster but only saw 14 steam all day.

On 24th September I organised a trip to the Newcastle area with the Slaithwaite and District Omnibus and Rail Society by coach, the first shed being 52G Sunderland with seven steam on shed; at the next, 52H Tyne Dock, there were 14 steam with the 9f's 2-10-0 locos on the Consett iron ore trains just about finished, 92099 had already been withdrawn, it was then onto 52F South Blyth with 11 steam on shed and then it was across on the ferry to North Blyth with 24 steam being noted and we then went into Hughes Bolckow's scrap yard which contained 63446, 63454, 65825, 65788, 65893, 65874, 63410, 63435 and 63349. It was then to 52B Heaton with 14 steam including 69005 (DM58) and 69023(DM59). The next shed in the itinerary was 51L Thornaby where amongst all the diesels 63368 was noted and then to 51C West Hartlepool where 27 steam locos were seen. On the whole it was a good day with 79 cops mainly steam and quite a few photos taken.

On 28th September I had a trip to London and an hour or two at Clapham Junction where 16 steam loco's were seen including six Bulleid Pacifics and then for some reason I went back into the city to Euston and out to Willesden Junction and a walk to 81A Old Oak Common which of course was all diesel, it was then back to Euston and the walk down to Kings Cross, calling in at St Pancras on the way and back home behind D157.

On 8th October we cycled to Mirfield to take photos of Flying Scotsman on a special, after the loco passed, we bunked 56D where 23 steam were noted and 43022(5D Stoke) being copped. Carlisle was the next place to be visited on 22nd October with 35026 seen on a special at some part of the journey (my notes don't state, but some where at the back of my mind I think it was in Leeds). On arrival at Carlisle it was first down to 12A Kingmoor where 60 steam locos were on shed with plenty of Britannias and Black5s copping 45028 and two 9Fs 92058 and 92067, it was then to the other side of the city to 12B Upperby with 22 steam including another six Britannia's and copping another Black5, 44677, there were also four of the troublesome Metro-vicks numbers D5700, D5702, D5705 and D5719 on shed. Afterwards it was back home to Leeds. On 5th November the last Bradford to Stockport train ran, we called it the Stocky tank or the Palethorpes (sausages) as it used to always have their van on the train, so we joined the train at Huddersfield for the trip to Stockport behind 42116 a 56F Low Moor engine. Upon arrival at Stockport we descended on <sup>24</sup>9B Edgeley shed where 36 steam locos were



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present on shed including 45596 Bahamas which by this time was being cared for there after being withdrawn, I did cop 43003,43088 and 48412 which by now was a bonus for me and as far as I can remember we came back on the return working to Huddersfield.

On 17th November I took myself to Chester and Croes Newydd. On the journey to Chester 92095 was noted withdrawn on 8B Warrington Dallam. On arriving at Chester it was onto Wrexham for 6C Croes Newydd shed with 14 steam and only three ex GWR Panniers to be seen, it was then back to Chester and 6A the shed there where it was all steam with 31 on shed. Three days later and S.D.O.R.S trip by coach to Stoke and Crewe with permits, the first stop being 5D Stoke the shed being completely all steam with 46 on shed with three cops, it was then to 5B Crewe South with 74 steam locos and four cops there. Next the works where there was still steam about with 35 on works. Of note was 92220 Evening Star, 70013 Oliver Cromwell, 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley, 60010 Dominion of Canada and parts donor 60026 Miles Beevor and 71000 Duke of Gloucester robbed of its cylinders; photos taken. It was next to the remains of 5A now just stabling point with 18 mainline diesels. On the way home 9F Heaton Mersey was visited, again all steam with 32 on shed, nearly all Stanier Black 5s and 8f's the only exception being 92083 (8H), we also called in 9B Stockport Edgeley which contained 30 steam locos including 45596 Bahamas which was in store there; a good day out for steam.

4th December and another coach trip out with S.D.O.R.S this time Yorkshire area sheds, again with permits, first 55G Huddersfield my local shed with just eight steam with 42141 and 42689 stored with no work, but were to be transferred away. It was then the turn of 56F Mirfield with 23 steam locos and a cop 92224, a recent transfer off the western region to Warrington. Next 55A Holbeck with 31 steam with four of their Jubilees on shed; staying in Leeds, 55H Neville Hill was next, with only 69621 and 3442 The Great Marquis in store there, on to 55B Stourton with only eight steam locos with the BR Sulzers now starting to take over freight turns. At 56A Wakefield it was back to plenty of steam with 64 on shed but there were quite a few in store as 13 mainline diesels were noted including new D6860 to D6865. It was a few miles to 55E Normanton with 15 steam of note was 77000, 77003 and 77014 in store with only 77014 escaping to the Southern Region to live another day. The only other steam cop that day was 92065 on 56A which had been transferred from Tyne Dock. On 27th December I had another trip out to Crewe, and a walk down to 5B Crewe South, I had by this time acquired a BR drivers coat so along with my railway pass I could gain access to sheds without a permit. There were 77 steam on shed including 14 on the works siding which all bar 92138 were withdrawn, they were 44525, 44377, 45393, 45138, 46495, 48457, 48718, 75053, 78019, 78036, 78059, 90622 and 90664, I also bunked the diesel depot and the stabling point which use to be 5A. On 29th January 1967 I went back again to Crewe, on a coach tour with S.D.O.R.S back at 5B where 60 steam locos noted and the works sidings had only 45033 with 78019, 78036 and 78059 from two days before; it was then to the works, with 90243 and 90281 noted in the paint shop and 60010 and 92220 in the new paint shop. 60026 and 71000 were still present and the only other steam loco was 70013 Oliver Cromwell, at this time the E5000 southern electric locos were in works being converted to electro-diesels, becoming E6101 etc. The next shed was 6C Croes Newydd with 24 steam and just two ex GWR pannier tanks 4646 and 9641 being noted. It was next to 6A Chester before heading home where 44 steam locos were noted, including 45000 which was according to my notes in store there.

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On 3rd February we decided to go and do the Southern before the end of steam there, so it was over night to Kings Cross behind D9021, for some reason we had a look in at Paddington and then to Waterloo for a train to Weymouth behind 35023 Holland-Africa Line, heads out the window all the way, we must have had permits with 70G Weymouth shed with 11 steam with 35026 Lamport and Holt Line, 73016 and 73080 Merlin in store out of steam, we then worked our way back with 70F Bournemouth the next shed with 13 steam, with 80032 withdrawn being noted, 70D Eastleigh was next with 37 steam on shed with a few in store as with every shed at this time, also noted in the works yard was preserved 30053 and 34051 Winston Churchill. Then back to London behind 35023 again. That night we took an over night newspaper train to Salisbury before visiting 70E where 11 steam were noted, I don't think much was said about what the actual time that was on the permit, it being early Sunday morning. It was then back to London and 70A Nine Elms with 29 steam locos on shed, with 34009 Lyme Regis, 34017 Ifracombe and 34032 Torrington already withdrawn. It was then back to Kings Cross and back home with 126 cops mainly steam in the bag. Five days later I took myself to Hull and 50B Dairycoates where a few steam locos on shed were 7 WDs and two B1s, the shed being full of the D95xx class diesels redundant from the Western region and a few English Electric type 3s, in the sidings awaiting the Drapers scrap men there were 32 locos including one of the last V2s 60831, the only steam cop that day being 92060 ex Tyne Dock awaiting the scrap man. On the 17th March another trip to Crewe, with Shrewsbury included, on arrival at Shrewsbury it was a brisk walk down to 6D, the only loco in steam being 44913, the other 15 steam in shed were all out of steam withdrawn, those being 44981, 45051, 45311, 46446, 46508, 47677, 75004, 76086, 78003, 78058 and 78063. It was then back to Crewe behind a BR Brush type 4 D1903. On arrival at Crewe it was the walk to 5B, the first loco seen being 4498 Sir Nigel Gresley not long after release from the works, there was another 76 steam locos on shed, nearly half out of steam, with soon to be preserved 75029 being copped ( photo taken )along with two Stanier 8f's 48304 and 48639.

My next trip out was to the North East, first shed being 52F South Blyth where there were only four J27s on shed over at North Blyth there were 14 steam, with half being out of steam, being Ivatt 2-6-0s and Peppercorn K1s at Hughes Blocklow's scrap yard 62002 and 62008 were present, afterwards I went back into Newcastle and did 52A Gateshead which of course was all diesel and then home with only three steam cops.

Trips were now getting fewer with the demise of steam and also courting. On 19th May another trip was organised down on to the Southern, going down over night for an early start, down to Weymouth, where there was 13 steam on shed with 35014 Netherland Line having joined 35026 on the scrap roads. It was then to Bournemouth and 70F behind 76069, where 13 steam were also noted and then to Eastleigh behind 76009 where 21 steam loco were seen, in the works yard, 35023 Holland-Africa Line, 34025 Whimble and 80152 were noted along with several diesels. We ended the day at 70A Nine Elms where 27 steam were seen and for some reason we had a look in at Paddington. I can't remember where we bedded down for the night, but the next morning it was out to 70C Guildford where only three steam on shed being 34102 Lapford, 76031 and the shed shutter 30072. From there we travelled to 70E Salisbury behind a Warship D827 Kelly, where eight steam locos were noted on shed. It was then back to London behind D824 Highflyer and D188 from Kings Cross back home, only copping ten steam locos.

The next month I had a trip out to Crewe, with S.D.O.R.S with permits, the stabling point the former 5A was visited first then onto 5B Crewe South, where 81 steam were present

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with 71000 still there, afterwards we did the Diesel Depot before going onto 5E Northwich shed where 15 steam were noted, stored in the goods yard were 46440, 46487, 46520, 48057 and 48640 all withdrawn.

The next chapter in my life was a move to London to work in the Talk of the Town theatre night club in Leicester square, working 6pm to 2am six days a week and a bed sit in Earls Court. I found myself wandering around the mainline termini's during the day before starting work and on 5th July was at Waterloo where I took a few photos of 34021 Dartmoor, before the end of steam on Southern, it was not until 19th July I went down to 70A Nine Elms where all the steam was dead and the place deserted with 31 steam on shed 34001, 34002, 34008, 34015, 34013, 34019, 34047, 34057, 34034, 34023, 34088, 34100, 35023, 35028, 35008, 35007, 35013, 35012, 35030, 42184, 41319, 41298, 73119, 73022, 73037, 75075, 76064, 80012, 80085, 80140 and 80145 and for some reason I didn't take my camera and I didn't go back.

After a month or so in London I couldn't settle so I got my job back at the Queens Hotel in Leeds and as I was doing a bit of courting, train spotting took a back seat, I did visit Crewe again on 11th February 1968 and at 5B there was only 4498 Sir Nigel Gresley, 75029 and 92203 which by now were all preserved. My last trip in the steam era was on 6th July to the North West Area with the Slaithwaite and District Omnibus and Rail Society by coach, the first shed being 9D Newton Heath where there were 34 steam on shed all being out of steam. I think by this time the shed was closed to steam. The next was 10D Lostock Hall, where only 19 out of 36 steam locos were in steam, the rest being withdrawn, it was then on to Preston Docks and the industrial steam locos there and then onto 10A Carnforth where there were 37 steam on shed with more stored than in steam with only a couple of weeks to go before the end. In store were 42073, 42085, 46441 and 61306 put aside preserved also 70013 Oliver Cromwell was on shed, 10F Rose Grove was the next shed which contained 40 steam locos with only 12 being stored. On the way home we called in at Bury where the EM2 co-co Electrics 27001-6 and 26000 Tommy were in store along with the General Electric class of bo-bo electrics E3036-45 and 45596 Bahamas, and so ended my train spotting in the steam era with just two cops 48167 at Rose Grove and 75009 at Carnforth. The visit to Preston Docks really put it in perspective that industrials were the only steam left to see. I didn't go out for the end of steam with 4th August being my 21st birthday and an all night party in my flat.

I started spotting again in the late 1980s when some work mates showed an interest and in doing so rekindled my enthusiasm in the railways after getting married and having children who were girls.

Shortly before I retired at 65 years old from the Queens Hotel with 46 years service, I had got to know a worker at the National Railway Museum who was a volunteer at the Middleton Railway which was on my door step. He told me to get over there and I would be on the footplate in 6 months, he was right and I am now a fireman on the industrials that put me off at the end of steam. I still go spotting as I still have my railway pass and I split my time between modern traction and visiting Heritage sites along with two days a week at the Middleton Railway.

*I suspect that over the last few months Mike has been putting in a great deal more time at the Middleton than two days a week, as he has been one of the main helpers with all the work required in building the Mezzanine Floor and refurbishing the Conference Room. Thank you Mike for a fascinating, though sad, picture of the demise of steam. Ed.*

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## Youth Team Update April '21

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I am sure that in the last article I promised some input from the members themselves. Having forgotten completely about this until I opened up my previous document to write this, and at the risk of angering the editor with further delay, I press-ganged some of the Youth Team available to me the very next day at the railway to write a piece...their input is below:

*“Volunteering at the Middleton Railway is a great opportunity for all those who work here. Personally, my experience has been amazing. I have learnt skills such as shunting, sign-writing, loco maintenance, firing and much more, all thanks to the many volunteers who kindly give their time. I have to give a big thankyou to John Linkins as he drove the Youth Team to learn these skills and be what it is today”* – Kenny Hall

*“At the Middleton Railway I have done everything from cleaning locos, firing, using a variety of tools and fitting loco parts, I have even learnt about sign-writing from other Young Volunteers too. I have an interest in railways so coming to Middleton is something I really enjoy”* – Matthew Radnall (I would also add that Matthew’s main enjoyment seems to be getting as dirty as possible; we have his role model, David Harpham, to thank for that!).

Well, now I have successfully destroyed my reputation and good name by allowing them to slander me in public (*what good name? I hear you cry!*) I will update you a little on progress since last time. Further restrictions in the first third of 2021 have hampered progress, and this will probably continue, but not all has been lost. ‘Dorothy’ was outshopped, complete with suitable nameplates I sourced from a lovely chap at the Nene Valley who does ‘Stationmaster’ door signs etc. in resin. “Any reason you can’t do a custom job?” I asked “Absolutely not” was the reply! And the resulting plates are very much in keeping with the wagon, also they are not attractive to metal thieves!

The Youth Team continued to work on the painting of Sir B, getting the frames and wheels ready to be re-united as well as finishing off some of the awkward bits that had been missed on No 6. Painting is very much at the core of a lot of our jobs and, although not massively exciting, it is very rewarding to see the progress being made and allows the engineering happening around it to progress at a steady pace.

We have also had a real push on getting our running fleet looking tidy. Cleaning locos is not glamorous or skilled but it is vital to present ourselves respectably to the paying public once we re-open. A big ‘Thank You’ to Matt Berry for leading the way on this and ensuring we have the relevant supplies in stock, with the help of Aaron Marsden. The team will soon be able to tackle locos quite independently and keep on top of it.

We have had the opportunity to continue some limited footplate training and as boiler inspections and season preparations increase, several of the team have been engaged in helping to prepare locos and steam them etc. for these important occasions. These ‘run of the mill’ events are important for the Youth Team to engage in and I thank those who have supported such activities, especially mid-week, when I am often not available.

Last time I reported that we had six core members with a further four waiting in the wings to be inducted, I am pleased to say that all inductions have now happened although perhaps all those involved are not under 18, I have taken them under the ‘Youth’ wing to ease them into the MRT family, so to speak! I am trying to give an overview of all new volunteers in ‘Turnout’, our working members newsletter, so that those assisting on site will know a little bit about new attendees and are more able to support them.

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Finally, I am looking for opportunities for the Youth Team to get involved in other areas of running the railway, such as Social Media, Museum Development and Commercial, so please don't be surprised if I approach you and ask for your support with one or more of these aspects.

I am also taking steps towards increasing my capacity as with 11 members it is simply impossible to support all of the Youth Team on a regular basis. I am thankful to all those who continue to support the programme and particularly Sam Burleigh, who has offered his support in terms of co-ordinating the team going forward. I have even managed to employ some elves, who are notoriously seasonal workers, into the engineering fold; you may recognise them in the list below. The current team includes:

Kenny Hall	Mads Pade	Alex Smith
Neilas Barauskas	Matthew Radnal	Steven Wild
Jamie Clifton	Ailsa Sayles	Matthew Wright
Joel Leverton	Ellen Sayles	

**John Linkins**

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## **POETRY CORNER**

### **“A local train of thought” by Siegfried Sassoon**

Alone, in silence, at a certain time of night,  
Listening, and looking up from what I'm trying to write,  
I hear a local train along the Valley. And " There  
Goes the one-fifty", think I to myself; aware  
That somehow its habitual travelling comforts me,  
Making my world seem safer, homelier, sure to be  
The same to-morrow; and the same, one hopes, next year.  
" There's peacetime in that train." One hears it disappear  
With needless warning whistle and rail-resounding wheels.  
" That train's quite like an old familiar friend", one feels.



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Mark Whitaker

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Sheila Bye, Honorary Archivist, Derek Plummer, Exhibitions Mgr

Sue Gill, Membership Secretary

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# Our splendid new Tampa!



By ‘eck!

There look to be a lot of knobs and levers to twiddle in there Steve!

Do you think we’ll get the ‘ang of it?

Don’t worry lad.

We’ll soon get topside of it!

It’s a lot easier than doing it by ‘and like we used to!

