

THE OLD RUN

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200th
Years of Train Travel
Since 1825



The Old Run
No. 266 Spring 2025

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The Editor welcomes contributions relating to the interests of the Trust and the operation of our and other Railways, especially if Leeds built equipment is in use. Items for publication, including images (please send in resolutions higher than 1Mb) are acceptable in any format and may be sent via email, post, CD or USB stick

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Editorial



This has been a strange issue to put together. Whilst we are all aware that this is an ever changing world and nothing stays the same for long, the fact that it contains three obituaries to friends and colleagues is certainly something to think about. It has also meant that some things that I intended to include in this issue will have to wait for another time. I hope you consider the tributes to David, Douglas and Roy are worthy of their memory and thanks to those who have helped with them. Whilst we mourn their passing we are also grateful that we were able to spend time with them and I personally believe that celebrating someone's life is just as important as mourning it. The wake held at the Railway for David Cook was a fine example of this and a credit to all those who planned and delivered it. Laughter and tears are a good combination at these things I think.

The 2025 season has started and whilst there was the usual scramble to ensure we were ready, stops were pulled out and midnight oil burned to ensure a great Community Day-where we not only showed off the Railway but forged links with local groups and Councillors. Sadly it seems that having had a free ride at the Community Day customers are now doing other things when we are running. The good weather has possibly not helped us with an exodus to the coast but, hopefully the changeable weather will soon be here and bring some customers with it. In the meantime, if you can help with getting the word out there by distributing some leaflets (see page 29) or sharing our Facebook or other social media that would be great!

Ian Dobson

Front cover: *The first train of the 2025 operating season is hauled over the upgraded foot crossing by 'D2999' on Saturday 5th April 2025 (Photo: IRD)*

Back cover: *'D2999' again? You may be excused wondering why, but the photo opportunity on Sunday 13th April 2025 was an Editorial request. A full set of four coaches, all constructed right here at Moor Road, as 2223 is almost ready to join the fleet. We don't expect to run four coach trains any time soon, so before one of them disappears into the workshop again the opportunity was taken to pose them together. Despite appearances, all are painted the same shade... (Photo: Steve Roberts)*

From the Chairman

Since I last wrote these Notes three of the Railway's volunteers have passed away, Douglas Lovely, Dave Cook and Roy Gunn. Each of them in their different ways made a significant contribution to the Railway, each of them were highly valued, not just because of what they did but for the people they were, and each of them will be greatly missed. Obituaries of all them are to be found in the later pages of this edition of 'The Old Run'.



Volunteers Mel Jones and Keith Batchelor hard at work in the Engine House preparing the floor after painting for the 2025 season. Photo: Charles Milner

Joseph Chamberlain's phrase of 1898, "we are living in most interesting times", seems never to have been more true. In the last ten years there have been a succession of once near unimaginable events: the UK leaving the largest free trade area in the world, a global pandemic which led to the cessation of normal life for months on end, a land war in continental Europe which is still raging and now the upending of the global trading system which led to a period of remarkable economic prosperity in the years since the end of the Second World War. And all of this against a background of an increasingly unpredictable climate which is tending to extremes.

To survive the challenges created by these events the Middleton Railway has to be resilient and has to keep changing. This is the lesson of the Railway's history. The Railway was founded in 1758 to meet the challenge of coal owners who had access to water-borne transport to move their goods to market. In 1812 the Railway successfully adopted steam power to meet the economic challenges posed by the Napoleonic wars. In 1881 the Railway changed gauge to connect with the national railway network which gave access to new markets for the goods it carried. In 1960, following the demise of the coal industry which was once the

Railway's raison d'être, the Railway was repurposed as one of Britain's heritage railways. Today the Railway faces new challenges – economic and political. How the Railway responds to these will determine its future.

It is the Trust's long term aim to own all its working rolling stock so that the Railway has maximum possible control of its operating and maintenance costs. This takes out the risk that rolling stock owners might decide to move their stock to another location or change hire fees as has happened on other Railways. The Trust is already well on the road to achieving this ambition.

The Trust is working with Leeds City Council to renew and extend the Moor Road Site Lease so that we are in a better place to bid for grant funding for new buildings and building refurbishment. As part of this process the Trust is looking to remove some of the restrictions built into the current lease so that a similar range of products can be offered in the Gift Shop

to those offered by, for example, National Trust gift shops with the object of increasing revenue.

Looking further ahead, simply offering a train ride is not enough. The Railway has to have an extended offering which complements the train ride and capitalises on the Railway's history. This why one of the Trust's long term objectives is to develop the Museum in such a way that visitors can be charged for entry to that part which is separate from the means of accessing the trains thus increasing revenue. This means using the 'New Museum' to tell

the Railway's story in a way which is engaging, makes visitors think and which builds the story around the people who created the Railway and the Leeds locomotive building industry which developed out of the pioneering work of Murray and Blenkinsop.

Matthew Murray was a brilliant engineer with a restless mind who kept seeking new challenges. He also liked his creature comforts – which is why he invented modern central heating as distinct from the Romans hot air system - and one only has to look at his portrait to see a man who was fond of his vitals and was partial to a glass of ale. His is a story which needs to be at the centre of the story told by the 'New Museum'.

Realising the Railway's ambitions and increasing its resilience requires the support of the local community. If the Railway is perceived to have become some kind of alien intrusion into South Leeds the chances of long term success will be very much reduced. This is one of the reasons why Community Day is so important for the Railway. It provides a means of showcasing to local Councillors



A very busy Engine House on Community Day, with visitors enjoying the many displays.

and others ways in which the Railway contributes to the life of the Community in which it has operated for over 260 years. Community Day helps build the 'social capital', the friends and supporters, who can help the Trust achieve its objectives.

Community Day also helps bring the Railway to the attention of potential visitors, which includes those who live in South Leeds, who would not become aware of the Railway's existence without being engaged by Community Day. This links to another strand of the resilience strategy which is to work to get our name before as many people living within about an hour's travel distance of the Railway through 'word of mouth' and other means in the expectation that they will look to the Railway's website and social media platforms to learn more about the Railway and eventually become visitors and supporters.

The 2025 Season started with a very successful Community Day and this was confirmed by

feedback from participating groups and visitors.

Getting the Railway ready for reopening and for Community Day involved a lot of hard work by volunteers working in all departments. Trains had to be crewed and the shop and café manned on the day but before this could happen much else had to happen. The museum team led by Andrew Johnson repainted and relined the Display Hall floor, erected a new display wall for locomotive name and worksplates and cleaned the exhibits. Mark Calvert's civil engineers got the lineside vegetation properly cut back and have been busy jacking and packing the running line using the Ballast Packer in anger for the first time. Steve Roberts and the workshop team delivered for opening day a fleet of working diesel and steam locomotives plus carriages. The commercial group led by Janet Auckland restocked the café and shop and cleaned the Engine House but also engineered the reconfiguring of the Ticket Office and Shop Counter to give it a much fresher appearance. All of this was underpinned by the work of the Electrical department and the Trust's Treasurer, Phil Calvert without whose efforts the Trust's business would rapidly come to a close.

All of this work was done by volunteers giving freely of their discretionary time as once did Douglas, Dave and Roy. Without the efforts of current and past volunteers there would be no Middleton Railway.

Charles Milner



A good example of the lineside clearance can be seen here just North of Middleton Park Halt. The view for our passengers, Stadium users and passing walkers is much improved. The South Leeds Stadium may not be to everyone's taste but Hunslet RL told us at the Community Day how much their crowds appreciate our passing trains!

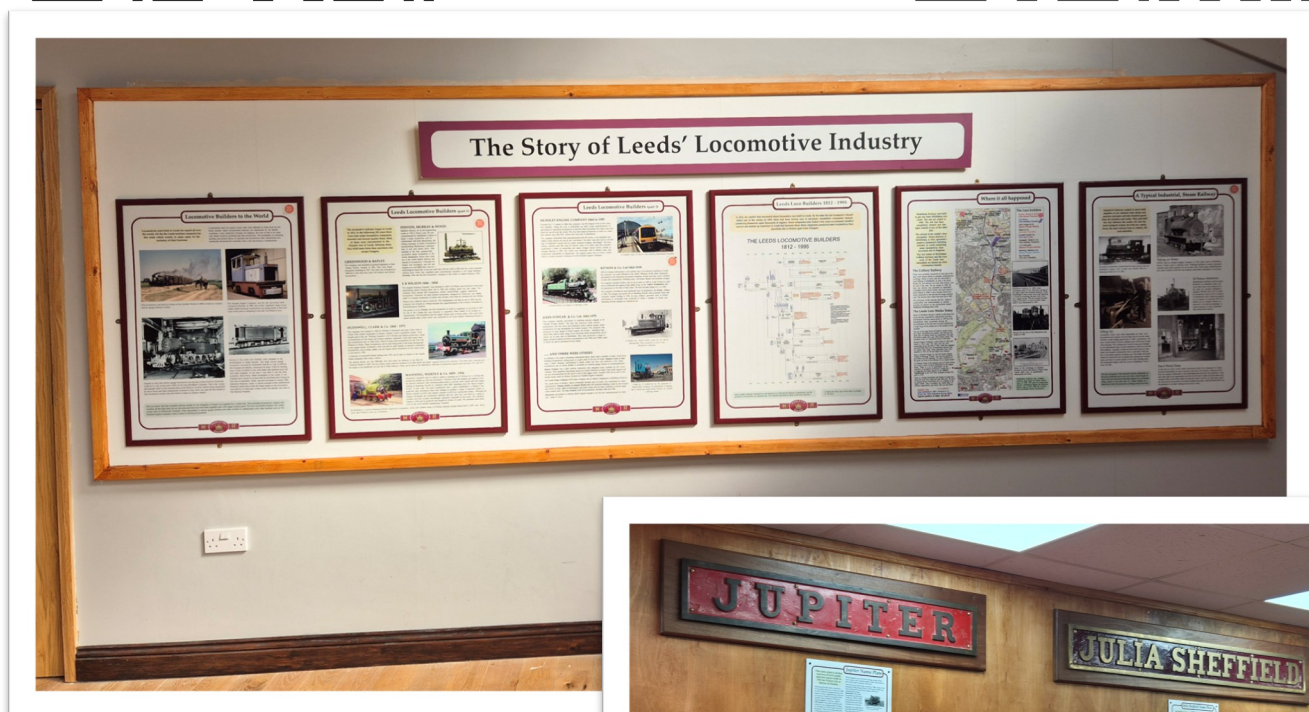
Museum Notes

The Middleton Railway history was moved onto the mezzanine prior to December by David Cook and Bruce Inman. In January the window from the conference room was boarded over by Andrew Gill. The new display boards facing south were finished to display the 'Leeds Engine Builders' boards.

The new Nameplate and worksplate wall was remodelled by Bruce and David Hebden so that the structural steel work has been boxed to create a large rectangular area rather than the two triangular areas amongst steelwork.

A hidden update within the museum is the Wifi upgrade to give greater capacity and range, done by Chris Hardy. This enables us to introduce more interactive material such as the video of Prince Philip touring Hawarden steel works and a Hunslet film about the mine's rack locos. You can access these from the comfort of your armchair using the QR codes below...

Andrew Johnson



The new displays. The boarded over Conference Room window on the mezzanine floor (above) and name and worksplate display under it (right)

Shop Notes

Although the shop has, until Community Day, been closed, much, of course, has been going on. This includes the stock-taking: counting all the pencils, the bigjig letters, the cans, the 'engine driver' caps and quite a lot more! The counter has been replaced, eliminating the glass surfaces that needed wiping every twenty minutes to get rid of the sticky finger-prints...

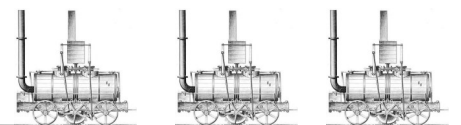
The shop area has also been rearranged, the children's area has moved over to the east, permitting the cafe seating zone to expand westwards. As part of this rearrangement the display-boards covering, among other topics, the loco industry of Leeds have been elevated to the mezzanine floor. Part of the space so released in what is now the youngsters' zone will (soon, we hope) get a short pictorial history of our railway, recounted by our Bert. It will of course be mounted at the eye-level of a seven-year-old



The big shop news for 2025 though is the introduction of a new 'retro collection' range of merchandise. This is all based around a freshly designed image of Matthew Murray leaving the tunnel (see coaster above) and this is front and centre in the new shop display. The following items are available, only from the shop in person for now but we expect to add at least some to the website for mail order in due course

A5 Notebook £5.65
A6 Notebook £5.00
Drinks Coaster £5.90
Fridge Magnet £2.10
Jigsaw (1000 pieces) £17.50
Key Ring £1.95
Microfibre Tea Towel £7.15
Mug £6.30

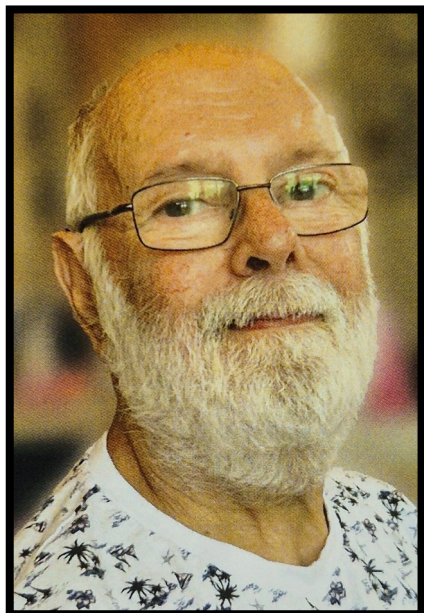
Richard Stead



The People Pages

David Cook

Our dear friend and colleague David died on 4th February 2025, aged 83. He had been in poor health for some time and latterly had been in and out of hospital, but he kept coming back to the Railway. Somehow it seemed he would go on forever but it was not to be.



To almost the very end of his life David stayed engaged with the Railway - latterly working on updated information boards for exhibits in the Display Hall, doing what he could for the Railway he loved.

Going into Cooky's Shop and knowing that never again will he be there to ask where to find brass screws or panel pins, to ask to borrow his drill, to seek his advice will be very strange. He was one of those slightly larger than life characters that help make the Middleton Railway more than just another heritage railway.

In his working life he gained an interest in industrial archaeology through working amongst industrial boilers, initially in Bradford and later during his time as a practical scientist in the power industry. Working both employed and latterly in a consultancy role he finally retired around 2001 and shortly afterwards brought his lifelong railway enthusiasm to

us at Moor Road. He specialised in wood based projects, although he confessed it was never his strong point really. He was quoted as saying that there are three ways of doing things, a right way, a wrong way and his way! He said in *The Old Run* in 2007 "the definition of a craftsman is someone who can cover up mistakes and poor workmanship and I have done a lot of covering up. My wife reckons that I'm a first class bodger". We wish we had more bodgers like him!

Away from the Railway he was very involved with the Harrogate Astronomical Society, passionately interested in Jules Verne, sundials and the Liberal Democratic Party.

His memorial at Moor Road will be the coach bodies, planters, cupboards, information boards and all the other items he helped create. Thanks for everything David.

Charles Milner and The Old Run archive

Douglas Lovely

It is with sadness that we report the death of Douglas Lovely on 20th March at the age of 89.

Douglas joined the Middleton Railway in the early 1990s and very soon became a fireman. He was always immaculately turned out on his firing turns and he also honed his craft by frequently attending Clive Groome's "Footplate Days and Ways" footplate training courses on the Bluebell Railway. He was always happy to pass on his knowledge to cleaners and he was an asset to his drivers. In the Spring 1999 issue of *The Old Run* he also wrote an article suggesting a series of courses for commercial footplate training which are worth looking up as they are a great example of how to do these. He was a great advocate of MICs and his own presentation that he described as "for aspiring firemen" under the title 'A Strong Draught and a Full Glass' was delivered several times to appreciative audiences. Professionally Douglas had been an engineer for British Waterways so perhaps the management of water was in his blood?

When 'Matthew Murray' failed during initial testing following restoration, Douglas stepped in and purchased a major share in the locomotive which enabled the railway to purchase a new, riveted boiler for it and thus return it to full working order.

As a result of this, the Middleton Railway was given the 'John Coiley Award for Locomotive Restoration' by the Heritage Railway Association in February 2002, with Douglas himself receiving it on behalf of the Trust.

In later years, Douglas became a Guard and once again was immaculately turned out and carried out his duties very well indeed, being both safety and public focussed. When he found regular guarding difficult due to his age, Douglas became an assessor, a duty he carried out very well indeed until his retirement from active duties. His wife Dinah (pictured right with Douglas by Ian Smith) was also a volunteer in the shop at Moor Road

Douglas was always unfailingly well dressed as both a Fireman and Guard and was also very engaged with our visitors, being both knowledgeable and polite to them all. In later years, he was unable to visit the railway as often as he would have liked, but still made welcome appearances and always attended AGMs and volunteer meetings.

He will be missed by his many friends at the railway and we extend our condolences to his wife, Dinah and the family.



Ian Smith and Tony Cowling

Roy Gunn

It is with the greatest sadness that we have to advise that Roy Gunn passed away at the age of 79 early in the morning of Sunday 23rd March following a long illness.



Roy originally came from Kent and was originally both a bus driver and a roofer/scaffolder in his working life. Outside work he was a narrowboat enthusiast, roaming the canal network for many years before swapping to travelling around in mobile homes as he got older. He was also a model railway enthusiast, building a very good model railway based on Southern practice. On retirement, Roy was looking for something to occupy his time and he joined MRT in 2017, quickly finding a home in the engineering department where he became one of the team. We soon latched on to the fact that Roy was a very skilled practical person and soon took on the task of finishing off the LMS brake van, No. 158760, work on which had come to a halt following Covid. Following the completion of this, Roy helped with the rebuilding of coach no. 1867 which had

suffered from an attack by vandals.

Perhaps his greatest contribution is probably his work on our latest conversion, No 2223 which is almost complete. Roy spent a huge amount of time on this vehicle and there will be a small plaque placed inside it to acknowledge his work.

Roy was not only active in the workshops but became involved with train operations, working his way up from shunter to guard, where he was always extremely well turned out when undertaking this role. Not content with that, he then started on the footplate, working his way from second man to diesel driver.

He was also very much involved in our Santa trains, often acting as 'Station Master' helping get people from the Engine House to their trains which he did very well.

On his Guarding turns, Roy was often accompanied by wife Hilary (who managed the operational roster for a while) and dog Jackson, who was of course well looked after (if not completely spoiled) by shop staff whilst Roy was on the train.

Roy will be much missed by friends and colleagues at the railway and we send our condolences to Hilary and his family at this sad time.

Ian Smith and Steve Roberts

Thanks are also due to Tony Cowling for his assistance in all three notes



Above: Almost ready for traffic, Coach 2223 stands resplendent in the sun on Sunday 13th April 2025. A great credit to Roy Gunn and all those who have worked on it, mainly using David Cook's woodworking shop as a base. Below: As part of the celebration of David Cook's life at the railway special train was run for his friends and family. A group photo was taken at Park Halt as part of the day, I'm sure David would have approved. (Photos: Ian Smith)



Volunteers forum and awards

At the Volunteers Forum on 20th March 2025 20 year service awards were made by Chairman Charles Milner to John Linkins, Andrew Gill, Sue Gill and Malcolm Johnson—as pictured left to right.



Brian Winstanley, David Hector and Richard Stead also received 15 year service awards—they are seen (in that order from left to right) below.



Thanks to all for their service, and may you have many years to come!
All photos: Ross Needham



Evening Talks 2025

17th May

Middleton Railway - a Preservation Pioneer
Ian Smith

21st June

Blenkinsop, Murray and Leeds Loco Building
Anthony Dawson

19th July

The 1811 Model of Salamanca
- What the CT Scan Revealed
Dr Michael Bailey

For all Talks:

Doors open: 17.45

Buffet and non alcoholic drinks: 18.00

Train departure: 18.30 (diesel hauled train)

Talk starts: 19.00

Finish: 20.15

Tickets £15 per person

Book online

www.middletonrailway.org.uk

FIND US ON



Community Day: Saturday 5th April 2025

Some Leeds Pottery in the Local History Group display (right).

Kingy the Hunslet RL Mascot greets guests and the emergency services in the car park (below)

Groups networking in the Engine House (bottom left)

The Lord Mayor enjoying the Leeds Peoples Choir (bottom right)

Photos: IRD



News from Moor Road

Loco Notes

It has been a fairly quiet three months in the workshops regarding our locos, as little work has been necessary on them and our limited volunteer labour has been deployed elsewhere. The only loco to receive much in the way of attention has been HC 1544 which has continued to progress.

Hawthorn Leslie 3860 of 1935 'No.6'



The loco has spent much of the winter in the running shed in a serviceable condition, winterised but available if needed. However, at the beginning of March the boiler was washed out and it was prepared for its annual boiler inspection. This passed without incident and it passed its formal steam test on the 26th March. The only other work carried out has been to the lubricator for the steam brake which has had new copper sealing washers fitted.

Manning Wardle 1210 of 1891 'Sir Berkeley'

As with HL 3860 the loco has spent much of the winter months in the running shed. The boiler drain has been receiving attention in a further attempt to stop it leaking. It has been perfectly alright when the boiler is cold but started to leak when in steam. After quite a bit of lapping in of the valve it was considered to be good enough to put back on the loco. The only other planned job has been the fitting of collars to the Salter safety valves. These are essentially to prevent anyone from tampering with the valves, which is very easy to do. There is a saying that 'the big advantage of Salter safety valves is that they are easily adjustable. The big disadvantage of Salter safety valves is that they are easily adjustable.' The loco had previously had steel pipe collars fitted to prevent this but when the valves were overhauled at the last boiler overhaul they were no longer of the correct length and were discarded. They also had the disadvantage that they required the valves to be dismantled to fit, so were very difficult to set up in practice. The new collars are made of brass and are removable with tools so they could be fitted without disturbing the setting of the valves.



The loco had its boiler washed out and prepared for its annual boiler inspection during March. As with HL 3860, this, too, was passed without any problem and is available for service. The plan is to use it on the first two Sundays of the operating season after which it will go to the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway for the Easter Weekend and the following one. After this it will move on to Beamish Museum for about 8 weeks before returning to Moor Road at the end of June. *Stop press: Sir B left Moor Road on Sunday 13th April.*

Sentinel no.68153



The loco has spent the winter tucked up in the Engine House. The only work done on it has been the manufacture of the necessary fittings to drain the piston gland chambers. Sentinel engines have two sets of glands on their piston rods, one on the cylinder and a second one where the piston rod passes into the crankcase. Piston glands on any steam loco are prone to leaking and on a Sentinel with the Engine unit in the cab they are enclosed to prevent the steam from entering the cab and being an annoyance. However, because the steam can't then escape it condenses into water and then fills

up the chamber and eventually finds its way into the sump through the lower gland, filling that with water. For this reason, the chamber is usually fitted with a drain. Over time, the drain pipes and fittings have gone missing so the loco has been running around with the covers missing. The pipe fittings have now been made and the necessary drain pipes should be made imminently.

The Boiler Inspector came and examined the boiler on the 26th March and pronounced all to be satisfactory with it. It has now been re-assembled and made ready for a steam test prior to the formal one on the 16th April. It is planned to use the loco more often in 2025 with the last Sunday in each month being pencilled in for it to haul service trains.

Hunslet 2387 of 1941 'Brookes No.1'

As with our other operational steam locomotives Brookes No.1 has spent much of the winter under cover in the workshops with little work being done on it. One thing that we have found time to do though is the fitting of the replica builders plates. We have had these for several years but they have been in a cupboard and forgotten about. They just need painting now.



The boiler was washed out during March in preparation for the boiler inspector, who came for a look on the 26th March. Apart from the two fusible plug holes and two washout plug holes in the smokebox, he was satisfied with its condition.

The four holes will have to be tapped out to recover the worn threads and will then require larger plugs making.

Hudswell, Clarke 1544 of 1924 'Slough Estates No.3'

As mentioned in the last Old Run, recent work has been concentrated on sorting out the washout plugs, which were of two different tapers. It had been decided that we should stick with a 1 in 8 taper because it is more suitable for the job. However, we did not have a tap of a suitable size so had to have one manufactured; a snip at £625. At least it will be suitable for some other locos in our fleet. Manufacture and supply of the tap was not as quick as we had hoped and it was mid-February before it arrived. A start was then made on re-cutting the screw threads in the boiler and we discovered that the majority of those threads were in actual fact 1 in 8 taper and not 1 in 16, as we had surmised with only those in the previously replaced smokebox tubeplate being 1 in 16. This meant that we had been



operating with some 1 in 16 plugs in 1 in 8 taper holes, a very unsatisfactory arrangement. Tapping out the holes to get a good screw thread is not a five minute task and requires a lot of physical effort by those doing it but eventually they were all finished. The next job was to carefully measure what size of plug we needed. They generally come in a range of sizes, each one being 1/16" larger than the smaller one. Once we had this information we were able to order the plugs and these are expected during the first week of April. This leaves just the two fusible plugs to sort out before we can contemplate filling the boiler with water and a hydraulic boiler test.

In parallel with the boiler work the cab and tank have been receiving attention. The coal bunker has been needle-gunned to remove corrosion and in the process finding more holes which have required pieces of metal cutting out and new metal welding in. The bunker stiffening angles have also received attention. Initially we thought that these had been forced off the back plate by corrosion but, when we needle-gunned them we found that they actually had spacers welded in between the angle and backplate. It was decided

to remove these and re-form the angle to better fit the curve of the backplate. Once this was done the newly curved angles were welded to the backplate, a much neater job. The inside of the cab has also been sanded down and a start has been made on painting it with light grey above the waist line and black below.

The tank has been filled with water and this has highlighted various small leaks, largely due to corrosion pitting. These have now all been attended to and the cab is now, hopefully, leakproof. Body filler has been applied along the various weld seams and elsewhere as deemed necessary. Apart from a small section, it still needs sanding down, though.

The current ashpan is not original and is not of the best design as it tends to clog with ash. It is intended to replace it with one that is much nearer that originally fitted although we don't actually have any drawings of this. To this end a visit was recently made to Embsay to view sister locomotive 'Slough Estates No.5'. Following this visit a start has been made on the necessary drawings.

Re-reading the last Old Run I realised that I had inadvertently said that the new frame stretcher had not been accurately drilled but this should have been a reference to the old frame stretcher and was the reason why the new frame stretcher came undrilled so that we could carefully mark them off and drill them. Apologies for any confusion caused in this.

The new chimney has been made but still requires to be fitted. In the end we could not rescue the original tube and had to have a new one rolled. The original chimney base has been rescued, though, which has saved a lot of hard and difficult work.

Fowler 4220033 of 1965 'Harry'

The exhauster has yet to be repaired. In the meantime, the loco is available for shunting, if required.



Peckett 5003 of 1961 'Austins No.1'

Available for service and used as required. It has recently had its air tanks re-certified.

Brush/Beyer Peacock 91 of 1958 'D2999'

Currently available for service and has recently had its air tanks re-certified..



Hudswell, Clarke D1373 of 1965, MD&HB No.45

As with Austin's No.1 and D2999 this loco is available for service and has had its air tanks re-certified. It is the usual loco for most general shunts. The loco was involved in a derailment on the points adjacent to the coal dock whilst shunting the ballast brake into the Engine House during December, fortunately without sustaining any damage. No obvious fault was found with the track or locomotive but there were witness marks to show that the wheel flange had struck the tip of the point blades and it is thought that the prime cause was coal being trapped between the point blades and stock rail, meaning that the point blades weren't properly 'home'.



Hunslet 6981 of 1968



There has been little progress with this loco due to the need to concentrate our scarce volunteer labour on other projects. Things should start to happen again imminently.

Hunslet 1786 of 1935 'Courage'

The rear sandboxes have now been cleaned down, painted up to gloss black and refitted. The operating linkage has also received attention as it was rubbing on the cab floor where it went through it. As mentioned in the last Old Run, the cab roof has been receiving attention to remove corrosion and has now been painted and re-fitted

After much discussion on the colour in which it would have been painted when the locomotive left the works in 1935 a decision has now been made. We know it was green but the available evidence from Hunslet records and the few colour photographs do not give any further definite details. The colour will be BS 4800 14C40 which is a dark green. This colour is also very similar to the green which the Lister engine is painted and this has been applied to the engine. Work is currently concentrated on the engine bonnet, which has largely been stripped down. The two removable side panels have been cleaned down and repairs effected where necessary. Adjacent to these are two small panels, which have also been removed. These are bolted to supporting angles and it has been discovered that there should be two short angles at the bottom to attach the panels to. The holes for these all exist but these angles don't exist and they were either removed when at Courage's brewery or were never fitted by Hunslet. New angles have now been made and fitted.



The wooden handle for the starting handle was split in two and held together by tape. We were originally going to make a new one ourselves but it was discovered that it is still possible to buy these off the shelf after all these years and this is what we have done.

Hudswell, Clarke D631 of 1946 'Carroll', D577 of 1932 'Mary' and LMS 7051



These museum locomotives are all currently on display in the Engine House and available for use for special events if required. D631 and LMS 7051 have both recently had their air tanks inspected and re-certified for a further two years.

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

Carriage & Wagon Notes

Coaches 1074, 1867 and 2084

All three coaches are currently in service and each had a 12 monthly 'C' exam at the end of March in readiness for the coming seasons train services.

Once coach 2223 enters service it is likely to be replaced in the workshops with the balcony brake, No. 2084, which is in need of some much overdue care and maintenance. Plans for this coach are currently being drawn up. It will have disabled access provided and the very popular balcony will be retained although it won't be the same as the present one.

Coach 2223

Roy Gunn had been working on this coach largely unassisted for over three years and at the beginning of January we heard the sad news that he was not expected to live more than three months. It was decided that we would do our best to finish the coach so that he might have the opportunity to ride in it. Sadly, this was not to be but the coach is now essentially finished and will be available at the start of the season. The last major task to be undertaken was the manufacture and fitting of the seats. Even though all the various parts had been made previously, final assembly and fitting was not a quick job. Once assembled each seat had to have a further coat of varnish. At the time of writing there are just the two long bench seats to fit and varnish to complete the job. Other finishing off jobs have included fitting of the door handles, making and fitting of the heater air outlet boxes and making and fitting of the footboards. Painting has also been an ongoing task which is now finally finished. This has allowed the two 'Middleton Railway' emblems that adorn the coach sides to be fitted. These were cast in resin using moulds that were originally made by Chris Rogers back in 1990 and have been in store since then.



Around and about

Volunteer numbers

The last Old Run suggested that we had seen an upturn in volunteer numbers, especially on a Wednesday and Sunday; however this hasn't lasted through the closed season with a significant drop off in people attending. This is not unusual on heritage railways where people seem to go into hibernation during January to March. Hopefully, things will start to improve now that the operating season is with us once more.

Level Crossings

Due to lack of time and resources we have not been able to do anything with regard to the required risk assessments for the level crossings on the Balm Road branch. Because of this, the branch remains out of use. It is almost certain that we will have to install wig-wag lights at Moor Road. The line also requires significant work on it and new gates are required for the access road to the Tulip Centre. All of this will cost a significant amount of money to implement



Volunteers at work
Colm Connolly-Taylor
and Leighan Dagless
working on Brooks
no.1 on 29th March
2025 Photo: Ian
Smith

The new signage on the foot crossing on the main line seen during a line inspection on 2nd April 2025. Photo: IRD



Coal and wood

As mentioned in the last Old Run we received two offers of coal which was free for the taking. A working party was organised to move the coal out of the house basement in Hyde Park (Leeds) and, with 11 people turning up the job was fairly quickly accomplished. The estimate is that we have acquired 3 tons from this source. The second source that we were offered came from an environmental organisation that had been tasked with clearing a school premises. This turned out to be a similar load of what is referred to as washed singles. These are small lumps of coal about one inch across and were used in automatically fired industrial boilers. Although not the most suitable size of coal for steam locomotives the product can be mixed with traditional lump coal to provide a usable mix. This time the coal was already bagged and in a skip which the donor agreed to deliver so it was an easy job to accept delivery.

Along with these two offers of coal at more or less the same time we received offers of timber for lighting up purposes from two sources. One was to provide a supply of old pallets from time to time and the first load was delivered at the beginning of February. The second offer was from someone clearing out a house which had two outbuildings full of timber. This we had to collect ourselves and it turned out to be a quite significant amount, so much so that it took two Saturdays to collect and deliver. The lighting up wood store is now full to the brim and the 16 ton mineral wagon has also been filled with timber. We are not going to be short of lighting up wood this year. *See also opposite, Editor*

Permaquip Tamper 74059

The completion of the shelter for the tamper has allowed it to be brought into use and it has been successfully carrying out tamping operations at the southern end of the line. Initial progress has been slow as those operating it are having to learn as they go along but, as experience has been gained, progress has improved.

New Container

Well, new to the Middleton Railway. Thanks to the good contacts of our Company Secretary we have acquired a 10 foot shipping container from the Leeds Transport Historical Society (LTHS). This will eventually be sited adjacent to the footpath fence next to the other 10 foot containers and will be used to store Permanent Way equipment and tools.



*The Official Guests at the Community Day at Middleton Park Halt with 'D2999'. From left to right: Emma Pogson-Golden, (SDP Councillor for Middleton Park Ward); Rob Chesterfield (SDP Councillor for Middleton Park Ward); Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung; Paul Wray (Labour Councillor for the Hunslet Ward) and Wayne Dixon (SDP Councillor for Middleton Park Ward).
Photo: Ross Needham*

Donation of Kindling

Recently the railway was offered some kindling wood, providing we could collect it from between Wakefield and Barnsley. Matthew Berry posted on the Middleton Volunteers Facebook group, asking if anyone could help. Especially with a suitable van or trailer. Having received relevant permissions, I offered the use of the trailer that 3rd Gee Cross Scouts own. This being a two-axle box van type and very suitable for the task planned.

Once that had been agreed, the next thing was to set a date and time that was convenient for all concerned. Eventually, 15th of February at 11:00 was agreed upon. This meant I didn't have to leave home (in Hyde) too early, it only being an hours drive from the Scout Hut to the collection point. My partner Anne was happy to join me and proceeded to do all the driving for the day.

On arrival she reversed the trailer into place, loading very quickly commenced and, within about an hour, the first load was deemed to be ready to head north for the 25-minute drive to the Railway. On arrival we found that the plan was to offload the wood onto the Lowmac wagon. This would then be pushed up to the wood store and unloaded, whilst we returned to collect the days second load.

The second load was dealt with as quickly as the first, but it was realised that we would be unable to clear all the wood that day. Arrangements were made for a further trip, on the following Saturday (22nd February) at 11:00, again borrowing the Scouts trailer. Once we had delivered the second load, Anne and I headed back home, dropping the trailer at the Scout Hut on the way.

Saturday 22nd soon came around and it was time to collect the trailer and head back over from Hyde to West Yorkshire, via the Woodhead Pass. This time I was on my own and got to drive! Once the first load was in the trailer, it was realised that it would need yet another trip, to get the last of it. Unloading was a repeat of the previous week, and the second trip was quickly done too. Once more the trailer was returned to its home and given a sweep out, ready for its next adventure. Grateful thanks to 3rd Gee Cross Scouts for the use of it.

Robert Davey



*Unloading the trailer onto the Lowmac wagon at Moor Road. 15th February 2025.
(Photo: Robert Davey)*

Galaxy S23 FE

Special Events 2025

These are the special events planned for this year. If you would like to help with the planning of the event or at the event itself please contact

volunteer@middletonrailway.org.uk

and we'll put you in touch with the right person

(Volunteers also welcome in all Departments for the rest of the season)

4th & 5th May: Teddy Bears Picnic & Bluebell Walks

24th to 26th May: Spring Bank Holiday Weekend

1st June: Classic Car Sunday

14th & 15th June: Model Railway Exhibition

5th & 6th July: Steam Punk Market

19th July: Sweet Pea's 90th Birthday

2nd & 3rd August: A Taste of Yorkshire

16th August: Children's Day

23rd to 25th August: August Bank Holiday

6th & 7th September: Autumn Gala

13th & 14th and 20th & 21st September: Heritage Open Weekends

28th September: Star Rails

Santa in December (6th/7th, 13th/14th, 20th/21st and 23rd/24th)

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of these events, whether as a visitor or volunteer!



Another view from the line inspection on 2nd April 2025 showing the excellent work done by Contractors and volunteers in cutting back the lineside vegetation in the close season. It's a long way from the pit heaps, lakes and green fields of the 1960s but Bridgewater Place standing proud over the John Charles Approach road bridge shows just how close we remain to the centre of Leeds.

Letters to the Editor

At least it proves that what I do is being read and sometimes appreciated! A note from my predecessor, Tony Cowling to open the correspondence...

I'm sorry, but I need to advise you of a misprint in the article on page 30 of the latest Old Run. The Manning Wardle model that Rapido Trains are producing is of a class L, not a class A as stated.

In common with most industrial loco builders, Manning Wardle had a far more elastic view of what constituted a class than the main line companies did, as illustrated by the differences between 'Sir Berkeley' and 'Matthew Murray', which are the two representatives of class L in our collection. But they certainly did recognise different classes, and in particular they did actually have a class that they designated as A, although this ended up only consisting of one locomotive (engine number 270 of 1869). This was a small (just over 11' long) 0-4-0ST, and was apparently sufficiently unsuccessful that they decided not to try building another one!

As an aside, the standard reference book on Manning Wardle locomotives does not record why this locomotive was unsuccessful, but it could not just have been lack of power, as it had a higher tractive effort than some of the other classes of small 0-4-0s. On the other hand, it's boiler was significantly smaller than the others, so maybe it just didn't have enough capacity to make steam.

Tony is, of course, correct in everything he says, except in the fact that this was a misprint. I claim full responsibility for writing the wrong class designation in the first place. In my defence I plead: 1) I'm primarily a diesel enthusiast, although anything Leeds built (even if you have to set it on fire to make it work) is in my sphere of railway interest and I should have known better. 2) It was the last article in the magazine so I was probably rushing to get it finished. 3) My proof reader has less interest than me in class designations (whether steam or diesel) and so is absolutely absolved of any blame. Now turning to Gordon Crapper:

Thank you for an excellent Old Run, I like the new format, and I particularly enjoyed David Dixon's 'A day in the life of a Santa Train Manager.' However it was the notes about 'Sweet Pea' that really caught my attention. Apparently it has sand boxes, news to me even though I drove it many times back in the day, indeed the first time I was ever on it - the day Fred Youell made me Traffic Manager before I was even a member. Fred left me on the footplate while he jumped off and scraped up ash to throw on the rail in the hope of stopping slipping! Seeing that it will be giving brake van rides brings back lots of memories of school visits on Wednesday afternoons. Keeping an eye on what the children were up to was a lot harder than dealing with loaded 16 ton wagons.

Thank you Gordon, I also liked David's style and similar contributions are always welcome. As a driver of 'Pea' in the 21st century I've never really had adhesion issues with it. I'm more concerned with the fact that I was born with only two arms, and it always seems that you need three to operate everything. The last note comes from another former editor, Brian Ashurst:

I always look forward to The Old Run and particularly appreciate the identifying pictures included in the mechanical reports. It's always good for us who live some distance away to be reminded of which loco is which! I edited The Old Run myself many years ago with help from our resident 'cartoonist', John Bushell. That was in the days when many contributors used the number of their favourite engine as a pseudonym. Fred actually used several numbers, all from the GER, of course.

Thanks to Brian for this, whilst I introduced the photographs it's something I borrowed ("sharing best practice") from another magazine. Shamefully I can't remember which one! I too have used numbers as a pseudonym when writing for the Deltic Preservation Society magazine in the past. I used E51815, a Bradford based DMU car, and a former Finsbury Park fitter I volunteered with at Grosmont always called me "Railcar" because of it...

Snapshot memories of The Middleton Railway

Following my request in the Editorial of the last Old Run, Colin Dews has kindly submitted this...

As I suspect there are now very few members of the Middleton Railway Trust who have been as long as I have been, I thought it was time to write my memories of the railway for a future Old Run.

Saturday, 7 November 1959, was a gloomy, wet, miserable day, perhaps appropriate for one final, miserable event. Working my way to the portal of Swinegate Tram Depot, my special ticket safely secure, I entered the cavernous interior to see ten Horsfield trams lined up for the last Leeds tram procession. I had been allocated tram number nine, climbing the rear steps to sit on a seat in the stair head by the indicator box. At 6.15pm the procession emerged into the gloom, slightly improved by the leading and rear trams being illuminated by coloured lights. Attempts by television cameras to film this historic event failed, as the equipment at that time was unable to cope with the dark conditions.

Proceeding up new Briggate, turning into Duncan Street, continuing into Call Lane, (New) York Street and so on to Marsh Lane and The Woodpecker in York Road. From here, the track went into a central reservation and then at the junction with Selby Road the procession divided into two, five cars continuing to Cross Gates and the other five to Temple Newsam. On the return journey the procession reformed at the Selby Road junction to continue back to Swinegate, the last tram being driven by Ald. 'Peg Leg' Rafferty. As I left the vast interior, now filled with redundant tramcars mainly earmarked for the scrapyard, it was the end of an era; I would never again travel on a tram in Leeds. Yet was it, for there were those who were proposing to include preserved trams on the Middleton Railway?

My first encounter with the Middleton Railway was a bicentenary exhibition at the Leeds City Museum, then in Park Row. On display was a model of 'Salamanca'. In 1967 I would discover another model of the locomotive in the Arts et Metiers (Science) Museum, Paris. Occupying a former medieval monastery, St. Martin-des-Champs, the time the displays was decidedly dated and boring. My interest was also stimulated by a reproduction of a panoramic view of Leeds from the top of the Old Run incline displayed on the History Room wall at West Leeds (Boys') High School.

Trams running on the railway boded well when during Leeds University Rag Week, June 1960, Swansea & Mumbles [Swumbles] no: 2, hauled by 'John Alcock', gave rides. Compared to the Horsfields, this Brush-built tram seemed enormous. From memory costing

Trams in Dartmouth Yard, date unknown, in this picture from the MRT Archives. The Swansea and Mumbles Car stands in front of (I think) Liverpool 869, Leeds Coronation Car and a Leeds Horsfield Car at the back.



a penny, special tickets were printed and numerous children enjoyed the ride. Besides this tram, one of the Leeds 1953, Coronation, single deckers was added to the collection and Leeds City Council's museum's Horsfield was stored nearby in a scrap yard. A further one to appear was a Liverpool 'Green Goddess' 869, acquired from Glasgow and then in that city's livery. Stored on the Dartmouth

Branch, vandals struck an only that ex-Glasgow survived. The others were scrapped, not without criticism as parts could have been salvaged from them for use in preserving other trams.

As far as I can now recall I became a member in (or by) 1962, just before leaving school to work as a clerk at the Yorkshire Electricity Board. Subsequently my line manager was Bert Nettleton whose son would make a significant, enthusiastic contribution to the railway. Over the years my memories have become like snapshots out of order. One is of a steam fair about 1965, held on what I think was Clayton's Sports Field, at which the Cole brothers brought their steam engine. Another was attending some AGMs at Leeds University in a building facing Woodhouse Lane, (the then Physics Department?) surely courtesy of Fred Youell) where on one occasion there was a discussion as to what livery should be used for the railway's locomotives.

Living in Wortley, it was possible to bus or walk down Whitehall Road to Spence Lane and catch the no: 46 Bramley to Middleton bus to the stop outside the now demolished Hunslet Moor End Methodist Mission in Church Street. In those pre-M621 days, before it tore through existing communities. The route went up Domestic Street, across Holbeck Moor,

It is now difficult to imagine the impact the coming of the motorway had on the railway's surroundings. This may help, The 'tube' across the middle of the picture is still in use today as the M621 tunnel.

Photo: MRT Archives



along Hunslet Hall Road and Moor Road. From here it was a short walk to the railway. Hunslet station, although closed in June 1960 was still there. On occasions when traveling on the Midland line I was struck by its size with four lanes; today when crossing the Beza Street bridge, I cannot believe there was once below it room for a railway station. On the

edge of Hunslet Moor the coal staithes marked the then terminus the railway, subsequently swept away by the M621; the trackbed then continued towards Kidacre Street and at the other side of Moor Road was the memorial to those lost in the Hunslet cholera outbreaks in 1832 and 1834, now in Hunslet Cemetery. Fred Youell tried to save the staithes but to no avail.

On my first visit as a new member I got dressed up to be told that I could not work in those clothes. I explained that I had a minor medical condition which prevented me from working and I had come just to see the railway. On another visit I was given a wire brush and told to remove the old paint off a railway container. Successfully achieved, the response was a complaint that I had also removed all the wires from the brush! On another visit when working near Clayton's, a diesel locomotive (BR or one being tested?) was derailed on the branch to the Midland Railway; watching it being jacked back on to the track was certainly a bonus for the day. One Saturday I turned up to find the place deserted and so decided not to waste my time there and so joined the crowd walking to nearby Parkside to watch Hunslet Rugby League play a home game.

There are two railtours I associate with the MRT. The Dalesman, organised by the RCTS on Saturday, 4 May 1963 started at Bradford Forster Square, and was hauled by Lord



The Great Northern bridge mentioned below. The Middleton Tramway went through the left hand side and our running line is on the right. 21st Century crews still refer to 'GN curve', possibly without knowing that this ever existed. Photo: David Hebden

Garnock's 'The Great Marquess'. For me, it was the only time I travelled into the now demolished, impressive, Victorian, Exchange Station via the Pudsey loop. Also on the train from Leeds was Fred Youell, and so it was easy to follow him to Forster Square. A reversal at Arthington saw passengers alight onto the platform and amongst them was 'Long John' Wilson, who until retirement had been Physics Master at West Leeds. Although a superb day out, the down side was that the tour returned to Foster Square about two hours late, with some concerned that they would miss their connection back to the North East. A railway employee managed to get the train departure delayed from Leeds. The other, organised by the MRT, was the Derbyshire Dawdler on 12 April 1967, with a coach reserved for Middleton members. My contribution to this tour was to draw the map to accompany the notes written by John Bushell. John and I were both Methodist local (lay) preachers. He made a significant contribution to the MRT until his premature death and would cycle to the railway. I wrote an obituary for him in the *Old Run*.

In those early, pre-motorway days the railway was set in a semi-industrial waste, with factories and back-to-back houses long gone and swept away. The incline towards Middleton was paralleled by the track bed of the Middleton tramway with the Great Northern Railway bridge crossing both. Coalmining was still being undertaken at Middleton Pit. A cart track, near to a pit heap, crossed the line towards the top of the incline and its

supporting wall was built from early stone sleepers. The railway was very much in its historic, economic context but no longer.

With the benefit of hindsight I am left with the impression that in those early years' efforts to preserve and run the line was more from keen, enthusiastic amateurs with in the end dreams and ambitions greater than could be achieved. When the Middleton Pit closed there were sensible thoughts of retaining some of the buildings for a workshop but not for the first time did vandalism simply paid to that suggestion. One of my concerns was regarding the attitude of some of the volunteers to others, by making disparaging remarks. I may be wrong but have always wondered if those Leeds University students who made such a significant contribution at that time, formed an elite which made it harder for other members to get involved.

In September 1967 I ceased my employment at the YEB and for the next four years was at a college in London training to be a teacher. During this time I at least twice helped staff the MRT stall at the Harrogate Model Railway Exhibition. Then in 1968 there was an appeal for a volunteer to type-up on stencil for duplicating a list of members. I was provided with stencils and a typewriter and so undertook the work. In the next *Old Run* appeared an article from a senior member complaining that three unnamed members had wasted their time by not doing tasks correctly. I was one of them and apparently I had used the wrong stencils. These had been supplied along with a typewriter from the complainants house! I wonder how many potentially active workers have been lost over the years by inappropriate attitudes towards them.

In the decades I have been a member so much has been achieved, far beyond my expectations, which far outweigh any disappointments the Society may have had. The museum is excellent and well worth a visit along with a ride to Middleton Woods – and perhaps there trace the alignments of former waggonways and find the sites of bell pits. If in those early days the approach was semi-amateurish, today in part to meet legislative requirements, such as the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, which did not exist when I first joined, there is now a professional approach. Another development is encouraging young people to develop skills for maintaining the railway in the future. Surely the vision of those pioneering members has been more than been surpassed and long may it do so!

D. Colin Dews

There is much to reflect on in Colin's article so I am grateful for this opportunity to use this image from earlier this year.

My own Middleton 'career' overlapped with the end of Fred's time at the railway and I certainly agree that we have become far more professional in recent times. Whilst some of this has been as a result of legislation the quality and range of work undertaken in the workshop has expanded and improved way beyond even the last 20 years. The shop and our customer experience is another example of this. Whilst we may not achieve the crowds of the 1990s Thomas events, the quality and range of events has certainly improved and continues to do so.

Colin should hopefully be glad to know that I am aware of several card carrying Methodists who volunteer at Middleton in 2025 (including me), so at least that tradition continues!

Photo: Andrew Littlewood, 26th February 2025



Can you help with this?

The long-term survival of the Railway depends on attracting more visitors and this will only occur if more people know about the Railway and what it offers. Whilst the Trust's Website and Social media platforms are doing a great job of promoting the Railway, the Railway's low profile means that we need to use every possible avenue to get our name and what we offer before potential visitors.

One way of doing this is get our leaflets into community spaces such as Church Halls, Sports Centres, Libraries and Community Centres across Leeds where they might be picked up and talked about. 'Word-of-mouth' remains one of the most important promotional tools available to the Railway.

Volunteers are needed to take our leaflets into Church Halls, Libraries, and the like in the communities where they live.

Would any volunteer who feels that they could help distribute leaflets, please contact the Trust's Commercial Manager, Janet Auckland, either in person at the Railway or by e-mail commercial@middletonrailway.org.uk, and arrange to collect some leaflets for distribution in the area where you live.

Your help in this task will be very much appreciated and hopefully will result in more potential visitors looking at the Trust's Website and social media platforms, liking what they see, visiting the Railway and then telling their friends about the Railway.

With thanks in anticipation of your help,

Charles Milner



Surely this is worth promoting? The first steam hauled service of the 2025 season awaits departure from Moor Road on Sunday 6th April 2025. Photo: Ross Needham

And finally: What needles you?

Like all good Trust members I have long been aware of the existence of the cast iron obelisk, made at The Round Foundry to mark the resting place of Matthew Murray. Just like all the Middleton visitors who say "I've lived in Leeds all my life and never visited you before" I have often thought "I really ought to go and have a look at that sometime".

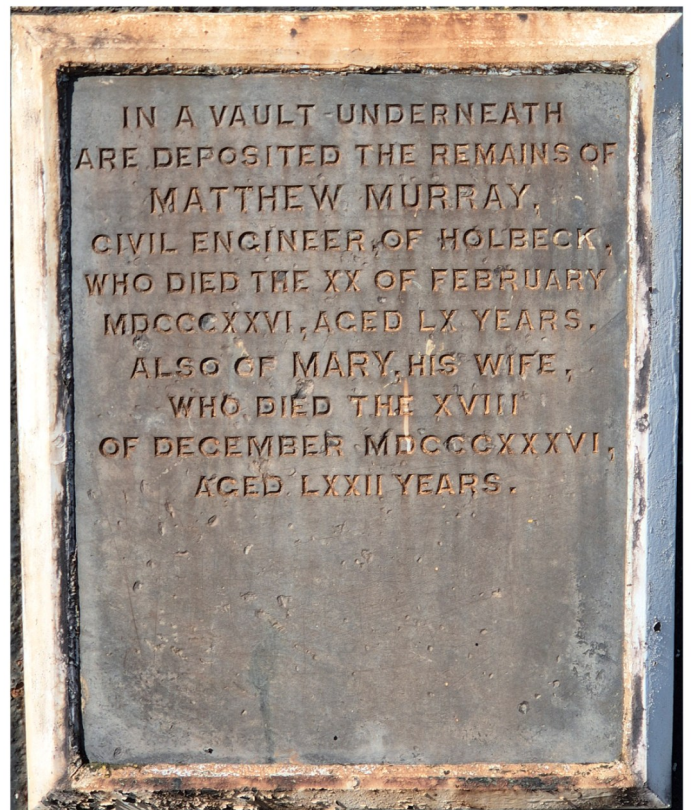
Whilst avoiding the many roadworks in Leeds whilst on the Uni run recently I chanced to drive



past what I assumed was it. Having a passenger who could use their phone I charged her with checking what we had just passed and she confirmed it was the obelisk I was seeking. I realised (like our visitors) that it was actually quite easy to find, so on my way home from the Community Day I stopped for some photographs. It is pleasingly free from graffiti and neglect as these photos show. There's even a mosaic too and bench too.

So, no excuses. St Matthew's Street, Holbeck in Google Maps (free parking) handy for Holbeck Depot too, sadly the 'Deltics far pit' historic daubing has gone from there though.

E51815



The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

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