

# THE OLD RUN

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# THE OLD RUN

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The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd, Middleton Railway Association or the Editor. Many thanks to those who provided articles, photographs and reports for this issue.

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**FRONT COVER:** The way it was! (1)  
Peckett No.2003 shunts wagon loads of scrap in Robinson & Birdsell's yard in 1980

**REAR COVER:** The way it was! (2)  
The Sentinel shunts a Trestle ED into Moor End works in 1965. A slight hiccup was the fact that the buffers had become locked on the very sharp curve! The joy of industrial lines. (Photos by Steve Roberts)

## EDITORIAL

I received a little bit of adverse comment about the last Old Run. Not about quality but about the fact that the news was out of date. This, in itself, was a bit disappointing because I had gone to great lengths to try and get the news as up-to-date as possible. It was, however, true. OR No.175 was landing on your doorsteps with gloomy news about the problems with No.67 some time after the railway press had revealed its return to service. Alas, this is likely to be an ongoing situation.. Whilst the copy can be written to reflect the very latest news, right up to the deadline, the time taken to print and distribute the magazine means that it will always be at least a month behind the times. We can only rectify this if we go back to commercial printing and pay the appropriate price. With a small membership and a small print run, this will always be an expensive option and, unless we find a generous benefactor, colour will be out of the question. The adverse comment received is very much a minority, though. Virtually all members who have voiced an opinion have been appreciative of the new look colour content.

### A New Editor

If all goes according to plan, a new Editor will be in place with the next issue. As the deal is not yet finally one, I will refrain from saying who the new incumbent is. I am confident, though, that he will do a good job and the magazine will go from strength to strength.

*Steve Roberts.*

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Dobson writes:

Well, That's it then, another season all but over and just the cold winter weekends to look forward to...

What sort of a season has it been though? Pretty good generally. We have launched 'Olive' and 67 (twice!) back into traffic, a new arrival in the shape of David Monckton's 'Picton', a very successful Gala (after some VERY hard work behind the scenes!) with 'Bellerophon' visiting again, the 'Thomas' events have been outstanding and the bank balance is relatively healthy (note 'relatively' please!). Birthday parties have been a particular success this year too – this potentially repeat business is a great boon to the Railway.

So the working membership can have a well-earned break and come back refreshed at Easter to start running again.....

Er no, because we need to stock take in the shop, repaint a coach, tidy the yard up, do winter maintenance on the loco fleet and all the 1001 other jobs that we did not have time to do because we were too busy running a service over the year! I cannot praise the working members too highly here, both the regulars who are there week in, week out and those who only come along occasionally. They are all vital to the running of the Middleton Railway along with the other jobs which are hidden, do you know who banks the money, buys (or wraps) Santa's presents or writes up the Council minutes to name but 3 of the hundreds of jobs? These are all vital to the ongoing success of the Railway.

It is a sad fact of life though that none of us are getting any younger (even I will be 40 soon!) and this is particularly true of

the working members at Moor Road. With the increasing trend for 'early' retirement there is a definite increase in mid-week working at the Railway – particularly on a Wednesday. If you find you have free time then please call in if you are passing and see if you can lend a hand. The Wednesday Gang would be glad to see you!

By the time you read this the Santa Specials will be underway and will see the usual suspects rushed off their feet to give our visitors a very special day out. If you can spare ANY time over this busy period (you don't really want to go shopping surely!) please call in!

What I really want to say is that we do need more help. The Railway gets by (as usual) but on some days it really is no more than that. In conversation with the 'regulars' it is clear that another 2 or 3 guards and 2 or 3 people for the shop would relieve a lot of the pressure. We do see new faces and you are all most welcome but please think about a New Year's resolution to come and help at Moor Road for a day or two. We have exciting plans for the future; the shed/exhibition hall should be taking shape this time next year, we are still talking to the Council about the extension to the Park and knows what opportunities Supertram might bring? Will you come and be part of YOUR Railway's future – please?

In closing I would like to thank the membership (working and armchair) for their support of the Railway over the past year. May you have a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year!



# FROM THE BOARDROOM.

Bits from the September, October & November meetings.

Much of Council business is mundane and routine, not worthy of separate mention in the old Run. These snippets are provided in the hope that they prove of interest and show the many and varied items that come up for discussion at the monthly Council meetings.

## Extension

The Chairman continued to report little progress with this subject, much to our disappointment. The City Council had still to produce their management plan. Much of the delay had been blamed on changes in staff within Leisure Services but there were now signs of some movement.

## Supertram

The Chairman had written to the Supertram managers about the proposals for Balm Road, which was intended to be the site of the depot and works. There was encouraging response regarding acquisition of redundant materials.

## Financial

The treasurer continued to report a satisfactory financial position. Cash in the bank at the end of the period under review was about £76,000 with little in the way of financial commitment.

## Policy for Junior Members

A draft policy on this subject was brought to Council. This was felt to be necessary due to recent problems with a particular member. It was noted that the Heritage Railway Association

were also producing guidelines on the subject and it was agreed to defer finalising the policy until this was available.

## Cranes

The railway currently has five cranes, all but one of which are currently out of use. At the September meeting the Mechanical Engineer presented a report on the various cranes and made recommendations for their future use and retention. It was agreed that the two small steam cranes be disposed of and these were to be offered to interested parties. The 10 ton Smiths crane would be retained but a decision on the 5 ton and 7½ ton Booths cranes was deferred pending further discussion on the subject.

At the October meeting, Council agreed to the sale of the 2 ton Booth steam crane to E. Lanne. The crane would remain on the Railway and a suitable agreement would be drawn up.

## New Coaches

Recent legislation had made the provision of new coaches of our own design, based on PMV chassis, a much more onerous task which would involve much in the way of 'type approval'. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of obtaining vehicles which had 'grandfather rights' and might be an easier option.

## Loco No. 3083

Council had agreed to the long-term loan of this loco to a group of individuals and a suitable agreement had been signed. The loco

would shortly be moving to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre for restoration to commence. The agreement allowed for the Railway to have use of the locomotive for up to 6 weeks per year.

## Medicals

All operating staff had now completed the self assessment forms. The few anomalies had been resolved satisfactorily and there were no problems. Dr. Catherine Roberts had been appointed as the Railway's official medical adviser.

## Health & Safety

It was agreed to form a Health & Safety Sub-committee. Mike McPeake was appointed Chairman and Messrs Scargill, Roberts, Smith, Wilkinson and Wood were appointed to the Sub-committee with the remit to co-opt others as considered necessary from time to time. The Sub-committee would meet quarterly and cover all aspects of Health & Safety matters other than those directly concerned with operating, which would remain with the Rules & Disciplinary Sub-committee.

## Bad Debts

It was reported that a person owed money for non-payment of train hire and this debt was outstanding, despite solicitors' letters. It was agreed to pursue this through the small claims court.

## Gardening

The gardener who had maintained the various shrubs around the Moor Road site could no longer provide this service. Council agreed that

this work still needed to be done professionally and agreed to another contractor being appointed at some increase in cost.

## No.11

Council noted that the ownership of loco No.11 had recently changed hands and agreed that the ongoing provision of shed space and use of facilities would be afforded the new owner.

## Public Liability

It was noted that the new direction on Public Liability under the Transport & Works Act had now been issued and would come into force on 27 November. The Railway already had taken the necessary steps to comply and had sufficient cover.

## Norwegian Coach

At the October meeting, the Chairman reported further progress with regard to the repatriation back to Norway of the Steam Power Trust's Norwegian Coach and its departure was imminent. However, he subsequently reported that there were problems with the height of the vehicle being too great for the ferry. This remained to be resolved.

## Filming

The Chairman reported that negotiations for the use of our rolling stock for an episode of 'A Touch of Frost' had fallen through. However, he was able to report that we had received a donation for our abortive effort.



# A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

## OR HOW WE REPAIRED MSC 67

The workshops phone rang. It was Mike Scargill, who was driving No. 67. He had stopped half way up the hill to Middleton Park with the loco making a strange wheezing noise in time to the motion of the rotation of the wheels. What's more it seemed to be coming from the firebox. He had been able to find nothing obviously amiss but he considered it unwise to continue.

As I set off on foot to the scene I had plenty of time to think about the problem. By the time I got there I had a pretty good idea of where this might lay and after the briefest of looks between the frames I opened the smokebox door. The answer was there for all to see. A large lump of concrete covering the cylinder block had been dislodged and there was a hole in the top of the cylinder casting. The loco was an obvious failure and, before long, a diesel was on its way to the rescue. 67 was soon shunted into a siding and left to cool down.

The next day, with everything cooled down, a better look could be taken. There was a hole in the top of the cylinder casting measuring about 2½" long and varying from ¼" up to ¾" wide at one end. The casting on one side of this hole was rather thin. The cylinder cover was removed and further investigation was possible. This showed that the cylinder had, at some time in its life been re-bored from 15½" diameter up to 16" diameter. What's more, this re-bore had been machined off the original centre. Thus, virtually the full ½" had been machined off one

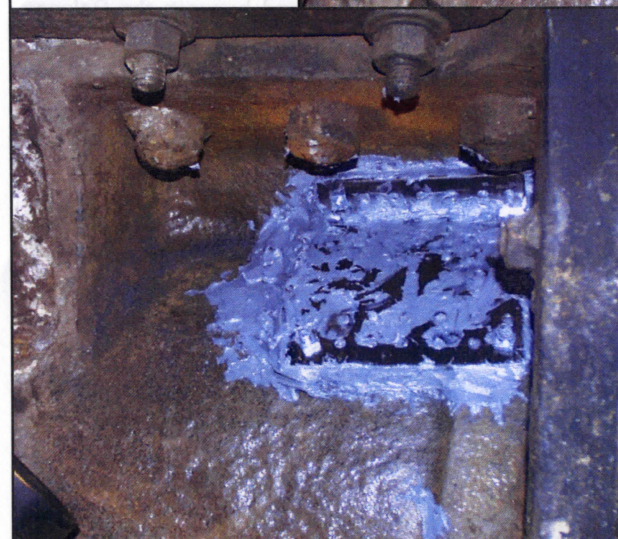
side, which is where the failure had occurred.

There were some long faces around. We consider that nothing is irreparable and initial thoughts were on metal stitching, as we had done last year with Brookes No.1 However, this was a different situation and could not be stitched. How about a weld repair? Such repairs have been successfully carried out on other locos. I thought that this would be impracticable 'in situ' and a visit by a specialist confirmed this. We would have to remove the cylinder block and send it to their works.

Other repair options were considered. Sleeving of the cylinder was a possibility and is normal practice when cylinders become worn. This would involve freezing in liquid nitrogen a carefully machined cast iron tube and inserting it into an equally carefully machined cylinder bore. As the liner warmed up, it would expand and become a tight fit in the cylinder block. Real specialist stuff, this. We neither had the machinery nor the expertise to do it in house but it was the best option. It would also mean doing both cylinders to maintain a common cylinder diameter.

A trip to Ashford on business provided the opportunity to visit the Kent & East Sussex Railway and a stop off at their Rolvenden workshops found me chatting to Adrian Landi (the KESR Works Manager) about the problem. Did he have any idea of how much it would cost to sleeve a pair of cylinders? I never did get the answer to that ques-

**RIGHT** Stage one of the repair was to thoroughly clean the top of the cylinder. In this view, the hole can clearly be seen. This part of the cylinder block would normally be hidden under concrete.



**LEFT** The first layer of Belzona 1111 Supermetal has been applied and the reinforcing plate added. The Belzona has been worked through the many holes in the plate.

**RIGHT** Job almost completed. The last of the Belzona has been applied and is being allowed to cure. After 48 hours, the whole of this area above the cylinder block was covered in concrete. This is done both to protect the cylinder casting and provide a smooth surface in the base of the smokebox.





tion but in the resulting conversation he suggested that we try Belzona to repair it. Belzona, for those who don't know, is a Harrogate based company who specialise in advanced polymer repair systems and, as such, market a range of materials suitable for repairing many things. They are the world leader in this field and, like hoover and biro, the name Belzona has become the accepted term for this type of material. Now, I've used Belzona to repair damaged castings for many years but I had never considered it suitable for such a repair where steam and pressure were involved and was initially very much against the suggestion. However, Adrian assured me that they had successfully repaired two similarly damaged cylinder blocks on their locos and mentioned several others which were running around following such a repair. He showed me one of the cylinder blocks on a 'Terrier'

I was still sceptical but I went away thinking about it. A phone call to Belzona's Technical Department in Harrogate was optimistic. What about the temperature? No problem was the response. What about the pressure? You can reinforce it with steel, just like reinforced concrete, came the reply. I was beginning to get convinced. Further investigation revealed yet more locos running with the same repair. I arranged a visit by Belzona's Technical Representative to actually see the job. He was confident of success and agreed the method of repair. He even produced a copy of their house magazine complete with an article on how they had repaired the Quinton 'Thomas' when it failed with the same problem. Yet another loco to add to the list! I ordered four tins of Belzona 1111 'Super

Metal', some cleaner and some release agent. Not cheap at £270, but cheaper than any of the alternatives. 1111 Super Metal is '*a machinable, two component, high performance reactive metallic polymer suitable for repair of damaged machinery*', to quote the information pack.

The area around the damaged cylinder was scrupulously cleaned of all rust, corrosion, dust, oil, etc., followed by needle-gunning and grinding, to ensure a good bond between the Belzona and the cylinder casting. A piece of steel plate was very carefully cut and shaped to be an accurate fit over the hole and around the adjacent casting. A multitude of 1/4" holes were drilled in the plate to improve the key between it and the Belzona. A piece of thin steel sheet was carefully curved and wedged into the cylinder to form the shuttering against which we could build up the material. It was covered in release agent to prevent it from adhering to the Belzona.

The actual task of applying and building up the Belzona is relatively easy. It is a two-part material and requires careful mixing. You get about twenty minutes to apply it, which may sound a long time, but it soon goes. The paste was very stiff and took quite a bit of spreading and working into the holes in the reinforcing plate. An initial layer of Belzona was applied and the reinforcing plate then carefully positioned before further layers of Belzona were applied to build up the thickness. The task was made harder by having to work in the confines of the smokebox.

Once the material had hardened, it was possible to remove the steel sheet from within the cylinder. A fairly smooth surface was presented at the cyl-

inder bore and it only took a little effort with files and scrapers to bring it up to a satisfactory finish.

All that now remained was to re-concrete the top of the cylinder block and replace the cylinder cover. Although the Belzona goes hard fairly quickly, it is a couple of days before it reaches its full strength and it was a week later, on the Saturday morning of the gala, before we considered it time to test the loco. As the gala activities unfolded around us, steam was slowly raised and the regulator opened. The loco moved with no problem and was run up and down the loop several times to check it mechanically. The acid test,

though, was to raise full steam pressure, apply the brakes and fully open the regulator. By this means, maximum pressure was applied to the repair, which successfully held. We didn't really doubt that it would, but you have to test these things. The loco was given a quick examination, passed fit for traffic and duly took a place on the roster for the remainder of the gala.

When the job was successfully completed, there were plenty of smiling faces amongst the workshop volunteers, I can tell you. And mine was one of them!

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## CLEANING

Jackie Maples tells us all about the traditional art of loco cleaning

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Most people wishing to sample the 'Romance of Steam' by becoming a volunteer in railway preservation quickly become familiar with the effort required to minimise the filth which is the reality. This effort is called cleaning.

There are two types of cleaning; engineering and cosmetic. One of the aims of cosmetic cleaning is the appeal to the public to whom we are dependent for income. The clean train conveys an impression, erroneous or not, of an efficient, safe and caring organisation. A survey carried out on another railway revealed that the public prefer to see engines with highly polished paintwork and brasses as at the York Railway Museum. The highest level of presentation is relatively easy to achieve in heated halls but difficult in the inhospitable conditions of a working steam railway.

Only some so-called enthusiasts claim to prefer engines 'as they were supposed to have run' but these enthusiasts are not renowned as huge sources of income.

Traditionally, loco paintwork was 'cleaned' with a mixture of paraffin and oil which, unless mixed in exactly the correct proportions and the surface subsequently well buffed, provides a magnet for every species of insect life and particle of dirt. Paraffin and oil is also carcinogenic. Perhaps ex BR types, who delight in extolling the virtues of these cleaning materials, had plenty of time to perfect the techniques. In fact, I am sure they did as this appears to be a culture of ex BR boasting about how many years were spent by personnel allowing themselves to be involved with mind numbing tasks. Hopefully, these days we have progressed to the use of more modern materials - sugar soap when necessary to was off



ingrained grime, then high quality wax polish containing no solvents which remove the plasticiser from the paint, thus encouraging cracking. There is a masochistic culture, which compels some cleaners to spread polish, immediately rubbing away furiously whilst the lazy amongst us take the easy way out, leaving the polish to dry for about an hour then simply wiping away. A loco treated this way should then only require a dry wipe for several weeks, as a shiny surface does not encourage dirt adhesion.

Running plates must be wiped free of oil and water and dried unless you have a vendetta against a crew member and want him or her to slip, fall and break bones.

Wheels and frames are often still cleaned by the time honoured paraffin and oil, but at least long handled brushes are provided to minimise skin contact. However, to avoid a 'spread around' finish, dry cloths must be used to finish the job.

Traditionally, the hallowed confines of the footplate are the cleaning province of the fireman who, in addition to other tasks, should be an expert in using the slacker pipe frequently. It is said that 'if you run out of time, clean the cab sides, the nameplates and the rods.'

Engineering cleaning generally occurs as part of mechanical repair or

overhaul. The ideal for any engineering work is to return components as close as possible to original condition, so efficient cleaning is extremely important. Initial preparation may be degreasing by hand, steam cleaning, needle-gunning, scraping, chipping or a combination of any of these methods. Such tasks can be very satisfying to the person carrying them out, often cut off from the rest of the world behind goggles and ear defenders, but are not appreciated by the wider audience who have to but up with the noise!

The next stage is wire brushing, followed by rubbing down with emery cloth, subject to the 'powers that be' allowing the release of such a valuable commodity. The emery paper is expected to be used until it is as smooth and abrasion free as the cleaned component!

Following inspection of the handiwork, the cleaner is usually allowed to cover it up with a coat of primer, taking care to ensure that there are no runs or bare patches. Then it is time to stand back and enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done.

An added bonus is that however long skilled craftsmen have taken to carry out the intricate repairs, appreciation from the paying public will be for how the engine looks.

**WANTED.....** British Standard Whitworth (BSW) nuts and bolts. Any size but especially 5/8", 3/4" & 7/8" sizes. Also rivets and any other engineering materials. If you know of anybody wanting to dispose of these contact Steve Roberts (phone no inside back cover)

## THE MARKETING OFFICER WRITES...

Emmanuel Lanne

As we are near the end of another year, before we turn the 2002 page and open the 2003 one it is time to review past events. Lets start with the most important question; did we, as volunteers, enjoy this past year? Only the reader can answer that for himself. Secondly, as a Trust how did we do and how did the year go? After a fairly difficult start (we reviewed the main reasons in last edition of the Old Run - end of Foot & Mouth, new increased local museum competition, etc), the year is ending very well. After the storming 2002 vintage gala, a Day Out With Thomas went very well too. The first week displayed a very strong 35% growth versus last year but week two only 19%. I have to say that due to the very poor weather conditions of that week - nearly non-stop rain over the two days - I was amazed by the attendance. And I can tell you that Steve Roberts' bowler hat was so soaked while he was keeping the gates on Saturday that he had to take it off as it was more comfortable without it. We now have to wait and see about the Santa specials.

With regard to Thomas, after a little bit of extra preparation and some changes to try to better comply with the requirements of Hit Entertainment, the Thomas brand owner, we again reached a high level of professionalism and provided a truly enjoyable day out for our visitors. Lets hope that the Hit Entertainment auditors who came to audit us, for the second time this year, will feel the same. More about it in the next issue.

With regard to the Regular running days, the end of the year will end up on

the 2001 level as, unfortunately, no real improvement has been shown. Again the dramatic increase in birthday parties will help a lot. A Halloween day was experimented with limited success due to very poor weather conditions. It is very important for our organisation to keep trying all these ideas especially when they come from our members. Thank you, Christine, for this one.

So to sum up, 2002 will be another very good year. Each year it becomes more apparent that to survive we have to operate as a professional attraction. This is putting a lot of strain on the volunteers; so any help is very welcome.

To review some of the strategy:

- On the advertisement side we have continued to develop our relations with BBC Radio Leeds, Leeds City Council and other local radios. Other channels were not neglected, newspapers and Tourist information centres, to mention the most important ones.
- Our core products, Gala, Thomas (and, we hope, Santa) have performed better and better.
- Our main concern remains the Regular days. The railway line, which is more and more spoiled by the buildings along it, can hardly be improved, though something may be done in a way with a better tree and hedge planting scheme.
- The stories we would like to tell to our visitors are still to be developed. As an organisation it is important to realise that we are an attraction and that competition is growing and improving alongside us. But things can



be turned around - again the birth-day parties' growth is there to prove it. Middleton offers a nice, enjoyable fun day, which compares very well with the local Fun factories, etc.

- In terms of pricing we seem to be at about the right level.

I would like to finish in saying that, after two years in this job, I have felt it necessary to resign from my current position due to pressure of work. They are

probably the best two years for the Middleton Railway in terms of visitor numbers. I now wish to concentrate on the visitor and museum side of the Railway, as at the end of the day they are our most important aspects, and I am sure we can do better. It has been an honour to be Marketing Officer, especially with the highest ever visitor number for two years. The ground was extremely well prepared by Howard Bishop, and as he told me when I took over, it is now time to inject new blood and new ideas.

## LOCO NOTES

Steve Roberts

As mentioned in the last Old Run, the 7th September became a bit of a low point with the failure of No.67 coming on top of the previous problems with 2103 and 1601. However, after the gloom of that day, we have bounced back and were able to put out five engines (including a visitor) for our gala at the end of September. Things are now a bit better, even though we still have some problems.

### 1601 Matthew Murray

Following the repairs to the main steam pipe joint (mentioned in the last old Run), the loco returned to traffic and ran most of the services during September when it was the only loco available for much of the time. However, this joint has continued to be problematical and it failed yet again at the end of October. As has previously been mentioned, access to this joint is well nigh impossible and assessing exactly what the real problem is is not easy. However a thorough investigation was carried out and we were of the opinion that the clamping arrangement on the pipe was marginal. In other words, it only

just clamped the pipe and the stresses caused by the change in temperature when steam was raised allowed the pipe to move and the joint to become loose. To overcome this, a new, closer fitting clamp, has been made. Following the failure of 2103, some midnight oil was expended to get the loco back in traffic for the next day. Hopefully, this time it will create the fix that we so desperately need.

### 2103

Repairs to the broken spring took longer than expected, due to the annual shutdown at the forge where the top leaf was made (the top leaf of this spring has forged 'eyes' at the end, unlike the other leaves). However, it was finally returned to us on the 18 September and was soon fitted, enabling the loco to be put back into service. Since then the loco has been performing satisfactorily. The loco was used on the first of the Santa specials but, unfortunately, sustained a melted fusible plug on the 7th December. Luckily, the firebox does not appear to have suffered damage but some of the crown stay set

screws will probably have to be replaced. The extent of repair will not be ascertained until a hydraulic test is carried out.

### No. 67.

The holed cylinder on 67 brought immediate doom and gloom to those at Moor Road. However, once the loco had cooled down and the cylinder cover could be removed, an initial assessment could be made. The casting was too thin to allow it to be metal stitched, a process used to repair Brookes No.1 and, indeed several currently operational main line locomotives. Welding in a patch would have been possible but this would have entailed removal of the cylinder block and despatch to a specialist repairer. Measurement of the cylinder bore revealed that it had been machined out previously and had suffered little wear since. This meant that sleeving of the cylinder would be possible and this was the option we started to explore. The machining, by the way, was one of the root causes of the failure as the cylinder had been machined off the original centreline, making the casting considerably thinner on one side. It was whilst enquiring amongst other railways about having the work done that the use of 'Belzona' was suggested. Belzona, for those who don't know, is marketed as a 'molecular metal'; a sort of super filler. Full details of how we did the repair are detailed elsewhere in this old Run.

The repair appears to have been successful and 67 has been used regularly since. The loco underwent its annual boiler inspection on 2nd December, everything being satisfactory.

### No. 6

In between keeping the working fleet operational we have found time to carry on the extensive overhaul of No.6.

The more we investigate the frames, the more horrors that we are finding. As mentioned previously, the loco has all the evidence of having been in a substantial collision at some time in its career at the cement works. Whilst the damage was initially thought to be confined to the rear buffer beam it is now apparent that the frames have also been distorted. Fortunately, most of this distortion is confined to the area between the rear axle and the rear buffer beam and won't significantly affect the loco's rebuild.

The left hand frame plate was considerably corroded over a small area below the cab, probably caused by leaks from the steam brake cylinder. This has now been built up with weld and ground flat. Other minor areas of corrosion remain to be built up in the same way.

Virtually all the loose rivets have now been cut out and a start has been made at rebuilding the frames. Most of the loose rivets had allowed movement of the various components causing wear to happen in the associated holes. These have been reamed out to allow for the fitting of 7/8" diameter rivets in place of the original 3/4" ones. The intermediate frame stretcher has been riveted back into place, as has the motion bracket. New angle brackets have been made to support the rear buffer beam. The original ones had been considerably deformed in the collision and attempts to straighten them proved futile. It is impossible to get imperial size angle these days and, as the brackets had to be of an equivalent size to fit properly, we had to get a larger equivalent metric size and machine them to suit. These brackets have now been riveted in place, ready to accept the buffer beam.

Steel for the replacement rear buffer beam has been obtained. Again,





**ABOVE** For its first movement in over forty years, *PICTON* needed a bit of a helping hand from a couple of bulldozers. The start of its long journey back to its birthplace.

**BELOW** *PICTON* is offloaded at Southampton Docks ready for the last leg of its long journey. (Geest Lines)



suitable thickness steel plate is no longer available and we have had to go for a slightly thicker metric size (35mm). The buffer beam has been cut to size and shape using the 'Pug' oxy-acetylene burner. The various holes have been drilled using the magnet drill and the buffer beam will be fitted shortly, once the drawbar slot has been cut and the cab support angles riveted on, a task more easily done before the beam is fastened in place.

As there was evidence of movement of the cylinders relative to the frames, sample cylinder bolts have been removed. These have confirmed the fact that the cylinders have been moving. The 24 holes will now have to be reamed out to a slightly larger size and new fitted bolts made. These have to be made fractionally oversize and driven home to ensure a solid fit.

To improve access to the front frame stretcher rivets we have had to remove the valve spindles, buckles and 'D' valves. It is the first time that we have stripped a locomotive down so far! Removal of the valves has revealed the valve seats to be scored and these will be cleaned up before re-assembly. At least they are relatively easily accessible on this loco! On No.6, this area, between the cylinders is a bit of a no-mans-land, normally hidden behind a bolted plate. Access here has been necessary to do the work on the valves and cylinders and we are having to dig out a mixture of many years of accumulated cylinder oil and chalk. This concoction is a pretty tough mix and has required some hard work with a hammer and chisel! The exhaust stem pipes have also been removed to improve access.

The wheelsets have been sent to Ian Riley at Bury to have the tyres machined. These are now finished and will be delivered back shortly.

The spring hangers have seen some attention. The screw threads have been cleaned up and the hangers generally cleaned down and primed. Two of the hangers have suffered quite badly from corrosion and these have been built up with weld and presently await machining back to original size.

A start has been made on overhauling the Ramsbottom safety valves. These are generally in good condition but the balance bar and spindle pin had suffered from corrosion and required repairing and replacing, respectively.

## PICTON

All things went according to plan and this Hunslet loco returned to British shores at Southampton courtesy of Geest Line at the end of September. It was quickly loaded onto Allely's low loader, given Customs clearance and on the last part of its journey back home to Leeds. The writer was possibly the first Middleton member to see it in this country when, at 7.00am, he passed it heading north at junction 24 of the M1!!

The loco arrived on two lengths of flat bottom rail, which we weren't expecting. Actually welding the wheels to the rails has done us no favours! We now have to carefully remove the weld without further damaging the wheel tyres; not an easy task because of how they have been welded. For the moment, the loco is sat on the workshops headshunt but as it is not presently moveable without the use of a 70 ton crane and is in the way of workshop shunts, we will have to tackle this task of making it mobile in the near future.

Arrival at Middleton has now given us a better opportunity to assess the reality of things. Much of the super-





This year's Gala was well attended. Visitors were able to see a great variety of action, much of it on the little used Balm Road branch.

Clockwise, from the left, we have:

- ◆ No.67 shunts the freight train at Moor Road (Ian Dobson)
- ◆ OLIVE ventures to the extreme limit of the Balm Road branch. (Ian Dobson)
- ◆ Matthew Murray crosses Beza Road whilst various vintage vehicles wait to cross (Emmanuel Lanne)
- ◆ Some of the exhibits greet the arrival of 67 at Middleton Park (Emmanuel Lanne)
- ◆ Bellerophon crosses Moor Road, light engine (Ian Dobson)
- ◆ A Garrett steam wagon waits patiently for 7051 to clear with a freight train. (Emmanuel Lanne)
- ◆ Beza Road, again, with Matthew Murray on the branch freight. (Emmanuel Lanne)



# GALA DAYS





structure (cab, tanks, footplate, etc) is riddled with corrosion and fit only for scrap. What lies beneath, though, is not too horrifying. The wheels are certainly in good condition and the fact that it was sunk up to its axleboxes in the ground does not appear to have been detrimental. One unfortunate aspect is that, now the boiler cladding has been removed, it has revealed a boiler in worse condition than was hoped.

We now have to formulate a plan of campaign which will allow the loco to be worked upon but will not compromise the other requirements of the Railway, especially with regard to lifting the loco off its wheels.

#### **1210 Sir Berkeley.**

There is little to report with Sir Berkeley. The frames have been moved up the yard to create space at the back of the workshops. Competitive tenders have been invited for a new boiler although we are still awaiting their return at the time of writing. Meanwhile, the VCT are pursuing a lottery bid for the locos overhaul.

#### **No.11**

This Hunslet loco has recently changed ownership, as is detailed elsewhere. Progress on its overhaul continues. The wheelsets have gone to Ian Riley, along with those from No.6, as mentioned above. Most of the frames have now been cleaned and needle-gunned, allowing a coat of red oxide to be applied. The cylinders have been cleaned down and given a coat of high temperature aluminium. The cylinder covers have been removed to enable the pistons to be removed. However completion of this task awaits the splitting of the crossheads from the piston rods

to enable them to be withdrawn.

The brake hangers are well and truly solid in the hanger brackets and much time and effort has been expended on freeing them up and removing them. It is quite likely that these have never been removed in the 77 years of the locos life.

Most of the corroded plate-work has now been cut out although some footplate support angles remain to be removed.

#### **138C**

Work continues on repainting this loco. As suggested in the last Old Run, the loco is being repainted in a blue livery. The base colour is the same as that applied to Matthew Murray.

Some minor repairs are also being carried out and the opportunity has been taken to remove the side valances and remove the air reservoirs, which have been sent away for shot-blasting.

#### **91**

This Brush diesel came into the workshops at the beginning of October, principally for a repaint into British Railways livery as D2999. Inevitably, such work uncovers various other problems and these have been attended to. The cab footsteps have been removed to enable a build up of corrosion to be attended to. Severe tin worm in the rear headlight housing has necessitated half of it being cut away and a new piece welding in. The original D2999 carried a cast aluminium plate with the makers name - Brush - on the cab side and a pattern has been made for replica plates. To ensure accuracy of colour, we are using paint supplied by Williamsons of Ripon, to the specification they supplied

to BR in the 1960's. It is the first time we have used Williamsons products to paint a loco and it has found favourable comment.

#### **54**

As mentioned in the last Old Run, the cab was freed off from the chassis. This allowed us to lift it off in one piece to gain access to the engine unit, which was then craned out. The tank was removed at the same time. During this period, the cab was sat outside the workshops and it brought back memories of days gone by at Darlington scrapyard when several cabs from withdrawn Sentinel locos sat in the yard, in use as workmens cabins! The cab is now back on the chassis as we cannot afford the loss of space.

The engine unit is now being fully stripped down for overhaul. It is generally proving to be in reasonable condition but some horrors are coming to light. One such is the fact that the piston glands had been wrongly assembled. As assembly of this requires removal of the pistons and is something we have never previously done, the error must date back to BR days. The way in which they were put together is not conducive to providing a steam tight gland and is the most likely reason for the frequent occurrence of water in the engine sump that the loco suffered from. The piston rings are well worn, as are the grooves in the pistons, themselves. It is quite likely that the grooves will be machined true and over-size rings fitted. One slightly embarrassing event in the dismantling of the engine unit has been the inadvertent breaking of a piece out of the cylinder casting. It is, however, a clean break and we are very hopeful that a cast iron

repair specialist can easily repair it.

The boiler eventually left for overhaul at the end of October. We are not in a rush for its return and the contractor is using it as a 'fill in' job.

#### **D631**

This loco suffered some minor damage when persons unknown tried to start it. Not having a key, they ripped out the wiring loom and tried to hot-wire it. Fortunately, their attempts were unsuccessful but the damage they caused needs rectifying. It is presently shunted out back of the workshops awaiting attention when time permits.

#### **OLIVE**

The railcar has now officially entered traffic and was used on one Saturday service and for 'all line tours' at the Gala. It has performed these most successfully and was certainly a popular attraction over the Gala weekend. It does have a limited seating capacity which will restrict its outings but we are actively looking at the possibility of using it on specific days in 2003.

**5003, D577, Rowntree No.3, 7401 & 1786** are, as usual, all serviceable and used as required. All other locos are in store pending overhaul or repair.



# NOTES & NEWS

## A Successful Gala

This years Gala proved to be another success. In the end, we managed to turn out five steam locomotives, ably supported by a varied cast of diesel locomotives, including 7401 and 'OLIVE'. The steam locos concerned were, MW 1601 'Matthew Murray', Peckett 2103, MSC 67, Brookes No.1 and the visiting Haydock 0-6-0WT, 'Bellerophon'. The steam loco contingent was remarkable in having three locomotives facing north (downhill) and four 0-6-0's, something unheard of only a few years ago.

Another successful aspect was the turnout of volunteers. The signing in book shows that 43 people volunteered for duty on the Saturday and only two fewer on the Sunday. Well done and thank you to those that turned out and helped make it a successful and memorable day

## And a Successful Thomas!

The now traditional Autumn Thomas event was a commendable success. In round figures, traffic income was up 24% on last years autumn event and shop income was also up by 14%. These figures might well have been even higher if the weather on the second Saturday hadn't been anything short of diabolical.

## Carriage & Wagon

The need to have the LNER ballast brake serviceable for the September Gala was the catalyst for an upsurge in the amount of work carried out on this vehicle. Although it was (and

is) still far from complete, sufficient work was carried out in the weeks leading up to the gala to enable it to run on that weekend. The roof timbers received a couple of coats of bitumastic paint before being covered with galvanised steel sheets. Whilst not prototypical, we have found that this method of roof covering provides us with a relatively easy, maintenance free, fix. The handbrake column was re-fitted, necessitating the provision of some new support steelwork, which was welded to the framework. The axleboxes have all been cleaned out, examined and refilled with fresh oil.

Although this van has been much modified over the years, both by British Railways and ourselves, it has been decided to return it to more prototypical livery. After some research, it was narrowed down to two choices. The van has always been a service vehicle and, as such, was originally out-shopped by the LNER in a blue livery, identical in colour to that applied to 'Matthew Murray' and, coincidentally, presently being applied to 138C. In later years, it was repainted in black, with the words 'Ballast Brake' applied centrally on each side. As the rest of our goods stock is gradually taking on a BR era paint style, it was felt that this colour would be the most appropriate and the van now sports this colour. Incidentally, although we know the number series of these ballast brakes, we do not know the actual number of this vehicle. Is anybody out there able to help with this one?

Whilst now substantially com-

plete, much work still remains to be done to finish off the van and, following the gala, it was immediately shunted back into the workshops.

The coaches have suffered a bit from vandalism recently although no serious damage has been done. Even so, it is disheartening and requires the expenditure of the very precious resource of manpower. A window has needed replacing, the guards door has been forced and the vestibule door has had its panel kicked out on several occasions. More worryingly, someone has tried to start a fire in one of the coaches, fortunately, without any success.

## Plant & Machinery

A few new (well, new to us!) pieces of equipment have recently arrived in the workshops. These acquisitions include a machine hacksaw, two pedestal drills, a small press, a bench grinder and a tool and cutter grinder. The hacksaw will probably be used to replace our existing one, which, although it does a good job, is perhaps a bit light for some work. The pillar drills came almost simultaneously from two separate sources and we will probably establish which is the best one and pass on the other. The tool and cutter grinder came complete with various fixtures and jigs but alas, no handbook so we are presently scratching out heads on how to use it! Once operational, however, it should be of benefit in keeping various tools in good condition. Some heavy duty pallet racking has also arrived and has been erected along the centre of the workshops and still leave sufficient space to carry on working safely.

It goes without saying that such gifts as these are more than welcome

but it does present us with an increasing headache as we try to find homes for them in the rapidly filling workshops. The Bantam welder (one of our earliest equipment purchases, back in 1977), failed recently. Investigation of the problem has yet to be undertaken. Another recent power tool failure has been one of the needle guns, where the needle holder shattered. A replacement holder has now been obtained for the princely sum of £42.

The Smiths crane has continued to be the subject of improvement and tidying up. Slowly but surely, the various parts are being cleaned down, overhauled where necessary, and given a coat of paint before being put back on. This is a necessarily slow job as we have to keep the crane operational.

The old shaper, put out to grass when we obtained a more modern machine several years ago but not actually scrapped, has been given the opportunity of a new lease of life, being passed on to another heritage group.

## Shed Extension

Plans for the shed extension have now been drawn up and tenders will be invited for the steelwork and cladding very shortly. It is intended that these works are started towards the end of next year. Because of the lack of spare siding space, the temporary loss of the two sidings whilst the work is carried out will present a real operational problem for us. It is intended to do the foundations and concrete raft ourselves, with most of the remainder put out to contract. The whole project is tied in with a Heritage Lottery Fund application, which will be submitted shortly.

There have been some minor changes to the plan originally published

some eighteen months ago, principally to make better use of the space available and to concentrate visitor amenities in one area. It is intended that the existing 'old shed' will become a visitor centre, with toilets and other facilities, and provide direct access to the museum building and trains. This will then allow for the future demolition of the existing shop and the provision of a loco shed in its place. All the foregoing is, of course, dependent upon agreement to the layout changes being given by the Railway Inspectorate.

A separate article on this will appear in a future Old Run.

#### No.11

The arrival of Picton meant that David Monckton was now the proud owner of three Hunslet locos. The only problem was that two of them needed restoring and it took little thinking to realise that the task ahead would be considerable. He decided that the best course of action would be to dispose of No.11. As a result, ownership of this loco has now changed hands and Steve Roberts has become the proud(?) owner. Little has changed as far as Middleton is concerned. The loco will remain at Moor Road and will hopefully be restored in a similar timescale.

#### Nuts & Bolts

Nuts and bolts are, without doubt, the most frequently used items from our stock of stores. They are essential for both maintenance and repairs. Until recently, we have generally got by on stocks acquired from various sources over the years. However, these stocks are becoming diminished and we are now having to buy certain sizes. Virtually all of our requirements are for

imperial standards (BSW). Such stock finds little use in industry these days and many engineering firms are disposing of them, often into a scrap skip. If you know of anybody who is disposing of these, we would be very pleased to have the opportunity of acquiring them. We are also very interested in acquiring rivets and any engineering tools, materials and equipment. Please get in touch with Steve Roberts if you can help.

#### Wednesday Working Parties

A regular feature for the last couple of years has been the Wednesday Working Party. This has grown from just a couple of bodies to a quite substantial group of people. They come together every Wednesday and undertake many of the routine and unsung tasks that are necessary to keep the wheels turning. Generally, members of this group are retired but this is not an exclusive requirement (although an ability to drink copious cups of tea/coffee does seem to be fundamental qualification!). It is an ideal way for people to get some gentle exercise in convivial company and if you feel like joining them, just turn up at about 11.00am on any Wednesday.

A side effect of the upsurge of the Wednesday daytime working group is that some of the Wednesday evening regulars have transferred to the daytime. We are keen to continue the evening workgroup, so if you can't make it during the day, Wednesday evening may be right for you. If you want to get involved, just turn up between 6.00-9.00pm on a Wednesday evening.

There's always plenty to do!

## JAMES HEWITT, 1785-1834

**The Worlds First Personally Identifiable Regular Locomotive Driver?**

Sheila Bye

James Hewitt was baptised on the 15th July 1785 at Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell, the son of James Hewitt and his wife Betty, née Higgins. The remaining details of his life mostly appear in the pages of the Middleton Time Books, at Leeds Archives.

Hewitt senior was well-established as a surface labourer for the Middleton Colliery by the 15th April 1806, when he was joined by his twenty-one years old son, James junior. No record of James junior's previous work has been found so far, but on that date he joined the workforce at the same rate of pay as his father, 2 shillings a day. He obviously must have worked well, since within a few days his pay had increased to 2s 6d (i.e. 12½p). On Wednesday 25th June, ten weeks after he joined the surface labourers, his father abruptly left the pay lists: the reason is currently unknown, but he may have become ill or died. James junior earned extra money chopping wood during the next few weeks, but was off the list of labourers for some time, after which he worked spasmodically until mid-August and then seemingly left the job.

There is a gap in the run of Time Books, starting in 1808, and James Hewitt junior was next found in May 1812, returning to work as a surface labourer for the first time that year, still at 2s 6d a day. By this time, the Steam Engine Manufactory of Messrs. Fenton, Murray & Wood had almost certainly completed the first steam locomotive

incorporating John Blenkinsop's patented rack and pinion motion. Sometime during the fortnight ending Wednesday 24th June, the locomotive was ready for transferring to our railway.

Wages for the estate and pit surface workers were by then recorded in fortnightly periods termed "Pays", each running from a Thursday to a Wednesday. The Time Book entry for the Pay ended Wednesday 24th June 1812 records the payment of 3s 9d to "Jas Hartley expenses for Self Prince Wormald Nuns & Hewitt When Loading Machine at Murrah Foundry". The last-named man was most probably James Hewitt. The "Machine" was tried out with great success on Wednesday 24th June, and then began a period of experimentation in its commercial use. The Machine had been tested on a short stretch of track in the foundry yard, and so at least one man had a small amount of experience in handling it. He was probably the Fenton, Murray & Wood mechanic who, according to Mr. James Haswell of Gateshead, writing in 1880, was sent by the foundry to drive the Machine on the colliery line for a few trial weeks, and his name was Joseph Speed. This most likely accounts for the Time Book having no record of any colliery worker being paid to work the Machine until the Pay ended 19th August. Joseph Speed must have worked it for four weeks starting with its triumphant journey to Leeds on the 24th June, and during that time he trained one of the col-



liery workers to take his place. Mr. Haswell named this man as Charles Standedge but, as will be explained later, he probably was confused. The 19th August Pay entries include:

	£	s	d
Jas Hewit 12 Days	1	8	"
at Machine at 4/- pr Day			
do omitted Last Pay	"	18	"

James had been paid at his normal 2s 6d a day for the last Pay, but once he proved capable of driving the Machine Blenkinsop obviously raised his wage rate and backdated the rise for the last Pay also. This was despite the fact that he was driving by 23rd July, and was almost certainly in charge when our railway's first derailment took place as related by *The Leeds Mercury* of Saturday 1st August:

'Mr. Blenkinsop's Machine is now in full activity. On Thursday it made seven journies each way from Hunslet-Moor to the Coal Staith and back again, and in those journies brought down 102 waggons of coals, each weighing about three tons. The journey both ways is a distance of about two miles and a half, and one of these journies was performed in fifty minutes, taking up twenty empty and bringing down twenty full waggons. - Owing to a deficiency in the rail-way some of the waggons yesterday got a wrong direction, but no serious accident occurred.'

Only one Machine was at work during 1812, despite numerous later statements to the contrary (including in our own History!), but staffing experiments continued throughout. James Hewitt drove the Machine, apparently single-handedly, until the end of the Pay dated 30th September, after which Ben-

jamin Cromack trained with him and then took over for a month, with the assistance of Charles Dixon. James's new found prosperity had enabled him to plan marriage to his sweetheart Anne Smithson on the 26th October, which may account for his absence around that time. He returned briefly in early November, but his first period as Machine driver ended then. His name does not appear elsewhere on the payroll, but when his daughter Mary was baptised in September 1813, he was described in the Rothwell Parish register as "Engineman" and so, with his new expertise, he may have been lured away by another workplace to tend a stationary steam engine.

James Hewitt did not reappear in the Time Books until late November 1815. During the intervening period, much experimentation with wages and working methods had taken place. The second Machine had started work at the beginning of 1813, and a variety of drivers had been tried at various rates and methods of payment, including piecework. The latter was not as lucrative for the drivers as a daily rate, and daily rates were reinstated after a nine months trial, eventually settling at 3s 6d for Drivers and 3s for Firemen. When James returned to driving, the fourth locomotive had just been delivered, and the railway was now being worked by two Machines on the upper section, at Belle Isle, and two on the lower section, from Hunslet Carr to Leeds, the waggons being raised and lowered between the two sections on a rope-hauled inclined plane, now Old Run Road.

Six months after James's return, a new member joined the Machine team when John Hustwaite became the railway's first Machine-dedicated Engi-

neer, paid 5s a day for his services, but seemingly not eligible for overtime. He lasted only five months in the job, and eventually was replaced at the beginning of August 1817 by Joseph Speed, the Fenton, Murray & Wood mechanic who had test-driven the first of the Machines.

The two Machines per section working lasted only two years four months until, on Saturday 28th February 1818, one of them exploded. Though James Hewitt was illiterate (both he and his bride 'made their mark' in the church register), remarkably he left far more written clues to his character than did most working men of his time, in the form of his evidence given at the Coroner's inquest and quoted at length in *The Leeds Mercury* weekly newspaper:

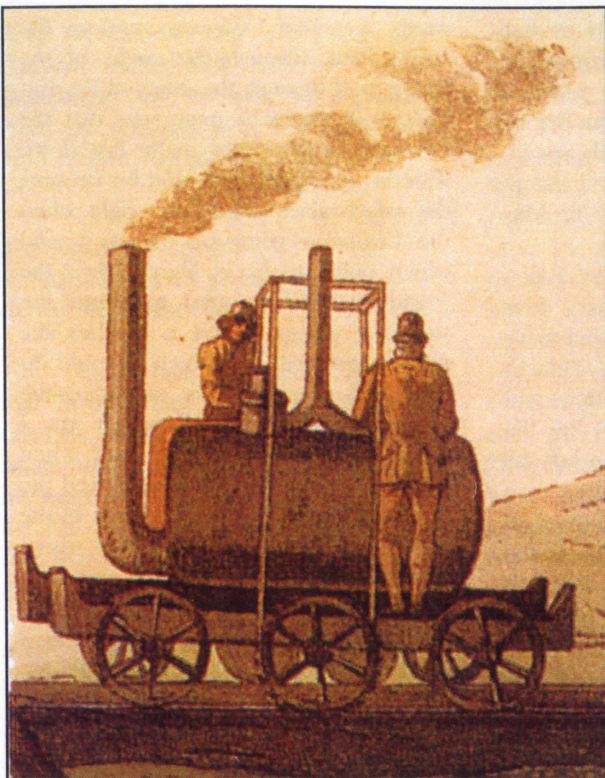
*James Hewitt* stated, that he worked the Engine called the *Lord Wellington*: the deceased, *George Hutchinson*, had the care of the Engine which exploded, called the *Salamanca*. He stated that all the Engine-men had directions from Mr. Blenkinsop, never to have the steam at a higher pressure than fifty-five pounds the square inch, but that the deceased had several times had the steam raised to a much higher pressure. On Saturday, the 28th of February, in the afternoon, witness was at the break-house at the top of the inclined plain, when the deceased arrived there with the *Salamanca Engine* and a number of loaded waggons. The Engine having been separated from the loaded waggons, was placed, by the deceased, in the usual place for returning with empty waggons, that he then increased the fire under the boiler, and came into the break-house, and remained until the empty waggons came up, which was up-

wards of an hour. Witness could see the steam issue through the cocks of the boiler, and through the joints of the Engine; and witness is quite sure that the two safety-valves were made fast down with the spring which is used for keeping the safety-valves steady and right when the Engine is going on the road, and which ought to be at liberty when the Engine is not in motion, to permit the steam to escape when it reaches the proper pressure, and which it would do without danger. Witness, on seeing the Engine so high charged, said it was a shame to see it so. The deceased, when the empty waggons came up, moved the Engine to them, to take them out of the way: he then got from the place where he stood to work the Engine, and went to the end of it to mend the fire, when the Engine-boiler burst at the end next the fire, and the deceased was carried, with great violence, into an adjoining field, the distance of one hundred yards. Immediate search was made for the body, but ten minutes elapsed before it was found:- it was in a very mangled state, part of the face and skull was taken away, and it was quite dead.'

James's evidence seems to indicate a careful, observant man who perhaps, judging by his comment "on seeing the Engine so high charged, said it was a shame to see it so", had some real affection for and/or pride in the Middleton Machines.

After the loss of *Salamanca*, each section of the railway was worked by only one Machine, the third being used only as required. The two regular drivers from now on were James Hewitt and Charles Standedge or Standage, who had become a fireman back in 1815, just before James's return. I believe that Mr. Haswell of Gateshead





Early Middleton Locomen. A detail from George Walker's 'The Miner' in his 'Costumes of Yorkshire, 1814'

Directors of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. They watched the tiny locomotives handle a train of 38 waggons containing a total of  $85\frac{1}{2}$  tons of coal: a combined load of 140 tons hauled at between 2 and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour. It was the Middleton Machines' 'finest hour', and amply illustrates the pressure of work which was now being demanded of them.

At the beginning of January 1831, only ten days before his death, John Blenkinsop signed the books for the last time. It was typical of him that, with his successor's ease of introduction to the job in mind, he had each worker's duty specified in the Pay lists: Jabez Hodgson Repairing Engines & c & c, Charles Standage Conducting Engine (Leeds End), James Hewitt Conducting Engine (Middleton), John

may have known these two drivers, and that he later confused his memory of which one had been trained by Joseph Speed to become the first regular driver in 1812. The drivers were assisted by various firemen, too numerous to mention here, but only in 1822 was there a break in James Hewitt's service as driver. This occurred in the summer of that year, when the number of workers employed in all areas of surface work fell drastically for over three months for an as yet unknown reason.

On 16th January 1829, James Walker and John Urpeth Rastrick observed the Machines on behalf of the

Ibbotson Assisting Standage with Engine, Robert Read Assisting Hewitt with Engine, John Charlesworth Assisting Hodgson with repairs. For a short time, Blenkinsop's successor Thomas Embleton similarly listed in detail the entire workforce concerned with the transportation of the coal commencing at the new pit near Middleton village: Francis Moon junior Leading Coal from Venture Pit, Francis Moon Braking Middleton Inclined Plane [from Middleton to Belle Isle], William Prince Hooking on [waggons] at foot of Inclined Plane, James Hewitt Working Steam Car-

riage, Robert Read Firing Steam Carriage, Charles Wright Braking at Todds Run [the Old Run, Belle Isle to Hunslet, incline], John Spink Hooking on at foot of Todds Run, Charles Standage Working Steam Carriage, John Ibbotson Firing Steam Carriage, James Dixon Jobbing on Waggon road, William Dixon Repairing Waggon road, James Heald Repairing Waggon road. The square-bracketed comments have been added for further clarification.

It was now nineteen years since the introduction of the first Machine, and they had been hard-worked for most of that time, yet within days of replacing Blenkinsop, Thomas Embleton unwisely removed Jabez Hodgson from his long-term post of Machine-dedicated Engineer, and sent him to join the colliery Smiths. Henceforth, other Smiths, less experienced in nursing the ageing and increasingly decrepit Machines, were often given responsibility for major repair work: in May 1831, for instance, a boiler repair accounted for a total of 34 days work performed by three Smiths, who did not include Jabez Hodgson.

On Wednesday 12th February 1834, a second Machine exploded. A Parliamentary election was filling the newspapers at this time, and *The Leeds Mercury* contained only a brief mention of the accident:

#### 'FATAL ACCIDENT.'

On Wednesday noon one of the loco-motive engines of the Middleton Colliery, was burst by the pressure of the steam. The shock produced by the explosion was so great that it was felt in almost every house in Hunslet and the unfortunate engine-man was literally blown to atoms, and his multi-

lated body scattered in all directions.'

*The Leeds Intelligencer* added little information, except that the explosion happened at Hunslet Carr, and was so great the townsfolk thought it was an earthquake. Neither paper even mentioned the victim's name, but the gap in the next Pay entries lay alongside the name James Hewitt.

It is hard to believe that James acted rashly or negligently: He was by then 48 years old, not a boastful young man like George Hutchinson. It is much more likely that his Machine was overdue for a major overhaul, that it had been serviced by someone who did not understand its extra complexities beyond those of a stationary steam engine, or simply that it had succumbed to upwards of 18 years unremitting hard labour and should already have been reboilered or scrapped.

The two remaining Machines staggered on for more than a year and a half, working the Hunslet Carr to Leeds section. The Belle Isle section was worked for some time by horses, but a rope-hauled system powered by a stationary steam engine was already being set up on that level, and was fully operational by 1836. Steam locomotives did not return to the Middleton Railway until 1866.

*Dedicated to the memory of the Middleton Railway's (and the world's?) first regular locomotive driver, James Hewitt.*



# HERITAGE RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

## Ian Smith Writes about the work of the HRA

**R**ecent events regarding the new requirements for staging "THOMAS" events led to a number of people at the railway complaining that the HRA have let the railway down in their dealings with HIT entertainment.

### WHAT HAVE THE HRA EVER DONE FOR US?

Of course, the reality, as always, is rather different and it seems an appropriate time to attempt to say what the HRA actually does and how it affects the railway preservation movement as a whole.

The Heritage Railway Association is an amalgamation of two separate organisations, the Association of Railway Preservation Societies [ARPS] and the Association of Independent railways [AIR].

For years, these two organisations represented heritage railways from two different levels, ARPS being very much a "volunteer" outfit, with AIR representing the "professionals" [general managers etc].

In the mid 1990s, the two organisations merged and after a short interval, HRA was the final result.

The new organisation now deals with all aspects of Heritage Railways and their operation and is widely respected in "official" circles, having representatives on many committees and also being consulted on many aspects of forthcoming legislation.

In effect, HRA is the "trade organisation" for the railway preservation.

To answer the question posed in the title, HRA deals heavily with a number of government departments concerned with railways. Of these, the most well known is clearly HMRI and we have excellent relations with that organisation. If railways experience problems with their local field inspectors, they can [and do] complain to HRA's Operating and Safety Committee, who will in turn give assistance.

HRA publishes guidelines for railway operations and of course the famous "Red Guide" published a few years ago has proved invaluable for the newer lines which are starting up. The "Red Guide" gives details of current legislation and tells readers where further information can be obtained. If railways follow these guidelines, they are, de facto, operating in a safe and proper manner. It has become very much an "accepted custom & practice" document which can be produced by railways to prove they are operating correctly – and, of course by HSE if railways are not!! The guidelines are constantly in course of revision to reflect current practices.

A very big success for HRA recently was the concession that heritage railways are exempt from new charges being applied by HMRI/HSE for site visits by their field inspectors. If a railway operates at 25mph or less, it is exempt from these quite steep charges. Similarly, the "Railway [Miscellaneous Provisions] Regulations" were altered in favour of heritage railways following representation by HRA. One area

which touched MRT was the section regarding the provision of a communication cord. The original draft regs made it mandatory to provide this feature. HRA successfully argued that in cases where the guard could see the whole train, a cord was unnecessary. This clearly covers Middleton, where the guard has visibility of the whole train and thus we don't need the cord. Small, perhaps, but less work for our engineers to worry about!

Another success was the fight against the "Hot Surfaces" Directive, which came from Brussels and was fought mainly by FEDECRAIL, the European body of which HRA is a member. These regulations actually wanted pipes on steam locos to be painted different colours depending on their temperatures! Don't laugh – this was a quite serious document from the safety wizards in Brussels. As with many types of legislation, its intentions were good – and even practical in buildings. Sadly, no-one thought about steam locomotives which were caught by accident and it took some time and effort to convince the powers that be, that such things were impractical on a steam loco which is SUPPOSED to be on fire!!

Another, equally boring, effort was the fight against Brussels wanting to tax pre-selling of tickets such as "Santas" which would have seen us paying VAT on these – another successful fight.

HRA is very much a "background" organisation which fights battles like these quite regularly without anyone really noticing – until something goes wrong.

The HIT saga is a classic case in point. There has been much muttering about the imposition of what are seen to

be petty rules and regulations. Sadly, the plain fact is that HIT have the rights to "THOMAS" and if we want to play, we have to abide by THEIR rules, however silly they may seem to ourselves. We should remember that, to them, railways are a VERY small part of their business – less than 1% of their business comes directly from railways. If we squeal too loud, the result could well be that HIT say they don't want to involve themselves with railways at all, to everyone's detriment.

One of the other things HRA involves itself in is the Heritage Lottery Fund and I'm on the HRA Heritage Committee who deal with this – very useful in view of our impending Lottery Bid.

HRA also gives various awards each year, with the intention of raising standards within the movement. MRT saw the benefit of this when we were awarded the "John Coiley Award" for loco restoration, for the rebuild of "MATTHEW MURRAY" last year. Incidentally, a photo of the loco, taken by Peter Nettleton, is appearing on the front cover of the HRA Annual report this year.

We also deal with the travel trade industry, promoting member railways to overseas visitors, including attendance at the Travel Trade fair in Birmingham each year.

We also assist railways with problems they may have – HRA has a team of specialist advisors for the purpose – and offer an "arbitration service" in the case of disputes between member organisations.

My own involvement with HRA has grown over the years and I am now a member of the HRA Board with a specific responsibility for the smaller railways such as Middleton. This can lead to some most interesting situations.

I can come to a MRT Council



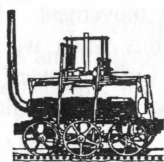
Meeting with some new legislation and get some grief from Council members who say it's too draconian or not appropriate. I then go back and present that view to HRA only to find that I'm being too soft!! On a more serious note, what I am actually doing is presenting the worst of both worlds in order to gain a compromise and in many cases this does actually work and we get a happy medium after suitable discussion.

My other major project, along with Geoff Evens from West Somerset Railway, has been the introduction of new guidelines for junior volunteers. Much work has gone into these guidelines and they should have a positive effect when they are issued shortly. A seminar, at-

tended by Cedric Wood, was held in June, although I was otherwise engaged in a hospital bed at the time!

Hopefully, members should at least be aware by now that HRA actually does do something for us, even though it doesn't always appear to be obvious at first.

A final point - we are currently restoring "SWANSCOMBE No 6" in the shed. This loco was acquired from APCM in Swanscombe, Kent in 1970. The loco was part of joint bid with the Quainton Rly Society, who got No 3. Who engineered the deal whereby we got No 6 for nothing and No 3 for a nominal sum? You've guessed it - ARPS, the forerunner of HRA!!



# WE NEED YOU!

**As ever, we are short of volunteers. Whilst help is required in all Departments we are particularly short of Shop Staff and Guards.**

## CAN YOU HELP YOUR RAILWAY?

Working in the Shop is particularly suited to couples but everybody is welcome to lend a hand, even if it is only occasionally. Every little bit counts and eases the strain on the 'Regulars' Guards duties are fairly easy and would suit the less energetic! Training is given.

We are also short of firemen - most have now been promoted to driver!! So, if you feel like learning footplate skills you would be more than welcome.

Contact any Council member if you are interested (see inside back cover).

## THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED

(Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

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

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**E-mail:** [info@middletonrailway.org.uk](mailto:info@middletonrailway.org.uk)

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Gerald Egan

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### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Full Trust Membership	£9.00	
O.A.P. Trust Membership	£6.00	
Junior Membership (of M.R.A.)	£6.00	
Family Associates of Trust Members (in same household)	£1.00	per person
Life Membership	£150.00	



