

## OLD RUN NEWS

Newsletter of the Middleton Railway Trust. Number 49 February 1970.

Safety at the Colliery. It is evident that often we shall have an Engineers Train at the Middleton Park relaying while the visitors trains are running on the Main Line. For safe working it is essential that the engineers train comes to a stand on the working site, and then sends the single line token back to the Visitors Train crew with a written statement that he is confined to the new works area and is clear of the main line North of the Park Gates crossing. We have observed that smaller children are at some risk if they cannot reach above the Guard's van safety bars. In such cases train crews are asked to see that the very young are either carried inside the van or held by parents well clear of the sides of the entrance platforms.

Middleton Broom Buildings. We are very disturbed to find so little response to our urgent request for active support in our programme for the move-in to the Broom buildings. In particular Bill Barraclough has had NO RESPONSE WHATEVER from members for caretakers and nightwatchmen. It is essential that members come forward for this work. We expect to be allowed to move in in March, and if we do not put a guard and watchman on duty as soon as the Coal Board move out, local vandals could smash the place up within a week. Action please ALL MEMBERS.

Membership. John Bushell reports membership 245 on 31 Dec. 1969, including 89 new members. By 26th Jan 1970 162 subscriptions had come in, including 10 new members. Keep it up! We are still one of the smallest active Societies. New members are Mrs Hilda Bareham, John and Ian of Bramhope, Mr Caltiers and Mr Howard of Leeds 7, Mr Tate of Bingley, Mrs D Lee Heather and David of Leeds 12. 1969 membership cards will not be valid for free travel on visitors trains from February onwards. Those renewed by 20th Jan. should have received cards. If you require your card before the next publication, send post paid envelope to the membership Secretary. We draw urgent attention to the lack of response to our request for Deeds of Covenant to be signed and sent with subscriptions. We are at a loss to know why members who pay Income Tax at standard rate have let us down so badly. Just sign the Deed and fill in your subscription amount per annum, date it for payment on or after the date of the Deed, and we do the rest. We can reclaim about 50% extra in tax rebate. We hate to bring up financial matters, but the response from members to the Appeal Fund is flagging. At the moment we have £1160 in the bank out of £4000. We must not go down as the Society which failed to raise the money in time, when many other Railway Societies have succeeded with amounts per member higher than ours. Roll in the cash, please everybody.

Fund Raising. Dunstan Harrington started off the Round Robin scheme last year, and the response was useful though hardly massive. John Carr is now backing this up with a Fund Raising Scheme details of which will go out to all members. With any such regular contribution ALWAYS sign a Deed of Covenant to increase the value of the gift. Chris Metcalfe asks for trading stamps & coupons of all kinds to help raise funds. Clean used newspapers, notepaper and duplicating paper can be sold to raise money if sent to the chairman.

Visits. In order to deal with the increasing number of school visits and enquiries from national railway bodies, a suggestion from Joe Lee has been followed up by Bill Barraclough and the Chairman with a leaflet for guidance of visiting parties of large or unusual types. This means that instead of a mammoth special arrangement as for the Merseyside visit we have a standard method for all. Copies will be circulated.

Sentinel Progress. The Sentinel fault has been traced to Darlington who had replaced the Sentinel hardened steel gear with a mild steel equivalent. The Sentinel gears were in good shape, but the grinding noise which brought 54 to a standstill was the result coming off the substitute which upset the valve gear and rotary pump eccentric. After ransacking Thomas Hills at Rotherham for the last remaining replacement, Andrew MacKenna and Co. soon had the bits together and No. 54 steaming and on trial.

Publications & Timekeeping. After some blunt speaking in certain places, we can now look forward to future publications being out on time. Transit of the Addressograph to Weeton revealed defects that needed a messy overhaul, and the present page was held by a major overhaul of our Gestetner machine. The inevitable paper work at the end of the year didn't help, our Membership Secretary spending several days making the year inevitable accurate. The Old Run is having better reproductions of the illustrations, and a change to new standard size paper will give 16 pages of text 7 1/4" x 9 3/4" with all advertisements on 4 extra pages between text and cover.

Wagons. We are sorry to announce that Carriage and Wagon Superintendent Peter Barry has had a heart attack, happily not permanent. Malcolm Phillips is backing him up and 2 trains for internal traffic each of 2 flat wagons and a bolster are well on the way.

Ancient Middleton. Evidence has been forthcoming that the coal working of the Leigh (Legh) family was not the first at Middleton. The Romans left their name in Middleton as the Legion "Ligones" gave the modern name Lingwell. The Norman name was Mildeone or Mildentone, the land and manorial rights being held by de Lacy of Pontefract. The earliest workings of coal now goes back to William Grammery in 1202, his argument with Adam de Beeston resulting in a duel in 1209. After Grammery, John of Gaunt and Simon of Pontefract have been recorded as Coal Owners before the Leighs.

Industrial Action. On 9th December 1786 Richard Humble made a complaint about the colliers having "without any reasonable excuse refused to work the colliery unless an advance be made on their wages" which at 2/6 to 3/- a day for an 8 hour day were said to be above average.

In 1822 John Blenkinsop said the Colliers had houses and gardens and coal for 20/- a year and all rates paid equivalent to 4/- a week.

The atmosphere at Middleton must have improved as in a strike of 1844 Middleton was about the only mine at work in the area. Rev. R H Brandling was so pleased that he visited Middleton on 11th November and gave his employees dinner and tea for their wives and a present of 2/6 each. He was presented with a silver cup as a mark of esteem, R H Brandling gave the Church Commission the land on which the Parish Church was built, and the Colliers gave £100 towards the building with "more if needed".

Perhaps we should not be too disturbed at the changes of spelling -- Legh and Leigh -- after all waggon instead of wagon and Harrowgate instead of Harrogate lasted a long time. The 1958 Bicentenary publications have been a useful background for our historical work, but we can now fill in some of the gaps. We have a good story to tell -- it should be complete and accurate.

North Eastern Area members have been invited by Durham University Rly. Soc. to meetings in room 120 Economics Dept Old Elvet at 20.15 hrs. Feb 26 North Wales Steam, March 5 Rural Railways, May 7 Presidential Address.

STOP PRESS. 10th Anniversary Commemorative Covers and special Railway Stamps favourably received by G.P.O. Details in a later Newsletter.

NEWS OF AN OLD FRIEND. Long service members will remember Mr. Herbert Garside, in charge of Dartmouth until he retired in 1961 to take over a public house in Lincolnshire. Now he has returned to his home at Tingley aged 71. Not only was he a first class engineer, but also helped us in our early months at a time when we needed it. We were delighted to find his daughter Mrs Townley at Leeds City Passenger Enquiries, where she is now handing out Middleton Timetables and telling visitors which 'bus to take to reach us!

LAST TRAIN ON THE MIDLAND SKIPTON - COLNE BRANCH. Please contact Mr. Bushell at 12 Trelawn Crescent Leeds 6 for tickets on this farewell train. Leeds City meet 8.20 at barrier. Train departs 8.30, Bradford Exchange 9.02 via Copy Pit and Preston to Lytham, visit Motive Power Museum of steam locomotives, Blackpool Corporation Transport tram works, Blundell Street, depart Blackpool North 18.15, Preston, Rose Grove, Colne, and the LAST TRAIN over the line to Skipton arrive Bradford 21.15, Leeds 21.43. Special fare excellent value, all inclusive 30/- children under 16, 18/-. Full fare, or 10/- deposit please as soon as possible.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS. Mr. Hitchin, Rev. J.A.Heap, Mr. Leeson, Mr. Walker, Mr Worth, Mr Millar, Mr Wood and Mr Fosdick, all of Leeds 10, are welcomed as new members, also Master D Lonsdale of Weeton, Otley, Mr. Hyde of Blackburn, Mr A R Thompson of Blackburn, Mr. N. Thompson of Newcastle upon Tyne, Mr Barrett Leeds 8, Mr Harrison Leeds 16, Mr Warner, Ilford, Essex, Mr Howlett Stratford, Essex, and St Michael's Church of England School, some of these have become active from the time of enrolment: many thanks!

ECONOMY. In view of the need for economy, members are asked not to use headed notepaper and printed envelopes for notes of a purely internal character - we still have to recover from the slump in goods traffic for 6 months in 1969.

ATTENTION PLEASE. C.M.E. Jim Lodge wishes to remind members that locomotives are not maintained by waving magic wands at them. Please support him in his work, and get in touch with him at 8 Hayleigh Mount Leeds 13 if you want to join in. No locos in working order means no income! Jim also asks all members to CARRY THEIR MEMBERSHIP CARDS in Dartmouth Works yard. Petty theft has become so alarming that members without evidence of their status could be taken for offenders by Factory Guards. Also to avoid confusion over which wood is scrap, do NOT use any wood from the Dartmouth pile without approval from our C M E, Traffic Staff, or Works Foreman. Joe Lee has found a large consignment of free wood for lighting up, and asks volunteers to see him about loading up the lorry from Easy Street to our depot.

PROGRESS AT MIDDLETON. Long negotiations with the N C B reveal that owing to heavy Government pressure they cannot afford to be generous to us. We ourselves will have to carry out the conversion of the interior of buildings. We are likely to have full access to the property on 28th February when the N C B move out. Meanwhile it is essential to keep an eye on the property, and until the demolition of pit equipment is complete we have been asked to supply a night watchman. Volunteers please to occupy a furnished room please notify Mr. Barracough at once. He, with John Sugden, have finished the survey of the buildings and also pegged out the track layout up to the buildings. Mr. John Carr (who will be remembered for the outstandingly good exhibition display jointly with Mervyn Leah at the Midland Bank HQ) is now taking an active part in our work. Any ideas for display at the Broom

Buildings when we move in, and help in preparing the display, should go to him. As we shall be paying rent for the buildings, it is essential that revenue from sales (encouraged by an attractive display to the public) should start as soon as possible. Having covered accommodation where we can work without getting in anyone else's way will be a great step forward. Properly organised, this is likely to put us on the map in a way not hitherto possible. More sales, more passengers, more members are likely. Help is needed for boarding up windows to prevent vandalism. We have now has 14 months since the N C B agreement with enforced inactivity on the buildings. Now we must make it absolutely clear that this project demands the full attention and hard work of every member within reach.

For members ready to help, the people to contact are:-

Surveying and Planning, boarding up windows, night caretakers in residence, Messrs Barraclough and Sugden, Railway Society, Leeds University Union, Leeds 2. and Jim Lodge 8 Hayleigh Mount Leeds 13. Display and Exhibition John Carr 2 Hollin Drive Leeds 16, Sales John Edwards 11 Drummond Court Leeds 16, Catering Planning, Joe Lee 27 Kellett Crescent Leeds 12 and Mrs Hebden 10 Lingwell Avenue Leeds 10. We know this asks a lot for a moderately sized Society, but it is essential to press ahead with speed and determination on all fronts.

We must also remind members that there is still an urgent need for hard cash. The cost to us of buying the rest of the Middleton line has still to be raised, and the amount is far from being the largest preservation appeal in the country. The blunt fact is that if we cannot pay up when the N C B ask for the money, we shall get neither the railway nor the depot and museum. Our excellent prospects of expansion and wider recognition will vanish. Hands in your pockets everyone; if you can't give, then loan what you can afford. 1969 saw the final dismantling of the pit head gear and the last bucket of concrete going into the shaft, ending over 4 centuries of mining. Let us help the new era to get a good send off!

RELICS OF THE PAST. We have salvaged from the Colliery a large scale map giving the track layout and buildings before the close-down. We have also obtained a brass plate (now polished) originally advertising "Middleton Estates and Colliery Co. Ltd. Registered Office" and "Please Walk In", but now with "Registered" changed to "Leeds". We have also salvaged the metal stencil plates dating from the times when Coal Wagons still had Private Owner status. Not only Middleton wagons, but much other material, must have had the name painted on with these plates. One stencil reads "Middleton Estate and Colliery Co. Ltd." the other reads "Gardens Hunslet". Some research with the very helpful Secretary of Samuel Denisons indicates that this was probably their siding, which dates from 1920 and was abandoned over 10 years ago. "Gardens" seems to refer to the Allotments which immediately face the Denison's siding.

Demolition work in the Meadow Lane area a very old building has now been exposed and it appears to be our original terminal building, or at least at the right place for the terminus. The line was cut back from Casson Close to Great Wilson Street early on when the latter road was built, but the site of the remaining building is just right for Casson Close, and it certainly looks so old that it would fall down in a high wind. Fortunately we have photographed it for record purposes, but go and see it before it is threatened with demolition.

POST SCRIPT. Mr Edwards asks the Editor to tell readers that the Belle Isle Public Library Middleton display is for 6 weeks in the care of Miss Sklodowska, Librarian.

DON'T FORGET. to book early for the last Skipton-Colne train on 31st January.