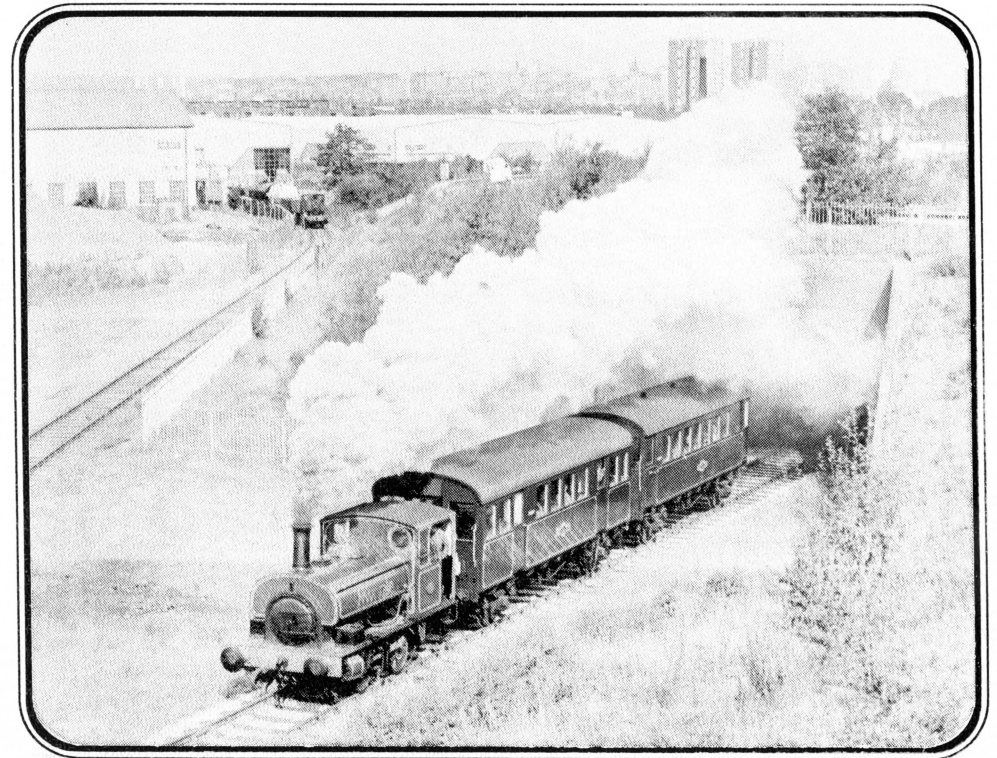


THE OLD RUN

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THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
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ALL members are invited to contribute to their magazine articles, news items, letters, photographs or drawings on relevant subjects. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd., the Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

All articles for the Spring Issue should reach the Editor by 1st March 1992.

EDITORIAL

A Very Happy New Year to all Members! At the end of 1991, the Editorial team would like to thank very much indeed all who have contributed to *The Old Run* during the past year. We've had a great diversity of contributions, and of contributors - including some new ones, and for each issue there's been at least enough written material. For this issue, there was far too much, and some has had to be put aside for 1992 - apologies to Dennis Caton, Colin Dews & Walter Rothschild. However, this is a far better situation to be in than that of having too little material and leaving extra large gaps between articles to compensate, so please carry on writing - your work will be published, even if not immediately. Also, please carry on gricing! Unfortunately, first-class reproduction of photos is rather beyond our budget limits, but a good black and white print - or a colour print (not slide) with plenty of shade variations rather than colour variations, can come out reasonably well. Again, many thanks for both articles and photos, and please keep them coming.

Sheila Bye, Editor.

Cover picture: *Mirvale* heads out of the tunnel with a passenger train, on Sunday 23rd September 1990, whilst *John Blenkinsop* waits on the Dartmouth Branch with a demonstration goods train. Another superb photo from Keith Sanders, to whom thanks go especially as he produced this and a couple more shots at very short notice, when it seemed as if we would be short of illustrations.

A CHAIRMAN'S LOT . . .

In paying tribute to the work of John Chaplin and Vernon Smith in the last *Old Run*, I referred to the amount of time that was involved in both the treasurer's and chairman's job, and then finished up by saying of Vernon that "there is certainly more that needs to be said about the other reasons for his resignation as chairman". In a sense, the need to say it has been partly overtaken by events, in that some of the difficulties which he had experienced were spelt out at the volunteers' forum, which is reported elsewhere in this Issue. At the same time, that did not cover all the difficulties, and some of them still remain: I don't think I'm giving away any state secrets in saying that Chris Rogers has found the job far harder going than he ever expected. In fact, what might be called the "management and administration" side of the railway has at the present time far more problems than the engineering or operating sides, where we are comparatively successful.

Why is this? Have we lost some magic element from our organisation since the days when we had to struggle even to survive? Has what success we have achieved made us complacent? Up to a point that may be true, in that we now appear to think that we can afford the luxury of arguing amongst ourselves; but being realistic we were never that united, even in the most desperate days, and disagreements over how the railway should be run have been around virtually since day one. We have always had represented amongst our members at least three quite different approaches to what the railway was about, and the best way to illustrate them is to caricature them - and to exaggerate something rotten in doing it!

First in the frame to be lampooned, then, we have the preservationists. "It's a historic relic", they cry, as they survey some mouldering pile of scrap metal. "We must preserve it for posterity", they insist, irrespective of the fact that it's of highly dubious value, and anyway is now in a state where the only feasible way of doing that would be to build a complete new one at enormous expense. But then, the real out-and-out preservationists have never had much grasp of such practical realities as cost!

Not so the second extreme, the dedicated engineers, for the practical aspects of doing complicated things to strange lumps of metal are their strong point. In fact, it's almost their only point, for they are inclined to be roundly dismissive of any aspect of the railway that does not start and finish with what can or cannot be achieved in the way of maintaining it, or possibly operating it. Mind you, if you push them hard you will actually discover that they then split into two separate groups, the engineers and the operators, and you will also discover that neither of them really trusts the other. Thus, the engineers firmly believe that the operators are basically a bunch of cowboys who will wreck their lovingly restored machinery as soon as they are given half a chance. Meanwhile the operators (some of whom may actually be cowboys, of course, but wouldn't dream of thinking of themselves like that) are equally distrustful of the engineers, being quite certain that they don't really know what they are talking about

when they claim that you shouldn't do this that or the other while operating this precious machinery.

Finally, the third group are the archetypal money men and paper-pushers. Most of this lot wouldn't know what the other groups are talking about half the time anyway, and they probably don't think it matters either. What is important to them is that the whole business is run as efficiently as possible, and makes a nice healthy profit. Thus, if they can find a better way of extracting money from customers then by definition it must to them be a good thing, no matter what historical or operating sensibilities it may offend.

Now those are caricatures, of course, and the reality is that everybody's views are actually somewhere in between these extremes. On the other hand, the differences do exist and are very real, and they mean that for almost any issue that may arise there will be no one right answer. Instead, there will be different emphases and points of view, and these will probably lead different people to come to diametrically opposite conclusions. Thus, confronted with this sort of situation the council (or anyone else) cannot say that one group is obviously right and the other is wrong: often there is no "obvious" about it.

At the same time, when some issue like this crops up the council cannot just ignore it, but instead they have to make a decision as to which view the railway will adopt. Often some other group of members will then reckon that the council have got it wrong, and in this situation there are no prizes for guessing which member of the council is most likely to end up on the receiving end of the complaints. Furthermore, if the complainants feel strongly about it (as they often do) then they tend at the very least to put their view fairly forcefully, and there have even been cases where people have come close to saying "I don't care what the council think, it's got to be done my way". A chairman who finds himself in the middle of this sort of situation too often can hardly be blamed for feeling that he might have done better to take up a less dangerous pastime, like lion-taming!

If that was the only hard bit about being a chairman, it might not be too bad, but there is more to the job than that - in fact, the chairman actually has to do about five different jobs, and chairing the council meetings may often the easiest of them, even allowing for the arguments that then follow outside the meetings, as just described. "What", I hear you ask, "are the other four?" Well, one of them is to act as the railway's representative outside, for instance when there are events that involve people like the City Council. "Oh, very difficult!" you reply, thinking how hard it must be to have to attend these sort of events and (if you're lucky!) be plied with food and drink into the bargain.

But, of course, one does not go to such events just to be fed and entertained: one goes because one hopes that there might be something in it for the railway, and so role number three is that of chief negotiator, and in practice it is a far more important, time consuming and generally onerous role than simply being a representative. What's more, if anything serious needs to be negotiated then it can take a sizeable chunk out of the time that one's employer expects one to spend at work, and even if you have an understanding employer that time still has to be made up somehow - possibly at times

when you would otherwise have wanted to be at the railway, enjoying what is supposed to be your hobby.

Except, of course, that when you get to the railway you probably discover that you can't simply enjoy your hobby, but instead have to pick up roles four and five, as universal manager and mister-fix-it respectively. Something has cropped up that doesn't fit neatly into the responsibility of any other officer? Then it must be the chairman's job to deal with it! Somebody has made a mess of some arrangements? See if the chairman can sort it out!

Sometimes, of course, the chairman can and does deal with such problems - but it is all more time, more aggravation, and if in the process of doing so he makes a decision that somebody else does not approve of, then in some cases it can be a lot more argument and frustration as well, which is back to where we started. To quote Vernon, not long before he resigned: "it's got so that every time I walk through the shed door I get hit with hassle, and as soon as I walk out again I know that people will be complaining behind my back about what I've done."

So, if the chairman's lot really is this bad at the moment, how can we improve matters? (And, incidentally, how can we also improve matters for the other people who are looking after bits of the railway's paperwork, all of which takes time that many of them would prefer to be spending actually at the railway, doing the things for which they originally joined it?) In the long run, there is only one realistic answer: we have to get to the stage where we can afford to employ somebody as a "general manager" (or any other title that you want), so that they can do most of these jobs for us. Then, the chairman can stop trying to do five jobs at once, and hopefully that will also help to stop him being a target for every criticism or complaint that's going.

Unfortunately, you don't need to be a financial genius to work out from our accounts that we can't afford to employ anybody at the moment, however much we might need them. Thus, in the short term the only thing that is going to help is for more people to get involved, and for everybody to be a lot more patient with what those who are doing the work are trying to achieve. In particular, we need people not just for doing the traditional railway things, like maintaining track and rolling stock, operating trains, and helping in the shop (although we do need those, of course), but for administrative jobs as well. To give just one example, the council have decided that we need to set up a sub-committee to help with the financial management of the railway's accounts: do we have any members with experience of management accountancy who would be willing to assist?

To summarise, therefore, the problems that we have had, and still have, are firstly that we expect too much from our chairman (and possibly our other officers as well). Secondly, when they make decisions that we don't agree with, as they inevitably must on some occasions, we are often too good at criticising (at least), if not actually being downright uncooperative. Thirdly, instead of us all pulling together towards the same objective, we are in danger of each doing our own thing and flying off in our own direction, irrespective of what the railway actually needs.

"But," I hear you say, "this is my hobby, and I'm a volunteer at the railway not an employee: aren't I entitled to do my own thing, and make the contribution that I

want in the way I want?". Well, yes, up to a point you are, but the simple fact is that in some respects the railway is now much bigger than any one of us, and we all have to see our contribution as just a part of the total. Mind you, it's not all that much bigger, and it certainly isn't big enough to be indestructible. Being blunt, therefore, unless we can solve this problem of working together effectively, there may come a time when the railway is no longer able to survive, not because of any failing as a railway, but simply because it can't be managed as an organisation. If this were to happen it would be a tragedy, not least because of the enormously good railway things that we have achieved.

I put it as forcibly as this because I am seriously concerned at the administrative problems that we have had over the last year or so, and although there are a few indications that things may be getting better, I don't see nearly as many signs as I would like that we are getting to the end of them. As one council member put it recently "as a railway we're going just great, but our administration's a real headache". In the long term, we should be able to solve that headache, but for the next few years at least we all (and particularly the council) will just have to live with some of it: please will all members do all that you can to help make it easier for us.

Tony Cowling

LOCO NOTES

For once, I am writing these notes before the Editor's deadline and the usual frantic telephone call to put pen to paper! [They still arrived a day late!] There has to be a first time for everything, and it may well be the last also for, after nearly thirteen years as the Railway's Mechanical Engineer, I have managed to find a successor. Nigel Crowther has agreed to take on formally the role of Mechanical Engineer, after effectively doing the job for the last few months. Whether he can be persuaded that writing these notes is also his responsibility remains to be seen, but I shall try!

As for the loco fleet, the period between the end of the season and the hectic Santa period tends to be one of recuperation. There is insufficient time to do major work on the service locos, but many of the minor jobs can be carried out, as has been the case this year. In detail, the loco situation is as follows:

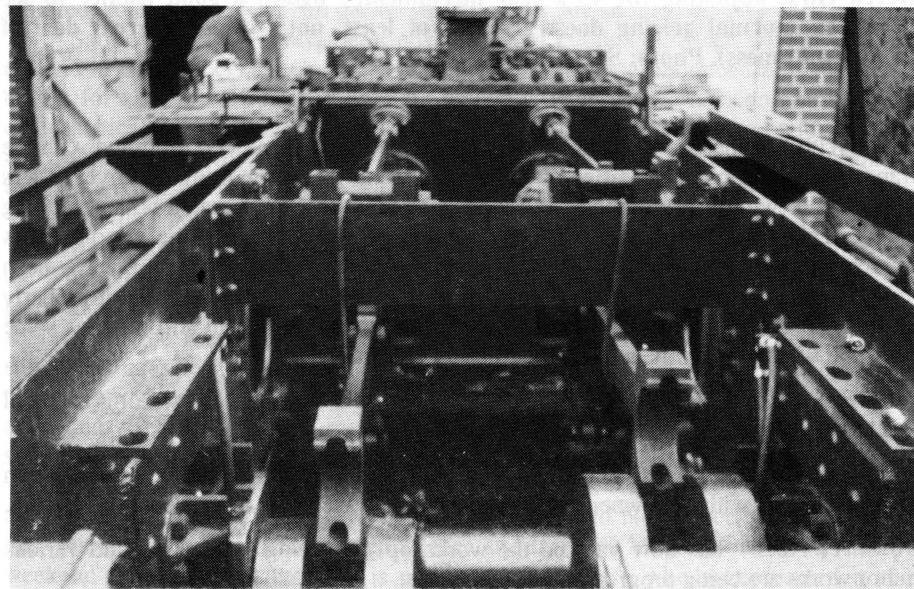
54 As prophesied, the *Sentinel* returned to Middleton immediately after the special events at the N.Y.M.R. on the 10th September, but was soon back on Cramscene's low loader to make the journey over the Pennines to Manchester. However, inbetween times, several minor repairs were carried out, including replacement of water gauge drain valves and repairs to a split water delivery pipe. *No.54's* short stay in Manchester was without incident, and the loco was well received by the Friends of the Museum of Science and Industry, acquitting itself quite well on the short demonstration line. Examination of the loco following its return to Leeds revealed a fractured shut off

valve for the feed pump, which has required some substantial repair work. It is available for the Santa service, and will see use on the Sundays throughout December, after which it will be necessary to drop the firebox out for its bi-annual thorough examination. This work should be completed in time for it to return to service at the beginning of the 1992 season.

1882 Mirvale passed its annual boiler examination during November, and is available for traffic as required. Various minor repairs have been carried out, including machining of the steam brake valve to cure persistent leakage problems.

385 In service for Santa Specials, after which it will be stopped for various minor repairs, and its annual boiler inspection. It is planned to send the front springs away for overhaul, as the front of the loco is taking on a decidedly droopy look!

1310 The *Y7* progresses well, but it now will certainly not be in steam in its 100th year. Despite eternal optimism, it has become clear that the many minor jobs take up as much time as the major ones, and the reassembly process has not been as rapid as had been hoped. Following completion of the lubrication pipework and fitting of the re-worked big ends, the chassis was towed up and down the yard several times with no problems. However, a trip up the line to Middleton Park caused both big ends to run warm, and further work has been necessary on them. Two further runs up to the Park were trouble free, and all bearings remained cool.



The *Y7's* chassis, awaiting the refitting of the boiler - a good chance to study some inner workings of the loco, whose denuded state will be sadly missed as a teaching aid in future School Day events! Photo: Steve Roberts.



Derek Hirst adjusting the Y7's gear mechanism - again, a good chance to see parts that normal gricing doesn't reach (at least, not without a great deal of trouble and mess). Photo: Steve Roberts.

With the chassis now virtually complete, the boiler has been re-united with the frames. This particular operation went very well, and the whole thing was over in less than an hour without any hitches. Work has started on the replacement boiler cladding sheets. This work causes much headscratching, not least because the crinolin rings (which support the cladding sheets) were of different diameters. These have been modified to bring them all to the same diameter, so that the cladding will sit properly on them. The new cab back sheet has now been fitted in place, but still requires some finishing work. Once this is done, the cab will be complete.

2387 Brookes No.1 is now resplendent in maroon livery, and is awaiting the final touches to bring its cosmetic restoration to completion.

1823 Harry No news is forthcoming on the future of this little Barclay, but we are in communication with the owner, to try and obtain a satisfactory agreement.

Rowntree No.3 has now vacated the workshop, following its repaint, and various minor works are being progressed as time allows.

91, 138C, D631, D577, 1697 and **4220038** are all serviceable and used as required.

Steve Roberts

WHAT HAS COUNCIL AGREED NOW?

Several important issues have been aired during the weeks since the last edition of *The Old Run*, and space may preclude listing them all here. However, the really important ones are described in the following paragraphs, so you can all see how we are trying to do our best for the Railway. Please don't forget, by the way, that any member is most welcome to bring to the Council Secretary's attention any item they would like Council to discuss at one of its meetings. I wait for an avalanche through the letter-box!

Consideration has been given to safety at the Railway, and in particular to Junior Members under 16 operating equipment. Council has now agreed to write to parents requesting their permission for training of this sort. Members should also note that a list showing who is authorised to use what equipment is kept in the shed.

It appears that the EM2 Society would like their bogies to remain here for the time being, and a suitable "donation towards their storage" is being negotiated.

The bulk purchase of coal is being considered, as savings in cost may be made if this is possible.

Harry is being looked at to assess whether limited or extensive repairs are required, so that the owner can decide what **Harry's** fate should be.

Sadly, Mr. I. Smith resigned from the post of Publicity Officer, with effect from the end of September. On Council's behalf the Chairman pronounced a large vote of thanks for all the work he had done on publicity, which had been considerable, and enthusiastically carried out. At the following meeting, Council accepted with pleasure Mr. Monckton's offer to take on the duties of Publicity Officer, on the terms as recently advertised. Mr. I. Smith will continue to arrange school trips etc.

As may be apparent by the time this Issue appears, Council has appointed a Yard Manager (Brian Hall), whose remit is "In conjunction with the other Officers of the Trust to identify, promote and organise projects which will enhance visitors' perception and enjoyment of the Moor Road Site and bring available work to the attention of the membership." It was also agreed that, if he was willing, Mr. Hall should be co-opted on to the Council as from the December meeting. So, if you thought strictly engineering jobs were beyond your powers, there will be plenty of opportunity over the coming months to exploit your other skills - and perhaps find some you didn't know you had!

Sentinel having returned from its various repairs and a successful weekend at the North York Moors Railway, had another trip on 2nd November, when it went to the "Friends of Greater Manchester Science and Industry Museum" and had a happy weekend running about there. It is understood that those who accompanied it also enjoyed themselves.

For safety reasons it has been considered necessary to reiterate the rules that no footplate rides are allowed on steam engines.

Niall Goulding has taken on the job of Roster Clerk, although the final responsibility still rests with Mr. Wilkinson.

Council has agreed to accept the Steam Crane offered by the Worth Valley Railway, and arrangements for its arrival are currently being made.

Mr. Monckton's plans for improvement of the public entrance to the site have now been approved by Council, and Mr. McKenna has been asked to make arrangements for obtaining new gates.

Following the Volunteers' Meeting on 10th October, which was considered to be very useful, it has been agreed that further such meetings will be held at fairly regular intervals. Details will be published in *The Old Run*.

It is noted that, due to additional work, Mr. Cromack may not be able to continue as Treasurer for very much longer. Would any aspiring successors please give the job some thought and, if they come to a positive conclusion, inform the Chairman? To make the job somewhat easier, Mr. Cromack has suggested that a Finance Sub-Committee be set up and this has been agreed. The idea is to attempt to draw up some kind of "scheme" to which a "budget" can be attached - i.e. what jobs need doing when, how much money will they cost, and how do we ensure the money is available? All Council members have been asked to supply information pertinent to this by the end of November.

Following a query about signing for completion of engineering jobs, it was agreed that where the person doing the job was a Junior Member, that person should sign for the job as well as the supervisor.

Council were pleased to accept Mr. Nigel Crowther's offer to take over the role of Mechanical Engineer from January 1992; Mr. Roberts had been waiting to finish his temporary role since he took it on 13 years ago.

Messrs. Roberts and Crowther attended the A.R.P.S. Seminar on 16/17th November, which discussed the effects of recent legislation on safety aspects of railway workshops. Whilst the majority of the new rules did not apply to railways which had no employees, some interesting information emerged.

It has become clear that the Disciplinary Code requires further clarification, and the sub-committee is being re-convened to consider this.

Mr. I. Smith brought to Council several suggestions on how the Railway might celebrate "60 Years of the Diesel"; these were briefly considered, and he has been asked to pursue them further, with a view to holding a major event around June 1992.

Council was delighted to hear of a volunteer willing to decorate the loos - anyone else want a job like this? If so, please see Brian Hall, who will be able to satisfy your need.

Well, that's all for now folks. If you want up-to-date information on Council's "doings", a brief report is pinned up in the Shop and the Shed after each meeting, so don't wait until *The Old Run* arrives - pop down to the railway with paint-brush, sweeping-brush, or simply willing hands, and have a word with Brian - he's got a job waiting for you!

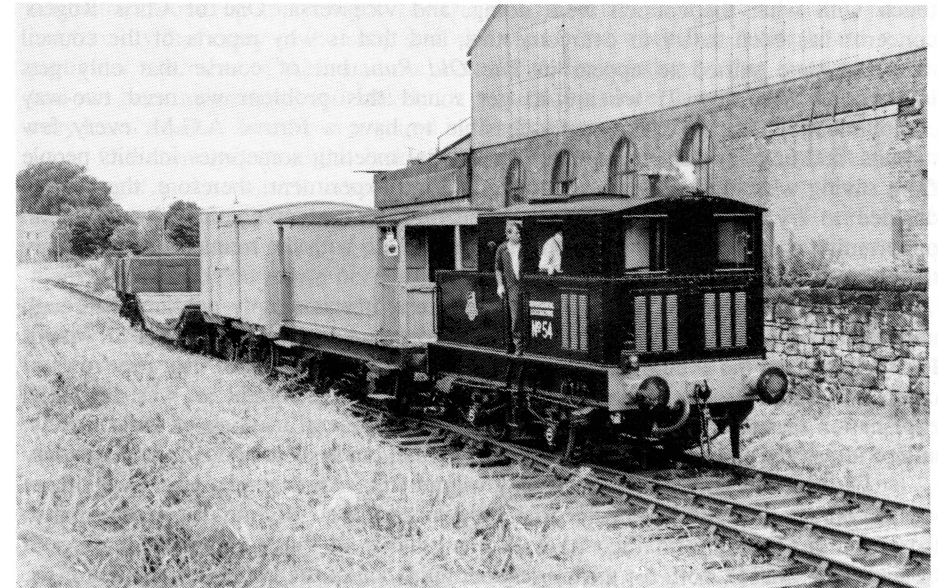
Jenny Cowling, Council Secretary

NEW APPOINTMENTS

After twelve years as Middleton's Chief Mechanical Engineer, Steve Roberts has decided to relinquish the post. The pressures of being both C.M.E. and Sales Manager have been considerable, and it was not really in the Railway's best interest for this state of affairs to continue.

The new man in the hot seat is Nigel Crowther. Nigel is a relative newcomer to the ranks of Middleton volunteers, but in the short time he has been around he has made a tremendous contribution to the Railway. He has many years experience of working on preserved railways, and has an intimate knowledge of steam locos and their operation.

Ian Smith has also reluctantly found it necessary to step down as Publicity Officer after several years in the hot seat. Publicity is a demanding but thankless task, often open to criticism when the visitors do not turn up in droves. We are indeed fortunate that we have a willing replacement in David Monckton, who has taken on this demanding role.



New Middleton C.M.E., Nigel Crowther, on the footplate of No.54 during a demonstration goods run, 17th July 1988. Photo: Keith Sanders.

A new post created by Council is that of Site Manager. This post has been created to try and correct an important shortfall in our organisation, in that no one person has had any responsibility for the Moor Road site, especially with regard to its tidiness and improvement. Brian Hall has been appointed to this very important position, and it is hoped that everyone will rally round and help him in his task of improving the Moor Road site, both for the public and for the volunteers.

Steve Roberts

[I'm sure that all members will wish to thank both Steve and Ian for their considerable amounts of effort and devotion to duty in their respective posts of C.M.E. and Publicity Officer, and to wish the best of luck to their successors - and to Brian Hall. All who read Issue 136's article about School Days doubtless will be pleased to know that Ian will continue to organise special events and liaise with the railway press.]

VOLUNTEERS' FORUM

Ever since the early days of the railway, one of the problems that we have had has been that ordinary members of the railway have felt as though they were out of touch with what the council were doing, and vice-versa. One of Chris Rogers' concerns has been to try to overcome this, and that is why reports of the council meetings have started to appear in *The Old Run*, but of course that only gets information one way. If we are to get round this problem we need two-way communication, but it is not really feasible to have a formal A.G.M. every few months, and anyway the atmosphere of a formal meeting sometimes inhibits people from saying what they really want to say. As an experiment, therefore, the council decided to try convening an informal meeting for volunteers, to give them an opportunity to express their views on any issues to do with the running of the railway that were of concern to them.

Because it was just aimed at the volunteers, it was simply publicised through notices at the railway, but even so some twenty or more people turned up at St. Mary's Parish Centre on the evening of Thursday, 10th October. Instead of nice neat rows of chairs, we simply sat round in a big circle, and the only formal bit was the initial explanation that the forum was not constituted as a general meeting of the company, and so it was not empowered to consider any formal business or adopt any resolutions.

Because it wasn't a formal meeting, we didn't have an agenda, so anybody there was encouraged to raise any matters that they wished. Also, no minutes were taken, so there wouldn't be any formal record of who had said what, but simply notes that would be made (i.e. these), both for the subsequent guidance of the council and also for the information of volunteers, whether they had been able to attend the forum or not. These notes would summarise the discussion under suitable headings, but not necessarily in strict chronological order. And it worked! People talked! In fact, they were still talking three hours later, when we finally had to close the meeting as such

and tidy up the room (and then adjourn briefly to the bar), and some of the talking then went on out in the car park for the best part of an hour after that. Even after that it was quite clear that there was still a lot more that people wanted to say, and the one obvious conclusion is that another such volunteers' forum needs to be arranged before too long: watch this space! Meanwhile, for those who weren't there, here is a summary of the things that we did talk about.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND MEMBERS. The council were asked whether their meetings were open to ordinary members. The reply to this was that in general they were, although there were sometimes items of business that needed to be confidential. In discussion of this, it became clear that many volunteers felt that they and their views were not adequately represented on the council, partly because they often did not even know who the council members were. Concern was also expressed that the council did not always seem to be aware of the views of working members, and could be in danger of making decisions that volunteers would not be prepared to implement.

It also became clear that volunteers did not feel adequately informed of what the council were doing, or why particular decisions were made. It was agreed that the practice which had been introduced of posting a summary of the council minutes in the workshop provided some information, and it was also noted that further quarterly summaries would be appearing in *The Old Run* from now on. However, it was pointed out forcibly that many of the shop staff did not see the workshop notice board, and in particular a number of them had not seen the notice relating to this meeting, and so had not been aware until too late that it was taking place. It was agreed that, at the very least, a notice board was required in the shop as well.

One consequence of this lack of communication was that matters which ought to be brought to the council were often left until they became a major problem, when they were then dropped on the officers - particularly the chairman. This was made worse by the fact that many of the officers were under pressure because there were too many things to be done and not enough people to do them, and so there was a danger that ideas or suggestions could be pushed to one side unless they obviously had high priority. Such situations could then cause resentment and possibly a lot of ill-feeling, and it was partly because of the pressure caused by these sort of occurrences that Vernon Smith had resigned as chairman.

It was suggested that, as managers, one of the roles of the council was to know the members, and particularly there was a need for them to have more information about skills and talents that people might have. However, it was pointed out that the officers themselves were only volunteers rather than professional managers, and because of their roles they often had to put in time away from the railway rather than at it, sometimes even doing jobs for the railway which they would have preferred not to have to do. A plea was made for some tolerance towards the council, even if they were not always able to respond as members would wish. It was recognised that council and members were generally trying to pull in the same direction, and it was

felt that the council needed support from the members: if communication in both directions could be improved they would be more likely to get it.

It was agreed that the present forum was a useful start in helping to overcome this, and that such meetings should become regular events, preferably quarterly. It was noted that some other railways had separate officers to organise these sort of meetings, but it was felt that this could be divisive here and was not needed. It was felt that if regular meetings were successful then there would probably be no need for ordinary members to attend council meetings, except for occasional special items of business.

FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK. Several people asked what jobs required doing in the near future, and particularly over the coming winter. The list for this winter that had been discussed at the last council meeting was quoted, viz: spot re-sleepering; complete the *Y7* overhaul; prepare for the boiler inspections that were required on *Mirvale*, *Sentinel* and *385*; repaint the shop (both inside and out) and reorganise the interior; complete the fencing work on the line; remove the platform fence; complete the shed mezzanine floor and remove the old containers from the yard. Also quoted was the list of jobs for further into the future, viz: start work on the renovation of *Arthur*; reroof the second coach; start full repaints of *No.6* and *Carroll*; cosmetically restore *Henry*; restore the Middleton Wagon. There was some discussion of these, and particularly of the need to do something this winter about the platform fence: it was noted that it might not be possible to remove this, and if so there was a strong feeling that it should be replaced by a neat fence in proper railway style. It was then asked what else could be done about improving the general aspects of the Moor Road site in order to make it more attractive, and a list of suggestions was made up, viz: redo the fencing around the site; ballast the car park; put down new paving slabs; provide new litter bins; and generally clear away as much junk as possible.

ROSTERING AND TRAINING. Some members who were regular workers at the line expressed surprise that they had not known previously that some of these jobs required doing, and asked whether more people might volunteer for such work if they actually knew what work did need doing. It was noted that the council had decided to try to appoint a yard manager, who would be responsible for co-ordinating this general work on the site, and this was welcomed. The need was expressed for more volunteers, including more volunteers for train crews, and it was agreed that there was a need to circulate information about the jobs that needed doing: this ought to be part of the role of the yard manager, along with ensuring that a list of jobs was available to anyone who came to the site.

It was suggested that volunteers' work might be better co-ordinated if they were organised into teams or departments, as on some other railways, and there was some discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of such a scheme. In particular, it was agreed that we needed better arrangements for training new members, and it was thought that a department structure might help with this. There was a general need for people to be more willing to help with training new members, although it was recognised that working members usually felt under pressure to get jobs that they were doing finished quickly; however, taking time to train new members would eventually

reduce the pressure by increasing the number of people available to do the work. It was suggested that specific training weekends should be held, and also that future volunteers' meetings could include some sort of introduction for new members to various aspects of the railway.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY. It was noted that some of the work on the site was being hindered by the uncertainty over what might possibly be included as part of any plans for extending the railway to Middleton Park. Leeds City Council were satisfied that the railway was capable of managing its finances, so that any capital which might be invested in the project would be safe, but progress was still very slow, as although the track had now been obtained, additional sponsorship still had to be found to ensure that the whole project could be funded. If any buildings or other work at Moor Road could be included in the eventual project, then we would get far better value for our own money by putting it into the funding of the project (probably on a pound-for-pound basis) than we could by spending it now, and so we should continue to put up with the uncertainty for the time being.

HIRING OF LOCOMOTIVES. Volunteers were asked whether they were in favour of the railway hiring out locomotives (such as the *Sentinel*) to other railways. It became clear that one or two were opposed to the practice, feeling strongly that the work which had been done on overhauling locomotives should be for the benefit of our railway rather than of others. In particular, the view was expressed that the *Sentinel* had spent too much of this season away from the railway, even allowing for the work that had been done on it while it was at Grosmont. While there was sympathy for this argument, the more general view seemed to be that occasional visits away were acceptable, if they meant that the locomotives earned more income from hire charges than they would from operating on our line. However, concern was expressed that it usually seemed to be the same few people who went with the locomotives on such visits, and the opportunity to be involved in them needed to be more widely available.

OPERATING. One question was asked about the detail of train operations at Moor Road, as to whether the guard of a passenger train should flag the foot crossing to the engine shed, or should remain on the platform to oversee passengers as they got on or off the train. In discussion of this, it was agreed that there was really a need for an additional person to be rostered as "stationmaster" in order to take charge on the platform, both while the train was in the station and also when a train was arriving.

DISCIPLINE. In the light of recent circumstances, concern was expressed about the practical operation of the disciplinary code for train crews, and it was generally agreed that it was turning out to be too inflexible. It was also suggested that if disciplinary action needed to be taken in future, then it would be helpful to other working members if information could be circulated to those on the same grade as to what had actually happened and what rules had been broken, so that they could then ensure that the same mistake was not made again.

Tony Cowling

FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETIES LTD.

As I am sure you know, the Middleton Railway is a member of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies. What you may not know is that individuals like yourself may join A.R.P.S. as Private Members.

Private Membership of A.R.P.S. is for those with a practical interest in Railway Preservation. Membership brings you not only the quarterly "A.R.P.S. Journal", but also your own copy of each new A.R.P.S. Information Paper on topics such as "Volunteer Recruitment". In addition Private Members may attend the three A.R.P.S. General Meetings which are held each year; there you will meet others with a practical interest in railway preservation.

Normally, A.R.P.S. Private Membership costs £12 per year and runs from April 1st. But as a special introductory offer, any Middleton member joining A.R.P.S. on or after January 1st 1992 will have their membership extended until March 31st 1993. In addition, the Middleton Railway will receive £2 for each A.R.P.S. Private Member recruited. Simply send your £12 to: Arthur Harding, Membership Secretary, A.R.P.S., 6 Ullswater Grove, Alresford, Hampshire, SO24 9NP, mentioning this offer, and stating that you are a Middleton member.

Chris Smyth, Council Member A.R.P.S., Member M.R.T.

A.R.P.S. SEMINAR - WORKSHOPS

The Association of Railway Preservation Societies held a well attended seminar on Workshops over the weekend of 16th/17th November, and Middleton was represented by Nigel Crowther and Steve Roberts.

The seminar covered a wide range of associated subjects, from fire protection to boiler legislation. By any standards, a lot of ground was covered, and it was gratifying to know that our house is in reasonable order. We are aware of our shortcomings, even if we weren't before, and attention must be paid to several points. One obvious area requiring improvement is tidiness, where we fall far short of the standards required. We are, of course, very much hampered by our cramped facilities, but the real solution is in the hands of everyone who uses the workshop - keep it tidy! Completion of the mezzanine extension will go some way towards easing the chronic space problem, but it needs a concerted effort by everybody to keep the problem under control.

Some light relief from the relatively heavy round of lectures and presentations was had with a tour of what is left of the once mighty Swindon Works, and an evening

dinner where we were entertained by a light-hearted look at Swindon Works in its latter days, through the eyes of one of its Works Managers.

All in all, an excellent weekend with much learnt by the two delegates.

Steve Roberts

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!

MEMBERS ONLY WEEKEND. You are cordially invited to attend a Members Only Weekend, to take place on **Saturday/Sunday, 21st/22nd March 1992**. We are well aware that many of you, who come from far and wide, are not able to visit the Railway regularly, and when you do it is amongst the general public. Then we are perhaps unable to give you the individual attention you deserve. This Members Only Weekend will give **you** the opportunity to find out what the M.R.T. is really about and give **us** the chance to "bend your ears" with our favourite subject.

We appreciate your financial support, but would you be able to give practical help too? There are many tasks which our local "workers" have difficulty finding the time to do - no special talents needed, just a willingness to help.

Come along, ride the trains, look around, and above all meet the "locals". We're sure you will have an interesting day, and we look forward to seeing you.

HELP, HELP, RAGS. We need some cotton rags as we use such a lot for cleaning the engines. If any members have any cotton rags they wish to get rid of, then please bring them down to the Railway on your next visit.

PUBLICITY. The Publicity Department will be asking for the help of other members in putting out leaflets and advertising posters, in their local areas. If anyone is interested in helping with this please contact David Monckton, address etc. on the last page, or Anne Butler c/o The Middleton Railway official address.

Anne Butler

1990 COACH COMPETITION

As the first section of this item explains, these results are rather belated! There were 16 entries in all, and our own S1867 came 5th, despite being ranged against such competition as a Pullman Car from the Bluebell Railway, which came first. Our coaches really do look splendid, as readers will see from the cover photo of this Issue, and all who worked on them should be congratulated. As remarked on by the judges and also in the last Issue's School Day events article, the window arrangement gives a

good, all-round view, far better than most lines' conventional coaches. The judgement was as follows:

General Comments - Once again the judges have enjoyed viewing a wide variety of stock. A high standard of restoration work has been the norm.

But several vehicles had clearly been entered in the optimistic hope that they would be completed before inspection. This resulted in inspections being deferred until late 1990 and even into 1991. Apologies are due to those entrants who were ready on time and have had to wait so long for the result.

Despite the deferred inspections several vehicles were still not complete at the time of inspection. The judges consider that some of the incomplete projects are potential winners in due course and hope that they will be completed in time for the 1992 competition.

A problem with the Coach Competition has always been that the judges are attempting to compare chalk and cheese. It is very difficult to judge a humble goods wagon against the sumptuous elegance of a Pullman car. In an effort to alleviate this the judges suggest that in 1992 two parallel competitions are run, one for coaches and the other for "wagons" i.e. all non-passenger carrying vehicles but excluding locomotives and cranes. From our inspections this year we believe that several worthy entrants for a Wagon Competition already exist.



A future contestant? Roger Walton's L.M.S. bogie coach, M31384, arriving at the Balm Road branchline on Friday 7th June this year. Photo: Roger Walton.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY Converted PMV S1867

A Mark I coach would look out of place on the Middleton Railway. It would not fit in with the industrial locomotives or their surroundings.

But Middleton now relies on passenger traffic for its bread and butter. The Railway's answer to the dilemma has been to convert two PMVs to passenger coaches. The result is very effective, the two coaches and their industrial workhorse being evocative of a miners' paddy train.

Robust wooden seating is combined with a good view from the newly installed windows. At the time of inspection both the Competition entry and its companion vehicle were doing sterling service. Some teething problems have been experienced but once they have been overcome these interesting conversions should make a lasting contribution to the Middleton Railway scene.

1991 PUBLICATION COMPETITION

This year, the competition was divided into two sections, one for societies with over 500 members and the other for those with less than 500 members. Middleton, of course, was in the latter section, and *The Old Run* Spring 1991 issue came 3rd out of 17 entries. The judges' comments were as follows:

The general opinion was of a well thought out and well put together magazine. The detractions for some were the use of stars to break between items - others would like to have seen more pictures. A good effort to gain the third spot.

As members presumably will have noticed already, the stars have been replaced by lines for this issue at least, as part of a continuing attempt to improve the look of the magazine. If they take up too much space which could be put to better use, it's back to the stars, though perhaps smaller, less obtrusive ones: we don't intend to become "dedicated followers of fashion" to quote The Kinks. As for pictures, I've perhaps tended too often to think of picture space as being whatever was left when the articles were all typed up. Would members rather have more photos? I don't know if you don't tell me.

Sheila Bye

1247 - PRESERVATION PIONEER

This publication, from Silver Link, is the story of G.N.R. 0-6-0ST **1247**, the first standard gauge steam locomotive to be preserved by an individual as opposed to a society. Captain W.G. (Bill) Smith was the individual concerned, and his book is plainly a story of the love between himself and his locomotive. It tells of the numerous problems inherent in preserving a steam locomotive in those early days, and also of the railtours the little saddletank worked in the early 1960's.

What is of particular interest to Middleton members, however, is the final chapter, entitled "The Pioneer", which tells of her visit to the Middleton Railway in 1990, to celebrate our 30th anniversary. As one of the "backroom boys" involved with organising *1247*'s visit, I can assure readers that Bill's narrative hardly touches on the many problems encountered in running both the "Middleton Pioneer" tour AND getting *1247* to and from the line! Without the dynamism of Peter Manisty and Vernon Smith, I doubt if the event would have happened at all. As it was, the loco arrived the day before the tour, on the same day that the EM2 bogies were being offloaded from their INTERNATIONAL(!) waggon which had conveyed them from Tilburg in Holland. The loco was steam tested that same night, to ensure all was well, and performed faultlessly on both days. Bill has some very kind things to say about our Railway and its facilities, and also the restoration work carried out, *Mirvale* very deservedly getting praise for the high standard of restoration.

All in all, a very worthwhile addition to any Middleton member's bookshelf, as a reminder of both the preservation of such a unique locomotive and as a memory of one of the most significant events in the Middleton Railway's preservation history.

Ian Smith

Stop Press. The Middleton Railway also features in a video currently on sale at W.H. Smith stores, under their own brand. Entitled L.N.E.R. STEAM, it lasts about 1 hour, costs £10.99p, and includes sequences of *Sentinel 54* at Middleton and at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, and of *1247* at Middleton.



G.N.R. *1247* at Moor Road Station, alongside Embsay's *Primrose No.2*, 24th June, 1990. Photo: Mike Taylor.

THE WAGGON-WAY MANIA

'The Railway Mania' is a term usually applied to the time of the great expansion of railway building in the 1840's, but this was by no means the first period of intensive railway speculation. As was seen in the sad story of the Bradford and Leeds Railway, in Issues 135 & 136, as soon as the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was seen to be a success everytown and its neighbour wanted to be linked by rail. However, though this might be considered to be the first **Railway Mania**, much earlier - during the latter half of the 18th century and the first few years of the 19th century, railborne transport was already being recognised as an essential adjunct to the industrial revolution.

Our own 1755 and 1758 ways were by no means the first in this country; they were a familiar enough sight on Tyneside in particular for the 1758 Middleton lease agreements to refer to the building of a "Waggon-Way or Newcastle Road". However, during the latter part of the century they became a familiar sight in most other mining areas, and their potential usefulness for other industries was recognised. By 1802, there already existed a large number of "rail roads" in the Yorkshire area, and many more were being planned. *The Leeds Mercury* of Saturday 6th February 1802 quoted the 'Monthly Commercial Report':

The internal commerce of this country continues to derive much new advantage from the daily extension of Iron Rail-Ways. They are made at an expence not exceeding 500*l.* [i.e.£500] sterling a mile. The advantages they give for the conveyance of goods by carts and waggons, seem even to surpass, in some instances, those of boat-carriages by canals.

In another section of the paper, it was stated that the Report was written by men "well-informed in the nature of trade and the progress of improvements", and the information was added that "It is a fact that there are more Bills at this time before Parliament, for the erection of Railways, than ever there was at any one time for cutting canals."

One large local project seeking Parliamentary sanction later that year was "an IRON RAIL ROAD" from the River Calder at Mirfield to the Low Moor Iron Works, which already had a waggonway link to Bradford and to some of its company pits. The new rail road was intended to have branches going from the main way to collieries and iron foundries in the townships through which it passed and in some neighbouring towns also. *The Leeds Mercury* of 2nd October mentioned that:

In the last Gazette, five Notices are given, of intended applications to Parliament, for the erection of Iron rail-ways, one of which is to run from the River Calder to the Iron Works at Wibsey Low Moor, and to pass through the townships of Mirfield, Dewsbury, Heckmondwike, Liversedge, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, and Hundsworth.

This ambitious project met with no success at the time, and the Low Moor to Mirfield link, some fifteen miles long, did not become a reality until forty-four years later, when the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, using basically the same route, opened their Low Moor, Cleckheaton and Ravensthorpe line on 18th July 1846.

Back in 1802, however, the possibility of linking one's business to an already existing rail road was beginning to be seen as a point in its favour when selling premises. Our own rail road was mentioned in the sale notices of two businesses that year. The first was in Meadow Lane, some distance from the northern terminus of the line in Casson Close. In *The Leeds Mercury* of 16th, 23rd and 30th January, and 6th February, a plot of about seven acres, "To be SOLD, in BUILDING LOTS", was offered with the comment that it was:

intended to be divided into convenient Lots to suit any Purchaser, and to communicate with Meadow or Jack Lane, and the Coal Rail Road from Mr. Brandling's Pits at Middleton to Leeds.

Five months later, "A Valuable CLOSE of FREEHOLD LAND" called Fullage Close, was to be sold by auction on the 14th July. About three acres, it was:

adjoining upon Hunslet Common, in the Parish of Leeds, and near to the Coal Road from Middleton Colliery, to which there is a Railed Road from a Staith on the Premises

Like the owners of the Leeds Pottery, built around the line further north, the owners of the "scribbling mill" at Fullage Close had apparently seen the usefulness of having their own private branch on to the coal road, presumably for the feeding of their "PATENT STEAM ENGINE, constructed by Messrs. Boulton and Watt". The 1793 Middleton Railway Act had officially sanctioned the selling of coal at places *en route* to Casson Close, but Jonathan Teal's plan of the Middleton waggon ways, made in August 1787, shows several branches already in existence from the main way. From south to north, these were:

35 yards, into the "Foundary" at Hunslet Carr (now Denison's).

35 yards, into "Armitage Staith", perhaps a little north of the present Moor Road terminus, but not quite as far north as the old Hunslet Moor Staithes.

52 yards, into "Workhouse Staith", north of the site of Hunslet Moor Staithes.

154 yards, into the Pottery, just north of Jack Lane.

Fullage Close could have been either the Armitage Staith or the Workhouse Staith, both of which adjoined Hunslet Moor, or it might have been a more recently built branch.

However, much larger scale rail links were already being advocated: longer even than the ambitious Low Moor link to the Calder. This was the year in which Richard Lovell Edgeworth resurrected his own dreams of large-scale railways, first written of by him in the 1760's, but now much more ambitious, with iron rails and stationary steam engines to cable-haul the carriages where inclines were necessary. (His writings were explored some years ago in *The Old Run*.) Edgeworth's essay was published by *The Leeds Mercury* in August 1802, but at the very beginning of the year, the issues of 16th and 23rd January had carried an even more detailed and more locally interesting plan, in the form of two letters signed "MERCATOR".

Regular readers of *The Old Run* history corner may well already have remembered where they saw this name before - apart from in an atlas. It was used by the person who initiated a spate of correspondence about transport between Leeds and Selby, explored in Issue 134. However, there is no more space remaining, and MERCATOR'S part in *The Waggonway Mania* must wait until Issue 138.

Sheila Bye

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JOBS FOR EVERYONE

A programme of repairs and improvements to the railway is planned for the Spring and the assistance of all members and friends of the railway is requested to complete the work for the start of the running season. The work ranges from general tidying up of the site, gardening, laying paving flags and painting through to trackwork.

Working weekends are planned for 1st/2nd February, 7th/8th and 14th/15th March 1992. All interested parties please contact Roger Walton on 0532 529307 or turn up on the day(s).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 6 February 1992 - The next informal volunteers meeting will be held at 7-30pm in the parish room at St. Mary's Church, Hunslet. All volunteers are invited to come along and air their views on any topic related to the railway.

Saturday 18 April 1992 (Easter Sunday) - A brief ceremony will be held at 2-15pm to dedicate the memorial to John Bushell at Moor Road Station. All members and friends are welcome.

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