

THE OLD RUN

**JOURNAL OF THE
MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST**



No.167

WINTER/SPRING 2000

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Editor: Vacant

Editorial Address:

e-mail:

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

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Cover picture:

The last train of the twentieth century is about to leave Moor Road on the evening of 19 December 1999.
Photo by E. Lanne

STOP PRESS! Just as this issue was being rushed off to the printers Alan Gilchrist accepted the job of OLD RUN editor. Congratulations, and thanks, Alan! More information in the next edition.

EDITORIAL

Steve Roberts

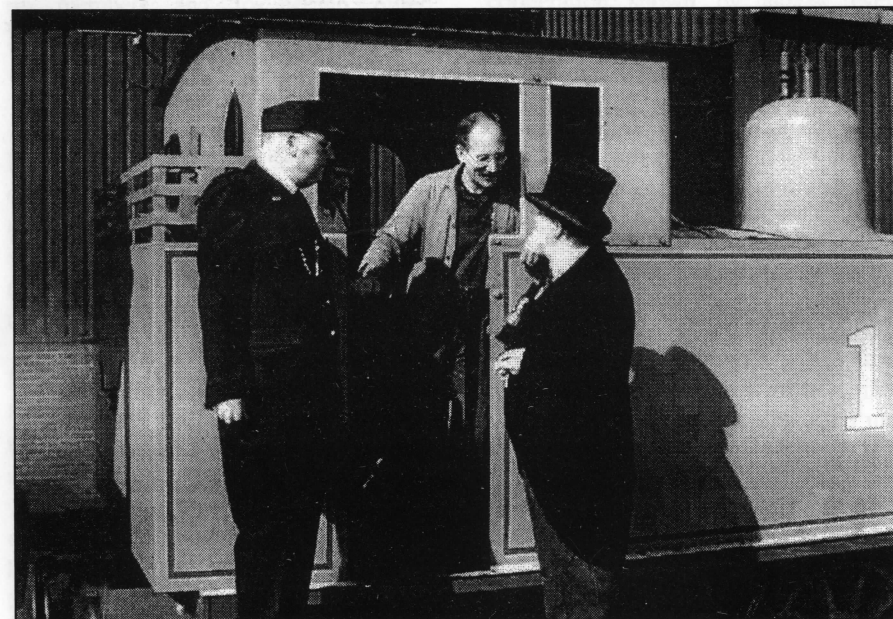
The absence of an OLD RUN through your letter box in recent weeks has become quite an embarrassment to the Trust Council. A new editor took over the magazine towards the end of last year and promised a new era with many exciting changes, not the least of which would be an end to the unwanted tradition of the magazine appearing late! However, it became obvious that, because of changed circumstances, the new editor was becoming unable to dedicate the necessary time to the task of editing the magazine. Things became even more desperate when it became obvious that phone calls, e-mails, etc., were not being returned. The Council was in a situation of not knowing what was happening. No letter of resignation has been received and we still do not know what the full situation is. What is obvious, though, is that we have to satisfy our obligations to the membership and I have undertaken to edit this issue on a one off basis whilst things are sorted out.

The lack of an OLD RUN editor would normally present us with a huge problem but I am pleased to report that two people have put their hands up and intimated that they would be willing to take on the task. Both these volunteers have done much work for the railway in the past and would be eminently suited to the task. Watch this space!



ABOVE Thomas (Brookes No.1) poses in the sylvan setting at Middleton Park
Photo by K Hartley

BELOW Sir Topham Hatt (Ian Smith) issues instructions to his driver (Graham Parkin) and guard (Colin Turner). Photo P Nettleton



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Steve Roberts writes:

As the Middleton Railway enters its fourth century the future appears bright. Increasing passenger numbers, a healthy bank balance and exciting projects on the horizon are all plus points. However, the problem with the Editorship of the OLD RUN, outlined on page 2 of this issue, only serves to highlight the knife edge that the Middleton Railway lives on when it comes to manpower. We are, and always have been, a small society with few active members in total. That said, we do have a significantly larger proportion of active members within the membership than most of the other Heritage Railways. The untimely

passing of Chris Rogers a few years back created a hole in our numbers that was never really filled. Chris was an ever present member, always ready and willing to do anything and see them through to a conclusion. More important, he would lead and organise. Unfortunately, we have all too few of this type of member and, to be frank, if certain members found that they could no longer devote the time and commitment that they do, we would struggle to continue. Whilst we always need more volunteers, just now we urgently need more leaders and organisers.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LTD for the year ending 31st December 1999 will be held on Thursday 29 June 2000 at 7.30pm at:

The Queens Hotel,
City Square,
Leeds

to transact any relevant business. Papers relating to this business will be sent to members prior the meeting.

Members wishing to tender apologies for absence, to make nominations for members of Council or to raise items of business shall present them in writing addressed to the Company Secretary at the Company's Registered Office at least four days before the meeting.

By Order of the Council. 21 March 2000

TIMES PAST

Winter 1959/60

In our 40th Anniversary year, it would seem to be an appropriate change from the Middleton Railway's early history (though bits of that will still crop up during the course of the year) for Times Past to look at the early years of the Railway's preservation. This issue begins the sequence with the text of the magazine's very first issue: No. 1 January 1960 (at least mainly, most probably completely, put together by Fred Youell, our Founder, first Chairman, and much missed Vice-President).

The Old Run January 1960

With a membership not confined to the University of Leeds, this Society clearly needs a news-sheet to keep members informed of progress and future activities. While this first issue is, of necessity, a bare outline of our progress in the first six weeks of our existence, it is hoped that future issues will be made into a complete record of the Society activities. It will be circulated to all paid-up members and to certain other interested people.

Chairman's Message

So much has happened since December when the Society came into existence, that it seems impossible to review it briefly. We still do not own a single yard of track, but we have opened negotiations for either the purchase or use of the Middleton Railway.

It is very appropriate that the Leeds University Railway Society should take the lead in forming a Society to preserve a railway which has been going since 1758 and was the first to make a commercial success of steam locomotives in 1812. The University Society is relatively small in numbers, and it is clear that we must invite the

collaboration of members of other railway societies and individuals, if we are to tackle so large a project successfully. Even so, L.U.R.S. forms the nucleus of the organisation, and has provided the ad hoc Committee to bring the Society into being.

The outstanding feature of the early stages of the Society to me as acting Chairman has been the kindness and cooperation shown by almost every person and organisation with whom negotiations have brought me in contact. Not everyone is likely to be wildly enthusiastic about a collection of railway enthusiasts intent on restoring a derelict line, however important historically, but the response has been most encouraging. Businessmen who might reasonably have politely shown me the way out have offered sympathy and encouragement; nationalised industries have replied by return of post; and people with no interest in railways have wished us success. Public reaction so far has been favourable and the idea of turning the M.R. into a working museum appears to be accepted as worthwhile. We have a vast amount of work before us. Our needs are members, money and manpower: members to widen the base

of the Society, money (as Subscriptions and Donations) to buy essential tools, stock and materials, and manpower to turn our present ideas into future achievements. In 6 weeks we have made a good beginning. May we keep up the pace until we have made the M.R. into the Railway Showpiece of Leeds.

My best wishes to all members,
R. F. Youell,
Acting Chairman.

PROGRESS REPORT

In the middle of December 1959, the LURS Committee felt that there was a great risk of the M.R. being irretrievably split up and that someone ought to take the initiative in an effort to keep the line going as a monument to the part played by Leeds in the development of railways. The obvious corollary was the establishment somewhere on the line of a Museum where relics and documents of the 202 year old line could be collected and preserved. At the same time, the final abandonment of Leeds Tramways had recently occurred, and apart from the possibility of one tram going to a Leeds museum, there was no prospect of preserving a short piece of tramway as a working museum piece. Leeds was the first British city to run trams with overhead pickup of current, and it was therefore decided that part of our effort should be devoted to acquiring some Leeds tramcars.

Quite naturally, our first task has been to investigate the feasibility of acquiring the remains of the MR cheaply, of restoring it and running it economically, and then

to commence negotiations. Every firm or organisation on the line was approached; all received our scheme sympathetically, especially Messrs. Clayton's, the Gas Engineers, who are themselves interested in reopening the line for their own traffic. It is not every railway that has a coal merchant's at one end and a coal mine at the other, but we must not be too optimistic about the prospects here as British Railways have an operating monopoly at present over the Colliery section of the line.

The section from Gt. Wilson St. to Jack Lane is now owned by the N.E. Gas Board who have built over part of the site. The bridge near Jack Lane over the Midland Rly. is intact and carries gas mains as well as the rails which have not been pulled up. To the south, the end of the line beyond Town St, Middleton, is now a housing estate. None of those parts appear capable of restoration, at least for a long time.

Between Hunslet Moor and Middleton Town St., the prospects are much brighter: the track remains, though in poor repair, from the Moor to Parkside Gt. Northern Junction, and also on the double line branch to the Midland line at Balm Road. From Parkside to Middleton Pit has been relaid by the Coal Board for their outgoing coal, but there is ample room beside it for an independent line. The sidings at the fireclay works at Middleton are disconnected from the main line and in a bad state. The Middleton Fireclay Co. is in voluntary liquidation and the works are for sale. The incline from the works to Middleton

Town St. has had the track lifted recently, but the sleepers and a vintage semaphore signal remain. A short section at the lower end is owned by the Colliery for explosives stores.

There is obviously plenty of scope for restoration on the line, limited only by financial resources and manpower. The line of the railway is hardly of scenic beauty, but even slag heaps and quarries can be disguised or covered, and Middleton Park is a bare 100 paces from the line.

We have received good wishes for the success of the scheme from the officers of the N.C.B., who own Middleton Pit, but major reconstruction there will make it difficult for them to give us much active help. The many BR officers whom we have seen or written to have been very helpful and most interested in our efforts. We might particularly mention Mr A. Blower, Assistant to the Chief Civil Engineer, Leeds, BR, who has walked the line with our Chairman, and reported on the condition of the permanent way and works. The latter include some unique iron level crossing gates dating from 1901.

The Leeds City Engineer has given very careful Consideration to our proposals to restore the line, and the Town Planning Committee will be giving its verdict shortly.

Mr M. T. Kendrick, of Messrs J. C. Kirk and Son, liquidators to the Middleton Fireclay Co., who own the railway, has been kindness itself. He has been

connected with the firm for a long time and is himself very interested in railways.

Turning to the tramway side of our scheme, we acknowledge the cooperation of Major J. W. Robinson, of Hinchliffe's, scrap merchants, who have sold us three Leeds trams at scrap price, and one tram to two of our members privately. The General Manager of Leeds City Transport has offered us a set of automatic point equipment, two girder trucks and a set of jacks for lifting tram bodies, at scrap price.

The advice of Mr. V. J. Matterface (former tramway works engineer, L. C. T.) now B. R. Electric Traction Engineer, Newcastle, has been invaluable and he has placed his expert knowledge at our disposal.

Mr. John Alcock, MA, Managing Director of Hunslet Engine Co., visited us, expressed his wholehearted support, and gave us a most generous personal donation to our funds.

Meetings.

The Committee meets weekly at 3pm Wednesdays in the Acting Chairman's room. Work parties assemble at the Chairman's room Saturdays at 11.30. It is hoped to arrange a full General Meeting of the Society soon to elect a fully representative Committee to take over from the ad hoc Committee which has managed the Society so far. Notice of this will be given as far in advance as possible to all members.

Subscriptions.

These are one pound per annum, 3s. for members 16-18 and students, Treasurer George Coles, Leeds University Union.

General inquiries and documents etc. to Peter Dean, Secretary, at Leeds University Union.

It is a clear sign of Fred Youell's indefatigable nature that he had managed to achieve all this practically single-handed within the space of perhaps 6 weeks, and compose a 2-page duplicated newsletter packed with detail!

In the later 1960's it was hoped that the Society would be able to purchase the fireclay works buildings, which stood a little to the south of our modern Park Halt site. These were to become a museum, workshops, and covered accommodation for locomotives, but they were in an isolated position and eventually became vandalised beyond anything but extremely expensive repair work, as did the collection of trams. By the mid 1960's, the tramway museum at Crich was being developed, and it was inevitable that our Society's tram enthusiast members would rather work on that project than the Middleton one, and the Middleton Railway Preservation Society henceforth became solely concerned with railway relics. Sadly, some of the trams failed to attract offers of a new home, and were scrapped.

If any of our very early members remain with us, the Historian/Archivist would be very much interested to learn of any photos/slides/film they might have of our pioneering days, of which we could obtain laser copies or duplicates (address on p.23).

R&B, 40 YEARS ON

Something our longtime benefactors Messrs. Robinson & Birdsell's, did not have to deal with in the days when our members operated a railway goods link for them to the Balm Road interchange, was fashionable Chinese folklore fads. This rather belatedly aired item appeared in the ITV Teletext local news pages, 31.10.1998:

FENG SHUI WILL DICTATE BLASTS

A Leeds company is to demolish five 500ft chimneys in Hong Kong - but only after consulting feng shui experts about the job.

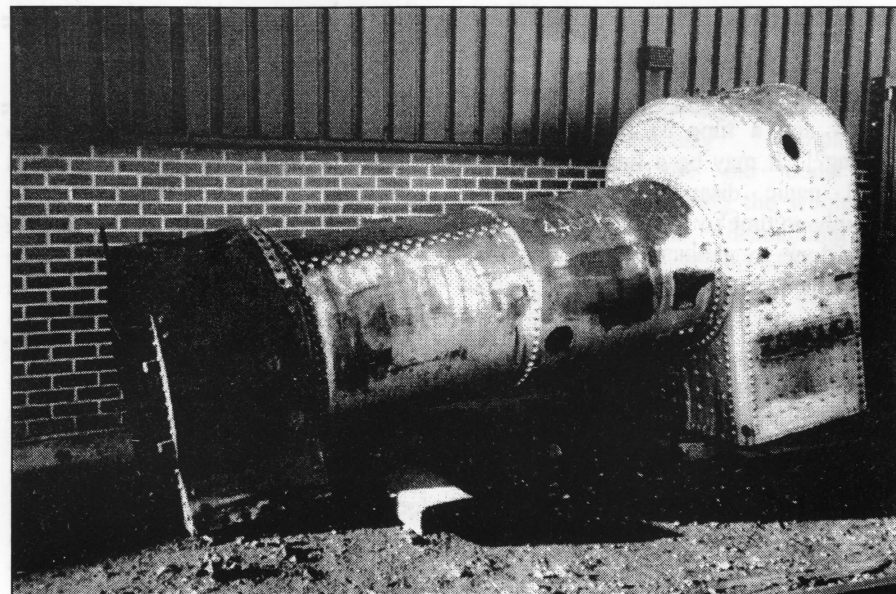
Beeston-based Robinson and Birdsell were told the best time, date, order and direction for the blasts, which will use 160kg of explosives.

Feng shui dictates that life is affected by the positioning of items.

[It could also provide a handy culprit to blame if a job goes horribly wrong!]

Above Right The old boiler from 1601 after removal from the frames. The raised firebox was a feature of Manning Wardle locos until the works closed in 1926.

Below Right The new boiler takes shape at Israel Newtons works. A boilersmith forges the new firebox backplate with the aid of a large copper hammer. Hard and a skilled work!



LOCO NOTES

Steve Roberts

Winter and a time of rest. Who's kidding?! It may be a time when the initial panic disappears but it is certainly no time to rest. There's much to be done to make sure that we do have some locos for next season.

1310

The Y7 tank ran some of the Santa specials before being 'winterised'. This involves draining all water from the boiler, tanks, etc and removal of those pipes where water might accumulate and cause damage if it froze. Frozen water is a great enemy of stored steam locos. It can do a great deal of damage if it is allowed to happen - burst pipes and shattered fittings frequently happen. Far greater harm can come if a loco has ice in its cylinders and is moved. Ice is solid and immovable. The frequent result is broken cylinder heads, bent coupling rods and sheared cranks. Expensive, to say the least.

Other than reassembly and a steam test no other work is planned for 1310 this winter.

1625

Like 1310, the little Cockerill has been winterised and, at the time of writing, still awaits its annual boiler inspection. The loco becomes due for its 10 year thorough boiler inspection in June

2000 and we were expecting to have to remove the boiler from the frames and remove all the tubes. However, some discussions have been taking place with our Insurance Company (the 'Competent Person' in law) and it is possible that there will be no need to remove the boiler and tubes because of the boilers unusual construction. Once the tank has been removed full access is available to the outside of the boiler shell and, unlike on a conventional loco, there are no hidden areas that cannot be examined. Likewise, there is full access to the inside of the boiler without removal of the thimble tubes and these can also be thickness tested in situ to establish their condition.

67

Steady progress has been possible over the last few weeks and many small (and not so small) jobs have been done. The Cab roof (complete with cab front) has received platework repairs to remove corroded and holed platework and has now received the first few of several coats of paint. The L.H. tank repairs have now been completed and this, too has received the first of several coats of paint. The protective bars on the cab rear windows (to prevent damage when coaling) have been refitted and the coal bunker painted internally.

Attention has at last turned to the boiler and this has now been washed out and is being prepared for its thorough inspection by the Insurance Company. All the studs have had the screw threads re-cut or replaced, as necessary. The various washout plug holes have been re-tapped to ensure sound screw threads. The few tube holes in the smokebox tubeplate that were damaged during tube removal have been repaired. The regulator has received attention and has had the main and pilot valves ground in to ensure that they are steam tight. This small sounding job has taken one volunteer four full days to do. The safety valves have been stripped for examination and some repairs are necessary, notably a new main spindle and lifting lever.

The boiler cladding sheets have been extracted from the storage container and assessed for their condition. Some renewal and repair will be necessary.

Much work still remains to be done and much of this work cannot be started until the boiler is back in the frames. It was a common feature of early Leeds built locos that so much had to be removed before the boiler could be removed or could not be fitted until the boiler was fitted. Hudswell Clarke, Manning Wardle and Hunslet locos from this period all exhibit this horrendous design concept! In the case of 67, we cannot fit the reverser, tanks, springs, lubrication and front sanders amongst many other parts.

1601

As mentioned above, removing the boiler on an early Leeds built loco can be horrendously complicated. Removal of the old boiler has necessitated removing the whole cab, including bunker, dismantling the brakegear, reverser and removing the springs amongst the more usual bits. All this work has now been done and the old boiler has been removed from the frames. This dismantling work has opened up various areas that had not been properly painted during its earlier overhaul and attention is now being given to these areas.

Work on the new boiler has now started at the supplier - Israel Newton & Sons - in Bradford. The boiler backplate has been flanged and work on the rather complex throatplate will start shortly. These few words cover a vast amount of work. Before these firebox plates can be flanged accurate heavy formers have to be made around which the plates are bent, or flanged. This flanging process is done by hand and flanging 1/2" thick plate takes a lot of sweat, even when it is heated to almost white heat. The back plate alone took two men four days to simply flange. Not for present day boilermakers the luxury of a flanging press and a single few minutes operation that would have been the case when the original boiler was made. Although Newtons do have a suitable press, the costs of making a full set of flanging blocks cannot be justified for 'one off' boilers.

Quite a few of the fittings have to be transferred from the old boiler to the new, one important item being the regulator. Removal of the whole casting took quite a bit of effort and it is probable that it has never been removed since the loco was built. The method of making a steam tight joint was interesting and one that the author of these notes has not come across before. This consisted of a fine copper wire mesh gauze and white lead filler.

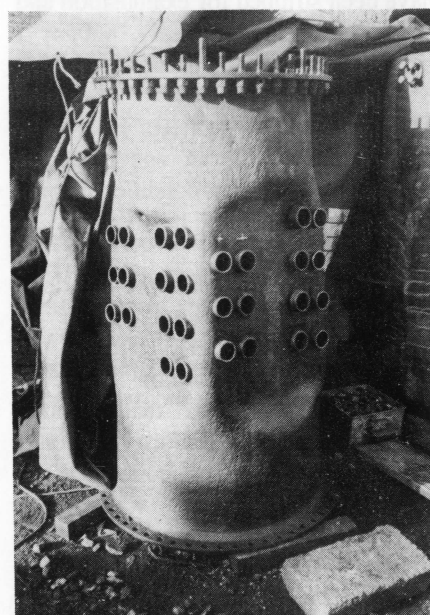
2103

This small Peckett has been a regular performer since its return to traffic and is proving a popular addition to the working fleet. It was generally first choice for the Santa Specials but disgraced itself by shedding its right hand side leading coupling rod brass on the last day of operations. Besides shattering the brass, the coupling rod was bent somewhat but fortunately no other damage occurred. Repairs have been carried out over the winter, the rod being carefully straightened to return it to its original shape. There was evidence of the brass having worked loose previously as the rod end was badly worn and uneven. The opportunity has been taken to machine the end of the coupling rod to restore a true and parallel housing and a the new brass has been machined to suit the new dimensions. The supply of a new bearing brass has necessitated the manufacture of suitable patterns for the two half pieces which have now been cast and machined to suit.

Mention was made in the last Old Run that the injectors were proving somewhat troublesome. However, with use, they have improved considerably and it is now possible to get either injector to pick up without wasting water.

54

Progress with our Sentinel down at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre suffered a setback at the end of December with the departure, for personal reasons, of the person who had been carrying out the work. The boiler has had the firebox re-tubed



Above The re-tubed and re-studded firebox from the Sentinel awaiting reassembly

and all the many studs replaced but still awaits assembly and a hydraulic test. The future plans for this loco are now very much up in the air. In theory we have an agreement with the BRS that they overhaul the loco in return for free use but it is probable that they will not be able to complete the works and the loco may have to return to Leeds for this to be completed. We shall have to wait for further developments.

2387

Thomas, as the loco now officially is, did a great service at our November event and performed without real problems, despite being somewhat unfinished. Due to the shortage of working licenced 'Thomas's' the loco was urgently requested by the Great Western Society and was whisked off to Didcot for five days of operations during December, despite this unfinished state.

Further work has been carried out on the loco since its return to Middleton and the majority of the outstanding jobs have now been completed. These have included making the sanding gear operational, repairs to the blower valve and injectors, fitting of a sight feed lubricator and extending the injector overflow pipes. A boiler washout has also been carried out and the loco has again now gone on its travels. At the time of writing it has just completed an intensive nine day stint at the Kent & East Sussex Railway where it is understood to have performed satisfactorily. It's next port of call is

back to Didcot before a lightning visit to East Anglia (Mangapps Farm) and a return to Middleton for our own Thomas Gala at the end of March. A hectic schedule, indeed!

1210 SIR BERKELEY

Discussions over the future use of this popular little loco have been successfully concluded and we recently signed an agreement which will see the loco overhauled for a reasonably quick return to service and an assured future at Middleton. The locos owners, the Vintage Carriages Trust will pay for the commercial overhaul of the boiler whilst we will undertake the mechanical (bottom end) work. Until the loco is stripped down, this is something of an unknown and a bit of a gamble (and loco overhauls are notorious for being a bad bet!) we are anticipating a relatively simple job.

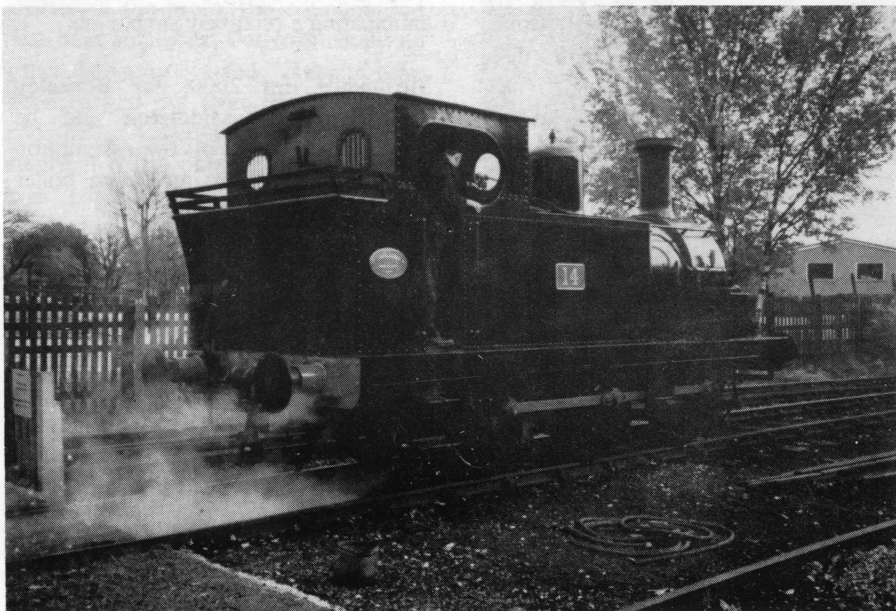
Meanwhile, for 2000, **Sir Berkeley** will remain at Middleton and be available for traffic on the assumption that it will pass its impending boiler inspection.

7401, 91, D631, D577, 138C, Rowntree No.3 and 1786 are all, as usual, serviceable and used as required.

I am sometimes asked about the remaining loco fleet that never get a mention in the Old Run. It may be of interest to readers for me to give a brief resumé of the other locos. The only order is that in which I think of



Products of 126 Jack Lane. **Above**, Hunslet 1697/1932, our own 'John Alcock' rubs shoulders with Hunslet 686/1898, variously known at 'St Johns', 'The Lady Armaghdale' and 'Thomas'. **Below** 'St Johns' started life as Manchester Ship Canal No.14



Recently restored Peckett No 2103 poses along with John Wilkinson (Driver) and Michael Garbutt (Cleaner)
Photo: Ian Smith



them and not necessarily their 'pecking order' in terms of a return to service.

2003 John Blenkinsop. A stalwart performer for many years our faithful Peckett has now been out of service for quite a while. Ten long years, in fact. It was retired in 1990 at the end of its 10 year boiler ticket and has patiently awaited overhaul ever since. It needs a full retube, boiler overhaul and a new smokebox but is thought to be relatively good mechanically. As has been mentioned with **Sir Berkeley**, only a full strip down will reveal the true extent of the work required to put it back into reliable service. A strong candidate for entering the works shortly.

1882 Mirvale came out of traffic last year at the end of its boiler ticket and also awaits a full overhaul. An attempt to have the loco returned to service by means of a 'fast track' overhaul at another railway did not come to fruition. Known to be relatively good mechanically and it is thought that the boiler needs relatively little work but a new smokebox tubeplate and the inevitable re-tube will be required.

No.6 It is all of 25 years since this powerful loco was last in steam. Known to be 'well worn' mechanically but understood to have a basically sound boiler. It will require a substantial amount of time and effort to return to service. It is a strong candidate for being next through the works not the least because it is

'Percy' to the many children that come to see it.

53 Windle last ran in 1986 and has stood in the middle road siding since then. **Windle** is of robust construction but is well worn mechanically. Its boiler is an unknown quantity. In theory, it is relatively good but stripping down may well reveal a multitude of problems. Know work on the boiler includes welding in new copper patches and re-rivetting the firehole door ring, together with the inevitable re-tube. It is one of the very few locomotives still known to have a Giffard injector (Henri Giffard invented the injector) which, although historical, gave much trouble in service. It has only got one boiler feed and one boiler water level gauge and these aspects may not be acceptable to our Insurance Company in the twenty first century.

1309 Henry de Lacy II would be a popular candidate for restoration, being held in fond memory by those that remember it. Perhaps its time may come around sooner rather than later but it is likely that it will need new boiler. The old one is known to have many problems, not the least being bad grooving at the foundation ring, cracks in the firebox and a badly wasted tubeplate, making a new boiler more likely than a repair. Mechanically, it is also suspect, the axleboxes requiring much work. It looks good, though!

385 was another loco that retired from traffic in 1999 after fifteen reliable years of service. Its mechanical

overhaul should be relatively straight forward but the boiler work is known to be considerable. The age of the boiler is not known but the copper firebox dates from 1955. It is possibly unique in this country in having a flanged and welded copper firebox. Certainly the writer has never heard of another. It will require new crown stays and probably new half sides to the outer firebox. The firebox sides have, in the past, had the stay holes repaired by bushes and this may not be acceptable to our Insurance Company. A full retube is also necessary.

2702 This little Bagnall saddletank was a mainstay of the loco fleet in the early days and was always regarded as a relatively powerful, free steaming little workhorse. Taken out of service in 1980 for some simple repair work to the smokebox tubeplate, the job grew, like Topsy, and a new boiler was found to be the only practical proposition. It has stood for twenty years now and will require much doing to it before it can steam again but it would be an economical performer if returned to traffic. Mechanically, it was

'reasonable' but would require a bottom end overhaul. A popular loco in its day.

3083 What's this, I suspect many people will be thinking! Tucked away in the back road siding is the other Cockerill, the derelict chassis of which arrived last year. What future there is for this loco is something that really hasn't been considered in any detail. It is thought to be restorable but will require very much work. Whether this happens or whether it becomes a long term source of spares for **1625**, only time will tell.

3900002 Last, but by no means least, is our one non-operating diesel loco. Last in service in the early 1980's it was withdrawn for attention to the engine. The cracked cylinder head was repaired but the necessary work on the water pump and radiator was never carried out. At 48 hp, it is not powerful enough to be of use in passenger service and its return to service is likely to need a fairy godmother. Any offers?

NOTES & NEWS

40TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

On 1st July, 2000, we are holding a 40th Anniversary dinner in the Palm Court Lounge at the Queens Hotel. Thanks

to our president, Gerald Egan, for organising this.

Cost is £22 a head, for a three course meal. Bookings can be done through

myself, with cheques made payable to Middleton Railway Trust Ltd.

I hope members will be able to support us on this special occasion and look forward to receiving bookings shortly!

TWINNING WITH BELGIUM!

One thing currently being explored by Council is the idea of twinning our railway with a Continental preserved line.

The "chosen" railway is the Stoomcentrum Maldegem, a 6 mile long railway just outside the picturesque City of Brugge, in Belgium.

I can almost here the question "Why?" and the answer really is quite simple – Publicity and marketing opportunities.

PO North Sea Ferries operate a service between Hull & Zeebrugge, which gives us two major opportunities to publicise our railway. The railway at Maldegem has a P&O man on its Board, and they are already have their leaflets on board the Zeebrugge ships. Middleton's would join them! As both Maldegem & Middleton are very close to each other's respective ports, it should not be too difficult to attract new custom to each other's lines. The publicity angle alone is worth quite a bit to us. We already have a special european weekend in June, to which the Press have been invited, along with Euro-MP's. The local press will be

very interested in the event and we hope to be able to announce the "twinning" then, if all goes well.

Should people wish, members of both railways will be able to visit each other and help operate each other's lines, which I already have been doing for some time.

This latter may well also help in obtaining EU Grants. We will be indulging in "cultural exchanges", which is a useful thing to be doing if one wants EU cash. Gerald Egan is already looking out for opportunities, I'm sure!!

Ian Smith

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

I recently wrote a paper for Heritage Railways, dealing with the use of Young Volunteers on preserved railways. A fair amount was based on experience gained at Middleton, along with research carried out at other lines. The resultant paper was vetted by HMRI and is now accepted as a guideline for the use of youngsters.

I am now presenting a similar paper on the subject to a European audience at the FEDECRAIL conference at Bad Briesig, Germany, in April.

It's good to know that Middleton's practices are now accepted as a standard for other railways to achieve!

Ian Smith

BUSINESS PLAN

It is very much the done thing for business's to have a Business Plan, a prime purpose of which is to show that the business is viable and that it's aims are realistic and achievable. It's something that we have never really had at Middleton, our fairly easy going approach of only spending what we have in the bank (and only then, reluctantly!) and operating at a pace that we can cope with has proved a successful formula for virtually all of our forty years existence. Only in those first couple of years has our bank balance been 'in the red' and we have looked after our money very wisely, ever since. You could say that this approach is our 'Business Plan', even though it is not written down.

However, the possibility of the extension into the Park and the need to apply for grant aid has meant that we have had to put pen to paper and draw up a formal Business Plan. A great deal of work has gone into the preparation of this document and, although many people have contributed to it, this has mainly been put together by Emmanuel Lanne and Ian Dobson. This has taken many hours to put together and is a prime example of the unseen work that goes on away from the Railway every day of the year.

IN THE WORKS

Much of this years winter activity has centred on our workshop. What's happening with the locos in the works

is detailed fully elsewhere but there is much more going on than just work on the loco fleet.

The main focus of attention this winter has been coach No 1867, which has received quite a bit of attention, as well as a full repaint. The brake gear has received an overhaul. New brake blocks have been fitted and the cross beams have been rebushed, as necessary. Some of the buffers have received new timber buffing pads to replace rotten existing ones. All the seats have been stripped out, dismantled into their component sections, cleaned, sanded down and re-varnished before re-assembly.

Various side panels have been replaced, as has some of the timber framework. The doors have received attention, including the fitting of new window straps and brass handles to the outside. The body has been completely painted internally and externally. All this work has taken many hours for our volunteer team but the finished result is excellent. This coach is now in its thirteenth year and is well past the twenty years which we originally envisaged as being its 'life' when first converted!

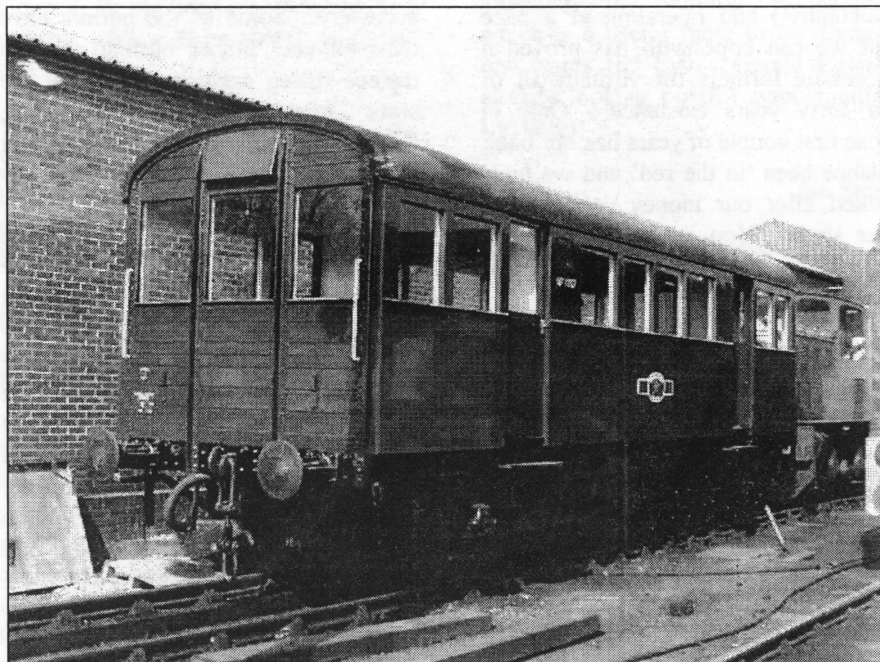
Some work has also been expended on the NRM's 16 ton mineral wagon but this remains to be completed, priority having to be given to the various 'must do before the start of the season' tasks.

Our forklift truck let us down during February when the motor that powers the steering pump failed. These things

never happen at convenient times or, in this case, in a convenient position, and much ingenuity was necessary to move it into a suitable position to extricate the coach.

Repairs are still outstanding at the time of writing. One thing is certain,

we have come to make much use of the forklift and we cannot do without it now. There is a possibility of acquiring another machine and this may be the cheapest option.

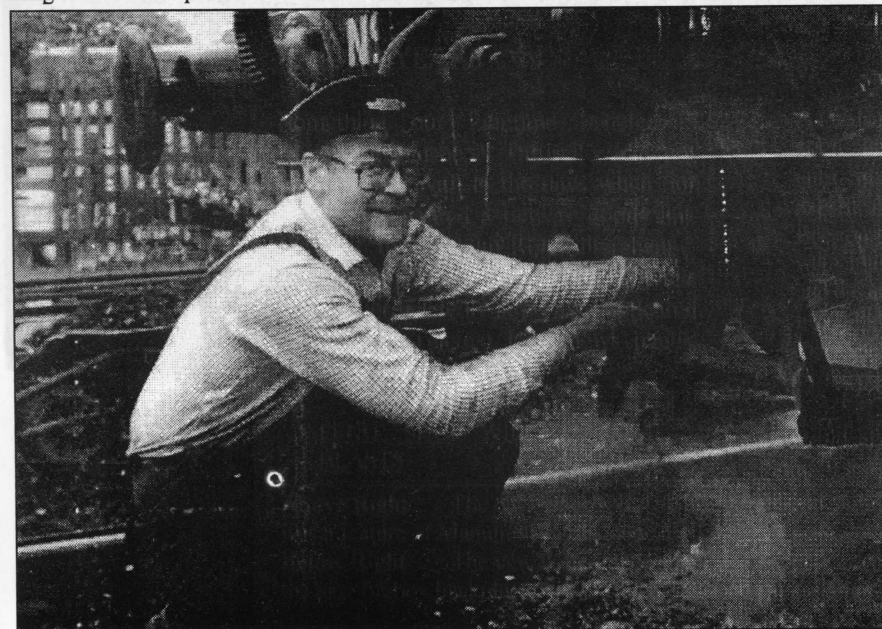


Above Coach No 1867 is shunted out of the workshop to be made ready for traffic following its major overhaul and repair



Above Middleton's future? Teenagers Andrew Plumb & Jame Roberts help sort sleepers.

Below Doing the dirty work. Stephen Turner gets down to the unenviable but necessary task of raking out 1310's ashpan.

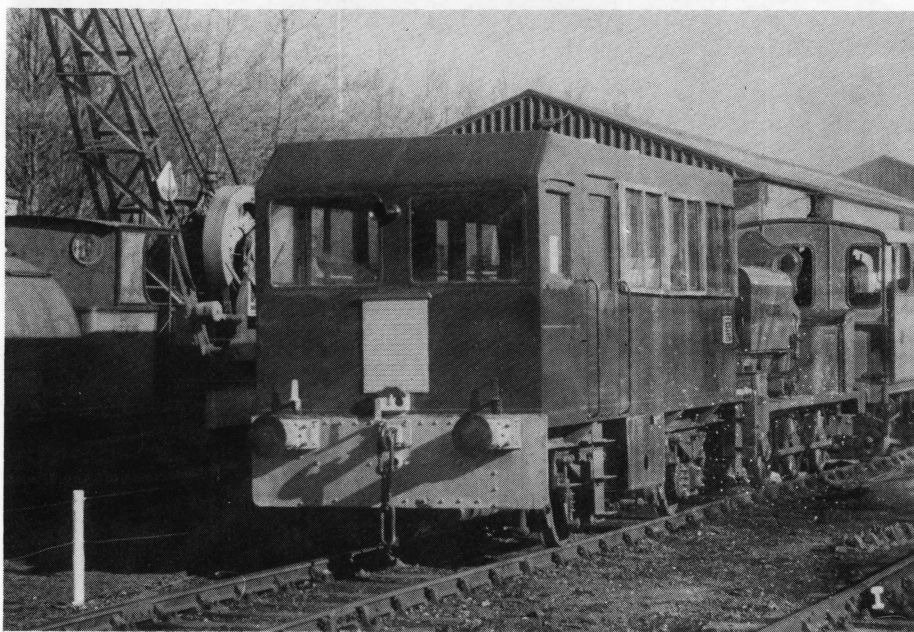


OLIVE

If you read the national railway press you may well have seen a picture of 'OLIV' looking resplendent in a new coat of green paint. It is sometime since she was last mentioned in the OLD RUN so I thought that perhaps you might be interested in what is going on with the green machine.

She arrived at Middleton in November 1997 and since then steady progress

has been made in making her presentable and a runner. The local members of the EM2 Locomotive Society who own her have undertaken the majority of the work. It would be a great slur, however, to ignore the efforts of some Moor Road stalwarts who have mucked in at various times - usually crucial ones!



Above 'OLIV' is now resplendent in the Brunswick Green carried by the first generation diesel multiple units. Will it sprout a 'cats whisker'? We'll have to wait and see! Photo by Keith Hartley.

So, what have we done? We have removed the hydraulic inspection tower and all associated pipework. The resultant hole in the floor has been covered in to match the existing floor. We have fitted six new windows and frames - all made to measure in Leeds! The air system, which supplies both the braking and gear change systems, has seen all rotten and missing pipes replaced or repaired. She can now be driven from either end, which we suspect is the first time for some time! The workbench has been removed and has now found a new life as a key part of the Railways workshop! In late 1999 all rotten parts of the bodywork were cut out and re-plated where necessary and a full repaint undertaken.

As of March 2000 she is basically fit to move under her own power and the air

reservoirs have now been removed for insurance certification. We re in consultation with the Railway Inspectorate regarding the fitting of seats for passenger carrying. The group of people doing most of the work are really midweek evening people so we are currently having a rest until the longer evenings arrive! Once we start work in earnest again we shall be turning our attention to the interior. We anticipate fairly fast progress on this and we may even see a run out in the September gala - subject to Railway Inspectorate approval, of course! As she is 50 years old this year (although we don't exactly know when!) we will do all we can to aim for this.

Ian Dobson

FROM THE DESK OF THE MARKETING OFFICER

Howard Bishop Writes:

At this time of year most of Britain's 150 or so steam railways and museums will be assessing whether or not the last year was a financial success. Reports indicate that many railways have done very well in 1999, with some facing the distinct possibility of a record-breaking year for passenger numbers.

This makes quite a change from the doom-mongers of a few years ago who predicted that the preservation bubble might burst. In the event the opposite

seems to be happening. What is very clear, however, is that railways face increasing competition for visitors, from Sunday shopping to other attractions.

In the light of a much more competitive environment we need to take a long, hard look, from both the railway enthusiast's point of view and especially from the viewpoint of the general public. These are the people who provide us with the funds to

spend on preserving our transport heritage and recreating the steam era.

How do we stimulate public patronage? We need a number of diverse ideas to promote our activities. The common denominator to these ideas is the concept of "added value". A ride on a steam train alone may no longer be enough to attract customers through the gate in the numbers necessary to maintain our stock, equipment and growth. After all, this is why we hold special events such as our "Thomas" and Santa's Special days.

It is particularly pleasing to report that the 1999 operating year saw our overall revenue from passenger fares (normal services and special events together) increased by over 35%! Indeed our passenger revenue at the September Gala weekend was up by 28%, the November "Thomas" up by no less than 63%, and Santa's Specials up by 16.8%. From this we can assume that our current marketing strategy is successful and that we are indeed satisfying the needs of the local and wider communities.

So what are we going to do to ensure the flow of passengers/customers in the coming year? We shall certainly build on the proven marketing techniques of the past years. The first few months of a new year sees a major thrust by way of leaflet distribution and this is one area where everybody can help - ALL OFFERS OF WHICH

WILL BE GLADLY ACCEPTED, just phone 01977 620585!

As we embark on a new year our biggest challenge will be how to become more commercially minded and how to offer even better value for money. Running an expanding railway is increasingly expensive to operate, and the financial contribution that visitors make is essential for its survival and growth. Increased numbers of visitors also raises the question of providing better visitor facilities. For this we need manpower and other resources. This is certainly not a time for complacency! Who will join us in the challenge?

The Marketing Committee is now actively planning for the 2001 operating season! We are hoping to repeat what was reportedly a very successful event some years ago - a combined Rail/River/Road tour of historic Leeds, involving a trip on the Middleton Railway, a cruise on the Leeds-Liverpool canal/Aire and Calder Navigation, and transport on a vintage Leeds 'bus. Also looking ahead to 2001, the Heritage Railway Association in conjunction with the National Railway Museum, is to hold a mega-exhibition at the NRM featuring 50 years of UK Railway Preservation. The Middleton Railway, as the first standard gauge railway to be run by volunteers will be included in this exhibition which will enable the Middleton Railway to be brought to the attention of a large public audience.

EUROPEAN STEAM WEEKEND - FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE URALS

The heading may have Churchillian undertones, but it is nevertheless an accurate description of one of this year's major events in the Heritage Railway Association's calendar. The dates of 10th and 11th June 2000 are firmly fixed in the diaries of many of the heritage railways and museums throughout the whole of Europe. Why European? Simply the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union and its heritage railway movement is subject to the rules and regulations that emanate from that organisation. The Heritage Railway Association, of which the Middleton Railway is a member, is a founder member of FEDECRAIL, a company representing the interests of all Heritage railway operators within the EU, especially in regard to the increasing tide of legislation and regulation coming from Brussels. An early success for FEDECRAIL was the exclusion of heritage railways from the "Hot Surfaces Regulations". If we had to comply with these, it would have meant having to paint our locomotives in a range of different colours according to the temperatures of the various parts! FEDECRAIL also promotes international cooperation and networking between its members, especially in the areas of marketing and promotion. FEDECRAIL seeks opportunities for its members to be recognised for what they are doing in terms of tourism, economic

regeneration and the study of railway development as shown by those members who have Museum status. June 10th and 11th has been designated European Steam Weekend. Each participating railway, including the Middleton Railway, will be flying the FEDECRAIL flag from their locomotives operating over the weekend, together with the flag of the country in which the locomotive was built prior to preservation. As well as the countries of the UK (England, Scotland and Wales), participating countries include the Isle of Man, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Italy and the Czech Republic. The weekend gives us great publicity opportunities for us to involve our local Member of the European Parliament and local MPs, particularly as it may be possible to attract European Regeneration Funding as part of "Partnership Funding" projects. It may also be possible to involve local councillors and Tourist Board members, local TV and radio stations and the Press. The Middleton Railway already has informal links with Stoomcentrum, Maldegem, Belgium - our own Ian Smith visits there regularly as a working member. We are looking to these links being made closer by way of a twinning arrangement, which it is hoped will take place during the weekend. So, although these dates are not highlighted as a special events on our 2000 timetable, please make a note of them now, and make sure you are able to attend what promises to be a memorable occasion.

COMING EVENTS AT THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY

A DAY OUT WITH "THOMAS"

The 2000 operating season gets off to a cracking start with A DAY OUT WITH "THOMAS" on the weekends of March 25, 26 and April 1, 2.

Featuring David Monckton's newly rescued locomotive "Brookes No 1" as "Thomas", the Leeds City Transport 1936 double-deck bus, David Gee's fairground organ, model railways in the Old Shed and competitions galore, this weekend again promises to be a major attraction to families in the South and West Yorkshire areas.

EASTER BUNNIES WEEKEND

We are repeating the popular Easter Bunnies weekend again this year on Good Friday, Easter Saturday, Easter Day and Easter Monday. Children

who bring along their Easter Bunny or wear an Easter Bonnet will be presented with a free Easter Egg. Look out for the Easter Bunnies who will be taking up residence at Moor Road this year.

40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

We will be celebrating the 40th anniversary in a big way over this weekend. Make a note in your diary now!

CAN YOU HELP?

We are always in need of extra pairs of hands at these and other events through the year. If you can help in any way, please get in touch! Telephone Stan Holdsworth, or leave a message of the Railway's answerphone, (0113 271 0320) anytime.

AND FINALLY.....

It's been a long time since I last produced an edition of the OLD RUN. Then it was a typewriter, cutting, pasting and lots of 'Tippex'!! This time I've the wonders of computer technology and desk top publishing. I don't know which is the easier method. If this issue seems a bit rushed, it has been. Thanks to all those who came to the rescue with articles, news & pictures. You know who you are.

Steve Roberts

THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED

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Full Trust Members	£8.50
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SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2000

A 'Day out with Thomas'	March 25, 26 April 1, 2 and November 4, 5, 11, 12
Easter Bunnies Weekend	April 21, 22, 23, 24
Postman Pat's Special	May 13, 14
40th Anniversary Gala	June 17, 18
Volunteers' & Members' Open Day	July 9
Teddy Bears' Picnic	August 6
Steam Extravaganza !	September 23, 24
Santa Train Services	December 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24

Special Events trains usually operate every 30 minutes from 10.30 to 16.30.
Please ring the Shop (0113) 271 0320 prior to the event for further information of
prices etc.

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