



**The Journal of the
Middleton Railway Trust**
No. 247 JULY 2020 £3.00
CORONAVIRUS 19 - COVID-19



© Ian Smith

Saturday 20th June 2020, 4.45 pm

Sixty years to the minute since this locomotive, John Alcock, pulled away the very first passenger train on the preserved Middleton Railway, Fred Youell's son, Matthew Youell, (Fred was our founder) waves to the world as this historic moment is re-created.

Sadly, because we were still in lockdown, there were no passengers, but the railway lives on.

The Old Run

No. 247
JULY 2020

Editor: Jenny Cowling

2 College Street
Sheffield, S10 2PH

Email:

oldrun@middletonrailway.org.uk

Photo Editor: Andrew Johnson

Email: **amj1066@hotmail.com**

Grateful thanks are extended to all those who have provided copy and images for this issue.

The Old Run is published quarterly by

The Middleton Railway Trust Ltd.

Publication dates are 15th January,

15th April, 15th July, and 15th

October, with deadlines of 15th

December, 15th March, 15th June
and 15th September respectively.

The Editor welcomes contributions -
photographs, articles, news items
and letters - relating to the interests
of the Trust and the operation of our
and other Railways.

Items for publication, including
images, are acceptable in any format
and may be sent via email, post, CD
or USB stick.

Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd. or the Middleton Railway Association.

© The Middleton Railway Trust Limited.

Our Chairman speaks:

The year 2020 started with such promise. After all 2020 is also the Diamond Jubilee Year of 'Coronation Street'.

More importantly, to quote from Sheila Bye's 'A History of the Middleton Railway Leeds', "at 4.45 pm on Monday 20th June 1960 Dr R. F. (Fred) Youell, wearing academic dress, took over the controls of a light engine (John Alcock) and gently pulled away a train full of eager children." And at that moment the Middleton Railway became the first volunteer operated standard gauge line in the U.K. and the next sixty years history of the Railway was launched.

And then, because of a tiny particle no more than 60 to 140 nm in diameter and composed largely of RNA, the UK has been forced into 'lockdown', tens of thousands of our fellow citizens have died prematurely, hundreds of thousands have fallen ill and the jobs of millions are under threat.

In the global scheme of things, the four month's suspension of operation of our Railway and the cancellation of our plans to mark our Diamond Jubilee may seem trivial, but to those who care about the Middleton Railway these are matters of some consequence.

Thanks to a suggestion made by John Linkins and others, and hard work by Steve Roberts, Tony Cowling, Ian Smith, Richard Pike and many others, our Diamond Jubilee was not forgotten.

At 4.45 pm on Saturday 20th June 2020 Mathew Youell, son of Fred Youell, waved off a special train headed by 'John Alcock' Sadly, because of the Covid 19 restrictions, passengers could not be carried on the train so the event could not be publicized, but Gavin Johnson was able to capture the special train on video and it is now available for all to see on the Trust's web site and social media platforms. 'Matthew Murray' was in steam for the event and thanks to the efforts of John, Richard, Chris Campbell and a team of young volunteers, both 'Matthew Murray' and 'John Alcock' looked superb.

Our Chairman speaks:

This event, though a very modest affair like that of the 20th June 1960, will generate useful publicity for the Railway in the local press and heritage railway press as the Railway prepares to re-open to the public.

All events to the beginning of August, (including a 'A Taste of Yorkshire' - our celebration of the best of Yorkshire Foods and Ales) have been cancelled because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The future of the other events planned for the remainder of the year will be reviewed, and details of what it is hoped can go ahead will be posted on the Trust's Website and social media platforms.

We are still hoping, subject to the government guidance, to hold an Autumn Gala to commemorate our Diamond Jubilee Year. With luck this will feature both '54' and '1310' working together. It would be fitting to see the Middleton Railway's first workable steam engine restored to traffic during Diamond Jubilee Year.

The other surviving element of the Railway's plans for Jubilee year will be the new two part history of the Railway. Part 1, written by Sheila Bye, covers the period 1758 to 1960 and will contain new findings about the early days of the Railway. Part 2, written by Ian Smith, covers the period 1960 to 2020 which has not been fully documented before. We hope both volumes will be available in time for your Christmas stockings.

All being well, the Railway will re-open to the public on Sunday 2nd August when an hourly service will be run. Currently the plan is to run on Sundays only through August (plus Bank Holiday Monday) but depending on the availability of volunteers every effort will be made to increase the service. Changes in days run and the service offered will be announced via the Trust's Website, so please keep an eye on this.

Although the Railway has been closed to the public for the last three months and to volunteers until quite recently, a lot of work has been done behind the scenes to enable

the Railway to safely re-open to the public in a way which meets the requirements of the Railway's Regulators. New risk assessments, working guidelines, operating plans, COSHH assessments etc. have been drawn up, additional PPE, hand sanitizers, 'sneeze screens' procured etc. This is still a 'work in progress' and what has been done may need revision in the light of changing Government Guidance and our own experience as we learn how to navigate the 'new normal'. None of us who signed up to volunteer on the Middleton Railway signed up to spend our time on these tasks but they are absolutely essential for a safe re-start. While it is sometimes invidious to name individuals, a special vote of thanks is due to Steve Roberts, Tony Cowling, Janet Auckland, Aaron Marsden and Mark Calvert for stepping up to the plate and getting on with this very necessary work.

As previously reported, due to prudent and careful management of the Railway by successive Councils (and some good fortune) the Middleton Railway will survive the Covid-19 Pandemic without much need to launch an appeal to the public for additional funding. However, because of 'lockdown', the Trust's income has dried up but not the Trust's expenditure, e.g. insurance premiums, and so the Covid-19 Pandemic will result in a significant reduction in the Trust's reserves. This means that a number of planned or proposed major projects, such as the cosmetic restoration of 'Conway' or casting a new cylinder block for 'Matthew Murray', may have to be deferred for a considerable period.

To help safeguard the long term future of the Trust, an appeal has been launched with the title 'Safeguarding the Future'. This has been publicised on the Trust's Website and on our social media platforms, and is set up in such a way that donations can be gift aided when made electronically – which is a facility previous appeals have lacked. Any support members of the Trust can give the Railway will be most gratefully received.

Our Chairman continues

In the last few weeks normality has begun to return to the Railway. Works trains have been run up the line to cut back the vegetation in preparation for resumption of running – and incidentally demonstrating the value of the new hedge cutter purchased for use with the mini digger. The workshops have resounded to the sound of volunteers fitting the last bits of piping back on ‘54’ and completing minor repairs on the other locomotives. Work has resumed on preparing the shop, café and Display Hall for visitors. In a few weeks we will be sharing our Railway with our visitors and hopefully providing them with an enjoyable day out.

All of this requires working volunteers and if any readers not already volunteering would like to consider doing so, please contact John Linkins or come down to the Railway and ask about volunteering. We are particularly looking for volunteers in customer facing roles, shop staff, guards, TTIs. etc. These are particularly rewarding roles because you can see how much pleasure our visitors get from our Railway. A further bonus is that you keep clean!

For now, please continue to take care of yourselves and your families and friends, follow government guidelines and look out for any neighbours who may be in a less fortunate position than yourselves.

Charles W Milner, Chairman

Train Spotting Days

On 18th January it was back up to Leeds and an interview at the Queens Hotel, Leeds with 6858 Woolston Grange being noted at Cohen’s scrap yard at Kingsbury and 43968, 44056, 44400, 44170 and 90122 stored on Normanton; on the 21st it was back home from Birmingham for the last time and a start on Monday 24th January at the Queens Hotel in Leeds, commuting from Slaithwaite every day and working split shifts, the afternoons off.

55A Holbeck was visited on 27th with three of Holbecks Jubilees and 70008 Black Prince noted, also 73112 still on shed; the 29th and 55H Neville Hill was visited, there being 12 steam including 69621 and 3442. The Great Marquess in store there. Every few days a walk down to Holbeck in the afternoon, some days with my camera, I had been bought a 35mm camera for Christmas, but still liked my trusty brownie.

By 14th February 45643 Rodney was stored withdrawn but 73112 was still there, by the 1st March 73112 had disappeared (I believe there was a rumour that it was to be preserved but a change of mind saw it cut up at T W Wards at Beighton Sheffield) but 45643 was still there with 20 other steam including Jubilees 45574 India, 45593 Kolhapur and 45697 Achilles.

I had now been at the hotel nearly three months and had got my privilege pass with the hotel being a British Transport Hotel. I think you had to have 6 months service before you became eligible for a free pass.

The 6th March and a trip north to Darlington with 51A having 17 steam locos on shed including 60124 Kenilworth, which may have been the stand by loco, also 60010 Dominion of Canada and 65033 being noted, with the works about to close at this time. Thornaby was next with the only steam loco being 60145 St Mungo on shed stored, it was then back to 50A York where 33 steam noted amongst 39 various diesels, including four V2s 60806, 60831, 60874 and 60886. The following weeks it was visits to Holbeck with nothing out of the

Train Spotting Days - Mike Cox

From 16D Nottingham, it was onto 16 F Burton where there were 32 steam locos on shed, but by now the Jubilees were history at Burton with mainly Stanier 8F 2-8-0s there. Next Derby Works beckoned, now being all diesel with first generation diesels 10000, 10201, 10202, 10203, ED2, ED4 and ED5 were noted more than likely for scrap. At this time Derby was building Sulzer Type 2 bo-bos, (D7600-05) it was onto 16A shed next door where 31 steam locos were noted, the following day it was back to Birmingham and work.

Train Spotting Days

ordinary, on the 18th March 55B Stourton was visited which contained 14 steam locos and then on to 55A Holbeck where 45643 was still in store. The 23rd March and at Holbeck, 45643 had gone to scrap with now 45574 India taking its place on the stored road.

On 11th April, making use of my privilege pass, a day out into Lancashire with 9K Bolton the first shed, I think now I had a railway pass it gave me a little freedom in asking to look around sheds and of course, if I had been caught bunking I could have lost the pass, Bolton was full of steam with 45 locos noted, it was then onto 8F Wigan Springs Branch with 58 steam locos on shed, with me copping my last Stanier 2-6-0 Lobster class; that's the name we gave them locally as they followed the Hughes Crabs numerically and which was stored withdrawn, there were also seven 0-6-0 Hunslet built diesel shunters stored.

At 10D Lostock Hall 46 steam locos noted on shed with 48302, 47336, 78022 and 78040 stored, it was then into Manchester behind 44934 and a visit to 9E Trafford Park shed where 42071, 42574, 78007, 78012, 78023 and 78023 in store awaiting moving to pastures new with also 42334 withdrawn for scrap amongst the 24 steam seen there.

It was back to my usual haunts of 55A Holbeck on 13th April where 45574 was still stored, but 45593 Kolhapur, 45660 Rooke and 45697 Achilles were on shed and 45675 Hardy was seen about. My next trip out with S.D.R.O.S by mini bus to sheds in the Yorkshire District with permits, first stop being 56D Mirfield with 16 steam locos on shed, next a short journey to 56A Wakefield with 80 steam locos on shed including 53 W D Austerity 8Fs and seven B1s. Next 55D Royston with 28 steam on shed including 45660 Rooke, next it was 36C Mexborough which by now was all diesel with 90241, 90367 and 90384 withdrawn stored on shed. It was 55E Normanton next with 21 steam on shed and then onto 55B Stourton with 20

Train Spotting Days

steam on shed and finishing the day off at 55A Holbeck with 29 steam on shed with nearly as many diesels.

First of May and a trip to Carlisle and to 12A Kingmoor where 70037 Hereward the Wake looking in a sorry state with its rear driving wheels missing, my last Britannia on shed photo taken with the trusty Brownie, there were another 13 Brits noted also 72008 Clan Macleod and 46115 Scots Guardsman in store. It was across the city to 12B Upperby where another four Brits on shed amongst 19 steam locos and also four of the Metropolitan-Vickers co-bo diesels were seen.

Back at Holbeck on 14th May 45574 was still residing awaiting its call to Drapers scrap yard at Hull. A trip to Rotherham area on 22nd May with a visit to 41D Canklow to see the shunting locos now off lease from Stavely Iron works (the lease being 99 years) where I was not disappointed with 41528, 41533, 41708, 41734, 41763, 41804, 41835, 47001 and 47005 present along with 61050 (DM30) 61051 (DM 31) and 61315 (DM32), these being the only locos on site, I did manage a few photos but the results were not very good, also noted was 84019 in Arnott and Youngs scrap yard at Park Gate. I then ventured onto 41A Tinsley which of course was all diesel.

The Bank Holiday 30th May and excursion trip to Blackpool for the day with my friends being hauled by 45063 (55A) we had to bunk 24E Blackpool shed where 45581 Bihar and Orissa, 45565 Victoria, 45647 Sturdee and 70010 Owen Glendower were noted amongst the 26 steam locos on site. I don't know what time we got home as with trips to Blackpool the line from there to Preston was nose to tail with excursions returning home. The following day I made the trip to York and 50A where 25 steam locos were present which include 60124 Kenilworth and 60145 St Mungo both stored, of note was the ride home behind 44680 for some of the journey.

Train Spotting Days

The 4th June and another trip with a picture of 92020 taken on a freight as we passed on a DMU near Huddersfield on the way to Leeds to see 4472 Flying Scotsman on a special with 70041 Sir John Moore and 70051 Firth of Forth seen before a walk down to Holbeck sheds where 70051 was now on shed along with three of Holbecks Jubilees, but 45574 had now gone to Drapers at Hull.

The next day I went to Liverpool, the Locoshed Directory first took me to 8K Bank Hall where out of 15 steam locos only 45627 Sierra Leone was in steam, the next shed was 8L Aintree with 17 steam on shed and then onto 8A Edge Hill with 34 steam, but by now no named locos just freight and black 5s about, it was then onto 8C Speke Junction where there was plenty of steam but mainly freight types, next in the directory was across the Mersey to 8H Birkenhead which by this time had become home to a number of LMS Crabs 2-6-0, and standard 9Fs with seven Crabs and 24, 9Fs on shed.

The following week I made the trip to Hull and on 50B Dairycoats there was still some steam 23 recorded mainly WD 2-8-0s in the sidings down from the shed the locos for Drapers were stored with 19 locos there mostly WD 2-8-0s but my old friend from Holbeck 45574 India was present along with a B1 61322. According to my notes 90413, 90533, 90606 and 90669 were in Drapers yard that day.

Another walk down to 55A Holbeck on 22nd June with 29 steam locos present including 70006 Robert Burns and 70017 Arrow along with four of Holbeck's Jubilees, two days later a ride out to Skipton, where the shed had 12 steam locos of which I copped two jinties and a standard 4 no 75058, for some reason I went back the following day with only 10 steam on 10G and no cops with 41251 noted out of steam.

On the 3rd July and trip to 9B Stockport

Train Spotting Days

Edgeley where 45596 Bahamas was noted on shed amongst 38 steam locos, it was then onto 9F Heaton Mersey where 29 steam locos were seen. Another visit to Holbeck two weeks later and 45660 Rooke was now stored withdrawn, and a trip to York two days later with nothing new seen, the two A1s were still in store there, but there was still plenty of steam about with 36 being noted. A couple of more trips down to Holbeck with nothing much before I started a trip to Scotland.

So on 5th August, the day after my 19th birthday my friend and I set off for Stonehaven. My friend had stayed in a B&B there before so we decided to set up camp there with our freedom of Scotland tickets and several permits, with some kind of itinerary. We soon found out that Stonehaven was not really an ideal place for a freedom of Scotland but we were keen spotters. I don't think the landlady saw us much at all as we had quite a few breakfasts on the train to Glasgow, and returned back on the last trains.

The first day was into Aberdeen where 60532 Blue Peter was seen awaiting departure to the carriage sidings, and photos taken (it was a cop) it was then to 61A Kittybrewster which was all diesel with quite a lot of the not very successful North British type 2s D61xx class about with some in store and some Clayton type 1s, was then back across the city to 61B Ferryhill with 60009 Union of South Africa, 60019 Bittern and 60532 Blue Peter with 60004 William Whitelaw now withdrawn, these being the only steam to be seen.

The following day it was up early and a brisk walk up the hill to the station for the first train to Edinburgh behind D362, the first shed visited was 64B Haymarket which of course was now all diesel.

Mike's memories continue in our next edition.

MEMORIES OF THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

The Flying Scotsman is an express passenger train service that has operated between Edinburgh and London. The service began in 1862; the name being officially adopted in 1924. It is currently operated by London North Eastern Railway. Its operating speed was 125 mph (201 km/h).

“Flying Scotsman” - 1907

There's a lonely little station on the main line way up north;
There's a schoolboy waiting there (he's only eight);
He's trembling with excitement, his heart beats all its worth,
He's come to see the “Scotsman” and its late!

It's a quiet country station which has few trains passing through,
And in summer time when all is calm and still,
You'll hear the liquid song of skylarks and the call of the cuckoo,
And the bleating of the lambs upon the hill.

You'll also hear the murmur of the ever busy bees,
The rising moan of pigeons as they rest.
The yellow-hammers calling for “a little bread and cheese”,
And the shrill sweetness of the wrens around their nest.

It's a kind of peaceful haven, set in a land of meadows green;
Nearby a blue bell wood of scented pine,
And a crystal laughing burn that sings a joyous paean,
As it twists and turns its way beside the line.

There's a musty smell of oil and tar that rises from the track,
Which mingles with the scents of Meadowsweet,
Of Honeysuckle, new mown hay (soon ready for the stack),
And the sea stroked air that tempers summer's heat.

At the station's southern end, a footbridge spans the line;
It's high up there the schoolboy tensely waits;
The signal box stands near (how all the levers shine!)
And below him are the level crossing gates.

All is quiet, very still, until there sounds a “ping!”
In the box nearby - it's from the signal bell.
And then comes quickly more, “ping: ping-a-ping: ping: ping:;
The signal man being asked if “all is well?”

“Is his section fully clear? Can he take the “Flying Scot”?”
He taps his answer back; “It is” - “I can”.
Now the scene begins to change - it changes quite a lot,
It's being set to run to careful plan;

the gates swing shut to close the road
(they do so with a crash!)

Continued overleaf

FLYING SCOTSMAN MEMORIES

There's a whirr of moving wire along the line;
The signals - "home" and "far" move down to show it's safe to pass;
All's being done to help the "Scotsman" make up time.

The boy is looking now to where the track curves way down south;
He's watching for a moving plume of white;
Ah! There it is - she's steaming fast; his heart jumps to his mouth,
His beloved train will soon come into sight.

Now she's left the curve behind and moved up to the straight,
He can hear her beat, her throbbing, pulsing roar;
She's travelling extra fast - that's because she's running late,
She's doing eighty miles an hour, or even more,

Now she's just a mile away and her whistles loud ad shrill,
The frightened cattle scatter far and wide.
As she sounds her warning message, "Look out, here I come Chat Hill!!"
She's moving smoothly with majestic pride.

Now she's here at last, with a noise like thunder crashing,
Drawn by a mighty engine garbed in shining green,
With smoke and steam out belching and wheels like lightning flashing,
To the boy a more than wondrous scene.

Klack klack, Klack klack, Klack klack she roars, flying through the station,
Her coaches golden brown, all shining bright.
The platform and the buildings shake to their foundation,
As the "Scot" blasts through with all her fearsome might.

Now she's moving out of sight and sound and steaming to the Border,
(See the rear guards van sway gently with her speed)!
Our little country station now returns to quiet order,
as the "Scotsman" races northwards to the Tweed.

Near the station there's a drinking fount where water's cold and clear,
It's there our schoolboy slakes his burning thirst.
Around him is the railway scene that to him is more than dear,
His magic world in which the "Scot" comes first!

"Flying Scotsman" - 1981

There's a little country station on the main line way up north;
There's an old man waiting there (he's eighty two);
He's come to see the "Scotsman" (for what today it may be worth),
But more his boyhood days in memory, to renew.

He hears her far away but no moving plume of white is seen,
No whistle clear and shrill comes o'er the air;
He sees no "chariot of fire", no Klacking wheels, no hissing pistons,
No belching steam, no stately green "atlantic" at which to stare.

Continued overleaf

FLYING SCOTSMAN MEMORIES

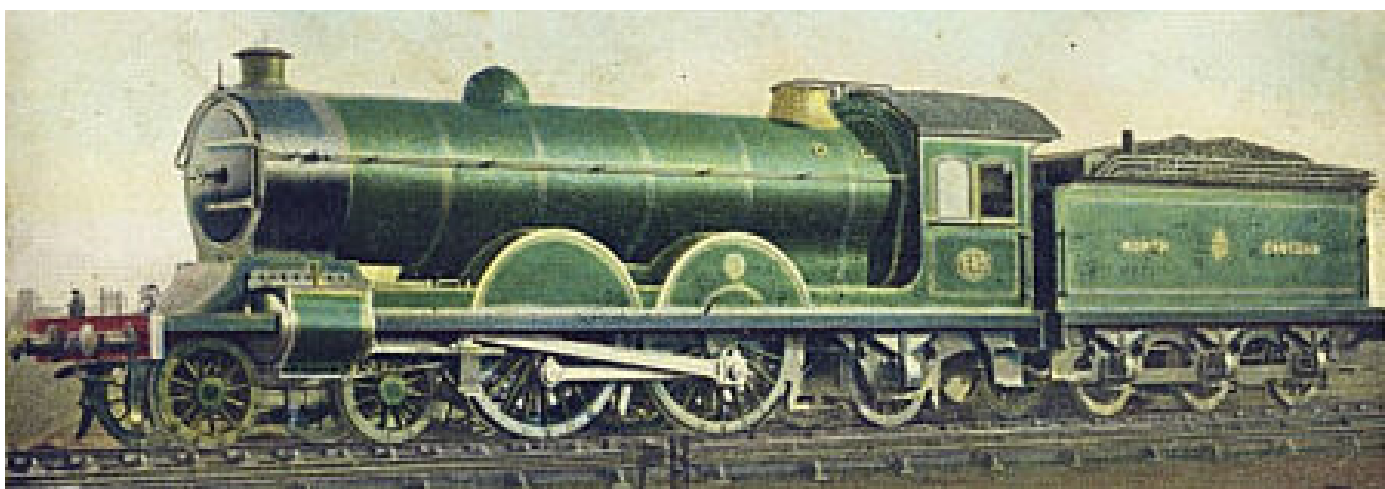
Just a monstrous diesel thing that has neither form nor grace,
Although (he's old) it does its work quite well.
And that his "Scot" of old it easily can outpace;
Yet in disgust, he mutters - "What the hell".

Things have changed, he thinks, a lot,
But he's glad that some are what they were.
The yellow hammers, the larks are singing still,
There's yet the scent of Meadowsweet;
New mown hay and sea stroked air.
The bleating of the lambs upon the hill.

Written by Tom (Tucker) Jackson of Chat Hill, and submitted for us by Bill Hampson.

"Tucker" Jackson was probably unique in having travelled as a boy on the first train between Chat Hill and Seahouses, and also as a man on the last train on the north Sunderland railway between Seahouses and Chat Hill.

Thank you Bill. Those who don't know railway folk may not expect them to be poetic souls, but I'm sure the words of this poem - and of the one in the previous edition of the Old Run - ring true for many a "survivor" of the age of steam. It was clearly a glorious era, and has left its mark on many hearts.



“Jenny Lind”

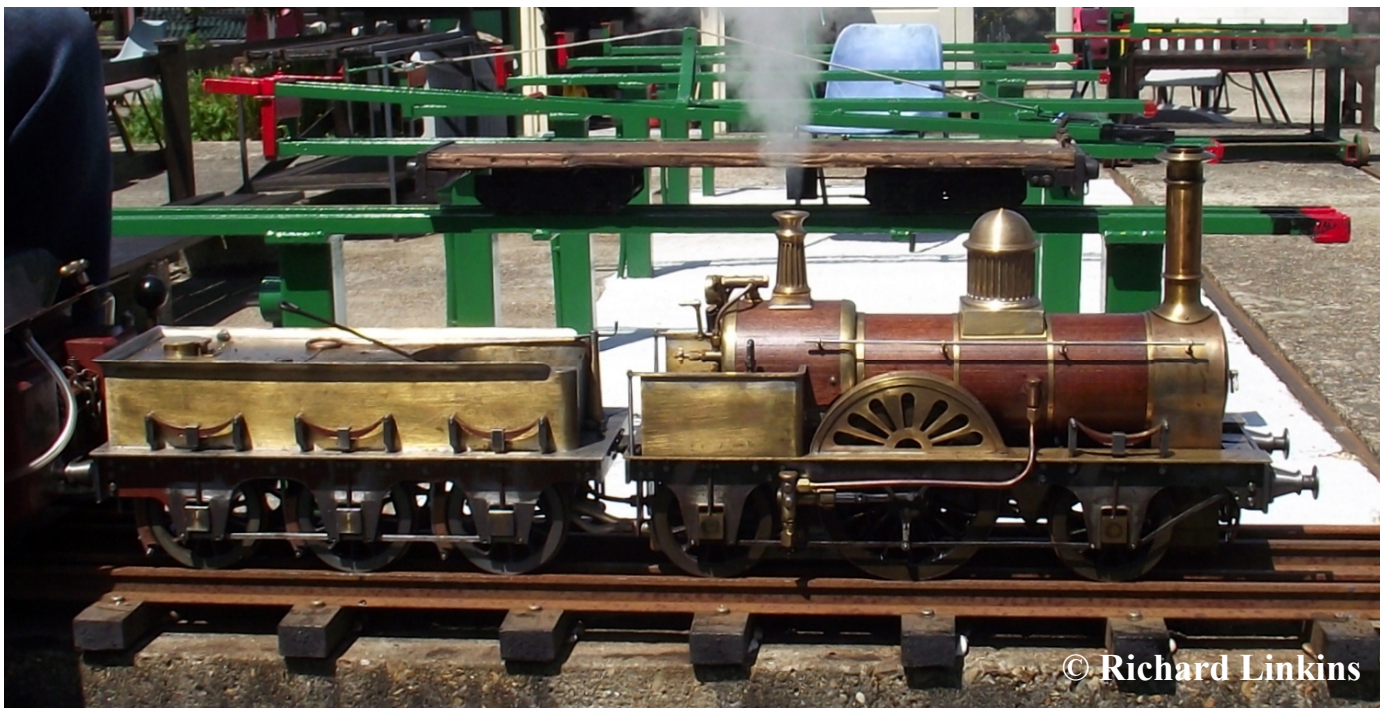
by **Richard Linkins**

In 1847 E B Wilson received an order for 10 engines from the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. David Joy, as chief draughtsman (aged 22), was given the task of designing them. He drew up 10 or 12 schemes in a week but was then told at noon on Saturday, by James Fenton the Works Manager, to try again. Joy was fed up and went home, but could not get the job out of his mind. He worked out the general layout in his head, then “having a sheet of double elephant mounted on my drawing board” he drew the general arrangement of the engine. On Monday morning he took the drawing to the Works and it was instantly and entirely approved. The locos were a great success and the first one was named “Jenny Lind”.

In 1942 the famous designer of miniature locos, known by the pseudonym LBSC, prepared a design for a 1/16th scale “Jenny Lind”. A friend of my father, Dennis Robins started to build this loco about 70 years ago. Dennis and his wife had moved from Yorkshire to Eythorne in Kent between the wars. His business was light engineering, which he ran from his workshop at home, and he did work for Tilmanstone colliery (near Eythorne). When Dennis died the chassis and boiler were complete. Dennis’ widow gave these to my father. He stored them away for many years while he worked on other projects.

My father eventually found time to start work on Jenny. He made a lot of the missing parts for it, including the tender, which has wooden brake blocks, and all the fittings. He did not manage to finish it and I inherited the loco in pieces. I completed the assembly and first steamed it two years ago. The trickiest parts to finish were the fluted dome and safety valve covers; apparently these were a combination of old London & South-Western Railway domes and London & Brighton features.

When steamed it ran well, but seemed too small to pull me, so I had to run behind it, which was quite tiring. Recently I tried running it again and managed a non-stop circuit of our club track. This required full regulator, full pressure and as much coal as the firebox could hold, which is not much as the grate is only 2.5” square. The load behind the drawbar scaled at over 400 tons! I think I might be able to manage a longer run when my firing technique improves and I lose weight!



© Richard Linkins

A Length of Plateway Rail

by Peter Excell

In 2017 I donated a length of plateway rail to the railway, in its capacity as a registered museum. I had had this item in my personal collection for about 45 years and, as I was de-cluttering, I had to choose a museum to which to donate it. I settled on the Middleton Railway due to its connection with very early railways.

The background story is a little surprising. After the end of steam on BR and its decline on industrial railways, I switched my interest to horses for a while. I learned to ride and I found a very accommodating stable in Northowram (north of Halifax) that was willing to lend me a horse for an hour or two and just let me wander out into the countryside with it. The countryside there is interesting, because it adjoins Shibden Dale. This gives every appearance of being an unspoiled valley filled with lush greenery and dotted with a few historic houses. However, aficionados of "Gentleman Jack" (who lived at Shibden Hall, at the south end of the Dale) may appreciate that, 200 years ago, this dale was riddled with mining activity and the lush green hillsides of today are actually, in many cases, spoil heaps that have become vegetated.

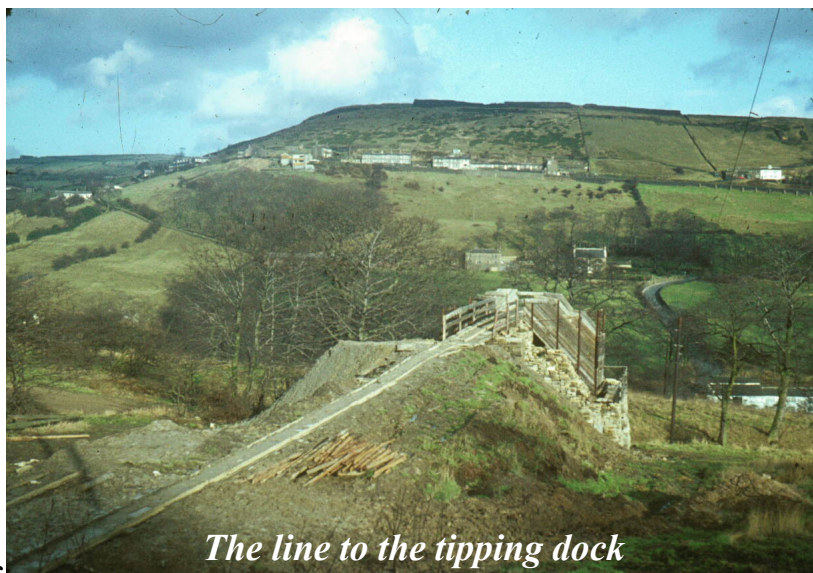
One day in 1972 I was alone but for my equine mate, mooching down the west side of the dale on an unadopted road when I looked downwards and was heard to utter the phrase "stone me, there's a railway!" I navigated the horse downhill across the fields and tied him up to a post when I was close enough. However, before I had even got so close my utterance had changed to "stone me, it's a plateway!!" I had become very interested in early railways as a result of reading C.F. Dendy Marshall's book "A History of British Railways Down to the Year 1830" (not to mention



The Railway!

being aware of another little local line that dated back to 1758...) and so I recognised a plateway as being of great historical significance (for the uninitiated, a plateway is a form of railway that has flanges on the rails and no flanges on the wagon wheels: it is a technology that has been obsolete since about 1800).

What I discovered was a small mine, previously unknown to railway enthusiasts, with two adits and a small arrangement of hand-worked tracks, but the tracks were plateways of about 1'7" gauge. I was a long-standing member of the Industrial Railway Society and, as

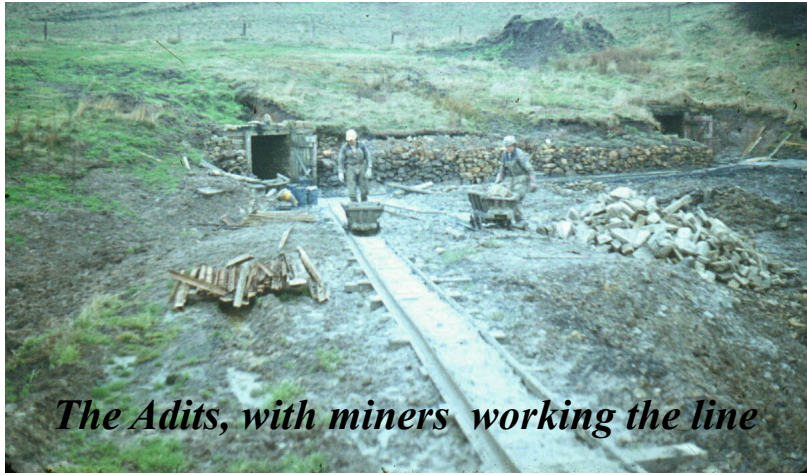


The line to the tipping dock

A PLATEWAY DISCOVERY

far as I was aware at the time, working plateways had disappeared in the UK around the 1920s, although I later found out that there was one of a more modern design at Wyke, near Bradford. For me, this remains the outstanding discovery of my 60-plus years as a railway enthusiast.

The mine was locked and deserted, but I found out that the owner was C.&S.Parkinson Ltd



The Adits, with miners working the line

and I arranged to visit when it was working, accompanied by one of the directors. He explained that their business was making specialised crucibles for the glass industry and these needed very high purity fireclay, which they just happened to have discovered in the deposits in Shibden Dale.

The mine had actually not been open for a very long time, but the

plateway equipment had been moved from an older, worked-out, mine nearby and so the whole antique set up was a case of "it ain't broke, so don't fix it".

Many of the rails were made of



Pushing a load to the tipping dock.



A Plateway Wagon

modern pieces of angle-section steel, but a few were much older, being of cast iron and made for the purpose. I asked the director if I could take possession of one of the cast-iron rails and he agreed: that is what I have donated to the Middleton Railway.



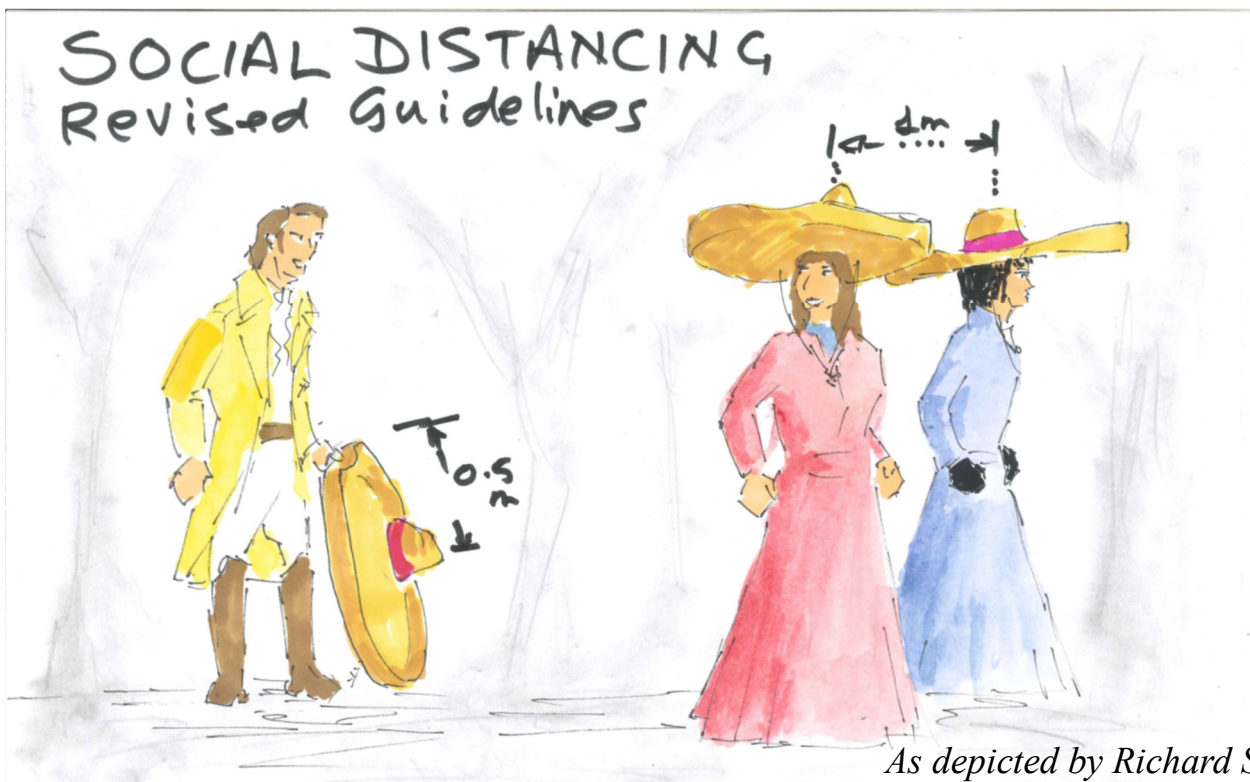
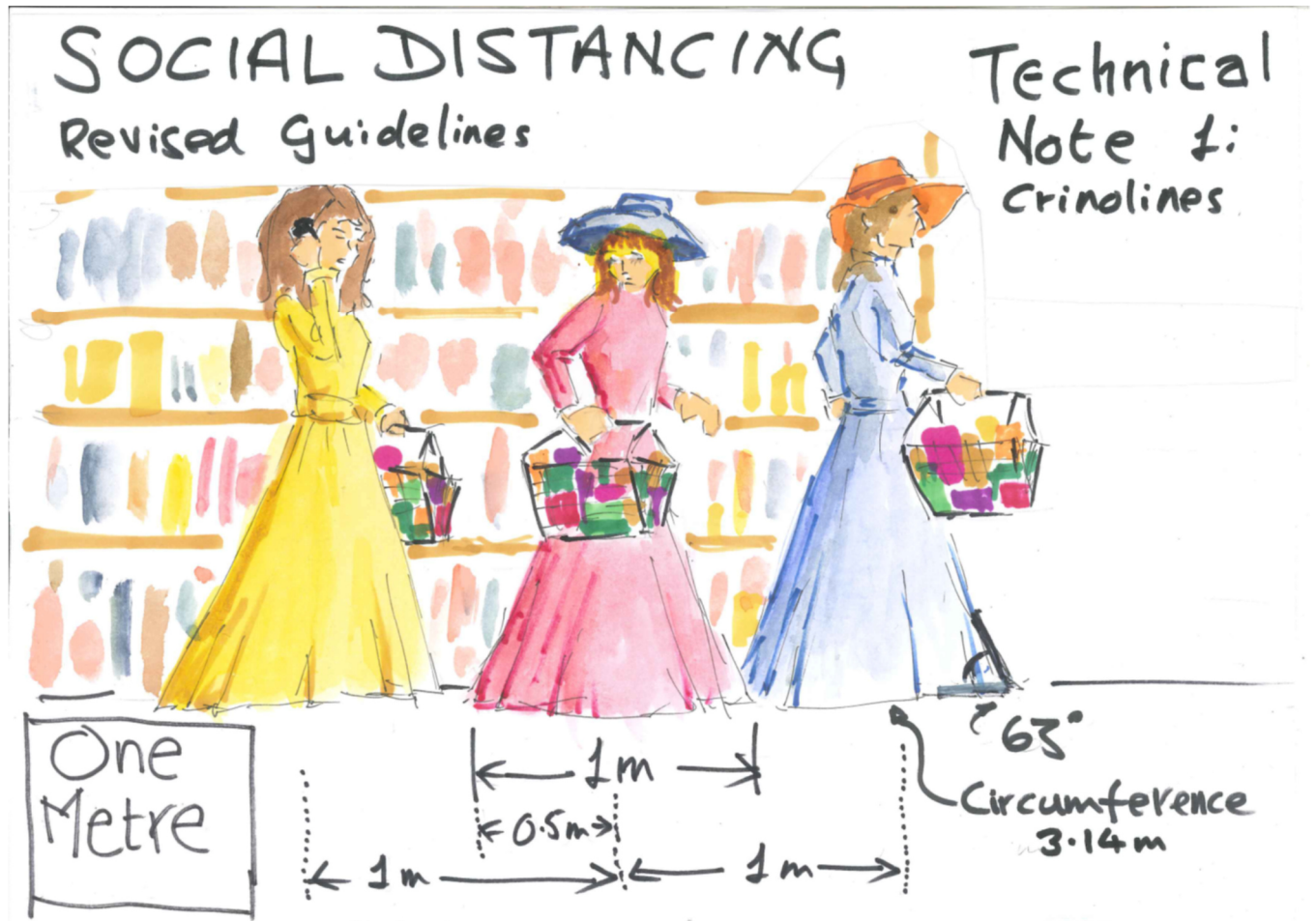
The donated plateway rail.

The mine has gone now, but I know that a wagon and some more rails were preserved in the Halifax Industrial Museum: I have not visited that in many a long year, but I hope that they are still in place.

All photographs © Peter Excell

Peter Excell

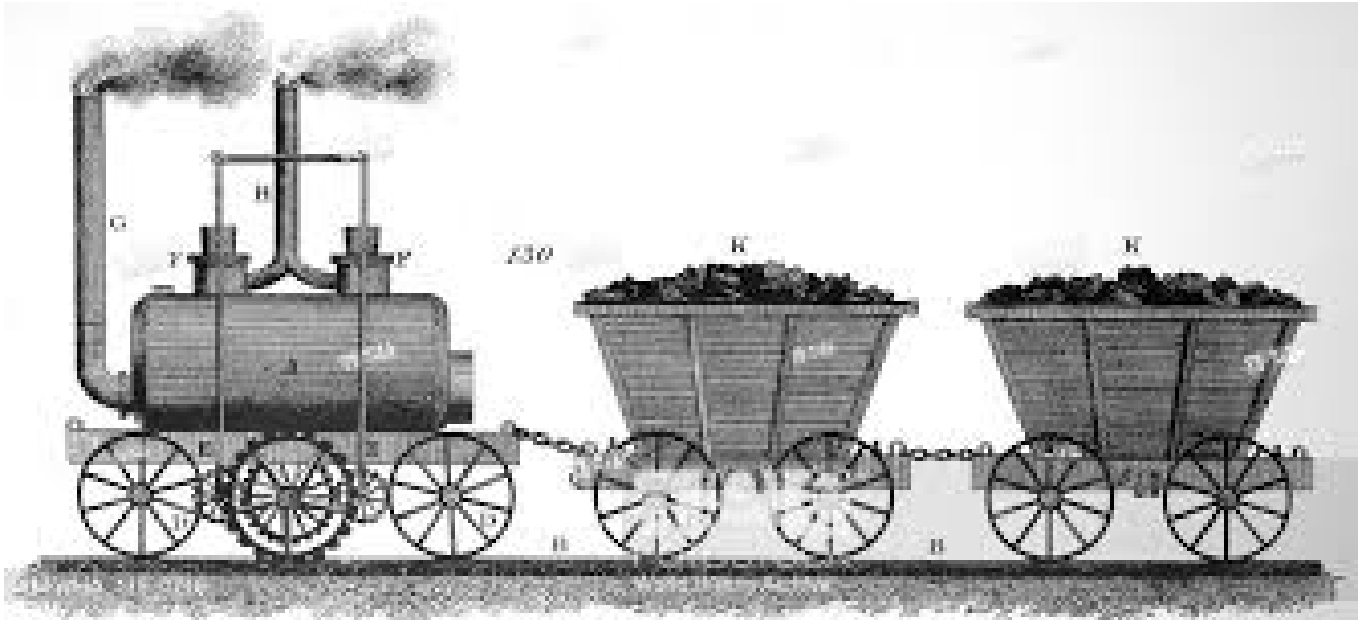
SOCIAL DISTANCING IN OUR TIMES



Technical Note 2: Sombrero

From small beginnings to mighty ends!

The great energy economy of West Yorkshire, ie coal, its transportation and conversion into electricity, began near Middleton with the coal-mining in the 13th century and is within touching-distance of ceasing as Drax goes over to wood-chips and the others close. To mark the end of the era, here's a picture of early mining at Middleton - near the beginning - and one of the Drax Power Station - the end.



OUR 60th ANNIVERSARY, 20th JUNE 2020

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST'S 60th ANNIVERSARY

How things can change so quickly. At the beginning of the year, the railway was gearing up to celebrate our 60th anniversary as the very first standard gauge railway to be re-opened by volunteers. In fact, since the narrow gauge railways all had paid staff, we were the first railway anywhere to re-open using only volunteers.

The Coronavirus has put paid to any celebrations and indeed has killed off any ideas of running much in the way of "Special events" at all this year, due to the 'social distancing' rules. "Santa" is being looked at closely and we hope to be able to announce something soon, but it will take a very different form from normal and we will not be able to carry as many passengers as usual.

Having said that, one of the things we have to do before we can re-open is to renew competency for our drivers, firemen and guards, which means running trains for that to happen.

Ever the resourceful thinker, John Linkins decided our 60th anniversary couldn't be ignored and it was decided that, as part of our training, one train would be run at 4.45 pm on Saturday 20th June, exactly 60 years to the day and minute since our first train ran – and with the very same locomotive.

Some time earlier, it had been agreed that LMS 7051 should wear its "JOHN ALCOCK" plates for the year and with one having gone missing, a replacement was cast and John soon had his volunteers painting and polishing it, alongside polishing up the original.

The Middleton Wagon was specially cleaned, as was the LNER brake van, and this was the train which left Moor Road at exactly 4.45 pm on 20th June, crewed by Richard Pike and John Linkins on the footplate, with me as Guard. Steve Roberts was also on board as the assessor for the crew.

We were delighted to be able to host Matthew Youell, son of founder Fred Youell, who waved the train off for photographs which later appeared in the "South Leeds Life" newspaper.

The train arrived at Park Halt, to be met by a number of locals who asked when we would be running trains again – a good omen for the future, perhaps?

Photos and a press release were sent out and a number of railway magazines will be featuring the train, including "Heritage Railway" and "Rail Express". Also the "Yorkshire Post" liked the press release, but insisted on doing their own photo shoot the following Wednesday and the feature went into the "Yorkshire Post" a few days later.

All in all, a very good result, made possible by the hard work of John and his team, and Steve and all the others who ensured the train was able to run. We raise our virtual glasses to the next 60 years!

Ian Smith

PREPARING FOR OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE



© Ian Smith

Two of our young volunteers readying Matthew Murray for its supporting role in our special 60th Anniversary celebrations.

A further two volunteers finishing off the smartening up of John Alcock for its history-making run, 60 years to the minute since its first journey up the Middleton line.



© Ian Smith



© Janet Auckland

And here they are - two of our most iconic locomotives - John Alcock and Matthew Murray - ready for the off!

CELEBRATING OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE

© Ian Smith



Matthew Youell
(our founder's son)
waving off
the train
for the
cameras.



© Ian Dobson

A pity we had to imagine the happy crowds of passengers we should have had on this train, but the Covid-19 regulations meant we could not carry any.

CELEBRATING OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE

© Ian Dobson



Chugging up
the line to
Park Halt
where we
were met by
would-be
passengers.

Our driver
waits to
run around
to the
other end
of the train.



© Ian Smith



Ready to start the return journey

© Ian Smith

CELEBRATING OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE



And so to bed -

until her next

outing.

Government
permitting, we
re-open on
SUNDAY
2ND
AUGUST.
See you then!



16th July 1960 - Fred Youell waving to the crowds



© Sheila Bye

“At 4.45p.m. on Monday 20th June, as noted in the next day’s Yorkshire Post, “*Dr. F. Youell . . . wearing academic dress, took over the controls of a light engine and gently pulled away a train full of eager children.*” The Middleton Railway had become the first standard gauge railway with services operated by unpaid volunteers. The temporary passenger service was part of the University Rag Week charity events. Offering ‘Free rides at your own risk.’, the 106-seat vehicle altogether carried 7,700 passengers between Burton Road level crossing and Parkside G.N.R. bridge, and even earned a small amount in donations. By running slowly and carefully, they stayed on the rails: looking back on the conditions at the time, this was a major achievement. At the end of the week, work began on repairing and relaying the track. “

The above is an extract from Part 2 of the History of our Railway, covering the story of our Preservation, written by Ian Smith. The above picture was taken the month after this historic event which we have just commemorated. Both Parts of the History - Part 1 by Sheila Bye, our Historian, covering our history from 1758 to 1959 - will be available later this year.

A WALK IN THE PARK WITH KRIS WARD

Early Steam Power in Middleton

Just as the VE Day guided walk in Middleton Park in May on the theme of Middleton at War was turned into an article people could download off the Friends of Middleton Park website to individually take the walk self-guided, so too has the walk that had been planned for June. This time the theme is early steam power. We would have visited a couple of the pit heads that would have used steam power, and discussed the use of steam in the colliery that actually pre-dated the use of steam on the railway, possibly by quite a long way.

Point 1 – Visitor Centre and Horse Gin Replica

Middleton Park is well known for its remains of early coal mining, particularly the remains of over 200 early pits throughout the woods where coal would have been extracted, quite often by hand. The sinking of deeper pits led to increasing use of machinery such as Horse Gins, where horses turned a wheel which wound a rope to haul buckets of coal out of the mine. Until the early 1800s this was still considered to be the most economical means of extracting coal from all but the deepest coal mines. What made steam commercially viable was the Napoleonic Wars, when huge numbers of horses were used by the military, causing a shortage of horses and fodder elsewhere and therefore greatly increasing the costs of using horses. The earliest use of steam power in mining was actually to drain water from the mines. The first practical engine for draining mines was the Savery Engine patented by Thomas Savery in 1698. In 1702 Savery published a book *“The Miner's Friend; or, An Engine to Raise Water by Fire”* describing his engine's application in draining mines.

On 16th March 1702 Ralph Thoresby mentioned in his diary visiting Middleton with the intention of seeing an engine used to drain Ralph Brandling's mines. However Ralph Brandling wasn't in so we get no further details of the engine. *“We called to see an ingenious engine, &c. lately erected by Mr. Brandling, to drain his coal-mines, &c. but missing of himself, received little satisfaction”*. In 1717 Ralph Brandling was described as the owner of, *“A Wrought Colliery or Coal Mine with a Water Engine and Smithy”* at Middleton. It could have been one of the earliest steam engines, however there were other means of pumping water from mines using water wheels or animals, though these might not have attracted the same attention. Neither Thoresby's book nor Savery's clearly state if it was a Savery engine that had been installed in Middleton.

Point 2 – Wood Pit

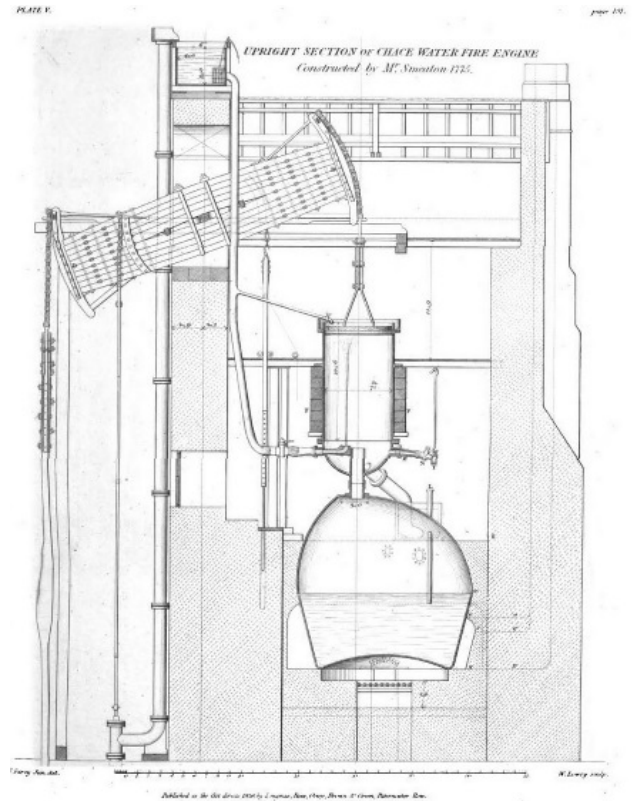
Wood Pit is the best example of a mine that once used a steam engine to be found in the park. Close to the pit can be seen a dip in the ground that would once have served as a reservoir to provide water for the engine. Also close to the pit shaft is a flat area where the engine is likely to have been and pieces of clinker that would have been shoveled out of the fire can be found. The mine was sunk around 1814 and is thought to be the one shown in the illustration of the Middleton Collier in the book *Costumes of Yorkshire* by George Walker as it would have been new at the time the illustrations were made.



MIDDLETON PARK MINING

From Wood Pit we follow a short section of old wagonway that once took coal from the pit.

One early example of an engine employed in Middleton was designed by famous Leeds engineer John Smeaton. In 1780 one of his engines was put to use in the Middleton Colliery. It was of a similar design to one used in Chase Water mine in Cornwall and illustrations of that engine survive. Smeaton also carried out experiments regarding the properties of coals from different mines, including coal from Middleton using a small engine of his own design set up in his own workshop. *“The performance of the Newcastle coals of the kind called Team-top were found superior to the common Yorkshire coals called Halton, in the proportion of 120 to 100. Cannel coal from Wakefield in Yorkshire was superior to Halton as 133 to 100. Hage-moor coals, and Flockton coals were superior to Halton as 133 to 100. Middleton-wood coals and Welsh coals, were superior to Halton as 110 to 100.”*



MIDDLETON PARK MINING

Also a new pit, Lyse Pit, was under construction, as was Broom Pit. Two additional engines were mentioned in the 1808 survey. *"A Capital Patent Steam Engine, Built by Boulton & Watt, equal to the power of Eighty Horses, with a 60 Inch Cylinder, 8 Feet Stroke"* Boulton & Watt were the Birmingham firm that dominated early steam engine production and went to great lengths to stop Leeds engineer Matthew Murray taking their business. The other engine mentioned in 1808 was *"A Steam Engine, Equal to the power of One Hundred Horses, with a 72 Inch Cylinder."* This specification matches that of Smeaton's 1780 engine. It is thought the Boulton & Watt engine may have been a replacement for the Smeaton engine which would have already been very much out of date and inefficient by 1808.

Point 4 – Broom Pit

The biggest pit in the Middleton Colliery and the last to still be in use when it closed in 1968. The land is now landscaped over after the site was used for landfill after the mine was demolished. In later years the colliery used a lot of machinery from the Sun Foundry which was close to their Kidacre Street Coal Staith. Their order records mention items such as Coal screens, air vessels, pumps and a new piston for Henrietta Pit in the 1850s and 60s. In 1913 when just Broom Pit and New Pit were in use a large *"Compound condensing tandem rotative pumping engine & double acting pump"* was ordered from the Works, then owned by Hathorn Davey.

Point 5 – The Railway

In 1812 the railway line from Middleton Colliery into Leeds was the first railway to regularly employ steam locomotives. Four locomotives were built by Matthew Murray of Holbeck. They used a rack wheel patented by colliery manager John Blenkinsop, although it may have been Murray's invention rather than Blenkinsop's, as Boulton and Watt were watching what patents Murray was taking out. The rack wheel engaged on teeth on one side of one of the rails, allowing a light locomotive to haul a large load and avoid breaking the iron rails, which was a common problem with early locomotives. It is sometimes said that the racks were to allow the locomotives to climb the gradients, however the railway had fairly level sections with rope worked inclines on the uphill sections (where Old Run Road passes under the motorway, and where Manor Farm Rise and the steps up to Town Street are now). It is recorded that the locos could haul 15 tons on the inclines but it is believed they generally operated on the level sections.

The Murray-Blenkinsop locos operated on the line until 1835, though two of them exploded in that time. The first, in 1818, was due to the safety valves being tampered with, and the second, in 1834, was due to the poor condition of the engine at the time. In both incidents their drivers were killed. In 1836 Nicholas Wood noted: *"The Deep coals are led by Horses from the West Pit to the top of the Middleton Plane, thence by a self acting plane to the Day Hole at which place the coals from the Forty Yard and Little, join. The whole of the coal are then led from thence, about 1 mile by a fixed Engine to the top of another self acting plane by which they are let down to Hunslet and they are then taken to Leeds by horses, taking 6 waggons at a time."*

Steam locomotives returned to the railway in 1866 with locos made by Manning Wardle in Hunslet. As well as steam trains, the Middleton Estate and Colliery Co. also bought a steam lorry in 1916 to cope with the shortage of horses and feed. Their steam lorry was made by the Yorkshire Patent Steam Wagon Co on Pepper Street. Though New Pit never re-opened

MIDDLETON PARK MINING

after the general strike in 1926, its pumping engine had to be kept running otherwise Broom Pit would have flooded. Broom Pit would have been using its steam engines right up to closure in 1968 and the trains remained steam powered to the end, by which time the preservation group at the Middleton Railway was already running its own steam engines.

With thanks to Sheila Bye, Jim Jackson and Paul Hebden.

Bibliography

A Treatise on the Steam Engine, Historical, Practical and Descriptive. John Farey 1827,
available to download on Google Books.

The Miner's Friend; or, An Engine to Raise Water by Fire. Thomas Savery 1702,
available to download on Google Books.

The Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1677 - 1724) (Volume 1),
available on Amazon Kindle.

1808 Survey of Middleton Estate, Northern Mines Research Society.

The Costume of Yorkshire, George Walker, 1814 (re-printed in the 1970s)

History of the Middleton Railway, available in the Railway's Shop.

Records of local engine makers on www.leedsengine.info

Kris Ward

CREW RE-FAMILIARISATION

Operating trains is an activity that needs to be practised, and so any members of train crew who haven't been able to actually operate any trains for a while will start to get rusty. Any car drivers who have not driven for several months will know the feeling! At the railway there is a gap in our passenger train operations for the winter engineering work, from the Mince Pie Specials on New Years' Day to when our passenger service re-starts, usually about the beginning of April, although there may well have been some engineering trains run during this period. This means that this gap is not long enough to cause a problem, as the guideline that is provided for this by HM Railway Inspectorate (who are part of the Office of Road and Rail [ORR], and who are the safety regulator for our train operations) is that train crews will maintain competence provided any gap in their involvement in train operations is no longer than six months.

Once the Coronavirus pandemic took hold, however, and heritage railways responded by closing down train operations, then it soon became clear that this whole situation would change. In early May, HMRI issued guidance to all heritage railways about what they would need to do to plan for re-opening their train services, and one of the 14 topics that this covered in detail was this problem of crews having become rusty. The standard approach for managing this problem is to require crews who may have become rusty to carry out one or more re-familiarisation duties, and these need to be assessed to check that nothing significant has been forgotten. Where just one person needs to re-familiarise themselves in this way then this can be done as part of ordinary train operations: but in this situation everybody needed to be re-familiarised.

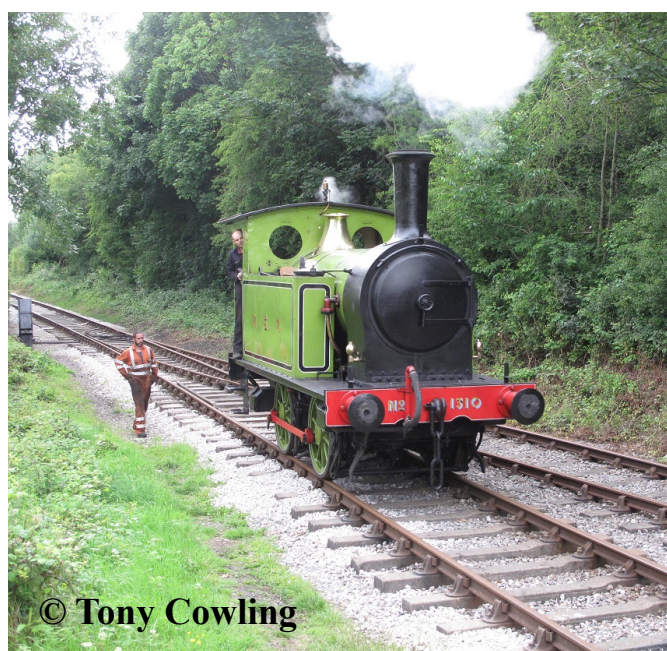
Like nearly all heritage railways, therefore, the approach that we adopted was to arrange some days when we would run "shakedown" services. These would be ordinary trains that would carry no passengers, and that would be run simply for crew re-familiarisation, with assessors on board to check that all was being operated correctly. The first of these services

RE-FAMILIARISATION

was the 60th anniversary special on 20th June. The next set of these services was on Wednesday 1st July, and used NER 1310 and the passenger coaches. 1310 was chosen for this purpose as the back of the cab is open, and so an assessor riding in the front coach could see enough of what was happening on the footplate to be able to make accurate judgements of whether all was being done properly. With any of the other locomotives the assessor would have needed to be in the cab as well, and our steam locomotive cabs are not big enough to accommodate three people with social distancing. As a result, we now have a good number of members of our train crews (drivers, firemen and guards) who are no longer classed as rusty, and this will provide a basis for us to start the train services in August.

There will be a need to run more re-familiarisation turns, and this may mean at least one more day of “shakedown” services: detailed plans for this are still being worked out.

Some shots from the day.



MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS

Twelve months ago I wrote: "Your Editor kindly reminded me that my Loco and other notes were due just as I was setting off for my long summer holiday!" The same has happened this year. However, my holiday has been about the only thing that has gone to plan in 2020 and that only just managed to happen. At Moor Road, things are slowly getting back to what is now the new normal. Our precious volunteers started to return in a small way after the government's announcements of 12th May which allowed some easing of the lockdown which had been in place since 23rd March. Volunteering at first was limited to undertaking key tasks deemed necessary for the ongoing sustainability of the Railway but as the restrictions were eased even more, we have been able to catch up in a small way as more volunteers returned to Moor Road.

LOCO NOTES

1601 MATTHEW MURRAY

The original plan had been to use 1601 quite intensively in the early part of the season before its boiler certificate expired in July. This would then be the end of the locomotive's use for the foreseeable future as the boiler inspector required the boiler lifting from the frames and all tubes removing before any further possible use could be considered. The knowledge that the cylinder block was in a very poor state meant that this work was unlikely to be undertaken unless a new cylinder block was part of the overall plan.

However, as is now well-known, the original plans for both the loco and for our 60th anniversary came to nothing. The Trust Council did, however, decide that the anniversary should be marked in some way and that this should include Matthew Murray being in steam for the occasion. This may well have been the loco's last day; however, we have put a strong case for an extension to the boiler certificate to the Inspector, based around the relatively good condition of the boiler and the lack of recent use. Although boilers can deteriorate even when not in use, the total number of steamings over the last ten years is probably no more than it would have had in one year in its previous working life, so it should not have deteriorated significantly through our normal wear and tear. Our inspector was minded to agree and a thorough boiler inspection was carried out on the 8th July. Apart from the need to re-tap a couple of washout plug holes in the smokebox and the fusible plug holes all was found to be in order. A steam test will now be arranged for early in August.

No. 6

In a pre-coronavirus world, the overhaul of No.6 should have been reaching a conclusion by now. However, Northern Steam Engineering, the company overhauling the boiler, decided that it would shut down and furlough its staff, bringing all work to a standstill. This remained the case until mid-June when work on the boiler re-commenced. At the end of June, the overhaul was essentially complete, with all the tubes installed and beaded over and only the boiler washout plugs and a few studs remaining to be fitted. A preliminary hydraulic test was planned for week commencing 13th July and a formal test witnessed by the inspector should quickly follow.

Once the hydraulic test is completed, the new smokebox will be fitted and a formal steam test should happen at the beginning of August. The boiler will then be returned to Moor Road where it will be immediately dropped into the frames using the Hiab of the delivering lorry as it is too heavy for our crane to be used. As a precursor to this happening, the frames were recently shunted onto the through road of the workshops.

Back at Moor Road, the last few jobs on the new water tank have been completed. These

LOCO NOTES

have included finishing off the handrails and fitting of the steps and the tank filler lid. The inside of the tank has received a coat of paint and the outside has been sanded down and a coat of grey undercoat applied.

Fitting of the boiler does not signify the end of the overhaul but merely the beginning of the end. The next job will be to manufacture and fit the crinolines which support the cladding sheets, another significant item that still needs to be made. These cannot be made in advance as we require the boiler to use as a template. Once the cladding and insulation has been fitted we can look to re-fitting the cab and tank and the loco will really start to take on a finished appearance and an end will be in sight. Other jobs requiring to be done include installation of all the fittings, all new pipework for injectors, steam brake, whistle and sanding gear and painting and lining out.

There is hope that the loco will be in steam before the year end but it will very much depend on the availability of suitable volunteers and the many demands of running the Railway.

1210 SIR BERKELEY

Work on Sir Berkeley was not deemed to be essential so the loco had to take a back seat during May. However, with the relaxation of restrictions and the availability of more volunteers, we were able to start to make significant progress with the loco's overhaul. This has largely been with the long and tiresome work of cleaning and painting the frames. Cleaning down has now all but been completed and the various parts have all received a coat of primer. The first coats of signal red are presently being applied to the inside of the frames. Red is relatively poor at covering and so it will require a second coat to make it look presentable. The outside of the frames are to be painted maroon with a black edge and yellow lining.

The axleboxes were temporarily re-fitted to the frames and measurements taken for wear. Their general condition is good and it is expected that all that will be necessary is removal of the lining plates and insertion of appropriate shims.

No.11

Still nothing to report.

No.1310 (NER H)

1310 has spent the last few months in storage in the Engine House but it was brought out towards the end of June and test steamed and given a 'B' exam. This is normally done after 15 days in steam but it was felt sensible to undertake one after it had been out of use for so long. Following on from this it was used for driver familiarisation and assessment purposes, something necessary after a long period with no operations. The loco was chosen for this purpose because it has an open backed cab and an assessor can ride in the front coach and essentially observe what is happening on the footplate without being present on the locomotive and thus compromise the social distancing that we are required to observe.

It is currently available for service.

1544 SLOUGH ESTATES No.3

The loco has also spent the last few months in storage in the Engine House. The only work carried out has been the overhaul of the fireman's injector steam valve, work which was ongoing when the Railway shut down in March. Like 1310, the loco will be given a steam

LOCO NOTES

test and 'B' exam in the next week or so and, if all is satisfactory, it will be available for service.

SENTINEL No. 54

Once things started to get back to more like normal it was possible to re-start work on the loco. The new vacuum ejector has now been fitted, along with some old and some new pipework and this system is now all complete. The various fittings and lengths of pipework that were removed to facilitate fitting of the boiler cladding sheets have all now been re-instated.

One of the last outstanding jobs has been the fitting of the foot control pedal. This could not be done until the floor was re-fitted and sections of this had been removed to enable pipework to be accessed. The foot pedal is provided on Sentinel locomotives to enable the supply of steam from the regulator to the cylinders to be quickly shut off during shunting operations. Although not a clutch or anything like it, it performs a similar function when driving the locomotive.

A steam test is expected in the first couple of weeks of August. Return to service of the loco will depend on what is found on this and subsequent testing.

HE 2387 BROOKES No.1

Brookes has spent the last few months in store in the Running Shed. The only work carried out has been repairs to the boiler drain valve. The discharge pipe from this came loose and, on investigation it was found that the screw threads in the valve were in a poor state. The valve has been bored and sleeved to create a new thread of the original size. It has now been steam tested and given a 'B' exam prior to entering service during August.

Fowler 42200033 HARRY

No progress with the repairs to the various gauges and the loco is currently on display in the Engine House.

Peckett 5003 AUSTIN'S No.1

Has been kept in working order and used occasionally during the lockdown period

D2999

Has been kept in working order and used occasionally during the lockdown period. It has been the preferred loco for use during lineside vegetation clearance as it can be easily and constantly controlled at low speed.

D577 MARY

The loco has been in storage in the Engine House and has not been used.

HE 6981

The overhauled radiator has now been fitted. This enabled the modifications necessary to the fan cowl to be ascertained. These modifications are necessary as the fan has had to be moved forward by 1¾" to allow the vacuum exhaust drive to be fitted. All this work has now been done and we have now been able to fit the radiator cover. This will also need modifying to clear the exhaust. Whilst this loco never had a vacuum brake system Hunslet produced similar locos with exhausters so we do have guidance on what is required for all this work.

The loco has now been moved into the back road of the workshops for the overhaul to

LOCO AND CARRIAGE AND WAGON NOTES

continue.

D631 CARROLL

The loco has been in storage in the Engine House and has not been used.

L.M.S. 7051

This locomotive was the one used for our first train services sixty years ago and, as such, was intended to be a key player in our planned celebrations during June. Although the hoped for gala would not take place it was considered important for a train to run on the 20th June to mark the anniversary, and to be hauled by this loco. In the week before, the batteries were charged up and the engine started. Initial problems with the starter motor not engaging were traced to it having moved in its mountings, and this was soon rectified. The loco was given a thorough examination and tested around Moor Road yard to ensure that all was well.

For much of the early years of the Railway, the loco had carried the name 'John Alcock' in honour of the loco's designer and later chairman of the Hunslet Engine Company. These nameplates had been removed when the loco was repainted in LMS livery and on display at the National Railway Museum.. It was decided that it would be a good idea to re-fit the nameplates for the anniversary and this has been done. One of the original nameplates had been stolen many years ago and fibreglass replicas had been fitted to prevent a recurrence. It was decided to have a new nameplate cast to complement the surviving original and the two nameplates were re-fitted just prior to the anniversary. The locomotive will carry these plates for the foreseeable future, although they are not authentic for the LMS livery that is presently carried.

D1373 MD&HB No.45

This has been kept in working order and used occasionally during the lockdown period. It has been suffering from difficulties in selecting forward gear and it is suspected that this is due to a problem with the air operated cylinder which moves the gear into mesh. Replacement seals have been obtained and will be fitted in due course.

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

CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES

The last Old Run reported that a start had been made on cutting up Flat wagon No.2. This was yet another job that fell by the wayside because of the lockdown. However, the task has now been completed and the various bits have been dispatched to Robinson & Birdsell. We have kept one wheelset and the bearings as strategic spares.

There is very little else to report as no work has been carried out on any of the rolling stock, other than to adjust the brakes on the 'Middleton' open wagon.

PMV 2223

Agreement was reached to purchase this privately owned Southern Railway PMV, currently resident on the East Lancs Railway, to provide the basis for a fourth coach. Payment was made to its owner literally the day before the lockdown but the vehicle had to remain on the East Lancs Railway until staff there returned to work and could move it into a position for loading. This eventually happened at the beginning of June and the van duly arrived at Moor Road on the 13th June.

ALL THE OTHER NOTES!

Council has yet to agree in exactly what form the vehicle will be rebuilt but it is likely that it will be a twin to coach 1867. In the meantime, plans are being formulated to remove the concrete floor, which is in poor condition. Repairs are also needed to the north east buffer as the timber packing pad has disintegrated completely and the buffer housing is loose. The north west buffer timber packing pad is also in poor condition and will require replacement.

Conversion of the van into a coach will essentially have to await the availability of shed space which is unlikely to become available until the LMS brake van is finished. This latter project now needs to take on more of a priority for this reason.

PLANT AND MACHINERY

The ever increasing challenge of keeping our lineside vegetation under control has been helped by the purchase of a hedge trimmer attachment for the mini digger. This has been fitted and put to good use in the last few weeks. The mini digger has been loaded onto the Lowmac and propelled up the line by D2999. From this position the hedges can be relatively easily reached to enable them to be cut back.

CARRIAGE SHED

One of the last remaining major jobs with this project is the installation of a set of buffer stops. The construction of these was essentially completed before the lockdown but the whole construction still needed concreting-in to provide the necessary strength and stability. This work has now been done and we await the first test of them to prove their suitability although we hope that it won't actually happen!

The remaining major task is that of connecting the roof drainage to the soakaway.

MOOR ROAD SITE TIDINESS

As part of the ongoing tidying up of our Moor Road site we have also finished cutting up and disposal of the green container. The small blue container has been moved to a new position adjacent to the fence. It will shortly be joined by the container presently residing on the Hunslet flat wagon and being used as a tool store. These moves will provide additional much needed car parking spaces for staff on busy days. Other work is ongoing to tidy the area between the workshops and the Picton shelter. This includes moving the two sets of oleo buffers (destined for the 10 ton crane and the Greenbat) and a quantity of rail previously cut up for scrap.

We have long had a hawthorn hedge around much of the Moor Road site and it does present a significant deterrent to people entering the site by removing palings from the palisade fence. However, there have been gaps in this hedge, creating a significant weakness in our security. We have recently planted young hawthorn along the fence where these gaps existed, in the hope that it will both strengthen our security and improve site tidiness. It is early days but all the plants seem to have taken and are growing well.

This improvement in our site tidiness is welcome and has been commented upon by members of the public. We have a very cramped site and it is difficult to hide unsightly items out of the view of visitors. We are currently developing a plan for the whole site to avoid any further piecemeal development and provide the best visual experience.

Steve Roberts, Mechanical Engineer



The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

(Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered Office: The Station, Moor Road, Leeds LS10 2JQ

Registered Company No. 1165589 Registered Charity No. 230387

Accredited Museum No RD2114

Telephone 0113 271 0320 (Office) & 0113 270 6162 (Workshop)

Email: info@middletonrailway.org.uk Website: www.middletonrailway.org.uk

President: Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP

Vice Presidents: Ian B Smith, Don Townsley

Chairman: Charles Milner, email: chairman@middletonrailway.org.uk

Secretary: Tony Cowling, email: secretary@middletonrailway.org.uk

Treasurer: Philip Calvert, email: treasurer@middletonrailway.org.uk

Council Members

Janet Auckland, Commercial Mgr

John Linkins

Mark Calvert, Civil Eng

Malcolm Johnson

Chris Campbell

Aaron Marsden, Traffic Mgr

Jenny Cowling, Council Secretary

Richard Pike, Electrical Eng

Sue Gill, Membership Secretary

Steve Roberts, Mech. Eng

David Hebden

Robert Taggart

Mark Whitaker

Other Officers

Sheila Bye, Honorary Archivist, Derek Plummer, Exhibitions Mgr

Membership Subscription Rates from 1st January 2020

Adult Membership (FT).....£23.00

Senior Membership (OT).....£18.00

Junior Membership (of MRA).....£16.00

Family Associates of Trust Members (in same household) £5.00 per person

Life Membership (LT).....£450

Other Useful Email Addresses

Administration (Chairman/Secretary)

admin@middletonrailway.org.uk

Education (Schools programme)

education@middletonrailway.org.uk

Engineering (Mechanical Engineer)

engineer@middletonrailway.org.uk

Finance (Treasurer)

treasurer@middletonrailway.org.uk

General Enquiries

info@middletonrailway.org.uk

'Last Coals to Leeds' project

coal@middletonrailway.org.uk

Medical Officer

medicalofficer@middletonrailway.org.uk

Membership Secretary

membership@middletonrailway.org.uk

Old Run Editor

oldrun@middletonrailway.org.uk

Safeguarding Officer

safeguarding@middletonrailway.org.uk

Safety Officer

safetyofficer@middletonrailway.org.uk

Staff Rosters (Roster Clerk)

roster@middletonrailway.org.uk

Traffic Manager

trafficmanager@middletonrailway.org.uk

Volunteer Liaison Officers

volunteering@middletonrailway.org.uk

Young Volunteers

youth@middletonrailway.org.uk

THE FIRST PASSENGER TRAIN - 20th JUNE 1960



© Sheila Bye

