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The first train of our 2022 summer season on 2nd April, pulled by Austins No. 1 © Ian Dobson

The Old Run

No. 254
APRIL 2022

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Our Chairman speaks:

It would be wrong of me to start these notes without mentioning the tragedy unfolding in the Ukraine. At the start of this year few outside the Intelligence community would have predicted that in April 2022 parts of a democratic European Country would be being reduced to rubble and its civilian people slaughtered by an authoritarian dictatorship making a land grab. The suffering of the Ukrainian people puts our own challenges into perspective. The long term effects of the war in the Ukraine are hard to predict; in the short term they will increase the cost pressures we are all facing and make us all the more conscious of getting the best possible value from the money we spend – which is very different from the false economy of not spending money in the short term to store up problems in the long term. Our Treasurer is carrying out a rigorous review of all the Trust's fixed costs and payment terms to make sure that the Trust gets best value – which is not the same as the cheapest. This is one of the many essential, behind the scenes, tasks necessary to ensure that the Railway can continue operating. It is as important as preparing steam engines for statutory boiler inspections, re-stocking the shop, re-painting the floor of the Engine House and cleaning the exhibits in preparation for the start of the operating season, and carrying out the myriad of other tasks which are necessary to keep the Railway running. Tasks of which our average visitors will be completely unaware.

This year there will not be the dramatic change in the appearance of our facilities that some visitors

Our Chairman speaks:

would have noticed at the start of the 2021 season, but during the winter months a team of volunteers replaced the urinal in the gent's toilet. A mundane task and not very pleasant but one critical to the way the Trust presents itself to its customers. It is a truism, but visitors never notice clean toilets but they 'sure as hell' will complain about dirty ones. This can cause far worse reputational damage than a 'not polished' steam engine at the head of a train. Particular thanks go to the team which took on this challenging task.

Despite the usual last minute panic - which is a feature of ALL tourist attractions just before the start of their open season - the Trust started the 2022 season in style with an excellent Community Day. This attracted a lot of visitors and allowed five local community groups to introduce themselves to everyone. Planning for this event, for which a lot of thanks go to John Linkins and Janet Auckland, has led to new contacts with local community groups and we hope that we can build on this to attract even more groups to attend in 2023. This event is important to the Trust, partly as a good way to launch the operating season, but also because it helps to develop links into the community in which we operate and so builds support for the Railway amongst our neighbours and their political representatives. This can prove invaluable when external support is needed to help achieve Trust goals.

In the last two years the Trust has been able to secure Grant funding to help overcome the effects of the Covid pandemic and maintain our finances. This year the Trust will be mainly reliant on the money we earn through our activities to discharge our charitable functions. These are, primarily, the maintenance and operation of our historic locomotives, and explanations of the significance of the Railway and its locomotives to our visitors. This means that our efforts are focused on increasing visitor numbers and thus revenue, through targeted promotion of the Railway in our visitor catchment, as well as controlling costs.

However, the Trust is also continuing to develop ways to improve what we can offer to society to help secure external funding, or benefit in kind, for particular projects. An example of this is the work done with training organizations, preparing people for track maintenance jobs on the national railway network; the Trust gets help with track maintenance, they get a full scale training opportunity for their students away from the pressures of the national rail network – a win for both parties. The Trust has started trying to establish a similar arrangement with University Technical College Leeds, which is attended by some of our younger volunteers. Whether this approach will be successful is not known; what is known is that nothing comes of not trying.

While working with local community groups, maintaining good relations with local politicians and seeking the acceptance of our neighbours is time consuming and may seem like a distraction from working on the Railway, it is one of the consequences of living in a democracy, even an imperfect one. Sadly the current headlines provide an indication of what life is like in a

Memories!

country where the writ of one man and a few advisors is the law. The lives of ordinary Russians, who are as much the victims of their leadership as the citizens of the Ukraine, should make us all reflect on the value of the freedoms we enjoy.

Charles W Milner, Chairman



The Middleton Railway Stand - at that moment, un-manned!

© Tony Cowling

A Smile of Recognition

The first time I read the Old Run was about 1969 (I still have some copies); a hapless 12 year old. I always liked the advert for The Engine pub which mentioned how their finest ale blew up the boiler of an early MR engine.

The re-print of Peter Barry's 1969 article (July 2021) brought a smile of recognition. Peter speaks of catching a 7.30 Leeds to Kings Cross train, and despite the comfy Mk II coach and cooked breakfast, his lament was that steam was missing. This watershed period, when steam vanished from British Railways, evokes a memory. In September 1968 I started at Matthew Murray School in Holbeck, Leeds. Many of you reading this will recognise that the previous month saw the last ever steam working on BR. Matthew Murray was a mixed bag of a school. I managed to get through with 4 'O' level GCE's and one art 'A' level. Good school dinners, nice girls (first girlfriends) but a bit patchy if it was an education you were after. It had it's moments - a good school orchestra; I still recall the music at assemblies.

A smile of recognition

Some good teachers, but some not always quick off the mark when tackling bullying. The presence of a loutish element meant life was not always pleasant. At times I looked back on my previous Primary School as an oasis of calm civilisation.

However!! For this introvert, MM had a few redeeming features. MM had three sections: Lower school, Middle School, and Upper School (6th form). Lower school (1st and 2nd form) was where you were required to wear the green school uniform (the blazer had a badge with an image of a Matthew Murray engine). From the west classroom windows of Lower school, you had a wide, panoramic view of the railways leading into Leeds from the south and west. Peter, I presume, was taken to Kings Cross behind a Deltic or one of the ubiquitous 'Brush' Class 47s.

I have to say that seeing a Deltic leave Leeds, first on the blue engineering brick LNWR viaduct which straddles Holbeck (still there, if you care to investigate - there is a proposal to turn it into an overhead walkway) at slow speed (15-25 mph line speed) then rounding the Geldard Road curve, before "Opening up" passing Elland Road Football ground, a burst of diesel fumes and a thunderous revving noise that only a Deltic can make. Audible two miles away. Now, that meant heads in those classrooms turned sharp left. A major distraction from a boring lesson! It was what you call a 'frisson'! thrown in during a mundane Tuesday morning.

Steam had pretty much disappeared from the Leeds area by late 1967. WD 'Austerity' powered coal trains still worked the "Sleepy valleys" (as one Holbeck express driver dryly nicknamed them) south of Leeds - Normanton, Wakefield, Ryhill, Cudworth etc. The only regions which still had serious operating steam by July 1968 was in localities like Lostock Hall shed near Preston in the north-west of England. Steam had gone in Scotland and the western region, although, surprisingly, it did survive on Expresses within the Southern Region (from London Waterloo) right up to 1967.

By the way, it was good to read John Bushell's article on the re-creation of the Rainhill 150th celebrations in 1980. John, as the MRT Archivist, was very generous with his time and energies. He very kindly lent me a fascinating box of Kodak slides back in 1982. These were photographs he had taken himself around 1969/70 of the MR as it was then. Some wonderful shots taken from a MR train of the girder bridges, 'Cuckoo Steps' and tip-hills which would all be swept away in a few short years. He was very fortunate to take a number of these pictures in good summer light. He also went to the trouble to print me a couple of Mervyn Leah's black and white photographs of the very last WD steam operations into Broom Pit Colliery in June 1967. Some of these ended as oil paintings! I'm still working on further pictures from the copies I made of John's slides.

An Evening Out with a Fowler

As I had childhood memories of the bridges and 'Alps' (Victorian tip-hills) my search for someone who had actually taken photos of these relics of the industrial revolution was over. I had attended Cross Flatts Primary school; the tips and bridges at Parkside were a source of wonder to groups of schoolboys; I remember going to explore - well, 'Lake' is a better word - with Alan McTaggart and Keith Mills (I forget the others). When you returned, to a boy's imagination it was as if you'd had a brief visit to Mars. That distinctive sulphurous smell; the red clinker which gave the tips their exclusive patina.

John Bushell. was a very kindly and intelligent man, and a huge asset to the MRT.

John Roberts

An Evening Out with a Fowler

In the late 1960s a steam centre was started based in the old Ashford (Kent) running shed. This depot was quite a large one with 10 roads originally under cover and a large yard. Three of the roads still had a roof. When the ex-South Eastern and Chatham C and O1 classes were withdrawn from service and sold they were stored in the roofed section. These formed the basis of the Ashford Steam Centre. More locos and stock were accumulated and occasional steaming days were held.

The driving force for this was Esmond Lewis-Evans. He was a founder member of the Steam Plough Club. He purchased the O1 class from BR and ensured the survival of this unique machine. He also owned a 12 ton Fowler roller, which he purchased from the East Ashford District Council. He kept this roller at the steam centre. He would steam it from time to time and run it around the local roads. He once offered to roll the Newtown village green to flatten it in preparation for a fête (Newtown was the railway village built for workers in the railway works). A couple of passes by Esmond and his roller created a trench across the green and the idea was quickly abandoned. He also managed to drive the front rolls into the pit at the steam centre.

One evening my father came home and told me that the Fowler roller was stopped on the main road near our house. It was a pleasant evening so we walked up to have a look. The roller was parked at the side of the road outside my uncle's builders yard. She looked lovely in her crimson lake livery and was in steam but no one was with her. Apparently the eccentrics had seized because Mr Lewis-Evans had not oiled them. We waited a little while and a small crowd gathered and then Esmond Lewis-Evans and an assistant arrived in a rather tatty Austin Gipsy 4x4 (similar to a Land Rover).

An Evening Out with a Fowler

The Austin was backed up to the front of the Fowler and chains coupled the tow hook to the front forks of the roller. Esmond mounted the roller and the assistant started to tow it slowly along the main road. Progress was steady and a left turn into the road to the steam centre was navigated successfully.

After turning the corner all was going well until the assistant eased off the accelerator and the roller started to catch up the Austin. The chains sagged and fell under the front rolls. This immediately brought the cavalcade to a shuddering halt. The Fowler rolled backwards off the chains with a crash and, as they went taut again, the Gipsy then appeared to jump into the air.

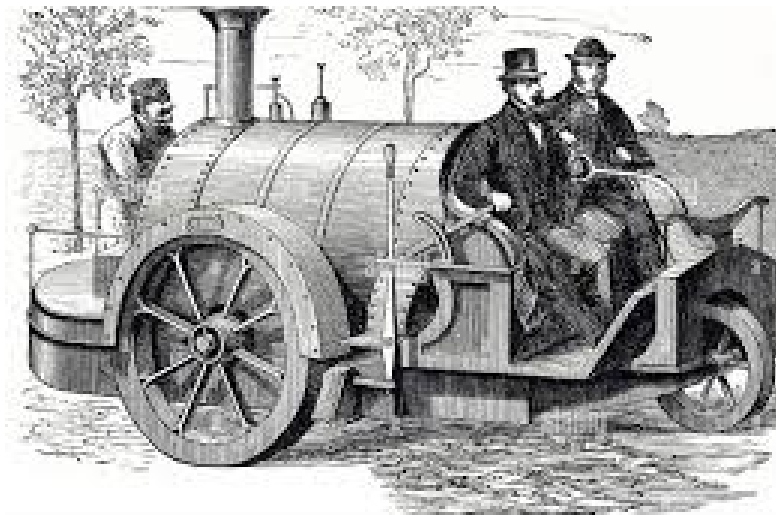
After a few minutes discussion towing was cautiously resumed. After another quarter mile Mr Lewis-Evans gently braked the roller to a halt outside the Co-op. From this point the road went downhill for a way, then up again. He announced that he felt it unsafe for the Gipsy to tow the Fowler down this slope and he intended to rely on gravity. The chains were uncoupled, the brake taken off and then nothing happened. He had misjudged the slope so the crowd now tried to push the roller. This was unsuccessful but my father managed to find a length of angle iron which he wedged under a rear roll and, using a block, started the roller moving. Before long the roller started to move on its own and picked up quite a bit of speed. We followed on foot.

The Fowler was moving so fast that it made it up the slope and failed to negotiate the sharp right hand bend by the fish and chip shop, which led into the lane to the running shed. This was fortunate as there was a car parked round the corner which would have suffered badly if the roller had hit it.

The Austin was used to tow the roller up the lane and into the shed. We thought that this had concluded the evening's entertainment but Mr Lewis-Evans then inquired if anyone had seen his glasses. After a short search he found them, lying crushed in the road - he had run over them with the roller.

With thanks to Keith Osborne and Julian Barton for help with this article.

Richard Linkins



Perhaps not one of these!

Hudswell Clarke 15 inch 6 Coupled Saddle Tanks

The Middleton Railway's Diamond Jubilee Year (2020) was the last year for a while when 'Slough Estates Ltd. No.3' could be seen in traffic. This provides an excuse to look briefly at the class of locomotives represented by this engine.

The six coupled outside cylinder saddle tank with 15 inch diameter x 22 inch stroke cylinders was one of Hudswell Clarkes & Co. Ltd's more successful twentieth century designs. They were developed from an earlier design with 15 inch diameter x 20 inch stroke cylinders. Ten locomotives to the earlier design were built between 1900 and 1910; six of them for export to the Argentine. In total 55 of the latter design were constructed, starting with works number 630 of 1902, built for Lord St. Oswald, Frodingham Iron Stone Mines, Lincolnshire, and ending with works number 1818 of 1955 delivered to Sharlston Colliery of Area No. 7, North Eastern Division of the NCB. This particular engine is illustrated in Fig 1 in its elaborately lined 'as built' livery – though rather shop soiled by the time the photograph was taken.



Fig 1. HC 1818 of 1955 'Nineteen Fifty Four' at Sharlston Colliery, 27.09.58. © Charles Milner Collection.

The number built compares very favourably with the number of Hunslet Engine Co. 15 inch saddle tanks built; 27 constructed between 1923 and 1947. In fairness the two designs had different strengths and so appealed to different markets: the Hunslet's for example had a very short wheel base which made them attractive to docks and other facilities which featured tight radius curves and turnouts.

Hudswell Clarke 15 inch 6 Coupled Saddle Tanks

The biggest customer for the Hudswell Clarke 15 inch saddle tanks was the iron and steel industry – in total 43 locomotives, 78% of the total built, were sold directly into this industry. The majority of these, 25, went to the Frodingham Iron and Steel Co. and its subsidiary, the Appleby Iron Company with a further 8 going to the neighbouring Redbourn Works of Richard Thomas and Baldwins in Scunthorpe. Four locomotives were sold to Samuel Fox & Co Ltd at Stocksbridge, three to the Sheepbridge Coal and Iron Co, two to Lloyds Iron Stone Co, Corby Iron Works, and one to the Trent Iron Co – also located in Scunthorpe. Just nine locomotives were sold into the coal mining industry, including the last four locomotives built to this design which were ordered by Area No. 7 of the North Eastern Division of the NCB. Two other locomotives were sold into industry - to Slough Estates Ltd.

The final two locomotives to be accounted for were supplied to a public railway, the Llanelly and Mynydd Mawr Railway. The older of these two locomotives, 'John Waddell', works no. 912 of 1912, was sold into industrial service in 1919 and ended its days at Great Mountain Colliery, in 1959. The younger, 'Hilda', works number 1214 of 1917 ended up in the ownership of the Great Western Railway and was disfigured by being retrofitted with various standard GWR components – bunker, safety valve cover etc. although it did retain its nameplates. This locomotive was the last of the Llanelly and Mynydd Mawr Railway locomotives to survive and was eventually withdrawn in February 1954 after covering the respectable total of 417,657 miles since the grouping.

The locomotives duties at the combined Appleby Frodingham Steel Works in the early 1950s were particularly arduous. The site worked 7 days a week, there were 6 single shift duties, 5 two shift duties and 32 three shift duties, plus two standby locomotives in steam and 6 locomotives being prepared to release locomotives for their 9 day shed visits, which usually took 24 hours. This required 78% of the total fleet to be in operation on days with just 7% stopped for overhaul. This high level of availability was achieved by a planned maintenance programme which provided for light overhauls every 12 - 18 months and heavy overhauls every 24 - 30 months.

In the early 1950s the Appleby Frodingham steel works saw an influx of 19 new, Yorkshire Engine Co. Ltd built, 16 inch saddle tanks. The parent company of Appleby Frodingham and the Yorkshire Engine Co., (and also Samuel Fox Ltd and several others), was The United Steel Companies Ltd. which may explain the choice of locomotive supplier. At the same time a reorganisation of duties consequent upon modernisation of the works and the introduction of new more powerful locomotives permitted the locomotive fleet to be reduced from 63 to 52. These two changes rendered a number of the Hudswell Clarke built 15 inch saddle tanks

Hudswell Clarke 15 inch 6 Coupled Saddle Tanks

surplus to requirements and so they were placed on the second hand market. The good condition of these locomotives made them of interest to various Areas of the NCB which were grappling with a plethora of elderly ill maintained locomotives from a multiplicity of builders. In total, 13 of the Hudswells were sold to the NCB, two for use in South Wales, one for use in Lancashire, one for use in Nottinghamshire and the rest for use in the Yorkshire Coalfield. Included in this number were '69', works number 1175 of 1916, which became the first 'modern' steam engine at Broom Pit, and which retained its Appleby Frodingham number whilst in Coal Board Service, and '77', works number 1367 of 1920, which went to the Old Roundwood Colliery. This engine is illustrated in Fig 2 which shows the deep front buffer beams fitted to the steelworks locos. The other locomotives sold into use in the Yorkshire Coal field all found their way into South Yorkshire pits including Bentley, Wath Main, Yorkshire Main and Hatfield Main. Other surplus Hudswells were sold for use in various Iron Stone quarries, notably Cranford and Pitsford, and to Renishaw Iron Works – the latter engine, works number 1366 of 1919, became 'Renishaw Iron Works No. 6' and is happily currently under overhaul on the Tanfield Railway.



***Fig 2. HC 1367 of 1920 '23' at 'Old Roundwood Colliery'
circa 1921. © Charles Milner Collection***

There were relatively few variations between the members of the class: the locos built for steelworks use had deep front buffer beams, 'Slough Estates Ltd. No. '3 like other Hudswell Clarke locomotives built in the late 1920's and early 1930s had cylindrical front sand boxes and four had 3 ft 7 inch dia. driving wheels unlike the rest of the class which had 3 ft 4 inch₁₀ dia. driving wheels.

Hudswell Clarke 15 inch 6 Coupled Saddle Tanks

The reasons for the differing wheel diameters have not been recorded though it is notable that the majority of the engines built after 1918 for the iron and steel and coal mining industries had the smaller diameter wheels first introduced in 1914. Presumably the 7.5% increase in tractive effort was considered valuable on the heavy duties characteristic of these industries. Fig 3 shows 'Rhos' of the Lloyds Iron Stone Co. locomotives standing outside Pen Green Shed at Stewarts and Lloyds Minerals Corby. This picture shows off the larger wheels fitted to this locomotive, which is also still in existence. 'Slough Estates Ltd. No. 3' was built with 3ft 7 inch diameter driving wheels whilst 'Renishaw Iron Works No. 6' was built with 3ft 4inch diameter wheels. The locos built for steelworks use had deep front buffer beams'



***Fig.3 HC 1308 of 1918 'Rhos' standing outside Pen Green Shed.
Early 1960s. © Collection Charles Milner.***

At least one of the locomotives acquired for use in South Yorkshire by the NCB from Appleby Frodingham Steelworks, 'Eddie', works number 1178 of 1916, lost its forward cab extension whilst working at Yorkshire Main Colliery, and another of these engines gained electric lights powered by a turbo-generator. In total six members of this class of locomotive have escaped the scrappers torch for now. One ex Appleby Frodingham loco, works number 1631 of 1929, has been converted to a side tank and after a period on the Derwent Valley Railway is in private ownership, 'No. 8', works number 1450 of 1922 and the only survivor of the Redbourn fleet, was converted to a 'Thomas' replica and now languishes on a siding at Bolton Abbey. 'Slough Estates Ltd. No. 5', works number 1709 of 1939, is in pieces at Embsay and 'Rhos' is now held by 'Rocks by Rail' at Cottesmore. The other two survivors, as indicated previously, are at the Middleton Railway and the Tanfield Railway and are the two most likely to be seen in steam in the near future.

Hudswell Clarke 15 inch 6 Coupled Saddle Tanks

There is possibly a curious codicil to this story. In 1936 two further 15 inch six coupled saddle tanks were supplied new to Appleby Frodingham, works numbers of 3883 and 3884. The locomotives were transferred to Loddington Ironstone Quarry in 1957 when the narrow gauge railway system was replaced by a standard gauge railway. The locomotives look curiously like the Hudswell Clarke 15 inch saddle tanks and quite unlike the standard Hawthorn Leslie built 15 inch outside cylinder saddle tanks of the period, although they were built by Hawthorn Leslie. They do have some characteristic Hawthorn Leslie design features – dome cover, design of sandboxes etc., but seem to be a deliberate attempt to copy the Hudswell Clarke design - or is their design an example of ‘form following function’? Perhaps a reader more knowledgeable in the affairs of Hawthorn Leslie can shed further light on the design of these locomotives. One of them is illustrated in Fig 4 – shortly after transfer to Loddington Iron Stone Quarry.



Fig 4. R & W Hawthorn Leslie & Co. Works No. 3884 of 1936, 'No.7' Standing outside Loddington Quarry Locomotive Shed. Quarter 3, 1957. © Collection Charles Milner

This article draws heavily on the works list provided in Ron Redman's book 'The Railway Foundry, Leeds, 1839 -1969' It also draws extensively on the various regional handbooks produced by the Industrial Railway Society and on 'The Locomotives of the Great Western Railway, Part Ten, Absorbed Engines 1922 1947' published by the RCTS. Any errors are mine.

Charles W Milner

The very early days of the Middleton Railway?



***Tram 180 photographed at Crich on 15th April 2022
© Andrew Johnson. "It could have been at Middleton!"***

Opening Day of the new Season, 2022



***Mersey Docks and Harbour Board No. 45 enjoying the Spring sunshine.
© Ian Dobson***



***Waiting for the signal to be off - with our splendidly repaired
Palvan. © Ian Dobson***

Opening Day of the new Season, 2022



Just collected all the passengers. © Ian Dobson



"Ready for a tea break?" © Ian Dobson

COMMUNITY STANDS ON 2ND APRIL 2022



Friends of Middleton Park advertising to attract some of our visitors to the Park, to enjoy themselves, keep the kids happy, and - who knows? - perhaps get involved in the work they do.

This is the display put on by Middleton Life History Group. Some fascinating pictures and artefacts were on display, as you can see from the picture on the right.



And here, on the left, we have the display put on by South Leeds Life, who provide their free newspaper telling us everything that is going on in the area every month.

And there is a lot going on! Make sure you don't miss anything.

Moor Road Happenings

The first weekend of the operating season is now behind us and with it the reality that brings to things. It didn't get off to a good start with 1310 failing with a mechanical problem and the non-availability of 2387 for reasons outlined below.

LOCO NOTES

No. 6

As mentioned in the last Old Run, a pressure reducing valve has been fitted to the steam feed to the vacuum ejector to better control the steam pressure to this piece of equipment. The Penberthy ejectors that we use are designed for industrial applications and not steam locomotives. As a consequence, they are designed to produce their best performance with steam at 40 psi and not the more usual locomotive pressures of 100 psi and more. It is possible to control the steam to the lower pressure by throttling the isolating valve but this is not the best use of the valve and can lead to the seat becoming damaged.

The last Old Run also mentioned that the steam brake required further work on it to eliminate leakage. The brake cylinder was removed from the loco and dismantled. The piston was found to be rather pitted and we are not sure why this was not attended to during the locos protracted overhaul. This has now been skimmed in the lathe to provide a better surface and thus, a better seal. The broken flange on the cylinder casting was welded up using cast iron rods and the whole lot re-assembled and re-fitted to the loco. A subsequent steam test proved the work to be satisfactory with virtually no leakage from the gland.

The loco is available for traffic and, although it was always intended to use 1310 during April, it is now planned to use it on a School special on the 6th April.

1210 SIR BERKELEY

Work has continued on the VCT's Manning Wardle as volunteer labour permits. The bunker sides and back have now been finish painted and lined out and this is looking superb. Attention has currently turned to the saddle tank, which has been craned down from its storage place on top of a container and moved into the workshops. The tank appears to be in good condition although there is a lot of debris inside that will have to be shovelled out by some small but willing volunteer. The outside of the tank has been sanded down and will shortly be getting its first coats of paint. The nameplates have also been removed to enable the platework underneath them to be properly done. Other work has involved painting and lining of the footplate valances and touching up areas of the frames where there has been some damage during the assembly process. It is always a compromise when it comes to painting the frames. It is much easier to paint them and the various bits whilst they are dismantled but it is inevitable that the

Moor Road Happenings

paintwork will be damaged when everything starts to be re-fitted as hammers, spanners, crowbars and jacks take their toll.

The last Old Run mentioned that we had found some cracks in the safety valve casting. After discussion with the boiler inspector it was agreed that these cracks were not in any critical areas and unlikely to present a problem and that they could be opened out and brazed up, which is what we have done.

What should have been a relatively simple task of carrying out a hydraulic test has proved to be a bit of a nightmare. The boiler has to be pumped up to 1½ times the safe working pressure, which is 140 psi so meant we had to pump it up to 210 psi. We use a hand pump to do this, filling the boiler absolutely full so that there is no air present. There are nearly always some slight leaks when doing a hydraulic test but, depending on where they are, this is acceptable. The important thing is to be able to maintain the pressure sufficiently long enough to satisfy the boiler inspector, which is usually 30 minutes. Our first test showed virtually no leakage from the newly installed tubes with just one needing further attention with a tube expander. The main problem came from the two large handholes on the side of the firebox and the setscrews that hold the safety valve mounting plate in place, which prevented us from reaching the desired pressure. The handholes proved to be a real problem. The modern, non-asbestos, joints that we use are known to leak when cold. In fact the installation instructions say so. However, as the boiler warms up, they cure and seal themselves. The trouble was that we were doing a hydraulic test with cold water so there was no steam or heat to provide this cure. We tried three sets of gaskets but, in the end, we changed the type of joint and managed to get them sufficiently water tight to carry out the hydraulic test. It was a similar story with the setscrews that hold the safety valve mounting. When under pressure water finds its way up screw threads and leaks out. The normal answer to this is to caulk around studs to provide a watertight joint. However, because of the curvature of the firebox the fastening holes are at varying angles and conventional studs cannot be used so setscrews have to be used to fasten everything down. Using setscrews meant that they could not be caulked to seal them. We resorted to using a proprietary product known as Steamseal, which was liberally applied to the screw threads before being tightened down. The instructions state that this will naturally harden in 24 hours at 20°C and provide the seal. However, we were working in temperatures that never reached double figures and the Steamseal on the threads just did not want to go off, even after several days of patiently waiting, even though the surplus on the outside eventually did. In the end, we resorted to carefully warming the area around the setscrews, being careful not to overheat things as this would have destroyed the Steamseal in any case.

Moor Road Happenings

Eventually we managed to get things sufficiently watertight to satisfy the boiler inspector so we could then prepare for a steam test. This involved removing all the setscrews that we had carefully made steam tight to fit the actual safety valves. Once more we applied liberal amounts of Steamseal to the screw threads before assembling everything. We also fitted copper washers to reduce the likelihood of leakage. Once the safety valve and gauge glasses were fitted the boiler was refilled and the first fire lit for several years. We managed to get up to 40 psi on that first steaming and, with the heat, there was no problem with leakage from the handholes and the setscrews. We did have trouble with the safety valves, though, the left hand one in particular blowing quite badly. We've since done further work on them and the right hand one is now good, although the left hand one is putting up a fight. The reality is that the valve and seats are well worn and it really needs new valves but we'll persevere and see what we can do. We've now had the pressure up to 90 psi and, apart from this valve, all looks good. As I write this, we are trying to improve the draughting arrangements with compressed air to get the fire hot enough to reach the magic 140 psi and invite the boiler inspector back to give it his approval.

No.11

Still nothing to positive to report.

No.1310 (NER H)

1310's boiler certificate expires on the 1st May and we have decided to use it as the main loco during April to get the most out of it. It was therefore the loco chosen to start the season on the 3rd April. However, all didn't go to plan as during the afternoon, the reverser catch handle broke whilst the loco was at Middleton Park, leaving the loco well and truly stuck in forward gear. The train was rescued by D1373 and the remaining day's service run with this. Once back at Moor Road, it was a relatively easy job to dismantle the handle and it should be quickly repaired and back in service.

Having said that, as the boiler reaches the end of its ticket on the 1st May, discussions have been held with the boiler inspector who is amenable to an extension to the end of 2022, subject to a satisfactory examination. Fingers crossed.

SENTINEL No.54

The loco had its necessary boiler inspection and steam test during March. Technically it is available for traffic but we are still lacking the confidence and experience to try it in traffic. A drain valve has been fitted to the tank as we found great difficulty in removing the plug which was the previous means of draining the tank. It was also great for soaking you as you essentially had to stand under it whilst you removed it.

Moor Road Happenings

HE 2387 BROOKES No.1

The loco underwent its annual visual inspection during February and should have been available for traffic by now. However, the injectors have always been a problem as, although they work, it proved very difficult to keep them steam tight at the valves. Enquiries elsewhere suggested that the way to go would be to fit stainless steel seats and valves, something already fitted to the injectors on HL 3860. The injectors were originally made by Davies & Metcalfe and the successor to this firm (Metcalf Engineering) was duly contacted to see if they would do the work as they had all the necessary drawings, which they were happy to do. We delivered the injectors to them during January for inspection and received a favourable quote and delivery so they were given the order to do the work. After initially being easily contactable, the phones now go unanswered and, despite many attempts, we are still awaiting the return of our injectors. It looks as though we are going to have to go to the works in Macclesfield and retrieve the injectors and send them elsewhere if we are to make progress.

HC 1544 SLOUGH ESTATES Ltd. No.3

Since coming out of service in April 2021, No.3 has been on display in the Engine House. However, completion of the repairs to D2999 released a slot in the workshops and No.3 was shunted in for its overhaul to start. It is perhaps premature to use the word overhaul as, before this can really start, it is necessary to strip the loco down into many individual components and this is what has been ongoing. The various cab fittings have been removed, along with the injectors and lengths of copper pipework. The tank has been unbolted and is ready for lifting off and most of the cab and bunker are now in a similar position and just require a second check to make sure that we haven't left any nuts and bolts in place. We can lift the cab and tank with our own crane but we will have to hire in a crane to lift the boiler as it is too heavy for our own. Lifting the boiler has to be carefully planned as it will be placed in the boiler cradle at the north end of the workshops and this is currently holding the boiler of Sir Berkeley.

The locos owners, the Slough and Windsor Railway Society, are keen to see the overhaul completed by the locos centenary in 2024. That is a tall order but we will do our best to fulfil it.

Fowler 42200033 HARRY

No progress to report at the moment but plans are being evolved.

Peckett 5003 AUSTINS No.1

Our Peckett diesel has been in regular use in recent times. However, we are currently having problems with the newly fitted compressor belts stretching and requiring adjustment. This should be relatively easy but there is a design flaw as, if you adjust the belts too much by moving the

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compressor, the belts start to foul on the bonnet door so the amount of adjustment is minimal and any further adjustment requires links to be removed from the belt.

The air receivers recently had their periodic inspection by the boiler inspector, and all is fine.

D2999

The engine was eventually re-assembled during March, not without a good deal of difficulty as the inlet and exhaust manifolds had been removed to facilitate removal of the cylinder head. Gravity had assisted in this process but it was far from helpful when it came to putting things back together. After uttering many rude words, things were eventually all back together and an attempt at a start was made. This proved to be unsuccessful unless the engine stop solenoid was manually held in the energised position, in which case it ran without problem. After investigating several possible causes it was traced to a broken wire on the solenoid and, once this was rectified, the loco could be run up and tried. It currently awaits trying in service to ensure that all is satisfactory.

D577 MARY

Still awaiting workshop space to fix the brake linkage problem.

HE 6981

There has been little further progress on this loco due to pressure of other more urgent work.

D631 CARROLL

Available for traffic but has not been used since September.

L.M.S. 7051

Available for use, if required.

D1373 MD&HB No.45

Available for use when required and seems to be the preferred locomotive for shunting and train operations..

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

CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES

The three coaches have all had their annual 'C' exams prior to the start of services in April. No problems were found.

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COACH 1074

In view of the amount of work going on, we have decided to not replace the roof and to take a chance on the roof repair holding up for the coming season. Fingers and anything else, crossed.

The broken droplight glass has been replaced over the winter. The glass broke earlier on in the year but, because it needed the door removing to effect a repair and because we were running with all the windows open due to Covid, its replacement was deemed to be a low priority.

PMV 2223

Work progresses reasonably quickly on this job, with people working on it on most Wednesdays and Saturdays. Once the floor joists had all been fitted it enabled the electrical installation to go ahead. The battery box hangs off the floor joists and the electrical cables are also largely clipped to them. The oil fired heater is another piece of kit hanging off these joints and this, too has been fitted, along with its fuel tank and piping. Once all the underneath bits had been attached to the floor joists, it was time to install the actual floor, which is made from a proprietary product called buffalo board. Having a floor to walk on has certainly made some of the other ongoing tasks much easier to do.

The rubber suspension dampers have all been changed for new ones, a not inconsiderable job taking several weeks to accomplish. The main reason for this is that the nuts on the eyebolts have not been off for many years and generally required heat and much effort to unscrew them. It was also found that several of the eyebolts were suffering quite badly from corrosion and, where this was the case, the eyebolts had to be built up with weld and machined back to size.

The old roof covering has now been removed and the roof timbers prepared for the new covering. The rotten bottom timbers have been replaced with new timber and the various holes in the roof that were there for ventilators have been plugged. Interestingly, there is evidence that the van once had a stove installed although the old roof covering made no provision for it. The next job in installing the new roof canvas is to install a new timber along the length of each side. This timber is provided to enable a 50mm x 3mm steel strip to be attached to it and so clamp the roof canvas in position along its edges.

In the woodworking shop all the seat timbers have been cut and profiled to size and given an initial coat of varnish. These have now been put into store until it is time to build the seats as once built up, they take up a lot more space.

The steel platforms and gates that form the gangways between the coaches have now been fitted to the ends and painted up. These were made some

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time ago and have been in store until now.

COAL

Anyone who has any interest in heritage railways cannot have failed to notice the increasing concern with regard to coal supplies. The last of UK mined coal has now been dug and sold on so, from now on until there is a change of mind by the government, we are reliant on imported coal to fire our steam locomotives. Fortunately, although coal is no longer a fuel of choice, the government have agreed that its use for heritage purposes can continue. So, we can legitimately burn it, if we can get hold of it.

We had a lorry load of coal delivered towards the end of last year, in time for the Santa season, and we were fortunate to be able to secure one of the last deliveries of Scottish coal from Killoch opencast disposal point. Killoch has been our preferred coal for a good number of years, but that has now come to an end. Although this delivery of coal would easily fulfil our needs into August, the heritage railway rumour mill was saying that the price of coal would quite likely double and may not be available at all. We contacted our usual coal factors (Hargreaves) and they concurred with what we were hearing. As a result, we decided to purchase a further load of coal during January to at least give us security of supply in the short term and avoid the expected large increase in price. Hargreaves had taken delivery of a load of Russian coal which had been landed in Ireland and it is this coal that we now have. I should add that this was well before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, otherwise we may have had second thoughts. The main problem we had to overcome was what to do with all this extra coal. It was suggested that it could be stored in one of our open wagons; a reasonable idea but, whilst loading the wagon would be easy, the only method of unloading would be by a hand operated shovel. Going back many years, this was what we had to do when a wagon load of coal arrived from Peckfield or Rossington collieries; a good mornings work for a gang of four. However, today's volunteers were not very keen on this thought so we had to look at alternatives and the solution was to use the Roberts tip wagon. This was brought out of storage and the tipping mechanism checked over to see if it was still possible to tip the skip. After a bit of effort success was achieved and we were able to fully tip the skip, which in turn allowed access so that it could be cleaned out of all the detritus that had accumulated over the years. The skip now has about 8 tons of the Scottish coal in it, ready for when we need it.

How much have we saved by purchasing this last lot of coal. It is difficult to say. The Scottish coal cost us about £200/ton delivered and the Russian coal has set us back about £250/ton, a quite substantial increase. However, it is known that other railways are now paying well over £300/ton where they

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can get it and some railways are having to ration the use of steam locomotive to conserve coal stocks. We, at least, should have enough coal to see us through until July 2023

Faced with the continuing uncertainty of coal supplies, two firms – Hargreaves and CPL – are marketing a smokeless fuel specifically for use in the heritage market. Both these products are in the form of ovoids although they are different products. We have just taken delivery of a trial load of the Hargreaves ovoids to see if they are suitable for use in our locos.

For those who might wish to know, the Scottish and Russian coals are quite different in their consistency and properties. The Scottish coal is a bituminous coal and is relatively smoky if the fireman is not careful. It is of relatively low ash content and is well suited to our needs. The Russian coal, however, is semi-bituminous, having a lot less in the way of volatile matter and it is much easier to avoid smoke. It is, however, much harder to get going and does not give instant heat so requires a different firing technique. It also has a higher ash content, which can lead to a clogged fire if the fireman is not careful. We have yet to try them but the ovoids are likely to be similar to the Russian coal.

Steve Roberts, Mechanical Engineer

Steve Roberts supervising one of several attempts to raise steam to full working pressure in the boiler of “Sir Berkeley”.

Stop Press! Success finally came on Saturday 23rd April, and the next step will be to repeat this for the boiler inspector.



Beginning to overhaul Slough Estates Ltd. No. 3



The saddle tank being lifted off SLOUGH ESTATES LTD No 3, in preparation for overhauling the boiler, 20th April 2022. © Ian Smith



The tank being craned onto the container. Steve Roberts is holding the ladder steady as the tank is being craned around. 20th April, 2022. © Ian Smith

Letters to the Editor

“Am I the only one who has noticed that our house magazine has been anonymous since issue No. 246? The magazine used to proudly proclaim its name of The Old Run on the front cover and has done since it first came into existence in 1960. Not any more. though. It is totally anonymous on the outside and could be just any magazine. The only avoidance of any anonymity is on the inside front cover in a rather nondescript typeface of the same size as the issue date. Come on, Madam Editor; please loudly proclaim 'The Old Run' on the cover once more and give the magazine its identity back.

Steve Roberts”

Well! My heartfelt apologies, and I think the answer to your question must be “Yes” - you are the only one, including the Editor. Or at least, the only one who could be bothered to let me know! Mind you, it isn't exactly anonymous as it does say in clear letters that it is the **The Journal of the Middleton Railway Trust**. so it isn't just any old magazine. Anyway by now you will have realised that I have reinstated **THE OLD RUN** in the format it had before it caught Covid 19, and I will do my utmost to ensure such an accident doesn't befall it again. Thank you for drawing it to our attention. *Ed.*



Where else could you be except the Middleton Railway when you see this wonderful locomotive? © Gordon Bell



The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

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IT MUST BE SPRING!



Blossom in the Park - April 2022

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Enterprises

Guess where you are!

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