

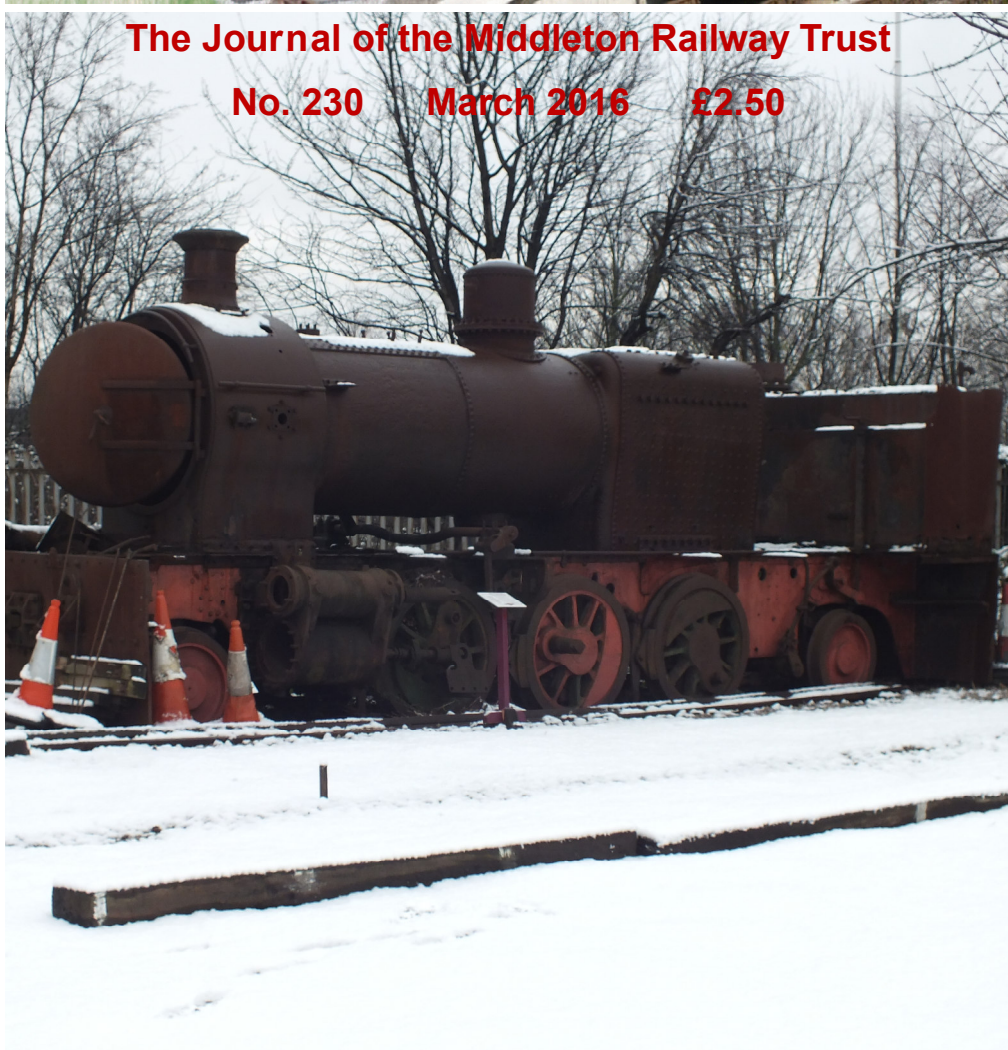


The Journal of the Middleton Railway Trust

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Picton, in the snow on 17th January this year, waiting for its shelter. Don't worry Picton—it's on the way!

Introduction

The Old Run No. 230 March 2016

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

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

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Front Cover:

Picton - Andrew Johnson

Back Cover:

Elves - Ian Smith

On the Platform

Jenny Cowling

Well, you took me at my word I am pleased to see. I'm a bit pushed for space as so much material has come in, and all of it very interesting. Which is better than a pile of naff cartoons nicked off the web.

The destruction of OLIVE, however, is very sad—not just the money, but so many hours of devotion put into restoring the vehicle, all gone up in a cloud of smoke to please some vandals that don't seem to have any brains. The photographs on the centre pages show just what a terrible mess they made of it. Personally, I hope the EM2 LS manage to restore it again; partly because it is, I understand, an unique vehicle and partly to prevent the vandals from winning! It would be good if they could be caught and perhaps taught a lesson that would make them think before acting in stupid ways again.

On a more cheerful note, you will see two articles in this issue about volunteering. They are both meant to encourage rather than deter and, although they both come from a rather different era in the railway's history (1968 and 1971), they both bear striking similarities to how things work (or don't work) today. The basic message they give is that **volunteering is fun!** And I'm sure all our working members will agree with this, even if it means being outside in the cold, wind, rain and sometimes snow, in order to finish a job by a deadline, the sense of achievement cannot be beaten. *And if you actually get to drive a train!* Well, that used to be the pinnacle of every schoolboys dreams—and there is an inner schoolboy in all of us (even us girls). Come and give it a try!

How boring life must be; nothing to do all day; no purpose in life; no interests – just sitting watching the television all day. Would you like me to let you into a secret? Yes of course you would. But I expect that you may know the secret already. It is of course our common interest in the Middleton Railway where it seems that at times chaos reigns. There is no time to be bored.

Over the last months we have successfully survived another Santa season. We had one or two casualties along the way – some volunteers were taken ill or had accidents. But I am glad to say that they are all well on the way to recovery. One mother and her children arrived for a train. Unfortunately we could not find her booking on the system. It transpired that she had booked with the MRT which she thought was Middleton Railway Trust but was in fact the Midland Railway Trust at Butterley! This was resolved by a telephone call and our Santa found space on the train.

Chaos seems to have been the order of the day in the Engine House since the last train on January 1st. We are fast approaching the end of the first decade since our 'new' Engine House was opened and it was decided that it was time to refurbish our visitor centre. The shop area has been stripped of all the fittings and the pictures removed from the walls. The staircase and conference room have had the same treatment. An infestation of joiners and decorators descended on the premises. A new ticket window and desk have been fitted along with what seems like miles of new skirting boards both upstairs and downstairs. Bright new colours

have been applied to all the walls with the thirty odd doors finished in white. This will all be accompanied by a revised layout of the shop and café.

What appeared to be chaos in the workshops over the last months is now starting to show the results as the saloon coach has been treated to a cosmetic restoration and the frames of Brookes are starting to be refitted with many new and refurbished components. A more detailed report is enclosed from our CME, Steve Roberts.

Chaos was the order of the day on a Tuesday early in February when four youths entered the yard. After a lot of effort they broke into OLIVE and using fuel from one of the cranes set fire to this unique artefact. All this was caught on CCTV. They then rang the Fire Brigade and retreated over the fence to observe the action! The matter is under investigation by the police. The owners of the vehicle, the EM2 Locomotive Society, are now debating what to do. They have our sympathy and we are hopeful of a good resolution from this chaotic situation.

Our yard will soon be joining the chaos as contractors will be on site to excavate the land for the foundations of the new running shed. Out of this chaos we hope that the steelwork for the building will arise from the ground about Easter time.

Many Middleton Railway volunteers have not had time to be bored. Indeed time has flown by over the last weeks. If you are reading this and have time and skills to spare then you will be welcome to join the friendly working parties at your railway any Wednesday, Saturday or Sunday.

Malcolm Johnson.

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How to become Traffic Manager without really trying

Gordon Crapper

Reading in the last Old Run Graham Findley's experience at the Somerset and Dorset railway reminded me of when I joined the Middleton Railway.

It all started harmlessly enough one Saturday afternoon in 1968. My wife noticed in the 'Evening Post' that there was an open day, and as the paper came in mid-afternoon on Saturdays we decided to drive down and see if anything was still going on. Unfortunately we were too late, the only person still there was then chairman, Fred Youell. In the conversation I absent-mindedly let slip that I too worked at the University, and in no time at all I was not only a member, but also Traffic Manager! It was very hard to say no to Fred. If the members were surprised to have a Traffic Manager nobody knew, they were certainly no more surprised than me. I don't think I could be described as a volunteer; conscript comes to mind!

'Come down on Wednesday' said Fred. On Wednesday we had to

move some wagons onto Robbie's weighbridge. It was raining. Fred started 'Pea' (HE 1786) as only he could, and off we went, but not far, as we slipped to a standstill. 'Take over' he said, and before I could say no he was off putting handfuls of grit on the rails, and I was 'driving' - not that we were going anywhere! We never did manage it that afternoon, and it wasn't much of an introduction to train operating. However I did eventually start to enjoy the freight working, and had some memorable days on the job. Clayton's had finished rail transport before I joined, so it was just scrap from Robbie's. Of course I had to liaise with Robbie's and find crews. This wasn't too difficult for Wednesday afternoons with students, as most of them turned up anyway, but harder in vacations and when we started the weekend passenger trains, as I didn't know anybody.

Actually being involved with trains became something of a relief. When I began the motorway was not started, so once we were safely down the steep curve to the headshunt we had a more or less level run before the downhill over Moor road. Usually

How to become Traffic Manager ... *Gordon Crapper*

it was routine, although you really had to be careful going downhill with a train of loose-coupled wagons. Sometimes it was not so straightforward.

On one occasion, Hunslet Feast was in full swing on the waste ground next to the old Parkside Rugby League ground. Vans were parked too near the track, and there were people everywhere. We managed to get the vans moved, but the people were another thing altogether. They seemed to regard the train as a free go on the dodgems. I was walking ahead of the train imploring them to move, but really only the first wagon bearing down on them had any effect. At the last minute one youth jumped towards the train and put one of the old wooden keys on the rail - don't ask where he found it - and watched as the first wheel smashed it to matchwood.

Another time was in winter. We were taking three loaded wagons to Balm Road, 'Pea' in charge, and snow on the ground. At Moor Road there were heaps each side left by the snowploughs. I was flagging the crossing. The wagons rumbled down through the first heap, across the road, hit the heap at that side and stopped dead. Now 'Pea' would never pull all three back up the hill from there, indeed one might have been a struggle, so we certainly had a problem. The first road vehicle in the line was a BR minibus and tool van, and its occupants obviously found it hilarious. Our driver rocked the train back and forth as best he could, and at about the third attempt we were on the move again, but it was a nasty moment.

One Wednesday afternoon, just as we were clearing up, a student volunteer put his foot on a piece of broken glass, which went right through his shoe. He was bleeding profusely, and there was the possibility of some glass in the wound, so we went off to Casualty at the Infirmary. The wound was no problem, actually very small in spite of all the blood, but the paper work was something else. 'Where did it happen?' 'On the Middleton Railway.' 'You were at work then.' 'No.' 'What were you doing then?' 'We'd been running a train.' 'You were running a train but not at work?' 'Yes.' I think in the end the lady just abandoned the effort and made something up. I had by this time become Safety Officer as well as Traffic Manager, but Health and Safety wasn't the industry it has now become. I had a telephone number for someone at the Railway Inspectorate if we had a major incident, but otherwise it was just application of common sense and taking due care. There was no accident book, and I didn't make any recommendations after the incident - we could hardly prescribe heavy duty footwear for all the student volunteers.

The last train on the old alignment, Carroll, with 13 wagons and a brake van, and the first through the tunnel, a school party with 'Pea' and a brake van which Joe Lee managed to borrow from BR were highlights. When the railway was back in business after the motorway tunnel was commissioned working freight with 'Pea' on the new alignment was rather a pain, because only one loaded wagon at a time could be taken up over the new points, so every trip took so much longer.

How to become a Traffic Manager ... *Gordon Crapper*

Towards the end of my time as Traffic Manager it became increasingly difficult to find student crews to work the trains in daylight, so we had to change our rules to allow for working at night. Robbie's were not too keen, because they had to weigh all the wagons themselves, but there was no choice. We had to learn which way to swing the lamp for forward or back, instead of waving arms, and to find enough lamps which actually had the oil burners inside, as most of ours were empty shells. The actual working in the dark was not a problem because in a city it is never really dark, and there was less traffic on Moor Road, which made the crossing easier.

In between times we operated school trips on Wednesday afternoons, just 'Pea' and the brake van. Some of these could be quite hair-raising when the teachers made no effort to control their pupils, as the guard couldn't be at both ends of the van, and boys – usually boys – would hang off or try to climb onto the roof. I also arranged the first School Steam Day, although the credit should really go to the headmaster of a school in Kirkstall who wanted to bring a large party and please could they have a steam locomotive? I already had requests for trips for smaller parties from other schools, and I thought that if I could persuade them all to come on the same day, maybe we could use steam. In the event it worked well. The passenger train in those days

was an open wagon and the brake van, and the scream as a wagon full of young children went into the tunnel is something no one would forget.

We also had a couple of steam galas, although my own input to the organisation was minimal, and some track relaying, which can be sampled on my poor quality 8mm cine film on YouTube—

<https://youtube/Xk9mkEQJ1qc>

In 1971 the Yorkshire Post organised an exhibition of steam locomotives, I'm not sure exactly where it was, but somewhere near to Central Station. We were not directly involved, but one locomotive on display was LNER K4 3442 *The Great Marquess*, which was at that time owned by our president, Viscount Garnock, and stored in Neville Hill Shed, where a



party of us was allowed to go and clean it, an interesting time with several other locos there. On the day we had to put on the nameplates and works plates which had been removed to prevent theft – the nameplates spent a few days in my loft – and fixing the works plate to the back of the tender meant someone,

me as it happened, had to climb into the water tank. Other exhibits were 532 *Blue Peter*, which attracted a lot of attention on the BBC children's programme, and the locomotives from KWVR which had featured in the film *The Railway Children*, ensuring a good attendance.



I left Leeds in 1973 for a new job in Liverpool, which ended my volunteering. At that time no one could have imagined the railway as it is today.

Gordon Crapper

(Do watch that YouTube video—it's very interesting. "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow ..." Ed.)

Gordon Crapper's article brought to mind one written by **Tom Apperley** in 1971, on a similar theme, **So you want to be a Sales Manager**. I thought this would be a good time to republish this (page 20) - see if you can spot the similarities; there are, sadly and not altogether surprisingly, several! Ed.

Roster Update

Some maintenance and update to the roster system has taken place over Winter. Almost all of the changes will be undetectable to the naked eye!

One that might be noticed is the recording of train crew's medical assessments and expiry dates. This means that it is possible for a member to try to roster themselves for a turn several months in advance, only for a warning to be flagged that they are not competent as their medical has expired. If this does happen, it is likely that there is actually a medical booked prior to the turn, so please do let the Roster Clerk know which turn you wish to roster for, and the turn will be provisionally booked until the medical is completed and the records updated – this prevents anyone else taking the turn.

The roster for the 2016 operating season is available now, so please do take a look and put your name down if you can; diesel turns and guarding turns seem to be the ones looking a bit bare at the moment.

As ever, if anyone has any queries or problems with the roster system, or just wishes to put their name down, please do not hesitate to contact the

Roster Clerk; Mark Whitaker

07828 849113 anytime

0191 203 3374 (09:00-16:00)

marks_mac@hotmail.com

roster@middletonrailway.org.uk

The Running Shed Project

The Running Shed Project

March 2016



The running shed project has now reached the stage where construction above ground level can be accomplished. A contract was signed in late February with Midbrook Steel who will provide and construct the steelwork along with the steel cladding for our new running shed. The same company will excavate the site and pour the concrete foundations for the building.

Construction of the building, which will provide undercover protection for the preparation and disposal of up to two steam locomotives, will take about two weeks. The expected start date, subject to receiving final permission for the building control, will be between April and May of this year. We are, of course, hoping for an early date. Our thanks must also be extended to our contractor, Midbrook Steel, for their favourable rates and support of our project.

The first engraved bricks arrive



The Running Shed Project

'Buy a Brick' Appeal

Fund raising for the project was started in 2013 and the members of Middleton Railway would like to express their thanks to you for your donation towards this ambitious project. For those who requested that a brick be engraved many of these are at present on display in our Engine House. Another batch of bricks are expected to be engraved in April. The closing date for requesting a brick to be engraved is 4th April. These will eventually be used in the lower section of the walls of the building. Fundraising to date is approaching £19,000 against an expected cost of £48,950.

Work done so far

In order that a steam locomotive can be prepared for the day it is necessary that many of the components be inspected and lubricated. Many of the places where oil is applied necessitate the crew to work beneath the engine. Thus the construction of a suitable pit is an integral part of a running shed. The existing pit would have been outside the new shed so this has been extended by the length of the new building. Construction of this structure required the use of over 750 concrete blocks and about 20 tons of concrete. The turnout into the service road from the yard has also been lifted to ensure that the track in the new shed will be level.

With the exception of the use of a mini-excavator and operator to dig out the many tons of spoil for the pit, all of the work to date has been carried out by volunteer labour.



Construction Timeline

2013 May – Initial plans discussed. Estimated cost £46,000.

August – Planning application was submitted and we were advised that this should take 21 days and Building Regulations 8 weeks.

September – The 9000 bricks donated by Taylor Wimpey had been delivered. Some of these have been used for the inscriptions.

October – Pre-application for Planning permission had been submitted but we were informed that there could be a delay as the Leeds planning were busy. Lifting of the track commenced.

November – Fund raising had reached £4,900. The outline plan for the shed had been agreed. Spoil samples had been sent away for analysis, the results of which specify how the spoil from the foundations may be disposed. It was anticipated that tenders for the steelwork should be sent out early January 2014.

The Running Shed Project

2014 January – It was reported to us that Leeds City Council (LCC) had had the application for **19 weeks** due to a backlog in their system.

April – Reported that the delay by LCC was as a result of the application for the proposed trolleybus system for Leeds to which they were giving priority.

More detailed drawings of the shed were prepared which needed checking by an independent Engineer. Fund raising now stood at £8,000.

October – Formal Planning Application was submitted; public comments closed on 14th November.

December - The Planning Application was approved.

2015 January – Work on the pit was started. This continued until March.

April – Work on the pit had by now been complete and it was in use. It was discovered that the times of operation for the shed had not been correct on the planning application. This meant we had to advise LCC of the error and ask for a variation in the conditions for permission of the application.

October – Our project manager/civil engineer had met with LCC regarding building regulations. He then arranged a number of meetings with suppliers.

November - Tenders for the work were invited. A display showing the progress was erected in the Engine House.

2016 January – Tenders had been received, considered and approved for the foundations, superstructure and steelwork cladding. Reported that LCC approval would be required to close the footpath in order to ensure that space was available for the construction. Quotations for an oil separator and pumps were invited.

February – A dividing wall and steps for the pit had been constructed to coincide with the position of the end wall of the proposed Running shed.

February/March Risk assessment and other Health and Safety documentation were prepared. Detailed discussion with the contractors about the exact phasing and construction methodology are, at the time of writing, ongoing.

April/May – Foundations and steelwork to be completed.

Summer/Autumn – Work outstanding: Brickwork, Drainage, Smoke trough, Fitting out.

**GEOFFREY HORSMAN, C.Eng.,
M.I.Mech.E , A.M.I.Loco.E.**

1925 - 2015 – AN APPRECIATION

Geoffrey Horsman, always known as Geoff to his many friends, was born on 12th October 1925 in Harrogate, where his railway interests began at an early age. His first recollection is of the auto-train to Knaresborough, formed of a 0-4-4 tank locomotive sandwiched between two carriages, an interesting combination which nurtured his long affection for the North Eastern Railway. He was nine when the family moved to Dragon Road, a house overlooking the LNER line north of the station, where his father, knowing the times of the principal express trains, would take Geoffrey and his sister Marjory to watch them pass. The adjacent goods yard also provided a scene of constant activity, including the excitement of regular derailments. The Harrogate Gas Company 2 ft. gauge railway at New Park was close by and another source of interest.

On leaving High School in 1941 he became an engineering apprentice with Dawson Payne & Elliott at Otley, the famous printing machine manufacturer, then involved in repetitive munitions work. This did not appeal as a career so at the age of 18 he volunteered for service in the RAF, trained as a flight engineer and was posted to 189 Squadron flying Lancaster bombers from Fulbeck in Lincolnshire during the last months of the war. The squadron disbanded at the end of 1945 and he then retrained on motor transport duties and was posted to Egypt. Long days driving through the desert did not appeal to

Geoff but he obtained an office role dealing with vehicle records which allowed time to explore the local railways.

Demobilised in 1947, Geoff hoped for a career on the railway, but opportunities were limited so he enrolled on a 3-year Mechanical Engineering course at Huddersfield Technical College. On completion, he applied unsuccessfully for posts at Doncaster Works, Beyer Peacock in Manchester and Yorkshire Engine Company in Sheffield. However, an application to The Hunslet Engine Company was successful and he began work here in 1950. Diesel locomotives were then becoming popular but steam locomotives were still being manufactured, ranging from six-coupled saddle tanks for the mining industry to a variety of narrow gauge machines for railways in Africa, India, and South America. The erecting shop was often full of new construction and locomotives being overhauled so there was a great variety of work available. Geoff enjoyed his time here and was particularly proud of helping erect the very attractive large 2-8-4 tank locos for the 2ft 6in gauge Dholpur State Railway, built using drawings originally produced by Kerr Stuart in 1921. This also brought him into contact with men of long experience at Hunslet and other locomotive manufacturers who would sometimes share their knowledge with him.

Geoff's ambition was to enter the drawing office, but because there was no vacancy at Hunslet he applied to the Yorkshire Patent Steam Wagon Co., was accepted, and moved there in 1953. However, Hunslet must have regretted the loss of his expertise and

An Appreciation (continued)

nine months later he was asked to apply for a position in their drawing office. This was accepted and he returned to Hunslet in 1954 to join Victor Melling on experimental work relating to mines locomotive development. A year later he transferred to the drawing office, working first on the conversion of steam locomotives to oil-firing to comply with the Clean Air Act then coming into force, later on the design of components for new locomotives. This usually involved checking old drawings to identify if something similar had been produced in the past and led to an easy familiarity with the company's extensive archive.

In 1956 he joined the Institution of Locomotive Engineers and, when this merged with the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 1969, became a Chartered Engineer. In 1964 the company produced "Hunslet 100" a history written by Tom Rolt, but we suspect that much of the research was actually Geoff's work, though he was too modest to admit it. He was known at that time for his gentlemanly manner and distinguished appearance, enhanced by the moustache he wore in earlier years.

In 1966 he transferred to the Contracts Department dealing with sales enquiries, preparing quotations and other documentation requiring close attention to detail, a skill in which he excelled. In 1969 he transferred to the Development Office producing new diesel locomotive designs for Ceylon and Northern Ireland Railways. His final move was to the Spares Department where his encyclopaedic knowledge, technical expertise and skill in sourcing

unobtainable parts proved a valuable asset to the company. It was said that if John Alcock, then Managing Director, required information on the Company's products it was Geoff he first approached.

Geoff never wrote a book himself, but he contributed articles to several publications, notably the "Industrial Railway Record" and "North Eastern Express". His 1964 article on Kerr Stuart "Wren" class locomotives is still referred to by researchers, while his contribution to "North Eastern Locomotives – A Draughtsman's Life" drew heavily on his own experience. He also aided many other authors. Requests for information received at Hunslet were usually directed to Geoff, and responded to promptly and thoroughly. Many of these later came from groups involved in locomotive preservation, a trend that gave him a great deal of pleasure.

Hunslet's vast drawing archive was the source of this information but by 1965 it was recognised that most were no longer relevant to the business. Geoff was asked to find a home for the pre-1914 drawings and those of Kerr Stuart and Avonside but Leeds City archives had insufficient space and it was only some five years later that the Bradford Industrial Museum agreed to accept them. A further reorganisation about 1980 was followed by an instruction that the remaining old drawings were to be burned, but Geoff intervened and as these were carried to the incinerator he diverted them to an old pattern loft where they lay until about 1990 when these, and the drawings from Bradford, were transferred to the Leeds Industrial Museum, Armley Mills. Geoff was made redundant a

few months before his 65th birthday and then spent time sorting the drawings at Armley Mills, helped first by Peter Halton and later by Peter Fox. Between them they made a number of interesting discoveries that resulted in articles in "The Narrow Gauge" and elsewhere. Though Geoff was not entirely happy when the archive was transferred to Statfold Barn the resources available there to conserve the collection and make it readily available achieved what he intended when saving it from destruction. It remains his most tangible legacy.

Geoff's generous support brought him many friends, especially Richard Farmer of Northridge, California who, in 1983, had purchased the 18" gauge Hunslet 0-4-0 well tank GWEN, and restored it to working order. Richard was eternally grateful to Geoff and I persuaded him to accompany me and help run GWEN at "Railfair 1999" in Sacramento. When we arrived at Los Angeles airport, Geoff wearing his traditional tweed jacket and cardigan, Richard drew me aside to ask why he was dressed like that. I explained that he always dressed that way, to which Richard said "We'll soon change that" and the following day whisked him off to Sears Roebuck to be fitted out with blue jeans and a denim shirt to match the other loco crews at the event. Geoff thoroughly enjoyed our ten days at Railfair, despite 100 degree temperatures and difficulties operating GWEN's injectors, but his delight at being close to big steam locos was obvious. We also brought a local touch to the event each afternoon by brewing Yorkshire Tea

using water from GWEN's boiler, attracting several British visitors to join us.

Geoff was also a great help to Middleton throughout the years, assisting with having work done on both "COURAGE" and our Sentinel in the 1990's and also with historical research when we were working on the Engine House project.

Other preservation projects have since given him great pleasure, especially the restoration of Hunslet EDWARD SHOLTO by Martyn Ashworth's team, and it is regrettable that mobility problems in his final years prevented him from visiting to see their work on the World War 1 Hunslet 4-6-0 tank. We have every reason to be grateful to Geoff – a friend, a helper, a supporter who gave so much to so many for such a long time – he will be missed, but never forgotten so long as Leeds-built steam locomotives survive.

Mike Swift

Free Rides for Members

If you have been a member for any length of time, you will realise that membership entitles you to two free rides on the railway per year, on ordinary service days. This, along with other benefits, is reviewed each year at the AGM. At the 2015 AGM it was realised that it would be beneficial to the railway (and the members) if this entitlement was increased to **four** free rides on ordinary days. Unfortunately we slipped up and this decision was not implemented on membership cards issued this year. We are rectifying this as soon as possible.

And the bad news is:-

THE EM2 Locomotive Society's Drewry Railcar, No. DB998901, was seriously damaged by fire in an arson attack at the Middleton Railway on February 9. (See our centre page spread, Ed.) Vandals broke into the vehicle and started a fire, causing widespread damage to its bodywork and destroying the interior in the passenger area. An adjacent business raised the alarm and called the fire brigade, whose prompt attendance prevented the fire spreading below floor level and consequently the engine, gearbox, final drive and brake pipe runs appear largely unaffected.

The unit had undergone a major body repair and a repaint at the VCT workshops at Ingrow less than six months previously. Ian Dobson of the EM2LS told Rail Express "Having spent around £5,000 restoring the vehicle last year, this is devastating for us. We're only a small group with limited resources and now have to make a decision on its future. The Society, a UK registered charity, will almost certainly be making an appeal for donations at some point, any offers of help would be welcome and we can be contacted at info@em2ls.org.uk" For the time being, the vehicle has been sheeted over, following the loan of a tarpaulin by the Baby Deltic Project.

No. DB998901 was used as an inspection vehicle on the Woodhead line in the 1950s, hence its EM2 connection. It was purchased by the EM2 Loco Society in 1997 and subsequently modified to carry passengers, winning a Heritage Railway Association award in 2002.

Its nickname 'OLIVE' is in reference to its use as an Overhead Line Inspection Vehicle.

(We at the MRT are extremely sympathetic to the EM2 LS, and regret bitterly that the incident happened at our railway. We will do all we can to help the EM2 LS in whatever decision they make. Ed.)

Ian Dobson's Famous Social Evenings



take place on the first **Tuesday** of each month, at Moor Road, starting at **7.30 pm**. It has been scientifically proven that there is nothing better to

do on a Tuesday evening and, if you're lucky and ask nicely, Mr Dobson might even make you a cup of tea!

Usual rules apply, all welcome, tea-break provided and no membership of any organisation is required, so bring your friends..

The programme for the rest of 2016 is as below. More speakers in the pipeline – really! Just as soon I have dealt with the charred remains of Olive I will get on this...

5th April	Ian Dobson	Recent Travels
3rd May		TBA
7th June		TBA
5th July		TBA
August		No Meeting
6th September		TBA
4th October		TBA
1st November		TBA
1st December		Christmas Social

Middleton Wagons for Sale!

Middleton Wagons for Sale

It is the intention of the shop to offer a further limited run of '00' gauge wagons in the previously issued 'Middleton Colliery' livery but updated to include better detailing and print quality. These are to be produced with up to 4 different numbers so you can add to your collection of Middleton Wagons or, if you missed out last time, get your little (plastic) piece of history.



The business making these also produces a number of other Leeds based wagons (some shown in this picture) in a variety of liveries which may be of interest to our members. One particularly relevant is that of 'Clayton Son & Co, Hunslet' registered locally of course!

Other local wagons also being considered are:



Waterloo Colliery - Rothwell

Airedale - Castleford

Arthur Wharton and Cawoods - Leeds

Clayton Son & Co - Hunslet

Prince of Wales - Pontefract

Expressions of interest to Janet Auckland in the shop, on the list in the mess room or via telephone for those members not able to attend

Moor Road personally. Price will be £12 a wagon with a possible reduction if we put in a large order.

Oh yes and if you are small minded (excuse the pun) there is a possibility of producing these in N gauge at a cost of £10, again with potential discounts for larger orders.

John Linkins

How to bring heartache to many:



Before photographs by Ian D



The destruction of OLIVE!



Dobson, after by Richard Pike



OLIVE - before and after the arson attack by four youths on 9th February 2016.

It makes you want to weep!!



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

A few weeks ago a programme on TV explained the vital contribution that railways made to Einstein's development of the Theory of Relativity. Since some readers may have missed this, here's what it said:

The context was that after railways had spread across Europe, the next job (c1905) was to ensure that everyone in any one time-zone had exactly - not roughly - the same time. Imagine two trains scheduled at noon to leave their respective stations in Zurich - several miles apart at opposite sides of the city but both visible from the 20th-floor office of the Controller. The idea was that the Controller should be able to stand at his office window and see signals go to green in the two stations simultaneously. He would of course need to have either a bad squint or some arrangement of mirrors.

Various devices for working such signals were being invented and many came across the desk of patent - clerk Albert Einstein. Thinking about all this, Albert came to the conclusion that the Controller would only see the two lights go green **if, and only if, his office and the two stations were not moving with respect to one another.** To another observer whooshing past in, say, a train on a high viaduct, the signals would not go green simultaneously - rather, the signal which the observer in the train on the viaduct was approaching would, to her, change first - concluded young Albert. What

seems to happen simultaneously depends on how you are moving!

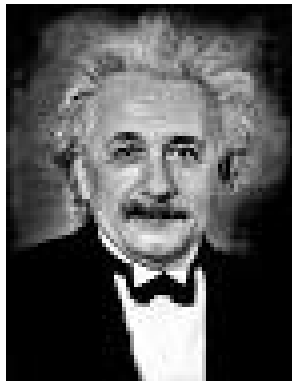
The main point is this: without railways, there would have been no theory of relativity!

Einstein went on to speculate about how the person in a fast train would work out the speed of light. The snag is that the speed of light can't change, even if you're travelling very quickly. How could this be?

He came to the conclusion that, as you travel faster and faster, your watch goes slower and slower. This is the Theory of Special Relativity and might explain why our trains sometimes come back late from the Park - they have gone up the hill so fast that the crew's watches are running slow!

yours

Richard Stead



(No, not Richard—this is Einstein, on a night out on the town when he was a bit older than his Eureka moment! Ed.)

Safety & Operations

You may recall in the first Old Run article from the Safety & Operations Committee, one area of operations that the committee would be looking at was the rule book, more specifically the Train Operating Regulations.

The current edition of the Train Operating Regulations now has several anomalies within it as it has not been updated to reflect the new yard layout to name but one. Furthermore, the Train Operating Regulations need to suit how we operate, and how we may operate in future to ensure we don't have to continually update the regulations.

The Safety & Operations Committee has commenced the review of the Train Operating Regulations, and continues to meet on a regular basis to discuss various items, including how the regulations should be updated. The committee has completed its first draft and has created a record of the proposed changes. This draft will now go to the Rules & Disciplinary Committee for review and feedback. There may be several passes between the Safety & Operations Committee and the Rules & Disciplinary Committee to ensure that the Train Operating Regulations are clear and capture what is required from them. It is hoped that this process is concluded by the end of May, which would allow a copy of the Train Operating Regulations to be submitted to Council for approval for the June 2016 Council meeting. If all goes well and the updated Train Operating Regulations are approved in June, the roll out will begin!

Each member who requires a copy of the new Train Operating Regulations will be issued with one as soon as possible and will be required to sign to say they have received a copy, and then a 'go-live' date will be set, such as 1st July 2016, although this will be communicated as the new regulations are issued. A process will be in place to allow for any anomalies with the Train Operating Regulations that may exist to be formally raised and reviewed, which will probably run until the end of 2016, the operating season.

All in all, this process is about 6 months behind where it was envisaged it would be at the start-up of the Safety & Operations Committee, however as I'm sure you will understand, this is something that must be done right, and hopefully spending the time now will be of benefit in future.

Mark Whitaker

Middleton Railway MICs, Spring 2016

Thursday 14th April – Preparation and Disposal. A new title for an MIC as Mr McPeake returns to shed some light (up) on this important topic. One not to be missed.

Mutual Improvement Classes are a valuable tool for all volunteers involved in operations and we have volunteers that have many years of experience, both at the Middleton Railway and other railways - and they are willing to share this for free! Please make every effort to attend the MICs.

All enquiries to either **John Linkins or Mark Whitaker**

So you want to be a Sales Manager?

SO YOU WANT TO BE A SALES MANAGER ...

An article published in the Old Run of 1971 by Tom Apperley

I would like to tell you a story, most of which is true and only a little bit libellous. There was once a Great Exhibition sponsored, with increasing unease as time went on towards the opening date, by the Yorkshire Post newspaper folk. Beautifully polished steam engines, a minor flood and gale force winds arrived simultaneously at the National Carriers yard in Wellington Street, Leeds. A Black Five, a strange orange 0-6-0T with a bell and a chime whistle (?), and a superb green fire-

children about, came from some other local line. If not actually steaming under their own power, they at least had the remains of fires from a terribly expensive lot of coal in the ashpans, and were towing an assorted lot of rolling stock, which included a BR diesel engine, complete with slightly flattened wheels caused by slipping as it desperately tried to stop those real engines. In the cab was an irate official who did not take kindly to comments of "Busdriver", or the presence of real live engines on his rails. Eventually those same engines were sent home in disgrace, and cold except for their cylinders and axle boxes.



breather, utilised mainly for hauling

Right at the front was a large green engine which was in charge of the whole affair, since all the invitations to the civic and other big brass were sent out in its name only. We live and learn in the publicity business, I hope. Standing well back from all his splendour and not at all in her previously agreed position, was "The Great Marquess", and the black-is-beautiful K1. That final quip is to prove that I am not colour prejudiced, although we all know Great Western Green is by far the most attractive colour



This then, with pretty little "Britomart" on a low loader near the entrance, a Miracle Crisp Manufacturer, the Turntable, hot dog, ice cream and Red Cross stands, THE SOCIETY TABLES, was the culmination of many hours of committee meetings under the teepees of the brand new Yorkshire Post building, with its vintage desks and antique furnishings, some beer drinking, and the solution of a multitude of major and minor problems.

No doubt the organisation of such an orgy of railwayism is of little interest to those not directly involved, but suffice it to say that at one of the few meetings I attended there were no fewer than 24 major items on the Agenda, and the discussions which began at 7.00 pm were still going on at 11.00 when I had to leave. Let others with a more lyrical turn of phrase describe the scene; just imagine the sheer simple physical effort of staging such an extravaganza, the Machievellian minds of those hard-bargaining financial wizards who made it a monetary success. Items: the collection of materials for the indoor small exhibition and publicity stands; transporting the Middleton coal wagon and its refurbishing; moving the Mark 1 sales stand and a couple of hundredweights of materials to the site; the dirty job of cleaning the "Marquess"; the hundreds of letters written, phone calls made, and personal contacts required to "oil the works"; steps for the "Marquess"; ordering, counting, selling and display of sales stock, which included the construction of the Mark 1 on two evenings immediately prior to the exhibition (I must get a few plugs

somewhere); collecting and erecting the police barriers to keep visitors out of the N.C.L. reserved areas, the only shelter in the grounds during the frequent showers. This was a job carried out by a band of "volunteers" on a filthy Friday night, who worked like navvies, and did not take kindly to being "organised" by one or two people who did not get their hands rusty or their clothes wet. These same stalwarts returned the barriers after the crowds had gone and some of the gentlemen (?), blue-tailed from all their frantic "being in charge", had retired to drink to the success of the venture. The Middleton crew included two who deserve mention, Robin Taylor, probably the lightest man on the job, and Arthur Tilleard.

I like making invidious comparison; we may not have been the strongest weight lifters, but we certainly shifted most, both coming and going!

On Saturday the crowds arrived and the hard work went on, if you do recognise yourselves ...

Middleton provided at least a complement, and at times an embarrassing excess, of ticket-sellers, ticket-tearers, gate-keepers, tabloid-sellers. (I still have large stocks of Yorkshire Railways; if you have neglected to get yours, 3p. Plus postage. Commercial over.) One lad with red hair should really be a news vendor if his sales figures are anything to go by.

On the sales stand, which was frequently crowded (and I have photographs to prove it), volunteer saleswomen and salesmen fought to relieve the public of their money. I award a well-known policeman the

So you want to be (continued)

accolade for his silver-tongued line of sales patter. And the cash came in. With the willing band of helpers in command, I was relegated to the (literally) heavy position of walking piggy-bank.

The sun put in a few welcome appearances; screaming hordes of children of all ages climbed in and out of engines, on Sunday ringing the bell of the "Marquess" somewhat to the annoyance of the M.C., the publicity officer of the Yorkshire Post, Mr Casson, who had been kindly volunteered into that unenviable position. This may have been because the bell was within feet of his ear, and rang loudly whenever "Blue Peter" seemed to be getting too much comment, or the "Marquess" not sufficient. It did give the loco crew a chance to pull the crowd and sell souvenirs. Sadly, Dixons no longer print "Marquess" postcards, or we should have sold more.

I think that the most enjoyable phase of this great show came a fortnight after the tumult and the shouting died, when to the accompaniment of rolls left over by visitors, and beer, the more or less amicable share out of the PROFITS was made between the participating bodies, at the shrine of Leeds Journalism. At the same time the bills were paid, and these pointed to the fact that without thousands of hours of unpaid labours of love by many busy people, such an event, far from being a commercial success, would have been a financial disaster.

Since then we have been represented at two other major exhibitions. Over the bank holiday weekend, while a few faithful ran passenger and freight traffic on the

then truncated (but beautifully ballasted) line through our tunnel, the Mark II sales stand appeared at Harewood Traction Engine Rally, sandwiched between a Gebruder organ with a very loud but limited repertoire, and a non-existent Northern Society's stand. The rain discouraged them. Fortunately, by the grace of the local DIY SHOP which sells corrugated PVC sheet, and last-minute carpentry in my overworked and overcrowded garage while the Exhibition Manager patiently waited to load up, the stand was made more waterproof than in previous years. In spite of heavy rain on Sunday and showers and wind on Saturday and Monday, we broke all records for sales by several hundred per cent. It was a particular joy to see the Ashurst and Bareham families selling those only 3p plus postage Yorkshire Railways tabloids to captive audiences caught by the frequent showers in refreshment tents and under trees.

At Harrogate, the Model Railway group and sales staff, with fewer customers than before and under difficulties of collapsing tables and about a third less space than anticipated, just exceeded last years return.

And the moral of this story is ... I can't think of one, but I have learned a few lessons in the months since Tim White asked, albeit in such a way that I could not refuse, if I would like to take over the job of Sales Manager. I cannot begin to imagine how he coped with it, and all the other jobs he did at the same time. I am less gullible now. I criticise more, as you may have noticed. I know that:

1. You do not sell unless you display.

2. We need publicity like the desert needs water! You can all do your bit here. I meet most of the passengers who travel on our line and a depressingly large proportion of the depressingly small number have never heard of us, except by accident.

(Does this sound familiar? Ed.)

3. Outdoor exhibitions are invariably wet and windy, even if only in the immediate vicinity of the Middleton stand.

4. It is surprisingly hard work selling from 10.00 hours through until 20.00 hours or later, even indoors. It is less enjoyable preparing beforehand and clearing up afterwards.

5. Without the help of my long-suffering family, whose home is 25% filled with Middletoniana, the Traffic Manager to transport a staggering volume of gear, and the Exhibition Manager to make it all possible, and all the other business aids like sales assistants, business would not be anything like so good. Of these I would like to personally thank Margaret, who spent days before and after each event sorting and packing, making sales sheets, counting out floats, and soothing the savage breast. On sales days she often got up at 6.00 and was still working at midnight. Strangely enough, she is pleasant to all but the most irritating members of the Trust and public. She meets both frequently, since most weekends she is selling on the passenger trips, and most weeks we take a trip to a retail warehouse for food for the line. No, we cannot have

a complete selection of every make of crisp or pop, there is neither the custom nor the profit margin. Yet.

I would like to end this short sermon with a few words of encouragement to those of you who may be in the position of not knowing what you can do to help this mad lot of group one-ers. There is a great deal you can do. I cannot make those wonderfully sweeping statements of policy which, although true, are so (shall we say) offputting. We can all advertise, by word of mouth if possible, so as not to interfere with the more grandiose publicity schemes. We can send our stamps to Roger Bareham (*sadly, no longer, Ed*) we can take photographs for record purposes or to go into the new stock-book, we can clean up the line to make visitors welcome and give a good impression, we can make posters for submission to John Bushell, who also needs a writer of ability to help him produce Middleton publications like histories. (*Alas, John is no longer with us either, Ed.*)

As for myself, I need reliable sellers of all ages, creeds and railway affiliations; I need designers and executors of blatant sales propaganda, colourful posters and display to sell some of our more sales resistant stock. I need retail outlets for Middleton materials, I also need materials as soon as possible! Any more questions?

(We were sorry to learn that Tom's wife, Margaret, died on 27th December 2015. after a long illness bravely born. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her in the many aspects of life with which she was involved. Her work for the railway was just a small part of all that she did for others.)

Moor Road Happenings

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS

LOCO NOTES

Doesn't time fly when you are enjoying yourself? It seems like only yesterday that we were winding down after the Santa services but Easter is now looming up very quickly and locos are being prepared for service once again. As with the last few years we expect to have four steam locos available throughout the year but Sir Berkeley is coming to the end of its 'ticket' and loco availability is likely to be much tighter in the next few years.

1601 MATTHEW MURRAY

Matthew Murray was used on some of the Santa Specials with no problem so the smokebox air ingress seems to have been cured. Air ingress reduces the vacuum in the smokebox which, in turn, reduces the draw on the fire leading to difficulties in producing sufficient steam. The loco has been visually examined by the Boiler Inspector and, subject to a satisfactory steam test, should be available for the start of the season's services.

No. 6

Again, there is no real progress to report this time.

1210 SIR BERKELEY

This has also had a visual examination by the Boiler Inspector with no problem highlighted. As with its sister locomotive, Matthew Murray, we are hopeful that nothing untoward will be found during the steam examination. Subject to this clean bill of health and all the usual caveats, it has been agreed that the loco can be used until 24th February 2017. It will

then require the boiler removing from the frames for a full overhaul. The boiler is known to need some work in addition to re-tubing but we are not aware of anything significant at this time.

The reversing handle has been dismantled for repairs as there was considerable play in the catch mechanism that holds the lever in the various positions. During this work it was noticed that there was a crack in the catch lever and this has been ground out and welded up. This work has improved things considerably but there is still a bit of rattle in some of the catch positions. Rectifying this will require much more dismantling work and is one of the things that will be attended to during the forthcoming overhaul. A plan for this is being developed in conjunction with the loco's owners, the Vintage Carriages Trust.

No.11

Nothing to report.

No.1310 (NER H)

1310 was used for the first few Santa Specials. However, a badly leaking gauge glass valve led to its withdrawal and replacement by Slough Estates No.3, which was put into steam for this. The gauge glass valves have now all been repacked. The whistle has been leaking where it goes through the cab roof and the assembly has been dismantled and refitted to rectify this. The work has also necessitated the manufacture of a large gunmetal nut to better fasten the assembly to the cab roof. The boiler was recently washed out and has been examined by the Boiler Inspector, both visually and in steam.

Moor Road Happenings (continued)

All was declared to be satisfactory and the locomotive is available for service. However, some other work is outstanding on the loco, principally to do with the steam pipes feeding the two injectors and this will be done before the loco enters service. Time will also be found to have another look at the regulator valve. This leaks when in the closed position and has been a problem since the loco returned to service. We have tried to solve the problem several times without success but it is now getting much worse and we need to do something about it.

The loco has been requested by the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre for a couple of weekends at the beginning of May and will be going there, subject to agreement.

1544 SLOUGH ESTATES No.3

This is available for traffic and has required only minor maintenance. The boiler was recently examined by the Boiler Inspector, both visually and in steam, and given a clean bill of health.

Sentinel No.54

The last Old Run reported that Israel Newton had agreed to complete the work on the boiler by the end of March 2016. However, at the time of writing, we have yet to hear of any work being carried out to this end. Until we have positive news on this our scarce volunteer and cash resources are largely being directed elsewhere. We have, however, found time to rub down the majority of the paintwork ready for a further coat of black gloss. In doing this it was discovered that for whatever reason, some of the paint had not properly adhered and could literally be peeled

off in large pieces.

HE 2387 BROOKES No.1

Work continues to progress apace on the overhaul of this loco and it is largely going to plan. In recent times the majority of the work has been with regard to the axleboxes. All the axleboxes have now been shimmed, as necessary and made a good fit in the hornguides. This has generally required the fitting of shims to take up wear but one axlebox actually had to have a small amount of metal taken off to achieve a correct fit in the right place. The two new axlebox underkeeps have been machined up. These have been provided to replace ones broken at some time in the past.

Cleaning down of the frames is now almost complete with only the underside of the cylinder block to do. This is an out of the way place that often gets overlooked when doing this sort of thing. The wheels and axles have recently been receiving coats of paint and some of the wheels now have their final coats of Mid Brunswick Green applied. Mid Brunswick Green was a standard house colour for Hunslet locos where the buyer did not require a specific livery.

The valve rods have been removed for examination. These were found to be quite worn but with sufficient material left to enable them to be machined back to a parallel surface. Despite our best endeavours we could not achieve a good smooth surface so a hand grinder was rigged up in the lathe toolpost and the job finished by grinding. New neck rings have been made to match the newly machined valve rods and the gland followers have similarly been

Moor Road Happenings (continued)

machined to suit.



Brookes valve rod being ground

The connecting rods have been retrieved from storage and steam cleaned and primed. The big end bearings have been tried on the journals and found to be a good fit. In fact, too good as, when tightened up, they would not rotate! Work is ongoing on shimming these to give a correct working clearance.

When the locomotive was dismantled, two of the four big end strap bolts were found to be damaged and beyond repair. These are slightly tapered bolts with nuts at each end and fit into similarly tapered holes. These are lightly hammered in and the bottom nut tightened up to draw the bolt fully into the taper. The top nut is then fitted and tightened up to lock it firmly in place. We made two of these as replacements but it was only when examining the existing two that we discovered that they had metric threads on them. They are obviously replacements from an earlier overhaul. It was decided that it was not good practice to mix imperial and metric fasteners so another two bolts have been made to the original imperial design.

A cast iron 'pot' has been made to our own pattern and this will be machined

up to provide the four new piston rings that are required. Once these rings have been made and fitted, work can start on re-assembly of the pistons, crossheads and slidebars.

K 5469 CONWAY

No recent news from Shildon. Back at Moor Road the new cab spectacle plate window frames have been completed and glazed, ready for fitting to the loco when required.

Fowler 42200033 HARRY

This is available for traffic and sees occasional use, largely because we presently have few drivers passed for it. Work on the brake modifications is currently in abeyance due to the volume of work required on other things.

Peckett 5003 AUSTIN'S No.1

The loco continued in use until the end date of its 'ticket' on the air receivers. It then came into the workshop for a major service and for various other works to be done. Two new air receivers were obtained from Abbots of Newark. Although very similar to the old ones they are made from a standard size of steel tube which was some 15mm smaller than the original in diameter. This slight difference has proved to be quite a headache in the task of fitting them. The old pipework was found to be of an obsolete size and type and replacement would have entailed a major re-work of the pipe runs so the original ones were re-used. This meant that the new cylinders had to sit on exactly the same centre-lines as the old ones to get the pipes to fit. We carefully calculated the thickness of wooden packings required to

Moor Road Happenings (continued)

achieve this but found that theory and practice don't always agree! It has thus been largely a case of trial and error to get the tanks securely and properly fitted.

Whilst the air tanks were being attended to the engine has also benefitted from a service. The engine oil has been changed, along with the various filters. The injectors have been replaced with a service exchange set as four of them were found to be unsatisfactory when tried on our test rig. Along with the engine, the two gearboxes have also had new oil filters and a topping up of oil.

The engine has recently been started and it is obvious that its condition is better than before this work was undertaken. One or two tweaks are still required before the loco returns to service, hopefully for the start of the season.

Lastly, a new two bolt panel lock has been obtained to replace the worn and damaged one. It has been fitted but still awaits riveting into place.

D2999

This is in regular use and has been the main diesel loco since the withdrawal of Austin's No.1 for its major service. The fuel pump drive belts have been renewed.

D577 MARY

This is available for service when required.

6981

Needle-gunning and priming of the body continues as time and manpower permit; a long slow process but necessary to return it to

good condition.

D631 CARROLL

This is available if required but is generally on display in the Engine House. It is the intention to use this locomotive more during the coming season.

L.M.S. 7051

This is available if required but is generally on display in the Engine House. An inspection of the loco's air system is due and will be carried out before the start of the running season

OLIVE

It is sad to report that four youths recently broke into the Moor Road site and, in a deliberate act of arson, set fire to this vehicle, causing significant damage. For the time being, the vehicle has been covered with a tarpaulin whilst its owners decide on any future course of action. *(Photographs of it before and after the attack form our centre spread this quarter. Ed.)*

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

CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES

Coach No.1074

It would be good to say that this coach was now complete and in regular service. However, this is not the case. With the onset of the winter weather it became obvious that water was getting into the vehicle in significant amounts. Inspection of the roof and gutters has failed to identify the exact reason. To prevent any lasting damage the coach was

Moor Road Happenings (continued)

sheeted with a tarpaulin but this action does mean that the problem cannot realistically be investigated. In addition to this, the majority of the coach doors have swelled sufficiently to prevent them being opened. Until the doors can be opened, we cannot remove them and attend to the problem. It is hoped that, with the coach being covered with a tarpaulin and the regular use of the heater, they will dry out and shrink sufficiently to enable the problem to be rectified.

In the meantime, a few finishing off jobs have continued to be done. Amongst these have been the manufacture of two tables to enable the coach to be used for birthday parties.

Coach No.1867

As soon as there was no longer a need to use this coach it was brought into the Engine House for repairs. The plywood panels on the east side, which were in poor condition, were quickly removed. This enabled a careful inspection of the timber framework which supports the panels and we were pleasantly surprised to find that there was little rot and, consequently, little that required replacement. The plywood panels have been replaced with another sheet material – Medite Tricoya - which is a specially treated form of MDF. The makers claim a life of up to 75 years and offer a guarantee of 25 years against fungal decay or water damage. We experimentally used some of this material on the west side two years ago and it has so far performed admirably. It is, however, not a cheap material, being three times the cost of the plywood it has replaced. Once the panelling had

been completed, beading was pinned to it to cover the various joints, in a similar manner to that previously applied to the west side.

The four doors have also been removed for repair. These were generally in poor condition and were tending to stick and need a judicious kick to get them to open. Two of the doors were found to have some rot in the frames and this has been cut out and new material spliced in. New Tricoya panels have been fitted to the outside and these are being finished off with beading to match the remainder of the coach.

At the time of writing the coach is in process of being repainted. The colour being used is RAL 3004 'Purple Red' which is the nearest match we have been able to get to the previous BS2660 'Cherry'. The latter has been proving quite difficult to get in recent times as BS 2660 is now largely obsolete. RAL 3004 is the colour used on coach 1074.

Coach 2084

This coach has been sheeted over with a tarpaulin to protect it from the worst of the weather. It had been intended to fit a new heater to it over the winter months but lack of time has meant that it has not happened. Perhaps this will be a project for the summer once coach 1074 is fit for regular service.

LMS Brake Van No.158760

Work continues apace on this vehicle, largely being undertaken by members of the "Wednesday gang". The east side solebar (the bottom frame member of the body) has been completely removed and replaced by

Moor Road Happenings (continued)

new pieces of pitch pine. We could not obtain a piece of wood of sufficient length so this has been done using two pieces spliced together. This actually echoes the original solebars, which were in two pieces, although not in accordance with the drawing, which shows one single piece. On each side there are four diagonal bracing timbers, 4" x 3" in section. On the east side, two of these were considered to be unfit for further use, even if repaired, and new timbers have been provided and fitted into the cantrail and solebar. Although the south bulkhead was considered to be reasonable and repairable, the south end verandah was in very poor condition and has been removed completely. New corner posts have been made to replicate the originals but still require fitting.

Dismantling of the body has required the removal of many of the metal fittings that hold it together. Several of these are more than life expired. Indeed, some have corroded away to nothing! Replacements have had to be made for these but we are trying to retain as much of the original as we can. Many of them are made of wrought iron and have been fire-welded, a blacksmiths' art now almost completely lost.

Much of the frame and running gear has now been needle-gunned and painted but there is still plenty to do. Work on the chassis has been minimal in recent times due to the inclement weather and the need to do more important work.

IN THE WORKSHOPS

An outstanding job noted in the last

Old Run was the commissioning of the new heater. This was eventually done just after Christmas and the heater has proved to be very useful in keeping the workshop at a higher temperature than the low temperatures outside. It has one drawback compared with the old heater in that it is too easy to start! The old heater was difficult to get going and, unless it was really cold, was not worth the battle to get it running. The new one simply requires the pressing of a button and it is perhaps too easy to do!

We have recently purchased a new Plasma cutter. This is a machine that can easily cut steel and other metals and uses a different process to the more usual Oxy-gas torch system. We have previously had a plasma cutter but it expired a couple of years ago as being beyond economical repair. It isn't a necessary piece of equipment but is very much a "nice to have" as it does a good job of cutting metal and can be used successfully with the minimum of training and practice. The new machine is capable of doing a clean cut in steel up to 12mm thickness and severance cuts up to 16mm, a significant increase over the old machine.

IN THE ENGINE HOUSE

Anyone walking casually into the Engine House in recent weeks could be forgiven for thinking that the place had been ransacked. It has, however, been the scene of much activity. Both the ground and first floors have received a fresh coat of paint. The black vinyl skirtings have all been replaced with more traditional skirting boards as these were starting to come away from the

walls and look unsightly. The shop area has been largely cleared and the shop re-arranged with new sales stands. Other items have been moved around; in particular the many photographs and other items that adorned the walls.

A new booking office window has been provided. The original was at a low height to suit disabled people but it meant that anyone serving tickets had to be seated and made it very uncomfortable for those doing this job as standing visitors effectively towered over them. When visitors in wheelchairs come into the Engine House it has always been found to be much easier to ask them into the shop area where the counter is at low height and there is no segregating barrier. This practice will continue.

THE RUNNING SHED

It would have been good to report that the running shed was now well on the way to completion but this is unfortunately not the case for a number of reasons. However, although there is, as yet, no building there has been considerable associated activity. The area surrounding the shed has been cleared of everything to leave a clear area ready for the contractors. The pit has now been split into two, with a preparation pit that will be inside the building and an ashpit that will be outside. The necessary steps have also been installed. A contract has been let for the supply and erection of the steelwork and cladding and a start date towards the end of April has been agreed. If all goes well the next Old Run should be able to report that the running shed is nearly finished! Keep your fingers crossed!

Ian Smith reports on “Conway”

Members will be aware that our Kitson 0-6-0ST “CONWAY” has been at the National Railway Museum, Shildon for some time now. She has been stripped down and some parts repainted, whilst work is proceeding on a new smokebox plus footplating. Repairs are also about to start on the cab area. In the meantime, our railway has manufactured two new, round cab spectacle plates for the rear of the cab. This is how the loco was actually delivered to Corby, the distinctive square windows we are familiar with being a later addition by the steelworks.

The loco is currently in store whilst the museum attend to their own stock for a number of exhibitions, which was always the intention for this project, it being a “spare time” one for the museum volunteer group. It is hoped that the local technical college will deliver a new smokebox at Easter, when our Chairman and myself will go up to Shildon for a publicity event to “accept” it and at the same time present the new spectacle plates for the restoration to continue.



Conway at Shildon. Wish we had all their space in which to work!



The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

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Adult Membership (FT).....	£20.50
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