

# THE OLD RUN

## JOURNAL OF THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST



NO.160

SPRING 1998

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Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Limited, Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

Many thanks indeed to the members who provided articles, reports and a multitude of excellent photos for this issue, and for all the other 1997 issues.

ALL members are invited to contribute to their magazine articles, news items, letters, photographs or drawings on relevant subjects. Could members sending photographs please mention whether they would like them to be returned after use, or put into the Middleton photo archive.

Written contributions can be sent on paper in the normal way, or on computer diskette, or by e-mail (see top of next column). Diskette contributions are best saved as plain text files which can then be changed, as can e-mailed contributions, to the system used for producing *The Old Run*.

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Cover picture: the Drewry Car, resting at the platform end on 29th November 1997, the day after its arrival. For report see Page 8.  
Photo: Ian Dobson

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DEADLINE DATES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS  
ARE THE FIRST DAYS OF MARCH,  
JUNE, SEPTEMBER, AND DECEMBER.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Smith

As we start the new season, it's interesting to reflect on our long history as a preserved railway. One of our neighbours is celebrating 30 years of "operation by volunteers", having commenced their services in 1968.

Whilst this is a commendable achievement, they were only following in Middleton's footsteps. It was the Middleton Railway which pioneered volunteer operation, running up to 10,000 tons of freight per year during our first years. The other pioneer railway, the Bluebell, commenced operations with at least one paid hand, their legendary general manager, Horace May. Our trains were run between lectures, by students, who proved that operating freight trains was somewhat more difficult than standing on a platform shouting "Thank you, Mr. Perks!".

Now, in 1998, we have a completely passenger railway, and the "elder statesmen" are the only ones who remember such delights as working 6 waggons with 'Pea' in pouring rain!

As always, we still require more volunteers, and, whilst it could be said that we always say the same thing, it is perhaps sobering to reflect that the Sentinel didn't turn a wheel last year because there was no one to retube it and return it service. Any help during the year would be gratefully appreciated, I can assure you!

Let's all hope for a successful 1998: our 38th year of successful operation!

## LOCO & YARD NOTES

Steve Roberts

There is little in the way of news to report for this issue of *The Old Run*. Pressure of work on other fronts has meant that our precious labour has had to be directed to the most urgent jobs. Effectively this means that work which can only be done when we are not running trains - track and coach maintenance, for example.

1601 still stands forlornly in the workshops, minus its tank and cladding. It awaits the availability of volunteer time to carry out the full investigation required.

67 Some good news here! There is a regular Sunday working party on this locomotive, and positive progress is being maintained.

Following upon the welding of the weighshaft bearing brackets, mentioned in the last *Old Run*, the bearing surfaces have been ground to take up the play that was present between them and the weighshaft, and the assembly has now been refitted. The six axle journals have been cleaned down and trued up following which the axlebox bearing brasses are being bedded into the journals. A new reach rod pin has been machined up. The original pin was seized solid, and had to be cut to enable it to be dismantled. Work continues on refurbishing the expansion links. The die blocks, which run in the expansion links, were quite worn and the expansion links themselves were worn at the extreme ends. This has been caused by many years of operation in full forward and full back gear. The die blocks have been built up with weld,

and then machined to be a satisfactory fit in the full forward part of the expansion link (where the wear was worst). Following on from this, the slots in the expansion links have been carefully ground true to suit the built up die blocks. This is a slow, monotonous job and, to date, the left side expansion link has been completed and the right side is almost finished.

Some dismantling continues, but we are now almost at the end of this process. The eccentric straps have been removed, and the crossheads and slide bars have been taken down. Based on information we have, it is understood that the cylinders and valves are in reasonable condition and it has been decided that it is unnecessary to remove the pistons from the cylinders or the valves from the valve chest.

Painting seems to have taken a back seat recently, and there has been little progress with applying coats of paint to the many various items, both large and small. Anybody with a penchant for this work would be most welcome. Most of the really hard work of cleaning down has now been completed, and the painting is the sort of task that can be taken on by almost anybody.

Platwork repairs continue on the cab. It was perhaps optimistic to suggest that this would be completed by the New Year, as stated in the last *Old Run*, as a fair amount of work remains to be done. However, positive progress is being maintained and recent work has included rebuilding of the tool lockers.

Quotations will be sought shortly for the replacement boiler tubes. The

tubes are likely to be the largest single expenditure in the task of restoration, although replacement of the stolen springs and brake cylinder will also be a considerable expense.

**1882 Mirvale** Having successfully completed its Santa and New Year duties, *Mirvale* has been stored for the winter. This work involves thoroughly draining the loco and removing all the fittings liable to frost damage, such as safety valves. No work is planned, and it is expected that the loco will be available for Easter services.

**385** still awaits an official steam test in the presence of the Boiler Inspector and has been 'winterised'. No work is planned before next season.

**1625** is available for traffic, if required, but is otherwise drained down and stored for the winter. Because of its small size, we have managed to squeeze the loco into the workshop, so it is having the luxury of being stored under cover!

**1310** did not see service over the New Year period and has remained drained for the winter, but is available at short notice, if required.

**54** No progress has been possible on the Sentinel, primarily due to concentration of manpower on 67.

**1210 Sir Berkeley** This Vintage Carriages Trust locomotive arrived back on Middleton metals on 13th March, after its winter holidays. Most obvious to those who saw it last year is the fact that it sports a new coat of paint. The new livery has certainly caused comment and is, perhaps, best described as 'Percy' green with black

and red lining!

It has had a boiler washout, and is presently stripped and awaiting a visit from the Boiler Inspector. All being well, it should be available for the start of the season. The length of stay this time is not yet known, but whether it is long or short, the locomotive will be a popular addition to the working fleet (on warm, dry days, anyway!)

**2387 Brookes No.1** Progress on this loco has been slow, of late, due to the owner's work commitments.

**91** is still in traffic and used as required, although suffering from fuel dilution of the engine oil. It is generally preferred to the other diesels, as it has an enclosed cab!

**D631 Carroll** The end of this overhaul is now in sight, virtually all mechanical jobs having been completed. The new platework for the bonnet has now been completed, and the first coats of paint are being applied.

The one major task outstanding is the overhaul of the four engine access doors. There is a possibility that the loco will be completed by Easter, but paintwork to the high standard being achieved does take a lot of time.

**138C** suffered from an attack of vandalism whilst out on a works train during February, when a side window was smashed, we suspect by an air rifle pellet.

**D577, Rowntree No.3, LMS 7051, and 1786** are serviceable and used as required. All other locos are stored out of use.

## PERMANENT WAY

As intimated in the last *Old Run*, the winter relaying programme started in earnest on the 10th January, with the removal of seven panels of track from south of the 'Beatwaste' crossing.

Nowadays, we are fairly well organised, and lifting the old sleepers is the only really hard task we have to do in our relaying. This time, even this work was made relatively easy with twenty seven volunteers, men and boys, turning up to lend a hand. If only such numbers could be maintained.

Once these panels had been removed, a JCB was hired in to attack the 'Beatwaste' concrete crossing and remove the two panels that were buried in concrete. This crossing dated from the 1970's, when the adjacent area was being used as a landfill site. The JCB was also used to level the trackbed, in preparation for the new concrete panels of track to be laid.

The actual relaying commenced on 24th January, and over this and the succeeding two weekends the nine lengths of concrete sleepers were dropped into place with the aid of our trusty crane. By the 7th February, the track was all but connected up again, and the next three weekends have been spent in carefully lifting, levelling and aligning the track. We have, at the time of writing (13th March) almost finished this year's trackwork programme. Almost, but not quite, as there is still the short closure section between the old and new track to finish off, and some further ballast to drop and spread to complete the job. Even so, to have finished this work in so short a time is a magnificent

achievement, and a credit to those who have turned up each Saturday to help out. The speed with which we have put the track back is largely due to the effectiveness of the team, who are by now so used to the technique that we have developed, that everything goes like clockwork.

Even though we are still in the throes of this year's relaying, thoughts are already turning to next year's relaying programme. We have located one definite source of concrete sleepers and a possible second source, that will be substantially cheaper than our previous supplier. The downside of this is that we may have to accept these sleepers in the next few weeks, with all the consequent problems of storage. It is our intention to relay eleven panels of track next winter, which will be more than we have ever attempted before. This number of panels will bring us to the start of the proposed extension works into Middleton Park and, until a decision on this project is made, will complete our intended major relaying works on the main line, spot resleepering being all that will be necessary for some time to come.

## CARRIAGE AND WAGON

Work continues on the restoration of the N.R.M. owned 16 ton mineral wagon. Work is still concentrated on needle-gunning the frames and priming the freshly cleaned metal. Much of the corroded plate work on the body has now been cut away, although the replacement steel has yet to be obtained. The corrosion



is generally confined to the lower third of the body panels, and much of the upper, sound panels have been sanded down and primed.

The passenger brake van (No. 2084) came into the works for attention immediately after the last of the New Year train services. The original programme of works planned some bodywork repairs and a full repaint. However, removal of the internal panels showed that the amount of rot to the woodwork was far greater than had been thought. Thus, the overhaul has become much greater than had been anticipated.

All the seats have been removed, together with all the internal panels, to give access to the timber body frame. The affected pieces of timber have been cut out and replaced. Many of the window frames were found to be rotten and these, too, have been replaced, necessitating removal of the associated window panes.

Externally, the body panels have been sanded down, rescrewed to the frame where necessary and filler applied, as required, preparatory to painting. Following on from this work, the external panels have been spot primed and then undercoated. Likewise the inner panels have been cleaned down, and are presently being undercoated. Those who might, perchance, think that there is little work involved with this should spend a few hours scraping and sanding the ceiling!

Progress on this coach has to be maintained as, because this is our only guards van with handbrake, it is an essential part of any train and without it, the trains cannot run. We are on target (just!) to have the coach

completed by Easter, but many hours of toil have yet to be put in before we can sit back and relax.

Several years ago, we acquired two oil tank wagons for display. One of these wagons was utilised as a mobile diesel fuel tank, but a suitable use has not been found for the second wagon, other than as an item of rolling stock to be used on special goods trains. The recent arrival of a third tank wagon, built at Leeds Forge, has meant that we had more of this type of vehicle than was considered necessary. We are very short of space for wagon storage and, when we received an offer for one of our tank wagons, your Council decided that one could be spared. The wagon is destined for another preservation project, and left Middleton for its new home on 27th February.

### IN THE WORKSHOPS

It is some time since we started moving our machine tools into the new workshops. However, once the overcrowding in the old workshops had been alleviated, there was no urgency to complete the task, and the two radial drills, Ward lathe, machine hacksaw and small shaper have remained in use within the old workshops. The eventual intention is to convert the old workshops into a small museum allowing some undercover visitor display and, following subtle hints from the Marketing Sub Committee, work has started on transferring the remaining machine tools into the new works. The large radial drill and machine saw have been moved, and the lathe and small radial drill will be moved shortly.

Following upon the acquisition of a similar size but much more modern shaper a year ago, the old shaper is now redundant, and will probably be scrapped. Besides the machine tools, much other equipment needs to be moved in order to create a visitor accessible area, but it is hoped that this work will be complete in time for Easter.

### IN THE YARD

Over the last few years, the Railway has been successful in applying for an annual grant, amounting to £750, for planting and gardening works within the Moor Road site. This has enabled us to do much in the way of planting around the car park and station area. Part of this year's grant is being used to plant a hawthorn hedge around the perimeter of the site. The purpose of this hedge is twofold - both to improve the visual aspect of the site and to deter would-be intruders. A mature hawthorn hedge is not the easiest thing to climb through!

### VOLUNTEER AMENITIES

A subject that does not find much space in the *Old Run*, but one that we are trying to improve, is the amenities available to our volunteers on site. We now have an operational shower for the benefit of those wishing to use it. Many thanks to Jackie Maples, who did the tiling for this. Upstairs in the new building, a kitchen is slowly taking shape, complete with microwave and other facilities, largely thanks to Brian Hall. Space is rather limited and this facility is, of necessity, rather small but should be

adequate for most needs. We do have toilet facilities in the new building but, although they are theoretically operational, their use is discouraged as they still require tiling and floor covering. Any offers of help to do this work would be most welcome.

Another amenity that we have is a small meeting room, used for council meetings, etc. We have collected suitable furniture for this room, but it is in a very much unfinished state. The walls are still bare breeze block and plasterboard. We would like to either plaster them or cover them with a suitable wall board. Again any offers of help to do this work would be most welcome.

## V.C.T. NEWS

Following the building of major extensions, the Vintage Carriages Trust Museum is once again fully operational, complete with a central viewing platform, and facilities for visitors with special needs, which include a 'neck loop system' for those with hearing difficulties, improved wheelchair access, and a braille guidebook and audiotape facilities for blind visitors. There will be a formal opening ceremony on Saturday 9th May, performed by Andrew Scott, Head of the National Railway Museum.

The VCT's Haworth shop will be relocated to its new home in the Ingrow establishment after close of business on Sunday 22nd March, and will then concentrate on the sale of 'hardware relics', books and magazine back issues, whilst their Keighley Station shop will also sell 'hardware'



and books, but will specialise in tickets, paperwork, and colour slides.

The ever-popular VCT locomotive, *Sir Berkeley*, was due to arrive at the Middleton Railway on Friday 13th March, resplendent in new livery of a much lighter shade of green than hitherto. After this season in use, *Sir Berkeley* is due to be withdrawn for its ten-year boiler overhaul, so make the most of your opportunities to see this interesting and photogenic little loco in steam this year.

The VCT's Ingrow Museum and Shop are open daily between 11.30 and 17.00, but the Keighley Shop is open at weekends only, from 12 noon to 17.00.

## DREWRY NEWS

Members visiting the Railway for the Santa Specials, New Year Specials, or loco or track maintenance work, no doubt noticed the new denizen at Moor Road, RDB998901, which arrived at 22.30 on the night of 28th November.

RDB998901, (which henceforth will be referred to as 'the Drewry Car'!), is owned by the EM2 Locomotive Society, owners of E27000 *Electra*, the electric locomotive which is based at the Midland Railway's Butterley premises, though her spare bogies were housed at Moor Road for some time.

The Drewry Car was built by the Drewry Car Company for British Railways in 1950, for overhead electric line inspection and maintenance, and was used on the Manchester-Sheffield-Wath 'Woodhead' route, before being handed over to the BR research department at Derby in the

early 1970's. It was then used to maintain the overhead lines on the BR test track at Old Dalby in Leicestershire, from where it was bought by the EM2 Locomotive Society in November 1997. Only two of these vehicles were built by Drewry's, and the other vehicle, RDB998900, has also been purchased as a source of spare parts, being in an inferior condition overall.

The Drewry Car is diesel-powered, and has a maximum speed of 23.1 mph! It was designed originally to work at a speed as low as 1.5 mph whilst inspection of overhead lines was in progress. It is fitted with a hydraulically operated inspection tower for this purpose.

It is hoped to convert the car in due course, for use as a passenger carrying vehicle for public service.

## MIDDLETON : THE MOVIE

A 60-minute-long video, entitled 'Industrial Locomotives - Vol.2 MIDDLETON' has recently been produced by PM Video. No, PM doesn't stand for Prime Minister, it doesn't even stand for Peter Mandelson: in this instance, PM stands for Pleasant Memories, a small (one-man I think) company owned by Alex Hurd who, incidentally, is now an M.R.T. member.

Pleasant Memories is certainly a very apt term to use where this video is concerned. The earliest film dates from a steam gala way back in 1967, and the latest is a round-up of the current state of the locomotives, filmed as recently as the 1997/8 Christmas season.

The video is very much a

miscellany of old and new Middleton, so even for members who now have their own camcorder, the tape is well worth buying for the older sequences of film alone. Very few members, for instance, will have movie film of No.6 or *The Loco Formerly Known As Matthew Murray* actually moving under their own steam, and not very many members will have film of *John Blenkinsop* in action, or of our magnificent 30th Anniversary weekend in 1990. It is also interesting to observe the changing surroundings of the line with film shot against backgrounds of Dartmouth and Moor End Works, the huge former flax mill near Balm Road Branch, and other long-gone lineside features.

The clustering of modern film with not so modern and even downright old film of most of the fourteen locomotives principally featured, is much better and more interesting to watch than a strictly chronological arrangement would have been. The commentary is performed by Alex Hurd himself, who also appears on camera in the introductory sequence.

Alex's filming technique has improved over the decades, along with his camera equipment, and there are lots of very nice sequences. Though I don't think MIDDLETON: THE MOVIE will be Oscar-nominated next year, it bursts at the seams with Pleasant Memories, and I'm sure it will be enjoyed by many Middleton members.

In fact, it already is being enjoyed by some members, as the first dozen copies went on sale in the Moor Road Station Shop on Easter Saturday and promptly sold out, though Alex immediately rushed further copies up from the depths of Lincolnshire (where

he is a member of the Grimsby Louth Railway Preservation Society).

The video is good value at £11.95p, and for those members unable to visit the shop to avail themselves of a copy immediately, they can be ordered from Moor Road station (full address on p.23) by post.

Payment, to be included with the order, can be by cheque (made payable to Middleton Railway Trust Limited) or by credit card (please state type of card, full number, expiry date, and the name of the holder as embossed on the card).

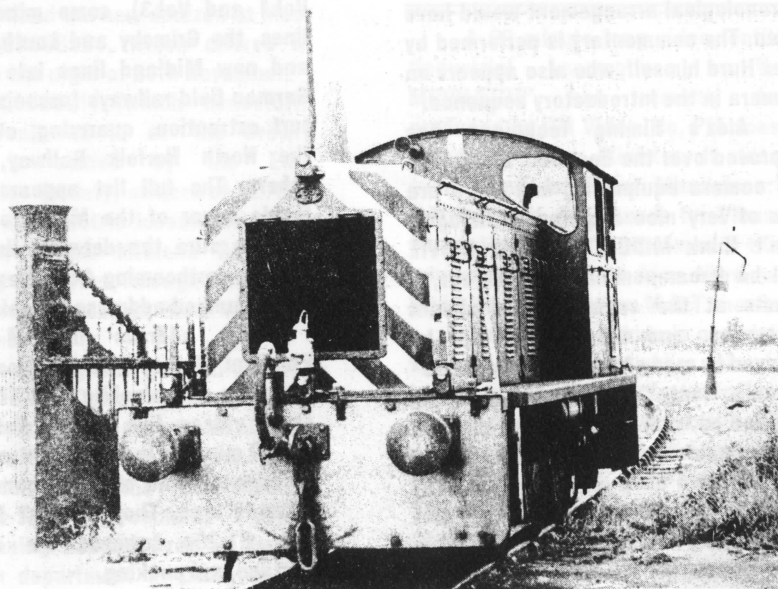
The price for posted orders is £13.45p (including £1.50p cost of postage and packing).

For those members interested in railways beyond Middleton, Alex Hurd also has produced videos on the Foxfield Railway (Industrial Locos Vol.1 and Vol.3), some minor Welsh lines, the Grimsby and Louth, the old and new Midland lines into Lincoln, German field railways (associated with turf extraction, quarrying, etc.), and the North Norfolk Railway, among others. The full list appears on the inside cover of the Middleton video, but I'm sure the detailed list would also be forthcoming from Alex himself for a stamped addressed envelope.

His address is PM Video, Pleasant House, 30 Station Road, Peepham, Lincolnshire, LN3 4DN. Most of his videos, like the Middleton one, are 60 minutes in length, but a few are 90 minutes, and one is a bumper 120 minutes long. They all cost £11.95p, plus £1.20p towards the cost of postage and packing.



Above: the Drewry Car almost immediately after arrival, on 29th November. Photo: Ian Dobson  
Below: BR Drewry diesel No.D2323, deputising for *John Alcock* in July 1962. Photo: C. Thornburn



## TIMES PAST - Spring 1793

Sheila Bye

*The Leeds Mercury* - 4.5.1793, advertisement on the front page:

### MIDDLETON.

WHEREAS considerable Damage has been lately done to the WOODS and GROUNDS at Middleton, near Leeds, belonging to CHARLES BRANDLING, Esq.

NOTICE is hereby given.

That whoever will give such Information to Mr. HUMBLE, at Middleton, of any Person or Persons guilty of cutting, destroying, or taking away any Wood from the said Grounds, so as to lead to the apprehending the Offenders and to their Conviction, shall receive a Reward of TWO GUINEAS.

A Game-keeper being appointed, any Dogs that are found ranging in the said Grounds, will be shot.

April 29th, 1793.

As well as being a hive of industry, pocked with small coal pits, and covered by a web of waggonways connecting the various pits, adits, quarries, and brickworks, the Middleton manorial estate was also home to the Brandling family during the 18th century and well into the 19th century. Not their principal home, admittedly: this being first at Felling Hall and later at Gosforth House, both near Newcastle upon Tyne. *Times Past* for this issue, is an attempt to show the Brandling family's place in the social life of the Middleton and Leeds areas, and the sort of life they lived there.

The Brandlings first came to Middleton in 1697, when Ralph Brandling married Anne Legh at Rothwell Parish Church. She was the daughter of the late John Legh, and granddaughter to Sir Ferdinando Legh, Lord of the Manor of Middleton, and when Sir Ferdinando died, a few years later, Middleton became an outpost of the Brandlings' Tyneside empire. Ralph was his father's third son, and so the property was probably meant to be his home estate. However, the two older sons died 'without issue', Ralph became the head of the Brandling dynasty, and thereafter made his home at Felling Hall, where he died - also 'without issue' - in June 1749.

The estates, including Middleton, were inherited by his younger brother Charles's son Ralph, who died only a few weeks later on 7th July 1749. *The Newcastle Courant* described him as "a Gentleman much regretted by all his Acquaintance, he being of an affable Disposition." Certainly, eight members of the local Great and Good, including the Lords Widdrington and Ravensworth, a knight, a baronet, and local coal-owners William Bigge and Ralph Lambton, carried his coffin at the funeral. On his death, the empire came into the possession of his own eldest surviving son, Charles Brandling.

Charles Brandling was only 16 years of age when he inherited the family estates. He is said to have been abroad at the time, presumably on the sort of European Grand Tour wealthy young men were sent upon at that time. When he returned to England, he took up residence at the family's chief home, Felling Hall. Before many more years had passed, he had made a good marriage - to Elizabeth Thompson, of Shotton, and had



himself a fine new residence built some miles away at the other side of the Tyne: Gosforth House. He quickly set about improving the family's estates at Middleton also, and it was only six years into his reign, when he was still only twenty-two years of age, that the first waggonway was built at Middleton to improve the transporting of coal to the riverside.

However, this article is about the social life etc. of the Brandling's, and quite a bit can be learned about Charles Brandling, mainly from the local newspapers. For instance, he was fond of sports of several varieties, notably horse-racing. By June 1759, he owned at least two racehorses, and at the Leeds Races in that month, his chestnut *Encore*, and his gelding colt *Northumberland Tom*, were 'placed' in their races. By the 1762 Leeds Races, *Encore* had obviously improved and actually won a race. Charles Brandling sent his horses to a number of northern meetings: his bay colt raced at Beverley in 1769, and his bay filly came eighth in the 460 guinea sweepstake at Newcastle Races in 1775.

On 4th February 1769, a son was born to Charles and Elizabeth Brandling, and was christened Charles John. He seems to have been at least their fourth child and third son, the other sons apparently dying as infants.



**CHARLES BRANDLING**  
(1733-1802)

Builder of the Middleton Railway.  
Shown here aged about 27 years.



**CHARLES JOHN BRANDLING**  
(1769-1826)

Owner of the world's first commercially  
successful steam locomotives.

Two years after the birth of Charles John, another son was born: Ralph Henry. As well as building the fine new Gosforth House, Charles Brandling had also had a new residence built on the Middleton estates, Middleton Lodge. The previous principal house at Middleton, Middleton Hall, was obviously considered old-fashioned. It had been the home of the Legh family, and was probably an old house remodelled in the Queen Anne style of the previous century. The Hall henceforth became the home of the Brandling family's Middleton estate stewards; in 1809 John Blenkinsop took up residence there, and even in the much later time of the Middleton Estate and Colliery Company, the Company Manager, Marshall Nicholson, lived there. Sadly, the Hall burned down in July 1962. Even more sadly the Lodge, after many years of neglect following its being abandoned as club-house of the local golf club, was demolished only a few years ago - despite many local protests. The large stone blocks, which can just be discerned as a lighter area at the base of the bay windows in the accompanying photograph of the Lodge, are said to have been the foundations of the several centuries old manor house, which the Hall had once replaced.



Middleton Lodge, seen here in January 1992, in a sorry state after being abandoned by the Middleton Park Golf Club, vandalised, set on fire, and generally allowed to rot.

Meanwhile, back in the late 1700's, the Lodge became the personal establishment of the young Brandling heir, Charles John. It is not clear whether it was he or both he and his father, who were cock-fighting enthusiasts. Whatever the case,



Middleton Lodge certainly was adaptable for use as a cock-pit, though whether this was a built-in original feature or a later addition is also not clear. The cock-pit is said to have been a basement beneath the floor of the Lodge's hall, which occupied the full height of the house. The floor was removable when the pit was to be used, and the surrounding fringe of floor, together with the balcony giving access to the rooms at first floor level, made viewing galleries.

The events held at the Brandlings' home would naturally be private ones, but the Brandlings also indulged in public events, though usually in the name of their 'trainer'. On 2nd July 1796, however, *The Leeds Mercury* newspaper advertised:

**PONTEFRACT COCKING,**

1796 To be FOUGHT, At Mrs. Lodge's Pitt, the Red-Lion, in Pontefract, on Saturday the Ninth of July Instant, A MAIN of COCKS, betwixt CHARLES BRANDLING, Esq; and WILLIAM LEE, Esq; for TEN GUINEAS a Battle, and TWO HUNDRED the Main.

Like his father, Charles John Brandling was also fond of horse-racing. By September 1801, he was the owner of a three years old bay colt, *Alonzo*, which raced at Doncaster during that month, though apparently without success. At York Races the following year *Alonzo* came second in the four miles, and at York again, in 1803, *Alonzo* won the Great Subscription four miles race for five year olds. A year later, the bay came second in the Doncaster Gold Cup. Charles John's horses did rather better than his father's appear to have done, and in September 1807 his brown colt *Smasher* won the Macaroni Stakes - not an Italian meal, but a three mile novices' race "To be rode by gentlemen" according to *The Leeds Mercury*. (A 'Macaroni', incidentally, was a fop or dandy.) The paper didn't say whether or not Charles John rode the colt himself.

Naturally, the Brandlings also indulged in the hunting, shooting and fishing sort of pursuits on their Middleton estates, and there were regular mentions of them or their gamekeepers in the lists of game licences issued. In 1796, Charles John (or rather, according to *The Leeds Mercury*, John Charles - a frequent mistake on the *Mercury's* part) was granted a Game Duty Licence, and in 1801 so was his younger brother Robert William (William Robert in the *Mercury*). Also in 1801, a Keeper's Licence was issued for the Brandling's keeper Ralph Hancock. Of course, the problem with having game on the estate was keeping it there, and the Brandlings were not always very successful at doing that - hence the fairly frequent publication of advertisements such as the following in *The Leeds Mercury* of 2nd September 1809:

**GAME.** Manor of Middleton, in the Parish of Rothwell.

CHARLES JOHN BRANDLING, Esq. Lord of the said Manor, particularly requests that Gentlemen will refrain from Hunting or Shooting thereon, as the Game of late Years has been much destroyed: NOTICE is hereby given, That all Poachers and unqualified Persons who shall be found trespassing on the Estate, will be prosecuted to the utmost Rigour of the Law.  
Middleton, August 21st, 1809.

Back in April 1781, his father had had similar problems, of a more fishy nature:

MIDDLETON, March 26, 1781. WHEREAS a large FISH-POND, well stocked with

CARP and TENCH, belonging to CHARLES BRANDLING, Esq; situate in a Field called Jackson's Park, near Middleton-Lodge, has lately been drawn and robbed, supposed about seven or eight Days since, of a Large Quantity of Choice Fish: This is therefore to give Notice, That whoever will inform of the Offender or Offenders, so as he or they may be brought to Justice, shall upon Conviction, receive a Reward of TEN GUINEAS, from RICHARD HUMBLE, Agent to the said CHARLES BRANDLING, Esq;

N.B. If any of the above Offenders will inform of one or more of their Accomplices, he or they will be intitled to their Pardon, and the Reward.

Any Gentleman or Others, having purchased such Sort of Fish, would do a laudable Action in giving Notice thereof to the said Mr. Humble.

The following report in *The Leeds Mercury* of 19th October 1816, was perhaps also the result of a visit from a poacher:

On Thursday night, the servants at Middleton-Hall were alarmed by the report of one of the spring guns, and on the gardener and another person going to the place, they found one of the garden gates open. Soon after, a man rushed out of the hedge, to whom they called out to stand, or they would shoot him; but as he still endeavoured to escape, they fired at him; and from the traces of blood on the lawn, it is supposed he was severely wounded.

Though there were many advertisements placed over a period of several decades, I've not yet come across a report of the actual prosecution of anyone connected with the crimes; presumably either the culprit's friends kept silent about his involvement, or else the steward dealt with him on site, and did not hand him over to the authorities. Game was not the only item stolen from the estate, as witness the 1793 advertisement which heads this article. Twenty years previously, in November 1773, Richard Humble offered half a guinea reward (i.e. £1.2½p) for information resulting in the convicting of "several Persons" who had "been guilty of cutting and stealing out of Middleton Wood, and the other Woods belonging to CHARLES BRANDLING, Esq; Underwood, Stakes, Bindings, Pea-Rods, Horse-Rods, &c. &c.". Again, in April 1809, John Blenkinsop advertised for information about "persons cutting Young Springs in Middleton Woods".

As with the coal beneath the estate, the woods were a source of income for the Brandlings. In June 1756, for instance, their steward advertised:

To be Sold, At Middleton Wood, three Miles from Leedes, and six from Wakefield, A Large Quantity of OAK TIMBER

TREES, of all Sizes, fit for Carpenters, Coupers, Lath-Rivers, and Building-Timber, and it is so handsomely grown, that it will be as readily brought into the Building-Way, as any Fir-Timber whatever, and known to be well-hearted; also any Person who may want in the Shipwright-Way, either for Keel Pieces, Kellseys, or Plank Stocks, may be sure of being well serv'd with the handsomest Lengths; likewise a large Quantity of Spar-Poles, Sidewavers, or Husbandry Geer; and also suiting for Colliers; also a large Quantity of Slabs, fit for many Purposes. The Sale will begin on Thursday next, and will continue every Monday and Thursday 'till all are sold. N.B. Whatever Wood is sold at the above Sale, the Buyer is to pay (over and above the Price agreed for) one Shilling per Pound, to the Salesman of the said Wood.

Much later, in January 1837 when the estate was heavily mortgaged and the Brandling

family were very much 'strapped for cash', they advertised the sale of considerable amounts of timber, including 264 oak trees. The estate was very much a well-used asset rather than a mere country home. Its woods and parklands were mined and laid out with waggonways, some pits and ways being within a hundred yards of the Lodge. Though records of payments for taking away spoil heaps are in the Pit Bills account books, they were specifically for pits in the farmland. Only when the pit or way was on farmland, does it appear to have been 'made good' when no longer in use, and there are several pit sites surrounded by the remnants of their spoil heaps still to be found within the parkland. The estate and lordship of the Manor were also frequently mortgaged to provide cash for a variety of projects, or just to enable the Brandlings to continue their lifestyle in hard times. For instance, the building of the locomotives in 1812, and the necessary re-laying of the track, coincided with mortgage transactions.

When the money was available, the Brandlings appear to have been as innovative in working their land as they were in working their colliery and waggonway, and in March 1796, an advertisement for Jubb's Patent Threshing Machine declared that: "Any Person . . . . may have Ocular Demonstration, by applying to Mr. Wilson, of Spence Lane; or Mr. George Humble, of Middleton, who now have the Machine at Work."

As well as the usual sort of sports, the Brandlings also dabbled in politics for quite some time. In fact, first Charles and then Charles John were Members of Parliament for Newcastle over a combined period of around thirty years. In November 1778, Charles was also one of three nominations for the position of County Sheriff of Northumberland. Whether he was successful that time is not known, but certainly he held the post in 1782. He first entered Parliament two years later, in 1784, and held one of the two Newcastle seats (Leeds had no M.P. at this time!) until he retired from Parliament at the end of 1797. The seat was then taken by Charles John, and held by him until 1812, when he also retired from Parliament: not for too long, however, as he was induced to stand again, successfully, several years later.

Some members of the family also pursued military interests. During a period of discontent among the 'lower classes' in 1819, The Northumberland and Newcastle Volunteer Cavalry was formed by the apprehensive 'moneyed classes' of the area, and Charles John Brandling became its commanding Lieutenant-Colonel. By 1825, his nephew - also named Charles John Brandling, was an 'Esquire and Cornet' in his Majesty's tenth regiment of Hussars. Another member of the younger generation Brandlings, John James, was also a Lieutenant-Colonel like his uncle, though in his case of a real regiment - the Horse Brigade of the Royal Artillery, and he was present at many of the battles of the Crimean War.

However, the Brandlings did not have the reputation of being a particularly war-like family. Their reputation was much more as being philanthropists. The first instance I've so far come across in the local newspapers (which only started in the 1730's and no longer exist in their entirety) was in 1760, eleven years into the 'reign' of Charles Brandling. *The Leeds Intelligencer* of 24th June announced that: "Under the Direction of the same Person was also erected, a Temporary Bridge (as an Arch in our Bridge is taken down in order to be rebuilt) over the River Air in this Town, in eight Days Time, entirely at the Expense of Charles Brandling Esq." Obviously, in this case, philanthropy may have been tinged with self interest as, once it had been delivered at the Coal

Staith, the Middleton coal was dispersed throughout Leeds and the only route into the town centre and the villages north of there was over Leeds Bridge. It was about this time that Charles Brandling had the miners' cottages built at Belle Isle hamlet, which once stood beside the railway not far from our present Park Halt. Other housing, 'Nova Scotia' for instance, was later built for the miners.

The Brandlings' long association with the Leeds General Infirmary could also cynically be said to have some small measure of self interest, since they often sent patients there who had been injured in the Middleton coal pits! However, they were benefactors of the Infirmary almost from the very first, when money was being collected in 1769 to finance a purpose-built Infirmary to replace the hospital, which had then been open for two years in a house in Kirkgate. At this time, Charles Brandling gave five guineas. A year later, his wife Elizabeth also subscribed for five guineas a year. The new building was opened in 1771, but soon needed extending. In 1777, "Charles Brandling Esq." was on the list of Trustees appointed by the Special General Board of the Infirmary "to take the Grant of the Infirmary Ground from Mr. Wilson". The first Leeds Infirmary was built adjoining the modern Infirmary Street, and was replaced by the present venerable building in 1869. On 15th May 1802, *The Leeds Mercury* recorded that "CHARLES BRANDLING Esq. has presented the General Infirmary, in this town, with Ten Waggons of Coals from his Colliery at Middleton." The donation became an annual event, usually during the winter, though, when the first Murray/Blenkinsop locomotive took its first train of waggons to the Staith in Leeds in June 1812, it was recorded that "The eight waggons of coals brought to Leeds at the launching of the machine, was by order of Mr. Blenkinsop, presented to the General Infirmary".

In times of hardship or unusually bad winter weather, the community in general often had reason to praise the generosity of the Brandlings. In December 1791, for instance, *The Leeds Mercury* reported that "It is with great pleasure that we announce to our readers, that Charles Brandling, Esq; has given forty waggon loads of coals to be distributed among the necessitous poor of Leeds". In late December 1800, "a fat ox was distributed by order of C.J. Brandling, Esq; M.P. amongst the poor of the parish of Gosforth", and a few weeks later "We hear that C.J. Brandling, Esq; of Middleton, supplies his workmen with wheat, at Forty Shillings per load". (The PRICES of CORN column in the same paper had it priced between 43s and 48s.) Also in the same paper, C. Brandling Esq. was listed as having donated £50 to the Leeds Subscriptions for the Poor. In April 1809, "Subscriptions to the Leeds Soup Establishment in 1808-9" included £21 (i.e. 20 guineas) given by "C.J. Brandling, Esq. M.P.", and in November of that year:

JUBILEE.- Shotton, the seat of the Rev. R.H. Brandling, perhaps exhibited on that memorable day a scene of universal heart-felt happiness and gratitude not surpassed in the kingdom. That worthy Clergyman, with a liberality peculiar to his family, presented every labouring family with a piece of beef from 10 to 30 lb. weight, according to their number, with a proportionate quantity of bread and ale, and, in the evening, his tenants sat down to dinner, and spent (we may say) the night in a degree of harmony only to be found under the influence of so generous and admired a president.



The Rev. Ralph Henry Brandling was a younger brother of Charles John. He married in 1796, and about the same time was installed as Vicar of Rothwell, of which parish Middleton was then a part, and the tithes and all other rights of which his father had recently purchased for £16,000. In 1826, after the death of his brother Charles John - 'without issue', Ralph Henry inherited the estates. He obviously carried on the family traditions of benevolence and, according to the September 1829 to September 1830 Leeds General Infirmary report, he had donated 15 guineas that year as well as "the customary donation of 12 waggons of coal".

Ralph Henry's elder son, a second Charles John, took up residence at Middleton Lodge, just as the first Charles John had done a generation earlier. In his time there, there was a great depression in the coal trade, and his father sent many missives down from Tyneside urging economy and wanting to know where the profits had got to which he should have been receiving. Charles John II sent back assurances of his economy measures, such as the dismissal of one of his butlers, the sale of his carriage and some of his horses, and cancellation of his novels subscription at Spinks the booksellers (was this the ancestor of Spinks' bookstalls in Leeds and Bradford markets?). Nevertheless, he was still willing to make some little show of liberality, and in July 1837:

On Monday last, being Leeds Fairday, the scholars and teachers of the Hunslet Association of Wesleyan Methodists paid their first visit to Middleton Lodge, the seat of C. Brandling, Esq., by whom they were kindly received and liberally rewarded. On their return to Hunslet, between 2 and 300 scholars, teachers, and friends took tea together, having spent the day very agreeably.

The folk of Middleton were only rarely seriously discontented with their lot, at a time when many workers were beginning to rebel against exploitation by their masters, and in November 1844, their loyalty was rewarded to some small extent by a -

**TESTIMONIAL TO THE WORKMEN EMPLOYED AT MIDDLETON COLLIERY.**- On Monday last, the 11th instant, the workmen belonging to Middleton Colliery, and their wives, to the number of 520 were invited to dinner and tea by Mr. Brandling, the proprietor of these extensive works, to mark his approbation of their good conduct, during a series of years, and more particularly of their exemplary behaviour during the late strike.

The family also gave with at least average liberality to various local funds in both the Leeds and Newcastle areas. In March 1793, for instance, "Charles Brandling Esq: has subscribed 50£ [i.e. £] to the fund raised by the Committee in Newcastle, for the purpose of giving a bounty to volunteer seamen". This was an attempt to provide the navy with properly hired and paid seamen, in place of press-ganged men. The following year, Charles John Brandling "gave £100 for the volunteers", though it is not clear whether this was for seamen or for the local volunteer militias which were set up during the period of war with France. Members of the family were also in the forefront of the collecting of money for a presentation to George Stephenson, when his invention of a miners' safety lamp was generally ignored in favour of Sir Humphrey Davy's slightly later, but much more strongly vaunted, invention of a miners' safety lamp.

Their lordship of Middleton was generally a benevolent one, though benevolence to those less fortunate than themselves would not usually lead to a great deal of sacrifice for the sort of family whose ladies, or lady visitors, could afford the likes of the garment described in an advertisement in *The Leeds Mercury* of 16th May 1801:

LOST, On Saturday Evening last, the 9th Instant, on the Foot Road leading from Beeston to Middleton, adjoining the Garden of Middleton-Lodge, A Plum-Coloured Silk PAILLAISE, or GREAT-COAT, with Eider-Down Stuffing, and lined with the same coloured Silk. Whoever has found it, and will bring it to the Printer of this Paper, shall receive ONE GUINEA Reward. If offered to be pawned or sold, stop it, and give Notice either at E. BAINES'S Printing-Office or at Middleton-Lodge.

Of course, many other 'masters' were far richer than the Brandlings, and not in the least bit benevolent!

As mentioned previously, the estate was making little or no profit by the 1830's, and it was heavily mortgaged. When Charles John Brandling I died, in 1826, there were already mortgages of around £25,000, and by 1835 the 'encumbrances' had risen to around £115,000. The Brandling estates were handed over to Trustees, often a way of avoiding seizure of them by creditors. Charles John II stayed on at Middleton, but the contents of Gosforth House were sold in 1826, the house was rented to a ship owner, and the Reverend Ralph Henry went to live at a lesser residence at Seaton Bourne. Both Ralph Henry and Charles John II died in the 1850's, and after protracted litigation between their creditors and their connections by marriage, the Middleton lordship and estate were purchased by the senior partner in the Tetley brewery.

The Brandlings' impact on Middleton over the c.1½ centuries during which they ruled the area, was great and had implications also for Leeds itself. They improved the exploitation of the area by mining and quarrying to a greater and more intensive extent than had previously been the case. Their readiness to finance improvements and new and experimental techniques, led to the building of one of the earliest waggonways in Yorkshire - our railway, and to the proving of the commercial viability of steam locomotives. The former result ensured the abundant supplying of cheap coal, which in turn led to the development of industry in the surrounding area, and the latter result made it natural that, when steam locomotives were required for the growing countrywide railway network, Leeds already had men with the expertise to build them.

A popular pitmen's song in the Tyneside area c.2 centuries ago, had the chorus:

Brandling for ever and Ridley for aye,  
Brandling and Ridley carries the day:  
Brandling for ever and Ridley for aye,  
There's plenty of coals on our waggonway.

Sadly, by the middle of the 19th century, the once large and vibrant Brandling family had all but died out - though I believe a few descendants do still remain. By the middle of the 20th century, the coal at Middleton was also almost gone. The last workable deep seam ran beneath a hospital for the elderly, threatening it with subsidence, and the last Middleton pit, the Broom Pit, closed in May 1968, exactly thirty years ago. The last coal to be worked at Middleton was by open-cast mining, ending in 1980.



## BLAMING IT ON ST. PETERSBURG

### The Editor

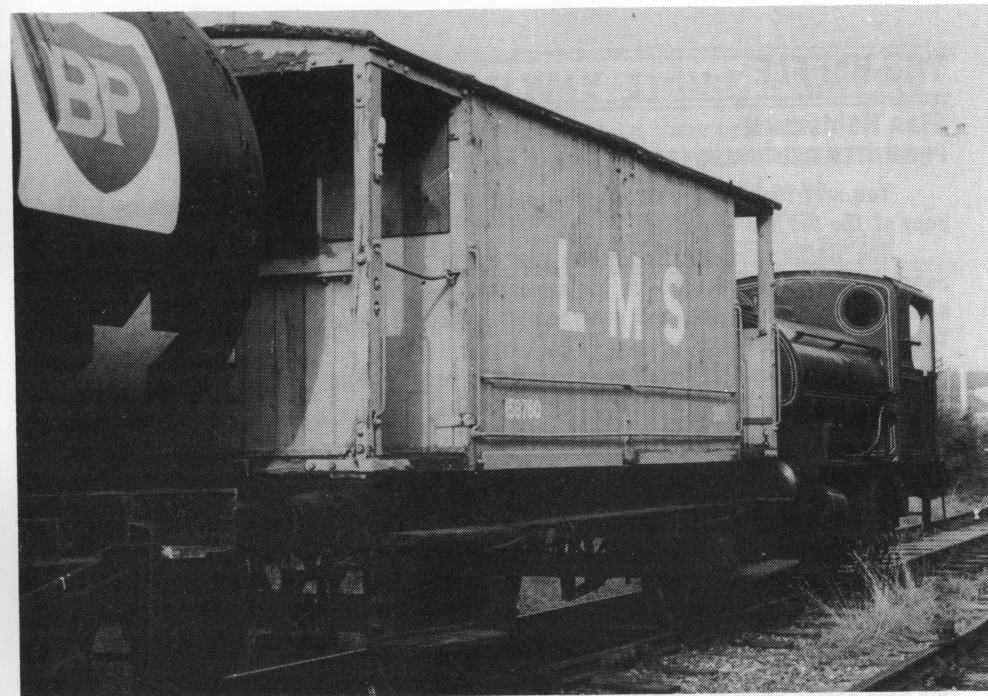
Apologies this issue for the dearth of contemporary illustrative material in the magazine. (It was fortunate that Ian Dobson supplied photos of the Drewry Car and last year's Gala, or the illustrations would have been all oldies.)

More apologies, yet again, for the late appearance of your magazine, yet again. Back in June 1813, Matthew Murray wrote to John Watson, of the Kenton and Coxlodge Collieries, explaining why he had not yet completed the rack locomotive which Watson had ordered from him. "We should have been very happy to have put this engine in hand immediately" he wrote, "but we are under the necessity of employing all our fource to get a large engine off to St. Petersburg which must sail in August otherwise shall be liable to a serious loss." Two months later he wrote again that "we are almost working night and day to finish those engines which must go from here to Russia the latter end of this month". These (stationary) steam engines had to leave by the end of August in order for the ship to reach port before the harbours froze over. A hundred and eighty five years later, the same excuse is offered for part of the delay in producing *The Old Run*: something had to be got ready quickly, to be sent to St. Petersburg.

Readers may remember mention in one of last year's issues, of our having had visitors from St. Petersburg last summer. Tony Heywood, who accompanied them and acted as their interpreter, is a member of a small group set up to assist and encourage embryonic railway preservation groups in Russia. Two of our Russian visitors came from the St. Petersburg transport museum, and this year they are mounting an exhibition about the railway preservation movement in Britain. There is not a great deal of interest in railway preservation in cash-strapped Russia, and the interesting steamscape which existed in the communist era is in danger of disappearing (probably more from decay and neglect than from modernisation I suspect).

As a pioneer in railway building (1758), steam locomotion (1812), and standard gauge railway preservation (1960), the Middleton Railway was chosen as one of those to be featured in the exhibition. We were invited to put together a collection of non-returnable display material which could be sent over to the Museum. Of course, this all required a bit of thought as to what would be most suitable. Eventually, thirty items were laser-copied to a standard A4 size. They consisted of some material connected with the early Middleton locomotives (including *The Leeds Mercury's* report of Grand Duke Nicholas's visit in 1816), and material about the preservation of the Middleton Railway. The latter included a group of photos of our early passenger and goods trains in 1960, contrasted with trains of mid-1970's and mid-1990's vintage: a group of photos of Dartmouth Yard and Moor Road station yard, the Fred Youell Building during and after construction, and locomotive restoration work in progress: and a group of photos showing the changes at the Moor Road site over the last thirty+ years.

Hopefully, though it made your magazine a bit later than it already was, the care taken in choosing the material to be sent to St. Petersburg will show the embryonic Russian railway preservation movement what a few decades' hard work can achieve, even when a group starts out with decrepit track, no buildings, and little money: in fact not much more than enthusiasm. Here's wishing them good luck!



Two 1997 Steam Gala shots by Ian Dobson. Above: *Mirvale* awaiting departure from Park Halt with a goods special. Below: *Sir Berkeley* heads a multi-loco special southbound from the tunnel.



## THE RAFFLE

**Stan Holdsworth**

**PROMOTER AND TRUST TREASURER**

You may recall that I enclosed a book of 4 raffle tickets with the Autumn 1997 copy of *The Old Run* - No.158.

The Raffle managed to realise just under £600, as most of the prizes were donated. Approximately 30% of the members receiving tickets returned their 'stubs' and cheques, and to you and everybody who bought tickets I say, on behalf of the Trust, a big THANK YOU.

I didn't realise my ambition of having to order another batch of tickets, but at least the Trust funds are enhanced by the effort. Thank you again, and the Winning Numbers for the prizes (which have all been claimed) are:-

Star Prize - Family Weekend Break in any Provincial Hilton Hotel	745
Food Hamper	1611
Family Trip for four by rail to Scarborough	599
Football autographed by the Leeds United 1997/8 Team	2010
Marks & Spencer Gift Voucher	197
Family Trip for four by rail to Blackpool	447
One Free Family Entry to each Special Event at the Middleton Railway in 1998	246
24 cans of Tetley's Beer	1686
Asda Gift Voucher	1645
Family Entry to the National Railway Museum	675
Family Entry to the National Railway Museum	108
24 cans of Tetley's Beer	487
Black Sheep Beer Presentation Set	317

and finally,

### ***A VERY WARM WELCOME***

to the following members who have joined or rejoined the Middleton Railway Trust or Association from preparation of the Spring/Summer 1997 issue up to February 1998:

Pat Cronin, Aaron Cronin, Freda Hainsworth, Christine Russell, Christopher Fisher, George Hall, Margaret Hall, Willard Moore, Martin Biswell, Nigel Richardson, Christopher Carey, Peter Simpson, Neil Read, Sheila Colledge, Sean Colledge, David Colledge, Rachael Colledge, Stephen Carey, Harry Emmett, Brenda Emmett, Adrian Lee, Judy H. Elliott, Shaun Hodgkins, Victoria Hodgkin, Patrick McGowan, Erin McGowan, Ian Johnson, Charles Petty, Peter Evans, Barry Wood, Peter Cox, Doreen Cox, Peter M. Cox, Diane Boot, Wendy Cox, Nigel Garbett, and Alex Hurd.

## THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED

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Gerald Egan

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Full Trust Members	£7.50
O.A.P Trust Members	£4.00
Junior (M.R.A.) Members	£4.00
Family Associates of Trust Members	£0.75
Life Membership	£95.00

## 1998 SPECIAL EVENTS

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24th & 25th May	Postman Pat
21st June	Open Day (demonstrations, guided tours etc.)
2nd August	Teddy Bears Picnic
26th & 27th September	Steam Gala - all available steam locos working
29th November, 4th, 5th, 11th, 12th, 18th & 19th December	- Santa Trains
31st December, 1st, 2nd & 3rd January 1999	- Friends of <i>Thomas</i> New Year Party

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Normally, all Special Events trains operate every 30 minutes from 10.30 to 16.30.

Special fares normally apply to all visitors and members.

The above dates are currently provisional only - to avoid disappointment, ring Moor Road Station to check, well beforehand, if you wish to attend any of them.

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