



# THE OLD RUN

The Journal of the Middleton Railway Trust

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A brilliant Brickie, Andy, at work on the Running Shed. Come and view our progress!

# Introduction

## The Old Run No. 231 June 2016

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**Front Cover:  
The Running Shed—bricks  
laid by Andy**

**Andrew Johnson**

## On the Platform

### *Jenny Cowling*

Well hello folks. I'm afraid it's a bit of a thin issue this time; everyone has been so busy building the Running Shed, preparing to do something really visible about the Picton Shelter (see the back cover for the latest news), running various very successful events, and generally keeping up with all the workshop jobs that are essential to maintaining our fleet of locomotives, that they haven't had time to put pen to paper. (or fingers to keyboard these days)..

As always, Steve Roberts tells you all about the fleet's progress on page 18 and David Hector explains how we go about repairing things when we have very little clue about what is required, on page 4.

July saw our first Steampunk event; as Malcolm says (opposite) this was something very new to us—and strange! If we do it again, you will have the chance to stock up on Victorian clothes so you look just the part at our next Victorian Gala! See the centre spread for some idea of just how “fantastic” it really was!

There are some wonderful photographs of the Victorian Gala too, although, in keeping with the fact that colour photography had not yet been invented, these are in black and white.

It might be September, but there are still plenty of events to come—a Diesel Gala (17/18th September); Model Mania (8/9th October), and of course, our exciting Santa Specials, when Santa himself visits us. Pity he can't bring the reindeer, but we haven't room to stable them. Come and join the fun.

Jenny

I regret to advise you that our President, Mr Gerald Egan passed away in June. The railway was represented at his funeral by two Vice Presidents, Mr J K Lee and Mr I B Smith, and myself. The chapel at the crematorium was overflowing with his family and friends. An obituary is to be found elsewhere in this issue.

There is always something different going on at our railway. We have had many good reports regarding the special events that have been arranged for the year. Just after the programme was announced we had one gentleman who asked if he could book a place on one of the Mining Tales and Trails days. Always a favourite were the model railway layouts in June. New for this year was the visit and market held by the Steampunk people. Many of us did not know what to expect and were delighted to meet so many nice people. Their costumes were loosely based upon garments of the Victorian and steam era. I spotted what appeared to be a multi-barrel gun being carried by one man. On closer examination the construction was based on a pre-World War II Pyrene fire extinguisher to which a number of lengths of copper pipe had been attached along with a gun butt at the other end. Talking of Victoriana our July steam gala featured a good selection of locomotives, all of which were produced during the reign of Queen Victoria. I have recently previewed a film of the weekend made by one of our members. This was made in monochrome and follows the format of early black and white films along with caption slides to introduce each section, people walking fast, scratches and jumpy images. This is a 'must see' item and

will shortly be available on Youtube.

There are still some more special events to attend this year along with the traditional Santa Trains so we would love to see as many members as possible, either as visitors or volunteers. The brickwork walls for the new running shed should be finished as soon as the last batch of bricks are received from the engravers. The new shelter for Picton is due for erection during the autumn. Inside the workshops work is progressing on the brake van, Brookes and the Sentinel. More skilled help would ensure an earlier completion of these projects. There are also plans for some more interactive displays in the Engine House.

As we need to send the copy for the 2017 timetable to the printer discussions are already underway about the special events. More details will be published in the next Old Run.

One thing that I find gratifying about working on our railway is the variety of tasks and skills which are necessary in order for us to achieve our aim of running the trains. These range from being a diplomat to servicing the toilets! Enjoy!

Malcolm  
Johnson



# Workshop secrets revealed ...

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## Workshop Jobs David Hector writes about Brookes Ash Pan

It is quite common at the Middleton Railway for our Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) Steve Roberts to come up and say "your next job is !!!!!!!". What is a lot less common is for him to say first, "The original has gone missing" and second, "and we have no drawings to work from".

Firstly, after extensive searching of the site, workshop, containers and hidey holes, no evidence of the original Brookes ash pan pan could be found. (looks like it went to the scrap yard heaven, via friendly metal thieves).

Secondly, even though we have an extensive archive of Engineering Drawings at Middleton Railway, none could be found of Brookes ash pan although an image does appear as a ghost line on a full assembly drawing.

Using this image, his knowledge and the fact that he had seen the original ash pan pan, our CME set about making a set of drawings of the component parts that would allow me to cut plate, fabricate and weld a new ash pan.

The next part of this tale is about a new piece of equipment that has been bought for the workshop. A "Plasma Arc Cutter".

Traditionally we would have to mark out and cut steel using an Oxy-acetylene cutter which has many disadvantages compared with this new piece of kit. A plasma cutter works when a

gas such as oxygen or even shop air is forced through a small hole in the nozzle inside the torch. An electric arc from our mains power supply is then introduced to this high pressure gas flow, making what is commonly known as a "plasma jet". The plasma jet immediately reaches temperatures up to 40,000° F, quickly piercing through the work piece and blowing away the molten material. The Plasma Cutter is easier to handle, neater, more cost effective and produces less wastage (scrap).

After I had marked out the various component parts of the ash pan on a sheet of steel plate I was able, using the Plasma Arc Cutter, to cut out the required parts which were very accurate and neatly finished. You are still required to wear PPE when using this equipment. I was then able to start assembling the plates to the shape of the ash pan, tacking the plates together and adding strengthening

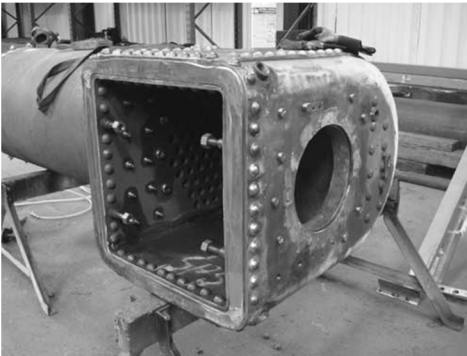


## Workshop secrets continued

bars to reduce distortion prior to welding complete.

The ash pan required two hinged air input doors. One on the front for when the engine is going forward and one on the back for when the engine works in reverse. These door openings are controlled by the fireman and help him to regulate the amount of air (oxygen) drawn into the fire box.

After the ash pan doors were fitted I now had to manufacture to our CME drawings the flange arrangement that went around the top of the ash pan and fitted up against the underside of the foundation ring of the firebox for Brookes: the picture below shows the foundation ring (actually not round but rectangular) of a typical firebox.



*Picture courtesy of the Lynton and Barnstable Railway.*

Various pieces of steel plate were cut and welded to the top of the ash pan to form the flange.

The ash pan is located and secured to the underside of the foundation ring by means of 10 location pins. You can see three of these pins in the next picture, and that each one has a slot in it. This is where a

tapered wedge is driven in after assembly to secure the ash pan.



Now we were in a position where we needed to mark out and drill 10 holes for the location pins in the ash pan flange.

As I had previously said we did not have any original drawings for this project so Steve, our CME, and I went out into our secure compound armed with tape rule, pad and paper. We measured each of the 10 locating pins and because we didn't have any centre lines, datum points or x and y axes to work from, we needed to get as many independent measurements as possible for each location pin.

In the end each pin had at least three positional measurements, some having as many as five. With this information our CME was able to plot them into the computer (at this point it became evident that during its lifetime some of the location pins on Brookes foundation ring had been removed and repositioned, so having an original assembly drawing would have been no help to us) which then produced a drawing.

With this drawing I reproduced the dimensions onto a piece of board and drilled a hole through the board the same size as my centre hole punch.



I then positioned it on top of the flange. I then centralized the board to get the best position for all 10 holes, then after clamping I centre popped through the holes to the steel flange below.



Once the position of the 10 holes had been marked it was off to the radial drill and 10 holes 1/16 inch bigger than the pins diameter were drilled into the flange. Finally with Brookes' boiler and firebox slung from our yard crane and lowered onto the now completed ash pan assembly and they married up well. Job done!



Gerald Egan, on duty on the railway he loved.

© Mrs Jean Egan



# Gerald Egan, our former President. An Obituary

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## Gerald Egan

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of our President, Gerald Egan, on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

Born in July 1935, Gerald was a career Railwayman who held many positions within the railway, culminating in becoming the last, ever, **Station Master** at Leeds City station before it was “converted” into the “Station Manager” role it is today.

Gerald had an outgoing personality and made his presence felt in anything he set out to do. One of his many claims to fame is that he had a suite of rooms named the “Egan Suite” in the Queen’s Hotel in the City Centre! He was also instrumental in creating a display area in the old bay platforms at Leeds, before the big modernisation, which showed a sculpture of Leeds in silhouette. Inevitably, it became known as the “Garden of Egan” to the many users of the station.

Gerald was also a keen flyer and many a time would be found at local flying clubs. He would regale all those who would listen with tales of his flying exploits. A keen traveller, he and his railway friends would often go out on “state visits” to various heritage railways.

When Gerald became President of MRT in the 1990’s, he worked tirelessly to promote it to as many

people as he could, and launched the “President’s Appeal” to help with building the Engine House.

One particular memory I have is of the time when we hosted the Heritage Railway Association’s AGM and Gerald procured the old BT Police HQ building for the meeting. The HRA event organiser at that time was a grumpy gentleman who stopped anyone from entering the meeting without his permission and demanded to know why he was there and upon whose authority. Gerald quietly said that he was the President of the Middleton Railway and was due on stage in a moment to welcome everyone to the meeting – but he would make an exception for this gentleman!!

Middleton has lost a good friend and we send our condolences to his widow, Jean.

The railway was represented at Gerald’s funeral by our Chairman, Malcolm Johnson, myself and another Vice President, Joe Lee, BEM, and it has been agreed that a memorial brick be placed in the new Running Shed to honour his work for the Trust.

Ian Smith



# Safety and Operations

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## Safety & Operations

The Safety & Operations Committee has been beavering away in the background reviewing and updating the Train Operating Regulations, and are now in discussions with the Rules & Disciplinary Sub-Committee as to which proposed changes are accepted and which need further review.

Due to the work on the Train Operating Regulations, there is very little else for the Safety & Operations Committee to update on – which is not necessarily a bad thing, as it means the railway has not had any major accidents or incidents that urgently need actions to be implemented. Despite this, we do all still need to be vigilant in what we are doing to ensure our works are being undertaken safely, and that other people around us are working safely.

### Consideration of Residents

It is with regret that we report the railway has had a complaint made both directly to us and to Leeds City Council in relation to our activities. The complaint relates both to noise and smoke from our operational activities. As you will all be aware, we should be operating responsibly and considering our neighbours, but perhaps now we need to focus a little more attention on this.

The noise complaint relates mainly to the sounding of horns and whistles. The necessity to sound horns and whistles is being reviewed as part of the wider rule book review, which may be able to relax some of the occasions when it is stated that horns and whistles should be sounded. In the mean time, we ask all crews to

consider how long and how loudly horns and whistles are being sounded. Crews must still adhere to the current Train Operating Regulations, but without sounding the horn or whistle excessively. Another action that could reduce this is by not allowing passengers to sound the horn or whistle, or sounding it for them, other than when at Park Halt. However, we do recognise the important role that something as simple as this does play in engaging visitors.

The matter of excessive smoke is perhaps more tricky to tackle in terms of satisfying the residents. We have been running mutual improvement classes (MIC) for a few years now, which are predominantly classroom based. This is perhaps an opportunity to run some practical MICs. At the railway we have a wide range of volunteer experience at firing; the experience of members of the Safety & Operations Committee, for instance, ranges from a few years to several decades! A parallel can be drawn with driving a car; how many people now would pass their driving test if they sat it again? This is because, in our nature as human beings, we take shortcuts, or get into bad habits. We all take pride in our abilities, which is a good thing as this pride should help us strive to do the best we can, however it is also very easy to subconsciously fall into bad habits or take shortcuts, something which may well be happening at Middleton. We now have an opportunity for some practical MICs, for us to look at how we fire our steam locos, whilst also giving firemen the chance to see how other people do it. It is invaluable during crew training to gain experience with as many different



# Safety and Operations

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people as possible, to glean the best bits of everyone. In reality, this does not happen for a number of reasons. However, with a series of practical MICs on firing, this can be done.

Please look out for the MICs, and it would be appreciated if all crew members would embrace this opportunity to both learn from others and share their experience; in the long run, this is for the good of the railway.

## Contacting the Safety & Operations Committee

As always, the Safety & Operations Committee is here to ensure the railway is operating safely and when incidents or accidents do occur, lessons can be learnt to prevent a recurrence, or at least minimise the consequences. As such, it is important that any accidents or incidents are reported; the contact details for reporting are outlined below – please do contact any or all of the committee should you need to report any incidents, raise any concerns or just want an opinion or guidance on any matters.

**In person** – Safety & Operations Committee members are; Mark Whitaker, David Hebden, Alex Bateman, Richard Pike and Douglas Lovely.

The Safety Officer is Tony Cowling, and whilst the Safety Officer does not sit on the committee, he can be contacted as well, particularly for the reporting of accidents.

**Via email** –  
[trafficmanager@middletonrailway.org.uk](mailto:trafficmanager@middletonrailway.org.uk)

**In writing** (marked for the attention of either Traffic Manager or Safety Officer):- **The Station, Moor Road, Hunslet, Leeds, LS10 2JQ.**

Alternatively, letters can be left at the workshop signing in point or shop counter. This can be anonymous if the reporter feels this is necessary.

## Safety & Operations Committee

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### 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! 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:-

- 6th September: China**  
(Adrian Freeman)
- 4th October Freight Only**  
(Kris Ward)
- 1st November Industrial locos**  
(Ian Smith)
- 6th December Christmas Quiz**  
(Team Dobson)



## Mel Jones tells us about training Guide Dogs

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It is 10 years since my wife and I got our first guide dog puppy and we have been deeply involved ever since. The pup was only 7 weeks old and we trained her for about 14 months, thereafter the Guide Dogs trainers took over and trained her with a blind person. The average working life of a dog is up to age 8 or 10 depending on individual circumstances. Overall it is estimated that it costs up to £50,000 over the life of a dog as The Guide Dogs Trust pays for all the dog's vets fees and food throughout its working life.

During the training a guide dog has to be exposed to all manner of situations, noises (including trains), buses, cars, traffic and shopping. I learned from another puppy walker that the dog she was training, Spencer is his name, was not happy boarding trains. So I sought permission from MRT to bring Spencer along to enable him to get used to getting on and off a train. The session proved to be successful.



Mel and colleague with Spencer and friend

# Visit of the Branch Line Society

It all started with Facebook – as things do. During the clean-up of the Engine House for the Model Railway Exhibition in 2015 I posted a photograph of the partially empty building and one of the first people to comment was Kev Adlam, secretary of the Branch Line Society, who quickly spotted the opportunity for their members to sample some rare track. The Society exists to enable enthusiasts to travel on track not normally available to passenger trains and the interior of the Engine House certainly fits the bill! Kev suggested that 'next year' it might be possible to link the emptying of the Engine House for the Model Railway Exhibition with a Branch Line Society charter?

Once I had cleared things with the necessary authorities we agreed a price and on the Thursday evening prior to the Model Railway exhibition we started clearing the Engine House – including some locos that had not moved for some time – the Fowler diesel and 385 for example. We had agreed that the charter would cover all the workshop side road but only as far as 'Henry' on the Balm Road Side as the access platforms for Mirvale and Henry could not be moved easily. Once everyone was loaded into the brake van in the platform Richard Pike took Austins and the van where no passenger train had ever gone before! We took the van as far down towards the shop as we safely could and then down the other side to buffer up to Henry before heading back into the platform where Austins was swapped for Carroll (as requested) and that took the party up to Park Halt and back in the brake van. Whilst the Engine House was empty we took the inspired decision not to put 67, 385

and the Fowler back where they came from but leave them at the shutter door end and move the exhibitors to the area they normally occupied. This had the added benefit of covering three loco lengths worth of very dirty floor and exposing some relatively clean floor instead. It also meant that the floor plan of the exhibition was shuffled but we all agreed that this resulted in a much better mix of layouts and full size exhibits. A lesson learned that we will repeat!

After a couple of hours of shunting we had a brake van full of very satisfied customers, a very healthy sum in the railway's coffers and a new floor plan for the exhibition – multi tasking in action! Thanks to all concerned for their efforts with the charter and the model railway exhibition – a very busy few days but we ended up with happy visitors and money for the railway – win, win!



**Ian Smith gratefully receiving a cheque from Kev Adlam on behalf of the Branch Line Society.**

# A photo montage of the Steampunk event in July - Our



thanks to Gavin Johnson for these brilliant photographs



# Memories of our Victorian Gala

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This year's major gala was envisaged as a celebration of our veteran locomotives and seen as an opportunity to have a bit of a goodbye gathering for **Sir Berkeley** who will be going out of ticket in October. The Events Committee considered several aspects to bring a Victorian theme to the railway including the hire of a vintage coach; this was not seen as practical however, so thoughts turned to which locomotives could be obtained to make this a very special weekend.

Having missed its visit in 2012 we thought that it would be good to bring together the Vintage Carriage Trust's two operating locomotives by inviting **Bellerophon** to join the party. At this point, an interesting suggestion was made. Why not get the third VCT locomotive in the form of Hudswell Clarke **Lord Mayor** in on the action (albeit as a static exhibit) to complete a historic line up. This idea had several attractions, not only was **Lord Mayor** Victorian and Leeds built but these three engines had never all been together at the same time. Spending almost her whole life in preservation in the VCT museum at Ingrow, it would be a rare opportunity to coax **Lord Mayor** out for a special celebration.

So, having established the core focus of the event, we decided on a four locomotive timetable, **Sir Berkeley** and **Bellerophon** would be joined by our own Victorian stalwarts NER 'H Class' **1310** and Manning Wardle **1601 Matthew Murray**. Although the latter does slightly miss the Victorian label by being built in 1903, the design is most certainly antiquated enough to pass muster!

The planning of an event involves

much more than just the choosing of locomotives and advertising the date hoping people will turn up. An interesting and workable timetable has to be developed, ticket pricing and commercial commitments organised, additional attractions as well as sourcing the crew which (as the roster clerk will tell you) can be one of the hardest jobs to complete. Victorian themed posters were designed and I, for one, think these looked fantastic. They are still on display and perhaps will continue to be a feature of our advertising into the future.

This year we were supported by many of our volunteers stepping forward and offering help on one or both days; not only this but they agreed to help us fulfil the last major aim of our event - the Victorian atmosphere. Most, if not all, of our train crew went out of their way to put on period dress (not A dress as Richard Pike first thought!) and I think everyone who was present or has seen photos will agree, this led to a splendid Victorian feel to the whole weekend. The weather was much kinder than in previous years and the glorious sunshine helped produce some stunning photos of our little line which have worked their way into many national publications. Of particular interest was the line-up of all 3 VCT locomotives and this was staged each day as well as on the Friday preceding the event. Opening on the Friday afternoon was always going to be a gamble but it seemed to pay off with many visitors enjoying the opportunity to ride in the guards van of our freight train and get some more varied photos of the line.

No special event goes totally

## Victorian Gala continued

smoothly and a historic fault on **Bellerophon** reared its head to mean that for the majority of the weekend it operated minus one draincock. This did not seem to affect her steaming performance much and many visitors enjoyed the added steam effects it produced! Over the weekend we did not perhaps have the number of visitors we enjoyed at the Hunslet 150 or 2012 galas but certainly all those who did visit went away very happy. The atmosphere was fantastic and everyone, volunteers and public alike, were enjoying themselves.

At the end of the day, as a railway, we are here to preserve and

celebrate our heritage as well as make a successful commercial go of things. Special events help to mark the link Leeds has with the past, both industrial and cultural, as well as giving our volunteers some added variety and enjoyment in their roles.

This event was the culmination of many people's efforts as well as that of our friend's at the VCT who supported us throughout. It is these friendships and partnerships which are formed in the course of events such as this that ensure the future of our historic line and its volunteer team. Long may it continue!

**John Linkins, Events Manager**

**Bellerophon, Lord Mayor and Sir Berkeley, good to go!**

© Tony Cowling

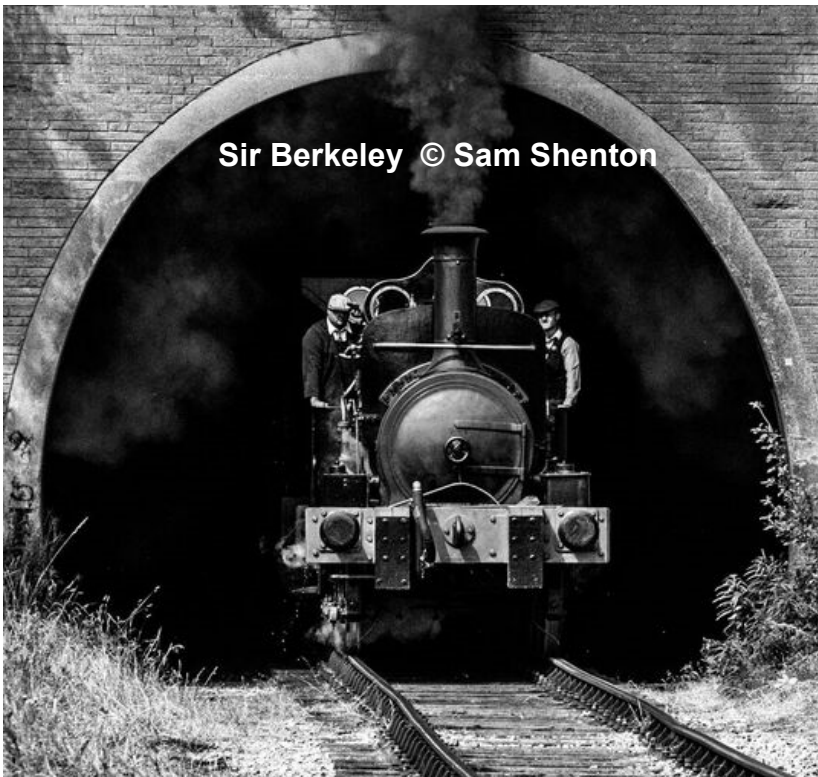
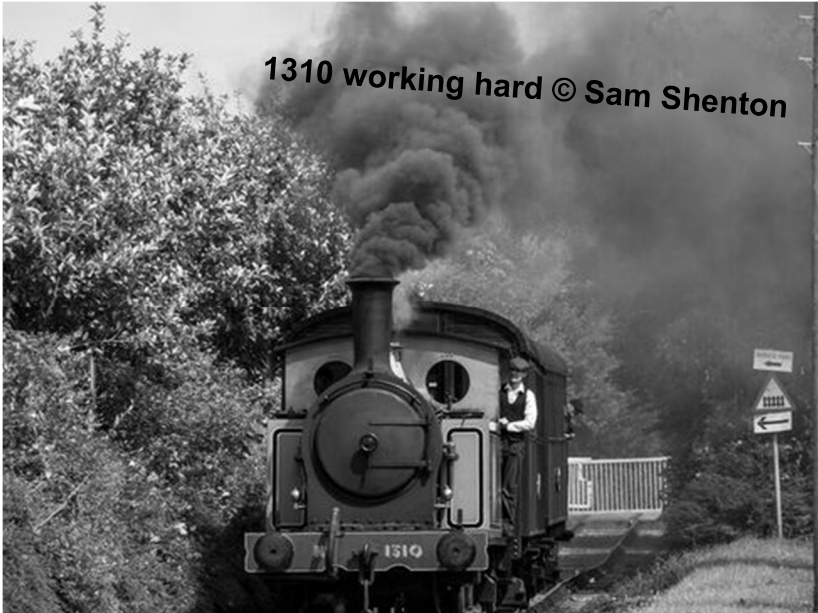


## Victorian Gala, 16/17th July 1896?

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# Moor Road Happenings

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## LOCO NOTES

The main operating season is always a harder time than the rest of the year. Locomotives are required in regular use and frequently need running maintenance to keep them operational. There is also the inevitable depletion of our volunteer labour force as people take hard earned holidays. It is perhaps a bit early to say this but we have generally managed to come through without a major crisis. Having said that, we did have one weekend when the only loco available was MW 1601.

### 1601 MATTHEW MURRAY

Available for traffic and used as required. It has, however, spent most of the recent time on display in the Engine House. It did have a problem with the fireman's side injector steam valve which suffered from a stripped screw thread whilst at Middleton Park, which meant that it could not be turned off. It was able to make its way back to Moor road though, and it was fortunate that Sir Berkeley was on steam test and was able to take over. Although it was the spindle that had failed and could have been replaced, the mating screw thread in the valve body was also found to be worn and thus irreparable. A replacement valve has been fitted as a temporary measure but this is not of the same configuration as the old one and must be regarded as a temporary arrangement. Some modifications to the valve arrangements will therefore need to be undertaken at some point. A list of other non-urgent jobs has also been drawn up and the loco will be brought into the workshops when space becomes available and it can be taken out of service for a prolonged

period. It has also suffered from some slight tube leakage in the firebox which has required a few tubes to be re-expanded and re-beaded.

### No. 6

There has been some further progress with the boiler of the loco. The corroded side sheet has now had all the stays and rivets removed and the side sheet itself has been removed from the boiler. The boiler now needs turning back onto its side so that all the bits of detritus that have built up during all this work can be removed. We will then probably be at a stage where we can invite tenders for the necessary repairs. The major drawback to this progress will be the lack of necessary funding for the repairs due to the ongoing demands on our limited budget.

### 1210 SIR BERKELEY

As mentioned in the last Old Run, Sir Berkeley went on short-term hire to the Tanfield Railway for their gala. Unfortunately, whilst there, some of the tubes started to leak in the firebox so this had to be attended to on its return. As with MW 1601, this has required them to be re-expanded and re-beaded. Apart from this slight upset, the loco has continued to give good service and is available for traffic.

### No.11

Nothing to report.

### No.1310 (NER H)

As mentioned in the last Old Run, 1310 went on loan to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. It returned to Moor Road after the Spring Bank holiday weekend. It has

seemingly operated without problem whilst there. Once back at Middleton it had a water change and has since been in operation, as required.

## **1544 SLOUGH ESTATES No.3**

When the last Old Run notes were being penned, Slough was out of service with a badly leaking clack valve which was preventing the injector from working. On stripping down the clack valve it was decided that it would be better to make a new one rather than grind in the badly cut original. This was duly done and the loco returned to traffic. It is presently serviceable and taking its turn to be steamed when required.

## **SENTINEL No.54**

Good progress is now being made with the boiler at Israel Newton's works. The shell has been finished and inspected by our boiler inspector with no problem. Work is presently proceeding on fitting the 96 studs that hold the two parts of the boiler together. Whilst completion is not expected imminently, it can't be far off now. Perhaps by the time the next Old Run appears it will be back at Moor Road.

The safety valves continue to be a saga. As mentioned previously, our existing valve casing is quite badly corroded and in poor condition. We have a spare but that one is no better. Andy Chapman, who owns Sentinel No. 7109 (which recently returned to steam) offered us a spare but incomplete safety valve. This offer was accepted and the casing duly collected. The plan was to use this casing along with the good internal bits from our existing one. However, as it was being heated up

to remove the valve seats, a hole appeared in the casing and, although it looked to be in good condition, it did not prove to be the case. Mike Hart, another Sentinel owner and Middleton life member, offered us another incomplete set of safety valves. However, close inspection of these four sets of valves has shown that, whilst similar, they are all of slightly different design. At the moment we are still trying to establish whether the internal bits that we have are compatible with the newly acquired bits. As the valves are very much safety critical, we cannot afford to get it wrong. Andy Chapman has fitted new commercial safety valves to his loco and this always remains an option (at a cost) but we would like to retain original Sentinel fittings if possible.

The water gauge fittings have also come in for close scrutiny and a lot of thought. They were originally asbestos packed which is no longer a permitted method and we have tried replacing this with shredded PTFE, not without some difficulty. Sentinel locos operate at 275 lbf/sq in and it seems that traditional off-the-shelf gun metal gauge glass fittings are only rated for 250 lbf/sq in so are not a viable option. Quotes were obtained for some purpose-made gauge glasses but the price was unacceptable. An alternative proposal was to have them bored out to accept modern Klinger sleeve packings but the firm offering this service would not undertake the work until 2017. At the moment we are persevering with the PTFE packing and will just have to see how it performs in practice.

Work continues with painting of the

## Loco Notes continued

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loco. it has had yet another coat of gloss black and has now been rubbed down, and a further coat is being applied. Inside the cab the upper parts have been painted light grey.

apart from fitting the boiler to the frames, the remaining major work involves the manufacture and fitting of a superheater coil and the provision of new live steam and exhaust steam pipes, together with all the one hundred and one finishing off jobs that are quietly forgotten about until the last minute.

### HE 2387 BROOKES No.1

Good progress continues to be made with this loco. The four eccentric straps have been white-metalled and machined back to the correct size for fitting to the eccentrics. Both big ends and little ends have been checked against their respective journals and found to require no work, other than fitting. Work on the axleboxes has been completed and the locomotive re-wheeled. Or so we thought! When we came to fit the coupling rods it became obvious that we had made a significant error with setting up the left rear axlebox in the hornguides. This has meant that we have had to lift the frames back off the wheels once more to rectify the problem. The alterations were soon made and the frames lowered back down onto the wheels. This time the fitting of the coupling rods proved to be entirely successful, causing sighs of relief from more than a few people!

The existing blastpipe was in very poor condition and had previously been patched up to keep the loco in service. A new blastpipe has now been cast from a pattern made in-

house. The casting still requires to be machined. Other small jobs continue to be ticked off, including repairs to the drain cock operating linkage and final painting of the inside of the frames.

It is usual practice to overhaul the majority of a loco before starting work on the boiler because the 'clock' starts ticking once the boiler is finished and having a boiler ready to go before the rest of the loco is not the best situation. However work on the frames is at a sufficiently advanced stage as to warrant a start on the boiler. We had already had the boiler examined and generally given a clean bill of health so we weren't expecting any expensive surprises. The boiler inspector had requested that the longitudinal seam of the boiler barrel be subjected to an ultra-sonic examination as a final check, and this was done during June. New smoke tubes were ordered and quickly delivered. Such things are readily available as there are still thousands of industrial boilers which use similar tubes. Fitting the tubes is a relatively straightforward process, if quite laborious. Fortunately, we had a few volunteers keen to undertake this work and the tubes are now all in place and expanded into the tubeplates. During the boilers time in storage, the regulator had become seized and this has require free-ing off. Removing the regulator handle proved to be a rather difficult task but perseverance, a hammer and some heat won the day. The regulator gland can now be re-packed. The next step will be to fit the boiler plugs and fill the boiler with water to ascertain if a good job has been done in the fitting of the tubes. This

will be followed by a full hydraulic test, but not before the regulator valve has been blanked off as it is important that the main steam pipe is subjected to this hydraulic test as well. The main steam pipe is usually made of copper but on this boiler it has been made of steel and there is always a concern that it may have corroded. It cannot be easily examined and a hydraulic test is necessary to check its integrity.

### **K 5469 CONWAY**

Our Chairman, Malcolm Johnson, recently visited Shildon and was able to hand over the newly completed rear cab spectacle plates in a small ceremony. Volunteers at Shildon continue to work on the loco as available and between other jobs.

### **Fowler 42200033 HARRY**

Available for traffic and has seen more use as more drivers undertake the necessary conversion course. It still needs various jobs undertaking to improve its overall condition.

### **Peckett 5003 AUSTIN'S No.1**

In traffic and used as required.

### **D2999**

In traffic and used as required. After a failure to start, the batteries were inspected and three of the six were found to be in poor condition. Six new batteries have now been fitted.

### **D577 MARY**

Available for service when required. We are presently making a pattern to enable some new brake blocks to be cast for this loco.

### **6981**

No progress due to the owner having

significant personal commitments.

### **D631 CARROLL**

Available if required but generally on display in the Engine House.

### **L.M.S. 7051**

Generally available if required although it has recently come into the workshops for a bit of TLC. This has included greasing all necessary points, re-lining of the transmission shaft band brake, replacement of the fuel and oil filters and topping up of all oil levels. The engine and compartment is also being cleaned down. Other work still to be done includes replacement of the compressor vee-belts and attention to some of the bonnet door latches.

### **OLIVE**

A decision on the future of this vehicle is still awaited.

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

## **CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES**

### **LMS Brake Van No.158760**

Work continues on this vehicle, largely being undertaken by members of the 'Wednesday gang'. Both solebars have now been fitted. Although it was hoped that the crossbar under the south bulkhead could be re-used, it became obvious that replacement was going to be the most sensible option. Work in recent weeks has been concentrated on the south end framework. Both uprights and crosspieces have now been made, along with the main roof timber and all these pieces should be being finally fitted together in the next

couple of weeks.

Work has also recommenced on overhaul of the chassis. This part of the vehicle is outside and had been largely left in abeyance over the wetter months. Good progress has been made in building up the various areas of corrosion with weld, following which they are ground back to give a level surface. The south west 'W' iron, which guides the axlebox had been forced away from the frame because of excessive corrosion. This was unbolted, cleaned and primed before being re-fitted. A start has also been made on removing the brakegear to allow refurbishment and painting. This is going to be a long process as there is a lot of it and it has been neglected for a long time.

### **Smith 5 ton Crane**

In the days before European style legislation came to the fore, it was always a requirement that lifting equipment was proof loaded. However, the present Lifting Equipment Regulations no longer stipulate this as mandatory. This crane came to us from the Kent & East Sussex Railway but was without any relevant paperwork. It has been inspected by our insurance company and given a clean bill of health and certified fit for use. However, the Inspector added a comment that he would like to see sight of a proof load test. We recently undertook this test using a calibrated load cell supplied by Lloyds British Testing and witnessed by their staff. In order to obtain the necessary amount of weight (6.25 ton) we used one of our flat wagons loaded with a stillage filled with water. We had expected to have to add a bit more weight to

achieve the 6.25 tons but, fortuitously, the wagon and water weighed in at exactly the needed amount. The load was lifted clear of the ground and then the crane was rotated through a full 360°. A similar test was repeated at the lower load limit of 1 ton to prove stability at the maximum radius.

The crane is now in regular service and the Smiths 10 ton crane has been withdrawn pending an overhaul.

### **Isles Crane**

A new jib rope has now been fitted to this crane to safely support the jib prior to its intended move and display. This entailed supporting the jib whilst the old rope was cut off, not a quick task as it was well and truly wedged around the drum it was coiled on. Whilst the body of the rope was very badly corroded, that around the drum was well covered in grease and turned out to be in excellent condition, almost as good as the day it was put on, which was probably some sixty years ago. Because the drum could not be rotated, we have not been able to correctly coil the new rope but it has been securely fastened in a way that makes it look as though it is to all but the most experienced observer.

**Steve Roberts, CME**

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**You may be wondering what has happened to the 'Contents' page. Well, there isn't one. This is to stop you turning to the bits that interest you most and not reading the rest, and will perhaps inspire you to write something for the next issue.**

**Editor.**



## The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

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# The work goes on .....

**Dave Gittos taking a well-earned rest in Brookes' smoke box.**

© Tony Cowling



## Hot off the Press!

The 2 cranes plus the jib plus the 4 special rails have now levitated into the car park, thanks to much effort on the part of our volunteers!

Photo © David Hebden

