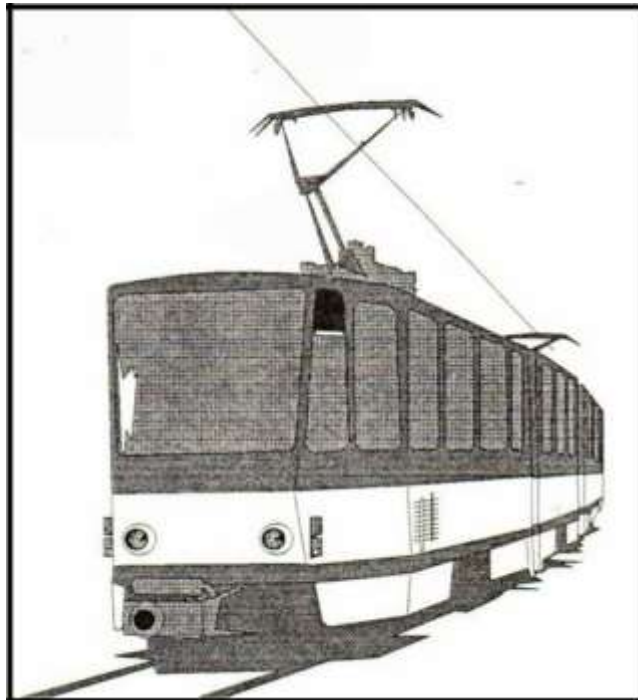


# TRANS PENNINE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE PENNINE RAILWAY  
SOCIETY



No.99 Spring 1997

## **COMMITTEE BRIEFS**

### **RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FEES**

We would like to thank all those members who have renewed their subscription to the PENNINE RAILWAY SOCIETY for 1997. For those who have forgotten to renew, or, more likely, been too busy, you will be delighted to know it is not too late. Simply send your £4.50 fee to our Membership Secretary, Captain Caddick at the address shown above. You will be instantly rejoined and be sent a free 1997 PRS diary.

For those who do not rejoin, this will be the final magazine you will receive. In these circumstances we thank you for your valuable support and hope that you decide to join again some time in the future.

### **END OF BR**

The evening of 31 March 1997 saw the end of BR. BR now no longer runs trains with the final of the 25 franchises to operate transferring from ScotRail to coach Operator National Express.

There was a champagne celebration on the final Glasgow-Edinburgh and Edinburgh-Glasgow service.

### **OH! MR PORTER**

Many "original", members of the Pennine will remember Geoff Bambrough holding an Equity union card, a thespian.

Several members have said they saw Geoff on the 1970 Morecambe & Wise Show repeated this Christmas.

He appeared under the name Eric Porter. Are they by chance related?

### **CENTRAL BUSES**

Pennine bus expert Gerry Collins reported an increase in buses in the Lincoln area recently. This will explain why an entire page of CEEFAX was devoted to cancellations of Central Trains services.

Services affected included Nottingham-Lincoln, Derby-Birmingham and Rugby-Stafford. The Lincoln-Doncaster service was abandoned completely.

No wonder it was taken over by a bus operator.

### **VIRGIN HITS THE BUFFERS**

Richard Branson's Virgin Group has lost out on a chance to run a new high-speed rail-line to Heathrow, taking passengers from Moorgate.

Airport operator BAA said it proposed to run a central London link as a sister service to its £400m Heathrow Express link from the airport to Paddington. The £30m second link would go from St Pancras, stopping at West Hampstead, Ealing Broadway, and Hayes and Harlington.

### **BLAME THE TROTS, NOT ME: BRIAN SOUTER - STAGECOACH**

It is well documented that South Worst Trains, run by coach operator Stagecoach, were cancelling 39 services a day on commuter lines into Waterloo from Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset after 71 drivers took voluntary redundancy in a campaign to reduce costs.

Chairman of Stagecoach, Brian Souter, blames deliberate attempts at sabotage by a small number of militants within the workforce "a hot-bed of Trotskyites with Stone-Age attitudes" who were

responsible for a jump in the number of drivers reporting sick on routes where new work rosters were being introduced. He also said "A high proportion of complaints are from people who have nothing to do when they get into the office in the morning. They sit down and write to SWT".

SWT has promised its services will be back to normal after Easter. SWT was due to explain itself to MP's in the all-party Commons Transport Committee but despite Labour opposition, the Tories voted to scrap the meeting because of the general election.

## **SMELLY FROGS**

Guard Andrew Watson was sacked after telling passengers their cramped conditions were down to his "fat French peasant bosses and smelly foreigners". The Ashford, Kent to Charing Cross service is run by French owned Connex South Eastern.

Mr Watson was previously reprimanded for kicking an "abusive" passenger off a train. He was a Rail Regulator researcher.

## **UP THE ROVERS**

Soccer devotees will have noticed a rise in the paltry attendance figures at Doncaster Rovers. David Bladen and son Alex have found something better to do than hang around the Station.

However, looking to the future Alex is asking poor David, "where is Rushden & Diamonds? where is Hednesford? where is Welling? Will you take me? What does Vauxhall Conference mean? "

## **BUS COMPANY TAKES OVER CENTRAL TRAINS**

Birmingham based Central Trains has been bought by bus giants National Express. At least Robin Skinner can list on his CV being a former member of the Sheffield Transport Group, a bus preservation society. If he needs any training on driving buses, he need only ask Group members.

## **ROBIN HOOD**

The final stage of the Robin Hood Line between Nottingham and Worksop is set to be completed and 4 new stations will be built, at Shirebrook, Creswell, Langwith and Whitwell, on the currently unused stretch of line between Mansfield Woodhouse and Whitwell. Work should be finished by May 1998.

## **SOOTY**

Residents on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway living at Grosmont are furious at the soot which blackens their washing and the constant noise from the engines. The Railway has promised to let off less smoke in the village and curb the trains' whistles.

## **RAILTRACK REGRETS NO TRACK**

A rail service cannot run because it has been replaced by a road. Railtrack says the line isn't closed, but the service is suspended until the year 2001. The line in question runs between Watford Jcn and Croxley Green. Near Croxley Green the track ends where an embankment has been demolished. A 06.20 train ran until March, but with no return journey. Railtrack has used a novel measure to avoid closure regulations. The A412 dual carriageway is now where the line used to be.

## **RUN OVER THAT BODY**

The body of a 28 year old woman lay between the rails for 4 hours in February as drivers were ordered to continue running rush hour trains. The woman was hit by a train near Billericay on Great Eastern's Shenfield to Southend line, run by private bus company FirstBus.

The company denied this was done to preserve profit and avoid penalty payments if the service was delayed. A spokesman said this was done in the interests of rush hour passengers who otherwise would have suffered very severe delays.

## **Dr MARJE SKINNER**

Hooray Sooty from Doncaster asks Marje whether Eurostar services will extend beyond Paris because he doesn't like smelly Parisians.

Dr Skinner replies that a Eurostar ski train will run to the French Alps next winter, departing every Saturday at 07.53 arriving at Bourg St Maurice at 17.00, with a pick up point at Ashford and a planned stop at Moutiers.

A special preview train has already run. Eurostar is building rolling stock to operate an overnight weekly service in 1999.

## **CHUNNEL MAY KEEP BLAZE PERIL WAGONS**

Eurotunnel wants to resume freight traffic with open wagons rather than introduce fireproof covered cars at a cost of £126m. The company says it will improve evacuation procedures and make greater checks on vehicles carried on the wagons.

## **FREE TICKETS**

On 20 February passengers on South West Trains arrived at its 176 stations to be told "put your money away" as an apology after weeks of disruption to timetables.

Provided a ticket was issued at a SWT station, passengers could travel free anywhere on "BR". The offer was not - publicised in advance.

## **RAILTRACK TO INVEST**

Railtrack will spend £4m per day for the next 10 years to create a system "that is second to none".

This will include £1.5bn on the WCML and £40m to restore the Forth Bridge, along with 49 stations getting more than each. Track modernisation will enable Eurostars to run beyond London and up to Scotland.

## **LONDON UNDERGROUND SELL-OFF**

The Government, if by a miracle it is re-elected, proposes to sell off London Underground, returning the proceeds to the buyers to re-invest in the property they have just bought. The Treasury will pay the buyer to take the Underground from its responsibility.

A whole package of improvements are said to include a Helpline for passengers stranded by cancellations owing to shortage of staff, a money back guarantee for everyone held up in a tunnel for more than 2 hours, a policy of keeping passengers informed when the escalators are out of order; giving them the option of going by bus; smart new air-steward type uniforms for station personnel; a new logo; Musak; easy to read timetables; and simple to operate ticket machines where the booking hall has been leased out as a shopping mall.

From day one they will be investing heavily in glossy questionnaires that will be handed out on every station by smiling girls wearing smart pillbox hats and sashes. The rolling stock will be painted.

Later the owners will look at such matters as sweeping out the carriages and mending broken seats.

The sale will be a bargain as nobody knows the "real" value or even how to start calculating the worth of something that requires £1.2bn to bring it up to standard and hundreds of millions of pounds more on an annual basis to keep it going. For your money you will get 500 plus trains, in varying condition, 244 miles of track, 106 miles of tunnel, 302 escalators, 64 lifts, 11 separate lines, and 16,500 staff and assorted cats.

Possible buyers include Branson's Virgin Group, Stagecoach, the second largest bus operator in the UK, owning the major bus companies East London and Selkent (and also South West Trains); National Express, which owns Gatwick Express, Midland Mainline, North London Railways, ScotRail and Central Trains, and French-based utilities company Cega Connex- which owns South Eastern and South Central.

Other possibilities include a management buy-out; Sea Containers; the Go-Ahead Group and Prism Rail, or a combination of some of those mentioned.

## **EDITORS NOTES**

Welcome to the Winter edition of Trans Pennine.

Those of you who have visited Doncaster station recently, will have noticed that yet another small bit of railway history has disappeared. I am referring to the mural which used to adorn the subway to the platforms. Painted about twelve years ago as part of a government "work creation" scheme, the mural depicted life and work in Doncaster. As a work of art it was never in the Rembrandt class, but it did provide a colourful and cheery welcome to the town and I suppose it was inevitable that as the industries depicted on the mural have disappeared, then the mural itself had to disappear as well. Somehow, advertisement covered walls will not be the same.

You may also have noticed a change to the style of this edition of the magazine. A member mentioned at the AGM that he found the typeface used, Times New Roman, difficult to read without his glasses. As an experiment I have changed the type to Arial which I am told is clearer and easier to read - I await your views!

A couple of magazines ago, I wrote that a national newspaper had reported that "Rover" type tickets issued by PTE's were under threat. Ian Shenton has passed a leaflet to me which seems to bear this out. In January, West Yorkshire PTE withdrew four of its popular 'Metro DayRover' tickets, the Adult Train and Bus, Half-Fare Train and Bus, Adult Bus and Half-Fare Bus. In future, the only ticket available will be the Family DayRover which can be used by one adult or a group (up to 5 people, including 2 adults). The cost is £4.40, which is reasonable for a group, but represents a hefty increase on the previous price for a 'single' ticket. Just the thing to get people out of their cars and back on to public transport!

Finally, the next issue of Trans Pennine is the 100th and to mark the occasion, I would like to make the magazine a "bumper edition". Any articles, especially from those who haven't contributed to the magazine before, will be gratefully received.

David Bladen

## **Notes from the Committee**

The Annual General Meeting of the Pennine Railway Society was held at Corporation Brewery Taps, Doncaster, on Sunday 12 January 1997, and was attended by 16 members.

The main points arising from the meeting were as follows:

- \* The present committee members will continue in their current roles.
- \* The financial position of the society remains stable.
- \* Membership remains at around the 65 mark, however, it was felt that the society might benefit from trying to attract new members. Geoff Bambrough has agreed to undertake a publicity "drive"

and will produce membership forms and posters, as well as notifying the local media of our meetings.

\* The society's attempts to organise trips for members continue to be thwarted. Health and Safety legislation is often quoted as the reason for visits to railway installations being curtailed. After much discussion, a proposal from the floor was accepted that if any member wishes to arrange a "get-together" for other members, for example, at a preserved railway or open day, then the "Notice Board" section could be used to publicise this.

\* Clarification of the rules for entering the slide competitions was requested. The two main provisos are :- 1) Any railway-related subject may be entered, including foreign railways, trams and light-rail systems. 2) Slides taken at any time may be entered but must be the entrant's own work.

\* In an attempt to boost the number of entries received, committee members are now welcome to enter the magazine quizzes. (This will not, of course, apply to your Editor, as he already has the answers!)

The committee would like to thank all members who attended the AGM for their vote of confidence and their contributions and suggestions for the future running of the society.

## **The Jacobite**

**by Paul Slater**

When Chris and I walked down to the end of the platform at Fort William, 4-6-0 no. 44767 "George Stephenson" was getting ready to depart. This was Chris's first train-ride to Mallaig, but I had travelled on the steam train eleven years earlier, and it had been hauled by the same locomotive. In 1985, however, the train had been composed of green-and cream stock and was named the "West Highlander"; now the stock was maroon, and the train was named the "Jacobite". The locomotive's smokebox number plate and shed plate had been painted blue to match the old Scottish Region colour of the "Jacobite" headboard.

We watched 37401 "Mary Queen of Scots" arrive with the overnight sleeper from Euston, then we got on board the "Jacobite" and found our seats. Soon the train was away, passing the former North British signal box at Mallaig Junction with its semaphores, and diverging from the West Highland route to Glasgow. In the yard alongside the Mallaig line were shunter 08630 of Motherwell depot and the other locomotive which would be working the "Jacobite" during the summer, BR Standard 4-6-0 no. 75014.

Looking back as the train headed for Banavie, I could see Ben Nevis standing out against the blue sky; cloud was already building up in the west, however, and I expected it to be raining before our ride on the "Jacobite" was over. At least we had done better than the last time I was in Fort William, as far as the weather was concerned; in 1985 there had been a lot of rain, it had been cold, and I had never got a glimpse of the upper part of Ben Nevis.

The "Jacobite" halted briefly at Banavie. The previous evening I had walked as far as Banavie from the hotel where we were staying at Corpach, and had noticed that, although the swing bridge over the Caledonian Canal was the same as it had been in 1985, the North British signal box had been replaced by a new radio signalling centre, opened - according to the plaque on its wall - in 1988.

After Banavie, the "Jacobite" passed the end of the Caledonian Canal at Corpach, ran on past a large factory, and then kept close to the shore as far as the head of Loch Eil. Beyond here, the line began to climb into the mountains, "George Stephenson" working noisily.

From the famous curved concrete viaduct at Glenfinnan there was a glimpse of the well-known view of Loch Shiel and the monument to the Jacobite uprising of 1745, and then the train was climbing again to Glenfinnan station. We had a short

wait here to pass a "Super Sprinter" on a regular Mallaig - Fort William working and to allow passengers to visit the small museum at the station. A girl piper serenaded the alighting passengers, and there was time to take photographs of the engine.

Beyond Glenfinnan the line continues to climb, and where it runs close beside the Mallaig road, the "Road to the Isles", there is a good place for photographing the steam trains, which I had discovered eleven years earlier. After reaching the summit, the train ran downgrade, then followed an undulating course through the mountains, with beautiful views. We passed Lochailort station, where in 1985 there had been a photo-stop in pouring rain, laboured loudly up Beasdale bank, and halted briefly at Arisaig, where "George Stephenson" had waited to pass 37409 on the 12.20 Mallaig - Fort William.

A run close by the sea brought us to Mallaig, where a gentle drizzle was falling. There was time for lunch, then a stroll down to the harbour to look at the fishing boats and watch the Skye Ferry depart. Once, the Mallaig line carried a heavy traffic in fish. In the 1950's, according to books I have read and photographs I have seen, the line was worked largely by K1 and K2 2-6-0s, and it is appropriate that one of the locomotives which has regularly worked the steam trains to Mallaig in recent years is a preserved K1, 62005.

Back at the station, a "Super Sprinter" named "Bonnie Prince Charlie" had arrived from Glasgow, and "George Stephenson" was getting ready to depart. As in 1985, the run back to Fort William was done in the rain, with the locomotive working tender-first. We were now sitting near the back of the train, and it was possible to get good views of the engine working hard as it hauled the "Jacobite" up the gradient round the curve at the end of Glenfinnan viaduct.

Next morning, we drove to Glenfinnan to have another look at the "Jacobite". At the visitor centre near the monument, we studied the displays which tell the story of Bonnie Prince Charlie's doomed uprising of 1745 and its tragic aftermath; then Chris went back to the car and I climbed the path up the hill behind the visitor centre. The viewpoint on the hill affords a beautiful prospect of the Glenfinnan monument standing at the head of Loch Shiel, and is also an excellent vantage point for the railway line across Glenfinnan viaduct.

A few other photographers climbed the hill and joined me at the viewpoint. At last I heard the sound of an engine blowing off steam, and "George Stephenson" came into sight. It slowly crossed the viaduct, then climbed the gradient to Glenfinnan station, locomotive and train making a magnificent picture high on the mountainside.

While the train was standing at Glenfinnan, we drove on ahead of it and stopped at the place where I had photographed "George Stephenson" in 1985. We did not have long to wait before 44767 was in sight, working quite hard with its six carriages on the climb out of Glenfinnan. Standing on a hillock beside the "Road to the Isles", I watched the "Jacobite" approach, pass by me in a short cutting, and then pull away into the distance on a long curve through the mountains. I am very glad not only that the highly scenic - but surely uneconomic - Mallaig extension has escaped closure, but also that steam trains now run regularly once more in such a beautiful part of the country.

## **The Pennine Quiz N0.89**

**John Dewing**

Thanks to John for compiling this edition's quiz which, in his own words, "will not be too difficult but, at the same time, will take a bit of effort to complete". Hmm, we shall see! Entries to the editor by May 17th, please.

- 1) Which loco was involved in the accident at Maidstone East?
- 2) On which line was Clifton Moor station?
- 3) What was the maiden name of Isambard Brunel's mother?
- 4) On which date was 3rd class accommodation re-designated as 2nd class?
- 5) What was the name of LNER loco 62471?
- 6) Which named express was previously known as the "10.30 Limited" ?
- 7) When did the Swansea and Mumbles Tramway close?
- 8) Which TV personality helped to launch the new London - Southampton shuttle service?
- 9) Which class 08 hauled the "Wigtownshire Wanderer" into Ardrossan Harbour station?
- 10) When did Glasgow Central station open?
- 11) What was the original name of A4 Pacific 60008?

- 12) Which two locos hauled the Royal Train to Caernarfon on 20 June 1969?
- 13) When did the Edzell - Brechin line close to passenger traffic?
- 14) What was the cost, in 1961, of a 'packed meal' from BR refreshment rooms? (The meal consisted of pork pie, cheese roll, marshmallow and fruit.)
- 15) Who designed Charing Cross Station Hotel?
- 16) What was the shed code of Heaton Mersey shed?
- 17) What was the name given to cheap overnight travel in 1953 between Glasgow St Enoch - London St Pancras and Edinburgh - London Marylebone?
- 18) When did the first DMU service run in Scotland?
- 19) How long was Burdale Tunnel?
- 20) When did Selkirk station close to traffic?
- 21) When did the Euston Station Hotel close?
- 22) When was the sleeper service introduced between London Kings Cross and Perth?
- 23) What name was originally allocated to D812?
- 24) Where were the cast iron- arches which support the roof of St Pancras station made?
- 25) What was the name of the 1st class Pullman observation car which ran during the summer season, between Glasgow and Oban?
- 26) In which year was the overall roof at Malton station demolished?
- 27) Who named 37407 "Blackpool Tower"?
- 28) Which station was recently used in the BBC TV series "Making Tracks" ?
- 29) What was the original gauge size of the Sand Hutton Light Railway, narrow-gauge line?
- 30) Near which station is Hibel Road tunnel?

### **The Pennine Christmas Quiz No.88**

The answers!

- 1) Voice of the North
- 2) Colonel W Yolland 1854 - 1885
- 3) First East Anglian Regiment
- 4) Amber
- 5) 1758
- 6) 90 mph
- 7) Canadian Pacific Railway Company
- 8) Staplehurst
- 9) Dewsbury
- 10) 46256 Sir William A Stanier FRS
- 11) Tay Bridge disaster
- 12) 1029 Western Legionnaire to Western Legionnaire (double 'N')
- 13) Fireman J Carswell
- 14) 13 November 1957
- 15) Shortlands
- 16) D1628
- 17) 111 is the figure given in the "Accident Register " in the book 'Railway Detective' however, it has been pointed out that R.T.Holt's book, 'Red for Danger', states 112 were killed in the Harrow accident, with a further 10 dying later from their injuries. Either answer was accepted!
- 18) Fleetwood
- 19) Alfred Fletcher
- 20) Spath, near Uttoxeter, 5 February 1961
- 21) 63 ft 6ins
- 22) Norman McKillop
- 23) 24 December 1910
- 24) 44767
- 25) R J Billington
- 26) Camden
- 27) D9009 Alycidon
- 28) 34005
- 29) Mouse
- 30) Ravensthorpe
- 31) 4-6-4



- 32) London, Ontario
- 33) Arley, on the Severn Valley Railway
- 34) Harold Morris
- 35) 61670
- 36) 8
- 37) 144ft (Severn Tunnel)
- 38) 9ft 1in.
- 39) 3/4hp
- 40) Whooper swans
- 41) Devonshire Tunnel
- 42) British Empire Exhibition
- 43) 46009
- 44) Birmingham Snow Hill
- 45) 12 October 1980
- 46) Lamphey Castle
- 47) Serpell Report
- 48) Plymouth
- 49) Kent & East Sussex Railway
- 50) 5 November 1988

The winner was John Dewing, with Ken King in second place and Ian Shenton in third.

Well done gentlemen, and thanks again to Malcolm Bell for setting the quiz.

### **What the Papers Say!**

*The main items of railway interest in the papers have been the problems experienced by South West Trains, and the reports of heavy job losses following MTL's take-over of Regional Railways North East. MTL issued a "Special Brief" on February 10th, outlining its ambitious plans for rail services in the area. Pete Wesley has kindly supplied a copy of the brief for inclusion in Trans Pennine - I will leave you to ponder on how cutting 1500 jobs will help the company achieve its aims,*

### **Special Brief**

*Issued Feb. 10th 1997 - to be communicated to all staff as soon as possible*

MTL Rail Limited has today been awarded the passenger rail franchise for Regional railways North East by the Franchising Director, John O'Brien.

MTL Rail Limited is a division of MTL Trust Holdings Limited and will manage both Regional Railways North East and Merseyrail Electrics.

Peter Coombes, Chairman of MTL Trust Holdings Limited, new owners of Regional Railways North East, today promised improvements in services and investment in rolling stock, stations and security.

On the day MTL Rail Ltd was awarded the rail passenger franchise, he made a commitment to customers to focus on their priorities of punctuality, cleanliness and better service delivery.

"We are delighted to have the opportunity to grow Regional Railways North East. We have agreed service improvements with the PTE's (Passenger Transport Executives) and will be investing in a number of areas including new rolling stock, extra services and better security," he said.

### **IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE:-**

\* investment of around £65 million in mainly new rolling stock, including 16 new trains (worth £48 million) to replace electric 308s on Leeds, Bradford, Ilkley and Skipton lines.

- \* variety of improvements aimed primarily at replacing and refurbishing Pacer fleet.
- \* intention to increase train miles, station stops in PTE areas, clockface timetabling, TransPennine services between Leeds and Manchester increased from three to four trains per hour.
- \* investing £3.5 million in station improvements, further £400,000 on improved security
- \* increase number of trains per hour between Leeds and Manchester from 3 to 4 and purchase additional rolling stock.
- \* introduce business class accommodation on principal TransPennine services.
- \* investigate speeding up the service
- \* more trains stopping at: Wombwell, Elsecar, Chapeltown on Sheffield/Barnsley route; Kirk Sandall, Hatfield and Stainforth on Doncaster/Scunthorpe route; Darnall on Sheffield/Retford route.
- \* through trains to Adwick from Sheffield via Doncaster.
- \* additional Sunday services to Meadowhall (40,000 extra train miles).
- \* commitment to providing service to new station at Millhouses on Sheffield/Chesterfield route.
- \* feasibility of new fast service Sheffield/Hull
- \* more trains to stop at Manors on Newcastle/Morpeth route.
- \* additional Sunday services Sunderland to Newcastle (service to run for 14 hours).
- \* more Sunday trains through to Metro Centre from Sunderland, Newcastle, Middlesborough and Darlington.
- \* feasibility of providing:
  - + more clockface, faster services Newcastle/Carlisle
  - + additional trains to Metro Centre (weekdays)
  - + new service Morpeth/Blyth (re-open Tyne line for passengers)
  - + upgrading of five Pacers to use on Sunderland/ Newcastle NEXUS service Greater Manchester
- \* feasibility of improving services between Stalybridge and Manchester Airport
- \* co-operation with Greater Manchester PTE in looking for opportunities to expand passenger services from Manchester Victoria

#### Leeds/West Yorkshire

- \* hourly peak stopping services between Leeds/Huddersfield (Saturday trains to call at Ravensthorpe)
- \* four trains per hour between Leeds/Manchester operate new hourly service between Brighouse/Elland (when necessary investment completed to upgrade lines)
- \* feasibility of a park-and-ride scheme in Leeds area and new enquiry office at Huddersfield

*Your editor has one comment and one question: One comment. Hmm, we shall see!  
One question: What on earth is "clockface timetabling"? Answers on a post card please!*

*Something slightly different now. The following article is from the Fire Brigade magazine 'in Attendance' thanks to John Thompson for the cutting.*

## **Mechanical chameleon unveiled at Bristol Docks**

The launch took place recently at Bristol Docks rail lines, of a unique safety vehicle which will dramatically improve the emergency response to incidents in Britain's longest railway tunnel. Developed by Railtrack Great Western and Avon Fire Brigade, the Severn Tunnel Road/Rail Emergency Vehicle is both a lorry and a railway vehicle. It transfers from road to rail via special ramps at the tunnel entrance and can carry rescue teams and equipment to a trapped train in record time. Engineering consultant Paul Kerslake, who managed the project for Railtrack, stressed: "There's no other emergency vehicle like it in the country. It provides a far more flexible response in the event of an incident and, thanks to its flat steel floor, can be adapted for a variety of uses as the need arises."

Designed by Renault Trucks, Bristol, the bright yellow vehicle looks like a lorry - but it has special wheels which allow it to run on the tracks. It is capable of carrying 12.5 tons of equipment in a canvas-sided box enclosure, and comes complete with loading pallets and a fork-lift truck attached at the rear. Owned by Railtrack, it will be housed at the fire brigade's headquarters in Avonmouth and driven by trained fire officers. In addition to the Severn, it could also be used in the Box and Chipping Sodbury tunnels and other inaccessible rail sites.

During the official hand-over ceremony, Railtrack Great Western Director Martin Reynolds said: "This project marks the first time that control of a section of railway line has been given to the emergency services. Previously, firemen would have to wait at the tunnel entrance until a Railtrack or train company representative arrived. Now they can ring the signaller, take possession of the site and save valuable time." It's a perfect example of our ability to work in partnership with local authorities throughout the zone on a wide range of safety issues," Martin continued. "Many people contributed to the idea of a mechanical chameleon - which first saw the light of day in 1991 and I would like to thank everybody who helped turn it into reality."

Guests at the ceremony included Avon Chief Fire Officer Andy Waiters, Renault Trucks Bristol General Manager Mike Jakeways and representatives from Gwent Fire Brigade, Avon County Council, and the Avon Ambulance service. They saw the vehicle transfer from road to rail and watched as fire-fighters unloaded and demonstrated the emergency equipment.

One of the first people to become involved with the project was John Buxton, now Cardiff Railway's Managing Director. When he was appointed BR's Project Director for Safety Planning in 1991, he had already adapted a tunnel maintenance vehicle - Avon Fire Brigade's Ernie Coghlan suggested adapting the idea for emergency use and the task was given to engineers Paul Beard and Paul Kerslake.

Paul continued: "This vehicle is part of a three-stage emergency response system. Stage one consists of an "alumi-cart" (a rail-mounted, four-wheeled go-kart) and two trailers, to carry extra firemen and paramedics into the tunnel. Stage two is the vehicle - the main rescue appliance which takes specialist equipment to the scene - and stage three is a Land Rover and rail trailer with 5-ton carrying capacity." Avon Fire Brigade's Divisional Commander Ernie Coghlan added: "The vehicle will be a great help in the event of an incident, and I'm sure other emergency services will be impressed by its versatility. It provides quick access into the tunnel and, if we need extra equipment, we can radio through, collect it and make a return trip."

The vehicle is one of many safety improvements within the four-mile Severn Tunnel. An £11 million refurbishment programme is underway and by the end of 1997, Railtrack Great Western will have installed a range of equipment - including a new ventilation system and pumping equipment on site.

Rotherham? Why Rotherham? Because at a recent Pennine meeting, a member suggested I tackle somewhere local! It's also the place where I work at the moment and it's somewhere you can get to by train quite easily. The other (main) reason is that a planned visit to pubs near Charing Cross a couple of weeks ago came to nothing. I had been in Sidcup for an aunt's funeral and had decided to stop off in London to research this column on the way back home (it's what my aunt would have wanted!). I was booked on the 20.00 departure from Kings Cross so if I left Sidcup about 5pm, I would have plenty of time for research.

Things started to go wrong at the wake, when my watch stopped and I didn't realise it (it was rather a good wake!) I left my cousin's house at what I thought was 5.15pm, made my way into Sidcup, and stopped off at the Alma Tavern, a Good Beer Guide-listed pub very close to the station, for a pint or two of Young's. The clock behind the bar said 6.50pm but I assumed it was wrong and sat down with my pint, GBG and A to Z, to plan my itinerary for when I got to Charing Cross. A couple sat down at the table next to me and as I glanced across at them, I caught sight of the man's watch - it said 6.54pm!

By now, a sense of panic was beginning to develop! A polite enquiry confirmed that it was indeed 6.54. Downing my pint incredibly quickly (it would be a criminal act to waste Young's Special), I dashed to the station in time to see the 18.55 service departing on its way to Charing Cross. A frantic perusal of the timetable showed that the next departure was at 19.20 to Cannon Street. Where? I wasn't sure I had ever been to Cannon Street! It was impossible to go via the Bexleyheath loop as the trains were disrupted following the previous week's derailment at Bexley. There was nothing to do but retire back to the Alma for a second, more leisurely pint and get my breath back. If you do get to Sidcup, the Alma is highly recommended! A comfortable, wood-panelled place, serving a good drop of Young's, alongside Courage Bitter and Director's.

Thankfully, the 19.20 left on time and made swift progress to London. A dash to the Tube at Cannon Street and a fortuitous connection at Monument got me to Kings Cross at 20.05. Another stroke of luck was that services outbound from the Cross were delayed by 15 minutes, owing to points problems at Finsbury Park. Thus I made the 20.00! 91001 had a storming run northwards and I got back to Doncaster just 5 minutes late - just time for one in the Railway!

And so to Rotherham. The town, in my opinion, does not have many good pubs in the centre. Most have been turned into neon-lit, noisy disco-bars, but then, so have thousands of other places nationwide! Our first port of call will probably cause CAMRA-purists to throw up their hands in horror, but I make no apologies, so here goes!

Nellie Dene's is the former Bridge Inn on Chantry Bridge. It recently re-opened, as an "Irish" pub, after a lengthy closure. "Irish" pubs are springing up everywhere, but this is one of the better ones, being independently owned and, what's more, serving some excellent beer. Old Mill's beers feature, with Old Mill Bitter and Nellie Dene Bitter both available. Nellie Dene is the paler and weaker of the two, more of "summer ale" - in fact, the GBG states that it is only brewed from April to October, but the bar staff assured me that Nellie Dene is available for the pub all year round. This will be good news for one of my Korean colleagues, who has developed quite a taste for it! Another Korean colleague has developed quite a liking for Finnigan's Stout, (Old Mill Blackjack by another name), which along with Finnigan's Red Ale (Old Mill Bullion), is also on sale. Hot food is available and there is live music at weekends.

On the other side of Centenary Way from Nellie Denes is the Kingfisher. Head back towards the station and turn right by the Phoenix Hotel (George Street) - there is a subway at the end of the road which comes out by the pub. This small but friendly establishment was taken over by Old Mill in 1992 and was among the brewery's earliest tied houses. The walls are decorated with many prints of kingfishers, including a certain steam locomotive! The beer's not bad either - on my last visit, Old Mill Bitter, Bullion and Blackjack were all available and if you fancy a game of pool, there is a table available. Catering at that time was limited to sandwiches.

Turn right from the Kingfisher, and a wander in the direction of Masbrough, through the subways under the roundabouts which make up Centenary Way, will bring you to the Moulders Rest on Masbrough Street, about 200 yards from Rotherham United's football ground. This is another comfortable and friendly pub, serving Stones Bitter and a guest beer. Cask conditioned Stones is a beer which in my experience, is often served "green" in many pubs i.e. it is served as soon as it is delivered and is not left for a day or two for secondary fermentation to complete. Happily, this is not the case at the Moulders - I've never had a bad pint of Stones in there. The guest beer too, is well looked after, and is usually from one of the smaller independent brewers, beers from Ridley's, Exmoor and Smiles having been sampled this year. Good value food is available and there is also a pool table, which has seen regular Anglo-Korean international tournaments!

Our final port of call is the Rhinoceros on Bridgegate - an odd name for a pub! The Rhino is a recent addition to the J.D. Weatherspoon chain of pubs, one of the first in our area, and is a long, narrow single-bar place, converted from a shop. There are usually four real ales available (one of which is a guest) and a real cider. Weatherspoon's have a policy of selling at least one beer at a promotional price - on my last visit, Younger's Scotch Bitter was 99p a pint - and guest beers are priced according to their strength. Good food is available all day. The Rhino is a popular meeting place and does tend to get very busy in the evening, with large gentlemen in bow-ties at the door, so an early visit is recommended.

So that's Rotherham. Not quite as exotic as London's West End, but probably cheaper! If I am ever near Charing Cross in the future I will have another go at preparing a rail-ale guide and who knows - I may even go back to Cannon Street!

## **Pennine Observers Notes**

### **Eastern Region**

We begin in Lincoln, where on December 3rd, 60026 and 60027 were noted heading oil trains through the station.

Immingham on December 14th saw 08405/632, 37059/706/718, 47221, 56039/085/117, 60022/054/067 stabled at the depot.

On the 17th, again at Lincoln station, 60003 and 60070 were in charge of oil trains. The following day at Doncaster, 56100, 58014, 58033 and 59201 were noted on coal trains, 37694+56068 and 56110 were in charge of freights, 08587 and 08682 were shunting and 47584/737 were stabled.

Noted at Peterborough on the 21st of December was 47762 which was at the head of a Kings Cross Carlisle charter. The same day at Eaton Lane crossing saw:

91020 14.05 Leeds - KX

91023 12.00 Edinburgh - KX

91027 13.30 KX - Leeds

43048+43167 'Highland Chieftain'

43111+43113 up 'Northern Lights'

43014+43071 12.46 Waterloo - Edinburgh

56081 Freightliner.

After its well-publicised failure at Berwick the previous month, D9000 'Royal Scots Grey' made a very welcome reappearance before a sizeable crowd of well-wishers at Doncaster, on December 22nd. On a bitterly cold evening (not unlike January 2nd 1982), the sound of "Napiers" was heard once again. Droning melodiously in the cold night air (*please excuse your correspondent, Ed*), and with 47758 as insurance, she was hauling an empty train from Heaton to Kings Cross, partly as a test-train and also to position the loco in London for the "Deltic Reunion" railtour from Kings Cross to York on January 2nd.

The "Duck and Weasel" railtour took 33116+33051 from Kings Cross to York, via Doncaster, Huddersfield, Blackburn, Copy Pit and Castleford. Unfortunately, on the return journey down the ECML 33116 expired near Colton Junction. Despite 37710 being sent from Doncaster to assist,

33051 took the train and "dead" 116 on to Kings Cross - a tremendous effort for a loco almost at the end of its days!

Also on the 28th, at Horbury near Wakefield, 47225 and 47290 were sighted.

Into the New Year, now. On the 2nd of January, the aforementioned Deltic railtour with D9000 at the head, was just about the only train on time at snowy Doncaster. After visiting some of its old haunts at Hull, Leeds, Harrogate and York, "RSG" was displayed on the turntable at the National Railway Museum, next to the "Big Blue" Deltic prototype - a magnificent sight! Your correspondent states that he will leave readers to their own imaginations, as to the sound effects as both of "RSG's" engines were restarted in the museum, before returning to the station and then on to Kings Cross. He also hopes that this magnificent engine has a long and happy return to the main line. *(There is no truth in the rumour that your correspondent was tired and emotional on this occasion- he's always been like this about Deltics! -Ed).*

Meanwhile, back in the real world, at Hull on the same day, 37694 was stabled at Paragon station after being employed on snow-clearing operations on the Scarborough line. (The effort of clearing snow must have been too much for the 37, as 47331 came to collect it on January 11th).

Pathfinder's 'GM Gyrator' railtour (*Who thinks up these names? Answers on a postcard to the Editor*) utilised 59103/201/206 for its perambulations around South and West Yorkshire, on January 4th.

At the end of January, 60017 was sighted at Leeds on the 30th, working a 'Tilcon' train to Hull. 47584 worked a Birmingham - York service before returning on a York - Poole train. Similarly, 47847 headed a Poole York before returning on a York - Bristol TM. 47747/774/785 were noted at York depot, while 47721 was sighted at Newcastle.

The following day, the Birmingham - York and Poole York trains were in the care of 47840 and 47841, and 47738/747/781 were at York depot.

Some of Hull's residents had a scare on the 7th of February, when 37706 and three wagons came off the rails just yards from homes in the Newbridge Road area, near to the entrance to Hull Docks. The 12 wagon train had come from Mostyn in North Wales, and the tanks had been used on the outward journey to carry acetic anhydride, a toxic and flammable substance. Fire appliances were called and roads in the area were sealed-off. Railtrack is investigating the cause of the incident, which happened on a stretch of line where a 10mph speed limit is in force, however, the single track line through the docks area is notorious for vandalism and children trespassing.

## **Midland Region**

A member in the Willesden area on the 14th of December, noted 37233, 47146/258/278/281/284/294, 92002/012/030 at the depot, while at Northampton, 31201/512/514, 47501 were in evidence.

On the 25th of January, Pathfinder's 'Rock 'n' Robin' railtour saw the first working of a class 56 on the 'Robin Hood' line. EWS-liveried 56105 worked from Bristol to Buxton via Sheffield and the Hope Valley,

Stockport and Birmingham, to Bristol. Noted stabled at Buxton were 08915, 31255, 37071/185/413/509/518, 60045/057. The much-travelled pair of "Cromptons" 33051+33116 also paid a visit to the Robin Hood line. They were on their way from Kings Cross to Scarborough, via Sheffield, on the 33111 Charters 'Robin Reliant' railtour on February 15th The 33s ran light-engine from York to Scarborough (56066 following behind hauling the charter) before returning the train via Doncaster and Lincoln to Kings Cross.

## **Western Region**

The "Rooster Booster" railtour, organised by Pathfinder, ran between Bristol and London on the 14th of December. 56032 hauled the train from Bristol to Stratford-on-Avon, where 58005 took over

for the journey to Guilford. From there, 33051+73136 took the train on to Kensington Olympia before being replaced by 60064 for the run to Northampton. 37505+20075 were next on-duty, hauling the train to Birmingham where 56032 was on-hand for the leg (pardon the pun!) back to Bristol. While all this was happening, 60009/60076/60099 were noted at Oxford and 08664, 37065/703/709/798, 47287/304/376/812, 58044 were sighted in the Didcot/Reading area.

## **Southern Region**

On December 21st, 'The Festive Fiasco' railtour ran in the London area. 31407 took the train from London Victoria, via Tattenham Corner, to London Bridge. 37194 then took the tour from London Bridge to Victoria, before 33019 completed the journey by working Victoria - Sutton - Streatham - Victoria. Whether the tour lived up to its title or not, is not reported! Locos operating Gatwick Expresses during the day were 73202/207/209 while the Orient Express was powered by 73114+73129.

At London Victoria on the 8th of February, there was an unusual sight amongst the 73s (205/210/211) on Gatwick Express services. 47784 'Condoval Hail' was at the head of Orient Express - 73108 having worked the stock into the station. (Your observer reported several other "beasts" outside the station, namely RML's 2408/2632/2708 on route 73 and RML2754 on route 38 - your observer considers this form of transport much more civilised than using the Tube!)

## **Preserved Railways**

Most preserved lines tend to hibernate during the winter. The Great Central is an exception, and held a winter gala on February 8th. Locos working were 5231, 30777 'Sir Lamiel', 46229 'Duchess of Hamilton', 75029 'The Green Knight', 92203, 92212.

Many thanks to Tony Caddick, John Dewing and Paul Slater for their contributions.

## **Notice Board**

### **Pennine Meetings**

Forthcoming meetings at the Taps (20.00 start) are as follows:

Wednesday 2 April 1997 John Wragg ***'An evening of videos and slides'***

Wednesday 16 April 1997 Neil Dakin ***'An evening with Neil'***

Wednesday 7 May 1997 John Davis and Keith Brown ***'The Sheffield Roadshow'***

Wednesday 21 May 1997 The Annual Pennine Slide Quiz ***'Chris Tyas asks the questions'***

Wednesday 4 June 1997 Speaker to be confirmed

Wednesday 18 June 1997 Speaker to be confirmed

## **WANTED!**

FOR LOCOMOTIVE ALLOCATION HISTORY PROJECT!

Loan of full year volumes of "Railway Observer" or "Modern Railways", 1968 onwards - I am willing to loan material in exchange. Contact Tony Smith on Retford (01777) 701627

## **East Lancs Railway Special Events**

April 26 Shunter Evening

May 3/4/5 Thomas the Tank Engine

May 10/11 Vintage Vehicle

Diesel Week

July 5-13 Teddy Bear's Picnic

Sept 12/13/14 Diesel Weekend

Oct 4/5 Thomas the Tank Engine

Oct 25/26 Autumn Steam Gala

December Santa Specials

With thanks to Stuart Earl. Members are advised to confirm the above events are on before setting out on a long journey! Phone 0161-764-7790 (weekends) or 0161-2535111 (Mon-Fri).

The next edition of Trans Pennine will (hopefully!) be produced in June. Please have all contributions to the editor by May 17th. Thank you!