

TRANS PENNINE

The Magazine of the Pennine Railway
Society



No.145 - Autumn 2008

Committee Briefs

Final Resting Place.

On Saturday 23 August 2008 Andy Dalby's ashes were scattered, by his family, under the A1A Locomotives support coach at Swanwick on The Midland Railway, Butterley. Members of the A1A Loco Ltd and the Pennine were also present.

Social Evenings at the Sally

Nights are drawing in quickly. Unless you are flash fitted your photo opportunities will be more limited.

Why not come to our social evenings at The Salutation, South Parade, Doncaster, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, 20.00 start.

Robin has drawn up an exciting programme of events for the autumn - details elsewhere in this organ. One of the many highlights will be the Pennine Slide Competition, judged this year by Chris Theaker (so he can't win this year).

The Pennine Slide Competition will be held on Wednesday 1 October 2008. If you have slides, bring 5 of your best along. If not, just come and see the quality.

Trophies and cash prizes for the winners.

Don't be late, Wednesdays at 8.

Flint - UK's Best Station

Our Welsh Correspondent, Rhys Jones, proudly tells us that Flint Station (Y Flint) has been named UK Station of the Year at the National Transport Awards in London.

It has recently benefited from a £2m facelift and now even boasts a waiting room.

The station, on the North Wales Coast line out of Chester, does not boast a buffet. There is, however, a tattoo parlour outside the main entrance.

Brief Encounter Derailed

After 130 years, the sleeper service between London and Cornwall is calling a halt to strangers sharing compartments.

Pennine veteran, Geoff Bambrough, reminds us that the steamier side of an encounter in a train berth was memorably depicted in Alfred Hitchcock's classic movie "North by Northwest" when Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint passionately clinched on the couchette.

First Great Western will abolish this practice within a year.

Couples will be able to book a twin berth for £30 each, but lone passengers will have to pay £40 and enjoy the pleasure of their own company.

First Group is considering a similar arrangement on its London - Scotland sleepers.

How well this arrangement will be policed to avoid a lone passenger inviting a newly found friend on board to "see my etchings" and "share costs" remains to be seen.

French railways are having none of this - anything goes on their sleepers.

High Speed Turbulence

Transport Secretary Ruth Kelly was recently asked at Transport Questions in Parliament by Coiffed Michael Fabricant (Con, Lichfield) "Can she understand that it is not much fun standing on a platform if a high-speed train sucks you off?"

She replied to Mr Fabricant that "such an experience would indeed not be much fun". Really!

Air France Eyes Move to Railways

Air France is holding talks on a joint venture that could lead to it offering high-speed rail travel. It is discussing a possible tie-up with Veolia, a French utility firm that also runs several rail services (it also empties the bins in Sheffield).

The airline could cut fuel costs by moving some services onto rail. It would run trains from its hub airport in Paris to other European destinations. It will focus on international travel as under EU plans, legislation is set to free up the international rail passenger market in 2010.

Veolia has previously run public rail franchises in several countries worldwide under the now defunct Connex brand.

It now runs continental Europe's largest private freight service and several rail connections.

ECML Plans for December 2009

National Express East Coast has announced expansion plans from December 2009, involving direct services to Lincoln, Harrogate and Bradford.

It also plans to use Class 180 Adelante 125mph diesel trains in addition to its existing fleet of refurbished diesel and electric trains, and not MK3 coaches with electric or diesel locos as first thought.

There may also be one train a day extending to Cleethorpes - oh for the days years ago "Deltic on Cleethorpes".

Grand Cuts at Grand Central

Late May 2008 saw troubled Grand Central cut the number of trains because of technical problems.

The company introduced a belated daily service from Sunderland to Kings Cross via Teesside and North Yorkshire in December 2007.

It was then forced to reduce operations because of a series of "major component failures", with the power car fleet. Some services were cancelled, others starting and terminating at York, with passengers ferried to other destinations by road.

North of York Grand Central trains serve Thirsk, Northallerton, Eaglescliffe and Sunderland.

Angel Trains Sold

Britain's largest fleet of rolling stock, including Virgin Trains Pendolino, has fallen into Australian hands after a consortium led by Babcock & Brown emerged as the long awaited buyer. Angel Trains had a stock of 4500 vehicles.

Contest to Design New Routemaster

London Mayor Boris Johnson has launched a contest to design a new version of the Routemaster bus, according to Pennine's bus expert Gerry Collins of Lincoln.

Key features include an open platform to allow passengers to get on and off quickly and easily, a good use of interior space, disabled access and green technology. Routemasters were phased out of regular service by the

end of 2005 as they were inaccessible to wheelchairs or pushchairs, a move promoted by then Mayor Ken Livingstone.

No new bendy bus contracts will be renewed, and they are due to disappear from London's roads by 2015.

The competition closes 19 September 2008.

Nuneaton Chord

A new £40m link enabling freight trains to cross the WCML at Nuneaton without disrupting passenger trains is being planned by Network Rail.

Known as the Nuneaton North Chord, the new one mile long line is part of the work to upgrade the Peterborough - Nuneaton freight route.

Work should start before summer 2009 and be completed by December 2010.

Class 377 Tested on Thameslink Route

First Capital Connect has tested a Class 377 Electrostar ahead of the introduction of similar trains on the Bedford - Brighton Thameslink route in March 2009.

FCC will take delivery of 23 similar four-car trains being built by Bombardier at Derby. Electrostars will operate as eight-car trains, with 12-car trains introduced by 2011.

“Bullet Train” Runs on HS1

A Hitachi -built “bullet train” Class 395 has done St Pancras International - Ashford, on trials, in 32 minutes. The units have a service design speed of 140mph. High speed services between St Pancras and the Kent coast will start December 2009.

End of Bletchley

Bletchley train maintenance depot has closed. London Midland now runs the franchise, having taken over from Silverlink.

From December, London Midland is phasing in the fleet of 37 Class 350/2 Desiros, maintained by Siemens at Northampton. They will replace the Class 321s which had been serviced at Bletchley.

New Look Class 91

The first Class 91 to be repainted in full National Express East Coast livery has made its public debut. A future quiz question - it is 91111.

All the fleet will be repainted by Wabtec at Doncaster.

A4x4

NRM marked the 70th anniversary of the world speed record for steam traction by re-uniting Mallard with Bittern, Sir Nigel Gresley and Union of South Africa on 5/6 July 2008.

Royal Visit to SVR

The Prince of Wales and the glamorous Duchess of Cornwall (Camilla) travelled over the Severn Valley Railway on 10 June 2008 in the Royal Train hauled by King Class 6024 “King Edward 1”, the first time had been steam hauled on a preserved line.

The celebrity couple were visiting areas of Worcestershire affected by serious flooding in 2007. The standby loco had been LMS 6201 "Princess Elizabeth".

Duchess of Sutherland to Visit Bishops Lydeard

20 August 2008 should see 6233 "Duchess of Sutherland" haul a "Cathedrals Express" From London Victoria - Bishops Lydeard. It will hand over the train to a West Somerset Railway loco for the onward journey to Minehead.

Alloa Back on Map

English soccer fans of Alloa Athletic will be delighted to hear of the reopening of the line to Alloa. Alloa now has an hourly passenger service to Stirling and Glasgow, and spotters will be able to view coal trains, re-routed from the Forth Bridge, to Longannet power station.

The first passenger train at Alloa was a steam special hauled by "The Great Marquess".

43048 - Terry Miller MBE

One power car, 43048, on the first HST to be rebranded in East Midlands Trains livery has been named after an engineer who played a key role in the development of the now legendary HST.

Stobart Heads for Highlands

Eddie Stobart Ltd is one of two major haulage companies allocated funding by the Scottish Government to provide two new freight services from the Central Belt to Inverness.

It follows the Daventry - Grangemouth Tesco traffic launched in 2006. Stobart will transport Tesco goods between Grangemouth and Inverness.

John G Russell will run a Coatbridge - Inverness rail height service.

Nuneaton Anger

In order to provide a faster service to London on the WCML, Virgin Trains will, from the December timetable, cut its off-peak services into London.

From December all fast trains from Nuneaton to London will stop after 09.00. Currently Nuneaton has at least one fast train per hour during the day. In future passengers will have to go via Northampton.

Longer Pendolinos

The Dept for Transport has selected Virgin Rail Projects Ltd as its chosen bidder to help introduce longer Pendolino trains on the WCML.

It will help bring into service 31 longer trains and 4 new trains, with extra vehicles ordered from Alstom by the DfT.

There will be 4 new 11-car Pendolinos and 62 carriages to lengthen 31 existing trains from 9 to 11 cars.

Tram Train Trials

Tram trains could be running on the Sheffield - Penistone - Huddersfield line by the end of 2010. The aim is to evaluate the potential for running tram trains on main rail routes which could then link into street-running systems such as the Sheffield Supertram network.

Five trains will be built.

Temple Mille Faithful

With the demise of non-HS1 compatible Class 37 and 73 rescue locos - another Eurostar is now used for this purpose - the only conventional speed traction on Temple Mills Eurostar depot is a Class 08 shunter which is used for internal route learning as well as movement of Eurostars.

Maintained under contract by EWS, the depot's smoke detectors have to be de-activated whenever it works in the shed.

To cope with 3000 extra services a year which will need to run from 2012 to cater for extra passenger demand, 4 new sidings will be needed at the depot.

Sheffield Railwayana Auctions

At the Sheffield Railwayana Auction held at the Derbyshire County Cricket Club's Gateway Centre, on 14 June 2008 the following locomotive nameplates all sold for £8,000 or more:

* "FISHBOURNE" as carried by the LSWR 0-4-4T class 02 loco No 178 built at Nine Elms in December 1889 - £11,500

* "BONNIE DUNDEE" as carried by the LNER 4-6-2 Pacific A1 class loco No 60159 built at Doncaster entering service in November 1949 - £19,250

* "SIR HECTIMERE" as carried by the SR 4-6-0 N15 "King Arthur" class loco No 798 built at Eastleigh in June 1926 - £8,000

* "SANDWICH" as carried by the LNER 4-6-2 Pacific A3 class loco No 2504 built at Doncaster entering traffic in September 1934 - £8,000

* "PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL S. N. CO." as carried by the SR 4-6-2 Pacific "Merchant Navy" class loco No 21C6 built at Eastleigh in December 1941 - £28,500

South West Trains auctioned 17 nameplates removed from Class 442 "Wessex Express" EMUs to raise funds for the Naomi House Children's Hospice near Winchester in Hampshire. The 17 nameplates were all sold and raised nearly £6,000 for the hospice.

The total auction of 500 lots made a total of £267,431.

Front Cover

The photo on the front cover shows 45112 "The Royal Army Ordnance Corps" on display at Barrow Hill on 22 August 2008 at the 'Rail Power 2008' event.

The loco was later used on the shuttle trains - its first workings for some time. (See Pennine Observer Notes for full list of locos used that day.)

Last Train to Rushden

by Paul Slater

The last regular passenger train to Rushden ran late in the evening of Saturday June 13, 1959. I was fifteen. I had thought for some time that the branch-line to Rushden and Higham Ferrers would close in the not-too-distant future, as few people used it and the local buses were more convenient; but I loved trains, had done so for as long as I could remember, and I was saddened at the idea that our little pull-and-push would soon cease to trundle in and out of the town. My fellow train-spotters and I called it the "Rushden gusher", and some of my most interesting excursions in search of engine numbers had begun with the short ride to Wellingborough on the two-coach branch train.

All day the whistles sounded as the train puffed back and forth between Wellingborough and Higham Ferrers. It was past eight o'clock when my brother and I walked down to the station to see the train and take a last trip. The sun, which had blazed all day, was going down, but was sun hot, and the red-brick town shone with a warm, ruddy light. We bought return tickets to Higham Ferrers. It was the train before the very last one; the booking-office was unusually crowded, and there were many people waiting on the platform. The train came round the curve into sight, preceded by the sound of its whistle, and when it stopped we got in. There were four carriages instead of the usual two, and the tank engine was sandwiched in the middle. There was not much to see on the mile-and-a-half ride to the terminus, just the rusty siding to the closed gasworks, then fields and the backs of a few houses. Just before the final station there were explosions as the train ran over detonators.

Higham Ferrers station was built of stone and stood on the edge of the little town. There were one or two sidings, terminating in a row of poplar trees. We got out. The engine was sizzling quietly, and my brother took a photograph of it. The Ivatt class 2 2-6-2 tanks which had been the mainstay of the branch passenger service had recently been replaced by BR Standard locomotives and it was 84007 which was working on the last day; it had been decorated for the occasion, with humorous slogans chalked on it.

We got back in the train and it started off again the way it had come. There were more detonators outside Rushden station. We watched the train steam away through the twilight, then walked home. The sun had gone down now, but the warmth of the day oozed from the buildings, and the streets smelled of dust and hot bricks. Every day for the past month we had been expecting a thunderstorm, but there had been none, each day the hot sunny afternoon turned slowly into a golden evening and then, eventually, into a calm blue twilight.

When the last train came, it was after ten o'clock. I had gone to bed, but was laying awake waiting. My bedroom faced towards the railway, and all the family came in to listen. The windows were open wide and the curtains drawn right back, but the room was stifling hot, as it often was at this time of year when it caught the evening sun for the last few hours.

We first heard the train as a whistle growing gradually louder. I got up and leaned out of the window. The air outside was cooler, and scented with flowers. It was nearly dark, but there was a greenish afterglow lingering in the north-west, silhouetting the rooftops in the next street. We heard the noise of the train wheels, then that and the whistle both stopped as the train reached Rushden station. There were more detonators, and the sound was much more impressive from up here than from close at hand, a series of reverberating explosions.

The sounds carried very clearly in the still evening; I could follow the progress of the train to Higham Ferrers by the sudden silences as it passed under bridges and even at two miles range the whistle and the detonators as the train started back on its last journey were perfectly distinct. By the time it left Rushden station again, the sounds were quite loud. I heard the engine start, then the whistle began and eleven reports boomed out, the last fusillade of detonators, echoing one after the other through the summer dusk and finally subsiding to leave only the farewell shriek of the whistle dying away.

On the Monday I read in the local paper of the celebrations usual on these occasions - the jokes and the singing and the toilet-rolls flying like streamers from the train windows - but at the time, from my bedroom, I was conscious only of the beautiful stillness of the evening and the sadness of the explosions and the final receding whistle. Rushden would continue to have the occasional excursion train, and goods traffic on the branch would not end for another ten years, but the "Rushden gusher" would nm no more. The last train to Rushden remains one of my most vivid memories of adolescence.

The Somerset and Dorset Revisited

by Glynn Gossan

Of all the lines that are no longer around, the Somerset and Dorset is the one above all others that I wish I had had the opportunity of seeing, and travelling on. I don't know exactly what its attraction is, as the line was closed long before I really ever knew of its existence. The line has had plenty of publicity over the years since its closure, largely due to the excellent photography, and books, of the wonderful Ivo Peters. I think it is because it was fundamentally a single line run almost as an elongated branch for much of the time. Then on Summer Saturdays it was transformed into a cross country main line, with double headed trains giving

wonderful locomotive combinations travelling through superb countryside, taking holiday makers to and from the Dorset coast. Combinations such as Standard 4s and West Country Pacifics were common place on these Summer Saturdays, and must have been a truly memorable sight, and sound. For me, one of the most amazing services on the whole system once ran on the line, and that was the Exmouth - Cleethorpes, and return, service. It seems quite unbelievable that such a train ran.

The Pines Express was, of course, the line's premier service, and I do envy Ivo having photographed the train so many times.

Returning to the line these days is something that I do when in the area. I just have to pay my own pilgrimage to Bath Green Park Station, and although obviously not the same, credit must be given to Sainsbury's for the renovation of the station, and particularly its roof, so at least visitors can get some sort of feeling of what it must have been like when trains ran. After all, we have seen so many other wonderful lines, and stations, completely removed from the face of the earth.

The shed area has now been taken over by the Homebase sector of Sainsbury's, and there is absolutely no trace of the railway there now. Until fairly recently, access was still available to the trackbed between the station and the site of Bath Junction, but sadly time has now taken its toll, and nature, together with encroachment from the adjacent car dealers, means that there is little to see now. The odd bridge parapet is all there is now, and the site of Bath Junction itself shows nothing of its past.

A linear path starts just beyond the junction, and a walk is possible up to the location that used to be Devonshire Tunnel. This has now been filled in and levelled; to the degree that there is no sign it ever existed. Since my last visit, a few years ago, Sustrans has opened up a foot and cycle path from a point that I'm not exactly sure of, somewhere south of Coombe Down Tunnel, through the site of Midford station, to Wellow. The idyllic location of Midford Goods Yard, just north of the station, is now so overgrown as to be hardly recognizable, but a walk through the short tunnel takes you through the station, where the platform is still in place, but nothing else.

The big surprise since my last visit was to find Midford viaduct completely clear of foliage, where the foot and cycle path crosses the old Limpey Stoke branch famously used for the filming of "The Titfield Thunderbolt". I even managed on my recent visit, to persuade my wife to walk down the trackbed towards Wellow, thinking about the many times the Pines Express had taken this very route. At Midford the station building is now a privately owned house, and the platforms are still intact, although filled in. There is still an original lamp post on the platform and a station signpost, and all in all, is still a pleasant place to visit. The current inhabitant is both used to, and pleased to oblige with, requests to take photos of the station building. Midsomer Norton is the site of a budding preservation group, with the station virtually intact, and the signal box in the process of being rebuilt. A short stretch of track has also been re-laid with the ultimate aim of, I believe, reaching Chilcompton. So far, I have only managed to visit locations at the northern end of the line, and it is my hope to revisit these, together with other locations elsewhere. I did manage to call in briefly several years ago at Evercreech Junction, but sadly have no photographic record. I do regret not managing to emulate the great Ivo Peters whilst the line was open, as it was truly a unique and sadly missed railway, which undoubtedly ran through superb scenery.

Let the memories of the Somerset and Dorset live on forever.

Tosca's Travels

(Beer and Bashing Abroad) Part 7

So that's a Kayak (June 1992)

Tuesday 9th June 1992

Another trip with Dave Reed and Ian Parkinson to the Low Countries & Germany.

43058 Sheffield - St Pancras (other power car was dead)

EMU 1529 Victoria - Dover WD

JETFOIL PRINCES CLEMENTINE Dover - Oostende

SNCB 2120 Oostende - Bruxelles Midi

SNCB 2752 Bruxelles Midi- Bruxelles Central

SNCB 2151 Bruxelles Central ~ Bruxelles Midi

SNCB 2157 Bruxelles Midi - Bruxelles Central

SNCB 1188 Bruxelles Central - Bruxelles Nord

SNCB 1602 Bruxelles Nord - Aachen Hbf

DB 103225 Aachen Hbf- Koln Hbf

DB 140671 Koln Hbf- Hannover Hbf

A few hours sleep on the overnight Bonn - Berlin train followed by a rancid hour spent in a bar on Hannover station surrounded by Druggies, Hookers and Pimps. Kept a tight grip on my bag I can tell you. Glad when the return overnight arrived.

Wednesday 10th June 1992

DB 114495 Hanover Hbf- Koln Hbf

DB 218131 Koln Hbf- Koln Hansaring

DB 140838 Koln Hansaring - Koln Hbf

DB 111144 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 215037 + 215129 Koln Deutz - Kohl Hbf

DB 218133 Koln Hbf- Koln Hansaring

DB 111196 Koln Hansaring - Koln Hbf

DB 111134 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 218145 Koln Deutz ~ Koln Hbf

DB 111191 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 111153 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf

DB EMU 420808 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 218143 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf

DB 140837 Koln Hbf - Koln Deutz

DB 215036 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf

DB 111127 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 110415 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf

DB 140840 Koln Hbf- Koln Deutz

DB 215135 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf

DB 1 11188 Koln Hbf- Koln Hansaring

DB 1 11195 Koln Hansaring - Koln Hbf

DB 215118 Koln Hbf- Euskirchen

DB 215016 Euskirchen - Bonn Hbf

DB 215116 Bonn Hbf- Bonn Duisdorf

DB 215113 Bonn Duisdorf- Bonn Hbf

DB 1 10133 Bonn Hbf- Remagen

Booked into the Hotel Westfalschisthof at Remagen.

DB 212233 Remagen ~ Arhweiler

DB 212233 Arhweiler - Heimersheim

DB 212035 Heimersheim - Arhweiler

DB 212253 Arhweiler - Remagen

DB 110355 Remagen - Bonn Bad Godesberg

DB 110444 Bonn Bad Godesberg - Remagen

DB 1 10338 Remagen - Bonn Hbf

DB 110116 Bonn Hbf- Remagen

DB 110160 Remagen - Bonn Bad Godesberg

DB 140582 Bonn Bad Godesberg - Remagen

DB 110261 Remagen - Bonn Mehlem

DB 114488 Bonn Mehlem - Remagen

DB 111105 Remagen - Andernach

DB 1 101 17 Andernach - Remagen

DB 110440 Remagen - Bonn Hbf

Found a bar near Bonn Hbf that served a nice pork chop with chips all washed down with a few bottles of Hoegaarden.

DB 111085 Bonn Hbf- Remagen

39 new engines in the day. I know there are lots of ned leaps and I can imagine some of the purists tutting but Germany is that vast and with so many engines to get I got as many as I could at the time. I'm glad I did because since then there are 100s of d/emus that have taken over a lot of work and some electrics like the 140s were dedicated to freight a long time ago.

Thursday 11th June 1992

DB 110128 Remagen- Andernach

DB 110264 Andernach - Remagen

DB 1 10262 Remagen - Koblenz Hbf

DB 141411 Koblenz Hbf- Cochem

DB 181205 Cochem - Trier Hbf

DB 141112 Trier Hbf- Trier Sud

DB 141405 Trier Sud - Trier Hbf

DB 141402 Trier Hbf- Trier Sud

CFL 1817 Trier Sud - Luxembourg

SNCF 15009 Luxembourg - Thionville

SNCF 16687 Thionville - Hagondange

SNCF 16675 Hagondange - Thionville

SNCF 15015 Thionville - Luxembourg

CFL 3620 Luxembourg - Petange via Hollerich

CFL 3604 Petange - Luxembourg via Esch

CFL 1820 Luxembourg - Cruchten

CFL DMU 204 Cruchten - Luxembourg

SNCF 15039 Luxembourg - Thionville

SNCF 15029 Thionville - Luxembourg

Had a Chinese meal in a very good restaurant near to the station. Then turned in for the night. As usual when in Luxembourg stayed in the Carlton Hotel.

Friday 12th June 1992

SNCF 15043 Luxembourg - Thionville

SNCF 16690 Thionville - Hagondange

SNCF 16687 Hagondange - Thionville

SNCF 15030 Thionville - Luxembourg

CFL 1801 Luxembourg - Lintgen ,

CFL EMU 2021 Lintgen - Luxembourg

CFL EMU 2006 Luxembourg - Wasserbillig

CFL 1802 Wasserbillig - Luxembourg

DB 181220 Luxembourg - Trier Hbf

DB 181219 Trier Hbf~ Saarbrücken Hbf

DB 218372 Saarbrücken Hbf- Sulzbach

DB 218386 Sulzbach - Saarbrücken Hbf

DB 110436 Saarbrücken Hbf - Koblenz Hbf

DB 111094 Koblenz Hbf- Köln Hbf

DB 140834 Köln Hbf- Köln Hansaring

DB 111185 Köln Hansaring - Köln 1-Ibf

No hotel tonight decided on an overnight instead.

DB 110151 Köln Hbf - Heidelberg

Heidelberg at 3am wasn't too bad, better than Hannover was. Had 3/4 of an hour there. Found a burger place that sold bottled lager so had a chilli burger and a drink.

Saturday 13th June 1992

DB 103145 Heidelberg - Köln Hbf

DB 110373 Köln Hbf - Aachen Hbf

SNCB 2349 Aachen Hbf - Liege Gullemins

SNCB 2201 Liege Gullemins - Namur

SNCB EMU 433 Namur - Dinant

Went to Dinant to do the kayak trains. These ran each summer Saturday morning for 100s of people who used the train to get to Houyet and then Kayaked back up the river. A kayak is a type of canoe by the way.

SNCB 5213 Dinant - Gendron Celles

SNCB 5211 & 5212 Gendron Celles - Gedinne

SNCB DMU 4505 Gedinne - Dinant

SNCB EMU 410 Dinant - Bruxelles Nord

SNCB 1184 Bruxelles Nord - Antwerpen Central

SNCB 6296 Antwerpen Central - Berchem

SNCB 6326 Berchem - Antwerpen Central

SNCB 1208 Antwerpen Central - Berchem

SNCB 6298 Berchem - Antwerpen Central

SNCB 1190 Antwerpen Central- Berchem

SNCB 1201 Berchem - Gent St Pieters

SNCB 1803 Gent St Pieters ~ Brugge

SNCB 6314 & 6266 Brugge - Gent St Pieters

SNCB 5107 Gent St Pieters - Bruxelles Nord via Denderleeuw

SNCB 2743 Bruxelles Nord - Oostende

Time for a St Louis Kriek bier before catching the ferry; which was Reine Astrid.

Sunday 14th June 1992

Arrived Dover at the ungodly hour of 04.00. Caught the boat train to London and then had to hang about until 08.25 for the first train to Doncaster, which was 91013.

Another excellent trip with 92 new engines for haulage. However the next trip for the annual Train, Tram and Bus weekend would beat that!

Robin's Review

No 35 'MOORS LINE'

'Moors Line' is the magazine of The North York Moors Historical Railway Trust. To you and me the NYMR, which runs from Pickering to Grosmont and more recently on certain dates through to Whitby on Network Rail Infrastructure.

The NYMR is one of the leading preserved railways in the country and now very much in the Premier League along with The Severn Valley, KWVR, and The Torbay Steam Railway etc.

The magazine retails at £2.50 and is A5 size and consists of 64 pages plus the cover.

A good 80%+ of the photographs are in colour. The Moors Line is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. The edition reviewed is No156 Autumn 2007. Which suggests the magazine is in its 39th year of publication dating back to 1969.

The Magazine like most starts with a contents page followed by an editorial written by the editor followed by "View From The Chair" from the Company Chairman, followed by "General Managers Jottings" by none other than The General Manager

This is followed by the usual regular news features starting with; 'Motive Power News'; this gives a very comprehensive list of locos associated with the NYMR stating whether in traffic or not and what overhaul is ongoing or due. This list covers 26 steam locos and 13 diesel locos. The Carriage and Wagon report follows in a similar format. Then Signalling and Permanent Way each have their own separate reports.

The LNER Coach Association then have a two page report on The Gresley and Thompson carriages they are restoring to their former glory in Teak. Along with the North Eastern Locomotive association report who also have a two-page report on their activities at the NYMR.

There are two pages of Area Group activity reports including details of former Pennine member Mr P Barsby who runs the South Yorkshire Area Group (SYAG) based at The Salutation. Although he didn't submit a report for this edition his name and details are shown.

The centre pages are colour pictures submitted by members followed by Four articles "The Saga of Bridge 31" "The Art of The Possible", "The Garden Locomotive Is Now On Its Way To Pastures New", "Regulations and Indignation" and "Demolition Trains".

Other regular features appear to be "The Lamberton Locomotive Trust", "The NYMR Archives", "Mail Van" (letters), and last but not least "Diary", again Mr Barsby gets a mention.

VERDICT: Phew all in all an excellent magazine but then it should be it appears to be sponsored by The Heritage Lottery Trust; but even so lots of interesting stuff and excellent value at £2.50. I would say one of the best Heritage Railway magazines I have read so far.

THANKS: To John Dewing, Pennine Member for Cottingham for providing this copy of Moors Line.

Pennine Observer Notes

Eastern Region

Recent sightings on the Gainsborough - Barnetby line have been:

Jul 3 66142 on coal train

Jul 5 66087 and 66178 on coal trains

Aug 11 66005, 66100, 66123 and 66144 on coal trains

Recent sightings at Hykeham have been:

Jun 20 60051 light engine

Jun 25 66079 on oil train

Jul 3 60025 on oil train

Jul 4 66723 on container train

Jul 9 66720 on container train

Jul 14 60024 on oil train

Recent sightings at Melton Ross have been:

Jun 28 60014 and 60076 on iron ore trains 60094 on steel train 66009, 66061, 66081, 66171 and 66581 on coal trains 66089 on oil train, 60043+60007+66091 light engine

Jul 12 60026 and 60079 on iron ore trains 66009 and 66079 on coal trains

Other recent sightings have been:

Jul 19 66157 on coal train at Scunthorpe

Aug 13-19 67024 Doncaster Thunderbird, 67023 Newcastle Thunderbird

Overhead line problems caused severe disruption to the Norwich Liverpool Street services on 9 to 11 June. A reduced service operated between Norwich and Ipswich on 9th and 10th. Services just got back to near normal on 11 June when 3 rail workers were injured south of Ipswich causing more heavy delays and cancellations. Locomotives seen parked with their trains at Norwich during this period were 90001, 90004, 90005, 90006, 90007, 90010, 90012 and 90020. 47818 and 47813 were on Norwich depot.

Locomotives seen at Barnetby on 16 August were 66005, 66046, 66078, 66097, 66201 and 66206 on coal trains, 60021 and 60096 on iron ore trains, 60066 on oil train and 60100 on steel train.

Western Region

Locomotives seen on the Bristol TM - Weymouth service have been:

Jun 21 67002 and 67021

Jul 12 67005 and 67006

57602 was on the 23.45 Paddington - Penzance sleeper on 11 July.

Midland Region

Locomotives seen on the Wrexham & Shropshire service between Wrexham - Marylebone have been:

Jun 28 67014 with 67013, 67015 with 67025, 67017 with 67001

Jul 16 67001 with 67017, 67012 with 67015, 67014 in bay at Wrexham

Noted at Anglesey Aluminium Works on 19 July was 60031.

Locomotives seen at Carlisle on 25 July were 66611, 66544, 66602, 66429, 57313, 66584, 66056 and 57316.

Locomotives noted at Carlisle on 29 July were 66533, 66523, 57305, 66419, 57326, 66056 and 66415.

Locomotives seen at Carlisle on 13 August were 66523, 66120, 66520, 66430, 66197, 66509, 66547 and 57307.

Southern Region

Locomotives noted at Eastleigh and Southampton Freightliner Terminal on 7 July were 08077, 08482, 08575, 08624, 08691, 08745, 09019, D2991, 37417, 59002, 66006, 66046, 66059, 66069, 66091, 66148, 66153, 66162, 66174, 66516, 66541, 66566, 66574, 66576, 66579, 66587, 66593, 66594 and 66601.

Locomotives seen at Eastleigh and Southampton Freightliner Terminal on 9 July were 08077, 08575, 08482, 08624, 08691, 08745, 09019, 58007, 58011, 58049, 59104, 59206, 66006, 66051, 66076, 66115, 66133, 66148, 66152, 66153, 66182, 66535, 66567, 66574, 66575, 66580, 66593, 66594, 66601 and 66713.

Railtours and Charter Trains

Locomotives seen working on railtours and charters have been:

May 26 ("Scarborough Spa Express") 34067

Jun 21 ("The Par Snip") 67006, 66182 and 66050 (Cranmore 150 - Quarry Gala Weekend Shuttles) 66200 and 59001

Jun 22 (Cranmore 150 - Quarry Gala Weekend Shuttles) 66200 and 59102 Jun 28 (Kings Cross - Keighley) 47832 and 477121 Jul 9 (Waterloo - Weymouth Charter) 34067

Jul 30 ("Scarborough Spa Express") 45690

Aug 5 ("Scarborough Spa Express") 48151

Aug 12 ("Scarborough Spa Express") 70013

Aug 13 ("The Dalesman") 30777

Aug 16 ("Meridian Mariner") 37059, 37423 and 47712

Aug 23 (Woking - Butterley) 67003 and 67021

Preserved Railways

Locos working at the Middleton Railway 250th Anniversary on 7 June were 1210 Sir Berkeley and 1601 Matthew Murray.

Locos seen on the Mid Norfolk Railway on 8 June were D8069, 31438, 47596, 50019, 56040 and 08631. Locos noted at the North Norfolk Railway on 10 June were 90775 (working), 65462, 69621, 34081, 12131, 79960, 31207, D5580 and D2063.

Locos used at the Keighley & Worth Valley 40th Anniversary Steam Gala on 28 June were 1210 Sir Berkeley, 1704, 957, 47279, 41241 and 90733.

Locos on display at the Tyseley Open Day on 28 June were: Steam- 4110, 4936, 4953, 4965, 5043, 7029, 7752, 7760, 9466, 9600, 45305, 45593, Cadbury's No 1, No 14, No 670, narrow gauge Howard and William Hedley.

Diesel and Electric - 13029, 08616, 31190, 33202, 37260, 40118, D1755, 47580, 47770, 47828, 57307, 86259, 87031 and Parry People Mover 139001.

Locos working on the Snowdon Mountain Railway on 1 July were No 2 Enid, No 6 Padarn, No 9 Ninian, No 10 Yeti, No 11 Peris and No 12 George.

Locos seen at Llanberis Lake Railway on 2 July were No 2 (working), Una (in steam), No 1 and No 12 Llanelli. Locos noted at Penrhyn Castle Industrial Railway Museum on 3 July were Kettering Furnaces No 3, Watkin, Fire Queen, Vesta, Hawarden, Charles, Hugh Napier, No 1, Haydock and Acorn.

Locos seen at Swanage Railway on 8 July were 80078 (working), 30053, 34028, 80104, 08436, D3591 and D6515.

Locos used at the Dean Forest Railway Diesel Gala on 12 July were 08473, D9555, 31466 and 27066. Locos working at the Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway Diesel Gala on 19 July were 08054, 08773, D2203, 47004, 33109, D5600, D9513 and 31119.

Locos used at the Barrow Hill 'Rail Power 2008' event on 22 August were 6430, MSC No 70, Met Tank No 1, 3440 City of Truro, Peckett 2000, 78019, 20121, D9520, 20096, D1023, 37275 and 45112.

Locos working at the Midland Railway Butterley 'Works Open Day' event on 23 August were 92214, 53809, 73129, 16410, 80098, 31108, 08590 and D2138.

Long Marston

Locos present at the Long Marston Open Day on 7 June 2008 were:

08345, 08447*, 08517, 08668, 08728, 08736, 08813, 08827, 08869, 08928, 20016, 20032, 20057, 20072, 20081, 20088, 20138, 20215, 20902, 20903, 31301**, 31423**, 31437**, 31439**, 37683, 37696, 37898, 47701*, 47746, 56011, 56021, 66722, 73201, 86205, 86215, 86217, 86223, 86226, 86228, 86229, 86230**, 86231, 86234, 86235, 86242, 86245, 86246, 86247, 86248, 86250, 86251, 86258, 86260, 86401, 87002,

87003, 87004, 87006, 87009, 87010, 87011, 87013, 87014, 87017, 87018, 87020, 87021, 87022, 87023, 87025, 87027, 87028, 87029, 87030, 87032, 87033, 87034.

*since left the site.

** The Class 31s and 86230 were located in the "A Yard" so not easily visible, although it is understood that the 31s were brought out into a more visible location on Sunday.

86218 and 86232 have arrived on site since the open weekend.

Note: Industrial locos not included in list.

Coaches and units present on 7 June 2008:

1211,1252,1254,1256, 1966,1971, 3312, 3366, 3374, 3438,3746,3749, 4614, 5789, 5797, 5853, 5869, 5913, 5925, 5936, 5965, 5971, 5976, 5981, 6001, 6008, 6013, 6035, 6046, 6064, 6117, 6119, 6122, 6124, 6137, 6146, 6160, 6162, 6170, 6173, 6183.

6356,6357.

9500, 9503, 9505, 9506, 9509, 9521, 9524, 9539.

10226, 10231, 10233, 10240, 10242, 10249, 10250, 10253, 10259.

10710.

11005, 11006, 11007, 11011, 11018, 11026, 11040, 11042, 11052, 11058, 11064, 11097.

12008, 12017, 12022, 12029, 12036, 12045, 12047, 12054, 12058, 12059, 12063, 12065, 12083, 12087, 12092, 12094, 12095, 12101, 12104, 12124, 12128, 12134, 12139, 12142, 12144, 12156, 12158, 12160, 12163, 12165, 12172.

17144, 17170.

21092, 25231, 25735.

34531, 35006.

40402, 40403, 40416, 40419, 40434.

40723, 40732.

44065, 44088, 44089.

82108, 82110, 82111, 82113, 82116, 82120, 82122, 82123, 82124, 82125, 82128, 82129, 82131, 82137, 82138, 82140, 82141, 82142, 82144, 82147, 82148, 82149, 82150.

96181.

96602-09.

977351 (Mark 1 FO).

DMU's: 51909, 54271 (stored) 51352, 59505, 51376 (operational)

EMU: 390033 (nine vehicles).

There was a charter train from London Euston to Long Marston which was operated by Class 66 locomotives 66182/66081. Stock used was a mix of mark 1 and mark 2s 5276, 5366, 4902, 1863, 5040, 4927, 5009, 3107, 3140, 80041, 3112, 3122 and 21272.

Stratford on Avon Broadway Railway

Stratford on Avon Broadway railway also operates from the site. They had on show industrial steam and diesel locomotives, also their preserved coaches.

Steam Locomotives

Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0 ST "Met"

Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0 ST "Swanscombe"

Robert Stephenson and Hawthorn 0-4-0 ST "Agecroft No 135"

Diesel Locomotives

Barclay 0-4-0 DM "Mulberry" 70047

Fowler 0-4-0 DM "ROP Chorley N04"

Sentinel 0-4-0 DH "Jean"

English Electric 0-6-0 DH "Hippo"

Coaches

Ex GWR 4777 ~ Collett Third Corridor
Ex LMS Army Number 3322 Third Open
BR Covered Carriage Truck CCT S1927
Ex BR RBR 1966 and 1971 Restaurant Buffet
Ex BR TSO Mark 1 4614, Mark 1 SK 25231, 25631,
Mark 1 BCK 21092, Mark 1 BSK 35006.

Also present on site was a couple of rare coaches which have not been seen for a number of years BR Mark 1 BG 80665 last seen in public over 20 years ago. GWR Royal Saloon no 9006 last seen in public over 10 years ago.

Old Sightings

Maurice Ockleford

23 April 1961

51A (Darlington)

90430 64821 68007 68754 90014 61353 68024 65880 67742 90217 60869 67628 60040 69007 60025 90704
62008 61224 68744 63395 62003 62039 90172 61025 67763 69021 60017 60833 68079 61321 62058 90011
90082 60803 60972 60060 69017 61382 67750 68006 61031 60848 90396 90341 62718 60941 62047 69004
43072 67777 60954 61032 60850 90445 90057 62733 63654 68019 68047 80097 67755 62002 61030 63391
90615 90405 65865 61080 68050 69022 46408 61304 65860 68060 68052 90014 61476 68023 68037 69018
69002 90373 62064 62004 61176 60412 62036 67765 61338 90155 63389 60967 43102 43129 43050 46477
46475 46483 76021 80101 43099 D2318 D2304 D2309 D2305 D2307 D2320 D2109 D2617 D2617 D2107
D5104 D2702 D3230 D2317 D3456 D2319 D2306 D2108 D2079 D2167

51F (West Auckland)

63351 63340 65733 65731 63403 64719 68708 64982 64835 64756 68692 63443 63353 63398 76049 78016
64979 64862 64969 63407 76046 77003 77002 76050 76045 64927 63446 63459 64848 D2154

52K (Consett)

63359 63455 63342 63439 61016 63427 63354 63433 63406 63357 63418 63346 63404 D3942

52C (Blaydon)

63386 63352 63356 63362 63434 63378 61199 63413 63400 67636 63431 63366 68014 67634 64713 69023
63444 61241 63377 63381 63441 63368 69025 68095 67653 63376 63387 61035 63453 63394 60887 D2321
D2247 D204 68010 63429 63458 61322 63390 61216 63363 63437 60918 61019

52B (Heaton)

26501 67646 60904 67647 60132 60137 67641 60539 67683 60807 60940 64856 68702 64939 65864 67642
60979 68713 60085 64864 60078 60926 64926 D2050 D3243 D26 67654 60073 60932 67645 69026 64931
64910 64945 46474 60116 60511 65869 77014 60538 43126 D2105 60147 64842 60923 64816 60976 60978
68732 69028 D2047 D2164 D279 D270 D3244 D3076 60929 67651 60910 60812 64871 67658

52E (Percy Main)

65807 65858 65812 65837 65791 65842 65802 65821 65795 65839 65825 65813 65814 65852 D2044 D2055
D2166 D3241 D3939

52F(n) Blyth

64814 65875 65811 65797 65815 65789 65819 65792 65794 65786 65867 65881 64846 65879 65851 65882
65857 65889 65863 65804 133673 132104 192097

52F(s) Blyth

65801 65838 65808 65861 46473 65799 65876 65834 65891 65800 65033 65810 46471 65877 65862 65845
65691 D2093

52H (Tyne Dock)

65693 68743 65668 64851 68029 68747 92062 92063 63468 63474 63423 63471 64852 63384 68031 D2061
D2315 65695 69024 68704 65663 69921 63460 65670 63466 61906 63856 63470 92061 92098 92097 63464
63463 63755 63465 63760 64921 D2147 D2314 D2162 D2080

52G (Sunderland)

65817 65835 65873 65832 65871 65841 65878 65833 65854 65823 64710 67689 63467 67673 63469 64825
65850 70024 64854 68041 68016 68058 68048 68044 64707 64704 65782 63410 68054 61267 63383 63442
D2231 D3150 64701 63419 63414 68021 65830 68711 61884 67645 64853 64858 6470064942 65892 64847
43100 68051 68951 65818 63457 64849 43015 68032 65805 61275 68057 63454 68715 90067 63412 63380
68055 63392 65846 61061 63421 68056 65820 90344 68053 68737 63440 90016 63397 D2322 D3672
D2230 D2205 D2204 D2232 D2068 D2076 D2070 D2206 D2078 D3149 43053 63422 68703 68698 90092
63415

51L(Thornaby)

90048 90434 90466 60808 69006 65760 43101 64758 65741 63396 60915 63447 64857 90603 68740 65768
90517 90022 90452 61259 63450 63409 61987 65790 43057 68729 65859 65853 63370 63344 90027 90461
63445 65776 90459 90377 90098 61034 65743 60960 63371 43075 69019 63426 63428 63432 63382 90240
90465 65788 65773 90462 61218 61173 63366 64861 61303 65753 64845 63430 63349 65763 90086 90074
64870 61986 64859 61220 68695 63355 60946 63405 64730 61844 63411 90479 63367 65868 65747 90481
90406 67759 65745 68688 68039 60809 63388 65855 65755 67766 63373 63417 90500 64725 90091 61257
65720 90435 63451 65761 65751 65772 90426 90593 63424 65757 60901 65778 68721 64850 63369 65756
61818 67764 64855 90081 63401 65769 63375 90273 68689 63435 60154 63347 43070 63420 65774 65870
62001 63452 63393 90132 64818 64706 63343 D3142 D3146 D5106 D5100 D5151 D5110 D5149 D5106
D5150 D313 D3147 D3148 D3144 D3140 D3145 63364 65884 63374 60916

51J (Northallerton)

78015 78010 78011 78012 78014

Pennine Quiz No. 133

Ian Shenton

Find the names and numbers of Steam, Diesel and Electric Locomotives with a BR number and that have run on BR tracks, with the words **YORK, DONCASTER, or SHEFFIELD** in them (Official names only).

Ian has found 24 locos with York, Sheffield or Doncaster in their names (I hope this helps! !).

Pennine Quiz No. 132

The Answers

1. Ivatt LMS 4MT 2-6-0
2. Fowler Class Five 2-6-0s
3. Class 158
4. GER F7 2-4-2T
5. Class 421
6. Class 56

7. Class 55 'Deltic'
8. Class 50
9. Class 13
10. Classes 26 and 27
12. GCR Robinsons 0-6-0s
13. Classes 24 and 25
14. Classes 81-85
15. Class 66
16. Class 220 Voyager
17. Early Class 31 with no headcode panel
18. LNER Raven Pacifics
19. Class 90
20. Class 33 built to Hastings Line profile
21. BR 9F 2-10-0
22. Gresley A4 Pacific
23. Class 37
24. Class 206
25. Class 14
26. Classes 201, 202, 203, 205 and 207
27. Class 76
28. SR U Class 2-6-0
29. Class 40
30. Class 59

Pennine Quiz No. 132

The Winners

1st Ken King

2nd Ian Shenton

3rd= Malcolm Bell

3rd= John Dewing

Congratulations to all the winners.

Pennine Meetings 2008

All meetings are held at The Salutation Inn, South Parade, Doncaster starting at 20.00 on 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

Wednesday 17th September 2008	Glynn Gossan	
Wednesday 1st October 2008	PENNINE SLIDE COMPETITION	Judged By Chris Theaker
Wednesday 15th October 2008	Martin Bromley	'Sheffield Vic - Marylebone' Is the Master Cutler a South Yorkshireman?
Wednesday 5th November 2008	Andy Barclay	
Wednesday 19th November 2008	Les Nixon	'Modern Traction Part 1'
Wednesday 3rd December 2008	PENNINE SHIELD	
Wednesday 17th December 2008	MEMBERS SLIDES	

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their generous contributions to this issue: John Dewing, Glyn Gossan, Maurice Ockleford, John Reader, John Sanderson, Ian Shenton, Robin Skinner, Paul Slater and Tosca.

Next Issue

The Winter 2008 Issue of Trans Pennine is due for publication on 17th December would contributors please let the coordinator have their information by Wednesday 19th November - THANK YOU. Remember, you can email your contributions to david@Whitlam45.freeserveeserve.co.uk

Era of the Trainspotter

The trainspotter and his passionate number-fuelled world -full of expressions like copping, cabbing, gricing and shed-bashing - began to emerge in Britain in 1943.

The appearance and subsequent growth of legions of boys and young men dedicated to the cause of taking down engine numbers coincided with the publication by a young railway employee of a pocket-sized book containing the numbers of most of the Southern Railway's locomotives, their classes and shed allocations.

The author of this simple book of lists, Ian Allan, had been presented with the opportunity to pursue his interest in steam trains by being taken on as a clerk at Waterloo Station. But as the Second World War soon began and Ian's work planning advertisements for excursions had to stop, he was moved to the publications department where he learned how to organise the print and production of Southern Railway magazine.

Having to handle enquiries from the public, he used a notebook with the numbers of most of the Southern's locos and rolling stock, which he thought would prove popular if available to others sharing his great interest in railways.

With a print bill of £42 to produce 2,000 pocket books and an advert in *Railway World* magazine costing 5s/6d, Ian quickly attracted nearly 2,000 postal orders of a shilling. From a profitable start, the Ian Allan publishing empire began... and further locospotter books emerged covering the Great Western Railway, the LMS and the LNER Thousands of his ABC books were being purchased. It seemed every lad in the land owned an Ian Allan Train book even though at ten bob each in the mid-1950s they took some saving up for.

In the 1940s and 1950s, trainspotters weren't considered anoraks, although many seemed to wear very identifiable outfits and were never without a Box Brownie camera and a top pocket full of pens!

When spotters laid pennies on the tracks of the West Coast mainline at Tamworth in 1944 so that passing trains would flatten them and subsequent nationwide publicity that 'collecting train numbers was a rage sweeping the country', it led to the formation of the Ian Allan Locospotters' Club to keep them in order. Members had to sign a pledge of good behaviour on railway property. There were branches the length and breadth of the country and many of the 260,000 members would enjoy going on Ian Allan steam specials to collect more numbers of wonderful engines.

Trainspotting was - and still is - an innocent pursuit yet the disappearance of steam from the national network led to an inevitable decline in interest. For the cost of a 1d platform ticket, the sight and sound of Stanier Pacifics, Halls, Castles and Britannia's was sheer bliss - the diesels were never quite the same.

The Soho Pool

Lawson Stevens, USA

My brother and I would sit on the low brick wall at the end of Park Grove, waiting for the goods train that would bring the Soho Pool back to life. To the left of us, below the embankment, the single track curved gradually under the Factory Road Bridge, then disappeared from view as it made its way to the London Midland and Scottish Railway's main line. To the right, the single track multiplied into the marshalling yard that ran parallel to Park Road, and terminated near the tram depot at Hockley Brook.

The Soho Pool was a busy place. It was here that the goods wagons were loaded, sorted out, and shunted into the many sidings to make up goods trains for onward movement from the city of Birmingham to other destinations throughout Britain.

The sorting out and shunting went on day and night, every day of the year, it brought a noisy, dirty, smoky and sulphurous stability to the lives of the people who lived right next to it. For this was 1940s England, long before the environmentalists succeeded in saving us from the rich, sensual experiences that characterised our everyday lives.

From the wall, we could watch it all: for that was the point where the ancient 0-6-0 locomotive would rest in a simmering, steaming, smoking state of restlessness, waiting for the signal from the switchman to dispatch more wagons into the yard. And when it came, it exploded into action, belching smoke in tumultuous staccato bursts, as it propelled the wagons forward, beyond the points that selected the track; then, screeching to a halt, sent the uncoupled wagons on their way - wagon banging on wagon in cacophonous protest as their buffers absorbed the shocks and slowed them down to a gradual stop. So it went on, incessantly: for commerce, factories, schedules, and timetables were relentless taskmasters, with little concern for the working poor who lived along the Pool. And they in their turn would never have thought of complaining, for it had always been part of their lives; and when the Pool was busy, Birmingham was busy, and people had jobs.

We used to watch from the wall regularly on our visits to my aunt and uncle, who lived next house but one to the Pool. And on one very special occasion, my uncle surprised us by prevailing upon the engine driver to give us a ride in the cab. Over the wall we went, down the embankment, and up into the fiery hot interior, to experience the thrill of a lifetime, with a bone jarring ride in and out of the marshalling yard, finding out first hand, what it was like to work in the cab of a steam locomotive. I'm still fascinated by the steam railways of my childhood years, but the noise, heat, and physical demands of maintaining balance were so exhausting that it cured me of ever wanting to be an engine driver.

At night, as we lay in bed, we would listen to the sounds of the completed goods trains leaving the Pool for their destination - the hoot from the locomotive to signal the start; then the steady, rhythmic chuffing of smoke from the chimney as a train got underway the brief reddish glow in the night sky as the locomotive passed close to the window; and the long, slow cadence of the wagon wheels as they crossed the joined tracks and switches on the way to the main line. It was that every day familiarity and comfort, which signalled the close of the day, and the promise of more to come. And it never kept us awake for long, as the silence of inactivity would have. Some thirty years later, I came back to England, to visit those places so fondly

remembered from my childhood days - to a Birmingham I no longer knew or recognised. Gone were my aunt and uncle, gone was the Grove and all the houses on it, gone was the wall, and gone was the Soho Pool, without any sign to show that it ever existed. Only the Factory Road Bridge remained as a monument to the days when steam railways were such an everyday part of people's lives. Gone, but not forgotten, for I can still conjure up the sights and sounds from my store of memories - whenever I have a mind.

Both these articles are reproduced from the November 2006 issue of Best of Brit 11rh, a monthly magazine available from newsagents and on subscription. Please visit www.bestofbritishmag.co.uk or call 01778 342814 for further information.