

# **TRANS PENNINE**

## **The Magazine of the Pennine Railway Society**



**No.155 - Spring 2011**

## **Photos**

### **Front Cover**

The photo, taken by Chris Theaker, came 2nd in the Pennine Slide Competition held on 3rd November 2010. It shows Pacer 142001 at Dawlish Warren on an Exmouth-Paignton service in June 2010.

If you wish to see your photo in Trans Pennine, send it with details to the Magazine Coordinator, David Whitlam.

## **COMMITTEE BRIEFS**

### **Peter Fox**

It is with sadness that we inform you that Peter Fox passed away on 8 February. Peter (affectionately known as "The Lord") he founded Platform 5 Publishing and had been a great friend of the Pennine Railway Society from the start.

Peter was a staunch supporter of public transport and was for a time elected Councillor on Sheffield City Council where he certainly made his views known. He will be missed and we send our condolences to his family and friends.

### **Annual General Meeting**

Following the cancellation of last year's AGM, we were able to hold one this year on Sunday 9 January. From the Committee, Robin Havenhand and Tony Booth were unable to attend and offered their apologies.

### **Chairman's Report**

Robin referred to the severe weather conditions in early and late 2010 which had caused the cancellation of the 2010 AGM and a number of meetings, but the year was rounded off in style with Ken Grainger's presentation "The Master Cutler".

In terms of events, the Society had visited the Railway Museum at Doncaster Grammar School on four occasions.

Further visits could be arranged in 2011. The social evening programme in 2010 had seen a number of excellent presentations and audience figures were good. A full programme for 2011 had been arranged. Meetings would continue to be held at "The Salutation" (unless unavailable in which case we would meet at "The Railway").

### **Membership Report**

Tony reported membership figures of around the 80 mark.

New members were joining, often through their attendance at social nights.

### **Web Report**

The Pennine's website was maintained by Tony Booth and regularly updated. Members were recommended to use this for latest news, including any changes to meetings (address on first page of magazine). See later in this organ for stats on the website hits in 2010.

### **Magazine Coordinator's Report**

Dave thanked contributors for their articles, details of sightings, quizzes and photos and welcomed continued contributions in 2011.

### **Treasurer's Report**

John presented the financial report for 2010 and confirmed that the state of the Society's finances remained healthy.

### **Re-election of the Committee**

The Committee was re-elected en bloc.

## **Open Forum**

Items discussed in Open Forum included: Review the "digital revolution" in terms of slide shows and competitions and the decreasing availability of slide film. Potential visits to Barrow Hill and SY Supertram.

## **President's Address**

Geoff closed the meeting by thanking all who attended the AGM, and those members unable to attend, for their support of the Society in 2010 and looked forward to a successful 2011.

## **Membership Fee - Renewal**

We would like to thank all those members who have renewed their subscription to the Pennine Railway Society for 2011. It is not too late to rejoin - simply send your cheque for £6.00, payable to the Pennine Railway Society, to Tony Caddick our membership Secretary, at the address shown at the front of the magazine.

For those of you who are not rejoining, this will be the final magazine you receive. In these circumstances we thank you for your past support and hope you may consider rejoining the Pennine at some future time.

## **Pennine Shield**

The result of the 2010 Pennine Shield, held over one round only due to severe weather conditions was a win for the Great Pretenders, with Dore Loco Group 2nd and Pennine Railway Society 3rd. Subject to the agreement of Dore Loco the result will stand and Great Pretenders awarded the Shield for 2010.

## **Social Evenings**

Robin has produced an excellent programme of social events for 2011. Come and join us on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Salutation Inn, South Parade, Doncaster (approx 12 minutes walk from Doncaster BR and buses available from Doncaster Interchange). We have a well furnished, private, function room. All welcome, members and non-members. Details of the programme are shown elsewhere in this organ.

Meetings start at 20.00.

## **Loophole Allows Large January Fare Increases**

Rail companies exploited a loophole allowing them to increase fares by varying amounts as long as the average rise in the cost of a regulated ticket did not exceed the government cap of 5.8%.

First Great Western season tickets between Bath and Bristol, Cardiff and Bristol and Bristol and Salisbury and Bath all went up 7.8%.

The routes - all direct - are overcrowded. However a season ticket from Liskeard to Plymouth was cut by 20%. There are no direct trains and few tickets are sold. First Capital Connect increased season ticket prices from Sandy to London by 6.7%, a route where it has no competitors.

An annual ticket from Gatwick to London went up just 1.9%, a route where there are two competitors. Regulated fares are season tickets, long distance off-peak and short distance "anytime" journeys of less than 50 miles around big cities.

## **End of Wrexham - Marylebone Direct Link**

The direct service from Wrexham to Marylebone was withdrawn at the end of January 2011 after just 3 years of operation. The Wrexham and Shropshire Train Company blamed falling passenger numbers in the economic downturn.

The service had run five times a day, dropped to four and was reduced to three in December. It was now run by Chiltern an offshoot of DB, the German state railway operator.

## **GWR Electrification**

The Government has agreed for electrification on the GW main line from Paddington to reach Oxford and

Newbury and a decision about going on to Bristol and South Wales is awaited.

### **Airdrie - Bathgate Opens**

The December timetable saw the introduction of services between Glasgow and Edinburgh via Airdrie and Bathgate but with fewer trains than planned due to commissioning the Class 380s intended for the Inverclyde and Ayrshire Coast routes, allowing class 344s to be cascaded to Airdrie-Bathgate. For the first time there will be direct services from Helensburgh to Edinburgh.

### **M&S Move into Rail Distribution**

Marks & Spencer are to send 25 containers per week from Daventry Rail Freight Terminal to Grangemouth.

### **More Krupps**

Eurotunnel is purchasing two more Krupps rescue locos, bringing the total to seven to haul stranded trains

### **Eurostar Expansion**

The purchase by Eurostar of a fleet of 10 Siemens Velaros should enable its routes in 2014 to include Amsterdam, Lyon and Geneva.

These trains will be bigger than the existing Eurostars as they will not need to fit with the smaller structure gauge that the original Eurostars encountered when working to Waterloo and do not need to draw current from a third rail.

### **London Crossrail to Go Ahead**

The Government has approved construction of London Crossrail to go from Maidenhead and Heathrow Airport to Shenfield and Abbey Wood. A westerly extension from Maidenhead to Reading is still being considered.

### **Sheffield Tap - Award Winner**

The Sheffield Tap bar on Platform 1 in the former refreshment room has won the Modern Railways Restoration Award. Runners up were Middlesbrough station cafe and Ormskirk station.

### **The Gates of Jerusalem**

Pennine's Religious Adviser, the Reverend Gerard Collins of the Diocese of Lincoln tells us that the portal of Shrugborough Tunnel in Staffordshire is based on the magnificent walls and gateways surrounding Jerusalem erected by Suleiman the Magnificent between 1537 and 1541. The triumphal arch is a copy of Hadrians Arch in Athens.

### **12 Cars on GN**

The December timetable changes saw the introduction of 12 car trains in the evening on First Capital Connect's Great Northern route to Royston and Cambridge.

### **c2c Franchise Extension**

National Express has been awarded an extension to its c2c franchise which will run for up to 2 years in return for commitments to provide additional train services and staffing during the 2012 Olympic Games.

### **Pendolinos from Italy**

The first of Virgin Trains' four new 11-coach Pendolinos has arrived from Italy. It is at Alstom's Liverpool Traincare Centre at Edge Hill awaiting a 6 month testing programme on the WCML.

### **Metrolink Tram Stop Closure**

Manchester Metrolink proposes to close the stop at Mosley Street in the city centre.

## **Stamp of Approval for Workhorses**

Royal Mail has issued a set of stamps celebrating the vital role played in the past by the unglamorous steam workhorses.

The first sheet of stamps featured:

- 1st Class - BR Dean Goods No.2532 on a Newbury bound local service at East Garton in 1951
- 60p - Peckett R2 "Thor" built in 1925 for Tunnel Cement Co. of Purfleet.
- 88p - L&YR No. 1100 at Liverpool Exchange in 1909 hauling the 2.10pm to Hull.
- 97p - BR WD No. 90662 "Austerity"

## **East Angling News**

Our East Anglian correspondent "Tractor" Collins reports on the return of the named business train "The East Anglian" the 07.40 Norwich - Liverpool Street. Class 90, No. 90008 will also carry the name. Also, there is now an enhanced service between Ipswich and Saxmundham and in 2012 extra trains will run between Lowestoft and Ipswich was the installation of a passing loop at Beccles.

## **Barrow Hill 2011**

The events planned for Barrow Hill Roundhouse in 2011 are:

Fri/Sat 13/14 May - Rail Ale Festival.

Sat 23 July - DPS operating Deltic 9009 on shuttle trains as a celebration of its birthday.

Sat/Sun 24/25 September - Model Rail Live

Sat 8 October - A1 Steam Locomotive Trust "Tornado" Convention.

Fri/Sat/Sun 14/15/16 October - Steam Gala

## **Rare Sight at Doncaster**

An unusual sight in Doncaster West Yard on Tuesday 15 February was Carmine/Cream liveried ScotRail EMU 320314. It is presumed the unit has come down for attention at the Wabtec Works.

## **Sheffield Railwayana Auctions**

At the Sheffield Railwayana Auction held at the Derbyshire County Cricket Club's Gateway Centre on 11 December 2010 the following locomotive nameplates all sold for £6,000 or more:

\* LOCOMOTIVE NAMEPLATE: THOMAS HARDY as carried by the BR Standard "Britannia" class 4-6-2 Pacific numbered 70034 built at Crewe and entered service at Longsight in December 1952. Soon transferred to the Eastern Region to join the stud of "Britannias" at Norwich (32A) on Great Eastern main line services, it was transferred back to the MMR in March 1963. It was withdrawn from Kingmoor in May 1967 and broken up by J McWilliam, Shettleston in October that year - £12,000

\* LNER locomotive NAMEPLATE: GAINSBOROUGH as carried by the LNER 4-6-2 Pacific as class loco No. 2597 built at Doncaster in April 1930. Renumbered 86 in October 1946 and BR 60086 in September 1948. A long-time Neville Hill allocation, it was withdrawn from there in November 1963 and cut up at Darlington the following month - £7,500

\* GWR LOCOMOTIVE NAMEPLATE: BECKFORD HALL as carried by Collett GWR Hall Class 4-6-0 No.5977 built at Swindon in September 1938. It was at first allocated to Worcester but by August 1950 could be found at Cardiff Canton. By the end of that decade it was based at Reading and was withdrawn from there in August 1963. Scrapped at Cashmore's Newport in July 1964. Together with matching CABSIDE NUMBERPLATE "5977" and SMOKEBOX NUMBERPLATE "5977" - £6,000

\* BRASS LOCOMOTIVE NAMEPLATE: DUKE OF GLOUCESTER as carried by the unique Riddles designed BR standard 8P 4-6-2 paced built at Crewe Works in 1954. Robert Riddles requested this loco be constructed to replace LMS Pacific "Princess Anne" which had been decayed in 1952 in the Harrow disaster. The new loco entered service in May 1954 to take its place alongside Stanier Pacifics working heavy express trains between Euston and Scotland and was allocated to Crewe North motive power depot. It was a frequent performer on the "Middy Scot" but day-to-day performances and those produced during

locomotive trails were mixed as were the opinions the loco crews. Withdrawal came in November 1962 and it was stored at Crewe until August 1967.

Originally scheduled by the British Transport Commission for preservation it was finally removed from the list and was instead heavily cannibalised, the outside cylinders being removed sectioned and sent to the Science Museum in London for display along with one of the nameplates. The hulk was sent to Woodham's at Barry for scrap but its journey there was not without incident as it ended up at Cashmore's in Newport in error, where it may well have been broken-up, had not the mistake been spotted and rectified.

Thanks to a dedicated band of volunteers it was rescued from Barry and despite its very poor condition, phoenix-like rose again. The rest is history. This nameplate was sold by BR in the mid-1960s as there was no perceived need to preserve two nameplates from the same loco. The nameplates currently fitted to the loco in preservation are, of course, reproductions - £29,000

\* LNER LOCOMOTIVE NAMEPLATE: BROWN JACK as carried by Gresley LNER Class as 4-6-2 built at Doncaster. It was originally numbered 2508 by the LNER becoming 43 in 1946 and then 60043 in BR days. Discounting the replacement "Grand Parade" which was constructed in 1938 it was the last production member of the Class. Always an Edinburgh loco it went new to Haymarket in February 1935 and did not move from there until June 1961 and then only down the road to St. Margaret's from where it was withdrawn in May 1964. It was cut up by the Motherwell Machinery and Scrap company at Wishaw in July 1964. "Brown Jack" was an equine superstar and probably the most popular flat-race horse ever, but began life as a hurdler. After winning the Champion Hurdle, he won the Queen Alexandria Stakes at Royal Ascot every year from 1929 to 1934 and also the Goodwood Cup, Doncaster Cup, Chester Cup and the Ebor Handicap. He was owned by Sir Harold Wernher - £8,500

## **Blackpool News**

With the proposed Easter reopening drawing ever nearer the winter modernisation work on the tramway continues apace. At the beginning of February work finally began on the street running section around the Metropole Hotel and all the old track has now been removed.

The new layout will finally have the trams completely segregated from road traffic and will bring to an end years and years of near misses on this short stretch of track. A new three track layout has been installed at Talbot Square slightly to the south of the original.

Platforms for the new trams are being constructed along the whole length of the line from Starr Gate to Fleetwood with new shelters already in place at the Cabin stop.

The imposing new depot at Starr Gate is now structurally complete with tracklaying almost finished and overhead line now being erected.

It should be ready well in time for the delivery of the first of the 16 new supertrams due in the summer.

Blackpool is the first customer for the new BOMBARDIER FLEXITY 2 tram with the first one due to be completed at the factory in Bautzen Germany by Easter.

They will be 32m long and 2.65m wide, low floor throughout was room for 74 seated/150 standing passengers/2 wheelchair spaces.

Sheffield Corporation Roberts car 513 finally left the resort on 16 February for its new home at the East Anglian Transport Museum at Carlton Colville. An initial 5 year loan has been agreed with the tram owners, the North East England Open Air Museum at Beamish.

## **Calder Valley Excursion**

**by Paul Slater**

The smart black-and-orange Adelante forming the 10.50 Kings Cross - Bradford departed from Doncaster, lightly loaded; and I was off on my first ride on Grand Central's new West Riding service. We took the Leeds line, passing 66567 on a container bin, and hurried through Bentley and Adwick. Beyond South Elmsall the train slackened speed.

Near Fitzwilliam we passed 66200 on an oil train and then a 67 running light.

Now going quite slowly, we turned off the Leeds line at Hare Park Junction and joined first the route from Pontefract and then the line from Normanton to run into Wakefield Kirkgate station, where we stopped at the outer platform.

From here my train was running on the Calder Valley main line, which as far as Horbury Junction is quadruple track.

We passed under the long viaduct carrying the Leeds line at the approach to Wakefield Westgate.

I noticed a signal box of Lancashire & Yorkshire pattern at Horbury Junction, where the line to Barnsley and Sheffield diverged and near here we passed 66596 on a mineral train. A few wagons could be seen in Healey

Mills yards, but trees were growing among the rusty tracks. Progress was slow on the triple track section through Mirfield.

Beyond the divergence of the Huddersfield line the Calder Valley main line had been for some years a freight-only route, although it is now used by some local services; it was a new line for me as far as the stop at Brighouse.

The country was becoming more hilly, the sides of the valley higher. The train turned off the main line at Greenland Junction, and slowly climbed the 1 in 50 gradient to Dryclough Junction where the connection from Sowerby Bridge came in. One of my videos shows steam trains being banked over this section in the 1960s. I alighted at Halifax, where the station consists of an island platform on the edge of the town. There is another signal box of Lancashire & Yorkshire design, and nearby are extensive industrial premises, with a tall white painted chimney making quite an attractive picture against a wooded hillside.

Halifax is served by frequent local services, and soon I was on my way in a 158 on a Leeds - Manchester working. It took the right hand turn at Dryclough Junction and after a few miles rejoined the Calder Valley main line. The train called at Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd - a station where I had never stopped before - and Hebden Bridge, where I alighted.

The station at Hebden Bridge is on the edge of the town. It looks like a station on a preserved railway, with old-fashioned signs and name boards and a traditional signal box. Once, after a writing course at nearby Lumb Bank, I had driven a car full of people to Hebden Bridge station to catch trains home.

I bought a drink at the station cafe, took some photographs then boarded a 158 on one of the hourly Blackpool - York semi-fast workings; it was in one of these trains that I had my first ride over Copy Pit Summit a few years ago.

The Calder Valley looked green and attractive in the summer sunshine. Mills and chimneys at Sowerby Bridge made a traditional industrial scene, and the old station building there has been restored as a cafe, with signs in the old North Eastern Region orange colour.

I was back at Halifax in plenty of time for the return Grand Central working, the 15.22 Bradford - Kings Cross. There were not many passengers. The train rejoined the Calder Valley main line at Greenland Junction. I enjoyed the leisurely ride eastwards, with a stop at Brighouse, the country becoming flatter as the hills were left behind.

There was a lengthy wait outside Wakefield, and then we ran into the outer platform at Kirkgate station. The return route to Doncaster was via Pontefract. We passed Streethouse, Featherstone and Pontefract Tanshelf and made a long stop at Pontefract Monkhill, where we passed another Adelante forming the 14.20 Kings Cross - Bradford. The train passed behind Knottingley station and depot and I was now on another route I had never travelled over before. The country was very flat, a contrast with the Pennine scenery earlier in my journey, and there were many level crossings. I looked out for the attractive station houses at Womersley and Norton. There was a long and severe speed restriction approaching Shaftholme Junction. After a few miles travelling along the East Coast line we were back at Doncaster.

I alighted and photographed the Adelante departing on its non-stop run to London. It had been an interesting day out.

## **Tosca's Travels (Beer and Bashing Abroad)**

### **Part 16**

Having split up with the girlfriend in September 1995 I was at a loose end as to where I should go for my leave in October. I had planned a week Norfolk but now I thought "sod that" and ordered my continental passes for a week in the Low Countries and Germany.

### **Saturday 14th October 1995**

The Blades were away at Southend so my plan was to go to the match and then catch the overnight ferry to Oostende.

DMU 153307 Sheffield - Retford

91021 Retford - Kings Cross

EMU 321326 Liverpool St - Rochford

Did two beer guide pubs in Rochford - Milestone, had Greene King Black Baron and Golden Lion had Fullers Summer Ale.

EMU 321323 Rochford - Prittlewell

The Southland ground is outside Southend in Prittlewell. There is a very good pub next to the ground called the Spread Eagle. I spent an hour in the pub and sampled Haycocks 118, Hampshire Pendragon and

Charrington Barmaids Pleasure. It was a really warm day so the beer garden became a little part of Sheffield for a while, with the usual Blades chants etc. Then went to the match, which the Blades lost 2-1 in a very inept display.

EMU 321447 Prittlewell - Southend Victoria

EMU 310064 Southend Central - Fenchurch Street

EMU 1507 Victoria – Ramsgate

### **Sunday 15th October 1995**

Having got to Oostende very early and with no train for 45 minutes, I found the cafe du Buroo open and had an early morning beer. Only Jupiler, a bland lager, but at 04.30 something too strong would have been a bad move.

SNCB EMU 834 Oostende - Gent St Pieters

SNCB 6237 Gent St Pieters - De Pinte

SNCB 6391 De Pinte - Gent St Pieters

SNCB 6213 Gent St Pieters - De Pinte

SNCB 6301 De Pinte - Gent St Pieters

SNCB 6211 Gent St Pieters - Gerrardsbergen

Having covered 5 diesel turns and not needing any I was a bit miffed. I had decided to cover the line through to Gerrardsbergen as I had not previously done it. Had a bit of time before the unit to Enghien so found a beer guide pub, the "saf Verhaege Caves" was the beer and a nice smoked cheese to accompany it.

SNCB EMU Gerrardsbergen - Enghien

SNCB 2737 Enghien - Bruxelles Midi

SNCB EMU Bruxelles Midi - Berchem

SNCB EMU Berchem - Antwerpen Central

I then checked into the Florida Hotel, before catching a tram out to Antwerp's football ground. I watched the local derby, Royal Antwerpen 1 Beveren 1.

Surreal to see the police at the stadium approaches carrying rifles! Sundays in Belgium, at that time were poor loco wise so after the match I had an evening of beer in various locations.

SNCB EMU 808 Antwerpen Central - Berchem

SNCB EMU 801 Berchem - Mechelen

Beer - Mechelen - Stillen Genieter Bar, had Martens Sezoens Quattro

SNCB EMU 841 Mechelen - Bruxelles Central

Beer - Bruxelles - Lunnette, had Lamot Ginder. Mort. Subite Bar, had Maes Pils. Image de Notre Dame Bar had St Freuillan Blonde.

SNCB 1192 Bruxelles Central - Berchem

SNCB EMU 808 Berchem - Antwerpen Central

Beer - Antwerpen - Waagstuk had Belle View Jack-op.

Bierland had De Konink Beer.

### **Monday 16th October 1995**

Having had the beers that I had yesterday there was no way it would be an early start today. So after a leisurely breakfast I came out for the 10.19 to Charleroi and was rewarded with my 2nd winner of the trip.

The plan today was to end up in the Netherlands.

SNCB 2109 Antwerpen Central - Mechelen

SNCB 2514 Mechelen - Leuven

SNCB 2514 Leuven - Mechelen

SNCB 2111 Mechelen - Berchem

SNCB 2743 Berchem - Mechelen

SNCB 2503 Mechelen - Leuven

SNCB 2149 Leuven - Liege Guillemins

SNCB 2234 Liege Guillemins - Flemalle Haute

SNCB 2204 Flemalle Haute - Liege Guillemins

SNCB EMU 408 Liege Guillemins - Maastricht

NS 1627 Maastricht - Eindhoven

NS 1314 Eindhoven - s'Hertogenbosch

I checked into the Terminus Hotel near the station before heading back out to hopefully get some winners. I had a reasonably good evening.

NS 1642 s'Hertogenbosch - Eindhoven

NS 1637 Eindhoven - s'Hertogenbosch



NS 1651 s'Hertogenbosch - Eindhoven

NS 1654 Eindhoven - s'Hertogenbosch

NS 1612 s'Hertogenbosch - Utrecht CS

NS 1613 yacht CS - s'Hertogenbosch

I then had a few beers in Den Boss, as s'Hertogenbosch is known. Did the Duvelke and had Huyghe La Guillotine as well as the bars own Wagons Blood Beer. Then back to the Terminus for Dommelsch Dominator. Is Dommelsch Dutch for Dennis, I wondered?

### **Tuesday 17th October 1995**

Tonight's plan was to do an overnight so again I didn't get up too early. I got to the station about 10.00 and got a beast on my first train of the day.

NS 1221 s'Hertogenbosch - Eindhoven

NS 1638 Eindhoven - Weert

NS 1658 Weert - Eindhoven

NS 1636 Eindhoven - s'Hertogenbosch

NS 1623 s'Hertogenbosch - Eindhoven

NS 1629 Eindhoven - Utrecht CS

NS 1620 Utrecht CS - Bunnik

NS EMU 850 Bunnik - Utrecht CS

NS 1735 Utrecht CS - Amsterdam Amstel

NS 1221 Amsterdam Amstel - Amsterdam CS

NS 1736 Amsterdam CS - Amsterdam Muiderport

NS EMU 475 Amsterdam Muiderport - Amsterdam CS

NS 1779 Amsterdam CS - Amsterdam Muiderport

NS 1718 Amsterdam Muiderport - Amsterdam CS

NS 5750 Amsterdam CS - Sloterdijk Low Level

NS 1712 Sloterdijk Low Level - Amsterdam CS

NS 1717 Amsterdam CS - Sloterdijk Low Level

NS 1768 Sloterdijk Low level - Amsterdam CS

After a successful day it was time for food and beer.

Sam at Cafe Maximilian, which as well as being in the beer guide did good food. The beer was Amsterdam Brouwhus Betanien.

Then did 3 other beer guide bars - Brakke Grond had De Kluis Verboden Vrucht; Belgie had Achouffe La Achouffe; Wildeman had Amsterdam Brouwhus Maximator. Then it was a walk back to the station for the Berlin overnight.

NS 1644 Amsterdam CS - Bad Bentheim

### **Wednesday 18th October 1995**

DB 112114 Bad Bentheim - Braunschweig Hbf

DB 112137 Braunschweig Hbf - Neubeckum

The Moscow to Bruxelles overnight wasn't supposed to stop at Neubeckum, but due to a signaling problem was stopped. In the adjacent platform was required 141451 on a local, so a leap was done.

DB 141451 Neubeckum - Dortmund Hbf

Arrived in Dortmund a bit early to find my hotel, so as my reason for staying here was to go to the Champions League game that evening I went to get my match ticket from the stadium.

DB 141272 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Westfallenhalle

DB DMU 628509 Dortmund Westfallenhalle - Dortmund Hbf

Then I checked into my hotel before some serious neddung around.

DB 143353 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Barop

DB 143030 Dortmund Barop - Dortmund Hbf

DB 143245 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld

DB 143853 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf

DB 143855 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld

DB 143039 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf

DB 143619 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld

DB 141172 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf

DB 143317 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld

DB 143615 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf

DB 143085 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld

DB 143045 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf  
DB 143603 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld  
DB 141176 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Hbf  
DB 143840 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Doestfeld  
DB 143586 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Lutgendortmund  
DB 143287 Dortmund Lutgendortmund - Dortmund Doestfeld  
DB 143619 Dortmund Doestfeld - Dortmund Mengade  
DB 141330 Dortmund Mengade - Herne  
DB 141110 Herne - Dortmund Hbf (direct)  
DB 110413 Dortmund Hbf - Kamen  
DB 103241 Kamen - Dortmund Hbf  
DB 141184 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Westfallenhalle

Then it was time for the match. The park leading to the ground was full of beer stalls and food sellers. Had a couple of IRS, a bratwurst and some spicy potato wedges.

The match was Batista Dortmund 1 Staua Bucharest 0.

On arrival back at the station a footex was waiting to go to Hamm. I bailed on as it was calling at be main station.

DB 141302 Dortmund Westfallenhalle - Dortmund Hbf

### **Thursday 19th October 1995**

Plenty of new engines today, with a plan to end up in Liege.

DB 141388 Dortmund Hbf - Dortmund Horde  
DB DMU 624647 Dortmund Horde - Schwerte  
DB 110423 Schwerte - Wuppertal Hbf  
DB 216092 Wuppertal Hbf- Wuppertal Barmen  
DB 143329 Wuppertal Barmen - Wuppertal Hbf  
DB 143336 Wuppertal Hbf - Wuppertal Vohwinkel  
DB 216034 Wuppertal Vohwinkel - Wuppertal Hbf  
DB 103210 Wuppertal Hbf - Solingen-ohlgs  
DB 141127 & DB 110137 Solingen-ohlgs - Koln Deutz  
DB 218134 Koln Deutz - Koln Trimbonstrasse  
DB 111131 Koln Trimbonstrasse - Koln Deutz  
DB 218133 Kohl Deutz- Deutz Trimbonstrasse  
DB 218139 Koln Trimbonstrasse - Koln Deutz  
DB 143601 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf  
DB 143613 Koln Hbf - Koln Deutz  
DB 143578 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf  
DB 143258 Koln Hbf - Koln Deutz  
DB 111170 Koln Deutz- Koln Hbf  
DB 143600 Koln Hbf - Koln Deutz  
DB 218248 Koln Deutz - Koln Hbf  
DB 215099 Koln Hbf - Euskirchen  
DB 215019 Euskirchen - Kuchenheim  
DB 215119 Kuchenheim - Euskirchen  
DB 215094 Euskirchen - Odendorf  
DB 215139 Odendorf- Euskirchen  
DB 215046 Euskirchen - Koln Sud DB  
DB 110159 Koln Sud - Koln West  
DB 215033 Koln West - Koln Sud  
DB 215034 Koln Sud- Kola West  
DB 110144 Koln West - Koln Hbf  
DB 111128 Koln Hbf - Aachen Hbf

SNCB 1805 Aachen Hbf - Liege Guillemins

Checked into the Hotel monopoly then went out to Angleur to have dinner in the Vaudree.

SNCB EMU 618 Liege Guillemins - Angleur

Beer - Vaudree, had a bottle of Malmedy Brune.

SNCB 5531 Angleur - Liege Guillemins.

Beer - Vaudree II, had a bottle of Vander Linden Vieux Foudre Kriek, followed by a bottle of De Smedt Napoleon.

## **Friday 20th October 1995**

Last full day as I wanted to be back for the Blades game on the Saturday.

SNCB 2221 Liege Guillemins - Namur

SNCB 1505 Namur - Liege Guillemins

SNCB 2249 Liege Guillemins - Charleroi-sud

SNCB 6221 Charleroi-sud - Berzee

SNCB 6243 Berzee - Charleroi-sud

SNCB 2722 Charleroi-sud - Nivelles

SNCB 2737 Nivelles - Charleroi-sud

SNCB 6282 Charleroi-sud - Cour-sur-Heure

Time for a beer break. The St Jean Bar near the station was the venue. Had Artois, Campbell's Scotch and Moortgat Duvel.

SNCB 6285 Cour-sur-Heure - Charleroi-sud

SNCB EMU 437 Charleroi-sud - Namur

SNCB 2248 Namur - Andenne

SNCB 2014 Andenne - Statte

SNCB 2229 Statte - Huy

40 minutes for the next train, ah well must be time for a beer!

Bar opposite the stations no name visible, but it was good for a bottle of Haacht Primus followed by a Hacht Tongerlo 8.

SNCB 2249 Huy - Liege Guillemins

SNCB 1605 Liege Guillemins - Bruxelles Nord

SNCB 2383 Banking out of Liege Guillemins

SNCB 2116 Bruxelles Nord - Bruxelles Central

SNCB EMU 373 Bruxelles Central - Bruxelles Nord

SNCB 2021 Bruxelles Nord - Bruxelles Central

SNCB 1806 Bruxelles Central - Oostende

Did the overnight ferry back to Ramsgate

## **Saturday 21st October 1995**

EMU 1561 Ramsgate – Victoria

91025 Kings Cross - Doncaster

It had been a good week with 92 new locos for haulage, two new footy grounds seen matches at and loads of new bars and beers.

Soon 1996 came along and bashing took a back seat as I met a new girlfriend, this time it was serious - I married her in 1997.

## **Pennine Observer Notes**

### **Eastern Region**

Recent sightings at Doncaster have been:

Dec 15 66056 track-cleaning

66081, 66557, 66711 Coal

66170 Minerals

66176 p.w. train

66505 Containers

Dec 16 Coal 66040, 66402, 66511, 66522, 66539, 66716, 66717

Intermodal 66147, 66172, 66708

Light engines 60010, 66037, 67026

Rails 66043

Gypsum 66157

Stand by 67026 67003 assisting a class 91

Freightliners 66538, 66591

Stone 66158 66020

60007 Sir Nigel Gresley/47804 Kings Cross - York excursion

Jan 6 67003 thunderbird

66175, 66716, 66723, 66525 Coal

66568, 66576 Freightliners  
66001, 66132, 66719 Intermodal  
66170 Sand  
66614 Limestone  
66015 Light engine  
Jan 27 67024 Thunderbird  
66005, 66161, 66707 Intermodal  
66615 Limestone 66001 Light engine  
66018 Rails  
66207 Engineers  
66084 Sand  
66133, 66405, 66510, 66519, 66595, 66714, 66717 Coal  
Feb 3 97025 Thunderbird  
66001 66084, 66722 Intermodal  
66201 Rails  
66731 Gypsum  
66575, 66567 Freightliners  
66553 Light engine  
66207 Sand 66057, 66136, 66232, 66560, 66585, 66551, 66605, 66705, 66714, 66715, 66717, 66951 Coal  
Feb 10 67020 Thunderbird  
66114, 66197, 66732 Intermodal  
66711 Gypsum  
66183, 66185, 66213, 66548, 66552, 66556, 66953, 66607, 66714, 66716, 66722, 66731 Coal  
66102 Engineers  
66230 Stone  
66516, 66593 Freightliners  
66055, 66153, 66501 Light engines  
Feb 17 66843 Light engine  
67016 Thunderbird  
66164, 66165, 66722 Intermodal  
66180 Rails  
66715 Gypsum  
66075, 66160, 66520, 66549, 66952, 66703, 66704, 66707, 66713 Coal  
66078 MEAs  
66541, 66572 Freightliners  
66230 Stone

Recent sightings on the Gainsborough - Barnetby line have been:

Dec 13 66716 on coal train  
Dec 17 66717 on coal train  
Dec 18 66711 light engine  
Dec 29 66715 and 66725 on coal train  
Dec 30 66027 on coal train 66131 on oil train  
Dec 31 66027 and 66725 on coal trains  
Jan 7 66008 on oil train  
Jan 8 66213 on coal train  
Jan 9 66004 and 66065 on coal trains  
Jan 12 66004, 66714 and 66732 on coal trains  
Jan 14 66017 and 66710 on coal trains 66080 on oil train  
Jan 16 66027 on coal train  
Jan 17 66719 on coal train  
Jan 18 66122 on coal train  
Jan 19 66711 on coal train  
Jan 20 66091 on coal train 66151 on oil train  
Jan 21 66091 on coal train 66122 on oil train  
Jan 23 66093 on goods train 66133 and 66160 on coal trains  
Jan 24 66137 and 66716 on coal trains  
Jan 25 66714, 66715 and 66717 on coal train  
Jan 26 66120, 66715, 66716 and 66717 on coal trains

Jan 27 66023 on oil trains 66081, 66120, 66714 and 66716 on coal trains.  
Jan 28 66003 on oil train 66019, 66091, 66714 and 66715 on coal trains  
Jan 30 66044 on goods train 66148 on ballast train  
Jan 31 66019 and 66057 on coal train  
Feb 1 66401 and 66717 on coal trains  
Feb 2 66019, 66705 and 66717 on coal train

Other recent sightings have been:

Dec 15 47804 on special and 66592 on container train at Retford  
Jan 5 66505 on container train at Retford and 66056 and 66213 in yards at Worksop  
Jan 13 66015 on mineral train and 66034 on coal train at Retford 66017 and 66136 on coal train and 66027 in yards at Worksop and 66124 on stone train at Sheffield  
Jan 19 66095 on mineral train and 66534 on container train at Retford  
Feb 3 66207 on mineral trains 66537 on container train, 66701 on coal train and 66238 light engine at Retford and 66232 on coal train at Meadowhall  
Feb 17 66545, 66548 66090 66716 66160 66952 66113 66168 66041 Coal, 09201 with wagons for repair and 66719 Empty biomass at Knottingley

## **Midland Region**

On 29 Jan, voyager 221137 on the 06.37 Nottingham to Southampton failed near Derby and the train was terminated at Burton about 1 hour late.

In an interesting development that took most enthusiasts by surprise Virgin Trains began hiring in a FREIGHTLINER Class 90 over the Christmas period to work WB64, the "Pretendolino" rake of Mk3s, and usually worked by a DBS example. The stock is normally only on the Fridays only diagram but due to a backlog of cold weather related maintenance problems on the Pendolino fleet it has been out most days on a regular Euston - Birmingham New Street working.

For the first couple of weeks "Powerhaul" liveried 90045 was employed and since then 90047 and 90041 have had a turn with 90044 taking over on Sunday 13 February.

The Monday to Friday diagram

1G04 07.03 Euston/B'ham NS

1B29 08.50 B'ham NS/Euston

1G15 10.43 Euston/B'ham NS

1B44 12.30 B'ham NS/Euston

1G27 14.43 Euston/B'ham NS

1B68 16.30 B'ham NS/Euston

1K39 18.43 Euston/Crewe (via Birm NS), then ECS to Wembley.

## **Railtours and Charter Trains**

Locos seen on railtours and charters have been:

Jan 29 (Rother-Don Rambler) 66070, 31601, 31190, 60099 and 66127

Feb 19 (Cumbrian Crusader IV) 20309, 37409, 57004, 57601, 66417, 66418 and 37667

## **Preserved Railways**

Locos used at the Wensleydale Railway "End of Season Diesel Day" on 3 January were 47715, 20020 and 20166.

Locos working at the East Lancashire Steam Gala on 22nd January were 71000, 45337, 73129 44871 and 46443.

Locos used at the Great Central Railway Winter Steam Gala on 29 January were 1450, 3717 "City of Truro", 3850, 4953 "Pitchford Hall", 5526, 30777 "Sir Lamiel", 45305 and 994 "The Great Marquess".

Locos working at the Barrow Hill Diesel Day on 5th February were 20132, 20121, 20096, 20107 and 09012.

## **Pennine Quiz No. 143**

**Compiled by Roger Griffith**  
**Supplied by Tony Booth**

## **North British Sheds**

### **Find the shed from the clue**

- 1 In Fife, a rent hurts!
- 2 Bovine hideaways here
- 3 Deer hideaway here
- 4 At this stabling point I've hit NER king!
- 5 Sounds like Captain James T., was in the cash Register with the Scottish water holder!
- 6 Did Sir Harry come from this Borders town?
- 7 Scottish shellfish town!
- 8 Use this place to party
- 9 It stood by the Old Course
- 10 A very pale measure at Victoria Park
- 11 At this junction, Gail lashes out!
- 12 Find the entice for a GWR 4-6-0
- 13 Left aside in Glasgow
- 14 Sounds like it commonly sleeps in Coatbridge!
- 15 Modus three, where it still stands
- 16 Neddy, I treed a bug!
- 17 Nevertheless, the boxer, Mr. Lewis did not come from here
- 18 No.6232 was the local "Lady" hereabouts
- 19 Hometown at the end of the line for short Jedediah!
- 20 You could cruise past this depot on the Border City waterway
- 21 Joint CR/NBR deals mixed up!
- 22 Could you get a head kilt here?
- 23 Sound, no middle and mixed-up!
- 24 You can get here via Mingle
- 25 Obey flare for direction from Strathendrick

## **Pennine Quiz No. 142**

### **The Answers**

- 1 Penzance
- 2 Bodmin Parkway
- 3 Dawlish Warren
- 4 Exeter St Davids
- 5 Yeovil Junction
- 6 Salisbury
- 7 Basingstoke
- 8 Reading West
- 9 Didcot Parkway
- 10 Leamington Spa
- 11 Birmingham New Street
- 12 Wolverhampton
- 13 Sandbach
- 14 Manchester Piccadilly
- 15 Salford Crescent
- 16 Horwich Parkway
- 17 Oxenholme Lake District
- 18 Penrith North Lakes
- 19 Carlisle
- 20 Newcastle
- 21 Berwick upon Tweed
- 22 Prestonpans
- 23 Edinburgh
- 24 Inverkeithing
- 25 Burntisland
- 26 Blair Atholl
- 27 Carrbridge

- 28 Inverness
- 29 Achnashellach
- 30 Kyle of Lochalsh

## **Pennine Quiz No. 142**

The Winner

1st Paul Slater

2nd Ken King

3<sup>rd</sup> Ian Shenton

6 all correct entries received so winners drawn at a Pennine meeting

## **Penning Meetings 2011**

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

<b>Wednesday 16th March 2011</b>	Tony Caddick - 'Tony 's Travels '
<b>Wednesday 6th April 2011</b>	Ken Horan - 'Those Black and White Days'
<b>Wednesday 20th April 2011</b>	Robert Pritchard
<b>Wednesday 4th May 2011</b>	THE ANDY DALBY MEMORIAL SLIDE COMPETITION
<b>Wednesday 18th May 2011</b>	Roger Butcher
<b>Wednesday 1st June 2011</b>	Trefor Evans
<b>Wednesday 15th June 2011</b>	Martin Fisher

## **Website Stats**

The following table shows the number of hits on the Pennine website during 2010.

1. United Kingdom	1,974	92.0 %
2. United States	38	1.8 %
3. Australia	22	1.0%
4. Germany	15	0.7 %
5. Ireland	11	0.5 %
6. Netherlands, The	11	0.5 %
7. Canada	10	0.5 %
8. New Zealand	8	0.4 %
9. France	8	0.4 %
10. Italy	6	0.3 %
11. Czech Republic	4	0.2 %
12. Japan	3	0.1 %
13. Belgium	3	0.1 %
14. Hungary	3	0.1 %
15. Spain	3	0.1 %
16. Russia	2	0.1 %
17. Finland	2	0.1 %
18. Greece	2	0.1 %
19. UAE	1	0.0 %
20 . Sweden	1	0.0 %
21. Norway	1	0.0 %
22. China	1	0.0 %
23. Ghana	1	0.0 %
24. Portugal	1	0.0 %

25. Malaysia	1	0.0 %
The rest	14	0.7 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,146</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Acknowledgements

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## Next Issue

The Summer 2011 Issue of the Pennine is due for publication on 15th June would contributors please let the coordinator have their information by no later than Wednesday 181 May - **THANK YOU**. Remember you can entail your contributions to david@whitlam145.freeserve.co.uk.

## Tunnel vision of the men who always worked in the dark

### Keeping the county's railway tunnels open for business was a dirty and dangerous job, as Roger Redfern recalls.

With the development of the railways across Britain after the first quarter of the 19th century came a sort of entrepreneurial mania. Railway companies constructed networks across the land in the hope of financial reward, no matter how flimsy the evidence for demand.

This meant driving routes through all types of terrains often at huge expense - none more so than through upland areas where construction costs involving viaducts, cuttings, embankments and tunnels were phenomenal.

Here in the North Midlands, some of the country's longest tunnels were driven through the Peak District and adjacent foothills. Once up and running, the tunnels required consistent maintenance to both the structure and the tracks and this led to the development of a new breed of specialist underground workers. The railway companies used different gangs of men to care for their tunnels, teams of gangers whose entire working life was spent in the dank dark polluted environment far from the light of day.

Rowland Hill reminded me of a Viking warrior was his tall broad frame and walrus moustache. I knew him in old age, when he came to prune our roses and fruit trees; at that time he was what we'd now call a tree surgeon for he liked nothing better than "a spot o' swarmin" This consisted of climbing trees to attach a rope high up before it was cut down. He was as active in his nineties as he'd been in his seventies and I can well remember Rowland pushing barrow loaded was several hundredweight of logs up the 1 in 5 gradient near his Dronfield home when he was in his late eighties.

Rowland Hill via was a Lincolnshire man, born near Louth in 1874 and he came to north Derbyshire to work for the Midland Railway Company. He worked in all North Derbyshire's longest railway tunnels - Cowburn, Topley, Bradway and Clay Cross - as gang foreman.

The high ridge at Bradway, between Chesterfield and Sheffield had deterred George Stephenson when he was planning the North Midland railway route north of Derby and into Yorkshire. In the end he built it from Chesterfield, via the Rother Valley, to Rotherham and so bypassed Sheffield It opened in 1840 but for the next quarter of a century, influential business interests in the Sheffield area insisted on a better railway link for their growing industrial centre - it only had a four-mile branch line from Rotherham!

Long after Stephenson had departed the scene, a direct route was built northwards from Chesterfield through the new Bradway Tunnel and so down the Sheaf valley to the new Midland Station in Sheffield. It opened to FMC in February, 1870.

Rowland Hill remembered his time in north Derbyshire's longest tunnels but particularly his many years in Bradway Tunnel up until his retirement in 1939.

"In wintertime I used to walk down't middle, between t'tracks, with a long 'ickling pole held up t'roof and fastened in a belt round mi waist to take some o' weight - that were to knock off ice and some o'them icicles used to rattle down and clout yer on t'ead !" A mate held a paraffin lamp up towards the roof so that Rowland could see the icicles which had to be dislodged before train could pass through. "Yer 'ands very near dropped of wi' cold in them days" he explained. "By gum! It were cold for that job."

Cowburn Tunnel, carrying the Sheffield - Manchester line from the Vale of Edale westwards towards Chinley and New Mills, suffered this same sort of problem in winter - long icicles hanging down from the eastern portal which, when they reached a certain length had to be knocked off. These days, though that long tickling pole carried by a ganger has been replaced by easier, mechanical means.



Joe Wildgoose worked with Rowland Hill in Bradway Tunnel and he once reminded me that other hazards were smoke and darkness, particularly before the advent of diesel traction. The gang he worked with was responsible for that length of the main line between the Drone Aqueduct through the one mile and 267 yards of the tunnel and on through a deep cutting as far as Dore & Totley station. He was nearly 40 years in that tunnel and the hard work in such adverse conditions didn't seem to adversely affect him because he lived well past 100, only dying a couple of years since.

"Our main problem was always smoke, thick black stuff" Joe remembers. "It was so bad at times when a train had passed through you couldn't see the flame in your lamp paraffin lamp just beside your feet. There was only a couple of feet between the rails and the side of the tunnel so you had to find a recess (manhole) if you weren't going to risk having your nose-end knocked off.

This problem of orientation is something a layman wouldn't think of. In the blackness, keeping one's balance was difficult and all work had to stop, of course, whenever trains roared past and there followed that awful, swirling, choking smoke. "In bright, frosty weather the smoke cleared quite quickly (there are eight smoke shafts along the length of Bradway Tunnel) but in hot muggy weather it never really moved away and conditions would be bad right through a shift", Joe continued. When a train was approaching, the look-out - called the horn blower because he blew a long blast on his horn - would warn the gang and everyone retired to a line-side manhole in the tunnel wall. There was the ever-present danger that a ganger, waiting in the choking blackness for the smoke to clear, would drift off to sleep and fall over.

"We used to carry a stick", Joe explained, "and trail this along the side of the rail so we knew where we were". Even then it was difficult to tell which rail your stick was touching and several deaths resulted from gangers not being where they thought they were and being knocked down by an oncoming train. "I learned my lesson soon after starting work in Bradway Tunnel" Joe recalled. "As we waited for the smoke to clear, I began to nod off. Luckily a ganger close beside me saw this in the glimmer of our lamp and grabbed me. I came too with a jolt and never did that trick again". Later that day they were having the midday break in the line-side shed just outside the south portal and Joe began to doze. The thunder of an approaching train shocked him to full wakefulness - a powerful memory of the tunnel incident a couple of hours earlier!

Water was the other enemy. When Bradway Tunnel was being constructed in the 1860s 16,000 gallons an hour flowed from the workings. As soon as a small "pioneer tunnel" had been opened, this water caused the builders little trouble as it drained away and was of such purity that it was piped to Sheffield and formed "an unfailing supply for all station purposes". For later maintenance gangs, though water was a problem. The area near the south portal was especially wet as were the ventilation shafts at the northern end. Gangers were issued with waterproof coats but they often finished an eight-hour shift drenched to the skin.

Teams usually numbered six - two men walked the length of the tunnel every day to check the security of the wooden keys in their chairs that kept the rails in place. "We carried a supply of new keys in a shoulder bag" Joe explains "and struck loose keys back into place with our long-handled hammer. Sometimes we needed four or six new keys every day, on a bad day perhaps thirty." The rest of the gang spent the shift lifting the track where it had sunk into the ballast and doing small repairs. The roof clearance in Bradway Tunnel was always very small. It varied between four and six inches for steam locomotives. At one time, Joe's gang got a new foreman called Jim Ashley. "Jim always thought he knew best", Joe recounted "and though we warned him he insisted on lifting the track to get it level. Locos passing thereafter caught their funnels - there weren't half some sparks - and of course, we had to lower the track again."

Gangs were never allowed to move damaged rails when the line was open for traffic. Only when single line operating was in force, or when both lines were closed (as on some Sundays) was a team allowed to replace worn or damaged rails. Major replacement jobs often involved other teams of gangers being brought in from other sectors of the system to help get the work done in a specified time. In his early days in the tunnel, someone had to run through the bore to the signal box near Dore & Totley station if a broken rail was found, to stop trains becoming derailed. Later on, Joe remembered that two telephones were installed 500 yards inside each port so that emergencies could be phoned to the same signal box. He never experienced a derailment in the tunnel because "maintenance was first class".

For all the hard work and danger, Joe Wildgoose and his workmates were paid just half a crown (12.5p) a week above the basic rate. Wages were two pounds a week before World War Two and by working eight hours on, eight hours off throughout an entire week when there was a major job to be done in the done, he earned five pounds a week

In his youth Joe had known the hardship of unemployment, of having to walk behind a coal delivery cart with a shovel over his shoulder, touting for casual work by moving dumped coal into people's sheds and cellars for two shillings (10p)

When I was a child, I remember a coal train backing onto the down siding south of Wreakes Lane Bridge (to let an express through) and running of the end of the track and into the River Drone. The guard's van and two or three wagons went into the river and we watched the proceedings with great interest It certainly

enlivened our train spotting for a few days! A few years ago, Joe explained to me that the coupling between locomotive and full coal train broke as it started to reverse onto the siding. The wagons gathered speed and the guard's van brake wouldn't hold it, so the guard jumped off at the last moment. The train crashed through the buffers and down a steep bank into the river. After the crane had lifted the derailed vehicles back to the line, Joe and his gang had to shovel and wheelbarrow all the spilt coal out of the river and along the banks up to the trucks again - "ever" last lump!"

I can still hear the gangers now, coming and going up and down High Street - 5.45 on a bleak winter morning, their clogs ringing on the pavement and red sparks showing their passing. Long gone - but not forgotten.

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## **Back on Track**

### **Step on board Nick Larkin to celebrate 150 years of cheap and cheerful tram travel**

No wonder traditional trams were loved so much. They clattered, whined and whirred and though the streets of towns and cities across the country for more than half a century, daily and without fail. Even today, older city dwellers recall the relief at emerging from air raid shelters and hearing trams in action - at least some aspect of civilisation had survived.

People grew up with tramcars as much a part of their landscape as the town hall. Often, trams would be the only way to escape and grab some fresh air on a Sunday afternoon, or visit Aunt Matilda for tea and scones. You'd go by tram to school, work, the station or a football match. Trams were brilliant for transporting large crowds of people cheaply - some British systems had among the lowest fares on earth. As a callow youth you might have put farthings on the track to be flattened, or remember a particularly painful tumble when your bicycle wheel met the tram line!

Not only were trams part of the scenery but they actually influenced it, not just because of all the wiring and track they needed but because tram lines in the suburbs often encouraged building development. By day, their rich liveries added much appreciated touches of colour as they gently swayed like tall ships through streets of soot and smoke-blackened damp buildings. There were deep maroons, greens and blues, normally accompanied by dashes of cream and probably some gold lining to finish off. Plus a few adverts for Rinso, Typhoo Tea, Nixey's refined black lead or the local drapers.

Imagine being transferred back to the inter-war heyday of these wonderful vehicles. You're waiting in the rain for your tram at night, acrid smoke from a thousand chimneys nudging the back of your throat, water dripping from your hat and the cold finally finding its way through your raincoat.

After what seems like an eternity but is probably only a couple of minutes you might hear the tram before you see it. But then like a submarine rising from the depths you see the distinctive rounded front appearing through the swirling fog. Ghostly-looking figures can be seen through windows misted up inside, looking snug in the bright cream glow from exposed light bulbs, which accompanied by a large spotlight make the shiny tram tracks glow bright like two huge illuminated drinking straws.

The tramcar pulls up with a manic squeal and hiss of brakes. You clamber up the steps into the "lower saloon" glance to your left and notice the tram driver sitting in his trenchcoat and peaked cap, his hand on an enormous lever. He could have been in the job for forty years and be giving silent thanks for the fact that he is now in a driving cab with windows - not exposed to the elements.

A bell sounds, there's a loud hiss as the brakes are released and a symphony of musical whines as the tram picks up speed. There are acres of brightly polished dark wood from floor to ceiling, and you're sitting on a surprisingly comfortable moquette-covered seat though, definitely made for people who were smaller in the days when they didn't eat so much.

The impression is of being in the snug of a friendly pub or even a church especially if you negotiate the narrow stairwell (after checking this is a double-decker tram of course). You open what looks like the front door of a very nice house, complete with bevelled glass, and head on to the upper deck, noticing what look like curved pews at each end.

A uniformed conductor comes round fairly quickly, issues you with the correct coloured ticket from a long wooden rack he's carrying and hands it to you in exchange for tuppence.

Now you are enjoying your journey, although the gentle rocking of the tramcar, the rain streaming down the windows outside, condensation doing the same inside and the stench of Woodbine cigarette smoke make you wish the tramway operator issued oxygen masks.

If you've had enough of trying to make out the darkened streets outside you can enjoy reading lots of notices telling you the rules of travel, and others made from paper advising of service changes. Some may even be telling you that the end of the tram is nigh or at least that individual routes are closing.

## **Beginning, end and the renaissance**

Although rail systems were well established, what is credited to be Britain's first street tramway didn't arrive until 1860, thanks to a flamboyant, slightly mad and appropriately named American called John Francis Train.

Born in Boston in 1829, 21-year-old Train moved to Liverpool to manage this arm of his family's shipping business. After a spell in Austria he returned and persuaded the authorities in Birkenhead that an American style horse-drawn tramway would be an asset to the town. He set up the Birkenhead Street Railway Company to operate the initial mile-and-a-half route.

Train had always set his sights on London, but three experimental systems he opened there closed were closed within months.

A horse tram could carry up to fifty people, twice as many as a Neddy-powered bus, meaning systems were opening in many other places. Blackpool introduced electric trams in 1885, and this method of power eventually replaced the horse - though some operators dallied with steam trams and cable systems.

More than 350 tram systems would eventually operate in Britain, many passing to, or being set up by, local authorities. By 1910, the London County Council was Britain's largest tramway operator, with more than 120 miles of routes covered by electric tramcars.

Trams blossomed but by the mid-1930s, their fate was sealed. Motorbuses had become a far more feasible alternative, needing none of the expensive infrastructure demanded by trams. Some operators turned to the trolley buses, which required overhead wiring but didn't require track and was a much more flexible.

Wartime saw a temporary reprieve for some systems. Not least because trams ran on cheap to produce local electricity rather than imported oil, they fulfilled their traditional role as crowd shifters admirably and few new buses were being delivered. It would be fair to say that there was a general feeling that trams had no place in the post-war era. Tramcars, track and wiring were utterly worn out, not helped by lack of maintenance during the years of conflict. Replacement would have cost a fortune and there was little money around in those austere times.

Nationalisation of the electricity industry meant cheap power generated by local authorities was no more. The undeniable inflexibility of trams, especially when people had to cross into the middle of the road to catch them, was another factor which meant that one by one, tram systems disappeared. Manchester ran its last in 1949, London in 1952, Liverpool's legendary 'Green Goddesses' went in 1957, Sheffield said goodbye in 1960 and Glasgow's final 'caurs' - as the city's much-loved trams were generally known - disappeared in 1962. Vast crowds turned out to say goodbye to trams on ceremonial final journeys, with hundreds of thousands of people witnessing the London finale.

Only one town decided to keep its trams - Blackpool - where even today streamlined 1934 "Balloon" double-deckers are still running alongside more modern and converted cars.

Unbelievably, Blackpool is no longer the only place you'll see trams. They have returned to several cities, beginning in Manchester in 1992, Sheffield and South London, with the Croydon Tramlink in 2000.

Nottingham and the West Midlands also now have tram services.

Modern sleek and efficient the newcomers may be, and they are certainly very welcome, but surely they'll never be as loved as the clanking, stately, polished wood-laden old boats of yesteryear.

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