



Newsletter

Issue 65: August 2018 Editor: Allan Trotter
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Editorial.

Progress? at Saltash.

Another year has passed and we returned once again to Paignton by Ava Travel coach. On the 20th of July, one of the excursions included within the holiday was a guided tour of Plymouth and even better, a stop off to view both the rail and road River Tamar Bridges at Saltash.

However, even after a year, not a lot of progress seems to have been made with the visitor centre. Well seeing this is a council run project. If it had been a McDonald's restaurant, it would have been built and be fully operationally within a week!

Nevertheless a worthwhile return visit especially as both bridges may be viewed without the hindrance of dense jungle. Compare the current images with those of last year in SMRS Newsletter 53, August 2017.



Events Diary.

17th Aug 2018 Society visit to Windmill Farm Railway.
15th Sep 2018 Southport & Liverpool Railway, 170th anniversary and tour.

More details of the above events to follow.

Chairman's Report.

I must say that the weather over the last couple of months has not really been conducive to carry out any work on my 2mm fine scale layout. I can at least do modelling in the relative comfort of the kitchen/dining room rather than in a loft where the temperature may be high enough to solder without using a soldering iron. I have managed to construct one turnout but still need to gap the sleepers and add an operating mechanism - only another four to go before I can start laying the track.

For those of you who have visited the clubrooms recently, you will notice that there has been a fairly substantial tidying up. Most of the rooms have had a decent clean out although some 'junk' still needs to be removed or relocated. *Monsal Dale* has been re-erected downstairs and is available for anyone who wishes to 'play trains'. *Clairmont Old Quay* is now erected in the north upstairs room and operational, although Allan and I expect to carry out a small amount of remedial work in August. We also hope to erect *Shell Cove* in the same room but this is contingent on moving some of the aforementioned 'junk'. Frank has made superb progress in clearing the garden and a start has been made on cutting up the old barriers. The toilet now has a sink with operating tap (only cold water unfortunately) and Ian G. has cleaned it (cobwebs, grass, leaves etc). So as you can see we are slowly getting back to a more habitable building.

In the middle of July we took *Clairmont* and the publicity stand to the Ainsdale Show. Our allocated spot was in the refreshment tent, which was perhaps not the best position - viewing customers were a little thin on the ground. It might have been better if the weather had been rainy or at least cloudy. I would like to thank John, Derek, Frank and David for giving up their time to man the stand when they could have been at home sunbathing.

As you know our clubroom celebrated its 170th birthday on 24th July and this was to have been marked by an event organised on the previous Saturday (a trip on the train to Waterloo and back, a bus tour of Southport and finally some refreshments at the clubroom). Sadly this had to be cancelled at the last moment, but we do hope to put it on later in the summer or early autumn.

Well I think that is all I have to say for now. When I started to write these notes there was a serious case of "writer's block" and I did wonder what I was going to say, but thankfully a few thoughts came to mind. **Ian Shulver.**

Secretary's Report.

Please accept my apologies for missing the deadline for July's newsletter but we were in the Norwegian Sea and I had no internet signal. The main issue which I would have mentioned was the proximity of our celebration of the 170th anniversary of our clubroom and the adjacent Liverpool Crosby and Southport Railway. However as members will be aware, we had to actually defer our celebration just the day before as unfortunately, although we had been able to secure a vintage bus for the afternoon, we couldn't get hold of a qualified PCV driver, despite your visits team canvassing as far afield as Crewe and Carlisle.

However every cloud has a silver lining and this means that we have a bit longer to arrange our celebrations and the tour will now take place instead on September 15th. This will enable us to prepare rather better and some of the members who were unable to attend due to holiday and other commitments (including the chairman) should now be able to participate. The general principle will be the same, consisting of a round trip from Southport to Waterloo and back (the original route of the LCS) followed by a tour of Southport by open-top bus (weather permitting) and then a cold collation and glass of bubbly at our newly renovated and tidied clubrooms. We are hoping to arrange our tour to cover the oldest bits of the town and be accompanied by a commentary about what Southport was like in 1848. If you can, attend in your club sweater or Victorian dress if you have it, so we get some nice photographs for publicity purposes.

I happily can report that the four mini-teams who are organising external trips, talks, film nights and practical demonstrations are already advanced in their planning and you should be able to read about some of their programmes elsewhere in this newsletter and future ones. For the present at least, our internal events will make use of our clubroom and its newly acquired data projector, and we intend to open up the talks to members of the public at a modest charge.

In panning these events and programmes we are aware that members have other important calls on their time from family members (including wives and grandchildren) and other outside occupations and you may not be able (or want to!) attend any or all of these events but they are being put on for your entertainment so you will be most welcome. Similarly with formal exhibitions and shows were we have been invited to attend. Whilst we very much value and appreciate members who can support these attendances in person, the committee recognise that most members have many outside interests and we are happy to work around them. As many have observed, these outside calls upon our time can actually increase after retirement from work!

It is looking as though Wednesday the 15th August is the most likely day for scattering Keith's ashes at the Tallylyn. Please let me know if you want to attend.

If you are going away for a holiday in the next month do make sure your visit a railway attraction, if only so that your other half has an excuse to drag you somewhere else in retaliation!. **Jim Ford.**

Treasurer's Report.

No report submitted.

Exhibition Coordinator's Report.

No report submitted.

Tours & Events Organiser's Report.

Our next event in the programme will be a visit to Austin Moss's Windmill Farm Railway at Burscough on 17th August commencing at 17.00. This 15" gauge railway built by Austin in 1997 is about ¾ mile long from Windmill Animal Farm station to Lakeview station. The address is Red Cat Lane, Burscough, Lancashire, L40 1UQ. There will be no steam operating particularly pertinent in view of present weather conditions, being situated among the outlying fields.

Catering will be provided in the form of tray(s) of sandwiches and light nibbles therefore I would ask for an expression of interest and for a contribution to cover costs. An early response would be appreciated. **Frank Parkinson.**

Articles by Members.

Will you still need me, will you still feed me.....

As you are probably all aware, Jim recently celebrated his 64th birthday party at Ford Towers. In his Invitation to a party in the garden where trains would be running he also referenced Lennon and McCartney with a suggestion that we wear an item of 1960's clothing or bring some other memento from the period of his formative years. Now to be honest I'd never get the flares much passed my hips even if I still had any, so instead I used some appropriate fridge magnets to form a Beatles train.



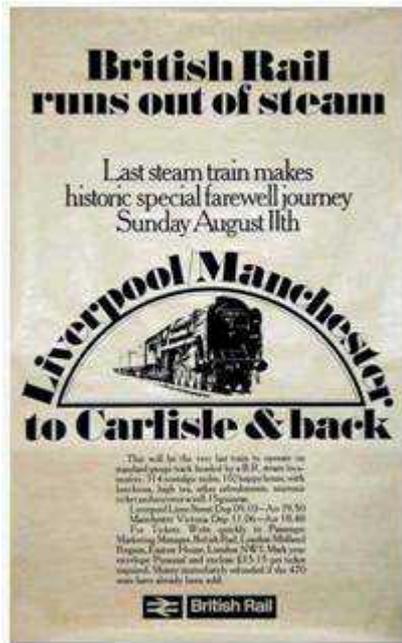


Later in the proceedings Fiona held a **When I'm Sixty - Four: Jim's Birthday Beatles Quiz.** By coincidence the final question was "Which Beatle is associated with a very famous locomotive?" I'm not telling you the answer so see if you can guess and I'm not telling you who won the quiz either, modesty forbids. **Frank Parkinson.**

After a Hard Days Night, working Eight Days a Week, it all Came

Together and the winner of the Beatles quiz was - Frank and June. Fiona presented Frank with a gold medal, actually a gold coloured, plastic, made in China medal. You actually remembered the 1960's. Well done! **Editor.**

50 years since the finale of British Railways mainline steam power.



Saturday the 11th of August 2018 marks the passing of half a century since standard gauge main line steam locomotive ceased regular service operations for British Railways. Although fifty years have passed, this historic event has certainly not been forgotten.

Sunday the 11th of August 1968 was indeed a momentous day in the history of British railway steam traction. After more than one hundred and fifty years of sterling service, steam locomotives were to be eliminated from main line services.

So what locomotives saw out the end of BR steam? Was it a BR Standard, a Bulleid Pacific, an LNER A4 or a Great Western King or Castle? Yes to the first in the form of a Britannia Pacific but no to all the rest.

In the main it was down to a trio of ex LMS Black Fives, the most work-a-day locomotives imaginable.

Back in 1968, advertisements in the press stated that a final commemorative run would take place on Sunday the 11th of August 1968. To quote from the advertising poster:

"This will be the very last train to operate on standard gauge track headed by a BR steam locomotive, 314 nostalgic miles, 10¾ happy hours with luncheon, high tea, other refreshments, souvenir ticket and souvenir scroll, all for 15 Guineas. Money will be immediately refunded if the 470 seats have already been sold".

The schedule for this final run stated it would depart from Liverpool Lime Street at 09:10, hauled by Black Five locomotive 45110 and arrive at Manchester Victoria at 10:36. A change of motive power then would take place to Britannia Class locomotive 70013 Oliver Cromwell. Departure from Manchester Victoria was at 11:06, via Blackburn and the Settle and Carlisle Railway, arriving at Carlisle Citadel at 14:56. The return train was to depart at Carlisle Citadel at 15:30, hauled by two Black Five Locomotives, 44781 and 44871, arriving at Manchester Victoria at 18:48. After another change of motive power back to Black Five 45110, departure was at 19:02 and arriving back at Liverpool Lime Street at 19:50.

That was the proposed schedule anyway but this went completely astray due to a number of incidents on route. In fact this schedule could have won the 1968 Pulitzer Prize for outstanding fiction. The train's head code was 1T57 but this final excursion train became better known as the Fifteen Guinea Special due to the return ticket costing £15-15-00, (fifteen pounds and fifteen shillings), fifteen guineas or even £15.75 in metric type money that was still to come in the future. This may not seem a formidable sum today but it was quite a substantial amount of money in 1968.



The location chosen to see the train was Blackburn, Lancashire and this turned out to be quite a wise selection. On arrival at Blackburn Station, quite an audience had gathered at the southern end of the station. In those days the semaphore signals were controlled locally by a couple of signal boxes and plenty of advance warning was given of an approaching train. The signals cleared and the awaiting crowd, all with itchy shutter fingers, prepared their still and ciné cameras. However, the first train that appeared was a Brush Type 4 locomotive on a passenger train with a maroon ex LMS passenger carriage next to the locomotive. At this appearance, everyone put their cameras away. Well, not quite everyone. There was one lone exception. I wonder how many of these other people regretted their hasty decision later on.

The next train to appear was introduced well in advance by a shrill whistle and there was no doubt this was the train we were all here to see. Although Blackburn was not an advertised stop, stop it did as the locomotive was in need of a drink. Here was encountered one of the many incidents that befell this excursion. On stopping next to the water crane at the northern end of the

station the fireman climbed onto the tender and attached the water bag and then turned on the water valve. Nothing much happened, the well was dry, there was no water! Now if this situation were to happen today, the service would have been declared a complete failure and a rail replacement bus service would have had to have been arranged.

However in the 1960's, railway men and in reality most people were permitted and did use their own initiative to get the job done. In those days there were no 'elf 'n' softie zealots to obstruct events by ordering "you can't do that". Very quickly the locomotive was uncoupled from the train and with the spirited assistance of the local signalmen; the locomotive ran round the train and sourced an abundant supply of water at the other end of the station. Once the locomotive was replenished, it then took its place once again at the head of the train. Very soon it was on its way to Carlisle, albeit somewhat delayed.

Although there was a police presence on the station, there was no restriction on standing line side at the approach to the tunnel or for that matter climbing signal posts for better photographic opportunities and everyone had the good old fashioned common sense to keep well clear of the through running lines. After the train's departure, Blackburn Station returned to its normal Sunday quiet self.



Some people waited for the return working and on its late appearance quite a few people had gathered at the southern end of the station. This gathering did not seem to have been anticipated by the local constabulary as only one single constable was on duty to maintain law and order. Unfortunately for the spectators this young constable did not take too kindly to anyone stepping off the platforms resulting in that opportunities for photography were somewhat restricted. Eventually though after some pushing and shoving, the ranks of the spectators broke and most people departed the confines of the platforms for a better view of the train from the line side, once again keeping well clear of the through running lines of course and finding a much better location for photography. This ideal location near to the signal box afforded a splendid view of the train as it departed and the overall scene was much more atmospheric due to the complete absence of irrelevant self appointed security minions in hi-vis tabards spoiling the scene. The constable, realising the futility of his situation was powerless to intervene.

So it came to pass that Black Fives 44871 and 44781 departed for Manchester Victoria. On arrival the two locomotives were removed and replaced with the original locomotive 45110 for the final segment of the excursion to Liverpool Lime Street. The end had finally come for main line steam traction in Britain.

For more images from the final day of British Railways steam traction see:

http://www.eastbank.org.uk/uk_steam.htm

I wonder if anyone will, hopefully in the very near future, turn out to see the final run of a Pacer unit. I think not! **Allan Trotter.**

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