



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 59 **South of England Group** **October 2010**
Vice Presidents – Alan Pegler OBE, FRSA; Sir William McAlpine Bt., FRSE, FCIT, FRSA

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THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE NRM

STEVE DAVIES MBE, DIRECTOR NRM

On 6th September, despite the Tube strike, director of the Manchester Museum of fifteen members and guests welcomed the Science and Industry. On getting the job, new director of the NRM. Steve started in August 2008, he embarked on a programme of improvements in order to explain how his interest was sparked in railways. This started at home in Darwin, Lancashire, but at a time project involved returning the K1 – the which was just too late to get a real first Beyer-Garrett built by Beyer, appreciation of steam engines in normal Peacock & Co, back to Gorton works on work. In the 1970s he used to tramp the centenary of its building. It was round Agecroft, and visit the embryo positioned in the boiler works which is steam centre at Carnforth. Following now little used, and Steve considers it as joining the army, his career took him to ideal as a potential railway works.

many different countries, most of which But back to 2004 in Sierra Leone. This is provided an experience of steam. For a reasonably stable area in West Africa, example in Wolsztyn during 1992 he with superb beaches and, after the civil experience Polish steam before the war, a reasonably placid existence, apart tourists discovered it. Surprisingly, in the from the capital, Freetown, which is early 1990s he discovered that steam chaotic. It was a British protectorate from engines were still extant in the Berlin area 1840 to 1961, and was always a British of Germany. They were mainly used for military hub, even being used in the coach steam heating but occasionally Falklands war. Steve had done some ventured on the main-line for runs, and research before he arrived and knew there Steve managed the odd ride or two. In used to be a 350 route mile 2' 6" narrow 1996 he visited Sarajevo with NATO gauge line, the infrastructure and stock of troops and secured a ride on a tank engine which was British supplied. Although footplate, during which some disgruntled having some diesel locomotives, steam native took a dislike to his uniform and survived to the end of the system in 1975.

had a pot shot at him, but hit the cab side. His driver said it wasn't a real attempt to get him; if it had, they would have opened up with machine guns! After a spell as a military advisor in Sierra Leone (see later), he finished his army career as Chief of Staff Army Headquarters Second Division. He then applied for the post of

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During the civil war, the rebels had hadn't told them they didn't have enough destroyed much of the railway's money for fuel, and the result was they infrastructure. Prior to Steve's arrival the became adrift 25 miles off-shore. A Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway passing patrol boat, an exchange of bought one of the steam locomotives and money and a brief show of Steve's some of the carriages. One day, Steve revolver, got them back to shore!

took a trip out to where the Chinese had Coming up to date, Andrew and Steve been gifted a factory to build a new have just returned from the Californian manufacturing plant. He was welcomed Railroad Museum which has a twinning with the question "are you from the arrangement with the NRM. This may government to take away the trains?". result in the loan of one of their 4-4-0 These had been lying there since 1977. locomotives, as used on the prairies and Suitably surprised and delighted, he took which helped to created a nation. a photographic record of what was left. Although such a loan has not been agreed, Using his advisory position to the it could have a role at the NRM in government, he arranged for a visit by the showing how railways have influenced President and his cabinet to tour the site the geopolitical world. Steve has also and Steve explained the historical visited the Nuremberg museum for the significance of the remains. That night 175th anniversary for German Railways. there was a documentary on the TV about At that museum, *Der Adler* is displayed the visit and Steve's plans to establish the alongside the NRM's sectioned *Rocket* national railway museum of Sierra Leone! and *Sans Parreil*. In return for the loan of Somewhat embarrassed into action and the latter two engines, the Germans are slightly overwhelmed by what he had offering their 05007 locomotive a class-taken on, he managed to recruit a team of mate of which, for a short time, once held local workers and together they set about the world steam speed record. This could to clean up the place. At this time, the be a useful addition to a display of world government had provided no funding, so record breakers.

Steve used his own money to pay the Steve is looking forward to the challenges workers and the materials to repair the in taking over the reigns at the NRM from building. Five months into the project Andrew. Current major tasks include the Steve spoke to the British Council and, as implementation of NRM+ and the a result, an invitation went out to Andrew redevelopment of the Great Hall. Both Scott to attend the opening event with the now have the added complication of President and local dignitaries. This progressing at the time of government turned out to be nothing like Steve spending cuts. The plans currently include expected. Once the public got to hear a £21M investment in the redevelopment about the opening, they descended in of the Great Hall. This will result in a hordes to see what the white man was up stunning presentation of the story of the to. While the resulting mêlée was railways. Steve showed the plans for enjoyable, the result was that the entire NRM+ and how the displays will be place was nearly as dirty as when they arranged around the existing turntable. started. Never daunted, Steve and his This will be decked over but the staff cleaned up overnight. The grand modification will still allow stock to be opening went well, but the relaxing boat moved out, albeit only occasionally. ride with Andrew Scott, a few days later, There will be plenty of interpretive turned into a nightmare as the boat crew material to help visitors around the

breakfast). A stroll from the station across appeared, now leading the down train to the shingle took us past several houses, Dungeness, hauled by *Northern Chief*. We the roof lines of which betrayed their had the next hour to watch the operation origin as railway carriages. of the buffet car. The operator's seat (he Returning to the station, the next train cannot stand up) has everything at hand, was due to be diesel hauled, but clearly including a gas stove for boiling a kettle. wasn't, being headed by *Hercules*, (The coach even has gas heating.) The resplendent in Crimson Lake.⁽⁶⁾ What is Nene Valley may be able to demonstrate more, attached to the rear was the postal pick up on the fly, the RHDR does observation buffet car, *Gladys*.⁽⁴⁾ it with tea.⁽¹⁾ Running into Romney Sands Unfortunately, full dining service of lunch the buffet car attendant exchanged full was not available, but we made do with a and empty mugs with the platform staff as snack. If the catering is limited, the drinks he passed.

selection was good and we sampled a At New Romney *Northern Chief* came off bottle of their wine. Also on offer was a and made its way onto shed to be replaced local brew of beer, (which the editor by *Southern Maid*, in SR livery. Talking enjoyed on Phil's return!) as well as of livery, we did not travel behind another Pimms and even soft drinks. pacific, *Green Goddess*, which painted in The main operating base of the RHDR is LNER apple green could easily be New Romney and after watching the mistaken for a Doncaster engine, until the locomotive change and waving goodbye driver stands up on the footplate!

to *Gladys*, we explored the area, On our final day on the marshes, we were intending to get some food and take a driving over to Hythe for final shopping later train back to Hythe. The weather when a familiar whistle was heard as forecast had not been particularly brilliant drove over the level crossing. Quickly and many had turned to the railway as an parking, we saw *Samson*, in BR black, as alternative to the beach. As a result the it passed on an up train.⁽³⁾

buffet at New Romney had little to offer. *Phil Brown*

However, relief was at hand as *Gladys*

OUTREACH

It has been fairly quiet over the summer Exhibition at Ashlyns School months. Our sales stand's last outing was Berhampstead on 9th October, followed by to the Trains at Trinty event at the Warley Model Railway Show at the Biggleswade. This coincided with the NEC, Birmingham on 20 & 21 departure of Martin Dawes, who has been November. Why not come to one? the Methodist Minister at this church for On the trains, there have been some some 14 years. During that time he wrote problems with *Oliver Cromwell*, which the book "End of the Line" - a history of has meant that a non-NRM engine the Great Northern Railway funeral appeared at the head of a number of the service trains of the mid-19th century. tours. However, *Sir Lamiel* is still in fine Martin presented his research to the fettle and we have been accompanying Group in May 2000 (see Briefings19 & her on several journies around the region. 30). We hope that, despite Martin's Sales have been holding up well both at departure, this bi-annual show will the stand and on the trains, so our continue. The stand is next out at the Treasurer should have some good news to Tring & District Model Railway report at the AGM!

ADVANCED NOTICE - SOUTH OF ENGLAND GROUP AGM & SUMMER OUTING

The AGM, weather, underground and outing. As usual, this will take in the train strikes permitting, will be held on FNRM AGM in York, and the following Monday 10th January 2011 at our usual day we will head off to the Yorkshire place. The formal notice will be sent out Dales for a trip and tour round the with the next edition of the Briefing, Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway. As its together with a booking form for the name suggests, this terminates near the festive refreshments. We expect the cost historic ruins of Bolton Abbey Priory, so of the refreshments will be £8, although there will be the opportunity to visit that this is subject to review. Please put the site and the adjacent river. Nearby hotel date in your diary now. accommodation will be reserved for us.

Les Butler, our outings coordinator, has The date will be 18-19 June. Please put also been busy planning next year's The date in your diary and come prepared summer outing. Since this year we had at the AGM to express an interest in only a day-out (to the Nene Valley joining the trip. Railway) next year will be a weekend

MULTUM IN PARVO, OR A DAY WITH GLADYS

This year I travelled down to the Romney the smallest mainline railway in the world Marshes for a few days R&R. The and one could imagine we were leaving a campsite was approached over a level capital terminus as we passed the back crossing but for a week there was no sign gardens of the houses.

of a train whenever we crossed. From the Soon we were clear of the metropolis of site, we regularly heard the sounds of a Hythe and onto the Romney Marshes. steam train, but rarely caught sight of it. Across the level crossing of yesterday and Then, consulting the timetable, we found passing isolated farm houses scattered ourselves returning to the site with just around the flat landscape (but with the enough time to get set up for a escarpment of Lympne always in sight). photograph. At the expected time, there The first stop was Dymchurch, infamous were distant sounds, not of a steam for smuggling. We were to miss by a whistle, but of an air horn. Sure enough, week their *Dr Syn* weekend, with the as the train drew near, I had found one of local vicar taking the part of his notorious the 2 diesel diagrams on the Romney, predecessor.

Hythe and Dymchurch Light Railway⁽²⁾. Approaching New Romney we passed the The next day we arrived at Hythe in good PW depot and then saw the engine shed time for the popular 9.30am departure. (*Northern Chief* would come off here on *Northern Chief* (in BR livery) had just its return from Dungeness). From New brought in the train from New Romney Romney the line is singled as we passed and was making its way to the turntable. the many holiday homes facing the sea. Whilst on the turntable, the driver took These were thinning out as the spring advantage of the turntable pit to go points for the return loop came into sight. around with an oilcan, before taking Dominating the landscape were the 2 water and backing down onto the train.⁽⁶⁾ nuclear power stations, clearly visible for Whistles were blown to get the last much of the journey. Below them is the passengers settled into the coaches and small RHDR station, with buffet serving a we were off.⁽⁷⁾ The RHDR claims to be welcome cup of coffee (or even an all day

various sections. These sections will actions. They also have a narrow-gauge cover various aspects of the history and electric demonstration line which allows role of railways in modern life, including members of the public to try their hand at freight transport and commuting, as well driving a miniature modern EMU on a as how the railways themselves were fully signalled track. Some of these could be replicated in the South Yard together built.

The construction of NRM+ also includes with a children's' play area and a 2ft gauge railway for visiting narrow-gauge bridge over Leeman Road, together with locomotives.

the relocation of the signal gantry so it is The NRM's engines will continue to be positioned over the main entrance from out on the main line. The repair of *Flying Leeman Road.* *Scotsman* is progressing and it will be out

After the Great Hall, the Station Hall next summer – we have Steve's word on needs to be made less gloomy. The that! He also aims to have *Duchess of priority here is a better presentation of the Hamilton* on the main line sometime in Royal Trains and the cleaning up of the near future. He does not intend to *Winston Churchill.* ignore the diesel fleet and will aim to

The South Yard, which has evolved over have about 4 diesel-electrics operating the years into something of a dumping (not hydraulics, due to the lack of ground, is also coming under Steve's servicing facilities). To facilitate all this, attention. It will become the site for a new he has recruited two more fitters to boost part-roundhouse, which will be used as an the workshop staff.

operational base for the main-line The museums at York and Locomotion locomotive fleet. The intention is to allow (which received its millionth visitor this the public to see the servicing of visiting month) are to be better integrated. In engines. It will also have the benefit of August next year there will be test runs of separating locomotive engineering, shuttles from York South Yard to restoration and operation. A raked seating Locomotion with steam and heritage area around the yard will be used for open diesel. In addition, *Evening Star* will air presentations – not just for railway- come to York, while *Mallard* is at related events but as a general facility for Locomotion. When she returns to York it the York area. may be possible for her to spend some

Steve has also been considering how to days in York station to attract visitors to bring some of the existing demonstrations the NRM.

up to date. For example, by using digital The Museum will continue to loan projection techniques superimposed on equipment to other preserved railways. the real display, *Ellerman Lines* will This could include buildings as well as become a simulation/presentation locos. They will also provide consultation showing the science of steam engines. services to overseas museums – Ecuador He and his team are also taking advice is already in the queue.

from other international museums. The Steve is clearly passionate about railways Japanese railway museum, for example, and the Museum but he recognises that he has an extensive number of simulations and his staff cannot accomplish all the including a computer-linked real steam above and he looks to the Friends to help. engine cab with all controls and Together it looks like we are going to instruments operating in real-time in have a busy time!

response to the driver and fireman's

NRM EXHIBIT AT MILESTONES

Earlier this year Milestones, Hampshire's Dr. Janet Owen, Hampshire County living history museum in Basingstoke, Council's Head of Museums, Arts and received an early 10th Birthday gift from South East Hub, spoke of the delight of the NRM, really a long-term loan in the form of *Woolmer* an 0-6-0ST. We reported and accepted a certificate of loan from its arrival in Briefing N° 57, including the complex transport arrangements organised by Moveright International (Andrew Goodman, from this company, will be addressing the Group on 8th November).



Anthony Coulls, Collections Manager, NRM. Anthony related something of the history of the locomotive built by Avonside, Bristol in 1910 (Works No. 1572). It spent most of its working life on the Longmoor Military Railway before being retired to the Beverley Museum of Army Transport. When that museum was closed the part dismantled locomotive was accepted by the NRM and sent to Locomotion at Shildon where it was returned to display condition as part of its "Learning In Motion" project.



On 7th June members of the Friends attended the museum to observe the official hand over and to view the scene in front of a replica of part of Winchester Chesil station.



Milestones is well worth a visit with its street scenes set in two periods, 1900's and 1930/40's, both well populated with trams, buses, cars and lorries. There is even a working "pub", open at the right times. What is more Friends of the NRM get free entrance on production of their membership card.

George Rutter

A DAY WITH GLADYS

On the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway see next page (photo numbers referenced in text)

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