



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 63

South of England Group

September 2011

Vice Presidents – Alan Pegler OBE, FRSA; Sir William McAlpine Bt., FRSE, FCIT, FRSA

EVENING MEETING 10th OCTOBER

On 10th October we host our Vice President, Sir William McAlpine. He wants it to be an informal evening - a chat about his experiences and reminiscences in answer to questions. To get the best out of the evening come prepared to ask a question or two about anything he has been involved with – *Flying Scotsman*, steam on the main-line, the “*Orient*

Express”, “*Royal Scotsman*”, the Railway Heritage Trust, railway construction and dismantlement, or his own collection of railway memorabilia. If you need inspiration, why not look at the book *SIR WILLIAM McALPINE - A Tale of Locomotives, Carriages and Conservation* by John Chacksfield, Oakwood Press

EVENING MEETING 14th NOVEMBER

Unfortunately, our November speaker, David Thomas, is having hospital attention so cannot make his presentation. We are therefore moving the annual Members' Evening to the 14th November. Please dust off those slides, prints, or

video, for a 10-15 minute presentation. It doesn't have to be polished – just something interesting. So we are ready to show whatever you intend to bring, please let Ian Harrison known before the event (contact details on back page).

CAMDEN WALK

A reminder that Peter Darley, of the Camden Railway Heritage Trust, will lead a guided tour round the Camden area. The walk starts at Chalk Farm underground station at 11:30 on Wednesday 5th October, and includes a

stop for lunch. See the CRHT web site at <http://www.crht1837.org/home> or the report on Peter's lecture in Briefing 61. It would help if you would warn Les Butler, our Outdoor Events coordinator, of your intention to be there.

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THE JOB OF THE CURATOR

We were pleased on 12th September, to welcome Anthony Coulls, Senior Curator of Rail Vehicles at the NRM. Anthony described himself as a railway enthusiast first and curator second. He has been a long term supporter of the Talylln railway, having 20 years footplate experience there. He spoke without a script, around photographs of items in the collection under the care of himself and his assistant curator, Bob Gwynne. He started by emphasising that the Museum has to compete for family attention at the weekend, so it is important that the exhibits are interesting, and that normally means working. The NRM's interests are not just at York and Shildon, but spread over more than 17 places where items are on loan. Currently there are more locos from the National Collection in operation or undergoing maintenance than ever before, some 12 currently running with a similar number under overhaul. It is essential to have the people with the necessary skills to repair and run the locomotives and rolling-stock. Unfortunately these people are nearing retirement so the Museum has had an apprentice programme for some time.

To emphasise that the collection is not just about locomotives, Anthony started by looking at one of the recent restoration projects; a narrow gauge contractors side-tipping wagon. Heritage railways don't have such items because they were transient (rather like wheel-barrow) and don't carry passengers, so don't earn money. The NRM is restoring one as part of a display of work of railway contractors. The message is that the NRM is about the train in total, not locos in isolation.

The NRM is also not just a steam engine museum. EMU preservation is, arguably, at the same place as steam was 40 years ago. Unless we keep some, future

generations will criticise us for not taking action. A 4VEP coach is a recent addition and was selected from those stored at Shoburyness on the basis that it was the one with the roof in best condition, and therefore least likely to have suffered corrosion. The EMU collection will be accessible by visitors, as with supplies of ex-NSE moquette, people will not be irreparably damaging the seats by sitting on them. One day the Museum will take possession of a HST, and even modern freight locos, so it needs to make similar provisions for spares to ensure that they can, when the time comes, be restored and maintained.

Anthony then looked at some of the items which are of current interest, starting with the replica *Rocket*. This has had a new boiler installed which more closely follows the original design and is working well. Anthony notes that "folks never stop grinning" after travelling behind *Rocket*, even though they are standing in an open coach in the rain and getting covered in black spots.

Anthony still believes he has the best job in the world, but that view can be tested when something major goes wrong. An example was in 2006 when the middle engine of *Green Arrow* was virtually destroyed. Anthony showed a photograph of the bent bits. Without the spare V2 connecting rod there would have been no chance of restoring it. The moral is that while we should run the locos we also need to look after them. He paid tribute to the support he gets from his "hands-on" boss, Steve Davies, in supporting the team, showing Steve crawling all over the new copper firebox, the biggest ever made in preservation, for *Flying Scotsman* at Ian Riley's works at Bury. This is an example of how the NRM uses others to work on its collection. Another was the Rhodesian Railways combination

day and sleeping carriage, obtained from David Shepherd, restored at a works in Appleby to an extremely high standard. Another example of the high standard of restoration work is the *Duchess* – where over a mile of gold-leaf lining was used on the streamlining. At the forthcoming York LMS gala it will be rolled out with a LMS brake, also in *Coronation* livery, to give an impression of how a full rake would look. While we should not rule out anything, he noted that if the *Duchess* ever runs again, it will be difficult to maintain it in its streamlined state – with closed-in running gear, no running footplate and sand-boxes hidden half-way up the engine. The gala will also demonstrate Steve Davies's vision of one museum with two sites, the experimental shuttles providing the link to Locomotion.

As previously noted, some 70+ locomotives and rolling-stock are currently on loan. An example is *Woolmer*, now on loan to the Milestone's Museum at Basingstoke. It came from the Museum of Army Transport, and its restoration was the first such project undertaken by the apprentice programme. *Woolmer* has connections to Hampshire, having worked at Longmoor, so it was the obvious choice for a loan to Milestones, as was noted in Briefing 57. Anthony recommended a visit and noted that, as part of the agreement for the loan with the NRM, entry is free to members of the Friends.

Anthony then reviewed the current state of various locos. *Cheltenham* is currently under overhaul at Eastleigh. It hadn't really been restored properly since the 1960s but the surveys have shown that it doesn't need a great deal of work, and should be complete next year. E5001 was also intended to go to Eastleigh for some 3rd rail running at the site, but these plans have been put on hold for a while.

Meanwhile it has been paired with a "Night Ferry" coach to represent these BR services in the 1960s. Anthony is confident that, when the time comes to try it on power from the 3rd rail, everything will work. However, it would not be suitable for main-line running without a lot of costly updates. Similarly, the NRM's Deltic, N° 55022 *King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*, has completed its restoration and is about to head off to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway for running in, the results being awaited before deciding whether to spend more money to get it on the main-line.

On liveries, Anthony acknowledged that there have been criticisms over the repainting of *City of Truro*. However, he pointed out that its current livery is historically accurate; the previous one was a "special" put on when it was preserved. In its new livery it is in demand from preserved railways. The repainting of the Crab into LMS crimson was a major step. The livery represents the condition the engine would have been when out-shopped. Strangely, there are no photographs of the engine in this state, although there are ones of sister engines N° 13001-3, all being slightly different!

The NRM has the first production version of a Merry-Go-Round Hopper. The FNRN North-East Group has now purchased the last Merry-Go-Round Hopper which will make a good pairing with the first one, allowing comparison of the detailed changes made during their production.

The Stirling Single, currently on loan to the Railway Children Theatre Company at Waterloo, will return early next year. Meanwhile work is in preparation, as funds permit, to renovate the Stirling tender to replace the current, non-authentic one. The original pattern tender, having ended up as a sludge tank, has been moved to Locomotion for assessment;

some original GNR paint has even been found below all the grime.

The next loco likely to go through restoration into running order is the LMS 2-6-4T N° 2500. The intention is to have it running with a rail-mounted water tank, enabling it to handle the future York-Shildon shuttles and York-Scarborough runs, without the need for either turning or re-watering. Another engine which Anthony has his eyes on is Wantage Tramway N° 5 *Shannon*, which has been on loan to Didcot for some time. The money raised by *Steam Railway's* appeal should allow careful restoration into working order for use on short sections of isolated track, as part of the Museum's outreach work.

Flying Scotsman is now back a Bury undergoing further work. The cracks in the horn-blocks had, apparently, been there for some time but it was only when loaded onto/off the low-loader that these became obvious. They have now been welded up. Further work will ensure that the loco is in the best state it has ever been. There isn't yet a clear date for finishing the work but hopefully this will be in time for the rescheduled Barrow Hill line up of LNER Pacifics next

Spring. Ian Riley's team and the NRM staff have been working 12 hour shifts in order to progress the work. No additional fund raising is being sought, the money coming from existing funds.

Winston Churchill was moved outside in June as part of the Station Hall shunt. While it looks good from afar, close-up inspection reveals a good deal of corrosion around the smoke deflectors and on the tender. This seems to be coming from under the paintwork. With the missing "borrowed" parts from the cab, there is going to be a good deal of work necessary. All asbestos has, however, been removed, so the way is clear to start. Anthony wanted to lay to rest one issue – the provenance of the current paintwork. In the records there is a receipt from BR Derby for repainting the engine, the date being well after it hauled the 1965 funeral train. So our fund raising campaign work doesn't need to worry too much about possibly destroying a historic livery, and Anthony wished us well in generating the necessary funds.

Ian Harrison thanked Anthony for this fascinating insight into this important aspect of the NRM.

FNRM EMBROIDERED CLOTHING

Arrangements have been made with a firm called My Workwear to produce clothing with the FNRM logo embroidered onto the left side. There is also the option of having your name embroidered onto the right side of the garment. A flyer is included in this copy of the Briefing giving instructions on how to order, either directly from their website, or via me, Mel Draper. Although the cost of the items is very competitive, postage costs are high unless ordered in bulk. To get round this, I am offering to group together orders for distribution at our lecture evenings. The costs of items

ordered in this way is as follows

Polo-Shirt	UC101	£11.50/£13.50
Sweatshirt:		
Heavyweight	UC201	£16.50/£18.50
Lightweight	UC203	£14.50/£16.50

The two prices are without/with your name embroidered on the garment.

If you want to take advantage of this offer, please fill in the form on the flyer, giving the colour, and size of the item(s) you want and strike out the £7.14 additional postage cost. Either hand it in at the October or November lecture evening or mail to me at the address shown. First deliveries will be at the

AGM Social in January. Please mark the "delivery address" on the form as AGM, or the lecture evening, or outreach stand event, where you intend to pick up your order. Cheques should be made payable to "FNRM South of England Branch".

You can, of course, follow the instructions on the flyer to order for postal delivery directly to your home address, but you will find that the overall per-item cost will be higher unless you order 5 or more items.

OUTREACH

Things have been fairly quiet over the summer period, although we have been represented on main-line steam excursions hauled by *Oliver Cromwell*, on 30th April, 2nd July and 6th September, together with one hauled by *Sir Lamiel* on 14th May. There are unlikely to be any repeats for a while since the former is now at Locomotion and the latter on the Wensleydale Railway, being temporarily withdrawn from the main-line.

The outreach stand will be at Banbury Model Railway Exhibition on Sunday 25th

September, to be held at Banbury School, Ruskin Road. On Saturday 8th October, the stand will be at Tad-Rail, at Ashlyns School, Chesham Road, Berhamstead. The main show will, as usual, be the National Model Railway Exhibition, at the NEC Birmingham on the weekend of 19th to 20th November. If you want to help with any of the outreach events please get in touch with any of the committee members, contacts shown on the back page.

PS WAVERLEY SAILINGS FROM LONDON

The Paddle Steamer Waverley is the only surviving ocean-going paddle-steamer in the world, having been built on the Clyde in 1947, to replace its predecessor which was lost in the Dunkirk evacuations. It will be making its last sailing of 2011 from London over the next few weeks. Excursions leave from Tower Pier on Sunday 25th September, Saturday 1st October, Sunday 2nd October, Thursday

6th October, and the final one for the year is on 8th October with a cruise along the River Blackwater. Prices are from £17 for the short trips to £41 for the cruise on the River Blackwater. There are other pickup/set down points in the south-east. More details are on their web-site at <http://www.waverleyexcursions.co.uk/ind ex.htm>

RAILWAY CHILDREN AT WATERLOO

This popular theatre show is entering its last season and will close its doors on 8th January 2012. Those of you who have been will know that there is a small display by the FNRM and Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, connected with the Stirling Single and NER Officers Saloon, which together form the train in the presentation. The aim is to have someone manning the stands about an hour prior to the start and at the interval about half-way through, to meet members of the audience and draw attention to the work

of the NRM, attract visitors to the NRM and KWVR and bring in funds to the Stirling Single Appeal and the KWVR bridge appeal. As a bonus, there is the possibility of sitting in on the show as well. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Chris Lawson on 01483 769584, mobile 07771 838776 or e-mail chrisjlawson@btinternet.com. He can provide more information and fit you into the stand roster. Shows normally take place at 14:30 (Thur, Sat, Sun) and 19:30 (Tues-Sat) on most weeks.

RAIL VERSUS AIR TO FRANKFURT

About 10 years ago Biggleswade was twinned with the town of Erlensee, about 20 miles east of Frankfurt am Main. Over the years I have made a number of trips there, but never by rail. This year was different. Booking was through Eurorail in London - a mistake. The offered connections were poor, needlessly extending the journey. Our final rail destination was Hanau, the next major stop after Frankfurt, but the ticket agent said this could only be booked as a separate journey, at significant cost. We decided to make our own arrangements when at Frankfurt. We were provided with tickets on the scenic route up the east side of the Rhine, however they were actually for the high speed route via Limburg! We took the scenic train anyway, and discovered that the train went to Hanau, so we should have stayed on it for one more stop! The moral, don't believe the "Euro" bit of "Eurorail".

But that is to jump ahead. An early start on the 06.25 from Biggleswade got us to St Pancras International in time to go through security and board the train for Brussels. For some unexplained reason we ran at reduced speed on HS1 and in consequence were a few minutes late into Brussels-Midi. This was of no consequence, as we had nearly 2 hours to wait for our connecting Thalys train to Cologne. What to do? The outside was not inspiring, so we crossed to the other side of the station. This was even less so, with small cafés and hotels. There were not even souvenir shops. Returning to the main concourse, there seemed little alternative but to find the waiting room beside the Thalys platforms.

The Thalys route followed the Brussels to Aachen motorway, from which we had noted the building of the high speed line on a previous trip to Germany by road. As we sped over the Belgian country side I

had the opportunity to try a GPS dongle with my laptop computer, which showed 180mph before we slowed for the stop at Liège-Guilemins. This impressive new station had many platforms, with the Thalys platform dominated by a giant globe reminding us of the danger to the environment. Approaching Aachen we rejoined the classic tracks with a local EMU sitting in a siding awaiting its return to the city. In Aachen there was a extended stop during which the power to the coach was off.

How much nicer it would have been to have the long connection at Cologne rather than Brussels, with the impressive gothic cathedral outside the station. On the platform for the train to Frankfurt (Main) there were helpful diagrams to show where our coach would stop, but ours sailed past and we had to hurry along a crowded platform. The non-air-conditioned stock proved rather warm compared to the modern Eurostar and Thalys coaches, but had large windows, ideal for a truly scenic run adjacent to the river Rhine.

The first few kilometres took us to Bonn then we emerged from the houses alongside the river, which we were to follow most of the way to Mainz, where we crossed the Rhine to follow the river Main into Frankfurt(Main). As the river and train wound its way along we passed various castles, reminding us of the many tolls which were extracted from the river traffic over many centuries. Approaching Bingen we saw the complete waterfront as we rounded a particularly tight bend.

Before reaching the city, the train stopped at Frankfurt International Airport. Here the train runs under the "ship" hotel, so called because from a distance it looks like a cruise ship in the stocks, as the base is curved and supported on props. Very soon we were crossing the extensive rail

yards outside Frankfurt (Main) Hauptbahnhof. Here our locomotive (120 501-2) which had hauled us so far would propel the train back out of the terminus station to continue its journey to Passau. Since my last visit to Germany, there are no longer separate ticket machines for DB and the local transport organisation (RMV). By the time we had realised we could use the red DB ticket machines, we were near the S-bahn platforms and an Hanau train was indicated. It was rush hour, the train was crowded but we eventually reached Hanau, to be met by one of our hosts for the week-end.

On the Monday morning the UK party met with its various hosts for a communal breakfast before starting back home. At Hanau, our train back to Frankfurt(Main) was announced as being 5 minutes late (Shock, Horror!). However, so was the previous train which we jumped on just before it left. The warning from our hosts seeing us off was not to get off at Frankfurt-Sud, but there were also comments about the airport - did this train go into the main station, or continue direct to the airport? What a relief as the train crossed the river Main and passed over the rail yards into the main station.

Soon our ICE14 train for Brussels arrived. We were in the front coach of unit 4602 and being one of the latest trains, it is possible to look over the driver's head and see the way ahead. Once settled in I had the laptop out, using the convenient power socket between the seats (not really safe as one has to grope for it under the armrest). We reached 150 mph before turning north west towards Limburg. When I had driven this way while the high-speed line being built, it looked like the view from the train would be restricted by the sound walls either side. This proved not to be the case, but the line has many tunnels which was the undoing of the GPS. However, it was

possible to follow the timing of the train by reference to the "Reiseplan" provided at the start of the journey. This gave the times at each of the stops and details of connecting trains at each (with platform details) – UK TOCs, please copy.

Once again there was a long stop (4 minutes) at Aachen during which power went off. It was noticeable that the power for the laptop went off several times between Aachen and Brussels, presumably as we coasted under dead sections. These were more noticeable than in UK - does the power change between the Belgian standard (3kV dc) to the European "norm" of 25kV ac along the way? All the announcements in the train were in 4 languages. Each used the place name appropriate for the language, most noticeable here with the German "Aachen" being changed to the French "Aix-la-Chappelle". Arrival in Brussels-Midi was on time, then we had to find our way to the Eurostar check-in, which was not very well signed. Here we joined the crowd for train EST 9157 for London. The check-in time of 45 minutes is not just a minimum, but also virtually a maximum as the check-in did not open until 50 minutes before departure!

After all the previous travels, the run to St Pancras was a non event, arriving a minute early, giving me 20 minutes to walk across to King's Cross to catch the train home to Biggleswade. Whilst the outward journey had shown the scenic attractions of rail travel, the return with just one connection between high-speed trains, showed the recent improvements in train speed. Overall, the return took 6 hours 46 minutes from Frankfurt(Main) to London, with a 1 hour 15 minute lay-over in Brussels. Once the ICE trains start running through the whole way (maybe, next year), the timing could come down to little more than 5 1/2 hours.

Phil Brown

FOR CURRENT LIST OF FORTHCOMING LECTURES

See the Diary section of the web page at:

<http://www.nrmfriends-south.org.uk/Diary.html>

FOR CONTACTS IN FNRM SOUTH OF ENGLAND

GROUP:

See Contacts at main index:

<http://www.nrmfriends-south.org.uk/index.html>