



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 66

South of England Group

June 2012

Vice Presidents – Sir William McAlpine Bt., FRSE, FCIT, FRSA; Richard Hardy

WELCOME TO DICK

As you will see from the heading, Richard (Dick) Hardy has agreed to join Sir William (Bill) to become a vice-president of the Group. Dick started his career in Doncaster in 1941, and spent many years in the operating department

of the LNER and Eastern Region of B.R. Many of you will be familiar with him as a long-time member of the Friends. He spoke to the Group in 1998, and a summary of his talk is available on the Briefings archive CD.

FAREWELL TO TWO STALWARTS

In the last Briefing, we reported on the death of Alan Pegler OBE. Alan's funeral took place on Monday 2nd April at the West London Crematorium. The service was well attended by many of his friends in the railway community, including our own Group Chairman, Dr Ian Harrison. The service included tributes from Dr John Prideaux CBE, and Sir William McAlpine and a reading by Alan's grandson, Romain, of Robert Louis

Stevenson's poem *A Railway Carriage*. We also leant of the death on 19th April of Leo de Rothschild, another stalwart of the Friends. Leo made us very welcome on 5th May 2006 when he hosted a visit by the Friends to Exbury Gardens. Leo personally drove our party round his miniature railway, which he was responsible for constructing at his ancestral home – see page 5. Both Alan and Leo will be sadly missed.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH OF ENGLAND GROUP

Steve Cable at the National Archives at Kew has recently contacted the NRM about a project to catalogue the W E Hayward collection held there. The NRM has asked us in the South of England

Group whether we can help. This sounds like an excellent opportunity, especially for anyone interested in railway research. The series is an extensive collection of railway history ephemera including

books, magazines, cuttings, photographs, timetables, maps and tickets compiled by the late W E Hayward of Weston-super-Mare. Hayward bequeathed the collection to the British Transport Historical Records library and it was subsequently acquired by the Public Record Office, with the part of the collection that consisted of relics (engine name plates etc.) going to the National Railway Museum at York. The part of the collection now at The National Archives is poorly catalogued at present. It has much GWR material, but also SR and light railways/miniature railways, covering many obscure branch lines. There are 780 separate 'files' – the interesting binders containing the ephemera start from piece [ZSPC 11/274](#) and about 150 pieces have so far been

catalogued.

Steve hopes to include these records as a part of a proposed conference looking at railway records mooted to take place at The National Archives next year, so the work is likely to receive some publicity.

We are also looking to identify other volunteer opportunities for members in the South to help the NRM, based around the items the Museum has on loan to railway centres in the region. More details will follow.

If you want to help with the cataloguing work at Kew, get in touch with me (Mel Draper – see back page for contact details) and I will arrange with Steve for a party of us to visit Kew together for an initial meeting and viewing of the collection.

JOHN WESLEY COMES HOME

At Methodist Church House in London on 24th May, the Revd Dr Leslie Griffiths, Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, unveiled the nameplate *John Wesley* taken from High Speed Train power car N° 43103 which carried it from 1988 to 1994. The power car is still in service with Cross-Country trains as N° 43303 and has now travelled about 20 million miles.

The Methodist Church celebrates 24th May as "Wesley Day" in commemoration of the day in 1738 when John Wesley began preaching and founded the Methodist movement. The nameplate had previously been unveiled on a locomotive at St Pancras Station on 24th May 1988 by Dame Thora Hird. At the same time, power car N° 43118 was named *Charles Wesley* (after John's younger brother and famous hymn-writer).

The Revd Dr Leslie Griffiths, the minister

of Wesley's Chapel in London and a former President of the Methodist Conference, said: "John Wesley travelled over 250,000 miles in England on horseback – more than anyone else, until the coming of the railways forty years after his death. The nameplate has travelled many miles and I'm so pleased that it has now reached a home where it will remind staff and visitors of the itinerant origins of Methodism."

The nameplate was found in a scrap bin in Edinburgh. It was acquired by Derek Brown and sold to Dr Ian Harrison, our Group Chairman. Derek generously donated the purchase price to the "*Winston Churchill*" restoration fund.

The nameplate will be on display at Methodist Church House located at 25 Marylebone Road, for at least the next five years (see page 5).

SOME ANTIPODEAN TRAINS

Your Chairman and spouse recently visited Australia and New Zealand on a trip organised by Ffestiniog Travel. This brief article gives some initial

impressions – but I am conscious that several Friends have long experience of these countries' railways.

We began in Darwin aiming to travel on

The Ghan to Adelaide. We were slightly frustrated as the line had been knocked out by a cyclone as far as Katherine – about 150 miles to the south – a mere bagatelle in Australian terms. We went by bus for that leg, alongside the railway, which enabled us to see the newly built track – not for passengers but for freight. The Ghan itself was very much like the American long distance trains but rather more modern. Having said that, there was a plaque in our coach which proclaimed that it had been selected for preservation after years of service of the “Indian Pacific” – the east-west train from Sydney to Perth. Watching the outback rolling by was broken by a brief stop in Alice Springs (temp 40° C) with whistle-stop tours of local sights including the original telegraph station. A posting there would have been no sinecure!

Adelaide to Melbourne is the same distance as London to Aberdeen: but there are three trains a week! We had just missed one so we flew: flights are every hour and full. Very environmentally friendly!

Melbourne - a city very reminiscent of Leeds – has a local preserved railway called the Puffing Billy Railway. I assumed this was a toy train. Wrong. It is a 2ft 6ins gauge railway that runs for 18 miles from Belgrave to Gembrook through undulating scenery ranging from temperate rainforest to grassland not unlike the Surrey Hills.

Dating from 1900 and built for logging and agricultural transport it was closed in 1954 and re-opened by the Puffing Billy Preservation Society in stages up to 1998 (“Puffing Billy” was a nickname cast by the local media – and it stuck).

It now boasts a remarkable collection of locomotives including a Garratt and a Climax. Most remarkable are the carriages which have open windows with ledges to sit on and dangle one’s legs

outside. I think our Railway Inspectorate would have a collective heart attack at the thought!

Both Adelaide and Melbourne have extensive and comprehensive tram systems which have been updated with state-of-the-art air-conditioned trams – except for the circle line trams in Melbourne which are the original 1930s variety and give a free service.

I was looking forward to the XPT trip from Melbourne to Sydney – the XPT having been built under licence from BR as a derivative of our HSTs. What a disappointment! We chugged along at around 50mph with the occasional dash to about 80mph and arrived an hour late. Dire is too complimentary a phrase.

After a brief look at Sydney – with an excellent suburban and metro system - we crossed to New Zealand. Joining the North Island mainline at Hamilton we travelled south all day on the 3ft 6ins gauge line to Wellington. The railways of NZ have had a very chequered history of late (see the Wikipedia article) and are now virtually entirely freight dominated except for suburban services around Auckland and Wellington. Somewhat bizarrely the North Island trunk line is only electrified between Hamilton and Palmerston North leaving stubs at each end that mean that the long distance passenger trains (one a day each way!) are diesel hauled. The passenger locomotives are DC Class diesels (1650hp) and look very much like beefy Class 20s. There are more powerful locos for freight use. The DCs are not unduly taxed as passenger trains run to three coaches plus a baggage/generator car. The economics defeat me!

There are some interesting variations – including the rear coach doubling as an observation car and an open sided section on the generator car.

The formula is repeated on the South

Island – but this train was new with very large observation windows and a running commentary about local landmarks on headphones. Being “narrow gauge” it’s a bit rock and roll and relatively slow, but there’s plenty to look at.

In Christchurch the former city centre station has been abandoned (well before the earthquake) in favour of a basic affair out of town. (The centre is still closed-off and most buildings are in process of being demolished). We had a trip on the “TranzAlpine” to Greymouth and back – just to see the scenery. This was built by NZ’s Midland Railway – a private company that built an incredible line – much as their namesake built one from Settle Junc to Carlisle. Starting in 1887, the line was not completed until 1923, the 5.3 mile Otira Tunnel alone having taken 16 years to build (on a 1 in 33 gradient). The tunnel was initially electrified (1500v DC) as steam locomotion was too dangerous to operate in those conditions. The coming of diesels meant

decommissioning of the electric system in 1997. The mid-way station at Arthur’s Pass is 2,425ft ASL. Again the line is used mainly by freight (coal) trains with the one daily passenger train being very much for tourist purposes.

Impressions of both countries are that the railways have been severely undervalued for passenger purposes. They suffered from lack of investment and inter-state inertia and although there is now some welcome investment in rolling stock, people locally regard long-distance trains as a joke. It’s actually cheaper to fly between major Australian cities!

NZ made the decision to convert from 5ft 3ins or standard gauge in the South Island to a uniform 3ft 6ins – which does nothing for the ride quality or chances of high speed travel. I couldn’t help but compare the smooth, silent running of our SW Trains Desiros with the ride in NZ: no comparison!

Ian Harrison



Puffing Billy Railway, Monbulk Creek bridge - note the out of gauge legs!



Puffing Billy Railway, 2-6-2T No 8A built at Newport, Victoria in 1908 for the original Gembrook railway. Rescued for preservation in 1970.



Puffing Billy Railway, Out of gauge Chairman (shoes removed for safe-keeping!)

(Photo: Charmian Harrison)



NZ North Island DC No 4029 on "The Overlander" at Hamilton



NZ South Island open observation space (generator car) and new passenger stock on "The TranzCoastal" at Picton

PHOTO-NEWS ITEMS



Lord Griffiths of Burry Port and Dr Ian Harrison unveil the HST nameplate John Wesley, at Methodist Church House



Leo de Rothschild (left) with members of the Friends on the visit to Exbury Gardens in 2006

EVENING LECTURE -

On 16th April, David Thomas, joined by his wife and son, gave an enjoyable talk about his family connections with the North Eastern Railway and its successors, over an 80 year period, interspersed with more general information on those railways. David grew up in York with the smell of locomotive smoke and oil permeating the house – the smell coming from his father's overalls!

David's family originated from the Dales; his great-grandfather, William, living in Gilling on the Thirsk to Malton line (opened in 1853). His grandfather, John, didn't remain in the village, joining the NER in 1889 as a cleaner. He soon fell foul of the bosses when he was involved in a runaway engine which finished up in the turntable pit. Evidence from those involved, supported by a character reference from his local vicar, showed he wasn't solely to blame and he was reinstated. Subsequently he was promoted to fireman in 1892 and driver in 1900. David showed a photograph of him standing proudly in front of his Class "C" engine. The promotions and increased income enabled him to marry Elizabeth in 1901 and buy a home at 172 Bishopthorpe Road, York.

This was a time of much change. The locomotive works at York closed in 1905, their last job being the conversion of BTPs to the 209 class 0-6-0. The Class R locos followed, allowing an acceleration of trains. Raven took over as C.M.E. and the building of superheated 3 cylinder Z class 4-4-2s followed. All these development came to a shuddering halt with World War I.

In June 1916, Lord Kitchener was travelling from Kings Cross to Thurso. His train was held at York while a following train arrived to deliver an important message. Jim had the job of taking Kitchener's delayed train to

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Newcastle. He did a good job making up some lost time although the riding in the train must have been rough. Both John and his fireman were presented with a gold sovereign for their service by one of Kitchener's adjutants. This was Kitchener's last journey, he died when HMS Hampshire sank the following day while en-route to Russia.

Jim was John's second son born in 1904. On leaving school he took a variety of jobs – assistant to a local butcher, making shells, and then a telegraph boy, before joining his father in April 1919 at York shed. This was a time of unrest in the industry, with little time to recover from the war before the railway companies were grouped into the Big Four; the NE joining the LNER. One effect of this was that NE locomotives worked through to London on the East Coast line. However, double heading was often necessary until the Raven and Gresley Pacifics arrived.

Meanwhile Jim had been promoted and, in 1925, fired an engine taking one of the exhibits to the celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. He went on to fire engines on other routes. The Woodhead route was not one of his favourites; not only was it difficult, even with a O4 ex-ROD, but he disliked the local Wath men! Jim's regular engine was N° 2168, a Z Class. The tender was changed for a larger one in 1928 so that it could pilot the Flying Scotsman service if needed. Even so, it still retained some of its NE livery – its "Z Class" marking still showing up on its buffer-beam in a 1930s photograph. It finally finished its days at Heaton shed and was cut up in 1947 at Darlington.

In July 1930, while working a train on the East Coast route, over the Scrooby water-troughs south of Doncaster, John was hit by debris cast off from a passing train. It was probably a lump of coal which had

been washed off the other locomotive's tender by excess water. It came through his engine's spectacle plate and hit him on the head. He never really recovered, and died a few years later.

In 1930, Jim was passed as a driver but he continued firing for several further years. He married his wife, Rene, in 1936, setting up home at 41 Nunethorpe Grove. The same year York received its first A1 and V2 locomotives. However, Jim was more familiar with less glamorous types. In the winter of 1940 he found himself on a Q6 on a York to Newport (Stockton) freight which got stuck in a snowdrift at Eaglescliffe. It was several days before he got home. By coincidence near the same spot on another train, he was faced with a large white horse standing in front of the train; it had no intention of moving. He opened the cylinder drain cocks, which served the purpose of startling it into movement, but it went running in front of the train over the nearby viaduct, closely followed by the Q6 and its train.

The Baedeker raids on York in April 1942 caused major damage to Jim's house; luckily the family were in the Anderson shelter. They had to move in with John's widow (David's grandmother) before finding themselves back in Gilling East. David remembers it being so silent compared to the metropolis of York. After that they took lodgings at Ingleton before returning to 41 Nunethorpe Grove. That was not the end of the war for the street. In March 1945, a Halifax bomber from 426 Squadron based nearby, crashed into the street. It destroyed two houses and damaged a further nine.

Post war, the LNER didn't fully recover before nationalisation came. Around this time, David used to accompany his father round York sheds which were just receiving the first Thompson A2s and Peppercorn A1s. The Ian Allan loco-

spotter books were now available and, like many of us, these stimulated David to take more interest in the railways. His father never understood the interest in number collecting, but he did give him a ride on the footplate of his J94. Jim, like all footplatemen, received free travel concessions within the NE region. On one of these holiday journeys, David was offered a ride by one of Jim's colleagues on B1 N° 1288 between Malton and Whitby. In the following decade many of the stations and lines in the East Riding closed; Gilling being an early casualty in 1953 with the line following in 1962.

Jim was now cleared to run on the East Coast Route to Kings Cross. On one of these journeys, David was a passenger on his father's train which, despite some on-route delays, arrived right-time at the terminus. David joined Jim and his fireman for a drink, the latter managed to down two pints before he and his father had even been served. It was soon after this that the diesels took over operations, and Jim moved on to English Electric Type 4s and Deltics, before finally, in 1967, being allocated D8309 for use on officer special workings. However, he didn't do this long as he had already applied for retirement. In retirement he was amazed at how much was achieved by the railway preservation movement. He paid a visit to the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, when he told David about his involvement in the equivalent event 50 years earlier. Jim died in 1986.

So ended David's description of his family's connections with the NE Railway. David didn't follow his father and grandfather's into the business, but he has been closely associated with the NRM, being one of the people to initiate the volunteer coordination programme, something he still assist with.

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 FNRN SOUTH OF ENGLAND

GROUP:

See *Contacts* at main index:

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

STOP-PRESS ITEM

As noted in the item on Volunteer good place to visit if people want to see Opportunities on page 1, we and the more of the same. Arrangements are still Museum are looking for other ways in at an early stage and the visit still needs to which members in the south of England be confirmed. However, if you are can be of assistance. One such possible interested in lending a hand, even if it is opportunity has just appeared. The only for an hour or so while you are museum has been approached to see if attending the show, please get in touch with Battle of Britain Class loco *Winston Churchill* can make an appearance at this email outreach@nrmfriends-south.org.uk. year's Great Dorset Steam Fair, which We are also due at the Northampton runs from Wednesday 29th August to Model Railway exhibition on Saturday Sunday 2nd September. It will, of course, 21st July, and the Banbury Model Railway be a static exhibition on a low loader but Exhibition on Sunday 23rd September. it should make a big attraction. Bearing in There is also a possibility of attending a mind that our group is responsible for special event at the Mid-Hants Railway raising funds for the cosmetic restoration featuring three of the NRM's locos the of the engine, we have been asked week following the Great Dorset Steam whether we could have a stand by the Fair. Again, if you are interested in loco, with the aim of raising funds and helping on the stand for any of these drawing attention to the museum as a events, get in touch with Mel Draper.

SUMMER OUTING

As noted in the last Briefing, each for travel on the RH&DR. A full day alternate year we have a one-day summer rover costs £13 for senior/ group/ outing for Friends in the South. This year concessions. Those taking the bus from we propose to visit the Romney, Hythe & Folkstone can get a £2 discount on the Dymchurch Railway. The date is 29th bus fare by asking for a combined return September. This will be their Vintage bus and RH&DR rover ticket. Gala Weekend with an intensive railway The aim is to meet at New Romney service, the museum and model railway station at around 12:30 for lunch in the operating at New Romney and a selection of trade stands. cafeteria there. Les Butler, who is We are not making special arrangements coordinating this, would be grateful if you for the travel, since everyone has different the trip, so he can keep the RH&DR requirements and concessions. For those informed of numbers, and inform you of coming from Central London, the best any changes to arrangements or whether route is via HS1 from St Pancras to you could join someone for the journey Folkstone, then bus 101 or 102 from the there. Please use the form on the reverse bus station (about 5 minutes walk away) of this page or e-mail Les on to Hythe. Please purchase your own ticket outings@nrmfriends-south.org.uk

MAINLINE STEAM TOURS WITH NRM LOCOS

These are the trips which we understand are expected to feature NRM locos running on tours in the South of England during the next four months.

Date	Loco	Operator	Route
5 July	30777 (*pool)	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
12 July	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
14 July	70013	RTC	St Pancras – Lincoln - KX
19 July	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
26 July	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
14 August	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
15 August	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
21 August	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
28 August	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
1 Sept	30777	ShNm	Olympia - Faversham
13 Sept	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
20 Sept	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
27 Sept	*30777	RTC	Victoria – Weymouth rtn
28 Sept	70013	RTC	Victoria – Dover (Golden Arrow)
29 Sept	70013	RTC	Poole – Cardiff rtn
30 Sept	70013	RTC	Dover – Victoria (Golden Arrow)
11 Oct	70013 + 30777	RTC	Victoria – Swanage rtn

SUMMER OUTING

I am interested in attending the 2102 Summer Outing to the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway on 29th September.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

HOME:

MOBILE:

(A mobile number would be useful to contact you on the day of the visit)

E-MAIL: