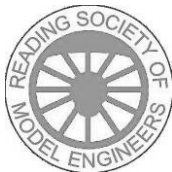


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The Prospectus

April 2015



One for member Mike Sinclair whose 5" gauge D-49 4-4-0 has just been withdrawn for an overhaul. This is 62712 Morayshire at Weybourne on the North Norfolk Railway on 7 March 2015. This engine will soon follow suit. Photo John

**DAWSON'S DIARY... SECTORISATION ON
BR....COMMITTEE NOTES... THE LNER B-17
CLASS...BREAKING ALL THE RULES...SEALIONS AT
DOLPHIN**

DAWSON'S DIARY

kept by the President

March already. The first of the new month was a very good one for the club. It turned out for the most part nice and sunny we were very busy from the start as usual. The membership did a grand job keeping the stations running smoothly. Inside the club house was very busy with plenty of tea flowing all day and the tea ladies did a splendid job of running the tea bar. Mike Strain and Andy Midwinter ran their locos double headed with Mike's NB Railway Waverley heading the train with Andy in front riding on the tender with his 2-6-0 Pioneer. Both locos caused a lot of interest and ran all day with full loads. As Mike and Chris Jones had only flown in early Sunday morning from South Africa only Chris turned up and did some driving on our Baldwin.

Steve Harland who came down to support the club from up North with his B1 4-6-0, Mike Sinclair had his Shire going well and yet another Mike, Mike Burke, ran his Class 33. Alf used "Little Pete". The little people seem to love to ride behind this engine. In all a good start to the month of March. The weather stayed fine till the finish then it went bonkers a large black cloud came over the wind blowing very hard with hail, rain we got very wet. Luckily it didn't rain for too long!

It did not help I had to lose my car keys. I must thank all those members who stayed on to help finding my key in the fading light with no luck at this time of day. Mike Sinclair very kindly ran me home to get the spare key. Many thanks Mike also Stuart who stayed on till we got back.

A number of members paid a visit to the club house on a Tuesday evening to see the 00 railway running with the full length extension, as far as myself I have only seen it once before and that was at an exhibition a very long time ago. I liked the terminus seeing trains of all sort running to and fro from the main layout made it interesting to look at. Mike Sinclair, Stuart Kidd, Lionel and younger members put on a very good show. I heard a remark "I think I will stick with steam this looks very complicated!". Well done everybody for putting on a good show for us.

Wednesday turned out to be bright and fine so plenty of the ongoing jobs were being worked through. Mike and Nigel changed the steaming bay water supply to the ground level track to come from the club house water pump and the tank in the coal shed is no longer used. This job needed a lot of digging and hard graft getting this done as mentioned in the last Prospectus the coal shed will be removed some time later.

Talking of which I found the March Prospectus a very interesting read this time. It's good to see the Pug is back once again. All the contributors have done us well and a big thank you to our editor John Billard!

With very nice weather club running day went well with plenty of interesting locomotives running. Mike Jones fresh back from South Africa he and Chris brought along their 0-6-0 Baldwin back after some work on the wheel sets. It has been out of

action for some time. It was due a hydraulic test but as the engine had stood around for a long period there were a few leaks and a problem with the regulator which will not take long to get sorted. Also we tested their latest loco a GWR 2200 Collett 0-6-0. What a very nice engine. They got the cab detail is very much like the real thing. This engine was due a steam test which was passed okay but as the engine is rather tight to move, well it is a new one, sometimes this happens. The regulator would not move while under full steam pressure, as Mike did not have the tender at the track he was using the Baldwin tender for coal and water just for the test. This snag will soon be put right. It will be a very good looking loco on our railway.

Ian Lane was having a run on the ground level with his Pansy which was steaming very well. Mike Sinclair was running his 3½” Royal Scot, Andy Midwinter also on the raised track using his 2-6-0 tender loco for a change from being on the ground. Chas Benham also had a steam test on his 0-4-0 a Polly 2 passed by Nigel this time. Peter Culham was getting used to driving his Maid of Kent. He will soon be using this engine on birthdays etc.

The club Baldwin developed a knock on one of the con rods the wedge and glut was missing so the loco was withdrawn for repairs. Ralph Appleford tried out his recently completed driving truck he has built for use with his 7¼” Tich which should be finished soon we hope! He was pleased it went through the points and the brake works well. Also he has built a large water tank inside so his supply should last a while.

I hope to have my latest project in steam very soon and about time say some!

PONDERINGS

by 61249

(Continued from the last issue)

As 1990 approached, my time in Project mode for the Chief Mechanical & Electrical Engineer (CM&EE) was coming to an end. It so happened that this coincided with a seismic shift in BR's organisation. The basis of the future was to be Sectorisation – dividing the railway into Business Segments the names of which will be familiar to some of my readers. Inter-City, Network South East, Provincial, Parcels, Freight. Each of these sectors had its own Director level chief engineer, reporting not to the CMEE for BR, but to the Business manager of the Sector, who also had a full team including marketing, finance and operations. These new organisations were populated by folk who had been through the Leadership 500 and leadership 5000 programmes, raising the business awareness of the top and middle tiers of management in BR. An impressive programme, and included moments of great fun for me. My last two projects for the CME were wildly different, both in terms of success, and type. One was on the personal instruction of the CME to get all the loco fleet into the same (correct) BR Livery, in line with the corporate design manual. To this day I have no idea as to why this was seen as necessary, and it started with a fleet that was all over the place in livery, - a lot were blue, some were grey, double arrows were

either big or small depending on the day of the week and roofs were black, grey, or white if they came from Stratford. There was also some early influence of the freight sector with different symbols for the various fleets (steel, coal, aggregates, etc.). Inter-City and NSE were relatively easy. There was no money to actually paint anything, so all I could do was to make sure that the overhaul specs included repainting in the correct livery, and to try and make sure that this was clear and agreed with the vehicle owner.

With the fleet in great flux and organisations changing by the month it was a thankless and hopeless task overall, and I think I achieved zero influence and completely failed to show any real cohesion in the approach. Presumably my boss realised that his time of influence over such matters had passed, and I escaped censure for my failure. By the turn of the century I could look over the sidings at Derby from my office window and count over 20 different vehicle liveries in one vista – and I doubt that we will ever see the corporate predominance that blue with a double arrow achieved in BR. The variety is, of course, great for modellers and model loco manufacturers. It's an ill wind... as they say.

The second project was to represent the CM&EE in the top down overhaul of the railway structure aligning all the functions into the previously mentioned five Business Sectors. This was called "Organising for Quality" and was led by BR's Chief Executive at the time. History shows that this was the way that the BR Board planned to move into the private sector, and each of the main passenger businesses would be vertically integrated (Trains and track). The CM&EE was already aligned into Business Sectors, and the drivers of change to trains were genuinely the Sector Business chiefs. Some interesting things happened as a result, not all of them good, but one was the influence of the Provincial business over the new trains they desperately needed. This different approach led to the emergence of the class 323 for Birmingham Suburban services (The CM&EE would have built more 455s for London and cascaded older vehicles to the provinces) and the cheapo cheapo box on 4 wheels Pacers. As I said, not all the business leading was good.

OfQ was a good project though. (We missed the cynics opportunity to shorten the title to Oh f**k You). Mainly it involved the other functions coming into line with what the CM&EE had done some time previously. With the benefit of hindsight, I would also say that some engineering functions really only entered into the scheme with reluctance, the change being little more than a new job title on their office door. The culture change from being an engineering silo where the Chief Engineer was king, to becoming a service to the Business was far too difficult for some. In signalling it was made much more difficult by the aftermath of the Clapham Junction accident, where the most safety conscious part of the railway caused a collision by getting the wrong wire on the wrong terminal. This shook the organisation to the core, but when the official history is written, it will I believe, show that it deepened the "Silo" mentality in the signalling profession.

The Chief S&T Engineer retained a status second only to God with even less chance of talking to his business colleagues in the same language. This may be unfair, but for me helps to explain why Railtrack and the Network Rail have had a great hill to climb culturally, and why signalling schemes to this day cost far more than they should. The CM&EE sanctioned buses on rails, but the S&T demanded gold plated safety. Both could not have been right, but both could be wrong to some degree.

When you do something different in railways, there are only two arguments needed to get in the way “We have never done that before” (therefore it is risky and not to be tried) or “We *have* done that before and it didn’t work” (Avoiding the fact that it may have been 100 years ago when the world was a different place). The big train issues raised by those who opposed Sectorisation were:-

1. The reliability of the railway will go down because we will lose the flexibility to use any loco on any train and get ourselves out of trouble.
2. We will need more locos because they will no longer work passenger during the day and freight at night.

Looking back I am sure that the first of these is true to a limited extent, and there are plenty of anecdotes about how the “Spare” loco from another business could have been used to substitute for a failure. However, such use was not outlawed by any essential rules, and all it really needed (and still does) was a call to the right person to sanction the impact on the owning business (or not, as the case may be – they have customers too). Often of course, the real reasons that it does not happen are more to do with staff training, and loco suitability for the task, than the fact that it belongs to the wrong business. We did not see many Deltics on coal trains, even though they were painted the same blue, did we?

The second excuse turned out to be 100% wrong. Sectorisation led to scrapping at least 10%, if not 20% of the fleet. The reason was simple, in BR days locomotive utilisation was pathetically low, particularly on the common user fleets. No one saw the real cost of ownership, nor could any one business decide the loco was not earning its keep. Immediately the loco was allocated to a business sector (Freight sector, Coal traffic for example) the costs and revenue would become apparent under one management. With a bit of imaginative diagramming and maintenance planned for the low use periods, dramatic improvements in efficiency could be, and were made. The railway could run with less locos, and did. This does not apply so readily in the passenger business where the fleet size is driven by the need for vehicles in the peak, but even here, maintaining the trains when they were not needed was an important part of “Sweating the Asset”. BR shifted well up the European railway efficiency league well before privatisation as a result. (*to be continued*)



Picture of a Class 47 No. 47222 at Didcot in Railfreight Construction Sub-Sector livery on 29 November 1992. The Class 37 is in Engineers livery and the logo is Carlisle Currock Wagon Shops from memory. Photo Ian Osborne

COMMITTEE NOTES

from Peter Culham

The committee wants to keep members up to date with meeting content as there is such a lot going on at present and in this way we can ensure that all members can be aware of what plans and developments are under discussion and consideration.

In brief therefore;

Renewal of Club Lease

Has been subject of much discussion and meetings with Reading Borough Council and is nearly ready to be signed, subject to the agreeing to some terms and conditions, which will give us a lease to cover the next seven years which is the maximum they are able to commit to.

Club Incorporation

The documentation has been very involved in ensuring that the wording reflects accurately the activities, standing, and future proposals for the club. In final throes, it should be submitted very shortly to the R.V.A. for their comments before submission to the Charities Commission.

Young Engineers/Modellers

Way forward defined with commitment to have the first engineers meeting on Friday 24 April. A Polly IV kit was discussed and the committee agreed that the purchase should go ahead.

Club Running's

Starting time has been confused recently but it can be confirmed that one or more key holder will be in attendance by 11am.

Replacement of signage

Ongoing and also to help the crossing attendants on the ground level on public opening days, a 'W' sign is to be installed some 30 yards before the crossing. Engineers to note please the request for whistle.

Other matters

Reports on model railway sections; birthday parties; public runnings; treasury, and health and safety. Additionally maintenance and project work includes; replacement of carpet tiles in clubhouse, clubhouse roof paint, anti-slip surface on both bridges (just completed) external lighting for clubhouse area, kitchen soakaway digging and resetting, track fettling, serious trimming and clearance of vegetation and bushes at the Bath road side of our land, and of course the Raised Track Extension.

RAISED TRACK EXTENSION LATEST

Since the last Prospectus, further preparatory work includes completion of sinking of water pipe alongside raised track to supply ground level steaming bays from existing supply pipe at raised track steaming bay area, dismantling and removal of water tank and standing from inside garage, and the external supply pipe from guttering, purchase of metal coal bunker to replace the life-expired ones in the garage and removal of unwanted items from garage including dried paint cans and broken floor tiles, and disposal of same.

Next in line is to isolate power supply to garage, dismantle and dispose of garage; clear and level the base of same, all in timing with the locating of, purchase and receiving of a 20ft container, in due course for use in storing the RTE hardware.

RSME CLOTHING

Reading Society of Model Engineers clothing is now available at Cavaliers in Weldale St, Reading, RG1 7BX. Prices are competitive with Polo shirts at £12:50, Sweat Shirts at £15:00, Fleece at £19:50. All of the above prices are dependant on the quality required. Other items are available, please see their web site cavaliersT-shirts.co.uk or visit their premises in [Weldale Street](#) opposite the entrance to [Iceland](#), or contact Tel 0118 9574885.

Aprils EGM Postponed

The EGM to discuss charitable status intended for April has been postponed until all relevant information has been received back from the Charities Commission. The committee will keep you informed as and when the EGM can go ahead.

THE LNER B-17 CLASS

by Rob Denton



Reference the last “Prospectus” March 2015 and the reference in Dawson’s Diary to David Wilkingson’s 7 ¼ inch B-17 that he is building, I should like to elaborate on Les’s reference to them being known as the “Footballer Class” as this is not strictly true. Whilst these locomotives were attributed to Gresley they were actually designed by the North British Locomotive Company who had previously carried out work for the LNER.

They differed from Gresley locomotives in a number of major engineering features in so far as they had divided drive with outside cylinders driving the middle axle and middle cylinder driving the front axle. The N.B. Loco Co had applied this pattern of divided drive the previous year 1927 when they had constructed the “Royal Scots” for the London Midland Scottish.

Another major departure was that the Gresley conjugated gear was mounted to the rear of the cylinders as requested by Doncaster and this led to the valve gear having to be revised/redesigned which delayed their appearance.

Upon acceptance of the drawings N.B. Loco Co then built the first ten locomotives in 1928. The locomotives were built to a light construction for the former Great Eastern section but this led to maintenance issues including frame fractures and ultimately led to modifications which led to sub classifications B-17/1-B-17/4. This also helped with the many variations in the brake systems including Westinghouse, vacuum and steam brakes and differing springing arrangements to help with the ongoing frame difficulties. The original 10 locos had 9 x 5/8” leaves the second batch had 1 x 5/8” +12 9/16” leaves. Finally the third batch had 15 x ½” leaves at four foot centres which gave maximum flexibility. Batches of locomotives were built at Darlington in 1931/33/35.

Collectively the class was known as the Sandringhams after the first built, christened “Sandringham” after the then king’s Norfolk residence. The following 47 locomotives were all named after English country houses. This group all ran with the small 3,700 gallon Great Eastern Railway style short wheelbase tenders and made up

the larger part of the class B-17/1-B-17/3. The B-17/4 locomotives were built in two batches in 1936 at Darlington and 1937 by Robert Stephenson & Co. These 25 locomotives differed from the previous five batches in that they had group standard 4,200 gallon tenders and were all named after Association football clubs” hence their nickname “Footballers” all of the class were allocated in the Southern Area of the London North Eastern Railway throughout their careers and the eastern area of British Railways.

Finally just to really confuse things there were two further sub classes B-17/5 which consisted of two locomotives. These were rebuilt in September 1937 to work the East Anglian train service between Liverpool Street & Norwich and were streamlined in the style of Gresley’s mega successful A-4 Class pacifics which they retained until 1951 when they were once again rebuilt to conventional form.

In 1941, upon the death of Sir Nigel Gresley, Edward Thompson took over as Chief Mechanical Engineer and this gave us the variant B-17/6. Thompson took his B1 boiler which was based on the B17 boiler and in 1943 fitted one with reduced pressure 180lb to a B-17. Later between 1947 and 1958 55 B-17s were fitted with these boilers with a working pressure of 225lbs the same as his B1 Class.

Like all Gresley three cylinder locomotives the B-17 suffered mechanically during the Second World War and a much more drastic rebuilding of ten of the locomotives, once again by Thompson, resulted in the class B-2 where they were rebuilt to two cylinder locomotives to reduce maintenance costs.

I hope members find this brief synopsis of the B-17 of interest and it also goes to illustrate how varied locomotives were before the demise of steam engines.

ANOTHER TALE FROM THE FOOTPLATE

Breaking all the rules by Mike Burke

As you may recall I acted as Traction Inspector on an overnight run from Cambridge to Southall with locomotives 34027 ‘Taw Valley, 4472 Flying Scotsman’ and 70000 ‘Britannia’ where we stopped at Stratford to take water and change crews.

It was in the early hours of Monday morning when we arrived in the yard only to find that no BR crews has arrived to man the engines. I reported this to the man in charge and said I would like the engines to take water whilst we waited. He said “We ain’t got no water here mate. The water board have shut us off whilst they change a faulty mains pipe but they hope to have it on by 6.00am”. The time was now about 01.00am and with no onward crews I felt sure we would be in trouble with low water in the tenders by then as we had covered some 50 miles and had another 30 or so miles to Southall.

I contacted the control office to find out where the relief crews were and was told the job was covered by Stratford men who should be there. The place was as silent as

the grave, the only noise coming from the gentle sizzling of steam valves.

I decided to find a crew room and wandered around this huge depot. Eventually I arrived at the crew room to find one sleeping driver lay on a bench. He aroused himself as I came in and said "Wotcher mate. Are you with the train I have to pilot to Acton?" (This I found to be the limit of his route knowledge.) On finding that said train was in fact three live steam engines and support coaches he said "Crikey, I don't know nothing about steam engines and they only had me available for this job" "Don't you have anybody who can drive these things?"

At this point I realised that drastic situations need drastic measures and so after discussing the falling water situation I got the support crews with the other engines to man and look after 4472 and 70000 whilst I and a support crew fireman took over 34027 'Taw Valley'. The Stratford pilotman was quite chatty and explained the signals and speed limits to me as I drove our train out onto the main line and under the wires heading for Acton.

My fireman was a Severn Valley volunteer and he had fired 34027 on a visit to his railway. I found him competent and began to enjoy my illicit drive. This journey meant traversing the North London Line via Willesden High Level in the dark of night. This proved the excellent visibility provided by colour light signalling but did nothing for my nerves as we hurtled through the inky darkness. We diverted to the right at Acton Wells Junction and then down the bank onto Western Region metals at Acton Main Line. Here our pilotman said, "This is as far as I go mate. She's all yours" and with signals gleaming green as far as the eye could see I looked around for a Western Region crew but no one was waiting. It seemed that the whole world was still asleep.

As I was on my home ground and knew every inch of the railway and signals in this area I decided to carry on finally arriving on Southall depot with just over 1000 gallons of water remaining in the tender. After damping down the fires and filling the boilers it was time to go home to bed. The odd thing was that nobody ever queried how these engines got from Stratford to Southall without any BR steam drivers and firemen (but now you know).

On a similar occasion I was called out from home at midnight by the Chief Controller and asked to escort a light engine No.80080 (a BR Standard 2-6-4 tank) from Didcot to Southall Depot acting as Traction Inspector. I agreed and quickly changed then made my way to Didcot where I left my car.

On arrival on the GWR depot the engine was quietly steaming on the outgoing road but no crew. A quick search revealed the BR men had got fed up waiting for a Traction Inspector and gone home but the GWR guys were still 'rain to go'. Based on my route knowledge of this area and lack of train crews this late on a Sunday Night/Monday morning, particularly men with any steam locomotive experience, I decided to drive the loco myself so consulted with the GWR men and found that they all had firing experience but not on the main line.

They were agreeable to fire for me so after checking the loco over I arranged with the Reading MASC to give us the road out of Didcot Depot and send us to Southall.

After leaving the Depot we were routed relief line, and with green lights all the way, I wound the reverser back to 25% and with the regulator just cracked open she purred like a contented cat, running at just under 50mph. This was great until we reached Reading where a succession of signal checks saw us routed up platform 9 and a stop for a few minutes. I took the opportunity to speak with the signalman (who I knew) who told me there was a problem with some signals in the West Drayton area.

We then had a clear run to Slough were once again we stopped in the Up Relief platform. This time the Movements Supervisor advised us that signals had gone out near West Drayton and trains were being hand signalled through the area. On getting the signal to proceed I took it steady until just after Longfield Junction I received one yellow. Then at the next signal at Langley station a red.

Here a hand signalman told me that thieves had stolen a long length of signalling cable and no signals or track circuits were working. I was authorised to run to West Drayton station and stop there for further instructions. I opened the regulator and we ran at caution keeping a good lookout along the way. It was in the Iver area where I noticed a large fire burning with a purple glow near a gypsy encampment.

I knew that when you burn copper wire this gives off a purple glow and so deduced that this was likely where the evidence was being converted to untraceable scrap. I stopped at West Drayton to report what I had seen and state my suspicions.

The signals were cleared from here on and after a short run and crossing from Relief to Main Line I eased her onto the goods line then forward onto the Depot at Southall. My last job was to hand her over to the maintenance men and report "No problems with the engine" then make my way back to Didcot and collect my car. (Once again, nobody ever queried how this engine got to Southall without a BR driver and fireman).

Addendum A Traction Inspector is authorised and required to be competent to operate and take charge of any traction unit or locomotive and to control any operatives responsible with such movement. He is also required to have route knowledge of the lines to be traversed. So apart from bending the rules by having a pilotman I acted within the spirit of them. MB

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WOLVERTON PUG - on the Western Region

(continued from the last issue)

The Passenger Train Office at Paddington had a Head of Section, who also handled Royal Train requirements for the WR. He was graded MS2 (Management Staff grade 2) There was his assistant (MS1) who also handled all carriage cleaning issues. A CO4 (Clerical Office grade 4) who dealt with public complaints and liaised with the PR and PO (Public Relations and Publicity Office).

An MS1, Head of the Passenger Rolling Stock sub-section, under whom was a CO4 handling the catering vehicle fleet, Sleeping Car fleet and the Blue Pullman sets and a CO3 who dealt with all the locomotive hauled passenger stock and allocated spare stock to excursion train requests and replacing vehicles in train sets for Main Works overhaul. Also under the MS2 were the three Head Office Passenger Inspectors and the North East South West Investigator based at Derby, who trouble shot problems with the cross country inter-regional trains and represented the WR on the NE/SW Passenger Committee. Finally there were the two CO2 clerks of whom I was one, who sorted all the guard's journals which arrived daily for every class one train on the WR. I dealt with the red, down trains and the other chap the blue, up trains. We extracted all the passenger counts recorded at each stop, any reported defects on the stock or locos and the punctuality at destination.

Next door to this fiefdom was the Engineering Planning Section, who agreed the times and places that the Chief Civil Engineer could take possession of sections of the railway. This sub-section consisted of another MS2, under whom he had an assistant who was an MS1 dealing with Squadron Tamping, and the Speno Rail Grinder. Also a couple of CO4s and a couple of CO3s dealing with the detailed possession requirements, subsequent alterations to the train plan and the publication of the weekly K2 notice, which listed all temporary speed restrictions and the upcoming engineering possessions, showing the mileage and signalling limits of each one.

On my first day at Paddington in 1970, I was summoned to see B.J. Gover Esq.. Mr Gover at the dizzy grade of MS4 was in charge of all the above and not surprisingly in those days, enjoyed the seclusion of his own office, along the corridor.

When I nervously knocked upon his door, I was summoned to enter and he gestured me to a chair. He was on the telephone. What he said next made me wonder what I was getting involved with. Spread before him was a huge chart with lots of figures and coloured lines, which meant absolutely nothing to me. He then uttered these immortal words "Ah yes! Unloading Sealions at Dolphin".

It was some while before I discovered that the Civil Engineer's fleet of wagons were named after various sea creatures and a Sealion is a bogie ballast wagon. Dolphin by the way is a crossover between main and relief lines just east of Slough. I understand it was named after a pub!

I worked my way through the grades, via the Rolling Stock and Engineering Planning Sections.

For a while I was in charge of the loco hauled passenger fleet, including sending them to main works for repair, as required by the Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineer's Shopping Control. The vehicles were sent to works based on time lapse, not hours in traffic as now. This meant a vehicle out of traffic for weeks awaiting a local repair would get sent to main works, when really it could have been repaired locally and carried on for some time before needing coded works repair. Not only that, the Shopping Control were constantly trying to ensure that the main works, in

this case Wolverton, were kept supplied with work!

Every now and again a vehicle overdue for coded repair would fail to appear on the rolling stock weekly returns. These were manual and consisted of the three HQ Inspectors walking round the various main rolling stock yards on a Monday, and Tuesday, coupled with reports from the outlying stations by the Bristol and Cardiff Divisional Rolling Stock Sections. We did not receive any reports from the London Division unless any vehicle had been detached defective somewhere on the Division, as the loco-hauled stock was all based at Old Oak Common and HQ Inspector George Smith trudged round the vast complex on a Monday morning in all weathers. If wet his notebook entries were in pencil!

Inspector Tony Gorton used to do Newton Abbot, Laira Plymouth and Penzance. On one occasion when Tony was on annual leave we sent George Smith, on the Tuesday. On his return the following day we asked him if he had had any problems with the journey as the West of England Main line was blocked at Somerton by a collapsed grain silo and all trains were going via Melksham and Westbury or via Bristol. On being asked he started to laugh. "The signalman at Somerton keeps chickens" he chortled!

To complete the reporting of rolling stock whereabouts each week the five regions exchanged telegraphic wires listing all foreign rolling stock on hand or in their train sets.

The WR return tended to show much more in the summer due to the holiday trains running to Devon and Cornwall. These tended to utilise 90 mph mark 1 coaches, which were only used once a week plus sometimes for excursions whilst stabled in the West of England, and would lose vehicles due to hot axle boxes.

Sometimes these detached vehicles, once repaired, would be worked to London as strengthening vehicles on busy trains. This could cause difficulties with the summer Saturday seat reservation scheme if the vehicle was compartment stock, since the WR second class compartments were four seats per side, whereas the London Midland, Eastern and Scottish Regions were three per side with armrests. (The Southern had very little loco hauled stock which were mainly opens).

The Train Planning Section at Paddington employed a very eager chap who was known as "The Pope", mainly because of his thoroughness and pursuit, quite rightly so, of ensuring the correct formations of all our train sets by his personal platform end gazing at Paddington. If one of the weekend workings contained one of these 'three a side' compartment seconds (SK or CK) and Old Oak Common had no spare 'four a side' vehicles he would instruct them to sew up the armrests and renumber the seats accordingly.

Vehicles overdue for main works repair appeared on the Shopping Control "Lead List". This showed the number of weeks overdue for each vehicle, with highest number of weeks at the top. There was one, a mark 1 Second Corridor (SK) -100mph, Commonwealth Bogied vehicle ,(W26064) which would normally be easy to trace,

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Vehicles overdue for main works repair appeared on the Shopping Control "Lead List". This showed the number of weeks overdue for each vehicle, with highest number of weeks at the top. There was one, a mark 1 Second Corridor (SK) -100mph, Commonwealth Bogied vehicle, (W26064) which would normally be easy to trace, as most of them were in the London commuter sets, which had reached something like 52 weeks overdue works, and the Shopping Control had sent a wire to other regions demanding it be traced, red-carded and despatched to Wolverton Works.

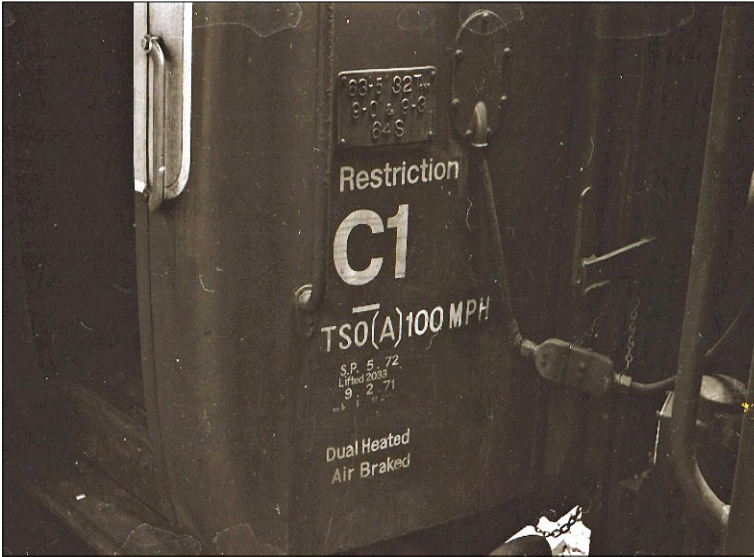
Well nothing turned up. My last record of it from memory showed it at Bristol. I used to be a member of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society and received their monthly magazine The Railway Observer, which reported all sorts of things including unusual locomotive movements, visits to depots etc. etc. One month somebody had gone round Sheffield Nunnery Carriage Sidings, and lo and behold there in amongst all the ER vehicles was W26064. Needless to say once I had told them, the ER Shopping Control despatched it immediately to York Works not Wolverton.. *(to be continued)*



Happy Birthday Fred Few

Members will recall Fred Few's hair raising tale of when his troopship was nearly torpedoed while he was in the RAF in the second war.

Fred was 90 on 29 March and, on behalf of all RSME members, we would like to wish Fred a very happy 90th birthday.



Above A Mark 2A TSO showing the works shopping dates. It had a bogie overhaul (C4) at Wolverton Works (2033) on 9th February 1971 and is next due works attention in May 1972 (15 month shopping regime) SP stands for Shopping Proposal. *Below* Platform 1 at Paddington in summer 1971 shows an ex works WR Mark 1 BSK (brake second) marshalled next to what must be a vacuum braked Mark 2z Open Second (TSO).

Photos Wolverton Pug



DIARY

April 2015

Sunday 5 th	Public Running. Track Marshal Alf Cusworth
Saturday 11 th	Club Running
Monday 13 th	Committee Meeting
Monday 13 th	Special Needs 13.30 to 17.00
W/E 18 th /19 th	Relay carpet tiles in club house
Friday 24 th	Junior Engineers
Saturday 25 th	Junior Engineers 10.00 to 14.00
	Club Running 14.00
Sunday 26 th	Birthday Parties 11.00 to 13.30.
	14.30 to 17.00

May 2015

Saturday 2 nd	Birthday Parties 11.00 to 13.30.
	14.30 to 17.00
Sunday 3 rd	Public Running. Track Marshal Jim Brown
Saturday 9 th	Club Running
	ALSR Rivermead
Sunday 10 th	Birthday Party 14.30 to 17.00.
Sunday 17 th	Birthday Parties 11.00 to 13.30.
	14.30 to 17.00
Friday 22 nd	Junior Engineers
Saturday 23 rd	Birthday Party 11.00 to 13.30.
	Junior Engineers 13.30 onwards
Monday 25 th	Public Running Track Marshal Mike Chalmers
W/E 30 th /31 st	Open Weekend

Public Running setting up from 10.30

Morning Birthday Parties setting up from 10.00

Afternoon only Birthday Parties setting up from 12.30

Opinions expressed in PROSPECTUS are the personal views of the contributor and cannot be taken as reflecting the views of the club committee or editor.

**The deadline for the April PROSPECTUS is
18 April. This is the final date.**

Contributions from all members are greatly welcomed

They may be submitted in hard or soft copy to the editor.

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