

Reading Society of Model  
Engineers  
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Charity Number 1163244

# The Prospectus

December 2019



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GWR 2-6-2 tank No 6142 and Gresley carriage at Paddington on 30 December 1962. I was on my way to visit Swindon Works and this is as far as I got! On that day we did not know that this freeze up was to last till March the following year. Photo John Billard

**DAWSON'S DIARY**  
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## **DAWSON'S DIARY**

**kept by the President**

The RSME membership turned out in force to attend the funeral of our highly respected member of the RSME Fred Few a wonderful witty kind man. A real craftsman and gentleman the club room won't be the same without him we will miss you, our Fred!

For a change some good news on Thursday 14 November 2019 David Wilkinson walked into the club looking fit and well and made the tea! Well done and thank you David!

I must congratulate Alasdair Milne on his latest model of a 7 ¼" GNSR "Gordon Highlander" to get a "Highly Commended" award. Well done! John Spokes photographs shows how much detail Alasdair put into building this engine. It was a pity that it was put on show at the MME in a bad position on the stand. You could not get a good look at it.

Fitting new bogies to the raised track trollies is progressing well. Roger Pattie and Andy Day have now completed three. Having both bogies with brakes will be much better for the drivers. Nigel and John have put temporary straps to secure the doors on the service hut by the carriage shed on the ground level track. This job is ongoing. It will be finished in the near future!

Once again, I would like to wish all RSME members a happy Christmas and a good New Year.

## **A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR**

**John Billard**

The November trustees meeting was busy and effective. We can announce that the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies rally will take place on our tracks on 26 September. The finances are healthy and that allows us to continue with improvements to our site.

There was a detailed maintenance report from Mike Manners covering ground level track improvements including motorising points, signal works, an overhaul of the club Baldwin, and replacement of the bogies on the raised track carriages. All good stuff and a credit to all those involved.

We have had a successful public running in October and once again we are concentrating on the role of the track marshals to ensure that running continues smoothly and all engine drivers present have a chance of a good run.

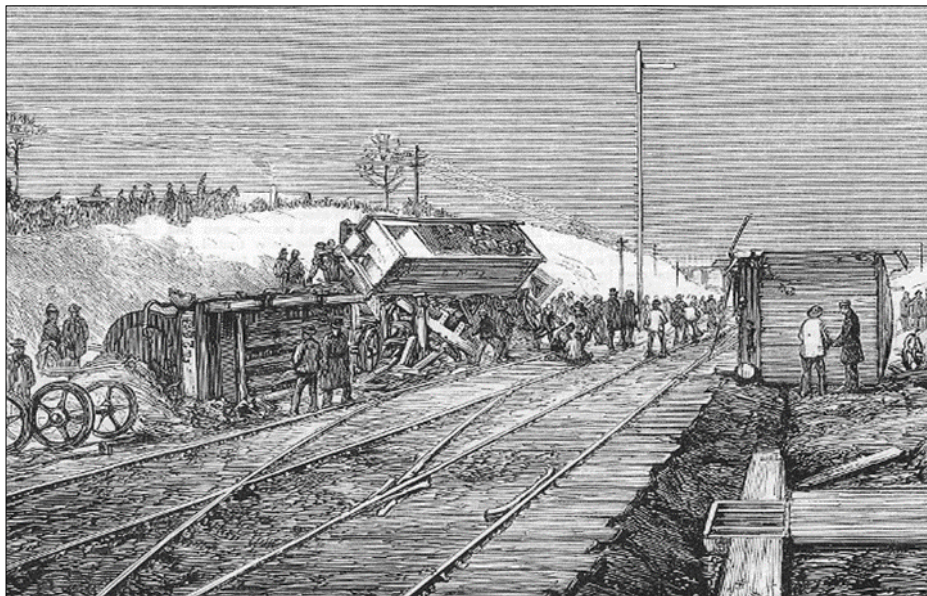
Our well attended winter evening talks are continuing. The next will be on 23 January. Finally we are considering a "bring and buy" evening in the new year so start by looking under that bench!

## **SURPLUS 5" BOGIES AVAILABLE**

As part of our schedule of overhauls of the raised track carriages a number of used bogies are available to members.

Please contact Peter Harrison.

## The Charfield Lithograph\* – A Ghost Story for Christmas by John Spokes



‘So, Vicar,’ remarked Quedgley, my friend and near neighbour, ‘you think this dealer chappie of yours is taking you for a fool?’

‘Yes indeed, Quedgley, yes indeed, but once Christmas has passed, I intend to write and inform him that we should go back to our original business arrangement.’

My ‘dealer chappie’, as Quedgley called him, was Algernon Heward, an acquaintance of a few years who owned a small gallery in London specialising in transport illustrations. When my wife died, I used some of her estate to add to my collection of railway prints and Heward was able to provide some desirable examples. Subsequently, he sent me items on approval; I purchased and kept those I liked and the rest I returned - at my expense, of course. I thought this would give me some priority in his sales and at first this worked, but latterly his offerings became more frequent, more mundane and of poor artistic merit.

‘What ‘stuff’ has he sent you this time?’ enquired Quedgley, with a hint of amusement.

‘Oh, it’s that small pile over there.’ I made a vague gesture to a place adjacent the sideboard. ‘There are two prints of the Highland Railway that are half-reasonable, but the hand-tinted photograph of a Claud Hamilton is appallingly executed. The top one is a lithograph, which Heward thought I might find particularly interesting, but I can’t understand why.’

Quedgley left his seat, picked up the small picture and took it back to study. 'I see what you mean, Vicar, hardly inspiring - an oblique perspective of a stretch of railway in a cutting, an overbridge in the distance and a few signals and telegraph poles. And here, in the very bottom of the picture, is a shape that appears out of place, like a person with a hood. I can just make-out his or her shoulders.'

'That's funny. I never noticed. Perhaps I spilt some coffee on it earlier,' I postulated, 'but I don't see how it could have got on the print - it's under glass'.

He proffered me the picture and indeed there was a black shape. I had certainly missed this, and I made some dismissive remark, before placing it back with the others. Quedgley and I then resumed our earlier conversation, begun over dinner, which mainly concerned the recent, so-called, Munich Crisis.

The next day was the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December and, as is a clergyman's lot in the festive season, I was heavily engaged in pre-Christmas preparations. I returned home at dusk. My housekeeper, Mrs Rogers, had established a good fire in the sitting room and had lit some of the gaslights. I poured myself a sherry and turned my attention to the four prints and the possibility of at least repacking them before Christmas came. As soon as I brought the first picture into the light, I could see that the black stain, observed the previous evening, was now much larger. The hooded head was the same, but the shape had moved up and slightly across the picture so that a whole figure was visible. I could see no details other than its black flowing cloak and my instincts led me to think I would not want to see the face under that hood. I put the picture back in its place, this time reversed, its image to the wall.

Mrs Rogers prepared dinner for 6pm. This I bolted-down and then phoned Quedgley using the telephone in the hallway.

'Anymore strange pictures, old chap?' he quipped.

I was not amused but resisted showing it. 'I wonder if you would come over?' I asked.

'I'll come after my dinner, if that's alright with you?'

But it wasn't, and in a somewhat pleading voice I suggested he came straight away, which he did.

'You sounded rather agitated on the phone.' Without responding, I picked up the picture, the cause of my anxious state, and placed it in his hands.

'By Jove! That's a strange puzzlement.'

'Yes, maybe,' I noted with an air of desperation, 'but what do you think it means?'

He sat down and pored-over the print, trying, I assumed, to formulate some satisfactory explanation that would calm my agitated spirits. In that, he more than failed.

'The black figure,' he stated, 'has grown much and moved since last evening and has also turned its head to look back up the line. It also appears to be operating a signal apparatus at the side of the railway.' He paused, and then, 'You know, old

chap, I wouldn't want to bump into that thing at night, especially out here in 'the sticks' where we reside.'

All very comforting I thought, ironically. So, even during the short wait for Quedgley, the figure had moved again. 'But there must be an explanation!' I emphasised.

After a few minutes deliberation Quedgley declared a brainwave. 'The title of the lithograph is 'The Railway at Charfield'. Do you have a Gazetteer or Atlas, so that we can look-up this place?' I found an old atlas and from this he discovered it to be a small village between Gloucester and Bristol. 'It's on a railway too, the Midland line from Birmingham to Bristol. But apart from identifying its location, this makes nothing any clearer.' There was a long silence, during which I stared at the map expecting some answer to miraculously materialise, when Quedgley broke my concentration. 'I have an old school-friend who works on a newspaper in Bristol. I could phone him tomorrow and see if he's able to provide some insight into your little problem.' I took some offence at his phrase 'my little problem' and, partly to placate my irritation and partly as a result of my exhortations, Quedgley agreed to phone his friend that evening. He would go home, dine, phone from there, and return later. Meanwhile, I packed three of the pictures to send to Algernon Heward. 'The Railway at Charfield', I kept, but I could not steel myself to look at it again and, to reinforce this sentiment, I took a table runner, wrapped it round the frame and laid it on the floor, under the sideboard.

Quedgley reappeared, looking triumphant. He poured us both a measure of whisky, flopped into his usual chair and caught his breath. Then, sipping occasionally at his drink, he narrated his story.

'Well, what a coincidence..... my school chum was, and is, a reporter on 'The Western Daily Press'. 10 years ago, as a cub-reporter, he attended the horrific aftermath of a dawn train crash between a Bristol-bound express and a Goods train at Charfield at a location where the railway narrows in a cutting under a road bridge. There was a serious fire, and many passengers died or were injured. Apparently, the driver and fireman of the express claimed the signals protecting the goods train were showing green; the signalman was equally certain he had not moved them from red. The express crew were tried for manslaughter, but were acquitted, and this, this is an interesting bit, there was some evidence that a signal had been tampered with.' Quedgley took a gulp of whisky. I sat engrossed. 'But there is one more enigmatic aspect of this story. Among the dead were two young children who were never identified and whose remains were never claimed by any parent, relative or guardian.' His voice fell almost to a whisper, 'Two young children travelling alone, through the night. That, in my view, my dear Vicar, is the real mystery of this affair. Did some person or persons unknown have a malevolent hand in this?'

We both sat in silence for a few moments.

'If there is some substance in this', I said, 'then should we not bring it to the

attention of the Authorities?’

‘I think not.’, exclaimed Quedgeley. ‘Firstly, we might be considered by those Authorities to be a little irrational, deranged even. Our reputations could suffer and, in your profession, my dear Reverend, it is unlikely to realise any sympathy with your parishioners. No, a decade has passed and I’m sure, as a man of the cloth, you can and must retain this as a secret.’

That night I slept fitfully, as they say; a jumble of distressing and horrific scenes falling in and out of my turbulent dreams. Christmas Eve: I awoke early, before dawn, dressed myself in some old clothes and took an oil lamp, some matches and a newspaper and, together with that well-wrapped print of Charfield, went to a secluded part of the garden to make a small bonfire. I placed screwed-up newspaper on the table-runner and its unwanted contents. I turned slightly to avoid the wind in order to strike a match, but before I could do so, I noticed a small cloud of smoke issuing out of the runner. Within seconds this had become a conflagration and I was forced to move back by the unexpected heat accompanied by a loud noise of crackling wood and shattering glass.

The inferno lasted at most two minutes and then again blackness. I collected up my lantern and matches and walked back towards the house. On the way I turned to confirm the fire had died. I saw a light, not from the fire, but an adjacent first-floor window and silhouetted in it was the outline of my neighbour Richard Quedgley. I turned again and walked on. ‘I’m not sure, Richard, that I can keep this secret.’, I muttered under my breath.

A month has passed and yesterday I sold the last of my railway art collection. I had become obsessed with examining the details of the pictures, particularly as the darkness began to fall. You will agree, I’m sure, that is not a healthy situation for a man in my position.

*\*With acknowledgements to ‘The Mezzotint’ by M. R. James*



### **For Sale**

5” Compass House dock shunter. 24 volt 0-4-0 battery loco. Two tone horn. BR green late crest, wasp stripes.

Good for birthday parties and public running. Complete with 2 x 12v mains battery chargers and separate horn battery charger.

**Contact George**

**£850 ono**

**07966 314307**

# THE LAST, LAST, LAST EVER GO ROUND THE GARDEN AND WOODLAND RAILWAY

by David Scott

Yes, the GWR is no more and a dream someone had back in 1970 has come to an end.

I became aware of a magical place that had a growing collection of Green Engines back in 1976 when a photo Album was admired at School. One of the Castles and one of the Kings had been ordered by Ted Martin and over the next few years the parts that I had met on my first cycle out to Keith Wilson's workshop got completed. They were working superbly as always in the home they knew.

Edward (TED) Martin had recognised a way of getting more power out of a racing Combustion Engine, patented it and made his fortune. And what do you do with a fortune when you are interested in everything mechanical? Build the Ultimate Garden Railway of course! And plant some trees or some Woodland. In a very secret location. With tunnels, and scale buildings, and bridges, and a turntable, and a track-plan that resembles a train-set. Upon which you could, and did, spend many hours enjoying every moment.

Hints about the railway hit the pages of Model Engineer from time to time mostly from Keith's pen during the build of various designs which he was describing. Also a certain photograph of a model outside one of the buildings on some scale track bullhead rail of course with correct chairs and two bolts. This was an advert for Keith to build more models for people interested. Ted did in fact write an article on his method of track construction which also involved scale sleepers set at scale spacing. Out of sight, well most of the line was rail screwed to the sleepers 4 to a sleeper.

The chaired section being by the Station where it was much admired

Ted also had a workshop and built models with help as we all do if we have time.

The workshop was built to match the Arts and Crafts house which it did superbly. Containing some superb machinery which I and others admired. Within its walls was another dream. A dream to build THE GREAT BEAR and yes, the curves round the railway were big enough for the Pacific.

It was not all steam and a Western had been built, and in order to run on this particular railway had to work just like the full size. And she did, having a small car engine driving a hydraulic pump which pumped fluid to the motors driving the wheels. These motors are very small compared to electric ones. Growing up in Devon we got to have a soft spot for Westerns, the school arranging many visits via train from 1971 onwards for me.

Back in the garden. The running shed was also to scale and by walking down steps you got to waist height to work on the steaming of the models. Further



steps down got you to be at eye level to the models within the building. A wonderful effect and one that gave you a feeling of stepping back in time. Even a signal box had been built but slightly bigger so that you could get inside. Just.

Mrs Martin loved her cakes and one of the wonderful parts of the visit after many laps of the track. Was the afternoon tea. This was served from the front door on a wonderful assortment of plates. As were masses of tea in matching the plates mugs. Then it was back to sitting astride the carriages and enjoy the locomotives that did match each other in livery. Each train being double headed and there being four locomotives in steam.

The story goes that on her first outing not so saintly Robin Hood had run away and damaged herself when she came off the track. Many years in rebuilding we got to see her triumphant return two years ago. A superbly sunny day according to the photographs

Yes, we were privileged to quite a few visits over the years, and managed to fill the car on one occasion with Reading members! So sit back and enjoy the selection of photos. Yes, she is a 9F and a guest locomotive on the last day. Wow she was POWERFUL!

And there was one more last run for The Haywood Society on a sunny November the 10<sup>th</sup>... Everyone enjoyed, and a friend filmed the occasion.

Then came some fantastic news that began as a rumour while helping load up at the end of our last visit. The Treetops Railway now they have substantially built it. Will have open days from May to September! That so fits in with the calendar! This is 5 and 7 ¼ so our new resident currently sitting in the sitting room in the shape of a Ken Swan designed Jessie can have days out when complete.

Photos by David Scott







## THE GARDEN AND WOODLAND RAILWAY

## WARRIORS REPORT

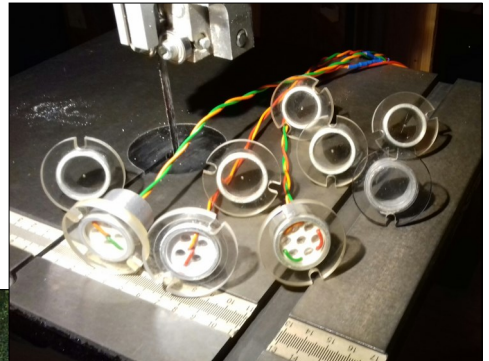
from Mike Manners

Picture 1 shows more spare signal lights under construction in my workshop. Lots of fun turning 1/4 inch thick Perspex discs in the lathe. A special abrasive faced chuck had to be made to grip the disc without marking it and still allow the outside diameter of the disc to be turned. Now I need to get on and make another batch of reed relay blocks to replace the old and battered ones removed during the recent ground level track replacement.

Picture 2 shows the old floodlight support post laying in the car park. The hard-working trench digging team took a break from the picks and shovels for a bit of light entertainment (pun) felling the old floodlight support post. A tricky little job as when it came down it had to miss both the new lamp post and the end of the loading ramp. John Evans, David Cole and Mike Furness lent a hand while Nigel Penford supplied the big disc cutter and took the picture from the over bridge. The trench digging team (Nigel Penford, John Evans, Chris Simons and David Scott) were soon back at work digging out ballast and installing ballast retaining boards on the ground level track near the bottom bend. Another job that should keep us fit!

**Come to the RSME and do a bit of digging. Its much cheaper than paying a gym membership.**

Photos by Mike Manners



## ANALYTICS

Where WP looks at photographs taken by the editor



**Pioneer Western D1000 passing Old Oak Common on 7 September 1963.** This loco, *Western Enterprise*, was outshopped from Swindon works in experimental 'desert sand' livery in December 1961. It went new to Plymouth Laira, then coded 83D, sub shed to Newton Abbot 83A, where the loco works was still operating. By February 1963 it had migrated east to Old Oak Common, as part of the replacement scheme for the King class locomotives on the Paddington to Birmingham/Wolverhampton/Birkenhead services.

The editor points out the interesting mix of rolling stock including LMS and LNER vehicles. From the loco they appear to be LMS, GWR, LNER, 4 x BR Mark 1s then possibly GWR or LMS and 5 x more BR Mark 1s, two of which look to be in chocolate and cream livery. A big train, load 13!

Being the correct diagram for an Old Oak Common Western in September 1963, and the fact it is on the up relief line and looks as if it has just traversed the Old Oak Common West crossovers from the Joint Line via High Wycombe suggests a train from Birmingham or beyond. The head code of 1A26 which indicates the train started on the Western Region terminating in the London Division, is correct as the Western Region stretched as far as Chester back then.

D1000 was withdrawn from Laira Plymouth in February 1974 and cut up at Swindon Works in July the same year.

## DIARY

### DECEMBER 2019

Sunday 1st	Public Running	13:00
Saturday 7th	Club Running	11.00 onwards
Monday 9th	Trustees Meeting	19.30
Sat/Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup>	Santa Weekend	

### JANUARY 2020

Wednesday 1st	New Year's Day Club Run	11:00
Sunday 5th	Public Running	13:00
Saturday 11th	Club Running	11:00 onwards
Monday 13th	Trustees Meeting	19:30
Saturday 25th	Young Eng. & Club Running	11:00 onwards

### FEBRUARY 2020

Sunday 2nd	Public Running	13:00
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Club Running	11.00 onwards
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Trustees Meeting	19.30

**Comments by RSME members on any subject appearing in Prospectus are welcomed by the editor.**

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 January issue is 18 December. This is the final date.**

Contributions may be submitted in hard or soft copy to the editor.  
John Billard Old Station House Twyford Reading RG10 9NA