

Reading Society of Model
Engineers
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railway.co.uk
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The Prospectus

February 2017



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Free to members



HST power car W40002, called “Sir Kenneth Grange” after its industrial designer, at Paddington on January 22 2017 in its original livery. It is forgotten now that it was known earlier as “Top of the Pops,” named by Jimmy You Know Who...
Photo John Billard

**DAWSON'S DIARY
HOW TO MAKE A MILLION
A STEAMY YEAR
THE FOBCO DRILL EXPLAINED
BACK TO THE COLD WAR**

DAWSON'S DIARY

kept by the President

Boxing Day steam up was fine and a good number of members came to the club with locos to have a run this year. Mike Burke ran his 5" 1400 tank this time out, Stuart Higgins Polly 10 2-6-2 rain well. It is getting run in now, Rob Denton had a problem with his Britannia, and had to retire, Bill from Newbury ran his Sweet Pea once gain. The mince pies went down with a mice cup of tea and a good morning's running for the members.

First public running of 2017 was rather damp but a good number of visitors came for a trip on the rails. Of course, the numbers were down this time. As I remember we were rained off last year! Mike and Chris Jones used their GWR 0-6-0 tender loco this time with no snags. As the weather got worse the public went home and so did the members. Let's hope that next month will be fine for the RSME.

At last as the Wednesday was fine Nigel and Mike were able to fit new locks on to the main door to the club house. Also Karl cleaned and polished the club Baldwin ready for use next time.

First club running of 2017 was well supported by the members. A bit damp but much warmer than of late. This did not put off the members having a run. David Scott was seen with his electric hand drill powered loco hauling four members around! Nigel Penford steamed his Baldwin once again so did Mike Sinclair have his 3½" Royal Scot working with plenty of steam being made, this engine was being driven by good few young engine drivers for which is a good thing to keep up interest in this hobby of ours. Pete Harrison's Sweet Pea now runs very well with pumps etc. now doing what they should. We had a nice sight on the track, Alf had on show three 5" gauge goods wagons that he is detailing like he does. Will be good to see them running as a train.

We have another Young Engineer joining the RSME, Pete let him light the fire and told him what was going to get it in steam. In the club house his mother was making tea for us and this lady vacuumed the floor for us which was very kind of her. Many thanks.

PONDERINGS

by 61249

How to Make a Million out of Railway Privatisation

My time in Rolling Stock Leasing was quite short, in keeping with all the changes through privatisation, there were lots of changes in personnel and lots of opportunity to select what you wanted to do. My reflections on Angel are non-technical, and much more to do with setting up the arrangements for the whole-sale leasing of the BR Fleet.

There were lots of things to do to set up a brand-new company, move into new offices, choose a name, choose all the engineering staff, and set up all the procedures for employment as a private company. We had no trouble attracting a first class set of folk and although exciting, the set-up of the company did not absorb

much of my time.

There were then company and railway objectives. The company objectives were to prepare the Leasing Company for sale, with the hope and expectation that buyers would be attracted by a significant asset base as each of the three companies (Eversholt, Porterbrook and Angel) were allocated some 4000 vehicles. Additionally the leasing charges on the train companies were controlled and backed by the government, making the immediate income secure. Trains going off lease because they were no longer needed was the big risk, and one must bear in mind that railways at the time were in a gentle decline under national ownership, so the risk was real.

Nevertheless, it was assumed that the specialist leasing companies in aero and auto leasing would be interested in expanding their business and portfolio. Finally, the banks were seen as potential investors with deep pockets and the potential to benefit from tax breaks and capital allowances.

Interested companies registered their interest centrally, and then we were sent round as the management to present to them what we were about and how the process worked. This led to some interesting conversations in very nice bank boardrooms.

The railway objectives were about making sure that we had the right engineering controls, adequate systems and all that we needed to endure the safe and reliable operation of the fleet. Twenty years on, I cannot recall a single accident caused by a failure of a train in traffic, or loss of a bearing, train fire etc. I therefore think we did this stuff quite well. Some things we did have turned out to be much more important than we thought at the time. Only this week I was reminded of this at the Memorial Service for Mike (the pipe) Stephens, who led the late BR effort to update and write down the specifications for train maintenance and overhaul. A team was set up at Swindon Works in the old drawing office under his leadership, and they did a brilliant job that has lasted extraordinarily well for many classes of BR built trains, HST included.

I spent a lot of time with the lawyers developing something called the Master Operating Lease (MOLA). The key engineering input to this document was setting the balance of risk between the operator and the owner. The owner remained responsible for all the long term issues such as wiring and corrosion, and the operator took responsibility for its reliability in traffic and day to day maintenance – forecourt activity is the best parallel. As the market has developed, this risk profile has changed considerably, with the involvement of the big manufacturers, and operators wishing to do more themselves.

I also remember lots of discussions on the issue of insurance for the trains. BR had up to this time self-insured, and was big enough and government backed to make this possible. The leasing companies were not. I must say that rather than see this as a good business opportunity, the insurance market took a long time to get its head round what would be appropriate. In this they were not helped, I must admit, by BR's records of what stock had been damaged and the costs of

repair not being seen as good enough to provide a good analysis of the risk.

Risk was a big word at the time. There were many prophets of doom over both what would happen to the railways, and the effect of privatisation. The trade unions and their Labour Party friends were instrumental in talking up a lot of the risk. The spectre of “profits before safety” loomed large in their announcements and completely ignored the continuing efforts of expert railway managers and engineers to keep the railway safe. History shows, of course, that not only was this risk overplayed, in fact privatisation has been a major factor in delivering a safer railway. That is why our railway is now the safest large railway in Europe by some margin, - 15 times safer than the German and French systems, for example, both of which are safer than the European average.

The political risk for companies looking at investment in the railways was also talked up considerably by sections of the press and politicians. Pledges to renationalise without compensation were trumpeted by certain prominent opposition spokesmen, one of whom was famous for his ownership of two Jaguar cars. More than anything, this deterred a lot of interest by potential buyers of the RoS-cos, particularly the big banks, none of whom made a bid when the companies were placed on the market. The practical impact was, of course, that the Treasury did not get the full value for the leasing companies which ended up being sold for a fraction of their real value as businesses with a secure use for all its trains, and as it has turned out, a growing market.

This is how the money works. Let us suppose that your company is worth £1bn. As a Management, you sell your involvement to someone who wants to invest in your sector and business. They must have the money to buy in, something like a bank or a pension fund are ideal as they are going to need someone knowledgeable to run the business and the existing management are a good bet with low risk. You do a deal with the Pension Fund, and agree that the Management will own 10% of the business (15 if you can get it), and will get this for £25m. You then go about raising £25m between all those in the business who want to buy in. Say 100 folk, £250k each. They beg and borrow, raising mortgages on their homes, putting all their financial livelihood at risk to support the business. The MD puts in at least 5 times as much, say a cool £1m, mostly borrowed. The Two Jags spouts off that Railways are finished, the whole shooting match is going to be a disaster and the businesses will be taken back by the government without paying a penny piece. This frightens away the other buyers and the Treasury finds that it is selling something worth £1bn for a 50% discount. The management and staff now own 10% of something worth £1bn. After less than a year privatisation has moved on, the lease charges are flowing and the political risk has subsided because there has been a General Election and two Jags's party did not make it. You now sell the business for its real value £1bn, to one of the companies who could have bought it a year before but were put off by Two Jags. 10% of the £500m profit belongs to the management and staff, so the 100 staff share £50m and have at least doubled their money in a year. If only 10 of the team were involved, the stake is greater but the reward is £5m each. Nice

work if you can get it, although I must say that the motivation for 99% of the railway managers and engineers involved at the time was to retain their interest in a job they loved, were good at, in an industry that they believed had a long-term future. Good on them, I say. The press however, rail against “Railway Fat Cats” as if they were all gold-diggers.

Unfortunately for the management team of Angel, the market saw it as worth more than the other two, by a factor of 2. Bearing in mind that all three started on the same day with an equal allocation of stock, Angel clearly won the business game of producing real added value. However, if your game was to buy the company and make a fortune, we lost. This could have been one of my opportunities to be a millionaire, but something else had happened meantime, so I never even got that far....

A STEAMY 2016 Part 2

by David Scott

August the 22nd saw us up very early for a visit to Marwell Zoo. Our Daughter Katie wanted to go and there is a hint of a railway there so fits in with our passion. Our highlight was stumbling upon a Tribe or an Album or Click of hot bored Photographers. “3 hours, 2” gasped another. Not even five minutes later the tiger brought her cubs out for a dip in the pool. Timing! We then added to our stuffed toy collection in the shop and the cakes were nice. Plus, when Katie was 6 she could recognise a Black Five, a Schools and an Ivatt class locomotive.

Of course we stayed out overnight and ended up, strangely again, at Ropley. “What do you mean that the home setting is meant to be done at your house on the navigating device? Wow, it was hot and an abandoned Ivatt footplate invited me to come aboard. “I love the heat!” said the fireman dripping some salty water onto the boards. “That lot keep looking for somewhere cooler and getting off.” he explained. Bright sunlight gave me some more lovely detail shots to send down to Devon to assist with friend’s model and the rough finish gave me confidence not to file the Class 2 wheels to a superb standard

Lily is always telling me “That 1966 was a great year!!” But not for The Great Central or for our younger viewers H.S.2’s original line. The 3rd of September was the last train 50 years to the day when they tore it all up and began filling the replacement motorways. The railway had re numbered their Black Five and 8F and got the original crew out of retirement for the event. Our highlight was an 8F footplate invite as she waited for the line on the last re-created down Parcels into Leicester, for a wonderful six minutes of inspiration.

I had done a workshop repair on the camera to keep the batteries in and was greeted with a damaged card beyond 3 shots. I had checked it worked by taking two! So, an evening via a big shop and the best Chinese takeaway north of Leicester and we were ready for Day 2.

And it was day Class 2 of course as they have two of them under overhaul. 78018 was moments away from her triumphant return to the cameras once ‘Moor’. Yes, she had starred in a blocked line buster of a film when she had run

into a snow drift back in 1955 at Bleath Gill. Come on, Derrick Guyler narrated it and his reference to “Landlady's Cake or Caake! when cutting the snow into manageable sections” is priceless. You Tube again for the devoted! I got carried away with the pair as 78019 was a bit more undressed without her boiler and ideal for details. I had a rest and took a good 30 of their other early Black Five beside her in a similar state. 550 photos during the day and I am sure that there is one or two details I have missed. A smaller camera is so much better at being thrust into tiny places, adjusted and given another go.

September the 11th saw me dial GU22 9BA into the how to get there device and we arrived at the Wokingham Exhibition. Some lovely models, lots of photographs and some kits and bits purchased for our model. It is South Coast Southern from a childhood of holidays in Kent. So Harlyn Pier in O Gauge, Hayling Island and the Seaton and Beer Railway were noted for inspiration. As was a lovely Terrier and a 700 Class in workhorse livery. Plus a very nice Wantage Tramway.

We decided not to go to Brooklands (Brookley?) so set off for Ropley and if the car does not know its way by now it is going back to the garage! Highlight of the Year and two free days. Note to self to check that there are 70 rivets on a Black Five tender frame top and sort out the best timetable to go behind as many loco-

motives as possible! We do a Thumper and go behind a 50. Yes in bright colours mostly blue and white. Very inspired by the Thumper again and a 3-coach unit may just fit on our 00 model with a slightly stretched platform. Saturday nights highlight being Alresford and the best Chinese takeaway in the area. This is after a walk along the river past the mill and Watercress beds. Brookley was the



airfield based on Brooklands in a certain 1965 film about very early Aircraft and Terry Thomas catches a train in it.

On the 25th of September it was Scaleforum so we set off for Stoke Mandeville and got last year's parking space. Again, some lovely layouts and the lighting and presentation superb on many. I returned to Sidmouth and we watched several trains arrive. Lea-on-the-Solent caught my eye as a by the sea model and a happy hour was spent following the old line on Google Earth on my return home. Behind was Ferring which gave me the feeling that the station building planned was

slightly below par on ours and it needed something resembling another hotel to cater for the many packets of people ready to be sprinkled upon the beach! Package Holidays indeed. Being fictional the hotel on the beach is very reminiscent of Monsieur Hulot's residence for his week's holiday of mayhem.

We got to sit with Martin Finney and did a compare of layouts just before the winner was announced. We were surprised that Sidmouth did not win but again the lighting on Rydes Hill was superb even if they only ran Thumpers via very slim computers!! Yes, Sidmouth was sunny on our last visit.

October and The Midlands Exhibition together with a fist full of carefully counted spending notes. I went to the 2nd one in Leicester too many years ago. And we were up to similar numbers of bodies and a lovely spread of models of that event. That was the year I got my Unimat 3 and carried it back to my student digs in Coventry. A Tom Rolt from built up parts caught my eye and two photographs. As did a Class 2 in 7 ¼ gauge now part of our (selfie) for computer sites. Another was a Kingscale Auto Tank in Green smiling among a line up of hand built models. A lovely class 4 43018 in 3½ inch built from many visits to the Severn Valley and impressive with double chimney which did not work very well the builder tells us from hours of research. Henry Ivatt rests his case with the original design. Cameras take notes in seconds these days. We were quite late home via a lovely new services!

We had just about recovered over an early breakfast when we drove the four and a half miles to the Engelfield Estate Steam up. Was it a year since we were last here? Mother's maiden name of Foster, breaks the ice with some of the traction engine owners, as does a love of the single crank compound by Burrell. We get to drive a model one on our return on the Sunday. Sanity questioned, but it is our love of the superb cakes on offer in the warm wood fired forge washed down by endless cups of tea!

4 days off apart for a Wednesday! And on the 21st we go down to admire the



Class 4 Ivatt (full size) who steamed south for a late holiday over the Alps from the Severn Valley. Not so lucky is the 7F up from Swanage, who sat next to a puddle all weekend blowing smoke sadly as she was leaking too much steam to run. However, the Royal Scott ran superbly with packed out trains until some Southern water caused her to rest for a few hours.

We break for the evening

with another walk along the river, visit a small supermarket to get supplies and then a spicy number 27 which we eat under the station lights romantically, I did bring the chopsticks, Lily!

We were up round the yard at 8.00 and with a low sun, got several All Black shots simmering away nicely. Our first locomotive is the Ivatt Class 4 number 43106 bathed in escaping steam, and surrounded in devoted fans. Then, like a borrowed car is hammered up the bank to Four Marks. They do a re run of the Pines Express later in the afternoon so we wait while they add several more carriages to our rear and the 9F to the front with 76017 leading, (now more run in!) Wow.

We catch the Royal Scot on the last train from Alton, do a last tour and soak up of atmosphere in the yard with a straggle of others, and the car takes us home, home.

The 5th of November saw our first visit to High Wycombe exhibition, and a much admired model that got the cup later of Much Murkle! Slightly too much dark in the green locos but so nicely done. A happy reunion with the saddest layout on the circuit of Coleford in 009. Permanently in winter. And a new owner of Burnham on Sea in 2 mm scale after so many years in hiding.

A cold estuary and a hot Indian meal being my memory of a visit there years before. The station becoming another supermarket. The model engineers had a stand and had a queue of very interested people in what they were doing.

Now four times a year at Pendon Museum, they run trains on the historic Madder Valley Railway layout. This being built in the very early days with hand made motors and rail soldered to cornflake packet card sleepers via staples every fourth one. We got to hold and admire a sacred piece. Some of the original locomotives managed to work but there was much Quibble and Cussing when they didn't? What a lovely name for a firm of Solicitors in the town of Madder Port!



We rounded the year off with a double visit to Cannon Street? Yes, a lovely afternoon being inspired to make yet another Arch Pub for our model! And that water can be modelled successfully. Not the river? The stuff round the girl in the bath! I once spent an evening in the Arch Duke further up river. This inspired the Arch Bishop. And a thumping good idea to lengthen the platform now gives us The Arch Rivals!



And, “Yes, I have been to China four times I told the visa place. “We have changed the rules so you can’t get one today” was their reply. Our lovely walk along the Thames began by admiring Cannon Street and a lovely reflected shot of the famous bricks in an all glass building down river.

Or was it left there by George working on his model?



A re run of the Pines Express at Ropley on the Mid Hants on 21 October 2016, 76017 leading the 9F. Photo David Scott

THE FOBCO DRILLING MACHINE

by John Billard

While few companies can boast of spending over 40 years making just two basic models of a drilling machine F O'Brian of Swadlincoat can, producing only the four speed "Star" (in several versions) and the heavier No 2 Morse taper "7 - Eight" (and very similar No 3 Morse "10-Eight"). Now out of production, both types were of very high quality, beautifully finished (with chrome plated ball handles) and ran with unusual smoothness; as a consequence they continue to command, in good condition, a premium price and are well worth seeking out if you require a drill vastly superior to the usual Far East imports.

Mounted on a cast-iron base plate into which socketed a solid-steel, 55-mm



diameter column, the drill was fitted with an 8.5-inch (215 mm) square table that could be rotated and tilted in either direction through 90°. The head (also in cast iron) was locked to the column by a powerful, lever-operated clamp and arranged to allow some 6-inches of throat. The spindle travel was 3.75 inches (95 mm) with control by a single lever sliding in a simple, adjustable clamp and with the return spring housed in a graduated housing. Five different versions of the spindle end were manufactured and two quill types: fitted originally was a small-diameter (about 15 mm) spindle with an ordinary Jacobs No. JT6 taper (often found with a No. 34 Jacob chuck); this was replaced by two different spindles that required an internally modified quill: one used the same Jacobs taper as the original, the other was bored to take

a No. 2 Morse taper socket and the nose threaded to take a collet-retaining nose cap.

Normally fitted with a 0.5 h.p. 1425 r.p.m. motor (with a neat built-in switch on the left-hand face of the head), 4 speeds were available: 475, 1020, 1990 and 4260 r.p.m. Unlike almost all competitors, proper cast-iron pulleys were used for both motor and spindle - thus ensuring superior grip and extended life. As a point of interest the top bearing in the shaft assembly is an ordinary ball race, but the lower pair are a pair of angular-contact type bearings.

I know a fellow engineer who owns a joinery business. His father, who manu-

factured machine tools, bought one in 1948 and it is still going strong.. The 1978 price was about £200, over a thousand today.

The point of all this is that I have one for sale in good condition. If you'd like further details please contact me; you are welcome to come and have a look; details on page 20.

I would like to credit lathes.co.uk for much of the above information. (Tony Griffiths phone 01298 871633). They stock spares and information for this machine.

2017 RENEWALS

MIKE MANNERS

Members will have reminder in Prospectus about membership renewals.

Now that we are a charity the membership renewal date is 1st April so it will give people a couple of months to get organised.

Peter Harrison will circulate some files containing a PDF and a MS Word copy of this year's application form with the next few circulations of Prospectus.

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Just a little Reminder

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It has been noted that a minority of members are driving on site at unacceptable speeds.

Please be aware that there is a 5 mph speed limit on site which should be adhered to especially during Public Running and Birthday Party events.

It would only take a child to run out between parked cars for there to be a serious accident.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR SPEED DOWN



Thank You



WOLVERTON PUG

A trip back to the Cold War

When I was working at Paddington in 1979 one of my colleagues, Dick, suggested a trip to Europe, which he was happy to organise. We would go to Berlin, then on to Vienna and Venice returning via Switzerland and Belgium. This would mean travelling through the Eastern Bloc -the DDR, East Berlin and Czechoslovakia.

In those days you were required to take your passport to your bank in order to obtain foreign currency. I have two entries in my old passport (Blue and larger than the new red ones!), which I still have. The first entry is £60 Lloyds Bank Craven Road, Paddington 11th June 1979 and the second is £130 on 9th July 1979.

As you might imagine the rigmarole and paper work required to achieve this trip was quite onerous. Firstly, we needed staff travel coupon tickets (free passes) for Holland, West Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium. Then we needed a reduced rate (staff ticket) through East Germany (Helmstedt to Bad Schandau via Berlin)- Price £14.96p! Next, we needed travel tickets for Czechoslovakia. and reservation tickets on the various trains, several being overnight. On top of this we were required to have Transit Visas for East Germany (the DDR) and Czechoslovakia, even though we were not stopping in either (we stayed in West Berlin and caught a through daytime train from Berlin Ost to Vienna. From memory, we applied for and received the DDR visas in the post. So, at lunchtime on Monday 11th June Dick and I went to the Czech Embassy at Kensington Palace Gardens. This was in order to obtain transit visas to pass through Czechoslovakia. I recall we had a very long wait to get served. I forget the arrangements for passing through East Germany, but from memory I think we were sent paper documentation.

On Thursday 26th July we set off on the 17.30 Liverpool St., to Harwich. We had berths booked on the 22.00 Sealink ferry to the Hook of Holland (arr 07.45), which connected into the 08.28 Hook to Berlin. Shortly after Braunschweig, at Helmstedt we stopped at the East German border-15.25 to 15.44. The guards came through the train and the customs officials stamped our passports and the transit visas. Armed guards then stood at the doorways of all the carriages to ensure no body could leave or enter the train without them knowing. The train then trundled on through the DDR at no great speed at all. We passed through a forest in which was visible a large contingent of Russian soldiers in a hidden camp. One didn't dare show too much interest in this. The feeling of oppression was palpable and I didn't dare take any photographs at all in the East. We passed stations along the way, all with full facilities and busy freight yards. The infrastructure was tired through the years of little investment.

On we went calling at Marienborn-15.54-16.01. After another hour and three quarters or so we were in the outskirts of Berlin. The train stopped at Potsdam, which station was closed and had been, by the look of it, since at least 1961

when the wall construction began. This was the last station (apart from Babelsberg) in the East before the border with West Berlin at Griebnitzsee. All the armed guards got off the train and melted into East Berlin. We then stopped at Griebnitzsee and our papers were examined and stamped accordingly. After which we stopped at Berlin Zoo, which was then the main station in West Berlin. Finally, we arrived at Friedrichstrasse. Beyond here was East Berlin. On the footbridge spanning the station with its overall roof, stood dozens of armed guards. The station was right on the border. You could not leave the station buildings without going into the East and the boundary with the West was the river Spree! Westerners could only leave Friedrichstrasse station by U-Bahn or the S-Bahn going back towards Berlin Zoo.

The S-Bahn was run by the East German authorities and where it crossed from West to East the lines terminated either side and did not cross the border, the section in between being closed. The U-Bahn (underground) was even more strange. It was run by the West German authorities, but where it ran from the West under the East and back into the West all the stations in the East were closed. Where this did not make much sense, perhaps where the line terminated in the East, the whole line and stations in the East were closed. So, the U-Bahn trains ran for some distance between stops passing at reduced speed through these ghost stations which were as they had been left by the Third Reich, including the gothic script station names. There would be a couple of single lightbulbs giving minimal illumination, but enough for the East German guards, sitting in the old waiting shelters, to ensure there were no attempts to get on the trains.

We stayed two nights in a hotel in the West at Kurfurstendamm. On Saturday 28th we went sightseeing, which included various viewing platforms to look into the East over the wall. One such overlooked the Russian War Memorial which had a continuous military guard who strutted in front of the memorial with even higher 'goose steps' than the Nazis before them. It is in the Tiergarten and in front of the trees in the park was a large wooden screen, which was to prevent snipers shooting at the Russians from the cover of the trees.

We found one of the closed S-Bahn stations near the border with East Berlin, which was now in use as a restaurant. Though the rusting tracks were still in place up to the building. I have tried to identify it, but so far without success.

The following morning we made our way to Friedrichstrasse in order to enter East Berlin. This process took some time as we queued at the processing window with our documents. We had to purchase ten East German Marks. The exchange rate was at par with the West German Mark, which of course was way above its market value. Not only that, we had to declare all other currency we were carrying, and on leaving East Germany we had to surrender any unspent E. German Marks, for nothing. Not easy back then to spend 10 marks on food and drink on an East German train! I still have the Currency Certificate listing D. Marks, Lire, Austrian Schillings and Sterling.

We travelled on the S-Bahn to the Ostbahnhof and duly boarded the 08.45 for

Vienna via Prague. Our compartment was full-four on each side I think. They were mainly people of retirement age including a lady who was examining some new shoes she had obviously purchased. At 11.02 we drew into the vast station at Dresden. Leaving at 11.12, and after about half an hour we reached Bad Schandau where the East German border officials checked and stamped the various documents and on we went. After about twenty minutes we reached the Czechoslovak border station of Decin, where all the formalities and document stamping took place again. Somewhere between here and Prague we became aware of an ominous metallic rattling coming from the bogie beneath our compartment. Obviously, someone in authority had become aware of this because we stopped in a station to be met by a carriage and wagon examiner, who poked about underneath, rattling bits of metal on the bogie that rattled. He then filled in a form and the train was despatched. The trains in the East did not go very fast, so we clanked and rattled on our weary way. When we reached Prague Hlavni we seemed to have circled the whole City as the statue of a man on a horse (probably Wenceslas) remained in view for what seemed an age.

At the station the problem with the bogie under our compartment had obviously been wired forward to great effect. An enormous posse of brown coated engineers now descended on our vehicle with much debate, form filling and arms waving. I expected at any minute that we would be turfed out into another carriage, whilst the errant vehicle was detached from the train. While all this debate was going on I ventured out into the corridor. Lo and behold the exterior door was open. Unobserved I nipped down the steps onto the platform stood there and got back on. Transit visa only! I had stood on Czech soil!

Eventually an engineer emerged from beneath the vehicle holding a piece of metal, about the size of his hand. More forms were filled in and we were waved on our way. The old lady with the new shoes looked sullen. As did most of the others in the compartment.

We travelled on through the Czech countryside until we reached the last station before the barbed wire border with Austria. This was a place called Ceske Velenice. The Czech diesel came off and guards with dogs came through the train. In each compartment a dog went along sniffing under the seats. No one was going to escape to the west today! The documents were then scrutinised in great detail and the mandatory stamping to show we were leaving the Eastern Bloc. Whilst all this was going on I could barely believe my ears. The unmistakable hissing of a steam engine from the front. I looked out. We now had a large Czech 2-10-0 on the front. This proceeded to haul the train the 2.5 kilometres through the wire and into the Austrian border station of Gmund.

The old lady's face lit up as did the other passengers. Dick pointed out to me that the Czech authorities would not mind pensioners defecting, so they were less restricted than younger people! I could now see the great 2-10-0 class 556 properly and photographed it on Austrian soil. Not being interested in steam engines at all, Dick thought I was bonkers! Without any delay, it came straight off

our train, signals were cleared and it returned immediately light engine back to Czechoslovakia.

(WP will be away for the next two editions)



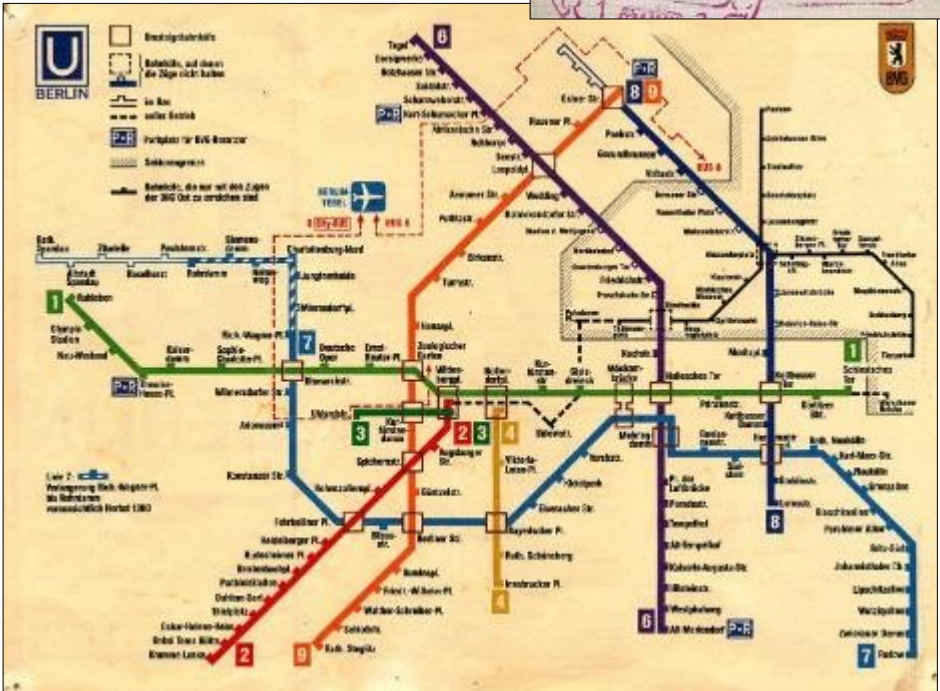
WP's DDR
transit visa

Right The visas required to pass through Czechoslovakia. This requirement no longer exists—as does the country.

All illustrations WP



Below A Berlin U Bahn map of 1979 showing the closed stations in the Soviet sector.





Above The wall, and an S-Bahn train in the East, over the River Spree
Below The brutality of the wall as a street is bisected





Above Berlin Stresemannstrasse
Below Closed U Bahn station, then a restaurant





Czech Class 556 2-10-0 at Gmund, Austria, 29 July 1979

AND TO BRING US BACK TO THE PRESENT...



Young Engineers Ash driving with Ed and Katie Scott on Nigel's Baldwin at the RSME track 29 June 2016.
Photo David Scott

DIARY

February 2017

Sunday	5th	Public running	
Tuesday	7th	00 gauge	
Saturday	11th	Club running	11.00
Sunday	12th	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
Monday	13th	Special Needs	13.30-16 00
		Trustees meeting	
Tuesday	21st	00 gauge DCC	
Friday	24th	Young Engineers	18.00 to 20.00
Saturday	25th	Young Engineers	11.00 to 13.30
		Club running	13.30 onwards

March 2017

Sunday	5th	Public running	
Tuesday	7th	00 gauge	
Saturday	11th	Club running	
Sunday	12th	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
Monday	13th	Trustees meeting	
Tuesday	21st	00 gauge DCC	
Friday	24th	Young Engineers	18.00 to 20.00
Saturday	25th	Young Engineers	11.00 to 13.30
		Club running	13.30 onwards

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 March PROSPECTUS is
18 February. 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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