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Free to members
50p when sold

The Prospectus

October 2015



Metropolitan Railway 0-4-4T No 1 at Watford LT on 13 September 2015 as part of the station's 90th anniversary.
Photo John Billard

**RSME IS NOW A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED
ORGANISATION. SEE STORY ON PAGE 3**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PRESS DATE FOR
NOVEMBER'S ISSUE IS 11 OCTOBER.**

DAWSON'S DIARY

kept by the President

Mike Manners and Nigel Penford are doing a lovely job of the toilets. We now have inner doors flitted and the end walls are clad ready for the furniture to be fitted. The effort these two members have put in getting this job organised with help of some members like John Evens the spade! With all the rest who gave support doing all the ground work. This is real team work.

As I spent the last six days at the Dorset Steam Fair which was fine this year somewhat better than last year's show I have seen very good progress with the toilet block. Pete Culham has made a very nice job of the painting, the lights, fans etc. are all nicely fitted a real professional job. This has raised the standard of the work being done at the RSME!

Alf's latest loco, a Class 50 done up in Network South East colours it looks very good with Alf's attention to detail.

Club running was rather a good one for our club member Nigel Penford. He gave his Baldwin 0-6-0 a try out on the track for the first time since it arrived in England. He soon had it in steam. It runs very nice, now we have three Baldwins in the club so far. One day they will run together! The club loco had a problem with the regulator while down at the Newport club in south Wales. One member got it sorted out it now works okay. This engine has had a good record. Not a lot of problems since it joined the RSME a good few years ago. John Spokes had a run with his 4-6-0 loco. This engine seems to run a lot better nowadays. Marcus ran his Polly Two once again on the ground level. He always seems to enjoy himself on these club running days. Karl had a drive of John Spokes's loco. Both these lads will make good drivers when they get passed out later on.

The club membership voted overwhelmingly for the RSME to become a CIO. The committee put over a sound reason for the club to go down this road in particular. Many thanks to committee member Stuart Kidd doing all that research over the past year for the benefit of us all. Well done Stuart!

I was pleased to see a good turn out of club members for this important meeting. This has put the RSME in a good position for the future. Long may it last.

61249 is away

NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE

from Peter Culham

Raised Track Extension

Planning thoughts continue with the committee and a lot of preparation work re storage facilities is being carried out.

New Event Day Toilet Block

Rapid progress being made mainly on Wednesdays with the back section

drainage, fans, electrical supplies, lighting and plumbing all at the ready for connection. Internal painting is well advanced ready for the flooring and then the installation of the suites. The external painting challenge is still under consideration and we have an industrial paint advisor helping us.

CIO and Renewal of Club Lease

Agreement received from the Charities Commission to the clubs application for charitable status and the position was presented to members at an EGM on Thursday 17 September 2015. After full discussion and questions from members, a vote was taken and a unanimous decision was reached that the club adopt the CIO status with immediate effect. The next steps were briefly outlined and all members will be kept advised on progress.

Club Finances

The year end date has passed at 31 August 2015, but as the CIO is effective as from 18 September 2015, the RSME (unincorporated) financial year will run up to 17 September 2015. Accounts will be ready for presentation to the AGM on 29 October. Another member has joined our club bringing the member number to 147. The welding trolley needs attention but meanwhile a new gas cylinder (half size of previous) has been paid for, and a computer tablet is to be bought for the dynamometer car to get it to working order. A water butt has been purchased for gardening purposes and is being permanently sited behind the new toilet block. It will be fed from the clubhouse rear guttering.

Young Engineers

The chassis is seen in the clubhouse and next job is wheel painting. The eccentrics can also be assembled to maintain the progress.

Works and Projects Record.

A number of our very willing Wednesday Warriors ask what needs doing and so a works sheet has been produced which will be updated regularly to be available in the clubhouse. Plenty of projects, big and small, to take on!

Santa Special

Date for the diaries is Sunday 13 December 2015. Preparations to be made; the new 30' container will be used and there will be three time tranches rather than the two of previous years in an effort to shorten possible waiting outside.

Wanted-surplus 00 gauge items by Charles Benham

Maples Resource Centre provides day care /respite for mainly elderly and those living alone. Some of the guests have an interest in model railways and have asked if any of our members have surplus 00 gauge items they are prepared to donate. They specifically would like enough track to make a circular layout, a transformer and rolling stock.

If anyone can help please contact Charles on 0118 9571407 or
cbenham@greenbee.net

THE ADVENTURES OF A SIGNALBOX LAD part 3 by Mike Burke

Miles Platting signalbox had 92 levers in one long frame facing the main lines. The controlling functions were, left to right, West Goods and loops, East Goods and loops, Oldham Branch Main, Ashtom Branch Main and Junction point work then South and North Main lines to Victoria.

The signalmen split the frame into two halves with the most complex working being on the Manchester Victoria end of the box and this was called the charge end with this signalman making major decisions on train regulation. To aid such train regulation one of the other signalmen had copied out the complete main line services on a large sheet which was pinned to one of the box walls and was constantly studied and referred to for long periods by Tommy Hill which meant that Jimmy Bennet was left to carry on working the busy train service on the main line un assisted.

He would call out to me to pull levers and answer block bells on the goods line end of the box to help and I soon became adept at doing this but could not neglect my main recording and telephone duties. Fortunately, the goods lines allowed permissive working so provided the drivers were warned of a train ahead the signals could be cleared and several trains could follow each other with the driver being responsible for keeping a good look out. The Block instrument could indicate how many trains were in that section of line and great care had to be taken as each train progressed to keep the instrument showing how many trains there were.

Absolute block working on the main lines did not allow such a practice except that trains from the Oldham direction could be permitted to approach Miles Platting under a warning arrangement which reduced the normal one quarter mile between trains to 200 yards but this was not allowed if the weather was foggy (a frequent occurrence in this industrial heartland).

If a train was being assisted in rear up the steep incline from Manchester Victoria then a special bell code was added to the Train Entering section bell signal which was 2 pause 2.

Frequently, when hearing this Tommy Hill would shout out “COAL BOY” and this meant that as soon as the banking engine stopped outside the box I was to climb onto the tender and throw off as much coal into the box coal bunker as time would allow. It was also a time for Jimmy Bennet to play one of his pranks and he would clear the signal for the engine to return to Victoria with me still busy chucking coal out.

The drivers would quickly set off back down the line with me shouting “Stop, Stop” from my unstable perch on the tender top. The drivers pretended not to notice and usually stopped several hundred yards down the line to let me off and, with a wicked grin would say “Sorry son we couldn’t hear you above the noise of the engine and the steam”. I then had to walk along the line back to the box which was risky as high vis vests were not in use and dark clothing was the norm.

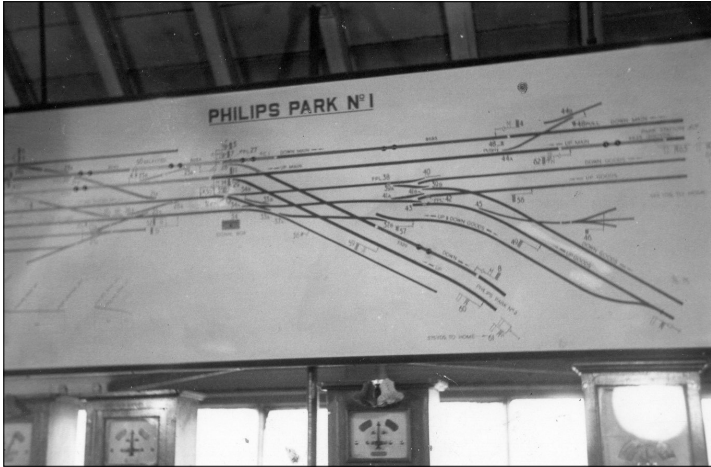


Photo courtesy Mike Burke

FRED FEW'S 90th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Taken on 4 September, the picture on the left shows Fred with his daughter and grand daughter, on the right with Rob Denton. The locomotive is one that Fred built. Photo Lionel Williams



WOLVERTON PUG - PLANDAMPF POLSKA-2015

In order to give everyone a break from my rapidly becoming historical career, I thought I would regale you with my recent experiences in a very hot Poland, travelling behind steam. This is becoming an annual pilgrimage thanks to Julian Worth a former Commercial Director with EWS, who organises the trips and also is a driver on Polish Steam locos. This year we were based for 5 days in Wroclaw, mainly travelling south into Silesia and the Czech border. Luckily for me there is a twice weekly Wizzair flight from Doncaster Robin Hood airport. (The former RAF Finningley station). Good to see the RAF Finningley badge still prominently displayed.

I flew out with two other people also on the same trip on Thursday 27th August. The airport is a haven of calm compared with the likes of Heathrow and Gatwick, so we were through to the air-side Wetherspoons in no time at all. Departure time was punctual at 19.05 and we were a few minutes early at Wroclaw. Again no queues. The higher air temperature was noticeable after the cool weather at home.

Day 1 Friday 28th August. We caught the 08.58 service train to Jaworzyna Slaska behind UK class 83 derivative red white and blue EP07P-2002 Bo-Bo electric. There waiting in the station was 2-8-2-tank loco TKt 48-18 on two restored 4 wheel coaches. We set off for Dzierzoniow Slaski south of Wroclaw, stopping at the intermediate stations where nearly everybody (there were 55 in the party!) detrained for the classic photo run-pasts. This gave Julian a chance to fully open the regulator for the short bursts through the stations. Most of these are the original buildings, no longer staffed but boarded up and graffitied. Reminiscent of the UK a few years ago.

Having arrived at Dzierzoniow (Reichenbach on my Cassell's 1928 atlas), we went round the old half roundhouse. It is now a museum with a goodly number of Polish steam tank and tender locos, all in various states of decrepitude. After this a bar selling cold pils beer was very welcome as the temperature was now about 30 degrees c.

Fully refreshed we then departed back behind the TKt to Jaworzyna Slaska, (Konigszelt) where there is an even bigger collection of old locos, carriages, wagons, and other items, inside and outside another half roundhouse, most of which look well beyond any form of restoration. They were certainly in Woodham's scrapyard condition, so I may be proved wrong! Here we were provided with classic Polish good wholesome food, pork steak, potatoes, vegetables, and another plateful of dumplings, pasta and cheese I think, though I was too full to tackle anything further. All washed down with good Polish bottled beer, and served outside at the back of the shed, near the derelict wheel drop.

Back to the station we returned to Wroclaw (one hour's journey) behind EP07P-2002 once more.

Day 2 Saturday 29th August. Another day of 30 degrees plus temperatures. We set off south from Wroclaw to a place called Klodzko Glowny (Glatz), complete with Ol-49-69 3 cylinder, early 1950's Polish 2-6-2 working tender first and heritage 1980's diesel SU45-115 on the rear as insurance. From Klodzko we headed northwest to Nova Ruda (Neurode) over a very scenic line of several high viaducts. A group of us opted for a visit down a coalmine. We were now deep in the coalmining and industrial heartland of Silesia, very close to the Czech border. Most of the mining and steel production has now ceased and there is crumbling industrial archaeology everywhere, including overgrown and derelict railway facilities such as half round houses.

As we approached the coal mine in our motor coach, several of our party, mindful of the nearness to Walbrzych, began speculating on the recently purported discovery of a train of Nazi gold buried in a tunnel in an old mine. It might be in this one!

We descended to the gloomy depths via a drift entrance, so no trip down a shaft in a cage, though we had passed the pit-head gear which gave access to much deeper galleries.

The mine was no longer used but was a museum, much like the National Coal Mining Museum at Caphouse in West Yorkshire. The party was too large, it also included a group of Poles, for the space available in the narrow galleries, but fortunately one of our party spoke Polish so was able to translate the guide's narrative to our group. We returned to the drift entrance on a miner's narrow gauge train, which was very cramped and with no lighting.

Returning to the steam train we set off towards Walbrzych, but could only go to a place called Gluszycza, 8km short due to engineering works between Jedlina Zdroj (Charlottenbrun) and Walbrzych.(Waldenburg) (or were they busy recovering the lost Nazi train?). We then returned whence we had come to Wroclaw.

We needed several stops for water outward and return with up to 4 small fire engines, which had little capacity and needed to continually go off somewhere to refill ! The water cranes do not work now, though most are still in place.

Day 3 Sunday 30th August. This turned out to be the hottest day of the trip (35 degrees c.) We had steam from Wroclaw, the Ol49-69, 2-6-2, 3 cylinder engine. heading out on the same route as day 1. We carried on west at Jaworzyna (Striegan) instead of turning south to Dzierzoniow . This was billed as one of the highlights of the trip as it involved several very steep inclines, starting with the climb from Swiebodzice to Walbrzych Glowny, past more closed coal mines, coking plants and the like. Nigel, who worked with me and had come out via Doncaster, told me he had been along this route back in 1989, when all the mines and factories were in full production. He said the air was thick with chemical fumes and smoke, almost blocking out

the sun. Difficult to imagine with it all gaunt and silent today. We stopped at Jelenia Gora (Hirschburg), the junction for the single line branch up into the Giant Mountains (Sudetes). Here the ancient SU45 was put on the front of the train with the Ol49 2-6-2 working tender first, which it had done from Wroclaw. Off we set, and as the climb steepened the three cylinder bark got louder. Up through the mountain forests the engine barked on towards the Czech border and the train gradually got slower and slower. Eventually we came to a stand and had to wait while the loco 'had a blow up' to raise boiler pressure. The struggle continued at barely walking pace. It seemed the diesel was contributing nothing to the effort, and we subsequently discovered that this was so. It was suffering high water temperature and had shut down. This meant the 2-6-2 was hauling seven coaches plus a dead diesel (i.e. the equivalent of 9 coaches) up a gradient of some 1 in 30 in places.

We stopped at Piechowice to pick up passengers and struggled the final few km to Szklarska Poreba Gorna (Schreiberhau) some 6km from the Czech border, arriving just over one hour late (standard charter time). Outside the station the town put on a splendid display of local crafts, food and local beer and even a set of 7 dancers doing the can-can. The Burghermeister and others in top hats tails and period costume were there to greet us.

The operating problems by now were beginning to snowball, as there is a fairly intensive local service on the single line and there were trains at both ends waiting to set out onto the single line. On top of this the steam was booked to do a shuttle back down the line to Piechowice for the locals. By the time all this had taken place we had been down the steep hill into the town to have lunch. On returning the steam had not yet returned from it's shuttle trip. So we sat in the sun outside the station enjoying the sunshine and local pils beer.

We were advised to return to Wroclaw by the 17.43 semi fast service, as the steam was now two and half hours late. We did, and got back via the route outward, at 20.48, two hours seventeen minutes earlier than the steam's booked arrival. We had missed the steam's long route back via Zebrydowa (Sunslau), which arrived at Wroclaw at 02.27 ! There were about 6 determined stalwarts still on board I understand!

Day 4, Monday 31st August. The special was booked to start at 05.33 but there was an option to get up later and pick the train up at Legnica (Liegnitz) (due west of Wroclaw), where the Ol-49 was due to replace the diesel. A group of us thought we would get up for it anyway having got back in reasonable time on Sunday night. We soon found out why the early start. After about an hour we had run into a yard taken an electric loco off one end, put another on the rear and set off back towards Wroclaw, when a chap spotted the tallest building in Wroclaw only about half a mile away and next to our hotel! So we did a tour of the Wroclaw avoiding line (Ringbahn!) to eventually turn west for Legnica. All this due to no path available over a

bridge reconstruction site. After collecting the O1-49 we headed south east through Jaworzyna Slaska (also done on Friday and Saturday) all the way to a place called Glucholazy (Ziegenhal) only 4 km from the Czech Republic. Here we had a quick turn round and were not allowed off the train. Yet another single line local service was starting to unravel due to poor regulation since we started that day, and paths had been lost. As a result, we were an hour and a half late. Back via Nysa (Neisse) and Brzeg (Brieg) with the diesel leading and the O1-49 in reverse on the rear. We arrived at Wroclaw at 18.09 one hour and 11 mins late.

I think the main observation over the whole trip was the lack of joined up thinking and working in silos that results when you break up a railway network into separate businesses. The inability for one person to make a decision.

Home via east Germany and some narrow gauge, but that's another story.



051 Tkt48-18 on the line to Dzierzoniow-does a run past.

Wroclaw Główny
SU45 115 on our train.

All photos WP





MORE STEAM IN POLAND

Photographs WP





NIGEL'S NEW BALDWIN



Nigel Penford showed off his new engine to club admirers on 12 September at the RSME track



Photos John Spokes

DIARY

October 2015

Saturday	3rd	Birthday Party	14.30-17.00
Sunday	4th	Public running	13.30
Tuesday	6th	00 gauge	19.30
Saturday	10th	Club running	11.00 onwards
Sunday	11th	Birthday Parties	11.00-13.30 14.30-17.00
Monday	12th	Committee	
Saturday	17th	Birthday Party	14.30-17.00
Tuesday	20th	DCC 00 gauge	19.30
Friday	23rd	Young Engineers	18.00-20.00
Saturday	24th	Birthday Party Young Engineers	11.00-13.30 13.30 onwards
Sunday	25th	Birthday Parties	11.00-13.30 14.30-17.00
Monday	26th	Special Needs	13.30-16.00
Thursday	29th	AGM	19.30
Saturday	31st	Birthday Party	11.00-13.30

November 2015

Sunday	1st	Public running	13.30 till dusk
Tuesday	3rd	00 Gauge layout	19.30
Thursday	5th	Fish 'n' chip run	16.00
Saturday	7th	Club running	11.00 onwards
Monday	9th	Trustees meeting	
Tuesday	17th	00 Gauge DCC	19.30
Friday	20th	Young Engineers	18.00-20.00
Saturday	21st	Young Engineers Birthday Party	11.00-14.00 14.30-17.00
Sunday	29th	Birthday Party	11.00-13.30

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 November PROSPECTUS is
11 October. 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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