



# The Locomotive & Carriage Institution

## **ANNUAL REVIEW 2012**

As we welcome in 2013, it is time again to look back over the past 12 months. As always, this report attempts to give details of as many of our activities as possible. Almost all our visits were fully subscribed, and our presentation evenings in London continued the recent trend of being well attended. I thank all those who supported the Institution during 2012 for your time and commitment.

So looking in more detail, it is clear to say that The Locomotive & Carriage Institution had a very successful year, with many interesting visits: New Cross Gate & Northam Depots, Basford Hall Freight Yard in Crewe (in conjunction with WNXX), the Trans-Pennine Express driver simulator at York, National Railway Museum, Statfold Barn Railway, a repeat visit to the newly re-opened Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, a walk over Meldon Viaduct, Dean Forest Railway, Ecclesbourne Railway, plus a joint walk with the Branch Line Society to the former railway lines around Weymouth & Portland.

In keeping with recent years, we hosted many excellent speakers at St. James's Park on Tuesday evenings. The subjects were diverse, with many modern topics covered: The recently formed Network Rail / South West Trains alliance, the Crossrail story (so far) and the fascinating story of the history of GBRf. To compliment these, we had several historical subjects, including, The Longmoor Military Railway and a history of the Central Line. The variety offered is clearly popular with members, with the average attendance just under the fantastic figures from our Centenary year in 2011. The actual figure for 2012 was 30.6 per lecture.

The Annual General Meeting was another success, with 41 members attending at the Yeovil Railway Centre. After an excellent meeting with many positives being taken, members enjoyed an excellent buffet lunch provided by the friendly volunteers, before making the most of the good weather to look around the facilities. The former Transfer Shed had a wonderful array of photos, documentation and memorabilia inside, which was very much appreciated by all, and especially those who worked on the railways in the region. Steam hauled brake-van rides were also offered by our hosts, and we covered a great deal of their track, including much that isn't normally done on public open days. The highlight for many was the section onto their 70ft turntable (which even made a full 360° revolution with us onboard). Thanks must also go to South West Trains for getting members to and from Yeovil 'on-time'. The Yeovil Railway Centre has kindly put a small selection of photos from the day on their website- [www.yeovilrailway.freeservers.com/150512.html](http://www.yeovilrailway.freeservers.com/150512.html)

Our Chairman, Alan Spencer, celebrated his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday during this year, and he organized a celebration event for family, friends and Institution members at the Ecclesbourne Railway. A special train was chartered for the event, utilizing the Directors Saloon, and a Class 31 locomotive, no. 31414. A superb buffet lunch was also provided at Wirksworth station.



Photo: Neil Downing

A superb shot of 'our' loco, 66716, whilst working a GBRf container train for MSC. The train is captured near to Morston Hall (Trimley) whilst heading from Felixstowe Docks to Hams Hall on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

## **New Cross Gate Depot Visit**

Review: John Hayward  
Date: Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Our group was met at New Cross Gate station at 11am. We entered a gate at the north end of platform 2 and then proceeded along a walkway next to London Overground's East London Line (ELL) tracks and adjacent sidings. At the far end of this walkway was a security gate which was opened for us. New Cross Gate depot, which opened in March 2010, is the main depot for the East London Line. The ELL is operated by the London Overground Rail Operations Ltd (LOROL), which is contracted to operate the London Overground (LO) train service on the National Rail network, under the franchise control of Transport for London. The company is a 50:50 joint venture between the Hong Kong metro rail operator (MTR Corporation) and the rail operator Arriva UK Trains. They work together with a number of companies to deliver and maintain a new high quality railway and rolling stock, and to operate the new railway successfully. The responsibilities are as follows:

(1) LOROL – Train Operation, Station Management & Traincrew's. (2) Network Rail – Signalling, Route Control & Traction Current Control. (3) Bombardier – Servicing of ELL & NLL Class 378 EMU's. (4) London Underground – Station Management at Whitechapel & Canada Water. (5) Carillion – Infrastructure Maintenance Contractor.

After operating for nearly 75 years as part of the Underground network, the ELL closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2007 for an extensive refurbishment and expansion project, reopening as Phase 1 of the ELL extension on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010. This extended the former Underground line northwards from Whitechapel to Dalston Junction using 2.25 miles of new trackbed. A further 1.3mile extension from Dalston Junction to Highbury & Islington was opened on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Phase 2 of the ELL, which will link the line to the South London Line (SLL) with a terminus at Clapham Junction, is due to be completed in December 2012.

Getting back to our visit, New Cross Gate depot has been built and equipped to a very high standard. It was clear from our visit that both the depot and trains are being maintained that way. The depot is home to a fleet of 24 x 4-car 'Capitalstar' Class 380/1 sets, operating on 750v DC third rail and running between Highbury & Islington and West Croydon/Crystal Palace. Of this fleet, 21 sets are required for weekday service. Two are normally under maintenance and one is available as a spare. These units were built by Bombardier at Derby between 2008-2011.

We were taken to the Operational Building Complex, containing the drivers' signing on and off point (for over 100 staff), general staff facilities, offices and the control room. We were invited into a meeting room where the depot manager gave a short introduction to the site as well as handing out a visitor information pack and giving safety instructions.

We were told that thought is now being given to adding an extra coach to the existing four car Class 378 EMUs to make them into five car EMUs. It seems that the process of expanding the 378s to include a fifth car has been accepted as a "must do," by Howard Smith, Chief Operating Officer for TfL London Rail. This will take place in 2013/14 and will no doubt come as good news to the Bombardier works at Derby. It will mean that selective door opening (SDO) at a number of stations will have to be introduced.

Our group was then invited to visit the Integrated Control Room, which is staffed in an apparently seamless manner by Network Rail, LUL, Overground and Bombardier staff. It oversees train operations, station operation and security together with fault reporting. First, we were shown where staff remotely monitor and manage the security at stations, with use of very high quality station CCTV cameras and monitors. They can also assist the station staff if needed in an incident. At the far end of the room is the signalling centre with signalling displays covering the tracks from Highbury & Islington to New Cross Gate & from Canal Junction to New Cross> There is also an interface with fringe signalling centres at London Bridge and Upminster. The two operators supervise the signalling, although their intervention is only necessary when late running occurs or there is an incident. Under normal circumstances, the trains are controlled by automatic route setting according to a pre-set timetable. Interestingly, the newly completed link between Silwood Junction and Old Kent Road Junction is not shown on any of the signalling panels.

Our group was then taken over to visit the Maintenance Shed, which is staffed by Bombardier Transportation who carry out all the train maintenance activities on behalf of TfL. The Class 378/1s on East London Line only use the third rail 750v DC system, but the workshop can also be used to maintain the Class 378/2 dual voltage 25kv/750dc sets from the North London Line if required. There is a short stretch of test track near the Train Wash with 25kv AC overhead should any Class 378/2 dual voltage unit need testing.

The jacking positions are capable of lifting a complete 4-car set at one go and the maintenance tracks are equipped with pits, walkways and roof access gantries. This last feature means that, in addition to accessing the roof-mounted air conditioning equipment on the present 3rd-rail equipped ELL stock, the electrical equipment on a Class 378/2 can also be inspected and maintained. It was pointed out that there is room for the building to be extended once the 5-car EMUs are introduced. We were also shown a mobile paint spray booth to enable sections of a unit exterior to be repainted should it have been damaged by graffiti. Fortunately, it has seen little use so far. Whilst in the shed we could hear it raining heavily outside and the manager commented that all the rainwater from the roofs of all the buildings on the site was going via the drains into tanks underground. The rainwater being 'harvested' is stored for use in the Train Wash facility. It was still raining quite heavily as we walked to the Wheel Lathe & Heavy Clean Facility building. As the name of the building implies, train wheels are turned on the Wheel Lathe, whilst heavy cleaning takes place in the opposite road. Fortunately, there have been few problems with 'wheel flats' so far. As we entered the building, we passed a battery powered NITEQ-2000E tug, which can be operated either manually or by remote control.

The building also contains the Security Control Room (SCR). This is responsible for controlling access to the depot by means of controlling the entrance gates, remote release of doors - all aided by 154 CCTV cameras and perimeter alarms. The staff are justifiably proud of their safety record and the lack of vandalism at their 'new' depot.

*The full version of this excellent report, including a history of railways in the area can be found on the L&CI website.*

## **From the Chairman**

2012 could never live up to the tremendous year of our Centenary (2011), but all in all, it was another good year for the Institution. The Yeovil Railway Centre was a great venue for our Annual General Meeting, and another good year of presentations, plus the usual array of visits and walks. However things are not as easy for a General Secretary now as they were back in the days of 2001 in terms of getting people to commit to giving a presentation, and also to some extent also gaining access to places of railway interest. So with this in mind, I must congratulate our General Secretary on a great effort in presenting such a program over the past year. The last twelve months also produced great changes for me: a new job in the railway industry, reaching retirement age (65) - but still not ready to hang up my Hi-Vi. One event that was supposed to have taken place in 2012 and was scuppered by DBS (EWS as they were) was my birthday train on the 21<sup>st</sup> October.

Over the last few weeks it has again been blown out of the water by continuing problems at DBS over resourcing issues. However I am pleased to be able to report that finally there is light at the end of the tunnel, and the charter train (which will now celebrate 50 years of railway service), will run on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

Please look out for the forthcoming itinerary for this charter.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank all the members who joined me at the Ecclesbourne Railway for my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday train.

Best Wishes,

Alan Spencer.



## **Okehampton & Meldon Viaduct Walk**

Review: Stuart Smith  
Date: Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2012

6 members travelled to Exeter St. David's to board the 11:07 First Great Western 'Summer Sunday' service to Okehampton. Shortly before 11am, it looked likely that those travelling on the HST from London might miss our intended service due to slow running on the approaches to Taunton following a trespass incident. However, luck smiled on them, as a fault with a Class 143/153 combination attempting to depart towards Exmouth had blocked platform 1 and thus delaying our service up at Exeter Central. Once on our way from Exeter, we swung left at Cowley Bridge Junction on to the Barnstaple line. Beyond Crediton we forked left on the L&SWR route to Okehampton and started the long climb to Yeoford, which according to local train-crews, was a 'challenge' if the conditions were unfavourable. Tales of Class 33's and 1000-tonne stone trains were told!!!

After a brief stop at Samford Courtenay (where passengers both alighted and boarded (surely proof that a regular service along this route could well be justified)), we reached Okehampton. Here we transferred via the wooden footbridge to the waiting 2-car 'Hampshire' DEMU for the short trip to Meldon Quarry. Sadly, the short journey offered very few views out across Dartmoor, as years of foliage growth have gone largely unchallenged. On the approach to the platform at Meldon, the train passed the immense quarry site on the left and several sidings of rolling stock, including a Class 08 shunter, an immaculate looking Class 47, 47701 "Waverley", and quite a few vehicles from various types of Southern Region units.

Leaving the train here we took the short walk to the impressive Meldon Viaduct. Constructed in 1874 and standing 150 feet above the valley floor, some spectacular views of the surrounding hills can be achieved whilst walking across. In the distance, Meldon Reservoir can also be seen. Once across the viaduct the trackbed enters into a deep cutting and under a couple of road bridges. Around half a mile beyond the viaduct is the site of the former Meldon Junction. The course of the two diverging routes is still clearly visible today (despite over 40 years of vegetation growth), although a strange arrangement of wooden benches did help a little! The line forward from here towards Lydford, Tavistock & Plymouth now forms part of the National Cycle Network (Route 27). The North Cornwall line to Bude & Padstow appeared to be inaccessible, as the A30 trunk road now severs the formation as it climbs away from Meldon.

Re-tracing our steps back to Meldon, we again boarded the DEMU for the journey back to Okehampton. The station itself has been lovingly restored to its former glory, with a restaurant, bookshop, ticket office and waiting rooms on the up platform, and a small museum on the former down platform. Before too long, it was time to join the FGW service back to Exeter and to conclude our very enjoyable visit. To see some excellent pictures and more history on the viaduct at Meldon, visit this link-  
<http://www.semgonline.com/location/meldon1.html>

## **Meetings & Speakers**

### **January**

The first speaker of the New Year was Tim Roberts, from Network Rail's Operations Centre. He started by giving a brief run through of his career. Following a family move to Wiltshire from Hull, Tim started as a signaller at Lavington, a box he knew well from unofficial schoolboy visits! A move to Bedwyn box followed, then a clerical job at Reading. In 1964 Tim was involved in the early days of the TOPS. The next job was the one that has evolved into the current one at the National Operations Centre (NOC), which moved to temporary offices at Milton Keynes Station in June 2011. The new permanent building is being built nearby.

The NOC is a "one stop shop", which has eight staff. Operation updates are sent out four times a day. They are punchy one-liners, straight to the core. More in depth reports are available if required. A brief run through the Network Rail set up was given. There are signallers and maintainers (for signals, Overhead Line, bridges/structures). In case of trouble or failures, a Mobile Operations Manager (MOM) is sent out. For more serious incidents, a Rail Incident Officer (RIO) will take charge over everybody on site, including Police. The Route (or Region) Control Manager oversees everything. There are also Incident Managers and Shift Signal Managers (SSM). There is a Train Running Controller, who deals with the Train Operating Company's and freight.

The Route Controller can have other operators in the room, e.g. Birmingham Control also has Virgin and London Midland, Swindon has First Great Western, and Glasgow has Scotrail. This makes co-ordination easier when trouble occurs. The Control Centre oversees the Route Controller, reviewing incidents as they happen, and deciding how important it is to go into the log. This log is distributed to the Rail Industry and Media Team. Contact with the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) is done solely through Tim's office. Any incidents that require a National Incident Report (NIR) to be written are compiled and distributed from here; the distribution now carried out via email rather than a huge fax list! All must be acknowledged.

The next part of Tim's talk, about modern technology, was spoiled by modern technology! Unfortunately a power point presentation just would not work, despite much effort! Part of this would have been a demonstration of box train recorders, in one instance a reported head on "near miss" could be investigated, and dismissed. A reliable reporter described his train swaying and a passing train almost making contact. Interviewing the relevant train company's staff, and track workers, the issue was unclear. But by reviewing the box tapes all was explained. Both trains were crossing from fast to slow lines, due to Sunday engineering work, and the reporter happened to be looking out of the window as the trains passed on the crossing!

A Bridge Strike Nominee (BSN) is now the first to report the status following a hit. There are categories, from Red (stop all trains) through to Green (ok to run line speed). This has proved to be a quicker, with safety in mind, way to get trains moving again.

Tim finished with a Questions & Answer session, which included questions on axle counters, stranded trains, the relationship between infrastructure and TOC operators, and an observation from the floor that the railways talk *AT* each other, not *TO* each other!

### **February**

For this month, we welcomed Charles Devereux (Head of Operations, Crossrail) who gave a wonderfully detailed insight into the changes being made "below the streets of London".

The history- January 1989 – Central London Rail Study. 1991/1994 – First Crossrail Bill Submitted/Rejected. September 2003 – Business Case for Crossrail Developed. The headlines – Scheduled to open in 2018. World Class. Affordable. Built to last. Leaving a legacy.

In the beginning- February 2005 – The Crossrail bill was passed by parliament. It was the longest transition through parliament of any bill in history. All technology, routes and local landowners were taken into consideration during the process. Recent threat from government spending revue and considerable local objections.

July 2008 – Royal assent gained. December 2008 – Funding agreement signed. January 2009 – Construction commences.

The facts- Crossrail is needed! A route to interweave through existing 'overground' lines and tube tunnels. Fully integrated with other forms of transport throughout London. Up to 4000 buildings and 50 other LUL tunnels in close proximity. Purpose built tunnels from Westbourne Park (Paddington) through to Pudding Mill and Royal Victoria. Use of existing lines to Heathrow/Maidenhead, plus Stratford/Shenfield & Abbey Wood. (90km of existing surface lines in total). Independent analysis predicts significant employment and population growth on the east-west axis.

In a world without Crossrail, the following will still occur- 636,000 new jobs created in London (2001-2016).

If only 50% of these workers use rail, then 318,000 new people will use the existing rail infrastructure.

Crossrail will provide significant relief to the existing Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan tube lines, and also alleviate crunch points of other lines/interchanges.

The figures- Fast running beneath London – up to 60mph.

Maidenhead – Liverpool Street: To be 51mins (currently 85mins). Paddington – Liverpool Street: 9mins (24mins).

Heathrow Airport – Canary Wharf: 43mins (71mins). Bond Street – Shenfield: 47mins (57mins).

The new trains & stations- Built to W6 gauge. 18% lighter than existing trains. Up to 1500 passengers. 450 seats. 200m in length.

The tender for the actual trains is expected to be let during 2012. At peak times, trains will run up to every 2mins.

Up to 30 trains per hour, giving capacity for 45,000 passengers in each direction. 27 stations to be served by Crossrail.

61 platform extensions to current stations. 146km of electrification. A new flyover at Airport Junction (Hayes).

New station layouts at Maidenhead & Abbey Wood.

## **Meetings and Speakers**

(continued)

**The tunnels-** 21km of new twin-bore tunnels underneath London. 8 new sub-surface stations. 7 tunnel boring machines used during construction. 6m diameter tunnels, compared to 3.81m on the existing Victoria line. Each machine is 120m in length and is capable of boring up to 40m per day or up to 200km<sup>3</sup> per month. 60mph running through tunnel sections. All stations to have platform edge doors, except Custom House. The London terrain is complex: clay, building foundations, other tube lines and underground springs all have to be taken into consideration. Air conditioning in tunnels and stations require wider tunnelling to allow for airflow. Enhanced train designs to accommodate air conditioning. Greater technology as a result. Re-generative braking. Less power used = less heat created. Floating slab track (on springs) to reduce noise to residents/business's above the route. Evacuation walkways throughout the length of the tunnels. Tunnel Academy has been set up to develop/retain skills.

**The other bits-** Active talk of Crossrail '2'. Skills and knowledge transfer to future projects. Excavated waste material (to Wallasea Island RSPB land reclamation bird sanctuary)- 14% carried by rail. 39% by barge. 47% by road. Grade 1 listed problems on existing stations and adjacent properties.

Old Oak Common Depot- Currently being used as a construction site and a materials stockpile. Upon completion of the project it will become the new depot in West London. The vacant site at North Pole was considered, but not taken up due to the likely congestion when crossing the existing track formation. Track alterations- Re-modelling of Kensal Green area. A freight flyover at Acton Yard.

### **March**

Mike Walshaw was our guest for this month, and 31 members attended to hear a very interesting talk (with slide show) on the Longmoor Military Railway. The complex nature and gradients etc, of the railway lines within the camp and surrounding area were described, including some 'behind the scenes' views taken shortly before its closure in 1967. Mention was also made of what remnants survive today, with note of the montage on display at Liss station too.

At the end of the presentation, all those present were given hand-drawn maps of the railway line in its heyday.

### **April**

John Smith (Managing Director, GBRf) gave a fascinating insight into the history of the company. Entitled "Turnover is vanity, Profit is sanity", this gave the 42 members in attendance a chance to discover how one of the newer railfreight companies successfully competes against some of its more established and much larger competitors.

Now recognised as the third largest rail freight operator in the country, GBRf has come a long way since being formed back in 1999 with just 18 members of staff! To show testament to the values of the company, most are still employed with them today.

The company has set out five core values:

Communication & Visibility = Establishing trust and good working relations with its customers.

Trust & Empowerment = A two way process with staff to ensure the job gets done.

Professionalism = A requirement on staff to dress smart and act accordingly. Appearance counts.

Enjoyment = A vital part of the business. Staff days out, naming locomotives etc.,

Support = Staff matter to a company like GBRf, so it's important to look after their welfare with things like healthcare.

It was stressed that the business is not engineering led or operating led! The name of the game is investment: investment in people, equipment and most importantly customers. The largest customer is Drax Power Station. Another successful contract (albeit with a limited timescale) was to remove waste/spoil from the Imberhorne Cutting at East Grinstead for the Bluebell Railway. In recognition of the work undertaken, GBRf are running the first passenger train over the newly-restored link in March 2013.

Coal trains to power stations make up a large percentage of the work undertaken. Network Rail ballast and infrastructure work also accounts for a substantial amount too. MSC (the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest container shipper in the world) are also an important customer: a contract that was bid for because of the guaranteed volume of freight. A recent contract to deliver brand new tube trains for London Underground has seen the re-introduction of Class 20 locomotives (hired from DRS and HNRC) to move stock from Derby Works to Old Dalby (for testing), and then deliver them to West Ruislip depot for acceptance.

The latest contract awarded was to move waste material away from the Crossrail construction site at Westbourne Park, near Paddington. This flow goes to Northfleet where it is put into ships for transfer to a bird sanctuary off the Essex coast.

GBRf are now operating almost 20% of the container trains out of Felixstowe Port. Expansion is desperately needed at the port before any of the three operators (DB, FL or GB) can increase the amount of trains run. Ships today hold nearly twice as much cargo as a decade ago, yet the port infrastructure has not grown at the same rate. Work has now started to address this, with two new berths being opened in 2011 (with further expansion still happening). On the rails, a new double track section across to Ely is being constructed, plus a new North facing chord at Ipswich. Additional capacity on the North London Line is also being planned.

Some of our milestones include winning the Network Rail contracts from DBS (formerly EWS), returning Royal Mail traffic to the rails utilising Class 325 EMU's (although this has now reverted to DB operation) and Infrastructure trains for Metronet, which required a large investment into the redundant yard at Wellingborough for these trains to operate from/to.

GBRf accounted for 30% of all UK coal traffic last year. However, with coal slowing going out of favour, a new flow of Biomass (from the Gulf of Mexico) is being trialled. This flow arrives into Bristol and is then taken by rail to Drax. Three of these trains compares to just one train of coal – resulting in more freight trains on the network.

## **Meetings and Speakers**

(continued)

Freightliner were complacent about others entering the container market. Having inherited all the inland terminals from British Rail, this prevented any other operator from using them. Other such smaller privately-operated terminals are few and far between and have limited potential for expansion due to planning restrictions.

British Steel was taken over by Corus, who were then succeeded by Tata Steel. In 2010 the site at Lackenby was mothballed, with a future of any kind looking unlikely. However, fortunes changed, and a Thai-based firm (SSI) took over operations of the blast furnaces. A contract was awarded to GBRf to maintain the trackwork, operate the 'torpedo' trains and a fleet of 10 ex-Norwegian shunting locos. Around 50 staff are needed to ensure a smooth operation, although many are new to the industry.

GBRf are currently responsible for around 12-13% of the UK Railfreight market, with a turnover of nearly £100million. The average freight train produces around 60% less carbon emission than the equivalent amount of lorries on the roads.

Europorte (the freight sector of Eurotunnel) took over from First Group in 2002 and set up some new International flows, including a through service from Domodossola, Italy to Daventry for DFDS and a train on behalf of Tesco conveying Spanish fruit.

John Smith is keen to influence the debate with the passenger sector that freight is needed on the railways. Not just being the bad-relation anymore, freight has a place!

Not only is it nessecery to work with the passenger sector in getting the most out of the available pathways, but minimising delays to each others' trains is a must. Communication and respect is vital and this is a good reason why we have to stick to our core values: flexibility, communication, support etc,

Of the 500+ Class 66's purchased by various companies in this country, only around 350 are still operating in the UK. The majority of those abroad are now in France or Poland.

There are worries from within GBRf about the future of the locomotive fleet. Locomotive fuel is around 6litres per mile, equating to 10-15% of train running costs. No longer is it acceptable to hire in a Class 56 and stick it on the front of a train (although some operators do). The Class 66 has proved a reliable asset, but the locomotives no longer comply with the strict environmental legislations. There is also concern over their crashworthiness!!

However, the alternatives lack inspiration. The Class 70's have had a very chequered start to the careers with Freightliner, and for a start they cost over \$0.5million more than a 66. GBRf is always on the hunt for additional locomotives for its fleet – both to expand the amount of trains it can operate, plus have an element of spare capacity for maintenance and the inevitable failures. This situation has been compounded by the recent derailment and loss of 66734 on the West Highland Line.

### **September**

Nick Agnew used his Presidential Address to kick-off the second Centenary of the Institution. Mention was also made of the many positives to be taken from the current railway industry, with the need to look into the past and draw on experiences, yet look forward to new challenges and practices. In reference to the Institution in particular, looking at the success of the visits and lectures we were able to offer our members, proved clearly that we were "doing things right". As usual and now customary with this meeting, the topics covered were continued next door.....

### **October**

Due to the last minute unavailability of our advertised speaker (Mike Ashworth, LUL Design & Heritage Manager), Nick Agnew stepped in to deliver this presentation. Having worked for several years on the Central Line, who better than to delivery a talk on the history of this route?

### **November**

Never can it be said that the Institution is lacking behind the times, and only attracts 'out of date' speakers. This presentation by Graham Stephens (TfL Games Co-ordinator) was bang up to date, and detailed all elements involved with transportation for the London 2012 Olympic Games. From the years of pre-planning through to the actual deliverance of everything transport related. Many of the eventual plans will live on as a legacy of the games, although now they serve the people of London in their everyday lives.

### **December**

Tim Shoveller (Managing Director for South West Trains) returned to give a second lecture to the Institution. The newly formed alliance between South West Trains & Network Rail has proved both popular and innovative within the rail industry, and one that will no doubt be repeated with other Train Operating Companies.

An informative overview of how things work in a more 'joined up' railway was given to the members present.

#### **2012 Presentation Attendance Figures:**

January – 22, February – 37, March – 31, April – 43,  
September – 26, October – 27, November – 28, December – 31.

## **Presidential Address**

It was always going to be a challenge to follow our Centenary year. The impact of UK-wide major events during 2012 was another potential 'diversion' for those who provided the Institution programme of meetings and visits during 2011. Yet again though, Council came up with a full and varied programme for members and I am pleased to be able to use this opportunity to pay tribute to those who work so hard to our benefit.

As the years pass, it becomes more and more difficult to provide a range of subjects that will appeal, but the healthy attendance at the monthly meetings confirmed that the hard work was appreciated and that the speakers and their topics were appropriate. Similarly, it was good to see the visits programme was also well supported in a year where transport, particularly rail transport, was a significant factor in the success of both the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the 2012 Games – The value of 'people' in the delivery process is clear.

Equally, our role in addressing the challenges of the future (as well as ensuring that the lessons of history are not forgotten) cannot be underestimated, and one of our challenges is to attract new members, particularly those in the early stages of their railway careers, as well as continuing to appeal to our long-standing members.

If the Institution continues to maintain the standard of the past season, we will be very well placed to appeal to a wide range of railway staff and associates.

Best wishes for 2013 to all members,

Nick Agnew.

## **SULLIVANS DINER**

**Run by friendly ex-railway staff. A great place to eat & drink after a fantastic train journey.  
Find us directly opposite platform 4 at Penzance station – Open 6 days a week.**

## **Statfold Barn Railway Experience Day**

Review: Malcolm Pym  
Photo: Malcolm Pym  
Date: Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Arriving from differing directions, 8 members gathered at Tamworth station for the short taxi ride to nearby Statfold Farm, and in particular, the mixed gauge railways that were open for an 'experience day'.

7¼", 10¼", 2'0" and 2'6" gauge lines snaked around the grounds, with a variety of steam, diesel and electric locomotives operating the trains. The Statfold Barn Railway is a unique creation, and although constructed in the 21st century, it can claim a link back to one of Britain's leading locomotive manufacturing companies from the mid 19th century. Locomotives and rolling stock of four different gauges can run on different parts of the railway at Statfold, and a fifth gauge is represented in the rolling stock collection.

The main line is laid out to allow a continuous "out and back" run of over three miles. The workshops at Statfold are one of the few places in Britain today where the skilled staff capable of building new steam locomotives may be found. There were Sixteen locos in steam during our visit, with continuous running from 10am until 4pm. Traction engines and steam lorries were also parked in an adjacent field, with vintage cars and oodles of stored relics waiting attention.



One of the impressive 2'6" gauge locos hauling a mixed passengers/goods train on the main line.

With the undoubted success of this day and the amount interest shown, a repeat visit will be organised for later in 2013.

## **Weymouth Quay & Portland Walk**

(an update from November 2010)

Review: Stuart Smith

Date: Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2012

A repeat of the very enjoyable walk previously taken on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2010. On this occasion, we were joined by members of the Railway Ramblers and the Branch Line Society. Starting from Weymouth station, we again followed the remains of the quay branch through the busy streets to the former passenger terminal. The tracks continued a short way beyond the platform, which served as a run-round facility. Two loading docks were also discovered and even a redundant point mechanism in the road tarmac.

From here we headed out for Portland following the Rodwell Trail. A big surprise since our last visit was the discovery that the bridge over the Newstead Road has been replaced, and thus enabling the track-bed to be followed in its entirety.

Having past around the quarry hole (now fenced off for Health & Safety reasons), the group split into two- with the more adventurous amongst us descending a steep path to regain the old alignment at the base of the cliffs. From here we were more successful in discovering the track-bed as it turned inland from the coast towards Easton itself, and although a 'filled in' tunnel prevented us walking the exact alignment, the route into the former station and goods yard was still traceable.

Some older versions of OS maps show the line continuing beyond Easton station to a set of carriage sidings. Again, we were able to follow these, (without trespassing, and actually with advice from one of the local residents) and although the cutting now forms part of some gardens, two over-bridges remain to clearly define the old formation.

All in all, this was a successful repeat visit, and if plans we were told about to re-open the whole line as a coastal footpath come to fruition, then a third visit will no doubt be organised. Lets hope if we do visit again, we can keep the excellent walking weather we have enjoyed on the first two walks.

## **Trans-Pennine Express Driver Simulator Day**

Review: Stuart Smith

Date: Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012

10 members travelled to York station to visit the First/Keolis Trans Pennine Depot at nearby Leeman Road. The journey from Kings Cross to York went without any problems, and the train arrived on-time into one of the two south-facing bay platforms which are now used to cope with the increased frequency of trains between the two cities. At Peterborough, 66704, 713, 721, 722 & 736 were noted on the GBRf Depot, although it was slightly disappointing not to see 66716 though.

Upon arrival at the relatively new depot, we were met by Steve Jackson (Technical Inspector) who gave us a warm welcome, and signed us all in. In true railway fashion, the kettle was already on, and tea was served thereafter. At this point we were introduced to Eddie Knorn (Standards Engineer) who would also be assisting in the proceedings for the day. The simulator workshop is housed within two rooms of the depot; one which contains the actual driving simulator, and a second that acts as 'the outside of the train' and also the recording/monitoring workstation. Two television monitors give views inside the cab – a sort of "fly on the wall" view over the drivers shoulder!

Each of us took turns to drive the Class 185 DMU through a variety of scenarios, starting with "a normal day", and then working with differing characteristics and weather conditions. To make it even more interesting, various out-of-the-ordinary situations were added to ensure the driver was still alert – not an easy task for those unfamiliar with the driving cab.

As testified by our two hosts, the simulators are a valuable aid in driver training and competency, and are used regularly by TPE drivers from various depots within the company. A second simulator is located at Adwick Depot in Manchester. Upon completion of the 'experience', each participant was presented with a certificate of achievement, which also served as a memento of the day.

Having said goodbye to our hosts, we then took the short walk to the National Railway Museum for the second part of the visit. Although it had been hoped to have a guided visit of the museum, with perhaps a look behind the scenes, this was not possible on the day, and so we made our own way around the exhibits. As always, the museum did not fail to inspire.