THE CORKSCREW

Newsletter of the

Wimborne Railway Society

Founded 1975

Issue 103 February 2018

Workplate of our cover picture at the Middleton Railway. Ken Aveyard

Workplate of the rear cover picture of Mary at Middleton Railway. KA

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Editorial

One of the last events of 2017 was our annual open day held on 30 December 2017 in the church hall and adjoining rooms. In contrast to previous years where we held the event mid week, the decision to move to Saturday probably caused the reduction in the number of visitors compared to previous years. There was also the competing West Camel event that we have previously avoided clashing with.

The decision to go with a selection of members smaller layouts also helped to create more space in the main hall, previous years of displaying Wimborne having created a somewhat crowded feeling at times.

As an exhibitor I did spend most of my time in the vestry (or the non-railway room as we called it) where my trolleybuses kept company with Chris Aston's trams. Horton Road was running in its usual slot and the new Turner's Wharf layout showed its continuing progress. Shunterton in the Gowing Room and Gorpeton Blymee in the main hall even made it to You Tube, just search for Wimborne open day 2017.

All in all, it was another thoroughly enjoyable day, showed the Society in a good light to both the general public and visiting enthusiasts, and we will no doubt be doing it all again this year (George?)

In this issue we have more from Alan Swinburne on recording train performance, new contributor Gerry Barnard on the Cathedrals Express, Steve Green on tenders and snowploughs, and Peter Watson gives us a taste of India. As always Colin Stone delivers Railways Roundabout.

Sit back and enjoy Corkscrew 103. Closing date for 104 is 15 March 2018.

Cover Picture :- Fowler diesel shunting locomotive 3900002 of 1945 seen at the Middleton Railway on 15 July 2012.

A “TENDER” TALE or HOW TO WRITE A REASONABLE ARTICLE ON “SCHOOLS” CLASS TENDERS THAT WERE CONVERTED INTO SNOWPLOUGHS BY BR DURING 1964, ALL OF WHICH THEN SURVIVED INTO THE PRESERVATION ERA.

And write the longest article title in the history of “THE CORKSCREW”, beating Colin Stone’s record set in Issue 98, April 2017!

By Steve Green.

As you are probably aware, the SR ‘V’ or “Schools” class 4-4-0 locos were numbered 900 – 939, and the tenders followed suit, no’d 700 – 739, in numerical order, i.e. loco 912 had tender 712, etc. However, tender nos. 700-4 were indeed new-builds for their respective locos, but those fitted to locos E905-9 were second-hand, having seen use behind “Lord Nelsons” and “King Arthurs”. These flush-sided tenders came from ‘N15’s 768, 770-2 and the ‘LN’ was E852. The four ‘N15’ tenders were built during June 1925, a full five years before the first “Schools” entered traffic. As “Schools” class tenders were fitted with turned-in top side sheets (to match the cab profile), it is unclear whether new tanks were fitted to the chassis, or if the side-sheets were simply turned-in at the top. These first 10 tenders (nos. 700-9) were the only ones fitted with spoked wheels; the remaining 30 featured the more well-known rolled steel disc wheels. Their water and coal capacities were 4000 gallons and five tons respectively.

Some other useless bits of information:-
Tender no.732 was converted to a self-trimming type during July 1938, which made it very distinguishable with its high-sided profile, akin to the “Lord Nelson” tenders. It remained paired with 30932 until August 1958 when an error inside Ashford paint shop meant it had to be swapped with ex-‘N15’/’LN’ tender no.705 and run behind 30905 for the remainder of its working life. Locos 30900/14/19/32 remained painted in BR lined black until withdrawal, all other locos received lined green.
Several tender/loco swaps occurred within the class during BR days, due to overhauls, etc. but four exceptions are as follows, when the locos swapped SR sections:-
30912 received the large bogie tender from “Lord Nelson” 30865 during July 1961, and 30921 received 30854’s tender (no.1007) during November 1961 when they were transferred to the Western Section.

This was to increase their water capacity and braking capability.
30908's tender (no.708) was transferred to 'S15' 4-6-0 30833 during May 1962, which was followed by 30912's original tender (no.712) across to 'S15' 30837 during June 1962, when they were transferred to the Eastern Section.
Of the three preserved "Schools", both 925 and 926 have their original tenders, although no.726 now resembles no.732 of course on the NYMR. 928 STOWE is now coupled to no.714 which she acquired during August 1957.

Moving on to the subject of this article, in total eight ex-"Schools" tenders were converted into independent snowploughs from locos that were in the final batch of withdrawals during December 1962. All were modified at Eastleigh Works, as set out below:-

Tender	Converted	Dept. No.	Allocation '84	Withdrawn
701	3-12-64	ADS 70226	Salisbury	12-12-87
715	27-11-64	ADS 70225	New X Gate	1-3-90
723	22-2-64	ADS 70210	Ashford	15-8-96
729	Dec-64	ADS 70227	Salisbury	4-7-96
731	22-2-64	ADS 70211	Ashford	8-9-98
733	Dec-64	ADS 70229	New X Gate	4-12-90
734	18-12-64	ADS 70228	Eastleigh	4-7-96
739	19-11-64	ADS 70224	Eastleigh	1-3-90

The plough was attached to the rear of the tender whilst the front was modified to accommodate a staff platform with additional handrails and conventional drawgear. 28 tons of concrete was used to ballast the ploughs. Under the TOPS scheme, they were were coded ZZV. Tender nos. 706, 730 and 738 were due to have been converted, but the orders were cancelled.
The two tenders attached to the 'S15's out-lasted all other "Schools" tenders in normal traffic, with 30833 being withdrawn during May 1965 and 30837 going during September 1965, the last 'S15' and "Schools" tender in revenue earning traffic. However, 30837 was retained by Feltham shed until January 1966 when she was used to haul two "LCGB 'S15' Commemorative Rail Tours", still coupled to the 6-wheel tender, being well and truly spruced up for the occasions! She was finally cut up by Cashmore's, Newport during September 1966, the only ex-'V' class tender to be dealt with by them.
The remaining 28 tenders were despatched by the following:-
14 cut up by BR at Ashford Works
11 cut up by BR at Eastleigh Works, including the three cancelled conversions (plus the eight locos who were attached to the above tenders)
2 cut by George Cohen of Kettering (but actually three "Schools" locos as they dealt with 30921 and her former "Lord Nelson" tender)
1 cut by Buttigieg's of Newport, attached the aforementioned 30833, the only 'S15' loco and 'V' tender to end their days in that yard.

Unsurprisingly, these tender-mounted ploughs didn't stay allocated to one place alone: ADS 70225 was also noted at Ashford Chart Leacon on 14-2-82 and at Eastleigh on 27-6-87; ADS 70226 at Redhill on 29-12-78 and at Hoo Junction on 6-2-88, condemned, but riding on a 40T well wagon!; ADS 70227 at Norwood Junction on 29-10-94 and at Selhurst sometime during 1996. The latter appeared in 'Railscene 10 video magazine' (Winter 86/7) taken on 17-1-87 when it got stuck in a snowdrift at Lenham Heath in Kent. It was paired with an unidentified sister plough, with 33061 sandwiched in the middle. They were eventually rescued by a snow blower, which had to come down from Scotland (!) and 47131. Some footage of this, not the actual Railscene shots, is available on YouTube.

Looking at each snowplough in numerical order, we move into the preservation era and their individual histories continue thus:-

ADS 70210 – Sold to Southern Locomotives Ltd, Sellindge, Kent.
Axleboxes/bearings to new-build tender no.002/3363, for use behind 34053 SIR KEITH PARK. Remains scrapped 1998/9 (?)

ADS 70211 - To Southern Locomotives Ltd, Hope Farm, Kent.
Arrived circa Feb. 1999? Last seen there March 2009.
Purchased as a source of spare parts, scrapped 2010/11 (?)

Tender chassis no.739 at Swanage during August 2017.

ADS 70224 – Sold to Mid-Hants Railway for use with 'U' 2-6-0 31625.
New tank built, but restoration never completed. To Swanage Railway 2014.

Chassis now has a new-build 3500g tank fitted and is currently running with ‘U’-boat 31806. If you look carefully, you will see the disc wheels belying it’s true identity!

ADS 70225 – Sold to the Bluebell Railway, May 1991.
Currently in unrestored snowplough condition, however (!), during 2004 it was painted in camouflage colours and had a mock-up machine gun nest fitted for use in the film “Head in the Clouds”.
It is now stored in the sidings at Horsted Keynes station.

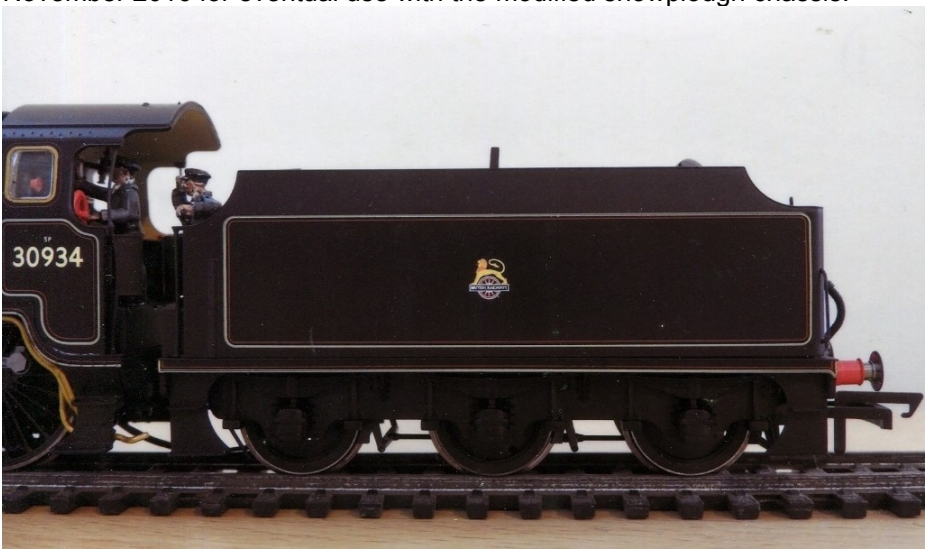
ADS 70226 – Sold to S.L.S, Richborough, Kent.
Parts for use with the new-build tenders for 34070 & 35027 (?)
To the Great Central Railway, but last seen during January 2005.

ADS 70227 - Sold to the Maunsell Loco Society at Bluebell Railway 30-8-96
For use with ‘S15’ 30830. Tank and plough removed. Loco and tender chassis sold by the MLS to the NYMR, to fund the purchase of STOWE, where they await restoration.

Tender no.734 in real life, now with the spoked wheels.

ADS 70228 – Sold to the Bluebell Railway, being noted there 20-10-96.
For use with ‘U’ 31638. New tank built, and tender restored in SR green May 2001. Loco completed during February 2006 and tender has remained with this loco since then. Now has spoked wheels fitted.

ADS 70229 – Sold to the British Enginemen Steam Preservation Society. Moved to North Woolwich Station Museum. To the Colne Valley Railway by 6-3-10, for use with 'MN' 35010. Currently in unrestored snowplough condition. Bulleid tender tank no.3116 purchased by BESPS from the MHR during November 2016 for eventual use with the modified snowplough chassis.



Tender no.734 in model form, with disc wheels.

For anyone wishing to model these unusual pieces of rolling stock, then Genesis Kits produce a 'OO' gauge whitemetal kit, Ref. SP1, which only requires the appropriate wheels to complete. I have not bought this kit, yet (!), nor unfortunately do I have any of my own photographs of these snowploughs, but there are plenty of them available on the world wide interweb. You will notice in the accompanying photos that those now attached to the moguls have a pronounced step in the front of their running plate, this is to take into account the difference in height of the dragbox between a 'V' and a 'U'.

And there you have it; hopefully you have found this seasonally wintery topic of some interest!?

A late running Cathedrals Express at Salisbury

By Gerry Barnard

Just before Christmas whilst beavering away ballasting Martin Catford's miles of track, Brian Cross, my fellow 'civil engineer' mentioned that a Steam Special would be passing through Salisbury the next day. It would be hauled by a Britannia Pacific locomotive so might be worth a journey to see visit our region. Although I've been to Salisbury many times I must confess I have never actually stepped on Salisbury station platforms before. So knowing that my wife would be only too pleased for me to get out of her way I duly set off on the morning of Tuesday 19th December to catch the X3 in Bournemouth to take me to the cathedral city for a chance to capture the experience of steam.

On the way I double checked on uksteam.info that 'The Cathedrals Express' from London Victoria to Bath was due through Salisbury at 13.11 p.m. Reaching the market square with plenty of time to spare I stopped off at Salisbury Model Centre to browse the stock and drop off some leaflets for our Open Day.

Arriving at the station it was pretty cold but the sun soon came out and blue skies started to appear overhead; perfect weather for a photograph. I admired the station buildings and looked across to the maintenance depot, trying to imagine what it must have looked like in the days of the West Country Class. There were two familiar looking chaps already standing at the top of the down platform; you know the type, grey beards, capped heads and wearing Nikons around their necks! I felt among friends. We were joined by a young guy down from university in Cheshire. He said he had planned his day minutely to get down to see a Britannia in the south west. Steam was obviously in his blood; his grandfather had been an engine driver and his uncles worked on the railway. After copping the Steam Special locomotive he planned to dash back up to Clapham Junction to catch a Merchant Navy Class, 'Clan Line'. Now that's what I call a real steam fan.

I soon discovered what many of you will already know; Salisbury station is a great location to photograph steam, still having its old water tower and a long curved gradient into the platforms. At one 'o'clock I learnt that I would have plenty of time to reconnoitre my shots as the young guy informed me that the Special was running late. It had been last recorded passing Basingstoke and nothing had been noted since! No one knew what had happened to it; engine failure? It soon became clear that no passenger traffic was running on the main line west either. The station announcer kept making apologies for the delays on the line. Eventually he blamed a late running steam train for the problem. Well perhaps he would tell us when it was on its way at last?

Fortunately Salisbury is an interesting place to pause and the café's staff quite accommodating. Whilst waiting we watched a track gang tighten a lot of nuts along the rails and help repair a sticking point too. I also managed to see my first spanking new South Western Railway livery up close too. It was on a local Class 158 unit I'd first seen in Brighton many years ago. Now in dark blue and grey it looked very smart indeed. The guard was a friendly chap who wanted to know the latest on the Steam Special timings. He was hoping to see it on his return journey. But still we had no news of its whereabouts when after twenty minutes he sadly had to depart his train back.

Class 59 203 hauling freight wagons through Salisbury on 19.12.2017. Gerry Barnard

We waited a further half hour then fortunately a Class 59 in DB Schenker livery, pulling a long freight rake of what looked to me like stone wagons appeared. It was clean and smart and shone bright orange in the sun as it effortlessly hauled its lengthy load quietly by.

After an hour we received information that the Steam Special was running one and a half hours late! Apparently its water tanker had been sent to the wrong location and the engine was still waiting with thirst at Overton crossing. Nothing was able to pass it either. I decided to go for another cup of tea.

As I walked back down the platform the station announcer suddenly asked that we stand way back from the platform edge. Ahead of me track gangs and other station staff started to emerge through doors and gather like a congregation.

There was an immediate sense of expectation. Quickly checking my camera settings I turned as I heard a familiar distant sound and realised that something big was going to happen at last.

First that feint drumming sound, then smoke billowed above the far buildings into the sky. A magnificent machine came into sight around the long approach curves, working so hard up the hill towards the station, hissing and snorting, trying its best to make up lost time.

BR 7MT class 4-6-2 Britannia Pacific 70013 Oliver Cromwell at Salisbury on 19.12.2017. ***Gerry Barnard***

'The 4-6-2 Britannia Pacific made music for my ears as it pulled its 300-400 ton train towards us. In a flash it was upon us – 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' gleaming in the sunshine, framed momentarily against the signal catenary, hurling itself through the station.

I got an impression rather than a view – of a headboard, lamps, nameplate, smoke, gleaming paint – black, green; driver, cap; whistle, steam, piston rods, big wheels, pounding movement; roar, steam, coal; table lamps, faces; BR crest, maroon; red lamp, smoke; and whilst I was still trying to process all these impressions, the 'Cathedrals Express' had gone. Thank goodness for my camera. Check the images. Relief. Got some.

The throbbing and clickety-clack sounds faded away. Silence. Slowly the station scene reverted to its earlier peace.

Britannia Pacific 70013 Oliver Cromwell heads the delayed Cathedrals Express past the old water tank at Salisbury having earlier waited over an hour for its own water supply at Overton. 19.12.2017. Gerry Barnard

Like a cinema film that had stopped and started again, all the characters in the piece start doing again what they were doing just before this steaming giant burst on the scene.

The orange clad track workers walked on, the platform supervisor returned to her barriers and the station announcer apologised for the delays to all trains to Bristol and Bath and the inconvenience caused– "this was due to a steam train running 128 minutes late!" he said.

I don't know if the young chap made it back in time to see 'Clan Line'. I don't know how many passengers were adversely affected by the delays. I don't know if WCRC were consequently fined a huge sum and I don't know either if the fire engine driver was hauled over the coals.

All I know is that the sight, sound and above all 'smell' of the railway of my youth was recaptured at Salisbury that December afternoon.

The two hour wait for The Cathedrals Express at Salisbury was certainly worth it.

Perhaps as a reward for patience a glorious Dorset sunset illuminated the bus ride home.

A PASSAGE TO INDIA (TWICE)

by Peter Watson

Back in 2013 we made our first ever journey to the sub-Continent during the course of which we managed to get to see the National Railway Museum in New Delhi. There were numerous exotic locos there ranging from a Bengal and Nagpur Garratt to more recent diesel and electrics. One that stood out for me was a rack loco that had worked in the Western Ghats on the line up to Ootacamund – or Ooty as it is known to visitors and locals alike. This was a Class X 0-8-2 tank engine built in 1923 by SLM Winterthur.

X Class 0-8-2T 37391 runs off shed at Coonoor ready to depart for the plains. ***Peter Watson***

Last year we retraced some of our steps by travelling back to India, but this time to the south in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. I had asked the travel agent to get us to Ooty and to book a ride on the train – but it didn't quite turn out as I had expected.

Ooty is a former hill station where the colonial powers escaped from the heat and humidity of the plains to a town in the hills of the Western Ghats at an altitude of over 7,000 feet. It still has a smattering of bungalows and colonial architecture – and it gets cool up there as evidenced by the log fire in our room.

We were booked on the afternoon train to Coonoor where our driver would meet us so we duly set off from the hotel and walked down through the town to the railway station on the metre gauge line that runs in from Mettupalayam on the plains. The line runs for a total distance of 46km and has a maximum gradient of 1:12 on the Abt rack section. Work began in 1886 and was completed to Coonoor in 1899 and then the extension to Ooty followed with the first trains running in 1908. I had no idea what to expect – lack of homework beginning to show up here – but was reasonably happy to see a YDM-4 Class diesel run in with 5 coaches. This was an adventure, we were in India, we were on our own and we had no idea where we were going.

Train at Ooty station ready to form the early afternoon departure for Coonoor. ***Peter Watson***

The platform was busy with tourists but also with locals who were going about their daily business. Estelle was soon deep in conversation with an Indian girl and her family – all keen to practise their English which was, by any reckoning, far ahead of my Hindi. Then it was a case of all aboard and we were off – the dog sleeping on the warm ballast at the other end of the station remained unmoved. The first stage was through wooded cuttings and numerous unlined tunnels punched through the rock with the noise of the diesel hammering back off the sides of the cuttings and exhaust smoke a heavy blue haze over the loco and its carriages.

It seemed that the loco was working hard yet the line falls 1,600 feet from Ooty to Coonoor in less than 19km which gives a ruling gradient of 1:26.
This part of the journey was partly through eucalyptus woods and then onto a ledge cut into the hillside giving views over valleys to villages clinging to the slopes with cultivation wherever the underlying geology permitted. It was obvious that the Raj had been involved – from signalboxes to semaphores the influence of the colonial power was ever present.

The approach to Coonoor was through a cutting which then opened out with the loco sheds on one side and the station on the other. Here was the sub-Continent's version of Dorchester South as we slowly ran through a complex series of points and paused before reversing back into the station. Another YDM-4 was ticking over in the sidings opposite the station but the highlight was a Class X in steam and another visible outside the shed. Unfortunately, this was the end of our rail journey but not before we were able to watch the loco change ready for the descent of the Ghats.

YDM-4 6664 in the yards at Coonoor having arrived from Ooty. P Watson

While the diesel unhooked and trundled away down the yards with one of the carriages, the rack tank backed off the shed, followed the diesel and then came back onto the coaches. It was hard to believe that this was 2017 and I was watching a scheduled steam departure on the "main line" – and I was probably the only enthusiast on the platform!

Some Class X tanks still operating are being converted to oil firing and have a diesel powered pump humming away in the former bunker and a saddle tank of fuel on top of the firebox. They were first introduced in 1914 (6), followed by further Swiss builds in 1920 (4), 1925 (2) and “our” engine from a batch of 4 built in 1952.

Interestingly, Indian Railways commissioned 4 more in 2011 – 14 to help take the load from their older sisters, several of which are withdrawn and preserved – I’ve seen two such at New Delhi and outside Coonoor station.

The change from coal to oil means that they can operate with only one fireman rather than the two required to feed the firebox on the long drag up the rack section.

After a quarter of an hour the semaphore clanked down, a whistle sounded and the train moved slowly out of the platform, the rack drive operating in anticipation of the forthcoming incline. These are compound locos with the high pressure cylinders driving the loco and the low pressure ones driving the rack.

The whole train slowly wound its way out of the station, through that complicated pointwork and took a line to the right that meant we could see the whole train begin to dip below the top yard and begin its run down to Mettupalayam with the compression braking put to the test.

Had we been a bit more switched on I would have tried to get a car to the foot of the incline and taken the train back up – now that would have made a noise!!

As it was we had to content ourselves with following the line down the Ghats, seeing it snake around the hills and cross the road, above and below, on bridges set at a crazy angle to the horizontal and the vertical – all the while our driver was carefully planning his overtaking to ensure he could complete the manoeuvre on blind bends with a steep rocky wall just beyond the 18” high retaining wall.

Monkeys gazed on appreciatively while we contemplated the radiator grilles of oncoming lorries and buses. We never saw the train again but we did beat it down the hill and crossed the line on the level outside Mettupalayam.

This has to be one of the most unusual sights on today’s world railways and an experience unique to this part of India. “If only……..” was a thought that stayed in my mind for some time after – displaced only by further rides on the modern Indian system and more sights and sounds of that marvellous country as we talked about making a return trip.

Loco and Train Recording Reminiscences

By Alan Swinburne

I have an extensive archive of journeys recorded mainly between 1959 and the early 1970's and my interest in recording was stimulated by the locomotive performance articles written by Cecil J. Allen in 'Trains Illustrated' and by O.S.Nock in the 'Railway Magazine'. The latter magazine continues to publish similar performance articles even today and shows their ongoing popularity with the readership. I think that in the days when most trains were locomotive hauled and each of the main four railway companies had their followers and supporters, it seemed natural to want to make comparisons between their locomotive classes.

Performance in everyday service was and still is the yardstick by which one measures how good a locomotive class was against its peer group. This legacy from the 'big four' continued into BR days with the BR Standard engines and then the diesels of the 1960's. In addition, in those days the much lower power output of steam engines and most early diesels (except perhaps for the Deltics) gave additional interest in that gradients both up and down were of much greater consequence to the speeds attained. Trains were also generally longer and heavier with 11 –13 coaches a common loading. The other main difference in the 1960's was the far greater number of signal boxes because even on main lines, semaphore signalling was often the norm outside the London suburban areas. From a recording performance perspective this was important in providing additional timing locations (as well as stations both open and closed).

Some club members may have done train recording and will no doubt have their own methodology for getting the end result of an accurate time and speed record of the engine's performance. Others may find it of interest to hear how I went about the process and the pitfalls and problems that could sometimes arise! The basic equipment needed for the task consisted of an accurate wristwatch with a clear second by second view, a stopwatch accurate to 1/10 of a second and an A5 size (or similar) notebook to take on the journey. One kept at home a hardback bound journal volume and this was written up when one got home from the 'rough' notebook taken on the outing. The hardback journal volume then became the permanent record of the performance.

A favourite journey of mine in the 1960 –1964 period was to catch the 'Atlantic Coast Express' from Waterloo to Salisbury. This had a tight schedule of 80 minutes for nearly 84 miles non-stop and was usually a 'Merchant Navy' roster with a 12 coach load. In preparing for a trip like this one needed to carry out some research. The first port of call was the Southern Region timetable which showed the Waterloo departure time of 11.00 and a Salisbury arrival of 12.20.

This of course did not get one very far as regards timing points since only the main stations were shown and the distances were only accurate to the nearest ¼ mile. Fortunately about 1960 Ian Allan Ltd produced a volume for each region called 'British Express Trains' compiled by Cecil J.Allen and this showed not only all the stations en route to the nearest 0.05 of a mile but also all the signal boxes or other identifiable locations like closed stations not in the timetable. Other valuable information that was shown included permanent speed restrictions (e.g. 40mph at Clapham Junction) and whether the mileposts were on the down or up side of the line. Another invaluable book to consult before travelling was called BR Main Line Gradient Profiles and this showed in pictorial form where the engine would be climbing or descending gradients. Going to Salisbury there is a steady 10 mile climb from Byfleet to Milepost 31 near Farnborough, a fast downhill stretch from Hurstbourne to Andover, a climb up to Grateley summit and then a final fast downhill stretch through Porton before the 50 mph speed restriction at Tunnel Junction, just before Salisbury. For a Merchant Navy pulling 12 coaches all these factors were of real importance! An illustration to show what this means in practice is given by a journey behind Merchant Navy class 35024 'East Asiatic Company' in April 1962. Having reached 81 mph near Byfleet, 35024 slowed to 71mph at Milepost 31 summit, reached 86mph through Andover, cleared Grateley summit at 67 mph and then touched a final 90mph down Porton bank before slowing to 45mph for Tunnel Junction. This was a Bulleid in cracking form with a 13 coach train!

35012 passing Farnborough on an up express 8 June 1964 WRS C908

Before I left home, I always liked to write up in my 'rough' book all the distances and timing points I hoped to find on the way; it was also helpful to know when on the train how far away the next timing point would be when one was concentrating on finding the ¼ mileposts to calculate the speed of the train using the stopwatch.

By writing down the ‘real time’ when passing a station etc. one was then able to crosscheck this against the stopwatch times recorded. As many of you know, 60 mph equates to a mile a minute, so at 60mph one covers ¼ mile in 15 seconds; this is the time you have to compute the speed, write it down and start looking for the next ¼ milepost. At 75mph this becomes 12 seconds and at 90mph only 10 seconds! In between one is looking out for and writing down the passing time at stations or signal boxes prepared in the rough book.

I should also mention that before boarding the train at say Waterloo one would walk along the platform and count the number of coaches and note their approximate weight. Hopefully the locomotive would also have appeared and its details would be recorded. I always tried to travel as near the engine as possible (especially on steam trains) and ideally one would in those days try to get a window seat in a compartment facing the direction of travel to maximise the available view of the mileposts. This assumes you are looking on the correct side! When the train is ready to depart, one should write down to the nearest second the actual departure time as this will govern the overall journey time. One would also note if the departure is on time or late (and by how much).

What about some of the difficulties one encounters in practice? First of all not all ¼ mileposts can be seen, perhaps because they are either not there, another train is in the way or the train is going through a tunnel. If one could not see the next expected ¼ milepost I usually let the stopwatch run on and take the measurement over ½ mile or even further. Deep cuttings can also be problematic where the mileposts are close to the track and one must look directly down to find them. One example of where this occurs is where the Bournemouth line goes from 4 tracks to 2 at Worting Junction and one then has the fast downhill stretch through Micheldever to Winchester. Sighting mileposts on a down train can be quite tricky along here, especially at 70-80 mph! So far I have also not touched on the extra problems of travelling in the dark. Stations that are open and lit are obviously okay but one cannot usually see mileposts in the dark. Lit signal boxes that used to be open fifty years ago (but of course no longer) are also invaluable timing points in the dark but closed stations can be easy to miss. What about stopwatch recording in the dark? In the 1960’s and 1970’s there was of course quite a lot of jointed track and even on welded track it was often possible to hear the joints faintly, especially as the older coaches were not sealed with air conditioning. The length of a standard piece of rail was 60 feet or 20 yards so 22 lengths of rail was ¼ mile and thus one was able to record stopwatch speeds by listening to the joints and counting up to 22! If the train was crowded and people were talking loudly this could make life difficult. One sometimes had to resort to standing in the corridor to get the necessary quiet space!
It was not always possible to get the details of the locomotive, even if one could see from its outline what class it was.

For example in 1966 I was travelling back with my parents from Preston to Euston in the early evening about 7 pm and we started off behind a Class 47 diesel which I had identified. At Crewe the diesel came off and we switched to a Class 86 electric locomotive. As I was well back on the train and it was already dark I thought I would get the electric engine's details when we reached Euston. This was not to be! The train came to an unscheduled stop at Bletchley and after some time it was announced that the line was blocked at Willesden because of a derailment. We were then put on a DMU and sent on a ride through the night to Marylebone where we arrived so late we had missed our last train home on the Southern. BR paid for a taxi home but I never did discover the identity of our loco from Crewe to Bletchley as it had disappeared into the night! After a day out travelling and time recording one then reviewed what was written down in the 'rough' book and prepared the data for the tabulated log in the permanent journal book. This principally involved converting the passing times as recorded on the wristwatch to the number of minutes and seconds from the start of the journey to each timing point. One also crosschecked the average point to point speeds against the stopwatch speeds to ensure the latter were accurate and hopefully find them in agreement. If they differed, I always worked from the station to station average speeds (allowing for gradient changes if applicable). The other aspect of recording I have not mentioned that would be highlighted on the final record would be any temporary permanent way or signal checks encountered on the journey. Thus one would end up with a gross overall time including all unscheduled PW or signal delays and then one would calculate the net time that would have been achieved if they had not occurred. The net time gave one a direct comparison between one locomotive and another, making due allowance for differing loads.

In conclusion, though train recording involved quite a lot of preparation and effort to achieve, I am pleased to have an extensive archive to look back upon, especially of the steam era. Journeys certainly were busy times and time went round very quickly! If any WRS members would like to see my timing records that mainly cover the years 1959 to 1970 I am happy to bring them along on a Club evening if you let me know in advance. With steam the portfolio is weighted towards Bulleid, Gresley and Collett's locomotives with some BR Standards as well. With steam's widespread withdrawal from the south of England after 1963, there are inevitably more diesel locomotive than steam journeys; I have a good collection of runs behind Deltics, Westerns and Warships, Classes 45 and 47, and Classes 37 and 40 to name the principal players. Southern Region pre-war and 1960 vintage EMU's are also well represented across the network. Finally I have in the archive journeys recorded that include the Deltic prototype, DP2, 71000 Duke of Gloucester, the Brighton Belle EMU and the Western Region 'Blue Pullman' unit. All a bit unusual and nice to have!

RAILWAYS ROUNDABOUT

DECEMBER 2017 :- On the first day of the month turbo unit No 166205 was noted undergoing clearance tests on the Western line at Dorchester West. During a prolonged stay in the station, staff were observed measuring distances between the unit and platform edge at various points. Enquiries revealed that 165/166 units are scheduled to start working the Bristol-Weymouth & Southampton routes soon. To enforce that fact sister unit No 166206 was noted in the Southampton area later in the month undergoing similar clearance tests.

Locally Hamworthy Stone trains start this report, Friday 1st saw Class 59 No 59103 carry out the duty followed by No 59005 on Monday 4th. Running in a later pathway No 59002 ran in at 09.00 on Wednesday 6th with 18 loaded wagons in tow.

Test Trains were a bit like buses, you wait ages for one, then three turn up in a week. “Our” monthly Derby-Weymouth-Eastleigh tester put in an appearance on Monday 18th, Class No 37254 worked “top & tail” with sister No 37175, Poole was passed at 21.05, returning up at 22.40. At the late hour of 23.20 (58 minutes early) on Wednesday 20th Class 37 No 37025 propelled a four coach test train from Eastleigh to Weymouth, DVT No 9702 led the formation.

One hour forty minutes later, the following day (21st) at 00.58, yes I was out at that time, my dedication reporting for “The Corkscrew” knows no boundaries ! The pair No’s 37175 leading and 37254 tailing passed Poole heading for Hamworthy Goods. Arrival there was at 01.13 with a departure time of 01.20, it was a bit surreal to be in almost pitch dark as the pair, (37254 now leading) accelerated away from Ashmore Avenue level crossing, as usual the English Electric roar was “ear catching”.

Quite what the slumbering natives of Hamworthy thought is best left to the imagination ? ! Regaining the main line at Hamworthy Junction the pair passed Poole heading for Eastleigh at 01.39, hot on their heels, running 1 hour and 16 minutes early at 01.44 came No 37025 also returning to Eastleigh.

For the record the “Hamworthy Pair” had left Eastleigh at 11.26 doing two round trips to Wimbledon depot (arrived 14.20 and 19.30). After the second Wimbledon trip the pair worked back through Southampton to Totton yard, reversed and ran to Romsey and back, via Eastleigh, before finally venturing down the line through Poole and on to the Hamworthy branch. The three 37 were in fact the final locomotives to work over “our” South Dorset line for the year 2017

JANUARY 2018 :- To start the New Year our first locomotive sighting was of Class 59 No 59202 on the 8th at the head of a Hamworthy Stone train, sister loco' No 59205 followed on the 12th.

On January 8th, 10th and 12th South Western Railways staff went on strike, some would say somewhat prematurely ? Locally no trains ran between Poole and Weymouth, but one train an hour ran from Poole to Waterloo and vice versa. A second hourly service ran from Bournemouth to Waterloo. In order to maximise seat availability most of these services were formed of 8 and 12 car "Outer Suburban" Class 450 emu's. On the Wednesday 10th for instance, 13x450 units were in use, 569+570+080, 020+561, 074+549, 071+107+124 these units worked two rounds trips each from Poole to Waterloo whilst 102+106+126 worked three round trips i.e. the 06.42, 11.22 and 16.22 all ex Bournemouth.

In week ending 21st two stone trains ran to Hamworthy, Monday 15th produced No 59102 at the head with No 59005 doing the honours on Friday 19th.

SWANAGE RAILWAY (SR) :- The first of the Christmas specials I was able to observe was on Sunday 3rd December. Three locomotives were in use, Ivatt 2 No 41312 was in charge of the "Wessex Belle" dining train, whilst U No 31806 and Standard 4 No 80104 were working the Santa Specials. These two engines worked "turn and turn about". After arrival into Swanage Loco' No 1 was detached and remained at the buffers. Loco' No 2 then worked one return trip and was likewise replaced on its return. The same scenario with the same locomotives operated over the weekend 9th & 10th.

A pleasant surprise was in store the following weekend (16th & 17th) when T9 No 30120 replaced the U as the 2nd loco' in use on the Santa specials, 80104 and 41312 worked as before. The same three engines appear to have carried out the same duties up to the cessation of the Christmas Season trains on December 24th.

On Monday 11th December BB 4-6-2 No 34070 "Manston" was moved to Norden by a Class 33 diesel and split from its tender, the loco' was then taken away by road for repairs following the collision with No 80104 earlier in 2017.

On Thursday 28th December the railway held their end of year "Winter Warm Up" with three loco's No's 30120, 31806 and 41312 in steam, Class 33 diesel No 33012 was also in use. The day saw the last use of the Ivatt 2-6-2T No 41312 on the SR before its return to its home base on the Mad Hants Railway. Sadly illness thwarted my final opportunity to have run behind the engine, but as compensation a few opportunities to at least photograph it came my way prior to its eventual departure.

Ivatt 2 No 41312 in charge of the "Wessex Belle" dining train, on 3rd December 2017. ***Colin Stone***

Class U No 31806 was the engine used to haul the final SR service trains for 2017 on December 31st and the first passenger trains for 2018 on January 1st. On January 10th Battle of Britain No 34053 "Sir Keith Park" returned to Dorset from its period of hire to the Severn Valley Railway, it was taken straight to Herston Works for attention after which it should enter service later in the year. The railway then entered a period of no trains running when minor permanent way and signalling works were carried out.

For some of the above information I am indebted to :- Fred Worth, Scott Lewis, Alan Worth SR webcams and Web site "Real Time Trains".

Northern Rail liveried class 142 Pacer units 142047 and 142007 sit side by side at Manchester Piccadilly on 27 March 2017. Ken Aveyard

Hudswell Clark D577 of 1932 Mary, at Middleton on 15 July 2012 KA