

THE COLONEL

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THE JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
FOR THE ENTHUSIAST OF THE LIGHT AND NARROW GAUGE
RAILWAYS OF COLONEL HOLMAN F. STEPHENS

Editorial: Embarrassment of riches

How do we do it? Despite keeping membership subscription at the same price for donkey's years, and having given hundreds of pounds away over the last couple of years to worthy causes, our bank balance is as healthy as it's ever been.

Is Nigel Bird a financial wizard? Quite possibly. But we also owe a lot to the generosity of members who responded to last year's appeal for donations to chip in an astonishing £235 to the society's coffers.

Many thanks are due to those benefactors. And I'm sure similar gratitude is felt by those heritage organisations who have benefited from donations awarded by the society.

I like to think that the willingness of individual members to contribute cash over and above the call of duty can be taken as endorsement of this society's financial support for projects that preserve and maintain the Colonel's legacy.

I certainly believe that this practise is the society's most significant achievement to date, and one of which we can be justifiably

proud. It's made us a lot of friends and, in its own small way, contributed to the variety and success of the nation's railway heritage.

Evidence of the superb cameraderie that exists between organisations involved in many different ways in preserving and continuing the legacy of the Colonel's railways is clear in the events of the AGM weekend, in which we enjoyed the excellent and generous hospitality of those working hard to recreate and maintain the Great Man's railways in Wales.

As chairman Derek Smith put it, the society is "very much on the up", as I hope the contents of this issue prove. Long gone are the days when, as one correspondent wrote back in the dark winter of 1999: "the society is not very active".

There is every sign that our activity will continue. To finish with another quote, from Young Mister Grace of *Are You Being Served?*: "You've all done very well." SH

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AGM reveals membership and money on the increase

Highlights of the society's 15th AGM, held at Waunfawr, North Wales, on 27 April, include our highest membership level ever, increased income over the year, and an excellent ride on the reconstructed Welsh Highland Railway.

Attendance matched last year's event, with 24 members braving the inclement weather and contributing to an interesting series of discussions. Many stayed on the following day for a guided tour of the WHR route to Porthmadog, where we visited the southern end of the line and the Festiniog Railway's Boston Lodge works.

A full report of the AGM proceedings is on page 7, while a write-up of the exploits of the following day starts on page 11.

Membership now stands at 240, up from 220 at the date of AGM 2001: a figure that itself exceeded the previous peak of 217 members in 1997. About a dozen new members have joined via the society website.

Income for the year increased by 33% to just under £1780, boosted by the generosity of members who donated extra funds over and above their normal subscriptions to the tune of a whopping £235 in total. Thanks very much to all who did so.

Subscriptions have once again been frozen at the same level, defying inflation if not gravity. A further £500 is to be donated to worthy causes yet to be decided by the committee, which was re-elected en bloc.

Enamel society badges continue to be available at £3 each, including postage, from David Powell. And we have nine binders left in stock for £5 apiece, available from Stephen Hannington: you will need six to house a complete collection of *Colonels*. Cheques for either item should be made out to The Colonel Stephens Society. ●

Signal posts found at new WHR site

John Keylock reports on rebuilding progress on the Welsh Highland Railway:

Members who attended the recent AGM had the opportunity of some glimpses of WHR rebuilding work in progress between Waunfawr and Rhyd Ddu. Working north from the latter location, ballasting is complete as far as the Glan Yr Afon viaduct.

The volunteer track-laying gang is working to reach the same point. They are now mechanised with a small Simplex diesel to haul sleepers and rail to the railhead (*See Heritage Railways, June 2002*).

A new work site has been opened at Snowdon Ranger, next to the youth hostel, and below the original NWNGR station building, which has survived in private

occupation.

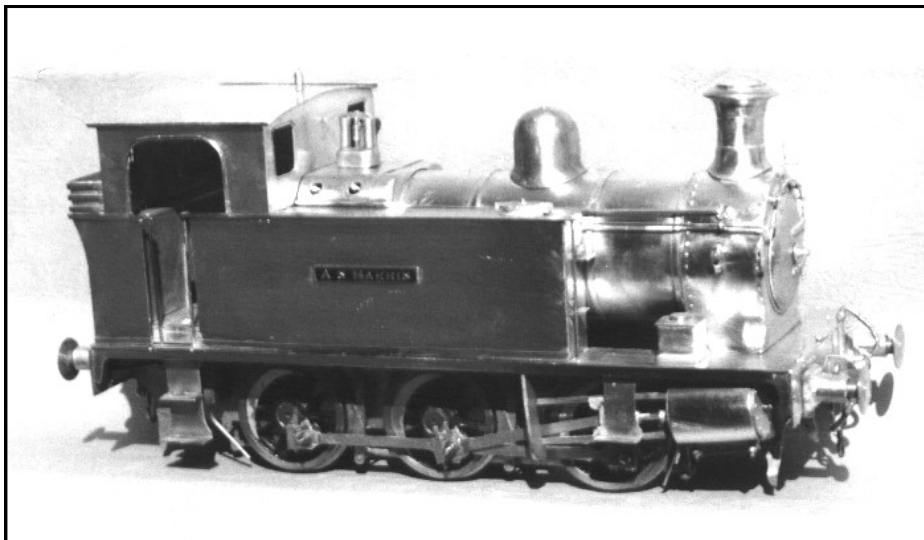
From a heritage viewpoint, it is exciting that three stumps of the original NWNGR signal posts have been revealed, and it will be interesting to compare their locations with Mr Boyd's plan of the station.

At the Porthmadog end, the necessary survey work is almost complete in anticipation of which plans are afoot to acquire further supplies of sleepers and rail to start track laying towards Pont Croesor.

The northern construction company are generously providing a point to connect the Beddgelert sidings operation to the original WHR alignment. ●

News

Agenoria releases *A.S. Harris*



The unstoppable Pete Stamper, CSS member and proprietor of Agenoria Models, has launched another Colonel Stephens loco kit, hard on the heels of the Selsey Tramway's *Selsey*.

This time it's *A.S.Harris*, one of the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction Railway's Hawthorne Leslies. The 7mm scale kit is in etched brass and nickel silver, with cast brass or whitmetal fittings. Including an etched nameplate, the kit costs £120, or £184 with wheels, gears, motor and pick-ups, plus £3 P&P (UK only).

Kits for the loco's sister Hawthorne Leslies *Earl St. Leven* and *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* are, according to member Ned Williams, soon to be available (See page 10).

A.S.Harris dates from 1907 and ended up shunting at Nine Elms until 1951 as BR number 30756. The kit includes parts to cover all the minor changes made to the loco

during its lifetime. By the way, does anybody know who the original *A.S.Harris* was? Or the two Earls, for that matter?

The news is not so good for 4mm scale modellers, though, because, as Pete puts it: "It looks like *Selsey* in 4mm scale will not materialise, as I have only had interest expressed by two people". He has previously said that at least ten firm orders would be needed before producing *Selsey* in 4mm scale. So if you think you might like one, don't hang back: pester Pete now! ●

Agenoria Models is at: 18 St Peter's Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 0TY. Telephone 01562 886125.

Email petestamper@yahoo.co.uk. Web-site: www.ukmodelshops.co.uk.

WC&PR man tells his story

Membership secretary David Powell has forwarded an account by member Howard Carey of his father Dan's life and times as a crossing keeper and guard on the WC&PR between 1923 and 1937.

He has produced a 40-page booklet, intended for "family and friends" that relates his father's story in his own words. And fascinating it is, too, being full of anecdotes that bring the railway to life. The society hopes to help this tale reach a wider audience, starting with Howard's own story in the next issue of *The Colonel*. ●

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Dispatches

Letters to the editor

Appeal for help to rescue BP&GVR

I am a member of the Rail Passenger Committee for Wales and am in the process of raising interest in the Burry Port & Gwyndraeth Valley railway, as it is in imminent danger of being lost forever to yet another cycle path.

It is impractical to develop as a standard gauge passenger operation, but I feel it has enormous potential as a narrow gauge line. It is located in a strategically important location between trans-European road and rail links and connects together some of Wales' most important tourist attractions that together bring more than a million visitors a year to the area.

I am thinking of the National Botanical Gardens Millennium Coastal Park, Pembrey Country Park and several more, all in dire need of better public transport.

What I have in mind is an ambitious Welsh Highland Railway-style operation, but based on a progressive, sustainable theme: in

short, a railway for the 21st century.

I am convinced I can attract very substantial European funding for this project, with the right support from partners and stakeholders.

I feel we have a unique opportunity here to preserve and develop the Colonel's third and nearly forgotten Welsh railway. My sustainable development theme is exactly in the spirit of the Colonel's approach. He was an experimenter with what we would call today 'renewables'.

If any of your members are interested in helping with this scheme - even just providing me with helpful articles and history would be of assistance - I would be delighted to hear from them.

Stuart Thomas
01267 267789 (evenings)
Stuart@thomasbojanic.freeserve.co.uk

Book Review

NEW ON THE SNAILBEACH

For enthusiasts of The Snailbeach District Railways in Shropshire, *anything* new is welcomed. There is a real dearth of photos and printed matter on this obscure Colonel-operated line.

The veritable E.S. Tonks produced in 1950 what is regarded as the definitive history, which was subsequently revised and enlarged in 1974 by the Industrial Railway Society. However, it is not a major work in the accepted sense, as even the revised edition only runs to 52 pages.

So the recently published *West Shrop-*

INQUIRY CORNER

In a recent correspondence, membership secretary David Powell wrote:

"New member Martin Fowley, as chairman of the London Railway Heritage Society, is involved with the listing of a number of railway buildings in London. As a result of this he has become involved with the group listing Chichester station.

"Martin has asked me if I know, or know someone who knows, of any Selsey Tramway buildings still standing. Any thoughts on potential experts?"

The expert, as ever, was Les Darbyshire, who supplied the following answer:

"There are no Selsey buildings still standing. The foundations of Chalder station may well still exist (they were there a couple of years ago), and one of the abutments of the lifting bridge over the canal is still in situ, but apart from these and some stretches of trackbed there is not a lot left."

● **Test Les:** *if you have any other questions about any of Colonel Stephens' works, email or write to the editor at the address shown at the bottom of page 2.*

shire Mining Fields, by Ivor J. Brown, although produced for mining enthusiasts, is most welcome, as it has a chapter on The Snailbeach District Railways. This runs to 12 pages and contains text, a simple map and 21 illustrations, a few of which are new to me, and I would venture to say have not been previously published (but I could be wrong-again!).

Several show the wagons used, and the loco shed. But for me the real gem is of the railway's tractor towing wagons along the tracks in the 1950s, when locomotives were replaced by road vehicles.

Snailbeach was also famous for operating Baldwin 4-6-0T locomotives, and the society has made a recent donation towards the restoration of one such loco. All in all, this was a most fascinating line and one that maybe the society can arrange to visit in the future during an AGM weekend.

The rest of the book is devoted to pictures, mostly of mines and the men who worked there, with decent text and a few maps. The quality of the paper used is rather poor and results in rather grainy and flat pictures, but I have seen much worse.

If you have an interest in The Snailbeach District Railways or the mines of this area, the book is well worth the purchase price, especially as copies of the Tonks book are so hard to locate. Anyone with a spare copy is more than welcome to contact me!

I can offer copies of *West Shropshire Mining Fields* from stock for £10.99 plus £1.50 by post in the UK. See my advert on page 5 for details. **NB**

West Shropshire Mining Fields, by Ivor J. Brown, published by Tempus 2001. Pictorial card covers, 128 pages fully illustrated with black & white illustrations. 6.5" by 9.5" £10.99

AGM 2002 REPORT

Held in what was probably once the parlour of the former station master's house at Waunfawr station on the Welsh Highland railway, now part of the Snowdonia Parc Hotel, our society's 2002 AGM was attended by 24 members (plus one dog) on 27 April 2002.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Albyn Austin and his wife, John Cant, Ian Dack, Barry Lindsey, Robert Shrivess, Les Spratt and Pete Stamper.

ACTIONS FROM LAST AGM

It was reported that the membership list had been compiled and distributed; membership badges have been re-ordered and are available again; and binders for *The Colonel* have been sourced and are available.

There was no reported progress on the proposed archive inventory or on publicity. The committee had decided that a society-organised model railway exhibition was not viable on the grounds of expense.

The S&MR study day did not materialise, mainly due to the Foot & Mouth crisis, but may yet be organised. And the 70th anniversary of the Colonel's death in November 2001 was not commemorated due to organisational difficulties.

Regarding the exhibition proposal, David Powell reported that it would cost at least £500, including insurance and exhibitors' expenses to stage such an event. He recommended that the best way to proceed would be via Colonel Stephens areas within general-purpose model railway exhibitions, which he called 'enclaves', as has been done in the past.

He added: "For small groups such as ourselves to put on an exhibition is one hell of a risk, especially given that the membership has such a wide geographical spread. I think we should use the enclave method for the foreseeable future."

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman

"Once again I am pleased to report another

successful year for our society. Our membership is back up after the decline of a few years ago, and is much better than many other societies.

"This AGM is something special. It is the first time we have held our meeting on one of the Colonel's Welsh lines. This has been organised by Nigel Bird, our treasurer. We say a big thank you to him for all his efforts.

"Thanks are also due to him for looking after our funds so well that we are able to have this super day out, and also tomorrow Nigel has arranged a guided tour of the Welsh Highland at the Porthmadog end. I hope this is well supported.

"A special thank-you to our editor Stephen Hannington. He is doing a wonderful job. Our journal has never been better. Thanks also to Stuart Marshall for the printing.

"David Powell, our membership secretary, has organised a visit to Sir William McAlpine's private railway and museum at Fawley Hill near Henley for Sunday 26 May. We do appreciate David's efforts to get this visit organised.

"This year we celebrate 17 years of our society, and as one of the founder members, I am pleased we have managed to make the deeds of the Colonel known to a wider section of ordinary folk.

"He seems better known now than he was in his lifetime. If he was alive today, I think he would be happy that we are to ride on one of his lines.

"A mention must be made of publicity officer Julia Hastings. I have yet to meet this lady, but I am certain she is doing a job in putting the society on the map.

"During the year our society has been well represented at model railway shows. Thanks must go to all our members who helped out on the stands and brought their models.

"I know 2002 will be a good year for our society, with it very much on the up. May I thank you all for the help I have received since becoming your chairman."

Derek Smith

Treasurer

Commenting on this year's financial statement, Nigel Bird pointed out that the 'bottom line' is £300 down on last year and that this was "principally tied up in binders and badges" that had cost the society £438 and had generated an income to date of £111.

At the previous AGM, it had been agreed to keep subscriptions at their existing level, but to invite members to make voluntary additional donations to the society. Nigel reported that this idea had been "particularly well received" and that almost £235 had been forthcoming.

He concluded: "We seem to be achieving an awful lot on a very modest income. It's all looking good. I don't see any need to increase the subs, but we should continue with the donations policy."

This proposal was accepted.

Membership Secretary

David Powell reported that membership now stands at 240, compared to 220 this time last year and 185 the year before that. Current membership consists of one Honorary Life Member, 20 joint members, three overseas (two Australian, one Belgian) and 216 ordinary UK members.

Since the last AGM the society has gained 31 new members, lost one each through death and resignation, and nine who did not renew. The net gain of 20 members included four new members and one rejoining the fold via the society stand at the Warley model railway exhibition at the NEC. David recorded his thanks to member Les Spratt for his efforts on the stand.

He also pointed out that we once again have a free stand at the Warley show this year on 30 November/1 December and have two free passes each day for those wishing to help out on the stand.

Finally, David reported that 15 society badges had been sold to date out of the new stock of 100: a further two were sold at the AGM itself.

Editor

Stephen Hannington pronounced himself pleased with *The Colonel* to date, but made an appeal for contributed articles since the

stock he inherited from his predecessor was starting to run low.

He also pointed out that he can print small numbers of back issues if required. Les Darbyshire, who is responsible for back issues, told the meeting that sales had doubled in the last year.

Of the 54 *Colonel* binders originally ordered, five full sets of six and one pair – 32 in all – had been sold to date, generating an income of £160. A further two sets were sold at the AGM at the special price of £27, since no postage would need to be paid. Shortly after the meeting, a further pair were sold at the full price of £5 each.

Website costs are up for renewal at £86.98 for two years, including name registration, web space and hosting, if the present supplier is maintained. Stephen recommended we continue with the web site as it was a useful 'shop front' for the society and had, for example, achieved a mention in *Heritage Railway* magazine. David Powell added that about 12 new members had been gained via the site.

AGM agreed that the website should be continued, but charged Stephen with the task of finding a cheaper supplier, as the sum quoted was considered to be high. Stephen thanked Dr Robert Kinghorn for maintaining the site.

Regarding society donations to Colonel-related projects, Stephen reminded the meeting that we are now life members of the Terrier Trust, which is restoring *Bodiam* and *Knowle*; and that we have a year's membership of the Leighton Buzzard Railway, where an ex-WD Baldwin is to be restored.

John Keylock addressed the meeting on behalf of the Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group, which received £200 from the society towards the rebuilding of Waunfawr station building. He said: "The thank-you comes from the railway as a whole", but pointed out that the building must take second place to reinstating the railway itself to Rhyd-ddu.

Finally, Stephen reported that he had been unable to attend the last two meetings of Railway Associations In London (RAIL), the umbrella group for organisations in the south-east, but that an article written by him about the society's donations had appeared on the front page of RAIL's newsletter. The next scheduled meeting is on 15 May.

Publicity

Julia Hastings was unable to attend the AGM, but submitted a written report that David Powell spoke from. He referred to a proposal from the last AGM that the society should try to get an article written about itself published in one of the mainstream magazines, such as *Heritage Railways* by way of publicity.

David pointed out that, while it may be easy to get an editor to agree to publish an article, the main problem is that they usually demand unpublished photos. He appealed to members to come up with some.

In a subsequent discussion, Adrian Gray suggested that members who also belong to "parallel organisations", such as the Festiniog Railway, should be encouraged to write Colonel-related articles for those organisations' newsletters or magazines that could also publicise our society.

Stephen Hannington added that it could be possible to reprint relevant articles from *The Colonel* in related societies' periodicals.

David Powell gave thanks to Alan Cliff who gave a plug for the Colonel Stephens Society in the 100th instalment of his Lock's Sidings saga in a recent issue of *British Railway Modelling*.

Nigel Bird suggested that adverts could be placed in relevant house magazines. The idea was supported by Adrian Gray, who said that members of related organisations are often not aware of the Colonel Stephens connection, or that a society exists dedicated to his works.

It was resolved that a mention should be made in *The Colonel* that posters and publicity material are available from the editor, that the unspent £150 publicity budget agreed at the previous AGM should be rolled across into this year, and that Stephen Hannington should draft advertising copy for use as required.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

No nominations had been received for any committee positions. Adrian Gray proposed that the committee, all being prepared to stand, should be re-elected *en bloc*. The second order was Alan Garner and the motion was carried unanimously.

DONATIONS TO RELATED

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance brought forward	£1715.97
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INCOME £

Subs received	1230.00
Donations received	234.90
Back issue sales	201.35
Badge sales	51.00
Binder sales	60.00
Current a/c interest	1.58

SUB TOTAL	£1778.83+
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£3494.80

EXPENDITURE £

Printing <i>The Colonel</i>	664.81
Postage	283.02
Donations	500.00
Corporate memberships	8.00
Stationery	82.95
Purchase of badges	211.26
Purchase of binders	226.76
Transfer to deposit a/c	1000.00

AGM 2001

Room hire/food	60.00
Train tickets	110.50
Donation CS Museum	50.00

AGM 2002

Train tickets (deposit)	20.00
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SUB TOTAL	£3217.30-
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Balance	£277.50
Plus unrepresented cheques	£36.18

Balance as per bank Statement of 20.4.02	£313.68
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On deposit inc. interest	£3292.51
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TOTAL CASH ASSETS: £3606.19

ORGANISATIONS

In the light of the earlier discussion, Adrian Gray said that such donations presented a “perfect opportunity to provide a hook for publicity”. There was general agreement that the donations policy was a good and useful one, and the AGM agreed to allocate a further £500 in donations to projects to be decided by the committee. The motion was proposed by Adrian Gray and seconded by Michael Darby.

The committee appealed to members to let it know of any suitable projects eligible for funding. One possibility, put forward by David Powell, was to pay for negatives to be made of photographs in the collection of the Kidderminster Railway Museum, where these are of Colonel-related subjects and negatives do not exist (See *Colonel 63*).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1) **Locomotive Kits:** Ned Williams told the meeting that fellow member Pete Stamper of Agenoria Models has produced a second batch of his 7mm scale models of 2-4-2T *Selsey* of the Selsey Tramway (See *Colonel 65*). The first batch had sold very well, he said, and added that Agenoria’s latest kits for the PD&SWJR’s Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-2Ts *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and *Earl St Leven* are about to go on the market.

2) **East Kent Railway Video:** It was also related from the floor that some “superb East Kent Railway material” is included in a new *Pathe Railway Pictorials* video from 125 Video, which prompted further discussions of the proposed Colonel Stephens video.

3) **Colonel Stephens Video:** David Powell reiterated the need for original material if such a video is to be compiled by an established producer at their own expense, the only financially viable option.

Les Darbyshire said that he believed that there is some 8mm cine material of Stephens subjects that the owner – the well-known Mr Hendry – might be inclined to allow to be transferred to video.

Mr Hendry’s address was passed to David Powell for further investigation. It was also suggested that David should compile a ‘source register’ of existing videos that contain Colonel-related footage, and to maintain an up-to-date list thereof.

4) **Locomotive Photos:** It was revealed that *Locomotives Illustrated* Number 134 *Larger Southern Shunting Locomotives* contains photos of former *Hecate* of the K&ESR and the Saddleback 0330 class 0-6-0Ts that ran on the K&ESR and the EKR.

5) **Next Year’s AGM:** It was resolved that next year’s AGM should take place in Buckinghamshire under the organisation of David Powell. Possibilities include the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre at Quainton Road where the former Rewley Road terminus building from Oxford has been re-erected.

Unfortunately there is little of direct Colonel interest in the area. David said that a recent visit to the site of the Edge Hill Light Railway, the nearest potential place of Stephens interest, had revealed that “there is nothing left”. But it was agreed that a direct Colonel connection was not a prerequisite, given the precedent set by the 2000 AGM on the Severn Valley Railway. ■

WELSH OUTPOSTS OF THE EMPIRE

Stephen Hannington reports on the society visits to the Welsh Highland and Festiniog railways that once came under the Colonel's wing

On the second day of what I suppose we ought to call the AGM Weekend, Nigel Bird had arranged an action-packed itinerary, including a guided tour of the as yet unrebuilt route of the Welsh Highland Railway, a visit to the WHR Porthmadog (formerly the Welsh Highland Light Railway 1964 Ltd), and a tour of the Festiniog Railway's Boston Lodge loco and carriage works.

The survival of the WHR is a curious thing. Although trains ceased to run in 1937, and the track was removed during World War 2, it never, in fact, ceased to be legally a railway. Its assets and liabilities have been in the hands of a receiver since 1944 until acquired by the Festiniog Railway in 1995.

As a result, the track-bed has remained intact all these years. As we know, from Dinas Junction to Waunfawr the track has been relaid, as well as along the former standard gauge trackbed between Dinas and Caernarfon, and trains are once more running. Our tour of the route began just beyond Waunfawr and proceeded south along the A4085.

Our guide was David Allen, chairman of both WHR Porthmadog and the Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group, who started us off at the remains of Betwys Garmon station, where most of the walls of the old building still stand. A branch to a nearby slate quarry at Hafod y Wern once connected with the railway here, and just beyond the station site new river and road bridges were under construction. Here the relaid rails end – for now.

Next stop was the site of Plas Y Nant halt, near where one of the original WHR bow-girder bridges can still be seen alongside a lay-by on the road. These bridges, bought second-hand from a standard gauge railway, are a distinctive feature of the WHR that the heritage group wants to retain. Although

examples have been replaced elsewhere during the rebuilding, because they are not considered strong enough to support the massive Garratt locomotives now in use, David reported that financial considerations mean that remaining examples are now likely to be strengthened and kept in service.

Also to be seen at this point are the concrete foundations of a Blacker Bombard, an experimental type of mortar installed during WW2 against German invasion, and what David called an “environmentally friendly” pill-box built of local slate. Both fortifications post-date the final running of trains on the original WHR.

About a mile further on, the trackbed passes under the road, and from the bridge can be seen the site of the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway's temporary terminus alongside Lake Quellyn (Llyn Cwellyn). David told us that the exact arrangements here are unknown, but the surviving formation, in a wide slate cutting, suggests that there was at least a loop here.

Another mile took us to the former Snowdon Ranger station, where the station building survives as a holiday cottage. The site is up a short path behind what is now a youth hostel, but which was once the notorious pub where, in 1883, driver Jones, fireman Williams and guard Morris had their ill-fated beer-drinking session on their way to Caernarfon [See *Colonel 64*].

As John Keylock relates elsewhere, the remains of some NWNG signal posts have been found on the site, where rebuilding work has started since our visit.

Then it was on to the site of Rhyd Ddu (pronounced Rid-Thee) station, now a car park for walkers up Snowdon. Ignominiously, the site of the former station building is now



*WHR original Russell waits
to take us to Pen-y-Mount*

occupied by a toilet block. New track has been laid from the north of this location for about a mile towards the Glan Yr Afon viaduct. There is an impressive view of the new track snaking round the lower slopes of Snowdon at this point.

David also pointed out a massive rock on which it is just possible to make out some ancient 'graffiti' carved on the side that once faced the tracks, which appear to give directions to the local post office and to include a couple of barely-legible names.

Here the railway will have to follow a new alignment to avoid the car park, involving a cutting into rock that can only be removed using chemical 'explosives', which will split the rocks without actually causing a bang. Conventional explosives have been banned by the authorities, presumably on safety grounds.

Lack of time prevented a visit to the station site at Beddgelert, but we did pass under a bridge built by the Porthmadog, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway company in 1904 as part of an aborted, pre-Stephens extension south. Track was never laid across the bridge: the Colonel took a different route in 1922.

Another nearby relic of the PB&SSR works is a pair of occupation under-bridge abutments standing alone and isolated in a field like a pair of ancient monoliths. What must passing travellers, ignorant of their unfulfilled purpose, make of that?

Our final stop was by the beautiful Aberglaslyn Pass, at the car park in Nant Mor and a short walk away from the north portal of the 'Long Tunnel' that pierces the rocky hillside at this point. This is the origin of disputes with local ramblers, who have been used to using the tunnel as a footpath, instead of the official and precipitous Fisherman's Path nearby. The gates that now close it off are sometimes locked and sometimes open, depending, one assumes, on locals' access to bolt-cutters.

Just outside the portal is a stone-built overbridge through the WHR embankment and giving access to a nearby copper mine, the remains of which can still be seen.

From here it was a dash to Porthmadog across the flat plains of the lower reaches of the Afon Glaslyn, where the railway embankment parallels the road for long stretches. Notable are the piers of the Pont Croesor

bridge across the Afon Glaslyn, which once carried the WHR alongside the B4410 on a structure built to carry both road and rail traffic.

Porthmadog

On the opposite side of town to the Festiniog Railway's harbour station, near the Railtrack railway station, is the terminus of the Welsh Highland Railway, Porthmadog. From here, trains run over a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile stretch of track along the route of former standard gauge sidings to Pen-y-Mount, close to the original route of the WHR.

Contrary to our expectations before the AGM, original WHR loco *Russell* was indeed in steam especially for the society and was waiting to take members on a trip down the line in a train that included one of the original NWNCR coaches.

We stopped along the way to visit the museum and workshops at Gellerts Farm, where some original rolling stock can be seen, such as the remains of an NWNCR buffet car, as well as more recently acquired items.

The short trip terminated at Pen-y-Mount, by which time the weather had become torrential and no-one was tempted to leave the train. On returning to the Porthmadog terminus, members availed themselves of an excellent

bookshop and refreshments at Russell's Cafe alongside the platform.

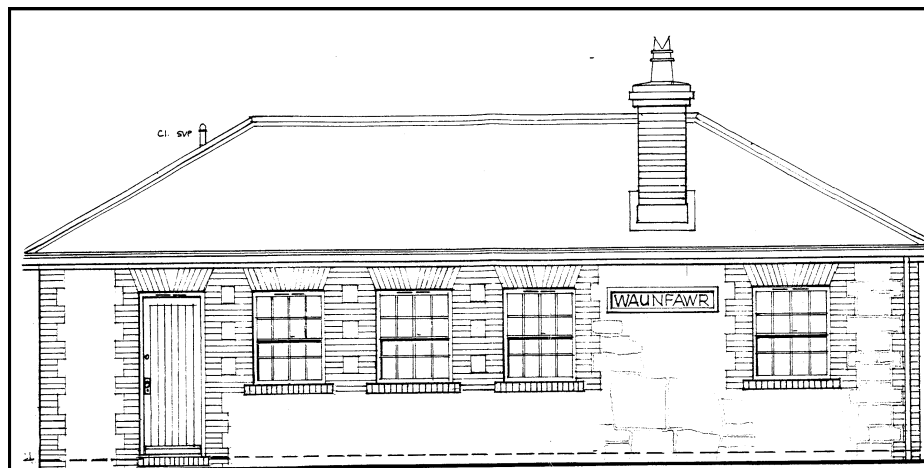
Before we left, and impromptu donation of £50 was made to the WHRP, which will go towards the cost of feasibility study into a proposed museum covering Porthmadog's industrial history, including the Welsh Highland and Festiniog railways.

Boston Lodge

A quick drive over the Cob took us to Boston Lodge, the locomotive and carriage workshops of the Festiniog Railway, where Adrian Gray, FR archivist and CSS member, signed us all in and, with works manager Mike Bradshaw, showed us round the extensive and busy works. Mike, incidentally, has since become a member of the CSS.

We learned that the machine shop had had electric lighting installed during the Great War by the Ministry of Munitions for the assembly of shell casings that was undertaken there, but it was removed by the Colonel after the war because he didn't want the expense of electricity bills.

Locomotives under repair included double Fairlie *David Lloyd George* and *Merddin Emrys*. Of particular interest was the first Beyer Garratt articulated loco ever built: the so-called K1 of 1909. Purchased by the FR in



Drawing of the proposed new station building for Waunfawr, supplied by John Keylock. It will include reclaimed materials from the original structure.

1966, 19 years after returning from Tasmania, it had been displayed at the National Railway Museum in York between 1979 and 1995 before returning to Boston Lodge, where its overhaul is almost complete. It is destined to return to active service on the WHR.

In one corner of the shed was a small Planet diesel named *Ashover*, maintained by the East Midlands group of the FR Society. Having suffered what Adrian described as “a catastrophic failure of the gearbox”, it has been out of action for five years and is in need of a £1500 repair. It would be “most useful as a Boston Works shunter”, Adrian told us, hinting that it might be a suitable candidate for a society donation...

Also on shed were coaches numbers 23 and 24, the former being one of the few surviving original NWNCR vehicles, built by Ashbury in 1894 and transferred to the FR in 1936 when passenger services ceased on the WHR. Number 24 is a replica of the same type of coach, in an earlier condition, under construction at Boston Lodge. Both will form a ‘heritage’ set on the WHR

The much-discussed ‘Colonel Stephens Green’ paint colour [See *Colonel 61*] was in evidence on coach number 10, an original FR vehicle that was used on WHR trains in the 1920s and 30s.

So ended a most enjoyable day out, and many thanks are due to everyone who helped to make it so. ■

Linda in steam and ready for her next duty turn at Boston Lodge works.



K&ESR STEAM RAILCAR IN 4MM

Stephen Hannington describes how he built a static model using etched components and suggests some modifications to the historical record

Steam railcar Number 6, built by Pickering in 1905, ranks as one of the Kent & East Sussex Railway's white elephants, alongside 0-8-0T Number 8 *Hecate*. There is no evidence that it ever saw active, revenue-earning service on the railway, and it spent most of its life mouldering quietly away in Rolvenden dump sidings.

Nonetheless, it's an attractive vehicle, and the fact that Trevor Charlton supplies etched body components decided me on making a 4mm scale model of it. Like the prototype, it now stands permanently moored at the end of the dump siding of my EM gauge K&ESR layout *Rye Town*.

For this reason, the model is not motorised. Richard Jones covered this aspect in some detail in *Colonel 43* for those that are interested. I shall concentrate on the bodywork aspect that Richard did not describe in quite so much depth.

It is fairly well known that Trevor Charlton's etchings are based on a drawing by Les Darbyshire that shows the body to be narrower than it should be. What is less well known is that the body is also too long, according to the dimensions given in *Colonel Stephens Railmotors*, which gives it as 27ft 1in. Les comments on the drawing on page 19.

The extra length – about 10mm if memory serves – is not immediately obvious. I was halfway through building the model before I checked the dimensions and discovered the error. I could probably have lived with the under-scale width too, as Richard did, except that I wanted to model the later-period guard's end of the vehicle, which has two windows instead of the original three as represented in the etchings.

So, if I was going to have to scratchbuild this component, I decided I might as well do it to scale. This meant also scratchbuilding the internal partitions, which unveiled some other discoveries that I will come to later.

Construction started with soldering the two etched sides to a floor of 20thou(ish) brass, which was shorter than the full body

length by the thickness of the end partitions. 10thou plastic was cut to fit inside the sides and the window apertures traced onto it. These would form internal faces of the side.

The inside faces of the sides were then lined with 10thou plastic attached with Evo Stik, except around the windows, where 10thou glazing was carefully glued in place, after first painting the edges of the window apertures with brown body colour.

The previously marked internal layer, with the window apertures cut out, was then attached, and a floor of 40thou plastic was added the full length of the brass. This left the inside of the body lined with plastic, allowing the partitions to also be made in plastic and attached using solvent.

There is one full-width partition between the driver's compartment and the passenger section. A second, with a doorway, separates the smoking and non-smoking sections. Both were made from 40thou plastic scribed vertically to represent matchboarding.

The partition between the entrance gangway and the passenger saloon is more intriguing. Examination of a photograph on page 35 of the Spring 1984 edition of *The Tenderden Terrier* shows that there were two windows on one side of the door, but only one on the other. This suggests that the door was not central, but offset towards the left hand side, looking towards the driver's end. Figure 1 is my interpretation of how it might have looked.

Considering the reason for this offset, I also came up with a seating arrangement in Figure 2. This doesn't quite account for the official seating capacity of 36 for the railcar – apparently there was also seating the guard's compartment – but this has been interpreted as an optimistic figure in any case. Seats for the model were made from 40thou plastic scribed to represent slatted timber: a guess derived from a glimpse shown in the above photo.

Figure 3 shows my impression of the later guard's end. Since this and the driver's end both contain windows, they were mod-

elled as sandwiches of 10thou glazing between inner and outer layers of 10thou with matching window apertures cut out. The guard's compartment partition facing the access gangway was simply a widened version of that in the kit, made of 40thou. Beading was applied in 10 x 20thou Microstrip, sanded to remove the square edges and reduce the thickness a little.

Some photos show the louvered ventilator panel on the left side of the driver's compartment to have been propped open, so I modelled this by fretting out the etched panel and making up a replacement in plastic. Louvres were formed by dragging a razor saw blade sideways across a piece of 40thou to scribe grooves in it. This was then cut to size and framed with 40 x 40thou plastic strip. The finished item was then carefully Araldited into the body aperture along its top edge, propped open and left to set.

I opted to model the driver's end with the 'garage' access doors missing as shown in photos. This reveals the vertical boiler,

which was created from a short piece of 5/16" Evergreen plastic tube, detailed with plastic rivets and mounting brackets.

Some representation of the engine was also required, which I could only assume had been situated on the right side of the compartment. Having no idea of what such an engine might look like, I improvised using the frames of a pair of rail jacks from Coopercraft's track maintenance tools set, plus some short pieces of plastic sprue to represent the 5½" x 9" vertical cylinders.

Maybe someone more knowledgeable can help us out here, but my bodge-up is barely visible once installed and at least fills the gap reasonably convincingly.

The rest of the construction does not differ much from Richard's techniques, except that the steps were made from plastic, since they do not need to be as robust as Richard's brass ones on his working model. The transverse water tank was also made from the plastic tube, with end plates of 10thou riveted with tiny plastic cubes. And

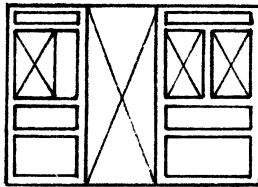


Figure 1: Internal partition to passenger saloon, showing offset door.

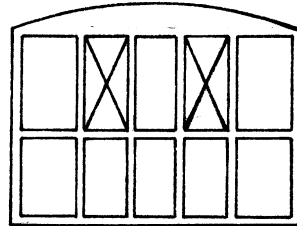
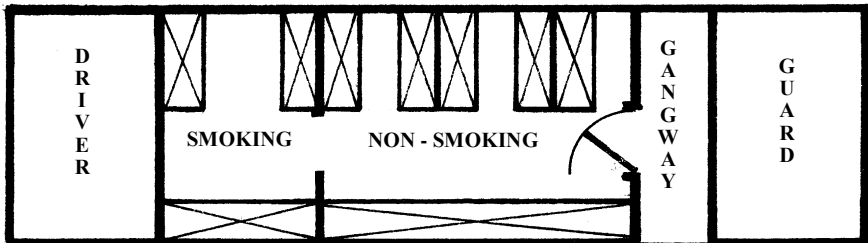


Figure 3: Later design of guard's end.

Figure 2: Guesstimate of seating plan. Not to scale.



Number 6 in an advanced state of decay in Rolvenden yard, showing modified guard's end with just two windows.



the distinctive 'hump-backed' roof was whitened and sanded from 6mm thick balsa.

Painting this vehicle in such a decrepit condition required some care. The passenger saloon gangway partition appears always to have retained its original livery of 'chocolate and cream' – or "Kentish Brown and ivory", as Richard puts it – and this was applied on the model before the partition was fitted. The rest of the body received a coat of overall brown in later years, but this peeled away in places to reveal the original colours.

My solution was, after priming of the etched sides, to paint the cream parts of the upper body sides with gloss paint. Once this was thoroughly dry, Humbrol matt chocolate brown was applied over the entire side and allowed to dry for an hour or so. Sellotape was then firmly rubbed down and ripped off, taking some of the brown with it. This gave a pleasing effect of peeled-off paint revealing patches of cream underneath. Clever, eh?

Overall, fairly liberal washes of dilute pale grey were applied to mellow the colouring of the brown, plus the odd wash of rust-red here and there on, for example, the chimney and the boiler. This should not be overdone, or you'll lose the effect of the mature rust that grows over decades of neglect.

The result now languishes amidst the tall grass at the end of a siding near the front of my layout, filling a scenic gap and attracting

considerable interest at exhibitions. It has since been joined by a model of an equally decrepit original RVR brake van, but that's another story. ■

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Colonel Stephens Railmotors, by Stephen Garrett and John Scott-Morgan. Published by Irwell Press, 1995, ISBN 1-871608-46-5.

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FABULOUS DAY AT FAWLEY HILL

Julia Hastings relates the wonders of Sir William McAlpine's private railway museum at Fawley Hill, Oxfordshire, in a visit organised by David Powell

My friend and I were greeted on our arrival at the museum by an elderly gent at the side of lane who gave us a very friendly welcome. We asked what time the railway closed, and he told us: "It's like the pub. We close when the last one has left!"

I was amazed at the sight that greeted us: not only by the railway set out before us, but by all the wonderful advertising signs in the museum. I am a collector of these things and could not believe how many there were.

We decided to look at the station first, and I was very impressed at how real it all looked. At the end of the track was a tunnel, but when one looked closely you could see it was really a shed to store the engines in, as it had hidden doors.

The whole station was covered with advertising signs of the old days, and there was a lovely red telephone box, with the old style telephone inside. I tried to open the door, but it seemed to be stuck.

Inside the station building was a ticket machine from which you could buy a souvenir ticket for 10p, and a Nestles machine selling chocolate for 20p. There was also a buffet/waiting room, and tea was provided along with soft drinks and free biscuits. There was a ticket office, but no one was selling tickets as you don't need them. It is all free, apart from a guide book which costs £2.50p.

There were train rides all day. The engine was a saddle tank that was presented to Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons brand new in 1913. Behind it was an open truck followed by a brake van. We decided to travel in the brake van as it did offer some protection from the rain, which had once again started.

The ride was brilliant: you go down a very steep incline at quite an amazing speed, and the old train was rocking and shaking,

which was wonderful. The railway goes through part of the McAlpine estate, where you can see parts of bridges that his company have removed from various railway lines.

The train goes down to the lower part of the estate and slows up at a little station, where it stops for a few minutes. You don't get out, so we were able to spend those few minutes looking at surrounding scenery, plus the wonderful 0-6-0 diesel engine parked there named *Bourne Again*.

The engine then set off again and travelled along a straight bit of track, which passes the hill we came down earlier, and an open-ended old shed, containing GWR wagons. After a minute or so, the train slowed and stopped, then the engine reversed back the way it had come to the little station again, and we returned up the steep incline.

By the side of the railway, at the top of the hill, is about the only SR item in the place: a bridge that that came from the Isle of Wight railway. Next to the bridge is a massive signal box, which had the name plate Paddington on one side.

The railway crossing was amusing as it appears to be an original American Railroad crossing. The bells clanged, which is quite a different sound from English railway crossings. Once the train was back in the station, we went across to the museum, which is stored in a massive warehouse building, with various stairs to get up to the galleries.

I should point out that there were no facilities for disabled people, and that also includes the toilet facilities. I should imagine that, as everyone there was so helpful and friendly, if a severely disabled person were to call in advance, everyone would go out of their way to provide assistance.

The first part of the museum was on the ground floor and contained the massive wood-

en destination board that used to reside at Brighton station. Piles of old railway mags could be purchased from about 10p each.

We went up a flight of stairs looking at all the various signs and pictures hanging on the walls. At the top is a gallery from which you can look down towards the destination board and also view the railway outside.

As you pass along this gallery you go through another doorway into a room full of models of trains and many things nautical, as well as various pieces of railway furniture. Most of the railway items in this museum are GWR. You could again look down into another lower floor of the museum, which to my delight housed a massive model of an SE&CR locomotive in a glass case.

In the last part of the upper museum were model engines of all shapes and sizes, which were a bit hard to examine closely as there were too many gents huddling around them all.

Later, I climbed into the signal box to

have a look around, then we went to explore the coaches that were parked up just behind it. There was an old Mk1, a royal coach that used to take royal family members on various journeys, and a very old wooden coach with a balcony end.

I would love to go back for another visit: a few hours is not long enough to see everything. And by the look of the place, new things are being added all the time, so another visit could be even better, as who knows what will be there then? ■

RAILCAR REGRETS

Les Darbyshire on his drawing of the K&ESR's Pickering steam railcar

Having given Stephen, and maybe others, a lot of grief, I had better don my sackcloth and ashes and offer an explanation!

The offending drawing was published in the late, much lamented *Model Railway News* way back in March 1970. The accompanying article contained the following 'health warning':

"Very little information seems to have survived about this vehicle and the drawing was made largely by projection from photographs, with the help of a couple of known dimensions. Its accuracy, like that of some other subjects of this series, cannot therefore be guaranteed."

The said "known dimensions" were the wheelbase, obtained from a previously published drawing, and the width, assumed to be the same as other contemporary vehicles from R. Y. Pickering.

A couple of years after publication, the stock registers of the K&ESR, containing some key dimensions, surfaced and also some official Pickering's photographs appeared in the HMRS collection. The result of

this extra information was that both of my "known dimensions" were found to be wrong! Clearly, a serious case of the application of Sod's Law!

The wheelbase error was reflected in all the length dimensions, but as Stephen found it is not that apparent when comparing the (wrong) drawing with photographs as the general proportions are not far out.

The width error was much more serious: I had assumed 8ft whereas the true figure was 9ft. The end view in the HMRS Pickering collection shows the width clearly and corroborates the stock register figure. Without that view, I would have suspected the register dimension, as a 9ft width was most unusual for 1904.

My humble apologies to Stephen, to Trevor Charlton and to anyone else who has built one of these beasts from the MRN drawings! ■



Brent's Browsings

HEAVY FREIGHT AND MOBILE LAWNMOWERS

Continuing Martin Brent's bequest gleaned from Railway Observer back issues, we hear first about the Callington branch of the PD&SWR in 1939

The April edition reported that only one of the three engines built for the line was now working on the Callington branch. This was Number 757 [one of the Hawthorne Leslie 0-6-2Ts] that, with one exception, worked the goods trains. The exception was the 12.57pm, Saturdays-only mixed train from Bere Alston to Callington.

The considerable summer and weekend traffic was worked by O2 0-4-4Ts, which were housed in the shed at Callington along with Number 757. Another O2 came up each day to assist with the goods traffic, which must have been heavy to justify this level of motive power.

But the situation was complicated by the fact that even Number 757 was only allowed to take "equal 14" from Calstock to Gunnislake because of the severe gradient. *[Editor's note: Martin did not explain what "equal 14" means. Can anyone help?]*

Since the traffic generated up to 100 wagons daily, the need for locomotives for several reliefs can be seen. The traffic was mainly fruit and flowers, and was busiest in the spring and early summer. Locomotives allocated to the branch at that time were O2s 201, 216 and Number 757.

This was amended by the May edition, which stated that the locomotives, while sub-shedded at Callington, were allocated to Plymouth. It was confirmed that another of the original locomotives, Number 758, also worked the line alternately with 757.

It was noted that the signalling system was somewhat curious insofar as the section from Calstock to Callington was operated using the electric tablet, while the section between Calstock and Bere Alston used the old fashioned ticket and staff system [See

Signalling On The Callington Branch in Colonels 61, 62 and 63].

Mention was made that an 0-6-0 was used on the line, and in May it was revealed that this locomotive was [Drummond 700 Class] Number 343, used because of the uncertain water supply at Callington. The tender tank allowed for two journeys to be made, while tank engines only had sufficient capacity for one trip.

Certainly this engine ran light from Plymouth to Bere Alston to operate the 1.40pm freight to Callington. Number 758, which had worked the 10.15am freight, then ran light to Plymouth at 1.05pm.

One the same day, an O2 piloted N Class number 1843 to Bere Alston to work the 4.35pm fruit special to Okehampton. This then went off to the Midlands. O2s 193 and 216 were also seen working on the branch at this time.

Rye & Camber Tramway

On 15 August, a visitor to the line learned that the 2-4-0 tank locomotive (Which one, we ask? As *Victoria* was the first to be sold, I assume it was *Camber*) had been disposed of and that all services were operated by the 'mobile lawn mower', which was brightly painted and in good condition.

But in the November edition it was revealed that the locomotive in question had still been in the shed, albeit very rusty and behind a mound of rubbish on 25 August. ■