

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



NO. 169 OCT. 1995

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT by Martin Lloyd & Gordon Wells

P3 No. 2392 (J27 No. 65894)

At Chatham, the completed boiler is now in store awaiting the go ahead from the Group for the hydraulic test. This will be delayed until the work on the loco frames is completed and the frames are ready to receive the boiler.

At Wilton, work on the reassembly of the loco continues slowly due to the diversion of most of the Monday evening volunteers to the A2 at Thornaby. However, contrary to the inference in the last issue of the NEWS, reassembly work does still take place on a Monday evening!

When an attempt was made to fit the loco buffer beam it was found that the thick wooden part of the beam had become curved, no doubt due to the dry conditions inside the depot, leaving a large gap at each end between the wood and the steel backplate. All the beam main fixing bolts are inboard of the buffers, there were none at the ends. The beam had to be removed again and the centre pair of the four bolts at each end, which hold the front plate to the wood, were modified to fit into tapped holes in the back plate so they could be used to pull the ends back into position. Following the above modification and repairs to the buffers, the buffer beam, buffers and the front vacuum and steam heat pipes were all refitted, followed by the cylinder cock linkages. The new ashpan, modified to include hoppers for ease of disposal, has been trial fitted between the frames in order to check the alignment of the hopper doors and linkages and ensure that nothing will foul on the loco brake rigging.

On the tender, the welding work inside the tank is now almost complete and attention will shortly be turned to the work required on the outside.

T2 No. 2238

On display in Deviation Shed. No work has taken place on the loco since the last report. However, it was cleaned on Sunday 3rd September!.

Following a rash of broken springs on the Q7 in August, the T2 tender has reluctantly had to surrender its centre R.H spring. On the T2 tender all the springs are identical. The Q7 tender has the same spring on the centre axle but the leading and trailing sets have an extra leaf fitted. As the Q7 had broken a centre spring, and no other spares were available, a spring was taken from the T2.

K1 No. 2005

During October work on the firebox commenced at Hull.

The loco frames and tender remain in store in No. 5 Depot, Wilton.

Q7 No. 901

After running for a week in traffic following the resetting of the valves a further adjustment was made to the centre valve on 30th July. During this operation it was noticed that the oil cover on the top of the centre expansion link had come adrift. In order to refit the cover it was necessary to extract a broken screw and recap the two fixing holes. An easy job on the bench but not so when the motion is in position and the whole engine must be moved with pinch bars just to gain access to the next hole!.

Some problems have been experienced with the operation of the steam reverser, moving the gear into forward was not as easy as it should have been. After investigations the problem was traced to the steam shuttle valve on the reverser itself which selects the direction of travel. Adjustments were made after taking measurements of the moving parts. The next time the loco was in steam enquiries were made of the driver as to the operation of the reverser, his reply was 'It's never been as good!'.

901 has suffered from a peak season outbreak of broken springs, three tender springs and one engine spring have had to be replaced. This exercise has consumed our whole stock of spares and no less than six springs have had to be sent away for repair or refurbishment.

During the 16th/17th September NYMR 'Thomas the Tank Engine Weekend', the faceless 'Charlie the Coal Engine' once again languished in Deviation Shed while the other locos went out to play and entertain the large crowds. It does now seem even more strange that an NRM loco cannot wear a face when the museum itself is holding a long running 'Thomas' event. Lift the ban, please!.

J72 No. 69023

Joem has not seen much use on the NYMR this year, except for its one trip to Pickering on 14th May when it failed at Levisham on the return journey, unable to raise steam. Following the repairs to the crack in the cylinder block it has stood in Deviation Shed awaiting test running to prove the repairs.

The loco's poor steaming ability is a cause for concern, it may be able to manage when on its summer holidays with short runs on flat railways but on the NYMR the work is more testing. Opinion amongst NYMR staff is that the loco steamed better before its major overhaul at Wilton in 1987

In April 1983 a new blastpipe was fitted, a few months later the blastpipe top was modified, to sharpen the blast, in an attempt to improve the steaming. As an experiment this modification was removed in August. Investigations also revealed a large gap at the bottom of the firehole door where it was not sitting flat to the boiler, this was allowing air to enter even when the firehole flap was shut. The door hinges were modified in order to make the door a better fit.

Joem was booked for several test runs up the bank on 3rd September but the crew arrived to find that the loco had not been lit up that morning as the Charge Cleaner, who books on at 5 a.m, had not turned up. The duty fitter had to light up all the service locos and did not have time for the J72. Thus it was mid afternoon before the loco was able to make its first trip to Goathland hauling a single coach. The steaming ability had not improved.

As a further experiment the spark arrester was removed and measurements taken of the blastpipe and chimney. Subsequent calculations proved that the blastpipe orifice was too large. A machined reducer of the correct dimensions has been made and fitted in the top of the blastpipe.

The J72 was used, complete with face, on the 'Thomas' weekend, to provide an attraction at Goathland by shunting waggons around the station between the service trains. Problems were experienced with the brakes sticking on and being very difficult to release, a condition which led to the loco being christened 'Joem the Juddery Engine'.

A2 No. 60532 BluePeter

"Don't take things for granted", which is just what we did at the time of writing the last Blue Peter report. The centre wheelset was due back from Parsons within days of the notes being written, so we took a chance on it actually happening. The wheelset only had to go on the lathe, the same one used way back in March for turning the font wheelset to check for crank axle damage. So we reported the wheelset as being returned to Thornaby in anticipation. Unfortunately, when Parsons went to turn the middle axle they found that the crank pins, longer by about a foot on each side, fouled the stocks of the lathe, preventing rotation. However, by about the time members were reading the NEWS, the wheelset was at the Tyseley Locomotive Works, being turned on the Birmingham Railway Museum lathe, thanks to Bob Meanley, their Chief Engineer (another near miracle arranged without batting an eyelid!). The exercise involved steaming their 45 ton breakdown crane to lift the wheelset off the lorry - and another photo opportunity missed!

The wheelset came back to Thornaby on 7th September, followed by the refurbished axle boxes three weeks later. On Sunday 1st October the RHS box was offered up and after a steady day's work by Richard Campbell and his support crew, the box was fitted. This involved blueing the axle journal, trial fitting the box, some scraping-in of the white metal bearing surfaces (these four stages repeated several times), a thorough cleaning up, fitting of felt lubrication pads (pre soaked in oil), smearing all bearing surfaces with oil, then fitting the box. The tray (axlebox bottom) then had to be fitted,

followed by the underkeep, spring hanger and finally the spring. Without fitting the spring, the box is top heavy and it could rotate and fall onto the non bearing surface of the box at the slightest movement of the axle.

Fitting of the LHS axlebox was attempted but it was found to be too tight. Richard felt that there was too much white metal on the bearing surface for hard scraping so the box, weighing about 3 cwt, was bundled into the back of Richard's Landrover and taken to his own workshop for a light machining. On Monday 9th October the box was returned to Thornaby and fitted to the axle.

The night was not without a little tension. The Thornaby depot, when the A2 arrived last October, was in its last few months as part of the Trainload Freight (Metals) organisation and the workload was somewhat light. The weeks just before 'de-nationalisation' were bleak indeed, with shop floor rumours of closure being rife. Since April and the creation of Bulk Haul (or Bulk Haul Railways, as Charlie the Supervisor insists), the place has got busier and busier, such that on the night of 9th October the wheel crane was being used for work on two traction axles for diesels (one of them belonged to a class 08 shunter so it did at least have crank pins). Our axle job would probably take about three hours, and it could not be left undone, so it looked as though we would not be able to start. However the Thornaby men pulled out all the stops and released the crane with just enough time for us to complete our work, and still get to the pub before 'last orders please'!

It is worth mentioning that we are not really allowed to use any of the Thornaby machine tools and particularly the crane, but we are allowed to use chain blocks. So the crane driver sets the hook at a convenient height above the axle and we lift the axleboxes on and off with a block slung from the crane. One of the many working compromises sorted out between us and the Thornaby workforce. The planning of our project has become a little more difficult as a result of the increased workload at Thornaby. If they take a traction motor/axle assembly out of one of their diesels they cannot shunt it around anything but the gentlest of curves and the shed approach roads are quite tortuous. The wheel drop road and the adjacent jack lift road are only single ended. The A2 is usually in one or the other, so if a diesel without an axle is over the wheeldrop and a spare part has to be ordered, we get trapped in and have to wait our turn in the queue. Having said that we cannot complain about the co-operation at Thornaby.

Richard Campbell's other, long wheelbase Landrover came into use when the centre big end had to go to his workshop to be machined. To do this the shells of the bearing had to be assembled and machined actually in the big end of the centre connecting rod. Now you don't get one of those in the glove box of your Mondeo without a struggle, so Richard brought his Landrover (which has just passed its 25th MOT test, he tells us) and we wrestled the thing into the back. It was returned and fitted to the loco on Sunday 1st October with surprising ease. We even managed to fit it big end first so that the side to side movement could be checked before the little end was fitted into the crosshead.

The significance of the date didn't escape us; it was exactly a year to the day of the disaster. The A2 arrived at Thornaby last October with only the centre drive intact and

without the outside valve gear. At the end of the evening of 1st October 1995 the loco was in a very similar state, but it was nice to reflect for a moment on the year's activities and realise that the engine was on the mend and was going to be in a better condition than ever, very shortly.

The new valve chest covers, to replace those that had their ends punched out at Durham, which we had tried to repair, have been cast by British Steel in Sheffield, and have been machined and bushed in Stockton. They have been made to a set of patterns made in a joint operation between us and the builders of the new A1. They were delivered to Thornaby on 11th October and were fitted to the loco the following week.

We have cleaned and reassembled the tender brake rigging and freed the rather stiff hand brake screw. We have also cleaned the loco brake rigging ready for assembly once the centre wheelset goes back into the frames, which was planned for Monday 16th October. The loco had been shunted a few times in and out of the shed and it is encouraging to see how freely it moves when loose coupled to the shunter. We hope it is as free when complete.

The boiler work is complete and all the cab fittings have gone back into their rightful places. The copper pipework associated with the injectors had to be annealed before refitting the special 'air ministry' joints. This practice was the focus of attention after a dangerous incident on A4 60009 Union of South Africa a couple of years ago when the crew was badly scalded. We took the pipework to our friendly blacksmith for him to do the annealing in his furnace, only to discover that he was in hospital for a major knee operation and his blacksmith had just started a fortnight's holiday in Corfu! We got them done at our friendly welding and machining firm in Thornaby.

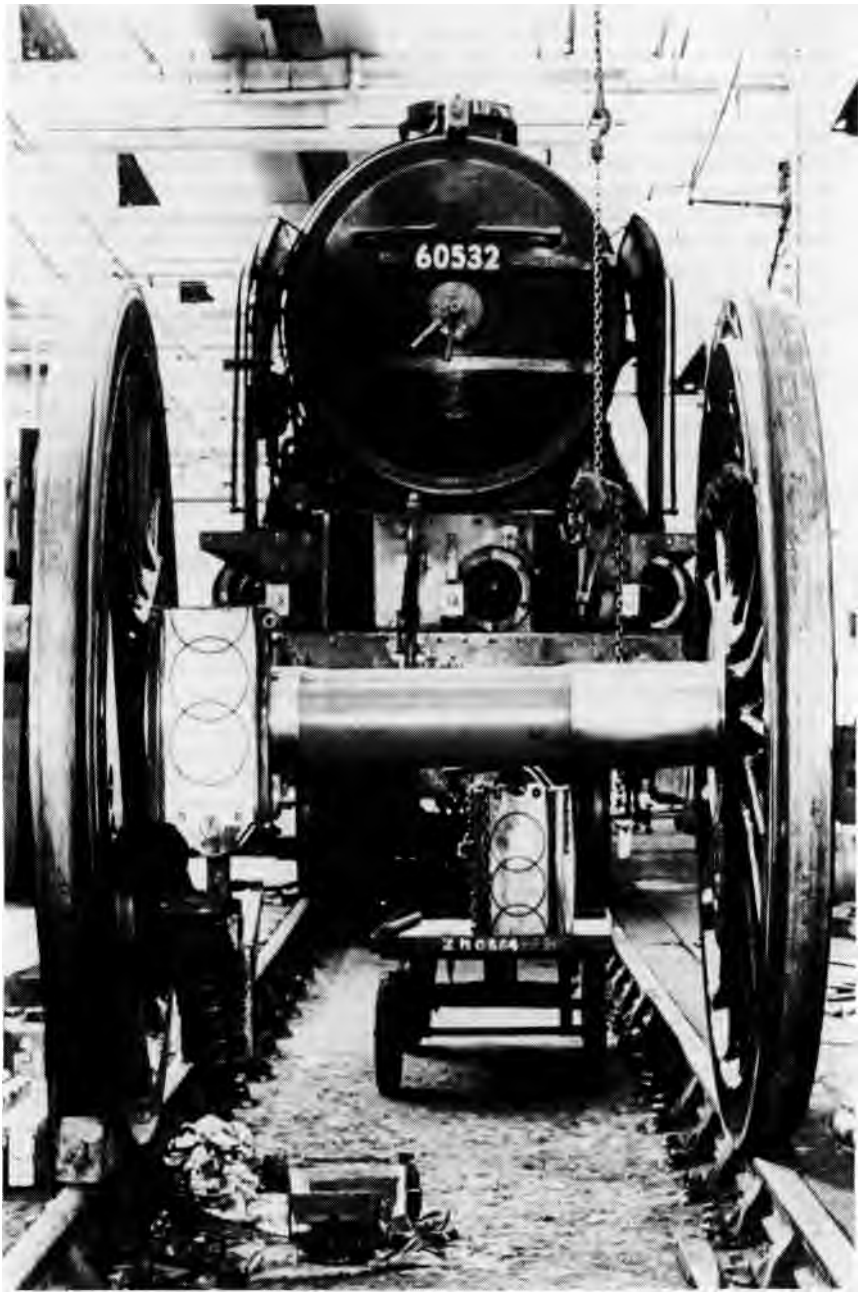
The two eccentric rods are ready and the two radius rods, along with the RI IS expansion link, are due to go to Stoke on Trent for grinding of the case hardening slots. When these arrive back they should be the last items to go back on the loco. Then all that remains is the thousand and one fiddly little jobs such as valve setting, checking and adjusting spring tensions, adjusting brakes, making a whole new set of trimmings and so on. Painting of frames and wheels, whilst they are out, is one of the ongoing jobs.

One of the compensations of being involved in this project is the number of helpful people we have encountered on the way. In particular we shall miss the sweet voice of Linda, from TNT Durham, our friendly haulage firm, who rings up regularly to see when the next set of axleboxes will be ready to go away!

Finally, we must apologise for not being ready by the promised date, but we *did* try our best!

A4 No. 2509 Silver Link

At the Great Central Railway, Loughborough, undergoing restoration to running order.



60532 Blue Peter inside Thornaby TMD with its centre driving wheels in the foreground, during the fitting of its refurbished axleboxes; poignantly the date is 1st October 1995 (Cohn Smith).



901 leaves Grosmont on 7th October 1995 with an 8 coach train for Pickering. Note the now impressive display of semaphore signals protecting the exit from the station platforms (Colin Smith).



NCB No.5 'somewhere in England' with a branch freight on 28th October 1995 during the NYMR's 'Wartime Weekend' (John Hunt).

A visit was made to Loughborough in late August, when the A4 was inspected in the company of a party from the NRM including Museum Head, and NELPG member, Andy Scott and Engineering Curator Richard Gibbon, who happened to be on an official visit the G.C.R that day.

The loco boiler has been removed from the frames and is currently standing on packing outside the front of Loughborough shed. The boiler is completely stripped and all the tubes have been removed. The frames were inside the repair shed standing next to the almost completed frames of B1 No. 1264 on the centre road, with the A4 tender at the rear of the third road. The side valencing plates have been removed from the frames to gain access to the motion and the front drawhook, cover plate and cylinder cladding has also been removed. The cylinder and piston valve covers have been removed prior to a piston and valve examination.

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VIDIO REVIEW - MOORS STEAM SUPREME

Running time - 55 minutes

In 1992 Ted Parker and Dave Martin, on behalf of the NYMR, produced the highly successful MOORS STEAM CELEBRATION video as part of the NYMR's 25th anniversary. This excellent video has to date sold over four thousand copies, in a market where a good video sells a thousand, and this one is still selling!. Perhaps the reason for this success lies in the fact that the style of production, and content, appeals to a wider audience than just the steam enthusiast.

The same team have recently produced a second video titled MOORS STEAM SUPREME which, once again, contains the same winning combination of steam action, scenic locations and commentary, presented and narrated by the 'Rochdale Cowboy' well known writer, musician and entertainer Mike Harding.

Once again Ted Parker demonstrates his mastery of the art of filming steam with the usual very high standard of camera work featuring some spectacular and atmospheric scenes from all four seasons of the year, although they do jump around a bit! The test of a good video is one that can be watched more than once, and there is something here to suit everyone. Those who like clag will certainly savour the scenes of 4F 4422 crossing the Esk Valley Viaduct, but don't show it to the environmental health officer. Unlike the previous Celebration video which contained archive film of the NYMR, the material this time is of more recent events and the only NELPG loco seen is the Q7.

This is a very good video, and one easy to recommend, although there are too many views of every coach in the train going past. Certainly an item to add to your Christmas present list.

MOORS STEAM SUPREME is available now from all NYMR shops price £12-99 or by post from Pickering for an additional £1-50 P&P.

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WELDING RODS

The Group has a requirement for welding rods for use on various repair jobs. In this age of B55750 many registered companies have assigned a shelf life to various items of stock. We have heard reports of unopened packets of welding rods being consigned to the scrap bin because their arbitrary shelf life has expired. These rods may be considered scrap but they can still be of use as most are still in perfect condition. If any member can assist then please get in touch

A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY by Colin Hatton

As Blue Peter nears the end of its epic repair, much uncertainty still surrounds a return to the main line. With Waterman pulling out of main line steam operation, increasing concern about the escalating costs of steam specials, together with the ever mounting paperwork required, it is not surprising that main line running takes up the bulk of Committee discussion at the present time. What is clear, however, from our meetings is that your Committee is committed to putting our locomotives back onto the main line, provided that the concerns we all share following the Durham incident are overcome to our complete satisfaction. Indeed during our October meeting it was resolved that the A2 would, on completion of the repairs, be based on the NYMR. It would not venture onto the main line until our concerns over driver training, RO experience and completion of the necessary paperwork, have been met. We will shortly be writing to the NYMR to officially request permission to take the engine to the line and, thereafter, refer to Deviation Shed as its home base.

As is usual, at this time of the year, some time was spent discussing our annual members' special. The Chairman pointed out that traditionally the special was a 'thank you' to those working members whose efforts throughout the year had kept the Group's locomotives running. This year has seen the special fully booked within three days, such is its popularity and good value (neither the NYMR or the NELPG derive any profit from the special). It was thus resolved that on future annual specials working members will be given 'first refusal' for the dining section. Members should note that the non dining portion of the train is always available for those just wanting to ride the line. Unfortunately Blue Peter was not ready to head this year's special as had at one time been hoped, but do watch out for news about any NYMR activity for the A2 when it eventually reaches the line. Hopefully NELPG meetings or the December NEWS might be able to announce such details.

Turning away from the Committee meetings, I can report that our monthly meetings in The Ladle Hotel are now well under way for the 1995/6 season, with Alan Toomer having lined up what appears to be an exciting array of guest speakers. Kicking off were David Champion and Bob Meanley, who gave a fascinating insight to their A 1 project. With funding in good shape, corresponding progress had been made, and the team was confident that when (not if) built, Tornado would be to a higher specification than the original AIs! I was particularly impressed by their apparent professionalism, but knowing how lucky we were in obtaining all the requisite drawings for Blue Peter (from the NRM), I feel that there is an awfully long way to go before we again see an A1 on the main line.

The October meeting saw the return of John Midcalf, ably assisted by Ken Appleby, to give an excellent slide show on the railways of Teesside. The near full house, captivated by the excellence of the photography - in the main from the Armstrong collection - were no less impressed by the continuous stream of interesting facts and figures presented by Ken, who spent his working life on BR stations around Teesside.

These evenings are excellent, friendly entertainment. I do urge members and friends living in and around Teesside to support them and in doing so, they might get involved in the activities of the Group.

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MSLO REPORT

The Mainline Steam Locomotive Operators organisation continues to work assiduously towards ensuring that there is a future for steam on the main line, with

particular emphasis on a continuing and fruitful dialogue with Railtrack and Rail Express Systems (RES), especially with regard to costs and crewing. Useful recent developments have seen the emergence of a second Vehicle Acceptance Body, Resco Railways, which offers a similar service in the certification and examination of steam locomotives and support coaches, as Transmark. Locomotive owners now have a genuine choice and competitive prices! NELPG is currently examining the options, particularly as the respective requirements for the locomotive maintenance policy are somewhat different. One fundamental development is the distinct possibility that 'fitness to run' examinations may well be carried out by MSLO nominated examiners, drawn from locomotive owners, and approved by the VAB.

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IN THE AIR ON THE GROUND AROUND TEESSIDE **by Len Clarke**

Reading my newspaper the other night my thoughts were interrupted by the sound of carriage doors slamming and the whistle of a steam locomotive coming from the television. Bustling along was a standard tank on a local at a tremendous rate of knots, the film speeded up to create the effect. A squeal of brakes and the loco had transmogrified into an old 0-6-0. I must say I was somewhat surprised since I didn't know they could do that!

Alighting at a station, John Steed and Emma Peel - for it was they - The Avengers had arrived in 1965 black and white. Searching through the debris of a derelict airfield for clues, Steed retrieves a plaque, blows off the dust to reveal the legend '33 Squadron' 33 Squadron? This was my old squadron, for one whole week!

I was based for the final year of National Service at RAF Leeming, near Northallerton. It was a very useful posting for me since I was not long married and lived in Billingham, a mere 35 miles away. It was a 6 a.m. start, bicycle the 6 miles to Thornaby, catch a G5 or D20 hauled train from Middlesbrough to Leeds via Ripon and Harrogate, alighting at Northallerton. Then it was a 5 mile bike ride to RAE Leeming (if you told young people that today, they wouldn't believe you!), and I still had to set about defending the country after that!

A familiar sight in the skies over Teesside at that time in the mid 1950s were the Black Diamonds, 111 Squadron Fighter Command, based at Middleton St. George, now Teesside Airport. The Diamonds were the acrobatic display scheme, flying Hunters, the role eventually taken over by the famous Red Arrows.

The advent of the 'V bomber force, Victors, Vulcans and Valiants, and the need for their dispersal at a time of heightened tension, required the runways at Middleton St. George to be lengthened, and 111 Squadron, being a front line fighter unit, transferred lock, stock and barrel to Leeming; their ground crews took over our billets while we were of a maintenance unit were daily shuttled by coach to and from the RAF regiment depot at nearby Catterick.

On a Sunday night in the winter of 1957/8 I would take the train from Billingham, V3 to Thornaby, A8 to Darlington, for Catterick. Darlington, being the hub of a number of outlying Army camps and RAF stations, would be crowded with personnel; H.M. lighting men were on the move! Military Police (Redcaps) and RAF police were thick on the ground ensuring that hardly a sound emanated from that great throng.

In the train, 6 to 8 carriages behind a K1 or B1 to Catterick and Richmond, the Redcaps extremely smart, mean and looking for trouble, would patrol the corridors as we sat silently, hoping that our short back and sides were just that. If you told young people that today

During its stay at Leeming 111 Squadron was disbanded and in its place 33 Squadron was reformed. The latter had had a long and distinguished history being formed at the birth of the RAF at the end of World War 1, and between the wars was based around the Empire at many exotic locations before the unit was disbanded in 1948. For the Squadron's rebirth a number of aircraft of types previously flown by the Squadron arrived at Leeming, some now flown by the Royal Navy. I helped assemble from crates a Hawker Hart, a biplane fighter of the 1930s, before patching its fabric wings and fuselage

When my posting ended, my last job was to update the Honours board, the history of the Squadron, which hung in the Officers' Mess. A wonderful record of the men and machines of 33 Squadron who kept the peace between and fought in two World wars. But for the whistling of a steam engine and the repeat of an old TV programme, I might never have remembered my time with 33 Squadron and those splendid railway journeys.

(Ed. - Len Clarke, now retired, is well known for his painting exploits on our locomotives. His recollections of past exploits is timely as the NYMR has just celebrated a Wartime weekend).

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 10th November 1995. **YORK- SCARBOROUGH 150 ANNIVERSARY** by Doug Hardy with cine films and slides.

Friday 8th December 1995. **TRAINS THROUGH THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS** by Charles Dean with cine films and slides.

Friday 12th January 1996. **BRITISH RAILWAYS IN THE 1960s** by Gordon Best with slides.

Friday 9th February 1996. **1950s AND 60s STEAM IN THE NORTH EAST** by Dr. Bill Hampson with slides.

Meetings held at 7.30 p.m. in the upstairs room of The Ladle Hotel, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

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COVER PICTURES

Front:- Amidst the autumnal splendour of the North Yorkshire Moors, 901 accelerates off the 15 m.p.h. PW slack at Fen Bog on 28th October 1995.

Back (top):- 69023 leaves Levisham with Dr. Beet's immaculate NER Inspectors' saloon during the NYMR's Autumn steam gala on 8th October 1995.

Back (bottom):- 901 again, this time at Grosmont on 21st May 1995, with a group from the NRM including Andy Scott and Richard Gibbon, and their counterparts from the German railway museum (all John Hunt).



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