

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



NO.184 APR 1998

EDITORIAL

The 18th March saw the resignation of Maurice Burns as Chairman and Director of the NELPG. Maurice was involved with the Group from the very outset, making the first donation to save a J27, then still in BR service. Since then his contribution to the NELPG has been considerable and its value, inestimable, for which the Group will be forever grateful.

As a member of the Committee since late 1966. Maurice has variously held the position of Secretary, Treasurer, Chief Mechanical Engineer and, since 1984, Chairman, which represents over half a lifetime of dedicated service to the Group. I personally wondered how he managed to work so tirelessly for the Group, whilst holding down an important full time job, and bringing up a family. That he managed to do so must have been a great personal effort and a credit to his ever supportive wife Val.

The achievements of the NELPG over the past 32 years have been the result of a tremendous team effort, but Maurice can claim the credit for a number of notable milestones in the Group's history, such as the partnership with ICI and the huge benefits that the MSC scheme brought to the Group, the S&D celebrations in which the NELPG's locomotives played such an important part: Deviation Shed at Grosmont: the acquisition of the .172 with Transport Trust funding; and the pioneering of the loco hire agreements with the NYMR and with other railways. However, as first Technical Secretary and then CME, Maurice has overseen virtually all the Group's locomotive Overhauls for the last 30 years, no mean feat when one stops to think of the enormity of what this has entailed - in the case of the K1, this is its fourth overhaul.

In proffering my own personal thanks and appreciation to Maurice for his often Herculean efforts over the years. I am sure that I speak for the membership as a whole. Well done.

Cohn Smith is also leaving the Committee since he has decided not to stand for re-election at the May AGM. However, Cohn is to continue his valuable and much appreciated work as Membership Secretary and - I hope - continue to submit his pictures for inclusion in the NEWS - as I hope Maurice will. Thanks go to Cohn, too, for his contribution whilst a Committee member.

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

J27 No. 65894

By the middle of April the J27 is expected to have worked 19 days on the Nene Valley Railway, working scheduled passenger services, driver experience trains and a charter freight. During its stay the locomotive had a boiler wash out and passed its insurance company in-steam examination. The locomotive is due to return to New Bridge yard at Pickering on 15th April, a day earlier than planned. On arrival at Grosmont the J27 will require a new LH driving wheel side rod hush, and will then enter NYMR traffic, hopefully to partner No.29, fresh from a major overhaul, in a re-enactment of the re-opening train of 1st May 1973.

T2 No. 2238

In store in Deviation Shed.

K1 No. 62005

The tender is now complete and is fully lined out, with BR crest, and has been varnished.

On the engine, all the cab fittings are refitted and the cab roof replaced. The at times frustrating task of refitting the cladding sheets is now complete. and the engine is in black undercoat.

The firegrate is proving problematical since the studs that locate the rocker firebar side supports were removed when the inner firebox side plates were renewed. and not replaced correctly after the boiler overhaul at Chatham. These have now been sorted, refitted and the firebars replaced. Finishing work on the new ashpan, the majority of which was fabricated by Mick Gammon, has had to be carried out by contract while he is away in order to sustain progress towards completion of the overhaul

On the motion, further work has been found necessary following receipt of three new valve heads and rings from the SVR, with the heads requiring machining to get the grooves for the rings uniform; there was 8 - 10,000 of an inch variation. The valve gear has been rebushed and the crossheads and slidebars have been remetalled and machined true by Richard Campbell. However, the major problem to arise, sadly at the eleventh hour, is the discovery that there is a quarter of an inch clearance between the piston heads and the cylinder bore. This will entail the reboring of the cylinders by Ian Storey and the manufacture of new heads, tasks that the Group could well do without at this crucial, late stage in the locomotive's overhaul.

The other major outstanding area is the smokebox. Refitting of the superheater elements is proving to be a slow and laborious process, and until it is complete, the external steam pipes, chimney and petticoat cannot be fitted.

However, despite these recent setbacks, good progress has been made but it will be a very close call to have the locomotive complete by the end of April deadline.

Q7 No. 901

The locomotive was satisfactorily steam tested on 18th March, followed by an insurance company examination the following day. Prior to this the outstanding work on the motion was carried out

The eccentrics were closed up having had up to 50,000 of an inch clearance. Worse still, the centre crosshead had no less than 147,000 of an inch clearance! This has also been closed up and the centre slide bar has been realigned. The piston packings were also replaced, and by the start of the season - unlike last year - the locomotive was available for traffic, thanks to the efforts of Clive Goult and other NYMR paid staff.

The Q7 entered traffic on Sunday 22nd March Working *The Moorlander* dining train, a task it performed again the next Sunday. By the end of the month it had worked on 5 days, amassed 468 miles and earned £2,223! The locomotive was used again during Easter week.

J72 No. 69023

In store inside Deviation shed.

A2 No. 60532 Blue Peter

After its successful southbound run over the Settle and Carlisle line from Carlisle to Hellifield, Blackburn and Crewe on 14th February, all three piston valves were removed and the build up of carbon deposits removed. The valve rings were blue, showing evidence of overheating. As a result a different superheat oil is being used, following consultation with the A4 Locomotive Society, in a bid to hopefully cure this particular long running problem. All three bronze tailrod hushes have also been replaced.

On 21st March the A2 rewrote the record books again with yet another superb performance over Shap and Beattock (see Railtour Report). However, in his eternal quest to keep on top of little problems before they become big ones, and improve reliability and performance, Paul Hutchinson has been busy carrying out remedial repairs at Millerhill, the A2's temporary home whilst in Scotland.

The LH big end was running warm and using excessive oil. As a result the felt pad has been renewed (when these become worn or contaminated they become less and less effective in retaining oil to lubricate the crankpin and need replacement). A hole in the blower ring has also been repaired. Andy Harper, NYMR boilermith, has also been up to Millerhill to carry out caulking of throatplate seams and some stays in the firebox.

A long standing problem was an irritating - and perplexing - oscillation through the reverser at high speed. This was thought to be due to carboning, of the valves but the cause has now, hopefully, been identified. The lifting link on the secondary weigh shaft on the middle engine was found to be loose. This has been removed, received remedial attention and refitted in readiness for *The Heart Midlothian* run from Edinburgh to London on 19th April.

As reported in the AGM supplement, the recent EGM agreed to an intermediate boiler overhaul of the A2 in order to prolong its main line life by

a further three years until the year 2001. This will involve the removal and replacement of all the small tubes and some flue tubes. The work will be carried out by Ian Storey Engineering Ltd which won the tender for the work. It is planned to take place at Hepscott during June and July, and when complete the locomotive will be returned to the NYMR for use in August. September and October, prior to a return to the main line later in that month

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RAILTOUR REPORT

The A2 has successfully run two tours since the last issue of the NEWS. On Saturday 14th February it ran a Past Time Rail trip from Carlisle, over the S&C to Hellifield, across to Blackburn and Preston, then down the WCML, to Crewe.

A month later it ran *The Middy Scot* for Days Out from Crewe to Carstairs, via Shap, Carlisle and Beattock. This was another resounding success with a top speed of 54 mph at Shap summit and a 25 minute EARLY arrival in Carlisle. Better was to come, with just 45 minutes to cover the 49.5 mile distance from Carlisle to Beattock Summit, topped at 52 mph, although the load was only ten vehicles. The locomotive and support coach then ran to Millerhill yard, south east of Edinburgh, in readiness for *The Heart of Midlothian*. A first hand account of *The Middy Scot* is given by Terry Newman elsewhere in this issue. A comprehensive and comparative report of various runs over Grayrigg, Shap and Beattock by Doug Landau, which puts Blue Peter's various performances in the highest bracket. will appear in the next issue.

The A2 is due to work *The Heart of Midlothian* from Edinburgh - Newcastle - Doncaster - Welwyn viaduct - London Kings Cross on Sunday 19th April, as the second half of two day tour which involves 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley from Nuneaton to Carlisle via Crewe and Shap on Saturday 18th April. This

train picks up at Kings Cross, Stevenage, and Peterborough. Fares are £190 first class and £160 standard class which includes one night in a hotel, dinner and breakfast. Details from Days Out on 0115 941 9330.

The final trip with Days Out is on Sunday 10th May when 60532 is scheduled to work a charter from London Kings Cross to York via Hitchin, Grantham and Nottingham. On arrival at York the A2 will go on display in the National Railway Museum.

The spring railtour season will come to a fitting close on Saturday 30th May with an NELPG promoted tour from the North East, with Blue Peter both ways over the Settle and Carlisle line in one day.

A booking form is included with this copy of the NEWS. Members wishing to participate in this tour are advised to send the completed booking form, together with a SAE to:- NELPG Enterprises Ltd., 57 Millview Drive, Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear, NE30 2QD as soon as possible.

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THE MIDDAY SCOT by Terry Newman

After a lovely sunny and unusually warm Spring, preparation day for *The Midday Scot* was cool and overcast. It always seems to happen when steam locomotives run on Railtrack metals. I wonder if Railtrack put a 'special order in'. to add to all the other little hurdles.

However, although it was 4 in the morning, all the support crew soon jumped out of their sleeping bags in anticipation of what could be a fascinating day. We were ready to leave the Crewe Heritage Centre at about 06.00 in order to turn the locomotive on the triangle south of Crewe station. Unfortunately we did not leave until nearer 07.00, although this did not effect our hooked departure time at 08..48

Alter turning, and in the process exploring Basford Hall yard that John Hunt has recently written an article about in RAIL magazine, we returned to the station and waited for the arrival of the stock from the Birmingham area. After coupling on one of the support crew noticed that the LH valve cover looked a bit scorched (the valves had been cleaned and replaced the day before), so we checked a couple of lubrication pipes, much to the consternation of Mel Chamberlain of Days Out, the tour promoters, and Peter Kirk, EWS Traction Inspector.

Departure was on time at 08.48, with a rousing start, and we arrived at our next pick-up point at Warrington, seven minutes early at 09.15. We left on time but arrived four minutes early at Preston. After Preston the next stop was Barton Loop for water. Just prior to departure from Crewe Railtrack had instructed Peter Kirk by fax that only three support crew could detain here to carry out the watering operation, but this did not cause any problems as the support crew were really slick! The locomotive was examined and all was found to be well. The heart heat slowed a little.

I was now on the footplate and looking forward to a thrilling run to Carlisle over Grayrigg and Shap. The loco crew were really focused and all I remember was a fierce staccato exhaust more reminiscent of 71000 Duke of Gloucester. Grayrigg was topped at 59 mph, but on the dash down through the Lune Gorge the engine was eased slightly to allow maximum water and steam levels to be attained before the assault on Shap. With the regulator between three quarters and full, and cut off at 35%, Tebay was passed at 75 mph. With the cut off adjusted to 45% speed gradually dropped on the 1 in 75 climb, but the summit of the five and three quarter mile climb from Tebay was passed in 5 minutes 36 seconds at 54 mph - a magnificent effort! The engine then flew down the northern side of Shap with speed between 75 and 80 mph. Winding its way round the curves at Penrith, the engine rolled and bucked like a rodeo horse!

We reached Carlisle an astonishing 25 minutes early at 12.40! Here the A2 was detached and retired to Upperby depot for coal, water and fire cleaning, before returning to the station. Departure at 15.02 was 6 minutes late waiting for other traffic to clear. but we set off with a vengeance under the supervision of Inspector John McCabe. Beattock station was passed at 73 mph. I was back in the support coach, but the exhaust sounded even louder



62005 in an advanced stage of restoration inside No.5 depot, Wilton on 26th March 1998 (Maurice Bums)



60532 Blue Peter storms up the Long Drag towards Birkett Tunnel with the Past Time Rail charter from Carlisle to Crewe on 14th February 1998 (Maurice Bums)



60532 Blue Peter approaches Shap Summit at 54 mph with *The Midday Scot* on 21st March 1998 (Maurice Burns)



At about 60 mph 60532 Blue Peter storms up Beattock near Harthope with *The Midday Scot* on 21st March 1998 (Maurice Burns)

from here. Ian Pearson was on the footplate now and he told me that With the regulator fully open and the cut off at 45%, Blue Peter forged up the ten miles from Beattock to the summit in 10 minutes 5 seconds, with a minimum speed at the summit of 51.5 mph, and an average speed on the climb of 59.5 mph!

Arrival at Abington Loop for water was four minutes early, but as the train slightly overran the stopping point, more hoses had to lugged around to facilitate watering. Nevertheless we left two minutes early at 16.28, and arrived at Carstairs four minutes early at 16.45. There was a high degree of satisfaction amongst passengers, Mel Chamberlain, the locomotive crew and our support crew. It was hardly surprising!

Blue Peter and its support coach then continued via Edinburgh to the bleak Millerhill yard, to the south east of the city, for examination and disposal. Being in the middle of nowhere it was an early night for the support crew after an exciting, but long day. On Sunday morning Doug Hardy picked us up in his minibus and we all got back to Teesside in time for me to go out for a Mother's Day lunch with my family - and the heartbeat was back to normal!

	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Crewe	dep 08.48	08.48
Warrington	an 09.24	09.15
	dep 09.27	09.27
Preston	an 10.08	10.04
	dep 10.16	10.16
Barton Loop	arr 10.26	10.26
	dep 11.27	11.20
Carlisle	arr 13.05	12.40
	dep 14.56	15.02
Lockerbie		pass 15.27
Beattock station		pass 15.37
Beattock summit		pass 15.47
Abington Loop	an 15.58	15.55
	dep 16.30	16.28
Carstairs	arr 16.49	16.45
	dep 17.29	17.10
Millerhill	arr 18.18	18.15

WORKING PARTIES

These take place every Sunday at Grosmont for work on the Q7 and the J27.
Contact Clive Goult on 01642 473451 or Fred Ramshaw on 01740 621301.

And at Wilton every Sunday, as well as Monday and Thursday evenings for work on the K1. Contact Paul Hutchinson on 01642 825880, Fred Ramshaw on 01740 621301 or Richard Pearson on 01642 475080.

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A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY by Colin

In my last report, I made mention of the requirements for prospective committee candidates to be aware of their responsibilities should they be voted onto the Board of NELPG.

In answer to the member who asks "what's that to do with us, were about maintaining and running locomotives", I can only say. that we can not accept the benefits and protection that being a limited company brings without recognising the responsibilities it also brings.

Thus, I am glad to report that Martin Lloyd has been proposed by your Committee, in accordance with our articles, to be their candidate at the forthcoming elections to replace Cohn Smith. Martin has accepted his nomination and, before Steve Hyman asks, no it is not my plot to stop Martin asking awkward questions at AGMs. (Joking apart - Peter .1 Robinson strongly believes he should be asking such questions as a Board Member rattler than when it is too late at an AGM.)

I can report little progress on the ICI Wilton front. although Paul Hutchinson and myself recently had an exploratory meeting with Darlington Council.

who, you may know, have long term plans to incorporate a steam locomotive restoration and operation centre local to North Road Station.

Unfortunately, covered accommodation is not available and we have requested further meetings with the Council to explore the possibility of NELPG providing a building on the site. These are of course very early days but the site is ideal (alongside the A I Society) and I am keen to explore with Darlington Council the possibility of lottery funding for a NELPG building. In the short term should members know of an unused steel structural building which could be dismantled and moved to Darlington, please let me know. (After all, that is how deviation shed came about).

Talking about deviation shed, Martin is pursuing modifications as outlined in the last issued and I am trying to set up a meeting with NYMR to discuss these developments and get their permission for the modifications.

In early February, Maurice and myself attended a loco owners meeting with NYMR, and whilst, in the words of Bryan Draper, bargaining was hard fought, I am glad to report we reached an amicable agreement on mileage rate for 1998 which will allow us to move forward in a positive manner with NYMR. I should point out that we have reached the end of our long term contract for locomotive hire with NYMR and Paul and myself have put a lot of effort into preparing the basis for a new style contract with NYMR, which needs to be agreed prior to the 1999 season.

I hear all sorts of rumours regarding your engines, so let me make it clear to all that your Board have never discussed taking locomotives away from NYMR except at those times that they are on main line duty, or, in peak season when not suitable for the line. There are no long term or short term plans to move our home base away from Grosmont

Indeed, the agreed intent of your Board is to continue to improve relationships with NYMR, albeit I should quickly add, not at the expense of getting a fair return for the use of our locomotives! Do note that the J27 will spend this summer at the Embsay railway and I am currently drawing up an agreement for this. Please note that it will leave the NVR on 15th April for Pickering, and early season work on the NYMR, before leaving for Embsay in mid June after the Thomas weekend. Hopefully steaming will take place at

Embassy every Sunday. Do endeavour to see our engine on this attractive line. particularly now the extension to Bolton Abbey is open

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A BACKWARD GLANCE by Maurice Burns

As you will have read elsewhere I have decided after some 31 years as a NELPG Committee member to call it a day. As part of the NELPG fabric for so long, a look back at some of the highlights is perhaps timely.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the NELPG and over the years there have been some excellent people making contributions to keep the Group and the engines going. Peoples circumstances inevitably change and over the years we have seen some well known people leave the 'active' list.

Finding people to join the Committee has never been easy with most volunteers preferring to work on the engines rather than attend meetings! So why did I join the Committee in 1966? Simply I had seen and photographed the heartbreaking sight of so many LNER engines such as D-19, G5, A8, A5, I21, .125, J27 and Q6s which were being cut up for scrap at Darlington North Road, and wanted to do something positive. there were. after all, still some J27s and Q6s in BR service at that time

After making my donation to save a J27 (which the records show was the very first ever received by the NELPG!). I joined the Group and my enthusiasm was such that I was co-opted onto the Committee at the first meeting I attended only two weeks after becoming a member! In the early days I held just about every position including Treasurer during the critical fund raising period to buy the .127 and Q6 from 13R. then General Secretary before taking up the Technical Secretary role - a post unique to the NELPG Even in those days when we were 'green as grass' it was a responsible position at the age of 21. After a fractured tubeplate was discovered on the Q6 at Thornaby in early 1968, I quickly learnt that there was more to steam

preservation than taking photographs. The top priority was learning the skills from the last steam boilerSmiths and fitters. My first retubing was under the guidance of the late Joe Glass, the last boilerSmith at Thornaby, about thirty years ago, saw valuable knowledge gained. Since then I have been able to oversee many locomotive retubings by our volunteers, plus the renewal of side stays, lacings, and all the roof stays on the K1. My last boiler job was the complex K I firebox copper welding repair, just completed, hut the experience started way back in 1968!

On the mechanical side, my biggest influence was meeting the late Bill Harvey in 1974 when he inspected our locomotives for the 1975 S&D 150 cavalcade. A great friendship was established with the former Norwich Shedmaster where he taught and passed on the skills of valve setting and his attention to detail.

In time, the responsibilities increased with more than one locomotive in operation, then in 1975 we began running on the main line. With the funds earned by sales efforts at Shildon we decided on building a storage shed. I managed to locate a suitable building at Longmoor, hut that was the easy part. The earth moving, laying of foundations, erection of steel work and fitting second hand cladding sheets took three years to complete, and it can now he said that it almost finished the Group off, because little work was done on the locomotives and active volunteers were down to a handful.

By 1984 NELPG had only had two Chairmen in its first 18 years - the late Bryce Greenfield and Ian Storey - both having made major contributions in steering the Group through changing circumstances. When Ian decided to stand down to concentrate on his own locomotive 'George Stephenson'. I was elected by the NELPG membership as only the Group's third Chairman. In the last 14 years, in addition to working on the locomotives. I have devoted much time to what I consider are the key issues. These have been the establishment of a restoration base on Teesside, within easy reach of volunteers' homes, and good locomotive hire agreements which will bring in the funds to keep the engines going. My part played in the latter is hardly seen by the membership, but it is vital for the locomotives to get this right - even if it does make one unpopular in certain quarters.

Wearing two hats as Chairman and CME throughout the last 14 years was rather like a second job, not always helped by Committee members.

including me - who always set targets which all but outstrip our volunteer resources. With the CME role one could never switch off from the responsibility but I have always enjoyed a new challenge. On the other hand, the current K1 overhaul is the fourth I have been involved in, though not quite as exciting as the first, undertaken in Thornaby roundhouse.

Following my resignation as CME and Chairman I cannot close without expressing some very special words of thanks and appreciation. It could be said that NELPG is all about engines but I firmly believe its success in the past and in the future relies entirely on people - friendship and working together towards a common goal. Without such friendship NELPG would not be where it is today. In my 31 years as a volunteer and organiser I have made many friends and I would like to thank each and every one of them for the support they have given me and the Group. Finally I must thank one very important NELPG member - someone who has allowed me to indulge in this hobby - my wife Val. Without her support I could not have made the contributions I have, and life would not have been quite the same!

And what do you think is my favourite memory? Playing a part in saving the Q6 from scrap? A BR footplate ride on 65894 on the way to a NELPG meeting in Newcastle? The Stockton and Darlington 150 Cavalcade? Driving the Raven three cylinder Q7? A footplate ride on Blue Peter over the S&C? No, none of these. The best memories have been enjoying a pint or two with the other volunteers after a hard days work on the locomotives!

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A CELEBRATION OF RAILWAY ENGINEERING

The weekend of Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th June 1998 will see an exhibition to celebrate railway engineering at Doncaster. The venue is the new International Railport just south of Doncaster motive power depot, and the star attractions are expected to be 1468 Mallard, celebrating the 60th

anniversary of its record breaking 126 mph run, 60532 Blue Peter, celebrating its 50th birthday, and 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley. It is also hoped to satisfactorily conclude negotiations with EWS to get class 60 diesels 60007 and 60022 as well.

Amongst the other attractions, there should also be traction engines, Scammel three wheelers, a 5" gauge working steam layout, sales stands and displays. The exhibition is being organised by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, using sponsorship to fund the event, which is aimed at supporting various charities and tree planting schemes. The exhibition should be open from 10.00 to 17.00 on both days and, subject to confirmation, the entrance fees are expected to be £3 for adults, £2 for OAPs and £1 for children.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 17th April 1998 **THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY** a slide lecture by Ian Smith

Sunday 19th April 1998 **THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN** Blue Peter on the main line from Edinburgh to London Kings Cross throughout on the ECML. See text for details.

Friday 8th May 1998 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** followed after the interval by **A PICTORIAL JOURNEY ON THE NYMR**. a slide presentation by Adrian Scales.

Sunday 10th May 1998 **BLUE PETER ON THE MAIN LINE** from London Kings Cross to York. See text for details.

Saturday 30th May 1998 **BLUE PETER ON TILE MAIN LINE** from the North East, 60532 both ways over the Settle and Carlisle line. See text for details.

Saturday & Sunday 6th & 7th June 1998 **BLUE PETER AT DONCASTER** as part of a Celebration of Railway Engineering also featuring 4468 Mallard and 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley (see text for details).

Meetings are held in the upstairs room of The Ladle Hotel, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough, commencing at 7.30 pm.

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COVER PICTURES

Front: 901 departs from Goathland with a train for Pickering on 27th March 1998 (John Hunt)

Back (top): 65894 on the Nene Valley Railway with a freight charter on Friday 6th March 1998 (Dave McAlone)

Back (bottom): Terry Newman tightens the top RH gauge glass cock on the backplate of the K1 at Wilton on 1st March 1998 (Colin Smith)

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