

DECEMBER 2003

Report not available

NOVEMBER 2003

At the meeting held on Guy Fawkes night, the Society welcomed Mr. Ron White from Buckinghamshire, who went on to present a well-narrated and illustrative slide show on his Colour Rail Collection. At times he was in direct competition with events which surround this annual celebration, because there were flashes and loud bangs flashes were heard nearby. Nevertheless, his show, which comprised 150 colour transparencies of mainly a combination of steam and diesel and electric motive power at numerous locations in the UK, proved, by the end of the evening, to be more entertaining.

Mr White said that some of the transparencies he had chosen were around half a century old and, as a result, the standard of technical quality may not have been as high as that reached in later years. Nevertheless the overall majority certainly did create an atmosphere of nostalgia to the evening's entertainment and therefore the technical quality was not of a high priority.

Locomotive examples represented each of the former regions of the railway network and incorporated scheduled passenger, freight and special workings. Classic shots of steam-hauled trains that once typified the scene at scores of locations throughout the UK were screened and many of these locations are now a feature of the past too. The show covered five decades of railway operation and during this period the transition away from steam power took place. Therefore as to ensure a continuity of events the presentation included some examples of the new interlopers such as the English Electric Type 4s, Warship, Western and Deltic, diesel locomotives. Society members find consistent interest in historical railway photographs and many have accepted that some of the earlier modern traction is now heritage itself and therefore delight in recollections of time spent at the line side in past years.

The presenter is well-known for the controversial remarks he aims at aspects of the Great Western Railway which are sometimes considered by members of the audience as highly offensive. As on previous visits to the Society, Mr White made his views explicitly clear as the GWR was yet again targeted with a deluge of unfavourable comments. Nevertheless, this did not appear to detract from the overall presentation, as the attentive audience showed more interest in the pictorial content rather than his personal opinion but did relish some of his witty remarks and his sense of humour.

The Society extends a thank you to all of the photographers who have contributed images of their railway photography to the Colour Rail Collection that Mr White has amassed over the years. Shows with a content of this nature would be very difficult to present had railway photographers not been forthcoming with their historical images.

John Tuffs

OCTOBER 2003

Report not available

SEPTEMBER 2003

The B1 Class 4-6-0 locomotives of the former LNER were a relatively common sight in the Burton area during their active years in service. However, the two examples of the class that were subsequently bought into preservation have eluded the area. Nevertheless, Mike Cobley of the B1 Society, gave members and guests an opportunity to reminisce in his illustrative presentation.

The presenter's well-documented account of the B1 Class highlight efforts by a dedicated small band of volunteers who raised cash to purchase and restore No. 61264 to full working order. The locomotive was withdrawn from BR service during 1965 but a temporary reprieve from scrapping came when it was taken into departmental stock and used as a stationary boiler at Colwick Depot, near Nottingham. Later it was finally withdrawn and made the forlorn journey to Barry, in South Wales, where it became the sole ex-LNER locomotive to grace the scrap yard.

Mr Cobley said that the restoration project had encountered many problems but these had been gradually resolved over time. He said that lengthy discussions with a number of interested private railways had taken place to ensure that the locomotive had a suitable home where restoration could continue. Following on from cosmetic restoration that had taken place whilst the locomotive languished in the South Wales scrap yard, it was eventually transferred to the Great Central Railway at Loughborough where restoration continued.

After several years of dedicated restoration work, locomotive No. 61264 is now in full working order. Since then it has been seen hauling special trains over various routes of the national railway network. However, during the summer months it has been a regular performer on the West Highland Line in Scotland, therefore, many of the 300 plus transparencies Mr Cobley screened highlighted these workings by the B1 Society's locomotive. But other examples of the class were shown to complement the story of the B1s.

John Tuffs

AUGUST 2003

Report not available

JULY 2003

Report not available

JUNE 2003

The Society welcomed veteran photographer Mr Ken Fairey from Wellingborough to present a slide show entitled "Wanderings from Wellingborough". This sprightly 78-year-old still takes an active interest in pursuing his hobby of railway photography and was keen to share his selection of images that had been accumulated over the past half century. The title of the show implied that the Northamptonshire outpost of Wellingborough

would be the focus of the majority of illustrations, but this was not to be and the audience was certainly not disappointed with what Mr Fairey had selected.

The East Coast and West Coast main lines featured strongly. Ex-LNER "A" Classes dominated passenger working on the East Coast route and Coronation Class 4-6-2s, Britannias and Royal Scots appeared on the West Coast main line. A mix of Jubilees, Patriots and mixed traffic Class 5s were recorded on scheduled workings on what is now regarded as the Midland Main Line - a route which passes through Wellingborough. However Mr Fairey's 'wanderings' had taken him to very many locations throughout the United Kingdom in his exploits of railway photography and, not surprisingly, many of these were also screened.

In its heyday Northamptonshire was noted for its iron ore, therefore it was little surprise to see that scores of freight trains - some of which emanated from the nearby quarries were thus included. Furthermore, during the period of transition when steam power was in the process of withdrawal, diesel powered trains became more prominent. It was interesting to note that more modern forms of traction have now also replaced many of the latter.

The audience were pleased that Mr Fairey had included a few local illustrations in his show. Burton's old steam depot was the location for a couple of shots. Shortly after the influx of Stanier Jubilee 4-6-0s to 17B's motive power allocation depicted the scene in the early 1960s. A delightful composition of a Hughes 'Crab' 2-6-0 heading an enthusiasts' special at Burton station highlighted the evening.

John Tuffs

MAY 2003

After the annual general meeting, the Society's chairman, Phil Stanbridge, showed nostalgic illustrations which had mainly originated from *Burton Mail's* photographers over the years and had then become part of the Alf Moss Collection. Mr Moss was famous for his *Burtonian's Diary* column between 1948 and 1976. (The Society wishes to thank all concerned in preserving photographic records, which has led to members of the railway society being fortunate in participating in an evening full of local nostalgia.)

Rationalisation and reorganisation in the Burton area has impacted much on the local scene which is now just a shadow of its former glory. It was therefore delightful to view images of this bygone era, which included the town's brewery railways; demolition of the former Midland Railway station; and the 1969 Wichnor Train Crash. Nevertheless a selection of steam hauled special trains passing through Burton on the main line as well as many other local items of transport-related interest gave an added supplement.

Amongst those screened was a number taken in the 1950s freshly-commissioned railway tracks which allowed coal trains to access the then recently constructed Drakelow Power Station site from the Burton to Leicester railway line. Ironically, some four decades later, this site will be redeveloped following recent decommissioning of the generating plant and scheduled to be razed to the ground. May be when redevelopment takes place it will stimulate interest in the restoration of passenger services along the Ivanhoe Line especially at the South Derbyshire and Staffordshire end.

Society members savour visual presentations of typical local taste and by no means was this show any exception. Phil Stanbridge, through his expert knowledge of the Burton area, was able to deliver a captivating, interesting and informative talk. Although an authority on the subject he did encourage the audience to contribute with their ideas in an attempt to solve an occasional identification problem where little background was known of the illustration.

John Tuffs

APRIL 2003

David Cross, making his first visit to Burton Railway Society, presented about 180 colour transparencies most of which had been taken by his late father, Derek, the well-known railway photographer and author. The show comprised a compilation of both steam and early types of diesel traction taken at numerous locations around the United Kingdom but with a prominence to the North West, Scotland and the East and West Coast main lines.

Burton Shed 17B set the scene for the first illustration when a portrait of Jubilee Class 4-6-0 45575 'Madras' was screened. Stenson Junction provided another local vantage point for the late Derek Cross - it was there that he captured on film an ex LMS 8F 2-8-0 hauling a brace of withdrawn ex-LNER locomotives en-route to a breaker's yard in the Midlands area.

The 1950s, 60s and 70s provided many photographic opportunities as the transition from steam to diesel and electric on the main lines took place. The West Coast Main Line provided an excellent location prior to electrification and the photographer exploited this with several illustrations which showed express passenger trains hauled by both steam or diesel traction on the section of line adjacent to the M1 motorway. It was at this location that he had pictured both steam and diesel hauled expresses. Forty years ago the volume of road traffic was relatively sparse compared to the levels seen nowadays and this was highlighted in an illustration which showed a brand new English Electric Type 4 diesel thundering past on a Euston-bound express whilst the motorway to the right of the picture was almost clear of traffic. Other pictures at the same location illustrated an unrebuilt Patriot Class 4-6-0, a Coronation Class 4-6-2 and a Princess Class 4-6-2.

Mr Cross narrated the show throughout and gave an explicit description to all of the illustrations. He showed appreciation when members of the audience were ready to give assistance in identifying some locations that had been previously been unknown to him.

John Tuffs

FEBRUARY 2003

A brace of ex-Great Western Pannier tanks 7760 and 9600 crossing the viaduct which spans both the River Trent and surrounding meadow land on the route from Leicester to Burton in March were featured in a video review of steam operation during 2002. The video presentation by Dave Richards and Karl Jauncey reflected on numerous steam-hauled special trains that ran during the past year.

Steam locomotives including well-known representatives of V2 60800 'Green Arrow', Merchant Navy Pacific 35005 'Canadian Pacific', and freshly-restored Coronation Class

6233 'Duchess of Sutherland' were recorded by the film crews as the enthusiasts' specials they were in charge of traversed a variety of tracks. Video sequences portrayed main line steam operation as it was during 2002 with an abundance of railway routes being included in the programme. Meanwhile steam locomotives and passenger carriages in nocturnal settings created an atmosphere of romance and nostalgia. A restored ex-LNER BI Class 4-6-0 61264 illustrated this as it eased a special train away from March East Junction. Another sequence of note was at Worcester Shrub Hill station where the semaphore signals formed a focal point as two steam-hauled special trains, appropriately hauled by ex-GWR 4-6-0s, crossed each other at the station; the first train pausing at one platform as the other train arrived at the opposite platform.

The two-hour show, which was a compilation of many hours of painstaking line side video recording, was full of interesting sequences of steam locomotives working numerous special enthusiast excursions. A descriptive and entertaining narration by Dave Richards complemented the high standard production with co-presenter Karl Jauncey handling the technical side of the presentation.

John Tuffs

JANUARY 2003

The show was entitled "A New Year's Programme" and featured a compilation of several archive transport-related films and was presented by Mr Rob Foxon, well-known for his visits to the Society. He screened films that included London trams, the APT project, the Whitby to Pickering railway line, electrification of the West Coast Main Line, an American steam locomotive and out-takes from the filming of "The Titfield Thunderbolt". Amateur footage of several other events was also shown. This included A4 Pacific 60021 'Wild Swan' following its collision with a freight train near Grantham. The film showed the locomotive, having been detached from the train, cautiously moving away from the scene with steam leaking from all quarters.

London Transport's tram service during the final day of operation in July 1952 began the evening where footage depicted scenes at various locations in the Capital as the trams eked out their final hours of service. As the final tram made its ultimate journey into the depot several hundred people joined the crowds to witness this event whilst others boarded the tram for the last few yards to its resting place.

In contrast, a film showing the APT Project from its conception to completion gave the audience a clear insight into tilting train technology and how it was developed. It has been suggested that the APT was many years ahead of its time, but it can claim to be the forerunner to the new tilting trains, electric-powered Pendolinos and diesel-powered Voyagers which are operated by Virgin Trains, now having taken to the tracks of the national railway network.

Thankfully, the route between Pickering and Whitby has survived where others have been less fortunate. The preserved North Yorkshire Moors Railway now forms the major part between Pickering and Grosmont with the remainder under the jurisdiction of the national railway network. Mr Foxon explained that by good fortune he had obtained a film which had been shot in the early 1950s by John S Eley during the time when the line formed the through route from Rillington Junction, near Malton, to Whitby. Sequences filmed at various locations along this picturesque railway of North Eastern origin epitomised the era.

May 1 1974 marked the inauguration of electric-powered trains running between London and Glasgow via the West Coast main line route although the route to Manchester and Liverpool had been energised in the mid 1960s. To mark the Anglo-Scottish completion, a film was made recording a special electrically-hauled train with many distinguished guests on board including HM the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Minister of Transport amongst the contingent of dignitaries. The train stopped at several strategic locations en-route and at these towns and cities Her Majesty unveiled commemorative plaques. Perhaps the most humorous highlight of the day was preceding one station ceremony, where as the proceedings were ready to commence, the station 'moggy' made several attempts to steal the limelight -however in the end this inquisitive cat reluctantly accepted defeat.

A further film, which portrayed the scene around Potters Bar station area in the late 1940s prior to its remodelling when tracks through the station were doubled to four. Mr Foxon explained that an earlier accident at this location had been the main factor in this railway engineering project in providing two extra platforms at the station. This post-war accident had occurred when a London-bound express collided with a derailed local passenger train which had fouled the main line. A northbound express then collided with the wreckage but miraculously no serious injuries were sustained.

Finally a number of out takes from the filming of the famous and humorous "Titfield Thunderbolt" movie were screened. The line used for the filming ran between Camerton and Limpley Stoke, which had been disused for about three years at the time and therefore gave an atmosphere of dereliction. The numerous sequences featured express trains on the nearby ex-GW line at Limpley Stoke, unrebuilt West Country Pacifics in charge of Somerset and Dorset line services on Midford viaduct, whilst a 14XX 0-4-2 tank engine was used on the Camerton Branch train.

John Tuffs