

Friends of Darlington Railway Centre and Museum

Newsletter

January - March 2011

Free to members



The Battle for the Tees

Museum Manager's Annual Review

Six Weeks on the Benguela Railway, Angola

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Introduction

My apologies for the errors in the last issue which crept in at the printers. This is no reflection on Festival Digital Print- I was not aware of how much work they did converting the files I gave them to a format suitable for their systems and the file for the last issue was particularly large and indigestible. Steps have been taken to prevent this in future and corrections are on page 18.

After various distractions including a poorly computer left me running late anyway I fear I lost quite a chunk of this issue due to an SOT error (System Operator Thrombosis, the user's a clot) so further apologies if this issue seems somewhat thrown together. It was.

Tim Ruffle, Editor

Contacts

If you have material for the newsletter, be it an article, photo' or a short anecdote to fill the last few lines on a page, do send it- it might not get in but it will be considered. Information and announcements for members may well end up here and on the website, which I also look after, but such things should be sent to the Committee.

I much prefer to be contacted by e-mail, especially if it saves me some typing, but you can reach me by post. Note that, In a desperate attempt to be organized, the web-site has its own e-mail address. Material for both can go to either address as long as that is clear.

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*For a change neither rain, nor hail, nor sleet, nor snow prevented Museum Manager **David Tetlow** from giving his report in January as is supposed to be usual. Chairman Richard Wimbury's quiz was an entertaining epilogue. The report on the "David and Richard Show" is by Vic Branfoot.*

Members braving a fine but bitterly cold evening were rewarded with a 'double whammy' of terrific presentations. First, David Tetlow, Museum Manager, aided by a range of visual aids, provided us with his now traditional 'State of the Nation' address entitled Plans 2011. His opening observation was immediately to emphasise that it was "not all doom and gloom" in the current economic climate. It was noticeable that David preferred to use the term "budget restraints" rather than "budget cuts".

David reported that projected 2010/2011 income at the Museum was £47,780 of which £37,874 had already been received. Significantly, this latter figure was £1,779 ahead of last year's equivalent figure. Projected expenditure was £339,278 of which £191,859 had already been spent. The latter figure was £14,573 less than last year's equivalent figure. A major help towards this latter favourable figure was the greatly reduced incidence of roof problems so far during 2010/2011. Out-turn figures for 2009/2010 had been income £49,936 (£45,530 projected) and expenditure £322,219 (£357,788 projected).

David went on to discuss the maintenance and upkeep of the Museum premises. He reported that the lead aprons surrounding the windows had been replaced with synthetic materials although he noted that, in order to fulfil English Heritage requirements, lead must be reinstated at a later date. David reported that each of the three boilers had failed- and been rectified- at various times. These repairs had been essential because of the need to maintain suitable temperatures and humidity-levels in order to prevent damage to certain exhibits. David also discussed various aspects of ice & snow in McNay Street and in the Museum car parks, electrical matters, the alarms and decoration. All of these matters had been dealt with in spite of a decrease in the maintenance budget.

In respect of the reduced budget for 2010/2011, David reported that he had decided to reduce expenditure in the various areas of Museum operation rather than reduce staffing. A budget reduction of £27,000 had been imposed on the Museum in addition to earlier reductions. This would be met chiefly in the area of maintenance although care of the collection, education, exhibitions, gardens and marketing would also bear some of the cuts.

David reported that there had been 25,210 visitors to the Museum during 2009/2010 of which 21,210 had passed through the doors prior to January 2010. The equivalent latter figure for 2010/ 2011 was 23,465 and so David was hopeful that the final figure for 2009/2010 would be exceeded this year. David considered that the Lewis Carroll exhibition had been a major contributor to this year's increased figures.

Turning to marketing, David reported that an erstwhile reduction in expenditure from £12,000 to £7,000 had been achieved by the Museum no longer having

additional professional help and that marketing was now done 'in house'. Elements of marketing included general leaflets, an events guide, an orientation guide, event fliers, posters and advertisements. These paid-for marketing techniques were augmented by cost-free press releases and website facilities.

Temporary exhibitions, both now and in the future, embraced the 'large' Lewis Carroll and Tornado Story (with help from the A1 Steam Trust) exhibitions and the smaller Trenches & Trinkets, Art of Robert Stephenson, History of North Road Station and Hot Coals & Ash exhibitions. Forthcoming events included a mixture of 'old favourites' and new innovations: vintage vehicle rally, Romans at the Railway Museum, World War II Evacuees Week, Little BOO! (Halloween Fun Day), Autumn Fest and Santa at the Station.

In terms of 'the future of the Museum', David said that things were "tricky and uncertain" although he did not appear to indicate that its actual existence was under threat. He reported that Darlington Museum Service was partaking of a Tees Valley Review of all museums, the other participants being the museum services of Stockton, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Kirkleatham. David envisaged that the outcome of the Review was expected during the summer of 2011.

David then turned to the matter of collection management and he thanked Leona for her contribution to his report. It was the intention to display textiles during 2011 for the first time. Outreach work from the Ken Hoole Study Centre would continue and expand and, in respect of the Study Centre, the digitisation of photographs and documents would continue apace. David similarly thanked Sarah for her contribution to his education report. Workshops planned for 2011 included science, creative writing, World War II and technology/ engineering. During 2009/2010 there had been 3,385 participants in education projects at North Road.

Turning to the café, David reported that, with the facilities now being leased out, there had been better food, improved service and a much more pleasant ambience in the room. Furthermore, the Museum had benefited from there being a guaranteed income from the lease. David noted that the lessee of the café worked closely with him in respect of event planning.

There followed a lively and constructive discussion and question & answer session. Everybody present appreciated the time and effort which David and his colleagues had invested in the preparation of David's presentation.

Following the interval, the Chairman provided us with an abridged version of the Christmas Quiz which he had planned for the December meeting cancelled due to the atrocious weather. Members appreciated the thought and work which Richard had put into compiling a most interesting, enjoyable, educational and wide-ranging quiz. How would you have done? If you were at the meeting how much do you remember? Answers are on page 19.

Local Knowledge

1. What is the link between the Stainmore Line and the River Tay?
2. What links these ten N.E. Railways: York and Newcastle, York and North Midland, York and Scarborough, Sherburn branch, Raskelf Curve,

Micklefield branch, Market Weighton and Beverly, Longlands Loop, York and Harrogate, York and Market Weighton?

3. "This train is for all stations to Richmond. Calling at Croft Spa, Moulton, Scorton, Catterick Bridge and Richmond." How would this announcement have been different from 1901-1911 and 1941-1946?
4. What is odd about the train service from/to Teesside Airport station?

Did I Fall Asleep? If you were at meetings you should know...

1. What was the name of the LNER's luxury tourist train of the 1930's?
2. What did a "Crather" do?
3. Where could you travel on "Daddy-Long-Legs"?
4. What links Harrow, Lewisham and Quintinshill?

European Dimension

1. What do the letters T.G.V. signify?
2. Which new operator may start running trains through the Channel Tunnel?
3. Which regular suburban train service has its wheels on the roofs of its vehicles?
4. What is 35.4 miles long and takes the crown from Japan?

Trams

1. Everyone knows about Blackpool but name four (of five) other English towns or cities with trams in revenue earning service.
2. Name three (of four) museums where a tram ride is part of the experience.
3. As well as the traditional overhead current collection London had a conduit (shoe) system. Name three (of four) other English tram systems using non-traditional current collection on some or all of its mileage.
4. Edinburgh is the most recent place to develop a new tram system. What was special about its extensive system until the 1920's (after earlier experiments with clockwork!)?

The Arts

1. Where did Trevor Howard, Celia Johnson and Sergei Rachmaninov meet?
2. What did 29 years old draughtsman Harry Beck produce in 1931?
3. Name the two elderly coaches pulled by Thomas the Tank-Engine.
4. What "went over the hill and she blew blew blew blew...."?

TALK:

An Ordinary Hobby, No Ordinary Life 7 October 2010

Gerald Rivett is a businessman mainly employed, or working as a consultant, in the food and agriculture industries. He is also a life-long rail enthusiast working as a Director of the Glenfinnan Railway Museum, Managing Director of WhestRail and a Director of the West Highland Railway Company. All photo's Gerald Rivett, report by Tim Ruffle.

Mr. Rivett was born in West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire in 1949 at home- a house with the joint GC/GWR line from Marylebone passing at the end of the garden. Born about 6.30am the first sound he heard was the 6.42 to Princes Risborough, an event his Scottish mother blamed for "contaminating" him with the railway bug. His aptitude for business manifested early- in 1962 he and his brother took a paper round for five shillings a week each but with an agreement that they would benefit if they brought in new customers. Since West Wycombe was rapidly expanding at the time within a few months he was soon earning 30 shillings a week enabling him to afford a camera which was rarely out of reach. He began photographing railway subjects at once and continues to do so creating an extensive record.

West Wycombe Station had closed in 1958 but the goods yard still existed and the line remained busy. The station had been planned with central through lines with the platforms served by loops. For reasons which have never been clear the through lines were not laid. All traffic through this busy station had to snake past the platforms so, even when not held up by trains stopping in front, everything was restricted to 45mph. This was an extraordinary bottleneck on a mainline but must have been great for a photographer with hard working locomotives accelerating away from the speed restriction.

On a joint line West Wycombe always had a fair variety of traffic but, in the early to mid-sixties with steam loco's being displaced and traffic being diverted



Left. West Wycombe Station in 1960 two years after closure. Today a closing station would be stripped of memorabilia but here signs, posters, seats, trollies and other such items remain. *Right.* There's little left for collectors at same site in 2009. The platform remains somewhere under the vegetation and the track has been realigned removing the speed restriction.

from the WCML which was being electrified, the assortment of motive power Mr. Rivett observed was truly staggering. Inter-regional holiday traffic and sporting specials contributed to the diversity and, checking his notes from 1962, he had observed 72 different classes of locomotive from all four regions including WR Kings, Castles and Halls, MR Stanier Pacifics, Royal Scots, Jubilees and Black 5s and ER B1s (in miserable condition), V2s (always sparkling) and K3s. West Wycombe also witnessed some interesting practices- Neasdon coal trains, usually in the charge of filthy Austerity 8Fs, passing each other would stop at the starting signals or by the signal box and swap crews.

Standard class loco's ran regularly including 7P Britannias and 9Fs but 70000 *Britannia* herself was a welcome sighting on an F.A. Cup special as was the single visit by a Crosti-boilered 9F. A friend's reported sighting of a Peppercorn A1 was greeted with no little scepticism one morning but it was more widely observed on its return journey in the afternoon. All were duly recorded by Mr. Rivett's ever present camera.

Mr. Rivett's interest in railways has never waned which is perhaps just as well since he seems hardly capable of avoiding them. Family trips to Scotland visiting relatives took him to Fraserburgh in the 60's where novel motive power hauled endless fish trains from the port (renowned Scottish railway photographer George Robin was an uncle). He spent years consulting on food production in former Iron Curtain countries Albania, The Ukraine and particularly Poland where he played a key role establishing Dalgety's business in the 90's when steam was still in revenue earning service and a footplate ride was readily available.

Gerald Rivett now lives in Scotland in Spean Bridge- on the West Highland Line (in a house on the trackbed of the Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway). As well as the interests mentioned in the introduction to this report he is actively involved in the care of the station, which won a Highland Rail Partnership award for most improved station, and initiatives to promote rail travel and preserve and publicise the history of railways in the area.



Gerald Rivett's first photo'- an Austerity 8F entering West Wycombe.



A Blue Pullman but a six-coach Midland rather than a Western set on a charter run for Preston North End to Wembley.



At Warsaw Railway Museum in 2009 next to the Pm3-5 a streamlined Pacific- "the Polish A4".

Friends member Charles McNab's talk about the early years of railway development in the region was encyclopaedic covering the earliest railway companies in the region, therefore the world of course, and the often bitter rivalries between them. This much abridged report is by Gill Wetherell.

This meticulously researched talk about the area between Stockton and the North Sea from about 1800 to 1865 was given to a large audience of members.

Because of problems moving coal from the many and expanding mines inland to the sea for export, merchants got together several times from 1810 to the mid 1830s to put in projects to try and improve access across the area by train, ship, canal etc. In 1828 the Tees Navigation Company was formed and amongst its achievements was the building of a suspension bridge across the tees. This was considered so dangerous by the crews of early coal trains that at least one driver preferred to set his train moving slowly then jog across the bridge and hop back aboard on the other side. Such was the concern that a pier was soon built in the river to prop up the middle of the bridge.

There was considerable infighting between The Clarence Railway with its line from Port Clarence to Ferryhill and Tees Navigation and the Darlington and Stockton Railway who squabbled over land and wayleaves, as each of the many companies set up in this period was competing to grab land to expand their own particular interests. Charles gave us all full details of all the various schemes complete with maps to show the development of the infrastructure of the area in this period and many excellent photo's of buildings related to the Companies, many now demolished.

With the discovery by John Vaughan and John Marley of the main Cleveland Ironstone seam in the Eston Hills and their initiative in leasing the land and starting to quarry a whole new demand came into play. In 1851 they built a railway from Eston to Redcar using labour from East Anglia and built a fillage at Eston Colliery called California. The Derwent Iron Company ran a wagonway from Upleatham to Redcar.

The prospect for profit from ironstone quickly drew the attention of existing coal mining entrepreneurs and the Pease family took over this area buying up mining rights and eventually building railways to Saltburn, Guisborough and Loftus and took over the Derwent Iron Company leases- thus opening up iron ore mines all over this area.

The infighting continued throughout this period ending with a pitched battle at the mouth of the Tees in 1865.

FEATURE: Six Weeks on the Benguela Railway, Angola: February and March 1973.

This excerpt from Derek Reeves' professional autobiography Life on the Railways in the North-Eastern Region is devoted to his time consulting for the Benguela Railway in Angola- "an offer I couldn't refuse". Photo's Derek Reeves, a contemporary map of Angola is on pages 12/13.

At the end of 1972, I was asked whether I would consider a 6-week secondment to Transmark to form part of a team going to Angola in Africa as consultants to look at the Benguela Railway with a view to increasing the traffic moved from Zaire, now that their Eastern route had been closed.

Early in February 1973, I left on a flight from Heathrow to Lisbon. I changed planes at Lisbon onto a Portuguese flight to Luanda, the capital of Angola, overnight and arrived there early on Saturday morning, changing planes again to a much smaller plane for the flight from Luanda to Lobito. I was to be met by the Team Leader, whose BR job was Works Manager at Ashford, but he was not there at the airport so I hired a taxi to take me to the hotel. This was situated beside the beach at Lobito, with the west doors opening directly onto the sands.

Transmark was a British Railway organisation which had several top directors who were responsible for obtaining the consulting work around the world, then they set up a team of seconded people who had the required knowledge to be able to produce a report and solutions to the problem. The staff selected were paid one grade above their current grade and all food, accommodation and travel expenses were covered.

The Benguela Railway is in Angola, which at that time was a Portuguese colony situated south of the equator on the west coast of Africa and extending some 1344km eastwards into the centre of Africa. The railway started at the port of Lobito, then ran some 25km south parallel to the coast to Benguela, turned east to climb the escarpment to the Central African High Plane, and then ran gently down through forest etc. to the Zaire border. The gauge was 3'6", or 1067 mm, and the line was single all the way, but had many passing loops. The capital of the area was Nova Lisboa, and this was where the main works were situated. This place was a small-sized town, and, I suppose, the most important town on all the railway.

To me, of course, the most important part were the locomotives. There were just over 100 steam engines and ten Diesels. Most of the steam locos had been built at North British Works in Glasgow and at Beyer Peacock Works in Gorton, Greater Manchester. The North British locos were of the 4-6-0 type (early ones) and 4-8-2 type (later ones). These were used on the passenger trains and on some of the lighter freight trains in the Eastern Section beyond Nova Lisboa.

There were not many passenger trains: three or four each day from Lobito to Benguela worked by a coal-brickette burning 4-8-2, a twice-weekly overnight sleeper train each way to Nova Lisboa, and a twice-weekly overnight sleeper train each way along the whole length of the line to Teixeira de Sousa. These were worked by oil-burning 4-8-2s west of Nova Lisboa, and wood-burning 4-8-2s east of Nova Lisboa.

The heavy freights were worked by the 4-8-2+2-8-4 Garatts oil burning locos to Cubal, because the wood-burning locos gave out showers of sparks and so were only used in the wet rain forest, and the oil-burning ones on the escarpment, which was tinder dry, and consequently a fire danger.

The Diesels had just been introduced and were not reliable, and it was proving very difficult to train the local steam men how to maintain them. I only saw one Diesel train the whole time I was there.

Shortly after I arrived, I was seated in the restaurant having lunch when a gentleman came over and spoke to me in English. He was also on a secondment team from Belgium on another project altogether. He had a car and offered to show me around Lobito during the afternoon to show me the sights. I still had not seen my Team Leader, as he was not around, so I accepted his offer, and it was quite an eye-opener, as this was my first visit to Africa.

We stopped on a small bridge over a stream and there were several Angolan women washing clothes in the stream and scrubbing them with stones. My companion said that if you use the hotel laundry service, this is how the clothes will be washed and laid out in the sun to dry!

He also showed me where the Sunday market was held and other interesting places. Then he said we would call at a big house. It was the Governor's house, and full of various officials and their ladies. Most were Portuguese, and many spoke a little English. Drink was flowing, but I stuck to orange juice. Eventually, we went back to the hotel for dinner. Here I met the Team Leader, who said that tomorrow is Sunday, so we will not be working, and after breakfast on the Monday he would take me to meet the Portuguese managers of the railway.

On Sunday, I spent a very interesting day wandering around Lobito, especially the Sunday market, where very little money changed hands- it was mainly bartering, like I'll give you ten potatoes for these four apples.

On Monday, after breakfast, I was taken by the Team Leader to the offices of the Benguela Railway to meet the Portuguese Managing Director, who spoke English and outlined the purpose of the Railway and the need for more capacity to meet the traffic demands.

After this meeting, I was allocated an interpreter, whose name was Osbaldo Trocato, and he would be with me wherever I went. I was also equipped with a pass that would allow me to go anywhere on the railway without any restrictions. (I soon found that I could get on any train and ride on the footplate of the loco where often the driver would offer me his place at the regulator.)

A further discussion with the Team Leader soon revealed that I was not going to get very much help from him with regard to my part of the exercise, so I decide that the first thing to do was to visit all the maintenance sites to assess how the work was undertaken and what standard was reached. The place to start was the main works in Nova Lisboa. Most of the arrangements were done by Osbaldo after I told him what I wanted to do.

The next day we were booked on the overnight sleeper train to Nova Lisboa. This left Lobito around 16:30 and arrived at Nova Lisboa the next morning at around 08:30 to 09:30. I started off in the train, but at Benguela, I went onto the footplate with Osbaldo. The drivers were Portuguese, but the firemen were Angolans. We climbed the escarpment with the regulator wide open and the

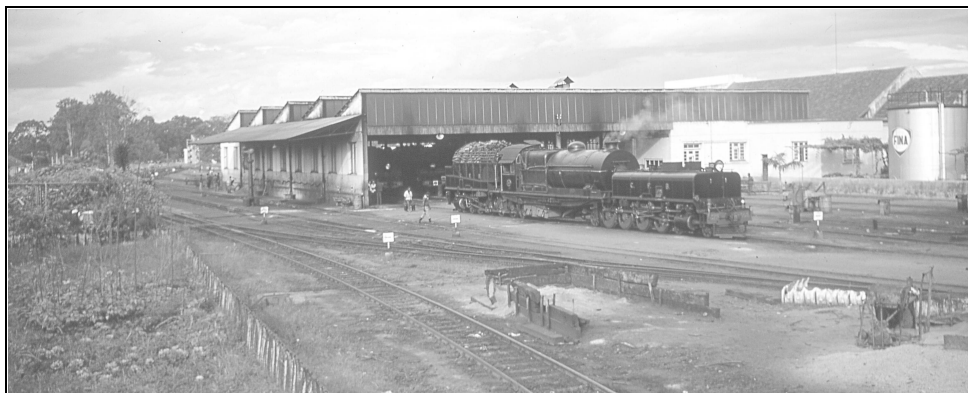
reverser at about 45%, and by this time it had become dark. At the top of the escarpment, we stopped at a station and the C&W examiners went along the train bleeding the brakes on each coach as the height unbalanced the vacuum in the brake cylinders. No wonder it took 12 hours to do 263 miles! After this, I went to bed and woke up near Nova Lisboa.

We checked into the hotel and made our way to the works, where I was welcomed by the Portuguese Manager, who spoke some English, but, of course, I had Osbaldo to help. The Works Manager said that his biggest problem was getting spares for the locos, as both N. British and Beyer-Peacock were no longer in existence. Much of his work was make-do-and-mend. We then went on a tour of the works, which appeared to be busy, with many men working on machines and locos under repair. I was struck by the absence of overhead cranes, there being only two in the Erecting Shop. These ran the whole length of the shop on a gantry, and each one had the capacity to lift a complete loco. The Garrets were lifted in three sections to be assembled, and when complete, never left the track. There were several wall cranes in the Machine Shop for putting heavy items on the machine to be worked on. All transfer of materials between the machines and shop was carried out by one or two bare-footed men!! Most of the Foremen were Portuguese, but all of the workers were Angolan.

The standard of work appeared to be good, although things like welding broken coupling-rods, which we would not tolerate, were done.

Outside in the yard, all deliveries of materials were unloaded by hand, as there was no crane outside. On another visit to the works, I watched fourteen Angolans unload a wagon containing twenty 4'8" (1.422mm) diameter locomotive wheel tyres from South Africa by hand. They positioned the wagon in a siding next to a large grassy area, put a thick plank of wood from the wagon door to the ground, and four or five of them upended a tyre, rolled it to the plank, and let go of it to roll down the plank, and then it rolled on until it stopped. All twenty got the same treatment and ended up all over the grass. They had to be righted again and rolled to the storage spot, where eight Angolans would lift each tyre on to a neat pile about six feet high. The whole activity took two days!! Oh, for a fork-lift truck!

This visit occupied three days. After the first day, I was let loose in the works



Nova Lisboa Depot with 4-8-2+2-8-4 wood-burning Garatt.

with Osbaldo to look at the work in depth and talk to many of the people.

After the works visit, I went back to Lobito and arranged to visit all the locomotive sheds along the whole length of the line. To do this, I was offered the Director's Saloon, which would be attached to any goods train to provide transport as soon as I had finished at each depot. The saloon had separate bedrooms for four people and a day room for ordinary travel. The party consisted of Osbaldo, the Operational Manager, whose name I cannot remember, me, and two attendants who cooked all the meals etc. on the journey.

There was a small fuelling point at Benguela with one fitter to look after the local train loco and the turn-round of the oil-fired Garrets, which were based at Cubal at the top of the escarpment. This I visited before we set off on the long trip.

By now the first week had gone, and we worked on Saturday morning. During the week, Osbaldo, the interpreter, had turned into a friend, we got on so well together, and I was invited to his house on the Sunday to meet his wife and three children. A very pleasant day.

Monday came and we set off attached to the rear of the sleeping car train at 16:30. Sometime during the night, we were taken off the train and left in a siding at Cubal. After breakfast, we walked to the depot, and I was introduced to the Portuguese Shed Master and taken around the depot to make a note of all the facilities that were available. Cubal was where all the oil-fired locomotives were serviced and maintained. No cranes had been provided, but there was a manually operated wheel drop so they were able to deal with hot boxes and any other repairs wheel-by-wheel. There was also a well-equipped machine shop with the capability to remetal the white metal in axle-boxes and other bearing bushes.

Recording all the details took all day, and at the end of the day we retired to the salon for dinner which had been prepared. After the meal, a pack of cards was produced, and they said: "What shall we play?". I said: "Do you know 'Mucky

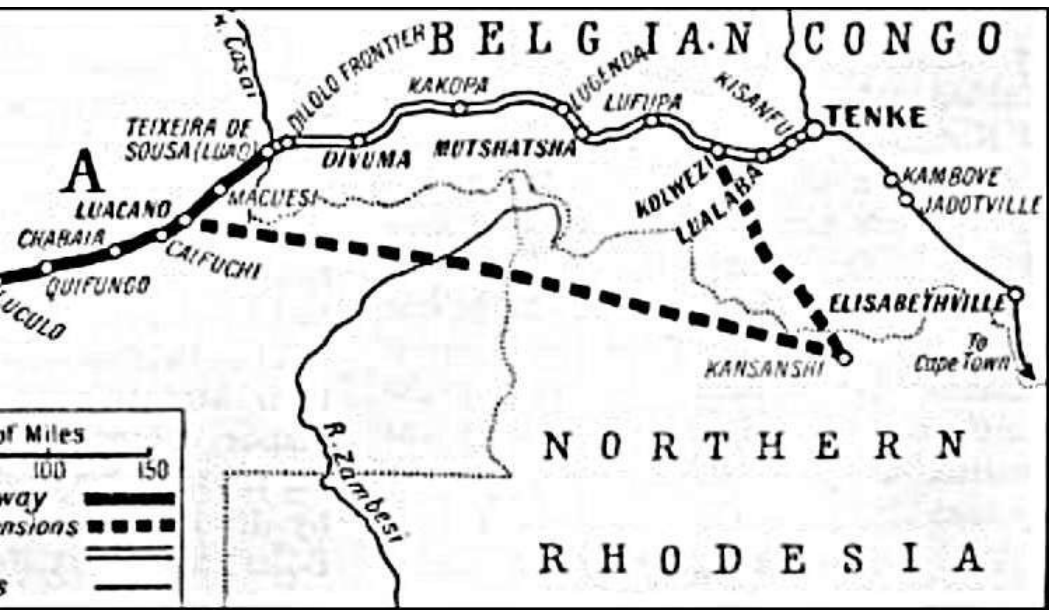


Liz'?" They didn't, so I taught them, and they took to it like ducks to water, and every night eagerly awaited to play!

During the night, the saloon was attached to a train and next morning we woke up at the Running Shed in Nova Lisboa. A visit to the depot revealed that it was exactly like the Cubal depot, i.e. no cranes and all work done manually, including a manual wheeldrop.

Next night we were moved to Silva Porto Depot. Here we had entered the wood-fired part of the railway. This proved interesting in that the railway employed a large team of foresters and their families to plant eucalyptus trees which would grow sufficiently in five years to be cut down and sawn into 85 cm lengths, which could then be thrown into the loco fireboxes. The railway owned the forest on each side of the line to a depth of 1km, and there were refuelling stations every 35 miles along the track. Amazing- but it seemed to work like clockwork! Silva Porto depot was a mirror of the two depots already visited.

The next morning, we arrived at Mumnango, which had a small depot similar to Silva Porto, which meant that I had finished my visit before lunchtime and I was asked what I would like to do in the afternoon. I said that I would like to visit the local village, but was told this was not possible as we had reached bandit country. They then said that we could visit the Police Depot, so I said OK. After phoning, the Police sent a car for us which took us to the depot. After a good lunch, I was shown the stables with huge horses, and they pointed out one that had been wounded but had fully recovered. They then asked if I would like a ride on a horse. Perhaps the lunch had been too good, because I said yes. They brought out a huge horse which I had great difficulty in mounting, and then I just sat there waiting for something to happen. I said to the horse, "Come on- start", but nothing happened. I moved in the saddle and accidentally dug my heels in the horse's side, and it took off suddenly. There I was on a galloping horse trying to find the





brake handle and seeing the headline 'British Engineer Dragged to Death in Angola!' I pulled on the reins and the horse skidded to a halt. I then realised that it had been trained to act on touch, so I just tickled its side with my heels and it started to walk a bit and then to trot. After that, I quite enjoyed my ride around the Parade Ground.

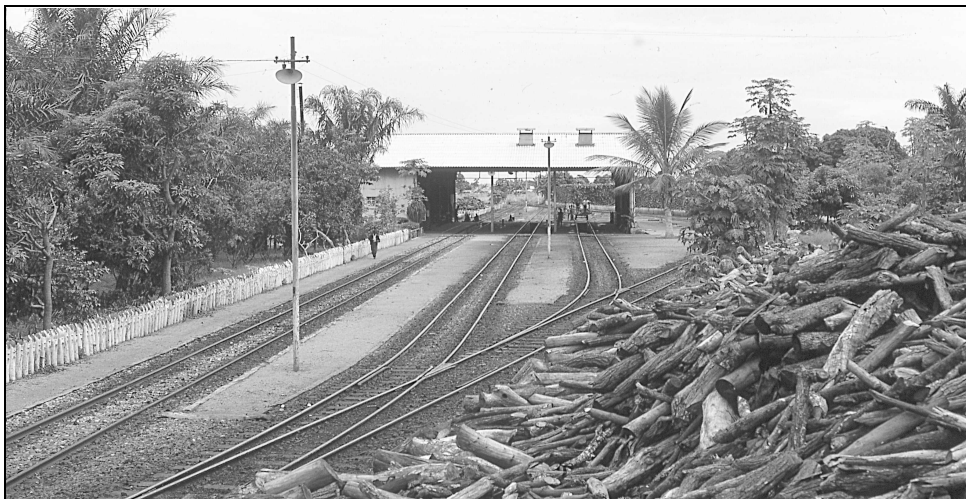
Mumnango was also interesting in that a loco had come in with a hot box overnight, and when I got back to the depot, the wheel had

been dropped, the box remetalled and turned, refitted, and the wheel refitted to the loco, and it was ready to go back into traffic.

Now that we had reached the bandit area, no trains ran at night, and those that ran during the day were preceded by a motorised trolley 300m in front of the train manned by four soldiers to look out for terrorists and bombs by the rails. Also, at the rear of each train, the last vehicle was a coach with eight soldiers in it.

Moving on, Vila Luso was the next overnight stop. This was a large depot, again mirroring the earlier big depots. Here again, I was finished by lunchtime, and this time it was the Police who took me on a tour of the town and district.

The next overnight stop was Luacano, which was another smaller depot, and so we moved on to the end of the line, which was Teixeira de Sousa. We had two nights here because I was going to accompany the loco going down to the exchange sidings just inside Zaire to pick up the next loaded train for Lobito. This was one of the wood-burning Garrets with a driver and three firemen, one in the



Teixeira de Sousa, fuel storage in the foreground.

cab, and the other two passing the wood from the tender.

The gradient up from the sidings was very steep and I am sad to say that although I was driving, we had to stop half-way up to blow up as we were short of steam! I understand that it was quite common to have to do that.

The Benguela Railway had a private aeroplane, and this was provided to fly me back after the second night at Teixeira de Sousa. Quite a pleasant experience, especially because I was sitting in the co-pilot's seat.

Another rather remarkable sight I came across during the trip was a site about the size of a football field covered with large rocks. A family was sitting at each rock, with the man hammering away with a chisel at the rocks and breaking off lumps about an inch thick. I enquired what they were doing, and was told that this was the 'crushing machine' that provided the ballast for the track.

Further visits to the main works at Nova Lisboa produced other remarkable uses of human power. One day, I heard a regular shouting from the other side of a loco' under repair, and when I went to look, there were eight Angolans in bare feet with a length of rail using it as a hammer to knock in fitted bolts of a horn check.

When it came to writing my report, some very restricting instructions were laid down. For example, the foresters must not be made redundant as the government did not want them to become unemployed, otherwise they would have turned to banditry. This meant that if we suggested Diesel locos, we would have to find a use for eucalyptus wood, which is not used in paper-making. This restriction applied to all employees who would be displaced if processes were modernised.

The final suggestion was to use natural wastage and stop recruiting, realising that this would mean it would take some twenty years or more to modernise the railway.

My return journey was similar to the outward one, i.e. a small plane to Luanda, a big plane from Luanda to Lisbon, and another plane to Heathrow. I decided to stay two nights in Luanda so I could have a look at the city and a separate railway from there inland to the East, so I booked into a hotel, leaving all my luggage at the airport. Luanda was an interesting place, and I was able to visit the railway station etc. The town was situated around a large bay, about a good mile around from the hotel, and at 8 o'clock at night, under perfectly clear skies, I suddenly felt drenched with water. There was no rain, but the air had cooled from the heat of the day, and the water just condensed on everything and everybody. This, of course, gave me a problem, because I had no change of clothes, as they were in the suitcase at the airport. The clothes I had on were decidedly damp the next morning! I eventually arrived back home on a Thursday and returned to the office in Newcastle on the Friday morning.

Steam ceased between Lobito and Huambo in 1974 with the purchase of 22 General Electric Diesels but the Benguela Railway was rendered unuseable during Angola's 27 year civil war by lack of maintenance and sabotage. It is largely restored thanks to a concerted rebuilding effort backed by controversial Chinese investment. Articles about the history and current state of the railway can be found on the BBC's website. Links are in the Friends site. Editor.

Talk: NYMR Bridge 30

On Wednesday February 9 Teesside University and The Institute of Mechanical Engineers Teesside Area will host a talk by Nigel Trotter, Civil Engineer for the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, about the Railway's Bridge 30.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway Bridge 30 spans the Murk Esk at Darnholme between Goathland and Grosmont. The original structure was 145 years old and had reached its end of its working life. Trotter will describe the old Bridge 30, its unusual construction, the problems with it and the options faced for either its repair or reconstruction.

The talk will be light hearted and aims to entertain describing the events leading up to, during and after the reconstruction. The talk is free of charge, open to non-members and registration is not required. Refreshments will be available. Details can be found at nearyou.imeche.org/events/event.htm?eID=4942 (no www) including a map or you can contact Scott Taylor for further information on 01642 212798 or at scott.taylor@sembcorp.com.

Meet at 6:00pm (for 6:30 start) at lecture room HS2.12 in Teesside University's Centuria South building (off Wilton Street- number 56 on the map) with car parking opposite.

Calling all Engineers!

Sarah Gouldsbrough, Learning and Access Officer and Volunteer Co-ordinator for the Museum, writes: If you are an engineer or are good at explaining how things work, we at the museum would appreciate your help. We are looking to increase the number of volunteers in the museum who are willing and able to talk to our visitors and/or school groups about our engines and how they work, and of course other items in the collection. This is something that Brian Howe did for us and we would appreciate people to take up the baton!

We are putting the call out now for two reasons, firstly, some of you have expressed an interest in being more involved, and secondly, because we have recently acquired some funding to help us increase our volunteer numbers, and also for training, props and costumes. (More on this coming soon!)

If you are interested in being involved, please call 01325 734128 or e-mail sarah.gouldsbrough@darlington.gov.uk and let us know what you can offer, what days you are available, whether you are happy to talk to anybody, or would prefer just to talk to adults and also whether you would be willing to wear appropriate costume (when available). This role would require you to be CRB checked if you are not already checked by Darlington Borough Council.

Please note that Sarah is on medical leave at the time of writing and is not expected to return until late in February. Editor.

Change to the Friends' Schedule

The Friends Committee has agreed to start holding Winter meetings (October to March inclusive) during afternoons starting next year. As mentioned elsewhere in

this issue the Museum is facing a reduced budget and this measure will save much of the expense it incurs in opening late for meetings such as lighting, heating and particularly paying overtime.

This not a decision that has been taken lightly. There will be some members who attend evening meetings that won't be able to come in an afternoon although it should also be noted that there will be members who cannot come in evenings but could make afternoon meetings. Certainly attendance at the afternoon meeting usually held in mid-September does not appear to suffer but the effects of this decision will be watched closely.

Please note that this change of schedule does not come into force until 2012- the programme of talks already scheduled will not be affected

Clayport Library Railway Month

Clayport Library is hosting a series of talks, displays and a film programme in its Railway Month. All events are free but note that places at the talks are limited and must be booked in advance. Call 0191 3864003.

Fathers of Steam - the battle of the giants: Saturday, 5 February, 10.30am. Tony Attle from Locomotion.

The Rise and Fall of Bishop Auckland as a railway town: Saturday, 19 February, 2pm. Andrew Everett.

Lines on Lines: Tuesday, 22 February, 3.00pm to 4.00pm. David Butler looks at railway poetry with Clayport Reading Group.

Creation, recreation and re-creation: two journeys in North East railway history: Saturday, 26 February, 2pm. David Heron.

Film historian Dr. David Williams presents a series of silent films exploring the way that cinema employed the dramatic possibilities of railways since the first films of 1896. Comedies, Melodramas, Documentaries and Westerns have all found that railway themes were ideal for their genres. The engines themselves were given star status and the ever present possibility of runaway coaches, spectacular crashes, and roof-top fist fights have all provided the thrills and spills. All showings at 7:30 on Tuesdays.

Feb 8 **The General (US 1926)** Buster Keaton's epic comedy with live music by George Hetherington.

Feb 15 **The Wrecker (GB 1928)** featuring a spectacular rail crash.

Feb 22 **The Flying Scotsman (GB 1929)** thriller featuring Ray Milland.

March 1 **The Great K and A Train Robbery (US 1926)** Tom Mix Western with live music by George Hetherington.

The Library will also be exhibiting photo's of Shildon from Durham County Record Office throughout February, Treasures from the Beamish Resource Centre on Saturday, 19 February, 11.00am to 3.00pm and hosting drop-in session- Activities and objects supplied by Head of Steam: Darlington Railway Museum- Tuesday, 22 February, 10.00am to 4.00pm.

The Friends' Library

Don Whitfield, the Friends Archivist would like to remind members about the Friends' library which seems to have been largely forgotten during the Museum's refurbishment. The collection includes books naturally but also videos and DVDs

and other articles which can be borrowed from the library for a nominal fee.

If you have an item of railway interest you no longer need please consider donating it to the library. Don would be happy to evaluate it for the collection. Duplicate items would not be buried and forgotten- you may have noticed some of the Friends collection is for sale in the Museum with payments collected in an honesty box. The income from this makes a small but welcome contribution to the Friends' treasury and little used items find a home where they are newly appreciated.

Corrections

Gremlins got to the last Newsletter at the printers introducing many errors all through the issue. This is not a criticism of Festival Digital Print- I had not appreciated the amount of work they did converting the files I gave them into a format suitable for their systems. The last issue made a particularly large file and it just seems to have been a bit much for the conversion process to handle. After consultation I hope to provide Festival with files that they can print from directly in future and a limited reprint of the last issue went well. If you have one of those ten copies guard it closely for it may be valuable one day. OK- probably not but you might need it to light a fire.

Most of the errors manifested as slightly odd word spacing but some text did get pushed off the page completely. Correction slips were printed but could easily be overlooked or lost so the corrections are repeated here.

The last paragraph on page five should read: The book revealed that the 0-10-0 loco's were the Russian class E (what looks like an initial "3" in the loco' numbers is actually a Cyrillic "E"). In 1920 the USSR was desperately short of motive power so 700 such loco's were ordered from Germany and 500 from Sweden. The order to Germany was shared by 19 locomotive building works which indicates the German industrial strength in 1920.

Although only the last few words are missing from the bottom paragraph on page 18 it suffered particularly badly from odd spacing making it awkward to read. The paragraph in full should read: Royal Engineers were the first inspectors of accidents and the actual inspections were under the auspices of the Board of Trade. Since 1991, the Inspectorate has been administered by the Health & Safety Executive. Ray spoke about early operating practices and followed their history through the decades until the present day. He explained such as Time Intervals and Absolute Block working and provided descriptions of numerous incidents, for example the Clayton Tunnel disaster of 1861 on the London to Brighton line. Ray discussed the change from 'local time' to 'standard railway time' when all railwaymen's watches were set to London time. He went on to describe how "Lock, Block and Brake" became the Inspectors' war-cry. Automatic brakes came about as a result of the 1889 Regulation of Railways Act and the consequent improvement in rail safety may be illustrated by the facts that, in 1902 and 1904, 'only' six people lost their lives on the railways and in 1901 and 1908 nobody was killed. However, stressed Ray, the railways then 'discovered' SPEED. Thus began the so-called Race to the North and the dangers that went with it.

Quiz Answers

Local Knowledge

1. Thomas Bouch, later Sir Thomas, was engineer for the Stainmore line and designer of the infamous Tay Bridge.
2. York Station. York was the “zero point” for mileposts on all of those lines. A commemorative zero milepost was erected on platform 5 in 2004.
3. In those dates there was a station at Eryholme after Croft Spa.
4. It has a Parliamentary service, a “parly” or “ghost train”- a legal minimum service once a week each way to a station that is, to all other intents, abandoned. (Since December two trains have started running each way on Sundays from Darlington to the Metro-Centre stopping at Teesside Airport.)

Did I Fall Asleep?

1. The Northern Belle
2. A brass foundry worker.
3. Between Brighton and Rottingdean on Volk's Seashore Electric Railway.
4. The three British railway accidents involving the greatest loss of life.

European Dimension

1. Train à Grande Vitesse (High Speed Train).
2. Deutsche Bahn (German Railways). There was a trial run of an ICE set last year.
3. Wuppertal, Germany. The Eugen Langen Monorail Suspension Railway.
4. The new Gotthard Tunnel is 1.9 miles longer than the Seiken Tunnel.

Trams

1. Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Birmingham and Croydon.
2. The National Tram Museum (Crich), Beamish, the Black Country Museum, East Anglia Transport Museum.
3. Blackpool used a conduit system for a while (“Smith Patent Underground System”), Bournemouth (conduit- type undocumented), Wolverhampton (Loraine Stud), Hastings (Dolter Stud). Stud systems would electrocute horses on occasion which was regarded as a drawback.
4. Edinburgh's tram system was cable hauled in the early 20th Century.

The Arts

1. The station scenes in *Brief Encounter* were filmed in Carnforth- called Milford in the film.
2. The schematic map of the London Underground.
3. Annie and Clarabel.
4. The Runaway Train- in the song written by Robert Massey.

Friends Meetings

Meetings are at the Museum in the Conference Room usually on the first Thursday of the month at 7:15pm although there are exceptions- there is no meeting in August and a second afternoon meeting in mid-September for instance. All the dates noted below are Thursdays. Non-members are always welcome to meetings but we do ask for a donation.

This list is offered in good faith but misprints can occur and, as proven recently, plans can change. To check visit the Events page of the Friends web-site (www.friendsofdrcm.org) which is kept as up-to-date as possible.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 3 March | The South Tynedale Railway
Dr. Tom Bell |
| 7 April | A.G.M. and A Steam Miscellany
Ray Goad |
| 5 May | The Future Direction of the National Railway Museum
Steve Davies |
| 2 June | Nesham and Welsh of Portrack Lane Iron Works
Alan Betteney |
| 7 July | Teesdale Tracks and Derailing Dukes
Chris Lloyd |
| 1 September | The Northumberland Railway: Brunel in Stephenson's Back Yard , Michael Taylor |
| 22 September (at 2:15) | The Art of Robert Stephenson: Images of the Man, Life and Works , Michael Taylor |
| 6 October | John (Paddy) Waddell, Railway Contractor
Charles. McNab |
| 3 November | The Construction of Durham Viaduct
David Butler |
| 1 December (at 2:30) | Christmas Get-Together |

Museum Programme

Exhibitions

Lewis Carroll: Living in Wonderland

Currently to Thursday 31st March. Celebrating the life and work of Lewis Carroll who grew up in Croft-on-Tees.

Trenches and Trinkets: Darlington Crested China Mementos of World War One
Saturday 9th April to Friday 1st July. Darlington Crested China from the First World War alongside events that shook the world.

The History of North Road Station

Monday 5th September to Saturday 31st December. A fascinating history of North Road Station now the Museum from its opening in 1842.

The *Tornado* Story

3rd October to 31st March 2012. An account of the building of the Peppercorn class A1 60163 Tornado. With artefacts on loan from The A1 Steam Trust.

Events and Activities

See the Museum's own programme or website for details including costs (activities are free but the Museum's usual entrance fee may apply).

Easter Activities

Good Friday to Easter Monday (April 22nd to 25th). Craft activities and Easter egg hunt in the Northern Rail Activity Room.

Kite Making

Friday 29th April from 12.30pm to 3pm, drop-in session with the Durham Wildlife Trust. Make your own kite.

Kidzone - Spring and Summer Arts and Crafts

April to September, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during school holidays only, Northern Rail Activity Room. Various arts and crafts to entertain the kids throughout the school holidays.

Vintage Vehicle Rally

Sunday 22nd May 11am to 3pm, Museum Events Field. Marvel at the variety of rare vintage vehicles from across the North East region, including cars, buses, military vehicles, vans and motorcycles. Entertainment includes mini-train ride, children's entertainer and arts and craft activities within the museum. Free outdoor event, half price admission into the museum.

Romans at the Railway Museum

Sunday 10th July 10am to 4pm, Museum, Garden and Piercebridge Roman Fort. Witness Roman Britain being brought back to life with reenactors at the Head of Steam Museum. An exhibition about Piercebridge Roman Fort explains our Roman connections. A vintage bus will also take visitors to the site where they will receive a guided tour (places limited).

Kidzone- Animal Tracks

Tuesday 2nd August, drop-in session with Durham Wildlife Trust from 12pm to 3pm. Put on your detective hat and discover which animals leave behind which tracks. Have a go and make a mould of an animal track!

Kidzone Natural Dyes and Fragrances

Tuesday 30th August, drop-in session with the Durham Wildlife Trust from 12pm to 3pm. Find out what people used to create colours and sweet smelling fragrances. Have a go making your own colour dye or fragrance using natural materials.

Kidzone - Autumn and Winter Arts and Crafts

October to March 2012, Thursdays and Fridays during school holidays only, Northern Rail Activity Room. Various arts and crafts to entertain the kids throughout the school holidays.

The Autumn Festival

Sunday 16th October 11am to 3pm, Museum Garden. Outdoor fun in the museum gardens, including making habitat boxes, bird feeding and watching and bulb planting. Durham Wildlife Trust and Natural England will also be on site to provide activities.

Bird Boxes

Thursday 27th October, drop-in session with the Durham Wildlife Trust from 12pm to 3pm. Build a bird box to put up in your garden (1 box per family, £5 per box). Bring an empty plastic bottle along and transform it into a hanging bird feeder. Discover what birds enjoy eating for snacks in the summer and winter.

Little BOO!!! Hallow-e'en Fun Day

Sunday 30th October 11am to 4pm. Come dressed up in your favourite Hallow-e'en costume! Spooky fun for all the family in our specially decorated museum. Entertainment includes magician, arts and crafts, mini-train ride and face painting.

Santa at the Station

Saturday 10th to Sunday 11th and Saturday 17th to Sunday 18th December 10am to 4pm. Meet Santa in our magical grotto and receive a Christmas present. Entertainment includes mini train ride, arts and crafts activities and face painting. Entrance fee applies and booking is essential.

Heritage Open Days

Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th September 10.30am to 4pm. Free entry to all comers with a guided tour by the Friends of Darlington Railway Centre and Museum. Meet the Curator for a behind the scenes tour. Discover more about our archives and watch conservation in action.

Activities for schools

Activities are free with Museum admission and usually take place in the Northern Rail Activity Room. For any further information and booking, which is essential, please contact the Museum's Access and Learning Officer Sarah Gouldsbrough: 'phone 01325 734128 or e-mail sarah.gouldsbrough@darlington.gov.uk.

Alice's Adventures in Darlington

Currently to 31st March. Complimenting the *Carroll: Living in Wonderland* Exhibition.

Weird Science

21st to 25th March. Creative science experiments for prebooked schools.

Creative Writing Workshops

May and June T.B.A. Practical based creative writing workshops.

World War Two Evacuees Week

4th to 8th July. Find out what it was like to be evacuated as a child during the Second World War.

Design and Technology Week

17th to 21st October. Fun hands-on design and technology workshops.

Forensic Science Workshop

November T.B.A. Become a detective and solve the crime.

THE FRIENDS: Introducing the Friends and Darlington Railway Museum

I hope you have enjoyed this newsletter and, if you are not a member of The Friends of Darlington Railway Centre and Museum, that it has piqued your interest. Presumably your having read this far is a good sign.

Darlington Railway Museum is housed in the old North Road station building, dating from 1842, on the route of the world famous Stockton and Darlington Railway. It tells the story of Darlington and its central role in railway history. George Stephenson's Locomotion N°1 takes pride of place at the head of a line of Darlington built locomotives surrounded by other exhibits. Much of the permanent exhibition will entertain anyone with a general interest in Darlington and its history but visitors unfortunate enough not to have a consuming interest in railways, perhaps accompanying those who do, will discover a varied programme of exhibitions on non-railway subjects and can enjoy refreshments in the café.

The Museum's facilities also include the Northern Rail Activity Room, a children's play room for younger visitors, a conference facility and the Ken Hoole Study Centre with its extensive archive.

The Friends is a non-profit organization existing to help promote and support Darlington Railway Centre and Museum, "Head of Steam", as well as presenting regular talks for members. Whether your interest is focused on the history or future of railways, their engineering or operation, the Friends' programme has something for you. Benefits also include a newsletter (oh- you knew that) and free entry to the Museum. Although there is no obligation members can also help at the Museum- for example leading guided tours, contributing I.T. or linguistic skills or even appearing in costume at special events adding to the atmosphere.

Space is limited here but you can find out more about both the Friends and the Museum at our web-site. It includes links to the Museum's site amongst many others, directions to the Museum, contacts, membership details and an application form should you wish to join. Remember- if you don't have Internet access your library does.

www.friendsofdrcom.org


www.head-of-steam.co.uk

Friends of D.R.C.M.

Darlington Railway Centre and Museum

[Home](#) | [Membership](#) | [Events](#) | [Links](#) | [FAQs etc.](#)

Introduction




Join us
Contact us

Welcome to the website for The Friends of Darlington Railway Centre and Museum.

Members will find an up-to-date programme of forthcoming talks and events but, if you are not a member, we hope you enjoy this site anyway. You'll find it a useful source of links to other sites that share our interests and, of course, an introduction to the Friends, the Museum and the Study Centre. You might even consider joining us.

The Friends is a non-profit organization which exists to help promote and support Darlington Railway Centre and Museum (currently marketed as "Head of Steam"). Whether your interest is focused on the history or future of railways, their engineering or operation, the Friends' programme of regular talks has something for everyone.

Further benefits, which include free entry to the museum, are detailed on the Membership page. There are also opportunities to volunteer to help at the Museum.



Darlington Railway Museum



LNER B1 number 61264 on a Jacobite working at Loch Eilt on its way to Mallaig in 2004.
Photo: Gerald Rivett (see page 6).



Locomotives on Angola's Benguela Railway photographed by Derek Reeves in 1973 (see page 9). *Above.* Super-power at Catengue- a train double headed by Garratts takes on water. *Below.* A gleaming 4-6-0 at Nova Lisboa Works.

