

DECEMBER 2001

John Spencer-Gilks visited Burton Railway Society to present a show entitled 'Freight Today and Yesterday' - a pictorial record of freight train operation spanning a period in excess of 40 years. Eloquently narrated throughout, Mr Spencer-Gilks screened transparencies that depicted numerous freight trains over a wide area of southern England, the Thames Valley, and the south Midlands area and throughout Wales.

The show started with freight train workings in the London area, where vantage points had been carefully selected to allow the trains to be photographed: these suitably highlighted many changes that have taken place over the past four decades. An example of how quickly changes take place was visible in a comparison of trains crossing over the River Thames. From the same location, a recent picture of a diesel-hauled freight was contrasted with another taken several years ago; this highlighted the change in the landscape. Numerous images pictured freight trains, hauled by a variety of motive power types, in operation at various locations. In some cases, it was easy to see the changing scene and the effect this has on local communities.

Interestingly, the images portrayed the importance of the railway and how it plays a major part in the transportation of freight. Even taking into account the loss of some traffic to other modes of transport, there are still today commodities that would otherwise bear an adverse environmental impact if they were not transported by rail.

The presenter had carefully selected a representative mixture of transparencies to encompass various modes of motive power - steam, diesel and electric traction were all included. Furthermore, as the elimination of steam traction in August 1968 enforced diesel or electric replacement, many classes of the latter have also become extinct, therefore it was pleasing to see photographic material showing many of these heritage locomotives at work in revenue-earning service.

Images portrayed how freight traffic during the past half century has undergone a mammoth transition. It was seen how oil, coal, aggregates and other products of large quantity has been transferred to being transported in 'block' trains taking the commodity direct to the distribution depots and power stations, instead of the older method of making up trains of individual wagons that may convey different products. However, it was noted how some of the latter do still appear on some routes from time to time. On this front, good examples to highlight this modern concept are the merry-go-round coal trains to power stations and the lengthy oil trains that run between oil refineries and distribution depots.

Generally, it was a well-presented show that created the climate for an excellent evening of railway-orientated entertainment. May be recalling from his earlier visit that Burton members have a preference for steam motive power, Mr Spencer-Gilks carefully interspersed diesel and steam images in an attempt to obtain a mixed balance. It is hoped those present will have enjoyed the pictorial content of the show as well as the informative anecdotes from this experienced presenter. In the likelihood that Mr Spencer-Gilks makes a further visit, this theme can be continued, as there is still much to benefit from his photographic collection.

NOVEMBER 2001

Members and guests welcomed *Steam World* editor, Mr Barry McLoughlin, from Blackpool, to the November meeting. The title of his illustrated talk was 'Holidays by Rail to Blackpool and the Fylde.' His show, aptly narrated throughout, gave an insight into the railway infrastructure and transport operations in that part of the country during a period spanning over 40 years.

After displaying a few slides, the presenter promptly earned the audience's respect when he screened a transparency showing a posse of 'official-looking' characters and described them as the 'BDG.' This comment certainly broke ice with the audience who were so amused that it set the scene for a thoroughly entertaining evening. The presenter went on to explain his interpretation of the 'BDG' - it was an abbreviation for the 'big daft group.' This nondescript group in the picture was seen posing for the camera alongside a gateway with a row of terraced houses forming the backdrop.

Many transparencies screened showed scenes that no longer form part of the northwest Lancashire railway networks. Included were: structures such as the former Central Station, which had closed in November 1964, rationalisation of the area around the North station, the singling of the coastal route that runs via Lytham St Annes and other major infrastructure projects. Major developments together with the elimination of steam traction and the loss of some longer distance services to Blackpool have substantially affected the railways in the area under review. However, it was interesting to reflect on the rail services that operate in and around this north western 'capital' and see the changes that have been made, including those during the transition from steam to diesel traction.

Steam-hauled passenger trains emanating from numerous locations in the UK had been captured on celluloid as they transported visiting crowds to this prominent Lancashire resort. It is interesting to note that since the arrival of the railways, Blackpool has been a regular destination for numerous specials, especially during the illuminations period of the year, when the demand is at its highest in order to cater for the additional day-trippers. In a bygone age Burton-on-Trent had strong connections with the town too; it was an established destination for special trains carrying numerous Bass employees for their annual day out.

The ever-changing railway scene was intensely highlighted in Mr McLoughlin's show. Photographs of mass rationalisation and dereliction portrayed how, over the years, a thriving railway operation became a shadow of its former self. The steam-hauled express passenger trains that once plied their way across to Blackpool and the Fylde Coast can no longer be seen; diesel-powered multiple units now operate the services instead.

The show also included a prominent service that must not be forgotten and which is very much part of the scene today; that is the admirable tram service between Fleetwood and Starr Gate, a route that takes the promenade at Blackpool for much of the way. Although not a standard gauge railway line it does however form part of the rail network on the Fylde Coast and makes a contribution to the area's transport system.

Illustrations of main line services operating on the main West Coast line near Preston and Lancaster were also shown. A photograph worthy of special note showed the final working of locomotive No 46203 'Princess Margaret Rose' before it was withdrawn from BR service. This locomotive survived the fate of the cutter's torch and was preserved. Subsequently it has been

returned to running order after undertaking years of restoration. It is now in pristine condition and runs occasionally on the main line.

OCTOBER 2001

The meeting welcomed railway author and photographer John Stretton, formerly of Leicestershire, now from Faringdon in Oxfordshire. The title of his illustrated talk was 'From Amateur Spotter to Professional Photter,' tracing his progression from a locomotive number taker to being a professional photographer for the current railway industry. Operating the slide projector was his cousin, David Richards, who presents to popular 'Preserved Steam On Video' evening for the Society each February.

The show started with illustrations of John's 1964 shed bashing trip to Scotland with David and two other friends in a 1950's Ford Popular car. The first slide showed the quartet posed in front of a Standard Class 4 tank locomotive at Corkerhill Shed, Glasgow. Subsequent views were of the general decline of steam power throughout the United Kingdom including many sad scenes of rusting locomotives at Woodham's scrap yard at Barry. However, John explained that the majority of the locomotives seen awaiting the torch were in fact later saved for preservation and in due course have been moved to various sites throughout the country. Maybe the most famous of these being the one termed 'Mission Impossible' that showed No. 71000 'Duke of Gloucester' in the early days of its restoration at the Great Central Railway at Loughborough.

When 5th August 1968 dawned, the first 'steamless' day on British Rail's network, John was presented with the question: What do I photograph now? However, his general love of railways took him through the transition period to modern motive power and he explained that diesel and electric motive power provided a greater challenge to artistic photography than the steam locomotive, and certainly one that he was willing to take up.

The first slide featuring the new era was that of diesel hydraulics D804 and D1054 in a woebegone state at Penzance depot in 1968. The presenter mentioned that one expected steam locomotives to be seen in an unkempt condition, but these two machines seemed little better considering their relative newness.

The second half of the evening included pictures taken by John of the contemporary railway scene in his privileged position as a professional - many of the scenes being taken at night showing track re-laying and bridge replacement.

The photographer by no means overlooked the narrow gauge, and one picture showed his daughter posed next to a train on the Ffestiniog Railway on the occasion of her 21st Birthday. The steam locomotive heading the train appropriately sported a headboard in recognition of her voluntary services on the line. Railway interest obviously runs in the blood!

The enjoyable evening was concluded by random pictures taken by John over his near half-century of railway interest, including one evocative shot taken on the Portuguese narrow gauge - all tastes were catered for!

SEPTEMBER 2001

Report not available

AUGUST 2001

The A1 Project - the construction of a Peppercorn Class A1 Pacific steam locomotive for eventual use on the national railway network and preserved railways - was the theme of the talk and slide show. The presenter was Mr Bob Alderman, an engineer, who is now based in Somerset.

He opened by saying how he became involved in the project several years ago and explained that as part of separate projects, the railway preservation movement had over the past 30 years manufactured all of the components required to construct a new main line steam locomotive. These include frames, wheels, cylinders, boiler, cab, smoke box and tenders. Furthermore, a number of narrow gauge and early steam locomotives had also been built, but he stressed that there had not been any attempt since 1960 to construct a complete main line steam locomotive in the United Kingdom. Consequently, in 1990, a small band of individuals considered the time had come to right history and the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust was formed with the mission of building a completely new Peppercorn A1 Pacific. The new locomotive would be sequentially numbered to follow on from the original batch of 49 locomotives that had been built by British Railways in the late 1940s; therefore it would take the number of 60163 and be named 'Tornado'.

Mr Alderman said that the new locomotive would not be a replica of the original A1 Class due to changes in material specifications, cost and regulations that prevented this but nevertheless the twin criteria of authenticity and quality applied to all decisions on specification and construction. One area identified for major re-design is the boiler, which will be an all-welded structure with a steel firebox. The quality standard of BS5750 is being used during the construction process to ensure that the requirements of the modern railway are met and to comply with both insurance company and safety regulations. The total cost of construction has been put at £1.6 million but it is expected that the final sum may be substantially less due to the generosity of some companies contracted to manufacture components. It was pointed out that the Trust being a registered charity meant that parts could only be manufactured when sufficient funds had been raised to meet the cost of production.

The project has been helped so far by various organisations and engineering companies. The National Railway Museum has been at the forefront with loaning of some 1,100 original drawings and it has also allowed the Trust the privilege of copying these drawings. Using computer-aided design software, scanning the images and thus allowing appropriate modifications to be made did this. Some drawings were beyond recognition thereby needing enhancement, re-tracing and in some instances, new drawings having to be made. Meanwhile, assistance has also been given by numerous suppliers who have contributed by generously constructing components at much discounted prices.

Mr Alderman said that many achievements had been accomplished since 1990 and it was hoped the new locomotive would be completed within the next few years. However, due to many factors, this forecast may change. It remains to be seen whether this target will be met. Present achievements are: the main frames have been constructed; all three cylinder patterns and cylinders cast; all wheel patterns made; six driving wheels cast; a permanent home where final construction will take place in Darlington has been converted into the Darlington Steam

Locomotive Works; and in excess of 50 castings and fabrications manufactured. It is interesting to note that Burton engineering company, William Cook plc, probably better known as the former Lloyds Foundry, has also been involved in the project; the Wellington Road firm making the six driving wheels as well as a number of other parts for the locomotive. The two nameplates have been cast too, courtesy of the Royal Air Force, Cottesmore.

The talk was complemented by slides showing various stages relating to the loco's construction with the illustrations showing many of the original drawings plus photographs of the original Peppercorn-designed, LNER-ordered, British Railways-built Class A1s during their short but prominent working lives prior to the screening of a computer-generated impression of No. 60163 as she will look on completion.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session that allowed members and guests to participate in the informative and interesting show. However, there may well have been some present who considered the talk to have been too technical for their liking, but were still nevertheless interested in the project. The audience made a donation to the A1 Project.

JULY 2001

Report not available

JUNE 2001

Retired detective inspector, Mr. Clifford Wrate, gave a talk on the subject of 'Murders on the Line'. On a previous visit Mr Wrate had entertained the audience with an interesting account of the 1963 Great Train Robbery. However, this time his talk centred around two murders which had a relevance to the railway system.

He explained that in one case, the murderer was apprehended following investigations into a left luggage ticket that had been handed over to police - the ticket having been found in the defendant's pocket by his wife. He said that the local police requested the assistance from the transport police to investigate the matter. Later, at Waterloo Station, they made a remarkable discovery - items which had allegedly been used in the process of disposing of the victim. This led to the arrest of the person responsible who was subsequently tried, convicted and hanged for the crime he had committed.

As a retired detective inspector, Mr. Wrate, highlighted a number of incidents where he had been personally involved. On one occasion, whilst he was a young police constable on the beat in a London suburb, he stumbled across the body of woman lying on the floor of a telephone kiosk. Recalling this incident, he went on to give the audience an entertaining account of what had happened on that particular night. The woman in question was in fact pregnant and very near to giving birth in the telephone kiosk. That was when young police constable Wrate came on to the scene and went to her rescue, giving her his great-coat as protection from the elements and assisting in the delivery of a baby boy. Later, he travelled along with the woman to the hospital from where he telephoned his Sergeant and said "I'm at the hospital having a baby." His sergeant, however, was more concerned about the area where PC Wrate should have been executing his duties!

MAY 2001

“Railway nostalgia around Bedfordshire” was the subject of a slide and talk show. The guest speaker, Mr David Eatwell, a native of that County, is the author of a book bearing the same name and as a consequence the presentation was based upon photographic extracts from this compilation. Mr. Eatwell eloquently described the illustrations as he narrated the show and, as required, giving credit to each individual photographic contributor.

The show comprised a selection of monochrome and colour transparencies that illustrated the railway scene around Bedfordshire and surrounding districts. These scenes related to railway operations that spanned the 1930s to 1960s but there were some that did extend well outside of these times. The compilation of photographic illustrations consisted of the work of many photographers with Steve Summerson and Harold Clements being the most prominent. Sadly, the latter passed away within the last 12 months at the age of 98 years, but his photographic collection from which many historical photographs have been published over the years will ensure he will long be remembered.

The audience was pleased to have yet another opportunity of sharing in the memory of a past era. On this occasion a mixture of steam locomotive classes were seen in action hauling services operated by the Great Northern, London Midland and Scottish, and London North Western railways in Bedfordshire. The presenter explained that the main railway routes of the West Coast, Midland and East Coast plus a considerable number of secondary and branch lines all passed through the county and as such produced a variety of interesting workings.

Interestingly, many of the main line passenger trains featured comprised up to 16 carriages with various classes of steam locomotive providing the motive power. It is hard to imagine that this combination was commonplace and the norm of the day. In contrast, however, scenes of local branch line activity brought about a feeling of tranquillity with illustrations showing two and three coach trains being powered by smaller locomotives. The Standard Class 2 2-6-2 tank engines, No. 84008 being an example, featured, therefore many Burton enthusiasts or railway historians will remember this type once featured on “Tutbury Jinnie” push'n'pull service from Burton to Tutbury. Furthermore, it was evident from the compilation that freight traffic was very prominent during the time under review. A variety of excellent photographs splendidly illustrated the freight scene in the district as numerous examples were screened.

Towards the end of the show other examples of railway interest featured. These included industrial locations where steam locomotives working hard had been captured on film. Narrow-gauge establishments including miniature railways together with other pictorial recollections completed the show.

APRIL 2001

The Society welcomed enthusiast and author, Mr. Michael Harvey, to present a talk and slide show entitled 'Diary of a Trainspotter' covering the 13-year time span between 1955 and 1968. He also brought along a number of artefacts to complement the show. The objects included a pair of Tuf shoes, a plastic raincoat, a home-made haversack, a box camera dating from the 1920s, sticky labels bearing the legend 'Play Up Pompey', the 'Portsmouth Gong,' and other items he had taken on many of the trips described in his Diary.

Mr. Harvey said that his railway interest began in the early 1950s when he regularly shared the footbridge at Fratton Station with a posse of like-minded individuals. This location was close to their homes in Portsmouth and was an excellent vantage point to view passing trains. He commented that steam was the order of the day but electric multiple units nicknamed 'Nelsons' did however operate the direct service to London. Fratton was also the location of the locomotive depot for the Portsmouth area thereby adding additional interest to the 'spotter.'

The Diary recorded that the small group of 'spotters' had been eager to visit other locations, not being content with their home territory. London became a favourite as it was a relatively short distance by rail and therefore allowed plenty of time to visit some of the engine sheds and stations in the capital before they journeyed home. He said they were keen football supporters too and followed the Portsmouth team around the country to see many of the team's away games. Commenting that travelling on the special trains to the 'away' matches often allowed them to visit other locations and watch their favourite team play football. Moreover, where time permitted, they would subsequently visit stations, engine sheds and other places where locomotives could be found. On some occasions, however, the away match was forfeited, instead visiting railway establishments, both with and without official permission. He went on to say that gaining entry to some engine sheds without authority was in fact a mammoth task, especially where it was impossible to avoid passing the shed master's office.

A 'Diary of a Trainspotter' is also the title of two books, which Mr Harvey has written about the antics of himself and his travelling companions. Therefore, many of the illustrations included in the show were extracts from the printed matter. Maps, diagrams, photographs, locomotive portraits, compilations of other railway-orientated memorabilia such as used journey tickets, cigarette packet cards (depicting railway scenes, of course) and an assortment of official permits used for entry to locomotive sheds - an essential requirement when visiting any railway property housing locomotives! Nevertheless, it was not always the case as one of the introductory slides bore the legend 'the first of 30 official visits, plus ...' This wording therefore allegedly implied that many of the subsequent visits to Eastleigh shed had been undertaken without the consent of the authorities. A disclosure that unofficial visits to many depots on the British Railways network did take place during the 13-year period under review but some were undertaken when the shed foreman 'turned a blind eye' to the fact.

A summary of extracts from the Diary highlighted many interesting facts relating the ever-changing railway scene. Many apt photographs illustrated this transition; especially the routine workings powered by steam locomotives but many other events with special interest were included too! One photograph, which is now unique, pictured two steam-hauled passenger trains waiting at adjacent platforms at Southampton Central station in July 1963. The locomotives, unrebuilt West Country Pacific No. 34105 'Swanage' and Standard Class 4 No. 76017, have since been preserved and are now residing at the Mid-Hants Railway. Mr. Harvey explained that when the photograph was taken it could not have been considered that this would ever be the case!

Historical events connected to railway operation prominently featured in the pictorial diary. Consequently, the final day of the train services operating on the Hayling Island branch line which took place later the same year, shed closures, final runs of steam locomotives, the impounding of ex-GWR Castle Class 4-6-0 No 5050 'Earl of St. Germans' at Fratton, as well as other incidents, featured.

The attentive audience could be excused if they concluded that too much emphasis was placed on the Portsmouth area. However, scenes of the Manchester area, London, South Wales, the

Northwest, Scotland and forays across the Solent to the Isle of Wight and over the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man did make an attempt at redressing the balance. Interestingly, trams, trolley buses, hovercraft, paddle steamers, omnibuses and other types of transport that was once formed part of Britain's heritage were shown at work during their years in operation.

John Tuffs

MARCH 2001

Railway operation in Northern Ireland, particularly the LMS's influence in the province, was the subject of the slide show given by Mr. Tom Ferris. The splendid selection of illustrations was aptly complemented by an authoritative narration throughout.

The guest speaker, a native of Cookstown in Ulster, was therefore well qualified on the subject and began by saying the railways of Northern Ireland are now just a shadow of their former selves. This is as a result of the railway routes from Belfast now only running to Londonderry, Larne, and Bangor and over the border to Dublin, together with the Portrush branch from Coleraine. However, on a brighter note, the freight-only line from Bleach Green Junction to Antrim will soon be re-opened to passenger traffic for use by Belfast to Londonderry trains. Consequently, this will alleviate the necessity for journey-makers to undertake the circuitous journey via Crumlin.

Mr. Ferris emphasised the role that the ex-LMS/NCC WT Class 2-6-4 tanks, designed and built at Derby Works from 1946, played during the last years of steam in Ulster. Moreover, these became the last class of steam locomotive to work in the province - their 'swansong' being the block spoil trains that ran between Port Arthur and Magheramorne, situated on the line to Larne, in conjunction with a major road project. 'Muck' trains as they were otherwise known ceased to operate in 1970, resulting in the remaining WT Class tank locomotives being withdrawn from service. Thankfully, one of the class, No 4, has been saved into preservation and in the intervening years has been pictorially recorded many times whilst hauling the 'Portrush Flyer' excursion trains that have since plied between Belfast and the coastal resort of Portrush.

In keeping with the idiosyncrasies of the area, a transparency taken during World War II was screened. This depicted a Belfast to Londonderry express running across the main runway of Ballykelly Airfield whilst, in the foreground, a 'Liberator' of RAF Coastal Command was waiting to taxi along the runway in readiness for take-off. Mr. Ferris expressed that this particular situation was unique especially during wartime and therefore hoped the railway signalman and the RAF control tower were in strict communication with one another at the time!

The slide presentation contained illustrations that portrayed individual items of rolling stock, locomotives and infrastructure, but other examples featured too - some of which brought humour to the large and attentive audience. One example being a contraption not unfamiliar to a type of hybrid bicycle - this machine was in use as a type of railway inspection vehicle. The rail-mounted apparatus was propelled by the efforts of a duo of railway workers who sat astride of the Line Inspector who was transported in this fashion to undertake his responsibility of studying the railway track. A further example illustrated another inspection vehicle that appeared more akin to that of a four-seater motor car equipped to run on the railway tracks. Ostensibly, the most unusual illustration of rolling stock befell to the converted piece of rolling stock to act as a personnel carrier suitably camouflaged with 'cement wagon' stencilled on its side. This item, which may or

may not have been used in the role of a personnel carrier, was commonly positioned to quell enemy invasion during the Second World War.

John Tuffs and Paul Forbes

FEBRUARY 2001

A packed audience of some 150 members and guests came to view the video presentation illustrating preserved steam operation on the main line during the year 2000. The PSOV annual video show - this their tenth successive year - was once again an action-packed spectacle incorporating preserved steam operation over main line routes of the railway network. Dave Richards narrated the two-hour show and left the technical side of the presentation to his colleague Karl Jauncey.

The new Millennium witnessed the return to service after overhaul or maybe restored to running order following a long-term preservation project several locomotives. Conversely, some locomotives with little time left on their running certificate eked out their final duties prior to temporary or maybe a permanent withdrawal from active service. The PSOV film crew filmed regular main line performers 60532 'Blue Peter', 35028 'Clan Line', 35005 'Canadian Pacific', 60800 'Green Arrow' and 6024 'King Edward I', together with 45110, 45407, 48773 and 80098 many times during the year. Freshly restored ex-GWR 4-6-0 4936 'Kinlet Hall' had the honour of hauling several trains in Year 2000 but on one occasion suffered the indignity of stalling whilst ascending Sapperton Bank. However, after some 20 minutes the train was able to continue its journey. A further spectacle was the appearance of Standard Class 4MT 2-6-4 tank 80098 hauling a series of "Dawlish Donkey" special trains along the ex-Great Western main line between Exeter and Newton Abbot.

Maybe one of the most interesting pieces of footage was the timeless scene at Preston Station when a special train arrived in the charge of two Stanier Class 5 locomotives, the pilot locomotive ex-LMS Class 5 45407 masquerading as 45157 'Glasgow Yeomanry'. With the exception of the overhead line equipment, this particular scene could well have been that of half a century ago and needless to say rekindled memories of a bygone era. Interestingly, 45407 spent some of its earlier days based at Burton 17B shed before reallocation and subsequent preservation.

Several specials were filmed long after daylight had disappeared. One spectacle was screened of a northbound special hauled by Merchant Navy Class 4-6-2 locomotive 35005 'Canadian Pacific' just north of Banbury Station. This nocturnal scene was certainly impressive and complemented other similar duties filmed elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Another perspective created by careful editing was the super-imposing of infrastructure items. The signal box at Dent Station, on the Settle to Carlisle railway line, being pictorially reinstated whilst the reappearance of semaphore signals on Hemerdon Bank in Devon, being such examples of this technique. How many of the audience spotted this is of course unknown.

In their quest to capture footage of preserved steam on video, Dave and Karl trek thousands of miles each year. It was evident that once again in Year 2k the pair continued to undertake numerous and breathtaking journeys in their never-ending search of main line steam. Hopefully, these specials will continue to run well into the 21st Century, but for how long, remains to be seen! In the meantime, however, Dave and Karl will continue to pursue the activity of using their

technical and geographical expertise to produce a first-class archive of main line steam operations as they have now done for a number of years.

John Tuffs

JANUARY 2001

Members and guests of Burton Railway Society at their January meeting received a New Year treat of archive films featuring railway operations since 1925 with interest and enthusiasm. Archivist Mr Rob Foxon who was assisted by his son, Mark, presented the films.

A short film "The 8 o'clock Special" was screened to begin the show; this followed a diesel multiple unit journey between Leeds Central and Bradford Exchange. The actual journey had been filmed in such a way that when replayed the screen trip lasted for just two minutes; much quicker than the realistic time it would have taken the train to run between these two Yorkshire cities.

This film was followed by footage of the Stockton and Darlington Centenary Cavalcade celebrations, which took place on 1st and 2nd July, 1925 between Stockton and Fighting Cocks, close to where Teesside Airport is now situated. The then Duke and Duchess of York, who later became HRH King George VI and HRH Queen Elizabeth, later the Queen Mother, were the Royal celebrities who attended the event. At that time, the Duchess was celebrating the Centenary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and last year she celebrated her own Centenary on the occasion of her 100-year birthday. As seen in the film the royal couple visited other exhibitions relating to the Celebrations such as a visit to the nearby railway workshops accompanied by local and railway dignitaries and they also viewed the cavalcade of locomotives.

A film, produced by the LMS Film Unit, entitled "The Permanent Way" was the third one to be screened. Mr Foxon explained that he understood there was no other copy of this particular film so the utmost care had to be taken to ensure its continued survival. The celluloid contained footage of routine work that is continually undertaken on the railway infrastructure to ensure that it is a safe and reliable system. It portrayed thousands of personnel, gainfully employed in the task of ensuring tracks and the surrounding environment was kept free from any defect.

To conclude the first half of the show, Mr Foxon presented footage he personally filmed in late August 2000, showing activity surrounding the replacement of Dyke Bridge, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire. The structure, spanning the River Trent, carried the East Coast main line and therefore a track possession was required to allow the work to be carried out. Consequently, all trains that normally took this route had to be diverted off the main line and take the secondary route through Lincoln and Gainsborough. This diversion procedure necessitated the use of Brush Type 4 diesel locomotives to power the GNER electric trains over the non-electrified railway tracks of the diversionary route. Mr Foxon filmed a number of these trains as well as other special services from a location close to where the bridge replacement was taking place. The sight of one of the old bridge sections in the process of disposal proved interesting. A large mechanical cutter was used to grab the displaced steelwork in order to destroy totally the archaic construction more quickly than would have been possible by use of the conventional method of a cutter's torch.

Several more films were screened after the interval: "This is My Railroad", "See Britain by Rail", "Rail 150", and a compilation which showed a number of trains believed to have been filmed in

the vicinity of the Cumbrian Coast. The first of these films, shot in 1952, showed operations of the Southern Pacific Railroad in California. Highlights included how the operating staff dealt with weather conditions, which included snow and sandstorms. At times, these elements created havoc to this West Coast of America railroad system, necessitating the dedication and loyalty of their staff to work in atrocious conditions to keep the trains running. Mr Foxon had recently acquired this film and as a result spent most of the recent Boxing Day working at restoring the celluloid to allow it to be screened.

The LMS Film Unit made the penultimate film of the evening for a joint marketing venture with the LNER for promotional purposes. It was originally made for showing at Rex House, the Railway Executives' Holiday Shop in the West End of London to promote holidays by train to Scotland. Entitled "It's Quicker by Train", the film portrayed a journey over the West Highland Line. Unlike most of the titles produced by the film unit which have subsequently disappeared, this film is one a few which have thankfully escaped the throes of extinction.

Finally, the "Rail 150" celebration of August 1975 was screened and complemented the Centenary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway that featured earlier in the show. The film highlighted the Grand Steam Cavalcade that passed over the Shildon to Heighington railway tracks led by a replica of 'Locomotion.' British Rail's latest design in the form of the 1C 125 High Speed Train was the epitaph of this grand event as it cautiously proceeded behind the last steam locomotive ever built for BR, Class 9F 2-10-0 No 92220 'Evening Star.' Meanwhile, appearing in the procession was ex-GNR 4-4-2 Class CI No 990 'Henry Oakley' which had also taken part in the 1925 event.

John Tuffs