

# THE MARLOW DONKEY



Edition

# 158

September 2017



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Howay the Lads - Part 3  
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Australia Revisited - Part 1

# The Marlow Donkey

The Magazine of the Marlow & District Railway Society

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The contents of the *Marlow Donkey* represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Society

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*Top: Bubble Car W55024 rolls into Marlow just prior to closure. Photo Ron North. Article page 5.*

*Middle left: 1453 running through Marlow Station throat. Photo: Mike Walker. Article page 5.*

*Middle right: Sir Vincent in action at Fifield with Julian Heard in charge. Photo: Chris Waite. Article page 4.*

*Bottom: 2-10-0 043 196-5 heading away from Rheine. Photo: Peter Robins. Article page 11.*

# TIMETABLE

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings are held in the Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Rd, Bourne End at 7.45 for 8.00pm

- Thursday 21 September                      **THE MANGAPPS RAILWAY**                      John Jolly  
The Mangapps Railway and Museum is a heritage railway centre located near Burnham-on-Crouch in Essex. The .75 miles of standard gauge demonstration train-track and museum are owned and operated by the Jolly family assisted by volunteers .
- Thursday 19 October                      **EARLY DAYS OF THE RAILWAY CHILDREN'S CHARITY**                      David Maidment  
David gives a presentation of his early life before he founded The Railway Children charity. How he got interested in trainspotting in the late 40's and early 50's; and commuting by steam from Woking to Waterloo to attend college from 1957 to 1960; getting holiday jobs at Old Oak Common; before joining the Railway in 1960 and becoming a Traffic Apprentice In 1961.
- Thursday 16 November                      **BRITISH RAIL: NOT QUITE MODERN IMAGE**                      Peter Robins  
Peter's presentation looks at British Rail around the Regions, mainly in the 1970's / 1980's, and shows that whilst British Rail tried to promote it's modern image, the reality was quite different. It also shows how much steam age infrastructure was still in use in the non steam age era .
- Thursday 21 December                      **CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**  
Planning for this popular annual event is well-advanced and full details will be announced shortly.

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I am writing this shortly after our very successful visit to David Buck's establishment, where those who participated enjoyed the spectacle of two locomotives in steam, providing rides around his grounds in goods wagons, a brake van or, quite literally, on the footplate (alongside the boiler and flywheel of *Sir Vincent*, the Aveling and Porter machine). In discussion with him over refreshments, he said that *Lady Patricia*, the Finnish Pacific, will definitely steam again next year and that his B1, 61306 *Mayflower*, will also be returning to the main line in 2018, following a major overhaul that he had not expected to be necessary so soon after his purchase of the loco. I look forward to both of these events. There was some mirth at my expense that evening, when I discovered I had come without my wallet and I was suitably embarrassed when asked for my contribution to the "whip-round" for coal and I have to thank Brian Hopkinson for coming to my financial rescue. Ironically, having done nothing towards arranging it, nor even contributing personally, it was I who was asked to pass on the collected cash to David, in my official capacity as chairman.

In the last few months, we have had quite a lot of steam activity locally, including several runs by 60009 *Union of South Africa* which is starting a lengthy "farewell tour" before being retired from service and placed on static display in a museum by its owner, John Cameron. This is a shame but we will have had her running for an extra 50 years, thanks to John's intervention and we must all realise just how expensive it is to run a loco (or two) on the main line, something I'm sure David Buck is finding out all too well right now. It was as a result of "No 9" running on the Western that I managed a personal first

recently, when, thanks to Mike Walker's guidance, I paid a first ever visit to Southcote Junction, south of Reading, where the Basingstoke and Berks and Hants lines diverge. At the time it was still unencumbered by any electrification masts or wires and on this sunny Sunday morning I was very pleased to get an excellent shot of the A4 and I had to wonder why I had never been there before.

Of course, we have been remembering the 50th anniversary of the end of Southern steam this summer and to celebrate this I booked for the *Bournemouth Belle* Pullman special that also marked the return to the main line of *Clan Line*. It was a great day out on a lovely sunny day and those of you who get Mike's electronic newsletters will have seen the pictures and a brief report. If you have never been on the Belmond (VSOE) British Pullman, I can thoroughly recommend it. Although it is incredibly expensive, the service you get is second to none and it puts other types of train travel in the shade. Unfortunately I don't think I'll ever get Mrs S on another special train in the future unless it's the Pullmans. Rather less luxurious were the various Southern Galas on preserved lines but back in 1967 if you'd suggested that 50 years hence you would be able to see several Bulleids working together, with others under overhaul and on display, they would have thought you mad, but that's exactly what the Swanage and Mid-Hants railways gave us. We are so lucky to be able to enjoy all this...and more.

I do hope you have been making the most of the Summer and look forward to seeing you all at our forthcoming meetings.

*Tim Speechley*

# SOCIETY AND LOCAL NEWS

## NEW MEMBERS

Once again we welcome two new members, Keith Gowers from Aylesbury and Richard Preece from Maidenhead. We hope you enjoy our activities.

## PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND VISITS

June is now our joint meeting with the Maidenhead RCTS branch and this year saw a return visit by the well-known railway photographer Dr Les Nixon with a show entitled 55 Years of Railway Photography which included pictures from all over the UK and overseas. The subject matter wasn't confined entirely to railways so a few buses, trucks and ships made it onto the screen too. This was part one of five so we hope to entice Les back for the others in due course.

Also in June, a small group of members visited the Spinney Light Railway at Farnham in Surrey. This is a 7¼" gauge private line to which access can only be gained by invitation and we enjoyed our visit which was blessed with good weather.

In July Brian Ringer, a former BR freight manager brought us Strictly Freight Only in which he surveyed the changes over half a century of British rail freight up to the dawn of privatisation. He looked at various types of traffic and how the railways came to lose them. Again a second part is awaited dealing with the privatised era.

As usual, we had no meeting in August but in lieu we were lucky to receive an invitation from David Buck to make a return visit to his private standard gauge railway at Fifield along with members of the Fawley Museum Society. This was the first time that David had both his locos, Peckett 0-4-0ST *Hornpipe* and Aveling & Porter 0-4-0WT *Sir Vincent* had been in operation together for an enthusiasts visit, the latter having just been overhauled in time to celebrate its centenary.

Our latest visit to Statfold was due around press time and will be covered in the next issue.

## RCTS MEETINGS

Our friends in the RCTS have the following meetings planned for the coming months.

Monday 25th September

Crossrail Progress - The Elizabeth Line Patrick Griffin

Monday 23rd October

The London Post Office Railway Chris Taft

Monday 27th November

Disconnected! Broken Links in Britain's Rail Policy  
Chris Austin

Monday 18th December Branch AGM

Meetings are held at the Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green, SL6 3AX starting at 19:30. MDRS members always welcome.

## MAIDENHEAD SIDINGS OPENED

A major component of the Great Western electrification project, the Maidenhead Stabling Sidings, were brought into use with the new timetable in May and officially opened by the Prime Minister on 30th June.

The six sidings on the site of the former goods yard are actually part of the Crossrail project but until those services start in 2019, Great western are using them as Maidenhead is currently the terminal of the electric services.

The number of electric services serving Maidenhead was increased from July 3rd.

The overhead line equipment is now complete west of Maidenhead through to Reading and will be commissioned during a two day blockade on September 16th/17th during which some GWR HST services will be diverted via Oxford and the Chiltern Line through High Wycombe. It is currently expected that a full all-day electric service between Paddington and Didcot will start in early January 2018.



*The new stabling sidings at Maidenhead were opened officially on 30th June by Prime Minister Theresa May assisted by First chairman Tim O'Toole (right) and Mark Langman, Network Rail's managing director for the Western Route (left).*

*Photos: Network Rail*



## ROYAL ANNIVERSARY

The 175th anniversary of the first royal train journey was marked on 13th June by Great Western repeating the journey from Slough to Paddington using IET 800003 whose driving cars were named *Queen Elizabeth II* and *Queen Victoria*.

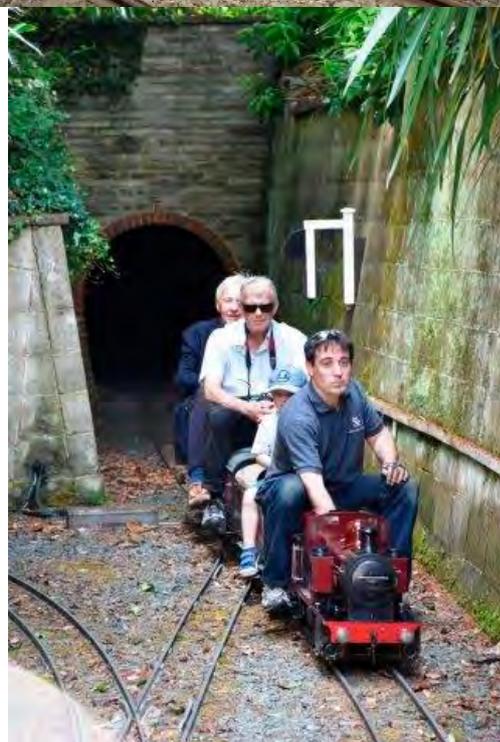
Her Majesty and Prince Philip joined the train at Slough, as Queen Victoria had done in 1842, and were accompanied by GWR Managing Director Mark Hopwood along with Isambard Thomas, great, great, great grandson of Isambard Brunel and Gillian White, great, great granddaughter of Sir Daniel Gooch.

The picture shows the special at Slough as the VIP party boarded.



Photo: Peter Robins

Photo: Chris Waite



Two photos: Tim Speechley



## SUMMER TRIPS

Views of our recent trips. Above, a LMS dock tank emerges from a tunnel on the Spinney Light railway with Brian Hopkinson and Derek Burnham taking a ride.

Left upper we see *Sir Vincent* in action at Fifield with Julian Heard in charge and below left *Hornpipe*, both conveying both MDRS and Fawley members.

David Buck hopes to have his Finnish Pacific *Lady Patricia* operation next year and issued an invitation to return next August to see and ride behind it.

# OLD MARLOW REMEMBERED



This summer saw the fiftieth anniversary of the closure of the original Marlow station on 9th July 1967 which, by strange coincidence, was exactly five years to the day that the *Marlow Donkey* was converted from steam to diesel operation.

Dating from the opening of the line in June 1873, it was located at the corner of Dedmere and Lock Roads. In the view above on 6th July 1962 we get a good view of the station where 1445 was waiting with a somewhat scruffy trailer. The goods shed can be seen beyond the station and loco whilst the engine shed is just visible on the left behind the wagon.

Three days later on the 9th July a well cleaned 1421 was provided for the final day of steam operation and is seen awaiting departure for Bourne End.

*Three photos: Colour-Rail*



Marlow was a sub-shed of Slough and housed the 'Donkey' engine which was changed weekly. In February 1946 4837 was alongside the water tower and coal stage.



The 'Donkey' often employed one of the compartment trailers such as W250W seen here attached to 1421 on 20th April 1962.

The new brickwork on the end wall of the engine shed is the result of an incident when the loco wasn't properly secured one night and attempted to take itself back to Bourne End!

The white gate was across the track leading into the Greenwich Sawmill which was established in 1945-6. It was the expansion of this establishment that led to closure of the old station and its replacement on the old goods yard site.

*Photo: Colour-Rail*

1453 running through the station throat gives us a glimpse of the entrance to the busy goods yard which had three sidings, one which served the goods shed. The replacement station was built alongside the outermost or western siding, ordinary goods services having ceased on 18th July 1966 although block timber trains continued to run from east London until 1970 when the sawmill closed.

The signal box stood to the right of where 1453 is but that was abolished on 26th September 1954 and replaced by a pair of ground frames and 'one engine in steam' operation.

*Photo: Mike Walker collection*



Bubble Car W55024 rolls into Marlow just prior to closure. On the left is the bay platform which was usually only used for storage and beyond that the rather austere lean-to cycle shed and the only surviving part of the goods shed wall which supported it.

The former "Klondike" siding (where the wagon was standing in the top picture on the preceding page) has already been lifted and new offices have sprung up on the land owned by Y J Lovell which had not been leased by Greenwich Sawmills. As soon as the station closed it was demolished starting the following day.

*Photo: Ron North*

# HOWAY THE LADS

Tim Speechley returns to the North East  
Part 3 Beamish again, Shildon and Bowes



I was so taken with Beamish and the Tanfield Railway when I visited in 2016 (as described in the March and June 2017 editions of the *Donkey*) that a return visit was inevitable. Beamish holds what they call the Great North Steam Fair in April, featuring a lot of visiting railway locomotives and road steam, plus many old cars, commercial vehicles and motorcycles and that seemed to be the ideal time to go.

I drove north on a beautifully sunny Thursday 6th April and had an excellent trip via the M40, A46 and M69, joining the M1 at Leicester. After a coffee stop at Trowell, I took the M18 across to the A1 and continued northbound, eventually coming off to have my very overdue packed lunch. Somewhat unexpectedly, there were signs for "Preserved Railway", so I followed them and ended up at the Wensleydale Railway's Leeming Bar station, somewhere I didn't really know existed. Sandwiches consumed, I had a very quick look at what

*Beamish's Puffing Billy replica with chaldron wagons at the colliery, the Head Wrightson coffee pot 0-4-0VBT is at the far end.*

*Three North East thoroughbreds in Locomotion Museum, Shildon.*



was on offer there – some class 37s, class 14 D9528, 47715 *Haymarket*, a couple of quite modern looking ex-MoD shunters, several DMUs and a very rusty 9F (92219). It was an interesting find and a lucky accident I had just chosen that exit from the A1 but with a long way still to go, I didn't linger.

Further north I realised that I still had time to have an hour or so at the Shildon annex of the National Railway Museum. Last time I'd been there was when the six A4's were there and the place was absolutely heaving with people. Today I had the museum almost to myself, allowing a good look round and some unimpeded photography before closing time arrived and I continued ever northward, finally arriving at the Travelodge at the A1(M) services at Washington.

Next morning, after a hearty breakfast at Morrisons, I headed for Chester-le-Street station, where I met my friend Chris Allen from St Albans, who had caught a train at Stevenage at some ungodly hour of the morning. We headed for Beamish but, of course, Sod's Law was in action, for yesterday's sun had gone and today was quite dull and cool. Nevertheless, Beamish was even more interesting than normal, with old cars as well as traction engines and steam waggons all running on the perimeter roadway that parallels the tram tracks around the site. We aimed for the colliery first, where a train of chaldron wagons was being moved around by the Head Wrightson coffee pot 0-4-0 VBT and the *Puffing Billy* replica. Nearby, on the 2 foot gauge line, visiting Kerr Stuart locos *Roger* (0-4-0ST 3128/18) and *Diana* (0-4-0T 1158/17) were at work, the former having trouble on a steep gradient, where I spotted NRM curator Anthony Coulls (our speaker back in April 2016) putting dust on the track to try to assist traction. He was attending with Marshall agricultural traction engine 23885 of 1893 which was working a saw bench nearby.

Later we visited the 1820's waggonway, where the replica *Steam Elephant* was at work. This displays an odd phenomenon in that the drive cranks rotate in the opposite direction from the wheels, giving a very confusing message to the eyes. Using a tram we went to the town and at Chris's insistence, went into the pub for a pint – most enjoyable. Thence to the station, where Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST *Bon Accord* was working the one coach shuttle. This loco had worked at Aberdeen gas works and has side plates to prevent inadvertent access to the wheels and motion when operating on the roadway.

Some time was spent watching the varied vehicles running around the site on the [www.mdrs.org.uk](http://www.mdrs.org.uk)



*Two strange bedfellows at a surprisingly empty Shildon museum - Sans Pareil and the prototype Deltic.*



*Kerr Stuart Roger supplying wood on the two foot gauge railway to the German PoWs working the saw bench powered by a Marshall general-purpose traction engine. The PoWs are identified with yellow discs.*



perimeter road, amongst which was Fowler road locomotive *Providence* hauling a trailer loaded with the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway's *River Mite*, thereby replicating the journey they made 50 years earlier when the loco was delivered from its builders, Clarksons of York. We also watched another traction engine working a saw bench in the guise of a WW1 army operation with German PoW's providing labour (identified by yellow discs on their clothing) and visiting 2' gauge *Roger* delivering material alongside.

We left at the 5 o'clock closing time and went back to the hotel so Chris could check-in. Fortuitously, he had the room next to mine, though we had booked completely separately. By now it had turned into a perfect sunny evening (of course!), so we decided to have a tour round in the car and went to see if there were any remnants of the past at Seaham Harbour, Seaton Bank Top (the former stamping ground of the Q6's and J27's) and Philadelphia. Of these, only the latter yielded anything worthwhile, for two of the large buildings that used to house the many locos used on the extensive former Lambton, Hetton and Joicey and later NCB system were still extant. Chris, an active member of the A4 Society, reminded me that *Sir Nigel Gresley* had been stored in one of those buildings when first preserved. Having lasted all those years, we later heard that there are plans to demolish them in the near future to make way for another new housing estate. We returned to the hotel and had an excellent meal at the Italian restaurant just up the road.

Saturday dawned sunny again and after satisfying the inner man, we headed for the Bowes Museum, not very far away from where we were staying. This is the remnant of a long east-west line that incorporated several rope-worked inclines and the preserved part has workshops, a collection of locos (standard gauge steam and diesel and narrow gauge battery for use underground) and other rolling stock and the remains of one of the inclines. It has been in dire financial difficulty for some time and I thought we ought to visit whilst we still could. There were not many people about but after a while a volunteer, Davy, appeared and he took the pair of us on a personal tour of the whole site, which proved very interesting indeed, especially when we looked at a video shot in the last days of its commercial use. I believe one section of incline some way from the museum site could still be worked again but a lot depends on resources. We thanked Davy for his time and left a generous donation to their funds.



*Philadelphia engine sheds built in 1917 by the Lambton, Hetton and Joicey system and still extant - but for how much longer. The main line went between them.*



*The top of the cable worked incline at the Bowes Railway Museum [Above].*

*The vertical and horizontal pulleys to get the incline cable round a bend. The stone building to the right houses several diesel locos.*





*Back at Beamish, well filled trams towards the end of the Saturday are passed by a 1914 Arrol Johnson car.*

The sun had obviously encouraged a lot of people to head to Beamish and we got stuck in a very slow queue of traffic several hundred yards from the entrance but eventually got into the car park and back into the museum. They issue tickets valid for a full year, so I was using mine from June 2016 on these occasions. However, with an open ticket, local people can go whenever and as often as they like, probably explaining the crowds on this sunny day. The sun did aid photography but the hordes did not. We visited most of the places we had been the day before, including the pub, and took advantage of the better photographic potential. Latterly we found ourselves chatting to Anthony Coulls again, who told us that there was going to be an impromptu photo session in the town immediately after closing time. So come 5 o'clock we accompanied Anthony and his daughter on foot to the town, where we found a line-up of steam waggons in the sun and a relatively small group of owners and photographers taking advantage.

We got our shots over a period of time and then, aware that we were well beyond closing time, made the long walk through a now almost deserted museum back to the entrance, encountering a number of steam vehicles travelling quite rapidly on the perimeter road. Then disaster !

*Providence hauling River Mite, as she had done when delivering her from York, 50 years earlier.*



We appeared to be locked in. Fortunately there was a metal fence that looked as if it would be climbable and somehow we both managed to get over it. This was quite a relief to me, as Chris is several years my senior and I had had considerable difficulty. Back to the car and away, I thought, but the car park too was gated and locked. By now we were both not a little concerned but fortunately some other people were returning to their cars and on speaking to them they said "follow us". In convoy, we drove into the museum (through a large open gate we had not seen before and which would have avoided our earlier fence-scaling exercise) and along the perimeter road. It seemed rather surreal to be driving my modern car within the museum, where earlier I had been photographing trams and traction engines. We went as far as the town's outskirts and could see the photo shoot still in progress, featuring the traction engine *Providence* with *River Mite*

on the trailer behind. Although there looked as if there were some nice pictures to be had, all thoughts were now only on one thing – escape. Our little convoy did a 180 degree turn and headed towards the goods shed and wagon works adjacent to the railway station. Here, to our immense relief, was a gate and the driver of the leading car knew the key code to open it – we were free again, hooray!!

Back to the Travelodge for a clean-up and then this evening we went to a local pub/restaurant called the Bowes Incline Hotel, which featured a couple of ex-NCB wagons in its grounds. A nice pint or two and good food but I've never seen so much of it. I do have a good appetite but even I had to leave almost half of my main meal, something I hate doing. Big helpings seem to be a feature of eating out in the north-east, so my advice is to forego the starter and see how stuffed you are after the main course.

Next time, Tim completes his travels with visits to the Tanfield and North Tyneside Railways and the Stephenson Museum at Percy Main.

*Three Sentinel steam waggons pose in the late afternoon sun for the select few remaining after the museum had closed.*





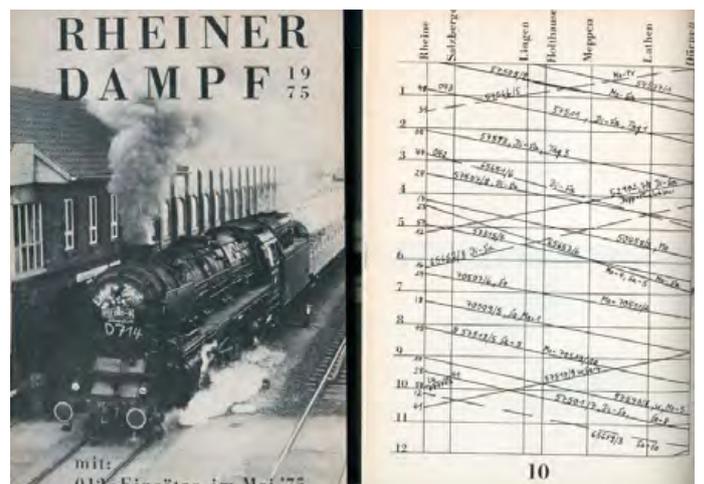
# ABSCHIED VON DER DAMPFLOK

40 Years since the end of West German steam by Peter Robins

Having thought that real steam finished in 1968, I was persuaded by a friend to join him in a trip to the steam worked Rheine - Emden line West Germany in 1975. Unfortunately, I missed out on the 012 Pacifics working passenger trains out of Rheine by about three months. However there was plenty of steam action including double headed 2-10-0's on 2,000 tonne ore trains. For a complete novice on German steam at the time, the locally produced publication *Rheiner Dampf* (Steam at Rheine) [Below] was an absolute godsend. It contained a wealth of information including freight train diagrams in graphical format, loco rosters, photo spots and the walking route to Rheine depot. On my first visit we stayed in the youth hostel at Rheine and we learnt that person in charge of the hostel was one of the co-authors of "Rheine Dampf". The line itself runs through pleasant but not spectacular scenery for 109 miles to Emden and then on to Norddeich. The stations were quite photogenic as were the woodland areas around Lingen and Meppen. When steam finished, class 220 diesel hydraulics, on which our own Warships were based took over services until ousted by electric traction in the early 1980's.

For the princely sum of 3.40 DMarks (70p), you could visit Bahnbetriebswerke Rheine (Rheine depot) which always had a good number of locos under repair and being prepared for service with the two main types illustrated here [Top]. The Deutsche Reichsbahn (DRB) class 41 was a 2-8-2 goods loco. 366 were built between 1937 and 1941 with 216 remaining with DB after the war. The boilers in these locos suffered from metal fatigue and so a re-boiling exercise was undertaken between 1957 and 1961. At the same time 40 locos were converted to oil firing and

then later reclassified as class 042 in 1968. The DRB class 44 was a 3 cylinder 2-10-0 goods loco. 1,989 locos were built between 1926 and 1949. During World War 2, an austerity variant was produced with simplified construction and delivery, known as the Class 44ÜK (Übergangskriegslokomotive). After the war, 1,242 remained with DB, 335 went to DR (East Germany) and 44 went to other countries. Further moves took place as reparations in 1952. The class 44 was very popular with German loco crews who called them "Jumbos" due to their pulling power. 32 locos were converted to oil firing in 1958 and then later reclassified as 043 in 1968. Of the locos seen here, 043 100-7 was built by Henschel in 1938 and is now preserved at the technical museum at Sinsheim, 042 018-2 was built by Henschel in 1939 and is now preserved in Munich. 042 226-1, just visible on the left was built by Henschel in 1938 and is now preserved in Tuttlingen.



The Marlow Donkey



**Above**, 042 360-8 ambles through woodland near Lingen (Ems) with an oil train from Holthausen on 19th March 1976. The loco was built by Jung in 1940 as 41 360, converted to oil firing and renumbered in 1958 and withdrawn in May 1977. Fortunately 042 360 survives and is now preserved at Oberhausen.

**Below**, 043 903-4 rounds the curve into Meppen with a southbound train of empties on 10th September 1975. This loco was built by Batignolles in 1943 as 44 903 and converted to oil firing and renumbered in 1960. 043 903-4 worked the final scheduled steam service on 26/10/1977. After withdrawal in 1977, the loco was plinthed in the station forecourt at Emden.





**Above**, 043 364-9 heads out of Rheine with a coal train on 23rd August 1976. This loco became a bit of a celebrity being the last loco overhauled at Braunschweig works and was fitted with polished boiler bands. It was built by Krupp in 1942 as 44 1364 and converted to oil firing and renumbered in 1960. Unlike its British counterpart, 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*, the last loco overhauled at Crewe, 043 364-9 was scrapped by Klockners of Osnabruck in 1980.

One of the last steam worked service in West Germany was the 18:56 Braunschweig - Goslar seen here after arrival at a snowy Goslar [**Below**] on 22nd March 1976. The loco, 050 439-9, was withdrawn seven days later and scrapped at Braunschweig works the following year.





Although the final steam working was some six weeks later, Deutsche Bahn held a farewell to steam event in Rheine depot on the weekend of 10-11th September 1977. The awful weather did not deter the photographers recording 043 196-5 heading away from Rheine [Above] with one of the special trains to Leer. The loco was built by Krupp in 1942 as 44 1203, converted to oil firing and renumbered in 1960 and was one of the last to be withdrawn on 26th October 1977. 043 196-5 is another survivor as a static exhibit at Salzbergen station, the junction where the Emden line branches off from the main line from Utrecht and Rotterdam.

I had had an "interesting" night's sleep in the youth hostel. There must have been at least four times the number of enthusiasts bunking down compared to the number of beds

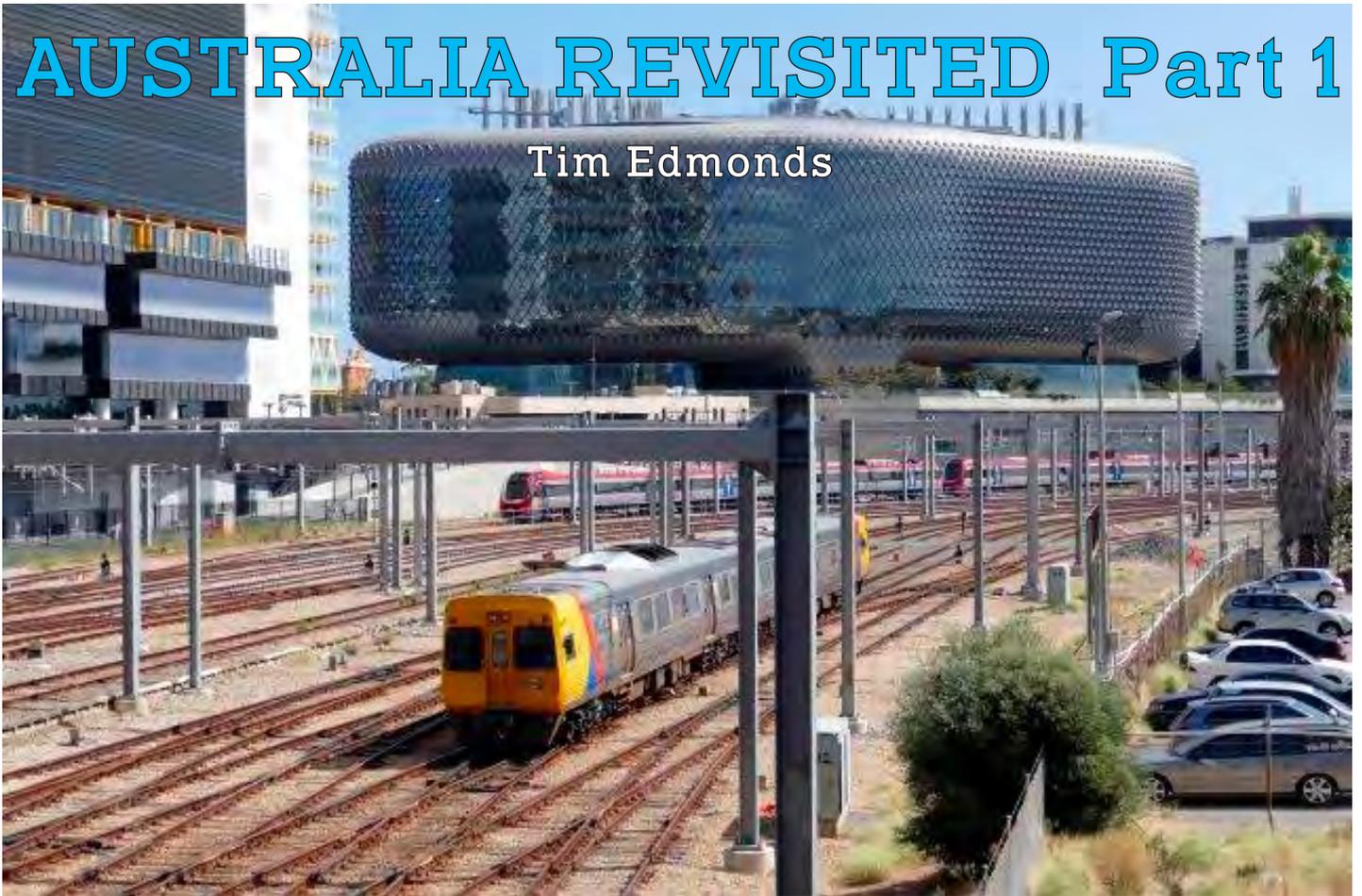
Mattresses were laid down on the floor and enthusiasts from all over Western Europe joined in sorrow at the passing of West German steam. The weather was awful for most of the weekend but Rheine depot was well attended and the special trains ran to capacity. The class 043 rumbling onto the turntable got more attention than the three preserved locos - 50 1255 from Stoom Stichting Nederland (SSN) at Rotterdam, one of 3,164 standard 2-10-0's built between 1939 and 1948. 044 508-0, a coal fired version of the 043 and now based at the Nuremberg Transport Museum and 55 3345, a Prussian G8 based at Bochum-Dahlhausen. The sign above the roundhouse says it all.

I returned to Hoek van Holland on the special train hauled by 23 023, a 2-6-2 built by Jung in 1952 and now based in Rotterdam. The final irony which had similarities to Network Rail thinking was DB's insistence that 23 023 be piloted on the 5 miles under the wires from Rheine to Salzbergen, albeit by a German "warship" 220 077. This was despite the fact that 042's and 043's had worked under same wires for a couple of years and continued to do so for another few weeks. We soon forgot the annoyance of the diesel pilot and had a spirited run to Hoek van Holland where many of us headed homeward. It was a very enjoyable if sad weekend but one I will not forget.



# AUSTRALIA REVISITED Part 1

Tim Edmonds



After a first visit to Australia in 2007 I wrote about my impressions of railways there in Donkeys 120 and 121 (available to view and download from the website). In March and April 2017 Veronica and I made a second visit – a chance to assess what had changed and to see some new parts of the country. Flying into Adelaide (South Australia), we continued via Melbourne and Geelong (Victoria) before heading for some tourist sightseeing around Cairns (Queensland) and Sydney (New South Wales). The grand finale was travelling by train across Australia on the ‘Indian Pacific’, Sydney to Perth (Western Australia), from where we flew home. During five weeks we also experienced travel on the transport systems in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth, visited tourist and heritage railways in Victoria and Queensland, and explored railway museums large and small. Here’s some of what we found second time around...

## A land of changes

Australia in 2017 presented some striking changes from the place we had seen ten years earlier and in particular there has been a huge amount of development in and around the cities. Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney had all expanded significantly, while it was clear that the pace of change in Perth was also very rapid. These developments included new stations, and extensions and upgrades to suburban railways and tramways. The changes were particularly striking at the throat of Adelaide station, which has been transformed by electrification of the railway and the development of a new hospital and medical research centre on former railway land. Compare the photo taken from Morphett Bridge this year [Above] with that taken from a similar viewpoint in 2007 (Donkey 120 page 9). The same white building in the centre is in both pictures.

*Seen from the Morphett Bridge, a class 3100 DMU approaches Adelaide station on 28th March 2017, while in the background two Bombardier A-City class 4000 EMUs are stabled. New since 2007, and dominating the scene, are the overhead electrification masts and the distinctive South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, beyond which is the new Royal Adelaide Hospital.*

One problem which is far from being resolved is the existence of different railway gauges. Leaving aside narrow gauge industrial and heritage lines, New South Wales is largely a standard gauge state. Northern Territory is completely standard. Queensland is predominantly narrow gauge (3ft 6in) and Tasmania is entirely so. Western Australia is split between standard gauge, connecting with the transcontinental line, and the once dominant narrow gauge, with the Perth suburban lines being its last bastion. The suburban system in Adelaide is entirely broad gauge, but 80% of the network in South Australia is now standard and only a few pockets of narrow gauge still exist. Victoria is the last stronghold of the broad gauge – some 70% of the network. Conversion continues, usually for the benefit of freight traffic. For example, since 2007 the standard gauge has been extended into the port area at Geelong.

## City smart

Since 2007 the big cities have adopted the smartcard for discounted public transport fares. The Sydney Opal card proved useful – it is free, so you only pay to charge it and there is a fare cap of \$15 on weekdays and an amazing \$2.50 on Sundays. We charged our Opals with \$20, which saw us through travel for three days with \$0.40 to spare, including five journeys on suburban railways, three on the light rail and three ferry trips – two of them over 20km long. In Melbourne it costs \$6 to buy an uncharged myki

Taken from the standard gauge East Perth station, terminus of the transcontinental line, a TransPerth A-class unit calls at the narrow gauge station with the 13:30 Perth to Midland suburban train on 23rd April 2017. The suburban platforms are being extended in connection with the new Perth Stadium just over the Swan River. This train runs over mixed gauge track from East Perth to Midland.



card, but our niece had two for visitors and we charged these as needed and used them on the suburban trains and trams. An Adelaide Metrocard costs \$5 before you charge it but we did not need them, thanks to lifts from our friends and the free tram service in the city centre. When we did a longer trip on the tram to Glenelg, returning via a suburban train, a \$10 day trip ticket did the job. In Perth the Smartrider cost \$10 up front, but again we did not need them because in the city centre we could walk and use a free bus, and we travelled to Fremantle and back by boat. To get to Bassendean Railway Museum we needed to use the suburban train, but also wanted to make an intermediate stop to see a plinthed loco at East Perth. While trying to work out the best way to do this at the ticket machine at Perth station, the ticket inspector at the nearby barrier came over to offer help and explained that the two of us could use a Family Rider day ticket for \$12.40 – not apparent from the machine and saving us at least \$6. This was typical of the helpfulness of most railway staff we encountered.

## Trams and light rail

Melbourne is still defined by the sight and sound of its trams – there are 24 routes operated by Yarra Trams using

a variety of types in various liveries, including vintage cars on the city circle. There is a free tram zone in the city centre. Adelaide and Sydney each have just a single route but both have been extended since my previous visit and both are well-used. An extension of the Glenelg line was completed through the centre of Adelaide to the railway station in 2007 and a further extension to Entertainment Centre followed in 2010. As in Melbourne, tram travel is free through the centre, including the entire extension. The Sydney Light Rail was extended from Lilyfield to Dulwich Hill in 2014 but, alas, it no longer has interchanges with the monorail. This was closed in 2013, a sacrifice to the expansion of the Conference and Exhibition Centres, and the track was dismantled. Bizarrely, at least three stations survive in elevated isolation. Chinatown is attached to the side of a building while Darling Park (which still carries a poster for last day services) and Harbourside are perched above each end of Pyrmont Bridge.



*Flinders Street is the hub of Melbourne's Metro suburban railway network, and remains a station full of character. Siemens Nexas unit 797M awaits departure with a service to Frankston on 29th March 2017.*



*A passenger taps off her Opal card, having left a Central-bound Sydney Light Rail service at Capitol Square station on 16th April 2017. This is a Spanish-built Urbos 3 unit.*

*On the street-running section at Jetty Road in Adelaide, Glenelg-bound Bombardier Flexity car 108 nears the terminus with a service from the Entertainment Centre on 28th March.*

## Regional trains

Most long-distance travel in Australia is by air, so there are few interstate railway services and those that exist are usually aimed at tourists. However, there are still some significant regional services. For example, in Victoria V/Line operates five lines from Melbourne, the inner sections coming within the myki smartcard area. Most are operated by modern Bombardier DMUs but there are still a few loco-hauled services. From Sydney the regional services include eight routes, two of which become interstate lines to Melbourne and Brisbane. In Queensland there are three routes inland from the main North Coast Line, but I had no opportunity to explore these. In Western Australia Transwa operates a narrow gauge service from Perth south to Bunbury and a standard gauge service from East Perth to Merredin and Kalgoorlie.

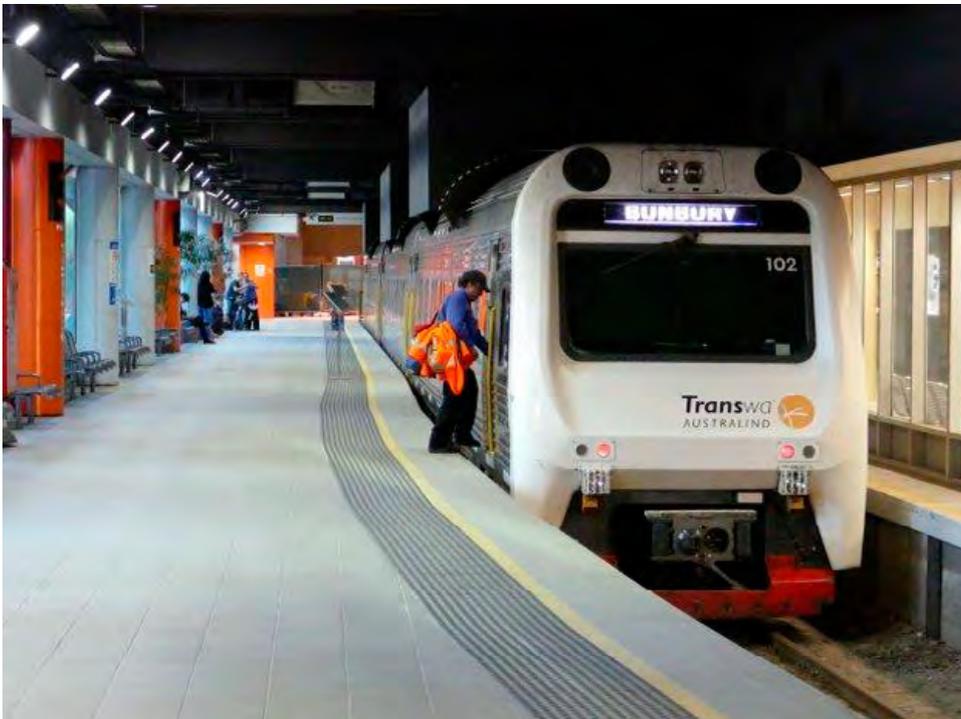
*On the Gippsland line, the 11:20 V/Line regional service from Traralgon to Melbourne Southern Cross leaves Trafalgar formed of 1249, a Bombardier three-car VLocity 160 DMU on 3rd April 2017.*

## Steam – or the lack of it

Absent from most of the railway parts of the holiday this time was any working steam. This was partly due to the season – last time was winter, this time it was autumn when the fire risk was greater. When planning the trip I'd done some internet searching to see if there was any main line steam activity in the places we were visiting and found none. As it turned out, when we got to Victoria I was told that some top-and-tail steam shuttles had been organised on two suburban lines in Melbourne on Sunday 9th April. However, they were advertised for “some school holiday fun” and were clearly aimed at families. Add to that the difficulty of finding suitable photographic locations under the wires, and railway replacement buses between Geelong and Melbourne (already experienced the previous day) and we decided not to attempt this. It turned out to be a rainy day and we stayed local to Geelong to see our only live steam on the 3ft 6in gauge Bellarine Peninsula Railway, where sod's law dictated that this was a Thomas the Tank Engine event!



*NSW Trainlink 2524, a 3-car Xplorer DMU, forms the 18:12 service to Canberra, awaiting departure from platform 2 at Sydney Central on 15th April 2017.*



*Platform 3 at Perth station is reserved for the Australind regional service to Bunbury. A 3-car Transwa DMU forms the 17:55 service on 23rd April 2017.*

*Ex Broken Hill Associated Smelters 3ft 6in gauge 0-6-0T (AB1543/1919), with its Pozieres nameplate obscured by its temporary identity as Oliver, at the head of a train at Queenscliff station during the Bellarine Peninsula Railway's 'Day out with Thomas' event on 9th April 2017.*



# THEN AND NOW - AYLESBURY



Half a century ago, Aylesbury was a sleepy market town when Black Five 45292 passed with a Marylebone to Nottingham train on 5th September 1966, the last day of through services on the Great Central. The new offices of Bucks County Council dominate an otherwise rural scene.

Today, it's a very different place with the council offices almost hidden by a car park and the Hartwell's siding (where the DMU was above) subsumed into Chiltern's maintenance depot. Thanks to Mark Edlington of Chiltern for taking the shot below.

