

Newsbrief

Newsletter of the Metropolitan Water Board Railway Society

Supporting the Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway Limited
Company No. 08428299, Registered Charity No. 1166913

No.72 January 2021

New rules bring construction to a halt

While the country (the world!) has been severely affected by the COVID_19 pandemic we have managed to carry on with our building program and a few other projects. As reported in the last Newsbrief everything stopped for a while in the summer and then restarted when it was clear we would not be breaking any rules. Of course, we did not run any public trains as most volunteers felt unhappy being close to the general public.

Even now most feel the same but the plan is to have a members' day in the spring (subject to confirmation nearer the time). To do that we will need to make the site COVID_19 safe and planning for that is in hand.

Construction of the carriage shed has been stop-start with limited volunteers but with the new Tier 4 restrictions introduced just before Christmas it is felt that we must now stop until the restrictions are lifted. Until then it had basically kept to schedule. Unfortunately to keep the volunteers as safe as possible we have at times had to actively discourage volunteers from attending. Let us hope most will return when we feel safe again. We are hoping that it will not be too long before at least the older volunteers are vaccinated and the some restrictions lifted. To record progress of shed construction a time lapse camera has been set up .

We are lucky that we were able to get through last year without any income and still be able to pay for & build the carriage shed. The railway's finances are now quite low but we are still waiting the second part of the Heathrow

Communities grant (not due until the shed is finished). It is still possible we might get some compensation from the Government. The Society have decided to give another £1,000 to the Company.

A Short Note on the Engineering Career of Dick Scholefield

David Seager

In the early 1970s, Dick joined the Systems & Weapons Division of EMI Electronics Ltd at Feltham, Middlesex where he worked as part of one of the teams developing Radar Proximity Fuzes for the UK MoD. He worked for some time on the SkyFlash fuze. He progressed from being a junior engineer learning the specific skills required to design and develop these products to a senior member of one of these teams.

By the early 1980s, Dick was 'headhunted' by the Technical Director to transfer to the recently established 'Active Infra-Red Systems Group. At the time, this group was researching the use of Infra-red lasers as alternative sources to radar in the latest generation of Fuzes. The young scientists and engineers in the group needed Dick's experience & expertise to enable them to produce a manufacturable product that would survive and operate in the harsh environments of an in-service missile not just the fragile and temperamental prototypes, so far produced.

He worked on Rapier for several years and the team produced a successful product that was manufactured and sold for many years.

His colleagues used the following terms to describe Dick, when asked this week. "He was a brilliant man and engineer", "very competent engineer indeed",

Dick (Richard) Scholefield.

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death in early January of our Mechanical Engineer, Dick Scholefield, after a long illness.

Dick was a Society member from very early on although not one of the founder members. With his mechanical knowledge he was very quickly invited to join the committee. Although we had no track and only two skip wagons he could see we would need some motive power if we were to do anything so he set about building what later became *Hounslow*. This locomotive proved indispensable when we started laying ballast.

He was also instrumental in purchasing the track and bridges from The Welding Institute and later still in purchasing the two Hunslet-Jenbach diesels. He will be sorely missed.



Pictures of Dick are rare. Here he contemplates lifting the track at TWI RL

“from the old school”, “the mainstay of the Rapier team”, “a true gentleman”, “such a talented and a nice person”, “totally unassuming and an absolute delight to work with”, and “always a great help”.

It was noted that “he had a lovely sense of humour” and, “on one occasion, when he was reprimanded for loading a trolley with heavy test equipment, he then proceeded to wheel it backwards and forwards over bubble-wrap, just because it amused him”. He was remembered for “a filthy brown teapot he had in his lab” and for his parties “one of which was that good that I don’t remember it well”.

He was described as being a ‘creative spirit’ and visiting the Technical Director just before he retired with a novel potentially patentable idea for a compact high frequency source. Unfortunately, Thales couldn’t find a way of exploiting the idea.

Given the small size of the sample of his ex-colleagues approached, it is obvious that he made a significant impact on those with whom he worked. Overall, I am impressed by the affection and esteem in which he was held.

One of his ex-colleagues suggested that ‘his passing will be a big loss for Kempton’.

Dick Scholefield remembered by Robert Leadbetter

Dick Scholefield was a great technical light in the life of the Metropolitan Waterworks Railway Society all though the years he was a member and CME. Two events stand out as far as I am concerned, The Welding Institute Railway and the Devon coaches.

When we heard that TWI was selling their railway Dick applied to buy it. However TWI only wanted it to go to another railway that would use it and not to the scrap man. Dick convinced them and we won the bid. There was a caveat and that was we were to remove it ourselves and in a reasonable time. It must be remembered that TWI was located in Granta Park, Great Abingdon, Cambridge 85 miles away. Dick financed the purchase but that was only the very beginning. The railway comprised of track and a welded steel viaduct. Pictures of the removal have appeared in this journal and the actual removal is a story unto itself. What might not be clear to our members is that for some considerable time Dick’s Land Rover journeyed the 85 miles to and from Granta Park almost every weekend and the journey averaged 2 hours. This must have cost £40.00 in fuel alone. Quite often the team stayed over on the Saturday night in the TWI hostel but that was not available if there were no TWI students also residing. I have memories of Dick and I staying overnight in the local village pub and walking in the dark trying to find the unmarked path to it. Dick was always “Mein host” for the stopovers.

After the track and viaduct had been dismantled and stacked, the return to Kempton had to be planned and financed. Although some volunteer’s journeyed to Granta park and helped it was basically a Dick Scholefield job.

The other great memory was the financing and transporting the Devon coaches from the Devon Railway Centre. This was a 163 mile journey taking at least 3 hours driving the Land Rover with trailer and coaches in tow. After facilitating the purchase and transport he was the CME for restoring them to working order.

Besides those two major memories I have working with him as our Chief Mechanical Engineer I shall always remember that he was giving advice to me about the restoration of the Darlington coach only one week before he died.

Rolling stock

It has also been decided that any additions to rolling stock will have to be approved by the Technical Committee. Approval will only be granted on the basis of need. At the moment we have more rolling stock than siding space. The extension track is blocked by stock from Bursledon and will need to be cleared before we get on with the rest of the extension. Once the carriage shed is complete we can fill that with vehicles that are being worked on. The “Running shed” will become available but its future use has not yet decided. There is a small amount of space in the “Station Siding” and that could be extended but it might still leave some vehicles off the track.

Livery Group

So far we have had no formal livery for our rolling stock although our two carriages follow a close pattern. With the progress on the Darlington Carriage it won’t be long before it reaches the painting stage (parts at least) so now is a good time to think about these things. With that in mind a small “Livery sub-committee” has been formed of Robert Leadbetter, Colin Clode, John Morson and myself.

There is more to choosing a livery that you might initially think. One for carriages, a posher one for 1st class, one for wagons, one for diesel locos and one for steam locos. Maybe another for the PW wagons. The results of our thoughts will be published sometime.

Web site

The new website is up and running

Free entry to KGE

I have only just discovered that MWBRs members can visit the Kempton Great Engines free (even on steaming days) and, reciprocally, KGES members are entitled to free rides on the railway (not on special event days). I doubt many members realised that as I didn’t.

Major John Poyntz

The death has been announced of Major John Poyntz is in the "Celebrating Lives" section of Issue 512 of "Steam Railway".

After a career in the Army (including 15 years at Longmoor Military Railway) he joined HM Railway Inspectorate looking after heritage railways 1989.

When he eventually retired from that job, in 2006, he became a consultant for the Heritage Railway Association and took on the task of advising heritage railways on matters of safety. For this service he only charged expenses. He visited us twice and I remember him saying that as we were within London he could travel from Harrow, where he lived, on his freedom pass so there would be no cost to us. He seemed quite impressed especially with our concrete sleepers and said "This is a small version of a main line railway!"

Working Parties

Reports by John Morson, David Lewis, Bernard Hales, Peter Binns and John Fevyer.

**Site Progress Report –
Week Ending October 23rd 2020**

1. Inspection pit cleared of water
2. Four stanchion plinths shuttered and holding down bolts positioned
3. Inspection of pit. Wall shuttering braced and made ready for pour next week
4. Adjustments to reinforcement to check cover to steel
5. Perimeter raised with braced boarding to correct pour height
6. DPM held in position and adjusted.
7. Site tidied up in readiness for pour
8. Working platform constructed over pit to operate from
9. Hounslow Building Control made site inspection

- Weather
1. Tuesday - dry - damp
 2. Thursday - some light rain
 3. Sunday - dry/damp and cool

Tuesday 27th October grey and drizzly

Most of the volunteers were working on the carriage shed. They were awaiting the arrival of the ready-mix concrete for the pit.

Meanwhile three of us were working on the Darlington carriage under the A316.

After loosening the stanchions that support the fibre glass roof we prepared to remove it. This first involved removing the “fairground” frieze that adorned the outer

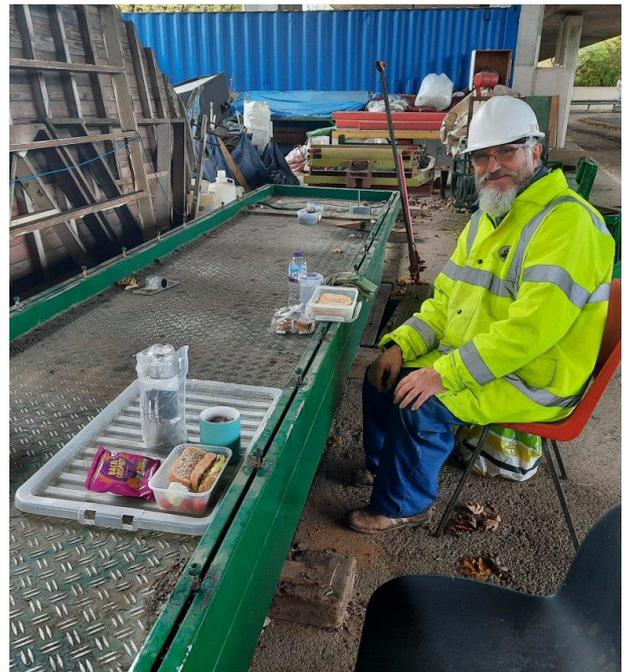


The dismantled Darlington carriage **JM**

edges of the roof. This in turn required the grinding off the heavily corroded nuts and screws the affixed it whilst being careful not to crack the fibre glass structure.

The ready-mix concrete truck was delayed our good fortune and we could pirate manpower in order to lift off the roof. The next job was to remove the carriage seats in order to remove the wooden seat slats so that they could be taken away for refurbishment. After that we had the problem of moving the carriage along the rail so that we could access

the second bogie. We needed to do this in order to remove the wheels before taking them to Riverside Engineering to have the inner flanges fitted. As the Ransomes and Rapier



...makes a socially distanced lunch table **RL**

six-ton crane was not available we had to recourse to partake of the method used by the ancients to move heavy items by the use of rollers. We jacked up the support pallets and inserted scaffolding tubes between them and pushed the carriage along the length of a bogie clear for its removal next Thursday.

This then will allow a team to start working on the seats



Concrete nearly fills the wall cavity. **JM**

and the roof and stanchions whilst giving the running gear team access to overhaul the bogies.

One slight advantage of clearing the bodywork of the carriage was that it made a COVID compliant table for lunch as can be seen from the photo.

Pit shuttering photos, all by David Lewis



The hole awaits shuttering



Jed positions the first side



Using the digger as a crane



First segment in place



Shuttering all finished

For those working on the carriage shed it was a frustrating day. The plan was to concrete the walls of the inspection pit. Although a lot of preparation had been done there was still a lot to do which could not be done in

1. Tuesday - dry - damp
2. Thursday - some light rain
3. Sunday - dry/damp and cool

Tuesday 3rd November

Thursday 5th November

Lockdown started – no work done while the regulations were studied & digested.



Finished concreting the pit JM

advance, such as pump out the small amount of water in the bottom of the wall cavity. The pit was tidied up. There was some rush to get all this done as the concrete lorry was supposed to arrive around 11am but he had been delayed and then he had a puncture. It was early afternoon before he arrived on site.

The concrete filled up the walls of the pit with some more going into four of the shed support bases which had had the studding plates added. With darkness approaching there was another rush to get it done.

The next job will be to level the carriage shed site ready for the floor reinforcing to be laid in place.

Thursday 29th October not very nice day.

It was too wet to do much in the field, so work concentrated on jobs under the A 316.

The second bogie was removed from the Darlington carriage. This was then turned upside down and the axles sets were removed ready for them to be taken away for modification.

We had been having problems with rain leaking into container 'A', so a large plastic sheet was placed over a large part of the roof and a tarpaulin was tied down over it to hold it all in place. Hopefully this will provide a temporary solution until we have a dry period when we can sort the problem out permanently.

It is that time of the year when the leaves blanket the ground and it was getting to the point where certain places were becoming rather slippery. Hence, we had a big leaf clearing exercise but this will not be the last of it, as there are still plenty of leaves on the trees.

Work was done on the brakes of the tractor to get it fully operational.

Site Progress Report – Week Ending November 1st

1. Inspection pit cleared of water
2. Pit walls cast
3. Four stanchion plinths cast
4. Removal of perimeter shutter make up to inspection pit
5. Check on drainage items received

Weather



Removing the hawthorn bushes John Feyver

However, at a committee meeting on 6th it was decided that there was nothing in the regulations to stop work, so it will restart on Tuesday 10th but with closer attention to social distancing and with fewer, invited, volunteers on site.

The only projects to be undertaken will be preparing *Darent* for its final “in service” boiler test and continuing preparing the base for the carriage shed. The shed will be ordered very soon.

Thursday 12th November

The big hawthorn tree by the north fire door of the carriage shed was cut down, chopped up and the stump taken out. Ditto the one by the south side door. Two others too close to the pipeline to remove were cut down. A largish area by the south shutter door was levelled. It was very muddy.

The new compactor was delivered last week, assembled on Thursday and tested OK.

Tuesday 17th November

Ballast was moved from near the gate in readiness for the crushed concrete to come in on Tuesday 24th. The crushed concrete will be dumped where the ballast was removed. The digger then went on to level the top end of the site some of which required a bit of hand digging.

Thursday 19th November

Final levelling and digging trench for drainage at the far end beyond the pit.

Site Progress Report - Week Ending November 22nd

1. Continued site levelling works to formation for general slabs
2. Continued site levelling works for track recesses

3. Excavation of trenches for drainage
 4. Commenced installation of drainage
 5. Continued manufacture of shuttering for slab and slab recesses
 6. Main shed building ordered with delivery date scheduled for 14th December
 7. Agreed final shed details with supplier re frame details, door sizes and locations.
 8. Pea shingle for drainage works ordered and delivered
 9. Finalised inspection pit steelwork details with fabricator.
- Weather:** Tuesday dry/damp, Thursday - some light rain Sunday - dry/damp and cool.

Tuesday 24th November Dry with a bit of sun.
Day of the drains; most of the day was taken up with laying out the drainage and getting the fall right.

Thursday 26th November
More levelling today plus starting to lay the crushed concrete which goes under the concrete slab. You can just see the new compactor in the background next to the pit.
The building has been ordered and it should be delivered on the 14th of December.

The work continues on site mainly levelling the ground in preparation for start of slab construction, trenching and installation of drainage – Some backfilling of the ground to slab formation has been started and advanced as much as possible. Drainage is being placed and levelled as soon as trenches become available. The inspection pit steel was made up in the steel fabricators and David Lewis visited them to view the progress and after it was sent for Galvanising (and is now delivered to us)

Building Control has been booked to inspect the drainage on Tuesday December 1st – and after that we can back fill the drain trenches and set up the ground profiles.

- Site Progress - Report Week Ending November 29th**
1. Continued site levelling works to formation for general slabs
 2. Continued site levelling works for track recesses
 3. Excavation of trenches for drainage
 4. Commenced installation of drainage
 5. Manufacture of stanchion plinth shutters
 6. Visit to steel fabrication works to see inspection pit steel
 7. Drainage installation setting out, levelling and pea shingle infill
 8. Commenced Type 1 backfill to slab areas
 9. Slab recess shuttering - continued and finished
 10. Slab stop end shutters started

Weather

1. Tuesday - dry - damp
2. Thursday - dry - cool
3. Sunday - dry/damp and cool

Construction report week ending 29th November

Thursday 3rd December Dull start turning to heavy rain.
The effort was concentrated on the carriage shed drainage system ready for Building Control to make an inspection this coming week. The day started off a bit overcast but it went steadily downhill until by lunchtime the heavens opened and the ground became so waterlogged that further work was stopped on the grounds of safety.
The metalwork to support the track over the inspection pit was delivered.

There was a problem with the dump truck (lack of lubrication on the wheel drive shaft coupling - broken off grease nipple) which was sorted out by lunchtime.

The last of the autumn leaves were also swept up. The long roller shutter door for the carriage shed is due to be delivered Thursday 10th December, with the main building kit arriving sometime during the following week.

- Site Progress Report – Week Ending December 6th**
1. Continued Site Levelling works to formation for general slabs
 2. Continued Site levelling works for track recesses
 3. Continued Excavation of Trenches for Drainage
 4. Continued Installation of Drainage
 5. Receive Inspection Pit Steelwork
 6. Continued Slab stop end Shutter manufacture
 7. Drainage Installation Setting Out, Levelling and Pea Shingle Infill
 8. Continued Type 1 Backfill to Slab Areas
 9. Clear Site Entrance of poor ground and fill over with Type 1 fill

Weather

1. Tuesday - dry - damp
2. Thursday - dry - cool
3. Sunday - very wet

Monday 7th December. It was a week of milestone achievement! – The underslab drainage was completed on Monday 7th

Tuesday 8th December Dull start, bright later but cold.

Work continued on the construction site over the last few weeks so drains were laid and bedded by this morning. Building Inspector came and ok'd the work today so we pressed on, the two Bernards (Chorley & Hales) on digger and tractor, Dave, Janet, John M, Jed on wheelbarrows Paul? and me on rakes. John F and Phil on rakes and wackerplate

Peter Binns
As the temperature was only 3 degrees C it was a wonder anyone turned up to volunteer. However, as I arrived there was quite a group working on the carriage shed.

I was very happy to see Bernard Hales driving the tractor at last. Hopefully we will see it on the surveyor's path on the deviation curve soon.



The compactor (wackerplate) in action Peter Binns

Meanwhile, three of us made a small progress on the Darlington carriage. Douglas Dick, Peter Binns and I

managed to grind off the bolts holding the roof support brackets to the fibre glass roof. These will be sand blasted and then painted to a scheme designated by the Livery Group. Next small job will be to treat the roof support posts as these are at the moment painted a mock golden colour. The three of us went home as it was too cold to continue.

Robert Leadbetter

We had a really good day's work with 12 volunteers working hard on the carriage shed site.

The drainage channels were filled up to the top of the pipes with pea shingle (we had a one-way system in place with the wheelbarrows moving several tonnes of material).



The tractor using its bucket at last John Morson

The Building Control engineer visited site and passed the drainage system, which meant we could then complete the covering of the drainage ditches with pea shingle and then type 1 crushed concrete on top. The site is now less like the mud bath it had been.

Next week the rooflights are due to arrive on Tuesday, with the main bulk of the building kit coming on Thursday.

Thursday December 10th

Continued levelling off the site to the correct height with the crushed concrete and compacting it with our new tampering machine. Lots more wheelbarrowing, tractor and digger operations needed to get the materials in the right places.

Some more work was done on rubbing down the outside of the enclosed coach.



The main roller door has arrived David Lewis

Just as we were packing up, there was a delivery of the first part of the main coach shed - the 6m long roller shutter door kit (some very heavy parts which we had to manhandle into the storage area).

John Morson

Sunday 13th December

On Sunday we dug the remaining foundation strip under the main door and prepared this for concreting on Tuesday. This will complete the footings and the remaining excavation will be for the pipework to the soakaway sometime next year

Site Progress Report - Week Ending Dec 13th

1. Continued site levelling works to formation for general slabs
2. Continued site levelling works for track recesses
3. Excavated trench for entrance strip footing
4. Continued installation of drainage
5. Receive inspection pit steelwork
6. Tested drainage
7. Drainage installation - finalised manhole heights and pipes through slab
8. Continued Type 1 backfill to slab areas
9. Drainage inspected by Building Control - All good
10. More fill received.

Weather

1. Tuesday - dry
2. Thursday - dry - cool
3. Sunday - damp -light rain

Deliveries to come this week are the roof light panels, the second roller shutter and the entire remaining shed components plus concrete and more fill of course.

Tuesday 15th December

On the Sunday the trench across the front on the Coach Shed had been dug out and the final adjustments were made early on the Tuesday, just before the concrete lorry turned up to fill the trench.



The trench under the door filled with concrete

Work then continued using the MOT Type 1 bringing the floor of the shed up to the correct height and compacting it.

The general gardening jobs continued and more work was done on the enclosed coach outside bodywork.

At the end of the day the truck bringing the Roof Lights of the coach shed turned up. It was lucky that there were still a few people around as it took 4 of us plus the driver to unload the 4m pallet.

Thursday 17th December

The levelling of the shed floor and bringing it up to the correct height was continued.

Another 20 tonnes of type 1 were delivered early on, so we could continue with this work.

The lorry carrying the main kit of parts of the Coach Shed turned up and it was all unloaded under the A316 in the semi secure area.

The temporary fencing was re-erected around the shed parts.

The last delivery (of the small Roller Shutter Door) has been delayed until early in 2021.

The lady's toilet door (which could not be shut due to the damp conditions) was worked on so that we could at least close it - more work needs to be done on it in the New Year.

One of our members has funded the purchase of a Mobile Belt Conveyor which will make the movement and distribution of loose building materials much easier, especially when we start work on the main line. This will arrive on site at the beginning of January. John M.



The tractor in action again

NOTICE OF AGM

The 18th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Metropolitan Water Board Railway Society will be held on Saturday 17th April 2021.

Due to the current COVID-19 emergency this will, as last year, not be a physical meeting but will be conducted on email.

All the meeting documents will be sent to members by email and we will use Survey Monkey for you to vote and send questions to the Committee.

Members without an email address will receive all the information by post. Voting results and answers to the questions will then be sent to all members.

Colin Clode, Chairman MWBRS



The main part of the building arrives

The conveyor arrives



Plant and Machinery Update Part 1-

Bernard Hales reflects on what one 'back-room' team has been up to in the 'back-yard workshop'.

Tractor

BH has been restoring our 20HP, 4WD tractor and fitting its new 4 in 1 front loader with help from several others since we bought it very cheaply in March 2018 !

The commissioning task was helping prepare the base for the coach shed, on what turned out to be our penultimate full volunteers session before the second lock down, when it successfully transferred a whole 20 tonne load of crushed concrete from the roadside gate into the workings in less than 5 hrs. This was good going as BH was using it in anger for only the second time whilst still getting familiar with the forest of levers (12 in all) to work the tractor and front loader, but not forgetting that old tractor brakes are notoriously feeble!

A satisfactory proving trial of the bits and pieces attended to during the gestation period:

- sealing odd hydraulic and lube oil leaks
- repairing voltmeter
- replacing voltage regulator
- fitting plastic plant trays over the top of rusted through mudguards
- new rear lights, flashing beacon and associated wiring
- replacing one front wheel rim and 2 front tyres
- refixing clutch pedal to the release shaft by replacing shattered Chinese roll-pins with a proper British solid taper pin
- dismantling and cleaning both brake actuators with limited success
- fabricating brackets and fitting 2 rear view mirrors
- acquiring s/h 5ft mower
- new rear lifting forks
- fitting the new Front End Loader

Now for our next exciting project:

Conveyor/elevator

A late Christmas present!

Looking to the future it was agreed such a machine would be desirable to help load and shift our increasing stockpiles of materials. Supported and generously sponsored by our late Chief Engineer, Dick Scholefield, BH successfully bid for a (c.1982) Downs 'Skyscraper' for us in a farm auction. It was delivered early in January.

Can you help?

We have built up this arsenal of useful kit (including crane, digger, dumper, whacker plate, 3 mowers, brushwood and grass trimmers, compressor, 4 generators) ready for the major works which building the railway entails, not forgetting routine landscape management. We have to commit time, effort and funds to the overhaul and regular maintenance of all this machinery.

Anyone who is lurking 'out there' with relevant experience, mechanical aptitude and willing to learn, and wants to support building the railway, please come forward!

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