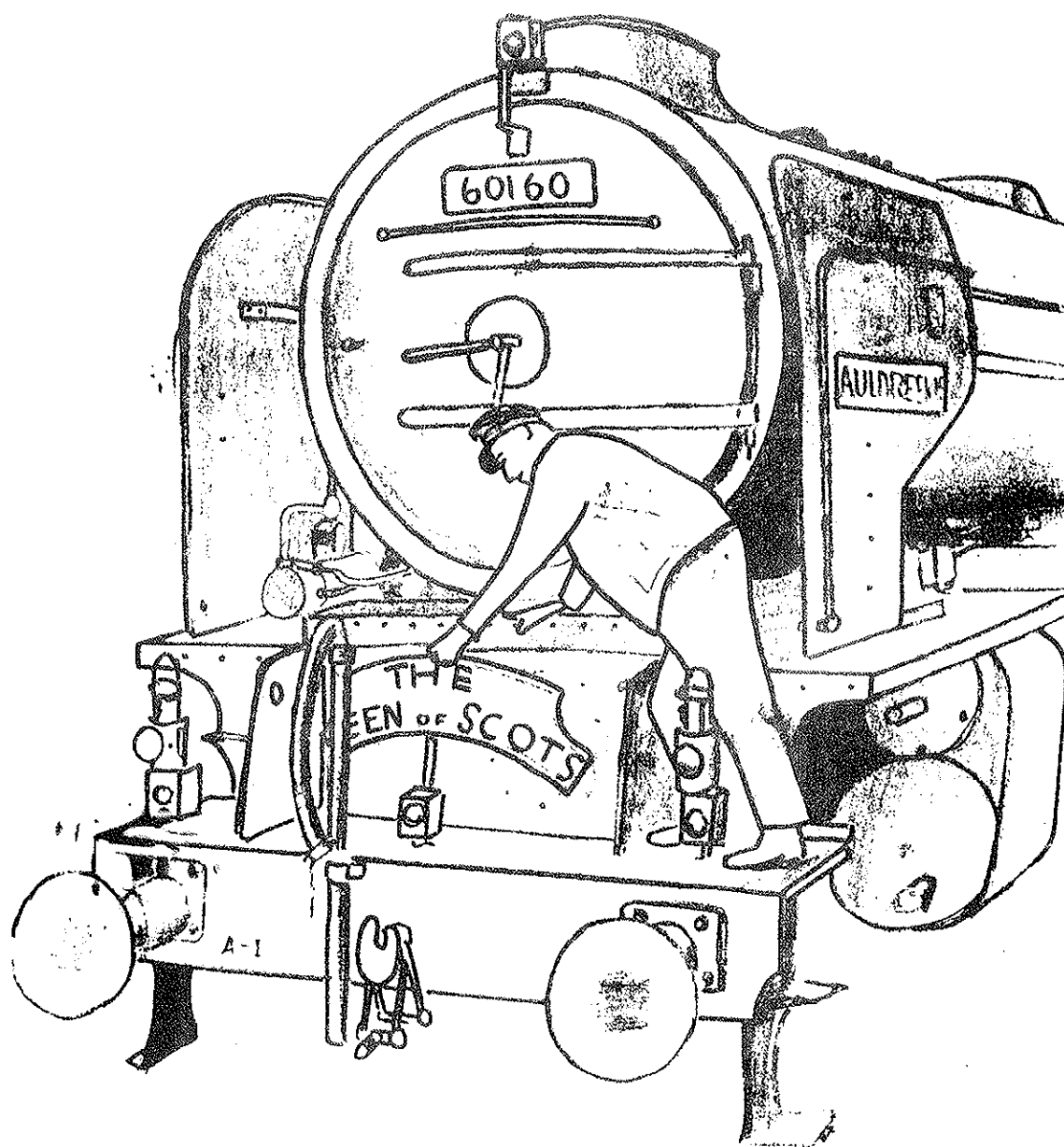


COCK O' THE NORTH

Newsletter of the Angus Railway Group

Handwritten signature



Drawing By DAVID MAHONEY

October 1975 Newsletter

E D I T O R I A L

In many ways the Angus Railway Group can pat itself on the back. Even though a very small group, compared with the nationally organised societies, it can probably claim a much higher percentage of members attending indoor meetings. In the past several very rewarding rail - tours have been organised, while at some time in the future the opportunity to organise a permanent static exhibition might even arise.

Basically our Group is in a position to expand, something which will be made very much easier if members can be regularly informed about what is happening. This is why the Newsletter is so important, especially for members who because of distance or other commitments are unable to attend many meetings. It reminds them that they belong to a Group which is interested in them.

We believe that we are the only Scottish based Group to issue a monthly Newsletter. Perhaps in this respect we are being too ambitious. The primary function of the Newsletter is to give members news of what is happening and this could be done in a single broadsheet. If the Newsletter is to continue in its present form, or hopefully expand, we simply must have more articles. A shortage of articles can only mean delays in publication and consequently delays in giving members our news. One article from each member per year would ensure continuation. Only recently the group purchased at substantial cost a very good printing machine and the photograph which won the competition for next year's front cover is splendid. So let's all set about to help produce an exciting, absorbing Newsletter and not leave everything to our official reporter. To ensure distribution before the first meeting of every month, the Editor would ask that all material for future issues be sent to him no later than the 20th of the previous month.

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2.
" HURRICANE " THOMSON.

The great, though short - lived, railway races to the North gave fame to drivers who were able to coax every ounce of energy from their chargers, without themselves coming to grief. Detailed records of these famous runs are readily to hand.

About one train, which regularly raced against the clock, there is very little recorded information. " The Beattie Express ", thundering down the bank from Lochmuir on its nightly run from Glasgow to Dundee, with its vans full of bread, scones and cakes has been described by many as a sight worth seeing.

It was a bigger thrill still for the man at the throttle, and in many cases on the run from Thornton to Dundee the driver was Mr Thomas " Hurricane " Thomson of Thornton Depot.

In fact it was on this very run that he earned the nickname " Hurricane " which stuck with him throughout the course of his railway career. At that time Beattie's Bakeries were not in operation in Kirkcaldy and all their goods for the East Coast came from the main bakery in Glasgow.

Like the fish trains, the twenty vans containing Beattie's foodstuffs were treated with priority. Woe betide the signalman who held up this train. As Mr Thomson explained " The poor man would be writing reports for a fortnight trying to explain why he'd held up even for a minute the Beattie Express. The railway company were so strict about lost time on this express goods run that even the drivers shuddered at the thought of falling behind schedule.

But one night Beattie's Express drew into Thornton Station several minutes behind schedule. The driver from Glasgow was a very worried man and asked Mr Thomson, who was taking over as relief driver, to try to make up lost time on the final run to Dundee. Mr Thomson did ! When he passed through Cupar, the signalman got on the phone and told Leuchars to keep the main line open. " There's something like a hurricane just passed me," were his words. And from that very night Mr Thomson was known as " Hurricane " Thomson.

Another time on a trip to Edinburgh he was behind schedule at Dalmeny, but on the run into Waverley made up lost time and drew into the station right on time. The guard was anything but happy at the speed, and said so in his report.

Back to " Hurricane " Thomson came the traditional large blue form to be filled

in for the railway company, giving an explanation. Unperturbed, " Hurricane " scrawled across the form, " I am not pleased with the guard's statement ". And that was the last he heard of the matter.

Like many other drivers, Mr Thomson used to smoke a clay pipe until it was black and seasoned. This was by tradition carried in the snout of his bonnet. These pipes usually had only small shanks and were called " jaw warmers ".

" Hurricane " was a typical example of how railwaymen could turn their hand even to the arts. He was awarded the certificate of merit for a water colour of Largo Parish Church in the British Transport Commission Railway Staff Association inter - regional railway exhibition at Glasgow. Later he was awarded a Silver Shield in a similar exhibition in London.

SCOTT BRUCE.

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GOINGS ON AT PERTH

During one September afternoon at Perth, the station pilot - an unidentified Class 08 shunter, became derailed at the catch points at the entrance to the carriage sheds. The driver had over - run the signals

No crane could be used to re - rail the locomotive, because of the overall station roof, so the use of jacks had to be improvised. (E.R. have not yet finished with the station roof at Perth - Ed.) The derailment caused considerable disruption to the station workings, as the engine blocked the entrance to the carriage sheds and necessitated diverting trains from platform 4.

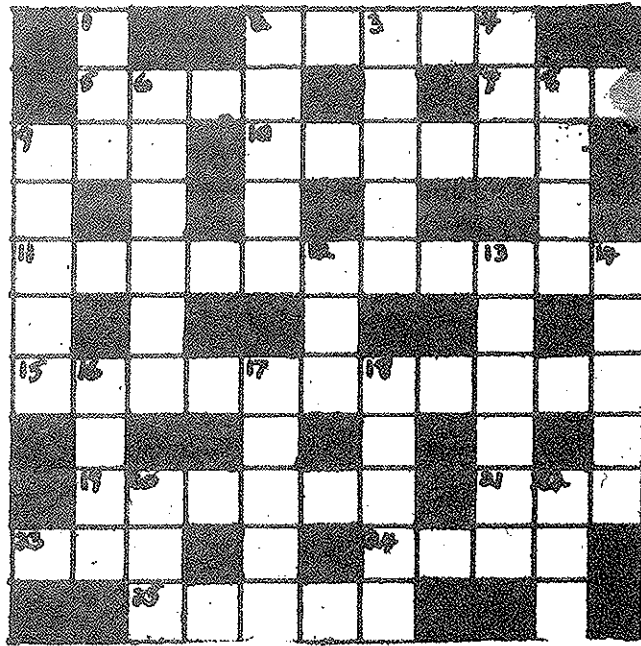
Having been re - railed, the engine was removed to Perth Stabling Point, from where it was despatched the following day to Glasgow for a three week sojourn

The only known regular working of Class 20 locos (Type 1) on the line is the once weekly Stanlow - Invergordon Butane Gas tank train. Electrically hauled from Stanlow to Mossend, near Glasgow, the Class 20's take over for the trip to Invergordon. Unfortunately for photographers, this working passes through Perth at 01.00 hours.

JOHN CUMMING

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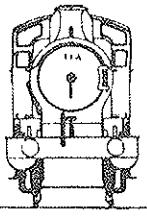
A REMINDER that the Annual General Meeting of the Angus Railway Group is to be held on Saturday 17th January 1976.

THE OCTOBER CROSSWORDGLUESAcross

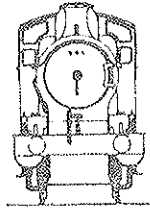
2. The basis of a good meal? (5)
5. Not short of a bob ! (4)
7. Inventor of a rack rail system (3)
9. Insane (3)
10. Stimulate (6)
11. You might meet him in No. 21. (8,3)
15. Place from which to control a railway (6,5)
19. Celestial spirit (6)
21. Hostelry (3)
23. The Lady (3)
24. Fasten (4)
25. Chop up and serve with tatties ! (5)

Down

1. Age (3)
2. Ponder (5)
3. A Salty Gent ? (5)
4. Consume (3)
6. Loafing (6)
8. Greek Letter (4)
9. Fashions (2)
12. Sick (3)
13. You, I and Joe ! (6)
14. Cloth (5)
16. Gradually Measure! (4)
17. Old, bearded man (5)
18. Telegram (5)
20. Round the edge (3)
22. Mesh (3)



LAST ON THE LAST



I hope to make this a regular feature in the magazine, so if you have a good quality photograph which you would like to be included in this feature please send it to your editor.

LAST ON THE LAST, BUT, ON LAST ON THE LAST, WHERE? AND WHEN? THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN ON THE LAST DAY OF PASSENGER SERVICES ON A SCOTTISH COUNTRY BRANCH LINE.

I will give you a clue about the photo below, it was strictly not the last train. But it was the last steam passenger train from this station on the last day of passenger services, although freight trains did continue to call at this station



Photo supplied by Lindsay Horne.

for a few years after this photograph was taken.

The answer will be in the next issue of Cock O' the North.

A.G.M.

Please REMEMBER, that our A.G.M. will be on the 18th January, 1976 at 7 p.m. in the Cambustay Hotel.

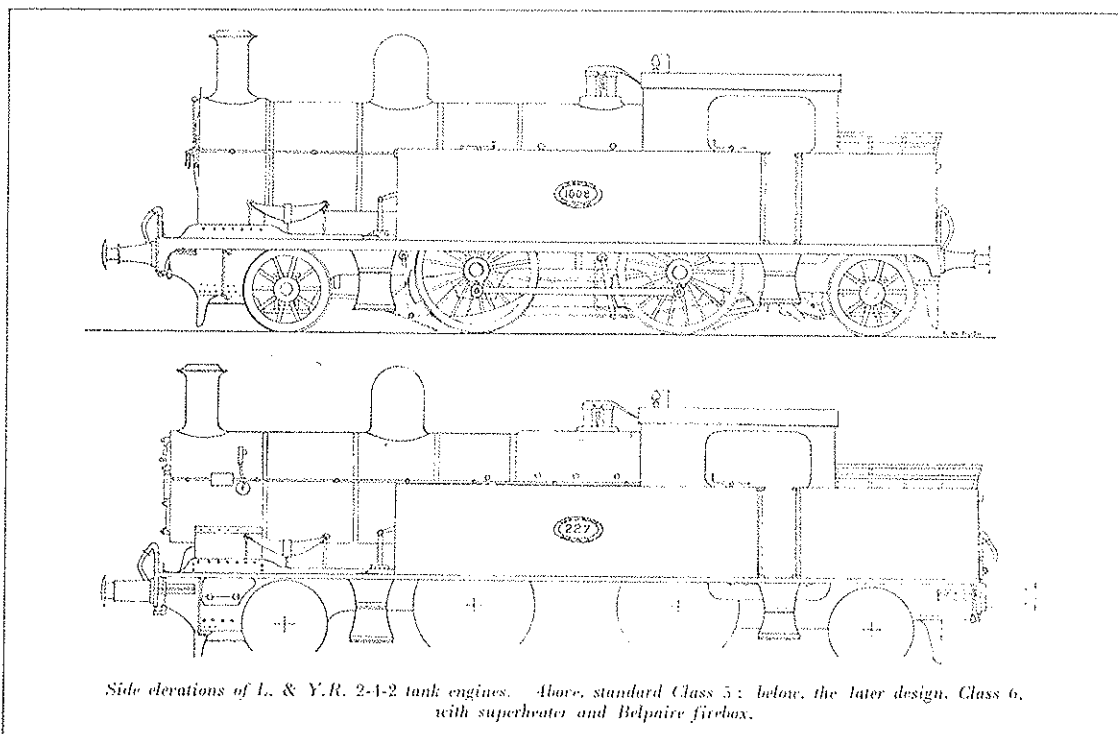
All motions and nominations will have to be given or sent to the Secretary as soon as possible, in writing and signed. Copies of all such motions will be sent with the agenda for the meeting.

ARDLER PRESS

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L and Y 2-4-2 Radial Tank Engines

These drawings, by R. W. Rush, originally appeared in Model Railway News for September 1939.



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