

# COCK O' THE NORTH

NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP



Our Class 40 negotiates the scissors crossing at Perth prior to hauling the last passenger train to Forfar on 5th June.

EDITORIAL - As we go into another series of Winter meetings, many members will be swapping tales of their own particular Railway memories of the Summer. Probably the single most talked about event will be the "Strathmore Sauna" of June 5th, our first last train. The bustle and excitement of that glorious day contrasted starkly with my own most recent visit to Forfar - rusting rails, signal box boarded up and a general air of dereliction. At least it can be said that the ARG gave many the last chance to enjoy the beauty and fine engineering of the old Caley main line.

At the northern end of the valley it was heartening to see on BBC's Reporting Scotland of the BRPS's efforts to move the Kinnaber Junction signal box to their own line, out of the way of BR's re-alignment plans. Their reasoning is clear when you study the photo in our Steam Album Vol.2 (p.24) of the kink in the North British approach line. Sharp eared listeners will also have heard Neil Mudie of BBC state that "the main line from the junction to Brechin(!) was closed to passenger trains in 1967" Surely a case for an ARG educational documentary to put the record straight.

Having "volunteered" to edit the Newsletter I hope I can keep up the high standards of previous issues - which of course depends on the quality of contributed items, so please keep 'em rolling in.

Ken Morris.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Forteviot Derailment - Tuesday May 4th, 1982

Fifty-eight people were injured, four seriously, when the 1335 express from Glasgow to Aberdeen was derailed following a collision with a tractor and bogie on a farm crossing. About 30 other passengers clambered from the wreckage shocked but otherwise unscathed. Witnesses said it was a miracle that so many had escaped serious injury and that no one had died.

The accident happened at 2.50p.m., about one mile east of Forteviot level crossing. Only one of the seven coaches on the train remained on the track after the collision, which happened while the train was travelling at 45/50 mph. After the train hit the tractor it ploughed down a 25' embankment coming to rest on its side in a shallow burn. The force of the impact turned the locomotive through 180 degrees and the leading cab became the trailing cab in a matter of seconds!

About 200 yards of track were torn up and distorted as the train ripped along the embankment, three of the coaches bypassing the loco as it burrowed into the soft earth. Two coaches toppled over on the North side and ended up at angles of more than 90 degrees while another nosedived down the South side. The other coaches were also canted at crazy angles and one, the Buffet, came to rest on the side of the locomotive.

Within minutes of the alarm being raised, major incident procedures had swung into operation - a fleet of six ambulances along with fire engines and Police vehicles streamed out of Perth. In Perth, normal traffic came to a standstill at junctions to give clearance to the rescue vehicles through the traffic lights.

Long before reaching the scene, rescuers could see the seriousness of the situation. As they raced along the hillside road to Dunning they had a panoramic view over the Earn valley, the scene marred by the strewn wreckage of the train.

Those passengers who could walk were taken to Forteviot Home Farm where they rested on hay bales in a barn until transport could be arranged to take them on to Perth. Farmer's wife Mrs Jessie Kettles, helped by her husband John and neighbours, made tea for the travellers. Among the injured were the three crew members, Driver Robert Johnston, Glasgow, Guard Donald McLaren, Perth, who was released after treatment, and Stewardess Ellen Mooney also of Glasgow, who was detained in PRI with a suspected fracture. 10 passengers were also detained overnight in hospital.

The collision destroyed both tractor and bogie. The tractor driver, Mr Gordon Carnegie of Craigend Farm, Arbirlot, Arbroath had been working in the area with a contract squad sowing beans. He said that he had been rolling the fields and was driving from one field to another when the tractor stuck on the line. When he saw the crossing gates opening, he realised that a train was coming and started to run up the line to warn the driver, but was too late.

For those interested, the train formation was :-

Locomotive	47 522
BSO	Sc 9433
FO	Sc 3243
SO i/c Buffet	Sc 6606
SO	Sc 5664



Perth General on the Sawbats (contd.)

The latter train divides here and runs forward at 4.07 and 4.20 respectively, the first portion for Carlisle (arrive 8.33) and Huston (arrive 3.50am). The second portion runs to Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Princes Street, both arriving at 6.25pm. Sleeping cars are run to London from Aberdeen, also a dining car from Perth to Carlisle on the first portion - a curious combination not often met with in this country.

The N.B.R.'s Edinburgh express leaves at 4.10pm and runs to Hilton Junction between the above two trains of the Caledonian Railway. At 4.20 a C.R. fast train runs to Dundee departing from the Down Dundee platform in the usual manner; and 4.30 sees an N.B.R. slow train leave for Edinburgh. The day's events are conclude with the arrival at 7.16 of a similar train from Waverley.

It is hoped that this article, which appeared in the September 1914 Edition of the Railway and Travel monthly will be of particular interest to our members resident in the Fair City and suburbs! Perhaps it might inspire someone to outline present day Sunday activities at Perth thereby allowing comparisons to be made, bearing in mind of course that the Strathmore, Glenfarg and Dava routes along with Dundee West and Edinburgh Princes Street stations are no more.

L.A.C. Horne

#####  
Edinburgh Murrayfield Signal Box - 1928

Sited above Murrayfield Rugby ground, this box was visited and described by the author Dell Leigh in his book "On the Line", as follows.

"Two men only were there inside who smiled their welcome and went on with their jobs, extracting interminable units from a thicket of signal levers with heaving shoulders, while we crouched over the fire, drinking tea out of blue enamelled mugs; and I watched the head signalman.

He wore gym shoes, a shirt and trousers, and he held the gates of Edinburgh in his two hands. The levers, he explained, were in series, with their distant and home lockings. He explained other things between the shoulder heavings, which were very nearly as Sanskrit to me. But I saw the Glasgow and Aberdeen and Perth expresses looming up; watched them hurtle by; saw his needle glance at the rear coaches to see that the tail lamps were on before giving two beats on his bell to the next cabin; saw him "book them" on the sheet; agreed with him that booking up trains was the signalman's bogey (all men of action loathe pens) - and then asked him questions in my language.

. . . No it wasn't one of those electro-pneumatic installations here - though the Company had them elsewhere of course - no reason for it here. Simple enough. See? - the 6.30 Glasgow is on offer, and all you've got to do is pull over numbers 49, 50, 51, 52 and 54. He proceeds to do so, and the place reverberates with the "s-a-n-k... c-l-a-n-k" of his movements. Now she is all clear and has got a run through. And he tells the next man ahead by means of the many little tinkling telegraph instruments.

Someone speaks to him and the sentence opens with "tonk... tonk... tink, tink, tink", and continues in that strain. A light and dissipated-looking engine speaks from the door of a shed hard by, asking "hooch... hooch" to be allowed out for the evening. My man complies with the numbers 38, 7, 8, 6 and 37. Another engine roaring at large (aye 'e's got a job presently - the 7.05 Dundee Goods - says the signalman) has got itself locked in the siding by overrunning a point, and dismal grunts from it proclaim the fact - until released by No. 24, and a mild Cabin expletive.

The lovely lights of evening, the grey smudge of Edinburgh Castle against a background of deepening crimson and blue mean nothing to him. He does not see them, all that concerns him, and deeply, is the thought that the 6.03 Dalmeny is half a minute late.

But as I walked down the little wooden steps I thought of the many times I had swished past these cabins in my lordly N.B.R. trains, up and down the vast expanse of line, and had seen a grey shirted figure glancing down from a window. An impersonal sort of chap he was then. A very real and likeable individual now - a good man swinging a man's job....."

Love me, love my Railway

tale

The following appeared in the Railway Modeller December 1966 - an illuminating /  
by a Mrs M. Gibson.

"You mean you actually LIKE the thing?" This, accompanied by a look that I have suddenly grown horns, is the usual reaction of railway modelers' wives when my husband proudly announces my interest in his hobby. Their husbands gaze at me in a mixture of disbelief and, (according to Alan) envy. I stand and feel embarrassed. Surely it is not so odd to like one's husband's railway? Or if it is, it shouldn't be.

The railway, or the idea of it, began the week after we were married. Alan's previous interest had always been model aircraft, but it was becoming increasingly difficult to fly them (we lived in London at the time), so he decided to make a railway, which could be worked at home.

"Home" was a couple of rooms 8' square in a flat, so it goes without saying that we had a folding baseboard. Alan experimented with various methods of wagon building; we bought the odd locomotive or two and one or two coach kits. I offered encouragement, or just listened, whichever was more appropriate. Now, you cannot avoid a railway in just two small rooms. It was obvious I would never lick 'em. The only alternative was to join them, so I did and that is what I would advise every model maker's wife to do, unless she wants to end up as a disgruntled "railway widow"!

Alan always explained everything I wanted to know, and I think most husbands would be equally forthcoming, provided their wives seemed interested. At first I think I was just being polite, but once I began to learn, genuine interest took over.

Then we moved to Grimsby, to a big furnished flat, so the Aultbrig and Mingulay Railway (hereinafter referred to as the A.M.R.) was dismantled, everything packable was packed, and the hardboard of the folding layout was given to a do-it-yourself enthusiast.

Alan expected to do National Service after long deferment, and spend the waiting time building a station, Mingulay, as no-one would offer him a job. Then at long last we heard from the National Service - He had failed the medical! More packing, this time for a move to Coventry, where we managed to acquire two furnished rooms. Alan stayed there, while I returned to Grimsby to finish my term's teaching. That over I too headed for Coventry to be greeted by an enthusiastic Alan who had "something to show me". I was greatly intrigued and could hardly wait to get back to the flat.

The surprise turned out to be a railway, set out along the wide mantelpiece. Alan presented it to me as though it were a ballon of French perfume, so I received it in the same spirit. It stayed there during our five months at the flat, collecting dust and providing a talking point for our fellow tenants.

Then we bought a house, some wood and some fibreboard and the A.M.R., now 6'6" x 7'6" took up residence in the box room which the builder had euphemistically described as a third bedroom. It went all round the walls and you crawled in underneath. But Alan did not bother with it. I waited for his enthusiasm to return, but it did not. Finally I asked him "What about the railway?"

"It's up there."

"I know."

"Well there's not really enough room for two up there, and I don't like leaving you up there on your own."

The mountain was obviously going to have to come to Mahomet..... "Fetch it down," I said. So, there it was, on a shelf 15' long, along our living-room wall. Mingulay was in the middle and the track disappeared into a tunnel at each end. There were lights that lit, giving the authentic gloom of a railway at night and I painted a background to merge with some cottages cut from a background sheet. Alan rather forced my hand there, painting a pitch-black sky, then standing gloomily beside it waiting to be rescued. We liked it! Visitors asked if I minded it being there - I did not. But there was just one thing wrong with it. It was too small. No room at all for the proposed Aultbrig.

Alan took it down, ordered vast quantities of wood and fibreboard, and proceeded to build a portable layout 12' x 7'6", which would "slip away to nothing, darling", in the third bedroom, and could be brought down and erected when required. In actual fact it filled the bedroom completely, and took time and muscles to erect.

(Contd. over).

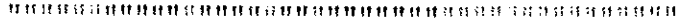
We had just reached this stage when a noisy family moved in next door, so I spent my holiday house hunting. One day I phoned Alan at work. It was at least a thousand more than we intended to pay; it was detached; you could see the Trent valley main line; it had a third bedroom 12' x 7'6" ....!

"Buy it!"

So here we are .The railway just fitted the third bedroom. We began to lay more track, build more wagons. Alan builds very good wagons. They are the best I have ever seen, even allowing for the exhibitions we have been to. We tried pushing a train of them along the track as far as we had laid it. The buffers on the long vehicles locked. Alan left the railway alone and brooded. Now, if we had more space, the curves on those points need not be quite so tight...

The floorboards for the loft did not take long to lay - not with two of us at it. The baseboards went through the trapdoor with half an inch to spare, and gave us enough length for a dogsbone of track. We must get that done at the double, as my father is coming to play with it! The A.M.R. will have to stay in the loft now. We have nowhere else. It will eventually extend all around the loft, giving us a layout 25'x12' which sounds just right. He could not possibly want it any bigger than that - or could he ?

Comments on the above would be welcome from the other halves of members. The Editor is a masochist! K.M.



Can you spot 48 stations past and present between Tay and Moray Girth?

OYNETHAGRENNETSSEAY  
GEBELUDACREIERTIT  
IANURCHEEIVREBISON  
ALGPARTSSESODMSOE  
RNYIVMEHTREPLZATH  
CEVTFATIDONSTREETT  
UEFCHEONEZFSMEIGLE  
TRYPTONIEENCEGEL  
HGVKIYENZELLALMO  
LNINOLGLASTERLAWR  
IEEOBANSTORZMISAR  
ELHCSNIYNDUEOOSRD  
GAYKRIKYRAMDNTETR  
ADALRG RULTIPTYLLO  
AGLACAMBUSOMAYOBF  
RAPHENPLAIDYRRABL  
AMHCLINCHTURSDRA

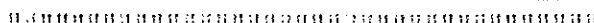
Answers will be given in next issue, unless any frustrated member is seen about to throw himself from the High Girders, when a full list of the contents of the above square will be passed to him from the next Special hauled by C.R. 828 - shouldn't be too long a wait! As a clue, all stations are to the East of the Grampians, and may be read up, down, back, front, diagonally (all in straight lines).

A.D. Williams



Book Review : Most recent publication from the N.B. Traction Group is a collection of photographs of North Fife. Edited by A.W. Brochie and J.J. Merd. It includes some historic material, covering all the towns and villages of the area, with the notable exception of St Andrews - for a future issue? Transport by rail, river and road are included, also illustrations of the general way of life of this predominantly agricultural community. Altogether a fine companion for its predecessors and no doubt causing endless discussion and argument among those with memories of the times illustrated.

ISBN 0 905069 18 8



Jim Page tells me that he has a Scalespeed panel-mounted unit & transformer for sale. All reasonable offers to Jim (or myself for passing on.)

