

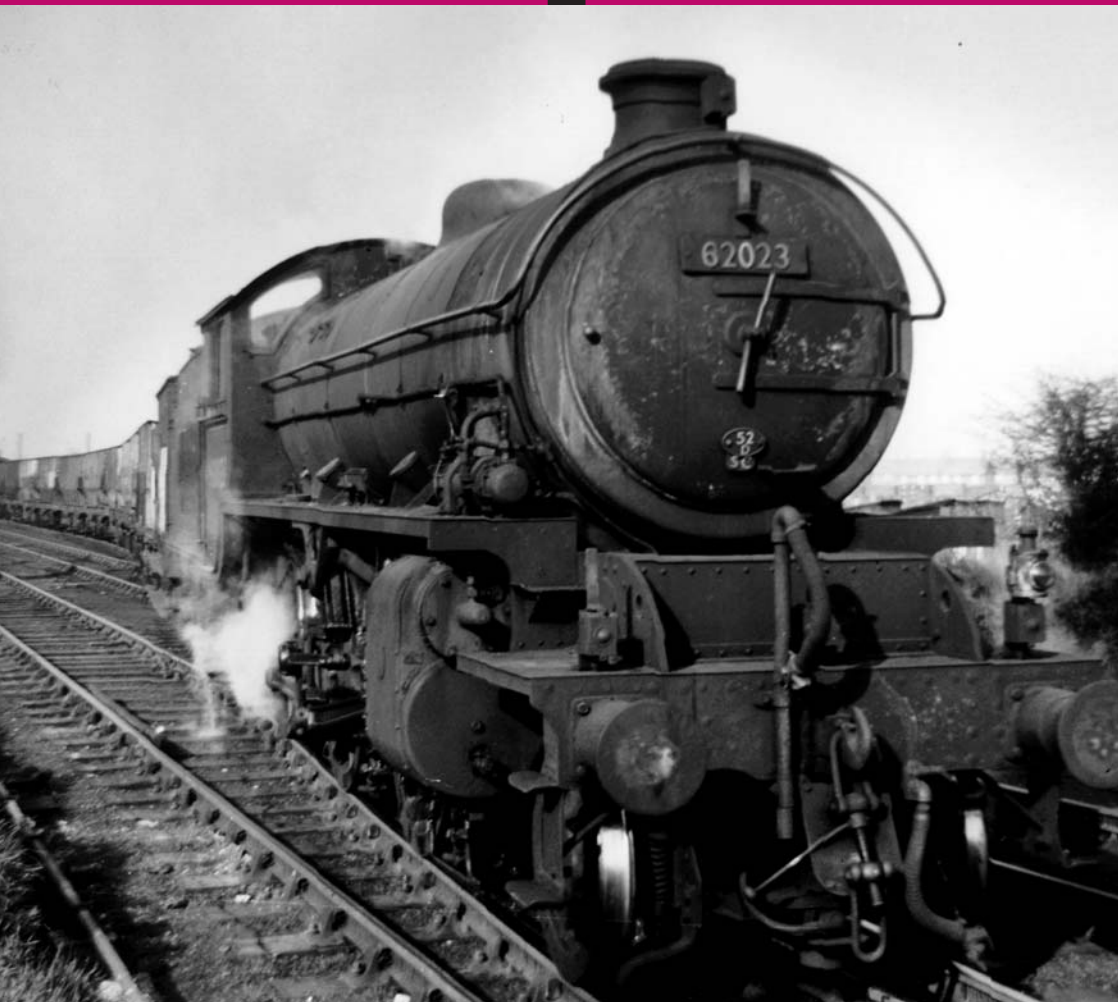
*'Linking Coast to Castle'*

# The Link



**Aln Valley Railway**

**Society Magazine**



**No. 21**

**Autumn 2001**

# ALN VALLEY RAILWAY SOCIETY

## PRESIDENT

**His Grace, The Duke of Northumberland**

## VICE PRESIDENT

**The Right Honourable Alan Beith, M.P.**

## COMMITTEE

### *Chairman*

**Stuart Manley**

Old Station House, Wagonway Road, Alnwick, NE66 1QG. (01665 603311).  
E-mail: "stuart@barterbooks.co.uk"

### *Vice Chairman*

**Kay Seymour-Walker**

Embleton Tower, Embleton, Alnwick, NE66 3UW. (01665 576274).  
"E-mail: kay-s-w@supanet.com"

### *Secretary*

**William Stafford**

1 Clive Terrace, Alnwick, NE66 1LQ. (01665 604969).  
E-mail: "wrstafford@bun.co.uk"

### *Treasurer*

**Eddie Fitch**

39D, Bondgate Without, Alnwick, NE66 1PR. (01665 604508).

### *Fund Raising*

**Neil Brison**

6 Royal Oak Gardens, Alnwick, NE66 2DA. (01665 602349).

### *Membership Secretary*

**Chris Freeman**

12 The Haven, Beadnell, Chathill, NE67 5AW. (01665 720182).

### *Magazine Editor/Press Liason*

**Keith McNally**

17 Hallwood Close, Nedderton, Bedlington, NE22 6BG.  
E-mail: "keith.mcnelly@virgin.net"

### *Legal Matters*

**Michael Smithson**

2nd Floor, Ward's Building, 31-39 High Bridge, Newcastle, NE1 1EW.  
(0191 2331444).

### *Volunteer Co-ordinator*

**Barry Shell**

31, Millfield Court, Bedlington, NE22 5EW. (01670 823638).  
E-mail: "baz-shell@northumbria-rail-group.org.uk"

### *Other Members*

**Reg Kemp**

30 Hollywell Dene Road, Hollywell Village, NE25 0LB. (0191 2376442).

**Martin Robinson**

42 Orchard Avenue, Acomb, Hexham, NE46 4QU. (01434 601900).

**Ken Middlemist**

19 South View, Hipsburn, Lesbury, Alnwick, NE66 3PZ. (01665 830619).

## NON-EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

### *Covenantors*

**Joe Hedley**

16 Ridgewood Villas, South Gosforth, Newcastle, NE3 1SH. (0191 2854737). E-mail: "avrt@bigfoot.com"

### *Corporate*

**Alan Fendley**

E-mail: "fendley@rothbury.ndo.co.uk"

## CONTENTS

### **3 From the Chair**

Stuart Manley

### **5 Railways Around Amble**

Bart Rippon

### **10 Mail Bag**

Your Letters

### **11 Hands On**

David Shell

#### ***Front cover:***

An Alnmouth K1, 2-6-0, 62023 is backing down to a guards' van in readiness to depart from Amble with another load of empty coal hoppers on a sunny summer's day on 6th July, 1965

Photo: Bart Rippon.

#### ***Rear Cover, upper:***

Alnmouth's K1, 2-6-0, 62021 is shunting coal hoppers in Amble's yard while an NCB, 0-6-0 tank, waits to take them down to the staithes on 13th May, 1965.

Photo: Bart Rippon.

#### ***Rear Cover, lower:***

Another load of coal has been delivered to Amble ready to be exported. K1, 2-6-0, 62006 is in reverse gear going to collect the next rake of coal hoppers on 15th April, 1965

Photo: Bart Rippon.

"The Link" is published by the Aln Valley Railway Society, Old Station House, Alnwick, NE66 1QG.

Web Site - <http://www.avrs.co.uk>

E-mail: [editor@avrs.co.uk](mailto:editor@avrs.co.uk)

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Committee or Editor. The editor reserves the right to amend or reject any submitted item, or part thereof.

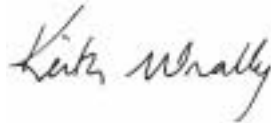
© Aln Valley Railway Society

No material may be reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of the copyright holder.

## **Editorial**

Like me, I'm sure your mouth will have dropped on hearing the fate of Railtrack. So it will come as a surprise to you when I say, "*All is not lost - read what our chairman has to say*".

Errata: The writer of the article "Another Coast to Castle Link?" in *The Link* magazine, no. 20, was Roger Jermy rather than the David Jermy stated in the header. My apologies Roger - a slip of the brain!



Printed on Tyneside by Potts Printers Ltd., Stuart House, Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate, North Shields. Tel. 0191 2570817

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



**STUART MANLEY**

*writes from the Station Master's desk at Alnwick*



**I was, frankly, dreading having to write another 'We are still waiting for Railtrack' report. You can imagine my dismay on hearing the news in October that Railtrack was being put into administration – surely an excuse for further delays if ever I saw one. So my astonishment two days later was total when I received in the post, complete on newly headed 'Railtrack in administration' notepaper, our 'Heads of Terms' for the Alnmouth site lease!**

Yes, it has finally arrived. Over a year and a half after we asked for it, the ball is at last back in our court.


Naturally, the initial reaction was one of elation, both for me and for the rest of our committee as the news was spread. Whereas that elation remains, close study of the document gives plenty of reasons for caution – we are not there yet. But it is a significant step forward, a vital hurdle overcome.

So what does the proposed lease say? In a nutshell, the conditions are draconian – if we do ANYTHING that hinders the operation of the East Coast Main

Line, there will be hell to pay. And it goes on to spell out the risks in great detail. Draconian, but it is hard to feel that such concerns are unfair, or even any more than might be expected.

Building railways next to an active premier main line station site is big boy stuff.

Although the conditions are fearsome, the terms show every sign that Railtrack are bending over backwards to be helpful. They are open to our proposals, offering a 50-year lease linked to the profitability of the railway. This would be especially helpful in the early years.

There are many financial implications, with, at the moment, an open ended liability for any Railtrack expenses during construction. The document has been studied by Michael Smithson, the Trust's solicitor, and all other committee members. Michael and Kay have done initial reports and areas of concern are being identified. If there are parts that we feel we cannot live with, we will be approaching Railtrack to see what can be done about them. David Morgan of the Heritage Railway Association has 

also promised to help with advice once he is well again. Comparisons with the agreements of other Heritage Railways leasing from Railtrack may also help.

### **False Dawns**

The first question I was asked, when telling the news to a Society member was “When do the diggers move in?” Hold hard! – if there is one thing we have learned over the past years it must surely be about false dawns! We have jumped a crucial hurdle, without which we could not have moved forward, but there are still hurdles ahead, any one of which could bring us crashing to the ground.

There are two major obstacles still in the way, and any number of other possible blocks.


The first is planning permission. The Railtrack proposed lease clears the way for us to put in our application and Martin Robinson is already working on it. Much of the plans and land ownership information is already ready, but we still need our Environmental Statement, all to be gathered together into our formal application. Six months is Martin’s current estimate.

We feel there are good chances of our application succeeding, not least because the railway has been adopted within the Alnwick District Plan as a desirable development, but you can expect some vociferous objectors. Luckily, I believe the majority of the people in the area are strongly for us. At one time Alnwick had only one major tourist asset – Alnwick Castle. To that has been added the water gardens and the emergence of Barter

Books, with its 200,000 annual footfall. Plenty of people now see that if you can add a steam railway to that package, mid-Northumberland will have an unbeatable cluster of attractions that will attract thousands of extra tourists both nationally and even internationally. With the added bonus of an extra public transport option – 40 minutes from Alnwick to Newcastle matches the car and beats the bus completely.

The second obstacle, and a showstopper if we do not succeed, is finance. Because it has taken a year and a half to get the Railtrack agreement, it is two years since we last checked if our commercial sponsors are still with us. Money does not necessarily stay on offer for ever – circumstances change. So while Martin is beavering with planning permission, others will be beavering to firm up our commercial support. And adding to it – for it is clear from the Railtrack document that we will need considerable finance

It will be cheap compared with building a railway at ‘full price’, but expensive compared with many other Heritage Railways, because it is clear that much of the work on the Alnmouth site will have to be done by contractors rather than volunteers, to satisfy the Railtrack conditions.

Daunting indeed! I am well aware, for I have been told it often enough, that if any one of dozens of our Society members win the lottery, our financial troubles will be over. It is very sweet of all who offered this, but I suspect that such a fairy tale ending is unlikely. I believe we will have to do it the hard way by 

convincing enough sponsors that this is a good thing to be involved in, and explaining the benefits of their name on the ECML and high profile involvement, and any other perks we can offer.

But there is one giant difference that we can now offer our sponsors: If the finance is raised, the railway **WILL** be built, rather than **MAY** be built [Objectors permitting! - Ed] ☐

# Railways Around Amble

More memories from Bart RIPPON

**A** mble, situated at the mouth of the River Coquet, lay at the most northerly end of the Northumberland coalfield. Its growth from a small hamlet to a thriving port was due to the meteoric rise of coal production and export. Coal was first mined at Acklington as long ago as 1670, long before there was any real worth in the product. This, however, led to quite intensive mining taking place in the area in later years.

First there was Broomhill Colliery, whose mining lease was granted to sink a shaft in 1773. By 1808, coal from Broomhill Colliery was shipped out of the harbour at Amble. It was not until 1830 that Radcliffe Colliery came into being under the ownership of Earl Grey. Land was released by William Dand, A.M. Wellwood, Thomas G. Smith and others, which permitted not only the workings of the colliery but also a railway line to the harbour beside the tiny hamlet of Amble. By 1838, plans were drawn, and the colliery and railway began the following year. The single track railway from Broomhill led down

to the harbour, where staites had been specially erected for the export of the coal. Coal was then transported to the port at Amble, using the gentle sloping gradient towards the harbour where the wagons were escorted by boys, after unloading, the empty wagons were hauled back to the colliery by horses.

This trade in coal promoted the use of the harbour and resulted in an Act of Parliament of 1837 to form the Warkworth Harbour Commissioners.

Over a period of time, other collieries were to spring up around the area. Newburgh, Bondicar, Togston, eventually Hauxley. Not all these collieries were operating at the same time, however, but this activity resulted in increased coal production that, naturally, needed to be transported.

Railways built by the colliery owners, began to spring up connecting the different local collieries.

Meanwhile, the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway were forging a route towards Berwick in the hope of reaching the great Scottish capital of Edinburgh. 🐾



**At the Chevington end of Amble's branch line stood a water tower and crane.**

*Photo: B. Rippon c1970*

The East Coast Mainline opened in 1846 and gave rise to the North Eastern Railway. Always looking for ways of increasing its revenue, it took the opportunity of coal transportation and opened a single branch line from Chevington to Amble, connecting with the colliery lines at Broomhill.

From the 5th September, 1849, the single track line was opened to Amble for the conveyance of all freight.

In 1875 a goods station was to be

built at Amble but it took until the following year for the proposed plan of a passenger station. This proposal included a warehouse and goods siding. The station itself was to be a single platform edifice, 300 feet in length, with all necessary buildings. At its east end there was a facility for the loco to run round its train and also the benefit of a watering column. On the approach road to the station was to be built the station master's house and two NER cottages.

The station finally opened and



passenger working was officially introduced between Chevington and Amble on Whit Monday, 1879. A daily service of five trains, was to work each way with a special service on Saturdays. There were frequent excursions but no Sunday service.

**Two Lines are Better Than One**

Prior to the opening of Amble’s station, access to the harbour was by single track but the need for station traffic

resulted in the doubling of the track system in Amble.

An agreement was made in April, 1893, between Broomhill Colliery and the NER to double the track from Broomhill to Amble to ease the congestion that was building up. This took place after the withdrawal of the Broomhill & Amble Railway Bill deposited by the owners, Messrs. Sowerby & Andrews.

For the NER to double the line, it ➡

AMBLE BRANCH.																							
Fares from CHEVINGTON BRIDGE			UP.		WEEK DAYS.						Fares from AMBLE			DOWN.		WEEK DAYS.							
1st	2nd	3rd	Dep.	Arr.	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	
...	...	...	Newcastle	Dep.	8	1 30	7 30	4	30	11 15	...	...	...	Amble	Dep.	8	30	9 35	8	5	10 5	8 55	9 10
...	...	...	Berwick	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	Alwick	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	Chevington	Dep.	8	50	9 25	8	35	10 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	Broomhill	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	Amble	Arr.	8	55	9 30	8	40	9 25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

An extract showing the timetable.

Photo: Ken Hoole Study Centre




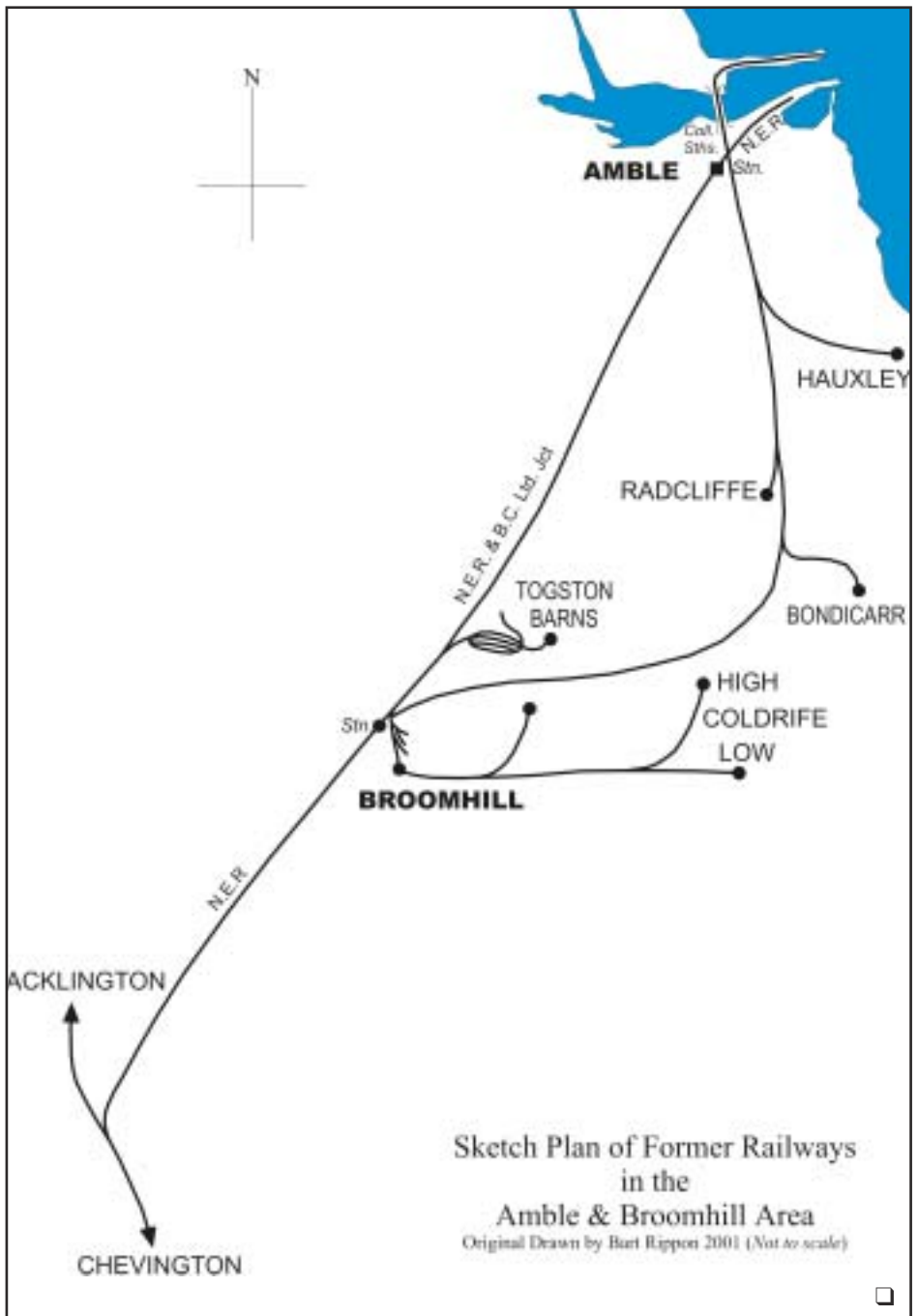
In the 1970’s, this wonderful harbour scene could be viewed from the NCB Staithe at Amble . People are milling around the arrival of a fishing boat. Just passed the staithe end is moored the “Coquet Mouth” dredger. Photo: B. Rippon

was agreed that 180 yards of extra siding accommodation would be provided at Amble for the use of Broomhill Colliery and other traffic. The Colliery would provide any additional sidings required for the increased coal output, and levies

would be made payable from Broomhill Colliery to the NER for the shipment of its coal and the transportation of its workers. By 1894, the tonnage of coal alone had grown to 500,000. (Part 2 in the next issue).



Looking east towards the harbour, this view from the signal gantry shows the goods yard at Amble. An NCB tank engine propels a single coal hopper wagon towards the waiting staithes. *Photo: B. Rippon* 



# MAIL BAG

## Lack of Consultation,

Could you please inform me as to why you have not consulted any local residents about the proposed scheme and the serious pollution and road safety problems it will surely create.

I contacted Stuart Manley over a year ago and he assured me that we would be kept informed of developments, but this has not happened.

This seems yet another instance where a scheme is being pushed through covertly to minimise the objections of the people of Bilton, Hipsburn and Lesbury.

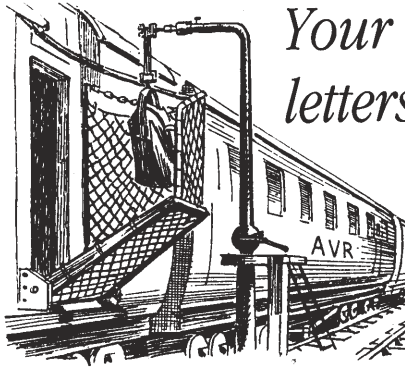
*Alan Morris, Alnwick*

## The Chairman's Response to above,

Until the Railway Trust can reach the point of a planning application, there is nothing to 'consult'. Nor is 'consult' what was promised, or what we have to do. When, and if, we reach the planning application stage, all objectors can then have their say.

As it happens, the railway proposal has been in the public domain for five

*Your letters*



years, with annual meetings advertised in the local press, inviting all

interested parties, both for and against, to attend and question. A number

of residents from Bilton, Hipsburn and Lesbury have

attended those meetings in the past, but curiously they all considered it a positive proposal rather than detrimental.

Come (and again, I say if) the planning application, you will have your chance to make your case for detrimental, but you will have to fight the evidence of positive effects such as enhanced property values (there are people who will pay a premium for houses in the proximity of a heritage railway), improved facilities at Alnmouth Station in parking, staffing, and disabled access, and the job creation via tourism that such railways bring.

However, in the light of the new Railtrack development, they may well do the job for you! We still have no agreement with them for the Alnmouth site, without which we cannot go forward to planning permission.

*Stuart Manley*



## Not Satisfied,

Further to your reply to my concerns about the proposed railway, I would like to raise the following points -

The fact that preparatory work on the track is being carried out indicates that the Society feel that any planning application will be a formality. I personally have no faith in Alnwick District Council, as in the past they have tried to prevent local people having their say on planning applications (As with the Bilton Barns quad bike project.)

I have not seen any invitation to attend any meetings in the local press. My wife and I were present at the launch reception at Alnwick Castle, after which the Society stated in the Northumberland Gazette that subsequent events would be for the "converted only". This may explain the attendance of those in favour of this scheme.

My son walks to and from Hipsburn Station every day to get to school. He does so on a poorly maintained, poorly

lit footpath next to a poorly maintained, poorly lit road. This is the same road that your estimated 30,000 customers a year will all be using (All at 60 mph.) As a worried parent I find it impossible to find anything positive in this.

The projected number of visitors will mean horrendous parking problems for local residents. The recent fuel crisis gave us an example of things to come, with cars double-parked the length of the Crescent bringing the area to a standstill at times. This is hardly going to enhance property values!

People with disabilities will be worse off as the pressure on parking in this area will mean that they will find access almost impossible - along with everyone else. Those with a disability such as asthma can look forward to an increasing number of attacks brought on by the increased particle contamination in the air.

Yours Sincerely,

*Alan Morris, Alnwick* ☐



**M**uch progress has been made with the access agreement with Railtrack over the Alnmouth Site, despite their position of being placed in receivership! While we must accept it may yet be some time before we can start work at this site, there is plenty of work going on elsewhere in the pro-

ject. The more work undertaken by volunteers now, the less we will have to contract out; ultimately saving the society money.

Now that work has stepped up a notch, further members have submitted their volunteer preference forms, ☞

and joined us at working parties, for which we thank them.

At present Volunteer Coordination has temporarily suspended all working parties. This is to enable us to re-address our priorities, and redraw our work plans to meet new timescales and requirements.

Work goes on...

### **Keeping Track**

The Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) epidemic continued to affect the track bed preparation workdays, but we feel this necessary to prevent the risk of spreading the disease, and also to prevent any ill feeling between land owners Northumberland Estates, their farm tenants and ourselves. In order to counteract the cancellation of the track bed working parties, emphasis shifted mainly to Alnwick Station and we devised some new schedules and arrangements for work in other areas. We were starting to make plans for a return to the track bed on Sunday, 26th August, but unfortunately just as it appeared all restrictions would be lifted and things could return to near normality, there was the first case of FMD in Northumberland for almost 3 months, which is a major upset for the farming community, and has put everyone back on edge. Now that most restrictions have been lifted (again!) we will be making a request for access and hope that we will be given the green light to return soon.

During the time that we have not been able to get out on the track, Volunteer Coordination has been working on a plan for the work to be under-


taken over the next few months. One of the first jobs being the tidying up of material that we felled on the last workday (back in February!), thinking we would be able to dispose of it next time and now that authorisation has been given for the hire of mechanical plant we hope that once we can get back onto the track bed, we can follow up some of the offers and get a loading shovel or similar on the job.

There is not yet any opportunity for track laying but some of our members are attending a course entitled "Steam Railway Infrastructure", being held at the North Tyneside Railway as mentioned in "*The Link*" number 20.

The team made a visit to Alnmouth on 28th September to check out rumours we had heard. These turned out to be true! Jarvis Rail has been on the site having explored, found and uncovered all of the MAS cable trunking. Is this a sign that they are planning to move it? – One of the prerequisites to us gaining access.

### **Going Loco**

27th May, 2001 – This date was intended as a track day but as we had not received clearance to return to the track bed, we instead went to Alnwick Station. We continued removing the Ruston 48 DS's bodywork including side panels, bonnet and nose for cleaning, rubbing down and repainting.

17th June, 2001 – At Alnwick Station. We continued removing the Ruston 48 DS's bodywork, and we made a start on removing the life-expired electric wires and control equipment, beginning with the starter motor. The 

electrical system received a few “alterations” during the locos life, and due to shorts, etc. requires a complete rewire. The engine controls, i.e. throttle and decompression, have been checked, and will possibly require adjustment. The engine was given a rub down, to facilitate inspection.

8th July, 2001 – At Alnwick Station. We continued removing the Ruston 48 DS’s life-expired electric equipment, including the dynamo. We have removed most of the cab floor so that we can clean out the foundry sand that seems to be able to get everywhere, and also to enable us to check over the gearbox. The engine was given a rub down, to facilitate inspection. We managed to get the mechanical sanding gear working on the front wheels, but it requires a bit of adjustment on the back wheels. An inspection was made of the hand brake system and it appears to work OK. We will probably have to remove the blocks and have a new set cast as there is not much life left on the current set.

19th August, 2001 - We had intended to have a workday, but this was cancelled due to other commitments, including Dave abseiling down Newcastle’s Civic Centre Bell Tower!

9th September, 2001 - At Alnwick Station. We continued removing the Ruston 48 DS’s floor and shovelled up 10 buckets of sand in the process. We also made a start on painting the bodywork with red oxide. An inspection was made of the drive chains, and these seem very loose. Adjustment will be made before use.


This loco will probably be the prime

motive power for construction trains. Although it might look a bit of a mess at the moment, it is thought that it could, if necessary, pull the whole passenger set (at 5 mph max!).

The loco department plan to perform an internal inspection of the gearbox but the locomotive will have to be meticulously clean before we even consider lifting the cover - one speck of dust could wreck the clutches.

Our loco department would also like to see a continuation of work on Penicuik, so anyone willing to lend a hand to tackle this steam locos restoration please speak now.

Work also continues elsewhere, including on the stock stored at Wooler. Brian’s R&H 200DE is starting to receive its coat of BR blue. For more details regarding the Wooler Diesels contact Brian Cunningham (b147cunningham@aol.com). The overhaul on Mick Fairnington’s steamer is nearing completion.

The loco team would like to express their thanks to Mr. Cowan for supplying us with a number of original Ruston manuals. Our loco group have started hunting down Ruston parts to aid with diesel overhauls. The loco team is on the lookout for braking equipment, including a vacuum exhauster and control valve for fitting to the Ruston 48DS to allow it to haul stock. Our loco group is awaiting conformation of a committee member loaning his Ruston 165DE to the project. Members with an interest in Ruston & Hornsby locomotives are advised to have a look a Dave Hall’s “Rustons R Us” 




**Baz Shell looking startled during application of a coat of red oxide primer to the ruston cowling.**  
*Photo: M. Murray*

informative website (<http://www.rustons.fsnet.co.uk>).

### **Taking Stock**

There have been no carriage working parties at North Tyneside since the last report, mainly for the reasons already given, but we are thinking about making a start on the under-frames in the near

future. Details will be posted on the web once confirmed. The C&W team is currently scouring the country for spare parts, i.e. windows for the Mark 2s to replace those damaged by vandals. Some of our members are now searching for a couple of ballast and flatbed wagons to form a Permanent Way construction train. 



Kay Seymour-Walker dismantling the flooring in the Ruston. *Photo: M. Murray* 

## Publicity & Sales

Most of the events that our publicity & sales stand would have attended were unfortunately cancelled due to the Foot & Mouth Disease but fortunately Neil and the team have been out to some events. The interest generated by the public and also some income has been most welcome. Neil and Kay have finished our new display within Barter Books which was aided by the acquisition by Reg Kemp of some display boards. For more information on publicity and sales activities or if you have photographs and other suitable items for display, please contact Neil Brison (his details are on the inner front cover). A sales page has also been added to the website, thanks to Keith McNally, to try and increase revenue.

29th July, 2001 - The publicity & sales stand was present at Alnwick Rugby Ground for a charity event held to replace the Alnwick Tournament, where it generated great interest, as well as a reasonable amount of income.

It was planned for us to attend the annual Brunton Steam Fair, but this was cancelled due to FMD.

## Specialist Tasks

We are currently working on our Health & Safety policy, to take in the extended scope of the new working parties. We are also trying to put together a group to design and then undertake a survey of opinion from locals and visitors to the railway and the area. Our works foremen are currently putting together their "wish lists" of equipment to help with the reconstruction of the branch.


## Elsewhere

We plan to sort out the various items, including track, held by the society at various locations. There are currently 4 lengths of bull-head and 6 lengths of flat bottom rail at Alnwick along with associated fixings, plates & wooden sleepers. There is also an assortment of materials at Wooler. Talks are still ongoing with Railtrack regarding the supply and accommodation of materials. On 9th September a large amount of rail was noted in the coal yard at Alnmouth Station. It later turned out this was for use elsewhere. During one working party we came up with some mathematical musings: Assuming that Railtrack delivers the promised rail in 30ft lengths, as requested, we estimate that we will require 1,056 lengths to be able to lay the 3 miles of track. Of course these rails would need to be laid on sleepers, of which we would require 6,336, along with 25,344 associated Pandrol clips. 2112 Fishplates, 8448 fishplate bolts, a lot of ballast, etc...

## Materials Acquisition

The discussions with Brown and Mason Demolition regarding the materials at Blyth Power Station have broken down as it seems they are unwilling to deal with what they class as "amateurs".

Reg Kemp kindly provided us with a couple of donation boxes that he made himself and, as mentioned earlier, display boards & cases.

The site cabin, kindly provided by Mick Fairnington of Wooler, will provide covered accommodation for eating meals as well as secure storage for 

tools and personal protective clothing(PPE) etc.

We have also acquired some work wear, PPE and safety gear including signs & barrier tape.

Our works foremen, Kay Seymour-Walker, and myself have been making sure our first aid kits are up to the required standard. Baz has recently completed his “First Aid at Work and Appointed Person” course. [Congratulations - Ed.]

We have been offered the use of a horse! If we can find the appropriate harness and chains “Laird of Talisker” can be used to pull out logs.

Some of our members are also keeping their eyes open for cheap plant &

equipment for auction.

Some of our members have their eyes on the BR standard 20t brake van currently standing at Cambois Motive Power Depot and have also made approaches to EWS regarding other stock.

We would like to express thanks to Mick Fairington for providing storage space at Wooler and also his offers of further help. We would like to also express thanks to Firman Coates and the other businesses at Alnwick Station for continuing to put up with us!

Although we don't wish to deter members from purchasing their own items for use on the branch, we would appreciate it if anybody planning to ➡



The new display boards supplied by Reg Kemp adorned with Society related items.

Photo: M. Murray

purchase a large item, e.g. a loco, coach, wagon, etc. approaches the committee first. Admittedly it would be nice to have a lot of stuff but we have to have a justifiable use for it and somewhere to put it! Anyone looking for railway equipment for sale is advised to have a look at the "Traction & Rolling Stock Advertiser", (<http://www.tractionads.co.uk>).

### Communication

You can keep up to date with news and details of work available by following the "Working Parties" link from the

AVRS website (<http://www.avrs.co.uk>), which is currently updated roughly fortnightly and volunteers with e-mail are sent brief updates. We appreciate not everyone has access to the internet so please provide us with your full postal address when completing the form so that we can keep you up to date. If you intend joining us on any of the working parties please contact either Kay Seymour-Walker or myself (see front inner page of magazine for contact details) for further information and to confirm arrangements ☐



The semi-stripped shell of the Ruston lies languishing next to storage drums in Alnwick station.  
*Photo: M. Murray*

