

MAID MARIAN LOCOMOTIVE FUND

PROGRESS REPORT

MAY 2024

2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

The 2024 AGM will be held on Saturday 7 September 2024 at the Heritage Centre at Llanuwchllyn Station, commencing at 1400 hours; please make a note of this in your diary. This might be the last year in which the AGM is held at this time of year as it comes between the August Bank Holiday Gala and the Bala Model Railway Show, with 3 visits to Llanuwchllyn within a calendar month. See the item below in the Report (THE TIMING OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS) for further discussion of the issues and the possible way in which they date might be changed.

ANTHONY (TONY) RHODES:

The Fund is saddened to record the death of Tony Rhodes in November 2023 and wishes to extend its condolences to his long-term partner, Marilyn, and to Tony's immediate family. Tony was one of the party of 6 people from the Manchester area who travelled to the Dinorwic Quarry in Llanberis on 3 September 1965 to make the inspection of *Maid Marian* with a view to acquiring the locomotive. The other person on that visit was Tommy Jones, the then Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Quarry, who accompanied the party. Tony played an important role in the Fund in its earlier years when he lived in the Manchester / North West area, and was active in the initial fund-raising activities needed to ensure that there was sufficient money to acquire the locomotive. He visited the quarry frequently during this period along with his school friend John Firth, with whom he had volunteered on the Festiniog Railway (as it was then called). In 1973 Tony was promoted to work in the Highways Department in Cumbria County Council; over the years the additional driving from Brigsteer to Llanuwchllyn meant that his role in the Fund decreased. Tony continued as a member of the Management Committee of the Fund until 1979 when it was agreed that the need for a separate MC no longer existed, since much of the intensive activities associated with the early years of ownership of the locomotive had disappeared. His interests in walking in the Lake District, volunteering on the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway and in the social life of Brigsteer came to the fore and his activities for the Fund decreased. He was also the proud owner of a garden railway which he shared with other model railway enthusiasts in the village. There are now only 2 survivors from that original party, your Honorary Secretary and Nath Pritchard, who is now our most remote subscriber, living in New Zealand.

DAVID SCOTSON:

The Fund is also saddened to record the death of our Treasurer at the end of December 2023. He had initially started work in banking but his life-long interest was in railways, both in model form and in railway preservation. He initially volunteered to work on the Bala Lake Railway early in its existence in 1976 where he played an active part in developing the signalling both at Llanuwchllyn and at the Llangower passing loop. His other skills in electrical engineering were put to excellent use in and around the Llanuwchllyn site. In 1981, Dave began volunteering at the Talyllyn Railway and by 1985 he was appointed full-time to the full-time engineering staff of the TR. Subsequently he was appointed Engineering Manager, then for a while the Acting Chief Executive until a new General Manager was appointed. Because of his TR commitments he had to curtail his volunteering on the BLR but continued to provide support to the BLR Society Committee. His previous experience in banking meant that he was an ideal candidate for the post of Treasurer when it became vacant in 1988. Dave had also been elected as Honorary Treasurer for the Fund at around the same time. His knowledge of banking practice meant that he was able to advise the Fund on financial matters over a period of 35 years. This included the busy time when fund-raising was at its most active between 2006 and 2007, to provide the cost of the new build riveted boiler. His reports were meticulously presented and he was a regular attendee at AGMs where he was able to explain subtleties of the accounts to the AGM. Some years ago he became seriously ill but recovered sufficiently to continue both his work responsibilities and those of being Treasurer. However towards the end of 2023 his condition deteriorated rapidly and became inoperable. Our condolences go his partner Maria and his siblings Peter and Christine.

POST OF TREASURER:

In view of the untimely death of our Treasurer the Committee wishes to recruit a subscriber who is willing to take over the position so ably filled by Dave. The Rules of the Fund specify that the Treasurer is one of the 4 Officers and Trustees of the Fund and would be elected at an AGM; as such that person would need to be a subscriber. In the interim, the Secretary will be acting in the capacity of Treasurer. If you are prepared to take on the role of Treasurer, which involves the maintenance of a clear data-base of our finances and the presentation of the Financial Statements to the AGMs, please email the Secretary at hughjones@aol.com or by telephone on 01302 539897. The amount of time involved is relatively small as the Fund has only a current account with an income of around £3260 in 14 payments (during the year 2023 / 4) and a dormant savings account. It would be helpful if you could give a short statement of your experience in financial matters, since if there are more than one applicants there will need to be an election, so your statement would be circulated in the event of a contested election. Rule 6j states that “The Committee shall be free to fill any vacancy which may occur during the year”; if there is only one candidate the Committee will immediately appoint that person. If there are more than one applicants the Committee will hold a postal / email ballot accordingly. Any decision so taken will be ratified at the 2024 AGM.

PROPOSED FUND-RAISING EVENTS:

Since the 2023 AGM, Robert Jones, who is one of our Committee members, has agreed to take on the role of Fundraising Officer to lessen the burden to the Secretary of transporting all the necessary equipment from home to wherever the stall will be held. The first opportunity this year was at the May Gala at Llanuwchllyn Station (“Steam on Road and Rail”) on 4 - 6 May 2024; this was a three-day event that was an opportunity to rationalise the stock of items on display and plan for subsequent events. A total of £465 was paid into the Fund’s account as a result of the event, in addition to the publicity of the Fund’s activities. The next proposed venues for the stall will be at the August Steam Gala (24 - 26 August) followed by a visit to the Bala Model Railway Show (21 / 22 September). It is hoped that any subscribers who are in the area will feel free to visit the stall to meet Officers and to use the opportunity to swell the bank balance against future major expenditure! Details of some of the stock held by the Fund are included in the next section of this Report. If you are able to volunteer to man the stall for a session to allow the Officers to visit some of the attractions you will be most welcome; please contact the Secretary by email at hughjones@aol.com for further details.

DETAILS OF STOCK HELD:

The following items will be available for inspection at the stall; some are suitable for acquisition through the post whilst others, mainly the heavier or larger items such as the brasses and coasters are not really suitable for posting:



Maid Marian name plates	£300
No: 5 name plates	£250
“Dinorwic or Velinheli Slates” a reproduction booklet	£15
Maid Marian DVD	£15 (post free)
Dinorwic Quarries workmen’s train timetable (A5 size)	£5
Jonathon Clay locomotive prints (Cackler, Jerry M, Sybil, Lady Madcap, Maid Marian)	£10 each / 2 for £15
Gomm’s enamel loco badges (Maid Marian, Charles <PQR Black>, Fire Queen)	£3.75 each
Maid Marian mugs	£6
Slate coasters	£2.50 / 6 for £12
Discs of locomotive drawings	£10
Christmas cards - bilingual greetings inside:	
No.1: two photo scenes with 3 cards of each (photos)	£3.00 (£3.50 P&P)
Two winter scenes with 3 cards each (from paintings)	£3.00 (£3.50 P&P)
Notelets - pack of 6 different scenes - no message inside	£3.00 (£3.50 P&P)

NEWS OF THE LOCO:

Maid Marian has received the latest Winter overhaul and is now back in service. The boiler was inspected and found to be in excellent condition thanks to continued careful firing; new fusible plugs were fitted. A complete new chimney pipe has been installed and the base has been heavily repaired. The existing smoke box is still operational though queries have been made about the proposed stainless steel smoke box as agreed at the last AGM. Further work needed includes changing springs as appropriate and further maintenance to the main valve. An interesting change has been made as there is now a new whistle on *Maid Marian* which is from a Manchester Metrolink tram(!). This has been provided by one of our subscribers who used to work in the Metrolink HQ and, although it was originally powered by compressed air, it has been slightly modified to use with steam. The effect is a thoroughly impressive sound which is reminiscent of an England locomotive whistle on the Ffestiniog Railway; come and hear it for yourself!

REPLICA DINORWIC LOCOMOTIVE NAME PLATES:

The photograph above shows the No: 5 name plate and the original works plate, both on the platform side of the loco (as a reminder, the works plate is now the only item on the loco stamped 822). The works plate provided by Hunslet in 1967, when the loco was purchased by the Fund, is slightly different and can be seen on the opposite side of the cab. Careful inspection will show the difference. Strictly speaking, the No: 5 name plate never appeared on the tank of *Maid Marian* at the same time as the name plate “Maid Marian” but, strictly speaking, *Maid Marian* was originally a loco without a cab but everything moves on! The idea arose from seeing *Holy War* with its own name plate No: 3; this inspired the Committee to commission a No: 5 plate. If you would like help our fund-raising activities, you can acquire your unpainted version in cast brass from the stall or even commission a special casting to include any number between 1 and 9. The Fund’s pattern has a blank where the “5” appears in the above photograph; this blank will accept any number from 1 to 9 as there is only sufficient space for a single digit. The price for any of these commissions will be the same as for the No: 5 plate, namely £250. Out of interest, the original numbers were allocated to locos as follows: No: 1 became *Rough Pup*, No: 2 became *Cloister*, No: 3 became *Holy War*, No: 4 became *Alice*, No: 5 became *Maid Marian*, No: 6 became *Irish Mail* and No: 7 became *Wild Aster*. There was no No: 8 or No: 9.

THE TIMING OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS:

The Fund has held AGMs in September or October for most of its existence (since 1967); Rule 4b) states that “The AGM shall be held in September or October each year and the reports by the Officials of the Fund together with the examined accounts shall be presented at the meeting”. More recently however it has been found that there has been much pressure on the September slot as it falls between the August Gala and the Bala Model Railway Show. Both of these are excellent venues for the Fund's stall, implying that 3 visits are required within a space of 4 weeks or so, rather a large commitment given the need for transporting sales items and the stall to and from Llanuwchllyn. At the 2022 AGM the possibility of changing the month for the AGM was considered

and the Secretary indicated that he would provide a position paper on the matter so that subscribers would have the opportunity to vote on a likely replacement. Unfortunately, this paper was not produced in time to affect the date of the 2023 AGM, so it was decided to leave the date as 9 September and to hold a consultation with subscribers in time for the 2024 season. This, too, has also been delayed but an attempt will be made to outline the situation and a possible way forward. October was mainly adopted until 1995 but after this year September was exclusively used. The venue at Llanuwchllyn has been used exclusively since 1986 as it has provided the opportunity to see *Maid Marian* and take a cab ride amongst other activities.

The Autumn slot was chosen after initial consideration of using both Summer and Autumn slots; there were advantages and disadvantages for both. Travelling was more easily managed in the Summer but there were difficulties because this coincided with holiday arrangements. The Autumn slot was more acceptable because holiday arrangements did not intervene, although late October dates were more difficult for anyone travelling a distance to the AGM. In the early years of the Fund, most subscribers lived in the North West, though the centre of gravity has now shifted to the Midlands and North Wales; in addition, travelling considerations are now not so critical with the advent of the motorway network. If the timing of the AGM is changed away from the current September or October, this change would need an appropriate amendment to the Rules, which would require the agreement of an AGM. The suggested options for the timing of the event for your consideration are:

Continue as per the present arrangements;

Allow the Committee to make any changes it considers appropriate;

Amend the timing to a summer slot (June, July or August);

Amend the timing to a Spring slot (April / May);

Align the AGM date with the Bala Lake Railway Society AGM (currently May) so that both AGMs can be attended on the same day. N.B. The Society AGM may change if May is not a satisfactory option in the long term;

Any other option not covered by the above (please give details of your suggestion).

In addition there is a choice between locating the AGM at Llanuwchllyn or holding it elsewhere (again, if you have an alternative, state your suggestion). Please email or write to the Secretary before 30 June 2024 with your options (1 - 6 above) and the location at Llanuwchllyn or an alternative. As this is postal / email vote the number of votes you hold will be taken into consideration. It is not essential for you to include the number of votes you hold, though it would save the Secretary having to look up everyone's voting strengths. The outcome of this consultation will be announced at the earliest opportunity and if any change is needed to the Rules, this will need to be agreed at the next AGM.

AND FINALLY:

As always, this is an opportunity to remind subscribers that they can add to their total of votes at any time, either by post to the Honorary Secretary at 139, Stoops Lane, DONCASTER South Yorkshire, DN4 7RG or in person at any of our fund-raising opportunities. Votes are offered at the rate of 2 votes for £30 or in multiples of £30 for 2 votes, with all proceeds allocated to the long term upkeep of *Maid Marian*. Cheques should be made out to the *Maid Marian* Locomotive Fund (in full), although cash is acceptable at the stall.

Hugh Jones

Honorary Secretary