



Little Red Train

Tube & Tunnel



"Tube & Tunnel" is produced by The "Little Red Train" to promote an interest in our 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " gauge (1/8th scale) models of a 1938 'Tube' train and "Ginny" 'Sub-surface' train.

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#14 / Autumn & Winter 2005.

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Teething problems continue ... but we are now much more confident of the 38 Stock's abilities in service, and things have settled down a bit. As you will read, we are presently down to 75% traction, but the difference in performance is negligible, so there is no immediate hurry to correct what is wrong and reinstate the two motors.

We have, following the experience of operating the train, rewritten the rulebook, and this now includes a section on signalling and a Risk Assessment as required by current legislation! However, in order to provide a good train service, certain conditions have become flexible, and in this way, the operation is safer than sticking rigidly to prescribed routines, as is so often the case. All situations are considered on their individual merit.

In this edition, there are brief reports from events that the LRT has attended (as was customary in earlier editions of "Tube & Tunnel" produced by Fred Blois), and we conclude our history of the LRT in Fred Blois' ownership.

LRT operators do not need a uniform, but from now on, you may well see a corporate image with LRT branded baseball caps!



Front Cover:

The LRT driven by Daniel Hill, on the long climb up to Piggery Summit on the Great Cockcrow Railway.

[Photo: A. Allum.]

Rear Cover (lower):

Adrian driving, Thomas Crame as Guard, during the run at Acton on June 4th/5th.

[Photo: D. Carter.]

Reports from Events.

After the open weekend at the Depot Museum at Acton in February, the LRT's next booking ... in the eleventh hour ... was at a Scout & Guide May Fayre at Ottershaw, near Chertsey on May 2nd.

268 passengers were carried on a track length of about 130', laid on grass. Thankfully, the grass was quite level (and we had checked it first), and only a small amount of packing material was needed under the track. We made continual checks (with the later assistance of a spirit level), and with a low speed, the event went without any problems. The area used had been roped off by the organiser, though we need to think more carefully about carrying so much material in one van (and small car)!

On the previous day, the LRT was taken to the Great Cockcrow Railway to be tested on their track, following more work that had been done to the train.

June 4th & 5th was another open weekend at the Depot Museum at Acton. The weather was considerably warmer, but being an event promoting an interest in buses ("75 years with Greenline"), patronage was low (394 in total, with 145 on the Saturday). We had one minor derailment when running as ECS, but no other problems. (LU also had a minor derailment within sight of the Depot Museum, with a D(78) stock!) However, we also experimented with some LRT-produced signals - in LU style, of course! These were very popular and the experiment will be developed further, pending the installation of permanent signalling there.

June 25th saw the LRT operating at the 1st Hook Scouts' Summer Fayre, near Chessington. The sky was very grey during the day, but the rain did manage to hold off! We carried 187 passengers during the four hour period. We were able to carry the required cordoning material by simply loading the van differently (see the event on May 2nd, above).

The 8th Ashford (Middx.) Scouts was the next organisation to host the LRT, on Saturday July 2nd. Somewhat out of the way (but on the most firm and level ground we could find), we carried only 115 passengers. Consideration was given to a different area to use next year, much closer to the main hub of events.

On the following day, the LRT went to its first school event, at St. Elphege's School in Wallington, near Croydon. Here, we had use of the playground where no packing under the track was needed, but with an incline! Nevertheless, despite no overnight charging to the batteries, the train performed excellently. We carried only 102 passengers, despite the 'incentives' provided by the host to attract more custom.

The train made a special visit to Acton on September 4th for a photo-shoot for publicity purposes, but not for rides ... though rides were given to the children who took part. The event went pretty well, but our attempts at getting a photograph of the photographer taking a photograph of the train were in vain due to an "overlooked setting" on the camera!

The Great Cockcrow Railway held its Gala Weekend on September 10th & 11th. It was somewhat overbooked by visiting locomotives, but were we advised to bring the LRT anyway just in case things quietened down enough to permit space to run it. We passed up the opportunity on the Saturday, partly due to the rain (and the open electric control unit), but also because it was getting dark, and having done some work on the train recently, we wanted to have the advantage of light ... just in case!

So, it happened on the Sunday! We made four trips, three around the "Green Route" completely non-stop, and one around the "Red Route" with the stop for reversal at Cockcrow Hill, and a wait for passing moves at Everglades Junction. Twice during operation, the reverse-gear facility failed. The first time, this disabled the ability to drive forwards from the "A" end, and the

second time it disabled the ability to drive backward from the "D" end. We took the train out of service, as we were not successful with finding the exact location of the problem, and didn't want to risk causing any extra delays on the very busy GCR (the slow speed of the train (<8mph) was to be tolerated). This was especially disappointing as we had been invited to carry GCR passengers, and we were honoured to be invited, but sense (in the circumstances) prevailed.



The History (continued).

Following many events, an overhaul in early 1994 (new motors and gears) and then more events, June 3rd & 4th was to see the start of problems. The train was taken to an event organised by the Vale of Aylesbury Model Engineering Society. Inclement weather conditions precluded the event being notably enjoyable, but some snobbery by the hosts' hosts only made matters worse! But the controller developed a fault in that it couldn't be regulated - all on or all off! The problem was found (a short-

Left: The LRT having just arrived back at Hardwick Central at the GCR on May 1st after a test-run. The engineer, Paul Trotter is seen to the extreme right, whose assistance in getting the LRT running and in keeping it running has been invaluable. [Photo: R. Maiden.]

Right: Martin Hill about to depart with a trainload of passengers at the Ottershaw Scout & Guide Group's May Fayre. [Photo: P. Scrutton.]



circuit) and repaired, but a visit to Cardiff was cancelled as the train needed further testing. Around this time, mechanical problems were also developing with the trailer that was used to transport the entire railway, and this being a central part of the operation could not be ignored.

Nevertheless, it was at St. James Church Summer Fete at Finchampstead, Berkshire, where the railway was introduced as the "Famous Little Red Train!" An honour, indeed.

On August 27th & 28th, 1995, the train went to Edenbridge & Oxted Agricultural Show at Lingfield. Due to the nature of the ground, arrangements were made for the track to be supported by ballast! Fred recalls, "This had taken about 3-4 days to prepare, and one enlightened visitor asked if we 'bag it all up' ready for the next event!" Later in the year, exploration was made to a permanent track being established at the Filching Manor Motor Museum. A number of options were looked at, but the project made no progress. The Tube's last run was on the portable track at the museum on April 6th - 8th, 1996; and by May 20th, Fred had recorded a desire to sell the train, recording also, that 'Adrian Allum could be interested in purchasing it.' One of the cars and the Ginny were put on display at the museum, but the rest of the Tube train was stored thereafter in the trailer.

In our next edition, we'll recap briefly on the start of the LRT's new Lease of Life under its new ownership.



Forthcoming Events.

With not much time to announce, the LRT will be at Acton again, on October 22nd & 23rd. We understand that the theme for this event is "Families," so bring yours along and enjoy the fun. It is likely that the LRT will also be there on March 4th & 5th next year.



Other News.

With the LRT in action again, great opportunities have prevailed for conversations about the train's resurrection. Following one such conversation, we are looking at making the following modifications, but cannot make any commitment to any of them at this stage!

- Replacing one 4QD/200 controller (c/w heavy duty wiring between the cars) with a 4QD/150 controller in each car, wired to work in multiple. Each car will be a separate entity, with only low voltage electrical couplings between.
- Replacing the arrangement of the motors wired in series within each bogie and in parallel between bogies, with having all motors in parallel. They will operate at 24v, and we would only apply the full 24v when more speed is required than on our portable track ... but presently, the train is too slow elsewhere!
- Designing the centre car to be powered (even if disguised as not powered) so that we can have 100% traction. Otherwise, we would have only 67% traction, and yet the present 75% traction is undesirable!
- Fitting motor cut-out switches, so that the train can be hand-shunted without risk of electrical damage to the controllers caused by the regenerative nature of the equipment!

Expense is a key issue here. We have one 4QD/150 controller in stock, and we would need to buy two more (at about £200 each)! The 4QD/200 would then go into the Ginny. The centre car would require two more batteries and four motors. (We had already planned that the wheel-sets would have motor-mounts in case any of them needed to be swapped over for whatever reason.) After the October event at Acton, we will do 'some' work on the LRT, but at this stage, we cannot say exactly what that work will be!





London 07-07-05.

We wish to offer our condolences to the victims of the atrocities that occurred in our capital City on 7th July.

The Little Red Train is a miniature representation of the excellent transportation in the City, a system that has stood the test of time and is indeed, one to be reckoned with. It is also one that will return to working order to serve our capital as well as it has always done.

The perpetrators have achieved nothing.

In true British manner, the emergency services responded efficiently; and the public reacted in the calm way that is so typical of our heritage. And it is with this observation that London is indeed the best venue for the 2012 Olympic Games ... we will not be beaten by terrorists!

