

# AUTOCAR

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The Newsletter of the  
1903 North Eastern Railway  
Electric Autocar Trust

# The North Eastern Railway 1903 Electric Autocar Trust

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Please send all correspondence to the secretary, address as above.
- Front Cover:** Stephen Middleton displays the new sandwich boards  
used to advertise our shop in Bolton Abbey station  
Car park, which were kindly donated by Len Clarke.  
  
Photo: S Middleton

## **We're getting there!**

Stephen Middleton

It is a frustrating period, having two splendid vehicles and not being able to do much with them until we have a decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The HLF grant is only for new un-started projects. Casual visitors may see this as a stalled project. However nothing is further from the truth and news within conforms this.

Thanks to goodwill on all sides, tri-partite negotiations have secured the correct underframe with a correct bogie (and one spare.) Again complex tri-partite negotiations have yielded a good motorised bogie. It is not as original but quite frankly we will not do better unless we had a bottomless money pit. These are two big lumps that are vital if we are to proceed and it appears they are unique. We expect other items such as operating consoles, diesel generator etc. to be easier to source.

Balance funding is dropping in to place. Thank you to all who contributed to the underframe appeal. The Ken Hoole Trust's donation is invaluable. Our account books show a reasonable sum thanks to memberships and generous donations. A PRISM (Science Museum) grant application was submitted early June and we expect a response soon.

Bob Gwynne's excellent work on the educational aspect of our work will boost our chances of success with the HLF and project manager Steve Hoather has clearly defined the engineering work required and submitted it to several parties in order to obtain quotes.

All is dropping in to place for a good quality, sound second submission to the HLF. If successful, the work really starts and I hope that many will become involved in the engineering and restoration. For those who cannot yet wish to take an active role, we have a large historic archive that lacks discipline, we need to work on visitor packs and educational material and articles for this journal are always welcome.

## Progress Report

The last three months have been a busy period for the team, it started with bad news, our new treasurer Ben Duncan had to resign due to health problems this led to much head scratching amongst the trustees to find a suitable replacement. Luckily Peter Lund a respected figure in heritage railway circles has volunteered to step into the breach, we extend a warm welcome to Peter and our thanks to Ben for his efforts over the last few months, we wish him a speedy recovery.

Our project manager Steve Hoather has been busy, after the trustees decided to use an existing motor bogie, Steve scoured the country with help from his ex BR contacts to locate bogies of a suitable type (which are now getting scarce). March saw a trip south by the two Steve's and Marcus, a long day visiting several sites paid off with the discovery of a suitable bogie in excellent condition with very little use since its last overhaul, and still under a coach so the motors have hopefully been protected from the elements. A reasonable price was negotiated with its owners, however this included us supplying a replacement accommodation bogie to support the coach that the bogie is currently under, here the problems started. Scrap steel prices are rising and reasonably priced bogies are hard to find, however Stephen H's networking skills went into overdrive and a suitable candidate was eventually located on the NYMR, its purchase has been agreed and it should be travelling south soon to be exchanged for our motor bogie which is to be stored at Embsay.

Good progress has been made on the underframe front, we have had a good response from members to our underframe appeal with £789.70 in the pot, a big **thank you** to those who donated. This is some way short of our target of £6000 but nevertheless a good start, remember that all donations are logged and count towards our donors reward scheme, if anyone is feeling left out a donation form is enclosed in this newsletter, any amount helps no matter how small.

Stephen Middleton has been hot on the trail of a suitable vehicle to swap for our required underframe at Weybourne, his overworked networking skills found quite a collection of available vehicles, however on investigation all were found to be unsuitable for a variety of reasons. Several des-

perate measures were considered including dismantling coaches and ferry vans until our new treasurer passed a lead of a GW Macaw available in Wales, both Steve's duly travelled west and inspected the wagon before passing its details to the NNR Staff who replied "Yes" much to the relief of your trustees. Negotiations have continued and hopefully an "exchange" will take place soon.



The rare grey Macaw

Photo; P Lund

Whilst at Llangollen the two Steves took the opportunity to visit their workshops and discuss the possibility of them quoting for some of the work needed, but all concerned agreed this was not appropriate as the work is outside their normal scope.

Steve Hoather has spent several months compiling the engineering specification document which will be sent to the prospective contractors to allow them to quote for the contracts on the autocar. Steve has produced a thorough and professional document which has now been sent out to engineering companies initially to see how many are interested in quoting for the work we require.

## Meet your new treasurer - Peter Lund



I am very pleased to have been appointed your new treasurer and as I am sure not many of the members will have heard of me here are a few words of explanation.

I was born in Edinburgh in 1947 when my father was shedmaster at Haymarket. My North Eastern connections come from being born of parents who came from West Hartlepool and Whitby. My father was a Darlington premium apprentice under Arthur Stamer and indeed met my mother whilst testing the Armstrong diesel railcars on the coast line between Whitby and Middlesbrough.

My teenage years were spent in Pinner and I regularly saw Gresley Pacifics on The South Yorkshireman and The Master Cutler on the way home from school in Harrow. I ran a small distribution business in Aylesbury for 33 years until retiring in 2007. I have been a volunteer on the Llangollen Railway since 1990 and was their Financial Director for some years. I also administered the ERDF grant obtained to build the carriage shed in Pentrefelin.

I own several LNER carriages and was responsible for the restoration of the only surviving carriage from The Elizabethan, the famous non-stop train from London to Edinburgh. I am currently restoring two carriages a 1907 ECJS TK and a 1912 Great Northern BCK.

I believe the North Eastern Autocar project to be an important part of the history of traction on railways. It will not be easy in this current economic climate to obtain grants and more to the point, obtain the matched funding. It is politically far more difficult than a decade ago, now that the authorities are far more interested in the social and educational aspects of a project than the artefact itself. However, it is apparent that Stephen and Marcus have assembled a very competent team and I have no doubt that the project will succeed.

## **Help Needed**

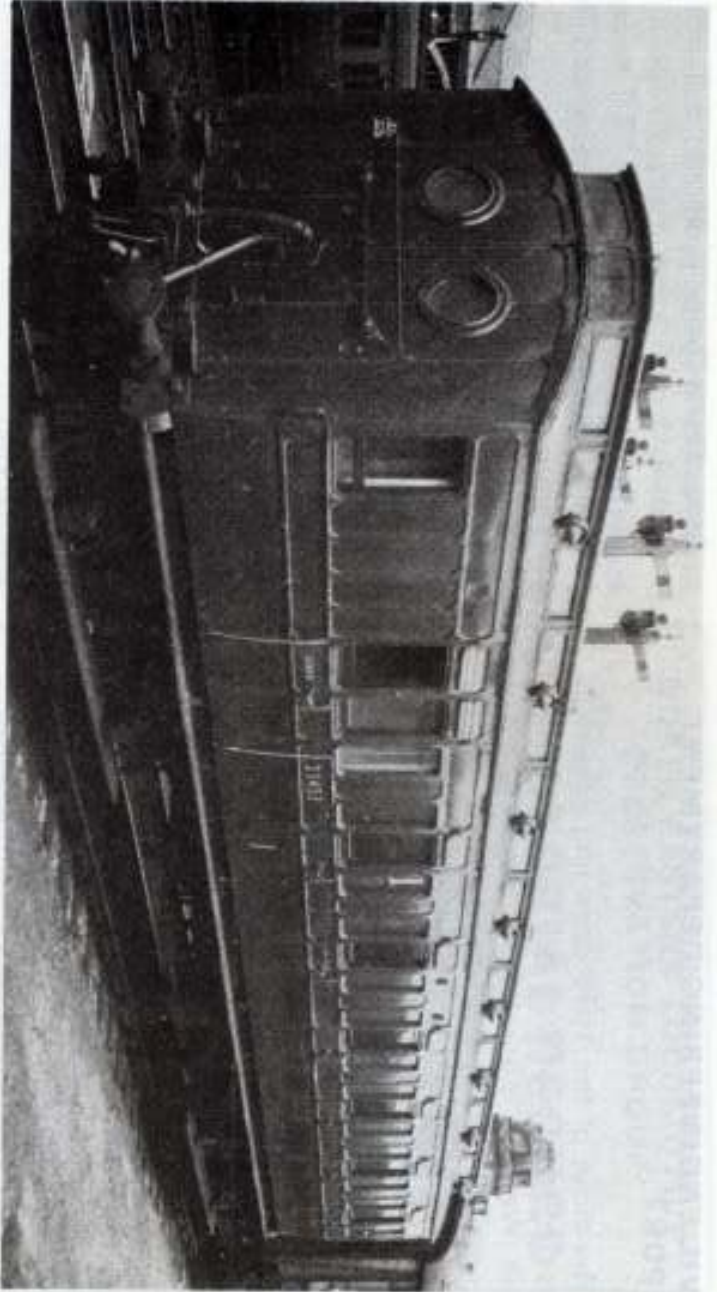
Marcus Woodcock

In common with most other railway preservation societies the NER autocar trust is administered by a small team of trustees and committee members all of whom are actively involved with other railway projects in one way or another, this means that our spare time is limited and there are times when the trust takes second place in the “jobs to do list” and delays occur. Our second round lottery application will be submitted soon, and we should know by the end of the year whether we have been successful and whatever the outcome work can then start. We are going to need more active members both on the administration and restoration sides, and I appeal to all our members to come forward and get involved. Stephen Middleton has mentioned elsewhere that we need an archivist/ researcher, this is a job that simply does not get done at the moment and it needs someone who to coin a modern term is “pro active” the small collection of documents we have needs sorting and cataloguing, but also we need to search other collections for information about our railcar, there are many areas that we have scant knowledge about, which may effect the quality of our end product. If anyone fancies a go please contact either myself or Stephen Middleton.

Another area where help is required is our shop in Bolton abbey station car park, the shop provides desperately needed funds for our project, staff are needed to keep it open, especially weekends and bank holidays in summer. It is a pleasant place to work and the duties not particularly arduous so please come and assist even if only for a few hours it all helps.

When the trust was first launched I had several offers of volunteer assistance, which were not taken up at the time because there was little practical work to do, the HLF will not fund projects which are already started. Most of the work on the Autocar will be done by contractors due to the specialist nature of the job but 3453 will largely be a volunteer job with plenty of work for both the skilled and unskilled so again if you can help please send me your details so I can drop you a line when working parties start.

Phone 01262 851268 or e-mail [Autocar@yorkscoast.plus.com](mailto:Autocar@yorkscoast.plus.com)



North Eastern Railway clerestory coach No. 3453, as British Railways No. E23453,  
at Scarborough, in about 1950. *Photo: W. A. Carrwell*



## **Building the Medley Petrol Electric Autocar: The Sides**

Richard Marsden

In my last article, I introduced the Medley 7mm scale Petrol Electric Autocar kit. In this article I actually start to build it.

The instructions start with the sides. As with most etched kits, it takes a long time to see any results as the first parts are invariably the largest and require the most cleaning.

The sides are initially quite flimsy, but stiffen quickly as the ventilators are fitted and the tabs are folded.



The first parts to be fitted are the over-window ventilators. These are laminated overlays that fit into half-etched spaces above the windows. I fitted them using solder cream and a 'tweezer' resistance soldering iron. This is an expensive piece of equipment but very useful if you have one (mine is a refurbished "American Beauty" that I have had almost ten years). If not, then a conventional iron on full heat should work. To my eye, the ventilators show more relief in photographs than they do in the kit.

I used crocodile clips to hold the ventilator etches in place whilst they were being soldered. Although the clips can be removed before the other parts are attached, I found it a good idea to fully support each side when working on it. Excessive heat (e.g. with a difficult joint) could loosen a ventilator's solder causing the ventilator to slip. This would quickly cool, resulting in either a hanging ventilator or a very unnatural bowed shape in the railcar's side!

Next are the drop-lights in the doors. The interior edges of the windows are etched with a half etch. This happens to be the same size as the inside of the drop lights – i.e. when fitted the drop lights would not be visible. I therefore carefully opened out the window holes for each door. The only need opening a small amount, so that the drop light will be visible. You have to be careful that the hole does not become too big for the drop light; and you have to keep the edges straight & square.

I folded the tabs on the sides before fitting the door fittings. The only problem tabs are the long tabs along the top and bottom of each side. I have an 8 inch "Hold and Fold" folding tool which is a great help, but I still had to take 'two bites' at folding each of the long tabs.

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The door fittings are next. The door handles are supplied as some very nice brass castings. The vertical handrails by each door are fitted using brass wire - standard practice in every kit I've built so far. The door hinges were trickier. There are half-etch slots for the door hinges, but the kit does not include any parts and the instructions do not mention them. After a useful discussion on the 7mm yahoo group and looking at photographs, I chose to use short lengths of brass rod that were about 2.5mm long. In order to cut large numbers of about the same length, I bundled the rod together before cutting. I still had some variation in lengths, so I carefully matched them up before fitting. In my opinion, it was more important to match sizes in a horizontal direction (i.e. adjacent doors) than in a vertical direction (i.e. on the same door). This is because the human

eye is drawn horizontally along the side of the railcar, and compares their positioning against things like doors, ventilators, etc.

Finally comes the solebar area. The solebar has the only rivet detail in the kit. I did a poor job with a blunt scribe, but I have since invested in a riveting tool. Again, I used solder cream and a resistance iron to attach the solebars; but conventional solder for the steps. The solebars have struts which then fold up and are attached to the body. The spacing of the kit's struts do not match those of the prototype! The main problem areas are around the steps. I moved two of the struts, and fitted additional struts made from scrap nickel-silver. This improves the look, but is not perfect. For the perfect look, you should probably move more of the struts, and fit struts behind the steps. To do this, you will need to fit the struts before the steps, and to cut slits in the backs of the steps to accommodate the struts.

The photograph shows the two completed sides. Glazing will wait until very near the end of construction - after painting but before most of the furnishings are fitted.

### **Welcome to the following new members;**

Mr K Gould of Goathland, Mr B Horner of Gt Ouseburn, York,  
Mr C Hindle of Padiham, Mr P Best of Knaresborough,  
Mr A Austin of Whitchurch, Mr B Patton of Berwick,  
Mr R Watt of Glasgow, Mr B Tempest of Dorchester,  
Mr M Fletcher of Harrogate, RCDM Welfare fund of Selly Oak  
Birmingham, Mr J Kay of Blackpool.

We now have 72 members

### **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The sixth Annual General Meeting of the NER 1903 Electric Autocar Trust will be held at 2pm on Saturday the 9th of October 2010 in a directors saloon at Embsay station. All members are cordially invited to attend.



Pickering station June 2004, the Middleton railway's *Matthew Murray* Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST of 1903 shuttled 3170 between station and yard during the NYMR's 150 years of the North Eastern Railway celebrations, it was the autocar's first public appearance. One side and end were painted in NER livery the other side and end remained in green Keldholme condition, which of the two is modern traction?  
Photo; Mags Woodcock