

MEETING REPORTS

SORRY, NOT IN SERVICE

by Fred Ivey

A report of the LURS meeting at All Saints Clubhouse on 12 October 2010

The title of the meeting was derived from the destination displays on London Underground trains that are running empty, for one reason or another. In the past, such trains carried a 'Special' plate or blind. Later, "Not in Service" was adopted and later still, the "sorry" was added, presumably to reflect a more customer friendly approach to empty trains! The meeting itself included the different varieties of trains not in service – empty stock transfers, stock moves, test trains and Underground vehicles on lorries. Because of the diversity of subjects covered, only a sample will be included here.

The presentation began in June 1977 with the changeover of stock on the East London Line – incoming A Stock and the outgoing 1938 Tube Stock, the latter being featured passing through Farringdon.



At that time the 1960 Tube Stock Track Recording Train was still active, then comprising two Pre-1938 trailers, in between two 1960 Tube Stock DMs and seen at Wembley Park (*Left*). Later in the meeting, we saw the same two trailers between Standard Stock pilot motors on their way for scrap. The scrapping of rolling stock was a common occurrence during that year, with consignments of both 1938 Tube and CO/CP Stocks being seen at various locations on their way to the scrapyards.



Trains were dispatched from West Ruislip (*Left*) and were seen on the main line passing Hanwell (1938 Tube Stock to Birds of Long Marston) and Aylesbury (CO/CP Stock to Cohens of Kettering).

Later in the meeting, a train of scrap R Stock was also featured at Dudding Hill Junction, on its way to Booths of Rotherham. The early stages of development of "leaf clearing" at the north end of the Metropolitan Line were being developed in 1977 and this involved spraying water at very high pressure onto the running lines to clear the leaf 'mulch'. The train comprised Sarah Siddons, Brake Van, Flat Wagon (with the equipment) and two Pre-1938 Ballast Motor cars. Both ends of the train were seen at Amersham and later, when one of the Rail Grinding cars was being trialled singly, between 1938 Tube Stock Ballast Motors leaving Rickmansworth sidings. The T Stock sleet unit was then employed on this work and this was seen in action just north of Rickmansworth.

A 1973 Tube Stock train visited Ealing Broadway (District Line) on 18 March 1978 on a football special to Arsenal, conveying fans who had arrived by main line train from Bristol.

Other views included the 1973 Tube Stock Experimental Tube Train (ETT), the Northern Line farewell (as it was thought then) 1938 Tube Stock tour, engineers' trains working on the Piccadilly Line tracks between Turnham Green and Ravenscourt Park, and the Bakerloo Line Stores Train at Queen's Park.

A rather weather-beaten Pre-1938 Stock Ballast Motor was then seen between pristine and newly-converted 1938 Tube Stock Ballast Motors at Ealing Broadway on its way to Ealing Common for scrap (*Below*).





The same car was then seen (*Left*) in Ealing Common depot, having been cut up by Cashmores and being loaded for dispatch.

By this time, the 1960 Stock Track Recording Train had been withdrawn and temporarily replaced by a four-car unit of 1962 Tube Stock. This was seen variously at Stanmore, Baker Street, Harrow-on-the-Hill, and on the East London Line at Whitechapel.

Although the C77 Stock made its *début* in service in December 1977, a newly delivered train was seen the following year in Ruislip depot.

The order for this stock also included one extra motor car to replace that written off following its bomb damage at West Ham in March 1976. The replacement car was seen at Harrow-on-the-Hill between maroon Q38 Pilot Motors whilst on a 'turning' run.



The Christmas period in 1978 saw "Father Christmas" logos applied to some Northern Line trains, an exercise that wasn't repeated on other Underground lines nor in subsequent years.

The winter weather featured Stanmore sidings in the snow, full of trains, then with a mix of 1938 and 1972 Stocks. Early in 1979, a collision-repaired 1973 Stock motor car (208) was fitted with prototype 1983 Stock bogies and was formed into a double-ended 3-car unit. Before entering passenger service it was seen on test on the Metropolitan Line at Northwood. The two trains involved with the formal Royal opening of the Jubilee Line on 30 April 1979 then took centre stage, the first being the stock to form the Royal Train passing Neasden (sadly without its headboard at that stage) on its way to Charing Cross, having been specially cleaned for the occasion. This had been a test train and was the last of this type to enter passenger service in November 1978. Also seen at Neasden, but on the northbound on the return working, was the 'standby' train. Hot on the heels of this event was the delivery of the first unit of D Stock on 29 June 1979, being seen at West Ruislip, in the depot and later on test runs at Harrow, Farringdon and Chorleywood. More leaf clearing runs were then featured, this time with the Pre-1938 Ballast Motors having been replaced by the 1938 Tube Stock Weed killing unit. The end of the CO/CP Stock on the District Line was covered, from the last day in service to the farewell specials, these being seen at Whitechapel and Wembley Park.

Various items of stock were observed in a Society visit to Acton Works. This included Sarah Siddons being stripped back prior to its 1982 repaint, collision-damaged C77 DM 5719, two Hurst Nelson Brake Vans and a line up of stock on the 'traverser' road. One of the cars seen there was withdrawn A62 DM 5171, which continued to languish around until scrapped in 1987.



One unusual working included a rail grinding car sent to the Southern Region with Pre-1938 Pilot Motors for tests on the Shepperton branch. Its outward transfer was seen at Barons Court and Fulham Broadway, and actually on SR metals at Sunbury (Above).



One of the views presented featured yellow battery locomotive L29, shunting in White City depot (*Previous page, lower*), with trains of 1962 Tube Stock stabled in the sheds in the background. Also visible was the track to the former 'ring road', which crossed the depot access from the westbound line. It was noted that the whole site has since been cleared and the Westfield shopping development had been built and opened.

Underground cars have featured more than once in the Lord Mayor's Show and Fred was on hand to capture 1972 Mkl DM 3322 in the 1981 parade. Following that event, the whole unit was seen passing through South Harrow on its way back to the Northern Line, still with part of its red "sash" attached.

The 'new' Track Recording Train (comprising converted 1960 Tube Stock motor cars with an adapted 1973 trailer) was seen at Rickmansworth in its first livery – a black waist level band with white above and red below. Some years later, it was repainted into near LU corporate livery, but one motor car remained in original condition for some time after, looking out of place on its special runs.

Other events included:

- Sarah Siddons hauling the SR's 4-SUB unit at Staines and Windsor & Eton.
- Test running of the 1938 Tube Stock for the Isle of Wight, seen at Shepperton.
- A gauging run of 1983 Tube Stock on the Northern Line at High Barnet.
- A 12-car formation of 1983 Tube Stock at Wembley Park, which was in fact a defective train, being 'pushed' by another.
- The different livery variations with the seven painted East London Line units of A60 Stock.
- The first new 1992 Tube Stock at South Ealing on test and a Waterloo & City Line train of 1992 Tube Stock on test passing through Leyton on the westbound.
- The Leaf Clearing train, which had become the Rail Adhesion Train (RAT) using five cars of A Stock, which included unrefurbished (unpainted) and refurbished units. By this time high pressure water jetting had been replaced by a 'paste' being spread on the running rails.
- 1973 Tube Stock under refurbishment at Bombardier at Horbury.
- New 1995 and 1996 Tube Stock – at Metro-Cammell in Birmingham, a car of the latter being moved by road to Stratford Market depot (before the link at Green Park Junction had been completed), and going to Upminster hauled by pilot units for temporary storage.

The meeting continued with more recent events, including the restoration of the Bluebell Railway's Ashbury coaches to original condition and the subsequent display of two of them (plus Met. 0-4-4T No.1) at Rickmansworth. One of the more embarrassing events was an empty A Stock train which was routed in error into platform No.2 at Harrow-on-the-Hill on 8 October 2001, but instead of stopping, continued onto unelectrified track, stopping under Station Road "off juice". Staying with A Stock, an eight-car train was glimpsed on the South Ealing test track, along with trains stabled in Uxbridge sidings. This last was on the occasion of the redundant 1983 Tube Stock cars being removed, with one of them being observed in the air suspended from a crane. It was also noted that the A Stock trains stabled in Uxbridge sidings all had the set number '400' on them. It was explained that the train maintainer prepares each train during the night, conducting various checks before signing them off as 'prepared' (for service). In the course of this, he (should) always reset the train number blinds to show '400' (thus proving that the number blinds can be wound). When the driver takes the train out in the morning, he then sets the train number to the correct numerals as well as conducting the brake test and so forth.

The refurbishment of the D Stock featured the prototype trailer car, so converted at Acton Works, followed by the main refurbishment programme undertaken at Derby. The evening concluded with a view of the as yet elusive Asset Inspection Train of 1972 Mkl Tube Stock on the South Ealing test track and finally an S Stock train north of Harrow-on-the-Hill on test.

Fred concluded the meeting by thanking Brian Hardy, who had scanned in the slides to make the Powerpoint presentation. Thanks are also expressed to Richard Griffin, who took the opening photograph of an A Stock destination blind especially for the presentation, which really says it all –

