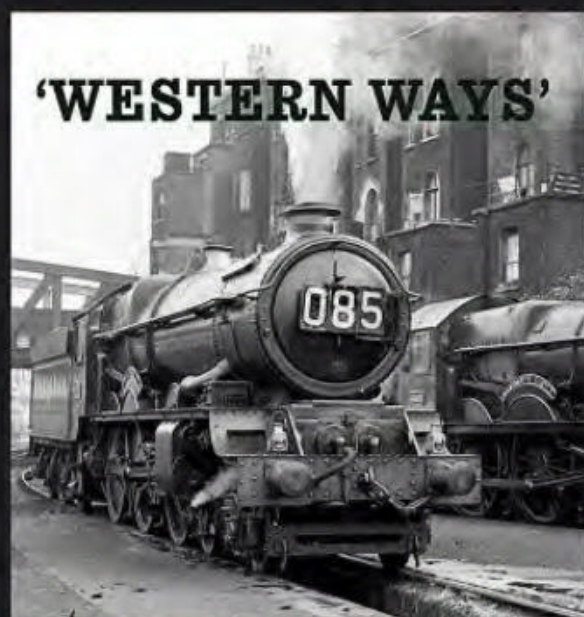


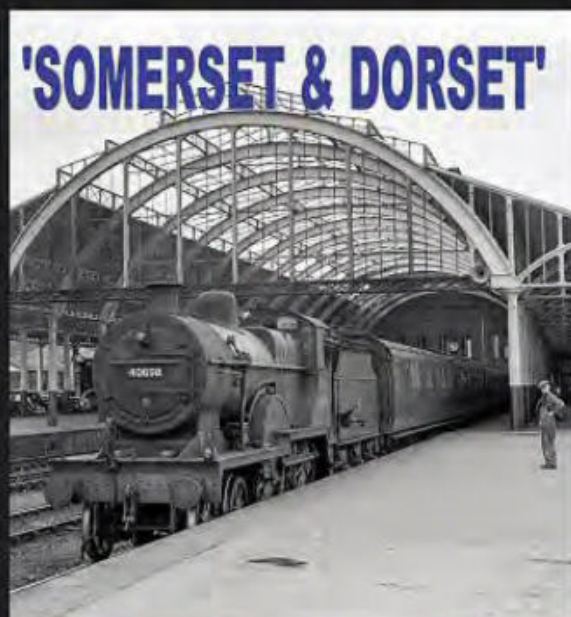


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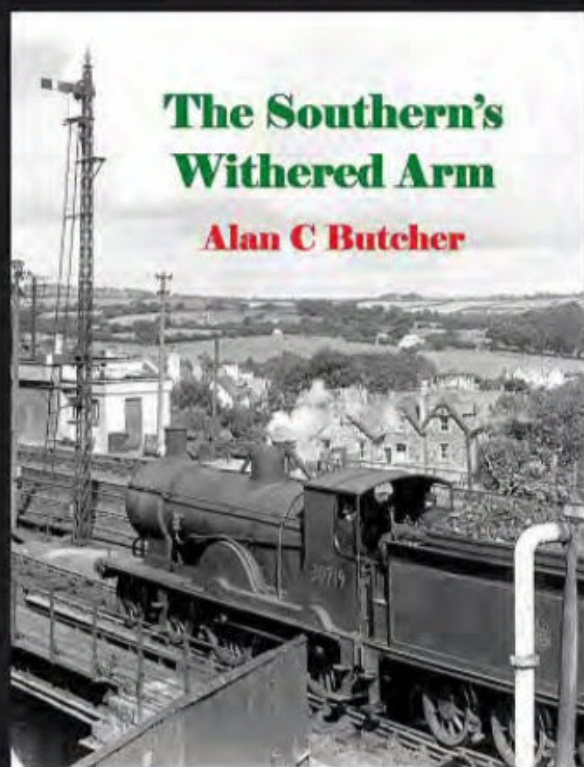


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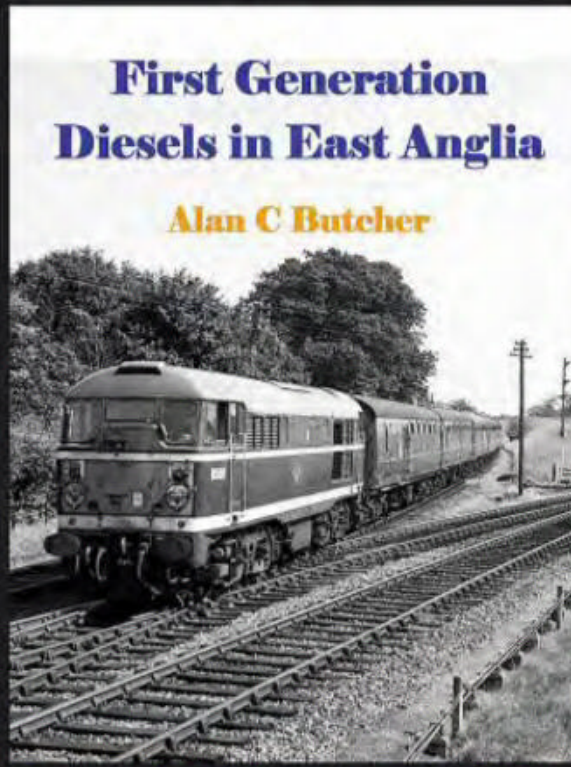


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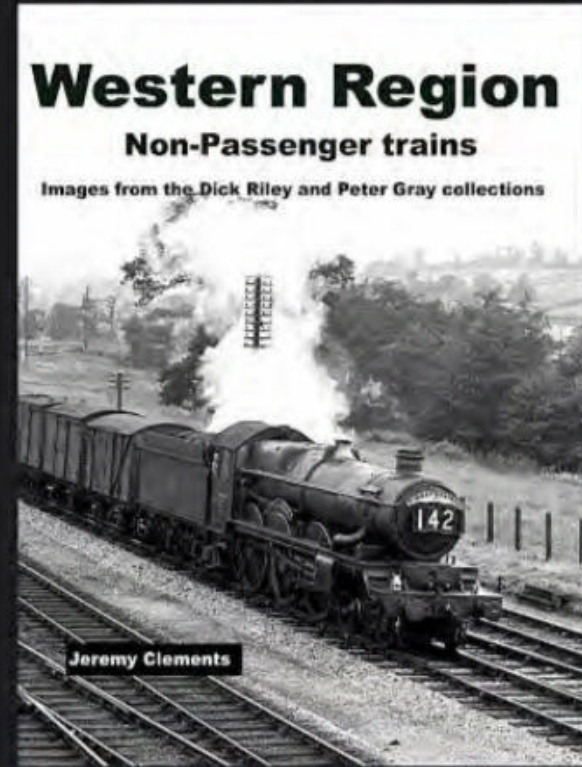


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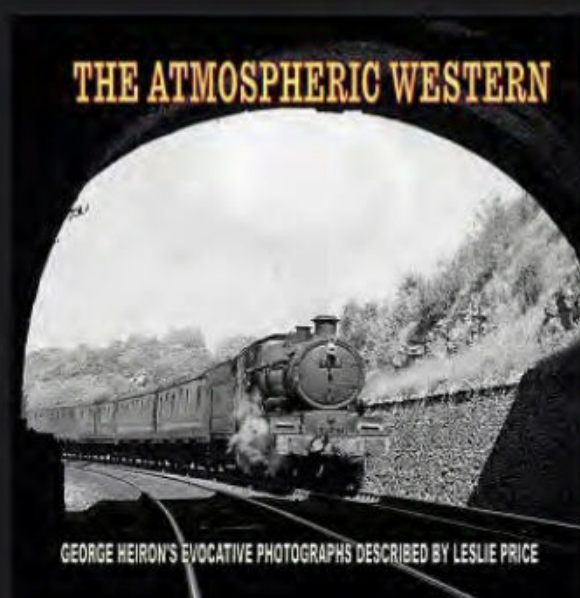


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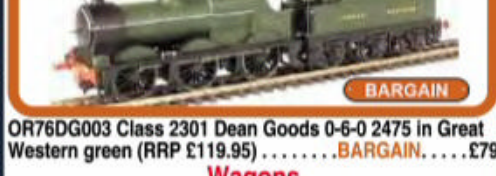
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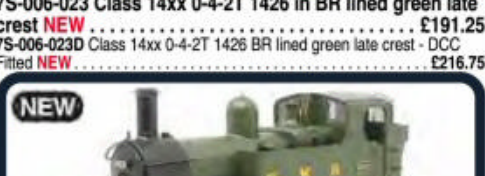
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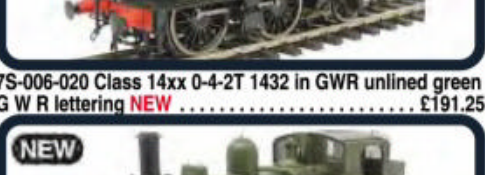
7S-006-021 Class 14xx 0-4-2T 1405 in BR black early emblem **NEW** £191.25



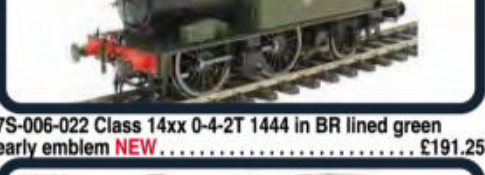
7S-006-023 Class 14xx 0-4-2T 1426 in BR lined green late crest **NEW** £191.25
7S-006-023D Class 14xx 0-4-2T 1426 BR lined green late crest - DCC Fitted **NEW** £216.75



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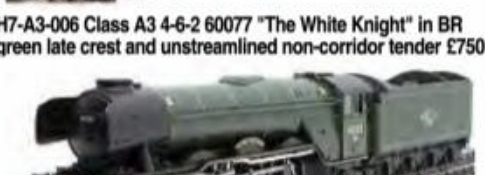
H7-A3-002 Class A3 4-6-2 4472 'Flying Scotsman' in LNER Grass green unstreamlined corridor tender - 'Record Breaker' £750



H7-A3-004 Class A3 4-6-2 60072 'Sunstar' in BR Express blue unstreamlined non-corridor tender £750



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3400 Class 33/0 33012 in BR blue - weathered £466.65



4024 Class 50 50007 'Sir Edward Elgar' in GWR green £594.15
4020 Class 50 in BR blue - unnumbered £594.15
5506 Class 55 'Deltic' D9001 'St Paddy' BR green full yellow ends - weathered £509.15



Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T No. 823 Countess heads a rake of replica original Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway coaches through the luscious Montgomeryshire countryside. The railway was due to launch its season on April 4, but because of Government guidelines on social distancing and avoiding unnecessary travel in dealing with the coronavirus outbreak, it has now joined the rest of the UK heritage sector in closing down for the foreseeable future. Like many others, the railway has launched a nationwide appeal for donations to ensure that it can stay afloat during the enforced closure when there is no income from ticket sales or shop and catering outlets. More details on how you can offer your vital support to the line and others can be found in News, page 10. KARL HEATH/WLLR

We must beat this crisis together

NEVER in my worst nightmare did I dream for a second that the 21st anniversary edition of the magazine would be overshadowed by the worst crisis in the 70-year history of the heritage railway movement – one in which every line and museum venue big and small has had to close down, seemingly indefinitely, because of a killer medieval-type plague.

The closure is essential to save lives, and cannot be avoided. However, there is the risk that it could cause lasting damage to the sector which has been built up through raw enthusiasm and sheer hard graft over the decades, and which is now a plank in the prosperity of local tourist economies.

However, it does not have to be that way. As reported in our Headline News crisis special on pages 6-13, many railways whose existence is now threatened by the loss of income to meet daily overheads during closure have out of sheer desperation issued emergency appeals for funds.

Furthermore, so many of our volunteer army are in the over 70s category, and are being told to stay at home and away from the railway to which they regularly give valuable unpaid service.

The ball is now firmly in our court, and we now must all support our railways in every way we can, even if it must be, by unprecedented necessity, from the seclusion of our homes.

We have listed all the ways in which donations big and small can be made to each of these lines. If you

were planning to visit one or more, but cannot because of Government travel restrictions or maybe self-isolation, work out how much you will save on the cost of petrol and refreshments on your aborted trip, and donate every penny to the line of your choice.

If you are staying at home with time on your hands,

sort out those old railway books, unwanted models or 'forgotten' railway relics, and once this is all over, place them on eBay and donate the proceeds.

Alternatively, you could support your chosen railway by now booking tickets months in advance, maybe even for the Christmas season, giving a lifeline to its stricken cashflow.

Even if you can spare only a tenner, it can but help.

We have not experienced

any situation like this in living memory, and within a few weeks it has changed all our lives, but we must not let the virus win. Everything we have worked for is now at risk, but the solution is in our hands. I have always maintained that railway preservation is the art of the possible – and we will overcome this, no matter how bad it gets in the times ahead.

Meanwhile, if you want to keep up to date with all the essential news from all aspects of the heritage railway sector, turn to pages 30-31 and see how you can take out a subscription of the magazine. At a time when people are not getting out much, have it delivered to your door, and keep up to speed the easy way!

Robin Jones Editor

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COVER: National Collection-owned LSWR T9 class 4-4-0 No. 30120 is seen west of Herston on the Swanage Railway on Tuesday, February 18. ANDREW PM WRIGHT/SR

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Magnificent Myfanwy

Alistair Grieve and Gareth Evans talk to Phil Civil, who won the Young Volunteer of the Year award at the Heritage Railway Association's 2020 awards for his efforts in restoring Bagnall 0-4-0 diesel *Myfanwy* to its original condition at the Chasewater Railway.



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Worth Valley turns green for spring gala

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's spring steam gala proved a resounding success – but came just days before many similar events were cancelled in response to the coronavirus pandemic, report Robin Jones and Gareth Evans.



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Lanky tank stars in East Lancashire spectacular

The East Lancashire Railway's March 6-8 steam gala had a Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway theme, starring three locomotives from the pre-grouping company, including No. 752, hauling its first passenger trains since 1982, writes Brian Sharpe.

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Reviving lost Ffestiniog branch – Will it be a gas?

A 'forgotten' branch of the Ffestiniog Railway – which includes its original terminus – is set to be revived – and may become the first in Wales to run hydrogen trains, writes Stephen Muritt.



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The greatest threat to heritage

By Robin Jones

ON JANUARY 31, two members of a family of Chinese nationals staying in a hotel in York became the first confirmed cases of Covid-19 or coronavirus in the UK.

Two months later, the country was in lockdown as the virus spread, with the daily death toll having reached into the hundreds.

In a bid to slow the spread of the killer virus, Government guidelines severely restricting the movement of people with the sole aim of saving life have quickly impacted on every aspect of everyday life, in a manner not experienced in living memory.

It has been said that the impact of coronavirus on our society will be felt for years to come.

In our sector, heritage railways – a bastion of the nation's tourist economies – have been brought to a standstill, as a direct effect of emergency measures.

As we closed for press, all heritage lines had closed until further notice,

and main line railtours had all been cancelled.

However, even though no trains are running, costs continue to mount, plunging them towards, or into, the red. Insurance, utilities, salaries, loan repayments, rent and rates all have to be met.

Labour shortage

Manpower is in short supply as volunteer staff, on which the sector largely depends, and some safety-critical personnel, are heeding advice on social distancing and self-isolation.

Even though a railway is closed to the public, the guidelines are placing severe restrictions on essential maintenance tasks which need to be carried out, not least of all security (as the East Lancashire Railway found to its great detriment – see separate story), and never mind restoration projects.

The crisis is being seen as by far the worst to hit the sector since the first heritage line, the Talylyn Railway, was taken over by volunteers nearly 70 years ago.

The Heritage Railway Association (HRA) is working to ensure that their members, key players in the country's leisure and tourism sector, receive meaningful support of the same kind as that available to transport and holiday operators, hotel owners and theme parks. The sector's trade body is calling for clarity on issues specifically related to heritage rail, particularly on the treatment of charities, payroll support, and insurance cover.

HRA CEO Steve Oates said: "We're also providing railways with regular and frequent updates on Covid-19, with guidance and advice to meet the particular needs of railway operation in mind.

"We've also provided a business resilience action plan, to help railways plot a path through the threats and risks posed by Covid-19. And, of course, we're talking to many of our members on a daily basis, providing advice and, equally importantly, gathering information.

"We're calling on our members to

work together, to share experiences and ideas, to work towards common solutions wherever possible, to provide practical aid to each other, and to form a single, powerful voice."

The HRA has contacted all its railways and museums, gathering information on estimated losses, cashflow predictions, the kind of support they seek to see them through the pandemic, and an outline of the measures they are taking in an attempt to minimise the financial impact.

Specific support

Industry representatives attended a meeting of the Tourism Industry Council meeting on March 17, where specific support measures were called for and relayed to Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak. Those measures included urgent access to funds; salary and redundancy support; relief not only on business rates, but on VAT and PAYE; mandatory closures of attractions, to enable insurance support to be provided; continuing business advice for tourism and leisure, and clarity on definitions.

Blue skies, green pastures and golden daffodils, plus a vintage train headed by No. 7 *Tom Rolt* – a perfect spring day in the valley. Sadly, it would not last. DAVID WILLIAMS



Glorious Talylyn spring cut short – the last charter before shutdown

THE Talylyn Railway (TR) is renowned for its colourful spring photographic charters, run by David Williams for the past 21 years, with all proceeds going to the heritage line.

Mid-March this year was no different – until all activities were suspended on the last day of

the charters due to coronavirus. Thus it became the last charter to run in the heritage sector before the shutdown.

The original programme was to see Barclay No. 6 *Douglas* in its RAF livery working on the first day, but the 0-4-0WT developed problems

shortly prior to the event which required the wheels to be lifted.

Barclay 0-4-2T No. 7 *Tom Rolt* then was pressed into service to work a mixed train. Other days saw former Corris Railway locomotives No. 3 *Sir Haydn* and No. 4 *Edward Thomas* haul vintage stock up the valley.

Following its shutdown, the railway launched an appeal to its membership to assist with funding during the difficult period of total closure.

→ To donate to the TR in its hour of need, visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/tallylyn-appeal2020

ge railways in 70 years

The HRA subsequently welcomed further guidance on the rules relating to the temporary coronavirus job retention scheme and furloughing (giving staff a paid leave of absence) designed to support employers whose operations have been severely affected by Covid-19.

Employers can use a portal to claim for 80% of usual monthly wage costs, up to £2500 a month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that wage.

Any UK organisation with employees can apply, including businesses, charities, recruitment agencies and public authorities.

A statement from the HRA issued on March 28 said: "This answers some of the queries we've received and is undoubtedly a move forward. However, it still doesn't address a number of questions and issues raised with us by members, especially the concerns about

the need for people to carry out ongoing maintenance and security on sites, and ensuring rolling stock, infrastructure and sites are ready to reopen when the time comes.

"The HRA, together with other trade associations, are still seeking answers on these."

Cautious welcome

While Steve welcomed the earlier news of business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses, and the grant funding geared to rateable values, he said that many heritage railways don't pay business rates, so may not benefit.

"The new Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme will help some, but more than a few railways already have loans, and may not be able to cope with more," he said.

"We're working with the Tourism Alliance and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport to confirm that heritage railways, tramways and cliff railways are included in the Government's

definition of the leisure sector, and can thus benefit from the £330 billion support being made available.

"One of the certainties of the Covid-19 pandemic is that the situation continues to change very rapidly. The HRA is now constantly monitoring every useful source, to ensure its guidance and support is timely and realistic.

"Heritage railways operators are all resourceful and resilient railwaymen at heart. Overcoming challenges is part of the business of building and running a heritage railway, and I know our members will meet this challenge as robustly as any other.

"Now's the time for the HRA to help our members hold and work together, share ideas, help with each other's technical and business questions, and speak with one voice.

"Putting emergency business measures in place will help railways to reduce their sense of uncertainty. And there will still be staff with work to do, volunteers who want to help



Heritage Railway Association CEO Steve Oates. HRA

and, before long, families looking for some leisure and entertainment. Being ready for their return is the goal of every railway's survival plan."

Appeals

Many railways big and small have issued appeals for donations to plug the financial deficit caused by not being able to open for an indeterminate period, with major lines like the North Yorkshire Moors and Severn Valley railways fearing for their existence.

In this issue, we have published the appeals that we have received so far – and are urging readers to respond in any way they can, in what is the heritage sector's greatest hour of need.

Three chairmen appeal to cover Ff&WHR costs

A TRIPLE SOS has been sounded by the chairmen of three organisations involved in the running of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, in a bid to cover the deficit from not being able to run trains.

Late March saw the railways cease the limited early spring service and immediately close all cafes and bars in accordance with Government guidance. The closure led to 40 seasonal staff set to start work this week not being able to do so, while the majority of the permanent staff were sent home under furlough arrangements.

Furthermore, all volunteer work has been suspended until Government restrictions are lifted.

A limited number of engineering staff spent several days ensuring that railway worksites were made safe before being asked to stay at home. In particular, care is being taken not to leave scaffolding or open workings.

However, local residents were warned that key maintenance inspections could continue as required, and therefore tracks should not be used for exercise purposes as trains could still be present at any time.

An appeal letter was issued by John Prideaux chairman of the Festiniog Railway Company and the Ff&WHR, Howard Wilson, chairman of the Ffestiniog Railway Society and Dafydd Thomas, chairman of Cymdeithas Rheilffordd Eryri (the Welsh Highland Railway Society).

It read: "The company has focused on just two key objectives in this crisis: the welfare of our people (staff, volunteers, supporters, customers) and survival.

"The virus has hit at a particularly difficult time for us. It has hit just as we were about to open the railways for daily service. In basic terms, the money we would take in the next six or seven months would normally be expected to pay our costs for the whole year.

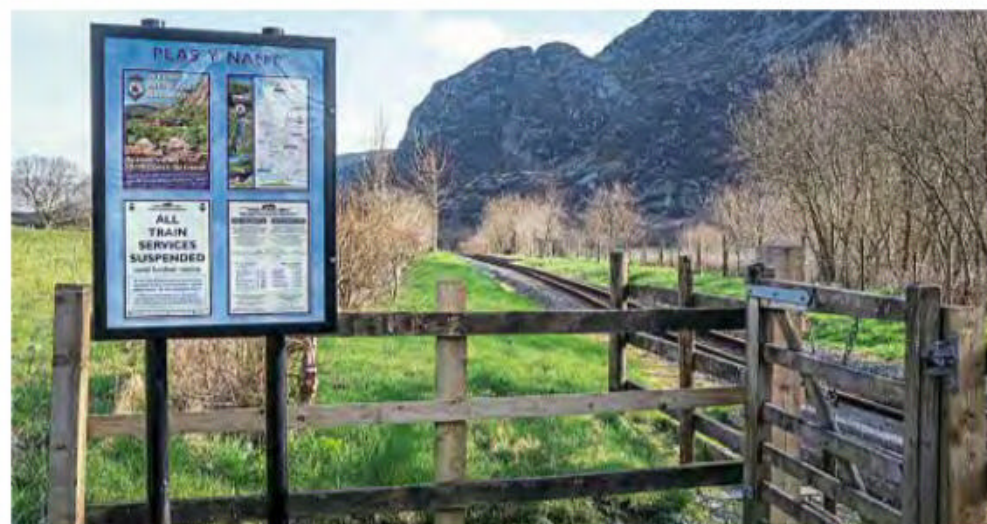
"Although we cannot run trains, there are tasks that we reasonably and safely can work on – particularly where these are jobs like new carriages which have been funded separately by generous donations. We will carry on with those.

"The Government advice on limiting social contact has unfortunately placed severe limits on volunteering.

"We will earn money where we can. The shops are open for internet sales, so please do support them. And if you are planning a trip after all this is over, please do not forget Ffestiniog Travel. However hard we try, there is going to be a big gap.

"The railway has a £6.5 million turnover and a £2.5 million wage bill. The trust and both societies have agreed to make loans to the company to ensure that it remains solvent in the short term, but those are loans. Loans have to be repaid.

"There may be some help from



Play Y Nant halt on the Welsh Highland Railway: the closure notices say it all. FF&WHR

Government. We are working with them to see what might be possible. However, it seems pretty clear that we will need substantial donations to help make up for the loss of the revenue from our trains, cafes and normal retail activities. So, we are asking all of you to consider giving a donation to help your railway through this most challenging time. We all need our friends in such difficult times."

Donations will allow work on locomotives, carriages, track and all other areas of the railway to continue as far as possible and allow the skilled staff to be retained. The strategy is to keep the railways in as near as operable position as possible so a swift return to running services is possible when appropriate.

An unnamed sponsor has offered to increase all donations by 5%.

→ If you wish to donate to the Ff&WHR, cheques can be sent to: The Treasurer Flat 1, 17 Chandos Road, Chorlton, Manchester, M21 0SS. Payments by bank transfer can be made to account name: The Ffestiniog; acc number: 87330040 and sort code: 60-05-11. A gift aid form can be downloaded at www.festrail.co.uk/pdf/FWRT_Gift_Aid_Form_2020_March.pdf and a scan emailed to jscarisbrick@ffwhr.com

Alternatively, payments may be made through the Ffestiniog Railway Society at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/donation-web/charity?charityId=1003330 and via Paypal on the Welsh Highland Railway Society website at www.whrsoc.org.uk

Virus impact: “Six months before life returns to normal”

By Robin Jones

AS we closed for press, the entire heritage railway sector in the British Isles had ground to an unprecedented halt because of the virus – leaving lines with no idea as to when they would be able to start running trains again.

On March 29, England’s deputy chief medical officer Dr Jenny Harries said it could be six months before life in the UK returns to “normal”. Speaking at the Government’s daily coronavirus briefing, as the number of people in the UK to have died from Covid-19 reached 1228, she said that they had to be “responsible” in its actions and reduce social distancing measures “gradually”.

However, she added: “This is not to say we would be in complete lockdown for six months.

“Probably over the next six months, we will have a three-week review. We will see where we are going. We need to keep that lid on – and then gradually we will be able to hopefully adjust some of the social distancing measures and gradually get us all back to normal.”

Lockdown

However, she also said it was “plausible” that the lockdown could go further than that.

In the earlier stages of the spread of the pandemic, several railways had remained optimistic and in good faith had initially advertised that they would to continue to operate while still taking precautions, as the

full extent of the crisis had yet to become apparent and more stringent Government guidelines had yet to be issued.

Some lines with special events downgraded them to ‘normal service days’ while cancelling visiting locomotives to reduce financial risk.

However, as confirmed cases of the virus escalated and the UK death toll rose, special events beginning with Mothering Sunday and Easter specials were cancelled everywhere as heritage lines took the decision to close completely. Some of them, like the South Devon Railway, have optimistically posted provisional dates on their websites for the resumption of services – Saturday, May 16 in its case – while others postponed indefinitely.

Following discussions with the Government, the Science Museum Group decided to close all of its five venues – including the National Railway Museum and Locomotion at Shildon – and the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester – from March 17.

“Our mission is to inspire futures. Right now however, we need to focus on today and on the health and welfare of our visitors and colleagues as the nation comes together to deal with the threat of coronavirus.

“While our doors will be closed for a while, our incredible collection – and the inspirational stories it contains – remains open to you online. We’ll also put our creativity to use in finding new ways to ignite your curiosity and lift your spirits during some difficult

days ahead,” said group director and chief executive Sir Ian Blatchford.

However, the group instead invited would-be visitors to explore its collections online at www.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/explore-our-museums-at-home/

A group statement added: “You can discover inspiring stories of scientific achievement on our websites, delve into our incredible collection online or through videos and 3D models, hear from scientific pioneers, explore fun activities to try at home or simply have fun playing our online games.”

Cancelled events

Scheduled for April 25, Camborne’s annual Trevithick Day, held in honour of the Cornish mining engineer who invented the railway locomotive

and thereby shrunk the world, and which attracts up to 30,000 visitors, was cancelled.

The 2020 Great Central Railway Model Event, sponsored by Mortons Media Group, publisher of *Heritage Railway*, due to take place in two enclosed marquees at Quorn & Woodhouse on June 19-21, was called off with the predicted peak of the virus being towards the end of May.

The railway subsequently cancelled all of its operations, including the March 28/29 Goods Galore gala, while the North Norfolk Railway at first considered downgrading its eagerly-awaited March 25-27 spring steam gala before cancelling all running outright. The Dad’s Army Live! event on May 24/25 is to be rearranged



The Llangollen Railway ran its last train prior to closure on Tuesday, March 17. The Class 109 Wickham railcar is seen departing Glyndyfrdwy on the 12.10pm from Carrog as the penultimate service to Llangollen. GEORGE JONES



Moorsline’s ‘very existence’ at risk from coronavirus pandemic closure

THE survival of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway – Britain’s most popular heritage line in terms of passenger numbers, could be jeopardised because of the closure due to Covid-19.

Officials said that the line, which closed on March 19, could potentially lose up to £1 million over the coming weeks – and

have launched an SOS appeal in a desperate bid to make up the deficit.

An appeal letter from the railway said: “While there have been no reported cases of coronavirus at the railway, the well-being of our visitors, staff and volunteers is our absolute priority. Matters of health and safety have our complete attention, which has led to this closure.

“The NYMR is a registered charity and without operating this would have a substantial impact on its future. Please help by donating to give the railway a fighting chance to be able to ‘steam on’ in its current form once the pandemic is over.

“The NYMR can’t claim insurance compensation for business interruption.

Left: John Cameron’s LNER K4 2-6-0 No. 69994 *The Great Marquess* and K1 2-6-0 No. 62005 at Whitby on June 3, 2015 during the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the closure of the line to Pickering. The pandemic could force the railway to the brink of permanent closure for a second time in history. ROBIN JONES



The Avon Valley Railway cancelled its March 21 mixed traffic industrial gala at the last minute in accordance with new stricter Government coronavirus guidelines, but the locomotives intended for the event had already been placed on display at Bitton the day before, when Somerdale Fry's chocolate factory Sentinel 0-4-0VBT No. 7492 of 1928 ran. The Sentinel was resplendent in its freshly repainted livery having just returned from Heritage Painting.
DUNCAN SAVIDGE

for later in the summer, while an announcement on its June 12-14 mixed traffic gala was set to be made at the start of May.

The Severn Valley Railway's April 16-19 spring steam gala featuring the first-ever visit from its Didcot Railway Centre home on new-build GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*; the line's May 23-25 event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its first public train; and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's Somerset & Dorset-themed May 23-25 Cotswold Festival of Steam, also sponsored by Mortons, were among several high-profile special events to be cancelled outright.

The Downpatrick & County Down Railway decided not to run planned St Patrick's Day specials on March 17 after the parade in Downpatrick was cancelled by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for health reasons. The railway subsequently suspended all operations, expressing hopes that it can reschedule an 'alternative Easter' later in the year.

The Middleton Railway is also closed

until further notice in what is its 60th anniversary year, leaving a question mark over in June 20/21 Diamond Jubilee gala weekend.

Postponements

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Historic Vehicles Trust has cancelled celebrations planned for Saturday, July 18, 2020 to mark its opening in 1960, when it became the very first heritage railway in the world to be built by enthusiasts on a greenfield site, in North Sea Lane, Humberston, near Cleethorpes. It has also cancelled plans for the June 6 Motor-Rail Through The Decades event and to operate a special service on July 4 to mark the 30th anniversary of the Skegness Water Leisure Park, in which it now operates.

Trust chairman Richard Shepherd remained upbeat: "These are postponements, not cancellations. If we have to leave it a year to celebrate our anniversaries, we'll just point out the train is running one year late. That's probably another world record for the LCLR."

The Isle of Man's Department of Infrastructure suspended all heritage railway services, including events on the Isle of Man Steam Railway and Manx Electric Railway. Seaton Tramway and Crich tramway Museum has also closed for the time being.

Several heritage lines rearranged events to a later date, in the hope the pandemic would be over. The Mid-Norfolk Railway switched its April 3-5 diesel gala to July 3-5, for instance, and others posted provisional rearrangement dates.

Not only have heritage lines and museums closed in the interest of public health and safety, but model railway exhibitions have also fallen victim.

Last May, Market Deeping Model Railway Club hit international headlines and attracted the support of veteran rocker and enthusiast Rod Stewart when four vodka-drinking teenagers broke into Stamford Welland Academy in Stamford, Lincolnshire, and wrecked its annual exhibition. The vandalism saw

sympathisers donate more than £100,000 and earned the culprits appearances at Lincoln Juvenile Court.

However, the same event, scheduled to take place at the venue on May 16-17, has now been cancelled because of the pandemic.

Publishing

The virus has also impacted on publishing in the sector. Platform 5 Publishing closed its offices until further notice, suspending publication of *Today's Railways UK* and *Today's Railways Europe* magazines. A statement from the company said it was the intention to resume publication as soon as the situation allows, at the time of writing the July-dated issues, due for publication in June, and subscribers would still get the same number of issues with subscription periods extended to compensate.

Elsewhere, Transport Video Publishing delayed the release of its Spring 2020 magazine programmes Steam Video and Video Track until late June.

"We could potentially lose up to £1 million over the upcoming weeks. Figures of this magnitude could threaten the very existence of the railway. Please help now and support the NYMR to ensure we survive."

General manager Chris Price said: "We want to continue with the incredible restoration and preservation work the whole team here has been doing for decades and hopefully will be for many more years to come."

In the first days of the online appeal, there was a steady stream of donations from supporters of around £25. One donor gave £1000 and others later gave £500. → To find out how to donate to the NYMR Crisis Fund, visit www.nymr.co.uk/appeal/nymr-crisis-fund or alternatively, text 'NYMR' to 70085 to donate £10.

Thieves steal £10k worth of fittings from East Lancs just hours before closure

HOURS after launching its SOS appeal for funds because of its closure due to Covid-19, burglars raided the East Lancashire Railway's Baron Street site – and stole £10,000 worth of brads and copper fittings.

The railway had announced that it would close from Saturday, March 21. However, the thieves struck the night before.

Railway chairman Mike Kelly said: "Like every other events organisation, Covid-19 is having a dramatic effect on our operations. We are a charity, staffed largely by volunteers, and have to prioritise the health and safety of both the public and our team, including many in high risk groups.

"We didn't take this decision lightly and we know it will impact a great many people's lives. To then be hit

with such a huge theft over the weekend was just gut-wrenching.

"We are trying our very best to maintain this heritage railway as a destination for generations to come and things like this have a massive impact.

"The closure and theft really do threaten our existence, so we would appeal to people, now more than ever, to support us and ensure we can reopen when this difficult period ends.

"We appreciate that times will be hard for everyone in the coming months, particularly our volunteers, and as a railway community we are doing everything we can to reach out to our older volunteers and make sure they are supported in any way they need.

"This is a constantly evolving

situation and we hope with the public's continued support to be able to open our doors again soon."

The line's officials are urging supporters to 'pay it forward' by booking tickets for future visits. → For more information on how to support the railway through the closure visit: www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk

A statement on the appeal site said: "The help that is currently available would see the railway become heavily indebted – it would be several years before the railway would be able to pay this off. The amount the railway is set to lose over the coming weeks could threaten the continued existence of the ELR. That is why we need your support to survive."

Your favourite heritage railway needs you NOW!



WENSLEYDALE RAILWAY

By Robin Jones

IN the days before we closed for press, several other heritage railways also issued SOS appeals for donations to help tide them over this unprecedented crisis in the 70-year history of the movement.

→ At **The Llangollen Railway**, which closed on March 17, general manager Liz McGuinness appeared in a video on Facebook to reinforce her line's pleas for financial help from supporters far and wide. The video can be seen at www.facebook.com/llangollen.railway/

A statement from the railway said: "We could potentially lose up to £600,000 over the upcoming weeks. Figures of this magnitude could threaten the very existence of the railway. The only Government help currently available would put the railway into significant debt, which may take years to pay off.

"Please help by donating to give the railway a fighting chance to be able to continue once this current pandemic is over."

A donate button can be accessed at www.llangollen-railway.co.uk

Alternatively, a bank transfer to the Llangollen Railway Charitable Trust can be made at sort code 53.81.03 account No. 23423455, or telephone 01978 860979 for card payments, or send a cheque payable to Llangollen Railway Trust to: Llangollen Railway,

The Station, Abbey Road, Llangollen, LL20 8SN.

→ **The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway** has launched a Victory Over the Virus appeal at www.e-v-r.com/victory/

It said: "The railway's management is doing all it can to reduce the financial consequences of this emergency upon the railway, but with a weekly operating cost of £5000, the fixed overheads and salaries for our tiny but essential paid workforce mean that the loss of revenue at this crucial time of year as we emerge from the winter break will be crippling."

→ **The Swanage Railway**, which suspended its commercial operations until May 1 at the earliest has invited well-wishers to donate at www.swanagerrailwaytrust.org/giving to ensure that the line "is not put into financial jeopardy through no fault of its own."

→ **The South Devon Railway**, which suspended trains from March 17 until provisionally May 16, has appealed for donations at www.southdevonrailway.co.uk/financial-support/

It also urged supporters to buy goods online from top stores under a free scheme which gives a percentage to the railway as a donation. Further details can be found at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/southdevonrailwaytrust/

→ **The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway** set up a Worth Saving appeal at kwvr.co.uk/worth-saving/ following the line's closure on March 19 to all but essential work.

A statement said: "2020 has been a tough year so far. We've had to replace a bridge at the cost of £150,000 (see News, page 49); have been hit by the worst flooding in years, leaving us with a heavy repair bill; and now we are expecting further financial loss due to Covid-19.

"We are unsure how long the railway will be closed, but as a registered charity the cancellation of our passenger trains, events and the closure of our commercial outlets will hit us hard. Your donation will go towards keeping the railway afloat."

→ **The Dean Forest Railway Society** was looking forward to celebrating 2020 as the 50th anniversary of its origins, with several special events planned for the March-November running season. However, it has been forced to temporarily close. There is no guarantee when it will be able to reopen.

General manager Duncan Rowe said: "We have various fixed costs which won't go away just because we're closed and these costs threaten the future of our heritage line."

Supporting charity the Dean Forest Railway Society is asking for help to ensure the survival of the railway,

one of the main tourist attractions in the forest. To donate, visit www.dfrsociety.org.uk/dfrs-emergency-fund or visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/dfrs-emergency-fund or text DFRS to 70191 to donate £10.

→ **Cambrian Heritage Railways** is appealing for donations at a time of growth for CHR, including the extension project to Weston Wharf. In a statement, it said: "This period of no income after our winter shutdown may impact on some of our activities. Please consider a donation not only to keep our project advancing, but also assist in keeping the local economy moving." Donations can be made at: www.cambrianrailways.com or by post to: The Treasurer, Cambrian Heritage Railways, Old Station Building, Oswald Road Oswestry, SY11 1RE.

→ **The Gwili Railway** has opened an emergency fund in a bid to replace lost income from services. It can be accessed at gwili-railway.co.uk/help-save-the-railway

Any surplus money raised will be allocated for the eventual return to steam of RSH 0-4-0ST *Olwen* and Vulcan Austerity 0-6-0ST *Haulwen*.

→ **The Nene Valley Railway**, which has been forced to cease train operations and shut its rateable cafe at Wansford, is appealing for donations. Donate online at nvr.org.uk/ or by post to Nene Valley Railway Ltd, Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough, PE8 6LR.

→ **The Wensleydale Railway** has set up its emergency appeal at wensleydale-railway.co.uk/campaigns/railway-appeal-2020

Or, you can set up a standing order or make a BACS payment to Wensleydale Railway plc, sorting code 40-35-03, account No. 21319353.

A statement said: "With no operating services we have zero cash flow and revenue and our future looks bleak. Please help by donating to giving us a fighting chance."

→ **The Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway** has appealed for donations at [cafdonate.cafonline.org/9557#/>/](http://cafdonate.cafonline.org/9557#/) DonationDetails

Alternatively, cheques payable to W&LLR Preservation Co Ltd can be sent to the Station, Llanfair Caereinion SY21 0SF, ticking the Gift Aid box on the downloaded form.

→ We are happy to publish details of subsequent appeals from other heritage lines in our next issue, or alternatively, post your appeal details on our www.facebook.com/HeritageRailway site, which with nearly a third of a million followers, is the biggest of its kind in the sector.



The Gwili Railway has secured London Transport-liveried GWR pannier No. L92 from the South Devon Railway for the 2020 season and a programme of events featuring it has been planned for when the line reopens. SCOTT ARTUS

Severn Valley: future of the line is at stake due to coronavirus crisis

FIFTY years after the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) ran its first public trains, and 13 years after it was partially closed by severe flood damage, its future is now threatened again because of the coronavirus pandemic – and it needs £250,000 to survive over the next three months.

What is regarded as Britain's second most popular heritage line in terms of visitor numbers has joined the premier league of railways in appealing to the public for donations just to stay afloat.

A statement from the railway said: "The SVR is fighting for its survival, and we need to ensure the SVR can stay afloat in the weeks and months to come, so that when the restrictions are lifted, we'll be able to re-emerge as one of the country's leading heritage railways.

"Even taking advantage of the Government assistance on offer, we need to find £250,000 to keep the railway ticking over for the next three months, for the SVR to get through this.

"We must maintain security across the railway, to protect our heritage rolling stock and stations. We've retained just enough staff to carry out essential duties.

And we're already planning our recovery strategy, so when the time is right, the railway, which we all care so much about, will return, as strong as ever."

A nationwide emergency appeal letter reiterated: "We have found it both necessary and sensible to postpone all our train services and to close the Engine House Visitor

Centre, our gift shops and our refreshment rooms until further notice. We have also taken the difficult decision to cancel many events such as our Easter holiday activities, spring steam gala, open house weekend, spring diesel festival and our 50th anniversary celebrations in May – all of which were predicted to generate vital large scale income to keep the railway running.

"Without this income, the railway faces a very uncertain future and, although the Government has announced various support measures for businesses, they offer insufficient help to the SVR at present. We, like many other businesses, are not insured for business interruption caused by the pandemic and the only help currently available to us is through Government-backed loans (if indeed we qualify), which would put the railway into significant debt and would take many years to pay off.

"We therefore face a very significant loss of income, over an uncertain amount of time, which through no fault of our own could potentially put the whole SVR's existence in jeopardy."

→ To make a donation, visit www.svrtrust.org.uk/emergency.

Alternatively make a bank transfer to SVR Charitable Trust at sort code: 40-26-08, account number: 91525786. Telephone 01562 757940 for card payments or send a cheque to SVR Charitable Trust Ltd, Number One, Comberton Place, Kidderminster, DY10 1QR.



March 16, the last day of operation of the Severn Valley Railway prior to closure saw Collett 0-4-2T No. 1450 on a driver experience course.

IAM MURRAYM/SVR

Help us fund upgrades while line closed – West Somerset

ALREADY having tackled a winter backlog of permanent way renewal in a bid to bring its running line up to scratch, the West Somerset Railway Association (WSRA) has appealed for donations to upgrade more infrastructure while the line is closed because of coronavirus.

The railway cancelled the opening of its season on March 21 because of the crisis.

A WSRA statement said: "The WSR plc is now considering how it can make best use of the period of enforced closure, perhaps by tackling further infrastructure projects and transferring staff to work on those.

"The WSRA has already opened a fund for infrastructure works, intended for use in the winter of 2020/21. We've decided to promote that fund now and be prepared to pay for infrastructure works in the coming weeks if suitable projects can be identified by WSR plc.

"WSRA members and supporters of the WSR have been generous in past months in funding the return to traffic of locomotive No. 9351 and the rail renewal projects last winter. We ask those supporters now to consider if they can again support the railway's improvement at this difficult time and turn a negative into a positive."

In a statement on March 27, WSR



A West Somerset Railway track gang in action. WSRA

plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said: "As we reflect, last year has been described as tumultuous for the WSR, and we all thought 2020 would be the year when we could rebuild and plan again for our long-term future. We were well supported last year and the plc's cash in the bank was poised to see us through until this year's trading enabled us to build it up again. Covid-19 has changed all that.

"The closure period will last at least until June, but it may well be longer. We now need to ensure the 'Wizzer' is placed into a safe 'care and maintenance' position, to allow the railway to be safeguarded and to ensure its resilience, that may mean pretty difficult decisions for 2020. We need to ensure that when the time is appropriate we can reignite both safely and effectively."

→ Donations can be made online at www.justgiving.com/campaign/railrenewal2020 or by direct bank transfer to the WSRA at sort code 03-97-00, account No. 00443258 using reference 'rail2020' or by card over the telephone between 10am-4pm on Tuesdays to Saturdays on 01823 433856. Alternatively, send a cheque to Rail Renewal 2020, WSRA, The Railway station, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton, TA4 3BX.

Bluebell Railway marks 60th year with emergency Covid-19 appeal

THE Bluebell Railway was due to celebrate its 60th anniversary this year. Now it too has launched an emergency appeal for donations to cover its costs after it closed on March 20, with services suspended until further notice because of Covid-19.

The Support the Bluebell Railway appeal site said: "Coming after the early part of the year when trains are not running, our finances are already at their lowest ebb.

"We are therefore appealing for donations to help keep the essential services of the railway running at a time when we have no income.

"In spite of our large volunteer workforce, we are also one of the largest employers in Mid Sussex, and we have many ongoing costs and expenses which do not stop when we're not running trains."

The pandemic raises questions as to whether the railway will be able to reopen in time for its 60th anniversary gala on August 7-9 when

Closed: the Bessemer Arms at Sheffield Park along with the rest of the Bluebell Railway.
ROBIN JONES



it planned to run its most intensive timetable ever.

A Bluebell Railway spokesman added: "We are preserving the best of a bygone era for future generations and any money people donate will help to ensure the railway can continue to do that when it reopens."

As we closed for press, the appeal had raised more than £15,000.

While the railway has stopped running trains and its shop and catering outlets are not open to visitors, its online shop continues to trade and indeed is increasing its stock of railway-related items. It can be visited at www.bluebell-railway.com/shop/

→ To donate to the Bluebell Railway appeal, visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/support-bluebell

Emergency appeal launched after landslip repair cash dries up

By Robin Jones

A DOUBLE emergency appeal for help has been issued by the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway – due to urgent repairs to a landslip being needed and the loss of its income streams because of the coronavirus pandemic.

As reported last issue, work on repairing the slip half a mile south of Gotherington station is already under way thanks to a substantial contribution from the line's supporting charitable group, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust. However, the money does not go far enough – and cannot now be supplemented by further income from ticket sales.

Repairs had been carried out sufficiently for trains safely to pass the site of the slip when the railway reopened on March 7 after its winter break, and special trains laid on for the Cheltenham Festival were run.

Temporary closure

However, the problem has rapidly escalated because, based on Government advice, the line has been shut until further notice, and special events such as Wartime in the Cotswolds and the Mortons Media Group-backed Cotswold Festival of Steam, both of which attract thousands of visitors, have been cancelled.

Therefore, the emergency appeal was launched on March 23 because the railway is now unable to fully

fund the necessary civil engineering work to repair the damage.

Nonetheless, work on the embankment – which is undergoing 'soil nailing' and 'sheet piling' using specialist contractors to permanently repair the slip – which must continue in order to ensure the future of the railway, has now been suspended because of Covid-19.

The railway's plc chairman Richard Johnson said: "Standing at the top of the affected embankment, we are in every sense staring into a black hole that is fast sucking in cash.

"We can't halt work on the slip, which has turned out to be more severe than originally thought. We believe it was caused by persistent heavy rain following a dry summer. The ground is continuing to move.

"If we halt works now to save money, the eventual repair cost will be considerably greater than if work continues now – and, as if this wasn't bad enough, the escalating coronavirus pandemic has meant that the line has had to close.

"What's more, a high proportion of the team on our volunteer-run railway, are unable to offer their time because they are in the 'high risk' category and must self-isolate. The railway has just six employees but over 950 volunteers who operate the railway on a day-to-day basis.

"Closing the railway means money will very quickly run out and we are therefore appealing to supporters,



Work on the landslip, seen underway on March 23, has now been halted because of the coronavirus pandemic. JONATHAN TAYLOR/G/WR

shareholders and the public, who gain so much enjoyment from the operation of trains, to generously respond to our appeal.

"We need to raise at least £250,000 as quickly as we can. Otherwise the consequences are unthinkable: we would face a stark future for our line.

Support

"This is a real double blow. We believe we could have funded most of the embankment repair cost had trains been running and we could have planned for an appeal for support over a longer period. But trains are not running and we need to replace that lost revenue: and fast."

However, big-hearted donors

responded quickly and gave more than £50,000 in the first week of the appeal – making a fifth of the target, and illustrating that the public is ready and willing to support their heritage lines in their hour of dire need.

→ If you would like to support the emergency appeal, donations can be made by bank transfer to Sort Code 30-90-89 Account 47638368 using the reference 'Support the GWR'; or by sending a cheque payable to GWRT to The Chairman, GWRT, Churchward House, Winchcombe Railway Station, Winchcombe, Glos GL54 5LD.

Further information on how to support the railway is available at www.gwsr.com

Food donated to charity

THE East Somerset Railway cancelled its March 21/22 steam gala with days to spare – and promptly donated all the surplus food for the event to the local Salvation Army food bank.

A railway statement said: "Although our rationale for still holding it was that we could minimise all risks to the public by taking serious precautions and following Government and NHS guidelines, it became apparent to us that this was not enough. Our priority is to keep our visitors, volunteers and staff safe and healthy."

Get in touch

editor@heritagerailway.co.uk

New role for Manchester Central station

MORE than 50 years after it saw its last trains, the former Manchester Central station has been given a new lease of life – as one of the Government's 'Nightingale' hospitals for coronavirus patients.

On March 27, NHS chief executive Sir Simon Stevens announced that the former terminus, now the Manchester Central Convention Complex, would become a temporary hospital for the pandemic, similar to London's ExCel centre.

It will take between 750 and 1000 patients, probably medium-level rather than the sickest cases, in a national plan that has been drawn up with the help of the Army and input from local leaders.

Designed by Sir John Fowler, Manchester Central was opened in July 1880 by the Cheshire Lines Committee and became the terminus for Midland Railway express trains to St Pancras. Its huge wrought-iron single-span arched roof, spanning



A 1930s view of Manchester Central, when more than 400 trains passed through each day.

210ft, 550ft and 90ft high is the widest unsupported iron arch in Britain after the Barlow train shed at London St Pancras.

It received Grade II* listing in 1963 and closed to passengers on May 5, 1969, when the remaining services were switched to Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.

It was subsequently converted into an exhibition and conference centre, originally known as G-Mex but now named Manchester Central in honour of its railway past.

The National Exhibition Centre near Birmingham is also to become a Nightingale hospital to help tackle the pandemic.

Steam locomotive locations during the lockdown

By Cedric Johns

WITH the railtour business brought to a halt by the Covid-19 pandemic, 20 main line-registered locomotives had fires dropped and were stabled in various parts of the country.

That seemed ironic, as a shortage of motive power was reported at the turn of the year.

The shortage was evident when Riviera Trains cancelled its entire programme of 'Torbay Express' Bristol-Kingswear excursions planned to run during the summer months, because it said that neither of its usual providers, DB Cargo nor West Coast Railways, were able to supply steam to meet the promoter's requirements.

Pathfinder Tours experienced similar difficulties when earlier last year it was forced to reschedule a trip along the Central Wales Line with the 'Sugar Loaf Mountaineer II' special three times, because neither the selected engine nor a replacement was available.

Last summer, the Railway Touring Company had to run a 'Dorset Coast Express' from London Victoria

to Weymouth throughout with diesel power when LNER A4 Pacific No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* failed at Rugby en route to Southall 24 hours before working the train.

So, where are they now?

■ **Crewe:** *Royal Scot, Britannia, Braunton, Sherwood Forester.*

■ **Carnforth:** *Scots Guardsman, Leander, Galatea running as Alberta, British India Line, Princess Elizabeth.* Nos. 45407, 44871, 62005.

■ **Southall:** *Mayflower*

■ **York:** *Union of South Africa, Tornado*

■ **Bury:** *Flying Scotsman*, No. 45212.

■ **Tyseley:** *Clun Castle*

■ **Stewarts Lane:** *Clan Line*

■ **Swanage:** No. 31806

Despite the cessation of main line railtours during the pandemic, it is understood that there is no embargo in terms of running light engine to suit the needs of stabling, maintenance checks or regular inspections while standing cold, so these details may change in the coming weeks.

→ **Railtours cancelled en masse due to Covid-19: see Main Line News, pages 56-57.**



The Swanage Railway's Class 117 DMU earmarked for the future service to Wareham at Furzebrook, during a Corfe Castle to bridge 4 over the River Frome testing run on March 13. The last Swanage Railway passenger trains prior to closure came on March 14/15. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Heritage lines help out the big railway

EXPERT staff from Britain's heritage railways have been placed on standby ready to help Network Rail to fill key worker shortages caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Responding to a call from Network Rail, the Heritage Railway Association (HRA) has been contacting its operational members to assess the availability of suitably skilled and qualified personnel, with an initial requirement being signalling staff, followed by station staff.

By the end of March, 10 heritage lines had responded with, potentially, well over 100 signalling staff who may be available for secondment to the national network.

Drivers and guards are recruited separately, by the Train Operating Companies (TOC), and like the TOCs, Network Rail is preparing for mass absences caused by the virus.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "The proposal makes sense. Network Rail is expecting to suffer staff shortages, like many other organisations. Effectively all of the UK's heritage railways have now closed until further notice – yet we have experienced and skilled people, available to help keep the nation's vital railways working."

Resource

Many of the staff and volunteers at Britain's heritage railways are retired Network Rail people. Others are younger people, working full-time running heritage railways to the same standards of safety and proficiency – and sometimes over the same track – as Network Rail. Many heritage railway weekend volunteers are Network Rail staff. The overlap between the nation's rail network and commercial heritage railways means the recruitment plan is

logical and less surprising than those outside the railways sector might think.

Steve added: "The first step is to identify the staff and volunteers prepared to put themselves forward, establish their availability, and where they are willing to work. The second step is to match staff and volunteers to vacancies, and assess to determine appropriate training. Following that, individuals would be deployed to their workplaces for completion of training and induction, and starting work."

Operations

Although rail services have been heavily cut across the UK due to falling public demand because of the virus, ministers and train operating companies have agreed the need to keep core services and freight services running. Network Rail is planning for all the measures necessary to enable those operators to function.

A Network Rail spokesman said: "Our priority is to continue to operate the railway safely and reliably. We're taking steps to ensure we have enough colleagues in the business to do that, including talking with the HRA to see how they could help fill any key worker shortages that arise as a result of Covid-19."

The UK's main line services have in effect been 'nationalised' on a temporary basis after the Government suspended rail franchise agreements to avoid TOCs collapsing because of the pandemic.

Emergency measures announced by the Department for Transport in late March saw operators offered the chance to transfer all revenue and cost risk to the Government and in return receive a small management fee to continue running services.

Double Fairlie trials 150 event postponed until June 2021

A PLANNED major celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of the double Fairlie trials on the Ffestiniog Railway has been postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In February 1870, a gathering took place to view trials organised by Robert Fairlie, demonstrating his new articulated steam locomotive, *Little Wonder*.

The revolutionary 0-4-4-0 pulled 100 slate wagons, plus an assortment of passenger carriages on demanding gradients and curves, impressing notable guests, including a Russian

Imperial Commission headed by Count Bobrinsky, who later became Minister of Transportation in Russia from 1871. Guests also came from India, France, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, Canada, the USA and Britain.

Originally due to be held on June 19-21, the anniversary event was to have included an 1870 trial rerun, gravity train demonstrations, and the first public train pulled by the refurbished 0-4-0STT *Welsh Pony*. The event has now been postponed until June 18-20, 2021.

Going green – but not to Greenrigg

THE AIn Valley Railway has cancelled its official opening day for Greenrigg Halt on April 3 because of the Covid-19 outbreak.

The railway has also said it will not run public services until the end of April at the earliest, while the May 25/26 music festival has also been cancelled

However, the line's team of volunteers have been involved in an alternative activity.

Sainsburys supermarkets have been collaborating with the Woodland Trust to supply tree and hedge packs to

community groups, and the railway successfully applied to become part of the scheme.

On March 19 a team of about 20 volunteers – taking care to maintain social distancing – took part in a programme of tree and hedge planting.

The railway had been given 400 'whips' made up of hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, rowan, alder, oak and birch. These were planted as hedging near the stations at Lionheart and Greenrigg, and singly along the line.



Above: The exhibition hall inside the new Central Hall. FEILDEN FOWLES

Left: The winning design for the National Railway Museum's new £16.5 million Central Hall, which will become a focal point for the York Central development. FEILDEN FOWLES

The shape of the NRM to come

By Robin Jones

THE winning design for the National Railway Museum's new Central Hall has been chosen.

London-based architectural practice Feilden Fowles has beaten 75 other teams to win the international competition to create the York museum's new £16.5 million Central Hall building, a key element of the museum's Vision 2025 masterplan.

Not only will the 4500 square metre building celebrate and showcase the latest developments in railway technology and provide a world-class visitor entrance, but become a shining example in low-carbon and sustainable architecture.

The competition jury, chaired by Dame Mary Archer, praised the winning team's proposal for its elegant but functional design, as well as its ambitious energy strategy.

Inspired by the site's former use as working railway buildings, the designs featured in the proposal reference the history of locomotive roundhouses with a central two-storey rotunda, clad in recycled copper and featuring high, glazed ceilings with timber radials.

Carbon footprint

The proposal – which will be shaped by the museum and the winning team – dramatically reduces reliance on concrete and steel by creating a timber frame structure. The combination of passive design principles and active systems, including the use of recycled

copper and local York stone, will reduce the site-wide operational carbon footprint by 80%.

Central Hall will be the centrepiece of the museum's transformational masterplan to create the 'world's railway museum' and will include a spectacular 1000 square metre gallery to showcase the future of railway technology.

Museum director Judith McNicol said: "Feilden Fowles demonstrated a real sensitivity to the site's railway heritage and to the historic character of the city of York. The building will play a vital role in linking the museum and will provide a focal point for the wider York Central development."

The masterplan is the 'cultural anchor' of York Central – one of the largest and most ambitious brownfield regeneration projects in Europe. York Central has received outline planning permission and £77.1 million of Government investment. Including a new park and green spaces, it will create up to 2500 new homes and an additional 6500 jobs.

Dame Mary Archer, chairman of the board of trustees of the Science Museum Group and also of the strategic board of York Central, said: "While the unprecedented challenge of the coronavirus is dominating our lives, we all want to see hope and ambition beyond the present dangers. So we are holding steady with our ambition to make this the world's greatest railway museum.

"If anything, the wider situation

has strengthened the resolve of the Science Museum Group to move forward with our transformational plans for our five sites outside London, investing in a sustainable future and playing our part in keeping culture at the heart of our communities."

Award-winning architectural practice Feilden Fowles has a reputation for delivering exemplary projects in sensitive historic settings, and recently completed the Stirling Prize-shortlisted new visitor centre for the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Feilden Fowles' design concept was developed with fellow team members, Max Fordham MEP (Services) Engineer and Price and Myers Structural and Civil Engineers.

Challenge

Fergus Feilden, Director of Feilden Fowles, said: "We're thrilled to win this nationally significant competition. The brief combined three of our passions – museum architecture, great railway architecture of the 19th century and working in Yorkshire. Central Hall is both a tremendous challenge and a unique opportunity to create a new face and connected experience for the museum. We can't wait to start work with such a fantastic client."

The proposal also proved popular with the public, who were able to

see the finalists' schemes in a free exhibition at the museum and online gallery and add their comments.

Seventy-six teams comprising 241 firms from 19 countries entered the competition, which was launched in September 2019 and run by Malcolm Reading Consultants.

The competition jury comprised Dame Mary Archer; Sir Ian Blatchford, director and chief executive of Science Museum Group; Gitta Gschwendtner, director of the Gitta Gschwendtner Design Consultancy; Zoe Laughlin, director of the Institute of Making; Karen Livingstone, director of masterplan and estate of the Science Museum Group; Judith McNicol; Michael Squire, senior partner in Squire and Partners; and Malcolm Reading, the competition director.

The National Railway Museum is ranked amongst the most popular attractions in the UK and welcomes more than 700,000 visitors annually.

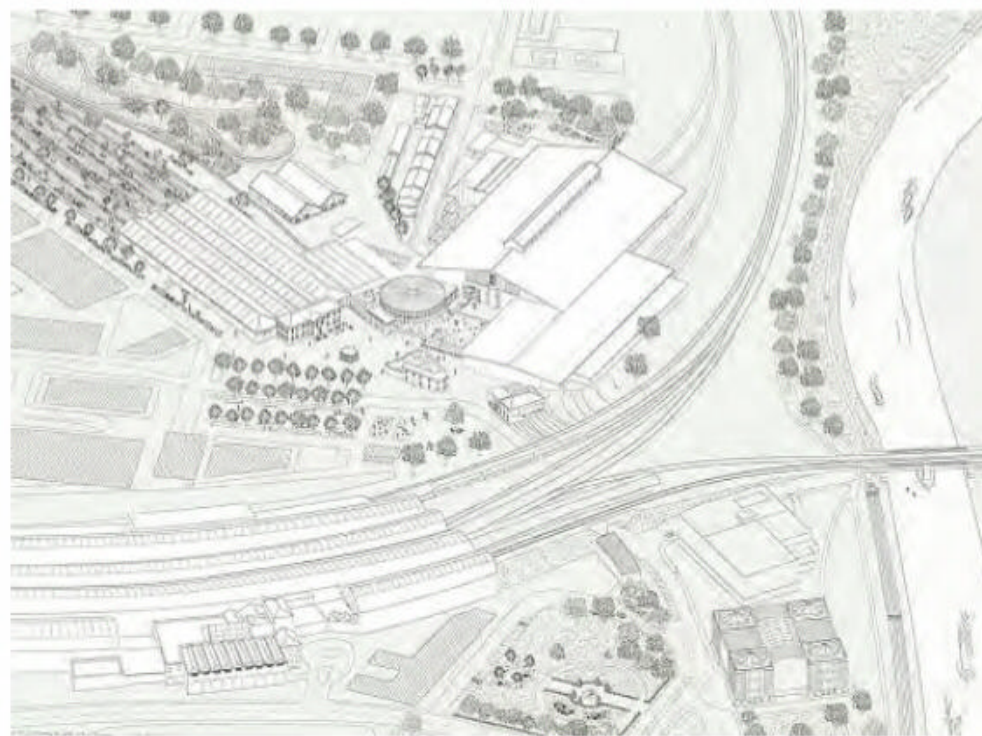
Feilden Fowles was founded in 2009 by Fergus Feilden and Edmund Fowles and specialises in delivering socially and environmentally sustainable buildings across a variety of sectors.

The Science Museum Group unveiled its focus on sustainability in February as part of the Government's UK Year of Climate Action, launched by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.



Left: The interior of the new Central Hall. FEILDEN FOWLES

Right: The position of the new Central Hall at the entrance to the York museum. FEILDEN FOWLES





The first passenger train to arrive at the new Bodmin General platform 2 reverses in on February 27. Richard Cornwall (pictured) was one of the five track gang passengers on board. JIMMY JAMES

Bodmin defies winter rain to complete construction of its new platform 2

THE new second platform at the Bodmin & Wenford Railway's Bodmin General station has welcomed its first passengers.

On February 27, the first passenger-carrying train pulled into platform 2 direct from Bodmin Parkway. It was a works train consisting of a brake van, a Lowmac, and the permanent way

coach propelled by Class 08 diesel shunter No. 08444, with driver David Pond, secondman Alan Tregaskes and guard Jimmy James on board.

The works were carried out throughout the winter storms and the wettest February on record in Cornwall by volunteer and contract labour, and completed on time

and within budget. Phase two, which involves new crossovers and signalling, is scheduled for next winter.

An official opening of the platform scheduled for April 20 has been postponed, with the railway closed until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic.



March 11 sees platform 2 almost complete, and awaiting a fence on the left-hand edge. Tarmac has just been laid. In the shed road stands the South Devon Railway's tamper, and in the platform itself the permanent way train. JIMMY JAMES

Poulton & Wyre Railway takes delivery of Class 108 DMU

THE Poulton & Wyre Railway took delivery of its first passenger-carrying vehicle in March.

Five years ago, the revivalists of the mothballed Poulton to Fleetwood branch, bought a two-car Class 108 DMU comprising 1959-built No. 51567 and 1960-built DTCL No. 56484.

The pair had been preserved at Peak Rail in the early Nineties, but by 2008 the set had moved to the Midland Railway-Butterley. Shortly afterwards, the engines were started and short test runs made up and down the yard.

Restoration

External repairs to rectify corrosion on No. 51937 began and the front passenger saloon underwent partial internal restoration.

In November 2015, the set was sold due to the lack of availability of resources to complete its restoration.

Following the arrival of the set at the Poulton & Wyre Railway, its restoration to passenger carrying condition will continue at Thornton. The revivalists aim to have it run their first services.

The branch closed in 1970 to passengers and in 1999 to freight.

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Prime Minister Boris Johnson: *Locomotion No. 1* should stay in Darlington

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson has promised to do what he can to keep *Locomotion No. 1* in Darlington, rather than see it moved to the Locomotion museum in Shildon.

As highlighted in issue 264, moves by the National Railway Museum to relocate the iconic locomotive from its current home in the Head of Steam Museum in Darlington to Locomotion in time for the 200th anniversary of the

Stockton & Darlington Railway in 2025, have split the North East.

Darlington townfolk, led by mayor Coun Nick Wallis, are fighting to keep the locomotive in its home of the past 160 years.

During prime minister's questions in the House of Commons on March 11, Darlington MP Peter Gibson asked for Mr Johnson's support in keeping *No. 1* where it is.

Mr Gibson, who defeated shadow

Brexit minister Jenny Chapman in last December's general election, taking the seat for the Conservatives for the first time in 27 years, said: "As the country that brought railways to the world, what plans does my Right Honorable friend have to celebrate the 200th anniversary in 2025?"

"And, does he stand with the people of Darlington to prevent the removal of *Locomotion No. 1*,

the world's first passenger steam engine from Darlington where it has resided for over 160 years?"

Mr Johnson replied: "I congratulate my honourable friend and the people of Darlington and the historic role they played in our railway history and heritage and I will do what I can to support his campaign to prevent Darlington from being despoiled of that iconic locomotive."

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway 'midway' station for sale

By Robin Jones

THE Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's Bratton Fleming station has gone on the market for offers in excess of £325,000 – prompting speculation that it may become a prime target for the revivalists.

The station which served the village of Bratton Fleming opened with the line on May 11, 1898, and closed with it on September 29, 1935. Since converted into a two-bedroom private residence, it has been expanded with a greenhouse.

Named Long Acre, the station building is now in use as a private residence and was expanded with a single-storey extension in the mid-1980s when the property was also remodelled and updated. A conservatory was added around 2012. It comes on to the market with separate garage and outbuildings and two-thirds of an acre of land.

The original railway bridge is still in evidence and below it is a water garden.

The station is being marketed by the Barnstaple office of estate agents Stags, which described it as a "highly individual and historic detached single-storey country residence," adding "the accommodation is bright, spacious and well presented. There may be potential to convert the loft space into additional accommodation or to extend the property further subject to planning."

Railway interest

A railway spokesman said: "The agreement between the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust and Exmoor Associates (EA) is that the Trust will buy up trackbed when it becomes available on the northern section of the line and EA will buy up trackbed on the southern section.



Replica Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* at Woody Bay station on March 19, with the last train on a suitably damp day before the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway closed until further notice, due to the coronavirus pandemic. TONY NICHOLSON

"EA is therefore no doubt considering at the moment whether to make an offer for Bratton Fleming station. The price clearly reflects its history as a former station on the L&B (albeit much extended since the railway closed), rather than its intrinsic value as a two-bedroomed

detached property in North Devon. I doubt whether anybody will be moving house any time soon, but if an L&B enthusiast were interested in buying the property, the railway would love to hear from them!"

The property is being offered for sale by informal tender/sealed bids.

The target date is noon on Friday, April 17. Tender forms are available from the selling agents.

The vendors reserve the right to consider offers prior to the due date, said Stags. They also reserve the right not to accept the highest or any offer.



Above: Extended Bratton Fleming station now up for sale. STAGS

Right: An Edwardian hand-coloured postcard of Bratton Fleming station. ROBIN JONES COLLECTION



Boiler now the T3 target

By Robin Jones

THE 563 Locomotive Group which is working towards the restoration of the sole surviving William Adams LSWRT3 for steaming on the Swanage Railway, is to focus on boiler work during 2020.

Last autumn, the group announced that it had raised over a third of its £350,000 appeal to restore the locomotive in the first six months. As we closed for press, total fundraising has reached £210,000, with around £4000 a month being added by standing orders from regular supporters.

Significant boiler work and progress has been made with all parts now cleaned, painted and stored ready for refitting at Bill Parker's Flour Mill workshop at Bream in the Forest of Dean.

In a letter to supporters, the group said that the boiler is the biggest single task. "We expect the work to cost around £170,000 in total and we are going to redouble our fundraising efforts going forward.

"Your support is vital. We have a good amount in our account at the moment but not enough to complete it!"

The firebox door plate and tube plate have been pressed in copper by South Devon Railway Engineering and the wrapper is now being formed up as well. These three components represent a £50,000 investment by



Above: One of the T3 driving wheelsets on the Flour Mill lathe for thrust face machining and journal polishing. 563LG

Right: The pressings for the copper firebox door plate and tube plate for the T3. 563LG



the Swanage Railway Trust (SRT) and are vital to continue the steady progress this year.

Many other components that are needed for the project have a long lead time and to delay ordering project critical parts will create sizeable delays to the project later on.

Of paramount importance are the four girder stays and the three different styles of hangers which secure them.

The group has placed an order for the manufacture of these parts with Premier Patterns, which is renowned for its work in polystyrene single use patterns for one-off jobs.

The bill for the girders as completed castings ready for machining is just under £15,000.

A project spokesman said: "With the Covid-19 crisis gripping the world, we are certain now that our progress will

be affected going forward. We expect longer lead times, reduced access to funding and a focus on saving the railway during these uncertain times.

"We must focus on saving the railway but supporters can rest assured that T3 restoration is still ongoing. We can continue to accept new subscribers and donors through the official 563 webpage. For the moment however, we would urge supporters to contribute to the SOS appeal at the Swanage Railway www.saveourservice.co.uk"

The T3 was gifted by the National Railway Museum to the SRT in March 2017, on the condition that if the heritage line should ever decide it no longer wants it, it offers it back to the National Collection.

→ For details of how to contribute to the T3 project, visit www.563locomotivegroup.co.uk

Bluebell Railway society chairman stands down

GRAHAM Aitken has resigned as chairman of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society after nearly four years in the role.

In a statement he said: "Having reached the age of 70, I have over the past months been reflecting on the ever increasing amount of time I am spending on preservation society business, and I am finding that it is becoming increasingly challenging to achieve the personal goals I have set for myself.

"I have therefore decided that it is time for a change of chairman and have reluctantly made the decision to resign, which has nothing to do whatsoever with the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I intend to remain as a volunteer in the roles that I enjoy, which are: senior stationmaster at Sheffield Park, a guard and the (unofficial) timetable assistant to the operations manager, Chris Knibbs."

Vice-chairman Steve Bigg has become acting chairman.

Furness No. 20 on its way back

THE Furness Railway Trust's popular and well-travelled unique 0-4-0 tender engine No. 20, which was rebuilt back to original condition from an 0-4-0ST steelworks shunter, is nearing the end of its 10-year overhaul, with the boiler undergoing out of frames hydraulic testing at the Ribbles Steam Railway workshops, where it is being overhauled.

Another of the trust's locomotives, GWR 0-6-2T No. 5643, has passed its annual steam test as a prelude to spending another season working on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway. It has been found to require additional work on both its brakes and front end, with a piston and valve exam needed to determine where it is leaking steam from and the work needed to remedy it.

A third locomotive, GWR 4-6-0 No. 4979 *Wootton Hall*, has been receiving new sections of firebox cladding and a pair of newly-made piston valves has been supplied by Tyseley Locomotive Works.

Armstrong Oilers of Grosmont has also supplied a set of oiler pads for the tender wheels, which will allow the tender to be rewheeled in the near future.

Tribute to Bluebell Railway founder and former magazine editor Klaus Marx

THE Bluebell Railway is in mourning following the death of founder member Klaus Marx at the age of 87.

Oxford graduate Klaus joined the newly-formed Bluebell Railway Preservation Society in 1959 and served on the first committee.

He played a leading role in the early days, including taking responsibility for the first museum set up in the Up side waiting room at Sheffield Park and helping Captain Peter Manisty in the production of publicity material. He also assisted with organising the first Bluebell special train which ran from Tonbridge to Horsted Keynes that year.

At the time, he was teaching at Great Walstead School, a short distance from Freshfield Halt, and was a Southern enthusiast. He offered to design the original tickets for the embryonic heritage railway.

Klaus was the editor of Bluebell

News for 35 years from 1960 until 1995, writing several articles based on interviews with people associated with the Lewes to East Grinstead Railway, and he continued to serve on the editorial committee for



Long-serving Bluebell News editor and archivist Klaus Marx. BR

some years after that, helping with historical information.

He also served as the railway's archivist until 2008 until Roger Price succeeded him. His handwritten notes are held in the Bluebell archive.

Klaus wrote a book with a definitive history of the Lewes and East Grinstead line which was published in 2001, as well as several volumes on the LBSCR, of which he was an enthusiast.

He served as headmaster of Willington School in Putney and later Wimbledon in London for over 30 years. He was a founder member of the Bluebell's former London Area Group and hosted its meetings at the school.

A thanksgiving service for his life was held at St Andrew's Baptist Church in Shepperton on March 20.

Klaus leaves a wife, Dorothea, and children Roger, Tim and Christina.



Weardale Railway saved by sale to charity

By Robin Jones

THE controlling interest in County Durham's Weardale Railway has been bought out of administration by a regeneration charity which aims to turn Bishop Auckland into a major tourist attraction.

As reported in issue 263, the 18-mile railway, one of Britain's longest heritage lines, was one of two offered for sale in January by British American Railway Services (BARS) – the other being the Dartmoor Railway in South Devon.

BARS was a subsidiary of Chicago-based Iowa Pacific Holdings, which went into receivership last year, a move which resulted in business advisory firm FRP being appointed to manage an accelerated sale process for the BARS subsidiaries.

The 75% stake in Weardale Railways CIC (Community Interest Company) held by BARS has now been bought by The Auckland Project, a charity which for the last nine years has sought to create opportunities and drive investment into Bishop Auckland and the surrounding area. It was behind the restoration of the recently-reopened Auckland Castle and deer park and the creation of the nearby award-winning Kynren outdoor night show, which depicts important moments from British tradition and history.

Secured

David Willis, a partner at FRP, said: "We're delighted to have been able to secure the sale of the Weardale Railway, allowing this unique heritage railway to continue to operate. We would like to thank the employees for all their support in recent weeks and wish The Auckland Project every success in the future."

In a statement, The Auckland Project said: "We have no experience of running trains. To deliver a full service from Darlington westwards, we aim to secure a partnership with a Train Operating Company, as well as



The Weardale Railway Trust's Class 108 DMU approaches Stanhope with Weardale Railway Heritage Services Ltd's last service of 2019. The Derby-built set comprises vehicles Nos. M50980 and M52054. PAUL WILSON

working with Durham County Council.

"We will continue to call on the essential expertise provided by the staff of the former Weardale Railway Community Interest Company and volunteers of the Weardale Railway Trust, who operated the summer heritage service on behalf of its previous US owner.

"This consortium could lead the way in demonstrating that the 'Beeching Cut' in the UK railway service could soon be reversed and potentially be the first of many such enterprises up and down the country.

"Together with new potential partners such as, the Science Museum Group's National Railway Museum in York and Locomotion museum in Shildon, whose history of passenger railways goes back to the pioneering Stockton & Darlington Railway, a new era for the railway will be born.

"At a time when the Darlington to Bishop Auckland train franchise is about to become available and investment in the North East transport infrastructure has been named as a priority for the current Government, this project is consistent with their declared intent. The Auckland Project

has already received warm support from many of the MPs representing constituencies on the rail route.

"This development also follows the recent announcement of proposals to create a Rail Heritage Quarter in Darlington. In 2019, the Tees Valley Combined Authority signed off £20 million towards the first phase of these regeneration works. And a bid by the Combined Authority for funding a £100 million overhaul and transformation of Darlington railway station was approved as part of the Budget."

Reactions

The remaining 25% stake in the heritage line is held by the Weardale Railway Trust and the county council. Trust chairman Kevin Richardson said: "We were initially disappointed when the previous owners announced the decision to offer the Weardale Railway for sale. We had enjoyed a successful relationship, which has been beneficial to both parties. However, the arrangement had not been without its difficulties, particularly given the six-hour time difference between Chicago and the UK.

"We were delighted, therefore, to learn that the Auckland Project had taken over ownership of the railway. To bring the line back into local ownership will, we feel, be a major positive step. We believe that doing so will encourage local people to join us in preserving this important part of our local heritage.

"We have followed the progress of The Auckland Project with great interest. Here we have an organisation, which has already proven at Bishop Auckland what commitment and vision can achieve. Their aspirations for the railway going

forward are very impressive and we look forward to working with them to take the Weardale Railway into the next chapter of its fascinating history."

The project's chief executive David Maddan said: "The North-East's magnificent industrial heritage offers a unique opportunity for change. By linking with other major transport infrastructure projects and working with partners, including the dedicated team at the Weardale Railway Trust, we can ensure an immediate impact is felt right across the Tees Valley and throughout County Durham."

Project founder Jonathan Ruffer said: "This is the latest initiative to restore vibrancy to the region, giving visitors a wide range of experiences around the castle at Auckland, the Kynren nightshow and the Spanish and Mining Art galleries – we have something for everyone. And soon they'll be able easily to arrive by train!"

Already, the trust is making progress with building a new halt between Wolsingham and Frosterley to serve Kingfisher Leisure Park and Holebeck Touring Caravan Site at Holebeck House Farm, with an emphasis on carrying walkers and cyclists.

Based on a structural steel frame, the halt will have the surface and protective fencing arrangements are designed to reflect the appearance of a traditional railway platform similar to one at Witton-le-Wear, and will have an access ramp for wheelchairs, pushchairs and bicycles.

Thanks to a supporter's generous donation, foundations for the metal frame have been laid following a site clearance east of Landieu crossing. Planned and managed by trust volunteers, the halt is expected to be completed over the coming months.



Class 31s Nos. 31190 and 31465 near Landieu Crossing, Frosterley, returning to Stanhope on a Christmas train on December 1, 2019. JOHN ASKWITH/WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Let's promote the Great Big Trains of Wales too!

NORTH Wales AM Mark Isherwood has raised calls for the Welsh Government to join up its support for the principality's heritage railways of all gauges.

Speaking in the Welsh Parliament on March 17, Mr Isherwood told Baroness Morgan of Ely, the Minister for International Relations and Welsh Language, of the benefits such a move would have for tourism and the local economy.

He said: "I recently had the pleasure of revisiting Llangollen Railway's major engineering project at Corwen Central station, which will have a massive impact on boosting tourism in the region, to see first-hand the progress they had made. I'm always amazed and massively impressed by what a group of volunteers with an average age of 68, working on a part-time basis, are able to achieve.

"A year ago, speaking here, I called for a Welsh Government (WG) statement on support for our standard gauge heritage railways. We know and applaud the fact that the WG supports narrow gauge heritage railways, but wanted to see how this massive volunteering effort could be taken forward, not only delivering heritage projects, but offering much for tourism and broader economies in

areas, often, that need much stimulus.

"How, therefore, do you respond to the question or point raised with me during my recent visit that we need the WG to move on from looking at this in terms of separate narrow and standard gauge heritage railways, and join up the heritage railway sector both in North Wales and across Wales as a win-win for tourism and local economies? And, of course this is even more critical in the current environment."

Responding, the Minister said: "I know that the amount of tourism and the number of tourists who are attracted by our narrow gauge and, as you say, our standard gauge railways, bring in significant finance into the economy of Wales. So, that is something that we hold dear. The enthusiasm for this sector is really something to behold, in particular the number of volunteers who give their time.

"It sounds like a good idea to put the narrow and standard gauge railways together in a promotional package. There may be some sensitivities around that, but that is something we can perhaps look at once this emergency (coronavirus outbreak) has quietened down."



Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35011 *General Steam Navigation* now at Blunsdon needs a boiler life to pave the way for the next stages of its restoration and back-conversion to original condition. GSNLRS

Sponsor No. 35011's boiler lift – for £10 an inch

By Robin Jones

THE General Steam Navigation Locomotive Restoration Society has launched an appeal to raise funds for the lifting of the boiler of Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35011 *General Steam Navigation* for the first time since BR days.

Supporters are being asked to sponsor an inch or more, for as little as £10 – with their names entered into a prize draw.

The society was formed in 2015 with the aim of restoring 1944-built No. 35011 to its original as-built condition, complete with air smooth casing and Bulleid's unique chain-driven valve gear. Retro-converting a Merchant Navy has long been debated since the days of Barry scrapyard, with 11 of the 30 members of the class surviving the cutter's torch.

First shedded at Nine Elms, it began work on services to Bournemouth and Salisbury, often on named expresses. In February 1954, it was transferred to Bournemouth where it regularly headed the 'Royal Wessex'. It later returned to Nine Elms, before being shedded at Exmouth Junction, during which time it was sent to Eastleigh Works for rebuilding.

Having returned to Bournemouth in early 1960, in January 1966 it headed an enthusiasts' special over part of the Somerset & Dorset main line, from which its class was officially banned.

Withdrawn a month later, it arrived at Barry scrapyard in June that year, with most of its running gear missing and critically, no crank axle.

One of the last locomotives to be saved from Dai Woodham's scrapyard,

it was originally designed for the abortive Brighton Locomotive Works project at Preston Park.

In April 2019, the 4-6-2 moved to its new base at Blunsdon on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. Because of the missing components, the cost of restoring it to either rebuilt or original condition are fairly similar.

The plan is to remove the locomotive boiler this summer for the first time since it was withdrawn to allow thorough restoration of the frames and wheelsets to achieve a complete rolling chassis within the next five years.

The approximate cost of the crane hire will be £1500, which also equates to approximately the distance in up-and-down travel of 150ins of the boiler by the time it has been raised to clear the chassis and lowered again.

Supporters can, of course, sponsor several inches if they wish. As a further incentive each 'inch or more' sponsored will be entered into a free draw to win prizes including a Graham Farish N Gauge Merchant Navy Pacific, other model locomotives, a year's free membership of the society and *General Steam Navigation* merchandise.

A lucky 'inch sponsor' will be drawn at random at pivotal points during the boiler lift, such as the moment the first inch has been lifted, point of maximum lift, being clear of the chassis and then lowered to its new location. The more inches sponsored increases the winning chances.

→ To sponsor an inch or more, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/35011boilerlift

Appleby heritage centre closes

THE Appleby Training and Heritage Centre has closed after losing the necessary funding to enable it to continue its educational training, leading to the 14 staff there being made redundant.

Among the projects completed there was the Furness Railway Trust's second class North London Railway coach, which was restored at the centre from 2002-3 with the aid of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

Subsequently, the centre allowed trust volunteers to return the

trust's GER Royal Saloon No. 5 to serviceable condition in the polytunnel from 2009-10.

Both projects saw considerable input from members who regularly travelled over to Appleby during these periods and enjoyed a friendly working relationship with the staff at the centre. This led to the trust's GWR 4-6-0 No. 4979 *Wootton Hall* displayed in prominent storage on the centre's site alongside the Settle and Carlisle line from March 2007 until October 2014.

New move to boost S15 progress

THE Urie Locomotive Society is on the verge of major progress with the restoration of the sole surviving Urie S15 No. 30499 at the Mid-Hants Railway.

The railway and society have negotiated a deal whereby the boiler will be worked on by both paid staff and the Urie engineering team.

With a crane on site at Ropley, the locomotive's boiler, No. 799, was

lifted onto trolleys and moved into the boiler shop at Ropley, with a target date set for 2022 to return the locomotive to steam.

While this work goes on, the society will be progressing work on the locomotive frames, with the motion brackets due to be riveted back on as the next step in their reconstruction.

**HERITAGE
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Happy homecoming for 4555!

By Robin Jones

GWR prairie No. 4555 – which not only ran on the Ashburton branch in BR days but also hauled the official train that partially reopened the line as the Dart Valley Railway in 1969 with Dr Beeching on board – was the undoubted star of the South Devon Railway's successful March 14/15 spring steam gala.

The Dartmouth Steam Railway, which completed the overhaul of 1924-built No. 4555 after it had been out of action for 12 years, agreed for it to visit its former home line for one weekend only, before it went on loan to the East Somerset Railway for two years.

No. 4555, which began its working life at Tyseley depot, is now considered too small to handle the Torbay line's peak-season loadings by itself.

More than 1000 visitors braved the changeable weather to attend the gala, many drawn by the prospect of riding behind or seeing No. 4555, which headed the last BR freight train on the line in 1962 and which was the first engine to arrive on the newly-preserved line in 1965.

Also in action were GWR panniers No. 6412 and 1369 – in its new shirt-button livery – and prairie No. 5542.

An estimated 700-800 passengers travelled over both days, many of them on Rover tickets, on what was the start of the line's main daily running season. Traffic levels were said to be 'quite good' on Saturday, but much quieter on Sunday due to poor weather and advancing fears over coronavirus.

A railway spokesman said: "Many



No. 4555 is seen near Hood Bridge with the 12.10pm Buckfastleigh to Totnes Riverside service on March 14. In 1973, No. 4555 was transferred to the then newly-purchased Paignton & Dartmouth Railway, where it's resided ever since. COLIN WALLACE

people simply wanted to get out ahead of the expected Covid-19 shutdown to enjoy themselves. I heard many similar comments that 'we just wanted to get out of the house and enjoy this event before we can't go anywhere fairly soon.'

"Coronavirus fears and the increasing media coverage of it on Saturday night and Sunday morning obviously had an impact on the numbers, and we had several people ringing to tell us they had planned to come but felt the risk too great. Others rang to ask if we were open and were pleasantly surprised to discover we were.

"The unaudited traffic figures show that we took a decent five-figure cash sum in tickets, plus advance ticket sales too, and a similar figure for our retail and catering operations, so a very good start to our season. Our shop did particularly well on both days.

"Our smaller booking offices at Totnes and Staverton were both busy, as was the Staverton station buffet too. On top of all this we do have the income from two popular photo charter days to add.

"Not surprisingly, No. 4555 was the main attraction for the

photographers, and our crews were impressed with it. The Dartmouth Steam Railway's crews and staff who came over to us also seemed to enjoy the loco's visit.

"Overall, given all the current external influences, we think the weekend went as well as could be expected and we certainly made the right decision to run it. Had it been scheduled for a couple of weeks further on, we may have been having different conversations about it. What happens from here onwards however, does not look too rosy, of course."



No. 4555 climbs along the cliffs tops at Waterside on the Dartmouth Steam Railway with a photographic charter on March 9. DON BISHOP



Welcome back old friend: No. 4555 runs along the straight at Stretchford on the South Devon Railway, with a short rake of GWR coaches for a photographic charter on March 13. The prairie moved to what will be its new home for the foreseeable future at the East Somerset Railway on March 18. DON BISHOP



GWR 0-6-0PT No. 1369 is seen at Hood Bridge working the 13.42pm Bishops Bridge to Buckfastleigh freight on Saturday, March 14. COLIN WALLACE



New Totnes MP Anthony Mangnall came on a short, fact-finding trip to the South Devon Railway's Totnes Riverside station and the Totnes Rare Breeds Farm during the spring steam gala on March 14. Accompanied by stationmaster Chris Mackenzie-Thorp and Sam Adams from the farm, he had a tour of the whole station and a short footplate trip on pannier No. 1369 (pictured), before visiting the signalbox and the 'Monster' display van. A railway spokesman said: "He described his visit online as being a 'hoot' which could apply equally to both the steam engines and owls (at the rare breeds farm). SDR

New tender tank delivered as 70% of new P2 cost raised

By Robin Jones

AS donations and pledges towards the construction of Britain's most powerful steam locomotive – Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* – passed 70% of the required £5 million, its tender tank was delivered to its Darlington Locomotive Works (DLW) on March 23.

The tender tank was manufactured by North View Engineering Solutions (NVES) of Darlington and was grit-blasted at MIS North East of Peterlee in late March.

Furthermore, the tender frames, currently under construction by ID Howitt of Crofton are now structurally complete and the four tender wheelsets have been painted.

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's appeal to raise £450,000 through The Tender Club has also already raised over £116,000, which means that more than two thirds of the money needed to complete the P2 has either been donated or pledged.

The construction of the new 60-ton tender has made significant progress over the past few months at four different sites across the UK. All four wheelsets were assembled – using eight 4ft 2in wheels cast by the trust's principal sponsor William Cook Cast Products Ltd of Sheffield – by South Devon Railway Engineering at Buckfastleigh and delivered to DLW in September 2019. Since their arrival, the wheels have been filled, painted and polished in preparation for the fitting of their roller bearings.

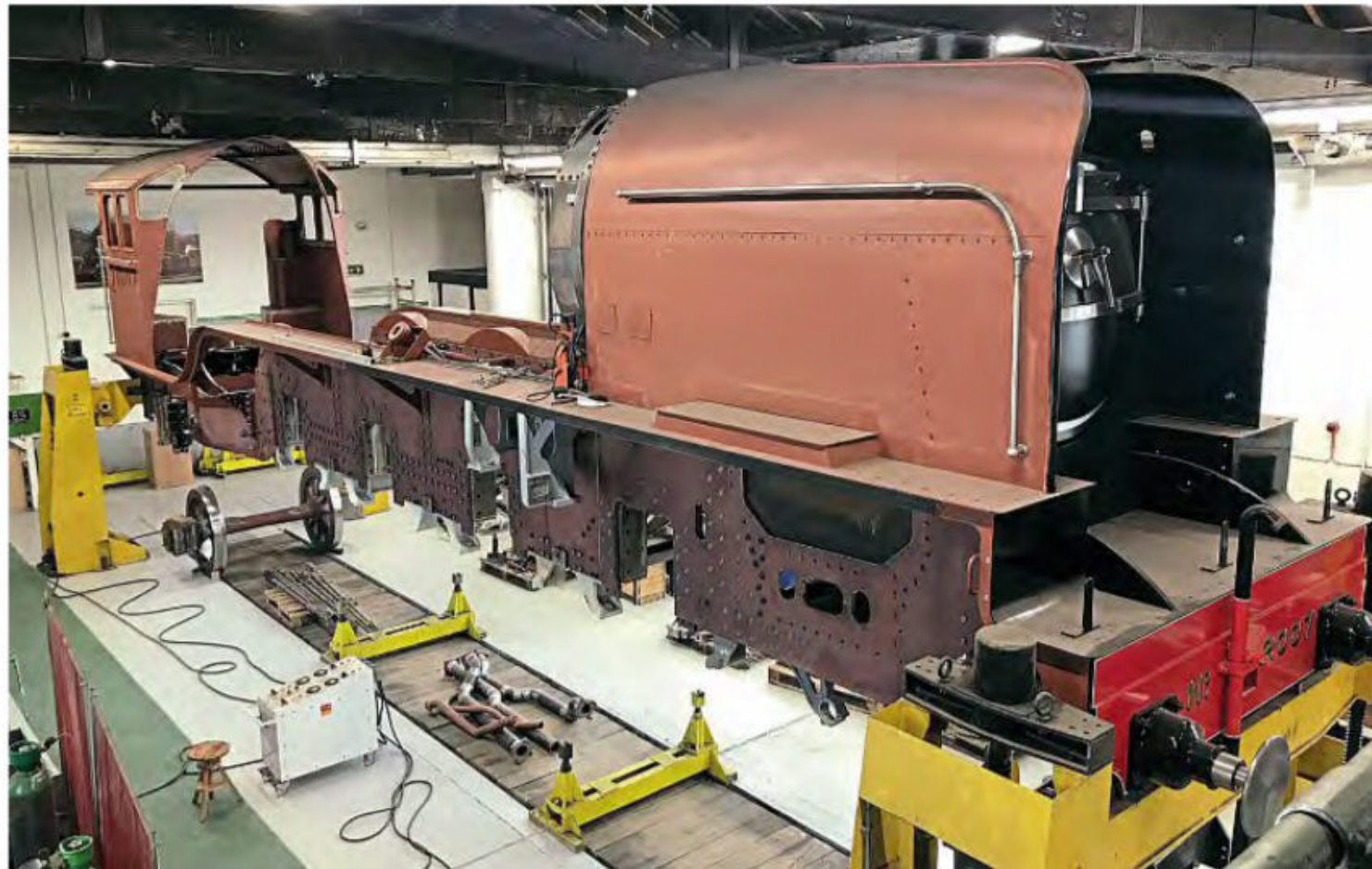
Tender frames

Work on the tender frames continues at ID Howitt using axlebox and other castings also produced by William Cook Cast Products. ID Howitt is making good progress with machining the tender horn blocks and the first pair have been trial fitted to the frames. The completed tender frames are scheduled to be delivered to DLW during the spring.

Having been trial fitted to the frames, the tender tank base plate was returned to NVES, which made rapid progress in erecting the coal slope and washplates (which prevent the water surging in the tender when moving).

All four tender sides were then fitted and the trust's specialist contractor Ian Matthews blacksmithed the curved sections of the 2in half round beading – part of the 160ft produced by DLW volunteers over the past three years.

The completed tender tank was unloaded from the wagon using the trust's lifting jacks inside the works and then lowered onto the newly-



The seventh Gresley P2 2-8-2, No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* being lifted for wheeling in March. DANIELA FILOVA/A1SLT



No. 2007's tender tank arrives at Darlington Locomotive works in March. DANIELA FILOVA/A1SLT



The P2 tender tank being gritblasted at MIS North East at Peterlee on March. MIS was North View Engineering Solutions' subcontractor for this task.

DANIELA FILOVA/A1SLT

acquired accommodation bogies once the wagon had gone. The tender tank will remain inside the works while Ian Matthews fills, primes and undercoats it – at which time it can be sheeted over and parked outside until the arrival of the tender frames from Crofton.

If the project is to remain on schedule to complete No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* within the next three years, the trust needs to have united the tender frames and tank during the spring.

The tender is based closely on the tender built for A1 No. 60163 *Tornado*. The original P2 tenders were to the 1930s non-corridor design built for the new A3 Pacifics being constructed at that time. The water capacity of the original design was 5000 gallons,

which at a typical consumption of 45 gallons per mile would provide a range between water stops of 80 miles (with a safety margin). The tender for *Tornado* was redesigned to increase the water capacity to 6250 gallons, which increases the range to about 110 miles. The additional water capacity is at the expense of a reduction in coal capacity from 9 tons to 7½ tons.

Tender Club

The aim of The Tender Club is to raise £450,000 from 250 supporters each donating £1500 (plus Gift Aid) to the project in up to 15 payments of £100 by standing order.

In return for supporting this appeal, there are a range of special benefits for members of The Tender Club,

including the opportunity to buy a ticket on one of the first trains hauled by No. 2007.

To become a member of The Tender Club, email enquiries@p2steam.com or telephone 01325 460163 or visit www.p2steam.com for more information.

P2 project director and trustee Mark Allatt said: "We are following Government guidelines with regards to the coronavirus and while our office-based staff are now working from home, our workshop staff are continuing to work at DLW, where they are taking all necessary precautions. However, as many of our supporters and volunteers are from vulnerable groups, the works is currently closed to non-essential staff."



The new display inside the Gauge Museum tracing the development of the line, with a Bristol & Exeter Railway milepost in the foreground. WSSRT



The 1897 GWR sleeping car and the goods shed doors at the Minehead end of the Gauge Museum that have been exposed for the first time for many years. These gave access to a short headshunt, which remains in position under the Taunton Model Railway Group building next door. WSSRT

West Somerset Gauge Museum refit complete

THE West Somerset Steam Railway Trust has completed a £60,000 refurbishment of its popular Gauge Museum at Bishops Lydeard station.

The upgrade, backed by a £40,000 National Heritage Lottery Fund grant, began in July 2018 and centred around a fresh look at Somerset's railway history, brought up to date using modern museum interpretation methods.

The story of the West Somerset Railway is retold in a way that it will appeal to families and enthusiasts alike, and aims to provide a valuable resource for local schools too as they tackle science, technology, engineering and maths subjects.

The Gauge Museum's interpretation work has been supported and developed by Smith and Jones Design Consultants Ltd, interpretation and design specialists based in Bristol who help museums, visitor centres and family attractions enhance their visitor experience with carefully thought-out communication and inspirational design.

Trust chairman Chris Austin said: "We have transformed the Gauge Museum not only to appeal to visitors to the WSR, but also to illustrate to our local community the rich heritage of the longest heritage railway in England."

"Our volunteers have pulled out all the stops to complete this huge task over the short winter period, and the results are stunning. I am so grateful to everyone who has contributed to this wonderful project."

The Gauge Museum will be open whenever WSR trains are running and stewards will also be on hand to open the Steam Trust's unique Victorian sleeping car on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays, plus WSR Gala days, until October.

A planned opening of the museum on March 21 was cancelled and along with the rest of the railway, it will remain closed until the end of the coronavirus crisis.



Chasewater bound: MGR wagon No.354456 is seen at the Doon Valley Railway. OWEN EDWARDS/DVR

Seventh Merry Go Round wagon for Chasewater

THE Chasewater Railway-based National Wagon Preservation Group has taken ownership of Merry Go Round vehicle No. 354456.

The Doon Valley Railway (formerly known as the Ayrshire Industrial Railway Society) has agreed to transfer ownership of No. 354456 to the group.

Built at Shildon Wagon Works, No. 354456 spent most of its working life in and around the

Scottish coalfields until coming to grief in 1988 in a derailment with five others at Dalmellington, Ayrshire on NCB infrastructure.

Rather than recover them, they were dumped to one side with the NCB paying BR for the loss of the six wagons. In 2004 Scottish Coal (the successor to the NCB) disposed of the wagons, donating No. 354456 to the society and scrapping the rest.

The group now plans to correct the

derailment damage to No. 354456. In the near future – coronavirus restrictions permitting – the wagon will move to the Chasewater Railway, joining the group's three other MGR wagons and bringing the number at the railway to seven, the largest fleet in the country.

→ Details of an appeal to assist with the repairs of No. 354456 can be found at www.crowdfunder.co.uk/nwpg-1

IN BRIEF

→ CLASS 44 'Peak' D4 (44004) *Great Gable* from the Midland Railway-Butterley has been booked for the Nene Valley Railway's October 9-11 diesel gala and will run alongside home-based classmate No. 45041.

→ SAVE Britain's Heritage has called on Greater Anglia to halt the planned demolition of Brandon station's 175-year-old flint stationmaster's house to create a larger car park. The group wants to see the building restored because of its historical importance. During the Second World War, US airmen used it to reach RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall and it also featured in a 1968 episode of BBC comedy *Dad's Army*.

→ GLASGOW Museums has acquired the nameplate *The Rt. Hon. John Smith, QC, MP*, named after former Labour leader John Smith, previously carried by a ScotRail Class 320 electric train.

→ ROBERT Stephenson export Dr Michael Bailey is the new president of the British Overseas Railways Historical Trust. Having undertaken a series of pioneering archaeological investigations of early steam locomotives, he was awarded a DPhil by the Railway Studies Institute at York and made an MBE in 2010 for his services to industrial archaeology.

→ THE Ivatt Diesel Re-creation Society, which is building a replica of LMS No. 10000, Britain's first main line diesel, has released a new video summarising the progress made on the project in 2019. It can be viewed at youtu.be/RAKSFSXljfI

→ THE garden railway at the Great Central Railway's Rothley station is to be extended, with space made available by relocating one of the existing wooden buildings to a newly slabbed area behind the recently-expanded Ellis Tea Room.

→ NETWORK Rail has given the Vale of Berkeley Railway permission to recover several Midland Railway-style signalboxes near Nottingham later this year. Signalling consultant Alan Price is to conduct a full survey of the 'boxes' and to work out a plan in order to recover them for reuse at Berkeley station and Oldminster Sidings.

→ THE overhaul of Class 47 No. 47105 at Toddington reached a milestone on March 21 when it was started for the first time in seven years, 11 months and 21 days. Members of the owning group, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway-based Brush Type 4 Fund, have recently applied blue undercoat to the locomotive's bodywork. Much effort has also gone into refurbishing the pipework underneath the locomotive.



Above: Up the pole: The mouse on the telegraph pole in Terence Cuneo's painting of Class 9F No. 92220 *Evening Star* that nearly caused an international security incident. SWORDERS

Right: Work of art: A member of Sworders' staff admires Terence Cuneo's painting of Standard Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92220 *Evening Star* before it went under the hammer for £65,000 on March 10. SWORDERS



Cuneo *Evening Star* painting sells to US bidder for £65,000

By Geoff Courtney

AN ORIGINAL Terence Cuneo painting of BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92220 *Evening Star* sold to a US bidder for £65,000 at auction on March 10.

The work was commissioned by a printing firm for its 1964 calendar, and was so well received at the time that the company produced a limited edition of 2500 prints, which was so successful that copies are still in demand today.

Before its auction, the painting, which went under the hammer at a Sworders' books and maps sale in Stansted, Essex, caught the attention of fine art collectors in the UK and overseas, as well as lovers of railway subjects and the many admirers of London-born Cuneo's work.

Auctioneer Alexander Hallett said: "There was considerable interest across the board, including commission and telephone bidders,

and the realisation reflected the quality of the painting." The painting was accompanied by a photograph of Cuneo and the painting with the vendor's father, John Haworth, the last managing director of the printing firm James Haworth & Co, of London and Leicester, who commissioned the artist to produce the work.

Mouse incident

Cuneo, who died in 1996 aged 88, related a tale about the painting in a book about the history of James Haworth & Co published in 1989. The artist usually included a mouse in his work tucked away and almost impossible to find, and the little rodent he included in the 9F painting nearly caused an international security incident.

One of the prints was hanging on the cabin wall of a Union-Castle Line officer, and he, his captain, and an Army friend were searching the painting for the mouse, but couldn't

find it, so in desperation the captain told his officer to cable John Haworth asking where it was.

Haworth replied in his cable "Up telegraph pole first right," but instead of the message being delivered to the ship that was docked in Cape Town, it was relayed to the South African security services as being highly suspicious, probably in code, resulting in two security men boarding the vessel and demanding to see the captain.

The captain had forgotten about the search for the mouse and was bemused and angered, but on remembering why the cable was sent, he led the security men to the officer's cabin. As Cuneo wrote in the book: "He flung wide the door and, with the air of a conjuror producing a rabbit from a hat, pointed dramatically at the print. 'There you are gentlemen, 'Up telegraph pole first right' – and there's the mouse!"

Malcolm Root, one of three Fellows of the Guild of Railway Artists, said the painting inspired him as a teenager to become a professional railway artist.

"I saw a print of it on the wall of a museum near Weston-super-Mare in the mid-1960s, and I thought you couldn't fail to be impressed by the blocks of colour and sense of power," he recalled.

Inspiration

"I was interested in railways and painting, and it made me try the same thing when I got home. My parents bought me a copy of the print the following Christmas, which I still have, and further inspiration came from the painting being featured on the cover of the Triang Hornby 1971 model railway catalogue."

The £65,000 realisation of the painting excludes buyer's premium of 25% (+ VAT).

Ravenglass needs £80K to overhaul popular 2-8-2 locomotive *River Mite*

THE Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society has launched an appeal to raise up to £80,000 to fund the overhaul of its first steam locomotive, 2-8-2 *River Mite*.

The overhaul is being undertaken at John Fowler Engineering's Old Hall Farm at Bouth in Cumbria, with the aim of having it re-enter traffic as soon as possible.

The cost of the overhaul is set to strain the society's finances,

coming so soon after the purchase, importation and restoration of the 'Train from Spain', Krauss 4-6-2 No. 8457 of 1929 *Whillan Beck*, at a total cost of more than £300,000.

At present, the funds for the overhaul of *River Mite* stand at just £10,000.

River Mite was built in 1966 by Clarksons of York after the society raised the money to pay for its construction. The 0-8-0

frames from the former Poultny steam tender chassis from *River Esk* were used as the basis of the new locomotive.

It was delivered across the Pennines by traction engine *Providence* and was commissioned on May 21, 1967, and ever since has been on permanent hire to the railway company.

→ Anyone who would like to donate to the overhaul fund is invited to

send a cheque made payable to 'Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Preservation Society Trust' to David Lees, 31 Water Street, Ribchester, Preston PR3 3YJ – and if applicable, include a Gift Aid declaration form, available by email from treasurer@rerps.co.uk

Alternatively, visit rerps.co.uk and follow the link to the Steam Locomotive Maintenance Fund to pay by Paypal

MPs praise Llangollen and Welshpool lines in parliamentary debate

By Gareth Evans

TWO Welsh MPs mentioned heritage railways in their respective constituencies during a St David's Day debate in parliament at Westminster.

Simon Baynes (Conservative, Clwyd South) said: "Clwyd South has a proud industrial and mining heritage. There is so much to celebrate in the businesses, organisations, sports teams, volunteers and communities of Clwyd South. As an MP, my job is to listen to people's problems and to do my best to resolve them, but it is also to support and promote people's successes.

"I have enjoyed events across the constituency, including a visit to the Llangollen Railway's Corwen extension project. Tourism is also a major industry in Clwyd South."

Craig Williams (Conservative, Montgomeryshire) was also quick to highlight his local heritage line. He said: "Looking at organisations such as the Montgomery canal, the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway and

the Centre for Alternative Technology, one cannot help but admire the spirit of the people getting involved locally and those who travel from across the UK – and, indeed, the world – to help out and take part.

"In fact, such is the ambition of Montgomeryshire that the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway just lent one of our great steam trains to Taiwan; the growing global network of our heritage railways continues. However, we do not have to look far to see what makes Wales stand out, and to understand its great tourism potential."

Meanwhile, at the new Corwen station, work continued on the island platform prior to the site's closure on March 24 due to Government guidelines about the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite a wet period during February, the volunteer workforce completed the block work and edging on platform 1. The footings for a concrete base for the fourth and final set of canopy columns was



The platform with lamp posts and columns for the Corwen board in situ and drainage channels as laid out with tactile pavers stacked for fitting.
GEORGE JONES

excavated, but wet weather required several bailouts of the trench before shuttering and has delayed the delivery of the concrete.

Meanwhile, four newly-cast lamp posts have been delivered and installed with wiring and a pair of renovated GWR columns were erected at the eastern end of the platform for the under-construction Corwen running-in board.

The fiddly job of installing the

surface drainage channels has progressed and with the tactile edging for the platform, will provide the surface for the eventual paving once a layer of fine sand has been spread.

Finally, steelwork for the basis of the waiting room has been delivered and awaits erection. Also frustrated by the enforced site closure was the scheduled ballast drop through the new trackwork and points into the loop.



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Stephenson roundhouse remains uncovered at Birmingham HS2 site

By Robin Jones

THE remains of what is thought to be the world's oldest roundhouse have been discovered during the building of Birmingham's High Speed 2 terminus at Curzon Street.

The roundhouse was sited next to the original Curzon Street station, which served the London and Birmingham Railway and the Grand Junction Railway and which was downgraded to a single goods station when Birmingham New Street was opened in 1854.

The roundhouse, built to Robert Stephenson design, was operational on November 12, 1837.

As such, it is two years older than the roundhouse in Derby, which was previously thought to be the world's oldest.

Post-rail use

The London & Birmingham's roundhouse at the southern end of the line, which opened in 1847, saw far better days after its rail use ended, and it was reincarnated as the Roundhouse music venue in Camden.

The archaeological excavations undertaken early this year uncovered the Birmingham roundhouse and other historic railway structures for the first time, including the remains of the Grand Junction Railway terminus.

Undertaken ahead of the construction of the new Curzon Street station, archaeologists will record the historical significance for the site and determine whether the remains can be preserved in situ.

Running from Curzon Street to Euston, the 112-mile London & Birmingham Railway took 20,000 men nearly five years to build.

Centrepiece of the Birmingham terminus was the neoclassical station entrance which has survived and will become a focal point of the development. The Grade I listed building is the world's oldest surviving piece of

monumental railway architecture.

The uncovered remains show evidence of the base of the central turntable, the exterior wall and the inspection pits that surrounded it.

Jon Millward, historic environment adviser at HS2 Ltd, said: "The discovery of what could be the world's oldest railway roundhouse on the site of the new HS2 station in Birmingham city centre is extraordinary and fitting as we build the next generation of Britain's railways."

Excavations

A team of 70 archaeologists spent last year excavating a 19th-century Victorian burial ground in Birmingham's Park Street, where a HS2 station is planned. Historical artefacts including figurines, coins, toys and necklaces inside coffins were discovered.

Along with the thousands of skeletons, these items will now be examined and informed by historical documents, such as parish records and wills, to develop detailed biographies of the individuals.

The new Curzon Street station – the first inter-city terminus to be built in Birmingham since the 19th century – will have close links with the city's Moor Street, which served the last major trunk route built in the UK in the steam age, part of the GWR line from the industrial West Midlands to South Wales which opened in 1908.

The surviving northern section of that route is now being marketed as

The Grade I listed original Curzon Street station building will be surrounded by public open space as part of the design of the new HS2 terminus. The design of the space will enhance the setting of the station and recognise the heritage of the site, in particular, the historic track alignments of the former goods yard that used to lie to its east. The new station's eastern concourse façade has also been designed to complement the architecture of the building. There will also be space for outdoor public events. ROBIN JONES



Help the £20K last push appeal to resteam Llangollen prairie

A £20,000 appeal has been launched to complete the restoration of GWR small prairie No. 5532.

The Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group needs to buy 195 small tubes and six large tubes to finish the boiler overhaul.

No. 5532 emerged from Swindon in June 1928 and was first shedded at Stourbridge Junction, working on stopping trains from Birmingham Snow Hill to Wolverhampton.

It was later based at Worcester, Evesham, Newport (Ebbw Junction), Tondur, Aberbeeg, Oswestry, Pontypool Road, Bristol (Bath Road), Swindon, Westbury and Plymouth (Laira), from where it was withdrawn in July 1962.

While at Ebbw Junction, No. 5532 was used to haul the Royal Train on October 22, 1941, from Hereford to Monmouth Troy, and later the same day (with George VI on board) from



Monmouth Troy to Ross-on-Wye.

No. 5532 worked the last local passenger train from Bristol to Frome on October 31, 1959.

The 2-6-2T arrived at Woodham's

Barry scrapyard in November 1962 and left in March 1981 after being bought by the Dean Forest Railway as a supply of spares for its other two prairies.

Just £20,000 is now needed to facilitate the restoration of GWR 2-6-2T No. 5532, the 124th locomotive to be bought from Barry scrapyard for preservation purposes. GARETH EVANS

The group bought sister No. 5538 from Barry in 1987. However, it had a cracked cylinder, and so the group agreed to exchange the frames and other components with No. 5532. As the numbers of locomotives are decided by their frames, the group took ownership of No. 5532 when the exchange was made.

Sponsorship of the tubes is being offered at £100 for the small ones and £275 for the large ones.

→ Donors are invited to either send a cheque payable to 'LRGWL' to fundraiser Paul Bailey at Dolwen, Bryneglwys, Corwen, LL21 9LY or telephone Paul on 01490 450271 for alternative payment options.

Tube sponsors will receive a certificate in acknowledgement and also be invited on the first service train hauled by No. 5532.



The remains of the original Curzon Street roundhouse discovered by archaeologists, yards from the electrified main line into Birmingham New Street. HS2

the Shakespeare Line, with the aim of taking international visitors who arrive at the new Curzon Street to Stratford-upon-Avon.

Vintage Trains last June signed a partnership deal with the West Midlands Rail Executive, a group of 16 local authorities, which will see the Tyseley-based Train Operating Company use steam to play a much bigger part in promoting regional tourism using the double-tracked route with its wealth of original stations as a 'heritage main line.'

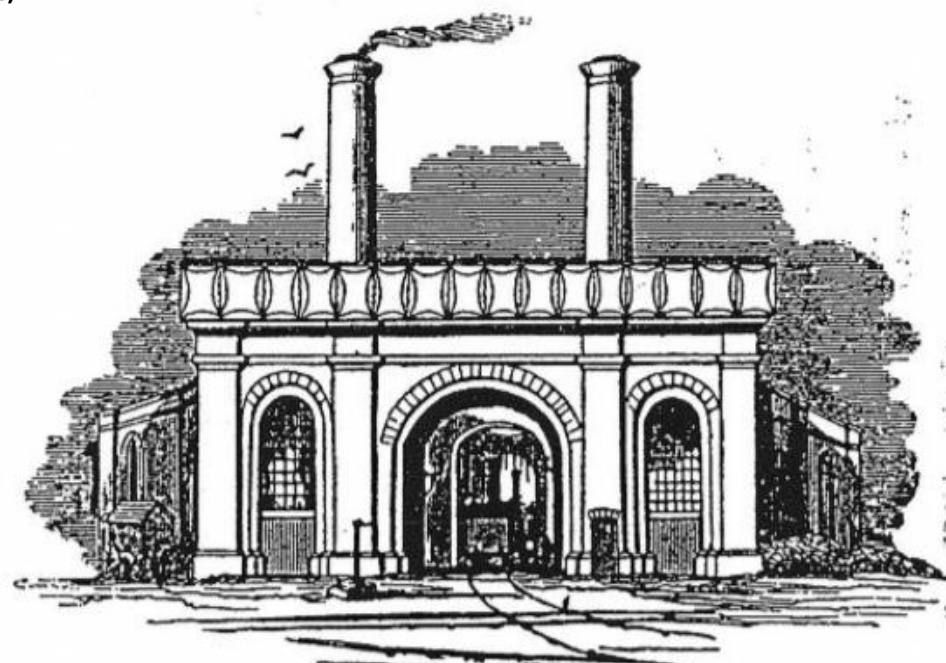
Passenger numbers at Moor Street are expected to grow from seven million to 12 million a year by 2043, with further increases expected as a result of the arrival of HS2 in 2026.

Plans for Birmingham's 'One

Station' strategy will aim to create seamless links between Moor Street, Curzon Street and New Street stations.

The plans include a new transfer deck with access to every platform and links to a new footbridge taking passengers directly to HS2 services from Curzon Street via a new public square.

There are also several options to improve pedestrian access between Moor Street and New Street, including a safe, well-lit and direct route via St Martin's Queensway; new steps and a ramp at Swan Passage, adjacent to the new Primark development, and a new ramped route from Rotunda Square to New Street station.



A contemporary drawing of the original Curzon Street station's 16-road roundhouse of 1837, which has just been rediscovered during the building of HS2.

Last Lanarkshire tram marks a quarter of a century in Summerlee preservation service

THE last surviving tram from the former Lanarkshire Tramways Company fleet, is celebrating 25 years in service at Summerlee Industrial Museum this year, having first run on Scotland's only heritage tramway on April 1, 1995, following a seven-year restoration by enthusiasts at the Coatbridge venue.

Open topper No. 53 was built in Preston by the United Car Company in 1908 and ran until the closure of the Lanarkshire system in 1931.

The body was bought by a farmer in Beith in Ayrshire, and was used as a hay store there until rescued by enthusiasts, and brought to Summerlee in 1988. The body was completely restored and a truck and electrical equipment came from Porto No. 180, the body of which was subsequently scrapped.

A firm favourite with crew and

passengers alike on the Summerlee Tramway, No. 53 made its own piece of history in July 2014, when the tram carried the Queen's Baton on its journey to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

The tram is due to run on select dates in 2020, crewed by members of the Summerlee Transport Group, whose volunteers provide drivers and conductors for the museum's working trams.

Clare Weir, Summerlee collections and exhibitions manager, said: "We are delighted to have had this historic tram in service for a quarter of a century, which is now longer than the tram ran in company service."

"Its survival is a tribute to the foresight of those who rescued No. 53 and their dedication in keeping it in service ever since."



No. 53 carries the Queen's Baton to the Commonwealth Games in July 2014.

HUGH DOUGHERTY

Military might returns to Mid-Norfolk

ON March 4, the Mid-Norfolk Railway carried its first military train in 11 years.

A 12-wagon train carrying 16 wheeled armoured vehicles was moved along the line for the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.

The train was moved overnight from Ludgershall to Wymondham, where resident Class 47 No. 47367 hauled the train to Dereham yard and into the line's recently-completed maintenance shed. GB Railfreight Class 66 No. 66778 provided support at the rear.

Soldiers unloaded the Army vehicles from wagons.

Betton Grange boiler fitted at Tyseley Locomotive Works

By Paul Appleton

A SIGNIFICANT milestone in the construction of new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* was achieved on Wednesday, March 18, when its overhauled boiler was lowered onto the chassis at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

The newly constructed ashpan was fitted at the same time.

The boiler had passed its steam test on December 6 and work since then has focused on preparing the chassis to receive the boiler and final painting in protective paint of the boiler itself. The boiler, a standard Swindon No. 1 unit, came from former 'Barry Ten' Modified Hall No. 7927 *Willington Hall*, and which is identical to the type used on the Granges, all of which were scrapped by the mid-1960s.

Recent weeks have seen the boiler cladding and cladding sheets prepared, with work on replacing the cab, which had to be removed prior to it being lifted in, and preparing and fitting all of the boiler backhead fittings, gauges, etc. Meanwhile, the many pipe runs are also being worked upon.

The smokebox remained to be fitted and work was progressing well when the coronavirus pandemic halted volunteer working parties and the planned movement to the Llangollen Railway for running-in has had to be put on hold, especially now that Tyseley Locomotive Works has also been closed, with the workforce sent home.

Work had also been progressing in parallel on the hired tender that will run with No. 6880.

This is the one from GWR 2884 class 2-8-0 No. 3814, the locomotive



The boiler in the frames at Tyseley Locomotive Works on March 18. QUENTIN MCGUINNESS

itself currently subject of a major restoration at Llangollen.

Meanwhile, the *Betton Grange* Society still needs to find around £100,000 to complete construction of its own replica 3500 Collett tender to main line standards. Twenty-seven were built under Lot A118 and numbered 2242-2268 for use with the Granges, none of which have survived. In view of the numerically appropriate last tender in this group, the one being built for No. 6880 will be numbered 2268.

The different tender 'clubs' to support the appeal are as follows:

■ **Ton-Up Club** £100 donation 'Ton For the Tender.' Benefits include a *Betton Grange* pen and pin badge, inclusion on the 6880 Roll of Honour and a special thank you card.

■ **3500 Tank Club**. Donate £350 and your benefits will include a *Betton Grange* pen and pin badge, inclusion on the 6880 Roll of Honour and a special thank you card, plus a replica shed plate with the GWR or BR(WR) shed code of your choice or, a replica

6880 smokebox number display plate.

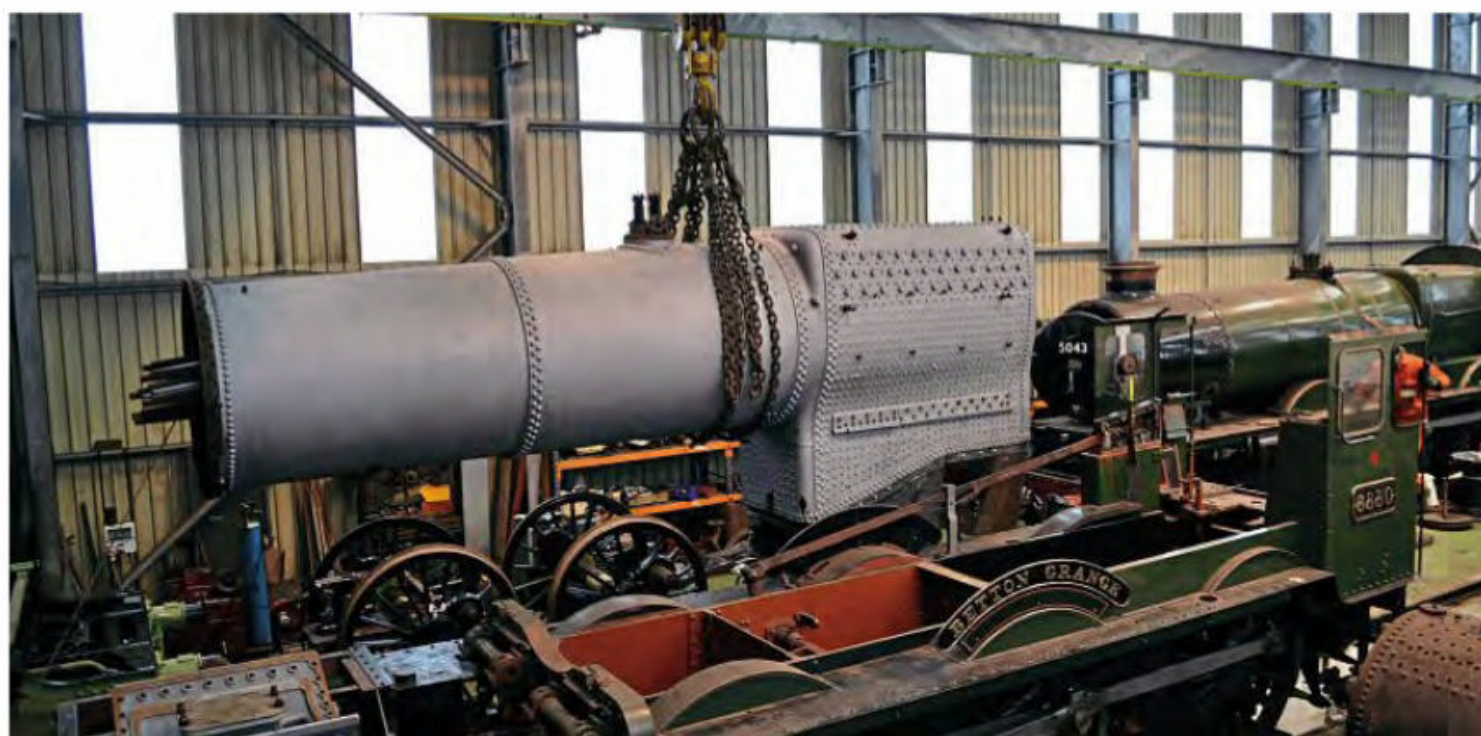
■ **The Chassis Club**: Donate £1100 and benefits include a *Betton Grange* pen and pin badge, inclusion on the 6880 Roll of Honour, a special thank you card, plus a replica tender plate numbered 2268 and your name on a plaque placed within the tender.

→ For full details visit www.6880.co.uk or contact Lynn Moore for an information leaflet at: 6880 Tender Appeal, 224 Staining Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 0DL, or email lynn@6880.co.uk



The new ashpan for No. 6880 *Betton Grange*, prior to fitting on March 18.

LYNN MOORE



The overhauled boiler being lifted into place. LYNN MOORE



Above: Following its routine winter maintenance, the cab of *Tornado* is seen being lowered back into place at Leeming Bar on February 26. ATSLT.

Right: *Tornado* undergoing its fitness-to-run examination at Leeming Bar on March 19, prior to its move to York. STEVE DAVIES



Tornado ready and waiting for new season to begin...

NEW-BUILD A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* has completed its routine maintenance in the engine shed at Leeming Bar on Wensleydale Railway in readiness for the 2020 operating season – whenever that begins.

Critical areas of the coupling and connecting rods were subjected to Magnetic Particle Inspection crack detection and all coupling and connecting rod bushes have been checked with renewal of white metallurgy where necessary. Both injectors were cleaned and inspected

and worn removable tips replaced where appropriate.

Following investigation of two known broken stays in the firebox, others around them were showing signs of fatigue and have been replaced. While the cab was off, the opportunity was taken to replace several rigid boiler stays and welding repairs have also been carried out to foundation ring corners. Since the grate had been removed to facilitate firebox repairs, the side and middle carrier bars have been renewed as the

old ones were becoming tired and repairs have also been made to the self-cleaning plates and screens in the smokebox.

Lubrication system

New piston rings have been fitted on all three cylinders, while the lubrication system has undergone a full check, with oil pots being cleaned and new trimmings being made and fitted where needed.

The bottom belly door on the underside of the boiler barrel was

opened so that a new washout door aperture could be welded into place.

Following the replacement of the safety valves studs and reassembly of the safety valves, the boiler passed its hydraulic test.

On March 20, *Tornado* departed from Northallerton and headed along the East Coast Main Line light engine to York and the National Railway Museum yard, earlier arranged as a positioning move for a railtour that was cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Change of heart sees Hosking 9F overhauled at Llangollen

By Robin Jones

JEREMY Hosking's BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92212 – which had been destined for static display in his new museum at Margate – is instead to be overhauled to running order in the Llangollen Railway workshops.

Inside there, it will take the place of LNER D49 4-4-0 No. 246 *Morayshire* which custodian the Scottish Railway Preservation Society took back before its contract overhaul was completed, as outlined last issue.

Built at Swindon Works in 1959, this veteran of the iron-ore trains from Oxfordshire to South Wales spent the 1961 summer season hauling holiday expresses over the Somerset & Dorset Railway line. In July 1962, it was transferred to Tyseley to haul heavy freights through the West Midlands. It survived into the last years of BR main line steam haulage, being withdrawn from Carnforth in January 1968.

Purchased by 9222 Holdings Ltd, it arrived at Barry scrapyards in September 1968 and 11 years

later became the 105th locomotive to be bought from Dai Woodham for preservation purposes. It was restored to running order at the Great Central Railway, where it ran in traffic for many years. No. 92212 was withdrawn from Mid-Hants Railway traffic at the end of its boiler certificate on December 30, as highlighted in issue 263.

Operational future

It was earmarked for a place in The One:One Collection museum, which has been set up in the iconic former Hornby factory at Margate.

However, Locomotive Services Ltd spokesman Peter Greenwood said that Jeremy had a change of heart when the space in the Llangollen workshops came up.

He said that it will be overhauled to running order, once the workshop reopens after its current closure because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We have not yet made a decision as to where it will go once it is back in running order," he said.



The first of five new boilers built by the Severn Valley Railway for the Isle of Man Railway (IoM) was steamed in Bridgnorth yard on March 7. This follows delays caused by an issue with the dome base design, which has now been rectified, meaning that two of the new-build boilers have been completed simultaneously rather than sequentially. The boilers, which will replace life-expired boilers in the IoM's fleet of Beyer Peacock 2-4-0Ts – originally built in the late 1800s – will first be fitted to No. 11 *Maitland*, whose bottom end overhaul is almost complete at Alan Keefe Ltd's works at Ross-on-Wye and go direct to Douglas for fitting to either No. 10 *G.H. Wood* or No. 12 *Hutchison*. The third boiler is also due for completion later this year and will be fitted to the other of No. 10 or 12, while the other two are on schedule for completion next year. PAUL APPLETON

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GWR 0-6-0PT No. 4612 visited the Nene Valley Railway from the Bodmin & Wenford Railway for the Swindon 70 event on March 7/8. The 1942-built locomotive is seen at Longueville Junction heading for Peterborough after departing Orton Mere on March 11, 2020, its last day of operation at the NVR. GARETH EVANS

or PHONE 01507 529529 QUOTE REF: HRDPS

LINES OPEN 8.30am-5pm (Mon-Fri)



A computer-generated image of how the viewing platform will look at the top of the south cantilever. NETWORK RAIL



Looking along to the south cantilever which will be topped by the viewing platform. It will be accessed by a walkway and stairs. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Forth Bridge viewing platform gets city council planning green light

By Hugh Dougherty

MEMBERS of Edinburgh City Council's development management sub-committee gave the green light to Network Rail's £10 million plans for a viewing platform 367ft above the Forth Bridge and a visitor hub at South Queens Ferry.

The decision was taken after a four-hour meeting on Wednesday, March 4, the 130th anniversary of the opening of the iconic rail bridge, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

A total of 155 objections to the application, originally lodged last September, came largely from South Queens Ferry residents. The objections included concerns about car parking, noise from visitors passing their homes, the removal of more than 100 trees to allow the visitor hub to go ahead, and concerns that visitors making the

climb from the hub to the top of the cantilever span via walkways and stairs would be able to see down into homes and gardens.

Plans modified

Although only 40 comments supported the plan, most welcoming a boost to local tourism currently generated by the bridge, councillors were swayed by Network Rail already having modified details of the plan to take objectors' comments on board, a pledge to encourage visitors to arrive by train at Dalmeny station, and the provision of adequate parking facilities.

Edinburgh City planning officers had also recommended acceptance and councillors ultimately backed their professional view.

When the scheme is complete, visitors will be able to access the viewing platform in escorted groups

of 12 and 15. Wearing safety harness, they will enjoy views down across the bridge to the rail deck and across to Fife. Visitors who time their tour to coincide with steam specials crossing the landmark structure, such as the annual Scottish Railway Preservation Society Fife Circle tours, will be rewarded with a vantage point, available only to bridge workers at present.

Network Rail expects 85,000 visitors to make the climb each year, with around 35 full-time jobs being created for guides and staff at the visitor hub. The company also expects the tours to boost tourist spend in South Queens Ferry and Edinburgh, and provide Scotland with a unique rail heritage-based attraction.

Alan Ross, Network Rail director of engineering and asset management, said: "We are pleased to have secured

planning consent for the project. The bridge walk experience will offer the public a unique and memorable visit to one of Scotland's best-loved structures and bring more tourists to the town.

"We are fully committed to working with the people of South Queens Ferry to deliver this project sensitively and with as little disruption as possible."

Second viewing platform

No completion date has yet been given for the project. However, Network Rail, which first revealed plans for a viewing platform in 2013, is keen to press ahead.

The company is also considering a second viewing platform, accessed by a lift, on the north cantilever of the bridge on the Fife side of the Forth. Fife Council has said that it is keen for this scheme to go ahead.

Statfold the target for British army trolley

A 2ft gauge Second World War Wickham army target trolley has gone on display inside the Statfold Barn Railway's award-winning narrow gauge museum.

In early 1938, D Wickham & Co of Ware in Hertfordshire, Britain's leading manufacturer of rail trolleys, was tasked by the War Department with developing a target trolley. Wickham built 200 examples to 2ft and 2ft 6in gauge.

Unmanned vehicles of this type ran on self-contained layouts at a number of firing ranges, including Lydd in Kent, Okehampton in Devon and Redesdale (Otterburn) in Northumberland.

The vehicles, powered by a two-cylinder JAP petrol engine, carried large wooden or canvas representations of armoured vehicles

which were intended to be shot at by infantry troops being trained in anti-tank gunnery. At most ranges the track ran in a shallow cutting or was shielded by earth banks, thus protecting the trolley from stray projectiles.

This example, No. 3170 of 1943, is owned by the Rail Trolley Trust, whose standard gauge collection is based on the nearby Chasewater Railway.

Initially to be displayed in Statfold's roundhouse museum, the intention is to occasionally demonstrate it in operation, complete with target, although not under live fire.

Trust director Jonathan Flood said: "We are grateful to be able to work with Statfold to enable our target trolley to be seen by the many thousands of visitors who attend the



The target trolley inside the Statfold museum on February 18. MARK HAMBLBY

railway's events each year.

"For many of them it will be their first exposure to this fascinating but little-known use of narrow gauge railways."

Statfold trustee Henry Noon said:

"Historic vehicles like the target trolley add to the interest and variety of the Statfold collection at the same time as ensuring that they are kept secure and protected from the elements."

Steve Davies is appointed new A1 Trust chairman

By Robin Jones

STEVE Davies MBE – the former National Railway Museum director who was responsible for the award-winning Great Gathering of all six surviving LNER A4 Pacifics in 2013/14 – has been appointed chairman of new-build pioneer The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust.

After joining the board last October, Steve was unanimously voted into the post at the trust's March 28 council meeting, which was held via a video conferencing facility to comply with social distancing guidelines.

A former colonel in the British Army, Steve is involved in a significant number of heritage railway projects both on a professional and voluntary basis, including the Wensleydale Railway.

The trust which built, owns and operates 101mph A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, is currently building Britain's most powerful steam locomotive, Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* at Darlington Locomotive Works and has started work on a third locomotive, LNER V4 2-6-2 No. 3403, as reported in issue 238.

Steve enjoyed two tours in the Ministry of Defence in London engaged at the military/political strategic level, and his final military appointment was as chief of staff of a division with responsibility for military planning across almost half of the

UK. It was whilst on secondment to the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces that he exercised his personal initiative to create the country's National Railway Museum which continues to thrive today. Steve is president of the Friends of The Sierra Leone National Railway Museum.

NRM highlights

After retiring from the Army, Steve served as director of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester and then as director of the NRM, during which time he devised, negotiated and implemented the 'mission impossible' repatriation of A4s No. 60008 *Dwight D. Eisenhower* and No. 4489 *Dominion of Canada* from North America for the 75th anniversary of No. 4468 *Mallard* setting the 126mph all-time world steam locomotive record (picture, page 92).

Steve, who lives in North Yorkshire, is the founder and managing director of the International Railway Heritage Consultancy Limited which provides a one-stop-shop for railway heritage organisations internationally, in order that they might access the skills they need to support their respective operations.

Amongst its many projects, Steve's company is supporting the extension of the Bala Lake Railway, and was heavily involved in planning and delivering a Channel 4 TV programme on carriage restoration.

As featured in issue 263, last year he



Steve Davies MBE, the new chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust. A1SLT

"It's a great honour to be appointed chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust. I look forward to working with the other trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters to deliver on the Trust's promises..."

advised the government of Nigeria on improving the Railway Museum in Lagos, including an assessment of the potential to return British-built River class 2-8-2s to working order for main line use.

Steve, filling the post that for 16 years was held by Mark Allatt who stood down in 2017 to become P2 project director, said: "It's a great honour to be appointed chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust. I look forward to working with the other trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters to deliver on the Trust's promises – keeping No. 60163 *Tornado* operating successfully on the main line, completing the construction of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*, starting work on Gresley class V4 No. 3403, and expanding the trust's base in Darlington.

"I have always been attracted to exciting, ambitious and very

professionally delivered projects and organisations.

"I have been a lifelong railway enthusiast and enjoyed the privilege of growing up in the 1960s in Darwen in the industrial heartland of Lancashire, bearing witness to the final years of main line steam. My grandfather was a driver at Lower Darwen shed (24D) and I undoubtedly derived much of my interest and passion for the subject from him.

International level

"My subsequent Army career also provided me with the opportunity to explore railways at an international level, and fond recollections of cabbie locos in the Berlin area during the final days of Deutsche Reichsbahn steam, discovering working steam in former Yugoslavia, and establishing the now-thriving National Railway Museum of Sierra Leone, are never far from my mind."

Run-round loop for Wallingford and canopy erection set to begin

THE Cholsey & Wallingford Railway has completed the acquisition of land next to its terminus adjacent to provide space for a run round loop and the erection of the Victorian canopy from Maidenhead station.

Realignment of the fence around the land was nearing completion by volunteers when closure due to Covid-19 was announced.

The canopy components have now been fully restored, with some of the ornate supporting spandrels and other parts needing to be re-cast using other originals as patterns.

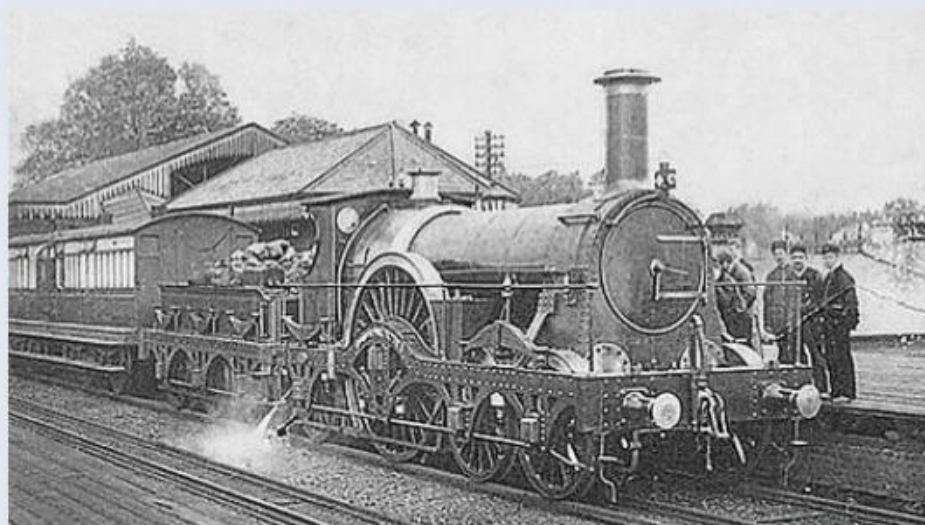
Funded by the Railway Heritage Trust, the main contractors, Green Oak Carpentry of Liss, have been appointed to erect the structure and had hoped to be on site from

May 4 with completion anticipated in July.

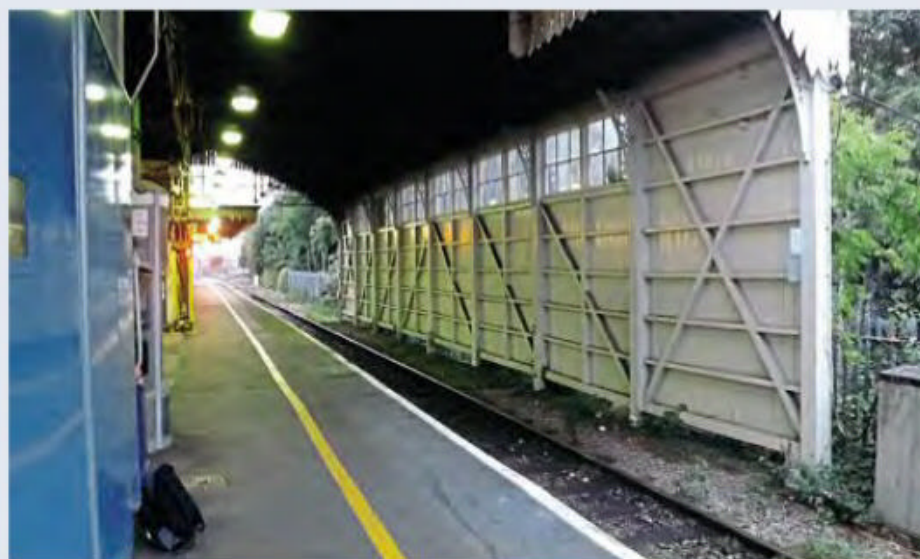
The canopy will span part of the run round loop with the five ornate supporting columns to the rear of the platform. The horizontal extension will appear to protect a line running to the rear of the platform where the railway's museum, housed in a Cambrian

coach body, will be sited as if standing at the platform.

When dismantled from Maidenhead to make way for the Crossrail project, only the Marlow line ran under the canopy. The erection of this historic structure is the first phase of several planned improvements at Wallingford station.



A latter-day broad gauge train runs in front of the Maidenhead canopy while snapped on the Marlow line. CWR



The canopy at Maidenhead shortly before dismantling. CWR

NYMR Bridge 27 progresses despite weather

By Roger Melton

WORK on the replacement of Bridge 27 at Goathland on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway has made steady progress, despite the worst efforts of the winter storms, which have been relatively mild this year, with no snow to disrupt proceedings.

By the end of February, the complex work of fitting the reinforcing steel for the concrete deck had been completed and the concrete deck itself had been poured, more or less on schedule. Various cast concrete blocks that form the end of the bridge and act as ballast retaining walls had been lifted into place and by mid-March the new concrete deck was receiving its protective coat of Wolfin waterproofing material in readiness for the first layer of ballast to be dropped, this in turn being the prelude to the track and signalling being replaced. As for the old steel bridge components, the cut-up sections were transported to Pickering and loaded onto road transport to be sent for recycling.

Bridge 8 cut up

At Pickering, Bridge 8 was cut up at the end of February and the remains lifted out using the railway's own Plasser 12T crane. The Kirow crane still on the NYMR is due to move to Pickering to work on lifting the new bridge deck into place but was trapped at Goathland because of rerailing work being carried out at Goathland summit.

By mid-March, the new bridge deck had been lifted in and waterproofing of it completed, allowing the Kirow crane to enter the shed at New Bridge for annual maintenance work to be carried out.

Finishing-off work at this site was due to include a further, substantial stone drop to raise the height of the new track by 90mm to match the height of the track to be installed in the new shed. A new point has been test-assembled at New Bridge ready to provide the first access to the new shed.

The bridge works at both locations are expected to be completed comfortably in time for the start of the new season.

Museum celebrates 'one off' survivor's 175 years as an operating railway

By Geoff Courtney

A PRIVATELY owned Cumberland railway museum is celebrating the 175th anniversary of the opening of an idiosyncratic line within the county. In its heyday it had two private stations, suffered early financial mismanagement but went on to become the second oldest railway company in the 1923 Grouping. It closed its first stations in the 1840s and lost most of its others in 1950 – and yet survives to this day as part of the national passenger network.

The 28-mile Maryport & Carlisle Railway is described as "very much a one-off" by Peter Rooke, whose West Cumberland Railway Museum will be putting on an exhibition of original artefacts from the line in recognition of the anniversary.

The railway runs from Maryport on the Solway Firth to Carlisle, known as the 'capital' of Cumbria. It opened in stages – from Maryport to Arkleby in July 1840, from there to Aspatria the following April and, in the opposite direction, from Carlisle to Wigton in May 1843. This left a gap between Aspatria and Wigton which was bridged in February 1845, so completing what became the railway's 'main line'.

The line's original Carlisle terminus, Bogfield, closed in December 1844 when Carlisle Crown Street was opened, but this also lasted only a short while, until March 1849.

After this, trains ran firstly into London Road and from June 1851 into Citadel.

There was considerable animosity

and litigation between the MRC and other major and larger railway companies who at this time were developing their own facilities in the city, while other problems accompanied the company's early days, as explained by Peter Rooke. "After only five years of operation the company was in debt to the tune of almost twice what it cost to build, due to the financial mismanagement of several of its senior staff."

There was also constant dissatisfaction among the travelling public about uncivil staff and the unreliability of the railway, which for a short period in the late-1840s had become part of the empire of the controversial George Hudson, and there were even allegations of drunkenness among on-duty employees that went unchecked.

However, in the 1850s the railway turned itself around due to improved management and the booming freight traffic carrying coal from local collieries and iron and steel from west Cumberland's factories. Healthy dividends were paid to shareholders, averaging more than 10% between 1870 and 1882.

By this time the railway had twice expanded; in December 1866 with the opening of a short loop midway along the line that branched off at Aspatria and rejoined at Aikbank Junction near Wigton, and six months later when a six-mile branch line opened running south from Bulgill station to Brigham.

Two private stations

One of the idiosyncrasies highlighted by Peter is the fact that this railway had two private stations within its system of about 40 miles. These were Crofton on the Maryport-Carlisle main line near Wigton serving the Brisco baronetcy of Crofton Hall, and Dovenby near the southern end of the Brigham branch, for the use of the Ballantine Dykes of Dovenby Hall, the family seat of Frecheville Lawson Ballantine Dykes, chairman of the railway.

Another oddity was that the company's crest, which was divided into four segments containing the Maryport and Carlisle coats-of-arms and the family crests of Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Joseph Senhouse, two of the line's leading promoters, didn't also carry the name of the company.

The main line opened with nine stations, one of which, Arkleby, closed in November 1852, while there



Freight namer: Jubilee No. 45588 Kashmir passes through Aspatria station with an Up goods in August 1962. The station opened in 1841 on the Maryport & Carlisle Railway and is still open today, nearly 180 years later. CUMBRIAN RAILWAYS ASSOCIATION/HERBERT WHITE COLLECTION



We're watching you: 'Black 5' No. 45383 at Maryport level crossing with an Up goods on May 10, 1966, watched by a youngster and two adults, while parked on the left is what appears to be a Hillman Minx that was perhaps owned by either the signaller or the photographer. An original nameboard from the signalbox being passed by the former LMS 4-6-0 will feature in an exhibition being held at West Cumberland Railway Museum to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the opening of the line to Carlisle. CUMBRIAN RAILWAYS ASSOCIATION/PETER ROBINSON COLLECTION

were another three on the loop that opened in 1866 – even though this was constructed for mainly colliery freight traffic – and four on the Brigham branch that opened in 1867. One of the Brigham branch stations closed in 1908 and another in 1921, the year in which one of the stations on the loop also closed.

The railway became part of the LMS in the 1923 Grouping, in which it was the second oldest company to be absorbed by any of the Big Four, but under the new ownership changes were afoot. The first was the closure in 1924 of the locomotive, carriage and wagon works at Maryport, where a number of the railway's engines had been built and which had employed 52 men and another 20 apprentices only four years previously.

In 1930 the loop ceased passenger services, although freight continued over part of the route until 1952, and in 1935 the Brigham branch closed entirely. As with the arrival of the LMS 25 years earlier, changes came quickly after Nationalisation in 1948, with the closure in 1950 of four of the main line stations, another following in 1951, and another, the private station of Crofton, in 1954.

This left, in addition to Maryport, just four stations open, and one of these, Bullgill, closed in 1960, but the



Early 20th century transport: Maryport & Carlisle Railway No. R1 waits for the off with a four-carriage train at Maryport station circa 1910. The 2-4-0 was built at the railway's own works in the town in 1867 as No. 19, was renumbered in 1884, withdrawn in 1921, and sold for scrap the following year. On the sandbox above the leading driving wheel is the company crest, which was unusual in that it did not carry the railway's name. CUMBRIAN RAILWAYS ASSOCIATION / BILL SHILLCOCK COLLECTION

remaining three – Aspatria, Wigton and Dalston – are still handling passenger traffic today, more than 175 years after they opened.

Peter, whose museum is housed in a former police station in St Bees, south of Workington, said the

anniversary display would include three signalbox original nameboards, station totem signs, a First World War poster, an operational clock, platform and hand lamps, boundary markers, tickets, stamps, paperwork and station plans.

As this issue went to press the opening dates and times were under review, but when it is open to the public, entry to the museum will be free.

For updates email Peter on petergrooke@btinternet.com

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The mystery of a girl from Crewe, top-link nameplates, and a back room setting

By Geoff Courtney

A MYSTERY photograph of a young lady surrounded by nameplates from top link express locomotives has baffled railwayana auction house principal Simon Turner, who found it in a collection of paperwork given to him by a client.

The young blonde-haired woman is sitting on a stool with a Jubilee nameplate on her lap, four plates at her feet, and five plates leaning on the wall behind her, including nothing less than *Britannia* from No. 70000 and *Princess Alexandra* from an LMS Princess Coronation Pacific. All are in ex-locomotive condition, suggesting they were carried by the relevant engines.

Notes on the back of the image give a date – September 16, 1965 – and even what is assumed to be the name of the woman, Jackie Williamson. Also written on the back is 'Engine name story', 'Nantwich office' and 'A girl from Crewe', indicating it may have been a press photograph to accompany an article.

One of the leading newspapers in the area is the Crewe Chronicle, which was previously titled the Crewe & Nantwich Chronicle, but the publication's records don't go that far back, while Crewe Library searched its microfiche archives but was also unable to track down such an article.

In addition to the *Britannia* plate, and *Princess Alexandra* from No. 46224, there are three further 'Brit' plates, *William Wordsworth* from No. 70030; *Tennyson* (No. 70032); and *Lord Roberts* from No. 70042; while from the LMS come Jubilee 4-6-0 trio *Silver Jubilee*, *Ontario* and *Sierra Leone*, from respectively the class numerical leader, No. 45552, and Nos. 45554 and 45627.



Nameplates mystery: The 1965 photograph of a young lady surrounded by a sea of top-link locomotive nameplates that baffles railwayana auctioneer Simon Turner, who discovered it among paperwork given to him by a client.

One of the plates at the woman's feet is seemingly unidentifiable, but enlargement of the image suggests it is *De Robeck* from No. 45678, and there is enough visible of another to indicate it is *Bellerophon* from Jubilee No. 45694.

Of the locomotives that carried

the plates in the photograph, one, the Princess Coronation, had been withdrawn in 1963, one of the Jubilees in 1962 and two others in 1964, but the remaining engines, including all four 'Brits', were still in service when Jackie sat on the stool for the photograph.

The photograph has another twist, which is probably the most astonishing of all. The floor appears to be covered by a sea of even more nameplates, and scrutiny of the image reveals the probability that these include at least five Princess Coronation class nameplates – four named after Cities and one a Duchess.

Simon said: "When I first saw the photograph I thought it was a straightforward press or official BR shot, but the more I looked, the more I saw, and the more baffled I became, as most of the plates are from locomotives which at that time hadn't been withdrawn.

"Further research explained that, for security reasons, BR removed a number of nameplates from some locomotives before they were taken out of service, and in fact there are quite a few mid-1960s images of engines that were originally named but not carrying either of their plates.

"The plates covering the floor, however, are difficult to explain, as even then, when railwayana collecting was in its infancy, you'd have thought BR didn't want to damage them, especially such desirable plates as those from Princess Coronations.

"And what was the purpose of the photograph? It doesn't look a carefully-posed image in an appropriate setting, but rather in a back room somewhere with plates propped up casually against a wall. Was it an official BR shot, or was it an image created by a press photographer, and if so was it ever published? And where was it taken? The obvious conclusion is Crewe, where all the locomotives concerned were built, but surely if so, a more appropriate setting could have been used."

Entire Moors steam fleet now either operational or under overhaul

WITH several locomotives freshly returned to traffic and several more advancing through the overhaul process, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's shed staff at Grosmont are not resting on their laurels. Two further locomotives are now being prepared for overhauls to commence in earnest.

Work has recently picked up again on Lambton No. 5, with the boiler, tanks, cab and bunker all prepared for lifting, so that the 0-6-2T can be inspected in more detail.

It is known that a great deal of work will be required on the cylinder block valve faces, which may be better dealt with by casting and fitting a new cylinder block. Should this prove to be the case, the pattern used to cast a new block for fellow Lambton tank No. 29 was designed so it could be modified to produce the correct design to suit No. 5.

Following the recent sale of 'Black Five' No. 44806 to NYMR supporter Peter Best, as exclusively

reported in our issue before last, dismantling work has started on that engine too, with the first of the boiler cladding removed. It is thought that extensive boiler work will be needed but that the bottom half of the 4-6-0 requires relatively little attention.

The NYMR is now in the possibly unique position – given the size of its locomotive fleet – of having all of its fleet of steam locomotives either in steam or under overhaul and none in a

queue awaiting attention.

However, the diesel overhaul queue consists of just one locomotive, Class 24 No. D5061. Class 25 D7628 continues to be the mainstay of NYMR services, supported by Class 37 No. 37264, while Class 24 D5032 continues to undergo a major overhaul. For the last two seasons, the active diesels have been supplemented by hired-in Class 26 No. 26038, which has returned to its home on the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway.

Booktown festival backs rail reopening and calls for steam specials

By Hugh Dougherty

THE organisers of the Wigtown Book Festival have backed the proposed reopening of the Dumfries-Stranraer railway.

They are also advocating reopening the line from Newton Stewart to Wigtown, and running steam specials to Wigtown during the annual festival.

The Dumfries-Stranraer reopening proposals have made it through to a second round of transport development options being considered by the Scottish Government and have gained substantial local support.

National lobby group, Railfuture Scotland, also wants to see the Wigtown line reinstated as part of the 'Port Road' reopening, while a local pressure group, Reopen The Port Road, says that steam specials are a 'must' for the local tourist economy and the festival's further development.

Tourism centre

Wigtown, Scotland's Book Town, has transformed itself from an almost-forgotten town, into a major tourism centre through developing year-round book shops. The annual, autumn, book festival attracts 30,000 visitors who come to hear internationally-renowned authors speaking, and generates £3.5 million for the local economy.

Wigtown was served by its own station on the Newton Stewart-Whithorn line, from 1877 until the withdrawal of passenger services in 1950, with final closure to goods, following in 1964. Much of the trackbed remains intact.

Since the book festival started in 2007, the organisers have bemoaned the lack of a rail link, which, they say, is holding back further expansion as the nearest railway station is at Stranraer, while they also claim that Wigtown is ripe for steam trains during the festival.

Charters

Adrian Turpin, the Wigtown festival's artistic director, said: "Wigtown is screaming out to have the railway connection restored. As one of the largest book festivals in the UK, bringing thousands of people to the town each year, we know that one of the key things that deters people from visiting is lack of convenient public transport. This is going to become increasingly unacceptable as the need and desire for green tourism increases.

"The prospect of special steam services during the annual book festival is mouthwatering. We take inspiration from the effect the reopening of the Waverley Line has had on the Borders and on the Borders Book Festival. It can be done."



Evidence of the railway past at Wigtown station site. But could steam return to this festival town? HUGH DOUGHERTY

Churnet Valley acquires more coaches

THE Churnet Valley Railway (CVR) is looking to increase its coaching stock fleet to provide an additional train of Mk.1 stock ready for the start of services to Leek.

TSOs Nos. 3809 and 4366 have been acquired from the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley. No. 3809 is due to be the next vehicle to be overhauled and will require major work, having been heavily stripped for spares

at Butterley. In particular, it will need a full set of aluminium window frames.

No. 4366 is less heavily stripped, but will still require a great deal of work. It is planned to restore it to SO configuration to match another such carriage, No. 4779, which is already in the CVR fleet.

The CVR is still looking for at least two more vehicles to add to its fleet.



The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall visited the London Transport Museum on March 4, to start the celebrations for Transport for London's (TfL) 20th anniversary. Arriving at the Covent Garden museum from Clarence House with TFL Commissioner Mike Brown MVO on one of London's new Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 EV City electric buses, the couple were welcomed by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and met TfL staff responsible for keeping the capital moving every day. The prince – seen touring the museum with the mayor, unveiled a TfL20 plaque to commemorate the visit, and the royal couple were presented with personalised roundels. TFL

First part of Wirksworth's new station building open

THE Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association has completed the first phase of the new station building at Wirksworth.

Financed with the help of grant aid from Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund, a generous legacy and a large number of donations, the building, which opened in February, houses a new museum/display and the association's bookshop.

The building is based on a Midland Railway design, like the one which was demolished at Wirksworth and is approximately on the site of the original.

It has secure display cabinets which have encouraged people to loan unique items of railway



The new Wirksworth station building which opened in February. ANDREW DENHAM

memorabilia for display.

Phase two, which will see the replacement of the life-expired toilets, has now started.

Nene Valley 5MT work progresses

By Gareth Evans

THE overhaul of the Nene Valley Railway's BR 5MT No. 73050 *City of Peterborough* continues to make steady progress.

Inside the workshop at Wansford, the 4-6-0's 6ft 2in driving wheels are practically complete. Apart from a weld repair to one of the horn guides, they are otherwise ready to go back under. Following the return of the springs from overhaul, the bogie is also nearly complete.

Intensive work continues on the main frame. The drag box has been removed and work to replace the thinned lower plate is scheduled.

The never-ending component

overhaul continues – including the vacuum ejector relief valve and the whistle.

A start has been made on dismantling the cab. This will be transported off-site for shot-blasting and initial overhaul, before being returned to Wansford for reassembly.

The selection of overhaul contractor for the boiler is still in progress. Tests on the welded section from the firebox side are delayed due to a faulty weld.

As previously reported, the 'Standard Five's tender is running behind BR 9F No. 92134 at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Withdrawn upon the expiry of its boiler ticket in 2014, work began on No. 73050 in early 2017

The Jolly Fisherman rides again – and is saved for Skegness!

By Robin Jones

ON the same day that Skegness Town Council decided to save the Jolly Fisherman – one of the world's most iconic examples of holiday resort advertising – the original Great Northern Railway headboard was carried by a train again.

The plight of the Jolly Fisherman, a creation of GNR artist John Hassall in 1908 which became instantly recognisable by generations of seashiders ever since, made the national media in the weeks leading to the council's debate.

A council report generated fears that the defining symbol of the Lincolnshire coast could disappear if funding was not forthcoming to support the mascot.

Uproar

Lincolnshire Coastal BID (Business Improvement District) Board had returned the costume to the council offices, and stopped offering the Jolly Fisherman for events, claiming that the outfit had become 'unhygienic' and there had been difficulty finding suitable volunteers to wear it.

The move prompted uproar in the town, which along with neighbouring coastal communities

attracts 4.5 million visitors each year. Tourism experts credit the publicity generated by the Jolly Fisherman since his creation as one of the factors in the continuing growth in people taking holidays in the locality, renowned for being 'So Bracing.'

Good Morning Britain host Piers Morgan also called for the character to be saved on the ITV show.

However, at its meeting on March 4, the council formally agreed to accept responsibility for the icon.

By coincidence, the original headboard from 'The Jolly Fisherman' train service, which ran from the Derby area to Skegness in the years before privatisation, was earlier that day being handed over by a volunteer on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway (LCLR), on behalf of the owner of this priceless relic, to Mike Fowler, one of the organisers of the East Lincolnshire Railway 50 Exhibition, to be staged at Bateman's Brewery Visitor Centre in Wainfleet in August, September and October.

The event, sponsored by *Heritage Railway* publisher Mortons Media Group, will, as previously reported, commemorate the closure of the East Lincolnshire Line from Grimsby via Louth and Boston to Peterborough in 1970. The exhibition will also help



Carrying the original headboard, 'The Jolly Fisherman' train poses in Walls Lane station on March 4 in the Skegness Water Leisure Park beside a Jolly Fisherman poster. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

to raise funds for the extension of the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway from Ludborough into Louth, running on part of the trackbed of the main line which closed.

On the front

It was too good an opportunity to miss to place it on one of the LCLR's trains in the Skegness Water Leisure Park, where it was carried along the line on Motor Rail Simplex No. 8622 of 1941 No. 5 *Major J E Robins R.E.* on a test train to the terminus at South Loop, beside Skegness Airfield.

When the Jolly Fisherman character visited the LCLR in July 2019 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the reopening of the line (the world's first heritage railway to be built by enthusiasts on a green field site back in 1960), crowds turned out to see the mascot and watch the mayor of Skegness, Coun Mark Dannatt, wave the green flag to send the anniversary train on its way, hauled

by Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 1008 of 1903 *Jurassic*. The photographs were carried by media around the world, generating further international publicity for the resort.

An LCLR spokesman commented on March 4: "One onlooker watching the headboard being carried on today's train was overheard to observe that there are only two seaside icons instantly recognised by everyone in the UK: one is Blackpool Tower, the other is Skegness's Jolly Fisherman. 'Would Blackpool get rid of its tower?' he asked the train crew."

After the council decision, Coun Tony Tye, who spent several years masquerading as the Jolly Fisherman mascot and denied that the costume was in poor shape, said: "He'll be around a lot longer than you or me!"

"A lot of kids really think there is a Jolly Fisherman. It means a lot to the town, and I've had three-year-olds staring up at me amazed when I've been in the costume."

'Excellent' Great North of Scotland Cromdale station for sale

By Hugh Dougherty

RESTORED Cromdale station is up for sale at offers over £255,000.

The Great North of Scotland Railway (GNSR) single-platform station is being sold by current owners John and Kathleen Diffey.

The couple bought the building and platform as derelict in 1994, before restoring it to today's excellent near-original condition, which includes period notices, platform furniture and station nameboards.

The property includes a restored GNSR six-wheeled coach body, built at Inverurie Works in 1916, which is currently let out by the owners as a camping coach, offering holiday accommodation, as well as a summerhouse and car porch, constructed to look like a platform awning.



The platform view shows how well the restoration of Cromdale station has been carried out. GALBRAITH

Cromdale station opened in 1863 and was the junction for the 1½-mile Balmenach Railway, running from the station headshunt to Balmenach Distillery whose Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2020 of 1936, operated the line.

The locomotive is preserved at Aviemore on the Strathspey Railway.

Cromdale was closed to passengers under the Beeching axe in 1965

with goods traffic following in 1968, when the line between Aberlour and Aviemore was closed to all traffic.

The station is 12 miles north east of Grantown-on-Spey, the ultimate goal of the Strathspey Railway, which operates the southern section of the line from Aviemore to Broomhill.

John Diffey said: "We are now retiring and would like to see



The Great North of Scotland coach converted to camping coach accommodation, and the station awning-style car porch. GALBRAITH

the property go to owners who would preserve its railway heritage which we have carefully restored and maintained. The Strathspey Way passes the station which is well-known to tourists and railway enthusiasts alike."

→ The sale is being handled by estate agents Galbraith. Full details can be found at www.galbraithgroup.com



Australian flagship preserved Pacific No. 3801 looks a picture after it emerged into the daylight at NSW Rail Museum on March 26, following completion of a protracted and controversial 12-year restoration, writes Geoff Courtney.

The overhaul of the state-owned locomotive, which was started at the end of 2007 and initially expected to be completed by 2011, was hit by a succession of problems, including a brand-new £600,000 boiler built by DB Meiningen of Germany

being rejected by Australian officials as unfit for purpose, and delays in the restoration of the locomotive's old boiler that it was subsequently decided would be refitted instead.

Preservation enthusiasts were at times in despair at the problems and were fearful the streamlined 1943-built Class 38 may never steam again, and even at the last minute Transport Heritage New South Wales (THNSW), which has the iconic engine under its wing, had to postpone its March 28 return

to railtour duty due to the coronavirus outbreak.

However, on posting the photo of the Pacific on the museum's turntable on March 26, THNSW said that while recent global events had delayed its return to service, its team had "worked hard to finish the locomotive, and we're all very proud to reveal it to you today. For now, No. 3801 will be social distancing like the rest of us, but it will be here after this crisis passes – and we can't wait to bring it to you then." TRANSPORT HERITAGE NEW SOUTH WALES

Richboro loco purchase completed

By Robin Jones

THE Aln Valley Railway has completed the purchase of its flagship locomotive *Richboro* thanks to a £12,800 donation from a big-hearted couple.

Coupled with Gift Aid, the money completed the last £16,000 instalment needed to buy the Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T, No. 1243 of 1917.

The railway's finance director Robin Mitchell said: "When we were offered the chance to buy *Richboro*, I thought it may be a struggle to raise the asking price of £130,000. This was mainly because we were a newly established railway without huge funds.

"I need not have been concerned, as our members and supporters were so generous. We are so grateful to everyone who contributed to this purchase to make the Aln Valley Railway a proud owner of our own steam engine."

The Friends of Richboro was launched only 15 months ago, with members paying an amount by standing order over 24 months. Once all the standing order payments are complete, invitations will be sent to all who contributed to attend an exclusive event to travel behind *Richboro* on the first train it hauls following its purchase.

Workhorse

Delivered new to the Inland Waterways & Docks, No. 1243 worked at the Richborough Military Port in Kent after which it gained the name *Richboro*. The port supplied the British Expeditionary Force in France, using the world's first roll-on roll-off ferry vessel.

Richboro was sold to W Craig & Sons at Ifton Colliery in Shropshire in 1926 and then came under National Coal Board ownership at Nationalisation in January 1947. It worked the two-mile branch between the colliery and the BR

exchange sidings at Western Rhyn on the Shrewsbury to Chester line.

Moved to Gresford Colliery near Wrexham in December 1969, it was stored there unused until that colliery closed in November 1973.

Sold to the Llangollen Railway, it moved there in February 1976 and was displayed outside the Dapol factory for several years.

Eventually it was bought by Michael Fairnington at Wooler, where it was restored. After a brief spell at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, its last move was to the Aln Valley Railway, where major boiler work was completed in 2017. It entered traffic in December 2017.

The following autumn, the railway launched its appeal to complete the purchase of the locomotive from Michael.

In March 2019, *Richboro* hauled the first steam working over the 135-yard seven-arch Crawledge Viaduct since June 1966.

Bluebell Times special online newsletter

IN a bid to maintain morale amongst its staff and volunteers due to its enforced closure from Covid-19, the Bluebell Railway is publishing a special newsletter inspired by the actions of soldiers in the First World War.

The newsletter is called The Bluebell Times and is based on The Wipers Times which was a newspaper produced by soldiers in the trenches in the First World War after they found an abandoned printing press. The paper helped to maintain morale during the fighting around Ypres in Belgium.

The railway is making the issues available to everyone who is looking for something to read or do at home during the shutdown.

A Bluebell spokesman said: "We hope The Bluebell Times helps to keep up spirits in the same way. It is designed to fill the gap for anyone missing their steam train rides or visits to the Bluebell Railway. Although the railway is currently closed, the lines of communication are still open.

"It's a publication for all – railway staff at home, volunteers in all departments, members, supporters, visitors, friends, train enthusiasts, families and general readers. It's perfect for train-mad youngsters or anyone who wants a bit of light relief."

Among the contents in issue one are a feature article on life as a train driver, an in-depth look at one of the railway's locomotives, an update on the emergency appeal for funds, a wordsearch puzzle, a guess the year quiz based on filming at the Bluebell Railway and a special children's section.

The Bluebell Times has been edited by locomotive department volunteer Tom James. It can be downloaded from www.bluebell-railway.com/bluebell-times/



Pride of the fleet: *Richboro* in Aln Valley Railway action, PAT MURPHY/AVR

Churnet Valley gets £1.4m Euro grant for Leek push

By Robin Jones

THE Churnet Valley Railway (CVR) has been celebrating its success in landing a £1,427,906 European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) grant to complete its extension into Leek.

The funding will cover 80% of the cost of building nearly a mile of railway line and associated infrastructure from the present railhead to a new station off Barnfields Road, while protecting the underground utilities and providing a new footpath alongside the railway.

It will also reconnect the former railway triangle at Leekbrook Junction, creating the first original operational triangle offering three different destinations in the UK heritage sector.

Ambition

Railway chairman Anthony Hancock said: "Reinstating the line to Leek has been the ambition of so many people for many years – and thanks to support from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and its leader, the dedicated effort from CVR volunteers and this fantastic funding award, this ambition is going to be fully realised. It really is full steam ahead now!

"Although we have secured this fantastic amount, we also need to

raise the final 20% ourselves so we hope to welcome as many visitors as possible in 2020 to help raise funds."

Coun Sybil Ralphs, leader of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, opened the first phase of the extension on October 11 last year, when USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 5197 hauled a special train carrying invited guests from Cheddleton station to Leek Brook and on to the £40,000 first section of the Leek extension – which had only been laid in the 48 hours before – as highlighted in issue 260.

She said: "As a long-time supporter and champion of the railway, I am absolutely delighted.

"Over the last two years we've helped the CVR secure funding for projects including Leek Brook station and some enabling works, as well as helping the CVR to win this big prize. It is wonderful that one of the final awards from EU funding is coming to our area!

"This is a real vote of confidence in the potential of the visitor economy – and an acknowledgement that attractions such as this heritage railway can both encourage tourists to come to the Moorlands and then to stay longer when they're here."

In March, the Moorlands Partnership Board, which is part of



S160 2-8-0 No. 5197 is seen heading the phase 1 reopening special on the then freshly completed section of track on October 11, 2019. DAVE GIBSON / NSRC ARCHIVE

the district council, approved a grant of £12,791 towards further work on the trackbed costing £25,0000.

Tourism opportunities

Coun Mike Bowen said: "This is a big move to get the railway back into Leek. It could then be looked at to get the line to Stoke. This would take a massive amount of traffic off the roads.

Partnership board chairman Coun Hilda Sheldon said: "This project opens up huge

tourism opportunities for the Staffordshire Moorlands. It is a very important project."

Under wider proposals to extend the line, passengers will eventually be able to board the train at Oakamoor, with its new holiday village, and travel directly to Leek, via all stations in between, without the need to take their car every time they enjoy the countryside.

As a result of the coronavirus outbreak, the railway has suspended all its services until at least May 8.

'Last' Swindon pannier reborn at Nene Valley

WHILE the type would never have run over the line in LMS days, the Nene Valley Railway held a special gala on March 7/8 to mark the 70th anniversary of the last GWR-design pannier tank leaving Swindon Works.

It was on December 12, 1950 that Charles Collett 57XX 0-6-0PT No. 6779 entered service, and was allocated to Cardiff East Dock shed on January 31 the following year.

Reallocated to Swansea Paxton Street (Victoria) on June 16, 1956, No. 6779 was withdrawn in June 1959. It was scrapped at Cashmore's yard in Newport in December 1960, having been in WR service for just a decade.

With 863 built, the 57XXs were the most prolific class of the GWR, and one of the most numerous classes of British steam locomotive of all time.

For the gala, No. 4612 was borrowed from the Bodmin & Wenford Railway and for the weekend, carried the cabside number 6779.

It has been hoped to hire a second pannier for the event, but a fault developed with it and it was unable to attend.



Visiting No. 4612 takes on the identity of long-scrapped younger sister No. 6779 at Wansford. ALL PICS: ROBIN JONES

As panniers were replaced by Class 14 diesels, also built at Swindon Works, 'No. 6779' was joined by Class 14s No. 9520 and 9529 at the gala.

A spokesman for the railway said that the event, the last to take place before the line's services were suspended due to

the coronavirus pandemic, was surprisingly successful.

→ See also pages 30-31.

Right: Pannier successor: BR blue-liveried Class 14 No. 9529 prepared to depart from Wansford with a service to Peterborough on March 8.



Tywyn to celebrate Thomas series 75th anniversary in August, if...

TYWYN'S Narrow Gauge Railway Museum is hoping to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the publication of the first of the Railway Series books written by the Reverend Wilbert Awdry, in August.

The Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at the Talyllyn Railway's Wharf Station contains a re-creation of Thomas the Tank engine, the Rev Awdry's study and the anniversary is planned to be marked with a celebration of the depiction of narrow gauge railways in literature.

It includes the work of Talyllyn volunteer Wilbert and his son Christopher Awdry, Pauline Hazelwood, Christopher Vine and Oliver Postgate for younger readers, plus novels by John Snell, Geraint Roberts and Kathleen McGurl and words by writers such as the railway's saviour Tom Rolt,

D H Lawrence; Henry Williamson and F Scott Fitzgerald.

Alongside the exhibition, the museum is planning meet the author events.

Pauline Hazelwood, author and illustrator of the Saddletank series of books, is set to appear on Friday, August 28.

A story writing competition is being run to support the display: further details are at www.ngrm.org.uk

Currently, both the museum and the railway are closed until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic, but museum officials remain hopeful that the current restrictions may have passed by the time of the anniversary in August. Details of any resumption of services may be found at www.tallyllyn.co.uk

Council refuses CPO on South Devon bridge

DEVON County Council has again turned down a call to use Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the South Devon Railway's Bulliver Bridge at Totnes Littlehempston so it can become part of a cyclepath from St Austell to Dover.

A cyclepath was planned into Totnes via Littlehempston, but it depended on permission being granted by the heritage line for cyclists to use the bridge. The railway has refused permission for the bridge to become a 24 hours a day public right of way because of security issues.

On March 11, the council's cabinet recommended that no further work should be undertaken on investigating whether the bridge over the River Dart could be used by the public and that a CPO cannot be justified.

The decision was made despite Nick Oldridge, chairman of the South Devon Cycle Link campaign, handing in a petition of 3,655 signatures, asking the railway to share the bridge.

A railway spokesman said: "While we support the principle of a cyclepath between Totnes town and Littlehempston as part of National Cycle Route 2 and cycling in general, we do not support the proposed route via our pedestrian footbridge and the private South West Water-owned lane."

The bridge was built in 1993 to enhance tourism. It cost £172,000, of which 50% was contributed by local authorities, including the county council, but is now owned wholly by the railway. Campaigners have already begun design work for an alternative bridge.

New dawn for Brunel's engine shed

HIGH Wycombe station's Grade II listed Brunel Engine Shed building is to be converted into offices, shops and a cafe.

Wycombe District Council's plans to give the 1854-built structure designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel a new lease of life as part of what the authority calls the 'Eastern Quarter' of the town, have been given the green light.

The building was the town's original station and engine shed

until a new station was built to the north in 1864. It then became the booking office, goods shed and engine workshop, and continued in railway use until 1967.

The shed, which has been disused for many years, will be given a two-storey extension with a mezzanine level and a new roof and roof lights.

A new main entrance facing the station will be created to welcome visitors to the town.



Members of the Heritage Railway Association and Kevin Hollinrake MP meet ministers to discuss the future of coal. From left: Lord Faulkner, HRA president; Chris Austin of the HRA, Chris Price, HRA vice-chairman; Steve Oates, HRA CEO, Kevin Hollinrake MP, Rebecca Pow MP, Liz Saville Roberts MP, DEFRA and BEIS staff. HRA

Meeting with ministers offers fresh hope for steam coal supply

HERITAGE lines have fresh cause for optimism about future supplies of steam coal, following a meeting between their representatives and Government ministers, it has been claimed.

Kevin Hollinrake MP, whose Thirsk and Malton constituency covers the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, organised a House of Commons meeting between ministers and members of the Heritage Railway Association (HRA) to discuss the disappearance of UK coal supplies, as outlined last issue.

The March 4 meeting discussed the uneconomical reality of relying on imported coal if domestic production ends. The very high cost of imported coal would represent a huge financial burden for larger railways, and an unsustainable cost for smaller heritage lines, the meeting heard.

The HRA team met with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Under Secretary Rebecca Pow, whose constituency partially covers the West Somerset Railway, Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage Nigel Huddleston and Liz Saville Roberts, chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail.

Affordability

Mr Hollinrake said: "I'm very concerned that heritage rail will not be able to guarantee an affordable supply of fuel in the years ahead, before environmentally-friendly alternatives have been developed."

The MPs considered a proposal to provide support with the extra cost of importing coal, expected to be about £2-3 million, to establish the necessary supply lines to import the lumped coal needed for heritage steam.

Importing coal from Russia or Australia has an adverse

environmental impact, the meeting heard. However, as an alternative, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is also considering planning permissions to extend the life of or to create new coal mines, allowing the UK to produce its own coal specifically for heritage railways, as well as for the UK's steel and cement industries.

Carbon footprint

The day before the MPs' meeting, in an answer to a House of Commons question about coal, the Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, Kwasi Kwarteng said: "From a coal and carbon emissions reduction point of view, it makes sense to have a locally based coal source rather than shipping it in a very costly way halfway around the world."

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "I was very encouraged by the time afforded to us by both Rebecca Pow and Nigel Huddleston and their advisors, and by their desire to gain a clear understanding of the challenges, costs and technical issues heritage railways face in securing consistent and affordable supplies of suitable lump coal in the future."

"Having stressed the economic, PR and social value of heritage railways to the UK's visitor economy and to numerous local rural economies, it is reassuring to know that the Government has no desire to see the end of heritage steam."

"Prompted by Rebecca Pow, we will now be seeking to meet with senior ministers Kwasi Kwarteng MP in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Simon Clarke MP in Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and to seek similar meetings with relevant ministers in the Welsh Assembly."



Swedish State Railway 2-6-2T No. 1178 is seen inside the running shed at Wansford on March 23, 2019. The boiler and tanks are loosely fitted to the frames. GARETH EVANS



Currently serving as the footplate-accessible locomotive at Wansford, parts of Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST *Derek Crouch* have been labelled in readiness for stripping. The 1924-built engine is seen on March 14 – the headboard being a reminder of the team of younger volunteers who will carry out its return to steam. GARETH EVANS

Nene Valley buys Swedish prairie

By Gareth Evans

THE Nene Valley Railway (NVR) has purchased Swedish 2-6-2T No. 1178, one of its resident continental steam locomotives, from a private owner.

Built by Motala (No. 516 of 1914), it was withdrawn from Swedish State Railway service in 1957 and placed in the Swedish Military Reserve.

Brought to the line by Richard Hurlock in 1975 and returned to steam in 1976, it worked the NVR's inaugural train on June 1, 1977 with French Nord class 3500 4-6-0 No. 3.628, which has since returned to France.

In 1984, it was bought by Peterborough Railway Society (PRS) member Michael Kitchen. The PRS made an agreement with the new owner whereby the society would use the locomotive without charge until it became due for overhaul – at which point the society would perform the work and return the locomotive to him. As the PRS evolved into the NVR, the NVR inherited the use of the S class and the obligation to overhaul.

After being a regular performer on NVR trains and having appeared in several films, No. 1178 was

withdrawn from traffic in 1992. The overhaul commenced in late 2002 – the plan being to restore the prairie in parallel with Danish 0-6-0T *Tinkerbelle*. However, as dismantling progressed, it became apparent that a very heavy overhaul was required, with valves, pistons and motion showing more wear than had at first been anticipated.

Although some work was carried out on the frames, the rest remained largely untouched. In 2017, the locomotive was roughly reassembled and shunted into the running shed, where it remains.

Purchased 'as is'

Last year, having waited patiently for more than 20 years, owner Michael Kitchen contacted the NVR and asked the line to suggest a way forward.

While an accurate estimate for the cost of the overhaul is not to hand, it is believed to run into six figures. After some discussion, it was agreed that the NVR would purchase the locomotive 'as is'. This would give Michael some compensation for the investment and goodwill he showed all those years ago and it would free the NVR to make the best arrangements for the engine.

A return to steam is not envisaged in the near future, but with it now securely in NVR ownership, when the time is right it could again become a valued asset for the line.

Overhaul progress

Meanwhile, work continues on Danish F Class 0-6-0T *Tinkerbelle* inside Wansford workshop on fitting vacuum brakes and the slide bars and motion. Many smaller components are being refurbished or replaced as necessary both on and off-site. Trial fitting of cab fittings is also under way. The boiler is progressing at Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough.

Members of the NVR Small Loco Group (SLG) continue to progress the restoration of two of the line's industrial engines.

As previously reported, Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Jacks Green* is to replace Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST *Derek Crouch* as the footplate-accessible locomotive at Wansford – with the latter returned to steam.

Obsolete pipework in *Jacks Green*'s cab which is not required for its display role has been removed to tidy up the appearance of the footplate. Warmer weather is awaited before painting can be completed on the

1939-built engine. On *Derek Crouch*, a start has been made on labelling components ready for removal from the locomotive.

It is intended to prepare the engine so that on the day it is ready to be moved into the shed for the overhaul to start, the tank and cab can be removed prior to putting the locomotive inside. This will enable SLG members to get straight on with preparing the boiler for lifting.

A vacuum brake ejector has also been sourced for *Derek Crouch* from *Jacks Green* as the latter will not be operational for the foreseeable future.

Derek Crouch is significant in the railway's history as it worked the first train along the NVR under the auspices of PRS on April 7, 1974. It is hoped the locomotive will be able to star in the 50th anniversary of NVR's embryonic days run in 2024 – which will also celebrate the engine's centenary.

→ Donations towards the project can be made online at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/derekcrouchoverhaulappeal or by post to: Small Loco Group, Nene Valley Railway Ltd, Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough PE8 6LR.

New commercial expert at Sheffield Park

THE Bluebell Railway has appointed Paul Lelew as its commercial and marketing director.

Paul, who lives near Maresfield, worked in the food business before retiring eight years ago. He started his working life as an accountant with Sainsbury's and his last roles were as a director of various companies with expertise in turning them around.

His father had a railway career as

manager of the Royal Train and his grandfather was made an MBE for services to the railway during the Second World War.

He will serve on the plc board with oversight of the sales, marketing, retail and catering activities.

Paul, the volunteer finance director of Uckfield FM, said: "I'm looking to finding new commercial opportunities at the Bluebell Railway and review existing operations

with a view to building on the great success so far."

Bluebell Railway plc chairman Chris Hunford said: "Paul will bring a commercial focus to all our operations and look at our income generation. He has catering, retail and sales experience and will bring energy and vigour to the railway."

Paul Lelew, the Bluebell Railway's new commercial director. BR





Former Barclay works may be closed

THE Kilmarnock site of the former Andrew Barclay & Company's Caledonia Works where steam locomotives were built has been proposed for closure by its American current owner Wabtec, with the loss of around 100 jobs, it is feared.

The site, which dates from 1840, has been rebuilt several times, and is currently used for rolling stock refurbishment.

Union Unite said that Wabtec planned to consolidate its operations in Doncaster, citing a reduction in orders. Unite, however, has asked for the "premature" closure to be postponed, pointing to multi-million-pound contracts awarded by Abellio Scotrail and the Scottish Government.

The closure of Didcot Railway Centre in late March due to the covid-19 pandemic has not only led to the cancellation of events such as the Railcar Rendezvous at Easter, but also halted a programme to introduce period re-enactors. A small group of new volunteers has been established and training was underway. Two volunteers in period dress are pictured with the venue's replica second-class broad gauge coach. FRANK DUMBLETON

Dean Forest's double development plans to boost capacity

By Robin Jones

THE Dean Forest Railway has announced two separate developments which will boost capacity on the line.

Firstly, a new carriage shed and restoration shed have been earmarked for Lydney Junction.

Once constructed, the sheds will free up capacity at the intermediate station of Whitecroft, where several BR Mk.1 carriages are currently stored under tarpaulins on a truncated siding.

Once moved, the siding will be reinstated as a passing loop, opening up new possibilities for more intensive train services, especially at galas and other special events.

The line's development director Adam Dickinson said that at Lydney Junction, the overall aim is to represent the 1960s transition period between steam and diesel traction.

Short-term improvements include the refurbishment of the station building, the provision of platform lighting for additional evening running, an improved platform surface and entrance path for visitors and watering facilities for steam locomotives.

However, bigger projects now subjected to detailed planning

include a carriage shed to protect coaches from the weather alongside a new restoration shed that will be more than double the size of the current one, with greatly improved facilities, plus the completion of Albany Pumps sidings.

At Lydney Town, the railway is aiming to represent the station as it was in the 1950s, with the BR Western Region colour scheme, with Middle Forge Junction improved to boost operational flexibility. At the railway's headquarters of Norchard, the starting point for most visitors, the new goal will be to represent the 'heyday' 1920s/1930s period.

Whitecroft

Whitecroft will be given a facelift to represent a 1920s joint GWR/LMS country station. A Dean Forest Railway Society member has offered to sponsor the foundations for the restored Midland Railway signalbox for the site.

Larger projects planned for Whitecroft include the reinstatement of the second platform and platform shelter – and potentially the loop behind the platform which existed in much earlier times. The reinstated loop would also provide additional siding capacity for the line's growing fleet of restored goods wagons.

"It is anticipated that Whitecroft will become a key crossing point for trains when the railway extends beyond the current northern terminus of Parkend," explained Adam.

Under the development plans for the line, it is intended that Parkend will represent a joint GWR/MR country station as in the 1910s, with the completion of the current signalling scheme with the scope to handle a future northern extension.

The railway has long hoped to push north from Parkend.

Adam said: "We're working diligently in the background to extend our railway, but the challenges should not be underestimated, particularly crossing the B4234 'Fancy Road' north of Parkend station.

"We're working to ensure that any extension will be supportable, and allow the business side of the railway to grow sustainably."

The first target of any extension, if and when the delicate issue of a level crossing at Parkend is solved, will be the site of the former Speech House Road station. Because the original site of the station is not available, it likely that a new station will be located on the site of Wimberry Junction, and it is proposed that it will represent a GWR

country station from the 1930s.

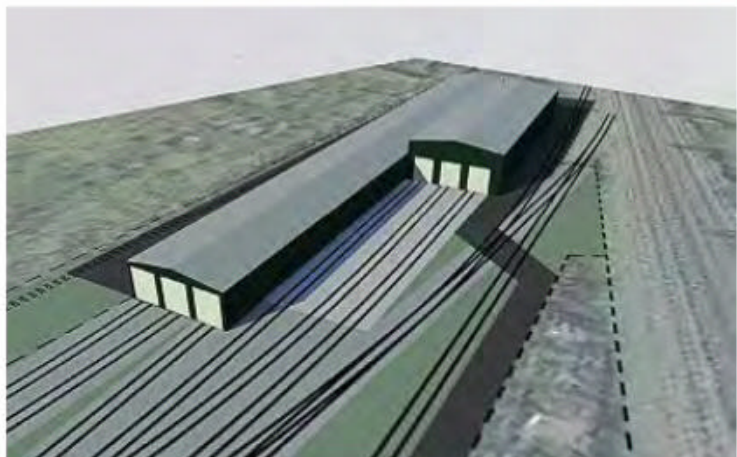
It is planned to re-erect the former GWR Panteg & Griffithstown station building at the site. As reported in issue 207, the building, which once housed the closed Griffithstown Railway Museum, was offered to the railway free of charge when the site was needed for a modern housing development.

The station had closed to passengers on April 30, 1962 and to goods on May 3, 1965. Torfaen Council had indicated that it was keen to see it removed to an alternative site, rather than demolished, and the railway raised the money to dismantle it brick-by-brick for re-erection in the forest.

Cinderford in future?

The railway has long harboured hopes of one day rebuilding the original branch to Cinderford, where a housing estate has been built on the station site. Current thinking would see a new station recreated in the style of a 1950s Western Region branch line terminus.

Adam was keen to stress: "This project is only at the very outline planning at this stage, because the engineering and economic feasibility study of an onward extension past Speech House Road is yet to be completed."



An artist's impression of the proposed carriage shed (left) and restoration shed (right) at Lydney Junction.

T MCLENNAN/DFR



Whitecroft station in its heyday, complete with a passing loop that is set to be restored.

IAN POPE COLLECTION/DFR

Unlocking new possibilities for Peebles weighbridge hut



The weighbridge hut which will house the railway museum. HUGH DOUGHERTY

By Hugh Dougherty

MEMBERS of the Peebles Railway Heritage Group have received the key to the door of the North British Railway weighbridge hut at the town's station.

Following the handover by Coun Shona Haslam, leader of Borders Council, the group now plans to apply for funding to renovate the listed structure, the last railway building left standing in Peebles.

The group intends to turn it into a railway museum, celebrating the rich North British, Caledonian, LNER, LMS and British Railways heritage of the Borders tourism and mill town.

The hut was preserved by the council after the station was

bulldozed to make way for a car park after closure of the town's rail link to Edinburgh in 1962, and plans for the proposed museum were made public in 2018, when the not-for-profit Peebles Community Trust proposed taking the project forward.

Plans

Now the railway heritage group plans to use the latest computer and audio-visual technology to tell the story of local railways, as well as displaying photographs, signs, maps and artefacts.

The group is proposing to combine the museum with a facility to provide information for visitors, after the town's tourist information centre, formerly on the main street, closed last year.



Councillor Shona Haslam presents Les Turnbull with the key to the weighbridge door, as members of the railway museum group look on. PEEBLES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Les Turnbull, chairman of Peebles Community Council, of which the railway heritage group is a subset, said: "We are delighted that the council has supported this project. Our priority is to restore the exterior of the building, which is a listed structure, to its original, railway condition."

"As the last remaining building from what was once an extensive railway presence in the town, it is important that the weighbridge hut is used to tell the story of the railways which, in many ways, made Peebles as a mill and tourist town. The museum will enhance the town's tourism offering and ensure that our railway heritage isn't forgotten."

Coun Haslam said: "The council is very pleased to be able to support this important project recalling the railway heritage of Peebles. We have leased the building to the railway group for 25 years at a peppercorn rent and I am sure that the railway museum will be a great success."

History

Peebles was formerly served by North British lines to Edinburgh and Galashiels on the Waverley Route, with the Caledonian Railway running from Peebles to Symington on the company's Glasgow-Carlisle main line. Besides the weighbridge hut, a plaque marks the site of the NBR station.

County council adopts idea for new Cheltenham link

AN idea for building a new link between the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (G/WR) at Cheltenham and the main line has been included in a new county transport strategy.

The G/WR's first chairman Tim Bazeley said that rather than rebuild the original line south from Cheltenham Racecourse station to the site of Cheltenham St James, where there are several gaps in the embankment, a new line could be built across fields between Hunting Butts cutting, south of Cheltenham Racecourse, and the existing Midland main line by Swindon Village.

Tim said that such a scheme could solve parking and capacity problems at the town's main line station, by providing a new park-and-ride station at Evesham Road, near the racecourse.

If the new link was double tracked, it could also increase siding capacity for race-day specials from Birmingham, London and Bristol.

Gloucestershire County Council has investigated the proposal – and included it in its Rail Investment Strategy.

Tim said that the idea was discussed and agreed in principle by Network Rail, the G/WR, the Jockey Club and Cheltenham borough and Gloucestershire county councils at a meeting held at the racecourse on May 1, 2018. However, he said, since then, nothing had been done to take the strip of land that would be needed to build the new railway.

A county council statement said: "The county council has investigated the possibility of the scheme, and the proposal is included in the Rail Investment Strategy, which is currently being finalised and will be published soon."

"Consultants SLC have analysed the economic value of the various rail corridors through the county and considered, at a high level, a scheme similar to the one proposed by Mr Bazeley."

"We're committed to making it easier for people to choose greener transport options like rail."

A spokesman for the G/WR said: "It's a proposal that we are watching with interest, although not actively pursuing."



The red line shows the proposed new link between Network Rail's main line to the left and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, while the yellow line marks the formation of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Cheltenham route into the town.

"It would need careful planning on race days, given potential capacity issues at our station. However, we have plenty of other priorities to concern us at present, not least being repair of the latest embankment slip at Gotherington."



Tubes being fitted in the replica of 1863-built *Mountaineer's* boiler. NBRES



The new cab built for Llanberis Lake Railway Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Thomas Bach*, also known as *Wild Aster*. NBRES

New Southwold *Blyth* 'now halfway' to completion

By Robin Jones

THE £300,000 project to build a replica of 3ft gauge Southwold Railway Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T No. 3 *Blyth* at North Bay Railway Engineering Services in Darlington is 50% complete.

Depending on funding and any coronavirus pandemic shutdown, the new *Blyth* should be completed on time for spring 2021, said the company.

The finished wheels were delivered from Ringrollers in South Africa in February and their accuracy was such that they could be immediately fitted into the pre-made axle-boxes with only a final cut on the bearings that was expected. The wheels have been finished in Great Eastern blue.

Crank pins have been made and were to have been shrunk in, but this process has been delayed because of the ongoing medical crisis.

Curve handling

The Adams radial gear for the leading axle is the first time something of this size has been manufactured for around 125 years and again fits well with the axle, and the movement it allows over tight curves can be seen by the sideways movement it facilitates.

The brake rigging and pull rods have been completed and to finish is the handbrake column, plus a steam power brake will be added – a feature that the original *Blyth* did not have.

The chassis is currently upside

down and once the brakes have been set up, will be turned the right way up. The connecting rods, the first part of the motion, was being finished.

Once the motion has been completed and the valves timed, the boiler will be fitted to the chassis, along with the regulator input plumbing. It is hoped the chassis can be run on air to check things through.

Completion of the locomotive is dependent on funding. Anyone who is prepared to donate to the project is invited to visit www.southwoldrailway.co.uk/trust-projects/2-4-0t-no-3-blyth/

Also being manufactured in the

North Bay workshops is replica 1863 Ffestiniog Railway George England 0-4-0T *Mountaineer*, for which the construction of the boiler was finished on March 24.

Next new-builds

Discussions are in place for another two replicas, one standard gauge and one narrow gauge. Both are now subject to contract and funding.

Three other boilers are being made by North Bay and another four are ready to start when these are completed. The company's welder has been working with a major preservation society on the group's welding requirements on a

boiler restoration.

The Llanberis Lake Railway's Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 849 of 1904 *Thomas Bach* is nearing finishing with a new cab constructed at Darlington. Depending on the Covid-19 issues, the locomotive should be back in Wales in May.

In conjunction with Naledi Ringrollers of South Africa, North Bay is acting as agents for the manufacture of railway wheelsets, including the manufacture of large driving wheels. Quotations are in hand for these, and they can be finished as wheels with tyres complete, or fitted to axles and ready to install.



The wheels for the new *Blyth* fitted at North Bay Railway Engineering Services in Darlington. NBRES



A brake part and crank pins for replica Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T *Blyth*. NBRES

Allegations of grant aid misuse raised by MP are 'false' – West Somerset

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway Association (WSRA) has said that allegations made about the misuse of grant aid outlined in a press release issued on March 9 by local Bridgwater & West Somerset MP Ian Liddell Grainger, are "totally untrue."

The press release stated that the MP is demanding an explanation from West Somerset Railway (WSR) officials as to what has become of a £96,000 grant that was handed over to fund apprenticeships and educational trips.

It said that "he had received disturbing reports that the money had not been spent in accordance with the original bid application."

The money was provided as a result of a successful bid led by the WSRA to a Hinkley Point nuclear power station community fund and given to the railway accompanied by a schedule specifying precisely how it was to be spent. It was to be used to subsidise up to 30 apprenticeships on the railway and to pay for educational trips for thousands of children from 18 schools along the line, enabling them to learn about the railway's history and heritage.

The grant also included funding for a full-time employee to oversee the apprenticeship programme.

However, the Conservative MP, a great-great-great-grandson of Queen Victoria, said in the press release: "My information is that only four apprenticeships have been created and that the programme has now been arbitrarily shut down by the railway company."

"I am also told that the temporary full-time employee has been diverted to other duties. Even more significantly, the company has announced the educational trips will not now go ahead – even though funding had already been provided to reserve the additional carriages."

Explanation

He said he would be seeking an early meeting with railway company chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt and asking for a full explanation as to what had become of the grant money.

"I am particularly concerned that the educational trips were simply cancelled. These would have been an excellent way not merely of teaching children about the railway's history, but also of stimulating interest in the idea of volunteering to work on it – and a lot of teachers and children are going to feel very let down."

However, a statement issued by the WSRA in response said: "We find this

very disappointing and the claims are totally untrue.

"Following a written complaint to the MP about the grant, which was also copied to us, we offered our view of the actual facts of the matter to Mr Liddell Grainger on March 9, in advance of him issuing his press statement."

"The WSRA has received just over half of the sum to date of the £96,000, which he mentioned in his media statement as this was a two-year project. (The year one spend is actually just over £39,000.) The project has undergone several reviews with the grant giver during the time it has been running, all for the benefit of the people in the West Somerset area."

The response continued: "The delivered benefit to the community is easily evidenced in various local newspaper reports which clearly carry the Hinkley Point C (HPC) branding logo indicating where the support for the events has been derived."

"The full-time employee post mentioned by the MP was, in fact, only employed for 25 hours per week on this task, but the same person was also employed separately to carry out other tasks for the WSRA for a further 15 hours per week. To be 100% clear, this additional work is not funded by

the HPC Community grant, but by the WSRA as part of its charitable activity in support of the WSR.

"There has been clear engagement with both local colleges and with local schools during the first year of the project."

Transparency

"Mr Liddell Grainger claims that the grant of £96,000 should have been used to support 30 apprentices. Even if the entire grant was used in total to support 30 apprentices as suggested, it would only amount to a bursary of £1600 per apprentice per year. We ask how this sum could possibly support 30 apprentices in an organisation that relies for its very existence on generous external donations and around 1000 volunteers to ensure its daily operation?"

"The WSRA would be happy to meet with Ian Liddell Grainger MP to go over the accounts held by the WSRA in respect of this grant funding. At such a meeting, we are confident that the WSRA can not only account for every penny of the money granted, but also show exactly what it was spent on."

Railway officials subsequently asked to meet the MP, who has a majority of 24,439. However, the meeting had been delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Ffestiniog gives first British bogie carriage a facelift

FFESTINIOG Railway carriage No. 15 has had its original-style livery restored at Boston Lodge Works during the winter.

Cars Nos. 15 and 16 date from 1871 and were the first bogie carriages to be built in Britain. They were very substantially built, with a wrought iron framework to support the wooden body, unlike the successor FR bogie coaches built later in the 1870s.

Britain's only Welsh Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, used both carriages when travelling to Blaenau Ffestiniog to catch the LNWR train to Llandudno Junction and then travel on to London – this also explains why the second double Fairlie locomotive to be built in the preservation era is named after him.

Both of these carriages were extensively restored, following the receipt of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund; No. 15 to its original livery and No. 16 to the much plainer

1930s green livery. Both carriages are in regular service on the Ffestiniog.

Stephen Paul, a senior member of the carriage works team, said: "As this carriage is such a prestige vehicle, its paintwork is a major concern to us. This particular repaint should last a long time – especially as we will soon be able to keep all our carriages undercover when the building of the new carriage sheds is completed."

The refurbishment of the livery of No. 15 has been one of many projects undertaken by the carriage works during the winter months.

Welsh Highland Railway carriage No. 2048 is due for completion after Easter, while No. 2045 is undergoing a 10-year overhaul which includes repairs to the floor, a complete revarnish of the seats, tables and walls, plus professional cleaning of the upholstery. Ffestiniog carriage No. 103 is back in service, having received the same treatment, while No. 121



Newly-outshopped from Boston Lodge following the restoration of its original livery: Ffestiniog Railway bogie carriage No. 15. Ff&WHR

will be the next to benefit from a 10-year overhaul.

Pullman Observation Car No. 152 is to be freshly outshopped following revarnishing, and is to be named *Eryri-Snowdonia* (the Welsh name will be on one side and the English on the other), so that all four Pullmans will have local names.

Ffestiniog No. 102 is being renovated as part of a volunteer

project. Once a First Class observation saloon, it will return as a Third Class version.

A replica Pickering carriage is being built by Boston Lodge for the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. Work on the chassis and bodywork for this brake composite, which ran on the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway and then on the original Welsh Highland Railway, is well underway.

‘Big Boy’ – marathon trip pulled in massive crowds

MORE than 1,100,000 people visited restored Union Pacific ‘articulated 4-8-8-4’ ‘Big Boy’ No. 4014 during its 109-day tour to mark the 150th anniversary of the US transcontinental railroad last year.

Following the locomotive’s restoration, No. 4014 travelled 8645 miles through towns, cities and communities in 17 states served by Union Pacific (UP).

The celebrations began with the launch of No. 4014 in Cheyenne, Wyoming, on May 4, followed by the excursion where No. 4014 was joined with the FEF-3 4-8-4 ‘Living Legend’ No. 844 as they travelled to Ogden to commemorate the anniversary of the driving of the Golden Spike on May 9.

There followed by The Great Race Across the Midwest throughout the summer and The Great Race Across the Southwest in the autumn.

Fans posted more than 55,000 photos, videos and stories on the Union Pacific Steam Club’s Facebook group, and more than 115,000 people visited the Experience the Union Pacific railcar, according to UP.



Union Pacific ‘Big Boy’ No. 4014 captured a nation’s imagination in 2019. UP

Track re-laid in latest phase of SVR Falling Sands viaduct refurbishment

By Robin Jones

THE £1.32 million project to refurbish the Severn Valley Railway’s Falling Sands viaduct is on schedule, with track re-laid across it as part of the completion of the first phase.

Work began at the end of last year to tackle the internal structure of the 1877-built viaduct, in order to improve the drainage and incorporate a waterproof layer.

The project has been financed by £925,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and by the railway itself, which raised matched funding of £397,000 through its Helping Hands for

Falling Sands campaign.

The first phase saw 200mm-thick panels of fibre-reinforced concrete cast over the arches and two coats of a special bituminous paint poured over the concrete and the walls. On top of the waterproofing, a layer of chippings was laid to permit water to migrate to the low points and out through pipes.

Contractor Walsh took the full brunt of storms Ciara and Denis to succeed against the odds.

Infrastructure volunteer Nick Yarwood said: “The project has progressed ahead of programme, due in part to an exceptionally mild winter. The greatest risk was

prolonged freezing or snowfall interfering with concreting and waterproofing.

“Waterproofing needed seven days to complete and was also vulnerable to rain. With good programming and a week of calm dry weather, it all went to plan.”

Nearly 3000 tons of fill material was tipped back into place and compacted prior to the re-laying of ballast. Concrete troughs were also laid to accommodate signal cables.

By late March, the track was being re-laid ready for the scheduled reopening of the line between Bewdley and Kidderminster in early April. However, those plans

were overtaken by the coronavirus pandemic. This resulted in the railway cancelling its Easter holiday activities, the April 16-19 spring steam gala and the 50th anniversary celebrations in May, among other events.

The second phase of the viaduct refurbishment, to be started later this year, will see contractors use rope access to replace damaged bricks and repoint the mortar on the outside walls and arches.

The 132-yard red brick viaduct, otherwise known as Bridge 3, takes the railway 64ft above the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and River Stour.



Track being re-laid on Falling Sands viaduct a mile west of Kidderminster on March 21. BRENT CLEETON/SVR



Concrete pumping and placement underway earlier. NICK YARWOOD/SVR

Somerset & Dorset Trust vows to fight Washford notice to quit

By Robin Jones

THE Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust said it has appointed solicitors to challenge the notice to quit Washford station served by the West Somerset Railway plc.

As reported last issue, in early February the railway sent a formal notice of termination of the 50-year tenancy agreement made with the trust in 2018, stating that the site was now needed for its own purposes.

In a statement issued in March, trust chairman Ian Young said: "We have appointed solicitors to handle this situation.

"We are disappointed by the attitude of the WSR plc towards an organisation that has invested so much time and money at Washford on both track and buildings on what was a brown-field site. Contrary to popular belief, there have been few formal meetings between the two organisations and at none of

them was discussed any thought, or justification for, the summary action by the WSR plc. It was certainly a 'bolt from the blue' as we have said before.

"The WSR plc has put part of the reason for the notice to quit down to our lack of contribution towards their financial difficulties. However, the trust's charitable objectives would make such donations unlawful and it would be unlikely that any changes away from our Somerset & Dorset specialism would be approved by the members at an annual general meeting. Nonetheless, we have assisted the WSR in other ways such as by providing most of the proceeds from the 2019 beer festival and purchasing items from them.

Tender subject

"It has been said that we refused to assist with fundraising for a new tender top for our S&D 7F No. 53808 which has been hired to the WSR since 1987. This is not so. Although, under the agreement, this

is the responsibility of the WSR plc, we had indicated that we were prepared to help with this by fundraising.

"The WSR also stated that we wish to pursue our own agenda. Our agenda is simply to preserve and promote the memory of the old Somerset & Dorset through our museum exhibits, locomotives and carriages, just as we have done since the forming of our original organisation, the Somerset & Dorset Circle, in January 1966.

"The refusal of the WSR plc to engage with the trust on these serious issues means that we have no alternative but to step up our efforts to challenge this eviction order.

"The trust will also be setting up an appeal for fundraising. This will be used to ensure that the Trust can secure its future and safeguard the heritage entrusted to us over the last 50 years. Already, we have had unsolicited donations and a significant increase in members."

A WSR plc spokesman said: "With everything else that is going on now with coronavirus and the immediate priority of being to try to save the WSR once again from potential oblivion – but through no fault of the railway this time – the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust lease issue is, of necessity, lower down on the list of WSR priorities.

WSR maintains its rights

"Following the trust's latest 'in denial' press release, the WSR can only simply repeat that a notice to quit the Washford site has been served, that the due process of the law will now take place and they will leave the site.

"While this may sound harsh to some, the S&DR Trust's recollection of events, discussions and meetings is clearly at odds with that of the WSR plc who, it has to be remembered, are the S&DR Trust's landlords and the WSR plc also has rights too and which they have exercised."

Compartment coach is latest to be outshopped from Ropley Works

THE latest vehicle to be completed in the Mid-Hants Railway's carriage workshop at Ropley is Mk.1 CK No. 16083, which first arrived in the workshop two years ago in a state of disrepair, not having been in operation for about 10 years.

Since then, major refurbishment has been underway, with repairs to the bogies, metal structure, windows, paintwork, leaking roof and the interiors of the coach.

Many of the carriages on the line do not have compartments.

However, this one has three third and four first-class compartments, making for an interesting addition to the fleet. Work on the interiors included restoring the seating, repanelling the vestibules, some rewiring work and new lino floors throughout.

No. 16083 has now been returned to its former glory and made its first outing for the Santa specials and the Christmas Leave wartime living history event earlier in December last year.



Mk.1 CK No. 16083 has been returned to as-new condition in the Ropley workshops. The carriage was built by Metro Cammell in 1959. MHR



THE boiler of WR 4-6-0 No. 7027 *Thornbury Castle* was lifted at the Great Central Railway's Loughborough Works on March 23. Meanwhile, the team carrying out the restoration has appealed for spare parts. Anyone who might have a suitable GWR boiler pressure gauge (measuring up to 320psi), GWR steam heat pressure gauge, oil gauge for the cylinder lubrication or safety valve bonnet is asked to make contact via www.facebook.com/7027-Thornbury-Castle-114458853436676 CRAIG STINCHCOMBE

Sir Drefaldyn overhaul progresses

THE Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway continues to make steady progress with the overhaul of 1944-built Franco-Belge 0-8-0T No. 10 *Sir Drefaldyn*.

Recent work has included machining parts, reassembling

the boiler cladding, finishing the set-up of the tanks and bunker and preparing to reinstate the motion. Good progress is also being made on the refurbishment of former Zillertalbahn four-wheel carriage No. B14.

Ingrow bridge replacement scheme halted over virus fears

By Robin Jones

A £150,000 project to lift and replace the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's 115-year-old Bridge 11 has been halted because of the coronavirus epidemic.

The bridge, which spans the River Worth near Ingrow West station, was installed in 1904 by the Midland Railway, but may have been a second-hand structure previously used elsewhere, some historians believe.

The planning of the operation to replace the life-expired bridge with a new concrete deck began more than a year ago, with volunteers starting physical preparation work on site during the first weekend of January.

Railway volunteers, managed by 27-year-old civil engineer James Barlow, have battled heavy floods caused by Storm Ciara in February, which left the engine shed in Haworth under water, as reported last issue.

James said: "We're extremely lucky to have a dedicated – and qualified – group of volunteers helping with this scheme. We wouldn't be able to deliver the project for £150,000 without them."

Fundraising

The railway has been fundraising to help cover the cost of the project.

Donations have included £15,000 from the railway's Friends group, which was matched by the K&WVR Trust. David Hanson and David Petyt, from the trust, presented a cheque to KWVR Preservation Society chairman Matthew Stroh and operating company chairman Nick Bennett.

Following the end of the successful March 8-10 spring steam gala (see pages 82-85), preparations began for the bridge removal, with the last two of the old beams being lifted out on March 18 using the Bahamas Locomotive Society's steam crane.

The bearings for the new concrete deck were installed on March 20. They provide a surface between the deck and the stone piers and allow controlled movement of the deck as trains pass over to reduce the stress.

The beams of the new bridge were due to be lifted into place on March 24, with the aim of having the first train movement over it on or before April 4, although the line



The last locomotive over the old bridge prior to its replacement: BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022 on March 22. CHRIS KING/KWVR



Above: Track being lifted at the start of the bridge replacement operation. KWVR



Right: The Bahamas Locomotive Society's steam breakdown crane RS1015/50 in action at Bridge 11. KWVR



Above: The new beams for Bridge 11 moved into place. KWVR

Left: Work on the bridge is suspended. KWVR

is currently closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Work paused

However, before the lift could be completed, a decision was taken to postpone the remaining work on the bridge because of the need to follow Government guidelines to avoid any

risk to volunteers from the virus.

KWVR Preservation Society chairman Matt Stroh said: "It's brilliant to have got this far, but I can't believe that because of circumstances so far out of our control that we've had to stop."

As we closed for press, it was unclear as to when the remaining

bridge work would be completed, with the line remaining split in the meantime.

➔ Meanwhile, fundraising for the project continues. Anyone wishing to support the appeal can donate at kwvr.co.uk/ingrow-bridge-appeal or telephone 01535 645214 or call at any station.

Early and late Victorian travel in the ticket spotlight

AN EARLY Victorian ticket for the 90-mile journey between Birmingham and Harrow, and a late Victorian example for travel on a mineral railway, will be in the spotlight at Paddington Ticket Auctions' April sale.

The former was issued by the London & Birmingham Railway (L&B) and dates from between the full opening of the line in September 1838 and the railway becoming part of the LNWR in July 1846. It carries no title, but the L&B monogram is on the back.

The mineral railway ticket was issued by the West Somerset Mineral Railway on June 20, 1898, for travel from Watchet to Roadwater in third class at a cost of 4d. The standard gauge 11½-mile line, which opened in stages from April 1857, was built for mainly iron ore traffic, but passenger services commenced in 1865 and lasted until November 1898, when all traffic was suspended. The line was finally wound up in 1925.

A 1d platform ticket for Whitby West Cliff on the Scarborough-Whitby line will also feature in the auction. It is dated September 7, 1936, and is a previously unknown survivor from this station that opened in December 1883 and closed in June 1961. The auction was due to be held at the Royal National Hotel in central London, but will now run as a postal auction.

→ SIX hundred slides of railway scenes in the 1950s/60s, with 75 steam train negatives, achieved the highest realisation in the railwayana and model railways' section of a transport memorabilia sale held by David Duggleby of Scarborough on February 21, selling for £420 (+ buyer's premium of 22½% inc VAT).

Cabsides, totems, poster and London Underground mix it with nameplates at Pershore

A DIESEL nameplate, cabside and smokebox numberplates, totem station signs, a London Underground platform roundel, and a poster, all mixed it with the middle-priced steam nameplates in GW Railwayana's sale at Pershore on March 14 – the last major railwayana auction to be held live before the virus curtain came down on such activities.

Two nameplates that were ahead of all others under the hammer were *Dartmouth Castle* from GWR No. 4088 (£14,000) and *Nelson* from LMS Jubilee No. 45664 (£12,900) – although also threatening the five-figure benchmark was Saint Stephen from GWR No. 2929 (£9100).

There followed *Nederland Line* from SR Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35014 (£8600), *Burmington Grange* (GWR No. 6829 – £6000), and a pair of GWR classmates, *Rood Ashton Hall* (No. 4965 – £5000) and *Holker Hall* from No. 6911 at £3000. A non-seller on the day was the nameplate, coat-of-arms and scroll set from SR West Country class No. 34005 *Barnstaple*, but this did sell the following week for £15,500.

Warship heads Grange

Between the plates from the Merchant Navy and Grange came *Cockade* from Class 42 'Warship' diesel-hydraulic D810 at £7000, and the Grange nameplate realisation of £6000 was matched by a cabside numberplate from GWR No. 6017 *King Edward IV*. Nameplate and cabside combo *Western Chieftain* from Class 52 D1057 was another that failed to sell under the hammer, but that too went after close of play, for £8000.



Two other category winners that outsold the pair of halls were an LNER poster by Tom Purvis (1888-1959) of 'The Coronation' crossing the Royal Border Bridge at Berwick-upon-Tweed (£5600), and a station totem sign from Northampton Castle (£5300), the latter being shadowed by another totem, Fort William, which went for £4900. Another top-scoring station sign was London Underground platform roundel Arsenal (£4000).

Heading the smokebox numberplates with a realisation of £4100 was 7005 from GWR 4-6-0 *Sir Edward Elgar* which started life in 1946 as *Lamphey Castle* and was renamed in August 1957, and skipping back to the cabsides puts three more in the spotlight – 4008 from GWR *Royal Star* (£3700), 4076 from *Carmarthen Castle* (£3000), and 4088, which sold for £2900 immediately after its matching *Dartmouth Castle* nameplate went to a new home.

Clocks ticked all the right boxes, with a GWR 12in drop dial dating from circa 1850 going for £3100 and an ex-Barry

Goods Yard signalbox example from about 1860 for £2000, while a 'Royal Scot' headboard achieved £2600. This price was matched by a Cambrian Railways' ex-Welshpool handlamp and a locomotive chime whistle from either a 'Brit' or Standard Class 5MT, and close behind at £2500 came a Walsingham and Wells single line staff from the former GER line that closed in 1964.

Worksplates were led by a Sharp Stewart & Co (works No. 2298) from an ironstone quarry metre gauge 0-4-0ST named *J.D.Ellis* built in 1873

(£2800), and a four-figure shedplate was 83G (Penzance and later Templecombe) that sold for £1150.

Improved bid

Two £1600 realisations were a Southern Railway pathway ownership cast iron notice and a GWR Improved Draughting locomotive cab plate from No. 7013 *Bristol Castle*, and a bid of £1300 secured a fascia enamel sign from the Southern Region station of Itchen Abbas. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 11% (+ VAT).

Simon Turner was a relieved auctioneer after the last of the collectors left for home. "With the virus problem we were a bit concerned, and the day before there was a noticeable spike in commission bids from people who had decided not to attend.

"However, the room was full, with a lot of new people, and internet bidding was 50% up. It turned out to be a strong auction, unbelievable to be honest. Clocks did very well, and enamels continue to be in demand."



No frills, but a record for Britannia model, at Great Central's Bloxham sale

TOP price in Great Central's 1000-lot sale at Bloxham on February 22, was £1600 for a 5in gauge live steam model of an unnumbered Britannia Pacific, a record for this particular 'no frills, no commission or telephone bids, and no reserves' sale of general railwayana.

It was followed by £800 for an

untitled 'Beware of the trains' cast iron sign believed to have dated from the 1840s; £600 for a South Eastern & Chatham Railway 'Ashford Works 31' numberplate; and £560 for a Great Central Railway inspection lamp. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+VAT).

Mike Soden, who shared auctioneering duties with Martin Quartermain, said: "Not only was the price for the model a record for a single lot at Bloxham, but total realisations were also the highest ever achieved. Signalling in particular was very strong."

He said that the 'Beware of the trains' sign created considerable interest and, being untitled, also theories about its origin, much of which led to the possibility that it came from one of the early minor Welsh railways. "It was the like of which no one had ever seen before," he said.

They're behind you – steam ahead, but electric and diesel also in five-figure territory

THE star turn – and thus the star realisation – at Great Central's March 7 auction at Stoneleigh may have been a steam locomotive nameplate, but also jostling for attention in the five-figure bracket were representatives of both electric and diesel traction.

Top spot was claimed by *Anti-Aircraft Command* with badge from Southern Railway Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34049 which attracted just one bidder, although this was enough for auctioneer Mike Soden to bring the hammer down at £27,000, slightly below reserve but high enough to clinch the sale.

The electric locomotive plate was *Edmund Burke* from Metropolitan Railway Bo-Bo electric No. 7 – one of the ornate bronze originals from 1927 and not one of the 1953 alloy replacements – whose £15,500 price was matched by *City of Winchester* from GWR No. 3441, which was bought by the Great Western Society for display at Didcot Railway Centre museum.

LMS weighs in

Close behind this duo came *Clan Mackintosh* from Standard Pacific No. 72007 (£14,400), followed by *The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)* with badge from Class 45 'Peak' 1Co-Co1 diesel D71/45049 (£11,600). The LMS then weighed in at £9600 with *Caernarvon* from Patriot No. 45515, and the GWR ended nameplate proceedings in neat symmetry at £8800 and £4400 for *Chirk Castle* (No. 5025) and *North Aston Hall* (No. 7917) respectively.

Two other LMS representatives, *Bahamas* from Nos. 45596 and *Armada* from No. 45679, failed to sell, leading to conjecture among some cognoscenti that the Jubilee success story of recent times may be slowing down. The latter plate, however, did redeem itself after

full-time when it sold for £6000.

I'm going to mention an industrial mini-success at this point, £1400 for a mounted nameplate and worksplate set from 1899 Peckett-built 0-4-0ST (works No. 798) *Alwilda* that saw service in Essex for 62 years with initially a reservoir construction company and then at cement works in Grays.

There were three stand-outs in the non-nameplate categories, a BR(S) totem station sign from Okehampton (£6400) a West Country Class scroll from an unidentified member of the Southern Railway class of Pacifics (£4600), and a 1960 worksplate from English Electric Class 40 D326/40126, the diesel at the centre of the notorious Great Train Robbery on August 8, 1963, which went to a telephone bidder for a class-record £3100.

Smokebox numberplates were led by 7818 from GWR *Granville Manor* (£2400), a cabside numberplate from GWR No. 6835 *Eastham Grange* came out top of its category with a realisation of £2100, and signalling had a busy day, headed by £1900 for a Tyer's key token instrument and £1560 for an LNWR train describer.

A piece – or rather, two pieces – of Scottish railway history comprising a pair of locomotive headlamps sold for £1850. They were carried by *Dunrobin*, a name given to two steam locomotives owned by the Dukes of Sutherland that were used to haul their personal trains that had the right to run from their private station at Dunrobin Castle near Golspie to Inverness. The station is still open today, as a public station on Scotland's Far North Line.

The first locomotive to carry the *Dunrobin* name was a 2-4-0T built in 1871 by Kitson & Co for the third Duke, and the second its replacement, a Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T delivered to the fourth Duke in



1895. Each of the headlamps, which auctioneer Mike Soden told the room had been bought by the Highland Railway Society, carried the name of the engines' long-time driver, A Rhind, and Brora, where the locomotives were shedded.

Retirement lamp

Other four-figure realisations included £1750 for a standard lamp presented by footplate crews and cleaners to H A Ivatt in February 1912 marking his retirement as chief mechanical engineer of the Great

Northern Railway; £1550 for a London & North Western Railway 14in dial wall clock; and £1450 for a Great Eastern Railway fireman's helmet. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Mike Soden said: "We were pleased to achieve five-figure prices for five of the nameplates, and totems and most other enamels continue to rise. Against the background of the coronavirus scare we were also pleased with the attendance – railwayana collectors are not easily deterred."

Hornby export tops the Vectis charts after 86 years

A HORNBY O-gauge export clockwork train set that has survived in near mint condition for 86 years went under the hammer for £3400 at a Vectis model train sale in Thornaby on February 21. It was made for the South African market in 1934 and comprised a 4-4-2T, four goods wagons, tinplate track, and even a guarantee slip bearing the stamp of a Johannesburg Hornby agent.

The loco was numbered 6027 and carried both SAR and SAS (South African Railways and Suid-Afrikaanse Spoorwee) identity, although its maroon livery and familiar outline may have led some UK model enthusiasts of the time to think of locomotives rather closer to home, while the original box containing the set featured an illustration of No. 6100 *Royal Scot*.

Another four-figure realisation was £2000 for an OO-gauge LNER A4 No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* made by Golden Age Models of Swanage, Dorset, below which at £600 was a kitbuilt O-gauge SR Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35003 *Royal Mail*. Prices excluded buyer's premium of 25% (inc VAT).



Talisman and Great Northern pull live auctions due to virus restrictions

TALISMAN Railwayana's March 21 sale at Newark and Great Northern's sale at Poynton on March 28 were the first two live railwayana auctions to be called off due to the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak.

Talisman's Roger and Sandra Phipps said that the items in their sale would be forwarded to form their August 1 auction unless further restrictions were in place then, and in addition some lots already due to be in the August sale would be included.

They asked collectors to retain their March 21 catalogue, while additional items would be listed on their website and also be available as a supplement on the day.

Great Northern's Dave Robinson said his sale would go ahead as a postal, email and telephone auction, with a closing date of April 18. He too requested that customers keep hold of their March 28 catalogue.

Diesel heads the march of the main line, and LU platform roundels flex their muscles

DIESEL and steam were among the pre and post-Nationalisation successes in the Transport Auctions of London sale at Croydon on February 29. In the lead was nameplate *Temeraire* from Class 43 'Warship' D851, which went for £4500, while a 1930 worksplate from GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7760 fetched £500.

The Class 43 was built by North British Loco (NBL) of Glasgow (works No. 27980) in July 1961 and withdrawn from Newton Abbot (83A) in May 1971, and No. 7760 was coincidentally another NBL product (works No. 24048). It was withdrawn by BR from Oxford shed (81F) in December 1961, sold to London Transport, renumbered L90, and withdrawn a second time in 1971, by which time it was one of the last steam engines on the Underground.

Padstow steam

Between this pair came two Southern Railway posters, a 1947 issue promoting the west country by Eric Hubbard (1892-1957) featuring a



steam train approaching Padstow (£1900), and another from a year earlier by Norman Wilkinson (1878-1971) of steamship *TS Invicta* leaving Dover (£700). In the same price territory was a Great Northern Railway (Ireland) poster of a railcar passing Lough Erne (£750).

London Underground platform roundels and bullseyes were also flexing their muscles, with Piccadilly Circus fetching £4200, Oxford Circus £1500, Bank £900, and East Finchley £800. The last-named was believed to have dated from 1939, when the former LNER station became part of the Northern Line.

Underground poster maps also kept the bidders busy, led by a 1947 issue at

£1700, closely followed by another from 1955 at £1600, both of which featured the Harry Beck diagrammatic style. A pre-Beck example from 1927, bearing the stamp of the LNER advertising department, went for £750. Still on the subject of Beck, a first edition Underground diagrammatic pocket map dating from 1933 sold for £900. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 16%.

Highest ever

Transport Auctions of London director Michael Wickham said the near £100,000 total hammer price of the auction was the highest he had achieved in 13 sales. "We were particularly pleased because, having moved to a larger saleroom, more than 100 people attended, another record.

"Almost all areas were strong, the highlights obviously being *Temeraire* and the Piccadilly Circus platform roundel, this being what we believe to be the highest price ever for an Underground sign."



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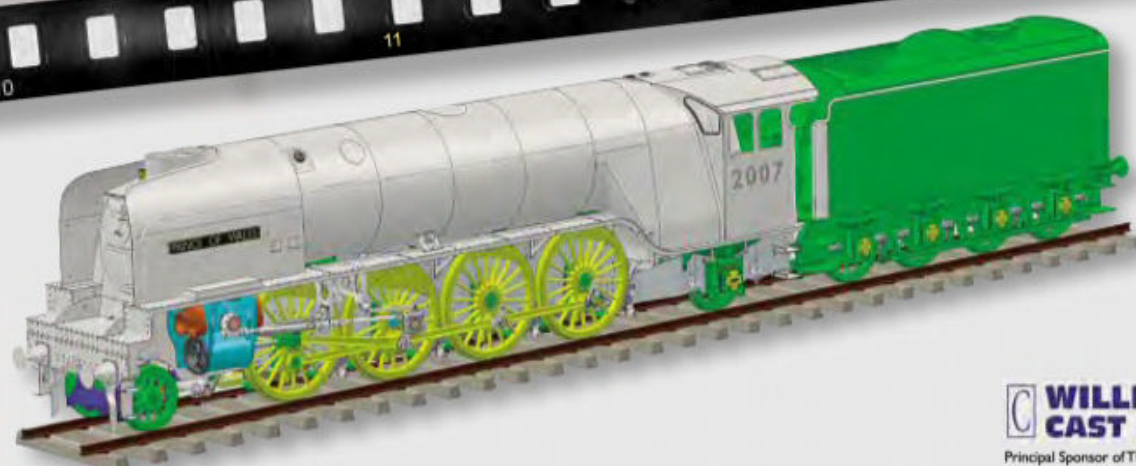
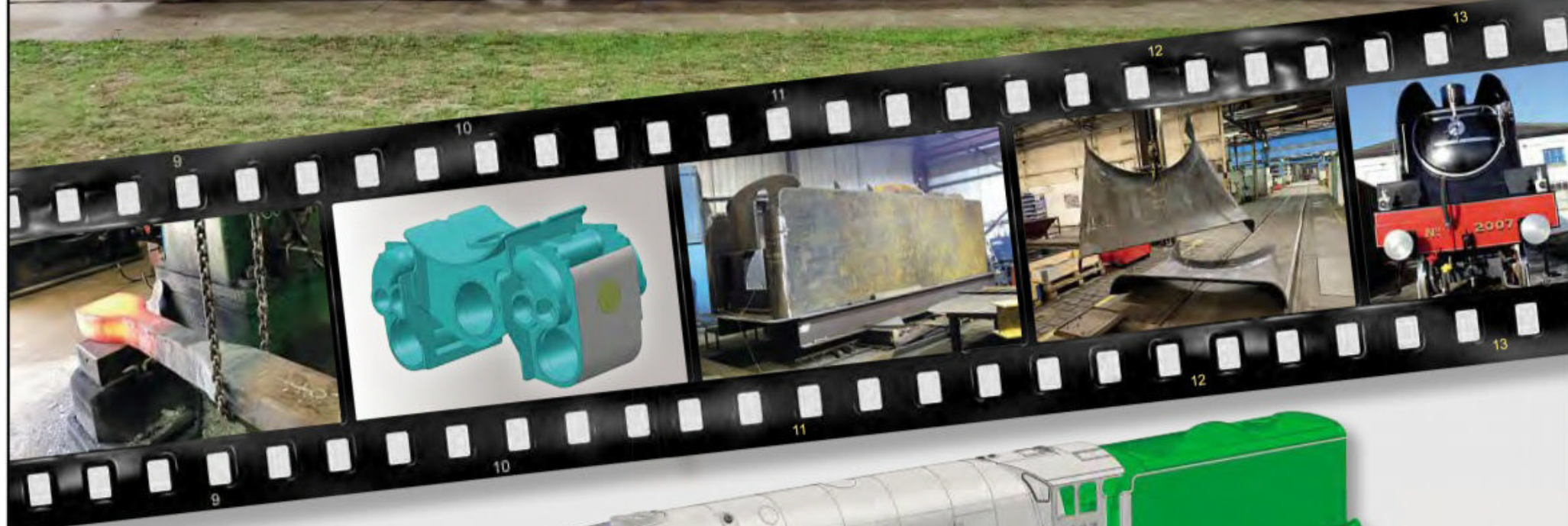
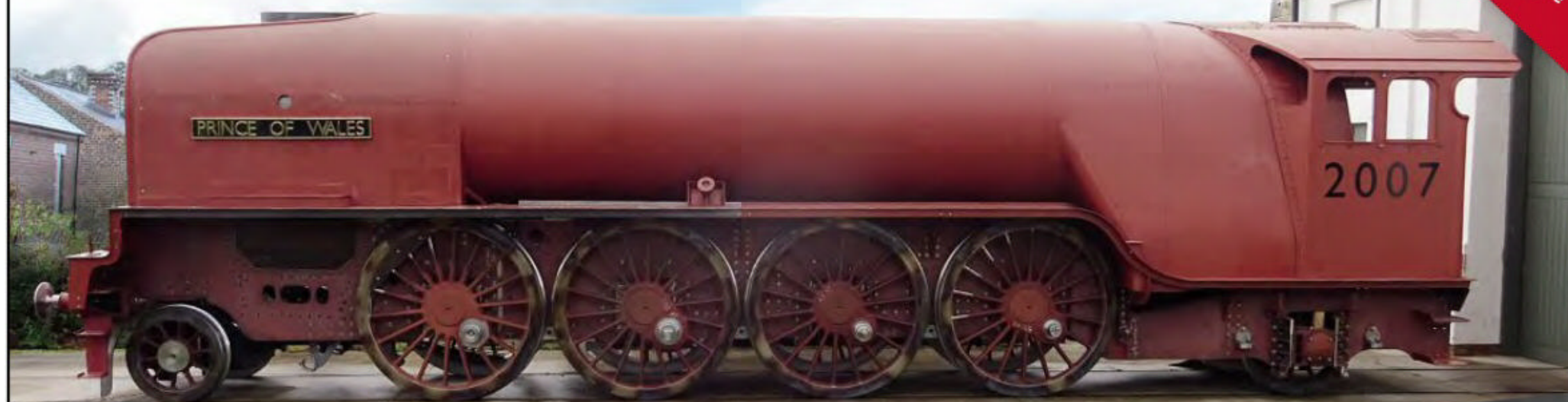
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As the sun sets, National Collection-owned LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* ascends Medstead Bank with its final Up run to Alton on March 8, the last of its public running days on the Mid-Hants Railway.

DAVE RYDING/MHR

Virus wipes out new railtour season start

Trains postponed for at least three months

By Cedric Johns

WITH Easter approaching, a time when each season of railtours gets in its stride, charter train promoters have all been frozen out by the impact of the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic.

Usually first out of the blocks in January, the Railway Touring Company's (RTC) 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' (CME) departed Manchester Victoria on Saturday the 25th heading for Carlisle via the Lune Gorge and Blackburn, returning over the Settle and Carlisle line with motive power supplied by West Coast Railways. In previous years this train, known as the 'Tin Bath' always opened RTC's season.

On Saturday, February 8 the 'real' CME ran from Euston behind blue Class 86 electric No. 86259 *Les Ross* to Carnforth, which on the day was worked forward by Carnforth's LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman*.

The 'Valentines White Rose' of Saturday, February 15 featured a double-header, LMS Princess Coronation Pacific No. 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland* working the train out of Ealing Broadway to York via Finsbury Park and Peterborough, A4 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* returning the 'Rose' back to west London.

No. 60009 was in action again on Saturday, February 22, when it departed Paddington with 'The Cotswold Venturer' destined for Worcester running via Reading and Oxford.

The following Saturday, RTC's revival tour, 'The Cotton Mill Express' set out from Lancaster and travelling via Manchester Victoria toured many of the cotton mill towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, steam again provided by West Coast.

It was No. 60009 which on Saturday, March 7, worked 'The Yorkshireman' from Ealing Broadway to York – this time routed through St Albans, Bedford, Kettering and across the spectacular Harringworth viaduct and Melton Mowbray, the train returning diesel-hauled over the outward route to the Broadway.

RTC's final excursion ran on Saturday, March 14 when 'The Cumbrian Coast Express' departed London Euston for Carlisle with Class 86 No. 86259 *Les Ross* at the sharp end.

RTC's operations manager Rachel Jackson said that the company was – optimistically – hoping to resume

running trains in early May with a 'CME' from Euston to Carnforth and Carlisle. A new date for 'Great Britain 20' is also being considered. Meanwhile at the time of writing, a skeleton staff was answering the telephone on 01533 661500 between 10am and 2pm and taking bookings.

Steam Dreams

In contrast to the seven trains run by RTC, Steam Dreams began its 2020 programme with a visit to Bath on Thursday, March 12, the tour starting from Clapham Junction and proceeding via Redhill, Shalford and Guildford.

With B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower* undergoing extended winter maintenance at Southall for a new firebrick arch to be fitted, LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45212 worked what turned out to be an excellent trip – according to Steam Dreams' operations manager Charlie Robertson.

However, it was the only train Steam Dreams had run before it became obvious that the coronavirus was changing our way of life. Unhappy with the situation, Steam Dreams chairman David Buck said that he was reviewing his programme with the thought that trains might run during May, but he remained unsure.

"I have cancelled our nine-day 'Moors &



The Branch Line Society ran its charters as planned in early March. West Coast's No. 33029 and No. 47746 worked 'The Fenny Crompton' from Lancaster to London Paddington on March 7, returning north two days later with 'The Park Royal Parkinson'. On March 8, the 71A Locomotive Group's Swanage Railway-based D6515 (No. 33012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* hauled the 'Devonian Crompton' charter from London Victoria to Coleford, which is seen waiting to head west at Yeovil Junction. West Coast's No. 33207 was on the rear. MARK V PIKE

Mountains Explorer' holiday trip around Wales and England over May 7-15, which puts our four-day visit to Edinburgh with *Flying Scotsman* equally in doubt over the weekend of July 2-5," he said.

Referring to the former, he said that plans had already been laid for a five-day visit to North Wales via the Central Wales Line to Snowdonia and the Cambrian coast in September next year.

He added: "We are in unchartered times, but we will get through it and revise our tour plans accordingly, especially the London Victoria to Windsor trains, which were planned to take advantage of tourists visiting the capital. Whether overseas visitors and airlines will quickly regain confidence in international travel remains to be seen."

By March 24, all Steam Dreams' staff were working from home. Telephone 01483 209888 for contact options.

UK Railtours

Apart from successfully running its Valentine's Day Pullman special, headed by Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* in February, UK Railtours (UKRT) postponed tours

illustrated in its new spring and summer brochure, beginning with the 'Cotswold Lion' trip on Saturday, March 23.

Mostly non-steam, UKRT's special 'Merchant of Norfolk' trip with No. 35028 on April 18 has also fallen victim to the virus threat.

However, the St Albans-based promoter has said that it intends to operate the whole of its existing nine-train programme when the railtour business returns to normal.

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust

The trustees of LNER A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* decided to postpone the 'Fen & Fells Flyer' Cambridge to Carlisle trip on Saturday, April 4 – but it plans to run the train at a later date this year.

Also postponed was the 'The Cumbrian Explorer' Darlington to Carlisle excursion on Saturday, May 2. The Liverpool-York 'The Jorvik Express' shown for Saturday, May 9 is optimistically shown as running.

The trust's tour programme details excursions right across the board from May through to October 3, when the A1 is booked to work 'The Easterling'



LNER A4 Pacific No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* crosses Harringworth viaduct with the Railway Touring Company's 'The Yorkshireman' on Saturday, March 7. The Ealing Broadway to York trip was the 4-6-2's final main line charter. ROBIN JONES

from London King's Cross to Lowestoft, by which time, it is hoped the existing situation will hopefully have diminished and the coronavirus maybe disappeared.

In addition to excursions, the trust cancelled its P2 No. 20007 *Prince of Wales* roadshows to have taken place at Peterborough on March 21, Darlington on April 18, Carlisle on June 6 and July 23 at Aberdeen. The trust said it will be reviewing whether or not to go ahead with each planned future roadshow and was also investigating an online substitute – visit www.a1steam.com for more details.

Visits to Darlington Locomotive Works on the third Saturday of the month have also been suspended, while measures are in place for staff to continue to operate in the works while it is safe to do so and in accordance with Government guidance.



BR Standard Class 7 No. 70000 *Britannia* was in charge of Saphos Trains' Shrewsbury-York charter 'The White Rose' on March 7. The Pacific is seen passing Grindleford. Class 47 D1924 Crewe Diesel Depot was at the rear. DALE SMALLIN

Pathfinder Tours

Having run its DRS Class 20 'Farewell' trip on January 18 and the 'Hacienda' trip on March 7, Pathfinder Tours followed the example of other promoters by postponing its 2020 programme, including its four-day Scottish land cruise on April 10-13, but was hoping to resume operations in June.

Taking a 'reasonable' projection, general manager Peter Watts is aiming to run Pathfinder's 'Mazey Day' trip from Birmingham New Street to Penzance via Bristol Temple Meads on June 17. If it comes off, the train will be powered by two Class 50s. He is equally anxious that three excursions with No. 35028 *Clan Line* will, as reported previously – operate in July.

For the latest announcements, call 01453 835314/834477.

Vintage Trains

Tyseley-based Vintage Trains has postponed all its advertised excursions until at least the end of June, but said that all passengers booked can transfer

their tickets to trains when the present Government restrictions are lifted.

The move includes the postponement of the special 'Shakespeare Express' trip from Stratford-upon-Avon to Birmingham Snow Hill sponsored by *Heritage Railway*, as featured in *Headline News* last issue.

For postponed tours, a credit note can be issued or a full refund requested. All booked passengers will be hearing from Vintage Trains with these options and more details.

Meanwhile, the West Midlands Train operating Company is engaged in planning a revised tour programme in conjunction with Network Rail.

Having agreed two Sunday paths with Network Rail, Vintage Trains is now in a position whereby it can run its 'Shakespeare Express' trains from Birmingham to Stratford on any Sunday when steam is cleared to operate later this year, and can announce a programme with just a few days' notice.

During the lockdown, the majority of Vintage Trains and Tyseley staff

are working from home. As such, the firm has requested that the primary method of contact be via email to Tickets@VintageTrains.co.uk. Visit www.vintagetrains.co.uk for more details.

Saphos Trains

All booked trains up to and including 'The White Rose' hauled by BR Standard 4-6-2 No 70000 *Britannia* on March 7 ran.

However, spokesman Peter Greenwood said that all future excursions have been cancelled pending further developments. If there is a change for the better, the first planned departure will be on May 27, when LMS No. 46100 *Royal Scot* is booked to head 'The Fellsman'.

On the motive power front, *Britannia*, Bulleid West Country Light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton*, 'Black Five' No. 45231 *The Sherwood Forester* and *Royal Scot* are stabled at Crewe out of steam.

West Coast Railways

West Coast Railways has taken steps to wait until May to make a decision as to whether to start running trains.

The annual 'Jacobite' service to Mallaig, which depends heavily on holiday traffic in the Fort William area, has now been delayed until May 1.

The 'Scarborough Flyer' season is booked to begin on June 18 and 'Dalesman' trips over the Settle and Carlisle line on May 12.

South West Main Line Steam Company

Trading as the Yeovil Railway Centre, the South West Main Line Steam Company, often a key element in West Country charter operations, opened its season on March 8 when the Branch Line Society visited Yeovil with a tour from London Victoria featuring a pair of Class 33s, Nos. 33207 and Swanage-based D6515.

On arrival at the Junction, the train was topped and tailed for a brief visit to Pen Mill station, before setting off for Exeter.

The centre is now closed with all scheduled events cancelled

while awaiting the outcome of the current lockdown.

At present the centre is expecting No. 35028 *Clan Line*, Merchant Navy No. 35018 *British India Line* and No. 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland* to visit, provided that operations are able to restart on July 9.

Branch Line Society

The Branch Line Society has deferred three main line excursions due to run in April: 'The BRCW Bunny' (18); 'The Hot Cross Crompton' (19) and 'The Jurassic Crompton' (23).

In a statement, the society said: "In light of the recent announcement from the UK Government, and as a responsible society, we have taken the decision to defer a number of our upcoming events. We place the health and wellbeing of our members, volunteers, partners and suppliers first.

"The situation has recently become more serious and widespread and is expected to significantly increase over coming weeks."

SRPS

Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) Railtours was due to begin its 2020 season on May 2 with a diesel-hauled excursion from Dunfermline to Fort William – but that trip, along with several others, has been postponed due to the coronavirus crisis.

Neil McDonald, commercial manager at SRPS Railtours, said on March 18: "At this stage in time we still plan to operate our programme from June 20, but we will be regularly reviewing this during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

"We are all highly disappointed having to take this decision but our primary concern is to protect our volunteers, staff and visitors. We are hoping that anyone that's already booked for tours can be transferred to tours later on in the year but if not, we will be offering refunds."

If restrictions are lifted, A1 Pacific No. 61063 *Tornado* is set to haul three SRPS excursions this summer – on August 9, 16 and 23. SRPS said other trips are being planned for later in the year.



Vintage Trains: 'The Shakespeare Express' awaits the green light. WR 'Castle' class 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* is seen at the operator's Tyseley depot. DENIS CHICK/VINTAGE TRAINS

Union of South Africa to remain in traffic for a year?

By Phil Marsh

THE FIRST A4 to work a train out of London King's Cross in the preservation era, John Cameron's LNER A4 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa*, has been withdrawn from main line duties six weeks earlier than planned. However, the popular Gresley Pacific could now remain in service for another year on East Lancashire Railway (ELR).

Its main line ticket expires on April 23 and what turned out to be its final main line charter outing was for the Railway Touring Company between Ealing Broadway and York on March 7.

The A4 has been stabled since then at the Railway Museum in York, awaiting arrangements to be made to get it to Riley & Sons at Heywood, who are contracted by the owner to maintain the locomotive.

Movement options

These arrangements depend on several factors – foremost being the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. There are two options to move No. 60009 by rail, in steam under its own power or to be towed by a diesel. A third option is to transport it by road on a low-loader.

Whichever choice is made, it will involve up to a dozen or so people. The

The locomotive and those who look after it. The arrival of No. 60009 on 'The Yorkshireman' from London on its last run to York on March 7 saw the support crew pose at the front of the locomotive at York, with the A4's owner John Cameron, who is in the centre of the picture wearing a black woolly hat. MAURICE BURNS

support crew will need to be activated with whatever option is chosen to either prepare the locomotive ready for a fitness to run exam or to split the locomotive, tender and support coach.

If it moves by rail, a train crew will also obviously be needed or by road, a low-loader team and escort required.

The people involved will need to travel from home to York, find somewhere to sleep and wash in safe conditions, given the support coach would not be appropriate. Once at Heywood, they will

need to return home with the attendant risks that involves.

The Government advice at the time of writing was very clear – only travel if absolutely necessary, and moving an A4 is unlikely to meet this criteria.

Future

Assuming the locomotive reaches the ELR at some stage, it will require an in-depth cold and in-steam examination by the insurance company, to pass the boiler for example, as fit and safe to

operate for another 12 months.

If this is successful, it is understood that the engine will only operate on the ELR and until classmate No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* returns to service, will be the sole A4 to be operational.

This would give owner Mr Cameron another year to find a display home for No. 60009, which like its owner, has surely earned a place in railway history.

→ Read about some of No. 60009's exploits in Don Benn's Main Line Performance column on pages p60-63.



On what turned out to be its last mainline run before retirement, LNER A4 class No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* strikes down the gradient leaving Staveley, Derbyshire on Saturday, March 7. ALAN WEAVER





National Collection-owned LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* departed the Mid-Hants Railway (see centre spread) on March 10. Running 136 minutes late after suffering a stand of nearly 2½ hours at Milton Keynes for a signalling failure, the 4-6-2 was routed via the Down Fast past Baddesley Bridge, Atherstone, where it is seen on the 9.21am Alton to Bury (East Lancashire Railway) engine and carriage move. GRAHAM NUTTALL

Right: LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212 wheels round the reverse curves at Baddesley Bridge, Atherstone with the 10.37am Southall West Coast Railways to Carnforth Steamtown engine and coach move on March 21, 2020. GRAHAM NUTTALL



Below: Double-headed 'Tractor' action: Locomotive Services Class 37s Nos. D6851 and D6817 pass Colton Junction near York en route from Crewe to Tyne Yard to collect stock on March 10. CHRIS GEE



Grants boost for Ferryhill engine shed restorers

ABERDEEN'S award-winning Ferryhill Railway Heritage Trust has been given £70,000 to restore a Victorian engine shed.

Last year, the trust, which was formed in 2007 to restore the Grade A-listed Ferryhill shed turntable next to Duthie Park, not only landed the 2019 principal award from the Aberdeen Civic Society, but also won the Stagecoach Volunteers Award at the 40th National Railway Heritage Awards in London.

The restoration of the turntable facilitated the visits to steam-hauled charters to the Granite City.

The latest windfall in the form of grants from the FCC Communities Foundation, the National Lottery and the Garfield Weston Foundation will help fund the restoration of the shed.

Trust chairman Dr Jon Tyler said: "These grants will provide the trust with an opportunity to complete the repairs to the 1850 engine shed roof.

"The trust will be opening to the public on certain days, allowing people to visit the enhanced amenities at Ferryhill."

Details of the public open days will be published on the trust's website at www.frht.org.uk.

Tamar Bridge may be lit up

ISAMBARD Kingdom Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge across the River Tamar may be illuminated.

Network Rail has been holding talks with the local authorities about installing architectural lights on the structure spanning the river between Plymouth and Saltash, which was opened in 1859 by Queen Victoria's husband Prince Albert.

The idea was raised by Network Rail after bridges across the Thames in London were illuminated recently. The management of the road bridge alongside, which opened in 1961, also wants to see whether it too could be lit up.

However, questions have already been raised about the cost and whether the energy used could be justified in an era of heightened environmental awareness.

MAIN LINE PERFORMANCE

TABLE ONE: SWINDON TO GLOUCESTER

Date	Saturday, February 22, 2020				
Train	7.09am Paddington to Worcester Shrub Hill				
Loco	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i>				
Load	11 coaches, 404 tons tare 435 tons gross				
Driver	Ray Poole				
Fireman	Roger Griffiths				
Recorder	David Sprackland				
Position	front of 2nd coach				
Weather	Cloudy				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Swindon	0.00	0.00	00	00	28 mins late
MP 79	1.64		04	50	45
Bremell Sidings	2.64		06	03	52½
Purton	3.64		07	09	58
MP 82	4.64		08	08	61½/63
MP 83	5.64		09	05	62½/61½
MP 85	6.43		10	59	66½/67
MP 86	8.64		11	53	65½/66½
MP 88	10.64		13	42	65½
MP 90	11.15		15	37	61/60½
Kemble	13.71	35.00	16	37	61½
MP 92	14.64		17	23	62½
MP 94	16.64		19	35	53
Sapperton Tunnel	17.52		20	40	47
MP 97	19.64		23	10	46½
MP 99	21.64		25	38	56/48½
Stroud	24.82		29	21	51½/57
Stonehouse	27.10		32	18	56½
Standish Jct	29.63	68.00	35	10	36
MP 97	32.38		38	29	64
Gloucester Yard	36.24	78.00	44	09	6 mins early

Distances and speeds from GPS



WITH FULL REGULATOR
LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW

With LNER A4 class Pacific No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* having worked its final main line charter for the foreseeable future, Don Benn looks at some of the 4-6-2's performances – including the recent 'Cotswold Venturer' on February 22, a snippet on South Western lines, one on the Great Western Berks and Hants line – plus a marathon to Newcastle and lastly from its final spell in Scotland in 1965.

I BOOKED on the Railway Touring Company's (RTC) 'Cotswold Venturer' on February 22 in the hope that I would get a final run on the main line behind John Cameron's magnificent A4 class Pacific No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* before its retirement in April.

However, events conspired against me as Network Rail was still trying to complete the remedial works at Eastleigh following the freight train derailment on January 28 – plus a landslide had closed the diversionary route via Romsey near Dean, which would have been used by Cross Country trains.

The National Rail Planner wasn't keeping up with this and I was given four different journey options over consecutive days until it settled on buses as being the only way north from Southampton Airport Parkway. Not wanting to risk this, I emailed the RTC office and staff kindly transferred my booking to August 22, by which time life would hopefully have returned to normal.

However, all was not lost as the indefatigable 'Shireman' and my old friend David Sprackland were both on the train and have kindly sent me details of the performance of 'No. 9'.

Steady running

I have covered the outward journey in some detail and so Shireman takes up the story: "After meeting some familiar fellow enthusiasts on Slough station, we watched the very weathered No. 60009 drift in. Load 11 with nothing on the back but a tail-lamp. Unfortunately Standards were at the front. My carriage was the fourth from the front on the outward, but ninth back on the big climb in the evening. C'est la vie. Like February 16, 2019's run, Pete Roberts was our driver.

There is nothing in the way of gradients between Slough and Reading on 'God's Wonderful Railway', but there is space for some decent fast running. There was a gorgeous sound from up front as No. 60009 got away. After a decent pick up, we passed Burnham at 45mph, the chime whistle drifting on the wind. Well before Maidenhead, 1-in-1320 up, six miles out, we hit 60mph but that was it. There was no high speed running over the next 11 miles, despite a seemingly clear path to Reading.

"In 2019 we ran nonstop through Slough, so there can be no meaningful comparisons. A decent crowd of photographers greeted No. 60009 as we ran into platform 13 a couple of minutes down, the chime

whistle sounding. We left two minutes down, with long blasts on the superb chime whistle.

Being way out on platform 13 meant no fun climb to High Level, just a run past new depot 'around the back'. Still, we had a decent restart and we'd reached 50mph five minutes out as we passed milepost 38½. Pete got into No. 60009 and the wonderful three-cylinder snarl echoed around the Thames Valley. Station passes were: Tilehurst 51mph; Pangbourne 61mph; and Goring and Streatley 67mph, the A4 purring along at the head of our train.

With greens all the way, it was fingers crossed for a 75mph run. With eight miles of decent relief track before Didcot Approach, did we get there? Unfortunately not. We passed milepost 46 at 68mph, but then Pete just allowed No. 60009 to run up the 1-in-1320, then 1-in-1508 through Cholsey, 67mph, before putting the brake in at milepost 49, four miles from our stop at Didcot Parkway. We rolled into the station to a chorus of chimes close to three minutes down in 23 minutes 11 seconds from Reading, including what turned out to be a signal check around Moreton.

"The run to Swindon was never going to be anything special as we were pathed through the long Wantage



No. 60009 Union of South Africa is seen passing Totton on the late-running 'Dorset Coast Express' on September 12, 2019. DON BENN

Road-Challow loop to allow a GWR Bristol IET (Intercity Express Train) to pass. We left eight minutes early for some reason and didn't even get to 60mph in the seven miles to the loop. We ran through rather slowly and only hit a max of 59mph to our first water stop in Swindon East Yard. We were four minutes down, but had a 21-minute stop scheduled, more than long enough to leave on time. The best laid plans of.... Word came back that the tanker hadn't arrived and thoughts of 'I wonder if the driver went to Challow?' circulated; but no. Apparently Swindon's 'Magic Roundabout' did its thing and mesmerised the driver of the water wagon so much so that we finally left 29 minutes late."

Storming climb to Sapperton Tunnel

Table one shows the detail of the running on the Swindon to Gloucester Yard section. Shireman describes the running with Ray Poole now in charge. "The late departure was actually a good thing as it meant 1L68, the GWR Paddington to Cheltenham Spa service was in the wind, so we'd get a clear road to Kemble, over Sapperton Summit and down to Standish Junction. Once past Swindon Junction, it got noisy and we hit 60mph less than four miles out at milepost 81 on the 1-in-401 down as we crossed Purton Crossing, chime whistle blasting a long warning of an A4 in a hurry. There were lots of photographers enjoying a last but one look at No. 60009.

"It was a lovely section to race on this relaid track. No. 60009 sounded superb on the close to two miles of 1-in-330 up, left at 62mph. A short 1-in-406 down and level bit saw a snarling No. 60009 reach 67mph, a speed held as we shot across Minety Level crossing just before milepost 87. It was truly excellent stuff!

"Speed held on a mile of level track and then we attacked the three miles of 1-in-330 up from milepost 88 to Kemble at 65mph. An A4 in almost full cry must have made a wonderful sight trackside; the snarling sounds were certainly appreciated in coach G. Speed only fell slowly – milepost 89 passed at 62mph and milepost 90 at 61mph. No. 60009 roared through Kemble Tunnel and through the station on the level at 62mph, with long



John Cameron is seen on his engine at York while the Pacific hauled the 'Jubilee Requiem' on October 25, 2014. DON BENN

blasts on the chime whistle meeting the approval of the sightseers and photographers. The three-quarters-of-a-mile of 1-in-143 up was dismissed at 63mph. This was going to be fun. We passed milepost 92 on the level at 63mph and over the next half-mile or so of 1-in-400/200 up/level at milepost 93, we hit the mile of 1-in-100 up, the beginning of the short westbound climb to Sapperton Summit at 60mph.

The sound from up front was tremendous, but speed fell to 54mph with a short slip as we passed milepost 94, the start of the mile and a bit on 1-in-94 up to the summit. In the cutting, the snarl of the A4 reverberated off the sides as speed fell quarter by quarter to: milepost 94¼, 49.5mph; 94½, 47.2mph; into the Short Tunnel at 45.8mph, out into the sunshine at 45mph; and into the long tunnel at just under 45mph. The summit is in Long Tunnel, where it didn't feel as if speed fell much below 45mph, before Ray eased No. 60009 and then braked as we left it on the 1-in-90 down. A noisy climb and a decent summit speed for 11 on!"

The run down to Gloucester Yard and on to Worcester Shrub Hill was unexceptional with a maximum speed of 72mph and an arrival a minute early.

Return from Worcester

For the return run on February 22, I have detailed the section from Gloucester Yard to Kemble and this is shown in table two. Once again Shireman describes this: "We were too far back to hear a lot and there was no real charge on the approach to Stroud over the mile of 1-in-276/620 up, topped at 45mph. Travelling through Stroud at 45mph close to line speed of 50mph and out onto the lower reaches of Sapperton Bank, a bit of a snarl drifted back as No. 60009 attacked the 2½ miles at 1-in-250, crossing Capels Viaduct, just after milepost 102 at 46.

"Ray had No. 60009 really notched up now and plenty of noise drifted back as our speed rose to 51mph at milepost 101. Unlike in 2018 when we were checked to 27mph by a yellow aspect signal caused by over enthusiastic linesiders, we crossed Brinscombe Path

TABLE TWO: GLOUCESTER TO KEMBLE

Date	Saturday, February 22, 2020				
Train	4.36pm Worcester Shrub Hill to Paddington				
Loco	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 Union of South Africa				
Load	11 coaches, 404 tons tare 435 tons gross				
Driver	Ray Poole				
Fireman	Fraser Birrell				
Recorder	David Sprackland				
Position	front of 2nd coach				
Weather	Sunny spells				

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Gloucester Yard	0.00	0.00	00	00	
MP 97	3.59		06	57	49½
MP 106½	7.10		14	27	5* sigs
Stonehouse	8.44		18	00	37
MP 104	9.35		19	21	43
MP 103	10.35		20	41	44
Stroud	11.18		21	48	45½
MP 100	13.35		24	32	51½
MP 99	14.35		25	41	51½
MP 98	15.35		26	55	43
MP 97	16.35		28	33	33½
MP 96	17.35		30	27	27
Sapperton	18.44		30	37	26
Tunnel in					
Sapperton	19.35		33	03	-/58
Tunnel out					
Kemble	22.12	48.00	39	27	

Distances and speeds from GPS
*brakes or speed restriction

"An A4 in almost full cry must have made a wonderful sight trackside; the snarling sounds were certainly appreciated in coach G."

TABLE THREE: WOKING TO CLAPHAM JUNCTION

Date	Saturday, October 25, 2003				
Train	7.15am Alton to Worcester Shrub Hill				
Engine	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 Union of South Africa				
Load	11 coaches, 367 tons tare 390 tons gross				
Crew	Not recorded				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Position	2nd coach of 11				
Weather	Cold and sunny, dry.				

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Woking	0.00	0.00	00	00	30¾ mins late
West Byfleet	2.61		05	17	38
Byfleet & New Haw	3.89		07	37	21*
Addlestone Jct	5.05		09	52	32½
Addlestone	6.01		12	55	37
Chertsey	7.44		15	18	36/39
Virginia Water	9.94	16.00	21	18	14*
Egham	12.09		24	46	51
Staines	14.11	24.00	28	55	18*
Ashford	15.51		31	37	44½
Feltham	18.16		34	39	57
Feltham Jct	19.58		35	58	60
Whitton	20.48		37	13	53
Twickenham	21.74		38	45	*
Richmond	23.32	39.00	42	13	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	35 mins late
North Sheen	0.65		02	43	33½
Mortlake	1.45		04	07	40/26* sigs
Barnes	2.60		06	35	37½
Putney	3.80		08	33	40
Wandsworth Town	4.96		10	13	44
Clapham Junction	5.76	12.00	11	57	

* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE FOUR: PETERBOROUGH TO BABWORTH LOOP

Date	Saturday, October 25, 2014				
Train	7.08am King's Cross to Newcastle				
Engine	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i>				
Load	12 coaches, 438 tons tare 475 tons gross				
Driver	Ron Smith				
Fireman	Fraser Birrell				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Position	3rd coach				
Weather	Sunny spells				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Peterborough	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
New England	1.61		07	13	47½
Woodcroft	4.96		09	51	18* sigs to SL
Helpston	5.56	9.00	11	31	24½
Lolham LC	7.09		14	16	41½
Tallington	8.47	14.00	16	05	51/52½
Greatford LC	10.76		19	09	38* tsr
Essendine	12.46		21	25	44½/51½
Little Bytham	15.89		25	38	49/43
Corby Glen	20.82		32	23	48
Stoke Jct	23.42	28.00	35	51	43
Great Ponton	25.79		38	46	63½
MP 104	27.67		40	10	74
Grantham	29.11	34.00	41	18	77½
Peascliffe Tunnel	31.49		43	11	75½
MP 110	33.67		44	52	79
MP 112	35.67		46	25	75/74
Claypole LC	39.01	41.00	49	06	76
Balderton LC	40.54		50	13	74½/71½
Barnby LC	42.71		52	04	73
Newark	43.82	45.00	52	56	74½/73½
MP 122	45.67		56	28	74½
Cromwell LC	48.37		57	04	42* sigs
Carlton Loop	49.32		60	14	21* sigs
Crow Park	51.12		64	16	40
Egmanton LC	54.04		66	21	45½/44½
Tuxford	55.60		68	14	46½
Lincoln Road	56.67		69	44	53½
Markham Summit	57.39		70	35	52½
Gamston	59.17		72	31	60
Grove Road SB	61.12		74	51	42* sigs
Retford	62.29	66.00	76	57	24*
Babworth Loop	62.86	68.00	78	54	
average speed milepost 104 to milepost 122: 75.52 mph					
net time 71 minutes					
* brakes or speed restriction					



TABLE FIVE: FROME TO TAUNTON

Date	Saturday, August 18, 2018				
Train	8.15am Paddington to Minehead				
Engine	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i>				
Load	11 coaches 410½ tons tare 440 tons gross				
Driver	Pete Roberts				
Fireman	Craig Stinchcombe				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Position	3rd coach of 11				
Weather	Cloudy				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Frome	0.00	0.00	00	00	1¼ mins early
Blatchbridge Jct	1.11		04	02	30½
MP 118	2.52		06	15	44½
MP 119	3.52		07	36	46½/43½
Witham	5.31		09	42	49
MP 122	6.52		11	22	51
Brewham Summit	7.17		12	08	49½
MP 124	8.52		13	30	71/67½
Bruton	10.64		15	15	74
MP 127	11.52		16	00	72½
MP 128	12.52		16	48	75
Castle Cary	14.07	17.00	18	09	59* tsr
Alford	16.19		19	59	64/57½
Keinton Mandeville	18.94		22	57	60½
Charlton Mackrell	21.19		25	08	64
MP 124	22.74		26	34	69½
Somerton	24.87	28.00	28	32	58
Somerton Tunnel	25.47		29	09	57½
Long Sutton	26.55		30	08	64
Langport East	28.55		32	13	66½
Curry Rivel	29.69		33	96	68
MP 132	30.74		34	00	65/63½
Athelney	33.67	37.00	36	45	68
MP 136	34.74		37	40	62/14* sigs
Cogload Junction	36.84	41.00	41	52	25
Creech St Michael	38.69		44	54	47½
Taunton East Jct	40.90		48	28	24*/14* sigs
Taunton	41.59	47.00	51	27	2¾ mins late
net time 45 minutes					
* brakes or speed restriction					

Below: No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* is pictured at Frome on the 8.15am Paddington to Minehead 'West Somerset Express' charter on August 18, 2018. DON BENN

on the short level bit at 51½mph. Speed held on the half mile of 1-in-310, and straight after that the grade steepens to half mile plus of 1-in-103. St Mary's Crossing, the mid-point, was passed at 51.

"Then we had our first slip and concern about the state of the railhead as our speed fell rather rapidly to 43.3mph over the half mile of 1-in-75. A bit of a recovery came across Chalford Viaduct on the steeper half mile of 1-in-70, 37.2mph, then another slip on the mile of 1-in-74 took speed down to 34.2mph. Bit of a worry with the steepest gradients still to come. We crossed Frampton Viaduct on the 1-in-75 at 34mph and hit the close to a mile of 1-in-60 to Sapperton Long Tunnel at 31.3mph, Our speed fell away to 25.4mph at milepost 96, with another slip we struggled into the tunnel at 24.8mph. Very different to the magnificent flat out charge into Sapperton Long Tunnel at 38.2mph in the dry in June of 2018."

Bob Baines took over from Ray Poole at Didcot and ran No. 60009 up to 73mph before Reading, finally bringing the train into Paddington on time after a great day out for No. 60009. Throughout I have used the times and speeds as submitted by Shireman and David, though these differ slightly as can be the case when using GPS.

Early days with Steam Dreams

In the early days of Steam Dreams they ran trains formed of the 'green set' starting at Alton and encouraged short journey bookings, so on Saturday, October 25, 2003, I made a booking to join the 7.15am Alton to Worcester at Woking for a run to Clapham Junction via Staines. Table three shows the detail of this run made on a bright but very cold Saturday morning. I don't have a gradient profile for this route other than the start to Byfleet Junction which is 1-in-326/367 down. We left Woking over half an hour late and the start was very cautious as indeed was the running as far as Virginia Water, where the train had lost another 5¼ minutes.

Things then perked up and speed touched 60mph at Feltham Junction, before calling at Richmond and arriving at Clapham Junction 35 minutes late. It's strange how some railtours stick in the mind, but I can still recall that cold sunny morning. Heritage electric traction back to Woking in the form of 4BEP unit No. 2324, maximum speed 80mph, completed this little jaunt. A few days earlier I had gone to London to photograph No. 60009 on another Steam Dreams excursion, this time the 11am

TABLE SIX: FORFAR TO PERTH

Date	Saturday, February 13, 1965				
Train	7.10am Aberdeen to Glasgow				
Engine	Class A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i>				
Load	6 coaches, 219½ tons tare 235 tons gross				
Crew	Ferryhill				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Position	2nd coach of 6				
Weather	Severe gale				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Forfar	0.00	0.00	00	00	11¼ mins late
Forfar South Box	0.70		01	47	43
Kirriemuir Box	2.85		04	16	64
Glamis	5.65		06	48	71/75
Eassie	7.85		08	38	73
Alyth Junction	11.90	12.00	12	00	72
Ardler Box	13.15		13	02	76
Ardler	14.20		13	51	77½/75
Coupar Angus	16.65		15	43	77
Burrelton	18.85		17	33	72
Cargill	21.20		19	30	78/79
Ballathie	23.05		20	58	74
Stanley Junction	25.30	23.00	22	51	70
Strathord	27.35		24	39	72
Luncarty	28.30		25	30	68
Almond Valley Jct	30.85		27	51	64
Perth	32.50	32.00	31	13	
* brakes or speed restriction					
start to stop average 60.9 mph					



LNER A4 Class 4-6-2 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* approaches Vauxhall with the 11am Waterloo to Yeovil Junction excursion on October 15, 2003. DON BENN

Waterloo to Yeovil Junction, which had started from Alton at 8.03am.

Moving on exactly 11 years, Saturday, October 25, 2014 saw me on the bleak platforms of Potters Bar awaiting RTC's 7.08am King's Cross to Newcastle 'Jubilee Requiem' railtour, which had No. 60009 at the head of 12 coaches.

One benefit of timing on the Great Northern main line is that there are full mileposts on the east side, as well as every quarter on the west side – those that are still there of course. In fact, I was seated on the west side facing the front of the train.

Up front were driver Ron Smith and fireman Fraser Birrell, who were to take us as far as York and they got the substantial 475 ton train moving nicely to reach 67½mph after Hatfield and regain over three minutes of a seven-and-a-half minutes late start to the Stevenage stop 19 minutes 42 seconds for the 15.02 miles. After the stop, we ran up to 70mph after Hitchin and then settled down to run easily on the slow line with speed in the 60s along the racing stretch to Huntingdon, passed a minute early and on to the water stop at Holme a minute early in 46 minutes 16 seconds for the 41.17 miles from Stevenage, a gain of nearly three minutes on the schedule.

We then ran slowly to Peterborough, our last pick up point, arriving there a minute early. It was there that word came back from the support crew that John Cameron, the owner of No. 60009, was also on the engine.

Dash down to the Trent valley

Table four shows the running from Peterborough to York which was a mixed bag. The engine appeared to be priming and the climb to Stoke on the slow line was steady to say the least, nearly eight minutes having been lost from the restart. Then followed a lovely dash down to the Trent Valley averaging 75.52mph between mileposts 104 and 122, before our progress was rudely interrupted by a diversion through the Carlton Loop, for reasons unknown.

Recovery to Markham summit saw a

reasonable 52½mph at the top of the 1-in-200/330, but the check at Carlton had lost us further time and we made the water stop in the Babworth Loop in 78 minutes 54 seconds for the 62.86 miles from Peterborough, or about 71 minutes net against a schedule of 68 minutes. Further details of 'The Jubilee Requiem' were in *HR196*.

Next in this mini tribute to No. 60009 is a run along the Berks and Hants line. Pete Roberts had been charge of the big Gresley on the 11 coach 8.15am Paddington to Minehead 'West Somerset Express' which we joined at Reading on August 18, 2018. Table five has the details of the running from Frome to Taunton which was pure Pete Roberts's enginemanship. I think Pete is the last ex-Nine Elms man still on main line driving duties and I had many runs in the 1960s with him firing, mainly to Jim Robinson from who he learnt his trade. He will only thrash an engine in rare circumstances but will always try to keep time and so it was on this day.

After taking water, we left Frome nearly two minutes early and then made a good climb to Brewham before touching 75mph down to Castle Cary, where we were checked and then ran cautiously for the next few miles. Athelney was passed just inside schedule, but a late running GWR service saw speed reduced to 14mph, before Cogload Junction and a signal checked approach to the Taunton stop, two-and-a-half minutes late in a net time of 45 minutes for the 41.59 miles from Frome against the schedule of 47 minutes. More details of this trip can be found in *HR246*.

Scottish BR runs

Finally to Scotland in 1965, where I had a number of runs behind No. 60009 on the Aberdeen to Glasgow three-hour trains. Although I started timing seriously in 1962, I didn't get to the Great Northern main line before the end of steam but instead got my A4 haulage by a number of trips north of the border, my favourite train being the 7.10am Aberdeen to Glasgow which connected off the

7.30pm 'Aberdonian' from King's Cross.

I never had a bad run with the Ferryhill men on the 7.10am and the run in table six was no exception. It was a morning of severe gales and we had been stopped a number of times for telegraph poles and trees down before reaching the Forfar stop, which was left over 11 minutes late. The running on to Perth in 31 minutes 13 seconds for the 32.50 miles was a little below the more normal 30-minute mark, but still pretty decent

touching 79mph over the river Tay near Cargill. The 32-minute booking was the last mile a minute schedule for steam in the UK.

Now with the virtual shut down of Great Britain, it looks like No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* has run its last main line trip before being retired. Many thanks to John Cameron for making his engine available and to the crews who produced so many good runs with this superb reliable locomotive. **HR**

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ON COURSE FOR EXPANSION

Nicola Fox visits the Northampton & Lamport Railway and meets a team of staff and volunteers full of enthusiasm to expand their operation, which lies on the former LNWR Northampton to Market Harborough line.



Steam-hauled passenger trains are to be worked by Hawthorn Lesley 0-4-0ST *Swanscombe No. 4* during the 2020 season. Having arrived at the NLR in October 2019 for the railway's autumn gala, the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre-based locomotive is expected to stay for the foreseeable future. NLR



Class 31 No. 31289 *Phoenix* waits in the loop as No.15 *Eustace Forth* departs Boughton with a freight train during the line's winter gala on February 9. WILL FARNDON

The Northampton & Lamport Railway (NLR) sits in beautiful countryside on the site of the former Northampton to Market Harborough line. A little off the beaten track, the railway's current headquarters are approximately five miles north of Northampton.

Perhaps not the most imposing of facades upon arrival, the railway buildings hide behind a nearby pub and accompanying car park. The sole station of Pitsford & Brampton comprises a single platform, around which are housed a jumble of buildings – including a makeshift shed and workshop for engineering work, alongside which several temporary buildings and a former signalbox act as offices, mess rooms and passenger facilities.

At first glance the site has a rather ramshackle feel, although the smart signalbox at the heart of the station is imposing. However, this exterior belies an organisation that – after years of slow progress – is starting to move forward with a smouldering determination that is worth taking notice of.

Route origins

The Northampton to Market Harborough line was conceived to transport the large amounts of ironstone discovered in Northamptonshire in 1851. A George R Stephenson railway, it was opened by the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1859 between the existing station at Market Harborough and a new station at

Northampton, enabling passenger services as well as freight.

Originally built in 1859, today's mainline station of Northampton was the second station to be built in the town, (Northampton Bridge on the Peterborough line had the honour of being the first) and was known as Northampton Castle. At the opposite end, the line joined the existing station of Market Harborough. Built in 1850 by the LNWR to serve the Rugby to Stamford branch, the station was also shared by the Midland Railway.

The line initially had just three intermediate stations – Pitsford, Brixworth and Lamport. Three more were added, bringing the total number of stations to eight: Northampton Castle, Pitsford & Brampton, Spratton,



Locomotive fleet

Operational

No. 3718 *Swanscombe No.4*, 0-4-0ST Hawthorn Lesley *
No. 47205, Class 47 diesel
No. 31289 (D5821) *Phoenix*, Class 31 diesel

Stored or under overhaul/ restoration

No. 3862, GWR 2884 Class 2-8-0
No. 5967 *Bickmarsh Hall*, GWR Hall Class 4-6-0
No. 776 *Firefly*, Andrew Barclay & Sons 0-4-0ST
No. 2323 *Irchester Quarries No. 9*, Barclay 0-4-0ST
No. 1378 *Westminster*, Peckett 0-6-0ST
No. 2104, Peckett 0-4-0ST
No. 21 Fowler 0-4-0DH
No. 53 *Sir Alfred Wood*, Ruston & Hornsby 165DS 0-6-0
No. 146 *Bunty*, Fowler/Thomas Hill 0-4-0DH **
No. 764 *Sir Gyles Isham*, Ruston & Hornsby 165DS 0-4-0
* On loan from Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
** Locomotive sold. Due to relocate imminently

Class 47 No. 47205 awaits departure from Pitsford and Brampton on February 9. Purchased from C. F. Booth, the Brush Type 4 arrived at the Northampton & Lamport Railway from Southampton Maritime on December 7, 2004, after being withdrawn from mainline service. WILL FARNDON

Brixworth, Lamport, Kelmarsh, Clipston and Market Harborough.

Following the usual pattern, closures began with the rural stations of Spratton and Pitsford & Brampton in 1947 and 1950 respectively, with the remaining passenger traffic withdrawn in 1960.

Two decades later, with complete closure scheduled for August 16, 1981, a special train was chartered by the newly formed Welland Valley Railway Revival Group. The train ran on the penultimate working day, carrying passengers from Northampton to Market Harborough and back. Crowds flocked to the old station buildings, bridges and crossings to bid the line farewell; a last hurrah to end 123 years of service. The metals were lifted in sections over the next five years until little remained but the trackbed.

Preservation

Members of the charter organising group were not prepared to say farewell to the line and sought to obtain a light railway order, with a view to one day running heritage trains, establishing the Northampton Steam Railway as a company in the process. The accompanying society moved through several names before settling on the Northampton & Lamport Railway and the two organisations now operate side by side.

Meanwhile, the line was purchased from British Rail by Northamptonshire County Council in 1987 and turned into a linear park and cycleway, called the Brampton Valley Way. The NLR had already made its home at the former goods yard at Pitsford & Brampton, and so was able to lease a short section of the



Efforts are currently focused on completing the platform at Boughton, ready for the opening to public trains of the line's extension. The partially completed platform is seen on February 9. NICOLA FOX

line, officially reopening to the public in March 1996. Twenty-four years later, the NLR consists of 1½ miles of track and a sole, one platform station, Pitsford & Brampton, unusually located in the middle of the line. The railway is currently fundraising £50,000 to rebuild the station building.

The present

Today the railway is a cheerful place, run almost entirely by volunteers, who are all clearly passionate about the place and eager to share their stories. Although volunteer numbers are low, those that the railway has are dedicated, with many starting in their teens. Unusually for such a small organisation, there seems to be a healthy quota of young volunteers across the board. The footplate department in particular has a high proportion of young volunteers, with most in their twenties or thirties. Indeed, the chairman of the Northampton Steam Railway Ltd, Adam

Giles, is a man in his thirties. A longstanding volunteer, he has a forthright and breezy attitude, far from the stereotype that has dogged railway preservation.

The facilities at Pitsford and Brampton might be a hodgepodge of fixed and temporary buildings, but the station nonetheless has a good sized and impressively well-stocked shop, with everything from books to toys, art work and memorabilia. The Pitsford site also houses the engineering department, a newly built locomotive shed (at the time of writing just awaiting the installation of shed doors), a yard and several sidings all controlled from the aforementioned smartly turned out signalbox. Pitsford & Brampton is one of three functioning boxes on the line, with yet another being restored for future use.

For such a small line, the required number of signalboxes is a rarity (one box per half a mile) and something which sets the NLR apart from railways of a similar size.



RSH 0-4-0ST No. 15 *Eustace Forth* is seen at Pitsford & Brampton station, complete with the attractive signalbox. After operating at the line for most of 2019, the locomotive moved to Peak Rail on February 13 and as reported last issue, it is due to operate at the Helston Railway during the main season. WILL FARNDON



Swanscombe No. 4 is seen at the line's northern head of steel. Following the completion of the southern extension to Boughton, the next phase of expansion is to take the railway north by approximately quarter of a mile over Bridge 14 to Merry Tom Crossing and eventually further north to Spratton. ADAM GILES

“We are very proud of it – our S&T (signal & telecommunications) team put an awful lot of hard work into it,” enthused Adam Giles. “Considering we started with absolutely nothing, to have re-created a full signalling system is quite something.”

The engineering department

The NLR website boasts a full roster of locomotives, listing 14 engines and one steam powered crane. Sadly, few of these are operational but many of them have chosen to make the NLR their home to benefit from the society's busy engineering department.

Mick Hooper is the railway's chief mechanical engineer and the only the paid member of staff. Mick works full-time, generating income through restoration contracts and engineering parts for other railways. When shown around his (albeit rather cluttered) domain, Mick proudly points to the new vertical boring mill and lathe that the society has just purchased, machinery that will help to tackle even bigger jobs.

Currently on Mick's 'to do' list is a ground up restoration of Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST *Firefly* and the complete restoration of badly deteriorated BR Mk.1 carriage, which Mick describes as “in worst case scenario condition.” The team have their work cut out as Mick Cooper's restoration brief is to return it to service in as original condition as possible.

The extension

The current southerly limit for passenger trains is Pitsford Sidings – the location of the second signalbox. The line curves invitingly away around the corner, though passenger trains may not continue in that direction – yet!

For the past seven years, the NLR has been working on a half-mile extension from Pitsford Sidings to Boughton Crossing. Roughly halfway been the historic stations of Pitsford & Brampton and Northampton, this new station will finally provide a destination for the line and has the added advantage of being within walking distance of a very pleasant pub! With another hostelry already next door to Pitsford station, could future rail ale events be in the offing?

Progress

The track has already been laid, with the accompanying signalling finished and test trains have been down the extension, including

freight trains during the February winter gala.

Some work remains, including the refurbishment of the 140-year-old Bridge 11; a seven-arch low brick viaduct which has been the victim of water ingress, and the completion of the station platform. Already partially-built, the platform will be completed as soon as volunteer numbers permit, according to Adam.

To increase the number of hands on deck, the railway is working with the local college, in a community partnership. “We've got Northampton College involved, with some people doing their bricklaying course. On the Saturday of our winter gala, we had six bricklayers down from the college,” explained Adam.

“However, still, more willing hands are needed to complete construction. The materials are all there, it's all down to volunteers now; our biggest problem is the shortage of people.”

Volunteer numbers

A small organisation with limited people power, Adam freely admits that the project has not been without its challenges. “There's so few of us,” he said, referencing not just the extension but the increased volunteer requirement to run the beefed up timetable the extension will make possible.

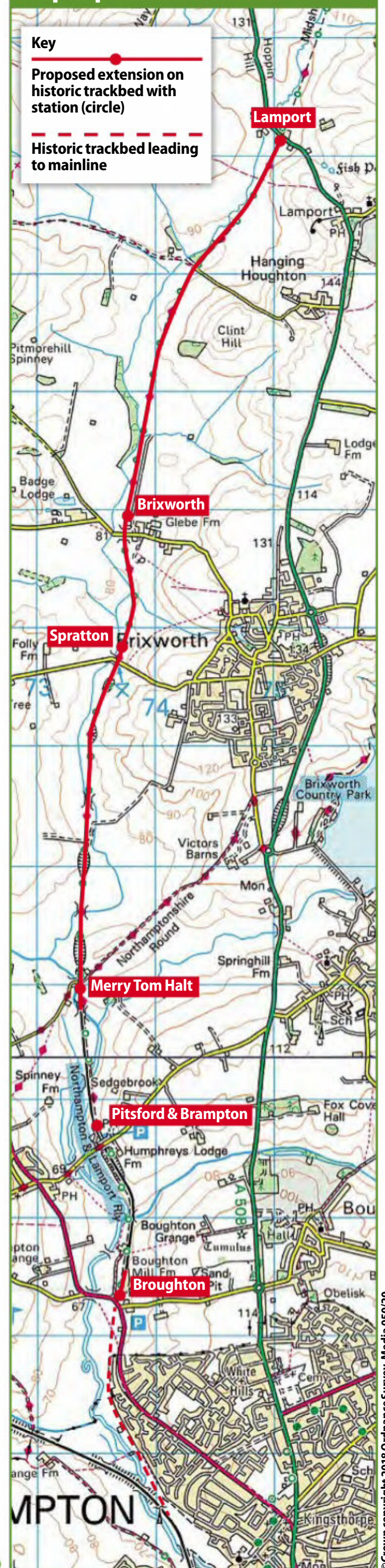
“We've got some volunteer drives going, but it's scary how much of a recruitment push we need.”

The railway is currently using targeted appeals, which Adam hopes will bring more volunteers on board, particularly in the under populated permanent way department. Time is a factor here, as the extension is being financed by grant money from Daventry Council, The Leader programme and a European Development Grant, with a deadline for completion by May this year. When asked if these volunteer shortages pose any risk that the extension won't be completed, Adam is cheerfully, if not slightly fatalistically upbeat: “It's got to be done. We can't afford not to.”

Why stop there?

In addition to this southern extension, the railway also has a Light Railway Order to allow it to extend initially 250 yards north to Merry Tom Crossing, which would enable it to put a run round loop and halt in. Plans are also afoot to re-create Pitsford & Brampton's station building. Money is currently being

Map of present and future route



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raised through an appeal and the new building is expected to be in the LNWR style, but to cater to modern passenger needs and requirements. The intention is to complete this before embarking upon any further significant extensions.

According to Adam, the railway is clear on its priorities: “You can have a 10-mile long railway, but if your facilities aren’t good, you won’t get the visitors.”

Once the station building is complete, the railway has no intention of resting on its laurels and hopes to press onwards a further 1.7 miles to Spratton. Unsurprisingly, this will provide a home for the signalbox currently being restored. The ultimate goal is to continue through Brixworth to Lamport, creating a line of over six miles in length.

With the support of its local authority and no major developments on its proposed route, the future for the NLR seems full of possibility. However, the recent conversation around the viability of reinstating many of the lines cut by Beeching may throw a spanner in the works.

A cloud on the horizon

In autumn last year, the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan mooted the possibility of reinstating a main line service between Market Harborough and Northampton, to link the Midland Main Line with the West Coast Main Line. Steve Jones, chairman of the Harborough Rail Users Group, welcomed the idea, saying “it would plug a major gap in the rail network if it went ahead.”

This notion was given further credibility after the Government confirmed on January 20 that it was setting aside £500 million ‘aimed at kick-starting reversal of the Beeching cuts.’

£500 million will not buy you a lot of railway line – indeed more than half of this budget alone would be needed to reopen the stretch in question – and none of the money in question has been allocated to pursuing this proposal, so the threat to the NLR is not immediate. However, local press has been quick to pounce on the issue and Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has stated his support for the idea, so the NLR has rightly followed the consultation on this project with great interest and a certain level of nerves.

The timing of this proposal is particularly frustrating, as after a slow beginning, the NLR is finally finding its feet and beginning to expand. Given the recent growth, to cut the railway down now would be especially cruel,



Pictured during the wet and windy weather from Storm Ciara on February 9, No. 15 Eustace Forth is seen at Pitsford and Brampton through the window of the station’s well-stocked shop. NICOLA FOX

jeopardising so much that volunteers have worked for.

At present however, the scheme is by no means guaranteed. According to a statement made at the end of last year by Chris Heaton-Harris, MP for Daventry, there are “no concrete proposals” – and the housing and retail development in Market Harborough “may well be a barrier to any reopening of the line in terms of connection to the Midland Main Line at Market Harborough.”

Returning the north-south corridor would require new construction circling the outskirts of the town, joining the Midland Main Line outside of Market Harborough, rather than straight into the station. Other impediments include crossing the main roads and the impact on the cycleway. Add to that, the loss of a tourist attraction and the prohibitive costs involved in compensating the NLR, should its eviction be necessary, the idea of reinstating this line – whilst possible – begins to look less likely.

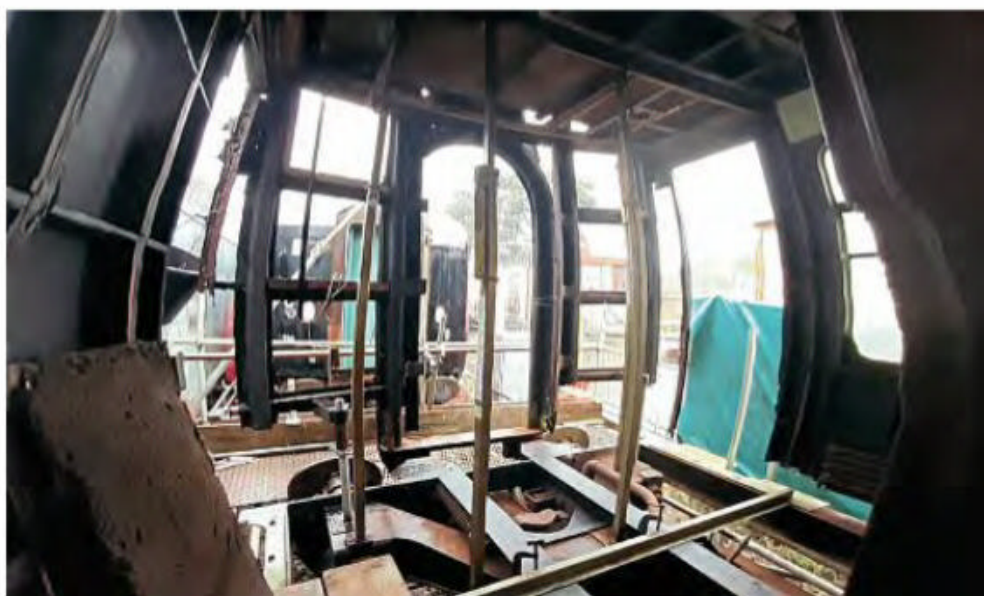
Despite this, the NLR is taking no chances with its future and has submitted a detailed consultation response. Contrary to what might be expected, Adam is not wholly against the idea, proposing a Swanage-style community railway scheme as “a better all-round option.” In this scenario, the NLR would share the

trackbed with the national network as part of a Community Rail Partnership, allowing it to serve smaller stations that may otherwise go without.

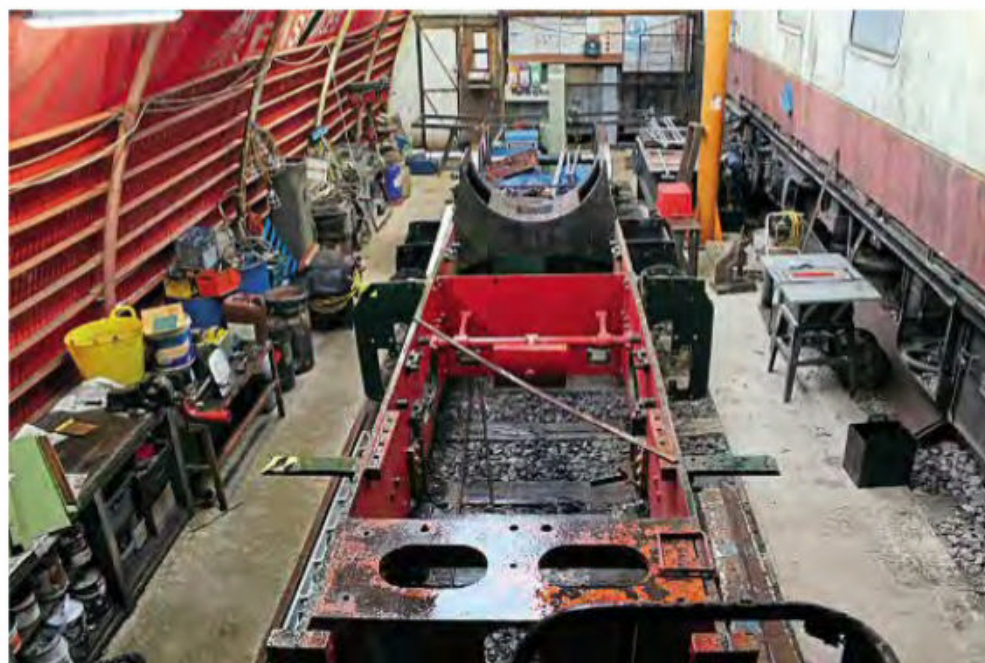
Adam said: “We would love to be able to deliver a community rail solution, to enable us to benefit more of the local area, as the current proposal includes no stations for places such as Chapel Brampton, Brixworth etc. We could serve the local area and potentially reduce congestion on the roads, having a park and ride scheme.”

As these proposals are so fresh, we cannot expect answers any time soon, and the consultation process will be ongoing, likely taking many years before the area can expect to see the realisation of any of these plans. During this time the NLR plans to keep pushing forward, refusing to allow stagnation to set in through uncertainty. After such a long period of stillness, the railway seems to be fired by renewed purpose and with the dynamism of youth at the helm, hopefully its days of stillness are behind it.

With so many irons in the fire, the railway is certain to need more volunteers to achieve its goals, so if you would like to get involved, please visit the NLR website: www.nlr.org.uk or email commercial@nlr.org.uk **HR**

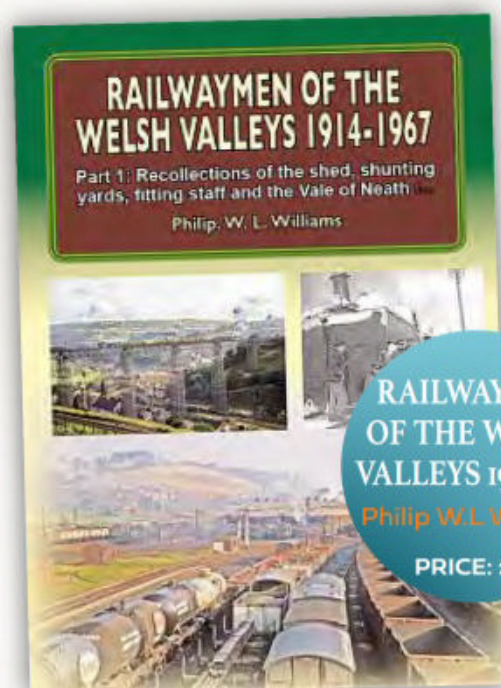


Captured using a fish eye lens, the team of volunteers led by Mick Cooper have their work cut out on the restoration of the railway’s BR Mk. 1 TSO coach M3919. This view is looking towards an end gangway from inside the saloon. The team’s restoration brief is to return it to service in as original condition as possible. NICOLA FOX



Barclay 0-4-0ST Firefly is under restoration at Pitsford and Brampton. Work has been carried out on the 1896-built locomotive’s frames (pictured) and boiler. WILL FARDON

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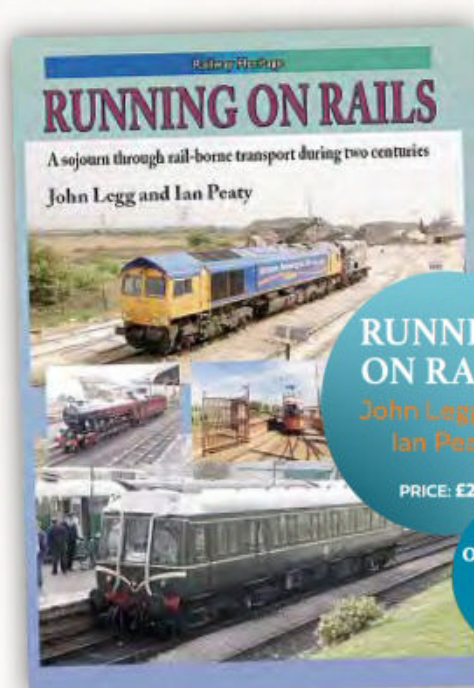
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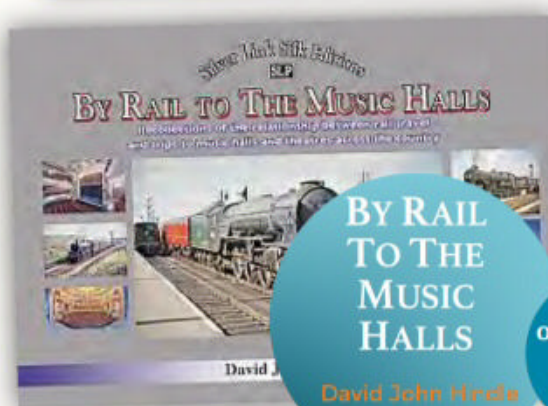
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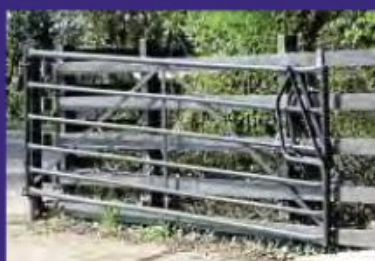
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Manor models to return thanks to Dapol in OO

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (GWR) and the Dinmore Manor Locomotive Fund are among the beneficiaries of Dapol's new 4mm scale model of 'Manor' class 4-6-0. The news came as the manufacturer revealed it plans to produce a newly tooled model of the GWR 78xx class in OO gauge – which is expected to be released in 2021.

While the class has previously featured in the ranges of Mainline and Bachmann in 4mm scale, it has been absent for many years – and news of Dapol's development is sure to be well-received among modellers and collectors alike.

Dapol's Manor class models will feature a highly detailed model with separately fitted parts; tool-free 18-pin digital decoder installation; space for a smokebox-mounted sugar cube speaker and a tender-mounted high bass speaker; diecast compensated chassis; detailed cab interior; sprung pony truck; and synchronised firebox glow.

Seven variations are to be made, covering a selection of British Railways and GWR colour schemes. At the time of writing, these were set to include: No. 7800 *Torquay Manor* in GWR green with shirtbutton emblem; No. 7814 *Fringford Manor* in GWR green with GWR lettering; No. 7807 *Crompton Manor* in GWR green with

postwar GWR lettering; No. 7810 *Draycott Manor* in BR lined green with early emblem; and No. 7823 *Hook Norton Manor* in BR lined black with early emblem.

Two other preserved members of the class to be released in model form are No. 7819 *Hinton Manor* in BR black with early emblem and No. 7827 *Lydham Manor* in BR lined green with late crest.

Dinmore model

Dinmore Manor was the first BR-built 4-6-0 78xx Manor class locomotive when it left Swindon Works in November 1950. This year, the now preserved locomotive will celebrate its 70 birthday.

To mark this achievement, Dapol has teamed up with the GWR to produce the locomotive in its original BR early crest mixed traffic lined black livery.

The models are to be available exclusively through the Dapol website or direct from the GWR. Like the other Dapol Manor class models, DCC fitted and DCC sound fitted options are available.

Trade profits from each *Dinmore Manor* model sold through the Dapol website will be donated to the GWR, along with an additional £5 donation to the Dinmore Manor Locomotive Fund. Expressions of interest for pre-

Despite appearances to the contrary, this is not a model. This side-on view shows off the fine lines of WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* as it clatters along the level line crossing the golden fields of Cotswold Gold oilseed rape on June 4, 2019. What a delightful model this locomotive will make! IAN CROWDER

orders from the GWR shop can be emailed to: shop@gwsr.com. Details on the Dapol website can be found at www.dapol.co.uk/shop/preorder/00-Gauge-Preorder/78xx-4-6-0-Manor-Sound-Fitted

Welcoming the announcement, Ian Crowder, spokesman for the GWR told *Heritage Railway*: "I think the concept of there being a *Dinmore Manor* model is exciting and I think it will go well. The locomotive is extremely popular on our line, whether you're an enthusiast or a member of the happy travelling public. In fact, I have ordered one myself."

Manor survivors

Thirty Manors were built between 1938 and 1950 and were withdrawn from service between 1963 and 1965.

Designed as a lighter version of the GWR Grange class, giving them a wider route availability, 20 were built between 1938 and 1939. British Railways Western Region added a further 10 in 1950. Members of the class were named after Manors in the area covered by the GWR.

Fortunately, nine members of the class survive in preservation:

■ **No. 7802 *Bradley Manor*** – based at the Severn Valley Railway. Currently under repair at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

■ **No. 7808 *Cookham Manor*** – displayed at Didcot Railway Centre. It was the final member of the class to be withdrawn from service by BR.

■ **No. 7812 *Earlstone Manor*** – based at the Severn Valley Railway. Currently under overhaul at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

■ **No. 7819 *Hinton Manor*** – on display at The Engine House, Severn Valley Railway.

■ **No. 7821 *Ditchat Manor*** – on display at Swindon designer outlet.

■ **No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor*** – although based at the Llangollen Railway, it has operated at a number of heritage lines. It departed Llangollen on March 26 to spend the season working on the West Somerset Railway.

■ **No. 7827 *Lydham Manor*** – operational at the Dartmouth Steam Railway.

■ **No. 7828 *Odney Manor*** – operational at the West Somerset Railway.

Locomotion Models' Class 33/1 on the way

AS EXPECTED given the current coronavirus situation, Locomotion Models has warned that the arrival of its new models from China will be delayed.

In a statement, it said: "We can only apologise but due to the coronavirus outbreak in China, production in the factories was delayed across the entire model railway sector and not surprisingly delivery dates have been extended. While the situation is not yet back to normal, we expect delivery of some items to recommence soon. The *Terrier Boxhill* is now having new bodysells made and will hopefully be with us in a few weeks."

Also expected soon is the first of Locomotion Model's exclusive edition Class 33/1, D6535 *Hertfordshire Rail Tours*. The BR blue liveried locomotive will feature high density headlights with etched nameplates and Spitfire depot plaque provided in the box for customers to fit if required. The full-size 'Crompton' is currently based at the Great Central Railway.

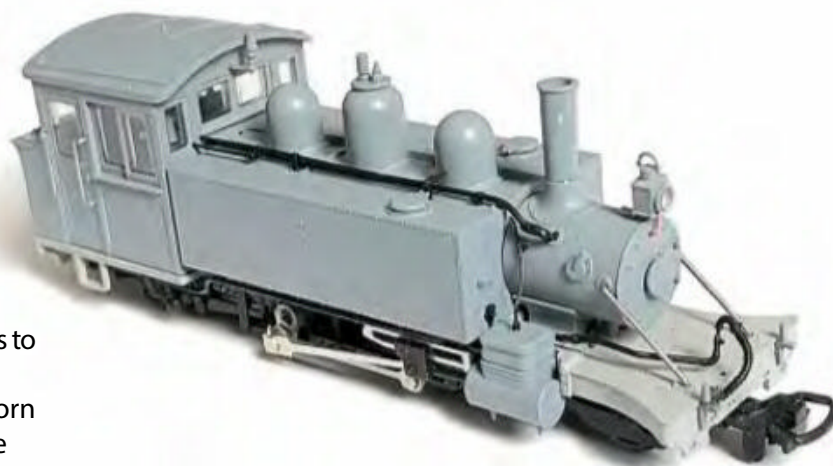
Heljan's *Lyn* progresses

HELJAN says its OO9 model of Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* is progressing well, with the latest running sample received in mid-March for approval. International events permitting, Heljan hopes to release these superb models in late-2020.

"Thanks to our expert friends at the reborn Lynton & Barnstaple Railway (L&BR), we've also developed highly detailed artwork for all six versions and decorated samples are now in preparation," the manufacturer said in a statement.

Heljan has confirmed that standard features of the new 4mm scale model will include a working LED headlamp; six-pin DCC decoder interface; detachable couplers; and etched metal cowcatchers. Numerous parts specific to period and livery will also feature, including coal rails, chimneys, smokebox doors, water tank filler hatches, whistles and safety valves.

Variants confirmed include: Undecorated black; L&BR dark green *Lyn* (pre-1906); L&BR dark green



The latest running sample of Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* was received in mid-March for approval. Heljan stressed the pre-production model shown here does not represent any specific version and is fitted with detail parts from different periods. HELJAN

Lyn (1906-22); SR dark green E782 *Lyn* (1923-29); SR Maunsell green E782 *Lyn* (1929-32); and SR Maunsell green E782 *Lyn* (1932-35).

The new Baldwin models will complement Heljan's L&BR Manning Wardle 2-6-2T locomotives, also in OO9.

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To paint or not to paint – Mike's model dilemma

By Hugh Dougherty

GRAMPIAN Transport Museum curator Mike Ward has been presented with a model dilemma. A 5in gauge, live steam, model of LNER, Thompson B1 class 4-6-0 No. 61278 has been gifted to the museum in ex-works condition, and Mike would like to know if the museum should paint the locomotive and tender, or leave it as it is.

"We were gifted the locomotive by the family of the late Peter Delaney, a civil servant turned model engineer, who built this scale replica of his favourite B1, as a labour of love. The steel and brass model, built from a copy of the original arrangement drawings, is perfect in every detail, even down to lifting sandbox covers," explained Mike.

"The real locomotive was built by the North British Locomotive Company in 1948. It ran on the Waverley route and it was also shedded at Dundee Tay Bridge, before being withdrawn in 1967.

We're not sure if we should paint the engine or leave its superb level of detail as it is."

Mike says that he's facing a model version of a full-size dilemma faced by transport museums, as to whether or not exhibits should be restored to pristine, original condition, or presented as they were in service.

"It's a debate that heritage railways have about full-scale locomotives, and our own museum volunteers are divided on whether to paint or not to paint. I know that one of the full-sized, preserved B1s, No. 61264, is painted in BR black, and the other, No. 61306 *Mayflower*, sports LNER apple green. Therefore, if we do decide to paint the model, which livery should we choose?"

Public display

The locomotive will not be painted in the meantime, and will shortly go on display in a specially made case which includes electrically powered rollers, to allow the wheels to rotate and working



The model is to be displayed in a specially made case, which includes electrically powered rollers, to allow the wheels to rotate and working valve gear to be viewed by visitors. GTM



The highly detailed cab. GTM



Does the lack of colourful paint bring out the detail – rather like sepia or black & white photographs vs. colour shots? GTM

valve gear to be viewed by visitors. The builder's family also bequeathed extensive notes on the real locomotive and pictures of No. 61278 in service to the museum, so there's plenty of information to support the display.

"However, we would love to hear from *Heritage Railway* readers to give their opinion on whether to paint or to leave the locomotive as it is," added Mike. "Just drop me an

email at curator@gtm.org.uk giving your views, we'll take all suggestions into consideration before we take any action. I'd just like to point out that our full-sized, ex-Aberdeen Corporation Gas Works, Andrew Barclay, 0-4-0ST of 1925, is preserved in its original livery, but that isn't a clue as to what will be finally decided about this superb model of No. 61278!"

Prince and Upnor Castle models for your garden

GARDEN railway supplier Locoworks is offering 16mm scale models of two Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways locomotives.

The first batch of *Prince* models is currently under construction, with delivery expected in the summer.

"Our ready-to-run 32mm live steam locomotive is equipped with a bespoke copper boiler – including a central flue gas burner with a 25-minute duration," explained Tom Beattie, proprietor.

"It also includes a proper water gauge and top-up valve. The

bodywork is etched and features hand-built brass parts, including whistle and smokebox door handles.

"The tender includes rivet details and also a compartment to house the radio-control gear. It can be ordered with manual control too."

The England 0-4-0STT comes painted in a choice of liveries, with name and works plates fitted.

Also set for delivery this summer is the first batch of Planet 4wDM *Upnor Castle* models. Featuring a steel chassis, a powerful motor and drivetrain, Tom said the locomotive's



A CAD image of Locoworks' new model of *Upnor Castle*, which is to be available with 32mm/45mm adjustable gauge.

haulage capability is impressive.

The detailed brass bodywork includes directional lights as part of the radio-control. An optional sound system is available too and it is offered ready painted in the



Locoworks is to build only 15 models of *Prince* per annum. Prices start at £2350. BOTH: LOCOWORKS

schemes carried by the prototype. Tom said the recently opened pre-order book had already attracted "healthy interest".

Visit www.locoworks.co.uk or telephone 0191 469 3796.

Enhance your industrial models with new transfers

PLANET Industrials has recently released a range of waterslide transfers, which will doubtless be of interest to those who model industrial prototypes – including rolling stock based at heritage lines such as Tanfield, Chasewater and Foxfield.

An initial range of four transfer packs has been produced, with white and black numbering and industrial lettering in a range of styles and sizes suited to internal user wagons.

In addition, there are National Coal

Board (NCB), British Coal and British Steel markings, as well as two styles of industrial-style wasp striping. The range allows for rolling stock, road vehicles, signage and even clothing to be tailored to a more industrial setting.

The waterslide transfers are custom drawn for use in 1:76 scale, but they may find use in other scales.

The initial range comprises: PIC-001 Industrial Transfers White £7; PIC-002 Industrial Transfers Black £6; PIC-003

Industrial Transfers British Steel £6; and PIC-004 Industrial Transfers Wasp Striping £6. All prices include UK delivery – international added at cost.

A range of further styles is in development, including specific wagon packs for industrial wagons.

The items are available exclusively through the Narrow Planet marketplace at www.narrowplanet.co.uk or by post at Narrow Planet, PO Box 297, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 9HF.



Models of internal user wagons can be enhanced with the addition of the new transfers.



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Midland Railway buildings of the Settle and Carlisle

Pete Kelly and a railway modelling friend, Ann Garth, put together two exquisite OO-scale card kits by Metcalfe Models, representing the wonderful Midland Railway architecture of the Settle and Carlisle line.

IN choosing which subjects to recreate on their layouts, many (but by no means all) model railway enthusiasts plump for a certain definitive period or setting reflecting the main line network of a particular time.

For instance, I'm slowly building up the rolling stock for a new OO-scale layout based upon the London,

Midland & Scottish Railway during the latter half of the 1930s – and just in case you're wondering, being completely non-partisan I could just as easily have chosen the London & North Eastern, Great Western or Southern Railways with equal relish!

However, today's wonderful heritage railway system also offers

modelling opportunities galore – including the ability to mix and match with complete authenticity model locomotives from many different historical origins to represent a railway's home-based fleet, along with the diverse motive power that might be visiting on gala days.



Starting point: Metcalfe OO-scale card construction kit P0333, based on station building designs along the Settle and Carlisle line, is manufactured with great precision and took the writer about six hours to build.



What you get for your money – the kit contents, including the all-important instruction book, are laid out on a small kitchen table.

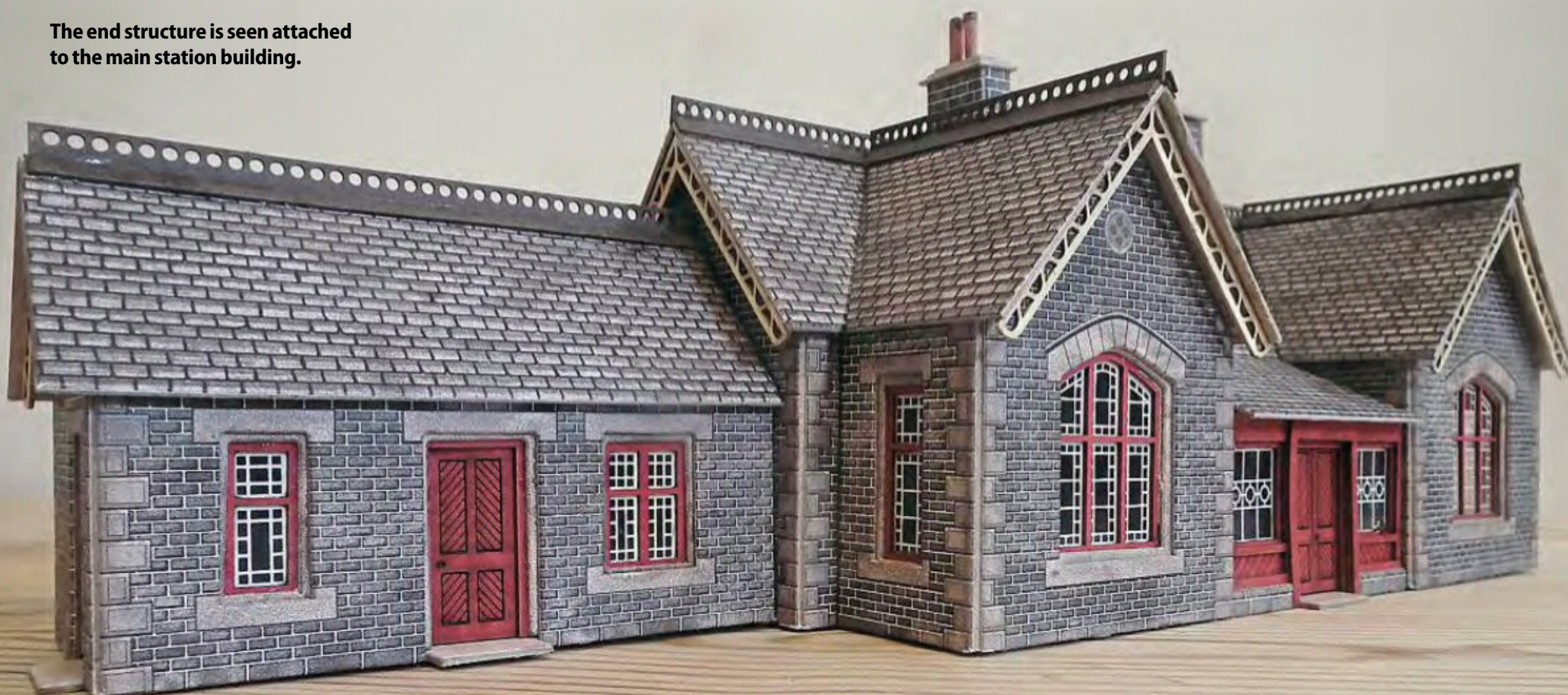


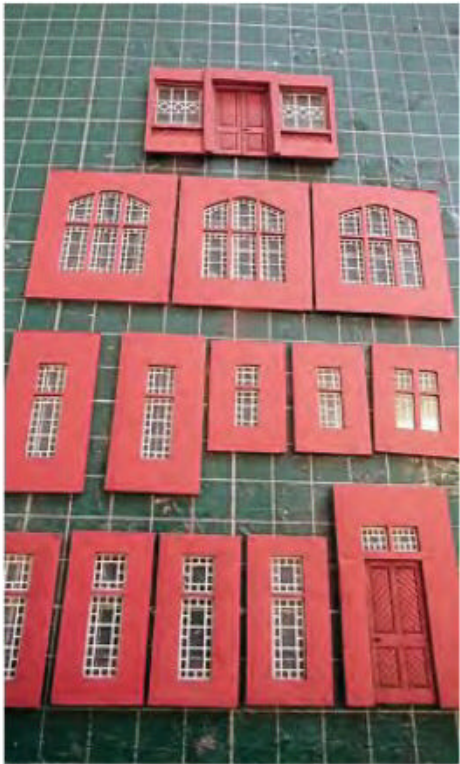
The red window and door frames have to be cut out carefully, preferably with a slightly used scalpel blade, and put aside with the glazing for building up.

Right: Standard power: BR 9F No. 92102 storms through the remote Garsdale station with an Up fitted freight in around the late 1950s. Relaxing on the platform seat on the right, watching the powerful 1956-built 2-10-0 as it thunders past, are the driver and young fireman of a local train, which is behind them. Their locomotive, simmering out of sight, is probably an ex-LMS 4MT 2-6-4T of Hellifield shed (24H). CUMBRIAN RAILWAYS ASSOCIATION/ALEC MAYOR



The end structure is seen attached to the main station building.





Try positioning the glazing and doors behind their frames before you glue – and when you do, use just tiny drops of the stuff to keep everything clean. Metcalfe kits are made with precision, and should be built up with equal care, trying especially hard to keep the white borders around the windows as equal as possible.



Each glazing panel and its red frame are then attached to the rear of the outer wall frames as shown – making a solid three layers in all.



After making sure all edges are lined up exactly, grey card sections are glued together to create the front and back walls of the main station building.



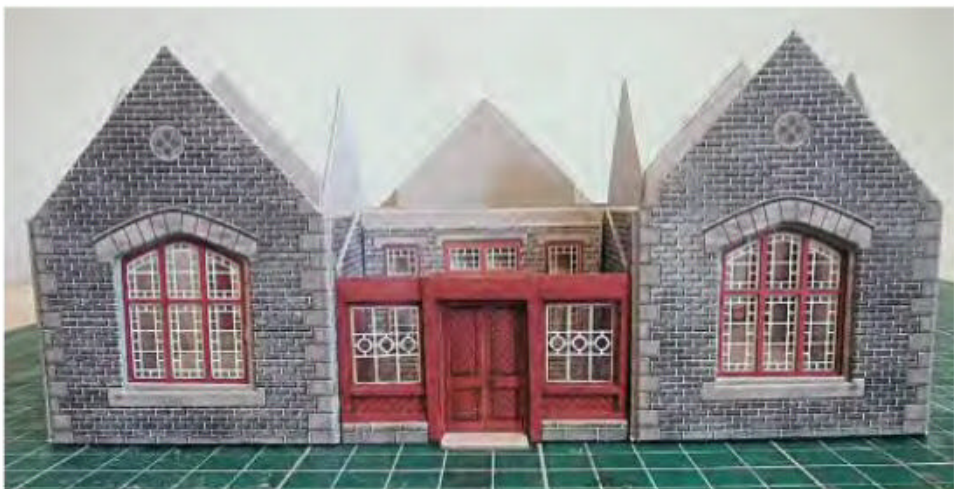
Above: How about this for realism? This is the front entrance to the completed station and its extension building. Note the laser-cut decorative embellishments glued snugly between the split ridge tiles.



With some of the windows and their frames in place behind a folding gable wall, the section is ready to be glued around its appropriate grey inner card.



The main entrance, inner walls and doors are seen in close-up.



Above: The main station building is seen before its grey card inner roof is fitted.

Right: The multi-gabled OO-scale stationmaster's house exudes charm, with fine barge boarding and rooftop embellishments.

I would also categorise main lines that frequently feature steam or diesel-hauled specials as 'heritage railways', and in that regard the Settle and Carlisle line, thankfully reprieved in 1989 after being earmarked for closure, also makes an ideal modelling choice.

To make this option even more attractive, Metcalfe Models of Bell Busk, near Skipton, Yorkshire, whose premises nestle beneath an

embankment along the line, produce a beautifully-made series of buildings in N scale, as well as OO which reflect authentically the attractive Midland Railway (MR) lineside architecture, particularly the stations, which still grace the route.

Built in the early 1870s to a standard single-storey concept under the MR's chief engineer John Crossley, the stations were developed into three specific Settle and Carlisle

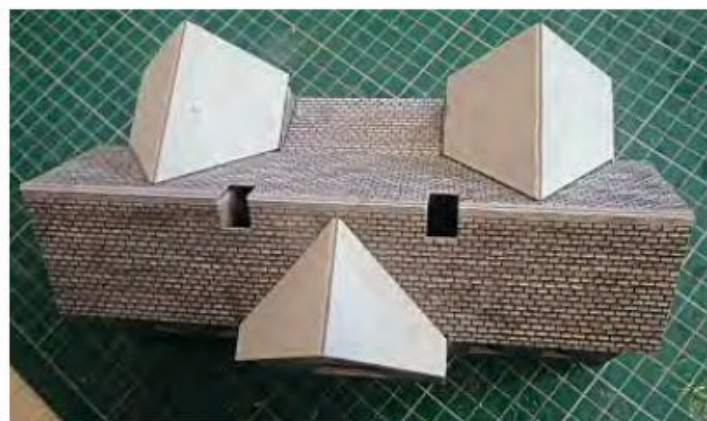




This cute 'coal door' forms part of the extension.



Structures such as this grey inner roof add massively to the strength of the building.



With the main outer roof now in place, three grey card gable inners are attached. The holes are for the chimneys.



Details like this small porch window add to the appeal of the stationmaster's house.



The laser-cut barge boards are a delicate work of art, and when fitted add lots of period charm to the building.

designs (large, medium and small) by company architect J H Sanders.

The high standard of the exquisitely-detailed Metcalfe card kits, which comprise a station building, station shelter, stationmaster's house and goods shed, bolstered by a set of workers' cottages and a S&C-style double-track engine shed (although none so large were built for the route) can be seen in the accompanying photos of the buildings put together by myself (station) and Ann Garth, a friend and talented modeller.

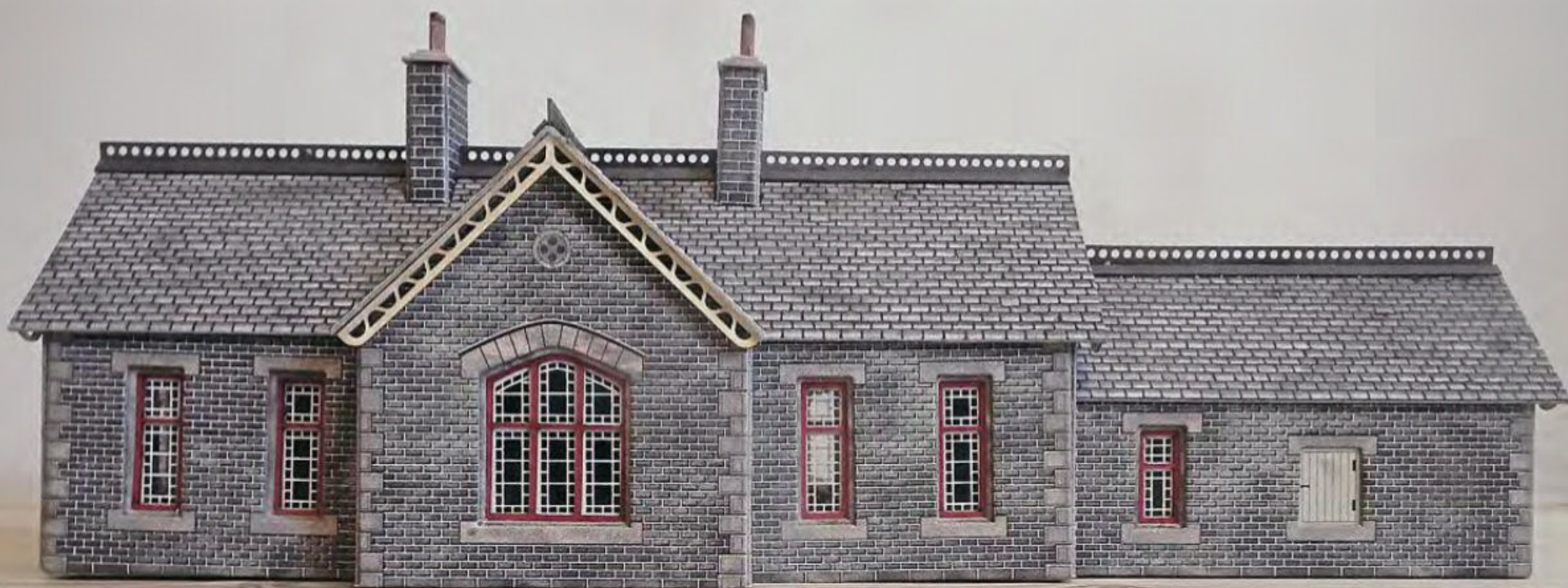
Following the very attractive lines of the station, the multi-gabled OO-scale stationmaster's house, which is also available in N, features many fine embellishments and, as well as adding to the atmosphere of the S&C, would also make a fine vicarage on any layout!

If you fancy building them yourselves but might be new to card kits, my advice is to follow the instruction book to the letter and, most importantly, take your time. Happy modelling! **HR**



A bird's eye view of the fine roof-top detail.

The station building and its extension are seen from the other side.



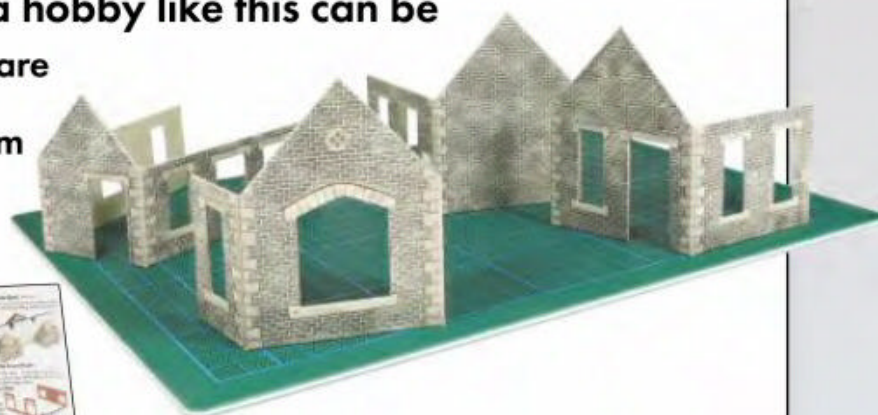
Modelling the Settle & Carlisle Railway in card

You wouldn't believe just how interesting and satisfying a hobby like this can be

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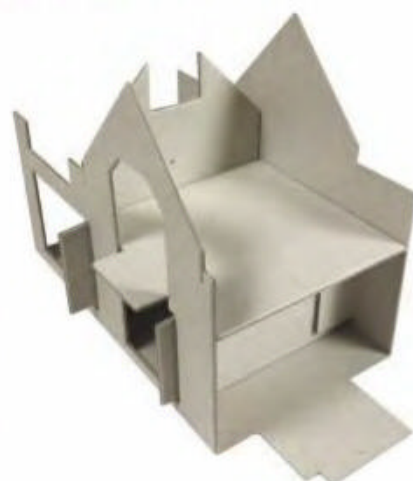
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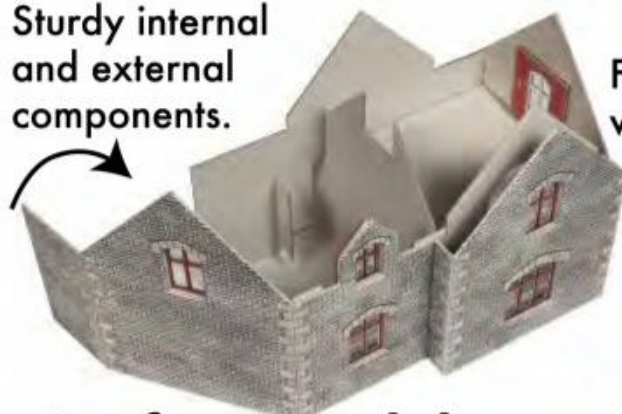
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AWARD WINNER

MAGNIFICENT *MYFANWY*

Alistair Grieve and Gareth Evans talk to Phil Civil, who won the Young Volunteer of the Year award at the Heritage Railway Association's 2020 awards for his efforts in restoring Bagnall 0-4-0 diesel *Myfanwy* to its original condition at the Chasewater Railway.

At the recent Heritage Railway Association (HRA) Awards Phil Civil, 24, of the Foxfield and Chasewater Railways, won the Young Volunteer of the Year award for the restoration of a locomotive. It wasn't a famous locomotive; in fact most people will probably not have heard of it. It is just a simple little 0-4-0 diesel shunter – although the restoration was anything but simple. The end product is a sight to behold, and more people will now know of *Myfanwy*, the award-winning diesel.

Myfanwy started life in 1962 as Bagnall works number 3211, but while a kit of parts it was moved from the Castle Works in Stafford to Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns (RSH) in Darlington for completion. Bagnall had just been taken over by English Electric, which then merged with RSH, closing the Castle Works in the process. Completed as RSH No. 8366, it went to work at ROF (Royal Ordnance Factory) Pembrey with two others, before a stint at ROF Glascoed, ending up with industrial locomotive dealer Alan Keef.

Purchased from Alan Keef by Tarmac Construction, it was heavily modified by an unknown contractor for work on the London Underground Jubilee Line extension. These included a lowered cab with modified internal arrangements to suit, narrowed steps and buffer beams, plus various safety features. It also acquired the *Myfanwy* name at this time. When work was completed for London Underground, it moved to the Rugby yard of

Carillion. However, it was deemed to be too small and light for shunting duties, so was parked up.

Luckily for *Myfanwy*, Mark Civil (Phil's father) also worked at Rugby depot. Instead of it being scrapped, the locomotive was bought by Mark, moved to the Foxfield Railway in 2003 and into preservation. The locomotive

"If you focus, you can achieve great things. This project was doubted by many people, but we did it! My drive to succeed was the memory of my father. Dad taught me everything. He's made me who I am."

saw use as a general shunting engine, plus making the odd gala appearance – but the restricted vision from the cut-down cab always made it a little challenging to use. Mark and Phil began to look at restoring the locomotive back to its original form, which included making plans and patterns for the new cab from scratch as none existed.

"We were planning to return it to full

height," recalled Phil. "No drawings are in existence, so it all had to be carefully calculated and drawn up."

Only three locomotives of this design were built by Bagnall – Nos. 3209/3210 and 3211, all destined for ROF Pembrey to start with. No. 3210 has been cut up, but No. 3209 is still working for a living as the works pilot at Brush, Loughborough. With no plans existing, it was No. 3209 that provided the template for the new cab for No. 3211 *Myfanwy*.

Sadly, before work could commence, Mark suddenly passed away in March 2016, resulting in the project being put on hold. However, discussions with friends at the Chasewater Railway saw the project reignited as they decided it would be a fitting tribute to continue the work Mark and Phil had started.

Therefore, that summer *Myfanwy* was moved to the Chasewater Railway and after appearing at a few events, work began in earnest to restore the locomotive back to its 1962 condition.

Able assisted by the Chasewater team, Phil has taken the locomotive back to bare bones, overhauled the engine and underframe and totally rebuilt the cab. The latter was not just a case of rebuilding the cab frame to raise the roof, but also included a complete rebuild of the driving desk and floor. The desk had been cut down to fit and the floor had been modified with two deep insets so the drivers drove by sitting on what was basically the old floor with their feet in the two wells,



With Phil Civil in the driving seat, *Myfanwy* shunts the MGR hoppers at Chasewater Heaths. Following the completion of repair work to HAD 368103, this is now up to six wagons. ALISTAIR GRIEVE



Myfanwy poses in the sun at Brownhills West for the first time in its new colours on March 7. ALISTAIR GRIEVE



Before the restoration work started, Myfanwy is seen shunting the MGR wagons at Brownhills West in 2016. ALISTAIR GRIEVE



forward vision being very restricted by this arrangement, even though new low-level windows were provided. A trademark of these Bagnall diesels (in original condition) is the very large windows, which provide excellent forward vision and these have now been restored – surely some of the biggest pieces of glass on a diesel shunter.

“It’s had a ground upwards rebuild – including lots of work on the engine and transmission and a full rewire,” explained Phil.

“It’s also been off its wheels – and the motion’s been overhauled. New springs have been fitted and the final drive has been attended to as well. It’s been fitted with vacuum brakes too, so it can now be used on passenger trains.”

The final piece of work has been the livery and it is nothing short of spectacular. It was delivered in 1962 in full all-over wasp stripes and that is what it carries again, one of only two preserved diesels to currently carry this scheme. The other (YEC 0-4-0 No. 2481) is tucked round the back of the Kelham Island Industrial Museum in Sheffield.

Rolled outside in its new colours for the first time on March 7, the scheme is nothing short of breathtaking, the pictures do not do it justice.

The locomotive was due to be formally relaunched at the start of April on Mark’s birthday, but the event was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The restoration is nothing short of magnificent, however. The HRA award is totally deserved for the work that Phil put into

this and *Myfanwy* is going to turn more than a few heads at Chasewater.

Myfanwy will now join the operational pool at the friendly Staffordshire heritage line, operating occasional passenger turns on Saturdays and during special events, as well as shunting.

Phil’s story

“My grandfather was the late Allen Civil, author of the Bagnall books,” enthused Phil.

“He worked at Bagnalls in Stafford. He volunteered at the Foxfield Railway, where he owned several steam locomotives. My dad and uncles got involved too. Dad and uncles David and Andrew owned two steam locomotives – I now own Dad’s share in those.”

The locomotives concerned are Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2842 and RSH 0-4-0ST *Eustace Forth*.

“I own *Myfanwy* myself as I was left it. I also own Thomas Hill 4wDH No. 111C of 1961. In fact, my next project is to rebuild that. I hope to be able to start imminently.

“While I enjoy being on the footplate, I’m happier in a boiler suit rather than a bib and brace. I love the restoration work.

“It’s great that both the Foxfield and Chasewater railways have a healthy mix of age groups – young volunteers are not in short supply. I still volunteer at Foxfield – I live between the two lines.”

Asked why he volunteers, Phil replied: “I like the satisfaction – the rebuilding and tackling something that was tired and breathing new life into it. I’m continuing the family tradition – I’m the third generation.

About the HRA award

The Lord Faulkner Young Volunteer Award is presented to a volunteer under the age of 26, for significant achievement.

Now a permanent feature of the Heritage Railway Association’s awards list, it recognises the crucial importance of succession generations in securing the future of heritage rail, and acknowledges a distinguished contribution made by one or more young volunteers.

Nominations open in October. The 2021 awards and annual dinner is currently set to be held on the evening of Saturday, February 6.



Above: Lord Faulkner presents the award to Phil Civil at the HRA awards ceremony in Birmingham on February 8, 2020. HRA

Left: The point of no return back in 2017 inside Brownhills West shed: Phil Civil stands in the remains of the cab which had been dismantled, and stripped out for rebuilding. Phil doesn’t have very short legs – he’s just standing on the lowered floor. ALISTAIR GRIEVE

“The experiences I have gained as a heritage line volunteer have helped me gain a role on the main line. I work as a mechanical fitter at Crewe.”

Turning to the HRA awards, Phil said: “I didn’t know I had been nominated until Chasewater Railway chairman Mark Sealey told me he’d done it. I got the invitation, so knew I was one of five people shortlisted. They read out the five different stories during the awards ceremony – all impressive people.

“I never thought I would win, so I attended the ceremony with that attitude. It was a good feeling to win though – I’m sure Dad would be proud of three years of hard graft in his memory.

“The awards ceremony was a most enjoyable evening. With us having the locomotives running at different lines, I know a number of people in the heritage railway sector, so it was nice to catch up with them and also to meet others for the first time.”

As for what advice Phil would offer other heritage line young volunteers, he said: “You’ve got to put a lot of time and effort in. If you focus, you can achieve great things. This project was doubted by many people, but we did it! My drive to succeed was the memory of my father. Dad taught me everything. He’s made me who I am.”

Asked about his ambitions for the future, Phil replied: “To continue the maintenance of the fleet – including the steam and diesel locomotives. No. 2842 is due a 10-year overhaul later this year. I’m hoping to finish the Thomas Hill by late summer, and then I can start work on No. 2842.” **HR**

Recalling the atmosphere that made the GWR great

The Atmospheric Western (Transport Treasury Publishing, hardback, 160pp, £27.50, ISBN 978 1 913251 06 2), and **Western Region Non-Passenger Trains** (Transport Treasury Publishing, softback, 112pp, £14.50, ISBN 978 1 913251 08 6).

ONE OF the usual requirements for a journalist penning a book review (or in this case, two), writes Geoff Courtney, is objectivity. But how to be objective with two publications that are overflowing with images of Great Western Railway locomotives at numerous locations throughout the network in the 1950s/early 60s when one was traversing those very tracks as an avid trainspotter? With difficulty, I guess, but hyperbole and rose-coloured spectacles must be cast aside.

The Atmospheric Western comprises 180 photographs by George Heiron with detailed and informative captions by Shrewsbury-born Les Price, who followed his father and two uncles into the railways, enjoying a 25-year career that started at Crewe in 1976.

The journey in Atmospheric Western starts on platform 1 at Weston-super-Mare and ends with a panoramic photograph of Bristol Temple Meads. Between there is the whole gamut of locomotives, stations and the lineside,

all shouting out in black and white with a cacophony of nostalgia, memories, and a photographic explanation of why steam was such a draw for youngsters.

Stick a pin on a map of the GWR and where it lands will probably be featured in the book, and likewise a trawl through the pages of an Ian Allan Western Region ABC will doubtless be rewarded with an image of the class of loco on which your eyes alight.

An evocative roll-call of named expresses also permeates the book's pages, including No. 5019 *Treago Castle* on 'The Cornishman' at Temple Meads, No. 5014 *Goodrich Castle* on 'The Merchant Venturer' at Bath, No. 5080 *Defiant* on 'The Red Dragon' at Badminton, No. 6027 *King Richard I* on a diverted 'Cornish Riviera' near Box station, and No. 7003 *Elmley Castle* on the 'Pembroke Coast Express' at Chipping Sodbury in March 1955 passing No. 1005 *County of Devon* on a stopping train.

George's photographs of 'The

Merchant Venturer' at Bath and the King near Box rang a distant bell, and there is the reason in my book of journeys I logged as a teenage trainspotter.

On August 13, 1960, I travelled from Paddington to Temple Meads on that express behind No. 5042 *Winchester Castle*, recording 75mph through Box with my basic stopwatch and equally basic timing skills. Being a summer Saturday the load was 14 coaches, and the Castle pulled into Bristol 13 minutes late, due in part perhaps to four signal checks en route.

Surprise on the cover

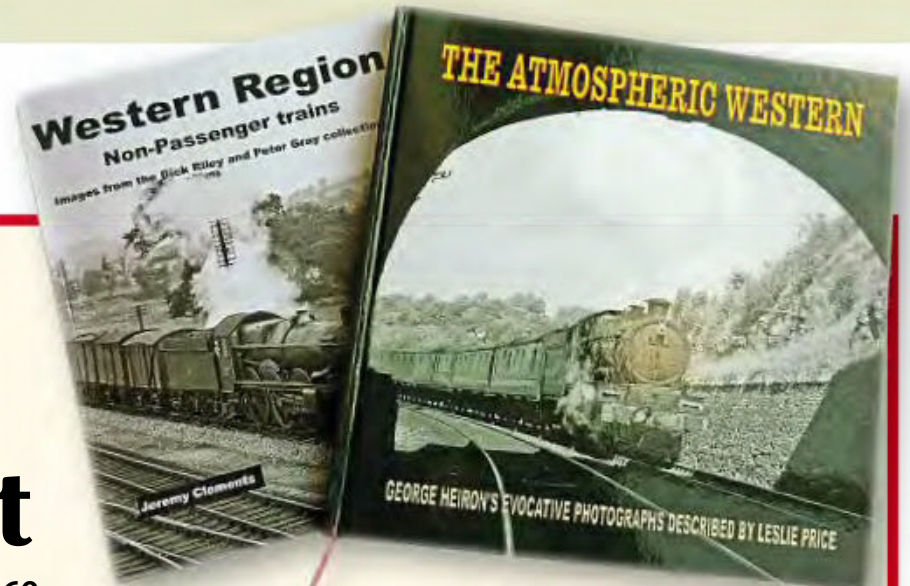
Western Region Non-Passenger Trains highlights a different genre of former GWR locomotives, but is none the worse for that. Featuring images from the Dick Riley and Peter Gray collections and compiled by Jeremy Clements, there's the tender and tank engines you'd expect, although the cover is a surprise – No. 5034 *Corfe Castle* coming off the Torbay branch

in July 1958 with a freight train and bearing a 'Torbay Express' headboard.

The reason for such an anomaly, writes Jeremy, is that the 4-6-0 had earlier worked the Down express through to Kingswear, and a convenient way of returning the locomotive headboard, and indeed the 142 smokebox train reporting number, to Newton Abbot was by a revenue-earning service while keeping the express identifications in situ.

Freight trains were so easy for 1950s' trainspotters to dismiss, other than for scribbled numbers in one's notebook, but thankfully many photographers thought otherwise and were far less narrow-minded. The result is images that six decades later remind us of the varied motive power that was to be found throughout the former GWR system but which, at the time, we so often took for granted.

GREAT WESTERN, GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Great Central Railway: Decline and Fall

By John Evans (softback, Amberley Publishing, 96pp, £14.99, ISBN 9781 4456 95570)

WAS Dr Beeching the villain of popular perception who destroyed so much of our beloved railway network, or a hero who saved it? That is a question that will be asked in perpetuity.

When he was appointed from outside the nationalised railway and delegated with the task of stemming its soaring losses, at a time when the public was switching en masse to motor road transport, Beeching drew up fundamental principles to reshape the railway network.

Apart from closing the myriad of country branch lines, he targeted main routes which 'doubled up', a legacy of 19th century competition between rival pre-Grouping railways to serve the same destinations, often from the same starting points.

The Great Central and its London Extension were late in the day, and, at the Grouping of 1923, it often played second fiddle to the older-established

parallel routes which provided a backbone for its new owner the LNER.

Decades later, Beeching had the Great Central firmly in his sights: why keep this duplicate route alive?

His recommendations were limited not only by the remit of his employer, the Ministry of Transport, which envisaged a future that lay with roads and not rail, but by a lack of foresight. Back in 1963, who envisaged a time when two (or even three)-car households were the norm, and many roads were all but permanently gridlocked?

It is now just over half a century since the final demise of the Great Central route, as superbly captured in both words and quality colour pictures in this attractively-priced volume.

Did those who endorsed the closure recommendations for the route take into account that it was built to Berne loading gauge, and a quarter of a century later, we would have the Channel Tunnel and its associated rail link? Back in 1969, nobody had heard of High Speed 2, but today the moribund GC route seems to have emerged as the 'thinking man's alternative' to a very expensive project that requires so much unspoiled countryside to be dug up to perform a similar function.

In 1969, a heritage scheme like no

other was set up. Not content to save narrow gauge lines in Wales or closed British Rail branch lines, the Main Line Preservation Group set out to save a section of trunk railway.

The fruits of its endeavours are legendary, and today's Great Central Railway is not only a world leader in the sector, but is on the way to reconnecting the outskirts of Leicester and Nottingham once again.

This fascinating volume may therefore be considered a 'prequel' to the magnificent heritage line that we have today.

SPLENDID ACCOUNT OF TIMES BEFORE TODAY'S GCR

Before Rocket: The Steam Locomotive up to 1829

By Anthony Dawson (hardback, Gresley Books at Mortons Books, 112pp, £12.99, ISBN 9 781911 658252).

THIS book has been needed for many years. Yes, we all know the names of Richard Trevithick, the Cornish mining engineer who invented the railway locomotive, John Blenkinsop and Matthew Murray who developed the concept, Timothy Hackworth and the great George Stephenson and his son Robert, yet we too often read about them in isolation.

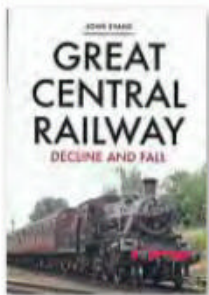
Here, the beauty of this volume is the chronological sequence which places each of these greats in their linear context.

A series of short but fact-packed chapters provides an easy-to-follow guide, inventor by invention, milestone by milestone, to the evolutionary chain that led to *Rocket*, which became the watershed between all of the early locomotive experiments and the steam age proper, which changed the world, and which is now on display inside the National Railway Museum at York.

The author, a University of Bradford graduate who gained a Master of Research degree at Leeds University, was part of the team that operated the replica of Robert Stephenson's *Planet* at the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester.

The volume is superbly illustrated throughout, with original plans and 19th century painting and drawings, to colour photographs of the survivors and replicas.

This book is brilliant for newcomers to the subject, including, I suggest, those of school age, as well as a handy reference



guide for seasoned historians, and provides knowledge and insight at your fingertips at a very affordable price.
INDISPENSABLE REFERENCE WORK

Flying Scotsman: The World's Most Famous Locomotive

By Brian Sharpe (hardback, Gresley Books at Mortons Books, 162pp, £14.99, ISBN 9781911658023).

HERITAGE

RAILWAY'S long-serving former deputy editor Brian Sharpe always maintained that *Flying Scotsman* was his favourite locomotive of all time – and this is his definitive account.



Here is the complete story, from its public appearance at the Wembley exhibition of 1924, through the first King's Cross to Edinburgh nonstop run in 1928 and the world's first 100mph record in 1934, to its purchase by Alan Pegler in 1963 and later rescue from California by Sir William McAlpine, its exploits in Australia and its final addition to the National Collection in 2004.

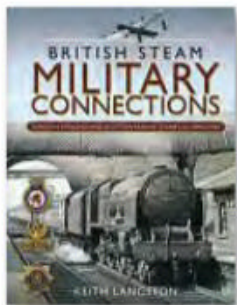
The highly-readable and accessible text is accompanied by quality colour pictures.

BIOGRAPHY OF A LEGEND FOR ALL

British Steam Military Connections: London, Midland & Scottish Railway Steam Locomotives

By Keith Langston (hardback, Pen & Sword Transport, 224pp, £30, ISBN 978-1-473878-53-2)

THIS excellent and unusual book deals with those LMS locomotives that carried names with military connections. These names include famous personnel, Army regiments, naval vessels, aircraft, battles and historic events.



The main focus is inevitably on the 'Black Fives', Jubilee, Patriot and Royal Scot classes. The volume is right up to date – even including the new-build Patriot No. 45551 *The Unknown Warrior*, which is currently under construction.

The book is an mine of information concerning both the locomotives and the military history and background to the famous names they carried. There is a wide range of contemporary historical illustrations, including paintings, badges and ephemera.

Each named locomotive is covered individually, with text and photographs showing it at work on the railway network.

The book is lavishly illustrated with

colour and monochrome material of a high quality.

An interesting aspect is the documentation covering the process by which locomotives were given these military names.

This is definitely a very interesting, useful and informative addition to the railway enthusiast's library, and as such is very strongly recommended.

MUST FOR MILITARY ENTHUSIASTS TOO

Railways At Night From Dusk Til Dawn

By Robin and Taliesin Coombes (hardback, Amberley Publishing, 128pp, £17.99, ISBN 978-1-4456-9237-1).

PHOTOGRAPHER Robin Coombes and his son, Taliesin who is equally gifted behind the lens, having won awards and critical acclaim for his work in recent years, have teamed up to present this celebration of railways at their most atmospheric, between dusk and dawn, when station lamps, the glow from an open firebox door, or a locomotive headlamp are the only things to pierce the inky black night.

The book covers a wide spectrum of railed transport from the UK and overseas, including steam operations on the main line and heritage railways, national network services, station scenes, people shots, and tram and systems.



The variety of styles and compositions is equally numerous, from classic 'glint' shots and silhouettes to the more artistic long-exposure and panned scenes, plus 'moment-in-time' images and posed tableaux. Full colour and black & white are both used effectively, and it is this variety that keeps the pages turning as you don't know what to expect overleaf.

Standout photographs for this reviewer include a black and white capture of Chicago commuters in April 2018, a powerful head-on portrait of No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* in Bath's Sydney Gardens, and GWR 4-6-0s Nos. 6998 and 5051 during a charter at Didcot Railway Centre.

The book uses one image per page for the most part throughout, which works extremely well in the landscape format. Reproduction is very good; the paper quality taking the dark inks really nicely.

ORIGINAL AND INNOVATIVE RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHY

The Settle-Carlisle Railway

By Paul Salveson (flexiback, Crowood Press, 208pp, £24, ISBN 978-1-78500-637-1)

THE Settle-Carlisle Line is one of the world's classic scenic railway lines. It was constructed through some of the

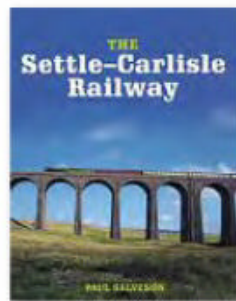
wildest and most challenging terrain in England by the Midland Railway.

This highly informative book charts the history of the legendary route, covering the construction and operation of the line from 1875-1989 with a sure hand. Excellent chapters cover the line under threat of closure after 1963, the renaissance that followed, and the lifting of the closure threat on April 11, 1989.

There is also fascinating coverage of work on the line as a young goods guard in the 1970s; the line under threat; the future of the historic route; and a chapter with brief portraits of people who played a key role in the life of the spectacular line.

The volume is lavishly illustrated, including a wide variety of colour and monochrome photographs, engravings, maps, cuttings, posters to cover the whole period of the line's existence. Strongly Recommended.

SUPERB ACCOUNT OF A SPECTACULAR LINE



The End of Steam in the North West of England

By Steve Heginbotham (softback, Amberley Publishing, 96pp, £14.99, ISBN 978-1-4456-9034-6)

IN A WAY it is quite remarkable that three young steam enthusiasts who were living in the Manchester area in the mid to late 1960s should, half a century later, as Bodmin & Wenford Railway volunteers (Steve Heginbotham, Andy Darby, Jimmy James), pool their memories to produce this book.

The railway revolution had started in the north west of England with the opening in 1830 of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. Was it just a coincidence that the last bastion of BR steam ended 138 years later in the same area, and on the same tracks?

There was Patricroft Shed in Eccles, with its stud of BR 5MT Caprotti 4-6-0s, and just a few miles away was Trafford Park and its collection of Stanier 8Fs, always a good shed to bunk before assembling on the adjacent Stretford End terrace for Manchester United's next match.

Momentous changes were taking place on the railway, and two more current Bodmin luminaries (David Ford, Maurice Dart) were also visitors to the area to witness and record the end of the era. Unseen and almost forgotten, these original and remarkably preserved images are truly evocative of those halcyon days. It's well worth the cover price.

PRICELESS MEMORIES



STUCK AT HOME?

Buy books straight from the publisher!

THE people who bring you *Heritage Railway* have just launched their latest book catalogue – brimming with fantastic new titles.

Mortons Books is busily preparing *The Railway Magazine Archive Collection* – 1930s, a collection of images harking back to the days when beautiful iconic engines were a part of ordinary daily working life across Britain and steam still reigned supreme.

These and dozens of other forthcoming titles available for pre-order can be found in the new Mortons Books 2020 catalogue, just out.

It may not currently be possible to get out and experience heritage steam in person during the current pandemic crisis, but if you're looking for a window back to happier times, look no further than our selection of rail reads, including *British Railways Stinks*, *Running on Rails*, *The Beeching Legacy* and many more.

Browse our range of rail reads at www.mortonsbooks.co.uk/railway and have them delivered straight to your door!

Don't forget to join our book club for more information about our latest book releases – PLUS you'll get 10% off your first order AND receive SIX FREE digital bookazines when you sign up.

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AS we closed for press, the number of followers on our facebook.com/heritagerrailway page was approaching the 308,000 mark.

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Heading for Oxenhope, BR 1949-built Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241 leads GWR Collett designed '5101' large prairie 2-6-2T No.4144 with the 2.40pm Keighley-Oxenhope train on March 6. ANDREW SOUTHWELL

WORTH VALLEY TURNS GREEN FOR SPRING GALA

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's spring steam gala proved a resounding success – but came just days before many similar showpiece events throughout the country were cancelled in response to the coronavirus pandemic, report **Robin Jones** and **Gareth Evans**.

Eight locomotives drew in the crowds when they steamed during the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's (KWVR) March 6-8 spring steam gala as the poor winter weather held off.

Around 2500 passengers rode during the event, which saw GWR 2-6-2T No. 4144 from Didcot Railway Centre as the guest locomotive.

Built at Swindon in September 1946, the 5101 class prairie was first allocated to Severn Tunnel Junction, where it spent much of the next 11 years on piloting or banking freight trains, including heavy coal shipments to South Wales through the tunnel.

In August 1957, it was transferred to Tondur depot and was used on passenger trains from Bridgend.

No. 4144 returned to Severn Tunnel Junction in December 1962, and again took up banking duties. Furthermore, it appeared on the tunnel's car ferry service which consisted of Carflat wagons and two coaches. What is believed to be the last regular service in South Wales to be hauled by steam ended after the Severn Bridge was

opened. Accordingly, in June 1965, No. 4144 was withdrawn and two months later arrived at Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyard.

In April 1974, it was bought by the Great Western Society and along with another three locomotives was towed to Didcot. It has become the 50th locomotive from Barry scrapyard to be bought for preservation purposes – four years after Midland Railway 4F 0-6-0 No. 43924 made history by becoming the first.

No. 43924 – which this year celebrates its centenary – immediately joined the nascent KWVR fleet and was restored in 1970. By contrast, the restoration of No. 4144 at Didcot was not completed until 1997, No. 4144 was withdrawn for overhaul in 1997, and officially re-entered traffic on May 2, 2015.

Both locomotives starred in the gala, alongside Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241, BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022, USATC S160 2-8-0 'Big Jim' No.5820, LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas*, Taff Vale Railway O2 0-6-2T No. 85, and LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45212 – which was making its last gala appearance on the line prior to leaving for

Southall to resume its main line duties, including West Coast Railway's 'Jacobite' in the summer.

No. 85 was booked to appear in the Bluebell Railway's April 3-5 Branch Line Weekend.

KWVR operations manager Noel Hartley said: "The gala was very unusual for us in that there were so many green engines running. We used to be known as the railway with black locomotives."

Next gala

The railway is now planning for a unique gala to be held over the August 29-31 bank holiday weekend. It will celebrate no less than 50 years since the making of *The Railway Children*, one of the most successful family films of all time and which, released by EMI to UK cinemas on December 21, 1970, gave an enormous boost to the still-infant heritage sector, just over two years since main line steam hauled on BR ended.

Newly-restored Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 2F 0-6-0 No. 957 – the 'Green Dragon' of the movie – and the carriages that appeared in the film are set to be in service. ➡



Visiting from the Didcot Railway Centre, GWR 2-6-2T No. 4144 is seen on Mytholmes viaduct with the demonstration freight train on March 6. ALAN WEAVER



Above: LMS Jubilee Class 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas* towards Oxenhope with the 1pm train from Keighley on March 6, complete with the headboard for its owning group, the Bahamas Locomotive Society. RODNEY TOWERS

Left: LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212 powers through Mytholmes towards Haworth with the 10.25am service from Keighley on March 6. TOM NOBLE



Left: Taff Vale 0-6-2T No. 85 climbs out of Keighley on March 6 with a train of BR Mk.1 suburban stock. ROBERT FALCONER



Right: Didcot Railway Centre-based 41XX Class 2-6-2T No. 4144 is seen at Mytholmes viaduct on March 6. Immediately behind the locomotive is Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Trust-owned Blackpool Club Carriage No. 47, which can normally be found on display inside Oxenhope Exhibition Shed. ALAN WEAVER

BR 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241 leaves Haworth with the 9.40am Keighley to Oxenhope service on Friday, March 6 with a train of BR Mk.1 suburban stock. IAN DIXON





'Black Five' No. 45212 and Jubilee Class 4-6-0 No. 45596 Bahamas are seen at Damens on March 6.
ALAN WEAVER



“The gala was very unusual for us in that there were so many green engines running. We used to be known as the railway with black locomotives.”

A special Pullman dining service is due to be available for advance bookings too.

At Keighley station, the original film directed by Lionel Jefferies and starring Dinah Sheridan, Jenny Agutter, Sally Thomsett and Bernard Cribbins will be screened in an outdoor cinema.

At Oakworth station, there will be a self-guided The Railway Children walk, along with re-enactments of scenes as well as interactive items and film displays.

Visitors will be invited to dress up as their favourite character – and meet some of the original cast from the film.

Before then, another planned big event on the line, the June 26-28 diesel gala, is due to welcome WR Class 42 D821 *Greyhound* from the Severn Valley Railway and the Deltic Preservation Society's Class 55 No. 55019 *Royal Highland Fusilier*. The East Coast Main Line veteran last visited the line in 2018

as part of the 50th anniversary gala.

However, as throughout the rest of the sector, these and other events may change depending on the Covid-19 pandemic. On March 19, the KWVR issued a statement which read: “We are following UK Government guidelines to ensure the safety of our passengers, volunteers and staff. We’ve now decided to close the railway to all but essential work until further notice.

“We will be monitoring the situation closely and may make changes as and when necessary. We are making adjustments to our events programme and changes to these will be announced individually.

“We will keep you up to date via our communication channels as the situation evolves.

“Please visit our www.kwvr.co.uk website to find information on our forthcoming services and any restrictions or cancelled events.” **HR**



US Army Transportation Corps S160 2-8-0 No. 5820 and LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212 climb to Oakwoth on March 6. ALAN WEAVER

LANKY TANK STARS IN EAST LANCASHIRE SPECTACULAR

The East Lancashire Railway's March 6-8 steam gala had a Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway theme, starring three locomotives from the pre-grouping company, including recently returned No. 752, hauling its first passenger trains since 1982, writes **Brian Sharpe**.

The eagerly-awaited East Lancashire Railway (ELR) spring steam gala was notable for the return to service of Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 23 Barton Wright 0-6-0ST No. 752, which hauled its first fare paying passenger trains since 1982.

The 1881-built locomotive had been purchased in 1968 from the National Coal Board still carrying its LMS number 11456 and had never worked for BR. It was returned to steam in time to take part in the Rocket 150 cavalcade at Rainhill in 1980 and hauled the

occasional passenger train on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (KWVR) over the next two years, before being withdrawn for what turned out to be an even longer restoration project.

As reported in issue 265, No. 752, one of three engines owned by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Trust, was returned to steam on the ELR last October, and was relaunched in February carrying the number 51456, which it would have carried if it had been in BR service.

Also in action over the weekend was resident Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway A class 0-6-0 No. 52322, which was renumbered 52345 for the occasion. The opportunity was taken to double-head the two L&Y engines.

Hunslet 0-6-0 No. 2890 *Douglas*, which has been converted from an Austerity 0-6-0ST to a tender engine, was in action, carrying the number 52322, while Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 32 *Gothenburg* ran in Thomas blue livery.

Also in steam were resident BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097 and Ian Riley's LMS

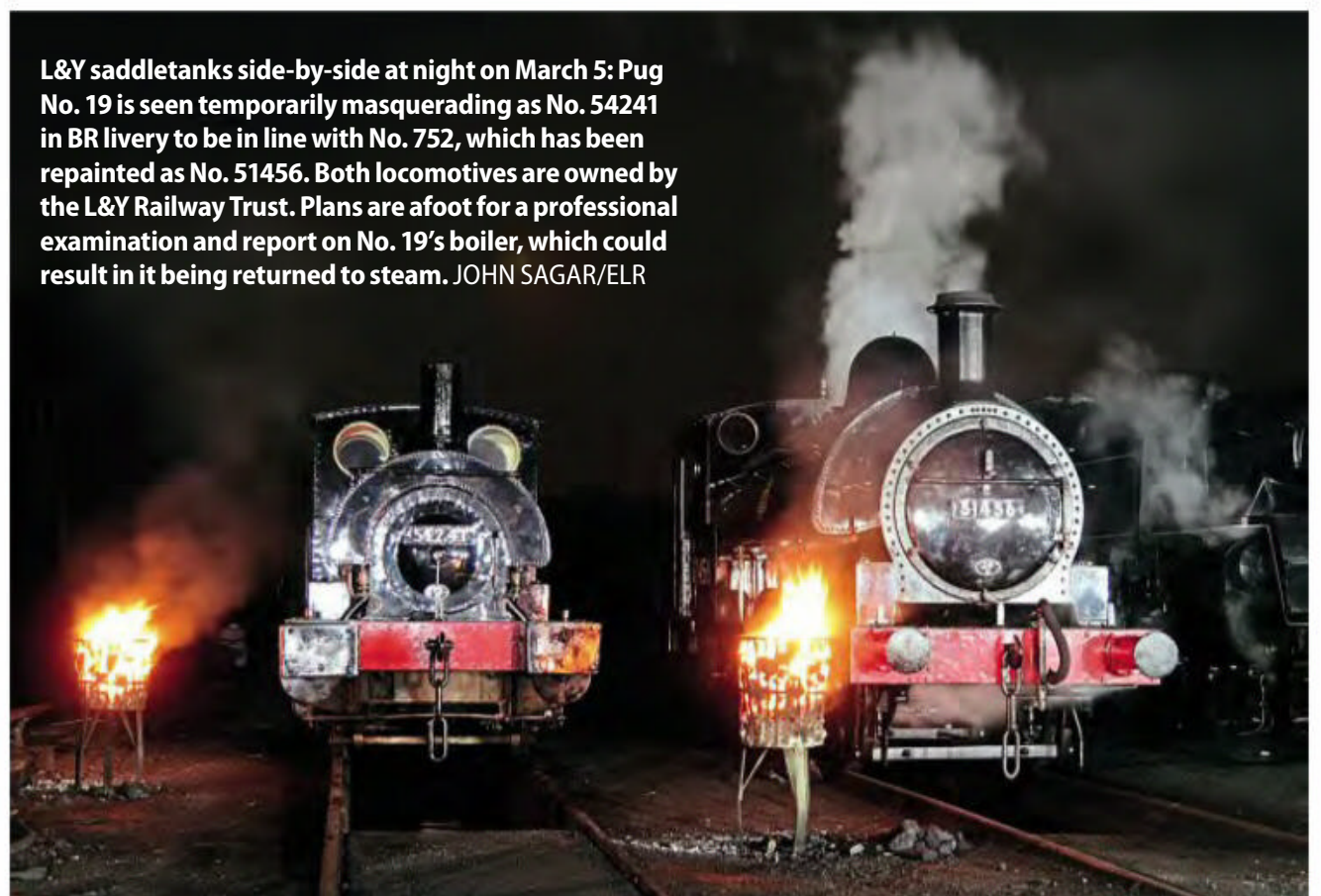


L&Y DUO: L&Y Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 51456 and Class 27 0-6-0 No. 52322, masquerading as Bolton shed's erstwhile No. 52345, power past Burrs at the head of the 1.30pm Bury-Rawtenstall service on March 6 during the ELR Spring Steam Gala. GRAHAM NUTTALL





L&Y Class 27 0-6-0 No. 52322 running as No. 52345 and BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097 are seen passing Burrs at the head of the 3.30pm from Bury Bolton Street Rawtenstall service during the ELR Spring Gala on March 6. KEVIN WHITEHURST



L&Y saddletanks side-by-side at night on March 5: Pug No. 19 is seen temporarily masquerading as No. 54241 in BR livery to be in line with No. 752, which has been repainted as No. 51456. Both locomotives are owned by the L&Y Railway Trust. Plans are afoot for a professional examination and report on No. 19's boiler, which could result in it being returned to steam. JOHN SAGAR/ELR



L&Y delight: Nos. 52345 and 51456 are seen at Rawtenstall. BRIAN SHARPE

Visiting from the South Devon Railway, GWR 0-6-0PT No. 6412 approaches Irwell Vale during the East Lancs Railway's Spring Gala on March 8. ROBERT FALCONER



'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44871. However, SR West Country Pacific No. 34092 *City of Wells* was unable to take part. Its place was taken by a last-minute visitor – the South Devon Railway's GWR 0-6-0PT No. 6412.

Another Lancashire & Yorkshire classic was on static display, in the form of 0-4-0ST 'Pug' No. 19, which is also owned by the trust and which was borrowed from the Ribble Steam Railway, and stood in the bay platform at Bury (Bolton Street).

With a mixture of motive power and an intensive timetable, the event proved popular with packed trains during the afternoons and no operating problems reported. The line's GWR observation car was attached to the rear of a service train every day, further generating much needed income.

A railway spokesman said that the trains were well patronised, especially on the Sunday, possibly because visitors from further afield had also come to visit the KWVR gala (see pages 86-89) at the same time.

In the days following the gala, ELR directors took the decision to close the line until further notice, in line with the Government's instructions during the coronavirus pandemic to avoid both unnecessary travel and attending major events where large numbers of people will be present. The fate of the July 2-4 big diesel gala therefore remained unclear.

ELR general manager Tracey Parkinson said: "Day ticket sales for the gala were good and overall the event was well supported. The ELR is keen to celebrate the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway as we approach 2022, when the 100th anniversary of the amalgamation will be commemorated." **HR**

■ Additional reporting: Robin Jones.



Left: A night photography session was held at Buckley Wells on March 5, organised by the ELR-based 3P20 Parcels Group. Pictured here are L&Y Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 51456, BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097 and L&Y Class 27 0-6-0 No. 52322, masquerading as No. 52345. JOHN SAGAR/ELR



Banked by Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 32 Gothenburg, L&Y Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 51456 is seen with the 4.10pm train from Bury Bolton Street to Rawtenstall on March 6. KEVIN WHITEHURST



On shed after dark: BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097 and L&Y Barton Wright Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 51456 are seen during the photography session held at Buckley Wells depot on March 5. JOHN SAGAR/ELR



This vantage point at Lumb, just south of Irwell Vale station, has become available again after an absence of several years thanks to recent tree clearance. The bank to the left is the embankment for the old East Lancashire Railway, which ran from the junction at Stubbins to Accrington – which closed to traffic in 1966. More recently, restoration of Lumb Viaduct, which is just to the left of this shot by Railway Paths Ltd was completed in 2015, with Sustrans extending the path to link with the existing cycle route. Ian Riley's LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44871 can be seen working away from Irwell Vale on March 8, with the 2.10pm Rawtenstall to Heywood service. PHIL JONES

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REVIVING LOST FFESTINIOG BRANCH

**WILL IT
BE A GAS?**

A 'forgotten' branch of the Ffestiniog Railway – which includes its original terminus – is set to be revived – and may become the first in Wales to run hydrogen trains, writes **Stephen Murfitt**.

The first terminus of the railway was at Dinas in Blaenau Ffestiniog, close to the now buried hamlet of Rhiwbryfdir, and connected with the inclines of several quarries located in the Dinas area.

The first quarry to use the railway was that of Samuel Holland, and the Oakeley and Welsh Slate Company quarries followed suit constructing connecting inclines. In 1854 Llechwedd quarry constructed an incline from Dinas to the original mill on floor two of the quarry. Access from the railway to the incline was gained by a tunnel under what is now the A470.

In 1865 passenger trains were introduced from Porthmadog to Dinas. On a date subject to debate by historians, a new 'branch' was opened to Duffws, situated just beyond the present Blaenau Ffestiniog station, which by 1870 had caused the cessation of passenger traffic to Dinas.

However, the Dinas line remained very active for slate traffic and in 1880 a new loop line was constructed adjacent to Glan-y-Pwll.

In 1899 the Dinas branch was diverted onto a new alignment to allow the Oakeley Slate Company to tip slate waste over the old route.

The original railway to Dinas had given good service for 60 years (shown red on map) and the new alignment (shown green on map) left the Ffestiniog main line near Glan-y-Pwll yard.

This new alignment served until slate transport ceased in 1946. The original track was lifted in 1955.

Background

Rhiwbryfdir, adjacent to the Dinas branch and close to the terminus, had several houses, a farm and commercial buildings, including the railway company blacksmith's forge. The need for the Oakeley quarry to find additional space for the tipping of waste slate led to Rhiwbryfdir being buried under the slate tip.

Following the introduction of steam locomotives in 1863, the prosperity of the railway company led other enterprises to tap into the lucrative slate traffic. The GWR built a standard gauge railway to Blaenau Ffestiniog from the south, and in 1879 the LNWR constructed a standard gauge railway with a tunnel under the Oakeley quarry to emerge adjacent to the terminus of the Dinas branch. By the early 1900s, the standard and narrow-gauge railways, together with the numerous

connecting inclines resulted in a complex, fascinating transport hub.

One of the jewels of the structures remaining at Dinas is the hydro-electric power station at Pant-yr-Afon, the second of two power stations constructed for the Llechwedd quarry. The first power station was built in 1899 on Floor 1 by Rooper and Tozer of Stafford and operated lights, fans, an electric rock drill and pumps, but probably not all at the same time! Rooper was an agent for Gilbert Gilkes of Kendal who supplied the turbine.

Pant-yr-Afon was built in 1903 and used water from four existing reservoirs at Llyn Barlwyd Bach, Llyn Barlwyd Mawr, Llyn Newydd and Llyn Bowydd. This remarkable structure was the fruit of experiments by C Warren Roberts, who was the manager of the quarry and a skilled engineer. Warren had been educated abroad and it may have been his travels that alerted him to the possibility of the new power source.

His drawing is based on an earlier survey by Charles Spooner who played a significant role in the development of the Ffestiniog Railway. The Pant-yr-Afon power station was opened on April 11, 1904 and the invoice from Gilbert

Gilkes to Llechwedd dated November 1905 was for £2,235-13s-7d. The original equipment was in use until 2007 when the station was replanted with a new Gilkes turbine and Marelli alternator generating the novel alternating current. The new equipment was installed alongside the original in such a way that existing switchboards and pipework remain in place as a fantastic example of an early hydro-electric scheme with many original features.

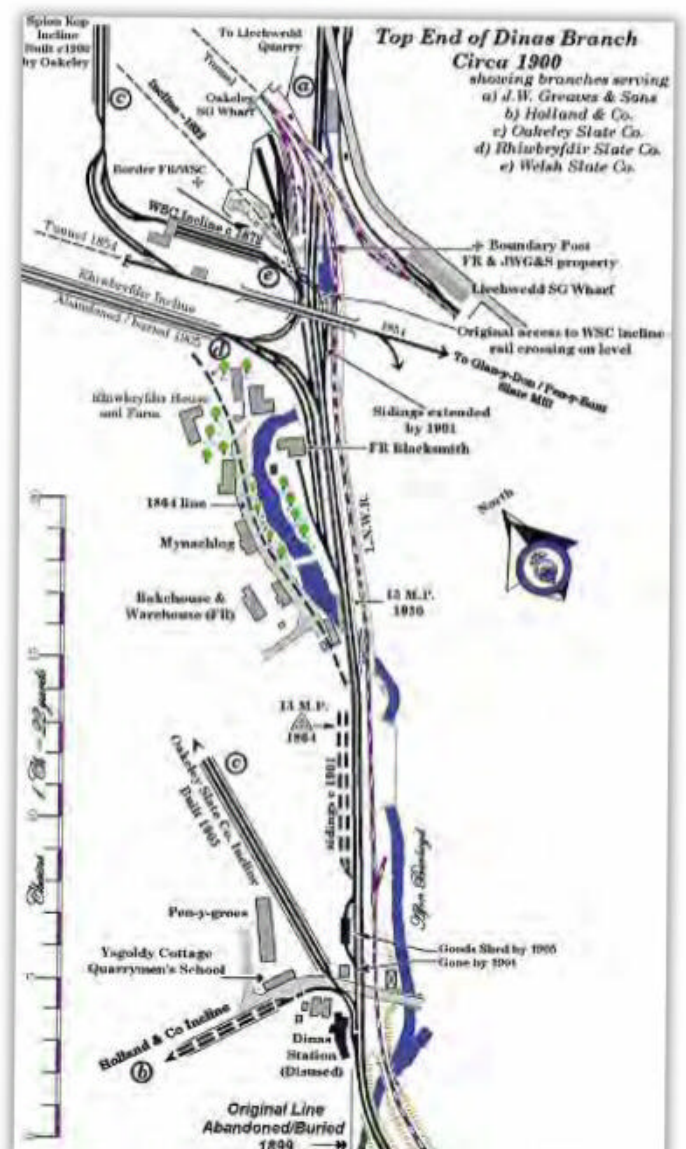
Subject to sufficient water being available, the plant generates 350kw and operates 24 hours a day. Presently all the power is exported to the national grid.

As reported in the last issue, the North Wales slate industry is currently subject to an application for World Heritage Status. For more than 110 years the Ffestiniog Railway, via its Dinas branch and other incline connections, was a major transporter of slate to the harbour at Porthmadog. The arrival of motor transport and the standard gauge railway brought this role to an end.

To reconnect the railway from its present Blaenau Ffestiniog station to Llechedd quarry, perhaps travelling in traditional quarrymen's coaches, would be a



An early 20th century hand-coloured postcard illustrating the complexity of the railway systems at Rhiwbryfdir serving Oakeley quarry. FR



significant contribution to both slate industry heritage, and an important insight for the interested tourist.

The 1½-mile Dinas branch is substantially still in place, although five bridges are no longer in existence. The branch reaches the power station at Pant-yr-Afon and then enters a tunnel under the A470. An overgrown steep incline then connects the railway with Llechwedd quarry: funding is available for the clearance of the rhododendrons so that the integrity of the structure may be established.

Technology

The University of Birmingham Rail and Research Department, one of the country's leading rail research departments, in conjunction with Porterbrook Leasing Company has designed and produced the first main line hydrogen train.

The university is working with the Ffestiniog Railway to produce a hydrogen train for running on the Dinas branch.

The power station at Pant-yr-Afon, in addition to being a tourist attraction, means the branch line is an ideal site for a prototype hydrogen train. The vision is to have an entirely green carbon-free train running from Blaenau Ffestiniog station to the Llechwedd quarry. The visitor attraction offers tours of the historic slate quarry and a zip wire experience.

Volunteers have cleared the area around the

power station and enthusiasm for this project is such that the first working party planned for 2020 included a volunteer who was prepared to travel from Colorado.

Two of the lost bridges on the branch have created an 'island' and the plan had been to gain access and ascertain the state of the formation; no doubt it is many years since anyone has found their way onto the island.

The working parties have now been postponed owing to the coronavirus epidemic but will be reinstated once Government advice allows us. Aspiring Dinas branch volunteers are very welcome to join the revivalist group, and if any readers have photographs of the branch (particularly working) or reminiscences of the branch in operational days, the author would be very grateful to receive them: email smurfitt@ffwhr.com

The clearing of vegetation on the branch is reminiscent of the Ffestiniog spirit of the 1950s when the railway was restored after nature had taken over. Indeed, several Dinas branch volunteers are taking part because they were not part of those heady, early days.

The plan is for the working parties to investigate the extent of the work needed to recover the line. This stage will be followed by grant applications made in hope of realising the vision of hydrogen and steam trains traversing the Dinas branch. A prospectus is in preparation. **HR**

TRACK TALK

→ Mystery of Spilsby lamp lettering

I FOUND the article in issue 264 interesting regarding the forthcoming ELR50, especially the reference to Spilsby and the photograph of the GNR signal lamps.

Many years ago I purchased a railway lamp from a stall at an open day at the Science Museum's reserve collection at Wroughton near Swindon. Thanks to the article, I can now identify my lamp as a GNR 'large' signal lamp and can confirm that it is marked 'Spilsby'.

One feature which I do not understand is the lettering following the word Spilsby and I would be interested to discover the meaning. After a punched full stop are the additional letters 'RD.XING'

The letter D is underlined with a punched full stop in the middle of the underline and the feature is raised above the line of the other characters.

I am pleased to say the lamp is in good order although the reservoir does weep – an ongoing problem judging by the number of old soldered repairs!

One other question concerns the original finish on these lamps. My lamp has a bare metal finish and this is the same as the lamps shown in the picture. I suspect this is a feature of their preservation rather than representative of the finish during their service lives. Clarification would be appreciated. Thank you for an excellent publication.

Graham Squires,
Didcot, Oxfordshire.

→ Electric seasonal greetings

MANY thanks for the inclusion in the letters column of issue 264 of the saga of my No. 86259 Christmas card. It really is a nice story, isn't it, and a lovely card!

I had many glowing comments from recipients of the card, which of course pleased Glynis no end, and now she is really thrilled to have her 'wrong-hand' work featured in *Heritage Railway!* With rest and physiotherapy, she is recovering from her injuries, and should be back to right-handed drawing and illustrating very soon.

Thanks again – it's always a thrill to have my modern heritage traction featured in your magazine!

Les Ross,
owner of Class 86 No. 86259 Les Ross

STAR LETTER

A4 owner should be assisted in keeping it running

IN *Heritage Railway* Issue 264, two pages are taken up telling readers that A4 *Union of South Africa* is very likely to end up, like its siblings Nos. 60008, 60010 and 60022, stuffed and mounted in some shed.

While I do recognise that, as owner of No. 60009, John Cameron has every right to do whatever he likes with his property, if he simply doesn't have the wherewithal to maintain it in full working condition, public funds should be made available to him to do so.

Just seven years ago, an inordinate amount of money was spent repatriating Nos. 60008 and 60010 from North America when all that was done was cosmetic restoration (because their owners didn't do it) and static display in the north of England, rather than spending the money returning *Mallard* to steam and touring the whole of Britain.

When the two locomotives were brought back, I said at the time (in *Platform*) that it presented a unique opportunity to present all six locomotives in all six liveries carried by the A4s (silver/grey, apple green, wartime black, garter blue, Brunswick green, and BR express blue) and for them all to be displayed at King's Cross and Edinburgh Waverley stations (the capital cities of the countries they served and so excellently connected).

The comment was made at the time that such an exercise would be too disruptive, but I'm quite sure that, with just a little effort, it could have been achieved. As it is, not one was presented in the silver livery of the

first four A4s built specifically for the 'Silver Jubilee' train. Okay, none of those four locomotives has survived, but I'm quite sure that there would have been few objections if one of the six had 'borrowed' one of their identities for the occasion. (No one minded *Bittern* becoming *Dominion of New Zealand* for a while!)

As it was though, two locomotives that had absolutely no credentials (other than their eventual names) to even warrant them being preserved had several million pounds spent bringing them home and then returning them.

Not only do I believe that John Cameron should be offered assistance in restoring No. 60009 (which should be permanently restored to its original name, *Osprey*) but also his unique K4, No. 61994 *The Great Marquess* for use on the 'Jacobite' trains.

In the same issue, the National Railway Museum (NRM) is reported to be planning to move *Locomotion No. 1* to Shildon (it would seem) against very strong opposition. Why?

As most enthusiasts know, the NRM is, as its name clearly says, a museum and, as such, is not particularly concerned with working exhibits. Possibly the best exhibit is Merchant Navy No. 35029 which has been sectioned to illustrate as comprehensively as possible how a steam locomotive worked (as is its function). Lines of steam locomotives that will probably never steam again are relatively pointless as exhibits for the general public since, to their untrained eyes, the principal difference is their colour!

I applaud the NRM for gifting T3 No. 563 to the Swanage Railway where it will, indeed, see action as it was designed and built to do. I sincerely hope that this policy will be repeated many more times.

The same should be done with V2 No. 60800 *Green Arrow* and several other NRM exhibits.

Personally, I believe that the money spent on No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* would have been much better spent restoring *Mallard* to full working order but that is, as I say, a personal opinion. There will only ever be one world record holder!

However, the only reason that *Flying Scotsman* can be claimed as 'The world's most famous steam locomotive' is because the media has made it so. *City of Truro* has a claim (albeit unsubstantiated) of being the first steam locomotive in the world to reach 100mph, but I doubt that 1% of the population has even heard of it and that is just as much down to the media. Meanwhile, the beautiful locomotive (No. 3440) sits stuffed and mounted and probably means nothing to anyone until they read the plaque!

My point is that the NRM has a function to educate the general public (preferably with non-unique locomotives) about the history of railways in Britain whilst heritage railways and heritage train operating companies should be left to cater for enthusiasts.

David R Holt,
Queensland, Australia

The Great Goodbye at the Locomotion museum in Shildon was the third and final of the three ground-breaking reunions of all six surviving LNER A4 Pacifics. Seen on February 21, 2014, are: No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* (foreground), and, left to right in the background, No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, No. 60008 *Dwight D. Eisenhower* and No. 6646 *Bittern*.



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A national rail pass would not benefit heritage railways

REGARDING the recent correspondence in Platform concerning the idea of a national rail pass, I wonder if your correspondents are aware of the Interrail Pass sold by the Heritage Railway Association (HRA)?

Gerald Creed's comparison with the National Trust is a bad one as this huge national charity owns all the attractions which it preserves and promotes. The same can also be said for the other big player in this section – English Heritage.

A better model would be the Historic Houses Association (HHA), which provides expert property maintenance, marketing, safety and other legal advice to most of the historic houses and gardens in the ownership of private families, companies and small stand-alone charities and trusts.

I can join as a Friend of the HHA for £56 year and get free admission to most of the properties – with some of the more expensive properties limiting this to one visit a year or a discounted admission only. The HRA provides a very similar function for preserved railways. Its website www.hra.com lists its activities and offers a very useful list and map of its member railways with clickable access to their websites.

As an individual member (for £22

a year) you can purchase an annual HRA Interrail Pass for £120 which gives a year's free or (in a few cases) discounted rides (usually a quarter or half fare for a day rover) on most member railways.

Working railway volunteers can usually obtain a two-person pass, at a much reduced price and without the need for HRA membership, through a designated person at their railway.

The National Trust has over five million members and rising, but the huge number of members visiting on any one day makes a huge dent in the revenue of individual properties – who receive only 50p from central funds each time a member visits and have increasingly to seek out alternative sources of income.

This magazine's recent excellent article on the sustainability of heritage railways shows how fragile the finances of our movement are at present and I am not sure how welcome the expansion of a scheme of the Interrail type, beyond the relatively limited numbers who know of and use it regularly now, would be. Also how many families will want to visit enough steam railways each year to justify paying the sort of fees quoted above?

Peter D Morgan,
Ashford, Kent

Do not forget the contribution of passed fireman Albert Shaw

I HAVE just received Issue 265 which is up to the usual standard, so well done.

I was pleased to see the article by Peter Kelly on No. 6201, drawing attention to Hornby's latest iteration of the manufacturer's long-term affair with models of No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* which is indeed a splendid effort.

It is also good that Peter has highlighted the sad fact that the 1936 achievement of the LMS, the engine, and its crew appears to keep getting overlooked by popular writing. However, Peter in turn has fallen for the oft-repeated omission in naming the crew, as he has completely edited out the presence of passed fireman Albert (Ab) Shaw.

The crew consisted of three men, and Shaw's rank as a passed fireman would have outranked that of Fleet as a fireman at that time, and as such Shaw would have been the booked fireman, with Fleet there to help.

I was told some years ago by Shaw's son (also Albert) that Shaw senior was also doing some spells of driving to relieve Tom Clark, so his was a presence which was every bit as important as that of Clark and Fleet, and it would be good if the many authorities who get trotted out periodically to pronounce on this great run would endeavour to correctly identify the facts before Ab Shaw is permanently written out of the history of this outstanding event.

There are more than enough photographs of the three men in the cab of No. 6201 on its return to Euston to corroborate the fact of Shaw's presence. All three of the crew and the guard were presented with clocks by the LMS to mark their achievement, and I was privileged some years ago to actually handle the clock which was presented to Albert, which is suitably inscribed with his name.

Bob Meanley, former chief mechanical engineer, Tyseley Locomotive Works

The best main line steam trip

OVER the years I've enjoyed many steam trips from Mallaig in the north to Bodmin in the west, but yesterday I can honestly say I had the best one yet.

Saphos Trains' 'White Rose' hauled by what looked like ex works *Britannia* and Mk.1 coaches that were pristine inside and out, set off from Crewe with six of us enjoying our Premier Dining experience on March 7.

There's something magical about being greeted aboard the carriage by uniformed hostesses and shown to our seats in the Pullman-style extravagance that sets this apart from others I've been on. A fabulous breakfast and unlimited coffee (with pastries) made the four-and-a-half hour journey across the snowcapped Pennines fly by. The Brit was clearly in fine fettle and even Miles Platting bank couldn't slow it down for long! Arrival in York to a crowded platform with dozens of cameras clicking

was bang on time. York is always a nice place to spend an afternoon and what better than a visit to Betty's Tea Shop!

Back at the station, *Britannia* backed onto its train while once more crowds tried to get close enough to get that special picture of this elegant locomotive.

We took our seats again and as darkness fell, we were served a fabulous four course dinner, which we washed down with a red Malbec.

Our hostess was a wizard at folding napkins and she showed me how to make a starched napkin into a boat or a lily. Friendly staff, great food and precision timing right back to Crewe made this a day out to remember. *Britannia* is performing as well if not better now than ever before and that says a lot about the team looking after it. Long may that continue.

Gerald Creed,
Bristol

Looking for mining locomotives

I AM looking for tips on tracing locomotives that worked in a mine where I live. I belong to the Skelmersdale Heritage Society and we try to keep memories of the town alive by tracing its history.

A mine that went into liquidation offered three locomotives for sale with

their names. I would like if possible to trace them. I don't know the etiquette of changing names etc. so they may have been consigned to history under other names, making my task impossible.

Geoff Boden,
Skelmersdale Heritage Society,
email.geoffboden@live.co.uk

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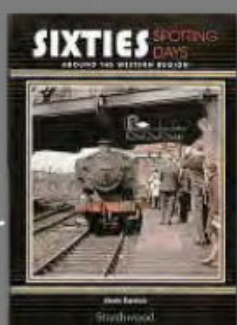
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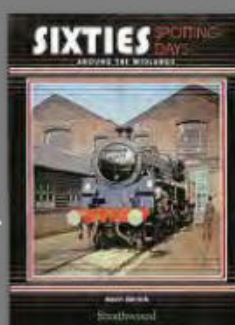
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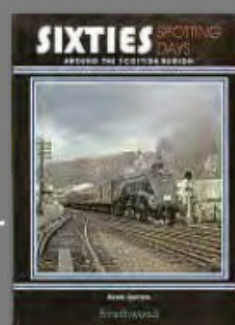
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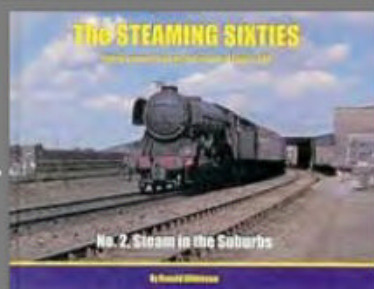
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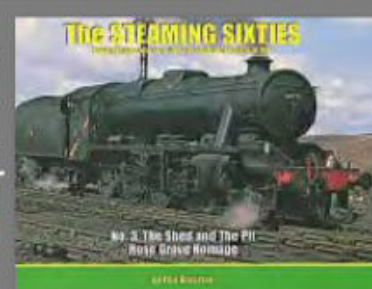
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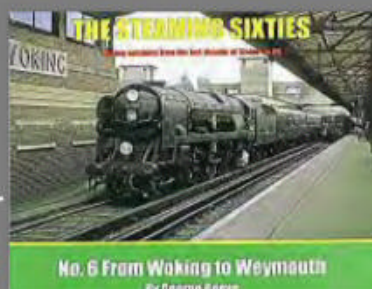
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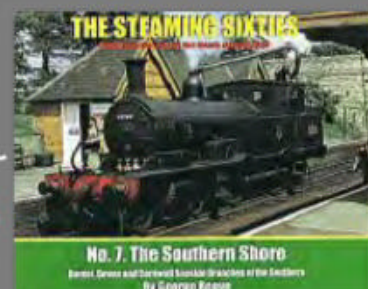
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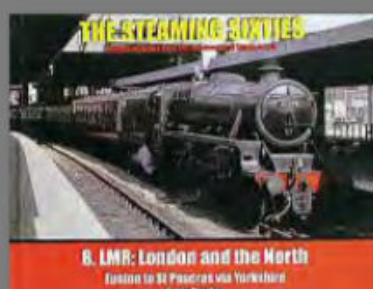
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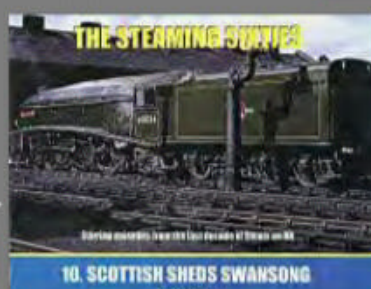
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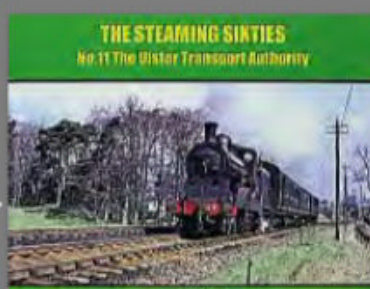
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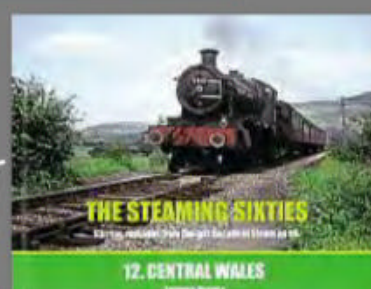
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As well as satisfying their passion for steam in the British Isles, enthusiasts sought it out in other ways, with many
making their way into Europe in search of steam.

In the summer of 1962, the late Brian Lockett visited Sweden and Finland on the Railway Correspondence & Travel
Society (RCTS) rail tour of Scandinavia. Then in the autumn of 1970 Brian visited Denmark, this time with the Railway
Enthusiasts Club (REC). Brian's films make up the majority of this volume of Scandinavian Railway Memories.

The Swedish visit includes wooden-bodied jackshaft electric D class 1C1 locomotives a giant 0-10-0 originally from
the Kiruna far north iron ore line, the Tomtebod Railway Museum plus Sweden's largest railway exhibition of 1962.
Visits are also made to Falun, Hagalund shed, Ludvika and Kristianstad shed. Sweden's largest private railway is seen
at Eskilstuna, the TJOJ iron-ore line, where the Traffic Manager and Chief Engineer took the party around. The last
steamship built in Scandinavia (and now-persevered SS 'Bore') takes the tour from Stockholm onwards to Turku.
There is excellent coverage of Finnish steam, but starts with an HR12 (now Dr12) CO-CO diesel. Helsinki shed was visited
and on the adjacent main line, there is continuous steam activity coming up the hill out of the City. Steam abounds
including 0-6-0T, 0-6-2T, 4-6-0, 4-6-2, 2-8-0, 2-8-2, 2-8-2T, 0-10-0T and 2-10-0 classes. The Tr1 2-8-2s and Hr1 4-6-2S
built up to 1957 are real beauties and include bar frames plus interchangeable boilers. Wood burners are also seen,
complete with spark-arresting chimneys.

The visit to Denmark includes one of the 'P' class Atlantics, single and double chimney 'E' class Pacifics, a visit to
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All change, all change please!

By Gareth Evans

WITH no special events for the foreseeable future due to the coronavirus crisis and all the 'joy' that sucks out

of our hobby, we thought it would be helpful for our normal 'The Month Ahead' page to take on something of a lighter tone.

→ If you've got a quirky photo, tale, poem or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email gevans@mortons.co.uk.



CREDIT: TALYLLYN RAILWAY

Talyllyn to the rescue

THE world's first preserved railway provided a 'ewesful' service on March 18, when it rescued a stray lamb from the lineside.

Perhaps feeling sheepish for its adventure in trying to discover whether in fact the grass was greener on the railway side of the fence, the escaped lamb was picked up by members of the Talyllyn Railway's track gang.

Far from being 'lambasted' for attempting to 'fleece the railway', the young sheep was welcomed on board – it wasn't charged for a 'sheep day return'. After a train ride in the arms of Oscar Hutchinson, the lamb was later reunited with its mother.

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 267 is out on May 15, 2020

HERITAGE RAILWAY



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Musings from the booking office...

DEALING with members of the public is not without its challenges, but it also has its lighter moments. A booking clerk is often the first person a visitor meets when they turn up at a heritage railway station – so the ability to answer sometimes apparently mundane queries and a sense of humour are essential. Here are a selection of lighter exchanges from several heritage lines down the years.

■ **Passenger:** "How much are children please?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "Sorry, we don't sell any here – please try the shop."

■ **Passenger:** "Can I have a dog ticket?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "Certainly. That's £3 please."

■ **Passenger:** "He's only a little dog."

■ **Booking clerk:** "It's only a little ticket.."

■ **Passenger:** "Do you take cheques?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "We carry all nationalities – Czechs, Germans, French – you name it..."

■ **Passenger:** "Can you hold the train please?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "Sorry, it's too heavy..."

■ **Passenger:** "How long's the next train?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "An engine and three carriages."

■ **Passenger:** "The train's late."

■ **Booking clerk:** "We still adhere to GWR principles here – Go When Ready."

■ **Passenger:** "Can I have a round trip please?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "Certainly."

After purchasing the ticket, the passenger walks out onto the platform, but is mystified to see the stop block at one end, so returns to the booking office window.

■ **Passenger:** "Where do the rails join up from the other end – for the round trip?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "It's not a circular ride – we go out and back..."

■ **Passenger:** "When does the 2.30pm train leave?"

■ **Booking clerk:** "Twenty-nine minutes past."



Booking clerks often have to handle a number of different types of tickets and passes. GARETH EVANS

Poem: Support the Severn Valley Railway appeal

By Ian Hollis, Severn Valley Railway volunteer

WHEN the railway was forced to shut,
We thought it was a pity,
So hopefully I can lift some hopes,
With this little ditty.

In Victorian times, the work began,
Around 1859,
A railway to move the goods,
The Severn Valley line.

A line to shift the coal out,
Iron, carpet and rope,
The valley's industrial revolution,
Was the founding company's hope.

From Shrewsbury in Shropshire fair,
To Hartlebury and back,
The steam-hauled trains meandered,
Along the railway's single track.

Passengers were always sparse,
And the freight traffic, not good,
And eventually the Salop end,
Would close down for good.

The end it came in '63,
Before old Dr Beeching,
Had time to swing his railway axe,
And make cuts so far and reaching.

A group met in the Coopers arms,
To keep the line alive,
And gained the use of a locomotive,
Number thirty-two-o-five.

In the May of '70,
They bought the iron road,
And began operating trains,
Between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade.

In '74 Highley was reached,
Then Bewdley in the May,
Then 10 years on, to Kidder Town,
Where the line still ends this day.

The year two thousand and seven,
Proved a troubled time,
When thunderous rain and thunder storms,
Washed away the line.

The mulch and mud was shifted,
And the rails were re-laid,
With generosity and determination,
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But now the Coronavirus,
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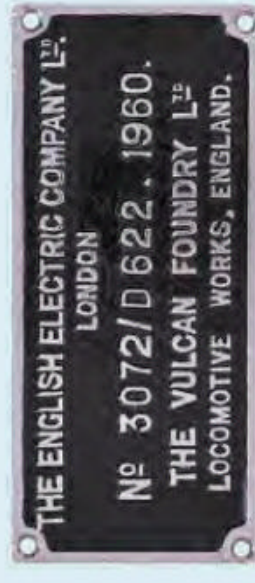
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