



BREAKING OUT OF LOCKDOWN:
HERITAGE LINES PLAN THE BIG TASK AHEAD

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE BRIGHTER STEAM NEWS MAGAZINE

ISSUE 268

June 12 –
July 9, 2020

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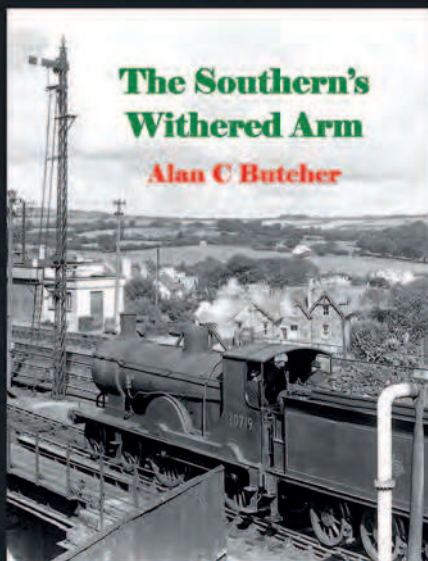
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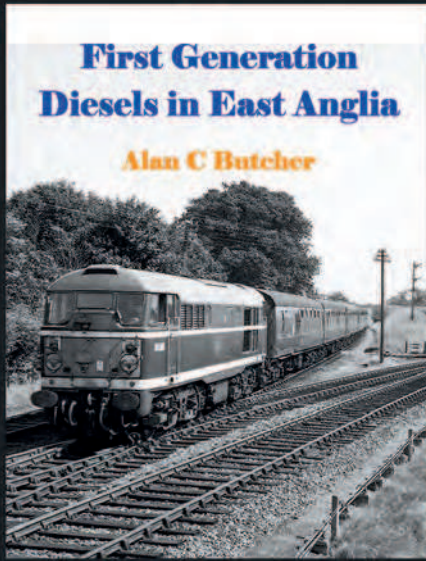


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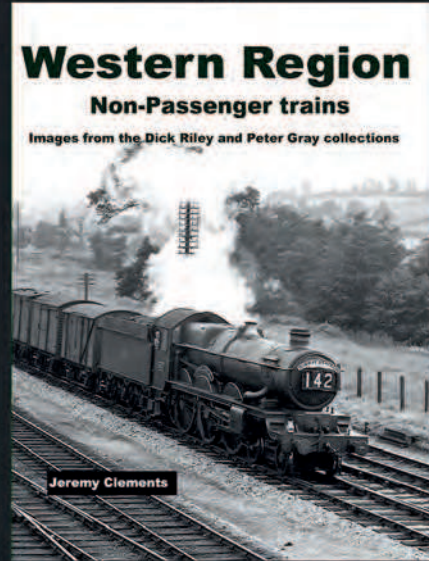


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A headline like 'Steam locomotive runs on heritage railway' in a specialist magazine like ours would in normal circumstances be tantamount to the national tabloids splashing on their front page with 'Dog bites man' or 'Sun rises at dawn'. However, these are not normal times by any stretch of the imagination, and while workaday BR Standard 2MT No. 78018 might never have the glamour of *Flying Scotsman* or *Mallard*, at the end of May it was the only standard gauge steam locomotive operating in public in the UK, when the Great Central Railway invited spectators to witness a day of test running, as reported in *Headline News*, page 6, and our special features on pages 78-79, giving fresh and visible hope that there really is light at the end of the lockdown tunnel. ROBIN JONES

Ideas and raw enthusiasm can beat this Covid crisis

THE response of the public to pleas for financial help from Britain's besieged heritage railways have so far been phenomenal. Desperate to cover day-to-day running costs while totally deprived of their main income stream in the form of ticket sales from both regular trains and special events, plus revenue from catering outlets and shops, ordinary people have dipped into their pockets to show they are equally determined for them to survive the Covid-19 crisis.

Leading the pack is the Severn Valley Railway, having raised an awesome £745,000 as we closed for press, while the magnificent response to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's appeal for £250,000 to cover the costs of repairing a potential line-truncating landslip has been closed after meeting its ambitious target in just 10 weeks.

However, do not let these stunning success stories make you believe that we are anywhere near being out of the woods yet: in a war-footing world where even the highest powers that be display that they still do not know the full nature of the killer beast we are dealing with, or what turn it will take next, in grim reality we may just be entering them.

I implore readers to keep sending those donations to our magnificent heritage lines, no matter how small; however much is raised, it will not last forever. When lines like the Gloucestershire Warwickshire announce that they are cancelling events as far ahead as the vital income-generating Santa specials and main line operators scrub their entire 2020 programme at this stage, we are all left asking when the end will be in sight.

The Government's furlough scheme has indeed thrown a lifeline to businesses, including heritage lines, throughout the country, but by necessity it will end in October, clearly casting a shadow of uncertainty over

outlets that have not been able to replace lost income of staff by then.

In our sector, money has never been the complete answer (although it's always a big start). In this issue we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Bluebell Railway and Lincolnshire Coast Light Railways, which achieved so much of their landmark early success through their sheer determination and raw enthusiasm of their founding members.

In recent weeks, I have been greatly encouraged by the fact that around 100 people have volunteered to offer their time and home resources free of charge to help Vintage Trains, echoing the achievements of those pioneers. We need more of the same please, and fast!

In any crisis situation, ideas can often pay bigger dividends than financial input, and in this issue Gareth Evans reports on the plans of several lines to maximize the potential of lockdown being eased.

Here at *Heritage Railway*, for the past 21 years we have endeavoured to deliver the widest news coverage of the entire movement, and now we aim

not only to support our railways by publishing details of their appeals, but also to provide a forum in which ideas for survival can be aired and shared every four weeks.

What is overridingly important is that we continue talking to each other and exchanging such ideas, in a very unfamiliar world that is often changing by the day. To keep up to date with developments as they impact on the venues that we have come to cherish over the past seven decades, refer to pages 30-31 and see how to take out a subscription to *Heritage Railway*. Sit back and let us keep you in touch with the wider picture as events unfold.

Robin Jones Editor

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General Queries & Back Issues
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Answerphone 24H
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www.classicmagazines.co.uk

DISTRIBUTION & PRINTING

Distribution
Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 3rd Floor,
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Wolverhampton

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SUBSCRIPTION

Full subscription rates (but see page 30 for offer): (12 months 12 issues, inc post and packing) - UK £55.90. Export rates are also available - see page 30 for more details. UK subscriptions are zero-rated for the purposes of Value Added Tax. Enquiries: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

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ISSN No 1466-3560

Published

Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
June 25, 2020
Next issue on sale
July 10, 2020

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ISSUE 268

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Don Benn recalls trips behind *Clan Line* and argues for an 80-minute Waterloo to Salisbury run

CONTENTS: WR 4-6-0 No. 7828 *Odney Manor* heads westwards past Ker Moor near Blue Anchor during a Don Bishop photographic charter on the West Somerset Railway on January 2, 2015. As we closed for press, the railway's plc and supporting West Somerset Railway Association had raised nearly £156,000 through two emergency appeals to cover the line's loss of revenue during the Covid-19 lockdown. It is not known when regular services will restart, but for the rest of 2020, all special events, including galas and dining trains, have been cancelled. However, the railway's officials estimated that at least £500,000 is needed for Britain's longest standard gauge heritage line to survive the pandemic, so don't let steam on this magnificent railway serving this beautiful stretch of coastline stay silent forever – help it reach its appeals target as soon as possible. ALAN TURNER

→ To support the emergency appeals, visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/donations

COVER: Bluebells in abundance on the Bluebell Railway: BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73082 *Camelot* passes through Lindfield Wood with the 1.30pm service from Sheffield Park on April 23, 2016. PETER EDWARDS/BR

Regulars

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Geoff Courtney's regular column.

Centre

The Bluebell Railway has built up a reputation second to none for its reconstruction and restoration of wooden-bodied Victorian and Edwardian carriages. SECR 0-6-0 No. 592 is seen heading a rake of classic pre-Grouping stock at Kingscote on July 4, 2010.



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60 years of Bluebell splendour!

In 2020 the Bluebell Railway was due to celebrate six decades since the first green shoots of one of the world's most popular and successful heritage lines appeared. Sadly, the showpiece anniversary celebrations have been placed on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The line is fighting a battle for survival, writes Robin Jones.



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Breaking out of the lockdown

Gareth Evans talks to a selection of heritage lines about their experiences of dealing with the Covid-19 crisis and how they're planning to reopen their railways – and the factors they must consider in the weeks ahead.



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The world's first DIY line!

While the Bluebell was setting a blueprint for the future revival of closed parts of the national network, fresh ground was being broken in Lincolnshire with volunteers building a new heritage line to run regular public transport services, write Chris Bates and Robin Jones.

The world's first social-distancing 'gala'?

After running test trains with BR 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 on May 22, nine days later the Great Central Railway staged a repeat, as a precursor to reopening after lockdown. No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* joined the proceedings. Robin Jones reports.



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New Wainwright D Class 4mm scale model progresses; Heljan's OO9 *Lyn* on track; plus the latest Bachmann releases – including DMUs and Thompson carriages.



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Adding a OO-scale model of a 'Black Five' 4-6-0 to his collection, Pete Kelly shares some of his many memories of these 'do-anything, go-anywhere' locomotives.

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Trains running again on the Great Central Railway

By Robin Jones

THE Great Central Railway in late May became the first of Britain's 'Premier League' of heritage lines to run trains again, if only for testing purposes.

On Monday, May 18, the railway brought back 10 staff from furlough to carry out essential functions and to prepare for reopening. The returnees included a skeleton crew in the locomotive shed and carriage and wagon works, signallers and permanent way staff.

The following Friday, BR Standard 2MT No. 78018 underwent trials following repair works carried out prior to the Covid-19 lockdown. It had undergone a valve exam with one new valve head being fitted and all new valve rings and the pony tick wheel was turned.

Tests were carried out with very strict safety and health disciplines in place, with the railway remaining closed to the public.

With precautions in place, including the driver and fireman wearing face coverings, and the guard alone in the rake of coaches that it pulled, No. 78018 completed four important return runs between Loughborough and Rothley, two light engine and two loaded with empty carriage stock.

Reactions

GCR chairman Richard Patching said: "The runs were relatively uneventful, although the loco crew looked quite menacing in their face masks – not a pair to mess with!"

GCR managing director Michael Gough said: "Today we have taken our first tentative steps towards opening up the railway and, in doing so providing our friends and supporters with some much-needed steam. We are regularly reviewing the situation and closely monitoring



A very welcome sight as BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 passes Swithland Sidings on a test run. ANDREW MORLEY/GCR

Government advice, and look forward to restarting other areas of our operation when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

"During Covid-19 the railway has been forced to use up all of its cash reserves, including vital match funding set aside to add to the funds raised by their appeal for the new locomotive works and education centre (at Loughborough) to be built. Thus the ongoing success of that appeal, through the purchase of commemorative plaques, is needed even more and the GCR are asking for its friends and supporters to visit www.gcrailway.co.uk/shedappeal to help ensure that the project may still proceed after the current pandemic.

"Behind the scenes, we have carefully planned arrangements, competency checks and disciplines to enable us to operate as soon as the restrictions are lifted, whenever that may be. I am sure you will appreciate that it's not as

straightforward as simply 'turning the lights back on and firing up.'"

The new shed will offer enhanced facilities for the restoration and maintenance of locomotives and will be able to store more of them undercover.

For the first time in GCR history, all shed activities will be accessible to the public with dedicated viewing areas.

Enhanced learning

The education centre will provide dedicated classrooms and a lecture theatre to support an extended education programme linked closely to the National Curriculum, greatly boosting engagement with schools, colleges, and universities.

On Sunday, May 31, the railway ran further test trains over the whole line – and this time invited the public to watch, although visitors were not allowed to enter the locked stations and there were no

refreshment facilities.

The railway announced the test runs over social media and in its Rail Mail monthly email bulletin two days before.

The car park field next to Quorn & Woodhouse station was opened for visitors and, the day before the Government's easing of lockdown to allow groups of up to six people to gather took place, GCR stewards enforced social distancing on the site with cars ordered to park at least two metres apart.

No. 78018 undertook a series of whole-line test runs between 10.20am and 4pm, while Class 37 No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* undertook stock movements including those of the 'Windcutter' rake of 16-tin mineral wagons and a mixed freight rake mainly comprising box vans.

A collection organised by stewards in the car park raised £270. A report of the day's unique event can be found at pages 78-79.

Beamish museum director resigns after nine-month suspension

RICHARD Evans, the director of Beamish – the Living Museum of the North, resigned with immediate effect in late May after 12 years in the post.

His resignation followed his suspension on full pay last September as an internal inquiry began. At the time, a museum spokesman said: "It is important to say that suspension is not an implication of any wrongdoing. Until the process has concluded it would not be appropriate to comment further."

A statement issued on May 26

did not outline the reasons for his departure, and said: "The Beamish museum board can confirm that Richard Evans has resigned as museum director with immediate effect. The board acknowledges and would like to thank Richard for his contribution to the museum's success, as part of a wider team effort, since he took up the role in July 2008.

"The board will make arrangements in due course to recruit to the position. In the meantime, the museum will continue to be run by the deputy

director and senior leadership team, supported by dedicated members of staff and volunteers. We look forward to working with them to build on the museum's successes to date."

Mr Evans, who was previously director of the Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park restoration project near Barnsley, and development officer for New Lanark World Heritage Village in Scotland, was in charge of around 430 staff at Beamish, backed by more than 500 volunteers and 2000 friends and business partners.

Famous for its re-created regional street scenes, the museum is undergoing a £23 million Remaking Beamish redevelopment programme, including the creation of 1950s town, a Georgian coaching house and an upland rural farm, supported by a £10.9 million National Heritage Lottery Fund grant and due for completion in 2021.

Beamish is an independent charity but receives grant funding from Durham County Council, which has three representatives on its board of trustees.



Glenfinnan Viaduct lit up in NHS blue from just before 8pm until 11pm on Thursday, May 28. NETWORK RAIL



Severn Lamb-built 0-6-4T Zebedee (1974), Berwyn Engineering-built 0-6-0 Muffin (1967), Exmoor Steam Railway-built 0-4-2Ts Ruby (1997) and Ellie (2006) passing Barnacre on the way to East Wheal Rose on the Lappa Valley Railway. LVR.

Railways big and small join in final NHS salute

By Robin Jones

RAILWAY heritage from the biggest to the smallest joined in the final Clap for our Carers event to show appreciation for National Health Service staff during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The iconic 21-arch Glenfinnan Viaduct on the West Highland Extension was again illuminated in blue on the evening of May 28.

The 416-yard-long 100ft-high viaduct, which starred in the Harry Potter movies, was Network Rail's first structure to be lit up in support

of front-line staff and key workers in early April and to end the series it provided a fitting finale and tribute.

Alex Hynes, managing director at Scotland's Railway said: "As we move into the summer months, week by week we were losing the battle against the light to do justice to our essential workers and iconic stations and structures.

"We will continue to be humbled on a daily basis by the incredible dedication shown by staff in the NHS and we are grateful to all key workers across the country, including

our railway family, who are playing a massive role in supporting the country at this time."

The lighting for the viaduct was undertaken by the Stage Group, under the clear physical distancing messages from the Government.

At the same time, more than 600 miles away, the small number of staff still working at the closed Lappa Valley Railway in Cornwall decided to join in the final Clap for our Carers by raising steam on all four of the line's 15in gauge locomotives and using the two operational diesels, to sound

their whistles/horns at 8pm. The cavalcade can be seen at lnkd.in/dx6a_b4

The event, which saw six of the 15in gauge locomotives run, also provided an ideal opportunity for a mutual refresher course for the railway's staff of paid drivers who will be driving when the line, which runs on part of the GWR Newquay to Chasewater branch, reopens subject to Government guidance. The popular attraction at St Newlyn East near Newquay was like many others, hoping for an early July restart.

L&B Bratton Fleming station back on market: purchase appeal launched

IN March, the former Lynton & Barnstaple Railway station at Bratton Fleming was on the market with a Devon estate agent inviting "offers in excess of £325k."

Exmoor Associates (EA), the property-buying company set up to secure original L&B trackbed, saw an opportunity and began to raise funds. Sadly, hopes were soon dashed when told that the vendors had been made an offer by an unknown third-party – which they had accepted.

However, at the end of May, an eagle-eyed L&B member noticed that the 'Under Offer' banner on the estate agent Stags of Barnstaple website was missing – and the station appeared to be once again for sale. Stags was contacted and confirmed that due to various problems with the buyer, the property was indeed again on the market – and so EA now suddenly has another chance to attempt the purchase.

EA director David Cameron said: "The window of opportunity is

small, as others have apparently expressed interest in the property, so time is of the essence.

"While EA does hold cash reserves, allowing it to react swiftly if any trackbed does suddenly become available, these fall far short of the asking price for Bratton Fleming station.

"The idea opted for is to seek 700 donors, each willing to donate £500 to become a 'Friend of Bratton', which should raise enough capital to meet the asking price – plus the associated costs and legal fees. There would be no upper limit to the number of £500 'slots' each donor could secure.

"Friends of Bratton, while set up initially through the efforts of EA directors and shareholders, is intended to be a stand-alone organisation, with its own management team, but working closely with EA and the L&B Trust.

"Would you like to become a Friend of Bratton, and have the satisfaction of knowing that you



Bratton Fleming station, now a two-bedroom private residence, is back on the market with two-thirds of an acre of land. EXMOOR ASSOCIATES

have made a positive contribution to the eventual reinstatement of the former Lynton & Barnstaple Railway?

"This is open to all – and is not restricted solely to members of

the L&BR Trust, or to shareholders in EA."

For further details, contact David Cameron at david@exmoor-associates.co.uk or on 07971 048490.

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Surge of public support boosts pandemic-hit heritage lines

By Robin Jones and Gareth Evans

WELL-WISHERS have continued to support their favourite heritage railways with donations to emergency appeals set up to cover day-to-day costs during the Covid-19 lockdown period when they are unable to earn revenue.

Topping the list of public responses is again the **Severn Valley Railway's** Fight Back Fund, which as we closed for press had nearly reached £750,000.

To further boost its finances following the cancellation of special events, including its 50th anniversary of opening gala and hugely-popular Forties weekends, the railway has launched Adopt-an-Engine packages as it opens an online shop.

The packages each come with a selection of exclusive merchandise alongside a certificate and glossy photograph of the chosen locomotive. With four levels of package, starting from £30 – Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum – there's an option for all pockets and an engine for every interest.

Steam locomotives which can be adopted include LMS 'Black Five' No. 45110, GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall*, Longmoor Military Railway 2-10-0 No. 600 *Gordon* and Ivatt 2-6-0 'Flying Pig' No. 43106.

Exclusively, the SVR has included the popular Bulleid West country light Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley* amongst the selection of locomotives, thanks to the agreement of its owners. Everyone who buys the top level package for the engine will be entered into a prize draw for an once-in-a-lifetime VIP experience at the Severn Valley Railway.

There is also a selection of diesel locomotives available across the Severn Valley Railway fleet including, Class 50 No. 50033 *Glorious* and



LNER B1 4-6-0 No. 61264 as 60134 *Chiru* prepared to depart from Whitby for Pickering on June 13, 2014. As we closed for press, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's appeal had raised nearly £300,000. ROBIN JONES

Class 14 D9551, plus Class 09s Nos. 09107 and D4100.

All proceeds from Adopt-an-Engine packages – available at www.svrshop.co.uk will support the Fight Back Fund.

Elsewhere, the **North Yorkshire Moors Railway**, which held an online auction on May 29 and raised £17,689 through it, has added it to the total of nearly £300,000 raised by its survival appeal (www.nymr.co.uk/pages/category/support-us).

The **Bluebell Railway** (<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/support-bluebell>) has topped the £250,000 figure with its £300,000 appeal.

The **East Lancashire Railway's** £200,000 appeal stood at more than £92,000 (www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk), rising to £102,000 with Gift Aid, while its online silent auction which closes on June 20 had topped £4000.

The **South Devon Railway's** £500,000 SOS appeal (www.southdevonrailway.co.uk/fundraising) totalled £166,429.73 on June 1. The railway broke through the £150,000 barrier after the debut of its Thomas the Tank Engine video on Facebook, with a follow-up planned for late June.

Meanwhile, the **Keighley & Worth**

Valley Railway's Worth Saving £200,000 appeal (kwvr.co.uk/donate/) has been endorsed by Jenny Agutter, one of the stars of the big-screen version of Edith A Nesbit's novel *The Railway Children*, which was filmed on the line, and which was released in 1970. She also appeared in the 1968 BBC TV dramatisation and ITV's 1999 version, which was filmed on the Bluebell Railway.

She said: "Because of the present situation, people have been unable to visit the Worth Valley Railway. Now without support, this treasure of a place may not survive."

"Fifty years on, I am waving my red flannel petticoat, metaphorically, hoping it will make people aware of the need to give support now, so we can look forward to returning to the Worth Valley Railway in the years to come." So far, the railway has raised around £150,000.

The **North Norfolk Railway's** appeal (www.nnrailway.co.uk) launched in April has raised around £68,000, with £44,000 comprising share purchases and £24,000 in donations. General manager Hugh Harkett said: "That is really a great response. We will need to perhaps

double this amount. I suspect however, that it is dependent on when we get going again.

"The big achievement in May was that we got eight people back into Weybourne Engineering so that we could resume contract work on boilers etc. That move has proven entirely successful and we have generated a really good amount of revenue, which helps us survive in these lean times. We have ensured that everyone follows proper guidelines to keep safe and healthy and we have also brought back from furlough Roy Muirhead, one of our cleaning staff to ensure the right conditions in the works."

The **Llangollen Railway's** appeal (www.llangollen-railway.co.uk) has received more than £75,000 in share purchases and donations including Gift Aid.

The **Epping Ongar Railway** raised £25,000 in May, the first month of its appeal (www.eorailway.co.uk/the-railway/appeal/). A statement from the line echoed the words of most others: "Without any income the very future of the railway becomes at risk; our volunteers will be unable to work and there is a real chance that we might not reopen."

Baroness Morgan joins Great Central Railway board

LONG-TIME Great Central Railway supporter Baroness Morgan of Cotes (Nicky Morgan) has become a non-executive director of the line's board.

Formerly Loughborough's MP and secretary of state for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and now a member of the House of Lords, she carried out the ceremony of turning the first sod of the new bridge over the Midland Main Line on February 2, 2016.

As reported in issue 213, she said: "Joining the two halves of the Great Central will place Loughborough

at the centre of an 18-mile heritage line, attracting more visitors and bringing new jobs and investment to Loughborough as well as the wider East Midlands economy."

Nicky took up her new directorship on June 1.

GCR's managing director, Michael Gough said: "I am so very proud that Nicky has accepted this position – she will bring an entire new level of advice and gravitas to our corporate governance. As the railway grows in popularity and strength, it will be so useful to have her massive

experience and knowledge to hand"

Nicky commented: "I am very excited to be joining the GCR board. The GCR has a very special place in the hearts of Leicestershire residents and beyond. I've worked with and enjoyed the railway as their MP, as the founding chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail and also as an enthusiastic GCR local member for over 15 years now. I look forward to supporting the railway's exciting future and working with all GCR staff and volunteers."



Baroness Morgan of Cotes. ROBIN JONES



Kerr Stuart Tattoo 0-4-2ST No. 4 *Edward Thomas* heads a special train on the Talyllyn Railway at Nant Gwernol on February 11, 2010. ROBIN JONES

Talyllyn and Corris to celebrate centenary of their No. 4

TWIN 2ft 3in gauge neighbours the Talyllyn and Corris railways are joining forces to celebrate the centenary of Kerr Stuart Tattoo class 0-4-2ST *Edward Thomas* with a series of special events next year.

The locomotive served as No. 4 both in the Corris fleet and then on the preservation era Talyllyn.

The first celebration will be on the Corris Railway over the May 8/9, 2021 gala weekend when it will

work alongside new-build sister No. 7 and will be seen hauling a rake of recreated Corris carriages and also some vintage wagons.

Early June will see both locomotives appear at a special gala on the weekend of June 12/13, where they will be seen alongside the other surviving original Corris locomotive, the Talyllyn's No.3 *Sir Haydn*. They will be seen alongside original Corris carriage

No. 17, currently being rebuilt at Stanegate Restorations and also the original Corris brake van that is now Talyllyn van No. 6, also being restored.

Furthermore, May 14 next year also marks the 70th anniversary of the first train to be operated by a railway preservation society after the Talyllyn was taken over by volunteers. The weekend of May 14-16 will see special celebrations.

Help P2 project by sponsoring a wheel part for Father's Day

SUPPORTERS of the project to build Britain's most powerful express steam locomotive are being invited to sponsor a wheel component for Father's Day.

As the £5 million project by The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust to build new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* prepares for the delivery of the first heavy motion, only six years after its launch, a batch of wheel-related components has been released for sponsorship.

Progress on the construction of the P2 at Darlington Locomotive Works (DLW) is moving forward rapidly. The engine has reached the condition where it is recognisably a P2 and the structurally complete tender tank and tender wheelsets are now at DLW.

Construction and assembly work continues on all fronts, including boiler, wheelsets, tender frames, pony truck, heavy motion, pipework and electricals.

Design work for the extensively modified and improved cylinder block is complete, with the focus now turned to adaptation of the Lentz rotary cam poppet valve gear to

overcome deficiencies in the original design.

The project's fundraising is also moving forward. The Pony (Truck) Club, the latest part of the project's donation scheme which launched on April 27, has already reached its initial target of 27 members, raising over £32,000, including Gift Aid.

Overall, the project has received pledges of almost £3.75 million, but to complete the P2 over the planned seven-to-10-year period, at least £700,000 must be raised every year.

In addition to being able to sponsor one of the 18 spokes of the 6ft 2in driving wheels for £600 (or £25 per month for 24 months) or even a whole driving wheel for £12,000 (or £250 per month for 48 months). Other components available for sponsorship range from a pony truck castellated nut for £20; a Cartazzi axlebox manganese steel liner for £36; a leading coupled axlebox locomotive bolt for £74; or the pony truck axle at £4200 (or £70 per month for 60 months). People who subscribe will have their names (or the name of



The fireman's side of the P2's tender tank ready to be primed. IAN MATTHEWS

the person the gift is for) inscribed on the official roll of honour at DLW.

Trustee Mark Allatt commented: "With almost £2.5 million spent, almost £3 million donated and almost £3.75 million pledged to date – almost 75% of the required £5 million – we remain on track for completion within three years. This initiative is a unique opportunity for supporters to have their father or grandfather's name associated with

a component of No. 2007 and the funds raised will help to ensure that *Prince of Wales* will be completed on schedule."

→ If you would like to sponsor a wheel component, email dedicated.donations@p2steam.com for more information. For more information on how to help the project, visit www.p2steam.com, email enquiries@p2steam.com or telephone 01325 460163.

The NHS worker caring for a railway in self-isolation

By Robin Jones

LOCKDOWN has turned into a steam dream for Matthew Armstrong, who in splendid isolation has become the sole occupant of the closed Wells & Walsingham Light Railway.

By day, Matthew carries out his duties as community nurse under Hellesdon Hospital in Norwich, but working from home – which at the moment is a caravan at the 10¼in gauge line's Wells-next-the-Sea station. Out of hours, at evenings and weekends, however, the 29-year-old is carrying out track maintenance, ensuring that grass does not grow over the otherwise unused line.

The pandemic has forced him to isolate from his partner Kat Zbrog, 37, a clinical support worker at Julian Hospital in Norwich and with whom he shares a house in the city, as she has worked with people who contracted Covid-19.

However, the railway has allowed him to share his caravan – with Dave, his 13-year-old black cat, while using the signalbox with its sea and sunset views as his office during the day. Apart from Dave, Matthew has been left all alone in isolation on the line.

Patrols

Matthew drives the line's two diesels to access the parts of the 4½-mile line – billed as the world's smallest public railway – because he cannot use the railway's own works van, as it is not insured for drivers under 30.

He also drives the diesels along the line to enforce security, because as with several other heritage lines, the Wells & Walsingham has experienced trespass during lockdown, with walkers wrongly believing that nothing is running.

One Thursday, Matthew fired-up *Norfolk Heroine* to both give the



2010-built articulated Garratt a run and to record a video for that day's evening's Clap for Carers event honouring the NHS. He said: "*Heroine* was the prefect loco for a tribute to heroes in our health service, as it is named in honour of Edith Cavell, a nurse who put her nursing duties above all else, much like our brave health staff have had to during this crisis. Working for the NHS myself, I wanted to use it as a thank you to my colleagues too."

Matthew is also doing his best to promote the line's emergency appeal for £25,000, set up by director Nick Champion at www.gofundme.com/f/keep-the-wells-walsingham-light-railway-steaming and which had raised nearly £5000 as we went to press.

Not only is the fund essential for

covering operating costs while there's no income from ticket sales, but money is desperately needed to keep steam alive on the line.

Norfolk Heroine's 10-year boiler ticket shortly expires, while 1986-built sister *Norfolk Hero* is currently under overhaul.

Lockdown experience

Matthew, who also volunteers on the North Norfolk and Northampton & Lamport railways, said that because of the loss of venue, the line could be left without both of its steam locomotives.

He said: "I would like to thank the Wells & Walsingham Railway for keeping me safe, housed and entertained. They have gone above and beyond to make me comfortable and happy, including allowing me to bring my cat Dave for company."

Since Matthew's lockdown experience went viral on social media, he has been approached by global organisations including the *Washington Post* and ITV's *This Morning*.

In making the appeal, Nick said: "The winter storms this year significantly affected the February half-term with wind speeds above our safe operating limit most of the week. The impact of coronavirus is likely to be catastrophic."

"We are doing all we can to plan ahead and build resilience in the business. We believe that we have the advantage with open carriages and have ensured good standards of hygiene for staff, volunteers and visitors throughout our operation."

"We are selling one of our 1880s GER/LNER six-wheeler carriages; not because we want to but because we feel we have to make that sacrifice for the business. Cost control has been of paramount importance and continues to be so. We want this lovely little railway to continue for years to come and need your help to do that."

The line's officials have also been drawing up plans for reopening once the social distancing rules are sufficiently relaxed to allow it. Current thinking is that services will run every hour only to Wighton, two-metre isolating distances will be marked on the platform, payment systems without cash or contact as much as possible have been planned, and a one-way system will be operated.



Above: Not strictly in self isolation – for Matthew has brought along his cat Dave for company.
MATTHEW ARMSTRONG

Left: Diesel hydraulic Norfolk Harvester used for weedkilling work at Walsingham.
MATTHEW ARMSTRONG



Wells & Walsingham Light Railway volunteer Matthew Armstrong has had the line all to himself during lockdown. WWLR



Bluebell Railway interim infrastructure director Barry Luck.
BLUEBELL RAILWAY

Barry joins the Bluebell board after death of railway stalwart

THE Bluebell Railway has appointed a new interim infrastructure director while mourning the death of long-serving Chris White.

Chris, the driving force behind the line's northern extension to East Grinstead in 2013 (as highlighted in our special anniversary feature 60 Years of Bluebell Splendour on pages 40-49), died on May 12 after losing a short battle with cancer.

The railway co-opted chartered civil engineer Barry Luck to the board on May 28. Barry worked for 40 years in the water industry and was involved in the design and construction of various projects as well as serving on management boards.

Volunteer experience

He has been volunteering at the Bluebell Railway since 2011 on restoration projects and as platform staff and signalman.

Since January 2017 he has been the volunteer project manager to build a new carriage shed and Heritage Skills Centre at Horsted Keynes station.

Barry said: "I am not a specialist in railway infrastructure management but as a civil engineer I am sufficiently practical to be able to understand the issues. As a director I would expect to take a broad overview of issues and solutions, relying on the expertise of those around me to provide the best technical advice.

"As a dedicated member of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society and active volunteer, I have a particular interest in the continuing success of the railway."

Plc chairman Chris Hunford said: "The board is very pleased that Barry is joining us to take the Railway through the post-Covid 19 era and onwards into 2021."

Cotswold landslip appeal closes after passing £250k

By Robin Jones

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust steamed past its £250,000 appeal target to help the Cotswold line pay huge bills to repair an embankment landslip south of Gotherington station – work on which has now almost been completed.

The trust, the charitable body which supports the 14 mile railway, launched its appeal in mid-March – and by June 1 around £255,000 had been donated by supporters.

Due to the cancellation of train services due to the coronavirus pandemic, the railway was left with no income to pay for essential repairs.

Trust chairman Glyn Cornish said: "£250,000 was the expected cash shortfall the railway would face in paying for the embankment repairs so we set our sights high, hoping to raise a substantial part of that sum.

"To have reached the full amount in just 10 weeks and at a time when so many people are facing their own difficulties; and when there are so many appeals for help, is just astonishing.

"I know that all of the volunteers on our railway are deeply grateful for every penny contributed. More than 1300 people have made contributions and contributors can be assured that every penny raised has gone into the landslip repair.

"It is very humbling to know that our railway is so well loved by so many people."

"While we can't say for certain that something like this won't happen again, we know we can effectively repair such embankment slips and we are working continuously on improving drainage to avoid such future occurrences."

The landslip has been repaired by specialist contractors, using both soil nailing and sheet piling techniques to permanently secure the embankment between Bishops Cleeve and Gotherington. More than a century old, it is built over ancient ridge-and-furrow farmland which has proved unstable and exacerbated by a long dry summer followed by a very wet winter, the embankment started to become unstable.

While the appeal is now closed, if supporters still wish to contribute to the future work of the trust, their donations will be used to support other projects.

The railway has announced that it will remain closed at least until the end of August because of the Covid-19 crisis and has cancelled all remaining special events on the line – including including Santa specials this Christmas – along with the remaining fish and chip trains and fire and drive courses are all also now cancelled.

For updates, visit www.gwsr.com



Contractors finishing the repairs to the landslip south of Gotherington station in late May. JONATHAN TAYLOR/G/WRW

Network Rail training days cut short by Covid-19

THE Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway was the base for a series of six training days for Network Rail graduates in March.

However, on March 17, the decision was taken to postpone the following two days training due to increasing coronavirus pandemic concerns and lockdown and the courses are

now likely to resume in the autumn provided the conditions are right.

Some quick operational real-time thinking was required because Class 33 No. 33053 which had been specially hired in, failed on three out of the four days bringing ex-Wolverton Works Royal Train Class 08 No. 08629 (see separate

IN BRIEF

→ **ACTOR Michael Angelis**, who in 1991 took over from Ringo Starr as the narrator on the children's TV series *Thomas And Friends*, died suddenly at home aged 68 with his wife on May 29. He first appeared on TV in the 1970s, appearing in *Z Cars*, *Thirty-Minute Theatre* and *Coronation Street*, and was later cast in numerous series including *The Liver Birds* and *Boys From The Blackstuff*.

→ **THE Chasewater Railway** has received a £3745 grant to help cover its electricity bill from Arts Council England's Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund.

→ **THE Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust** is seeking donations towards the refurbishment of recently-acquired Restaurant *Miniature Buffet No. S1887*. Since arriving at *Midsomer Norton*, volunteers have cleaned graffiti from the inside and carried out a full repaint into BR maroon livery, greatly improving the coach. The trust now wants to raise £10,000 to reupholster all 48 seats and install new linoleum: donations are invited at <https://sdjr.co.uk>

→ A LORRY carrying a highly-stacked load of wooden pallets failed to pass beneath the bridge carrying the Great Central Railway over The Ridings near Swithland at 3pm on May 29. Police closed the road for an hour as around 12 smashed pallets were cleared. The bridge appeared undamaged.

→ **THE Covid-19 lockdown** has delayed the manufacture of two new steam locomotives meant for the Nilgiri Mountain Railway at India's Golden Rock Railway workshop.

→ **NETWORK Rail** has begun a £29,000 project to refurbish the Grade II listed footbridge at Prudhoe railway station in Northumberland, closing it for three months to allow work to take place.

→ **ISLE of Man enthusiast groups** are combining to host the July 29-August 2 *Manx Heritage Transport Festival* online with the original occasion postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. More details at www.facebook.com/events/657085081520610/

Boost for West Somerset but redundancy still a possibility

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway (WSR) has been given a welcome double financial boost just at a time it needs it the most – when its closure due to the coronavirus pandemic has forced it to issue precautionary redundancy notices to 42 of its staff.

Firstly, draft trading results by WSR plc show a profit of £311,217 for the year 2019/20 – compared with anticipated year-to-date forecasts for the end of March of just £83,823.

Secondly, the line's two emergency appeals – launched by the WSR plc and the West Somerset Railway Association – to offset running costs during the Covid-19 shutdown had, as we closed for press now raised almost £156,000 – nearly a third of the £500,000 target.

A statement from the railway regarding the trading results said: "This clearly illustrates a complete sea change for the railway's financial performance when compared with recent years when the WSR was clearly in steep decline, culminating in a near £800,000 loss for the turbulent year of 2018/19. However, with a determined new chairman and board of directors in place, who set about charting a new course for the railway, the situation has been turned around to the good again.

"While this figure excluded cash held on behalf of other organisations, together with a sum of £100,000 still being held by the plc pending the acquisition of the Bishops Lydeard shop and café, the plc was still some £258,000 ahead of forecast."

WSR plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt commented: "All of this fantastic turnaround in the WSR's fortunes has been achieved during a 19-month period since September 2018 by the reinvigorated plc board, our dedicated staff and volunteers, our active support organisations and advisors, plus shareholders, supporters and stakeholders, all of whom are all part of the greater WSR 'family' and whose great team efforts have succeeded.

"This is just the sort of confidence booster we and our supporters needed, and proves that we are once more on the right track.

"Were it not for last year's good trading figures and profits, the railway simply would not have been able to keep going, and would have gone into liquidation – but we still need more cash, help and support to survive.

"Members of the WSR board understand that there have been concerns over the new direction the

railway has taken in the last year or so. We hope the financial results speak for themselves and go some way to reassuring our supporters that the board has the best interests of the future of the railway at heart, and is actively striving to build on this success in these unprecedented times.

"In a normal world, we would now all be busy celebrating this huge achievement and sharing it loudly with our staff and supporters as they have made such a huge contribution to the railway over this last 12 months.

Cost reductions

"Now, we find ourselves in the middle of a global pandemic. The railway and all its ancillary activities are closed. We have had no option but to place the majority of our staff on furlough and have now also had to issue at risk of redundancy notices to 42 of our 45 staff and we are doing our utmost to reduce other costs.

"Without this action, we would be losing well over £100,000 with each month that passes, and the money we have made would be very quickly gone, leaving our coffers bare.

"With the restrictive current Government social distancing measures in place, it is very difficult to

see how we will be able to run trains and cover costs in the foreseeable future and our season is simply ticking by with no income.

"I have already highlighted to everyone, especially our staff, that it is very unlikely that we will be able to operate again now until next year. That was a very hard decision to consider, let alone make.

"Regrettably, Covid-19 has hit us just as we were about to turn the corner into a brighter future and it now represents the biggest threat to our railway yet seen since the line was closed by British Rail in 1971.

"So, once again, and for the second time in two years, we see it as our clear and unshakable responsibility to ensure that the railway is safeguarded financially so that we are able to run again when things do eventually change.

"Each month that passes sees our cash reserves reducing and we are acutely aware that these are running out. That's why we have had to issue redundancy notices to our loyal staff sadly; are looking at every item of expenditure; and why the emergency funding appeal is so vital."

The 'surprise' annual profit was

announced weeks after Bridgwater and West Somerset MP Ian Liddell-Grainger called for 'frank and meaningful' discussions on the future of the railway in the wake of the possible redundancy warnings.

He issued a press release which said: "The West Somerset line is regarded rightly as one of the jewels in the Somerset tourism crown and thousands of people will be saddened by the fact that they will be denied the chance to travel on it this year.

"It is clear there needs to be a long and detailed look at how the railway is run and its financial state – and some frank and meaningful discussions about the future.

Criticism

"The company must come clean about the costs of the outstanding track repairs that need to be done and all its other liabilities so that everyone knows exactly where it stands. Unless there is confidence in the future of the WSR, then the owners of locomotives and rolling stock currently leased or loaned to it are likely to start removing them, which would make cranking up services again even more of a challenge."

Jonathan responded: "Mr Liddell-Grainger has claimed to support the WSR yet, despite many offers from us in the past to meet him to discuss our position, he has never come to us first to air any concerns he might have in seeking to learn the truth from the 'horse's mouth', so-to-speak.

"However, I'm pleased to report that he agreed to a video conference call with us on June 3, where we could set out the true facts to him at last. Given the scale of the Covid-19 crisis nationwide, our situation is not unexpected news either as it'll be exactly the same one that many other heritage lines are facing too. Tourism is facing a huge hit from this and we need help not brickbats, so we're hoping to get some commitment and actual support from the MP."

A railway spokesman said that the possible redundancy letters were sent in the event of a "worst-case scenario," adding: "We certainly do not wish to lose any of our skilled workforce if possible, but we have to be realistic too and protect what we have. It's nothing more than that at this stage and normal practice in crisis situations like this but been dictated by the changed furlough regime which now ends at the end of July for payment of 80% of wages, and then carries on until October at a lower rate with contributions expected from employers."



With train services suspended due to Covid-19, track on the West Somerset Railway's Crowcombe Heathfield station is in need of weedkiller. Looking every bit like a 1960/70s closed branch, the railway needs funding to get it back to get it back to tip-top condition, hence the emergency appeal. DON BISHOP



Borrows-design Kerr Stuart 0-4-0WT No. 3063 of 1918 is back from the Chasewater Railway at its home at the Flour Mill workshop at Bream in the Forest of Dean, joining its sisters *Wallsend Slipway No. 3* and *The King* (as featured last issue).
BILL PARKER

Grants for studies into restoring network services over heritage pair

By Robin Jones and Phil Marsh

THE Isle of Wight Steam Railway (IOWSR) and the East Lancashire Railway's (ELR) Heywood branch are on a Department for Transport shortlist of 10 projects for feasibility studies into restoring regular community services.

The pair are among bidders for the first round of the Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund who were told by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps on May 23 that they have been successful in their application for 75% of the costs of up to £50,000 funding to develop a business case for restoring public (as opposed to heritage services) services that were lost in the 1960s.

The Wight scheme involves two potential reopenings – Shanklin to Ventnor, and Smallbrook Junction to Newport via the heritage line.

Challenges

Wight MP Bob Seely welcomed the possibility of restoring the routes but warned it would not be easy: "We must be realistic about the logistical challenges we face in seeing these routes restored. Understandably, the steam railway's first priority is to ensure the continued operation of their award-winning and popular heritage railway."

Meaningful main line services would need to operate a half-hourly service from early morning to midnight, which would involve the provision of other passenger signalled passing loops on the IOWSR.

Signalling would need to be brought up to main line passenger standards such as TPWS, which means fitting to IOWSR locomotives, plus bringing track alterations and upgraded modern standards at all crossings. Track would require a more onerous inspection and maintenance



Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. WD198 *Royal Engineer* at the Wootton end of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway – but could the line be extended back into Newport?
PHIL MARSH

regime given the annual tonnage and speeds would significantly increase.

While two out of the three miles trackbed from the IOSWR terminus at Wootton to Newport could potentially be reinstated, the last mile into the town now houses a solar panel farm, or has been otherwise used.

An extension of the electrified Island Line into Ventnor appears particularly problematic, not least of all as last year Southern Water built a new water treatment plant outside the 1300-yard tunnel mouth leading to the resort, where the original station was 300ft above sea level but not close to the town or its beach.

The grant towards a study into the use of part of ELR was welcomed by Bury North MP James Daly, who said: "I am delighted that we will now receive Government funding to develop proposals such as this one in more detail, which will bring huge benefits to people living and working here."

"Good transport links are essential, and I hope this funding marks the first step in getting this project off the ground as quickly as possible. I will work with all stakeholders, including the ELR to deliver this exciting project."

As we closed for press, a joint official statement from the ELR and Transport for Greater Manchester into their

reaction to the announcement was awaited. Keith Whitmore, chairman of Greater Manchester Transport Heritage, said the scheme would involve only the ELR's Castleton East Junction to Heywood section, and not Bury Bolton Street, with a new tram line being built alongside the existing track, with an enhanced main line junction for the ELR.

The tram line would continue to Rochdale and Oldham.

Other schemes

Another shortlisted scheme involves the reinstatement of the Penrith to Keswick branch which closed in 1972, and which local campaigner Cedric Martindale has championed through his company, CKP Railways plc, for the past two decades. Four local MPs assisted by Allerdale Borough Council submitted a study bid based on his work.

Meanwhile, Torbay MP Kevin Foster and Totnes MP Anthony Mangnall have asked the Government to also fund a study into extending network services over the Dartmouth Steam Railway from Paignton to Churston, to serve Brixham, which lost its branch in May, 1961.

They submitted their expression of interest after Torbay Council decided not to pursue the idea.

Tyseley gets a new volunteer army boost

MORE than 100 volunteers have responded to Vintage Trains' (VT) call to arms to help out in their hour of need.

As highlighted last issue, with many of Tyseley's staff furloughed, company secretary Robin Coombes issued an appeal for volunteers to take over a variety of roles during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Volunteer officer Matthew Self was recently unfurloughed to both assist existing staff with home working and the induction of the potential new volunteers.

The company has drawn up plans for the volunteers to help develop projects from home, starting with the development of the North Warwickshire Line under its new banner of the Shakespeare Line and embedding the 'Shakespeare Express' within the anticipated national timetable developments which will upgrade services in the West Midlands.

Projects

Secondly, volunteers are needed for the regeneration of the GWR staff club next to Tyseley depot. Finally, a third group will be directed to fundraising and establishing a social media team.

VT chairman Michael Whitehouse said: "We're in good shape because we have a war chest of money. We do not owe anyone a halfpenny."

As reported in Main Line News (pages 50-51), VT has cancelled its entire railtour programme for 2020, but vowed to return with a vengeance once lockdown is over. "The Shakespeare Line will be like the Severn Valley or North Yorkshire Moors railways but running at 60mph," said Michael.

Anyone who would like to volunteer for VT, working from home, is invited to email robin.coombes@vintagetrains.co.uk



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THE RAILWAY Magazine

DIGITAL ARCHIVE

classicmagazines.co.uk/rmarchive



Lockdown homework

WHILE heritage railways and associated workshops have closed during the Covid-19 pandemic, members and supporters have taken minor restoration jobs home to work in isolation. Here, the driving axlebox dust shields for Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway-based ex-Barry scrapyard BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76077 are seen being machined at the home workshop of restoration team member Andrew Meredith, while Locomotive Maintenance Services at Loughborough is closed. Picture: ANDREW MEREDITH

→ To find out how to support the project for as little as £10 per month, or to assist with practical work, contact info@standard76077.com or visit www.standard76077.com



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If so, follow the recently launched *Heritage Railway* magazine page on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/heritage-railway-magazine/



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Double Lottery win boosts Wensleydale

By Robin Jones

THE Wensleydale Railway has received a second and much-needed boost from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The 22-mile railway has just been awarded £50,000 under the Lottery's Heritage Emergency Fund to help charitable organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic – following on from a £368,000 award to restore Leeming Bar station house.

The latest grant includes £29,000 for Mk.2 carriage restoration in time for this December's Polar Express series. The remainder will be used to provide modern toilet facilities at Leeming Bar, the starting point for most passenger journeys and as a short hop off the A1(M), the railway's gateway to the dale for visitors.

A statement from the railway said: "Originally these essential improvements would have been funded by this season's train ticket income, which is not possible as we are closed due to the global pandemic. This is the fifth time the National Lottery has funded projects at Wensleydale Railway, demonstrating its commitment to our railway and belief in our work."

The railway's £50,000 emergency coronavirus appeal to supporters at www.justgiving.com/campaign/emergencymatchfundappeal had reached around £40,000 as we closed for press. A benefactor has offered to match fund the money raised once the target is reached, which means that with Gift Aid, it will bring in £125,000. Furthermore, a separate appeal by the line's plc to its shareholders has raised £20,000.

Despite the pandemic lockdown, the restoration of the station house continues to make progress.

It had been hoped that some aspects of the project would have



been undertaken by volunteers, but this was not practical because of the necessary social distancing.

The project has also experienced delays because of shortage of materials.

Before the pandemic, it had been estimated that the project would have been completed within nine months.

The scheme includes the restoration of the station's family accommodation in 1920s style. Once complete, the public will have access to the restored ticket office, waiting rooms and station family's lounge and kitchen.

A wide range of activities with railway themes will be delivered in and from the station house to the public, schools, families and community groups.

Elsewhere, the Lottery awarded a grant of £47,000 through its emergency fund to the Nene Valley Railway to help pay bills and wages while the railway is closed and all but two staff have been furloughed.

The railway's acting general manager Kim Shaw said: "Thanks to the National Lottery and its players, we now have a fighting chance of being able to welcome visitors back to the railway when we are allowed to reopen."

Above: The refurbishment of Leeming Bar station house underway. WR

Below: The floor joists in room three of the station house were found to be in a bad way. WR



"We are extremely grateful to everyone who has donated to our emergency appeal and would warmly welcome further contributions."

→ Donation may be made via nvr.org.uk/product.php/164/. Also benefiting, with £25,200 from the Lottery's emergency fund, is the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, which had already raised more than £40,000 from public donations to help keep it going through the lockdown. Details of how to support the line through its appeal are at www.wllr.org.uk/covid-19-appeal-tracks-recovery

Bo'ness Class 25 will run next year, if...

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) has called on supporters to make one final push to get Class 25 No. 25235 running again.

Following a successful appeal for the money to fit replacement tyres to the wheelsets, a huge amount has been achieved over the past three years with the wheelset work completed, bogie frames and attachments cleaned back to bare metal, repaired and repainted, traction motors professionally overhauled, axleboxes and axlebox guides repaired and

new bogie springs purchased.

The bogies have been rebuilt and are back beneath the locomotive, while the engine has also been completely stripped and rebuilt, the radiator group has also been stripped out and new settling tanks made. A start has now been made to treat all the body corrosion.

The SRPS has set a target date of 2021 for completion but need more funds to finish the radiator overhaul and pay for the new steel for the corrosion repairs. The radiator

elements were sent for overhaul last year and nearly all failed, and the cost to repair these alone is £14,000. Furthermore, several other items are needed to finish the job such as batteries, overhauled buffers and finally a new coat of paint.

→ If you would like to contribute to these final stages of restoration, send a cheque made payable to SRPS Class 25 Appeal, c/o Alastair George, 4 Baberton Mains Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 3EQ, or donate through the society's uk.virginmoneygiving.com page.



The restoration of Class 25 No. 25235 making steady progress at Bo'ness. SRPS

Tyseley to stage its next open day entirely online

HAVING cancelled its 2020 railtour programme, as reported in Main Line News, page 50, Vintage Trains is going ahead with its popular Tyseley Open Day. However, the June 27 all-day event will be held only in virtual reality.

The day will include a celebration of 35 years of the 'Shakespeare Express' (including footage of the first on June 8/9, 1985 when fares were just £7.50 return), an early morning photographic charter, an event opening ceremony, visiting locomotives including main line specials, locomotive namings, the miniature railway, shuttle trains and even a royal visit.

'Attendees' will be able to look around Tyseley's GWR roundhouse and inside today's locomotive works. See the 'Shakespeare Express' arrive in Stratford, take a trip on an afternoon shuttle train to Dorridge and watch the cavalcade at the end of the day.

Everyone is encouraged to post

photographs, video and stories/ anecdotes as the day's events unfold. Videos of previous open days or personal photographs and memories of a favourite locomotive are welcome.

Footage of Prince Charles visiting the site on September 14, 1988 will also be screened.

Vintage Trains is now planning to develop the 'Shakespeare Express' with a more intensive timetable from 2021 as the North Warwickshire Line via Shirley to Stratford-upon-Avon, which still has much of its GWR infrastructure in place, develops with a strong community involvement.

Tyseley station, for example has been adopted by Vintage Trains and Henley-in-Arden station has recently been similarly taken under the wing of a local community group.

→ To attend the open day, log on to www.facebook.com/vintagetrains/ or Twitter: @Vintage_Trains



Everyone is invited to attend the Tyseley open day – a firm favourite since the first on September 29, 1968 – via their computer screen. VT



Penny Pegler with No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* during its historic visit to the Swanage Railway in March, 2019. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Scotsman saviour's daughter says "now save the Swanage Railway"

PENNY Pegler – the daughter of Alan Pegler, the man who saved *Flying Scotsman* in 1963 – is now asking the public to help the Swanage Railway survive.

She has backed the award-winning Purbeck line's £360,000 'Save Our Service' appeal to help the railway countermand the economic effects of the coronavirus lockdown.

Last March, Penny was the star guest during the line's hugely-successful three-week visit of No. 60103, flying from her home in Portugal with her eldest son to wave off its first train from Swanage.

She said: "The Swanage Railway has been brought back to life over the years and exists today thanks to the enthusiasm, determination, financial support and hard work of those people who believed in the project and made it become a reality."

"For this great adventure to continue in these challenging times, the Swanage Railway needs our financial help. There is nothing

quite like the sound and smell of a locomotive in steam hauling a train through the Isle of Purbeck."

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Gavin Johns said: "I would like to thank Penny for her support as well as everyone who has made – and will make – a donation to the appeal during these extraordinary and challenging times. Several generations of remarkable people have rebuilt the Swanage Railway from nothing since 1976 and there is still so much more to achieve."

→ Clearly marked 'Save Our Service' appeal, cheques can be sent to the Swanage Railway Trust at Station House, Dorset, BH19 1HB. To donate by telephone, text 'SOS' to 70470 to donate £10. This costs £10 plus a standard rate message.

To donate via PayPal, a Fast Payment through internet banking or by a cheque in the post, visit www.saveourservice.co.uk while donations can also be made via the line's Facebook page. The appeal stood at around £170,000 as we closed for press.

Red Wheel plaque to celebrate Scotland's oldest railway

THE earliest railway in Scotland is to be honoured by a Red Wheel plaque.

The Tranent to Cockenzie Waggonway in East Lothian was built on wooden rails and, opening in 1722, used horses and gravity to haul coal.

The waggonway was built on estates seized from supporters of the Old Pretender, Bonnie Prince Charlie's father James Edward Stuart, after the failed uprising of 1715.

Thirty years later, his son, the Young Pretender, led Jacobite forces to victory over King

George II's army at the Battle of Prestonpans, part of which was fought over the waggonway.

Last year, excavations uncovered imprints of the wooden rails and a cobbled horse path between them, 3ft beneath the surface. It is now planned to open up a stretch of up to 16 yards to find out more about its construction as the archaeological dig continues.

Once the Covid-19 restrictions are eased, the Transport Trust is to unveil a Red Wheel plaque outside the Cockenzie museum run by the 1722 Waggonway Heritage Group.

Weston, Clevedon & Portishead cycleway gets £1.3m grant

PLANS to revive part of the legendary Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway as a cyclepath and walkway have received a £1.3 million boost from Highways England.

The money has been given to North Somerset Council towards the £2,450,000 scheme to build the 'pier to pier' route between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon, cutting four miles off the existing journey.

As highlighted in issue 263, a replica of the former Wick St Lawrence Halt is set to be built as part of the scheme as the entrance to the cycleway off Wick Road.

The shared path for use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders will, for

part of the way, use an existing farm track built on the route of the former light railway.

The project is set to create the first direct link between Weston and Clevedon since the railway closed on May 18, 1940, linking up the 24 miles of cycle route from Brean to Portishead. Up to now, anyone wishing to cycle between the two towns has to negotiate the M5 Junction 21 and a busy A road.

A council spokesman said: "Building a Weston to Clevedon cycleway is a long-held aspiration for the council, first proposed back in 1979. It will be designed to accommodate disabled people and will offer health benefits."

Brian Green, 'a professor of railways' and renowned photographer, dies aged 88

By Geoff Courtney

RENOWNED photographer Brian Green, whose images delighted generations of enthusiasts and trainspotters over six decades and who was fondly described by his daughter as a 'professor of railways', has died at the age of 88.

Known universally as BKB (Brian Kenneth Bayliss) Green, London-born Brian became a trainspotter in 1943 when he was living in Enfield, north London, and joined BR as a junior clerk at Liverpool Street in August 1948, shortly after Nationalisation. There he was taken under the wing of Roy Vincent, the Eastern Region's official photographer, which enabled him to take the first steps on a path that led to him becoming a household name in the world of railway photography.

In 1949 Roy took him to King's Cross, where from platform 10 – the platform revered by enthusiasts as the ideal location for trainspotting in the steam era – they crossed the tracks to the locomotive servicing point, which the public was not allowed access to. That visit, Brian told *Heritage Railway* in a 2016 interview, was to be his introduction to railway photography.

Later that year he and his family moved to Manchester, where for 10 years he worked in a number of clerical roles at the London Road (Eastern Region) station and in the stationmasters' offices at Guide Bridge and Sheffield Victoria, and in Mottram Yard master's office, Wath electric depot, and Penistone electric control room. In 1959 he took up a clerical position at Reddish depot, where he remained until 1976.

During this time he forged a bond with the Manchester to Sheffield Woodhead route, and in his interview he recalled riding through the three-mile Woodhead tunnel on the footplates of A3 No. 60104 *Solaris*



Unique LNER U1 class 2-8-0+0-8-2 No. 69999 heads a freight train out of Dewsnap Sidings near Guide Bridge on the electrified Manchester to Sheffield route on October 11, 1953. The Beyer-Garratt was photographed by Brian Green during his time based in the area. BKB GREEN

and B1 No. 61380, the latter occasion being a "dreadful experience" due to the loco's rough riding and the smoke.

He also spoke of travelling on the Woodhead route in the guard's van behind unique LNER U1 Beyer-Garratt No. 69999 in the early-1950s from Guide Bridge to Woodhead and back after the 178-ton 2-8-0+0-8-2 had been newly outshopped from Gorton following overhaul.

Thanks to his work he was given a lineside track permit covering a wide area, from Manchester to Rugby, and Doncaster to King's Cross, and the East Coast Main Line became his favourite location, particularly in the Grantham and Retford areas. He always had his camera with him, and kept meticulous records of his photographs, even to the extent of often noting which trains locomotives were working.

Saddened by what he felt was a run-down industry, Brian left the railways after a 29-year career in 1977 to work for the Automobile Association, retiring in February 1990, while his lineside photography continued until 2013.

Three years later Brian, by then physically frail but still with a razor-sharp mind, sold his collection of 25,000 negatives to another railway photographer, the late Norman Preedy, who described the collection at the time as "without doubt one of the most significant to have come onto the market for some time."

Judgement and skill

Brian's younger daughter Christine told *Heritage Railway*: "Dad always opted for the traditional 35mm single lens reflex cameras, and had quite a collection. He swore by them, saying you got better quality and could use your own judgement and skill, which is evident from his own photography success."

"What sticks in my mind about dad so much was his ability to recall numbers and times so incredibly well – it was like he was a 'professor of railways.' You only had to reel off an engine number and he'd tell you its name, where it was from, when it was built, the main routes it took, and its complete timetable."

"He knew the London Underground like the back of his hand, he would never need a map, and he also knew through his many friends when Network Rail works and repairs were on, which lines to avoid and which services were cut."

"Some years ago my husband Mark and I were driving to Edinburgh on the coastal route, some of which is parallel to the railway line, and a train went by quickly and I noted the number and the time. Dad said it was the 1.01pm service from Edinburgh to Euston, passing through that particular point at 1.45pm or something – it made total sense at the time."

Christine also recalled another example of her dad's railway knowledge. "When he couldn't drive any more due to sight loss, I would take him and mum out shopping. About three years ago we were passing Warrington Central station, and we heard a train but couldn't see it as the bridge sides were too high. Dad said: 'That's the Peterborough service that comes through at 12.04pm.' I looked at the time and it was 12.04pm – he wouldn't have been able to see that. I was floored!"

"We are all going to truly miss him. He's such a loss to us all as a family and to all of his friends, who also have a great passion for the railways and some of whom were life-long friends."

Brian, who lived in Oakwood, Warrington, died at Warrington Hospital on May 6, leaving a widow, 83-year-old Margaret, to whom he had been married for 61 years, and two daughters, Janet and Christine. He and Margaret met when he was based at Manchester London Road station, where she also worked. His funeral was held at Walton Lea Crematorium, Warrington, on May 26.



Renowned railway photographer Brian Green at Manchester London Road station in July 1956, when he was 24.



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INJECTORS: their theory, construction & working • 1893 • Pullen • £14.75

Even at 107 years old, this is a cracking book! It may not include the most modern injectors, but the science of injectors was well developed when it was published, and it does cover all injectors and ejectors of the period in considerable detail. Great book for the technically minded and those involved with steam preservation. 210 pages. 109 drawings/illustrations. 10 tables. Paperback.



Steam Locomotive Design: Data and Formulae • Phillipson • (1936) • £ 9.50

This book details the various factors affecting the design of the steam locomotive. Whilst published in 1936, the parameters with which it is mainly concerned largely were established by then. So if you want to calculate horsepower, driving wheel and cylinders sizes for a given power-output, the bearing surfaces required throughout the design for the intended power-output, the heating surface, hammer-blow, etc., etc. then this is the book for you. 448 pages with numerous drawings.



La Locomotive a Vapeur (1952) Chapelon • £24.95

Here the French engineer André Chapelon reviews developments in the design and construction of all the steam locomotive's major parts, and compares the merits of simple and compound expansion. He looks at the major standard gauge locomotive designs worldwide of the 20th Century, including his own. Also includes various addenda updating Chapelon's work to the end of commercial steam, looks at

Chapelon's unbuilt designs, and the work of those who continued to develop advanced steam locomotives. A book nobody interested in the history of the steam locomotive in the 20th century should be without. 659 pages, over 450 B & W photos, drawings, diagrams and charts, plus 41 colour illustrations.



From the Files Locomotives that Were & Locomotives that Weren't Barnes • £33.00

In this lovely book, artist & writer Robin Barnes looks at and illustrates some 25 locomotives which actually were built, and a further 14 which never saw the light of day. Very readable historical and technical details for each locomotive or machine illustrated and, in many cases, there are secondary illustrations,

be they paintings, technical drawings, or photographs. 96 large format (297 mm x 297 mm) pages. 65 paintings and illustrations by the author, and 28 mainly colour photographs. Hardbound.



Beyond '68 Jamieson • £33.60

This truly stunning book marks the 30th anniversary, in 2018, of the last trains under British Railways management on the narrow gauge Vale of Rheidol Railway, and the true end of BR steam. There are 104 pages 292mm x 273mm containing

85 monochrome photographs (virtually all one to a page) duotone printed on 170 gsm satin paper. Hardbound.



On the Trail of The Titfield Thunderbolt Castens • £11.05

A revised and enlarged edition of this book on the making, in 1952 of the Ealing film, "The Titfield Thunderbolt", perhaps the most loved of all feature films with a railway subject. Includes a comprehensive guide to the locations used. 56 page, quality paperback, 35 B&W photos and 4 maps.

Steam Locomotive Design Specifications and Calculations for New Build Baldwin 2-4-2T

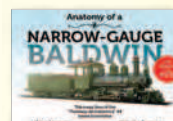
'Lyn' • Gaylor • £58.50

At 604 pages, this is a real doorstop of a book! It contains the full design and engineering criteria for building the new version of the 2 foot gauge Lynton & Barnstaple 2-4-2T 'Lyn', now complete and operation. You won't be able to build your version from this, but there is a huge amount of useful information here, including a good number of CAD drawings and Third Angle drawings of various parts, including 5 pages for the boiler. Paperback.



Anatomy of a Narrow Gauge Baldwin • Manning • £11.40

Baldwin WN 37399 is a 60 cm gauge 2-4-0 tender locomotive built in 1911 for the Cantareira Tramway in Brazil. It has hauled passengers, sugar, limestone and cement on different lines, and now awaits restoration. Modified at various times during its life, it is a superb project for modellers. In 92 landscape pages Peter Manning provides 150 CAD drawings of the engine and its tenders, with basic dimensions included. There is also an history of the loco with 20 photographs, both B&W and colour.



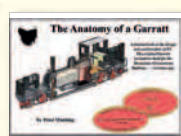
The Darjeeling Garratt and the engine it tried to replace • Manning • £23.95

Here Peter Manning provides detail dimensioned drawings plus 3D CAD ones, of the second Garratt locomotive built - the 'D' class for the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, plus drawings for the 'B' class 0-4-0 tanks it was intended to replace. Whilst a significant development in the evolution of Garratts, the 'D' class locomotive wasn't repeated on the DHR, and the 0-4-0 tanks continued to the present. 72 landscape format and ringbound pages.



The Anatomy of a Garratt Manning • £23.35

Peter Manning's "detailed look at the design and construction of K1, the original Garratt locomotive, built for the Tasmanian Government Railways - a century ago", now on the Welsh Highland Railway. The drawings here are of such quality that we are sure you could build a model of K1. In any gauge, from them. 29 pages of colour views of the engineering anatomy, 24 pages of parts drawings with imperial dimensions, a colour painting, a map and a history of K1's life so far. 66 landscape A4 format pages, spiral-bound, with a plastic outer cover. Great information.



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1932 - 1965 • DVD £20.77

Vol. 2 From Paris to the West & the Last of Steam • 1947 - 1966 • DVD £20.77

Vol. 3 The Splendour of Steam and early Electrics • 1945 - 1965 • DVD £20.77

Vol. 1 has considerable footage shot on the Nord Railway, and Region, that from 1932 shot by Jack Stretton-Ward covering a journey from Dover to Paris, and return, on the Fleche d'Or, much of the return journey shot from the footplate. Film from 1947 also covers the Gares du Nord and Bastille, plus a visit to Vitry test plant to see a 141R being put through its paces. This DVD ends with 1965 film shot at Calais.

Vol. 2 covers trips on the lines from Paris St. Lazare to Le Havre in 1947 in which a Dean Goods is seen, and slightly later, a journey from Paris Montparnasse to Le Mans, where the 2-D-2 hands over to a 141P. The action then moves to Verdun on the Est Region in 1966, before finishing with the very last SNCF steam run on the 28th April 1973 with a 141R from Sarreguemines.

Vol. 3 makes a partly electric journey in 1947, anti-clockwise round France from Paris Austerlitz, to the Gares d'Est and to Lyon, via Modane & Culoz, finishing with a considerable amount of steam, including a 240P at the Gare de Lyon.

All are around 55 minutes long and mostly in B & W - Vol. 1 has some colour.



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Very well made film on India's four narrow gauge mountain lines - the Darjeeling, Matheran, Nilgiri and Shimla railways. All are shown with steam-powered trains, although the Matheran line is using a Darjeeling Class 'B' as motive power. What makes this film that bit different from others is that it has more in the way of lineside shots, which really give you a feel for the countryside the railways operate through, and life going on around them. Amongst highlights are the Darjeeling trains negotiating Kurseong and its bazaar, but there is much more!



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Boris Johnson predicts “glorious future” for Llangollen Railway

By Gareth Evans

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson said in Parliament on May 13 that the Llangollen Railway (LR) has “a glorious future ahead.” The development comes as two other MPs have raised questions with the Government about support for the heritage railway sector in recent weeks.

Mr Johnson’s statement came after the LR’s local Westminster representative, Simon Baynes MP (Conservative, Clwyd South), asked during Prime Minister’s Questions: “The hospitality and tourism businesses in my constituency of Clwyd South are vital for the health of the local economy, of which a very good example is the Llangollen steam railway. Will the Prime Minister join me in congratulating the railway on its current restructuring and fundraising campaign designed to see it through the coronavirus crisis? After the crisis is over, will he please hop on board one of its steam trains

when he is next in Llangollen?”

The Prime Minister replied: “I have a picture at home of myself and William Hague aboard the Llangollen steam railway, I am proud to say. I congratulate the group on what they are doing to raise funds. I have no doubt that they have a glorious future ahead with my hon. Friend’s support.”

Sector support

In a written question to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Liz Saville-Roberts (Plaid Cymru, Dwyfor Meirionnydd) asked what support for heritage railways in the UK the department and HM Treasury have agreed since April 8, 2020.

Nigel Huddleston, assistant whip, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for DCMS (Conservative, Mid Worcestershire) replied: “We recognise the extremely difficult circumstances which heritage and tourism businesses, including heritage railways, are currently facing

across the country as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“To assist in mitigating this impact, the chancellor has announced an extensive financial support package for business and workers in the current economic emergency. The Heritage Alliance, of which the Heritage Railway Association is a member, is represented at weekly ministerial teleconferences with DCMS, in order to communicate members’ issues and concerns to Government to help us to seek solutions and mitigations.

“Heritage railways may wish to apply for further support from the Heritage Emergency Fund, a £50-million scheme launched by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the heritage sector through the Covid-19 pandemic.

“They may also want to approach Historic England, which has announced a £2-million programme of grants for smaller, specialist organisations and projects.”

In a parliamentary debate about the heritage and tourism sector on April 27, Robbie Moore (Conservative, Keighley), said: “The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway – Yorkshire’s No. 1 tourist attraction – has welcomed over seven million visitors to Keighley in the last 50 years, all supporting our much-loved heritage railway and the local economy in Keighley.

“Like all heritage railways, it is run predominantly by passionate volunteers, with an economic model based on ensuring that ticket sales are plentiful. With social distancing restrictions unlikely to be relaxed for a significant time, will the minister outline what additional support he will consider providing to the heritage railway sector?”

Nigel Huddleston MP replied: “My hon. Friend may wish to apply to the £50 million emergency programme launched by the heritage fund to support the heritage sector through the Covid-19 pandemic. He may also want to approach Historic England.”

The term ‘furlough’ may be new to many, but it is familiar to collectors of old railway tickets

By Geoff Courtney

EARLIER this year many of us had never heard of the word ‘furlough’, or if we had we would undoubtedly have had only a remote idea of its meaning.

The coronavirus pandemic has changed that, but to many collectors of old railway tickets – a hobby not as esoteric as some may imagine, and indeed popular enough to have its own specialist auctions – it was far from an unknown word even before Covid-19 struck.

Great Central Railwayana director Dave Jones, one of the country’s leading railway ticket collectors, said ‘furlough’ first appeared on tickets issued to servicemen on a leave of absence prior to the 1923 Grouping, and was probably used most widely by the North Eastern Railway. An example he quoted was an NER ticket for a return journey from Leeming Bar in North Yorkshire to York which had ‘Soldier on furlough’ quite clearly printed on it.

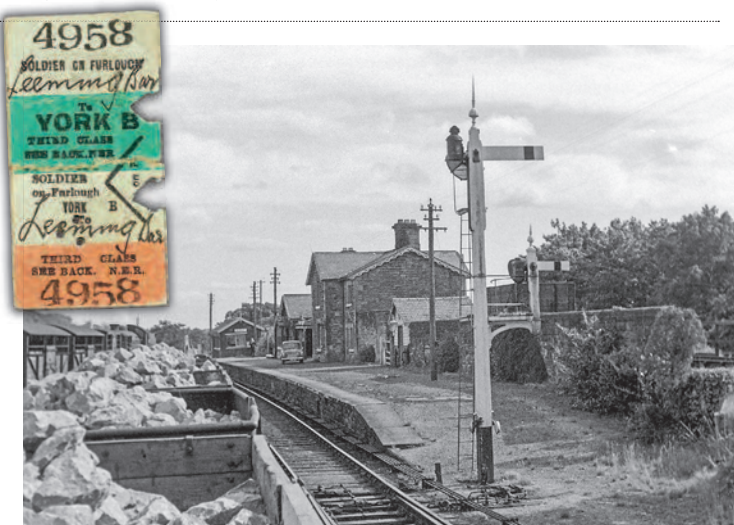
After Grouping, ‘furlough’ was adopted by the LNER, which had a significant number of RAF and USAF bases on its patch, and was occasionally also used by the Southern Railway and LMS. Dave said that it even survived into

the post-Nationalisation era of British Railways, particularly in the Eastern Region, although BR also printed other terms, such as ‘Forces leave-MM’, the initials standing for Mercantile Marine.

Chris Dickerson, of Pickering-based auction and sales company Old Railway Tickets, concurred that ‘furlough’ was used mainly by the LNER, while post-Grouping the GWR often used ‘HM forces on leave.’ Chris, a North York Moors Historical Railway Trust board director, said the terms ‘forces on leave’ or ‘forces on duty’ were also often used.

He said that a number of service personnel tickets issued after Nationalisation but printed by one of the Big Four and carrying the term ‘furlough’ were still in use well into the 1960s, especially by some little-used country stations. “In towns that had a major military presence, like Colchester, stations soon ran out of such tickets, but country stations often issued pre-printed stock for many years.”

According to English language websites, ‘furlough’ comes from Dutch verlof, which originated from early 17th century middle low German from the verb verlöven (to allow).



Rural activity: There are signs of activity at Leeming Bar station (now part of the Wensleydale Railway) in this atmospheric 1959 scene, as a K1 class 2-6-0 shunts cattle wagons on the left and someone strides towards the Ford Prefect parked on the platform. Meanwhile, wagons loaded with limestone from local quarries are ready to be delivered to customers. The North Yorkshire station was the starting point in the pre-Grouping era for a soldier on furlough to travel to York. TRANSPORT TREASURY/NORRIS FORREST

Inset: A North Eastern Railway ticket issued to a soldier on furlough for return travel from Leeming Bar to York. GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAYANA AUCTIONS

An LNER furlough return ticket for a serviceman’s journey of about four miles each way from Sealand in Flintshire to either Connah’s Quay or Shotton station. The ticket, which would have been issued after September 1931 as prior to then Sealand was called Welsh Road Halt, was doubtless issued to an airman, as Sealand was located close to an RAF base. OLD RAILWAY TICKETS





LMS 0-6-0T No. 47493 joins forces with the Bluebell Railway's LBSCR E4 class 0-6-2T No. 32473 on the Spa Valley Railway in May 2007. The 'Jinty' and the E4, built respectively in February 1928 and June 1898, are producing a combined tractive effort of more than 40,000lb ft as they approach Groombridge. The Spa Valley has recently welcomed back from restoration a Mk.1 coach that is to be a key member of the railway's popular dining trains. DAVID STAINES

Benefactor remembered as Spa Valley Railway dining carriage returns after £60k restoration at Cranmore

By Geoff Courtney

A Mk.1 coach that is earmarked for a key role in the Spa Valley Railway's crowd-pulling dining trains has returned to the Tunbridge Wells West-based heritage line after restoration at the East Somerset Railway. The carriage, a first open coach, will now undergo final work including overhaul of the bogies and refitting of the vacuum brakes and steam heating.

No. 3131 will be outshopped in BR

Southern Region crimson and cream and be named *Audrey*, in memory of the late Audrey and Charles Harris, whose legacy to the railway enabled the £60,000 restoration to take place.

Spa Valley commercial manager Jonnie Pay said that the restoration of the coach, which was purchased in 2018, included two new ends, replacement of all metalwork underneath the windows, and the full rebuild of a large part of one side

due to the discovery that during its service life it had been involved in a collision. "It will become a key part of our dining train operation, and will take pride of place alongside another Mk.1 and a Mk.2, and be joined by our future kitchen car that will enter the shed for overhaul next year."

As an illustration of the importance of the dining operation to the railway, Jonnie revealed that more than £10,000 worth of

tickets were sold within a week for a newly-launched programme of 'gin and steam' specials that were to run monthly throughout the summer but fell victim to the lockdown.

The Spa Valley's shop at Tunbridge Wells West is another success story, thanks to a £10,000 volunteer-led refurbishment that provides more display space for model railway items and other products, while the shop has also been granted an alcohol licence for bottled sales.

Caledonian Sleeper coach upgrades accommodation for Didcot volunteers

FACILITIES for Didcot Railway Centre volunteers are soon to be upgraded following the delivery of Mk.3 sleeping car No. 10527 which was delivered by low loader to Didcot West Yard on May 6.

Donated by Porterbrook Leasing following its retirement from Caledonian Sleeper services last October, No. 01527 was worked onwards by rail to the centre by DB Cargo on Monday, May 11.

Once an electricity supply and intruder and fire alarm systems have been installed, the 1980s carriage will be used to replace the Mk.2 sleeper currently used to provide overnight accommodation for volunteers.

Didcot's chief executive Emma Jhita said: "We

are extremely grateful to Porterbrook for this generous gift. In normal times, our 250 active volunteers contribute around 50,000 hours to restore and maintain our unique collection and help welcome visitors and bring to life the history of the Great Western Railway – anything that helps us to improve the amenities for our working volunteers is very welcome and this coach will be of particular benefit to those that travel some distance to work on the site.

"Although we are currently closed, we will be pleased to welcome new volunteers soon as we are in a position to reopen – whether you want to help run the trains, serve in the shop or tend the gardens within



Caledonian Sleeper car No. 10527 is delivered to Didcot West Yard on Wednesday, May 6. GWS

the centre, we'd love to hear from you."

The centre can be contacted via email at info@didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk.



The proposed new station serving Trawsfynydd and its 1180-acre man-made lake. BFRHT



The surviving goods shed at Maentwrog Road is seen alongside the overgrown but intact track and siding. Also pictured is the A470 road bridge. BFRHT

New Trawsfynydd revival group launches 'Timber for a Tenner' appeal

By Robin Jones

THE Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust – formed in November 2018 as a second attempt to revive the mothballed Blaenau Ffestiniog to Trawsfynydd branch – is inviting the public to sponsor a major sleeper replacement drive.

The 'Timber for a Tenner' appeal aims to fund not only the replacement of around 14,000 sleepers on the route, but also the legal and administrative costs of securing a lease of the line from Network Rail and costs involved with the initial stages of surveying the trackbed to find out exactly what is needed to return the line to working order.

The last train to carry nuclear material from the closed Trawsfynydd nuclear power station left on April 22, 1997 hauled by EWS Class 37 No. 37426.

The appeal is being divided into

five stages using the proposed stations/halts as milestones – 1: Blaenau Ffestiniog to Manod (one mile); 2: Manod to Cwm Teigl (2½ miles); 3: Cwm Teigl to Llan Ffestiniog (four miles); 4: Llan Ffestiniog to Maentwrog Road (5½ miles); and 5: Maentwrog Road to Trawsfynydd Halt (seven miles).

New organisation

Treasurer Steve Richards said: "The previous attempt to refurbish the line came to grief in 2017. We are a newly-formed organisation and have reviewed and learned the lessons of that failure. Members of the current committee are determined to 'do things properly' – recruiting a mix of professional and technical members who share a common aim – that of restoring traffic to this picturesque line. Since our trust was established, we have taken the time to put in place a robust strategy that will form the foundations of our efforts going forward."

"We are now at the stage where we need to turn words into action. Launching an appeal in the middle of one of the most crippling pandemics that we have ever encountered might not be seen as great timing – especially as the rest of the heritage rail sector is doing the same. With no end-date in sight however, we believe that we must press on."

Chairman Shane Barry said: "We are now starting negotiations with Network Rail with a view to securing a long term lease of the trackbed and its supporting infrastructure. We have raised the money to begin these talks, but will need to raise a significant amount of funds to cover the legal costs of entering into an agreement with them. That, of course, is just the start as we will need to cover the costs of surveying the line just to find out what needs doing!"

"Our 'Timber for a Tenner' appeal

will do just that. If we can get each sleeper sponsored for £10, then that will give us a really solid financial base on which to build."

Working parties

The trust has already been granted Gift Aid status. It has pencilled in September 19/20 for its first two working parties, subject to confirmation because of lockdown restrictions.

Trawsfynydd was the largest intermediate settlement and station on the route. Opened in 1882 by the Bala & Ffestiniog Railway, it was backed by the GWR, of which it became part in 1910. It closed to passengers on January 4, 1960 and a last train special ran from Bala to Blaenau Ffestiniog and back on January 22, 1961, before the through route closed.

→ If you are interested in supporting the appeal or becoming a member of the trust, visit www.balaffest.org.uk

Mid-Norfolk pioneers 21st century crossing technology for Dereham

THE Mid-Norfolk Railway's (MNR) refurbishment of Dereham's Yaxham Road level crossing has been hailed as a first for the heritage sector.

The crossing has been completed using a system developed by Dutch railway infrastructure company Edilon Sedra and was installed by volunteers from the MNR, together with contractors from Sonic Rail Services, TXMPlant and a team of technicians from Keltbray. The signalling and crossing warning lights work was carried out by MNR volunteers to industry standard, and the trackwork replacement was carried out by Sonic Rail Services.

The finished crossing saw specially prefabricated concrete slabs installed, before new special hard-wearing high manganese content steel rails were fitted. The rails were then encased in a special resin developed by Edilon Sedra by the Keltbray technicians.

The technology has not previously been used at such a busy crossing point on the entire UK rail system. The finished crossing is expected to have a maintenance-free life of at least 50 years. The crossing rails were also laid onto a special bedding layer that acts as a noise dampener and so the crossing will also be quieter.

The new level crossing has sparked interest for Network Rail and Transport for London, who have both been trialling this system. Officials from the two organisations have visited the MNR site and it is expected that this type of crossing will be rolled out across the UK rail network in the future.

The line's general manager George Saville said: "We all recognise that this is a difficult year for everyone. However, at the MNR we knew we had to conduct this work as the old level crossing had reached the end of its life and therefore had



The installation of the new Yaxham Road crossing underway. MNR

to be replaced. As a result, the railway decided to invest in 21st-century technology for our replacement crossing as it safeguards our long term future."

Vandalism and trespass exacerbating lockdown harm to lines

By Robin Jones

SEVERAL heritage railways have been left counting the cost after being targeted by vandals during the Covid-19 closure period.

Whereas many lines have launched emergency appeals to compensate for the lack of revenue during lockdown, the attacks have compounded their financial problems.

The Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway has been hit by a surge of trespass and vandalism – literally from end-to-end on the four-mile line.

The starter signal wire at Chinnor station has been cut three times – probably with industrial cutters – and an attempt made to uproot a supporting stake. The lineside fence has been repeatedly vandalised at this location as well.

Security measures

Hi-definition CCTV cameras were installed in late May in a bid to identify the perpetrators for prosecution – at the site where the BBC Silent Witness police drama was filmed last year!

At Keens Lane crossing, a quarter of a mile from Chinnor, security padlocks were removed and disappeared, while a further half-mile towards Princes Risborough, the lineside fencing by Wainhill crossing was damaged. At Thame Junction, some permanent way ballast



A normally unremarkable train movement becomes the focus of attention when nothing else moves during lockdown. On the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, a crossing gate from Penrhyn crossing had been removed for repair during closure. The missing gate seemed to be interpreted as an invitation to walk along the line by some local walkers, who thereby risk problems with works trains and when services eventually restart. Hibberd Planet 4wDM Upnor Castle is seen at Minffordd at the head of a short rake of wagons returning the crossing gate for reinstallation. FF&WHR

wagons were decorated with graffiti.

Local walkers were leaving adjacent public footpaths and used the half-mile of track as a short cut walking route back to Chinnor. One neighbour half-a-mile west of Chinnor station has insisted that it is acceptable to trim his hedge from the railway line, while another insisted the railway does not own the land and so he can walk about as he likes!

Further along the line, 2½ miles from Chinnor, the level crossing gates at a user worked crossing were obstructed by hardcore being laid to enable vehicles to more easily cross the line but prevented the gate to be closed. This issue was eventually amicably resolved with the user.

Illegal track walkers have a left a housebrick and inexplicably an orange by the Chinnor starting signal.

The railway embarked on a social media anti-trespass campaign which was picked up and broadcast by the BBC in mid-May. A track patroller asked a trespasser who

was photographed as to why he was walking along the side of the line – and said he always did and in any case, no trains were running.

Between May 2-13, following a series of trespass incidents, Swindon & Cricklade Railway volunteers found that fencing at Taw Valley Halt had been ripped up and signs smashed.

Further incidents

The Midland Railway-Butterley was targeted twice in a week by vandals. On May 27, a group of youngsters raided the carriage which serves as a waiting room at Swanwick Junction, ripped out seats, etched graffiti on the tables and used the space as a toilet.

Next day, windows were smashed in one of the service coaches.

A staff member took a photograph of a group of four youths and handed it to police.

The railway launched an appeal at www.midlandrailway-butterley.co.uk/donations/ to cover the loss of income during lockdown, but now faces

having to find extra money on top to repair the damage.

The South Devon Railway has also reported trespass incidents, including damage to gates and fences.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway general manager Charles Spencer reiterated warnings by his counterparts of other heritage lines that trespassers are risking their lives, because works trains are often run, even during closure.

Meanwhile, on the 'big railway', newly-released figures from Network Rail showed that trespassers disrupted vital passenger and freight services 1024 times during the first month of the pandemic lockdown. Network Rail's head of public and passenger safety for Network Rail Allan Spence said: "These figures are disappointing. Trespass is often seen as a young person problem but less than a fifth of the trespass incidents recorded in lockdown involved youngsters. Adults are far more likely to be the ones putting themselves in harm's way."

Farewell to North East industrials expert and author Colin Mountford

TRIBUTES have been paid to renowned industrial railway author Colin Mountford, who died on May 16 at the age of 78.

Born in Worcester, where he attended the city grammar school, Colin had strong family links with Swindon, where members of both sides of his family had been employed 'inside' in the GWR works.

One of his cousins was Justin Hayward, a member of the rock band the Moody Blues, and he not only attended their concerts, but occasionally visited Justin at his home in Monaco.

His uncle, Eric Mountford, was also a noted railway historian who wrote several books about Swindon and South Wales, notably the history of Caerphilly Works published in 1975.

Colin spent much time at Swindon station when he was young and later became a member of the Great Western Society.

At Durham University, the thesis for his MA degree was The History of John Bowes & Partners up to 1914. He became one of the founding members and later chairman of the

Bowes Railway. The Birmingham Locomotive Club published a history of the railway in 1966 and an enlarged revised edition in 1976, a copy of which he presented to the Queen Mother, whose family the Bowes-Lyons had a connection



Colin (right) is seen being presented with the Stephenson Locomotive Society's Annual Literary Award 2015 for his book *Rope and Chain Haulage*, by the group's president Dr Michael Bailey on April 10, 2016. MA GREEN/SLS

with the line, when she visited the railway that year to launch the preservation scheme on its 150th anniversary.

Colin became a history teacher and a deputy headmaster, and after he retired, a schools inspector. At one stage he served as chairman of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers.

His interest in industrial railways led to him helping to compile Industrial Railway Society handbooks for Durham and Northumberland and in 2004 his *The Private Railways of County Durham* was published. He also served on the Industrial Locomotive Society committee for eight years.

Colin was diagnosed with terminal cancer in March and was admitted to hospital, where he died. A memorial service at Newcastle Cathedral is planned for 2021.

IRS member Russell Wear said: "He has made a huge contribution to industrial history and railways, particularly in County Durham, and his work will remain as a memorial into the future."



Tom Jewitt.
OXFORD LIVING HISTORY GROUP

FREDERICK JAMES IVERMEE on his oath saith I reside at No.3 Star Terrace, Cholsey I was in charge of the L.D.V. guard on the four arches bridge on the Berkshire side from 10p.m. on the 1st June During my tour of sentry from 12.40 to 3.20a.m. on the 2nd June I was accompanied by J. Croxford junior About 3.10am. Croxford reported to me that the sentry from the Oxfordshire side was absent from his post I immediately walked up the line towards the Oxford side After going forty to fifty yards I came across a smashed rifle I immediately called the other sentry as I knew something had happened I shewed him the broken rifle lying between the up and down ^{main} line Croxford went in front of me and he saw parts of a body scattered on the main up line He shouted to me and I told him to go and fetch Dr. Cooper and phone for the police. *I had seen the deceased on sentry duty on the line & we were a family the bridge of the Harvel of the bridge & had a chat then. He was perfectly normal.*

Frederick James Ivermee

Statement to the police from Fredrick Ivermee, the LDV member on the Berkshire side of the bridge on the fatal evening.
OXFORD LIVING HISTORY GROUP

Special train to honour first 'Dad's Army' volunteer killed in the war

By Tony Stead

THE Cholsey & Wallingford Railway is planning a special train to mark the 80th anniversary of the death of a man identified by local historians as the first member of the Home Guard to die in the Second World War.

The term Home Guard – made famous by the BBC TV comedy series Dad's Army – was not the initial title used for those volunteers who kept nightly watch and were prepared to protect Britain against invasion.

Soon after war was declared in 1939, several local groups formed with this purpose in mind, and as their numbers grew it became apparent that a degree of co-ordination and training was required. By May 13, 1940 a plan to create the Local Defence Volunteers (LDV) was in place and its formation announced in a radio broadcast the next evening.

Fatal casualty

However, what was perhaps the first fatal casualty of an LDV member occurred locally to the railway, for on Sunday, June 2, 1940, less than a month later, Tom Jewitt, a 31-year-old resident of nearby Crowmarsh, the son of a Durham miner, who was employed as a 'moulder' at the foundry operated by the Wilder-Lister

company, was killed while out on his first LDV assignment. Indeed, it may have been that Tom volunteered for this duty to allow his landlord, Bill Harvey, to stay at home and look after his wife Edith, who was unwell, and their three children.

Tom's role that evening was to guard the GWR London-Bristol main line, particularly the bridge over the Thames between Cholsey and Goring, presumably with an eye for the activity of 'fifth columnists' who might try to sabotage the railway or for bomb damage, both of which could cause a derailment or serious damage.

Patrol

An inquest was held at Berkshire Downs café in Moulsoford on June 3, 1940 and according to the coroner's report, Tom left his lodgings with the Harveys of 2 Dormer Cottages at 8.45pm on Saturday, June 1 to go to a meeting of the local LDV. He was then assigned to patrol the Oxfordshire side of bridge over the Thames with Frank Wilder Junior from 1am.

Both ends of the bridge had pillboxes, although it is unlikely that these were in place in June 1940. At 3am Rowland Green, who was in charge of the party on the Oxfordshire side of the bridge, was told by Frank Wilder that he had not seen Tom Jewitt for 20 minutes. When Mr Green went to look for Tom he was informed by his opposite number from the Berkshire side, Fredrick Ivermee of 3 Star Terrace, Cholsey, that something was lying on the line. It seems possible that Mr Ivermee may have also been searching as his statement said that the junior with him, J Croxford, had failed to see Tom on his patrols too.

Mr Green and Mr Ivermee then walked the line and "discovered Jewitt's body badly mangled between

Extract from the Berks and Oxon Advertiser dated Friday, June 7, 1940.
OXFORD LIVING HISTORY GROUP

"It is too dangerous a task for the inexperienced persons and should be performed by either railwaymen or persons who have knowledge of walking among railway lines, observed the Coroner, and he went on to say that he was not criticising or saying that anybody was to blame, "but I think the authorities should give definite instructions on how the patrol should be carried out, or that railwaymen or those acquainted with railways should perform this particular duty."

the Up and Down lines". Later this statement was qualified as being between the main Up and Down lines. In his statement to police Mr Ivermee stated that he found a smashed rifle and then called the Oxfordshire guard but by this time Mr Green must also have been looking for him.

During the inquest it was reported by Mr Green that LDV volunteers were not provided with any training prior to being assigned such duties. The coroner then reported that he felt proper instructions needed to be provided to those guarding the railway.

Inquest

The inquest concluded that "death was due to shock due to injury caused by a passing train, and that such injury was caused by misadventure".

There is no mention of Frank Wilder in the newspaper article, nor of J Croxford in the police report which makes it hard to determine the precise sequence of events. Equally, we have no idea which train hit Tom; perhaps he heard one and stepped away from one only to be hit by one travelling in the opposite direction? Further confusion arises when studying the Ministry of Pensions letter of July 22, 1940 requesting details of the inquest as in this letter the accident is said to have occurred on July 2, 1940, a month later than the event.

Furthermore, it seems the name on the stone in the churchyard at Crowmarsh was misspelt and the stone spells his surname Jowett; perhaps this was how local people knew Tom as his north-eastern accent may have made Jewitt sound like Jowett?

What is certain is that the mystery and confusion surrounding what may well be the first death of a LDV member has been untangled only thanks to the efforts of Michael Quigley and Paul Chambers of the Oxfordshire Living History Group. Indeed, some of Tom's modern-day relatives were of the impression that Tom's death was thought by some as suicide, but clearly this was not the opinion at the time as death certificate states that the cause of death was "shock from injuries accidentally caused by being run into by a train on the GWR on Cholsey viaduct".

It was planned to commemorate the tragedy with a special train on the neighbouring heritage line in June and a memorial service at the church in Crowmarsh. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, both events have been postponed until further notice

Oxfordshire Home Guard has submitted a claim to the War Grave Commission to get recognition for Tom and to get him listed on the Home Guard Roll of Honour on the Commonwealth War Grave Commission database.



The memorial stone in the church gateway at St Mary Magdalene, Crowmarsh Gifford with the misspelling of Tom's surname.
OXFORD LIVING HISTORY GROUP

Three more DVTs secured for heritage sector

By Robin Jones

THE Northampton & Lamport and Colne Valley railways and Crewe Heritage Centre have become the latest lines to acquire a Mk.3b Driving Van Trailer (DVT).

The purpose-built control cars which allow the driver to operate a locomotive from the opposite end of a train, have been acquired from Porterbrook Leasing following their withdrawal from Greater Anglia Class 90-hauled push-pull services between Liverpool Street and Norwich which have now been replaced by Class 745/0 units.

These Class 82 DVTs were originally used by Virgin Trains on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) until the Pendolinos were fully operational. Following the introduction of the Class 745/0 units, the locomotive-hauled sets have all been withdrawn from service, with the last set running its final services on March 24.

The first of four DVTs to be preserved so far, No. 82125 has since 2019 been used as a hauled carriage at the Mid-Norfolk Railway.

As reported last issue, Porterbrook has donated No. 82118 *Britannia* for static display at Crewe Heritage Centre, along with Mk.3 coach No. 12114.

A statement from the heritage centre said: "These vehicles were a

common sight through Crewe for many years and will make a fantastic addition to our collection. We intend to display the vehicles alongside our Class 87 electric locomotive No. 87035 *Robert Burns* to create a short train set. Nos. 82118 and 12114 were chosen as ideal candidates for preservation as they ran with No. 87035 on its last service in 2004.

"We plan to use the space inside the DVT as an exhibition area, with the driving cab open to visitors. Our plans for the Mk.3 coach include a general sitting area and a classroom for school visits during the week. In the long term we plan to externally paint the vehicles into a prototypical BR livery."

Porterbrook's director of stakeholder engagement Rupert Brennan-Brown said: "We are delighted to see these vehicles go to a good home, where they can show the evolution of passenger travel on the WCML to future generations."

Legacy

On May 15 No. 82114 arrived at the Northampton & Lamport Railway after being bought from Porterbrook using a legacy donation in memory of Alfred Staden, an inventor connected with the Northamptonshire leather/shoe industry who passed away in June 2016 aged 93. His legacy and other donations were shared with several other



Newly-delivered Greater Anglia Mk.3b Driving Van Trailer No. 82114 alongside the platform at the Northampton & Lamport's Boughton station. NLR

Northampton organisations.

The acquisition of the DVT is part of the ongoing project to increase the number of vehicles for passenger services as well as boosting the variety of vehicle types, operational resilience and quality of stock. The project aims to create a rake of air braked coaches while increasing the educational opportunities by preserving Mk.3 vehicles as a way of telling the story of BR's in-house coach development alongside the line's existing Mk.1 and Mk.2 coaches.

No. 82114 is to remain in its current Greater Anglia livery, but will be fitted with a generator to provide electrical supplies to the other vehicles in the rake, thus allowing non-ETH/ETS fitted locomotives to haul the rake throughout the year.

Around the same time, DVT No. 82121 *Carlisle Cathedral* was delivered, also by road, to the Colne Valley Railway at Castle Hedingham.

Mk.3 DVTs were built from 1988 by

British Rail Engineering Limited (BREL) at Derby Litchurch Lane works and were introduced to the WCML with Mk. 3 coaches.

Evolution

In late 2018, No. 82113, converted into a self-powered vehicle dubbed No. 19001, ran trials along the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway in October. The Artemis-led project saw the DVT fitted with a JCB engine and hydraulic accumulators, which store energy during braking for reuse during acceleration to reduce overall energy consumption. The vehicle is unlikely to actually carry No. 19001 or be allowed out on the main line.

Meanwhile, in 2019, Jeremy Hosking's Locomotive Services Ltd bought two Class 90s, Nos. 90001 *Crown Point* and 90002 *Eastern Daily Press 1870-2010 Serving Norfolk for 140 Years* as part of an ongoing expansion of its operation as a train operating company, protecting its heritage locomotives from excessive use.

Thieves stall Tanfield locomotive's heritage era debut

LOCKDOWN intruders who stole £20,000-worth of non-ferrous fittings during a break-in at the Tanfield Railway's Sunnyside headquarters on Tuesday, April 28 have jeopardised the restoration of Barclay 0-6-0ST No. 1015 of 1904 *Horden*.

Supplied new to Horden Collieries of Durham, the locomotive has never run in preservation. Its restoration began in 2012.

Tanfield Railway Trust chairman Derek Smith said: "We're absolutely devastated by this callous and targeted theft.

"Our volunteers have put thousands of hours into the restoration of *Horden*. Before the lockdown, it was only weeks away from hauling trains for the first time since 1972.

"The theft will put that back months and cost more than £20,000; money that we can ill afford at a time when we have no income."

Northumbria Police have appealed for anyone with information about the theft of copper pipework and brass fittings to contact its 'report an incident' page at www.northumbria.police.uk quoting log 300 280420.



Barclay saddle tank *Horden* under restoration at the Tanfield Railway. TANFIELD RAILWAY TRUST

DC Shaun Atherton, who is leading the investigation, said: "This was a targeted theft where thieves preyed on a charitable organisation during lockdown."

The railway has launched a £50,000 appeal at www.gofundme.com/f/help-support-tanfield-railway to compensate through loss of income during the Covid-19 pandemic

closure period, and part of the money raised will go towards getting *Horden's* restoration back on track. As we closed for press, more than £11,000 has been raised.

Pacers delivered for Cambrian community rail project

By Gareth Evans

CAMBRIAN Heritage Railways (CHR) has acquired a pair of Class 144 Pacer diesel railbuses from Porterbrook Leasing.

Nos. 144006/7 travelled under their own power by rail to Gobowen from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway on Friday, May 22, saving four separate lorry moves.

As reported last issue, the entire 23-strong class has recently been stored at Keighley on the heritage line by train operator Northern. With frequencies reduced due to the Covid-19 crisis, Northern did not have the required capacity to

store the number of units no longer required during lockdown at its depots and outstations.

Currently stored in Gobowen station's old coal yard – land which was purchased by CHR in 2016 – the units are expected to move to CHR's Oswestry headquarters in due course. In the immediate future, the Pacers are set to be available for use on CHR's services from Oswestry to Weston Wharf, where a new station is rapidly taking shape alongside the popular Stonehouse micro-brewery visitor centre.

Crucially, the Pacers provide modern rolling stock with which to

operate the Oswestry to Gobowen community rail service that CHR is promoting with a number of local stakeholders. Earlier this year, CHR submitted a bid to the Department for Transport's £500 million Restoring Your Railway Fund www.gov.uk/government/collections/restoring-your-railway-fund to reopen the line between Gobowen and Oswestry, via the Orthopaedic Hospital at Park Hall Halt. The bid was backed by North Shropshire MP Owen Paterson and the Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership. CHR is already in possession of a Transport & Works

Act Order, which provides the legal powers to operate the line.

Porterbrook CEO Mary Grant said: "I was really excited when I learned about the plans for the heritage railway linking Gobowen and Oswestry. Porterbrook is always keen to work with community rail groups and I am delighted that we have been able to make available some of our retired Pacer trains for this very worthwhile project. I very much look forward to visiting CHR to see these trains as they embark on a new life serving both local people and visitors to this beautiful part of Shropshire."

Derwent Valley chairman applauds 'fantastic' volunteer recruitment day ahead of lockdown

By Geoff Courtney

WITH volunteers being the heart and soul of heritage railways, the chairman of the Derwent Valley Light Railway in North Yorkshire is hailing a "fantastic" inaugural recruitment day that saw 10 potential new volunteers coming through the gates.

Craig Benton said: "It was a fantastic day, and much to our surprise many people attended. The feedback was also fantastic, and a big 'thank you' to all who helped out on the day, great teamwork as usual."

The event was held on March 14, so just beating the coronavirus lockdown, and after assessing the event, trustee Allan Briggs has told members of the railway he was hopeful that some of those who attended may become volunteers. Indeed, such was its success that it

has been decided to hold two a year in the future.

The day, which was advertised on local radio as well as other media, included displays, outlining plans for the railway, in what roles volunteers were sought, a tour of the site, and train, cab and brake van rides.

Members have also been told of the death of a former long-time volunteer at the age of 100, plus a Second World War Normandy veteran who was a frequent and much-loved visitor. The centenarian was Des Telford, of whom roster clerk Trevor Humbey said: "His best skill was electrical wiring and installation, and he would do a job and say that it was temporary and he'd do it right in a few weeks, but it looked fine to us. He was a perfectionist, and a gentleman."

The war veteran was Ken Smith, who died on April 13 at the age of 95.

A popular supporter of the railway who often wore his various medals with great pride, Ken served with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry as a signaller in the Normandy campaign of 1944, where he landed on Gold Beach on June 6.

After fighting his way through Belgium and Holland he was repatriated following serious shrapnel injury, and friend Nick Beilby, writing in the spring issue of the Derwent Valley Light Railway Society news, said: "Ken could never understand why people thanked him for his service, and this was exemplified on his visits to the railway, of which he was immensely proud and grateful."

The railway is a restored stretch of a line that ran 15 miles from York Layerthorpe to Cliffe Common near Selby, which opened in 1912 for

mainly agricultural traffic, although passenger trains ran until 1926.

It defied absorption in the 1923 Grouping and Nationalisation in 1948, and remained independent until closure in September 1981, by which time it was one of the country's last operational privately-owned standard gauge railways. The motive power in its latter days was two Class 04 diesels bought from BR.

In 1990 preservationists took over a half-mile stretch of the line within Murton Park on the eastern outskirts of York, the home of the Yorkshire Museum of Farming, and two years ago they celebrated the silver jubilee of the launch of its regular passenger service. One of the former Class 04s that worked the line until closure, D2245 (Derwent Valley Railway No. 2), has been preserved and is now based at the railway.



Then: During its latter operational days prior to closure in 1981, the Derwent Valley Railway's motive power was two Class 04 diesels bought from BR. One, formerly D2245, is pictured in September 1971 in its post-BR guise as DVR No. 2 on a freight train from York Layerthorpe, while a smartly-dressed gentleman surveys proceedings from the cab. DAVID TILLOTSON



Now: Preserved D2245, which became Derwent Valley Railway No. 2 after being bought by the independently-run line following its withdrawal by BR in December 1968, operates a demonstration freight train in March 2018 on the now-preserved Derwent Valley Light Railway at Murton Park, York, where it is based. JONATHAN STOCKWELL

CHR chairman Roger Date said: "We are grateful to Porterbrook for all their help in allowing us to acquire these units and to the Community Rail Partnership for making the introductions and working with us so positively over the past 12 months."

"Being a part of the Community Rail Partnership has assisted us with our aspiration to deliver a community rail service and bring economic benefits to the area."

The Class 144s were built in 1986-87 at British Rail Engineering Limited's Derby Litchurch Lane Works, with bodywork by Walter Alexander. Built specifically for local services sponsored by the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, the units have latterly been operated by Northern.

Other Class 144 units confirmed for further use on heritage lines so far include Nos. 144003 on the



Class 144 Pacers Nos. 144006/7 were driven from Keighley, West Yorkshire to Gobowen, Shropshire on May 22. They are seen at Gobowen – the second track from the right in the distance heads off to Oswestry. PHIL BRADLEY/CHR

Great Central Railway Nottingham, 144004 at the Aln Valley Railway; and 144011 on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

→ **Former Caledonian Sleeper carriage No. 10722 arrived at Cambrian Heritage Railways' (CHR) Oswestry site on May 26. Delivered**

from storage at Long Marston, the Mk.3 also acquired from Porterbrook will provide accommodation for volunteers at the Shropshire line.

Class 141 Pacer joins Margate museum collection

By Gareth Evans

CLASS 141 Pacer No. 141108 is to join the One:One Collection for display at Hornby's former distribution warehouse in Margate. The set is now one of just two survivors of the class in Britain.

Confirming set No. 141108 is still with Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh Works, a spokesman for Locomotive Services Limited (LSL) told *Heritage Railway*: "It will only be cosmetically restored and will be painted an appropriate regional livery – the decision as to which one remains to be finalised. It will then go to Margate for eventual display."

The spokesman also confirmed there have been no further arrivals in terms of rolling stock at Margate since Eurostar power car No. 373304 along with a first class carriage were delivered in January.

Class 60 No. 60081 *Isambard Kingdom Brunel* remains at DB Cargo's Toton depot, where it is awaiting cosmetic restoration by the freight train operator prior to moving for display in Margate. The GWR green locomotive was withdrawn in April 2005 after a catastrophic engine failure.

According to the Railcar Association website, No. 141108 became the first production second generation DMU to operate in preservation when it returned to action in October 2002 at the Mid-Norfolk Railway. However, the set was later deemed unsuitable for the line, and in 2005 No. 141108 was relocated to the Colne Valley Railway, under custodianship of Colne Valley Diesels Ltd. Some restoration work was completed and the set re-entered service in July 2006. The following year No. 141108 was sold to custodians Colne Valley Diesels Ltd.

In June 2010, No. 141108 was repainted into a non-standard blue and grey livery. However, reliability was poor, with the unit suffering from electrical issues, which led to its withdrawal.

After it failed to find a buyer, repairs were completed and No. 141108 returned to service in spring 2018. However, reliability issues plagued the set again and it was returned

to the market. This time it was bought by LSL.

With No. 141108 unlikely to return to action, the sole operational Class 141 in Britain, No. 141113, can be found at the Midland Railway-Butterley. Owned by Llangollen Railcars Limited, it carries West Yorkshire PTE Metrotrain Red and sees regular use. Vehicles from Nos. 141103/10 Weardale Railway were all scrapped by 2018.

Right: The first movement on the Chasewater Railway since the coronavirus lockdown began in March saw Class 142 Pacer No. 142030 on a May 24 early morning test run. The purpose was to check the line, the Pacer itself and to begin a process to ensure everything and everyone is ready for when some form of running can be achieved. No. 142030 is seen arriving back at Brownhills West. ALISTAIR GRIEVE



No. 141108 Heddingham Colne Valley Railway on March 24, 2018. PAUL BICKERDYKE

Third loco for Gwendraeth revivalists as cut-down 08 comes home

By Robin Jones

BURRY Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway (BP&GVR) revivalists have acquired one of the three surviving Class 08/9 shunters that were cut down for use on the line.

The North Dorset Railway at Shillingstone station in Dorset, which bought No. 08995 for restoration at auction in 2015 after it was declared surplus by DB Schenker, has sold it to the Gwendraeth Railway Society (GRS).

The Class 08/9 locomotives were redesigned and modified at Landore Traction Maintenance Depot in Swansea between 1985-87 by being given headlights and cut-down bodywork, which resulted in the overall height being reduced to 11ft 10in for use on the freight line to Cwmmawr.

No. 08995, which operated most recently on projects such as the Manchester Metrolink, was initially bought in the knowledge that it is in need of a major general overhaul and the intention was to restore the locomotive back to full running order, so that in future it could be used at Shillingstone. The 08/9, one of three survivors of the sub-class, has been stored for the last five years at haulier Andrew Goodman's Moveright International yard, near Sutton Coldfield, awaiting restoration, as the required work is too complex to be undertaken at Shillingstone.

Some work was carried out during this period by the fitters at the yard, but much more specialist treatment was required. Over the subsequent years it became increasingly apparent to Shillingstone trustees that the increasing cost and complex practicalities of restoring No. 08995 were no longer realistically within the means of their charity.

A fundraising and part owners' group was proposed and raised £10,700, but much more money would have been required to complete the restoration and deliver it to Shillingstone.

Sale and acquisition

Rather than continue to tie up funds in the project, the trustees decided to sell it and replace it with the smaller but fully operational Huddswell Clarke 0-6-0DM D1186 of 1959 *Ashdown*. It has been restored by Andrew Briddon at Peak Rail and is more suited to Shillingstone's current needs and capabilities.

D1186 was built for the Manchester Ship Canal, where it was first numbered 2001 and later D1 and named *Ashdown*. It was subsequently bought by Hunslet and rebuilt as works number 8526, before moving to a coal distribution depot in Newport,

Inset right: One of the original workplates from Avonside 0-6-0ST *Pontyberem* recently acquired by the Gwendraeth Railway Society. STUART THOMAS

Right: Avonside 0-6-0ST No. 1421 of 1900 Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway No. 2 *Pontyberem* (rebuilt 1953 as No.1875), NCB No.11, at Penrikyber Colliery shed in October 1968. This locomotive and Barclay 0-6-0ST No.2074 of 1958 *Penrikyber No.1* worked the yard of this colliery until 1968 when one diesel shunter replaced them. It was decided to keep one of them as standby and *Pontyberem* was chosen in favour of its partner which was just a decade old. It was withdrawn in 1970, and is now at the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway awaiting eventual restoration for reuse on its original line. HUGH LLEWELLYN/CREATIVE COMMONS

Gwent, where it displaced ex-BR shunter D2181 and was renamed *Pride of Gwent*. Bought for preservation, it arrived at the former Butetown Historical Railway Society site in Cardiff Bay and later moved to the Vale of Glamorgan Railway when it was named after member *Bill Caddick*.

Sold on to the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway, it saw little use as it was regarded as unsuitable to the steep gradients. A locomotive exchange saw it moved to Peak Rail as part of Andrew's collection at Darley Dale, where it regained its original name.

A Shillingstone spokesman said: "When the North Dorset Railway is permitted to reopen after the Covid-19 hiatus, it should not be too long until *Ashdown* is on site. This will be another important milestone

in the heritage railway's quest to become operational."

The first section of the BP&GVR's nine-mile main line opened in 1869 and much of the railway was laid on the bed of a canal built by Thomas Kymer around 1768, giving it restricted loading gauge because of the low canal overbridges.

Loading gauge

The railway linked collieries and limestone pits to the sea at Kidwelly and later extended its network to include Burry Port, Trimsaran, a brickworks at Pwll and Sandy near Llanelli. It also at one stage worked the separate Gwendraeth Valleys Railway (see map), and was later re-engineered by light railway empire builder Colonel Holman F Stephens, who upgraded the mineral route to public

passenger-carrying standards.

Passenger services ended in 1953, and the last section of the BP&GVR closed on March 23, 1998. In the wake of the closure, in May 2002, a new Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway Company Ltd was incorporated with a view to reviving the line. As outlined in *Heritage Railway* issue 44, an initial scheme involved regauging the mothballed line to accommodate continental and American rolling stock.

Metre gauge was identified for the revival of the route by the GRS because of the notorious low bridges which required the use of locomotives with cut-down cabs like the latter-day Class 08/9s. Indeed, talks between representatives of the new company and the Portuguese national railway authorities about the acquisition of at



Above: Double Fairlie Mountaineer of 1869 at Burry Port in the 1890s. The Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway was the only standard gauge line in the UK to regularly use double Fairlies. GRS



Left: The Burry Port stormwater culvert which was formed using the boiler barrels from double Fairlie Mountaineer. The Gwendraeth Railway Society hopes to extract the barrels to create a static replica of the original locomotive. STUART THOMAS



The Velorail De Larzac in France – an example of the type of velorail operation proposed for the Gwendraeth Valley. GRS



The refurbished level crossing gates and new station fencing at Pontyates. GRS



Above: Heavy vegetation clearance between Pontyates and Pont Newydd just before the Covid-19 lockdown began. GRS



Right: Class 08/9 shunter No. 08995, which was modified for use on the former Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway, has been sold by the North Dorset Railway for use on the revived line with its low overbridges dating from the time when they were built as part of the oldest canal in Wales. NDR

least five redundant steam and diesel locomotives and nine carriages began.

A first for Britain

However, the revival scheme has long since changed direction. The aim is now to develop the UK's first velo-rail (railbike) and supporting standard gauge heritage railway visitor attraction. Complex discussions have been completed to agree heads of terms of a lease for 99 years for a nominal rent for the branch and associated land and sidings and final legal agreements are in preparation, pending Network Rail and rail regulatory bodies completing the final industry sign off, as we closed for press.

Several strategies to acquire or build sufficient numbers of high-quality velo-rail vehicles are under appraisal. Options include purchase of an initial batch from existing suppliers

in Continental Europe or the Far East. The currently preferred option is to design and build UK specific vehicles adapted for local climatic conditions (primarily rain).

A waste recycling scheme is under consideration to recover and reuse components from scrap bicycles in collaboration with local third sector groups and training providers to generate local benefits and a cost effective sustainable supply of velo-rails for this project.

With regard to the classic heritage railway side of the project, the company now has a fleet of three locomotives.

The company bought the sole surviving original BP&GVR steam locomotive, Avonside 0-6-0ST No. 1421 of 1900 *Pontyberem*, from the Great Western Society (GWS) in

2009 and moved it to the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway for overhaul.

Pontyberem had been purchased new by the BP&GVR to replace the aging double Fairlies *Mountaineer* and *Victoria* which had operated the route for most of the previous 30 years since the time of the canal conversion in the mid 1860s. *Pontyberem* was later sold into colliery service in 1914, where it survived at Mountain Ash and Penrhiwceiber until preserved by the GWS and moved into storage at Didcot.

Another veteran acquired

Pontyberem was followed there several months later by Swindon, 1960-built Class 03 No. 03141, one of the batch that also had cabs reduced in height to work on the BP&GVR. It is one of six surviving Class 03 veterans of the line.

After withdrawal in 1985, the locomotive was bought for preservation, before being acquired by Cotswold Rail in 2000. In 2002, it moved to the Dean Forest Railway and was sold in 2005 to a member of the revivalist group and moved to the now-closed Swansea Vale Railway for storage. Little work was done on the locomotive there due to vandalism problems.

The acquisition of No. 08995 means that the BP&GVR revivalists' entire collection of three locomotives are veterans of the line they intend to restore.

GRS members will now consider options for undertaking the major overhaul of No. 08995 with a view to returning the working locomotive to the Gwendraeth Valley in time for the official launch of the project. In the interim, members will focus their attention on completing the restoration of the smaller No. 03141, which will need to be available to undertake the refurbishment of sections of the route.

The GRS is progressing steadily with

restoring *Pontyberem* to its original condition. One of the locomotive's original Avonside worksplates appeared at auction and has now been reunited with the locomotive. Another lucky find was a pair of missing eccentric rods from the locomotive which had been mistaken for GWR items and are now also back with *Pontyberem*.

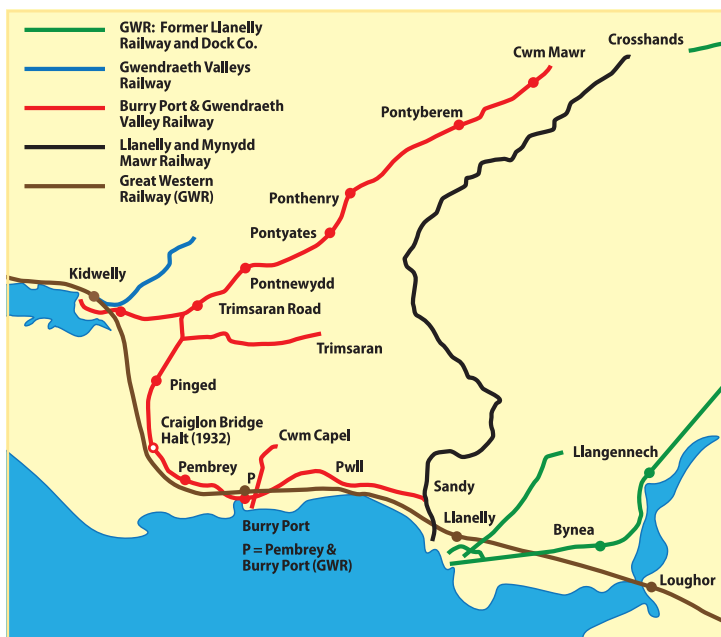
Also, the GRS has long-term plans to add a fourth former BP&GVR locomotive, even though it will be for static display only.

In spring 2004, as reported in issue 62, society members rediscovered the boiler barrels of Double Fairlie 0-4-4-0T *Mountaineer*, which for over a century had been used as a water culvert in Burry Port. It is planned to recover the barrels at the basis of a full-scale static replica of this prototype locomotive, the remains of which make it the world's oldest surviving Fairlie.

The society's first phase of restoring the route is from Kidwelly (on land adjacent to the main line junction) to Pontyates, with intermediate station halts at Trimsaran Road and Pont Newydd/Glyn Abbey, giving a total distance of around five miles. The total distance of all planned restoration phases to Cwm Mawr via *Pontyberem* and Pont Henri is nine miles.

→ Anyone who would like to join the GRS or donate towards its project is invited to contact Cymdeithas Rhilffordd Gwendraeth Railway Society, 2 Bridge Street, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, SA17 4UU, or via the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gvrrail/. Enquires may also be directed by email to Stutom64@btinternet.com

Cheques should be made payable to the Gwendraeth Railway Society. Alternatively, donations can be made via bank transfer to Nationwide Building Society, sort code 07-01-16, account number 43069113.



A system map of the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway in 1909, also showing the nearby semi-parallel Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway. AFTERBRUNEL/CREATIVE COMMONS

Just 40 supporters would ensure return of iconic preserved EMU, says 4-SUB restoration group

By Geoff Courtney

THEY were at the heart of the Southern Region's London commuter traffic for the first three decades of Nationalisation, and were the regular mode of travel for not only the capital's many thousands of workers, but also the army of trainspotters wanting to visit sheds in the metropolis south of the Thames. Even their name, 4-SUB, had a ring about it that appealed to teenage enthusiasts.

The classification referred to each unit comprising four cars – two power and two trailers – and their suburban traffic role. To many they were the archetypal Southern Region electric multiple unit, and operating out of Waterloo, Victoria, Charing Cross and London Bridge, became known as the face of suburban rail travel in south and south-west London.

Between 1941 and 1951, a total of 185 sets emerged from Eastleigh Works, and despite continual use with heavy rush-hour loadings on one of the most intensive commuter networks in the country, all but six of them were still in service in 1973, when they became Class 405 under the TOPS system.

Many survived into the 1980s, with the final 4-SUB working being the 10.21am East Croydon to Victoria train on September 6, 1983. By then BR had recognised the sterling work and iconic status of the class, having saved for preservation the previous year a complete four-car set, No. 4732, which was one of the last to be built in 1951

and had spent its entire 31-year BR life working out of Waterloo.

BR's largesse didn't stop at simply ensuring the unit's survival, however, for to the delight of EMU aficionados it was reliveried in Southern green and operated charter trains and appeared at open days, serving as a reminder of a class of which each set had covered hundreds of thousands of miles on millions of individual passenger journeys without any major modifications from the original design.

By 1998 No. 4732's charter days were over, and it was sold to 4-SUB Preservation Ltd for its scrap value of £5785 and subsequently stored in the open air at the Electric Railway Museum near Baginton on the outskirts of Coventry, which closed in October 2017.

Admirers' relief

The unit is now owned by the Heritage Electric Trains Trust and in 2018 was moved to the Locomotive Storage Ltd facility in the former Hornby factory in Margate, where it went under cover for the first time in 20 years. That was a relief to the unit's many admirers, but the trust has now warned that funds are desperately needed if a planned £50,000 cosmetic restoration, prior to the possibility of restoring it for operational use, is to become a reality.

In a message to supporters, trust chairman Graeme Gleaves has explained that the move from the museum to Margate and storage



Preserved SR green-liveried Class 405 EMU No. 4732, alongside an unidentified Class 33 diesel, on home turf at Waterloo on November 22, 1986, when it was still owned by BR and operating charter trains and making guest appearances at open days. CREATIVE COMMONS/MICHAEL DAY

had, to date, cost more than £25,000.

"This was not unexpected, but we had faith that, given the popularity of the 4-SUB and the number of people who wanted to see this unit return to its former glory, we could make it happen."

However, Graeme revealed that funds were now running out, and the trust was struggling, a situation that he said couldn't continue. "The current situation (of Covid-19) has left us with no opportunities to go to fundraising events, and we rely entirely on the income we generate from our immediate support network."

The trust, he said, had set up a fundraising scheme under the title

750 Supply to raise £750 a month, which would pay for the storage costs and enable the restoration to start, and he said 40 people could achieve this by signing up to one of three packages – five people subscribing to a gold package at £50 per month, 10 silver at £25 per month, and 25 bronze at £10 per month.

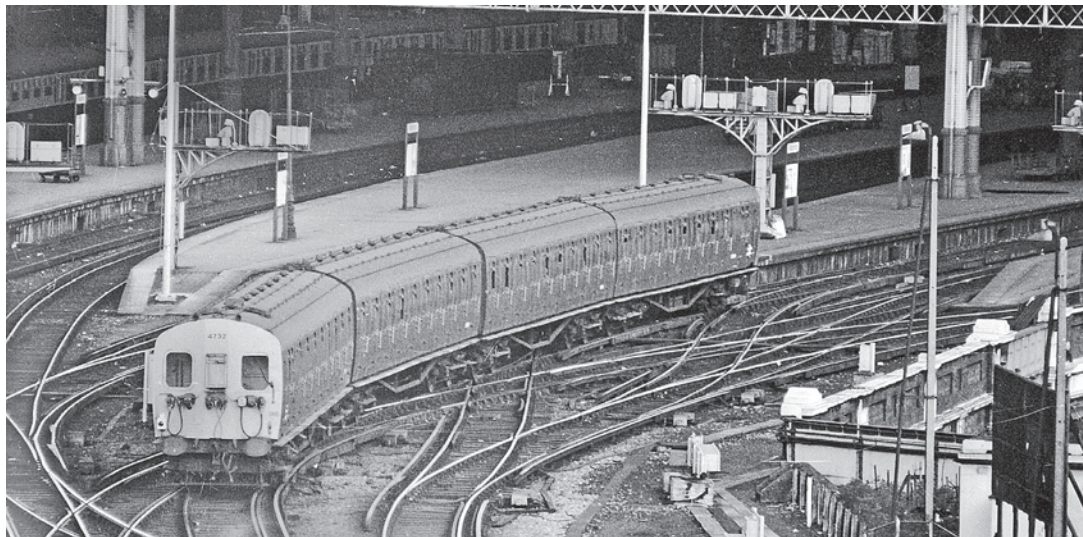
Each subscriber, said Graeme, would receive an annual package of a calendar and other exclusive items, these being dependent on which level of support is pledged. "If it is fully subscribed, we will be home and dry to realise that ambition we all share, to keep No. 4732 safe and get it restored."

Graeme told *Heritage Railway*: "The restoration would not be about making the unit operational, that will be a much later consideration. Display and conservation comes first, 20 years of open storage has to be arrested. Operating the unit on heritage railways remains a longer-term goal, exploring bi-mode power supply."

"The unit is an icon, and a unique one. There will never be another chance to restore a SUB unit."

The fundraising and planned restoration is to be carried out with the support of the 4-SUB Association, whose chairman Mark Walling said the opportunity to get No. 4732 under cover and to kick-start new projects would ensure the long-term future of what he described as an "historic and important train" that would be a real asset to railway heritage.

➔ If you would like to become a 750 Supply subscriber, visit www.hett.org.uk, email hello@hett.org.uk, or write to: Lavinia Lodge, Strayfield Road, Enfield, EN2 9JF.



Class 405 No. 4732 weaves its way across a maze of points into an apparently deserted Waterloo on July 14, 1974. The EMU, which spent its entire BR life working out of the London terminus, was the only unit from this iconic class saved for preservation. It is now at the Locomotive Storage Ltd facility in Margate while a fundraising campaign has been launched to kick-start its restoration. HERITAGE ELECTRIC TRAINS TRUST ARCHIVE

Welsh Pony to steam again after 80 years – but only online

By Robin Jones

IT HAS taken 80 years since the Ffestiniog Railway's England 0-4-0STT No. 5 *Welsh Pony* ran – and following an extensive restoration at Boston Lodge Works, it was on track to undergo test steaming in June.

However, Boston Lodge closed due to the Covid-19 lockdown with just four weeks' work left to complete the overhaul of the 1867-built locomotive, which from 1985-2002 was plinthed as a static exhibit outside Porthmadog Harbour station, exposed to the elements.

Substantially rebuilt in the works in 1891 to its current form, *Welsh Pony* last officially ran in traffic in 1939, but running records show it was briefly pressed in to service in February 1940. However, eight years later and at the time of another national emergency, the locomotive is set to steam once more, and is likely to be one of the very few major restorations to be completed in 2020.

Head of the queue

Allan Garraway, the first manager of the restored FR, always had *Welsh Pony* as the next in line for restoration. However, twists of fate, including the arrival of Penrhyn Quarry Hunslet 2-4-0STTs *Linda* and *Blanche*, kept it well away from the head of the queue.

In 2013, following consultation with members, who voted by a significant majority for the restoration of *Welsh Pony*, an appeal fund opened with the first donation of £100 made by Allan himself. Allan passed away the following year, but will be honoured with the restoration of the locomotive dedicated to him. It will carry the green livery that FR locomotives of the Garraway era carried.

The restoration, which began in 2013, has proven



So near to steaming again for the first time since 1940, when Britain was last in the grips of an international crisis: *Welsh Pony* in Boston Lodge works. PAUL LEWIN/ FF&WHR

more challenging than anticipated. It was hoped that at least one major component in the form of boiler, cylinders or frames might be reused, but all were found to be corroded to such an extent that this was not possible. Combined with the need to provide a new tender to the original design, the overhaul has cost more than £250,000. Volunteers and staff alike have worked on the locomotive which retains many original features from 1891 and beyond, and it will reappear in the form in which it ran from 1915-40.

Just before the start of lockdown in March, the boiler inspector was booked to give a final examination of the new boiler to start the 10-year certificate, and a steam test was expected just weeks later. As we closed for press, attempts were being made to rebook the appointments, with a small skilled team working on the locomotive once more.

Given the restrictions that continue in place, the locomotive is likely to be test steamed – but only online for supporters and members this summer.

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway (FF&WHR)

general manager Paul Lewin said: "With priority always given to core fleet locos when at Boston Lodge, it was a delight to see sustained progress with the engine in late 2019 and early 2020.

First steaming

"We all need to feel the connection with our railway at this time and bringing *Welsh Pony* back to life is what we hope to do for our supporters. As a mark of respect for all of those who have supported the project, the locomotive will not carry its nameplates until an official naming ceremony which our members and friends can freely attend."

Details of the first steaming of *Welsh Pony* online will be made available via the FF&WHR social media and web pages.

At that point, limited edition prints of a painting of the moment of first steaming will be made available to buy online to raise funds for the FF&WHR as it fights through the pandemic. Railway artist Rebecca 'Bex' Whalley has been given access to *Welsh Pony* and the location of the planned first steaming ahead of the event.

Help get 'The Flying Scotsman' Gresley teak coach running again at Bo'ness

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) has launched a £7500 appeal to finish the restoration of its Gresley Third Corridor coach No. 10021 to traffic so it will complete a four-coach teak set to run behind LNER D49 4-4-0 No. 246 *Morayshire*.

Acquired in 1971, but yet to run under SRPS ownership, restoration work on the 1924-built eight-compartment coach started in 2012. A body lift was undertaken to allow major repairs to be completed to rectify corrosion in the underframe gussets and replace perished body mounting pads.

Repairs to the carriage frame have been completed and the coach is currently being reclad with new teak panelling. The society has also taken delivery of new toughened safety glass to

replace all of the external windows.

Work also continues on the internal refit: refurbished radiators and the associated steam heat plumbing, and reupholstered seats are now ready to be reinstalled.

The society needs the money to buy new bellows (the heavy-duty rubber for the gangways), have the floor screed in linoleum and then purchase and lay new carpets. It also needs to lift the coach off its bogies for inspection and repair.

Finally, there will be the considerable task of signwriting the vehicle and applying countless coats of varnish to protect the valuable teak. Restoration work has revealed the inscription 'J Set 4', confirming that the vehicle was part of 'The Flying Scotsman' set of 1924.

It is hoped to have No. 10021 in service for the 2022 season.



Gresley Third Corridor coach No. 10021 under restoration at Bo'ness. SRPS

→ If you would like to donate to the appeal, send a cheque made payable to 'SRPS' to: SRPS Gresley Coach Appeal, c/o Alastair George, 4 Baberton Mains Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 3EQ;

or through the society's Virgin Money Giving page at uk.virginmoneygiving.com which has been launched to compensate for loss of revenue during the Covid-19 lockdown.

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A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* crosses the Grade I listed Royal Border Bridge at Berwick-on-Tweed with the Railway Touring Company's Edinburgh Christmas market special from York and back December 21, 2019. The postponement of the 2020 railtour programme due to Covid-19 has left *Tornado* in storage at the National Railway Museum where The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust has carried out some maintenance, as described overleaf. ANDREW FOWLER/A1SLT



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Above: Tracklaying at the northern end of Shillingstone station, which opened on August 31, 1863, and closed on March 7, 1966. NDR

Right: Already a popular attraction as a museum, the restored Shillingstone station is now moving towards becoming a fully-fledged operational heritage line. NDR



Shillingstone station moves towards operational status with northern push

By Robin Jones

MOVES by the North Dorset Railway (NDR) to turn Shillingstone station into an operational heritage line are underway.

As reported on page 26, the NDR has recently acquired Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0DM D1166 of 1959 *Ashdown* and is stripping down and rebuilding a brake van. The pair are set to form the first passenger train once the venue gains operational status.

The railway is continuing to improve and enhance its health and safety management systems and is waiting for planning approval for a new welfare and training container.

The site currently operates as a working museum on part of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway main line at Shillingstone. It contains a café, shop, museum, station garden,

signalbox plus a range of rolling stock, with direct access for visitors onto nine miles of off-road trackway.

A major obstacle to track laying at the station has been overcome with the help of a £47,000 European Union Leader grant. The popular North Dorset walking and cycling trailway has been diverted off the Down platform and onto a new dedicated, volunteer-built, embankment which has been popularly received. The grant also enabled the platform to be raised and resurfaced, with car park spaces and an accessible toilet provided.

Planning progress

Since then the permanent way team has laid the second track through the station as far as the northern boundary of the current site and is gearing up for a northern extension. Planning and consultations are in progress, with the

aim of fulfilling NDR members' wishes to extend the line over Lamb House Bridge as far as Bere Marsh, which would more than double the current length of track.

Further preparation work, including a construction and environmental management plan, a biodiversity plan and recommendations from stakeholders need to be incorporated into the NDR's plans in order to gain the necessary permissions and approvals. Progress is steady and initial responses were reported as being positive and encouraging.

Station signage has been improved and interpretation boards to enhance the visitor experience are being produced. A station heritage plan is also being prepared by the NDR's visitor experience group, while a museum and signalling group has been established to develop facilities and to educate visitors on the history of the station and line. The museum

is affiliated to the Dorset Museums Group and is already a popular visitor attraction.

The Project 62 steam locomotive preservation group, which is also based at Shillingstone, is halfway through the restoration of the first of its two Yugoslavian-built 'pirate copy' USA 0-6-0Ts, Nos. 30075 and 30076. Restoration work is now able to take place under cover as a large warehouse adjacent to the station has become available for a temporary period.

Support

Members and supporters have contributed more than £10,000 in donations during the Covid-19 lockdown. Further donations are invited by sending a cheque made out to North Dorset Railway, to the Membership Secretary, 50 Clayford Avenue, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 9PG. For further information visit www.northdorsetrailway.co.uk

Reunification boosted as GCR's Factory Flyover appeal tops £150k

THE 'Factory Flyover' phase of the Great Central Railway's Reunification appeal has passed £150,000.

Millions of pounds are needed to reconnect the GCR with its sister Great Central Railway (Nottingham) to create an 18 mile inter-city heritage line.

The Friends of The Great Central Main Line chairman Andy Fillingham said: "Our Reunification project is one of the biggest schemes on any heritage railway in the UK. We've already raised millions of pounds towards it, which delivered one brand new bridge and paid for another to be fully overhauled.

"In early March, we set out to fundraise for the next stage which will see another two new bridges built. It's going to cost around £3 million.

"We're living in difficult and extraordinary times. Even though

we can't meet our supporters face to face, we're doing our best to keep in touch on social media, including premiering a brand new film all about the Reunification project on YouTube. We're deeply humbled that our friends are still supporting the appeal even when priorities are changing on a daily basis. As soon as we have the majority of funds for the next phase of the project to hand, we'll resume construction."

"If you would like to contribute to the project with a donation by standing order, a form can be downloaded from www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify/reunification-standingorder.pdf and returned to the David Clarke Railway Trust, which is managing the finances for Reunification. One-off donations can be made using a form downloaded from www.gcrailway.co.uk/donations/donateprocess.php

Lubricants supplier launches support scheme for heritage railways

SHREWSBURY-BASED Morris Lubricants has launched a scheme to support heritage railways across the UK during their temporary closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Morris Lubricants Heritage Railway Support Scheme aims to reward loyalty from customers and support heritage and steam railways that need help.

Railways are invited to apply to the scheme by emailing heritagerailsupport@morris-lubricants.co.uk with details of why they need support and how they think Morris Lubricants – which has a 150-year history of working with steam workshops – can help.

The company's board will review all applications and offer support packages for those that are appropriate. Such packages

may include financial support, discounted or free lubricants and promotional material.

The firm's executive chairman Andrew Goddard said: "As dedicated enthusiasts and supporters of the heritage and steam industry, we are keen to help."

He and his brother Edward, managing director of sister company Morris Leisure, and their parents, David and Diana Goddard, are avid steam enthusiasts, owning traction engines and steam vehicles, including a 1931 Sentinel Steam Wagon.



Help meet *Tornado's* overheads while in 'furlough'

By Robin Jones

THE A1 Steam Locomotive Trust has appealed for more supporters to sign up as covenantors in order to help keep No. 60163 *Tornado* fit to run on the main line once railtours resume.

The Peppercorn Pacific was built largely with funds raised through the trust's 'A1 for the price of a pint' covenantor scheme, which is now helping to meet its running costs of more than £250,000 a year.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the trust has been unable to use *Tornado* to generate revenue for its maintenance and at present the A1 is berthed at the National Railway Museum.

A trust statement said: "With no steam railtours currently operating, we are now relying on the generosity of our supporters' donations more than ever.

"To ensure we keep *Tornado* on the main line where it belongs, we would be delighted to welcome you on-board as a covenantor, from as little as £2.50 each week. If you are already a covenantor, please do consider donating the price of an extra pint of beer a week to *Tornado*."

Covenantors receive a print of *Tornado*, access to view No. 60163 at all reasonable times, the trust's journal and newsletters on a regular basis and have the opportunity to attend the trust's annual convention and days out at other railway centres, while being given priority travel on trust trains hauled by *Tornado*.

At the end of April, the trust's Richard Pearson and Rob Morland attended the York museum to complete some essential tasks which will prevent damage and



A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* was safely back in the shed at the National Railway Museum in York at end of April. A1SLT



At York, *Tornado* was examined inside, out and under – and all was found to be in order. A1SLT

deterioration of *Tornado* while it is in store.

The A1 was examined inside and out to determine that it was safe to move, with the piston rods and other moving parts oiled as required. *Tornado* was then pulled out of the shed and moved a few hundred yards up the yard, where a brush was taken to the running plate, cab roof and tender top to remove pigeon debris, twigs and feathers.

It was then returned to the shed, but this time it was parked 2ft further forward than beforehand, to prevent brinelling of the axlebox bearings while they are stood stationary for a long time.

The boiler water level was checked



***Tornado's* ashpan side ash doors have been left open to allow the air to circulate. A1SLT**

and the boiler refilled to remove as much air (oxygen) as possible from the boiler. The boiler water treatment contains a product which removes the dissolved oxygen from the water. This will then reduce internal boiler corrosion to a minimum.

The tender tank was drained to allow it to fully dry out. It received an internal inspection and be cleaned out before returning to service

■ To support *Tornado*, visit www.a1steam.com/become-a-covenantor/ and obtain a registration form (including a Gift Aid declaration) and a standing order form to be completed and returned to Darlington Locomotive Works, Hopetown Lane, Darlington, DL3 6RQ.

IN BRIEF

→ THE National Railway Museum is running its successful Future Learn course with the University of Strathclyde again. The online course looks at the lives of railway workers between 1840-1914 and participants can ask questions which members of the research team will answer. Last time participants from 67 different countries took part, and with many people confined to home, the York museum decided to rerun it. Further details are available at <https://learning.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/learning-resources/>

→ NEW Zealand's 'Kingston Flyer' underwent a test run over the nine-mile line from Kingston to Fairlight on May 23, raising hopes that it could soon be revived as a commercial operation despite delays caused by coronavirus. The Pounamu Tourism Group, which operates the Marlborough Flyer, plans to lease the 'Kingston Flyer' which last steamed in 2012.

→ DESPITE lockdown, progress at Mangapps Railway Museum in Essex continues to be made, with track laid in the extension of the main museum building and a major shunting operation undertaken to reposition rolling stock. All locomotives and the most historically important vehicles can now remain in secure covered accommodation during the enforced closure.

→ REFURBISHMENT and construction work on the East Somerset Railway's Cranmore museum building and platform has been completed, with contractors Wells Roofing having restored the roof and chimney.

→ POLICE were investigating the theft of tools from the Keith and Dufftown Railway Association's base in Dufftown's Station Road between May 22-23. Anyone with any information is asked to call 101 and quote reference 870 of May 23.

KESR 'Terrier' Bodiam to become Poplar again for 150th birthday in 2022

THE Kent & East Sussex Railway's (KESR) 0-6-0T 'Terrier' No. 3 *Bodiam* is set to return to its original LBSCR guise as No. 70 *Poplar* in William Stroudley's improved engine green livery when it returns to service in time for its 150th birthday in 2022.

The move is part of the Terrier 150 programme launched jointly by co-owners the Terrier Trust and KESR early last year.

Nearly £60,000 of the £150,000 target to fund the locomotive's

overhaul has been raised.

In addition to carrying the striking Victorian-era livery last worn by the locomotive more than 120 years ago, No. 70 will receive dummy condensing pipes and the smokebox wing plates during its contract overhaul by North Norfolk Railway Engineering. *Poplar* featured these fittings when first outshopped in 1872 as the first 'Terrier' to be constructed and one of the first batch to enter service.

However, the locomotive will not have a fully-original appearance as its A1X smokebox and unique KESR bunker will not be replaced. Trust spokesman Graham Hukins said: "The aim is to conjure up the general appearance of the locomotive in its original 1872 livery. We will achieve a far greater degree of authenticity in 2024 when the locomotive will be turned out in another livery it has never worn in preservation."

That livery is KESR deep green lined with straw and black which it carried after an overhaul at Brighton in 1947.

"We need to maintain the momentum with fundraising and ideally slightly accelerate it, so the overhaul isn't delayed," added Graham. "That way, we can ensure the first 'Terrier' built is in steam to lead the celebrations." Donations to the overhaul can be made via the TerrierTrust.org.uk website.

Descendant of pioneering Victorian steam submarine engineer converts Royal Train 08 to Tesla battery power

By Phil Marsh

LONG-TERM Wolverton Works resident Class 08 350hp shunter No. 08649 has commenced testing powered by former Tesla car batteries, in what was a confidential project until April.

The locomotive, now based at Silverstone, was purchased by Meteor Power, along with Wolverton classmate No. 08629 in January, as previously reported.

What was not reported due to commercial confidentiality was that No. 08649 was being converted to battery power under a Department for Transport (DfT) innovation funded decarbonisation project. No. 08649 was non-operational for over a year and had been used as a donor to keep Wolverton's other Class 08s in service.

The DfT contract was awarded to Meteor Power Limited in July 2019 and the race was on for Meteor's Mike Edwards and Rob Bruerton to convert a diesel shunting locomotive to run on batteries via their bespoke modern hybrid electric powertrain system.

After the contract was awarded, it took the pair six weeks to locate a suitable locomotive assisted by the National Railway Museum's associate curator Bob Gwynne.

A lock-up unit was sourced at Silverstone as the engineering base to convert the 60-year-old locomotive to a hybrid propulsion system.

Creating railway history

The York museum was interested in partnering the project because as Bob said: "Given this project had the potential to create railway history and is one of the ways the railway could reduce its carbon footprint, we thought it worthwhile to record the development of this interesting prototype."

He suggested contacting Gemini Rail Services at Wolverton works to



Mike Edwards and Rob Bruerton in the cab of No. 08649 at Silverstone on March 6. PHIL MARSH

see if their Class 08s were available. Gemini confirmed it had two surplus Class 08 locomotives, both used for decades on Royal Train duties. Meteor Power purchased them, relocating the unserviceable one to Silverstone on January 7, and the operational No. 08629 to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway a month later.

The day after No. 08649 arrived at Silverstone, the engineering team commenced stripping down the unserviceable locomotive, somewhat hindered by a lack of any knowledge of this type of locomotive. In addition to purchasing British Rail and English Electric training books, they sought advice from the rail industry.

Mike added: "We've had to rely on the experience and advice of others to guide us and our task has been made significantly harder as we had to work out which pieces of the jigsaw we had to remove, and in what order, to gain access to the parts we needed. As such, the advice from industry experts has been invaluable in understanding

what the different components are and how they interact, etc."

Rob Bruerton told *Heritage Railway*: "Since taking delivery of the locomotive, we've been flat out stripping things down in preparation for removing the damaged 92-litre engine and preparing the build and testing of the first phase of our electronics and it's all been pretty successful."

"The locomotive moved under electrical power for the first time on February 3, inside the Silverstone workshop using a fixed shore supply but using our own electronic controller a few days later. It felt like a larger toy train set being able to move a 50-ton loco with a small speed controller with an adjustment dial smaller than your little finger."

In early April, No. 08649 was fitted with a new Euro stage 3A compliant John Deere 6.8 litre diesel engine to power a generator, which recharges the large battery pack. The engine's efficiency will be further improved

to be better than Euro Stage 5 standards, incorporating technology from sister company Motive Zero. The battery pack has a combined storage capacity of 300kWh taken from Tesla Model 3 cars imported from America and Europe.

The new equipment fitted to the locomotive uses Meteor Power's own control systems for the auxiliary systems such as compressors and vacuum pumps to drive the original traction motors.

Rob added: "Removing the engine took a bit longer than anticipated. There were far too many nuts, bolts, pipes, etc that hadn't seen a spanner for 60 years, so it was harder work than expected. Eventually we had to cut some of the larger nuts as no amount of heat or leverage was doing the job."

"The end result was that on February 21, we were finally able to remove the engine and generators so now, after a good clean, we could make a start installing the new generator and battery pack parts and finalising the wiring, etc."

Importantly for safety acceptance, the driver's controls remain unchanged, apart from reducing the voltage under the control desk from 400 to 24, creating a safer environment.

Mike Edwards' family has a long history with engineering innovation going back to the early 1800s making steam and diesel engines for stationary and shipping applications. These ranged from supplying the steam engine in 1886 for the Nordenfelt steam submarine for the Turkish Ottoman Navy to components for the first nuclear submarines.

Testing postponed

The two ex-Wolverton locomotives were due to be displayed on trials at the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway in mid-April, but this has been postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

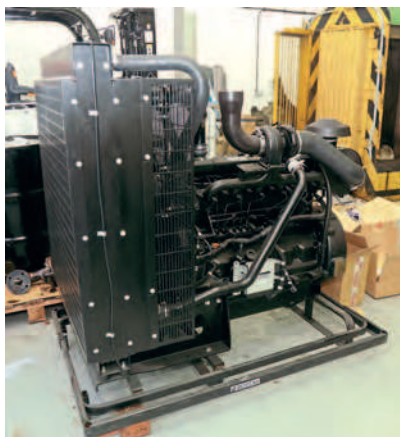
However, No. 08629 was pressed into service on March 17 when hired-in Class 33 No. 33053 failed for the third time in four Network Rail training days – but the trainees seemed to be delighted when told they were about to drive a Royal Train locomotive!

Many heritage lines use these Class 08 shunters and often houses have been built adjacent to locomotive and carriage sheds. Will there be a use for this traction package which will be far quieter and environmentally friendly and thus more acceptable to lineside neighbours?



Right: The new John Deere diesel engine to be fitted into No. 08649 on February 18. PHIL MARSH

Left: The Tesla battery pack by partially-dismantled No. 08649 on March 6. PHIL MARSH

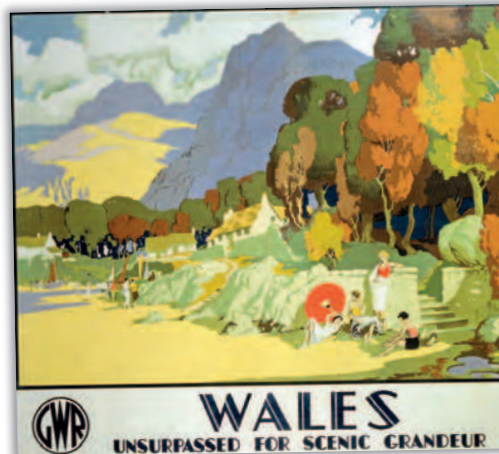


THEN

NOW



GWR poster advertising the delectable duchy with a harbour scene. Artwork by Leonard Richmond.



GWR poster extolling the many attractions of the principality. Artwork by Michael Reilly.



LNER poster advertising rail services to the Norfolk Broads. Artwork by Septimus E Scott.



LMS poster for the Wirral resort. Artwork by Septimus E Scott.

Wish you weren't here!

By Robin Jones

BACK in the steam age, art deco travel posters extolling the delights of UK holiday destinations and encouraging families to travel there by train are now widely considered significant works of art.

However, the National Railway Museum has reimagined 10 of them, tweaking their design to encourage visitors not to go to these choice destinations – and instead observe the Government Covid-19 lockdown travel restrictions.

The redesign was staged by the York museum some weeks before the restrictions on travel (in England only – Wales and Scotland initially retained the ban on travel) were relaxed on Wednesday, May 13, allowing people once again to drive to the coast or inland beauty spots for the day – but not to stay there overnight. Hotels, pubs and guest houses were closed, and police were given the powers to turn campers back and fine them.

At several coastal resorts across the UK, there were numerous reports of local residents expressing anger towards visitors, many of who were said to be flouting social distancing rules.

Some local councils like Great Yarmouth even asked would-be daytrippers to stay away, despite the Government relaxation on May 13.

Designed to show support for key workers, including those working in the rail industry, the set of 10 reimagined popular travel posters features vintage artwork, but with new messages updated to reflect the Government's travel advice. The posters revised invite people to 'visit when this is all over' or to 'visit online' instead.

The museum has a collection of 10,700 posters and other railway artwork dating from 1804 to the present day. Director Judith McNicol said: "At a time of widespread travel restrictions, we hope that re-creating a selection of the most popular travel posters will enable people to enjoy some of their favourite holiday destinations while celebrating the style and glamour of these works of art. This is also a way for us to show our support for the nation's keyworkers, including many of the 115,000 railway workers who are continuing to keep things running during this time."

Part of the Science Museum Group, the NRM closed to the public on March 17, as part of measures to control the spread of coronavirus. However, despite temporary closure, the Group's collection is still available to explore online at: collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/

The set of reimagined posters is available to download for free from: blog.railwaymuseum.org.uk/vintage-travel-posters-reimagined/

■ All posters © National Railway Museum Science & Society Picture Library.

Could you help with the rebuilding of Britain's first public railway?

By Robin Jones

THE modern-day Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway Company (LMMR) has appealed for volunteers to join its bid to create a major visitor attraction for South Wales.

The company is aiming to restore as much of the original Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway, initially known as the Carmarthenshire Tramroad, which has been hailed as the oldest public railway in the UK.

The original line was established by an Act of Parliament in 1802 as a horse-drawn plateway and began running trains the following year. Although the Surrey Iron Railway is the long-time popular claimant as the oldest – and was the first to be incorporated, it is said that the LMMR was the first to carry traffic.

Origins

The Carmarthenshire Tramroad closed in 1844 but the line reopened in 1883 under the newly-formed Llanelli (sic) & Mynydd Mawr Railway Co (see map, page 27) which became part of the GWR at the Grouping in 1922. The line continued as a main artery for coal distribution from the Gwendraeth valley until the closure of Cynheidre Colliery in 1989.

The modern-day LMMR spent 20 years developing the Cynheidre site as a heritage centre, and on September 3, 2017, held the first of several open days, giving visitors brake van rides over the 200 yard running line. An army tracklaying exercise that autumn



Sentinel Rolls Royce 0-4-0DM No. 10222 hauls a festive season brake van special over the latest extension at Cynheidre last December. DAVID MEE

of 2017 saw a further 110 yards of running line open for the 2018 season. Until the Covid-19 pandemic brought tracklaying to a halt, it was intended that a further 260 yards would open in 2020, bringing the total running line to half a mile in length.

Preparations are underway to link up with existing track to the north of Cynheidre village to create a one mile running line. A small halt and run-round loop will be provided at the top end of the line, including picnic and other facilities for visitors.

Family events at Christmas and Easter have proven particularly popular and the LMMR currently holds around eight open days each year.

However, today's LMMR has much bigger plans, including the development of a heritage park telling the story of coal in the South Wales Valleys and its transport from pit to user and in particular the Cynheidre

'super' pit. As for the future, LMMR director David Mee said: "We would like the site to develop into a major tourist attraction for Llanelli and the surrounding areas, incorporating country and woodland walks, nature conservation and rural crafts, complete with all the usual facilities that visitors demand these days.

Support

"All of this requires time and money, and although still at an embryonic stage, things are constantly evolving as volunteers and funding becomes available.

"One major challenge at the moment is the lack of mains electricity on the site, something which will have to be tackled as a priority if the site is to develop.

"The other challenge is common to all heritage organisations – a lack of volunteers. In order to reach our goals

we need more volunteer help in all departments, including operational, maintenance and restoration, and administration. If you could spare a few hours for what is a most enjoyable pastime and worthwhile cause do not hesitate to get in touch."

Future plans – subject to available manpower and finance – include extensions north to Sylen Bridge and south to Swiss Valley. In the longer term, subject to local authority backing, the LMMR would like to extend back into Llanelli, linking it to Tumble, a total distance of 10 miles.

The current heritage line runs over a later extension to the original route, which was not part of the 'oldest' line. However, a southern push over an available part of the Carmarthenshire Tramroad could change that.

If you would like to volunteer on the LMMR, visit www.llanellirailway.co.uk or www.facebook.com/llanellirailway

Didcot's flagship will steam at 60th anniversary if £60K is raised

THE Great Western Society has launched a £60,000 appeal to ensure that its first locomotive, Collett 0-4-2T No. 1466, returns to steam at Didcot Railway Centre in 2021 as part of celebrations to mark the group's 60th anniversary.

The locomotive's £300,000 overhaul is making steady progress, with repairs to the wheels and motion largely complete and the 1936-built locomotive close to being a rolling chassis once more.

However, extensive boiler work is still required, including a new foundation ring, a new smokebox, specialist copper welding to the firebox, the replacement of the crown stays and a full retube.

The latest tasks to be completed are the refitting of the steam brake cylinder and brake shaft, fabrication of a new bunker, machining of the valve guide bearings and the painting of the frames.

The restoration team has begun fitting new sections of the bunker, both corner pieces having been manufactured by the South Devon Railway.

Western Steam Engineering, based at Coleford in the Forest of Dean, is undertaking the work and providing that the final funds are in place, No. 1466 will return to Didcot early next year.

No. 1466 was based at Newton Abbot almost all its working life, transferring to Taunton prior to withdrawal. It was bought in April 1964 for £750, and delivered to the society's former Totnes Quay branch depot.

The society's marketing and events manager Graham Hukins said: "It was an appeal to save a 14XX almost six decades ago that led to the creation of the Great Western Society and, in turn, to the establishment of Didcot Railway Centre and its growth to become the 21 acre living museum it is today.

"The current enforced closure means we cannot fund the work from admission income so we're asking for some help to get the delightful, octogenarian tank engine back on the rails."

→ If you would like to donate to the overhaul appeal, visit bit.ly/DRC-1466



Latest progress being made on the bunker of Didcot flagship No. 1466. WESTERN STEAM ENGINEERING

'BoCo' makes further strides back to operation

By Robin Jones

THE restoration of the sole-surviving Class 28 Metropolitan Vickers Co-Bo diesel has continued to make steady progress under the custodianship of the East Lancashire Railway-based Class 15 Preservation Society.

Since D5705 was reunited with its bogies, some external bodywork has been repaired and all useable parts from the spare power unit have been stripped.

Since then, the society has focused almost all attention to the locomotive's interior.

Society electricians have been busy in the electrical cubicle, where all of the large components have been fully overhauled and, where possible, bench tested. Motor contact boards Nos. 1 and 2 have now been wired in and refitted to the wall.

Restoration progress

All of the end-to-end cables from No. 1 end have been pulled through into the cubicle, having previously been looped up in the trunking. They have been routed to the locations in which each of the cables is to be terminated and a start has been made on terminating the wires.

Wiring in No. 2 cab is ongoing, fitting it in around when the cab is empty. Also, within No. 2 cab the air pipes located under the floor have been replaced due to them being rotten.

The brake frame has been completely rebuilt, with all the pipework and valves overhauled. The wiring is now being fed in and terminated to the relevant items and will be finished sometime this year subject to when access to the locomotive can be achieved following



Metropolitan-Vickers Co-Bo D5705 is seen on static display at Bury Bolton Street platform 1 during the East Lancashire Railway's summer diesel gala in 2016. KITMASTERBLOKE/CREATIVE COMMONS

the Covid-19 lockdown, which has led to all work being suspended for the time being.

More pipework has been located and refurbished, and a start to refurbishing the valves beneath the locomotive has been made. They are being worked through systematically by removing one, stripping it down, cleaning it up and reassembling once a thorough check has been made to confirm all is okay.

Inside the engine room/cooler group area, the No. 1 end traction motor blower and snail have been refitted. The motor was overhauled some time ago, as was the snail. This has been refitted and the wiring fed through to it.

The V8 power unit (Mk.3 version) has had all of its heads, pistons and liners removed, and they will be replaced by the ones recovered by society members from the spare Crossley power unit (V12 version with interchangeable parts) as this had lower engine hours.

Considered one of the least successful – but undoubtedly among the most distinctive regarding their appearance (some say the ugliest) – of the products of the Pilot Scheme for diesel locomotives built under the 1955 Modernisation Plan – 20 'Metrovicks' were built at Stockton-on-Tees between 1958-58. However, their two-stroke Crossley engines – the

choice of which had been influenced by Oliver Bulleid – proved problematic and suffered frequent failures. By 1961, the entire class was handed back to the manufacturer for remedial work on the noisy engines and to cure problems with cab windows falling out while running.

Survival

The whole class was withdrawn from service during 1967-68, and all but one had been scrapped by the end of 1969. By chance, D5705 survived, renumbered S15705 and used from December 1968 by the Research Division for its Tribology Test train and subsequently used as carriage heating unit No. TDB968006 at Bristol Bath Road before being stored at Swindon bought for preservation in 1985. At first it was moved to Peak Rail and later to Bury.

The 'Metrovicks' also proved a disaster in miniature. Hornby Dublo produced a OO gauge version in 1961 and it was all but shunned by the public, with just 30 models sold in three years. When Tri-ang took over Hornby Dublo, a total of 3150 were still in stock unsold.

The type proved somewhat more successful in children's fiction, forming the basis for BoCo, a character in The Railway Series children's books by the Reverend W Awdry and the spin-off TV series Thomas and Friends, numbered D5702.

Vandals smash coach windows in Dereham raid

POLICE were hunting vandals who smashed several carriage windows and a seasonal display after entering the closed Mid-Norfolk Railway's Dereham station between Friday, May 1, at 5pm and Monday, May 4 at 8.30am.

A railway spokesman said: "Extensive damage has been done to a number of vehicles, including our recently-restored and painted brake coach which the railway has spent nearly £45,000 restoring and our blue DMU.

"Everyone at the railway is shocked and devastated by this. It couldn't have come at a worse time when the current crisis means the railway has no revenue income from visitors."

Police have appealed for anyone with information or CCTV footage to contact PC Sophie Webster at Dereham police station on 101, quoting crime reference number 36/29074/20, or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

The railway had already launched a £75,000 appeal at www.mnr.org.uk/coronaclosurefund to compensate the loss of vital income during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Churnet Valley carriage appeal 'nearly there'

THE Churnet Valley Railway has now raised nearly £13,000 towards its £17,000 appeal to buy more BR Mk.1 coaches for its planned extension into Leek and transport them from their current locations. So far TSO No. S4046 from the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway, SO No. M4366 and TSO No. E3809 from the Midland Railway-Butterley have arrived, but all need extensive restoration. Donations are invited at www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/cvr_coaches



1. D5705's completed brake frame with new wiring being pulled through. C15PS



2. The Class 28's termination boards, complete with terminated wiring at No.1 end cab. C15PS



3. Looking through the 'Metrovick's' engine room towards the cubicle and brake frame. C15PS





Above: Long-serving Liz Turner at her retirement special in 2019. She has now made a speedy comeback to help out Ffestiniog Travel. FT

Left: Polish State Railways 2-8-2 Pt 47-65 on a Wolsztyn-Lesno tour which featured in the Ffestiniog Travel programme. FT

Ffestiniog Travel: all set for the return of overseas railtours

By Robin Jones

THE overseas rail travel industry may have all but collapsed in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, but signs are that it is gearing up for a major resurgence next year.

That is the view from Ffestiniog Travel, which has cancelled 19 of its scheduled tours due to depart before August, including tailor-made tours which account for a third of its business – with all of its customers fully refunded.

Owned by a charitable trust with profits supporting the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, Ffestiniog Travel was established in 1974, making it one of the UK's longest-running rail holiday operators, arranging railtours around the UK, Europe and worldwide.

Half the company's staff have been furloughed, a necessary course for sustainable survival, while the remainder of the staff on duty have been processing refunds and also planning next year's programme. Tours which the company has been forced to cancel will, wherever possible, be automatically included again in the 2021 programme, with many customers already having booked tours from it.

The company's founding director Alan Heywood, 80, said: "I'm confident that our customers will remember us once they're ready to travel again. Nearly everyone has said 'put us down for next year', so at the moment the feeling is very positive. We're hoping they'll be raring to go by Christmas!"

"Our travellers are people who enjoy seeing the world, learning about the places they visit, taking in the

scenery and visiting cities of interest. So perhaps they will be less cautious than some."

Alan has been spending his days responding to the many emails of thanks the company has received after it took the decision to refund all monies to anyone whose holiday was cancelled. He said: "It helps that we are a small company, so we buy flight seats and hotel beds in small numbers rather than getting locked into large contracts. We've been able to keep faith with our customers, but many other, bigger travel companies have not been so lucky."

Experience

Alan's rail industry experience goes back to 1955, when he first volunteered as a 15-year-old schoolboy at the recently-reopened Porthmadog Harbour station. He remained closely associated throughout the 1960s and was soon involved in most aspects of the railway's day-to-day operations. After teaching geography and history in Cheshire, he joined the railway full-time in 1969 as traffic manager.

When the Beeching cuts saw all staff removed from numerous stations on the Cambrian Coast Line, commercial opportunities were created for the Ffestiniog Railway which was asked by BR to become its agent for domestic rail tickets throughout the UK.

When Alan joined the railway, he applied for

this to be extended to Sealink Ferries and continental rail, and so Ffestiniog Travel was born! The Ffestiniog Railway Society's 5000 members proved to be the first, ideal market to sell these European rail holidays to.

The Sealink journey between Harwich and Hoek van Holland provided a gateway to the whole of Europe, but Alan knew there was much more to explore by train beyond The Netherlands and he set his sights on Switzerland for the company's first continental rail tour.

"We knew that regular Ffestiniog Railway passengers and society members loved the mountain landscapes and heritage railways of Snowdonia, so Switzerland, with its many scenic mountain railways and spectacular Alpine landscapes, seemed like the natural destination," he said. "Originally it was planned as a one-off trip, but little did we know that that first trip in October 1974 would become the fulcrum of our business for the next 45 years."

Alan remains cautiously optimistic that once the restrictions are lifted, customer confidence in travel will return. "I think confidence will return eventually and there will undoubtedly be a pent-up desire to travel, but I do think that it may be slow in coming," he said. "Still, I'm certain that it will come back in the longer term. Indications so far suggest that customers have not

lost their appetite to travel."

Before the pandemic, there had already been a growing trend towards rail travel, with customers opting to take the train for environmental reasons. Alan witnessed this first-hand, with some passengers forgoing flights to Romania, for example, and instead adding on an extra rail segment, extending their holiday by three days in each direction. However, he said that it is too soon to say if Covid-19 will escalate that trend.

Loyalty

Meanwhile, Liz Turner, who joined Ffestiniog Travel in 1973 as Alan's right-hand woman, and who retired last year at the age of 68, is back, volunteering to help the company deal with the devastating impact that coronavirus has had on the tourism industry. The longest serving Ffestiniog Travel employee on record, who has carried out every role within the company over the decades, from secretarial, administrative, product development, customer services to leading tours, said: "There's no place I'd rather be right now."

"I couldn't think of a better way to spend retirement than supporting this small, independent, pioneering company that led the way in rail holiday travel in the UK, if not the world."

"Right now, we are reminded just how precious travel is."

Alan concluded: "We are extremely grateful to Liz for coming back on board. Her expertise in all areas of the business will help us manage the crisis and plan our recovery so that when tours can operate again, we are ready."



Ffestiniog Travel founder Alan Heywood. FT

Glyn Valley Tramway rail uncovered at Chirk station

BURIED rail from the long-closed Glyn Valley Tramway has been rediscovered by revivalists.

The Glyn Valley Tramway Trust, which aims to rebuild the western end of the legendary 2ft 4½in gauge line to 2ft 6in gauge, uncovered more of the Chirk station trackbed and platform before the Covid-19 restrictions brought an end to the work.

When lockdown is lifted, trust members will return to the site to ascertain exactly where the rediscovered rail sits in terms of the station layout, but it is thought that it might be near the turntable, just north of the platform end.

If work is allowed to resume this year, more excavation and clearance to the north and then south of Hand Lane road bridge will take place.

The line operated between 1873 and 1935 in the Glyn Valley between Glyn Ceiriog and Chirk. Initially horse powered, the line originally terminated at a wharf



Above: The cleared trackbed at Chirk station alongside the Chester-Shrewsbury main line. GVTT
Right: Last used 85 years ago: the rediscovered rail at Chirk. GVTT

on the Llangollen Canal near to the Poachers Pocket restaurant at Chirk Bank, the remains of which can still be seen today. In 1886-88, the line was converted to steam and diverted to terminate at Chirk railway station, where it continued to run until its final closure on July 6, 1935.

More information about how to join the trust can be found at www.glynvalleytramwaytrust.co.uk



1938 Tube stock to be preserved at Havenstreet

ISLAND Line operator South Western Railway (SWR) has offered a two-car 1938 Class 483 Island Line train to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway (IoWSR).

The heritage line considers that it would be a suitable exhibit, given former London Underground trains have worked on the island since 1967 – around a third of the time that it has had public rail transport.

The IoWSR's heritage and learning manager Roger Silsbury said: "It is most appropriate that examples of this type of traction should be included within our collection."

Preservation was considered when the 1920s tube stock was withdrawn in the late 1980s, but there were no storage or exhibition facilities available or likely to be. Today, with far better facilities and active plans to expand these further, Roger added: "It would be sensible to accept SWR's offer."

It was understood that the planned introduction of the new Viva Rail trains to Island Line has slipped by a few months and the associated track upgrades may now be carried out in January rather than this autumn.

Farewell to Severn Valley fundraising giant John Leftwich

TRIBUTES have been paid to Severn Valley Railway Charitable Trust interim chairman John Leftwich, who died in hospital on April 28, a few days before his 65th birthday, following a short illness.

Fellow trustee Nick Paul, chairman of SVR (Holdings), said: "John was a dear personal friend and an equally great friend to the railway, and his loss will be felt deeply by many people."

"John was integral in extending the remit of the SVR Charitable Trust in 2012. Indeed without his guidance and considerable financial support, it simply would not have got off the ground. He brought tremendous business acumen to his role as fundraising director on the board of trustees, gained from a stellar career that culminated in his position as corporate vice president of Microsoft, responsible for marketing across Europe, the Middle East and Africa."

"We've lost one of our own, and our deepest condolences go to his wife Louise and his family."

With a background in sales and marketing John, who lived near Tenbury Wells, was the first Englishman to become an executive at Microsoft, and in recognition of his achievement, was

awarded a Fellowship from the University of Worcester. He spent more than 20 years in the personal computer industry and was a Worcestershire area chairman of the Prince's Trust.

Lord Faulkner of Worcester, the previous president of the university's College of Fellows and the president of the Heritage Railway Association, said: "We shared a passion for heritage railways, and I remember with particular pleasure riding on his 60th birthday special train on the SVR in 2015."

"The steam locomotive carried a special 'John Leftwich' headboard. His contribution to the SVR was immense."

SVR Charitable Trust director of development Shelagh Paterson said: "John

was always a wonderful advisor, mentor and friend. He really was a giant of a character, and a huge presence in any room."

"His ideas and passion got our Future Fund investment in place, attracting donations from far and wide, and he helped us shape the charitable trust to become what it is today – a major part of the railway – with a track record of raising £5 million. He leaves a huge gap in his wake."



John Leftwich. SVR



The trailer being used to carry the Scottish Railway Preservation Society's Caledonian Railway 419 class 0-4-4T No. 419. JJP HOLDINGS

Low loader trailer stolen

WEST Somerset Railway chairman Jon Jones-Pratt has offered a £10,000 reward for the recovery of his firm's £130,000 road trailer which is used to transport steam locomotives around the country.

The Nooteboom Euro 96-04 lorry trailer, which was built in 2012, has been stolen from Styles farm workshop at Henstridge airfield, Templecombe, in Somerset. It was not carrying a load at the time.

As *Heritage Railway* closed for press, police had drawn a blank on its whereabouts.

"Someone must have an idea where it is – you can't hide it," said Jon.

Anyone with information is asked to email jon@jjpholdings.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY

The Brighter Steam News Magazine
www.heritagerrailway.co.uk

The dawn of standard gauge preservation on a former part of the national network: LBSCR A1X 'Terrier' 0-6-0T No. 55 *Stepney* leaves the crowded platforms at Sheffield Park with the first public Bluebell Railway passenger train on August 7, 1960. Hayling Island branch veteran *Stepney* was the fledgling line's first locomotive and has ever since been one of the most popular. BLUEBELL RAILWAY ARCHIVE



60 YEARS OF BLUEBELL SPLENDOUR! BUT THE BATTLE MUST GO ON

This year the Bluebell Railway was due to celebrate six decades since the first green shoots of one of the world's most popular and successful heritage lines appeared. Sadly, the showpiece anniversary celebrations have been placed on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the railway, for so long a household word for classic steam, is now like the rest of the heritage sector fighting a battle for survival, having launched a nationwide emergency appeal for vital funds just to stay afloat, writes **Robin Jones**.



May 14, 1951, marked the dawn of a dynamic new era, for it was on that day that the Talylyn Railway began running services using volunteer labour, marking the start of the British operational heritage railway sector.

Two years later, the hit Ealing comedy *The Titfield Thunderbolt*, the first film shot in Technicolor and inspired by the exploits of the Talylyn Railway Society, told the story of the villagers trying to stop their local branch line from being closed, and brought the basic concept of volunteer-led railway revival into the public consciousness big time.

On July 23, 1955, the Ffestiniog Railway,

1960

Four students decide to save a Sussex branchline and the Bluebell Railway is born.



'60 Sheffield Park station slumbers

May '60 'Stepney' arrives with our first coaches coming from the Brighton mainline to the Bluebell

'60s Second class fare 2/6d! (12.5p)



Battleaxe Madge Bessemer who forced BR to begrudgingly reopen the East Grinstead to Lewes line. Her name is remembered in the Bessemer Arms pub and restaurant at Sheffield Park.
BLUEBELL RAILWAY ARCHIVE



Future headquarters: Sheffield Park station in 1959. BLUEBELL RAILWAY ARCHIVE



Clearing weeds from the track in 1959. BLUEBELL RAILWAY ARCHIVE

under the guidance of the late Alan Pegler, ran its first heritage era train.

June 1960 saw the Middleton Railway, a private freight-only concern that had operated continuously since 1758, become the first standard gauge railway to be taken over and operated by unpaid volunteers, with students from Leeds University under the guidance of their lecturer, the late Dr Fred Youell, running trains for a week using a diesel locomotive to haul a redundant Swansea & Mumbles Railway tramcar.

However, the biggest breakthrough to date came on August 7 that year, when Bluebell Railway volunteers ran the first train on a revived section of the British Railways standard gauge national network – paving the way not only for other ‘Premier League’ lines to follow, but setting world-leading standards in the field of railway heritage.

Indeed, had the UK heritage railway movement taken several more years to reach that stage, how many now-priceless examples of classic locomotives and rolling stock would have been lost forever?

The Bluebell laid down a blueprint for rail revival, but not necessarily one for plain sailing: indeed it was to be another eight years before the next former BR line to be reopened as a heritage line, the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, would run its public trains.

The market-leading heritage line has its origins in the 1877 Act of Parliament which authorised the building of the Lewes & East Grinstead Railway, which was acquired by operator the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway under subsequent legislation a year later. Both Acts included a clause that “Four passenger trains each way daily to run on this line, with through connections at East Grinstead to London and to stop at Sheffield Bridges, Newick and West Hoathly.”

The clause imposed a statutory requirement to provide a service – and the only way to

remove this obligation was to pass another Act.

In 1954, British Railways’ branch line committee proposed closing the line from East Grinstead to Culver Junction near Lewes. Despite a challenge by local residents, the closure date was set for June 15, 1955, although it took place earlier, on May 29, due to a rail strike.

Local residents were determined not to take it lightly, and battled for the next three years to get the decision reversed. Shortly after closure, Chailey woman Margery ‘Madge’ Bessemer, the granddaughter of Henry Bessemer, inventor of the Bessemer converter for converting pig iron into steel, discovered the clause in the 1877 and 1878 Acts relating to the ‘Statutory Line’ and demanded that BR reinstate services.

Aided by local MP Tufton Beamish, she forced BR to rethink. Faced with this statutory legal obligation, on August 7, 1956 BR extremely begrudgingly reopened the line, but with trains stopping only at stations mentioned in the Acts. It was to be done strictly by the book, and not an inch more. Because of this, the reintroduced timetable became nicknamed the ‘sulky service’.

BR took its case to the House of Commons in 1957, resulting in a public inquiry. BR was censured, but later the Transport Commission was able to persuade Parliament to repeal the special section of the Act that has prevented closure, and so the last passenger train ran on March 16, 1958.

It has been said that while picking spring flowers on the embankment near her estate Madge, who loved wildlife, may have herself invented the nickname of the ‘Bluebell Line’. On that final day of services, Madge had a chance encounter with Carshalton Technical College student Chris Campbell, who shared his many recollections of travelling on the line while spending school holidays with relatives. Inspired by her efforts to save the line, Chris,

then aged 18, wondered if it might be possible to win a second round with BR.

Meanwhile, Martin Eastland, 19, a telecommunications engineering student of Haywards Heath, David Dallimore, a student at the London School of Economics, from Woodingdean, and Brighton-based Alan Sturt, 19, who was studying at the Regent Street Polytechnic, had mooted the idea of setting up a preservation society for the route, drawing on the examples of the abovementioned Welsh narrow gauge lines.

The students wrote to interested parties highlighting Madge’s campaign and the unexpected level of public support that it had created. They initially hoped to save the entire route, reopening it stages at a time, acquiring a GWR railcar for regular passenger services and adding a two-car DMU which funds permitted, but using steam during the summer months when visitors would flock to the ‘sunny south’.

On March 15, 1959 a group that included future society president Bernard Holden, met in Haywards Heath and formed the Lewes and East Grinstead Railway Preservation Society, but then voted to change its name to the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society.

The society’s very over-ambitious initial aim was to reopen the line from East Grinstead to Culver Junction as a commercial service. However, when the society failed to raise the money buy the whole line, it was forced to edit its dreams – an experience which would beset many future revivalist groups. The society then settled for using just the line between Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes as a tourist attraction, with vintage locomotives and stock operated by unpaid volunteer staff.

As BR still ran the third-rail electrified line from Horsted Keynes to Ardingly and Haywards Heath, the society leased a stretch of track from just south of Horsted Keynes. The electric services came up from Seaford



August '60 Mrs Kimmins breaks a bottle and the Bluebell Railway is open

June '61 'Bluebell' at Bluebell Halt (aka Horsted Keynes, before we were permitted by BR to enter the real HK)

October '61 With all our locos in steam, we reach Horsted Keynes for the first time

via Haywards Heath and Ardingly to Horsted Keynes. Initially planned to go further north, any extension of the three-rail electrification beyond Horsted Keynes was permanently halted by the Second World War and never revived.

The revivalists aimed to maintain the LBSCR heritage of the line by using LBSCR locomotives and stock. Their ideal locomotive was a Stroudley D1 0-4-2T, but they found that the last one had been scrapped 18 months previously. Their second choice was a 'Terrier' 0-6-0T, and for £750 BR sold them No. 32655 (LBSCR No. 55) *Stepney*, plus two coaches. A legend was born!

Stepney hauled what was the Bluebell's first train via Haywards Heath to Horsted Keynes and from there onwards to Sheffield Park on May 17, 1960.

Back in service

On August 7 that year, the first Bluebell Railway services proper ran from a temporary stop, Bluebell Halt, 100 yards south of Horsted Keynes, to Sheffield Park.

That first operating season lasted until the end of October, running at weekends only, yet more than 15,000 passengers were carried. Most importantly, the revivalists had shown that a standard gauge steam service using volunteer labour could be viable.

October 29, 1961, saw the Bluebell permitted to work into Horsted Keynes station, even though it was still used for electric services. At first, the Bluebell trains ran into the disused eastern side platform.

In 1962, the society invited none other than BR chairman Dr Richard Beeching to open a second new halt at Holywell (Waterworks). That was in the year before East Grinstead

Opening day on August 7, 1960: Commander Anthony Kimmins RN, who was also a film producer whose family set up nearby Chailey Heritage School, and his wife Christen SECR P 0-6-0T No. 323, which also worked the inaugural train. It was later painted blue and named *Bluebell*. BLUEBELL RAILWAY ARCHIVE

resident Beeching published his infamous Report on the Reshaping of British Railways. Ironically, Holywell (Waterworks) Halt closed within 12 months.

BR withdrew passenger services from Horsted Keynes to Haywards Heath in 1963 and also closed the routes north to East Grinstead and west to Ardingly. Not only did the Bluebell Railway find itself severed

from the BR system, but even hired-in North London Railway 0-6-0T No. 58850 and LBSCR E4 0-6-2T No. 473 *Birch Grove* to the contractors who were ripping up the track north of Horsted Keynes in 1964.

Seeking new horizons

Looking to expand what had by then become a major visitor attraction, in 1975 the society bought the site of the demolished West Hoathly station, to make a start on a push back north and an eventual return to East Grinstead.

Kingscote station was bought in January 1985, and in the face of opposition from local councillors, a public inquiry resulted in both the secretaries of state for the Environment and Transport giving planning permission and a Light Railway Order for an extension to East Grinstead that year.

Work on the six-mile extension from Horsted Keynes to East Grinstead began in March 1988 with a golden spike ceremony. However, it would not be a quick job.

The extension from Horsted Keynes as far as Kingscote was completed in 1994, including the relaying of track through the 731-yard Sharpthorne tunnel, but planning permission was not forthcoming for the rebuilding of West Hoathly station.



SECR 01 0-6-0 No. 65 simmers at Kingscote in 2004. The locomotive was bought from BR by the late Esmond Lewis-Evans for the long-defunct Ashford Steam Centre project and finally brought to the Bluebell for overhaul, being returned to steam for the centenary of the amalgamation of the South Eastern and London, Chatham & Dover railways in August 1999, and is now a stalwart of the heritage line. ROBIN JONES



October
'63

An electric service ran from Horsted Keynes to Seaford until October '63

'63

Hi Vis
'60s
fashion

July
'64

'Mr Pastry'
unveils
'Fenchurch'

'70

50 years ago Elton John posed for his album cover outside this museum



LBSCR A1X 0-6-0T No. 55 *Stepney*, SECR P class 0-6-0T No. 323 *Bluebell* and LBSCR E4 0-6-2T No. 473 *Birch Grove* arrive at East Grinstead with the late running empty stock to form the first departure from East Grinstead. ANDREW STRONGITHARM

BR donated East Grinstead's spectacular Imberhorne viaduct to the railway in 1992. However, the trackbed had been sold off into numerous portions, all of which had to be bought one by one, a process that was not completed until 2003, from when physical civil engineering activity on the extension beyond Kingscote began.

The biggest blockage of all was the 30ft deep 1600ft long Imberhorne cutting, which after the original line was lifted was used as a landfill site for domestic waste. The rubbish had to be extracted if trains were to pass through again. Test borings established that the 96,000 cubic metres of waste were not toxic, but would cost £5 million to remove. The track north of the tip was relaid to allow it to be taken out by rail to a landfill site to the north of Aylesbury.

BBC News presenter Nick Owen publicly began the waste removal on November 25, 2008, using heavy machinery donated from the High Speed 1 Channel Tunnel Rail Link which had just been completed through Kent. GB Railfreight's first trial movements of excavated spoil by rail were made in 2009.

The date for the public opening to East Grinstead was set for March 23, 2013, and the first two months of the year saw frantic tracklaying as the wintry weather permitted.

On Friday, March 8, shortly after a GB Railfreight Class 66 made a clandestine late-night run over the extension, the final section of track was formally joined using a white fishplate, with long-serving Bluebell extension catering lady Barbara Watkins tightening the four bolts, bringing the total running length of the line to 11 miles.

A severe last blast of winter on March 23 brought snow to East Grinstead, but it would take more than that to deter the Bluebell battlers, who over the decades had fought far worse... and won. The first public train from East Grinstead was hauled by a trio headed by E4 0-6-2T No. 473, aka *Birch Grove*, in Southern green livery, followed by blue-liveried SECR P 0-6-0T No. 323 *Bluebell* and No. 55 *Stepney*.

The first train north from Sheffield Park was headed by U class 2-6-0 No. 1638 and comprised the breakfast Pullman carrying 144 guests who were served champagne.

Shopping triumph

Despite Arctic blasts, a 45-minute service ran to time, with no engine failing. Many of the passengers alighted at East Grinstead and returned hours later with shopping bags – a sight which with pinpoint accuracy boded well for local traders.

Thursday March 28 saw an eagerly-awaited 12-coach UK Railtours charter from Victoria, headed by Class 66 No. 66739 which had taken its turn on the spoil trains, with two BR blue-liveried Class 73s on the rear. After running through to Sheffield Park, the train was hauled back by the 73s to Horsted Keynes, where No. 66739 was named *Bluebell Railway* by GB Railfreight managing director Mark Smith.

Present at that ceremony with more reason than most to be justifiably proud of the completion of the extension was the line's infrastructure director and locomotive driver Chris White, the driving force behind the project. Unpaid volunteer Chris had organised the removal of around 100,000 tons of waste



Chris White (left), the infrastructure director who moved mountains to make the East Grinstead possible, with preservation society chairman Roy Watts at the naming of GB Class 66 No. 66739 *Bluebell Railway* at Horsted Keynes on March 28, 2013. ROBIN JONES

from the cutting at the lowest possible cost, sourced £4 million of vital funding and also led the successful challenge against Railtrack's plans to sell the reserved station site at East Grinstead to supermarket chain Sainsbury's for a petrol station.

One day, Chris would be found sifting through mountains of legal paperwork, and the next leading a team of contractors. Society chairman Roy Watts said at the time of the extension's opening: "Those close to the project will know that there were many, many hours given to planning, execution, and delivery, as well as lots of work to get through the mire of the legislative paperwork. But no one knows this more than Chris White, who probably devoted more time to the project than we appreciate."

In September 2017, Chris stood down as infrastructure director and handed over to Kevin Beauchamp, former head of infrastructure for High Speed 1, but stayed on the board as safety director. Kevin stood down last year due to personal reasons and Chris took infrastructure back on, and was also assurance director. Since then a new safety director had been appointed.

Chris lost a short battle with cancer on May 12. Yet his legacy is one of the greatest engineering features in the heritage railway sector's portfolio, one which will be enjoyed by countless generations to come.

The East Grinstead extension, which allows visitors from London to travel to the Bluebell Railway by train, indeed brought a tourist boom to the town. In the first year after steam trains returned to East Grinstead, figures showed that the railway attracted 188,144



'70

Santa at Horsted Keynes. Do you remember snow?

'72

No locomotives were hurt in the making of this film

May '74

Freshfield Halt. Note the early PA system

May '74

What's Russian for Horsted Keynes?

visitors compared with 146,224 in 2012. Ticket revenue soared from £1,577,474 in 2012 to £2,294,145 in 2013. In 2019, the railway carried more than 143,000 passengers overall.

East Grinstead tourism manager Simon Kerr said: "All this seems to have been accomplished without any extra pressure on the town's existing car parking capacity. Most of this extra passenger loading comes from the use of the Network Rail connection from London."

By 2015, the Bluebell Railway was forced to hire more coaches because of the overwhelming success of the northern extension. Before that extension was opened, 60% of Bluebell trains were formed of four carriages, and only 30% of five or six. It was expected that demand for seats would tail off after the euphoria surrounding the opening to East Grinstead, but the opposite has happened. The railway now needs five or six-car trains through much of the season.

The society today boasts a membership of more than 10,000. It is the governing body of the line and sets the strategy, goals and objectives for the operating company – Bluebell Railway plc, of which it is the majority shareholder with a 75% stake.

Vital to the line's successful operation is a core of around 50 employed staff supported by and working with an extensive array of more than 700 volunteers – drivers, firemen, guards, booking office clerks, station staff, buffet stewards, shop assistants, museum attendants, guides, tracklayers, lineside maintenance, painters, as well as those working in the carriage and wagon and locomotive works.

Each of the four stations is themed in terms of staff uniform, colour schemes and signage: Sheffield Park in the late 1800s of the LBSCR; Horsted Keynes in the 1930s Southern Railway,

Kingscote in the 1950s of British Railways and East Grinstead in the 1960s – Southern.

Grade II listed Horsted Keynes with its five platforms is one of the largest stations on any heritage railway. Despite its long service with the LBSCR, Southern Railway and BR, today's operations represent the busiest period in its history of the station.

The passing place on days with a multi-train service, it holds major events ranging from being Santa's temporary home at Christmas to a very popular venue for weddings. Its size makes it an attractive location for film makers – the versatility of the site and age of station buildings making an excellent backdrop for period drama from Victorian times up to the 1960s. It became Downton (of Abbey fame) on numerous occasions as well being used for several scenes in the Poirot detective series.

Well set for the future

Indeed, the entire railway – all of its stations are in effect 'walk-on sets' – has been a prime choice for location filming for hundreds of feature films, TV dramas, fashion shoots and music videos for nearly six decades starting with *The Innocents* in 1961.

The railway has a team to support filming activities, with personnel representing every railway department – filming liaison officers, loco crews, guards, shunters, signalmen, station staff, infrastructure and lineside staff. The filming team also has experience working off-site and was able to take a locomotive in steam and with 10 coaches to King's Cross for scenes filmed for *Wonder Woman* (2017).

It was also responsible for operational safety and supervised all train movements during the making of *Murder on the Orient Express* (also 2017) at Longcross Studios.

Revenues from filming, fashion and advertising shoots plus other corporate activity are an essential part of the cash flow required to sustain the railway and its ever ageing buildings, infrastructure, locomotives, carriages and wagons – for which the costs of maintenance and restoration are ever increasing.

On October 19, 2018, the new £200,000 interactive locomotive exhibition, *SteamWorks!* at Sheffield Park was opened, marking the completion of the first phase of the railway's three-year £1.5 million National Heritage Lottery Fund-backed ASH (Accessible Steam Heritage) project, which aims not only to improve the display of classic locomotives but also to provide a wider educational and interactive experience for visitors. Taking pride of place on static display is none other than *Stepney*, alongside which is a full size mock-up of the locomotive where members of the public can get up close and operate the controls, view progress down the track and experience life on the footplate.

Society trustee Roger Kelly said: "SteamWorks! is designed to be both fun and educational for people of all ages, but particularly the young. It is after all they who hold the key to our future success both in terms of visitors and volunteers."

Indeed, *Stepney* has been a children's favourite for generations, if only because of its depiction as a character in its own right in the Reverend Wilbert Awdry's *Railway Series* alongside *Thomas the Tank Engine*.

The railway has established a *Stepney* club within its children's section: visit www.bluebell-railway.com/childrens-section/ for more details and to join.

That is not to overlook the enormous



May
'76

Wedding special
for two Bulleid
Society supporters

November
'79

The Reverend Awdry, creator of
Thomas the Tank Engine. Our very
own 'Stepney' went to Sodor in 1963

March
'80

Harold Macmillan
on the footplate
of 'Birch Grove'



May
'92

The longest tunnel on any
heritage railway, Sharpthorne
Tunnel, re-opens

September
'92

In order to reach
East Grinstead we
purchase a viaduct for...



May
'94

A decorated locomotive
pulls the first train
into Kingscote

'95

effort put in one weekend a month by the youngsters in the 9F club who are forever cleaning, polishing, repairing and painting. Aged between 11 and 16, members of the 9F club often use this as source of training and experience for entry into volunteer work – but mainly the idea is to have fun. The club has been the route into a Bluebell volunteering career for many including current plc chairman Chris Hunford.

The youngsters of today are the lifeblood for the success, preservation and continuance of all our heritage railways of tomorrow.

Now for the next 60 years

After the extension of the line to East Grinstead a period of consolidation was required. However, that did not stop the successful completion in the summer of 2016 of the first building phase of Operation Undercover and its Heritage Skills Centre on land adjoining the carriage and wagon works at Horsted Keynes.

This £1 million project will provide cover from the elements for up to 20 carriages awaiting restoration or repair: the Bluebell Railway has long been a market leader in the recovery of Victorian and Edwardian carriage stock, renovating coach bodies used for decades as bungalows, holiday homes or chicken coops to as-built condition.

It has long been the aspiration of the Bluebell to see a second main line connection added, with the restoration of the Ardingly branch, which closed on October 28, 1963.

For a brief spell afterwards, the branch was used occasionally to transport rolling stock to the Bluebell, the final movement along the line recorded on May 13, 1964 when 'Terrier' No. 32636 *Fenchurch* (LBSCR No. 72)



The headboard 'The Pioneer' speaks volumes: *Stepney* heads a VIP special at Kingscote in 2000 to mark the 40th anniversary of the heritage line in 2000. ROBIN JONES

became the last locomotive to arrive in steam before the heritage line was severed from the national network.

BR had given the Bluebell just four weeks to acquire *Fenchurch*, but Dr Beeching decreed that the locomotive should instead be reserved for six months.

Lifting of the Ardingly branch began on July 15, 1964, and reached Horsted Keynes by September 21. During the summer of 1968, Sheriff Mill viaduct, the condition of which was one of the reasons for the closure of the branch, was demolished as Mid Sussex District Council wished to straighten the bend on New Lane below. The Bluebell had been invited to buy the line in 1962, but could not afford BR's asking price of between £25,000-£30,000 together with the £10,000 needed to

maintain the viaduct. Options for bridging the Sheriff Mill gap as part of the mooted Western Extension Project by extending the embankments and using two second-hand bridge sections, are being pursued, and another major obstacle is the replacement of a short girder bridge. The branch's Lywood Tunnel appears to be in good condition.

The western end had a second lease of life for carrying freight. An Amey Roadstone plant was established in Ardingly goods yard shortly after closure of the line, and was served by a daily freight working from Haywards Heath using the former down local line. Access to the up main and up local lines at Copyhold Junction has been severed. The new occupant demolished most of the station platforms, and track in the station was removed and



From this in 1988...



...to this in 1994

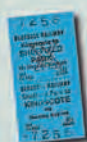


'84 Ringo Starr - 'They've got a ticket to ride'

'85 Bridging the gap at Sheffield Park

March '88 We push on to Kingscote. The first length of track is laid by the Minister of Transport

'88 Kingscote in need of TLC



Poppy day - Vera Lynn and Bernard Holden stand beside 'Camelot'

'95 Eric Idle, Steve Coogan, and Terry Jones as Mr Toad, in 'The Wind in the Willows'

June '97 You start with some wheels, and a lot of skill and hard work later...

'98 'Bluebell' goes to Holland. Note the GB plate



2000



'00

Steam tram engine from our Dutch twin railway visits the Bluebell



'05

We start to dig through to East Grinstead. Over 70,000 tons of clay and household rubbish were removed!



October '07

Bull line
Hor

Over the past 60 years, the Bluebell Railway has built up a reputation second to none for its reconstruction and restoration of wooden-bodied Victorian and Edwardian carriages. SECR 0-6-0 No. 592, one of the last three members of its class to survive in Departmental service at Ashford, was saved by the Wainwright C Preservation Society, which was formed in 1962. Bought in December 1966, No. 592 moved to the Bluebell in 1970. It is seen heading a rake of classic pre-Grouping stock at Kingscote on July 4, 2010. Scenes like these underline the importance of the railway's current emergency appeal in raising vital funds to ensure that its ground-breaking work in this field and others can continue. MIKE HOPPS

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE BRIGHTER STEAM NEWS MAGAZINE



leid's giants
up at
sted Keynes

June
'09

The four founders, and
Bernard Holden MBE,
together again

August
'10

A cavalcade of
locos celebrating
our 50th birthday

June
'11

Lord Faulkner of
Worcester opens
the museum

a loop installed at the southern end of the former goods yard area. The station buildings remain, used as offices by the firm's successor, Hanson Aggregates.

After the completion of the East Grinstead extension, Bluebell directors said the line would give itself a breathing space before embarking on such a major project. However, restoration of the Ardingly branch could give the Bluebell a presence in Haywards Heath and do for tourism in that town what it has done for East Grinstead, as well as a potential interchange with the London to Brighton line.

The Bluebell is now securing the asset so that a future extension to Haywards Heath remains a possibility, replacing fencing and carrying out ecological surveys.

Visitors inevitably ask if there is also the possibility of rebuilding the line south of Sheffield Park, over the vacant formation of Lewes that Madge Bessemer and the original revivalists had hoped to save.

The short answer is that the Bluebell now sees no commercial reason for a new push south. The railway does not own the trackbed, and a major cost struggle to get into Lewes because the land has been built over and the former brick viaduct has gone.

New LBSCR locomotives

As stated earlier, the founders hoped that the LBSCR line they saved would host as much of that company's locomotive and rolling stock types as possible.

In October 2000, it was announced that a new H2 Brighton Atlantic would be built, replicating the last in service, No. 32424 *Beachy Head*, withdrawn in April 1958 and scrapped.

The boiler of the new 4-4-2 passed its hydraulic test last autumn, and it has been hoped to fit it to the frames so that the locomotive could be displayed for Bluebell 60th anniversary celebrations that had been scheduled for August 7-9 (see below).

However, Covid-19 has seen all work suspended on the project, and so the new *Beachy Head* will now appear later than planned.

In the autumn of 2019, the railway's board, society and trust gave full endorsement to the Atlantic Group's next scheme, the building of SECR E class 4-4-0 from scratch as a cost of £1.2 million.

The group has chosen No. 516 in original condition to replicate, and it is estimated the project, which will start as soon as *Beachy Head* is complete, will take 10-13 years to complete.

Group chairman Terry Cole said: "It would add a locomotive type widely used on the

Southern Railway but which the Bluebell Railway currently doesn't have: The pre-grouping 4-4-0. The chosen engine is No. 516 which was used as the 'royal' engine and kept in tip-top condition."

Meanwhile, the railway is lining-up the next locomotives in its overhaul queue.

Work is currently in progress on Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair*. When that is completed, a start will be made on *Fenchurch*.

Then it will be the turn of the Maunsell Locomotive Society's Schools V 4-4-0 No. 928 *Stowe*. Members of its owning group have been making progress with work off site while the Sheffield Park workshop is closed due to lockdown.

Next overhaul

The brake gearing has been refitted to the rolling chassis and the steam heating system has been fitted with all new steel piping. Cladding sections are being cleaned and painted by volunteers while the cab roof is being reskinned.

After that, the Bluebell will look at the next medium-sized overhaul, possibly H 0-4-4T No. 263 when its current running certificate is finished or GWR Dukedog 4-4-0 No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley*, a veteran of the Cambrian Coast Line and real 'odd man out' in Southern territory but which, since its arrival in 1962 thanks to the efforts of the late Tom Gomm,

has firmly established itself as part of the Bluebell furniture. Indeed, when saved for preservation, the Bluebell was the only line where it could run.

The beauty of the Bluebell fleet is that everyone will have their favourite locomotive, and therefore their own opinion on which should be restored to running order next.

Celebrations suspended

This year, the railway has geared itself up to celebrate its 60th anniversary, with a showpiece *Steaming Through 60* gala weekend over August 7-9.

However, those celebrations have been postponed along with all other special events planned to date, because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The closure of the line due to lockdown has also placed on hold a planned programme to carry out an in-depth refurbishment and restoration programme to restore the line's 'jewel in the crown', Horsted Keynes station.

The first stage of the project has been to undertake a comprehensive survey of everything from the chimney stacks down to the railway tracks. The 75-page survey has revealed deterioration in the station fabric and the platforms, but concludes that the station is overall basically sound. The full cost of restoring the station to its 1930s glory is estimated to be over £1 million, but plans to launch a Diamond Jubilee year appeal



A 21st century epitome of the Southern Railway: Eastleigh, 1936-built S15 4-6-0 No. 847 heads a rake of matching green coaches through the unspoilt countryside which is a trademark of the Bluebell Railway. No. 847 is the biggest and most powerful of the Maunsell Locomotive Society's engines and the last 4-6-0 built by the SR. It was rescued from Barry scrapyard in 1978. PETER EDWARDS



'13

The Duke of Gloucester visits the museum

March '13

Having finally reached East Grinstead, we open the new station in the worst of weather

'17

'Deltic' diesels line up at Horsted Keynes

'19

We even invite the GWR over on special occasions

to members and supporters to raise at least £500,000 of the cost have now been delayed because of Covid-19.

Instead, as previously reported in issues 266 and 277, the railway has joined many other heritage lines throughout the UK in launching emergency appeals to cover overheads during the lockdown period, in order simply to survive, following its closure on March 20.

As we closed for press, the Government had started to ease lockdown restrictions, but no firm date had been set as to when places of entertainment including heritage lines could resume operations.

Public support

However, the public has not forgotten 60 years of Bluebell magnificence, for by the end of May, more than £250,000 had been donated towards an initial target of £300,000. Officials revealed that there had been at least 1500 individual donations ranging from a few pounds from children offering their pocket money to several thousand pounds from members and supporters.

The railway's fundraising organiser Trevor Swainson said: "The totals include a commitment by two individuals who wished to remain anonymous to jointly donate £5000 including Gift Aid if the total reached £195,000. That has now happened."

The railway set the £300,000 target based on financial modelling. While fare income from passengers is its main source of revenue each year, the railway also relies on sales of food and drink at its cafes and restaurants, shop purchases, weddings, special railway charters and filming location fees to provide enough money to restore its historic locomotives and carriage.

A railway spokesman said: "We are now looking at the logistics and practicalities of reopening. We are examining how to ensure social distancing and provide health protection while operating as a heritage railway."

Survival instincts

Of course, if the lockdown restrictions continue beyond the summer months, it is likely that the Bluebell, in common with all other heritage lines, will need to raise that target even further. To many, it all but seems that those pioneering times of the late Fifties and early Sixties to see steam and branch lines survive against all odds have now back with us and with a sharp vengeance.

*To support the Bluebell's emergency appeal, visit <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/support-bluebell>

To compensate for the loss of the Steaming Through 60 gala weekend in August, the railway is to hold a virtual celebration of its fabulous 60 years of operation in August.

Robert Hayward, chairman of the Bluebell Railway's Diamond Anniversary steering group, said: "The pragmatic decision not to hold the event as previously planned allows the Bluebell Railway to focus its efforts on reopening. We will be holding a virtual event this August and are currently working on various ideas for the event because we are still going to celebrate 60 years of operating as a heritage line."

The railway is asking its members with model railway layouts in action to produce a 'virtual gala' to replace this year's cancelled spring and summer events. The virtual gala will be posted on the railway's YouTube channel to view.

Again, with youngsters in mind, the line's education department is producing a series of online Storytime videos for children. The railway-related stories have been selected and read by volunteers from the department before being uploaded to the YouTube channel.

The department's Ruth Rowatt said: "Storytime with Bluebell Railway is a nice way to keep our younger visitors informed and to keep the railway in their hearts and minds. Many children were looking forward to visiting *Stepney* and all his friends at the Bluebell Railway this spring. I wanted to let them know that we at the railway are thinking of them and looking forward to welcoming them when we reopen."

The real-life 60th annual gala will now be rearranged for next year. Robert added: "New opportunities may be available to us in 2021 that are not possible now. Next year's event



will be on a date to be agreed."

As we closed for press, all events from September until the end of December were under review, includes the planned debut SteamLights season of illuminated trains, as pioneered by the Dartmouth Steam Railway which accordingly won a major Heritage Railway Association award in February. The Bluebell is now working on the practicality of holding SteamLights in addition to its popular Santa specials and festive dining trains. **HR**

→ The timeline has been supplied by the Bluebell Railway. Several of the views from the Bluebell Railway Archive are included in a new book, *Bluebell Railway: Sixty Years of Progress 1960-2020*, available from the online shop at www.bluebell-railway.com/product/bluebell-railway-sixty-years-of-progress-1960-2020/ which is operating during lockdown.



"If there is a railway in the next world, it will look like this."

2020



Dave Phillips is one of hundreds of volunteers, past and present, who has helped to save and restore the Bluebell Railway for future generations.

'19

In 2006 we started a re-build of 'Beachy Head'. We hope to see this beautiful locomotive running in 2021

'20

BR Standard Tank 80151 is the latest locomotive restored in our works at Sheffield Park

Vintage Trains cancels its 2020 railtour programme

By Cedric Johns

VINTAGE Trains (VT) has taken the decision to opt out of its main line tour programme for this year – including the UK's only main line 'Polar Express' trips in December.

The move follows VT's review of the Government's instructions to 'stay at home', while it assesses the possibilities of further easing of lockdown restrictions regarding travel by bus and rail.

VT spokesman Denis Chick said: "The Government is actively discouraging travel by road and rail and it is now clear that social distancing will be maintained in one form or another over an extended period. Its enforcement regarding train staffing, managing passenger movements and the crewing of locomotive footplates will continue to present insurmountable problems.

"While there is social distancing, very few will want to travel by train until a vaccine is available. For those who have booked seats on trains we have advertised, we apologise that we will not now be able to offer these trips.

"We have no choice legally, morally or commercially. We are not offering to postpone or rebook any trains at this time. We are therefore writing to our customers and offering three choices: a full refund; a credit note valid for 12 months; or to donate the train fare to Vintage Trains Charitable Trust towards the refurbishment of carriages."

Donations can also be made online at www.pullmanclub.co.uk

Denis said the company needs to fill 85% seating capacity to cover costs before hoping to make a viable profit. "Multi-millionaires might be able to run half empty trains, but not Vintage Trains. We would rather come back stronger when the time is right"

As it is, work on GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and the overhaul of the Pullman carriages is taking priority and is the reason for the need to raise money.

However, you can still enjoy the thrills of Vintage Trains main line action by logging on to the company's Facebook or Twitter pages for a virtual open day on June 27 (see pages 14/15).

Other operators

Meanwhile, at least two railtour promoters favour August as an anticipated restarting date.

Pathfinder Tours has chosen August 15 for a possible resumption of activities with a multi-powered almost forgotten lines tour – its 'Blue Boys Merry mixer' trip.

Using DRS locomotives – five different types – during a tour of the northern Midlands, the train is scheduled to depart Eastleigh, calling at most stations between Basingstoke, Reading West and Didcot then onwards via Banbury and Leamington Spa to final pick-ups at Birmingham's International and New Street.

A day later, on August 14, Steam Dreams (SD) is scheduled to join in the celebrations for a Mayflower 400 event at Southampton.

Departing from London Victoria, the train calls at Egham and Woking, before heading for Southampton docks and a range of nautical attractions.

An afternoon tour of the Hampshire countryside is also on offer, rounded off with a champagne tea. Motive power is expected to be No. 61306 *Mayflower*.

Should the situation be favourable, the planned SD Windsor trains and evening diners will run on Tuesdays and Saturdays during August and the first week of September. SD chairman David Buck said: "We shall continue to monitor developments as they arise and act accordingly. When social distancing eases, we will be ready to run."

While waiting for a relaxation of present restrictions, the King's Lynn-based Railway Touring Company (RTC) is offering a telephone enquiry service between 10am and 2pm, Mondays to Fridays. Operations manager Rachel Jackson said that RTC is now looking at its 2021 tours programme.

West Coast Railways' Carnforth base is essentially in lockdown, but it is hoped that 'Jacobite' trains, for which tickets are already on sale, will be able to run when permitted.

Scottish Railway Preservation Society chairman Stephen Humphreys said all events have been cancelled until the end of the season, including 'Forth Circle' trips

taking advantage of visiting engines.

In August, the society's management committee will assess the possibility of operating services from Bo'ness in the final quarter of the year, and in September it will discuss the viability of running Santa trains.

Postponements

On May 26, Saphos Trains posted a notice of trip cancellations and postponements as follows:

'The Fellsman', booked for May 27, has been postponed until September 2; the 'Welsh Marches Express' has been moved from June 6 to November 21; June 13's 'The Lakeland' has been moved to August 15; 'The Fellsman' of June 24 is rescheduled for August 26; the 'Great Western Envoy' of June 27 has been re-dated for December 12; and the June 21 'Pennine Peaks & Valleys Explorer' has been cancelled outright.

Following the death of John Farrow, (HR Issue 267), operations at his company, UK Railtours (UKRT), are currently on hold. John's daughter Elizabeth said UKRT will be back in business as soon as it is practical.

At the time of writing, The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust is advertising its Darlington to Edinburgh and Stirling 'The Queen of Scots' for September 12 and its Edinburgh-Aberdeen 'The Aberdonian' for September 3 and 10. No. 60163 *Tornado* is due to haul the trains.

Stamford station, on the line between Leicester and Peterborough, has just been upgraded from Grade II to Grade II* by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, ensuring that structures such as the waiting shelter and footbridge are recognised for their architectural value as well as the main building. The move came following advice from Historic England. "This is a particularly fine example of an almost complete Victorian railway station," said Dr Melissa Thompson, senior listing adviser at Historic England. "Other Grade II*-listed railway stations are usually in city settings: it is rare to have such an example of finely wrought architecture in a minor station. It fully deserves the upgrade." Architect Sancton Wood designed it in a Tudor style, with some saying he was influenced by the nearby Elizabethan Burghley House. Here, GWR 4-6-0 No. 4936 *Kinlet Hall* is seen calling at the 1848-built station on July 19, 2008 with Vintage Trains' 'Ely Explorer' from Tyseley to Ely. The 1929-built locomotive, now owned by West Somerset Railway plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt, is awaiting the completion of a full overhaul. ROBIN JONES



Firemen's farewell for West Coast 'Jacobite' driver Bobby Duncan

By Robin Jones

TRIBUTES have been paid to popular West Coast Railways steam driver Bobby Duncan who has died at the age of 77, shortly before he was due to retire.

Robert Alexander Duncan and his twin brother Charles were born in Linnhe Road, Fort William, on December 16, 1942.

Bobby attended school at Fort William and earned a prize for technical drawing. His interest in trains was ignited when his father Charlie had a spell working on the railways.

After leaving school, he worked as hotel porter before starting a railway career as a steam cleaner, making his way up through the links to become a fireman by the Sixties. His first firing duties for BR were on the West Highland Line running through his home town.

He moved to Stirling in 1964, and when an opportunity to become a second man on diesel locomotives arose he moved back to Fort William to take it. However, he longed to become a fully fledged driver in his own right and finally achieved his ambition in 1986 when he qualified as a steam driver in Fort William

and drove locomotives on the West Highland Line, over which steam had returned in 1984.

His driving career then took him to Inverness. There, he became a train driving instructor with ScotRail and was the first driver for the North of Scotland line to drive the then new Sprinter trains in 1989.

A committee member of Fort William Railway Social Club, he worked with ScotRail until he retired, and then joined West Coast as a steam driver in 2006, driving the 'Jacobite' during the summer season and undertaking snowplough duties in the winter. He had planned to retire permanently after the 2020 summer season when he reached 78.

Bobby died peacefully on April 22 following a short illness. He was surrounded by family at his home in Inverness.

At his funeral on April 30, firemen's shovels were raised high in a poignant guard of honour, and flowers were thrown by friends and colleagues as the cortege passed Inverlochy depot.

Bobby was laid to rest alongside, Moira, his second wife, and his twin brother who had passed away in 1982 aged only 40.



Bobby Duncan with Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46512 at Kingussie station in 2013.
JIM FRASER



Wemyss Bay station lit-up blue to thank the heroes of the NHS in their fight against Covid-19. NETWORK RAIL

Historic Wemyss Bay station thanks NHS workers with blue illumination

SCOTLAND'S award-winning A-listed Wemyss Bay station was illuminated blue on Thursday, May 21 to show solidarity with key workers and front-line NHS staff fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

The iconic station affords panoramic views over the Firth of Clyde, which ensured the light show was visible both locally and across to the southern islands of Argyll & Bute.

The lighting of Wemyss Bay station between 8-11pm was undertaken by the Stage Group, following the clear physical distancing messages from the Government, as station staff and people across Britain

once again join in a mass round of applause to thank NHS staff for their incredible work.

The £5million two-year refurbishment of the station, which saw the canopies and glazed roof upgraded, and repairs to the sea wall and improvements made to the buildings, was completed in 2016.

It was voted best project in the National Rail Heritage Awards in 2017.

Stuart McMillan, MSP for Greenock & Inverclyde, said: "Lighting the station blue is a great way to show support for everyone in the fight against COVID-19, and we are grateful to Network Rail."

Union of South Africa remains 'stranded' at York

A4 4-6-2 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* is now shorn of its main line ticket, and according to owner John Cameron is "stranded at York awaiting a move to the East Lancashire Railway (ELR), subject to the availability of a crew".

The plan was to do some runs on and for the ELR to offset past storage charges. However, events overtook the idea of moving the engine, and when the ELR went into lock down the immediate movement was cancelled.

Unless the situation is resolved, it appears any move will be a case of the A4 being towed to Bury by a West Coast Railways diesel.

Whether the ELR management will be prepared to receive the Pacific in the light of present Covid-19

circumstances remains to be seen.

Plans for John's Fife visitor centre, in which the A4 was to go on permanent static display, are now on hold.

With No. 60009 confined to heritage railways, the main line will be without the sight and sound of A4s for the foreseeable future.

Saphos Trains included No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* in its motive power line up for its cancelled 'Welsh Marches Express', which had been due to depart Wilmslow on June 6. Work on reassembling No. 60007 in the National Railway Museum's workshop at York is at a standstill and dependent on the easing of lockdown restrictions. Locomotive Services' sister No. 60019 *Bittern* will remain in store at Margate for an unspecified time.

Local anger after demolition approved for 1845-built Brandon station

CONSERVATIONISTS have pledged to carry on campaigning to save Brandon's 175-year-old station building after Breckland Council gave Greater Anglia permission to knock it down.

The Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust

had opposed the train operator's £1million scheme to create an extended car park, with work due to start by the end of the year.

The station on the Breckland Line from Cambridge to Norwich was used as a location in an episode

of the BBC television series *Dad's Army*, but its building has fallen into dereliction in recent decades.

James Brandon, a trustee of the group, said: "It will be a very sad day for Brandon, which is famous for being at the centre of the flint

industry, and our view is that the station is a fantastic symbol of that heritage. The building is the best example of flint work anywhere."

Brandon town councillor Gary Brocklehurst said he will carry on fighting to save the building.

TABLE ONE: SALISBURY TO VICTORIA

Date	Thursday, December 20, 2018
Train	4.55pm Sherborne to Victoria
Engine	MN Class 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i>
Load	12 coaches, 429 tons tare 460 tons gross
Driver	Graham Ward
Fireman	Paul Major
Inspector	Bob Hart
Recorder	Bryan Benn and Alan Rawlings
Position	12th coach
Weather	Dry after light showers

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Salisbury	0.00	0.00	00	00	9 mins late
Tunnel Junction	1.10	3.00	05	09	35
MP 80¾	2.75		07	29	46/40
MP 79	4.50		09	58	41
Porton	5.37		11	25	40
Idmiston	5.97		12	08	40
MP 77	6.50		12	55	40
MP 75	8.50		15	26	52
MP 73¼	10.25		17	23	56
Grateley	10.90		18	03	63
MP 71	12.50		19	25	73/71
MP 70	13.50		20	03	72/70
Red Post Jct	16.00		22	27	66
Andover	17.28	25.00	23	32	75/76
MP 65¼	18.25		24	20	73
MP 64	19.50		25	24	67
MP 63	20.50		26	18	66
MP 62½	21.00		26	45	65½
MP 61½	22.00		27	37	73/74
Hurstbourne	22.50		28	02	69
MP 59¾	23.75		29	11	63/60
Lunn OB	25.30		30	36	67/66
Overton	28.00		32	59	70
Oakley	31.15		35	48	61* sigs
Battledown	32.50		37	42	39* sigs
Worting Jct	33.25	45.00	38	50	43/35* sigs
Basingstoke	35.73	50.00	42	57	48
Newnham Siding	39.80		46	43	73
Substation	40.26		47	06	72/71
Hook	41.28		47	55	75
MP 41	42.50		48	55	74/73
Winchfield	43.83		49	50	75
MP 38½	45.00		50	53	76/73
Fleet	47.18		52	30	74/25* sigs
Farnborough	50.46	63.00	57	12	47
Sturt Lane UB	51.31		58	28	55
MP 31	52.50		59	42	57
Pibright Jct	53.86		60	58	68
Brookwood	55.50		62	24	65/21* sigs
Woking Jct	58.70		66	58	47
Woking	59.16	73.00	67	30	54/66
West Byfleet	61.80		70	10	54*
Byfleet	63.08	79.00	72	52	23*/40
Addlestone	65.20		76	16	34*
Chertsey	66.63		78	45	40
Virginia Water	69.13	94.00	85	55	12*/39
Rusham LC	70.54		88	49	28*
Egham	71.28		90	19	34
Staines	73.30	106.00	95	14	1¼ mins early
	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 min early
Ashford	1.50		03	58	56/30*
Feltham	4.15		08	04	39/33*
Feltham Jct	5.56	12.00	10	36	37
Whitton	6.46	13.00	11	55	43
Twickenham	7.72	16.00	13	29	50
St Margarets	8.20	17.00	14	06	31*/9* sigs
Richmond	9.30	19.00	18	24	14* sigs
North Sheen	9.95		20	48	20*
Mortlake	10.75		23	18	21*
Barnes	11.90	26.00	26	22	24
Putney	13.10		28	55	27
Wandsworth Town	14.26		32	13	*
Clapham Junction	15.06	33.00	35	21	1½ mins late
	0.00	0.00	00	00	2¼ mins late
					sigs stop
Victoria	2.93	18.00	15	14	R/T

* brakes or speed restriction



No. 35028 *Clan Line* is seen passing Potbridge between Winchfield and Hook with the 8.45am Victoria to Bristol VSOE Pullman on July 22, 2009. DON BENN

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW

In his latest column, **Don Benn** reports on locomotive performances by SR Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*, ranging from 2018 back to 1964. He also argues there is a case for an 80-minute booking from Waterloo to Salisbury for this magnificent and powerful Pacific, now in top form after its last overhaul.

THIS time I am reporting on some performances of the Merchant Navy Locomotive Preservation Society's (MNLPS) superb modified Merchant Navy class Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line*.

I have used the word modified as the terms 'rebuilt' and 'unrebuilt' have caused controversy in the past, so I looked back at a set of papers on the Merchant Navy Pacifics, which I rescued from being dumped while I worked at Waterloo in the 1960s. In those papers the terms modified and unmodified are used, so that's good enough for me.

Clan Line has produced some quite amazing runs on the main line, not just recently but also in the past, including at least two 100mph speeds, one of which I was on, which took place on December 12, 1966 when speed reached 103mph at Palelane between Winchfield and Fleet, this giving an indicated horsepower figure in the region of 3000. The other was during the course of a quite phenomenal run from Salisbury to Sidmouth Junction on the down 'Atlantic Coast Express' on September 23, 1961, timed by Derek Winkworth, when the speed at the foot of the bank after Axminster was noted as 104mph. The whole run

was a tour de force, resulting in the 53.7 miles between Semley (started at 60mph) and Honiton, finished at 62mph being reeled off in 39 minutes 54 seconds, an average of 80.75mph! The minimum over the Honiton incline was an estimated 54mph, after being eased from 59mph at the tunnel entrance. This was I think possibly the finest ever run with *Clan Line* notwithstanding the many good runs in the post-steam era.

Up from Salisbury in December 2018

On Thursday, December 20, 2018 *Clan Line* worked a UK Railtours charter from London to Sherborne Abbey for a carol service. I covered part of the outward journey (which I was on) and the return from Sherborne as far as Salisbury in Issue 252, and Table one now shows the detail of the return run from Sherborne to Victoria, timed by brother Bryan and my regular correspondent Alan Rawlings.

The crew comprised Graham Ward and Paul Major, with Bob Hart as the traction inspector. Graham Ward is a quietly spoken gentleman, who always reminds me of Nine Elms driver Bert Hooker, both in his quietly



Left: No. 35028 *Clan Line* is pictured at Salisbury with the 4.55pm Sherborne to Victoria on December 20, 2018.

ALAN RAWLINGS

Below: No. 35028 *Clan Line* brings the empty stock of the 4.24pm to Victoria via Petersfield into Eastleigh on May 23, 2009.

DON BENN



TABLE TWO: EASTLEIGH TO BASINGSTOKE

Date	Saturday, May 8, 2010
Train	5.35pm Weymouth to Waterloo
Loco	MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i>
Load	11 coaches plus 66015, 492 tons tare 520 tons gross
Driver	Brian Butcher
Fireman	Rob Binstead
Inspector	Colin Kerswill
Recorder	Don Benn
Position	2nd coach
Weather	Cold and cloudy

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Eastleigh	0.00	0.00	00	00	¾ min late
Allbrook	0.85		03	20	31
MP 72	1.45		04	32	39
MP 71	2.45		05	50	42
MP 70	3.45		07	13	45
Shawford	3.81		07	52	46½
MP 69	4.45		08	32	47½
St Cross	5.70		10	02	51
MP 67	6.45		10	55	52½
Winchester City	6.90	10.00	11	28	54½
Mp 65	8.45		13	04	57½
Winchester Jct	9.00		13	42	58
MP 63	10.45		15	08	59
Waller's Ash	11.75		16	21	58½
MP 61	12.45		17	12	58
Weston	13.25		18	00	59
MP 59	14.45		19	14	59½
Micheldever	15.40		20	08	61
MP 57	16.45		21	12	62
Roundwood	17.25		21	57	62½
Steventon	19.50		23	59	71
Wootton	20.95		25	28	70½
MP 51	22.45		26	30	73
Worting Jct	23.18	27.00	27	07	76
MP 49	24.45		28	14	57*
Basingstoke	25.70	31.00	30	40	½ min late

*brakes or speed restriction

spoken way and his driving style. Bert Hooker was in charge of No. 35023 on its 102mph dash down through Andover on October 15, 1966. He also fired to Jack Swain both in the Locomotive Exchanges and on the Southern on normal trains. I remember being told by Bert Hooker, or maybe it was an uncle who was a government inspector, that on one occasion Bert was firing to Jack Swain on unmodified Light Pacific No. 34107 *Wadebridge* on an up express when approaching Woking the speed was the same as the number on the engine. Folklore or true? Who knows, but it sticks in my memory.

I digress – and my brother Bryan now tells the story of the run from Sherborne to Victoria, the detail of which is in Table one. “Salisbury was left nine late, but even with the usual very slow start over the crossovers to leave the platform road, and a no more than a steady ascent of Porton bank, we had recovered almost two minutes of that late start by Andover, which we passed at the maximum permitted speed.

The three miles or so of Enham bank's 1-in-178 saw the locomotive very nicely opened up, topping the summit at just over a creditable 65mph. Steady running followed until signal checks after Oakley, but the pristine Pacific still got us past Basingstoke only two minutes late. Onto the wonderful racing stretch after that Hampshire town brought back, for those of us old enough, many memories of the last years of normal steam, and the incredible fast running that all the remaining varieties of Bulleid Pacifics had achieved back then. That was not to be repeated this evening of course, but it was still very enjoyable running at, or close to, 75mph for a little under 10 miles, before another signal check after Fleet.

“There were further checks approaching Woking, passed a little over three minutes late, but those checks didn't herald the expected cross to the slow line. A very nice acceleration followed, before the inevitable end of any fast running as we finally left not only the up main, but also the direct route to London, when we took our scheduled route via Addlestone Junction to the booked stop at Staines. Thanks to an almost clear run from Addlestone, we arrived there nearly two minutes early, in a non-stop time of just over 95 minutes from Salisbury. Which, for those who value such things, may be the fastest time behind steam for running that particular 73.30 miles without any intermediate stops. A regulation run into London Victoria followed, where we came to a stand at the buffer stops right on time.”

Heavy load climb to Roundwood

Going back further in time to 2010, I have picked the section between Eastleigh and Basingstoke, as part of a run from Weymouth to Waterloo on Saturday, May 8, 2010. The morning had seen us go from London to

Yeovil with a load of 11 coaches plus a non-working diesel locomotive, Class 66 No. 66015, which had then hauled the train to Weymouth after *Clan Line* had been turned and serviced.

Table two shows the detail of the climb from Eastleigh up the 1-in-252 to Roundwood and the lovely dash on to the Basingstoke stop. Brian Butcher and Rob Binstead were in charge of the train, which weighed about 520 tons full and they got this heavy load going very well with speed up to 54½mph by Winchester, where the slight easing of gradient to 1-in-349 for a short distance brought speed up to 58mph by the site of Winchester Junction.

From Weston, *Clan Line* was evidently given more steam as speed then increased nicely to 62½mph at Roundwood summit. The four miles from Weston had occupied three minutes 57 seconds which I calculate resulted in a power output of 1850 equivalent drawbar horsepower (EDBH) or 2380 Indicated horse power (IHP) – a high figure. It was good to see the locomotive being allowed to run fast up to its speed limit at Worting Junction, where I recorded a

“I can remember being told by Bert Hooker, or maybe it was an uncle who was a government inspector by trade, that on one occasion he, Bert Hooker, was firing to Jack Swain on unmodified Light Pacific No. 34107 *Wadebridge* on an up express when approaching Woking the speed was the same as the number on the engine. Folklore or true? Who knows now with this distance in time, but it sticks in my memory.”

TABLE THREE: SOUTHAMPTON TO WATERLOO

Date Monday, December 28, 1964
Train 11.30am Weymouth to Waterloo
Loco MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load 12 coaches, 405 tons tare 435 tons gross
Driver Jack Varney
Fireman Condon
Timed by Don Benn
Position Rear of train

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Southampton	0.00	0.00	00	00	3½ mins late
Northam Junction	1.05	3.30	03	29	*
St Denys	2.11		05	23	43/44
Swaythling	3.54		07	26	21*/8* sigs
Eastleigh	5.80	10.00	12	14	33
Allbrook Box	6.66		13	35	45½
Shawford	9.61		17	11	54½
Shawford Jct	10.46		18	02	56
Winchester City	12.75		20	30	60/62½
Winchester Jct	14.85	20.00	22	38	61½
Wallers Ash Box	17.55		25	18	61
Weston Box	19.05		26	46	61½
Micheldever	21.18		28	52	61
Roundwood Box	23.05		30	42	60
Waltham Box	24.15		31	45	62
Steventon Box	25.30		32	50	67½
Wootton Box	26.75		34	15	60
Worting Jct	28.98	37.00	36	38	56*
Basingstoke	31.50		38	58	71
Newnham Siding	35.55		42	13	82
Hook	37.08		43	26	74
Winchfield	39.41		45	20	75½/78
Fleet	42.76		47	57	75/76
Farnborough	46.05		50	33	74½
Sturt Lane Jct	47.05		51	24	75
MP 31	48.25		52	23	72½
Pirbright Jct	49.60		53	29	79
Brookwood	51.25		54	43	81
Woking Jct	54.50	58.00	57	20	74
Woking	54.95		57	41	75
West Byfleet	57.56		59	49	78
Byfleet	58.84		60	48	79
Weybridge	60.09		61	51	72
Oatlands Box	61.15		62	41	70
Walton	62.16		63	30	75
Hersham	63.33		64	23	79
Esher	64.85		65	38	76
Hampton Court Jct	65.90	67.30	66	28	72½
Surbiton	67.20		67	36	71
Berrylands	68.26		68	29	72
New Malden	69.46		69	26	74
Raynes Park	70.60		70	27	68
Wimbledon	72.05		72	21	30* sigs
Earlsfield	73.66		74	34	52
Clapham Junction	75.31	77.00	76	39	43*
Queens Road	76.43		78	13	56
Vauxhall	77.93		79	50	37*
Waterloo	79.24	84.00	82	51	2¼ mins late

net time 77½ minutes

* brakes or speed restriction

very unusual 76mph. Despite this superb performance, the very tight 31 minute allowance for the 25.7 miles was only bettered by 20 seconds.

Going back even further in time to the days of steam, I have dug out a run on an up Bournemouth two hour train from Monday, December 28, 1964.

In charge of No. 35028 were the top Bournemouth crew of Varney and Condon, well-known at that time for their consistently good locomotive performances. This one was on the 11.30am from Weymouth, and Table three shows the section from Southampton to Waterloo timed in 84 minutes for the 79.24 miles. Time keeping of the up two hour trains was generally good, whether hauled by a light Pacific or a Merchant Navy and even-time runs were common, unlike the down trains where signal checks in the St Denys area were common and normally due to a diesel unit from Portsmouth which was timed in front. We were away three-and-a-half minutes late, but then got a severe signal check approaching Eastleigh, which put us six down by Winchester Junction. Then followed a good climb to Roundwood, with speed held at 60mph or more with this 12 coach 435 ton train. The easing before Worting may have been evidence of shortage of steam though we were inside the 37-minute booking to that point and gained more time by dint of the normal fast running to Surbiton, though an on time arrival at Waterloo was thwarted by a signal check at Wimbledon.

Net time was around 77½ minutes – good for an engine maybe not on top form.

Sub 50 minutes to pass Worting Junction

Table four shows the detail of a rare main line run from Waterloo with a good load and a clear road as far as Battledown. The occasion was the Eastleigh 100 celebrations and it was a splendid day out on the beautiful spring morning of Saturday, May 23, 2009.

Clan Line on 12 coaches for 460 tons ran well all day and this tabulation illustrates how the old 50 minute booking of the 'Atlantic Coast Express' can be kept even with the current 75mph locomotive limit and a start from Platform 19, given a clear road.

Wayne Thompson and Paul Major were in charge up front and the 7.17am departure was one of the keys to this performance as we followed the 7.10am Waterloo to Exeter, which we caught up with before Andover, though we were by then running 10 minutes early and due to call at Grateley for water. The other things that mattered were getting a start across to the down main

Throwback to April 30, 1966: The fireman relaxes as No. 35028 *Clan Line* passes Weybridge at speed with the 8.50am Schools Excursion from Poole to Waterloo. DON BENN

MEMORANDUM : T. E. CHRISTIE, ESQ.,

MILEAGES OF UNMODIFIED AND MODIFIED M.N. CLASS.

PERIOD 7th JULY TO 24th NOVEMBER, 1956.

ALL MODIFIED	MILEAGE.	AVERAGE PER week.
35022	35,798	
35014	33,357	1,790
35020	28,794	1,668
35018	28,631	1,440
35013	24,906	1,433
		1,245

UNMODIFIED, BEST OF CLASS DURING PERIOD.

35001	32,845	1,642
35021	25,899	1,295
35027	25,414	1,271
35029	24,917	1,271
35023	21,694	1,245
35004	20,606	1,065
35028	17,040	1,030
35015	16,321	852
35009	14,570	817
		729

4th January, 1957.

RSP: MFM/A2/GEN.

SCT/SK.

as soon as possible, even though it was from Platform 19, getting up to line speed as in good order and seeing green signals through Woking. The running was fully up to 'Atlantic Coast Express' standard and given the running to pass Worting Junction in 49 minutes 10 seconds, Salisbury in 78 minutes would have been quite feasible.

So here is my plea to all those concerned. May we have a non-stop run from Waterloo to Salisbury timed in 80 minutes for next year, 2021 please? A Platform 19 departure is clearly a deterrent as we took eight minutes 34 seconds to pass Clapham Junction, whereas a lower platform with access straight onto the down main would save about 90 seconds. This would help compensate for the 30mph speed restriction which now applies through Basingstoke. The train would also need to be limited to 11 coaches including the P.O.B due to the platform lengths and this would also aid recovery from the Basingstoke check. However, Wayne Thompson has told me: "*Clan Line* is in very good fettle since its last overhaul and has the strength to accelerate away from slower speeds in quite amazing fashion now."

Departure from Waterloo would also need to be at 7.45am, in front of the 7.50am to Salisbury and a clear road would be required throughout. With all that in place, Wayne is of the view that 80 minutes is possible. He added: "Even with the 30mph restriction





Above: SR Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* is seen at Yeovil Steam Centre, having been turned on May 8, 2010. DON BENN

Left: Part of the set of papers on the Merchant Navy Pacifics rescued by the author when he worked at Waterloo in the 1960s.

at Basingstoke, I think it could do it – a clear run into Salisbury helps of course!”

The 7.45am Waterloo to Portsmouth would need to be retimed to follow us at 7.47am, but as we should be past Woking in 25 minutes and the Portsmouth train calls at Clapham Junction, the delay to this train need be no more than a few minutes. No doubt there would need to be other changes as well but with the will to do it an 80 minute path to Salisbury should be possible. How about it all you good people in the MNLPS, Network Rail, DB Cargo and UK Railtours?

To finish this time I have included the continuation of the Eastleigh 100 charter from Grateley to the Southampton up goods loop. The detail can be found in table five.

After a slow start from Grateley up the 1-in-165 and negotiating the Laverstock Junctions, a good climb was made up the 1-in-150 to milepost 93 before we streaked away to a maximum of 77½mph down the 1-in-220/236 to Dunbridge – a lovely piece of well laid out railway through the Hampshire countryside. Final arrival at Eastleigh was on time.

I am grateful to correspondents Bryan Benn, Alan Rawlings, Paul Rowe and Wayne Thompson for their contributions. Next time I hope to cover more work of that Class 5XP that thinks it's a Class 7, No. 45699 *Galatea*. In the meantime, stay safe everyone and hope for an early return of main line steam. **HR**

Below: SR Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* waits to leave Sherborne with the 4.55pm to Victoria on December 20, 2018. PAUL BLOWFIELD/MNLPS

TABLE FOUR: WATERLOO TO GRATELEY

Date	Saturday, May 23, 2009
Train	7.17am Waterloo to Eastleigh
Loco	MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i>
Load	12 coaches, 427 tons tare 460 tons gross
Driver	Wayne Thompson
Fireman	Paul Major
Recorder	Don Benn
Position	10th coach
Weather	Fine and sunny

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Waterloo	0.00	0.00	00	00	3¾ mins late
Vauxhall	1.29		05	13	33½
Queens Road	2.81		07	03	51
Clapham Junction	3.93	9.00	08	34	49*
Earlsfield	5.58		10	32	55½
Wimbledon	7.24	14.00	12	14	60½
Raynes Park	8.64		13	35	65
New Malden	9.78	17.00	14	37	68
Berrylands	10.98		15	39	68½
Surbiton	12.04	19.00	16	36	69½
Hampton Court Jct	13.34	20.00	17	39	73
Esher	14.39		18	32	74
Hersham	15.91		19	48	75
Walton	17.08		20	43	73
Oatlands Box	18.12		21	41	71
Weybridge	19.15		22	27	73
Byfleet	20.40		23	29	76½
West Byfleet	21.68		24	30	74
Woking	24.29	31.00	26	45	72
Woking Jct	24.75		27	06	70
Brookwood	27.99		29	58	65
Pirbright Jct	29.49		31	32	63½
MP 31	31.00		32	52	63
Sturt Lane Jct	32.15		33	54	70½
Farnborough	33.20	42.00	34	47	73½
Fleet	36.48		37	25	76
Winchfield	39.83		40	08	71½/70
Hook	42.16		42	07	73½/72½
Newnham Siding	43.70		43	20	77
Basingstoke	47.75	55.00	46	43	65*
Worting Jct	50.30	58.00	49	10	62
MP 51	51.05		49	51	60½
Oakley	52.38		51	33	32* tsr
MP 53½	53.55		53	58	42
Overton	55.55		55	45	62
MP 58	58.05		57	59	72
Whitchurch	59.10		58	56	70
Hurstbourne	61.14		60	51	47* tsr
MP 62½	62.55		62	37	54
MP 64	64.05		64	03	70/76½
Andover	66.35	77.00	65	53	54*/12* sigs
Red Post Jct	67.65		68	50	27½
MP 68¾	68.75		71	34	50
MP 70	70.05		72	58	54½
Grateley	72.70	87.00	77	04	6 mins early

net time 70 minutes

* brakes or speed restrictions

“The whole run was a tour de force, resulting in the 53.7 miles between Semley, started at 60mph and Honiton, finished at 62mph being reeled off in 39 minutes 54 seconds, an average of 80.75mph! The minimum over the Honiton incline was an estimated 54mph, after being eased from 59mph at the tunnel entrance. This was I think possibly the finest ever run with *Clan Line* notwithstanding the many good runs in the post-steam era.”

TABLE FIVE: GRATELEY TO SOUTHAMPTON

Date	Saturday, May 23, 2009
Train	7.17am Waterloo to Eastleigh
Loco	MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i>
Load	12 coaches, 427 tons tare 460 tons gross
Driver	Wayne Thompson
Fireman	Paul Major
Recorder	Don Benn
Position	10th coach
Weather	Fine and sunny

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Grateley	0.00	0.00	00	00	4½ mins early
MP 73¾	0.64		03	27	29½
Allington	2.89		06	40	52
MP 77	4.39		08	40	66
Porton	5.39		09	36	68
Laverstock N Jct	9.45	13.00	14	26	27*
Laverstock S Jct	9.88	15.00	15	24	32*
MP 94	11.60		18	15	42
MP 93	12.60		19	35	44½
MP 91	14.60		21	44	67½
MP 89	16.60		23	25	75
Dean	17.46	25.00	24	01	76½
MP 86	19.60		25	48	73½
MP 85	20.60		26	36	76
Dunbridge	21.33		27	05	77½
Kimbridge Xing	22.08		27	39	75
Romsey	25.04	34.00	31	50	27*
MP 21	27.15		36	23	55½/25* sigs
Redbridge	30.40	42.00	40	18	30*/33
Millbrook	32.15		45	10	16* sigs
Southampton UGL	32.71	47.00	48	03	3½ mins early

* brakes or speed restriction



No. 35028 *Clan Line* is seen at Waterloo prior to departure of the 7.17am to Eastleigh for the Eastleigh 100 event on May 23, 2009. DON BENN

Collectors' Corner memories lead to discovery of three early catalogues

MEMORIES from more than 50 years ago of the iconic Collectors' Corner store run by BR's Midland Region in Euston have led to the discovery of three auction catalogues from the early days of the railwayana movement.

The memories, published in issues 265 and 267 of *Heritage Railway*, led life-long railway enthusiast Stefan Gronkowski to delve into family archives in the loft of his home in the Cornish village of Nanpean, near St Austell.

And among the paperwork he unearthed were catalogues of railwayana sales held in the mid-1960s by auctioneers Charles Butters & Sons in Stoke-on-Trent and Derby, on behalf of British Railways.

The Stoke sale was held in BR's depot in Whieldon Road on June 6, 1964, and the Derby auctions at the BR Riverside Sidings warehouse on November 7 the same year and May 22 the following year. The three catalogues contain typed lots with minimal descriptions and no estimates, with the Stoke sale containing 261 lots and the two Derby auctions a combined 821 items.

Dominant among the 14 pages of the Stoke sale, which contained items from north Staffordshire and south Cheshire stations that had recently closed, were platform and waiting room seats, which according to the hand-written notes in the catalogue sold for upwards of 10s (50p) for a group of three. There are also platform trucks, wheelbarrows, a plethora of platform oil lamps, and even an LNW coal scuttle from the stationmaster's office at Birmingham New Street.

Station totem signs also featured – 10 from Newcastle-under-Lyme in two lots sold for a grand total of two guineas (£2.10) – while clocks, including pre-Grouping examples, also went under the hammer, for upwards of £1

15s (£1.75). Stefan, 69, first showed an interest in railways at the age of two, when he lived near Peterborough and his grandparents' home was just 100 yards from the East Coast Main Line.

He became a trainspotter at the age of seven in the mid-late 1950s and was a frequent visitor to the city's New England shed (35A, recorded 34E in 1958).

At 12 he started making his own trips by rail, and Rugby became a favourite haunt, as did the two Birmingham stations of New Street and Snow Hill, while he was also an enthusiastic member of a locomotive club at Peterborough's Lincoln Road Boys' School, where he was a pupil.

One memory he recalls was a nine-day trip organised by the club in August 1964 to northern England and Scotland. Staying at youth hostels, the lads visited numerous depots in such locations as Carlisle, Perth, Aberdeen and Inverness – an itinerary that must have been a dream come true for an avid southern-based trainspotter.

Master printer

On leaving school in 1965 he became a motor mechanic, and in the early 1980s opened his own garage business. He and his wife Janet have three daughters, and in semi-retirement he runs an MoT testing station in Redruth with one of the daughters, Mara.

Explaining how the catalogues came into his possession, Stefan said: "My grandfather was a master printer interested in paperwork, and the catalogues became part of the family's collection of paperwork and photographs."

"After reading the memories of Collectors' Corner in *Heritage Railway*, which were fascinating and pure nostalgia, I delved into some old family

Memories, memories: Lifelong railway enthusiast Stefan Gronkowski reads one of three archive railwayana catalogues he unearthed in the loft of his home near St Austell. JANET GRONKOWSKI



Sign of the times: A British Railways' truck waits in the yard of Newcastle-under-Lyme station in May 1964, two months after it closed. The line on the right led down to the goods yard. Ten totem signs from the Staffordshire station sold for a total of two guineas (£2.10) in a railwayana auction in Stoke-on-Trent on June 6, 1964. BRAMPTON MUSEUM, NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

archives in my railway room – the loft – and found these three old catalogues which are full of interesting details of items for sale, and luckily some of the prices have been shown."

➔ Details of the lots in the two Derby auctions, including no fewer than 11 Jubilee nameplates in the November 7, 1964 sale, will be published in next month's railwayana column.



Drummond's transport: An official LSWR photograph of 4-2-4T and attached saloon nicknamed 'The Bug' which was built at Nine Elms in 1899 for the personal use of locomotive superintendent Dugald Drummond. CREATIVE COMMONS Inset: An O-gauge model of the unique locomotive and saloon combination that topped the model railway charts in a Vectis auction on April 30 with a realisation of £500. VECTIS AUCTIONS

Model collector is bitten by 'The Bug'

A ONE-OFF London & South Western Railway combined tank locomotive and coach was in the spotlight at a Vectis vintage toys sale at Thornaby on April 30, when an electric O-gauge model of the unique creation topped the train category with a realisation of £500.

The original on which the kit-built model was based emerged from Nine Elms Works in Battersea, south-west London, in April 1899 for the use of locomotive superintendent Dugald Drummond and his senior staff.

Nicknamed 'The Bug', it was classified Class F9, numbered 733, and was officially a 4-2-4T, although the rear axle supported a small gas-lit saloon, which contained a table, easy chairs,

a tiny buffet, attendant's compartment, a small lavatory, and an opening hatch for communicating with the locomotive footplate crew.

A second nickname was 'Mr Drummond's car', and it was in effect his personal chauffeured company transport, often for travel from his home in Surbiton to the works at either Nine Elms or Eastleigh. It also travelled far and wide over the entire LSWR system with the autocratic Drummond on board, and one account records it as having covered 361,000 miles by 1912.

Another claim sounds rather less credible, that the little locomotive, which had a tractive effort of 5285lb ft, was capable of more than 80mph, which if accurate must have produced

'A proper job' says Simon as GW Railwayana tackles restrictions

"A PROPER live auction except nobody in the hall" is how GW Railwayana's Simon Turner describes his next sale, which was originally scheduled for July 11, but has been put back to July 25.

Commission bids can be left via email or the post, with telephone bidding possible on items that were estimated to sell for a minimum of £500. Then there's the techy-bit, as explained by Simon.

"There will be two online platforms for live bidding – one of which will be our own, GWRA Live Bid – and these can be accessed by laptop, smart 'phone or tablet, and this will enable collectors to view me holding the auction and make their bids as if they were in the room."

He said anyone wanting to bid this way would need to register before the start of proceedings.

Colour catalogues will be distributed in the usual way, and in addition viewing will be possible on certain lots at Simon's home by appointment, subject to any travel restrictions that may still be in place. The GWRA buyer's premium has recently been increased to 15% (+ VAT), and the extra premium normally applicable to items bought online will be waived on the GWRA Live Bid site.

Highlights of the 500-lot sale include nine nameplates, five of which were from the Ted Watkinson collection, and featured in last month's issue of *Heritage Railway*. The other four comprise GWR trio *Saint Vincent*, *Compton Castle* and *Thornbridge Hall*, supported by SR representative *Morgan Le Fay*.

The Saint, No. 2930, was built in September 1907, and made it into BR stock before withdrawal from Chester (84K) in November 1949 after



London-bound: Britannia No. 70023 *Venus* in Sonning Cutting, near Twyford, with the Up 'Red Dragon' on August 1, 1959. The Standard Pacific, which has just 33 miles to go before reaching its Paddington destination, carries a headboard from the express of the type that will be going under the hammer at a GW Railwayana auction. TRANSPORT TREASURY/R C RILEY. Inset: The headboard that is being sold on July 25. GWRA

a service life of more than four decades.

The *Compton Castle* name had a rather more varied life, as it was carried by no fewer than three members of the class, the first being No. 5047, which was built at Swindon in April 1936 and renamed *Earl of Dartmouth* in August 1937.

The name was then given to June 1938-built No. 5072, which in turn was renamed *Hurricane* in December 1940, and was finally carried by No. 5099, a May 1946 product which was withdrawn from Gloucester Horton Road (85B) in February 1963. Just to complicate things a little, No. 5047 wasn't the first GWR locomotive to be named *Earl of Dartmouth* – that privilege, albeit for just a few months, went to No. 3204/9004, a 'Dukedog' 4-4-0 outshopped by Swindon in August 1936.

Thornbridge Hall was carried by No. 6964, which emerged from Swindon in May 1944 and met its end in September 1965 when a resident of Banbury (2D). Both the hall and *Compton Castle* are Grade-listed buildings, the former near Great Longstone in Derbyshire and the castle in Marlton, west of Torquay. Finally comes *Morgan Le Fay*, from King Arthur No. 30750, built by the London & South Western Railway at its Eastleigh Works in October 1922 and withdrawn by BR from Basingstoke (70D) in July 1957.

Another highlight is a headboard with crest from 'The Red Dragon', which in the 1950s enabled Western Region trainspotters to witness the handsome lines of the Britannia Pacifics because a number of them were allocated to Cardiff Canton (86C), primarily for use on this express. The board is in the style introduced by BR in 1956 and used until 1962.

I logged this London Paddington to South Wales express at Reading General

on a number of occasions in the late-1950s, variously hauled by Nos. 70023 *Venus*, 70024 *Vulcan*, and 70029 *Shooting Star*. Two of my logs on successive days in 1958 illustrate the intense use to which Western Region express locomotives were put at the height of the summer season.

On Friday, August 29, No. 70029 came through Reading at 12.21pm on the Up 'Red Dragon', and four hours later passed through on a Down Fishguard Harbour train, having had a brief service and turnround at Paddington before returning to south Wales.

The following day, a busy August Saturday, the Pacific again came through Reading on the Up 'Red Dragon' – just one minute later than it had on the same working the previous day – and once again passed through four hours later on the Down Fishguard Harbour express.

→ See next month's railwayana column for further details of items in the auction.

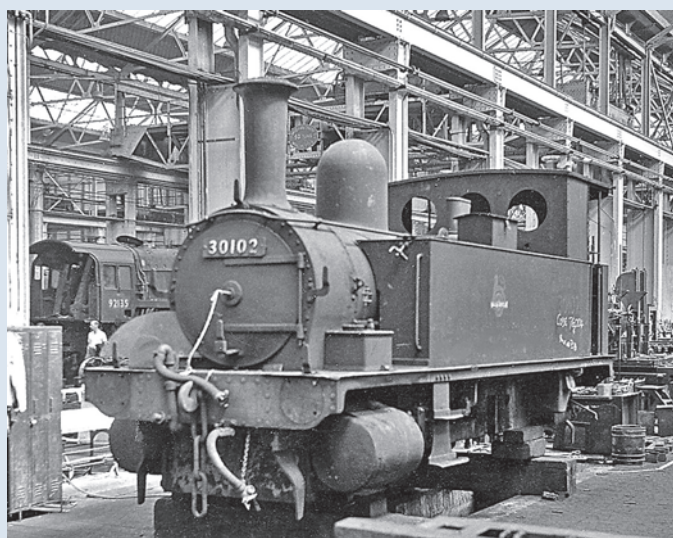


a most lively ride for Drummond.

After his death in November 1912, at the age of 72, 'The Bug' was rarely used, although it survived in Southern Railway ownership, numbered 58S, until withdrawal in 1940.

That wasn't the end, however, for the frames and leading and trailing wheels were used to transport heavy loads around Eastleigh Works until 1957, while the saloon became an inspector's office in the carriage works until the late-1960s, and is believed to survive today as a garden shed in Swanage close to the town's heritage line.

Because of Covid-19 restrictions the auction was held as an online, telephone and commission sale, with no live audience in the saleroom. The model's realisation of £500 excludes buyer's premium of 25% (inc VAT).



Ancient and modern: Southern Railway B4 class 0-4-0T No. 30102 being prepared for preservation at Eastleigh Works on August 5, 1964, while in the background a locomotive from a totally different era – Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92135 – is the object of attention. The tank engine was built at Nine Elms in December 1893 and withdrawn in September 1963, its service life of 70 years being in stark contrast to that of the 9F, which emerged from Crewe in June 1957, and was withdrawn just 10 years later, in June 1967. The former LSWR works and depot at Eastleigh frequently played host to a unique locomotive and saloon combination used by locomotive superintendent Dugald Drummond in the first decade of the 1900s. BEN BROOKSBANK/CREATIVE COMMONS.

BREAKING OUT OF LOCKDOWN!

Gareth Evans talks to a selection of heritage lines about their experiences of dealing with the Covid-19 crisis and how they're planning to reopen

On bank holiday Sunday (May 24), my fiancée Sarah and I enjoyed a coffee and a cake from the Nene Valley Railway (NVR) – something we'd not done since lockdown was enforced on March 24. The NVR is Britain's first heritage line to reopen part of its customer-facing business during the Covid-19 crisis – the refreshment kiosk at Overton.

On our four-mile walk around Nene Park, I caught up with the friendly volunteer team at Overton station. A one-way system was in operation on and off the platform. Tables were set up beneath the canopy with pre-packed cakes, sweets, crisps and a drinks fridge alongside – plus a Perspex screen and contactless card machine. Customers could enjoy their refreshments on one of the platform benches or picnic

tables in the station's attractive gardens.

It was thought-provoking for how heritage lines can begin to reopen – something I'm sure many of us long for (I mean that in a business way). Such has been the success of the weekend's trading that it is to continue every Saturday and Sunday – weather permitting.

Therefore, I decided it would be interesting to talk to a selection of railways about their experiences of Covid-19 and their plans to reopen.

Nene Valley Railway

"Opening the refreshment kiosk at Overton was an experiment to test our systems – I'm pleased to say it all went as planned," said NVR director Phil Marshall.

"It was pretty much a normal weekend in terms of refreshments takings. There was no

trade from the nearby campsite or trains – it was solely walkers and cyclists passing by. There seems to be a genuine desire to support the railway."

As for resuming operations, Phil said: "It's currently impossible to say when we're going to run trains. I'd like to think it would be by the summer holidays, but it depends on Government advice."

"The start-up costs are the crunch – the social distancing markers on the ground cost £3 each, for example. The NVR needs a £3000 budget to implement those measures. We could invest, only to find it's changed."

"It's essential to think out of the box. We expect we'll start with static events – such as having Thomas sat by the platform at Wansford, with Thomas whistling using its own steam or compressed air."

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways general manager Paul Lewin is cautiously optimistic about reopening: "If we see a solution which makes sense where we could run trains that would at least break even, then we'll consider our position." Double Fairlie 0-4-4-0T David Lloyd George arrives at Minffordd on April 29, 2017. GARETH EVANS





Service with a smile: Nene Valley Railway director Phil Marshall was serving refreshments from beneath the canopy at Overton station on May 24. GARETH EVANS

"With our static events, we may have to have some sort of time slots. Visitors will be able to book online when they want to come, so we can manage the numbers. We hope to be able to resume train services as soon as it safe to do so."

Santa trains provide vital revenue for many railways – the NVR is no different.

"We've planned for best and worst case scenarios – the key is how to operate profitably," explained Phil.

"Normally our Santa specials carry 500 people per train and we run five trains a day. This year however, it might be four trains per day to allow for enhanced cleaning – and capacity being reduced to 200 passengers per departure, which would still be profitable. The thing to consider is that our costs don't drop proportionately – our overheads such as coal, water, insurance and staff remain the same. These are big figures. We've planned ways to maintain customer satisfaction while keeping them safe."

"This year, Santa might be waving from a stage, but we will be running Santa steam trains. As soon as we're a little clearer on how we're going to do it, tickets will go on sale. We've got a good product and we want to keep it."

In terms of funding, Phil said: "We're grateful for the generous donations we've received so far. We've applied for everything we can. We've had £47,000 awarded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Heritage Emergency Fund. We've taken advantage of the furlough scheme – and we were awarded a £25,000 grant from Peterborough City Council."

"It's one thing ticking over when your staff are furloughed and costs are being covered by grants, the key to it is what happens when we come out of it – that transition phase – and how the Government handles that is the crunch point for the heritage railway sector."

"Lean times for heritage railways come in January to March – so not only have we got to recover from this year, we've also got to have enough revenue to carry us over until we get the money coming in again at Easter."

"It's going to be a challenging time. Reopening Overton has been a great first step. In a way, it feels like we're pioneering preservation again. Normally, the takings from this station are a little bonus to the weekend, whereas at the moment, every penny counts."

Looking to the future, Phil said: "Out of all this, we must reevaluate what we're all doing. It's

the age-old thing that we can spend too much time thinking about trains – now we've got to broaden our thinking. If heritage lines are to prosper, there has to be a more commercial focus – not just a full-size trainset."

"In many ways, we've got this fantastic asset that is the NVR, and in addition to travelling on the trains, people are also walking and cycling along the wonderful network of paths. We can put the station more at the heart of the community. There tends to be an automatic assumption that the station should only be open when we're running trains. This crisis is perhaps a little wake-up call of where there are other business opportunities. If we have willing volunteers, it could provide welcome additional revenue."

Severn Valley

The Severn Valley Railway (SVR) is tentatively working towards dates for running trains and reopening its popular pubs at Bridgnorth and Kidderminster.

Helen Smith, general manager said: "When I was working at Magna, a visitor attraction near Sheffield, we were flooded in 2007. We had a plan as soon as it happened – we could actually see the effects in front of us, and we knew exactly what we had to do to fix it; the insurance company paid out; and we recovered. With Covid-19 however, it's so unknown – and everything's continually changing."

"At the SVR, when Covid-19 first hit us, it was impossible to know how things were going to pan out. How can you make decisions when you don't have sufficient background information? Now, things have moved on considerably, and we've decided the best thing to do is to put a date in the diary and aim to reopen. If it gets put back, it gets put back – but it gives us something positive to aim for and everyone can work together towards that date."

"We've dealt with this whole situation in steps – when it first happened, it was all about fundraising to survive, i.e. how we're going to pay the bills. Looking at how much money we were losing, it would have been easy to focus on doom and gloom, but we resisted that."

"If we were an attraction that was failing badly, we'd be panicking trying to understand why it was happening – but with the coronavirus, we know it's beyond our control, and not the result of anything we're doing wrong. It's a matter of batten down the hatches and surviving until we can reopen, and being realistic that things will not be

BRIEFLY

Perspex screening in carriages

England's most northerly steam line, the 15in gauge Heatherslaw Light Railway, is converting its carriages in order to comply with social distancing, once the current lockdown restrictions are eased and services are able to run again.

Each compartment will be screened separately by a Perspex sheet.

Meanwhile, the railway has appealed for donations at www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-the-heatherslaw-light-railway-company in order to cover operating costs while it has to remain closed. Fears have been expressed that the family business could be forced to close after 30 years.

"We're grateful to have had a few very generous donations in return for sponsoring a carriage, so going forward our rolling stock will all have names rather than just numbers," said a spokesman.

Why Seaton Tramway operated nonstop for 24 hours

The Seaton Tramway, which has its 50th anniversary in August, staged a week of live videos streamed online from staff members' homes, in a bid to raise vital cash to cover its costs while the line is closed due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

On June 11, the line scheduled a 24-hour tram trip running continuously between Seaton and Colyton stations to be streamed online throughout as part of the Tramathon fundraising appeal.

Armchair viewers were invited to donate to the appeal at www.tram.co.uk/tramathon

The tramway has also launched its new Hero ticket which can be redeemed as an all-day explorer ticket when the line reopens, with all proceeds going towards the Tramathon. The ticket will extend to December 2021 and be free for all NHS staff and care home staff with a valid ID for tram travel.

ORR issues Covid-19 guidance

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR), the industry's safety regulator has issued guidance for the main line and heritage rail sectors alike in recovering from Covid-19 at: orr.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice



Confirming the NYMR has a plan for reopening, the line's general manager Chris Price said: "Whether we do or not will depend on several parameters. One of the main things is it's got to financially stack up. If it does, too right we'll open!" NYMR

normal for possibly another year or so.”

Turning to the target reopening dates, Helen said: “The situation could change with little warning as it is dependent on Government guidance. However, we’re aiming for July 4 for the pubs and August 1 for running trains – that’s when the Prime Minister has indicated attractions will be able to open. We also hope to introduce catering and shops in the second week of July.

“In the coming weeks I’ll be calling back senior management and planning staff from furlough in readiness for reopening. We’ll be welcoming back volunteers of all ages, as we prepare for reopening, but we will arrange this in a carefully managed way, so that it can be done safely.”

Asked how services will operate, Helen said: “While it’s not yet set in stone, our current plan envisages selling set journeys using compartment carriages, so you board at Kidderminster or Bewdley and you travel to Bridgnorth or an intermediate station; you return on the same carriage on the same train to your boarding station.

“Passengers would be required to pre-book to ensure we’ve got manageable numbers in terms of capacity, catering and on the platforms. However, it’s important to get sufficient passengers to cover the operating costs and make a profit as we’ll be in some considerable debt after this closure. We have to plan to repay it. While our fundraising efforts have done well, we have not covered the loss of income.

“We’re hoping the social distancing rules will be reassessed – it would be extremely difficult to achieve 2m on a train.

“Visitors see a day out at the SVR to be an outdoor activity, so we anticipate they’ll perceive it to be safer than an indoor activity. We’ll have to be careful that we properly communicate what we’re expecting. I anticipate we’ll be expecting visitors to take personal responsibility for adhering to social distancing. That’s what the main line operators are doing.

“We’re not going to expect volunteers and staff to police it – we won’t know who’s from the same household. We have to show we’re protecting everyone, but people should be allowed to enjoy their day out.

“We must ensure each step is fully considered

“Out of all this, we must reevaluate what we’re all doing. It’s the age-old thing that we can spend too much time thinking about trains – now we’ve got to broaden our thinking. If heritage lines are to prosper, there has to be a more commercial focus – not just a full-size trainset”

and the correct tone is set across the railway. Some staff and volunteers will want stricter measures than others, but we must have uniform rules and systems in place.

“We’re trying to ascertain who will still be visiting after we reopen. We’re analysing more than 4,500 responses to our customer survey regarding expectations and confidence when we are able to resume operations. Clearly, the grandparents market will be impacted, as will group travel. I’m eager to find out whether people still want to do on-train dining.”

Asked what funding options the SVR has taken up, Helen replied: “In addition to the furlough scheme, we’ve obtained a business rates holiday; and extended our overdraft; deferred some tax. We’ve applied for a CBILS (Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme) loan and for the National Lottery’s Covid-19 emergency appeal funding. We’ve applied for everything we can.”

As for the future, Helen said: “It will be a period of time that will pass and we’ve got to get through it while not losing any of the skills we’ve got in the organisation. We must look to the future. I’m sure we’ll be able to do it!”

North Yorkshire Moors

“You can take two options – get miserable or decide it’s another challenge and face it. I’ve decided on the latter,” said North Yorkshire Moors Railway (NYMR) general manager Chris Price.

“We’ll get through it. I believe the great British public will quickly migrate back to how they were as soon as the opportunity arises. It’s not the end of preservation as we know it – we will clearly have to adapt. In over 60 years of preservation, we’ve always found a way – this crisis is no different.”

Confirming the NYMR has a plan for

reopening, Chris said: “Whether we do or not will depend on several parameters. One of the main things is it’s got to be financially stack up. If it does, too right we’ll open!

“We’re not going public with our hoped-for reopening date yet. We’ve taken the opportunity to carry out some of the low-cost infrastructure projects we were going to do next winter in case we have to open for longer this season. The trade-off with that is we won’t have an operational railway available until July 20.

“We’re looking at several different scenarios. We have to have an adaptive approach because the situation is changing on a daily basis. We’ve not completely ruled out a traditional method of opening if there is some initiative which mitigates social distancing – such as the 2m rule with the wearing of face masks, which would potentially allow us to open as close to normal as possible. We’re also considering mandatory pre-bookings.

“We should be looking at other tourist attractions, such as Alton Towers – not just the heritage rail sector or national network. We’ve got to be realistic. The 2m rule isn’t possible.

“That’s why to a certain extent we’re not rushing to come up with a method of opening. We’re working on the processes, but we have to ensure we’re adaptive. When we open, we have to not only consider the health and safety of everyone, but also provide reassurance to would-be travellers.”

Turning to finances, Chris said: “Like everyone else, we took the Government’s opportunity to support our wage bill with the furlough scheme as soon as we could. We’ve got five people on the ground and 12 working from home.

“We’ve got a railway that’s currently turning over zero – it’s normally in excess of £7 million per annum. You can imagine the challenges that brings with it.

“We’ve got no immediate cash-flow problem as we’ve got a handle on where our finances are. We know where the pinch-points are.

“We’ve got the bank’s support, but if we take it, we’ve got to repay it at a cost. There are fundraising options – we have a few ideas up our sleeve we’re examining. The fundraising is doing well – we’ve raised in excess of £300,000.

“We’ve been in negotiations with the National Lottery about our current projects, so we aren’t looking at its Covid-19 support scheme.

“We’ve converted some of our existing borrowing into the CBILS scheme, which is interest-free for a year. We’ve also got a payment holiday on our loans. We’ve benefited too from rate rebates from our local authorities. Basically if it’s out there, we’ve gone for it.”

As for staffing, Chris said: “We’re yet to open the floodgates for having volunteers on-site – we’ve only had one or two as we see the need, such as the signal and telegraph work to get the line ready for handing back.

“In addition to two permanent way staff, we’ve got three members of staff at Grosmont shed. We will have four or five locomotives



The Severn Valley Railway is aiming to reopen its pubs on July 4 and to resume running trains on August 1. GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714 departs Bewdley for Kidderminster on February 23, 2019. GARETH EVANS



The South Devon Railway is warning that it's now facing the biggest crisis since the line was closed by BR in 1962. GARETH EVANS

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In happier times, Talylllyn Railway No. 4 *Edward Thomas* and No. 3 *Sir Haydn* pass No. 6 *Douglas* and No. 7 *Tom Rolt* at Quarry Siding. DARREN TURNER/TR

available for traffic by the time we reopen, including some Whitby-registered ones, which will be enough.”

Chris concluded: “As I said in my ‘face to face’ interview in HR last year, we have to ensure what we’re doing in our sector is sustainable. We’ve welcomed the opportunity to look critically at ourselves – we’ve not been distracted running a railway.”

“The biggest thing we’re currently managing is uncertainty. We are getting there!”

Talylllyn

“We don’t know when we’ll be reopening yet,” said Talylllyn Railway (TR) general manager Stuart Williams.

“We are awaiting the latest Government advice. We do get a little heads up as Wales has tended to follow England in this crisis, albeit slightly delayed – it’s going to roughly follow the same path, i.e. a gradual reintroduction.”

“I know some standard gauge lines in England are planning to resume operations by early August, so I’m happy for a little Welsh narrow gauge railway to see how it goes. We certainly don’t want to be first off the blocks. We must be sensitive to our local community. We’re in no rush. We’ll do it when it’s right.”

“I’m now more optimistic about running trains this season. In early May, I believed we were unlikely to see a train running this year. If other railways are operating and it works well, there should be no reason why we could not follow suit. It would be less capacity, more cost and extra hassle – but there’s a need for a lot of people to see trains going up the Fathew Valley for their own mental wellbeing. If we can run and break even, then fine.”

“I would like to think we can operate trains by mid-August, but that’s a hope – we should

be optimistic. We are bound by the Welsh Government, and whether we can operate our service within current guidelines. We can make some preparations now so we don’t need to react quickly once the time comes to run a service.”

“We’re lucky at the TR in that we don’t have corridor coaches – we have a door per set of seats. There are things we can do to fit the carriages out, so we can run a compartmentalised train if required and increase our capacity that way a little. However, I expect that by the time we in Wales have reached that point, something will have changed on social distancing. We have time to observe, learn and respond accordingly. We’ll be ready.”

“We’re monitoring, assessing and preparing. We’re introducing online training, but we did run trains in February, so it’s not as if we’ve been without operations since last year.”

As for finance, Stuart said: “Early on we had £25,000 from the business rates scheme, which was easy to apply for. The furlough scheme has been the saviour for so many businesses, especially the tourism sector. We have 21 of our 23 staff currently on furlough. The changes in the furlough scheme, to allow part-time work, means we can look at introducing retail and catering when the Welsh Government gives the go-ahead.”

“Furlough is critical. It’s guaranteed until the end of October – I hope it can continue for specific industries such as tourism. Such businesses tend to make money for five months and lose for seven months of the year. The first month we normally lose money is October – so if the furlough scheme ends, we’ve then got another six months of no money to get through. Even limited support

for those months would enable us to continue as we are. Removal of all support will mean mass redundancies in the tourism sector, which is just what the Governments are trying to avoid.”

“We started a weekly walkabout online. We thought it would only be for two or three weeks – but we’re on week nine now. It’s become increasingly professional and we are getting around 7000 people watching it – we can’t ignore that level of engagement.”

“Our Virtual Visit appeal has struck a chord too – it’s not far short of £90,000. The support has been brilliant. The initial £75,000 target was based on us covering the first three months of costs. It’s become apparent that as a tourist attraction, we will be the last to come out of lockdown. Therefore, we’ve increased the appeal target to £150,000. We’ve also got an auction – things money can’t buy.”

Details can be found at www.talylllyn.co.uk/covid-19-update

Ravenglass & Eskdale

The Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway is planning to operate some trains in 2020, but it is awaiting further Government guidance.

“We believe we have a workable model,” said Stuart Ross, general manager – visitor experience. “We’ve been looking at our timetable, which will be revised to allow time for cleaning.”

“We found the guidance issued by ORR to be thought-provoking and helpful. The challenge is how to deal with social distancing on little trains. We also have to be careful about committing to modifications when the rules may change with little notice.”

“We’re planning to install screens in our coaches as a temporary measure. Without



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that, we can't run trains economically – we'd be operating a 10-coach train with just 20 people.

"I think we'll be gentle with how we reopen – we'll be as sensitive and cautious as we can. This is to reassure the local communities around the railway that we are addressing their concerns about a large influx of tourists. We managed to run up to March 20 – the day pubs were forced to close."

Highlighting some of the positives, Stuart said: "This situation has allowed us to review all we do. We're wondering whether we need to run as many trains, for example. Also, off the back of not being able to trade, we've established an online shop."

"We ran a virtual gala on May 8-10 – the feedback and levels of engagement were heartening."

"Our museum, which is a separate charity, received a £10,000 grant from the Arts Council's Covid-19 crisis fund. It made up for the lack of donations, which meant the staff member is safe there. While not open to the public, the museum has managed to continue to function. It's gained a lot of information and photographs of the railway in the 1960s, 70s and 80s – so it's been a buoyant, positive place."

"A virtual pub quiz was held one Friday evening in aid of returning Bassett Lowke 4-4-2 *Synolda* to steam. Stage 2 of the project – the chassis – can now happen."

However, Stuart said a big worry is the loss of the coach tour market. "We're going to feel the impact of that. Among others, we've regularly welcomed coaches with David Urquhart Travel's clients – but the firm has announced it is to wind up its coach operation."

Stuart concluded: "When operations restart, we would like people to travel on our trains as soon as they are able to. Britain's heritage lines need all the support they can get."

South Devon

"We're now facing the biggest crisis since the railway was closed by BR in 1962 – it's that serious," a South Devon Railway spokesman warned.

"If we pull it off, it will effectively be the third time the railway's been saved. The majority of our staff are furloughed – a couple of people have been brought back to run the admin and finance functions. We're grateful for volunteers' efforts, particularly directors, some of whom have worked through the night on several occasions to get things right."

"Our engineering business has a limited number of staff and volunteers, who are working strictly within health and safety and social distance regulations doing the contract work. The engineering business can bring in revenue, but it's by no means enough to safeguard the railway."

"All expenditure has been carefully examined. We're looking at the options. We have weekly virtual planning meetings. We're entirely in the hands of Government as to what, when or if things might change."

"We're keeping a careful eye on Santa trains – it's 10% of our income stream. Another 10% comes from the group travel market. It's a vital source of revenue – it provides regular,



While Nene Valley Railway train services are currently suspended due to the Covid-19 crisis, visitors can enjoy refreshments in Overton station's attractive gardens. GARETH EVANS

easy midweek traffic, particularly during the early and late season. We've worked hard to grow that segment and it's sad to see it crash and burn. I hope coach travel can resume promptly."

Cleethorpes Coast

"For seasonal tourism businesses, the lockdown couldn't have come at a worst time," said Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway (CCLR) director John Kerr.

"We'd spent a lot in readiness to reopen for April – such as painting, track work, cleaning and marketing. A lot of the £10,000 Government grant we had early in lockdown went straight to paying the bills of the upgrades – yet we've been unable to get payback as we've not had any customers."

"Therefore, we're aiming to raise £10,000 by crowdfunding www.crowdfunder.co.uk/keepusontrack. We're offering a host of incentives to donors. Without support, it's going to knock everything we've put into the railway back by one-two years."

Restrictions permitting, as of May 28, the CCLR hopes to reopen in July with a skeleton staff.

"We won't consider running if we believe we'll be putting visitors or staff at risk. In light of all that, we also realise that we have to keep going – we celebrated our 70th anniversary two years ago, which showed the support our railway has."

John added: "Because our Signalbox Inn is the smallest pub on the planet, we have a large beer garden. We will open that as soon as we're permitted, which will support the railway."

"Our full-time staff are furloughed, ensuring they have income. If people want us to be here for years to come, a small donation would be a gratefully received."

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways has furloughed 92 out of 97 full-time staff, while 40 seasonal staff who were due to start have all been laid off.

"We've so far been unable to access other grants – although there remains a chance we may be successful in the second round of grants by Heritage Lottery Fund and Welsh Government," said the line's general manager Paul Lewin.

Asked about plans for reopening, Paul replied: "As of May 27, the Welsh Government has given no indication as to when it may be possible to open tourism or leisure attractions."

"The current 2m arrangements for social distancing means railways of all types can only operate at 10-15% capacity. Nobody can make money out of running trains with that few passengers."

"It remains to be seen what package of measures will be developed. For example, train operator GoVia Thameslink is currently trialling a spray which can be applied to the inside of carriages which protects the surfaces from the virus for 30 days. If it succeeds, that could be revolutionary for our sector."

"If we see a solution which makes sense where we could run trains where they would at least break even, then we'll consider our position."

Turning to the line's popular Spooners pub, Paul said: "If you've got small pubs where the capacity is much reduced, you can't make money. Our catering offer relies on a strong flow of customers on the trains. While there is a small amount of local trade, there's vigorous competition for it. There's no point in reopening to make heavier losses than you're making while you're closed."

Paul concluded: "A small number of staff are working on engineering projects alongside the essential care and maintenance work. Our online shop is bringing a small but persistent flow of orders, for which we're very grateful." 

➔ See Off the Shelf page 80.

"When operations restart, we would like people to travel on our trains as soon as they are able to. Britain's heritage lines need all the support they can get."

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Wainwright D class progresses

By Gareth Evans

THE project to produce a 4mm scale model of the National Collection's South Eastern & Chatham Railway D Class 4-4-0 has reached the second engineering prototype stage.

The partnership of Dapol, Rails of Sheffield and Locomotion Models late last year announced the release of the model – the first time that this locomotive has been produced ready to run in OO scale. It has been produced using the preserved No. 737 locomotive in association with a team of expert contributors, including those from the National Railway Museum.

Six versions are available to pre-order through Rails of Sheffield, comprising:

- SECR green as No. 488 (Pre-Grouping Silk Finish)
- Southern lined Maunsell olive green as No. 1730
- BR sunshine black 4 as No. 31731
- BR lined black early crest as No. 31574
- SECR grey (scraped beading) as No. 726 and
- Southern sunshine as No. 1734.

The models will feature a firebox flicker effect, NEM coupling pockets, a Next-18 Decoder socket, 'pullout' PCB and solderless speaker (plus provision for customer to fit Bass reflex speaker in tender). Another feature is the drawbar between the locomotive and tender, which is of a new 'pinless' type carrying the electrical connection.

Dapol is the first manufacturer to use this type of drawbar on a British outline OO scale locomotive. To couple the locomotive to the tender, it is necessary to connect it on a straight section of track to enable them to be pushed together.

Delivery is expected later in the year and it is hoped to be able to produce the model for less than £200, subject to exchange rates on delivery.



This latest engineering prototype is sure to whet appetites. DAPOL



Just look at the detail, inside and out, that's been applied to Bachmann Branchline's OO scale Class 121 single-unit 'Bubble-car', seen here in original BR green with 'whiskers' and red buffer beams.

Due for arrival

Bachmann Branchline heritage DMUs and Graham Farish Thompson coaches...

By Pete Kelly

DESPITE the long, hard coronavirus lockdown and all the implications this has had for the railway modelling trade and international supply, Bachmann remains on course for the roll-out of more than 50 new items before this summer is out.

Covid-19 meant that the Chinese factories manufacturing the models had to halt shipments in January, but these have now resumed and the first were expected to arrive in June.

In OO scale from Bachmann Branchline, these include a Class 117 heritage DMU and a single-unit Class 121 'Bubble-car', with livery options for both including the smart original BR green with just the 'whiskers' at each end that will sit so comfortably on mixed steam and early diesel-era layouts. In both cases the inner and underfloor details are amazing, and the coach numbers and even



The Class 117 boasts the same level of refinement, and both models will be available in later liveries too.

smaller graphics have to be seen to be believed.

The models will also be available in a choice of later liveries, including BR blue and grey with yellow ends and revised Network SouthEast.

Over recent years, fine detailing of N-scale models has advanced in leaps and bounds, and the state-of-the-art Graham Farish Thompson coaches, which will be available in both teak-effect and early British Railways carmine and cream, are shining examples of this trend.

New N scale releases in the range of fully-painted and decorated buildings

and accessories from Scenecraft include an electrical relay room, stone cattle dock, coal staithe and a splendid four-road brick engine shed, along with a bonded warehouse, low-relief cinema and single-road servicing shed, ranging in prices from £9.95 to £119.95.

V2 latest

One of Gresley's most beautifully-designed and highly-versatile mixed traffic locomotive classes was the V2. Capable of heavy passenger and goods duties alike, all eyes were focused on Bachmann Branchline's forthcoming OO scale model of the stylish three-cylinder workhorses when an engineering prototype was displayed at last November's big Warley Model Railway Exhibition.

A 'must-have' for every LNER enthusiast, the engineering prototype follows the majestic lines of the originals to perfection, as the accompanying photos show. The latest estimate is that the finished models will be in the shops by March 2021 – but they should be well worth the wait!



First and First Composite variations of the brand-new Graham Farish N-scale Thompson coaches are seen in their original LNER mock teak livery.



The same two models look particularly smart in early BR carmine and cream.

Heljan's Lyn on track

By Gareth Evans

HELIJAN'S OO9 model of Lynton & Barnstaple Railway (L&BR) Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* is progressing quickly, with the first factory decorated samples received for approval in the final week of May.

The manufacturer said that thanks to assistance provided by the revived L&BR, which operates a replica of the North American-built locomotive, the models feature highly detailed artwork appropriate to each period of

the locomotive's career.

A plain black variant is also to be offered, which is aimed at freelance modellers.

As previously reported, standard features include a working LED headlamp, six-pin DCC decoder interface, detachable couplers, etched metal cowcatchers, and numerous parts specific to period and livery, including coal rails, chimneys, smokebox doors, water tank filler hatches, whistles and safety valves.



This decorated sample of the new OO9 *Lyn* looks the part. HELJAN

The pre-production model shown is not a final approved version and may be subject to correction or modification before production starts.

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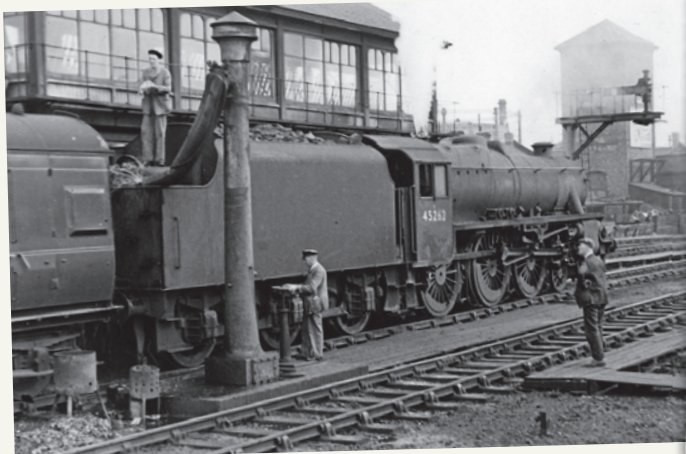
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Many readers will remember the 'Black Fives' in the same grimy condition as No. 45262, pictured by C J Bramley taking water at Nottingham Midland station before working the 11.49am train to St Pancras on July 29, 1950. The locomotive was built at Crewe in 1938. RAILWAY MAGAZINE ARCHIVE



Note the period rolling stock as one of the original batch of 50 Stanier 'Black Five' 4-6-0s built by the Vulcan Foundry at Newton-le-Willows, Lancashire, in 1934/5. No. 5056 heads a 4.40pm London St Pancras to Bedford train near Mill Hill circa 1938. E R WETHERSETT/ RAILWAY MAGAZINE ARCHIVE

Modelling the memories: Stanier's evergreen 'Black Fives'

Adding a OO-scale model of a 'Black Five' 4-6-0 to his collection, Pete Kelly shares some of his many memories of these 'do-anything, go-anywhere' locomotives.

THE Christmas Day screening on Quest TV of the two-hour-long programme 'The West Highland Railway – Fort William to Mallaig' took viewers on an armchair journey with 'The Jacobite' along the stunningly beautiful 42.8-mile route with 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*, and provided a master class in the efficient and economical handling of one of these legendary do-anything locomotives at the hands of owner/driver Ian Riley and his fireman.

It brought back an unforgettable footplate experience during the late 1980s on the same Armstrong Whitworth-built locomotive when it was owned by Paddy Smith from Cheshire and known universally as 'Paddy's Engine'. It was returning south after completing a summer season on the West Highland line extension, and every time the train stopped, those on board who had helped during the season

were each given a cab ride in turn.

Paddy had invited me to join the trip as a railway magazine editor, and although I was offered a footplate ride several times, I declined until every helper had taken his or her well-deserved turn – which meant it was pitch dark by the time I finally took my stint along the main line between Glasgow and Edinburgh – but I'll never forget the drama as the 'Black Five' raced through the night

with the almost unbroken roar from the chimney leaving a horizontal stream of sparks in its wake.

'Black Fives' have always been close to my heart because I spent my childhood only about four miles from The Vulcan Foundry that built the first 40 of these ubiquitous locomotives in 1934/5. I well remember the proud 'Vulcan Locomotives' sign painted in bold white lettering on one of the factory's large roofs that was clearly visible from passing West Coast Main Line trains as they negotiated the sharp right-hand curve just beyond Winwick Junction.

Loco-spotting days

A little later in life, I used to cycle past Vulcan's main gates to and from my first job as a trainee reporter on a local newspaper in 1961, often noticing brand-new Class 37 diesel-electrics waiting for dispatch. It's hard to believe that, like so many other British firms that once built locomotives for the whole world, the memories are all that now remain of that hallowed complex where even the fabled production 'Deltics' were built.

When mum wanted my younger brother and me 'out from under her feet' on rainy summer holiday mornings, she'd sometimes find enough money for us to buy two half cheap-day returns to Chester or Crewe for well-remembered loco-spotting days. On the bus into town we'd ponder about what might be heading our train, but we soon learned that it would always be a 'Black Five' no matter which destination we chose.

The prefabricated building in which



Among the 15 'Black Fives' surviving in preservation is No. 45428 *Eric Treacy* at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. It is seen here awaiting departure for Pickering on August 21, 2015. GARETH EVANS



Looking down on the top of the firebox and cab shows details like the reversing lever, safety-valves and whistle and sliding cab roof through which the writer once witnessed a spectacular shower of sparks during a return trip aboard 'Paddy's Engine', No. 5407, during a 1980s working home from a season on the Fort William to Mallaig line. The roof hatch cover does slide absolutely straight, by the way! PETE KELLY



From tip to toe, Hornby's R3616 OO-scale model of 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5089, in pristine LMS red-lined livery is a fine representation of the real thing. PETE KELLY



Looking on to the footplate, the backhead details are clearly visible. PETE KELLY



The perfectly-proportioned cab boasts side doors and look-out screens for the crew. PETE KELLY



Brilliant detail is evident from this close-up, front-end view. PETE KELLY

fellow classmates and I spent much of our first year of secondary education in 1956 nestled at the foot of a high embankment taking the line from Warrington Arpley to Manchester over the Manchester Ship Canal on the impressive Latchford Viaduct. The frequent goods trains were often handled by 'Black Fives', but on bitterly cold wintry days, the ever-willing 4-6-0s would sometimes lose their footing and stall on the hard climb towards the bridge despite their sanding gear, and eventually a banker would be called from Arpley, an exchange of whistles announcing the resumption of the journey.

The line was closed to the commuter passenger traffic, usually in the hands of the nimble Ivatt 2-6-2 Class 2 tank engines, on September 10, 1962, and although the line remained quite a busy artery for freight traffic, that too came to an end on July 7, 1985 – the overriding factor being the cost of repairs that had become necessary for the line.

On family caravan holidays at Winkup's Camp, between Rhyl and Abergele, our notebooks would soon be crammed with new locomotive numbers – the vast majority being 'Black Fives' and their BR counterparts, the Standard Class 5 4-6-0s, heading excursion trains from crowded cities to Llandudno and beyond – so many, in fact, that I clearly recall seeing two 'Black Fives' seemingly 'racing' each other as they ran side-

by-side on adjacent lines out of Rhyl.

For the past 19 years, I've lived in the heart of former Great Northern Railway territory in Lincolnshire, and although most of the lines that once criss-crossed England's second largest county by area disappeared before and during the Beeching era, the remains of many of the often ornately-styled stations, and accompanying goods yards and other items of infrastructure can still be found.

Clean slate

It came as a great surprise, then, that when I visited a local garden railway open day last summer and asked the owner what his favourite class of steam engine was, he replied unhesitatingly: "The Black Five!" I'd expected him to choose a Gresley locomotive, but even among the ranks of mixed traffic locomotives there are many worthy contenders, including GWR 'Hall' and 'Grange' 4-6-0s, the LNER K3 2-6-0s, B1 4-6-0s and V2 2-6-2s (the latter being my own particular favourite) and LMS 'Crab' 2-6-0s to name but a few.

When the LMS, the biggest by far of the 'Big Four' railway companies formed at the 1923 Grouping, with more than 7000 route miles and stretching effectively from Bournemouth to Wick and Thurso, it inherited more than 10,000 steam locomotives of various antiquities and classes (many built in very small numbers) from the London & North Western and Lancashire &

Yorkshire Railways which had already amalgamated on January 1, 1922, the Midland Railway, North Staffordshire Railway, Furness Railway, Glasgow & South Western Railway, Caledonian Railway and Highland Railway.

A huge brush was clearly needed to sweep the slate clean and bring the sprawling new railway up to date with a huge fleet of modern and efficient locomotives. However, the best part of a decade went by before the much-needed revolution began under William Arthur Stanier, who moved from his post of principal assistant to GWR Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) Charles Collett at Swindon to become CME of the LMS on January 1, 1932, and took the sound engineering principles of the GWR with him.

Although there was plenty of 'if

it works, why change it?' behind the thinking of the new CME, the locomotives his design team produced certainly were not Great Western engines, and the suggestion that they were sometimes irritated him. When he took over, rivalry between the Crewe and Derby design offices remained intense, and his skills in making everything work and getting everyone to start singing from the same hymn sheet are often overlooked by historians.

Even the LNER's legendary CME Herbert Nigel Gresley, who was knighted in 1936, wasn't too proud to learn from the GWR. After a series of comparative locomotive trials between one of his three-cylinder A1 Pacifics, No. 4474 *Victor Wild* and four-cylinder GWR 'Castle' 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* between King's

"On family caravan holidays at Winkup's Camp, between Rhyl and Abergele, our notebooks would soon be crammed with new locomotive numbers – the vast majority being 'Black Fives' and their BR counterparts, the Standard Class 5 4-6-0s, heading excursion trains from crowded cities to Llandudno and beyond – so many, in fact, that I clearly recall seeing two 'Black Fives' seemingly 'racing' each other as they ran side-by-side on adjacent lines out of Rhyl."

Cross and Doncaster during the spring of 1925, he happily embraced the GWR's principle of increased lap and longer-travel valve-gear for his swift and beautiful three-cylinder locomotives to give them even better performance and economy.

Born in Edinburgh in 1876 and raised in Derbyshire, Gresley himself started his brilliant career under two constituent companies of the LMS, serving his apprenticeship with the London & North Western Railway at Crewe Works before working under John Aspinall at the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway's Horwich Works.

Before his 30th birthday, though, he moved to the Great Northern Railway as carriage and wagon superintendent in 1905, and during the autumn of 1911 succeeded Henry A Ivatt as the GNR's CME.

Up-to-date

In stark contrast to the LNER, into which Gresley – whose graceful early Pacifics had already set the standard for the fabulous express passenger locomotives to come – moved across seamlessly from the GNR at the 1923 Grouping, the LMS had started the new era under George Hughes from the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway (1923-25), followed by Sir Henry Fowler from the Midland Railway (1925-31) and, briefly, Sir Ernest Lemon (1931-32) before Stanier and his team finally got down to work to bring the railway up-to-date.

Despite the Princess Royals, Jubilees, Duchesses and rebuilt Royal Scots, the most important Stanier classes by far were the 842 two-cylinder 'Black Five' 4-6-0s that were built between 1934 and 1951 and their even more numerous freight-only counterparts, the 852 8F 2-8-0s that were built between 1935 and 1945. Sheer numbers and an urgent timescale necessitated the 'Black Fives' being constructed at Crewe, Derby and Horwich Works, Vulcan Foundry, North British and Armstrong Whitworth.

The 8Fs were so important to wartime operations that they had an even wider range of constructors – Crewe, Horwich, Swindon, Brighton, Darlington, Doncaster, Eastleigh and Ashford Works as well as Vulcan Foundry, North British and Beyer Peacock – and as an aside the Riddles WD 2-8-0s, which were based on the 8Fs but had parallel boilers, round-topped steel fireboxes and non-spoked driving wheels, numbered no fewer than 935!

Although in many respects these two-cylinder, taper-boiler locomotives, with their long-travel valves and 6ft driving wheels, were the LMS equivalent of the GWR 'Halls', they utilised Walschaerts valve-gear rather than the GWR's inside Stephenson's variety, and being narrower also had a much wider route availability. Their universally-liked cabs were also a big improvement on those of their GWR counterparts.

Such was the difference between the Welsh steam coal that fed the Swindon-built 'Halls' and that generally used by the LMS, though, that it soon became clear that the first batches of 'Black Fives' had an inadequate evaporative heating surface for their particular operating conditions – and without going into too much detail, an increase in superheater surface from 228 to 348 sq ft and in grate area from 27.8 to 28.7 sq ft, resulting in an overall increase of evaporative heating surface from 1616 sq ft to 1650 sq ft transformed the 4-6-0s into the lively, much-loved locomotives they became, capable of fulfilling any duty that could be thrown at them, including fast fitted freights and some meteoric express passenger performances of 90mph plus.

No fewer than 18 'Black Fives' survived into preservation, where examples still at work never look a year older than when they were in their main-line heyday more than half a century after steam



Above: To weather or not to weather... that is the question. The writer's model of a G2a 0-8-0, echoing a real-life type frequently seen from a school classroom in 1956 wheezing uphill from Arpley to the Latchford Viaduct across the Manchester Ship Canal, was expertly weathered by TMC. A slightly milder treatment might well be applied to the 'Black Five' to echo the reality of a late 1930s main line scene, but it would be best left pristine to reflect modern heritage conditions.

Right: In real life, a heavy canvas bridging the gap between the scant cab roofs of the long-lived 0-8-0s and their tender-front extensions made working tender-first through a blizzard or thunderstorm a little more bearable! BOTH: PETE KELLY



was supposed to have finished on Britain's railways for good – and that includes the 'Jacobite' heritage train, whose timetable has been hit badly by the coronavirus epidemic, with which this feature began.

In model form

The usefulness of 'Black Fives' to heritage railway modelling is obvious, and the latest acquisition for my planned OO-scale 1937 LMS layout is Hornby's nicely-crafted and detailed No. 5089 in pristine red-lined LMS livery. The well-proportioned body is spray-painted overall, and the rest of the decoration, including tiny worksplates and tender water-capacity details, is applied by a printed process, not transfers.

The scale 6ft-diameter wheels are finished authentically in black, but the shiny connecting rod and valve-gear details could be slightly weathered to advantage. The perfectly-proportioned cab boasts doors and small crew lookout screens, a sliding roof plate and backhead control details picked out in copper, and among the other refinements are sprung metal buffers.

The model is powered by a sealed, long-life motor that's fitted to the locomotive rather than the tender, which carries a moulded coal load, and a separate small packet in the box includes front steps and the brake rod assembly.

Many small details are moulded into the accurately-modelled boiler and firebox, with separately-fitted handrails, and the safety-valves and whistle have a shiny brass finish. My 'Black Five' model cost £153 and in due course will join a well-weathered 'Super D' 0-8-0, a Midland Compound 4-4-0, a Midland 3F 0-6-0, an unrebuilt Royal Scot 4-6-0 and three Stanier Pacifics.

Heritage modellers love weathering and/or renumbering their miniature locomotives, but as before the preservation era I rarely saw a really pristine example of a hard-working 'Black Five', whose modern design allowed 145,000 miles or more between general repairs, my new model will almost certainly join my 'Super D' by having some kind of weathered appearance.

In a way, it all depends on whether you're modelling history or preservation, because whereas heavy weathering would be perfect for, say, an early 1960s main line layout, it would hardly be appropriate for a present-day heritage scene.

Be careful about renumbering, too, because batches of 'Black Fives' were fitted with different types of boiler from new, although to confuse matters further, different kinds were sometimes fitted during heavy overhauls, so a bit of research will be necessary to pick a number applicable to the particular boiler carried by the model. **HR**



'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5232 is seen on the kind of duty the class always relished – a Chester-Llandudno train pictured near Colwyn Bay on August 8, 1939. J C MUIR/ RAILWAY MAGAZINE ARCHIVE



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60 YEARS OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST LIGHT RAILWAY

While the opening of the Bluebell Railway in 1960 was setting a blueprint for the future revival of closed parts of the national network, fresh ground was being broken in North East Lincolnshire, with volunteers building a new heritage line with aspirations to run regular public transport services, write **Chris Bates and Robin Jones**.

As we mentioned earlier, the 1950s saw a succession of landmarks which paved the way for the British and indeed worldwide rail revival movement – the reopening of the Talylyn and Ffestiniog railways by volunteers, the takeover of the Middleton by university students and the launch of the Bluebell Railway.

In each instance, a closed or closure-threatened railway was revived by enthusiasts who were prepared to give their labour and time free of charge in order to ensure that historic routes, locomotives and rolling stock could continue in operation for appreciation by future generations.

Yet towards the end of the decade, another group of enthusiasts, this time in Lincolnshire, went one stage further – and built their own railway on which to preserve part of the county's unique railway heritage, and on a virgin greenfield site too. Not only that, within years they were using it to provide genuine public transport.

Members of that group, in which the founder of what became the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, William (always 'Bill') Woolhouse from Fotherby, near Louth were involved in the early preservation of the Talylyn, Ffestiniog and the Welshpool & Llanfair Light railways. Bill became member No. 13 of the Talylyn



The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway's flagship locomotive, Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 1008 of 1903 *Jurassic* was delivered new to the quarries and cement works of Kaye and Company in Southam in Warwickshire, and together with similar locomotives was named after prehistoric geological periods. Bought by the LCLR in 1961, it was delivered from Southam to Humberston along with a Ruston & Hornsby diesel that was subsequently scrapped. Found hidden behind the coal bunker in the cab was a copy of a 1956 edition of the *Daily Sketch*, possibly bought by the crew on its final day of operation at Southam. *Jurassic* is seen heading over the 'new line' built at Humberston to replace the original 1960 alignment with two Ashover Light Railway coaches in blue and the former Sand Hutton Railway coach. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR

Railway Preservation Society and had played a founding and active role in the establishment of the world's first preserved railway.

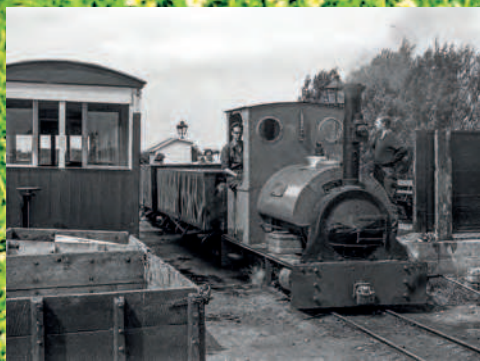
Today, it is still a long way from rural East Lincolnshire to central and North Wales, but in the Fifties, for impecunious young men crammed into a car of the time on twisting, congested cross-country roads to Merionethshire and back, it was both an expensive and time-consuming journey.

So they asked – how do we develop our interest in operating narrow gauge railways? Answer – build your own!

In the embryonic days of the heritage sector back in 1958, there was no blueprint for



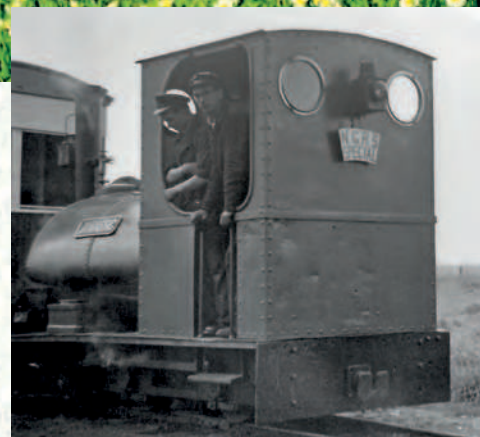
Left: The August 27, 1960 opening day first train comprising Simplex Paul (Motor Rail No. 1926 of 3995) and one WD Class D open coach. Left to right in the coach are Mr Woolhouse senior, Bill Woolhouse, Mrs S C Tovey who performed the opening ceremony, Ann Rogers, Jeff Rogers, Fred Boothby. The driver is John Chapel and the boy with the flag Graham Boothby. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR



North Sea Lane station in 1961 with Doug Hewson driving Peckett 0-6-0ST *Jurassic* and Brian Hastings on the platform. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR



Jurassic driven by Graham Newall on the 'new line' at Humberston built after the local council reclaimed the original alignment for camping. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR



Above: Box Brownie view of *Jurassic* on a Narrow Gauge Railway Society special approaching North Sea Lane around 1962, with Doug Hewson (right) and Mick Allen on footplate. CHRIS BATES



January 1962 saw young volunteer Chris Bates being given one share in LCLR Ltd, supposedly as the youngest-ever railway shareholder. He is seen wearing the hat and Midland & Great Northern joint Railway tie belonging to his late father Geoffrey Bates, who was a signalman latterly at Friargate, Grimsby, who had previously worked at Brocklesby, Bury St Edmunds, around Spalding on the GN&GE Joint Railway and M&GNJR lines and as porter-signalman at Whaplode. Chris has remained a volunteer on the line ever since, and also spent more than four decades as a passenger guard on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. GRIMSBY EVENING TELEGRAPH/CHRIS BATES COLLECTION



Left: Diagram of the original Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway in Humberston.

them to follow. However, while the flatlands of Lincolnshire bear no similarity to the mountains of Wales and the steep gradients on that region's fabled narrow gauge lines, there was a treasure trove of historic rolling stock on their doorstep just crying out to be given a third lease of life.

The stock had its origins in the trench railways of the First World War, and since that conflict ended, had been sold second-hand for use on the 23 miles of the Nocton Estates Railway, which transported potatoes, sugar beet and fertiliser across the Lincolnshire Fens. That system, immortalised in the Oakwood Press volume *The Lincolnshire Potato Railways* by Stewart E Squires, was winding down as road transport and roads themselves became more efficient, so surplus rail, locomotives and wagons and vans would soon become available.

The group set out, from the outset, to create and commercially run an all-new railway in a locality which offered good prospects of success, and in an age when most people still took summer holidays at home, well before the emergence of cheap Mediterranean package holidays, a popular local seaside resort seemed ideal.

The first site that these pioneers looked at lay between what was close to the southern terminus of the then 10¼in gauge Cleethorpes Miniature Railway (now the superb 15in gauge Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway) and a point where buses of Cleethorpes Corporation Transport on route 12 turned round.

However, Cleethorpes was not too keen on encouraging development close to its rival, Grimsby Rural District Council (RDC), which looked after Humberston and operated the substantial Fitties Holiday Camp close to the beach – and so it was to the RDC that Bill and his friends turned. Meanwhile, they had arranged for the loan of Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2067 of 1917 *Peter* owned by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society and it moved to Louth in preparation for renovation and operation on their planned new railway.

There was an enthusiastic response from the RDC and on April 7, 1960, the company which was to build the world's first heritage railway to be constructed by enthusiasts on a greenfield site, was formed: the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Company Limited (LCLR)

Construction of the 60cm gauge line (usually referred to as 2ft gauge, but more accurately 1ft 11½in) started that month with the help of a hired digger to clear the site of old holiday cottages and to lay ash ballast and rails from Nocton.

Everything – rails, locomotives, wagons and vans – were delivered by rail from Nocton & Dunston station to, it is believed, Waltham station on the East Lincolnshire main line from Grimsby to Boston. Later additions to the LCLR collection came by road, as BR had hiked its freight charges, and Nocton & Dunston, which closed to passengers in 1955, ended freight services in 1964, although the Peterborough to Lincoln line which it served is still open.

Just 20 days after that first Bluebell train...

A combination of wet weather and remedial work on the freshly laid track delayed opening until August 27, 1960, when Mrs S C Tovey, wife of one of the directors, waved the green flag for driver John Chaple (no relation to the railway's current company secretary, John Chappell) who drove the line's Motor Rail Simplex 4w diesel (No. 3995 of 1926, *Nocton No. 5*) the 700 yards to Beach station, where a footbridge across the adjacent ditch took passengers to the beach, car park and tea stall on the edge of the Fitties.

This chalet park has its origins immediately after the First World War when the shortage of housing for the homeless, hopeless and dispossessed led to an acceleration in the building of an informal architecture, unfettered by planning regulations and the like. The term 'fitties' is believed to derive from the Viking word for salt marsh, which is what the camp was built on.

The little line was an immediate success. More than 8000 passengers and their luggage were carried in the three weeks of operation before closure for the autumn and winter, reopening at Easter 1961.

Trains could be so full that the initial carriage, converted from a War Department Light Railways Class D wagon (complete with shrapnel holes from German artillery, as the Grimsby Evening Telegraph of the day noted) that occasionally one or two of the Class P ration wagons would be added to carry suitcases and camping gear.

A second Class D was converted for passenger use, a midway passing loop with storage spurs was added, the ballast improved and many improvements made for the 1961 season.

Traffic rose to 64,000 passengers that year. Two of the huge Gloucester Carriage & Wagon coaches built for the defunct Ashover Light Railway were acquired from a sports field at Clay Cross and mounted on Class D bogies and were pressed into service at night, even before restoration could begin. Trains started at 9.30am and were scheduled to run for 12 hours (sometimes later when holidaymakers leaving from the pubs of Cleethorpes wanted a train back to the Fitties). A paid driver and booking clerk were needed to supplement the volunteers' efforts and cope with the traffic.

It seemed a time of unprecedented success and progress: Peckett 0-6-0ST No.1008 of 1903 *Jurassic* was acquired from Rugby Portland Cement's works at Southam in Warwickshire, along with a Ruston & Hornsby 4w diesel – which proved near-impossible to start and so slow that frustrated passengers were known to climb out of the train and walk ahead!

Jurassic was steamed almost upon arrival as the original Simplex, now named *Paul*, failed; it was overhauled the following year and proved immensely popular with visitors. *Peter* was returned, unrestored, to the Narrow Gauge Railway Society (and is now at Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre near Arundel in West Sussex) – the less-than-impressive Ruston was eventually disposed of, mostly for scrap but some parts went to the Talylyn and West Lancashire Light railways.

The 'Ashovers' were renovated, fitted with former tramcar seats and new torsion bars to cure a sag and looked fine and handsome behind *Jurassic* steaming past newly erected ex-GNR and LYR signalling. It was in every sense a 'proper' narrow gauge railway – steam powered public transport.

Motor transport competed with the railway here too!

Railways big and small, especially the light railways of the ilk which made up the empire of the legendary Colonel Holman F Stephens, went into decline after the First World War, with car ownership in the ascendancy and motor buses proving a more versatile alternative to rural lines.

The bus operations of Grimsby and Cleethorpes were combined by their controlling local authorities and the success of the LCLR as public transport, albeit over a comparatively short distance, was too tempting a target for the town hall mandarins to ignore.

The road beside the LCLR was not strong enough to allow for a service with double-deckers, even single-decker buses – so an

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			TRAINS WILL RUN APPROX. EVERY 20 MIN. SERVICES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

A sign giving train times for the last season in operation at Humberston. LCLR

Austin (or Morris?) minibus was acquired, painted in the joint operators' livery and set to work to compete with the trains.

It could bridge the gap between the bus turn round and the LCLR's North Sea Lane terminus and significantly, run into the Fitties. With the added factor of a wet summer, the 1962 passenger figures were 50,000, dropping to 42,000 in the following year.

By 1964, even allowing for *Jurassic* being out of service all season, traffic was back to 60,000, but it was realised that the railway needed to go further into the Fitties to compete with the buses. The RDC landlords wanted the original alignment to develop for camping and an agreement was reached to lift the original track and rebuild and extend the line further into the camp on a new alignment 50 yards to the south.

Work began in 1966, installing a link from the original line to the new formation, where rails from Penrhyn and Nocton were being laid, some on halved ex-BR wooden sleepers.

The only carriage built for the Sand Hutton Railway arrived (again, having been a sports pavilion) and was mounted on new frames made from two ex-WDLR Class D underframes.

Traffic continued to increase to 70,000 people a year, despite the bus competition and the increasing popularity of package holidays to Spain, trains running 13 hours a day, seven days a week, during a four-month summer season.

Jurassic's weekend appearances were a great attraction locally, but the line struggled to attract attention from the wider enthusiast community, at a time when narrow and standard gauge lines were being opened and because of the comparative isolation of North East Lincolnshire from the rest of the country.

Tapping into a new market

Traffic inexorably declined and the line took on an overgrown and neglected appearance, but then in the late 1970s, sprang into life at weekends with the operation of a Sunday market in the adjacent Beachholme Holiday Camp, which somehow circumnavigated the strict Sunday trading laws of the time.

Trains filled with passengers travelling to the market from South Sea Lane terminus

in the Fitties, returning with shoppers laden with everything from carpets, trays of eggs, clothing, car spares and all manner of bargains. The trains were made up of two Ashover carriages, the restored Sand Hutton carriage, an open coach and sometimes, one of the line's WDLR ambulance vans fitted with platform seats – top and tailed by *Jurassic* and one of the Simplexes.

The only passenger carriage built for the Nocton Estates Railway had been rescued from its role as a Lincoln scrapyard's office and was mounted on WDLR Class D bogies, but as entrance was over one of them it was never restored for passenger use (and remains unrestored today).

However, it was all to be in vain; the 1984/85 miners' strike hit the Cleethorpes area hard, with many of its traditional holidaymakers unable to afford their annual holiday because of the financial hardships caused by the acrimonious and prolonged industrial action.

Package holiday competition was intense – a fortnight in Spain could cost less than the same time at Humberston or Cleethorpes – the adjacent road had been strengthened to allow double-decker buses to run from the centre of Cleethorpes straight into the Fitties, and the local authority wanted the LCLR's land for a new caravan park.

Faced with demands that in any new lease the LCLR would have to erect a 6ft fence and pay higher rents, the directors reluctantly decided not to take a new lease and with traffic receipts falling and other difficulties, decided to close the line at the end of the 1985 season – a few weeks after celebrating its 25th anniversary of opening.

In the meantime, Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Elin*, fitted with a Marshall's 'launch boiler' and which was owned by director John Burdett, had proved too heavy for the line, damaging the rails when steamed on two occasions, left the line for the private Yaxham Light Railway in Norfolk.

The end – first time round

Bravely, the directors decided not to wind up the company or dispose of their rolling stock and equipment. Over following months, the track was lifted, the locomotives, carriages and



The North Sea Lane terminus in the late Seventies with two-train running, utilising the bay platform. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR



The South Sea Lane terminus for Humberston Fitties in the early Seventies, with Graham Newall driving.



Almost the final run round: *Jurassic* on August Bank Holiday Sunday, 1985 at North Sea Lane. CHRIS BATES



Building the new LCLR at Skegness in the mid-Nineties. Founder pioneer Bill Woolhouse is nearest to the locomotive wearing a tie. LCLR

wagons were taken to storage in an open-air site at Burgh-le-Marsh, near Skegness.

Already, one of the WDLR ambulance vans, two of the Class D bogie wagons and the 4w wagons had been sold for a nominal sum to a newly-formed charity, the LCLR Historic Vehicles Trust, which moved them for restoration and display to the Museum of Army Transport at Beverley.

Another of the ambulance vans had been sold to the embryonic South Tynedale Railway (where it was apparently lost in a fire) and two of the four-wheelers and a useful permanent way trolley were sold to local trout and watercress farms.

Yet this wasn't the end of the LCLR, which has on several occasions survived against the odds – it was the beginning of a new future for what has been dubbed 'The Lazarus Line'.

The trust's collection was safe in the Museum of Army Transport in Beverley and its restoration provided a focus for volunteers, while the company's stock remained out in the open at Burgh-le-Marsh at the mercy of the elements.

Southern shift to Skeggie

The directors continued a search for a new location, combing much of Lincolnshire for a suitable site. In the meantime, the Skegness firm of Ellis Bros Ltd was diversifying from its house building business into the development of a caravan park, but one with a strong emphasis on the environment, conservation and heritage.

The firm began work on its site in Walls Lane, Ingoldmells, near Skegness, a seagull's



Founder the late Bill Woolhouse on May 3, 2009, when the railway reopened at Skegness. ROBIN JONES

hop from Butlin's Funcoast World. It occupied a site on which Sir Billy Butlin and the LNER had planned to build a branch line from just outside Skegness, skirting the west of the town and giving direct access to the pioneering camp at Ingoldmells, (as they did at Filey). The Second World War put paid to that, but the plans still exist.

Ellis Bros decided that a railway around the site would be ideal in terms of an attraction and as transport. Discussions were held with the LCLR about how to make this happen.

At the same time, an airfield was being developed by the firm next to the railway and it soon became apparent that its runways would prevent a circle of track being laid (though it is shown as such on some OS maps of the time).

Plans were amended to create a formation to the west of the airfield, giving views over surrounding arable farmland as far as the foothills of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Therefore, in 1995 John Burnett dug out the first of the formation with just two or three volunteers to assist.

Jurassic, the Simplex diesels, Ashover, Sand Hutton and Nocton Estate carriages and a 4w wagon were delivered – a tree was growing out of the roof of one of the Ashovers, and a corrugated iron stockade was built around *Jurassic* to protect it. Work got underway, slowly, but steady progress was made – and one of the Simplex diesels started straight away, despite years out of use.

Gradually the line crept forward, first to the site of a new station (to be called Lakeview, later renamed Walls Lane) and then advanced



The first train at Skegness Water Leisure Park returning from South Loop in 2009. DAVID ENEFER

around the side of the airfield to a point in a clearing in the trees called South Loop.

Generous support from the increasingly-successful Skegness Water Leisure Park and its owner, Ellis Bros, provided use of a shed in which to store and restore the locomotives and carriages; one volunteer (Astling Evison, subsequently a director) worked tirelessly on weekdays on his own, laying ballast, sleepers, spiking rails in a manner reminiscent of construction of the Egyptian pyramids. Eventually the new station platform was erected, fitted with handrails rescued from a part of Wainfleet station and its sidings, bought by the park's owners on which to develop housing.

By May 2009, the line had been inspected and passed for opening, the volunteers had been trained and passed out to drive, guard and operate the line, which now had a safer and more sophisticated system of tokens and interlocking ground frames.

The directors sent out an invitation to the media to see the mayor of Skegness, Coun Neil Pimperton, with that most famous of seaside icons, the resort's very own Jolly Fisherman, a party of Butlin's Redcoats and the Butlin's mascot Billy, dispatch the official reopening train.

Back in the late Fifties, the LCLR had broken much new ground for the heritage sector to come – in not being content to revive a moribund railway, but going as far as building a new one on a greenfield site. Now they had done it again, moving their railway 42 miles to the south, and had relived their dream for a second time.



A cake made to mark the 2009 reopening of the LCLR at Skegness. ROBIN JONES



***Jurassic* with Ashover coach No. 2 and WD open No. 2572 approaching Walls Lane station on July 13, 2019 during the LCLR (Skegness) 10th Anniversary Gala. DAVID ENEFER**



A representative from Butlin's holiday camp, Butlin's Billy the Bear, the mayor and mayoress of Skegness Neil and Rita Pimperton and LCLR's John Chappell with the Jolly Fisherman at the 2009 reopening. DAVID ENEFER



Peckett *Jurassic* with Ashover No. 2 and WD open No. 2572 in the wooded section near the railstore when returning from new South Loop on September 15, 2019, during the successful Classic Wheels car show. DAVID ENEFER

The world's second DIY line – in New Zealand

The LCLR, the world's first 'DIY' heritage line, has received a letter of congratulations for its 60th anniversary from the second – the Ocean Beach Railway (OBR) in Dunedin, South Island, New Zealand.

When the LCLR opened in 1960, the OBR was taking shape. It was the first organisation to preserve a steam locomotive in New Zealand with the intention of operating it. While some sections of a closed line were used in its construction, the rest was built new in a nearby public park.

It opened to passengers in 1963 and became its country's first operational heritage railway.

Campbell Thomson, chairman of the Otago Railway & Locomotive Society Inc, wrote: "The Ocean Beach Railway is also located near the Coast, being close to the beach in the seaside suburb of St Kilda.

"This makes the Ocean Beach Railway and the LCLR 'family', and today we send our warmest greetings and congratulations to you, our 'relatives', on the East Coast of England.

"Both our railways have endured difficult times that could have brought about our demise, but we have both survived and continue to demonstrate the railway heritage of our communities. Long may that continue.

"In the case of the LCLR we are glad to see that you are being supported by ever-increasing numbers of visitors."



New Zealand Railways A class 0-4-0 A67 was built by Dubs & Co in Glasgow in 1873, and was bought by the Ocean Beach Railway in 1967. OBR

Running again

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 124, the LCLR reopened on Sunday, May 3 that year.

At the time, LCLR Historical Vehicles Trust chairman Richard Shepherd said: "The original LCLR was a wonderfully quirky, eccentric little railway which had a unique character loved by many. After closure in 1985, none of us dared believe that one day we could operate it again. Now, thanks to the dedication of all those who have worked so hard for its revival, the LCLR will run again."

That year's Heritage Railway Association's Small Groups award honoured the LCLR jointly with its near neighbour, the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway at Ludborough (as featured last issue), for reopening their lines.

Passenger traffic grew through the low hundreds with trains running on summer Sundays, with the restored Ashover No. 2 and the Simplexes still in Humberston blue as work progressed on upgrading the track and rolling stock. More of the old Humberston volunteers returned and newcomers were recruited.

Running days were switched to Saturdays when it was realised many visitors to the park left by mid-morning. Passenger numbers, still largely reliant on park guests, showed a healthy increase, with fares at just £1 each return. Word of the LCLR's historical significance, now that it had reopened, was spreading.

As plans were being made for Britain to commemorate the First World War and the sacrifices of its service personnel, the local Boston & Skegness MP, Mark Simmonds (who was also the Minister for Overseas Territories) was invited to take a journey on Friday, April 5, 2013 to see how British soldiers fighting in the war (and their supplies) travelled to and from the trenches and battlefields in France and Belgium. He took a journey on the line, accompanied by the local media and saw the restoration of the WDLR vehicles and posed for the cameras on the footplate of one of the Simplexes.

Royal recognition

In November 2014 the LCLR's charitable Trust won the regional ITV People's Millions competition, which resulted in a grant of £43,000 to restore the original carriage used in 1960, a converted WDLR Class D bogie wagon, to turn it into a disabled access open carriage. The project was hugely successful and the carriage in its new form is immensely popular with passengers, especially those with limited mobility, who can now enjoy a ride with friends and family. Photographs of its progress are on the trust's website at lclrhvt.bravesites.com/peoples-millions

Two further very significant developments were in the offing – the award of a similar amount from the Lottery Heritage Fund for the restoration of the line's flagship, *Jurassic* and its return to steam – and a royal visit.

Jurassic's boiler, firebox and smokebox were sent to the North Norfolk Railway's workshops at Weybourne for overhaul; much other important work was carried out by the volunteers in Skegness and it was successfully steam tested in early 2017, reassembled, repainted and lined out and put back into service toward the end of the season – a moment of pure joy for all connected with the LCLR.

Sadly, company secretary and director Bill Woolhouse died on March 16 that year in the Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital in Grimsby

aged 91, so did not see *Jurassic* run again.

Nor did he see Princess Anne travel on the line on Tuesday, April 25, as reported in issue 228, during her visit to the leisure park to see how Lincolnshire seaside holidays have changed since Hi-de-Hi days.

In 2019, the 10th anniversary of the reopening at Skegness was held, with the mayor, now Coun Mark Dannatt, and the Jolly Fisherman waving off *Jurassic* and its train from an enlarged Walls Lane station with crowds of onlookers watching – the mayor having loaded an iced celebration 'cake' (made from an off-cut of an old sleeper) into *Jurassic*'s firebox, as reported in issue 256.

Such were the numbers attending the end of season Skegness Classic Wheels Show, held on the adjacent airfield and the LCLR, that £5000 was raised for local charities.

Showcase for unique local heritage

The never-say-die durability of this remarkable preservation era product is testament to the immense value of the plethora of smaller heritage railways and museum venues.

The LCLR will never be another Bluebell, Severn Valley or Great Central Railway, but neither has it ever intended to be.

The beauty of smaller lines like this lies in the fact that it can major in on unique localised heritage which, if tackled by a major line, would probably by necessity end up being relegated to a sideshow dwarfed by more illustrious locomotives and stock of far wide relevance. In this instance, the collection of First World War trench railway stock and the legacy of the Lincolnshire Potato Railways provide a valuable and worthwhile extra dimension to British railway heritage, and all in a county where the substantial role of the narrow gauge was in danger of being forgotten. Yes, the heritage railway sector has never been exclusively all about A4s, 'Black Fives' and Bulleid Pacifics: a classical symphony is not just about the 'popular bits' everyone knows, but about the entirety of the piece.

An impressive schedule of special events to mark not only the 60th anniversary of the LCLR (planned for July 18), the 30th birthday of the Skegness Water Leisure Park and the 25th anniversary of the opening of Skegness Airfield (which had been announced for July 4) have been postponed due to Covid-19, as was the June 6 Motor Rail Through The Decades event celebrating Simplex locomotives.

Richard Shepherd said: "We are disappointed not to be able to stage these events, but the Government's measures to control the spread of the virus and our concern for the safety of our volunteers, our intending passengers and the many people in the Water Leisure Park whose support makes possible the operation of our railway, leaves us no choice.

"These are postponements, not cancellations. Preparation for these events takes our volunteers many months of work and at the moment, we cannot access our site or its equipment. 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."

→ As we closed for press, the LCLR remains closed. Updates on the future running of services on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway will be posted on www.lclr.co.uk



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SHEFFIELD: FROM TRAM TO TRAM-TRAIN

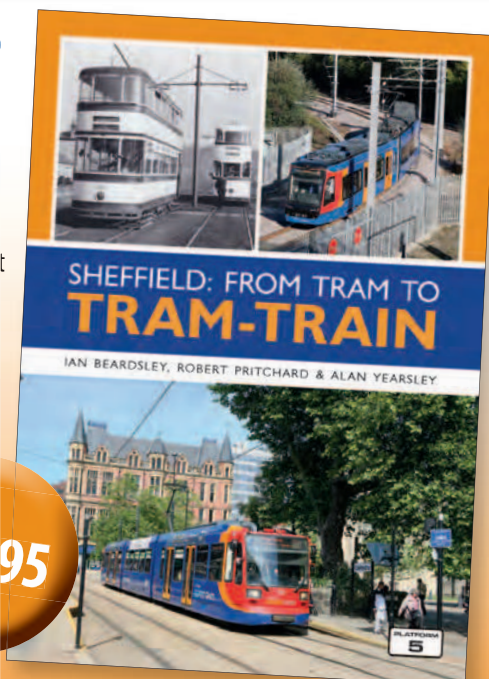
This new book tells the story of Sheffield's pioneering light rail systems. It begins with a brief look back at Sheffield's original tramway that closed in 1960, including details of all first-generation Sheffield trams that survive in preservation.

It then looks in detail at the Supertram project of the early 1990s, including the planning and design of what was then a relatively new concept in the UK. The construction process and the mechanics of day-to-day operation are also examined, and the various extensions proposed over the years are discussed.

Finally, the book turns to the Rotherham tram-train project with details of how the plans for tram-train developed and how the chosen option was implemented. Also looks at the unique operating requirements of tram-train and its potential for use elsewhere in the UK.

Using original documentation and publicity material, together with maps and many previously unpublished photographs, Sheffield: Tram to Tram-Train describes in detail the original Siemens tram fleet and the new Stadler tram-trains, the infrastructure and how the network operates. 128 pages, **Mail Order Price £17.95 plus P&P**

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THE WORLD'S FIRST SOCIAL-DISTANCING 'GALA'?

After staging a surprise series of test runs of BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 on May 22, nine days later the Great Central Railway staged a repeat, as a precursor to reopening the line following lockdown. Class 37 No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* joined the proceedings – and this time the public were invited to a complimentary viewing. Robin Jones reports on the gala-like event in words and pictures.

In the 21 years since the first issue of *Heritage Railway* appeared, I have never before experienced an event of the kind that was staged at the Great Central Railway (GCR) on Sunday, May 31. Indeed, it deserves the tag 'unique' in railway history.

As outlined in *Headline News*, pages 6 and 7, following a successful surprise series of test runs of BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 nine days earlier, the exercise was repeated, the line's Class 37 undertaking stock movements added to the mix.

What's more, this time the public was invited to view the day's proceedings free of charge.

The test runs were announced both on social media two days beforehand, and on the GCR's Rail Mail email newsletter. The railway stressed that all the stations, including the catering outlets, would remain closed and strictly off-limits, as they had done throughout the heritage railway since Government lockdown restrictions were imposed to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic on March 24.

However, the grass car park to the west of

Quorn & Woodhouse station would be open to the public so they could view the trains – but under strict rules.

Cars were ordered to park at least two metres apart and people were requested to remain in their vehicles to watch the trains, and if they stepped outside to photograph them, they had to ensure that they stood at least two metres away from anyone who was not from their immediate household. Helpful, friendly and very efficient GCR stewards were on hand throughout to ensure that the social distancing guidelines were adhered to.

Atmosphere

Around 30 cars turned up, parking alongside the fence to give their occupants a grandstand view. Although the occasion was not in any shape or form advertised or badged as a special event of any kind, there was a decided 'gala in miniature' atmosphere along that row of cars, whose occupants co-operated throughout.

Elsewhere along the line, 'typical gala

crowds' were not existent. While driving to Loughborough that morning, I feared that every road overbridge would be crammed with steam-starved photographers eager for their first action in three months.

I need not have worried. At the bridge overlooking Loughborough locomotive shed, there were just three photographers who had turned up to check that No. 78018 was being prepped, and another three looking through the side fencing next to the firmly-locked station. On Bridge 334, the first one south of the station, I stood totally on my own for some time before No. 78018 emerged, running backwards light engine around 20 minutes later.

Unmetalled Kinchley Lane, which on gala days is normally packed with the cars of photographers seeking the classic view of the line, was uncannily deserted apart from walkers, until three videographers briefly showed up.

Held the day before the Government eased lockdown in England to allow groups of six



Above: Seconds after passing No. 78018 in the opposite direction, Trainload Freight (Metals)-liveried 1961-built Class 37 No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* approaches Loughborough with a mixed freight rake primarily of box vans.

Right: No. 78018 cuts a lonely figure as it approaches Kinchley Lane bridge while returning light engine from its first round trip of the day from Loughborough to Leicester North.





"We're not open for business": the entrances to Loughborough Central and all other stations on the line are firmly barred to visitors with the notice reiterating why.

people to meet, the scenes at the GCR were a sharp contrast to those elsewhere in Britain.

As temperatures soared to new heights for 2020, police were called out to disperse crowds at beauty spots like Richmond in Yorkshire; the leader of Bournemouth Borough Council appeared on TV expressing sheer dismay at the attitude of crowds she experienced on the beach flouting advice; and protest marchers in London who reportedly ignored social distancing while making their point.

However, these were all shamed by the wholly responsible behaviour of the rail fans and the line's officials and stewards in deepest Leicestershire as the test runs were completed without a hitch. What emerged here was a credit to the sector as a whole. **HR**

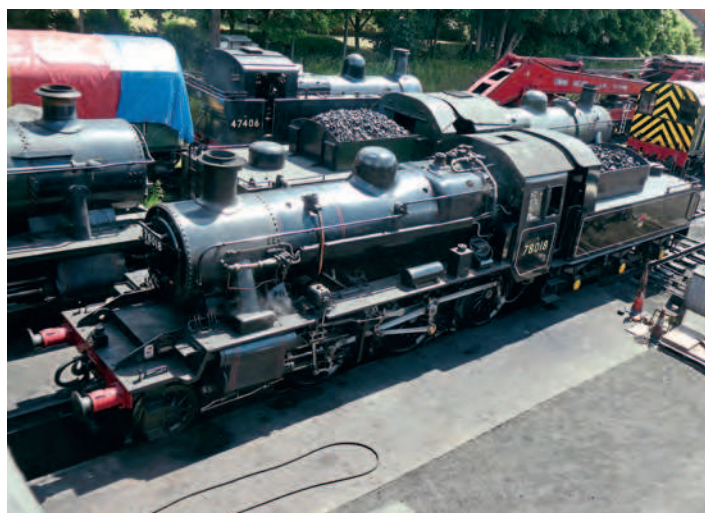


BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 heads tender-first away from Bridge 334 at Loughborough on its first test trip of the day. Built in 1953 at Darlington North Road Works, No. 78018 entered traffic the following March at West Auckland. Its next move was to Kirkby Stephen, where it worked trains from Tebay to Barnard Castle on the Stainmore route, where in February 1955 it became famous by getting stuck in a snowdrift for two days, as depicted in the film *Snowdrift* at Bleath Gill. Frozen solid, it was eventually rescued by sister No. 78019 – its shedmate at the GCR today. Withdrawn in November 1966 and sent to Woodham Brothers scrapyards at Barry in June 1967, along with No. 78019, in October 1978 it was bought for preservation, and moved to what is now the Battlefield Line in 1981 for £10,000. Stripping down began at Darlington followed by the restoration and manufacture of components, but in 2012 it was decided to send it to the GCR for reassembly with Loughborough Standard Locomotive Group. It steamed in August 2016 for the first time since 1966, and is contracted to the GCR for the rest of its 10-year boiler ticket.



Above: Class 37 No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* passes through Quorn & Woodhouse with the line's 'Windcutter' rake of 16-ton mineral wagons in a stock positioning move from Loughborough.

Below: A panoramic view of the grass car park at Quorn & Woodhouse. There were around 30 visitors' cars and stewards ensured everyone parked at least two metres apart to comply with social distancing.



BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 waits outside Loughborough locomotive shed shortly before its first run of the day.



The Vale of Rheidol Railway – The Story of a Narrow Gauge Survivor

By Peter Johnson, (hardback, Pen & Sword, 208pp, £30, ISBN 9781526718051)

IF YOU ever consider buying just one book on the Vale of Rheidol Railway, this is the one. The author's comprehensive work means it really is a one-stop shop, providing a complete story of the line to date, with a host of welcome detail.

Running for 12 miles between Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge, the well-known 2ft gauge line became British Rail's last steam operation and the first part of the national network to be privatised.

Now operated by a charitable trust, the Rheidol has been transformed, benefiting from investment in rolling stock and infrastructure alike – the detail about which is covered in this book. It's a railway you should travel on if you haven't visited for many years.

The author has drawn on a variety of sources, such as press reports and correspondence, including the Department for Transport's files dealing with the line's Privatisation now accessible at the National Archives.

Five chapters cover planning, powers and funding; construction; the independent years and rolling stock gallery 1902-88; the subsidiary years; and Privatisation – return to independence.

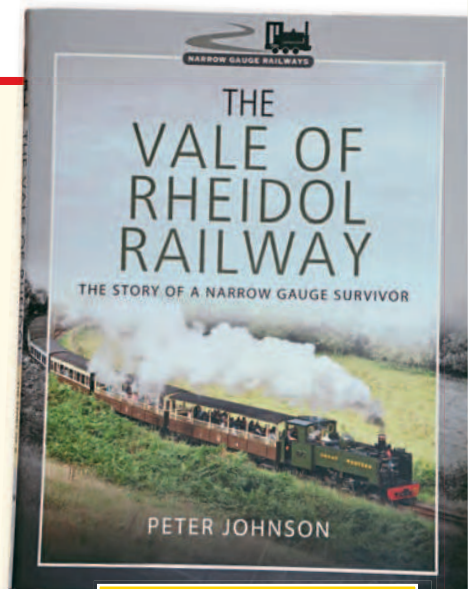
Interesting details in the 21 appendices include Board of Trade returns from 1903-1913; operating costs for 1986; the number of tickets sold between 1958 and 1987, plus 1989-2016; a list of planning applications since 1987; and work

carried out by the Brecon Mountain Railway at BR expense in 1987.

A route map and gradient profile can be found in the inside front pages, which is mirrored in the inside rear pages.

Well designed and clear to read throughout, images are reproduced large and sharp. Informative captions accompany the 200 colour and black and white illustrations, maps and track diagrams. According to the author, a number of 'new' images have been uncovered.

In the author's familiar style, the text is highly informative yet easy and enjoyable to read – he doesn't 'waffle'. It's no exaggeration to describe this



EDITOR'S CHOICE

book as gripping. It's worth every penny of its recommended retail price.

The meticulous detail and photographs are sure to appeal to historians and modellers alike. This invaluable reference source now proudly sits on your deputy editor's book shelf.

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WHILE heritage railways throughout Britain are left wondering what the summer season may bring, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways has jumped ahead to release its 2020 Christmas cards, featuring two new designs.

The first illustrates a Ffestiniog Railway train returning to Porthmadog from Blaenau Ffestiniog, with one assumes, a post-Christmas service. Double Fairlie 0-4-4-0T *David Lloyd George* is depicted arriving at Boston Lodge Halt – one of the line's first-class Pullman observation carriages is immediately behind the locomotive.

A particularly nice touch is the inclusion of a robin in the foreground on top of a post in the bottom left-hand corner.

The second design features NGG16 articulated Garratt No. 143 at the Welsh Highland Railway's Caernarfon terminus – the town's famous castle dominating the skyline.

The fact that the locomotive carries a Santa special headboard leaves one in no doubt that this scene depicts the run up to Christmas.

The host of welcome detail includes a group of passengers suitably attired; a child being hauled by its parents on a sledge; festive wreaths on the railings; a Christmas tree at the station building's platform entrance; a railway operating staff member on the platform; and a photographer pointing his camera towards the footplate. Not to be forgotten is the snowman behind the 2-6-2+2-6-2T on the trackbed towards Bangor.

The wonderful works of art are based on original watercolours by Richard Marsh. Each pack of 10 cards and envelopes contains five of each design. The greeting inside is bi-lingual (Welsh/English) 'Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda' and 'With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year'.

The attractive designs will appeal to enthusiasts and non-enthusiasts alike, helping to support the F&WHR financially, as well as raising awareness of these scenic Welsh lines.

APPEALING DESIGNS



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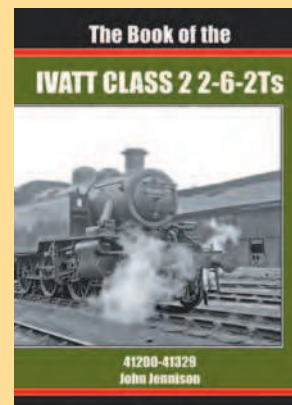
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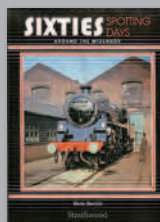


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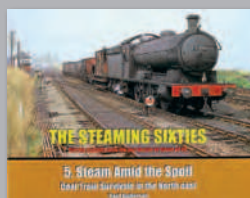
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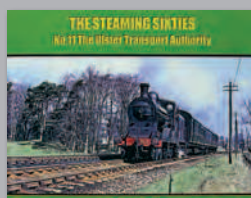
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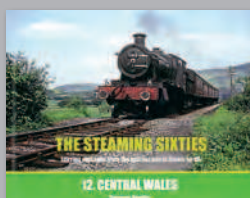
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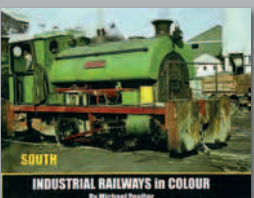
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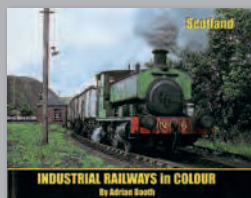
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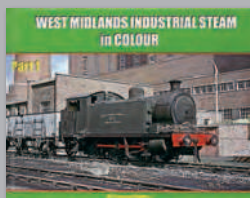
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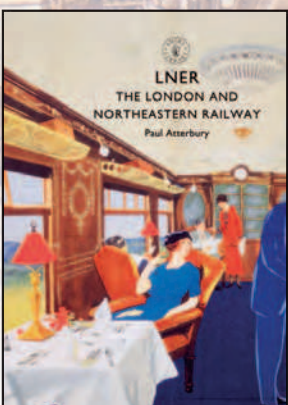
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BRANCH LINES OF HAMPSHIRE



BRANCH LINES OF HAMPSHIRE

Duration
109 mins

This DVD is part of a series of films exploring the Branch Lines of England, many of which were lost during the Beeching cuts of the 1960s. Railway historian and author Colin Maggs explores every corner of Hampshire to see what remains of the county's once-numerous branch lines, some of which were closed even before the Second World War.

Amusing anecdotes include the tale of why the Kaiser's train was kept waiting at Christchurch Road level crossing in 1911, and there is also an interesting interview with a man who enjoyed working at the Esso Fawley Refinery Railway for over 30 years. Happily a few branches remain active today: the electrified Eastleigh to Fareham line, the Alton and Lymington branches, the preserved Mid-Hants Railway and a section of the Totton to Fawley

branch. We also visit the evocative Hayling Seaside Railway, and on the border with Dorset, another narrow gauge line, the Moors Valley Railway near Ringwood.

BRANCH LINES OF WILTSHIRE



BRANCH LINES OF WILTSHIRE

Duration
109 mins

The old routes of the GWR dominated much of the county, but the film also pays tribute to the Wiltshire section of the Midland & South Western Junction Railway, which was absorbed by the GWR in 1923. It also features the branches of the LSWR in the county's southern region.

The film begins by looking at the railways of the Salisbury area, and those military lines which made such a vital contribution during wartime, as did the route from Corsham to Quarry Tunnel. We also explore the lines in the area of Chippenham, Calne, Trowbridge and Devizes. Other highlights include a visit to the Swindon & Highworth Light Railway, and the line from Dauntsey to the beautiful abbey town of Malmesbury. You will also enjoy interviews with

two former railwaymen and a feature on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, Wiltshire's only standard gauge heritage line.

BRANCH LINES OF SOMERSET



BRANCH LINES OF SOMERSET

Duration
103 mins

This film explores over 160 years of rail travel in Somerset, with the help of rare archive material and a whistle-stop tour of sites of interest today. This is an extra special journey for Bath-based author and historian Colin Maggs, as it is a celebration of his home county's railway heritage.

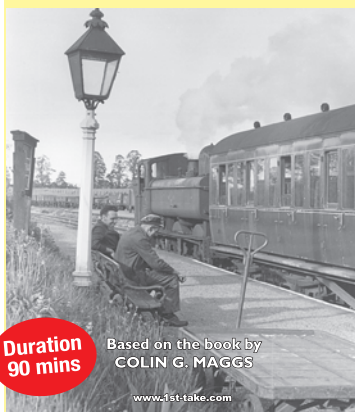
Most of Somerset's branch lines were closed during or before Beeching's cuts, from the 792-yard branch at Dunball Wharf near Bridgwater to the industrial railways of North Somerset, the Bristol to Portishead branch, the Cheddar Valley or 'Strawberry' Line and the Norton Fitzwarren to Minehead Railway.

Happily, Somerset is blessed with some fine preserved lines: the beautiful East Somerset Railway at Cranmore; the West Somerset Railway between Bishops Lydeard

and Minehead; the unique Bristol Harbour Railway and the Sandford Station Railway Heritage Centre. You also have a rare chance to glimpse railway activity at Portbury Dock, as the freight line reopened there in 2001 and is now thriving.

BRANCH LINES OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BRANCH LINES OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE



Duration
90 mins

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The story is illustrated by extensive use of rare archive photographs, and is enhanced by informed commentary. You will also enjoy fascinating interviews, stunning modern film, excerpts of archive footage and visits to two of the county's preserved lines - the Dean Forest Railway and Avon Valley Railway - and the GWR Museum at Coleford.

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TRACK TALK

→ Modelling section a welcome addition

HAVING been a subscriber to your magazine since September 2013 I wanted to write and let you know how much I enjoyed the 'Face to Face' – Living the Dream article in issue 265 on David Buck and wondered if it would be possible to have more of the same – perhaps John Cameron, Pete Waterman and Julian Birley to name just a few, for future publications.

I have also found the new Heritage Modeller section of great interest, especially as my husband is still building his OO gauge model railway.

I find the magazine a most enjoyable read and eagerly await receiving the next issue each month. Keep up the excellent work, especially in these extremely difficult times we are experiencing with the coronavirus and the impact it is having on all our lives and our heritage railways.

Sue Chard, email

→ Meaning of that lettering on that GNR lamp

GRAHAM Squires asks for clarification about the lettering on his GNR signal lamp (Platform, issue 266). Assuming that the lettering was applied by letter punches, I would suggest that the inscription reads 'SPILSBY RD. XING', i.e. Spilsby Road Crossing. A check on the old maps shows that there was no road crossing at Spilsby, and it would probably have been called 'SPILSBY L.C.' anyway.

However, just north of Boston, the GNR East Lincolnshire line – now the Grantham to Skegness line – crosses the A16 road on the level. This road is variously called Boston Road, Boston & Spilsby Road or simply Spilsby Road depending on the map used, and the 1906 1:2600 O.S. map clearly marks a signalpost.

It looks as though Graham's lamp is from there rather than Spilsby itself.

Malcolm Hindes, Headingley, Leeds.

REGARDING the query from Graham Squires in 'Track Talk' in the current *Heritage Railway*, I can tell you that the mysterious lettering on his GNR signal lamp case stands for ROAD CROSSING.

Some companies sometimes used an 'X' followed by 'ING' as an abbreviation for CROSSING, and RD is, of course, ROAD. So this lamp would be on a signal next to a level crossing at Spilsby.

John Stott, York.

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STAR LETTER

Reviving the Severn Valley left us fans for life

MANY thanks for *Heritage Railway* issue 267 which provided some cheer when we should have been thinking about, or taking part in, period events in costume, particularly 1940s events on steam railways.

At least we can show support for railways in need – thank you for the appeal information, and the suggestion we should not just consider the larger railways, but also the smaller ones with not so much funding. We are trying to search some of the websites, but not all are up-to-date with appeals for funds.

Your article about the Severn Valley particularly brought back memories to a time long before we both met. As a young teenager at Wolverhampton Grammar School, Tony was drawn into conversation at a break time between two other lads, Steve and Kevin, about railways and a society that had been set up to rescue a closed railway at Bridgnorth. This led to us all joining as junior members.

Branch meetings of this society, including talks and slide shows, were being held in an unused workshop behind the Wolverhampton town centre shop of an elderly watch and clock dealer and repairer with an enthusiasm for the railway project, and the meetings were attended by local like-minded folk.

As members, along with John, a friend of Kevin, we would catch the Wolverhampton Corporation bus to Bridgnorth on a Sunday, to see what was happening and to offer practical help. This began with assisting in trying to rid the tracks of weeds that had grown since the line had been disused. It was not the most exciting



Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34053 Sir Keith Park passes Oldbury Viaduct on September 30, 2015. Built after the war, it is named after the air vice-marshal who is credited with victory in the Battle of Britain.

LEWIS MADDOX/SVR

of tasks, and when the opportunity arose we found more fun helping to paint signs.

We had our own compartment in a non-corridor carriage at Bridgnorth, to act as a workshop where we could repaint the signs in chocolate and cream. To get to the signs down the line from Bridgnorth, unscrew them and bring them back to our workshop, or return the repainted signs to their rightful place, we

borrowed the railway's 'push-me-pull-you' flat truck. There were many regular society members we would meet at Bridgnorth, some coming to look around and take photographs, some doing odd jobs which could be done in anticipation of the railway line being able to be purchased as far as the Alveley Sidings, and run trains to Hampton Load.

The sight of No. 3205 arriving was the most joyful we had ever experienced, followed by the coming of No. 46443, or 'Mickey Mouse' as it is nicknamed. We stayed as members for a few years until situations changed – leaving school, starting work and so on.

However, the Severn Valley has always remained close to the heart, and when in 1995 it began holding 1940s Second World War events, and occasional Victorian events, we with friends in our re-enactment society, Nostalgia Unlimited, found the opportunity to offer our help just being in costume to add character, playing roles such as 'the Spiv', singing wartime songs on trains and stations to encourage the public to join in.

Your article has shown there has always been widespread support for this railway when it has been in need.

Tony and Joyce Perry, Oxburn, Wolverhampton.



Each Severn Railway station is decked with patriotic bunting and guarded for the hugely-popular Step Back to the 1940s weekends. Sadly, this year's events on June 27-28 and July 4-5 have been cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic which has left much of the world on what is akin to a war footing. SVR

Britain's heritage railways virtually leading the way during the crisis

UNPRECEDENTED is a word that has suddenly entered the vocabulary of just about everyone in the country as the world is gripped by the coronavirus pandemic.

The situation has caused a major rethink on how every aspect of life is organised.

I feel the heritage railway sector has really stepped up to the (foot) plate on this occasion.

The great majority, if not all, have launched appeals for cash to try and ensure they are there to provide their pleasure and entertainment they have always done to their followers when the crisis is over.

It is, however, the social media side that has really shown the way. In my own area, the Severn Valley Railway went ahead with its (virtual) steam gala, where followers were treated to stills and videos from previous years' events over the weekend.

Not to be outdone, the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway went ahead with its virtual

version of its always popular Wartime in the Cotswolds event. This not only featured stills and videos from previous years provided by the railway and re-enactors who had visited the line, but also new and live performances from artists that were scheduled to appear at the railway.

I feel this shows our heritage railways to be truly innovative and compared with other organisations such as the National Trust who have not made the most of the opportunity to make best use of social media.

I cannot leave without saying how I enjoy the time when my copy of *Heritage Railway* lands on the doormat. Full from cover to cover with a wealth of interesting, up-to-date articles and, as they say, the photographs 'are to die for' – truly beautiful. I appreciate we are fortunate in having such a photogenic interest, but all are superb and a constant joy.

Best wishes to all in the current crisis.

Phil Whitehouse, email

Two saviours of The Great Little Trains must not be forgotten

IT WAS good to read of the Corris Railway's expansion plans and plans to build a further steam locomotive. One hopes everyone connected with the Corris will do all they can to keep the memory alive of the Corris Railway hero, Campbell Thomas. Maybe they could name their new locomotive after him?

The visionary former stationmaster at Machynlleth in 1948, when the Corris Railway closed, at a time of a national scrap drive, hid Corris locomotives Nos. 3 and 4 at the lower yard at Machynlleth. Accidentally, he overlooked instructions to send the locomotives to Swindon for scrapping.

Campbell Thomas knew the Talylyn needed his locomotives. Without realising it, he became a pioneer of railway preservation as the Talylyn would have been in a

very difficult position without the Corris two.

Another railwayman, Oliver Veltom, district superintendent at Oswestry, was inspired by Campbell Thomas and he saved the Vale of Rheidol from closing in the 1950s by revitalising it to such an extent that the local railwaymen called it 'Veltom's own Railway'.

Oliver's greatest achievement was saving the Welshpool & Llanfair by keeping locomotives Nos. 822/823 in Oswestry Works for six years, so enabling the railway to reopen. He also saved Dukedog No. 9017 in Oswestry Works.

Oliver cared for his men. When the Ruabon to Barmouth line closed, he wrote to all the firms in the area served by the railway asking them to employ redundant railwaymen.

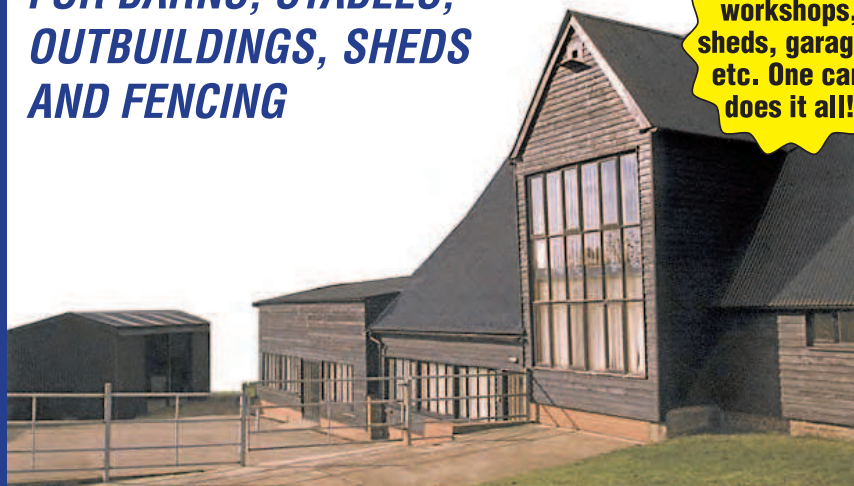
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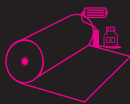


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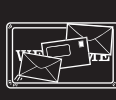
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WANTED Your lighter takes

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 photograph, tale, poem

or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email deputy editor Gareth Evans on gevans@mortons.co.uk

Canine fare issue onboard

AS we've outlined on this page previously, there is never a dull moment when dealing with members of the public.

Reader John Rogers writes: "Being a ticket inspector on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, I hear many funny stories, but this happened to me last year.

"I was going through the train checking tickets, when a gentleman and his good lady presented me with two tickets to check and clip. On looking at the tickets, I could see they were for two dogs. Looking around the couple, no dogs were to be seen.

"I asked where the dogs were and was told they did not have any pets. I pointed out that they had dog tickets and not adult senior. The gentleman informed me that that was what was issued to him at Toddington station. He was sold them as he had asked for 'Two Rover Tickets' and I suppose the poor booking clerk thought he had two dogs!

"We all had a good laugh and on his return to Toddington, he purchased the correct ones. A day on the train can be fun...!"

He adds: "Please keep up the good work with a great railway magazine – it's the best one on sale."



Ornament closer to reality in lockdown

IN the Covid-19 lockdown, a railway enthusiast's garden ornament is closer to reality than he'd like – with steam nowhere to be found. However, that hasn't stopped reader Steve Lloyd of Camborne, Cornwall from looking forward to the future and making the most of his delightful display.

He writes: "Reading your request in issue 267 for any railway-related quirky photographs, I thought you might be interested in this shot of my 14XX 0-4-2T stone garden engine and two painted wagons. The signal is home-made and the locomotive is named *Phyllis* after my wife.

"There is coal in the bunker, but as is unfortunately currently the

case nationwide, there is no steam. However, we all hope as soon as possible that all signals on our heritage railways will be in a similar position, meaning steam trains will be running again.

"Incidentally, very often we see a little mouse running between the engine and wagons picking up birdseed. I tried to get my 'Cuneo' shot with the mouse in picture, but it wouldn't cooperate.

"The 'Trains Cross Here' sign in the photograph was rescued from Falmouth Docks when the railway system there ceased operations in the 1980s."

Stephen adds: "Also of particular interest to me was your editor's walk on the trackbed of the old Bourne & Essendine Railway in issue 267. I used to live at Witham-on-the-Hill, near Thurlby and Bourne, and trainspotted at Essendine regularly when steam was still in command on the East Coast Main Line just before the Deltics started infiltrating. I still remember coping *Mallard* speeding through on an Up train in my teens. I jumped with joy at seeing it for the first time!"

→ As this issue went to press, Steve succeeded in photographing his four-legged garden resident next to his ornamental locomotive.



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NEXT ISSUE

Issue 269 is out on
July 10, 2020

Off route to Paddington...!

"Some months ago we were visiting my brother in Broad Bush, near Blunsdon," writes reader Howard Burgess from Dymchurch, Kent.

"As we arrived too early, I thought we would take a look at Blunsdon station on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. A member of the railway staff saw me and came over to chat to me on the pathway leading up to the station.

"All of a sudden, a young lady arrived in a car, jumped out and came hurrying towards us, pulling one of those wheelie cases behind her, and enquired 'Is this where I catch the train for Paddington?'

"We thought that was a bit of poor

information from someone...!"

While Blunsdon station is home to a rateable buffet, it certainly does not adjoin a main line railway. It's hardly Alton, Aylsham, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Bodmin Parkway, Chappel & Wakes Colne, Duffield, Grosmont, Keighley, Kidderminster, Minffordd, Porthmadog or Sheringham.

A quick look on Google maps reveals it's approximately six miles to the nearest main line station in Swindon. Far from being 'on route', the lady appears to have been 'off route' to Paddington. We hope she managed to catch her intended train...



It would appear someone was led up the garden path... GARETH EVANS

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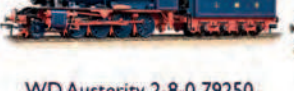
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