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ISSUE 303 February 17 – March 17, 2023

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GREAT CENTRAL 50TH

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LMS 2-4-0 Kirtley No. 158A, built in 1866, stands to the left of 4-4-0 Compound No. 1000 of 1902 inside Barrow Hill Roundhouse at a Timeline Events photographic charter on January 25. ROBERT FALCONER

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SUBSCRIPTION
Full subscription rates (but see page 30 for offer): (12 months 13 issues, inc post and packing) – UK £59.80. Export rates are also available – see page 30 for more details. UK subscriptions are zero-rated for the purposes of Value Added Tax.
Enquires: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

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ISSN No 1466-3560

Published
Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
March 2, 2023
Next issue on sale
March 17, 2023

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A second Age of the Volunteer

I FOUND the Great Central Railway's Winter Steam Gala a truly breathtaking experience, not only for the performance of the locomotives and crews but also the size of the crowds that turned up.

On the Friday, usually the quietest of the three days of most weekend gala, car parks and verges along the line were packed, as was the remote muddy track that is Kinchley Lane, everyone's favourite photographic vantage point, despite the overcast weather on the day.

The event proved to be a cracking start to the railway's 50th anniversary, and in one of two special features on the GCR in this issue, we look back at the early Seventies when a motley band of seemingly over-optimistic volunteers set out to confound the critics and again proved that railway preservation is the art of the possible.

In the case of the GCR, Mission Impossible became Mission Accomplished – the creation of a unique double-track heritage main line near the heart of England, with the potential to link the outskirts of two major cities, and moves to realise this potential are happening again.

Half a century on and the sector's stalwart volunteer arm is on the march again. In our News section, we report on the progress made by the Helston Railway during the cold season in clearing decades of vegetation and dumped rubble from a quarter-mile of trackbed which hopefully will one day again bring trains to the edge of this delightful Cornish town. Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the country, the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway revivalists have doubled the length of their running line.

From its earliest days in 1951 when Tom Rolt and his merry band saved the Talyllyn Railway, volunteers have been the backbone of our magnificent heritage sector. Now they are needed perhaps more than ever before in order to secure the future of what we have.

Several of our top lines have reported falls in passenger numbers and the resulting income, firstly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown, and then the cost of living crisis which has followed in the wake of the war in Ukraine for which no end in sight seems obvious at the present time. Just as we overcame all those odds to reopen railways decades ago, then we all need to answer the latest call for help.

If you are able to offer your services free of charge in any capacity to your local heritage line, don't hesitate to do so – you will be made to feel more than welcome.

If you are looking for a quality day out for the family, a trip on a heritage railway is still one of the better bets... and once you have been, tell your friends. Want to buy presents or souvenirs? Check out your local heritage railway shop or website. If you want to offload old railway books or other items, most lines have second-hand counters. Every penny of profit for our lines will go towards making the difference at this time.

Just look at what the GCR has proudly become since its formative years, and then do your utmost to ensure that none of our lines will have to take retrograde steps.

Robin Jones Editor

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COVER: This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Great Central Railway, and its Winter Steam Gala kicked off a year of celebration. Having recently been repainted following its purchase by the railway's supporting trust, BR 9F No. 92214 thunders through Quorn & Woodhouse station with the iconic 'Windcutter' rake in tow on January 29. **See pages 74-78 for the full story.** JOHN TITLOW

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£3.2m Lottery win for Stockton & Darlington 200

By Robin Jones

PLANS to celebrate the bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 2025 have been awarded £3,211,630 in National Heritage Lottery Fund grant aid.

The award, announced on February 7, is a major contribution towards the capital costs for Darlington's groundbreaking new Rail Heritage Quarter as a national and international visitor centre, along with the implementation of an activity plan to engage with communities along the 26 miles of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, plus a programme of small grants to enable communities to organise their own celebratory events and projects.

Opening in 2024, the quarter will redevelop a cluster of heritage buildings around Darlington's Head of Steam museum, and has been estimated as capable of attracting more than 360,000 visitors each year.

The funding will also enable the creation of an immersive experience in the restored goods shed, museum and carriage works, and across the site. The carriage works will be refurbished to create an exhibition space, open store and archive facility. The whole site will be animated from the outset through digital means, including virtual and augmented reality.

The Grade II-listed Lime Cells in Northgate, which were developed by the S&DR between 1831 and 1853 as a facility whereby lime was dropped from railway wagons above the ground floor and stored pending its transfer by road, will be restored.

A bespoke play facility designed to link with the site heritage will also be created.

It is estimated that the quarter will create 30 new jobs and a further 300 indirectly, plus 37 in construction. Local students will be able to gain valuable work experience in several areas and progress in their chosen careers with the creation of an apprenticeships scheme.

On January 31, Darlington Borough Council handed the keys of the Head of Steam museum to contractor Willmott Dixon to enable redevelopment to continue onsite.

The successful Lottery bid came as a result of a collaboration with the council, Durham County Council, Stockton Borough Council and the Friends of Stockton & Darlington Railway.

Darlington council's leader, Coun Jonathan Dulston, said: "This generous award is key to the success of this fantastic project. It will enable us to display and interpret our amazing railway heritage for the enjoyment of all our visitors, to cherish and maintain it for the benefit of generations to come."

Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said: "This National Lottery award highlights the impact the S&DR had on the global stage.

The new Railway Heritage Quarter at Darlington under construction. DMBC

"It will help secure tourist trade and boost the area's economy, getting people spending in our towns, and will undoubtedly act as an inspiration for future industry, development and innovation in the region."

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's commercial director, Graeme Bunker-James, added: "Visitors to heritage railway sites now expect more than just to look at restored exhibits.

"They want to see historic engineering skills put to use, and in Darlington the A1SLT employs them alongside modern design techniques to create new steam locomotives and maintain existing vehicles, and all while visitors are entertained and informed about the activities they are observing."

Furness No. 20 to visit Didcot

FURNESS Railway 0-4-0 No. 20 is to run at Didcot Railway Centre's during the Easter bank holiday weekend – and will stay for about two months.

The 1863-built locomotive will be in service from April 7-10. A total of nine steamings over the two months has been agreed with its owner, the Furness Railway Trust.

No. 20 is one of six examples of the class which were sold to the Barrow Haematite Steel Co. at Barrow in 1970.

It continued in traffic until 1960, when diesel locomotives were introduced, and was then presented to George Hastwell Special School in Abbey Road, Barrow, where it was displayed for more than two decades.

Bought privately in 1983, it was moved to the Steamtown Railway Museum at Carnforth. After the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £97,000, the trust began its restoration to working order. Following a total rebuild, including the construction of a new boiler and tender, No. 20 emerged from the workshops of Marconi Marine in Barrow on December 17, 1998, resplendent in Furness Railway Indian Red livery.

Didcot-bound Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20. FRT

Remembering the first GWR bus 120 years on

THE exact 120th anniversary of the first GWR bus service will be celebrated by the Helston Railway on August 17.

Faced with an estimated £85,000 bill to construct a light railway to extend the Helston branch to Lizard Town, the decision was made to test the market with bus services on the route. After local red tape stopped the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway using its two buses for a link with Ilfracombe, the GWR bought them to start a Lizard service, which started on August 17, 1903.

For the celebration, which has been arranged in the middle of the summer season, the Helston Railway has arranged with Thames Valley bus group to bring a genuine GWR bus to run from Truthall Halt to the Lizard.

Other events at the railway are the May 28/29 1940s weekend and the September 9/10 transport weekend.

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Cotswold line wins national award in partnership with museum

THE 2023 Heritage Railway Association Award for Innovation – sponsored by *Heritage Railway* magazine/ Mortons Media) – has been won by the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway and Broadway Museum and Art Gallery for their Journey Through Steam exhibtion.

Assembled in just six weeks last autumn by G/WR marketing manager Catherine Johnson, with museum director Anona van Lawick, and railway volunteers Mike Doss and Rose Phillips, the exhibition highlights the history of the G/WR Straford-upon-Avon to Cheltenham main line which served the town – an international tourist honeypot by virtue of its trademark Cotswold yellowstone buildings.

Since it opened on November 4 lsat year, (News, issue 300), the display has proved a winner with the public and has boosted the museum's footfall to the extent that it will now run until November 9, rather than May 7 as originally envisaged.

Heritage Railway editor Robin Jones said: "There are many members of the public who visit Broadway to immerse themselves in the beauty of this famous village but remain unaware that it has a heritage railway because the station is a fair walk from the centre. The exhibition goes a long way to promoting the history, heritage and modern-day appeal of this line."

The HRA has also announced the shortlist for its 2023 awards, dubbed the Oscars of the sector, for which entries have been stronger than ever – and in which the G/WR is also a finalist in other categories.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "Despite all of the challenges thrown at the sector, some of the work demonstrated by entrants in the awards this year is literally staggering. The amount of effort put in by staff and volunteers at railways and tramways up and down the country over the past 12 months never ceases to impress – and these awards are all about celebrating their successes."

The awards, sponsored by leading steam locomotive lubricant producers Hallett Oils, will be presented at the HRA annual dinner and awards evening at the Birmingham Conference and Events Centre from 5pm to 11pm on Saturday, March 11.

The finalists are:

- **Railway of the Year:** Seaton Tramway, Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company.
- **David Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation:** Chasewater Railway (pre-Grouping private owner coal wagons), Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway (after 95 years, coach 'Queen Mary' carries it first fare-paying passengers), Bluebell Railway (Southern Railway Bulleid five-plank merchandise open wagon No. 12058).
- **John Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering:** Dean Forest Locomotive Group (restoration of BR pannier tank No. 9681), Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway (*Premier* back to the future project), Bluebell Railway (LBSCR 'Terrier' No.72 *Fenchurch*), Severn Valley Railway (GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall*).
- **Award for Business Innovation:** Bodmin & Wenford Railway (Cornish Rail Coffee Company), Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum (Dales Dining).
- **Award for Diesel or Electric Locomotion:** EPB Preservation Group (No. 5759), Crowle Peatland Railway (restoration of Simplex No. 40s302, now known as 'Little Peat'), Great Central Railway (Nos. 37714 and D6700 preservation), Georail Services Limited (Barclay No. 400DM *Duke of Edinburgh* restoration).
- **Award for Environmental Innovation:** Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (embankments and cuttings; bringing biodiversity back), North Yorkshire Moors Railway (The Primrose Path Project), Railworld Wildlife Haven, Peterborough (Reuse, Repurpose and Share!).
- **Lord Faulkner Young Volunteer Award:** Keighley and Worth Valley Railway – Oliver Harrison, Isle of Wight Steam Railway – Issac Farnbank, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway – Alex Caulfield, East Lancashire Railway Preservation Society – Liam Barnes, Ecclesbourne Valley Railway – Ben Field.
- **Infrastructure award:** Aln Valley Railway Trust (Cawledge Viaduct refurbishment), Cambrian Heritage Railways (Weston Wharf extension), Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway (new coach shed and maintenance facility).
- **Award for Marketing and Communications:** Talyllyn Railway (the oldest preserved railway building a digital audience), Isle of Wight Steam Railway (Island Rail News), Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway (Journey Through Steam).
- **Award for Rising Stars:** West Somerset Railway – Kerry Noble, Railway Preservation Society of Ireland – Gill Lewis, Middleton Railway Trust – youth team.
- **Team of the Year:** Peak Rail (Peak Rail volunteers), Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (The curatorial committee), East Lancashire Railway (Santa Special Team and 100-plus volunteers), Great Central Railway (Heavy Tractor Group), The Terrier Trust CIO (Tracks through Poplar project team).

Tickets for the awards evening are now on sale at www.hra.uk.com/events/awards

A timechart of the history of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway is displayed in Broadway Museum and Art Gallery in Tudor House, High Street, in the exhibition which has been extended until November 9.
ROBIN JONES

IN BRIEF

➜ **A piece of James Bond history could be yours as LMS four-wheel CTT No. 37066 is for sale at the Nene Valley Railway. The vehicle was modified to have personnel end doors for the filming of the 1983 Octopussy film, which remain to this day. The wooden body requires replacement, however, the chassis is complete and nominally operational, having recently been moved. For more information, email Keith Parkinson at signalengineering@nvr.org.uk**

➜ BARCLAY 0-4-0ST No. 2157, previously based at Mangapps Farm Railway until sold and moved to a private Wiltshire site in November 2022, has taken up residence on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, where its overhaul will now continue at its new home.

➜ **CLASS 14 D9537 *Eric* has been confirmed as the first visiting locomotive for the North Norfolk Railway's June 9-11 Mixed Traction Gala.**

➜ THE South Tynedale Railway has placed its unrestored 1907-built Orenstein & Koppel 2ft gauge Indian Hill articulated 0-6-0T No. 740 on the market. For more details, email enquiries@south-tynedale-railway.org.uk

➜ **THE public will be able to view progress on two new-build locomotive projects, BR Standard Class 6 Pacific No. 72010 *Hengist* and LNER B17 No. 61673 *Spirit of Sandringham,* on Saturday, April 15 between 10am and 4pm at CTL Seal Ltd., Butterthwaite Lane, Sheffield S35 9WA.**

➜ FOLLOWING a successful appeal for funds, the National Wagon Preservation Group has secured 11 withdrawn TTA petroleum tankers that will move by rail to the Dean Forest Railway once replacement filler caps have been delivered and fitted.

Britannia for Swanage March gala

BR Standard 7MT Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* is to headline the Swanage Railway's March 24-26 steam gala, at which North Norfolk Railway resident 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76084 will also appear.

The weekend, which will have a Bournemouth theme, will be the first such gala to take place on the line in three years.

The railway advertised opportunities available during the weekend for driving the 'Brit' (pictured, Main Line News, pages 58-59). An intensive service will operate residents U class No. 31806 and Bulleid Pacifics Nos. 34070 *Manston* and 34028 *Eddystone* also in operation.

Details and tickets are available at swanagerailway.co.uk/events/view/spring-steam-gala

Meanwhile, *Eddystone* will be the star guest at the North Norfolk Railway's April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala.

At least three locomotives from the resident fleet will feature each day, drawn from GER Y14 No. 564, BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76084, BR Standard 9F No. 92203 *Black Prince*, Somerset & Dorset 7F No. 53809 and War Department 2-10-0 No. 90775 *The Royal Norfolk Regiment*.

The event will feature an intensive timetable of passenger trains, some non-stop workings, double-heading and demonstration goods trains.

Rolling stock in use during the weekend will include the 1950s four-car suburban set, the unique LNER Quad-Art articulated teak-bodied carriages, the vintage train of four and six-wheeled carriages, and two rakes of BR coaches.

New agreement with trust paves way for GCR(N) services to restart

By Robin Jones

A NEW future for the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) has been unveiled following agreement on a closer working relationship with supporting charity and freehold owner the East Midlands Railway Trust.

The agreement, which involves changing the GCR(N) articles of association, and which was unanimously approved by shareholders at their annual general meeting on January 21, paves the way for a phased return of services over the nine-mile line between Ruddington and Loughborough.

It will also mean an end to the line being officially known as the Nottingham Heritage Railway, a title adopted in 2021 following its temporary closure after being served in October 2020 with an improvement notice by the Office of Rail and Road for not having "established a safety management system in relation to the examination, maintenance and repair of structures on their railway infrastructure such as the bridges and Barnstone tunnel."

After the notice was served, the GCR plc at Loughborough took steps to stop its northern counterpart using the title Great Central in order to avoid customer confusion.

Following the new agreement, the key change in the articles of association is the removal of a clause which prevented any one party from owning more than 10% of the GCR(N) shares. Now the trust can convert its long-standing loan to GCR(N) Ltd into share capital in order to acquire a majority interest in the company.

GCR(N) will be the commercial arm of the charity as it seeks to reopen the line and run services, initially over the 2 ½ miles between the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre and Rushcliffe Halt.

The change will inject working capital into GCR(N) and remove the burden of uncertainty caused by the loan under the previous arrangement. Individuals are also purchasing new shares in the company.

Trust chairman Dr David Rae said: "The boards of both companies have been working towards this agreement for the past year and we are very relieved to have the support needed from shareholders to conclude it.

"It means that GCR(N) Ltd can now work with the backing of EMRT to reopen the railway while the trust safeguards the railway line, track and infrastructure."

The agreement followed the recent replacement of the life-expired late Victorian bridge carrying the railway over the A60 near the former Brush Works in Loughborough (as highlighted in issue 299), over which the ORR had prohibited the running of trains in September 2020.

No services had been run under the Nottingham Heritage Railway banner, but the agreement renews the momentum to restart trains and eventually connect with the GCR at Loughborough.

The two boards will be supported by the LNER (GC) Heritage Trust, the volunteers' membership organisation, which aims to take a more active role. Its new chairman, Andy Fillingham, who is also a director of GCR(N), said: "We look forward to working with East Midland Railway Trust and Great Central Railway Nottingham to drive forward fundraising and recruitment of volunteers, both of which are essential for a long-term future."

Buy a Brighton Belle coach!

A FORMER Brighton Belle dining carriage could be yours – but it comes with a potentially-high extraction cost.

Built in 1932 and once part of the luxury London-Brighton dining service, not one of the Brighton Belle carriages went for scrap when withdrawn, instead becoming pubs or restaurants, or surviving in heritage use. Car 89 was purchased by Little Mill Inn, at Rowarth, Derbyshire, in 1972, where it was converted to a three dormitory bed-and-breakfast accommodation vehicle. Now its owners are disposing of it after listing it through online auction site eBay.

Describing the underframe as 'solid for the most part', Car 89 is in need of attention to the windows, panelling and interior, in addition to a repaint.

However, any buyer will likely face a hefty bill to extract the vehicle from its current resting place due to access limitations, with estimates quoting £40,000. As such, this historic vehicle has been listed with an asking price of just £2200. If unsold, it will be scrapped in-situ.

To view the listing and contact the selling agent, visit ebay.co.uk/itm/285129631069

GCR Reunification set for the next step – or two!

A MAJOR new fundraising drive to boost plans to link the two heritage-era Great Central Railways is to be launched in March.

Three phases of the seven-stage Reunification project – the aim of which is to create an 18-mile heritage line between the outskirts of Nottingham and Leicester – are now ready for track to be laid. These phases are: a new bridge to carry the GCR over the Midland Main Line at Loughborough; the refurbished late 1890s bridge over the Grand Union Canal in the town; and the recently completed replacement for the original Bridge 326 over the A60 next to the Brush Works.

An ongoing fundraising campaign means that there is more than £1.4 million ready to spend on the next phase, the factory flyover. Subject to a successfully securing the relevant permissions, work could begin on the £2.8 million phase later this year.

The factory flyover combines two stages of the project – a new bridge across a factory car park and another to cross Railway Terrace in Loughborough. Once work has started, it will continue as far as available funds allow.

The new Money Match March fundraising drive will see every pound donated to the scheme matched by another from a donor up to the value of £150,000. The scheme has run successfully before, but this is the biggest match pot yet offered.

Andy Fillingham, chairman of the Friends of the Great Central Main Line, which promotes Reunification, said: "This project is all about people power and pushing forward a plan with potential to transform the local area.

"It's been humbling how much support we have received, not just at home, but also around the world. Times are tight but people are still choosing to support the inspirational Reunification scheme. We are very grateful to everyone."

"We want to get building again as soon as possible rather than just having money in a bank account fighting inflation, so we've decided to do just that. Every pound matters – the more people give, the further we can go with the factory flyover."

➜ Further details of the Reunification project are available online at www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify

The replacement Bridge 326 spanning the A60 to the north of Loughborough, as seen on January 27. While reusing as much of the original late Victorian abutments as possible, the new bridge deck is supported by two new specially designed and manufactured preformed concrete components, creating extra inches of headroom between the tarmac and the bottom of the bridge and reducing the threat of lorry strikes. ROBIN JONES

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West Somerset Railway launches £50k landslip appeal

By Robin Jones

A £50,000 match-funding appeal to restore a section of the West Somerset Railway damaged by a landslip from a potato field before Christmas has been launched.

The appeal is being run by supporting charity the West Somerset Railway Association.

Its chairman of trustees, Geoff Garfield, said: "The response to the landslip from the railway's volunteers, supporters and friends has been magnificent and we are well underway to a temporary fix that will allow trains to run when the season starts.

"Now we are asking for everyone's support to allow us to resolve the problem for the long term. The charity will match every £1 donated with another £1, up to a total of £50,000".

Much has been achieved since the slippage at Tribble Bridge, alongside the AS358 at Combe Florey, near Bishops Lydread on the morning of December 20, as reported in issue 302. The watercourse that brought the mud on to the line has been diverted and a start on clearing it made.

"We are grateful for the help and cooperation we have received from our neighbours, whose gardens have also been affected by the mud," said Geoff. "Plans are being finalised to stabilise the bank, which will allow trains to run safely at full line speed.

"The appeal funding will be used to remove and replace contaminated ballast, and to replace the sleepers and track over the affected length. Every penny raised will be used for this purpose.

WSR plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said: "We have been greatly heartened by our friends and supporters for the all the help we have received to help solve this problem since we first saw the damage in late December.

"Our own team on the railway, including staff and volunteers, have been magnificent in the work they have put in, both to analyse and review the problem, but also to make sure that the impact on our winter programme was minimal.

"Beyond the railway itself, the response from professional colleagues around the country has been almost overwhelming and we are now well on the way to solving this matter on a permanent basis.

"A detailed engineering assessment has been made which confirms that it is safe to run over the affected length at reduced speed. But we have work to do to repair and strengthen the embankment, which will take place as soon as possible.

"After that, it is a matter of replacing and relaying the worst affected track, and it is this work which the association has offered to help with.

"We are very grateful indeed to the WSRA for launching and managing this appeal, and we look forward to having the line back in full operational order very soon."

The railway expects the line to reopen as planned on March 18.

Part of the landslip affecting the West Somerset Railway embankment near Trimble Bridge. WSRA

➜ To contribute to the appeal fund online, visit www.wsra.org.uk/rail-renewal, or alternatively send a cheque to: WSRA Landslip Appeal, WSRA, The Railway Station, Bishops Lydeard TA4 3BX.

For those donating offline, please complete a Gift Aid declaration, so the WSRA can claim an additional 25% of your donation.

Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 469 1888 of No. 15 *Hastings*, seen heading up the bank to Tenterden Town while on test at the Kent & East Sussex Railway on May 30, 2022, will guest at the Bluebell Railway's branch line weekend following completion of repairs. ALAN CROTTY

Two East Lancashire Railway residents – Aspinall 0-4-0ST Pug No. 19 (masquerading as Goole Docks No. 51241) and A class 0-6-0 No. 52322 – will give a slightly northern flavour to the Sussex gala. OWEN HAYWARD

Oldest-surviving Hunslet heads for Bluebell branch line bonanza

THE Bluebell Railway's April 21-23 branch line weekend will feature two Lancashire & Yorkshire Aspinall locomotives – alongside the first appearance of the oldest surviving Hunslet 0-6-0 in the UK following completion of repairs.

Built in 1888 for the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal, No. 15 *Hastings* (originally named *Liverpool* until 1898) has been undergoing cylinder and motion repairs following the failure of a connection between a piston rod and crosshead coupling rod during running in trials on the Kent & East Sussex Railway last July.

It is currently at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, where the cylinders have been rebored by JM Steam Ltd. New parts, including piston heads and rods, front cylinder covers, and crossheads, have been manufactured by Statfold Engineering.

On withdrawal in 1957, *Hastings* was purchased by the KESR, but it steamed only once in 1965 when it was established that a complete overhaul was required and which made limited progress; it was sold to a member of the East Essex Preservation Society in 2002 and moved to Mangapps Farm Railway Museum, where work resumed.

In 2017, under the new ownership of Mike Hart, efforts were renewed and it moved to the Elsecar Heritage Railway in 2018, and the boiler was sent to the North Norfolk Railway for contract repairs. *Hastings* finally returned to steam in 2021 at Statfold Barn Railway before moving to Chasewater for running in. It returned to its spiritual home at the KESR last year but did not pull any public services before the mechanical failure occurred.

Alongside *Hastings* will be East Lancashire Railway residents Aspinall A class 0-6-0 No. 52322 and, as previously reported, 1910-built Class 21 0-4-0ST Pug No. 19.

The sole survivor of 484 examples built, No. 52322 was outshopped from Horwich as No. 1300. Fulfilling the principal role as a freight engine, it spent its entire working life in the north of England until it was withdrawn by BR at Lees (Oldham) 26E shed in August 1960.

The home fleet will be represented by SECR 0-6-0 01 No. 65 and A1 0-6-0T 'Terrier' No. 72 Fenchurch, set to have made its comeback debut hauling February half-term trains when the railway was operating only between Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes due to track relaying on the section towards Kingscote.

Passenger sets are expected to comprise examples of the railway's SR Birdcage, Bulleid and Maunsell stock, in addition to the Metropolitan Chesham rake. It is hoped that the vintage four-wheeled carriages will also return to service, having been sidelined for several years due to the condition of the track at Vaux End, one of the sections being tackled during the relaying.

GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* heads an Ian Allan special near Shipton-under-Wychwood in the Cotswolds on August 8, 1965, just after the locomotive had been withdrawn by BR and privately preserved. MIKE MORANT COLLECTION/G/WR

Pendennis Castle starts its four-venue spring tour at Severn Valley

by Robin Jones

HISTORY is set to be made at the Severn Valley Railway's April 16-18 Spring Steam Gala as GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* tops the bill – when, for the first time in its 99-year history, it will haul passenger trains on a heritage line away from its Didcot Railway Centre restoration base and current home.

The visit will be followed by loans to the Mid-Hants and Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway and Tyseley Locomotive Works.

No. 4079 was the seventh of GWR Chief Mechanical Engineer Charles Collett's 171 Castles, a class celebrating its centenary this year, and was outstopped from Swindon in February 1924.

One of just three survivors currently in service, *Pendennis Castle* has made headlines throughout its life. In 1925, it took part in locomotive exchange trials with the LNER, proving its superiority over Sir Nigel Gresley's Pacifics class on the East Coast Main Line. It competed against the larger No. 2545 *Diamond Jubilee* and passed Holloway Bank and Finsbury Park in less time than had ever been achieved by any LNER Pacific.

As a result, the GWR decided that No. 4079 should replace No. 4073 *Caerphilly Castle* at the British Empire Exhibition in October 1925, when famously it stood alongside No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* and was dubbed "the most powerful express passenger locomotive in Britain."

In 1978, its then owner, the late Sir William McAlpine, sold No. 4079 to Western Australian mining concern Hamersley Iron, for use by its workers' Pilbara Railways Historical Society.

After expiration of the boiler certificate, *Pendennis Castle* made a final run in October 1994, and because Hamersley Iron was not prepared funds repairs, its parent company, Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation, looked for a new home for it, contacting Nick Pigott, then editor of *The Railway Magazine*, now a sister title to *Heritage Railway*.

The Great Western Society was the chosen recipient and on June 8, 2000, following a voyage from the other side of the world, No. 4079 was unloaded from the Wallenius Wilhemsen roll-on roll-off cargo ship Toba at Portbury Dock, near Bristol. There followed a marathon restoration at Didcot Railway Centre before No. 4079 steamed again on August 13, 2021, as reported in issue 284, and formally relaunched into traffic on April 2, 2022 (issue 292).

SVR's head of steam engineering, Duncan Ballard, said: "We are thrilled to be hosting a named engine with the prestige of *Pendennis Castle*.

"It will prove a magnificent figurehead for our GWR-themed gala, celebrating 100 years since the grouping of the Big Four companies.

"We have an extremely strong working relationship with the GWS and are honoured it has chosen the SVR for Pendennis's debut away from Didcot."

No. 4079 will appear with a further yet-to-be-announced guest, along with GWR 4-6-0s Nos. 4930 *Hagley Hall* and recently overhauled No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor*, GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714 (newly painted into BR livery) and other members of the SVR's home fleet.

Tickets for the Spring Steam Gala are now on sale, as are those for all of the line's other special events and Santa trains, and standard running days, which begin again on March 4 (between and Kidderminster and Highley only).

The Open House event on April 1/2 marks the SVR's return to full-line running. It will also provide visitors with the chance to go behind the scenes and gain access to rarely-seen areas of the line. They will be able to see the work that goes into getting carriages ready for service, how new boilers for steam locomotives are created, visit the state-of-the-art diesel depot, and see the locomotive shed at Bridgnorth. The Engine House visitor centre at Highley will also be open.

May 6/7 sees the Spring Model Railway Weekend, and the May 18-21 Spring Diesel Festival will run over four days rather than the three originally planned.

The hugely popular 1940s weekends will return on June 24/25 and July 1/2, while August 12/13 will see the Vintage Transport Extravaganza. The Autumn Steam Gala will run from September 15-17, with the Autumn Diesel Bash on September 29 to October 1.

For more information and to book, visit https://svr.co.uk

GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* at its home, the Didcot Railway Centre. DUNCAN BALLARD/SVR

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75104 heads above the iconic row of traditional beach huts at Goodrington Sands with a Dartmouth Steam Railway service to Kingswear on August 25, 2022. DSRRBC

And for the next three calendar dates

FOLLOWING its appearance on the Severn Valley Railway, No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* will visit the Mid-Hants Railway for its Spring Steam Gala, running from April 29 to May 1.

An MHR spokesperson said No. 4079 would be the only guest locomotive for the event. Afterwards, it will head to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway for the May 12-14 Cotswold Festival of Steam.

Castles were synonymous with express trains from the Cheltenham and Gloucester area, reflecting the theme of this year's festival – Cheltenham and Gloucester Steam Days. A Castle was the chosen power for the 'Cheltenham Spa Express' or 'Cheltenham Flyer' to Paddington, which in the 1930s was hailed as the fastest train in the world.

Castles were also the usual locomotives hauling 'The Cornishman' express from Wolverhampton to Penzance over the Birmingham to Cheltenham route, part of which is now the G/WR, and also took charge of the heavy race specials from Paddington to Cheltenham Racecourse.

Another special festival guest will be BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75014 *Braveheart* from the Dartmouth Steam Railway. It is expected to arrive at Toddington in early March and will join the home fleet for the first three months of the new season. It is the first time that a member of this class has visited the line in the heritage era.

Outshopped from Swindon Works in December 1951, No. 75014 was withdrawn from Shrewsbury in December 1966 and went to Barry scrapyard, from where it was bought by a group of North Yorkshire Moors Railway members before being restored to main line operating condition and later working West Coast Railways' 'The Jacobite' on the West Highland Extension.

In 2000, the engine was named *Braveheart* in recognition of the Mel Gibson film of the same name, which was also shot in the West Highlands, and two years later it was sold to the DSR.

During the 1950s and 1960s, other class members regularly worked over the line and in the wider Cheltenham and Gloucester areas.

G/WR chairman Richard Johnson said: "It fills a gap left following the withdrawal of Great Western 2-8-0T No. 4270 on expiry of its boiler certificate in January this year and before the under-overhaul 1905-built 2-8-0 No. 2807 returns to service later in the year."

The railway resumes services from March 4 at weekends and will also run specials for the March 14-17 Cheltenham Festival. March 14 marks the 60th Anniversary (1963) of the last steam-hauled Cheltenham Festival race train, which was headed by WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* from Paddington direct to the racecourse.

The fourth port of call for *Pendennis Castle* will be Tyseley's June 17-18 open weekend, which will also feature three other Castles: *Clun Castle*, No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* (both in steam) and No. 5080 *Defiant*.

Nos. 4079 and 7029 were last together in steam at Tyseley in March 1967. Furthermore, No. 4079 was last at Tyseley prior to the 'Great Western Envoy' special to Didcot on May 29, 1977, immediately prior to its export to Australia.

On the Saturday morning, there will be a line-up of all four Castles around the turntable, following a similar event at Didcot on March (see Main Line News, page 57), followed by turntable demonstrations, a three-Castle cavalcade, depot passenger shuttle trains and the relocated Sutton Miniature Railway in operation.

***Pendennis Castle* will operate the Sunday depot shuttle, while the Fathers' Day 'Shakespeare Express' will run to Stratford-upon-Avon behind No. 5043 in the morning and No. 7029 in the afternoon. It is possible to ride behind both locomotives (one each way) on the Stratford midday departure. Book at www.vintagetrains.co.uk**

Sir Nigel Gresley success for wagon group with Nene Valley visit on schedule

by Tim Hobman

WITH the impending visit to the Nene Valley Railway of A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, the NVR Wagon Group's evening photographic charter with the locomotive hauling its BR goods rake on Good Friday, April 7, sold out within four hours of tickets going on sale.

The sales from what will be a very rare opportunity to see an A4 involved in freight duties earned the wagon group much-needed funds for the maintenance and restoration of its fleet.

The group was shocked at the speed of ticket sales on January 23 and the subsequent enquiries for further places.

The charter will feature *Sir Nigel Gresley* in newly-painted BR Express Blue livery in two static shots in Wansford station, before the grand finale of several runpasts with the wagons. The group has already been busy ensuring that the wagons are looking as good as they can, as well as collecting props for staged shots of loading wagons, with a BR Morris Van on the platform at Wansford.

The wagon group is entirely self-funded and this charter is one of several events it has organised for this year. Other events will give participants the opportunity to drive a locomotive in charge of the goods rake, while also riding in the brake van, witnessing the duties of the guard, and visiting Wansford signalbox.

The first driving course on Friday, March 31 gives a rare chance to drive Sentinel Shunter DL83 through Wansford Tunnel to Yarwell and is expected to be popular with fans of industrial shunting locomotives and London Transport, the livery DL83 still holds.

The next course offers the chance to drive Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34081 *92 Squadron* on Friday, June 2 between Wansford and Peterborough.

Although it has a slight increase in price from previous years due to rising costs, the chance to drive a Bullied Pacific with a goods train is always popular.

Further dates are planned for Friday, August 4 and Friday, October 6, which are likely to include large heritage diesels.

Elsewhere on the NVR, plans are progressing well for the April visit of the A4, with ticket sales for standard running days selling fast. Passengers can pre-book to visit the footplate through the corridor tender while the train is in motion – another not-to-be-missed opportunity that is expected to be equally popular.

While the railway is buzzing in anticipation for the arrival of No. 60007, there is still work to do on the Fletton Loop to ensure that the locomotive can get on to the railway from Crewe via the East Coast Main Line.

The NVR's management is confident that trackwork will be completed in time to replace just over 400 sleepers on the branch which deteriorated quicker than expected during extremely hot weather last year, as highlighted last issue. A schedule of works has been drawn up which is due to be completed a week before the A4 arrives.

However, in order to finish the work, the railway is having to tap into existing funds to pay for materials, so donations to the Fletton Appeal, which opened in December, are still urgently needed to support the project. The railway is also looking for offers of physical help during the next two months of intensive work.

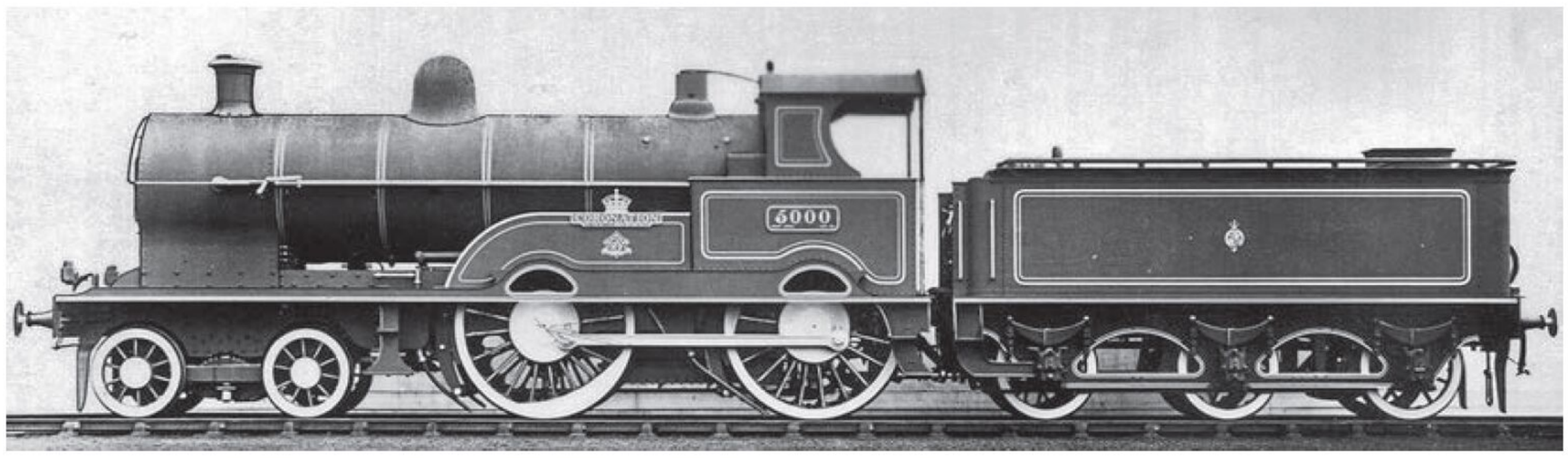
For further details of the NVR Wagon Group, visit nvrwagons.wordpress.com

For more information on the visit of No. 60007, the Fletton Appeal and to book NVR events, visit www.nvr.org.uk

A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley,* newly reliveried into BR Express Blue, in the Locomotive Services Limited paintshop at Crewe on January 23. TREVOR CAMP/SNGLT

Coronation nameplate to precede the crowning of King Charles III

By Geoff Courtney



Work of art: LNWR George the Fifth Class No. 5000 shows off its handsome profile and distinctive *Coronation* nameplate in a works' photograph soon after its construction at Crewe in June 1911. The locomotive was likely numbered 5000 for official photography to record the fact that it was the 5000th engine built at Crewe, while its allocated running number 1800 was subsequently applied prior to it entering service. One of the 4-4-0's nameplates will be going under the hammer at a Great Central Railwayana auction on March 4. CREATIVE COMMONS

A DISTINCTIVE crown-mounted *Coronation* nameplate carried by a landmark LNWR and LMS express locomotive will be going under the hammer on March 4, appropriately just two months before King Charles III is crowned at Westminster Abbey.

The brass plate is from George the Fifth Class No. 1800, which was built at Crewe in June 1911 and named *Coronation* in honour of the then monarch, who was crowned at Westminster Abbey in the same month. The 4-4-0 was the 5000th engine built at Crewe, and in recognition of this landmark at least one works' photograph of the new locomotive shows it temporarily carrying the No. 5000.

In June 1927 the engine was renumbered 5348 by the LMS, which inherited all 90 members of the class in the 1923 Grouping, and it was renumbered again in August 1936 to 25348, so allowing its original number to be allocated to a new 'Black 5' 4-6-0. Withdrawal came in June 1940 from Chester Midland shed (6A), where it had previously been recorded on April 18, 1937, in the company of two classmates, Nos. 25376 *Snipe* and 25382 *John Rennie*.

The class, designed by chief mechanical engineer Charles Bowen-Cooke and considered one of the prides of the LNWR, became extinct in May 1948 when the last two, Nos. 25350 *India* and 25373 *Ptarmigan*, were taken out of service before having their BR Nos. of 58011 and 58012 applied.

Crowning glory

In typical LNWR style, the nameplate also doubled up as a worksplate, additionally identifying the engine as the 5000th built at Crewe. It is also noteworthy that the same *Coronation* name was carried by two LMS locomotives simultaneously for three years – Princess Coronation Pacific No. 6220, which was built at Crewe in June 1937, and No. 25348 until its withdrawal in June 1940. In each instance, the plates were adorned by a crown.

Great Central Railwayana auctioneer and director Mike Soden, who will be putting the nameplate under the hammer on March 4, said: "It is highly appropriate that it will be coming up for sale just a few weeks before the coronation on May 6 of King Charles III, the great-grandson of George V.

"It is a beautiful and distinctive plate that would grace any display, be it in a private collection or on public view, and that it comes from the 5000th locomotive built at Crewe, one of the world's most famous railway works, increases its appeal. I would expect considerable interest from home and abroad. In effect, the plate records three events – the Coronation of King George V, the fact that the locomotive was built at Crewe in June 1911, and that it was the 5000th engine to be built there."

While estimates of nameplate realisations are difficult in what are unpredictable times at railwayana – and indeed other – auctions, it would not be unrealistic to expect it to fetch a price of well into five figures.

Although the *Coronation* nameplate is tipped by many to achieve the highest realisation in the auction, it will face competition from another LNWR plate, *Ajax* from a Precursor 4-4-0 No. 639, and eight other plates, comprising six from GWR Castle, Grange, Hall, Manor and Saint classes and two from LNER Classes D40 and A1.

The auction will be live online and starts at 10am.

➜ **See Geoff Courtney's railwayana column on pages 70-72 for further details of the auction and previews and reports of other sales around the country.**

Above: On a plate: The *Coronation* nameplate from LNWR George the Fifth Class No. 1800/LMS No. 25348 that will be the highlight of a Great Central Railwayana auction on March 4. The plate also includes the 4-4-0's build date and records the fact that it was the 5000th engine built at Crewe. GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAYANA

Left: New number: George the Fifth Class *Coronation*, carrying its final LMS No. 25348, at Chester in the late 1930s. TRANSPORT TREASURY

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Cheques to the G/WR and DML were presented alongside No. 7820, the subject of Dapol's limited edition OO gauge model. DAPOL

WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* passes a field of rapeseed near Laverton, on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, on May 25, 2019. IAN CROWDER

Model *Dinmore Manor*'s £22k boost for real loco – and its home

By Robin Jones

MODEL manufacturer Dapol has given a total of £22,500 to both the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway and Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd.

Dapol has produced an OO gauge version of WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor*, which has been based on the railway since 2014, in a limited edition of 500 models.

Options include a version equipped with a sound card recorded on the GWSR to capture the sounds of the real locomotive.

The model appears in BR lined black, the livery *Dinmore Manor* first carried when built at Swindon in 1950 and carries today. Other model options include DCC ready and DCC fitted (without sound).

The money was presented on January 19 at Toddington station by Joel Bright, Dapol's managing director, and Richard Webster, head of its product development, to Kenneth Sims, chairman of Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd, and Richard Winstanley, the line's finance director.

Joel said: "Dapol has been proud to be involved with this exciting project and we have enjoyed working closely with the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway to produce this outstanding model.

"I hope our donations contribute to the success of both the locomotive group and the railway. The reputation of our company has certainly been enhanced by this project and I hope we can co-operate in other projects in future."

Kenneth said: "I am thrilled that this co-operation has been a commercial success for Dapol and that so many people share our enthusiasm for *Dinmore Manor* by buying examples of this quite superbly detailed model.

"This generous contribution will likely go towards completing the restoration of our other locomotive, heavy freight 2-8-0 No. 3850, work on which has been progressing well."

Richard added: "I am thrilled to receive this wonderful contribution towards the continuing development of our railway. *Dinmore Manor* is a wonderful locomotive and I am grateful for the fruitful way that this imaginative relationship has benefited Dapol, *Dinmore Manor* and the railway."

Outshopped in November 20, 1950, *Dinmore Manor* was withdrawn from Shrewsbury shed on November 6, 1965. In September 1979 it became the 104th locomotive to be bought from Barry for preservation, moving to the Gwili Railway before being sold on to a group of West Somerset Railway volunteers. It returned to steam at Tyseley Locomotive Works in 1995.

➜ To obtain one of the few remaining *Dinmore Manor* models, visit https://tinyurl.com/dinmoremanor or telephone 01691 774455.

Dapol's OO gauge model of WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor.* DAPOL

Fancy a line of your own? Evesham Vale Light Railway is now on the market

THE 15in gauge Evesham Vale Light Railway is being offered for sale at £325,000.

The 1¼ mile-long railway in Worcestershire's privately-owned Evesham Country Park at Twyford was built by Jim and Helen Shackell, who opened it on August 1, 2002, and sold it to its currently owners, Adrian and Sandra Corke, who took over on January 3, 2012.

The Corkes were both volunteers at the Leighton Buzzard Railway for many years.

Adrian, a steam driver, was that line's chief steam engineer until he became head of engineering at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. Sandra developed and ran Leighton Buzzard's catering operation for many years, as well as handling the line's accounting work and also painting locomotives.

Since they took over the EVLR, they have continued to invest in it and develop it.

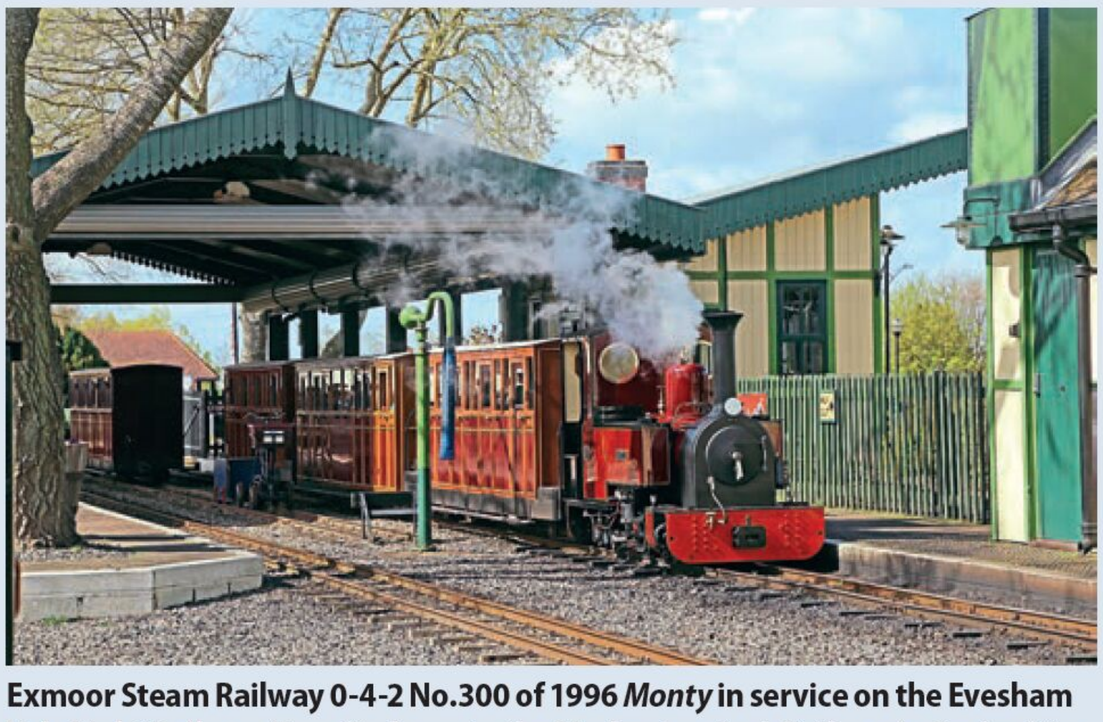
Carrying about 48,000 passengers a year with a turnover of £175,000, business is no doubt aided by The Valley shopping centre situated in the park, which attracts a footfall of 1.9 million people every year.

The railway provides a transport function around the country park, stopping at Evesham Vale Station where there is a playfort and picnic area and an adventure golf course set to open this year.

The railway currently operates for 170 days a year, made up of weekends and Worcestershire school holidays.

Its operation is assisted by a group of enthusiastic volunteers who help with all aspects of operation and maintenance.

Being sold as a going concern, the £325,000 price tag includes the main assets of one steam and one diesel locomotive, and five closed and three semi open coaches, plus all equipment on site needed to run a successful narrow gauge railway. The equipment is described as in very good condition and well maintained. Country park owner Eagle One Ltd will provide a minimum 10-year lease on the track and main buildings. Serious expressions of interest should be made by email, addressed to Adrian Corke, to enquiries@evlr.co.uk



Exmoor Steam Railway 0-4-2 No.300 of 1996 *Monty* in service on the Evesham Vale Light Railway. Supplied new to the Markeaton Park Railway in Derbyshire where it was named *Markeaton Lady*, the locomotive has had a full rebuild, including a new boiler and wheels and axles. ADRIAN CORKE

Severn Valley cutbacks as costs soar and visitor numbers drop

By John Titlow

SEVERN Valley Railway services are being cut and voluntary redundancies made in a bid to address soaring operating costs and falling passenger numbers.

The measures responding to a fall in income are being implemented after a statement to staff and working members on January 12 announced plans to tackle the financial challenges of 2023.

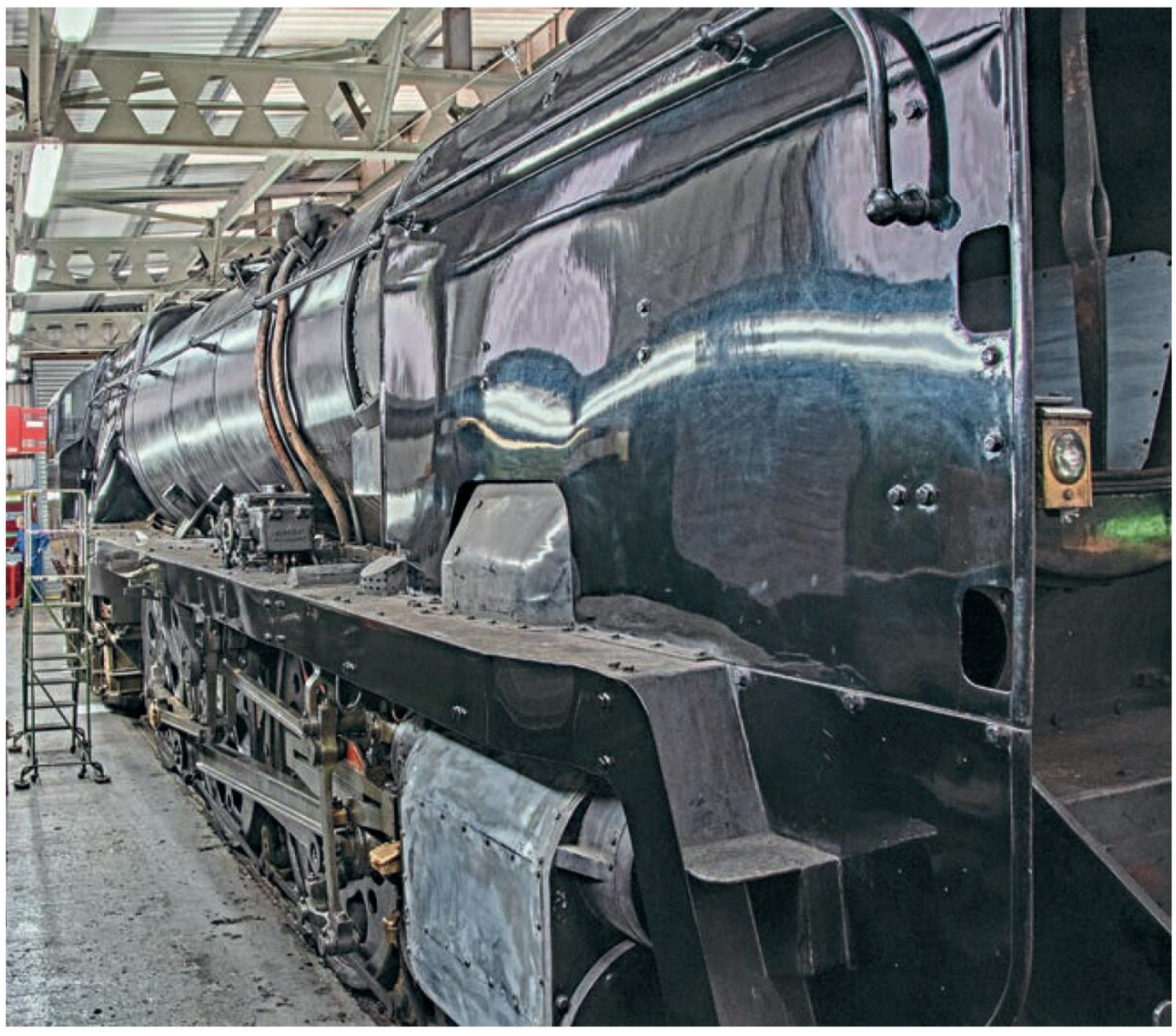
It said that "tourist attractions across the UK continue to be impacted by up to 30% drops in visitor numbers since Covid and this has been made worse by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. The SVR is taking pro-active action to protect its business and ensure it comes through to thrive in the future.

"The unjust war in Ukraine has impacted on the cost of coal and utilities, with prices rocketing."

Cost-cutting measures were worked on by managing director Helen Smith much earlier, including changes to staff working patterns, a recruitment freeze, voluntary redundancies and steps to save energy usage across the business.

Compulsory redundancies have not been ruled out but officials are working hard to avoid them. Planned budgets for 2022 were made on the basis of a gentle increase in visitor numbers which did not materialise.

The statement came from Mike Ball, chairman of SVR (Holdings) Plc, Diane Malyon, chairman of the SVR Company Ltd, and Tim Hargest, acting chairman of the SVR Charitable Trust.



West Country light Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley* entered the paintshop inside Bridgnorth shed at the end of January for a repaint from its controversial but successful purple livery as No. 70 *Queen Elizabeth II* into wartime black. The Severn Valley Railways painter Ronan O'Brien was looking forward to getting on with the yellow Southern lettering on the tender and the cabside number 21C127, a first in preservation for a Bullied 4-6-2. It is expected that it will run during the line's April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala. JOHN TITLOW

Outgoing managing director Helen Smith at Bridgnorth station. SVR

'Phenomenal contribution'

Another statement issued later the same day said that Helen Smith would leave the organisation in the next few months to take up another role. It read: "Helen will remain in post for the next few months and will be working closely with the SVR's chairman Mike Ball and vice chairman Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster to ensure a smooth handover."

Mike said: "Helen has made a phenomenal contribution to the SVR. In the three years that she's been with us, she has steered the railway through the devastating impact of Covid, ensuring that we secured substantial Government support and emergency grant funding to keep us going when we were unable to operate. She successfully oversaw the reopening of the railway in very changed and testing circumstances, with the country still in partial lockdown.

"It's a testament to her leadership that we won a national Visit England excellence award for Resilience and Innovation last year."

Helen has been appointed by St Aubyn Estates as its chief operating officer at St Michael's Mount, Cornwall, a tourist attraction which also has its own internal railway (see Next Stop, page 106). She said: "It's my dream to work in Cornwall and at such an iconic site – that's why I'm leaving.

"My team and I have worked incredibly hard and have dealt with all kinds of external factors influencing the operating environment in which we work.

"It's been a tough three years but I've learnt a lot and met some amazing people, many of whom will be friends after I leave. I will never forget my time with the SVR and I wish them all the very best for the future."

A subsequent statement on January 23 said that Gus has become the company's interim managing director, working closely with Mike, other directors, and Helen to ensure a smooth transition in preparation for her departure in late February.

An active SVR volunteer for more than 30 years, Gus – a career railwayman who joined BR when he left education in 1987 – recently retired as Avanti West Coast's executive director of operations and safety.

Mike said: "The SVR faces considerable challenges in 2023, with escalating costs and an expectation that last year's drop in passenger revenue will continue. I believe that Gus will be a steadying force to take us through the uncertainties of the coming year, ensuring that we offer the exciting and value-for-money experience that visitors rightly expect from a leading heritage railway."

Gus added: "We have many challenges to overcome. However, I've been involved here for more than three decades and I know how dedicated and passionate our volunteers and paid staff are.

"Our railway is held in high esteem by both heritage enthusiasts and the general public.

"It's time to come together and make sure the railway we love can survive and thrive into the future."

Rising energy costs

The price of coal has risen from £160 per ton to more than £400 – leaving the railway to find an extra £664,000. Its electricity has gone up from £185,000 to £515,000.

The first half of 2022 saw a reduction in bookings which did not recover to previous levels, and by the middle of September they started to decrease further, so running trains became more uneconomical.

Out of respect to the ongoing Ukraine conflict, the popular summer 1940s weekends were cancelled. Steam and diesel galas did well, but national rail strikes impacted on the autumn event and the festive season.

Christmas trains ran at 75% capacity and will run again this year, but the Steam in Lights trains out of Bridgnorth proved less popular and are under review.

Six return trains ran daily in the 2022 spring and summer high season, but this frequency is now said to be unsustainable; 70% of passengers joined trains at Kidderminster with insufficient numbers on the first out of Bridgnorth, and often the last return working from Bridgnorth was nearly empty.

This year, a reduced four-train timetable will see two steam and two diesel-hauled services four days a week from Thursday to Sunday, April 1 to June 30.

All morning departures are now from Kidderminster, with the first from Bridgnorth at 12.30pm.

During March, planned engineering works will take place near Country Park Halt severing the line. On March 4, weekend services start running throughout the month with four returns from Kidderminster to Highley.

Timetables will be reviewed by the end of May, when there is the possibility of adding trains subject to bookings. Special events are listed in the article on News, page 10 about the forthcoming visit of GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*.

In January, a major filming job took

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Severn Valley Railway interim managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster. SVR

place in Kidderminster Town station, bringing in key funds during the closed period.

Meanwhile, steam locomotive overhauls inside Bridgnorth Shed continue as and when they are needed.

Work is currently underway on new BR Standard 3MT No. 82045, GWR No. 4150 (separate story, page 46), LMS Crab 2-6-0 No. 12968 and Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T *Dunrobin*.

However, due to space restrictions and to improve efficiency, these projects will be completed before any further overhauls are undertaken.

GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 is presently outside and its broken casting inside. Once the new casting arrives, it will need fitting. Regular maintenance of the running fleet will continue; GWR pannier No. 7714 has just undergone a valve and piston exam and BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069 is inside the shed undergoing a similar process.

Plea for understanding

Regarding motive power in 2022, Gus said: "It is important to have daily steam – no steam running would be a disaster, diesel gala excepted.

"There has to be the correct mix. People aged in their 40s and families like the SVR experience, especially the atmosphere of the stations and carriages – these are its big attractions. The balance was right in 2019 but is presently unsustainable."

However, changes to working patterns will take place particularly with a reduction of footplate turns, and Gus is asking for understanding for the compromises that will have to be made.

He said: "As a volunteer for more than 30 years, it is a great privilege to be asked to look after the SVR as its interim managing director this year.

"It is an opportunity for me to give something back to the railway I have enjoyed for so long.

"If we all work together, we will overcome the challenges we face and ensure the SVR survives for generations to come."

The updated timetable is live on the new SVR website. More than £30,000 worth of bookings have recently been taken, including those for Christmas trains and events, especially the spring steam gala. To purchase tickets and support the railway financially, visit https://svr.co.uk/

Norfolk's Whitwell & Reepham Railway's February 25/26 anniversary gala will mark 14 years since its station was officially reopened. In action will be Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-4-0ST No. 7681 of 1951 *Agecroft No. 3,* which returned to service last year and which is pictured on February 5 hauling the recently restored SECR brake van. The gala will feature freight trains, double-heading and top-and-tailed locomotives. A photographic shoot is also planned. STUART CHAPMAN

Feeling the pinch
– Bluebell considers year ahead

By Owen Hayward

THE Bluebell Railway has appointed its preservation society chairman Paul Churchman as interim plc chairman following the resignation of Geoff Mee on January 29.

Geoff issued a statement through the railway's website, saying: "I am disappointed that I failed to agree with the preservation society a course of action that would have allowed us to work together to reverse the long-term reduction in visitor numbers and make the necessary savings to enable the continued success of this fabulous living museum. I have therefore regrettably decided to resign as chairman of the plc."

Vice chairman Roy Watts has become deputy plc chairman and commercial director Paul Lelew had resigned for personal reasons, no longer being able to dedicate time to the role. Neil Glaskin will take on the position in addition to that of operations director.

The appointments came as the railway started to closely assess its operation, with the cost of a running round trip on the 11-mile line now at about £1000. The railway was also left reeling after factors out of its control – namely the postponement of the visit of A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* and the autumn ice rink at Sheffield Park – meant that predicted financial boosts were not possible.

The plc board, society and the trust are discussing two possible initiatives to address the financial situation, one being to ask members for a voluntary contribution and the second to review days of operation outside the summer peak, half terms and special events to help shape services in 2024.

In the January edition of The Bluebell Times newsletter, Geoff Mee wrote that the commercial team was also looking at a wider application of Kids for a Quid offerings and more special events to make a visit more attractive to a broader audience.

"We are also having to examine ways of reducing the costs of our ongoing activities for traction and rolling stock," he said. "To be very blunt, we have too many locos and carriages for a railway that is only 11 miles long and our existing maintenance regime of 'fix it, run it into the ground, and then stick it in a field under a tarpaulin until it is no longer viable to repair' has got to change."

"We spent a lot of money building OP4 (the new carriage shed at Horsted Keynes), but I think we have lost sight of what it could be used for. At present, it cannot be used for maintenance or carriage cleaning and can't be used for exhibiting any of our magnificent restored carriages.

"We need reliable vehicles, in service, to attract fare-paying visitors that will raise funds to allow our maintenance needs and refurbishment to continue into the future. If we don't need a piece of kit and other railways can restore and use it, then that is better than having it stored under a tarpaulin or in OP4."

A meeting of plc directors and some paid staff also highlighted financial challenges and the immediate need for drastic action, with spending limited to essential items.

Mid-Hants implements cost-saving measures

By Owen Hayward

FOLLOWING sharp rises in general operating costs, combined with a Steam Illuminations season that proved not as successful as forecast, the Mid-Hants Railway has taken immediate action to ensure survival.

In a January 20 statement to members, CEO Amanda Squires reported that the festive lights services, budgeted to bring in ticket revenue of about £1.05 million, achieved only circa £650,000. While it concluded with profit, it was far lower than expected at a time when "there are fewer opportunities to generate replacement income than at other times of the year."

The sharp rises in essentials such as coal have not helped, and despite support from Covid-19 grants and recovery loans, "expenditure has outpaced income for a number of years but has been masked by exceptional income, including large sums from property deals (referencing the compensation received from developers when the Alton section was severed due the need to replace a bridge for a new housing estate) which are now at an end," read the statement.

"The railway's losses arising from Covid-restricted operations were underwritten by emergency grants and a large Government-backed loan which was exhausted some time ago but has expensive monthly repayments which will continue to increase as interest rates rise."

The railway has now taken action to conserve cash, including an immediate freeze on recruiting paid staff. Non-critical infrastructure, maintenance and other works have been suspended and restrictions on project expenditure for projects have been imposed. Any intended spend over £250 will first need to be referred to the railway's finance department for approval regardless of its nature; authorisation will be given only for safety-related and genuinely business-critical items.

Groups with their own fundraising schemes and accounts, such as the railway's wagon group, will continue to operate independently but must adhere to these processes for any MHR-backed spend.

Further key measures are likely over the coming months, including a review of staffing structures and core operations, and identifying saleable assets.

"We must considerably reduce our cost base, cutting our cloth according to our means," the statement added, highlighting that the gap between income and spend is "too wide to cover by targeting increased income of by fundraising alone" and that expecting visitor numbers alone to naturally increase was also not viable.

Ticket prices will need to be increased, while continuing to demonstrate value. Additional events with lower operating costs are being investigated to ensure that these bring in maximum profit.

Fifty years since Alton's 'final thump'

FEBRUARY 4, 1973 was a key moment in history when the last Class 205 DEMU departed from Alresford station at 8.21pm. Half a century later, the moment was marked when about 50 Mid-Hants Railway volunteers gathered for a ceremony featuring one of the two units that formed that final working.

Hampshire unit No. 1125 was displayed during the afternoon of February 4. The two-car DEMU has been out of service for several years, in need of bodywork repairs which were started before the Covid-19 pandemic, but carriage repairs then took priority. However, during January it was temporarily moved into the Ropley carriage workshop to dry out and for gutter clearing while the work required to return it to service was assessed.

Many of the MHR volunteers who helped establish the heritage railway after its closure by BR on February 5, 1973, attended the ceremony to share their memories of early restoration activities.

Watercress Line CEO Amanda Squires said: "The enthusiasm and pleasure that these dedicated volunteers still feel for the Watercress Line was very touching.

"Without their hard work, pulling together to help restore the line and its locomotives to their former glory, we would not have such a wonderful piece of railway heritage to share with present-day visitors and future generations."

There is a strong desire to see No. 1125 return to service. Volunteer Matt Bentley said: "The unit needs a comprehensive body overhaul after 64 years of service.

"We are currently assessing the work required and when complete, details of the fundraising required and how people can support the project will be announced in due course."

Fifty years since the last 'Thumper' departed Alresford before the Winchester to Alton line was closed by BR, more than 50 volunteers gathered on February 4, 2023 to mark the occasion with Class 205 DEMU No. 1125. MATT BENTLEY/MHR

T3 No. 563's boiler has been trial-fitted at the Flour Mill, pictured here with the workshop's Geoff Phelps, Alex Simmonds and Jason Powell. BILL PARKER

Help last push to steam T3 in spring

AN £85,000 appeal has been launched to complete the £600,000 six-year restoration of T3 4-4-0 No. 563 to full working order so it can run for the first time since 1948 this spring – marking the centenary of the Southern Railway and the 185th anniversary of the LSWR.

Work on the 1893-built T3 is being carried out by specialist contractors at the Flour Mill workshops in the Forest of Dean, and as this issue went to press, it was revealed that, following the installation of all the stays, the boiler had been turned upright and trial-fitted in the frames, with tube fitting to commence imminently.

Nathan Au, chairman the Swanage Railway Trust's 563 Locomotive Group and a volunteer driver on the Purbeck Line, said: "It's very exciting to see the finishing line for the challenging and meticulous restoration of a unique Victorian steam locomotive come into sight – we are on the final sprint and almost there.

"The unique and iconic No. 563 will offer something new and exciting to everyone on the Swanage Railway, enabling our visitors, members, volunteers and locomotive crews to enjoy an evocative taste of Victorian train travel."

A series of behind-the-scenes fund-raising videos by the Swanage Railway about the history of the T3 and its meticulous restoration can be found at youtube.com/SwanageRailwayOfficial

● To make a donation or start a standing order to complete the T3's restoration, visit 563locomotivegroup.co.uk

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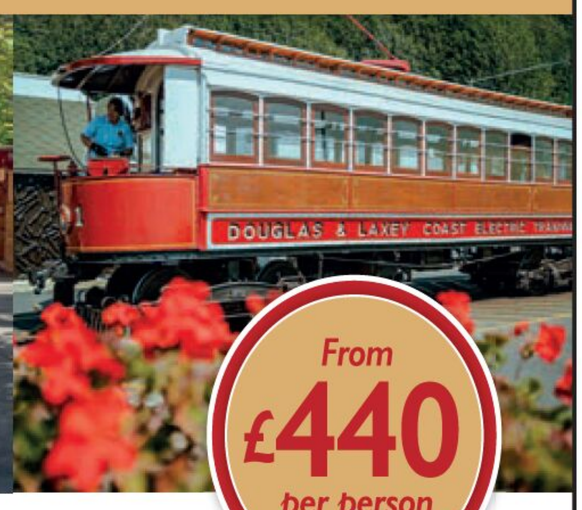

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Record year for some – but a sign of the challenges ahead

By Owen Hayward

UK heritage railways were observing increasing passenger numbers in 2022 following the lifting of the final Covid-19 restrictions – meaning regular service operations could be implemented once more.

Celebrating at the year's end was the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, which set a new record for income generated through ticket sales and trading.

"Passenger numbers nearly matched the previous staycation-fuelled season, but price increases meant that we generated an additional £100,000 in revenue," said general manager Steve Backhouse, who revealed that the railway welcomed 114,332 visitors during the year, about only 900 less than 2021. End-of-year accounts were being prepared and that a surplus of about £350,000 was expected.

After two profitable years, an £800,000 investment in capital improvements are planned during 2023. Major projects, supported by legacy funds, include a replica trailer car for the railway's award-winning Ryde Pier Tramway Drewry railcar, which will enable it to run once again as a two-car unit. The bodywork is being constructed by local firm Clare Lallow Ltd.

Membership and volunteering numbers have also increased, rising 20% and 10% respectively over an 18-month period to January 31.

Little railway, big income

The Talyllyn Railway reported a passenger count of 41,727, slightly up on 2021's figure of 38,613 but again short on almost 50,000 it reached in 2019. However, trading revenue was also up.

Outgoing general manager Stuart Williams said: "Revenue from ticket sales, catering and the shop is reaching £1.3 million, which was better than any other year; it was £1.1 million in 2019 and 2021. But while it was a record-breaking year for income – the July 23/24 Awdry Extravaganza saw our shop record its highest two days of takings by some considerable margin, for example – the same can be said for expenditure. Costs have increased, so the money we make will have fallen."

To balance service offerings with forecast demand, in order to reduce costs the TR has slightly decreased the number of trains being run by about 4% on 2022.

Stuart added: "Clearly, that has some impact, but narrow gauge costs are fairly reasonable compared to our standard gauge cousins.

"However, the railway will focus on maximising revenue and controlling all costs where we can."

The Aln Valley Railway was also celebrating a bumper year, with 12,500 passengers between April and September 2022 and for some event days during the festive season.

Trustee Gemma Maughan said: "For a little railway that's still being built, I think that's pretty good going. Our most popular event was the model railway in September, but across three weekends in December we had more than 1500."

The increase in visitors stood at 55% compared to its previous year's tally, although Gemma acknowledges this is an unfair comparison given that 2021 still saw coronavirus restrictions – a point Jonnie Pay, commercial manager of the Spa Valley Railway, also highlighted after reporting his railway's count had reached 69,549.

"That's higher than 2021," Jonnie said, "but I think everyone's forgotten that most places didn't open for the first five months of that year, and even then it was a slow restart as people came out of their houses, so it's not fair to compare to the year before. Polar Express figures, which were circa 40,000, were slightly up as we had more capacity."

Monitoring the loadings of trains throughout the year has helped to shape the timetable and operating patterns for 2023.

Jonnie added: "We are doing much the same as we have always done but have changed the timetable to give an earlier finish to the day and encourage custom on the last trip, often skipped by families as it's too late a finish. We will continue to monitor costs and adapt as required throughout the year."

Mindful planning

Although the Kent & East Sussex Railway recorded visitor numbers in the region of 60,000, general manager

LSWR O2 0-4-4T No. W24 *Calbourne* in action on April 15, 2022, on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, which last year set a new record for ticket sales and trading income. JOHN FAULKNER/IOWSR

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Robin Coombes said the year would not be considered profitable following the cancellation of the 1940s weekend in the wake of the war in Ukraine, and the hot, dry summer putting people off visiting also leading to the need to hire in a diesel (Class 33 No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson*) to mitigate fire risk.

Looking at the year ahead, Robin said: "The words for this year are 'agile' and 'focused'.

"Agile in that we can quickly respond to marketing changes; given the uncertainty that exists in the UK economy, nobody knows yet how a cost of living crisis will feed into the market for tourism and heritage. We will likely reduce the number of published running days, but there will be some in reserve to add if the market holds up.

"Focused in that we will be targeting audiences who will be more resilient to a cost of living crisis, so more luxury, tailor-made experiences such as the Wealden Pullman and family saloon. We will use the opportunity to innovate by developing products and events."

A weekly update from interim Bluebell Railway plc chairman Paul Churchman published at the start of February informed supporters that the commercial team had met to discuss plans for 2023.

He said: "The aim was to look at where we can make savings by combining trains – reducing underused services but also adding extra Golden Arrow and Wealden Ramblers, where we know we will sell them, and we know these trains are highly profitable.

"There was also a review of some of the events, and changes have been made. The diesel gala will not go ahead, but we will now have Giants of Steam in the autumn."

The Mid-Hants Railway, which welcomed 89,243 passengers – an 8% increase over 2021 – was looking to add more low-cost, high profit events to its calendar after assessing those run during last year.

CEO Amanda Squires said: "2022 was something of a mixed year for the Watercress Line, with the vast majority of our events outperforming budget but fewer visitors than expected for our Christmas programme.

"In the face of this, together with uncertainty about the UK economic outlook and rising costs, we will be reviewing our business by developing and diversifying our already established and successful event and visitor programme, and we will be introducing a number of new offerings.

"Not only will this put us in the strongest position to face whatever challenges the still uncertain UK visitor economy may bring in 2023, it will also ensure that we have a successful and sustainable operation for many years ahead."

The autumn visit of A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* to the Swanage Railway (issue 300) helped bring up the 2022 visitor tally there to 150,000, this too still being 50,000 (25%) down compared to 2019.

"While the popular *Flying Scotsman* event provided some relief against an otherwise poor trading year, the Swanage Railway Company's trading deficit will still be in six figures," SR chairman Robert Patterson said.

"Our operating plan for 2023 is to reduce train service frequencies during slack periods of the year to increase passenger numbers, with the number of operating days only decreasing marginally. We hope to run a greater frequency of special events during 2023."

Events prove popular

Meanwhile, Mike Kelly, chairman of the East Lancashire Railway, said: "We saw passenger numbers increase significantly from the previous year, with roughly an additional 40,000 guests visiting throughout 2022.

"We also saw revenue increase for some of our most popular seasonal peaks, including a 17% increase for our Halloween events and a 14% increase for our Santa Specials."

With this increase, Mike makes an observation that is widely reported across the board – that event days are attracting higher patronage than standard running ones.

He said: "Since the coronavirus lockdown ended, we are seeing visitors return to the railway, particularly for our events programme rather than a simple heritage steam ride.

"We have reduced some of our less popular scheduled services, helping to reduce the number of steam locomotives hauling service trains without severely impacting visitor experience.

"We are sure that the entire heritage railway sector is being realistic about the current and long-term challenges ahead, but heritage railways have never been without their challenges. It is the nature of the world we operate in – we just need to keep the faith."

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway reported that its passenger footfall of circa 100,000 was a close match for the pre-Covid years of 2018 and 2019.

Chairman Matthew Stroh said: "The strength of trading in 2022 has revolved around our events programme, particularly over the Christmas period where visitor volumes were very strong compared to 2019."

"It is too early to be specific about the profitability of the year," he added, "but we are expecting to be able to report a positive result despite fighting with 150% inflation in the cost of coal."

Pictured in the workshops at the Vale of Rheidol Railway, the restoration of No. 794 is approaching completion. The current state of the locomotive will be unveiled to donors and supporters on the launch day planned for May 27. VORR

Lost Welsh Highland Baldwin to live again

THE Welsh Highland Railway Ltd and Imperial War Museums have announced that ownership of Baldwin 4-6-0T WDLR No. 794, which had been on long-term loan to the line, has been permanently transferred.

It comes as part of an ongoing review by the museum of its collection. In consultation with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it felt that with WHR Ltd being a registered charity, it was the most appropriate long-term home and will present the railway with an opportunity to recreate a lost example of the original railway's motive power fleet.

No. 794 was built in January 1917 at the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia. It was shipped to Europe for use by the Railway Operating Division in support of First World War trench lines. It ended its working life at the Upper India Sugar Mills in Khatauli, India, and was repatriated by the IWM in 1985.

A serious restoration did not begin until after 2003, when it was placed on loan to WHR Ltd, which owns and operates the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway at Porthmadog.

A sister Baldwin, No. 590, was bought by the WHR in 1923, operating alongside Hunslet 2-6-2T *Russell* until the line closed in 1936. It was cut up in 1942 as part of the Government's scrap drive; a builder's plate was saved and is on display at the National Railway Museum.

With No. 590 very much a part of the WHR scene in the 1930s, it has long been a desire of WHR Ltd to recreate the engine for visitors to be able to appreciate it working alongside *Russell* once again. When No. 794 arrived on loan, permission was sought and obtained to run it under the guise of its scrapped classmate, meaning that once restored, No. 590 will live again. No. 794 is currently at the Vale of Rheidol Railway's Aberystwyth workshops. It will be outshopped in a dark maroon livery and carry a Baldwin pattern whistle.

To support the restoration, visit whr.co.uk/appeals/baldwin-rebuild

GWR large prairie No. 4144, seen on January 30, has been repainted at Didcot Railway Centre, transitioning from early BR green with lettering to GWR unlined green with GW crest. It is to go on loan to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway for the 2023 season, where it is expected to haul the first services on Mothering Sunday, March 19. FRANK DUMBLETON

Double celebrations in order for Northampton & Lamport

By Owen Hayward

Hunslet Austerity No. 3193 on its previous visit to the Northampton & Lamport Railway in 2021. It has now been bought by the railway and will take up permanent residence from February. N&LR

LESS than a month after launching an appeal to fund necessary repairs to one of its bridges, the Northampton & Lamport Railway was celebrating hitting the target – and also announced it had purchased a steam locomotive!

As reported last issue, the northern section of the railway had to be closed as the large track securing timbers that run lengthways over the six -pan metal Bridge 13 had deteriorated and required replacing before passenger trains could run again. The large size of the four required replacements – measuring 60ft in length, 10in deep and 16in wide – meant they are expensive, so an £8500 appeal was launched to ensure that the bridge stood a chance of being ready for the start of the 2023 operating season.

With the appeal publicly launched on January 5, just 20 days later it was announced the target had been met. A statement from the railway said: "We had a fantastic response and managed to hit the fundraising target in exactly two weeks!

"Contributions included more than £2600 donated by the public via a GoFundMe page, a £4250 grant from The Eric Stanton Northampton Trust, which helps fund local environment, conservation and heritage projects, and two large private donations.

"This has meant that the timbers can be ordered immediately, and the work will hopefully be fully complete (and the full line reopen) before our 2023 season opening on Sunday, March 19."

At the same time, the railway also announced that it purchased Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3193 *Norfolk Regiment*, and that it will be moving from its previous home at Bressingham Steam Gardens and Museum in Norfolk.

Built in 1944 for the Ministry of Defence at Barby as WD 75142, No. 3193 operated at several MoD bases before being sold to the National Coal Board in 1962 shortly before returning to Hunslet's Leeds workshops for a rebuild which saw an underfeed stoker mechanism fitted. It was then employed at the Smithywood Coking Plant at Chapeltown in Leeds. The underfeed stoker system was removed by July 1973, and in 1978 it was purchased by Phil Wainwright and entered preservation at Loughborough on the Great Central Railway.

It changed hands several times over the ensuing decades, with Norfolk Heritage Steam Railway Ltd taking ownership of it in April 2009. Restoration commenced at a private site in Yaxham, Norfolk, and a return to steam took place at Bressingham in May 2019. It has previously visited the N&LR for the 2021 summer gala. It was named *Norfolk Regiment* in 2010.

The decision to sell was because the group had reached a 'crossroad moment', according to NHSRL secretary David Bramhall.

Parting of ways

He said: "We bought the locomotive in 2009 as a kit of parts. Restoring it took 11 years and we did the bulk of the work ourselves. It is now in full working order with several successful hires under its belt, so we take considerable satisfaction from having achieved our original goal.

"However, as a group we are all advancing in years and realise that we can no longer properly maintain No. 3193 *Norfolk Regiment*. Our sole concern is to ensure the continued health of the loco, so have decided to transfer ownership to the N&LR. We know the line well and have the greatest respect for the organisation's expertise and enthusiasm. We are confident that it will operate the locomotive and care for it as well as we could have done ourselves – probably better."

A NLR statement said: "No. 3193's arrival will give the railway two resident working steam locomotives for the first time in more than 20 years!

"Having two will take some of the strain from current resident 0-4-0ST *Swanscombe No.4* and provide a back-up engine to ensure steam services are provided as advertised."

Purchased by Northampton Steam Railway Ltd, the Austerity was due to arrive on the N&LR during February an undergo an annual boiler exam in March prior to entering service, with approximately six years left on its current boiler certificate.

Garforth footbridge moves from Yorkshire to Kent

THE Grade II-listed classic NER footbridge from Garforth station is to move south – to a new home on the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway in Kent.

The Railway Heritage Trust has awarded £25,000 to help relocate the footbridge when the route between Leeds and York is electrified as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, a multi-billion pound long-term railway infrastructure programme designed to improve connectivity.

The footbridge conforms to the standard design of the NER and consists of an elliptical arch in four sections with roundels in the centre of each section. Decorative railings to the steps have crossed bars between iron balusters.

The steps return to the east on each side of the bridge and rise to the road above on the north side. An inner line of metal railings has been added to the steps, with horizontal bars between posts.

It was listed as Grade II by Historic England because it is complete and intact, and is considered an attractive example of the NER design.

The Grade II-listed NER footbridge at Garforth station. RHC

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Legacies fund ‘tribute’ purchase at Quainton Road

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Railway Centre has added an operational Peckett 0-4-0ST to its stock list with the purchase of R2 class No. 1370 *May* from Dr Christopher Beet, made possible thanks to funds from donated legacies.

Built in 1915, No. 1370 was delivered new to Coventry Ordnance Factory in Warwickshire, where it was named *Lady Godiva*. At some point after it relocated to Yates Duxbury & Sons Papermill at Heap Bridge near Bury, Lancashire, where it was renamed *May* and worked until being withdrawn and sold to the late Dr Peter Beet in 1975, who moved it to Steamtown Carnforth for storage.

Extensive work was required at its first overhaul, the locomotive being in very poor condition, however, it returned to service on the East Lancashire Railway in 2009 where it spent a few further years before moving to Beamish.

In 2019 another overhaul followed at a private site before No. 1370 returned to Beamish and then listed for sale in December 2022.

A centre spokesman said: “Over the last few years we have very kindly received legacies from a few members.

“We wanted to ensure that these legacies were used towards an enduring, visible and fitting tribute. We also wanted to future-proof ourselves by adding another locomotive to our operational steam fleet so we can concentrate on long-term overhauls and restorations such as that of Metropolitan No. 1 and 16in Hunslet No. 3782 *Arthur*. To this end, we have purchased Peckett No. 1370.”

May arrived on January 24 and will make its first operational appearance over the half-term running days on February 12, 15 and 19.

➜ The railway is still appealing for donations to fund the overhaul of Metropolitan E class 0-4-4T No. 1. The locomotive celebrates its 125th birthday this year and the centre needs to raise £70,000 to return it service. More information, including methods for donating and Gift Aid forms, can be found online at bucksrailcentre.org

Fresh off the lorry in the afternoon sun on January 24, Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 1370 *May* sits in the yard at Quainton Road after being purchased by the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. BRC

From Namibia’s desert to Snowdonia – Welsh Highland NG15 boiler returns

By Owen Hayward

THE sight of a South African Railways’ 2-8-2 running through the Snowdonia National Park may not be too far off – with boiler of the Welsh Highland Railway’s NG15 No. 134 *Kalahari* being returned to the frames on January 13.

Having been overhauled at Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough, the boiler was transported to Dinas on the WHR, where it was then lowered back into the frames for the first time since being removed in December 2018.

The NG15 class was developed for use on the 60cm gauge lines of the SAR, with No. 134 built in 1952 as part of a third batch of the locomotives by Société Anglo-Franco-Belge in France. Delivered to Walvis Bay and commissioned onto the Otavi Mining and Railway Company in Namibia, No. 134 then transferred to Port Elizabeth when the line was regauged in 1960, before finally being withdrawn in 1990 initially for boiler repairs but never completed due to the declining amount of work for steam locomotives.

Along with No. 133, it arrived in the UK for a proposed railway at Robin Hood’s Bay in Yorkshire which never came to be and was subsequently purchased by the WHR in 1998.

Work to strip No. 134 commenced as far back as 1999 to assess condition in preparation for a return to active service. Over the last two decades, a new tender tank has been built, the wheelsets regauged and the lubrication system reworked to share components with the NGG16 Garratts.

A week after it was returned, a working party assembled at Dinas to work on the interfaces between the boiler and locomotive and also to place the wooden cab mock-up in position to be checked for fitting before the metal is cut for the final version.

Project leader Adrian Strachan said: “We have made many changes in our concept for the cab since South Africa. The cab was very short in its previous design, with a fall plate to the tender always moving around and quite dangerous for the crew to balance on. We have modified it to have a constant floor with an extension frame on the back of the locomotive, which allows us to have a one-piece floor.”

Work will continue to finish the tender tank and reassemble No. 134 ready for a return to service at an as yet unconfirmed point in the future. Further donations to fund the work are sought; more information can be found online at ng15-134.co.uk

Having arrived at Dinas from Loughborough on January 13, the overhauled boiler for No. 134 is lowered back into the frames for the first time since 2018. CHRIS PARRY/FFWHR

While No. 134 was being shunted over to the main Dinas workshops on January 20, the opportunity to position it alongside unrestored classmate No. 133 was taken to compare conditions. No. 133 is hoped to be overhauled at some point in the future. CHRIS PARRY/FFWHR

Great Central mourns preservation powerhouse Richard Tilden-Smith

By Robin Jones

DIRECTORS of the Great Central Railway Rolling Stock Trust have paid tribute to founding chairman Richard Tilden-Smith, who died suddenly at home on January 10 aged 83.

His death was unexpected, and was evidently precipitated by a major hemorrhage. Earlier that day, he had been discussing fundraising initiatives for the trust's project to restore GCR 'Barnum' carriage No.228 (as highlighted in issues 296 and 298).

A statement from the trust said: "It is with great sadness that the GCR Rolling Stock Trust directors must announce the sudden death, at home, of its chairman.

"Richard was a true gentleman in every sense of the word, a great visionary, and a major influence in the heritage railway world. But he was also an extremely private person who kept his private life and a variety of interests in tight compartments, shunning personal publicity when and wherever possible. Thus, much of his amazing activities and achievements will go unrecorded.

Above: Richard Tilden-Smith, who campaigned for the northern section of the heritage-era Great Central Railway for more than 25 years. GCRRST

Left: Richard Tilden-Smith meets the Duke of Gloucester on his visit to Nunckley Hill Museum on the Great Central Railway and restored Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway coach No.946. B PRICE/GCRRST

Lasting legacies

"We know one of his great passions centred around railways and railway heritage, in particular, the original Great Central and the rescued two sections between Leicester and Ruddington.

"At that time, he lived in Warwickshire and, for him, it was only a short car hop to Ruddington, where he spent more than 25 years helping to shape and develop the northern section of the former GCR running between Loughborough and the decommissioned ordnance factory site at Ruddington. One of his legacies was the creation of the GCR Rolling Stock Trust in 2000, specifically set up as a standalone company to rescue and ultimately restore to working condition an eight-vehicle collection of former GC Railway carriages spanning the period from 1888 to 1910 – the original Victorian Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway through to Edwardian GCR and its London extension.

"He was a man of great vision with a raft of ideas and interests, a great spokesman who championed many causes, and a generous benefactor, especially to the trust. Richard remained as its chairman throughout, encouraging and inspiring a large number of like-minded colleagues to contribute financially and supply their valuable work expertise and time to expand and develop his projects.

"He never sought the limelight but, being a keen photographer, enjoyed recording and using his journalistic skills to promote achievements and, when he thought appropriate, to highlight failures in the system.

"It is beyond doubt that he was a workaholic, and this was demonstrated right up to his final farewell on January 10 – having that same afternoon planted some flowers for friend Jackie and had at least three lengthy discussions with trust colleagues over the telephone about the fundraising campaign currently underway to finance seating for 'Barnum' carriage No.228 and voice his concerns over the future of the heritage railway centre at Ruddington. It is now up to us to carry on with what he has created."

Richard will be privately cremated following a family-only funeral. A commemorative service will be held in early April and a service of thanksgiving later in the spring at All Saints Parish Church, Mountfield, East Sussex, TN32 5JS, followed by the internment of his ashes in the graveyard, with refreshments in the village hall. All are welcome.

Richard requested no black or dark clothing, wanting a celebration rather than a wake – taking a 'fun-day' approach in memory of his life. As the venue for both the commemorative service and the post-service refreshments have limited space, the family have asked for guidance on the number of Richard's railway connections who wish to attend. Full details will be circulated nearer the date on request from trustee Roger Penson, who can be emailed at roger.penson@outlook.com

Final push for club members as P2 *Prince of Wales* tender nears completion

THE frames for The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust current new-build project Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* are almost complete.

Recent progress has been made, with the machining complete for the tender wheelset axleboxes, along with other work on the brake and handbrake components. The finished frames were due to be delivered to the trust's Darlington workshops allowing for full construction to be completed thereafter.

Funding has come thanks to a strong uptake of membership to The Tender Club, which was established to raise the estimated £450,000 from 250 supporters each donating £1500 (plus Gift Aid). Membership had surpassed 110 (44% of the target), which has raised more than £165,000 before Gift Aid.

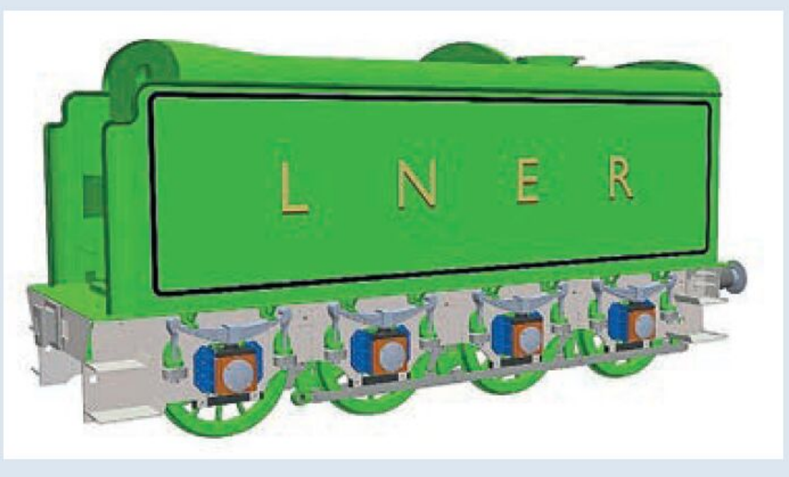
The frames are with ID Howitt Ltd in Crofton, where hornblocks have been fitted, and focus is now on the brake gear. The axleboxes had manganese steel liners welded on by CTL Seal of Sheffield and were returned to Crofton for final machining, while 3D CAD work is ongoing for the electrical and pipework layout now that the main line cab signalling equipment required has been fully defined.

Membership is still open for The Tender Club, for which members are entitled to benefits such as the opportunity to buy a reserved seat on one of the first trains hauled by the finished locomotive, as well as reasonable access to No. 2007 at all times and a limited edition print of a Stephen Bainbridge painting.

For more details or to sign up, visit a1steam.com/prince-of-wales/support-us/clubs/the-tender-club/

Left: With the drag boxes now fitted at ID Howitt in Crofton, the frames for the tender of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* will soon be ready for transfer to the A1 Trust's Darlington workshops. NIGEL FACER/A1SLT

Right: CAD artwork has enabled a mock-up of what the finished tender is expected to look like. DANIELA FILOVÁ/A1SLT



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Running 1013 miles to raise £1013 for D1013!

THE Western Locomotive Association's new charities officer, Jon Aston, has come up with an energetic way to support the bogie overhaul appeal for Class 52 D1013 *Western Ranger* – by undertaking a 1013-mile run.

Having started on December 13, which was also the 60th anniversary of the locomotive's release into traffic from BR's Swindon Works, Jon plans to run 1013 miles before the end of the Severn Valley Railway's spring diesel gala on Sunday, May 21.

Jon's challenge is an opportunity to combine his two passions while making a big difference to the WLA.

He was introduced to railways by his late uncle Alan Maund, a renowned railway photographer and artist, whom he accompanied on trips to see the very last days of steam and the emergence of diesel and electric traction.

Jon took up running in 2006 to lose weight and graduated to marathon running within six months. To date he has run at 311 organised events of marathon distance or longer – including seven non-stop 145-mile runs from Paddington to Bristol, following the old stomping grounds of the Westerns.

He was voted WLA charities officer at the association's November 2022 annual meeting.

Jon's challenge will see him need to average 6 ½ miles a day for the 159 days. Keeping to the target of the locomotive's number, he has a set the fundraising goal of £1013.

Western Locomotive Association charities officer Jon Aston with Class 52 D1013 *Western Ranger*, the locomotive's number being the target for both his distance run and amount hopefully raised by May 21. WLA

➜ Pledge your support to Jon's venture by donating online at gofundme.com/f/1013-miles-for-d1013-bogie-overhaul-appeal, where updates on his progress will appear. For more information on the WLA's bogie appeal, visit d1013bogieappeal.uk

Pointing the way at Bridgnorth on the Severn Valley

By John Titlow

THE Severn Valley Railway's Bridgnorth station and locomotive shed were disconnected from all points south on January 4. The first of three sets of points leading to Platform 2 and the yard were removed for repositioning and replacement.

Preparation work started in December during the intensive Christmas service and the line was closed immediately after the running season finished.

Work began on the southernmost set of points located on the B4363 road overbridge, led by permanent way manager Barry Light and his team with help from volunteers, and by the end of the day, all tie bars, linkages, point rodding and track circuits had been removed. On January 6, there was a large gap in the track where the points were.

Weekend volunteers then removed redundant chairs from the main beams of the bridge deck and continued various other preparatory tasks leaving a large hole where the line was. It was all hands to the pumps to get the job done, with sustenance provided in the form of bacon butties from the recently-built refreshment room by SVR Guarantee Company chairman Diane Malyon.

The new points will be relocated off the overbridge slightly further north for structural and track reasons, thus reducing the lateral forces on the wing walls of the bridge supports. New drainage is being installed at the same time.

The new turnouts, complete with sleepers, were manufactured by KGJ Price in South Wales, with the first set delivered on January 26 arriving as a kit of parts before assembly and installation.

The first set of points was in place by the end of January and the focus moved to the larger crossover connecting it to the head shunt, Platform 2 and the yard.

There is a downhill gradient here and over time settlement has taken place; this will be eased during the works and will provide better conditions extending the life of the track.

Volunteer project manager Nick Yarwood said: "The work being carried out should be good for many decades to come and the project has got off to a good start."

A view looking north shows the repositioned points at the southern end of Bridgnorth Station in position on January 30. JOHN TITLOW

Meanwhile, movements around the shed and yard can continue to take place.

Bulleid West Country light Pacific No. 34027 is inside the paintshop undergoing transformation from purple as *Elizabeth II* to black as No. 21C127 *Taw Valley*. As reported in issue 294 of *Heritage Railway*, the points replacement is the first phase of the yard project and part of the recent appeal for £500,000 to replace all life-expired rails, which were laid in the 1970s using second-hand materials. So far, £250,000 has been raised.

➜ Phase one is fully funded, but support is still needed for phase two, which is planned to start in 2024. To contribute, visit svrtrust.org.uk

Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST No.4 *Edward Thomas* and its train at Brynglas in support of the Territorial Army's work in 1953. PB WHITEHOUSE/NGRM COLLECTION

The Territorial Army members cover Dolgoch Viaduct during a working party that improved the pioneering heritage line's track condition. NGRM COLLECTION

Tywyn museum exhibition celebrates triple anniversaries

BY Owen Hayward

THE Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at the Talyllyn's Tywyn Wharf station has set up its annual temporary exhibition that for 2023 will focus on three sets of significant anniversaries being marked this year.

The first of these is the Glyn Valley Tramway, which celebrates the 150th anniversary of the opening of the 8¼-mile line between Chirk and Glyn Ceiriog in Denbighshire. Originally a 2ft 4¼in gauge horse-drawn line, it was increased in gauge by ¼in when steam locomotives were introduced.

Passenger trains ran over 6 ½ miles of the route, with the remainder serving a large granite quarry and several minor slate ones, but a steep decline in traffic in 1932 led to passenger services being abandoned at the start of 1933, and freight traffic ceased two years later.

Most of the stock was scrapped bar some carriage bodies that survived on farms; two of these – Nos. 14 and 15, built by the Midland Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. Ltd. in 1892 and sometime around 1901 respectively – survive on the Talyllyn as First Class carriages.

The GVT Trust was formed in 2007 with the aim of restoring part of the tramway from Chirk station, recreating the 1920s era in appearance and providing a visitor centre and workshops with educational facilities to display and interpret the history of the tramway. A 2ft 3in gauge track will be relaid between Chirk, starting from adjacent to the Network Rail station at a site already cleared, and Pontaen, with the first rails laid last December.

The trust is planning an open day later in the year to mark the occasion and hopes to borrow some wagons from the Talyllyn and NGRM to be horse-drawn along the new tracks.

A set of retired points have been donated by the Vale of Rheidol Railway that will receive new timbers and be regauged for use at the Wrexham end of Chirk station.

Trust director Andy Christie said: "We are looking at staging an event to reflect the origins of the tramway using working horses. We also hope to have a miniature railway to provide rides along the trackbed further away from the station area.

"The date is still to be set as this will depend on groundworks to improve the site, however, we are hopeful that this will be in July."

The Talyllyn will also mark the GVT anniversary at the July 1/2 Anything Goes gala, with 0-4-2T No.7 *Tom Rolt* planned to pull a non-stop train from Tywyn Wharf to the Nant Gwernol terminus and both GVT coaches together in the same rake.

This year also marks the centenary of the formation of the Big Four, when the implementation of the Railways Act of 1921 grouped the 120 independent railway companies into four main large companies – the GWR, LMS, LNER and Southern Railway. The NGRM's exhibition will consider the impact of the Grouping on narrow gauge lines such as the Talyllyn.

Welsh Highland centenary

The third anniversary being marked in the exhibition is that of the Welsh Highland Railway, which opened in 1923.

The Welsh Highland (Light Railway) Company reopened the line between Dinas Junction and Rhyd Ddu on July 31, 1992. Ten months later, the section from Rhyd Ddu to Portmadoc, which passed through Beddgelert and the scenic Aberglaslyn Pass, was also opened. A weekend of celebrations is planned by the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland and Welsh Highland Heritage railways over June 23-25.

The Friday will mark the pre-1923 opening history of the WHR, with the Croesor Tramway represented with horse-drawn wagons and WHR inspection trains that were run by a four-wheeled Simplex locomotive prior to the opening of the line.

The Saturday will see a focus on trains to Beddgelert, featuring vintage locomotives such as the George England 0-4-0T+Ts, Baldwin 4-6-0T and Hunslet 2-6-2T *Russell*, the latter of which is the only surviving original WHR locomotive, operating with the correct rolling stock formations.

That evening will mark the original WHR closure that occurred on May 31, 1937, with non-stop Minffordd to Pen-y-Mount trains running.

The Sunday will focus on the revival and 21st century era WHR, with vintage trains alongside the Caernarfon to Porthmadog services, mixed trains and double-heading that will include *Russell* with the FR's replica Manning Wardle Lynton and Barnstaple 2-6-2T No. 14 *Lyd*.

Another section of the NGRM's exhibition back at Tywyn records three events that occurred on the TR 70 years ago, namely: the assistance provided by a Territorial Army unit in repairing the track between Monday, June 29 and Friday, July 10, 1953; the coronation of the late Queen Elizabeth II on June 2 (with the Talyllyn being the only line operated by volunteers of a preservation society at that time); and the release of The Titfield Thunderbolt movie that took place at the Leicester Square Theatre on March 5 and which was heavily inspired by the voluntary efforts to save and operate the line.

The NGRM is open at Tywyn Wharf on each day that trains are operating. Admission is free, but donations are welcome for entry.

No.4 *Edward Thomas,* suitably decorated for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, with its train at Pendre. NGRM COLLECTION

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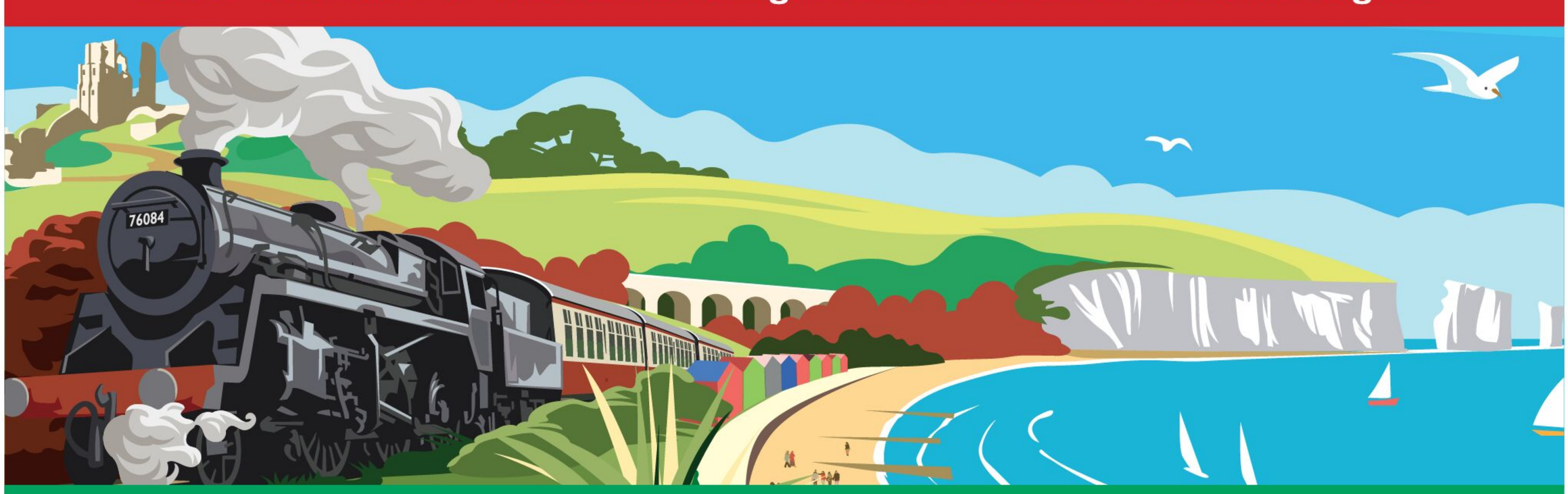


swanagerailway.co.uk

Pacific given green light for landmark visit to KESR line

By Geoff Courtney

Summer visitor: Battle of Britain No. 34072 *257 Squadron* approaches Okehampton station on July 14, 1959. The Bulleid-designed Pacific, which was saved for preservation after withdrawal in October 1964, is to become the most powerful, largest and heaviest locomotive ever to run on the KESR heritage line. TRANSPORT TREASURY/RC RILEY

BATTLE of Britain No. 34072 *257 Squadron* is to visit the Kent & East Sussex Railway during April and May after a 'will it, won't it?' dilemma over such concerns as whether the Pacific was too large and heavy for the light railway.

The decision, announced by general manager Robin Coombes on January 31, brought delight and relief to staff and volunteers following weeks of deliberation during which the visit of the Spa Valley Railway-based Pacific was in the balance.

In early January, Robin had said: "We really hope we can make it happen, as it would be the the first-ever Pacific to visit our light railway and the largest, heaviest and most powerful locomotive ever to run on the line, but for those very reasons it is vital that we complete all necessary safety and logistical checks."

An indication of the implications of such a visit is that the former LBSCR Class A1X 'Terrier' 0-6-0Ts which operated on the railway prior to its closure by BR to passengers in 1954, and which are regular performers on the line in preservation today, weigh just over 28 tons, whereas No. 34072 checks in with tender at nearly 134 tons.

As the deliberations continued, speculation began to mount that the visit wouldn't happen. On January 26, Robin said in a social media post: "There is much passionate advice being given to me, both for and against. I cannot make a decision until due diligence has been completed."

He said that this included assessments on operational suitability, crew competence, safe running, passing movements, engineering criteria, commercial viability ("For instance, does it have a *Flying Scotsman* effect?" he asked), whether a large passenger locomotive fitted in with the KESR's objectives of being a light railway operated with small engines, and whether there were other better value alternatives with lower risks.

He ended by pledging: "All I can assure everyone is that the decision will be made dispassionately, based on a detailed assessment of risk against reward."

And on January 31, that decision was announced – the visit would go ahead.

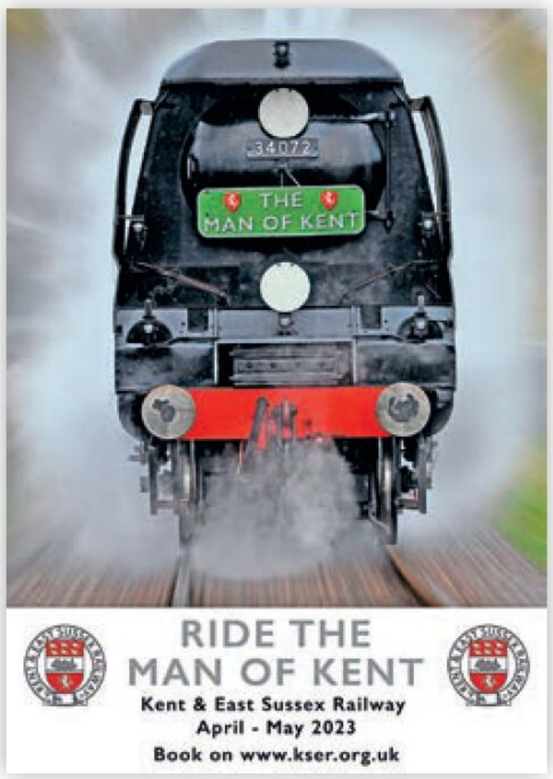
Shortly afterwards, Robin told *Heritage Railway*: "Everyone is very excited at the decision, which we all thought very hard about, from safety and viability to authenticity.

"We are now in a very different world from five years ago, let alone 50, and as a railway preservation charity we need to be on the front foot to do public good and educate each new generation.

"This will be an opportunity to engage with new audiences, and a Bulleid Pacific is synonymous with Kent, so a recreation of 'Man of Kent' or 'Kentish Belle' is entirely appropriate."

He also thanked the locomotive's owner, Southern Locomotives Ltd, the Spa Valley Railway, the KESR Guest Locomotive Fund, and his operations, commercial, marketing, locomotive and permanent way teams. "Now the hard work starts to make it a successful visit," he added.

The programme for the 1948-built Pacific is yet to be finalised, but events due to be held during its visit include the Easter April 7-10 weekend, and a 1940s weekend on May 13/14.



Landmark Pacific: The promotional poster issued by the KESR for the landmark visit of preserved Battle of Britain No. 34072 *257 Squadron*. ROBIN COOMBES

Ready for service: The KESR family saloon looking resplendent after completion of a painstaking long-term restoration. JAKE LEWIS

Family saloon returns

As the visit of the mighty Pacific is awaited, a 123-year-old family saloon that is a treasured part of the railway's rolling stock has provided another cause for celebration after the completion of a painstaking restoration.

Built by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway at Ashford Works in 1900 for transporting wealthy families, the coach originally featured a saloon area, a vestibule leading to a five-seat compartment, a WC cubicle and another with wash basin, and a separate luggage compartment.

"It was the kind of carriage that might have hosted the fictional Grantham family from Downton Abbey on their trips around the country," said KESR press officer Alison Miles.

The saloon's aristocratic existence came to an end in 1907 when social and transport changes led to it being converted into an invalid saloon and subsequent sale to the Longmoor Military Railway, finally arriving at

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Tenterden in 1985, where it became a popular part of the railway's vintage set.

The restoration, which was part-funded by the Kent & East Sussex Locomotive Trust, includes a high-quality exterior finish with paint donated by Craftmaster Paints, and such internal features as velvet upholstery and authentic signage. The layout provides an open carriage featuring side bench seats.

Speaking before the saloon returned to public service on February 11 for the first time in more than a decade, Robin said: "The quality of the restoration is both sympathetic and authentic, and I must pay tribute to the dedicated team of volunteers who have delivered such a professional result."

Adam Brown, Craftmaster Paints' general manager, said: "As enthusiasts ourselves, it is nice to play a small part in such things and we were delighted to lend our support."

The saloon can carry up to 20 passengers, and will be used at special events and also be available for hire.

Luxury travel: Comfort is guaranteed in the five-seat compartment of the newly-restored KESR family saloon. KESR

Open for business: It may be 123 years old, but the KESR family saloon guarantees a warm welcome to passengers after its return to service. KESR

Railcar progress

Meanwhile, another of the railway's long-term restorations, that of GWR diesel railcar W20W, has moved a step forward with the appointment of Steve Beck to oversee the 83-year-old vehicle's compliance with traction and rolling stock regulations.

Steve has 53 years of experience in the maintenance, overhaul and service introduction of electric and diesel multiple units, including 27 years with BR and 15 years with multinational engineering company WS Atkins. He is senior traction and rolling stock consultant to Cambrian Transport Ltd, which has been awarded the contract by the KESR to ensure the railcar meets regulatory requirements before it re-enters public service.

Steve has already inspected W20W, which it is hoped will return next year. The railway reports that his initial conclusions were that the restoration to date had been carried out to a good standard, although he identified some additional matters that should be addressed, and these have been added to the restoration plan.

The railway has also revealed that an appeal launched in September to raise £20,000 to complete the restoration had now raised £18,000.

W20W was built at Swindon in 1940 as one of 38 in a class that proved a success on both main and branch lines. It was withdrawn by BR from Worcester (85A) in October 1962 and saved for preservation by the KESR, where it arrived in April 1966. It last ran in 1980, and the restoration started 26 years ago.

Poppy Line spends £300k on new track for 2023 season

NEW pointwork costing more than £300,000 is being installed at the eastern end of the North Norfolk Railway's Weybourne station.

The points allow trains to use the station's two platforms and also allow entry to the line's locomotive depot, and the major project was completed in time for services to run from February 11-19 during the half-term school break.

The sections of track being renewed were last replaced in the 1970s using second-hand materials, so many components are almost life-expired.

NNR managing director Hugh Harkett said: "We run trains on over 250 days a year, carrying up to 165,000 passengers annually, so it is vital that our infrastructure is maintained in excellent condition. This is an investment in the railway's future and the new track will last for generations to come.

"Our short winter closed season is the only time we can carry out work like this."

The work was undertaken by specialist contractor Trackwork, with many components prepared offsite to enable the removal of the old rails and sleepers and installation of the new pointwork to be completed in just over three weeks.

The relaying of track at Weybourne station in progress, with the first of the three new points seen in position. BRYAN TOOVEY/NNR

IN BRIEF

➜ THE chassis and tender of LNER B12 4-6-0 No. 8572 will be overhauled by Riley & Son (E) Ltd at Heywood, owner the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society has announced. The boiler is being overhauled by the North Norfolk Railway's engineering team. To donate to the appeal to fund the overhaul, visit www.mandgn.org/steaming-into-the-next-century

➜ WORK to restore uncovered remains of Horwich station – which closed to passengers in 1965 and goods the following year after nearly a century – is underway. The Horwich Heritage group has recovered a set of rail buffers uncovered during recent flood prevention work at Old Station Park, which occupies the site, and placed them on display there.

➜ FOLLOWING four years on ice, the 2.4-mile funicular Cairngorm Mountain Railway reopened on January 26 for the rest of this year's snow sports season after Department of Transport carried out testing and issued safety certificates. The UK's highest railway – its Ptarmigan summit building is 3494 feet above sea level – was taken out of action in September 2018 due to structural concerns. Reinstatement works included a complex engineering project to strengthen the viaduct and install a new control system.

➜ UNRESTORED LMS 'Black Five' No. 44901 has been moved from Sharpness Docks on the Vale of Berkley Railway to a private site at Malvern, Worcestershire, for storage. Built in 1945, the Stanier locomotive became one of the 'Barry 10' and has not steamed in preservation.

➜ CRICH Tramway Museum has lodged a new application to Amber Valley Borough Council for planning permission for a modern renovation of its current tearoom facility. It hopes to construct a larger building to connect the existing tearoom site to the Red Lion pub, which was moved from Stoke to the site in the 1980s.

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NRM exhibits shuffled after York's Station Hall closure

By Owen Hayward

WITH the National Railway Museum's Station Hall now closed for renovations, a shuffle has taken place to relocate some of the exhibits previously on display there, with them either stored elsewhere at the York site or moved to its Locomotion museum outpost at Shildon.

On January 24, LNER 0-8-0 class Q7 No. 901 returned to Shildon from Head of Steam in Darlington, where it had been on loan since 2008. Built in Darlington and entering traffic in September 1919, No. 901 last steamed at the end of a 10-year agreement with the North Eastern Locomotive Group in 1998 and became the first steam locomotive to arrive at Locomotion in June 2004.

Travelling in the opposite direction was Stockton & Darlington Railway four-wheel composite No. 59, built in 1847 by Tweed Dale & Barton of Carlisle, which has gone out on a period of loan.

Class 52 D1023 *Western Fusilier* at Didcot Railway Centre, where it arrived on January 28 for a five-year period on display. Along with D1013 *Western Ranger*, it hauled the 'Western Tribute' railtour on February 26, 1977 – the final farewell to the class organised by British Rail. The train ran from Paddington to Swansea, then Swansea to Plymouth, and finally Plymouth to Paddington. D1010 and D1048 followed the railtour to minimise delay in case one or both of the train locomotives failed. FRANK DUMBLETON

Above: What was Locomotion's first steam locomotive to arrive for display in 2004, LNER Q7 0-8-0 No. 901 is now back at Shildon after being exhibited at Head of Steam in Darlington. NRM

Below: Class 84 No. 84001 arrived back in York on January 24 after returning from the Museum of Scottish Railways at Bo'ness. It was transported to Holgate Sidings by road, from where it was towed by rail to the National Railway Museum. NRM

Electric boogaloo

A day later, Class 84 No. 84001 arrived back in York after its own spell on loan at the Museum of Scottish Railways at Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway.

It is both the first and sole survivor of a batch of just 10 of a class of prototype electric locomotives ordered in the early stages of the electrification of the West Coast Main Line, built by North British between 1960 and 1961, but they were beset by technical issues.

They were not deemed to be a success, and despite attempts at rectifying issues that included rough riding and flashovers, all were withdrawn between 1977 and 1980.

No. 84001 is now displayed in the Warehouse building, with the first production Class 43 HST No. 43002 *Sir Kenneth Grange* moved to the entrance to the Great Hall. No. 43002 was built in the year that the NRM opened in 1975 and was named after its designer in 2016, when it also returned to its original blue and yellow livery.

On January 25, Class 52 Western D1023 *Western Fusilier* was towed by rail to York Thrall works, from where it was collected and then transported by road to Didcot Parkway on January 28.

An NRM spokesman said: "The National Railway Museum in York has agreed a five-year static loan with Didcot Railway Centre for the loan of Western Fusilier. It will be on display in the area it once operated.

'Significant' locations

"The NRM is keen to ensure that any vehicles go out on loan go to places where they may be historically significant.

"With the Westerns being built for the Western Region, we hope that *Western Fusilier* will help to tell the story of the railways in that area."

Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Horwich Works 0-4-0ST shunter *Wren* is set to take up residence at the Bury Transport Museum. As reported last issue, the NRM was approached by a then unconfirmed third party with a view to taking the 1887-built locomotive on loan. The NRM also confirmed that further moves of exhibits were planned.

Moorsline launches major pre-season drive for fresh volunteers to sign up

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has launched a volunteer recruitment campaign, called Put Yourself In The Picture, to fill hundreds of varied roles ahead of its 2023 season opening in April.

The line, a registered charity, needs between 300 and 500 hours of volunteer support every day. It offers a broad range of volunteer opportunities – from working on the locomotive footplate to signalling and telecommunications, lineside conservation, customer service, retail, catering, fundraising and education.

The new role of head of volunteer development was created in 2020 with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The role was specifically designed with longevity in mind as part of the £10 million Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project, helping the NYMR to focus on new ways to engage potential volunteers and to create roles.

Marcus Aldrich, who took on the position, said: "It is not just about what you give to us – we want to give back to you and make sure you have a meaningful and rewarding time in our unique environment. If you are a young person and you are looking for work experience, it is perfect – relevant work experience can enhance CVs and support university applications.

"There are about 30 different roles involved with running our heritage railway – we are an education, preservation and conservation charity, and it's our people who bring it to life.

➜ For more details or to apply to become a volunteer, visit www.nymr.co.uk/volunteer

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Famous face launches new campagin to protect Liverpool Street heritage

By Robin Jones

ACTOR, comedian and TV presenter Griff Rhys Jones is fronting a national campaign against £1.5 billion plans to redevelop Grade II-listed Liverpool Street station.

The Victorian Society has united eight conservation groups to oppose the scheme by Sellar, which developed the Shard, Elizabeth Line operator MTR and Network Rail. It includes a 16-storey tower block being erected on top of the station and the five-story Grade II*-listed former Great Eastern Hotel, now the Andaz Hotel.

The society, which described the plans as "insensitive and harmful", is chairing the re-formed Liverpool Street Station Campaign, which stopped the total demolition of the 1874-built GER terminus in the 1970s when it was backed by Poet Laureate Sir John Betjeman, architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and comedian Spike Milligan.

The campaign committee also comprises Save Britain's Heritage, the Twentieth Century Society, Historic Buildings and Places, the Georgian Group, the Spitalfields Trust, Civic Voice and London Historians.

The proposed Liverpool Street development, as seen as Sun Street Passage. HERZOG DE MEURON

'Living story'

As campaign president, Griff Rhys Jones said: "All the major heritage sector bodies are appalled by what is proposed. They have joined together. They all want to try to preserve a superb London landmark. I have seldom seen such uniformity. We believe the people of London will be with us too, if they are properly informed.

"This great station and hotel are not only important listed buildings, they are also part of the living story of London, just as much as Westminster Abbey or St Paul's. They should be safe from part demolition and what is intended to be a huge 16-storey cantilevered tower, stuck directly above them, blacking out the daylight and virtually burying the original buildings. Let's hope that a massive public outcry will lead to Sellar dropping these plans."

A statement from the Spitalfields Trust, which has campaigned for the historic environment in East London since the 1970s, said: "Liverpool Street station is one of the great railway termini in the capital. This celebrated group of buildings are monuments to the engineering and architectural achievements of the 19th century.

"Liverpool Street is an excellent example of a Gothic train shed, filled with light. The proposals are overbearing and will cause huge damage to the character of this historic building, with no compelling justification."

A statement from SAVE Britain's Heritage said: "The emerging proposals show Liverpool Street station and its majestic neighbour, the former Great Eastern Hotel, stamped on by massively overscaled development.

"The colossal towers would block out daylight from the glass vaulted roofs across the station, and the tower shown on top of the Grade II*-listed hotel ignores its historic setting.

"So bulky is this scheme, key views of St Paul's Cathedral would be interrupted. The developers claim public benefits in return for this scale of development, yet we've seen no evidence that these could not be achieved through a more sensitive scheme."

The 16-storey block would include 10 floors of offices topped by a six-storey hotel. Under the plans, a publicly accessible roof garden and swimming pool would be heated by surplus heat from the offices, and there would be a tennis and squash court and a rooftop café, both open to visitors.

The developers insist that the Victorian train sheds will not be affected and will be restored separately by Network Rail.

A petition from the campaign group can be found at https://chng.it/bXbY2HmDRj

Saint meets *Scotsman* at Bury's ELR

NEW GWR Churchward Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* is to visit the East Lancashire Railway – and run alongside A3 No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* on selected dates.

The locomotive, which was completed at Didcot Railway Centre in 2019 at the culmination of a 45-year project, is to haul passenger trains on the ELR during March 11/12, 17-19, 25/26 and April 6-10 and 12-16.

***Flying Scotsman* will run on the line on March 11/12 and 17-19, during which it will also haul dining trains.**

In addition, the A3 will be on static display at Heywood during March 3-5 and on March 10, when guided tours of up to 10 people at a time will be offered at half-hourly intervals. Ticketholders may walk through the tender and look around the footplate.

Tickets for the services and tours are now on sale. For more details, visit www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk

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Vandals strike at Butterley

VANDALS smashed windows and a works van and damaged memorial benches at the Midland Railway – Butterly on January 23.

A dog walker alerted police when they heard the noise of the attack, but by then substantial damage had been done by the perpetrators.

Windows on the station building, signalbox, carriages and a works transit van were smashed and memorial benches ripped apart during the rampage that has left the railway appealing for donations to put the damage right.

Previous attacks have resulted in increased security including CCTV cameras being implemented, which has captured clear footage of the perpetrators. This has been passed on to Derbyshire Police to assist with investigations, but as this issue of *Heritage Railway* went to press, no arrests were reported to have been made.

A railway statement said: "Our dedicated volunteers give up their time and own expense to restore and maintain the railway to secure it for future generations, so it is heart-breaking that a few individuals feel that it is acceptable to do this.

"As a volunteer-led charity, the railway now must spend money and time putting this right rather than spending its funds and time on making improvements for our volunteers and visitors."

Glass panes on the Butterley ground frame signal cabin, as well as carriages and a works van, were smashed during the attack. The railway is appealing for donations to help put things right. MRB

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A trio of LMS 'Black Fives' will be among the star attractions on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway during the March 9-12 steam gala. Home-based No 45212 (pictured) will line up alongside visitors No. 44871 and 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*. There will also be two LMS Jubilee 4-6-0s in the form of visiting No. 45690 *Leander* and home-based No. 44596 *Bahamas*. Also in action from the home fleet will be Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 25 0-6-0 No. 52044 in BR black (which in green livery appeared as *The Green Dragon* in the 1970 movie version of The Railway Children), LNWR 0-6-2T Coal Tank No. 1054, Taff Vale Railway 02 0-6-2T No. 85, BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75078 and BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022.

The event will feature demonstration freights and double-headed passenger services, and tours of Haworth shed will be available. For more details, visit https://kwvr.co.uk/KWVR

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Yorkshire to Brechin: 'Chopper' moves to new home in Scotland

By Owen Hayward

BR Class 20 No. 20166 has been sold to a volunteer at the Brechin Railway Preservation Society, which operates the four-mile Caledonian Railway in Angus. The locomotive moved there from its previous base at the Wensleydale Railway on January 18.

Already operational, it is planned for the 'Chopper' to enter service at the railway's summer diesel day on July 8, where it will join resident Classes 26 (No. 26014), 27 (No. 27024), 11 (No. 12052), 08 (D3059) and former Dartmoor Railway-based Class 205 DEMU No. 1132.

The move of the Class 20 comes in the middle of a busy period of work on the CR which has seen the Brechin station canopy project enter its second phase.

The current design was built to replace the 1848 'cowshed' roof of the originally constructed through station when it was converted into a terminus in the 1890s. About 70% of this was then removed by BR when passenger services ceased in 1952, with glass and lead from what remained taken out in the late 1970s prior to the CR taking over operations. The remaining timbers were removed in the early 1990s due to safety concerns, leaving the just the bare columns.

The first phase of the project, which saw the canopy returned to the existing columns, was completed in 2021 by volunteers, but thanks to funding from the Place-Based Investment Programmed, a Scottish Government capital fund backed by Angus Council that supports community led projects, the CR has been able to order new canopy support columns to replace some of those removed in the 1950s.

The original columns were made from cast iron but the cost of replicating these was prohibitive; thanks though to modern manufacturing techniques, it has been possible to fabricate new ones while still maintaining their heritage look. These have been produced locally by Hydrus Group fabricators, while the roof sections are being manufactured by The Forfar Roof Truss Co. Ltd.

Over the new year period, local contractor G&H Watson excavated and uncovered the original column bases, complete with mounting studs, which were described as being in "incredible condition".

Once completed, the new section of canopy will result the covered area of platform more than double.

The first of the new columns were delivered to Brechin on January 30, with installation commencing just a few days following.

The Hydrus contractors are also assisting with the structural overhaul of Mk.1 BG No. 80735, which, once returned to the CR, will be fitted out and converted for static use as a bar.

The railway has also been fortunate in securing three of the four semaphore signalposts and signals from Barnhill in Perth, which were removed as part of realignment works being carried out by Network Rail.

Meanwhile, permanent way volunteers have commenced with track renewal at Bridge of Dun station, with the road through platform one lifted.

First laid by CR volunteers in the 1980s, the existing materials had become life-expired and will now be renewed.

The frames for Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2153 of 1954 were returned from Bill Parker's Flour Mill workshops at Bream in the Forest of Dean back in October last year, where they had new crown brasses machined and the wheels refitted.

CR volunteers have commenced cleaning the frames, ready to run pipework and reassemble the running gear. In the meantime, the boiler has also gone away to the Flour Mill for inspection and overhaul.

The railway has been fortunate in securing the Strathbungo footbridge from Network Rail, which removed the structure and four columns in Glasgow's Southside during early January as part of the Barrhead to Glasgow route electrification works.

The Grade C-listed structure was constructed in 1877 and will be replaced as part of the scheme of works.

It was made available through Network Rail's asset disposal scheme in December, and while it was not possible to find a local site at which to re-erect it, the line was originally operated by the Caledonian Railway; it will be used to improve access at the heritage line's Brechin station while also contributing to the heritage look and feel there.

Left: Built in 1966 and delivered new to Nottingham Division, BR Class 20 No. 20166 (D8166) has been bought by a volunteer on the Caledonian Railway at Brechin, where it sits in the station yard after unloading on January 18. JON GILL/BRPS

The Brechin station canopy, prior to the fitting of the final clear panels. It was reinstalled thanks to support from several grant funds. JON GILL/BRPS

When the station platform was excavated in readiness for phase two of the canopy project, original column bases and drainage was discovered and found to be in surprisingly good condition. JON GILL/BRPS

New columns for the second phase of the canopy reconstruction project following delivery to Brechin on January 30. JON GILL/BRPS

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Spa Valley Railway offers real ale and a mystery to solve – and half-term rides for children at just £1

By Geoff Courtney

Under suspicion: Members of the cast of an on-train murder mystery production prepare themselves for an evening of intrigue on the Spa Valley Railway. JONNIE PAY

MYSTERY, real ale trains, and £1 rides for children are among the eclectic mix on offer at the Spa Valley Railway as winter makes way for spring.

For those who enjoy mystery, the investigative skills of Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot will be useful assets on some of the railway's evening trains between February and September, for dirty deeds will be afoot that have got the police baffled. Passengers' brains will be working overtime as a murder interrupts the usually peaceful and relaxing five-mile journey from Tunbridge Wells West station to Eridge.

It's all for fun and entertainment of course, but brows will be furrowed and theories expounded while the onboard events are discussed over supper and a beer or glass of wine, before all is revealed in the railway's Victorian-era engine shed.

The show, an ever-popular annual event in the Spa Valley calendar, is put on by Brighton-based 368 Theatre Company, and features a murder during the 1940s in Morlington Hill, a sleepy Cornish village that is the unlikely scene of such a dreadful crime. The local constabulary has drawn a blank, and passengers are challenged to come up with the answer and point the finger at the culprit.

"Every performance and storyline is different, so no one who has seen the show in previous years is at an advantage over first-time passengers," said Jonnie Pay, the railway's commercial manager. "It is always a thoroughly enjoyable evening that invariably baffles most people. It can get quite competitive, which adds to the occasion."

Mystery trains, either steam or heritage diesel-hauled, will run on February 18, March 18, April 29, May 20, June 24, July 8 and 29, August 19 and September 16. Passengers meet at Tunbridge Wells West at 6.15pm for a briefing, followed by a 7pm departure to Eridge, where more of the story unfolds on the platform.

The train then returns to Tunbridge Wells West prior to a second return journey to Eridge and final arrival back at Tunbridge Wells, where all will be revealed in the railway's 1891-built four-road engine depot (75F), the last remaining former LBSCR shed still in railway use.

Alcohol – and soft drinks for those determined to keep their little grey cells in perfect working order – will be available from bar coach *Kate* during the journeys. Tickets cost £55 per adult, including supper and both return trips.

Another series of special trains will be launched in March, featuring real ale and cider sourced from local breweries and cideries. They will run on March 25, June 17, and August 4/5, departing from Tunbridge Wells West at 7pm for two return trips to Eridge. Tickets cost £15, including a free pint.

Steam enthusiasts: Two youngsters greet Austerity 0-6-0 No. 2890 at the Spa Valley Railway's Groombridge station and receive a smile and wave from one of the footplate crew in return. Children aged 15 and under who are accompanied by a fare-paying adult will be able to travel on the heritage line for just £1 on February 18/19. CAROLINE EDMUNDS

Bargain offer

In addition to mystery and real ale for adults, youngsters below the age of 16 who are accompanied by a fare-paying adult are being offered steam train rides for £1 during the current half-term.

The deal, which was launched on February 11 and included the February 18/19 weekend, will permit children a return trip if the accompanying adult has bought a one return trip ticket, or all day travel if the adult has bought an all-day ticket.

Austerity No. 2890 *Douglas* – which was built for the War Department by Hunslet in 1943 as a 0-6-0ST and was converted into an 0-6-0 tender locomotive in the late 1990s – is on loan from the East Lancashire Railway and will share duties with a heritage diesel.

Jonnie said: "We live in an era of computers and sophisticated gadgets that even the youngest children can understand and embrace, yet heritage railways, and steam locomotives in particular, have enormous appeal to everyone of all ages.

"Children are fascinated by them, even though – or perhaps because – they are based on Victorian technology. It is a delight to see their excitement when an engine such as *Douglas*, which has become extremely popular during its time with us, steams into view.

"The February half-term can sometimes be a trying time for parents due to the unpredictable weather, and we thought that youngsters below the age of 16 being able to travel with an adult on a steam train for just £1 would be a winner for everyone concerned.

"Who knows, some of the children travelling with us today may enjoy the experience so much that they become the volunteers of tomorrow."

No. 2890 will leave Tunbridge Wells West for Eridge at 10.15am, 12.55pm and 3.35pm, while the 11.30am and 2.10pm departures will be diesel-hauled. Fares for adults are £10 for one return trip and £15 for all-day travel, with concessions.

Corwen gains its roof – as new terminus canopy craned into place

By Owen Hayward

ALTHOUGH the originally-planned March opening has been postponed, progress at the Llangollen Railway's Corwen extension has taken a significant and instantly noticeable step forward with the station canopy roof frames lifted into place.

On January 23, safety fencing was erected around an area of the adjacent car park in readiness for the arrival of a 167ft crane and the first of the canopy roof frames the following day.

Each frame would be assembled from 11 component parts by contractors before installation then commenced, with the 26 frames – weighing just under one ton each – being carefully lowered into place over the following days in varying weather conditions. The final sections were placed on January 31, after which the fitting of cladding was set to commence.

LR chairman Phil Coles said: "This is another important step in the extension of the line to Corwen, which has now been ongoing for eight years.

"The canopy has been paid for by the UK Government's Levelling Up fund, administered by Denbighshire County Council, while the Welsh Government paid for the new station platform. The rest of the money has come from donations to the Llangollen Railway Trust over a number of years.

"We have so far pent just over £1 million, and the total cost of extending the line here from Corwen East is expected to be £1.25 million.

"What has been done so far is a marvellous achievement and lots of the work has been handled by our volunteers who have an average age of 67, with some of them aged in their late 70s."

With the scaffolding up, the opportunity will also be taken to install electrical conduit and lighting.

A revised opening date is due to be agreed at a meeting in the coming weeks; it is envisaged that it will be during the second quarter of the year, depending on what outstanding work is required to facilitate this.

Rolling road

In the meantime, the extended hire of Great Central Railway's 0-6-0ST Austerity No. 68067 will see the early preservation days of the LR echoed when it is paired with two suburban coaches on half-term trains to Berwyn.

Ongoing trackwork is taking place on the line west of the station that includes brand new rail, purchased from British Steel in Scunthorpe, being installed at Pearson's Farm crossing near Glyndyfrdwy.

The 80072 Standard 4 Group has launched an appeal for £3000 to fund the purchase of an ashpan for the 2-6-4T as the existing one has now reached the end of serviceable life. About £500 had already been raised as this issue of *Heritage Railway* went to press, and the group was hoping to find 100 donors contributing £25 each in order to raise the remaining amount. To donate, contact Paul Bailey on 01490450271 or email paulbaileywincham@yahoo.co.uk

Elsewhere in the works, painting of WR 57XX 0-6-0PT No. 7754 in a livery being kept a closely-guarded secret was due to commence imminently, with the aim of the locomotive being available for the opening of the Corwen extension.

On the passenger stock front, the LR Suburban group has been undertaking a conversion of the guard's section of brake second No. 43182 to make it wheelchair-friendly. Windows have been fitted to the luggage compartment end walls, with a partition between this and the guard's compartment which will create a comfortable and accessible seating area.

The new Corwen station canopy trusses were craned into place over the course of a week, with work completed on January 31. Installation of electrical and lighting conduit commenced immediately, and cladding out was due to follow shortly after. RICHARD WALLIKER

With a large portion of the adjacent car park cordoned off, the roof trusses were lifted into place by a road crane over the course of a week, steady progress being made on January 26. TERRY PICKTHALL/LR

The 80078 Standard 4 Group is raising funds for the replacement the 2-6-4T's life-expired ashpan. PAUL BAILEY

BR Mk.1 Suburban brake second No. 43182 has seen the guard and luggage compartment modified to offer better accommodation for wheelchair users. The interior was still to be completed, but the new end windows now allow plenty of natural light into a new accessible section. BOTH: LR SUBURBAN GROUP

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Historic crane comes to Donegal from Castledawson

By Hugh Dougherty

DONEGAL Railway Heritage Centre's latest exhibit comes thanks to the generosity of a farming couple from Manorcunningham, in County Donegal, who responded to the centre's appeal for a genuine railway goods yard crane.

"We'd been looking for just such a crane for some time," explained centre manager Niall McCaughan. "When we officially launched steam locomotive *Drumboe*'s return to Donegal in August last year, Michael and Kate Chance attended and offered us the crane.

"It's thought to date from the opening of Castledawson station and so could be 167 years old.

"Remarkably, the crane was still used by Michael and Kate until recently to lift fertiliser bags on their farm and is in working order.

"We are delighted to accept it and thank them for their generosity as well as their recognition of the artefact as having inherent railway heritage value."

The station was opened in 1856 by the broad gauge Belfast & Ballymena Railway on its line linking Toome Bridge with Cookstown.

The hand-cranked heavily-geared crane is of a type once common in goods yards in Ireland and Britain on both standard, broad and narrow gauge lines.

It was in use until the line, which closed to passengers in 1950, saw its last goods train in 1959, and was sold off along with the station by the Ulster Transport Authority.

"It next surfaced in the 1980s, when Michael Chance bought it from Bertie McNiece's engineering workshop in Castledawson," said Niall. "Bertie told Michael that he could remember, as a wee boy, watching German prisoners of war operating the crane at the station after the end of the Second World War, so it does have quite a history. We are delighted to have it and it fills a gap in our collection.

"Even though the crane came, originally, from a broad gauge station, Castledawson became Midland

Michael and Kate Chance inspect the Castledawson crane, along with manager Niall McCaughan, at Donegal Railway Heritage Centre on February 23. DRHC

Railway Northern Counties Committee and, later, an LMS NCC station, as both companies were joint owners of the County Donegal Railways, there is a connection. The two companies often provided equipment to the CDR for use on its narrow gauge line, while the fact that the crane was based for many years in Manorcuningham, itself on the Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway, doubles up its Donegal heritage and connections!"

Scottish 'Tractor' ventures south for second year

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society's Class 37 No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* will be venturing back into England for the second year in a row to assist Vintage Trains in operating its main line diesel 'Explorer' tours for the first few months of the year.

The Tyseley-based railtour company acquired sister No. 37240 from Boden Rail Engineering last November, when it became its second main line-registered diesel after Class 47 No 47773. Once based at the Llangollen Railway under Harry Needle Railroad Company ownership, it was sold to BRE in 2018 and was recertified for main line use in 2020, although it has not hauled any passenger workings on the main line since 1996.

Although a series of excursions were planned for No. 37240 between March and July, an examination of the locomotive has revealed that it requires replacement wheel bearings before it can enter service. VT confirmed that these were on order and that the 'Tractor' was otherwise fir for service and would take up duties "as soon as possible."

To cover, No. 37403 will be brought from Bo'ness across the border again, having spent last summer on loan to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Its first working will be on the March 11 'South Wales Explorer' departing from Dorridge at 7.30am to pick up at Widney Manor, Birmingham Moor Street and Snow Hill, Kidderminster, Worcester and finally Cheltenham as it follows the River Severn across the border at Lydney as it heads for Cardiff. No. 37403's next turn of duty will be to head the June 3 'Cumbrian Coast Explorer' from Birmingham to Ravenglass and Carlisle, after which it is expected to haul the July 19 'East Anglian Explorer' to Norwich and Great Yarmouth.

The final working currently advertised with Vintage Trains is the 'Jolly Fisherman' to Skegness on July 29.

For booking and further information, visit vintagetrains.co.uk

New-build single Fairlie is wheeled

THE project to build a replica of a unique Hunslet single Fairlie locomotive took a major step forward on January 24 when the frames of 0-6-4T No. 979 *Gowrie* were placed onto their wheels for the first time.

Having been shot blasted and primed by external contractor, the fully riveted carrier frames were delivered the Gowrie Locomotive Trust's Derbyshire workshops along with the wheelsets for the power bogie, which had been machined at Statfold Engineering. Seeing an opportunity that was too good to miss, the carrier frames and assembled bogie, complete with wheelsets, were assembled to give an indication of the project's progress to date, as well as an indication of the size of the final locomotive.

The unique 0-6-4T is based on that of the 1908-built Hunslet Engine Co. locomotive of the same name, which was last recorded in existence in 1931 and believed to have been scrapped shortly afterwards. It was the last locomotive built for Welsh Highland Railway predecessor the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways and although shared a wheel arrangement with two Vulcan Foundry-built single Fairlies, it differed considerably in its outward appearance.

The new-build project, which has been welcomed by the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, will be fitted with both vacuum and air braking to facilitate operation on both lines and enable it to visit other railways once complete.

Anyone interested in joining or donating to the project can find out more information by visiting gowrielocomotivetrust.com, emailing gowrielocomotivetrust@gmail.com, or writing to: Marion Allen, 6 Shipley Rise, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 1BN.

The wheeled frames of new-build NWNGR Hunslet single Fairlie No. 979 *Gowrie* at the Gowrie Locomotive Trust's workshops on January 24. JOEY EVANS

March preservation debut for Dartmouth's large prairie

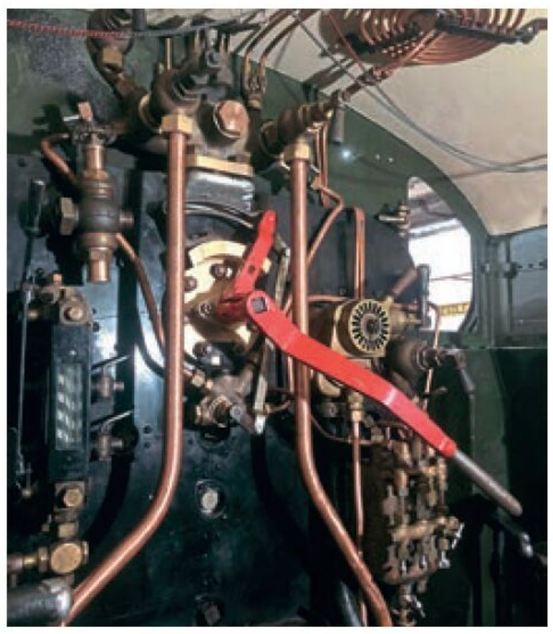
By Owen Hayward

THE 100th locomotive to leave Barry scrapyard in 1979, the Dartmouth Steam Railway's GWR 5101 class 2-6-2T No. 4110, is set to make its first public appearance in the heritage era at the East Somerset Railway's March 18/19 steam gala.

Its appearance will follow its restoration from derelict condition at the line's Cranmore workshops, where it has been since January 2020.

Built at Swindon in 1936, No. 4110 was shedded at Taunton from July 1962 to May 1963, during which time it was deployed on the Minehead branch. Just over half a century later, appropriately it returned there when the West Somerset Railway bought it in May 2015 from the Great Western Preservation Group at Southall which had first bought it in May 1979, almost 14 years after it was withdrawn in June 1965.

No. 4110 was sold in 2019 to the DSR and initially moved there ahead of the restoration deal with the East Somerset Railway that will see it spend three years running at Cranmore. As part of the conditions of sale, it is also expected to make an appearance back at the WSR at some point.



The interior of No. 4110's cab has had many new fittings and all-new pipework fitted, set for its heritage era debut in March. STEVE MASTERS/ESR

With lining out and other minor work still to be completed, GWR 2-6-2T No. 4110 sits outside the engine shed at Cranmore on January 15. LEE THORP/ESR

Final push

Following the return of the boiler to the frames last September, the final push to complete the large prairie has included making the all-new copper pipework that could not otherwise have been completed before this step. Three years after its arrival, the almost completed locomotive was drawn outside the works to sit over the inspection pit, where it was to be weighed and have springs adjusted in preparation for commencement of steam testing, which is due to take place over the coming weeks.

No. 4110 will spend three years on the ESR before returning to the DSR to take up residence there.

Taking its place in the workshops is another future DSR locomotive, GWR 42XX 2-8-0T No. 4247, which was has had a lease deal signed with the owner, the 4247 Preservation Society, which will see it run on the Kingswear line for two 10-year periods once outshopped from Cranmore Works. Work to strip the locomotive, which previously ran on the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, has commenced, with the cab roof and tanks already removed and the boiler due to follow soon, ahead of the frames being lifted off the wheelsets.

Once this has been completed, a full assessment to gauge the work required can be undertaken to accurately determine the full scope of the overhaul. It is already known that the tyres are thin and replacements have already been purchased, ready for fitting at South Devon Railway Engineering. It is envisioned that the work will take approximately two years to complete; once running-in has been completed on the ESR, No. 4247 will then move to the DSR.

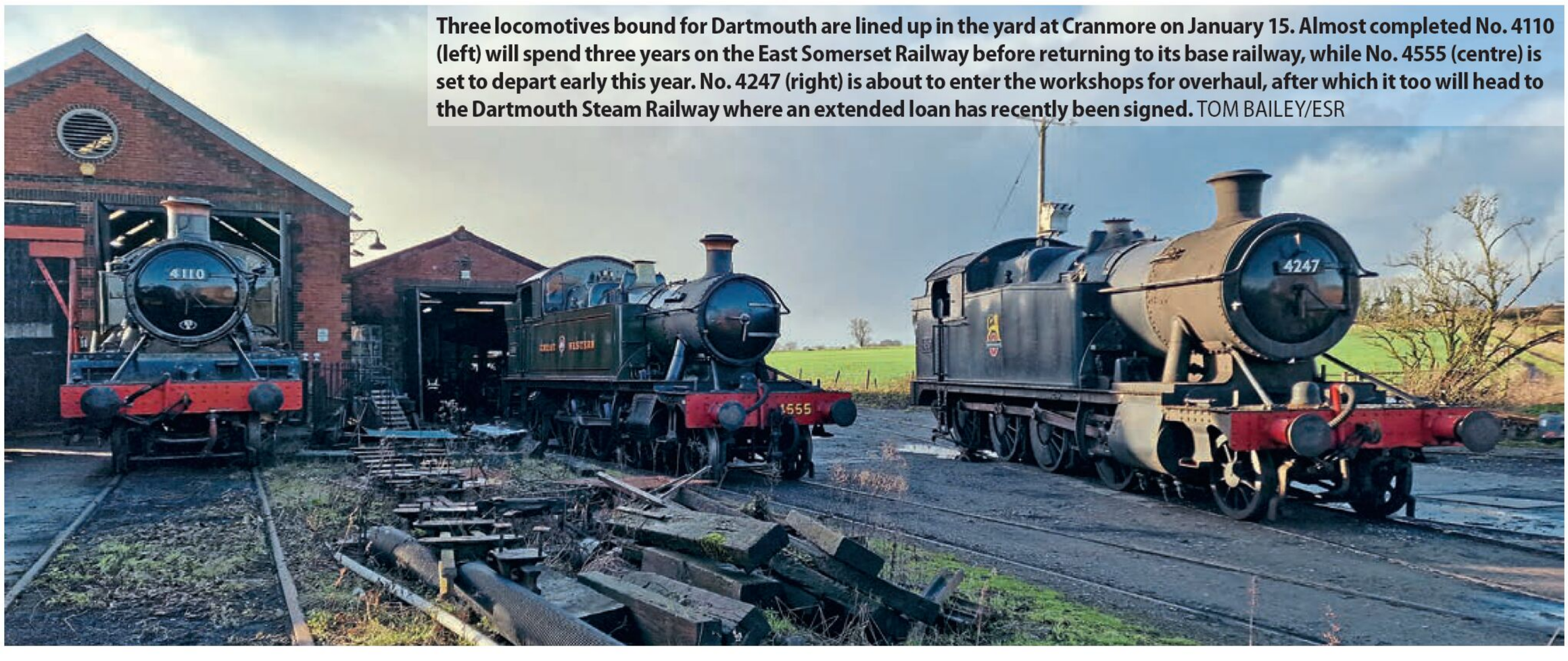
Home again

Meanwhile, a third DSR tank is also set to return home. GWR 45XX 2-6-2T No. 4555 was undergoing winter maintenance in the workshops and was due to depart the ESR once running-in of No. 4110 had been completed and the locomotive released for traffic. It will return to the ESR again in 2024 to provide cover when Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447, which is on a 10-year loan from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, is withdrawn for overhaul.

The March gala will see up to four locomotives in operation on passenger and freight workings, with No. 4110 running alongside Nos. 4555 and 46447 and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1719 *Lady Nan* hoped to return to steam after a year out of action. A hole was found in the main steam pipe, with the two smokebox steam pipes also found to be in poor condition. Attempts at cast iron weld repairs by contractors proved unsuccessful and so new ones have been made; as this issue went to press, the boiler was ready for presenting to the insurance inspector.

Elsewhere on the ESR, volunteers have replaced one of the points at its Mendip Vale terminus station. Heavily worn, it was also too tight a radius for No. 4110.

The replacement has been made up with all-new timbers, some new rail and existing stock chairs, with switches and crossing donated by the DSR.



Three locomotives bound for Dartmouth are lined up in the yard at Cranmore on January 15. Almost completed No. 4110 (left) will spend three years on the East Somerset Railway before returning to its base railway, while No. 4555 (centre) is set to depart early this year. No. 4247 (right) is about to enter the workshops for overhaul, after which it too will head to the Dartmouth Steam Railway where an extended loan has recently been signed. TOM BAILEY/ESR

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Shortly after arriving on the Bluebell Railway on January 19, Oxted class 207 DEMU No. 1305 sits in the Sheffield Park locomotive yard as it undergoes checks prior to a first start-up. JAMES CUMMINS/BR

DEMU traction is back at Horsted Keynes – and this time it's for keeps

MAKING history as the first resident DEMU on a railway that was once famously steam only, Class 207 'Thumper' No. 1305 arrived on the Bluebell Railway on January 19 and a week later had made the journey to Horsted Keynes station under its own power.

Since it fell to the Beeching Axe on October 28, 1963, Horsted Keynes station has seen an almost exclusive steam presence on heritage service trains stopping there.

While in more recent years the railway has acquired a sentinel shunter for use in the Horsted Keynes carriage and wagon works, along with Class 09 and 33 locomotives for other work, no Southern Region multiple unit has stopped at the once busy junction station (with exception of a railtour operated by Hastings Class 201 DEMU No. 1001 in 2016).

The Class 207 was introduced in 1962 for use on the Oxted line – a branch of the London to Brighton route diverging at South Croydon – and concentrated on services between London Victoria and Uckfield and Eridge to Tonbridge via Tunbridge Wells. Services from East Grinstead to Horsted Keynes and Haywards Heath via the Ardingly line were operated by SR 2BIL units.

No. 1305 was built in 1962 at Eastleigh Works and was not withdrawn until 2002, with a conversion to conductor/guard operation that saw fluorescent lighting and a PA system installed, along with the fitting of corridor connections occurring in 1991; on June 3, 1995, it was named *Brighton Royal Pavilion* at Brighton.

First preserved at the East Lancashire Railway, it was acquired by the Coulsdon Old Vehicle and Engineering Society in 2021, which offered it to the Bluebell last year when it was given notice to quit its MoD-owned base in Bicester.

The two-car unit, formed of driving trailers Standard Open No. 60904 and Motor Brake No. 60130, arrived at Sheffield Park on the morning of January 19, utilising the lorries that would then transport BR Standard 5MT No. 73082 *Camelot* to the Great Central Railway for the Winter Steam Gala there (see feature, pages 74-78). Once on the rails, the unit was checked over and coupled up, with a start-up taking place in the afternoon but revealing a few faults, such as governor solenoids not operating.

First moves

With brake rigging reassembled, another start-up was performed on January 23 and the unit moved around the confines of Sheffield Park under its own power for the first time. It was parked over a pit to allow for checks beneath to be carried out. A few further faults were discovered but all lighting was working by the end of the day.

The unique Brighton Royal Pavilion nameplate design that will be copied for the new replacements for No. 1305.

After a few more days' work, the most exciting occurrence was the unit's first run up the line to Horsted Keynes station, with diesel traction engineering co-ordinator Ben Wetherall at the controls, assisted by secondman Laurie Anderson and guard Neil Glaskin.

"It has been a mission getting it in," Ben said. "Getting it started wasn't too much of a problem as we knew it did run, so the fault-finding was easy enough, but the real journey starts now.

"The tyres have been measured and found to be good, and we had to fix at least one of the horns at the north end as a means of audible warning for the journey to Horsted Keynes.

"Having passed the fitness to run exam, we travelled at a maximum of 10mph as the axles have not yet been ultrasonically checked for damage. We stopped about halfway at Rock Cutting to check the unit over and all was well.

"Having successfully got to Horsted Keynes, we went into the Down yard and coupled to a Mk.3 sleeper coach, which we then took over to the Up yard and stabled both it and No. 1305."

The DEMU will return to the Sheffield Park yard at some point to enable the underframes to be steam-cleaned and for the ultrasonic testing should that require pit access, but in the meantime will be covered over with tarpaulins while it waits for the required bodywork repairs to be carried out.

It was also announced that thanks to the cost being sponsored by travel agency Avocet Travel Management, which is owned by one of the 1305 Oxted Thumper Gang members, two new *Brighton Royal Pavilion* nameplates have been ordered. The originals were sold by Porterbrook when the unit was withdrawn, however, a group member was able to get hold of one of these to enable it to be copied.

A dedicated fundraising page has been set up for donations towards is restoration. Visit bluebell-railway.com/trust/make-a-donation/ and select the Oxted DEMU 1305 option from the projects list.

Last push for funds before new Corris Falcon enters traffic this year

THE Corris Railway's new Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 is now set to enter public service this year.

A meeting between representatives of the railway and Alan Keef Ltd at Lea, near Ross-on-Wye , which is completing the locomotive, was held on January 23 to discuss progress.

Following the first steaming last September, as reported in issue 299, much more fitting out has continued, including work on mechanisms for the braking system, injectors, and drain cocks.

Corris volunteers with appropriate skills and workshop facilities have produced the handrails for the saddle tank top and refurbished a brake valve, the latter reducing the cost of that particular component by 90%.

Adapted design

Currently under construction is the coal bunker, which will be inside the cab. The design of this is adapted from that carried by the original trio of Falcons on the Corris and loaded via a hinged section of the upper left cabside sheeting. A weakness of the originals was that coal dust could accumulate at the bottom of the bunker and cause rusting, but this will be obviated by a removable section for access and cleaning.

Although components are being added to the locomotive, a remaining major stage will see it being stripped down to allow painting and then being reassembled. Together with the move by road from Keef's to Maespoeth Junction, it will cost a five-figure sum, and fundraising continues.

➜ To donate to the project, visit www.corris.co.uk or send a cheque, made payable to Corris Railway, to: Peter Guest, 38 Underwood Close, Callow Hill, Redditch B97 5YS.

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GREAT RATES – SEE PAGE 30

Gwili hires a pannier – and buys a RRV!

THE Gwili railway has announced that it is hiring WR 64XX 0-6-0PT No. 6430 from the South Devon Railway for the 2023 operating season. The 1937 Swindon-built locomotive previously visited in 2003 and spent most of its working life in South Wales.

The railway has also acquired a road rail vehicle from Quattro Group, which chairman Mathew Bowen said will "be invaluable for work at Abegwili Junction and along the line."

Bon Accord society gets Simplex successor

THE Bon Accord Locomotive Society has taken ownership of 1957-built 4w Simplex No. 5763 *Aberdeen Gas Works No. 1* from the Strathspey Railway, from where it moved to the Royal Deeside Railway on January 19. Delivered new to Greenock Gas Works, it moved to Aberdeen in 1964, which led to the withdrawal of 0-4-0ST Andrew Barclay No. 807 *Bon Accord*.

It is believed that the two locomotives never operated together, and it is the society's long-term intention to restore the Simplex, which is currently non-operational.

Kitson on loan at Peak Rail

FOLLOWING a period of winter maintenance at its Llangollen Railway home, Kitson 0-6-0ST No. 5459 *Austin No. 1* will go on hire to Peak Rail for the 2023 season.

Built in 1932, the tank engine had previously spent two years on loan to the Somerset & Dorset Railway at Midsomer Norton.

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The 1924-built *Kingswear Castle* paddle steamer will return to the waters of the River Dart this summer after an extensive first phase of a rebuild project. PSKCT

Appeals to keep railway paddle steamers afloat

By Owen Hayward and Robin Jones

THE Dartmouth Steam Railway and River Boat Company has signed an extended contract that will see it operate last remaining coal-fired paddle steamer in the UK on the River Dart for a further 25 years following an extensive rebuild.

Built in 1924 and withdrawn in 1965, PS *Kingswear Castle* was returned to service on the rivers Medway and Thames from The Historic Dockyard at Chatham in 1985.

For more than 35 years, *Kingswear Castle* has ferried delighted passengers on its decks and returned to the River Dart in 2013, when a long-term charter was signed by Paddle Steamer Kingswear Castle Trust Limited with the DSRRBC.

In 2021 it was decided that it was time for a much-needed rebuild to secure the future of the vessel, with work commencing that winter and lasting throughout 2022.

The rebuild has included much structural repair and replating of the hull steelwork from the boiler room to the stern and renewal of the bulkheads, keelson, stringers and frames, as well as new decking, the cost of which was expected to be about £500,000. This sum will complete the first phase of the rebuild, with the steelwork forward of the engine room of both sides and the deck to the bow set for attention during the winter of 2023/24. This phase is estimated to cost about £200,000 and donations are sought to complete the necessary work.

Donations can be made online by visiting kingswearcastle.org or by sending cheques to: Paddle Steamer Kingswear Castle Trust, Fundraising, PO Box 9565, Weymouth DT4 4HT.

Elsewhere, an urgent public appeal has been launched to raise funds to enable paddle steamer *Waverley* to afford recommissioning costs and dry dock fees for it to sail this year.

Built in Glasgow for the LNER and launched on October 2, 1946, *Waverley* entered service on June 16, 1947. The last seagoing paddle steamer and was gifted to the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society in 1974 for £1.

Since 1975, it has operated in preservation, carrying more than six million passengers.

In 2022, *Waverley* operated in several areas around the UK coast following the easing of pandemic restrictions, but average daily operating costs soared above £16,000, with fuel accounting for about 50% – a total of more than £300,000, resulting in a lack of funds to survive the winter maintenance period.

Waverley's general manager, Paul Semple, said: "This is a cost which the owning charity hasn't been able to withstand. We urgently need to raise funds or we simply can't afford the start-up costs for this coming summer season.

"*Waverley* must be taken out of the water and dry docked annually before her sailing season begins. She is now booked to dry dock in late March and then re-enter service in May. Due to increased operating costs last season, we don't have enough money to afford this year's dry dock and other costs we incur in the weeks before *Waverley* starts sailing."

The Dry Dock 2023 Appeal has a target of £180,000, with more than £35,000 already raised. Those who donate by March 1 will be entered into a draw for the unique opportunity to visit *Waverley* and see her out of the water in dry dock.

The ship is operated on a not-for-profit basis and owned by Waverley Steam Navigation Co. Ltd, a registered charity. Donations to the Dry Dock 2023 Appeal can be made online at waverleyexcursions.co.uk or by calling 0141 243 2224. Those donating online can opt to be included on a virtual donor wall.

Right: The extended contract for the operation of the paddle steamer *Kingswear Castle* on the River Dart at Dartmouth for a further 25 years is signed. Left to right are John Megoran (Paddle Steamer Kingswear Castle Trust Limited), Paul Merrington, engineering director, and John Jones, managing director (both of Dartmouth Steam Railway and River Boat Company).

Paddle steamer Waverley, which was built for the LNER. JOHN K THORNE

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Swanage signalling pioneer retires after three decades

A volunteer who established the Swanage Railway's first signalling school – and helped ensure the safe operation of its trains as a signaller and signalbox inspector – has retired after 31 years of dedicated service.

Alan Greatbatch, aged 68, from Branksome in Poole, set up the school in 1991 to train the first signallers ahead of the Purbeck Line's first signalbox being built.

In 1991, the railway ran passenger trains on just three miles of line from Swanage to Harman's Cross and the first 'box would not be brought into operation until 1997. There are now four on the line.

Growing up in Poole, Alan's 44-year working career was spent on the main line as a signaller between Brockenhurst and Dorchester, and as a signalling manager and a mobile operations manager after he joined BR at Bournemouth station in 1971.

That was when BR ran freight trains to Wimborne and West Moors via Poole and Broadstone, and when there was still a branch line from Maiden Newton to Bridport. Alan retired from Network Rail as a mobile operations manager at Bournemouth in 2015.

As a volunteer signalling inspector on the heritage line for 20 years, Alan visited its 'boxes every week to see the signallers and sign the train register which records all train movements, the official record of a signalbox.

Alan said: "I am very proud of what we have achieved on the Swanage Railway over the years in rebuilding the line against the odds. I am one small cog in a massive machine and without all the other people, it would not have happened.

Keeping passengers safe

"I volunteer on the Swanage Railway because I enjoy it and I believe in it, and because of those original determined campaigners who battled against the odds to be allowed to rebuild the line and then worked so hard to slowly do so.

"The most enjoyable part of my job has been seeing people achieve their dream of becoming a signaller, which involves training and sitting an exam every two years. Being a signaller is enjoyable because you are keeping our train passengers safe.

"If someone had told me in 1967, when our beloved steam engines stopped hauling trains in southern England for BR, that in 2022 I would be in a mechanical signalbox pulling semaphore signals for steam engines, I would not have believed it – but that's exactly what we do on the Swanage Railway, which is fabulous.

Alan Greatbatch on duty in Corfe Castle station signalbox. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

"The past 31 years have flown by – I don't know where the years have gone. It has been a challenge but also fun and I have worked with many good people."

Swanage Railway Company chairman Robert Patterson said: "I would like to say a very big thank-you to Alan for his important contribution to the development and safe operation of the Swanage Railway across more than 30 years. Alan is a credit to the Swanage Railway because he epitomises its spirit of dedication, enthusiasm, professionalism and enjoyment."

'Role model'

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Gavin Johns explained: "Over the years, Alan has helped to train, mentor and examine more than a 100 signallers, and he has been an excellent role model and example to our team of volunteer signallers in their training and continuing development as they signal trains safely and efficiently."

At a special gathering to mark his retirement, attended by Swanage Railway volunteer signaller colleagues past and present, Alan was presented with a framed photograph showing him at work in Corfe Castle signalbox.

➜ The Swanage Railway welcomes new volunteers. Anyone interested in finding out more should contact the volunteer recruitment and retention office on 01929 408466 or email iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk

The retirement presentation for Swanage Railway signaller Alan Greatbatch. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Bogie exchange kickstarts Class 416 EMU's eventual main line comeback

THE EPB Preservation Group has begun steps to return its Class 416 EMU No. 5759 to operation on the main line. The unit, which is usually based at Southall and was one of the main attractions at the Mid-Hants Railway's diesel gala in July last year, has been moved by rail to Nemesis Rail at Burton upon Trent.

Three overhauled bogies have been sourced from 2EPB trailer No. 930204 that is already there. No. 930204 was latterly used as a de-icer unit formerly based at Selhurst and was given a bogie overhaul not long before its withdrawal.

The bogies will be swapped with those under No. 5759, while the fourth bogie, the leading trailer on carriage No. 77558, will be overhauled.

Estimated to cost just under £6000, this work will ensure that the unit can continue to be hauled over the national rail network to attend open days and gala events. It paves the way for its eventual return to service on the main line and will be the first of several industry requirements that will need to be met for it to do so.

Built in 1956, No. 5759 is the only non-corridor suburban EMU still in passenger use.

A fundraising appeal has been launched to fund the required work at gofundme.com/f/5759-bogie-swap

Class 416 EMU No. 5759 at Alresford during the Mid-Hants Railway's diesel gala last July. RP BAINES/EPBPG

Cravens Heritage Trains sells its last silver tube unit to LU

By Owen Hayward

ESTABLISHED in 1995 with the intention of purchasing a Cravens Limited three-car unit from London Underground, Cravens Heritage Trains went on to buy a retiring four-car 62TS unit that became the only surviving silver tube stock in existence.

On January 21, CHT announced that it had sold the unit, typical of former Central Line operations, to London Underground as a source of spares for keeping the Underground's Rail Adhesion Trains in service.

Since acquisition, the unit had been stored at the Central Line depot at Hainault, and work was started with a view to return it to operational condition. However, limitations on access to the depot grounds, as well as several instances of vandalism over the years, has prevented the growing amount of required work from taking place.

Director Bob Yeldham said: "As directors of the company, it is our responsibility to ensure that the company remains solvent and free from any possible liability. Therefore, the 62TS has been sold to LU as a spares source to keep the RATs going.

"The decision to dispose of this was not taken lightly, but as there was absolutely no prospect of it ever being returned to an operational condition, the decision was made to offer it back to LU. The 62TS has been out of our reach as volunteers for many years, due mainly to the ever-changing rules LU has introduced regarding depot access; this applies not only to us, but also to all who access the depot."

The 62TS units were made to an almost identical design of the 1959 predecessor, built by Metro Cammell and incorporating some minor modifications to brake control valves and voltage regulation and rectification systems. They lasted until February 1995 when most were withdrawn, although a few lasted longer following brief use on the Northern Line prior to the introduction of new stock there.

The four-car unit, comprising driving motor trailer Nos. 1506 and 1507 and centre car Nos. 2506 and 9507, was stored at Hainault depot after withdrawal in 1994. Prior to being dismantled, a number of components including bench seats and Duplex gauges have been recovered by CHT for resale to fund its other projects.

"As part of the agreement to sell the unit to LU, we have recovered many items that were being stored on the unit which can now be bought via the Epping Signal Cabin's website," Bob added.

Signal cabin

Epping signal cabin was closed on July 28, 1996, and lay in a state of decay until CHT took a lease of the site in 2001, installing the 83-lever frame from Hainault cabin as the original had been removed. It now houses Epping Museum, the only museum dedicated exclusively to London Transport Underground history, with an exhibition of LU artefacts in the old relay room including signage, control desks and even several relays that can be heard clicking away when the lever frame upstairs is operated.

A recent addition to the collection is a working N gauge model railway layout of the proposed LU Northern Heights extension which never came to pass and depicts what would have been Brockley Hill, a station that ironically would have been raised high above ground on brick arches; three of these arches were completed by 1939 but following the war intervening, the proposal was dropped. The remains of these arches remain to this day on what is now the Edgware Way Grassland. Previously on display at the Boreham Wood museum, the display was transferred to Epping on January 16, where it will now be reassembled.

Work over the winter has also included the repainting of the roof of former Acton Works shunter No. L11, which has involved stripping it back to bare metal. Despite having lived outside for most of its 90-plus years, little rust has been reported, with the few small patches found easily tended to.

Meanwhile, the museum is appealing for more volunteers to help maintain, restore and run the museum. A volunteering day has been scheduled for March 4 from11am, and those interested in joining are invited to attend to meet the team. Roles are also available away from the site, including fundraising and advertising officers.

The museum is currently closed until the spring. Full details on opening times, and all recovered 62TS components available for sale, can be found at eppingmuseum.com

CHT's 1960s Cravens unit is currently stabled on the 'dead' siding at Ruislip Depot. Its traction motors have been borrowed by LU for use under its Track Recording Vehicle unit. A proposal has been mooted for it to remain stored there as an insurance policy for the TRV but maintained in operational condition as a back-up for London Transport Museum's 1938 tube stock.

The last silver tube train has been sat at Hainault depot since withdrawal in 1994. Despite CHT's desire to return it to service, the sad decision has been taken to sell it to LU for spares. KEITH WARD/CHT

Above: Component recovery from the 68TS took place on January 21, when it was announced that the unit had been sold to LU. A number of parts are for sale on the Epping Museum site to fund CHT's other projects. KEITH WARD/CHT

Right: A model of what once may have been – and very nearly was. An N gauge model of what Brockley Hill station, part of the abandoned Northern Heights extension, may have looked like will be going on display at Epping Museum, situated in the decommissioned signalbox at the eastern terminus of the Central Line. JAMES DEACON/CHT

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Tanks aplenty: Bluebell 2-6-2T project takes steps forward during winter

THE project to construct new BR Standard 2MT 2-6-2T No. 84030 on the Bluebell Railway has taken several notable steps forward in recent months.

The Standard Class 2 Working Group confirmed that the first of the side tanks has been completed at the external contractor's site.

The work offsite has seen the right-hand water tank for No. 84030 completed, including application of black top coat. Work has now commenced on the left-hand tank following the drawing work being carried out that saw a total of 68 separate drawings produced for all the items that required profiling between the two. A spare water capacity indicator for the right-hand side tank has been purchased from the Mid-Hants Railway.

The next step will be to produce manufacturing drawings for the cab, which will progress once the bunker is complete. This phase has proven a challenge as the poor quality reproduction BR drawings have proven difficult to interpret; cardboard cut-outs are being used as reference for the larger side panels.

The rear bunkers panels were riveted together and bolted onto the frames in the latter part of 2022.

It is hoped that the boiler – which comes from BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78059 that became the basis for this tank engine conversion project – will be moved to Sheffield Park soon to enable the group to carry out some TLC on it to prevent deterioration.

The project originated in 1980 when a small group of Bluebell members visited Barry scrapyard and opted to buy No. 78059, even though it lacked a tender. A fund raised the £7500 to buy the engine, which arrived at the Bluebell on May 23, 1983. The lack of a tender and the fact that none of the 65 tender engines in the class ran on the Southern Region led to a decision to rebuild No. 78059 as a tank engine.

➜ **The group is appealing for volunteers (particularly those with engineering skills) and donations to help progress the build. For further information on getting involved, contact project leader Chris Wren at ccwren@gmail.com**

The first of the completed water tanks for BR 2MT 2-6-2T No. 84030 at the external contractor's site. It has been painted up to black topcoat. CHRIS WREN

Dates for *Flying Scotsman* at Worth Valley

THE tour of Gresley Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* as part of its year of centenary celebrations will reach the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in May.

In a break between main line duties on the Railway Touring Company's 'Royal Duchy' on April 30 and the June 7 'Cardiff Express', the A3 will arrive at the five-mile heritage line for a month-long festival that will include late night running, live music, photographic opportunities and special dining services.

Operating days were confirmed to be May 25-29 inclusive, with each one offering five departures for a full-line trip from either Haworth or Oxenhope, with ticket options including a cream tea offering aboard either a 1930s Pullman or BR Mk.1 restaurant car.

Ticket prices start at £32 and include a same day rover to travel on other KWVR services.

Taiwan engine arrives in Wales after 6195-mile voyage

THE Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway welcomed a powerful diesel locomotive to Wales on a three-year loan on February 1 – after it had made the 6195-mile journey from the Alishan Forest Railway in Taiwan.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 301, the Welsh railway agreed a loan of the locomotive to help further educational and cultural co-operation between the two lines and provide cover for the diesel fleet which are in need of overhauls.

Locomotive DL-34 departed Taiwan on November 24 for the start of a journey that finally saw it dock in Liverpool at the start of January.

DL-34 was built in 1972 by Mitsubishi of Japan, designed to tackle the steep gradients and tight curves of the Alishan Forest line with an engine that produces 523hp.

Now safely on Welsh rails, it will undergo a period of commissioning and receive modifications to its coupling and braking systems to make it compatible with the WLLR's rolling stock, with entry into traffic due in the first part of the 2023 operating season.

As well as strengthening the educational links between the two 2ft 6in gauge lines, DL-34 will enable WLLR volunteers to begin overhauls of some of the resident diesels, including 1949-built Baguley Drewry No.7 *Chattenden*. Another locomotive with Taiwanese origins, 6WDH Taiwan Sugar Corporation Diema No. 175, will also in turn be released for works to be carried out.

DL-34 unloaded on Welsh rails at Llanfair Caereinion station in the company of Taiwan Sugar Corporation Diema No. 175, which was preparing to shunt the new arrival over an inspection pit. JAMES BRETT/WLLR

WLLR chairman Steve Clews said: "This loan is the culmination of four years of discussions and hard work and is a great opportunity for our two railways to continue building their relationship."

The two railways have been affiliated with one another since 2017, with the AFR famous for being the highest narrow-gauge line in Asia.

Sourcing locomotives for 2ft 6in gauge is often difficult as there are very few lines that operate on it in the UK; the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway and Whipsnade Zoo lines are the only two running steam in the UK. A third line, the Almond Valley Light Railway in Livingstone, Scotland, is exclusively run by international combustion engine locomotives.

Will main line services return to Goodrington after half a century?

By Robin Jones

GOODRINGTON could once again become served by regular trains on the national network – 50 years after British Rail sold to Paignton to Kingswear line in services to the Dart Valley Railway.

In a House of Commons debate on the Government's Restoring Your Railway Fund held on January 24, Torbay's Conservative MP Kevin Foster argued the case for reintroducing regular public services to the station.

However, the current proposals do not envisage the use of the Dartmouth Steam Railway by the new services, but the laying of a new track alongside the heritage line from Paignton station. A platform to be created alongside the heritage railway's Goodrington Sands station, with accessibility provided via stairs and a lift to the road bridge which passes over the site.

While Network Rail's Paignton station has limited parking, there are large car parks close to Goodrington Halt, often used only in the summer peak season, and a parkway-style facility could be created. Furthermore, Goodrington's large beach and adjacent leisure facilities would attract more visitors to arrive by rail from further afield, it is conjectured. Calls for a new Network Rail link to Goodrington have followed in the success of the reintroduction of daily regular services to Okehampton via the Dartmoor Railway, which reopened in November 2021, and the construction of a new £13.1 million station at Edginswell, on the Torquay to Newton Abbot line, to serve Torbay Hospital, Edginswell Business Park and other nearby business, and communities in Shiphay and The Willows. Work is scheduled on to start this summer on what will be Torbay's first new station since the Second World War, with the two-platform station opened by the end of 2024. The project involves the modern-day Great Western Railway and Torbay Council, as well as Network Rail.

The sidings alongside Goodrington Sands station on the Dartmouth Steam Railway.
TERRY BUTCHER/CREATIVE COMMONS

"The reopening of the line to Okehampton and the forthcoming start of work on the new Edginswell station shows the demand there is for new rail services and the boost they can provide to communities, showing what could be achieved in future if national rail services returned to Goodrington," said Mr Foster.

Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company general manager John Jones welcomed the proposal in its current form, saying that the extension of main line services back to Goodrington would not harm the heritage line, but by running alongside, the sight of steam trains would act as an advertisement for it. He also said that money from the sale of necessary land to Network Rail to lay the new track would be used to enhance developments elsewhere on the line.

When the Dartmouth & Torbay Railway opened on March 14, 1861, it passed over a level crossing on Tanners Lane, which led to the sea at Goodrington. Building the line across the marsh at Goodrington proved difficult but was achieved by laying redundant pipes from Isambard Kingdom Brunel's failed atmospheric railway between Exeter and Newton Abbot in the ground and across the beach for drainage. On July 9, 1928, a small station, initially named Goodrington, was opened on the Kingswear side of the crossing. A second platform was added as the double-track line, which reached Tanners Lane by 1928 and was extended into the station on July 4, 1930.

The area between Paignton and Goodrington was then redeveloped with carriage sidings and a goods depot to allow the restricted site at Paignton to concentrate on accommodating increasing holiday passenger traffic. The council opened a public park and boating lake in the area in 1936. Work started on a bridge to replace the crossing in 1939, but this was not completed until 1956 due to the Second World War Two.

The carriage sidings between Goodrington Sands and Paignton remain in use by Network Rail for main line trains, especially on summer Saturdays.

Taff Vale Railway O2 0-6-2T No. 85 approaches Damems Curve on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway on January 21.
NEIL TERRY PHOTOGRAPHY

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Helston that much nearer in our sights!

By Robin Jones

A SMALL band of Helston Railway volunteers took advantage of the line's eight-week winter closure by starting the long-awaited excavation of the filled-in cutting and following embankment to the south of the current terminus of Truthall Halt.

The GWR Helston branch closed to passengers on November 3, 1962, and to freight on October 4, 1964, with the track lifted by summer 1965.

Over the years, much stone and soil from adjacent fields was dumped in the cutting and along the embankment, and much of it had become overgrown with trees and brambles.

Weekends in December were spent manually cutting and clearing all of the dumped material and vegetation while checking on wildlife activity before a start could be made on removing the last major blockage on the original trackbed between the heritage line and Helston.

On the morning of January 14, three voluntary manual workers, a digger driver, and an excavator driver set to work. The team found about 1000 tons of quality Cornish hedging stone piled on the trackbed and retrieved it for future use. A quantity of old ballast was also discovered.

Other stone and concrete excavated from the cutting will be crushed and used as hardcore in other projects.

The team managed to clear a quarter of a mile of the blocked trackbed. The remaining three quarters of a mile of the old formation from there onward to the proposed eventual terminus at Water-Ma-Trout on the outskirts of Helston is covered by only light undergrowth.

The formation of the Helston branch being cleared on January 17.
COLIN SAVAGE

Decades of rubble shifted in a day to pave the way for rails to return.
COLIN SAVAGE

Generous support

At Prospidnick at the northern end of the heritage line, which is currently 1¼-miles long, excavation of the cutting is also underway but at a steadier pace, with a view to completing a new access road for the railway to make rolling stock delivery easier.

The boarding of the current 'temporary' platform at Prospidnick – which is made of metal grating panels – is also making headway. Thanks to the generosity of Wickes in Truro and Travis Perkins in Helston, the line now has enough boarding to cover the whole surface and sufficient paint to make a smart non-slip finish.

Meanwhile, all the line's 2022 Santa visits were booked online for the first time, with an option to book train travel, too. The visits were sold out and trains were satisfyingly busy.

"Without doubt it was our best Christmas running to date," said general manager Colin Savage. "We are very satisfied with how 2022 went and are looking forward with equal confidence to the coming year."

The Helston Railway Preservation Society was formed in 2002 with about 12 members – now about 1000 – and on April 28, 2005, vegetation clearance began. The heritage line opened for passengers in December 2011 for the Trevarno Gardens Winter Wonderland.

➜ To volunteer on the Helston Railway, email info@helstonrailway.co.uk or telephone 07901 977597.

Tributes paid to Blue Anchor supremo Pete Treharne

THE West Somerset Railway has been in mourning for stationmaster Pete Treharne, a founder of the Blue Anchor Railway Museum, who passed away on December 20 at the age of 86.

Before retiring, Pete was a BT engineer specialising in maritime navigation communications, latterly working at Portishead.

In 1995 he became a trustee of the then West Somerset Steam Railway Trust, a position he held for 23 years, and on relinquishing this post he became its vice president.

Pete founded the museum along with Peter and Ginny Barnfield. It opened in the former Down side waiting room in time to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the GWR in 1985.

It exhibits included many of Pete's own collection of number plates, nameplates and models.

He assembled a rare collection of key tokens from the Minehead and Barnstaple branches as well as the ticket printing press.

West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust president Chris Austin OBE said that Pete was missed by everyone who knew him.

"For many years, he was the driving force at Blue Anchor, living in the adjacent station house, and competent as stationmaster, signalman, booking clerk, porter and general factotum," he said. "In earlier years, he was often called out to open the 'box if the signalman had been delayed on the A39 or cover had not been available – one of the penalties of living 'over the shop'.

"Pete was not one to complain, and he was always ready with a wry comment and an infectious smile to anyone passing through or visiting his station.

"If meeting anyone in authority on the railway, he would always enquire when he could expect to see his bonus. In the words of Mark Smith, former managing director, 'Pete never got his bonus – the WSR did'.

"His advice was always thoughtful and his experience much valued by other trustees. He will be remembered as one of a band of dedicated volunteers whose prodigious work over many years established the West Somerset as the longest and the finest in the country."

On his retirement as stationmaster at Blue Anchor in 2010, Pete Treharne was presented with a full piggy bank for station funds.
KEITH SMITH/WSRHT

Lottery win for Covent Garden museum in new scheme

LONDON Transport Museum has become one of the first beneficiaries of a National Lottery Heritage Fund pilot scheme.

The Covent Garden venue was awarded £24,892 on December 12 under the new Heritage Innovation Fund, which has given 35 grants totalling £843,000 to pioneering projects around the UK, supporting creative ideas for making the heritage sector's workforce more robust, sustainable, inclusive, and fit for the future.

Skills focus

A NLHF spokesman said: "The London Transport Museum has been awarded a Heritage Innovation Fund grant for its project proposal which will focus on combatting current skills shortages in the transport heritage sector – in particular, the lack of sufficiently qualified staff able to maintain heritage vehicles.

"The proposal aims to raise awareness of skills shortages in the heritage sector and the need for different organisations to come together and combine forces, pool their resources, and address this challenge together.

Workforce support

"The museum also highlighted the need for more younger people to get involved in volunteering and running attractions to help address the problem of sustaining and supporting an ageing workforce of volunteers."

The grant awards are being distributed by the Heritage Fund's delivery partner, The Young Foundation.

The awards provide up to a maximum of £25,000 support to each project, covering the cost of participants' time and activities during the initial six-month 'explore' phase of the pilot scheme.

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Dangerous wall forces closure of Bridgnorth Cliff Railway

By John Titlow

BRIDGNORTH Cliff Railway, which links Low Town and High Town, was closed on December 21 for the foreseeable future due to a dangerous and unsafe brick wall immediately alongside.

Opened in 1892, it was initially powered by water and was the steepest inland funicular railway in Britain. Double-track, 201 feet in length and climbing 111 feet, the water tanks were mounted underneath the cars, and when the top car was filled, it counterbalanced the lower one, raising it up the hill. After a major rebuild, in the 1940s it was converted to electrical operation.

The dangerous wall on a neighbouring council property lies underneath the footpath that runs around Castle Hill, a spectacular viewpoint overlooking the valley of the River Severn. The Cliff Railway is an important means of access into the town centre from the river, saving 200 steps and a 100ft climb.

Over many years, vegetation has grown without maintenance or clearance. Buddleias have rooted themselves into the wall, breaking it apart, and all the top corbelling is now loose and could fall at any moment.

Stretching for about 80ft and at a height of 30ft, the wall is near the top station and rebuilding will be difficult. Because it is at the highest point of the railway, getting the essential materials in will not be easy as there is no road access.

Whether the wall is listed is uncertain, but it is in a conservation area, and due to the historic brickwork and architecture in the area, original bricks will have to be used with lime mortar.

A town council statement said: 'Bridgnorth Town Council, working in partnership with Bridgnorth Cliff Railway, have made a decision to temporarily close the funicular railway.

"It is anticipated that this closure will be until at least Easter.

The dangerous wall on the right side at the top station of Bridgnorth Cliff Railway on January 24. JOHN TITLOW

"A structural defect in a retaining wall has been identified, with a requirement for remedial works to be carried out. Bridgnorth Town Council will be working with specialist structural and civil engineers and partner agencies over the next few months to ensure that the works are carried out sympathetically in the conservation area, with as little disruption as possible.

'Minimum impact'

"It is anticipated that once the remedial works begin, there will be a need to close the Castle Walk for an unspecified period of time. Both the town council and Bridgnorth Cliff Railway are aware of the impact this temporary closure will have on residents, businesses and visitors. However, it is hoped that the closure at this time of the year will have a minimum impact."

Bridgnorth's mayor, Coun Karen Sawbridge, said: "We are so very proud of the cliff railway and its heritage within our community and the town of Bridgnorth. The town council want to ensure that any works completed secure the future enjoyment of residents and visitors who use this historical funicular railway."

Dr Malvern Tipping, director of The Bridgnorth Castle Hill Railway Company Limited, added: "We are delighted that the town council is working in partnership with us to ensure the works identified will be carried out without delay, and we will see the railway run for years to come."

There was no sign of any works starting at the end of January. Work for eight railway employees has been suspended, and the cars are midway down the track for safety and security reasons.

Middy's operational line doubles in length thanks to brand new extension

THE Mid-Suffolk Light Railway has more than doubled the length of its operational line.

January 30 saw specialist rail engineer TES2000 complete the third-of-a-mile extension from Brockford & Wetheringsett station at the conclusion of a project that was delayed by two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and which has been the line's revivalists' most ambitious project to ate.

The recycled rails used in this project were originally in the Ipswich Lower Goods yard, in Suffolk, located beside the River Orwell, on a link between the main line and the docks.

The next step is to build a new terminus station, Aspall Halt, which will recall Aspall, the next station on the original line after Brockford.

However, it might be Easter 2024 before passengers can ride over the extension, as the presence of a public footpath has necessitated an application for a Transport and Works Order at a cost of around £60,000.

MSLR marketing manager John Reeve praised the work of TES2000, which also undertakes contracts for Network Rail and has used the heritage project to give its apprentices invaluable experience.

Running over the section from Brockford to Dovebrook begins on April 9/10, with Peckett 0-4-0T No. 1631 of 1923 No. 12 *Marcia* on loan from the Kent & East Sussex Railway in action.

The last section of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway extension in place on January 30. MSLR

The extension completed. All it needs now it a Transport and Works Act Order. MSLR

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Sir Berkeley is back in business

By Sally Clifford

MANNING Wardle 0-6-0ST *Sir Berkeley*, star of the 1960s BBC TV serialisation The Railway Children, is set to make its comeback at the Middleton Railway's Victorian weekend on April 15/16 following a two-year overhaul.

The Class L locomotive, No. 1210 of 1890, has already had a trial run up to Middleton Park in preparation for it coming back into full-time steam.

One of only two Class Ls in the country, the other being No. 1601 of 1903 *Matthew Murray,* which is also based at Middleton, *Sir Berkeley* was originally built for contractors Logan & Hemingway and helped with the construction of the Great Central Railway's London Extension.

It later worked in the iron industry, latterly at Cranford Ironstone Co. in Kettering before being preserved by Roger Crombleholme.

Its overhaul was curtailed by the Covid-19 lockdown. The locomotive has now been repainted in a representation of the original Logan & Hemingway livery as a working memorial to navvies who worked in the construction of Britain's railways.

Ambassador ambitions

It is hoped that *Sir Berkeley*, which is owned by the Vintage Carriages Trust at Ingrow and loaned to the railway due to its historically important Leeds links, will become a railway ambassador.

Also running during the event will be NER Y7 0-4-0T No. 1310 of 1891, which will be withdrawn from traffic in June after its boiler ticket expires.

Meanwhile, a special Community Day will be held on Saturday, April 1 when the railway reopens following its annual winter maintenance programme. Vice president Ian Smith said that there will be free travel behind the diesel locomotives running that day, and there will also be stands showcasing the work of local community groups.

June 10/11 will be a celebratory weekend commemorating the 91st anniversary of LMS 0-6-0DM No. 7051 of 1932, the Middleton Railway Trust's first locomotive.

Ian said it was hoped to run Hudswell Clarke's 1932-built 0-4-0DM D577 *Mary,* along with Hunslet 0-4-0DM No. 1786 of 1935 *Courage*, also known as *Sweet Pea,* and which can operate only in conjunction with another locomotive due to its lack of vacuum brakes. As such, it is used rarely on passenger services and mainly sees use during special events.

The guest will be Kerr Stuart 0-4-0ST No. 4388 of 1926 from the Foxfield Railway.

***Sir Berkeley* at Middleton Park during a trial run on January 15.** MR

NER Y7 No. 1310 of 1891, seen at Moor Road in 2022, will be running for one of the last times under its current boiler certificate during the forthcoming Victorian weekend. MR

Guided tours of Tyseley depot are back on

VINTAGE Trains has reintroduced a pilot scheme of behind-the-scenes guided tours of Tyseley depot after an absence of many years.

The tours will focus on the original GWR 1908-built depot archaeology, and its locomotives and rolling stock, with historical information.

They will begin with a briefing in the original postwar GWR staff club, followed by a visit to the footprint of the original roundhouse, the reconstructed Sutton Miniature Railway and the locomotive depot to view operational locomotives, but will not include the engineering workshop.

The tours will take place on May 27, June 10, July 8, August 5 and September 2. Pre-booking at www.vintagetrains.co.uk is essential as numbers will be limited.

Admission is £10 for adults and £5 for children aged 10-15. Children under 10 are not allowed.

Largest depot

Since the depot opened in June 1908, it has seen continuous daily service; steam locomotives have been available for service every day since then. It is the largest remaining operational steam depot of Britain's top 50 depots in terms of the numbers of locomotives shedded.

Part of the original depot area is in use daily by West Midlands Trains, while the heritage sector gained a foothold at Tyseley in 1964 with the arrival of GWR 2-6-2T No. 4555 for main line service.

Mile of trackbed from M&GN is looking for its next owner

A MILE-long section of the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway at Hillington in Norfolk has been placed on the market.

The 20-mile Lynn & Fakenham Railway was taken over by the Eastern & Midlands Railway. It then part of the M&GNJR line from Leicester to Great Yarmouth, which closed in 1959.

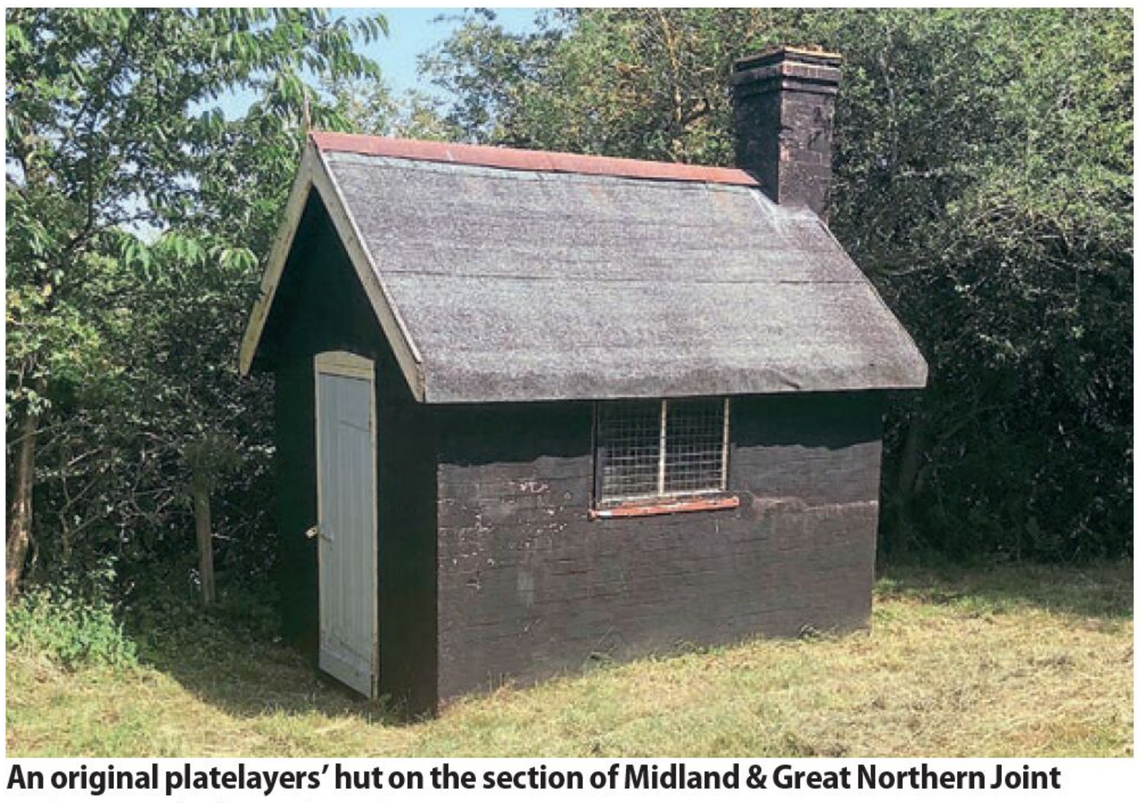
It was originally purchased by the M&GN Trust soon after its closure in a bid to preserve part of the old line.

This stretch of the route passes close to the royal estate of Sandringham, and the promoters had high hopes attracting this prestigious traffic. At one time, Hillington carried the station nameboard Hillington for Sandringham.

It is now owned by Mike Urry, founder of the Whitwell & Reepham Railway.

In recent times, there has been a proposal to convert the King's Lynn to Fakenham trackbed into a cycle path.

For further sale details, contact Mike Urry at mikeurry@mac.com or via www.whitwellstation.com



An original platelayers' hut on the section of Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway tracked now for sale. DAVID BILL

Mixed traction gala date for Cynheidre

THE Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway will start the new season with a mixed traction gala at Cynheidre on March 18/19.

The event will see the inaugural services by former modern-day Great Western Railway Pacer DMU No. 143612, which is on loan from the Vale of Berkeley Railway, short rides in ex-MOD four wheel railcar No. AD9117, subject to completion of overhaul, and brake van rides hauled by Sentinel 0-4-0DM No. 10222.

Recently arrived ex-European Passenger Services Class 73 electro-diesel No. 73130 will be fired up periodically during the day for photographs and may play a bigger part in the gala subject to certain works being completed.

A selection of items from The South Wales Cab Yard, a collection of 35 locomotive and multiple unit cabs currently based at a private site in Bridgend, will also be available for inspection.

Gates will open at 9.30am, with the first departure at 10am and services running until 3pm.

Fire in Gwili mess room

A FIRE broke out in the Gwili Railway's Bronwydd Arms motive power department mess room in the evening of Wednesday, January 25, requiring the attendance of local fire crews.

The incident was reported in local media which quoted damage as being potentially in the region of £100,000. However, the extent of damage was not as extreme as indicated.

Chairman Mathew Bowen said: "We had a fire in the MPD mess room.

"Thankfully, it was contained and the damage is limited; certainly not £100,000 as suggested. Our engine shed, machine shop and the rolling stock are all unscathed."

No injuries resulted from the blaze, which was being treated as accidental by the fire crews.

The railway is due to reopen in April with a new station at Abergwili Junction.

With the boiler trial fitted to enable pipework to be formed, No. 4150, pictured inside Bridgnorth Shed on January 12, is beginning to look a real locomotive once again. JOHN TITLOW

Last means another first for the Severn Valley

By John Titlow and Robin Jones

THE completion of the restoration of GWR 2-6-2T No. 4150 on the Severn Valley Railway as the culmination of a project spanning nearly half a century will see it run for the first time in the heritage era.

No. 4150 – which began its working career when supplied new from Swindon Works to Stourbridge Junction shed in 1947 – will also become the last locomotive on the SVR that was rescued from Dai Woodham's scrapyard at Barry to be returned to steam.

Another major milestone was reached when the Churchward prairie's boiler was fitted onto the frames inside the Bridgnorth boiler shop on December 29.

The ashpan was on top of the firebox, which had to be removed first. Once done, the boiler was lifted and turned and was lowered onto the ash pan to be bolted up.

As the completed boiler was lowered into its frames, the fit was so tight that an 1/8th of an inch had to be removed off the heads of the stays before it would fit.

Now this is complete, all the necessary pipework can be fitted and connected before the boiler comes out for its hydraulic and steam test to get the maximum time out of the boiler ticket.

After the recent work, No. 4150 was moved into the main shed for restoration to continue.

From 1953 to 1962, No. 4150 was allocated to Weymouth, Taunton, Exeter and Newton Abbot sheds. From the latter, it was used on passenger, freight and banking duties on the South Devon banks including Dainton, the Moretonhampstead branch and the daily lightweight pick-up goods to Kingswear, as well as taking holiday expresses onwards to Paignton and Kingswear. After a brief spell at Westbury, No. 4150 was allocated to its final shed, Severn Tunnel Junction, in 1962. It was used on local passenger trains and piloting and banking duties through the tunnel until being withdrawn in June 1965.

Fund launch

In 1972, two working members of the Dean Forest Railway Society looked into the possibility of buying a prairie from the scrapyard. The 4150 Fund was subsequently launched on March 5, 1973, to buy the locomotive.

Along with GWR 4-6-0 No.7812 *Erlestoke Manor*, No. 4150 left Barry in 1974 and was towed by a Class 25 diesel to the Dean Forest Railway at Parkend. Site difficulties meant that no restoration was possible, and in 1977 the possibility of moving it to a new home was considered.

The 4150 Fund shareholders voted in favour of an opportunity to move it to the SVR, where it arrived on January 19, 1978, to take its place in the restoration queue.

After another period of storage, No. 4150 was dismantled and the wheels sent to Bridgnorth for tyre turning and journal skimming. The frames underwent a lengthy period of horn grinding by hand, and axleboxes were remetalled and refitted. The boiler, frames and wheels were eventually reunited and the springs and brake gear refitted, followed by rebuilt pistons and valves.

However, by the mid-1980s, fundraising and restoration progress had markedly slowed.

In 2007 a new committee was formed to rekindle enthusiasm and take the project forward.

While the boiler remained the major hurdle to be tackled before No. 4150 could return to steam, an inspection by SVR boilersmiths found it to be in remarkably good condition; the inner copper firebox was renewed at Swindon not long before the prairie's withdrawal from BR service.

Fundraising continues in earnest as the prospect of seeing a locomotive with impeccable local heritage connections join the SVR looking ever closer on the horizon.

➜ For details of how you can help, visit www.4150.org.uk

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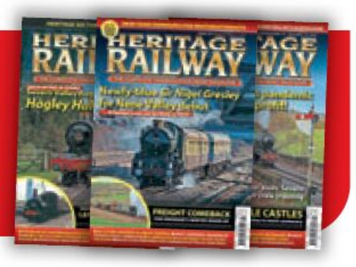

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Management reshuffle at Mid-Norfolk

THE Mid-Norfolk Railway has undergone a management restructure.

The MNR Trust Council has recognised that the railway has grown and expanded into a multi-million-pound business with several hundred staff comprising both some paid positions and majority volunteer roles, but which had outgrown the existing structure.

A process has therefore started that will update the structure, with the aim for it to be better able to take the railway forward, building on the past 25 years and looking forward to the next.

As part of this and as previously announced, the position of general manager has been abolished and in its place a range of new posts are being created, some paid and some voluntary, that will carry out all of the previous duties of the role.

Trust chairman Charlie Robinson said: "I would like to take this opportunity to announce that I will be stepping down as chairman at the next annual general meeting. I will remain a trust council member and will now focus on the organisation of future Polar Express and wedding special services, both of which will be more than enough to keep me extremely busy."

Details of the new management structure will be announced in due course once the process and implementation is complete.

The Class 50 Locomotive Association's No. 50019 *Ramilles* continues to undergo restoration in the Dereham locomotive shed. MNR

Work ongoing

Meanwhile, behind-the-scenes work has continued at both ends of the 17 ½-mile line. At County School, improvements and preparations of the ground are ongoing for the eventual return of trains to the northern end of the line. The North Norfolk Model Engineering Society continues to expand its own running line at the site.

At the opposite end of the route, the former Spooner Row signalbox is undergoing refurbishment at Wymondham before the signal and telegraph department can begin the resignalling of this area, with that team's focus currently on finishing the signalling at Thuxton and Dereham.

Once the refurbishment of the 'box is complete, the MNR will then have three operational 'boxes' controlling operation of the railway as far as its current Dereham northern terminus.

The railway is seeking permission to continue using the platform at Wymondham Abbey station after finding that it should have been removed decades ago.

The temporary structure, which comprises scaffolding with boards laid on top, was intended as a stopgap measure while plans were formed to replace it with a permanent platform. Permission for its construction was given in 1997, with the proviso that it should be removed by the end of 1999.

The trust said that the recent discovery that the platform breached planning conditions came as a "total surprise", and it has asked South Norfolk Council if it can keep it in place until funds for a proper replacement have been found.

It said that the soft ground conditions placed the cost of a permanent replacement out of reach of what was then an infant heritage railway, but the intent is to create a new station facility when the finance is available.

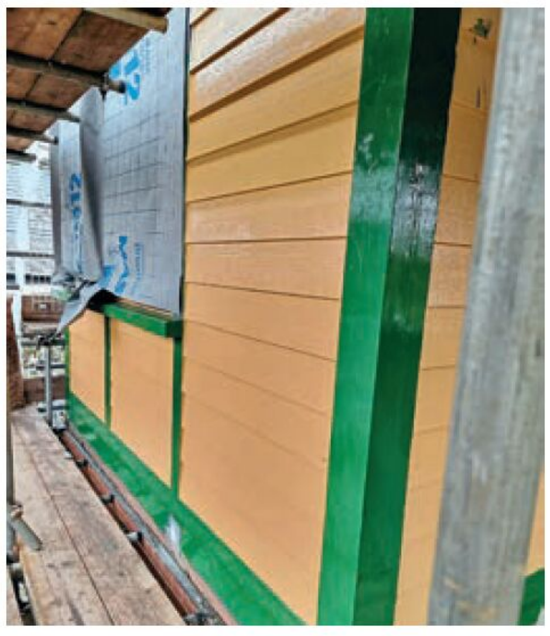
Most extensive ever

Rolling stock restoration continues with Mk.1 FCK No. M13225 which, once complete, will have undergone the most extensive rebuild the railway's carriage and wagon department has ever attempted.

The vestibules at each end have been rebuilt and crash pillars repaired, as well as windows and compartments stripped and rebuilt, with seat cushions having been reupholstered.

The bodywork was rubbed back to bare metal and corrosion addressed; it is now nearing the end of a repaint into BR maroon livery.

Resident owning groups, including those for the Class 117 DMU and Class 50 No. 50019 *Ramillies*, have also made progress during the year.



Left: The refurbished south wall of the former Spooner Row, now Wymondham Church Lane, signalbox as the railway's third operational 'box nears commissioning. MNR

Right: Name boards ready for fitting to the relocated signalbox. MNR

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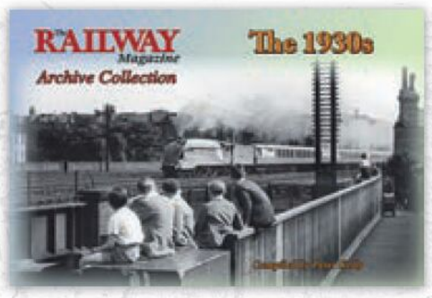

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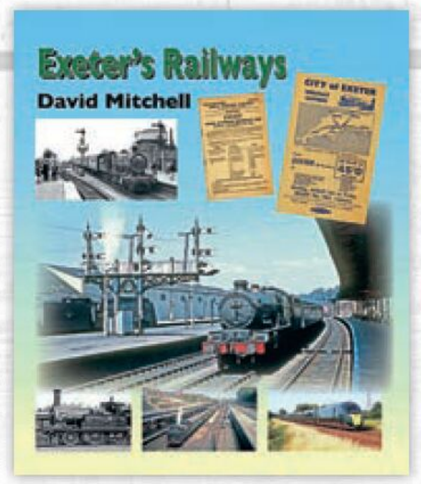

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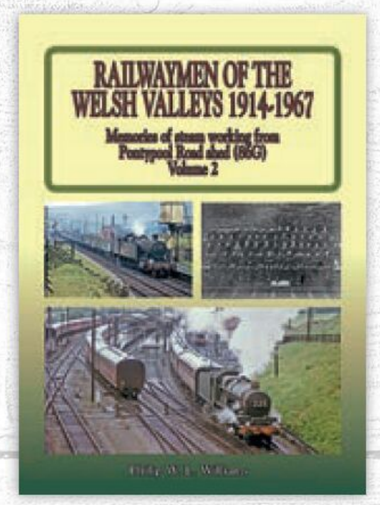

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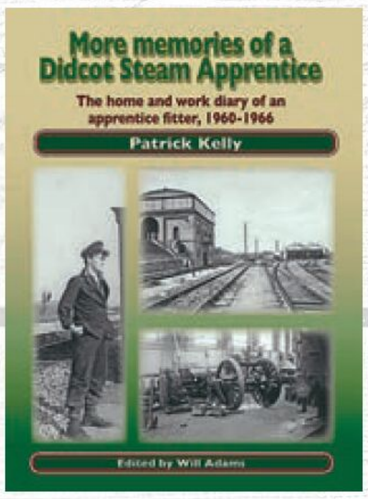

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STEAM WITHOUT FIRE!

Nicola Fox investigates the fascinating history and heritage of the fireless locomotive. There are 29 preserved in the heritage sector, but only one is currently operational.

The fireless locomotive forms a very interesting chapter in our railway history. With limited steam capacity, they were never repurposed for passenger services like other shunting locomotives were in the twilight of steam, such as the famous GWR pannier tanks, and as such were never truly part of the public gaze.

Yet, as enthusiasts mourned the death of steam in the late 1960s and bid farewell to industrial steam in the 1970s, many of these unassuming locomotives still continued to carry out their daily duties into the 1980s and, in a few cases, as recently as the 1990s.

Often, where they have survived into preservation, they are tucked away in museums if they are lucky – or, for the less fortunate, decaying in the open air behind the back of sheds. Barely any remain in operational condition. On the continent, however, several are still in use to this day, becoming part of the history of the fireless locomotive, which stretches back to the late 19th century.

The idea of fireless locomotives may have been first floated as early as the 1860s. In 1864, noted American locomotive designer Zerah Colburn reportedly suggested a fireless locomotive as a means to safely run trains through the newly-opened Metropolitan Railway, the London Underground, but this idea did not come to pass. It would take a dentist to make the idea of a fireless locomotive a reality.

The dentist in question was Dr Emile Lamm, an inventor whose patents included gold fillings before he turned his hand to steam locomotives. Dr Lamm was responsible for the earliest fireless locomotive, which was used to power street tramways in America in 1872. He founded two companies, the first of which produced locomotives powered by ammonia. It had the catchy name of Ammonia & Thermo-Specific Propelling Company of America. The second company built engines using stored steam, the more memorably titled Lamm Fireless Engine Company.

Andrew Barclay No. 1952, currently the UK's sole operational fireless locomotive, in operation at Dunaskin on the Doon Valley Railway on July 5, 2015. GORDON THOMSON/DVR

His fireless engines were briefly popular in both the States and across the ocean in France. However, the arrival of the electric train in the 1880s soon made the fireless train obsolete.

Second chances and UK firsts

Years passed and the system was considered a failure – until the rise in chemical production led to its return in the early 20th century. There was a need for safe, spark-free transport around the factory sites dealing in chemicals, and unexpectedly the fireless locomotive found itself resurrected from obsolescence.

The epiphany about fireless locomotives as ideal shunting ones was made by German company Orenstein & Koppel, which recognised their value for many factory environments, such as paper mills, food production, oil refineries, chemical plans, and munitions factories, where both the dirty exhaust of a steam locomotive and the inherent fire risk from sparks was undesirable. It outshopped its first fireless locomotive from its Drewitz locomotive factory in 1899.

Barclay No. 1952 running at Dunaskin on May 29, 2016. GORDON THOMSON/DVR

In 1907, Orenstein & Koppel delivered a fireless 0-4-0 to Empire Paper Mills in Greenhithe, Kent, the first example of the fireless principle in action on UK soil. Seeing the potential in this design, Andrew Barclay & Sons followed suit shortly after at its works in Kilmarnock.

The company began producing fireless locomotives in 1912, outshopping the first British-produced fireless locomotive in 1913, which was delivered to the Admiralty Explosives Depot in Bedenham, Hampshire.

With the advent of the First World War, sometimes referred to as the chemist's war, the demand for chemical factories increased, and this led to a brief boom in the production of fireless locomotives.

For example, on one site at HM Factory Gretna (the largest munitions factory on earth at that time), Andrew Barclay locomotive No. 1550 *Sir James* was used to transport cordite around the factory, which stretched nine miles from Dornock in Scotland and crossed the border to England in Longtown.

The last fireless locomotive was built in the UK in 1961 by Andrew Barclay, but the famous Meiningen Steam Locomotive Works in Germany continued to produce them into the late 1980s, some of which are still in use to this day.

How it works

The fireless steam locomotive uses similar operating principles to a conventional steam locomotive, but in place of a boiler is a reservoir, known as a steam accumulator. The accumulator is not filled entirely with steam but also with super-heated water, delivered under pressure from a stationary boiler. The accumulator is usually charged to about 180psi.

Once the accumulator is charged with super-heated water and steam, the locomotive then operates as a conventional one would, the regulator drawing steam from the accumulator to expand in cylinders, with valve gear turning the horizontal motion of the cylinders into forward motion.

As the steam is used, the pressure within the boiler drops; the boiling temperature of water is lower in low air pressure, meaning that the water continues to boil and the steam accumulator continues to produce steam as the pressure drops. This process is not continuous due to heat loss, but the locomotive can continue this way until the heat and pressure drops too low, circa 30-40psi, for example. At this point, it must be recharged.

To allow the locomotives to continue working at these low pressures, they were built with large cylinders which, in European

"Often, where they have survived into preservation, they are tucked away in museums if they are lucky – or, for the less fortunate, decaying in the open air behind the back of sheds. Barely any remain in operational condition."

designs, were often positioned at the back of the locomotive. By contrast, American designers placed them at the front, mirroring conventional locomotive design.

Factories using stationary boilers can charge a locomotive in a matter of 15 to 30 minutes (tying in perfectly with the driver's need for a cuppa or lunch!), making the process very economical for those facilities that already produce an abundance of steam, such as power stations.

Locomotives can run for several hours on one charge; naturally, the greater the work required, the more frequently the locomotive would require charging.

Unlike conventional steam locomotives, fireless ones do not have a chimney: instead, the used steam exhausts through a pipe that usually runs up the outside of the back of the cab.

As this pipe only emits steam, the further increases the go-anywhere aspect of the locomotive, allowing it to shunt in and out of buildings both without fear of sparks and without expelling noxious fumes.

In the pursuit of total spark elimination, some models even had rail washing gear fitted to the leading and trailing coupled wheels to reduce the risks of sparks when taking tight corners.

UK builders

The most prolific UK builder of fireless locomotives was Andrew Barclay. Known for producing industrial engines, Barclay outshopped 114 fireless locomotives between 1913 and 1961. W. G. Bagnall built 14

"Seeing fireless steam locomotives active in preservation is a rare sight. Without the necessary steam feed to charge the boilers, a separate steam locomotive is required to be steamed in order the charge the steam accumulator of the fireless."

locomotives, other manufacturers such as Hawthorn and Leslie built in smaller qualities, and Peckett is notable for building one single fireless locomotive, the only fireless to ever be built at its Atlas Works.

Outlasting coal-fired cousins

Fireless locomotives enjoyed a long career in the UK, Europe and elsewhere in the world, including America, in many places outlasting conventional steam locomotives. Where there was an inexpensive and plentiful source of steam already on site, fireless locomotives were cheaper to run than the diesel shunting locomotives that replaced many conventional steam locomotives, and well-insulated steam accumulators could preserve pressure over hours, allowing the locomotive to be called on when required.

However, despite this advantage, most fireless locomotives were eventually still replaced by diesel and battery electric locomotives. These replacements were outfitted with protected appliances to allow them to work in flammable environments. Most, but not all.

Grosskraftwerk Mannheim AG (GKM) is a coal-fired power plant based in Mannheim, Germany, which still has several operational fireless locomotives running on its site.

The locomotives were variously built by Maschinenfabrik Esslingen, Henschel & Son, and RAW Meiningen (now Meiningen Steam Locomotive Works) between 1944 and 1987. Simply numbered 2 through to 6, they have worked at GKM for decades, shunting coal trains delivered by Deutsche Bahn onto GKM premises. According to a company representative, GKM intends to continue this practice for the foreseeable future.

In the UK, however, the bulk of fireless locomotives that remained in service were withdrawn by the 1980s. In Wales, Barclay No. 1966 was the last regular working commercial industrial locomotive, being withdrawn in 1990, and shortly after the last working fireless locomotive in the UK, No. 1944, a fellow Barclay, was withdrawn, ending the era of fireless steam in the UK.

Preservation

At least 29 fireless locomotives are known to be preserved in the UK.

Most are in a sadly dilapidated state, in need of restoration and with very little chance of ever steaming again. However, several are in excellent display condition and tell the story of these long-serving engines.

Heysham No. 2 (Andrew Barclay Works No. 1950) spent more than 40 years in service, first at the Dingle Oil Terminal at Liverpool docks, then later Lancaster Power Station and finally Heysham Power Station, from where it retired in 1971. Now cosmetically restored and on display under cover at the Ribble Steam Railway and Museum, *Heysham No. 2* carries a bright blue livery and is an eye-catching exhibit.

Imperial No. 1 found a safe home at the Locomotion museum in Shildon, where it has been cosmetically restored and placed on display to visitors.

Several fireless locomotives have found themselves on external display around the UK. *Sir James* carries a camouflage livery to commemorate its wartime service at the site of a former cordite factory near Gretna, which is now The Devil's Porridge Museum.

Left: In 1981, Barclay No. 2243 of 1948 *Laporte* became the first fireless locomotive to be restored for preservation. It is seen running at the Buckingham Railway Centre in the 1980s. BRC COLLECTION

Below (both): The National Museum of Wales fireless pair, Barclay Nos. 1966 of 1929 and 2238 of 1948, at Nantgarw store in December 2014. ANTHONY COULLS/NRM

Meanwhile, the sole Peckett fireless locomotive can be seen by those travelling along the A57 in Salford on Cadishead Way, where it sits in the open air on static display, missing its steam accumulator cladding but otherwise cared for by the Rotary Club of Irlam.

Seeing fireless steam locomotives active in preservation is a rare sight. Without the necessary steam feed to charge the boilers, a separate steam locomotive is required to be steamed in order the charge the steam accumulator of the fireless. This inefficient method means they are not the ideal choice for running service trains and so are used for gala and demonstration days only.

There is currently only one operational fireless locomotive in the UK – Andrew Barclay No. 1952. Supplied new to Shell Refining Company's refinery at Ardrossan, Ayrshire, in 1928, it worked at that location until the refinery closed in 1981 and passed into preservation.

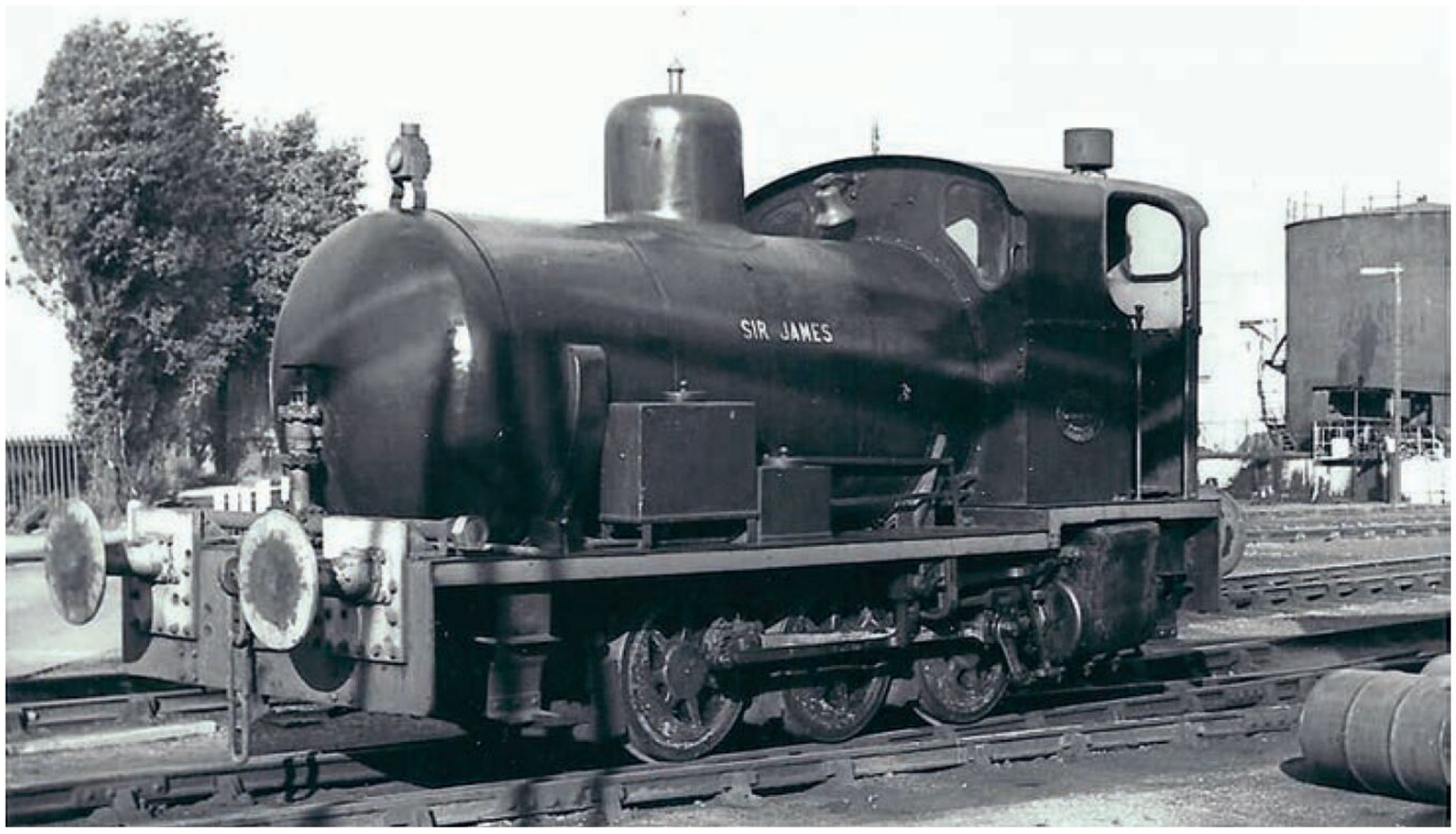
In doing so, it earned itself the title of the last commercially-used steam locomotive in Scotland.

It was overhauled in 2015 and makes its home at the Doon Valley Railway, Scotland's biggest industrial heritage railway, run by the Ayrshire Railway Preservation Group, which was founded in 1974, and based at the former Dunaskin Ironworks in Waterside, near Patna.

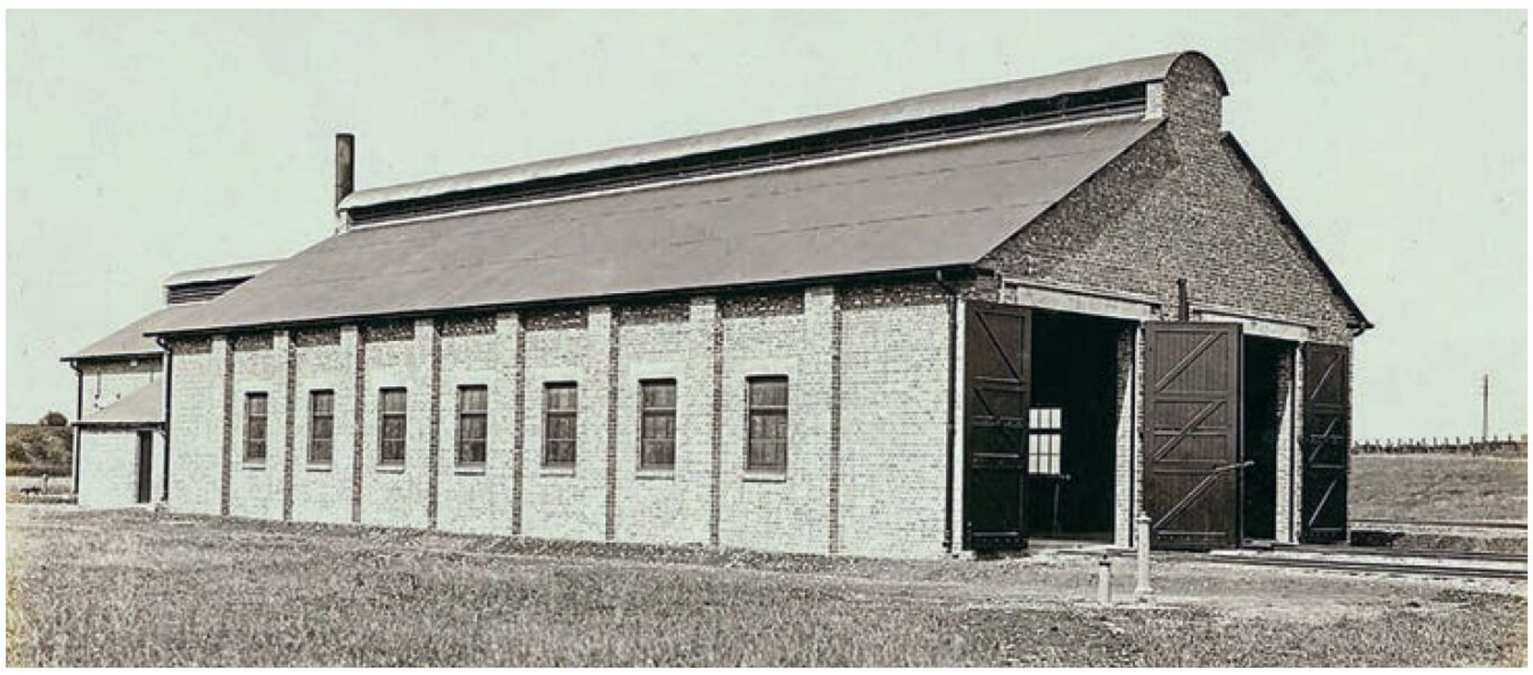
No. 1952 is sadly sitting cold, as the locomotive used to charge it, fellow Barclay NCB locomotive *Ayrshire Area No. 10*, is out for overhaul.

However, according to Gordon Thomson, of the Doon Valley: "Currently, we are preparing *No. 10* for the boiler inspections, which will enable it to return to steam in time for this year's open days."

For those wishing to see the UK's only fireless locomotive in action in person, the open days



A view of *Sir James*, possibly taken during its working life at HM Factory Gretna.
THE DEVIL'S PORRIDGE MUSEUM



The charging station for fireless locomotives at HM Factory Gretna on August 11, 1917. The size of the shed indicated the size of the site's fleet. THE DEVIL'S PORRIDGE MUSEUM

Cosmetically-restored Barclay fireless locomotive No. 1550 of 1917 *Sir James* on display at The Devil's Porridge Museum, which has been established at a former cordite factory near Gretna.
THE DEVIL'S PORRIDGE MUSEUM

Barclay 0-4-0F No. 1950 of 1928 *Heysham No. 2*, cosmetically restored to pristine condition in the museum at the Ribble Steam Railway in Preston. GARY SEVERN/RSR

are listed online at www.doonvalleyrailway.co.uk

Several other fireless locomotives have also steamed in preservation. Barclay No. 1989 *Lord Ashfield* ran at Manchester's Museum of Science and Industry in the 1990s, and prior to that fellow Barclay No. 2243 *Laporte* was the first fireless locomotive to be restored for preservation running at the Buckingham Railway Centre.

Charging in preservation

As is the case with No. 1952, *Laporte* was charged by a conventional steam locomotive acting as a stationary boiler, which had to be fitted with a high-pressure flexible hose to allow transition of steam to Laporte's reservoir and a self-explanatory non-return valve.

Firing the conventional locomotive, in this case North British 0-6-0ST No. 24564 of 1939 *Coventry No. 1*, to continue to produce steam to charge *Laporte* is no easy feat, as to compensate for the steam being withdrawn to fill *Laporte*'s reservoir requires the fireman to shovel significantly more coal than under normal running conditions – and charging *Laporte* using *Coventry No. 1* was not something that could be achieved in a matter of minutes!

Whereas a hot locomotive in a factory environment can be charged from the steam supply in a matter of 15 to 30 minutes, charging one locomotive from another from cold takes significantly longer. In an industrial setting, the locomotive's steam accumulator would be part-filled with boiling water. However, without access to such a large supply of boiling water, *Laporte*'s accumulator would initially be part filled with cold water, meaning the process takes much longer.

As the steam from *Coventry No. 1* rushed in, it condensed, therefore during this process some of the water in *Laporte*'s accumulator would be dumped to make space. Over time, however, the temperature in the accumulator rises and the condensation of steam stops, allowing the pressure to rise.

Once the locomotive reached working pressure, the connecting hose could be depressurised and removed, allowing *Laporte* to begin its duties.

This process of charging *Laporte* took about four hours. This charge would then allow for about four hours of running before the locomotive's steam accumulator was depleted.

Thankfully, recharging a hot steam locomotive does not take quite as long, as less

Barclay No. 1815 of 1924 at the now closed Snibston Discovery Museum at Coalville. ANTHONY COULLS/NRM

Barclay 0-4-0F No. 2373 of 1956 *Imperial No. 1* at the Locomotion museum in Shildon. ANTHONY COULLS/NRM

Roll of honour

Locomotive number/name	Build date	Built by	Condition	Current location
1472	1916	Andrew Barclay	Awaiting cosmetic restoration	Bressingham Steam Museum
1473	1916	Andrew Barclay	Currently dismantled – an enthusiast group is seeking to restore it	Swansea Waterfront Museum
1477	1916	Andrew Barclay	Awaiting restoration as static exhibit	Buckingham Railway Centre
1550 *(Sir James)*	1917	Andrew Barclay	On static display	Devil's Porridge Museum
1571	1917	Andrew Barclay	In storage in display condition	Riverside Museum
1572	1917	Andrew Barclay	Unknown	Believed to be at Carnforth
1815	1924	Andrew Barclay	Unknown	1815's location is currently a mystery.†
1876	1925	Andrew Barclay	Awaiting cosmetic restoration	Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
1944	1927	Andrew Barclay	Awaiting restoration	Telford Steam Railway
1950 / *Heysham No 2*	1928	Andrew Barclay	Permanent museum display	Ribble Steam Railway and Museum
1952	1928	Andrew Barclay	Operational	Doon Valley Railway
1966	1929	Andrew Barclay	In storage	National Collections Centre, Cardiff
1984	1930	Andrew Barclay	Unknown	Believed to be in the hands of West Somerset Restoration
1989 *(Lord Ashfield)*	1930	Andrew Barclay	Undergoing restoration – has steamed in preservation	Bo'ness and Kinneil
2008	1935	Andrew Barclay	Unknown	Believed to be at the Midland Railway
2126	1942	Andrew Barclay	Undergoing maintenance to prevent deterioration while long-term plans are considered	Vale of Berkley
2238	1948	Andrew Barclay	In storage	National Collections Centre, Cardiff
2243/*Laporte*	1948	Andrew Barclay	Awaiting restoration – has operated in preservation	Buckingham Railway Centre
2268	1949	Andrew Barclay	Unknown	Believed to be at Carnforth
2373/*Imperial No. 1*	1956	Andrew Barclay	On static display	Locomotion, Shildon
2216/*Unique*‡	1923	WG Bagnall	Awaiting cosmetic restoration	Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2370/*Bullseye*	1929	WG Bagnall	Derelict – restoration possibility unknown	Wakes Showground Blaby
2473	1932	WG Bagnall	Believed to be privately preserved	Believed to be somewhere in West Yorkshire
2898	1948	WG Bagnall	In storage	Darlington Railway Preservation Society
3019	1952	W G Bagnall	Unknown	Last known location K&J Bownes & Sons in Wallingwells, Nottinghamshire
3121	1957	WG Bagnall	Unknown	Believed to be at the Plym Valley Railway
3746	1929	Hawthorn Leslie	Awaiting restoration	Tanfield Railway
7803	1954	Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns	On static display in the open air	Stonham Barns Holiday Park Suffolk
2155	1955	Peckett & Sons ◊	On static display in the open air	Cadishead Way Salford

† Having been an exhibit at the Snibston Discovery Museum in Coalville, the locomotive has not been seen since the venue's closure in 2015.
‡ Notably standard gauge construction with the wheels inside the frames to allow narrow gauge running.
◊ The only fireless locomotive ever built at Atlas Works.

steam condenses with the accumulator already hot, but as *Laporte* was used in preservation for demonstration purposes rather than hauling industrial trains, generally it was only run on one charge.

Accustomed to working down to low pressures, fireless locomotives have large cylinders, and while 30psi is given as the more practical minimum working pressure, *Laporte* has been recorded as moving at pressures as low as 15psi.

Given the time-consuming nature of readying a fireless locomotive for duty in a heritage environment and the fact that, to many visitors, one steam locomotive is as good as another, fireless locomotives are unlikely to find themselves the star draw of any attraction.

It is likely for this reason that while so many of them have been preserved, so few have ever been run in preservation.

The aspirations of most of the organisations currently in possession of a fireless locomotive were limited to cosmetic restoration at best or preventing deterioration at worst.

Sadly, for the fireless locomotives of Britain, there just isn't the draw or the drive to preserve them in the way the likes of *Flying Scotsman*, *Britannia* and other celebrity engines can boast.

Workhorses that were a huge part of the war efforts in the early 20th century and stalwarts of industrial railways in the following decades are now left to rust and rot, often in the open air.

They may not draw the crowds the way a Duchess or a Castle might, but they are no less a part of our railway heritage, and they deserve to be remembered. HR

Barclay 0-4-0F No. 2126 was delivered new in May 1942 to Castle Mead Power Station at Gloucester where it carried No. 1. Castle Mead was one of two emergency power stations constructed in Britain after the start of the Second World War. The coal-fired power station was built on Alney Island in the River Severn at Gloucester. The locomotive initially shunted coal wagons from the wharf by the river near Gloucester lock, where the power station fuel was unloaded from coasters using a steam crane. VOBR COLLECTION

A 2022 view of Barclay 0-4-0F No. 2126 of 1942 shows the rear exhaust. In 1973, the locomotive was donated to the Dowty Railway Preservation Society at Ashchurch in 1973 and which later moved along with it to Toddington on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. The National Waterways Museum obtained it in 1988 to return it close to its former workplace at the British Waterways Museum at Gloucester Docks. Following cosmetic restoration, it was stored off-site at the Vale of Berkeley Railway several years before the museum donated it to the heritage line in 2022.

HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

The first main line run of the year with passengers was the Railway Touring Company's January 21 12-coach 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express', which started behind a diesel from Manchester Victoria on January 21. Steam came on a Carnforth in the form of LMS 'Black Five' No. 44932, replacing LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* which had failed a fitness-to-run examination. It was one of those magical days with snow on the hills and a severe frost on the ground. Running at speed non-stop through Garsdale station around 1pm, No. 44932 is seen crossing the viaduct immediately to the north before the final climb to Ais Gill summit. The embankment immediately beyond the buffer stops was where the line to Hawes branches off; the houses to the right were built by the Midland Railway for its workers. This location would once have been a busy junction in the heart of the Pennines. JOHN TITLOW

Pathfinder extends programme with mix of regular and brand new tours

By John Titlow

PATHFINDER Tours will run its first outing of the year on March 18 with the 'Great Eastern' from Crewe to Norwich, including an option to Great Yarmouth.

Departing at 6.30am, motive power will be the Class Forty Preservation Society's No. 40145. It will be a homecoming for the 40 because the class members started their careers in this area in 1958. The return to Crewe is at 11pm.

April 8 sees the 'Cumbrian Fellsman' start from Leamington Spa at 6.30am. At Carnforth, a West Coast Railway steam locomotive will take the train over Shap and then return to Preston via the Settle and Carlisle route. The outward and return leg from Leamington Spa is diesel-hauled, returning at 10.30pm.

New tours include the March 25 off-the-beaten-track 'Marsh Magician.' Starting from Bristol Temple Meads at 6am and returning at 11.25pm, the tour picks up at Bristol Parkway, Cheltenham Spa, Bromsgrove, Birmingham New Street, Thame Bridge Parkway, Stafford and Crewe.

Liverpool Docks via the new double tracks leading to it is one of its destinations. However, pride of place goes to the terminal at Knowsley, where it is intended that the train will run the full length of the branch to the buffer stops. The Waterloo sidings at Edge Hill, plus various goods loops and sidings, make this one for track aficionados.

Requests were made for a branch line tour without a Class 66 up front, so the train will be hauled throughout by a Class 60, nicknamed 'Tugs'. From Crewe to Edge Hill, the tour will be top-and-tailed by another Class 60.

Pathfinder favourite

A particular favourite with Pathfinder is the 'Cambrian Coast Express' on April 21, starting from Bristol at 6am and returning at 12.50am the next day, running via Cheltenham Spa to Birmingham New Street, Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury and collecting passengers en route. The train runs over Talerdigg via Machynlleth and Dovey Junction through Barmouth to Pwllheli. Options are available: Barmouth for a walk over the historic bridge; Minfford for Portmeirion; and Porthmadog for the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways. The usual motive power for this train is two Class 37s.

The April 29 'Spring Cornish Explorer' runs to Penzance, stopping at Camborne for the annual Trevithick Day celebrations. A pair of West Coast Railways Class 37s will run from Dorridge at 5.50am, returning at 11.15pm.

Routing is via Oxford and Swindon, picking up at important stations, with the last one being Bristol Temple Meads.

Bookings are strong for the April 14-17 'Spring Highlander' land cruise, starting from Cheltenham Spa at 6am and returning four days later at 11.30pm. Two day trips follow, one to Perth to Dundee and the second to Fort William over the West Highland line. Return is via the Forth and Clyde valleys then down the East Coast Main Line to Cheltenham.

Two days after the coronation of King Charles III, a royal-themed day out to Windsor or a trip through London via Buckingham Palace on a Routemaster bus takes place on May 8.

It starts at Burton upon Trent at 6.20am, picking up at Birmingham New Street, Bromsgrove, Worcester Parkway, Cheltenham Spa, Stroud, Kemble and Swindon. Two options are available: Kensington Olympia for the Routemaster tour or Windsor for the castle or river walks.

Appropriately, the motive power requested is two of the three Class 67 diesels that are used for Royal Train duties, all with distinctive liveries and royal names. The return to Burton is at 10.40pm.

Two Colas Rail Class 37s will head the 'Heart of Wales Explorer' on May 20, leaving Bristol Temple Meads at 6.15pm. Joining stations are Bath Spa, Chippenham, Swindon, Oxford, Banbury, Leamington Spa, Warwick Parkway, Dorridge and Birmingham New Street, before heading through Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury for a two-hour break. After its southbound leg along the Welsh Marches to Craven Arms, it branches out onto the scenic single-track Heart of Wales route over Sugar Loaf summit to Hendy Junction before commencing the journey along the South Wales Main Line back to the joining stations – apart from Bristol Temple Meads and Birmingham New Street; these are pick-up stations for the outward journey only.

Steam railway visit

Getting close to Pathfinder Tours' golden anniversary on June 10, its last tour before that celebration is on May 29 when a pair of West Coast Railway Class 33s 'Cromptons' depart Burton upon Trent at 6.30am to Paignton.

Pick-up stations for this tour are Tamworth, Birmingham New Street, Stourbridge Junction, Kidderminster, Worcester Shrub Hill, Cheltenham Spa, Cam and Dursley, and Bristol Parkway.

From there it's across the Somerset Levels, through Exeter St Davids and then along the Dawlish Sea Wall to Paignton for a brief stop, giving passengers the opportunity to ride on the Dartmouth Steam Railway to Kingswear, before heading to Torquay for a four-hour break.

The return leg after Taunton is via the Berks and Hants line to Westbury before circling back through the Avon Valley and Bath retracing the outward journey, arriving in Burton at 11pm.

➜ **For more details, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk/day-tours/**

Railway Touring Company 'Stratford Flyer' from Manchester

ON Saturday, March 11, the Railway Touring Company will run a steam-hauled excursion to Stratford-upon-Avon from Manchester Piccadilly.

A Carnforth-based locomotive will head the train from Manchester to pick up at Stockport and Wilmslow. From here, the tour will take the West Coast Main Line south towards Stafford, calling at Crewe to pick up more passengers before the locomotive is afforded an opportunity to stretch its legs.

At Stafford, the train will take the Birmingham route via Wolverhampton to Birmingham New Street before joining the GWR route from Birmingham to Stratford-Upon-Avon via the North Warwickshire Line.

Passengers will have just under four hours to explore Stratford while the locomotive is serviced, ready for the return trip to Manchester along the same route.

Tickets are available for Premier Dining, First Class and Standard Class travel. For further details and booking, visit www.railwaytouring.net

After failing its fitness-to-run examination before the trip the week before, LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* was back on the 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' on January 28, the first of this year's series to start from Euston. It is seen here heading over Shap. DAVE WILSON

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

LMS 'Black Five' No. 44932 passes Newholme on the approach to Hellifield with the Railway Touring Company's 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' on January 21. When it was approaching Hellifield, the temperature had risen to -3.5˚C. It departed Hellifield 27 minutes late and the stop at Langwathby was omitted to make up time, arriving at Carlisle 10 minutes early at 12.41pm. Heading south, departure was on time at 3.06pm for a spirited run over Shap, crossing the summit one minute early. The locomotive was exchanged for a diesel at Carnforth for the return run to Manchester Victoria, arriving four minutes early. JOHN TITLOW

Northern Belle offers more Settle and Carlisle steam experiences for 2023

By Tim Hobman

NORTHERN Belle has released the 2023 dates for its Settle and Carlisle steam specials. The tours include light brunch on the outward journey and a five-course dinner on the return from Carlisle in the luxury of the Pullman cars.

The first tour is on Saturday, April 1, beginning at York and picking up at Leeds and Wakefield Kirkgate, with just over two hours in Carlisle.

Next up is Saturday, April 22, starting from Telford Central and collecting at Shrewsbury, Wrexham General and Chester, with about two hours in Carlisle.

The tour on April 29 starts from Coventry and picks up at Birmingham International, Wolverhampton, Stafford and Crewe, with 90 minutes in Carlisle.

The May 27 tour starts from Darlington, collecting further passengers at Durham and Newcastle en route to Carlisle for a 90-minute break before the return trip.

New departure station

Further tours are planned for Saturday, June 17 from Leeds, collecting passengers at Huddersfield and Manchester Victoria, and on Saturdays June 24 and July 29, both from Coventry, picking up at Birmingham International, Wolverhampton, Stafford and Crewe. Both give passengers an hour and a half in Carlisle.

The Saturday, August 12 trip from Leeds picks up passengers as before from Huddersfield and Manchester Victoria. Saturday, August 19 sees a new departure station of Lincoln, followed by pick-ups at Gainsborough, Doncaster and Wakefield Kirkgate.

A trip from Hull on Saturday, September 2 picks up at York and Wakefield Kirkgate. It is followed by a departure from Liverpool Lime Street on Saturday, September 16, collecting additional passengers at Newton-le-Willows and Preston.

On Saturday, September 23, a tour leaves from Telford Central, picking up at Shrewsbury, Wrexham General and Chester.

The final tour of the year is on Saturday, October 28, this time from Nottingham, picking up passengers at Derby and Sheffield.

Each tour will include steam traction on the leg from Carnforth to Carlisle and return.

The locomotive will be either Peppercorn A1 No. 60163 *Tornado*, LMS Princess Royal 4-65-0 No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*, or SR Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere*.

➜ For further details about the 2023 calendar and booking information, visit https://northernbelle.co.uk

Earl of Mount Edgcumbe set for comeback

AS we closed for press, GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* was due to return to steam at its Tyseley Locomotive Works home following the completion of its 10-year boiler overhaul.

Depot trials will be followed by main line testing with a light engine run to Stratford-upon-Avon, followed by a loaded test run.

No. 5043 is scheduled to return to main line passenger service on Saturday, March 4, double-heading the Vintage Trains Community Benefit Society shareholders' special to Didcot Railway Centre, where both it and WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* will join with No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* and cosmetically-restored No. 5051 *Drysllwyn Castle* (which last steamed in 2008) in a Castle line-up for the public – the first of two such events to mark this year's centenary of the class, the other being at Tyseley on June 17/18 (see News pages).

No. 5043 will then join the Vintage Trains main line locomotive pool for the 2023 tour programme. Furthermore, No. 5043 is expected to operate several 'Shakespeare Express' trains, including the morning run on Sunday, June 15.

***Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* was due to return to service last June following successful hydraulic and steam tests. However, the failure of the superheater header fitted to stablemate *Clun Castle* required No. 5043's header to be removed and fitted to No. 7029 so the latter could continue in service. No spare four-row superheater exists and so a new drawing, pattern and casting was prepared, a time-consuming and costly process.**

Former Tyseley Chief Mechanical Engineer Bob Meanley prepared the drawings, the pattern for which was digitally printed in Germany, cast at Boro Foundry and approved following the change in pressure vessel regulations.

'Reliable' main line Class 50 *Fearless* now on the market

BR Corporate Blue-liveried Class 50 No. 50050 *Fearless* has been offered for sale by owner Neil Boden. Neil is aiming to raise funds for the expansion of the Boden Rail Engineering Depot at Nottingham Eastcroft. The 'Hoover' is dual-braked for main line use, having hauled several railtours last year.

Fearless was one of the two class members to work 'The 50 Terminator' final railtour in March 1994 from Waterloo to Penzance, with No. 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar*.

Following this railtour, and No. 50050, being surplus to requirements, it was withdrawn after only 26 years' service. It was then moved to St Leonards Depot in Sussex under private ownership before eventual recertification for the main line in 1998.

Neil said that the locomotive is very reliable and has no restrictions for use on the national network.

Its sale comes with the caveat that the locomotive is sold for main line operational use only, giving hope that it will continue to be seen on railtours in the future.

Expressions of interest are to be sent to neil.boden@bodenrailengineering.co.uk

Crew training at Crewe takes the Salop circuit by storm

Words and pictures by John Titlow

WHILE January was expected to be a quiet month on the main line, with only two tours over the Settle and Carlisle route taking place towards the end of the month, Locomotive Services Limited at Crewe delighted linesiders by continuing crew training, this time on the national network.

As reported in issue 300, crew training took place on the Severn Valley Railway last November using B1 4-6-0 No 61306 *Mayflower,* but speed on the heritage line was limited to 25mph. However, it becomes a completely different matter on the main line at 75mph.

More footplate crews are needed to fulfil the ever-growing number of steam tours advertised by the LSL group this year.

It takes several years to train footplate drivers, firemen/women and inspectors in the important skills of handling a powerful steam locomotive at main line speed, and this becomes even more difficult with the different variety of engines, each one having their own specific way of driving and firing.

With the variation of locomotive regions and designs available from LSL, it is important to know the characteristics of each one to avoid problems, and so this is where the superior knowledge of the inspector comes in.

Over four days from January 10-13, *Mayflower* ran a daily circular trip, departing Crewe at about 10am to Chester. From there it headed south through Wrexham into Platform 4 at Shrewsbury before reversing into Cotton Hill yard for water, servicing and a break of about an hour.

Departing Cotton Hill at 12.42pm and running through Platform 7 at Shrewsbury, it then headed via Wellington and Telford to Bushbury Junction Down goods loop for a 34-minute break. Departing at 2.43pm, the return was via the West Coast Main Line under the wires through Stafford to Crewe, arriving at about 4pm.

The B1's train was an odd selection of seven air-braked carriages, comprising of one Mk.1 carmine and cream support coach and six 'raspberry ripple'-liveried Mk.3s and Class 37 No. 37688 *Great Rocks* in tow.

These were the first main line runs this year taking place under the auspices of LSL, and all without passengers.

On January 17, No. 61306 headed with its support coach to Southall, ready to take up duties in the south of England. The following day, LMS 'Black Five' No. 45231 *The Sherwood Forrester* returned to Crewe under its own power with its Mk.1 support coach for routine maintenance after working tours in the south. Two weeks later, it was BR Standard Class 7 Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia*'s turn for crew training from January 24-27.

It ran the same circuit at the same times, with the train strengthened by an additional Mk.3 carriage and No. 37688 again tagged on the rear.

The B1 struggled during the first week due to the coal supply, which was changed for the second week on *Britannia*. Despite this, both locomotives performed well, running at their maximum speed of 75mph where applicable.

Four footplate inspectors were involved, including Bob Hart, who had just celebrated 60 years on the footplate. Two drivers and four firemen underwent main line training, and one driver and one fireman were passed as fully competent.

It takes 200 hours on the footplate to become a passed driver.

Running at line speed with an express lamp headcode, BR Standard Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* approaches Albrighton on January 25.

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Above: With the headlamp code for an empty coaching stock working, B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 Mayflower runs through Wellington station with a crew training train on January 13.

Right: With an express lamp headcode, No. 70000 *Britannia* climbs into Shrewsbury station on January 25.

Below: B1 No. 61306 *Mayflower* approaching Shrewsbury station during crew training on January 13.

Right: No. 70000 *Britannia* flies through Wellington station on the fast line with an express passenger headcode on January 24.

Below right: B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 at Shrewsbury station on January 13.

Nine 'Sunset Steam Express' trips from Steam Dreams

STEAM Dreams' recently announced nine 'Sunset Steam Express' trips start on Thursday, June 22 and then run on Tuesdays July 4, 11, 18, 25 and August 8, 15 and 22.

All start from London Victoria at 6.15pm for a circular trip around the Surrey Hills, returning at 9.45pm. Pullman-style dining, and First and Premium Standard classes are available.

The 2023 Steam Dreams programme starts on March 16, with steam departing from London Victoria at 9.45am to Bath for a 3½ hour break in the city, picking up at Slough and routed via Reading and the Kennet Valley. Return to Victoria is at 8.15pm.

March 25 sees a Euston to Carlisle trip depart behind a vintage electric locomotive at 7.10am, picking up at Milton Keynes, Rugby and Lichfield Trent Valley. At Crewe, steam takes over heading through Blackburn before running north over the Settle and Carlisle line. The return leg is via Shap to Crewe for a motive power change, before arriving back at Euston at 10.30pm.

Split day tours are beginning to become much more of a feature, giving passengers greater options and reducing the time spent on a train.

On April 22, the day is split into two tours. The morning steam tour starts at London Victoria at 8.45am, then runs through Surrey and Hampshire following the London and South Western route via Staines and Woking to Winchester, arriving at 11.10am and giving a full day to explore the city before departing at 6.15pm to Victoria, which is reached at 9.45pm.

Meanwhile, after the train is serviced, it departs Winchester behind steam at 1pm for an afternoon journey entitled 'The Test Valley Scenic Tour', down the South West Main Line to Eastleigh to collect passengers, and then through Southampton towards Romsey and Salisbury before reversing and returning to Winchester at 4pm.

Various options are offered as a destination on April 26, starting behind steam from London Victoria at 8am for Barrow Hill, arriving at 1.30pm, and picking up at Bletchley and Ridgemont.

The first destination en route is the Ecclesbourne Railway, followed by Crich Tramway Village and Chesterfield for Chatsworth House. Return is by diesel to Victoria at 10.30pm.

May 24 sees an 8.45am departure from London Victoria to Bath via Basingstoke, Salisbury and Westbury, returning at 9.45pm.

For more details, visit Steam Dreams' website at www.steamdreams.co.uk/tours.php

Tributes to Northern Ireland's only qualified steam driver

By Hugh Dougherty

TRIBUTES have poured in from around Ireland and further afield following the sudden death on January 16 of Noel Playfair, Northern Ireland Railway's only qualified steam driver.

The 62-year-old father and grandfather was taken ill while on duty on a light diesel engine movement at Portadown station. Despite the efforts of fellow railway staff and paramedics, Noel died in Craigavon General Hospital.

Noel was widely regarded as Mr Steam throughout Ireland, and had been firing main line steam trains for the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland since 1987, passing out as a steam driver in 1996.

He joined Northern Ireland Railways as a conductor-guard in 1979, qualifying as a diesel driver in 1981. As one of the most-experienced and longest-serving NIR staff, Noel had planned to complete 50 years of service on the railway before retiring and was looking forward to starting training the next generation of steam drivers for the company.

His son Chris, also a railwayman, said: "My father was a railway hero. He was one of the most experienced and longest-serving drivers on NIR and simply loved steam.

"As well as driving for the RPSI from its Whitehead base, he would also step in to fire when Irish Rail was short of firemen for RPSI trains south of the border, and this way he reached many parts of the Irish railway system on the footplate.

"But he always said that the highlight of his career took place on June 28, 2016, when he drove 4-4-0 No. 85 *Merlin*, hauling the Royal Train carrying The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to the official opening of the new Bellarena station platforms.

"My dad was so excited that he didn't sleep the night before, but everything went off perfectly. He was presented to The Queen and the duke, and was immensely proud."

RPSI chairman Dr Peter Rigney said: "It is with the greatest sadness that we learnt of the death of our great friend and colleague Noel Playfair. For the past couple of decades, Noel was really Mr Steam NI, ever available to help the society operate its annual programme of steam trains, often at personal cost and inconvenience.

"He was always willing to step in, for example, firing our steam trains to Rosslare and Maynooth when there was difficulty rostering a full crew in Dublin.

"Noel Playfair was a professional engineman and a great friend of the society. He will be greatly missed and the society expresses its sincere condolences to his family and friends."

In exalted company: Noel answers questions from the late Duke of Edinburgh and The Queen after driving their royal steam train to Bellarena on June 28, 2016. CHARLES P FRIEL/RPSI

'Committed'

Richard Knox, Translink head of rail services, said: "We were shocked to hear of Noel's sudden passing. He was renowned across the business as an enthusiastic and committed member of our railway team. With more than 43 years' service, 40 as a train driver, he often spoke positively about his role.

"Many will remember him as the royal steam train driver for The Queen in 2016. Noel will be much missed by the Translink family and we would like to extend our heartfelt sympathies to his family and friends at this sad time."

Joe Cassels, railway author, RPSI member and personal friend of Noel, added: "Noel learned his craft from the last of the steam-era drivers on Northern Ireland Railways and was a first-class engineman, one of the most experienced in the British Isles, who relished being at the controls of a steam locomotive.

"After firing for some years, he passed out as a steam locomotive driver in 1996 and always continued that tradition of mutual respect between enginemen and serious enthusiasts which has characterised steam railways in Ireland over many generations."

An online appeal to raise funds for Noel's family reached its £5000 target days after his death. Noel was buried on January 25 in his native Carrickfergus, with donations made at the service going at the behest of his family to his beloved RPSI.

Mark of respect

The loss of the only qualified steam engine driver on Northern Ireland Railways raises questions about the ability to run steam trains in 2023, but Translink said it would not consider arrangements nor make any comment on the matter at this time as a mark of respect for Noel. "The matter will be considered at a later and more appropriate time," said a spokesman.

Noel Playfair in his NIR steam driver's uniform beside the plaque unveiled by the late Queen at Bellarena station. Noel said that driving the Royal Train was the greatest moment in his long railway career. TRANSLINK

Noel Playfair takes a break on the footplate of Great Northern Railway of Ireland 4-4-0 No. 85 *Merlin*. ROBIN MORTON/RPSI

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Duke of Gloucester takes strides towards 2023 return

RAPID progress to have unique BR Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* back on the main line later this year is being made at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

The owning BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust has arranged a meeting with Vintage Trains on February 28 to talk about including the *Duke* in its future programmes.

"This is a significant development as it confirms its availability from Tyseley for hire in the second half of 2023," said trustees chairman Trevor Tuckley.

Inside the works, the cab has been fitted and bolted up to the locomotive while work is underway to refit the motion.

The cab back on BR Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*. BRC8SLT

The No. 71000 support crew working parties at Tyseley have continued every Wednesday and Saturday – in all weathers! Crew member Richard Barron is seen working during a sub-zero period in January. BRC8SLT

Work continues

All tyres have been sanded, cleaned, polished and greased, all the crank pins have had their protective coating cleaned off and greased, and all the connecting rods have been cleaned. The connecting rod bushes have been removed and remetalled and are being machined; the rods should be ready shortly and then reassembly can commence.

The boiler has been blanked off ahead of the hydraulic test which Tyseley has agreed to undertake in March. The hydraulic test will be followed by the steam test, which will comprise several cycles to allow the boiler to cool down between each cycle. The welding of the ends to the main steam pipes has been deemed unacceptable and new ends have been machined and are currently awaiting delivery to Tyseley. The old ends will subsequently be cut off the pipes and the new ends welded on.

Work continues on the Caprotti boxes, and the overhaul of the live steam injector and clack valves will be completed shortly. The gauges – steam, vacuum and air – have been tested, recalibrated and returned to Tyseley.

An order for the boiler lagging, which will cost about £3000, is to be placed, with the lead time around 18 weeks.

Regarding the tender, new pins have been made for the brake gear and fitting of the brake gear is now finished, apart from fitting the overhauled steam brake cylinder which will be refitted nearer to the running time.

Profiling deferred

It has been agreed with Tyseley that tyre reprofiling is not required for going out on the main line this year and will be deferred and undertaken during a winter maintenance period.

The new support coach battery cables are fixed and clamped in place and the batteries have been connected. The inverter is now working and charging the batteries, but a 240v system is yet to be installed.

The water tank has been filled and tested, and pipework to the pump and drain cocks has been installed. Window limiters are required for the droplights before the coach can run on the main line and these will be fitted shortly, based on those fitted to Vintage Trains' coaches

Central Door Locking will be fitted at some point in the future, although not mandatory this year. Vintage Trains has produced a design which is likely to cost about £10,000 per coach.

In February, personal track safety training and certification was being carried out for some members of the support crew, who will then be able to go out with their Vintage Trains counterparts to gain vital experience of the requirements for main line running.

➜ To join the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust, telephone Dave Oliver on 07768 847272.

Euston mural honours Britain's first female train driver

By Robin Jones

A GIANT mural celebrating the first woman to be accepted to train as a driver in the UK had been erected at Euston station.

Karen Harrison made history when she applied in 1977 to BR as 'K Harrison' and obtained an interview from bosses who believed they were seeing a young man.

Avanti West Coast, which runs high-speed trains between London, Glasgow and Edinburgh, commissioned Manchester-based street artist Akse to create the work as part of its commitment to increasing the number of female driver recruits. It will be on display until February 23.

The poster reads: "Meet Karen Harrison. In 1979, she became a train driver. It was a big deal. Today it isn't. We're recruiting now. Visit our website to be one of them."

In 2022, women made up 18% of driver applications at Avanti West Coast compared to 12.5% in 2020, and this year will be see the company's biggest ever driver recruitment push. The aim is to increase the number of women applying to enrol as trainee drivers to 20%.

Karen, who was born in 1960, died in 2011. Her family gave their blessing to the campaign, which challenges the stereotype that train driving is a job for men.

In 1997, Harrison told a BBC documentary about the challenges she faced: "It was open warfare. People wouldn't work with me, people put notes up about me, and my locker was defaced. Graphic pornography went up in the mess rooms. I've never wanted to be pushed out. I knew if I'd left the railway, I'd have let these people win and what was happening was wrong and it wasn't fair. It's now put me in a position where when it happens to other women, I now know how to help them."

The mural at Euston station which has been commissioned by Avanti West Coast to honour Karen Harrison, one of the first female train drivers in the UK. AWC

She later retired and studied law at Oxford University.

Marie, Karen's sister, said: "Karen was a trailblazer in the rail industry, in the trade union movement and beyond. She applied her determination and formidable intelligence to achieve her goals, and her family is enormously proud that this legacy has an impact today.

"Akse's mural captures that independence of spirit and fierce determination not only to secure her own place in the rail industry, but to also ensure that other women could follow her path. We hope that she continues to inspire women to consider train driving, the job she loved and fought for so passionately."

Akse, who has previously painted murals of football Marcus Rashford and fundraiser Captain Sir Tom Moore, said: "I am incredibly proud to be involved in highlighting Karen's achievements on the railway.

"Painting such a pioneering character is a true honour and it's been amazing to hear stories from her family about how she adapted and overcame barriers on a daily basis."

IN BRIEF

New transport hub will be built on the Dartmoor Line

THE Government's Levelling Up fund is to provide £13.4-million to build a new station on the Dartmoor Line.

The newly allocated funds will be used by West Devon Borough Council to develop an integrated transport hub on the eastern edge of Okehampton, providing an interchange with the A30 trunk route from Exeter and encouraging more passengers to use what was in part previously the Dartmoor Railway heritage line.

The first route to be reopened under the Department for Transport's Restoring Your Railway campaign, it reopened to regular passengers in November 2021, almost half a century after BR closed Okehampton station.

As reported in *HR* issue 301, the revived railway has doubled expectations, carrying more than 258,479 passengers in its first year.

The new platform will include a passenger lift, cycle facilities to serve the popular Granite Way cyclepath nearby, and electric vehicle charging points.

Council leader Coun Neil Jory said the local authority was "absolutely delighted" by the funding, with the new hub set to make travelling to Okehampton much easier.

Extra Midland Pullman heads for Llandudno

AN extra day trip has been added to Locomotive Services Limited's Midland Pullman calendar. On May 1, it will set off from Bournemouth at 5.40am for a run across the country to Llandudno for the resort's Victorian Extravaganza festivities.

Picking up at Brockenhurst, Southampton, Eastleigh, Romsey, Salisbury, Warminster, Westbury, Bradford-on-Avon and Bath Spa, it returns to Bournemouth at 11.30pm.

For more details, visit https://midlandpullman.com/

Head for Aberdeen behind overhauled *Tornado*

TICKETS for The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's 'The Aberdonian' trips from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling behind Peppercorn 4-6-2 No. 60163 *Tornado* are now on sale.

Trains from Edinburgh to Aberdeen will run on Thursdays July 20 and 27, Saturdays July 29 and August 19, Thursdays August 31 and September 7, and Saturday, September 16.

The 'Clyde Aberdonian' from Glasgow and Stirling will run on Saturday, July 22 and Thursday, September 14.

For more details and to book tickets, visit www.a1steam.com

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Last chance to visit freight-only lines?

by Tim Hobman

SATURDAY, April 8 will see UK Railtours run 'The Last Chance?' – a charter designed around forgotten tracks and so named because some of the freight lines involved may become inaccessible to passenger trains in the future.

A lack of route knowledge and a reduction of regular traffic may lead to these lines no longer being so highly maintained. Working in partnership with DB Cargo, UK Railtours offers the opportunity to travel over these lines while you still can.

Starting from Finsbury Park, hauled by a Class 90 electric locomotive and picking up additional passengers at Potters Bar, Stevenage, Peterborough and Retford, the train will head north towards Doncaster.

Swapping the locomotive in the Doncaster area for a Class 60 and Class 66 in top-and-tail formation, the tour continues out of Doncaster via Skellow on the freight line. More unusual lines are then covered via Scunthorpe to Barnetby for a brief stop. Following this, the tour will continue east along the route of the former Grimsby & Immingham Electric Railway, with the hope of getting permission to traverse the retained emergency connection route via Pyewipe Road through industrial lines around Grimsby's port.

Heading back to the main line, the excursion will head for Gainsborough Central and then the coal yards of Worksop where stock is stored, and then on to Sheffield for the Deepcar branch towards Stockbridge steelworks. Returning towards Doncaster, the tour is planned to take the South Yorkshire Joint Line which used to serve local collieries. Once back in Doncaster Yard, the locomotives will be swapped back to electric traction for the journey home, setting down passengers on route.

There are options of First Class Dining, First Class and Standard Class tickets. However, dining is not available to passengers joining the train at Retford due to the later pick-up and early set down of passengers.

On Saturday, April 1, 'The Snowdonian' from Euston will pick up at Watford Junction, Milton Keynes Central and Rugby before heading north along the West Coast Main Line before diverging at Crewe and heading via Chester along the North Wales coast to Llandudno. There, coaches will be available to take passengers to one of two off-train options, the first being the chance to travel the length of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways. Beginning at either Blaenau Ffestiniog or Caernarfon, those who take this option will travel the full length of both lines before arriving at either and being transported by coach back to the waiting train to return to London.

The second off-train option is a roughly four-hour visit to the National Trust's Bodnant Gardens, before returning to Llandudno for about an hour of free time prior to returning to London.

There is no obligation to take advantage of the off-train options and those content to stay in Llandudno can explore the resort or take a local bus to Conwy or Colwyn Bay.

For further details, visit www.ukrailtours.com

Class 56 No. 56081 heads UK Railtours' twice-rearranged 'Farewell to Grids' tour through Cossington on January 14, with No. 56098 on the rear. The trip provided a last opportunity to see GB Railfreight Class 56s in their current form before withdrawal for conversion and refurbishment. MARTYN TATTAM

Statesman's spring day trip to the Ffestiniog

STATESMAN Rail is to run a day trip with an optional excursion on the Ffestiniog Railway.

The May 10 'Snowdonia Statesman' starts at Chesterfield at 6.10am, picking up at Alfreton, Ilkeston, East Midlands Parkway, Loughborough, Leicester, Narborough, Hinckley and Nuneaton, before proceeding to Llandudno where the train reverses before heading up the Conwy Valley through Snowdonia to either Betws-y-Coed or Blaenau Ffestiniog where passenger may board the heritage line if they wish.

The tour returns to Chesterfield at 11.05pm.

The 'Dorset Coast Statesman' on May 20 leaves Whitchurch at 6am, picking up at Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford, Codsall, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley, Birmingham New Street, Solihull, Dorridge, Warwick Parkway and Leamington Spa. The final destination is Weymouth for a two-hour break, but there are options to alight at Bournemouth and Poole. The trip is back in Whitchurch at 11.20pm.

On May 31, the 'Yorkshire Coast Statesman' sets off from Cardiff at 5.45am at Newport and collects passengers at Cwmbran, Abergavenny, Hereford, Leominster, Ludlow, Craven Arms, Church Stretton, Shrewsbury, Whitchurch and Crewe. After passing through York, the final destination is Scarborough for a three-hour break, returning at 11.20pm.

Visit www.statesmanrail.com for details.

Meanwhile, Intercity, which also runs under the Locomotive Services Limited banner, has reported that its February 24-26 'Push-Pull Scottish Tour' from Crewe, as reported last issue, has sold out.

The tour will re-enact the push-pull trains which ran Edinburgh and Glasgow from 1979 and will run behind on of the original locomotives, Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*.

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Grant funding to bring historic waiting room back to life

ONE of the world's first stations is set to be improved as part of Liverpool's recent £20 million Levelling Up fund award from the Government.

The 1830-built Grade II-listed Earlestown station's waiting room on the Liverpool-bound platform is the oldest station building in the world still in passenger service, although this is now limited to providing shelter from the rain under its canopy. The building itself has not been used since 1980 and is currently derelict.

Earlestown is also one of only two triangular railway stations left in the UK, the other being at Shipley, in West Yorkshire. Earlestown's triangular track layout represents the world's oldest junction between two passenger railways.

Open for all

The grant aid will provide the station with several new features, including lifts to make it fully accessible, and a café, while bringing the historic waiting room back into full use.

The 'triangle' area between platforms will also be cleared, creating room for open space, and potentially allotments.

Earlestown station served the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, the world's first inter-city line. The National Transport Trust last year installed a red wheel heritage plaque at the site marking its historical importance.

Nearby on the line towards Liverpool is the Sankey Viaduct, the first main line railway viaduct which crosses the Sankey Canal, and where one of the earliest passenger railways crosses the first canal of the Industrial Revolution.

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SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

On a strike day for scheduled passenger services, LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea*, as No. 45627 *Sierra Leone*, is routed via the Up fast line past Atherstone with the 5V42 8am Carnforth to Southall West Coast Railway depot on February 1. WCR's Class 47 No. 47802 is at the rear of the train, acting as insurance, due to this move also being a test run for *Galatea* following repairs. GRAHAM NUTTALL

Another busy calendar for Saphos Trains tours

By John Titlow

SAPHOS Trains began its busy 2023 tour programme on February 11 with 'The Lakelander' from Rugby. Scheduled for diesel haulage to Preston for a locomotive change to steam for a run over the Settle and Carlisle line, the return was via the Cumbrian coast.

On March 1, St David's Day, the 'Welsh Marches Express' will run from Holyhead to Cardiff and back, starting at 6.10am and finishing at 10.20pm. Steam takes over at Crewe for a run over the Welsh Marches.

Two of the popular 'Golden Arrows' follow. The first, on March 4, which has limited places available, starts at Birmingham International at 6.20am returning at 11.15pm, picking up at Coventry, Rugby, Long Buckby, Northampton, Milton Keynes Central, Leighton Buzzard, Hemel Hempstead and Watford Junction to London.

The second, on April 1, is fully booked. It starts from Bristol Temple Meads 6am, returning at 11.10pm.

Both trains are diesel-hauled to West London, where steam takes over in the form of either BR Standard Class 7 Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* or Bulleid West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton*. After running through London, they join part of the original 'Golden Arrow' boat train route through Kent for a three-hour break in Canterbury before heading on to Dover, along the Folkstone Warren and back to West London.

The 'Cotswold Explorer' on April 8 leaves Norwich at 6.35am, returning at 11.55pm. It heads east into West London, where steam takes over to Worcester for a three-hour break before returning via Sapperton.

Starting in Rugby at 6.20am on April 15 and returning at 10.40pm, the 'Great Western Envoy' picks up along the West Coast Main Line at the same stations as the above mentioned 'Golden Arrow', before steam takes over in West London for a run down the Great Western Main Line to Bath and Bristol.

North and south

A northbound 'Welsh Marches Express' on May 10 departs Paignton at 6am for Shrewsbury, picking up at Torquay, Newton Abbot, Dawlish, Exeter St David's, Tiverton Parkway, Taunton, Bridgwater, Yatton, and Bristol Temple Meads, and returning at 11.30pm.

A May 17 trip over the Settle and Carlisle route starts from Crewe at 7am, returning at 10pm, with pick-ups at Chester, Frodsham, Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Euxton Balshaw Lane, Blackburn and Clitheroe. The trip is steam-hauled throughout from Crewe, and unusually it is both north and southbound over this ever-popular route.

May 20 sees 'The Lakelander' depart from Leeds at 6.50am, heading to Carlisle for a two-hour break. Collecting stations are Leeds, Dewsbury, Brighouse, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Rochdale, Manchester Victoria, Bolton, Chorley and Preston.

The outward leg runs over Shap, returning via the Cumbrian Coast Line, and is back at 10.55pm.

All tours in the north have a choice of steam from the Locomotive Services Limited pool of either LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Scots Guardsman*, LMS 'Black Five' No. 45231, *Britannia* or A4 Pacific No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* in its new blue livery.

Trips in the south are currently headed by either No. 34046 or B1 4-6-0 No. 61306.

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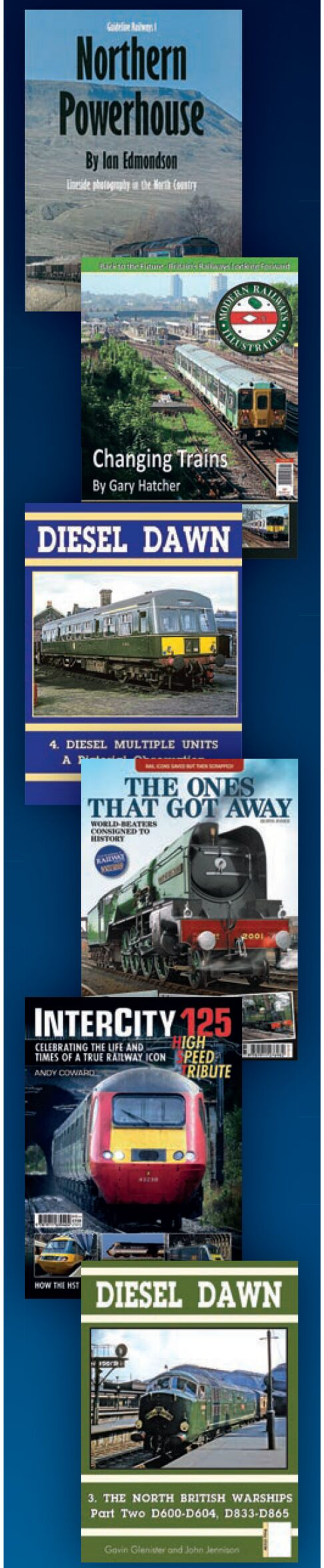

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The very popular Vintage Trains Polar Express season continued after two days of cancellations due to national rail strikes. On December 20, 2022, five round trips from Birmingham Moor Street to Dorridge were timetabled, the first being a new midday departure. This earlier trip opened up some more locations, as here when WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* caught some low winter light on a return trip approaching Tyseley station. After a nervous wait for the photographers assembled on the overbridge, the relief was palpable as the lights turned to green right through the section just moments before the Castle came into view. With Kev Cronin on the regulator, the rest was never in doubt. ALAN CORFIELD

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WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

The information in this list was correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise you confirm details of a particular trip with the promoter concerned.

FEBRUARY

18 'The Cotswold Venturer'
London Paddington, Worcester Shrub Hill and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

18 Settle & Carlisle Circular
Circular tour from Chester-le-Street. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Loco: Class 47 TBA. SR

18 'Medway Valley Venturer'
Hastings, Faversham and return.
DEMU: 1001. HD

22 Settle & Carlisle Pullman
Potters Bar, Carlisle and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

24-26 'The Push-Pull Scottish Tour'
Three-day tour of Scotland utilising push-pull fitted stock. Departs Crewe (24), Edinburgh Waverley (25), Inverness (26).
Loco: 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*. IC

MARCH

1 'The Welsh Marches Express'
Holyhead, Cardiff and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Cardiff.
Loco: TBA. ST

4 'The Cheshireman'
London Euston, Chester and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

4 'The Golden Arrow'
Birmingham International, Canterbury and return. Steam-hauled from Watford Junction to Canterbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

4 'The Whitby Jet'
Aviemore, Whitby and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

11 'The Stratford Flyer'
Manchester Piccadilly, Stratford-upon-Avon and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

11 'The South Wales Explorer'
Dorridge, Cardiff, Cwmbargoed and return.
Loco: 37403 + TBA. VT

16 London to Bath
London Victoria, Bath and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. SD

17 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. BEL

18 'The Great Eastern'
Crewe, Norwich, Great Yarmouth and return.
Loco: 40145. PT

18 'The Second Bite'
Derby, Whitby and return.
Loco: 50008 *Thunderer* + TBA. BLS

18 The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express
London Euston, Appleby and return. Steam hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: 86259 *Les Ross* + Steam TBA. RTC

18 Castles Up The Lickey
Birmingham Moor Street, Worcester and return. One trip each, AM and PM.
Locos: 7029 *Clun Castle*, 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* (AM/PM TBC). VT

18-20 'West Highland Pullman'
Three-day tour of Scotland and West Highland line. Departs from Finsbury Park (18) and Fort William (19/20).
Loco: 43406 + 43055 (HST). MP

25 'The Avon Ambassador'
Hastings, Bristol Temple Meads and return.
DEMU: 1001. HD

25 Settle and Carlisle Steam Special
Coventry, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth.
Loco: TBA. NB

25 'The Edinburgh Flyer'
York, Edinburgh and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

25 'The Mancunian'
London Euston, Manchester Piccadilly and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland*. RTC

25 London to Settle & Carlisle Railway
London Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Carlisle.
Locos: TBA. SD

25 'The Whitby Jet'
Dundee, Whitby and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

26 'The Shakespeare Express'
Birmingham Moor Street, Stratford-upon-Avon and return.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

31 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. BEL

APRIL

1 'The Golden Arrow'
Bristol Temple Meads, Canterbury West and return. Steam-hauled from London to Canterbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

1 'The Snowdonian'
London Euston, Llandudno Junction and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. UKRT

1 'The Stratford Flyer'
Norwich, Stratford-upon-Avon and return. Steam-hauled between Norwich (outward) and Peterborough (return).
Loco: 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland*. RTC

1 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

1-3 'Lord of the Isles Pullman'
Three-day tour Scotland. Departs Paignton (1) and Inverness (2/3).
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

8 'The Cumbrian Fellsman'
Leamington Spa, Appleby and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. PT

8 'The Cotswold Explorer'
Norwich, Worcester Shrub Hill and return. Steam-hauled from West London.
Loco: TBA. ST

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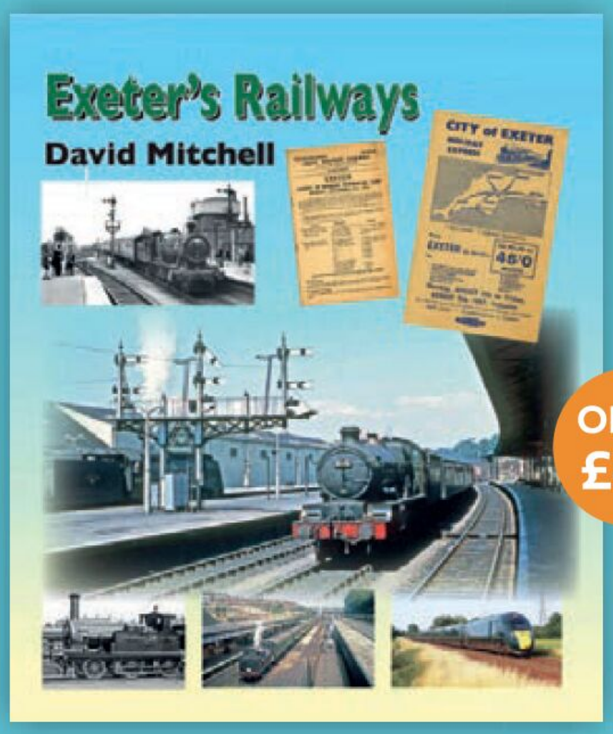

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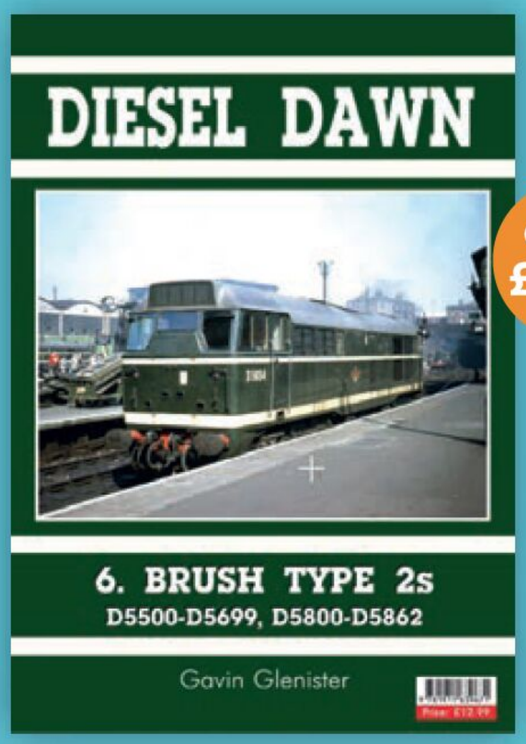

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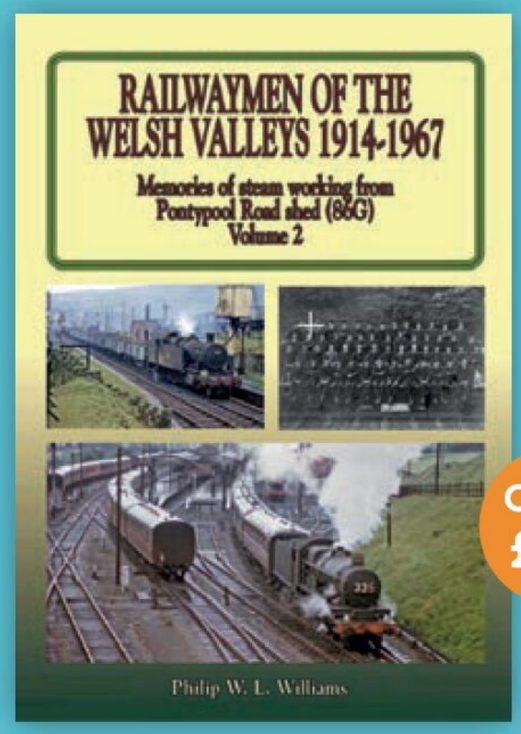

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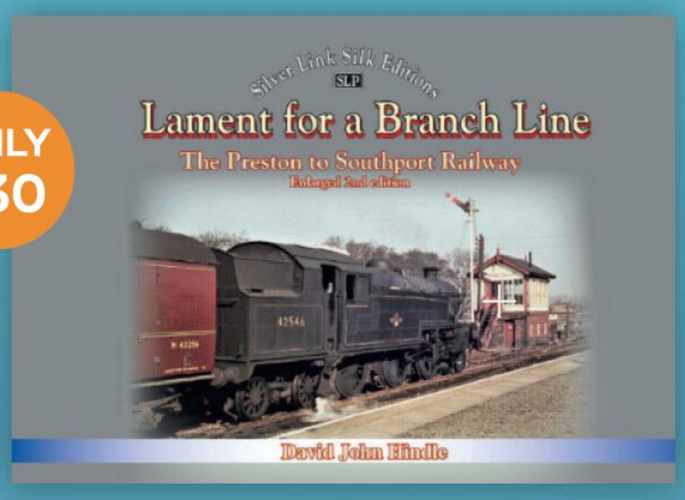

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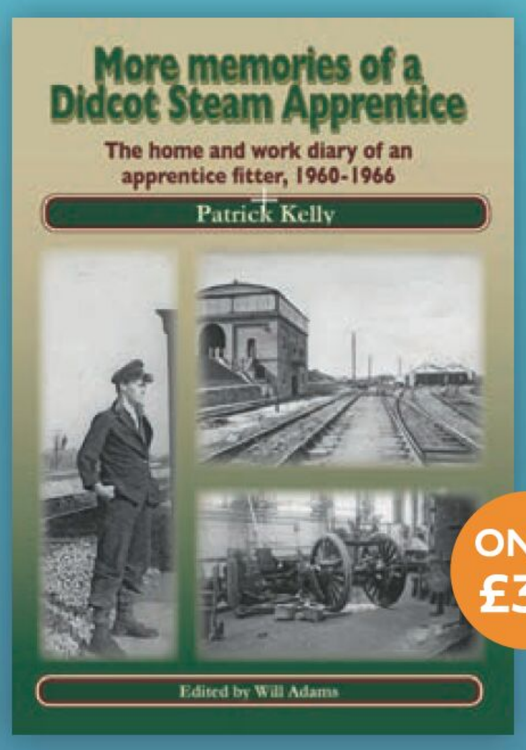

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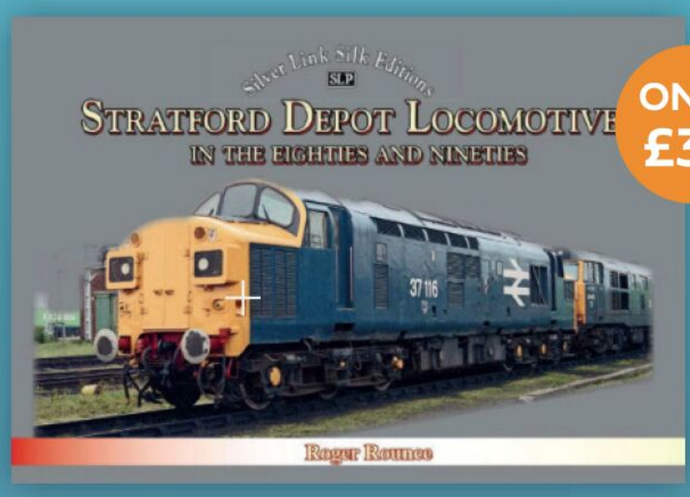

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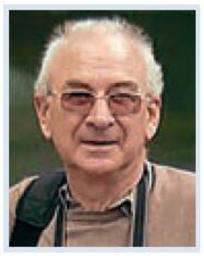
LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



In this latest column, Don Benn looks at LMS Class 5s: No. 45212 on the Jacobite from Mallaig and No. 45231 on 'The Spitfire' in 2006, plus 5XP No. 45699 *Galatea* on the Settle and Carlisle line in 2015 and a very fast run with Class 47 No. 47406 from Havant to Guildford in 1986.

I STILL have more runs behind Merchant Navy Class pacific No. 35018 *British India Line* to cover but thought that this time I would look at the work of other locos, should readers be suffering from Bulleid burnout. No. 35028 *Clan Line* is also undergoing a substantial amount of repair and is unlikely to return for some months.

So, we start by returning to Scotland for the Jacobite from Mallaig to Fort William on Saturday, October 15, 2022. The outward journey was covered in *Heritage Railway* issue 300. Once again I am indebted to Sandy Smeaton for details of the performance and his superb images of the 'Jacobite' in the autumn of 2022. Table One shows the section from Morar to Glenfinnan, and Sandy takes up the story: "On the return trip, Nathan Lightowler, also from the Strathspey, took over the shovel. At Mallaig the normal Sprinter services use Platform 2 and the 'Jacobite' Platform 1, so it is necessary to re-set the points after it has moved out to the station throat. Once done, the short climb to Morar Summit was topped at 25½ and we stopped at Morar in 10½ minutes from the start. Creag Mhor, at the south end of Keppoch Moss, was passed at 31, falling to 20 at Kinloid summit after 1½ miles of 1-in-90/50. The booked stop at Arisaig was omitted, passing the station at 15½ and rising to 30 before a minimum of 20½ on the 1-in-50 at MP30.

"After dropping down Beasdale Bank and round Loch Dubh, Polnish Summit was topped at 24½. The start of the eastbound climb to Glenfinnan Summit, MP20 at Essan, was passed at 32, falling to 15½ at MP18 and then to 13 at the Summit before running down to Glenfinnan stopping in 50m 40s from Arisaig. The last leg running along Loch Eil was marginally faster than outward, at a steady 40.

"After observing all the restrictions approaching Fort William, arrival was 14½ minutes early. No. 45212's minimum speeds on the two major climbs are at the lower end of the spectrum (together with the other Black Fives with seven on), but cautious driving during October's railhead conditions was the wise option. During the entire out and back trip I heard only one slight slip on restarting from Mallaig after resetting the points. This was a fine, competent run."

TABLE ONE: MORAR TO GLENFINNAN

Date	Saturday, October 15, 2022
Train	2.10pm Mallaig to Fort William
Loco	LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No. 45212, tender first
Load	Seven coaches, 258 tons tare 285 tons gross
Driver	M Earnshaw
Fireman	N Lightowler
Recorder	S Smeaton GPS from fifth coach
Weather	Overcast with occasional light rain

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Morar	0.00	0.00	00	00	2 early
McClean's O/A	0.36		01	41	21½
MP 36	0.79		02	34	31/28½
MP 35	1.79		04	33	31/32½
Creag Mhor	2.79		06	28	31
MP 33½	3.29		07	27	29½
MP 33	3.79		08	35	24½
Kinloid	4.04		09	15	21½/20
MP 32½	4.29		09	58	23½
Arisaig	4.76	12/16	11	30	15½*
MP 31½	5.29		13	03	28
MP 31	5.79		14	13	25/30
MP 30½	6.29		15	19	24½/20½/32
Beasdale	8.18		19	23	28½/30½/27
MP 27	9.79		22	41	30/31
Arnabol Viaduct	10.54		24	13	29½
Polnish Summit	11.54		26	28	24½/29½
Lochailort	12.95		29	32	26½
MP 23	13.79		31	11	33½
MP 22	14.79		33	11	29½/30½
MP 21	15.79		35	13	28
MP 20	16.79		37	11	32
MP 19	17.79		39	12	25½
MP 18½	18.29		40	35	20
MP 18	18.79		42	12	15½
Summit	19.29		44	16	13
MP 17	19.79		45	46	28/33
MP 16	20.79		47	41	30½/33
Glenfinnan	22.03	55.00	50	40	6¼ early

*brakes or speed restriction

Jubilees on the long drag

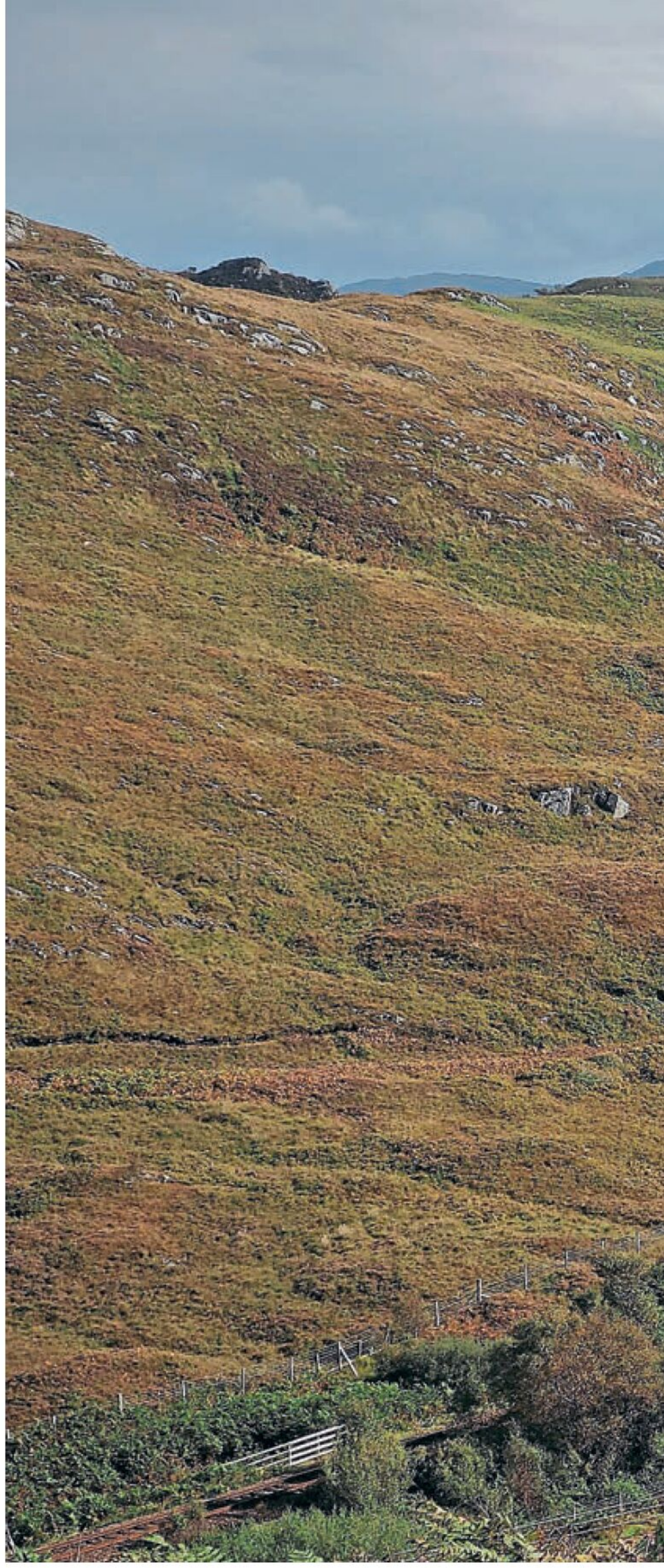
I have found a run from Hellifield to Carlisle in 2015 with No. 45699 *Galatea* with just eight coaches timed by Sandy Smeaton and thought it was worth including as it stands comparison with my run from 1966, also with a Jubilee on eight coaches (*Heritage Railway* 201), which was then the normal load in the last days of Holbeck Jubilees on the Leeds to Carlisle trains, notably the overnight service from St Pancras to Glasgow and the 10.17am from Leeds.

Table Two shows the competent performance by *Galatea* in the capable hands of driver Gordon Hodgson and fireman Chris Holmes.

Sandy comments: "This was the second Compass steam tour of the year and started from Rugby, picking up the same steam path as the previous week at Preston. Nos. 47760 and 47580 topped-and-tailed seven coaches into Preston on time, but the departure was delayed by about half an hour as the goods loop, where the incoming steam locomotive from Carnforth normally sits and tops up with water, was out of use. No. 45699 was held near Fylde Junction and did not back onto the train until 10.21am. The load, including support coach, was eight, totalling 290 tons tare and about 305 gross, similar to a 1966/67 S&C steam load."

"The schedule to Appleby was very generous and 11 minutes were recovered by Hellifield, the engine apparently steaming well and dealing with the climb to Pleasington with little difficulty. The minimum on the 1-in-101 to MP6¼ was 26½ m/h. A more than adequate 52 minutes were allowed for watering allowing a departure from Hellifield only one late. The maximum in the dip at Settle Junctionb was 64. Two miles of climbing 1-in-100 brought speed down to 52 at Settle, and the next 1¾ miles to 41½ at Stainforth.

"The small respite in the gradient at Helwith Bridge brought a recovery to 39½ from 34½. As we climbed away from the relative shelter of the flanks of Ingleborough, the effect of the wind took



COMPARISONS

Date	01.04.2015	20.08.1966
Loco	45699	45675
Load	305 tons	265 tons
Settle Jct to Blea Moor	24m 00s	22m 38s
	35.0 mph	37.2 mph
MP 239 to 246	12m 58s	12m 22s
	32.4 mph	34.0 mph

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Above: BR(M) No. 44871 leads the 2Y68 'Jacobite' from Fort William at Morar Summit on September 23, 2022. SANDY SMEATON

Below: 'Black 5' No. 45231 *The Sherwood Forester* passes Paddock Wood, hauling the 8.25am 'Spitfire' from Victoria to Faversham on September 2, 2006. DON BENN

TABLE TWO: HELLIFIELD TO APPLEBY

Date	Wednesday, April 1, 2015
Train	6.24am Rugby to Carlisle
Loco	LMS 5XP 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea*
Load	Eight coaches, 290 tons tare 305 tons gross
Driver	Gordon Hodgson
Fireman	Chris Holmes
Recorder	S Smeaton
Position	Fifth coach
Weather	Heavy rain and strong-to-gale west wind

	miles	Sched	mins	secs	speed
Hellifield Loop	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 late
Long Preston	1.13		03	22	41½
Settle Junction	3.13	9.00	05	35	63½/64
Settle	5.13		07	40	52
Stainforth Siding	6.88		09	57	41½
MP 239	7.63		11	05	38½
MP 240	8.63		12	43	34½
Helwith Bridge	9.13		13	35	35/34½
MP 241	9.63		14	26	38/39½
Horton	11.13	26.00	16	51	34½
MP 243	11.63		17	45	31½/31/33
MP 244	12.63		19	38	31
Selside	13.38		21	11	27½
MP 245½	14.13		22	53	25½
MP 246	14.63		24	03	25½
MP 246½	15.13		25	13	26
Ribblehead	15.88	38.00	26	49	31
Blea Moor	17.13	42.00	29	35	24½
MP 249	17.63		30	47	26
Blea Moor Tunnel	17.88		31	31	˜/46½
MP 252	20.63		35	36	41
Dent	22.03		37	54	29*
MP 255	23.63		40	14	53
Garsdale	25.31	53.00	42	01	56/60/51½
Ais Gill	28.38		45	24	55/60/58/61½
MP 262	30.63		47	43	60½/61½
Mallerstang	31.63		48	57	58½/57/62
Kirkby Stephen	35.21	66.00	52	17	59½/61½
Crosby Garrett	38.38		55	24	60½
Griseburn	40.63		57	36	64/60
Ormside	43.63		60	34	61½
Appleby	45.88	79.00	64	14	14 early

TABLE THREE: GILLINGHAM TO FAVERSHAM

Date	Sunday, September 3, 2006
Train	3.59pm Gillingham to Faversham
Loco	LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No. 45231
Load	10 coaches, 334½ tons tare plus 31602 dead, total 442½ tons tare 460 tons gross
Driver	Pete Roberts, ex-Nine Elms
Weather	Fine and warm
Recorder	Don Benn, stopwatch and mileposts

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Gillingham	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 late
MP 37	1.10		03	18	33
Rainham	3.00		06	02	48½
MP 40	4.10		07	31	50
Newington	5.70		09	12	54/30½*sigs
West Jct	8.00		12	49	44
East Jct	8.20		13	13	49
Sittingbourne	8.80	14.00	13	47	56½
MP 46	10.10		15	08	61
MP 47	11.10		16	05	66½
Teynham	12.00		16	54	60
MP 50	14.10		19	19	44
Faversham	16.05	31.00	23	32	6½ early

* brakes or speed restriction

Driver Pete Roberts, a former Nine Elms engineman, on No. 45231 at Faversham on September 3, 2006. DON BENN

TABLE FOUR: HAVANT TO GUILDFORD

Date	Saturday, September 13, 1986
Train	1.02pm Portsmouth Harbour to Manchester Piccadilly
Loco	Brush Type 4 2580 bhp Class 47 No. 47406
Load	9 MK 2E coaches, 297½ tons tare 320 tons gross
Weather	Heavy rain
Recorder	Don Benn, stopwatch and mileposts

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Havant	0.00	0.00	00	00	6½ late
MP 64½	1.95		03	01	61
Rowlands Castle	3.20		04	20	49*
MP 61	5.45		06	38	64/65½
MP 59	7.45		08	33	58
MP 58	8.45		09	35	56½
MP 56	10.45		11	08	88
Petersfield	11.55	15.00	11	54	84*
MP 53½	12.95		12	53	90
Liss	15.00		14	17	87
MP 50	16.45		15	19	80
MP 48½	17.95		16	29	75½
Liphook	19.60		17	40	82
MP 45	21.45		19	00	84
Haslemere	23.45	25.00	20	29	76
MP 42	24.45		21	15	86
MP 40	26.45		22	42	80*/87
Witley	27.95		23	48	75*
Milford	30.15		25	24	88
Godalming	31.95		27	05	57*
Farncombe	32.90		27	56	68/71½
Shalford Jct	34.90	35.00	29	39	70
Guildford	36.10	37.00	31	32	1 late

start to stop average 68.7 mph
* brakes or speed restriction

Driver Mick Rawling backs No. 45699 *Galatea* onto empty coaching stock at Carlisle for the return to Rugby on April 1, 2015. SANDY SMEATON

its toll and speed fell to a minimum of 25½mph before Ribblehead. On the previous week with one coach more, Bill Long recorded a minimum of 29½ here, so the wind effect was not insignificant. Once through Blea Moor Tunnel we more or less ran at the line speed down to Appleby, knocking almost 15 minutes off the easy schedule, 79 minutes for 45.9 miles."

The comparison table shows that No. 45675 *Hardy* on eight for 265 tons on the 9.20pm from St Pancras had the better of it on the long drag but with a lighter load and in calmer conditions. The train from St Pancras to Nottingham had D38 and D50 on to Leeds before No. 45675 took over and left 18 late to work right through to Glasgow Central. Lateness had grown to 33 minutes leaving Skipton for the booked non-stop run to Carlisle. We lost a further 14 minutes with nothing more than a short signal stop outside Carlisle.

The engine was in poor condition though, blowing off steam on the descent from Ais Gill. Water was taken from the troughs at Garsdale and the maximum speed was 70mph over the river at Ormside. I decided to stay on the train to Glasgow, probably a mistake as we lost more time and arrived 68 late. With hindsight, I should have gone back from Carlisle on the 8.34am to Skipton for the 10.17am to Leeds as this had No. 45593 *Kolhapur* and arrived in Carlisle 12 early after a maximum speed of 88 mph!

Neame steam

Every September, Faversham celebrates the brewing of beer in the town with a Hop Festival. Shepherd Neame has been brewing beer there since 1698 and for some years sponsored steam-hauled trains, mainly from London, to the festival and short steam-hauled trips to nearby towns. These made for good days out from my then home in Paddock Wood, Kent, for photography and travel. In September 2006, the trains ran on two days, Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd, the former from London at 8.25am and the latter from Brighton at 9am.

On the Saturday I saw the train passing Paddock Wood and on Sunday passing Chartham and Graveney before driving to Faversham for a ride on the 2.25pm to Gillingham via Sheerness. LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No. 45231 had 10 coaches plus a non-working No. 31602 on the rear for a total of 460 tons, driven by ex-Nine Elms engineman Pete Roberts.

Leaving Faversham eight minutes late, we reached 34mph before speed fell to 28 on the

BR Class 47 No. 47406 *Rail Riders* sits in the pouring rain at Portsmouth Harbour on September 13, 1986, waiting to depart with the 1.02pm working to Manchester Piccadilly. DON BENN

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On September 3, 2006, No. 45231 passes Chartham with the 9am Brighton to Faversham 'Spitfire' excursion. DON BENN

1-in-132 climb to milepost 50 and then recovered well to 57½ on the 1-in-132/330 down to Teynham and 59½ on the 1-in-140/200/900 down to milepost 47.

Speed fell to 51mph on the 1-in-220 up to milepost 46 before brakes came on to take us through Sittingbourne in 11 minutes 51 seconds, a gain of 6¼ minutes on the schedule.

We then ran round onto the branch line to Sheerness over the heavily restricted Swale bridge, arriving in the terminus 2¼ minutes late in 33 minutes 24 seconds for the 16.1 miles.

After reversal, No. 31602 took the whole train back to the main line and to Gillingham where the train reversed again and was hauled back to Faversham by No. 45231.

Table Three shows this leg of the journey, and Pete had to work the 'Black Five' very hard on the 1-in-130 from Newington before letting the engine run down through Sittingbourne with an almighty roar at 56½mph, touching 66½ at the foot of the 1-in-220 at milepost 47 and then falling to 44mph at the milepost 50 summit.

A very good performance with this heavy load gained seven and a half minutes on the schedule from Gillingham, 23 minutes 32 seconds for the 16.05 miles.

BR Class 31 No. 31602 hauls the empty stock of the 'Spitfire' at Faversham on September 3, 2006. DON BENN

Near-record to Guildford

In the days of Chris Green's very successful Network South East, Network Days offered unlimited travel within a defied area at a bargain price.

One such day was Saturday, September 13, 1986, and I took full advantage, planning to maximise locomotive-hauled mileage which I achieved with runs behind Nos. 33023 on the 8.36am Waterloo to Salisbury, 33053 on the 10.22am Salisbury to Portsmouth Harbour, 47406 on the 1.02pm Portsmouth Harbour to Guildford, and 47559 on the 4.15pm Clapham Junction to Redhill. It was No. 47406 which excelled, this time on the Southern. See *Heritage Railway* issue 300 for its 104mph effort from St Pancras in April 1987.

Table Four shows the extraordinary fast run from Havant to Guildford in 31 minutes 32 seconds for the 36.1 miles, prompted by a six and a half minute late departure from Havant and achieved within the 90mph line limit with a clear road throughout.

This is the second fastest time I can find after perusing the RPS database and finding a run with EMUs in 31 minutes 14 seconds, though some of the recorded speeds on this run seem a little high.

Those who think of me as a steam-only man can see that for sure I am not, but I certainly am pure steam (and diesel and electric as well).

Next time I will return to Bulleid steam power with more runs past and present. HR

Station signs dominate at Thirsk sale

A TOTEM sign from the Scottish Region station of Newtonmore headed the realisation list at £700 in Thirsk Railwayana's 975-lot auction on January 14, ahead of an LNER seatback nameplate, a second totem and a SR target.

Opened by the Inverness & Perth Junction Railway in September 1863 and still open today, Newtonmore is on the Highland Main Line between Aviemore and Dalwhinnie and is a Category B-listed building.

The seatback, which sold for £660, was from Barras in Cumbria, a Stainmore line station located at an altitude of 1100 feet. It was opened by the South Durham & Lancashire Union Railway in February 1862 and was closed by BR just a month short of its centenary, in January 1962. The second totem, which went for £580, was from the Leeds to Morecambe line BR(M) station of Bentham that opened in June 1850 and, like Newtonmore, remains open today.

Behind this leading trio came SR target sign Chard Junction (£560) and at £460 the smokebox numberplate from 1905 Darlington-built J26 class 0-6-0 No. 65768. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12% (+ VAT).

A BR(Sc) Dundee Tay Bridge totem is to feature in Railwayana Sales' internet auction being held from February 27 to March 5. The station, the location of engine shed 62B, was opened by the North British Railway in June 1878, renamed simply Dundee by BR in 1965, and replaced by a new £38 million station on the same site in July 2018. The original Tay Bridge was the scene of a disaster on December 28, 1879, when it collapsed as a train was passing over during a violent storm, resulting in the deaths of 75 people.

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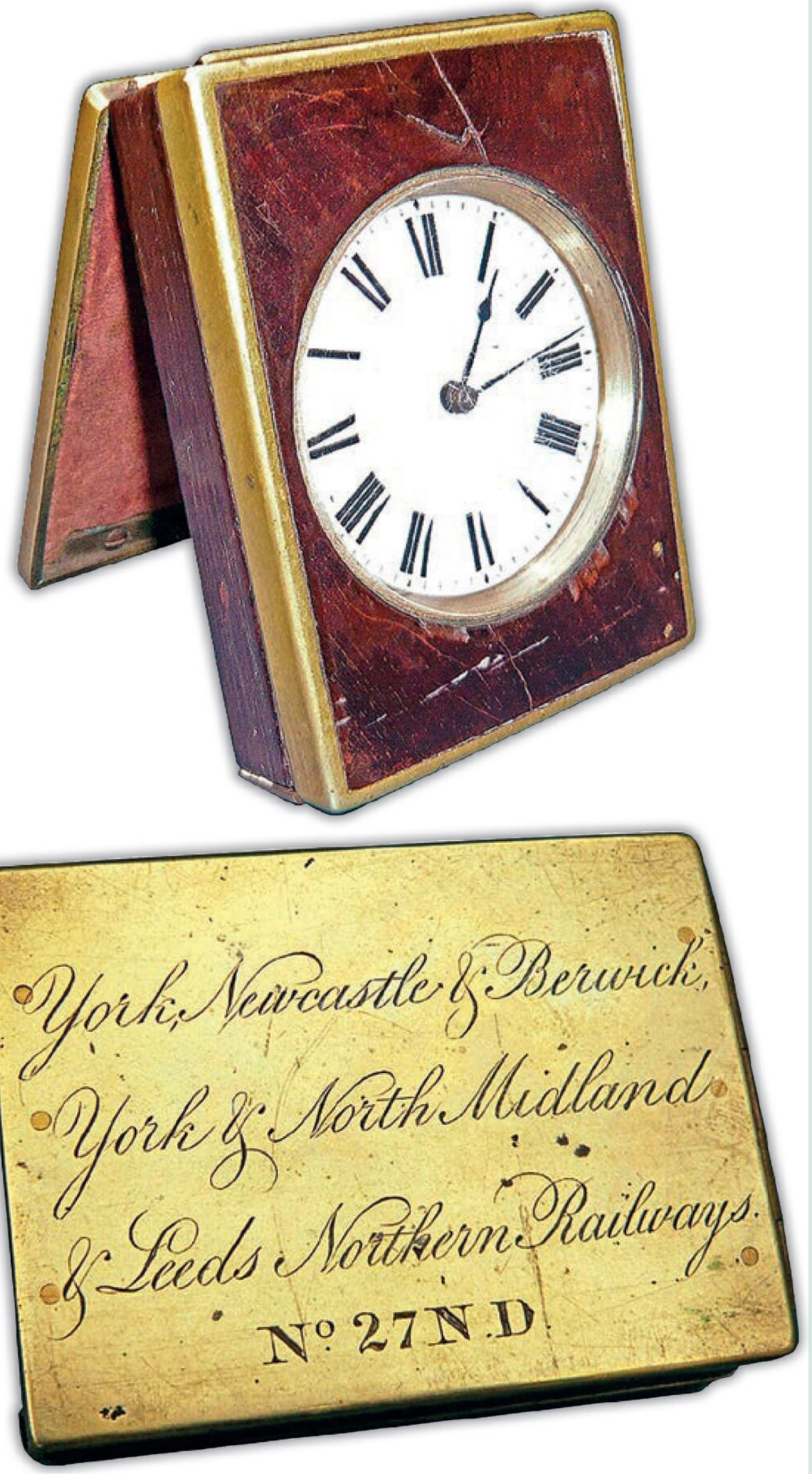
Room at the top when steam takes on diesel

THE steam and diesel eras of Britain's main line railways will both be represented at the top of Talisman's saleroom auction at Newark Showground on March 18. Two Jubilee nameplates will be going under the hammer in the steam category, while a Deltic plate will fancy its chances of overall victory.

From the LMS come *United Provinces* and *Hyderabad,* respectively from Nos. 45578 and 45585, a pair of 4-6-0s built by North British within three months of each other and withdrawn in the same month nearly 30 years after entering traffic.

The older of the two, No. 45578, emerged from NBL's Glasgow works in September 1934 and No. 45585 in December the same year, and each was withdrawn in May 1964, from Manchester's Newton Heath shed (9D) and Derby (16C) respectively.

Representing heritage modern traction is *Ballymoss* from D9018, a Class 55 Co-Co Deltic built by English Electric in November 1961 for East Coast Main Line duties working out of the Finsbury Park diesel depot in North London. It was renumbered 55018 under the TOPS system, withdrawn in December 1981, and cut up at Doncaster the following year.



Lighting the way

The smokebox numberplate category includes No. 46251 from LMS Princess Coronation *City of Nottingham*, while handlamps include examples from the Stockton & Darlington Railway dating from about 1850 and the Maryport & Carlisle Railway circa 1900.

Another c1850 piece of railway history is a guard's cased pocket watch that is engraved on the back with York Newcastle & Berwick, York & North Midland, and Leeds Northern Railways, all three of which were incorporated into the North Eastern Railway in 1854.

Station totem signs include BR(E) Gedling, opened on the Great Northern Railway's Derbyshire extension in February 1876 and closed in April 1960, and a poignant signalbox nameboard is Quintinshill. Opened in 1903 and closed in 1973, this Caledonian Railway 'box near Gretna Green overlooked Britain's worst ever rail disaster, when on May 22, 1915, a total of 226 people, most of whom were soldiers on a troop train, were killed in a five-train crash that was attributed to a signalling error.

Also from Scotland is a seatback nameplate from Helensburgh, which was opened by the Glasgow Dumbarton & Helensburgh Railway in May 1858. The station, the location of engine shed coded 65H, had a Central suffix added to its name by BR in June 1953, is a Category B-listed building, and is still open today. The auction starts at 10am.

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Nameplates will make GWR fans feel at home

WITH six GWR nameplates going under the hammer and GWR enthusiast Mike Soden in charge of proceedings, Great Western aficionados will be in their element in Great Central's quarterly auction on March 4.

In chronological order of construction at Swindon, the six plates are: *Saint Agatha* from No. 2911; *Broome Hall* and *Eden Hall* from Nos. 4908 and 4996; *Trematon Castle* (No. 5020); *Leaton Grange* from No. 6821; and the youngest of the six, *Broome Manor* from No. 7805.

No. 2911 entered traffic in August 1907 and was withdrawn in March 1935. Nos. 4908 and 4996 were built in January 1929 and March 1931 respectively and withdrawn from Didcot (81E) in October 1963 and Taunton (83B) the previous month, and the Castle was outshopped in August 1932 and taken out of service in November 1962 when allocated to Llanelly (87F).

No. 6821 emerged from Swindon in January 1937 and was another Llanelly engine, being withdrawn from there in November 1964, and finally, No. 7805 joined the GWR ranks in March 1938 and ended its days in December 1964 when a resident of the Birmingham shed of Tyseley (2A).

The nameplates from Nos. 4908, 5020 and 7805 are from a single collection and all will be appearing at auction for the first time. In addition, cabsides and the smokebox numberplates from Nos. 4908 and 7805, and a cabside from No. 5020, will all be going under the hammer as separate lots.

Those six GWR nameplates, however, will be far from having everything their own way, for the LNER and LNWR/LMS intend getting a slice of the action, those from the former being *George Davidson* and *Holyrood* from two very different locomotives, D40 class 4-4-0 No. 62273 and Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60152.

No. 62273 was built at the Great North of Scotland Railway's Inverurie Works in June 1921 as No. 45, numbered No. 6845 and subsequently 2273 by the LNER, and withdrawn from Keith (61C) in January 1955. Classmate No. 62277 *Gordon Highlander* avoided the cutter's torch and survives in preservation, while the A1 was outshopped by Darlington in July 1949 and withdrawn in June 1965 from York (50A). These two also come from the single collection and are making their auction debuts.

Finally, from the London & North Western Railway is *Coronation* from George the Fifth class No. 1800/LMS No. 25348 – which, as reported on page 12 of this issue, is expected to be one of the stars of the show – and *Ajax* from LNWR Precursor No. 639/LMS No. 5190. This 4-4-0, named after a hero of the Trojan War, was built at Crewe in October 1904 and withdrawn in September 1928.

Returning to the GWR, in addition to 4908 and 7805, there are smokebox numberplates from Nos. 5027 *Farleigh Castle* and 5913 *Rushton Hall*, while the Southern Railway weighs in with 30768 and 34092 from King Arthur *Sir Balin* and preserved West Country Pacific *City of Wells*.

Worksplates include a Stratford 1911 plate from Class D16 4-4-0 'Claud Hamilton' No. 2606/BR No. 62606, and joining 4908, 5020 and 7805 in the cabside numberplate selection is Southern Railway 2545, from a 1901-built Class C2X 0-6-0 that became BR 32545.

Within the totem station sign line-up is BR(W) Rhayader, a mid-Wales station on the Three Cocks Junction-Moat Lane Junction line that opened in September 1864 and closed in December 1962.

Single line key tokens include Notgrove – Bourton on the Water, a section of the GWR Banbury to Cheltenham line. The auction will be live online and starts at 10am.

TAL makes it five in busy auction calendar

TRANSPORT Auctions of London's February 25 sale, the second of an intensive series of five railwayana auctions on successive Saturdays, has a nationwide feel about it, thanks to a GWR cabside numberplate from an 0-6-0PT that ended its days as part of the London Transport fleet, a GWR poster promoting the Welsh resort of Tenby, a Rhymney Railway warning sign, a Scottish totem, and a BR(S) dual language station sign from the other end of the country.

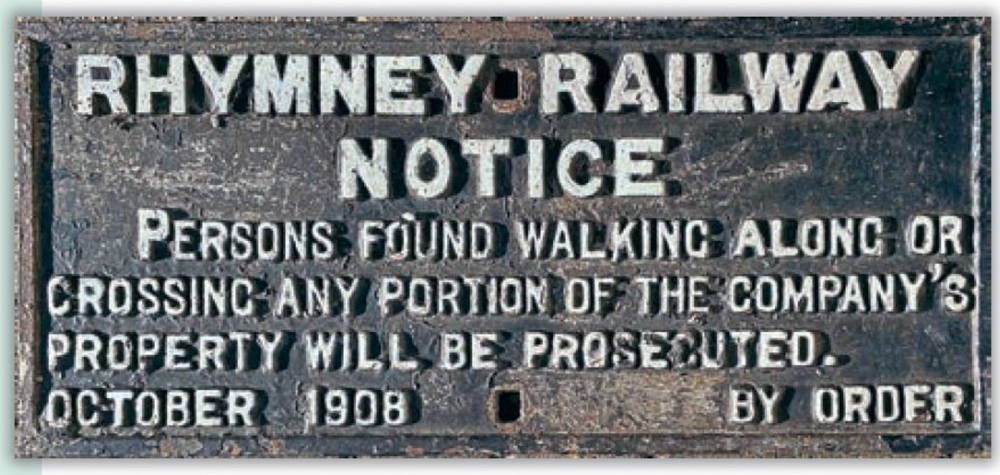
The pannier tank cabside is from No. 5757, which was built at Swindon in May 1929, withdrawn from Westbury (82D) in November 1960, and sold by BR to London Transport, which renumbered it L91 and extended its working life for nearly a decade until final withdrawal in January 1970.

Also from the GWR, the Tenby poster, issued in 1946, was by Worcester-born Ronald Lampitt (1906-88), who also produced work for the LMS, SR and BR and was an acclaimed illustrator for Ladybird Books. Still in Wales, the Rhymney Railway cast iron sign warns of walking on the company's property and dates from October 1908. From Scotland comes totem sign High Street, a station opened as College in 1886 on the Glasgow City & District Railway sub-surface line and renamed in January 1914. The railway was electrified by BR in 1960 and the station remains open on what is now the North Clyde Line. A second totem in the auction is BR(W) Didcot, home of the Didcot Railway Centre.

For linguists there is a dual language Southern Region 'Gentlemen – Messieurs' enamel sign from Folkestone Harbour station, and for photograph collectors a single lot with copyright of several thousand negatives and colour slides of UK mainly steam, but including early diesels and electrics, from the early 1950s onwards taken by the late David Hope, who died in 2021 at the age of 92.

Overseas paperwork includes a 1950s' East African Railways & Harbours Corporation engine stock list with diagrams and photographs, a 400-page French railway timetable from 1934 covering the entire system, and a 1915 two-volume set of Italian railway locomotive and motorcoach drawings with full technical details. The auction is live online and starts at 10am.

The other four auctions either side of the TAL sale are being held by Great Central on February 18 and March 4, GW Railwayana on March 11, and Talisman on March 18, all of which are previewed in this column.



Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **February 17**
  Vectis (model trains)
- **February 17**
  Lacy Scott & Knight *(railwayana and model trains)*
- **February 18**
  Great Central Railwayana *('Bloxham' sale)*
- **February 20-26**
  JustaClickAgo *(photographs, negatives and slides)*
- **February 25**
  Transport Auctions of London
- **February 27-March 5**
  Railwayana Sales
- **March 4**
  Great Central Railwayana
- **March 10/11**
  GW Railwayana
- **March 17**
  Vectis *(model trains)*
- **March 18**
  Talisman Railwayana

➜ FURTHER to the preview in last month's column of the JustaClickAgo February 20-26 online auction of railway photographs, negatives and slides, boss Simon Stewart reports on recent consignments of a large collection of pre-Grouping prints and another consisting of world-wide steam slides from Europe, Africa, South America and other far-flung locations, including Burma and China.

➜ HORNBY O gauge took the first two top slots in a Vectis model trains sale on January 20, led at £950 by a clockwork goods set comprising an 0-4-0 with Southern lettering and No. E509 on the tender, accompanied by an open SR wagon and two-rail track. In second place was a three-rail electric LMS Princess Royal Pacific No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* (£800). Both prices exclude buyer's premium of 25% (inc VAT).

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Royal presence as Kings make late sale entrance

THE trio of GWR and LMS nameplates which were among the early declared runners in GW Railwayana's March 11 auction, as reported in last month's column – *Enborne Grange* from GWR No. 6814, and LMS Jubilee pair *Leeward Islands* and *Shovell* from Nos. 45614 and 45651 – have now been joined by two further GWR arrivals, *King Edward VI* and *Holkham Hall*, and SR King *Pellinore*.

The GWR King is from No. 6012, built at Swindon in April 1928 and withdrawn from Stafford Road, Wolverhampton (84A) in September 1962, having recorded 1,910,525 miles in service, an average of more than 55,000 miles per year. The Hall plate is from No. 6926, named after a country house near Wells-next-the-Sea in Norfolk. This 4-6-0 was outshopped by Swindon in November 1941 and withdrawn from Banbury (2D) in May 1965. LNER B17 class No. 61601 was named after the same estate, which is the family seat of the Earls of Leicester, but was simply *Holkham*.

The third recent nameplate arrival in the auction, *King Pellinore*, is from long-time Bournemouth (71B) resident No. 30738, a King Arthur class locomotive built at Eastleigh in December 1919 and withdrawn from Basingstoke (70D) in March 1958. The smokebox numberplate from the 4-6-0 will also be going under the hammer, separately from its nameplate.

Also among the smokebox numberplates is No. 58128 from an 0-6-0 built by Kitson & Co of Leeds for the Midland Railway in February 1876 as Class 1142 No. 404 and withdrawn by BR as a Class 2F from the East Midlands shed of Toton (18A) in October 1962, meaning its service life with the MR, LMS and BR was no fewer than 86 years and eight months.

Another smokebox numberplate from a long-serving Victorian era 0-6-0 is 52388, from a Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 27 that emerged from Horwich Works in November 1899 as No. 397 and was pensioned off by BR in March 1958 when a resident of Lees Oldham (26E).

Steam worksplates will make their presence felt, including an 1881 Neilson & Co of Glasgow (works No. 2752) from a London & South Western Railway 0395 class 0-6-0 withdrawn by BR as No. 30572 in January 1957 after 76 years in service, and a Great Northern Railway Doncaster dated 1900 (works No. 915) from a D2 class 4-4-0 withdrawn as LNER No. 4384 in March 1946.

Two others in the category are another GNR Doncaster plate, from a C12 class 4-4-2T (works No. 1017) built in 1903 and withdrawn in May 1956 as No. 67384, and a 1921 Robert Stephenson & Co Darlington (works No. 3836) example from GWR 2-6-0 No. 7304 that was taken out of service by BR in December 1963 when shedded at Severn Tunnel Junction (86E).

Leaping the decades from 19th century steam technology to heritage modern traction is a flamecut cabside panel from Class 55 Deltic No. 55018, one of whose *Ballymoss* nameplates is being sold by Talisman Railwayana the following week (see preview in this column) and a 1962 Crewe worksplate from Class 52 D1040 *Western Queen*, a Co-Co 'Western' diesel-hydraulic that was in service for just 13 years and five months before being withdrawn in February 1976.

On March 10, the day before the main auction, GWRA's Simon Turner will be holding a 300-lot auction of general railwayana, including shedplates, posters and clocks. This starts at 10am, and the sale the following day at 9.30am.

Hands-on approach by an unknown railway company

A WOODEN notice from an unidentified railway company instructing footplate crews not to pass until a 'hand alright signal' is given from the signalbox is a late addition to Great Central's 'Bloxham'-style auction on February 18. As previewed in last month's column, the sale of up to 600 lots, which starts at 9am and is live online, will comprise such general railwayana as shedplates, framed and carriage prints, signalling equipment, cast iron and enamel signs, and hand and lamps.

To ensure speedy progress, there are no telephone bids and few reserves.

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PACKED OUT!

CROWDS FILL OUT GREAT CENTRAL FOR START OF HALF CENTENARY YEAR

Lineside, stations, and, yes, even the trains were packed to the brim over the weekend of January 27-29 when the UK's only double-track main line held its winter steam gala, the first event of its 50th anniversary year. **Owen Hayward** reports.

BR class 5MT pair Nos. 73156 and 73082 *Camelot* double-head past Woodthorpe at the head of the 1.45pm non-stop departure from Loughborough Central for Leicester North on Sunday, January 29. GAVIN THOMSON

The start of the year is a notoriously quiet time in heritage railway calendars. With the close of festive services at the end of December (or often, at best, the new year), the nation's preservation railways go into hibernation for a while, carrying out much-needed maintenance work on rolling stock and infrastructure that cannot otherwise be performed when running services. A big hole left in the enthusiast calendar before the respite of February half-term trains to combat withdrawal symptoms, any railway running a service, let alone a big gala during this window is bound to reap the rewards – and that could certainly be said to be the case for the GCR Winter Steam Gala.

The lure of double-track running, upwards of four departures an hour and an interesting mix of services operating proved immeasurable this year as the masses descended upon the 8¼mile Loughborough-Leicester line to get their steam fix. Many services during the middle hours of the days departed with not even standing room left available!

Impressive line-up

Despite the rising costs of coal, diesel and electricity, the GCR didn't hold back with its roster for the weekend. It saw up to seven steam locomotives in operation, comprised of five residents and two visiting from the south.

Off the back of classmate No. 73156's visit to the Bluebell Railway last October, BR 4-6-0 Class 5MT No. 73082 *Camelot* appeared courtesy of its home line and owning group 73802 Camelot Locomotive Society – presenting only the second time that two of these Robert Riddles machines have worked together in preservation.

Built at Derby in July 1955 and entering service at Stewarts Lane, *Camelot* worked on the Kent Coast line and Dover to Folkestone boat trains before transferring to Nine Elms in 1959. It was here that it, along with 19 other members of the class, received names transferred from withdrawn Urie King Arthur class 4-6-0s, with *Camelot* being taken from No. 30742.

Withdrawal came in June 1966 at Guildford and the locomotive was moved to Barry scrapyard in November the same year. The 73082 CLS was formed in March 1974 after a visit to the yard, with the locomotive (sans tender) finally purchased in January 1979 for £8100. The Bluebell was chosen as it had already helped to obtain a suitable tender chassis from a South Wales steelworks as there were no standard tenders left at Barry.

No. 73082 arrived at Sheffield Park in that October and, 16 years later in 1995, it entered traffic on the railway where it ran for almost a full decade before being withdrawn for overhaul in June 2005. It began services under its second preservation-era boiler ticket two decades after starting its first.

The second visitor for the former LNER route's event was another southern region interloper in the shape of SR Urie 4-6-0 S15 class No. 506.

One of a batch of five ordered in March 1917, No. 506 was completed at Eastleigh works in October 1920 and, outshopped in LSWR Holly Gren livery, was first

allocated to Nine Elms. A move to Strawberry Hill occurred in 1922 and then to Feltham in 1923, where it remained until withdrawn in 1964, having covered more than 1.2 million miles during its working life.

Acquired by the Urie Locomotive Society in March 1973 for £4000, it was not until April 1976 that it moved from Barry scrap yard to the Mid-Hants Railway, with a return to steam first taking place in 1987. Although locomotives tend to be withdrawn after 10 years of running, No. 506 completed 14 before coming out of service for overhaul in 2001. The second overhaul was completed in June 2019, with a year to spare before the locomotive's 100th birthday.

Although the visitors each drew their own crowd of supporters, arguably the main attraction was BR 2-10-0 class 9F No. 92214 which, as reported last issue, the GCR's supporting charity The David Clarke Railway Trust has bought from its previous owner and now has a secure future based on the line. Within weeks of this announcement, the 9F had emerged from the Loughborough workshops freshly repainted into unlined BR black after spending almost nine years in lined BR green, a livery which No. 92220 *Evening Star* was the only example of the class to ever receive in BR service.

No. 92214, built at Swindon in October 1959, had an incredibly short working life, spending just under six years in service with BR before withdrawal came in August 1965 and then moving to Barry that October. It was bought in 1980 and moved to Buxton after purchase by the Peak Rail Society, which later sold it the 92214 Locomotive Group. It was restored and subsequently returned to steam in July 2003 at the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley before going to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway on hire between 2006 and 2008.

In 2010 it was bought by former GCR driver Stuart Whitter's Grosmont-based PV Premier Ltd firm and took up residence back at the NYMR, where an overhaul was carried out during 2012/13. In January 2014, then GCR director Michael Gregory bought the locomotive for dedicated use on the GCR and it moved to Loughborough, where it was then repainted; in recent years it has masqueraded as *Evening Star* with permission of the NRM, as well as being named *Central Star* and *Leicester City* after the football team won the Premier League in 2016.

Visiting from its Mid-Hants Railway home, Urie Locomotive Society's S15 class No. 506 storms away from Loughborough Central on January 28. ROBERT FALCONER

The 'spaceship' was turned to face north, being joined by BR 2-6-0 class 2MT No. 78019, while the two visitors and three remaining residents – No. 73156, 2MT No. 78018, and LMS 2-8-0 class 8F No. 48305 – all faced south.

Derby Lightweight DMU *Iris* and BR Class 45 D123 were also on the roster.

Expensive success

With the recent spike in the cost of living, along with the railway's own spike in bills for coal and diesel fuel, understandably there were concerns as to how well attended the weekend would be. Gala fares have had to be raised not just at the GCR but also at heritage lines nationwide. Although this move has drawn criticism from some enthusiasts, the plain fact is that if events like this are to keep taking place, this downside will have to be accepted.

"It was a very well attended gala on each of the three days and overall," general manager Richard Patching said. "Our passenger numbers were some 20% higher than for 2022, with 3800 visitors from all corners of the UK. The only snag, of course, remains that of cost.

"These days it gets increasingly hard to lay on spectacular galas, not least with the costs and challenges involved. Locomotive transport costs are a hard one to bear, for sure – approaching £25,000 for our two guests this time. That is just one example of why I felt it necessary to explain why our fares have had to increase. While we have aimed to hold the increases to a reasonable

Newly outshopped in BR black and now permanently based on the GCR, BR 9F No. 92214 pulls away from Swithland Reservoir with a passenger train for Loughborough on January 29. JOHN TITLOW

Above and below: The rolling chassis of Bulleid Pacific West Country No. 34039 *Boscastle* was on display at Quorn and Woodhouse to mark 50 years since it first arrived on the railway. ROBIN JONES

BR standard class 5MT No. 73156 approaches Kinchley Lane with the expanded local set comprised of two suburban and three Mk.1 carriages. Originally two rakes, the failure of class 45 D123 required a DMU substitute, and these sets were merged to maintain passenger capacity. NICK GILLIAM

Urie class S15 No. 506 approaches Quorn & Woodhouse station with a goods working on January 29. JOHN TITLOW

No. 73082 *Camelot* passes Kinchley Lane on the approach to Rothley with a Leicester North service. MARTYN TATTAM

A local working passes Swithland Reservoir, bound for Quorn and Loughborough stations, worked by BR 2MT No. 78019. MARTYN TATTAM

BR 9F No. 92214 climbs towards Swithland Sidings with a Leicester North to Loughborough empty mineral working on January 28. GRAHAM NUTALL

level, we recognise that the fares have risen significantly since 2022.

"That said, the GCR (and no doubt other heritage railways) has been faced with huge increases in its energy costs, together with high levels of inflation in every other commodity and service which has to be purchased."

The cost of coal is well documented to have reached double or even treble what it once was over the last 12 months, but electricity prices are hitting our heritage lines hard, with similarly stark rises.

"Just to put things in further context, the annual electricity bill has risen from £70,000 to £280,000 for the current year," Richard observed. "Ticket sales on the Friday covered the transport cost of the visitors, and Saturday the steaming fees and coal bill; it was really only the Sunday that took us into actually making something for the railway.

"So, in short, while the gala's financial result was most welcome, it would only make a very modest dent in the hit taken on electricity costs."

With such a substantial number of visitors, it is no wonder that trains were full to bursting. At the busiest of galas, these are often referred to as having standing room only – but those attempting to join at intermediate stations (and sometimes even at the termini) would have sometimes struggled to find space to even get through a carriage door. There were light-hearted jokes between passengers that if you managed to claim a seat, you couldn't leave it even if you wanted to.

Friday and Saturday unfortunately experienced trains running as late as 70 minutes; Friday's delays were reported as being an issue with points at Loughborough Central, while Saturday's arose right from the off when D123 was failed before even leaving shed, leading to some careful replanning of allocations to ensure locomotives were available in the right places at the right times. A two-car Class 101/111 hybrid DMU was brought out to substitute for one of the two 'local' sets, with the suburban coaches and short Mk.1 rake being merged to ensure there was still sufficient capacity. The DMU remained in service on Sunday.

LMS 2-8-0 class 8F No. 48305 has charge of a mineral empties on the Up main at Swithland Sidings while BR Class 5 No. 73156 waits in the Up loop with a mixed freight for Loughborough on January 28. GRAHAM NUTALL

Delays aside, the timetable allowed for up to four trains an hour each way, with 21 departures from Loughborough on the Friday and a staggering 32 on the Saturday; a highlight of these was certainly a non-stop double-header to Leicester North behind Nos. 73082 and 73156.

Lineside locations were packed with photographers and families coming out to enjoy the sights of passenger and goods workings, which of course included the iconic 'Windcutter' mineral rake. The group behind the restoration of these wagons is still determined to bring the running total up to 30 vehicles.

In the goods yard at Quorn & Woodhouse, Bulleid West Country 4-6-2 Pacific No. 34039 *Boscastle* was on static display commemorating the half a century since it first arrived on the then-new heritage line. Last operational in June 2000, it has been undergoing overhaul with Boscastle Locomotive Ltd, which hosted a display about its history and progress alongside its rolling chassis. The boiler will require repairs and replacement sections of firebox plating.

The GCR has an exciting calendar of events planned to celebrate its landmark anniversary, including the return of the 1940s Weekend (June 2-4), Railways at Work (August 19/20), Diesel Gala (September 1-3) and an Autumn Steam Gala (October 5-8).

A 50th anniversary weekend event will take place on June 17/18, with more details to be published nearer the time. HR

No. 73082 *Camelot* brings the mixed freight rake under Rabbit Bridge as it approaches Swithland Reservoir on January 29. JOHN TITLOW

SAVING HISTORY AND THEN MAKING IT!

As the Great Central Railway proudly celebrates its half centenary, **Robin Jones** looks back at the early years and the succession of hurdles the revivalists had to conquer to clear a way forward that led to today's magnificent and unique double-track heritage line.

Six decades ago saw the publication of British Railways chairman Dr Richard Beeching's infamous report, The Reshaping of British Railways. Appointed in a bid to reduce soaring losses, one major strand of Beeching's rationalisation of the network was to eliminate routes that 'doubled up' and which dated from an era of competition firstly between the pre-Grouping companies and then the Big Four.

The biggest of the Beeching closures was the Great Central Railway's London Extension, the last trunk route built in the UK's steam age. It ran from Annesley, north of Nottingham, to Quainton Road (now the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre) and on via the Metropolitan Railway to Harrow-on-the-Hill, from where a new line took the route into Marylebone. Beeching saw it as mirroring the Midland Main Line, and his closure notice for the GCR prompted widespread debate and public protests.

The sections between Rugby and Aylesbury and between Nottingham and Sheffield closed during September 3/4, 1966, with the track lifted from Rugby to Calvert. Nottingham Victoria closed on September 4, 1967. While the section between Aylesbury and Marylebone escaped the axe, the only part of the northern section left was that between Rugby and Nottingham's suburban Arkwright Street station – which was first closed in 1963 before one platform reopened for a six-trains-a-day skeleton DMU service, until it closed again, this time permanently, on May 3, 1969.

Groups who opposed the loss of the route came together for a meeting in a waiting room at Leicester Central, resulting in the formation of the Main Line Preservation Group in January 1969. The stated aim of these early revivalists was of the whole line from Arkwright Street to Rugby Central, but like many other similar closure-era preservationists, they soon edited their dreams due to time and financial constraints to a much shorter section of the route, which they chose because of its scenery and comparatively few major engineering works.

The group differed from other such schemes of the day like the Bluebell, Middleton, Dart Valley and Keighley & Worth Valley railways in wanting to save a double-track section of line, when main line locomotives representing the Big Four companies and BR could one day again haul appropriate trains in an authentic setting.

Separate groups were established to prevent vandalism, and in March 1970 the group approached BR to buy the line. The asking price was £383,000 for the land between Loughborough and Birstall, together with the double track between Loughborough and Quorn & Woodhouse, and a single track between Quorn and Belgrave and Birstall.

However, an appeal raised only £50,000, and BR added an extra £1000 a month interest to hold off lifting the track.

Landowner Denis Butler, the 9th Earl of Lanesborough, through whose estate the railway ran and who had a letter condemning Beeching's closure of the Great Central trunk route published in the Daily Telegraph

The reopening special on July 24, 1973 to Quorn & Woodhouse. *King Haakon VII* takes on water at Loughborough. GCR

on September 28, 1965, became president of the group, which embarked on a series of exhibitions and film shows to publicise its aims. January 1970 saw the top floor of Loughborough Central leased and renovation commencing, and two months later an offer to buy the line was made to BR.

That summer, the Main Line Preservation Group began talking to steam locomotive owners while making an application for a Light Railway Order giving it statutory powers to run the line.

In January 1971, a new company formed to run the revived section of line, Main Line Steam Trust Ltd, and received charitable status. The HM Railway Inspectorate visited and found the state of the line to be good, giving broad approval for the scheme.

Two months later, Leicester County Council finally abandoned the idea of building a road on the trackbed, removing a major doubt about the viability of the revival scheme. Fundraising began in earnest that summer, and in September the trust formally took over from the preservation group.

Meanwhile, BR retained a single track from Loughborough to Ruddington to access the Ministry of Defence base there, as well as British Gypsum freight to Hotchley Hill.

The revivalists had the ultimate aim of running from Ruddington in the north to Belgrave and Birstall in the south, a distance of 18 miles.

Small beginnings...

If you turned up at Loughborough Central station in January 1973, you might be lucky enough to have one of the footplate rides being offered to the public within the station limits. Such an embryonic operation was the opposite end of the scale from the magnificent crowd-pulling winter gala on January 27-29.

A reopening special was run on July 24, headed by Swedish-built Norwegian State Railways 2-6-0 No. 377 *King Haakon VII* hauling a single coach. Totally non-authentic for a Great Central line, it had been had been bought for preservation in 1969 and imported into the UK, being first based at Loughborough (and is currently awaiting overhaul at Bressingham Steam Museum and Gardens in Norfolk).

A major landmark was passed on September 30, 1973, when the first public train ran from Loughborough to Quorn & Woodhouse, under BR supervision as no Light Railway Order had yet been granted. Heading the train was LMS 'Black Five' No. 5231.

Initial services were operated by locomotives operating the two coaches in top-and-tail mode because there were no run-round facilities at Quorn & Woodhouse at that time. It was decided to build a large locomotive shed to the north of Loughborough Central, but care was taken to leave a way through for a possible future extension to Ruddington.

At the same time, BR lifted the track beyond Loughborough, as the Ruddington branch would thereafter be connected directly to the Midland Main Line by a new chord.

Regular operation of services between Loughborough and Quorn & Woodhouse was achieved by July 1974. At that time, the double track from Loughborough Central to Quorn & Woodhouse and the single line south to Thurmaston Road bridge in Leicester was still in situ, prior to the building of the A563 ring road which severed the line south of Birstall.

Most of the early services were typical of 'starter' preservation schemes, with industrial tank engines at the fore. On site were *King Haakon VII*, Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 1800 of 1936 *Robert Nelson No.4* (now at the private Riverstown Old Corn Mill Railway in Ireland), Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST No. 2018 of 1922 *Littleton No. 5* (now at the Avon Valley Railway), Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-6-0ST No. 6947, which had been converted by members from a saddle tank to a side tank (now with the Darlington Railway Preservation Society), Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST No. 3581 of 1924 *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* (now at the Foxfield Railway), and No. 5231.

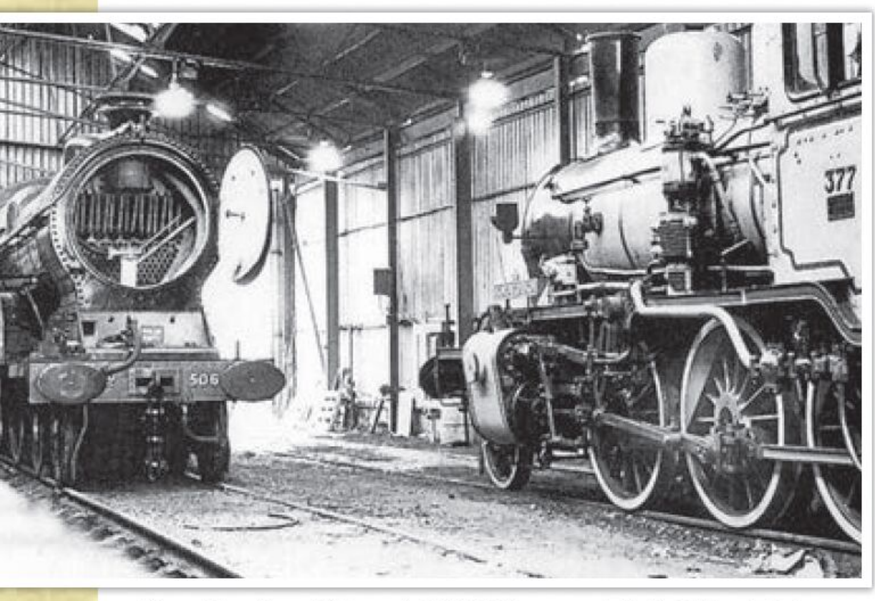
A trial weekend in September 1975 saw trains run into Rothley for the first time, the first being a VIP special again hauled by *King Haakon VII.*

The Great Central Railway Company (1976) Limited was incorporated as a private company on May 6 that year, and a public company three days later when No. 5231 was named *3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Worcester and Sherwood Foresters Regiment* at Quorn. It was reputed to be the longest name ever given to a locomotive, but it is no longer carried by this engine.

The Main Line Steam Trust was still struggling to find the purchase price and had to continue paying the monthly interest. In December 1975, British Rail gave the trust an ultimatum to buy the track outright by April 1 – or else it would be lifted. A share issue was launched to buy the track from BR, but initially it was possible to buy only a single-track section from Loughborough to Quorn.

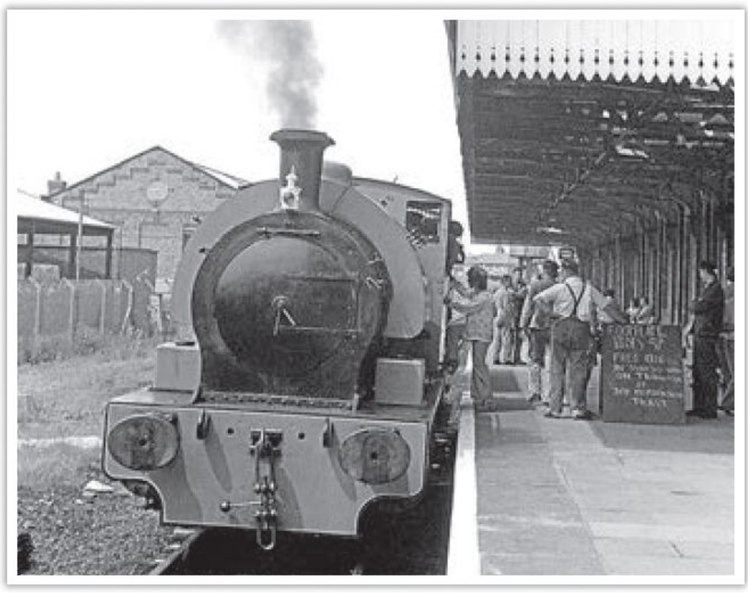
However, with the help of the trust and a substantial bank loan, the company bought the single line between Quorn & Woodhouse and Rothley, making a total of five miles. BR then lifted the remainder of the track, the second track between Loughborough and Quorn, and the Rothley to Birstall section.

The extension of the line to Rothley encouraged more locomotive owners to base their engines there. The Witherslack Hall Society moved its WR 4-6-0 No. 6990



***King Haakon VII* and GCR 'Director' 4-4-0 No. 506 *Butler Henderson* on static display together.** GCR

Remedial work to the Loughborough Central platform canopy was carried out by volunteers after the revivalists moved in. GCR



Small beginnings for a big heritage railway with massive public appeal – and very different from today. Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-6-0 No. 39, then still in its saddle tank form, gave brake van rides for 5p a time at Loughborough station from June 21-24, 1973. GCR

GCR directors and Charnwood Borough Council representatives in April 1978 after signing the 99-year lease on the land and buildings which allowed the revivalist company to operate. In the centre holding the lease is the late Bill Ford, who had championed the joint venture between the council and the railway to save the line. BILL SQUIRES/GCR

A Loughborough open day with traction engines and house organ providing entertainment at the north end of the platform on April 13, 1974. DENNIS WILCOCK/GCR

Tracklaying underway on the extension from Rothley to Leicester North. DENNIS WILCOCK/GCR

Witherslack Hall from Barry scrapyard there in December 1975.

Witherslack Hall was a veteran of the route, for it had run along the London Extension during the Locomotive Exchanges of 1948, in which different Big Four locomotives were trialled over different regions of the newly-nationalised railway.

While the railway was closed in the summer of 1976, a much-needed run-round loop was installed at Loughborough Central, eliminating time-consuming and expensive shunting procedures.

While the trust was still working flat-out to buy the track between Rothley and Quorn for £70,000, Rothley station was refitted with gas lighting, the apparatus having been brought from BR's Collector's Corner in London. The lighting was switched on by Sir Mark Henig, chairman of the English Tourist Board, during Bonfire Night celebrations on November 5, 1976.

Saved at a minute to midnight

In 1977, British Rail gave the railway an ultimatum to hand over the purchase price of the line by January 20 or see the line between Quorn and Rothley lifted. Thanks to two interest-free loans from Leicestershire businessmen, topped up by a bank loan, the money was paid with only a day to spare.

With far-sighted vision sadly absent from many other local authorities of the day, Charnwood Borough Council agreed to purchase the land and buildings of the whole route from Loughborough to Belgrave and Birstall, where the original station, decimated by vandals, was demolished the following year.

In 1977, two GCR directors bought LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 5690 *Leander* as a crucial step in fulfilling the original aim of running big main line locomotives on a main line railway. *Leander* had run over the route in 1962.

In April 1978, Charnwood Borough Council and the railway agreed a 99-year lease at a cost of £1750 annually on the land and buildings, allowing the line to operate.

That year, the company and the council were jointly awarded a Light Railway Order which came into effect on March 31, the day the GCR finally took complete control of all train operations. From then on, BR no longer needed to supervise operations – but at least one of the supervisors became a volunteer on the line!

Also in 1978, LNER-design B1 4-6-0 No. 1306 *Mayflower* (picture, Main Line News, pages 58-59) and GNR N2 0-6-2T No. 4474 arrived, forming the mainstay of motive power the following year, during which a second Gresley teak buffet coach and four Mk.1 carriages from the Nene Valley Railway also arrived.

In 1979, *Mayflower* ran for 109 days: by this time, the modern-day GCR was already running eight-coach trains so remarkable had been its progress during the first decade.

Sadly, that winter the Great Central bridge over the Midland Main Line, along with the southern embankment leading to it, were demolished, creating the biggest obstacles to reopening all the way from the southern edge of Nottingham to the fringe of Leicester.

Yet, as we have seen, the removal of the bridge has not deterred revivalist from seeking to reconnect the Loughborough Central operation to what is again known as the Great Central Railway (Nottingham), forging an 18-mile steam and heritage diesel highway

Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 1800 of 1936 *Robert Nelson No. 4* heads a GCR Marylebone Extension 75th anniversary special on March 23, 1974. Already there is a restaurant car in the train; the revived GCR was to be renowned for its dining services. GRAHAM WIGNALL/GCR

September 6, 1975 saw heritage-era trains run into Rothley for the first time, the first being a VIP special hauled by Swedish-built Norwegian State Railways 2-6-0 No. 377 *King Haakon VII*, seen crossing Swithland viaduct. GCR

LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5231 departs from Loughborough on June 20, 1976, before BR lifted the second track. BRIAN SHARPE

The Great Central Railway has hosted countless visits from classic locomotives during its 50 years. GNR *Stirling Single No.1* is seen crossing Swithland Viaduct on May 9, 1982. JOHN TITLOW

The first train into the new Leicester North station: Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* heads 'The Great Central Limited' on July 5, 1991. JOHN EAST/GCR

The Duke of Gloucester inspects progress on unique BR 8P Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* before setting off on a special train to inaugurate the Leicester North extension on July 8, 1985, and is seen inserting a golden spike to mark the occasion. GCR

between the outskirts of the two important cities.

In 1980, the railway's first general manager, Douglas Grahame Handley, was appointed. In early December the following year, the line saw the first run since 1938 of 1870-built GNR Stirling single 4-2-2 No. 1, courtesy of the National Railway Museum. The GCR had been selected by the NRM for its running-in trials following its restoration and also ran it the following season.

Another big landmark was passed in 1982 when one of two surviving original Great Central locomotives, D11 'Director' 4-4-0 No. 62660 *Butler-Henderson* (now at Barrow Hill roundhouse) made its debut on March 27 following overhaul. That year also saw the arrival of the line's first heritage-era main line diesels, Swindon-built WR diesel hydraulics Class 14s Nos. D9516 and D9523, acquired from British Steel at Corby, where they spent years in industrial service following BR withdrawal.

Easter 1984 saw preparatory work begin on the installation of a passing loop at Quorn & Woodhouse. The immediate benefits were obvious: extra trains such as demonstration freights could be run on high days and holidays without disrupting timetabled services.

May 1984 saw the introduction of a new timetable which facilitated the operation of two trainsets on a regular basis, making it possible to run services every 50 minutes rather than 70. As soon as a train arrived at Loughborough, another would be ready to leave. The last BR passenger train to Ruddington, 'The Ruddington Requiem' charter, ran on June 9 that year.

An appeal for a southern extension to Belgrave & Birstall was launched by The Duke of Gloucester during a visit on July 8, 1985. With the help of a substantial borough council grant, work commenced with clearance and tracklaying south from Rothley. At the northern end of the line, the Main Line Steam Trust appealed for cash to buy the mothballed Ruddington line.

In November 1987, following tracklaying, a members' special ran from Loughborough to

The restoration of the National Collection's GCR Robinson O4 No. 63601, which made its debut on the line on January 28, 2000, is one of the heritage line's major achievements over the past 50 years. It is seen passing BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019 as it takes the 'Windcutter' rake of 16-ton mineral wagons into Rothley on October 2, 2006, during the annual autumn steam gala. ROBIN JONES

WR 4-6-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* on the Down main into Rothley for the official double-track opening ceremony on June 1, 2000. ROBIN JONES

Belgrave & Birstall. Steam also returned to the Ruddington branch when *Robert Nelson No. 4* was loaned to British Gypsum for an open day at Rushcliffe.

The shed at Rothley was built in 1988. The following year, the company crossed a definitive watershed when it declared that it would no longer use industrial steam locomotives, and that they were to be phased out in favour of a new 'big engine' policy, in accordance with the aims of the original revivalists.

Dame Margaret Weston officially opened the extension from Rothley to Belgrave & Birstall on November 15, 1990, giving a running line of 7 ½ miles. At this stage, there was no passenger terminus at Belgrave & Birstall, and from November 3, push-pull and DMU trains operated south of Rothley where a connection was made with the main services to Loughborough. Rothley signalbox was opened.

Double the track, multiply the appeal

The GCR upped the game in 1990 by announcing its intention to reinstate double track, initially from Loughborough to Rothley. Then director, the late David Clarke, agreed to provide significant financial support.

Also that year, a new company, Great Central Railway (Nottingham), was formed to reopen the Ruddington branch as a second heritage line.

July 5, 1991, saw Merchant Navy No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* head the 'The Great Central Limited' into the new Leicester North station, which has been built just south of the demolished Belgrave & Birstall station. The official opening was performed by the then deputy prime minister, Michael Heseltine, the president of the Board of Trade. Also in 1991, the line also ran its first Christmas Day train staffed entirely by volunteers including directors – and has kept up the tradition since.

Thanks to an initiative by Nick Pigott, who later became editor of *Heritage Railway*'s sister title, *The Railway Magazine*, an appeal was successfully launched in August 1982 to buy a rake of 16-ton 9ft wheelbase BR mineral wagons, nicknamed 'Windcutters' by enthusiasts, for use in lengthy demonstration freights on the line.

The appeal saw the first wagons, from Onllwyn Washery, South Wales, arrive in late August. Others came from the Rover car factory at Longbridge in Birmingham, where they had survived in use on the internal system for carrying components.

Many more landmarks were yet to come – and still are underway. A national fundraising campaign to finance the cost of overhauling the National Collection's Robinson GCR 8K (LNER O4) 2-8-0 No. 63601 to working order saw it run for the first time since withdrawal in 1961 on January 28, 2000. June 1, 2000 marked one of the biggest milestones in the history of the heritage railway sector when, at 11.40am, GCR benefactor, the late David Clarke, pulled a sequence of levers in Rothley signalbox to send a nine-coach VIP train headed by *Witherslack Hall* on its way, completing the project to create Britain's first – and still only – double-track heritage main line between Rothley and Loughborough, and a new pinnacle for the sector.

Early on September 3, the long-held ambition to reinstate the demolished GCR bridge across the Midland Main Line at Loughborough took a major step forward with the two main beams of its replacement installed by contractors.

From its sparse beginnings, today's GCR has now long been a major tourist attraction for the East Midlands, and with the possibility of reconnecting to the GCR(N) and getting a main line link at the same time, it is full steam ahead into the next 50 years! HR

Tulyar exclusive among new Accurascale Deltics batch

TO mark its fifth anniversary this year and following the runaway success of its first batch of BR class 55 models in OO, Accurascale has confirmed that a new batch of Deltic models will be released, with delivery slated for the first quarter of 2024.

Seven running numbers are being produced, including two manufacturer exclusives – one of which is No. 55022 (D9000) *Royal Scots Grey* in two-tone green as it appeared while operating Virgin CrossCountry services between 1997 and 1999, complete with high-visibility headlight. The second, No. 55016 (D9016) *Gordon Highlander,* will be decorated in the Porterbrook Leasing purple livery that was applied following the locomotive's overhaul at Brush Traction Loughborough's works in September 1999, complete with WIPAC light clusters.

A third is one commissioned by the Deltic Preservation Society and represents one of its three society-owned examples of the class, namely D9016 *Tulyar* in two-tone green with small yellow panels.

Following customer feedback, Accurascale has made some minor improvements to the tooling for its finely detailed model, such as a redesign of the attachment chains, as well as changes to components for the footsteps, fuel tanks and nose rails, which should result in an even more robust model.

Decorated samples are due to arrive in mid-2023 before final production commences on this new run of models.

Prices are set at £169.99 for DCC ready and £259.99 for DCC sound-fitted versions of Accurascale exclusives (only available through Accurascale.com) and standard models (which will also be available through the manufacturer's stockists).

The DPS exclusive is priced at £180 and £270 respectively but includes postage and packing in the price. Advance orders can be made online at thedps.co.uk/shop

New out from Bachmann

BACHMANN Europe announced on February 1 that as part of its spring 2023 catalogue, the West Somerset Railway's Blue Anchor station building would be released within its N gauge Scenecraft range. With an RRP of £45, it was due for release as this issue went to press.

For those who are using the Great Central high level station buildings, a single-track road bridge is due for release which will greatly benefit those modelling stations akin to the island-types found on the Great Central Railway. RRP is £44.95.

Truro signalbox in N from Kernow

CORNISH retailer Kernow Model Rail Centre has commissioned an exclusive N gauge model of the Truro East GWR Type 7 signalbox from Graham Farish Scenecraft.

The Type 7 design was introduced in 1896 and used across the network, with the last being built in 1927. Key features were a hipped roof, ornamental eaves brackets, and highly distinctive operating room windows with sashes divided into three upper panes and two lower that were intended to improve the signaller's view of the line.

They were built with bright red bricks with Staffordshire blue brick often used for plinths, quoins and window surrounds.

Truro East 'box was built in 1899 and remains standing to this day at the east end of the station overlooking the level crossing. Its name was shortened to just Truro in 1971 after the closure of the West signalbox, when it also gained the 54 lever frame from a Bristol 'box.

Cast in resin, the model is fully painted and fitted with etched metal window frames. The staircase is supplied separately.

The price is set at £54.95 and can be bought in store or ordered online at www.kernowmodelrailcentre.com

Fourth 'General Steam Navigation' wagon exclusive

CONTINUING its cooperation with the Medway Queen Preservation Society, the General Steam Navigation Locomotive Restoration Society, formed to restore namesake SR Merchant Navy class No. 35011, has released a new OO gauge limited edition wagon from manufacturer Dapol – in two guises!

The latest of the exclusives utilises the 14-ton rectangular tank wagon tooling with 'General Steam Navigation' lettering and carries the number four in reference to this being the fourth such release. It is available in both grey and bauxite red liveries.

Models cost £17.50 each and can be bought from the GSN webstore at 35011gsn.co.uk/online-shop.html

Peco is going green with new Small Englands

THOSE who missed out on PECO's OO9 scale 0-4-4T+T Small England models – which sold almost as quickly as they were stocked – will no doubt be relieved following the release of a second batch of the two previous examples, or possibly tempted with the new offering presented due for release this March.

Models of the Ffestiniog Railway's Nos. 1 *Princess* and 2 *Prince* in the railway's lined maroon were in high demand when released last year, and in response another wave is being produced. In addition, both locomotives will also be represented in Ffestiniog green livery, *Princess* with black borders and *Prince* with black topped saddle tank and lining.

Customers deterred by reports of previous models arriving damaged or losing crank pins when running will be pleased to know that these issues have been resolved with a new pin design and improved packaging.

RRP for the new batch of Small Englands is set at £150, with many retailers offering lower prices. The motorised 0-4-0 chassis will also be available again as a separate unit with an RRP of £65.

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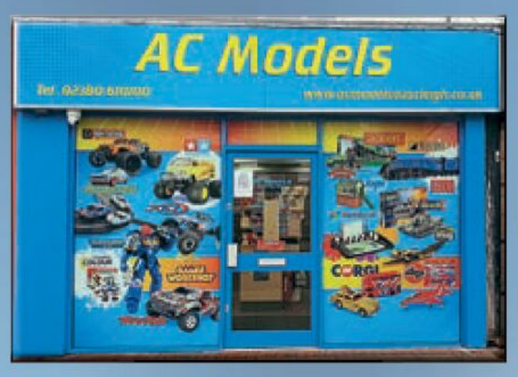

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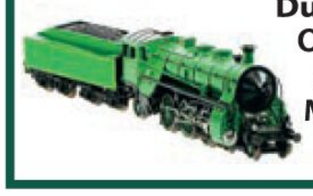

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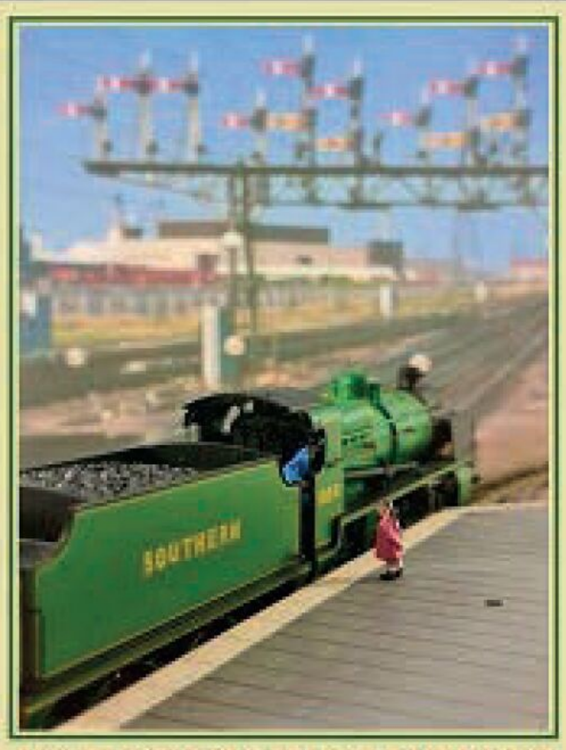

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TRACK TALK

➜ 'There's no proof that the Coalbrookdale pioneer ever ran'

I SEE that your editorial in issue 302 has repeated the claim widely spread by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum that the first railway engine was built at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire.

There is evidence that the building of a railway locomotive commenced there, but no evidence that it was ever completed or ran. The first to be completed and operated was, of course, by Trevithick at Pen-Y-Darren in 1804.

Some years ago, I contacted the National Railway Museum for its view on this. The reply was: "No problem with the Coalbrookdale loco being commenced in 1803 by Reynolds to a broadly Trevithick design.

"However, Reynolds died during the year and there is no evidence that the loco was ever finished, despite the Llewellyn drawing telling us almost certainly what it was going to be like, and parts of the loco still being in existence in the 1860s."

So, world's first, probably. "Ran" – not a shred of evidence.

This has not stopped the museum from building and operating a working simulation of this failed attempt and presenting it as a world-first.

It is unfortunate that a respected museum should feel it necessary to embroider the truth.

Malcolm Richards, email

➜ It just gets better!

JUST a line to say as a subscriber, that you and your editorial staff have surpassed yourselves with the latest *Heritage Railway* issue 303!

So many different interesting articles, with colourful static and action photographs to match.

Living in Camborne, Cornwall, not far from Spaceport, your editorial was well written. Camborne Hill is just around the corner. Fingers crossed for a second successful 'Cosmic Girl' firing.

Steve Lloyd, Camborne, Cornwall

➜ Save Cornish block signalling instruments

SOON this year the signalling in Cornwall will be done from Exeter. The disused signalboxes will, I suspect, be gutted and maybe the 'box will be used in another form.

I am interested in the block signalling instruments and I am asking what happens to them and if they can be given to the public if asked.

Dave Trudgeon, email

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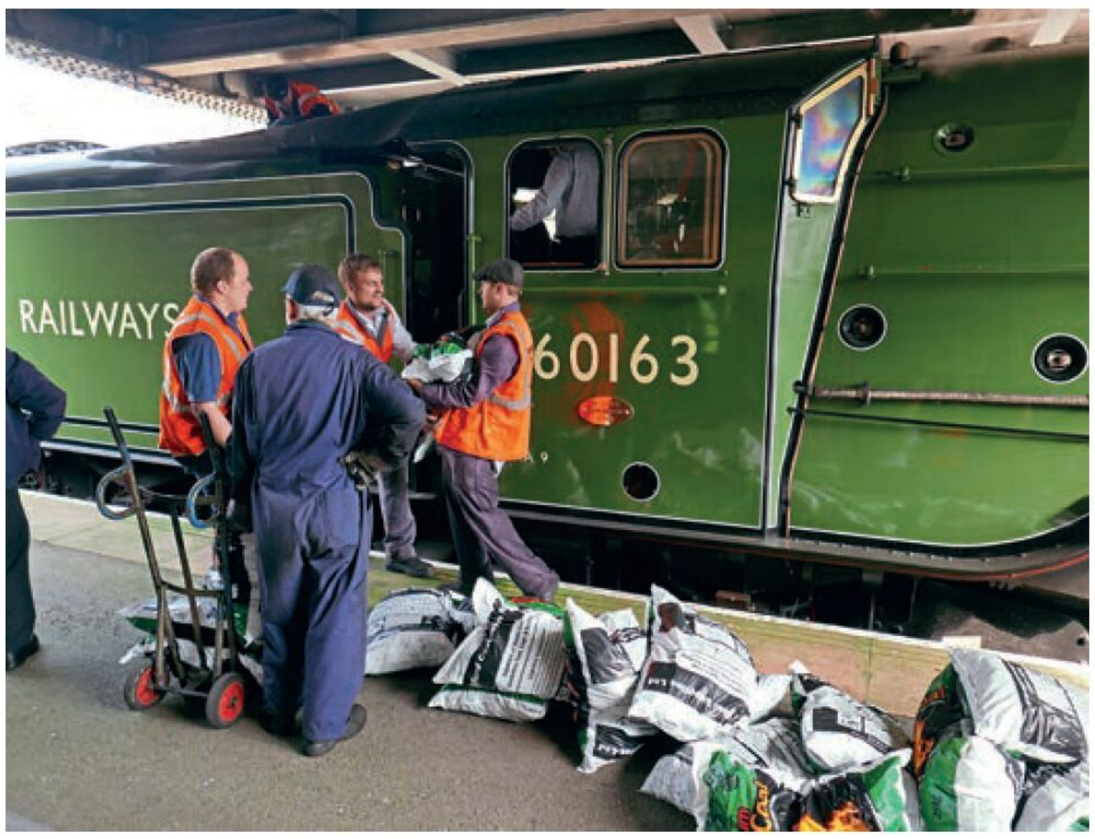
STAR LETTER

Coal and steam: a bigger perspective is needed – and fast!

WITH reference to the (apparent) ongoing problem of climate change caused by air pollution referred to in the article on page 14 of issue 301, I am again totally astounded at the small-mindedness of British politicians. They seem to have an all-or-nothing mentality regarding emissions.

Nearly 100 years ago in 1830, there were some 40,000 steam locomotives, a million petrol-driven cars and trucks, and just about all shipping using fossil fuel. However, add to this, the number of households and business places heated by coal fires or furnaces and the unwanted production of free carbon dioxide into the atmosphere was horrendous. And, of course, Britain was not alone in this. It was happening worldwide!



Replenishing Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 with bags of coal delivery by lorry to Scarborough station during The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's 'The Scarborough Flyer' trip from King's Cross on June 4, 2016. ROBIN JONES

'Minute'

In 2023, the amount of pollution produced by heritage steam locomotives, traction engines and steamships is a minute fraction of what it was then – and, what's more, it will never revert to anything like it.

All over the world, solar panels are appearing on roofs, and homes are no longer even built with fireplaces – heating is increasingly being provided by solar-generated electric air-conditioners with zero emissions.

Many vehicle manufacturers and countries already have plans to terminate the production of petrol-driven vehicles by 2030 – again, they are being replaced by electric vehicles using renewable electrical sources. Modern high-speed trains that can transport passengers from city centre to city centre faster than airlines are proliferating dramatically as technology makes tunnel boring and more direct underground routes more viable (thus eliminating the need for massive property resumption). Again, these are using renewable sources of electricity (solar, hydro, wind turbine etc.) with zero emissions.

So, in the final analysis, pollution in 2030 will be a tiny fraction of what it was in 1930 and yet the British Government spends inordinate amounts of public money closing all of Britain's coal mines so that more pollution is produced bringing the relatively small amount of coal that will, in the foreseeable future, be needed for heritage operations and essential manufacturing that technology will, in the fullness of time, be able to eliminate!

It seems to me that the short-sightedness of Richard Beeching hasn't gone away!

'Vital' to history

Even if reinstating a coal mine that produces environmentally-friendly fuel means that the said fuel will cost more than it once did, surely that would still be cheaper than importing it from Australia or Colombia!

I am sick and tired of reading about the vast amounts of money that are spent on feasibility studies (which only tell everyone what they already knew). Just do it! It is a vital part of Britain's history and heritage!

David R Holt, Queensland, Australia

Rescued van body needs assistance

I LIVE in Usk in South Wales. I've rescued a grounded wagon body from a farm field. It's a 90-year-old LNER freight wagon and the frame is suffering from serious rot.

I can handle woodwork, repainting, roofing and so on, but I've no skills or tools to weld and the base of the frame and uprights need some serious attention to get the restoration underway.

I'm hoping there's a person in the area who would like to help restore a piece of railway history and is willing to bring skills to the project.

My plan is to restore it to its original form and colour. I can be contacted on 07531 523434

Tim Mulhall, Usk, Monmouthshire

Can you help restore this vent van body? TIM MULHALL

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

A year after the late Sir William McAlpine repatriated LNER A3 Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* from California and had it overhauled at Derby Works before undergoing trial runs on what is now the Dartmouth Steam Railway, the world's most famous steam locomotive is pictured in April 194 at the long-defunct Bulmers' Steam Centre in Hereford, complete with a second tender, at the head of the rake of Pullman coaches painted in the cider manufacturer's green and cream livery.
HUGH LLEWELLYN/ CREATIVE COMMONS

Sir William was the true saviour of *Flying Scotsman*

REGARDING Lady Judy McAlpine's letter in issue 302 regarding the lack of acknowledgement the National Railway Museum gives to Sir William McAlpine for his part in saving *Flying Scotsman* for the nation: I was involved with the locomotive throughout the period of ownership by Alan Pegler/Sir William and Dr Tony Marchington.

It is, of course, a long story but there can be no doubt that Pegler left the locomotive in the USA with considerable debts to creditors and no plan or money to ensure its future. The locomotive was therefore effectively lost to this country and there was a real possibility it would be scrapped to pay the creditors.

Sir William, on becoming aware of its plight, called a meeting of those he thought might be prepared to help and quietly came to the conclusion that only he had the means and ability to arrange an immediate rescue mission.

He asked George Hinchcliffe to go to the USA, establish the facts, and report back with a plan and costs.

George, through some skilful negotiation, came up with a plan which included shipping back to Liverpool.

Speed was essential because a risk existed that the creditors would foreclose and claim ownership of the locomotive.

Sir William immediately gave the go-ahead to George to arrange the repatriation and he would pay all the costs. On arrival at Liverpool, *Flying Scotsman* was then sent to Derby Locomotive Works for overhaul, all of which Sir William paid for, and he then ran it on the main line for 23 years – including at least three more intermediate overhauls.

I believe that Sir William came to regret the decision to sell the locomotive to Dr Marchington, and when Tony decided to sell it after only five years' ownership, Sir William decided that the NRM should take it into the National Collection to ensure its long-term sustainability and used his considerable influence in places where it mattered to ensure this happened.

There were other parties interested in purchasing *Flying Scotsman*, one of who certainly had the means and ability to give it a good home in full working order.

The fact that *Flying Scotsman* exists today in this country in the National Collection is entirely due to Sir William and the NRM should acknowledge this as a historical fact in its communications regarding one of its most famous exhibits.

David Ward,
former InterCity Charter Trains director,
email

Bring more pre-Grouping liveries back right now

IN Platform, issue 301, Chris Harris writes on his disappointment of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway display at the East Lancashire Railway gala featured in issue 299, in which all the locomotives were in BR livery.

Heritage railways have got away with this for far too long now; it's like putting on a Santa special without a Santa – they would soon lose customers. We need a complete list of engines in BR livery showing all their previous companies.

We are losing too much of our railway history – stop hiding it all under a BR camouflage.

Reported in issue 302 is just what we have been waiting for: the William Adams T3 4-4-0 No. 563 will still carry its Victorian LSWR livery when it rolls out of the Flour Mill workshops in May. The photographs in issue 303 show an excellent paint job and signwriting.

Now maybe the Watercress Line will take up the challenge as it holds the monopoly on LSWR locomotives. The T9 and the M7 would all look great – let's see what's lurking under that BR camouflage.

Then what went wrong at the Bluebell: having just returned to steam, the Adams radial tank it too rolled out of the paintshop as a BR specimen. Shame on you Bluebell, that's not you.

While on the subject of the Bluebell, News, page 9, issue 302, gives a glimpse of the excellent job the carriage and wagon shop is doing with the K type Pullman; bet they now wish they had planned to turn out the Brighton H2 Atlantic in its original umber livery as Earle Marsh would have seen it.

On page 51 is a reminder of the opulence of the Brighton Belle... when will it hit the tracks? Already, the Midland Pullman has got there first.

All great news keep it up, *Heritage Railway*.

Derrick Martin,
Hornchurch, Essex

There is a place for all liveries

IN response to the Chris Harris' letter on locomotive liveries in Platform, issue 301, I must admit that I hadn't realised that there is such a big difference between Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway black, LNWR black and BR black.

Nor, in all my travels to the East Lancashire Railway, have I come across any pre-Grouping coaches. Indeed, the ELR has only BR-era coaches, so any correct rendition at a gala event will look so much better if locomotives and coaches are in a matching condition.

Add in the facts that the LNWR Coal Tank is in LNWR livery, that two of the five L&Y locomotives were in L&Y livery earlier last year, and the other three have been in the past, then I think that it is his comments that are disappointing.

As a member of the L&Y Trust and the Bahamas Society (that looks after the Coal Tank), I've given many hundreds of pounds to help with the restoration of both locomotives and carriages, and I know the people who have spent hundreds of hours restoring them. If we were happy for the locomotives to appear in BR livery at what was an extremely good event, then I'm afraid that Chris needs to accept this.

David Smith,
Sheffield

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The remarkable tale of how a Royal Mail postman restored life to an historic halt near his Hatfield home, as told to **Mark Slattery.**

This little story begins in 1902 and concerns one of the UK's smallest stations, sandwiched between Hatfield and St Albans. It concludes 117 years later with what could well be Britain's most resourceful postman.

Oliver Robert Hawke Bury, a resident of Wilkins Green Lane, Hatfield, was an internationally esteemed engineer for the Great Northern Railway; his portrait hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. The first manager of the GNR in 1847 was his great-uncle.

It was Oliver's desire to shorten his own commute to work at King's Cross station, which led to the creation of Nast Hyde Halt. Being somewhat influential to say the least, Oliver was instrumental in the establishment of the halt, which opened in 1910 by the Hatfield & St Albans Railway Company. I say influential, because his company owned it, and Bury himself was on the board.

However, by the 1930s it was clear that the whole line had become uneconomical, but the Second World War necessitated its continuance because the de Havilland company in Hatfield required delivery of aircraft parts. The war ended and Bury, an LNER director until 1945, retired and then died on March 21, 1946, aged 84.

In December 1951, the Hatfield to St Albans branch carried its final passengers, and in 1968 carried an unceremonious final haul of goods – a wagonload of bananas. The track was lifted in 1969 and that was the end of the line for the railway... but not for our story.

Disused, unloved and overgrown, there the trackbed lay until 1988, when the former line became what is now known as the Alban Way, a 6.3-mile walking and cycling route between Cottonmill Lane in St Albans and Wrestlers Bridge in Hatfield. Every year some 200,000 cyclists alone use the smoothly surfaced trail, which starts near St Albans Cathedral and ends near Hatfield House, once home to the first Queen Elizabeth.

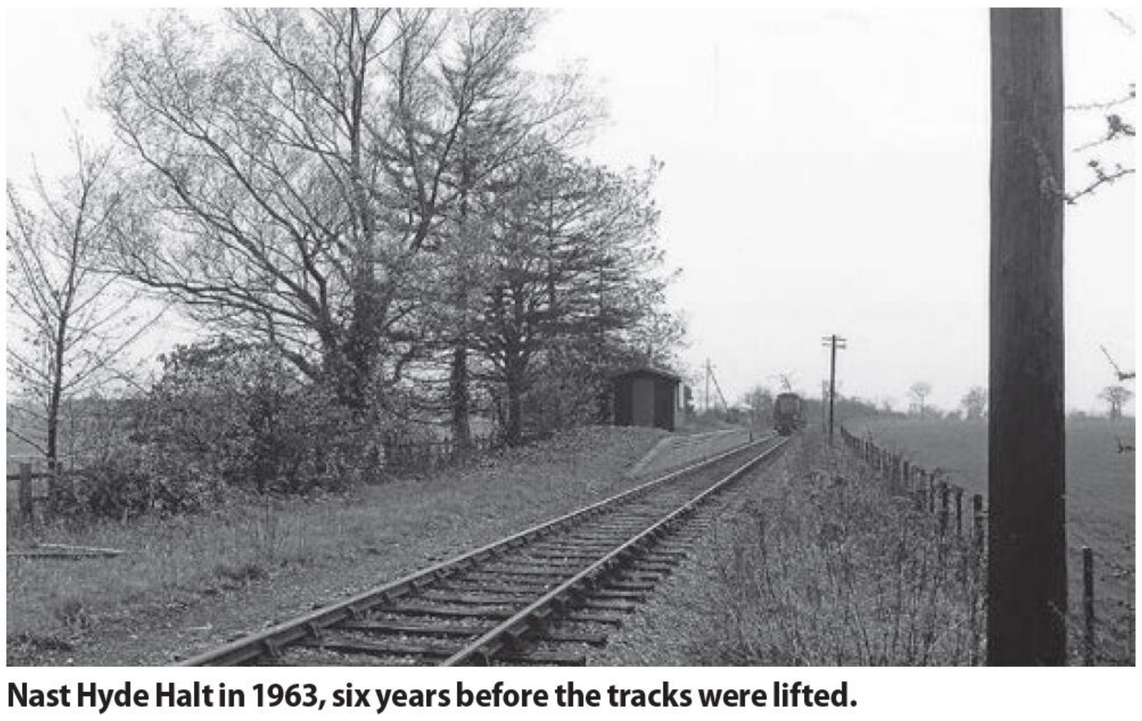
Creating the Alban Way, however, did nothing for disused stations and certainly not for Nast Hyde Halt. That's where a man called Michael Izzard came in.

Mike, 47, is a postman for the Royal Mail, based at the sorting office in St Albans. He grew up and still lives in Hatfield, with his wife Kate. Every day, he cycles home from his round past – you guessed it – Nast Hyde Halt.

"St Albans City and District Council decided to improve the old trackbed path in 2015 but only at the St. Albans end," Mike said. "The Hatfield end wasn't being funded by the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

"I thought it would be embarrassing if the Hatfield end of the Alban Way was overgrown and unkept, so I took matters into my own hands."

That may be the understatement of a lifetime. This remarkable postie went on to involve a community and transform the whole area beyond any reasonable expectation, winning several awards in the process.



Nast Hyde Halt in 1963, six years before the tracks were lifted. LAMBERHURST/CREATIVE COMMONS

Postman Mike, surrounded by a team of local residents who helped with landscaping. MARK SLATTERY

Above: Oliver Robert Hawke Bury, general manager of the GNR, as depicted by artist Sir Leslie Ward in about 1900, wanted Nast Hyde Halt built so he could commute to King's Cross. MARK SLATTERY

Right: Postman Michael Izzard, who delivered a first-class restoration to Nast Hyde Halt. MARK SLATTERY

Left: The modern-day stationmaster of Nast Hyde Halt. MARK SLATTERY

"I stopped off on my way home each day after work. It was virtually impossible to see the old station. Initially, I thought I'd just clear the leaves and expose the original brickwork, maybe put down some grass seed, and make it more presentable," he said.

"I used my grandad's tools and hid them in the bushes. Every night I'd stop and do a little more. People saw me and asked what I was doing."

Some people just don't know when or how to stop. Mike's personal satisfaction and sense of pride – and the reaction he was getting from local people – kept him working at it a little bit more than he'd planned.

"I made a replica railway signal, buying the timber from a woodstore and making a one-metre-deep hole that needed to be concreted and shuttered," he continued. "Then, I decided to make some full-sized signs. It was my own money I was drawing on. I realised I'd need help to take it further."

Mike the postman, who had turned into Mike the handyman, thus became Mike the fundraiser – and he met the challenge with equal success. "I set up a gazebo by the halt and sold tea and cakes for donations. It raised £250. I repeated the exercise and donations doubled to £500. That helped me fund some benches for the older people who like to sit next to the park opposite."

He painted faces on trees to amuse the children walking the Alban Way, installed old-style clocks in the treetops and set up a Go Fund Me page. It pulled in a further £2000, which Mike immediately reinvested to buy 47 fence posts for the rear of the halt. He erected them at a rate of two or three per day. It was hard work after a shift that wakes him at 4.30am and may not end until half past three in the afternoon.

By now, somebody had tipped off Hatfield Council that a postman was single-handedly restoring local heritage: "The council came and saw what I was doing. They created a special licence and paid for me to be insured and gave me an honorary title of stationmaster."

Official endorsement secured, now things really started to happen. Mike bought a platform trolley and some milk churns from eBay. More funding was still needed to bring the old halt back to its former glories, but Mike's funding horizons had expanded.

"Instead of tea and coffee, I had a full open day, with a brass band and a ukulele band. In the end I raised about £9000 to help create the new halt," he said.

"The icing on the cake came when the Nene Valley Railway offered me a 30ft section of authentic full-size railway line. The tracks were donated by former Hatfield resident Don Osborn, who was the track and bridges manager for the Nene Valley, and collected for me by Andy Stevens, another Hatfield man, who then had to lay them to rest in the garden of a local resident."

Mike had an intensive weekend corralling support from passers-by and organising deliveries to lay the tracks. He also made the buffers himself.

The council donated four enormous disused planters from a roundabout, which required Mike to inform the police before he removed them at 4.30am one weekend.

You might be thinking how can one postman do all this? How can he also replace 600 bricks, manage joinery, and concrete mixing?

"Before I was a postman, my first job from school aged 16 was at a kennels. A man called Don Armstrong made me a handyman. I did all the maintenance – painting, bricklaying, carpentry, gardening. He wouldn't accept anything shoddy, and he watched me like a hawk! Without him, there would be no me. I put his initials on one of the plaques as a dedication," Mike explained.

Hatfield Town Council presented him with a community award to accompany the civic award he had received the year before from Welwyn Hatfield Council.

However, the work wasn't quite finished yet.

Full planning permission to lay the section of track was granted only four weeks before the day Mike had chosen to hold his open day – one that he needed to lay down six months in advance. The pressure was on.

"I worked my socks off. The council removed four trees, local people helped, and a local signwriter donated his services for free.

"We did it. What began as a whim ended up as a lot of pressure, but we had an open day with light music and the transformation is incredible."

This one-man Ground Force had embarked on what became a four-year restoration project of the old ghost station of Nast Hyde Halt. But that's not all... Mike maintains half-a-mile of line too. The work isn't over: now it has been done, the halt and track must be kept constantly in shape. Mike is always busy.

You can find him going about his duties as stationmaster most days. Nast Hyde Halt is even listed on Trip Advisor as the 10th 'thing to do' in Hatfield.

The remarkable postie's exploits didn't stop there.

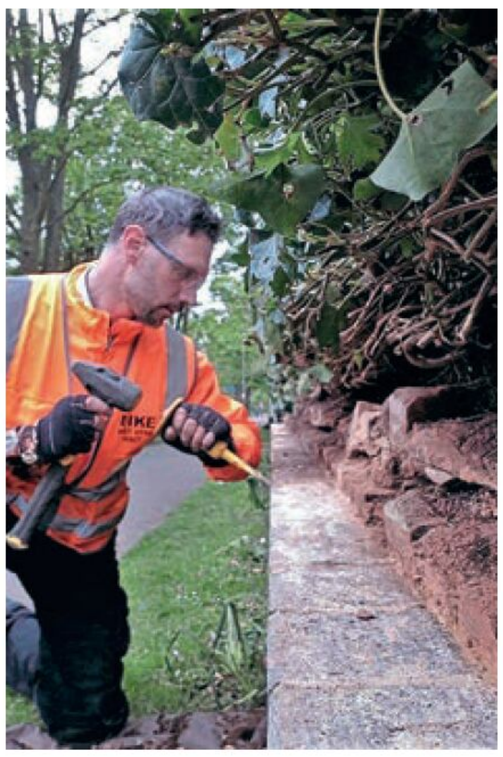
"My dad, who loved the halt, was struck down by dementia shortly before the opening day," he said.

"He started struggling with his memory and found it difficult to recognise even people who loved him.

"He threatened mum with a carving knife, thinking her a stranger. He's in a nursing home now and we visit him each week."

So Mike launched a new fundraiser for £500 to help Dementia UK. Tapped into his high standing in the community, where he has become something of a heartthrob, Mike posted videos of himself chopping wood, displaying his chiselled physique, and soon had donors swooning. The pot soon whizzed to £3500.

"The first £500 is going to Dementia UK. Thereafter donations will be split evenly between dementia and keeping Nast Hyde Halt a first-class ghost station."



Above: Mike hard at work on landscaping around the halt.
MARK SLATTERY

Right: Mike installing signals at revived Nast Hyde Halt.
MARK SLATTERY

One thing you can safely say of this postie is that his desire to create red letter days for good causes will not be ending here. The light in his eyes tells you there is more to come. Oliver Bury would be proud that his venture of 100 years past has been preserved by the philanthropy of a single person.

Over the years, there have been calls for the Hatfield to St Albans line to be reopened in order to provide a direct link between St Albans City and Watford, and also permit the closure of St Albans Abbey station. HR

Nast Hyde Halt

➜ Support Mike's work at **www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/nasthydehaltvsdementia**
➜ Visit Nast Hyde Halt in Ellenbrook Lane, Alban Way, AL10 9NS
➜ Review the halt on Trip Advisor at: **www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g503867-d18313257-Reviews-Nast_Hyde_Halt-Hatfield_Hertfordshire_England.html**

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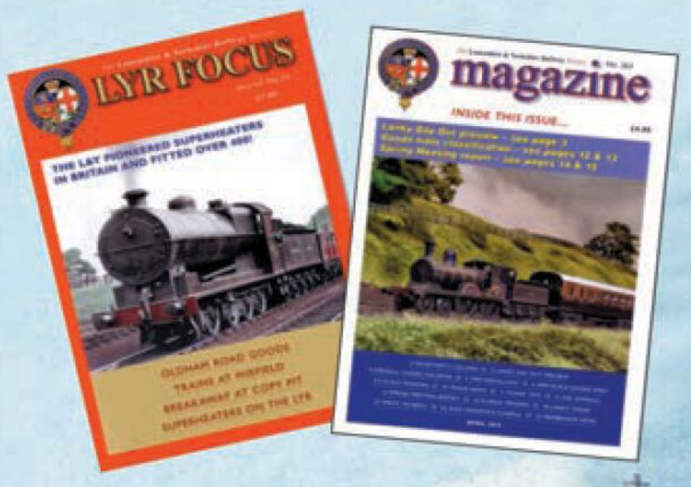

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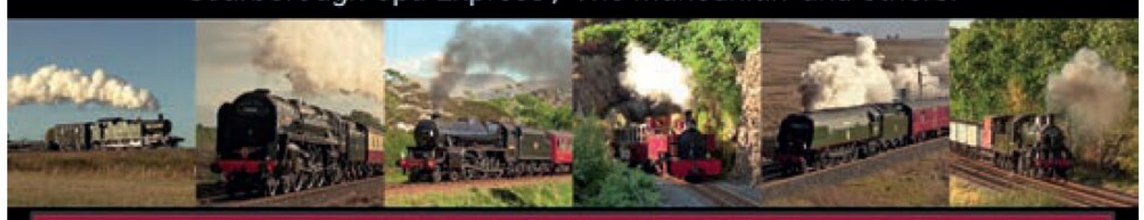

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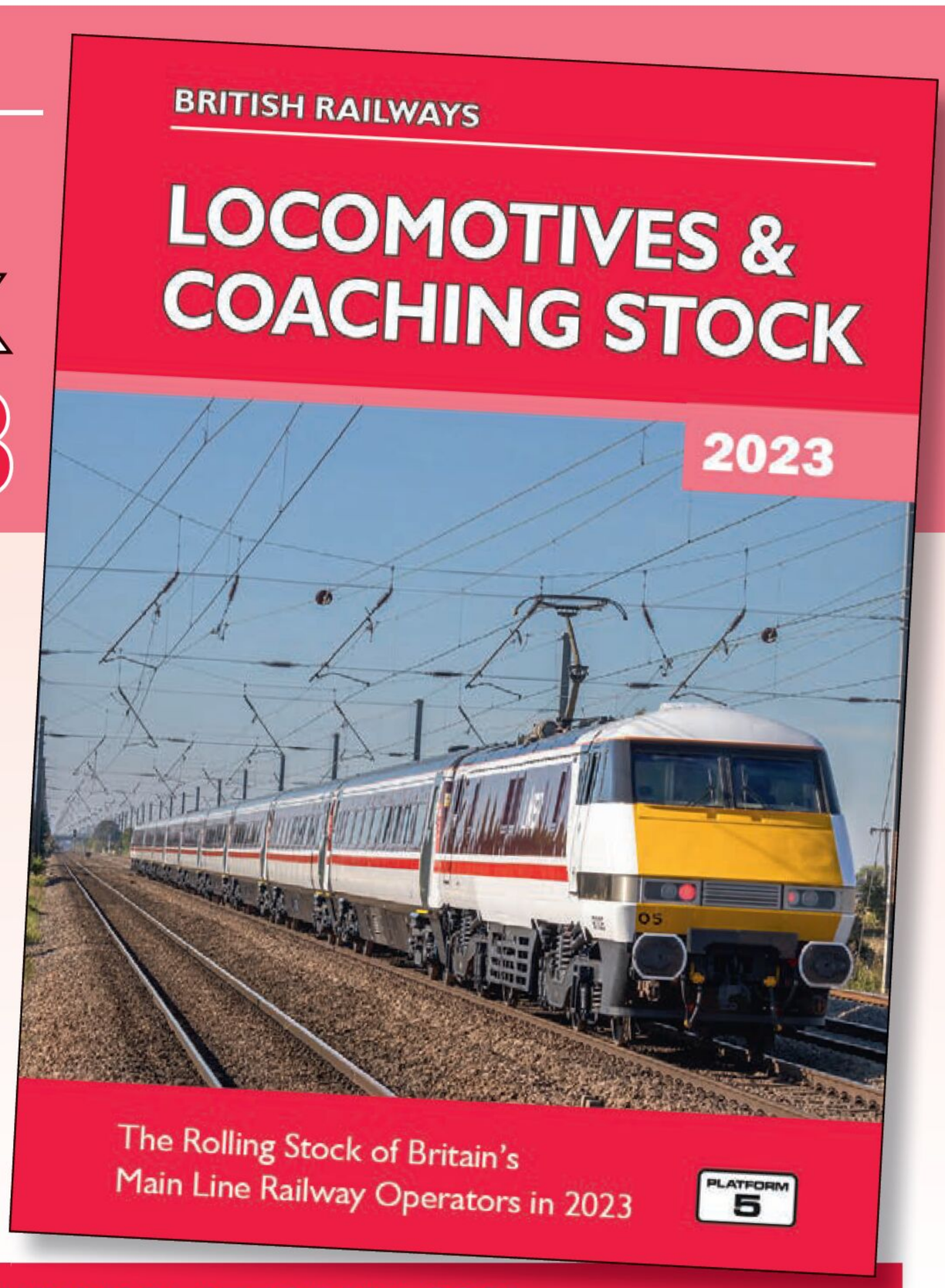

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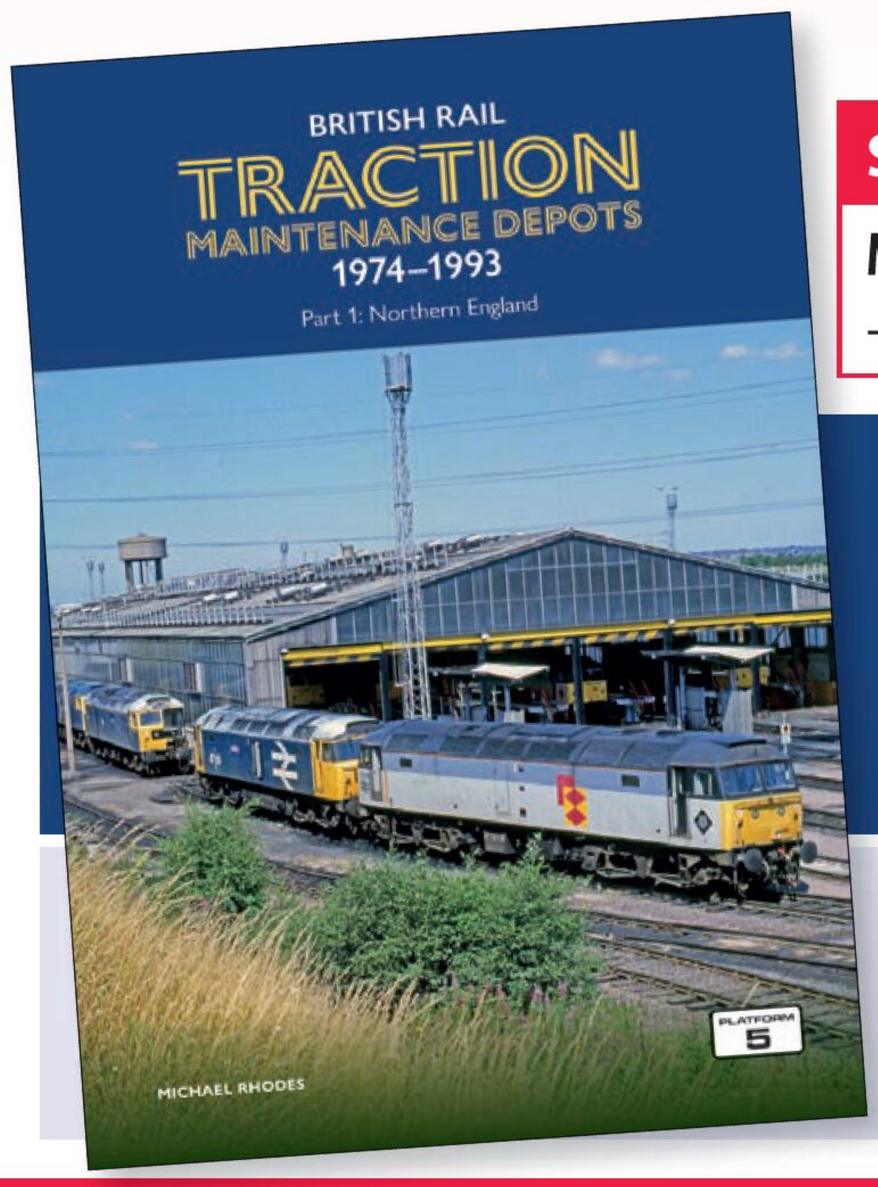

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Severn Valley Steam 2022

DVD/Blu-ray (www.steamvalleyproductions.com, 07875 556615, 95min, DVD £15, Blu-ray £20, plus £2.90 p&p)

WE have come to look forward each year to Steam Valley Productions' video compilation of the finest moments of steam on the SVR – and this one again doesn't fail to disappoint.

It includes the return to action of flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* after 36 years out, and GWR 2-8-0 No. 2857 and WR pannier No 1501 in their final year before withdrawal for overhaul.

Then there are the visits for testing of A3 Pacific No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, BR Standard Class 7 4-6-2 No. 70000 *Britannia* and B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower*. Other visitors include new-build GWR Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* and SR S15 No. 506 and West Somerset Railway mogul No. 9351, plus Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 1873 of 1931 *Jessie* from the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway.

We also see home-based West Country light Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley* in its temporary purple livery as No. 70 *Queen Elizabeth II*.

There is rarely a dull moment on the SVR and if there was ever one, it is certainly not captured on this splendid offering.

SUPER NON-STOP STEAM ACTION

The Weston & Cleveland & Portishead Railway: Then and Now

By Paul Gregory (softback, WC&P Group, www.wcprgroup.org.uk or email Doug Warwick salesdw@wcprgroup.org.uk, 64pp, £9.50 plus £1.75 p&p, ISBN 978-0-9929755-17)

WHILE GWR branches served Portishead, Clevedon and Weston-super-Mare, a direct line linking these towns was much-needed and proposed in 1884, with construction starting in 1887. After numerous delays, trains eventually ran in 1897 but just between Weston and Clevedon.

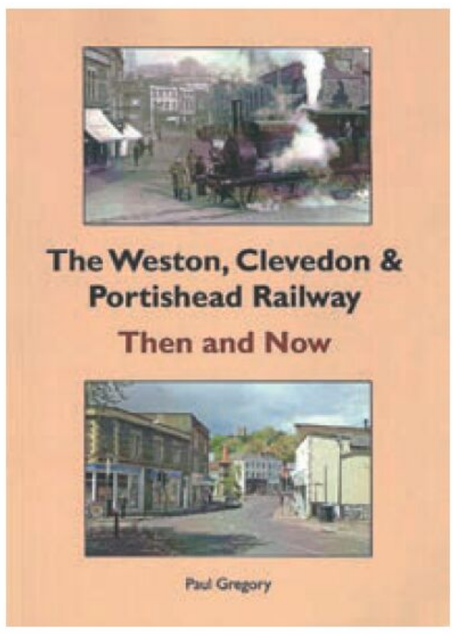
It was not until 1899 that the Light Railways Act enabled previous obstacles to be overcome and allowed the final stretch of the line to be completed, although this was not finished until 1907, and so the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway was finally completed.

The line itself was only 14 miles long, although it had 20 stations, including halts and further additional stops for quarries, gas works and wharf links. The line ran through the scenic Gordano Valley, while in contrast it skirted Weston and passed through the middle of Clevedon.

In 1911, Colonel Holman F Stephens was appointed manager and he was able to revive parts of the line that had started to decline. Today he is remembered with a lane along the site of Ashcombe Road Station, named Colonel Stephens Way in 2011.

The WC&PR lasted 43 years and it is amazing that the line which closed in 1940 is, more than 80 years later, still so well followed and admired by railway enthusiasts. This book offers then and now photographs for all stations and stops, some barely indicating the line was there, while others show walkways and trackbed along its route.

This book was also published in 2019, but this new updated version now includes Mud Lane Halt, a new photograph of 'Terrier' No.2 *Portishead* travelling along the



Gordano Valley, and details of the new Greenway Pathway between Yeo Bank Lane and Wick Road, which should be open in 2023. There is also a map of the planned route which has already had considerable work completed on it.

The fold-out map of the WC&PR at the back offers a detailed route of the line while also indicating other disused railways.

All profits from this book will go the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Group, which plans to build replica features along the pathway route, and also towards the continued purchase WC&PR artefacts to add to the history of this once wonderful and unusual railway which linked three seaside towns that were never otherwise directly linked by road.

SUPERB ACCESSIBLE LINE BIOGRAPHY

Watercress Line

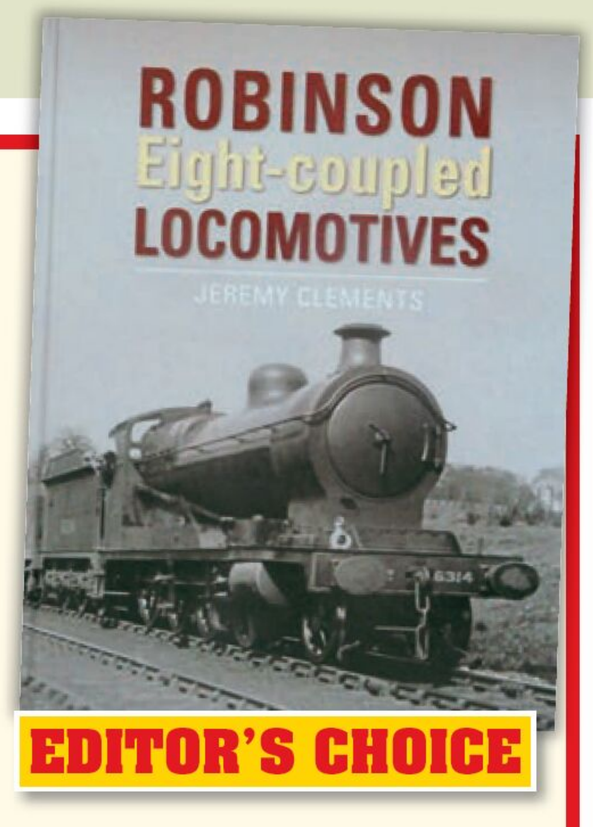
By Paul Crook (hardback, Middleton Press, 96pp, £1.99 plus £1.75 p&p, ISBN 978-1-910356-75-3)

MIDDLETON Press is renowned for its trademark series of books which set out to evolve the ultimate rail encyclopaedia, covering each section of the UK network that was (and still is), stage by stage, using archive photographs with extended captions containing essential historical information, track diagrams and vintage Ordnance Survey maps to produce a handily-sized and highly affordable mini-biography of each stretch.

A new series within the series has just been launched covering Britain's heritage railways, the first being the Mid-Hants Railway, which now markets itself as the Watercress Line.

Whereas previous MP volumes have used black-and-white archive and present-day pictures as standard, this one has an extensive colour section among the 170 views on offer. The volume's appearance is certainly

Robinson Eight-coupled Locomotives



EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Jeremy Clements (hardback, Crecy, 224pp, £25, ISBN 978-1-91080-968-6)

WITH the opening of the London Extension, the Great Central Railway was presented with fresh challenges aplenty, especially regarding the operating costs of its backbone freight traffic.

A watershed moment came in 1902 with the appointment of John G Robinson as locomotive superintendent, who brought three new designs to haul the fleet in the 20th century – an 0-8-0, and 0-8-4T and two 2-8-0s.

The small-boiler 2-8-0 became Robinson's flagship design, its standardised components cutting construction and maintenance costs.

Cometh the hour, cometh the man and his locomotive design – and more than 500 Robinson 2-8-0s were built for use in France by the British Expeditionary Force during the First World War.

Four of his 8Ks (LNER O4) survive today, the restoration at Loughborough of the sole British-based example, 1912-built No. 63601, part of the National Collection, proving to be one of the major headline-grabbing achievements by the heritage-era GCR (picture, page 83) in its first 50 years.

A total of 241 eight-coupled Robinson engines were inherited by the LNER at the Grouping and 382 including 213 O4s and 51 O1s by British Railways at Nationalisation in 1948.

'Comprehensive'

The volume, superbly illustrated by archive monochromatic photographs, provides a comprehensive history of Robinson's locomotives, including their later modifications and rebuilding under Sir Nigel Gresley and Edward Thompson.

It also looks at the fate of the ROD 2-8-0s that were sold off both abroad and to other UK railway companies after the end of the First World War, 97 of which were called up again for military service in the Second World War. The final Robinson 2-8-0 ceased working in Australia in June 1973.

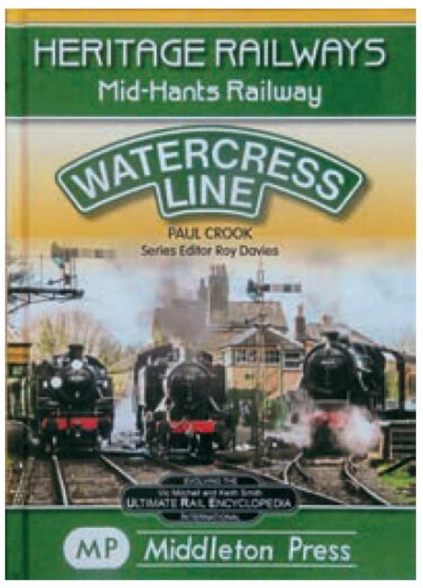
A separate chapter considers the GCR's 'might have been' articulated Garrett project, and extensive appendices list details of every Robinson eight-coupled locomotive built.

An exhaustive biography, this is a ready reference work for those who want to know more about the contribution made by Robinson and his designs, in particular the 2-8-0s, to UK railway history.

It might hopefully inspire a renewed enthusiasm in having No. 63601 overhauled for a second time.

VERY WELCOME PORTRAIT OF A CLASSIC LOCOMOTIVE

Pre-order Issue 304: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



timely: as reported in News, page 16, on February 4 the railway marked the 50th anniversary of the last BR passenger train over the line.

The volume deals all but exclusively with the history of the heritage line, which takes its marketing title from the fact that historically the arrival of the railway allowed the Alresford area with its chalk streams to become a major centre for growing watercress, a box of which is seen being loaded on to one of the last trains on January 25, 1973.

It was in May 1975 that a share issue was launched in a bid to buy the line. The first three miles of track between Alresford and Ropley were eventually acquired, but the rest of the track was lifted the following summer.

Heritage services began on April 30, 1977, and paved the way for a gradual rebuilding of the line back to Alton, with the extension formally reopened on July 24, 1985, establishing the line as one of Britain's premier heritage railways.

The volume follows the classic MP format at looking at the line stretch by stretch, station by station, and gives comprehensive coverage of the home fleet and most guest traction over its first half century.

The net result is both an excellent introduction to the line and a souvenir of it, and we look forward to more volumes in this new series.

A MUST FOR ALL MID-HANTS FANS

The Railways of Trinidad

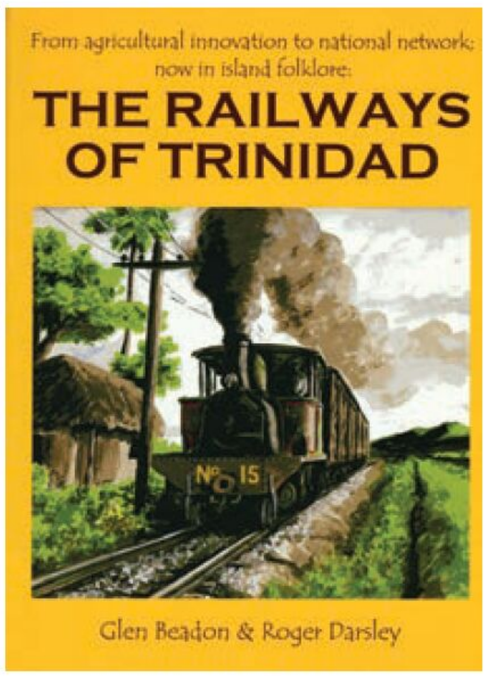
By Glen Beadon and Roger Darsley (hardback, Mainline and Maritime, mainline-maritime.myshopify.com, 224pp, £40, ISBN 978-1-913797-08-9)

JUST a few miles from the mainland of South America and roughly the size of Lancashire, the island of Trinidad once had several hundred miles of railways. Starting with isolated tramways serving the sugar industry, the island developed a network which, following unsuccessful private investors, was built by the colonial government and run by Trinidad Government Railways.

Locomotives built in the UK were used to operate services on the new system, which opened in 1876 and was then expanded over the next few decades. The creation of major American bases on the island during the Second World War added more track and saw American-built steam and diesel locos arrive, but then postwar decline set in. Despite the acquisition of two almost new ex-BR Wickham-built Class 109 DMUs (available due to UK line closures) and diesels from the USA, the Trinidad government decided to shut the system completely from the end of 1968.

As well as the 'main line' railway, Trinidad also had hundreds of miles of industrial lines used by sugar companies – some as recently as 1998, when the last line closed. A huge variety of steam motive power was used over the years, plus 'modern traction' including armoured Simplex petrol locomotives bought as surplus after the First World War, and export versions of BR Class 05 0-6-0 diesels supplied by Hunslet from the late 1950s.

This book sets out railway history in great detail, with multiple maps and archive pictures from the



earliest lines and locos to the 1960s, rare pictures of the ex-BR DMUs in service on the island, and lots of colour pictures of steam operations dating from the mid-1940s onwards – thanks in particular to the archive of photographs taken by American oil company official, amateur historian and very competent rail photographer Dr Arthur L Down, who could obviously get colour film in the USA in 1945 at a time when it was largely unavailable in the UK.

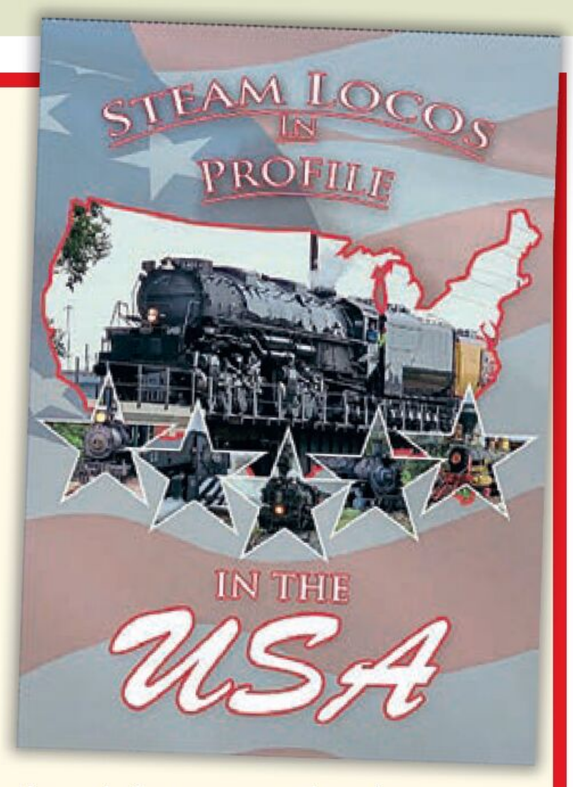
Final chapters cover trams in the island capital Port of Spain (which stopped running in 1950) and other industrial railways built at various times in the island's history, all illustrated with archive pictures.

This book is the first to tell the complete story of Trinidad's railways and is comprehensive.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED PORTRAIT OF CARIBBEAN RAILWAYS

Steam Locos in Profile – In The USA

DVD/Blu-ray (EG Media, www.e-gmedia.co.uk, 170min, DVD £24.99 or Blu-ray £29.99 plus p&p)



CHRIS Eden-Green has been producing his documentary series (often abbreviated as SLIPs) focusing on British locomotive designs since 2012, first launched on YouTube and later available on DVD. As its audience grew and expanded across the globe, he became increasingly aware of its popularity in the USA, and while trips onto the continent have been made in the past, the logistics of venturing further afield made it difficult for the crew to undertake.

However, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of SLIPs last year, Chris launched a crowdfunding appeal in July 2021 for a trip to the States to film up to nine different American steam locomotive designs. His target of £30,000 was exceeded, with just shy of £35,000 in total raised, which has resulted in 10 insightful instalments produced for this home release exclusive.

Divisive but ingenious

Though American steam can cause division among British enthusiasts, as Chris's films here detail, there were some masterful and innovative engineering achievements made to meet demands of rough track conditions, long-distance travels and increasingly heavy loads that resulted in locomotives far exceeding the tractive effort of some the most popular and powerful classes ever dreamt of by the likes of Stanier, Gresley and Riddles.

From industrial 'Porters' to the iconic 'Big Boy', Chris has obviously spent much time researching his material, and while the editing style may be compared with a popular motor vehicle entertainment programme, his content here is well presented, engaging and, most of all, interesting to even those who may not have any prior knowledge of locomotive classes from the States beyond recognising a few of their more iconic designs by shape.

On that topic, the 10 episodes cover some of these more recognisable examples, along with several more obscure locomotives and their railways, including the Mount Washington Cog Railway, the first of its kind in the world.

Though it is assumed the viewer has some basic understanding of terminology, comparisons to British lines and locomotives help the less technically-minded understand the scope of the sheer power of the focus of each episode.

Furthermore, some of those prototypes featured boast some intriguing backstories, such as those developed to work on a network of narrow gauge lines that were first inspired by the Ffestiniog in Wales, which then served as inspiration for the Brecon Mountain Railway back in Wales many years later. And who knew that when the States' iconic 4-4-0s were being withdrawn that television and film production companies would be responsible for preserving some of them?

With each short film averaging between 15 and 20 minutes in duration, there is no overload of information, and each makes for enjoyable, bite-sized viewing, though for anyone planning to binge-watch the full collection in one go, a point of criticism to note is perhaps the overuse of the one same music track when the historical recount reaches the point of locomotive withdrawals.

Differing views

Preservation in the UK and USA is vastly different; Chris recounts that American enthusiasts told him during his time filming there that they perceive the US as "very good at saving things, but actually doing something with it" is a different story. That said, it cannot be denied that what has been restored is audibly and mechanically impressive – there is plenty of action and noise to enjoy here, though one wonders how quickly British health and safety officials would break into a cold sweat seeing railroad staff riding on the ends of flat wagons or the noticeable lack of fencing at the lineside and stations... and that's before we even mention the black smoke!

AN EASILY DIGESTIBLE INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STEAM TRACTION

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HELP PRESERVE A RAIL LEGACY

Volunteers have been the lifeblood of the heritage railway sector from its very inception... millions of hours from many thousands of enthusiasts over many decades have built and maintained so many of the attractions we perhaps today take for granted as being fixtures on our tourism and heritage landscape.

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Before the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis hit the UK, many heritage groups were thriving. Most weekends through the year saw enthusiast galas or family events at various locations around the UK. But many places were mothballed as lockdowns were imposed, and some events have simply not returned as groups struggle to fully recover, with many volunteers leaving the sector.

Be the answer

Now, heritage lines and groups around the UK are calling out for help... and maybe YOU could be the answer – not by dipping into your wallet, but by giving some valuable time.

Volunteering allows you to get 'hands on' in your hobby, and getting involved with your local railway brings many benefits, such as making new friends, becoming more active, going behind the scenes in areas you may not have a chance to as a regular visitor... and it can lead to exclusive opportunities and experiences.

The volunteers of the past have helped create so many wonderful places, locomotives and opportunities... why not step forward and help preserve that legacy by giving your local line a call?

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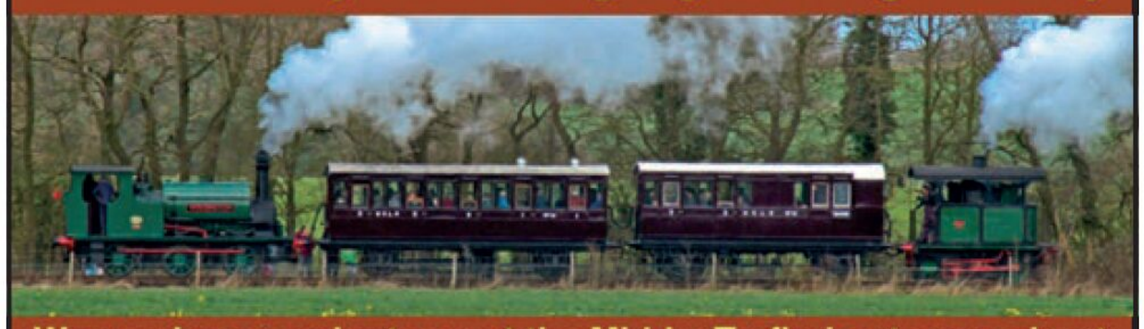

We need more volunteers at the Middy. To find out more about opportunities in events, C&W, fund raising and infrastructure,

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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex. Tel: 01798 831370. **Open: Weds – Suns.**

Bluebell Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL. Tel: 01825 720800. **Running: Feb 16-19, then W/Es from Mar 4.**

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254. **Running: Weds, sch hols.**

Chatham Historic Dockyard
Standard gauge, one mile. Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800. **Open: Daily.**

East Kent Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Shepherdswell, Kent. Tel: 01304 832042. **Open: TBA.**

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway
10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. **Running: W/Es & Sch Hols.**

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway
12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203. **Open: Daily from March 19.**

Hayling Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Hayling Island, Hants. Tel: 07902 446340. **Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols.**

Hollycombe Steam in the Country
2ft gauge, 1½ miles. Liphook, Hants. Tel: 01428 724900. **Reopens April 7.**

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204. **Running: March 19, 22, 26, 29.**

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155. **Running: Feb 18, 19.**

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515. **Open: TBA.**

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810. **Running: Feb 18, 19. W/Es from Mar 18.**

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922. **Reopens April 9.**

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey. **Reopens April 9.**

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353. **Running: W/Es, then daily from Mar 27.**

Royal Victoria Railway
10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246. **Running: W/Es.**

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01795 424899. **Running: TBA.**

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141. **Running: W/Es.**

Volk's Electric Railway
2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton. **Reopens Easter 2023.**

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538. **Running: Feb 18, 19, Mar 19.**

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555. **Reopens Feb 19, then Suns & Tue–Thurs from Mar 19.**

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600. **M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.**

Dartmouth Steam Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872. **Running: Sats & Tues + Feb 23.**

Devon Railway Centre
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon. Tel: 01884 855671. **Reopens April 1.**

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417. **Running: W/Es from Mar 11.**

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752. **Reopens Apr 10.**

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597. **Reopens Mar 19.**

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317. **Open: Weds-Suns.**

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665 Reopens: TBA.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487. **Reopens: April 1.**

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415. **Running: W/Es.**

North Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696. **Open: Weds, W/Es.**

Plym Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078. **Reopens: Apr 2.**

Seaton Tramway
2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375. **Running: W/Es.**

Somerset & Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY. Tel: 01761 411221 **Running: Feb 19, 26, Mar 5, 12, 19.**

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370. **Running: Mar 19, then Daily from Mar 25.**

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800. **Running: W/Es + Mar 24.**

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615. **Running: Mar 19, 25, 26.**

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996. **Running: W/Es from Mar 18.**

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420. **Running: Mar 19.**

The Urie Locomotive Society's LSWR S15 4-6-0 No.506 on the Mid-Hants Railway with a short passenger working during a photographic charter. The owning group is currently overhauling classmate No. 499, which will appear in the original LSWR design. TONY STOREY/MHR

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum
Narrow and standard gauge, one mile. Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900. **Reopens: TBA.**

Bure Valley Railway
15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 733858. **Running: Feb 18, 19, then W/Es from Mar 4.**

Colne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174. **Reopens: April 2.**

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524. **Open: Weds, W/Es. Running: Feb 19, Mar 19.**

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889. Running: TBA.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex.

Pre-order Issue 304 : Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Built in 1923 by Davey Paxman , the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway's 2-8-2 No. 7 *River Esk* is reflected in the still waters of its namesake river with a 2022 Santa Special working. The railway reopens for the February half-term holiday, with daily running recommencing on March 18. RER

Tel: 01621 784898.
Running: W/Es.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Reopens: TBA.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.
Reopens: April 9.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: W/Es.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles. Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA. Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Feb 18, 19, Mar 19.

Wells & Walsingham Railway
10¼in gauge, four miles. Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk. Tel: 01328 711630.
Running: Sch Hols.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Reepham, Norfolk. Tel: 01603 871694.
Open: Tues, Thurs-Suns. Running: Diesel W/Es, steam first Sun of month.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri. Running: Feb 19.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns from Mar 19.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067
Reopens: Easter 2023.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: W/Es.
Running: Feb 18, 19, Mar 4.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: Feb 18, 19.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable. Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Running: Sch Hols.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Reopens: TBA.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Reopens: TBA.

London Museum of Water & Steam
2ft gauge, 400 yards. Brentford, London.
Tel: 0208 568 4757.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX. Tel: 0116 299 5111.
Open: Daily.

Amerton Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs.
Tel: 01889 271337.
Reopens: Easter 2023.

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.
Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Reopens: April 1.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse
Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.
Open: W/Es from Mar 4.

Battlefield Line
Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.
Reopens: Feb 18, 19, 21-22, 25, 26 then W/Es from Mar 18.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Reopens: April 2.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: TBA.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles. Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Suns + Feb 20-23 & Sats from Mar 4.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile. Crich, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Thurs from Mar 11.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles. Norchard, Lydney, Glos. Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Weds, W/Es from Mar 15.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles. Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 823076.
Reopens: April 1.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns.

Evesham Vale Railway
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: W/Es.

Foxfield Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs.
Tel: 01782 396210.
Reopens: TBA.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles. Toddington, Glos. Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: W/Es from Mar 4.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323.
www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: W/Es.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Reopens: April 7.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Suns from Mar 19.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunsbury Hill, Northampton.
Tel: 01604 702031.
Reopens: TBA.

Nottingham Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Ruddington, Notts. Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Running: Closed UFN.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: Mar 12, 18, 19.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.

The details in this list were correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise that you confirm details with the venue concerned. Pre-booking is often essential.
TBA = To Be Announced

NER 0-6-0 class J27 No. 65894 and Lambton Collieries 0-6-2T No. 29 catch the attention of photographers on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, which is one of several railways celebrating anniversaries in 2023. The first heritage operations ran between Grosmont and Pickering in 1973, and an anniversary steam gala will take place September 21-24 to celebrate the occasion, with the railway looking back through the archives to relive key moments of history throughout the year. NYMR

Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST No. 886 *Premier* rounds One Mile bend in Milton Creek Country Park on Kent's Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway. The Brazil class locomotive returned to service on May 21, 2022. SKLR

Reopens: TBA.

Leek & Rudyard Railway
10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.
Running: W/Es from Mar 11.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants.
Tel 0300 3023 150.
Reopens: Mar 19.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles.
Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR.
Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: W/Es from Mar 4.

Statfold Barn Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU.
Tel: 01827 830389.
Open: Feb 18-26, Mar 18, 19.

Tanat Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Nantmawr, Shropshire SY10 9HW.
Tel: 01691 780042.
www.tanatvalleyrailway.co.uk
Open: TBA.

Telford Steam Railway
Standard gauge, one mile. Telford, Shropshire.
Reopens: TBA.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Reopens: Easter 2023.

NORTH WEST

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: W/Es from March 11.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles. Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.
Reopens: Easter 2023.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile.
Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Reopens: April 8.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile.
Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 670453.
Reopens: April 9.

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Reopens: TBA.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles.
Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Running: Fri-Sun from Mar 10.

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Near Ulverston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01539 531594.
Running: Daily from Apr 1.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway
3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).
Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 697473.
Running: Tues-Thur & W/Es from Mar 14.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass, Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.
Running: Feb 17-22, then daily from Mar 18.

Ribble Steam Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Preston, Lancs. Tel: 01772 728800.
Reopens: TBA.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles. Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.
Reopens: Apr 1.

Stainmore Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Reopens: Easter 2023.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Reopens: April 1.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Reopens: April 2.

Railway Museums

Beamish
The Living Museum of the North, County Durham. Open: W/Es & Sch Hols
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Coleford GWR Museum
Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Open: Fris, Sats.
Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Colonel Stephens Railway Museum
Tenterden station, KESR.
Open on KESR operating days.
Tel: 01580 765155.

Crewe Heritage Centre
Vernon Way, Crewe.
Reopens: TBA.
Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre
Donegal. Reopens April 1.
Tel: 00353 (0) 749722655.

Head of Steam
North Road Station, Darlington.
Closed for redevelopment.
Tel: 01325 405060.

Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum
Irchester, Northamptonshire.
Open: Suns.
Tel: 01604 675368.

Leeds Industrial Museum
Armley Mills, Leeds.
Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: 0113 378 2097.

Locomotion: The National Railway Museum, Shildon
Co Durham.
Open: Weds-Suns.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

London Transport Museum
Covent Garden.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0343 222 5000.

Manchester Museum of Science & Industry
Castlefield, Manchester.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

National Railway Museum
Leeman Road, York.
Open: Weds-Suns.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Penrhyn Castle & Railway Museum
Bangor, Gwynedd.
Open: W/Es.
Tel: 01258 353084.

Rail Story
Ingrow, West Yorks.
Open: Carriage Works daily, Engine Shed Tues-Suns.
Tel: 01535 690739 or 01535 680425.

Railworld Wildlife Haven
Peterborough.
Open: W/Es.
Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum
Glasgow.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0141 287 2720.

STEAM – Museum of the GWR
Swindon.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum
Tiverton, Devon.
Open: Tues-Sats.
Tel: 01884 256295.

West Cumberland Railway Museum
St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups – contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
Cultra, Co. Down.
Open: Tues-Suns.
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Ex-South African Railways NG/G13 Garratt No. 60 *Drakensberg* returned to service on the Vale of Rheidol railway during 2022, having been undergoing overhaul since arriving 2017. The 2-6-2+2-6-2 locomotive, built in 1927 and arrived from Switzerland, stands out from the surrounding scenery and is quite different to the 2-6-2T Rheidol tanks introduced to the line by the GWR. ANDREW SIMMONDS/VOR

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Reopens: April 9.

Appleby Frodingham Railway Preservation Society
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: Feb 25, Mar 17.

Bowes Railway
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles. Springwell, Tyne & Wear. Tel: 07850 916484.
Open: Tues, Thurs to prebooked groups only.

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01472 604657.
Running: TBA.

Derwent Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near York. Tel: 01904 489966.
Reopens: Easter 2023.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks. Tel: 01756 795189.
Running: W/Es from Mar 4.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.
Reopens: Apr 1.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: W/Es + Mar 9, 10.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Reopens: May 29.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire. Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Mar 19.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Reopens: April 1.

North Tyneside Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. North Shields.
Tel: 0191 277 7135.
Running: Feb 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles. Grosmont, North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Daily from Mar 27.

Scarborough North Bay Railway
20in gauge, 7/8 mile. Scarborough, North Yorks. Tel: 01723 368791.
Reopens: TBA.

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Suns from Feb 19.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Feb 19, 22, 23, 25, Mar 5.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles. Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: Feb 18, 19, then W/Es from Mar 4.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.
Running: W/Es.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Reopens April 9.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Feb 18, 19, 21-23, 25, 26.

Barry Tourist Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Barry, Vale of Glamorgan. Tel 01446 748816.
Running: Closed UFN.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.
Reopens April 1.

Conwy Valley Railway Museum
7¼in and 15in gauge, ¾ mile. Betws-y-Coed station, Conwy. Tel: 01690 710568.
Open: Daily.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile. Corris, near Machynlleth. Tel: 01654 761701.
Reopens: TBA.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Feb 18-26, then W/Es from Mar 18.

Ffestiniog Railway
2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.
Reopens: Mar 25.

Gwili Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 01267 238213.
Running: Mar 19.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Tues-Thurs + Feb 20, 24, 25, Mar 12.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 07956 082305.
Running: Mar 18, 19.

Llangollen Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen, Denbighshire. Tel: 01978 860979.
Running: W/Es + Feb 17, 24.

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Reopens April 1.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Reopens April 1.

Snowdon Mountain Railway
800mm gauge, 4½ miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870223.
Reopens April 1.

Talyllyn Railway
2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.
Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.
Running: Feb 18-26, then W/Es from Mar 11.

Teifi Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Henllan, Ceredigion, SA44 5TD.
Tel: 01559 371077.
Reopens: Apr 2.

Vale of Rheidol Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.
Running: Daily from Mar 25.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.
Reopens April 8.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles.
Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Reopens: Mar 25.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles.
Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.
Tel: 01938 810441. **Reopens April 1.**

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Feb 18, 19, Mar 17, 19, 25.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.
Reopens: Apr 8.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge.
Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Reopens: April 10.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire. Tel: 01340 821181.
Reopens: Apr 7.

Lathalmond Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, Lathalmond, nr Dunfermline.
Tel: 07379 914801.
Reopens April 3.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire. **Reopens: TBA.**

Royal Deeside Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory, Kincardineshire. Tel: 01330 844416.
Reopens: TBA.

Strathspey Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Aviemore, Inverness-shire. Tel: 01479 810725.
Reopens: Mar 29.

IRELAND

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
5ft 3in gauge. Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.
Reopens: TBA.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

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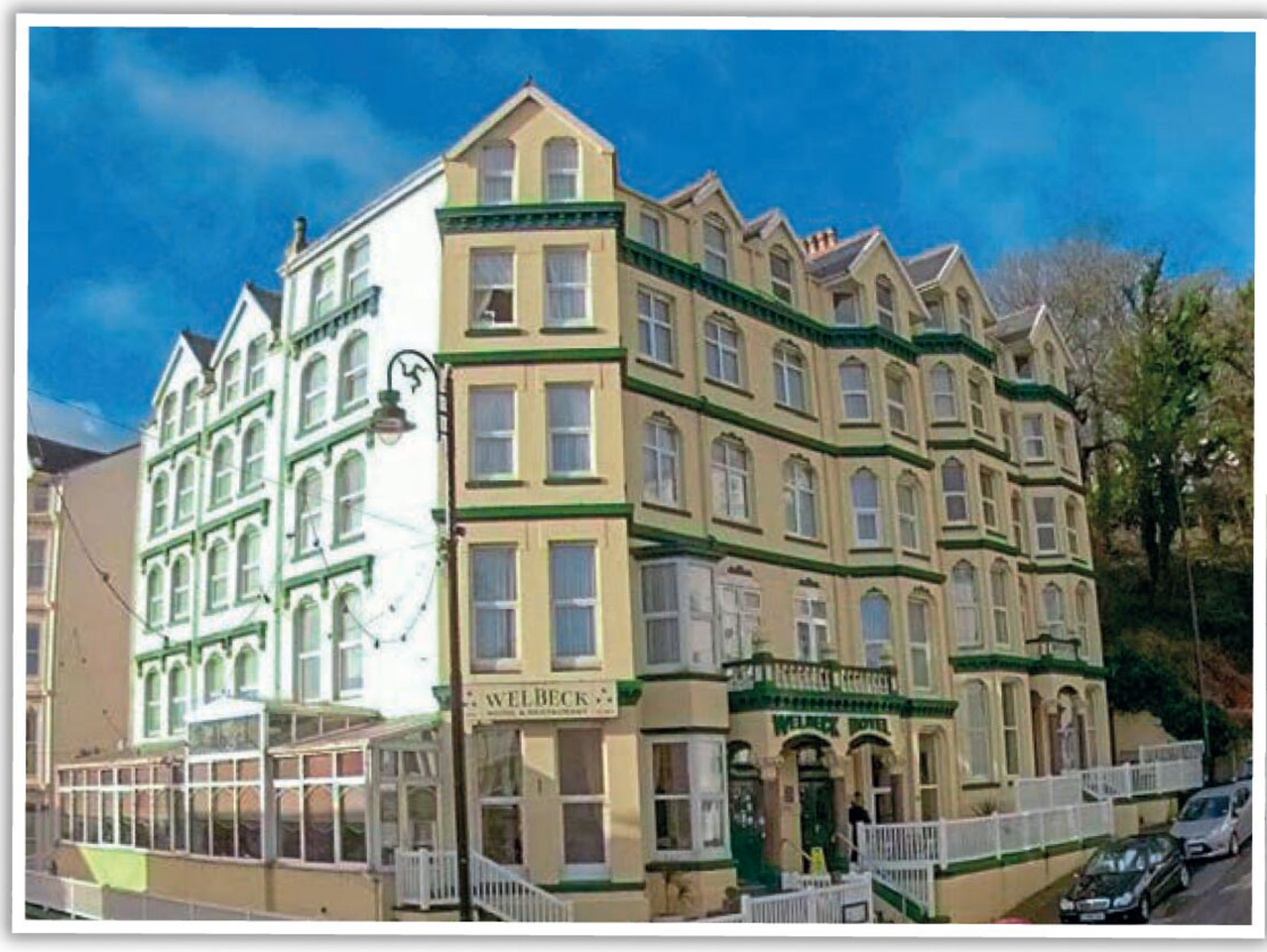

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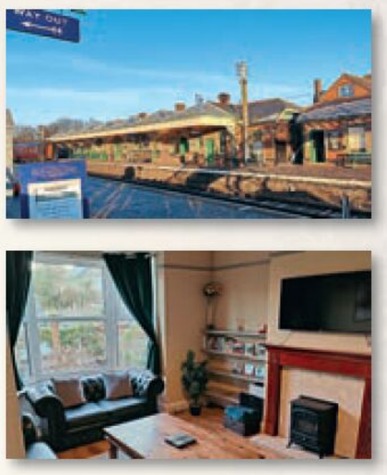

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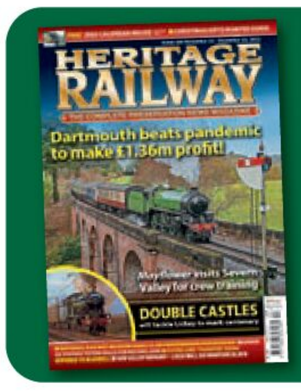

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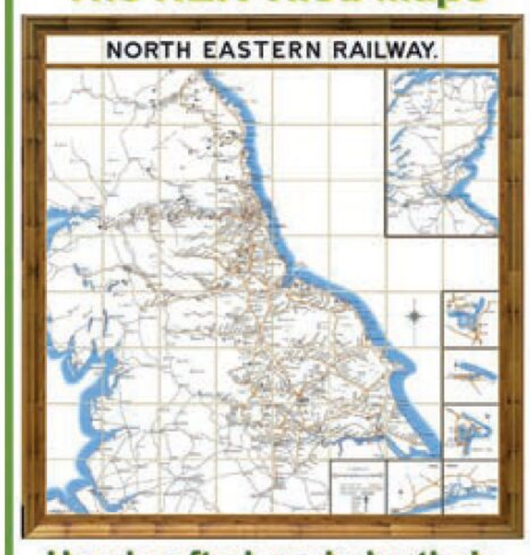

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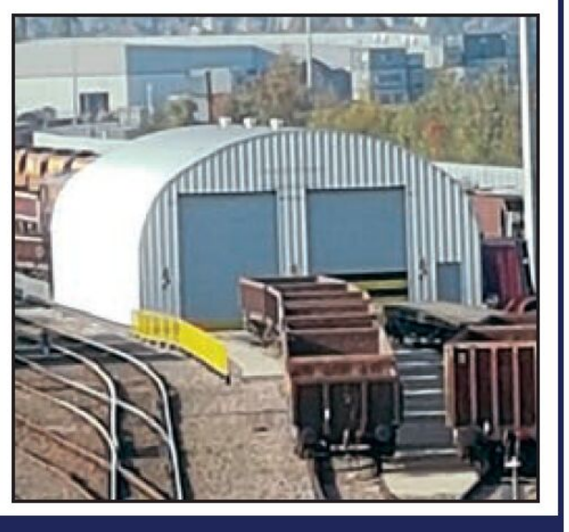

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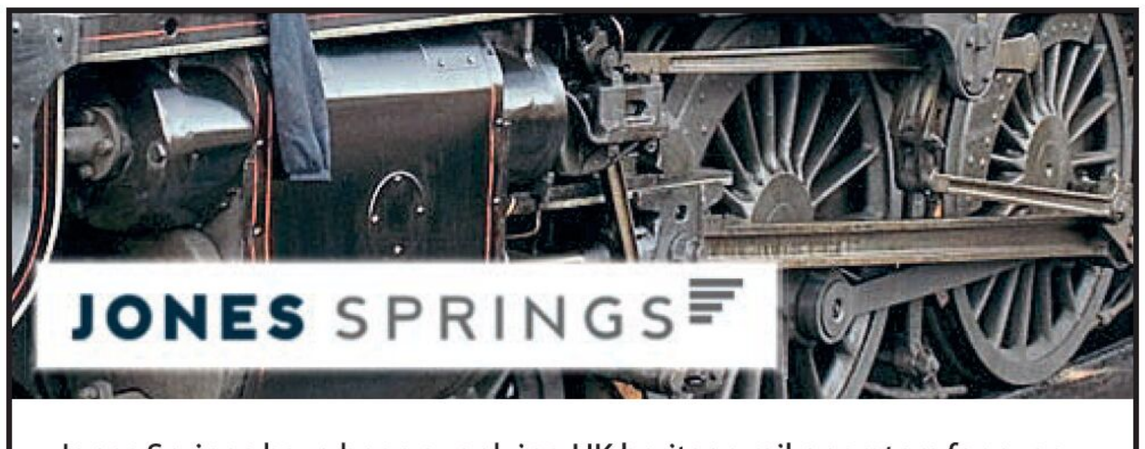

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From one of the biggest heritage lines to the smallest!

By Robin Jones

St. Michael's Mount – a place of myth and legend, romanticism and fantasy, as illustrated in a GWR poster. ROBIN JONES

The railway runs from the quayside through a set of doors to the harbour station and the tunnel beyond. ROBIN JONES

SOMETIME around the early 6th century, King Arthur was slain at the Battle of Camlann, when his forces fought those of his traitorous nephew Mordred. Arthur's court magician, Merlin, was so enraged that he caused a great earthquake to consume the retreating forces of Mordred as they fled westwards across Cornwall and the adjoining land of Lyonesse. The resulting tidal wave swamped Lyonesse, which remains all but covered by the Atlantic waves to this day. All that survives above water are the Scilly Isles and the island of St Michael's Mount, which can be reached by foot from Marazion at low tide.

Another story says that St Michael's Mount was once home to an 18ft-tall giant named Cormoran, who lived in a cave with his ill-gotten treasures obtained by terrorising local towns and villages – that was, until a young farmer's son named Jack killed him by trapping him in a concealed pit; he received a hero's welcome and was named Jack the Giant Killer.

It has also been said that the archangel Michael sat in a great stone chair at the top of the mount, affording him a sweeping view far across the sea so he could protect England from invaders.

Those who nowadays give the slightest credence to such legends are few and far between. There are also many who likewise greet another tale from the mount with utter disbelief when first told – that it has a railway running through it!

This particular story, however, happens to be 100% true: the 2ft 5½in gauge line was the subject of a feature in the third issue of *Heritage Railway*.

Following her recent resignation as managing director of the Severn Valley Railway, Helen Smith announced that she has taken the role as chief operating officer of St Aubyn Estates, which looks after the mount, which she described as an "amazing natural treasure." So, one move has taken her from one of the UK's biggest heritage railways to one so small that visitors and even railway enthusiasts do not even know it is there.

Mention Marazion to railway enthusiasts and they will immediately think of the Pullman carriages stored at the closed station's former sidings since they were moved there in the 1960s as holiday accommodation.

Benedictine monks from the remarkably similar Mont St Michel on the Normandy coast built a priory on the Cornish mount's summit, and it was later fortified as a castle by Henry IV during his war with France.

Built in 1901, the castle's unique cable-operated incline railway ferries supplies from a secret 'station' on the quayside to another inside the kitchen pantry in the castle! Trains once ran at speeds of up to 40mph – up a slope of 1-in-1.9 as it ascends 174 feet from the harbour to the summit.

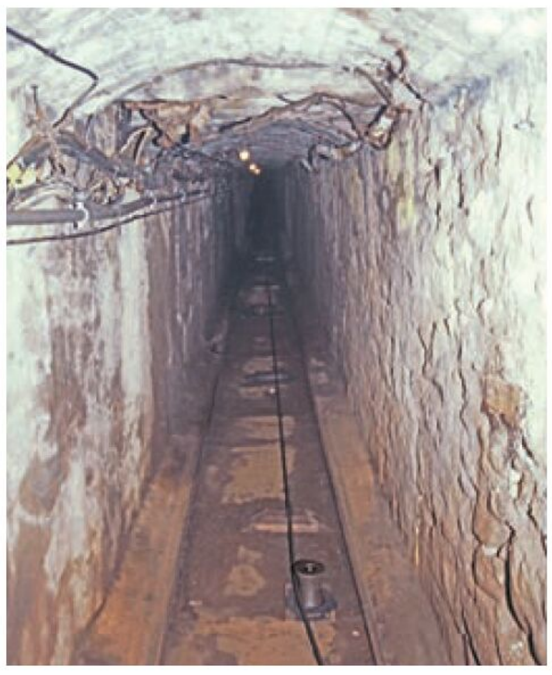
The only publicly visible clue to the existence of the railway is the short length of rail laid tramway-style in the quayside cobbles beyond a set of wooden double doors between the harbourside cottages leading to the bottom station. This is known as the 'tramyard' and is concealed in a steel cage for security. The National Trust, the island's custodian, does not allow visitors access to the railway.

Cornwall is world-famous for its mining traditions, and the miners' technique of spiking the rails directly on to the rock face was used for much of its length. Apart from one section where tunnelling was essential, the railway was constructed using a 'cut and cover' method, with a brick arch to hide it from view.

The single item of rolling stock is a steel box wagon hauled by a cable connected to an electric-operated winding drum at the summit station. Power was originally supplied by a gas engine, but a Ruston petrol engine replaced it in the 1920s, and in turn it was superseded by a Crompton-Parkinson motor after an 11,000-volt power cable supplying the island from the mainland was installed in 1951. Since the modifications were made, the wagon – not the original – now takes a modest two minutes and 35 seconds to make the journey from start to finish.

Before the Second World War, serious consideration was given to converting the line for passenger use, but no action was taken.

We wish Helen all the best in her new job – but don't expect SVR flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* to be running on the island's line anytime soon!



Hidden from public view: The tunnel through which the railway climbs to the summit of the mount. ROBIN JONES

The sole item of rolling stock on the railway is used to take supplies from the harbour to the kitchen of the castle at the summit of the mount, and rubbish back down. It is sometimes referred to as the 'Dreckly Express'. ROBIN JONES

NEXT ISSUE
Issue 304 out Mar 17
T3 4-4-0 No. 563 may be hot news approaching a return to steam, but Owen Hayward visits another LSWR restoration – Urie S15 No. 499.

PLUS
Remembering Rail 150
As a £3.2 million Lottery grant to celebrate the 200 years of the Stockton & Darlington Railway is announced, John Titlow looks back at the cavalcade at Shildon marking the 150th anniversary in 1975.

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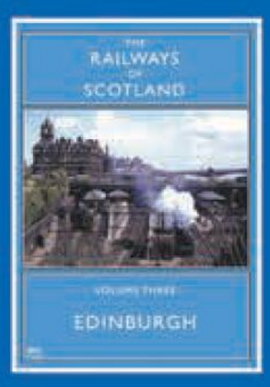
Railways Of Scotland 1:
The Kingdom Of Fife

This comprehensive video record, transferred from colour film taken by local cameramen, looks at some of the long-closed lines and stations of Fife's intricate railway network, which existed until the early 1970s.

57 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR101)



Railways Of Scotland 3:
Edinburgh

Many long closed lines and stations are featured, recorded at a wide variety of locations with many classes of steam locomotive. Also the transition to diesel traction is well documented with Deltic, Type 4, Sulzer Type 2 and Clayton locos.

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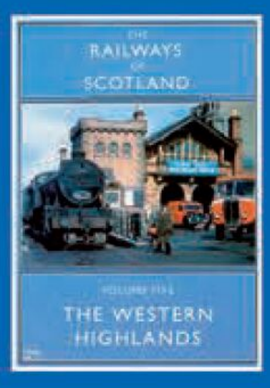

Railways Of Scotland 5:
The Western Highlands

Steam Class 5, B1, K1 and K2 locos plus a C15 powering the push/pull service to Arrochar are featured plus NB Type 2, Class 20, 25 and 26 diesel locos in the early 1960s.

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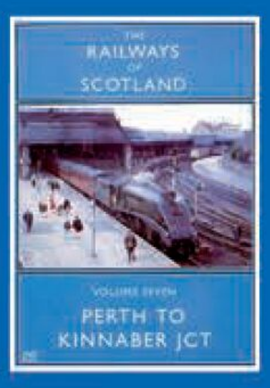

Railways Of Scotland 7:
Perth To Kinnaber Junction

Freights to Brechin and the 'Special' last passenger train to 'Bervie' in 1966 are shown, both powered by ex-N B Class J37s. DMUs, NB Type 2s, Cl 26 and Cl 40s feature- plus a Class 50 'fly-shunting' at Forfar!

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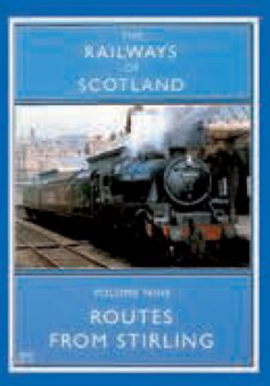
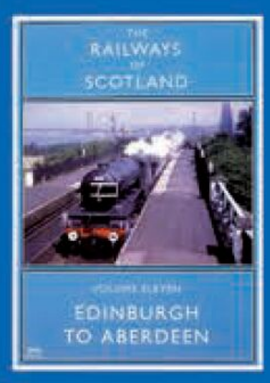


Railways Of Scotland 9:
Routes From Stirling

Stirling is viewed before heading north-west to Callander, Killin Junction, the Killin branch, Oban and Connel Ferry. Next is Gleneagles, Crieff and Comrie, the railbus between Falkirk and Grangemouth, Polmont, Bathgate, Winchborough and more.

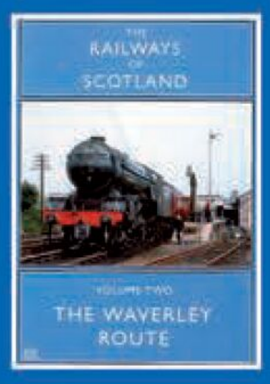
62 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR109)



Railways Of Scotland 11:
Edinburgh To Aberdeen

Begins with scenes at Edinburgh Waverley and Haymarket, the Costorphine branch with aerial views of the Bridge. Steam classes include A1/2/3/4, B1, D11, D40, J36/7/8, V2, B1.5 and WDs plus diesel Classes 06, 08, 20, 26, 31, 40, 47, 55.

65 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR111)



Railways Of Scotland 2:
The Waverley Route

Until its closure in 1969, the Waverley Route served the border towns and villages between Carlisle and Edinburgh. This DVD traces the changes in motive power, including scenes on the last day of passenger workings.

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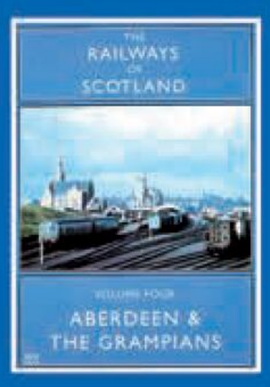
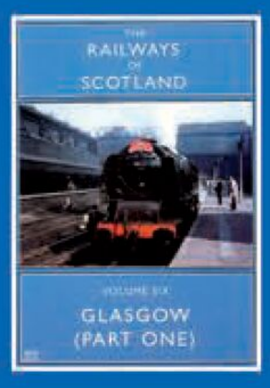


Railways Of Scotland 4:
Aberdeen And The Grampians

The Granite City - Aberdeen, was the focus of several branch lines, plus routes from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness. Footage of the last steam hauled Royal Train contrasts with views of demolition crews at work following the line's closure in 1966.

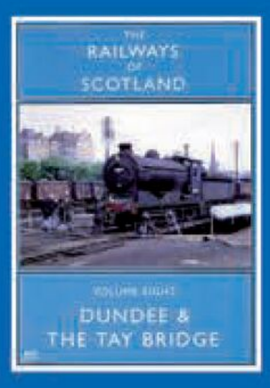
59 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR104)



Railways Of Scotland 6:
Glasgow Part One

Glasgow held a fascination for rail enthusiasts and Buchanan Street, Central and St. Enoch stations are featured with a wide variety of ex-LMS, LNER and BR locos and early diesels. Ex-Caley and N B Railway types feature plus G&SWR locos at St. Enoch in 1931!

59 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR106)



Railways Of Scotland 8:
Dundee And The Tay Bridge

Dundee forms a major junction where routes from Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, converge. Dundee was host to both the North British and Caledonian Railways. Their legacy was a range of secondary lines centred on Dundee, all of which have closed.

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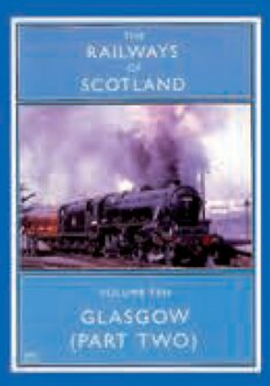
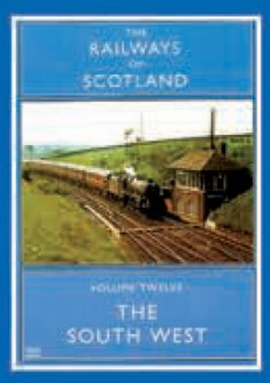


Railways Of Scotland 10:
Glasgow Part Two

Recorded in 1966, commencing at Gourock, this traces the entire route to Glasgow Central. St. Enoch, Queen Street, Buchanan Street and the final A4 Aberdeen service in 1966 are shown, plus Corkerhill, Eastfield and St. Rollox depots.

63 minutes ~~£19.95~~ £12.95 (CR110)



Railways Of Scotland 12:
The South West

From Carlisle, the mainline to Dumfries is followed, then Kilmarnock, Troon, Ayr, Dalmellington and Stranraer. The final section of the programme is a detailed journey in 1965 from Dumfries to Stranraer with a high-speed return trip showing almost every yard of track!

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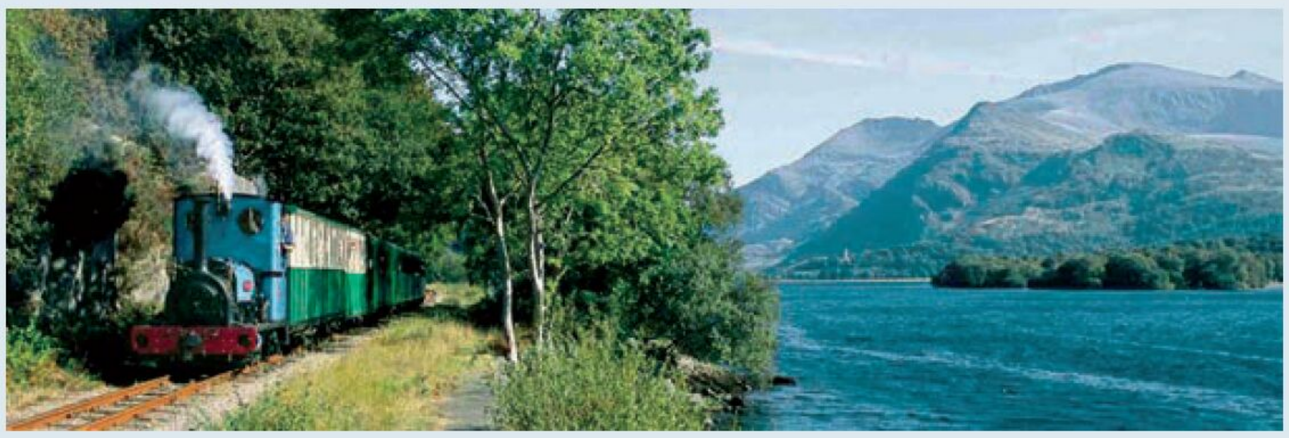

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