

'CORNISH' PRAIRIE BACK AT BODMIN HAULING CLAY HOODS

ISSUE 305 April 14 – May 12, 2023

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

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As part of the Ribble Steam Railway's Spring Steam Gala, the opportunity was taken for the country's oldest working steam locomotive, 1863-built Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20, to haul a demonstration freight train. It is seen running alongside the River Ribble on March 26. Following the event, the locomotive moved to Didcot Railway Centre for its Easter services.
STUART CHAPMAN

Where the heritage sector was proved right

"THE line should never have closed!" How often have we heard that comment appertaining to railway routes big and small over the past 60 years since the publication of Dr Beeching's report in 1963?

However, proof is in the pudding – in one case, stopped with a liberal helping of Devon clotted cream.

There was widespread dismay, both from residents and holidaymakers alike, when it was announced in 1968 that even with the doctor having departed, his medicine was still being prescribed and that British Rail sought to close the Paignton to Kingswear line – despite its presence and popularity in the heart of one of Britain's favourite summer holiday destinations.

However, the Dart Valley Railway, which had saved most of the GWR Ashburton branch, had other ideas, and credulity was stretched far and wide when its directors announced that they sought to buy a second line on their doorsteps, despite having only a few years' experience of operating their first branch.

As it has so often done since volunteers saved the Talylln Railway in 1951, railway preservation has proved itself to be the art of the possible – and I have no doubt that it will continue to do so time and time again.

As our feature on pages 48-53 illustrates, the takeover of the Kingswear line – the first example of privatisation of part of the nationalised rail network – has, over the past half-century, been shown to have been exactly the right decision, no matter how over-ambitious it appeared at the

time. The branch not only survived, but due to a mainstay of tourism in the resorts it served, it extended the season well beyond summer.

Last year, we saw the Exeter to Okehampton line, which had a comparatively brief heritage stint as the Dartmoor Railway, reopened as part of the national passenger-carrying network with remarkable success, begging the question – what else might follow?

"Railway preservation has proved itself to be the art of the possible, and I have no doubt it will do time and time again."

I have always maintained that the biggest mistake was made not in closing routes, but by allowing the trackbeds to become blocked so any future reinstatement becomes, at a glance, wholly impractical. Looking at the Dartmouth Steam Railway, would it not be absolutely wonderful if the Brixham branch could have been reopened? However, it could

never happen because of the sheer volume of physical obstacles now in the way.

I watch with excitement the new series of heritage DMU services over the entirety of the Swanage branch, another line which stalwarts of the heritage sector have shown should never have closed.

On April 4, Peter Frost – who travelled on the last BR train from Swanage to Wareham as a child in 1972, and became one of the first Swanage Railway volunteers – was rostered to travel in the cab of the 10.44am train from Corfe Castle to Wareham. Looking at the achievements of the Kingswear line, there is every reason why these new services on the Purbeck line should succeed, and reap big dividends for the local economies into the bargain.

Robin Jones Editor

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Don Benn looks at the double-headed Castle run to Didcot on March 4, plus two Halls in the 1960s.



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COVER: WR small prairie No. 5553 climbs up the 1-in-40 past Charlie's Gate with a rake of dirtied clay hoods during a 30742 charter on March 31. The Waterman Heritage Trust-owned small prairie is on loan to the Bodmin & Wenford Railway for the 2023 season and once operated over the line during its BR allocation to St Blazey shed from November 1960, when it worked Bodmin to Padstow services. See feature: pages 72-77. JOHN TITLOW

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SR 4-6-2 No. 34072 257 *Squadron* passes the 14th century Bodiam Castle on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. ROBIN COOMBES/KESR



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Summertime... and the living is steamy

The Dartmouth Steam Railway is celebrating 50 years of stunning success since it was bought, in a history-making purchase, in service from British Rail by the nearby Dart Valley Railway. Robin Jones looks back over the half-century history of one of the sector's premier lines that also encompasses riverboat travel.



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'Cornish' prairie – back on the clay freight

With a GWR prairie that was once based at St Blazey shed visiting the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, over which it ran in British Railways days, a golden opportunity was taken to run it with the line's growing rake of restored Cornish clay hood wagons.

The Forest pannier: back in action

An award-nominated restoration, WR 0-6-0PT No. 9681 was launched into traffic at the Dean Forest Railway at the start of March, and now the team responsible is setting its sights on the locomotive's immediate numerical successor.



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Ain't snow stopping us now!

A March blizzard brought picturesque scenes to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, where an exciting gala with a strong Midland flavour resulted in stunning sights amid valiant efforts by the line's volunteers to keep things running.



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Model news

Rapido Metropolitan 0-4-4T E class, Accurscale GER J67/68/69 'Buckjumpers' and Locomotion's Class 31 highlight a plethora of announcements.

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Ffestiniog's old ladies

With Bachmann's recent release of the Penrhyn Quarry Hunslets in 009 scale, Luke Ryan delves into the history of these two popular Ffestiniog Railway locomotives.

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Severn Valley withdraws GWR coaches over snap lock concern

By John Titlow

CONCERNS have been raised regarding snap door locks on older heritage railway carriages. Trains have arrived in stations with the door handles in the vertical position, which could have led to an accident – but fortunately none have occurred.

Snap locks are a type that does not latch automatically when the door is pulled closed and must be physically turned 90 degrees once the door is in the fully-shut position.

It had been anticipated for some time that the GWR stock on the Severn Valley would be temporarily withdrawn while appropriate safety control measures and solutions were looked into, and their use in the April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala is now unlikely.

Several options are being explored to bring them back into service safely, including additional train staff and improvements to check more thoroughly that all doors are closed on every carriage before departure. The intention is to reintroduce the vehicles at the earliest opportunity, but officials cannot be more specific at this stage.

In the longer term, there are modifications that the SVR could

make to bring these coaches up to the same level of operation as later LNER/LMS/BR stock with 'first catch locks' or snap locks that prevent the door from being fully closed without it being locked.

The railway is now assessing the cost and timescales involved with modifying them.

More issues

The situation is compounded by the different styles of locks; some are mounted internally and others externally, causing design and fitting issues, plus the striking plates will be different.

Patterns will have to be made and new locks cast in brass. Aesthetically, they must match the existing ones as closely as possible, but a situation thus arises where they are not genuine and it therefore becomes political. The choice is then to either place the carriages in a museum or have them running and doing the job they were built for.

The modifications will not be cheap, likely costing several hundred

pounds per door, multiplied by more than 140 doors, coupled with installation.

According to Hugh McQuade, technical expert on the SVR: "The wider-bodied GWR coaches had the double-acting 'slam locks' as the T-handles are shorter, to keep them within loading gauge.

"Slimmer coaches continued to have snap locks right until the end of construction in Hawskworth/early BR batches (the GWR had about five different widths of stock for different routes!)"

Managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We have taken prompt action to address an identified safety risk. We will resolve it, as we want to keep running these coaches. Our unique collection of pre-Nationalisation rolling stock is one of the SVR's crown jewels. However, the safety of our staff and visitors is always the primary factor in any decision such as this.

"It is a perfect example of how preservation is overcoming challenges to continue operating heritage equipment in an

environment where visitor and staff safety is the paramount consideration.

"This is an absolute requirement for us under the Rail and other Guided Systems Regulations (2006), sometimes referred to as ROGS, and the Office of Rail and Road would absolutely expect us to have taken the action that we have done."

The SVR's head of traction and rolling stock, Martin White, said: "Presently, two GW carriages are in operational use that already have GWR double-acting locks fitted, Nos. 6045 and 9103.

Repairs pending

"There are 11 ex-GW carriages used on passenger carrying duties during December that have snap locks fitted. These have temporarily been withdrawn from passenger-carrying use pending the completion of an operational review and risk assessment review.

"In addition, there are two auto coaches and two ex-GW inspection observation saloons, all of which are privately owned. There are also six GWR carriages that have run previously which are currently out of use pending repairs. One of these (9627) has double-acting locks fitted,



Perrygrove gala will feature UK's newest steam engine

BRITAIN'S newest steam locomotive is to make its public debut at the Perrygrove Railway's April 29-May 1 steam gala.

The 0-6-0ST, based loosely on a Peckett design, is the latest to be outshopped by North Bay Railway Engineering Services in Darlington.

Designed and built to specifications supplied by Perrygrove, it will become the seventh steam locomotive in the 15in gauge Forest of Dean line's fleet.

Its livery is similar to that carried by diminutive stand gauge Port of Par Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Alfred* and *Judy*, which are based at the Bodmin & Wenford Railway.

It will be named at a ceremony for invited guests the day before the steam gala.

The gala will see all locomotives in operation, along with traction engines, rock crushers and saw benches in action.



The new Perrygrove Railway saddle tank in the final stages of completion at the North Bay Railway Engineering Services workshop in Darlington.

NBRES



Resplendent in its new Brunswick green lined livery, 1928-built GWR 0-6-2T No. 6695, the 99th locomotive to be rescued from Barry scrapyard, was officially launched into Swindon & Cricklade Railway traffic at Blunsdon on March 18. Pictured at Hayes Knoll, the locomotive, which was built by Armstrong Whitworth, previously ran on the Swanage Railway, where it was returned to steam in 2006.

JIM CROTON/SCR



The Severn Valley Railway at its best: GWR 4-6-0 No. 6960 *Raveningham Hall* heads up Eardington Bank with a complete rake of GWR coaches on April 14, 2021. The locomotive was taken out of service on July 1 that year and moved to owner Jeremy Hosking's One:One Collection museum at Margate pending a possible overhaul. JOHN TITLOW INSET LEFT: Coach lock in the down position. SVR/MARTIN WHITE

but the other five have snap locks. Finally, there are a number of ex-GW carriages currently undergoing restoration."

Narrow gauge lines such as the Vale of Rheidol, Talyllyn and

Ffestiniog railways have overcome the issue by locking passenger doors while the train is in motion, but this takes time at stations and can lead to delays. Other railways with similar locks on pre-Grouping

stock may also be affected by this situation, for which the SVR has taken the lead by temporarily removing the coaches from service until the issue can be resolved.

Trial photographic charters are back on Severn Valley line

THE Severn Valley Railway is trialling the return of photographic charters after their temporary withdrawal two years ago over safety concerns.

The first will take place in partnership with Timeline Events on Tuesday, April 18, featuring visiting GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, a guest at the line's April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala.

The day-long charter will see *Pendennis Castle* paired with an SVR set of GWR carriages, although nobody will ride in them. Photographers will travel to carefully selected locations along the line using their own transport or that provided by Timeline Events.

SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "This type of operation is commonly used. It has proven successful at other heritage railways.

"Very importantly for us, it greatly reduces the risks that were previously identified when large groups of photographers had lineside access and which led to us temporarily withdrawing photo charters in 2021. "It is clear there is an appetite for them to return, and we are delighted to be working in partnership on this occasion with specialist photography event organiser Timeline Events. We are very much looking forward to hosting this exciting day."

Depending on the success of the trial charter, the SVR will be looking to host further events this year.

Tickets are available to purchase online at timelineevents.org

Fifty wagons for 50 years – Great Central Railway plans longest rake

By Owen Hayward

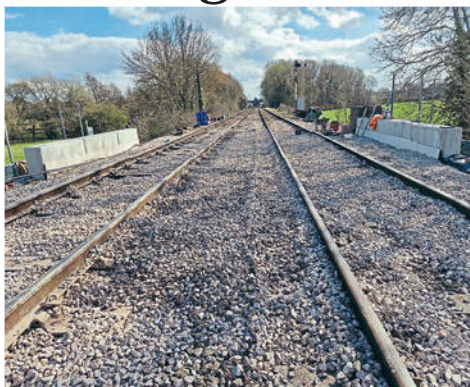
THE Great Central Railway is to attempt its longest-ever wagon rake at its 50th Anniversary Gala event, taking place over the weekend of June 17/18 – when it will attempt to operate a train of 50 wagons long.

Combining the line's mineral 'Windcutter' wagons with the van train (along with any other operational vehicles to bring up the total should there be a shortfall from the two rakes), plans are being laid for the proposed 50-vehicle wagon train run the 8¼ miles from Loughborough to Leicester North.

Recently appointed general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "What better way to mark our 50th anniversary than by running a 50-wagon train? We are currently looking at everything very carefully to make sure it can be done safely and properly, but it is very much our intention to do this."

Malcolm confirmed that there will be a raffle with some exciting prizes on offer, and a new fundraising appeal will also be launched.

Meanwhile, the railway has completed the replacement of two 125-year-old bridges, one either side of Quorn and Woodhouse station, which enabled steam-hauled services across the full length of line to resume from April 1 after several weeks of DMU-only services operating from Leicester North to Swithland and along the Mountsorrel branch. "These services have been incredibly well patroned and we shall be



Newly-laid track across one of the new bridges either side of Quorn & Woodhouse station. GCR

looking at ways we can utilise this setup again in the future," Malcolm added.

Much of the finance was provided by the David Clarke Railway Trust, the GCR's official supporting charity.

The GCR has replaced four bridges in the last 12 months, a major undertaking for the visitor attraction. One is essential for the Reunification scheme to relink the two separate halves of the heritage-era GCR, while the other three were all on the main line between Loughborough and Rothley.

Unique Class 17 for GCR and Swanage

THE NOW unique Class 17 D8568 is to appear at the Great Central Railway's April 22-23 Spring Diesel Gala.

The Diesel Traction Group's Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway-based locomotive will star alongside long-term guest Derby lightweight railway *Iris* from the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

In action from the home fleet will be Class 37 D6700, Class 45 D123 *Leicestershire and Derbyshire Yeomanry*, Class 50 No. 50017 *Royal Oak* subject to completion of repairs, testing and examination, and the line's two Metro Cammell diesel railcars.

D8568 will also be a guest at the Swanage Railway's May 12-14 diesel gala and beer festival, alongside other visitors Class 45 No. 45108 from the Peak Locomotive Company, Freightliner Class 47 No. 47830 and the Class 40 Preservation Society's D345/40145, with Class 33s Nos. 33012 and 33111 from the home fleet. Trains will run over all 10 miles of the heritage line from Swanage to its boundary with Network Rail at Bridge 4 over the River Frome.

Foxfield partners with heritage YouTube favourite for Knotty 100

By Owen Hayward

THE Foxfield Railway has entered into a year-long sponsorship deal with YouTube content creator Lawrie Rose.

His channel, Lawrie's Mechanical Marvels, features films about various heritage lines, quirky and unique items of rolling stock, and other heritage projects. The deal lasts until the end of 2023, and Lawrie will reveal exclusives in the lead-up to the railway's July 7-9 Knotty 100 weekend, which forms part of a wider celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of the absorption of the North Staffordshire Railway (nicknamed 'The Knotty') into the LMS company on July 1, 1923.

Volunteer content manager Ben Wiles said: "We discovered that Lawrie had a passion for Foxfield during lockdowns and we are delighted to work together to further heritage education and enjoyment.

"The Foxfield is the first heritage railway to sponsor the LMM channel, and we believe we are also the also first to negotiate a long-term agreement with a heritage

Youtuber in the UK. Lawrie will bring wonderful wit and passion, as well as tremendous value, for us at Foxfield with a class-leading audience size and content, and so we are committing a third of our marketing budget to support his channel and promote the Foxfield Railway.

'Passionate'

"This includes bringing the Lawrie's Mechanical Marvels team to Foxfield throughout the year, sponsoring videos to other heritage destinations, live streams, providing giveaways, and exclusive announcements such as details for the Knotty 100 event."

Lawrie, who is also a volunteer on the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, where he owns ex-Fawley Hill Railway Ruston 48DS 4WDM No. 294266, said: "I am delighted LMM will be working in an official capacity with the Foxfield Railway. We are passionate about showcasing our wonderful heritage to a worldwide audience on YouTube and feel extremely honoured that it wants to support us in that journey.



Bagnall No. 2623 Hawarden has returned to steam after a 15-year absence at the Foxfield Railway. It is pictured with Dave Scragg (owner) and volunteers Dave Burrage and James Goodwin following an initial test on March 12.

RICHARD WARREN/FR

"It's fantastic to be recognised for what we are doing and I'm really excited for the opportunities this presents for the channel."

The first announcement revealed by LMM was that resident 0-4-OST Bagnall No. 2623 Hawarden will be the star locomotive at Knotty 100. No. 2623 will be appearing fresh from overhaul and made its first movements in 15 years on March 12.

Owner Dave Scragg said: "I would like to thank the dozens of people who have worked on the locomotive over many years and whose efforts have been realised today.

"In the spring, there will be running-in and the formal entry into traffic procedures followed by a complete repaint. We are confident that No. 2623 will officially enter public service at Knotty 100."

The Knotty 100 organisers have also applied to the National Railway Museum for the loan of the unique

NSR 4 wheel battery shunting locomotive No. 1, with the intention of displaying it alongside formerly NRM-owned NSR 0-6-2T L class No. 2, the only other surviving NSR locomotive which is currently stored in the museum shed on static display. No. 2 is itself also a century old, having been outshopped as LMS No. 2271, coming into service after the Grouping.

Working model

Further Knotty 100 celebrations will take place at multiple venues in North Staffordshire, including the Brompton Museum in Newcastle-under-Lyme, where a working scale model of the station is set to be installed, with Foxfield's iconic Knotty Heritage Train playing a key role in the railway's involvement.

Full Knotty 100 details will be available on the dedicated knotty100.uk website in due course.



Left: Lawrie Rose (right) with Foxfield's volunteer content manager Ben Wiles during a visit to the railway to launch the new partnership between the Youtuber's channel and the heritage railway. LAWRIE ROSE/FR

Shunter *Wren* moved to new home in Lancashire

LANCASHIRE & Yorkshire Railway 18in gauge Horwich Works 0-4-OST shunter *Wren* has been moved from the entrance of the National Railway Museum's Station Hall at York to the East Lancashire Railway's Bury Transport Museum.

Wren could remain in its new temporary home for several years while work continues on the redevelopment of the hall, part of the Vision 2025 scheme.

When John Ramsbottom was appointed consultant to the LYR regarding the planning of Horwich Works in 1883, he advocated an 18in gauge internal transport system similar to that he had earlier installed

at Crewe for the LNWR. Originally extending to 7½ miles, *Wren* was built by Beyer Peacock in 1887 and was fitted with a strongbox on the tender for distributing wage packets. By 1948, the system had shrunk and *Wren* was the last survivor, remaining in service until September 1961. It was placed on static display inside the works until October 1963.

A NRM statement said: "We are pleased to confirm a new loan agreement with the ELR that will see narrow gauge locomotive *Wren* go on public display at Bury Transport Museum while we prepare the NRM for our Vision 2025 development."



On April 2, L&YR 0-4-OST *Wren* was pictured inside Bury Transport Museum alongside John Cameron's streamlined A4 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa*, which has been repainted by Riley's Heritage Painting ahead of its impending move to its owner's museum in Fife. NEIL EVERITT



The year's first 'Jacobite' services, pictured approaching Glenfinnan station, ran on April 3 with LMS 'Black Five' No. 45407 at the front. Despite recent rainfall, Network Rail considered there was still a fire risk, and so Class 47 No. 47425 assisted from the rear. TREVOR GREGG

New set-up for Locomotion's APT-E

VISITORS to the Locomotion museum at Shildon between March 27 and 31 would have witnessed the rare sight of BR Advanced Passenger Train Experimental (APT-E) outside the museum – the first time it has been both moved and outdoors since 2004.

It was reconfigured from four to three-car formation to more accurately represent the unit as built in 1970. The surplus car will remain at Shildon on display as part of a new display at the museum.

The process of reconfiguring the APT-E required specialist lifting equipment to extract one of the centre cars from the formation, with support provided by haulage firm and heavy lifting specialists Allelys. One car was rotated 180 degrees during the process.

The head of Locomotion, Dr Sarah Price, said: "It has been a mammoth few days and our teams have worked extremely hard to reconfigure our APT-E set.

"It is now safely back in the museum, presented in a more accurate way to how it was originally created.

"One of the middle carriages will be redisplayed alongside other vehicles in the collection to tell the story of rail innovation and research throughout history.

"I want to say a huge thank-you and well done to our rail operations team and our external partner, Allelys, for delivering such a brilliant result."



Outdoors for the first time since 2004, the BR APT-E was reformed at the end of March into a three-car unit. Supporting rigs and a crane supplied by Allelys are seen being prepared to conduct the lifting of one of the centre carriages. LOCOMOTION



One of the APT-E centre carriages is lifted from its bogies during the reconfiguration process at the end of March. LOCOMOTION

Travel to Swanage diesel gala aboard heritage traction

THOSE seeking to enjoy the Swanage Railway diesel gala in its entirety can go a step further by travelling to the event aboard London Transport's Class 438 4TC unit and behind Class 33 D6515 Lt. Jenny Lewis RN to and from Eastleigh thanks to the Branch Line Society.

'The Jurassic Crompton' will ferry those travelling to Purbeck on Thursday, May 11, the day before the gala begins, departing Eastleigh at about 11.12am and arriving at Swanage at 6.41pm.

The return working, entitled 'The Return of the Jurassic Crompton', will leave Swanage at 3.30pm on the Sunday afternoon, shortly before the gala concludes, with arrival at its destination scheduled for 10.40pm.

It is intended that the trains will work over some sought-after routes, such as Laverstock Curve and the connection from Norden to Worgret Junction.

A raffle in aid of The Alzheimer's Society will take place on board

each working. The charity is the new partner of GBRf, which is also supplying two Class 73/1 locomotives to support the workings.

Both the 4TC and Class 73s will too be in operation each day of the gala.

Fares for both 'Jurassic' trips are set at £65.15 for adults and £32.58 for accompanied under-18s. Booking can be made online by visiting branchline.uk/current-fixtures

S&D on the move – to S&D!

ROLLING stock owned by the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust has been moved from its home of 46 years at Washford station on the West Somerset Railway to the North Dorset Railway at Shillingstone, where they will be restored and displayed.

As reported in issue 265, in February 2020, WSR plc gave the trust a years' notice to quit the site. Following further talks, agreement was reached for the trust to remain at Washford until November 23, 2023 (issue 290). Several exhibits have already been moved for display at the S&D Railway Heritage Trust's Midsomer Norton base.

A formal loan agreement has now been reached with the NDR and the first two wagons, LMS box van No.179162 and LMS open wagon No.607324, were transferred on March 10, with remaining stock to follow.

Also moving to Shillingstone are Fruit D van No. W3450W, CCT No. N37103 and SDRJ six-wheel coaches Nos. 98 and 114.

A statement said: "The NDR and S&DRT look forward to developing a relationship to promote the history and heritage of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway, with the aim of establishing a long-term future presence for the S&DRT at Shillingstone."

Board games... all aboard a steam train!

BOARD game aficionados are invited to a special evening on board a steam train at the Nene Valley Railway, working in partnership with *Tabletop Gaming* magazine for two-hour trip on May 20.

Guests are asked to arrive at Wansford between 6pm and 6.15pm, ready for boarding the train, which will depart at 6.45pm.

Tabletop Gaming's editor, Christopher John Eggett, said: "There's a great history of board games about trains, and what better way to enjoy that than on a historical train?" Ticketholders can bring any game they wish.

Tickets range from private compartments (£199) to individual tickets. To book, visit www.tabletopgaming.co.uk/information/ticket-to-ride-on-a-train

£1.5m SOS appeal for urgent repairs to Stanway Viaduct

By Robin Jones

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust has launched a £1.5 million appeal for urgent repairs to the 15-arch 656ft-long Stanway Viaduct.

The 15-arch Staffordshire blue brick-built structure, which came into use in 1904, has been suffering from the effects of water penetration for many decades.

The trust aims to address the structural problems through a two-phase project to install a new waterproof layer and repair brickwork subsequently damaged by water ingress.

Such work is essential to prevent continued deterioration of the 50ft-high structure – said to be the largest viaduct anywhere on a UK heritage railway – to a point when it could no longer safely carry the loads and stresses imposed by trains, severing the vital link to Broadway and resulting in services having to terminate at Toddington.

After BR closed the Stratford-upon-Avon to Cheltenham line in 1976, the track was removed from the viaduct in 1979.

In 2005, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway began relaying the track, and in November that year an engineering train became the first

to cross the viaduct since closure. The first heritage-era passenger train to cross the viaduct came in 2010 when the railway opened as far as Laverton on its push north to Broadway, which was completed in 2018.

Structure 'suffering'

G/WR plc civil engineering director Dr Graham Plant said: "The viaduct carries static and dynamic loads via the brick arches acting in compression and then transferring those loads to the piers and hence to their foundations.

"The structure was built including a waterproofing layer of asphalt below the ballast.

"Water percolating through the ballast should enter catch pits and then via drainage pipes exiting within the arch soffits.

"In 2020, the catch pits and drainpipes were cleaned out and the stone around them replaced, but funds were not available to undertake more extensive works.

"Recent evidence shows that the waterproof layer has failed and so the structure has suffered from the effects of water penetration over many decades, especially on the brick piers causing some spalling.

"Brickwork on half of pier eight was repaired in 2021. The brickwork

of piers five, six and seven, together with associated adjacent spandrels, was repaired, with a grant from the trust in 2022. All these repairs to brickwork are necessary to maintain the viaduct's strength. However, while this work is essential, it is not addressing the root cause of water penetration from above.

"This will only be achieved with a new waterproof layer under the track ballast. Providing this new waterproof layer, at an estimated cost of £300,000, will form the first phase of the project."

The remedial work needs the track and ballast to be removed, the deck cleaned, a concrete layer placed to ensure water flows towards the catch pits and the application of two waterproofing layers, together with protection, and then the replacement of the ballast and track.

The second phase, which could start as early as this year if funding becomes available, is to begin repairing all the brickwork for the whole structure, including the remaining nine piers, associated spandrels, the balance of pier eight, the arch soffits and the parapets.

Three-year project

The intention is to spread the work over three years, and a particular, expensive

challenge is to provide safe access for the bricklayers to reach all parts of the structure.

The remedial work on the viaduct will be carried out by specialist contractors working for G/WR plc. The trackwork will be undertaken by the railway's track volunteer maintenance team.

Trust chairman Philip Young said: "The Stanway Viaduct is an integral part of the living museum and we are therefore delighted to be able to run this appeal in support of the GWSR.

"I would like to thank everyone who is able to donate, however small, as your generosity will help us secure the future of this iconic structure.

"If you are a UK taxpayer, please consider adding Gift Aid to your donation."

G/WR plc chairman Richard Johnson said: "We cannot delay; the work needs to be undertaken as soon as possible so please do support the appeal."

If less than the target funding is achieved, the focus of the repairs would be on the first phase (the waterproofing), as this will prevent further deterioration of the structure.

➔ To donate to the Stanway Viaduct appeal, visit www.gwrt.org.uk or the trust office at Toddington station.

WR 0-6-0 No. 9466 is seen crossing Stanway Viaduct on December 30, 2019. No. 9466, which is owned by West Somerset Railway plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt, is to run in traffic on the WSR this season. JOHN TITLOW



Darjeeling tank in Adrian Shooter collection sale

By Owen Hayward

THE Beeches Light Railway collection is to be auctioned off on June 21 following the death of the late Adrian Shooter, with the available assets including his iconic Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Sharp Stewart B class 0-4-0STT No. 19.

As reported in issue 301, the Chiltern Railways founder, who had been involved in numerous heritage railway projects and societies during his lifetime, died on December 19, 2022 at the age of 74 following a short battle with motor neurone disease. The 2ft gauge, mile-long Beeches Light Railway was built around the garden of his Oxfordshire home between 2002 and 2004, with a distinct Indian theme to its station, sheds and signage.

In 2019, Adrian announced that the line was closing permanently but intended to relocate his

collection to a new site, which unfortunately never came to be.

HJ Pugh & Co Auctioneers and Valuers has been appointed to conduct the sale of his rolling stock and railwayana, including the Darjeeling B and accompanying replica coaches, a former London Underground post train, a rail-mounted Ford model T diesel car.

HJ Pugh representative Henry Biss said: "We already have worldwide interest. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for someone to own part of such a well-known collection – the Darjeeling locomotive is one of a kind and the highlight of the sale."

Between 150 and 200 lots are expected to be listed, which will include the rolling stock, tools, literature and many other items.

The full list of available assets and details of the auction will be made available soon, with the time and



Darjeeling Himalayan Railway class B No. 19, along with its two accompanying replica carriages, are among the assets being sold from the collection of the late Adrian Shooter. HJ PUGH

date set to commence at 2pm on June 21. Visit hjpuh.com or phone 01531 631122 for details.

Following the announcement of the auction, a trust has been formed by those who worked on the Darjeeling B at the BLR with a view to bidding on the locomotive

and retaining it in the UK at the Statfold Barn Railway. A six-figure sum is estimated to be required to purchase and overhaul the B, with donations and sponsorship being sought. Should the trust fail, all funds received will be returned. Visit www.darjeelingtank.org.uk to support it.

Third visitor announced for SVR spring steam gala

GREAT Central Railway-based BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 will be the third and final guest at the Severn Valley Railway's April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala.

The 1953-built locomotive, which is owned by Darlington Railway Preservation Society, with the Loughborough Standard Locomotives Group as its custodian, secured its place in history when it featured in a 1955 British Transport Film documentary, *Snowdrift at Bleath Gill*. Hauling a goods train, it had become stuck in a snowdrift on the Stainmore line, and the film highlights first-hand the heroic struggle to rescue it.

No. 78018 spent 11 years at Barry scrapyard and arrived at the GCR in November 2012, where its restoration was completed. It entered service in October 2016.

"This is a solid branch line loco," said Duncan Ballard, the SVR's head of steam engineering.

"It brings a more modern twist to our event, in comparison with another of our guests, GWR small prairie No. 4555 (from the Dartmouth Steam Railway). It's going to give us some variety and interest on our smaller formation services.

"These economical and modern locomotives are at home on the SVR, and with No. 78018's last BR shed being Shrewsbury, our gala sees the locomotive returning to Shropshire after a number of years away."

The other guest to the GWR-themed gala is No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, making its first-ever heritage line appearance in its 99-year history.

GWR 4-6-0 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* last month was returned to Tyseley Locomotive Works, where its recent overhaul was completed, for attention to two warm axleboxes, arriving back at the SVR on April 2 for the gala where it will run alongside SVR flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930



BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 at Quorn & Woodhouse on the Great Central Railway on January 7. ROBIN JONES

Hagley Hall, 0-6-0PT No. 7714 freshly painted into BR livery, SR Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley* in its new temporary identity as 21C127 in wartime black, and LMS Ivatt 4MT 2-6-0 No. 43106. To book tickets, visit svr.co.uk



Dignitaries and representatives from the North Norfolk Railway's volunteer and staff teams and visiting dignitaries gather alongside BR 9F Black Prince at Sheringham station for the award presentation by Deputy Lieutenant Adel MacNicol. L CAUDWELL/NNR

Poppy Line volunteers are rewarded with royal accolade

NORTH Norfolk Railway volunteers have been presented with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and equivalent to an MBE, it was presented by the Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk, Adel MacNicol, at a ceremony at Sheringham station on March 23. It was attended by representatives of the line's 500 volunteers and dignitaries, who then travelled on a special haul by BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92203 *Black Prince* to Holt and back.

As reported in issue 294, the award was announced last June at The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend,

but the planned presentation was postponed due to the death of the monarch on September 8.

NNR managing director Hugh Harkett said: "Our volunteers really are the lifeblood of the railway and we are continually thankful for their dedication and support. The NNR is a not-for-profit enterprise, so this support is crucial to our survival."

"We are delighted that the fantastic contribution they make has been officially celebrated in this way."

Two volunteers from the line will also be invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May, along with other recipients of the award.

Isle of Wight takes top honour in the 2023 heritage Oscars

By Robin Jones

A COACH that helped sow the seed of a cornerstone of the preservation movement 68 years ago carried off a national accolade at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2023.

On May 15 and August 20, 1955, the Narrow Gauge Railway Society travelled in the coach, the Queen Mary, on a tour of the 23-mile 2ft gauge Nocton Estates Railway in Lincolnshire. The coach was built in 1927 using the frames and bogies from a War Department Light Railway Class D wagon. Fitted with swivel chairs, drinks holders and gun racks, the vehicle was used for shooting parties of the private agricultural system. The name Queen Mary was given by estate workers as response to the aloof manner of the shooting party guests.

During one of the society's visits, the conversations while riding in the coach turned to conserving part of the Nocton system, which was then being scaled back and gradually dismantled in favour of road transport. The discussion led to the decision to save the system's rolling stock and track to create the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, which, when it opened in 1960 at its former Humberston site, was the first heritage railway to have been built on a greenfield site anywhere in the world. It was very much a form of public transport from the outset, popular with families carrying heavy suitcases, using prams, and accompanied by children and grandparents on their way to stay in the Fitties Holiday Camp.

Three years later, the Ocean Beach Railway in Dunedin, New Zealand (South Island), opened and many others have followed suit around the world.

As the Nocton system shrank, the coach was sold off to become a taxi



The restoration to the as-built 1905 condition of Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST Premier won the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering for the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway. HRA

office and then a scrap merchant's office. The project to rebuild it for passenger use began at the LCLR's current Skegness Water Leisure Park in 2021 and it entered public traffic for the first time in June 2022 – earning the railway the Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation.

Our own 'Oscars'

At the awards presentation dinner, held at the Birmingham Conference and Events Centre, in Hill Street, Birmingham, on March 11 and sponsored by Hallett Steam Oils, nearly 200 of Britain's leading preservationists came together for the movement's own 'Oscars'.

The top award of Railway of the Year went to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway for its authentic locomotive restorations, iconic wooden carriages and exceptional visitor experience, with a friendly welcome and booming visitor numbers.

IoWSR general manager Steve Backhouse said: "I feel very fortunate to be a part of an amazing group of paid staff and volunteers who bring a raft of enthusiasm, skills, experience and teamwork to running the railway."

The 2ft 6in gauge Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway carried off the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering for its restoration of 1905-built Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST 2ST Premier, which was painstakingly returned to as-built condition from photographic evidence and returned to steam on the former papermill line. The level of detail shown and the commitment from a small team at the Kent line saw the little Brazil class machine triumph over more famous competitors.

The gravity slate train project at the Ffestiniog Railway, as featured in issue 300, was awarded the prestigious Peter Manisty Award for exceptional achievements in the heritage railway world, showing excellence in restoration and operation, and developing and maintaining heritage skills. The project, which encompasses 200 wagons, has even seen the construction of a purpose-built storage shed and has prompted much advance thinking about wagon preservation in the sector as a whole.

A new award for 2023 led to Peak Rail's volunteers picking up the HRA

Team of the Year trophy. In just under a year, the volunteers have taken on the day-to-day running of the line, leading to a string of successes, while morale has reached an all-time high.

'Fantastic job'

West Somerset Railway general manager Kerry Noble collected the HRA Award for Rising Stars, another new accolade. The judges were impressed by how Kerry took on a string of initiatives to boost the financial performance of the WSR and her collaborative approach to working with a huge variety of stakeholders.

West Somerset Railway plc board chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said: "Kerry has done a fantastic job since becoming general manager and we are all delighted with her success and warmly congratulate her."

"The board and I are very grateful for the many hours of professional management she has put in to help make the WSR the success it is."

The Bodmin & Wenford Railway collected the HRA Award for Business Innovation, another new accolade. The line has created the Cornish



The hotbed where a landmark idea germinated: The Queen Mary carriage with Nocton Estates' Simplex No 5 (now named Paul on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway) with a Narrow Gauge Railway Society special train in 1955. BILL WOOLHOUSE COLLECTION/LCLR



The award-winning Queen Mary at the rear of a Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway service on June 4, 2022. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR



The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's 19-year-old trustee and guard, Oliver Harrison, won the HRA Lord Faulkner Award for Young Volunteers 2023. HRA



The Heritage Railway Association Interpretation Award 2023 is presented to Anona van Lawick, director of Broadway Museum & Art Gallery (centre, right) and Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway marketing manager Catherine Johnson (second right) by Heritage Railway editor Robin Jones (left), watched by event compere Paul Lewin (right) and railway volunteers Mike Dodd and Rose Philips (second and third left). JACK BOSKETT/HRA

Rail Coffee Co. brand and trading company to take its expertise well beyond the traditional boundaries of a heritage railway.

The venture now also encompasses coffee shops on the national network in Cornwall and is rapidly expanding, with its sights set on Devon.

The HRA Award for Diesel and Electric Locomotion went to the Georail Heritage Volunteer Group for its restoration of 1956-built Barclay 0-6-ODM *Duke of Edinburgh*. The group's submission shone for its efforts in reconstructing the badly damaged and complicated gearbox when so many others would have left the machine in a siding – or worse.

The Talyllyn Railway and its approach to building digital audiences earned it the HRA Award for Marketing and Communications. Initially spurred on by the Covid-19, pandemic, the railway made video production a huge part of its overall marketing activity, producing remarkable results.

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway won the HRA Award for Environmental Innovation for its Primrose Path project, which focused on the restoration, conservation and connection of two miles of lineside. Lost habitats have been restored and

work carried out to protect species like the Duke of Burgundy butterfly and declining adder populations.

Another fresh category for 2023, the HRA Award for Infrastructure, was presented to the Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway. The line has transformed its operations with a new coach shed and maintenance facility that has seen the 2ft gauge railway go from looking after its fleet in converted shipping containers to having purpose-built accommodation in a very short space of time.

'Role model'

Always the most fiercely contested, the HRA Lord Faulkner Award for Young Volunteers had five finalists this year.

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's 19-year-old trustee and guard Oliver Harrison took the top honour for being a role model for other young people joining the railway.

Ben Field from the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, Alex Caulfield from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway, Liam Barnes from the East Lancashire Railway Preservation Society and Isaac Farnbank from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway all received special commendations.



LSWR O2 0-4-4-T No. W24 Calbourne in service on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, voted HRA Railway Of The Year. HRA

As reported in issue 303, the HRA Award for Innovation – sponsored by *Heritage Railway* magazine – went to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway and Broadway Museum and Art Gallery for their Journey Through Steam Exhibition, which has proved so popular that it has been extended by a further six months to November 12.

The HRA Lifetime Achievement Award, sponsored by our sister title, *The Railway Magazine*, went to Martyn Ashworth, recognising five decades of hard work and dedication to the preservation movement.

The Crewe Diesel Preservation Group won the *Rail Express* Editor's Modern Traction award for recreating the ScotRail Class 47/7 push-pull operation on the main line for the first time since 1990. No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* was used in push-pull mode with a rake of Locomotive Services Limited Mk.3 coaches and a Mk.2f Driving Brake Standard Open, recreating the 100mph trains that ran initially between Glasgow and Edinburgh from 1979 until 1990.

A charter ran from Crewe to Edinburgh on February 24, and then operated one round trip between Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street the following day.

After another run from Edinburgh to Queen Street, the 47 and its train ran to Inverness via the Highland Main Line.

On February 26, the 47 returned to Crewe, running via Aberdeen, Glasgow Queen Street, another run to Edinburgh, up the East Coast Main Line to York and then across the Calder Valley to Manchester Victoria.

Congratulations

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "We hear so much about how challenging times are in the heritage rail sector.

"But this awards event sends out a strong signal that it is still possible to get it right, to achieve great things, and to really succeed as a heritage railway or tramway.

"The sheer variety of projects this year showed the strengths that the sector has; a real grasp of our history, huge volunteer commitment, and a level of dedication to the cause that so many will be envious of.

"I must congratulate not just the winners but everyone who made it to the finals for showing that the future can be bright for railways, locomotives, carriages, viaducts and so many other aspects of our amazing heritage rail sector."

Lord Hendy takes on the chairman's role at association

NETWORK Rail chairman Peter Hendy been appointed to a similar position with the Heritage Railway Association.

Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, is also a trustee of the Science Museum Group and a trustee and a director of London Transport Museum.

Peter took on the role of HRA chairman at the organisation's annual general meeting in Birmingham on March 10. On the board, he joins North Yorkshire Moors Railway chief executive and Talyllyn Railway president Chris Price, Seaton Tramway chief executive Jenny Nunn, and Kent

& East Sussex Railway chairman Simon Marsh.

Lord Hendy said: "The heritage railway sector is of immense importance to communities around the country. Heritage railways are hugely significant draws for tourists and for wider investment and are vital for the preservation of technological and social history in a way that makes it interesting and accessible for all.

"Like the main line railway, heritage railways face some significant challenges, but I look forward to working with colleagues at the HRA, as well as the wider community, including the

thousands of passionate volunteers, to address these and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the sector."

Appointed Network Rail chairman in 2015, Lord Hendy was previously Commissioner of Transport for London and led the operation of transport for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. He has also been international and UK president of the Institute of Logistics and Transport and is a fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers. He was knighted in 2013 and took his place in the House of Lords in 2022.

Outgoing HRA chairman and former MEP Brian Simpson, who



New Heritage Railway Association chairman Lord Peter Hendy. HRA

will remain a key part of the organisation's board, said: "It's brilliant to be able to welcome Peter Hendy to the board and I wish him all the very best in his role as chairman."

£1.2m grant aid boost for Nene Valley, Amberley and West Shed

By Robin Jones

THREE railway heritage venues have received a total of nearly £1.2 million in Government grant aid via Arts Council England.

The Nene Valley Railway, Amberley Museum and the Princess Royal Class Locomotive Trust's West Shed Museum at the Midland Railway – Butterley are among 70 cultural venues, museums and public libraries supported by a £60 million boost through the Culture Investment Fund, it was announced by Culture Secretary Lucy Frazer on March 20. Arts Council England receives its funding from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

The NVR was awarded £669,873 to support three major infrastructure projects: to relay worn-out track through Wansford Tunnel, including new drainage; to relay track and roadway at Wansford level crossing; and to relay track in Wansford yard, where old track has been buried in ash for more than four decades.

The track renewals made possible by the grant will have a life expectancy of about 40 years. Work will start later this year and continue through 2024 and complete in mid-2025.

The line's chairman, Michael Purcell, said: "We are very pleased that the

Arts Council is supporting us in the renewal of these parts of the NVR. As custodians of these heritage assets, we shall now be raising our share of the total amount required and then getting on with the work needed.

"We look forward to running rail services over the renewed track so we can continue to welcome passengers for many years to come."

At-risk monument

Under the scheme, Amberley Museum has been awarded £433,766 from the Museum Estates and Development Fund to restore and upgrade the historically important Bagging Shed area, the total project cost being £463,766. This area is a scheduled monument that has been identified as a historic building at risk by Historic England.

A significant part of the original chalk and limeworks site, it includes the original route of the railway line into the site from the main line, the remains of a Victorian lime kiln and the main visitor entrance and shop.

Trustees chairman Richard Vernon said: "This is immensely exciting news for Amberley Museum as it represents the first major project that we will undertake following the challenging times we have gone through in the last few years. This project

Trackwork in progress at the Nene Valley Railway, where three sections are to be relayed. NVR



demonstrates the significance of these buildings and will help support other improvements to the site in the short and medium term."

The work is scheduled to take place over the coming winter and early spring of 2024, with the aim of completing next year.

The project will allow visitors to learn about historic chalk quarrying and the production of lime in an ideal location to bring history to life.

Visitors will find it easier to navigate the entrance with improved ramp access and better interpretation of this area, and the collection of artefacts that are displayed within the Bagging

Shed will be better conserved and interpreted.

The PRCLT has been awarded £68,000 towards the cost of improving and maintaining the West Shed Museum.

This will provide safer access for visitors, improved protection for the trust's collection, and eco-friendly solar powered heating for the library and refreshment room.

Spokesman Del Tilling said: "Our project was recognised as one of the top 10% following a national competitive bidding process involving more than 700 accredited museums."

→ Amberley Museum has launched a £25,000 appeal for the overhaul of former Groudle Glen Railway Bagnall 2-4-0T No. 1781 of 1905 *Polar Bear*.

The first steam locomotive to run at the museum, it was taken out of service on October 29 last year when its 10-yearly boiler certificate expired. It now needs a complete mechanical and boiler overhaul, including retubing and restudding of the boiler and a new main steam pipe.

Donations to the overhaul project are invited at www.justgiving.com/campaign/supportpolarbear



Left: Worn-out track through Wansford Tunnel can now be replaced thanks to the Arts Council England. NVR

Right: The Bagging Shed at Amberley Museum was once part of a chalk and limeworks served by a branch line. AMBERLEY



Western exchanges at Minehead and Ongar galas set for this April and June

LOCOMOTIVES at the West Somerset Railway and Epping Ongar Railway will be travelling in opposite directions this April and June as residents from each venture out for gala appearances at the other.

Appearing at the WSR's event taking place between April 28 and May 1 will be the EOR's WR 4-6-0 No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall*, where it will operate alongside GWR Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*, which was retro-converted from another Hall class, No. 4942 *Maindy Hall*, and will therefore provide an interesting comparison between the two.

No. 4953 has visited the WSR twice before, the last being in 2010, but this visit is only its third away from home since completion of its overhaul in October 2019.

The gala will also be the first chance to see a Saint and Collett Hall operating together since the last Saint was withdrawn in the 1950s.

It is expected that Nos. 2999 and 4953 will be paired up on occasions during the event, at which WR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestone Manor* will also appear.

Organisers are attempting to run as many trains smokebox first

thanks to the turntable at Minehead and triangle at Norton Fitzwarren.

Local passenger services will shuttle between Bishops Lydeard and Williton throughout the weekend.

Goods trains will also operate, and there will be the rare opportunity to ride on the brake vans.

In return for the loan of the Hall, WSR resident 0-6-0PT No. 9466 will appear at the EOR's June 23-25 steam gala – a year later than originally intended.

Having been booked for the Essex line's 10th anniversary gala last June,

it had to be withdrawn from the line-up in need of firebox repairs.

A Paddington-based locomotive during its BR days, its visit to London's closest heritage railway also ties in with the line's London Underground connections, having been used during Steam on the Met specials in 2013.

The Epping Ongar Railway gala will also see No. 4953 and small prairie No. L150 in action, alongside resident Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST No. 3437 *Isabel*.

Full details of the event were still to be confirmed.



The West Somerset Railway's opening weekend sees WR 4-6-0 No. 7828 pass Combe Florey, near the site of the recent potato field landslide, with the 2.40pm service from Bishops Lydeard on March 19. NICK GILLIAM

A Class 57 and a 60 to join SVR diesel festival

AN as-yet unnumbered DB Cargo Class 60 and a Direct Rail Services Class 57/3 have been added to the Severn Valley Railway's May 18-21 Spring Diesel Festival, marking 50 years of diesel preservation.

A 60 last appeared on the line when No. 60100 ran during the 2017 Spring Diesel Gala, while a 57, No. 57012, previously appeared at the Autumn Steam Gala in 2000.

The pair will join Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, a GB Railfreight Class 56 and Class 58 No. 58023, with up to five more guests to be announced. Home-based Class 42 D821 Greyhound will appear in a livery never seen before, while Class 33 No. 33108 will also return to service.

Tickets for the festival cost £34.20, with multi-day saver also on offer, at svr.co.uk

Lowry railway painting sells for £1 million in top London auction

By Geoff Courtney

A PAINTING by world-renowned artist L S Lowry of his local railway station sold for £1 million at auction in London on March 21. Dating from 1953, the work was of a crowded platform at Pendlebury near Manchester, and featured mainly bowler-hatted gents depicted in his characteristic 'matchstick men' style.

The painting, which carried his signature, was put under the hammer by leading auction house Christie's in an evening sale of modern British and Irish art. It was titled *The Railway Platform* and achieved the second highest realisation of five works by Lowry in the auction, behind the hammer price of £1.1 million for

Glasgow Docks, dated 1947. The £1 million price of *Pendlebury station* was inflated to £1,242,000 with the addition of buyer's premium.

Christie's Nick Orchard said: "L S Lowry's works have enduring appeal, depicting the communities he encountered, whether at work or during their leisure time. His economy of detail seems to convey so much more beyond the canvas, and the viewer is absorbed in the lives of others, captured in a moment yet unaware of their observer."

Lowry, who was universally known by his initials rather than his first names of Laurence Stephen, was born in Stretford, south of Manchester, in November 1887, the son of a clerk and a teacher. In 1905,

he secured a place at Manchester School of Art, and moved to Station Road, Pendlebury, four years later. During the Second World War, he was a volunteer fire watcher and an official war artist.

He was also appointed official artist at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in June 1953, but 15 years later turned down a knighthood in 1968, having previously twice declined OBEs.

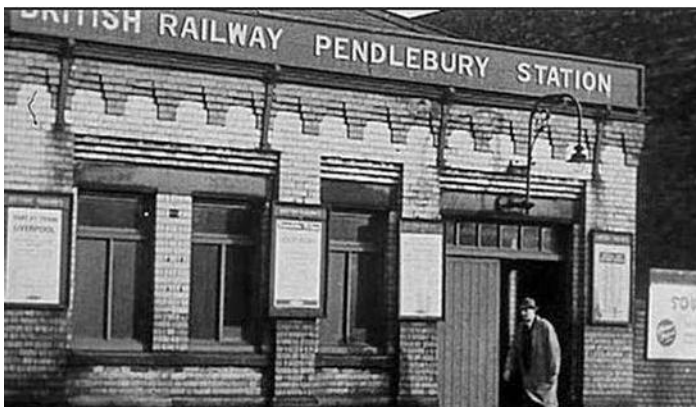
He never married and was regarded as a solitary and private person. He enjoyed football and was an ardent supporter of Manchester City. He died in February 1976 at the age of 88.

Of his artistic skills, he is quoted as saying: "You don't need brains to be a painter, just feelings," and in response

to criticism of his unique style, said: "If people call me a Sunday painter, I'm a Sunday painter who paints every day of the week."

Pendlebury station was opened by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway on its Manchester to Wigan line in June 1887 and was closed by BR in October 1960. An archive black-and-white photograph shows Lowry leaving the station in the 1950s, and an oddity is that the nameboard above the station entrance reads in large letters 'British Railway Pendlebury Station' rather than British Railways.

→ Read Geoff Courtney's railwayana column in this issue for previews and reports of auctions around the country, including the sale of a Deltic diesel nameplate for a record price.



Wearing his familiar raincoat and hat, L S Lowry is seen exiting his local station of Pendlebury near Manchester in the 1950s, beneath a British Railway, rather than British Railways, sign. A painting of the station by the artist sold for £1 million at auction on March 21. AGE UK SWINTON & IRWELL VALLEY HISTORY GROUP



Waiting game: The painting by L S Lowry of Pendlebury station near Manchester that sold for £1 million. CHRISTIE'S IMAGES LTD 2023

Doncaster visit added to *Flying Scotsman's* 2023 itinerary

LNER A3 pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* has seen its city of birth added to its centenary year calendar following an appeal by Doncaster's mayor – after the location was originally excluded.

During a visit to Edinburgh Waverley on March 24, when Gresley's iconic A3 visited the Scottish capital to mark 100 years since being rolled out of the workshops (as reported last issue), Mayor of Doncaster Ros Jones made her case for a visit of No. 60103 to its birthplace directly to National Railway Museum officials. On March 10, she tweeted: "*The Flying Scotsman* is coming home! We have been in discussions with the NRM for more than a year to get the most famous locomotive in the world to visit its birthplace of Doncaster as part of its centenary celebrations. I went to Edinburgh two weeks ago as part of the centenary celebrations to press our case at the highest level and I am pleased to say that our calls have been answered.

"*Flying Scotsman* was built here in Doncaster; it means a great deal to the people of Doncaster whose relatives helped design and build it. It will be incredible to see it return home as part of its centenary year."

The National Railway Museum also confirmed its intention for the A3's visit, at a date still to be announced, saying that "the logistical arrangements are complex."

The A3 was previously only billed to pass through the city on June 30 on day one of the Railway Touring Company's June 30-July 4 *Flying Scotsman* Centenary Weekender'.

Return to Dublin for GNR 4-4-0 – following 60 years

By Owen Hayward

The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland returned Great Northern Railway (Ireland) 4-4-0 Q No. 131 to Dublin – just over 60 years after it was last seen in steam at the republic's capital.

Outshopped by Neilson Reid in Glasgow in February 1901, No. 131 mainly worked out of Belfast and was rarely seen south of Dundalk until after 1958, when it passed into the hands of Córas Iompair Éirann (Irish Transport Company) and worked trains to Dublin until withdrawal in October 1963. Return to steam came on February 22, 2015, with a test run along the main line under a special licence, as the required on-train monitoring and signalling equipment was not yet fitted.

The trip was operated to transfer No. 131 to the Amiens Street engine shed, from where it will operate on the Irish network once again, with much planning and communication between RPSI, NIR (Translink) and Irish Rail to facilitate the move as NIR has no steam drivers following the sudden death of Noel Playfair (as reported in issue 303).

No. 131 departed Whitehead and ran to Dundalk, where it collected its rolling stock, which was brought in with passengers from Dublin by an Irish Rail GM diesel electric. A ceremony toasted the return of the beloved engine to Iarnród



Great Northern Railway (Ireland)'s 4-4-0 Q class No. 131 sits beneath the trainshed roof of Dublin Connolly's station for the first time in 60 years after arrival from Dundalk on April 1. KEVIN O'BRIEN/RPSI



A piper greets No. 131 after its arrival at Dundalk. CHARLES FRIEL/RPSI

Eireann lines, after which it collected passengers and worked the return.

The trip was sold out, with 298 passengers on board, including many who were associated with

Dundalk Works and the Great Northern Railway Heritage Society, and drew crowds seeking to witness this important moment in Irish railway history.

Historic headboard reunited with *Western Ranger*

FORTY years after it ran the final farewell tour for the Class 52 *Western* diesel hydraulics, D1013 *Western Ranger* has been reunited with the headboard worn on that trip. A consortium of members from owning group the Western Locomotive Association bid on the significant piece of history at a Great Central Railwayana auction on March 4.

A complete withdrawal of the Westerns had been expected in railway circles by the end of 1976, but with much surprise, seven remained in operation at the start of 1977. As their final days approached, farewell tours were announced and all seats quickly sold.

The last normal service train hauled by a Western out of Paddington was the 10.40am to Plymouth on February 8, 1977, worked by D1023 *Western Fusilier*. BR's official and final farewell tour was scheduled for February 26, when there were only four examples of the class left in service. D1013 *Western Ranger* and D1023 were chosen to work this final 'Western Tribute' tour, while D1010 *Western Campaigner*

and D1048 *Western Lady* acted as reserve engines.

The tour carried a 'Western Tribute' headboard which was produced by staff at Old Oak Common depot. The train departed Paddington at 9.10am for Swansea, travelling back to the capital via Bristol and Plymouth and arriving just six minutes late at 11.41pm. All four locomotives were withdrawn two days later and survived into preservation.

The headboard, meanwhile, was raffled off on the day of the tour and thought to have vanished – until it appeared in the listings for the GCR auction. A consortium of WLA members decided that the rightful home for this important piece of railway memorabilia was with the group and with D1013 *Western Ranger* at the Severn Valley Railway.

With support from the WLA, they successfully bid for the headboard, a stressful experience as the cost rapidly rose well above the expected range, the final hammer price being £3200. A week later, the headboard was reunited with D1013 at



The 'Western Tribute' railtour's headboard was reunited with D1013 *Western Ranger* at the Severn Valley Railway, with WLA engineering projects co-ordinator Darren Shelmerdine, chairman Roger Smith, and Paul Finch, vice-chairman and publicity officer. MARK PERRY/WLA

Kidderminster Traction Maintenance Depot.

It will now go on display at the SVR but will make appearances on some Western-hauled services in the future.

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Swanage spring gala comeback stunner!

Words by Robin Jones

Pictures by Andrew PM Wright

DORSET railway history came alive again on March 24-26 when the Swanage Railway held its first Spring Steam Gala for four years.

One of two guest locomotives was 1957-built BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76084, visiting from the North Norfolk Railway for the first time.

The workhorse Standard 4MT 2-6-0s were regular sights in Dorset during the 1950s and 1960s on passenger and goods trains, and worked on the Swanage branch between 1963 and 1966.

Indeed, the final timetabled steam-hauled Swanage to Wareham branch train on the evening of Sunday, September 4, 1966, was hauled by Class 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76010.

The last BR Class 4MT 2-6-0 to haul a train on the Swanage branch was on Sunday, May 7, 1967, when No. 76026 (which hauled one of the last service trains on the last day of the Somerset

& Dorset route in March 1966) was on the Wareham end of the first run down the branch of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain's 'Dorset Coast Express' railtour from London.

Third visit

The second guest was BR Standard Class 7 No. 70000 *Britannia*, making its third visit to the Purbeck line. The 1951-built locomotive previously brought an excursion from London in 2012 to Swanage and also attended its 2015 spring steam gala.

Passenger trains operated along the 9½-miles of the line to within sight of Wareham. Over the 5½ miles between Swanage and Norden, the trains were hauled by one steam locomotive. From Norden, along the little used four-mile line past Furzebrook to the bridge over the River Frome, the six-coach trains had a locomotive at each end as there is no run-round loop at the bridge.

Heading for the River Frome, the trains climbed for two miles between

Norden and Furzebrook, while on the return to Norden, the top-and-tailed trains climbed at a gradient of just under 1-in-80 for three miles between the River Frome and Furzebrook.

Also appearing was the home fleet of Southern Railway U 2-6-0 No. 31806, which hauled holidaymakers' trains from Basingstoke to Swanage during the 1950s, as well as Southern Railway Bulleid Pacifics Nos. 34070 *Manston* and 34028 *Eddystone*.

More attractions

The gala saw the Swanage Railway Trust museum and cinema coach welcome visitors in the restored Victorian goods shed at Corfe Castle station, with the nearby 'have a go' signalbox museum also a hit.

The Purbeck Mining Museum next to Norden station was open to the public during all three days of the gala, with the museum's narrow gauge diesel trains operating and the volunteer museum staff on hand to

answer questions about the 2000-year history of ball clay mining in the Isle of Purbeck.

Volunteer Swanage Railway Company chairman and Swanage Railway Trust director Trevor Parsons said: "Our Spring Steam Gala was a celebration of all that is wonderful and fascinating about steam.

'Thank-you'

"There was a real buzz in the air throughout the three days and I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to deliver such an enjoyable event. The brake van rides on the goods train operating between Swanage and Corfe Castle were popular, and there was a rare chance to enjoy the beautiful Isle of Purbeck countryside from a different and very evocative perspective.

"*Britannia* was a sleek wonder to behold, while No. 76084 was a reminder of a versatile class that worked throughout Dorset for more than 10 years."

Visiting BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76084 heads a passenger train away from Corfe Castle on March 24.





No. 76084 in charge of a demonstration goods train at Corfe Castle on March 26.



No. 70000 *Britannia* approaches Norden on March 26.



BR Standard 7 Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* passes Quarr Farm on March 24.



Arriving for the gala, No. 70000 *Britannia* at Wareham on March 22.



U class 2-6-0 No. 31806 heads a freight working at Harman's Cross on March 24.



Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34070 *Manston* at Furzebrook on March 25.

Schoolboys to the rescue as arsonists target signalbox

By Robin Jones

TWO 12-year-old enthusiasts have been hailed as heroes for raising £12,000 to restore one of the Nene Valley Railway's signalboxes after it was damaged in a suspected arson attack.

The damage to Orton Mere 'box was one of several deliberately started fires on March 12 and early the following day, which also saw several cars destroyed and a sheltered accommodation home damaged.

The railway said it would cost up to £20,000 to repair the damage to the signalbox, so school friends Oliver Walker and Harry Cowley decided to

set up an online fundraising page. In their spare time, they had watched and photographed trains on the heritage line. Both are also James Bond fans, and the 'box appeared in the movie *Octopussy*, scenes from which were filmed on the line.

Sponsored walk

The pair then planned to stage a 10-mile sponsored walk on a footpath alongside the line from Railworld Wildlife Haven at Peterborough to Wansford station on April 6 to raise even more money, carrying collection boxes en route. The fire crew who attended the blaze asked if they could join in part of the walk, and

a civic dignitary was due to see them off.

As a mark of thanks, the railway offered them tickets for a ride back to the city on a service behind visiting LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, making its first visit to a heritage line since being repainted in BR express passenger blue.

Harry's mother, Jennifer, told the BBC that she was "really proud" of the boys, adding: "Both boys were mortified to hear this shocking news and can't understand why some people want to spoil what others enjoy."

A NVR statement said: "We are sad to confirm that our signalbox at Orton

Mere is now out of use following an arson attack.

"We have some processes in place to enable our basic running to continue as normal, but the closure of the signalbox will have some impact on a few of our events planned for the year.

"The railway and its volunteers and staff work hard to preserve heritage for future generations, and we were heartened to hear that two of our young local supporters set up a Go Fund Me page to support the repair work."

Police were investigating the cause of the fires.



The fire in Orton Mere signalbox, which is believed to be an arson attack, at about 12.30am on March 13.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Fundraisers Harry Cowley and Oliver Walker outside the damaged 'box, for which they have raised thousands of pounds towards repairs. JENNIFER COWLEY



Bluebell Railway-based Mk.1 coach No. S21272 has been overhauled at Williton on the West Somerset Railway, which has hired it for the summer season. Formerly chocolate and cream-liveried No. W21272, it arrived at the WSR from the East Somerset Railway in May 2022 and its overhaul was completed in February. It is seen being shunted into the workshops at Minhead by resident Class 03 D2133, coupled to home-based maroon Mk.1 No. W4987. JOSH BRINSFORD



Hawthorne Leslie 0-6-OST No. 3931 of 1938 *Linda* hauls the last train of the day over the swing bridge on March 25 at the Ribble Steam Railway's Spring Steam Gala. *Linda* was delivered new to the British Steel Corporation's Corby site and in preservation it operated some early Swanage Railway services. ANDREW DENNISON

A County revelation at Didcot

AT the April 22 supporters' day for the Great Western Society's new-build GWR Hawksworth County 4-6-0 at Didcot Railway Centre, No. 1014 *County of Glamorgan* will be on display in its most complete form to date when the locomotive and tender are rolled out of the workshops together.

Those who have made significant contributions to the project will be invited to see No. 1014, which is now fitted with its partly finished boiler and coupled to its almost complete tender, outside the sheds before it is shunted to the turntable to be rotated for photography. The day will also mark the final fundraising push towards securing the remaining

£150,000 required to complete the County. Though No. 1014 will appear complete outwardly, there is still much work to be carried out to complete the locomotive before it can steam; new cladding is being manufactured and motion being assembled. The society is not committing to a date for completion but estimates the earliest that it could feasibly be done is by late 2024 or early 2025, however, should the funding be achieved in good time, there is reasonable chance it could happen sooner.

→ **Donations towards the County project can be sent by post to: Richard Croucher, The County Project, Didcot**



The new slide bars have been fitted to GWR 4-6-0 County Class No. 1014 at Didcot, where the locomotive will be on show coupled to its tender for the April 22 supporters' event. GWS

Railway Centre, Didcot, Oxon OX11 7NJ, with cheques made payable to 'Great Western Society Ltd. County Project'.

Thornbury Castle's future fate is still in the balance

LAST-MINUTE talks about the future of Castle 4-6-0 No. 7027 *Thornbury Castle* were still ongoing as we closed for press.

As previously reported, No. 7027, which has never steamed in the heritage era, was bought by the Great Western Society's 4709 Group, which aims to recreate a GWR 47XX 2-8-0 'Night Owl'.

In a statement issued on March 31, 4709 Group spokesperson Richard Croucher said: "I think it's probably fair to say that we have exhausted all the alternative options for *Thornbury Castle* and to date, the GWR has received no approaches from any group or individual with adequate funds or access to sufficient resources to enable a restoration of it. After a six-month-long wait to establish whether there was a potential for a different future for No. 7027, we now have approval to use the boiler to expedite the build of No. 4079."

However, one of No. 7027's previous owners, West Somerset Railway plc

chairman Johnathan Jones-Pratt, who sold it in January 2020 to a buyer who had committed to seeing it restored at the Great Central Railway, said he was still in talks about buying it back.

"A formal offer has been put forward for the complete loco, which includes all parts collated and to include all work that's been completed so far," he said.

"The offer we made sat within a six-figure profile so it was attractive, I thought. Sadly, the offer has been unsuccessful. I have written to confirm that this offer still remains.

Strong hopes

"We have been offered the engine without the boiler but that's not something we can even begin to entertain. We still stand by that we want to do the best by the loco and I really hope it won't become a donor engine, especially given all the previous progress that was made by the team on the GCR."

However, the 4709 Group aims to have the boiler examined, overhauled and tested before being settled into the frames of the new 'Night Owl'. Richard said that using the Castle boiler will save the group about £500,000 and probably five years' work in getting No. 4709 finished.

The frames have previously been cited to be used in a new-build GWR Star 4-6-0, but this proposal has since been scrapped.

Society chief executive Clive Hetherington said: "There are no plans at the moment to use the other parts of *Thornbury Castle* but we would be happy to listen to any proposals. The GWS will not be involved in any restorations other than those already connected to, or on, the Didcot Railway Centre site.

"This does not preclude a rebuild of *Thornbury Castle* or the build of a Star class by individuals or groups with the resources to take on such projects, but that will not be the GWS."

Safety notice issued after passenger injury at GCR

HERITAGE lines have been issued with urgent safety advice following an incident at the Great Central Railway, when a passenger lost their footing while alighting from a train at Loughborough's Platform 1 and sustained a serious injury.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch has appealed for witnesses to the incident, which happened at 11.49am on Saturday, January 14, as reported last issue.

The RAIB warned heritage railways that suitable arrangements may not be in place to mitigate the risks arising from the operation of passenger trains formed of slam door rolling stock where the trains are closer to, or longer than, platform lengths.

It has urged other operators of trains which use coaches with doors that are not centrally controlled and/or locked by train crew to review the risks associated with the use of train formations that may not be fully platformed, or which are of a length close to that of the platforms being called at.

The safety notice said: "These assessments should consider the type and location of passenger doors on the relevant rolling stock; the length of passenger trains compared to the platforms at which they may call; the capabilities of the braking systems of the trains involved and the level of precision which is reasonably achievable by them when stopping and the level of accuracy in stopping position required of train crew and if this is supported by relevant competency and assessment processes; if the level of stopping position accuracy required of train crew aligns with the capability of the trains involved and the accuracy required at the relevant platforms; the effectiveness of existing measures intended to manage the risk of passengers exiting a train that is not fully platformed or which may stop in line with areas not intended for public use, and the visibility from the cab of different traction units and the effectiveness of any stopping markers in place."

→ **Anyone who saw the incident is asked to call the RAIB on 01332 253324 in confidence.**

KESR celebrates a top award, a Pacific visit and appeal success

By Geoff Courtney

THE Kent & East Sussex Railway launched its 2023 season with a prestigious national award for one of its volunteers, by releasing details of the landmark visit of Bulleid Pacific No. 34072 257 Squadron that will include the line's first major steam gala for more than three years, and by welcoming a stunning response to an appeal that within months has exceeded its target nearly three-fold.

The award went to Geoff Colvin, the railway's chief stationmaster, who won the high-profile nationwide 'tourism superstar' competition, run by VisitEngland in partnership with the Mirror newspaper. After public online voting for the 10 finalists, 70-year-old Geoff was announced the winner on March 25 during English Tourism Week, having received one-third of the votes.

After learning of his victory, he said: "The outcome, and especially the

proportion of people who voted for me, was a huge surprise, given how impressive all the other finalists were.

"I am particularly honoured to be the first representative from a heritage railway to win, and it is a real recognition of how the preservation movement has grown to be a vital part of local tourism."

Robin Coombes, the railway's general manager, told *Heritage Railway*: "To say we are chuffed is an understatement – what a start

to our 2023 season. Our volunteers are the heart and soul of our railway and we couldn't be prouder of Geoff. This is not only an accolade for him, but also important recognition for the countless contributions of the hundreds of volunteers who selflessly give their time to the railway."

Praise too came from VisitEngland director Andrew Stokes, who said: "English Tourism Week is about amazing people, businesses and destinations, and Geoff Colvin is a stand-out example. He gives every passenger, young and old, unforgettable experiences with his passion for our wonderful railway heritage."

Geoff, a childhood trainspotter who retired from a career in social work in 2019, became a KESR volunteer in 2020 and was promoted to chief stationmaster last year. Before his victory was announced, he said: "Discovering the history of the line has been fascinating and stimulating, and sharing it with our visitors is a joy."

Pacific's arrival

As the railway's celebration of Geoff's success continued at the railway, staff and volunteers greeted the arrival of No. 34072 from the Spa Valley Railway for a two-month visit. The Pacific, the largest, heaviest and most powerful locomotive to ever run on the line, started passenger operations on April 7 and is scheduled to operate every weekend up to and including June 3-4, other than the coronation weekend of May 6-8.

Its star turn will be at the railway's Steam Up gala on May 27-29, an eagerly awaited festival due to it being the first major



Southern on the Western: Battle of Britain No. 34072 257 Squadron passes through the Western Region station of Exeter St. David's with a Down train on July 13, 1963. The preserved Southern Railway-designed Pacific is currently drawing the crowds during a landmark visit to the Kent & East Sussex Railway. TRANSPORT TREASURY/RC RILEY

Tanks a lot – four-wheel TTAs move to Lydney in their final main line journey

By Owen Hayward

FOLLOWING their final-revenue earning trip on November 15, 2022 and the transfer to Gascoigne Wood shortly thereafter, 11 four-wheel TTA tankers made a final main line trip on March 7 – but not to a scrapyard to meet their demise.

They were bound for the Dean Forest Railway instead, where – under the care of the National Wagon Preservation Group and after four months of fundraising and planning – they have now taken up residence thanks to a successful crowdfunding appeal that saw one generous investor contribute £15,000. The vehicles form part of the NWPG's

Project Petroleum plan that seeks to recreate a small rake that was once typical of minor yards and fuel points.

Several variations have been acquired, including those from different builders (Pickering and Chas Roberts), and both short and full-length 'catwalks' along the tank top.

Before the move, the vehicles required reinstating on TOPS, which was completed with support from Worldline (R2) managed data services.

A full examination of all 11 wagons and securing replacement filler caps were also required before they could travel on the national network again.

The long journey from their storage location to their new home began

with a departure from Gascoigne Wood sidings at 9.42am. Traction was provided by Loram's Class 37 No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach*, which sports large logo blue with yellow ends.

The route saw it pass Barrow Hill North Junction (near to the Roundhouse) and Kidderminster (at one end of the Severn Valley Railway), with arrival at Lydney Up Goods Loop at 5.05pm – 35 minutes ahead of schedule.

Having crossed over onto DFR metals, the rake was shunted into the siding near St Mary's Halt on the section between Lydney Junction and Lydney Town, before No. 37418 departed light engine.

The NWPG will also be moving its bogie TEA tanker No. 87867 from storage in Wishaw to the DFR to join the rake in the very near future.

NWPG co-chairman William Snook said: "The NWPG wants to make its gratitude known to all parties involved. We are now in the process of acquiring spare parts from other TTA tanks that didn't make the cut into preservation and we are also appealing for donations in order for their longevity to be maximised."

"It is planned for the wagons to work a demonstration train at the DFR's September gala, with plans afoot to bring in a very special locomotive to haul them – this is not to be missed!"



Left: Sign here: Matt Dives, steam engineering manager of the Spa Valley Railway (left), and Kent & East Sussex Railway general manager Robin Coombes shake hands at Tenterden Town station on the agreement that has brought Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34072 257 Squadron to the KESR. ROBIN COOMBES



Right: Getting there: Former GWR diesel railcar W20W is beginning to look the part outside the KESR carriage and wagon works at Tenterden Town station on March 14. ROBIN COOMBES

event on the line since before the Covid-19 pandemic and also because of the event's variety of steam, diesel, operational and additional attractions.

One of the highlights will be trains running for the first time in many years to the western end of the line at Junction Road, rather than terminating at Bodiam. Although no longer a station, in days gone by this was the traditional stop for hop pickers making the annual pilgrimage from London. At the gala, this service will be top-and-tailed by Mid-Norfolk Railway-based Bo-Bo diesel No. 33202 (D6587), and 1888-built Hunslet 0-6-OST *Hastings*.

Other attractions over the three days of Steam Up will be two former MoD Hunslet Austerity 0-6-OST engines in operation, Nos. 75008 *Swiftsure* and WD132 *Sapper*, public access to the carriage and wagon works at Tenterden Town station and the locomotive depot at Rolvenden, and driving experiences for just £10 on Peckett 0-4-OT *Marcia* at Tenterden. There will be an intensive timetable in operation, including a DMU shuttle service between Tenterden and Rolvenden and both platforms being in use at the intermediate station of Northiam.

Non-railway activities include funfair rides and traction engines at Rolvenden and Northiam, and classic car and scooter displays at Tenterden.

Daily freedom tickets and Steam Up weekend passes are available from www.kesr.org.uk at discounted prices from the walk-in costs.

Astonishing result

The railway's vibrant start to the year has been boosted even further by the success of an appeal launched six months ago for donations towards the restoration of long-time resident GWR diesel railcar W20W. The £20,000 target was to enable the project to be completed; by the beginning of April, £58,000 had been either donated or pledged. The appeal is dedicated to the late Andrew Webb, a former KESR director whose tenacity kept the restoration going after it began nearly 26 years ago. He died in 2019.

Robin said: "I think Andrew would have been astonished by the scale of the response but, like us, would see it as confirmation of the iconic nature of the railcar and how well-loved it is by enthusiasts everywhere."

Volunteer Derrick Bilsby, who has been leading the fundraising campaign, said the railway had

been taken aback by the volume of donations and pledges. "The amazing sum raised will not only enable the completion of the restoration, but will also provide a secure fund to ensure its continued conservation," he said.

The restoration team is hoping to complete the work by next February, in time for the railcar to celebrate

the 50th anniversary of it operating the revived KESR's first public train in preservation.

W20W, one of 38 in its class, was built at Swindon in 1940 and withdrawn from Worcester (85A) in October 1962. It was saved for preservation by the KESR, where it arrived in April 1966.

*See centre spread, pages 54-55.



Star quality: Newly crowned 2023 'tourism superstar' Geoff Colvin chats to Mark Williams, the driver of ex-MoD Hunslet Austerity 0-6-OST No. 75008 *Swiftsure*, at the KESR's Tenterden Town station. ALISON MILES/KESR



With its 11 TTA tankers in tow, Class 37 No. 37418 approaches Tame Bridge Parkway, bound for Lydney and the Dean Forest Railway. WILLIAM SNOOK

IN BRIEF

→ HUNSLET 16in 0-6-OST No. 2705 *Beatrice* made a fleeting return visit to the Spa Valley Railway over the Easter weekend to cover a locomotive shortfall. With Bulleid Pacific No. 34072 257 Squadron away and Hunslet 0-6-0 No. 2890 *Douglas* stopped for wash-out and maintenance, a small locomotive was hired to ensure a steam presence over the bank holiday weekend, for which 832 people had placed advanced bookings.

→ THE Lappa Valley Railway at St Newlyn East, Cornwall, collected a silver award in the large visitor attraction of the year category at the South West Tourism Excellence Awards.

→ THE Wensleydale Railway's model railway weekend will be held on the

April 29/30 and May 1 bank holiday weekend inside the engine shed at Leeming Bar and also in a marquee set up in the car park.

→ BEAMISH Museum was the most visited attraction in the North East last year, according to the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions. It welcomed 773,814 visitors in 2022, up 30% on 2021. It will host a Fares Please transport event and coronation celebrations from May 6-8, featuring on-loan Barclay 0-4-OST No. 1219 *Caledonia Works* from the Blaenavon Heritage Railway. Its 50-year-old tramway has undergone repairs to its overhead power lines from a Tyne and Wear Metro maintenance team during a Nexus volunteer day.

Statfold enthusiast gala launches new line – and a crane tank, too

By Owen Hayward

THE Statfold Barn Railway in Staffordshire can make several proud boasts, including the ability to see more working narrow gauge steam locomotives in an hour than anywhere else in the UK – possibly even the world!

At its March 18 'Spectacle of Steam' enthusiast running day, it also opened a new 12 ¼in gauge line, called the Mease Valley Light Railway. Running for just over a half-mile, the line is operated by 2-4-2T No. 332 *Victoria*, which, despite being built in 2007 by the Exmoor Steam Railway, has done very little work in its life so far.

It was built by the ESR for the Tintern Steam Railway, a line proposed to be built along the disused trackbed of the Wye Valley Railway from the remains of Tintern station. That line never came to be and so *Victoria* was sold to the Scarborough Fair Collection for another proposed miniature line that was also never built. Instead, the locomotive remained on display in the museum there until purchased by Statfold in November 2021. It was sent back to its builders at the now private ESR to be overhauled and undergo running trials before arriving back at Statfold during February.

Meanwhile, Statfold has constructed what is only the first phase of a much larger running line that will eventually loop around a field to negate the need for running round. A large shed, yard and workshop, complete with turntable, has also been built to accommodate the 12 ¼in gauge collection, including carriages built for the Liverpool Flower Garden Festival in 1984.

Sixteen years after first being built, *Victoria* hauled its first public passenger services as part of the March 18 event, at which the railway's workshops and Hunslet archive were open for viewing. Again, the



Statfold Barn's Spectacle of Steam was the first time that Exmoor Steam Railway-built 2-4-2T *Victoria* was used on public services, despite having been built 16 years ago. The 12 ¼in gauge locomotive was also operating on the venue's new Mease Valley Railway, which was opened at the March 18 event. GAVIN THOMSON

double-track narrow gauge main line allowed views of parallel running and passing trains, with dedicated photography points.

One surprise revelation was a new standard gauge addition to the collection – Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 crane tank No.1 *Glenfield*, which has not steamed since the early 1980s. Having been for sale since the death of its owner in 2019, the locomotive was seen departing the Ribble Steam Railway in Preston on January 27 but its destination was unknown. Since then, it has been given a cosmetic restoration and is now on static display at Statfold.

With plenty of action, including freight trains and four gauges of line operating with fierce gradients and tight corners, the Spectacle of Steam cemented itself as one of the must-do events for narrow gauge enthusiasts.



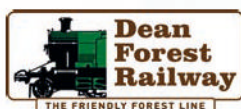
A new exhibit was revealed at the March 18 enthusiast day – Andrew Barclay 0-4-0CT No. 1 *Glenfield*, which underwent a cosmetic restoration following departure from the Ribble Steam Railway in January. MAKKENZY CHAPMAN SMITH



A regular sight at Statfold Barn enthusiast days, a triple-header was worked on this occasion by Nos. 2 *Roger*, 1632 *Liassic*, and 3903 *Statfold*. GAVIN THOMSON



Bagnall 4-4-0T No. 2820 of 1945 *Isibutu* passes weeping willows as a rainbow arches overhead. ROB BATTY



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Above: WR 4-6-0 No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall* departs Gotherington with an empty coaching stock race train on March 17. JOHN TITLOW

Right: WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* approaches Hayles Abbey with a race train on March 17. JOHN TITLOW



A day out at the races – as steam beats the queues!

By John Titlow

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway ran full steam-hauled trains for racegoers during all four days of this year's March 14-17 Cheltenham Festival.

The festival is a highlight of the horseracing calendar, especially the Cheltenham Gold Cup, and the railway

provided a far more convenient way to travel for those attending, negating the extremely long queues of traffic entering and leaving the course.

Ample parking at Toddington and a network of roads enabled racegoers to avoid the congestion; on one day after the races, Tewkesbury was at a complete standstill.

The locomotives in use were Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co.*, and WR 4-6-0s No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* and 7903 *Foremarke Hall*. All performed faultlessly and were rotated on trains.

On March 14, 15 and 16, a two-train return service from Toddington to the conveniently located terminus at

Cheltenham Racecourse used all three working resident locomotives at the railway, but Gold Cup day on March 17 saw a three-train service. This is so important for the railway that a standby locomotive was rostered in case of problems (which did not arise).

From Racecourse station, it is an easy walk straight to the back of the grandstand.

Evening trains left Racecourse station in the twilight at 6.10pm and 6.25pm, with an additional one at 6.40pm on the Friday. Rail passengers had the pleasure of watching the queues of cars exiting the racecourse.

VIP treatment

Basic prices for parking and trains started at £75 on Champions Day on Tuesday, Ladies Day on Wednesday and St Patrick's on Thursday. On Gold Cup Day, it cost £85. VIP treatment costs rose to £515 per passenger plus £80/90 for a grandstand seat. Champagne was sold at Toddington station's passenger entrance.

The event was organised by Classic Hospitality in partnership with At The Races, hence the headboards. All eight-coach trains over the four days were full.

Over the years, the railway has recognised the earning potential of this meeting, so it has now become a major event on the railway and one to rival the line's Santa trains.

Feedback has been positive, so similar trains are likely to run during next year's festival. Other race event trains take place on November 11 and 12.



Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co.* approaches Hayles Abbey with a Cheltenham Gold Cup day race train. JOHN TITLOW

Pendennis Castle is set to replay the day that its firebars melted at 97mph!

By Robin Jones

A RECREATION of the fabled Ian Allan Paddington to Plymouth railtour of May 9, 1964, when two GWR-design 4-6-0s hit 97mph, will be one of several special events run by the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in the coming weeks.

The Cotswold line will celebrate 'One Last Hurrah' – 59 years to the day when GWR No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* and WR No. 6999 *Capel Dewi Hall* headed Z48, a BR special to mark the 60th anniversary of GWR 4-4-0 No. 3440 *City of Truro*'s unofficial 102.3mph run heading downhill on Wellington Bank. The 2023 re-run will feature visiting *Pendennis Castle* and

home-based WR No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, masquerading as No. 6999.

The 1964 trip was designed to use four Castles, and it was hoped that 100mph could be reached at least once. However, after 97mph was reached, No. 4079 was failed with a melted fire grate after the coal burned too hot.

Withdrawn at Westbury, it was replaced by No. 6999 and never ran for BR again, and ended up being bought for preservation, as recounted in our special Castles feature in the last issue.

Tickets for the 'One Last Hurrah', to be held in the daytime on a Tuesday, are available from www.gwsr.com/events/one-last-hurrah, with a 5% discount if bought online.



GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* at rest at Paddington station prior to departure with the Ian Allan special on May 9, 1964. COLOUR-RAIL/G/WR

It will be followed by an evening event the same day, the 'Prosecco Picnic', at which a special, again hauled by No. 4079, will depart Toddington at 6.30pm for a trip to Cheltenham Racecourse station, where guests will be served a luxury picnic meal.

As the day's events relive an occasion around the height of the 'Swinging Sixties', there will be a prize for the best dressed couple or group

in 1960s dress, which is optional. Return to Toddington is at about 9.15pm. To book, visit www.gwsr.com/events/dining-train-pendennis

As previously reported, *Pendennis Castle* will feature in the May 12-14 Cotswold Festival of Steam, which has the theme of 'Cheltenham & Gloucester Steam Days Remembered'

Before then, another special event, to be held on April 22/23, will be the 'Cambrian Weekend', which will recreate summer seaside days when passengers travelled on the 'Cambrian Coast Express' to reach the Welsh coast. The weekend will feature resident WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* and visiting BR Standard 4MT No. 75014 *Braveheart* from the Dartmouth Steam Railway – both once shedded at Shrewsbury, from where they worked both goods and passenger services over the steeply-graded Cambrian main line on which, because of axle weight and loading gauge limits, locomotives larger than a Manor or Standard 4MT were prohibited. Steam haulage of the 'CCE' ended in 1965, *Dinmore Manor* having the honour of hauling the last regular steam-hauled trip.

Tickets for the event are available at www.gwsr.com/events/cambrian-weekend, with a 5% discount on online purchases.



A Barmouth to Birmingham service, headed by Standard 4MT 4-6-0 no. 75014, tackles the 1-in-52 Talerddig bank on August 22, 1964. TB OWEN/COLOUR-RAIL/G/WR

Celebrate 1960s BR green in the Cotswolds!

By Robin Jones

A celebration of BR green livery is to be staged at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway on Sunday, June 11.

WR 4-6-0 No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall* will be rostered alongside Class 47 D6948 and the line's Class 117 DMU for the day.

At Nationalisation in 1948, the newly formed British Transport Commission began developing a standard identity for the unified industry after inheriting a diverse range of locomotives and rolling stock, all carrying a variety of liveries. In the early 1950s, trials were conducted with locomotives being painted in various colours, such as both deep and light blue (known as 'Express Blue'), maroon, light apple green, and the Southern Region's malachite green.

From 1954, a new livery often referred to as 'British Railways Locomotive Green' was adopted for BR express steam locomotives, as carried by *Foremarke Hall*, and which was very similar to GWR Brunswick

Green. However, the specification was BS224 Deep Bronze Green, sometimes called Land Rover Green.

Mixed traffic locomotives generally wore lined black, similar to the LNWR style, and plain black for freight and shunting locomotives. However, green became more widely adopted with the passage of time.

BR Green was also applied to diesels, with a dark green for the mixed traffic locomotives like the Class 37s and a two-tone green for passenger-orientated diesels such as the Class DMUs. They were green from the outset, with the 'cats whisker' lining on the front and later with yellow warning panels, while Southern Region multiple units carried a separate BR(SR) green. In addition to the new green livery, an emblem was developed in the form of the BR totem depicting a rampant lion emerging from a heraldic crown and holding a spoked wheel, enclosed in a roundel with the British Railways name displayed across a bar on either side.

BR green began to give way to the new BR corporate identity from the mid-1960s, with Rail



BR green-liveried Class 37/0 D6948 in Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway service. G/WR

Blue for locomotives and DMUs and blue/grey for coaches.

Tickets for the event are available at www.gwsr.com, with a 5% discount for online purchases.

Meanwhile, the G/WR is itself going green big time – developing a 'wildlife corridor' with tree planting, landscaping, wildflower planting, beehives and much more, and for which it earned a place as finalist in the 2023 Heritage Railway Association's annual awards, in the Award for Environmental Innovation category.

Through travel by regular services to Swanage is back – after 51 years!

By Robin Jones

MAIN line travellers are now able to add tickets for journeys from Wareham to Swanage for the first time in more than 51 years after a new trial series of heritage DMU services was launched by the Swanage Railway.

The trial service started on April 4 and is operating on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays until September 10, with the first train departing Wareham at 11.19am and the last train leaving Swanage for Wareham at 4.20pm – giving visitors the opportunity to spend four hours at the seaside resort or Corfe Castle.

Tickets for the service are also available from main line operator South Western Railway so its passengers can add them to their main line tickets.

It is the first time since Saturday, January 1, 1972 – the last day of BR passenger trains to Swanage, before the branch line was controversially closed and most of the track lifted that summer – that such a main line ticket facility for travel to Swanage has been possible.

Delay, then Covid

During the summer of 2017, the heritage line operated a trial train service on 60 selected days from Wareham using hired-in diesel locomotives and carriages operated and staffed by West Coast Railways. The railway had hoped to operate a second year of 90 selected-day trial services from Wareham during 2018 but it was delayed, before the Covid-19 pandemic hit and scuppered the plans.

In another first, the railway will be using its DMUs to operate the 11-mile service – one mile of which will be on the Network Rail main line from Worgret Junction to Wareham.

The four-daily trains service from Wareham will be formed of a three-carriage Class 117 DMU that can have a Class 121 railcar added at busy times, giving a total of 292 seats.



The Swanage Railway's Class 117 DMU, which has been refurbished to run on the national network, passes Furzebrook in January. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

The DMUs have been restored and upgraded for the Swanage Railway by specialist contractors who fitted the same technical, signalling and safety equipment that is installed on all other trains running on the national network.

The timetable is subject to change on special event days. The trains will again be operated and staffed by West Coast Railways.

Swanage Railway Trust volunteer chairman Gavin Johns said: "This trial train service is the result of working in partnership with the Government's Coastal Communities Fund, the Department of Transport, the former Purbeck District Council, Dorset Council, British Petroleum, Perenco, Network Rail and South Western Railway.

"I would like to thank our valued stakeholders for their far-sighted investment of £5.5 million to reconnect Swanage and Corfe Castle with the main line at Wareham,

which included £1.8 million from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund so we could restore and upgrade our 1950s heritage diesel trains for running on the main line directly into Wareham station.

'Historic moment'

South Western Railway regional development manager Andrew Ardley said: "SWR is proud to support the Swanage Railway by giving customers the ability to buy tickets through to Corfe Castle and Swanage from any one of the 189 stations on our network.

"This is an historic moment for the Swanage Railway and we look forward to seeing the results of this highly anticipated trial."

Swanage Railway Company volunteer chairman and signalman Trevor Parsons said: "I would like to say a big thank-you to our valued stakeholders for their invaluable help and patience with a complicated and detailed project that has been as

ambitious as it has been challenging. This trial train service would not be possible without the former Purbeck District Council committing £3.2 million from housing developers' transport improvement contributions for resignalling improvements between Wareham, Worgret Junction and the Swanage Railway as part of Network Rail's Poole to Wool resignalling scheme in 2013."

Purbeck Community Rail Partnership chairman and railway trustee Coun Mike Whitwam added: "This trial train service to Wareham marks an important opportunity to return to a fully-functioning and sustainable rail service that meets the needs of local communities, visitors and businesses.

"It holds the prospect of Isle of Purbeck residents travelling anywhere possible by rail, leaving their cars at home and taking traffic off the congested A351."

Tickets for the service are available at swanagerailway.co.uk

The King succeeds The Who at Fawley Hill's transport extravaganza in May

ROCK legends The Who have cancelled their appearance on the first night of the big May 27-29 Fawley Hill Festival of Vintage Transport.

Frontman Roger Daltrey complained of feeling unwell on the band's recent US tour and felt it prudent to cancel some gigs, but has since recovered and The Who will be performing a UK tour this

year as planned. In the meantime, The Who's spot at the National Transport Trust festival on May 27 has been taken by Elvis Presley impersonator Ben Portsmouth, his band, and backing singers, who have played at previous Fawley Hill events. Ben is the only non-American to win the Memphis Elvis contest. Proceeds from the festival will go towards Macmillan

Cancer Support. Fawley Hill is now selling VIP tickets for the Saturday to include an all-day VIP 'lounge' beside the arena, pre-dinner drinks and canapés and front-stage tables for dinner with wine. Also available are seating-only tickets for the concert.

Furthermore, visitors who buy general Saturday or all-weekend tickets will be able to watch the

show but without seating, and may be outside the big top.

The event will feature a wide range of transport, from camels to Spitfires, with steam locomotives, traction engines, cars, buses and lorries and a semi-circle of fairground engines outside the big top.

→ To book tickets, visit www.fawleyhill.co.uk

Lynton & Barnstaple revivalists buy Blackmoor station

By Robin Jones

FOLLOWING years of negotiations, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway revivalists have acquired the former station at Blackmoor.

April 17 saw the completion of the purchase of the Old Station House Inn and restaurant and the adjoining house at Blackmoor Gate and adjacent land for the future construction of the railway by the L&B Blackmoor Company plc, a subsidiary of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust, which owns Woody Bay station, the headquarters of the heritage line.

The inn was formerly Blackmoor station, which was built in 1897 by Bob Jones of Lynton in the Nuremberg or Swiss chalet style as befitted the 'English Switzerland' the town became known as in Victorian times. Because of its remote location, it housed the stationmaster as well as facilities for travellers, including a refreshment room that sold alcohol until the licence was allowed to lapse in 1913.

A trust statement said: "We are indebted to the previous landlords, Mr and Mrs Shepherd, who have worked hard over many years to provide a warm welcome to their customers and build a successful business that has recently navigated the pressures of the Covid pandemic.

"The venue will eventually provide station facilities as part of the extended Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, in addition to continuing to operate as a pub and restaurant.



Manning Wardle 2-6-2T Taw waits with an Up train for sister Yeo to clear the single track at Blackmoor station on August 11, 1927. HUMPHREY HOUSEHOLD/LBR TRUST

"As the new landlord, the company is not planning radical change to the premises and assures all the regular and occasional visitors to the inn that it will continue to offer a warm welcome with quality food and drinks.

"A programme of investment is planned that will respect the heritage of the setting and its place as an important part of the local community by retaining and enhancing the present character of the pub and restaurant.

"Directors of the L&B Blackmoor Company plc and the new manager look forward to meeting our customers."



Left: The Old Station House Inn and restaurant at Blackmoor Gate on March 19. TONY NICHOLSON/LBR

It is planned to erect a new station to the west of the original structure, so to allow the pub and restaurant business to continue to flourish, at the western gateway to Exmoor National Park. At the same time, the realigned course of the trackbed will make it

easier for the railway to run under the crossroads at Blackmoor Gate which, at 900 feet above sea level, is the second summit of the line.

➔ Dividend-bearing shares in the plc are still available. More details can be found at www.lynton-rail.co.uk

Steam shed and signalbox tours in Spa Valley volunteer drive

By Geoff Courtney

THE Spa Valley Railway is offering would-be volunteers a question-and-answer session, a tour of the railway's facilities – including its former LBSCR engine shed, the only one of its kind in the country, a train ride from Tunbridge Wells West station to Groombridge, and a visit to a signalbox during a recruitment day on May 8.

Commercial manager Jonnie Pay said: "All volunteering is important as we are a 100% volunteer-led railway. It is a great way to make lifelong friends as well as having fun and learning new skills, and it can be anything from a few hours a week to much more – whatever spare time people of all ages may have."

He said the participants would also learn about volunteering in the catering department, adding: "This is one of our most important areas as the revenue raised from our dining trains is essential to keeping us open for all to enjoy. Our dining experiences include Sunday and ploughman's lunches, fish and

chip suppers, afternoon tea, cream teas, real ale trains and murder mystery evenings."

The Sunday lunch trains will run on April 23, May 7, July 23, August 27, September 17 and October 29, departing from Tunbridge Wells West for Eridge at 12.55pm. In addition to a three-course lunch, a bar service will be available.

Continuing the food theme, the railway will run its first-ever cheese train on April 22, featuring four cheeses from local suppliers, with the ticket price including an accompanying drink. The train departs from Eridge, which has a direct link with the national network to London Bridge, at 2.45pm for a return journey to Tunbridge Wells West. Further dates will be announced later in the year.

The railway's busy spring and summer season also includes a series of steam or diesel-hauled vineyard tours and wine tasting trains on the weekends of June 10/11, July 1/2 and 29/30, August 19/20 and September 2/3. Departure from Tunbridge Wells



Volunteer army: Spa Valley Railway volunteers of all ages join Standard Class 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069 at Poke Hill Farm Crossing on August 29, 2022, during the railway's 25th anniversary gala. The railway is holding a volunteer recruitment day on May 8 that will include locomotive depot tours. HUGH WAGHORN

West will be at 11.30am for the five-mile journey to Eridge and a visit to Wildwood Vineyard hosted by the owner, Paul Olding.

Ticket prices and other information on these and other trains at the Spa Valley are available online at www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk

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The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's March 9-12 Steam Gala was blessed by a last-minute covering of snow. Despite blanketing the landscape and the icy conditions on local roads the snow brought with it, volunteers and enthusiasts continued to turn up to a 'gala like no other', with five LMS 4-6-0 locomotives operating as part of the line-up. 'Black Five' No. 45212 heads the morning goods towards Oakworth on the morning of March 11. See pages 86-89 for the full story.

TOM MARSHALL/KWVR



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Above: GWR 2-6-2T No. 4110 inside Cranmore shed.

Left: Ivatt 2-6-0 No. 46447 shunts the freight at Cranmore shed.

Heritage-era debut for 100th loco rescued from Barry

Word and pictures by John Titlow

THE first passenger trains to be hauled in the heritage era by the 100th locomotive to be rescued from Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyards ran at the East Somerset Railway's successful March 18/19 gala.

At the line's first gala since April 2021, GWR 5101 class large prairie No. 4110, built at Swindon in 1936, ran alongside 1924-built small prairie No. 4555 – a guest at the Severn Valley Railway's April 14-16 spring steam gala – and 1950-built Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447, while Barclay

0-4-0ST No. 1719 of 1926 *Lady Nan* gave sold-out driver experiences costing £10.

No. 4110 was first shedded at Severn Tunnel Junction in October 1936 for use on banking, but was transferred two months later to the GWR's Wolverhampton Division, where it stayed for 26 years working services from Birmingham to Leamington Spa and Stratford-upon-Avon, as well as those to Wolverhampton Low Level, Stourbridge, Kidderminster and Dudley.

Displaced from the area by DMUs, it moved to Taunton in June 1962 and was used on the Minehead branch. In May 1963, it was transferred to Neath and then Cardiff Radyr, and finally in April 1965 it ended up at its 'starting place' of Severn Tunnel Junction. Withdrawn in June 1965, it ended up in the scrapyards two months later.

In preservation

In May 1979, it was purchased by the Great Western Preservation Group and moved to the now-defunct Southall Railway Centre in 1979.

After a move to Tyseley Locomotive Works for restoration, it was sold to raise funds to complete works on WR 0-6-0PT No. 9682. In 2015, it was bought by the West Somerset Railway and moved to Minehead, but after four years of inactivity it was again sold, to the Dartmouth Steam Railway in 2019.

It moved to Cranmore in 2020 for serious restoration to begin. Recently completed under an agreement between the ESR and the DSR, No. 4110 will be used at Cranmore for three years.



Newly restored GWR 2-6-2T No. 4110 and Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447 depart Mendip Vale with the last train of the day on March 18.



In lashing rain, GWR prairie No. 4555 leads Ivatt 2-6-0 No. 46447 from Mendip Vale on March 18.

An intensive service took place with seven return workings over the 2 ½-mile line from Cranmore to Mendip Vale, where locomotives run round. Timings were 10.30am, 11.25am, 12.20pm, 1.15pm, 2.10pm, 3.05pm and 4pm.

Double-heading and banked trains took place, with locomotives rotated on every train. A freight train ran from the siding by the station to the shed, with two of their tankers seeing rare use.

Sell-out

Online tickets were sold out for both days, with 1400 passengers being carried, making a total of 2200 journeys. The four-coach trains were full with very few available seats and the buffet did a roaring trade.

Shed visits were offered, and a walkway allowed visitors to view the locomotives being prepared. *Lady Nan* and No. 4110 were brought

inside for minor adjustments, making it possible to photograph them inside.

The signalbox had been spruced up and visitors were guided around. It is yet to be connected, although the frame is in place, and it is hoped to do this in the next two years.

The miniature railway running alongside the line was in operation with one steam locomotive working, and also did good business.

A considerable number of young volunteers were seen at work. I spoke to Alex Brooks, a 15-year-old lad who helped restore No. 4110 bending pipework, and who told me that he now wants to study engineering.

Regular services take place at weekends from April and throughout the year, and they are intensified during the summer season. There are also special mixed traffic days.

→ For more information, visit <https://eastsomersetrailway.com>



GWR prairie No. 4110 climbs away from Mendip Vale up the 1-in-56 gradients through the limestone cutting, one of the most spectacular locations on the line.



Double-headed prairies: Nos. 4555 and 4110 at their journey's end at Cranmore.



Saddle tank *Lady Nan* runs past Cranmore shed with a driver experience trip.

Revised Corwen extension opening date is announced

By Owen Hayward

THE Llangollen Railway has announced that its Corwen extension opening date has been set for June 1 – and that the resident group restoring a locomotive yet to steam in preservation had been awarded charitable status.

The announcement of the opening date for the LR's westward extension to Corwen comes after the previously planned opening for March had to be postponed following delays to the installation of the canopy during the autumn and winter.

As reported in issue 303, the new framework sections were lifted into place during the final

week of January, with cladding out commencing afterwards. By March 25, the scaffolding had started to be dismantled, with the majority of the work on this completed and attention now focusing on completing the station's facilities in time for the official opening on the new date.

Full plans for the event were being discussed as *Heritage Railway* closed for press, but it was expected that a two-train service would operate as minimum from June 1-4 to celebrate the occasion with a variety of traction from the home fleet.

The new station's signalbox, from Weston Rhyn, will be fully commissioned at a later date, with a ground frame currently installed

to control the points for the run-round loop. Accordingly, the section between Carrog and Corwen will be a one-train only operation until the 'box is operational.

Testing the way

On March 25, the railway ran test trains with a DMU out alongside the rostered steam service (operated by hired Hudswell Clarke Austerly 0-6-0ST No. 68067) to test the Electronic Token Block signalling ahead of Easter services and the opening of the extension; some remedial repair work was found to be required ahead of public two-train services operating.

Meanwhile, in the railway's workshops BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80072 has seen its

frames jet washed, ready to go to Locomotive Maintenance Services at Loughborough for mechanical overhaul.

The railway's Class 26 No. 5310 has been stopped for some top-end engine repairs and a Class 09 shunter is due to arrive to help take some of the pressure away from resident class 08 No. 13265 that will also need overhaul.

Work to strip class 03 No. 03162 for assessment has also commenced, with the rods and air tanks removed. Despite its age, the bodywork has been found to be remarkably sound.

The first major task will be to lift the locomotive off the ground to facilitate lowering out the final drive unit for inspection.



Above: Scaffolding has started to be dismantled at the LR's new Corwen terminus following cladding out of the new canopy roof. Opening is set to take place on June 1. OWEN HAYWARD

Below: Roger Hibbert's Austerly 0-6-0ST No. 68067 arrives at Berwyn with the last train of the day on March 25. OWEN HAYWARD



Left: The Llangollen Railway's resident 0-6-0PT No. 7754 is rapidly nearing completion in the workshops, with final assembly taking place and the first layers of paint being applied. The final livery is being kept a closely guarded secret; it is hoped that the pannier will be ready for the opening of the Corwen extension. OWEN HAYWARD



At first glance, you may think it a complete locomotive, although with no boiler fitted, No. 5532 will not be going anywhere just yet. It is seen inside the Llangollen shed on March 25. OWEN HAYWARD



Barry locomotive restoration gains charitable status

THE Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group, which is spearheading the restoration of GWR 2-6-2T No. 5532 – which has yet to steam in preservation – announced on March 14 that it had officially gained charitable status, and that HM Revenue & Customs had additionally confirmed it eligible to claim Gift Aid on donations made to the project.

"There were three different charity options available to us, but thanks to support from the 4150 Fund at the Severn Valley, we found both the easiest and best option," said group secretary Charles Cooksley.

"The whole process started back in November 2022 and has had to go through the various legal procedures, including checks by the Financial Conduct Authority and HMRC, before we could be confirmed as a charity.

"Now, though, we are able to start claiming Gift Aid on donations, which will make a big difference. We currently have about £80,000 in the bank but at our AGM on March 18, several members took forms away with the promise of some large donations and we look set to have in the region of £100,000 by the end of the financial year."

No. 5532 was outshopped from Swindon Works in June 1928. While shedded at Ebbw Junction in 1941, it and classmate No. 5516 became 'royal engines' when they hauled the Royal Train from Hereford to Monmouth Troy on October 22, and then later on to Ross-on-Wye with King George VI on board. In 1959, it was allocated to Westbury shed and hauled the final passenger train from Bristol to Frome that October.

It was withdrawn on July 10, 1962, from Laira and spent 20 years at

Barry before being rescued by the Dean Forest Railway. When the group acquired No. 5538 from Barry, it came with a cracked cylinder, which led to a swap of parts with the DFR.

As locomotive numbers are decided by the frames, when those of Nos. 5532 and 5538 were swapped, they thus became owners of the former. Over the years, the group has made gradual progress on the restoration of the small prairie, while also helping with the LR itself; the group helped to fund part of the engine shed and an inspection pit. When this was completed, the frames moved undercover during 1997 for restoration to commence.

A vast number of new parts have already been ordered and fitted to the rebuild, including new coupling and connecting rods, springs, a chimney, smokebox and tanks. The bunker and rear end of the frames were corroded and have also been rebuilt. Aside from some final plumbing, the chassis is essentially ready to receive the boiler, which moved to Tyseley Locomotive Works on March 23 for contract overhaul. There it is due to have the firebox assembled, a new front tubeplate, and subsequently all boiler tubes fitted.

It will undergo a hydraulic test but it has not yet been decided as to whether it will return to Llangollen for finishing thereafter or remain at Tyseley to be completed.

Should sufficient funding be achieved, an optimistic estimate of two years has been floated before No. 5532 could be seen in steam, but a seemingly more realistic estimate places it in the region of three to four years.

On March 23, the boiler and firebox for small prairie No. 5532 were collected from Llangollen for transportation to Tyseley Locomotive Works, where it will now be overhauled under contract there. LRGWLG



Mid-Hants Railway CEO steps down

AMANDA Squires, CEO of the Mid-Hants Railway, is stepping down from her role due to a change in her personal circumstances.

In a letter to the railway's members on March 2, Amanda announced that she would leave the position at the end of the month, saying: "Sometimes, life takes an unexpected turn and you find yourself in a situation you simply weren't expecting.

"After being in good health for a long time, my husband's journey with Parkinson's disease became considerably more challenging shortly after I joined the Watercress Line in April last year

and he now needs greater support than I am able to provide.

"Therefore, I have made the life-changing decision that I need to step down from my role in order to spend time supporting him."

Watercress Line Heritage Railway Trust Ltd chairman David Jones extended his thanks, saying: "I'd like to thank Amanda for her hard work on behalf of the Watercress Line during a period where we have faced unprecedented trading pressures. Her resilience in the face of this has been outstanding and equally she has been selfless in balancing her commitment to the railway with her home life."

Wisbech's last joins Mangapps collection

AFTER less than a month of being advertised for sale by its previous owner, Class 04 0-6-0DM D2203 (BR No. 11103) has left the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway at Skipton and moved back to somewhat regional home territory at the Mangapps Farm Railway Museum in Essex.

Built by Vulcan Foundry under sub-contract by the Drewry Car Co. in 1952, it was used as a shunting locomotive on the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway in East Anglia. The line was officially closed on May 23, 1966, and it has been said that D2203 is both the last-surviving locomotive to have operated on the tramway and the only survivor of the first batch of four Class 04s built.

Following a spell in use with BR, D2203 was sold to into industrial use



On March 28, D2203 arrives at Mangapps Farm Railway Museum, passing the appropriately named Drewry Street. JOHN JOLLY

at Hemel Concrete Company before entering preservation at Embsay. It was operational until the removal of the radiators for repairs about two and a half years ago. These repairs will now be completed at Mangapps, where it is also intended to restore it to as near to original condition as possible, complete with side skirts and cowcatchers.

D2203 will be right at home amid the array of East Anglian railwayana the museum homes.

60mph licence for East Lancashire

NEW safety certification issued by the Office of Rail and Road will allow main line operators to test vehicles at speeds of up to 60mph on the East Lancashire Railway, making it one of just a select few where tracks are passed for such speeds.

Previously restricted to 25mph, the section of line between Heywood, Bury and Summerseat will be capable of seeing main line stock testing reach the new maximum speed with the rest of the railway still restricted.

ELR's head of operations, Jeff Armstrong, said: "This new non-main line certification from the ORR marks a significant expansion in our testing capacity.

"We have a long tradition of welcoming operators and contractors to the network, but

this new licence now eliminates any need to request temporary dispensations, making the entire process of testing equipment more streamlined and straightforward for all."

The new safety certificate is valid until January 2028 and also permits filming at the new top speed.

Railway chairman Mike Kelly added: "Securing this new safety certificate has been a real team effort and I'd like to salute the dedication and hard work of everyone from the railway who has been involved. As a registered charity, it is vital we continue to develop new revenue streams and we look forward to becoming an even greater partner for main line operators and contractors."

Alycidon completes testing for return to the main line

By Owen Hayward

THE Deltic Preservation Society's Class 55 Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* has completed running-in trials after a winter of maintenance at Barrow Hill.

On March 28, No. 55009 ran across the national network from the DPS base at Barrow Hill to West Coast Railway's Carnforth base, with one of the main line operator's Class 57s in tow for insurance. The trip marked its first appearance on the main line since March 3, 2019, when it failed with damage to its No. 2 generator and six traction motors following a high-voltage power surge.

No. 55009 returned to operational condition for heritage lines during January 2022, where it undertook some running-in on the Great Central Railway. A main line return was billed for December 3 on Pathfinder Tours' 'North Eastern Christmas Markets' trip from Swindon to York, Durham and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, but during an inspection at the Severn Valley Railway ahead of planned main line testing, a cracked exhaust silencer was found, which necessitated repairs before it could venture onto Network Rail metals for fear of fire risk.

Following this discovery, No. 55009 returned to Barrow Hill for repairs.

The March 28 trip was the first of three days of testing, with the Deltic first running to Carnforth via Derby, Burton upon Trent, Crewe, Wigan North Western and Lancaster.

A scheduled pause at Preston saw it within a stone's throw of the birthplace of the class, the prototype having been built at the Dick, Kerr & Co works there in 1955.

A loaded test run took place the following day, with *Alycidon* at the head of a rake of ex-Riviera Mk.1 coaching stock and Class 57 No. 57012 again at the rear. The test trip, which saw the locomotive easily reach 95mph, ran from Carnforth to Carlisle and back, which involved tackling the renowned 1-in-75 gradient at Shap. Arrival at Carlisle was seven minutes ahead of schedule, with the return also departing early and arriving back 128 minutes ahead of time, having been given a clear run along the route. It returned to Barrow Hill the following day.

Following the successful tests, Pathfinder Railtours has announced 'The Capital Deltic Reprise'. This will see No. 55009 depart Willington at 6.30am on July 29, picking up at Derby, Chesterfield, Sheffield and Doncaster, before running a circular route via Pontefract, Gascoigne Wood

and Selby. After a second pick-up at Doncaster, the Deltic will then run to Peterborough and on to King's Cross via a 'diversionary' route through Ely, Cambridge and Hitchin for a layover in the capital, before returning to Willington, dropping off at the same pick-up points from the morning.

Prices for this tour start at £65 for children and £129 for adults for standard class seats, with first class and premier dining options also available. To book, visit pathfindertours.co.uk/events/the-capital-deltic-reprise

Birthday trip

The July tour is the second trip confirmed for No. 55009, with the first (UK Railtours' 'The Coronation Deltic') scheduled for May 13 from King's Cross to York and Scarborough.

Its arrival at York will play a part in the 100th birthday of local driver Harry Wilson, who also drove LNER A4 Pacific No. 4468 *Mallard* on one of its final trips in 1988.

The UKRT headboard will be substituted with 'The Centenarian', and Harry, who often drove on 'Scarborough Spa Express' and 'Scotsman' services, will be given a ride in the cab of *Alycidon* to celebrate his landmark birthday.

DPS chairman Murray Brown said: "Harry loved driving the Deltics and when I interviewed him last year, I asked him what he would like for his 100th birthday. He said a cab ride.

"With his birthday falling on May 6 and the tour just a few days later, the timing was perfect – how to make an old man happy, as the saying goes.

"The change of headboard has all been agreed with operator WCR and UKRT"

Tickets for the May trip start at £119 for children and £129 for adults travelling in standard class. As this issue went to press, first class was fully booked but dining options were still available. To book tickets, visit ukrailtours.co.uk/product/the-coronation-deltic

As we closed for press, the DPS confirmed that the overhauled bogies for D9015 had been placed back beneath the locomotive, which would further allow the overhauled Napier power units to be lifted back into the engine bay. Funding for the majority of the required main line equipment for No. 55019 was also in place and an investigation was being carried out as to what further work would be required before a second society locomotive could commence testing on the national network.

Class 55 No. 55009 *Alycidon* passes Dillicar during the ascent of the Shap incline during a loaded test run on March 29. KALLUM BUCKLEY EVANS





Pictured on the last day of running on the privately-owned Rhiw Valley Railway on October 2, 2022, 15in gauge 0-4-0 Jack and carriages are some of the assets for sale. JOSH WATKINS

Rhiw Valley assets on the market

THE rolling stock collection of the private 15in gauge Rhiw Valley Railway, which was located near the Powys village of Berriew, are being offered for sale by its owners following its closure.

Built in the 1960s, it was opened in 1970 and initially run by the late Jack Woodroffe, an ex-professional musician who spent most of his working life in the musical instrument retail business but who was also a great enthusiast and built railways in gauges ranging from OO to 15in. Following his untimely death in 1990, the line continued to

operate under its current ownership, and closed on October 2 last year.

The railway has since received an offer for the trackwork, but the remaining assets have been placed on the market and are available either as a complete lot or individual items. The listings include steam locomotives, the first being an 0-4-0 tender engine designed, built in 2003 by and named after Jack. Its current boiler certificate expires in April 2025.

The second is *Powys*, an 0-6-2T designed by David Curwen and built

by Severn Lamb in 1973, with a boiler certificate expiring in August 2028.

Also available are several wooden-bodied passenger carriages, a guard's van, engineering wagons and workshop machinery.

Viewing is strictly by appointment, with a 25% deposit payable within seven days of any offers being accepted. For more information, visit rvlr.co.uk or contact Mike Woodroffe (07890 681270 or mike.woodroffe@gmail.com) or Chris Phillimore (07539 485268 or chris.phillimore@btinternet.com)

Rat race for Epping's diesel gala this autumn

RATS could be roaming the Essex countryside this autumn – but not of the rodent kind.

For its September 22-24 diesel gala, the Epping Ongar Railway has secured a visit from Class 25 D7659 thanks to the Waterman Locomotive Trust and Peak Rail. Built in 1966 and mostly allocated to the London Midland Region, it also spent some time based at

Cricklewood depot. It returned to service in late 2021 after a 23-year absence and overhaul.

It may not be the only 'rat' operating over the three-day weekend, as the EOR's resident Class 25 – D7523 – is expected to return in time to appear alongside the visiting classmate, having been absent itself for nearly a decade and it too having undergone

contract overhaul on the Battlefield Line. Diesel gala organiser Marco Carrara said: "We are delighted that D7659 is able to join the line-up for our diesel gala. With the return to traffic of D7523, it will be the first time two Class 25s have appeared at the railway at the same time, and it will reunite the locomotives that double-headed a service out of St Pancras station in August 1980."

Appeal launched for Peak's main generator

TEAM 45, the group working to return Class 45 No. 45132 to operational condition at the Epping Ongar Railway, has launched an appeal to help fund repairs to the locomotive's main generator.

No. 45132 failed at the Mid-Hants Railway on March 3, 2000 when the main generator banding burst, causing damage to the essential component. Since then, it has been undergoing a gradual restoration scheme to repair and return it to service, with the generator being repaired at Bowers Electrical in 2008.

Following a move to the EOR in September 2014, work continued, and a successful start-up took place on March 26, 2019. During a series of commissioning runs, another defect on the generator unfortunately developed that resulted in it requiring further repairs. The problem is now being tackled by another specialist firm and will be aided thanks to the salvaging of parts from classmate No. 45015 at Shackerstone on the Battlefield Line, which is being scrapped.

The group has set an initial target of £7500 to go towards the required work to bring the generator back up to standard, which is now the only major obstacle preventing No. 45132 from returning to operation.

→ To support the appeal, visit gofundme.com/f/45132-main-generator-appeal



On August 3, 2019, BR class 45 No. 45132 underwent a test run on the Epping Ongar Railway. A few weeks later, the main generator failed. The volunteer group working on it have now launched an appeal to fund the required repairs. OWEN HAYWARD

Race to complete Coronation tram for coronation is called off

By Hugh Dougherty

THE race to complete the restoration of Glasgow Coronation tram No. 1245 in time for the coronation of King Charles III has been called off.

Volunteers and bosses at Summerlee Industrial Museum decided to take their time and complete the work to their usual high standards, rather than to pull out all the stops for May. However, there is a chance that the 1939-built Glasgow Corporation tram, whose class name recalls the coronation of King George VI in 1937, might be ready to run before the end of the current coronation year.

Volunteer team leader Charlie McAloon said: "While we've made excellent progress, there was no point in rushing for the sake of it. The tram now has its external panelling completed, glazing is well underway and, thanks to a new metalwork bending machine we've been able to buy, the work has been speeded up. Also compete are the folding platform doors we built using an original as a template. Testing is underway on the control equipment we've built and designed to bring the original system up-to-date, while still preserving the heritage of the tram as a working exhibit."

With bogies and motors overhauled, and ventilators and grills constructed and restored, plus all wiring and lighting circuits in place, Charlie said the group essentially has a kit of parts ready to assemble.

"It's really a matter of putting the kit together to complete the tram," he said.



Glasgow Coronation tram 1245 with panelling complete and glazing underway, ready for the paintshop. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Steam and art combine at 'Middy' bank holiday gala

By Geoff Courtney

STEAM and art will be at the heart of a bank holiday gala being held by the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway at its Brockford base and museum on April 30, with the former due to be represented by a Hudswell Clarke 0-6-ST and art by

Malcolm Root, one of the country's leading railway artists and a keen supporter of the 'Middy'.

The 72-year-old artist and life-long steam enthusiast, who is a fellow and vice-president of the prestigious Guild of Railway Artists, will exhibit 10 of his acclaimed paintings at the

gala, ranging from Southern Railway Leader class 0-6-6-0 No. 36001 at Winchester to a mid-19th century portrayal of the Colne Valley & Halstead Railway.

Malcolm, who lives at Halstead in the neighbouring county of Essex, will also unveil a painting of MSLR

stalwart J15 class 0-6-0 No. 65447 at Laxfield shortly before the line closed in 1952, a work he created especially for the exhibition.

"I have always been made to feel very welcome when visiting the railway," he said. "The station and base at Brockford encapsulate the rural nature of the original light railway with a charm of its own, and it is always a pleasure to visit."

John Reeve, the Middy's marketing manager, told *Heritage Railway*: "Malcolm is a long-term supporter and we will be delighted to host the exhibition and have him with us during the day. His attendance will be a major attraction to the event, as will all-day steam train rides in genuine four-wheel Victorian coaches. All the facilities will be open, including our museum and restoration shed, and real ale bar."

The original Mid-Suffolk Light Railway was opened to freight traffic in September 1904 and ran for 19 miles through sparsely-populated agricultural countryside from Haughley, on the Great Eastern Railway Ipswich-Norwich main line, to Laxfield. It went into receivership two years after opening but continued to operate, and passenger trains were introduced in September 1908.

The railway was still in receivership at the time of the 1923 Grouping,



The end is nigh: LNER Class J15 No. 65447 and its crew await departure from Haughley station on the Ipswich-Norwich main line in July 1952 with a Mid-Suffolk Light Railway train to Laxfield, shortly before the closure of the line, which is identified on the station's large running-in-board. The 0-6-0, a regular on the branch line, was 53 years old at the time, but still had another seven years left in service. A painting by Malcolm Root of the locomotive at Laxfield will be unveiled on April 30 during a steam gala at the Brockford base of the revived Middy. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ROY VINCENT

Trackbed greenway plan could threaten Donegal revival or exist alongside

By Hugh Dougherty

A PROPOSAL for a pedestrian, cycling and riding greenway – using much of the trackbed of the former County Donegal Railways main line through the scenic Barnesmore Gap between Ballybofey and Donegal Town – could block future plans to reopen part of

the route as a heritage line. Public consultation on the proposal has elicited a large number of responses, including from Donegal Railway Heritage Centre, its members and supporters.

The centre has been in talks with Donegal County Council about the possibility of including a narrow

gauge railway track with the greenway, much in the same way that the Aln Valley Railway has been able to do along its route between Alnwick and Alnmouth.

The former South Donegal Railway Restoration Society pressed ahead in 1991 with a scheme to restore just over 10 miles of the railway to link the site of the former Meenglas Halt with Barnesmore Halt, including the most scenic part of the line where it runs through the Barnesmore Gap on a ledge cut into the hillside.

However, that plan failed because of a proposed Ballybofey bypass scheme which would have used part of the old railway track route past Lough Mourne, while a geological issue at the foot of the gap and the objections of a homeowner to a railway running near his property sealed its fate.

Since then, the successor to the SDRRS, Donegal Railway Restoration CLG, operator of the heritage centre, has reaffirmed its aim of operating heritage CDR stock, with several options, including

the Barnesmore Gap route, being actively considered.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre manager Niall McCaughan said: "We encouraged all our members, supporters and the general public to get involved in the consultation and there has been a good response."

"It is important that the railway and its place in the Barnesmore Gap is recognised and it may be possible to build the greenway in such a way that it does not rule out a heritage line on the existing CDR trackbed."

Greenway champion Coun Barry Sweeny, of Donegal County Council, said: "I believe that the greenway has great potential and I am very much aware of the railway heritage of the Barnesmore Gap. I congratulate the railway heritage group for its work. Its input is invaluable in taking this project forward."

The 3ft gauge line through the gap was built by the West Donegal Railway Company and opened between Stranorlar, where it connected with the 5ft 3in gauge



CDR 2-6-4T No. 5 Drumbroe on its return for display at Donegal Railway Heritage Centre in October 2021 after restoration at Whitehead. The line of the railway, on which Drumbroe may steam, can be seen on the hillside above the locomotive. DONEGAL RAILWAY HERITAGE CENTRE



Train of thought: Artist Malcolm Root at work on his painting of J15 class No. 65447 at Laxfield, which he will unveil at the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway's April 30 steam gala. MALCOLM ROOT

but was absorbed by a reluctant LNER in July 1924 and continued to operate until July 1952, when it was closed by BR, so bringing the curtain down on a railway that had become affectionately known as the 'Middy' but had led a parlous existence for nearly half a century.

Preservationists step in

The curtain, however, didn't signify the end, for in 1991, 39 years after the last train ran, a group of enthusiasts formed the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Society to recreate the line at the site of Brockford & Wetheringsett station, six miles from Haughley.

That venture has now become a popular Suffolk tourist attraction as the county's only standard gauge heritage railway, a proud claim that received a major boost in January with the completion of an extension on the original trackbed that has doubled the length of the running line to more than half a mile, as reported in issue 303.



Double delight: Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 *Wissington* and Cockerill 0-4-0VBT steam tram No. 2525 top-and-tail a train of two vintage GER carriages in a delightful scene on the Mid-Suffolk Railway on April 6, 2015. LAWRIE ROSE

Hudswell Clarke No. 1700 *Wissington* of 1938, on loan from the North Norfolk Railway, is the 0-6-0ST due to be on duty at the April 30 gala. Other steam locomotives at Brockford are another NNR loanee, LNER Y7 class 0-4-0T No. 985/BR No. 68088, built at Darlington in 1923 and undergoing restoration, a second Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST, No. 1604 dating from 1928, which is owned by the railway and also under restoration, and a 1906 operational Cockerill 0-4-0VBT steam tram, No. 2525. Diesels on the railway include two Ruston &

Hornsby 0-4-0DM locomotives, Class 48 No. 294266 and Class 165 No. 304470, and Fowler 0-4-0DM No. 20337 *Shreddie*, which was built in 1934 for the Shredded Wheat Company's Welwyn Garden City factory. It underwent a Heritage Railway Association award-winning restoration by two railway members.

Other rolling stock includes a GER horsebox built in 1869 and the oldest vehicle of its type in the UK, and three four-wheel GER carriages, of which one, first class smoking saloon No. 140 of 1863, is believed to be the oldest GER coach in existence.

The event will be followed on May 7/8 by a Coronation Steam-Up gala, which will see two locomotives in steam running alongside *Shreddie* and the line's Wickham Trolley.

The May 28/29 bank holiday weekend will feature the Middy in the 1940s event which, in addition to the railway attractions, there will be a full programme of displays, military vehicles, live music, memorabilia, visiting 'soldiers, sailors and airmen', and, weather permitting, a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight flypast.

➔ For the full programme, visit www.msrlr.org.uk

Finn Valley Railway and had a temporary terminus at Drummin in 1882, before being extended to its original intended terminus at Donegal Town in 1889.

Following the conversion of the FVR to narrow gauge in 1894, the railway through the gap became the CDR's main line and handled through trains from Derry and Strabane to Killybegs. It closed with the rest of the CDR on December 21, 1959, and was lifted in 1960.

Since then, the bulk of the trackbed has remained intact and distinct while its reuse as a main line railway has been mooted as part of rail lobby group Into The West's popular and growing campaign to reconnect Donegal to the Irish national system. If the proposals do come to fruition, the greenway plan would have to be substantially altered, and if a narrow gauge heritage line does succeed in running through the gap, it would raise the intriguing possibility of mixed gauge track making its first appearance in Donegal.



What could be on offer: CDR 2-6-4T No. *Blanche* in full cry, lifting its heavy mixed train through the Barnesmore Gap in May 1956. The ledge on which the train is running is intact today. DONEGAL RAILWAY HERITAGE CENTRE

Going even greener at Talyllyn

By Owen Hayward

THE Talyllyn Railway's 'nature first' strategy is to be stepped up under the world's first volunteer-run line's new joint managers.

As reported in issue 301, the railway's former general manager Stuart Williams has departed and been replaced by Liz Porrett and Lorraine Simkiss.

"I've been involved with the TR in some aspect for several years," said Liz, who is now general manager (operations). "I would bring my children down as they were involved with the Tracksiders gang (the young member's group for under-14s) and more recently became commercial manager for the railway. Having that connection to the area already there certainly made moving here much easier, too."

"We both work very well together," said Lorraine, general manager (health and safety), who was safety and environmental manager. "We are, of course, still in that period where we are trying to iron out exactly who is responsible for what, but we both know if we're not certain, we can go into one another's office and just ask or figure it out."

"The railway's board has also put their full support behind us and we get on well with them all, too."

Their predecessor was very keen on reducing the railway's environmental impact, which has led to, amid many other things, the installation of solar panels at Tywyn Wharf station. The railway is now closely looking at how it works with nature along the Fathew Valley, with Liz also sitting on the Heritage Railway Association's environmental committee.

"We must monitor how we fit in with nature," she said. "For example, on the orchard site at Pendre (part of the proposed redevelopment plan as reported in issue 296), we have an active badger sett. We must ask 'how do we care for them?' Do we accommodate them on the site or look at options to relocate them?"

Tree care

The railway also undertook a survey of all the trees along the lineside to ascertain what species there are, but crucially to also identify any that may need removing. Ash dieback has been a serious problem and many were discovered to be infected. A cutting down programme has seen 25 trees alone felled at Abergynolwyn.

"This may seem drastic, but we have a responsibility to manage it," Liz said. "We had to work with the local power company as some of these hung over power lines."

"The first impression is that we have changed the landscape, but take another look and you can see that, actually, it now looks very much like it did 150 years ago, as many of these trees were planted as the railway was built. We have therefore opened up views for the passengers to see 'beyond the green corridor' and enjoy similar views to those that could be witnessed in the late 1800s."

To offset the felling, the TR applied to a Woodland Trust scheme and has received 180 new saplings of multiple species that will be planted along the lineside by the young member working groups.

Specialist work

Dolgoch viaduct has also been subject to attention, with a drone inspection carried out, followed up by bringing in Highlife Rope Access, which specialises in heritage structures, to carry out a physical inspection that required the team to abseil from the top. By tapping bricks and listening to the sounds made, they were able to identify where work was required.

Between two pillars, 40 bricks were replaced with specialist mortar and engineering bricks, while the drainage on the structure was identified as needing some work. That aside, the viaduct has been given a clean bill

of health.

The TR has also recently recruited a new heritage project manager to oversee its National Heritage Lottery Fund project applications and implementations, including the aforementioned Pendre redevelopment.

Nicholas Broster, currently environmental project manager for Metrolinx in Toronto, Canada, has connections to Tywyn with family involved in local green campaigns and so will also be keeping a close eye on the environmental impact of the railway's proposals.

In October, the TR was awarded a £110,000 grant towards developing its 'Preserving Our Past, Developing Our Future' plans (as reported in issue 299 of *Heritage Railway*). The project includes the construction of a new heritage carriage shed at Tywyn Wharf station that was due to begin over the winter, but it has been delayed due to spiralling costs that have led to the need to look at other possible grant applications to secure the necessary additional funding.

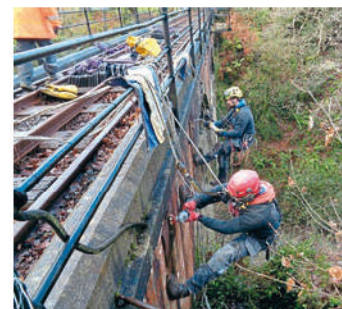
This project and the Pendre redevelopment scheme will also form the basis of the TR Volunteer Society's 75 Appeal, to be opened at the May 14 Founder's Day event, at which Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT No. 2 *Dolgoch* is



Resplendent in Corris Railway red, No. 4 *Edward Thomas* trundles past a sea of daffodils at Rhydyronen with CR saloon No. 17 in tow on March 22 during a David Williams photographic charter. ROBERT FALCONER



Liz Porrett (left) and Lorraine Simkiss, the new general managers at the Talyllyn Railway. The locomotive behind, No. 4 *Edward Thomas*, was subsequently repainted into Corris red for a week of photographic charters. LUKE RYAN/TR



Specialists from Highlife Rope Access abseil the pillars of Dolgoch Viaduct during an inspection of the structure that saw 40 bricks replaced. TR



A rarely seen view at Pendre of a locomotive (on this occasion No. 3 *Sir Haydn*) looking out of the shed doors on the evening of March 19. OWEN HAYWARD

planned to be launched into service following completion of its overhaul.

Sir Haydn's 'turn'

On March 17, a sight that has not been seen since 2004 was that of Falcon Works 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* facing west. The uphill gradient of the line has almost entirely seen its steam locomotives facing east, although No. 3 was turned to face the opposite way after its first season on the TR in the 1950s as the Corris-style cab blocked entry on one side.

On few occasions since, normally for photo charters, there have been some appearances of locomotives

facing 'the wrong way' on the line, the last being Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST No. 4 *Edward Thomas* a decade ago. For a David Williams photographic charter between March 19 and 22, the Falcon was turned to face downhill, substituting for Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT No. 6 *Douglas*, which was undergoing axlebox repairs in Pendre works.

No. 3 ran alongside a freshly repainted No. 4 that had been rapidly turned around in little over a week following the February half term trains. Wearing Corris Railway red livery with black borders and yellow



No. 4 *Edward Thomas* poses with two slate wagons at the site of the Abergynolwyn winding house on March 23. OWEN HAYWARD

lining, the repaint of No. 4 was only to be enjoyed for a short spell, as on April 17 it will be withdrawn from traffic for overhaul. It has not been confirmed which colour scheme it will reappear in, but many hope that the Corris colours will be retained.

The charters saw both locomotives operate with two of the original TR Brown Marshall carriages and brake van, Corris saloon No. 17 and a rake of restored wood and steel bodied wagons.

The rotation of No. 3 allowed for some variation in photo opportunities at some of the line's most popular locations, including the award-winning

Ty Dwr watering point. Almost immediately after the charters concluded, No. 3 was swiftly turned around on the morning of March 23.

An additional private charter that day, which was used to shoot material for the TR's Awdry Extravaganza event, also presented an opportunity to pose No. 4 with two slate wagons at the remains of the Abergynolwyn winding house, a project the Heritage Working group will soon progress. The plan is to construct pillars on which to mount the drum to enable conservation work on that while looking at what else can be done with the site.

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A MATTER OF UTMOST GRAVITY

Waggon restoration is a subject that doesn't often grab the headlines, so it was especially gratifying that the team of volunteers who look after our slate waggon fleet were presented with the 'Peter Manisty Award for Excellence' in the 2023 Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards.

The slate waggon Gravity Train has been a popular feature of FR heritage events for many years. Why not come and see it in action for yourself during the 'Bygones Weekend' taking place over the weekend of 6th - 8th October 2023.

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Children can now travel free as Moorsline marks 50 years

By Robin Jones

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has introduced a 12-month annual pass for visitors for an unlimited number of trips for just £40.

From April, child and family fares and peak/off-peak pricing have been replaced with the annual pass for standard services only over the full length of the line, and a single-use shorter journeys ticket for £15. Accompanied children aged 15 and below will travel free at all times.

NYMR director of corporate services Laura Strangeway said: "Since the pandemic, we have had to adapt our ticketing model to fall in line with restrictions. Heritage railways were not designed to accommodate social distancing, limited capacity and timetable restrictions. Due to this, our timetable and ticketing have become increasingly tricky to manage and maintain. We've listened to our visitors and simplified the offering with the view to providing better value for money, enabling more visitors to access the railway and see the full works of the charity."

"Not only will more people be able to access and use the railway, but we are encouraging our visitors to use Gift Aid at no extra cost to help relieve some of the pressures from our day-to-day operation."

Furthermore, to mark its half centenary as a heritage line, the



Fifty North Yorkshire Moors Railway family passes are being given away following the launch of the line's Golden Ticket competition. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM PHOTOGRAPHY

NYMR is giving away 50 family passes to lucky finders of its special golden tickets. To enter the competition, visit www.nymr.co.uk/golden-ticket

Furthermore, thanks to funding from the Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project, four 'fuss-free' coaches – part of the line's long-term initiative to make it accessible to all – have been completed.

The coaches ensure that all carriage sets in service will contain one vehicle specially adapted for wheelchair users, with access requirements to accommodate them

and their friends and family. They all have access ramps, accessible toilets and space to accommodate wheelchairs.

The NYMR has also completed a full review of its access points and facilities. Significant upgrades and changes include large print and braille menus and accessible route maps for Pickering station; installing fixed and portable hearing loops; free travel for carers; accessible parking spaces; and additional signage at stations. The updated www.nymr.co.uk website now has

new 'access champions', staff have been given access training, and downloadable station guides have also been introduced.

Special events coming up include the September 8-17 heritage open days, the 50th Anniversary Steam Gala on September 21-24, Through the Decades 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s on October 14-15, and Santa specials on November 25/26, December 2/3, 9/10, 16/17 and 23/24.

→ For details of the new tickets, visit www.nymr.co.uk/Listing/Category/book-tickets

May will see a Baldwin tank steam in Welsh Highland service – 87 years on!

A LONG-LOST feature of Welsh Highland Railway history will be recreated in May when a repatriated First World War Baldwin 4-6-0T will enter traffic in the identity of former WHR sister No. 590.

As reported in issue 303, 1917-built No. 44699, which became War Department Light Railways No. 794 for use on the Western Front trench lines, was sold off after the conflict ended. It ended its working life at the Upper India Sugar Mills in Khatauli, India, and was repatriated by the Imperial War Museums in 1985. In 2003, it was loaned to the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway at Porthmadog.

Its subsequent overhaul was completed at the Vale of Rheidol

Railway's Aberystwyth workshops, and it will permanently take on the identity of 1916-built No. 590, bought by the original WHR in 1923 as War Department surplus, and which ran until the line closed in 1936 – only to be cut up in 1942 as part of the Government's scrap drive.

Ownership of No. 794 has recently been transferred to WHHR owner and operator WHR Ltd.

The 'new' No. 590 will be officially launched on the WHHR at 11am on Saturday, May 27. Donors and guests will arrive at the WHHR Porthmadog station building in Tremadog Road before being taken in heritage carriages pulled by WHR flagship Hunslet 2-6-2T *Russell* to the Gelert's Farm



Long before its repatriation by the Imperial War Museums, Baldwin No. 794 could be seen in action at Khatauli in India with the nickname *Tiger* painted on its tanks. L MARSHALL/WHR

Museum. At 11.55am, speeches in the museum will take place, followed by the unveiling of No. 590 in the north yard, when it will be in steam alongside *Russell*. Donors will be able to board the

inaugural train to Pen-y-Mount, hauled by No. 590, and from 2pm, both trains will run between Porthmadog and Pen-y-Mount for both donors and the general public to ride in.



GER Y14 0-6-0 No. 564 with Quad-Art set No. 74 heading to Weybourne on the North Norfolk Railway. STEVE ALLEN

Poppy Line's Quad-Art set is back

THE North Norfolk Railway's now-unique LNER Quad Art set No. 74 has returned to service following the reprofiling of its tyres – for the first time since its restoration about 15 years ago.

This latest project undertaken by staff and volunteers focused solely on the re-turning of the carriages' tyres. However, this was a mammoth task because of the set's articulated design; the four carriages are permanently coupled together with adjacent carriages sharing a four-wheeled bogie.

The process involved first removing all brake rigging, brake pipes and electrical connections from the 1924-built set in preparation for the separating and lifting of individual coaches, which then enabled the extraction of the carriage bogies.

Lifted by Midland & Great Northern Society-owned crane *Horace*, itself a heritage but regularly-used road crane, the bogies were then transported to Leeds where the tyres were turned back to their correct profiles at a state-of-the-

art engineering facility operated by Freightliner.

The Poppy Line's carriage and wagon supervisor, Chris Moxon, said: "Splitting the sets and lifting the carriages to release the bogies was an extremely complex operation and a spare articulated bogie recently donated by the National Railway Museum was used as an accommodation bogie so we could deal with the set in two halves.

'Carefully planned'

"Even then, it's not straightforward. The set only has buffing and coupling gear on the two ends, so moving the half-sets had to be carefully planned."

No. 74 is the only surviving example of 98 that were built in the 1920s and which formed the mainstay of commuter trains out of King's Cross for about three decades.

They were designed by Sir Nigel Gresley to address issues with the smoothness of the ride that had plagued suburban carriages since the 1880s.

Using bogies improved the comfort for passengers, while sharing them between carriages kept the weight and train length to a minimum – both important to give the maximum capacity for passengers on commuter trains.

Typically, trains services with two sets of Quads to make an eight-coach train, and improvements to interiors, including the addition of electric lighting, was popular with passengers.

The set was acquired by the M&GN Society in 1966 for the fledgling NNR project and was regularly used on the line until 1979 when, in need of major restoration, it went into storage where initial preservation steps were taken, including the removal of rotten timbers. In 2001, an extensive survey estimated that a full restoration effort would cost about £500,000. Through donations, fundraising efforts and a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, the target was achieved, with restoration beginning in 2003 and completed in 2008.

Hunslet Arthur back on its wheels at Quainton

A MILESTONE was reached at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre when the chassis of Hunslet 16in 0-6-0ST No. 3782 of 1953 *Arthur* was lifted back on its wheels.

Built to a design of 1923, *Arthur* was delivered new to the NCB and sent to Markham Main Colliery, near Doncaster, where it remained in use until 1976. It acquired parts from a similar locomotive, No. 2688, during an overhaul in 1972.

When withdrawn, it was the last steam locomotive working for the NCB in the Doncaster area. It lay out of use until 1978, when it was moved to Crab Key, Ellastone, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, where it joined a private collection of industrial engines.

A year later, it was moved to a similar collection at High Cogges, near Witney, Oxfordshire, but remained there only briefly, arriving at Quainton Road on December 1, 1979, having been purchased

by a Quainton Railway Society member. *Arthur* became the property of the society after several members funded the purchase through regular monthly contributions.

However, it became a long-term resident of the restoration queue until 2016, when it was stripped down with the tanks, cab, boiler and wheels all taken off.

The frames were grit-blasted back to bare metal. The front and rear buffer beams and the rear frame



Hunslet saddle tank *Arthur* back on its wheels. ADRIAN AYLWARD/BRC

stretcher have all been replaced, with new ones having been hot-riveted on. A set of side tanks from a 14in Hunslet were bought and modified.

The boiler has had a new skirt added to the lower part of the firebox, while the cylinders have been bored and sleeved. The tanks and cab are painted and ready to go back on, and a new smokebox has been made. Recently, 50 new copper stays for the boiler were fitted and rivetted over.

The axleboxes have been white-metalled and machined before being fitted onto the axles. The springs have all been either overhauled or replaced, and new spring pins have been made and fitted under the engine, which was then lowered down onto its wheels using jacks and packing blocks.

The boiler recently passed its hydraulic test, and the restoration team has been assembling the motion, prior to refitting the boiler.

IN BRIEF

→ A NEW boiler for Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST No. 2047 *Warwickshire* has been placed on order with Israel Newton by its owner, the Warwickshire Industrial Locomotive Preservation Trust, with delivery due in 2025. The Severn Valley Railway-based locomotive, supplied new to Rugby Portland Cement Co Ltd and used as Bridgnorth station pilot after being bought for preservation in 1967, last steamed in 1977 and was subsequently found to need extensive works, including a boiler retube and a new smokebox, smokebox door and ashpan. In 2020, a £50,000 appeal was launched to complete its restoration.

→ THE Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust is offering its Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 1788 of 1929 *Kilmersdon* for hire. It was overhauled at the Mid-Hants Railway's Ropley Works last year and returned to traffic in August and will be used for Thomas the Tank Engine events and other galas there, but it is available for hire inbetween them, particularly after October 2023. Enquiries should be made to info@sdrtr.org or The Railway Station, Washford, Watchet, Somerset TA23 0PP.

→ THE Wensleydale Railway has introduced the 'Wensleydale Fryer', a new lunchtime diesel-hauled fish and chips dining train, from Leeming Bar to Leyburn. The service starts on April 22. Places are very limited and booking is essential via <https://wensleydale-railway.co.uk/wensleydale-fryer-2/>. The railway will also run afternoon tea trains on June 18, July 30, August 20 and October 15. Book at <https://wensleydale-railway.co.uk/leeming-bar-and-leyburn-timetable-tea/>.

→ THE Isle of Man Steam Railway Supporters Association's three-and-a-half-year project to restore 150-year-old box van No. G1 is now complete. In the Douglas station workshops on March 13, the van, built by Metropolitan Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd in Birmingham as part of the first batch of rolling stock delivered to the island for the Peel line, was handed over to representatives of Isle of Man Railways and the Department of Infrastructure. It will be used in special events, photographic charters, the promotion of transport heritage and periodic display in the railway museum next to Port Erin station.

→ THE Foxfield Railway has been awarded bronze at the 2023 Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism & Good Food Awards on March 9, coming joint third with Dorothy Clive Garden, near Newcastle-under-Lyme, as best Small Visitor Attraction of the Year.

Colne Valley to stage second miniature railway gala

A GALA weekend will be held on the miniature line at the Colne Valley Railway on May 13/14, repeating a successful event held last year.

Visiting locomotives on the 7½in gauge railway will be *Mrs Darling*, a Tinkerbell class locomotive; *Sir Goss*, a tender engine based on a Tinkerbell; and *Aneirin*, a single Fairlie based on the Ffestiniog Railway's *Taliesin* (all from the Swanley New Barn Railway); *Dragonfly*, another privately owned Tinkerbell; Stafford 0-4-0ST *Tihany* (from the Top Field Light Railway); a 'Holmside' 0-6-0T based on an NCB engine; and two 'Scamp' petrol locomotives. (*Aneirin* will be appearing on the Sunday only.)

A portable 5in gauge railway will be in operation, along with miniature traction engines. The event will also include full-size traction engines from the East Anglian Traction Engine Society, which will stage a road run around the local area between 10am and late afternoon on the Saturday, and will be displayed on site during the Sunday.

The 45163 Restoration Group will be offering guided tours of its shed, allowing visitors to view progress on its ex-Barry 'Black Five' 4-6-0 and neighbouring classmate No. 45293, the latter being restored by the British Enginemen Steam Preservation Society.

This season's visiting steam locomotive, Andrew Barclay 0-6-0ST Works No. 2138 *Swordfish*, will be in action on the CVR's running line; if weather permits, passengers will be conveyed in a BR tube wagon.

The Railway Children star's overhaul underway after 24-year absence

By Sally Clifford

GWR pannier tank No. 5775 – which acquired world fame in fictitious Great North & South Railway ochre livery as one of the steam stars of the 1970 movie blockbuster version of Edith A Nesbit's children's classic *The Railway Children* – is being overhauled after nearly a quarter of a century out of action.

In the film, No. 5775 hauled the Old Gentleman's Saloon that famously ground to a halt as the character Bobby, played by actress Jenny Agutter, attracted the driver's attention to a landslip blocking the line.

Nicholas Hellewell, a senior steam driver at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, the locomotive's home and the setting for both the 1970 film and *The Railway Children Return*, which hit the big screens last year, was a fireman on the footplate for many of the location shots in the first movie.

For Nicholas and his daughter Fran, the only female steam train driver on the KWVR, No. 5775 carries a special significance for their family as it has been part of their lives for so long.

"I have taken a special interest in it, and my daughter remembers it from its last overhaul to getting it back into traffic," said Nicholas.

Fran said: "As a child, I associated the engine with Dad because it was the one he always championed."

She recalled being involved during the engine's previous overhaul: "Dad used to involve me, when the railway was restoring it

last time round. He occasionally took me to the railway and would be underneath, with me passing him spanners.

"It's my dad's favourite engine and that has rubbed off on me as his daughter."

Built in Swindon in 1929, No. 5775 was shedded by BR at Danygraig, Carmarthen and Pontypool Road, from where it was withdrawn in January 1963.

"It is a useful middle-size locomotive, capable of pulling our heaviest trains and earning money for the railway, as well as being a valuable draw given its celebrity status."

It was then sold to London Transport, where it ran as L89 until 1970, when it was sold to the KWVR.

Nicholas, who began volunteering on the line aged 16 and was in a team of voluntary caretakers overseeing maintenance and running repairs of No. 5775, said: "The railway was filmed in May and June 1970 and they asked for this particular loco and, at the time, wanted it to be painted in the now iconic livery for the filming."

It also featured in *Last of the Summer Wine* in LT livery (L89), but

with KWVR on the side tank. The locomotive ran in BR green until it was taken out of service 24 years ago and placed on exhibition at Oxenhope Museum.

In May 2014, it went to the Locomotion museum at Shildon to be repainted in the livery it carried in the film. The following year, it appeared in York Theatre Royal's production of *The Railway Children* at the National Railway Museum in York.

Nicholas explained that the locomotive was a regular on the KWVR before reaching the end of its 10-year boiler ticket in 1999, and then returned to Oxenhope and enjoyed centre stage in *The Railway Children* exhibition for many years.

He said: "It hasn't really done anything since then. There was no money to overhaul it – which isn't cheap if you need to replace the cylinder block, as well as extensive boiler work."

Fran added: "Prices have shot up so estimated figures we were looking at three years ago when we first got them together have had to be updated. The cost of materials, such as steel, have gone up, so three years ago we would have been talking about £300,000 and now it's nearer the £400,000 mark."

The launch of *The Railway Children Return* film inspired the momentum to get the engine up and running again.

"We asked for the railway's permission for the finance to do it and, like many similar organisations, we rely on voluntary contributions to help," said Nicholas.



GWR pannier No. 5775 in Yorkshire Theatre Royal's stage version of *The Railway Children* at the National Railway Museum in May 2015. ROBIN JONES

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 306

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Above: Work begins on the overhaul of GWR 0-6-0PT No. 5775 at Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.
TOM MARSHALL/KWVR



Right: Fran Hartley, who is part of the team overseeing the overhaul of the iconic locomotive.
TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

"With that agreed, we commenced stripping down for more detailed evaluation.

"The locomotive was brought to Haworth in October and we have removed many of the boiler fittings since then, enabling us to remove the tanks and boiler cladding in the last couple of weeks."

Nicholas and Fran are leading the team and overseeing the overhaul, which is expected to take up to four years to complete.

"There is much uncertainty with the price of materials, let alone the price of coal. I would estimate if we could do it in three years, we would be doing well," said Nicholas. "The more money we can raise, the faster we could do it."

"It is a useful middle-size locomotive, capable of pulling our heaviest trains and earning money

for the railway, as well as being a valuable draw given its celebrity status. Although it would not have traditionally been from this area as an engine that would have worked in the South West, it is perfect for our line – economical with a small train, while having the capability of pulling the heaviest. It is versatile and it's relatively old, being of 1929 vintage," added Fran, who hopes to see No. 5775 back on track in time for its centenary. "One of the best things is that it is such a team effort. There is a group of us working on it, particularly younger members, many of whom have never seen it run and who are now learning new skills in a shared goal for the future.

"It should be amazing, and I am looking forward to driving it too!"

→ For more information, visit <https://kwvr.co.uk>



Nicholas Hellewell and daughter Fran Hartley on the footplate of BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022 at the KWVR. CRAIG PHILIP SZLATOSZLAVEK/KWVR

London Transport Museum head steps down after 28 years

By Robin Jones

SAM Mullins OBE is to step down as director and chief executive of the award-winning London Transport Museum after 28 years at the helm.

Since he joined in November 1994, under Sam's direction the venue has grown to be the world's leading museum of urban transport, with visitor numbers soaring from 180,000 to about 400,000 per year. He oversaw its £22 million redevelopment in 2007 and saw the venue named Visitor Attraction of the Year in 2022 at the London Tourism Awards.

His vision has long been to extend the museum's reach beyond the walls of its Grade II-listed building in Covent Garden. In 1999, the opening of the LTM Depot in Acton as the first publicly accessible museum store in the UK was a major step toward realising this aim.

The museum's educators have been working in every London borough since 2006 to promote safe, active and responsible travel to primary schoolchildren, and today this continues through the delivery of the STARS programme on behalf of Transport for London.

The launch of the museum's exclusive Hidden London tours of disused tube stations followed in 2015, inviting people to see where history happened as they explore secret and 'forgotten' spaces on the Underground network.

Lasting legacy

Sam has also overseen the delivery of many major heritage vehicle operations, including the return of steam-powered journeys to the Metropolitan line to celebrate 150 years of the tube in 2013, and the Year of the Bus in 2014, which featured a cavalcade on Regent Street.

In 2008, Sam oversaw the museum's transition to charity governance, delivering a rich programme including volunteering opportunities to help preserve the museum's historic collection, as well as interactive STEM workshops and skills and employability support for young people.

He guided London Transport Museum through the Covid-19 pandemic and its successful reopening post-pandemic with new displays and exhibitions.

Sam will step down later this year upon the appointment of a successor to lead the museum's new five-year strategy, after which he will continue his career as a historian, writer and presenter. He will also share his



Sam Mullins OBE at London Transport Museum. LTM

long-standing experience of cultural sector leadership through mentoring and consultancy, and complete the first history of Transport for London.

In 2018, Sam was awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Year Honours for his significant contribution to the museum.

He is president of the International Association of Transport Museums and a past chairman of the Association of Independent Museums, where he led the campaign for Gift Aid on admissions. He has also been a board member and professional development mentor for the Museums Association, as well as a trustee of the Royal Logistics Corps Museum, and is currently deputy chairman of SS Great Britain and a judge for the Museums and Heritage Awards.

'Incredible impact'

Sam said: "My 28 years as director and CEO at London Transport Museum have been the most rewarding of my professional career as a leader and historian working in museums. I have been extraordinarily fortunate to work with so many creative, dedicated and inspiring colleagues at our museum.

"We have not only created one of London's brightest and most popular museums, but also an institution that promotes all that is best in London."

Transport for London commissioner Andy Lord said: "As director and CEO of London Transport Museum, Sam has made an incredible impact.

"Under his leadership, the museum has brought the story of our city and its pioneering transport network to life with flair and imagination."

P2 builder seek £250k for monobloc by summer

By Robin Jones

THE A1 Steam Locomotive Trust has stepped up its fundraising efforts for a core component of new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*.

The P2's cylinders are now a monobloc, which is making considerable progress at Howco Ltd of Irvine.

As previously reported, the cylinder block was delivered to the trust's Darlington Locomotive Works for the trust's 2022 convention in a largely complete condition. It has since been returned to Howco, where machining and other work has been progressing.

Following welding, the cylinders have been heat-treated to release stresses, and the liners have been satisfactorily fitted and are

undergoing final machining. The monobloc is due to be brought back to Darlington in the coming months, as one of several components to be delivered during the year.

However, the trust must first raise £250,000 through The Monobloc Club from 250 supporters each donating £1000 to the project in one lump sum or monthly instalments by this summer.

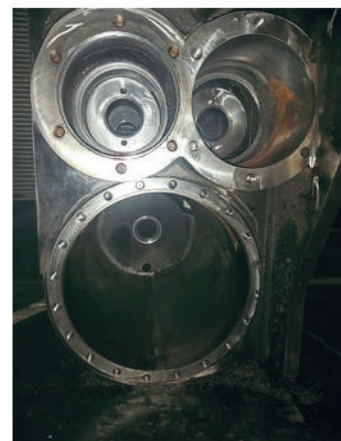
Club incentives

So far, the club has 53 members, and despite the impressive design and unique fabrication, donations for the monobloc remain below the target, meaning that covenanted income gets redirected away from the broader project to complete the locomotive, for which other parts will be delivered to Darlington in the coming months.

Club members will receive an exclusive print of the engineering drawing and 3D CAD image of the redesigned cylinder block; the opportunity to a buy ticket (seat already reserved) on No. 2007's first main line train; reasonable access to No. 2007 at all times; the chance to join one of the teams building No. 2007; the first choice of other components to sponsor; and invitation to the trust's annual convention; and a special supporters' day on delivery to view the monobloc up close.

"Joining The Monobloc Club is the best way to throw your support behind the construction of this unique part of the locomotive," said a trust statement.

"One-off donations are also welcome. Each donation takes us



The P2 cylinders fitted to the monobloc. A1SLT

closer to the steaming of this titan." Designed by to haul 600-ton trains on the arduous Edinburgh-to-Aberdeen route, the six LNER P2s were the most powerful passenger steam locomotives to operate in the UK.

→ For more details, visit www.a1steam.com/p2monobloc/#/ or email enquiries@p2steam.com or call 01325 460163.

New trolleys for Tanat Valley

THE Rail Trolley Trust has moved two more items from its collection to its second base at the Tanat Valley Railway.

On January 25, Robel ganger's trolley No. 56.27 and the remains of Wickham type 18A Mk. VI No. 10842 were collected from Meldon Quarry, having been acquired from RMS Locotec in March and July 2021 respectively, and delivered to the TVR the following day to join the Shropshire collection.

The Robel trolley was inspected and pressed into service immediately, subsequently proving itself to be a useful piece of on track plant. The Wickham vehicle was stripped some years ago and has been used as a trailer; the trust has been looking at options regarding its future use and will be making an announcement about this in the near future.

The trust's fundraising appeal to raise a minimum of £10,000 to conserve and restore its collection of self-powered engineering trolleys and associated trailers and equipment is still ongoing. Several vehicles are currently with contractors for repairs, with more also in line for similar treatment upon their completion.

→ To support the appeal, visit railtrolleytrust.co.uk/help-us-donate.html

Hythe Pier's carriage restoration continues despite uncertain future

By Robin Jones

DESPITE fears for the future of the Hythe–Southampton ferry service, Hythe Pier Heritage Association is continuing with its restoration programme for the century-old 2ft gauge pier railway. Having already restored to running order the two original carriages ordered for the opening of the line in July 1922, work began last September on the inspection and disassembly of a third.

The third carriage is the first of two driving carriages ordered by Thomas Percy, proprietor of the General Estates Company, which owned the ferry service, pier and railway at the time, from the Drewry Car Company of London in March 1923.

Like the two standard carriages, the driving carriages were built by Baguley Cars Ltd of Burton upon Trent under a working arrangement between the two companies. The first of the two, No. 1327, was dispatched to Hythe on May 12, 1923, and the second, No. 1328, followed two days later. However, once the faults were rectified, the pair proceeded to deliver a century of staunch service.

The restoration work authorised by the association is being carried out by volunteers from the (Hythe) Shed (at the pier), with engineers from Blue Funnel Ferries having already inspected the chassis for its overhaul.

Project manager Tina Brown said: "The timber side frames are almost complete. As a driving carriage, the interior differs from the two carriages already restored, with a separated driving compartment and



Hythe Pier carriage No. 2 (1327) out of service, awaiting inspection and restoration. ALLAN FAIRHEAD/HRHA

a larger seating section in one of the compartments. This different seating configuration has got us thinking on how we can offer 'enabled access' by widening the door entry. Our volunteers have solved the issue with hardly changing the aesthetic view.

"We now await the works to begin on the carriage chassis, wheelsets and all the braking and electrical systems that are part of a driving carriage. The side and end frames can then be positioned, along with the roof, doors and seats, which have been restored."

Having already restored tractor unit Brush No. 16307 in 2021, the association is also restoring the second tractor unit, built as Brush No. 16302 for use at the Avonmouth Munitions Factory in 1917. The association owns the two surviving tractor units and the four carriages,

leasing them to Blue Funnel Ferries. While it was announced prior to Christmas that the ferry service to Southampton would cease on New Year's Eve, prospective buyers came forward allowing services to continue on a month-by-month basis while negotiations were instigated.

A Blue Funnel Ferries statement said: "The future of the Hythe Ferry is still under review by a potential new owner with others also on the sidelines. "These processes do take time and the current interested company continues to carry out its due diligence."

The association said it "will continue with all its existing projects" and "work towards our aim of restoring and redeveloping Hythe Pier, its associated buildings and the century-old pier railway for the community of Hythe."

No. 7063 *Eustace Forth* has new owner

ROBERT Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-4-0ST No. 7063 of 1942 *Eustace Forth* has been bought by Peak Rail life member Del Tilling from its previous owner.

Supplied new to Dunston Power Station in Gateshead, it was preserved by the long-disbanded Hexham Rolling Stock Group and taken into the National Collection in 1978.

It went the North Yorkshire Moors Railway but proved too small for the purposes of the line, and then ran in its CEGB green livery and acted as *Percy* in the National Railway Museum's Thomas the Tank Engine events.

Its boiler certificate expired in 2009 and it was gifted to the Foxfield Railway in 2014 as it was a duplicate of the National Collection's RSH 0-4-0ST No. 7416 of 1948 *Agecroft No. 1*. After undergoing a boiler overhaul, it eventually moved to Peak Rail.

Del said: "No. 7063 is a lovely locomotive in robust condition. It is equipped with train brake, carriage heating and independent mechanical lubrication for axle boxes and cylinders."

No. 7063 currently is rostered for Peak Rail's Saturday and Sunday duties.



RSH 0-4-0ST No. 7063 of 1942 *Eustace Forth* at Peak Rail. DEL TILLING

SVR engineering head joins brand new County team

SEVERN Valley Railway's head of steam engineering, Duncan Ballard, has joined the project to build new Churchward County 4-4-0 No. 3840 *County of Montgomery*.

Duncan has been appointed to the board of directors and trustees of the Churchward County Trust.

His fascination with GWR steam was sparked by No. 3440 *City of Truro*, which he saw being overhauled at Bridgnorth and Bewdley as a child. He started volunteering at the SVR as soon as he was old enough, signing on as an apprentice boilermaker in the mid-1990s, the same year that he qualified as a passed cleaner.

Two years later, he joined the SVR's main line locomotive support crew but left in 2002 to pursue a career as a boilermaker, initially going to Riley & Son, followed by four years at LNWR Heritage at Crewe. He then took role at Tyseley Locomotive Works, during which time he not only passed out as a driver on the SVR but also qualified as a main line fireman. In mid-2009, Duncan became boiler contracts foreman at the SVR and was later appointed to his current role.

CCT chairman Gary Boyd-Hope said: "Duncan's knowledge of steam locomotive engineering, and in particular Swindon-built machines, will be invaluable as the build of *County of Montgomery* progresses at Tyseley. "Together with our engineering manager Bob Meanley and engineering liaison David Bradshaw, I'm confident we now have the best team in place to drive the loco's construction forward."

Meanwhile, the trust is seeking more donors to support



Duncan Ballard in the cab of WR 4-6-0 No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor* during a visit to the West Somerset Railway.

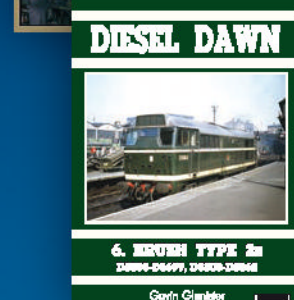
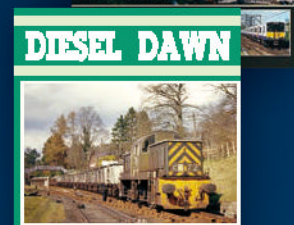
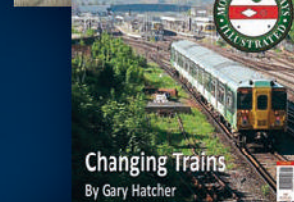
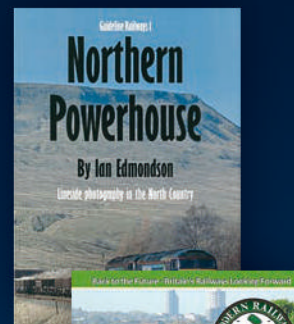
WILL MARSH/CCT

its four appeals to help pay for aspects of the machining and assembly of No. 3840's coupled and bogie wheelsets.

Further details can be found online at www.churchwardcounty.org.uk/support-us/ or by writing to: The Treasurer, Churchward County Trust Ltd c/o 4 Green End Barns, Ramsey Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5RH.

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BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75014
Braveheart crosses Breadsands Viaduct,
with Torbay in the distance. DSRRB

SUMMERTIME

...AND THE LIVING IS STEAMY!

The Dartmouth Steam Railway is celebrating 50 years of success since it was bought – in a history-making purchase – in service from British Rail by the nearby Dart Valley Railway, reports **Robin Jones**.

It was 60 years ago on March 27, 1963, that BR chairman Dr Richard Beeching's report, *The Reshaping of British Railways*, was published. A seminal landmark in UK railway history, it took an accountant's approach to the eradication of loss-making lines within a national basis, rather than region by region.

Despite the mounting BR deficits in the face of the mass switch from rail to road transport, the report was famously greeted with anger and hostility from large swathes of the public. In the campaign for the 1964 General Election that followed, Labour vowed to sack Beeching and reverse all of his cuts. Labour won – and not only continued with the Beeching cuts, but after his departure from BR, went on to make more of its own.

On May 21, 1969, in a classic role reversal scenario, Beeching officiated at a ceremony to reopen a closed line – that of the former GWR Totnes to Ashburton branch, which had been restored for heritage purposes by the Dart Valley Light Railway Association after it took ownership in October 1965, its founders initially having looked at reviving the Kingsbridge branch that closed in 1963.

Sadly, despite its early success as a heritage railway and tourist attraction, part of the

Ashburton branch could not stave off a second closure, when the northern section from Buckfastleigh to Ashburton was severed for the widening of the A38 into the Exeter to Plymouth trunk road.

However, 10 years after the Beeching report came another landmark – one that what might well be considered the first example of privatisation of part of the national network, as opposed to the restoration of a closed line by an enthusiast group purely for heritage purposes.

Shockwaves reverberated with the seemingly audacious announcement that the Dart Valley Railway was to buy itself a second line, the operational Paignton to Kingswear branch, which many regarded more of a 'main line by the back door'.

I well recall the enthusiastic press of the day quipping that the Dart Valley would proceed to bid for the entire Paddington to Penzance route! Yet, history was to prove that this move by a preserved railway into uncharted territory not only had a rock-solid business case in the hands of the right people, but was also inspirational beyond belief and would come to guide the heritage movement in many ways.

As a child, my family enjoyed two excellent summer holidays at Goodrington, during



GWR 2-8-0T No. 4277 Hercules proudly carries the 50th anniversary headboard. DSRRB

which myself and my elder brother were fascinated by the Kingswear line serving the resort. As enthusiasts we had followed the effect of the Beeching closures, and just a few years later we could hardly believe that the route – which had always appeared thronging with summer visitors – could even be considered for closure.

Yet in 1970, the Ministry of Transport received a formal proposal that the line from Paignton to Kingswear should be closed, and approval for this was given by the Transport Users Consultative Committee, subject to suitable replacement bus services being available. However, during 1971 and 1972, Devon County Council held talks with the Dart Valley Railway Company, which



A3 Pacific No. 4472 Flying Scotsman during its first visit to what was then the newly-opened Torbay Steam Railway in 1973. COLIN HARMES

was backed by the Western Region, about a ground-breaking takeover.

The line was officially closed on October 28, 1972, but BR ran a DMU service on behalf of the Dart Valley, subsidised by the county council.

The sale of the line to the Dart Valley for £250,000 was finally completed on December 30, 1972 (with a further £25,000 paid for track and signalling alterations at Paignton). BR ran a diesel winter commuter service six days a week until Dart Valley Railway took over on January 1, 1973, mainly for pupils at Churston Grammar School as a county council requirement. Indeed, it became one of the few private standard gauge railways to run a commuter service at the request of a local authority. The situation was unique before, during and after Beeching, in that no closure order was ever issued for the line.

The first heritage-era manager of the Kingswear line was Barry Cogar, who had volunteered on the Dart Valley Railway in its earliest days, since 1966. The two founding directors, Bob Saunders and John Evans, persuaded him to become operations manager in 1969 and then general manager in 1974, and he became a director in 1981.

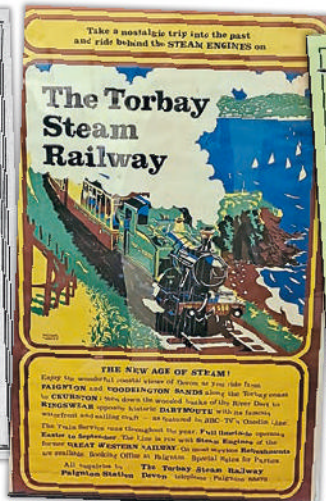
In 1972, to raise money for the purchase of the second line, the Dart Valley went public, forming the Dart Valley Light Railway Plc (now Dart Valley Railway Limited). The share issue was highly successful, so the Paignton to Kingswear branch was purchased outright.

The two early morning and two afternoon services were soon supplemented by a midday service each way, but from the end of that summer, the line became a commuter operation.

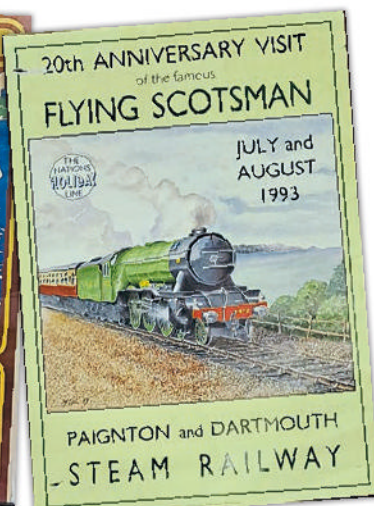
Fireman Colin Harmes remembered January 1, 1973, an historic day for the heritage sector and Torbay tourism: "This time 50 years ago, it was all about to start. I can't remember seeing the new year in as I had to get up about 2am for a 3.30am start



An advertisement in *The Railway Magazine* for the opening of the Torbay Steam Railway in Easter 1973. TRM



An early poster for the Torbay Steam Railway. DSRRB



The official poster for the 1993 visit of *Flying Scotsman*. DSRRB

at Paignton, because the then Dart Valley Railway was about to commence running the train service between Paignton and Kingswear.

"What I do remember is that the last BR train ran on Saturday, December 30, and with no booked Sunday service, but a private charter was run for local dignitaries.

The first public train under new ownership was to be Monday, January 1. At that time, New Year's Day was not a bank holiday, so just after 2.30am, it was on the trusty Bonneville for an extremely cold run over to Paignton.

"When I got to the station yard, all was in darkness, but luckily we had already sorted out lighting up wood, and the engine, GWR 2-6-2T No. 4588, was fully coaled. Driver Fred Heath was groping around, sorting out the cans of oil, and very soon we had it all under control and had a nice, steady light up.

"I remember the exact running times – it was 7.30am first train down, and what must

be borne in mind is that this was 1973! This was a time when heritage railways closed for the winter, so any steam movement was not the norm. There were no Santa trains, carols down the line or mince pie specials. That was all yet to come, so the local press made a bit of a news item out of steam engines on commuter trains. Whatever next?!" The commuter service ended two years later.

In 1973, between taking ownership in January and the main summer season, the railway built its own terminus, Paignton Queen's Park station, with a platform, run-round loop, and coaling and watering facilities independent from the existing BR one, which it backs on to.

The nascent Dart Valley operation of the coastal line, at first known as the Torbay Steam Railway, received a major boost for its first summer season when no less than the world's most famous steam locomotive, LNER A3 Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman*, spent 10

The tide is nearly in at Goodrington Sands as visiting GWR 4-6-0 No. 6023 *King Edward II* passes on its way to Kingswear on August 21, 2018. DSRRB



“...it became one of the few private standard gauge railways to run a commuter service at the request of a local authority.”



Long-serving railway manager Barry Cogar greets Prince Charles when the Royal Train visited on April 7, 1994. DSRRB

weeks in the peak season, July and August.

The year before, *Flying Scotsman* had been rescued from California by the late Sir William McAlpine, after it was left stranded following the collapse of a tour of North America arranged by the man who bought it from BR in 1963, Alan Pegler, who was left bankrupt.

Abandoned in San Francisco, the A3 could have been scrapped, but Sir William brought it back to the UK and had it overhauled at Derby Works.

On July 14, 1973, No. 4472 left the works and travelled under its own steam to Paignton via Burton upon Trent, Tyseley and Bristol, coupled to two historic saloons, 1897-built Caledonian Railway No. 41, and 1920-built GER No. 1.

The visit of *Flying Scotsman* in its 50th anniversary year raised the profile of the line big time, and a large number of special trains, charters and dining trains were operated during its visit.

Preservation powerhouse Sir William was one of the line's early shareholders and in 1977 became its chairman. *Flying Scotsman* made a repeat visit for the 1993 summer season.

Yet again, *Flying Scotsman* made history. Royal Mail rekindled an old railway postal tradition to mark the line's 20th anniversary, sanctioning the first official post office aboard a standard gauge heritage railway.

Passengers and other members of the public could buy stamps and souvenir postcards and have them franked by hand on the *Flying Scotsman* service, before being collected by Royal Mail from Paignton Queen's Park station and delivered first class.

As a heritage railway, the seven-mile branch, with its unrivalled mix of spectacular coastal and estuarine scenery, proved a massive hit in and around the beating heart of one of Europe's most popular traditional seaside resorts, and went from strength to strength.

It has been said that holidaymakers often chose Torbay as a destination because of the presence of the railway as a prime attraction in all weathers.

As the initial financial situation settled, the line began to move forward under its new ownership.

The loop at Churston was reinstated in 1979 using colour light signals, controlled by a new signalbox built on the original site, and



***Flying Scotsman* made a return visit to the line in 1993, this time in its latter-day BR identity as No. 60103 with smoke deflectors. CHRIS SLACK PHOTOGRAPHY, BRIXHAM**



Peter Roach driving *Flying Scotsman* at Kingswear, with Bob Saunders looking on. Generations of youngsters on holiday have never ceased to be fascinated by the railway. DSRRB

facilitated an hourly two-train service in the peak season.

In 1977, the turntable from the BR sidings at Goodrington was moved to Churston and positioned on the old Brixham branch to the north of the station. In 1992, a locomotive workshop was opened at Churston, followed by a carriage paint shed four years later.

A new level crossing to the north of Kingswear to serve the Darthaven Marina, controlled from the Britannia signalbox with the aid of closed-circuit television, was opened on January 24, 1993.

Floating new ventures

The sale of the Buckfastleigh to Totnes line was completed in 1999, and then the railway, in a surprise move, purchased two boat companies, the Red Cruisers and Dart Pleasure Craft, which included the Kingswear-Dartmouth ferry once operated by the GWR. The boats were then operated as River Link.

The purchases were followed up in 2003 when the railway bought its own fleet of

buses to start its Round Robin service, whereby visitors could travel by train to Kingswear, take a boat trip to Totnes, and catch the bus back to the starting point of Paignton Queen's Park station. This operation has proved to be a bestseller among visitors and an award winner.

In 2010, boat and rail began jointly operating under the trading name of the Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company.

The boat operation was so successful that in 2012, it followed it up with the purchase of the Western Lady Ferry business, which enabled sea-going trips between Torquay, Brixham and Dartmouth.

On December 18 that year, the paddle steamer *Kingswear Castle* arrived, and from the following year onwards, it operated passenger trips around Dartmouth Harbour and up the River Dart to Totnes.

Now having eight boats and five buses in addition to nine steam locomotives, the DSR has emerged as a microcosm of the GWR, which also ran alternative forms of transport →

alongside its trains.

The railway has, for decades now, been a choice destination for excursion trains from around the country. In 1984, it saw the first of many visits by the Venice-Simplon Orient Express, with the final leg from Paignton to Kingswear completed behind WR 4-6-0 No. 7827 *Lydham Manor* and BR Standard 2-6-4T No. 80064 (now at the Bluebell railway awaiting overhaul).

Another unforgettable VSOE visit came on August 11, 1999, when it headed to Kingswear for one of the best viewpoints of the total eclipse of the sun on that date. Each incoming charter has the capability of decanting about 500 passengers into the resort, with the resulting economic benefits.

In 1988, the railway was the first heritage line to be visited by a High Speed Train, and the line saw two visits by the Royal Train, firstly on April 10, 1992, when The Duke of Edinburgh was on board, and on April 7, 1994, when Prince Charles arrived. On both occasions, they were attending the passing-out ceremony at Britannia Royal Naval College, the initial officer training establishment of the Royal Navy.

Future of the first line

The Dart Valley Company was in the position of running two nearby heritage railways, but could it give both equal attention and resources to what were two very different animals?

In 1989, DVR PLC publicly announced that the Totnes to Buckfastleigh line was uneconomic and would therefore find another operator or close it. The line's volunteers stepped in and took over, drawing on the articles of association of the charity overseeing then resident GWR 4-6-0 No. 4920

Dumbleton Hall as its commercial vehicle to take over the line.

The Buckfastleigh line was renamed the South Devon Railway, and the volunteers under the new banner of the South Devon Railway Trust, took over its operation on New Year's Day 1991, its first train running on March 29 that year.

In February 1999, the trust purchased the freehold of the line and so became wholly independent of the Paignton to Dartmouth operation. A classic example of a typical GWR country branch line with its own successful attractions, the SDR provides a dramatic contrast with the DSR's coastal route and scenery.

Apprenticeship scheme

Run in conjunction with South Devon College, a new DSR apprenticeship scheme was launched in 2017, three years after one had been set up for the boat side. Four apprentices were taken on at the start, under the guidance of Dart Valley Railway trained mechanical engineer Peter Roach and engineering supervisor Julian Kerven. More apprentices followed, and some are now working as fitters at Churston shed.

Engineering director Paul Merrington said that the scheme has brought major benefits to the railway, in that it can service and repair its own locomotives and stock without having to outsource such work at higher cost. Furthermore, greater flexibility in being able to work on the line's own locomotives in-house paves the way for more opportunities to hire them out to other heritage lines.

Lighting the way

Before Christmas 2018, the DSR added what would be an entirely new dimension to

seasonal services for the UK heritage sector – in the form of the illuminated Train of Lights.

Decorating trains with strings of coloured lights had for some years been an established festive trip in North America, but it was DSR staff who devised a way to bring the idea across the Atlantic to the English Riviera.

Not only were locomotives and carriages draped in lights, but illuminated tableaux were designed and installed at points along the line, much to the delight of passengers.

The DSR's Train of Lights proved an instant hit – all 18,000 seats sold out in that first season, and in the years that followed, a multitude of heritage lines big and small devised similar attractions for their own festive services, the DSR idea becoming a money-spinner throughout the sector.

The Train of Lights saw the DSR carry off the Heritage Railway Association's new Award for Special Events in 2020. It also saw the company win a major award for innovation in the Visit Devon Awards.

Indeed, the illuminated train has proved so popular that bookings are already pouring in for the 2023 festive season, and the railway intends the event to be bigger and more spectacular than ever before. Seats can be booked now at www.dartmouthrailriver.co.uk/tickets/christmas-train-of-lights

The railway also carried off the HRA Award for the Outstanding Visitor Attraction 2021, but following far less happy circumstances. In order to ensure the safety of its passengers during unprecedented times in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic, gargantuan efforts were made during the lockdowns.

With all but three of the line's staff on furlough, managing director John Jones and his head of engineering, Paul Merrington,



BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75014 *Braveheart* pulls into Kingswear in April 2021, the first week that the line reopened after the second lockdown.



Above: GWR 2-6-2T No. 4555 was bought in working order straight out of BR service in 1965 and was the first locomotive to arrive on the newly preserved Dart Valley Railway. It hauled the line's official train in 1969, with Dr Beeching on board. When the Dart Valley bought the Kingswear line in 1973, No. 4555 was one of the engines transferred over from Buckfastleigh and had been there ever since, later being named *Warrior*. It will attend the Severn Valley Railway's April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala, after which it will return before going on long-term hire elsewhere. DSRRB

Right: GWR 2-8-0T No. 4277 *Hercules* departs Kingswear on August 8, 2016. Next to the loco is the railway's Devon Belle saloon. JOHN TITLOW



personally built more than 200 bespoke Perspex screens and fitted them inside carriages to allow socially-distanced seating.

To maintain revenue with less seats, extra trains had to run – and so the platform at its Paignton Queen's Park terminus was permanently extended by 170 feet. The railway also pioneered the use of an on-board fog machine to spray a sanitising solution to deep-clean carriages after use, along with many other anti-coronavirus measures.

The railway was to defy the odds. As reported in issue 300 of *Heritage Railway*, the Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company made £1.36 million profit before tax in a year hit by the pandemic and lockdowns. Rather than sit back and take Covid-19 on the chin, a rationalisation of boat services at a time fewer visitors were coming to Torbay and a strategic reallocation of resources allowed the business to remain cash flow positive – and no redundancies or wage decreases were made.

Unlike several other heritage lines, it received no public grant aid to help it weather the Covid-19 storm. Shareholders have not been paid a dividend since 2020, because the company held the money back while it covered pandemic loans.

Again, the railway was pointing the way for others to follow where they could, and accordingly it was a finalist in the HRA Railway of the Year 2023 category.

Last year, the DSR reinforced its position as one of Europe's top seaside railways, carrying 230,000 passengers, with 200,000 journeys made on its boats and 30,000 on its buses.

Barry Cogar stepped down from the helm in 2009, after becoming the longest-serving railway general manager in Europe with 40 years' service, during which he oversaw much of the line's success. He said: "It has everything a railway should have – the viaducts, the tunnel, and the scenery. It is now the top attraction in Torbay, and also the nation's holiday line."

Current managing director John Jones is to run a special private train in the coming weeks for as many of the original employees from 1973 from the operating, maintenance and commercial departments and VIPs as a thank-you to mark 50 years of hard graft and a remarkable track record of success. **HR**



WR 4-6-0 No. 7827 *Lydham Manor* exits Greenway Tunnel on July 19, 2016. The locomotive is currently stopped for repairs. DSRRB



The Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company also operates paddle steamer *Kingswear Castle*, the last remaining coal-fired paddle steamer in the UK, on a long-term charter, which has just been extended by 25 years. DSRRB





HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

An historic moment took place on April 3 when SR 4-6-2 Battle of Britain class No. 34072 *257 Squadron* underwent acceptance runs on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, becoming the biggest locomotive to have ever graced the 10 ½ mile line. Pictured departing Bodiam with the 14th-century castle in the background, it will run on regular dates until June 4. ROBIN COOMBES/KESR

Heritage trains recognised for first time in Transport Scotland statement

By Hugh Dougherty

THE importance of heritage, charter and tourist trains has been given specific mention, for the first time, in Transport Scotland's High Level Output Statement for 2024-29.

The plan, which is issued by the public body on behalf of Scottish ministers, lays out aims and objectives for developing Scotland's railway network in partnership with infrastructure owner Network Rail. It is the seventh in a series of similar five-year plans issued by Transport Scotland.

The latest HLOS makes clear that Network Rail has a duty to deliver on improving the infrastructure and, for

the first time, carries a section headed Charter Trains and Railway Heritage, which states: "Network Rail is required to ensure that structure clearance is maintained on routes that charter and heritage operators vehicle types are authorised to run on, removing the need for annual reapplication for authority to run vehicles on routes they were previously authorised to run on."

The statement is topped by a section stating that the operation of charter, tourist and heritage trains to the tourist economy is recognised, and that Network Rail must produce a strategy by March 2024 to promote charter train operation in Scotland. The strategy is required "to lay out the

objectives and approach to build the profile of Scotland's railway heritage to deliver social, cultural or economic value and the measures by which that value will be evaluated and publicly reported."

Network Rail is also required to ensure that lineside vegetation neither impedes passengers' view from trains on scenic routes, an issue on the West Highland and Stranraer lines, nor scratches or damages rolling stock, especially that belonging to heritage and charter operators.

An emphasis on gauging specifically responds to a concern expressed by charter and heritage operators, such as West Coast Railways, which runs the successful summer 'Jacobite' steam

trips from Fort William to Mallaig, of the need to apply annually for route clearance when it had already been granted by Network Rail.

Also included in the HLOS are aspirations to provide a more reliable and robust railway service, expanded freight capacity and decarbonisation of the network, with charter and heritage operators playing their part in the railway by being a strong partner in growing the economy and tourism. Scottish Government transport minister Jenny Gilruth said: "The inclusion of charter and heritage trains in the High Level Output Statement recognises their important contribution to the economy and tourism."



Scenic lines such as the one to Stranraer will from now on have to be kept clear of lineside vegetation to allow passengers to enjoy views. In April 2019, B1 No. 61264 and 'Black Five' No. 44871 are seen powering the 'Great Britain XII' out of Glenwhilly for Stranraer. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Duke of Gloucester needs a brand new cylinder con rod

A NEW centre cylinder connecting rod is to be forged for unique BR Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* at a cost of up to £30,000.

During recent testing of the coupling and connecting rods, they were all found to be sound – apart from one.

The centre con rod was replaced during the late 1950s and early 1960s, and a new one was manufactured when the locomotive was rebuilt at the Great Central Railway.

Following a stress analysis of this component, a source for the manufacturing of the forging has been found, along with the required machining.

A statement from the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust read: "We have always ensured that our finances are sound, as from experience, these types of unexpected occurrences are likely to happen when you are completely rebuilding a steam locomotive. We can cover this cost from our reserves, but it will obviously leave us with a significant hole in our planned positive finances which we need to address."

Members and supporters are being invited to offer financial help if they can.

The need for the new con rod will not affect the completion of the *Duke's* overhaul at Tyseley

Locomotive Works as the component can be fitted to the crank axle and coupled to the centre cylinder at the end of the overhaul without interfering with the rest of the reassembly of the locomotive.

The trust's engineering principal, Dave Oliver, has undergone his first round of Personal Track Safety training in order to be able to go out with the *Duke* on the main line. In the near future, he will go out with the Vintage Trains support crew on one of their runs to gain first-hand experience of what is involved.

Right: The centre cylinder connecting rod that needs to be replaced. BC8SLT





LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 Scots Guardsman approaches Langworthy on the Settle and Carlisle line with the Railway Touring Company's 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' on March 18. The train was an hour late leaving Euston due late-arriving stock. However, at Greenholme the delay had been cut to about 15 minutes and it was on time at Langwathby. DAVE WILSON

A Scottish pair for Railway Touring Company

By Tim Hobman

THE Railway Touring Company is offering two opportunities to visit Scotland for an extended break.

The first of the holidays is 'The Cock O'the North', a seven-day excursion beginning on Thursday, May 25, when passengers take the 'Highland Chieftain' from King's Cross north along the East Coast Main Line. Stopping at York to pick up any passengers from Peterborough, the train continues to Newcastle, Edinburgh, and through the Scottish Highlands to Inverness for an overnight stay.

The next day gives the opportunity to ride the Strathspey Railway in the morning and then take lunch in Dufftown, before riding on the Keith & Dufftown Railway in the afternoon. All coach transfers are provided, together with breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Touring Skye

A rail trip from Inverness to the Kyle of Lochalsh is in store for the next day of the trip, with passengers taking in the scenery while their luggage is transferred by road. After the train trip, coaches will transfer travellers to the Isle of Skye for dinner and the overnight stay.

On Sunday, May 28, the day will consist of a tour of Skye, with dramatic scenery, mountains, plenty of wildlife, and a trip to Dunvegan Castle. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided, with another overnight stay on the Isle of Skye.

The next day will, for most, be the highlight as customers leave the Isle of Skye and take the ferry to Mallaig to explore the fishing village before

joining the West Coast Railways 'The Jacobite' steam train to Fort William.

From Fort William, road coaches will take guests back to Inverness through the Great Glen and the length of Loch Ness to arrive in time for dinner and an overnight stay in the city once again.

The penultimate day of the tour gives leisure time in Inverness, then a cruise along the Caledonian Canal and into Loch Ness, followed by a visit to ruined Urquhart Castle. There will then be time to explore Inverness before a visit to a traditional whisky distillery and then back to the hotel for dinner.

After an early breakfast, customers will be transferred to Inverness station and join the 'Highland Chieftain' back to King's Cross.

This tour includes first class travel to and from London with at-seat dining, all accommodation, meals (although some lunches are not provided), road travel on the tour and tickets to all attractions.

Alternative itinerary

The second holiday, 'The Summer Highlander', is a six-day excursion between Monday, June 5 and Saturday, June 10. Similar to 'The Cock O'the North' tour, passengers will take the 'Highland Chieftain' from King's Cross and travel north on the East Coast Main Line to Edinburgh, then on to Perth, through the Scottish Highlands to alight at Kingussie. From here, the journey continues by road to Fort William for the night.

The second day will take in a trip on 'The Jacobite' from Fort William to Mallaig and then, after an hour's break, on by boat to the Isle of Skye. Once on the island, guests will take a coach tour before heading back

to the mainland via the Skye Bridge.

A late afternoon service train has been chosen to transport passengers to Inverness, where they will be transported to a hotel – their base for the next four nights.

On Wednesday, June 7, a trip to Dunrobin Castle by road will provide plenty of time at the castle before lunch at the Golspie Inn in the nearby village and a visit to a whisky distillery before returning to Inverness.

Heading out on the next day after breakfast, the tour will take guests north as far as they can go, with a visit to the village of John O'Groats.

After this, lunch will be provided a few miles west at the Castle of Mey, restored from near ruin by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

Moving across to Thurso station, passengers will board the Scotrail service to Inverness to experience a different perspective from returning by road.

The next day will afford guests the opportunity to ride the Strathspey Railway in the morning and the Keith & Dufftown Railway in the afternoon, having first taken lunch at the 'Buffer Stop' restaurant car in Dufftown. Road coaches will then take passengers back to Inverness for the final evening's stay.

The final day will see guests return to London via the 'Highland Chieftain' in luxury.

As with the previous tour, this holiday includes first class travel to and from London, all accommodation, meals (although some are not provided), road travel on the trip and tickets to all attractions.

➔ For further information and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net

Tour delayed by derailment at Inverness

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society tour from Linlithgow to Inverness on Sunday, March 26 was delayed leaving Inverness after Class 37 No. 37676 derailed in Inverness Yard.

Both No. 37676 and classmate No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* had entered the yard for servicing of locomotives and coaching stock after arrival with the tour when No. 37676 became derailed.

This mishap blocked in the rest of the train and meant that the only solution was to extract the coaches two at a time and reform the set.

After a sterling effort from all involved, the train was reformed and tested, and was back in the platform for a departure two hours later than planned, leaving at 6.32pm. No. 37403 then took the train home as a single engine.

The cause of the derailment was still to be determined.

Intercity advertises one further tour

AFTER Intercity's successful inaugural Scottish tour, when its newly restored push/pull driving brake standard open set ran over its old stomping ground between Edinburgh and Glasgow, one further tour has been advertised.

On April 14, No. 47712 will haul the 'Cumbrian Mountain Anniversary' tour from Crewe, departing 10am and returning at 7.05pm. Pick-ups are at Warrington Bank Quay and Wigan North Western.

This journey will mark the 10th anniversary since the preservation of Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* by Crewe Diesel Preservation Group. The push/pull set will be used for a journey over Shap on the West Coast Main Line to Carlisle for a two-hour break. The return is via the Settle and Carlisle route before rejoining the West Coast Main Line at Farington Junction, retracing the journey's steps back to Crewe.

Further tours will be listed on <https://inter-city.co.uk/>



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New date is set for the 'Snowdonian'

UK Railtours has released a new date for its 'Snowdonian' railtour that had been planned for Saturday, April 1. It has now been rescheduled for Saturday, September 30, due to planned strike action taking place in April.

Starting from Euston, with pick-up points at Watford Junction, Milton Keynes Central and Rugby, the excursion takes the West Coast Main Line and is then planned to diverge at Crewe and head via Chester to Llandudno.

There will be two off-train options at Llandudno: the chance to travel the length of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways or a visit to Bodnant Gardens.

Alternatively, passengers may wish to stay in Llandudno to explore the seaside resort or take a bus to Conwy or Colwyn Bay.

There are options of first class dining, first class and standard class tickets, with a supplement for the off-train activities.

For further details and to book, visit the website www.ukrailtours.com

Bookings continue for Statesman Rail

BOOKINGS are looking good for Statesman Rail's spring tours.

Only limited places are available on its three-day 'Lord of the Isles' Statesman weekend trip from April 11-13, starting at Rugby to Kyle of Lochalsh.

The 'Settle and Carlisle Circular' on April 22 is now fully booked, as are tours on May 5 and May 29. The 'Dorset Coast Statesman' on April 19 also has only limited places, as does the May 10 'Snowdonia Statesman' from Chesterfield to Llandudno.

Bookings are still coming in for the 'Dorset Coast Statesman' from Whitchurch to Weymouth on May 20, the 'Yorkshire Coast Statesman' from Ayr on May 27 and the 'Yorkshire Coast Statesman' on May 31. Visit www.statesmanrail.com for details.



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Pathfinder's take-up boost for spring tours

By John Titlow

FOLLOWING the 'use it or lose it' comment last issue, Pathfinder Railtours bookings have been increasing steadily.

Very limited seating is available on the April 14-17 'Spring Highlander' land cruise.

The 'Cambrian Coast Express' on April 21, Pathfinder's only run this year over this scenic line due to pathing difficulties, had only five seats were left as *Heritage Railway* closed for press.

Bookings are steady for the 'Spring Cornish Explorer' on April 29 and for Pathfinder's golden anniversary train to Weymouth behind Class 40 No. 40145 on June 10.

The 'Crompton Torbay Venturer' on May 29, behind a pair of West Coast Railways Class 33s, will head from Burton upon Trent, picking up at Tamworth, Birmingham News Street, Stourbridge Junction, Kidderminster, Worcester Shrub Hill, Cheltenham Spa, Cam and Dursley and Bristol Parkway.

From Paignton, an optional trip behind a Class 37 for an additional local fare will take passengers over the Dartmouth Steam Railway to Kingswear.

The return trip takes the Berks & Hants line from Taunton to Westbury, from where the tour circles back to Bath to retrace its outward journey.

However, the May 8 trip to Windsor has been cancelled because of low bookings and the 'Heart of Wales Explorer' on May 20 is off due to the Colas Rail Class 37s being unavailable, but the trip will be reconsidered for the future.

Recent additions are the June 24 'Maze Day Special' to Penzance for the annual celebrations. It starts at Tame Bridge Parkway at 5.45am, returning at 11.25pm, picking up at Stourbridge Junction, Kidderminster, Droitwich Spa, Worcester Shrub Hill, Cheltenham Spa, Cam and Dursley, Bristol Parkway and Bristol Temple Meads. Options are available to visit Truro and St Erth for St Ives. This train will be double-headed by a pair of recently refurbished GBRf Class 69s and be a first for its class to work a passenger train to Penzance.

See Hartlepool fleet

On July 8, the 'Tall Ships Excursion' to Hartlepool from Bristol Parkway starts at 6.35am, returning 11.05 pm, with joining stations being Cam and Dursley, Cheltenham Spa, Worcestershire

Parkway, Bromsgrove and Birmingham New Street, and there is an option to alight at York. Motive power will be a pair of Camforth's Class 37s.

The 'Capital Deltic' on July 29 will see BR Class 55 No. 55009 (D9009) *Alycidon* haul Pathfinder's first outing with the locomotive. The tour starts at Willington at 6.30am, returning at 10.50pm, and picking up at Derby, Chesterfield, Sheffield and Doncaster twice after a circular trip around Pontefract, Gascoigne Wood and Selby.

The final addition to the Pathfinder programme is the 'Pembroke Coast Express' to Pembroke Dock on August 6; special permission was granted by Great Western Railway to use the name. It starts at Salisbury at 8am returning at 9.40pm. Joining stations are Warminster, Westbury, Trowbridge, Bradford-on-Avon, Bath Spa, Keynsham, Filton Abbey Wood and Newport. Two Class 33s will haul the majority of the tour, revisiting lines where they were once a very familiar sight. Unable to run round west of Carmarthen, another West Coast Railways diesel will provide the power from Carmarthen to Pembroke Dock.

➔ For more details, visit pathfindertours.co.uk/day-tours/



Left: The Midland Pullman (Class 432s Nos 43046+43059) at Middlesbrough, working 'The Whitby Jet' charter from Dundee to Whitby on March 25. It stopped for five minutes to wait for the 10.47am Saltburn to Darlington service to arrive so it could cross over onto the Esk Valley line, which heads towards Whitby. TONY WINWARD

Midland Pullman is becoming a sell-out success

THE Midland Pullman has become very popular since its reinvention, with tickets selling out fast.

All April tours are now sold out, including the three-day 'Lord of the Isles Clansman' from April 1-3. Into May and only the 'Yorkshire Coast Pullman' on May 3 has limited places available.

A comprehensive programme has now been published for the year. June 1 will see the 'North Wales

Coastal Pullman' to Llandudno, starting at Berwick-upon-Tweed at 5.25am and returning at 9.55pm, picking up at Alnmouth, Morpeth, Cramlington, Newcastle, Chester-le-Street, Durham, Darlington, Northallerton, Thirsk and York.

The June 10 tour over the Settle and Carlisle line is sold out. On June 14, the 'Ben Nevis & Lochaber Pullman' from Lancaster at 5.25am (returning at 11.45pm) heads to Fort

William, picking up at Oxenholme, Penrith, Carlisle, Lockerbie, Carstairs, Carlisle and Motherwell.

Another 'English Riviera' is on June 21 from Chester at 6.20am and returning at 10.50pm, picking up at Wrexham General, Ruabon, Chirk, Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford, Codsall and Wolverhampton.

Visit <http://midlandpullman.com> for more details.

New Didcot-Tyseley GWR partnership forged to promote UK heritage market

THE Tyseley-based Vintage Trains Charitable Trust has formed a 'GWR alliance' to collaborate with Didcot Railway Centre and promote the market for railway heritage in Britain.

The collaboration will focus on expanding the market for heritage experiences at both Didcot and Tyseley, drawing on the experience of the Great Western Society in tourism and visitor entertainment and VT's knowledge of running heritage trains on the main line.

It will aim to expand the market for main line tours using both organisation's databases and boost market penetration in the Midlands and Home Counties, together with promoting VT charter trains and adding boarding locations in the Oxford, Didcot, Swindon and London areas.

Tyseley Locomotive Works will assist Didcot in engineering on its extensive locomotive restoration programme by becoming a preferred supplier.

Finally, Didcot will assist VT in improving its museum and archive development.

Meanwhile, VT's double-headed Castles express excursion from Birmingham to Didcot and back on March 4 behind GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* and WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* for its Community Benefit Society shareholders saw two members of the latest generation of engineers join the support crew.

Learning about VT's operating competence management system, each having gained their personal track safety certificates, were 19-year-old apprentices Jake Downes (City of Wolverhampton College and now a trainee machinist/fitter) and Will Archer (HNC engineering and now a trainee fitter).

The locomotives were driven by newly qualified drivers Kevin Cronin and Alastair Meanley, assisted by newly qualified fireman Sam Perry.

The locomotive pair are to mark the centenary of the Castle class with a main line tour on Saturday, May 13. Departing from Birmingham New



Jake Downes and Will Archer with WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* on March 4. VT



On March 26, Castle Class No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* passes Hatton North Junction with Vintage Trains' 'Shakespeare Express' ANDREW PLUMMER

Street and picking up passengers at Wolverhampton, the circular tour will first head towards Shrewsbury and take the Welsh borders line to Hereford for a two-hour stopover in the city.

The tour then departs Hereford to climb Llanvihangel Bank, before passing through the Severn Tunnel

and taking the Great Western Main Line from Bristol towards London, returning to Birmingham Snow Hill via Oxford.

Tickets are available for Pullman dining, a private compartment or tourist class. Visit <https://vintagetrains.co.uk/train-rides/celebrating-the-centenary>

Family tickets for *Tornado* Aberdeen summer series

THE A1 Steam Locomotive Trust has introduced family tickets for tables of four on this summer's 'The Aberdonian' trains, hauled by A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* from Edinburgh and Glasgow

They cost £249 for parties of two adults and two children in tourist class, in which individual tickets cost £99 – meaning that children can travel for the equivalent of just £25.50 each.

The trains from Edinburgh and Haymarket will run on Thursdays July 20 and 27, Saturdays July 19 and August 19, Thursdays August 31 and September 7, and September 16.

'The Clyde Aberdonian' from Glasgow Central and Stirling will run on Saturday, July 22 and Thursday, September 14.

Bookings can be made online by visiting 21stcenturysteam.co.uk.

For telephone bookings and enquiries, please call 01325 488215, or email enquiries@21stcenturysteam.co.uk



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Steam Dreams dates released for 'Sunset Steam Express' trains

STEAM Dreams has announced dates for its 'Sunset Steam Express' dining trains around the Surrey Hills from London Victoria.

These will be on the same day as the firm's previously advertised Garden of England steam tours: Tuesdays June 22, July 4/11/18/25 and August 8/15/22/29.

Departure from Victoria is at 6.15pm, returning at 9.45pm, with B1 No. 61306 *Mayflower* rostered as motive power.

Standard class costs £69, first £119 and Pullman dining £155.

There are no dates as yet for the Royal Windsor Steam Express trains from Victoria, but these should be on the Steam Dreams website soon.

Bookings are good for the April 22 split-day tours from London Victoria to Winchester and back, plus the afternoon trip along the Test Valley. The April 26 Victoria to Chesterfield is also doing well.

May 24 will see a trip from London Victoria to Bath. A split-day tour will run on May 27, again from Victoria to Oxford, returning in the evening, plus an afternoon circular trip towards London on the Great Western returning via the Great Central route.

The May 3-11 'Emerald Isle Explorer' tour to Ireland is now fully booked.

Visit www.steamdreams.co.uk/tours.php for more details.

Living Steam Dreams in total luxury – over Ribblehead!

John Titlow enjoyed Pullman-style luxury when he boarded a Steam Dreams dining train for a jaunt over the Settle and Carlisle line, and reports here in words and pictures.

FOR a day out that included a favourite location for fellow lineside photographers, I chose Pullman-style dining on Steam Dreams' London to Settle and Carlisle Railway Tour on Saturday, March 25, joining at Lichfield Trent Valley station at 8.29am and returning at 8.42pm (the train started its journey at Euston at 6.06am, returning at 11pm).

The first point of contact when booking is by telephone or online; most bookings tend to be done via the internet, and Steam Dreams makes this an easy process. Telephoning is more personal, and it's nice to chat with friendly, knowledgeable staff who explain the tour in full. Tickets are generally emailed unless post is requested, and these arrive about five days prior to departure, when Steam Dreams receives final timings from Network Rail. There is an option of a carbon offset.

On the internet, you start by making your choice of tour, followed

by the boarding point; clicking this gives the times of your train at pick-up and destination. Another drop-down list gives you three travel choices.

Premium standard offers seating in open carriages around tables of four with complimentary tea and coffee, while first class is in restored Mk.1 carriages with armchair seating. On a typical day trip, you are served a welcome glass of Buck's fizz on the outward leg and on the return a glass of sparkling wine, plus a selection of light snacks with tea and coffee on both journeys.

Pullman-style is by far the best option, especially when it's a long day on board. Seating is in vintage Mk.1 carriages with the highest level of service and comfort. Elegant wood panelling and period features are enhanced by curtained windows and cushioned armchair seating.

Dressing appropriately for where you are going is important. If you are dining at a good restaurant,

you would expect to be smart, and a similar situation applies when travelling Pullman-style. Smart casual is recommended to create a relaxed atmosphere... ripped jeans and sleeveless T-shirts, although fashionable, are not recommended.

As we all know, sometimes steam locomotives fail and a change of engine is essential. Every effort is made to run as advertised, but conditions like high fire risk, locomotive failure or restrictions imposed by Network Rail can throw a spanner in the works, forcing a change of motive power – but which is considered as a last resort. Partial refunds are available in the unlikely event of this happening.

Welcome aboard

Upon boarding, we were escorted to our seats in the very plush Pullman carriage where a Bellini cocktail was served, followed by a traditional breakfast. In the late morning on the outward journey, a selection of pastries, accompanied by

tea and coffee, is offered. On the return journey, you are welcomed back on board with a glass of champagne and a selection of canapés, followed by a four-course evening meal and wine, included in the price. Dining concludes with coffee or tea and petit fours.

Food is of a high standard and all cooked fresh. Duck was on the menu, making a difference from the usual roasts. Fresh flowers on all the tables was a nice touch, and a mat is placed outside the carriages at stations when getting on and off.

The Mk.1 carriages are a reasonably smooth ride at speed, but they never had the greatest loos. However, here these have been upgraded considerably from the originals and are more in keeping with a train of this quality.

Train manager for the day, Sandra Jones, and the friendly, attentive staff onboard made me feel very welcome. The cleanliness of the train, table layout, and the way I was served throughout the journey was first class



Ribbleshead Viaduct from a different viewpoint, with LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 Royal Scot crossing on March 25.

– as good as you would expect in a top restaurant.

Looking after 250 passengers on a moving train is not easy, but it was second nature to this team.

Stock for the day of my journey was the 11-coach Saphos Trains set, with Class 47 No. 47614 on the rear. Class 86 No. 86101 – in spotless condition – brought the train down from Euston. LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* was due to take over from Crewe, but with a fire in the Crewe area, it could not get out of depot easily.

The crew kept us updated with the difficulties encountered and steam came on at Warrington Bank Quay instead, extending the train to 12 carriages with the support coach.

With passengers joining at Crewe, the train was held at Stafford to ensure correct departure time at Crewe.

With steam on, the excitement became palpable and it was good to hear the three-cylinder beat of the Scot climbing over Ais Gill summit; a couple of slips were heard on occasion, which were quickly rectified.

Steam over the long drag kept to time, with a watering stop at Appleby in the pouring rain... only the foolish or hardy ventured out for a photo, and there were not many linesiders to be seen.

Arrival at Carlisle was on time, allowing a two-hour leg stretch in the driving rain.

The station is in the centre of the city, but it was good that the train was prepared early and sitting in



No. 46100 takes on water at Appleby in the rain.

the platform ready for returning passengers escaping the downpour.

It was a long day for the staff, whose day began at Milton Keynes and ended with a late finish at Euston at 11pm. This is followed by a coach back to Crewe, arriving at about 3.30am. However, they do get two days off afterwards to recover.

I wish to thank Steam Dreams and all the serving staff for a thoroughly enjoyable day. All Steam Dreams trains are operated by Locomotive Services (TOC) Limited, and crewed by Locomotive Services Group hospitality and driver teams.



Comfort and luxury, Steam Dreams style. STEAM DREAMS



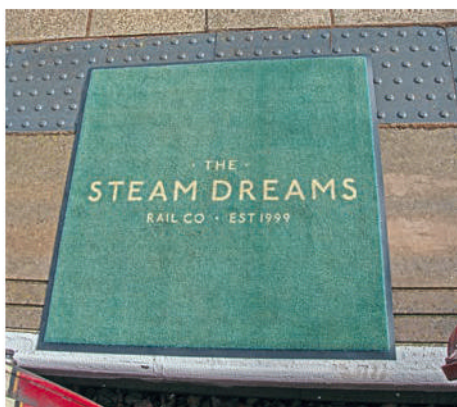
After running over the Settle and Carlisle line with the excursion, LMS No. 46100 *Royal Scot* rests at Carlisle Citadel.



No. 46100 backs onto the train at Warrington Bank Quay.



Changeover time: Class 86 No. 86101 *Sir William A Stanier FRS* and LMS No. 46100 *Royal Scot* at Warrington Bank Quay.



Class 86 electric No. 86101 *Sir William A Stanier FRS* at Crewe after bringing the excursion from Euston.

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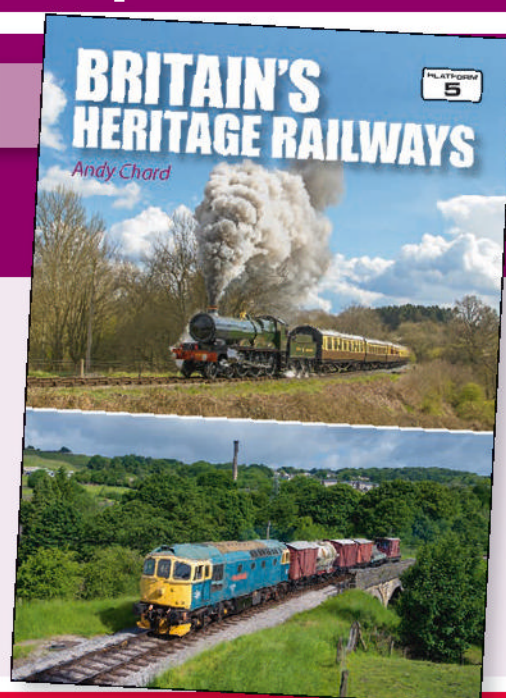
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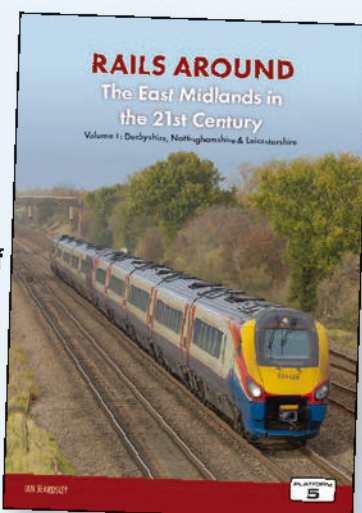
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April

15 'The Great Western Envoy'

Rugby, Bristol Temple Meads and return. Steam-hauled from London (outward) to Rugby (return).

Loco: TBA. ST

15 'The Great Britain XV'

London Paddington to Bristol Temple Meads only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

15 The Baker's Dozen

Circular tour of London termini, starting from London Liverpool Street.

DEMU: 1001. HD/RTC

16 'The Shakespeare Express'

Birmingham Moor Street, Stratford-Upon-Avon and return.

Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

16 'The Great Britain XV'

Bristol Temple Meads to Llandudno only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

18 'The Great Britain XV'

Llandudno to Edinburgh only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

19 'The Great Britain XV'

Edinburgh, Aberdeen and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

20 'The Great Britain XV'

Aberdeen to Blackpool North only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

21 'The Great Britain XV'

Blackpool North to Scarborough only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

22 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'

Tyseley Locomotive Works, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Hellifield (outward).

Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

22 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Telford Central, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth (outward) to Preston (return).

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

22 London to Winchester

London Victoria, Winchester and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

22 'The Great Britain XV'

Scarborough to Norwich only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

22 Test Valley Scenic Tour

Winchester, Southampton and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

23 'The Great Britain XV'

Norwich to King's Cross only. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

26 'The Highland Clansman Pullman'

Thirsk, Aviemore and return. Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

26 London to Chesterfield for Chatsworth

London Victoria, Chesterfield and return. Steam-hauled outward only.

Loco: 34046 *Braunton*. SD

29 'The Spring Cornish Explorer'

Dorridge, Penzance and return. Loco: 2x Class 37 TBC. PT

29 'The North Wales Coast Explorer'

Birmingham New Street, Llandudno and



LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* passes beneath the impressive train shed roof of Darlington station at the head of the Railway Touring Company's March 25 'Edinburgh Flyer'. KENNY FELSTEAD

return. Diesel-hauled from Chester to Llandudno (outward).

Locos: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*, 37240. VT

29 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Coventry, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

30 'The Royal Duchy'

Bristol Temple Meads, Par and return.

Loco: 60103 *Flying Scotsman*. RTC

May

1 'Llandudno Victorian Pullman'

Bournemouth, Llandudno and return.

Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

3 'Yorkshire Coast Pullman'

Maidenhead, Scarborough and return.

Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

13 'Welsh Marches Express'

Birmingham News Street, Hereford and return.

Locos: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*, 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

13 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'

London Euston, Appleby and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).

Loco: Steam (TBA) + 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

20 'The Atlantic Coast Express'

London Waterloo, Exeter St Davids and return.

Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

20 'Heart of Wales Explorer'

Bristol Temple Meads, Shrewsbury, Dorridge.

Locos: 2x Class 37s TBC. PT

20 'The Edinburgh Flyer'

York, Edinburgh and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

20 'The Whistling Ghost'

Birmingham Snow Hill, Minehead and return.

Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

24 'Ben Nevis & Lochaber Pullman'

Morpeth, Fort William and return.

Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

24 London to Bath

London Victoria, Bath Spa and return.

Loco: 34046 *Braunton*. SD

27 'The South Devon Explorer'

Woking, Plymouth and return. Steam-hauled between Bristol (outward) and Taunton (return).

Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

27 London to Oxford

London Paddington, Oxford and return.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

27 Chiltern Hills Afternoon Tour

Circular tour from Oxford.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

28 'The Shakespeare Express'

Birmingham Moor Street, Stratford-upon-Avon and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. VT

29 'The Crompton Torbay Venturer'

Burton-on-Trent, Paignton and return. Loco: 2x Class 33 TBC. PT

31 Shoeburyness to Portsmouth

Shoeburyness, Portsmouth Harbour and return. Diesel-hauled from Southall (return).

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

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.

Tour promoters

A1SLT	A1 Steam Locomotive Trust 01325 488215
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society Branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels Hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

Regular Tours

Daily AM (+ PM from May 1)

'The Jacobite'

Fort William, Mallaig and return.

Loco: LMS Black 5 TBA. WCR

TABLE ONE: WIDNEY MANOR TO DIDCOT

Date	Saturday, March 4, 2023
Train	8.18am Birmingham Snow Hill to Didcot Parkway
Pilot engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 7029 <i>Clun Castle</i>
Train engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 5043 <i>Earl of Mount Edgumbe</i>
Load	10 coaches, 352½ tons tare 390 tons gross
Crew 7029	Frake, Perry, Stanton
Crew 5043	Cronin, Meanley
Recorder	A. Smeaton
Position	Eighth coach
Weather	Overcast, cold and dry

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Widney Manor	0.00		00	00	1 late
Underbridge	0.60		01	59	28½/13½
Bentley Heath LC	1.34	4.00	04	16	21/4½*
Dorridge	1.89	7.00	06	32	13* loop
Lapworth	4.45		10	26	66½/69½
Hatton	8.68	16.00	15	13	20*
Warwick Parkway	11.56		18	54	69½
Warwick	12.84		20	04	67
Leamington Spa	14.81	23.00	22	51	28*/63½
Fosse Road	18.28		26	52	63/59
Southam Road	21.04		29	38	61
Knightcote	23.20		31	36	67½/69½
Fenny Compton	25.89	37.00	33	58	66½
Clattercote	29.10		36	50	71½
Underbridge	30.13		37	42	74½/75½
Copredy	31.15		38	31	72½
M40	33.00		40	09	64/63
Banbury	34.68	46.00	41	43	66
Kings Sutton	38.20		44	51	68½
Aynho Jct	39.66	51.00	46	09	68/69½
Wharf Farm	41.11		47	24	69/67
Fritwell	42.73		48	50	67½
Heyford	45.61	59.00	51	19	73½
River Cherwell	47.10		52	40	40*/21*
Tackley	48.25		55	28	32½
Bletchington	49.73		57	24	57½
Oxford Canal	50.60		58	15	65½
Kidlington	51.74		59	15	69
Sandy Lane	52.88		60	16	62
					sigs stop
Wolvercote Jct	54.49	68.00	66	43	26
Footbridge	56.45		69	17	60
Oxford	57.36	74.00	70	27	29
					sigs stop
Kennington Jct	59.76	77.30	76	21	53/54½
Radley	62.40		79	56	20½*/24½
Nuneham Viaduct	63.54		82	53	14* tsr
Culham	64.63		85	10	48/49
Appleford	65.66		86	54	14*/27½
Didcot North Jct	66.93	89.00	90	14	20*
Didcot Parkway	67.71	93.00	94	11	2 late

*brakes or speed restriction

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



Don Benn tells the story of the Vintage Trains double-headed Castle run to the four Castles event at the Didcot Railway Centre on March 4, hauled by No. 7029 *Clun Castle* and newly overhauled 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe*, plus two runs behind Hall 4-6-0s in the 1960s.

ON Saturday, March 4, Didcot Railway Centre staged an event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Collett's Castle class locomotives (see issue 304). I decided that I would attend and also photograph the double-headed Castle special, run by Vintage Trains from Birmingham Snow Hill in conjunction with the event.

March 4 was also the exact 56th anniversary of two Castles working specials to Chester. No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* worked 1X82 'The Birkenhead Flyer' from Didcot, having started from Paddington diesel-hauled, and No. 7029 *Clun Castle* worked 1X83 'The Zulu' from Banbury, also diesel-hauled from Paddington. By then, both engines had entered preservation, so the events of March 4 this year were appropriate in more ways than one as No. 7029 was on the special train and No. 4079 in the four Castle line-up at Didcot.

My chosen location to see the special was Oxford station as all being well, the special would have a clear road and be travelling at speed. I opted to travel there by CrossCountry train from Southampton Airport and this, despite being a very crowded nine-coach train, kept good time after an early scare. CrossCountry has not yet restored the hourly service south of Reading. It was withdrawn with Covid-19 and is a nuisance to a lot of people; doubling up the train sets doesn't compensate. The steam special was due through Oxford at 9.51am, three minutes after a Worcester to Paddington service was due to leave at 9.48am.

However, I was monitoring the progress of the two Castles and was alarmed to see that they were gaining time and had passed Heyford

Below: No. 7029 pilots No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* on March 4, 2023, passing Oxford three minutes early with the 8.18am Birmingham Snow Hill to Didcot Vintage Trains' shareholders special. DON BENN





Nos. 5051 *Dryslwyn Castle* and 7029 *Clun Castle* at Didcot Railway Centre on March 4, 2023. DON BENN

six minutes early. Our train was due at Oxford at 9.38am and we were two minutes down, so if the Castles were given precedence over the Worcester train, it would be close run – especially as we wanted to get to the Up platform as the Down view could well be blocked by trains. As it turned out, we made it as the Up Worcester came first and was still in the platform when the special came past at 29mph on a yellow signal on the Up through line, still three minutes early despite being stopped at Wolvercote Junction. It was with relief that we joined the 10.07am train to Didcot to enjoy the rest of the morning photographing the four Castles; Nos: 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*, 5051 *Dryslwyn Castle* and 7029 *Clun Castle*, and travelling behind prairie No. 4144 hauling two saloons – Nos. 92 and 190 – on the demonstration line.

Double-headed running

Unknown to me at the time, my Scottish correspondent Sandy Smeaton was on the Vintage Trains special from Birmingham to Didcot and Tables One, Two and Three show the details of the running in both directions. Among the train crew, only one name was familiar to me as the new policy by Vintage Trains of taking a 'rear gunner' means that I don't now support them so haven't been up-to-date with their engine crew training. Trains with double-headed steam or short trips such as the 'Shakespeare Express' can, however, be expected to be free of diesel assistance. So, with only the equivalent of five coaches each, the performance was nothing special, though the Hatton Bank climb on the return was rather good. Sandy tells the story of his day out with two Castles:

"This Vintage Trains special was organised to thank those who had financially helped them become →



TABLE TWO: DIDCOT TO BANBURY

Date	Saturday, March 4, 2023
Train	3.01pm Didcot Parkway to Birmingham Snow Hill
Pilot engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 5043 <i>Earl of Mount Edgcumbe</i>
Train engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 7029 <i>Clun Castle</i>
Load	10 coaches, 352½ tons tare 390 tons gross
Crew 5043	Cronin, Meanley, Stanton
Crew 7029	Frake, Perry
Recorder	A. Smeaton
Position	Third coach
Weather	Overcast, cold and dry

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Didcot Parkway	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
Didcot North Jct	0.77	4.00	03	22	25/36
Appleford	2.05		05	57	15*
Culham	3.09		08	18	29
OB 5	3.58		09	32	20*
Radley	5.31		13	12	47
Kennington Jct	7.95	11.00	15	59	68
Hinksey North	9.48	12.30	17	22	64½
Oxford	10.35	14.30	18	10	65
Aristotle Lane FB	11.26		19	00	68½/71½
Wolvercote Jct	13.23	18.30	20	42	71
Oxford Canal	15.33		22	32	66½
Kidlington	15.98		23	06	69
Bletchington	17.99		25	02	58
Tackley	19.46		26	42	38*
Heyford	22.10	27.30	29	42	66
Fritwell	24.99		32	19	67½
Aynho Jct	28.05	33.30	34	56	72/71½
Kings Sutton	29.51		36	09	72
Banbury	33.08	40.30	41	43	1 min late

* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE THREE: BANBURY TO DORRIDGE LOOP

Date	Saturday, March 4, 2023
Train	3.01pm Didcot Parkway to Birmingham Snow Hill
Pilot engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 5043 <i>Earl of Mount Edgcumbe</i>
Train engine	GWR Class 7P 4-6-0 No. 7029 <i>Clun Castle</i>
Load	Ten coaches, 352½ tons tare 390 tons gross
Crew 5043	Cronin, Meanley, Stanton
Crew 7029	Frake, Perry
Recorder	A. Smeaton
Position	Third coach
Weather	Overcast, cold and dry

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Banbury	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
MP 87	0.78		03	11	28
MP 89	2.78		06	00	53½
MP 91	4.78		08	05	59½
MP 92	5.78		09	03	64½
MP 93	6.78		09	57	68½
MP 94	7.78		10	49	72
Fenny Compton	8.78	9.30	11	38	74½
MP 96	9.78		12	26	75/76
MP 100	13.78		15	49	65½
Harbury Tunnel	14.39		16	22	68½
MP 102	15.78		17	33	73½
Leamington Spa	19.83	22.30	22	01	27*
MP 106¾	20.53		23	21	40
Warwick	21.80		26	12	11½*/8½*
UB 155	22.45		30	07	10½*
Warwick Parkway	23.08		31	40	39½
MP 110	23.78		32	36	49
MP 110½	24.28		33	12	52½
Footbridge	24.73		33	42	55
MP 111½	25.28		34	18	57½
MP 112	25.78		34	47	62
Hatton	25.96	34.30	34	58	63
MP 113	26.78		35	44	65½
MP 114	27.78		36	35	74/75½
MP 114½	28.28		36	59	74½
Lapworth	30.19		38	41	60½
Dorridge	32.75		43	03	18* loop
Dorridge Loop	32.98	44.30	45	19	¾ min late

* brakes or speed restriction

On June 20, 1964, WR Modified Hall No. 6978 *Haroldstone Hall* restarts the 10.45am Poole to Sheffield at Oxford. DON BENN

TABLE FOUR: BASINGSTOKE TO BOURNEMOUTH

Date	Wednesday, July 3, 1963				
Train	8.30am Newcastle to Bournemouth West				
Loco	GWR Hall Class 4-6-0 No. 6904				
Load	11 coaches, 371 tons tare 390 tons gross				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Weather	Fine and sunny				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Basingstoke	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 min late sigs 10*
Worting Jct	2.51	6.00	07	02	23
Wootton Box	4.75		11	26	30
Steventon Box	6.20		14	18	47
Waltham Box	7.35		15	24	50
Roundwood Box	8.45		16	41	53
Micheldever	10.30		18	41	56
Weston Box	12.45		20	54	58
Wallers Ash Box	13.95		22	26	60
MP 63	15.35		23	47	64
Winchester Jct Box	16.70	26.00	25	10	58
Winchester	18.80	29.00	28	24	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	right time
St Cross Box	1.17		02	53	38
Shawford Jct	2.41		04	25	50
Shawford	3.06		05	10	54/58 20*
Allbrook Box	6.00		09	08	27 to LL 5*
Eastleigh	6.90	11.00	12	37	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Swaythling	2.26		04	51	50 sigs 34*
St Denys	3.67		06	49	42
Northam Jct	4.75	8.00	08	28	20*/30
Southampton Central	5.79	11.00	11	01	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Millbrook	0.90		02	41	31/46
Redbridge	2.65	5.00	05	13	42*
Totton	3.30		06	09	42
Lyndhurst Road	6.15		09	54	49/55
Beaulieu Road	8.85		13	00	52
Woodfridley Box	10.45		14	44	62 *
Brookenhurst	13.55	19.00	19	48	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Lymington Junction	0.95	2.30	03	07	29
MP 94½	1.70		04	37	31
Sway	2.75		06	20	41/63
New Milton	5.75	10.00	10	16	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Hinton Admiral	2.50		04	33	57
MP 103	4.45		06	22	67
Christchurch	5.80	8.00	08	42	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	41
Pokesdown	1.95	5.00	04	58	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	24
Boscombe	0.55	2.00	02	28	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	36
Bournemouth Central	2.20	3.00	03	57	

After Southampton kept time by reducing time allowed for station stops

a licensed train operator. It was a very pleasant surprise to find at Snow Hill that the two double-chimney Castles had top-and-tailed the 10-coach train from Tyseley, with no diesel in sight. It was a cold, grey day but with little wind. No. 7029 *Clun Castle* ran round to come onto the front of No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* to lead on the outward run. The train was probably about half full from Snow Hill, but full from Widney Manor.

"There were clearance slacks at platforms throughout the run and we ran through Dorridge loop to avoid the station platforms altogether. Four minutes was allowed at Widney Manor for all to board, but we left only one late. After negotiating Dorridge loop, 69½mph was reached before the slack through Hatton's Up platform. Leamington was passed at 33mph on the Up main. On the climb to Southam Road, 63½mph was reached just before Fosse Road, falling to 59mph just after it. Southam Road was passed at 61mph, with 69½mph reached in the shallow dip before the rise to Fenny Compton, passed at 66½mph. The maximum down to Banbury was 75½mph, before easing through the station to 66mph. After Aynho Jn, the maximum was 73½mph at Heyford, passed six minutes early, and after the slack at Tackley, 69mph was reached at Kidlington.

"Running early, we were stopped before Wolvercote Jn and again after Oxford. However, despite the slacks at Radley and Appleford and the temporary speed restriction at Nuneham Viaduct, we stopped in Didcot Parkway only two late.

"At Didcot, the two Castles eventually joined *Pendennis Castle* and *Dryslwyn Castle* (restored to its original name after being *Earl Bathurst* for most of its GWR and all its BR life) for a rare line-up. The return departure, now with No. 5043 leading, was on time and we ran in the high 60s, then low 70s from before Kennington Junction until the Tackley slack.

"This was repeated from Heyford to Banbury, where the locomotives were watered. Departure was again right on time, accelerating to 59½mph at MP 91, the summit. The maximum downhill to Leamington was 76mph after Fenny Compton. Leamington was passed at 27mph but the clearance slack at Warwick required a cautious 10mph, so there was no run at Hatton bank. Nevertheless,

from passing Warwick Parkway at 39½mph, the two Castles accelerated the 10 coaches to 57½mph at MP 111½. The summit is at MP 111¾, but I saw no surviving marker. They went on to reach 75½mph before Lapworth. There was a pathing stop in Dorridge loop and we stopped in Widney Manor to set down. Final arrival into Snow Hill was half a minute early. The outward run was timed from the non-milepost side, but on the return I stood at the coach middle window from Banbury on the return. An interesting day all round!"

Halls to Oxford

My involvement with GWR steam in its last years was minimal and covered photography mainly at Paddington, Salisbury, Basingstoke and the line to Bournemouth during 1960 to 1963 and a few lineside sessions in the Ealing and Slough areas in June 1963. The

only mileage I had was on some Southern branches in the South West and on Inter-Regional trains to and from Southern resorts such as Bournemouth and Poole via Basingstoke in 1963 and 1964. I knew which trains were steam-hauled from Paddington but somehow the lure of a high-level of steam out of Waterloo was too much to resist until it was too late, much to my regret now, of course. The folly of youth!

Table Four shows a typical run on the Newcastle/York

to Bournemouth train on Wednesday, July 3, 1963, as part of a Southern weekly rover. Eleven coaches for 390 tons is a heavy load for a GWR Hall, but this was normal for the train in summer and No. 6904 kept time with relative ease, though from memory it sounded nice accelerating well away from the many stops after Southampton. A year later on Saturday, June 20, 1964, I made a determined effort to get some Hall mileage to and from Oxford on the Inter-Regionals. I started in London at Euston, where I saw No. 45674 *Duncan* on an empty coaching stock (ECS) train and then to Paddington, where the only steam seen was No. 7912 *Little Linford Hall* on an Up ECS working at 9.45am and Pannier tank Nos. 9477, 9789 and 8459 also all on ECSs.

Having ensured as far as possible that no Down passenger trains would be steam, I went to Waterloo and caught the 11.22am to Basingstoke, which was hauled by No. 34082 *615 Squadron* which, with nine coaches, ran easily down in 52 minutes 35 seconds





Above: On June 22, 1963, WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* is seen near Slough with the 9.15am Paddington to Hereford. DON BENN

for the 47.8 miles, maximum 70mph in the Byfleet dip. At Basingstoke, I waited for the 10.45am Poole to Sheffield, which rolled in on time behind No. 6978 *Haroldstone Hall*. This had eight coaches for 300 tons and ran well, getting to 65mph after Mortimer before encountering signal checks and a three-minute stop at Reading West Junction, waiting for the road to cross over all lines to the down slow. Arrival at Oxford was nearly four minutes late.

I spent a busy two hours seeing quite a lot of steam, including Nos. 6858 *Woolston Grange* on a Down freight, 34071 *601 Squadron* on the 11.16am Bournemouth West to Newcastle, and 6915 *Mursley Hall* on the 10.30am Weymouth to Wolverhampton that had run via Westbury. At 3.05pm, No. 5063 *Earl Baldwin* arrived with the 10.25am Manchester Piccadilly to Bournemouth West, which No. 34103

Calstock took forward to the Southern. What a wonderful combination for any train timer!

I was waiting for the 8.30am Newcastle to Bournemouth West, which was stopped outside 20 minutes early with No. 6967 *Willesley Hall*, and we left still eight minutes early with the usual 11 on for 395 tons. Badly checked, we lost all that time and more to Basingstoke, but then the Hall produced a run to Bournemouth similar to the one in Table Four. I returned to London on the 7.40pm behind No. 34007 *Wadebridge* with 11 for 374 tons, mainly empty. Severe signal checks in many places meant we were half an hour late into Waterloo, a poor end to an interesting day, showing that GWR steam wasn't quite dead in the summer of 1964.

Next time, I will look at the work of the LMS Class 5 locomotives. [HR](#)

TABLE FIVE: BASINGSTOKE TO OXFORD

Date	Saturday, June 20, 1964				
Train	10.45am Poole to Sheffield Victoria				
Loco	Modified Hall Class 4-6-0 No. 6978 <i>Haroldstone Hall</i>				
Crew	Not recorded				
Load	Eight coaches, 272 tons tare, 300 tons gross				
Recorder	Don Benn				
Weather	Fine and warm				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Basingstoke	0.00	0.00	00	00	¾ min late
MP 47½	3.95		06	58	60
Bramley	4.93		08	00	56
MP 45	6.45		09	49	53
Mortimer	8.28		11	45	58½
MP 40	11.45		15	00	64/65
Southcote Jct	13.59	20.00	18	44	signs 15*
Reading West	14.54	22.00	21	55	signs 5*
signs stop					
Reading West Jct	15.45	24.00	24	54	0*
			27	52	
Tilehurst	17.13		32	36	41
Pangbourne	20.01		36	24	54
Goring	23.23		39	55	60½
Cholsey	26.91		43	50	58
Moreton Cutting	29.86		46	59	56½
Didcot North Jct	32.30	46.00	50	21	37*
Appleford	33.56		52	20	48
Culham	34.60		53	43	59/55
Radley	36.81		56	03	60
Kennington Jct	39.45		58	52	51
Oxford	41.86	60.00	63	02	3¾ late
net time 57 minutes					
*brakes or speed restriction					

Left: On March 4, 2023, Castles Nos. 4079, 5043, 5051 and 7029 line up outside the former GWR locomotive shed at Didcot Railway Centre. DON BENN



Turkish delight as 1960s steam is remembered

ITALIAN and Turkish steam topped the charts in an online auction held by photographs, slides and negatives specialist JustaClickAgo from February 20-26, when a single lot of 175 colour slides taken in the two countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s sold for £520.

Behind came British heritage modern traction from the mid-1980s, including Class 43 HST125, taken in the Birmingham area and at Crewe Works by the late David Williams of West Bromwich. One lot, comprising 200 colour slides, went under the hammer for £470, and a second selection of 195 slides for £420. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 18%.



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Deltic powers to the top with diesel record

DELTA nameplate *Ballymoss* was the unchallenged winner in Talisman's saleroom auction at Newark Showground on March 18, when it went under Roger Phipps' hammer for a diesel record-breaking price of £32,400.

The plate, bearing the name of the winner of the 1957 Irish Derby and St Leger and 1958 Coronation Cup and Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, was from D9018/55018, built by English Electric in November 1961 and withdrawn 20 years later.

Two steam nameplates that also featured in the auction, *United Provinces* from LMS Jubilee No. 45578 and *Hyderabad* from another Jubilee, No. 45585, sold for £10,000 and £8000 respectively, while the smokebox numberplate from LMS Princess Coronation No. 46251 *City of Nottingham* went for £7300 and a cabside numberplate from GWR No. 5009 *Shrewsbury Castle* for £3300.

Station totem signs made their customary mark, with BR(M) Betws-y-Coed selling for £4800 and BR(E) Gedling for £3700, although this latter realisation was trumped by the £4700 achieved by

a Macclesfield Bollington & Marple Railway handlamp.

Signalling peaked at £2100 for LMS signalbox nameboard Quintinshill, the scene of Britain's worst-ever rail disaster in which 226 people died in May 1915. This was followed by four Midland Railway ex-Brighton signalbox lever plates that sold as a single lot for £1500, a price matched by an LNER Darlington 1945 worksplate (works No. 1973) from a 2-8-0 built for the LMS, Class 8F No. 48736.

Close behind was an LNER 'East Coast' poster painted by Frank Mason (1875-1965) that fetched £1400, and a second LMS signalbox nameboard, Trent Junction (£1300). Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Talisman is the only mainstream railwayana specialist still holding saleroom auctions, and principal Roger Phipps estimated 400 people attended. "Fantastic all round," he enthused. "Fantastic turn-out and fantastic atmosphere, capped by what was a diesel record. We enjoy a live arena, and will continue to hold



saleroom auctions this year and next." Of the bidding for the *Ballymoss* nameplate, he said: "It exceeded even my expectations. The room went deadly quiet and you could have heard a pin drop on a carpet, and I was delighted that the successful bidder got a round of applause."



From Scotland to Russia in two-week sale

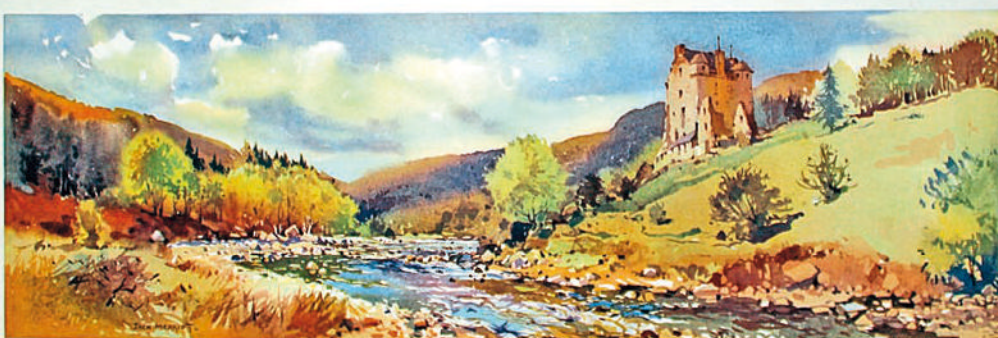
UP to 500 lots of general railwayana will be going under Simon Turner's hammer in a GW Railwayana two-week timed auction in early May that will comprise memorabilia that didn't make it into Simon's main auction on March 11, a report of which is in this column.

A large collection of unframed carriage prints of Scottish scenes may attract those of an artistic bent. Another single collection features Russian steam worksplates, a category that also includes plates from LNER and LMS locomotives.

Official LMS and GWR works' photographs will also be in the sale, as will such familiar categories as handlamps, watches, shed and wagon plates, silverware, watches, cast iron and enamel signs – the last including station totems – and paintings. The auction is being held from May 1 to 14.



LOCH KATRINE AND BEN VENUE, PERTSHIRE



THE RIVER TWEED AND NEIDPATH CASTLE, PEEBLES SHIRE

Steam takes the top honours but modern traction fights its corner

WITH nameplates *Coronation* from LNWR George the Fifth class 4-4-0 No. 1800/LMS No. 5348 selling for £20,000 and *Lady Margaret Hall* from GWR No. 7911 fetching £12,500, as reported in last month's issue, steam took the plaudits in Great Central's live online auction on March 4.

This duo's success was aided and abetted by *Trematon Castle* from GWR No. 5020 (£9600), *Broome Manor* from GWR No. 7805, which went for £8200, and *Holyrood* from Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60152 (£6400).

At this point, diesel and electric traction showed their hand, of which more anon, and so to continue with steam, *Ajax* from LNWR Precursor No. 639/LMS No. 5190 sold for £6000, while GWR trio *Leaton Grange* (No. 6821), *Eden Hall* (No. 4996) and *Broome Hall* (No. 4908) went to new homes for £5000, £3200 and £3000 respectively.

Non-sellers under the hammer were *Saint Agatha* (GWR No. 2911) and three ex-LNER locomotives, comprising *Audley End* (B17 No. 61606), *George Davidson* (D40 No. 62273) and *Inverness-shire* from D49 No. 62725, although the B17 plate sold after close of play for £4000.

Straying from steam, albeit only temporarily, the star turn in the diesel heritage modern traction nameplate selection was *University of Dundee*, from 1964-built Class 47 D1731, which made £6200, followed by *Titan Star* from classmate D1652



with a realisation of £3200. Electric locomotives also had a say in proceedings, with *Kenilworth*, from 1974-built Class 87 No. 87032 (£4400). On the subject of electric traction, a cabside numberplate from Class 83 E3027, built by English Electric/Vulcan Foundry in September 1960 for the WCML, went under the hammer for £2600.

Although outsold by the Class 83, a steam cabside worthy of mention was 5020, which accompanied its *Trematon Castle* nameplate out of the door by selling for £2400, and also joining their nameplates under the hammer were 4996 from *Eden Hall* (£1000) and 4908 from *Broome Hall* (£950).

Similarly, the 7805 smokebox numberplate from *Broome Manor* and 4908 from *Broome Hall* also sold, for £1800 and £650. The 7805 smokebox plate wasn't the category leader, however, for that accolade went to 34092 from preserved SR West Country Class Pacific *City of Wells*, which realised £3200.

Totem signs inevitably flexed their muscles, headed at £5800 by BR(W) Rhayader on the mid-Wales route from Moat Lane Junction to Brecon which closed in 1962, ably supported by BR(NE) Billingham (£3800) and Scottish Region Kilconquhar (£2800).

Other enamels to catch the eye were LNER shedplate Cambridge, of the type that were fitted in steam locomotive cabs, which sold for £4800, 12 times its top estimate, and a BR(S) 'Carriage servicing charyman' doorplate that sold for £3400, nearly seven times its highest estimate.

Another category winner was a steam-era 'Aberdonian' headboard from the King's Cross to Aberdeen sleeping car express (£3800), which was followed by a 'Western Tribute' nameboard from the final Class 52 train hauled by D1013 *Western Ranger* and D1023 *Western Fusilier* from Paddington to Swansea, Bristol, Plymouth and return via Westbury on February 26, 1977 (£3200).

The signalling gold medal went to an LBSCR Webb & Thompson staff instrument from Heathfield South signalbox on the Eridge-Polegate line (£2800), and that for clocks to a GWR 8in dial wall example, which sold for £1600. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Auctioneer Mike Soden said: "We've got to be well satisfied."

"Enamels continue to do well, especially Scottish totems, the two headboards made good money, and everything is holding up extremely well, better than we could have envisaged."



Capital win for LU ahead of BR and SR

LONDON Underground was the overall victor in Railwayana Sales' internet auction that ran from February 27 to March 5, although BR's Scottish and Eastern regions and the pre-Nationalisation Southern Railway ensured it wasn't a one-sided contest for top honours.

A King's Cross St. Pancras platform roundel from the Underground station that is served by six lines and pre-Covid handled 90 million passengers annually – that's nearly 250,000 every day of the year – clinched it with a £5050 realisation.

Another platform sign was runner-up, a BR(Sc) Dundee Tay Bridge totem that sold for £2550, while third and fourth places went to

two more platform signs, Southern Railway target Egham from a Surrey station on the Waterloo-Reading line (£1800), and BR(E) totem Alford Town, from a Lincolnshire station on the Boston-to-Louth route that closed in October 1970 (£1760).

Also from the Southern Railway was a direction sign to Bow station, on the Exeter to Okehampton line which closed in 1972 (£880), and from a more modern era came a BR

Doncaster 1965 worksplate from Class 86 electric E3109 that carried the name *Wigan Pier* from 1987-1992 and was withdrawn in February 2002 as No. 86416 (£820). Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15%.

"I'm pleased with the results, as prices seem to be holding up," said Railwayana Sales' Chris France.

"It's also pleasing to report that we are getting more bidders every auction."



Railwayana Auction Calendar

■ April 14-May 2

Paperchase

■ April 15

Great Central Railwayana ('Bloxham')

■ April 15

Thirsk Railwayana

■ April 21

Vectis (model trains)

■ April 23

Bristol Railwayana

■ April 28

Lacy Scott & Knight (railwayana and models)

■ May 1-14

GW Railwayana (timed auction)

Cast iron and enamels sign up to 'Bloxham'

ABOUT 50 cast iron and 30 enamel signs will be major features of the Great Central live online 'Bloxham'-style auction that is being held on April 15, with hand and platform lamps also making a significant contribution.

The 'no frills' sale, which starts at 9am, is part of the series held by Great Central that puts general railwayana under the hammer. There will be up to 600 lots, and an absence of telephone bidding and few reserves should ensure that progress is speedy enough to allow participants to digest the afternoon's football results.

→ LNER and LMS Pacific locomotives in O gauge scooped the two top realisations in a Vectis model train sale at Thornaby on March 17. An Ace Trains Class A4 No. 4468 *Mallard* headed the list at £750, while the runner-up was a Hornby Princess Royal class No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*, which fetched £540. Both prices exclude buyer's premium of 25% (inc VAT).

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Three out of four heavyweights put on a show

THREE of the 'Big Four' pre-Nationalisation companies put on an entertaining show for their live online audience in GW Railwayana's March 11 sale, with only the LNER missing out on the action. Centre stage went to the GWR with the two top nameplates plus one other, but the LMS, with three nameplates and two smokebox numberplates, and the SR also with a nameplate, were a strong support act.

Heading the cast list was *King Edward VI* from No. 6012 that went under the hammer for £19,500, thus indicating that, despite the increasing influence of diesel and electric traction railwayana, steam era collectors remain loyal to their long-standing favourites. And on a similar theme, nameplate *Holkham Hall* from No. 6926 and *Leeward Islands* from Jubilee No. 45614 were each firmly in five-figure territory, at £13,000 and £11,000 respectively.

The SR weighed in with *King Pellinore* from King Arthur No. 30738, which attracted a top bid of £6300, and the LMS with a second Jubilee plate, *Gold Coast* from No. 45610 (£6000), although both were trumped by an LMS smokebox numberplate,

46114 from Royal Scot *Coldstream Guardsman*, that fetched £7100.

Completing the main line steam nameplate line-up at £5100 and £4300 respectively were *Enborne Grange* (GWR No. 6814) and *Shovell* from a third LMS Jubilee, No. 45651, while the same class weighed in with the smokebox numberplate from No. 45661 *Saskatchewan* (£3700), so giving the LMS a double success in this category.

GWR cabsides were led by No. 2350 from a Dean goods 0-6-0 that sold for £2500, followed by No. 6 from an ex-Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway 0-6-0T (£2200), although both were outsold by a flamecut cabside panel from Class 55 Deltic No 55018 *Ballymoss*, which went for £3100. One of the nameplates from this Co-Co diesel was to sell a week later for £32,400 at a Talisman Railwayana auction, as reported in this column.

Also in the heritage modern traction selection were nameplates *Eastern Star* from Brush Traction 1964-built Class 47 Co-Co D1765/47733 (£2700) and *Port of Liverpool* with badge, from another Class 47, D1988/47286, built by BR at Crewe in 1966 (£2600),

while a 1962 North British of Glasgow worksplate (works No. 27930) from 'Baby Warship' D6357, the last of this short-lived class of Bo-Bo diesel-hydraulics to be built, fetched £1950.

Now is the time for the spotlight to shine on station totem signs, of which 104 went under the hammer. Top of the line-up was BR(NE) Saltburn that fetched £4500, followed by three more North Eastern Region examples: Malton, which went for £4100, Apperley Bridge (£4000), and Seamer, whose price of £3200 was matched by Southern Region Clapham Junction.

Other platform signs included London Underground roundels Paddington (£2800), Aldgate East (£2500), and Baker Street (£1700), and the top SR target with a realisation of £1300 was from the former LSWR station of Bursledon. Signalling played its part too, particularly with six GWR lever plates that sold in two lots, each for £2100.

On March 10, the day before the main sale, auctioneer Simon Turner held an auction of shedplates, watches, clocks, paintings, posters, and other general railwayana, in which the bestseller at £5500 was

an original painting by Don Breckon titled 'The Haymaking', depicting a GWR 2251 class 0-6-0 on a local train passing farmworkers in the 1930s.

Behind with a realisation of £2500 was an 18-inch dial teak-cased platform regulator clock supplied to the LBSCR in 1868 that spent its entire railway life at Crowborough station. Prices at both auctions exclude buyer's premium 15% (+ VAT).

"It was really buoyant and I am pleased with the way it went considering it was held during an intense period of auctions," said Simon, as he mulled over the two days' proceedings. "One of the highlights was definitely the high number of totems, all but two of which sold under the hammer."



THE CAMBRIAN COAST EXPRESS

FOR LOVERS OF STUNNING SCENERY, THE SINGLE TRACK RAILWAY THAT CLIMBS THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS OF MID-WALES, THEN HUGS THE CAMBRIAN COAST BY WAY OF TYFWYN, BARMOUTH, AND PORTMADOG TO PWLLHELI IS HARD TO BEAT.



FRIDAY 21 APRIL 2023

This rail excursion offers a wide variety of joining points along our journey, so relax in comfort on a through train to one of the most spectacular railway lines in Britain.

From Shrewsbury the train will set-off for Mid-Wales, over easy ground and back into the valley of the River Severn, which is close by through Welshpool to Newtown, soon after which we enter the valley of the Afon Garno, followed almost to the summit and deep rock cutting at Talerddig.

Helter-skelter downhill then to Machynlleth and to Dovey Junction, where we take the north side of the Dyfi Estuary, running on a seawall towards Aberdyfi, then turn north to Tywyn, onto the cliffs at Friog and down to cross Morfa Mawddach on the half mile viaduct to Barmouth/Abermaw.

On then past the great fortress at Harlech to Minffordd and across the Glaslyn Estuary, with views before Portmadog. A final run, much of it close to the shoreline, leads past Criccieth to the end of the line at Pwllheli.

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Bristol Temple Meads	0600	0050
Bristol Parkway	0620	0040
Cam & Dursley	0640	0010
Cheltenham Spa	0710	2350
Worcestershire Parkway	0740	2320
Bromsgrove	0800	2300
*Birmingham New St.	0840	2220
*Wolverhampton	0900	2200
*Shrewsbury	1015	2105

Estimated Timings



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SATURDAY 29 APRIL 2023

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Cornwall's only Cathedral City with a branchline to Falmouth

Option B - Camborne for Trevithick Day (12:40 - 16:25)

Join in the celebrations of a Cornwall's most famous inventor renowned for engineering and his hometown.

Option C - St Erth for St Ives (12:50 - 16:10)

For the scenic branchline to picturesque St Ives

Option D - Penzance (13:00 - 16:00)

Enjoy time at leisure in Cornwall's most westerly town of Penzance. Perhaps take a bus to visit nearby Marazion for St Michaels Mount, Mousehole, Newlyn or Lands End.

This train will be hauled by a pair of West Coast Railways Class 37 diesel locomotives.

Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Dorridge	0550	2315
Warwick Parkway	0605	2300
Leamington Spa	0615	2250
Banbury	0635	2250
Oxford	0700	2200
Swindon	0750	2115
Chippenham	0810	2055
Bath Spa	0830	2030
Bristol Temple Meads	0850	2010

Estimated Timings

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First Class	£185	£145	£720
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'CORNISH' PRAIRIE BACK ON THE CLAY FREIGHT

With a GWR prairie that was once based at St Blazey shed visiting the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, where it ran in British Railways days, a golden opportunity was taken to run it with the line's growing rake of restored Cornish clay hood wagons, a classic piece of the duchy's proud railway heritage, as **John Titlow** reports in words and pictures.

Collett 2-6-2T No. 5553 departs Boscarne Junction after crossing the River Camel with the dirtied clay hood rake on the 30742 charter.



When it comes to railways in Cornwall, what first comes to mind is the Great Western Railway and its engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, and before them, Richard Trevithick, the father of the steam locomotive.

At the heart of the duchy sits the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, conveniently situated within driving distance of major resorts. Its route from Bodmin Parkway to Boscarne Junction includes part of the original Bodmin & Wadebridge Railway; historically, it has a peculiar history by virtue of its original isolation and later as the meeting point of two railway 'empires'.

Opened in 1834, the year after Trevithick's death in Dartford at the age of 62, it was built to carry minerals to the port at Wadebridge from the Wenfordbridge and Ruthernbridge branches, while returning trains carried sea sand used to improve agricultural

"The clay trains that ran long after other routes in the duchy and fell victim to the Beeching axe gave a breathing space – during which the heritage sector matured to the point where it had more resources to save surviving lines."

land. Another branch ran into Bodmin North to carry passengers, although trains were irregular.

The Bodmin & Wadebridge was the first steam-powered railway in the duchy, but it operated on a shoestring. Floods in 1847 washed away several bridges and it was bought by the London & South Western Railway, which was hoping to get a foothold into the county for an eventual push westwards. Three 1834-built original carriages from

the B&WR are preserved in the National Railway Museum.

The present Bodmin Parkway station, originally named Bodmin Road, was built by the Cornwall Railway and opened in 1859. That same year, Brunel's masterpiece, the Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash, finally connected the duchy via the Cornwall Railway to the rest of the national network.

In 1876, the Cornwall Railway became part of the GWR. Bodmin Road became a junction station with the opening of line in 1887 to Bodmin General, which was located near the centre of what was then the county town. A year later, the line was extended to Boscarne Junction to meet up with the Bodmin & Wadebridge; in doing so, it became a meeting point between great rivals the GWR and LSWR and the respective cultures.

From Waterloo via Exeter, the LSWR eventually reached Wadebridge in 1895 via the North Cornwall Railway and Wadebridge Junction, and its final section to Padstow was opened in 1899, marking the western extremity of the 'Withered Arm'.

Passenger services between Bodmin Road and Padstow ceased on January 30, 1967. Freight continued to Wadebridge until 1978, one commodity being powdered slate from Delabole Quarry, for which a vacuum system was installed to load Presflo wagons. The last locomotive-hauled passenger train was a seven-coach special from the Midlands, hauled by Class 25 No. 25080 on September 30, 1978. A charity DMU trip from Bodmin on December 17 was the final passenger train of all.

By then, the heritage sector had already gained a foothold of sorts on the line. The nascent Great Western Society stored stock and equipment at various locations around the former GWR. The society leased the Bodmin General engine shed from 1969 and kept its 1910-built GWR 0-6-0ST No. 1363 there, occasionally using it for trips around the station. With the gradual closure of these sites and the focus being on the society's collection on Didcot Railway Centre, rolling stock and also fixtures and fittings were moved.

After Wadebridge closed to freight, the rest of the line remained open for the clay trains that ran over the Wenfordbridge branch to serve the Wenford clay dries, which processed china clay extracted on Bodmin Moor.

The Wenfordbridge line has long been famous in enthusiast circles as the last outpost of the legendary three surviving LSWR Beattie 0298 class 2-4-0 well tanks, which had been designed for London suburban service and built between 1863 and 1875. Most were withdrawn by 1898, but in 1895, three were transferred to the Bodmin & Wadebridge, which finally became linked to the LSWR network that year, and remained in serviced until 1962 because of the sharp curves of the Wenfordbridge branch. Replaced by GWR 1366 class pannier tank and later Class 08s, two of the Beatties have been preserved – No. 30585 at the Buckinghamshire Railway





South Devon Railway-based GWR 0-6-0PT No. 6412 runs round at Bodmin General.



Cut-down Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 3058 of 1953 *Alfred* and Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 2766 of 1944 No. 75178 inside Bodmin shed.

Centre and No. 30587 by the NRM. The line to Wenfordbridge stayed open until 1983, when complete closure of the route took place.

Entering the heritage sector – this time for keeps

Shortly after the closure, efforts began to save the branch as a heritage line: the clay trains that ran long after other routes in the duchy and fell victim to the Beeching axe were given a breathing space – during which the heritage sector had matured to the point where it had more resources to save surviving lines.

In 1984, the Bodmin Railway Preservation Society was formed and created Bodmin Railway plc, which successfully raised funds to purchase the line from Bodmin Parkway to Boscarne Junction via Bodmin General with the assistance of North Cornwall District Council.

The society held its first open day in 1986 when Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2962 of 1950 *Devonport Dockyard No. 19* shunted at Bodmin General.

The railway today consists of three separate entities, B&WR plc, the B&WR Trust and the society. Under a proposed merger and restructuring, the name will change to simply Bodmin Railway.

The society has nearly 1000 members and a volunteer work force of about 150. The railway has about 20 paid staff, some full-time, some part-time, according to the time of year.

A Light Railway Order was granted in 1989 and passenger services began on June 17, 1990, between Bodmin Parkway and Bodmin General, and the line was extended to Boscarne Junction in 1996, giving a 6½ mile journey. Because of its complex history, the line is unique in preservation, having its main station on a wye: after running round, trains run on a completely different line in the opposite direction. Each branch has sections of 1-in-40 gradient.

Sadly, the final 4 ½-miles section from Boscarne Junction to Wadebridge remains a long-term objective fraught with problems. This section is now a cycle track, the Camel Trail, and Sustrans has a reputation for being protective of its routes. A relaid line would pass a vineyard, and concerns that smoke would ruin the grapes have been expressed!

The extension blueprint envisages an extension to Nanstallon Halt, then Grogley Halt, and finally to a new terminus at Guineaport on the outskirts of Wadebridge (the original Wadebridge station is now the John Betjeman Centre, named after the Poet Laureate who loved the locality. A founding member of the Victorian Society, he helped save St Pancras station from demolition.

Motive power today

There is a reasonable collection of steam locomotives on the railway. At the time of my visit, three steam locomotives were

operational. Collett GWR small prairie No. 5553, which was built at Swindon in 1928, is on hire for the season from Peak Rail. No. 5553 was transferred to St. Blazey shed (83E) in November 1960, and, as reported last issue, would have worked both passenger and freight/clay trains on the lines around Bodmin.

Its visit has quite rightly been welcomed as a homecoming. No. 5553 also spent a few months at the Moorswater sub shed on the Looe branch prior to its dieselisation and was withdrawn in November 1961.

It was the last locomotive to leave Barry in January 1990 when it was transported to the Dean Forest Railway. Having spent nearly 28 years in the scrapyard from March 1962, it holds the record for being the longest resident there.

Swindon 1924-built GWR pannier No. 6412 is on hire from the South Devon Railway until early summer and will join No. 5553 at the May 20-21 Spring Steam Gala. Home-based diminutive Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2572 of 1937 *Judy* is in service.

Nearing the completion of its overhaul is a sister to No. 5553, Swindon 1928-built No. 5552, which is expected to be back in traffic in May. No stranger to Cornwall, it was shedded at Truro (83F); the senior driver on the railway, Courtney Berryman, started his working life in the late 1950s cleaning and firing it.



Above: Port of Par Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Judy* being prepared for shunting at Bodmin Shed on March 31. The 1934-built locomotive, along with sister *Alfred*, would have regularly shunted clay wagons beneath the low bridge under the main line at Par on the track leading to the docks.

Right: Visiting GWR pannier No. 6412 at Boscarne Junction on March 30.





Small prairie No. 5553 departs Bodmin Parkway station with its clay freight train on March 31. The classic GWR footbridge at the main line station is to be replaced by Network Rail later this year.



End of the line... for the moment: No. 5553 stands at Boscarne Junction with the dirtied clay hood wagons on April 1.



No. 5553 runs into Bodmin General station in pouring rain with its clay train charter working on March 31.

Awaiting overhaul are GWR 0-6-0PTs No. 4612, built at Swindon in 1928, and auto-fitted No. 6435, also built at Swindon but in 1937, Bagnall J94-type 0-6-0ST No.2766 of 1944 No. 75178, *Devonport Dockyard No.19* and *Judy's* sister, No. 3058 of 1953 *Alfred*. Both *Alfred* and *Judy* have impeccable Cornish pedigrees as Port of Par engines used for shunting china clay wagons under low bridges. They became *Bill* and *Ben* in the Rev Wilbert Awdry's Thomas the Tank Engine stories.

Diesels in service are BR Class 50 D442/50042 *Triumph*, built 1968, Class 47/3 No. D1787/47306 *The Sapper*, built 1963, Sentinel Rolls-Royce 0-4-0 No. S10029 *Denise* and Class 08 No. 08359, a recent visitor. Awaiting overhaul are Class 37 D6842/37142, Class 08 D3359/08444 (expected to enter works soon) and Class 10 D3452. Awaiting repairs is Class 121 'Bubblecar' No. 121020.

Clay heritage recreated

One of the unmistakable features of parts of the Cornish landscape are the lunar-like mountains of unwanted quartz and undecayed

feldspar from kaolin or china clay pits, principally to be found around the St Austell area but also to a lesser extent on Bodmin Moor. Kaolin is a product of decomposing granite found on the moors of Cornwall and Devon, an important raw material in many industries and applications. Its extraction and recovery also generated a sizeable volume of freight traffic over the region's network.

As reported in issue 270, a proposal to create a preserved rake of china clay wagons to reflect the duchy's rail freight heritage was begun by Bodmin & Wenford Railway member Evan Gray and his dad Bryan, restoring the eight clay hood wagons that are currently based on the heritage line. The mission is to create a rake similar to the Great Central Railway's fabled 'windcutter' rake of 16-ton mineral wagons, for enthusiasts and also as an attraction for the general public.

The clay hoods that transported china clay to Fowey harbour were the last generation of a wagon design that had changed little since the late 19th century. The four-wheeled wooden-bodied wagons with open tops allow

the loading from above and side and/or end doors for discharge. The vehicles preserved at Bodmin are eight of 875 built by BR to this design between 1954 and 1960. Originally, the wagons were covered with sheets when loaded to keep the clay dry, but the sheets were easily torn, sometimes stuck to the load, and tended to gather water in the corners. In the early 1970s, BR modified the wagons with a raised ridge bar, over which tough plastic sheeting was draped to keep it well clear of the load. This modification gave a tent-like appearance which earned the wagons the nickname of clay hoods.

Nearly 500 wagons remained in service in the mid-1980s. They rarely left the West Country, working to Fowey from around a dozen clay dries in Cornwall and Devon, including Wenford, but were seen later on in Devon on the Torrington line, specially marked for ball clay only.

As reported in issue 294, as a result of the Grays' initiative, the Bodmin & Wenford made history by running the first rake of china clay hoods in the heritage era. The three-wagon



Prairie No. 5553 and Bagnall saddle tank Judy both in steam alongside Class 47 No. 47306 at Bodmin General on March 30.

train made its public debut on a freight driver experience course headed by GWR 0-6-0PT No. 4612 on Saturday, May 17, 2022.

Those three wagons are the first in a planned rake of nine, Nos. B743795, B743353 and B743171, with the bodywork repainted and the distinctive blue hoods fitted, returning them to 1970s condition. Six more of the BR-built 13-ton vehicles, including four derelict examples acquired from the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway in 2019 and 2020, now await full restoration, with a fourth well on the way.

On March 31, I visited the railway to attend an event organised by Martin Creese, of 30742 Charters, and found it unmissable – here was No. 5553, a locomotive that is historically correct for the branch, with the now unique clay hoods. The following day, Martin did a second charter with the clay hoods. If you wish to join him on further charters, email mail.30742@btinternet.com

Innovation and heritage award

As reported in News, pages 12/13, the railway just has scooped a new national accolade – the Heritage Railway Association's Award for Business Innovation 2023, in the form of the Cornish Rail Coffee Company.

This recent innovation saw the heritage line branch out by opening snack and drink outlets. One is at Bodmin General and others are at the main line stations of Bodmin Parkway and Liskeard. Par is currently having the design work completed for its refurbishment, and another major station in Cornwall and others in Devon are being considered. The idea is to create ongoing revenue streams that are not dependent on the success of the heritage operation, but that nonetheless have a strong railway link, creating a style that reflects the traditions of the main line railway.

This recognises that the heritage railway of the future will not be sufficiently funded

by merely operating trains and that there is a need to diversify and widen the scope of the business.

"This not only generates a revenue stream, but also gives us advertising potential to new audiences and in new locations for our heritage railway," said a spokesman.

I have to say, I found the pasties at Bodmin General to be excellent.

Services and galas

All trains on the line are timed from Bodmin General: during April, May and October, there is a four-train service at 10.45am, noon, 1.35pm and 2.50pm. Peak season starts in June, running through July, August and September with a five-train service at 10.30am, 11.50am, 1.15pm, 2.35pm and 3.45pm. There will be diesel days on selected Saturdays.

Fares are £19.90 for adults, £10.50 for children, £18.90 for senior citizens/concessions, £47.50 for family of three



Right: More on the way: Wagon restoration in the Bodmin General workshops. The ground-breaking heritage era china clay rake will get longer...

Left: With its clay hood rake in tow, No. 5553 heads through the woods after departing Boscarne Junction on April 1, the second day of the 30742 photographic charter.

Right: The Bodmin & Wenford Railway's Heritage Railway Association award-winning Cornish Rail Coffee Company operation inside the signalbox at Bodmin Parkway.



(including one child aged between three and 16), £57.50 for a family of two adults and two children, £80 for a compartment and £1.75 a dog.

There is free parking at Bodmin General and journeys take about two hours for the full round trip of 13 miles because of the run-rounds. Different operational procedures are involved in the run-rounds at each station.

The BWR is unique within the UK because of the wye configuration of two separate branch lines converging at Bodmin General. Tight curves and gradients of 1-in-40 for three miles on both branches add to its charm.

There is time for passengers to stretch their legs and enjoy the manoeuvres at each of the stations. Summer services offer cream teas that are collected from the station buffet; presently, there is no on train service because the dining carriages are being restored. Murder mystery evening trains operate twice a week at high season, and on board is a choice of fish and chips or Cornish pasties.

At the abovementioned May 20/21 gala, all visiting and home fleet locomotives will be working with a two-train service, plus the clay train will be out. September 9/10 will see the China Clay Gala, a mixed traffic weekend unique to the line.

A diesel gala will take place on September 30 and October 1. The year rounds off with an end-of-season mixed traction weekend on October 14/15 and again, the clay rake should be out for this.

A word of warning. Cornish roads are notoriously busy and get clogged, especially during the school holidays in July and August. Arriving by train is a more relaxed and easier way to travel down over the route of the original GWR by the modern-day Great Western Railway. Its trains conveniently stop at Bodmin Parkway from all directions



Small prairie No. 5553 climbs up towards Bodmin General on the Boscarne branch with specially dirtied clay hoods during the 30742 charter on April 1.

and it is a simple cross over platforms via the historic footbridge (due to be removed this year) to join Bodmin & Wenford trains.

For longer journeys from the south east, there is the overnight sleeper from

Paddington. Book tickets via gwr.com

Before travelling on this wonderful historic line, it is worth looking at <https://bodminrailway.co.uk> for timetables and events, and to learn more about its history. **HR**

Former St Blazey locomotive No. 5553 sits at Bodmin General Station with its clay train. St Blazey shed would have provided motive power for the clay-carrying lines around the St Austell china clay area, including the Wenfordbridge branch, as well as the two branches to Fowey, one on which, running from Par, was later converted to a lorry-only road.



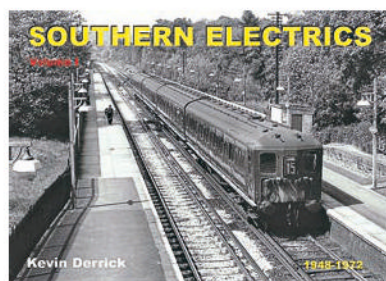
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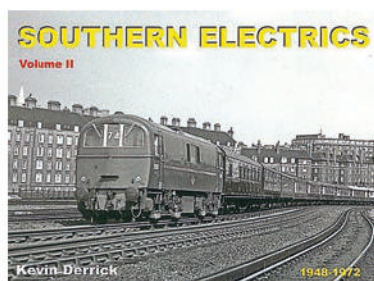
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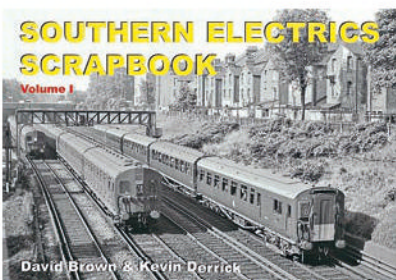
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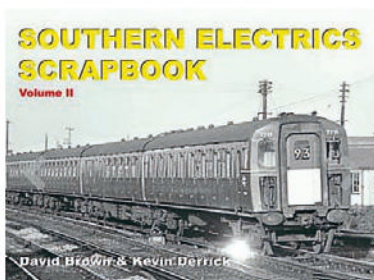
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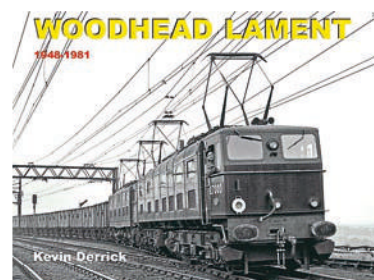
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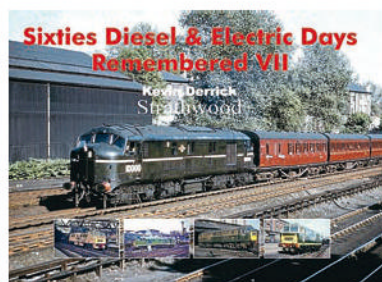
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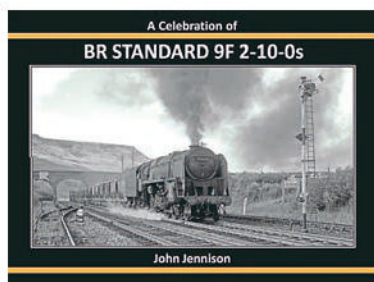
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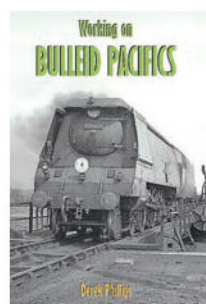
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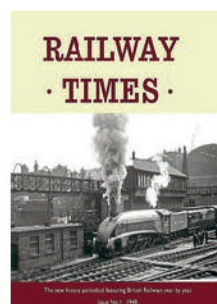
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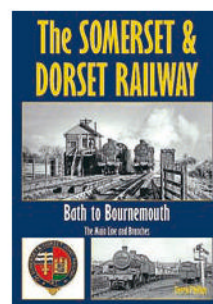
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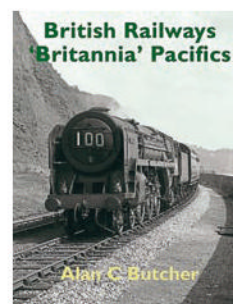
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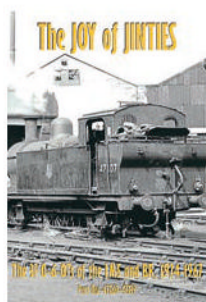
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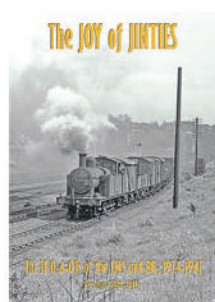
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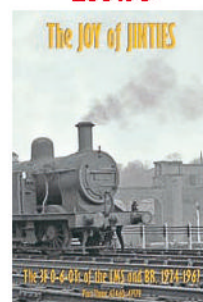
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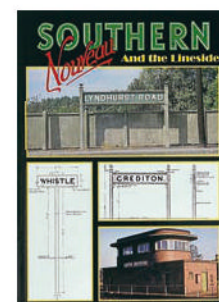
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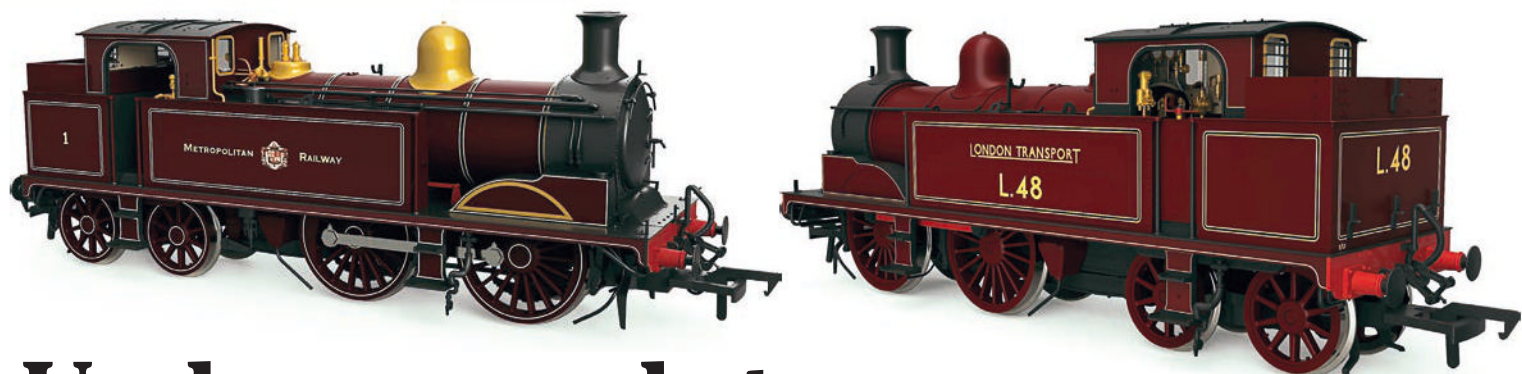
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Underground steam emerges from Rapido tunnels

CURRENT or would-be modellers of London Underground's pre-modern fixed unit formation days were undoubtedly delighted when Heljan released the Metropolitan Bo-Bo locomotives a few years ago. Now, manufacturer Rapido Trains UK has revealed it is in the advanced stages of a steam locomotive to go alongside – the Metropolitan Railway 0-4-4T E class, specifically No. 1 (L44). It was the star of the LU150 celebrations back in 2013 when it returned to run on the first section of the world's first underground railway, enjoying a

moment of fame that some may say overshadowed the likes of *Flying Scotsman* or *Stephenson's Rocket*.

Since then, many have asked whether this icon of LU steam would ever appear in model form other than just as a kit or scratchbuilt example. Manufacturers are rumoured to have looked at it, but until now, nothing has been confirmed.

In partnership with TFL, Rapido has been working away on this new announcement behind closed doors that enabled the firm to reveal it just ahead

of the British Festival of Railway Modelling at Alexandra Palace, London, over the weekend of March 18/19, with development at such an advanced stage that it has already reached engineering prototype.

The seven E class locomotives received numerous modifications over their working lives, with No. 1 being built in 1898 between two batches of the class to replace a 4-4-0T A class that was scrapped after an accident. It is rumoured that many parts used were spares from the two that came two years before it (Nos. 77 and 78). As such, the Rapido model will focus almost solely on No. 1 as it appeared in London Transport and preserved conditions. The exception to this is No. 81, which has been found to be close enough in detail to warrant production as L48. The three versions of No. 1 will cover it as L44 from its late LT career, Metropolitan Railway-lettered maroon as carried between 1999 and 2009, and the more recent Metropolitan 1 worn between 2013 and 2020.

Features of the model will reflect the high standards of the manufacturer and include firebox flicker, fine detailing, a smooth and powerful mechanism, and a Next18 decoder socket with factory-fitted sound speaker.

RRP starts at £179.95 for standard DC versions, with sound-fitted examples priced at £279.95. Models will be available either directly through Rapido's webstore or its approved stockists, many of which will be offering slight discounts on the RRP.



Locomotion commissions the first 'Toffee Apple'

THE first of the BR class 31 locomotives, D5500 (31018), which is part of the National Collection and can be found in the Great Hall at the National Railway Museum in York, is the latest exclusive from Locomotion Models, which has commissioned manufacturer Accurascale UK to produce the 'Toffee Apple' (the nickname being derived

from the shape of its control key) in OO scale, utilising its currently under-development new tooling of the class.

D5500 was built in 1957 by Brush Electrical Engineering at Loughborough Works as part of the 1955 BR Modernisation Plan to replace steam; originally built as



Class 30, it was reclassified as 31 after being re-engined during the 1960s.

D5500 was withdrawn in July 1976 and then restored at Doncaster, and has spent some time in preservation operating on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway but is now on static display at the NRM.

DCC-ready and sound-fitted versions will be produced depicting the locomotive in its current No. 31018 guise, in BR blue with full yellow ends and headcode discs.

As per Accurascale's other examples being modelled, features include a wealth of fine detail and separately fitted parts, ranging from

footsteps to brake rigging, with pipework on the battery box and air tank.

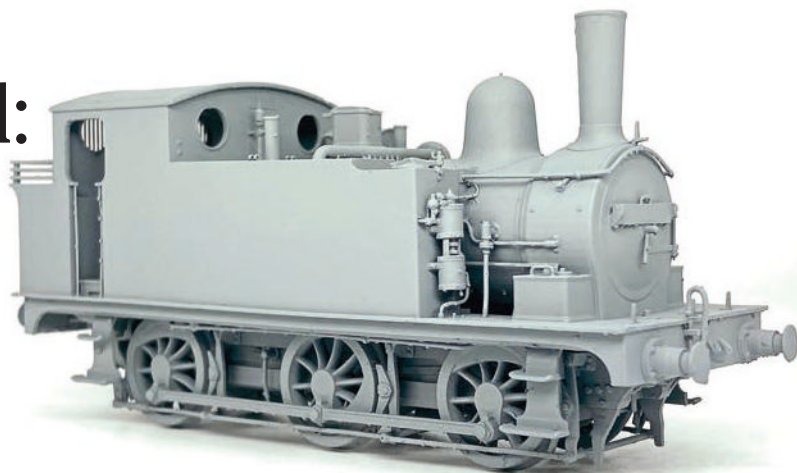
Working lights and a scale speed roof fan (that will operate on both DC and DCC versions) are also part of the model specifications.

Models can be secured with a either full payment upfront of the £169.99 retail price (for DCC-ready; £269.99 DCC sound-fitted) or with a £30 deposit, and remaining payment taken at a later date. Delivery is expected in the early part of 2024.

For full details or to place an order, visit locomotionmodels.com or call 01904 685785.



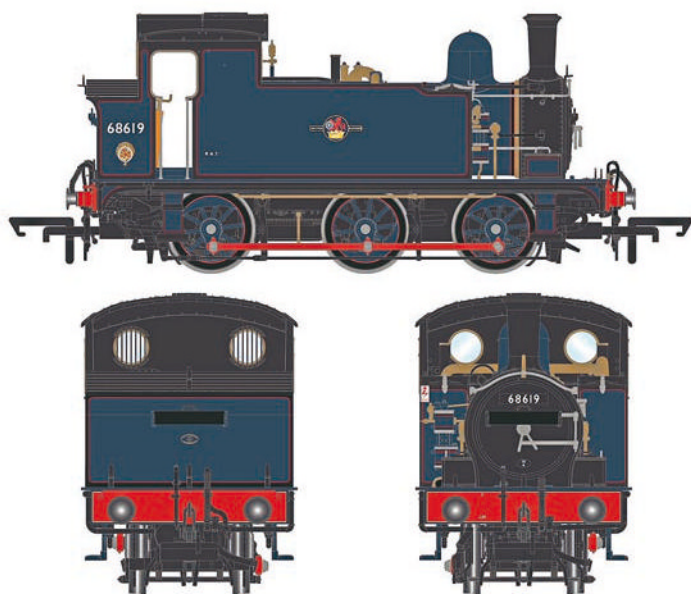
Bucking the trend: Accurascale's Eastern region 0-6-0T



ANOTHER exciting announcement from Accurascale will help to fill the gap in the GER/LNER/BR(E) pool of small tank engines – James Holden's J67/68/69 0-6-0Ts that were affectionately nicknamed 'Buckjumpers'. Some claim this was because of the design's ability to start off like a startled rabbit, while others argue that at any speed

approaching 40mph, they developed a distinct gyration.

The J67 (introduced as GER class R24 in 1890) were utilised on suburban and branch passenger workings as well as shunting duties, with a number being reboilered and later reclassified as J69, along with the similar later



GER class S56. The J68, meanwhile, started as GER class C72, the first being built in 1912. Variations of each during their working lives saw some fitted with condensing gear and Westinghouse pumps.

Sadly, only one example of the three classes survived into preservation; J69 GER No. 87 is another locomotive in the National Collection and is currently on display at Bressingham Steam Museum in Norfolk.

Perhaps the most famous example of the 'Buckjumpers' was BR(E) No. 68619, which ended its working life as the Liverpool Street station pilot painted in GER dark blue with red lining. It was withdrawn on October 30, 1961, after 57 years of service.

Accurascale has announced five running numbers in this first batch of these well-loved tank engines, which includes No. 68619 in its final guise.

BR unlined black with both early and late crests, lined LNER black, and GER ultramarine blue variants are also on offer. Models will include features such as die cast boiler and chassis, fully detailed cabs with magnetic roof for access that also boast sliding roof ventilators, firebox glow and full sound provision.

Delivery is anticipated in the second quarter of 2024; a 3D-printed sample was on show on the manufacturer's stand during the British Festival of Railway Modelling, with decorated samples expected towards the end of 2023.

Prices are set at £139.99 for DC models and £239.99 for sound-fitted versions, with all bar the Liverpool Street pilot available through the manufacturer's website and its approved stockists. The model of No. 68619 is a manufacturer exclusive; to place your order, visit accurascale.com

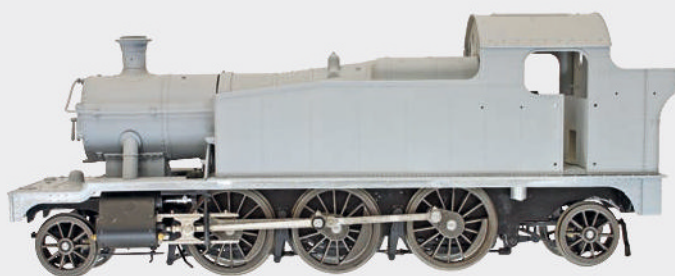
Dapol builds on Lionheart's WR 2-6-2T small prairies in O...

HAVING completed its O gauge WR 45XX class locomotives, Lionheart Trains (owned by Dapol) has announced it is now looking at the later 55XX class of small prairie locomotives.

The first samples have been received by the manufacturer and assembled by hand for review, with feedback now given to the

factory and artwork development underway. Further samples are expected in the second quarter of 2023.

Nine different liveries will be available, spanning early GWR to late BR green and black colours, with a numbered version of each being released alongside unnumbered examples for all colour



schemes. RRP starts at £513.33 for DCC-ready models (£672.77 sound-fitted), which will boast features

similar to the 45XX models, including die-cast metal chassis and wheels, but also a working vacuum pump.

...and announces new GWR autocoches in OO

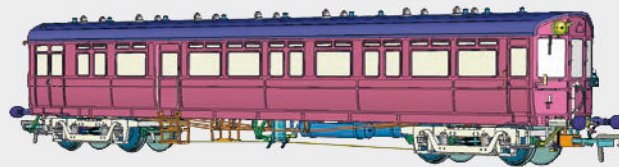
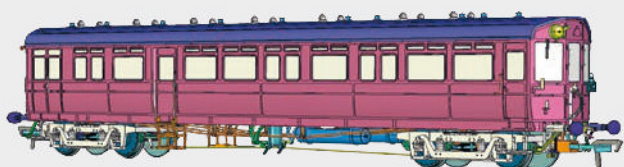
STICKING with the Western Region, Dapol also announced it would produce the diagram 'N' version of the GWR autocoches that were built as new vehicles during 1907 and not conversions from withdrawn steam railmotors.

One of the six built under lot 1126, of which Dapol is basing its models, No. 38 survives in

preservation at the Telford Steam Railway and this will be replicated in OO form as W38 in BR maroon livery, one of seven models being produced each in a different livery, including GWR and BR variations.

The model will boast the usual wealth of separately fitted detail, along with a removable

roof to facilitate the fitting of crew and passengers. Workings interior lights will also be available on DCC and sound-fitted versions of each. Currently at the CAD stage, prices start at £80 RRP, rising to £195 for DCC sound versions. Delivery is anticipated to be during the first quarter of 2024.





Above: *Blanche* at the quarry in 1960, giving a clear view of the cab backsheet that was originally fitted to the Hunslet.

DR T GOUGH/TRANSPORT LIBRARY

Left: With the final years of the Penrhyn Quarry approaching, *Blanche* is pictured at work during 1960. The following year, it was offered to both the Tallyllyn and Ffestiniog railways for £2500, which initially declined to purchase, but it eventually arrived on the FR in December 1963.

DR T GOUGH/TRANSPORT LIBRARY

Ffestiniog's old ladies

With Bachmann having recently released the Penrhyn Quarry Hunslets in 009 scale, **Luke Ryan** delves into the history of these two popular Ffestiniog Railway locomotives.

PENRHYN Quarry – the largest slate quarry in the world come the end of the 19th century, boasting a pit a mile long and 1200ft deep. With slate extraction at Penrhyn dating as far back as 1570, and it still being the largest slate quarry in Britain, it's no surprise it is now an integral part of the newest British UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Slate Landscape of North West Wales.

The quarry's long affair with railways begun in 1793 when William Jessop, a civil engineer best known for his work with canals and harbours, suggested that its owners ought to build a tramway to convey slate straight to Port Penrhyn.

Construction started on September 2, 1800, at a cost of £170,000; the first slate train ran on the Penrhyn Railroad on June 25, 1801. The railroad was

horse-drawn on the up journey and gravity worked on the down – with three balanced inclines along the way.

Come 1868, Charles Easton Spooner, the man responsible for bringing steam traction to the Ffestiniog Railway and arguably introducing narrow gauge steam on the whole, wrote to Lord Penrhyn, proposing that the railroad should be replaced with a new line designed for steam haulage in mind. Spooner was given the task of surveying the aforementioned new line in 1872, and by July 1875, the decision to replace the railroad and introduce steam had been made.

The new line was planned to take a less direct route than the railroad to avoid the necessity of using inclines and provide a single line straight from the quarry to the port. In 1877, two

De Winton vertical boiler locomotives arrived from Caernarfon to help with the construction, the first sod being cut on March 7, 1878. Just one year later on October 3, 1879, the first steam-hauled train was operated on the newly-named Penrhyn Quarry Railway.

The Hunslets arrive

The massive output from Penrhyn Quarry eventually proved too much for the De Winton locomotives, the heavy trains outmatching their power. So, in 1882 the railway made an order with Hunslet of Leeds for a large 0-4-0ST. Hunslet No.283, or *Charles* as the locomotive would become named, was soon to make a very big impact on the fledgling railway, with the design reputedly being influenced by a batch of Darjeeling A class locomotives

that were subcontracted to Hunslet.

At a gauge of 1ft 10³/₄in with 2ft 1in diameter driving wheels, *Charles* proved to be very successful at its job, hauling the heaviest of loads with ease – but the output of the quarry was relentless, and with only one suitable locomotive, more were sought.

Soon to follow were younger sisters *Linda* and *Blanche* in 1893, built to the same basic design as *Charles* but with a subtle difference – gone were the square front cab spectacle plates, replaced by a more traditional round design.

The three together would become known as the Penrhyn main line Hunslets and would be the mainstay of the Penrhyn Quarry Railway right up until the end. The trio



Above: pictured in August 1964 following further modifications to fit the gauge of Garnedd Tunnel and clearly showing the absence of a leading pony wheel, something which would not be added until 1970. FF&WHR

Left: *Linda* backs towards the Penrhyn Quarry's locomotive sheds on October 2, 1961. The bucket hanging off of the smokebox dart (which carried extra sand as both locomotives only had small sandboxes) became synonymous with the locomotives during their quarry lives. COLOUR RAIL



Dating from 1893, former Penrhyn Quarry Railway Hunslet's *Blanche* and *Linda* have undergone numerous modifications since their quarry days, including fitting of leading pony wheels, addition of tenders, conversion to oil firing, and back again to coal-fired. FFWHR

worked Penrhyn's main line reliably, even outlasting three Baldwin locomotives bought in 1924 that proved unsuitable.

Fast forward to the 1940s, and the devastating destruction from World War Two created a boom for the Welsh slate industry thanks to the reconstruction efforts happening countrywide. Sadly, this was only to be for a short period as new man-made materials and cheaper foreign slate imports were beginning to creep their way into a market that once seemed untouchable. Penrhyn's export of slate was of much higher quality but came with a price tag to match. Traffic steadily declined throughout the 1950s, and with road haulage becoming favourable, with the ability to take slate directly from the quarry

to where it was wanted without the use of the harbour, the writing was slowly being chalked on the wall for the Penrhyn Quarry Railway.

Charles had been out of regular traffic since 1955, and the PQR attempted to sell *Linda* and *Blanche* for £1500 and £2500 respectively throughout 1961, with offers being made to the Ffestiniog and Talylyn railway. Both lines considered the price too high at the time, though this would not be the last interaction between Penrhyn and the Ffestiniog.

Joining the FR

On July 11, 1961, *Linda* would make its final trip on Penrhyn metals before moving to those of the Ffestiniog, being hired for the sum of £50 a week. It arrived at Minfordd via BR on July 14, first

steaming on the following day.

Linda performed well on the Ffestiniog, proving that it was worth the hire fee, although the issue of track gauge would soon come back to bite. As previously mentioned, the PQR was 1ft 10³/₄in gauge, whereas the Ffestiniog is 1ft 11¹/₂in. You might think that was not going to cause much of an issue, but when you are already riding a fine line of gauge, one thing being not quite right can cause an accident.

On September 5, 1962, *Linda* and 0-4-OSTT small England No. 2 *Prince* were thundering up the line when suddenly *Linda* leapt off the rails. Thankfully, *Prince* was able to hold *Linda* in place and stop it from plummeting down the embankment! The cause of this derailment was a combination of factors, the aforementioned gauge issue with *Linda* being under-gauged for the FR – and the belief that the track was slightly wide to gauge.

As a result of this unfortunate incident, for the 1963 season *Linda* was regauged to 1ft 11¹/₂in and fitted with vacuum brakes. The cab back sheet was removed and waggon No. 38 was attached as a temporary tender – that 'waggon' actually being a George England locomotive's tender, having previously belonged to No. 4 *Palmerston*.

In December of the same year, the Ffestiniog Railway bought *Linda* for the discounted sum of £1000, along with sister engine *Blanche* for £2000, which arrived at the FR on December

17. For 1964, *Linda* was further modified with a new cab roof profile so to fit through the constrictive Garnedd Tunnel, and a 'new' tender was fitted – made by altering the tender of yet another England, No. 5 *Welsh Pony* – to match the width of the cab side sheets. *Blanche* too would receive modifications such as regauging, conversion to left-hand drive, fitting vacuum brake equipment, and inheriting *Palmerston*'s old tender from *Linda* – with a doorway being cut in the cab backsheet akin to those on a George England locomotive.

Blanche would receive further modifications in 1965, such as cab roof reprofiling, removal of the cab back sheet, and a whole new tender with an extended cab as part of its structure – the top half of which is from the original cab backsheet.

'The ladies' have gone on to become a staple of the Ffestiniog's locomotive stud, both evolving even further over the years with the addition of front pony trucks and conversion to oil burning rather than traditional coal firing, in 1970 for *Linda* and 1971 for *Blanche* – turning them into oil-burning 2-4-OSTTs. They would stay as oil burners for more than 40 years, with both locomotives returning to coal firing only as recently as 2013.

Despite the full closure of the Penrhyn Quarry Railway in 1962, *Charles* also survives, having been donated to the National Trust. The locomotive now resides within Penrhyn Castle.



Although *Linda* can normally be found operating with its new tender, a backsheet does exist to allow it to appear in pseudo modified tank form, as pictured on one such occasion at some point during the 2000s. COLOUR RAIL



The models

Bachmann has really knocked it out of the park with these little beauties. Each model has a high level of detail, with various separately fitted parts. One feature that was absolutely not necessary but amazing nonetheless is the opening firebox door – which, of course, also has an LED flicker in there. The fact that models this small have fully open, fully detailed cab interiors is one thing, but to have an opening firebox door in there is just showing off – and I, for one, welcome that! Bachmann is very much pushing the limits of 009 with each new model released.

On offer are *Charles*, *Linda* and *Blanche*, all in original 0-4-0 Penrhyn condition. *Charles* and *Blanche* are in two variations of pristine Penrhyn

black, while the Penrhyn condition *Linda* is weathered up superbly well for what is a factory finish.

The latter model has some rather interesting and fun modelling possibilities as well, as it is worth mentioning just how close the Talylyn Railway came to purchasing the locomotive in 1961 when it was first offered up to the TR and FR.

The Talylyn's Chief Engineer – the legendary John Bate – drew up full proposals for conversion to 2ft 3in gauge without any need to alter the outside frames, though this would only leave a quarter of an inch wiggle room between frame and wheels! Money was the ultimate issue that lead to the TR passing on *Linda*, but with the model track gauge of 9mm scaling up to a perfect 2ft 3in, the possibility of a 'What If?' Talylyn Railway No. 7 *Linda* model is certainly a fun one! Similarly, by cutting away the rear cab sheet and requisitioning a tender from a PECO/Kato George England, one could produce a Ffestiniog 1963 condition *Linda*, running with the ragged remains of Palmerston's tender!

Finally, Bachmann also offer *Linda* as it would have

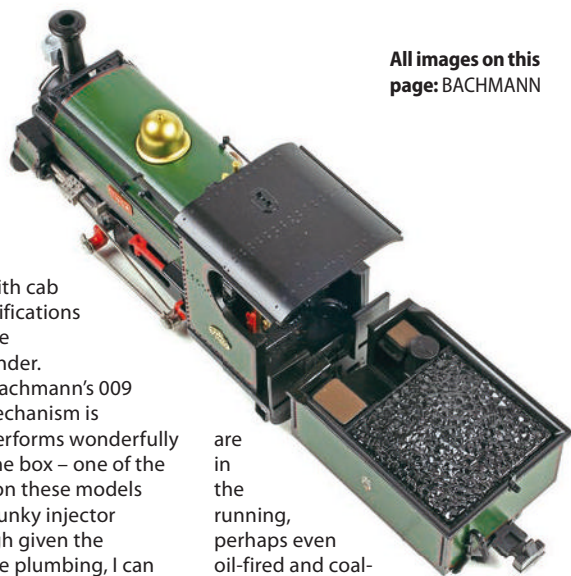
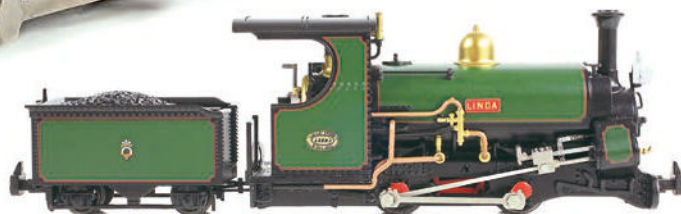
been seen during the 1964 to 1969 period on the Ffestiniog Railway, resplendent in Garraway green and complete with cab roof profile modifications and a much more sophisticated tender.

As with all of Bachmann's 009 offerings, the mechanism is gorgeous and performs wonderfully straight out of the box – one of the only detractors on these models is the slightly chunky injector pipework, though given the complexity of the plumbing, I can understand why injection moulding was chosen over individually bent and fitted brass wires! It is so good to see that Bachmann has truly committed to 009, and I cannot wait to see what else it brings. I'm sure 2-4-0 versions of *Linda* and *Blanche*

are in the running, perhaps even oil-fired and coal-fired variations?

While there may not be much at all to nit-pick, I do have one thing to say to Bachmann regarding the Penrhyn main line Hunslets – next time, please include a bucket for the front! **HR**

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AIN'T 'SNOW' STOPPING US NOW!

A March blizzard brought picturesque scenes to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, where an exciting gala with a strong Midland flavour resulted in stunning sights amidst valiant efforts by the line's volunteers to keep everything running.

Mother Nature tried her best to intervene in the March 9-12 steam gala at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. However, thanks to the sheer determination of volunteers – some of who were seen on webcams clearing station platforms not long after 7am while the signalling department was out clearing point and signal rodding – battling the sub-zero temperatures (which plummeted to -8°C on the Friday night and early hours of Saturday morning), the spectacle of steam carried on without too much disruption.

The spontaneous snowy snap greeted steam crews turning up in the early hours of the Thursday morning as they arrived to prep locomotives – which included no less than five LMS 4-6-0 designs, possibly the largest gathering of such locomotives in preservation.

The Jubilee class was represented by resident No. 45596 *Bahamas* and main line-registered

No. 45690 *Leander*, owned by Chris Beet. Alongside were three 'Black Five' examples, resident No. 45212 being joined by Ian Riley's Nos. 44871 (one of the pool of locomotives that hauled the 'Fifteen Guinea Special' before the BR steam ban on August 11, 1968) and 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*, both of which arrived by rail under their own steam in the few days prior to the event.

The latter was also sporting blue-backed smokebox number and shedcode plates ahead of it starting duty on the 'Jacobite' services on the West Highland Line on Monday, April 3.

Up to 10 locomotives could be found operating over the four days, other home fleet locomotives including L&YR 0-6-0 'Ironclad' Class 25 No. 52044 (back from the East Lancashire Railway, where it was fitted with a new smokebox door over the winter months), Taff Vale Railway 02 0-6-2T 02 No. 85, LNWR Webb Coal Tank 0-6-2T No. 1054, BR

Standards 2-6-0 2MT No. 78022 and 4-6-0 4MT No. 75078.

The conditions inevitably led to a few delays on the first day, with fresh snowfall starting that afternoon. Some minor timetable adjustments were required for the Friday, with a morning goods working, Keighley to Ingrow shuttle services cancelled and timings for other departures amended to cope. The weekend's timings ran as advertised, with only a locomotive substitution instigated that saw No. 85 operate in the place of No. 78022.

In addition to demonstration goods trains, there were multiple double-headers that saw the Jubilees and 'Black Fives' pair up with another, and full-line non-stop runs with carriages packed to the brim.

Shed tours at Haworth allowed visitors an insight into the workshop activities and to see overhauls taking place, including The Railway Children star pannier tank No. 5775. ➔

Midland Region 4-6-0s were the dominant force of what became an unexpectedly 'white' event. With snow covering the ground, 'Black Five' No. 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier* passes Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* at Damems loop on March 10. ROB BATTY





Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* crosses over Mytholme Viaduct at the helm of the 11.10am Keighley to Oxenhope service on March 10. PETER FOSTER



The cab of L&YR 'Ironclad' No. 52044 offers little protection to its crew, two of which are pictured on March 10 enjoying a moment of rest while a third tends to coal still dusted with snow from the previous night. ROB BATTY



The morning goods: on the last day of the gala, March 12, Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* passes through Oakworth with a demonstration freight working, observed closely by one of the platform staff. JOE CONNELL



Starting off the first day of the gala, LNWR Webb Coal Tank No. 1054 approaches Ingrow with the demonstration goods train. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR



Taff Vale Railway 02 0-6-2T No. 85 single-handedly lifts the six-coach Jubilee set out of Mytholmes Tunnel on the 9.30am Keighley to Oxenhope service on March 11. GRAHAM NUTTALL

Talks also took place at Ingrow, with Squadron Leader Dave Hunt RAF (Rt), chairman of the Midland Railway Society, discussing the differences at a glance between the Jubilees and 'Black Fives', while longstanding KWVR volunteer and LMS Society member David Pearson JP DL MA spoke about the history behind the names of the Jubilees – something far more complex than one might imagine.

The event saw a 15% rise in income over the previous year's event. Tom Marshall, marketing and communications coordinator, said: "This is very pleasing given the weather conditions and incredible customer satisfaction, with some saying it was the best steam gala event they have ever attended.

"We took a slight gamble on putting on such a large-scale event with the cost of living challenges and our own increased costs. However, it paid off and we will fight to stay ahead of the curve and retain our position as a destination for people looking for something special."

The KWVR is now preparing itself for the visit of LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*, which will be visiting during May. Tickets can be bought online now at flyingscotsmanfestival.co.uk 



Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 'Ironclad' No. 52044 and Taff Vale No. 85 climb through the snow-covered valley beside the River Worth near Damems with a morning service from Keighley to Oxenhope. BEN BUCKI

Stanier super power: On March 10, 'Black Fives' Nos. 44871 and 45212 climb towards Oxenhope, with Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* bringing up the rear. ROBERT FALCONER





Working the 4.15pm from Keighley, No. 52044 pilots No. 85 through the Worth Valley landscape, bound for Oxenhope. ANDREW DENNISON



As March 9 progressed, fresh snow began to fall, and it continued during the day and through into the night. No. 45690 *Leander* starts off from Oakworth with its first run up the valley. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR



As the sun begins to set on March 10, 'Jubilee' pair Nos. 45690 *Leander* and 45596 *Bahamas* double-head the 5.05pm departure up the gradient and away from Keighley station. ROB BATTY



Above: Despite the challenging conditions, the KWVR volunteers fought through it all to ensure things were kept running. KWVR

Left: LMS 'Black Fives' Nos. 45212 and 45407 cross Mytholmes Viaduct on March 10. ROBERT FALCONER

THE FOREST PANNIER: BACK IN ACTION

An award-nominated restoration, Western Region pannier tank No. 9681 was launched into traffic at the Dean Forest Railway at the start of March, and now the team responsible are setting their sights on the locomotive's immediate numerical successor. **Owen Hayward** attended and reports on the occasion.

While many were enjoying the snowy Yorkshire scenes of the gala in the Worth Valley on March 11, or preparing for the Heritage Railway Association awards taking place that evening, in the Forest of Dean something that may have otherwise been unnoticed was taking place – the release into service of newly-overhauled WR 5700 class 0-6-0PT No. 9681 and the launch of a fundraising appeal for the overhaul of its immediate numerical successor.

The pannier was released from the line's Norchard workshops in November 2022 and has since undergone test runs along the 4.5-mile line to run it in ahead of formal launch into traffic, which took place at the Norchard Low Level platform at 10am on March 11 as part of a DFR Society members' day. The rededication of No. 9681 was performed by retired Bishop Christopher Hill KCV, who was formerly Bishop of Stafford and Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Lichfield. He

blessed the locomotive with his silver-topped crozier (with which he took great care to avoid damaging the immaculately-applied BR unlined black paintwork), after which Dean Forest Locomotive Group trustee Tom Halford, who coordinated the overhaul of the pannier, was presented with an O gauge model of it in recognition of his efforts.

Following this, the service departed to Lydney Junction with No. 9681 working bunker first at the leading end. Bringing up the rear was resident GWR small prairie No. 5541 which, upon arrival at the junction, detached and collected the engineering freight set.

For the remainder of the day, both locomotives ran services between Lydney Junction and Parkend stations, with No. 5541 initially in charge of the freight set and No. 9681 on the rake of maroon-liveried Mk.1 and Mk.2 coaching stock. The pair then double-headed the 3.05pm out of Lydney Junction with the pannier piloting the prairie, with

the return leg seeing No. 5541 leading No. 9681. Upon arrival back at the junction, No. 9681 then took a turn on the freight set (terminating early at Norchard owing to a brake issue).

No. 9681 was built at Swindon in May 1949 and was first allocated to Tondur shed in South Wales. It was then transferred to Oswestry in April 1956, Cardiff Canton (December 1960), Barry (August 1962) and finally to Cardiff East Dock (January 1963), from where it was withdrawn in August 1965 before being sent to Barry scrapyard. Thankfully, it was saved by the Dean Forest Locomotive Group in 1975, becoming the 75th locomotive to leave Barry, and it returned to steam on the DFR in 1984.

Tired engine

Its last boiler certification expired in 2013 and although it was initially thought that overhaul would be swift, much more work was required as it was found to be quite worn out. That work has been done from the ground up,

and has seen much new metal required across the locomotive, including a new cab. A new ashpan sprinkler system has also been fitted to enable it to cope better during hot summers. A chimney was also cast, with the life-expired original put up for sale to raise funds for this. One piston was found to be bent and another loose, so these have also been replaced.

An estimated £350,000 has been spent on the overhaul, with volunteers attending to work on the project over several days in a week.

The openness of the site also enabled socially-distanced working to take place once restrictions permitted this. As much as possible was carried out in-house to reduce costs, with only some of the highly skilled tasks contracted out.

The result of all this effort, however, is an immaculately finished locomotive that is a true credit to those who have worked on it over the last decade, and it has been warmly welcomed by

The Dean Forest Loco Group's two operational ex-BR locomotives – WR 57XX 0-6-0PT No. 9681 and 4575 class 2-6-2T No. 5541 – double-head through St Mary's Halt with a members' special to Parkend. OWEN HAYWARD





No. 5541 rounds the curve onto Parkend Straight with an engineering ballast train from Lydney Junction. OWEN HAYWARD



Retired Bishop Christopher Hill KCVO takes great care to avoid scratching the paintwork as he blesses No. 9681 during the rededication ceremony on March 11. OWEN HAYWARD



Just a few of those who are responsible for the overhaul of No. 9681 (from left to right): Callum Bayliss, Tom Halford, Craig Morris, Charlie Mansell, Sam Rees and Mike Thomas. OWEN HAYWARD

locomotive crews on the railway which has often relied on Hunslet Austerity assistance over the last few years.

Trustee Josh Watkins said: "This project has been a culmination of effort from so many people. The No. 9681 restoration team owes its thanks to Charlie Mansell, Rauffe Shirley, Tom Buffin, Mike Thomas, Callum Baylis, Sam Rees and Matt Cowley as volunteers, plus Ed Freeman and Craig Morris as key sub-contractors. We may not have won the HRA award, but we did receive a fantastic certificate and were privileged to have reached the shortlist."

Focus has now turned to the group's second pannier tank, No. 9682, acquired in 2018 from the GWR Preservation Group at Southall along with GWR Todd brake van No. 17488, which is also being restored in the Norchard shed. Unfortunately, just prior to the sale, thieves stole parts worth £35,000 from a store there, meaning that the overhaul of the second pannier will be another expensive undertaking.



A stark contrast between two locomotives of the same class but in very different conditions. On March 10, newly overhauled WR pannier No. 9681 shunts its partially dismantled classmate and immediate numerical successor around the yard at Norchard to position it ready for the tanks and boiler to be craned off; this will allow a full assessment of the condition to take place. This will then help form the overhaul plan to return No. 9682 to steam. TOM HALFORD/DFLG

No. 9682 was outshopped from Swindon in tandem with No. 9681 but was allocated to Tyseley until July 1960 and withdrawn from Radyr in 1965. It was saved by the GWRPG in 1982 and overhauled at Southall, returning to traffic in 2000 before being withdrawn in June 2009 for overhaul.

Disassembly at the Dean Forest commenced over the winter while No. 9681 was running in, and on March 10 the locomotive was rolled out of the shed to facilitate

the removal of the tanks and boiler from the frames. With this complete, a full assessment of the work required to return No. 9682 to steam can now be carried out and work started.

During the last few years, when the need arose to order materials and parts for No. 9681, the opportunity was taken to double up and order what is needed for this second pannier tank.

However, with No. 5541 due out of traffic in mid-2024, no decision has yet been made as to whether the pannier or the small prairie will be the next to be completed and the final decision will very much depend on the available funding and the condition of the 2-6-2T when it is due for overhaul.

When No. 9682 returns to service, it could very well present a rare opportunity to see two numerically-sequential locomotives running in tandem – how many other railways can make a similar boast? **HR**

Support the overhaul of No. 9682

The DFLG is now raising funds for this overhaul, including an appeal for £2500 to purchase the replacement brake valve castings, some of which were those taken during the raid at Southall. Donations towards this or the general overhaul fund can be made by the following methods: via BACS to the Dean Forest Locomotive Group using sort code

20-33-83 and account number 10966932; by post to Dean Forest Railway, Forest Road, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 4ET; or online by visiting the website deanforestlocogroup.org. Donors are asked to please ensure that you make reference to '9682 overhaul/missing parts appeal' on any donations being made.

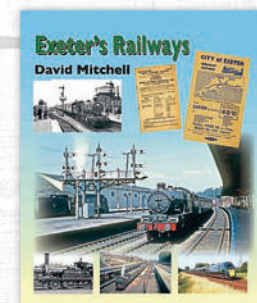
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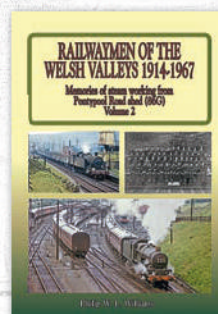
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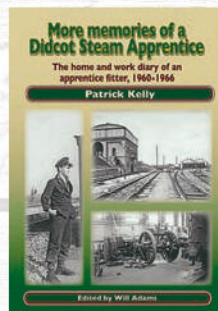
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TRACK TALK

→ Where was the Time Team viaduct?

AS a subscriber, I just love the magazine and I was wondering if you or the readers could help me?

One particular episode of a TV series called Time Team dealt with a partially buried railway viaduct that had been progressively roofed over as a spoil heap became larger.

I wondered if anyone could recall the location and the story behind it?

P Beckett,
Worthing, West Sussex



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GREAT RATES SEE PAGE 30

STAR LETTER

The day a Castle broke the speed limit at Didcot

THE article about the GWR Castles at Didcot Railway Centre in issue 304 of *Heritage Railway* brought back a memory from the 1950s.

I was then a teenager who, together with several other Didcot boys, travelled by train each day to school in Abingdon. Our school day ended at 3.30pm, but after-school activities kept us there and we returned home on a train just before 5pm.

However, sometimes we could get an earlier train at about 3.45pm, which got us to Didcot just before the Up 'Bristolian' was due and we would wait to see it – always an impressive sight, it being the fastest scheduled express on BR at that time.

On one occasion, I was alone and could see that the express was already signalled and I just had time to step out of our train when I was hit by an avalanche of noise. Though one platform away from the express, the ground shook violently. Before I could react and look in that direction, the express

was through the station and half-way to Moreton Cutting.

Until the advent of the Inter-City Class 125 High Speed Trains, I had never seen a train approaching that speed before. The following day, a small report in the *Daily Telegraph* stated that the Up 'Bristolian' had achieved a speed of 102mph on its way to Paddington.

Needless to say, I wanted to tell my friends what I had seen. I should not have bothered, as no one believed me. Their eyes glazed over with disbelief and I was told firmly that the Bristolian did not need to exceed 80mph.

Even during my adult life, nobody has been prepared to accept it. That is, until just before Covid-19 when I paid a visit to Didcot Railway Centre and got into conversation with another visitor. I relayed my story to him and his reaction really surprised me. He asked me if I knew the reason for what I had seen.

When I said no, he told me that authority was considering cutting the schedule by five minutes

but was uncertain whether they would then have any recovery time available for delays en route. They decided to use the BR-built Castle No. 7018 and invited the drivers to see how much time they could save.

For just one week, there were no speed limits and they could go as fast as they felt comfortable.

Didcot was a wonderful place to observe Castles at speed. You could watch them coming from Moreton Cutting, heading straight towards you, rocking from side to side. In summer, there was often no visible exhaust – just a blue haze above the chimney.

To send this observation, I have interrupted getting ready for tomorrow, Saturday, when I am due to start my 28th year as a volunteer on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway.

Most of that time has been on the footplate, but age has taken its toll so I am now on the platform at Toddington.

Tony Stockwell, email

Didcot's four Castles line up was an inspiration!

THANK you so much for including my picture on that amazing double page spread on the Castle centenary line-up at Didcot Railway Centre in *Heritage Railway* issue 304.

I received an email from a Severn Valley Railway member entitled 'Fame at Last!' That made me smile, as I guessed what it might be. I was looking after my twin grandsons today (2½ years old) so took them on the bus, then walked them up through Malvern to WH Smith, and got a copy. Very impressed and thrilled to have been included in such a prestigious railway magazine.

Here is the completed painting done on top of the drawing Owen Hayward saw, but I took the opportunity to get the sketch photocopied before I painted it so I had a record of what I did 'on the day', so to speak. Many people actually liked the drawing as it was.

I had to darken down some of the lines a bit so they would show on the copy and took the opportunity to add the coupling rods and a bit more wheel detail before I did the painting. The painting was started on Tuesday and done largely from memory as my photos were very dark and I am not keen on editing them. I am a 'Plein Air Artist' as I have always drawn and



Glynis Dray's painting of the line-up of four Castle 4-6-0s at Didcot Railway Centre on March 4.

painted 'live' in all weathers. I draw and paint most things, but railways are my life because I am descended from a number of railway staff and was married to one for 32 years! I am

painting at the Tyseley open days and Severn Valley Railway and Great Central railway galas.

I am making up for the fact that I never got into the depots at Nine

Elms, Old Oak Common, Guildford and Eastleigh before they closed in my mid-teens.

Glynis Dray,
artist, Malvern Wells.



Urie S15 No. 506 departing Arlesford on the Mid-Hants Railway on February 18.
OWEN HAYWARD

We lost the best Urie

I greatly enjoyed reading the article on the Urie Locomotive Society locomotives in issue 304 and the efforts to restore the second Urie No. 499 to steam.

There was a third Urie locomotive purchased by Woodhams at Barry, No. 30512. It was sent there in December 1964 (after Nos. 499 and

506) but unfortunately scrapped in January 1965 – a case of wrong place, wrong time.

Someone from the Urie Locomotive Society once told me that it was probably the best of the the Urie locomotives that were sent there.

Roy Wolstencroft

Let the restorers and owners choose the liveries of their engines

TWO LETTERS caught my eye in Platform, issue 303.

The first from David Smith I wholeheartedly agree with. When I saw the photo that Chris Harris criticised, I was pleased to think that we can still enjoy the engines working thanks to the owners and volunteers who have made this possible.

The second letter from Derrick Martin I feel requires some comment. Derrick has 'form' in writing to your magazine regarding pre-Grouping liveries. On a previous occasion, the owner of the Lancashire & Yorkshire 'Ironclad' suggested he stump up the cash if he was so intent on the original livery!

There are a number of factual errors in his letter that I feel should be corrected.

The T9 and M7 are under overhaul at the Swanage Railway and not at the Mid-Hants. Also, the T9 in superheated form post-dates the pea green livery and this would not be correct.

At the Bluebell Railway, the Adams radial was repainted as a sponsorship deal.

The locomotive then took part as a static exhibit in the 2019 Branch Line weekend, together with *Calbourne*, *Normandy* and Beattie well tank No. 30587.

It has not been overhauled and there are no plans to do so. In my opinion, the lined black livery enhances the lines of the locomotive which had spent many years in pea green.

The new Brighton Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* is a project being undertaken by a group of volunteers at the Bluebell. The funding has come largely from donors sponsoring individual parts. At the outset, the group expressed the desire to complete it as they remembered it, in BR lined black. They are building it – they choose the finish!

Heritage railways are embarking on a difficult year this year. They need our support. They do not need carping from the sidelines from armchair preservationists with their own personal wish lists.

Chris Eddie,
email

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VOLUME 12

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The programme opens in Scotland with an 0-4-0 Grant Ritchie and 3 Andrew Barclays, followed by Manchester (North Staffordshire tank No 2) then 4 collieries in Northamptonshire, 5 in Leicestershire, 3 in Staffordshire (with Beaudesert, a Fox Walker of 1875, the oldest locomotive shown) and 7 collieries in Warwickshire (with the Beyer Peacock Garratt "William Francis" at Baddeley plus 2 Hunsletts built in 1956 at Newdigate Colliery). The programme closes at Coventry Colliery with 2 ex WR Hawksworth 0-6-0 pannier tanks.

The DVD should be available from your usual stockist or you can obtain it direct from Julian Peters by sending £16.95 (cheque made payable to I Peters) to:

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www.lomevents.com



THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

OUR CELEBRATORY 50TH ANNIVERSARY EXCURSION TO THE SUNNY SEASIDE TOWN OF WEYMOUTH

SATURDAY 10 JUNE 2023

On 10 June 1973, our very own Peter Watts ran his first train, which departed Gloucester Eastgate heading for Pwllheli. 50 glorious years have since passed and we are still running charters across the country.

To celebrate the occasion, and to mark just how far we have come, we present this very special train to Weymouth with class 40 locomotive No. D345 proudly organised by Peter himself.

Starting at Burton-on-Trent, our locomotive picks up at locations through the Midlands to Cheltenham from where we head through the Golden Valley and over Sapperton to the Great Western Mainline.

With everyone on board, we soon reach Reading where we head South to Basingstoke and the Southwestern Mainline.

From here we can expect some fast running and beautiful coastal scenery where we soon arrive at the seaside resort of Weymouth (1340-1635). Here we have ample time to explore and relax.

Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Burton-on-Trent	0640	2240
Tamworth	0655	2225
Coleshill Parkway	0715	2205
Birmingham New St.	0740	2130
Barnt Green	0810	2100
Worcestershire Parkway	0840	2030
Cheltenham Spa	0910	2000
*Swindon	1000	----
**Bristol Parkway	----	1930

Estimated Timings

Table for Two seats are available at a supplement of £40 per person in First Class and Premier Dining.

First Class Passengers will each receive vouchers towards refreshments from the buffet car during the journey.

Passengers will be able to enjoy the comfort of travelling in 1970's BR MK2 carriages.

**Please note that Swindon is an outboard pickup point only, we will not be calling at Swindon on the return journey.*

***Bristol Parkway is a set down only stop on the return journey.*

Enjoy a walk around this beautiful seaside town, with perhaps a stroll around to the harbour and a visit to Nothe Gardens, or sample the Fish and Chips on the beach.

The excitement begins straight away on the return as our locomotive attacks the 1-50 Bincome Bank before heading for Yeovil and onto Westbury.

After further meandering, we skirt Bristol and attack Filton bank as we begin our final run along the Midland Railway as we begin setting down at the main stations we picked up from.

We hope you'll join us to celebrate what we believe will be a fitting tribute to our first 50 years!



Fares:	Adult	Junior	Party x4
Premier Dining	£299	£259	£1176
First Class	£189	£149	£736
Standard Class	£139	£70	£536



THE PATHFINDER MAZEY DAY SPECIAL

TRAVEL IN STYLE ON THIS VERY SPECIAL PATHFINDER EXCURSION TO THE ANNUAL MAZEY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN PENZANCE!

SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2023

No-one knows quite how long ago it was the people of Cornwall started to celebrate Midsummer (Golowan in the Cornish language), but it was noted as 'an antiquity' in 1754.

After the festival was banned on the grounds of 'health and safety' - in the 1890s(!) - it 'slept' for near a century until revival in 1991, re-established now as a leading annual event, journeying from the Midlands, sit back and enjoy crossing the Somerset Levels to Taunton, over the Blackdown Hills and down to Exeter.

At the water's edge we run along the Exe Estuary and out onto the famed sea-wall, then inland to Newton Abbot and steeply up and down along the edge of Dartmoor to Plymouth and soon to the crossing of the River Tamar on Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge into Cornwall.

Option A: Truro (1220-1640)

There is little straight or level track right through to journey's end, but there are deep valleys and lofty viaducts amidst delightful scenery, past Liskeard to Lostwithiel and through St. Austell to Truro, where you may alight for a four hour break.

Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Tame Bridge Parkway	0545	2325
Stourbridge Jn	0625	2245
Kidderminster	0640	2230
Droitwich Spa	0655	2215
Worcester S' Hill	0710	2210
Cheltenham Spa	0740	2135
Cam & Dursley	0805	2105
Bristol Parkway	0830	2030
Bristol Temple Meads	0850	2015

Estimated Timings

Table for Two seats are available at a supplement of £40 per person in First Class and Premier Dining.

First Class Passengers will each receive vouchers towards refreshments from the buffet car during the journey.

Passengers will be able to enjoy the comfort of travelling in 1970's BR MK2 carriages.

Option B: St Erth (for St. Ives) (1245-1610)
Continuing west we reach St. Erth, where we set down passengers for the branchline train (local fare around £4) to St. Ives, a small town that offers something for everyone, seaside, specialist shops, harbour and even the Tate Gallery.

Option C: Penzance (1308-1600)

Just five miles west is line's end at Penzance, where the Maze Day festivities will be in full flow, although there should be plenty of time before the start of the main parade. For something slightly different, the bus station is adjacent to the railway station and offers local journeys to Lands End, Mousehole, Marazion (for St. Michaels Mount) and more.

This train will be hauled by a pair of recently refurbished GBRF Class 69's in a double headed formation, which will be a first for its class to work a passenger train to Penzance.



Fares:	Adult	Junior	Party x4
Premier Dining	£299	£259	£1176
First Class	£185	£145	£720
Standard Class	£129	£65	£496

PATHFINDER RAILTOURS Book Online www.pathfindertours.co.uk Telephone 01453 835414/834477

BRESSINGHAM

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Heritage Steam Gala

Bressingham Steam Museum

Early May Bank Holiday Weekend:
Saturday 29th April - Monday 1st May



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Narrow Gauge passenger trains

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Standard Gauge Railway

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BRESSINGHAM



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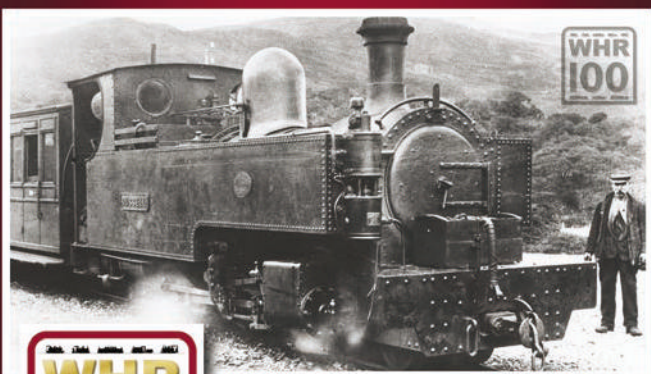
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28th April - 1st May 2023



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WHR
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CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

23rd-25th June 2023: A 'not to be missed' weekend of special trains and activities celebrating the centenary of the completion of the original Welsh Highland Railway's line from Dinas to Porthmadog - featuring trains through the ages, worked by original and present day engines and stock, including iconic loco 'RUSSELL' appearing on its first WHR train from Harbour Station since 1936..!

See our website for more information about this joint event, being held in cooperation with the WHRS, WHHG & WHHR

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www.festrail.co.uk 01766 516024 facebook.com/festrail

GLOUCESTERSHIRE WARWICKSHIRE RAILWAY

COTSWOLD FESTIVAL OF STEAM

May 12th - 14th 2023



'Cheltenham and Gloucester Steam Days'

- Up to 8 engines in steam with special guests, including...
- GWR No. 4079 Pendennis Castle (courtesy of Didcot Railway Centre)
- L&Y Pug No. 11243 (courtesy of the L&Y Trust and the East Lancs Rly)
- BR Std 2 No. 78019 (courtesy of the LSLG and the Great Central Railway)
- BR Std 4 No. 75014 (courtesy of Palngton & Dartmouth Steam Rly)
- Collection of traction engines
- Freight train Brake Van rides
- Visit Broadway Signal Box
- Trade stands and displays
- Narrow gauge steam
- Gotherington station gardens open
- Locomotive and Carriage & Wagon sheds open



All locomotives & attractions subject to availability

Image copyright: Mike Mowatt Collection

See gwsr.com for tickets & more information

RH&DR MAY GALA

13TH & 14TH MAY 2023

Join us for a whole weekend of special steam & diesel services!

All available RH&DR steam locomotives, plus visiting loco River Esk and diesels J B Snell and Shelagh of Eskdale will be in service over the weekend.

Want to travel in style? We're offering you the chance to travel like a VIP in one of our first class carriages. Support your railway and bid to travel in one of our special carriages over the event weekend, see online for more details.

GALA WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

-  **SATURDAY – HYTHE TO HYTHE '28 MILE' NON STOP**
Plus express runs, stopping trains & shuttles running into the early evening, provided by 6 passenger sets of coaches.
-  **SUNDAY – AN UNMISSABLE MULTI-HEADER FINALE!**
Following a mix of passenger & freight services throughout the day provided by 5 passenger sets of coaches.

100TH
BIRTHDAY!



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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: Tues-Suns + Bank Hol Mons.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.

Running: Weds + Apr 13-15, May 7, 31.

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: Weds, Fris-Suns. Running: Suns.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway

10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.

Running: W/Es, Bank & Sch Hols.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway

12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.

Open: Daily.

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.

Open: Suns, Bank Hols.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.

Running: Suns, Tues-Thurs, Bank Hols + Sats from Apr 29.

Kent & East Sussex Railway

Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.

Running: W/Es, Weds, Bank Hols + Tues from May 23.

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: W/Es, Bank Hols + May 5, 12, 18, 19, 24, 25.

Mizens Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey.

Tel: 07962 400922.

Running: Suns from May 7.

Old Kiln Light Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile.

Farnham, Surrey.

Running: W/Es (ex May 6) + Bank Hols.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway

15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent.

Tel: 01797 362353.

Running: Daily.

Royal Victoria Railway

10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.

Running: W/Es.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, 1¼ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent.

Tel: 01795 424899.

Running: Suns, Bank Hols.

Spa Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.

Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Tel: 01892 300141.

Running: W/Es, Bank Hols.

Volk's Electric Railway

2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.

Running: Daily.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway

Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.

Running: Suns, Bank Hols + Sats from May 13 + Apr 29.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway

Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall.

Tel: 01208 73555.

Running: Tue-Thurs, Suns, Bank Hols + Sats from May 6 + Apr 22.

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: Daily.

Devon Railway Centre

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon.

Tel: 01884 855671.

Open: W/Es & sch hols + Thurs & Fris from May 4.

East Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.

Running: W/Es + Weds from May 3 + May 1, 29.

Gartell Light Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset.

Tel: 01963 370752.

Running: May 29.

Helston Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.

Running: Thurs, Suns + May 29

Lappa Valley Railway

7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile.

Newquay, Cornwall.

Tel: 01872 510317.

Open: Daily.

Launceston Steam Railway

1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles.

Launceston, Cornwall.

Tel: 01566 775665

Running: Suns-Weds from May 28.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.

Running: Tue-Thur, W/Es, bank hols.

Moors Valley Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants.

Tel: 01425 471415.

Running: W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

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.

Running: Suns + Apr 22, May 20, 27.

Seaton Tramway

2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.

Running: Daily.

Somerset & Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY.

Tel: 01761 411221

Running: Suns + May 31.

South Devon Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.

Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.

Running: Daily.

Swanage Railway

Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.

Running: Daily.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway

Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.

Running: W/Es + May 1, 29.

West Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.

Running: W/Es, Tues, Weds, bank hols + Apr 28.

Yeovil Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.

Running: Apr 23, 30, May 7, 13, 14, 30.

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum

Narrow and standard gauge, one mile.

Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.

Open: Daily.

Bure Valley Railway

15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk.

Tel: 01263 733858.

Running: Daily.

Colne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.

Running: Suns + Apr 29, May 1, 8, 13, 27.

East Anglian Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.

Open: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Running: Apr 16, 29, 30, May 1, 27, 28, 31.

Ferry Meadows Railway

10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¾ mile.

Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex.

Tel: 01621 784898.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.

Reopens: TBA.

Mid-Tsford Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.

Running: April 30, May 7, 8, 28, 29.

Nene Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01780 784444.

Running: W/Es, Weds.

North Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 5½ miles. Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA. Tel: 01263 820800.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + Mons from May 1.

Wells & Walsingham Railway

10¼in gauge, four miles. Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk. Tel: 01328 711630.

Running: Daily.

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.



The Leighton Buzzard Railway reopened on March 12 after a record-breaking Christmas during which 6316 passengers were carried. The first train, the 10.30am departure from Page's Park, was ceremonially flagged away by Leighton Linslade's deputy mayor, Coun Sheona Hemmings. The line's Gin and Whisky Festival returns on Sunday, May 7. MARK LEWIS/LBR

River Esk, about to enter its second centenary.
DAVID MART/RER



River Esk marks centenary with special May Day gala at Ravenglass & Eskdale

THE Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway is to mark the 100th birthday of Davey Paxman 2-8-2 *River Esk* with a special May Day Bank Holiday steam gala.

The April 29 to May 1 event will include visit by 95-year-old *Samson* from the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, signalbox tours and special 'behind the scenes' tours for passengers. There will also be a centenary exhibition

at Ravenglass Railway Museum and even a competition to 'make a coal cake'.

Stuart Harrison's miniature railway will be on display in the railway workshop and souvenir treats will be on offer at both the Turntable Café at Ravenglass and Fellbites at Dalegarth.

RER general manager (visitor experience) Stuart Ross said: "We are so excited to mark this milestone

birthday for *River Esk*. It's tremendous to think of the changes in society this heritage steam engine has seen over the last century, but here it is, in full working order and ready to welcome passengers on board over this special celebratory weekend."

→ Tickets can be booked in advance at <https://ravenglass-railway.co.uk/events> or purchased on the day at Ravenglass or Dalegarth stations.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Quainton Road, Bucks.
Tel: 01296 655720

Cafe open Mon-Fri. Running: **Suns.**
Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366
Running: **Suns, bank hols + May 20, 27.**

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon.
Tel: 01491 835067

Reopens: **Apr 30, May 1, 8, 13, 14, 28.**
Didcot Railway Centre

Standard gauge, Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.

Open: **W/Es (exc May 6),**
Weds, bank hols.

Running: **W/Es & bank hols.**
Epping Ongar Railway

Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: **W/Es (exc May 6 & 28),**
bank hols.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.

Running: **Daily.**
Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Reopens: **Suns + Apr 22.**

Leighton Buzzard Railway

2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888

Running: **Suns, bank hols + May 27.**
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: **W/Es (exc May 6), bank hols.**

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Running: **W/Es, bank hols.**

Barrow Hill Roundhouse
Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.

Open: **W/Es.**

Battlefield Line

Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.
Reopens: **W/Es, bank hols.**

Cambrian Heritage Railways

Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llyncllys). Oswestry and Llyncllys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Reopens: **Suns & bank hols from Apr 30 + Apr 29, May 27.**

Chasewater Railway

Standard gauge, two miles. Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.

Open: **Daily.** Running: **W/Es + May 1, 4.**

Churnet Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 5¼ miles. Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.

Running: **W/Es, bank hols + Weds from May 3.**

Crich Tramway Village

Standard gauge, one mile. Crich, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 854 321

Open: **Sats-Thurs, bank hols, sch hols.**

Dean Forest Railway

Standard gauge, 4½ miles. Norchard, Lydney, Glos. Tel: 01594 845840.

Running: **Weds, W/Es, bank hols.**

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, nine miles. Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: **W/Es + May 1, 29 & Fris from May 5.**

Echills Wood Railway

7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.

Running: **Suns + May 12, 13.**

Evesham Vale Railway

15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: **W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.**

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, Tues-Thurs, bank hols + May 12.**

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.

Running: **W/Es & bank hols.**

Lampport Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.

Running: **Suns, bank hols + Apr 29, May 27.**

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: **W/Es.**

Perrygrove Railway

15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Tel: 01594 834991.

Open: **Tues, Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.**

Rocks by Rail

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.

Reopens: Apr 30, May 1, 14, 28, 29.

Leek & Rudyard Railway

10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.

Tel: 01538 269948.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants.

Tel: 0300 3023 150.

Running: TBA.

Severn Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR.

Tel: 01562 757900.

Running: W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

Statfold Barn Railway

2ft gauge, one mile.

Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU.

Tel: 01827 830389.

Open: Apr 23, 29, 30, May 1, 6-8.

The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's No. 10 *Dr Syn* has returned to service after a five-year absence. One of the railway's two Canadian Pacific-style locomotives, built in 1931 by the Yorkshire Engine Company, the other being No.9 *Winston Churchill*, it has completed an intermediate overhaul. Engineering manager Paul Trotter said: "The overhaul was held up by the boiler when cracks were found around the clack bosses, but upon the correctly sized ones being found, it turned out that this size was no longer in production. These were in addition to the normal boiler repairs that were carried out." No. 10 is named after author Russell Thorndyke's fictional hero of Romney Marsh smuggling stories. RHDR

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

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.

Running: May 27-29.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.

Running: Apr 30, May 1, 7, 8, 12-14, 28, 29.

NORTH WEST

East Lancashire Railway

Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.

Tel: 0333 320 2830.

Running: W/Es (exc May 6), bank hols + May 31.

Eden Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles. Warcop, Cumbria.

Tel: 01768 342309.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Great Laxey Mine Railway

19in gauge, ¼ mile.

Laxey, Isle of Man.

Tel: 01624 862007/670386.

Running: Suns.

Groudle Glen Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile.

Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 670453.

Running: Suns from May 7

Heaton Park Tramway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.

Manchester.

Tel: 0161 740 1919.

Reopens: Suns.

Isle of Man Steam Railway

3ft gauge, 15½ miles.

Douglas, Isle of Man.

Tel: 01624 662525.

Running: Weds-Mons (exc Apr 26).

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.

Near Ulverston, Cumbria.

Tel: 01539 531594.

Running: Daily.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway

3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).

Douglas, Isle of Man.

Tel: 01624 697473.

Running: Tues-Suns, bank hols + Apr 17.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway

15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass, Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.

Running: Daily.

Ribble Steam Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Preston, Lancs. Tel: 01772 728800.

Running: TBA.

South Tynedale Railway

2ft gauge, 4¼ miles. Alston, Cumbria.

Tel: 01434 338212.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + May 10, 16.

Stainmore Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.

Open: Suns.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.

Tel: 01768 779747.

Open: Tues-Suns + sch hols.

West Lancashire Light Railway

2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.

Tel: 01772 815881.

Running: Suns & bank hols.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland.

Tel: 0300 030 3311.

Running: Bank Hols + Apr 29, 30, May 13, 14, 27, 28, 31.

Appleby Frodingham Railway Preservation Society

Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.

Tel: 07889 297271.

Running: Apr 29, May 20.



Railway Museums

Beamish

The Living Museum of the North, County Durham.

Open: Daily

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.

Open: W/Es and some bank hols.

Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre

Donegal.

Open: Daily.

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: Daily.

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, Weds and some bank hols.

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.

Tel: +44 (0)28 9042 8428.

Bowes Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Springwell, Tyne & Wear. Tel: 07850 916484.

Open: Tues, Thurs to pre-booked groups only.

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway

15in gauge, two miles.

Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire.

Tel: 01472 604657.

Running: Daily.

Derwent Valley Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near York. Tel: 01904 489966.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.

Embsay, North Yorks.

Tel: 01756 795189.

Running: W/Es (exc May 7), Tues, bank hols.

Heatherslaw Light Railway

15in gauge, two miles.

Ford Forge, Northumberland.

Tel: 01890 820244.

Open: Daily.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ. Tel: 01535 645214.

Running: W/Es, Weds, bank hols, sch hols + May 11, 12, 16, 18 19, 23, 25, 26.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway

2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.

Tel: 07407 500884.

Running: May 7, 28.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire. Tel: 01507 363881.

Running: Apr 29, 30, May 1, 28, 29.

Middleton Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.

Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.

Running: W/Es, bank hols.

North Tyneside Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.

North Shields. Tel: 0191 277 7135.

Running: April 30.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles.

Grosmont, North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.

Running: Daily.

Scarborough North Bay Railway

20in gauge, ¾ mile.

Scarborough, North Yorks.

Tel: 01723 368791.

Running: Daily.

Tanfield Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.

Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.

Tel: 07508 092365.

Running: Suns + May 1, 29.

Weardale Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles.

Stanhope, Co. Durham.

Running: Weds, W/Es (exc May 6, 21, 28), Bank Hols.

Wensleydale Railway

Standard gauge, 22 miles. Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.

Tel: 01677 425805.

Running: W/Es, Weds, bank hols + May 1, 19, 26, 29.



The Buckinghamshire Railway Centre's rarely used traverser behind its visitor centre was utilised in March when recently arrived Peckett R2 class 0-4-0ST No. 1370 of 1915 May shunted a wagon that was being collected for restoration. As reported in issue 303, the former Coventry Ordnance Factory and Yates Duxbury & Sons papermill locomotive – bought for preservation by the late Dr Peter Beet in 1975 and which ran at the East Lancashire Railway and Beamish Museum – was bought for Quainton Road with funds from donated legacies. LOUISA RICHARDS/BRC

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)

15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.

Running: W/Es, sch hols, bank hols + Apr 21, 24, 28.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway

2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols, bank hols.

Barry Tourist Railway

Standard gauge, two miles. Barry, Vale of Glamorgan. Tel: 01446 748816.

Running: Closed UFN.

Brecon Mountain Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, five miles.

Pant, Mid-Glamorgan. Tel: 01685 722988.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es (exc May 6), bank hols.

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.

Running: Sats from Apr 29 + Apr 30, May 1, 28-31.

Fairbourne Railway

12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.

Running: W/Es, Tues-Thurs + May 1, 29.

Ffestiniog Railway

2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Tues-Suns; daily from May 1.

Gwili Railway

Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 01267 238213.

Running: Suns, Thurs + Weds from May 3 + May 1, 29.

Llanberis Lake Railway

2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870549.

Running: Suns-Fris.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 07956 082305.

Running: May 6.

Llangollen Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen, Denbighshire. Tel: 01978 860979.

Running: Fris, W/Es, bank hols + Weds & Thurs from May 3.

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.

Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.

Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Rhyl Miniature Railway

15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.

Tel: 01352 759109.

Running: W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

Snowdon Mountain Railway

800mm gauge, 4½ miles.

Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870223.

Running: Daily.

Talyllyn Railway

2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.

Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.

Running: Daily.

Teifi Valley Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Henllan, Ceredigion, SA44 5TD. Tel: 01559 371077.

Running: TBA.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.

Running: Daily.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.

Running: Sats, Tues, Weds, bank hols, sch hols from Apr 29 + Apr 30.

Welsh Highland Railway

2ft gauge, 26 miles.

Caernarfon, Gwynedd.

Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Tues-Suns; daily from May 1.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, eight miles.

Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.

Tel: 01938 810441. Running: W/Es, Weds, Thurs, bank hols, sch hols.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.

Running: W/Es, Tues + May 26.

Caledonian Railway

Standard gauge, four miles. Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.

Running: May 27.

Doon Valley Railway

Standard gauge.

Dunaskin, Ayrshire.

Running: May 7, 28.

Keith & Dufftown Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.

Dufftown, Banffshire.

Tel: 01340 821181.

Running: W/Es.

Lathalmond Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ½ mile.

Scottish Vintage Bus Museum,

Lathalmond, nr Dunfermline.

Tel: 07379 914801.

Open: Suns.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South

Lanarkshire. Running: Suns.

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.

Running: W/Es, Weds, Thurs, bank hols.

IRELAND

Downpatrick & County Down Railway

5ft 3in gauge.

Downpatrick, Co. Down.

Tel: 028 4461 5779. Running: May 1.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.

Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.

Open: Thurs-Suns.

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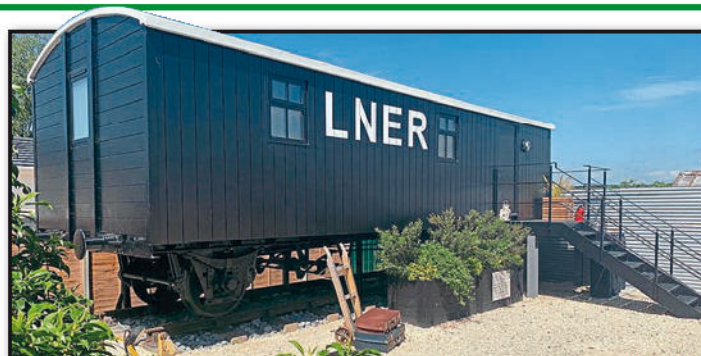
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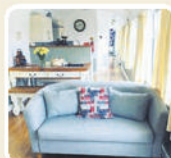
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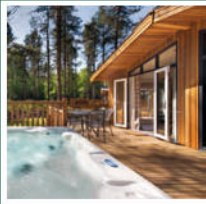


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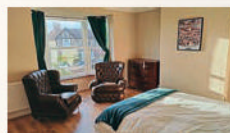
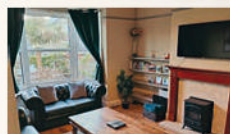
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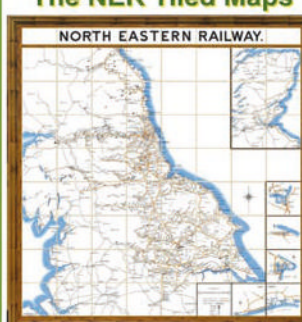
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When is a wall not a wall? When it's actually a door!

By Owen Hayward

TALYLLYN Railway aficionados or regular travellers on the line will no doubt be familiar with its north side-only platform arrangements, meaning passengers board and alight from the same side of the carriage at every station.

For that very reason, more recent Talylyn coaching stock has all been constructed with doors on just that side of the vehicle; even the railway's original guard's van (Brown Marshalls

No. 5) had the south side sliding doors that once existed boarded over. That has been the way for years, and many would no doubt rightfully assume that south side doors no longer exist on the railway's rolling stock.

The reality is quite different. Anyone walking into the Pendre paintshop during March will have observed four-wheel compartment No. 3 with doors open on the 'wrong' side and may very well have

mistakenly thought that the vehicle had been turned – particularly given that Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* also 'took a spin' for four days of photographic charters in the latter half of that month.

This 'turning', of course, was very much not the case, for when the railway's original Brown Marshall coaches (Nos. 1-3 and 5) and Lancaster Wagon Works No. 4 were built in 1866/67 respectively, they all had doors on both sides.

Realising they were not needed, the handles on the south side were quickly removed before passenger services began and the holes where they had once been filled in. The hinges and carriage locks remained and for many years thereafter, that is how they have been run.

In early March, the decision was made to undertake repairs to the Victorian-era original carriages ahead of Founders' Day on Sunday, May 14, improving their appearance in readiness to be paired up with newly-overhauled Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT No. 2 *Dolgoch*. Woodwork repairs are being carried out where required and each carriage will be varnished. In order to facilitate some of this work – including repairs to the droplights, these often forgotten doors were opened up to improve access.

It is actually a sight that has happened on the odd occasion in preservation during maintenance of the carriages, but one very rarely documented. The two Glyn Valley Tramway carriages (Nos. 14 and 15) are much the same as is, rather surprisingly, six-compartment bogie carriage No. 18, which was built in the 1960s.



Left: It may look a normal sight, but in reality the doors pictured open on Brown Marshalls No. 3 are rarely opened, being situated on the opposite side to all of the Talylyn Railway's station platforms. A closer look will show the absence of handles on these doors, which were opened during carriage repair work on March 24.
OWEN HAYWARD

Llangollen's last travels Ruabon to Barmouth route

ON April 29, 1967, BR Class 8F No. 48697 headed the Wrexham Mold & Connahs Quay Rail Tour, a trip run to celebrate the centenary of the WM&CQ Railway's construction between Wrexham and Buckley.

Taking over from a pair of Fowler 2-6-4s at Wrexham North Junction, the 8F first ran to Brymbo West before returning to Wrexham General, then departed for Llangollen Goods junction along the remaining stump of the Ruabon to Barmouth line. After running round, the train returned to Wrexham, where the Fowler tanks took over for the next leg of the tour.

This trip proved to be the last passenger service to use the line before it was closed and the track lifted.

The 8F was withdrawn on December 23 that very same year, but its numberplate survived and recently appeared at a Great Central Railwayana Auctions sale on March 4 this year, where Llangollen Railway volunteer Peter Dickinson won the bidding

at £460 (plus fees). With this piece of local of history now in his possession, Peter saw an opportunity to do something special.

"Having acquired it, it felt wrong not to recreate a bit of history," he said. "On the evening of March 18, on my way back from volunteering at the LR, I took the opportunity for part of the long-scrapped 8F to return to the line."

With his new acquisition in hand, Peter took a stroll along the remains of the old trackbed to the east of Llangollen station, positioning the plate for a commemorative photo near to the site of the former Sun Bank Halt between Llangollen and Trevor.

While the LR has no plans to extend eastward along this route, although such a move has often been voiced by supporters as a very long-term aspiration, it can now be said that a little bit of history has returned – even if briefly – to this long-lost section of the GWR route.



The smokebox numberplate for scrapped BR 8F No. 48697 returned to part of the Ruabon to Barmouth line on March 18 after Llangollen Railway volunteer Peter Dickinson won it at auction and took it along the remains of the trackbed to the east of Llangollen station. PETER DICKINSON

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 306 out May 12

Hugh Dougherty talks to Museum of Scottish Railways director Dr Becky Peacock about the acquisition of Class 91 No. 91131.

PLUS

FREIGHT DAYS

Since the end of steam-hauled freights on the main line, many charter re-enactments have recreated long-lost trains by using a wide variety of stock, as John Titlow reports in the first of a two-part feature.



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