SIR NIGEL GRESLEY TO MAKE FIRST BLUEBELL VISIT AT AUTUMN GALA

ISSUE 318 April 12 – May 10, 2024

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Blue Peter is back!

Tornado
main line comeback trip announced

TALYLLYN APPEAL
FOR NEXT 75 YEARS

■ THREE NEW-BUILDS TO RUN AT COTSWOLD FESTIVAL ■ GREAT CENTRAL'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY JOINT GALA SUCCESS ■ SWANAGE, WORTH VALLEY, EAST SOMERSET AND EAST LANCS GALA ACTION ■ NORTHAMPTON & LAMPORT EXTENSION OPENS

Homefire®

CPL

FUELLING THE FUTURE

made in the UK

HERITAGE

SMOKELESS STEAM COAL

DESIGNED & TESTED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF HERITAGE RAIL

- Developed for the Heritage Steam Market
- Be a good neighbour – reduce smoke emissions by up to 80%
- Up to 80% less smoke and 25% less CO_2 than coal
- High performing, easy alternative to coal
- Lower incidence of trackside fires
- Runs Cleaner and Low Ash Residue
- High heat output
- Consistent high quality - same performance every time
- Nationwide availability, prepack or loose
- Comparable price to coal • Manufactured in UK

Don't get left behind. Enjoy the benefits of Heritage Smokeless Steam Coal.
Call **0345 4500778**
or email **trade@homefire.co.uk**

For any technical assistance, email:
graham.donkin@cplproducts.co.uk

Yellow daffodils on the Bluebell Railway: BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80151, resplendent in black, leaves Kingscote with the 12.45pm from East Grinstead on March 30. The repaint of No. 80151 was completed over the winter following its temporary purple guise for a Cadbury's promotional advert last November; the purple vinyl wrap had damaged the paint when an attempt was made to remove it, resulting in the scheme being worn throughout the railway's Santa season. No. 80151 will also run as stablemate No. 80100 for the May 10-12 branch line gala, with its fellow 2-6-4T still remaining unrestored at the railway. NICK GILLIAM

Unswerving determination is the answer to our future

PERSEVERANCE and persistence are defining keys to the future of the heritage railway sector. That basic fact was crystal clear in the official opening of the Northampton & Lamport Railway's half-mile extension on March 30.

Guests at the ceremony heard that it had taken nearly 17 years for volunteers at the 1½-mile standard gauge line with a 300 membership to lay the track, restore a seven-arch viaduct by hand, import a classic Victorian signalbox and return it to full working order, and build a new southern terminus to a markedly high standard, as reported in Headline News, pages 8/9. The end result is outstanding.

At the other end of the scale, I could not fail to be impressed by the joint gala held by the Great Central Railway at Loughborough and the Great Central Railway (Nottingham), based at Ruddington, not only to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the original GCR's London Extension, but to also seize the opportunity to promote the long-held dream of reconnecting the pair to create an 18-mile heritage line between the outskirts of two cities and become a major, regular contributor to the regional economy.

As highlighted in our special feature on pages 46-51, the concept of a bus replacement service – a feature of the closure of the Beeching era – was used to immense effect to highlight the potential of the reunification project to a family audience far wider than the standard enthusiast fraternity.

Classic London Routemasters were packed – more so than they might have been during their days in the capital – as they ferried visitors between the two lines, while an ingenious and much-varied array of attractions, big and small, were laid on at all of the stations. Indeed, what was on offer at every twist and turn was so absorbing that during my day's visit, I did not find sufficient time to even visit Kinchley Lane's classic photographic location – a regular port of call for me and many others. In many ways, this gala was unique, and offered so much to the rest of the sector to learn from.

Yes, running any railway largely by volunteers in the current economic climate may seem yet another 'mission impossible' as running costs, not least that of coal, soar. However, the 73-year history of the heritage sector shows time and time again that if we have the same determination as those incessant grafters on the Northampton & Lamport, we will win the day.

Likewise, we must all acknowledge the achievements of 12-year-old schoolboy enthusiasts Oliver Walker and Harry Cowley, who refused to sit back when an historic Nene Valley Railway signalbox was badly damaged by arsonists and staged a sponsored walk to raise £17,000 for the completion of its restoration a year after the attack, as featured on pages 90-91. With others like them also championing the cause, our sector is undeniably in safe hands. Thank you again, lads.

Robin Jones Editor

EDITORIAL
Editor Robin Jones
rjones@mortons.co.uk
Staff writer Owen Hayward
ohayward@mortons.co.uk
Senior Contributors
Geoff Courtney, John Titlow
Contributors
Josh Brinsford, Hugh Dougherty, Tim Hobman, Daniel Long, Phil Marsh
Designer Tim Pipes
Production editor
Lucy Wood
Publisher Tim Hartley
Editorial address
Heritage Railway magazine, Mortons Media Ltd, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ
Website
www.heritagerailway.co.uk

ADVERTISING
Advertising representatives
Craig Amess 01507 529537
camess@mortons.co.uk
Fiona Leak 01507 529573
fleak@mortons.co.uk
Group advertising manager
Sue Keily
skeily@mortons.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES
General Queries & Back Issues
01507 529529
Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm
Answerphone 24H
help@classicmagazines.co.uk
www.classicmagazines.co.uk

DISTRIBUTION & PRINTING
Distribution
Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 3rd Floor, 161 Marsh Wall, London E14 9AP
0203 787 9001
Printing
William Gibbons & Sons, Wolverhampton

MORTONS MEDIA GROUP LTD
Sales and distribution manager
Carl Smith
Marketing manager
Charlotte Park
Commercial director
Nigel Hole
Publishing director
Dan Savage

ARCHIVE
Enquiries Jane Skayman
01507 529423
jskayman@mortons.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION
Full subscription rates (but see page 30 for offer): (12 months 13 issues, inc post and packing) – UK £67.60. Export rates are also available – see page 30 for more details. UK subscriptions are zero-rated for the purposes of Value Added Tax.
Enquires: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Contributions to this magazine should be clearly typed and ideally sent by email. Photographs, which should be clearly marked with the contributor's name and address, are submitted at the owner's risk. Mortons Media Group Ltd cannot be held responsible for loss or damage, however caused. All postal submissions must include an appropriate SAE for the return of all material. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or his staff.

© Mortons Media Group Ltd.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage retrieval system without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

ISSN No 1466-3560

Published
Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
April 25, 2024
Next issue on sale
May 10, 2024

MORTONS MEDIA GROUP LTD
Independent publishers since 1885
Just ask!
Having trouble finding a copy of this magazine?
recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

CONTENTS

ISSUE 318
April 12 – May 10, 2024

News

Headline News 6
- *Britannia* and *Sir Nigel Gresley* to headline Sussex lines' big galas
- *Blue Peter* commences running-in trials at Severn Valley
- Three new-builds set to run at the Cotswold Festival of Steam
- Six Bulleid line-up set to break Swanage gala record

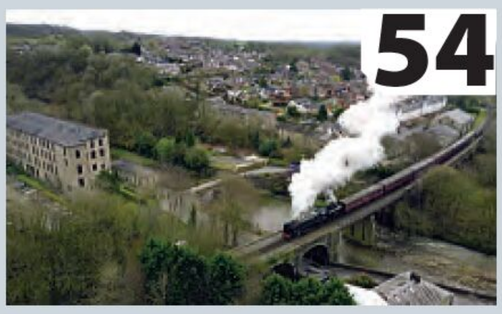
News 10
- KESR prepares to bid farewell to beloved Peckett *Marcia*
- Moorsline officials confident that railway can survive losses
- *Clan Line* makes first moves ahead of main line comeback
- Surprise displays unveiled at Rheidol's new museum
- Remembering Peter Nicholson
- *Leander* at Lakeside for Beet family locomotive union

Main Line News 56
- Summer 'Jacobite' services cancelled by West Coast Railways
- Tender opens for new *Flying Scotsman* custodianship deal
- Seaside jaunt in charter firms' joint charity excursion

CONTENTS: **Nobody could feel blue at the sight of A2 No. 60532 *Blue Peter* enjoying a momentary burst of sunshine as it climbs Eardington Bank during a test run on March 27.**
COVER: No. 60532 passes Crossing Cottage during a test run on the Severn Valley Railway on March 28. The A2 arrived from Locomotive Services Limited's Crewe works by road on March 19 before commencing running in trials. See Headline News, pages 8/9. BOTH: JOHN TITLOW

Regulars

Subscribe Today 30



Centre
BR Standard 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia* crosses Brooksbottom Viaduct on the East Lancashire Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

Main Line Itinerary 62
Steam and heritage diesel railtours.

Railwayana 68
Geoff Courtney's regular column.

Off the Shelf 89
Latest book and DVD releases.

Platform 94
Where your views matter most.

Up & Running 96
Guide to upcoming railways running days and events.

Next Stop 106

Features

Great Central doubles up for Reunification by bus!
To mark the 125th anniversary of the London Extension in March 1899, today's two Great Central heritage railways took a major step forward in their long-held dream of reunification – by holding a successful ground-breaking gala in which road buses were stars of the show, reports Robin Jones.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

East Lancashire reaches for the stars in spring gala with a twist! 52
It's the question every gala organiser asks: "How do we do it better next time?" Owen Hayward visited the East Lancashire Railway's March 15-17 Legends of Steam gala to experience how first-hand.

Eyes on the prize: Talyllyn's vision for a sustainable future 72
While the preservation scene has changed much in 75 years, those at the Talyllyn Railway know now is the time to get the railway fit to survive the next three quarters of a century, as Owen Hayward finds out.

The Keighley & Great Western Railway! 86
The appearance of two GWR-designed express locomotives brought bumper crowds to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's March 21-24 spring steam gala, reports Robin Jones.

Swanage Victorian weekend a 'bargain-priced' success 64
Following the return to service of LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 last October in its stunning pre-Grouping livery, March 23-25 saw the Swanage Railway deliver with two locomotives of 1890s vintage.

The Saint becomes a star at East Somerset's 50th anniversary gala! 78
The star guest at the East Somerset Railway's successful 50th anniversary gala on March 16/17 was GWR 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*, from Didcot Railway Centre, reports John Titlow in words and pictures.

Heroes of heritage: the next generation! 90
Robin Jones boarded a special train on the Nene Valley Railway celebrating the fundraising success of two young enthusiasts, while Hugh Dougherty asks award-winner Jonathan King why he volunteers.

Models

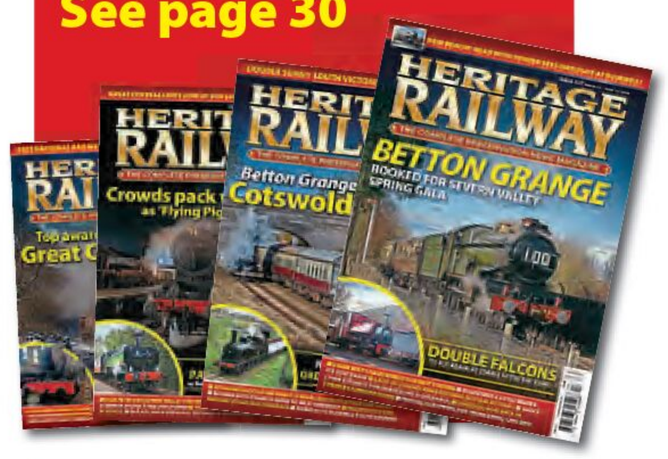
Model news 80
Rapido adds Andrew Barclay fireless locomotives to its range, plus surprise new wagons announced in OO and N from Bachmann and Farish.

Two of a kind: the LMS Ivatt twins 82
With this iconic pair of early-generation main line diesel locomotives now available in N gauge, Daniel Long explores what makes these 'twins' so special.

SUBSCRIBE FROM JUST £47*

*THAT'S JUST **£3.62 AN ISSUE** IF YOU PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT EVERY 12 MONTHS

See page 30



Find the latest news, images and discussion online only at:

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

Britannia and *Sir Nigel Gresley* will headline two Sussex galas

By Owen Hayward

A PAIR of steam era icons will visit two Sussex heritage lines to headline very different gala events – with one set to be a significant preservation first.

As the Kent & East Sussex Railway prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary on June 1/2, the first visitor announced, BR Standard 7 4-6-2 No. 70000 *Britannia*, will not be traversing the line between Tenterden Town and Bodiam but instead will be operating trips along the currently-isolated Rother Valley Railway at Robertsbridge end of the original line throughout the weekend.

With the KESR currently terminating at Junction Road and the RVR at Northbridge Street, following the approval of a Transport and Works Act Order in 2023, the two lines are due to be linked together in the coming years.

The wait is over

The *Britannia* shuttles will be the first services on the RVR in more than a decade, with the station site having been undergoing extensive work in recent years, including the installation of a turntable. Complete with a main line connection over which the star guest will arrive, it is hoped that Robertsbridge may prove attractive for servicing and turning locomotives working main line tours in the region.

Meanwhile, the KESR will see the return visit of SECR 0-6-0 O1 No. 65 from the Bluebell Railway, it having previously visited in May 2009. No. 65 had been a regular performer over the route pre-preservation in the early 1950s and on January 2, 1954, ran the final timetabled passenger service over the route, together with LBSCR A1X 'Terrier' No. 55 *Stepney* (another modern-day Bluebell resident). The O1 has rarely been away from the Bluebell since it arrived there in 1997, save for the aforementioned KESR visit and appearances at galas at the Spa Valley (2023) and more recently the Swanage Railway (see feature, pages 64-67).

> "It is wonderful that two organisations which go back to the dawn of the steam preservation era are working together for the first time..."

A further guest for the occasion was unloaded at Wittersham Road on April 3. BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76017 has been noticeably absent from the heritage railway world for more than a year. Previously based on the Mid-Hants Railway following the death of a shareholder in 2022, it became outright owned by John Bunch and shortly left Hampshire for storage at West Coast Railway's Southall depot, having first appeared at the October 14-16 Giants of Steam Gala at the Bluebell Railway before being moved by rail to west London the following month.

The visit of No. 76017 to the KESR will see it remain in Kent until at least the end of the year.

A further visiting locomotive was under negotiation as this issue of *Heritage Railway* went to press, its identity remaining undisclosed until contracts are signed.

The two ends of the original line will be linked by a vintage bus service (connecting with KESR trains at Bodiam) which will be included in the one-for-all rover ticket fare. Many areas including workshops and sheds will be open for tours, along with a full programme of on-station entertainment representing the last five decades of the KESR's successes.

Revisiting the past

A recreation of the original opening ceremony, which was undertaken by then MP for Ashford RH William Deedes, will take place before the departure of the first train on June 1, with current Ashford MP Damian Green undertaking the role.

Having starred alongside *Britannia* at the East Lancashire Railway's March 15-17 Legends of Steam gala (see pages 52-55), A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* will also be visiting Sussex to star in the Bluebell's October 11-13 Giants of Steam weekend. While sister No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* has previously visited the Bluebell, this will be the first visit for No. 60007, courtesy of the Sir Nigel Gresley Locomotive Trust.

Trust chairman Nigel Wilson said: "Since we completed the last overhaul in 2022, we have mixed main line running with several heritage railway visits. It is our objective to make *Sir Nigel Gresley* as widely available to our members and the public as possible, which has meant visits to all corners of the country.

"We were therefore delighted to be invited to the historic Bluebell Railway, which will give those in the south a chance to enjoy the locomotive.

"We still have many members in the London area who remember the times in the 1980s when the engine regularly ran out of Marylebone.

"It is wonderful that two organisations which go back to the dawn of the steam preservation era are working together for the first time, with the Bluebell starting services in 1960 and SNGLT operating No. 60007 since 1967."

Following its appearance at the Bluebell's annual celebration of some of the biggest steam locomotives in operation, the A4 will remain there for an additional week in order to operate 'Golden Arrow' dining services on October 19/20.

The full line-up will be confirmed in due course, with many hoping that new-build Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* will feature, pending completion of its assembly and successful running-in beforehand.

Prime Minister visits A1 Trust's Darlington base

By Robin Jones

PRIME Minister Rishi Sunak paid a visit to Darlington Locomotive Works on April 2 to meet staff and volunteers of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust and see for himself the progress made on developing its new base.

Accompanied by Darlington MP Peter Gibson, Mr Sunak was given an update on the project to build the seventh example the most powerful express passenger steam locomotive to operate in the UK, Sir Nigel Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* – and at one stage, lent a helping hand to its construction.

He was also told about the recent overhaul of Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado,* which, as reported in Main Line News, page 56, is set to make its comeback trip over the national network on June 29.

Last May, the trust moved into its new £4.5 million purpose-built works within the Darlington Railway Heritage Quarter. Owned by Darlington Borough Council and funded by it, as well as Tees Valley Combined Authority and Government grants, the building will provide many of the facilities needed for building and operating the trust's steam locomotives.

Mr Sunak was shown the continuing works on the new main line connection so the locomotives can regularly return to their base.

Trust chairman Steve Davies MBE also briefed him on future plans, including a turntable at the site and celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and more.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak lends a helping hand to the P2 new-build project, guided by volunteer Gordon Best. EDWARD MASSEY/CCHQ

Trust chairman Steve Davies MBE talks Rishi Sunak and Darlington MP Peter Gibson through the plans for the main line connection and turntable. EDWARD MASSEY/CCHQ

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Three new-builds together in steam 'first'

By Robin Jones

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's Cotswold Festival of Steam is set to mark a heritage era first – with three new-build locomotives running together at the same event.

The trio are all GWR-designed. As previously reported, No. 6880 *Betton Grange* has been booked to appear at the May 25-27 Bank Holiday weekend gala, along with Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* from at Didcot Railway Centre.

Now the duo will be joined by West Somerset Railway 2-6-0 No. 9351, which was converted by the Minehead line from ex-Barry scrapyard 2-6-2T No. 5193 by removing the tanks, modifying the back end, and adding a new tender. In its 21st century form, it represents a type that was designed by GWR Chief Mechanical Engineer George Jackson Churchward in about 1910 but was never built, and it provides greater coal and water capacity than in its original tank engine form.

More firsts

This year's festival has the theme of Western Workhorses and will see the visitors joined by five locomotives from the home fleet.

It is also the first time that all existing GWR two-cylinder 4-6-0s will have appeared together, *Lady of Legend* and *Betton Grange* joining home-based WR Modified Hall No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, a design developed by Swindon Works from the Saint, and WR No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor*, a smaller and lighter version of the Grange. All of these types once regularly worked over the route on which today's heritage line operates.

It will be only the third time in the past 20 years that No. 9351 has visited a railway other than the WSR, having previously been to the Severn Valley Railway twice. Event organising team chairman Tom Willson said: "This is shaping up to be one of the most spectacular and ambitious Cotswold Festival of Steam events to date. It's a unique opportunity to enjoy such a variety of motive power that recall the locomotives that once could be seen day in, day out on the railway we now call the G/WR."

WSR's deputy head of mechanical engineering, Richard Hiscox, said: "I am excited to see our engine visit the Cotswolds – joining two other newly-built locomotives makes the occasion even more special."

Close to completion

Furthermore, Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd's GWR 2-8-0 No. 3850, now close to the end of an extensive overhaul that started at Toddington in 2015, will make its first public appearance if completed in time.

Also rostered to appear at the event is GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807 and 'odd man out' Southern Railway Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental SN Co.*

Betton Grange will now go direct to Severn Valley

NEW-BUILD GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* was being readied for its first steaming and test runs in the yard at Tyseley Locomotive Works as this issue of *Heritage Railway* went to press.

The 81st Grange, the culmination of a 26-year project, had, as previously reported, been booked to visit Shackerstone on the Battlefield Line for testing. However, delays to the completion of its painting and varnishing due to the damp caused by the record levels of rainfall in the early part of the year and also the need for final adjustments, such as the setting of the valves, led to the cancellation of that visit.

Instead, No. 6880 was rescheduled to go straight to the Severn Valley Railway for test-running in readiness for its debut at the Spring Steam Gala on April 18-21.

It was believed that prior to the gala, No. 6880 may undergo a gauging test run along the length of the 18-mile line.

A spokesman for builder the 6880 Betton Grange Society said it will visit the Battlefield Line at a later date, possibly for Christmas trains.

Providing that all goes will with its testing and debut, No. 6880, as reported last issue, has been pencilled in for the West Somerset Railway's big May 3-6 gala weekend, prior to its appearance at the Cotswold Festival of Steam.

➜ For updates on the steaming and test runs of No. 6880, visit www.heritagerailway.co.uk/18671/betton-grange/ or scan this QR code.

Newly-painted GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* standing on the turntable at Tyseley Locomotive Works on March 15.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak with staff and volunteers in front of the cab of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*. EDWARD MASSEY/CCHQ

Taw Valley resurrected

SR West Country 4-6-2 No. 21C127 *Taw Valley* has been briefly resurrected to act as a standby locomotive at the Severn Valley Railway.

Last operational at the January 6/7 Winter Steam Gala, the Bulleid was withdrawn ahead of its boiler ticket expiring, pending an intermediate overhaul starting. However, after two cracked boiler tubes were discovered on WR 0-6-0PT No. 7714, the light Pacific was revived on April 2 and underwent a test run ahead of working trains at the April 6/7 Open House weekend. *Taw Valley* will also be on standby should booked guest GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* be unable to run at the April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala.

Going one better: six set for Strictly Bulleid II gala

THE Swanage Railway's big Bulleid bonanza on June 7-9 will see at least six Southern Pacifics in steam – one better than the 2017 gala.

Southern Locomotives Limited's Battle of Britain and West Country classes Nos. 34028 *Eddystone*, 34070 *Manston* and 34072 *257 Squadron* will be joined by two returnees from that previous event.

The first is No. 34081 *92 Squadron,* courtesy of the Nene Valley Railway and the Battle of Britain Locomotive Society. No. 34081 recently completed a programme of firebox repairs which saw it temporarily pulled from traffic in early 2023. A successful boiler examination was undertaken on February 22, following which final tasks – such as repainting, cleaning and installation of the concrete 'brick' arch – have been carried out to prepare it for a return to service.

The second is No. 34092 *City of Wells,* courtesy of the East Lancashire Railway.

The third guest is a newcomer to the Jurassic Coast. Merchant Navy No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co* will visit from Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway.

Over the three days, some trains will run the full nine miles from Swanage to Bridge No. 4, just short of Wareham; with no run round there, these services will run top-and-tailed. More details will be confirmed nearer to the event.

Garden railway festival plan for Llangollen

ONE of Britain's biggest garden railway festivals will take place in Llangollen on Saturday, May 11.

It will be held in the Llangollen Royal International Pavilion, home of the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod), and feature more than 50 exhibitors, including leading retailers, heritage railways and societies, as well as layouts in various gauges and demonstrations of modelling techniques. More details can be found at www.lgrf.co.uk

Blue Peter pulling trains again – after 22 years!

By John Titlow

LOCOMOTIVE Services Group at Crewe has announced that A2 Pacific No. 60532 *Blue Peter* has moved under its own power after an eight-year overhaul.

Blue Peter was seen on a video posted online on March 14 running up and down a siding alongside the works where the overhaul was carried out, with the opportunity taken for the workers to pose alongside it before its move south.

Four days later, on March 18, it arrived by road at Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway for testing. Unloaded the following day, it was coupled to its tender, which had arrived first. A fire was lit, and engineers from LSL and Bridgnorth carried out the routine inspections.

Blue Peter, the sole survivor of its class, was outshopped from Doncaster Works on March 25, 1948, and withdrawn from service on December 31, 1966.

Main line additions

Its last main line certificate expired in September 2001. Afterwards, it was based on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, working until the end of 2002 when its boiler certificate expired.

During its overhaul, train protection and warning system apparatus and other equipment essential for main line running have been added, with an air pump installed discreetly inside the left smoke deflector and relevant air tanks fitted. It still retains its chime whistle on the right side and looks superb in its BR express blue livery, even though it still awaits the lining and crest on the tender.

Five return light engine runs were originally scheduled to take place on March 20, but all that changed with the arrival of the Saphos Trains stock headed by Class 47 D1935 for a corporate event in the station, along with Class 121 'bubblecar' No. 55022 (see separate story).

Instead, the morning runs were cancelled, but at 12.30pm No. 60532 finally was allowed to stretch out

Above: Driver Ian Walker sets back *Blue Peter* at Kidderminster Town on March 20. JOHN TITLOW

Left: On its first run for 22 years, A2 Pacific *Blue Peter* emerges from Bewdley Tunnel, heading for Highley, on March 20. JOHN TITLOW

Welcome to Boughton: extension opens to passengers following 17 years of hard graft

Words and pictures by Robin Jones

THE Northampton & Lamport Railway's new southern terminus at Boughton was formally opened by Daventry MP Chris Heaton-Harris on March 30.

A four-coach train headed by Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No.3193 of 1944 *Norfolk Regiment* and top-and tailed by Hawthorn Leslie No. 3718 of 1928 *Swanscombe No. 4* took VIP guests from the northern terminus of Brampton & Pitsford via the new half-mile extension to Boughton for the ceremony.

Construction of the extension began in 2007 and involved repairing a seven-arch low viaduct, restoring the Victorian signalbox from Betley Road, near Crewe, to full working order, laying track by hand, erecting semaphore signalling, and building a new station platform, sidings and a run-round loop at the former Broughton Crossing on the A5199 on the outskirts of Northampton.

Infrastructure director Graham Peacock told guests that the platform had used 27,908 bricks. All the work was undertaken by volunteers from the railway's 300 members, supported by donations from the public and grants from the former Daventry District Council and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Railway chairman Adam Giles said: "When we started, there was nothing here at all – no platform, no track – so everything you see has been built brand-new.

"We gave people a reason for coming here. You've got the pub you can visit. You can use the footpath and have a walk about and follow the railway all the way."

The path alongside the Brampton Valley Way is a 'linear park' offering a traffic-free route for walkers, cyclists and pedestrians.

Future plans

Mr Heaton-Harris, who served as Transport Minister in Boris Johnson's government and is now Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, unveiled the Boughton station sign and quipped that the railway now links two pubs, the Brampton Halt and the Windhover.

Guests were able to visit the reconstructed signalbox. A northern extension of the railway to Spratton is the line's next long-term goal.

About £50,000 is required for repairs to Bridge 14, which will allow the opening of another short

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The beautiful lines of No. 60532 look lovely as it climbs Eardington Bank light engine on March 21. JOHN TITLOW

along the line to Highley with the 'bubblecar' in tow, maybe a preservation 'first'. The A2 completed a second run in the afternoon light engine, covering about 50 miles on its first day. Over the following two days, three light engine full returns from Kidderminster to Bewdley were completed without incident.

The crew at Bridgnorth said they were very happy how things were going, with no warm bearings.

The week commencing March 25 saw loaded test runs begin, with six air-braked carriages from the Mk.3 sleeper set stored at Kidderminster, plus the Mk.1 support coach tagged on the end.

It was not just loaded tests to run the locomotive in, but also a test for the air brakes, as the original one would have been vacuum. Because No. 60532 will be spending most of its time on the main line hauling air-braked Saphos stock, these tests are essential.

Glorious sound

Three return runs took place between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth on March 25. The following day, the SVR started running regular pre-Easter daily service trains, hauled by BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069 and GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* 4930. Two daily return trips were fitted in between these service trains on March 26-28.

The A2 took climbing Eardington Bank with seven coaches in its stride, with the sound of a chime whistle once again echoing up the valley. The footplate crew was main line steam driver Ian Walker and fireman Tom Mills, from SLS, who had the responsibility in keeping it down to 25mph. During its time on the SVR, the A2 was expected to cover 1000 miles, which is normal for a LSG locomotive test; next in line from there is unique BR Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*.

As this issue of *Heritage Railway* closed for press, testing the A2 had been successful. Provided all goes well, it will return to Crewe on the main line behind a diesel.

During the SVR's April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala, *Blue Peter* will be on display at Kidderminster Town.

The question now being widely asked is with A1 No. 60163 *Tornado* soon to return (see Main Line News, page 57), A3 No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* and A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* with current boiler certificates, and now A2 *Blue Peter* back, what are the chances of a line-up of all four in steam, evoking Top Shed memories?

Class 12 'bubblecar' No. 55022 *Flora* sits at the buffer stops at Kidderminster Town on March 20. JOHN TITLOW

Not only an A2, but also a 'bubblecar'

ON March 18, the same day *Blue Peter* arrived by road at Kidderminster from Crewe, there was another unusual arrival on the Severn Valley Railway.

Travelling by rail, DMU 'bubblecar' No. 55022 *Flora,* owned by Locomotive Services Limited, arrived under its own power from Crewe.

The DMU has been fitted out to an incredibly luxurious high standard, complete with table lamps, and is apparently for use by LSL owner Jeremy Hosking.

Built by Pressed Steel in 1960 as a double-ended Class 121, maximum speed 70mph, for use on the Western Region, its original number was No. 977873. It coupled up to *Blue Peter* for its first test run on March 20, as pictured on the page opposite.

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 6193 *Norfolk Regiment* at the head of the VIP opening train at Boughton on March 30. Previously based at Bressingham Steam Museum, it is now owned by Northampton Steam Railway Ltd.

extension to Merry Tom Crossing. A NLR statement said: "The railway plays an important part in the local area's heritage and tourism economies, attracting about 10,000 visitors a year, despite only operating on Sundays and some Saturdays and bank holidays. The opening of the extension is expected to see that figure grow."

***Swanscombe No. 4* prepares to return the VIP train to Brampton & Pitsford.**

Above: Inside the immaculately reconstructed signalbox from Betley Road, near Crewe.

Left: Local MP Chris Heaton-Harris unveils the nameboard at the new Boughton station.

KESR faces a sad farewell to much-loved Peckett *Marcia*

EXCLUSIVE

By Geoff Courtney

A RECENTLY restored steam locomotive that is a long-time favourite of volunteers, staff and visitors at the Kent & East Sussex Railway is to be sold at auction following the death of its owner.

Peckett 0-4-0T No. 1631 of 1923 *Marcia* was donated to the Tenterden-based line after its withdrawal 62 years ago and remained there following its subsequent sale to a member. Their family have now decided to put it on the market in what is believed will be the first-ever auction of a heritage line's standard gauge locomotive.

As a very small engine weighing just 12 tons and with a tractive effort of 3870lb-ft, it is incapable of pulling heavy loads, but its departure will be sorely felt by the railway due to its popularity, ability to perform sundry minor roles such as shunting and driving experiences, its lengthy residence on the line, and its recent return from overhaul.

It will be put under the hammer at the end of April by GW Railwayana Auctions in a two-week online timed sale.

After reports of its sale reached *Heritage Railway*, KESR general manager Robin Coombes confirmed that the executors of the owner's estate had indicated their wish to sell.

"Our contract for the care of *Marcia* ends in May, but we have indicated to the executors that we are happy to continue to have it at the railway until such time as it is bought by a new owner and can be transported to its new home," he said.

"We would always be happy to see *Marcia* back at the railway. It has been a familiar and popular attraction at the KESR for many years, and while we will be sad to see it leave, we are ourselves not in a position to purchase the loco.

"*Marcia* is able to perform very few duties at the railway, and as we look to the growth in passenger services in the coming years, we must prioritise the need for larger locomotives which can haul those services – hence our 50th anniversary appeal to restore pannier tank No. 1638." (See News, page 34).

Something different

GW Railwayana director and auctioneer Simon Turner is used to putting up to 1000 lots under the hammer in two-day live online auctions, but the prospect of selling a full-size, albeit small, operational standard gauge steam locomotive in a one-lot auction is an entirely new experience.

Explaining that he had been handling the sale of the late owner's railwayana collection when the family asked him to sell *Marcia*, he said: "It will be something different and I will give it a go."

With no known precedence for such a sale, Simon is as yet undecided on the reserve price, and is also reluctant to place an estimate on what it may sell for, although a figure in the region of £50,000 has been mooted in some circles.

On the market: KESR resident *Marcia*, which will be coming up for auction at the end of April, was in fine fettle at the railway's Rolvenden shed on May 27 last year, offering a contrast in steam motive power behind the diminutive 0-4-0T is SR Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34072 *257 Squadron*, at the time a star guest that drew in the crowds to the Tenterden-based line. OWEN HAYWARD

Likewise, he has also yet to decide how potential bidders will be able to view the engine and plans to discuss the matter with the KESR. "Collectors frequently view memorabilia before putting in a bid, and I accept it will be no different for anyone seriously thinking of buying a steam locomotive," he said.

In that regard, Robin Coombes said he would be happy to discuss the matter of viewing the engine with the estate's executors.

Marcia was delivered new to Marcus Bain Ltd for use on its internal railway system at Mauchline sandstone quarry in East Ayrshire. Until early in the 20th century and the arrival of steam, horse-drawn wagons were used on the railway to transport quarried material to the line's connection with the Glasgow-Dumfries route. After passing through the hands of West of Scotland Shipbreaking Co, Marcia was purchased by Manchester Oxide Co in the 1940s and was named after Marcia Clayton, the wife of the managing, director James Clayton. It was withdrawn in 1962 and donated to the KESR and subsequently purchased by the late member whose family is now putting the engine on the market.

Trains are running over Stanway Viaduct again

By Robin Jones

GOOD Friday saw the first passenger train to Broadway run across the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's landmark Stanway Viaduct following the successful completion of the first phase of repairs to the century-old 220-yard structure.

As previously reported, the work involving re-waterproofing the surface of the viaduct and to stabilise the parapets, under which a mortar joint was unexpectedly found to have failed, has been completed by Walsh Construction and its sub-contractor Lampitt Rail Services with consulting engineers David Symonds Associates

Broadway had been cut off from Toddington since the beginning of November, when the track was lifted to gain access to the viaduct's deck. The track has since been reinstated and the viaduct handed back to the railway in time for services across it to resume.

G/WR civil engineering director David Plant said: "This first phase was completed within budget and within the expected time frame – we were fortunate that generally favourable weather has been on our side, allowing the work to press ahead with little interruption. I am particularly pleased that all the works were completed safely over the five-month contract.

"The chosen solution to stabilise the parapets, using stainless steel ties between 240 stainless steel plates on the parapets anchored to the new concrete deck, was completed far more quickly than we expected. Many of us have breathed a huge sigh of relief after the intensive work on the viaduct, to say nothing of the stressful and unpleasant surprise that the parapets were showing alarming signs of failure.

As seen from the train, Bulleid Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S N Co.* crosses Stanway Viaduct with the first passenger train to Broadway on March 29, following the completion of the first phase of repairs to the viaduct. The stabilising work to the parapets can be seen. JOHN FANCOTE/G/WR

"We will now allow the viaduct to dry out before starting work on phase two, which is planned to start in 2025, subject to funding. This will encompass repair of the structure's brickwork that has been damaged by water seepage over many decades."

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The Severn Valley Railway's second in-house night photographic shoot in just over a month saw flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* coupled to GWR Toplight carriages Nos. 605 and 6045 at Bewdley before heading to Arley, where the first shots were in twilight. Lighting was once again provided by SVR director and 30742 charter organiser Martin Creese with the help of guard Matt Fielding, while SVR visitor engagement manager Lewis Maddox organised the event. More night shoots will be announced at https://svr.co.uk/all-events/ JOHN TITLOW

Clan Line is gearing up for comeback

THE eagerly-anticipated return to service of Merchant Navy No. 35028 *Clan Line* draws ever nearer following the locomotive's return to Stewarts Lane depot in south-west London– which was swiftly followed by its first moves under its own steam a mere a week later!

After being stopped in July 2022 following the discovery of cracks in the thermic syphons, *Clan Line* moved to Leaky Finders' premises in Devon, where Merchant Navy Locomotive Preservation Society (MNLPS) volunteers and workshop staff have undertaken the necessary repair work that will see it start with a clean bill of health.

More than 1000 new stays have been machined and fitted, syphons welded, and numerous other jobs carried out following the boiler being successfully hydraulically tested at the start of March, which then allowed for the first steam tests to be performed.

With cladding freshly painted and fitted, No. 35028 finally returned to its main operating base in the capital on March 23, where society volunteers and the contractors from Devon continued to work together to finish assembly and reconnect pipes and cables.

On March 30, the locomotive was gradually warmed through before finally making its first moves in over 18 months under its own steam in and out of the depot building.

Alive once more: On March 30, Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* made its first moves under its own steam since July 2022 as its overhaul draws near to completion. MNLPS

Society communications officer James Cummins said: "We must ensure our heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes to the Leaky Finders team and many others within the industry who have gone above and beyond to help the society throughout the locomotive's outage. Alongside a number of MNLPS volunteers who were able to support the locomotive during its time spent in Devon, we could not have achieved where we are at this time without the dedication, support and drive of Rory and his team, and also with the guidance, efforts and direction throughout from Chris Ellick, our CME.

"*Clan Line* will need to pass a number of critical tests and be certified by both our assessment body and our operator, DB Cargo.

"Our booked rail tours throughout 2024 will always be subject to the locomotive's availability."

Moorsline locos set to join gala line-ups

TWO of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's home fleet will head out on separate gala visits this year.

Following its appearance at the Severn Valley Railway's April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala, Lambton, Hetrton & Joicey Colliey Railway Kitson Works 0-6-2T No. 29 will journey south for the Mid-Hants Railway's April 26-28 event.

No. 29's visit to the Watercress Line gala will see it join guests LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45690 *Leander* and SR Battle of Britian Pacific No. 34070 *Manston*, alongside the home fleet of SR S15 No. 506, BR Ivatt 2MT No. 41312 and Peckett No. 1788 *Kilmersdon*.

Autumn will then see BR Standard 9F No. 92134 visit the East Lancashire Railway for the October 11-13 autumn steam gala, where it is expected to join locomotives including West Country No. 34092 *City of Wells*, Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 'Pug' No. 11243 and LMS 'Jinty' No. 47298.

Saving heritage artefacts: is there more we can do?

A MAJOR consultation on boosting the preservation of railway artefacts for the National Collection and other interested bodies has begun.

The Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board (RHDAB) has launched the UK-wide consultation of heritage lines and museums to help inform its new collecting policy and to protect unique railway artefacts.

The process of designating items for the National Collection was originally overseen by the Railway Heritage Committee. The Science Museum Group, which includes the National Railway Museum, took over the role in 2013 and its board of trustees ratifies the decisions made by RHDAB. The RHDAB meets three times a year, and members are drawn from the railway industry, archives and records offices, museums and the heritage railway sector.

Better understanding

The proposed new collecting policy will enable the board to have a better understanding of the type of railway items that potential recipients are interested in collecting. It will contact more than 100 heritage railways, local and national museums and railway companies to invite them to respond to a questionnaire, which will provide information to add to the current strategy and improve how the RHDAB works with partners. It will be used to ensure important railway items are protected and remain in the public domain. Designated items are protected by law under the Railway Heritage Act 1996.

RHDAB chairman Tim Dugher said: "The past 10 years have seen significant progress in preserving more than 200 important railway items for posterity. Despite this success, there is always room for improvement, and we know there are some misconceptions about how railway heritage is designated, which can lead to difficulties finding homes for designated items. We are inviting heritage organisations and the rail industry to complete our survey and tell us about the types of railway related objects that are of interest. Feedback will help us find any gaps in the designation list and consider what type of items could be designated in future."

The RHDAB covers railway infrastructure, archives, and smaller items like paintings and furniture, as well as locomotives and carriages.

➜ **For more details, email smgrailheritage@sciencemuseum.ac.uk or write to: Secretary, RHDAB, Registration, Science and Industry Museum, Liverpool Road, Manchester M3 4FP.**

Moorsline 'can survive' losses and soaring costs

By Robin Jones

NORTH Yorkshire Moors Railway officials said that the line has a survival plan and is on course to break even financially by next year, despite an auditors' report documenting a £519,094 loss, casting doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern after operating costs soared.

The report, covering the year to February 2023, was included in the NYMR Trust's annual accounts submitted to the Charities Commission last December.

It said that visitor numbers in 2022 had not returned to expected levels and costs had "increased dramatically" due to high inflation and supply issues with coal due to the Ukraine conflict.

"These events or conditions, along with the other matters, indicate that a material uncertainty exists that may cast significant doubt on the group's and the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern," the report stated. By contrast, the line had made a £2.4 million surplus the previous year.

Problems averted

However, the line's finance director, Garry Mumford, said: "It is important to note that the auditor highlighted the notes in the accounts which discussed the difficulties the NYMR was facing at the time the report was written in July 2023.

"These difficulties were around the cashflow challenges through the winter of 2023/24 – the one we are emerging from now – and at that stage, we anticipated this would be very tight and therefore a risk. Like all businesses of our type, we have a huge cyclical cashflow, with the winter having little or no income yet high costs on maintenance while we are not operating.

"The reality is that through good management over the 2023 year, we have come through the winter with cash headroom, so any potential problem has gone away.

"The NYMR navigated its way through the pandemic relatively unscathed; however, the past couple of years have been challenging, with costs rising post Covid-19.

"Between February 2023 and February 2024, we have made some huge changes, resulting in a positive movement in profitability of about £500,0000.

"I am extremely positive about the 2024 operating season, and we are forecasting that the financial year ending February 2025 will show significant further improvement – and that the result should be back to breaking even."

NYMR acting CEO Laura Strangeway said: "We are confident that we have a robust plan in place and are absolutely committed to ensuring we can survive into the future but, like all businesses, and even individuals, we are having to prioritise and look at how we can make efficiency savings to reduce costs and at opportunities for generating additional income to cover core costs.

"We have an excellent track record of securing funding through grants and are continuing to focus on our fundraising efforts, and we are grateful for all support during this challenging time for all visitor attractions."

No immunity

Heritage Railway Association chief executive Steve Oates said: "It won't be a surprise to many people that costs have been increasing enormously across all business sectors in the UK over the last two to three years. We may all wish that heritage railways were immune from these pressures, but sadly they aren't. Equally, they are not immune from the slow recovery in visitor numbers post-Covid 19 which large parts of the visitor economy are experiencing.

"Increases in fuel and energy costs are well-known and most railways have done everything they can to mitigate them.

"People costs have also risen drastically since the coronavirus pandemic, largely driven by an increase in the minimum wage, which, at a time of rising costs at home too, is of course entirely understandable.

"None of these issues are new to people running heritage railways and we know that directors, trustees and managers up and down the country have been making tough decisions to ensure their organisations respond and adapt.

"We are now seeing the results of these pressures appearing in accounts and annual reports, but it is important to look at them in this wider context and not in isolation. "

"As long-standing organisations, most heritage railways have got through testing economic times by reshaping and refocusing more than once."

Peak Rail has been in mourning after long-serving volunteer Jackie Roberts died on March 20. Pictured is Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST No. 750 of 1906 *Waleswood* at Darley Dale, carrying a wreath in her memory on March 23. "All of our thoughts are with Jackie's family at this extremely difficult time," said a statement made by the railway. ALAN WEAVER

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The Branch Line Society special top-and-tailed by Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Judy* and Class 08 No. 08359 at Charlie's Gate, returning from Parkway to General. JON HIRD/BWR

'Access all areas' at Bodmin as shunter shuffle commences

THE Branch Line Society has furthered its reputation for charters accessing parts of the network that other trains don't normally reach.

On the Bodmin & Wenford Railway on March 23, a special consisting of Bagnall former Par Docks 0-4-0ST *Judy* and Class 08 No. 08359 – and 43 passengers in the GWR autocoach – was tasked with 'kissing the buffers' in sidings, headshunts and sheds along the 6½ miles of track between Bodmin Parkway and Boscarne Junction.

This aim was achieved in the headshunts at Parkway and Boscarne, road six of the carriage shed at Parkway, the stub of the Walker Lines sidings, roads three and four of the running shed at Bodmin General, the barracks and refuge sidings also at General, and the headshunt at Boscarne.

Such manoeuvres require the rolling stock in sheds and sidings to be dragged out, stabled out of the way, enabling the BLS train to be propelled in, and/or the passengers transferring to an OOV clay wagon with seating for further propelling movements.

No. 08359 was performing its last duty with the railway before returning to the Avon Valley Railway Bitton, where its owning group, Valley Rail Preservation, was due to undertake maintenance work (including a new radiator box) ahead of the 'Gronk' heading out on hire elsewhere.

The 08 had been on hire to the Bodmin & Wenford Railway to cover the ongoing absence of its own examples of the class, which each require work.

To fill the gap at Bodmin, ex-Felixstowe Docks Class 10 D3489 *Colonel Tomline* has arrived back after a fleeting visit last November.

After being sold to the Helston Railway by its private owners, D3489 departed its former home at the Spa Valley Railway, but road access at its new home was disrupted.

A quick agreement was reached to see it temporarily offloaded at Bodmin General while the matter was resolved.

Meanwhile, another member of the VPR collection has been loaned to the Llangollen Railway.

To assist the Llangollen Railway Trust-owned No. 08195, the backbone of shunting works but which is now in need of repairs, No. 08202 has arrived on a 12-month hire to support it.

Its vacuum braking capability making No. 08202 ideal for undertaking such duties around the steeply-graded Llangollen area.

Chancellor's £15m budget boost to safeguard NRM's ongoing plans

THE National Railway Museum's transformative masterplan was given a £15 million boost in Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's spring budget through an investment from the Government's Levelling Up fund.

This contribution will safeguard the museum's plans for the future of its estate and collections care, and inspire the next generation with the past, present and future of the railways, said an NRM statement.

Through the masterplan, about £95 million is being invested in capital projects that will extend and improve both the York museum and its sister site, Locomotion in Shildon.

The March 6 announcement follows the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's £18.6 million investment in 2019 under the Cultural Investment Fund.

The NRM is the cultural heart of York Central, a 45-hectare city-wide regeneration scheme to turn underused railway land into a distinctive new city quarter with residential neighbourhoods, civic spaces, and high-quality commercial real estate.

Director Judith McNicol said: "This is incredible news for the NRM. The £15 million package is a major milestone in our transformational journey to become the world's railway museum – globally relevant and open for all.

"It will help us attract upwards of 1.4 million visitors to both museum sites and fulfil our role as the cultural gateway to York Central."

The budget also included a permanent extension to tax relief for theatres, orchestras, museums and galleries.

Sir Ian Blatchford, chief executive and director of the Science Museum Group (SMG), added: "This £15 million investment in our ambitious plans for the NRM represents a strong vote of confidence in the transformative work underway right across the SMG, while the continuation of vital tax relief included in the budget will be hugely welcomed by all in our sector."

Meanwhile, latest figures from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions showed that NRM experienced a 10% increase in 2023, which it attributed to Wonderlab: The Bramall Gallery, the interactive attraction for families, which opened in July.

Former British Sugar Corporation Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 of 1938 *Wissington* is back in action on the North Norfolk Railway for the first time in several years after spells on the Mid-Suffolk light and Colne Valley railways. It is seen alongside GER Y14 0-6-0 No. 564 during the March 29-April 1 Steam Into Spring event. JAMIE RINGWOOD/NNR

READ THESE ISSUES AND HUNDREDS MORE IN THE
The RAILWAY Magazine
DIGITAL ARCHIVE
classicmagazines.co.uk/rmarchive

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 319
No need to pop to the shops in four weeks' time... simply order your next *HR* from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529.**
SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Liverpool Class 507 which carried Elizabeth II is saved

By Robin Jones

THE Liverpool-based Class 507 Preservation Society has reached an agreement to take over the ownership of a Merseyrail EMU before the last of its type is withdrawn and scrapped.

No. 507001, which carried the late Queen Elizabeth II from Moorfields station to Kirkby when she opened the network on October 25, 1978, was due to be scrapped later this year, as highlighted in issue 316.

However, subject to funding, the train will now be taken to the Tanat Valley Light Railway Nant Mawr visitor centre, near Oswestry, for conservation work.

The unit was built in 1978 by BREL at its Holgate Road Works in York and has spent its entire life working on the Northern and Wirral lines of Merseyrail.

While the society has secured agreements with everyone involved for the unit to be preserved, about £10,000 is now needed to move it from the National Rail network to the Nant Mawr visitor centre, home to the UK's largest collection of industrial monorail equipment, more than a mile of standard gauge track, and a short narrow gauge line. The society is about to launch an appeal to cover the transportation costs.

Chairman Robert Hampton said: "It's fantastic news that we will be preserving this train for future generations. They have served the Liverpool city region well in the 46 years since Elizabeth II travelled on this very train in 1978, be it taking people to and from work, for a day out to the seaside, or home after an evening out.

"But we need to raise money to move the train from the main line network to its new home at Nant Mawr or it faces being sent to South Wales and turned into razor blades.

"If everyone who remembers travelling on a train like this were to donate just £5.07, then we would be well on the way to saving this train for the people of Merseyside."

For several years, people online have said that something should be done to preserve a Class 507. In September last year, Robert set up a website and mailing list, as reported.

The latest class to enter preservation: Merseyrail Class 507 EMU No. 507001 at Hamilton Square station on March 10. CLASS 507 PRESERVATION SOCIETY

More than 200 people expressed an interest, so just eight weeks later a meeting was held in Liverpool where those assembled agreed to form the society and appointed a committee. The society has steadily grown and now has more than 70 members, from Bristol to Dundee.

Following its debut in 1978, it is estimated that No. 507001 has travelled more than five million miles.

Mark Hignett, from the Nant Mawr visitor centre, said: "I'm thrilled that a train which carried Elizabeth II is coming to Nant Mawr. The area has many historic connections with Liverpool – much of the city's water comes from Lake Vyrnwy, which is just 20 miles away. We look forward to hosting this very special train."

➜ **Donations can be made by visiting www.class507.org.uk**

Coastal getaways for London Transport 4TC

By Owen Hayward

IT has been a regular at Swanage diesel galas and is set to be so again – but now London Transport's 4TC unit is also bound for the North Norfolk Railway's June 7-9 Rails and Ales weekend, a mixed traction gala with two visiting diesels set to star too.

With main line diesels becoming a regular attraction at modern traction enthusiast events, the need for compatible air-braked stock to work with them has seen the 4TC come into its own. It has appeared at several diesel weekends (such those at Swanage), as well as on main line tours. The four carriages were rebuilt from Mk.1 stock, three being converted in 1966 and the fourth in 1974 and were purchased by LT from BR in 1992 to provide stock for the Steam on the Met excursions.

On May 9, the 71A Locomotive Group's Swanage-based Class 33 No. 33012 *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* will once again ferry visitors from Eastleigh to the Swanage Railway's May 10-12 diesel gala.

Operating as 'The Jurassic Crompton', the tour will also feature a GB Railfreight Class 69 which is set to star at the gala alongside a Colas Rail locomotive (of which a Class 37 has been requested), the East Lancashire Railway's Class 24 D5054 *Phil Southern*, and the Diesel Traction Group's Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion*.

It is expected that the tour will route via several rare and interesting tracks on its way to Swanage. The charter departs from Eastleigh at about 8.49am and reverses at Waterloo. On May 12, the formation will depart Swanage at about 2.20pm, heading back to Eastleigh via Waterloo once more.

'Unique opportunity'

Following this visit to the Jurassic Coast, the 'Crompton' and 4TC will then head for East Anglia for the aforementioned NNR gala, which will also feature Hanson & Hall Rail's Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer*.

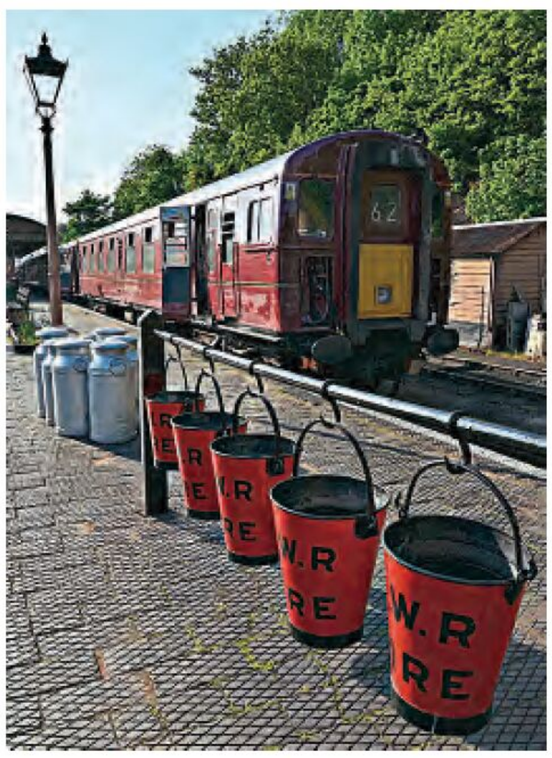
Poppy Line interim general manager Graham Hukins said: "We are very grateful to the owners for making both Nos. 50008 and 33012 available for the event. Neither locomotive has hauled passenger trains on the Poppy Line before, so we are pleased to be able to offer this unique opportunity to enthusiasts, local residents, and holidaymakers alike. The addition of the 4TC set is equally exciting and we are thrilled to offer passengers another experience on the line."

Ales will feature at each of the line's three stations and on certain trains; Sheringham and Holt will both have a selection of bottled beers and ciders on offer, while further brews and other on-board refreshments will be available from the buffet cars on selected trains.

Weybourne will host a real ale bar, giving visitors the opportunity to hop on and off the many trains and discover about 25 beers and ciders each day.

The two locomotives will arrive via the main line connection at Sheringham on June 6 as part of a railtour organised by the Branch Line Society under the title of 'The Holt Hoover'. Originating at Eastleigh at about 8.34am, the consist will head up to Humberstone Road with the 'Hoover' up front, before running round to continue the journey in top-and-tail formation. The route is expected to take in some rare track including March Up goods and Ely West Curve, arriving at Sheringham almost exactly 12 hours later via the main line connection at 8.20pm.

After the event, 'The Cromer Crompton' will depart the NNR at about 5.05pm on June 9 to head to the West Midlands, arriving at Water Orton at approximately 10.08pm, having traversed Trowse Up and Down loop, as well as March goods loop.



The London Underground 4TC set. J BOWLEY/NNR

Booking information

Full details for the NNR gala and festival were still being planned; however, it promises to offer some non-stop services across the full length of the line, as well as double-headers, with breakfast baps available on board the buffet car each day.

The 4TC will also head to the Dean Forest Railway on July 27; for more details, see branchline.uk/current-fixtures.php

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

LBSCR 'Terrier' 0-6-0T No.72 *Fenchurch* passes out-of-ticket sister No.55 *Stepney* at Sheffield Park during a Jon Bowers photographic charter on the Bluebell Railway on March 26. PETER HOLLANDS

Prototype Hovertrain needs £30k for essential conservation repairs

A £30,000 appeal to save Britain's hovertrain has been launched.

Research Test Vehicle 31, the prototype tracked hovercraft (hovertrain) developed between 1967 and 1973, stands at the gateway to the Railworld Wildlife Haven at Peterborough and is a landmark seen by passengers on the Nene Valley Railway when approaching its eastern terminus and on the adjacent East Coast Main Line too.

In a bid to pioneer high-speed land transport, Tracked Hovercraft Ltd built and tested a full-scale prototype and achieved speeds of more than 100mph on a fenland test track between Sutton and Earith, in Cambridgeshire.

However, in 1973, the Government withdrew its financial backing ahead of the second phase of testing which would have attempted speeds up to 300mph. The project was abandoned instantly, and the test site dismantled and removed in 1975.

RTV 31 was dumped among caravans at Cranfield University, in Bedfordshire, before being rediscovered 20 years later and saved from scrap by Tracked Hovercraft staff and volunteers at Railworld, who collectively raised £10,000 to save it.

Since then, RTV 31 has been displayed on one of the original concrete track beams. However, decades of being exposed to the elements has left it in bad shape and a recent structural survey of the beam found it to be life-expired.

RTV 31 must come down, and unless £30,000 can be raised to cover the cost of specialist lifting equipment, vehicle structural accommodations and insurance, it could end up being scrapped.

"The monument exists as testament, not only to the passion and devotion of hundreds of Tracked Hovercraft staff, but also to the volunteers who came together to save it in 1996," said a Railworld statement. "This is their legacy – if RTV 31 disappears, who will remember them, the hovertrain, and the story in 50 years from now?

"If the hovertrain can be brought down in one piece, or as intact as possible, further efforts will be made to house, preserve, and aesthetically restore it. Railworld has about six months before an irreversible decision will be made – please help to save this behemoth of the 1970s!"

➜ **To donate, visit www.gofundme.com/f/save-rtv-31-britains-1970s-hovertrain**

Hovertrain RTV 31 above the entrance to Railworld Wildlife Haven in Peterborough. ROBIN JONES

Lappa Valley owner Keith Southwell and Trebah Gardens CEO Jon Cummins with Alan Keef 0-6-0DH *The Duke*, one of the locomotives which works the Newlyn Downs branch and was part of the stock bought from the Wells Harbour Railway, which closed in September 2022. LVR

Cornwall's newest station is now open

THE Lappa Valley Railway has opened a new station to serve its new tropical garden.

Trebah Halt, on the award-winning (see News, page 39) attraction's 10 ¼in gauge Newlyn Downs branch, opened on March 28 and serves a new space planted with a sub-tropical feel developed in partnership with Trebah Garden, near Falmouth.

Railway owner Keith Southwell said: "This is the first new platform to open at Lappa Valley in nearly 30 years, so we felt it was important to do something special.

"We are very fond of Trebah Garden, and we have enjoyed working alongside the team to share a flavour of its sub-tropical Cornish garden in the heart of our secret world of play and trains.

"Thank-you to Jon, Darren, and the team at Trebah for helping to make our new platform even more extraordinary. We are looking forward to using the opportunity to help promote Trebah to our visitors as a fellow quality Cornish attraction."

Jon Cummins, CEO of Trebah Garden, said: "To be able to share some special plants from Trebah and bring some of the sub-tropical look and feel of one of Cornwall's great gardens to Lappa as a much-loved family attraction in north Cornwall was an idea we couldn't pass up."

Cranmore milk train could be here to stay long-term

By Owen Hayward

FOLLOWING a successful appeal to cover the cost of transporting four wagons to the East Somerset Railway for a photographic charter, the train of six-wheeled milk tankers could now become a permanent fixture on the line.

While many freight service combinations have been recreated during preservation, the most notable perhaps being the Great Central Railway's mineral 'Windcutter' and box van rakes, milk trains have been notably absent, with no railway homing sufficient numbers to produce an authentically-sized rake.

That changed briefly in October 1996 when the Severn Valley Railway had five vehicles brought together to form a classic Western Region formation, with classes 52 Western and 42 Warship locomotives pulling these, along with a BR Mk.1 full brake.

'Missed opportunity'

A short-notice charter was arranged using WR mogul No. 7325, but by that time two tankers had returned to their respective homes. Nevertheless, the day recreated services once seen on the Barnstaple line, although many lamented the missed opportunity to run the full rake with steam, with it often referred to 'the one that got away' in charter circles.

Jumping to September 2023 and 30742 Charters ran a photographic day with newly-restored large prairie No. 4110 paired with a full brake and two milk tankers at the ESR.

"Fast-forward a little and a second discussion took place on a visiting engine to help the East Somerset mark its 50th anniversary," said 30742 organiser Martin Creese. "Given at the time the plans and progress, contact was made with the owning group of new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange*, which was agreed to visit in March.

"In discussion around photo charters to support the visit, I suggested it would be nice to have a combination that would be different to the other railways lined up for visits, and while I would do the same combination as with No. 4110, a longer train would look really good.

"At this point, the idea suddenly took off, and I am indebted to Tom Bailey and Phil Wilson, of the ESR, who embraced the idea."

Discussions were held with owning railways and groups of other vehicles and four were found to be available to visit, so an appeal was swiftly launched to raise the required transport costs, along with undertaking some minor repairs.

"There is always a moment of doubt as to whether support would be forthcoming, but 40 very generous photographers allowed us to meet the target," Martin said.

The vehicles began to arrive in early February, joining the ESR's resident pair. No. 44000 came from Midsomer Norton, W102 and W3018 courtesy of the 813 Fund, and W2835 from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, courtesy of Andrew Goodman, who also arranged all the transport movements.

GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* passes the distant signal for Mendip Vale with the six milk tankers in tow. MARTIN CREESE

Admirable deputy

While *Betton Grange* was not finished in time to appear at the gala as hoped, the Great Western Society's new-build Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* deputised and on March 25, the sight of a six-tank WR milk train could once again be witnessed – much to the delight of the participants and all those involved in the planning of the event.

"The weather was kinder than the very wet forecast had suggested but not quite the glorious sunshine you always hope for, but what a sight and sound it made," Martin said. "It hasn't quite sunk in what Tom and Phil have done to make this happen, and with the rake staying together for a little while, yet more charters are planned before the tanks return home.

"In embarking on the project, the hope was that bringing the rake together may stimulate interest in milk tanks and the part they played in goods traffic around the UK but especially in the South West.

"We were very kindly offered more tanks than we could afford to move, and thoughts are now being given to whether this can become a longer-term project and to give something back to these vehicles, some of which are really in need of some TLC.

"The popularity of them on photo charters and the diverse range of motive power that hauled them gives plenty of opportunities in the future which could provide a sustainable income to maintain them. I have a list from a GWR 1400 to a SR Bulleid light Pacific in my wish list, the latter to recreate the workings from Seaton and Chard Junction.

"Given the establishment of themed goods rakes on many preserved lines, a milk train based on the East Somerset may yet become a reality."

➜ Anyone wishing to receive news of future developments and charters with the milk rake should sign up to the 30742 Charters' mailing list by emailing mail.30742@btinternet.com

The milk train heads for Cranmore, partially reflected in floodwater in an adjacent field. OWEN HAYWARD

New 'halt' opens for business on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway

THE Cotswold Halt is the newest stop on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. It is also the name of the new café at Toddington station, which has replaced the Flag & Whistle tea room.

A rethink of the catering at Toddington station followed the end of an external franchise after the 2023 season. Since then, volunteers have been working flat-out to turn the café into an appealing 80-seat destination, with a new menu to match the best comparable offerings elsewhere in the Cotswolds.

There is also a new bar called The Halt Bar, which will be opened on special occasions, specialising in local Cotswold beers, ciders and spirits. An exclusive range of gifts, The Cotswold Collection, will also soon be on offer from the café.

The manager of The Cotswold Halt, Tracey Jaggers, who was previously café and shop manager at Tewkesbury Abbey, said: "I'm thrilled to be managing this exciting new facility for the railway, which is already one of the leading attractions in the Cotswolds.

"Visitors can be assured of a very warm welcome."

The Cotswold Halt is open from 9am to 4pm six days a week; closed on Mondays except bank holidays.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

A MARKET-FIRST EXCLUSIVE

Officially licensed Flying Scotsman 100th Anniversary Tribute

LIMITED EDITION OF 4,999

IMPRESSIVE 8 INCHES WIDE

Throughout its history, Flying Scotsman has epitomised the golden age of British ingenuity, invention and craftsmanship, and is renowned for being the first locomotive to run a non-stop journey from London to Edinburgh. Now, 100 years since this iconic locomotive received its name, Flying Scotsman, and was renumbered 4472, we commemorate the locomotive and its 1924 debut at the British Empire Exhibition with an officially licensed *Flying Scotsman 100th Anniversary Sculpture*.

HANDSCULPTED WITH RICH BRONZE TONES

A prestigious tribute, this unique edition is **sculpted by hand** and features a stylised model of the 4472 Flying Scotsman engine upon rail tracks, finished in **rich bronze tones** and its famous green livery – reminiscent of museum-quality sculptures. The wood-grain base depicts **Flying Scotsman's nameplate** and a 100th anniversary commemoration to mark the locomotive's appearance as No. 4472 Flying Scotsman at the British Empire Exhibition. On the back of the wood-grain base is showcased a **tribute to the LNER engine's Doncaster origins and to Nigel Gresley**, Chief Mechanical Engineer.

LIMITED TO 4,999 NUMBERED EDITIONS - ORDER TODAY!

Limited to JUST 4,999 individually numbered editions, this Flying Scotsman tribute is only available from The Bradford Exchange. Your purchase is accompanied by our 365-day money-back guarantee and a Certificate of Authenticity. It is available for just 4 interest-free instalments of £24.99 - that's only £99.96 (plus £9.99 S&S)*. Pay nothing now – order online at **www.bradford.co.uk/fs100sculpture** or simply complete and return your Priority Order Form today!

Shown smaller than actual size of 8.4 inches (21.4 cm) in width x 5.1 inches (13 cm) in height x 3.1 inches (7.9 cm) in depth. | Produced under licence from SCMG Enterprises Ltd. Flying Scotsman trade marks ® SCMG/ designs © SCMG. Flying Scotsman is a National Railway Museum locomotive. www.railwaymuseum.org.uk | © The Bradford Exchange. * S&S - Shipping & Service. Offer applies to UK only. Our guarantee is in addition to the rights provided to you by consumer protection regulations. Please note: The first 100 edition numbers may be secured at a higher price whilst stocks are available. Simply call 0333 003 1545 to order yours! 126-JIN15.01

THE REVERSE FEATURES ENGINE AND NIGEL GRESLEY TRIBUTES

PAY NOTHING NOW

ORDER FORM

Please Respond Promptly

To: The Bradford Exchange, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA

YES! Please order __ (Qty) of the **FLYING SCOTSMAN 100TH ANNIVERSARY SCULPTURE** for me as described in this advertisement.

Complete today or Call 0333 003 0019

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms).....
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....Telephone.....

Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Please note, we may contact you via mail, email and mobile with information about your reservation. For details of our privacy policy, please go to www.bradford.co.uk/privacypolicy or contact us at the above address or phone number.

The Bradford Exchange · Since 1973 ·

126-JIN15.01

Order Ref:443560

FASTEST WAY TO ORDER

www.bradford.co.uk/fs100sculpture

***Or call on* 0333 003 0019**

and quote reference code 443560

Scan me!

MPs want iconic steam painting at bicentenary

FOUR North East MPs have sent a joint letter the National Gallery asking for its support for the Stockton & Darlington 200 celebrations.

Conservative MPs Peter Gibson, Paul Howell, Matt Vickers and Dehenna Davison want to see painter William Turner's 'Rail, Steam and Speed' displayed in the recently renovated Preston Hall Museum.

Local councils along the 26-mile route are planning to stage various events as part of the bicentenary celebrations.

In the letter, the Members of Parliament wrote: "We, the four MPs representing the route, would like to voice our support for the plans by the festival director to display a range of artworks celebrating our glorious railway heritage.

"We understand that the painting has never been displayed in England north of York before, and the 200th anniversary of the birth of the modern passenger railways represents the perfect opportunity for the National Gallery to bring the work to a new audience.

"We would like to meet you at your earliest convenience to discuss this proposal.

"Supporting this timely request will allow the National Gallery to be an integral part of this event of international importance."

Rudyard Lake line is bought

A BUYER has been found for the 10¼-in gauge Rudyard Lake Steam Railway in Staffordshire.

The 1¼-mile line was built by Peter Hanton, from Congleton, and laid along the trackbed of the standard-gauge North Staffordshire Railway line from Macclesfield to Uttoxeter. It started in 1985 and was sold to the Leek & Rudyard Railway in 2015.

Since 2016, the line has incorporated the locomotives and rolling stock of the former Isle of Mull Railway. Owner Simon Clarke, who plans retire to Scotland, said the new owner used to volunteer at the railway when they were a teenager.

Railway 200: How can you become involved?

By Phil Marsh

IT is widely accepted that the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway on September 27, 1825, marked the beginning of the railway age.

While acknowledging that lines such as the Middleton Railway, which opened in 1758, predate the S&DR by two-thirds of a century, 2025 marks the generally accepted bicentenary of the railways. So, how is this occasion to be marked? That is up to any readers in their capacity as volunteers or paid staff in the heritage railway movement.

Heritage Railway magazine publisher Mortons Media sponsored the Heritage Railway Association's spring conference, held in Llandudno on March 5/6. On the second day, several hours were spent considering the Railway 200 project and presentations were made, with Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, the chairman of Network Rail and the HRA, in the audience.

Railway 200 advisors Phil Marsh (left) and Mike Lamport address the Heritage Railway Association conference at Llandudno on March 6. Mike, who has worked for the railways since 1964, helped organised the Shildon 150 cavalcade in 1975 and curated the Waterloo 175 celebrations on July 11 last year. PAUL BICKERDYKE

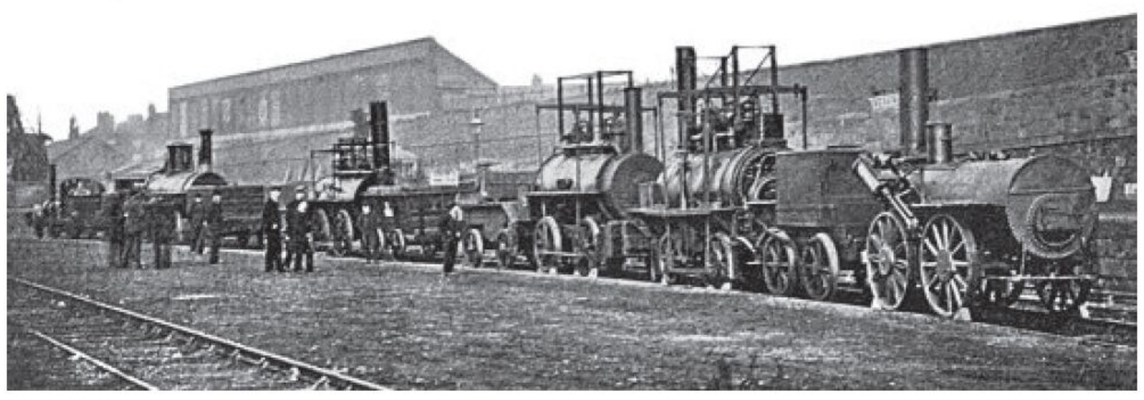
Main aims

The Railway 200 presentations by Lord Hendy's team brought to life what the project was all about, highlighting the key aims, which are:

- To increase tourism and patronage at heritage railways, especially travelling by rail to lines that that connect with Network Rail such at Alton, Aberystwyth or Aviemore. The aim here is to increase public awareness of green tourism and attract new passengers and or visitors to national rail and heritage railways alike.
- To act as a volunteer recruitment drive for heritage lines, especially from professional railway staff whose employers offer paid volunteering leave. The latter will learn new skills that are potentially helpful in career advancement, so promote youth groups as the key to the future sustainability of our heritage industry. A similar aim is to attract existing volunteers to consider joining the 'big railway' as many of their skills are, to a degree, transferable.
- To attract potential employees to the rail industry who may not have considered joining it, perhaps because of a lack of knowledge about the roles in rail or because of a negative perception of the railways.
- To create lasting partnerships between heritage lines, the rail industry, and perhaps local museums to host events showcasing unseen railway-related archives or relics. Train operating companies can liaise with community rail partnerships to generate travel to exhibitions and events, especially where they interface with heritage lines.
- Creating and hosting events linking in with national events like Children In Need, Red Nose day, or the National Heritage Open Days week held every September.
- Perhaps contentiously, railways may consider re-liverying traction and or rolling stock with the Railway 200 logo – thereby generating media attention with a grand reveal press event.

The conference audience were told that events can last one day to as long as can be staged. Groups such as the LNWR Society, the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society, and the South Eastern & Chatham Railway Society could be invited to host exhibitions and give talks at any given railway with facilities. Events can be held on a date of the heritage railways' choosing from summer 2025 to spring 2026; the only firm date in the diary is the September 27 anniversary when Railway 200 aligns, but parallel to the Stockton & Darlington 200 project, which will take centre stage.

No repeat of the 1975 cavalcade is planned as 50 years ago there were thousands of former main line steam crews available and safety considerations were not as tight. Additionally, there is no funding available for aspects like lineside stands, staffing, and insurance considerations, and the land used in 1975 has been taken out of railway use given the closure of the Shildon wagon works.



How we celebrated Britain's invention of the steam railway 143 years ago: The George Stephenson centenary parade between Wylam and Newcastle in 1881. PHIL MARSH COLLECTION

Exhibition train

An exhibition train has been procured consisting of Mk. 3 coaches which will be reconfigured with four or so carriages hosting a travelling exhibition where digital content can be displayed to the public. It has not yet been decided where the train will visit, but its national rail stops will be determined by platform capacity and ease of public access. The train will visit heritage lines and potentially railway works and stay for up to a week depending on operational requirements, providing a link to the past and railway innovation.

Whichever heritage railways the exhibition train visits, the host venue

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway has commenced its season of Vintage Trains utilising the locomotive and carriages from Stephen Middleton's Stately Trains Collection. On March 24, the four-carriage set was hauled by his Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1208 of 1916 *Illingworth* with its *Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons No. 88* nameplates previously carried in the late 1930s. The carriages comprised LNWR saloon No. 17 (Queen Victoria's carriage) from 1885, GER No. 14 (1889), GER No. 37 (1897) and Great North of Scotland No. 34 (1894). Thee combined ages of the locomotive and stock totalled 639 years! MIKE HEATH

may consider using local history to illustrate how the railway changed its area in socio-economic terms.

Equally, if any heritage railway has anniversary to link in with Railway 200, use it – for example, the Severn Valley Railway is 60 years old in 2025, while the Brill Tramway running from Quainton Road, now the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, closed in 1935, 90 years prior to 2025. A double anniversary will create local media interest.

For those reservationists who overhaul or restore locomotives or rolling stock, do you anticipate returning or launching into service an item in 2025?

September's National Heritage Open Days is a huge event where free access to museums and stately homes is offered among other activities such as talks and exhibitions.

Join in by allowing access to some behind-the-scenes workshops or reserve collections for the public. How many members of the public, for example, have seen mechanical interlocking rooms under signalboxes? Victorian innovation at its best – but replicated today on screens.

To the future

What project can the heritage sector create to create a legacy for the future?

Several suggestions were made by Lord Hendy's speakers. Film tourism is huge, and many railways have been used as locations for blockbusters.

An exhibition explaining how the filming was carried out, where, and when will attract new patronage. Equally, an illustrated timeline of local railway history, perhaps including carriage prints and railway posters, will always attract interest. At the other end of the scale, how about seeing if it is possible to be physically connected up with national rail, even on a temporary basis, if you operate adjacent to Network Rail's tracks?

The late Adrian Shooter organised to join the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway with Network Rail in July 2010 to celebrate the centenary of the Banbury to Bicester line, with GWR pannier No. 9600 hauling a train from Banbury to Chinnor and back.

Think big was the message at the HRA conference. Every event can be publicised on the national Railway 200 website free of charge. This will create an all-inclusive national programme, no matter how large or small your heritage operation is.

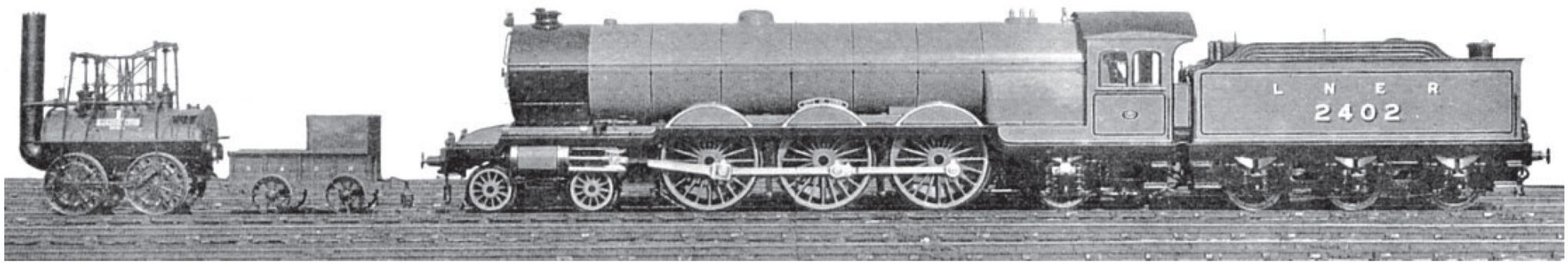
Railway 200 will have partnerships with Historic England, National Archives, the British Film Institute, the National Trust, the London Transport and National Railway Museums and other organisations.

Innovation

Finally, other key aspects of this project are to showcase innovation and the environmental benefits of rail travel. The message is that rail travel is green, and that innovation has been key to technology advances over the last 200 years.

The legacy aspect is designed to facilitate new partnerships, increase the heritage railways' visibility, boost volunteer numbers – and not forgetting income from new and more diverse visitors.

There is a Railway 200 Heritage Delivery Group, with the author and Mike Lamport supporting Steve Oates, of the HRA, which railways are urged to join. This is a once-in-a-generation chance to be part of a nationally recognised event.



The LNER publicity shot for the 1925 centenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, featuring George and Robert Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* and Raven A2 4-6-2 No. 2402 *City of York* (which in 1936 became the first locomotive built by the LNER to be withdrawn). PHIL MARSH COLLECTION

The Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's Baldwin No. 590 has returned to Aberystwyth. Once there is sufficient capacity in the workshops it will re-enter them for repair works following a driving wheel bearing failure last summer.

Previously unseen by the public in preservation, Isle of Man Railways 'Pairs' coach No. F68 has been restored to its former glory.

Surprises are unveiled as new Rheidol museum opens

Words and pictures by Owen Hayward

ON the same day that its 2024 daily operating season commenced, the Vale of Rheidol Railway officially opened a new museum space in the GWR locomotive shed – with some exhibits having been moved in during the days before.

Originally a subshed of Machynlleth's 6F depot, the building at Aberystwyth dates from 1938 and was closed by British Rail in April 1965, with ownership transferring to the VoR in 1969. Its renovation is part of a £2.2 million project, Wales to the World, which is transforming the site into a station that is sustainable for modern and future tourism.

The scheme has included a new entrance hall with ticket office and shop, improved toilet facilities, and a reworked station layout. A previous temporary shop building used during the new booking hall construction has been relocated and will in the near future be fitted out as a permanent café to boost the railway's visitor facilities at its main starting point.

Reworked

The engine shed has undergone a through refurbishment to turn it into a multifunctional display space, which allows it to not only house some of the railway's extensive collection of locomotives and rolling stock, but also be available for external event hires such as food festivals and private functions.

As previously reported, the sole-surviving GWR 4-4-0 Dukedog No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley* is one of the star displays, having arrived in February on a two-year loan agreement from the Bluebell Railway, having been a resident of the two-road depot for the majority of its working life. Ahead of it is the sole-surviving Padarn Railway locomotive *Fire Queen*. Built in 1848, it is one of the oldest-surviving narrow gauge locomotive in existence.

The set-up of the rail-connected museum allows for its displays to be regularly changed as required. On the opening day of March 23, for example, England 0-4-0STT No. 4 *Palmerston* was also on show, it having arrived on February 29 from the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway. It will remain on display until late June or early July, when it will then move into the VoR's workshops across the tracks for a contract boiler work before debuting in steam once more at the August 24-26 steam festival weekend. Having had a bottom-end overhaul not long before its withdrawal, initial inspections have supported the understanding that the boiler is in good condition and is unlikely to require much more than a retube and some other remedial works.

In waiting

Also on display was the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's Baldwin 4-6-0T No. 590. Although it returned to steam following restoration at the VoR's workshops in 2023, a driving wheel bearing failed during running in at Porthmadog. It has not steamed again since; on February 27, it arrived back at the Rheidol where it too awaits a slot in the workshops for repairs. Its return to service is highly

An aerial view of the Vale of Rheidol's Aberystwyth site: 2-6-2T No. 7 awaits departure to Devils Bridge on March 23 with the newly-refurbished 1938 engine shed behind, which now houses the museum. On the roof are a vast quantity of solar panels that provide power for much of the site.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

A cross-section of four different railways and gauges. From left to right are England 0-4-0STT No. 4 *Palmerston*, Isle of Man Railways carriage No. F68, GWR Dukedog No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley* and Padarn Railway 0-4-0 *Fire Queen*.

Back on home territory: GWR 4-4-0 Dukedog No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley* is on display inside the new museum for the next two years.

Little and Large: Visitors admire the stark contrast in size of quarry Hunslet *Margaret* (left) and NG60 *Drakensberg*, both operational Rheidol residents.

anticipated by many.

A surprise revelation in the museum is Isle of Man Railways 'Pairs' carriage No. F68, one of two four-wheel coaches (Nos. A9 and C13) purchased in 1873 from the Metropolitan Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd. By 1881 the two carriages were working close-coupled before being mounted together on a new steel underframe to form one long carriage in 1909.

It remained in service until 1964 when it was withdrawn and stored in the St John's carriage shed, making occasional appearances to support services during particularly busy times until 1974.

In 1975 it was sold to Peter J Rampton along with coaches F37, F38 and two Celminsons with which it left the island, joining the renowned yet mysterious Collection X, which has passed into the custodianship of the VoR following the sad passing of Peter in July 2019. Peter had spent more than 40 years carrying out restoration work, the internal layout becoming slightly modified during the process, with the VoR finishing it off at his Surrey workshops after his passing.

Top-secret

Until March 23, F68 had yet to be publicly seen in preservation and was even delivered to Aberystwyth in a curtain-sided lorry so as to keep its reveal a surprise.

While the Manx railways are 3ft gauge, No. F68 sits on a pair of 1ft 11 ¾in gauge bogies and has been air-fitted to allow it to eventually operate on the VoR should there ever be a desire to do so.

The cross-section of various railways continues with the Brecon Mountain Railway's 0-6-2WTT Graf Schwerin-Lowitz No. 99 3553 of 1908 on show alongside the Rheidol's own NG60 Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 No. 60 *Drakensberg*, the aptly-named Kerr Stuart Wren class 0-4-0ST No. 3114 *Wren* and quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 605 *Margaret*, the latter three of which are all operational and will be removed from the museum as and when required for service. Out-of-service VoR 2-6-2T No. 9 *Prince of Wales* is also on display, with an overhaul to return it to steam planned to commence in 2025.

While there is still some final finishing-off to do, including interpretation and educational boards to tell the story of the exhibits, the museum provides an additional attraction for visitors to the railway, allowing the public to see some of its historic collection while additionally providing dry, undercover storage.

The museum is open daily until November 3 unless booked out for a private function.

➜ **A small model railway show will take place in the museum shed on October 26, which will include the late Reverend W Awdry's Ffarquhar layout courtesy of the Talyllyn Railway.**

Left: The late Adrian Shooter's rail-mounted Ford Model T vehicle, a somewhat unorthodox contraption which stands out from some of the other displays in the new museum at Aberystwyth.

IN BRIEF

'Lizzie' needs 'at least £165,000' for overhaul

THE Princess Elizabeth Locomotive Society has launched a £165,000 public appeal to cover the cost of a major overhaul in order to return No. 6201 to the main line, hopefully next year.

As reported last issue, work to dismantle the 91-year-old locomotive to determine what work needs to be done began at West Coast Railways' Carnforth depot on February 28.

Society chairman Clive Mojonnier said that the boiler has been removed for investigations, but the full situation would not be known until after its overhaul, and the final bill could be nearer £500,000.

➜ **To donate to the appeal, visit www.6201.co.uk**

Calbourne needs 36k for tyres

THE Isle of Wight Steam Railway has launched a £36,000 appeal to buy new tyres for its flagship 1891-built LSWR O2 0-4-4T No. W24 *Calbourne*.

Calbourne, the sole survivor of its class, in 1967 became the first locomotive acquired by the heritage line.

An IoWSR statement said: "After more than 60 years of use, *Calbourne's* tyres have worn to the extent that they now need replacing. The success of this essential project relies on charitable contributions."

➜ **To donate, visit https://iwsteamrailway.co.uk/get-involved/make-a-donation/**

Two new trips on South Devon

THE South Devon Railway has announced two new attractions for this season.

The Freight Train Experience will take passengers on a return trip on wagons normally only used for railway maintenance – and with an open veranda offering scenic views of the landscape and railway. The ticket also includes unlimited travel on regular services during the day.

The two-hour Ploughman's Lunch Dining Experience in the 1950s restaurant car will depart from Buckfastleigh at 12.10pm on selected Sundays during April, July and August.

➜ **For more details, visit www.southdevonrailway.co.uk**

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES – SEE PAGE 30

Brief window of opportunity allows for a Lakeside union

Words and pictures by Owen Hayward

MARCH 21 was a day of strong emotion for many as two long-held ambitions finally came to fruition when two LMS-designed locomotives owned by members of the Beet family met for the first time at the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway – a route on which one of them had run during its BR career.

In 1967, Dr Peter Beet saved Ivatt 2-6-0 No. 46441 from being scrapped with the intention of operating it on what later became the L&HR. Built in 1950 at Crewe, it was allocated to Lancaster Green Ayre shed until that closed in 1966, after which it was transferred to Carnforth, where it remained until withdrawn the following year. Its working life saw it operate on the line from Ulverston to Lakeside on the shore of Lake Windermere.

The original line was opened on June 1, 1869, as an extension of the Furness Railway from Ulverston. The company had realised the potential of personal travel and tourism following the completion of a railway system around the coast from Carlisle to Lancaster by its predecessors.

The terminus was originally to be at Newby Bridge, where four passenger steamboats terminated their journeys from Waterhead at the top end of Lake Windermere; however, the FR saw the potential in a terminal point at Lakeside that would allow for connections with much larger ships. At the time of the branch's opening, however, the stations were not completed.

BR closed the line to passengers on September 6, 1965, with traffic ceasing altogether two years later. A group of enthusiasts chaired by Dr Beet formed the Lakeside Railway Estates Company with a view to preserving both the branch and the 10A locomotive depot at Carnforth.

Loal locomotive

As part of this vision, No. 46441 was purchased with the intention of running across the line, but expansion of the road network, including the rerouting of the A590, severed the line at Haverthwaite, meaning the original dream was not to be. Dr Beet died in 2005 and ownership of the Ivatt passed to his widow.

The Ivatt remained at Carnforth as part of the Steamtown museum, although that closed as a visitor attraction in 1998. The Ivatt ran at Steam on the Met events in the 1990s, as well on the East Lancashire Railway, before its ticket expired in 2002, after which it went on display at the Ribble Steam Railway in Preston.

In 2018, just over half a century after it had been first earmarked to do so, No. 46441 arrived at the L&HR for the first time in preservation.

The Beet family-owned pairing of No. 45690 and 46441 pause side by side at Lakeside station during a private running day on March 21.

Its overhaul was carried out by a mix of volunteers and contractors, with the boiler going to Carnforth for work to be carried out by West Coast Railways. By November 2023, work had essentially been completed, with loaded test runs taking place along the line to run it in.

As well as the Ivatt, in 1994 Dr Beet also purchased *Leander* from the Severn Valley Railway (along with, at the time, No. 45699 *Galatea*), which is now owned by his son Chris. Having been a regular performer on the main line, its final tour working was the 'Cumbrian Coast Express' on

Ivatt No. 46441 approaches Forresters foot crossing with a loaded test run on March 20. The locomotive ran across the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway's line during its BR career and its return to service there following overhaul is a welcome return, it having originally been preserved with that very intention back in 1967.

***Leander* is reflected during morning prep outside the original goods shed on March 20.**

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Above: LMS Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* (right) departs from Haverthwaite on test while Ivatt No. 46441 is serviced in the locomotive yard ahead of its own running-in trials later that afternoon.

Right: On March 21, Ivatt No. 46441 and Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* ran together for the first time in the heritage era under Beet family ownership on a private day of special trains. The pair are seen approaching Newby Bridge halt.

September 30, 2023. Following this, it moved to spend the winter at the East Lancashire Railway.

With a brief gap between booked gala appearances, having already starred at the ELR's Legends of Steam gala over the weekend of March 15-17 (see report, pages 52/53) and then being due to almost immediately make the journey south for the Mid-Hants Railway's own April 26-28 steam gala, an opportunity presented itself to have both of the family locomotives together at Haverthwaite for a week.

Fast-acting

Still warm from the gala, *Leander* was loaded onto a lorry on March 18 and arrived in Cumbria the following morning. Locomotive and tender were swiftly reconnected, allowing for a gauging run to take place on March 20, with No. 46441 also undergoing further testing on the same day.

Finally, on March 21 both locomotives were run together for a small number of trips along the 3½-mile line, allowing the family to enjoy the pair running together for the first time – a long-held ambition that had had come close to being a reality the year before, but which was prevented from happening due to logistical issues.

The pair then ran the LHR's first weekend of daily public services over the weekend of March 23/24, alternating departures out of Haverthwaite each day, before the Jubilee was loaded and it then set off for Hampshire on March 26.

Chris Beet said: "It's been a desire to see the two family engines run together for a while and this brief window of opportunity between *Leander*'s bookings really was an opportunity too good to miss as the Jubilee will go out of ticket while it is down south and won't be back in steam again for a few years afterwards while we overhaul it back at Carnforth."

***Leander* bursts out of Haverthwaite Tunnel as it heads off on a gauging run on the morning of March 20.**

New dawn for Stephenson's Newcastle workshop

THE multi-million-pound conversion into a business centre of the Pattern Shop, a workshop behind Newcastle Central station where Robert Stephenson built steam locomotives for use both at home and all around the world, has been completed.

The Grade II-listed workshop, which found itself at the heart of the Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century, fell empty in 2008 and slowly became derelict, until Newcastle City Council and its development partner igloo Regeneration, with Thriving Investments (part of the Places for People group), stepped in in 2020 with a plan to revive it, creating employment and boosting the local economy.

The £9 million project has seen the 32,367 sq.ft Pattern Shop converted sympathetically, with emphasis on retaining as many original features as possible, including the cast iron pillars in the Engine Hall, large arched windows, floorboards, and roof timbers which date back to Stephenson himself.

Funding from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership to address the structural deterioration and from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions has played a key role in the conversion.

Building 'reborn'

Coun Alex Hay, the council's Cabinet member for a thriving city and inclusive economy, said: "I am delighted that the Pattern Shop project is now complete. It's wonderful to see a building so important to Newcastle's history being reborn for clean, green businesses that will create the next generation of good-quality jobs."

Founded in 1823, Robert Stephenson & Co. was the first company in the world created specifically to build railway locomotives.

More than 3000 locomotives constructed there were shipped all over the world, as far afield as America and Egypt, placing Newcastle on the international map.

A building on the site of the Pattern Shop first appeared in 1826. It evolved up until 1880, with sections of the building, including the roof, being removed and a first floor inserted.

When fully occupied, the building, on 4.3 acres of brownfield land within the Stephenson Quarter, is expected to house 200 workers. A special event aimed at businesses interested in locating to the Pattern Shop is set to be held in May.

Severn Valley mogul goes gold leaf!

Words and pictures by John Titlow

THE current repaint of Stanier mogul No. 13268 into full lined LMS livery on the Severn Valley Railway has been completed with gold leaf.

Gold leaf and steam locomotives might at first glance seem unlikely bedfellows; apparently, its use is more common and widespread on motive power and rolling stock than you would imagine.

On March 7, I was invited to watch Ronan O'Brien gilding gold leaf to the number and tender LMS letters inside Bridgnorth Shed's paintshop.

It might appear that anything to do with gold would cost a fortune, but gold leaf – which is real gold, but thinner than most paper and therefore incredibly light – is not as expensive as one might assume. It costs a lot more than painting, but it will last considerably longer. It can often be low in karat or of not high purity, but in this case, 24-karat leaf was used; 24 sheets cost about £30.

The leaf comes as a transfer attached to paper in just over three-inch squares, and its application to cover both sides of the locomotive took about a day. Approximately 120 full leaf individual sheets were used.

Original references

Pre-Grouping and post-Nationalisation companies at time used gold leaf not only on their locomotives, but also on carriages. The Gresley carriages on the SVR have gold leaf on them.

Before any work commenced, a tracing was created from original photographs of the locomotive to ensure the correct size and spacing of the numbers on the cabside and that the letters would fit correctly on the tender.

The surrounding area where the figures are located was fully painted in black gloss. Once completely dry, the numbers and letters were hand-painted with a base coat of paint used as a guide.

The surrounding black gloss was pounce-dusted with French chalk and the figures cleaned of all debris. Afterwards, a special size was applied carefully over them, cutting in the edges exactly the same as if the figures were being hand-painted.

Time was allowed for the size to become tacky before the gold leaf could be applied – slowly and meticulously. The most difficult part of the job was to lay it on neatly, especially around the rivets, which stand out.

It was not important if the gold leaf overlapped a little because it could be removed easily afterwards as it did not stick to the size. Obviously, wastage was kept to a minimum.

After being left to dry overnight, the leaf was burnished, cleaning off any excess before the all-important shading was done. Shading around the figures gives a marked 3D effect and makes the letters more prominent.

Finishing touches

Once all paintwork is completed, the locomotive gets several coats of varnish to finish it off.

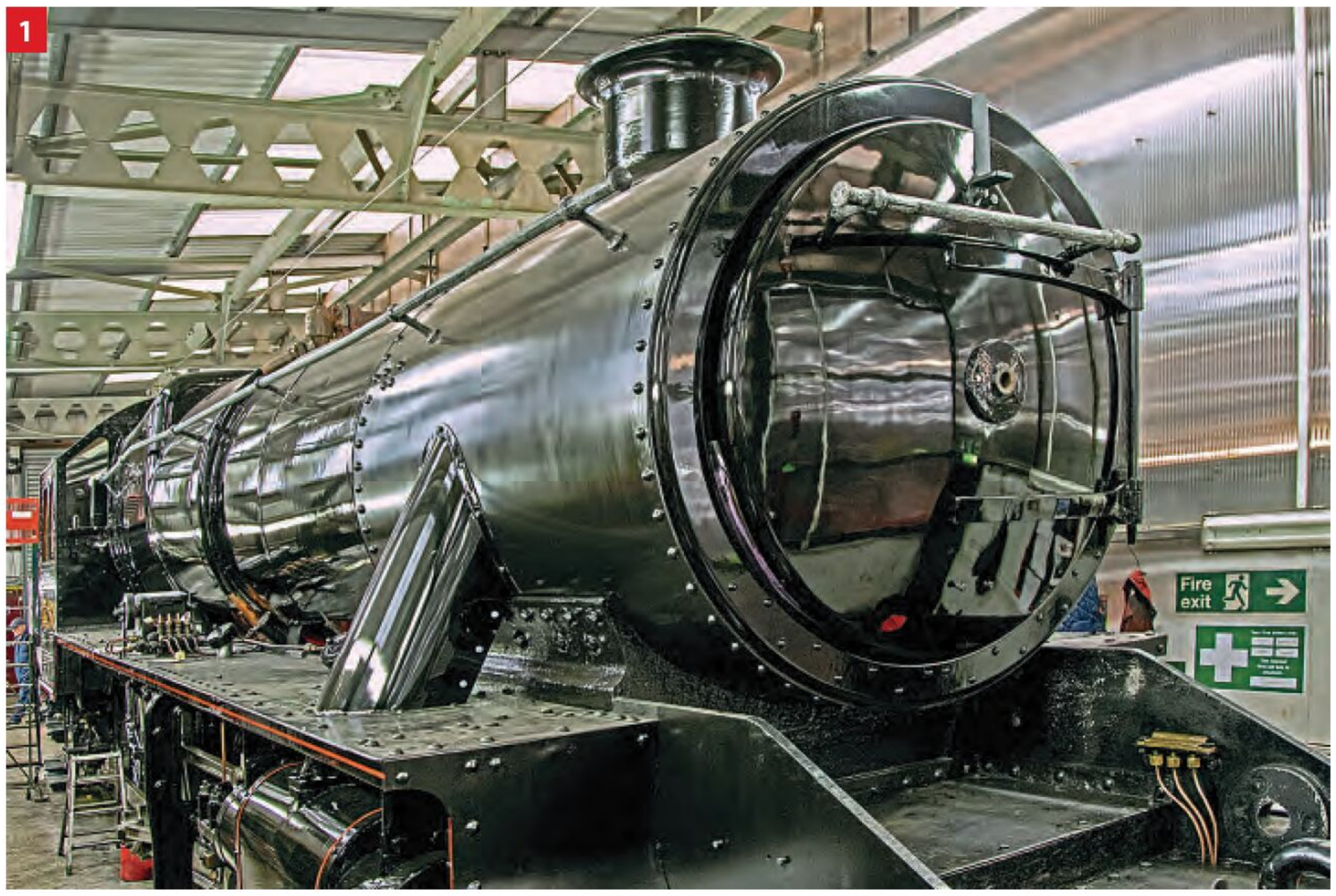
No. 13268 was built in 1934 and fits within the period of 1934 to 1936 when the LMS used gold leaf and lined black as its livery.

Crewe, where it was built, did not use transfers during that period.

Finishing touches to this locomotive are especially important, and Ronan did all the lining by hand without using masking tape. The lamps alone are evidence of the quality of his work.

The mogul will be running at the Spring Steam Gala being held on April 18 to April 21, at which it is set to haul the rake of Midland carriages.

➜ For further information about the locomotive and what's on, head online and visit https://staniermogulfund.org.uk



1: No. 13268 undergoing a full repaint into lined LMS livery inside Bridgnorth Shed on March 19.

2: Ronan O'Brien applies the gold leaf to the numbers of No. 13264 on March 8.

3: Gold leaf is applied to the numbers of No. 13268.

4: Shading around the letters creates a 3D effect.

5: The shading has been applied around the numbers too, also giving them a 3D effect. Final varnish had yet to be done on No. 13268.

6: Attention to detail is paramount, as depicted by the lamps of No. 13268.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

CHURNET VALLEY RAILWAY

MAY STEAM GALA

SATURDAY 4 MAY – MONDAY 6 MAY 2024

- Star guest locomotive No. 4079 “Pendennis Castle” celebrating its **100th birthday** in 2024
- Final appearance of guest locomotive No. 75014 “Braveheart”
- Home fleet locomotives, S160’s No. 5197 & 6046
- Selection of trains along steeply graded Cauldon Branch
- 4F No. 44422 and TKH No. 2944 on static display at Cheddleton
- Hot and cold food all day in Froghall tea room and on selected trains

FOR BEST PRICES BOOK ONLINE

4079 courtesy of Didcot Railway Centre, 75014 courtesy of the Dartmouth Steam Railway.
All locomotives and services subject to availability.

churnetvalleyrailway.co.uk

Churnet Valley Railway, Near Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands

VisitEngland QUALITY ASSURED VISITOR ATTRACTION

Top railway society 'back from the brink' after volunteers plea

By Geoff Courtney

ONE of the country's leading railway societies is back from the brink of being wound up after volunteers stepped forward to fill officers' vacancies, but the chairman still warns that more may be needed if the organisation, which celebrated its golden jubilee last year and has 1000 members, is to survive.

The Great Eastern Railway Society was formed in 1973 to promote a widespread interest in the GER, which operated from 1862 until becoming part of the LNER in the 1923 Grouping, to coordinate research, and provide a permanent record of its history. It also covers the GER's predecessors, successors and associated railways in East Anglia.

Part of the fascination of the GER, which owned 1200 miles of track, lies in its London suburban network, which in the early 1920s was the busiest steam-hauled commuter system in the world, comprising 24 trains an hour at its Liverpool Street terminus.

Turn-around: J69 No. 68538's fireman strides forward to activate the Stratford (30A) turntable in June 1957 while his driver stares intently at the photographer. The 0-6-0T was built at the GER works there in April 1892 and was withdrawn from 30A in September 1961, after having spent possibly its entire service life of nearly 70 years allocated to the depot. The smokebox numberplate clearly visible in the photograph was removed before the veteran locomotive was cut up and is now in a private railwayana collection. Behind the J69 is K3 class 2-6-0 No. 61890. The GER Society, which was formed in 1973, held its AGM on March 16 and welcomed new officers after its chairman warned the society could be wound up if volunteers did not come forward to fill these positions. TRANSPORT TREASURY/DR IAN ALLEN

Intense demand

Its Stratford Works in east London, where most of the railway's locomotives and rolling were built, was also of historical interest, and so too the work's associated depot, coded 30A by BR, which at the time of Grouping had an allocation of no fewer than 555 engines, a figure that reflected the demand of the intensive commuter traffic for which it provided motive power.

Over the years the GER Society has become the 'go-to' organisation for enthusiasts and historians interested in the railway's past, and its two quarterly publications, *Great Eastern News* and *Great Eastern Journal*, are highly respected, but in a recent issue of the *News*, chairman Peter Walker gave a blunt warning that the society faced the threat of being wound up due to an absence of volunteers to replace three officers' vacant roles.

The warning, which doubtless surprised many members, followed the resignation of treasurer Neil Pearson and the decision by both Ruth Ivimey-Cook, editor of the *News*, and membership secretary Ken Wheatley to stand down. Describing it as a serious problem, Peter told members that past treasurer Bernard Anderson would carry out essential functions until a successor could be found, but no successors had been identified for Ruth's or Ken's roles.

"Without a treasurer, the society cannot function. Unless someone comes forward as editor of the *News*, we face having no *News*. And if we cannot effectively manage our membership subscriptions and membership list, we cannot continue as a society," he explained.

Stepping up

Ending his warning to members, he wrote: "Several trustees, such as our secretary Brian Watson and myself, are already holding down multiple jobs within the society and simply cannot take on any more. I am therefore making this important appeal to you: if you want the society to continue, we need volunteers to come forward to assist in filling these vacancies or relieving the load of others. If not, we face the chilling prospect of having to consider winding up the society."

The matter was discussed at the society's AGM in Brentwood on March 16, following which Peter told *Heritage Railway:* "It was a very positive meeting, and a number of volunteers came forward, which I believe will enable us to continue as before. It is important that the officers, both long-standing and new, receive further assistance whenever possible, as the workload shouldn't be placed on just a few.

"We are definitely back from the brink and can be optimistic about the future, but there must be no complacency. I do, though, look to the future with more hope than was the case before my message and the subsequent AGM. We have a lot to offer those enthusiasts who are interested in the history of East Anglia's railways from their very earliest days."

The long-awaited 'Chinnor Independent Line' to Princess Risborough being laid. CPRR

Forging a new path into Princes Risborough – at long last

THE first 60ft track panels on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway's independent line into Princes Risborough have been laid using the line's track-relaying twin-jibbed rail crane.

Since 2018 when it opened a rebuilt fourth platform alongside Princes Risborough's Network Rail/Chiltern Railways station, CPRR trains have accessed the layout there via a half-mile diversion over a NR siding, but only when it is not otherwise needed!

Known as the Thame Branch siding, it is part of the remains of the old line from Princes Risborough to Oxford via Thame. Adjacent to it were the remains of the GWR branch to Chinnor and Watlington, but after final closure on cessation of a daily coal train for Chinnor cement works in 1989, the track became derelict.

The CPRR has now lifted most of the old track, removed the trees, and flattened the base ready for new track to be laid. Some of the rail is reuseable, but most of the sleepers not, while a few are 'siding quality'.

Volunteers are now pressing on with relaying. Last year, the Princes Risborough to Aylesbury branch was closed for it to be diverted onto a new embankment and bridge over the High Speed 2 track; NR donated some concrete sleepers made redundant as a result. They are old bullhead types, so fit the recovered rail.

Now, 60ft panels are being assembled in small batches on top of

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Remembering railway author and engine owner Peter Nicholson

Words and pictures by Josh Brinsford

MARCH 24 saw a memorial day held in honour of the late railway author, journalist, photographer and locomotive owner Peter Nicholson. It was organised by his family and held at the Westonzoyland Pumping Station, near Bridgwater, in Somerset.

Peter, who worked for *The Railway Magazine* since 1999, died on October 30 last year, aged 75, following a long illness, as reported in issue 313.

The 2ft gauge Westonzoyland Light Railway was a place that Peter really treasured, and he based his Lister railtruck locomotive and skip wagon there, also convincing the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust to relocate its Lister railtruck and collection of 2ft gauge wagons to the site run by the Westonzoyland Engine Trust (WZLET) from the now-deserted site at Washford on the West Somerset Railway.

He also contacted several locomotive owners he knew well to see if they were interested in attending the railway-themed events, including Brian Faulkner's collection of Lister railtrucks and Graham Morris with his Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST No. 4256 of 1922 *Peter Pan,* which is due to make a return appearance at this year's railway gala on August 26 Bank Holiday Monday.

In Peter's memory

The memorial day featured many highlights in Peter's honour, including passenger trains with his old locomotives, FC Hibberd Y-type Planet No.1830 of 1933 *Boothby,* named after the Boothby Peat Company, in Cumbria, where Peter purchased it from in 1968. The oldest-surviving petrol Hibberd, RA Lister railtruck No.6299 of 1935, is now owned by WSLET trustee Jason Keswick, who purchased it from Peter in 2017. It was once used at John Board, Portland Cement and Lime Works at nearby Dunball. The locomotive arrived onsite in 2017 following a major restoration carried out by Jason, which included sourcing a new JAP engine after discovering the original was seized solid.

Another of Peter's old locomotives also now owned by Jason is the museum's most recent arrival, Ruston and Hornsby 20DL No.235711 of 1945. Peter purchased it from Hills and Bailey in Llanberis, and then sold it to Alan Keef in 1998, who in turn sold it to the Devon Railway Centre in 1999, thus reuniting it with the rest of Peter's narrow gauge collection based there.

The DRC sold the locomotive to Jeremy Martin, of the Richmond Light Railway, in 2017. It recently sold it to Jason, and a full restoration is to be undertaken shortly.

Extension and more

The WZLR plans some new developments in the future, including the extension of the 2ft railway to the site entrance, as well as a Clyse mechanism to be displayed outside the locomotive shed, which will then be landscape for some new railway signage to be installed. There are also possible plans to build a second locomotive shed due to the 2021-built one being now full of the museum's resident locomotives.

More highlights during the day were a memorial flypast by the Middlezoy Aerodrome volunteers and the launch of Peter's memorial bench donated to the museum by his family and un veiled by one of his oldest friends, Robin Willes.

A commemorative headboard was also made for the event and saw use on Peter's former locomotives Hibberd No. 1830 and Lister No. 6299, as well as the WZLET-owned Motor Rail Simplex No.40S310, which were used on the passenger trains throughout the day, including a triple-header that both passengers and photographers enjoyed.

About 65 people attended the memorial day, including some making their first-ever visits to the 'hidden gem' of railways in Somerset!

The most recent arrival at the railway is Ruston Hornsby 20DL No.253711 of 1945, the restoration of which is due to start in the Westonzoyland workshops.

Peter's widow Pauline and WZLET member Jason Keswick unveil the commemorative headboard carried on his Lister 'Railtruck' No. 6299/1935.

Motor Rail No. 40S310, Hibberd No. 1830 *Bootby* and Lister 6299 are seen triple-heading with the Westonzoyland Light Railway's passenger coach.

existing track nearby, which makes getting the sleeper spacing correct straightforward; then the track-relaying machine carries each panel (weighing about 10 tons) to its final position. One rail is then de-keyed, allowing the panel to be curved to suit, then re-keyed.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to recover as many sleepers as hoped, so the railway is still about 400 yards short of track to complete its 'Chinnor Independent Line'. It is looking for another source and is busy fundraising, while conscious also of the quantity of ballast it will need once the track is done.

Elsewhere, the level crossing at Wainhill has needed a major refurbishment for some time. A 5mph temporary speed restriction of the section approaching and over the crossing has been in place until the works could be completed. In recent weeks the permanent way team has worked very hard to relay the entire length of track over the crossing and install a modern modular system, which will provide a smooth crossing for vehicles, pedestrians, and horses.

Wainhill level crossing is now the subject of refurbishment. CPRR

Lottery grant allows return of Darley Dale's original footbridge

By Robin Jones

THE 1911 footbridge at Peak Rail's Darley Dale station is to restored and returned to its original site thanks to a £223,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The restoration of the unique curved lattice double-staircase structure by the Derwent & Wye Valley Railway Trust (DWVRT) is part of a far-reaching history project engaging volunteers and the local community.

Trustees chairman David Lathrope said: "We are delighted to have received this support. This project is not just about preserving a structure; it is also a celebration of our local heritage, connecting generations and promoting sustainability. It's wonderful to know that we can bring this iconic footbridge back to life, enabling it to stand as a beacon of our community's rich history once again."

The remainder of the £243,000 cost is being provided by £19,000 from the trust and £1000 from Darley Dale Town Council.

The footbridge was removed from the site in the 1970s and taken by owner Derby Museums and Art Gallery to the Midland Railway – Butterley for storage. At one stage, the columns and spandrels were stolen, and so the bridge was not re-erected.

In 2010, the trust agreed a long-term loan of the surviving upper section of the bridge with a view to eventual restoration, but the project was delayed due to a shortage of money. Fundraising initiatives led to sections being moved into storage behind Rowsley South shed.

Replacements for the missing columns and spandrel brackets were cast to the original Midland design, removing one of the major obstacles in the overall restoration.

In February 2016 the successors to Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby Museums Trust, donated its sections of the bridge to the DWVRT.

A statement from the DWVRT said: "The trust has a great deal of respect for volunteers toiling for years to restore an item of derelict rolling stock or a building, but unfortunately the footbridge does not readily lend itself to this pattern of work.

An enthusiasts' DMU special after arrival at Darley Dale in 1967, shortly before the station closed and when the footbridge was still in place.
PEAK RAILWAY ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES

"The bridge is a deceptively complex structure which, while over-engineered, needs to be rebuilt from start to finish to a high standard to be safe for use.

"This means that when the money is raised, everything will be packed off to a contractor to assemble and then return later ready to be put up. The cost even includes erecting the whole bridge in their warehouse as a dummy run!

"Some volunteer input is required to remove some of the platework and a few rivets. This will save the contractor time (and our money) in the dismantling phase. The DWVRT will continue to promote this project as a flagship for the railway. It is a unique story of a redundant railway structure not only surviving being dismantled for use elsewhere, but then actually coming back to where it started.

"It will hugely enhance Darley Dale station in appearance and improve the experience of staff and passengers there.

"With the completion of the bridge, we join the ranks of railways with experience of delivering medium-sized projects, and it opens up the path for future infrastructure works, both within and outside of the trust. Timing is crucial; with the completion of the Up and Down platforms and the columns sat waiting, the bridge is the next natural step."

The footbridge arch stored in Rowsley yard pending restoration and re-erection.
ALAN WEAVER/DWVRT

Wickham trust's newest acquisition is all set for residency at Peak Rail

WHILE the Rail Trolley Trust has a well-established base at both the Chasewater and Tanat Valley railways, the latest vehicle to join its collection will head off to a new line.

Delivered new on January 8, 1973, Wickham Type 27 Mk.IV semi-open trolley No. 10646 has been based on the Weardale Railway, the supporting charity of which, the Weardale Railway Trust, has been seeking a new home for the vehicle.

Following an approach to the RTT, the trolley has been placed on loan to it, along with responsibility for finding a new home as part of the agreement.

Peak Rail was approached during 2023 and following discussions an agreement was reached and signed in February. On March 18, No. 10646 was then collected from Wolsingham Yard on the WR and transported to Rowsley South.

Restored in 2022, the trolley has seen little use and so before it enters regular service, a period of running-in and repairs will take place to ensure it is reliable.

RTT chair Johnathon Flood said: "The RTT would like to place on record our thanks to Weardale for placing the trolley on loan with us and to Peak Rail for offering a base for the trolley. The trust continues to appeal for funds towards the £10,000 target we set ourselves last year.

"The trust hopes that as we are able to share more positive news, more donations will be forthcoming to enable us to move more of our collection to our secure locations, provide further suitable storage accommodation for some of our older and more historic vehicles, and make some significant progress on several restoration projects."

➜ Details of how to donate can be found at www.railtrolleytrust.co.uk/help-us-donate.html

Wickham Type 27 Mk IV semi-open trolley No. 10646 is the latest arrival at Peak Rail. RTT

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The remains of the wagon after being unearthed in Belgium. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE, CITY OF ANTWERP

How did this LNER container body become buried in Antwerp?

MYSTERY surrounds the discovery of a Big Four era LNER wagon unearthed by archaeologists in Belgium.

The remains of a wooden removals truck, used to carry people's belongings when they moved house, and still complete with LNER lettering, were dug up in Antwerp. It was buried along the future route of the Oosterweel Link, part of the greater R1 Antwerp Ring Road now under construction.

The vehicle is believed to be about a century old. It had inscriptions such as '...NITURE REMOVAL TO HOUSE', 'Enquire at any station', 'BK 1820' and 'LNER'.

BK 1820 indicates that the wagon is a container conflat BK 1820, a type of special wooden-decked vehicle used for furniture removal, although some were built with insulation for refrigerated use. Many BK 1820s were converted from cattle trucks into container conflats following a downturn in livestock traffic. Sadly, very little remains of the wagon as it disintegrated after it was brought to the surface.

Stuart Thomas, communications director of the modern-day LNER, said: "We are fascinated by the history of our brand. Just last year, we celebrated 100 years since the LNER came into being in 1923. In our 101st year, it's incredible to discover that a little bit of LNER history has been buried in a field in Belgium for so many decades."

Severn Valley saddle tank ready for comeback

AFTER two years out of service, work is going well inside Bridgnorth Shed to replace the broken casting of Port Talbot Railway/GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 – and it is anticipated that the locomotive will return to steam in time for Severn Valley Railway's April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala.

It was during the corresponding gala in 2022 when No. 813 suffered a catastrophic dragbox and frame stretcher casting failure while working the Bridgnorth to Hampton Loade local service.

The casting is thought to be original and dates back to 1900 when the loco was built by Hudswell Clarke.

In October 2022, the casting was removed, exposing how important this is to the frame of the locomotive. It supports the transverse leaf spring located over the rear drivers. This spring is fixed centrally onto the casting immediately beneath the firebox door. An all-new casting has been made and was inside the shed last July in preparation for fitting. Adjustments to the casting had to be made before the loco could return to the frame lift inside the shed and for the overhead crane to lower it into position.

The rear drivers are back in place and the locomotive is now off the frame lift. The brake gear has been refitted.

During this time, its boiler clock has been slowly ticking away and is due to expire in spring 2026. It is hoped an extension can be granted, although it is unlikely it will be for an additional two years.

While the locomotive has been out of action, the 813 Preservation Fund has received no income, which is essential for funding the next overhaul.

Considerable works including a new water tank, and a new injector and vacuum reservoir tank will be needed during its next overhaul.

➜ Donations are invited at www.gwr813.org

Its rear drivers in place, GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 is being reassembled after having its footplate casting replaced inside Bridgnorth Shed on March 7. JOHN TITLOW

Big turn-out for last run of 'oldest' Japanese steam locomotive

CROWDS turned out to watch Japan's oldest operational home-built steam locomotive make its last run in the Kyushu south-western region on Saturday, March 23.

Class 8620 2-6-0 No. 58654, nicknamed 'Hachiroku' (8-6), was built in 1922. The type was Japan's first mass-produced passenger locomotive and a total of 672 were built between 1914 and 1929.

For its farewell trip, No. 58654, which was withdrawn from regular service in 1975 having covered more than two million miles and restored to traffic in 1988 under the name SL Aso BOY, headed the three-car SL Hitoyoshi train on a four-hour 75-mile return trip from Kumamoto, where it is preserved, to Hakata. Kyushu Railway Company president Yoji Furumiya said it was the intention to give the locomotive to the city of Hitoyoshi, but no date for a transfer nor arrangements for its future display method had yet been decided.

However, the oldest-working steam locomotive in Japan is Sharp Stewart 0-6-0T No. 2421 of 1874 No. SL12, which was imported from the UK two years after the opening of Japan's first railroad. Based at the Meiji-Mura Museum in the city of Inuyama in Aichi Prefecture, it offers short trips on the venue's internal line. It was reboilered in 1985 and the original one is preserved on site.

No. SL12 returned to service on April 20, 2023, after a four-year gap, during which it underwent extensive repairs.

Pictured on a previous trip is Class 8620 2-6-0 No. 58654 heading the SL Hitoyoshi from Kumamoto to Tosu between Sojo University station and Nishisato station on the Kagoshima Main Line. MAEDA AKIHIKO

WELCOME ABOARD THE BIGGEST RAILWAY COMMUNITY

HERITAGE RAILWAY

Heritage Railway has a track record in providing the latest news and cutting-edge topical features from within the whole spectrum of the UK preservation sector, giving support to all of our lines, museums and locomotive groups – big and small, or steam, diesel and electric. With regular submissions from Britain's leading rail photographers and writers, every four weeks you will find essential details of events and railtours. Secure your copy today by subscribing at a great price and joining the UK's biggest rail community.

ROBIN JONES, EDITOR

BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019 and Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73156 arrive at Quorn & Woodhouse station on March 16 with a passenger service to Leicester North on the first day of the Great Central Railway's successful London Extension 125th anniversary weekend held in partnership with the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) – see feature, pages 46-51. ROBIN JONES

Call 01507 529529 and quote HRDPS

Online: www.classicmagazines.co.uk/HRDPS

or scan the QR code to go straight to our secure online store

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

WHICH *HERITAGE RAILWAY* SUBSCRIPTION SUITS YOU BEST?

1: 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION — BEST VALUE

13 print issues for **£47**
Direct Debit

13 print issues for **£52**
credit/debit card

SAVE £20.60

2: SIX-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION

6 print issues for **£25**
Direct Debit

6 print issues for **£27**
credit/debit card

SAVE £6.20

WHAT OUR READERS SAY ABOUT *HERITAGE RAILWAY*

★★★★★
A great heritage magazine for railway enthusiasts in the preservation scene.
IAN SANGSTER

★★★★★
An interesting and informative read alongside many excellent photographs.
FIONA MOYE

★★★★★
Informative, insightful and supportive of the heritage railway movement.
CLIVE WILSON

WHY YOU SHOULD SUBSCRIBE TO AND READ *HR* EVERY MONTH...

» We cover the whole spectrum of the UK railway heritage sector » Saves on buying in the shops
» Subscriber exclusive offers and competitions » Get the latest news about lines and venues
» Be part of the UK's biggest rail community » We take you trackside with the best photographers

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Rates are based on UK orders only – for overseas please visit www.classicmagazines.co.uk/hr-overseas. Subscriptions will start with the next available issue. Offer closes 10/05/24. Direct Debit payments will continue at the price you paid, on this offer, at these intervals thereafter unless you tell us otherwise. Full terms and conditions can be found at www.classicmagazines.co.uk/terms. Quoted savings are based on a direct debit subscription when compared to the same number of issues at full printed price

Betton Grange to debut on daily services as third Poppy Line guest

By Robin Jones

NEW-BUILD GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* is to become the third guest stream locomotive to run on the North Norfolk Railway this year, heading daily services for three months from August onwards.

NNR interim general manager Graham Hukins said: "We are looking forward to welcoming *Betton Grange* in the summer and giving our visitors the chance to ride behind this truly unique locomotive. The project to build a new Grange locomotive has taken three decades, so we are privileged to host its first extended visit to a heritage railway.

"No. 6880 will see extensive use on our summer and autumn services, the first time in six decades that a Grange will have been seen in day-to-day service and will also headline at our nine-day Festival on Rails Gala in late August."

The 81st Grange, which has been completed at Tyseley Locomotive Works (Headline News, pages 6/7), will follow GWR 2-8-0T No. 4277 *Hercules*, on loan from the Dartmouth Steam Railway until November 22, and Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3844 of 1956 No. 22 from Appleby-Frodingham Railway Preservation Society at Scunthorpe, and which will be staying all season.

They are set to be joined by GNR N2 0-6-2T No. 1744, which is nearing the end of its overhaul on the NNR and is pencilled in for test running in July (see separate story).

The four will help plug the gaps left by BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76084, which was withdrawn from traffic in December after its 10-yearly boiler ticket expired, and BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 *Black Prince*, the last duties of which were hauling the Norfolk Lights Express illuminated train last December.

The 9F was then sidelined and thorough investigations by the NNR's engineering team revealed a leak in the main internal steam pipe. The leak was traced to the point where the pipe is expanded into the smokebox tubeplate behind the superheater header.

Graham said: "Unfortunately, the location of the fault and the amount of work needed means it is not possible to carry out a cost-effective repair given the limited use possible before the boiler ticket expires in early May."

Accordingly, the line's engineering team booked replacements to cover.

Well-known owner

The 9F was built at Swindon in 1959 and enjoyed a working life of just eight years before being withdrawn in November 1967. Fortunately, No. 92203 was purchased by the late wildlife artist and railway enthusiast David Shepherd, who named it *Black Prince*.

No. 92203 had spells at the Longmoor Military Railway, Eastleigh Depot, the East Somerset Railway, which David founded, and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway before moving to Norfolk. In September 1982, it worked the heaviest steam-hauled freight train in Britain, totalling 2198 tonnes, at Foster Yeoman's Torr Works in the Mendip Hills.

Final touches to a project 26 years in the making: New-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* in the paintshop at Tyseley Locomotive Works. SCOTT BARNES/NNR

The Appleby-Frodingham Railway Preservation Society's Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 22 pictured on May 25, 2015. STEVEN ALLEN

The withdrawal of No. 92203 following the expiration of the boiler ticket of sister No. 92214 on the Great Central Railway, as reported in the last issue of *Heritage Railway*, leaves just one 9F currently in traffic, No. 92134 on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, which is also the sole-surviving single-chimney member of the 250-strong class.

BR Standard 9F No. 92203 with the Poppy Line's unique Quad-Art set at the Spring Steam Gala on April 15, 2023. STEVE ALLEN

'Deceptively powerful'

No. 22 was built to haul trains for the National Coal Board. A powerful tank engine class, it was officially retired from service in 1978 and then was purchased in 1997 by the society, which then undertook a large-scale restoration project, with No. 22 returning to steam in 2010 in the maroon livery of the United Steel Companies.

Graham said: "We are pleased to have secured No. 22; it is a deceptively powerful industrial engine which once worked at collieries in South Wales, and it provides a real contrast with our other locomotives. We're sure our fleet will continue to delight visitors with a range of contrasting engines for them to see and travel behind."

➜ Full details of North Norfolk Railway service, including timetables, can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk/opening-dates, with discounts for advanced online booking.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

N2 for North Norfolk summer comeback

By Robin Jones

AFTER nearly six years out of traffic, Great Northern Railway N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 is set to return to service on the North Norfolk Railway this summer, its owner, the Gresley Society, said it was delighted to announce.

The oldest-surviving locomotive built to the design of Sir Nigel Gresley, and the only one of his tank engines in the heritage sector, was withdrawn from NNR service late in 2018 for an overhaul that has proved to be considerably more extensive and costly than anticipated. Built in 1921, the N2 has been owned by the society for more than 60 years and longer than the LNER and BR combined.

Raft of work

Its overhaul began in 2019 but was soon impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected both timescales and costs, and the war in Ukraine then impacted on the price of materials.

Furthermore, once the locomotive was stripped down, it became evident that far more work was needed than first anticipated. The number of items requiring complete replacement has proved to be exceptional, especially boiler components. Accordingly, an extensive and expensive programme of both mechanical and boiler work has led to eventual overhaul cost of about £650,000, which has been funded by legacies left to the society and donations from members.

The work has included new driving wheel and pony truck tyres, a new crankpin, new expansion links, new safety valve bodies, reverser repairs and replacement screw axlebox and horn repairs, valve and piston examination, a new front boiler ring, new front and firebox tubeplates, a new firebox wrapper, top corners and backhead patch, manufacture of new superheater tubes and repair header, and the manufacture and fitting of new crown and other stays.

The final elements of the overhaul are now underway at the works of main contractor Northern Steam Engineering, at Thornaby.

Hydraulic and steam testing of the boiler is anticipated in May, after which the boiler will be replaced in the frames for final fitting-out. It is expected that No. 1744, resplendent in its distinctive GNR livery, will be ready for test running in July, after which the locomotive will return to traffic on the Poppy Line, where it will continue to be based.

Society chairman Philip Benham said: "Although it was always known that this would be a major overhaul, the scale of work required has proved to be far more than expected. We are grateful to Northern Steam Engineering for the way it has worked with us, and to our partner, the NNR, which would have hoped to have the locomotive back and available to it long before now.

Great Northern Railway N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 inside Barrow Hill roundhouse on April 14, 2012, during the venue's 'Fab Four' event. ROBIN JONES

Support still required

"This is, without question, the most comprehensive overhaul the N2 has had in preservation. Our hope is that this will have set it up for trouble-free running over the coming years.

"The positive and much appreciated response from members to our appeal in 2021 helped substantially fund completion of the overhaul. However, the cost of the extra work has placed a significant strain on the society's resources, and we still need to raise the £20,000 needed to get our N2 back into revenue earning service – so we would encourage all supporters of the works of Sir Nigel Gresley to help us with a donation.

"The society is already thinking ahead to the class N2's next overhaul and is developing a fundraising campaign which will be launched on No. 1744's return to traffic."

Over the years, the N2 has been based on the Keighley & Worth Valley and Great Central railways, before coming to its present home on the North Norfolk Railway early in 2018.

➜ To donate, visit gresley.org or send a cheque, payable to The Gresley Society Trust, to: Chris Nettleton, Membership Secretary, 96 Greenfield Drive, Eaglescliffe TS16 0HN.

Ravenglass gala offers 130 years of motive power at May Day steam gala

ONE of Britain's newest steam locomotives is to visit the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway for its May Day Bank Holiday special steam gala.

Mr Hallworth, an 0-6-0ST built by North Bay Railway Engineering Services in Darlington and delivered to the Perrygrove Railway last year, is, as reported in issued 306, named after the late Bodmin & Wenford Railway stalwart Tony Hallworth.

Themed around 'Something Old, Something New', the May 4-6 event will see a display of resident steam and diesel locomotives spanning 130 years, including *Katie* (built 1896), *Synolda* (1912), *River Esk* (1923) and *Whillan Beck* and *Perkins* (both 1929). Visiting from the Evesham Vale Light Railway is 0-4-0T+T *St Egwin*, built by the Exmoor Steam Railway in 2003.

A full yellow timetable will operate, with at least 13 daily departures from Ravenglass and some double-headers. Weekend 'rover' tickets with one, two and three-day passes will be available.

The gala weekend also sees the launch of a new volunteer hub in conjunction with the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society to give anyone interested in volunteering a behind-the-scenes look at what's involved. It will include tours of the workshop and engine shed, plus a shuttle train to Murthwaite sidings to see a track-laying demonstration on Saturday and Sunday only.

There will also be free entry to Ravenglass Railway Museum and the chance to become a 'driver for a donation', with 15-minute bookable slots being made available.

A 7¼in gauge miniature railway will run in the railway workshop by the local Harrison and Johnson families. RER general manager (visitor experience) Stuart Ross said: "We are particularly looking forward to seeing a mix of historic locomotives alongside brand-new visiting engines."

Visit www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk or telephone 01229 717171.

1: *Mr Hallworth* on the Perrygrove Railway. RER

2: *St Egwin* hauls an Evesham Vale Light Railway service on March 11, 2012. RER

Remaining trailer of pioneer LMS era EMU moves to Llynclys Junction

By Owen Hayward

The sole-surviving Class 503 EMU vehicle newly arrived at Llynclys. CHR

FOLLOWING its removal from storage at the One:One Collection museum building in Margate, the sole-surviving LMS-era Class 503 EMU has seen two of its three cars sent for scrap, while the remaining vehicle has arrived at Llynclys on the Cambrian Railway near Oswestry. Driving Motor Brake Open Second No. 28690 arrived at Llynclys on March 12 in what is the start of the latest phase of its life.

Previously in store at Kirkdale depot under the ownership of Wirral Borough Council, its two trailers were once earmarked for a proposed transport museum in Birkenhead, but space constraints meant this was not to be, with the EMU then moving to the site of the former Coventry Electric Railway Museum 28 years ago.

When that site also closed, the unit then moved into the Locomotive Storage Company Ltd facility in Margate in 2018, but with that venue due to open to the public in the near future, combined with the EMU's condition and space available, the Heritage Electric Trains Trust was asked to remove the unit.

Future decided

An alternative site to accommodate the full three vehicles was investigated but sadly fell through last year, which ultimately sealed its fate.

HETT chairman Graeme Gleaves said: "With no alternative site available other than offers to house a single vehicle, the decision was made to reduce the project to the most complete and potentially restorable vehicle, the DMBSO."

Both the Trailer Second Open and the Driving Trailer Second Open were dispatched for scrap after some useable parts were recovered. The cab end of the DTSO has subsequently been recovered and is now in Cynheidre, South Wales, as part of The Cab Yard collection, the remainder of the vehicles having been broken up by March 15.

Graeme said: "The biggest problem the 503 project has always faced is a dire lack of support. During service, the units worked in a very limited area and thus have no broader appeal; indeed, the people currently running the project have never ridden in one. Merseyside and The Wirral have never been able to offer anything in terms of a long-term secure home and thus the unit became a nomad in exile – something a fair few thought was a good item to preserve but one that nobody wanted to do anything about. Its current status is a direct consequence of this inaction."

Time for action

The DMBSO's arrival at Llynclys is the start of a decade-long storage agreement with the CHR, but Graeme stresses that what happens next is down to those who wish to see it restored. "After 28 years of next to nothing, it's time for people to step up; inaction is not an option. HETT has set a target of five years from now to review the status of the vehicle and if it will be worth retaining it further."

The immediate priority is to get a suitable quality covering to protect the vehicle from the elements. When it was sheeted at Coventry, the rate of deterioration was noted to have stabilised. The next step will be to encourage supporters to help, as at present there is not enough income currently generate to cover the storage fees alone.

"Anyone who is saddened by the loss of the complete unit should take note that there are no other saviours waiting and this really is the last chance to prevent the class from going extinct," said Graeme. "Bringing it to Llynclys is the closest it can get to 'coming home'."

➜ **For further details on the EMU's history and how to support its survival, visit hett.org.uk**

Station signs of the times

HISTORIC early 1950s station signs that were removed during the 1970s are now reaching unprecedented levels in value.

Items once bought by enthusiasts for £5 or less are changing hands for thousands of pounds, with famous named examples fetching five-figure sums. Railwayana Auctions UK Ltd offered 91 era enamel totem signs at an auction in early March, with examples from Paddington and King's Cross both achieving £14,400. Also exceeding expectations were Brighton (£9,480), Penzance (£8400), Bristol Temple Meads (£7440), Lake Side (£6000), Darlington (£4800), West Hartlepool (£4080) and Royal Oak (£3840).

KESR anniversary appeal for pannier's return

AS part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, the Kent & East Sussex Railway has launched a £163,000 appeal to raise the funding to see its WR Hawksworth pannier return to service.

Built in Swindon in 1951 and bought for use on the Dart Valley Railway in 1967, No. 1638 was sold to the KESR in 1992. Its latest operational stint ended in 2021, after which it was sent to Leaky Finders workshops in Devon for some remedial bottom-end work.

Hoiwever, as it was dismantled, the extent of work needed was discovered to be more than initially thought and the overhaul stalled while a decision was made on how work was to progress, and funding sourced to enable it.

No. 1638 is not only special in being the sole survivor of the 1600 class; it additionally has a special connection to the KESR and the local community as the only steam locomotive to be wholly owned by the heritage line.

Dubbed the 'maid of all work', it is described as being highly versatile and ideally suited for the varied needs of the railway, capable of handling all types of work.

First steps

To ensure the locomotive's return to the rails, the KESR has set its sights on raising £163,800. Reflecting the locomotive's number, this figure is based on initial work estimates, plus a contingency.

The first step will be to complete work on the chassis and motion before any investigation of the boiler can begin, with the aim of providing a fresh 10-year certificate.

It is hoped to attract 250 supporters who are each willing to commit to a monthly contribution of £16.38 for a fixed period of three years to fund the project. Any upfront larger donations will enable the railway to fast track the start of the overhaul. Launching the appeal at the spring volunteers meeting on March 16, the line's chairman, Simon Marsh, said: "Pannier No. 1638 has a great deal of symbolism and emotional connection for the KESR, so raising funds to bring it back to service is very appropriate as the focus of our 50th anniversary appeal.

"Like most aspects of our railway's life, when we combine our efforts, we can achieve extraordinary things and do much more than any one of us could achieve on our own. This has been borne out by the success of recent restoration projects which have combined the generous support of external grant providers, sponsors, and individual supporters.

"I am hoping we can replicate that success for our anniversary appeal for pannier No. 1638."

➜ **Details of how to donate and make Gift Aid donations can be found at www.kesr.org.uk/donate**

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Ruston Hornsby 4wDM No. 201970 of 1940 *Alistair* heads its one-coach special train. Supplied new to the Lancashire Steel Corporation's works at Irlam, in 1968 it was one of several small locomotives used on the reconstruction of the Ffestiniog Railway between Tan-y-Bwlch and Blaenau Ffestiniog, later seeing service on the Gartell Light and East Hayling Light railways. JOEY EVANS/SBR

Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 3902 of 1971 *Trangkil No. 4*, built in Leeds in 1971 for use on the Trangkil Sugar Mill at Pati in central Java, was the last steam locomotive built in the UK for non-heritage purposes. It returned to the UK in 2004 to become the first steam locomotives in the Statfold collection and was regauged from 750mm to 2ft. JOEY EVANS/SBR

New fairground museum to boost Statfold success

THE Statfold Barn Railway's Spectacle of Steam event on March 16/17 attracted nearly 2000 visitors.

There were full trains throughout the two days, with 13 locomotives in steam on the 'main line', plus Burton & Ashby Light Railways tram No. 14, Statfold Works 4w-4DM railcar No. 9905 of 2015 *The Goose* and Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM No. 201970 of 1940 *Alistair* hauling a one-coach special.

The 12¼in gauge Mease Valley Light Railway ran two-train services with Exmoor Steam Railway 2-4-2T No. 332 *Victoria* and Alan Keef 0-6-0DM No. 2.

The next event at Statfold Country Park will be the May 13/14 model railway exhibition, with at least five locomotives in steam, plus more than 25 visiting layouts and 25 traders, with the Transport Museum Wythall running a free bus service from Tamworth to Statfold.

Meanwhile, the Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust, which operates the country park, has formed a collaborative partnership with The Fairground Heritage Trust, operator of the Dingles Fairground Museum in Milford Lifton, Devon.

For several reasons, the FHT has decided to close its museum and has agreed to move the bulk of its collection to a new one within the wider country park.

An agreement will see the SNGMT taken on the day-to-day operations management of the new museum and its fairground rides.

The Fairground Heritage Trust will remain as the owner of the collection, with responsibility for conservation and curation.

The remainder of the collection will move to the Hollycombe Working Steam Museum in Hampshire, with aspirations for an exhibition and operations in the medium term.

A Statfold statement said: "The SNGMT is delighted to be working with the Fairground Heritage Trust and is looking forward to showing all of our existing visitors the delights of heritage fairs, and welcoming the new visitors that we are sure want to 'have all the fun of the fair'."

Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 3904 of 2005, outshopped from the Statfold workshops in November 2006, on a goods train during the Spectacle of Steam event. JOEY EVANS/SBR

Davenport 0-4-0 No. 1586 of 1917 *Ryam Sugar Corporation No.1* arrived from India in May 2013, complete with a large tree which had grown through its motion. It was restored and returned to steam in March 2015. JOEY EVANS/SBR

STRATHSPEY RAILWAY

Fancy a Wee Change?

Seasonal Train Crew Staff - Footplate and Guards

The Strathspey Railway's main running season extends from early April to late October, with a core three-return-trains per day, four-days per week timetable increasing to six or seven days per week during our peak months of July and August.

We are looking to augment our volunteer train crews with temporary seasonal paid staff who can join us during our 2024 running season. At this point in time, we are fairly flexible on the number of days or weeks that you can visit and work on the railway at any given time over the season, however we prefer and would give priority to engaging staff who can primarily support us during July and August.

Ideally, such staff would come to the railway with existing verifiable competence and experience, based on their time on other heritage or main line railways, requiring only Route, Rules and Regulations training and sufficient 'turns' to meet Strathspey Competence Management requirements.

As an example, we have recently revised our Footplate Policy and have a clear and efficient process for the transfer of competence of footplate crew to the SR, again based on verifiable evidence of competency and experience. This aspect of the Policy will be shared where applicable with those who express an interest in joining us on the footplate.

However, we would also welcome interest from those close to gaining or slightly out of 'Ticket', providing we have enough time to induct, train and formally assess as competent such an individual, well ahead of the busy July/August period.

Employment in the Operational, Loco, C&W, Infrastructure, etc departments will be available to seasonal staff during days on which passenger train services are not being run.

Terms of Employment would be with the 'Strathspey Railway Company Ltd'., based on a seasonal Zero-Hours contract with rates of pay being in the order of £13.50 to £15.00 per hour depending on grade and/or experience.

Seasonal paid staff would also be required to join the SRC's sister charity, the railway's Volunteer Member's organisation, the 'Strathspey Railway Association'. (Initial membership fee will be refunded).

Accommodation may be available for SRA Members in the Association's Railway Hostel in Aviemore at a nominal overnight fee (Conditions apply).
(see details of Spey Lodge in SRA website https://strathspeyrailwayassociation.co.uk)

To express an interest in taking this offer further, please send an email with a covering statement regarding yourself including details of your likely availability over the season and outline or attach your CV in respect of the Train Crew role you are applying for, to

recruitment@strathspeyrailway.co.uk.

Applications for this current Train Crew recruitment drive will close midnight Sunday 5th May.

Keeping it in the family:
mother-daughter crew a heritage era first?

By Owen Hayward

ONCE taken for granted as men-only domain, the heritage era has more than proved that the footplate is for anyone. The Talyllyn Railway has been a pioneer in many fields since initiating the volunteer-led preservation movement 73 years ago and on March 8 it broke new ground with what is believed to be the first ever locomotive crew comprising a mother and daughter in the UK heritage sector – to celebrate International Women's Day.

Driver Sarah Freeman started on the TR in 1993 as a trainee guard and it was here that she met her future husband, Mark. After joining the steam department, she worked her way up through the ranks which in 2017 resulted in her becoming a fully-qualified steam driver.

Both husband and wife are regular faces around the railway and have often crewed trains together. The pair also introduced their children to the Talyllyn, and their daughter Ffion is now rising through those same ranks.

Family feel

On March 8, Sarah and Ffion were rostered driver and fireman for Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* on a train specially planned to celebrate International Women's Day.

"The Talyllyn is a real family. It's always been accepting of women, and it's great that the number of women in the locomotive, engineering and outdoor departments has been going up over the past few years," Sarah said.

"It's such an honour that my daughter is able to fire to me today – and maybe one day my second daughter will join her!"

Ffion has recently been promoted to passed cleaner and has been around the railway since birth, putting in her first 'turn' at the age of six months old with her mother in the booking office at Tywyn Wharf. She also sits on the committee for the railway's Young Members' Group, taking charge of the organisation of working parties.

"I've been a volunteer since I was a baby, so I've never really known a time without the railway," she said. "It's great that the place is so accepting of people from all backgrounds – I've made so many friends my age.

"It's been so nice to be the first ever mother and daughter crew. We've been out on the footplate before, but always with Dad as the driver or fireman, so to be the fireman to my mum is really special."

The special train departed Tywyn Wharf at 11am with 90 invited guests from the local and volunteering communities. Cream tea and scones were served on arrival at Abergynolwyn.

General manager (commercial) Lorraine Simkiss said: "The 2024 International Women's Day campaign is to inspire inclusion. When we come together as a community, we are included.

"We forge a better world – this in turn gives us a sense of belonging and empowerment. Women of all ages and all abilities are the epitome of strength and resilience... from the women who run a home and bring up their children to those who are doctors, lawyers, surgeons and more. We are all brave, determined, strong women. Here at the TR, we are inclusive."

Like mother, like daughter: Sarah Freeman (left) and daughter Ffion were the rostered driver and fireman for a special service celebrating International Women's Day on March 8. While there are many other publicly-recorded family combinations, the mother/daughter crew is possibly a first in the UK heritage sector. OWEN HAYWARD

Long legacy

The TR has had a long history of women volunteers dating back to the 1950s when the line was first preserved, with many of the member's wives taking up the slack and helping out where needed, including guarding trains. The glass ceiling of the locomotive department was well and truly shattered in 1957 when Anne Hatherill was passed out as the first qualified woman fireman in the UK, which started a great legacy of inclusion and diversity at the railway for all volunteering roles.

While many families have their origins in the railway, the TR itself even has a family in its own origins. On February 17, Tom Curtis completed his first rostered driving turn after also being promoted. Tom's family has been involved with the railway for more than 123 years, with his father David Jones employed by the company as a fitter and driver. David's father, Dai, and uncle Herbert were also employed by the company from 1950 and 1955 respectively as drivers, and their father, Hugh Jones, was also on the payroll, having first started at Bryneglwys quarry in 1918.

The chain has one further link, with Hugh's father, Tom's great-great-great grandfather David, recorded as a platelayer for the original railway company in 1901, meaning that five whole generations of the family have worked on the TR almost continuously for almost one-and-a-quarter centuries.

In addition to those members featuring earlier in the family tree, Tom's sister Katie is a volunteer guard and stationmaster and was on duty for the March 8 train.

Recently promoted to driver, Tom Curtis has a longstanding family connection to the TR. His father David Jones (left) is an employee and sister Katie Angell (centre) a fellow volunteer. Their family history is entwined with the line back to 1901. BARBARA FULLER

Aberdeen tram tracks are rediscovered during road resurfacing works

TRACKS from a long-closed Aberdeen tramway route have been uncovered after being buried for more than 60 years. The tramline was rediscovered by workers resurfacing the carriageway in Holburn Street and are believed to be part of the Bridges route.

It opened as a horse-drawn tramway in 1883 and originally linked Market Street with Bloomfield Road. The line was lengthened to Bridge of Don in 1892 and the River Dee two years later. Horse traction ceased to be used on the system in 1902, and in 1958 the Bridges became the final one to close.

Aberdeen's buses numbers 1 and 2 follow the former tram route today.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Major event to mark 10 years of trains to Minehead

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway is to stage a special anniversary event on July 16-21 to mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of the line from Watchet to Minehead.

Iron ore began to be mined in commercial quantities in the Brendon Hills in the 1850s. The West Somerset Mineral Railway was constructed and ran from the hills to Watchet Harbour between 1856 and 1864 so that the ore was sent in ships across the Bristol Channel to South Wales for smelting at Ebbw Vale.

Also formed in the 1850s was the separate West Somerset Railway Company to build a line from Watchet to Taunton and connect with the Bristol & Exeter section Railway

Due to the success of the railway to Watchet, Minehead inhabitants wished to extend the line to ensure the prosperity of their town. The main promoter of the expansion was the Luttrell family of Dunster, which had visions of the Minehead area rivalling popular tourist locations such as Weston-super-Mare and Burnham-on-Sea, with Blue Anchor being ideal for day-trippers, and so the Minehead Railway Company was formed to extend the line to Minehead.

The Watchet and Minehead section opened on July 16, 1874, and was the penultimate broad gauge to be built, the last being the St Ives branch which opened in 1877. Minehead residents decorated the town in celebration.

The first Up train left Minehead at 6am, and on its return at 9am it brought about 200 passengers. When the next train arrived at 1pm, it brought about 800 more, including the company directors. A total of 180 schoolchildren met the train while a band played and they then marched through the streets, waving flags. Each train was greeted by the cheering public and also salutes from cannons!

Opening spectacle

On the opening day, a grand luncheon was held in a marquee near the station for about 150 dignitaries. After the meal, various sports were played and poems recited, before prizes were given out to the successful competitors.

The next day saw 160 navvies march with Minehead Brass Band along the parade, with ribbons in their hats, and the men were treated to a dinner and plenty of beer in the same marquee as was used the day before. The men were joined by their wives and had a very pleasant afternoon dancing and running for prizes.

The railway is arranging a wide range of activities to commemorate this special occasion, with special services, ceremonies at Watchet and Minehead, brass bands performing, markets, traction engines, horses and carts, shanty singers, Punch and Judy shows and more over several days.

Outside Bishops Lydeard signalbox are (from left to right) Conservative MP for Bridgwater and West Somerset Ian Liddell-Grainger, West Somerset Railway plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt, West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust president Chris Austin and WSR general manager Kerry Noble. WSR

Future plans

On March 15, local MP Ian Liddell-Grainger met WSR managers and staff today to visit the works that have been carried out on the line over the winter shutdown period and to hear about their plans for 2024 and the anniversary event.

He commended staff and volunteers on their work in getting the railway ready and for its huge importance as England's longest heritage in supporting the local economy.

Plans are in hand for new attractions for families and also and the reopening of the refurbished museum at Blue Anchor.

WSR general manager Kerry Noble said: "Last year was good year for the railway. We are planning for a bumper season this year as visitors rediscover the jewel that is West Somerset and the best way to do that is from one of our trains."

Steam, gin and jazz for new event on the Spa Valley Railway

By Geoff Courtney

A COMBINATION of steam, gin and jazz will be a new experience for Spa Valley Railway passengers on May 4 and June 15. The events will start each evening at 6.30pm in the railway's LBSCR 1891-built engine shed at Tunbridge Wells West with a performance by the Ruby Robinson Quintet, accompanied by a G&T from the award-winning Anno Distillery of Marden, near Tonbridge.

Departure for a five-mile steam-hauled journey to the national network station of Eridge, again with jazz accompaniment, is at 7pm, during which a second gin will be on the menu, supplied by another Kent distillery, Copper Rivet of Chatham. On the Eridge platform, the quintet will perform another live set, prior to a return to Tunbridge Wells, followed by a second Tunbridge Wells West-Eridge return.

Tickets cost £75, and this includes the two return journeys from Tunbridge Wells, two gin and tonics, a ploughman's meal and a dessert, a Spa Valley Railway gin glass, and the quintet's live performances. The motive power is expected to be Caledonian Railway 812 class 0-6-0 No. 828 (BR No. 57566), currently on loan from the Strathspey Railway.

Spa Valley commercial manager Jonnie Pay said: "Ruby has performed at a number of prestigious venues, including Soho's Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, and has also toured the UK with big bands. She has a fantastic stage presence with a repertoire inspired by more than a century of music, and her performances at our railway will transform passengers through time." The launch of these trains follows a series of gin trains that ended on March 23, and will precede a programme of wine specials with vineyard tour which, as reported in last month's issue of *Heritage Railway*, will run on various weekends throughout spring and summer.

Rescue on the way: Class 3F No. 57566 simmers on the Ayrshire shed of Ardrossan (67D) in July 1963, a month before its withdrawal and subsequent rescue for preservation. The 1899-built 0-6-0 is currently on loan to the Spa Valley Railway from the Strathspey Railway and running in its original guise as Caledonian Railway No. 828. TRANSPORT TREASURY/WAC SMITH

Beachy Head move sees LBSCR out and LSWR in

By Owen Hayward

IT WAS a sight hotly anticipated by supporters, volunteers and enthusiasts – on March 5, new-build LBSCR Marsh Atlantic 4-4-2 No. 32424 *Beachy Head* was moved out of Atlantic House, the shed in which it has resided during the majority of its construction, and coupled to its tender for the first time in the Bluebell Railway's main locomotive yard at Sheffield Park, as reported in Headline News last issue.

As *Beachy Head* takes a step closer to its first running trials, two LSWR locomotives have taken the space it vacated in Atlantic House for work to commence on their overhauls.

Atlantic House was completed in 2006 as a covered workshop space for the project to work in, but the available space meant it was at a 90-degree angle to the Bluebell's own rails. Accordingly, the extraction of *Beachy Head* required that each half be loaded onto a lorry, turned, and then lowered onto the rails.

The early morning of March 5 saw the tender moved out first; once this had been unloaded, a reverse move saw the Bulleid Society's 0-4-0T No. 96 *Normandy* loaded and moved into the empty space where its overhaul will commence to return the popular shunting locomotive to steam for the first time since 2006, when its last boiler ticket expired.

Perfect shunter

No. 96 was built at Nine Elms in 1893. After a short stint based there, it moved to Southampton Docks in 1905 and remained there until it was transferred to Ashford and Eastleigh in 1950. Withdrawn at the latter in 1963, it was sold to fuel merchant Corralls in Southampton, before finally arriving at the Bluebell in 1972.

It could often be found rostered to the weekly shunting duties, the only regular steam shunting turn in the country, as well as putting in turns helping with the northern extension. However, after its most recent ticket expired, it has seen the work taken on by diesel locomotives due to their efficiency. Recognising the potential loss of the skills involved in steam shunting, its overhaul was agreed during 2023 and will be undertaken by the team of volunteers behind *Beachy Head*'s construction under contract by the Bulleid Society.

Following the movement of the tender, the front half of No. 32424 was then collected and unloaded with another Atlantic wheelbase, Adams radial 4-4-2T No. 488, displacing it.

No. 488 was built by Neilson & Co. in 1885 and worked the East Kent Railway as well as for the Ministry of Munitions during its working life, first being sold in 1917, before being repurchased for use by Southern Railways in 1946 and then allocated to the Lyme Regis branch with which the class became synonymous.

As it retained the original pattern of boiler, it was bought for preservation and arrived at the Bluebell under its own power in July 1961, operating until 1968 when withdrawn for repairs. With assistance from Swindon, it then steamed again in August 1973, with a subsequent overhaul carried out in 1985; however, it has not run since 1990, with concerns that the boiler and wheels may need to be replaced.

While the overhaul of No. 96 gets underway, No. 488 will be dismantled and assessed to fully ascertain the extent of the work required to return it to service once more. As such, no fundraising appeal has yet been launched to fund the work; this is currently being planned for once assessment is completed and an estimated cost is known.

Work in progress

Beachy Head, meanwhile, has now moved into the railway's main workshops, where final assembly and commissioning work has begun to bring the locomotive into service.

No date has yet been confirmed for its first trains, but it is expected that running-in will commence by the summer, with a view to it entering service in the autumn.

Meanwhile, the overhaul of the Maunsell Society's Q 0-6-0 No. 541 is making rapid progress at Leaky Finders in Devon, where all the stays have been removed from behind the wasted areas of the steel outer firebox wrapper that requires replacement. A new dragbox is also being fabricated.

The wheelsets have returned to the works, having been sent for tyre turning, while a number of components from the motion have travelled back to Sussex for work at the hands of the Bluebell's full-time workshop staff in order to expedite the overhaul.

A new tender water tank will be required and volunteers there have worked through the winter to free this from the chassis, as well as remove the brake gear and vacuum cylinders. The contract to build the new tank has been awarded to the 4253 Loco Group as the Kent & East Sussex Railway, for which the old one will be delivered for use as a pattern and possible reusable component salvaging.

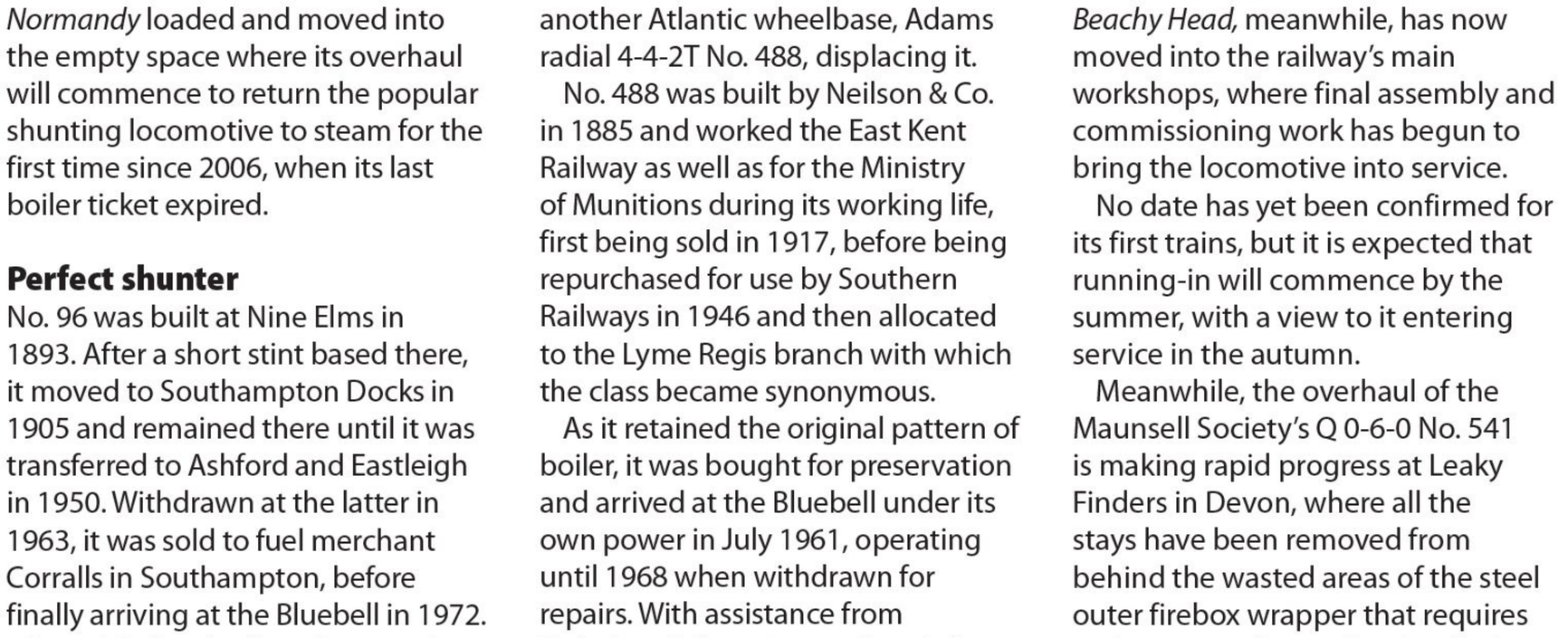
The tender is due to be lifted to allow the wheelsets to also be sent for tyre turning, as well as facilitate inspection of the dragbox.

➜ Bluebell Railway Preservation Society and plc chairman Paul Churchman resigned with immediate effect on March 8, with the position being temporarily filled by society vice president Roy Watts, who also now oversees the company along with chief operating officer Lisa Boyle and operations director Neil Glaskin until replacements are sourced for the two positions.

"While I am sure that this will come as a surprise, it is important to remember that the Bluebell Railway will continue as normal and we continue to deliver a great experience for all our visitors and maintain the progress in ensuring the railway has a strong future for years to come," said Mr Watts.

Another LSWR moving into Atlantic House was B4 No. 96 *Normandy,* which will be overhauled under contract from the Bulleid Society. Once operational again, it is hoped to take up regular steam shunting once more to maintain the required skills for this duty. JAMES CUMMINS/BR

Moving in: With the front half of *Beachy Head* having vacated Atlantic House, Adams radial tank No. 30583 (LSWR No. 488) was moved into the space ready for an assessment to commence with a view to returning the locomotive to service for the first time since 1990. JAMES CUMMINS/BR



Left: Coupled to its tender for the first time on March 6, new-build Marsh Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* sits in the yard at Sheffield Park ahead of its move into the maintenance shed for final assembly and commissioning to start. Although no date is yet given for its debut, it is hoped that running trials will commence by the summer. JAMES CUMMINS/BR

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Seaton Tramway now wins gold!

By Robin Jones

THE Seaton Tramway's latest in a quick succession of honours is the prestigious gold award for Experience of the Year – one of two accolades it carried off at the South West Tourism Excellence Awards 2023/24.

Considered to be the Oscars of the regional tourism world, the gold award for the 2ft 9in gauge line's The Story Tram, along with the bronze award for Large Attraction of the Year, were bestowed on the tramway at the awards evening held in the Great Hall at Exeter University on March 14.

The event, a culmination of 12 months of rigorous evaluation, saw more than 300 distinguished guests, winners, and tourism leaders gather to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the region's tourism industry.

The tramway's chief executive, Jenny Nunn, said: "We are honoured to receive these awards, which underscore our commitment to providing exceptional experiences. This recognition is a testament to the dedication and passion of our team at Seaton Tramway."

The Seaton Tramway's Josh Castree and Jenny Nunn (centre) are presented with the gold award for Experience of the Year by a representative of sponsor Sunflower Digital. NICK WILLIAMS/ST

More to come?

The awards follow hot on the heels of the three honours the tramway won in the Jurassic Business Awards on February 29, as reported last issue, plus the Heritage Railway Association's Environmental Innovation Award, presented in Brighton on February 10.

The gold award may earn the tramway a nomination to represent the region in the national VisitEngland awards in Liverpool in June.

The tramway began its 2024 daily running on March 23. Seaton station is currently hosting the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition and this spring will open the new Jurassic Discovery attraction, having purchased the old Seaton Jurassic Centre in January this year.

As reported, it will first open with a Jurassic Soft Play and Café before introducing a new immersive, animatronic dinosaur exhibition, set to open this summer.

Members of the Lappa Valley Railway team celebrate with their awards. They are (left to right) Keith Southwell, Sara Southwell, Hannah Rowe, Ben Patrick, Ben Harding and Elizabeth Bucknell. LVR

Meanwhile, at the South West Tourism Excellence Awards, the Lappa Valley Railway was named as one of the very best attractions in the South West for the second consecutive year.

It was awarded silver in the Large Visitor Attraction category, while one of its team was also recognised with a special award.

Judges noted the warm welcome, well-maintained facilities, and very friendly and helpful staff.

The Lappa Valley had already scooped gold in the Cornwall Awards in November.

Celebrations

Railway owner Keith Southwell said: "Lappa Valley celebrates its 50th birthday this year and this really is the icing on the cake. We are chuffed to have been recognised as one of the top days out in the South West, especially when we are surrounded by so many other great attractions.

"None of this would be possible without our Lappa family – the committed team members who really pour their hearts into Lappa Valley, and especially our operations manager Ben Harding."

Lappa Valley train driver Ben Patrick was also named one of the year's unsung heroes, using his experience as a young full-time carer to his father to help visitors with disabilities and additional needs feel more comfortable, as well as encouraging young railway fans.

Major facelift for Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge gets underway

A MAJOR programme of refurbishment and maintenance for the ongoing conservation of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge has begun with a landmark project to protect its historic wrought-iron chains.

Many of the chain links are 180 years old, having been manufactured for GWR engineer Brunel's Hungerford footbridge in London, which opened in 1845. When the footbridge was demolished to make way for the Charing Cross railway bridge, the engineer John Hawkshaw recycled the parts to complete Bristol's legendary Grade I-listed icon.

Engineering firm Taziker has been awarded the multi-million pound refurbishment contract which aims to keep the ironwork in top condition for at least another 20-25 years. A protective paint system will be used across the chains and parapet girder latticework and stanchions which run along the outer side of the bridge's footways.

For the future

As the existing lighting needs to be removed to enable the bridge structure to be inspected and repainted, the Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust will also install a cutting-edge, environmentally-friendly and sustainable lighting system following the completion of an extensive consultation and planning process.

The trust's bridgemaster, Trish Johnson, said: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime project that will safeguard important original features, as well as updating the bridge's illuminations to ensure we are reaching the highest standards for sustainability while minimising light pollution.

"The project has been funded through the collection of bridge tolls. As a charity, we thank bridge users for helping finance these important works.

Taziker CEO Neil Harrison said: "It is a true testament of our reputation as conservation specialists to be trusted with a landmark that means so much to the public."

Steam the winner at the races!

Words and pictures by John Titlow

ONCE again, steam on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway won out over road when travelling to Cheltenham Racecourse, with this year's March 12-15 Cheltenham Festival seeing its prestigious Gold Cup race celebrate its centenary on Friday, March 15.

Initially, the first three days had a two-train service with three trains on Gold Cup day. However, bookings were so strong on the Tuesday that an additional train was added. All eight coach trains over the four days were full, and there was a waiting list for Gold Cup day.

Conveniently-located Cheltenham Racecourse Station is a short walk to the event venue, and all trains started at Toddington, where there is ample parking, thus avoiding the fees at the racecourse. The first train off was at 10.50am, closely followed at 11.05pm with a three-train service, and the next departure was at noon. There then followed empty coaching stock workings, two to Toddington and the third to Winchcombe, where the locomotive uncoupled from its stock before running light engine to Toddington for servicing.

WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* emerges from Greet Tunnel with the afternoon empty coaching stock to Cheltenham Racecourse on March 15.

Captivated audience

Between trains, visitors watched the three locomotives being prepared for watering and coaling at Toddington, giving crews a well-earned break. Two crews were needed on each locomotive due to the long day.

After servicing, the three trains returned as empty coaching stock to Racecourse, passing by within 40 minutes of each other. It was then a long wait for the returns in the evening, with trains departing after the 'sun' had set at 6.10pm, 6.25pm, and 6.40pm.

Passengers were able to wave from the train as queues of vehicles entering and exiting the racecourse mounted up. Local roads and the nearby M5 were clogged with traffic.

Racegoers were all fun and smiles on the outward journey, and on the return, it was either bigger smiles or tears after their losses – at least the return journey by steam must have been worth the day alone!

As with last year, 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*. GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807 was on standby and was promptly entered into service on the Tuesday due to a piston ring failure on No. 7903.

Classic Hospitality, in partnership with At The Races, organised the events using its own design of headboard.

Popular event

Prices for parking and trains started at £80 for Wednesday's Ladies Day and Thursday's St Patrick's Day, then £90 on Tuesday's Champions Day. On Gold Cup Day, it cost £100. Toddington car park was almost full of expensive cars. Additional packages were available, with prices starting at £460 plus VAT.

At Toddington the buffet has recently been brought in-house and renamed as The Cotswold Halt, as reported on News, page 16. It has been refurbished and was opened in time to serve festival visitors. Champagne was on sale at the station.

Feedback was positive, with many repeat bookings. The race event has become a regular in the GW/R calendar, financially rewarding, and second to its sell-out Santa trains. Additional race event trains run on November 17 and 18.

SR 4-6-2 No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co.* pulls forward for coaling as *Dinmore Manor* awaits its turn at Toddington. The white canopy on the left is the racegoers' entrance for trains.

With the empty coaching stock lamp headcode, recently restored GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807, standing in for No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall,* drifts downgrade from Gotherington.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Celebrating Scotsman's designer and first show appearance 100 years on in landmark exhibition

By Robin Jones

A NEW landmark exhibition celebrating the ground-breaking work of the man who designed the world's fastest steam locomotive is to be opened in Doncaster's Danum Gallery, Library and Museum at a ceremony on April 23.

It will be a century to the day that the British Empire Exhibition opened at Wembley Stadium with LNER Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* as one of the star exhibits, the resulting publicity igniting its pathway to stardom.

The civic mayor of the City of Doncaster, Duncan Anderson, will open the new free exhibition, entitled Gresley – Genius of Steam and Speed. It will run until September 21 and will also celebrate the achievements of the unsung heroes of Doncaster who worked alongside Gresley to create the A3.

Featuring a selection of letters and notebooks in Gresley's own hand, to artefacts such as his hat and passport, the exhibition will resurrect Gresley's own life and career.

One of those characters featured in the exhibition is Doncaster man Harry Harper, who was Gresley's personal assistant for many years. Although from different social backgrounds, it is evident that Gresley and Harper were close, sufficiently so for Sir Nigel to entrust several of his personal notebooks and papers to him, and it is this amazing treasure trove that will be at the heart of the display. Additional material, including an audio-visual app guide, were supported and created by XP Trust students, who recently published a book called Rail City.

'Historical significance'

Chris Barron, trustee of the Doncaster Grammar School Railway Collection Trust, said: "Harry Harper handed over what we now call 'The Gresley Papers' to the Doncaster Grammar School Railway Museum in 1963, but for decades they have been largely unknown and unseen to the world in general.

"These documents are of great historical significance and have provided the impetus for this entire exhibition. We are delighted to have worked closely with Heritage Doncaster and The Gresley Society in making them public."

The Gresley Society's chairman, Philip Benham, said: "One hundred years on from the event that first thrust the world's most famous locomotive into the limelight, it is fitting to see the achievements of *Flying Scotsman*'s creator commemorated in this wonderful exhibition. It is all the more appropriate that it is being held in Doncaster, where so many of Gresley's achievements took place."

City of Doncaster Council chief executive Damian Allen added: "This is another important celebration and milestone in the life of our railway history. Our city is fast assuming its rightful position as a centre for such activity and this event serves to reveal even more about our proud past and ability to collaborate with a wide range of partners."

Sir Nigel Gresley in the Great Northern Railway office at Doncaster Works. CITY OF DONCASTER COUNCIL

The exhibition is a collaboration between the Doncaster Grammar School Railway Collection, trustees, the Gresley Society Trust, Heritage Doncaster and the XP Trust.

Second restored Hythe Pier locomotive to be named in recognition of local charity founder

THE second Hythe Pier Railway locomotive to be restored is to be named in honour of its benefactor.

The Hythe Pier Heritage Association (HPHA) is currently overhauling locomotive No. 16302, which is to be named *Edward Fort* after the current chairman and founder of Hampshire charity the Beaulieu Beaufort Foundation, in recognition of the long-term support which it has given to the restoration of the 2ft gauge pier train.

Once operational, No. 16302 will join its sister locomotive No. 16307 *Gerald Yorke* in service.

Edward S. Fort OBE founded the Fort Vale group of companies in 1967. Originally producing parts for the road tanker industry, Fort Vale has expanded to be a global engineering group. The foundation was the first grantor to support the restoration of the train in early 2020 and further support has been given for the continued restoration of the carriages and of *Gerald Yorke*.

The two surviving locomotives and a third that was dismantled in 1935 for spares were built in 1917 by Brush Electrical Engineering of Loughborough for use at a First World War munitions factory in Avonmouth. After the war, Hythe Pier and Ferry proprietor Thomas Percy bought them from a War Office surplus plant catalogue and they arrived in Hythe in June 1920, commencing operations on the pier in July 1922.

Their appearance has changed little over the past 102 years. Apart from converting from battery to mains electrical supply, the mechanics remain the same – a testimony to early 20th-century engineering.

As previously reported, HPHA, as part of its continuing plans to restore Hythe's historic pier and iconic railway, had locomotive No. 16307 back on track after an extensive and painstaking renovation carried out by volunteers from the Hythe Shed (at the Pier) and Blue Funnel Ferries engineers, using as much of the original material as possible, in time for the centenary of the Hythe Pier Railway. It was named *Gerald Yorke* in honour of the railway engineer charged by Mr Percy to oversee the implementation of the pier train.

Progress on the cabin of Hythe Pier Railway locomotive No. 16302. TINY BROWN/HPHA

No. 16302 is at present undergoing a similar restoration and is set to be back on track later in 2024.

The entrance to one of the three long-disused tunnels on the coast path between Saundersfoot and Wiseman's Bridge. ROBIN JONES

Coastal path on historic trackbed is blocked by falls

A KEY section of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path which used the trackbed of an historic mineral railway and which includes three surviving tunnels will need £600,000 for repairs if it is to reopen by the start of the summer school holiday.

The footpath and cycleway between Wiseman's Bridge and Coppet Hall/Saundersfoot, known as the Tramway, and which is part of the Wales Coast Path, experienced 'substantial rock falls' late last year and in January.

The March 11 meeting of Pembrokeshire County Council's cabinet heard that the necessary grant funding was still unsecured, and the money has to be found from the local authority's own capital programme in time meantime, members decided. If the section of the path was not restored, it could lead to permanent closure and the loss of part of a National Cycle Route.

The trackbed is that of a 4ft gauge line built in 1832-34 by the Saundersfoot Railway & Harbour Company linking collieries at Stepaside, Kilgetty and Reynalton, brickworks and ironworks to Saundersfoot harbour.

The four miles of tracks were upgraded in the 1870s for steam locomotives to haul the wagons instead of horses. However, local coal and iron production began to reduce. By the late 1920s, coal mining was in recession and the line closed. A brief resurgence in local mining led to the lines being reopened in 1932, but only seven years later, due to financial considerations and the workings becoming exhausted, the railway finally closed just before the outset of the Second World War. The tracks and rolling stock were scrapped for the war effort.

Big shunt for May opening at Locomotion's New Hall

By Robin Jones

THE National Railway Museum has orchestrated its biggest-ever shunt to create Europe's largest undercover display of historic rail vehicles in time for the public opening of the Locomotion museum in Shildon's £8 million New Hall on Friday, May 24.

Managed by specialist teams from Locomotion and the NRM at York, the shunt involved 46 rail vehicles and one road vehicle being moved carefully inside the newly-constructed hall.

To enable the four-week shunt to take place safely, Locomotion was temporarily closed to visitors during weekdays until March 27. The final vehicle was expected to go into the hall at the end of April. When added to the stock already at Locomotion, there will be 99 rail vehicles, creating the largest undercover display of historic rolling stock in Europe.

Once the rail vehicles are in place, New Hall will receive new interpretation, seating, wayfinding, lighting and other finishing touches ready to open for visitors. It will also be ready celebrate the museum's 20th anniversary in September.

LNWR G2 'Super D' 0-8-0 No. 485 being unloaded into New Hall. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM

The NER snow plough during the shunt of Locomotion. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NRM

Showcasing history

The museum stands close to the site of Shildon Works, once a thriving railway workshop employing thousands and which closed in June 1984. The new building and its vehicle display will recognise the important role of railways in shaping communities in Shildon and the North East, as well as the development of the railways around the UK.

The interpretation will also tell new stories of the significance of coal in the development of the railways, along with related stories of industry and freight transportation.

New Hall is the centrepiece of a site-wide programme of improvements at Locomotion which incorporates historic coal drops, a collection of railway buildings, and Gaunless Bridge – one of the world's oldest iron railway bridges. A restoration project is taking place to repaint and display the bridge, which was originally part of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, funded by the Ironmonger's Company and public donations.

As well as New Hall, visitors to Locomotion can see many highlights from the national collection, from the world's fastest diesel locomotive, High Speed Train Class 43 power car No. 43102 *The Journey Shrinker,* to George Stephenson's *Rocket* and *Locomotion No.1*, which hauled the first train on the S&DR in 1825.

The new building will be a key part of plans to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the opening of the S&DR in 2025 as part of the Railway 200 programme of events (see News, page 18).

Locomotion's New Hall has been generously supported by Durham County Council (Lead Funder).

Head of Locomotion Sarah Price said: "I would like to thank all our partners involved in creating the magnificent New Hall, especially Nationwide Engineering and Durham County Council. New Hall effectively doubles the size of Locomotion and gives us much-needed covered display space to help conserve the collection, as well as giving visitors the chance to find out more about the railways and the North East's railway heritage.

Visitor draw

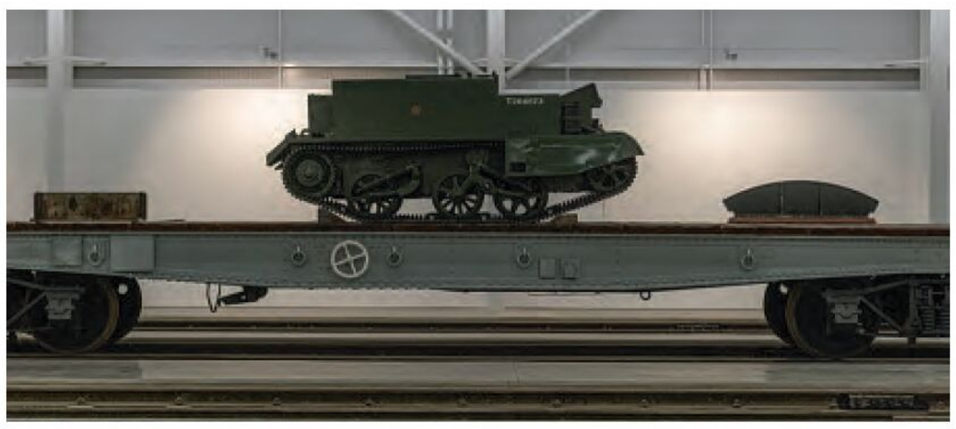
"I hope the significant regeneration at Locomotion can draw even more people to visit the museum and the region as part of the national Railway 200 celebrations and beyond."

Locomotion is a partnership between the Science Museum Group and Durham County Council, lead funder for New Hall, which is situated opposite the museum's existing collection building, and

Inside the £8 million New Hall as its tracks await the arrival of exhibits. JASON HYNES/NRM

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

NER 2-2-4T No. 66 *Aerolite* being moved into New Hall. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NRM



The war flat and tracked vehicle inside New Hall. JASON HYNES/NRM

An LNER velocipede inside New Hall. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NRM

which was designed by AOC Architecture and J+L Gibbons Landscape Architects. The county council successfully applied for £20 million of Levelling Up funding to allow it to invest in Locomotion, including the creation of New Hall.

New Hall has also been backed by the Wolfson Foundation, The Friends of the National Railway Museum and The Foyle Foundation (all major funders), Sir James Knott Trust and The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust (both associate funders), The Platten Family Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland and Northumbrian Water Branch Out Fund.

The council seeks to promote the county and its assets to visitors as part of its Inclusive Economic Strategy.

Coun Elizabeth Scott, the authority's cabinet member for economy and partnerships, said: "It's really exciting knowing New Hall is getting closer to opening and to housing Europe's biggest undercover display of historic rail vehicles.

"We were delighted to be able to provide funding for this project, which will let many more people know the significance of Shildon as the starting point of the world's first steam locomotive-powered passenger journey, further raising Durham's profile nationally and internationally as the 'Culture County'.

"Locomotion is already one of County Durham's and the North East's biggest visitor attractions, putting smiles on faces and delivering significant economic benefits. We look forward to New Hall adding to the museum's offer and to it being at the heart of celebrations of both 20 years of the museum and 200 years since the opening of the S&DR."

➜ The New Hall vehicle line-up comprises locomotives *Hetton Lyon*, LNER 0-8-0 Q7 No. 1901, NER Bo-Bo electric No.1, LNWR G2 'Super D' 0-8-0 No. 485, Hunslet 'Austerity' No. 3850 *Juno*, Class 08 No. 08064, NER 2-2-4T No. 66 *Aerolite*, Sentinel 0-4-0DH No. H001, BR Class 31 D5500 and Simplex petrol 0-4-0 No. 4217.

Rolling stock includes an LMS three-plank open wagon, LSWR brake van No.99, a 1911 road/rail removals van, a 'Warflat' 50-ton bogie flat wagon of 1940 with Bren Gun carrier, a BR special cattle van of 1951, a mineral wagon used at Stanton Ironworks, a BR 16-ton mineral wagon, a BR container flat wagon, a BR BA Type container, a NER snow plough, a Matisa tamping machine, a locomotive-mounted steam crane and jib (c 1915), a Wickham platelayers trolley, two velocipedes, a LNER match truck, a National Benzole tank wagon, a BR china clay wagon, a Naburn Sewage Works narrow gauge tipper wagon, a BRF Presflo cement wagon, a Phillips Petroleum 100T tank wagon, a bogie hopper wagon, a Merry Go Round coal wagon and an HDA hopper wagon, Seacow bogie ballast hopper No. DB 982896, a Lowmac wagon, HEA coal hopper wagon No. 361000, an LNER hopper wagon, a NER 20T wooden hopper wagon, a NER Shell-Mex and BP Ltd tank wagon, a Seaham Harbour chaldron wagon, GNR locomotive tender No. 1002, a rail-mounted BR snow plough, a GNR four-wheeled hand crane, an EWS (Thrall) HTA 102-tonne coal hopper and BR 20T Weltrol wagon No. B900805.

New steam arrives for Aln Valley with thanks to supporters

THE Aln Valley Railway has welcomed a new steam locomotive to its collection following the arrival of Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1366 *Renishaw Ironworks No. 6* on March 15.

Outshopped in 1919 for the Appleby Ironworks at Scunthorpe, after the Second World War it was rebuilt by the Yorkshire Engine Co Ltd and in 1952 was sold to the Renishaw Ironworks in Derbyshire, where it was given the identity it currently goes by.

Withdrawn in March 1969, it was privately purchased by enthusiast RT Robinson, who moved it into storage at the locomotive shed for British Steel's Redbourn works; by 1972 it was at the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway, where it was returned to steam before later moving to Steamtown at Carnforth. For the last two decades, No. 1366 has been based at the Tanfield Railway, arriving there in March 2004 from Mick Farrington's workshop at Wooler. Its most recent overhaul was completed in the autumn of 2023, returning in time for the railway's Run It gala over the weekend of October 14/15, but was then listed for sale.

Having been purchased by AVR supporters Adam and Diana Stone, on March 15 it departed Marley Hill shed following a ceremonial handover of the shovel to move to its new home at Alnwick, where it will operate alongside the railway's Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0Ts Nos. 1243 *Richboro* and 1731 *Jennifer*.

Adam and Diana said: "We are honoured to have the opportunity to bring *Renishaw* to the AVR. The locomotive has a fascinating history, and we believe it will greatly enhance the railway experience for our visitors."

AVR operations manager Richard Maughan said: "*Renishaw* is a remarkable addition to our collection of steam locomotives and huge thanks go to Adam and Diana for choosing Aln Valley as its new home."

The shovel of Hudswell Clarke No. 1366 *Renishaw Ironworks No. 6* is handed over to new owners Adam and Diana Stone. GEMMA MAUGHAN/AVR

Mail Rail welcomes new museum specialist and unveils tunnel walks

By Geoff Courtney

THE Postal Museum in central London, which incorporates the innovative underground Mail Rail visitor attraction, has announced the appointment of Sue Wilkinson as chairwoman and unveiled a series of walks through the railway's tunnels.

Sue, who succeeds Rick Wills, the chairman for the past for 8½ years, is a trained teacher who has held a number of roles in the education and arts sectors and has been awarded an MBE for services to museum education and an OBE for services to literature and libraries.

She is described by Postal Museum trustee and chairman of the selection committee David Gold as "a strategic thinker who will take the museum to the next level as an organisation."

Her career spans time at the Tower of London and senior roles at the Museum, Library and Archive Council, where she established a scheme designed to revitalise England's regional museums. Sue also led the development of a quality and impact framework that is now in global use in museums, archives and libraries, and is a trustee of Historic Royal Palaces and the National Coal Mining Museum, in addition to other similar appointments.

'Inspiring vision'

"Museums have always been my passion, and the Postal Museum is one of London's best," she said.

"It has an amazing collection, wonderful interactives and a real commitment to providing high quality, informative and engaging experiences for visitors of all ages. Its inspiring vision is one I am very much looking forward to supporting and developing."

Mail Rail comprises a restored stretch of the former 2ft gauge Post Office Underground Railway that opened in 1927 and ran 70 feet beneath the capital's streets for 6½ miles from west to east London, carrying millions of letters and parcels 22 hours a day on driverless electric trains.

Dubbed 'London's secret railway' as so few residents and tourists knew of its existence, it closed in 2003, beaten by the relentless march of lorries and vans, but instead of being sealed up it was mothballed, and a small maintenance team retained. In 2013 a £26 million project was unveiled that comprised a new postal museum and nearly a mile of the railway reopening as a tourist attraction, based at Royal Mail's Mount Pleasant centre in Clerkenwell, near King's Cross station.

Popular attraction

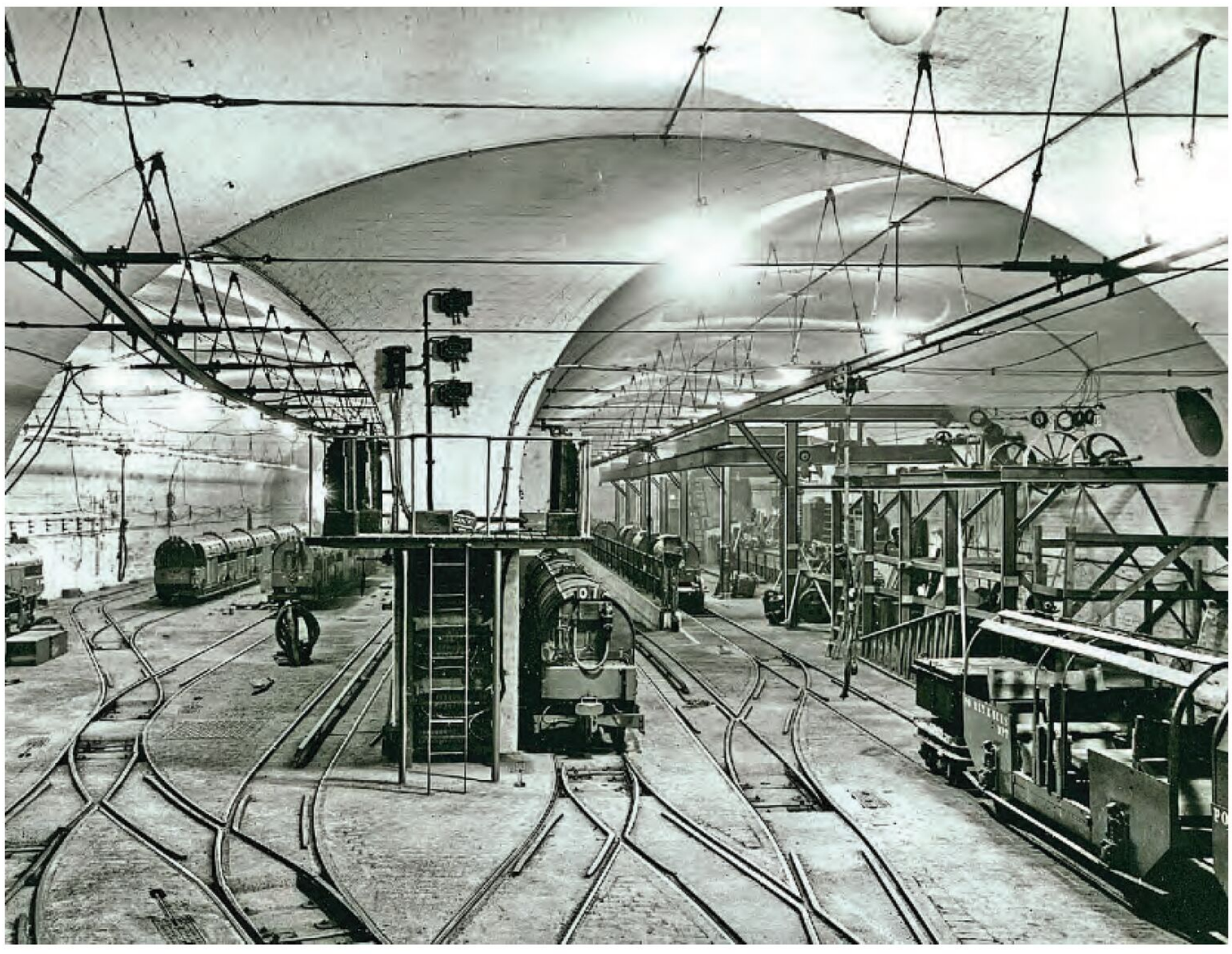
Passengers are carried in custom-designed battery-powered trains that are boarded beneath the Mount Pleasant site in the railway's former maintenance and repair depot, which has been converted into an exhibition, hospitality and passenger centre. It was opened in September 2017 and became an overnight success, carrying no fewer than 55,000 passengers in its first four months and completing 9000 journeys in its first year.

The tunnel walks that have also been announced will enable visitors, who will be accompanied by an expert guide, to explore parts of the railway, platforms and tunnels, and view details not accessible on the Mail Rail ride. They will be held on a number of weekday and weekend dates in April, May and June.

Details of how to book and other information are available on www.postalmuseum.org/event/tunnel-walks/

Above: Railway arrival: Sue Wilkinson, the new chairwoman of London's Postal Museum, beside a Mail Rail train beneath the museum's Mount Pleasant site in central London. THE POSTAL MUSEUM

Left: Tunnel vision: The innovative Mail Rail underground railway is now open to guided walks 70 feet below the centre of London. THE POSTAL MUSEUM



Right: The Post Office Underground Railway maintenance and repair depot at Mount Pleasant in 1927, the year the line opened. The depot is now an exhibition, hospitality and passenger centre as part of the Mail Rail tourist attraction. ROYAL MAIL GROUP LTD/ COURTESY BPMA

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Sweet treat for Tyseley's chocolate engine

By Owen Hayward

ITS rail yard closed in 1976 and its locomotives sold or scrapped, but with the Cadbury Bournville factory in Birmingham celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, plans are underway that may see one of its industrial 0-4-0Ts make a brief return to its former stomping ground.

Built by the Avonside Engine Company in 1925 for the chocolate factory's expanding yard, No. 1977 moved the heavy loads around some rather tight bends within the complex, which totalled about six miles of track. The demise of the yard, which was established in 1884, came about because of road transportation.

No. 1977, which was identified as *Cadbury No. 1*, was sold to the Dowty Railway Preservation Society in 1963 when diesel traction displaced steam. Initially moved to its site at Ashchurch, Gloucestershire, in 1983 No. 1 moved to the fledgling Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway where in April the following year it worked the heritage line's first public trains. It remained the nascent heritage line's only operational steam locomotive until the end of 1985 when it was withdrawn.

Andrew Christie hopes to cosmetically refurbish *Cadbury No. 1* at Tyseley ahead of the confectioner's 200th anniversary this year and the locomotive's own 100th anniversary in 2025. ANDREW CHRISTIE

A rear view of No. 1 in the Tyseley yard on March 14. ROBIN JONES

As the G/WR's services expanded and outgrew the capabilities of industrial tank engines, No. 1 was sold to the Birmingham Railway Museum (now Tyseley Locomotive Works) in 1988, where it was overhauled and returned to steam for a spell. However, it has now spent many years out of service and stored outdoors on one of the turntable roads.

Cadbury No. 1 will turn 100 years old in 2025. Its entire working life was spent shunting at the confectionary company's rail yard at Bourneville, where it is hoped to return briefly for display.

The project to cosmetically restore the locomotive is being led by Severn Valley Railway volunteer and Bournville resident Andrew Christie, a train driver instructor for Cross Country Trains, based at Birmingham New Street, who said: "Being a resident of Bournville with a passion for steam engines, for me this is the right thing to do!

"The first steam locomotive I drove as a youngster was a 7 ¼in gauge model of an Avonside tank engine, which was painted as *Cadbury No. 2*. This happened during my early days of volunteering on the Severn Valley Railway. I also have a family connection to the chocolate factory as both my father and grandfather worked as electricians at Bournville for a time.

"The brand Cadbury is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year and knowing that No. 1 is 100 next year, I thought the time was right to make the loco look a bit smarter.

"Why a cosmetic restoration? Simply because it's the right thing to do for now.

"Inevitably, a full restoration will cost well over £100,000, with new tanks, boiler and smokebox required. Alistair Meanley informed me that the boiler was tired last time Tyseley refurbished it. The locomotive is a full kit of parts and could run again, but for now it would just be nice to make it look smarter for its 100th anniversary."

The estimated cost for the refurbishment is about £5000, although Andrew has set a target for £10,000 to cover any material price increases, as well as hopefully fund the lorry moves that could see the locomotive temporarily return home for display during the anniversary celebrations, including during a heritage day planned by residents of Bournville village on September 14. A road closure on Bournville Green is planned to allow for a display of vintage vehicles and classic cars – and hopefully No. 1, with the potential for a return visit in 2025 for the locomotive's own centenary. Andrew also hopes to establish a photographic display at the attraction showing workings in the yard.

➜ To support the appeal, visit www.gofundme.com/f/back-to-bournville

Bid to bring exiled Manx carriage home after 12 years

THE Isle of Man Steam Railway Supporters' Association is aiming to repatriate an original Manx Northern Railway 12 years after it left the island.

The six-wheel carriage, which was built by the Swansea Carriage & Wagon Co and supplied to the railway for its opening in 1879, is described as a "unique survivor".

Originally MNR No. 3 and later Isle of Man Railway No. N42, the coach was cosmetically restored for the then-new Port Erin museum in 1976.

However, it was removed in 1998 to allow the museum to be refurbished and did not return. It is currently stored outdoors in Suffolk, where some remedial work has been undertaken.

The association has held talks with the coach's owner, Robert Hendry, of the Three Foot Gauge Society, regarding the return of the carriage, and is searching for covered accommodation on the island as there is no room for it on the Isle of Man Railway.

The carriage as seen last August following a repaint and repairs to the roof, with replacement glazing panels having been fitted following vandalism. IOMSRSA

Chairman Bill Cubbon said: "This represents a final throw of the dice to attempt to have this carriage returned home; we have been working closely with Robert Hendry to achieve this aim but thus far have been unsuccessful in finding a suitable home, so we are now opening our appeal up to the general public in the hope that we can find a one for it."

The coach was one of 14 built to the unusual six-wheel Cleminson patent. Only three other carriages from the order remain, one of which has been completely restored by an association member and is now back on the railway. Another is used as storage and the third is part of a private collection off-island.

Help bring a Walrus to the Churnet Valley!

THE Churnet Valley Railway is making steady progress with a public appeal to buy a BR ballast wagon.

Following the successful borrowing of a BR Whale wagon, the railway launched an £8000 appeal last autumn to buy a Walrus wagon. The purchase would mean that the railway would have a complete set of vacuum-braked bogie ballast wagons, highly useful for future works planned on the line.

About £7000 had been raised as we closed for press.

To donate, visit www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/bogieballast

GREAT CENTRAL DOUBLES UP FOR REUNIFICATION BY BUS!

To mark the 125th anniversary of the London Extension in March 1899, today's two Great Central heritage railways took a major step forward in their long-held dream of reunification – by holding an innovative and successful ground-breaking gala in which road buses became the surprise stars of the show, reports **Robin Jones.**

In the Beeching era, the term 'rail replacement bus' would immediately conjure up visions of lines being permanently closed and wiped off the map. Sixty years on, the role was reversed as a fleet of heritage London Transport Routemaster buses linked the Great Central Railway at Loughborough with its northern counterpart the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) during a unique 'gala in a million' to celebrate 125 years since the last trunk route into the capital before the coming of High Speed 1, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, was opened.

It was on March 15, 1899, that the first passenger trains on the Great Central Railway between Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester and Marylebone ran, the work of the 'Railway King' Sir Edward Watkin (1819-1901), who also turned Canada's Trunk Railway into the longest in the world, dug two miles of the first Channel tunnel in 1880, and created Cleethorpes as a holiday resort, among many other achievements.

In its early years, the Great Central's steam-hauled Sheffield expresses were the fastest in the country. However, the express services from London to destinations beyond Nottingham were withdrawn in 1960, and the Beeching report three years later said that the route was a duplicate of the Midland Main Line and was therefore ripe for closure. A DMU service ran between Rugby Central and Nottingham Arkwright Street until May 3, 1969.

The heritage GCR at Loughborough ran its first services in 1973, but in subsequent years BR proceeded to lift the track to the north of the town and bridge over the MML. Since the formation of the GCR(N) to revive the section from the MML to the closed Ruddington MoD depot (now Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre), there have been moves to reinstate the missing link under the banner of the reunification project, its progress and potential being outlined in a special feature in *Heritage Railway* issue 310. The link will create an 18-mile heritage line between the outskirts of Nottingham and Leicester and also give the GCR at Loughborough Central a main line connection, facilities, and inward and outbound charter trips to the benefit of the local economy.

The anniversary event took a very different twist to the standard heritage railway gala. Its backbone feature was the vintage rail replacement bus link running at regular intervals from the GCR at Quorn & Woodhouse station to the NTHC at Ruddington. It appears that every one of the buses were full to capacity, such was the popularity of the link. On the Saturday only, a free shuttle bus ferried visitors from Loughborough Midland station to

One of the biggest successes of the gala was the linking of both railways with a fleet of heritage buses. One of four London Transport Routemasters is seen on March 16 at the temporary bus stop installed at Quorn & Woodhouse alongside BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92214, the boiler ticket of which expired on February 27, as reported last issue. The bus services from here to Ruddington were packed throughout the event. ROBIN JONES

The destination board says it all: Back in the 1960s, rail replacement buses were a regular feature of the Beeching era closures; however, the 125th anniversary gala was a stepping stone to reuniting two heritage lines!

Right: Great Central Railway general manager Malcolm Holmes (left, dressed in Victorian attire as Sam Fay, the last general manager of the original GCR) with the Mayor of Charnwood Borough Council, Coun Margaret Smidowicz, Geoff Scargill, chairman of the Watkin Society (as Edward Watkin) and Debbie Gillott, of the Friends of the Great Central Main Line (Watkin's wife) at Loughborough Central station on March 16. GCR

Left: Ruddington's 3 ½in, 5in and 7 ¼in gauge miniature railway proved a popular attraction through the weekend. ROBIN JONES

Right: The final trackwork into Platform 2 at Ruddington Fields is now in place, with Class 20 D8154 becoming the first locomotive on it. ANDY FILLINGHAM/GCR(N)

Lovatt House for Loughborough Central. Furthermore, no visiting steam locomotives were hired for the event, and apart from two on-loan vintage railcars, the GCR relied on locomotives from the home fleet. No trains ran on the GCR(N) from Ruddington Fields due to remedial work needed on four bridges, notably 302A.

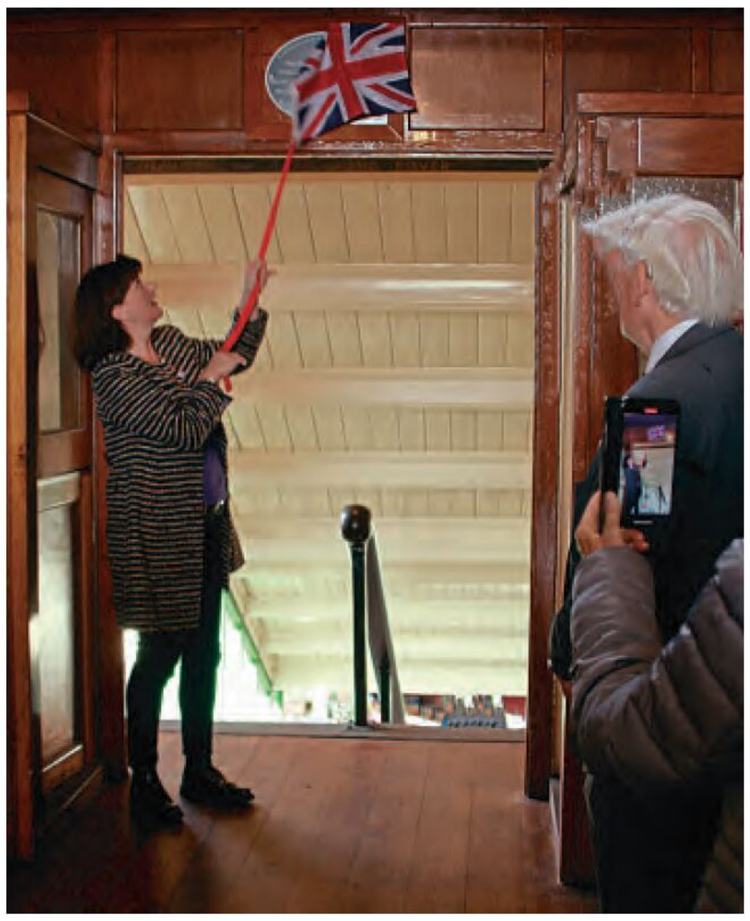
However, the 18-mile GCR heritage railway corridor as linked by the buses was transformed into a linear passage through history, with a plethora of attractions and displays set up at stations en route and locomotive, carriage sheds and workshops open for public viewing and tours, with locomotives and rolling stock on display and some with cab visits.

One of the big attractions at Ruddington was the multi-gauge miniature railway, and the Nottingham Area Bus Society depot was also open. In the absence of trains, a free heritage bus service took visitors to Rushcliffe Halt, where platform displays were set up, and the car park was filled with vintage vehicles.

Above: One of the vintage buses based at the heritage centre in Ruddington arrives at Rushcliffe Halt. The platforms had been dressed for the occasion. JAMES KIRK/GCR(N)

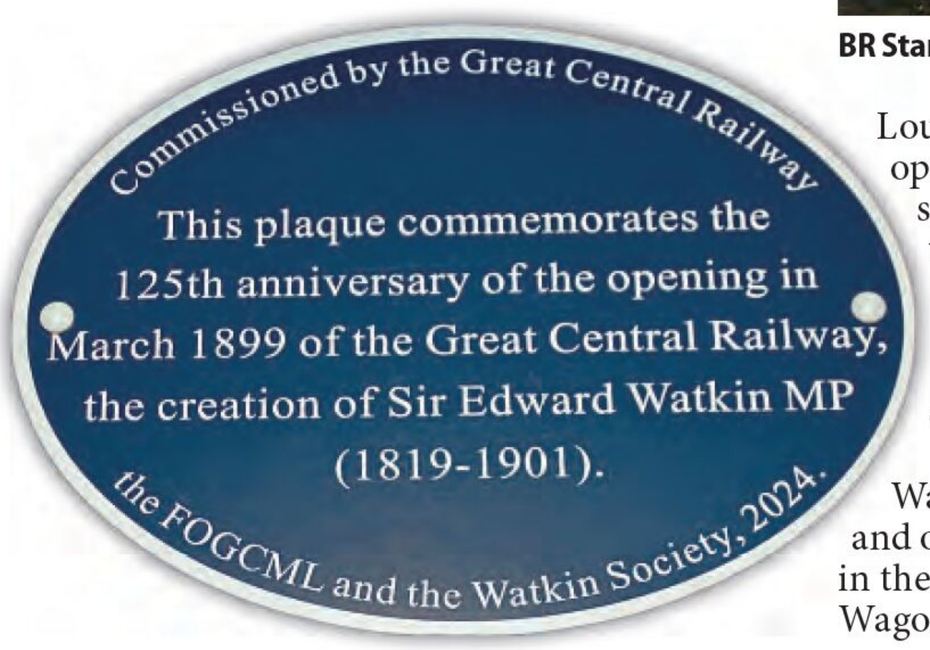
Class 31 No. 31210 was displayed at Ruddington for the first time following a major refurbishment and is waiting to have its bogies swapped with a donor locomotive on the site. Withdrawn in February 1992 and based at the Dean Forest Railway for many years, it has never run in preservation. ROBIN JONES

The event provided a welcome platform for the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust to display its 4-6-0 No. 61264, for which it is trying to raise £750,000 for its next major overhaul. A former resident of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, the B1 was moved to Ruddington in August 2022. It needs a number of new components including inner firebox, tender tank, tyres, ashpan and fire and flue tubes for the boiler. Regular working parties are held at Ruddington. To find out more or to donate, visit www.thompsonb1.org PAUL CHAMBERS/GCR(N)



On March 17, a plaque commemorating the 125th anniversary of the opening of the GCR and mounted above the entrance to the Loughborough Central platforms was unveiled by Nicky Morgan, Baroness Morgan of Cotes, who was Conservative MP for Loughborough from 2010-19 and also served as Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. As reported in issue 213, on February 12, 2016, she cut the first sod for the building of the new bridge over the Midland Main Line at Loughborough. KEN SIMMS/GCR

BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 departs Quorn & Woodhouse for Leicester North on March 16. ROBIN JONES



Loughborough Central's museum was open, and a miniature railway had been set up at the rear of the locomotive shed, where tours were available. Historic station tours ran on both days, and at 1.30pm on the Sunday, Baroness Morgan of Cotes unveiled a plaque commemorating Sir Edward Watkin.

At Quorn & Woodhouse station, the Watkin Society ran a stall in the marquee and on the Saturday gave history talks in the goods shed. The Quorn Wagon & Wagon Group displayed its historic vehicles, including Test Car 2, which was open for visits.

Regular railcar and DMU trips were run along the Mountsorrel branch, with passengers given free admission to Mountsorrel and Rothley Community Heritage Centre, where Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway coach No. 946 of 1888 was on show.

At Rothley, visitors could look inside the carriage and wagon department, while a railway telecommunications exhibition was mounted on the platform.

BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73156 departs from Loughborough Central for Leicester North of March 17. KEN SIMMS/GCR

During the weekend, the Quorn Wagon & Wagon Group displayed restored vehicles at Quorn & Woodhouse, with Test Car 2 open to visitors. Converted from a 1962-built Brake Second Corridor coach between 1974-2006, Test Car 2, based at the Railway Technical Centre in Derby, was mostly used for slip/brake testing of vehicles on the West Coast Main Line between Crewe and Winsford. The group won the Heritage Railway Association Mortons Media (sponsored by *Rail Express* magazine) Modern Traction Award 2020 for its restoration. ROBIN JONES

Right: At Quorn & Woodhouse on March 16, *Heritage Railway* editor Robin Jones (left) presents the Heritage Railway Association Interpretation Award 2024 – sponsored by this magazine and announced in issue 314 – to GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes (centre) for the line's Railways At Work 1963 gala on August 18-20 last year, which was organised by Jack Shaw (right). DAVID RAE

Left: Edward Watkin, the man who created the Great Central Railway.

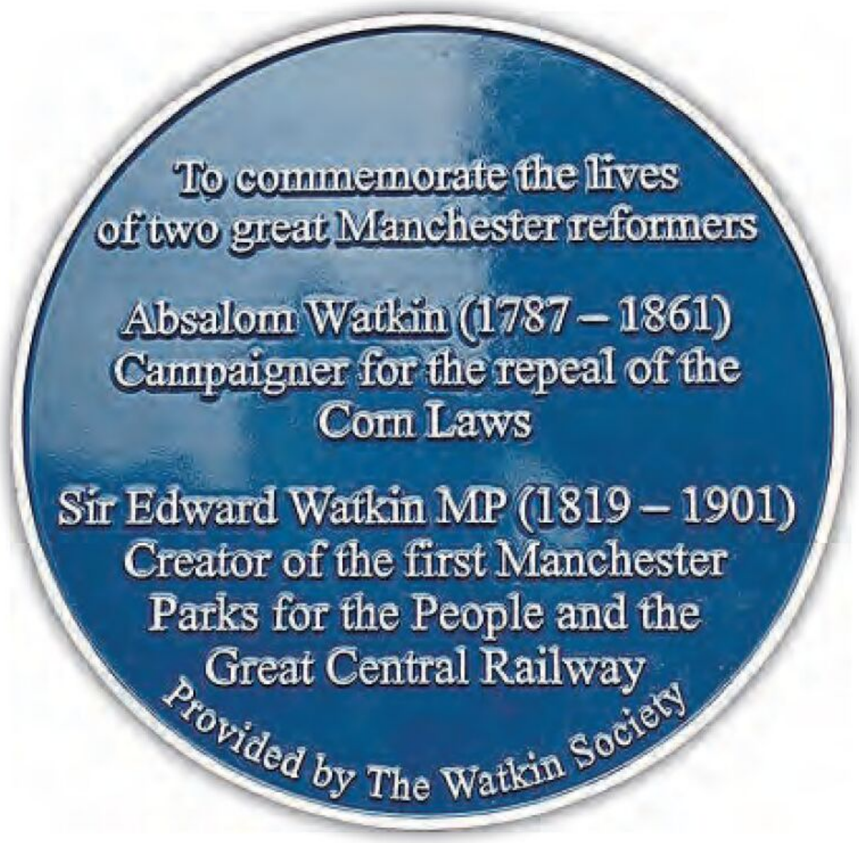
Geoff Scargill, chairman of the Watkin Society, which celebrates the lives of Absalom and his son Edward Watkin, nicknamed the 'Railway King' who built the Great Central from Manchester, the last main line into London until High Speed 1, among many other global achievements. On the Saturday, he delivered talks in the goods shed at Quorn & Woodhouse. For more details, visit www.watkinsociety.org.uk or email admin@watkinsociety.org.UK ROBIN JONES

BR Derby Lightweight railcar No. M79000 on loan from the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway joined up with a two-car Class 101 DMU to run regular services from Loughborough Central along the Mountsorrel branch. ROBIN JONES

The carriage and wagon works at Rothley was open to visitors, who could see the refurbishment of Derby-built Mk.1 SK No. 25711. The bogies have just been rebuilt and it has been painted in BR blue and grey livery – maybe an anathema to steam era fans, but nonetheless nowadays a core part of heritage if diesel-hauled trains are to be recreated on the line. ROBIN JONES

A display highlighting the history of railway communications was staged at Rothley station. ROBIN JONES

NER electric autocar No. 3170, restored by Stephen Middleton, returned to traffic in 2020 and is based at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway. It provided regular services from Loughborough during the weekend. ROBIN JONES



The Watkin plaque at the former GCR Manchester terminus. WATKIN SOCIETY

Footplate visits were offered at Leicester North when trains arrived, and a railway history exhibition was held there in a coach in the bay platform.

In short, there appeared to be a barely precedented level of interest for both enthusiasts and the general public laid on at every stop. About 2000 visitors attended the event, which was covered prominently on both BBC and ITV, reaching a very large audience at prime time.

GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "The 125th anniversary of the opening of the GCR to passenger trains was an ideal opportunity to celebrate not only our heritage, but to also look to the future.

"Reunifying our railway to create an 18-mile line has been a long-held ambition, so working in collaboration with GCR(N) and joining the railways together with a classic rail replacement bus service was the natural thing to do. I've been delighted by how popular it was, something that we'll definitely be repeating!

Visitors and volunteers alike had a thoroughly enjoyable time."

The merits of holding similar heritage rail replacement bus link dual galas will be explored on June 1/2 when the Kent & East Sussex Railway celebrates its 50th anniversary with a vintage bus service to the Rother Valley Railway (in advance of the connecting A21 level crossing reinstatement), Thinking aloud, how about linking the Bluebell Railway to the Lavender Line or the Stainmore Railway at Kirkby Stephen East to the Eden Valley Railway by road, for instance?

More to mark

The 125th anniversary was also commemorated at both ends of the trunk route. At the Manchester Central Convention Complex, formerly the Great Central Railway's Manchester Central terminus, a Watkin Society blue plaque in honour of Absalom and Edward Watkin was unveiled by the city's Lord Mayor, Coun Yasmine Dar, in front of 60 invited guests on March 7.

At Marylebone station on March 15, Chiltern Railways celebrated the anniversary with local residents and industry stakeholders by naming one of its Intercity Class 168s *Marylebone: 125 Years*. Malcolm was among those who attended this event.

New contemporary art installations have been unveiled at the Harewood Avenue entrance of the station, relating Marylebone's history, with archive material and pictures documenting its construction, the challenges it faced during the Second World War, and the impact of the Beeching cuts of the 1960s, before exploring the recent period of growth under Chiltern Railways.

There are those who maintain to this date that the rebuilding of the GCR trunk route from London to Manchester would have been a far more affordable and palatable alternative to High Speed 2, which has caused anger by bulldozing its way through swathes of unspoiled countryside when a ready-made, albeit vacant, route was on hand.

The Igo celebrating the 125th anniversary of Marylebone station. CHILTERN RAILWAYS

This tamper movement on March 20 comprised the first train over the new A60 bridge at Loughborough, which will again link the GCR(N) – and eventually the GCR – to the main line. The original bridge was removed in October 2022, with tracklaying over its replacement beginning this year. GCR(N)

The way ahead

At present, about two-thirds of a mile separates Loughborough Central from the GCRF(N). A new bridge over the MML is waiting for the day when tracks will be laid over it, but a new southern embankment with bridges over Railway Terrace and the nearby Preci-Spark will first have to be built.

As reported in issue 299, the original Bridge 236 over the A60 near the Brush Works in Loughborough was removed in October 2022, and a replacement costing more than £1 million was in place a month later. The first track has now been laid over the new bridge.

Another major step forward in the reunification project is the GCR plc board's decision to relocate Loughborough locomotive shed to facilitate the construction of an authentic double-track main line north from Loughborough Central.

Removing and replacing the old shed will also allow the railway to rearrange how it services, repairs and overhauls vintage locomotives and carriages to best protect, operate and display them for decades to come.

While not completely obstructing the route, the shed in its current location prevents track connecting the two railways being relaid in the best possible place.

Malcolm said: "This is a very exciting plan. Given the loco shed was built in 1973, this isn't a decision taken lightly. It was already a second-hand building then and it has given us sterling service too. However, there's no escaping the fact that while tracks could have been squeezed around the outside of the building to reconnect both halves of the Great Central, it would be far better to dismantle the shed, put the tracks through the centre of the site, and have a fully authentic double-track main line heading north.

"We are now developing plans for our future covered accommodation for locomotives, carriages and maintenance, carefully bearing in mind the needs of our local community, our workforce, and our stakeholders.

"This is going to be a once-in-a-lifetime change for the railway, touching on many aspects of how we operate."

Charnwood Borough Council recently allocated cash from the Loughborough Town Deal Fund to improve the shed further, but no public money has yet been spent. The GCR has invested in recent work to install new lights and doors, which, along with some forthcoming and badly-needed improvements in staff accommodation, will take the building to 'the end of its life' about five years from now.

Discussions have taken place with the council on using the grant to make more improvements to the current building, including allowing public access for the first time in many years. Where public funds can be used, they will be invested with care to ensure the benefits they deliver can be transferred to a new building.

A project group is now examining possible locations for a new engine shed within the entire proposed 18-mile line, to which a substantial amount of equipment must be relocated. A review is also being carried out into the uses of existing shed buildings, and a full plan will be announced in due course. GCR plc chairman Richard Patching said: "We are fully committed to the reunification project. Moving the shed means our double-track line can continue north from Loughborough Central station, through the site of the engine shed, to the bridge over the Grand Union Canal.

"From an aesthetic point of view, it delivers the vision of the 'Double-Track Main Line' the Great Central Railway is. Visitors will be able to stand on Loughborough Central station and really get an authentic heritage experience as their excitement builds when they see trains arrive from the north.

"In practical terms, it also makes the layout of track approaching the station simpler and will help future operations."

Meanwhile, the GCR(N) has been putting finishing touches to its new Ruddington carriage shed, for which, as previously reported, Rushcliffe Borough Council awarded £40,000 of grant aid. Contractors have been installing tracks to connect the shed to the rest of the railway. Work will then resume on pouring a concrete floor inside the building to allow it to be used as exhibition venue as well as a storage shed.

Supporters have raised more than £11,500 to install a roller door. GCR(N) director Andy Fillingham said: "We'd like to thank everyone for their generosity in donating to our shed appeal. Our original appeal was for £15,000 to allow us to fit the new shed out with power and light and we are so close to reaching the target." Donations can be made at lnergctrust.org HR

➜ For more details about the reunification project and how to support it, visit www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify/

Loughborough locomotive shed from the air. GCR

Trackwork underway for the new carriage shed at Ruddington in March. GCR(N)

EAST LANCASHIRE REACHES FOR THE STARS . . . IN SPRING GALA WITH A TWIST!

In recent years the East Lancashire Railway has twice had the largest gathering of operational LNWR and L&YR locomotives. Then, last October, it ran a 30-wagon freight – its longest to date – begging the question that every gala organiser asks: "How do we do it better next time?" **Owen Hayward** visited the Legends of Steam gala to find out.

The organisers of the East Lancashire Railway's March 15-17 spring gala switched tack by reducing the number of locomotives operating, while securing some 'big hitters' for its line-up in the form of A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley,* as well as BR Standard 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia*, the latter having completed repairs a week beforehand following its motion failure on August 22, 2023. Both are icons of their eras with a passionate following among enthusiasts, and the event was packaged as Legends of Steam.

The pair were supplemented by home fleet locomotives LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45690 *Leander* and the smaller yet nonetheless popular Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Aspinall Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 752, running as scrapped BR classmate No. 11305, which had been based at Horwich.

The change of identity was as part of a photographic charter in the days beforehand, the number having been chosen in tribute to the late Harvey Scowcroft, a supporter who sponsored the locomotive's paintwork at its most recent overhaul.

Meanwhile, *Leader* has entered its final few months of boiler certification which will see it withdrawn pending overhaul in May. Owned by Chris Beet, it was a regular sight on the main line steam scene until last summer; its appearance at the ELR gala marked the start of a 'farewell tour', with it departing on March 18 to arrive in Cumbria early the following morning. Having spent a week on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite (see News, pages 22-23), it then travelled south to the Mid-Hants Railway in readiness for a star appearance at the April 26-28 steam gala, after which it will head to the Epping Ongar Railway for two final weekends of running there.

With just four locomotives out, the result was that there were ample opportunities to travel behind all three of the headlining main line stars, with a double-headed service each morning offering a different combination of locomotives to appease passengers and photographers alike. While the larger engines took charge of the full line between Rawtenstall and Heywood, No. 11305 was allocated to Bury-Ramsbottom shuttle workings to keep a busy timetable in effect, making use of the Ramsbottom sidings in order to run round its stock out of the way of the main trains.

Standing room only

With an anticipated high demand for seats, the railway hired additional Mk. 1 carriages from West Coast Railways, a move that paid off as many of the trains were standing room only! There may have been no freight workings or shunting demonstrations (which have been a popular features of the most recent galas), but with the crowds heavily focused on the station platforms and the headliner locomotives, their own activities may well have been

Pacific pulling power: BR Standard No. 70000 *Britannia* leads No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* past Burrs Country Park on March 15 as the East Lancashire Railway's Legends of Steam gala gets underway. KAORU AKAGAWA

Above: A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* ascends Burrs Bank in a strong wind on March 15. KEVIN WHITEHURST

Right: L&YR Class 23 No. 752 (as No. 11305) brings a local service over Brooksbottom Viaduct and the River Irwell on March 16. KEVIN WHITEHURST

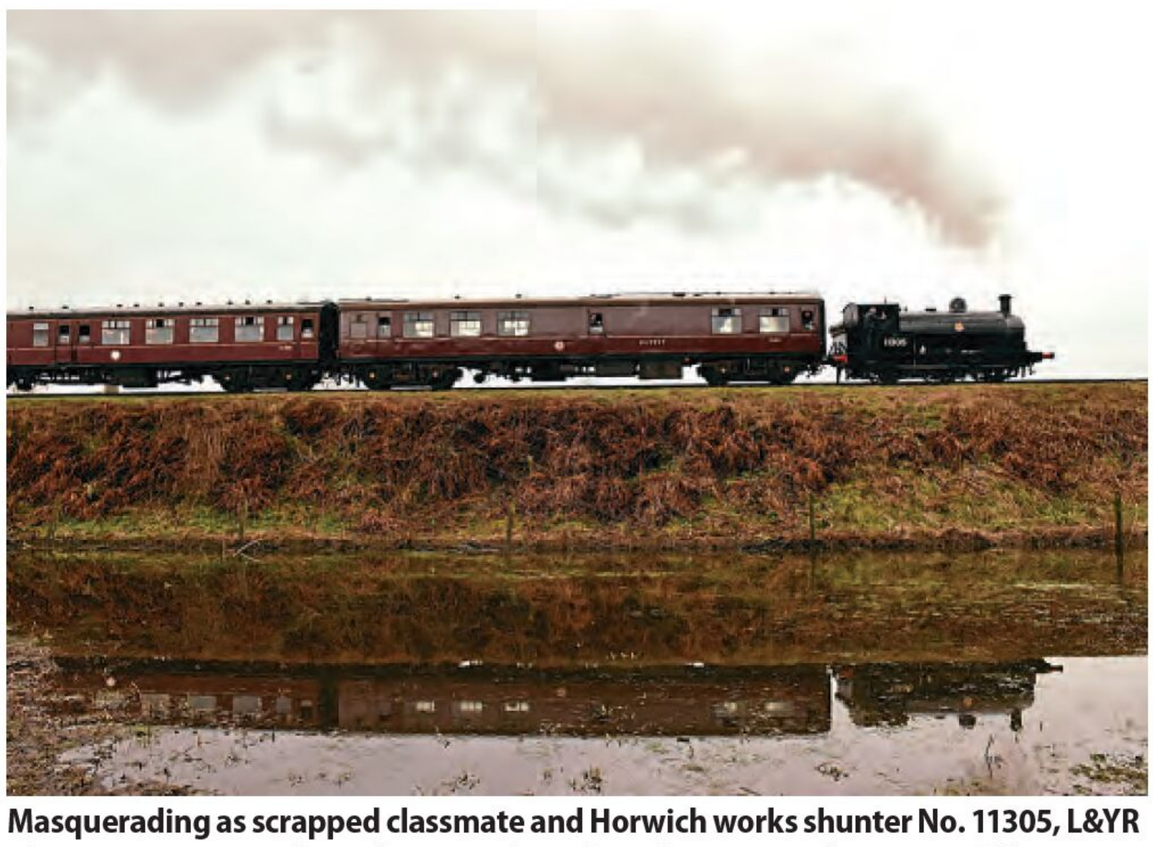
overshadowed.

The two guest stars operated services the following weekend before departing to resume booked main line duties. At the start of April, the ELR welcomed the Great Western Society's GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* for an extended visit.

Overall, more than 4000 visitors travelled from around the glove to visit over the three days, with the ELR reporting that revenue had "exceeded expectations, with a trebling of a positive financial contribution in excess of £65,000 in fares alone."

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said "Heritage events such as Legends of Steam prove the value of heritage railways to the wider public and enthusiasts for their love for the nostalgia and engineering excellence of these iconic locomotives. We rarely get the chance to bring together such giants of steam in one place that can boast almost 250 years of steaming experience. I was very pleased to see many young people enjoying a day out who were far too young to remember when these locomotives were the workhorses in their day. I saw children as young as two and people as old as 80 coming together to enjoy the weekend. With more than 100 staff and volunteers supporting the event each day, the planning and delivery is central to the success of this event where there was a complex timetable to ensure all the locomotives could be seen and ride behind." HR

No. 45690 *Leander* catches the sun as it passes the river Irwell at Townsend Fold shortly after departing Irwell Vale. OWEN HAYWARD



Masquerading as scrapped classmate and Horwich works shunter No. 11305, L&YR Class 23 No. 752 is reflected in a pond resulting from recent heavy rainfall at Burrs Country Park. OWEN HAYWARD

BR 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia* and LMS Jubilee No. 45690 *Leander* storm away from Burrs Country Park on March 17, ensuring that anyone hoping for a lie-in at the adjacent caravan park definitely woke up! OWEN HAYWARD

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

On March 16, BR Standard 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia* crosses Brooksbottom Viaduct on the East Lancashire Railway shortly after having restarted its train from Summerseat station. Having recently completed cylinder repairs and other maintenance, the Pacific locomotive was starring as one of three icons of the steam era as part of the Legends of Steam weekend. On the left is part of the Grade II-listed Brooksbottom cotton spinning mill of late 1870s origin, erected on the site of earlier 1773 and 1812 mill buildings. OWEN HAYWARD

West Coast Railways suspends summertime 'Jacobite' service

By Robin Jones

WEST Coast Railways (WCR) has suspended its 'The Jacobite' daily summer steam service on the West Highland Extension.

The service had established itself as an integral part of the West Highlands tourist economy after running for more than 30 years with an exemption certificate that enables it to operate with Mk.1 hinged-door carriages on the main line, granted by rail regulator the Office of Rail and Road.

Carnforth-based WCR has applied to renew its long-term exemption and a request for a temporary exemption to operate from March while the ORR assesses its longer-term submission.

However, because the ORR has not yet granted an exemption, WCR has suspended the service until further notice.

As reported in issue 315, it lost a High Court bid for a judicial review of the ORR's decision-making process over the safety of doors on its carriages in December.

West Coast Railways' commercial manager James Shuttleworth said: "We are disappointed to have to suspend this service and we are sorry for the inconvenience caused to our customers who have booked trips. We again appeal to the ORR to reconsider our request for a temporary exemption.

"'The Jacobite' service is enjoyed by thousands of customers every year. It boosts the local economies of Mallaig and Fort William and brings an estimated £20 million into the UK's tourism sector.

'Lost value'

"If the ORR does not grant us a further exemption, we believe this could lead to up to £50 million in lost value to both local and national communities.

"We remain committed to working with the ORR to find a long-term solution which safeguards the future of heritage services on the main line."

Passengers with bookings for 'The Jacobite' will be offered a full refund. They can also contact WCR via enquiries@westcoastrailways.net for more details.

WCR owns 63% of the main line heritage rolling stock in the UK and runs more charter trains than any other heritage operator.

In more than 40 years of operation, the operator has never had an incident of serious injury or a fatality relating to a door opening in traffic. It has carried out detailed risk assessments that demonstrate its secondary door locking system, with proper maintenance and monitoring, is sufficiently safe.

Under the Railway Safety Regulations 1999, exemptions for operating hinged-door rolling stock on the main line can be made in exceptional circumstances. Since 2005, heritage rail operators have been granted exemptions so that they can continue to operate on the main line.

'The Jacobite' is crucial to the economic wellbeing of the local communities at Fort William, Mallaig and Glenfinnan. Most passengers stay in local accommodation, with international travellers contributing heavily to the hospitality sector.

In Mallaig, a village of under 700 inhabitants, there are more than 10 restaurants. 'The Jacobite' stops at the town for two hours, providing a steady flow of customers for the community. During peak season, 'The Jacobite' brings in more than 700 passengers a day, across two services.

At Glenfinnan, famous for the landmark viaduct which appears in the Harry Potter films, 'The Jacobite' makes a 30-minute stop. When services first started, this enabled a museum, shop and tearoom to be opened at the station, all which depend largely on 'The Jacobite' passengers making up a large part of their trade.

'Disappointed'

An ORR spokesman said: "All heritage operators were told several years ago that in order to operate after March 31, 2023, they either needed to fit central door locking or obtain an exemption from us. West Coast Railways' application for an exemption failed and it made a claim for judicial review. A temporary exemption was granted to maintain the status quo, enabling WCR to operate while litigation reached a conclusion.

"Despite this, WCR chose to sell tickets when it was far from certain that a new application for an exemption would be granted, either in time for the commencement of services or at all. It submitted an exemption application on March 8, which we are now assessing.

"The ORR is disappointed that WCR appears not to have made sensible contingency plans."

Tornado comeback trip for Settle and Carlisle line

By Robin Jones

NEW-BUILD Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* is to make its first tour following its £1 million overhaul with a 21st Century Steam tour from Leicester over the Settle and Carlisle line on Saturday, June 29.

Through 2022 and 2023, No. 60163 has been in the workshop at Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough and has undergone the world-first fitting to a steam locomotive of European Train Control System (ETCS) technology. This is part of the heritage pathfinder project for the £1.4 billion East Coast Digital Programme.

During the spring, *Tornado* will undertake static and dynamic ETCS testing, key steps in determining the technical and commercial viability of fitting heritage locomotives and trains. As reported, No. 60163 is pencilled in for dynamic testing during night-time possessions on the Cambrian Line.

The A1 is to visit the Nene Valley Railway from May 21-27, as reported in last issue.

Its main line comeback trip from Leicester, 'The Ribblehead Rambler', will be operated by Vintage Trains – the first time it has worked with *Tornado* – and will call at East Midlands Parkway, Chesterfield, Doncaster and Leeds, before heading for Settle and Carlisle.

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust (parent company of 21st Century Steam), Vintage Trains and Tyseley Locomotive Works have a long history: the frames of *Tornado* were assembled there in 1996, VT supported fundraising train 'The Talisman' in 2006, and they have been involved in many other collaborative endeavours since.

Icon meets icon

Steve Davies, chairman of 21st Century Steam and The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, said "*Tornado* has been away from the main line for too long – and what better way to return to operations than with a trip over the Settle and Carlisle railway? An iconic locomotive on an iconic route; an unbeatable combination.

"We are also especially pleased to be working with Vintage Trains for the first time and look forward to fruitful partnership between the two organisations."

Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* heads across Ribblehead Viaduct on the Settle and Carlisle line on September 28, 2019. MANDY GRANT/A1SLT

Tornado will be active throughout the UK in 2024 and into 2025. The regular programme of 'The Aberdonian' tours in Scotland will run from July to September, and there will be further tours announced for the UK. It is planned for this programme of trains to enable passengers from the North East, South East and West Midlands to enjoy a steam-hauled special train headed by *Tornado*.

More details about the train and booking information can be found at www.21stcenturysteam.co.uk. Alternatively, the 21st Century Steam booking office can be reached on 01325 488215 and is open Mondays to Thursdays from 9am-5pm and Fridays 9am to 4pm.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

LMS 'Black Five' No. 44871, heading 'The Whitby Flyer' from King's Cross to Whitby (steam coming on at York) on March 20, passes a sea of daffodils on the embankment approaching Danby between Whitby and Battersby.
MAURICE BURNS

New custodian sought for world's most famous

THE Science Museum Group is now preparing to choose a new custodian for LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*.

On March 6, the group issued an invitation to tender to find the successor to Riley & Son (E) Ltd, with which the previous custodianship agreement ended on December 31.

Once appointed, the custodian will be responsible for operating and maintaining the A3 and working with the National Railway Museum and partners to plan and deliver the locomotive's operational calendar.

It is expected that the contract will begin on June 3. The group is seeking to enter into a new arrangement that will last until January 31, 2032.

Flying Scotsman is currently based at the National Railway Museum in York and will remain in public ownership as part of the group's collection.

NRM director Judith McNicol said: "We are seeking a single supplier to act as custodian for *Flying Scotsman* and to work closely with us to ensure that the 100-year-old locomotive receives the best care possible to preserve it for future generations.

Up close

"We also want to give people around the UK the chance to see the locomotive in person and we will create a public engagement calendar that includes main line excursions, heritage railway visits, and display at the NRM and Locomotion."

Tender responses are being evaluated on both price and quality and scored on a series of criteria including previous experience, technical ability, public engagement, staffing, project management and sustainability. As well as operating and maintaining the locomotive, the custodian will also be responsible for *Flying Scotsman*'s next overhaul – which is due before the main line boiler ticket expires in 2029.

Flying Scotsman will remain in the current configuration and livery, numbered 60103 to reflect as closely as possible its condition at the end of its BR working life in the early 1960s.

However, the tender includes provision for the NRM to convert the locomotive to a single chimney and change the livery, if requested.

It also includes a limit on annual mileage to ensure a balance between operational requirements and conservation.

For further information about the invitation to tender, visit https://in-tendhost.co.uk/sciencemuseumgroup. All queries from potential bidders regarding the tender process must be made via the website.

Remembering *Nigel Gresley's* postwar record

A SPECIAL train is to be run by LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* to mark the 65th anniversary of its postwar speed record.

On May 23, 1959, No. 60007 reached 112mph while descending Stoke Bank on the East Coast Main Line with a full train of passengers returning from an excursion to Doncaster Works.

May 23 will see Saphos Trains' 'Settle & Carlisle Fellsman' start from Crewe, picking up at Chester, Frodsham, Warrington Bank Quay and Wigan North Western, before heading over Shap summit to Carlisle, then returning via the Settle and Carlisle line. Seats are available in Pullman dining and first class. As we closed for press, standard class seats were sold out. To book, visit https://saphostrains.com/

Forty for 40 anniversary tour to Skegness

PATHFINDER Tours is to mark 40 years since a Class 40 hauled a public service to Skegness with a trip on Saturday, July 27.

Since the coming of the railway to the town, Skegness has been a popular seaside destination. From the 1930s, the resort began to see increased numbers of special excursion trains, which lasted until the 1980s. From the 1960s onward, the motive power of choice for these trains was Class 40s, and it was No. 40181 which hauled the last special on September 15, 1984.

This tour will commemorate that last excursion train by featuring No. 40145 (D345).

Starting from Burton-on-Trent behind either a Class 47 or 57 under the title of 'The Jolly Whistler', at Crewe this will be swapped for the Class 40, which will take the proposed route via Sheffield and en route to Skegness.

Passengers will have about three hours there to explore the resort. The return trip is due to follow a different route via Nottingham.

For more details and to book, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk

Two within five: Castle and Bulleid same-day double steam over scenic Settle and Carlisle

By Owen Hayward

ON March 16, a rare chance to see two steam-hauled tours over the Settle to Carlisle line pass in close succession came when Battle of Britain light Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere*, a regular sight there, was preceded by an interloper on the route – Vintage Trains' GWR Castle 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*.

Initially departing Birmingham New Street at 6.55am diesel-hauled, VT's 'Shap Mountaineer' picked up at Wolverhampton, Stafford, Crewe, Warrington Bank Quay and finally Preston, before heading onward to Carnforth, where the Castle displaced the 'Spoon' for the remainder of the journey into the heart of Cumbria for a scheduled three-hour layover at Carlisle, with no diesel attached to the rear of the stock for assistance as is the norm for railtour workings these days.

Meanwhile, a Railway Touring Company 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' originated at Euston with Class 86 electric locomotive No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* working the rake of West Coast Railways Mk. 2 stock (formed of the train operating company's rake of central door locking-fitted carriages) up the West Coast Main Line, picking up at Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe, and finally Preston, before also picking up steam – this time in the guise of *Tangmere* – from Carnforth.

No. 5043 was originally scheduled to arrive at Carlisle at 12.05pm but was delayed at Preston due to an on-board incident, with its 9.26am departure slipping 53 minutes to 10.19am. On an increasingly congested network, there was little scope to make up time, although it arrived in Platform 3 at its destination at 12.50pm, having recovered a modest seven minutes. As a result, *Tangmere* arrived on Platform 1 just four minutes later.

While the Bulleid would depart and follow the circular route over the Settle and Carlisle line at 2.19pm, the Castle and its train were serviced and turned to return south via the same route through Lancaster and down the WCML, departing almost an hour after *Tangmere* at 3.15pm.

Despite the vast difference in departure times, the longer route round the Settle-Carlisle line meant that the 'CME' arrived at Preston just 20 minutes after the Castle had passed through; upon arrival at Carlisle, a Class 47 was attached to the front of No. 5043 for the remainder of the journey to Birmingham.

With the line essentially being a large loop, the Bulleid therefore arrived at Preston from the south and was subsequently detached to return to Carnforth depot. *Les Ross* had moved to the station light engine after detaching from the outward train earlier in the day and following arrival of the return working there was reattached to head the stock back south to the capital.

The homeward journeys for each trip were uneventful and saw both arrive back at their originating points within two minutes of their booked times.

Battle of Britain light Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* heading the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' at Preston on March 16. OWEN HAYWARD

GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* roars past Salterwath with Vintage Trains' 'Shap Mountaineer' on March 16. DAVE WILSON

Charter firms come together on an east coast seaside jaunt to raise cash for railway charity

LOCOMOTIVE Services Group and the Branch Line Society have joined forces to run a charity excursion to Scarborough, raising money for the Railway Benefit Fund.

Founded in 1858, the fund is a benevolent charity to help current, former and retired railway personnel who find themselves in financial difficulties, offering support by way of grants of up to £3000 and financial and debt advice to help those struggling. The charity does not limit itself to just national rail employees; it also supports those who work in the heritage sector.

For the June 5 'Bucket & Spade' tour, LSG is providing its Class 40 D213 *Andania* as motive power and its rake of first class InterCity carriages. The day starts at Crewe with an expected 8.15am departure, followed by pick-ups at Warrington Bank Quay (8.35am) and Manchester Victoria (9.35am).

The service will pass through York at about midday, with a pause to set down passengers wishing to explore the city and the National Railway Museum, before continuing to Scarborough. Following a three-hour seaside break, the return working departs at about 4pm, picking up at York an hour later and then heading back to Crewe.

A statement from LSG said: "We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute towards such a great cause by providing locos, coaching stock, train crew and our outstanding onboard hospitality team for the 'RBF Bucket & Spade' charity charter running.

"All funds raised from the charter will help the Railway Benefit Fund continue to support railway workers, as it has been doing since 1858."

The Branch Line Society is acting as the booking agent for this tour, for which all proceeds will be donated to the fund.

A raffle will take place on board during the trip.

Prices start at £99 per person for non-dining seats, with the maximum fare being £224 per person for dining at a guaranteed table for two. To book, visit railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/news/bucket-and-spade-charity-charter/

Class 20 for Branch Line Society's 'Millbrook Meander'

THE Branch Line Society plans to run a railtour on Sunday, May 26 under the title of 'The Millbrook Meander', which will now feature a Class 20 alongside the original traction.

Starting from Eastleigh behind Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer*, the tour will operate in top-and-tail mode with a Class 66 at the rear and feature Mk.1 coaching stock. However, a Class 20 is also expected to take the leg from Eastleigh to Millbrook in the morning and return from Millbrook to Eastleigh in the afternoon.

From Eastleigh, the tour will pick up at Southampton Airport Parkway and Southampton Central, before heading to Southampton Maritime Freightliner Terminal, Redbridge, Romsey, and then Salisbury for more passengers.

There is then a photographic stop in Gillingham before a reversal at Yeovil Junction and then another reverse move at Yeovil Pen Mill.

Arriving at Dorchester West, passengers will have the option to alight here or continue on to Weymouth, the final destination.

Travellers will have just over two hours in Weymouth before the tour returns home, this time via a slightly different route.

Passengers will be collected from Dorchester South, before continuing on to Poole, Bournemouth, Brockenhurst, Redbridge, and into the Millbrook Freightliner terminal, the second Freightliner terminal highlight of the day. Picking up the Class 20 again, the tour will return to Southampton to set down passengers at both stations, before arriving back at Eastleigh.

Tickets are available in first class non-dining and standard class, with a snack bar being provided on the train. For more details and to book, visit www.branchline.uk

Peak transport to 'Teddy Bear' summer gala

MAIN line tour operator Inter City has announced a trip behind Class 45 'Peak' No. 45118 that will prove an ideal way of travelling for diesel enthusiasts attending the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway's July 25-28 Class 14 anniversary gala.

Departing Bristol Temple Meads at 7am on Saturday, July 27, the 'Peak' will travel over some of the class's former stomping grounds as it heads for Duffield with 'The Diamond Jubilee Express', arriving at about 10.25am, where those looking to attend the diamond jubilee gala for the Class 14 0-6-0DHs can alight for the day, before the excursion continues and terminates at Chepstow 20 minutes later.

It is expected that a direct interchange between the services at Duffield will again be possible. As reported last issue, the EVR is undertaking a track slew along a section that has been closed off by a landslip, preventing its heritage trains from running into Duffield station. Preparatory works were well advanced as this issue went to press, with the project due to be completed before the summer.

The gala will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the introduction of the Class 14 'Teddy Bears' with a line-up of six locomotives planned to appear, bringing the total to just four short of the East Lancashire Railway's 10-locomotive line-up at its half-centenary gala in 2014. Alongside residents D9525 and D9537 *Eric*, organisers have also secured the Kent & East Sussex-based and newly overhauled D9504, the Severn Valley Railway's D9551, Nene Valley's D9529, and finally D9553, which will be travelling from Brechin on the Caledonian Railway.

An intensive timetable will be in operation each day offering ample opportunity for mileage behind all locomotives, including a sextuple-headed afternoon departure.

The 'Peak' will depart Chesterfield on the return journey at 6.30pm, picking up at Duffield at 6.50pm and arriving at Bristol Temple Meads at about 10pm.

Bookings can be made at inter-city.co.uk/journey/diamond-jubilee-express, with tickets for the tour including EVR gala entry and travel. More information about the event can be found at www.e-v-r.com/14s-at-60, including details of sponsorship deals to help the railway cover the high cost of staging the event.

Following last year's successful Twin Peaks joint diesel gala, the EVR and Peak Rail will once again host a joint diesel gala weekend from April 11-13. A heritage bus service will connect the two lines; a joint ticket allows travel aboard this and train services at both venues.

Travel on Western's one-way test run

UK Railtours and Pathfinder Railtours are collaborating on Sunday, April 14 to give customers a tour under the title of 'The One Way Wizzo'.

This tour is designed around a loaded test run of Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion* and will see the locomotive hauling 13 coaches and a dead diesel at the rear.

Departing from Paddington, the tour is planned to head west down the Great Western Main Line, passing Slough and Reading, before turning north at Didcot for Oxford. It is hoped there will be an opportunity for a short photographic stop at Banbury.

Following the short break, D1015 again heads north along the Chiltern Main Line to Leamington Spa, before diverting via Kenilworth to Coventry and on to Birmingham International. Taking the diversionary route at Stechford, the train is planned to continue towards Aston and Tame Bridge Parkway, where passengers can choose to alight.

D1015 is then expected to take the train forward into Bescot Yard, where it will be detached. The train will then be taken back to Birmingham New Street by the supporting locomotive, where the tour terminates.

For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com

Catch *Earl* for visit to Liverpool

VINTAGE Trains is to run an excursion to Liverpool behind GWR Castle 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* on Saturday, June 1.

Leaving from Tyseley, the train is planned to make its way to Birmingham New Street to pick up additional passengers and then take the West Coast Main Line for further pick-ups at Wolverhampton, Stafford, and Crewe.

The tour is expected to arrive in Liverpool just after mid-day and passengers will have four-and-a-half hours to explore the city.

Tickets are available in Pullman class, first class and tourist class. For more details and to book, visit vintagetrains.co.uk

Ancestor of first stationmaster launches historical display at 'Sophia Loren' main line station

By Geoff Courtney

A 27-year-old railway guard led the launch on February 23 of an historical display at a restored main line station where his great great grandfather was the first stationmaster 142 years ago.

Andrew Lamport and his railwayman father Mike were invited to celebrate the launch at Shawford, a station on the London Waterloo to Bournemouth and Portsmouth route south of Winchester that featured Sophia Loren in a 1974 movie and also in a scene in the final episode of the BBC sitcom One Foot in the Grave, starring Richard Wilson as Victor Meldrew.

The station was opened in September 1882 by the LSWR, with Andrew's ancestor Matthew Mathews its first stationmaster, and in addition to being on the Waterloo route, it was also served by GWR trains on the Didcot, Newbury & Southampton Railway. Its goods yard was closed and sold in the 1990s, and although now unstaffed, the station has an hourly service in each direction and handles more than 100,000 passengers a year.

Matthew was born in 1829 and joined the LSWR in 1846 as a porter at its Richmond terminus in London, and after rising through the ranks was by 1859 a passenger guard based at Waterloo. Two years later, on January 28, 1861, he unexpectedly became a hero when riding as the guard on the Down 5.10pm to Portsmouth after it derailed and crashed at Epsom Junction, now Raynes Park. His brake van and other carriages rolled down the embankment in the dark, but Matthew smashed his way out through the guard's roof toplight and climbed up the embankment carrying an emergency flare. He managed to walk back along the track in time to stop a following train, preventing an even greater disaster.

The end is near: Although only just a little over eight years old, BR Standard 5MT No. 73170 looks in a sorry state as it calls at Shawford with a Bournemouth to Bradford train on September 4, 1965. The 4-6-0 has no shedplate, but at the time it was allocated to Eastleigh (70D), from where it was withdrawn the following year. The station was opened in 1882 and is still operational today. Following restoration, an historical display was unveiled on February 23 by train guard Andrew Lamport, a great great-grandson of the station's first stationmaster. TRANSPORT TREASURY/PETER PESCOD

Like father, like son: Retired railwayman Mike Lamport (left) with his son Andrew, who is also a railwayman, at the unveiling of a display on February 23 that features the history of the 142-year-old restored Shawford station behind them, on the Waterloo-Bournemouth and Portsmouth route. Andrew is the great great grandson of the station's first stationmaster. ELEANOR LAMPORT

Medal award

His grateful employers awarded him a medal which he proudly wore for the rest of his railway career, and he was in addition presented with a gold watch chain by a Spanish diplomat after the Up express from Southampton in which he was travelling was stopped by Matthew's fellow crew members in time to prevent it from ploughing into the wreckage. Following his heroism, he was soon appointed district agent at Bishopstoke, later renamed Eastleigh, and in 1882 he became the first stationmaster at Shawford, from where he retired in April 1896, 50 years to the day after launching his railway career. In retirement he moved to Fratton in Portsmouth to live with his brother, who became a leading light in the Portsdown & Horndean Light Railway tramway that opened in 1903.

Matthew died in 1904, and the family continued to serve the LSWR, Southern Railway and BR until 1964, when Harry Mathews retired as a passenger guard at Portsmouth, leaving the Lamport side to continue the family railway tradition now through Mike's son Andrew, a commercial guard with the train operating company South Western Railway, who has also volunteered on the Strathspey and Mid-Norfolk heritage railways.

Andrew's career railwayman father Mike (see also News, page 18), who is aged 76 and started as a BR accounts clerk at Woking in 1964 and retired from National Express in 2008, said: "The restoration of the lovely old Shawford building by the Hampshire Community Rail Partnership is a proud moment for both the Lamport and Mathews families who have between them kept our family railway story alive from the days of railway mania in the 1840s through to today, and hopefully beyond."

Sophia Loren's appearance at the station was in a remake of Brief Encounter, while the One Foot in the Grave episode, which was aired in November 2000 and watched by nearly 13 million viewers, involved Victor Meldrew being killed by a car in a hit-and-run accident while waiting outside the station.

Both productions are featured in the new display, as is the station's history.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The Midland Pullman comprising Class 43 power cars No. 43055 (leading) and 43055 enters Whitby Station with 'The Whitby Jet' on March 9. TONY WINWARD

Rare tracks tour to Pembroke Docks

By Tim Hobman

THE Railway Touring Company is offering a rare opportunity to travel by steam over the branch line from Whitland through Tenby to Pembroke Docks on Sunday, May 19.

Titled 'The Pembroke Coast Express', the tour is expected to be hauled by LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas* and will recall the days of named trains running in the 1950s from Paddington to the Pembrokeshire coast.

Starting from Bristol Temple Meads, the train is scheduled to stop at Newport and Cardiff for further passengers. Continuing along the South Wales Main Line, the tour will pass Bridgend and stop at Port Talbot for the locomotive to take water. At Briton Ferry, the tour will take the Swansea District Line to Llangennech, running by the sea from Llanelli to Carmarthen.

Once the tour reaches Carmarthen, *Bahamas* will leave the train and be replaced by a diesel to continue on to Whitland and the branch line to Pembroke Docks. Passing through Kilgetty and Saundersfoot, the train will stop at Tenby to set down any passengers who wish to spend time in the resort. Passengers leaving the train here will have just over an hour to explore.

Those staying on the train will travel on to Pembroke Docks, where the train will pause for 10 minutes while the steam locomotive is once again attached.

Heading home, No. 45596 is expected to take the train via the same route back to Bristol Temple Meads, setting down passengers on route.

For more details and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net

Blyth and Tyne or Beamish in June

ON Saturday, June 8, UK Railtours will offer customers a tour with four different destination options under the title of 'The Blyth & Tyne or Beamish Open Air Museum'.

Starting from Potters Bar, passengers will be seated in blue and grey Mk.2 carriages and hauled double-headed by a pair of Class 43s, believed to be a first for a railtour.

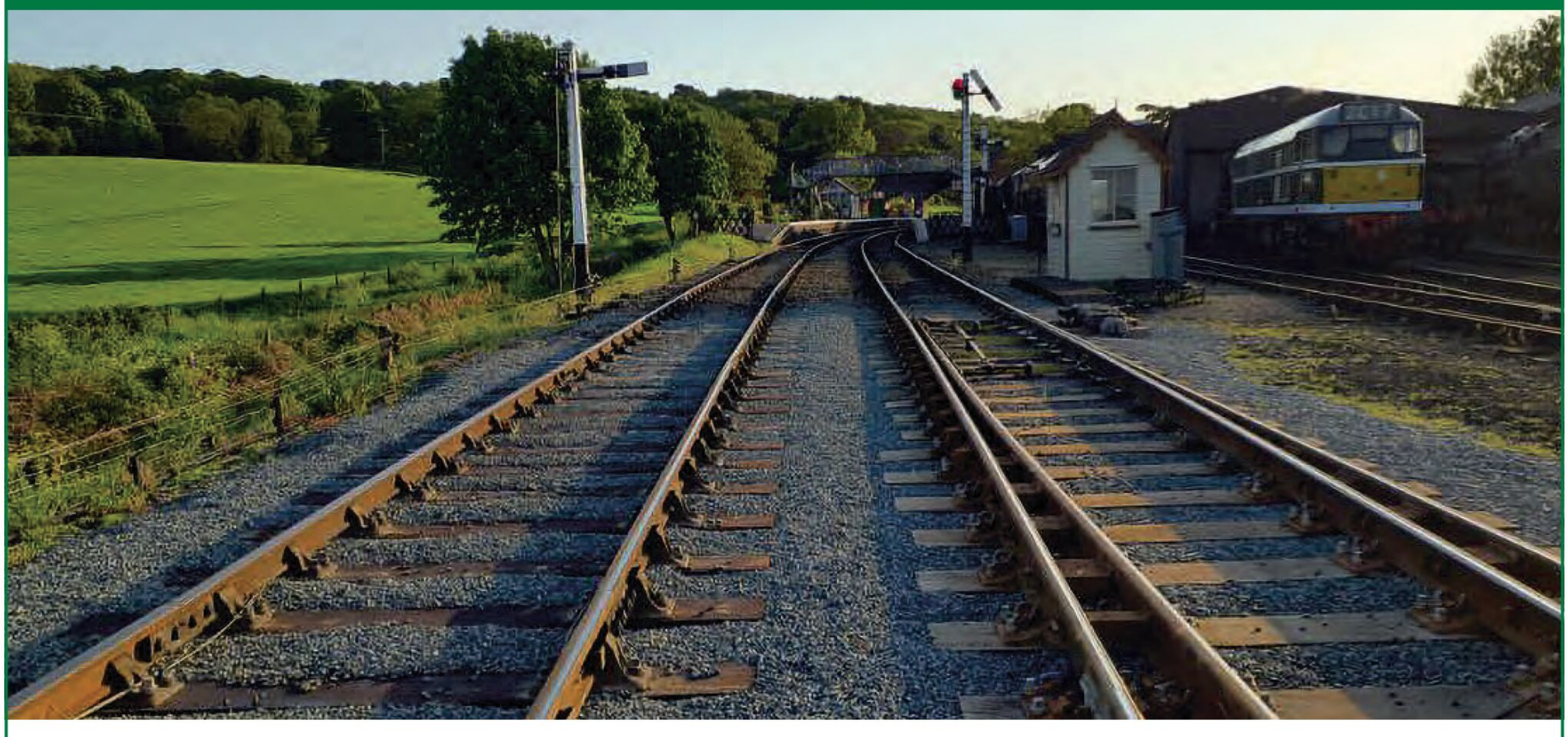
The tour is planned to head up the East Coast Main Line to Durham, where passengers will have the option to alight and explore the city or Beamish Open Air Museum, and Newcastle, or remain on the train for a circular tour of some rare metals.

Leaving Newcastle Central, the plan is to pause briefly in the Heaton Down Goods Loop to service the stock, before heading to Benton Junction, following the Tyne and Wear Metro for a few miles and then heading north along the Blyth and Tyne Line. A three-hour break will commence upon arrival back at Newcastle.

Once everyone is back on board, the return trip is planned for over the North East Coast Line, passing Sunderland and Hartlepool, before rejoining the ECML at Northallerton for a sprint back towards London, but it will not pick up at Durham.

Encompass Environmental

ADVANCED CERTIFICATION UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 9872 Audited RISQS



Specialists in on & off track Vegetation Control | Japanese Knotweed Control | Arborist Services

For more information please call **01379 384200** or visit **www.encompassenvironmental.co.uk**

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

ESTD RAILS 1970
OF SHEFFIELD

FAMILY BUSINESS
FRIENDLY SERVICE

PRE-OWNED & SECOND HAND

WANTED CASH OR EXCHANGE

BUY • SELL • EXCHANGE • ANY GAUGE • ANY AGE

LOCOS - COACHES - WAGONS - TRACK-WORK - CONTROLLERS - ACCESSORIES
DIE-CAST - LORRIES - BUSES - PLANES - SOLDIERS - RAILWAYANA - AND MORE

DECEASED ESTATES - EX SHOP STOCK A SPECIALITY
FAST SERVICE WITH COMPLETE DISCRETION ASSURED

WE VALUE YOUR COLLECTION VERY HIGHLY!

1
CONTACT US
get in touch by email, phone or post with your list of items

2
OUR OFFER
our friendly staff will review your list and make an honest valuation offer

3
PACKAGE
either visit the shop, send us your items, or we can collect larger collections

4
PAYMENT!
fast, secure payment via your choice on confirming of the value offer – easy!

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT IN 4 EASY STEPS

GUARANTEED
TOP PRICES PAID

Ref: HERITAGE24

DON'T DELAY - GET IN TOUCH TODAY!

+44 (0)114 255 1436 secondhand@railsofsheffield.com

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE Stuff to Sell? LINK:

www.railsofsheffield.com

HORNBY magazine MODEL RAILWAY Awards 2023
RETAILER OF THE YEAR!

April

12 'Cornish Riviera Pullman' Day 1
Berwick-upon-Tweed, Penzance.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

13 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 1
London Victoria, Worcester. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

13 'The Lakelander'
Leicester, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Preston (outward).
Loco: TBA. ST

13 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Liverpool Lime Street, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth (outward) to Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

13 'The Harbourmaster'
Rare tracks tour departing Paddington.
Locos: 2x Class 66 TBA. UKRT

14 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 2
Worcester, Lancaster. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

14 'The One Way Wizzo'
Paddington to Birmingham New Street only.
Loco: D1015 *Western Champion*. UKRT & PT

15 'Cornish Riviera Pullman' Day 2
Penzance, Berwick-upon-Tweed.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

15 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 3
Lancaster, Glasgow Central. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

16 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 4
Glasgow Central, Inverness. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

17 'The White Rose'
Hereford, York and return. Steam-hauled from Crewe (outward).
Loco: TBA. ST

17 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 5
Inverness, Kyle of Lochalsh and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

18 'The Cambrian Coast Express'
East Midlands Parkway, Pwllheli and return.
Locos: Class 67, 2x Class 97s TBA. PT

18 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 6
Inverness, Aberdeen, Edinburgh Waverley. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

18 'Settle & Carlisle Pullman'
Wolverhampton, Carlisle and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

19 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 7
Edinburgh Waverley, Liverpool Lime Street. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

20 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Telford Central, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth (outward) to Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

20 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 8
Liverpool Lime Street, Swansea. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

20 Bath and Bristol excursion
Horsham, Bristol Temple Meads and return. Steam-hauled on the outward journey only.
Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

20 'Neasden Nonsense'
Rare tracks tour departing Tonbridge and London Victoria.
DEMU: 1001. UKRT

20 'The Welsh Marches Express'
Birmingham New Street, Hereford and return.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

21 'The Great Britain XVI' Day 9
Swansea, Paddington. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

23 'The Highland Clansman Pullman'
Chester, Aviemore and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

27 Clan Line 50th Anniversary Pullman
London Victoria, Bath and return.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL/UKRT

27 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Darlington, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth (outward) to Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

27 'Bath & Gloucester Steam Express'
Paddington, Gloucester and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBA. RTC

27 'Settle to Carlisle & Blackpool Pullman'
Dundee, Blackpool North and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

May

1 'The Fellsman'
Blackpool North, Carlisle and return.
Loco: TBA. ST

4 'English Riviera Express'
Shrewsbury, Dartmouth and return. Steam-hauled to/from Taunton.
Loco: TBA. ST

4 'The Spring Cornish Explorer'
Dorridge, Penzance and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Locos: TBA. PT

5 'The Royal Duchy'
Bristol Temple Meads, Par and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

8 Chatsworth & Barrow Hill Excursion
Colchester, Barrow Hill and return.
Loco: 46100 *Royal Scot*. SD

9 'The Jurassic Crompton'
Eastleigh, Waterloo and Swanage only.
Locos: 33012 *Lt. Jenny Lewis RN*, Class 69 TBC. BLS

10 'The Great Western' Day 1
Birmingham Snow Hill, Plymouth.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

11 Chester excursion
Euston, Chester and return. Steam-hauled outward only.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

11 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: No. 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

11 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Carnforth (outward) to Preston (return).
Locos: Steam: TBA. Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

11 'The Great Western' Day 2
Plymouth, Paddington, Birmingham Snow Hill. Diesel-hauled from Paddington.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

11 'Tyne Valley Pullman'
St Albans City, Carlisle and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

Class 86 electric locomotive No. 86259 is reflected in a post-downpour puddle at Preston on March 16 while it awaits arrival of No. 34067 *Tangmere* with a 'Settle & Carlisle' special. The 'can' would go on to work the trip back south to Euston, while the Bulleid detached and returned to Carnforth depot. OWEN HAYWARD

12 'The Return of the Jurassic Crompton'
Swanage, London Waterloo and Eastleigh only.
Locos: 33012 *Lt. Jenny Lewis RN*, Class 69 TBC. BLS

14 'The Welsh Marches Express'
Coventry, Shrewsbury and return. Steam-hauled to/from Bristol.
Loco: TBA. ST

16 Chatsworth & Barrow Hill Excursion
London Victoria, Barrow Hill and return. Diesel-hauled outward.
Loco: 46100 *Royal Scot*. SD

16 'The Cambrian Coast Express'
Cardiff Central, Pwllheli and return.
Locos: Class 67, 2x Class 97s TBA. PT

18 'The Edinburgh Flyer'
York, Edinburgh Waverly and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

18 'The Lakelander'
Nottingham, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Preston and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

18 'Exmoor Coast Pullman'
Whitchurch, Minehead and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST.

19 'The Pembroke Coast Express'
Bristol Temple Meads, Tenby, Pembroke Dock and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

23 'The Settle & Carlisle Fellsman'
Crewe, Carlisle and return.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

25 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Darlington, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

25 'The Mancunian'
Manchester Piccadilly, Holyhead and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

25 'The Hanson Hanse'
Eastleigh, Kings Lynn and return.
Locos: 50008 *Thunderer* + Class 20 TBC. BLS

25 'Blackpool Pullman'
Ayr, Blackpool North and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

26 'The Millbrook Meander'
Eastleigh, Weymouth and return.
Locos: 50008 *Thunderer* + Class 66 TBC. BLS

28 Norwich excursion
Windsor & Eaton, Norwich and return.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

28 'Ben Nevis & Lochaber Pullman'
Morpeth, Fort William and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

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

SWANAGE VICTORIAN WEEKEND
A 'BARGAIN-PRICED' SUCCESS

With the return to service of LSWR T3 4-4-0 last October in its stunning pre-Grouping livery, many hoped it would not be long before No. 563 would be in the company of other such schemes. On the weekend of March 23-25, the Swanage Railway delivered with two locomotives of 1890s vintage running together, reports **Owen Hayward.**

Billed as a Victorian weekend, No. 563 was joined by SECR O1 0-6-0 No. 65 making a rare visit – only its third this century – from its the Bluebell Railway home.

While the T3 was built in 1893 at Nine Elms, No. 65 followed three years later in 1896 as a product of Ashford Works, outshopped originally as an O class by the Southern Eastern Railway and of which it is the only surviving example of a locomotive from that company. In 1908 it received a rebuild into its current O1 guise which many describe as outwardly similar to the SECR C class.

No. 65 was saved for preservation in 1963 by enthusiast Esmond Lewis-Evans, who kept it as the Ashford Steam Centre until that closed, when it was moved into private storage. Following a visit by the owner to the Bluebell to inspect its facilities in 1996, No. 65 moved to Sheffield Park and returned to steam in time for the centenary of the SECR in 1999.

Stage fame

While No. 65 made it onto the books of BR, No. 563 was withdrawn under Southern Railway ownership in 1945. After a period in store, it was sent for display at the National Railway Museum in York in 1975 and remained until there 2010, when it was moved to the Locomotion museum in Shildon. It starred in theatre adaptations of the classic Edith Nesbitt novel The Railway Children both in Toronto, Canada (2011) and at King's Cross (2015), with profits from the London staging vastly offsetting a £14,000 loss from its oversees venture.

In March 2017, ownership transferred to the Swanage Railway, which sent it to Bill Parker's Flour Mill Workshops at Bream in the Forest of Dean ahead of an assessment for possible restoration. By May 2019, work had been approved and a return to steam for the Victorian-era workhorse, which began with staggered and specific appeals to help raise the required funds. In July 2023 it made its first movements under its own steam in 75 years before returning to the Purbeck Isles for running-in, pulling its first passenger trains on October 7, as highlighted in issue 312.

The March 23-25 event was a chance to celebrate that locomotive's return to steam in the company of another Victorian era locomotive. The pair, each in ornate pre-Grouping liveries, looked resplendent working their way through the Dorset countryside, double-heading the first departure from Swanage each morning.

In one of the definitive classic views of the Southern Railway portfolio, SECR O1 No. 65 and LSWR T3 No. 563 head from Corfe Castle to Swanage on March 23. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Visiting O1 No. 65 leads T3 No. 563 past Corfe Castle on March 22. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Several volunteers and visitors took the opportunity to don Victorian clothing help set the scene, including re-enactors from Nothe Fort Garrison in Weymouth on the Saturday in period military attire, who visited stations and travelled on the train.

Late Southern counterparts

With no restored Victorian era stock on the railway, services had to rely on the use of Mk. 1 carriages. It was also hard to overlook the less-than-Victorian SR U and West Country locomotives also in service, but which perhaps offered a contrasting view of motive power from the opposite end of the history of Southern Railways. Rebuilt Bulleid light Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone* entered service as SR No. 21C128 in 1946, having been built at Brighton Works, while U mogul No. 31806 began life as K class 2-6-4T, outshopped by the same works but 20 years prior, before a rebuild into the 2-6-0 arrangement in 1928 following an accident at Sevenoaks. Both currently carry appropriate BR liveries for their conditions.

T3 No. 563 and O1 No. 65 arrive at Corfe Castle station on March 22. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

SECR No. 65 double-heads LSWR 563 past Quarrs Farm campsite with the first departure from Swanage on March 24. OWEN HAYWARD

The railway's telecoms volunteer, Graham Holliday, in Victorian attire greets T3 No. 563 at Swanage station on March 23. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Norden station porter Jo Guess greets SECR O1 No. on March 24. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Contrasting eras: SECR O1 No. 65 crosses Corfe Viaduct hauling a Class 117 DMU that was replacing a failed set of Mk.1 carriages. OWEN HAYWARD

O1 No.65 emerges from below the mineral line pass-over during a run-round at Norden. OWEN HAYWARD

U 2-6-0 No. 31806 and West Country light Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone* pass Corfe Castle on March 22. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Nos. 65 and 31806 double-head through Woodyhyde, bound for Norden, on March 24. OWEN HAYWARD

Misfortune on Friday, March 23 saw one of the brake coaches of the three carriage sets failed during the day, which ultimately led to a three-coach rake being withdrawn from service. In order to deliver the advertised service, this was instead replaced by the line's Class 117 DMU which ran as hauled stock throughout the weekend, primarily behind the visiting SECR locomotive on semi-fast services that ran non-stop through Harmans Cross, although with No. 65 double-heading the first and last departures each day, and a morning and evening departure worked by *Eddystone*.

Although it is increasingly common for advanced online ticket bookings to offer a discount (with adult tickets priced at £35 against an on-the-day fare of £40), in the days leading up to the gala the railway ran a flash sale, with tickets reduced to £20 for 24 hours, starting in the evening of March 17, followed by a second 24-hour sale to celebrate International Day of Happiness on March 20, which also knocked 50% off of the advertised prices.

Splendid success

Swanage Railway Company chairman Gavin Johns, who is also a Swanage Railway Trust director and volunteer signalman, said: "Almost 1900 passengers were carried during our splendid three-day Victorian Weekend, and I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to plan and stage the event, as well as our passengers for their support, which was much appreciated.

"There was a real buzz during the weekend, and the sight of the Bluebell Railway's O1 No. 65 operating with the Swanage Railway Trust's newly-restored T3 No. 563 through the Isle of Purbeck was truly wonderful.

"I would also like to thank the Bluebell Railway for allowing the Swanage Railway to host its splendid O1, as well as the dedicated re-enactors from the Nothe Fort Garrison, in Weymouth, and the New Hardy Players, from Dorchester, who gave the Saturday of the weekend extra Victorian atmosphere.

"The three days were a splendid tribute to

SECR O1 No. 65 and LSWR T3 No. 563 double head past the majestic ruins of 11th-century Corfe Castle on March 22. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

the enterprising Victorian era, which gave rise to the building of the Swanage Railway in the mid-1880s."

Immediately following the gala, the railway went almost entirely cashless from Monday, March 25 as part of a trial to reduce costs on cash handling and banking, with an annual saving estimated to be in the region of five figures that can now be reinvested elsewhere on the line.

A statement issued by the railway said: "Cash is very expensive to manage and is a declining source of income for the railway. Cashless payments rose during the pandemic and have remained at a high level. At the current time, more than 90% of our income is derived from electronic and card payments.

"With the improvements of wi-fi connections across the railway, we can now take electronic payments on the train, and this includes TTI and revenue protection collections.

"We have evaluated that by removing cash, the net benefit to the railway is that we can save more than £10,000 per year. This is an example where we can refocus our resources on better priorities and reflect the spending trends of our passengers.

"As a reminder, this is a trial. We can't get it right all the time, but we do hope that this reassures you that this decision, like everything we decide, is coming from a good place and is designed to benefit our railway.

"Heritage railways that adapt and transform and reflect the demands of their customers are the ones that will survive. This is one small example of change that will ensure we are going to be one of the survivors! We will still be able to accept cash collections for trust fundraising at our stations and around the railway as well as our museums."

Survival appeal

Meanwhile, the Swanage Railway's £450,000 Save Your Railway appeal, launched last October (as reported in issue 313), currently stands at £125,000.

The appeal is being led by dedicated volunteer Ben Ford, who is also a trust director. He said: "Without financial aid to help plug the gap created by rising costs, the Swanage Railway is facing the possibility of having to close – having been rebuilt from nothing since 1976 after BR closed and lifted most of the line in 1972.

"While the Swanage Railway is doing all it can to reduce costs, it is vital that people donate to our Save Your Railway Appeal to ensure the railway survives this challenging time so it can be enjoyed by future generations.

"We are immensely grateful to those people who have very generously donated."

Ben, who is also a volunteer leader with the Swanage Railway's Sygnets youth group, a train guard and a locomotive cleaner, added: "Success with our appeal provides essential support to the Swanage Railway and enables planned maintenance to be brought forward to next year, 2025." HR

➜ *Additional reporting by Robin Jones.*

Support for survival

➜ The public can donate to the appeal at **www.swanagerailwaytrust.org/giving**, where they can make a payment online, by standing order, and by other methods.

Re-enactors from Nothe Fort garrison welcome the arrival of T3 No. 563. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

The New Hardy Players – re-enactors based in Dorchester who promote the work of late Victorian author and poet Thomas Hardy, who lived in the county town of Dorchester – travelled on the trains on the Saturday performing some of Hardy's poetry and received applause at the end of their readings. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Intensive timetable fails to dent the market

GREAT Central's live online auction on March 2, the first of three flagship railwayana sales held on Saturdays within three weeks, provided comfort to those who felt that such an intensive timetable would dent the resilience of the market.

Many within the railwayana movement – be they vendors, buyers, interested spectators, and even some of the auction houses themselves – felt uncomfortable that the volume of items coming up for sale would impact on demand, and thus prices, especially for such high-end memorabilia as nameplates, other locomotive hardware, and station totem signs.

But come the evening of March 2, as the results of Great Central's sale were digested, a sense of calm surely descended on collectors throughout the land – except perhaps those who were waiting to pounce on what they hoped would be a bargain. Yes, there was no sign of a return to the heady days of yore, when prices reached giddy and unsustainable heights, but two five-figure realisations, two more within a whisker of that landmark, and about another dozen £5000 or more provided confirmation that the market was robust and healthy.

The five-figure achievers were *Cleeve Abbey* from GWR Castle class No. 5091 that went for £15,000 and *The Braes of Derwent* from LNER D49 'Hunt' No. 62742 that went to a new home for £12,000, while close to the £10k barrier came *Merchant Taylors* from SR Schools class No. 30910 and *Clive of India* from BR Standard 'Brit' No. 70040, selling for £9200 and £9000 respectively.

Up next

Nestling behind were *Lord Rodney* from SR Lord Nelson class No. 30863 (£8200), *Cardigan Castle* from GWR No. 4087 (£7600), whose smokebox numberplate followed immediately after for £900, and *Merrie Carlisle* (LNWR Precedent No. 860/LMS No. 5050), fetching £7000.

Three closely-matched plates were next, comprising *Baltic* from another LNWR locomotive, Claughton No. 2445/LMS No. 5948, *Heatherden Hall,* that sold with its cabside numberplate as a single lot (GWR No. 6946), and *Princess Helena* from another GWR engine, Star class No. 4051, a trio that went for £6600, £6400, and £6000 respectively.

Mike Soden and fellow auctioneer Martin Quartermain weren't finished with main line plates, as five more found themselves in new collections, including *Sir Balan* and its smokebox numberplate from King Arthur No. 30769 (£5500). Close on its heels was classmate No. 30785, the *Sir Mador de la Porte* plate of which went for £5000, a price matched by *Odney Manor* from GWR No. 7828, immediately followed by its cabside numberplate for £1000 and smokebox plate for £500. The remaining two nameplates were also GWR representatives, *Nanhoran Hall* (No. 4947; £4800), and *Walton Grange* (No. 6849; £3800), leaving *Welbeck Abbey* from LNER B17 No. 61619 as the only category non-seller under the hammer, although it did sell after full-time for £4000.

Steam survivor

Industrial nameplate *Juno* and its worksplate deserve a mention for giving the lower-priced main line contenders a run for their money by selling for £3400. They were from an 0-6-0ST built by Hunslet Engine Co in April 1958 (works No. 3850) for Stewarts & Lloyds Minerals' ironstone quarry operations. It was saved for preservation on withdrawal a decade later and is currently on display at Locomotion Shildon.

Other headliners in the locomotive categories were the smokebox numberplate from SR Battle of Britain No. 34084 *253 Squadron* (£2800), GWR cabsides from Star class No. 4013 *Knight of St. Patrick* (£2500) and No. 5041 *Tiverton Castle* (£2400), and, from the heritage modern traction sector, a 1968 English Electric worksplate from preserved Class 50 D429/50029 *Renown* which went for £3600, some way ahead of the top steam worksplate, an LNER 1928 example from B17 class No. 61601 *Holkham* (£1800).

Still with steam, a bid of £3400 secured a 'Bournemouth Belle' headboard in the style designed to be carried by rebuilt Merchant Navy Pacifics. I recorded this Pullman express at Basingstoke on three occasions: on September 9, 1959, headed by No 35025 *Brocklebank Line* on the Up working; three days later by No. 35030 *Elder Dumpster Lines* in charge of the Down train; and on September 6, 1960, when No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* was also on the Down working.

Onto totems and to BR(M) Knotty Ash, from a former Cheshire Lines Committee station in the eastern suburbs suburbs of Liverpool, which sold for £7000. Such a realisation would doubtless have tickled the late comedian Ken Dodd, who lived throughout his 90 years in the Knotty Ash former farmhouse in which he was born and who frequently mentioned the location in his act. Others in the totem selection included BR(S) Hellingly (£6200) and BR(NE) Saltburn (£5000), while the leading SR target at £3400 was Hailsham.

And talking of Saltburn, a 'Way out, Zetland Hotel straight ahead' direction sign from this North Eastern Region station had got the auction off to a good as the first lot when it sold for £4800, six times its top estimate. Another enamel of note was a BR(W) 'Wash and brush up' doorplate that went for £2200.

Signalling and artwork

Signalling peaked at £3800 for a North London Railway Tyers block instrument that carried a New Inn Yard engraved brass plate, a location just outside Broad Street, while GER signalbox nameboard Six Mile Bottom went under the hammer for £2000.

Two final category winners of note were a painting by Philip Hawkins, a fellow of the Guild of Railway Artists, of No. 4092 *Dunraven Castle* arriving at Birmingham Snow Hill with a Wolverhampton-Paddington express while No. 7912 *Little Linford Hall* waits on the middle road (£1700), and an LSWR 12in dial ex-Barnstaple Junction signalbox clock that fetched £1400.

Prices in the live online sale exclude buyer's premium of 15% (VAT).

"Fantastic – 15 nameplates sold under the hammer and the final one after the auction ended," said Mike Soden. "One of the reasons was that there was wide variety across the board, and interestingly, some went to collectors who were new to us."

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

King, Earl, steam veteran and totem lead GWRA

FOUR items of memorabilia hurdled the £10,000 barrier in GW Railwayana's auction on March 16, led unsurprisingly by two nameplates, which were followed by a 168-year-old steam locomotive worksplate and a BR(W) station totem sign.

The nameplates were both from GWR engines, the first of which, *King George VI* from No. 6028, went for £16,000 after close of play, closely shadowed at £15,500 by *Earl Baldwin* from GWR Castle class No. 5063.

In third place with a realisation of £12,000 was a Hawthorns & Co of Leith worksplate (works No. 138) from an 0-4-0PT built in 1856 for an Ayrshire ironworks and withdrawn in 1921. A fourth was a totem from the GWR terminus of Paddington, realising £10,500.

A GWR nameplate that appropriately led the chasing pack behind the Paddington totem was *Builth Castle* from No. 4086 (£8200), whose cabside numberplate and smokebox sold immediately after for £3700 and £800 respectively, at which point the LNER chipped in with *The Berkeley* from D49 No. 62754 (£7600). Then it was back to the GWR with a duo comprising another Castle class 4-6-0, *Goodrich Castle* from No. 5014 (£7200), and *Knight of the Bath* (Star class No. 4014 – £6500), followed by an intrusion from the Southern Railway with *Sir Sagramore* from King Arthur No. 30771 (£5900).

GWR line-up

Not to be outsmarted, the GWR returned to the nameplate fray, represented by no fewer than seven further locomotives: classmates *Hardwick Grange* from No. 6818 and *Tudor Grange* from No. 6857 (£5200 and £5100 respectively); *Pioneer* from 0-6-0T No. 2197 (£4000); *Butleigh Court* from Saint No. 2934 (£3700); *Grotrian Hall* from No. 5926 (£3200), followed by its smokebox (£600); *Melmerby Hall* from No. 6982 (£3000), followed by its cabside (£1200); and *Brocket Hall* from No. 5987 (£2700), also followed by its cabside (£900).

A GWR combined nameplate, number and worksplate from Bulldog No. 3321 *Brasenose* failed to sell under the hammer but went at full-time for £7500, leaving *King Edward VII* from GCR No. 259/LNER C5 class 4-4-2 No. 5259 as the only main line nameplate without a buyer.

Three LNER flamecut cabside nameplates from north of the border which did find new homes were *Dumbiedykes* from D30 No. 62427 (£2000), *Luckie Mucklebackit* from Class D11 No. 62678 (£1300), and *Lord James of Douglas* from another D11, No. 62687 (£550).

Sold for charity

Heritage modern traction played its part too, not least with a collection of nameplates from recently-withdrawn HST125 power cars being sold for charity by Great Western Railway. These included four names, albeit not the actual plates, carried by Castle class 4-6-0 locomotives built by the original GWR: *Nunney Castle* from power car No. 43009, the name previously carried by No. 5029 (£5100); *Raglan Castle* from power car No. 43171, ex-No. 5008 (£4300); *Dunster Castle* from power car No. 43122, ex-No. 4093 (£4100); and *Chepstow Castle* from power car No. 43170, ex-No. 4077 (£4000).

From the same collection came another former steam name, *Restormel Castle* from Class 57 Co-Co diesel No. 57602, which started life in 1965 as Class 47 D1818 and is still in service with the modern-day Great Western Railway (£3100). This name was originally carried by No. 5010.

Diesel nameplates that were not part of collection but also sold included *Defiance* from preserved 1968-built Class 50 D449/50049 (£3200) and *Resolve* from Class 47 D1753/47769 (£2400). The Newcastle depot of Heaton (52B in steam days) is also worthy of mention, as this was the name given by BR to another HST power car, No. 43095, which went under the hammer for £2700, while a 'Motive Power Department' enamel doorplate from the same depot sold for £3000.

To complete the nameplate round-up, it was back to steam and two plates from neighbouring light railways that are now very much part of the preservation era. First was *Tenterden* from Rother Valley Railway 2-4-0T No. 1, built by Hawthorn Leslie in 1899 and withdrawn in 1936 (£5700), and *Bodiam* from a preserved 1872-built LBSCR Class A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T that was sold to the Kent & East Sussex Railway in 1901, was withdrawn by BR as No. 32670 in November 1963, and is now part of the KESR heritage line stocklist as No. 70 *Poplar* (£5600).

In addition to the aforementioned Paddington totem, others in this category included a tightly-knit group comprising BR(NE) Whitby Town (£7400), BR(W) Penzance (£7300), BR(NE) Berwick-upon-Tweed (£7200), and BR(E) King's Cross and BR(M) Lancaster Castle, each at £7000. Still with the enamels and the London Midland Region, direction signs to the stations of Kentish Town West and Primrose Hill went under the hammer for £3700 and £2800.

The leading SR target sign was Ryde Esplanade (£2300), and a London Underground bullseye platform sign from Marylebone sold for £2600 to complement nicely the Paddington and King's Cross totems and also another from a London terminus, BR(S) Waterloo (£5500).

Signalling was topped at £4300 for a GWR Dawlish Warren signalbox cast iron nameboard, and I will give a shout-out to a 'Cambrian Coast Express' headboard and a BR Standard class steam locomotive tri-note chime whistle that each made £1600.

'Strong' show

The two-day sale continued on March 17, when just over 400 lots of general railwayana went under the hammer, the highest realisation being £3400 for a painting by Don Breckon of Dulverton station on the Exe Valley Line with trains departing to Taunton, Barnstaple and Tiverton.

Behind this work of art came the leading clock, an LBSCR regulator railway clock dating from 1863 (£2700), while the highest-priced poster at £2200 was 'Scotland for your holidays' by Terence Cuneo, illustrating A4 Pacific No. 60031 *Golden Plover* crossing the Forth Bridge. Prices on both days exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

As he pondered the events of the two days, auctioneer Simon Turner said: "Totems were really strong, shedplates okay, worksplates not so much. We had 450 different buyers, and a lot of long-standing collectors are still in the market."

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **April 12**
  Lacy Scott & Knight *(railwayana and model trains)*
- **Ends April 13**
  Great Northern Railwayana
- **April 13**
  Thirsk Railwayana
- **April 14-30**
  Paperchase
- **April 24**
  Vectis *(model trains)*

It's a golden auction for Jubilee nameplates

THE Jubilee nameplate bandwagon, for so long a central part of the railwayana auction scene, continued rolling on in Talisman's live saleroom sale at Newark on March 23, thanks to *Newfoundland* from No. 45573 selling for the day's leading realisation of £10,000 and *Camperdown* from No. 45680 achieving the third highest price of £6100.

Nameplate *Glenalmond*, from Great Central Railway Class 1A 4-6-0 No. 4/LNER Class B8 No. 5004, prevented an LMS 1-2 by going under the hammer for £7600, while the final two steam main line plates, *Sir Bedivere* from SR King Arthur No. 30457 and *Hindford Grange* (GWR No. 6875), fetched £3800 and £3000 respectively. Meanwhile, LNER A3 No. 60100 *Spearmint* joined the action when its smokebox numberplate became a member of the £5+ class by selling for £5200. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Further details of the auction, including prices achieved by a Peppercorn A1 class worksplate, a Class EM1 electric locomotive worksplate, an HST125 nameplate, and another good day for station totem signs, will be published in next month's railwayana column.

Railway slides add splash of colour to auction

EUROPEAN and Asian steam and heritage modern traction were at the heart of an auction held by railway slides, negatives and prints specialist JustaClickAgo on February 19-25, with the highest realisation of £1950 being achieved by 550 colour slides of working steam, diesel, and electric locomotives at a number of locations in East and West Germany between 1964 and 1992.

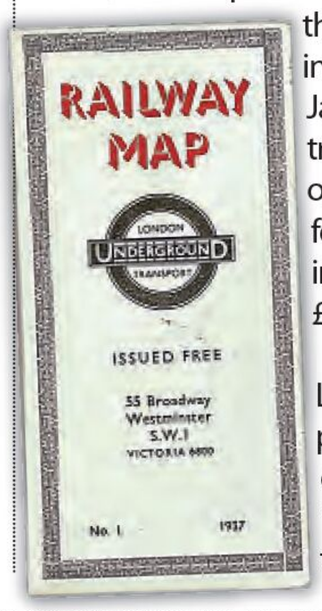
From the same collection came 430 colour slides that included steam in India and Yugoslavia and diesel and electric traction in Hungary and Italy taken from 1969 to 2006, which went under the hammer for £520.

Between these two lots at £620 were 350 colour slides of UK railway infrastructure in the 1980s that included signals, stations and viaducts. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 18%.

➜ An HO-gauge model of South African Railways' Class GMAM Beyer-Garratt 4-8-2+2-8-4 No. 4121 was the top-seller in a Vectis auction on February 29 with a realisation of £660, with second place going to a Hornby OO-gauge live steam A3 No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* that sold for £540. Both prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

Collectors go Underground

EARLY Harry Beck pocket diagrammatic maps of the London Underground system put on a strong show in a Transport Auctions of London live online sale on February 24, led by a 1933 first edition that went for £1700, followed by a similar example at £1100, and a third at £950, while a special tourists' edition of the map produced in 1937 for the Japanese shop and travel agency Sakai of Denmark Street, featuring directions in Japanese, sold for £1000.



A Central London Railway pocket map, dating from circa 1908 that was the standard Underground map of the time, went for £1300, and from half a century later, a large collection of Underground pocket maps dating from 1961 onwards fetched £750. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

As reported in last month's column, the GWR made its mark in the sale when a collection of silverplate and china tableware, including some marked Tregenna Castle Hotel, sold in five lots for a total of £5800.

TAL director Michael Wickham said: "The overall result of the auction was much higher than predicted, and I was pleasantly astonished at the demand for the railway tableware."

From main line to coastal branch in nameplate sector

TWO main line locomotive nameplates and another from an engine that operated on a short branch line in the north-east were among the railwayana which went under the hammer at a collectors' auction held by Anderson & Garland of Newcastle on February 29.

The top realisation was £10,000 for *Bishop's Castle* and its matching cabside numberplate, from GWR No. 5064, which emerged from Swindon Works in June 1937 as *Tretower Castle* but was renamed three months later. The 4-6-0 was withdrawn from Gloucester Horton Road (85B) in September 1962, coincidently exactly the same month as No. 5094, which was given the displaced *Tretower Castle* name when built in June 1939.

Behind this GWR representative at £2200 was *Sir Edward Fraser*, carried by Great Central Railway Class 11E No. 432, which was outshopped by Gorton Works in October 1913 and named after a GCR director and former Sheriff and Mayor of Nottingham. Renumbered 5432 by the LNER and reclassified D10, the 4-4-0 was the last of the 10-strong class to be withdrawn, from Northwich (9G) in October 1955 when numbered 62653.

Third up with a realisation of £1500 came *Bamburgh* from an 0-6-0ST built by Manning Wardle of Leeds in 1898 and bought on hire purchase by the North Sunderland Railway, which opened in December that year, and ran from the ECML station of Chathill to Seahouses on the north Northumberland coast. Management of the four-mile branch line was taken over by the LNER in 1939, at which time *Bamburgh* was still operational there, while closure by BR came in October 1951.

Another four-figure realisation was £1200 for a 5in gauge live steam model of GWR 0-4-2T No. 1451.

Prices exclude buyer's premium of 25% (+ VAT).

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Hargreaves Steam Railway Coal

Hargreaves will have available during 2024 for the UK Heritage Steam Market, a comprehensive range of different Steaming Coals in various sizes to suit all steam loco's.

We also have available 2 grades of Steaming Ovoids.

To discuss and secure your 2024 Steaming Coal needs simply contact us by

Tel Sue McNaught on 07970 147205

Email steamcoal@hsgplc.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY ASSOCIATION COMMERCIAL PARTNER

LOOKING FOR DVDs, CDs AND BOOKS THAT YOU CAN'T FIND ON THE HIGH STREET THESE DAYS?

1ST TAKE

PERSONAL SHOPPER SERVICE

Cover image of the 1st Take DVD 'Branch Lines of Hampshire'

☎ 01454 321614

Since 1st Take's Personal Shopper Service was launched twelve years ago, we have taken great pleasure in tracking down countless **rare DVDs, CDs and Books on Railways and many other subjects** for our valued customers. Many people tell us that they would not know where to start without our bespoke service, and we pride ourselves on handling all enquiries courteously - and with no obligation to order.

IF IT'S OUT THERE - WE CAN FIND IT FOR YOU!

It's so simple...

All you need to do is call us on **01454 321614,** drop us a line (address below) or email us at **sales@1st-take.com** and let us know what you would like us to find for you. To help us acquire the correct item, please give us as much information as possible. Don't worry if you don't have all the details; we relish a challenge and we are sure that if it is out there we can find it for you!

For each **DVD, CD or Book** please supply the title or a description, and the approximate date it was published. Even if it is no longer manufactured, we will do our best to find it for you.

As well as Railway titles, we will also be pleased to source **DVDs featuring TV Programmes and Movies, Music CDs, Audio Book CDs, Radio Show CDs, Books of any description - and even old Maps!** The title of each item you need would be perfect, but if not just let us know names of anyone who features in it or is connected to it (for example, a lead actor, the director, the author or artist). We can also source items by subject matter, for example DVDs or Books about a certain region of Britain or any specific subject. You can ask us to find anything you like – from the rarest Book published 100 years ago to a brand new Movie you have just seen advertised!

Once we have sourced what you are looking for, and if you decide to go ahead, we will ask for payment only at that stage, and then order it immediately. Your order will be delivered to your door, via our **Personal Shopper Service** which we believe to be unique in Britain...we certainly don't know of another one like it!

Put us to the test, and we'll help you find that Documentary, Movie, TV Show, CD or Book you've always wanted to enjoy again and again!

Please send all post enquiries to:

Personal Shopper Service, 1st Take, PO Box 1840, Yate, Bristol BS37 4WB

1ST TAKE

EYES ON THE PRIZE:

TALYLLYN'S VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The year 2026 will mark 75 years since a small group of dedicated enthusiasts ran the very first volunteer-driven railway services that marked the start of preservation. While the scene has changed much since then, those at the Talyllyn Railway knows now is the time to get the railway fit to survive the next three quarters of a century, as **Owen Hayward** reports in words and pictures.

If you were to approach governing bodies these days with the proposal of running a railway with a public service using nothing but enthusiastic volunteers, you would probably be laughed out of the office. Back in 1950, when the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society was founded to do just that on a narrow gauge line in Wales, there were probably still doubters – but something about the idea captured the imagination of many. If those first days after May 14, 1951, when the society ran its first public trains, had failed, our preservation scene could have been vastly different to what we have now.

For nearly 75 years, the Talyllyn Railway has continued to pioneer the heritage railway sector and doing what it does best – transporting visitors on a journey through the Fathew Valley, with some of its original locomotives and rolling stock continuing to see use right up until today. While it has grown and changed, the heart of the railway has remained the same, which has been a vital part of the new plans to improve facilities for volunteers, engineering, and visitors combined.

Seeking to raise a minimum of £500,000 over the next five years, the newly-launched 75 Appeal, entitled 'Preserving our Past, Building our Future', will help fund work that is crucial to ensuring the world's first preserved railway can thrive long into the future. But just what is involved, and why does it need to happen now?

It's all about timing

The simple answer for the latter point is timing. With costs rising for a start, if a project as monumental as this was to be held off for much longer, then the amount required would rise much more than it has since it was first floated a few years. Add that to the time required to deliver such a project and it makes sense to start now. As General Manager (operations) Liz Porrett told me: "It can take a long time for things to come to fruition. There are things I'm just achieving now that I aimed for when I started in 2022.

"I've just been writing a development plan for up to 2032; this current project is going to take us five years into the future, and actually we have to say, 'what are we going to achieve from this, what can we do, and how can we operate?' Our focus is going from the now and this year to five or six years down the road."

"You've got to have that forward-thinking plan in place" Lorraine Simkiss, General Manager (commercial) added. "We've must

On March 22, the Talyllyn Railway launched its 75 Appeal to help safeguard its future while maintaining its past. At Tywyn Wharf station, No. 2 *Dolgoch* (left) and No. 3 *Sir Haydn* (right) flank the newly-overhauled No. 1 *Talyllyn,* which wasn't quite ready to pull the train as planned but did make it down from the sheds under its own steam.

Left to right: Ian Drummond (heritage working group), Liz Porrett (general manager operations), Lorraine Simkiss (general manager commercial) and Nick Broster (heritage project manager).

Fletcher Jennings 0-4-2ST No. 1 *Talyllyn*'s new Great Eastern-inspired blue livery shines in the sun at Tywyn Wharf station on March 23.

start thinking of the future and about what we can do to develop, keep us safe, and keep everything moving. Whatever we do, we must do so sympathetically. We have to consider who is involved in it, all the options, and whose toes are we going to tread on."

The extent of the redevelopment plan covers three key sites on the railway which will all feed into improving and enhancing the Talyllyn Railway's world without detracting from its atmosphere, most notably at Pendre where the 1867 building continues to be used for the daily maintenance and larger repair work for the locomotives. Since preservation moved in, new carriage sheds have been built to accommodate a growing fleet of coaches that supplement the original five Victorian era four-wheel vehicles, but with the final two new carriages of a batch of three ordered from Boston Lodge due to be delivered over the next 12 months, space is at a premium – and facilities to work on those in need of some TLC are a perhaps a little less than ideal.

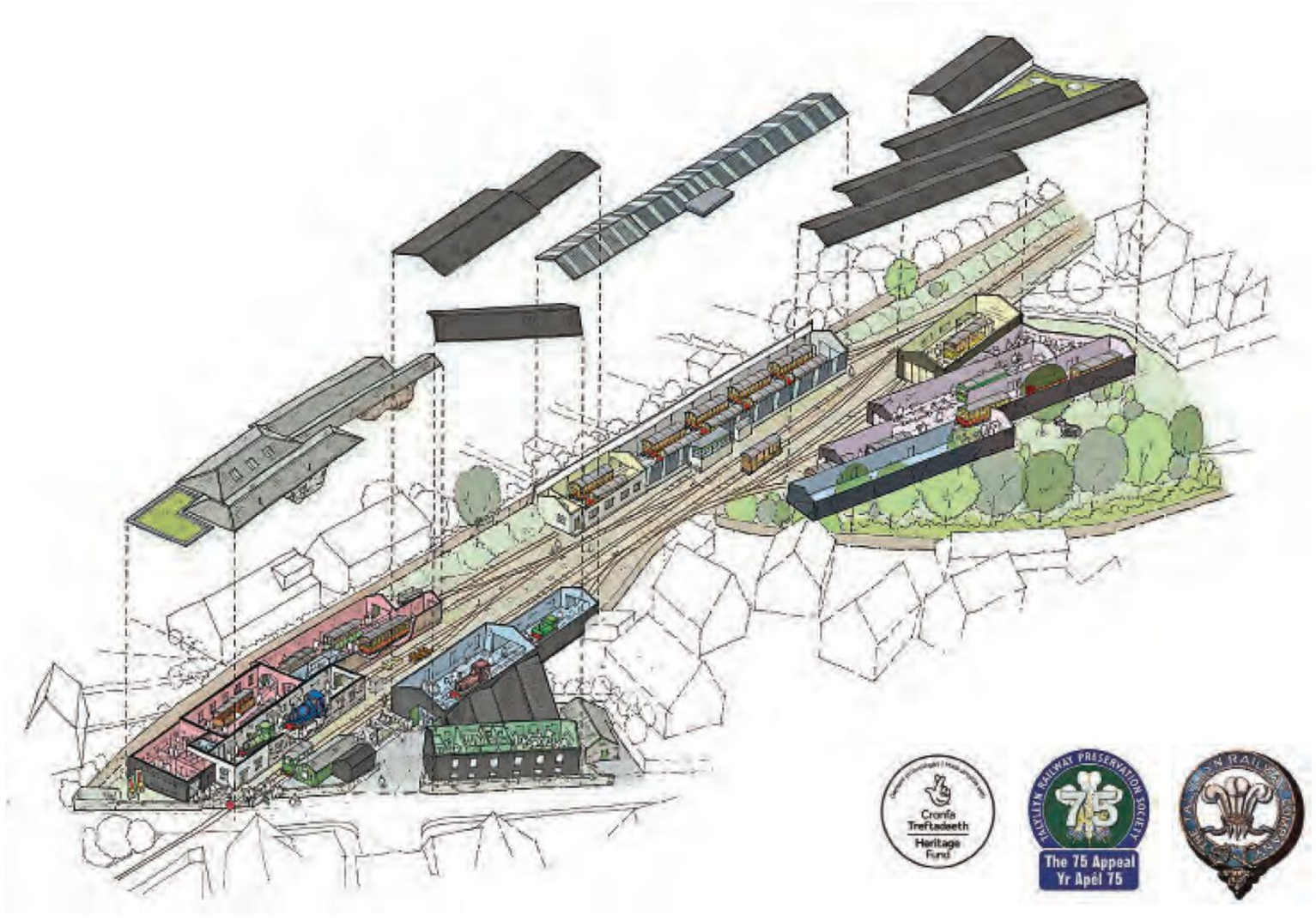
On the left, North Shed (dating from 1963) is now life-expired. As part of the redevelopment plan for the site, it will be replaced by an all-new facility for maintenance and overhaul works, while the locomotive sheds on the right will be restored but remain relatively unchanged externally.

Perfecting Pendre

"Overall, what we are proposing is a really big project to achieve certain aims. At Pendre, this is to improve the facilities for staff and volunteers and in the workshops," Liz explained. "We have a lot of workshops crammed into some hodgepodge buildings they're not really suitable for, with specific work on site like woodwork and welding that creates noise and dust – issues you run into when manually creating stuff – so we need to separate preservation from the nitty gritty work.

"We do have a maintenance regime on our coaches, but this is also in a space that isn't quite right; combined with the increased need for undercover carriage storage as our new ones arrive, we have a couple of options."

At the moment, all major engineering works take place on the locomotives in the original locomotive workshop which has remained largely unchanged since its construction. The railway is keen to open this up to allow visitors to be able to look around, with interpretation on the story behind it, the fleet, and the work that takes place. At present, this is impossible because it would require any heavy engineering work being carried out to be stopped for safety reasons, as there is limited space to manoeuvre groups of people



To improve the working environment of Pendre while also allowing the original locomotive sheds to be opened for public viewing, the large redevelopment plan will see many modifications to the site, while the Victorian character of the original building is retained. New workshops and improved welfare facilities form part of the proposals, with slight variations considered which will be determined by how much can be raised towards the cost. TR/HLF

The railway's main terminus at Tywyn Wharf will see an accessible street-level entrance created, with the interior of the main building remodelled to bring the ticket office upstairs into what is currently office space. The space between the Wharf Edge and the Cambrian main line will soon see a standard gauge open wagon positioned to help better tell the story of the railway's involvement in the Welsh slate industry. The large house on the left just behind the station building is Trefri, which will become new volunteer accommodation and office space.

through and around operating machinery.

The first of the new carriage sheds, known as North Shed, was completed in 1963 using a recycled metal frame and asbestos cladding. Now reaching the end of its life, the redevelopment poses an opportunity to replace it with better facilities for carriage maintenance, which at present takes place in a segregated part of the West Shed (built in 1972) but becomes unusable during summer months when carriage rakes are extended, thus stretching into this space.

There are three different plans for the site, with the final choice to be made based on how well the fundraising goes.

The basic plan would see the existing North Shed demolished and replaced with an all-new building housing a dedicated carriage repair space and heavy locomotive engineering space that will take work such as overhauls out of the main running shed. As part of this new building, improved volunteer welfare facilities and office space will be built, reducing the number of temporary cabins that are currently on the site.

This will then allow for the current mess room to be reworked to house visitor exhibitions and facilities, with the main locomotive shed accessible for regular tours that will educate visitors on its role on the railway since its construction.

The remaining workshop and shed space will be utilised to store and display the heritage carriages. Despite these having been in almost constant use since their construction, they have remained in relatively good condition, with much original material surviving. However, it is known too well that this will not last forever and so to ensure their longevity, these will be phased out of daily use, instead being used for experience trains (such as the popular 'Slate Trail' tours') and event days.

"'Preserving our Past, Building our Future' will help fund work that is crucial to ensuring the world's first preserved railway can thrive long into the future."

No. 3 *Sir Haydn* pauses at the award-winning Ty Dwr original watering point reconstruction, one of the Heritage Working Group projects telling the history of the railway.

Mindful plans

The 'bells and whistles' plan includes the construction of an additional building on a plot of land opposite West Shed that the railway acquired in 2019. This proposed building would become the dedicated carriage works and paint shop, with the North Shed replacement becoming a dedicated machine and fabrication workshop.

The prospect of encroaching on green space for such a major development is at the front of Liz and Lorraine's minds, and careful attention has been paid to ensure that while some of the space may be used, as little disturbance as possible happens to what remains, with potential uses for it observed too.

Currently, the entrance to the railway is off

An artist's impression of the new external appearance of Wharf station when the redevelopment work is completed, including a potential new shed that will house some of the carriage fleet and interpretation of the railway's story and role.

the street and down a set of steps or a ramp to the ticket hall. The importance of a street-level entrance is not lost on management, with some potential visitors having been observed trying to find a way in through what are currently offices and the museum, only to walk away.

A full reworking of the Tywyn Wharf station site is another key aspect of this project. A new-street level entrance will welcome visitors into a new ticket hall, with the current office space being reworked into welfare facilities, a shop, or multimedia display area.

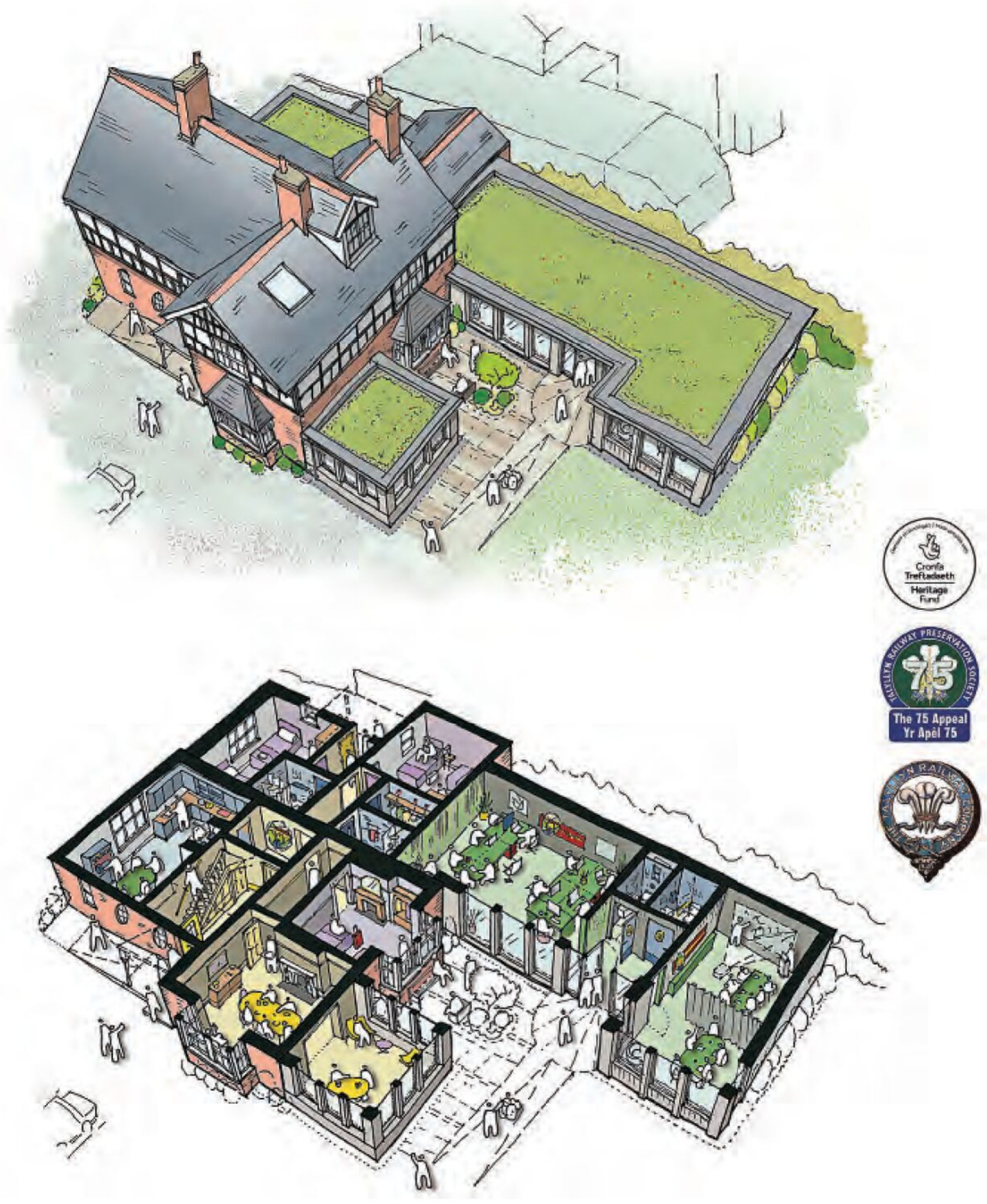
The access to the platform will then be via the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum; with its platform entrance currently located right at the end of the station, it can sometimes still be overlooked by visitors. This reworking would ensure increased footfall through it as guests would make their way downstairs to board their trains.

The lower floor presently houses the café, shop, ticket office and control office. The café is regularly at capacity and the new model will see it expand into the room currently occupied by the retail space, with this being moved over into the space currently occupied by the ticket office and control office.

Outside, a new interpretation building will be erected. The narrow gauge museum tells the story of the whole world of narrow gauge, but the railway recognises that it needs to improve how it tells the story of its own role in both the world of slate quarrying and how it served local communities. The building could further double up as covered event space as and when required.

Better space for volunteers

The Talyllyn is exceedingly fortunate in having a dedicated on-site hostel at Tywyn Wharf station which has enabled many volunteers – young and old – to visit regularly and be actively involved in the railway, but during



An artist's impression of the proposals to turn the former home of the late Edward Thomas into volunteer accommodation, with accessible rooms and communal spaces, plus an extension to house offices and conference rooms.

Dolgoch station is one of the most photogenic stations on the line. During a photo charter on March 11, the scene is set with volunteer reenactors posing on the platform next to the namesake Fletcher Jenning's 0-4-0WT.

peak times this can fill up fast, so another key area is to improve and expand what the railway offers in this regard.

"We need to increase the amount of accommodation we can provide for volunteers," said Lorraine. "We have Llechfan, but that gets very full and is bunk accommodation, which isn't to everyone's needs. It's not what a lot of volunteers like, particularly our more mature ones who don't want to be in a hostel environment."

"To meet demand, we have been block-hiring a local holiday let, which many people have appreciated" Liz continued. "We recognise that this is what we need, and we were lucky to purchase what was the old general manager's house, Trefri, a few years ago. It's been rented out since then, but now this is the time to pull that back and deliver something for the volunteers.

"The purpose of having it was always intended to be for volunteer accommodation, so it's reassuring to see it now on the tip of being that.

"Crucially, this will mean no longer needing to keep spending money on an external holiday let, and that funding can go elsewhere."

The plans will see the interior reworked to include an accessible suite, something the railway is keen to support as it tries to, within reason, welcome volunteers of all abilities. Washrooms, kitchens and bedrooms will mostly be on one level, with dedicated disabled parking spaces outside, alongside new electric vehicle charging points.

The current building will be expanded slightly too in order to create some new office space, which will replace that lost during the station building reworking.

"Eventually, it will give us training and conference rooms alongside the office space," Liz said. "There will be outdoor space for anyone who needs a quiet space for wellbeing reasons, or even for socialising."

To the future

The prominence of these plans will no doubt be obvious to all as they progress, but even away from these there are changes happening that some may not notice as the push for sustainability and environmental care remains at the front of the mangers' minds.

"We are seriously trying to reduce the amount of waste and increase our recycling rate," said Lorraine. "For example, we are trying to move away from single-use plastics; you'll seen in our café now that not much other than water comes in a plastic bottle – almost everything else is glass or can. Soon, we'll be moving away from those too for soft drinks as we go to draught post-mixers in fully recyclable cups.

"We are also looking at things like our coffee cups. These are biodegradable, but the lids are not recyclable currently. One of our team recently went to a trade fair and has come back with a contact for lids that are being trialled which we hope will change this.

"It's as much about educating visitors about recycling as us dealing with our own rubbish. Wales has one of the best rates of domestic recycling and now there's a push for businesses to do same, starting from April. How do we encourage visitors to recycle correctly when everything has to be separated? If we can get all visitors thinking the same way, they will take that home with them too. Give people the right tools and they will do it.

"We are also reviewing all cleaning substances – no more single-use wipes. Let's

There is very little representation of most railway companies from before the Big Four. Having acquired a wagon at the Bristol Harbour Railway a few years ago, a five-plank open has been restored by Stanegate Restorations in Cambrian Railways livery that will form part of a transhipment display, showing how slate was transferred between the narrow and standard gauge railways.

No. 2 poses with wagons at Nant Gwernol on March 13. One aspect that forms part of the railway's vision for the future is how to better tell the story of its role in the slate industry, which could include construction of more replica slate wagons.

be responsible in what we purchase, use, and dispose of."

Representing the line's heritage is another area of focus, with the Heritage Working Group actively undertaking projects to this end. Its most recent delivery has been the recreation of the line's original watering point at Tŷ Dŵr on the Nant Gwernol section of line. The group's focus has now moved to the restoration of the former Abergynolwyn village incline winding drum. But it's not just pre-preservation history that has to be cared for.

"Our preservation history is hugely significant too" said Ian Drummond, the HWG's chair.

"What is happening now is tomorrow's heritage. We have a huge archive currently inaccessible, so how do we make that available and safe? The redevelopment is great from a facilities point of view, but it also allows for better ways of sharing and understanding our story.

"At Wharf, we now have an open wagon ready to go in the space between the edge of our line and the main line for a transhipment display, which will be another bit of history brought to life, but where do we go after this? The site is one we need to tackle as a whole to allow people to appreciate it.

"There will be many little stories from throughout the years – some of our 'modern' coaches, for example, are perhaps now heritage themselves – but we must look at it creatively.

"The goal is to hand over what we create to the next generation for it to take on and continue, as what we may not see as heritage now may be viewed differently in the future."

The whole project is expected to take place over a period of four to five years, at an estimated cost of £4 million. The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded the TR a grant of £110,000 towards to the development of the project, with matching funding from the railway's own resources.

The railway intends to submit an application to the HLF for a grant of around £1.5 million towards its delivery and will also investigate other options for other grants and possible business sponsorship opportunities.

Supporting the appeal

The 75 Appeal has been established to raise a minimum of £500,000 to help support these other avenues.

Regular donors contributing £5 per month by Direct Debit can join the 75 Club and will receive an exclusive badge and certificate, as well as regular updates on the redevelopment's progress. They will also benefit from invitations to events to meet the team behind the plans. One-off donations are also welcome, as are any offers of practical support to deliver the project, all of which will help reaffirm the faith of the HLF and other potential sponsors of the commitment to the project, as well as building confidence in the level of income to support it. HR

➜ Full details of the project and how you can support it can be found by visiting talyllyn.co.uk/75appeal or by emailing fundraising@talyllyn.co.uk

Above: The railway has a wealth of history not only of its own but also from other railways too. On March 11, Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* with saloon No. 17 and open wagons tackles Brynglas Bank, the train similar to those once seen on the Corris Railway.

Below: No. 1 *Talyllyn* heads through the Wharf cutting as it returns to the sheds on March 22.

THE SAINT BECOMES A STAR AT EAST SOMERSET'S 50TH!

The star guest at the East Somerset Railway's successs 50th anniversary gala on March 16/17 was GWR 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend,* from Didcot Railway Centre, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.

Becoming a regular feature in the enthusiast calendar is the East Somerset Railways spring gala, which this year took place over two days, marking the 50th anniversary of the line founded by the late wildlife artist David Shepherd in 1974 to offer rides on his own collection of steam locomotives.

Last year's gala was a resounding success and this year's was no exception. The Great Western Society stepped up at short notice to fill the gap left by new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange,* which was not ready in time, and supplied its own new-build, 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*, which arrived the week prior to the gala.

Introduced in 1902, the Churchward 4-6-0 Saints were a common sight on express services until the 1950s, but this was the first time that a Saint had traversed the East Somerset Railway.

Home fleet trio

It joined three members of the home fleet. Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447 was built at Crewe in 1950, withdrawn by BR in 1966, and moved to Barry scrapyard. In 1972 it was purchased by the Ivatt Locomotive Trust and moved to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre at Quainton Road. In 2008 it relocated to the Isle of Wight, where initial conservation work was undertaken before it then moved to Cranmore on the ESR in 2012 and was restored to working order in 2014. It is now coming to the end of its boiler ticket.

With the last train of the gala, GWR 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* pilots prairie No. 4110 away from Mendip Vale on March 17.

GWR 4MT large prairie No. 4110, built at Swindon in 1936 and a veteran of services from Birmingham Snow Hill across the West Midlands, languished at Barry scrapyard from 1965 until 1979, when it became the 100th locomotive to leave. No. 4110 then went to the Southall Railway Centre, Tyseley, Minehead and Cranmore before finally returning to steam last year.

It is operating under an agreement between the ESR and its owner, the Dartmouth Steam Railway, so should be at Cranmore for another two years.

Once again, Barclay 0-4-0ST No.1719 of 1920 *Lady Nan* performed frequent driver experiences costing £10. All pre-booked tickets were sold out, but pay on the day was also available. There are not many places where you can get your hands on the regulator for a tenner.

Eight return workings took place each day from Cranmore to Mendip Vale, starting at 10am behind No. 2999, which also took the 11.40am. No. 4110 worked the 10.55am and 1.30pm and No. 46447 the 12.30pm.

The last three afternoon trains were double-headed, with the first at 2.25pm behind Nos. 46447 and 4110, and the return top-and-tailed with No. 4110 leading.

At 3.20pm, it was the pairing of Nos. 46447 and 2999, with No. 46447 leading on the outward and No. 2999 on the return, followed at 4.10pm by the Great Western pairing of Nos. 4110 and 2999, with No. 2999 leading the return,

Superb sounds

There were two goods trips between Cranmore station and the engine shed, the first at 10.40am behind No. 46447 and the second with No. 2999 tender first at 2.10pm.

The line is just 2½miles long but packs quite a punch, especially with the 1-in-56 climb through the rock cutting from the run-round loop at Mendip Vale. Locomotives have to work hard from a standing start over the Mendip Hills towards Cranmore and are not helped by a speed restriction midway. The sound of No. 2999 pulling away from Mendip Vale was deafening.

Cranmore station is typically Great Western and has been restored to a high standard. Its signalbox was open to visitors, and the points were controlled by the recently-installed ground frame alongside the signalbox.

The miniature railway running parallel to the line and the engine shed was in operation, with trains hauled by internal combustion locos. The two-road shed was also open for visitors.

Unlimited travel throughout the day cost

Morning mist lingers on March 17 as No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* returns the first train into Cranmore station.

Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447 departs Cranmore with the morning goods.

£20 for adults, £16 for concessions, and £12 for children. Parking was £5, or free with a gala ticket. For those without cars, a bus shuttle ran from Frome station and Shepton Mallet Cenotaph was included in the gala ticket.

The weather was unkind on the Saturday; it rained for most of the day, though it did not stop people coming. Sunday was much better.

ESR business manager Simon Bending said: "We had a fantastic 50th anniversary gala and it was great to see so many visitors.

"*Lady Of Legend* was very much the star of the show, with enthusiasts coming from far and wide to see her and travel on our trains. Our visitors took a record 2681 return trips over the weekend. Another highlight was our hugely popular Driver for a Tenner on *Lady Nan,* which provided 92 unique driving experiences. A huge thank-you to all our volunteers who worked in all areas of the railway over the weekend."

This gala is one to look out for every year and is well worth adding to your steam calendar.

Regular weekends trains started running from late March and will run until the end of October with four trains a day and an intensified service during the summer season, with special mixed traffic days. For more information visit https://eastsomersetrailway.com HR

Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 pilots Ivatt 2MT No. 46447 while departing Mendip Vale.

Barclay 0-4-0ST No.1719 of 1920 *Lady Nan* ran footplate driving turns for £10 and is seen here passing Cranmore shed.

GWR large prairie No. 4110 gets to grip with the 1-in-56 gradient from Mendip Vale.

GWR 2-6-2T No. 4110 leads as Ivatt 2MT No. 46447 provides banking duties while departing Mendip Vale.

All smoke without fire: new industrials from Rapido

RAPIDO'S reputation for picking unusual prototypes to bring into model form goes unchallenged with the manufacturer announcing the Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 fireless locomotives to its 4mm scale range – the first ready-to-run model of the type to ever be produced!

As the railways established themselves as a reliable method to transport goods, one problem came to the forefront – fire. Steam locomotives fundamentally need a heat source created from some form of fire to turn water into steam. However, this fire, alongside sparks emitted from the chimney, caused great concern in environments where munitions, fuel, or other flammable materials were being moved or stored. Thus the fireless locomotives were introduced, harnessing steam power in a large rechargeable steam reservoir sitting in the place of the boiler of a conventional steam locomotive.

The largest number of British-built fireless locomotives were constructed by Barclay where 114 were built between 1913 and 1961 of varying designs. It is the most numerous of this firm's design – the Caledonia – that Rapido has picked to model as the first RTR version of a British fireless in OO scale. The highly-detailed Rapido Trains UK rendition will be available in a variety of liveries, covering the locomotive's lengthy history from the 1920s right through to the present day. Included among the offerings is a very long-lived locomotive, No. 1944 Croda Chemical Works shunter, believed to be one of the last working fireless locomotives in the UK, and potentially the last steam locomotive in regular industrial use across the nation, making it perfect to run alongside modern contemporary traction.

Models will be presented with the firm's smooth-running mechanism, a factory-installed speaker, NEM Coupler pockets and an ESU E24 decoder socket. Known for its humorous marketing approach, Rapido additionally stressed there will be "absolutely no firebox flicker". Individual models will feature variations of reservoir support, buffer guides, reducing valves, and also some versions with an extra tank and injector.

The models can further be personalised with a selection of interesting Polybag parts too, including oil and electric lamps, cabside windows, low doors, shutters, and full cab doors.

The design is complete and at present, the model is in tooling. You can pre-order your DCC-ready (RRP £139.95) or DCC sound-fitted (RRP £249.95) versions directly from www.rapidotrains.co.uk or any of its official stockists.

New 'Pals' revealed in surprise Bachmann announcement

AT the March 16/17 Festival of Railway Modelling, Bachmann made a surprise announcement following its spring catalogue reveal a few weeks beforehand. While Rapido's fireless is a first in locomotives, Bachmann's upcoming OO scale 12-ton 'Palvan' is a first for the BR-designed box van in the wagon department.

By the early 1950s, the use of wooden pallets and forklift trucks to load and move goods had become well-established; however, the doors of standard railway wagons were not wide enough to accommodate the loading of a pallet. Aware of this new trend, British Railways experimented with modifying GWR and LMS designs before creating its own design, Diagram No. 1/211 of 1954, for the Pallet Van or 'Palvan'. On the left on each side was a door with an opening of 8ft 6in – as opposed to the 5ft opening of a standard van door – allowing pallets to be loaded on either side. The body was made from plywood, with distinctive bracing and bracketry making the 'Palvans' easily distinguishable in a train of mixed vans.

The new Bachmann Branchline tooling allows a range of 'Palvan' models to be produced, depicting the various differences incorporated in the different build lots and during their service lives, incorporating differences in brake gear, axleboxes, buffers, and even advertising boards.

Full details, including liveries and pricing, will be confirmed at the manufacturer's summer catalogue update in May, with the exhibition at Alexandra Palace proving an opportunity to show off the tooling samples that had been received shortly beforehand.

Additional Farish four-wheel tankers sure to 'B' 'A' hit

IN addition to the OO scale wagon announced by Bachmann, its N gauge division, Graham Farish, also revealed a new wagon joining its range that is yet another first for the scale. New tooling has been created, allowing models of the 14-ton and 20-ton Class A and Class B anchor-mounted tank wagons to be produced.

These were conceived in the mid-1940s, the design being agreed between the private operators, the Petroleum Board, and the railway companies. Rather than the timber saddle, cradle and wire hawsers employed on earlier wagons, the new design used a central anchor mechanism to secure the tank to its chassis.

The Farish model depicts both 'A' and 'B' types, with options to include the bottom outlet pipe and associated handwheel mounted on top of the tank, with or without the steam heating inlet valve, and with a straight or cranked air vent.

The top catwalks and filler can be depicted in their central position or offset, while these wagons can also be modelled with or without the ladders, giving access to the catwalks; where fitted, these are constructed from fine metal etches.

As with the OO scale 'Palvan', full release details will be issued with the summer range update.

Send your model news to staff writer **Owen Hayward** on **OHayward@mortons.co.uk@mortons.co.uk**

Coastal DCC
www.coastaldcc.co.uk

Friendly advice, support and installation services
Tel: 01473 710946 Email: enquiries@coastaldcc.co.uk

DCC by modellers for modellers

Kent Garden Railways

16mm and G Scale Specialists

LGB * Accucraft * Peco * Piko * Bachmann * Roundhouse * Pola * USA Trains and more

Great Stocks of OO, HO & N

We have large stocks from the leading manufacturers

Hornby * Bachmann * Peco * Gaugemaster * Metcalfe * Heljan * Graham Farish * Dapol * Woodland Scenics * Kato * Walthers * Kadee * Expo * Noch * Oxford Diecast * Kestrel Atlas * Broadway * Parkside * Ratio * Wills * Modelscene * Minitrains and more

68 High Street, St Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent, BR5 3NH
Tel 01689 891668 email sales@kgrmodels.com www.kgrmodels.com
Internet, telephone and exhibition sales only.

Redcar Models & Hobbies

130 High Street,
Redcar,
Cleveland

Stocking a wide range of '00' railways
by Bachmann, Hornby, Peco and Gaugemaster

Also Model Kits and Diecasts and all other modelling accessories
FREE PARKING FOR THE FIRST HOUR

T: 01642 494 912 E: andrewnpaton@ntlworld.com

Orwell Model Railways

Ipswich Model Railway Centre

48-52 Tomline Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 8DB
01473 724578

Opening times Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm,
Saturday 10am to 5pm,
with Late Night Opening until 6pm on Wednesday

enquiries@orwellmodelrailways.co.uk
www.orwellmodelrailways.co.uk

MonkBar Model Shop

Established in 1963

2 Goodramgate
York - YO1 7LQ
01904 659423
Open Monday - Saturday 9am - 5pm

OO, N & O Gauge Model Railways

Stockists of Hornby, Bachmann, Graham Farish, Peco, Dapol, Gaugemaster, Ratio, Wills, Woodland Scenics, Metcalfe, Oxford Diecast, Rapido, Accurascale and more

monkbarmodelshop.co.uk

MODELLING MAGAZINES YOU'LL **LOVE**

GREAT OFFERS AVAILABLE ACROSS THE RANGE

SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND SAVE UP TO 49%
VISIT: WWW.CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/MODELLING24
CALL: 01507 529529 QUOTE: MODELLING24 EXPIRES 31/12/24

AC Models

www.acmodelseastleigh.co.uk

Stockists of Bachmann, Graham Farish, Hornby, Peco, Scalextric and much more for all of your modelling needs.

Find us on Ebay ACModels2 & Amazon ACModelseastleigh

Gift Vouchers Available

www.acmodelseastleigh.co.uk

Now Open - New R/C Department

Opening times Mon-Tue-Thurs-Fri & Sat 10am-4pm, closed Wed & Sun

ON-STREET PARKING OUTSIDE THE SHOP

9 High Street, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 5LF
Tel: 02380 610100
E: info@acmodelseastleigh.co.uk

Two of a kind: the LMS Ivatt twins

With this iconic pair of early-generation main line diesel locomotives now available in N gauge, **Daniel Long** explores just what makes these 'twins' so special.

Built in 1947, No. 10000 is pictured at Allbrook during July 1954, its metallic LMS lettering now gone with BR insignia in its place. B J SWAIN/COLOUR RAIL

A MEETING Room in Stafford might seem an innocuous place for the main line diesel revolution to begin, but it was in such a place in May 1947 that representatives from the English Electric Company met with counterparts from the LMS and discussed the next stage of travel in the UK.

For the LMS, the move towards diesel traction was one which it had long been a proponent of. It was a pioneer in the use of diesel engines for shunting but had long seen the benefits that might be brought to the main line. Diesels offered crews a cleaner working environment, without the hassle of long preparation times and with the capacity for increased daily mileage. But first, the theory had to be proven.

The agreement between the LMS and the English Electric Company was for the construction of two 1600hp locomotives which could potentially work in tandem to produce an output of 3200hp – more than enough to handle the formidable Anglo-Scottish services, while also providing enough power for mixed services in other areas. The experiment was designed to give the widest possible operational scope.

The English Electric Company provided the diesel and electrical equipment, including the beating heart of the locomotive in the form of the English Electric 16SVT engine. The team at Derby Works took responsibility for the chassis parts, including frames, bogies and cab. It was the LMS side which took overall responsibility for the project under the auspices of HG Ivatt, but the result was a true collaboration.

Midland Pioneer

The construction of the first engine, No. 10000, was completed in 1947, just three weeks before Nationalisation. Although the development of a diesel design was a novelty, it did not slow progress at all. In fact, the team at Derby would complete the first engine in just six months. Given the scarcity of materials in the postwar environment, it shows the pride with which the team held the project. It was, arguably, the last hurrah of the LMS, but it was also the first bold step into a new world of main line diesel electric locomotives, and they continue to dominate Britain's railways today.

No. 10000 was able to benefit from other experiences with diesel designs, and the brief had included the use of two six-wheeled bogies on a bogie some 61ft 2in long. As would become common, a driving cab was provided at both engines, as well as a corridor connection through the noses which would allow for easy changes of end when the engines worked in tandem. There were plans to make this connection the same size as the standard coach corridor connection, but no doubt someone thought of the aesthetics of inflicting this carbuncle on the bold new image for main line travel. Luckily for all concerned, it was quietly forgotten about.

Main line

HG Ivatt drove No. 10000 out of the paintshop in December 1947, and the locomotive was quickly put to work not only on test runs, but also as a showcase of what the LMS had achieved. Just 10 days into operation, No. 10000 found itself at Euston alongside the last LMS-built steam engine – Coronation Pacific No. 6256 *William A. Stanier FRS*. The bold decision to paint the diesels in black with LMS emblazoned on the sides must have looked impressive. The shining aluminium of the undercarriage only added to the distinctive look of these stunning locomotives – though one can imagine how quickly the shine wore off as it dirtied in traffic!

And so it was that No. 10000 settled into a routine of tests and experiments. One of the more impressive runs was a 12-coach train, complete with dynamometer car, between St Pancras and Manchester. The locomotive performed well within the capacity of a 5XP class, and early tests proved the ruggedness of the design. Minor changes were made to improve the oil tanks and to provide inspection hatches at each end of the locomotive. These were incorporated into No. 10001, which was outshopped in July 1948.

By the time No. 10001 left the works, No. 10000 has proven itself on expresses between Derby and St Pancras, as well as between Derby and Manchester. Both engines proved themselves on these services, managing consistent and impressive punctuality with performance considered slightly above those of the popular Jubilees.

The completion of No. 10001 allowed the Derby team to begin testing the engines in an entirely new configuration; namely, operation in tandem. Tests began on the Euston-Glasgow expresses. Just five days after commencing these services, on October 5, 1948, No. 10000 failed and was returned to Derby. It was some time before the engines were returned to workings in tandem as once No. 10000 returned to service, No. 10001 was sent to the works for attention. When both returned to traffic, they were assigned their most prestigious duties to date.

The 'twins' could often be found working 'Royal Scot' services towards the end of their lives. In June 1958, Nos. 10000 and 10001 depart Rugby with the Down journey of one of these named express services. D SMITH/COLOUR RAIL

Long haul

In May 1949, the LMS twins began a long and successful stint at the forefront of passenger services in the Midland Region. First assigned to the Euston-Glasgow sleeping car expresses, with 13 bogies on the drawbar, the engines were allocated a turn on the 'Royal Scot' on June 1. This train was reported to have 16 coaches behind.

Usually, the train would stop at Kingmoor to change crews, but the diesels were able to run non-stop all the way to Glasgow where they arrived three minutes early to crowds of admirers. The engines returned to the sleeper trains thereafter, where they ran for nearly 600 miles every 24 hours, compared to just over 400 on the 'Royal Scot'.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Over the next few months, the locomotives ran through to new destinations such as Blackpool and Aberdeen. As the winter months set in, however, the locomotives were reassigned from passenger duties to freight thanks to poor performance from their train heating boilers. No. 10000 was recorded operating the formidable Scotch Goods, a train which often had 515 tons behind it and could run to express freight timings.

As the weather warmed in 1950, the class returned to its role in the express passenger link. One memorable run for the pair saw No. 10000 fail mid-journey. No. 10001 pushed the damaged diesel, as well as hauling the 14-coach train, to Carstairs. They arrived 40 minutes late, and a 'Black Five' was coupled in front to make a triple-header over Beattock Bank. No. 10001 took command for the downhill stretch until Carlisle, where another engine took over the train, apparently reaching impressive speeds in what was presumably a bid to make up some of the time lost on the way up.

When the Southern Region looked to see what benefits diesel traction could give, both of the LMS twins were sent to supplement their own experimentations with main line diesel traction. The LMS pioneers did not distinguish themselves during this period. Although running on named trains such as the 'Bournemouth Belle', and operating across the region as far as Weymouth and Exeter, the class was approaching an all-time low in terms of reliability. Both engines saw time spent at Brighton Works as faults were attended to, and it can only be said that in 1953, No. 10000's performance was poor indeed. Much of its time was spent in the works, and much of its time out of the works was spent being rescued.

No. 10000 passes through Watling Street Junction, near Cricklewood, with the 2.15pm St Pancras to Manchester express on April 24, 1948, bearing the iconic 3D LMS lettering synonymous with both it and classmate No. 10001.
BEN BROOKSBANK/CREATIVE COMMONS

Legacy

On return to the Midland Region in 1955, the two engines were thoroughly looked over before being dispatched back to familiar territory on the Derby-St Pancras trains, as well as on runs such as the Scottish sleeper service to London and between Euston and Blackpool.

Although seeing turns on expresses, other classes had begun to supersede them by this point, both in the form of BR Standards and of other diesels which were part of the modernisation plan. Although finding occasional turns at the head of the 'Royal Scot', neither engine had the impact it had had initially in traffic.

In 1963, No. 10000 was withdrawn from traffic after having spent 12 months idle at Derby Works. It was only sold for scrap in 1968. No. 10001 was withdrawn much later, in 1966, until it too was cut up in 1968.

The legacy of the LMS twins can be best seen in their impact on future classes of diesel locomotives. They had an unmistakable effect on what came after. Designed as experiments, they proved that there was potential for main line steam to thrive.

Numerous elements can be seen in designs that follows. The formidable English Electric 16SVT engine found use in other locomotives such as the Class 40s and Class 50s. The bogie design proved sound enough for use on the Class 77s, and even the distinctive nose was lifted wholesale for use on the Peaks.

Although neither locomotive was preserved – a tremendous shame given the incredible influence that these engines had – the legacy of this two-of-a-kind class has more than been assured.

Preservation

Despite neither engine being saved from scrap, pioneers in our own heritage circles are determined that such important examples of our country's engineering achievements should not be ignored. The Ivatt Diesel Re-creation Society has worked tirelessly over the last 13 years to begin work on a replica of the first main line diesel electric locomotive, No. 10000, through the use of contemporary parts and new-build elements.

Here is where the legacy of the LMS twins can really come into its own, as the intention is to source authentic elements where possible. Already, the group has sourced elements such as diesel engines and bogies from the 40s and 50s respectively. The latter are taken from an EM2, which lifted the design from the LMS twins in the first place. Is this the perfect example of things coming full circle?

Miniature marvels

The recent announcement from Graham Farish of the LMS twins in N gauge surprised (and delighted) me. These engines are often overlooked icons of British engineering, and having models available in miniature is a joy. The nature of the prototype means it is essential that no detail can be overlooked, even though it is considerably smaller than usual.

On the undercarriage, for example, the aluminium frames leave no room for error and Graham Farish has delivered some stunning details considering the scale of the model. The springs on the bogies, for instance, stand out as some of the finest in the industry, with a look that would only be enhanced by some light weathering to add some contrast to the shiny finish.

The chassis itself is a lovely piece of design. Based on a diecast metal block, the LMS twins should be weighty enough to hold their own against most trains that modellers will throw at it. The driving force is not English Electric's engines, but a modern coreless twinshaft motor which allows for all-wheel drive. Two flywheels are included which ensures that these little wonders run as beautifully as they look. The attention to detail here means that no matter what loads are put behind it, this engine can deliver, even if not operating in tandem!

Above the frame, the body has been finished in exemplary fashion. Although the relatively simple finish of black, with various details in chrome, might seem straightforward, the challenge is to achieve this as cleanly as possible.

Graham Farish has made it seem easy, while also adding in details which are commonplace in larger scales but not so in N gauge. If you look through the various bodyside windows, engine room detail has been included to complete the stunning appearance of these locomotives.

Of course, it might be a little difficult to see, so Graham Farish has equipped the LMS twins with cab lighting and directional lighting on the headlights to add some life to your model. That ever-present feature of sound is also accounted for in both DC and DCC thanks to a pre-fitted speaker, and a Next18 DCC decoder socket.

The locomotives are, of course, available in LMS black and silver, but perhaps of more use to modellers will be the engines in variations of BR Green, including some gorgeous variations with full lining with small warning panels. These impact and legacy of these engines makes them a very tempting acquisition. A bold choice from Graham Farish, and one which is to be commended. HR

"A bold choice from Graham Farish, and one which is to be commended."

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

We need £80,000!

WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN
OVERHAUL 19B'S BOILER

DONATE

SUBSCRIBE

DARJEELING TANK 19. B. LOCOMOTIVE TRUST

www.darjeelingtank.org.uk

RAILWAY MAGAZINES YOU'LL **LOVE**

GREAT OFFERS AVAILABLE ACROSS THE RANGE

SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND SAVE UP TO 31%

VISIT: **WWW.CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/RAILWAY24**

CALL: **01507 529529** QUOTE: RAILWAY24 EXPIRES 31/12/24

THE KEIGHLEY & GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY!

The appearance of two GWR-designed locomotives – associated more with classic main line action rather than a country branch line – brought bumper crowds to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's March 21-24 spring steam gala, reports **Robin Jones.**

This year's star guests at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway reaped rich dividends for the line.

Visiting were GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* from Didcot Railway Centre and WR 4-6-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* from the Great Central Railway, which, when added to the home fleet, made a total of nine locomotives in steam during the hugely successful event.

Also in service were LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas*, LNWR Coal Tank 0-6-2T No. 1054, LMS 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241, BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022, BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75078, Taff Vale Railway 0-6-2T and Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 25 0-6-0 52044.

The corresponding event last year also proved a huge success, but this time around was even more so. The event saw a 15% increase in passenger numbers on last year, with about 4300 people travelling over the four days.

Business and operations manager Noel Hartley said: "At the KWVR and, it seems, throughout the sector, there is a huge appetite for enthusiast events at the moment, which is great to see.

"It gives some confidence that these events are safe for the time being and means we know we can invest in them to stage a great show.

"The two GWR locomotives put on some great performances on our 1-in-60 gradients and added a splash of sparkle and colour to the gala."

An intensive passenger service was interspersed with special double-headers and demonstration goods trains. The gala also had services running into and out of Keighley. After two months of trains being absent from Platforms 3 and 4 due to major refurbishment works, services returned to the station on March 2. The refurbishment works are scheduled to last until December.

The public response to the gala bodes well for the line's special events throughout the coming season.

The two museums at Ingrow West will be opening their doors for free as part of a National Lottery initiative this summer. The Engine Shed and Carriage

Ready to roll: BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022, LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No.45596 *Bahamas* and GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* in Haworth yard on the morning of March 22. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

WR 4-6-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* passes under Bridge 26 and Haworth Yard with a demonstration freight on March 22, with customers enjoying a brake van ride. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

Creating a storm having left Haworth station, GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* heads through Top Field on March 23. MARTYN TATTAM

Works, at Rail Story will waive its normal admission charges on June 14/15 to anyone showing a National Lottery ticket or scratch card. Free entry also applies to those accompanying the ticketholder.

Both the Bahamas Locomotive Society and the Vintage Carriages Trust, which operate the museums, have received National Lottery funding for projects.

The diesel gala will take place on June 20-23, with the guest locomotive to be announced shortly.

On successive weekends from July 20/21 to August 17/18, vintage services will operate using a selection from the line's museum collection of historic older coaches, many of which date back to Victorian times and rarely see public use, including carriages from the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Trust and the Vintage Carriages Trust.

A guest locomotive will be invited to the October 5/6 Autumn Steam Up, and the Beer & Music Festival will run from October 17-20.

For more details of these events and other special services, and to book tickets, visit https:// kwvr.co.uk/events/ HR

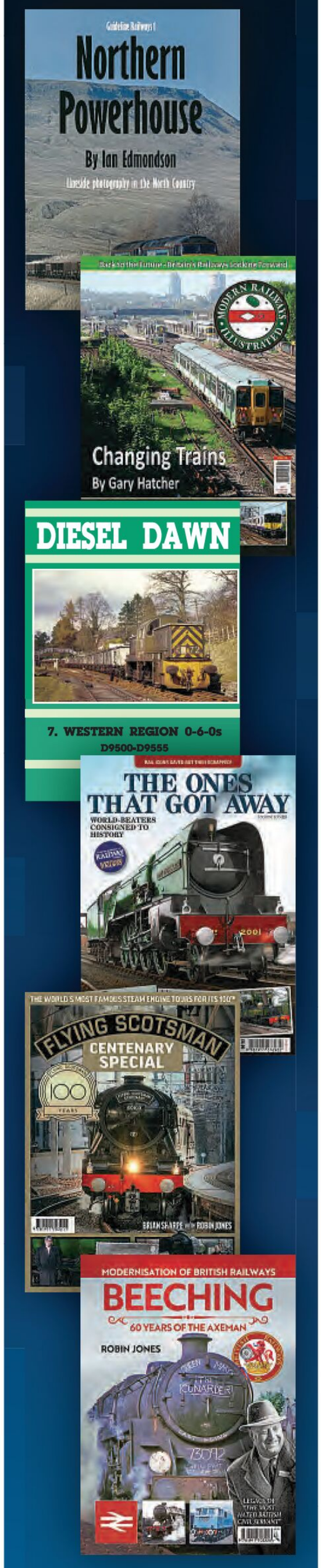
GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* 4079 departs Oakworth station, passing 'hoot corner' and Vale Mill, on March 23. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

LMS Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241 and BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75078 approach Oxenhope on March 24 with the 1.50pm from Keighley. PAUL BIGGS

Taff Vale Railway 02 0-6-2T No. 85 leads Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 25 No. 52044 at Keighley. COURTNEY FORDER

Great reads from £6.99!

132-page full colour, perfect bound bookazines



ORDER TODAY FROM CLASSIC MAGAZINES:

www.classicmagazines.co.uk/thebookshelf

CALL: 01507 529529

classic magazines

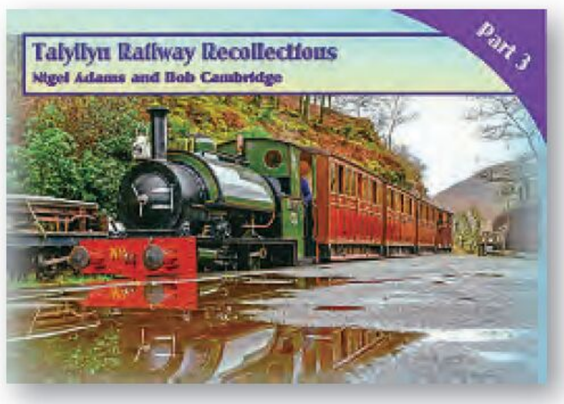
Also available at WHSmith

Above: On hire from the Great Central Railway, No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* climbs the bank to Oakworth station as a rainbow forms behind the hill and clouds of steam. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

A rainbow breaks over Ingrow as LNWR Coal Tank No. 1054 is prepared for service on March 23. As reported in issue 317, the National Trust recently transferred full ownership of the locomotive to its long -time custodian, the Bahamas Locomotive Society. PAUL LAWRENCE

Below: GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* departs Oakworth at about midday on March 23. PAUL LAWRENCE

Volunteer driver Andy Tarran looks ahead as BR Standard 4MT No. 75028 and LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No.45596 *Bahamas* approach Oakworth Station with an express service on March 23. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR



Talyllyn Railway Recollections (Part 3)

By Nigel Adams and Bob Cambridge (Silver Link Publishing, paperback, 80pp, ISBN 978-1-857946-14-7, £10.99).

As the railway rapidly approaches its 75th anniversary, now perhaps is an ideal time to expand this 'Nostalgia' series of books which covers much of the more recent preservation era.

Both authors have been volunteers at the railway for more than 40 years so have experienced much of the change documented first-hand, with photographic content supplied by many of the line's other volunteers.

With the railway prepares for some major redevelopment work (as documented in this issue's feature on pages 72-77) that will see it provide facilities to help see it through the next 75 years, it is interesting to look back through this publication at just how much has changed since 1961.

Tywyn Wharf station is one notable example, with documentation here on the construction of the building that houses the shop, café and visitor facilities, but which is part of that aforementioned plan that will see it reworked to better meet the needs of the modern railway.

There are, of course, a vast number of high-quality photographs of the railway's iconic locomotives at some of the most scenic locations along the line from both past and present; with Bachmann due to release models in 009 scale of Fletcher Jennings 0-4-2ST No.1 *Talyllyn* and some of the Brown Marshall carriages, perhaps these can also serve as inspiration and reference for those wishing to model parts of the railway?

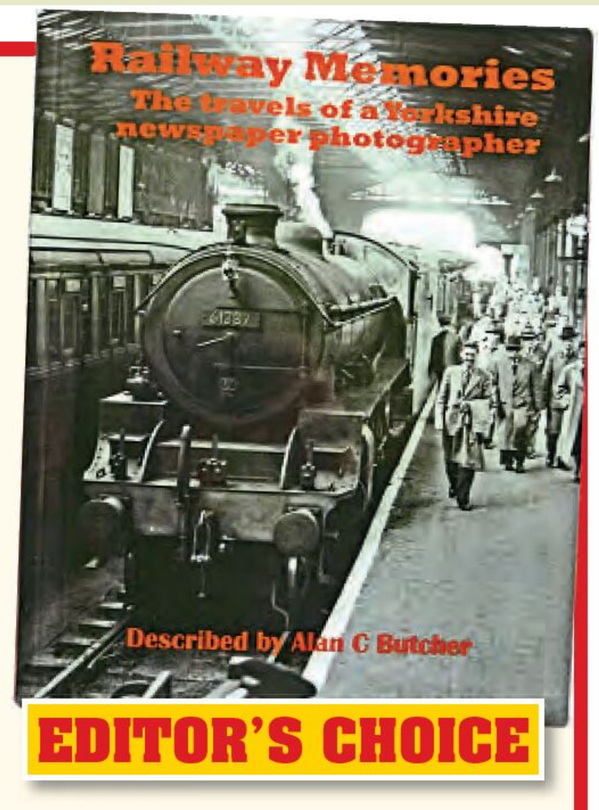
The images very much do the talking in this publication, with captions giving concise rundowns of what is on show, so anyone who may fear being overwhelmed by a high word count can rest easy.

There are some amusing moments, too – see the photograph of Hughes 0-4-2ST Falcon No. 3 *Sir Haydn* being turned on a makeshift turntable at Pendre yards, not something ever likely to be repeated in the world of modern health and safety limitations.

For Talyllyn Railway and narrow gauge enthusiasts, this publication is an ideal way to reflect on some of the last 75 years of this pioneering line's history as the sector gears up for a landmark anniversary in 2026.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF PRESERVATION PIONEERING HISTORY

Railway Memories



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Described by Alan C Butcher (softback, Transport Treasury Publishing, 112pp, ISBN 978-1-913251-13-0, £14.50 + £3 p&p. Cheques payable to: Transport Treasury Publishing, 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ).

THIS book's subtitle identifies the location of these memories – 'The travels of a Yorkshire newspaper photographer.' In fact, the back of the book's cover, **writes Geoff Courtney**, says they were taken by professional press photographers, while the introduction says they originally formed part of a newspaper archive by an unknown member of staff or a freelancer who was evidently an enthusiast, as not all were 'newsworthy.'

Whether one photographer or more, freelancer or staff, newsworthy or otherwise, the pictures form a medley of images offering an insight into the county's railways, from the early postwar years until the end of steam.

It is understandable why Alan Butcher believes not all the images are 'newsworthy,' but a number of them are, and that adds appeal to the publication as there is a reason for many of the images that goes beyond merely satisfying enthusiasts' appetites for photographs of steam traction.

That tone is set early on in the book, for one of the photographs is of a group of about 25 lady members of the South East Leeds Conservative Party on a platform at the city's station, looking forward to a day trip. They are posing in front of a Gresley 1935-designed former 'Coronation' express beaver-tail observation car that was in use as a general passenger carriage from 1948, but one senses that the car was not the reason for the photograph, even if its presence makes it relevant to a railway publication.

Rather, it is likely the image was taken by a local newspaper press photographer to record the ladies' day out, and standing out of shot would be a journalist colleague waiting to interview the women for a story to accompany the image. Ah, memories, memories for yours truly, who was a news journalist in Leeds in the mid-1960s.

News photographs punctuate the book: the opening ceremony of the third Woodhead tunnel in June 1954 starring, in no particular order, transport minister Alan Lennox-Boyd, the now preserved EM1 electric locomotive No. 26020, and a television crew; the old train shed at Leeds City station in the throes of demolition; and a selection of railway accidents, including A3 Pacific No. 60089 *Felstead* at Ardsley in October 1959.

The chapter on stations covers a wide area, as is to be expected for such a large county, with its many locations being listed in alphabetical order. Often there is no train in sight but sometimes crowds of people, two examples being a lengthy queue at Leeds City, perhaps drawn to the station by an overhead poster advertising excursions to Whitby for a fare of 12s.6d (62½p), and Market Weighton, where a platform is thronging with young and old alike, despite it being a cold and snowy day.

Steam and early DMU enthusiasts need not fret, however, for their interests are well served, including Royal Scots, Jubilees, and A4s, as well as humbler former LMS and LNER fayre, while lesser-known lines also get a decent look-in, including the Derwent Valley Light Railway and Easingwold Railway.

RAILWAY VARIETY IN UK'S LARGEST COUNTY AND FOND MEMORIES RECALLED OF DAYS GONE BY

Steam on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway 2023

(DVD/Blu-Ray, Steam Valley Productions, 1 hour 8 minutes, DVD £15, available exclusively from the railway at www.gwsr.com; Blue-Ray £20 from www.steamvalleyproductions.com. Both plus p&p).

Steam Valley Productions has impressed with its annual video compilation of action on the Severn Valley, Railway, as reviewed last issue. Now, the Droitwich-based company has turned its attention to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway with similar impact.

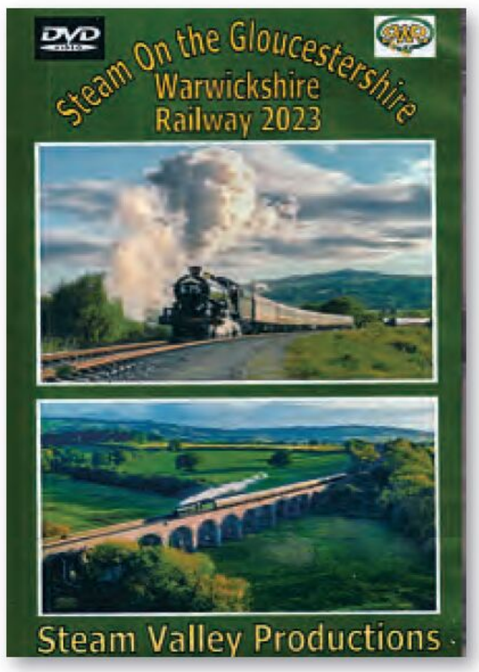
Producer Matt Fielding has joined the G/WR photographers group, which allowed him to go lineside.

Coverage is given to the Cotswold line's entire 2023 season, from the brief spring visit of BR Standard 4MT No. 75014 *Braveheart* to the mince pie specials in December. Repatriated GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* is seen visiting the line for the first time, and 2-8-0 Churchward heavy freight No. 2807, the oldest-surviving working GWR-built locomotive, is seen returning to traffic. There is also a special feature on GWR 2-8-0T No. 4270 from the end of 2002 to the start of the new season, filmed before its 10-yearly boiler certificate expired.

Other visitors featured are a BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 from the Great Central Railway, U 2-6-0 No. 31806 from the Swanage Railway, and Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 'Pug' 0-4-0ST No. 11243 from the East Lancashire Railway.

Also in action from the home fleet are WR 4-6-0s Nos. 7903 *Foremarke Hall* and 7820 *Dinmore Manor* and Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S N Co*. Nos. 4270, 35006, 75014 and 75014 can also be seen hauling demonstration freights.

As highlighted in Headline News in this issue, the Cotswold Festival of



Steam is lining up to be one of the big events of the year, anywhere in the sector.

If you need to be convinced to make a visit to this superbly scenic line for the first time, this video will show you just what you have been missing.

PRIME COTSWOLD ATTRACTION SHOWCASED

HEROES OF HERITAGE: THE NEXT GENERATION!

Robin Jones boarded a special train on the Nene Valley Railway celebrating the fundraising success of two young enthusiasts, while **Hugh Dougherty** spoke to Jonathan King, winner of the Heritage Railway Association Lord Faulkner Young Volunteer Award for 2024, to ask him why he loves volunteering.

THE efforts of two youngsters whose widely-praised achievements in raising £17,000 to restore a Nene Valley Railway signalbox gutted in an arson attack have been rewarded with a special train to mark its reopening nearly a year to the day.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 305, Orton Mere signalbox was severely damaged by one of several deliberately-started fires in the locality on March 12/13, 2023, which also destroyed several cars and damaged a sheltered accommodation home.

When dawn broke, it was apparent that structure of the building and roof needed major repairs, while most of the signalling equipment inside the 'box – which had been donated or purchased over the years to give a period look – had been severely affected. Thankfully, the actual lever frame escaped largely intact thanks to its robust construction; modern electronic signalboxes would not have survived.

The 'box had been brought from Maxey Crossing, north of Peterborough, and fitted with part of the lever from another Peterborough signalbox which had become redundant in the 1970s. Both were of a Midland Railway design.

The considerable damage to the interior impeded regular services on the line as they were unable to pass at Orton Mere, and movements along the Fletton Loop, which links the NVR to the East Coast Main Line, were restricted. However, enthusiasts Oliver Walker and Harry Cowley, then aged 12, and both students at Nene Park Academy, were having none of it. The pair, who had photographed services on the line, set up an online fundraising page and then undertook a 10-mile sponsored walk carrying collection boxes from Railworld Wildlife Haven at Peterborough on a footpath alongside the line to Wansford station on April 6 to raise even more money. Oliver and Harry are also James Bond fans, and the 'box appeared in the movie Octopussy, scenes from which were filmed on the NVR.

Thanks to the money they raised, the 'box was repaired to full working order. Better known for wagon restoration and creating resin signage, Tim Hobman, with the help of his brother James, carried out the restoration.

Four years ago, Tim decided to go self-employed and, making use of his skills, set up a business under the banner of Handy Hobman. Mostly taking on handyman-type jobs in the Peterborough/Stamford area, the restoration of Orton Mere signalbox was by far his biggest challenge to date.

Outside the restored Orton Mere signalbox, Harry Cowley and Oliver Walker hold the commemorative plaque unveiled by Nene Valley Railway president Miranda Rock DL (rear left) , accompanied by railway chairman Michael Purcell. ROBIN JONES

"Harry and Oliver's fundraising efforts are a fantastic example of how donations are so vital in helping the railway overcome difficulties and continue running during these challenging times."

Back to former glory

The Hobman brothers discovered that much of the damage was cosmetic. They then took more than two months cleaning down the charred woodwork, painting, replacing windows, and rebuilding the damaged parts of the building. Tim even spent a week stripping the lever frame back to metal and repainting it in the correct colours.

Towards the end of the year, visible progress had been made and basic testing was underway. By the end of January 2024, the railway's signalling equipment manager felt able to hand the signalbox back to the operating department for normal use from the beginning of February.

At the end of the process, the signalbox had been restored inside and out to its former glory, with some even commenting that it now looks better than ever before.

Both Tim and James said: "It was a long job, sometimes seeing us working into the evening to get things achieved, but the final outcome is something we are both very proud of. We hope that the NVR will get many years of enjoyment from our labours".

As mentioned, Tim also has another few strings to his bow. One of these is the creation of resin signage; mostly railway-related. He has a large collection of signs in his repertoire and has been commissioned to produce products for many heritage railways. Making use of his knowledge of wagons from his role as volunteer wagon manager at the NVR, many wagons in preservation around the country

Fundraising heroes Oliver and Harry are filmed for local TV in front of *Thomas* during the grand reopening ceremony on March 9. ROBIN JONES

Above: Miranda Rock DL unveils the plaque, watched on by Oliver and Harry.
Above inset: The commemorative plaque.
BOTH: ROBIN JONES

now carry his replica plates. Tim – who is also *Heritage Railway*'s main line correspondent - is always happy to discuss signage requirements and is also available for anything in the field of handyman. His website for signage, which also has a link to his social media and email address, can be found at https://handyhobman.wordpress.com

A grand reopening ceremony was held at Orton Mere on Saturday, March 9. A special train headed by the original *Thomas* the Tank Engine, aka Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 1800 of 1947, which was named by the Rev W Awdry, author of the much-loved children's books, ran from Wansford at 9.30am to Orton Mere for the occasion.

Oliver and Harry were the top VIPs on board and at Orton Mere, the pair were met by the firefighters from Peterborough Volunteer Fire Brigade who, supported by an on-call crew from Yaxley, heroically battled to salvage the historic structure after the arson attack.

Amid an atmosphere of gratitude and recognition, a commemorative plaque was unveiled by the NVR's recently-appointed honorary president, Miranda Rock DL.

Miranda, who took over the role last September, is executive chair of the Burghley House Preservation Trust and oversees the running of the Grade I-listed 16th-century grand country house at nearby Stamford and estate on behalf of the charity and its board of trustees.

Expert pair of hands

An art historian, she is Deputy Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire and a director of the Historic Houses Group, and her role at Burghley includes involvement in many community groups and charities. She is particularly committed to the support of children with special educational needs and is a founding trustee of T21, which oversaw the opening of The Birch Tree Café in nearby Easton-on-the-Hill in 2022 to support young adults with Down's syndrome.

Last year, according to the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, the largest percentage increase in visitors in England was seen by Burghley House, at 86% to 154,827 after the introduction of an adventure playground.

"With her knowledge and experience as a trustee running one of the largest tourist attractions in our area, we are sure that Miranda will bring valuable insight and advice, as well as fundraising expertise," said NVR chairman Michael Purcell.

Thomas's driver, Paul Roe, said: "It was a really good day and *Thomas* was in fine fettle. There was a crowd of about 100 people waiting for us at Orton Mere to see the unveiling of the plaque. It's amazing to have the signalbox fully restored and operational again."

Recently-appointed NVR general manager Tracy Spring said: "Harry and Oliver's fundraising efforts are a fantastic example of how donations are so vital in helping the railway overcome difficulties and continue running during these challenging times. Please consider making a donation by visiting our website at www.nvr.org.uk to help keep the NVR on the tracks."

At Orton Mere, *Thomas* the Tank Engine prepares to take the grand opening VIP party back to Wansford. ROBIN JONES

Members of the fire crew which tackled the arson attack on Orton Mere signalbox on March 13 last year stand in front of the restored structure. ROBIN JONES

The interior of the historical signalbox as restored by brothers Tim and James Hobman. ROBIN JONES

JONATHAN'S THE PRIDE OF THE COUNTY DOWN!

At the age of 24, Jonathan King has a very busy life. From Monday to Friday he's completing the fourth year of a law degree at Trinity College, Dublin, travelling home to his parents' house in Dundrum, County Down, by train to Belfast, and on by road, on Friday evenings. Then, on Saturday mornings, in what he describes as the highlight of his week, he reports for volunteer duty on his beloved Downpatrick & County Down Railway.

On Sundays, he heads back to Dublin and, as a steam man first and foremost, admits that he almost enjoys heading southwards on the diesel-hauled 'Enterprise' train!

"Saturday is my best day of the week," said Jonathan. "I've been volunteering at Downpatrick since my early teens, and I've loved every minute. My parents and sister are not interested in railways at all, but my grandfather, the late Jim Magorrian, was heavily involved with establishing the railway and, as a director, bought former CIE G class No. G613 for the line, long before I was born. I suppose you could say, that in the best traditions of railways, there was a generational family connection!"

Very much not dressed in his railway hi-vis overalls, the Pride of the County Down enjoys his award with Lord Faulkner, after receiving it at the Heritage Railway Association's annual awards event. MORGAN YOUNG

Learning from experts

One of the reasons Jonathan kept going back was the variety of tasks he was trusted with – and his portfolio is impressive indeed, as over the last decade he's worked on carriage restoration. He vividly remembers an early task removing rust from a carriage underframe over several weekends, since qualifying as a shunter, guard, and fireman, working as a tour guide, becoming social media and website editor, and, in 2023, being promoted to board member.

"It was great in terms of personal development, as a young person, to work with older people," said Jonathan. "That gave me confidence. I learned about the importance of teamwork, and I was actively taught and encouraged by older volunteers in senior positions, such as the late Bob Edwards, our steam expert, and the late Michael Collins, so I learned from them, retained that knowledge, and now, at just 24, I'm in the position of passing that on to other newer and younger volunteers.

"It's important that we attract young volunteers, but it's even more crucial for the future of heritage railways that we retain them by allocating suitable tasks and making them feel as welcome as I was as a teenager."

While at school, Jonathan is the first to admit that most of his classmates had no idea what he got up to at the weekends and stresses that, in Downpatrick and Dundrum, where there has not been a main line railway since as long ago as 1950, when the Ulster Transport Authority closed most of the of Belfast & County Down Railway at a stroke, many young people are simply not train-aware.

However, in his sixth year, he invited a group of schoolfriends to the railway – and they were amazed at what he was doing.

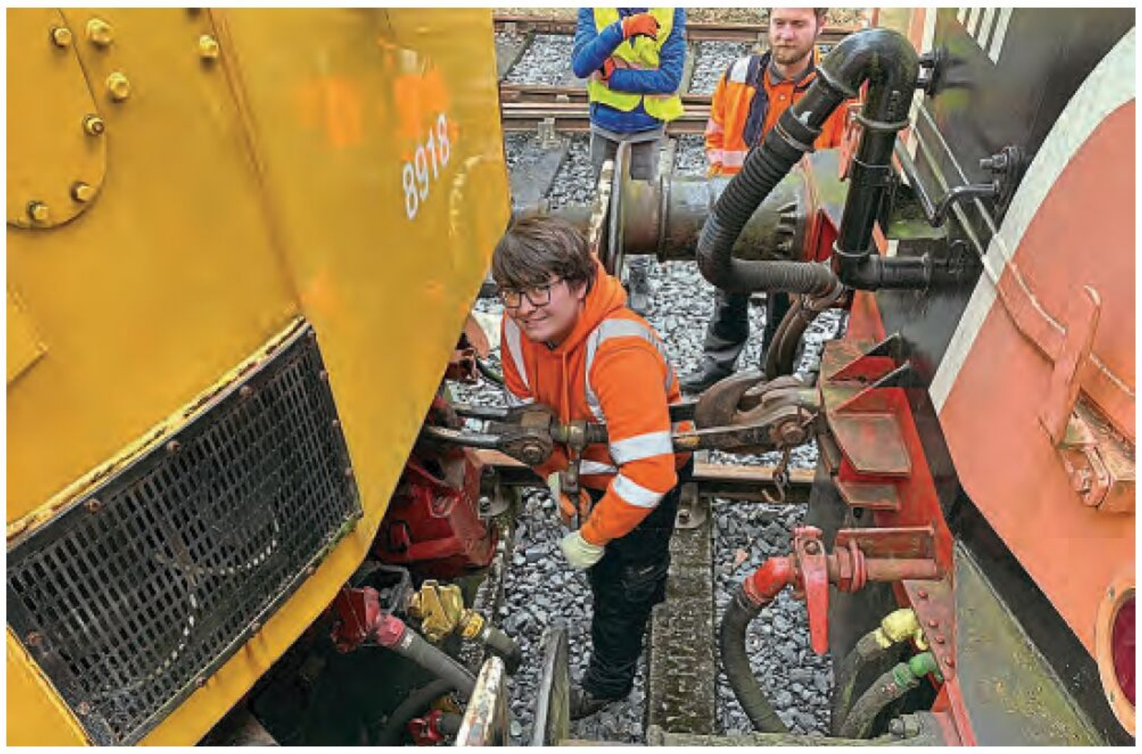
"They imagined I was volunteering on a miniature railway," he said. "When they saw the sheer scale of the trains and the tasks I was undertaking, they were really impressed.

"The result was that several volunteered at the railway as a component of their Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme programme and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, as well as spreading the word among other young people about the railway in and around Downpatrick."

Damage limitation

Jonathan's commitment has been tested to the hilt by recent events at Downpatrick, such as dealing with the devastating effects of vandalism in 2020, when he acted as night watchman to prevent further damage to the station and rolling stock, while he was literally up to his knees in stinking water when the railway was almost fatally flooded in November 2023.

"As a local volunteer, was I able to access the site when the flood struck to assess and try to limit damage even at that early stage. The damage was extensive, and if someone could wave a wand to repair all the track, locomotives, rolling stock and buildings affected, we'd need £2.5 million to get back to exactly where we were before the flood. The good news is, that with the Northern Ireland



Very much a hands-on volunteer, Jonathan, as a steam man, was caught by the camera coupling diesels up! D&CDR

Jonathan's late grandfather, John McGorrian, bought CIE Class 611 No. G613 for the Downpatrick & County Down Railway. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Assembly back at work, we are submitting applications to access flood damage funding, but we are still looking for donations. The flood wasn't all bad news for us, as we picked up 10 new volunteers as result of the publicity, so every cloud does have a silver lining."

As a steam man by preference, but one who's not afraid to get his hands dirty on a diesel, Jonathan prefers the simplicity of steam as you can see right away how it works, but with both types of traction, the attraction is getting your hands dirty, especially, as he puts it, for young people who live in the virtual reality world of the computer age.

"All of us, older but especially younger volunteers, enjoy really working with large components and putting everything together to make a locomotive, coach or wagon run. It's very satisfying doing such 'real' work and is especially appreciated by young people who live increasingly online. This is practical volunteering, and you learn a great deal."

Working closely with Jonathan is another 24-year-old, Morgan Young, who, as operations manager, carries a heavy responsibility. He's part of the team involved in steam locomotive restoration, and the railway was faced with the dilemma of restoring one of its two former Irish Sugar Company Orenstein & Koppel-built 0-4-0Ts, known affectionally at Downpatrick as the Sugar Puffs, or Great Southern & Western Railway 0-6-0T No. 90, built at Inchicore in 1875.

"People had strong views on which to restore, and there were constraints on volunteer time and money, and operational considerations also played a part, so Morgan and I did mechanical examinations on the locos," said Jonathan. "I used my legal training, you might say, to present a paper to the board, setting out all issues, costs, and options. The result was a very structured discussion, and the decision was made to restore No. 90, which I and younger volunteers are delighted to be working on together.

"We have a lot of fun working on what is Ireland's oldest working steam locomotive.

Above: No. 90 in fine fettle: the plan is to restore Ireland's oldest working steam locomotive to the condition it appeared in at Downpatrick before withdrawal for overhaul. JONATHAN KING

Right: No. 90 with the restoration gang of young volunteers. Jonathan is at bottom right. D&CDR

Above all, volunteering on a heritage railway may be hard work and challenging, but it also has to be, first and foremost, fun."

Thanks to volunteering, the new Pride of the County Down – the title takes its name from a well-known song about the area – says he has picked up multiple skills which he's recorded on his CV and feels that they will stand him in very good stead wherever his legal career takes him. One option after graduation and qualification might be getting into legal work with either Northern Ireland Railways or Iarnrod Eireann, and he is sure his experience of working on a very wide range of activities at Downpatrick could give him the edge on application.

However, whatever he does, this personable and modest young King, who was crowned at the HRA's award ceremony in Brighton in February (as reported in issue 316), will not let fame go to his head. He aims to keep coming to Downpatrick, where he as a young person has always been valued and made welcome. He is acutely aware of playing his part in preserving precious survivors of Irish railway history, from both north and south, and is so happy that the railway preservation movement in Ireland spans – and has always spanned – political and religious divisions.

If Jonathan has a message for the heritage railway movement, it's quite simple: he says that its future lies in the hands of young people like him. Young people offer energy, drive, commitment and, often, a fresh way of looking at matters. In Jonathan's view, it is up to the movement and individual heritage railways, as many already do, to really welcome young people and value them as the future of the sector. "What I want to see," he said, "is our railway fully restored after the flood, and we're well on the way to doing that, and for it to be fully appreciated as a vital part of the tourist offering of our part of County Down, contributing to the economy, welcoming all volunteers and, especially, young people to allow them to play their part in the life and development of the railway, while learning new skills and developing personally, just as I have had been privileged to do since I first volunteered more than a decade ago." HR

STAR LETTER

Loco is a part of Northants heritage – and not Ireland's

FOLLOWING on from Mark Smither's remarks regarding 3ft gauge Black Hawthorn 0-4-0ST No. 859 of 1885 *Kettering Furnaces No. 3*, (Platform, issue 316), Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, a registered educational trust, was never informed of the possible release of the locomotives at Penrhyn Castle. If we had been informed, our reply would have been very positive.

The locomotives rehomed from Penrhyn appear to have found appropriate homes with the exception of *Kettering Furnaces No. 3*. Saved for preservation in 1963 by the late Bernard Latham and put into exhibition condition by Kettering Iron and Coal Company, *No. 3* is the oldest-surviving locomotive from the Northamptonshire ironstone industry.

The only logical home for *Kettering No. 3* would be Irchester Narrow Gauge Museum. The museum is less than 10 miles from Kettering and is responsible for the Northamptonshire Industrial Narrow Gauge Collection. The collection includes examples of metre, 3ft, 2ft and 1ft 8in gauges. *Kettering Furnaces No. 3*, having spent all its working life at Kettering, would fit our collecting policy exactly. The museum has provision for undercover accommodation and the resources to properly maintain its collection.

The Black Hawthorn 0-4-0STs delivered to Kettering Iron and Coal Co in 1885 were, by the mid-1890s, superseded by Manning Wardle 0-6-0s, the reason being that the quarry line was extended to nearly three miles – beyond the capacity of the Black Hawthorns, the four-wheel locos generally being confined to duties at the furnaces (see Tonks Vol 3. Kettering Area, page 181). This fact implies *No. 3* will not be very suitable for a six-mile run!

If Waterford looks to raise £250,000, then why not 'do a Southwold'; i.e, raise the money to build a missing Peckett 3ft gauge 2-6-0, 4-4-0 or 0-4-4 as used on various 3ft Irish lines. I am certain Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum would like to assist.

K Adams, trustee, Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, Northamptonshire.

On loan at Irchester from the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn is metre gauge Corpet Louvet 0-6-0T No. 493 of 1888 No. 4 *Cambrai*. Between 1936 and 1956 it ran on the Loddington Tramway, which linked ironstone pits near the Northamptonshire village to the standard gauge line from Kettering to Cransley, and during 1956-58 it worked on the Waltham Iron Ore Tramway on the edge of the Belvoir Estate in Leicestershire. ROBIN JONES

Metre gauge Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2029 of 1942 *Wellingborough Tramway No. 87*, stored outside the Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum. Currently being repainted, it is one of three Pecketts from the Wellingborough Tramway at the museum. The tramway linked a series of ironstone mines and quarries with the Midland Railway and later with the ironworks on the north side of the town and operated between 1875 and 1966. ROBIN JONES

Petition to keep *Kettering Furnaces No. 3* in the UK has taken off

A PETITION to stop Black Hawthorn 0-4-0ST *Kettering Furnaces No. 3* from moving from Penrhyn Castle to the Waterford & Suir Valley Railway in Ireland is growing.

The petition is at www.change.org/p/stop-kettering-furnaces-no-3-from-being-exported and I have a dedicated Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/813188787287048

An official complaint has been made to the Charities Commission and MPs have been stirred into action (well, writing letters at least!). Most press articles on the subject have included a reference link to the Waterford appeal for funds towards restoration so surely, if only in the interests of balance, information about a campaign to retain the locomotive in the UK should be featured?

There is a 'bad smell' about the way the National Trust has gone about all this, and while I applaud the placement of the majority of the collection as considered and appropriate (maybe more luck than judgement), the glaring exception is the giving away of a national treasure to another country. The National Trust must have been aware of a possible backlash.

Stephen Seale, email

Electric stock owners should promote their vehicles more

COMPARED with steam haulage, the maintenance, storage and operation of electric vehicles would seem to be relatively easy. Now, whether the purchasing public is as enthusiastic about EMUs as it is about steam is a moot point.

It is up to the owner/operators of the stock to market them well. The now-closed Coventry Electric Railway Museum seems to prove it's not a viable long-term niche. But given the publicity the 4VEP's recent visit to Waterloo has received, it would seem to be possible; there may be short-term (gala?) interest. Perhaps a heritage railway like the Epping Ongar Railway might be persuaded?

In terms of 2024 landmark celebrations referred to in your opinion column (issue 317), those mentioned, in my view, will be dwarfed by the interest in the Stockton & Darlington Railway's 200th anniversary next year. I predict this is going to be a very big series of events, attracting far more people than mere niche enthusiasts. If I was involved with heritage railways now, I would be asking what I could do to capitalise on the big celebrations coming next year; a little bird has told me that this is beginning to happen. I, for one, am already planning my own SD200 tour.

John Grimley, Toronto, Canada.

➜ **See News, page 18.**

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Dukedog in Welsh BR service days

AS a subscriber to your excellent magazine for many years, I was very interested to read in issue 317 that one of my favourite locomotives, GWR Dukedog 4-4-0 No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley*, has returned home after 64 years, finding a place in its former shed at Aberystwyth courtesy of the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Here is a picture of it I took in August 1960 at Ynyslas station, showing it on a local train from Machynlleth to Aberystwyth, shortly before withdrawal later that year.

At this time it was being maintained at 89C Machynlleth shed. A true survivor!

Roger Hodson, Bournville, Birmingham.

➜ See News, pages 20/21.

GWR Dukedog No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley* at Ynylas in 1960. ROGER HODSON

The main line steam situation is a modern dilemma

I READ with sadness the footnote by Don Benn to his article in issue 317 where he says that his future Main Line Performance contributions may become, at best, intermittent.

"To me, being pushed around by a diesel locomotive or not knowing if the diesel is working or not, isn't steam locomotive performance," he wrote. He is, of course, correct in that statement.

That said, someone who had the privilege of being present on the record-breaking run with the 'Bournemouth Belle' nearly 60 years ago, as described in his article, is in a good position to compare and contrast 'then and now', as his column title indicates.

The artist David Shepherd once wrote in the house magazine of the loco group of which he was president that "everyone who owns a racehorse and who has to keep it tied up in a backyard must look longingly to the racetrack where the beast can have her head."

And therein is the 21st century dilemma. Heritage railway lines are in little doubt as to their 'raison d'etre', but it is on the main line where express passenger steam really comes to life. The fact that it is in the hands of operators who run businesses to make money while also securing heritage steam for the nation creates a double edge to the activities. Current issues over rolling stock and the operational use of diesels are just two examples of the conflict.

Much is being said publicly by promoters and operating companies to defend their response to these issues, but the ultimate test will be how each deal with the dilemma going forward. That must include a much-needed openness about the nature of the offer to the public.

Time will tell how the market responds. The good news is that not all operators are responding in the same way and that, ultimately, will sort out the sheep from the goats.

Alan Rawlings, email

The Angolan railway which ran on wood-burning steam

READING recently a modest section in one of my regular gardening magazines on eucalyptus plants, I was immediately reminded of Angola's Benguela Railway in its heyday, when eucalyptus wood-fired much/most of the steam locomotives that powered the trains for about half a century. This is written up very well in the now vintage 1963 book Railways of Southern Africa, by John R Day, pages 115-129.

About 85 million trees were claimed to be growing, tended by 3000 foresters, planting 16 million trees a year for a sustained harvesting programme.

The main workshops were at the then named Nova Lisboa, and the entire system fell into disuse after the disastrous independence civil war that 'officially' ended in 2002. Despite the war, the trees would still continue to grow, and apart from any felled for non-railway purposes, which would be understandable, there ought to be a significant potential harvest awaiting the chainsaw. This century, the Chinese have moved in here as in other place in Africa and the entire line is claimed to be rebuilt but using Chinese-built diesel locomotives. One hopes these are having more success than their equivalents a generation earlier on the also Chinese-built Tanzam Railway.

So, is there a Dai Woodham-style steam locomotive graveyard at Nova Lisboa (now called Huambo) awaiting restoration? One might guess after half a century of disuse that many removeable bits, especially non-ferrous items, would have been vandalised, but miracles of restoration have been done elsewhere.

One could also claim steam technology is more suited to developing countries due to its simplicity compared with diesel power, and the need to import spare parts rather than using village blacksmith skills to keep steam locomotives operational. This, of course, is an unfashionable point of view, but that it might actually work better might be a modest consideration, and, of course, wood-fired steam is not a fossil fuel operation so ought to tick at least one extra box.

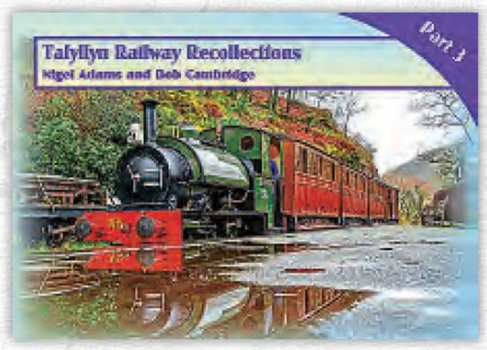
Anyone been to Angola recently, or is it time for a fact-finding visit?

Wesley Paxton, email

The RAILWAY Magazine

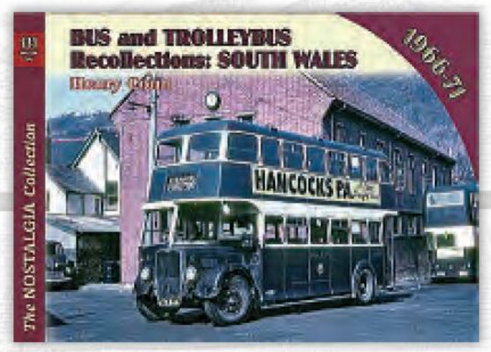
BOOK CORNER

The Fairbourne Railway
Nigel Adams
£11.99 – Quote 15543



Talyllyn Railway Recollections
Part 3
Nigel Adams & Bob Cambridge
£10.99 – Quote 15811

The Stately Trains Collection
Mike Heath
£10.00 - Quote 15804



No 131 Bus and Trolleybus Recollections: South Wales
Henry Conn
£10.99 - Quote 15627

Order your copy today, visit
www.mortonsbooks.co.uk
Or call **01507 529529** and quote the five-digit number

MORTONS BOOKS WANT TO HEAR ABOUT OUR LATEST BOOKS?

JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB!
AND GET **10% OFF** YOUR FIRST ORDER!

www.mortonsbooks.co.uk/newsletter

To view the privacy policy for Mortons Media Group, please visit www.mortons.co.uk/privacy

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
VISIT WWW.CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/HRDPS FOR MORE INFO

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: Weds-Suns.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Weds + Apr 11/12, 24, May 5.

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.
Running: Suns.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway
10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Running: W/Es, sch hols, bank 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.

Hollycombe Steam in the Country
2ft gauge, 1½ miles. Liphook, Hants. Tel: 01428 724900.
Open: Suns & bank hols from May 5.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns + Sats from May 4.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols + Tues & Thurs from May 7.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: Apr 20/21, May 5, 19

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Running: Thurs-Suns, bank hols.

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.
Running: Suns from May 5.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Running: W/Es.

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, 1¾ 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 until May 4.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns + Apr 13, May 11.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open daily.

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, bank hols + Thurs & Fris from May 2.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Running: May 6, 27.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Thurs, Suns.

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
Reopens: Spring 2024.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415. **Running: W/Es, 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 13, May 11, 25.

Seaton Tramway
2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.
Running: Daily.

Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY. Tel: 01761 411221
Running: Suns + May 11.

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: Tues-Thurs, W/Es. Daily from May 1.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Running: W/Es, bank hols.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Tues, Weds W/Es, bank hols + May 3.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Running: Apr 141 21, 28, May 11/12.

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, bank hols + May 4.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Apr 14, May 4-6, 25-27.

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.
Running: W/Es.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. Tel: 01621 784898.
Open: W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: May 12, 26/27.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Newly-restored BR Mk. 1 BSK No. E35334 arrived by road at Cambrian Heritage Railways' Oswestry yard on March 12. The 1962-built carriage has been restored to traffic by the line's carriage and wagon volunteers based at CHR's Llynclys South site, four miles south of Oswestry. It is planned for the vehicle to be used on CHR's regular public services which operate from Oswestry to Weston Wharf this season. DAVE ROLL/CHR

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Main line diesels will take centre stage at the Severn Valley Railway's May 16-19 diesel gala, with GB Railfreight's Class 73 No. 73119 booked to attend. Its appearance will be poignant for many at the line because the locomotive has been named after the late long-standing SVR supporter Paul Taylor, a champion of both the SVR and the SVR-based Class 50 Alliance, who often used its locomotives on the charity rail tours he organised. It will feature alongside a Class 69 also being supplied by GBRF, and subject to availability, this is expected to be No. 69009. The booked locomotive has just been turned out in retro Western Region maroon livery and has been named *Western Consort* to commemorate the Class 52 Western locomotives. Meanwhile, both Colas and Freightliner will each be supplying a Class 70 locomotive in different liveries for the weekend.
BOB TILLER/SVR

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles. Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

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-Suns. Running: Diesel W/Es, steam first Sun of month.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri. Running: Suns.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns, bank hols + May 4.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon.
Tel: 01491 835067
Running: Apr 13, May 5/6, 11/12.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open and running: Weds, W/Es.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: W/Es, 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.
Running: Suns + Apr 13, May 18.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Suns, bank hols + Apr 20.

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.
Running: Suns.

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.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Suns, bank hols from May 5 + May 4.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: Apr 21, 28, May 19.

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, bank hols.
Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre
Donegal.
Open: Mon-Sat.
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.

Museum of Scottish Railways
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01506 825855.

National Railway Museum
Leeman Road, York.
Open: Daily.
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: Weds, W/Es.
Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum
Glasgow.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0141 287 2720.

STEAM – Museum of the GWR
Swindon.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum
Tiverton, Devon.
Open: Tues-Sats.
Tel: 01884 256295.

West Cumberland Railway Museum
St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups – contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Weds, W/Es + May 6.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Thurs.

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, bank hols.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns.

Evesham Vale Railway
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Foxfield Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs. Tel: 01782 396210.
Running: Suns, May 6, 18.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles. Toddington, Glos. Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323. www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: W/Es, bank hols + Apr 26.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Ruddington, Notts. Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Open: W/Es.

Leek & Rudyard Railway
10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.
Running: W/Es, bank hols from May 4.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: W/Es, bank hols from Apr 27.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Suns + May 4, 6.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunsbury Hill, Northampton.
Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: Apr 14, 28, May 5/6, 19, 26/27.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: W/Es, bank hols + Weds from May 15.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Open: Tues, Thurs. Running: Apr 14, May 5/6, 12, 26/27.

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 + Thurs from May 2 + Apr 18/19, May 1, 8.

Statfold Barn Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU.
Tel: 01827 830389.
Open: Fris-Suns.

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: Suns, bank hols.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: May 5/6, 11, 18, 25-27.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Running: Sats.

NORTH WEST

Blackpool Heritage Depot & Tram Tours
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Blackpool, Lancs.
Tel: 01253 209521.
www.blackpoolheritage.com
Depot: Mons, Sats.
Heritage tram tours: W/Es + May 6, 8.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 342309.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

The newest of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway double Fairlies, No. 8 *James Spooner,* passes through the outskirts of Blaenau Ffestiniog with a 'Mountain Spirit' service on the first day of the railway's operating season on March 23.
CHRIS PARRY/FFWHR

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 670453. **Running: Suns from May 5.**

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Reopens: TBA.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles.
Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Running: Thurs-Mons.

Kirkby Stephen East
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Open: Suns.

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.

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: Sats, bank hols.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles.
Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Opens: Tues-Suns.

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: May 4-6, 18, 25-27.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: Apr 27, May 11, 18, 25.

Bowes Railway
Standard gauge, 1¾ 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.

Pre-order Issue 319: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks.
Tel: 01756 795189.
Running: Tues, W/Es, bank hols + May 10.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Running: Apr 20/21. W/Es from May 4

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire. Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: April 27/28, May 5/6.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Running: W/Es + May 6.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Grosmont, North Yorks.
Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Daily.

Scarborough North Bay Railway
20in gauge, 7/8 mile. Scarborough, North Yorks. Tel: 01723 368791.
Running: Daily.

Stephenson Steam Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields. Tel: 0191 277 7135.
Open: W/Es, bank hols. Running: Apr 21, 28

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Sats + Tues & Suns (from May 5) + Apr 14, 16, 18, 21 23, 25.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols + Tues from May 14.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles.
Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.
Open: W/Es, bank hols + May 8. 10.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

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

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan. Tel: 01685 722988.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile. Corris, near Machynlleth. Tel: 01654 761701.
Running: Sats + bank hols from Apr 27 + May 5, 26

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

Ffestiniog Railway
2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Daily.

Gwili Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 01267 238213.
Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns, bank hols.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Suns-Fris + May 4, 25.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 07956 082305.
Reopens: TBA.

Llangollen Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Llangollen, Denbighshire.
Tel: 01978 860979.
Running: Fris-Suns, bank hols + Thurs from May 2.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Running: W/Es, 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 11¾in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.
Running: Daily.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.
Running: Thurs, W/Es, bank hols + Weds from May 1.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles. Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Daily.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and heritage events in the coming weeks

APRIL
- 12 Seaton Tramway Sensory Tram
- 13 Talyllyn Railway Diesel Running Day
- 13/14 East Lancashire Railway Western Region Weekend
- 13/14 Llangollen Railway Branch Line Gala
- 13/14 Statfold Country Park Model Railway Show
- 19/20 Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway 'The Snowdonian'
- 18-21 Severn Valley Railway Spring Steam Gala
- 20/21 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Spring Transport Festival
- 20/21 Great Central Railway Road Rail Steam Weekend
- 20/21 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Vintage Weekend
- 21 Crich Tramway Village Model Trams Exhibition
- 26-28 Epping Ongar Railway Steam Gala
- 26-28 Great Central Railway Spring Diesel Gala
- 26-28 Mid-Hants Railway Spring Steam Gala
- 27/28 Spa Valley Railway Day Out With Thomas
- 28 West Lancashire Light Railway Friendly Engines Day

MAY
- 3-6 West Somerset Railway Spring Steam Spectacular
- 4-6 East Lancashire Railway Day Out With Thomas
- 4-6 Didcot Railway Centre 1940s Weekend
- 4-6 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Beer Festival
- 4-6 Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Steam Gala and Behind the Scenes
- 4-6 Spa Valley Railway Day Out With Thomas
- 5 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Brake Van Day
- 5/6 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Day Out With Thomas
- 10-12 Bluebell Railway Branch Line Weekend
- 10-12 Didcot Railway Centre 55th Anniversary Celebration
- 10-12 Swanage Railway Diesel Gala
- 11 Welsh Highland Railway Caernarfon Food Fair
- 11/12 Great Central Railway Open Extravaganza
- 11/12 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Model Railway Weekend
- 11/12 Statfold Country Park Steam in Miniature
- 12 Crich Tramway Village Model Trams Exhibition
- 12 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Vintage Road & Rail Rally
- 12 Mid-Norfolk Railway Vintage Bus Day
- 16-19 Severn Valley Railway Spring Diesel Festival
- 18/19 Bluebell Railway Road Meets Rail
- 18/19 Ffestiniog Railway Model Railway Workshop
- 18/19 Great Central Railway Heritage Bus Rally and Railcar Weekend
- 18/19 Kent & East Sussex Railway 1940s Weekend
- 19 Crich Tramway Village dog-friendly day
- 19 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Festival of Transport

Organising a gala or other big event and want it included? Let us know by emailing Owen Hayward at: ohayward@mortons.co.uk

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair Caereinion, Powys. Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Tues, W/Es, + Apr 26.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Brechin, Angus.
Tel: 01356 622992.
Running: May 11.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Reopens: May 26.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire. Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: W/Es + May 3.

Lathalmond Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, Lathalmond, near Dunfermline. Tel: 07379 914801.
Open: Suns.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire. **Running: Suns from Mar 31.**

Royal Deeside Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory, Kincardineshire. Tel: 01330 844416.
Running: W/Es.

Strathspey Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Aviemore, Inverness-shire. Tel: 01479 810725.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway
3ft gauge. Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Running: Sats-Mons.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
5ft 3in gauge. Drumod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: 028 4461 5779. **Reopens: TBA.**

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.

RH&DR

Steam & Diesel Gala

Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th May

Celebrating its 30th birthday, "Spitfire", will be joining us from The Bure Valley Railway for this year's gala celebrations.

Spitfire

SCAN FOR DETAILS

www.rhdr.org.uk @rhdr @rhanddr @rhdr1927

RH&DR ROMNEY, HYTHE & DYMCHURCH RAILWAY

CASTLE COMBE STEAM & VINTAGE RALLY

New exhibitors and traders welcome on

18th & 19th May 2024

Contact 07739 518980 • www.castlecombesteamrally.co.uk

RIBBLE STEAM RAILWAY AND MUSEUM

With Ribble Steam Railway's fascinating working and static exhibits, the museum is a proud reminder of what makes Preston and Lancashire the vibrant place it is today.

Discover the history of Preston's Docks and the stories of the first electric trains, then hop aboard a steam train and travel the railway's 1¼ mile dock and riverside line. Uncover a hidden part of the city as the line passes Preston Marina and ventures over its impressive swing bridge.

Job Opportunities

Hop aboard a Steam Train and discover the history of Preston's Docks and Railway...

Contact us on 01772 728800 or visit www.ribblesteam.org.uk

GUARANTEE YOUR COPY

PRE-ORDER YOUR NEXT ISSUE

3 GREAT REASONS

- Delivered straight to your door
- Free postage and packaging
- Buy direct from the publisher

SCAN ME...

Pre-order today: www.classicmagazines.co.uk/issue/preorder

GLOUCESTERSHIRE WARWICKSHIRE RAILWAY

COTSWOLD FESTIVAL OF STEAM

25th -27th May 2024

'WESTERN WORKHORSES'

see the Saint, Hall, Manor and Grange!

6880 Betton Grange (courtesy of the 6880 Betton Grange Society)

2999 Lady of Legend (courtesy of Didcot Railway Centre)

Narrow gauge steam rides • Traction Engines

Locomotive and Carriage & Wagon sheds open

Goods train and Brake Van rides (additional fee)

Free bus link to Cheltenham Spa station • Trade stands

(All locomotives & attractions subject to availability) • Image copyright Jack Boskett

gwsr.com for tickets & more information

Tel: 01242 621405

Apedale Valley Light Railway

Narrow Gauge in North Staffordshire.

Lister Fest

May 18 & 19 - ListerFest

Visiting locos, stationary engines, autotrucks & more!

www.avlr.org.uk

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

Photo Credit: Tony Middleton

Summer Diesel Festival

6th June - 8th June 2024

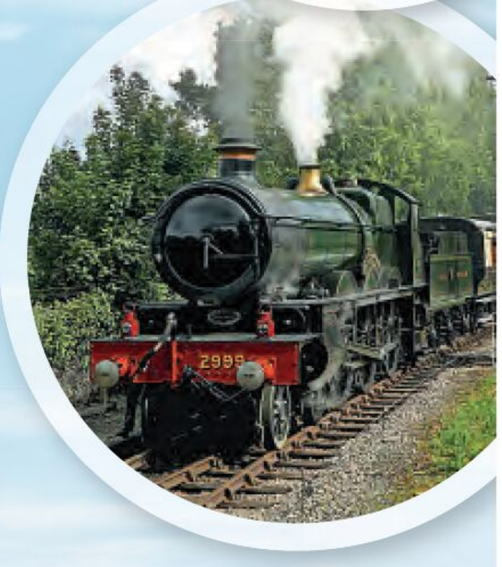
Advance discount tickets available online. For full information regarding the event please visit our website.

01643 704996 info@wsrail.net
www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

DIDCOT RAILWAY CENTRE

Make tracks for a great day out

Explore this 21-acre living museum and unearth almost two centuries of railway history. Stroll through the original 1932 Engine Shed and see magnificent preserved locomotives – you can even climb onto the footplates of some!



01235 817 200 | didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk
info@didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk

NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS RAILWAY

NYMR

DIESEL GALA

14, 15 & 16 June

KIDS GO FREE

Fuelling the past, join us for a weekend celebrating heritage diesel locomotives.

BOOK ONLINE NOW
NYMR.CO.UK

EPPING ONGAR RAILWAY

FESTIVAL OF STEAM

27 APRIL - 12 MAY

Starring:

45690 Leander

(final steamings of current certificate)

and

2999 Lady of Legend

Up to 5 locomotives in action!

THREE exciting steam filled weekends!
TWO guest engines!
ONE Festival of Steam this Spring!

eorailway.co.uk | 01277 365200

BRESSINGHAM

HERITAGE STEAM GALA

Saturday 4th - Monday 6th May 2024

Bressingham Steam Museum

For more information on tickets please visit our website:
www.bressingham.co.uk

STAY A WHILE

DERBYSHIRE

Luxury Lodge Holidays in Derbyshire.

Home to many heritage railways.

Darwin Forest
LUXURY LODGE HOLIDAYS

Call 01629 732428 or visit www.darwinforest.co.uk

FFESTINIOG/WHR

Penrhyndeudraeth
near Porthmadog

Bungalow, sleeps 4, GCH, superb views, FREE WiFi, available all year. Ffestiniog trains pass below. No pets.

Tel: 01766 770740
Email: alanmaureenpye@gmail.com

ISLE OF MAN

THE WELBECK HOTEL
Hotel • Apartments • Restaurant

Mona Drive, Off Central Promenade, Douglas
ISLE OF MAN IM2 4LF
Tel +44 (0)1624 675663
Email: mail@welbeckhotel.com
No. 1 on Trip Advisor
www.welbeckhotel.com

LINCOLNSHIRE

Two self catering cottages in the market town of Louth

Sweetpea Cottage sleeps 5. Rainhill Cottage sleeps 4. Well behaved pets welcome. Secure parking available. Free Wi-Fi available. **Price £450 p/w based on 2 sharing** *(other tariffs available).*

Telephone Debbie
01507 606772/ 07495 767007
http://www.railwaycottages.org/

NORTH YORK MOORS

The Hideaway

Spacious, well equipped cottage for 2, situated by the lineside down the beautiful Newtondale Valley 3/4 miles from Levisham Station. Walking, birding & cycling from the door. Whitby and the coast 20 miles.

Tel: Jan on 01751 476874
www.hideawaynorthyorkshire.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY

NORTH YORK MOORS

Self catering railway carriages

Five miles east of Pickering
Twelve miles from the coast

- *Each self contained carriage sleeps up to six*
- *Bed linen, towels etc included*
- *Heating & electricity included*

For full details visit www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk • Tel: 01723 859024

THE RAILWAY HUB

A CENTRAL POINT FOR ALL RAIL NEWS PAST AND PRESENT.

STEAM | DIESEL | ELECTRIC | MODELLING

www.therailwayhub.co.uk

Includes a FREE easy to use app for on-the-go access

The Railway Magazine · Heritage Railway · Express · Steam Days · Railways Illustrated

NORTH YORK MOORS

HUNGATE COTTAGES

11 highly individual self catering cottages set in peaceful gardens, a short walk to Pickering Railway Station, the starting point of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Tel 01751 476382 • Mob 07876 404152
Book online at **hungatecottages.co.uk**

Self-catering holiday accommodation

THE OLD STATION

The Old Station, Allerston, North Yorkshire

This former station ticket office has been carefully renovated and converted into a **spacious** two bedroomed cottage, each with a walk-in shower. Lounge and dining area contains several restored period features. There is a wood burning stove in the original fireplace and underfloor heating throughout. Kitchen includes freezer, dishwasher and washer dryer.

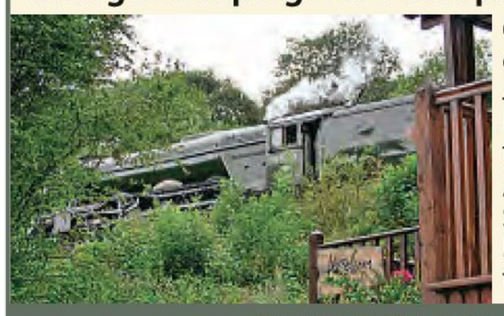
Contact 01723 859024 • www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE

RIVER STEAM HOLIDAYS

Ship Inn Lane, Highley Nr. Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 6NU

Set within the heart of the Severn valley, a selection of six lodges and cottages sleeping 2-8 + occupants.



Offering stunning views of Locos as they pass in and out of Highley Severn Valley Steam Railway Station. Just twenty metres below the tracks. The furthest house from the station is sixty metres and the closest thirty metres. See, hear and smell the trains.

A bonus is the River Severn 20 metres below with barbel fishing a plenty.

07801 981629
www.riversteamholidays.co.uk

SCOTLAND

Helmsdale Station

Self catering accommodation

4 bedrooms in listed station building on the Far North Line.

Non profit making community project.

01743 588654
www.helmsdalestation.co.uk

WEST SOMERSET

BLUE ANCHOR

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

Traditional Great Western camping coach.

Updated to comfortable modern standards. Sleeps 6. Right by station, yards from beach, steam trains running by...

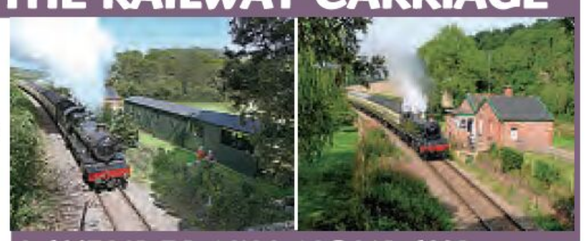
www.britishrailholidays.co.uk
or call 07850 741628

WEST SOMERSET

RAILWAY COTTAGE and THE RAILWAY CARRIAGE

* Fabulous views of West Somerset Railway
* THE RAILWAY COTTAGE - 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, sleeping 6 in comfort
* Wood burning stove * 1 mile from great pub
* THE RAILWAY CARRIAGE - 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, sleeping 4 in comfort

BOTH HAVE: * Hot tubs * Wi-fi
* Plasma TVs etc * Allow well behaved dogs
* Enclosed gardens with views of the Quantock Hills and Exmoor.



LAVENDER HILL HOLIDAYS
Tel: 01984 656622 * kate@lavenderhillholidays.co.uk
* www.lavenderhillholidays.co.uk

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

RAILWAY RETREATS

www.railwayretreats.co.uk
Tel: 07494 520867 / 01797 253850 • Email: bookings@railwayretreats.co.uk

MK1 Plum & Custard Sleeps 6

- Two double bedrooms • Bunk bedroom
- Family bathroom
- En-suite bathroom
- Open plan lounge and dining area
- Full kitchen with everything you need

The carriage also offers you a great view of the station, surrounding countryside and golden sunsets from the elevated glass balcony.

ICI Salt Van Sleeps 3

- En-Suite Shower Room
- Double glazed • Fridge • BBQ
- Individual Private Garden and Outdoor seating overlooking the railway and surrounding Rother Valley.

GWR TOAD Brake Van Sleeps 2

- Fitted kitchen/dining area
- Double bedroom
- Free Sat TV
- En suite shower room/WC
- Double glazed

The full fitted kitchen and balcony providing panoramic views of the station platform and Rother Valley

Guns & Roses Ammunition Wagon
Sleeps 2+2

- Double bedroom • Sofa bed • Shower room/WC
- Microwave • Fridge
- Barbecue • Individual garden
- Double glazed with great views of the station platform.

Emerald Express
Sleeps 5

- Two bedrooms
- Family Shower Room
- Full Kitchen
- Open Plan Lounge and dining area
- Elevated Balcony giving a great view of the K&ESR

CLASSIFIED

EXPRESS GOODS

Contact Craig Amess on 01507 529537 • camess@mortons.co.uk

AUCTIONS

www.thepaperchase.co.uk

The latest auction of 800 printed transport collectables is online from April 14th - 30th. Railway, bus and London Transport items including official publications, posters, timetables, maps, photographs, negatives, slides, badges, labels, tickets, etc.
Fully illustrated catalogue at the above web address.

01234 391545

BOOKS

Visitors to Matlock are welcome.
Please call or email in advance before travelling.

BILL HUDSON
TRANSPORT BOOKS

FAMILY RUN BUSINESS SELLING NEW AND SECOND HAND RAILWAY BOOKS
To view our stock please call or email in advance
www.billhudsontransportbooks.co.uk Call: 07921 833469

RAILWAY BOOKS

Rare and out of print • 5,000+ to view at
www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk
01974 821281

NICK TOZER
RAILWAY BOOKS

RAILWAY BOOKS BOUGHT AND SOLD
Free Railway Booksearch Service
155 Church Street, Paddock, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 4UJ
Shop open: Tue & Wed 11:00-17:00 + Thu 14:00-20:00
Tel: 01484 518159 (answer machine)
web: www.railwaybook.com email: nick@railwaybook.com

The Smokebox bookshop of Kingston revived
Stall F2B at Antiques of Kingston KT2 6ND
specialises in rail and road transport, selling books, photographs and ephemera.
Reasonable prices. Open 7 days. Close to rail and bus stations.
Contact Nick 07722 084314 Email: nickcountertenor@gmail.com

Published 30 March
BRANCH LINES AROUND PRESTON AND LANCASTER
Recently Published
BEATTOCK TO CARSTAIRS
PRESTON TO THE FYLDE COAST
£19.95 each + P&P MAIL ORDER
www.middletonpress.co.uk
126A Camelsdale Rd, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3RJ
T: 01730 813169 E:sales@middletonpress.co.uk

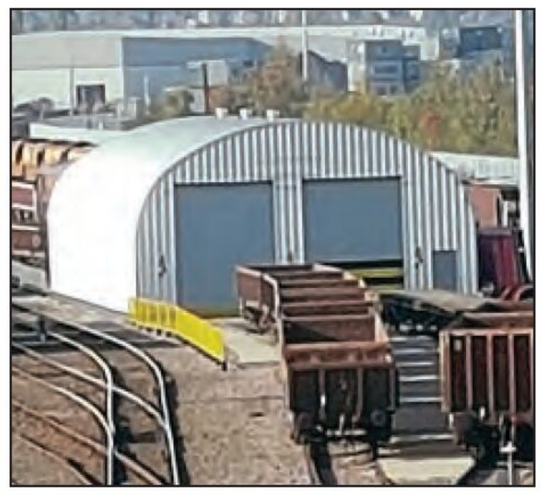
FOR SALE

• PROCAST •
MANUFACTURERS OF HIGH QUALITY
RAILWAY REPRODUCTIONS
IN BRASS AND ALUMINIUM
THE RANGE INCLUDES:-
Steam Locomotives
nameplates, train headboards, builders plates, shed plates, smoke box number plates and many more.
For catalogue and price list please send 2 1st class stamps to:- PROCAST (DEPT HR), Netherfield Mills, Bradford Road, Cleckheaton BD19 3JP
Tel: 01274 871111
Email: procastco@aol.com
Website: www.procast.co.uk

BUILDINGS

STEEL BUILDINGS

HEAVY DUTY STEEL BUILDINGS
- Extremely cost effective
- Workshops/Garaging/Storage
- Widths from 20ft to 70ft
- Unlimited Lengths
- Buildings to BS 5950
- Finance available



Tel: 01709 578333

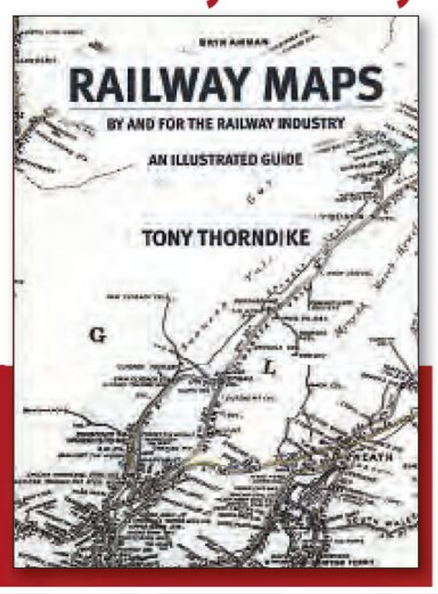
BLUELINE BUILDINGS LIMITED
e: sales@bluelinebuildings.co.uk • www.bluelinebuildings.co.uk

FOR SALE

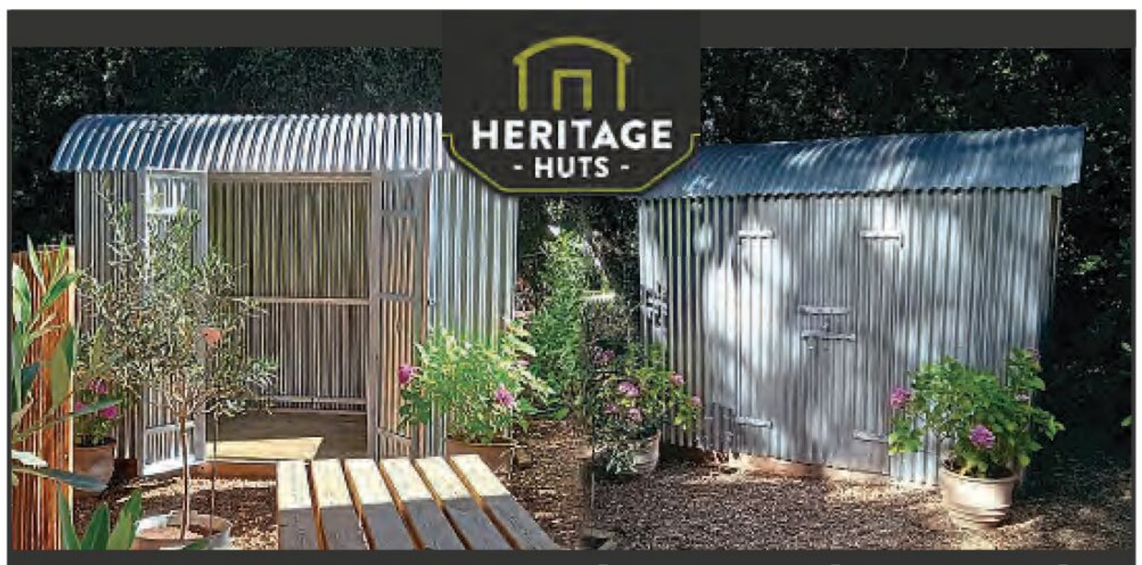
A 64-page fully illustrated guide to railway maps, primarily produced by and for the railway industry

It includes definitive lists of those by Macaulay, Airey, the Railway Clearing House and Quail/TRACKmaps, and selections by numerous railway companies and contemporary atlas compilers.

Price £12.50 plus p&p.



Available from
York Publishing Services, 64 Hallfield Road, Layerthorpe, York, YO31 7ZQ.
enqs@yps-publishing.co.uk
01904 431 213

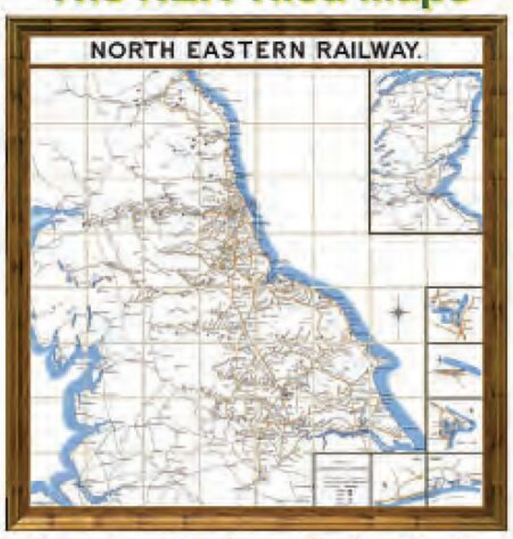


07973 204595 • www.heritage-huts.co.uk

Please mention HERITAGE RAILWAY when responding to adverts

FOR SALE

The NER Tiled Maps



Handcrafted again by their original manufacturers

Full, threequarter and half sizes are now available from

The North Eastern Tile Company
4 Foundry Cottages, Wrelton, Pickering, YO188PF
01751 477216
www.northeasterntilecompany.co.uk

www.phototransport.com

Quality Photographs of Railways, Ships and Aircraft

Fresh images regularly added

NEW ADDRESS

Please send £3.95 for our list/sample print
Please state which list you require
(cheques payable) to:- MR D SMITH
2 Briain Way, St. John's Road,
Clacton-On-Sea, Essex CO16 8LR

10% off orders over £50
(exc P&P)

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS NOW AVAILABLE

If you're looking for a good home for your treasured pictures then please email us mail@phototransport.com or write to us at the above address.

RAILWAYANA

BARRY JONES

Wanted Railway Publicity, b/w photographs BR period, timetables, posters, RCH maps and other official items.

Model railway items always sought.

28 Marine Crescent, Worthing BN12 4JF
Tel: 01903 244655 Mobile: 07947 100711
Email: barryjones28@virginmedia.com

SERVICES

HAWKINS INSPECTION SERVICES LTD

- *Boiler inspections carried out to current regulations*
- *Annual inspections*
- *Repairs assessed & overseen*
- *AIBI Member*
- *Specialist in heritage plant, rivetted boilers, loco type boilers, air receivers workshop & loco*
- *Modern plant also catered for*

T: 01243 554623 M: 07872 903401
www.boiler-inspector.co.uk
office@boiler-inspector.co.uk

SERVICES

ATEN LIGHTING

LED Bus Bulbs
with pearl glass bulb, 10-30V DC

Aten Lighting,
Unit 14 North St,
Melton Mowbray, Leics. LE13 1NL
01664 569457
info@atenlighting.co.uk
www.atenlighting.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY

Colour-Rail

prints and downloads
150,000 images at
www.colour-rail.com

Looking for a good home for your treasured negatives and slides?

Then e-mail colourrail@aol.com or write to
558 Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, B61 0HT

WANTED

Railway Lamps

Original Specifications
Repairs & Bespoke Design
New build or refurbs, eg Midland, GWR or any new lamp from photos. Brackets and columns etc.
01484 456 456
email: 456@metroheritage.com
www.gaslamps.co.uk

RESTORATION

Jones Springs have been supplying UK heritage rail operators for over 50 years giving us a reputation for being reliable and trustworthy as well as allowing us to develop a range of skills and techniques which we have been able to apply to our work in the manufacturing of springs.

All our work on railways and locomotives is produced to British Rail standard 166 and British Rail standard 148a ensuring that all products we manufacture are created and tested to the levels of quality and precision required by British Rail.

With a general engineering shop based locally in the Midlands we can offer a range of services such as the manufacturing and repair of springs, our facilities also allow us to carry out load tests to make sure that your products are fit for purpose and use. We can also provide full certification for any test we carry out for you at our site.

For assistance please call us on: 0121 568 7575
Email: sales@jones-springs.co.uk

JONES SPRINGS (ENGINEERING) LTD.

Gladstone Street, Darlaston West Midlands WS10 8BE
T: 0121 568 7575 F: 0121 568 7692
E: sales@jones-springs.co.uk
www.jones-springs.co.uk

Reg. in England - Company No. 00520744

WANTED

To advertise in
HERITAGE RAILWAY
contact
Craig
01507 529537
camess@mortons.co.uk

WANTED Your lighter takes

If you've got a quirky photo, tale, poem, or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email staff writer Owen Hayward on ohayward@mortons.co.uk

Mystery of royal visits to small Welsh station

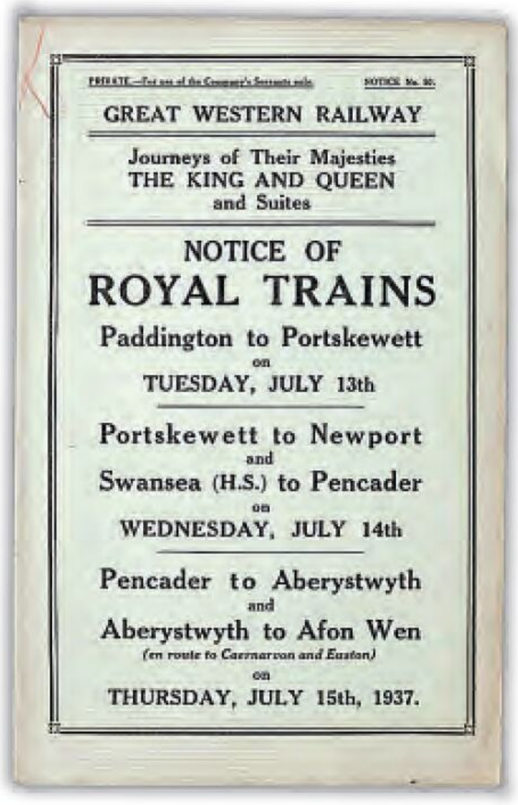
By Geoff Courtney

TRAIN journeys by the Royal Family are doubtless rarer now than they were 85 years ago, and wherever they are undertaken, security would surely be tight, in keeping with the wary world we live in today.

But before the Second World War and in the conflict's early days, a printed detailed itinerary of such journeys was readily distributed to railway personnel in the form of a Royal Train notice, and a number recently surfaced in a sale held by Brian Moakes's Paperchase auction house.

They ran for up to 40 pages, and one of them listed on its cover the route to be followed by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth – and 'Suites' – from Paddington to Wales on July 13-15, 1937. Destinations included Newport, Swansea, and Aberystwyth, while two other notices, for journeys on February 6-10, 1940, and March 18-21 the following year, identified Yeovil, Bristol, Cardiff and Plymouth among other locations.

However, in all three cases, what caught my eye was another destination en route: Portskewett. My geography of the British Isles is reasonable, aided considerably by my travels through much of the UK trainspotting in the latter half of the 1950s, but Portskewett was a new one on me, and led me to wonder why such a location would have hosted overnight stays by royalty three times in four years.



PRIVATE.—For use of the Company's Servants only. NOTICE No. 80.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY

Journeys of Their Majesties
THE KING AND QUEEN
and Suites

NOTICE OF
ROYAL TRAINS

Paddington to Portskewett
on
TUESDAY, JULY 13th

Portskewett to Newport
and
Swansea (H.S.) to Pencader
on
WEDNESDAY, JULY 14th

Pencader to Aberystwyth
and
Aberystwyth to Afon Wen
(en route to Caernarvon and Euston)
on
THURSDAY, JULY 15th, 1937.

Monarch's stopover: A Royal Train notice that recently went under the hammer at a Paperchase auction highlights an overnight stop at Portskewett on July 13, 1937. PAPERCHASE

Royal branch: The line to Black Rock, which operated from 1863 to 1886, is on the left in a painting by local artist David Woolnough of Portskewett station in its operating days. The station was opened by the South Wales Railway in 1850 and closed by BR in 1964.

My interest was further piqued when research revealed that this is a village on the Welsh bank of the Severn estuary in Monmouthshire that at the turn of the 20th century had a population of just 900 souls, a figure which perhaps had risen to 1000 by the time of these visits.

Portskewett station, 146 miles from Paddington, was opened by the South Wales Railway in 1850 between Chepstow and Newport, and in 1863 became a junction when a one-mile branch line was opened to a nearby pier at Black Rock for passengers to access a ferry that crossed the Severn to the English side. The ferry ceased operating in 1886 when it was replaced by a tunnel and the branch line was closed, but the track to Portskewett was not lifted, and therein lies the reason for the royal overnight stopovers in the village, as explained by local historian Peter Strong.

"The Royal Trains stopped in the branch line that went down to Black Rock," he said. "The royals would stay on board, and being unused, the line gave privacy and security, and a policeman was posted at either end of the line."

Children, said Peter, would wave to the Royal Train as it departed after its overnight stop, adding: "Local resident Rob Wilsher remembers waving as a child. He says a waving hand would often appear from the toilet window – although he couldn't say who it belonged to!"

Take the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways to the Monopoly board!

By Robin Jones

ITS 40-mile route already twisting around the stunning landscapes of Snowdonia, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways has again been extended – this time on to the Monopoly board game.

A new official Monopoly: Eryri Edition has hit the shops, featuring the Ff&WHR on the cover of the box, a montage in the centre of the board, a mention on a Chance card, and its own game tile.

Other landmarks included are Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), which replaces Mayfair, while Ty Hyll (The Ugly House) displaces Old Kent Road. Portmeirion village and Harlech Castle (featuring in a set of three different castles) also get tiles.

"The response from the public to the edition has been overwhelming," said Yasmin East, custom games executive at Winning Moves UK. "A big thank-you to those who sent in nominations and congratulations to everyone featured."

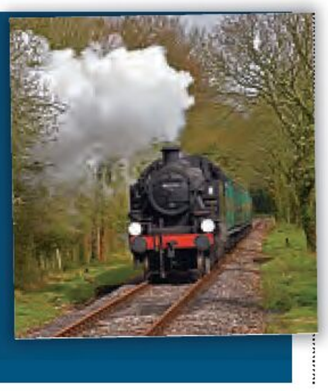
In addition to the bespoke squares, all of the tokens are customised, replacing traditional Monopoly counters with a Carneddau pony, a campervan, a sleeping dragon, hiking boots, a castle tower – and a railway carriage.

The Chance and Community Chest cards are also bespoke. One reads: "You have won second prize in a sheepdog trialling contest," replacing the 'beauty contest' card from the classic original. The game is available to purchase from

www.festrail.co.uk/shop/ and from Waterstones, Yesteryear Toy Shop, and many other outlets on the internet.

NEXT ISSUE
Issue 319 out May 10
Our 25th anniversary issue will cover the eagerly-anticipated Severn Valley Railway Spring Steam Gala, being held on April 18-21.

PLUS
ISLAND APPEAL
How do you attract visitors to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway? Owen Hayward speaks to general manager Marc Huws to find out.



PRE-ORDER ISSUE 319
No need to pop to the shops in four weeks' time... simply order your next *HR* from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529.**

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

THAMES VALLEY AIR AMBULANCE

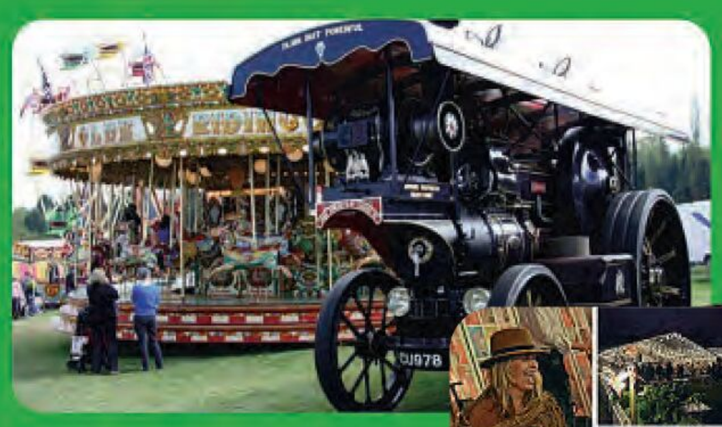
It's Back!

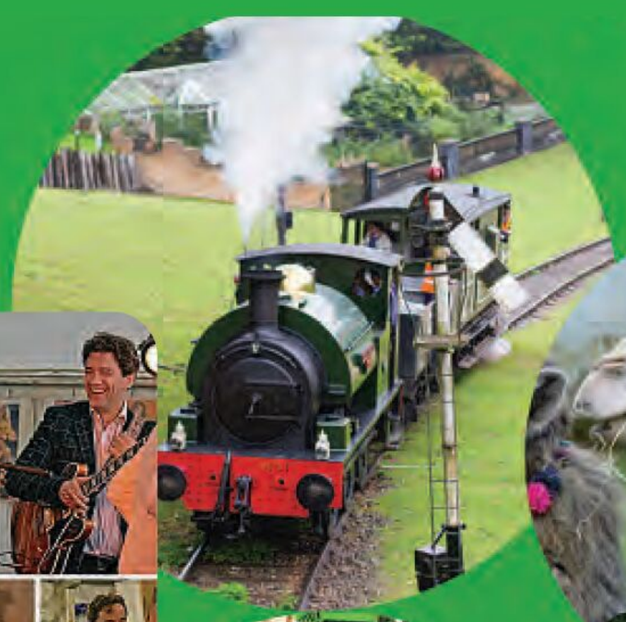
In aid of MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

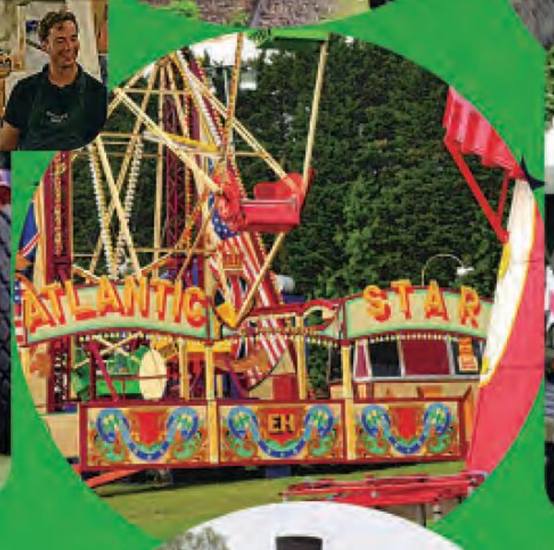
Don't miss it - this really is final!

NATIONAL TRANSPORT TRUST's Vintage Transport Festival at FAWLEY HILL

17th - 19th May 2024







From camels to Spitfires: even a flying Flea! All forms of vintage transport to admire, try, buy ? Traction Engine games, heavy horses, beautiful cars, masses of military, steam train rides, tractor racing, restoration workshops, auto-jumble, shopping to suit everyone

Great local food & drink, music and events on stage in the Big Top Pub all weekend.

VIP packages available for Saturday - the list of bands and performers is growing so entertainment for all

Some trade stands still available

www.fawleyhill.co.uk

Book tickets or trade stands NOW

www.buytickets.at/fawleyhill or scan the QR Code

Rail Holidays of the World

September Rail Tours or Travel Sooner!

Mountain Railways of Switzerland ~ Departs 11 September 2024 - 14 days from £3,475pp

Spend two weeks touring and ascending the famous peaks of the Swiss Alps – by train! A chance to experience stunning views as you reach mountain summits courtesy of Switzerland's engineering excellence and gravity defying trains. Includes First Class travel on the Glacier Express and journeys on steam and rack railways.

- First Class Swiss Travel Pass for unlimited travel whilst in Switzerland
- Travel on many funiculars and mountain railways
- Spectacular scenery from the summits of Switzerland
- Steam excursions on Brienzer Rothorn and Blonay-Chamby Railways
- First Class travel on the famous Glacier Express with reserved seats

Narrow Gauge Steam in Eastern Germany ~
Departs 4 September 2024 - 15 days from £2,650pp

The fall of the Berlin Wall 35 years ago brought with it access to some of the world's most remarkable narrow gauge steam railways that survived the Cold War and are still in daily operation. This 15-day tour explores many of these railway gems with stays in Frankfurt, Dresden, Stralsund and Wernigerode.

- 3-day HSB Rover Ticket for unlimited travel, including trams on southern end of the network
- Excursions on at least 10 narrow gauge railways
- Reserved seats on all InterCity journeys
- InterRail Pass for unlimited travel for the duration of the holiday
- Hotels ideally located close to stations for easy access to explore

Trams & Trains of Austria ~
Departs 6 September 2024 - 11 days from £2,530pp

This escorted tour travels by train to Innsbruck to enjoy its wonderful tram network including a panoramic line that climbs part way up scenic Patscherkofel Mountain. A day trip over the border to Germany by rail takes in Germany's highest mountain with a cogwheel train ride up the Zugspitze.

- Rail journey on the classic route along the Rhine River
- Journeys on 4 cable car lines
- Scenic round trips to Zugspitze and Lake Achensee
- Travel on 3 city tram networks
- Visit the Mariazell Tram Museum
- Time to explore Innsbruck, Vienna and Frankfurt
- Specialist escorted tour with like-minded fellow travellers

LAST CHANCE TO BOOK.....

The Green Hills of Spain ~ Departs 13 June 2024 - 15 days from £3,140pp

Forget the usual Costa Spain coastal holidays and travel from the UK by train through France and along Spain's 'green' coastline, taking in the vibrant cities of San Sebastian, Bilbao, Santander, Gijon, Leon and A Coruña en route. Encounter some of the country's most beautiful and unspoilt beaches before returning via France to ride the La Rhune Rack Railway.

- Scenic rail journey between San Sebastian and Bilbao
- Journey on the metre gauge FEVE network
- Luggage transfer between hotels in Spain
- Basque Railway Museum
- Petit train de la Rhune Rack Railway
- Time to explore Bilbao, Santander, Gijon, A Coruña and León

West Coast USA ~ Departs 9 June 2024 - 15 days from £4,535pp

Journey by train through the stunning coastal scenery of Northern California, Oregon and Washington State on this tour that combines modern train travel with vintage railroads. Explore the exciting cities of Seattle, Portland and San Francisco and some truly memorable rail journeys through wonderful landscapes.

- Napa Valley Wine Train Gourmet Express Dining Experience
- Return journeys on the Mount Hood & Roaring Camp Railroads
- Whole day to explore California State Railroad Museum
- Travel by rail along the scenic Pacific coast and through the Cascade Ranges
- Free time in Seattle, Portland, Sacramento & San Francisco

*** Tel: 01766 512400 * Email: info@ffestiniogtravel.co.uk * Book Online at www.ffestiniogtravel.com**

Ffestiniog Travel is owned by a charitable trust and profits go to support the world famous Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways every booking helps preserve the railways.