NENE VALLEY LAUNCHES £300K SURVIVAL APPEAL

ISSUE 320 June 7 – July 5, 2024

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

New-build trio in Cotswold steam spectacular

Stunning debut for *Betton Grange*





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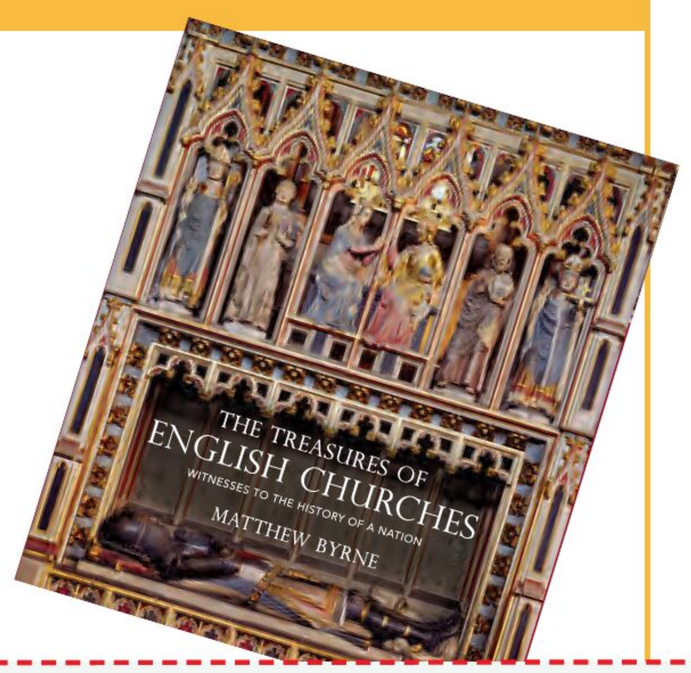
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LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* heads through Greengates with Saphos Trains' 'The Settle & Carlisle Fellsman' from Crewe to Carlisle on May 23, complete with a headboard marking the 65th anniversary of its 112mph official postwar speed record run. The 'Stevenson Locomotive Society Special' on May 23, 1959, was the first train in the UK with a booked or advertised schedule of more than 100mph, and that was before the record was set. The tender attached to the A4 back then was the same one behind A3 No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* during its officially-recognised speed of 100mph on November 30, 1934. GAVIN THOMSON

A festival beyond all!

EVERY steam enthusiast in the UK and beyond owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Quentin McGuiness and the 6880 Betton Grange Society, plus all those who have contributed over the past 26 years to fill a major missing gap in transport history by creating the 81st GWR Grange.

Ultimate honours must equally go to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, which started out 40 years ago running an industrial tank engine from a station saved from near-dereliction over a few hundred yards to track – and is now a 14-mile heritage line capable of holding a heritage sector landmark event and impressing during every minute of its three days.

When Tom Rolt and his volunteers began running the Talyllyn Railway on May 14, 1951, did any in their wildest dreams envisage a future when not one, but three full-sized GWR standard gauge locomotives would be built by enthusiasts? – yet alone meet up for a unique gala which pulled in the crowds big-time, at a time when Britain is racked by the cost-of-living crisis while politicians line up to throw brickbats at each other on a daily, if not hourly, basis.

The eagerly-awaited public debut of *Betton Grange* and its superb performances throughout the Cotswold Festival of Steam – which started off in blazing sunshine and above-average temperatures for May in inspirational countryside as visitors queued at the gates well before opening – showed that whatever the rest of the world chooses to do, our sector's spring is well and truly here for us.

Among the many 'firsts' recorded during the festival was not only the return of a Grange to the line after 59 years, but also the first visit to Winchcombe by a Saint 4-6-0, No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*, for 71 years.

> "The successes of the new Saint, Grange and West Somerset mogul, and that of the G/WR, offer classic blueprints for others to follow."

The Cotswolds and its glorious yellowstone towns, villages and farmsteads are fabled the world over, and its GWR heritage line has shown beyond a doubt that it rightfully takes its place among the area's many must-see historical treasures.

Indeed, Toddington is a very different place from the station I drove past in 1983, when its restoration was just beginning. Today, its state-of-the-art facilities include staff mess facilities and a splendid upgraded café, but best of all, an outstanding fully-equipped locomotive shed workshop – where its staff completed outstanding jobs on *Betton Grange* in the days before its triumphant entry into public service.

The successes of the new Saint, Grange and West Somerset mogul, and that of the G/WR, offer classic blueprints for others to follow. They show just what can be done – and that nearly six decades after the end of BR steam haulage on the main line, our railway heritage is there to be cherished and enjoyed by all. It makes us so much the richer for it.

Robin Jones Editor

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DISTRIBUTION & PRINTING
Distribution
Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT. Tel: 020 7429 4000
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William Gibbons & Sons, Wolverhampton

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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

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ISSN No 1466-3560

Published
Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
June 20, 2024
Next issue on sale
July 5, 2024

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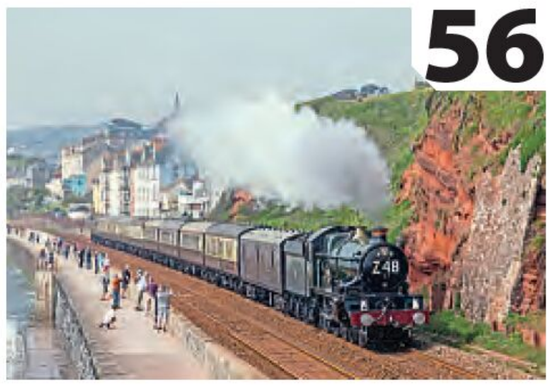
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COVER: New-builds rub shoulders at Toddington on May 25, with No. 6880 *Betton Grange* (left) being prepared for service alongside No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*. JOHN TITLOW

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The annual celebration of branch line locomotives expanded its remit this year to include smaller main line locomotives, which helped the Bluebell Railway put on another stand-out show in the south – with help from its friends in the west, as Owen Hayward reports.



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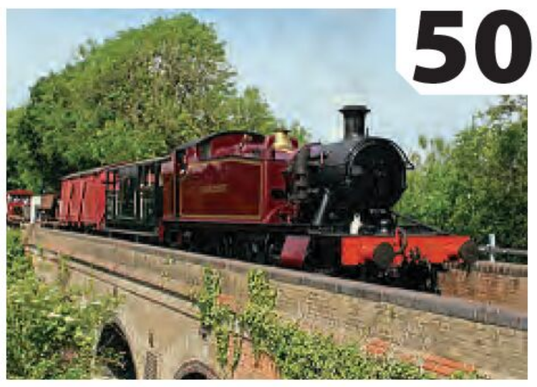
ABOVE: Taken from a similar position to the image to the left, dirty GWR 4-6-0 No. 6803 *Bucklebury Grange*, without name or numberplates, comes off Stanway Viaduct with a Wolverhampton-Birmingham-Cheltenham Racecourse Festival special on March 11, 1965. It was withdrawn in September that year. JOHN DAGLEY MORRIS/G/WR ARCHIVE

Stanway Viaduct needs your help again!

British Rail unsuccessfully sought permission to demolish the 1904-built Stanway Viaduct in 1980, and it survived to become the standout feature of today's Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. Thanks to the completion of the first phase of remedial works costing £750,000 earlier this year, as reported in issue 318, services over it resumed on Good Friday, and during the hugely-successful May 25-27 Cotswold Festival of Steam it carried passenger trains between Broadway and Toddington,

The total cost of restoring the 650ft-long, 45ft-high viaduct is £1.8 million, and the railway is running an appeal for funds at www.gwrt.org.uk/donate/stanway-viaduct-appeal

The railway is also offering supporters commemorative plaques which will be permanently mounted on each of the 240 stainless steel plates on the viaduct parapets. The plaque could be in memory of a loved one, or a family name or other commemoration, and a minimum of £250 suggested.
➜ For more details, visit www.gwsr.com/supportus



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Betton Grange public debut as three new-builds make a gala in a million!

By Robin Jones

THE eagerly-awaited debut of GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* and its superb performances proved to be the pinnacle of the May 25-27 Cotswold Festival of Steam, one of the most successful events held by the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in its 40-year history.

The unique gala, on the theme of Western Workhorses, was the first time in the history of the UK heritage sector that three new-build standard gauge steam locomotives were seen together in action, the other two being visitors GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend,* from Didcot Railway Centre, and West Somerset Railway 2-6-0 No. 9351.

It was also the first time that all types of two-cylinder Great Western-designed steam locomotives, following development from 1904 to 1950, were together at the same time in preservation, and the first visit of any newly-built locomotive to the G/WR.

As reported in past issues of *Heritage Railway*, several booked appearances of *Betton Grange*, the 81st member of a class that once regularly frequented the Stratford-upon-Avon to Broadway line, were cancelled due to last-minute modifications needed as the intense 26-year project came entered its final stages.

No. 6880 was delivered to Toddington from Tyseley Locomotive works eight days before the G/WR gala began – and in the G/WR workshops, staff worked round the clock to fit its brick arch and spark arrestor, among other tasks.

Queuing visitors

About 4500 visitors passed through the gates over the three days, the Saturday blessed with summer sunshine and soaring temperatures. Queues had built outside the entrance to Toddington station by 8am, and after seeing *Lady of Legend* depart for Cheltenham Racecourse with the first service of the day, visitors watched as a collection of steam road vehicles and traction engines assembled for a display in the car park.

All eyes were on No. 6880 – which, as reported last issue, hauled its first passenger train at its private launch on Tyseley's internal system on April 27 – as it prepared to haul its first public train, the 9.4pm from Toddington to Cheltenham Racecourse at 9.45am. It carried out that duty – and all others during the gala – without a hitch.

During the trip, views from the carriage windows saw rows of lineside photographers in fields at strategic points, taking full advantage of the sunlight.

A minor issue concerning the Saint raising a lower level of vacuum than the other locomotives caused some delays to trains on the Saturday, the knock-on effect being that the timetable ran 40 minutes down, but few, if any, complaints were received.

Also in action were home-based WR 4-6-0s Nos. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* and 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807 and SR Merchant Navy class Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S.N. Co*, while the 2ft gauge North Gloucestershire Railway was also in operation.

G/WR spokesman Ian Crowder said: "Wow! What an outstanding event! Of course, the attraction of three new-build locomotives really put our already award-winning Cotswold Festival of Steam firmly on the annual calendar of must-see events.

"Over the weekend we carried just shy of 4500 fare-paying passengers. Some trains were packed to standing but, unlike the misery of commuter services, everyone was enjoying a carnival-like atmosphere.

"There was something to enjoy at all of the stations, as well as a wonderful variety of motive power. On the whole, everything worked smoothly.

"This rates as probably the most successful of the current series of festivals. The Saturday – the first day of the festival – saw just over 2000 passengers carried, almost matching the 2018 event following opening of the railway to Broadway.

"What a way to celebrate 40 years of running trains.

'Elated' by success

"Naturally, a huge amount of organisation goes into such an ambitious and costly venture. There is a risk in taking on such an event, with significantly higher costs for such things as coal and transport, but it has handsomely paid off.

"The volunteer team organising it, chaired by Tom Willson, work together extremely effectively and are already thinking about next year's event – it's going to be a hard act to follow!"

Tom said: "We are all elated by the huge success of the Cotswold Festival of Steam.



GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* prepares to leave Toddington with its first-ever public service train on May 25. ROBIN JONES



Reunion at Toddington: No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* meets up again with fellow new-build No. 9351, following their previous encounter when the Saint visited the West Somerset Railway last year. ROBIN JONES

Waiting for the off: The line-up outside Toddington shed at 6.44am on May 25 featuring (left to right) Nos. 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, 6880 *Betton Grange*, 2999 *Lady of Legend*, 7820 *Dinmore Manor*, 35006 *Peninsula & Oriental S.N. Co* and 9351. JOHN TITLOW



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"The provisional figures suggest that this is the most successful event on the railway for a very long time.

"*Betton Grange*, making its debut on the GW/R, was clearly a huge attraction, the steam department working tirelessly to run the locomotive in and sort out the remaining teething issues that are natural with a brand-new machine.

"That the engine worked faultlessly over the event is a credit to them, as well as to the 6880 Betton Grange Society and Tyseley Locomotive Works.

"Seeing the engine run its very first revenue-earning passenger train on a line that once saw Grange class locomotives pass through on a daily basis was a very special moment and a real privilege that will stick in mine and many others' memories for a long time. It was great to see the palpable excitement around the railway.

"We express our deep gratitude to the loco owners for entrusting us with their beautiful locomotives, each of which has taken hundreds of thousands of pounds and endless hours to create, and it was a pleasure to welcome their crews and supporters.

Grateful thanks

"I'd particularly like to thank our sponsors, including LCC, which kindly provided £500 worth of coal (almost 1.5 tonnes), the traction engine owners, sideshow events, transport providers, stallholders,



Cheltenham-bound No. 6880 *Betton Grange* pilots No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* out of Winchcombe, climbing to Greet Tunnel on May 25. JOHN TITLOW



Above: New-build visiting West Somerset Railway 2-6-0 No. 9351 heads past a buttercup-filled field at Didbrook, en route to Toddington, on May 25. This visit to the Cotswold Festival was only its third away from its home line since it was built. ROBERT FALCONER

Below: GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* passes Didbrook with its first full passenger train on May 25. JOHN TITLOW







Jung 0-4-0WT No. 939 of 1906 returns to Toddington station on the North Gloucestershire Railway on May 25. ROBIN JONES

model railways, caterers and, above all, the amazing enthusiasm of our volunteers who have willingly undertaken everything from crossing duty, first aid, ticket inspecting and frontline duties, through to operational staff.

"It's frankly astonishing to think that everyone involved with the railway at the event is a volunteer. Even our few paid staff volunteered their time.

"We are, above all, grateful to the hundreds of visitors who have been very generous in their compliments about how well it has been run, its value for money, the friendliness of our volunteers, and the ever-improving facilities on the railway.

"The opportunities to take a look behind the scenes at the Toddington depot and the carriage and wagon works at Winchcombe seem to have been especially appreciated. We are clearly doing something right!"

A statement from the 6880 Society said it had been a "fantastic weekend" for *Betton Grange*'s debut – "and boy what a debut!"

Fantastic effort

"Thanks to everyone involved," the statement continued, "especially the GW/R team who helped get it ready for the weekend and all the volunteers worked on *Betton* over the years, Tyseley Locomotive Works, and Llangollen Railway engineers.

"This was a fantastic team effort – well done, everyone, and thank-you from the bottom of our hearts."

Betton Grange is rostered to work on every operating day on the G/WR until to the end of June, giving anyone missed the gala an ideal opportunity to experience this new locomotive on normal services.

Afterwards, it will visit the West Somerset Railway, whose general manager, Kerry Noble, said: "We are really excited to be able to welcome *Betton Grange* to the railway in July.

"I am sure the locomotive will prove very popular with our visitors, and we look forward to running some special services during the visit."

More details are available online at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

In August, *Betton Grange* will visit the North Norfolk Railway for three months, as previously reported in this magazine. HR



WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* heads a goods train at Toddington, with rides offered on the brake van. ROBIN JONES



History made: *Betton Grange*, newly arrived at Cheltenham Racecourse with its debut public train. ROBIN JONES



With the last train from Broadway on May 25, No. 6880 *Betton Grange* double-heads with fellow new-build No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* into Toddington. ROBIN JONES



On May 25, GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807 carried a wreath and special plaque on the smokebox door in honour of the late railway journalist and locomotive owner Peter Nicholson. Peter was the founder member of the 2807 Group which bought the locomotive from Barry scrapyard in 1981, laid the first piece of track at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, helped start the restoration of several stations, locomotives and items of rolling stock, and convinced several owners to base their locomotive there. The wreath and plaque were provided by his grandson, Josh Brinsford. ROBIN JONES

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Tornado at Great Central for test runs

By Robin Jones



A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* reunited with its tender outside Loughborough shed on the Great Central Railway on May 23. A1SLT

PEPPERCORN A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* has been moved to the Great Central Railway for test running following its planned return to the main line this summer.

Due to a delay in completing its overhaul, which was said to have cost nearly £1 million, what is arguably the most high-profile standard gauge new-build locomotive was unable to fulfil its planned Easter visit to the Nene Valley Railway to mark its return to steam, and its rearranged visit for May 21-27 was also subsequently cancelled.

Trust chairman Steve Davies MBE said: "We have faced unanticipated challenges in the area of coded welding, a matter that has affected a number of heritage railway projects as well as our own.

"On reassembly of the boiler and its fittings, we needed to undertake some work to the gauge frame pads. Due to the paperwork required and the level of welding necessary, this was not the straightforward task we had anticipated as our regular welder was no longer available to us.

"It proved exceedingly difficult to source a qualified coded welder for the task, as within the small pool who could undertake the work, personal circumstances delayed progress and the plan to complete this work changed numerous times. We lost time in this delay, but parallel work has been continuing as far as possible.

"Once the gauge frames were secured, it was appropriate to undertake a hydraulic test to reset the seven-year ticket. This took place on May 1. The boiler passed the hydraulic test; however, one stay on the righthand side was weeping, suggesting a very small crack. The boiler has had several hydraulic and steam tests, and this had not presented previously.

"The stay was removed and as is necessary, the team then inspected the surrounding stays as they can suffer damage compensating for the adjacent cracked stay. A reasonable number were found to need replacing.

"This raised concerns for the left-hand side of the boiler and we subsequently found a smaller number that required replacing on that side."

Following the completion of this work, on May 23 *Tornado* was moved by road to the GCR from nearby Locomotive Maintenance Services and reunited with its tender in advance of test running, which was scheduled to take place in the week after we closed for press. *Tornado* was due to return to the national network at the head of the trust's 'The Ribblehead Rambler' from Leicester to Carlisle on Saturday, June 29. More details are available at www.21stcenturysteam.co.uk

Its promised visit to the NVR is now rebooked for August 20-22, when driver experience courses will be on offer. The A1 will haul regular passenger services on August 24-26.

Now it's eight Bulleids for big summer Swanage record-breaking gathering!

AS A non-GWR locomotive, Merchant Navy Pacific No.35006 *Peninsula & Oriental S.N. Co* was the odd one out in the ground-breaking Western Workhorses-themed Cotswold Festival of Steam – but was booked to take a starring role to star in another landmark historical gathering, this time with Southern classmates.

No. 35006 will take part in the Swanage Railway's June 7-9 Strictly Bulleid II gala, which will see the largest gathering of Merchant Navies hauling trains since the end of southern England steam in 1967.

It will also be the biggest heritage-era gathering of Bulleid Pacifics in their original 'Spam can' 1940s form with an air-smoothed metal casing over the boiler – and the first time that two rebuilt Merchant Navies have worked services together since 1967.

Since the gala was reported in the last issue of *Heritage Railway*, the number of Bulleids taking part rose to eight with the addition of No. 35018 *British India Line,* provided by West Coast Railways, along with six Mk.1 carriages to run during the event.

Also taking part will be Battle of Britain class members No. 34081 *92 Squadron* (now masquerading at No. 34111 *Royal Auxiliary Air Force* for the duration of the season – see separate story, page 10), courtesy of the Battle of Britain Locomotive Society and the Nene Valley Railway, Southern Locomotives Limited's Nos. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* (following completion of its overhaul), 34072 *257 Squadron* from the Spa Valley Railway, 34070 *Manston* and West Country 34028 *Eddystone*.

West Country No. 34092 *City of Wells* will visit from the East Lancashire.

D-Day commemoration

A preview day on Thursday, June 6 to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day will feature *92 Squadron* and *257 Squadron* hauling trains between Swanage and Norden, with newly-restored Victorian LSWRT3 4-4-0 No. 563 also replicating the vital role of the class in hauling trains in the build-up to the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe, which took place in June 1944.

On May 27, a plaque marking the 80th anniversary was unveiled at Swanage station, where members of the 26th Infantry Regiment of the US Army's First Infantry Division, who were stationed in the town while undergoing training, embarked on their journey to Omaha Beach.



SR Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No.35006 *Peninsula & Oriental S.N. Co* heads a passenger train out of Toddington, bound for Cheltenham Racecourse, on May 25. ROBIN JONES

Most of the Strictly Bulleid Two trains will run on all nine miles of line between Swanage, Norden and beyond to Furzebrook and the River Frome – just before the main line connection. Passenger trains between Norden and the River Frome will have a Bulleid Pacific at each end.

Saturday will see the line's first all-night running since 2003; the 'Night Rider', headed by No. 34070 *Manston,* will haul four overnight services between Swanage and Corfe Castle, departing Swanage at 11.30pm, 1am, 3am, 5am and 7am. Friday and Saturday evenings will host a real ale train, with two cask beers and a cider on sale. Purbeck will run a small beer festival at Corfe Castle station across all three gala days. Named Train Sunday will see the locomotives wearing headboards that would have been a common sight when they were in pre-preservation service.

No. 35006 will remain at Swanage for a few additional days following the gala to run service trains on June 10-14.

Together in electric dreams: NER autocar is two-car unit once again

By Sally Clifford

FOLLOWING a four-year overhaul, NER autocoach No. 3453 was officially launched back into service during the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway's May Bank Holiday weekend transport festival.

Together with NER autocar No. 3170, the pair are transporting passengers along the five-mile heritage line. No. 3170 was the subject of an earlier award-winning 15-year restoration programme by Stephen Middleton to get it back on track following its use as a holiday home after it left railway service.



Left: No. 3170, built by the NER as a petrol-electric autocar and rebuilt by Stephen Middleton, now has a trailer in clerestory autocoach No. 3453. The pair are pictured during the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway's transport festival of May 25. MIKE HEATH

Post-Grouping conversion

No. 3453 was built in 1904 as a non-corridor brake third to NER diagram 116. A few years later, it was converted to a push-pull driving trailer to work with steam locomotives and avoid the need for the engine to run round at the end of each journey – with the characteristic portholes cut in the end of the coach to enable the driver to see ahead.

Although it was originally built with Westinghouse air brakes (and gas lighting), it was converted after the Grouping to vacuum brakes and electric lighting and remained in service until the early 1950s.

On withdrawal, it was used at Leeds Holbeck depot as a Departmental vehicle and was purchased for preservation in the early 1960s. It was restored externally at Hull Dairycoates and moved to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in 1975, but was not used because it had no seats, so slowly deteriorated in storage at Levisham.

Stephen, honorary president of the NER 1903 Electric Autocar Trust, the restorer of 10 vintage carriages and the owner of Stately Trains, based at the EBASR, said that the NER Coach Group donated it to the trust to enable it to carry more passengers.

The restoration included fitting appropriate control equipment, new cladding, a new interior, and painting. Restored to its original crimson livery, 12 books of gold leaf were used on the lining.

Stepping into the only first class compartment out of six – the remaining third class offering a less superior experience – gives passengers a sense of how the Edwardians travelled in style.

Buttoned navy seating with arm rests fringed in gold, wood panelling and overhead luggage racks create a sumptuous space in which to sit back, relax, and savour the rolling scenery in this quieter and sedate mode of railway transport.

History is made

Accompanying me on the return journey from Bolton Abbey to Embsay, trust chairman John Furness, said it took him 70 days to complete the painting of the autocoach. He also completed all of the lining.

John, an EBASR volunteer for 40 years, said: "We upgraded it, tested it – it has been tested to all the modern regulations. As we stand at the moment, it is preservation's most recently-built driving van trailer."

The calibre of the coach is synonymous with NER's grandiose styling.

"The NER was one of the richest railways in Britain – even the colour is crimson, which was the most expensive paint you could buy," John explained. No. 3453, he said, is a simplified version of the Victorian-styled NER clerestory passenger coach No. 818 restored at Kirkby Stephen East and launched on May 26 – the day after the autocoach (see separate story).

"This weekend, history has been made," said John. "Nothing like it has happened in preservation history. They are both done to a comprehensive standard and match each other."

The autocar itself has been running for five years on the EBASR and, throughout last winter and early spring, on the Great Central Railway. Also running were Lancashire & Yorkshire A class 0-6-0 No. 52322 from the East Lancashire Railway, Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 68067 from the Great Central Railway offering brake van rides, and Class 03 shunter D2084.

➜ **For more information visit www.embsayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk**

Diesel gala is back at Bluebell

AFTER a six-year absence, the Bluebell Railway is holding a diesel gala on September 6-8, with three guests announced and more to follow.

Visitors announced so far are Class 14 D9551 from the Severn Valley Railway, Class 20 D8188 from the Mid-Hants Railway/ Somerset & Dorset Locomotive Ltd, and Class 33 No. 3311 from the Swanage Railway. They will join the Bluebell's resident Class 09 D4109 and Sentinel 4wDH No. 10241 in action across the three days.

Repairs and commissioning work is still ongoing on resident Class 73 E6040 *The Bluebell Railway* following its arrival at the railway last spring.

Clerestory comeback celebration in Cumbria

MAY 26 saw the return to service of a 121-year-old NER clerestory coach at Kirkby Stephen East following completion of a thorough restoration project.

Built in 1903, luggage composite No. 818 is owned by the Beamish Museum but in 2021 moved on loan to the Stainmore Railway Company at Kirkby Stephen East, where it has undergone an extensive refurbishment to bring it back into service. Body panels both inside and out have been renewed where required, with seating upholstery repaired and replaced, amid countless other tasks carried out by volunteers and contractors.



Luggage composite No. 818 at Kirkby Stephen East on May 26 during its launch into service following restoration. IAN CAWTHORNE/KSE

No. 818 was officially returned to service wearing a spotless NER lined maroon livery and paired with LNER Gresley brake third No. 3669. Motive power was provided by 0-4-0ST Peckett No. 2111 *Lytham St Annes* and Hibberd 4wDM *Elizabeth* operating shuttles at half-hourly intervals along the museum's demonstration line.

Director Mike Thompson said: "There are still a few small jobs to complete and the final cost is likely to be in the £45-£50,000 range."

Restoration efforts will now turn to NER full brake No. 131 (once a six-wheel vehicle but currently sitting on a four-wheel BR pipefit wagon chassis) and five-compartment third No. 2051, which Mike said "will run concurrently as many of the jobs to be done are the same on both."

"Once completed," he added, "this will give us three NER wooden-bodied six-wheelers to operate with ex-NER Class C (LNER J21) No. 876/65033 when it returns from the Lottery-funded overhaul at Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough."

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After a five-year absence, large diesel traction returned to the Blaenavon Heritage Railway on May 18/19 when Class 31 D5627 re-entered traffic. Withdrawn from service just before the Covid-19 pandemic, it has undergone an extensive mechanical overhaul, with the bodywork repainted into BR green with small yellow warning panels. D5627 will operate on select diesel days, including special events, throughout the remainder of the year, as well as providing coverage for any last-minute unavailability of steam locomotives. On May 17, it is seen preparing to depart from Furnace Sidings down the 1-in-34 gradient towards Blaenavon High Level. PHILIP COOMBE/BHR

100th birthday celebration for *Count Louis* as return is made to its Fairbourne origins

THE visit of 15in gauge Bassett-Lowke 4-4-2 Little Giant *Count Louis* in its 100th anniversary year to the Fairbourne Railway's May 25-27 annual steam gala prompted one-time staff member Steve Plimmer to organise a reunion of old friends and colleagues from the line's 15in gauge days.

The reunion took the form of a 100th birthday party on May 26, complete with a cake in the shape of the locomotive and special-edition *Count Louis* badges for those present.

Count Louis was built in 1924 to the order of Count Louis Zborowski for use on his Higham Railway, but it was not delivered owing to his death in October 1924 while competing at the 1924 Italian Grand Prix at Monza. In 1925, the locomotive went to Fairbourne, where it was named *Count Louis*, and it remained a stalwart of the line until the railway was rebuilt to 12.25in gauge in 1986.



Former Fairbourne Railway staff from its time as a 15in gauge line pictured with Bassett-Lowke 4-4-2 Little Giant *Count Louis* during a reunion with each other and the locomotive they once worked with. CLIFF THOMAS

During the gala, *Count Louis,* now based on a private site, hauled a short train of original Fairbourne carriages, including a recently restored ex-Dudley Zoo open 'glass end' carriage, over the 15in dual-gauged section between Fairbourne and the Beach Road car park, top-and-tailed with a small internal combustion locomotive between main line arrivals and departures.

Also visiting the gala and running on the 12.25in gauge main line to Barmouth Ferry, was the Ruislip Lido Railway's oil-fired 2-4-0STT *Mad Bess*, making its first-ever appearance at the Fairbourne Railway.



Left: On May 21, Battle of Britain class No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair* was shunted out of Horsted Keynes paintshop, where it had been residing since its surprise New Year's Day appearance on service trains after 12 years out of action. It has been painted in Brunswick green, with the numbers, lettering and lining all applied by hand. On May 22, it was towed to Sheffield Park for final work before its rededication ceremony, led by Bluebell Railway chairman Roy Watts, at the line's preservation society's annual general meeting on June 15, which will also be attended by TV presenter and railway historian Tim Dunn. JAMES CUMMINS/BRPS

Solar power lights the way for new Southwold motive power

DURING its May 11 open day, the Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway CIO ran a demonstration freight train using a battery-electric locomotive – with the charge having come directly from solar power!

Built by Greenwood & Batley of Leeds in April 1936, initially for the work at Ebbw Vale steelworks and then Richard Thomas and Baldwin's Irthlingborough Mines in Northamptonshire, *Greenbat* was purchased by two members of the HTSNGR in 2020 and used for testing the demonstration line's pointwork and wagons. Power was first provided by car batteries until replacements were fitted during 2022/23, with air brakes also added for future passenger use.

UK first?

During the open day at Blythburgh station, the halfway point of the original eight-mile 3ft gauge Southwold Railway, *Greenbat* was coupled to replica SR wagon No. 18 to offer demonstration runs. The locomotive batteries were charged beforehand via solar panels, making it possibly the first solar-charged goods train in the UK – and maybe in a wider international context.

A railway film show was held in the village hall, along with displays showing the progress of the restoration of the line since the CIO was formed in 2018, with trackbed walks allowing for inspection at close quarters. A lengthened RNAD underframe on display forms the chassis for what will become the heritage railway's first coach, with hopes of offering train rides at future events – which will be the first such journeys on the section since 1929.

Further open days are planned on July 13 and September 8, 10.30am to 4pm, the latter coinciding with a model railway show.



Solar-powered locomotive *Greenbat* demonstrated at Halesworth on May 11. HTSNGR



Above: Durham County Council leader Coun Amanda Hopgood (left) with Judith McNicol, director of the National Railway Museum, cutting the tape to officially open the showpiece New Hall on May 24.

Right: The National Railway Museum's Judith McNicol and Locomotion head Sarah Price leading the delegates to the opening ceremony away from the £8 million New Hall.
BOTH: DREW FORSYTH/NRM M



Europe's 'biggest' undercover stock collection opens in Shildon

By Robin Jones

THE first of two major railway heritage attractions in the North East – the Locomotion museum at Shildon's £8 million New Hall 47-vehicle collections building – opened on May 23.

The largest undercover collection of historic rail vehicles anywhere in Europe, it is Locomotion's most significant regeneration project since it was opened by the then Prime Minister Tony Blair on October 22, 2004, as reported in issue 68.

More than 100 vehicles are now on display, celebrating the story of Shildon as the world's first railway town – as it aims to attract 250,000 visitors a year. It will play a central role in the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary celebrations in 2025, expected to be a significant draw for international visitors.

Locomotion is a partnership between the Science Museum Group and Durham County Council, with the latter having provided significant funding towards New Hall.

New Hall is the latest milestone in a wider £95 million masterplan project across Locomotion and the National Railway Museum in York, regenerating both museums with new galleries, spaces and vital conservation work to inspire future generations of engineers, creators and thinkers.

Hall highlights

Locomotion head Sarah Price said: "Great days out are made at Locomotion, and now it's bigger and better than ever. New Hall is the place to be to celebrate the North East's railway story for generations to come, ahead of the nationally significant bicentenary celebration."

Highlights of New Hall's collection include historically significant vehicles built at Shildon Works: two snowploughs, a tracked Bren Gun Carrier, two cranes, and the Hetton Colliery locomotive *Lyon*, built in 1851. The museum's existing Main Hall has also been refreshed and redisplayed.

Nearly 1000 vehicle moves were undertaken to achieve the new displays; this was the museum's largest-ever series of shunts, involving a team of in-house workshop and traction experts, conservators and specialist contractors (issue 318). It is the first time that many of the vehicles are now under cover.

Inside New Hall, oral histories from former Shildon's rail workers are used alongside historic film clips and graphics to bring the collection to life and highlight the significance of coal, the industry, and freight transportation – and how the North East's industry and innovation influenced the world.

The building is the centrepiece of a host of other improvements and additions to Locomotion's site, including the return of the iconic Gaunless Bridge, designed by George Stephenson. Originally spanning the River Gaunless from 1823 to its removal in 1901, it is one of the first railway bridges to be constructed of iron and the very first to use an iron truss. From 1975, it was on display in parent body the NRM's car park at York. It was sympathetically restored and repainted to its original colour scheme in early 2024 and is now installed on the approach to New Hall.

Other improvements at Locomotion include newly-planted landscaped gardens, designed to increase biodiversity on the site, renovations to historic railway buildings, enhancements to parking facilities, and the restoration of the site's historic coal drops.

A 'Changing Places' facility has also been installed at the museum. In April, Locomotion was given an award from the North East Autism Society in recognition of its improved approach to inclusion and accessibility.

Locomotion employs about 48 people and is home to a vibrant community of volunteers, many with long-standing connections with railways in the region.

Coun Amanda Hopgood, leader of Durham County Council and North East Combined Authority cabinet



Above: A snowplough takes centre stage amid the new rows of exhibits, with LNWR 7F 0-8-0 No. 49395 on the right. AOC ARCHITECTURE

Right: Historic Gaunless Bridge in its permanent place at Locomotion. NRM



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NER 2-2-4T No. 66 *Aerolite* in place. OWEN HUMPHREYS/PRESS ASSOCIATION



Guests at the official opening gather inside New Hall. DREW FORSYTH/NRM

member for culture, creative, tourism and sport, said that New Hall will "enhance the already world-class visitor offer we have at Locomotion and across the 'culture county' that is Durham. She added: "We are going to shout from the rooftops about this."

NRM director Judith McNicol added: "Shildon did so much to change the world with the railways. We want to show the significance this area had."

NRM senior curator Anthony Coulls said: "It means that our collection is no longer open to the elements – it's dry and accessible, and we can tell its story."

Peter Robinson, a volunteer at Locomotion who was employed at Shildon Works from 1956 until 1984, said: "It has been my life's ambition to see something like this in Shildon. It's a wonderful place and a hugely positive asset. I speak to people from all over the country, and even internationally, who have come to Shildon specifically to visit."

New Hall was designed by AOC Architecture and J+L Gibbons Landscape Architects, and draws on the aesthetic of an engine shed, with vehicles displayed on reused tracks across six themed roads. Sustainability has been built in through passive design, high insulation, airtightness and cost-effective construction. Low carbon air source heat pumps reduce energy use. Building contractor Nationwide Engineering constructed the building over 14 months, breaking ground in January 2023 and completing work in March this year.

Meanwhile, A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* is to be displayed at Locomotion during the summer. Following a light engine visit to Toton Depot for maintenance, it returned to the NRM where it was scheduled to go on display from May 30.

Roll of honour

The New Hall is supported by Durham County Council (lead funder), The Foyle Foundation, Friends of the NRM, Wolfson Foundation (all major funders), The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, Sir James Knott Trust (both associate funders), Banks Group Community Fund, County Durham Community Foundation, The Platten Family Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland Northumbrian Water Branch Out Fund (all funder) and supported by The Ridley Family Charity. The Gaunless Bridge project is supported by The Ironmongers' Livery Company (funder) and public donations.

Locomotion is open seven days a week, except December 24-26, and admission is free.

➜ For more information, including events and activities, visit www.locomotion.org.uk

Next stop, pioneering Hopetown!

NINE miles to the south of Locomotion is the new £35 million Hopetown Darlington railway heritage centre, which will open on July 16, it has been announced.

The 7.5-acre site is now also geared up to play a defining role in the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary in 2025, as well as generating a tourism boom all year round. Hopetown is the former name for the area, given by railway pioneers who built foundries and homes beside the 1825 line.

Visitors will enter Hopetown through the Grade II*-listed goods shed in McNay Street. Believed to be the second oldest in the country, the 19th-century building now houses a cafe, shop and interactive visitor experience.

A £3 million investment has turned the Head of Steam Museum into the North Road Station Museum, which houses a new exhibition focusing on the history of railway engineering in Darlington.

As previously reported, The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, builder of No. 60163 *Tornado* and the new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*, is already occupying the new Darlington Locomotive Works, in which visitors will see staff and volunteers at work.

The restored 1861 Engine Shed is now home to the Darlington Railway Preservation Society and the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group.

In The Stores, visitors can discover objects and artefacts relating to the development and operation of railways in the north not on permanent display, with exhibits regularly changing. The Space (within The Stores) is specially designed for community exhibitions exploring Darlington and the town's railway heritage.

The carriage works will host the Brick Journeys exhibition, a world tour of transport made from LEGO, and a time travel simulator will tell the journey of how rail travel changed the world. A new wagon works play park and restored 1842-style station will also open.

Visitors will use a new car park at Skerne Bridge, or they can travel there by train – Locomotion is just a short hop away up the Bishop Auckland branch.

There will be live music and street theatre throughout the opening week.

Free site admission includes entry to the North Road Station Museum, the Darlington Locomotive Works viewing gallery and The Stores, as well as the shop, café, and outdoor areas. Some exhibitions, events, and activities will carry a separate charge. For details, visit www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk



The entrance to Hopetown Darlington is via the restored 19th-century Grade II*-listed goods shed. DBC

Back to 1966 – and take part in GCR special summer event!

THE Great Central Railway is appealing for volunteers to help stage its Railways at Work 2024 event on August 10/11.

As reported in issue 314, last year's event, which re-enacted 1963 and the Beeching era, won the Heritage Railway Association Interpretation Award, sponsored by this magazine.

A GCR statement said: "This event has always been a pulling together of all railway departments to show off what we do best. As a result of last year's national acclaim, all eyes are on us this year!

"Nowhere else in the country can pull off a display in the same way we pulled off Railways at Work 2023, so we are stepping up our efforts to deliver an event that is just as good if not better than last year's. The theme is 1966 – A New Era and will focus on the transition from old to new and look at how BR started reinventing its image in the mid-1960s.

"We are looking for re-enactors and period railway enthusiasts, railway staff, football fans, military personnel, tradesmen and civilians to take part. If you are interested in getting involved, please apply."

➜ For more details, visit www.gcrailway.co.uk/special-events/railways-at-work-gala/

IN BRIEF

New life planned for former Brunel engine shed

PLANS to create a café, restaurant and gallery space in High Wycombe's Grade II-listed Brunel Engine Shed following its refurbishment last year have been approved by Buckinghamshire Council.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel built the shed for the GWR in 1854 and it functioned as the town's station until 1864. Restorer Buckinghamshire New University will open the café and gallery space to the public, while also providing workspace for entrepreneurs and start-up businesses.

Alterations at the shed in Station Approach have included a new slate roof in keeping with its original Victorian character, while the original timber queen post trusses designed by Brunel have been sensitively repaired. Solar panels and roof lights have also been fitted.

Bahamas at Peak Rail

LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* will visit Peak Rail from July 5 to August 11, during which time it will feature at both the July 6/7 1940s Weekend and the August 10/11 Steam Gala events.

In addition to a select number of standard operating days, No. 45596 will also be available for driver experience courses and a 'Pie and Pea' evening dining train, details of which were still to be confirmed. See peakrail.co.uk for more information.

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Nene Valley launches £300k survival appeal

By Robin Jones



Danish State Railway F class 0-6-0T 'Tinkerbell' in Nene Valley Railway action following its return in January after 38 years. PAUL ROE/NVR

THE Nene Valley Railway has launched an emergency £300,000 appeal to stave off the threat of closure in the face of soaring running costs.

In what is the latest plea for extra funding from a major heritage railway within the last year, a statement from the 7½-mile line said: "With operating costs rising sharply and passenger numbers remaining subdued since the pandemic, the NVR urgently requires financial support to sustain its operations and safeguard its future as a cherished heritage attraction and working museum.

"Since its inception, it has offered visitors an immersive unique journey through time aboard meticulously restored steam and diesel locomotives. From families seeking an unforgettable day out to enthusiasts passionate about Britain's railway heritage, the NVR has captivated hearts and minds for more than 40 years.

"The current economic climate has placed immense strain on the railway's finances. Reduced visitor numbers across the heritage sector, combined with mounting running and maintenance costs, has left us facing unprecedented financial pressure. Without immediate financial support there is a real risk that this valued local attraction could face closure, depriving future generations of the opportunity to experience its magic.

"Nene Valley Railway is appealing to the generosity of the public, businesses, and grant funders alike. The £300,000 target will enable the railway to maintain operations, conduct essential repairs, and embark on vital infrastructure upgrades and restoration projects to ensure its long-term viability."

Railway chairman Michael Purcell added: "The NVR is more than just a railway attraction; it's a community of volunteers, a legacy, and a symbol of our industrial heritage.

"We are calling upon all those who cherish the heritage and charm of Nene Valley Railway to join us in this crucial effort. Your contributions will not only help us weather the current storm but will also ensure that the railway can continue to inspire and delight our visitors and volunteers for years to come.

"Every contribution, no matter the size, will make a meaningful difference in safeguarding the future of this much-loved heritage railway."

As we closed for press, about £20,000 had been donated in the first two weeks of the appeal, with more arrving by the day, said an NVR spokesman.

The NVR is run by a team of 11 core paid staff, supported by a workforce of more than 350 volunteers and a membership of 900-plus.

It receives more than 30,000 visitors a year and runs an education programme hosting about 2000 schoolchildren.

➜ Donations to the campaign can be made securely online at https://nvr.org.uk/product.php/164 or via a GoFundMe link at https://gofund.me/5f75ca51

Future secured as Clacton Express EMU makes a return to its home region

By Owen Hayward

THE future of Class 309 No. 309624 has been hanging in the balance after its custodian, the Clacton Express Preservation Group, was given notice to vacate the site at Isfield, where it had resided since initially being acquired by the Lavender Line following closure of the Electric Railway Museum in Coventry, the group having purchased the EMU in 2022.

With the clock ticking to find a suitable new home, many feared that the unit would face being cut up for scrap – but on May 14, it was announced that its future was secured, and the EMU would be returning to withing a stone's throw of its former stomping ground after ownership transferred to the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappel & Wakes Colne station.

Two of the vehicles from the three-car unit quickly moved to Essex, but with available space at a premium, the final vehicle temporarily transferred to the Rushden, Higham & Wellingborough Railway for storage.

With all of the EMU's cars now in locations with easier working access and closer to power outlets, the group's volunteers are able to resume restoration efforts to restore the unit back to its former glory. Group chairman Brad Wright said: "We can confirm that two of the vehicles are to return home to Essex for the first time in almost two decades, which completes our group's original aim of saving the set and returning it to the region.

Restorations

"The BDTC and MBS, which form a representative pair, have been donated to the East Anglian Railway Museum, securing the vehicles' long-term future. In time, both will undergo full cosmetic restorations, alongside developing interactive displays and exhibits throughout the vehicles. The CEPG will remain as an active supporting group, continuing to work on both vehicles at the EARM, providing restoration updates and volunteering opportunities.

"We are also pleased to reveal that the DTS has been offered a home at the Rushden, Higham & Wellingborough Railway. This ensures this vehicle's survival as a useful asset in its own right and means that reuniting the whole set one day will not be impossible.

"Our profound gratitude goes to everyone at the RH&WR for providing this vehicle a future and working around the clock to ensure no further storage is necessary."

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On May 13, Kerr Stuart Brazil class 0-4-2ST No. 4219 *Melior* bowed out of Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway service pending overhaul. It is seen heading a short mixed train from Kemsley Down as part of a photographic charter. With classmate No. 886 *Premier* now the only operational steam locomotive on the line for the remainder of the 2024 operating season, the SKLR is appealing for funds to be able to carry out *Melior*'s overhaul alongside the that of Bagnall 0-6-2T No. 2511 *Superb* – see justgiving.com/sklr for more information. Before that, on April 24 the SKLR saw diminutive Barclay 0-4-0T No. 8 *Dougal* arrive in Kent from the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, where it too will undergo overhaul. ANDREW SIMMONDS

NVR Wagon Group's triumph with fitted rake

IN a major success which again highlights the invaluable work of its volunteers in keeping the heritage line running in the face of rising overheads, the Nene Valley Railway Wagon Group has announced the completion of work that has seen the automatic vacuum brakes reinstated on its current fleet of running wagons.

From the group's formation in 2012, there was an eventual aim to demonstrate an express rake of wagons. However, it was hoped that once 10 standard vans were restored, the group would go back and retro-fit the vacuum braking equipment, much of which was non-existent. Late last year it was identified that the group has been victims of its own success, having restored too many wagons to safely run as an unfitted rake behind much of the home fleet and stop within the required distance. It was therefore decided to vacuum-fit as many wagons as possible over the winter in time for the 2024 running season.



Class 55 Deltic No 55009 *Alycidon* masquerading as No. 55013 *The Black Watch* heads the vacuum-fitted wagon rake at Wansford on May 17. ALAN BERRISFORD

The group, comprised entirely of volunteers and self-funded by driving courses and photographic charters, has spent six months and more than £5000 on the project. The work has involved the overhaul and installation of 10 vacuum cylinders, with new fittings and vacuum hoses being added to every vehicle in the rake. The result is that the group now has a train of 19 vehicles, 12 of which are fully fitted.

On the evening of Sunday, May 12, the complete train was tested behind Class 45 'Peak' No. 45041 *Royal Tank Regiment* at the NVR, with the braking system working perfectly and no issues identified.

The following Friday, May 17, the wagons were out again for a freight driving course with visiting Class 55 Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon (*in disguise as No. 55013 *The Black Watch*), and once again the event demonstrated a faultless operation of the vacuum brakes.

NVR wagon manager Tim Hobman said: "I am immensely proud of each member of the group for the work that has been put in to achieve this project. Each wagon has received all-new rubber components and many specially manufactured parts to ensure the braking system is as reliable as possible, with a high standard of attention to detail in the execution of the fitting.

"For the first time in the history of the NVR, we have a fitted wagon rake which is not only safer than unfitted wagons, but it also has the ability to attract main line locomotives to work it, as demonstrated with *Alycidon*. Going forward, we hope to vacuum-fit each wagon prior to it leaving the works as we continue to achieve results under our principal focus of 'The Paul Foxwell Express Freight Project'.

➜ Further information about the group can be found at nvrwagons.co.uk

An EARM spokesman added: "In our mission to educate our visitors on the history of railways in East Anglia through the preservation of key items, the Class 309 EMU fits neatly into the museum's collection to demonstrate the transition from diesel to electric traction.

'Delight'

"While some substantial works will be required to transform the vehicles into high-quality exhibits, we are confident that they will prove to be assets to the museum, helping to tell the story behind both the technology and history of the electrified railways in East Anglia."

Rushden Historical Transport Society trustee David Champers said: "The RH&WR is delighted that the CEPG has accepted our offer for the final vehicle of the Class 309 set. It is intended to restore and equip the vehicle as accurately as possible to its 1980s condition, and to use the vehicle together with our existing Mk.1 propelled stock."

In recent years, the EMU has received the unwanted attention of vandals on several occasions, with numerous windows having been shattered, amid other damages.

The CEPG, which continues to support the EMU between the two sites, are appealing for funds in order to help undertake the repairs necessary. See www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/309-homecoming for full details.



Two vehicles from Class 309 No. 309164 have now moved to the East Anglian Railway Museum in Essex, bringing the EMU closer to home territory and where full restoration will commence. CEPG

92 Squadron name change to *Royal Auxiliary Air Force*

By Robin Jones

BULLEID Battle of Britain light Pacific No. 34081 *92 Squadron* has taken on a new identity for the duration of the current running season – that of No. 34111 *Royal Auxiliary Air Force*.

The temporary name change came as the Royal Auxiliary Air Force marks 100 years of volunteer reserve service in the RAF.

On Saturday, May 25, the locomotive made its inaugural run in its new identity at Wansford on the Nene Valley Railway with HRH Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester (Honorary Air Commodore in Chief of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force and patron of the NVR) on the footplate, having renamed the locomotive.

Musicians from the Band of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force provided a musical backdrop to the event, which was also attended by civic dignitaries including Gillian Beasley, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire.

The Battle of Britain class was introduced in 1945, comprising 47 locomotives carrying names commemorating individuals, RAF stations and operational squadrons which took part in the battle, including *Sir Winston Churchill*, *Tangmere*, *Sir Keith Park* and *257 Squadron*. Nine survive today, including *92 Squadron*.

Dedication

The Battle of Britain Locomotive Society was keen to support the Royal Auxiliary Air Force with the temporary name change after learning that some 41,000 RAF Volunteer Reserves were killed in action during World War Two. Today, thousands of ordinary men and women give up their spare time to train as RAF Reserves and deploy with the RAF on operations all over the world.



No. 34111 *Royal Auxiliary Air Force* with regalia and a special headboard after the ceremony at Wansford on May 25. BBLS

No. 34111 *Royal Auxiliary Air Force* was the next unissued number in the sequence and could well have been given to a locomotive named after the RAF had more been built.

New nameplates were cast and mounted on the locomotive and the cabside numbers were changed. Using a precedent set by No. 34050 *Royal Observer Corps,* which was unique in carrying the Corps' long-service medal ribbon painted beneath the number on the cabside, *Royal Auxiliary Air Force* now carries the medal ribbon of the Queen's Volunteer Reserve Medal (now the King's Volunteer Reserve Medal) beneath its temporary number of 34111.

Fundraiser

At the end of the anniversary period, the nameplates will be auctioned in aid of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Foundation, which maintains the various memorials to fallen RAF Volunteer Reserves and is a custodian of the history of this unique service.

A Royal Auxiliary Air Force spokesman said that it is "grateful to the Nene Valley Railway for its support and assistance in marking this special occasion."

→ THE renaming event had been scheduled to feature a Second World War Spitfire and Hurricane from the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, which is based at RAF Coningsby, near Lincoln. However, the flypast was called off when tragedy struck earlier that afternoon.

A Spitfire, one of six airworthy examples based at Coninsgby, crashed near the air base, killing its pilot, Squadron Leader Mark Long, a serving RAF officer who had been a pilot with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight for four years.

Police and emergency services attended the crash site in Langrick Road just before 1.20pm.

Mr Long was declared dead at the scene.

The RAF temporarily suspended flying all Battle of Britain Memorial Flight aircraft while an investigation was carried out.

As we closed for press, it was not known if the Spitfire involved in the crash was the one scheduled to take part in the flypast over Wansford.

Tributes to Mr Long were paid by the Prince of Wales (honorary Air Commodore of RAF Coningsby from 2008-23) and the Princess of Wales, to whom Prince William handed over the role last year, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer.

Amberley Museum's volunteers take centre stage at award presentation

By Geoff Courtney

VOLUNTEERS at the transport and crafts working museum in the village of Amberley, near Arundel, deservedly took centre stage on May 3 during a visit by Lady Emma Barnard, the Lord-Lieutenant of West Sussex.

Lady Emma was at the museum, which is home to one of the country's most comprehensive collections of different gauge locomotives, to present the prestigious King's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest recognition of its type created in 2002 to celebrate the late Queen's golden jubilee.

The Lord-Lieutenant, accompanied by trustees' chairman Richard Vernon and museum director Katrina Burton, toured the museum and met volunteers working in such locations as the historical fire station and the print and cycle repair shops.

As other guests – including Andrew Griffith, MP for Arundel and South Downs, Coun Pieter Montyn, chairman of West Sussex County Council, and David Skipp, chairman of Horsham District Council – enjoyed the spring sunshine, Richard praised the commitment and dedication of the 350 active volunteers.

"I am always struck by their variety of skills and knowledge which are shared with the visiting public," he said.

In addition to the collection of more than 30 steam, diesel, petrol and battery-driven locomotives in 13 gauges from 1ft 6in to 5ft 3in, the museum has a short standard-gauge demonstration track and a half-mile 2ft gauge steam and diesel-operated public line with three stations that regularly features long-time resident 1918 Bagnell 0-4-ST *Peter*.



Dedicated army: Volunteers at Amberley Museum are joined by Lady Emma Barnard, the Lord-Lieutenant of West Sussex (near the centre of the front row wearing a pink jacket), after the presentation of the King's Award for Voluntary Service on May 3. PETER EDGELER/AMBERLEY MUSEUM

The museum is located in a 36-acre former quarry that operated from 1846 to 1969 and included an internal standard gauge railway linked to the national network that was operated by a fleet of four steam and diesel locomotives.

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Broken stays sees Poppy Line Y14 premature withdrawal

By Owen Hayward

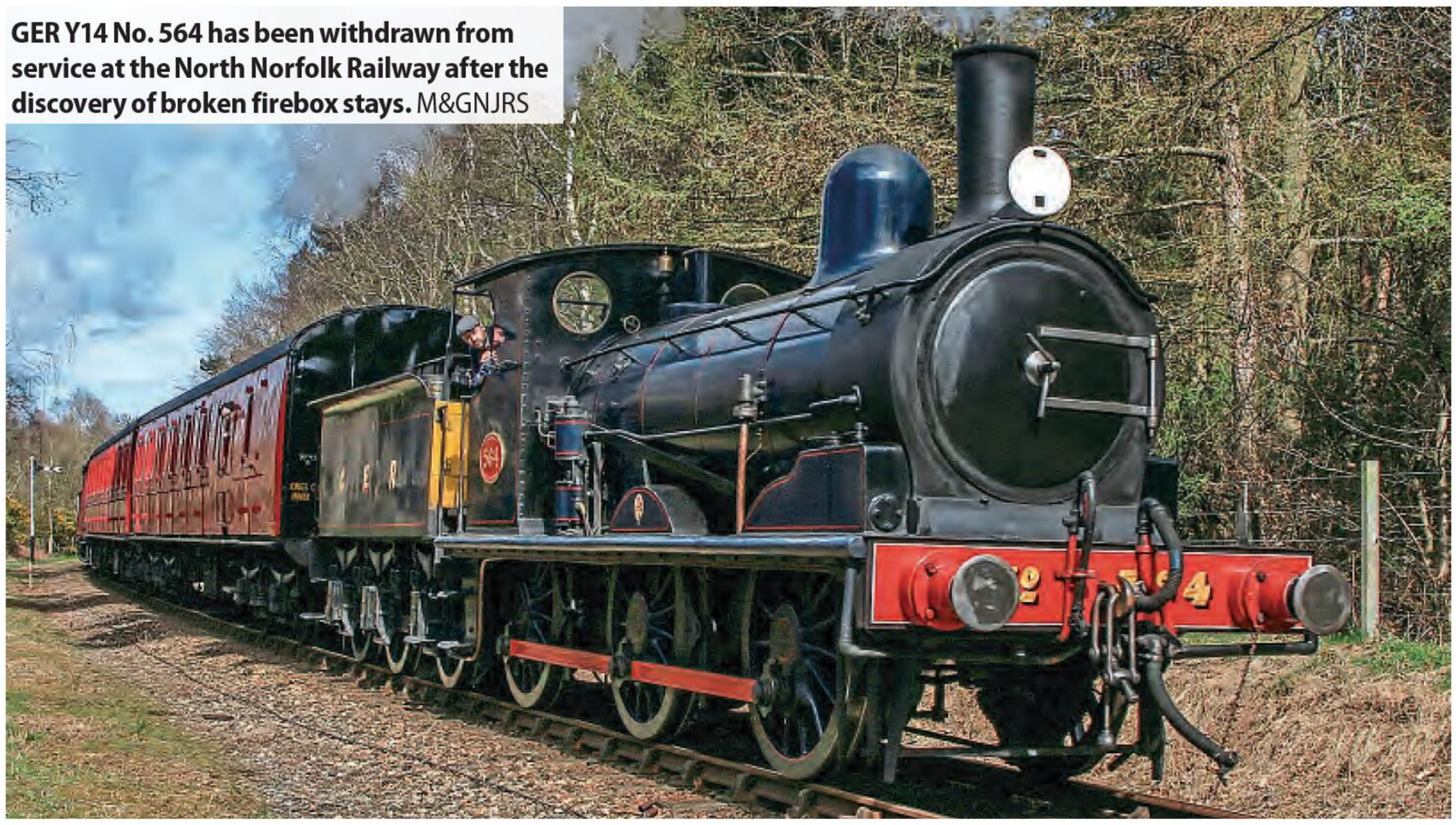
WHILE GER Y14 (LNER J15) 0-6-0 No. 564 had been in its final year of its boiler ticket, the North Norfolk Railway was left feeling a motive power pinch when its was withdrawn from traffic early after failing its annual boiler examination. It is the second locomotive to be prematurely withdrawn in as many months, following BR 9F 2-10-0 No. 92214 *Black Prince* being formally stopped in March.

During a routine inspection in early May, an engineering surveyor identified a number of firebox stays with potential issues that required further investigation. Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society chief mechanical engineer Keith Ashford arranged for a specialist inspector to attend and carry out further examinations, which further confirmed the need for independent non-destructive testing to be undertaken.

The testing was carried out on May 21 by an expert contractor, and it was subsequently confirmed that a total of eight firebox stays had broken inside the water space, with their positions dictating that the boiler had to be deemed a failure, ultimately meaning that the locomotive had to be withdrawn from service.

With the boiler certification due to have expired in July, the extent of work needed to repair the affected areas would have been too extensive to warrant the required effort for the amount of time gained and so this option was not followed up.

No. 564's last overhaul was completed in 2015 with the assistance of Ian Riley & Sons at Bury, with modification work having been carried out to revert it from its J15 appearance to that closely resembling its original GER Y14 configuration. A subsequent retube of the boiler was carried over the



GER Y14 No. 564 has been withdrawn from service at the North Norfolk Railway after the discovery of broken firebox stays. M&GNJRS

Reunited in steam: Preservation icons are back in service and together again

EVERY heritage line has its icons, but seldom are they so pivotal to the full history of the railway such as Fletcher Jennings 0-4-2ST No.1 *Talyllyn*. Built at the company's Whitehaven workshops in 1864, *Talyllyn* was built specifically for the line where it spent its entire life.

When the pioneers of preservation took over the railway in 1951, No. 1 was in a dire state. Having been the popular choice out of it and fellow Fletcher Jennings product (0-4-0WT No. 2 *Dolgoch*), by 1945 it was exceedingly tired and was laid aside to await its fate.

Its poor condition was beyond the means of the fledgling heritage line's volunteers, but in 1957 the railway was able to send No.1 to Gibbons Bros Ltd in Dudley for restoration, and it returned to steam in 1958.

Since then, the locomotive has usually swiftly been overhauled following the expiration of each boiler ticket. The most recent ticket expired in 2018 and the work was expected to be relatively straightforward, with the boiler sent to Ropley on the Mid-Hants Railway for local Talyllyn volunteers to progress with there. However, the Covid-19 pandemic intervened, followed by the withdrawal of *Dolgoch* in 2021, which, being in better condition, took priority so as to quickly return that to service.

With No. 2 having returned to service last spring, attention then turned to completing the railway's namesake, with the boiler arriving back in Tywyn in July 2023. Reassembly was rapid, and by the winter it looked, to all intents and purposes, like an engine ready to go. Although it had been hoped to have No. 1 completed and ready to work a train for invited guests at the 75 appeal launch on March 23 (as reported in issue 318), outstanding final jobs meant it could appear at Tywyn Wharf in light steam only. Come May 4, the locomotive was



Right: For the first time since it was withdrawn in 1945, *Talyllyn* takes water at Ty Dwr on May 4. The original watering point was demolished in the 1950s, with this recreation being completed in 2022 by the railway's Heritage Working Group. LUKE RYAN/TR



On May 14, the Talyllyn Railway celebrated the anniversary of the first trains run by volunteers in 1951 with both of its original locomotives – Nos. 1 *Talyllyn* (right) and 2 *Dolgoch* – together for the first time since 2018. NATHAN SPENCE

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winter of 2016/17; this procedure was not carried out during the main overhaul project as they had been fitted only in 2011/12 and the boiler inspector had passed these to remain in the boiler for two further years following its return to steam. No. 564 returned to service again in April 2017.

The NNR and M&GNJRS are now formulating plans in the hope of arranging the locomotive's overhaul to commence as soon as possible.

The NNR has been left with a slight motive power shortage. Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 *Wissington is* the only operational home-based locomotive, which is being supplemented by S&DJR 7F No. 53809 (on long-term loan from the 13809 Preservation Society), GWR 4200 2-8-0 No. 4277 *Hercules* (from the Dartmouth Steam Railway) and Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 22 (Appleby-Frodingham Railway Preservation Society).

As previously reported, new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* is booked to visit from August 1 through to November 2 while repairs to WD 2-10-0 No. 90775 are nearing completion at Weybourne.

LNER B12 No. 8572 and N2 No. 1744 are also progressing through overhauls, with the latter hoped to return to service later this year.

able to work its first public train, a photographic charter special, as part of a mini gala raising awareness of the appeal that saw Nos. 1 and 2 take water at the reconstructed Ty Dwr watering point for the first time since the 1940s and 1950s respectively. Although the columns and launders linking to the stream were completed in 2022, the correct-sized troughs to carry the water to the filling point on each locomotive have only just recently been completed, having needed them both in an assembled state to obtain the measurements.

Nos. 1 and 2 were then next out together on May 14 on the TR's Founders' Day, the anniversary of the first services run by volunteers in 1951, before No. 1 was finally ready for its public debut on daily passengers services on May 23 – when it also briefly starred in filming for the second series of the Welsh children's television programme Dreigiau Cadi. This was first filmed on the railway during last summer (as reported in issue 310), and new episodes are due to be aired later this year.

Severn Valley launches fundraising appeal to support future resilience

By Robin Jones

THE Severn Valley Railway has announced a new fundraising appeal aimed at supporting its operational resilience in the coming years. The SVR Resilience Fund is replacing the railway's £1.5 million Survival Fund, which was launched in April last year.

"We are indebted to everyone who supported the Survival Fund," said SVR's managing director, Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster. "It raised a very substantial £500,000 and has helped us turn things around from what was, without doubt, a time of crisis.

"We have now wound up the Survival Fund, but there's still a long way to go before we can say we've fully recovered.

"We are going to need ongoing support to meet our running costs for some time to come so we can build the railway's resilience and confidence, and also safeguard assets such as rolling stock and infrastructure."

The SVR Company Limited is leading the new appeal, a volunteer-run member of the SVR family of companies which is separate from SVR (Holdings) Plc, the line's train operating company.

SVR Company Limited chairman Diane Malyon said: "Because we are a volunteer company, we are able to keep overheads to a minimum, and that means we can pass on to SVR (Holdings) every penny possible to support the railway's operational resilience and to secure its future for many years to come."

"The costs associated with running a heritage line can be very high. For example, the railway has to spend £500 on coal for a steam locomotive's return trip along 16-mile line, and a new set of points are an eye-watering £10,000.

"These are some of the higher costs, but donations of all sizes will help and are very welcome. A ton of granite ballast costing £25 will stabilise the track for example, and with £50 we can buy three litres of specialist paint for a locomotive or one of our heritage carriages."

A 1600-strong volunteer team carries out most of the roles at the SVR. "Seeing how much people enjoy themselves when they visit tells me just how important this place is," said 17-year-old Alex Cleall, who recently qualified as a volunteer ticket inspector. Volunteer guard Dawn Adams, 32, added: "The SVR really is something special and I'd like to think it will be here for our children, and generations to come."

"We suffered a huge loss of income during Covid-19, when we had to shut down for extended periods," explained Gus, "and the current cost-of-living crisis has damaged visitor numbers, while the price of coal, diesel, electricity, and everything else we need continues to rise. We have made massive savings with scrupulous spending controls and by reducing our paid staff, and we have found new ways of earning income by undertaking contract work for main line railway companies. But operating the SVR is a costly business, and we need every bit of help we can find right now.

"Next year, we will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the SVR pioneers coming together to save this wonderful line. Will we be running in another 60 years? We think so, and we hope to get the support we need to achieve that ambition."

➜ You can donate to the SVR Resilience Fund at svr.co.uk



Alex Cleall, 17, is a recently-qualified volunteer ticket inspector at the Severn Valley Railway. SVR

Hagley Hall to celebrate Kidderminster Town's 40th

ON July 27/28, Severn Valley Railway flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* will re-enact the inaugural passenger train it hauled out of the embryonic Kidderminster Town station 40 years ago to the day.

On May 25/26, *Hagley Hall* also celebrated its 95th birthday by hauling passenger services, including premium afternoon teas in the line's first-class dining cars.

SVR's managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We'd like to wish our special locomotive very many happy returns. It has a special place in the hearts of many of our volunteers and visitors. We were absolutely thrilled to welcome it back in 2022, following 36 years out of service when it was on static display and under restoration."

No. 4930 was rescued from Barry scrapyard in 1973 and entered SVR service six years later, but it was withdrawn in 1986 after several boiler stays failed, and it was nearing the end of its 10-year boiler ticket.



Above: Driver Adrian Hassall and fireman Mark Writtle celebrate the 95th birthday of *Hagley Hall* at the SVR. NICKY FREEMAN/SVR

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Type 3 traction at Bewdley: Class 33 No. 33108 and Class 37 No. 37409 *Loch Awe*. DAVID BISSETT/SVR



Modern traction had a strong presence, including GB Railfreight's No. 69009 *Western Consort* at Kidderminster. The name was previously carried by Class 52 D1065, which was withdrawn in 1976. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

Another big diesel winner for the Severn Valley gala season

By Robin Jones

THE Severn Valley Railway has followed up on last year's success with modern traction events as more than 5000 visitors attended the May 16-19 Spring Diesel Festival.

Visitor numbers significantly exceeded expectations, and a stunning line-up of diesel traction further cemented the railway's position as a leading provider of enthusiast events as it looks forward to its 60th anniversary in 2025. As reported in issue 316, the line won the Heritage Railway Association 2024 Award for Diesel and Electric Locomotion, while managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster received *The Railway Magazine* Preservationist of the Year Award, both for his work as a volunteer with the Class 50 Alliance and his leadership of the SVR throughout the previous year.

The festival featured a huge variety of diesel traction. Visitors included representatives of Classes 69, 70, 73, 59, 46, 37, two High Speed Trains and five Class 20s, as well as members of the home fleet.

Jonathan said: "What four days we've had! This was another well-planned and professionally delivered event and I'd like to thank everyone involved across the entire SVR for their hard work and dedication.

"We had a couple of locomotive issues, and these were both extremely well-handled operationally. The diesel engineering team dealt superbly with an issue with the Colas HST on the Friday.

"We're also indebted to our industry partners for their wholehearted and much-welcome support; our thanks go to GB Railfreight, Colas, Freightliner, Locomotive Services Group, 20189 Ltd and Eastern Rail Services.

"Once more, I have been inundated by positive comments from visitors, volunteers and staff regarding the



Class 46 No. 182, owned by the Peak Locomotive Co Ltd, on Bewdley North viaduct. PHOENIX IMAGES/SVR

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Above: Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion* arrives at Bewdley on May 16. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

Left: Colas HST No. 43301 at Highley. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

Right: Class 43 power car No. 43303 in action. JONATHAN 'GUS' DUNSTER/SVR

feel-good factor and the overall quality of the event.

"Our commercial results are, of course, all-important, and I'm delighted to say that we smashed the budget for both passenger numbers and secondary spend.

"Yet again, a triumph that showcased our wonderful railway at its very best."

The SVR's Autumn Diesel Bash will take place on October 3-6 and promises "an almighty celebration of heritage locomotives, but with the possibility of one or two surprises!"

➜ **Tickets are available at svr.co.uk**



Above: Intercity services come to Eardington, the Severn Valley's smallest station, on May 18. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

Right: Token exchange at Bewdley North with Class 50 No. 50007 *Hercules*. DAVID BISSETT/SVR





Double choppers: Class 20s No. 20205 and 20007 at Bewdley. DAVID BISSETT/SVR



Freightliner's No. 70005 made a Class 70 debut at the SVR, seen here ready to depart Bewdley on May 16. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

Public rallies to help Bo'ness model exhibition hit by arson

By Robin Jones

ENTHUSIASTS around the world have responded to an SOS plea by the organisers of a model railway exhibition next to the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway's Bo'ness station after it was severely damaged in a fire deliberately started during a burglary.

The fire occurred in the early hours of May 19 inside one of two vintage Norwegian carriages which houses the free exhibition, in Union Street.

John Evans, of the Bo'ness Gauge O Group, which has operated the Glenauchter layout in the carriages for the past 30 years, said that "tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage" was caused.

Numerous models were stolen and others damaged before the fire was started in one of the carriages, which heavily damaged the interior of the fiddleyard coach and caused smoke damage to the viewing coach.

It was subsequently extinguished by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

John said that intruders had disabled the CCTV system in the carriages by removing the recording box but were captured on the BKR's separate system on the adjacent site, and that photographs were handed to police. The raiders also broke into a nearby BR Mk.1 coach owned by the Scottish Railway Preservation Society and stole a donation box.

He said that the stolen models would be difficult to sell as they were of distinctive Scottish company stock, such as the Glasgow & South Western and North British Railways.

The group's chairman, Chris McDonald, said that the layout would be repaired, but a full refurbishment of the two carriages would be required before being reopened to visitors.

'Saddened'

He said: "Perhaps more importantly, in our 30th anniversary year, the hundreds of hours given by members, many of whom are long retired, cannot be recovered.

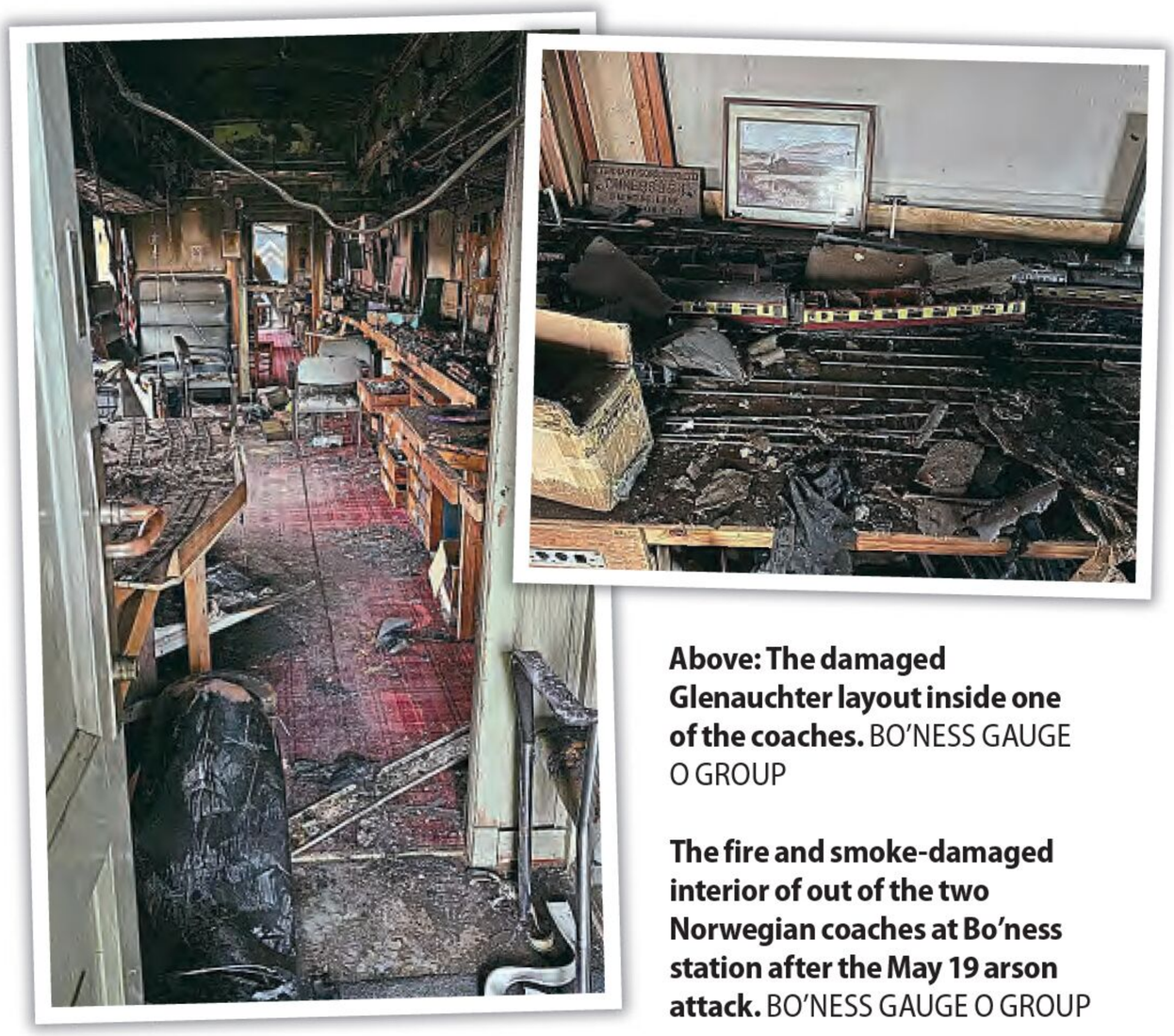
"Most of our model railway is hand-made from scratch, and it is deeply saddening to see how pointless theft and vandalism can destroy what brings joy to many of thousands of visitors every year."

The carriages are two of a pair imported from Norway when they became redundant in 1978/79, the other two being sold on to the Swindon & Cricklade Railway.

Two days after the incident, a crowdfunding appeal was set up on the Just Giving online platform to raise £500 to help tackle the damage and reopen the exhibition as soon as practical – and more than £9000 was donated inside the first 24 hours.

The target was then raised to £15,000, and as *Heritage Railway* closed for press, more than £23,000 had been donated.

A group statement read: "To say that it has been an emotional few days is a bit of an understatement.



Above: The damaged Glenauchter layout inside one of the coaches. BO'NESS GAUGE O GROUP

The fire and smoke-damaged interior of out of the two Norwegian coaches at Bo'ness station after the May 19 arson attack. BO'NESS GAUGE O GROUP

This group isn't just about model trains – it is a creative outlet, a meeting place for friends, and a hub of knowledge.

Morale boost

"It was a welcome surprise and boost to morale to see the sheer amount of love and support sent our way in the immediate aftermath.

"Whether you donated £5 or £500, please know that it means so much to us – especially considering the current cost-of-living crisis. You have all shown that good ultimately triumphs."

➜ To donate to the repair fund, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/bonessgaugeogroup-modelrailway or alternatively, you can write to: John Evans, 5 Woodlands Drive, Bo'ness EH51 0NT.

➜ Two men, both aged 32, were arrested by police and charged in connection with the incident and have appeared before Falkirk Sheriff Court.

Paving the way to £6k in four hours for Horsted Keynes platform repairs

THE latest fundraising campaign launched by the Bluebell Railway may have had sticklers questioning whether modern concrete or prototypical Yorkstone slabs would be used, but successfully raising £6000 in just four hours towards the total showed that, material aside, there is support for major projects away from the glamorous locomotive and carriage restorations.

Horsted Keynes station is often described as the Bluebell's jewel in the crown and over the last few years has been the focus of some heavy restoration work, with the main station building and canopies receiving attention and Platform 5 being relaid.

Now, focus has turned to Platform 1 with a view to returning it to operational use, it having been used for many years as a storage road on which vehicles such as the carriage shop have been stabled.

The coping stones on all five of the station's platforms date back to the 1880s and comprise 100mm Yorkstone, a porous type of sandstone. Over the ensuing years these have deteriorated, including cracking, delamination and becoming brittle.

Rebuild work

With Platform 1 having been out of operational use, this area in particular has suffered, with volunteers currently rebuilding the platform edge retaining walls. However, before the job can be completed, 180 new coping stones are required to replace all of those along the current platform edge.

It was initially thought that only the damaged stones would need to be replaced. However, with the resultant patchwork effect it would bring, along with the eventual need to replace the remaining stones anyway, it was deemed more sensible to undertake a full replacement, with the stones currently in good condition being retained as spare stock for reuse in repairs to those located on other platforms.

Options were explored to try and secure second-hand stones in sufficient quantities. However, as this has proven unsuccessful, a batch of wholly new ones will be ordered, with each slab costing £115. In addition to the delivery costs, along with materials and plant hire to undertake the renewal work, a total of £26,000 is needed to be raised. The Paving the Way appeal was launched on May 10 as part of the railway's branch line gala (see feature: pages 46-49), and within four hours had already achieved £6000.

For those purchasing a complete stone, an honours board will be displayed on Platform 1 upon completion of the work featuring the names of contributors and the specific stones sponsored.

The long-term aim is to see the platform return to operational use, with passing and terminating trains making use of it along with other possible static display uses in future.

➜ Donations can be made online by visiting www.bluebell-railway.com/trust/make-a-donation. Alternatively, bank transfers can be made to the Bluebell Railway Trust using account number 61059056 and sort code 60-10-26, again quoting the appeal in the reference.

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Romney gala celebrates Bure Valley locomotive's 30th

THE weekend of May 11/12 saw the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway host its annual steam and diesel gala, with this year's guest locomotive celebrating its 30th birthday.

Built for the Bure Valley Railway by Winson Engineering at Penrhyn, 2-6-2 No. 7 *Spitfire* was delivered there at Whitsun in 1994, its design loosely based on the Indian Railway ZB locomotives.

The gala also saw Canadian Pacific 4-6-2s Nos. 9 *Winston Churchill* and 10 *Doctor Syn* working together for the first time in six years, with No. 9 having returned to service from overhaul in March. Both were outshopped by the Yorkshire Engine Company in 1931 after a rather chequered history, having originally been ordered from and started by Davey Paxman and continued at New Romney in the years prior to their completion at the workshops in Sheffield. The pair ran top-and-tail together on the first train to Romney Sands on May 11 before undertaking a non-stop run through New Romney on their way to Dymchurch and Hythe.

All available steam locomotives were in service along with ICL diesel locomotive No. 7 *Shelagh of Eskdale*, which is on long-term loan from the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway.

The end-of-weekend finale once again saw all available steam locomotives operate a service from Hythe to New Romney. The RHDR's autumn gala will run on October 26/27.





Above: RH&DR's Canadian Pacific No. 9 *Winston Churchill*, which had returned earlier in the year from overhaul, double-heads with No. 10 *Doctor Syn*. JASON CROSS

Right: Visiting from the Bure Valley Railway, No. 7 *Spitfire* double-heads with RHDR's No. 6 *Samson*, the difference in size between the pair just about noticeable. COURTENAY FORDER

Didcot anniversary mini gala – as auto tank nears completion

THE Great Western Society marked its 55th anniversary with a mini-steam gala event at the Didcot Railway Centre on May 11/12, with Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 752 visiting from the East Lancashire Railway.

Although it was hoped that GWR 1400 0-4-2T No. 1466, the locomotive which the GWS was initially established to save and which has been undergoing overhaul at the West Somerset Railway, would be completed in time to take part in the celebrations, further works required to complete the boiler have delayed progress, meaning it was ultimately unavailable. The anniversary is therefore expected to be marked properly later in the year when the auto tank returns to service.



Visiting Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway saddle tank No. 51456 passes the Radstock North signalbox on Didcot Railway Centre's branch line during the mini spring gala on May 12. Behind is autocoach No. 231, which has returned to service following overhaul. FRANK DUMBLETON/GWS

With No. 752 (currently running as BR No. 51456, although never having passed into BR ownership) having appeared at the May 4/5 Steam into the Forties event, the locomotive was kept on a week longer to start at the spring gala alongside two other DRC resident tank engines, GWR 5101 class large Prairie No. 4144 and unique Avonside 0-4-0ST No. 1340 *Trojan*.

The locomotives rotated between demonstration goods trips and working passenger services along the museum's two short demonstration lines, with *Trojan* additionally tasked with shunting coal wagons up the steep gradient towards the top of the 1931 locomotive coaling stage. Services on the branch line utilised autocoach No. 231, which has recently returned to service following completion of overhaul and repaint.

Events organiser Sarah Jermyn said: "The weekend was met with sensational weather and bought with it a good crowd of enthusiasts and families alike. Autocoach No. 231 looked stunning with new paintwork and varnish and really stood out next to the black of the LYR engine.

"While we had initially planned for No. 1466 to be back with us and to wholly celebrate 55 years at Didcot, delays to the overhaul have meant this has been postponed. We do still plan to put on a special celebration once the overhaul is complete, but outstanding boiler work means this ETA has been pushed back."

As this issue went to press, the boiler of No. 1466 was waiting for one weld to be completed around the front angle ring, which will make it one complete structure. Boiler fittings are ready to be refitted, while two 'bottle ends' for the flue tubes are on order from the South Devon Railway and are expected to be delivered imminently. Replacement crown stays are also in manufacture after some of the previously-delivered batch were found to be too tight.

It is hoped that the boiler will be ready for a hydraulic and steam testing in the early summer.

Boiler overhaul contract awarded for Toddington Standard 4MT

By Robin Jones

BOILERMAKERS and locomotive engineers Leaky Finders Ltd, of Brixham, Devon, has been awarded the contract to overhaul the boiler of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway-based Toddington Standard Locomotive Limited ex-Barry scrapyard BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76077.

The boiler is currently at Toddington, while the chassis is currently being restored at Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough, where work on the frames began in 2019.

TSLL's engineering director, Andrew Meredith, said: "We have gone through a stringent tendering process based on price, engineering skills, approach to the work and timescales, as well as conducting appropriate due diligence. Leaky Finders proved itself more than capable to undertake this important work and I am delighted that we have reached this conclusion.

"Six contractors were asked to quote for the works, but unfortunately nearly half were unable to give us a realistic start or completion date. This underlines the huge amount of overhaul work being undertaken in the UK, as well as the shortage of skilled labour that seems to exist within the heritage sector.

"I am pleased that our original cost estimate for the boiler repairs looks to be pretty much spot-on, although with a project of this nature we won't know for sure until the job is complete.

"The boiler will be delivered to Leaky Finders in December and will hopefully be completed by the end December 2025."

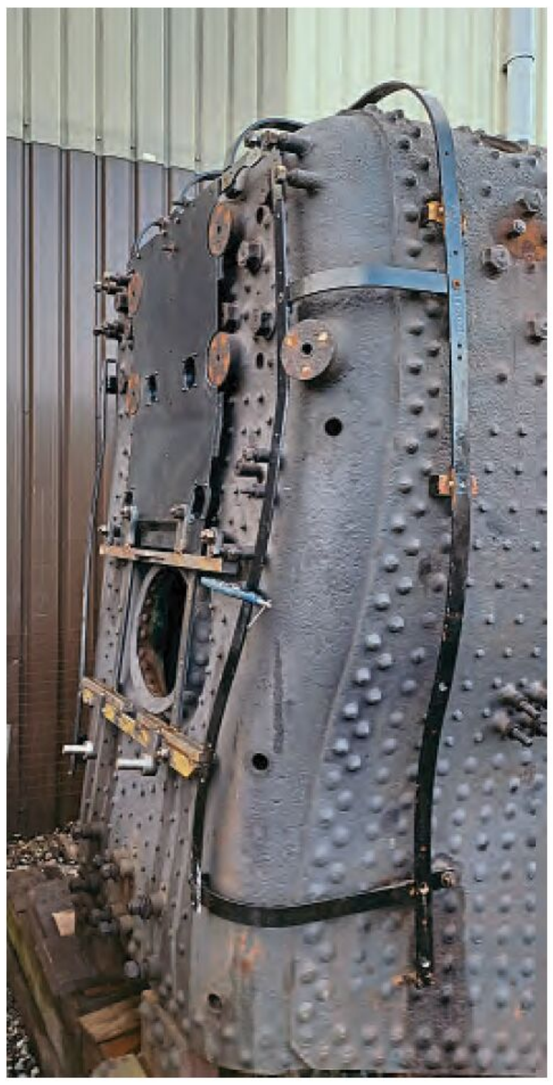
Leaky Finders director Rory Edwards added: "I am thrilled that we have been chosen. We visited Toddington to examine the boiler for ourselves and confirmed the programme of work identified in the excellent tender document.

'Straightforward'

"Although it hasn't been steamed since 1967, the boiler is in surprisingly good order, particularly given that it was overhauled at Eastleigh only three years before No. 76077 was withdrawn, so I see this as a fairly straightforward boiler overhaul that will include a new front tube place and front parallel boiler section, a decision I fully endorse as it will save future costs and effort.

"I am really looking forward to working with the 76077 team. This will be a fine engine for the G/WR, and I am proud that our work will form such an important part of the locomotive's overhaul."

Leaky Finders has developed a strong reputation for the high quality of its boiler work in the heritage sector, including that of Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line*, which, as reported last issue, has just returned to main line duty.





Above: Leaky Finders founders at work: Rory Edwards (left) and George Blasdon. LEAKY FINDERS/76077

Left: Trial-fitting of the cladding and firehole door runners for the boiler of No. 76077. ANDREW MEREDITH/76077

The boiler is No.1052, which was fitted to No. 76077 at Eastleigh Works in February 1964, when the locomotive, built in Doncaster in 1956, received its only general overhaul.

TSLL marketing director Ian Crowder said: "All our effort must now concentrate on raising the necessary money to fund the overhaul.

"Already, the boiler appeal has passed the £30,000 mark, which is hugely encouraging. Following the success of our three component sponsorship promotions to date, we have now launched a catalogue to enable boiler components such as tubes, the tube plate, stays and patch screws to be sponsored. It means that sponsors can claim 'ownership' of specific parts of the boiler."

➜ To sponsor a boiler component, visit https://standard76077.com/boiler-appeal/

Rheidol museum officially opened in spring ceremony

WHILE it may have already opened to the public on March 23 in conjunction with the commencement of daily train services, on May 3 the Welsh Government's deputy director for tourism, development and sport, Steffan Roberts, was welcomed to Aberystwyth to officially open the new 5000 sq ft museum at Vale of Rheidol Railway.

As previously reported, the museum utilises the GWR Aberystwyth locomotive shed to provide a dry, covered space, within which is displayed a vast number of assets from the VoR's collection, as well as locomotives and stock on loan from other lines, such as GWR 'Dukedog' No. 9017 *Earl of Berkley* from the Bluebell Railway.

The museum also provides a dedicated space that can be hired for private functions and other events like concerts, such as that on May 11, when the Machynlleth Wind Band performed amid the displays.

The building was completed on budget by the railway, despite having to navigate Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and increasing costs throughout the last phase of construction. "Delivering the project has been challenging at times," said VoR managing director Llŷr ap Iolo. "However, we now finally have the facilities to welcome visitors and offer a fantastic experience and day out. This makes the business more sustainable, both as an all-year-round attraction and as a large local employer."

Jeremy Miles, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language, said: "It's very exciting news that the new museum and community events space is now open to the public. The modern exhibition will raise awareness of the pivotal role that Wales played in the history of narrow-gauge railways and is a great addition to an already highly-popular Welsh attraction."



VoR managing director Llŷr ap Iolo and Steffan Roberts, the Welsh Government's deputy director of tourism, development and sport (right) prepare to cut the tape to officially open the new museum in Aberystwyth. CHRIS PARRY/VOR

Invited guests enjoyed a private look inside the museum while being entertained by Aberystwyth-based professional string quartet Da'l Ati. The guests then boarded the train for a ride to Devil's Bridge for a sumptuous buffet lunch, provided by the Two Hoots Tea Room.

"It was fantastic to invite our funders, contractors and friends to the opening day and showcase the finished building," added Llŷr.

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Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity

‘Hoover’ mishaps fail to disrupt Swanage diesel gala success

By Owen Hayward
Pictures by Andrew PM Wright



Colas Rail’s Class 37 No. 37219 leads Crompton No. 33111 over Corfe Viaduct with a train from Norden as part of the revised timetable on May 12.

IT is a weekend that has become an annual fixture in the calendar for many diesel traction enthusiasts, with a variety of popular heritage and rare modern locomotives to be sampled, along with a plethora of beers from the accompanying festival, and this year’s Swanage diesel gala was another roaring success – although it was not without incident when two visiting locomotives encountered problems on successive days.

Reported to be the most commercially successful of these weekends in six years, the line-up of 10 locomotives comprised the two resident ‘Cromptons’ – Class 33 Nos. 33012 *Lt. Jenny Lewis RN* and 33111 – alongside eight visiting locomotives that included Class 20 Nos. 20302 and 20111 (Harry Needle Railroad Company), Class 24 D5054 *Phil Southern* (East Lancashire Railway), Class 37 No. 37219 (Colas Rail), Class 50 Nos. 50021 *Rodney* and 50026 *Indomitable* (Paul Spracklen), class 52 D1015 *Western Champion* (Diesel Traction Group) and Class 69 No. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* (GB Railfreight).

Sun, beer – and some steam

The four-day gala and beer festival began on May 9 with the traditional preview day, which saw the visiting Western operating alongside resident No. 33111 on diesel-hauled services alongside SR West Country 4-6-2 No. 34028 *Eddystone*. The appearance of the Crompton came following the arrival of the Branch Line Society’s ‘Jurassic Crompton’ railtour at Swanage, which brought in Nos. 33012, 69002 and a Class 73 (the latter of which did not run during the gala) from Eastleigh along with London Transport’s 4TC unit, which went on to appear as locomotive-hauled stock throughout the event.

The same consist then departed Swanage during the afternoon of May 12, returning to its point of origin. Services operated across the full 10 miles of line, including the rarely-used section between Norden and the Network Rail boundary at the River Frome. Meanwhile, the accompanying beer festival at Corfe Castle offered patrons a choice of more than 30 locally-produced real ales and ciders, with live music performed during the evenings of May 9/10 and during the afternoon of May 12.

Swanage Railway Company chairman Gavin Johns said: “I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to plan and deliver such a popular and challenging event – in its 17th year – while also thanking our passengers for attending the gala and helping to support the Swanage Railway. We were blessed with lovely weather, and the diesel locomotives were an impressive sight.”

“Our May 2024 diesel gala and beer festival attracted just more than 3100 passengers – the best performance since the event in May 2018.”



With the ruins of the castle atop the hill behind, London Transport’s 4TC unit is propelled into Corfe Castle station by No. 33111 on May 9. Two days later, the left-hand line became the location of the derailment of No. 50026.

Setbacks

Despite a strong start, services on May 10 were heavily delayed after *Rodney* failed in the section between Harman’s Cross and Corfe Castle with an electrical fault that shut down the engines of the ‘Hoover,’ requiring it to be rescued by No. 33111. As a result, No. 50021 was withdrawn from the rest of the weekend as the necessary repairs required a specific component that was not immediately to hand.

This was the first of two incidents to cause such delays. At about 6.30pm the following day, classmate No. 50026 was arriving at Corfe Castle at the rear of a six-coach train

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Recently returned to main line operating condition, D1015 *Western Champion* crosses Corfe Castle viaduct during the May 9 gala preview day.



With modern traction proving to be a lure for enthusiasts, many heritage lines with main line connections hire in locomotives that are rarely seen on passenger workings. On May 10, GBRF-owned No. 69002 departs Swanage with the 4TC unit.



D5054 *Phil Southern*, which was visiting from the East Lancashire Railway, works an evening Beerex through Holme Lane on May 11.

when the leading end bogie became partially derailed, necessitating an overnight effort to re-rail the locomotive and assess any damage.

Gavin said: "We liaised with the Rail Accident Investigation Branch regarding the recovery of the diesel locomotive and its investigation into what caused the partial derailment."

With no damage found, *Indomitable* was towed away to allow for a reduced Sunday timetable to be implemented, which saw 11 departures from Swanage during the day.

With the Up line of the passing loop at Corfe Castle out of use for inspection by the RAIB and subsequent repairs, services terminated at Norden rather than River Frome so as to maintain a balanced pattern of trains, with Harman's Cross being the only other place to pass services.

"After Class 50 No. 50026 *Indomitable* was found to have sustained no damage in the partial derailment at Corfe Castle, it returned by rail to Eastleigh in Hampshire on May 14," Gavin added.

The BLS's 'Return of the Jurassic Crompton' tour departed as planned on May 12, returning to Eastleigh via the SR's main line connection at Wareham, while the convoy of remaining visiting main line locomotives departed with Western Champion two days later.



Transition of traction: *Indomitable* departs Swanage on May 10, passing U class No. 31806 in the sidings in a scene reminiscent of times when diesel traction was starting to phase out steam.



Full circle: GWR Saint No. 2999 arrives at Ongar, passing No. 4953. The latter, a Hall, was a development of the former, while No. 2999 itself was built using parts of another Hall. PAUL LAWRENCE



No. 45960 passes through the outskirts of Epping Forest as it climbs through the green corridor of Coopersale on May 4.

High stakes pay dividends: Epping Ongar's festival of steam success!

Words and pictures by Owen Hayward

ORGANISING any event is a fine balancing act, trying to create something that appeals to as many people as possible while making sure that the final product is profitable enough to stage= in the first place.

Anyone involved with planning a steam gala knows that guest locomotives can make or break these, as can running over too many days. yett conversely, taking a risk can sometimes bring favourable results.

Having secured the Great Western Society's new-build Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* for its annual steam gala, the Epping Ongar Railway went on to boast a major coup by securing LMS Jubilee No. 45960 *Leander* for its final two weeks of service before the expiration of its boiler ticket. With two star guests secured, the decision was made to take a risk and turn a one-weekend gala into a three-weekend festival of steam, which spanned April 27/28, May 4-6 and May 11/12.

To start the celebrations, the first weekend saw the express GWR 4-6-0s out together, with No. 2999 operating alongside EOR's resident No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall*, presenting a chance to see the story of the Hall and Saint coming full circle. Charles Collett's GWR Halls were a development of the George Churchward Saints, incorporating modifications such as smaller driving wheels and outside steam pipes. In 1974, the Great Western Society acquired No. 4942 *Maindy Hall* and set about rebuilding it as an example of the Saints, none of which survived into preservation.

Putting on a show

Over the first May bank holiday weekend, it was all hands to the pump for a three-day gala that saw up to five locomotives in steam.

Nos. 2999 and 4953 were joined by second star guest *Leander,* along with 4575 small prairie No. L150 (GWR 5521, on long-term loan from Bill Parker) and EOR's resident shed pet Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST No. 3437 *Isabel*.

With gradients as steep as 1-in-65, the locomotives were worked hard throughout, putting on a show that enthralled all. While the four ex-main line locomotives took charge of services across the full 6.5-mile line between Ongar and the railway's London Transport boundary at Epping, the industrial ran shuttles into Epping Forest, giving rides aboard a shark brake van. A late surprise alteration saw the original plan for the inclusion of a DMU trailer instead swapped for an ex-MOD Rectank flatbed, aboard which was placed a classic 1933 Austin 7 car, which certainly caught the attention of passengers and passers-by.

The third and final weekend was a bittersweet occasion, riding on the success of the gala beforehand but also being the final time that *Leander* could be seen in steam ahead of its withdrawal for overhaul. Operating alongside *Lady of Legend* for one final time, the Jubilee concluded services on May 11 with a non-stop run from



LMS Jubilee *Leander* passes Bilsden's Farm with a non-stop express from Ongar to Epping Forest, with GWR No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall* attached to the rear.

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Ongar through to Epping Forest, before dropping its fire for the final time at the end of the following day.

The main gala event itself welcomed more than 1200 passengers across the three days, with the shouldering weekends bringing that up to 2000-plus, the lure of *Leander*'s final steamings attracting visitors from around the country.

Managing director Wesley Tierney said: "The event surpassed our expectations, with an intensive service and two star locomotives drawing impressive crowds to see and hear them hard at work on our challenging gradients. The volunteers can be proud of what they achieved, and it was a delight to see many happy, smiling faces not only filling the trains across all three weekends of the Festival of Steam event, but also providing a boost to the local economy."

Farewell for now

Leander departed Essex by road shortly after the gala, returning to Carnforth where owner Chris Beet was preparing to commence the overhaul of the locomotive. Amid the usual boiler work, the Jubilee requires a new tender water tank which is nearly completed and ready to be swapped over with the current one. The overhaul will be undertaken at West Coast Railway's Carnforth workshops by a team of volunteers led by Chris himself, who said there was "no set timescale for completing the work."



Above: No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* passes Coopersale Common as it climbs away from Epping with an evening real ale train on May 4.

Left: *Lady of Legend* leads *Pitchford Hall* through Blake Hall on May 5. At the time the station was closed by London Underground in 1981, it was famed for being the least used station on the network. It is now a private residence.

Below: The EOR's resident Hawthorn Leslie *Isabel* approaches Roughtalley's Wood with a brake van trip towards Epping, featuring a classic Austin car loaded aboard the Rectank wagon.



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ROBIN JONES, EDITOR

On May 4, LMS Jubilee class No. 45960 *Leander* crosses Cripsey Brook Viaduct during a departure from Ongar station during the Epping Ongar Railway's 'Festival of Steam' gala weekend. OWEN HAYWARD.

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LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44932 heading away from Gisburn with the Manchester Victoria to Carlisle 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' in sub-zero temperatures on January 21, 2023. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ

This year's very best from the lineside!

By Robin Jones

THE winners of the 2023/24 Railway Correspondence and Travel Society Photographic Competition, held in conjunction with Mortons Media, publisher of *Heritage Railway*, have been announced.

This year's free-to-enter contest had the theme of Steam or Modern; People and the Environment, as outlined in issue 311. It offered existing and fledgling photographers of all ages the chance to showcase their work and win special prizes.

The overall winner was Eddie Holden, whose image of Ratcliffe Power Station, the last coal-fired one in the UK, showed Class 60 No. 60019 passing Gateway West Junction with the 7.02am Lyndsey Oil Refinery to Kingsbury Oil Sidings freight on February 24, 2022.

The judges considered that Eddie, who won the top prize of a DB Cargo cab ride, had captured an everyday railway scene in a creative manner in both the composition of the image and the contrast achieved in the sky and steam, with the location chosen illustrating the role of the way in which railways serve industry. All of the components in the picture lead the eye to the focus point of the train.

One of the four categories for entries was heritage railways and main line steam (the others being modern traction, people and the railways and the environment and the railway), with Steve Sienkiewicz winning the first prize of a Nene Valley Railway shed tour and cab ride.

His entry showed LMS 'Black Five' No. 44932 heading away from Gisburn in fine style with 1Z30, the 7.34am Manchester Victoria to Carlisle 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express', in sub-zero temperatures on January 21, 2023.

The judges' view was that No. 44932 is caught in a classic steam pose, with the conditions being 'just right' to add to the composition. The tracks through the field emphasise the exhaust which trails off into the distance, while the depression in the ground helps to hold the attention on the train and the exhaust is not 'lost' in a milky sky.

The second prize of a Mortons magazine subscription and RCTS book was won by his entry 'Glorious Devon,' which showed LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* passing Saltern Cove on the Dartmouth Steam Railway on August 12, 2023.

In third place was John Stevenson with 'Decapod Sunset,' which portrayed BR Standard 9F No. 92203 *Black Prince* at sunset on the North Norfolk Railway on July 8, 2023. He won a choice of either a Mortons magazine subscription or an RCTS book.

The wild card category was included in the competition to reward an image that the judges considered was excellent quality, but which could have been more entered in more than one of the main four categories – or could potentially have done better in a different category to the one that the photographer entered it in. Each of the eight judges put forward two possibilities and after much debate they selected Philip Coombe's image of Class 42 Warships D821 and D832 posing under the signal gantry at Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway on October 6, 2023, for its careful composition, accompanied by excellent clarity and exposure. Philip won first class tickets and an afternoon tea at the Talyllyn Railway.

In another of the four categories, People and Railways, Stuart Chapman took the second prize of a Mortons magazine subscription and RCTS book for his view of the age-old task of preparing a steam locomotive for duty, being re-enacted at Barrow Hill Roundhouse on March 8, 2023.



A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* heads south past Saltern Cove on the Dartmouth Steam Railway on August 12, 2023. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

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The overall winner across all four categories was this view of Ratcliffe Power Station on February 24, 2022. EDDIE HOLDEN



Above: Class 42 Warships D821 *Greyhound* and D832 *Onslaught* at Kidderminster Town on October 6, 2023. PHILIP COOMBE

Right: The now out-of-ticket BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92203 *Black Prince* at sunset on the North Norfolk Railway on July 8, 2023. JOHN STEVENSON



Below: Preparing a locomotive for a day's action at Barrow Hill Roundhouse. STUART CHAPMAN



Three to steam for first time in living memory at Corris gala

JUNE 15 will be an historic day for the Corris Railway when three locomotives will be in steam together for the first time in more than 100 years.

With the railway's new-build Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 being joined by original Corris classmate No.3 from the Talyllyn Railway for the month, the opportunity has been seized to stage a steam spectacle. Fellow new-build Kerr Stuart Tattoo 0-4-2ST No. 7 will also join the occasion, its last gala event before it is withdrawn for overhaul at the end of 2024.

Based on past galas, the CR has taken the decision not to plan any demonstration freight services during this event. With past years' galas having seen these cancelled in order to run sufficient passenger-carrying services, it is expecting high visitors numbers for what will be an incredibly rare occasion and has planned services with this in mind.

Flying the Falcons

Another feature of the day will be double-heading by the two Falcons. Evidence of double-heading by Falcons during the line's history (even in its 'golden age' before the First World War) is scant. One photograph exists of such a working on the bridge over the river Dyfi at Machynlleth, but it is not known if this was set up for a commercial postcard.

With the original route closed in 1948, memories of how trains worked have almost vanished, but local tradition says that some trains were double-headed at times of high demand, such as on market days in Machynlleth. It is suggested that on these occasions the pairing would work returning trains from Machynlleth as far as Maespoeth Junction, where, with the most severe climbing including the 1-in-30 gradient on the approach to the junction which the current work on the southern extension will recreate, one locomotive would detach before the other took the train on the rest of its journey to Corris and Aberllefenni.

Treats for visitors

With one locomotive only usually to be found in steam, particularly as it approached closure, it can be safely said that three locomotives in steam is a sight that has not been seen on the Corris in more than a century and certainly beyond living memory.

Visitors to the gala will also be able to see the work being carried out by the Corris volunteer workforce, including on carriage No. 24 which, once complete, will allow first-class travel on the line for the first time in at least 90 years.

The museum at Corris will be open, and drinks and snacks will be on sale. A short walk away from the station, the Slaters Arms pub will be open, which until 1948 had its beer delivered by train, with the barrels being rolled across the road from the level crossing opposite the pub.

➜ Advance gala tickets can be purchased at www.corris.co.uk

'Hoover' set to clean up at annual diesel gala spectacle in Kent

THE Spa Valley Railway's summer diesel gala will welcome two guest locomotives to support its home fleet, with one a familiar friend and another one new.

Class 50 No. 50021 *Rodney* will be the third example of its class to have traversed the five-mile line when it visits for the August 2-4 event, with No. 50019 having been based at Eridge for a short while in the 1990s and No. 50026 *Indomitable* having visited for the 2017 summer diesel gala. Currently turned out in BR large logo blue, its visit comes courtesy of owner Paul Spracklen and PTG Tours.

Also appearing is Class 33 No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson,* which visited the Spa in both 2014 and 2015. Having been seen in use on the line to Hastings during its main line career, the 'Crompton' is an appropriate locomotive for the route and appears courtesy of Stewart Robinson and the Mid-Norfolk Railway.

Trains will run late into the evening on both the Friday and Saturday, with real ale and fish and chip dining options on offer. Sunday will conclude with the return of popular 'Loadex' working, a regular feature of the railway's diesel galas and which will see *Rodney* leading all available main line locomotives from Tunbridge Wells West to Eridge, before taking charge of the return service with the others attached to the rear.

Brake van rides are expected to shuttle between Eridge and Groombridge each day.





Above: LMS 0-6-0 No. 44422 on display in the bay platform at Cheddleton. CVR

Left: Swapping the River Dart for the River Churnet, visiting BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75014 *Braveheart* passes Consall Forge on May 6. ALAN WEAVER

Churnet celebrates success after five-year gala hiatus

By Owen Hayward

GLORIOUS sunshine and an attractive line-up of locomotives proved to be a winning combination for the Churnet Valley Railway when it rejoined the gala scene after a five-year absence – with the first May bank holiday weekend event far exceeding expectations.

Having set high standards at its last steam gala on February 23/24, 2019, which saw Caledonian Railway 439 class 0-4-4T No. 419 visit from its home north of the Scottish border, this year's event saw the two resident USATC S160 2-8-0s – Nos. 5197 and 6046 – joined by BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75014 *Braveheart*, which has been on loan to the railway from the Dartmouth Steam Railway since January.

Local loco

A regionally appropriate locomotive, after being built in 1951 at Swindon it was allocated to several sheds during its working life, including Stoke from September 1963 through to March 1967, during which time it would have no doubt worked over the route which the CVR operates. Indeed, for a photographic charter in March, it masqueraded as scrapped sister No. 75035, which worked the last passenger train to Leek.

Completing the line-up was 1924-built GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, which is celebrating its centenary this year and had arrived from a month long stay at the East Lancashire Railway. No. 4079 remained at the CVR for the remainder of May, with a final weekend of operation on June 1/2, before returning to its home at Didcot Railway Centre for the summer.

With an intensive timetable and steep gradients including a 1-in-40 in the section between Leekbrook Junction and Ipstone Loop putting locomotives through their paces, passengers were treated to a show, with double-header combinations seeing No. 6046 being paired with both Nos. 5197 and 75014 for trains during the May 4-6 gala. The railway reported that revenue was substantially up against its previous event.

CVR director Chris Meadowcroft said: "The revenue was up 40% on our last gala in 2019 with the Caley Tank, so it was a great result. Covid-19 played a part in not holding a gala for a few years, but being able to get the visits of Nos. 4079 and 75014 to overlap was a great reason to hold one now; the visit of No. 75014 in particular has been very popular.

"My highlights for the gala have to be the climb to Ipstones, which is always a huge attraction, along with the double-headed S160s, which drew a lot of attention. Most of the trains up the bank to Ipstones behind No. 4079 were standing room only.

"We will be holding another gala next year, for which we are already making enquiries about locos."



USATC S160 pair Nos. 6046 and 5197 start off from Consall with a service to Kingsley & Froghall. ROBERT FALCONER



GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* tackles the climb through Bradnop towards Ipstones. ROBERT FALCONER

Steaming for a centenary

The gala additionally proved an opportunity to launch the 4F Centenary Appeal with a view to returning the line's resident LMS Fowler 0-6-0 No. 44422 to service in time for its own 100th birthday in 2027.

Having undergone a full boiler overhaul and returned to service in 2016, it worked only for 18 months before being withdrawn again in need of further mechanical work and has sat dormant since, although it has recently undergone a cosmetic refurbishment and been displayed at Cheddleton station.

In association with the North Staffordshire Railway (1998) Ltd, which owns the locomotive, a target of £50,000 has been set to fund the required work which will enable No. 44422 to return in time to celebrate its centenary in three years' time.

➜ **For further information and to support the appeal, visit www.churnetvalleyrailway.co.uk/4f-no-44422**

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Boston Lodge to build new Darjeeling tank boiler

By Robin Jones

THE Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways' Boston Lodge Works is to design a new boiler for Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Sharp Stewart B class 0-4-0SWTT No. 19B.

As previously reported, No. 19B was last year bought by the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust at the auction of the late Adrian Shooter's estate, along with two replica carriages.

A detailed examination of No. 19B's boiler (the 1903 Low Moor iron and copper one from sister No. 27B) at the Statfold Barn Railway workshops revealed that so many parts were found to be life-expired that building a new one was the best option, as reported last issue.

An agreement has now been reached with Boston Lodge to design a replacement and take it through to certification

Ff&WHR's Chief Mechanical Engineer, Jon Whalley, design engineer and boilersmith Bob Yates, and managing director Paul Lewin visited the DTLT at Statfold in early May to examine the old boiler shell and firebox and discuss requirements for the new design.

A plan for a new all-steel, flanged and welded boiler with a riveted foundation ring has emerged, based on the original envelope but updated to modern standards.

The provisional timescales will see the design completed by July, with certification by Christmas, enabling a contract to be placed for manufacture of the new boiler, assuming that the required funds can be raised.

All being well, No. 19B will be back in steam in early 2026.

Trust chairman Jeremy Davey said: "I am delighted we have been able to place this design contract so quickly and want to thank Paul Lewin and his team for their advice and support in getting to this point.

"I'd also like to thank all the other parties who kindly reached out and offered their services to help achieve the goal of getting No. 19B back into service as soon as possible.

"It gives me great confidence for the future of heritage steam in the UK that so many skilled organisations are here, able, and willing."

Will Smith, the trust's engineering lead, said: "With Boston Lodge's highly-regarded boiler design and manufacturing work, we are confident that a very high-quality design will be produced.

"Alongside the great work from Statfold's fitters on the mechanical overhaul of the locomotive, No. 19B will be fitted with a boiler that will provide many years of trouble-free service."



The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways' design engineer and boilersmith Bob Yates draws the plan for the new boiler against the old one at Statfold Barn. DTLT

Trust treasurer Pete 'Fuzz' Jordan said: "The funds for the design and certification work were already to hand when the decision was made to renew the boiler. We have about £75,000 left to raise towards the estimated construction costs and fundraising will continue."

Paul Lewin added: "We are delighted to be able to continue the relationship with No. 19B, which started when Adrian Shooter owned it and now extends to the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust. Jon Whalley and Bob Yates are looking forward to getting on with the design and helping to continue the story of this remarkable and popular locomotive."

Local economy reaps rewards from Boston Lodge heritage project

REINFORCING the fact that the value of a heritage line goes far beyond the preservation of historic artefacts, with businesses in the areas often benefitting from increased footfall and subsequent business, contractors and sub-contractors in North Wales have been boosted by the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways' project to improve and better interpret its workshops at Boston Lodge, with more than £3 million having been spent on it to date.

Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Ffestiniog Railway Society and Welsh Highland Railway Trust, the project to restore and develop the main engineering workshops at Boston Lodge has included the restoration and extension of the blacksmiths building to create space for volunteer projects, while additionally creating a NLHF training and research centre.

The waggon repair shed once found in top yard is also being rebuilt, which will provide further undercover storage and a visitor orientation area, while the old engine shed on the opposite side of the running line will gain a small interpretation area from where guided tours can commence and finish.

With an overall budget of £5.2 million for the project, £3.766 million has come from NLHF grants, and much has been spent on sourcing local skills and craftmanship, which has resulted in significant contracts being awarded to local businesses in the region.

Ff&WHR heritage project manager Dr Edwina Bell said: "It has been really important to reinvest this money back into the community here as we restore old buildings and build new ones, transforming the site to make it fit for the future and enable us to offer guided tours to showcase the heritage skills that keep the railway running.

"We have a wealth of construction skills locally and I was determined to use them."

OBR of Llangefni is the main contractor leading on 12 of the buildings, while GH James Cyf was brought in to work on the small locomotive shed, along with J Lloyd Steelwork of Corwen. OBR has used a wide range of local subcontractors including Snowdonia Lime of Glan Conwy, JRS Mechanical and Electrical Service from Abergele, Lance Williams Roofing of Porthaethwy, North Wales liquid screed of Caernarfon, Colin Jones Rock Engineering of Porthmadog and RG Jones of Pwllheli.

Ff&WHR general manager Paul Lewin said: "The Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project is all about working in partnership with the local community. I am immensely proud of the work that has taken place with the help of the NLHF and match-funding by the Ffestiniog Railway Society and the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways Trust to make our busy Boston Lodge works a place where the community and visitors can step into a real working site and understand the area's pioneering spirit, and also give locals with a railway family history an opportunity to see where their ancestors worked.



The workshops and sheds at Boston Lodge are nearing the end of a multi-million-pound renovation that has seen numerous local businesses benefit from contract work. It will open for tours later this year. CHRIS PARRY/FFWHR

"We now have a state-of-the-art classroom and facilities to enable us to do that. When you visit, you will see the project has allowed us to rescue historic buildings at Boston Lodge, bringing them back into use, as well as creating some new buildings thanks to the skills and endeavour of our contractors. I can't wait to invite the community onto the site this year."

Boston Lodge is set to open for tours later this year, with details to be released in due course.

New heritage futures for two classic station footbridges

By Robin Jones

THE iconic 1894-built Grade II-listed footbridge from St Erth station in Cornwall is to be moved to the East Somerset Railway's Cranmore headquarters and re-erected.

The footbridge, which gives access over the tracks at the west end of the station, has been given to the heritage line free of charge by Network Rail, which is building a modern, fully-accessible, step-free replacement.

Some local residents have voiced their displeasure at the replacement of the footbridge, a key component of the station complex which opened on March 11, 1852, and is Grade II-listed throughout, but Cornwall Council granted planning permission early last year.

In 1877, the station became the junction for the St Ives branch, the last broad-gauge line to be built. The station was enlarged in 1897 when another platform was built and a level crossing at the west end of the station was replaced by the footbridge.

The wrought-iron flanged-plate girder bridge with a horizontal span over the main line tracks has dog-legged stairs leading down onto Platforms 1 and 2. The upper halves of the sides are open, and both the span and stairs are covered with a metal canopy roof covering.

The bridge has remained essentially as it was first built, although a few elements have been replaced in recent years, such as the corrugated roof covering with its decorative timber valences and many of the timber stair boards and bridge deck boards.

All change

NR will transport the dismantled footbridge to Cranmore, where Cass Hayward Structural Engineers has been engaged to assist with the design of foundations for the relocated structure. Restoration work will be undertaken on the three main sections before the bridge is repainted into either GWR or ESR colours and lifted into place. It is currently in NR blue.

The ESR said it is fortunate that the footbridge has recently been repaired by Network Rail and looks in relatively good condition considering its age; this should reduce the amount of restoration work needed when the bridge finally comes to Cranmore.

Meanwhile, a 132-year-old footbridge which serves as a gateway to the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway at its main line connection has been restored to its original splendour by Network Rail at a cost of £900,000.

The Duffield station footbridge was originally built in 1892, of which the main bridge span survives. The structure underwent a significant modification in 1957 when the original ironwork staircases were replaced with brick.

The latest overhaul started in January and saw Network Rail and contractor Amco Giffen carefully plan the work to cause as little disruption to station users as possible.

Major improvements took place to the structure, including new handrails, stair treads, and cross beams, as well as masonry and drainage upgrades.

All steelwork was then mechanically prepared before being painted in Midland Railway livery.

NR undertook the restoration to improve the experience of passengers as they travel from the station and to offer them a safer way to cross the line.

Tim Hedley-Jones, executive director of The Railway Heritage Trust, said: "We were happy to provide a grant to ensure that the footbridge was painted in authentic Midland Railway colours. It contributes to making a smart entrance for visitors to Duffield and the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway".

'Much-loved asset'

NR project manager Shak Munshi said: "It's really important for NR to protect and conserve structures on the railway network – and the footbridge at Duffield station is a prime example of a much-loved heritage asset being sensitively brought up-to-date.

"The vital investment now means the railway crossing will be safer and more reliable for passengers for generations to come.

"We are delighted with the outcome of this project and hope that both passengers and local residents are as pleased with the end result as we are."

East Midlands Railway customer services director Dave Meredith said: "We too are delighted that Duffield footbridge has been restored to its former glory.

"The investment on the bridge changes the look and feel of the station, making it brighter and more inviting for our customers."



St Erth station with its footbridge on September 8, 2021. HUGH LLEWELLYN/CREATIVE COMMONS



The restored footbridge in Duffield station, freshly painted in Midland Railway livery. NETWORK RAIL

Vintage 1938 unit is all set for summer return to Underground journeys

A SERIES of special Underground trips aboard London Transport Museum's restored 1938 Art Deco tube stock will run over the next four months.

The first outing, the June 9 Piccadilly Sunday Special event, will see the unit make a 50-minute journey from Acton Town station in West London to Oakwood station in North London over the Piccadilly Line. Single tickets are also available from Oakwood to Acton Town.

At Oakwood station, guests will hear a mini talk about the architect Charles Holden and how his innovative station design has played a major role in shaping the appearance of London. At Acton Town, guests will be able to shop for transport collectibles at a pop-up stall run by the London Transport Museum Friends. They will also receive a souvenir booklet to remember their experience.

Tickets are now on sale online at www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on-calendar/heritage-vehicle-outings/heritage-train-journeys-piccadilly-sunday-special

The July 20/21 Summer Special event will celebrate the 120th anniversary of the extension of the Metropolitan Line out to Uxbridge from Harrow-on-the-Hill.

On August 10/11, the Heathrow Loop trip will start from an as-yet-unannounced West London station, where there will be a London Transport Museum Friends stall and a drop-in craft activity.

The final heritage journey of the season will coincide with the popular annual Amersham Heritage Day, taking place on Sunday, September 8.

Journeys will commence at Amersham station on the Metropolitan Line, but the exact

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Bressingham Steam Gardens hosted its annual heritage steam gala event on May 4-6, which saw the Norfolk site flooded by vintage traction engines, road rollers, miniatures and more. One star attraction that was not in steam was newly-arrived BR 9F No. 92203 *Black Prince*, which arrived on April 29 at the start of a two-year storage deal between the museum, the Friends of Black Prince, and the North Norfolk Railway. On May 4, ex LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 662 *Martello* passes the 'Spaceship' during a run along the demonstration line, and the difference in size between the pair is plain to see. PAUL LAWRENCE

Unique items expand Rail Trolley Trust's collection

WITH an asset catalogue covering a broad range of Wickham trollies and associated equipment, the Rail Trolley Trust has further expanded its collection thanks to the acquisition of several appropriate signalling components – as well as another trailer vehicle.

A portable token instrument has been on loan to the RTT for several years; in March this year, its owner advised the trust that they were looking to dispose of it, along with some other items in their collection.

After discussions between the two parties, a price was agreed and the assets collected, with a signalbox token alarm and a termination of motor trolley system trackside sign also joining the portable instrument in the RTT's collection.

Having suffered from years of weather damage, the sign has been sent to a member of the RTT team for restoration. The two mechanical instruments are due to go to another member for their own refurbishments to be carried out.



The as yet unidentified ex-MOD weedkilling trailer which the RTT successfully bid on at auction. It has moved to Andrew Briddon's yard at Darley Dale on Peak Rail, where it will be returned to use. RTT



A portable token instrument that would have been used by rail trolley workings. The RTT will undertake refurbishment of this latest acquisition and hope to identify the precise methods in which it would have been utilised. RTT

Telling the wider story

"As one of the trust's stated aims is to demonstrate how trolleys were operated and signalled, it was obvious that these items should be added to our collection," said chairman Jonathon Flood. "We hope in the long term to be able to demonstrate the signalling system with a replica of a typical 'off-track' and token plug-in-point. Further details of this project will be announced in the future once a suitable heritage railway location has been found and the relevant agreements are in place."

The trust has also acquired a standard gauge ex-MOD trailer fitted with weedkiller spraying equipment and has been jointly purchased by locomotive and rolling stock owner Andrew Briddon, who spotted it listed in an auction of other miscellaneous equipment.

Having made a successful bid on the trailer, it moved to Andrew's base at Peak Rail's Darley Dale, where its equipment will be serviced allowing it to return to regular use.

Jonathon added: "The trailer currently carries the number 9015, which was originally allocated to a Wickham Type 27, but this is quite obviously not a Wickham. It is actually a Baguley-built trailer supplied to be used with the railcars that Baguley Drewry built, such as the privately-owned No. AD9120, which is also based at Andrew's site and is currently being worked on in the Geoffrey Briddon Building.

"The trust would obviously be interested to know the original identity and build date of the trailer. If anyone has any details, then please get in touch."

The trust continues to appeal for funds towards its £10,000 goal to enable it to move more of its collection to secure locations, provide further suitable storage accommodation for some of its older and more historic vehicles, and make some significant progress on several restoration projects. Donations can be made in various ways; all details can be found online at www.railtrolleytrust.co.uk/help-us-donate.html

route is yet to be confirmed.

Some of the events will include costumed actors from a bygone era, craft workshops, souvenir booklets, a transport collectibles stall or a busker.

The 1938 stock unit was the first kind of deep-level tube train to have all the electrical equipment underneath the floor, combining the latest technology of the time with quintessential late 1930s style. These trains served London on several deep-level tube lines for half a century. It comprises four cars, complete with green and red moquette seating, grab handles and Art Deco light fittings.

More details about the event programme and ticket sales will be available at www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/heritage-vehicle-outings



Right: The restored 1938 Art Deco London Underground tube train formed a special service for the Rickmansworth Festival in May 2013. ED WEBSTER/CREATIVE COMMONS

Worth Valley September service suspension for bridge replacement

By Owen Hayward

THE Keighley & Worth Valley Railway will temporarily suspend services over half of its 5½-mile route in September to allow a key bridge to be replaced.

Bridge 27, situated outside Haworth station, is now the focus of the railway's engineers who are preparing to replace it. The line between Haworth and Oxenhope will be closed for up to four weeks to facilitate the most substantial element of these works.

The current bridge was built in 1889 as part of a reconstruction of a previous structure erected in 1867 for the opening of the line. The existing bridge is two separate structures, but they both utilise the same abutments and pier.

One of these decks carries the line into Haworth Yard, but this span received significant work in the late 1970s and is not part of the upcoming scheme. The other, which carries the KWVR's main line, now needs renewing due to the poor condition of the supporting abutments, the mid-stream pier it sits on, and its iron girders.

Engineers are planning for the shutdown to take place after the key school summer holiday period's daily passenger train services have concluded, with the closure expected to come into effect from September 1, which is forecast to last until at least September 21.

The target is to replace the life-expired sections of the bridge which spans Bridgehouse Beck, one of the River Worth's main tributaries.

Ass previously reported, the railway was awarded £1 million from the Government's Community Ownership Fund, part of the Levelling Up programme, to undertake the work on the bridge.

Decade of planning

KWVR chief civil engineer James Barlow said: "We have had the replacement of bridge 27 on our radar for more than 10 years and we've been planning its renewal since about 2015.

"Our regular inspections picked up the deterioration that must be expected in a structure of its age. Its replacement this year is the culmination of nearly 10 years of effort by our volunteer engineering team, supported by specialist designers and contractors.

"We have been working with Cass Hayward since 2019 on the design and are in the process of entering into contract with multiple suppliers for the physical construction works.

"During the spring we will remove the track and install 12 new reinforced concrete piles behind the existing structure, after which we will put the track back to enable the summer services to run.

"At the end of the summer, starting on the evening of September 1, we will demolish the existing bridge and install a new one placed on the piles. Replacing the existing structure with one that requires less maintenance in the future will also enable our volunteers to focus on the maintenance and improvement of other areas of the railway."

As preparatory work is carried out ahead of the larger job in September, Haworth station will have limited parking on occasions to accommodate the equipment and machinery required.

➜ Details of the project and expected disruptions can be found by visiting kwvr.co.uk/bridge27update/



During April and May, groundworks were being prepared for new pilings as part of the KWVR's bridge 27 replacement project, which will close the line between Haworth and Oxenhope in September. KWVR

Ffestiniog manager becomes HRA's vice-chairman

FFESTINIOG & Welsh Highland Railways general manager Paul Lewin has been appointed as the new vice-chairman of the Heritage Railway Association, replacing outgoing Chris Price.

Paul has been general manager of the Ff&WHR for 20 years, making him the longest-serving general manager in the sector at what is coincidentally also the longest heritage railway, at a combined length of nearly 40 miles.

He joined the railway at a critical point, when the major expansion plans to more than double the size of the railway coincided with financial difficulties in the existing operating company.

Since then, the FfWHR business has gone from a turnover of £1.9 million, making a £300 loss, to a £6 million business returning an annual surplus in the range £100-300,0000 consistently for two decades.

The railway, while employing more than 100 staff, is also supported by 500-plus regular volunteers.

Paul was elected to the HRA board at its annual general meeting in Llandudno during March and was appointed vice-chairman at the following board meeting in April.

It is the second time that Paul has served on the board of the trade body for the heritage rail sector.

His predecessor, Chris Price, remains a director of the HRA.

The HRA's chairman, Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, said: "Paul has a huge amount of experience and knowledge. He is one of the most respected figures in heritage rail today.

"It's been a pleasure working with Chris and I'm very pleased that he remains part of the board. Even though his day job is now in a different part of the visitor economy, he retains his passion and commitment to the sector."

Paul said: "Our nation's heritage railways and tramways are facing both financial challenges and generational change.

"More than ever there is the need to work together and the HRA is the focal point for that. It is a pleasure to be appointed to this post at a pivotal time for the movement."

Other recent changes to the HRA board include the appointment of North Yorkshire Moors Railway Group finance director and Talyllyn Railway chief financial officer Garry Mumford.



Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways general manager Paul Lewin has been appointed to the role of vice-chairman of the Heritage Railway Association. HRA

A keen railway enthusiast since an early age, Garry started volunteering on the Talyllyn Railway in 1992 and is now one of the most experienced finance professionals in the sector.

Former HRA chairman and MEP Brian Simpson retired at the March AGM, as did longstanding director and former West Somerset Railway managing director Mark Smith.

Lord Hendy added: "The work that Brian and Mark put in on behalf of the whole heritage rail world during their long service on the HRA board will not be forgotten. Their contributions were significant, and I want to thank them for their support."

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Above: Newly-arrived Sentinel shunter Derwent at the Wensleydale Railway's Leeming Bar station. NICK KEEGAN/WR

Right: Cosmetically restored experimental railbus LEV1. WR

It's one in, one out at North Yorkshire heritage line

By Robin Jones

THE Wensleydale Railway has taken delivery of Sentinel 0-6-0DH No. 10156 of 1964 *Derwent* on loan from Hope Cement Works in Derbyshire.

Fitted with a Rolls-Royce eight-cylinder engine, *Derwent* was used to move cement wagons from the works, the largest cement manufacturing operation in the UK which opened in 1929, down the private branch line to Earles Sidings on the main line before onward transportation.

John Mulryan, maintenance manager at the works, said: "We are delighted and thankful that the Wensleydale Railway has agreed to support the preservation of this locomotive, which is part of our industrial heritage. We look forward to seeing *Derwent* being returned to its former glory at its new home."

Wensleydale spokesman Terry Larder said: "We are very grateful to the team at Hope Cement Works for the permanent loan of their locomotive. We are planning an industrial diesel weekend in August and look forward to showcasing the loco at this event."

Meanwhile, the line returned its historic 1975-built experimental railbus LEV1 to the National Railway Museum for display at the Locomotion museum in Shildon.

Its body is based on the Leyland National bus and designed to provide economical services on selected routes. The prototype design eventually led to the development of the Pacer series of DMUs in the 1980s.

LEV1 has been on loan to Wensleydale Railway since October 2012 and saw service for several years. The line's engineering team recently carried out a major cosmetic overhaul of the unit prior to its departure.

Wensleydale Railway plc director Steve Davies said: "As a former director of the NRM, I fully recognise that railway heritage and preservation is not just about the eye-catching steam, diesel and electric locomotives, but also that those vehicles which played an important role in maintaining services economically in order to guarantee their viability are equally important.

"LEV1 played a pivotal role in the eventual development of the much-maligned Pacers, a vehicle which, despite its poor publicity, actually underpinned a multitude of commuter and secondary services at relatively low cost for many years.

"LEV1 therefore can rightly claim its place in the pantheon of British railway history alongside the likes of the A1, A3 and A4 Pacifics, the Royal Scots, Duchesses, Castles and Kings, and the early diesels, and of course the APT and HSTs."

He said that at Locomotion, LEV1 "will assume a modest but important role in telling the story of the passenger experience."

Spa Valley gets the green light for services after lorry bridge strike

By Geoff Courtney

IT was news that Jonnie Pay and his volunteers on the Spa Valley Railway had heard all too often – a bridge that carries the heritage line over the busy A26 in Tunbridge Wells had once again been hit by a lorry, this time resulting in two cars being damaged and debris scattered over the road.

Fortunately, fate for once smiled on the heritage line, and the incident on May 8 didn't affect the railway's services over the following weekend.

The accident happened when two vehicles on the upper deck of a car transporter were pushed off as the lorry hit the 14ft 6in bridge, which is close to the railway's Tunbridge Wells West terminus. Nobody was hurt, although an eye witness said a following vehicle was nearly hit when one of the cars fell.

Jonnie, the railway's commercial manager, told *Heritage Railway*: "The number of strikes seems to be on the rise, despite numerous signs and warnings in place at this structure.

"Each time it's hit, it costs our volunteers valuable time to inspect the bridge, and sometimes payouts pending insurance claims for inspection and repairs. The highways authorities are always helpful concerning road closures, but it's unfortunate that these strikes happen."

Kent Police, which attended the scene, confirmed there were no injuries, while fire crews were also called out due to a fuel leak.



Class act: Former Caledonian Railway 812 class 0-6-0 No. 828 (BR No. 57566), on loan from the Strathspey Railway, calls at the Spa Valley Railway station of Groombridge with an Eridge to Tunbridge Wells West train on January 14. The railway suffered a bridge strike at Tunbridge Wells on May 8, but fortunately services were unaffected. OWEN HAYWARD

£75k appeal to safeguard workshops that overhauled *Flying Scotsman*

By Owen Hayward

HAVING stood for 168 years and escaped demolition after closure by BR, the Baron Street engineering workshop just outside Bury Bolton Street station on the East Lancashire Railway needs renovating in order to continue meeting the needs of the heritage railway.

Built in 1856 for the East Lancashire Railway Company, it served as its main workshop, and 16 locomotives were built there after being taken over by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway. It was then used as a carriage repair shed between 1889 to 1916, after which it became a maintenance facility for trains that ran between Bury and Manchester Victoria for more than 70 years.

In 1967 the workshops narrowly escaped when Buckley Wells started to be demolished after passenger services stopped. However, a determined group of volunteers saved the railway and the Baron Street workshop went on to play a pivotal role in the restoration of traction and rolling stock to support the launch of the first heritage era passenger service in 1987, remaining a critical part of the ELR's engineering facilities to this day, and it has even been used as the base for the overhaul of LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*.

The Grade II-listed workshop, believed to be the one of the world's oldest buildings still in use for its original purpose, needs renovation work – including a new roof – to be able stay fit for purpose.

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "Like all heritage assets, there is always maintenance and repair work to be undertaken.

Historic asset

"For more than 50 years, the ELR has successfully managed the railway's maintenance and has made considerable improvements to improve health and safety, IT, welfare and customer services. The Baron Street workshop is one of the heritage railway's jewels in the crown. It is steeped in history, and on a walk through the building you can imagine the noise and the flurry of locomotives moving in and out of the workshop and being there at the dawn of the railways.

"The roof, while being maintained, now needs a serious investment to restore it not just to its original condition, but to also take the opportunity to install solar panels to reduce electricity usage and therefore reduce carbon levels."



The East Lancashire Railway's Buckley Wells locomotive shed and engineering workshops, located on Baron Street in Bury, seen with visiting LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* outside. A £75,000 appeal has been launched to help towards a £2 million renovation project. NIGEL VALENTINE/ELR

In recent years, the ELR has been investing heavily into trying to keep the building windproof and watertight but has struggled financially to meet the requirement needed year on year with its current repair programme. With the total amount required valued at £2 million, a target of £75,000 has been set to help match-fund contributions being made, with an application being made to the Community Ownership Fund for funding to help finance the work.

➜ Donations can be made online by visiting www.justgiving.com/campaign/raiseourroof

KESR volunteers help reintroduce trees as ecology study highlights rarities

WHILE the native elm tree almost entirely vanished from our landscapes in the 1970s following an outbreak of Dutch elm disease, volunteers at the Kent & East Sussex Railway have played a part in reintroducing this species after planting 10 new examples resistant to the infection along the 10½-mile line.

Kent County Council donated five rebona elms and five new horizon elms to the railway as part of its tree establishment strategy which is being implemented around the county. Not only are these two varieties disease-resistant, but they can also happily tolerate both drought and waterlogging, which makes them ideally suited to the KESR's lineside habitats.

Ecological benefits

The heritage line's entirely volunteer-run forestry and conservation group, which is responsible for the management of all trees and vegetation along the Tenterden to Bodiam line, planted the 10 trees at the start of its 2024 tree planting programme. Fast-growing and resilient, the elms will add to the overall biodiversity of their location next to a two-acre wildflower field at Rolvenden, which was carefully selected to maximise their ecological benefit as well as enable the forestry and conservation team to care for the trees. New horizon elms are particularly important ecologically as they can provide food and a breeding habitat for the much-depleted white letter hairstreak butterfly, currently found only in limited areas of the South East.

Paul Davies, who heads the forestry and conservation team, and Steve McMurdo, who has been an active volunteer for more than 10 years and helped plant the elms, said: "The majority of our team are of an age who remember the outbreak of Dutch elm disease in the 1970s and the subsequent devastation it caused.

"It has therefore been particularly satisfying to be given responsibility for the planting and caring for these new elm trees."

The team has been responsible for planting about 3000 trees on railway land in the last few years, both along the line and in the areas around its stations – an area equivalent to about 30 acres, and this particular project is just one part of the KESR's overall commitment to sustainability and conservation. As well as planting more trees, there are plans to introduce wildflower meadows to encourage pollinators and for improvements to wetlands.

'Nature corridor'

The KESR is also currently partway through a two-year ecological study with the Kent Wildlife Trust Consultancy and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust to record and further support biodiversity along the line, and early results have confirmed how ecologically rich the railway estate already is.

A total of 89 different species of bird and 15 bumblebees were identified; 17 of the bird breeds appear on the red list of endangered species and 22 on the amber list, including turtle doves and nightingales. Two rare species of bumblebee, the light ruderal and the back form ruderal, were also identified.

"The railway is the custodian of a remarkable, if accidental, nature corridor," said Keith Barron, lead on biodiversity and habitats for the KESR's sustainability group.

"As a result, we have a unique opportunity to protect and regenerate these linear habitats, helping to link up green corridors that benefit both nature and the people who live and farm nearby. A valuable spin-off benefit lies in engaging our visitors with the process, adding to their experience of visiting a heritage railway and educating them about the importance of biodiversity."



Three of the 10 new elm trees are prepared for planting at Rolvenden in late April, forming part of the KESR's commitment to supporting the natural environment that surrounds the 10½-mile line. KESR

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Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway volunteers join visitors from Taiwan's Alishan Forestry Railway and Cultural Heritage Office to launch DL-34 into service on May 4. WLLR

Welshpool's Taiwanese visitor enters service as compatibility work finishes

WITH its eclectic mix of rolling stock from around the world, on May 4 the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway added another country to its list of those represented when its Taiwanese visitor was finally launched into traffic.

DL-34 arrived in Wales in early February 2023, having made a 6200-mile journey from the Alishan Forest Railway in Taiwan as part of a flourishing partnership between the two railways.

The locomotive then spent the next 12 months undergoing the necessary modifications for it to enter service. Modifications to the brake systems were made by specialist contractors, as well as the fitting of couplings to make it compatible with the W&LLR's own rolling stock. Once the mechanical works were completed, DL-34 commenced a period of testing and driver training to allow the railway's volunteer crews to become familiar with the locomotive.

On May 4, a joint ceremony was held to officially launch DL-34 into service was held by delegates from the AFR and Cultural Heritage Office in Taiwan, who travelled over especially for the occasion, along with members of the W&LLR team and local dignitaries ahead of the locomotive's first passenger service.

As a symbol of friendship and co-operation between the two railways, the ceremony saw the joint symbolic fitting of a headboard to the locomotive by Lin Hwa-ching, director general of Taiwan's Forestry and Nature Conservation Agency, and W&LLR chairman Steve Clews.

Flourishing partnerships

The occasion also afforded the opportunity for an exchange of ideas between the two heritage railways, including further co-operation in promoting tourism within the two regions, best practice in operation and maintenance, and engaging with new audiences both as visitors and volunteers.

The W&LLR and AFR have been affiliated since 2017 and both parties hope that this loan will help further their educational and cultural co-operation.

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

Lin Hwa-ching added: "Under the excellent care of the W&LLR, we believe that DL-34 will traverse the beautiful hills and plains of Wales gracefully."

DL-34 was built in 1972 by Mitsubishi of Japan. Designed to tackle the famous steep gradients and tight curves of the Alishan Forest line, its engine produces a formidable 523hp. The AFR is the highest narrow-gauge line in Asia, with steep gradients and its distinctive Shay locomotives. As well as strengthening the educational links between the two 762mm gauge lines, DL-34's arrival will help bolster the Welsh railway's home fleet of diesels which are in need of overhaul. The arrival of a third diesel capable of hauling passenger services and other duties will allow 1949-built Baguley-Drewry No.7 *Chattenden* and former Taiwan Sugar Corporation Diema No. 175 to be released in turn from traffic for major works.

DL-34 will operate further passenger services during the summer months, dates of which will be published on the railway's website in the coming months. It is on loan to the W&LLR for an initial three-year period.



W&LLR Chairman Steve Clews (left) and Lin Hwa-ching, director general of Taiwan's Forestry and Nature Conservation Agency, with the symbolic headboard signifying the partnership between the Welsh heritage line and the Alishan Forestry Railway. WLLR



Paired up: DL-34 (left) sits alongside another Taiwanese locomotive, Diema No. 175, at Llanfair Caereinion during the May 4 launch ceremony. WLLR

'Wren' will tram return?

MANY railways strive to find ways of supporting the habitats of wildlife beside their lines and limit the disruption caused by the passage of train services, but staff at the Seaton Tramway went one step further to ensure a nest of wrens was left in peace.

During an inspection of 1961-built Tram No. 4, a Blackpool-style 'open boat' car, a nest of these diminutive birds was discovered tucked away beneath the central canopy of the tram, right next to an electrical circuit breaker. Instantly, the decision was made to withdraw Tram No. 44 from service until the nest is vacated.

"In our commitment to being a friend to our feathered locals, we'll be giving this new tram family their peace for now," a statement read. "We appreciate your understanding as we adjust our service to ensure the safety and comfort of our smallest passengers!

"Male wrens will usually build five-10 nests and the female then picks her favourite of those to nests in; this means that on this occasion, she liked Tram No. 4 as a home the most!"

Steam, diesel, and real ales!

JUNE 15/16 at the Severn Valley Railway is set to be an irresistible draw for lovers of real ale, with the heritage line's first-ever Real Ale & Mixed Traction Festival, with the Engine House at Highley hosting up to 20 real ales from all parts of the UK – alongside a busy service of steam and diesel trains.

"We will have pale ales, dark stouts, and everything in between," said visitor engagement manager Lewis Maddox. "This is the perfect opportunity to enjoy a day of heritage rail travel and sample some of the country's finest real ale offerings.

"We will have plenty of food available, including a barbecue, to help you make a full day of it."

No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* will be in service during the event, alongside Stanier Mogul No. 13268 hauling a matching rake of LMS carriages, while Class 37 No. 37263 and Class 52 D1062 *Western Courier* will each run for 64 miles, plus a DMU will work local services.

Guest locos and ales for Norfolk gala

Up to 10 locomotives, 40 ales and a dozen ciders will be on offer from June 7-9 when the North Norfolk Railway stages its Rails & Ales gala, with five locomotives in the line-up set to be visiting for the long weekend.

On the tracks, visiting diesel locomotives Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer* and Class 33 No. 33012 *Lt. Jenny Lewis RN* are both anticipated to arrive at the Poppy Line as part of a Hanson & Hall railtour on June 6. The third guest is the Waterman Railway Heritage Trust's Class 25 D7659, which arrived on May 24 from its usual base at Peak Rail in Derbyshire.

Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 22, which is visiting NNR for the 2024 season and is usually based on the Appleby-Frodingham Railway at Scunthorpe Steelworks, will be making its first gala appearance on the line. All will operate alongside home fleet steam and diesel locomotives, as well as a DMU.

Local delights

Away from the tracks, ales will feature at each of the line's three stations, with Sheringham and Holt Stations both having a selection of bottled beers and ciders on offer. Weybourne will host a real ale bar, giving visitors the opportunity to hop on and off the many trains and discover about 50 beers and ciders across the three stations on each day. The local focus extends to live music at Weybourne with bands from the area, including Bloke & Burd and The Pumas performing at certain times.

Interim general manager Graham Hukins said "The Rails & Ales Gala promises to celebrate diesel and steam power alike, giving visitors a host of opportunities see and ride on the wide variety of the trains that will be running with almost 12 hours of on-track entertainment on Friday and Saturday and nine on Sunday.

"Variety is also the keyword when it comes to the 'Ales' part of the event as we celebrate Norfolk talent both in terms of the breweries represented and the music throughout the weekend."

➜ More details, including timetables and information about the locomotives, can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk/rails-ales/

Nameplate honour for ex-LMS lifesaver Bill

By Geoff Courtney

A FORMER LMS signalman whose quick thinking prevented an almost-certain disaster at Carlisle station 40 years ago was recognised at a locomotive-naming ceremony at the station on May 1 – and among those who attended was the great-grandson of a train guard who was also hailed a hero in a train accident more than a century earlier.

The signalman was Bill 'Willie' Taylor, who on a shift at Carlisle Power Signal Box on May 1, 1984, realised that a Liverpool to Glasgow freight train carrying highly explosive chemicals had become divided south of Carlisle, and that the rear portion was careering downhill towards the station at an estimated 60mph.

The unfolding events started at Preston, where the train had stopped due to dragging brakes, but after attention it continued on its northbound journey. However, an improper brake test meant the train's air brake cocks halfway down the 15-wagon train were not reopened, meaning the front was braked but the rear was not.

According to Paul Darlington, a retired railway signal and telecommunications engineer and friend of the Taylor family, from that moment a disaster was inevitable, and that inevitability was exacerbated by a second problem caused, it is believed, by the screw coupling between the fifth and sixth wagons not being stowed away properly and thus left swinging.

Dangerous cargo

At Shap Summit, 30 miles from Carlisle, it is believed the coupling between the two wagons went slack, struck an automatic warning system magnet, and was lifted upwards.

"The train coupling came off the drawhook and the rear 10 wagons, with their dangerous cargo, were now free-running and unbraked," said Paul. "They were initially left behind, but then started to gather speed on the downhill grade towards Carlisle."

It was at this point that Willie Taylor's vast experience, which was gained from working at most of the 46 mechanical signalboxes in the Carlisle area, came into play.

"He was 58 at the time and had spent more than 40 years working as a signalman in both mechanical and power boxes," said Paul. "In the event of an incident, signallers have to think quickly and calmly, and put control measures in place, and he certainly had to do that, for he had seconds to decide the action required to avoid a disaster. There wasn't time to consult or refer the decision to senior managers."



Hero's recognition: David Taylor unveils the nameplate in honour of his father at Carlisle station on May 1. The plate, on Class 66 Co-Co diesel No. 66308, is in recognition of former LMS signalman Willie's quick thinking that averted an almost certain-disaster at the station on May 1, 1984. PAUL DARLINGTON

Having spotted the irregular indications on his panel, realising he had a divided runaway train, and being aware there was a passenger train in the station, he allowed the freight train's locomotive and attached front portion into the station and signalled it to a stop, and switched the points to divert the runaway portion onto the freight line bypassing the station.

Travelling at an estimated 60-70mph on a line that had a 20mph restriction, the wagons made it round a sharp curve but crashed through a bridge and into the River Caldew. Such was the impact that the bridge was pushed off its bearings into the river, and local residents were evacuated.

It required the UK's largest crane to lift the wreckage out of the river, and it was decided not to restore the freight route. But most importantly, not a single soul was injured.

'Doing my job'

In subsequent interviews, Willie, who joined the LMS in 1940 as a 'knocker up' and moved on to booking train movements before becoming a signalman, said he was not a hero and was only doing his job. An accomplished violinist and skilled model-maker, he sadly died of cancer a year after the incident at the age of 59.

His quick thinking was commemorated by a plaque in a waiting room at Carlisle station, but his son David, supported by his brothers Ian and Michael and sister Margaret, wanted greater recognition for their father, and this came to fruition at Carlisle station on May 1, exactly 40 years after the incident, when he unveiled nameplate *Signalman Willie Taylor* on GB Railfreight Class 66 Co-Co diesel No. 66308.

One of those at the ceremony was Mike Lamport, whose great-grandfather Matthew Mathews, an LSWR passenger guard, also became a railway hero when, on January 28, 1861, his Waterloo to Portsmouth train derailed and rolled down an embankment at Epsom Junction. Matthew smashed his way out through a roof toplight, climbed up the slope, and managed to stop a following train before it ploughed into the wreckage, for which he received a medal from his employers.

Mike, who is 76 and like his ancestor became a career railwayman, is a former member of the Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board, and it was at his urging the board designated Willie's waiting room plaque, thus safeguarding its survival.

"David and I are truly fortunate to both be railway sons who have been able to honour their father's and grandfather's' heroic acts, ensuring that their proud legacies will live on in railway lore," he said.

David, a 56-year-old former Intercity regional telecoms performance engineer and now account director mainline rail for Thales Ground Transportation Systems, said: "We were all overjoyed to have a locomotive named after our dad. His quick-thinking actions make us feel very proud, while the naming will help us pass on the story to our children and grandchildren. The ceremony was quite emotional, and it was extra-special to be joined by some of dad's work colleagues, family and friends."

Pre-order Issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Network Rail loco named after heritage pioneer

By Owen Hayward

A DAY after celebrating the 73rd anniversary of the moment that kicked off the world's heritage railway movement, there was cause for celebration once more in Tywyn when Network Rail officials visited the Talyllyn Railway to name one of its Class 97 locomotives after the pioneering volunteer-run line.

The locomotive, which entered service on January 2, 1964, as D6917, is one of the refurbished Class 37s on NR's departmental stock list, having been fitted with the European Rail Traffic Management System with use on the Cambrian routes including that which runs through Tywyn.

Renumbered 97304 in 2007 as a result, it had previously carried the name *John Tilley* in honour of the former NR engineering manager.

The renaming has been in discussion for several years. However, on May 15 the moment for the ceremony finally arrived which saw NR chairman Lord Peter Hendy and Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport Ken Skates MS arrive at Tywyn to unveil the nameplates for the now-renamed *Rheilfforddd Talyllyn Railway* on No. 97304 which had been stabled in the siding adjacent to the TR's boundary at Tywyn Wharf.

"I am very fond of this railway, and it always seemed to me that it was a great shame that if we had dedicated locomotives on the Cambrian coast line that they couldn't bear the names of railways with whom we have a very close connection," said Lord Hendy. "It's taken a bit of time and quite a lot of effort to get to the stage where we could name this Class 97 after the Talyllyn Railway, but having taken so long to get here it seems particularly appropriate that it is on the cusp of the Talyllyn's 75th anniversary – and unlike previous locomotives named after the railway, this one can actually get to Tywyn!"

TR company chairman David Ventry added: "We are really grateful to NR for not only Barmouth Bridge, but also for donations of sleepers and assistance with relocating our standard gauge wagon. As you well know, life for heritage railways is becoming more difficult, as it is with big railways, but we are also grateful for the support you give us and the Heritage Railway Association which is much appreciated."

In addition to the nameplates, which have been cast in the style of the TR's logo, two mounted replicas were also presented to David and TR general managers Liz Porrett and Lorraine Simkiss.



Talyllyn Railway Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* sits on the Wharf edge at Tywyn next to Network Rail's newly-renamed No. 97304 *Rheilfford Talyllyn Railway*. LUKE RYAN/TR



In addition to the plates fitted to the Class 97, two mounted copies were gifted to the railway. From left to right: Ken Skates MS (Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport), Liz Porrett (TR general manager, operations), David Ventry (TR chair), Lorraine Simkiss (TR general manager, commercial) and Lord Peter Hendy (Chair of Network Rail). LUKE RYAN/TR

New headstone remembers LNER war victim – 82 years after his death

By Geoff Courtney

A memorial headstone has been unveiled at the long-time unmarked grave of an LNER policeman who died after remaining at his post in a Second World War air raid on York station 82 years ago.

In a moving memorial and dedication service at York Cemetery on April 29, Normandy veteran Ken Cooke was among those who paid tribute to the officer, Robert Smith, one of the 94 people who lost their lives in the Luftwaffe bombing in the early hours of the same date in 1942.

On that fateful morning, 800 passengers on the late-running 10.15pm King's Cross to Edinburgh sleeper service were safely evacuated at York following an air raid warning before the first bomb fell. This was followed by another near the parcels office and more across the station buildings, resulting in debris from the roof setting fire to the station.

The blaze was fuelled by hundreds of gallons of paraffin in the lamp room. Robert, who was working in the station's post room, and another LNER employee, William Milner, were among those who lost their lives.

Robert laid in an unmarked grave for 75 years, until 2017 when the British Transport Police History Group placed a wooden cross there as a memorial, and now the modern-day train operating company LNER has reinforced that recognition with the permanent headstone unveiled on April 29.

John Owen, of the history group, said: "Robert's story was uncovered during research of the roll of honour of fallen railway police officers. When we realised he had received little recognition, we worked on finding out more about his life.

"His grave had been unmarked and unkept for many years. Now there is a fitting tribute for everyone to pay their respects."

Ken Cooke, a keen supporter of York's Derwent Valley Light Railway where a preserved ex-Rowntree factory 1960 Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM carries his name, endorsed John's comments. "You must keep going as long as you can to remember the things that happened and those people who gave their lives. We must never forget, and a headstone to Robert makes sure he will never be forgotten."

Nick Beilby, from the Raids Over York heritage project, added: "For Robert to be recognised is testament to his bravery and sacrifice, and something of which we are immensely proud."

LNER managing director David Horne said that with no family of his own having been located, Robert's railway family coming together for the memorial service ensured his immense courage and bravery would never be forgotten.

"There is now a lasting memorial to a dedicated LNER colleague and family man, who sacrificed his own life to save others," he said.

During the service, a wreath was also laid on the nearby grave of William Milner.



Not forgotten: Second World War Normandy veteran Ken Cooke lays a wreath on April 29 at York Cemetery beside the new headstone of LNER policeman Robert Smith, who died in an air raid on the city's station 82 years ago. LNER



Above: Northern Lights go west: During mid-May, the night sky over many parts of Britain was illuminated by the aurora borealis, or Northern Lights. Far from the Arctic Circle where the lights are traditionally a regular occurrence, Crowbone Heathfield on the West Somerset Railway was lit up by the celestial display. PETER SMITH/WSR



Right: Social climber: Class 9F No. 92134 departs Grosmont on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway with the 1.30pm to Pickering on April 4. Ahead is a 1-in-49 climb to Goathland, but with nearly 40,00lb-ft of tractive effort at its disposal, the impressive 1957-built 2-10-0, one of the railway's crowd-pulling locomotives due to its size and obvious power, will make light work of the challenge. An ex-Barry survivor, the 9F returned from restoration in September 2019, when it steamed for the first time since its withdrawal by BR in 1966. Speaking of the 141-ton locomotive, a NYMR spokesman said: "We enjoyed a busy Easter, with excellent loadings and happy families, and the 9F more than playing its part and proving to be more popular than ever. We look forward to it having a central role in what we anticipate will be a busy summer." BARBARA PRINCE

Final Fawley Hill festival a winner

THE May 17-19 Fawley Hill Steam & Vintage Festival proved a huge success, attracting about 8000 visitors – but it is the last one ever.

The festival offered a fairground and displays of vintage farm machinery, military vehicles, buses, motorcycles, cars, and pedal-powered and horse-drawn vehicles. A star attraction was the original Chitty Chitty Bang Bang car, which starred in the 1968 film, on loan from Beaulieu Motor Museum.

The standard gauge Fawley Hill Railway was in operation, with Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 2409 of 1942, visiting from Didcot Railway Centre, hauling services in place of resident Hudswell Clarke No. 1026 of 1913 No. 31, which was away for repairs and is anticipated to be back by mid-summer.

The festival raised money for Macmillan Cancer Support, Thames Valley Air Ambulance, Ways & Means Trust and the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Lady Judy McAlpine said this year's festival marked her 80th birthday and will be the final one, as she has sold the estate's stud field, used for car parking. However, Steam Days on the private railway will continue to be run by the Fawley Museum Society. About eight take place each year.

Campaign group's 'royal' EMU purchase – for £1

By Robin Jones

A MERSEYRAIL Class 507 EMU has been bought for £1 in a bid to save the type from extinction.

As highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 316, a campaign was launched last September to save one of the last survivors of the class of 33, built by BR at York Works between 1978 and 1980, and which are due to be replaced by the new Class 777s.

The Class 507 Preservation Society, which was formed last November, has now paid a nominal sum to fleet owner Angel Trains to take possession of No. 507001 when it is withdrawn in July.

When new, it was used to take Queen Elizabeth II from Moorfields to Kirkby when she officially opened the Merseyrail underground on October 28, 1978. It has since run for more than five million miles and was recently restored to BR blue and grey livery.

The society plans to move the EMU to the Nant Mawr visitor centre at the Tanat Valley Light Railway, near Oswestry, but needs £10,000 to move the train from the scrapyard to its new home and has launched a crowdfunding campaign which aims to cover transportation costs. As we closed for press, more than £8000 had been donated by 225 supporters.



Class 507 EMU No. 507001, which once carried the late Queen Elizabeth II, could be saved for future generations. C507PS

Society chairman Robert Hampton said: "The Class 507s have served the Liverpool city region well in their 46 years.

"We hope we can repay their service by raising the funds needed to give No. 507001 a well-earned retirement in the Shropshire countryside.

"Many people will have happy memories of travelling on these trains, from a day out at the beach to a night out on the town, but without the help of those who remember travelling on these trains, they are now destined to be sent to South Wales, where they will cut up and turned into razor blades.

"We don't want to see that happen. We want to preserve this train and then tell the story of how the railways helped build the Liverpool city region."

Mark Hignett, from the visitor centre, added: "I am thrilled that a train that carried Queen Elizabeth II is coming to Nant Mawr."

Many people travelling to and from work by train have a favourite seat. Accordingly, the society is offering the chance for supporters to have their name on a seat.

➜ Visit class507.org.uk to donate to the crowdfunder and claim a range of rewards, from limited-edition badges to sponsoring your own seat. Donors can also send a cheque, payable to 'Class 507 Preservation Society' to: 54 Woodsorrel Road, Liverpool L15 6UD. The appeal closes on June 29.

Pre-order Issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

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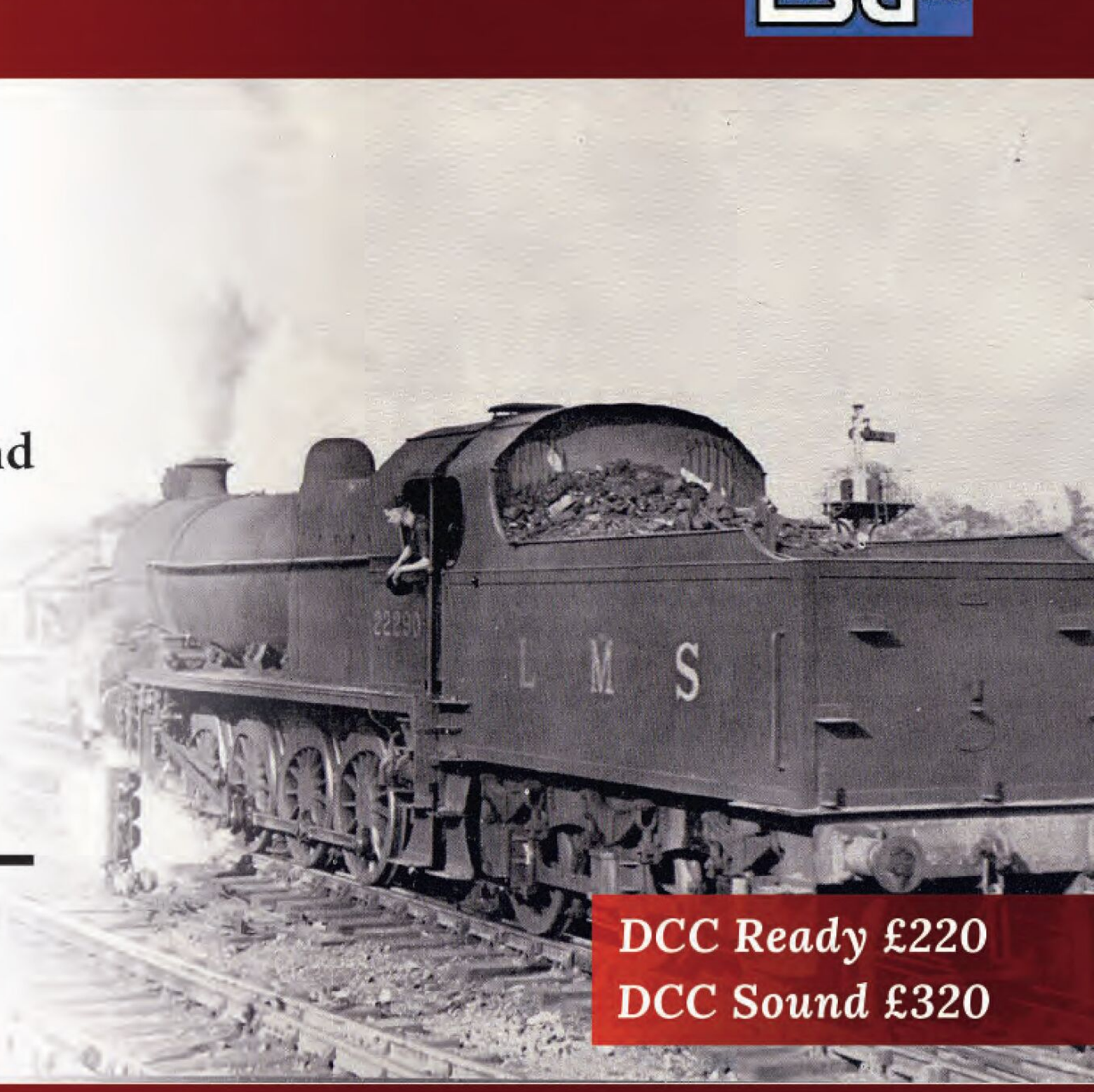
BIG BERTHA
'LICKEY BANKER'

In 1919, the Midland Railway built a single 0-10-0 steam locomotive, No 2290 (later LMS (1947) 2290 and BR 58100). It was designed by James Anderson for banking duties on the Lickey Incline in Worcestershire (south of Birmingham), England. It became known as "Big Bertha" or "Big Emma" by railwaymen and railway enthusiasts. KR Models is proud to announce that we are planning to manufacture this iconic 0-10-0 loco in OO gauge.

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A GREAT WESTERN WINNER: BLUEBELL'S BRANCH LINE SPECTACLE

The annual celebration of branch line locomotives expanded its remit this year to include smaller main line locomotives, which helped the Bluebell Railway stage another stand-out show in the south, with help from its friends in the west, as **Owen Hayward** reports.

Some say there are two ways of doing things: the Great Western way and the wrong way – and it was thanks to the former that the Bluebell Railway's May 10-12 branch line weekend was deemed a roaring success as two once-rival regions crossed over for a weekend of glorious sunshine and steam in Sussex.

The invasion from the Great Western counties drew on the strong working relations between the Bluebell and the Severn Valley railways. Less than a month beforehand, LBSCR A1 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* went on its travels from the south to Shropshire for the SVR's own spring steam gala, as highlighted last issue, where, for many, it stole the show working shuttles between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade that included tackling the grades of Eardington Bank. Shortly after returning home, it was followed by two of that line's resident locomotives.

The first of these was WR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor*. Entering service in 1939, it worked a variety of freight and passenger services across the GWR's network.

Not quite strangers

Examples of the class were not, however, strangers to Southern region metals. Inter-regional workings between Reading, Redhill and Tonbridge could often be seen with these 4-6-0s at the helm, making No. 7812 an ideal candidate to fly the flag for the class at the event.

Withdrawn from Shrewsbury on November 6, 1965, it was purchased by the Erlestoke Manor Fund in 1974 and moved to the SVR where a rapid restoration saw it return to service in 1979. In 2016 it successfully passed 100,000 miles of operation in preservation and has continued to be a regular performer.

In 2023 it spent the majority of the year on loan to the West Somerset Railway, and its appearance in Sussex this year slotted nicely into a gap on its way back to the South West to run at the WSR again this summer.

The second SVR resident that ventured south was GWR Kerr Stuart-built 5700 class 0-6-0PT No. 7714, which entered service in 1930. It was not unusual for the GWR to award contracts to other firms to build its locomotives, with only 50 of the 300 examples of this class ever constructed at its Swindon Works; the remainder were built by Kerr Stuart, Armstrong Whitworth, WG Bagnall, Beyer Peacock & Co, North British, and Yorkshire Engine Co.

No. 7714 was based in the Birkenhead area through to December 1958, when it briefly transferred to Wrexham, being withdrawn in ➔

No. 7812 passes below Three Arch Bridge on May 11 with the 10.15am departure from Sheffield Park. NICK GILLIAM

SECR O1 took on what some described as a bridesmaid role over the weekend, spending the majority of it operating brake van rides within station limits at Horsted Keynes. In order to get there, however, it double-headed a morning service from Sheffield Park, seen approaching New Road on May 11 with No. 80151 (alias 80100). OWEN HAYWARD



No. 7714 catches a pocket of sun as it emerges from Sharpthorne Tunnel with a southbound service from Kingscote on May 12. OWEN HAYWARD



For one weekend only, BR 4MT No. 80151 assumed the identity of the Bluebell's second, albeit unrestored, classmate No. 80100, which had been allocated to the Western Region during its working life. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* catches the evening light on May 10 as it climbs through Holywell with the evening's 'Pie & Mash' diner. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 1369 coasts down the grade at Nobles Farm with LNWR observation saloon No. 1503 on May 10. JAMES CUMMINS/BRPS



Above: The glorious evening sun of May 11 catches *Wightwick Hall* as it passes through Horsted Keynes with a non-stop goods working bound for East Grinstead. RICHARD SALMON/BRPS



Right: On May 12, WR Pannier No. 7714 works a train of SR green Mk. 1 carriages away from Horsted Keynes, bound for Sheffield Park. JAMES CUMMINS/BRPS

January 1959 having covered 520,259 miles in service. Sold to the National Coal Board for use at Penallta Colliery, near Rhymney, in South Wales, the tight curves meant it was unsuitable for regular use and was thus kept as a spare.

It passed into preservation in 1973 and, like the Manor, moved straight to the SVR for restoration, although its in-steam comeback was not until 1992.

The third and final guest had also appeared at the SVR's April gala, but on this occasion travelled eastwards to visit Sussex. No. 1369 is one of just six GWR 1366 class 0-6-0PT locomotives to have been built, of which it is also the last survivor.

With a wheelbase measuring just 11ft, it was designed for working the branch lines of Devon and Cornwall. Its size also made it ideal for trips along the Weymouth quay tramway system. Displaced by diesel in 1961, three class members transferred to Wadebridge shed to work the Wenford China clay branch, with No. 1369 being the last to be withdrawn in November 1964. It moved to Buckfastleigh on the South Devon Railway in 1965, where it has remained resident ever since, returning to steam 31 years later in 1996.

There was a fourth identity to be found traversing the rails between Sheffield Park and East Grinstead during the gala, but it was not one that needed to travel far to appear.

Mistaken identity

For one weekend only, resident BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80151 carried the number of unrestored classmate No. 80100, which also resides on the railway and is currently stored in the sidings at Horsted Keynes.

Built at Brighton in January 1955, No. 80100 initially worked on the London, Tilbury & Southend line until the route's electrification in 1962. After that, it spent time under three different regional managements but based entirely in what was the Western Region, first moving from its home in the Eastern Region to Shrewsbury that July, followed by Croes Newydd just four months later, before transferring to its final shed at Machynlleth the following March, which was taken over by London Midland.

Withdrawn in July 1965 and arriving at Barry scrapyard in January 1966, it remained there until October 1978 when it was purchased by the Bluebell and moved to the south, rounding out its regional spread. It remains a long-term aim for the railway to restore it, although at present there is no estimate of when that is likely to take place.

The line-up was rounded off with resident SECR O1 No. 65 and long-term loanee BR modified Hall class No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall*, bringing a total of seven locomotives able to be found in service across the event.

A tradition of this event's timetable has been to see locomotive swap sets at Horsted Keynes, with some services running the full length of the line to East Grinstead before returning as far as the former junction with the Ardingly and Haywards Heath branch, returning northwards behind a different locomotive, with the original continuing south with a different rake of coaches.

This move helped recapture the scenes once witnessed at junction stations where passengers would have to change trains, and those not wishing to vacate their seats would ultimately be rewarded by experiencing most of the motive power on offer without having to expend much effort.

Brake van rides also took place within the station limits of Horsted Keynes each day, with No. 65 taking charge of this duty, travelling from and home to Sheffield Park by double-heading a morning and afternoon service accordingly.

Of course, the weekend doesn't just focus on the locomotives – it is a time for the Bluebell's

The event saw the welcome return of two Chesham carriages following completion of door lock replacements, along with LBSCR four-wheeler No. 661, with the vintage set looking right at home behind LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* at Bluebell Halt on May 12. PAUL LAWRENCE



The weekend concluded with a double-headed service starring the two 4-6-0s. No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* and No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall* start the 1-in-75 climb up Freshfield Bank shortly after departing Sheffield Park. OWEN HAYWARD

extensive and varied collection of Grouping and pre-Grouping carriages to shine.

Cream of the crop

While the ubiquitous Mk. 1s played their own part (with the blood and custard 'Wealden Rambler' stock looking particularly at home behind Nos. 7714 and 7812), it was perhaps the mixed vintage rake that caught everyone's eye – and for good reason.

With the full rake having been notably absent in 2023 while undergoing maintenance and full door lock replacements, two of the iconic Metropolitan Railway Chesham vehicles – brake third No. 387 and full third No. 394 – were completed in time to put in a comeback appearance to the delight of many.

The remaining two carriages will receive their new door locks over the coming months, these replacing the worn originals which were becoming hard to maintain after 125 years in service.

The four-wheeler collection also saw LBSCR first class No. 661 return to service for the first time since the 2019 branch line event following some minor underframe repairs and a full brake overhaul. Remaining carriage rakes comprised SR Maunsells and Bulleids, with the odd BR (SR) green Mk. 1 and LNWR Observation carriage No. 1503 mixed in to boost capacity where required.

An addition to the gala was a demonstration goods train on the Saturday evening, which saw No. 1369 trip the rake of restored wagons from Horsted Keynes to Sheffield Park, where



No. 1369 leads *Wightwick Hall* towards Sheffield Park on May 11, where it would subsequently detach from the train to prepare the evening goods working. PHIL BARNES

No. 6989 then undertook a run of the full line to East Grinstead – the first time the goods has reached the Bluebell's northern terminus despite it being opened in March 2023.

Even a major weekend closure of part of the M25 and restricted parking at Horsted Keynes due to a waterlogged field did not deter visitors from flocking in their droves to enjoy everything on offer, with the railway reporting that passengers numbers were on par with the 2023 event.

No. 1369 returned to Devon in the week immediately following the gala, while *Erlestoke Manor* remained in Sussex for another week to appear at the May 18/19 Road Meets Rail event, the Bluebell's annual road steam rally with Horsted Keynes taken over by traction engines, road rollers and more. HR



Doing what it does best: No. 1369 heads south from Horsted Keynes with the evening goods working on May 11. OWEN HAYWARD

IT'S ONLY PAINT, ISN'T IT?

Never does a topic get as much debate, bemoaning, dismissal and nitpicking as the choice of liveries. **Chris Eden-Green** examines the decisions behind some of the heritage sector's most notable examples and their influence on the preservation landscape.

Yes, I can sense half the people reading this are already cringing and thinking, 'oh, blimey, are we really doing this nitpicker's dream?' However, before assumptions are made about this being one person's opinion piece, think of all the times other people have stirred such pots.

Livery discussion has become so dogpiled with debates over the years, a break-out of arguments is practically clichéd – particularly when a pre-Grouping engine is repainted into BR black or green. The centenary of the Big Four has been and gone, and with the restoration of LSWR T3 4-4-0 No, 563, along with the Bluebell Railway's recent shuffle in rolling stock, the taste for pre-BR representation seems to be getting stronger.

Yet, while some preservationists strive for accuracy right down to the shading on a hand-painted coat of arms, you could argue that there are more important matters in the heritage sector than a locomotive's paint job and vice versa. So, how much thought goes into choosing a livery, and how can it influence the image of an entire railway?

'How we remembered it'

History has a habit of repeating itself, yet interestingly, the nostalgia cycle has been known to repeat themes every 20 to 40 years. In the last decade, popular TV shows such as Peaky Blinders, Ripper Street and Downton Abbey have given people a taste for the 1920s. In the early 2000s, shows such as Life On Mars and Ashes To Ashes took place in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1990s, films such as Forrest Gump and The Shawshank Redemption had throwbacks to the 1950s, while the biggest film of the decade, James Cameron's Titanic, could also be argued as a callback to A Night To Remember of 1958 while simultaneously calling back to the 1910s. At about the same time, the popularity of The Simpsons, itself a satire of film and sitcom tropes of 1950s and 1960s media, did for television what The Beatles did to music 30 years previously. You could even argue Downton Abbey borrowed elements of David Croft's You Rang M'lord from 1989, itself a 1920s period piece.

So, with a taste for the past stretching back as far as it does, how many pre-Nationalisation locomotives are currently wearing a non-BR livery?

Excluding narrow-gauge and industrial types, in 2024 there were 66 steam locomotives built before 1948 in operation on Britain's heritage railways (discounting industrials). Of those, 40 were running in BR livery. With many railways relying on BR Mk. 1 coaches, the chance to match authentic-looking locomotives and stock becomes a no-brainer. Some lines though, such as the Mid-Suffolk, Bluebell, Severn Valley, North Yorkshire Moors, North Norfolk and Tanfield railways, are well-known for regularly using pre-Second World War rolling stock.

You cannot escape the sight of SECR bogies and veteran four-wheelers while visiting the Isle of Wight Steam Railway; their most modern coach is a Maunsell era frame kept in storage.

Of those 66 locomotives currently operating, 19 are from the pre-Grouping era, but only seven of those are in BR liveries (one of which, LYR class 23 0-6-0ST No. 752, never having actually made it to BR.) Conversely, there are 47



Left: More than half a century after the launch of the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, LMS 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241, in its opening day's guise, stands at Haworth Loop on August 28, 2023.
TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

Below: Wearing liveries now very much part of the history for each locomotive, Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's LMS 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241 and USA 0-6-0T No. 30072 pass Mill Pond in this scene captured during the 1970s.
HOWARD MALHAM/KWVR ARCHIVE





The triumphant return to steam for LSWR T3 No. 563 in its pre-Grouping livery drew much praise amid enthusiasts and became a flagship for its home at the Swanage Railway. Having been withdrawn in 1945, if it were to have been restored in BR livery, that would have been wholly incorrect. However, with the railway's mainly BR era appearance of stock and station presentation, it certainly stands out – but is that such a bad thing? OWEN HAYWARD

engines from the Grouping era, of which only 14 are wearing Grouping era liveries. When you total that up, 85% of those built after the Grouping and currently operational are wearing British Railways colours.

Our property, our choice

Whether influenced by corporate policy or not, original liveries are not alien to preserved steam locomotives. In the early days of preservation, standard gauge groups were prohibited from using BR trademarks on their stock for copyright reasons – resulting in some nonconformist schemes, including the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway turning out Ivatt 2MT 2-6-4T No. 41241 and USA S100 0-6-0T No, 30072 in Worth Valley trademarks of red and ochre respectively. The former was reapplied during No.41241's recent overhaul and has since proved a popular draw on the railway.

KWVR finance coordinator David Pearson recalled that such liveries were chosen more by preference than priority.

"We had no money and couldn't afford any paint. We were then given a supply of lemon and blue paint (known as blue and primrose), which became our corporate colours for the stations and coaches," he said.

In those earlier days, most of the Worth Valley's locomotive fleet was privately owned by society members who simply chose to paint them as they wished. Richard Greenwood, who owned No. 30072, emulated American practice by giving the engine a light smokebox, while the owners of No. 41241, Ron Ainsworth and Hubert Foster, went for their own take on LMS maroon with KWVR branding. At the time, Ron owned a decorating firm and recruited his team to paint the locomotive.

Yet there is more to a railway's image than just engines. Opened back in 1867, the KWVR Company ran the line independently until it was fully bought out by the Midland Railway in 1886.

So, when EMI chose to film The Railway Children on the line, Oakworth station was restored to Midland Railway condition – and 54 years later, the station is the only one along the line in Midland condition.

Meanwhile, the rest have received a uniformed red and cream colour scheme. David continued: "We had a wonderful man called Guy Henderson who argued that the railway was about *being a railway* and not about a place to see steam engines. Guy fought tooth-and-nail to get money for the stations, which he did. We had a bit of money after The Railway Children and decided very informally to paint Keighley in red and cream."

Pearson recalls at the time, following BR regional boundary changes in 1958, Keighley station came under North Eastern Region control, a change which resulted in stations being painted in North Eastern green and cream livery with orange signage.

You can imagine how proud the locals were of previous regimes, as when it came to repainting Keighley station, Henderson selected a variation of red and cream. The positive feedback this generated resulted in other stations, except Oakworth, following suit over time. By now, the railway began to obtain ex-Eastern Region BR Mk.1 compartment coaches previously used on London's Widened Lines. The superior seating capacity allowed the KWVR to carry 12 Mk.1 TSOs worth of passengers in train of half that length, due to shorter platforms at Keighley station. "They ran for a long while in blue," David recalled, "and with the stations being painted in red and cream, the society went to the same paint supplier as the stations and started to paint the coaches in a sort-of quasi-BR livery; red with black-and-yellow lining".

Not all of these early decisions seemed to be popular. While based at Keighley and also owned by Ron, J72 0-6-0T No. 69023 *Joem* was painted in North Eastern Railway green, which later turned out to be a few shades too light. This was a livery carried by classmate No. 68723 while acting as station pilot at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but it resulted in the KWVR receiving letters of complaint. Ron's response to this was: "It's my b****y engine, I'll paint it what I want!"

Resident Bulleid coach No. S1469, now owned by the Vintage Carriages Trust, briefly ran in a livery that seemed to be a necessary evil. David recalled: "In the 1970s, there was a craze for fluorescent green. Many Ford Capris came out in a form of that colour, and we simply painted the coach and one of the railbuses in that colour because somebody gave us the paint for free."

However, while these early decisions were being made, the preservation society had more pressing matters to attend to. "In one early public meeting, the manager of Clough's Mill stood up and said he wanted to know what time the trains would stop at Ingrow so he could get his people to and from the mill," David remembered. "Bob Cryer replied, 'we



SECR P 0-6-0T No. 323 *Bluebell* powers up Freshfield Bank. ANDREW STRONGITHARM

haven't got enough money to buy the line, let alone think about a timetable.' You don't think about stuff like that, you think about *somehow* stopping them lifting the track."

Let's be clear – while supplies have sometimes been gained through necessity, the KWVR is not careless when it comes to era representation. David confirmed the society's general practice when a decision of that nature comes up is to ask: "What would the Midland have done (if it was Oakworth) or what would the LMS or BR have done?" When trying to recreate scenes spanning more than 150 years, this seems to be a more respectable approach. One particularly amusing point is the Worth Valley station BR totem signs. The line never had a totem in BR days, so these are heritage era additions. And when these have gone missing, only to mysteriously come up for auction as 'genuine BR totems,' it becomes interesting to see who falls for what when the railway intervenes!

Other organisations simply obtained stock for practical purposes. In 1984, Dart Valley Railway plc began obtaining DMU carriages from Class 116 and 117 units for use on the Paignton to Kingswear line. By 1994, eight of these could found in GWR chocolate and cream. Authentically, these couldn't carry anything seen before 1957, but their use as makeshift GWR suburban coaches seems to have served the preserved railway very nicely. In their preserved guise, they seem quite at home behind the resident GWR small prairie and 4200 tanks, along with No. 7827 *Lydham Manor*; a 1951-built engine which has also been known to carry prewar GWR livery in preservation.

Journey through time

One of the most prominent railways flying the flag for all eras is the Bluebell, with assets dating back to mid-Victorian times. Richard Salmon, a governor of the Bluebell Railway Trust, confirmed that there was an early preference for painting locomotives in their earliest possible liveries. "It's not a hard and fast rule," he said, "but whereas other lines have wanted everything in BR black, the thinking on the Bluebell has generally been a feeling of wanting everything as interesting and as early as possible."

This approach might imply that the nostalgia cycle is not a modern phenomenon. "Back in the 1960s, interest was in the pre-Grouping era. In the same way as now that people who are in their 70s may remember BR black in their youth, 60 years ago people remembered pre-Grouping and wished to recreate that."

This would certainly ring true when selecting which LSWR Adams radial tank to preserve. "No. 488 was chosen because it had the original boiler on it," Richard clarified. "From an engineering perspective, one might not choose the oldest boiler. But from a wouldn't-it-be-nice perspective, backdating it to 1885 condition was possible with an 1885 boiler."

Representing different eras didn't stop at the engines and stock, as each station along the line has been deliberately renovated in different periodic conditions. "Fairly early on, people wanted to put Sheffield Park back to Victorian condition. Horsted Keynes couldn't represent the Victorian era because the canopy on the third platform had been demolished when it was originally restored. It was a big station in BR colours, which had almost unchanged from Southern colours. So, representing that in Southern days was reasonable."

This theme did not seem to officially continue until the northern extension progressed. "People had the feeling it would be nice to present Kingscote in its early-BR condition around the time it closed," Richard continued. "I think what has been agreed is if at some point we get to build a station at East Grinstead, that would be an Art Deco-type building like Surbiton; something that's not represented anywhere in preservation. It seems if we've got to build it from scratch, why not build something a bit different? Then having built it in the 1930s style, it could still represent the 1940s, 1950s or 1960s."

One of the Bluebell's most original liveries has also turned out to be one of its most popular. After initially running in plain black, SECR P 0-6-0T No. 323 *Bluebell* was painted blue to match the railway's early coaching stock, but ironically, the locomotive has now carried a variation of blue for the majority of its working life. Its 2011-19 ticket introduced an interpretation of the SECR livery where shades of green were replaced with blue equivalents.

This taste seems to have spread to the modelling world, too. Rapido Trains UK regularly posts rejected what-if liveried images of its upcoming models to social media, but a twist came on January 26 when pre-orders were launched for a limited edition of its OO gauge SECR O1 0-6-0 based on the Bluebell's No. 65's – but fictional, rather than its current livery, derived from that currently carried by No. 323! What began as a regular joke seems to have generated enough interest to warrant a sales run.

Ironically, the Bluebell also houses the largest collection of BR Standard types in the UK, consisting of 4MT tanks Nos. 80100 and 80151, 4-6-0 No. 75027, 5MT No. 73082 *Camelot*, 9F No. 92240 and 2MT No. 78059 (though this is currently being rebuilt as the next 2MT tank No. 84030; the next closest is the Great



An impression of the upcoming run of Rapido's 00 Gauge SECR O1 0-6-0 *Bramble*, with a livery based on that carried by P No. 323. RAPIDO TRAINS UK



The current pride of the Whitwell & Reepham Railway, Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-4-0ST No. 7681 *Agecroft No. 3*, with another full brake van shuttle service. COURTENAY FORDER



Sometimes to fill a heritage 'gap', surviving locomotives are modified to portray how they would have once appeared. Built by the GER as Y14 No. 564, LNER J15 0-6-0 was withdrawn as BR No. 65462 in 1962. Having run in GER livery in the 1960s on the North Norfolk Railway, it was rebuilt to closely resemble its original configuration during overhaul, returning as No. 564 in 2015. Still retaining this livery, it will soon be withdrawn pending overhaul, but will it return in this scheme, or in a later livery carried? OWEN HAYWARD



Something that is very much a what-if: Bill Parker's GWR small prairie No. 5521 has for several years appeared in London Transport red carrying the identity of L150. This locomotive type never ran on the LT network but was painted for the Underground's 150th anniversary in 2013. It is currently running on the Epping Ongar Railway, which was once part of the Underground system. OWEN HAYWARD



In June 2022, the East Lancashire Railway celebrated the centenary of the Lancashire & Yorkshire and LNWR merger, with Aspinall Class 23 0-6-0ST and Class 27 0-6-0 reverting to their original LYR guises of Nos. 752 and 1300 respectively. Previous incarnations of these identities have been accompanied by the full extravagant lining, and while on this occasion the plain black was reminiscent of that carried in BR days, the presence of LYR numberplates just makes enough difference to make them stand out from the crowd. OWEN HAYWARD

Central Railway with two 2MTs, a 5MT and a 9F resident plus NRM-owned class 7 No. 70013 *Britannia* on loan).

Interestingly, the railway did not receive its first Mk.1 coach until 1983, and then purely for catering purposes. It was only the prospect of extending the line to East Grinstead that influenced the decision to expand the carriage fleet with more Mk.1s.

Who should decide?

People have argued with me that painting a locomotive as you wish, particularly LMS Fairburn tank No. 42085 appearing in Caledonian Railway blue, is "like slapping a Tesla badge on a Ford Model-T" or "putting stickers on a laptop." Yet both of these points overlook the fact that, whether the public likes it or not, those responsible for their property get more choice on the matter, and if people are going to call out anachronistic liveries, I ask them when in steam days did a Bolton Power Station RSH 0-4-0ST haul an SECR 'Dance Hall' brake van in the goods yard of a Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway station?

At the Whitwell & Reepham Railway, volunteers Tom Crouch and Dan Knights carry a policy of theming individual assets instead of a whole picture. "With *Agecroft No. 3*, it was decided by the chaps overhauling the locomotive for the livery," Dan said. "They want it to be in blue, a link to its life as *Bolton No.1*, so it was decided it should a 'blue' equivalent livery to match its sister *Agecroft No. 1*."

Although decisions were made for non-BR liveries, Whitwell has its share of divisive preferences. "Many of our older volunteers were more keen for our stock to hold BR livery," Crouch confirmed. "There's a difference between generations, but I think that's healthy. A lot of younger people want to express themselves, so the pre-Grouping schemes are becoming more appealing. It's great to see people of our generation stepping up and being given that decision to demonstrate a vehicle's history, or what would look nice to tie with another engine's sibling."

Again, it seems the organisation has final say over what it presents in which guise and how it benefits it. Not only that, but when the public are left to decide, there's no way of telling if the voting majority could use it as an excuse to take the mickey. Need anyone be reminded of the Boaty McBoatface situation, in which that seemingly absurd name was overwhelmingly chosen by the public in a 2016 poll for a new Natural Environment Research Council £200 million polar research ship?

On occasions, however, a decision is based on wider feedback. In September 2023, the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group showed a preservation first by repainting J27 0-6-0 No. 65894 in LNER black, a livery it last carried before Nationalisation. With elder generations remembering BR black in their youth, you might imagine this was going to be temporary. However, fast-forward five months and a poll among members has resulted in 205 out of 234 votes in favour of retaining it.

Of course, certain locomotives cannot authentically carry certain liveries. The recently-restored T3 No.563 was withdrawn from active service in August 1945, more than two years before British Railways lettering was being applied to LMS Jubilee No. 45565 *Victoria* for the Movietone News cameras. So, to see No. 563 turned out in BR black would not only look odd, but it also wouldn't apply to the history of its class. Yet coincidentally, the younger Drummond T9 4-4-0 No. 120 would be unable to carry any livery it wore with its original saturated boiler. Without a Urie chimney cap and sandboxes on her wheel splashers, the earliest livery it could authentically carry in its current condition is the olive shade of Southern Green; unless it was to replicate its striking yet fictitious 1961 pea green appearance.

The Severn Valley Railway is another line with a strong prewar appearance. Alongside the ubiquitous Mk.1s, regular use is made of LMS composite and LNER teak coaches alongside numerous GWR carriages dating back to toplights from the Churchward days. If you want to see engines, coaches and stations match, it is hardly surprising that this place is so highly recommended by railfans worldwide.

It therefore must have come as a shock to many seeing Bulleid Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley* turned out in purple for Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Since then, *Taw Valley* has been reliveried in fictitious wartime black as No. 21C127, despite being outshopped in malachite green in 1946 and rebuilt in 1957 while carrying BR Green. Like other original liveries, some have taken exception, while others have taken interest.

If there were only one Bulleid Pacific in preservation, then subsequent outrage could be universally justified, but as there are 10 rebuilt light Pacifics left, two of which (No. 34010 *Sidmouth* and No. 34058 *Sir Fredrick Pile*) have yet to turn a wheel in the heritage era, you could say that the occasional what-if scenario is not as sacrilegious. Whatever people think of these guises, both are now as much a part of *Taw Valley*'s history as its early 2000s 'Hogwarts Express' livery. The main difference between *Taw Valley* and the repainting of the National Railway Museum's GWR 4-4-0 No. 3440 *City Of Truro* in fictitious BR black (albeit on one side only) in 1985 is that the motivation behind the former were far from a joke. The publicity it generated brought much-needed attention and income to the SVR during its recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Is there a right or wrong way?

In short, no. A heritage railway is like a giant outdoor theatre production; each of its uniformed elements, staff, locomotives, stock, architecture, infrastructure and operation, contributes to the stories it tells its visitors.

With each performance, the whole operation has to attract enough punters in order to cover its costs and allow each story to develop further.

Current older generations may remember sighting postwar liveries in their lifetime, but curiosity for what came before, particularly pre-Grouping, has always been evident.

A variation of chapters can tell a more comprehensive story. Influence may come from the outside, but ultimately, those who tell the story have final say, and because of human nature, everybody is naturally going to have their own way of telling things. Some may wish to recreate specific periods to a tee, while others may go with whatever pleases the eye – or even whatever they can resource. Either way, while other aspects of railway heritage operation take priority, there will always be a case for BR black as much as there is for the earliest pre-Grouping schemes and everything in between. In both parts of Ireland, railfans are used to seeing the same pool of locomotives in the same liveries and are simply happy to see them. By comparison, the rest of the British Isles seems to be spoilt for choice!

After all, it's only paint, isn't it? HR

HERITAGE RAILWAY

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After emerging from Rise Hill Tunnel, SR West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* passes the site of the former water troughs while approaching Garsdale en route to Carlisle with Saphos Trains' 'The Fellsman' from Blackpool North and return on May 1. JOHN TITLOW


34046

‘Weeds on the line’ wreck *Clun Castle’s* record attempt

By Robin Jones

VINTAGE Trains’ bid to emulate the legendary 1Z48 Ian Allan railtour on May 9, 1964, when WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* reached 96mph between Plymouth and Bristol, was thwarted in a bid to match or better that speed when its May 10 ‘The Great Western Railway’ two-day tour was stopped – by a clump of weeds.

The vegetation triggered automatic brakes, bringing the special with about 300 passengers on board to a stop on Hemerdon Bank on the second day of the trip.

The original 1Z48 was a celebration of the 60th anniversary of GWR 4-4-0 *City of Truro* run which reportedly topped 100mph on the same route. The tour, held 60 years and day after the Ian Allan tour, ran from Birmingham Snow Hill to Plymouth on May 10 and Plymouth to Paddington the following day, all on GWR main lines.

Vintage Trains chairman Michael Whitehouse said: *“Clun Castle* strode out of Plymouth, under the road bridge, to be greeted by a gallery of people.

“Driver Andy Taylor let the loco find its feet and to understand the load. Then the loco simply flew round the bends and reached 55mph at the foot of the climb. We roared up the bank in fine style, fully understanding that the last few yards would ordinarily bring speed down to about 10mph, such is the ferocity of the climb.



No. 7029 *Clun Castle* powers through Keynsham on its non-stop run from Bristol Temple Meads to Paddington on May 11. RICHARD TAPSCOTT

Standstill

“But the drag increased, and we came to a stand after only about six wheel revolutions. After a couple of attempts at moving the piston position, it was clear that the loco was not going to move. Then we discovered that overgrown tree branches had knocked the telltale ‘butterfly’ catches on a couple of coaches, causing the brakes to apply.”

He said that there were no issues with *Clun Castle*, which “overachieved,” with the load effectively 12 towing a diesel, not nine as expected, after the stop at Hemerdon Bank. The rest of the run to Bristol was non-stop, making up 35 minutes and arriving in Bristol five minutes early.

“1Z48 demonstrated what the railway can do when teams work together well. The tour brought out the best in everyone and there must have been more than 100 people involved in the planning and delivery,” said Michael. “Very many thanks to Network Rail, First Great Western and

WR 4-6-0 7029 *Clun Castle* roars along the sea wall at Dawlish with the Plymouth to Bristol leg of the Great Western on May 11 to the delight to its many waiting admirers. MARK WILKINS



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The scene near the summit of 1-in-42 Hemerdon Bank on May 11 immediately after WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* was brought to a stand by dragging brakes while working Vintage Trains' 'The Great Western 1Z48' charter, the 9.31am Plymouth to Bristol Temple Meads. Fortunately, Class 47 No. 47773 was running just behind the charter and was able to provide assistance without delay to other train services. The remainder of the run to Bristol was faultless. The tour marked 60 years since *Clun Castle* achieved the then fastest-ever run from Plymouth to Bristol. RUSSELL AYRE

all the people who willingly made this trip happen. The smiles on thousands of peoples' faces as they turned out to see us go by says it all, together with hundreds of children who were simply awestruck."

The non-stop run from Bristol to London featured the first arrival in Paddington for No. 7029 since it hauled the last steam train out of there in BR days, to Banbury on June 11, 1965. *Clun Castle* was officially withdrawn in December that year.

"History has come full circle," Michael added.

Double-header

Vintage Trains will return to the South Devon banks with Clun Castle and GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* double-heading 'The Mayflower' from Bristol Temple Meads to Plymouth and back on Friday, September 27.

Named after a short-lived Western Region express at the end of the steam era, 'The Mayflower' will leave from Birmingham New Street, diesel-hauled, picking up at Bromsgrove, Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham and Bristol Parkway en route to Bristol, where the Castles will take over.

The pair will then double-head 'The Mayflower' unassisted to Plymouth in both directions.

On arrival back at Bristol, the tour will once again be diesel-hauled for the return leg to Birmingham.

➜ For more details about the journey, head online and visit https://vintagetrains.co.uk/



WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* at rest at Paddington after its non-stop run from Bristol Temple Meads on May 11. VT

B1 *Mayflower* heads to Kingswear

ON Saturday, June 15, Steam Dreams is offering the chance to travel to Kingswear with a tour featuring B1 4-6-09 No. 61306 *Mayflower*.

Departing from Paddington and picking up additional passengers at Slough, Reading and Newbury, the first part of the tour is planned to be diesel-hauled along the Great Western Main Line, before taking the Reading-Taunton Line south-west.

Passing through Hungerford, Westbury, Frome and Castle Cary, the train is scheduled to stop at Taunton so that *Mayflower* can be attached to the train.

Leaving Taunton, the tour will head to Exeter and onwards for a run along the sea wall at Dawlish.

The train will then take the Riviera Line to Paignton and on to the Dartmouth Steam Railway for a run to Kingswear.

There is the option of leaving the train at Paignton or continuing on to Kingswear for a break of about three hours before the return journey to London.

Tickets are available in Pullman dining, first class and premium standard class.

➜ For more details and to book, visit steamdreams.co.uk

Take 'Cathedrals Express' tour to Hereford or Cardiff

STARTING from Dorridge on Saturday, June 22, Vintage Trains is offering customers the opportunity to ride behind one of its Castles to either Hereford or Cardiff under the title of the 'Cathedrals Express.'

The train is planned to pick up additional passengers at Widney Manor, Birmingham New Street, Wolverhampton, Telford and Ludlow, as the train heads south on the Welsh Marches Line.

The first stop is Hereford, where the train is booked to pause for half an hour. Passengers who choose to alight at Hereford will have just under seven hours to explore. Those staying on the train will continue south and cross the border into Wales, before passing through Newport and onto the South Wales Main Line to Cardiff.

Customers will then have about two-and-a-half hours in the Welsh capital before the return journey via the same route.

The locomotive with be either No. 7029 *Clun Castle* or classmate No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. Tickets are available in Pullman class, first class or tourist class, with a discount for junior travellers.

Western Champion tour from Midlands to East Somerset

By Tim Hobman

UK Railtours is to run a tour behind Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion* from the East Midlands to the East Somerset Railway.

The 'The Westbury Wizzo' tour on Saturday, July 6 is planned to depart East Midlands Parkway station and head south on the Midland Main Line, picking up additional passengers at Leicester, Kettering and Bedford.

After leaving Bedford, the tour is scheduled to take the Marston Vale Line towards Bletchley and then turn south again on the West Coast Main Line to Watford Junction, picking up passengers at both locations.

Passing through West London the train will take the Great Western Main Line at Acton before a sprint to Reading for the final passenger pick-up.

Chance to explore

Taking the Berks and Hants Line, the tour is planned to pass Hungerford for the first stop of Westbury. Here, passengers may wish to alight to explore the market town and surrounding area or take the opportunity to visit nearby Longleat House as an off-train option with a supplementary fare.

Those not alighting at Westbury have the option to stay on the train and continue towards East Somerset Junction and on to the Merehead line, which has recently been cleared of vegetation to allow access to the East Somerset Railway. There is then the option of customers alighting to look around Cranmore station or taking a specially-chartered steam train to the end of the line at Mendip Vale.

There is a supplementary fare for the steam train or a slightly reduced supplementary fare for just exploring Cranmore.

After just over two hours at the ESR, Western Champion (picture, Ness, page 21) is scheduled to take passengers homeward via a slightly different route.

After collecting passengers from Westbury, the tour is planned to take part of the Wessex Main Line and then head towards Swindon on the Great Western Main Line, before deviating to Oxford to set down passengers as an alternative to Reading. Continuing to Bicester, the excursion is then scheduled to take the Chiltern Line back towards London and pick up the outbound route at West Ealing.

Having passed through West London, the train is expected to turn north and set down passengers at their joining station on route back to East Midlands Parkway.

Book now

Tickets are available in standard class with a reduction for junior travellers, first class non-dining and first-class dining.

There is a supplement for off-train options, as stated above. For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com

Clan Line set to mark the end of Southern steam

THE Railway Touring Company will commemorate the end of southern steam with a tour on Tuesday, July 9, hauled by Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* to Weymouth.

Leaving from London Victoria by steam, the first stop is scheduled to be Woking, followed by Basingstoke to collect additional passengers at both stations, before taking the West of England Line to through Andover and Salisbury, then continuing on through Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe and Sherborne, before arriving at Yeovil Junction. Here it has been arranged for *Clan Line* to be serviced at the Yeovil Railway Centre, so the final leg of the tour to Weymouth will be diesel-hauled.

Turning south at Yeovil Junction, the train will take the Heart of Wessex Line, passing through Dorchester West and finally arriving at Weymouth in the mid-afternoon. There will then be just under two hours to look around the resort, before the train is once again coupled to No. 35028 for the homeward leg of the excursion.

The return route will see the train turn east at Dorchester Junction on to the South West Main Line. Passing through Bournemouth and Southampton Central, the train then turns north towards Winchester before arriving at Basingstoke, then Woking, and finally London Victoria.

Tickets are available in premier dining, first class and standard class, with a discount for junior travellers and families: visit www.railwaytouring.net



West Country light Pacific No. 34028 *Braunton* is seen heading the Preston to Carlisle section of Saphos Trains' May 18 Nottingham-Carlisle 1Z70 'The Lakelander' at Beckfoot. PAUL BERRY

Two more 'Lakelanders' for Saphos this year

SAPHOS Trains is to run two more trips under the banner of 'The Lakelander' this season.

The first excursion, on June 8, starts out diesel-hauled from Leeds and is planned to head to Dewsbury to pick up passengers before running on to the Calder Valley Line to pick up passengers at Brighouse, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Rochdale and Manchester Victoria. From here, the scheduled route is via the Manchester-Preston Line to pick up remaining passengers at Bolton, Chorley and Preston.

At Preston, the train is taken over by a steam engine from a pool of engines, including LMS 4-6-0 No, 46100 *Royal Scot*, West Country 4-6-2 No. 34046 *Braunton* and BR 7P Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia*.

A circular route of the Lake District will begin a sprint up the West Coast Main Line, over Shap Summit, and down to Carlisle.

At Carlisle, passengers will have about two hours to explore the city, before the return journey, this time via the Cumbrian Coast Route back to Preston, then all outward stations back to Leeds. As we closed for press, seats were still available in Pullman dining, but first and standard class were sold out.

However, there will a second opportunity on Saturday, August 31, with a trip initially diesel-hauled from Hereford.

Taking the Welsh Marches Line north, the tour is scheduled to pick up additional passengers at Leominster, Ludlow, Craven Arms, Church Stretton, Shrewsbury, Whitchurch and Crewe, before heading up the West Coast Main Line to Warrington Bank Quay and Preston, picking up passengers at both.

After exchanging the diesel for steam from one of the pool of locomotives from the above tour, the train is planned to head for Carlisle, again for a break of about three hours.

Following the pattern of the previous tour after leaving Carlisle the train is expected to take the Cumbrian Coast Route back to Preston and then back to Hereford, setting down passengers on route.

Tickets are available in Pullman dining, first class and standard class. To book, visit saphostrains.com

Pre-order Issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

A2 Pacific No. 60532 *Blue Peter* undertook its first main line loaded test run on the usual Locomotive Services Group Crewe-Coton Hill-Crewe circuit and seen under Beeston Castle Hill on May 2. KEVIN WHITEHURST

Heritage recognition for Barmouth's iconic bridge

MAY 15 was a busy day for Network Rail chairman Lord Peter Hendy when he travelled to Barmouth to unveil a blue plaque on the town's iconic viaduct that spans the estuary of the River Mawddach.

Opening 1897, the structure was given Grade II*-listed status on March 22, 1988, and has recently undergone a four-year restoration project costing £30 million in order to protect it for future generations.

Lord Hendy travelled to Barmouth to join Ken Skates MS (Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport for Wales), Owain Pritchard (Mayor of Barmouth) and members of the Network Rail project team to unveil the blue plaque, which has been funded by the Railway Heritage Trust, which also financed new handrails on the structure.

Tim Hedley-Jones, director of the Railway Heritage Trust, said: "We were very pleased to work with Network Rail on the restoration of Grade II*-listed Barmouth viaduct.

"By reinstating handrails more in keeping with the architecture of the bridge, we hope that those crossing it will better appreciate this marvel of Victorian engineering."

Following the unveiling in Barmouth, Lord Hendy then travelled southwards to Tywyn, where a Class 97 was named after the Talyllyn Railway. For a full report, see News, page 43.



Lord Hendy (right) joined some of the Network Rail project team and Cabinet Secretary for North Wales Ken Skates (left) to unveil a blue plaque on Barmouth Bridge on May 15. NETWORK RAIL

First Class all the way for Branch Line Society's LNWR tour

By Tim Hobman

ON Sunday, June 23, the Branch Line Society has scheduled a tour from Glasgow Central to Derby with all first-class accommodation under the banner of 'The Glasgow GM.'

The title of the tour is a refence to the booked motive power, a pair of Class 57/3s, with their General Motors 12645F3B engines, which will be coupled in a top-and-tail formation.

Starting from Glasgow Central, the route is expected to be via Bridge Street Junction, then the Up Clydesdale Goods, Rutherglen Curve, Glasgow Central Low Level and through Platform 2 at Anniesland.

Passing Maryhill, Cowlairs North Junction, Cowlairs West Junction, Gartcosh Junction and Gartsherrie South Junction, the train is scheduled to take the Coatbridge Up Slow to Mossend Up North Curve, Up Holytown, Wishaw, Law Up Loop and Carstairs.

Continuing on the West Coast Main Line, the tour is planned to pass through Lockerbie and Quintinshill, before arriving at Carlisle to pick up and set down passengers.

From Carlisle, the route is expected to take the train via Upperby Up Through Goods, Tebay Up and Down Goods, Oxenholme, and then Carnforth for a reverse move.

Heading on to the Bentham Line, the tour is scheduled to pass through Giggleswick and Hellifield, before turning south to Clitheroe on the Ribble Valley Line. On to Blackburn, then Bolton and Salford Crescent. Passengers will have the option to alight at Manchester Victoria.

Leaving Manchester, heading for the Hope Valley Line, the tour is planned to pass Ashburys and Edale, before taking the Dore Curve onto the Midland Main Line to set down passengers at Chesterfield and then on to the final destination of Derby.

The train is non-dining, with tickets available in first class and a small supplement for a guaranteed table for two people. This tour is one-way only, with no return trip arranged by the BLS.

➜ To book, visit www.branchline.uk

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SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Translink's nod to railway heritage as Great Victoria Street closes

By Hugh Dougherty

TRANSLINK made a significant nod to Belfast's railway heritage when the last train left the city's Great Victoria Street station on Friday, May 10. The day was marked by events at the terminal station including the issue to every passenger of a souvenir ticket, the publication of a commemorative booklet charting the history of the site, former members of staff recalling their stories of the station, music, and events for schools.

The first station on the site, opened by the Ulster Railway in 1839, was originally called Glengall Place. It changed its name to Great Victoria Street in 1848 when a magnificent frontage was built, complete with porte cochère, carrying the title Great Northern Railway after the Ulster Railway merged with other companies to form the GNR(I) in 1876.

In its heyday, Great Victoria Street was the terminus for trains to Dublin, including, after 1947, the prestigious Enterprise Express, Derry, Armagh, Enniskillen, Bundoran, Omagh, Cones and Monaghan. After September 1957, the station's traffic reduced drastically when many of the cross-border lines were closed by the Stormont Government, largely for political reasons.

Make way for buses

With the demise of the GNR in 1958, the station fell under the Ulster Transport umbrella and the anti-rail-minded UTA wasted no time in converting part of the station into a bus terminal which outshone the railway side of the station, especially after the lines to Derry via Omagh and the Warrenpoint branch were closed in 1965. The Victorian façade was demolished in 1968 to make way for the Europa Hotel in an act of heritage vandalism much criticised at the time, while IRA bombs destroyed a large part of the interior in 1971.

The last trains ran in 1975 and the station was demolished in 1976, its site being used to build the Europa Bus Centre.

However, a replacement four-platform Great Victoria Street station was opened in 1995, its cladding paying homage to the characteristic glazed bricks used by the GNR. It was this station which closed on May 10, to be replaced by the new Belfast Grand Central, which will open later this year.

New life

Built on the site of the former GNR(I) Grosvenor Road goods yard, it will have eight platform spaces to allow for expansion of the Northern Ireland Railways network, including reopening of lines such as to Armagh and Derry via Omagh, as contained in the All-Ireland Strategic Rail Review, and NIR plans to recall the 185 years of railway heritage at the entire site within the new terminal, which, with its integrated bus station, will be the largest public transport hub in Ireland.

The opening will see the Enterprise trains for Dublin, which uphold the traditions of the GNR on the inter-city route, returned to their original city centre terminal location, having been banished by Belfast Central, now renamed Lanyon Place, in 1976.

Translink's head of rail customer services, Hilton Parr, said: "Great Victoria Street has been a key rail station for some 185 years. It played a significant role in several moments in history, including facilitating ambulance trains in the First World War and American troops in training for D-Day in the Second World War. Since 1995, when it reopened, thousands of passengers have travelled through every day for many reasons.

"We wanted to make May 10 a special day to surprise and delight our passengers, recognise our staff, many of whom started their careers at the station, and engage with the community, to capture the nostalgia of the occasion, making it a memorable day for all."



Great Victoria Street mobbed as GNR(I) 4-4-0 No. 131 returned to its old stomping ground to head the NIR 50th anniversary train to Whitehead on April 4, 2018. HUGH DOUGHERTY

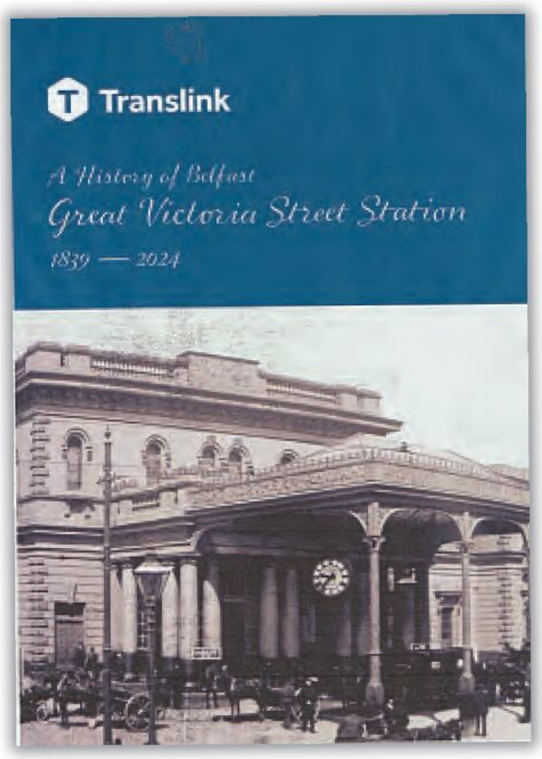
Steam unlikely

Great Victoria Street often hosted Railway Preservation Society of Ireland steam trains, the most notable being on April 4, 2018, when GNR(I) 4-4-0 No. 131 headed a special charter train to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of NIR.

However, with the lack of qualified steam drivers on NIR, no steam was employed to mark the closure, and it remains highly unlikely that steam will play a part later this year in the official opening of Grand Central.

Little remains of the original Great Victoria Street, although a platform bench survives at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and a platform roof stanchion from 1848 was discovered during demolition work for Grand Central Station and was donated by Translink to the Downpatrick & County Down Railway in 2108.

The D&CDR is also home to an Ulster Railway coach which would have worked in and out of the original station. The RPSI operates GNR(I) No. 85 *Merlin*, built in 1932 as one of a batch of five compounds which ran accelerated Dublin express trains from Great Victoria Street, while S class 4-4-0 No. 171, which is about to return to service after an extensive overhaul, was also a frequent performer at Great Victoria Street right up to withdrawal in 1965.



The commemorative brochure produced by Translink shows the 1848-built station façade on its cover.



Great Victoria Street in its glory days as the first Enterprise, bound for Dublin, gets ready to leave the station, hauled by GNR(I) 4-4-0 compound No. 83 *Merlin* on August 11, 1947. CHARLES P FRIEL COLLECTION

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Heritage trust marks 10 years at restored North Queensferry station

NORTH Queensferry Heritage Trust volunteers have been celebrating 10 years since the completion of the restoration of the town's Grade B-listed station building.

Trust volunteers leased the station in 2012, obtained grants from a range of bodies including the Railway Heritage Trust and Fife Council and reopened the refurbished building, renaming it as the Forth Bridge Heritage Centre in July 2014.

The station is served by trains from Edinburgh Waverley and several heritage steam trains pass through yearly, having crossed the Forth Railway Bridge itself.

The station building was constructed by the Forth Bridge Railway Company as part of the masterplan for the iconic bridge, which was also built in 1890, and the trust volunteered to take the surviving building over after First ScotRail, the then Scottish railway franchise holder, declared it surplus to requirements.



The restored North Queensferry Station with the gallery room publicised on the platform with a picture display. NQHT



The trust's light tower and the Forth Railway Bridge underline the transport heritage of North Queensferry. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Community use

Volunteers now maintain a gallery in the former ladies waiting room, with artefacts and pictures of the Forth Bridge on display, including framed shots of steam trains that have crossed the bridge. The trust also keeps the station toilets and offers a community meeting room facility.

Trust secretary Garry Irvine said: "We decided to take over the station building because of its heritage and to restore it to its proper place in the community, and we are pleased with what we have achieved.

"The trust celebrates and preserves the heritage of North Queensferry, and we are proud of the station and also of the 1817-built harbour light tower, which helped light the way for ferries across the Forth before the railway came.

"We maintain the light in working order and operate a small museum on the pier beside the light, which also includes Forth Bridge artefacts.

"The Forth Railway Bridge dominates North Queensferry and we have marvellous views of it from our pier. We'd like to remind *Heritage Railway* readers that we are here, and that they are very welcome to enjoy a station visit to see what we've achieved by saving a historic building, very much part of the railway bridge story and keeping it in everyday use as part of the community."

Seaside Poacher set for next Hastings Diesels excursion

THE third railtour of the 2024 season for Hastings Diesels is planned for Saturday, June 8, under the banner of 'The Lincolnshire Poacher', with the destinations of Boston and Skegness for customers to choose from.

Starting from Hastings, the tour is expected to follow the usual pattern in picking up passengers from St. Leonards Warrior Square, Crowhurst, Battle, Etchingham, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Bromley South, before heading across South London and crossing the River Thames to the final pick-up of Kensington Olympia.

From here, the heritage DMU is planned to head out onto the East Coast Main Line for a run to Peterborough. Passing Peterborough, the line to Sleaford will take the train to the first passenger stop of Boston.

Passengers who choose to alight at Boston will have just under four hours to explore the inland port. For those opting to stay on board, the train will continue to Skegness, where passengers will have two and a half hours at the seaside resort.

It is hoped that the return journey may take a different route back to London, but this will be confirmed nearer the time of the tour.

However, once back in the capital, the train will set down passengers at their joining stations on route back to Hastings.

➜ Tickets are available in standard or first class. For more details and to book, visit www.hastingsdiesels.co.uk

West Somerset tour organised by Midland Pullman

ON Tuesday, July 2, Midland Pullman will be running a tour from Chesterfield to Minehead called the 'Exmoor Coast Pullman'.

Heading down the Midland Main Line, picking up passengers at Alfreton, Ilkeston, East Midlands Parkway, Loughborough and Leicester, the tour is scheduled to take the Birmingham-Peterborough Line for final pick-ups at Narborough, Hinckley, Nuneaton and Coleshill Parkway. It is then expected to take the cross-country route to Bristol Temple Meads before picking up the Bristol-Exeter Line. Just after Taunton, the tour is planned to turn on to the West Somerset Railway for a run through to Dunster.

Passengers may choose to alight here or continue on to Minehead for a stop of two hours. The train will then head for home via the same route.

➜ Tickets are available in Pullman dining or first class. For more details and to book, visit midlandpullman.com

Houses by the Settle-Carlisle line refused permission

PLANNING consent for four new homes near the Settle to Carlisle line has been turned down because of their impact on the views from the railway.

North Yorkshire Council rejected the plans for Bowerley House, in Langcliffe, near Settle.

The railway is protected by the longest conservation area in the UK and covers the entire stretch of line from Hellifield Junction to Carlisle Citadel station. Heritage expert John Hinchliffe asked for the application by Steadman Construction Ltd for the three-storey homes within Bowerley House's garden to be refused because it would harm both the Langcliffe and the Settle-Carlisle conservation areas.

The applicant can appeal against the decision.

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June

8 Skegness Excursion
Hastings, Skegness and return.
DEMU: 1001. HD

8 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Coventry, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

8 'The Tynesider'
King's Cross, Morpeth and return. Steam-hauled between York and Morpeth.
Locos: Steam: TBA.
Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

8 'The Lakelander'
Leeds, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Preston and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

8 'The Blythe & Tyne'
Finsbury Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and return.
Loco: Class 43 HST. UKRT

8 'The Ffestiniog Express'
Dorridge, Blaenau Ffestiniog and return. Diesel-hauled between Llandudno Junction and Blaenau Ffestiniog.
Loco: TBA. VT

9 'The Cromer Crompton'
Sheringham to Water Orton only.
Locos: 33012 *Lt. Jenny Lewis RN*, 50008 *Thunderer*. BLS

11 'The Dalesman'
Chester, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. WCR

13 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

15 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Leeds, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

15 'The Bath & Bristol Steam Express'
Swanage, Bristol Temple Meads and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

15 Paignton Excursion
Paddington, Kingswear and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

15 'The Ancient Kingdom'
King's Cross, Edinburgh and return.
Loco: TBA. UKRT

18 'West Highland Pullman'
Preston, Oban and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

20 Garden of England lunchtime tour
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

20 'Sunset Steam Express'
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 70000 Britannia. SD

22 Settle to Carlisle and Coastal Pullman
Holyhead, Carlisle and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

22 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express;
London Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: Steam: TBA.
Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

22 'English Riviera Express'
Woking, Kingswear and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: TBA. ST

22 'The Return of the Jolly Fisherman'
St Pancras, Skegness and return.
Loco: Class 125 HST. UKRT

22 'Cathedrals Express'
Dorridge, Cardiff and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. VT

25 'Welsh Marches Express'
Paignton, Shrewsbury and return. Steam-hauled between Bristol Temple Meads and Shrewsbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

26 'The Swanage Belle'
London Victoria, Swanage and return. Diesel-hauled from Swanage to Southampton (return only).
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

27 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

27 'Torbay Riviera Pullman'
Crewe, Paignton and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

29 'The Mazey Day Cornishman'
Dorridge, Penzance and return.
Locos: 2x Class 50s TBA. PT

29 'The Cheshireman'
Euston, Chester and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

July

2 'Exmoor Coast Pullman'
Chesterfield, Minehead and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

3 'Settle & Carlisle Fellsman'
Blackpool North, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. ST.

4 Settle to Carlisle and Coastal Pullman
Derby, Carlisle and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

6 'North Wales Coast Express'
Euston, Llandudno and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Llandudno.
Locos: Steam: TBA.
Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

6 'English Riviera Express'
Northampton, Kingswear and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: TBA. ST

6 'The Westbury Wizzo'
East Midlands Parkway, Westbury and return.
Loco: D1015 *Western Champion*. UKRT

6 'The White ROSE'
Birmingham New Street, Scarborough and return.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

7 'The Waverley'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

9 'Torbay Riviera Pullman'
York, Paignton and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

9 The End of Southern Steam
London Victoria, Yeovil Junction, Weymouth and return. Diesel-hauled from Yeovil Junction to Weymouth.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. RTC

9 Garden of England lunchtime tour
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

9 'Sunset Steam Express'
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia* SD

11 'The Golden Hind'
Milton Keynes Central, Plymouth and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Plymouth.
Loco: TBA. ST

13 Derby Excursion
Hastings, Derby and return.
DEMU: 1001. HD

13 'Cumbrian Cromptons'
Reading, Carlisle and return.
Locos: 2x class 33s TBA. PT

13 'The White Rose'
King's Cross, York and return. Diesel-hauled from Peterborough to King's Cross (return).
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC



Southall sunrise: At just after 6am on May 11 and with the sun just about above the horizon, streamlined A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* creeps through Southall in West London ahead of its empty coaching stock working to Euston in readiness for the Steam Dreams excursion to Chester. TERRY PICKTHALL

Regular Tours

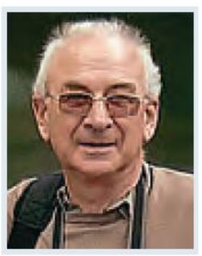
'The Jacobite'
Fort William, Mallaig and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Locomotive: 44871, 45212 or 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*. WCR

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

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LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



Don Benn looks at the main line return of Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Lane* after overhaul 50 years to the day after its initial return to the main line in 1974, and some of its work in 1967 and 2017.

AFTER a protracted overhaul, No. 35028 *Clan Line* finally made it back to the main line in time to work the Belmond Pullman to Bath on April 27 – 50 years to the day since its first return to the main line in 1974. It cannot be overstated how much hard work and heartache went into the work involved, with one problem after another being overcome in the 21-month marathon. The final three months included a huge amount of work. In the words of Chris Elllck of the MNLPS: "Since December 5, it is worth repeating that two side sheets were cut, fitted, prepped and welded; more than 1000 stays were drilled, reamed, tapped, manufactured and fitted; two thermic siphons were assembled and fitted, all in situ; the boiler was prepared for a hydraulic test; and the grate was refitted for the steam test."

And so to the fitness-to-run (FTR) exam on April 19, as Alan Rawling's image shows, which was then followed by the loaded test run round Kent on April 22. This run started from Stewarts Lane at 10.41am, 21 minutes late, and ran via the Catford Loop, Bromley South (11.55am), Bickley Junction (11.58am, where brother Bryan/Wedgie took a nice image), Chatham (12.25pm), Faversham (12.49pm, still 10 late), Canterbury East (1.02pm) and finally to Dover Priory at 1.24pm, just four late. It returned to London via Ashford and Paddock Wood, where Bryan captured another shot. The test run was deemed successful, and so all was set for the big day.

Saturday, April 27.

The load of the 9.14am Victoria to Bath Belmond Pullman was eight Pullmans, two brake coaches, a generator coach and support vehicle, total 12 on for 463 tons tare and about 485 tons full. Crew to Salisbury was driver Dave Proctor, fireman Andy Denton and traction inspector Fred Lewis; the route conductor was Clive Billson. The train was routed via Herne Hill, Tulse Hill, Wimbledon at 9.45am, West Junction and then the promised main line to Salisbury at 11.08am. Peter Underwood reported that the 75.29 miles from passing New Malden to Salisbury were run in 77 minutes and 43 seconds at an average of 58.12mph against the schedule of 79 minutes. New Malden was passed at 55mph, Hampton Court Junction at 71mph, and after a signal check approaching Woking, a very fine 64mph at the milepost 31 summit, and 70mph at Farnborough. Another check approaching Basingstoke was a prelude to 54mph at Worting Junction and 75mph at Andover.

Another signal check approaching Tunnel Junction could not prevent an arrival a minute early in an excellent time of 32 minutes and 35 seconds from passing Worting Junction, just two and half minutes slower than the old 'Atlantic Coast Express' schedule timed for 400 tons and allowed 85mph.

Incidentally, Bryan told me that his shot of



No. 35028 undergoing its fitness-to-run exam at Stewarts Lane on April 19. ALAN RAWLINGS

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***Clan Line* approaches Bickley Junction at Blackbrook Bridge during its loaded test run on April 22.** BRYAN BENN

No. 35028 passing Pirbright was taken at 10.10am, which was the exact time *Clan Line* left Basingstoke on its return to steam in 1974! From Salisbury, Wayne Thompson took over from Dave Proctor, who then fired to Bath, which was reached more than four minutes early.

Upton Scudamore

The return trip left Bath seven late at 5.01pm with Wayne Thompson driving, Jim Clarke firing and TI Don Clarke. The big interest for the return was how *Clan Line* would cope with its big 485-ton load on the 1-in-70 Upton Scudamore bank out of Westbury. Well, let's just say it was amazing. I quote Wayne Thompson: "Firstly, just under 50% cut-off. Regulator not quite fully open, but not much more left! I was only glancing at the speedo every now and then, mainly to see if we were gaining/losing speed and to adjust the cut-off/regulator as necessary. For the lower three-quarters of the climb, we held exactly the same speed – 39mph. It tailed off just slightly as we got towards the top, back to about 37mph. I then eased the regulator before we got to the top, hence the valves lifting. The last time I looked at the speedo, before we were over the top, it was at 36mph."

Wayne could not have achieved this climb without fireman Jim Clarke and so asked him for his take. His reply: "On the approach to Westbury, I had made sure there was a very big fire in her, with the back corners built right up. The firing up the climb was made easier by just adding little and often. The end result kept her right on the red line with one ejector on. Plenty of steam for Wayne to work his magic."

The video clips on YouTube are spine-tingling – what a fantastic loco this is. With the available information and assuming a reduction in speed from 39 to 36mph between Dilton Marsh and the summit, I have calculated that the EDBH (equivalent drawbar horsepower) was about 2150, which is a very high figure and compares with the 2325 EDBH of No. 35012 on my record Up 'Bournemouth Belle' run on April 4, 1965.

From Salisbury the times were quite easy, with 23 minutes allowed to Andover and 40 to pass Worting Junction, then fast line to Woking at 7.35pm, 70 minutes from Salisbury for the 59.61 miles. The actual time was 68 minutes and 45 seconds, maximum 75mph, with a signal check



***Clan Line* approaches Paddock Wood during its loaded test run.** BRYAN BENN

TABLE ONE: THE WATERLOO SUNSET WOKING TO SALISBURY

Date	Sunday, July 9, 2017
Train	10.41am Waterloo to Yeovil Junction
Loco	Rebuilt Merchant Navy Class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	12 coaches, 430 tons tare 465 tons gross
Engine crew	Wayne Thompson and Jim Clarke
Inspector	Don Clarke
Recorder	Don Benn from 10th coach
Weather	fine and warm

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Woking	0.00	00.00	00	00	
Woking Jct	0.46	02.00	02	08	27
MP 26½	2.21		04	51	48
Brookwood	3.70		06	34	54½
Pirbright Jct	5.36		08	19	59½
MP 31	6.71		09	39	62
Strurt Lane Jct	7.91		10	44	70½
Farnborough	8.91	12.00	11	36	74
MP 35	10.71		13	00	76½/77½
Fleet	12.19		14	10	76½
MP 38	13.71		15	21	76
Winchfield	15.54		16	47	74/73
MP 41	16.71		17	46	74
Hook	17.87		18	42	75½
MP 43	18.71		19	22	75
Newnham Siding	19.41		19	55	77½/78½
MP 45	20.71		20	56	74
Basingstoke	23.46	25.00	24	46	13* tsr
MP 49	24.72		27	27	39½
Worting Jct	26.01	29.00	29	08	49
MP 51	26.73		30	02	52½
Oakley	28.09		31	21	62½/64½
MP 53½	29.26		32	31	64
Overton	31.26		34	14	74
MP 58	33.76		36	14	77½
Whitchurch	34.81		37	04	76/74
Hurstbourne	36.85		38	37	77½
MP 62½	38.27		39	46	75
MP 64	39.77		40	57	78
Andover	42.06	49.00	42	38	77½
Red Post Jct	43.36		43	43	75
MP 69	44.78		44	52	79
MP 71	46.79		46	28	72½
Grateley	48.41		47	47	69
MP 73¼	49.06		48	22	68
Allington	51.31		50	14	75½
Idmiston	53.31		51	49	77
Porton	54.00		52	17	79
MP 80	55.82		53	44	74*
Tunnel Junction	58.27	66.00	56	04	38*
			sigs stop		
MP 83	58.73		58	19	0*
			61	20	
Salisbury	59.40	69.00	65	05	

Start-to-stop average Woking to the sigs stop just short of MP83: 60.43mph.
Net time: 55 minutes.
Woking depart 15¼ minutes late.

"It cannot be overstated how much hard work and heartache went into the work involved, with one problem after another being overcome in the 21-month marathon."

"The loco is still running beautifully; don't really need to push her hard."

after Worting Junction and severe adverse signals into Woking. Here, Wayne handed over to Jim and Tim Steadman took over the firing. Arrival back at Victoria was on time at 9.16pm. To quote Wayne again: "The loco is still running beautifully; don't really need to push her hard. Other than Upton Scudamore, I didn't have the regulator anywhere near fully open on my stint. Even then, it wasn't fully open for the climb.

"Leaving Salisbury, it started to drizzle, which gave me a slight issue getting away. But once we were away, there were no further problems. The climb up through Porton was taken in her stride. Easy on the regulator for the rest of the journey to Woking. Indeed, she was purring along in the low 70s with 20% cut-off; 80 to 100psi in the steam chest between Basingstoke and Woking."

So ended a brilliant main line return for *Clan Line*.



Exactly 50 years after its first main line tour in preservation, *Clan Line* brings the 9.14am London Victoria to Bath Belmond Pullman through Pibright Bridge on April 27. BRYAN BENN

To Salisbury in 2017

No. 35028 has produced many good runs for us mere mortals away from Belmond, and I have picked a typical July 9 effort from 2017. Details are in Table One. The load was 11 plus support coach, total 12 for 430 tons tare, and as the train was completely full, about 465 tons full. Wayne's fireman to Salisbury was Jim Clarke and the Traction Inspector was Don Clarke, so together a very good combination.

From Woking we left just over 15 minutes late, and with high hopes of a clear run to the Salisbury stop, booked 69 minutes for the 59.4 miles. Up the climb to MP31, the engine was being worked hard enough to get us past the summit at an excellent 62mph. We were up to 74mph by Farnborough, where I spotted Paul Cooper trying to replicate his famous shot of No. 35023 passing there on the July 8, 1967, while working the last Down steam-hauled express, the 8.30am Waterloo to Weymouth.

We then we ran effortlessly with speed in the 70s until interrupted by the severe speed restriction applicable to *Clan Line* at Basingstoke. As far as I am aware, no work has taken place here in the last few years and nor has the engine changed shape, so the reason for this restriction – which cost us about four minutes – is unclear.

Recovery up the 1-in-249 to Battledown was good with 52½mph at the top. We had just kept the schedule from Woking (which was planned without the restriction) and now ran beautifully over the remaining 33.4 miles to Salisbury. From 77½mph over the viaduct at Hurstbourne Wayne must have taken a bit more steam as we cleared to top of the mini summit to MP62½ at 75mph, before the engine was eased to keep within the speed limit.

The dash down Enham bank on the 'Atlantic Coast Express' was always one of the highlights of the journey, and Wayne told me afterwards that he was tempted to let *Clan Line* run but, being the good engineman he is, he didn't, of course. So, from 78mph at Andover, we cleared Red Post Junction at 75mph and then set about the climb to Grateley, topped at an excellent 68mph; very good work indeed with this load. Wayne said that he gradually increased the cut-off from 22% to 27% and to 30% at the top of the three miles of 1-in-165, pulling the regulator up to full by the top, so using about 230lb of steam. What a superlative performance from an engine fresh from overhaul which has clearly been to the very high standards demanded by the MNLPS, and the first-class enginemanship of Wayne and Jim cannot be praised too highly. If we had been allowed to run at line speed down to Andover (85mph), then with less effort from the engine we would have swept over Grateley at 70mph or more. Another example of where a relaxation of the

TABLE TWO: BASINGSTOKE TO WOKING

Date	Tuesday, June 27, 1967
Train	6.15pm Weymouth to Waterloo
Loco	Rebuilt Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	Three coaches and four vans, 205½ tons tare 220 tons gross
Crew	Fred Burridge and R Symon, Nine Elms MPD
Weather	Damp with wet rails
Recorder	Don Benn with stopwatch

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed	
Basingstoke	0.00	0.00	00	00	6½ mins late	
MP 47	0.75		01	44	40½	SL to FL
MP 46	1.75		02	47	64	
MP 45	2.75		03	41	74½	
MP 44	3.75		04	27	78	
Newnham Siding	4.05		04	42	80	
MP 43	4.75		05	13	80½	
Hook	5.59		05	48	83	
MP 41	6.75		06	37	87½	
Winchfield	7.92		07	26	90	slipping
MP 39	8.75		07	58	91	
MP 38	9.75		08	37	93/95	
MP 37	10.75		09	15	94	slipping
Fleet	11.27		09	34	96	
MP 36	11.75		09	53	95	
MP 35	12.75		10	32	93	eased
MP 34	13.75		11	12	90	
Farnborough	14.55		11	45	82	
Sturt Lane Jct	15.60		12	33	70½/59*	tsr
MP 31	16.75		13	44	64½	
MP 30	17.75		14	34	75	
Pirbright Jct	18.26		14	52	80	
MP 29	18.75		15	18	83	
Brookwood	19.76		16	00	88½	
MP 27	20.75		16	42	84	brakes
MP 26	21.75		17	27	74*	
Woking Jct	23.00		18	34	53*	
Woking	23.46	26.00	19	24		right time

Start-to-stop average: 72.56 mph.
Average speed MP39 to 34: 92.8 mph.
Net time: 18¾ minutes.
Train left Bournemouth 30 minutes late and arrived at Waterloo four minutes early.



No. 35028 *Clan Line* approaches Clockhouse Crossing during its loaded test run on April 22, 2024. CHRIS BROOKE-TAYLOR

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75mph limit would give a win/win result.

It is worth recording that the coal supplied for this trip was tricky stuff, producing very dirty, black smoke. Jim Clarke told me that it required laying into the firebox thinly and well-spread to keep a live fire all over to avoid the engine going off the boil.

From Grateley summit, we ran easily downhill past Porton and Tunnel Junction to a signal stop at MP83 outside Salisbury. We had caught the late-running Portsmouth to Cardiff train and once again, a service train had caused a steam-hauled train recovering time to be delayed. But on this occasion, there was much celebration among the timing fraternity as it was clear that we had run from Woking to the signal stop inside even time; 58.83 miles in 58 minutes and 19 seconds at 60.52mph. This was unexpected and made my day.

We got the road after three minutes and stopped in Platform 4 in 65 minutes and five seconds, a gain of four minutes on the schedule. Net time was a very good 55 minutes from Woking, and the running had been up to or better than ACE standard throughout.

Going further back in time to the last few days of steam on the Southern, Table Two shows what No. 35028 can do when let loose of its current main line shackles, albeit with a light load. On board were a number of people who were involved in the preservation of *Clan Line*, one of whom was quite concerned that the way the loco was being worked on the damp rails would cause some damage. I wonder if any of that group are still involved and reading this article?

With the ongoing saga of West Coast Railways and the ORR, I am not sure when I will be able to write my next column about pure steam on the main line, but let us hope that the planned trip to Exeter on September 28 can run diesel free, as it always has.



On April 27,1974, *Clan Line* climbs the grade near Grateley with the 10.10am Basingstoke to Westbury, its first main line railtour after being preserved. DON BENN



Five-man crew from Crewe in GWRA nameplate line-up

FIVE locomotives built at Crewe up to nearly four decades apart are to feature in GW Railwayana's auction on July 20, when nameplates *Sir Francis Dent*, *Windward Islands*, *Clan Mackintosh*, *Sir Christopher Wren* and *Lord Kitchener* go under the hammer.

The first of the quintet is from LNWR Claughton class 4-6-0 No. 2221/LMS No. 5927, which was outshopped by the world-famous works in August 1916, withdrawn in December 1936, and carried the name of a Lt Col in the Engineer & Railway Staff Corps who was also the South Eastern & Chatham Railway general manager from 1911 to 1920.

Windward Islands was carried by Jubilee No. 45637, which became the first member of the class to be withdrawn after being severely damaged in the Harrow & Wealdstone crash on October 8, 1952, that resulted in the deaths of 112 people and remains the country's worst-ever peacetime rail accident.

This 4-6-0 was built at Crewe in December 1934 and was allocated to Liverpool Edge Hill (8A) at the time of the disaster.

From the Big Four era to the days of the BR Standard classes, we firstly come across the Clan, from No. 72007, which was built at Crewe in February 1952 and withdrawn from its lifelong shed, Carlisle Kingmoor (12A), in December 1965.

Sir Christopher Wren and *Lord Kitchener* are from Britannia Nos. 70039 and 70043. The former emerged from Crewe a year after No. 72007, in February 1953, and also ended its days at 12A in September 1967, while No. 70043 entered traffic four months after its classmate, in June 1953, and was withdrawn from its home town shed of Crewe South (5B) in August 1965.

Departing from Crewe, chronologically we come to nameplates from locomotives built at Swindon, Gorton, by North British





at Glasgow, and Darlington. *Dorney Court* is the Swindon representative, from Saint class No. 2940 that was outshopped in December 1911 and made it into BR stock before being withdrawn from Cardiff Canton (86C) in January 1952. The cabside numberplate from this 4-6-0 will also be in the auction.

Remaining in the pre-Grouping era, there is *Sir Berkeley Sheffield* from Great Central Railway Gorton-built Class 11E No. 436/LNER Class D10 No. 2657. This 4-4-0, named after a GCR director who was also a First World War captain and a Conservative MP, was another inherited by BR, who withdrew it as No. 62657 from Sheffield Darnall (41A) in March 1953.

That leaves just two more nameplates that were early entrants in the auction, *Galopin* and *Woodbastwick Hall*. The former comes from A3 No. 60076, built by North British in October 1924 and a north-east locomotive all its life, shedded at either Darlington or Gateshead until spending its final month in service at the Newcastle shed of Heaton (52B) prior to being taken out of service in October 1962. The Pacific was named after the winner of the 1875 Derby, and still today, some 65 years after 'copping' it, I think it a brilliant name for a racehorse.

Completing the line-up is *Woodbastwick Hall*, carried by another Nigel Gresley-designed locomotive, No. 61613, an October 1930 Darlington-built B17 class 4-6-0 named after a Norfolk country house dating back to 1600 and withdrawn from Cambridge (31A) in December 1959.

The auction is live online and starts at 9.30am. On the following day, July 21, auctioneer Simon Turner will hold a 400-lot sale of general railwayana, including shedplates, posters and clocks. This will start at 10am and will also be live online.

See next month's column for further details of the auction, including late nameplates and other entries.

Marcia breaks new ground, but what is the future for the 0-4-0T?

IN the near 20 years I have been covering railwayana for *Heritage Railway*, I have reported on well in excess of 1000 auctions and written of many thousands of items that have gone under the hammer. They've all been there, from railway tickets to nameplates, paperwork to headboards, and posters to worksplates.

But one part of the railway scene was missing – a steam locomotive. That, however, has changed, for as I reported in issue 318, Kent & East Sussex Railway-based standard gauge Peckett *Marcia* was to go under the hammer following the death of its owner.

It was new territory for my auction coverage and, more importantly, for Simon Turner of GW Railwayana, who put it on the market over the last two weeks in April.

Early doors there was hope for the family selling the 1923-built 0-4-0T that the little 12-ton engine may find a new owner, and Simon was encouraged when 12 people registered an interest.

It is believed a bid of £50,000 would probably have secured the engine, which sounds competitive for a recently restored, fully operational standard-gauge steam locomotive, but it was not to be.

After the auction closed on April 30, Simon said: "I was surprised and disappointed that we didn't get any bids.

"The family of the deceased owner was very understanding and appreciative of our efforts, but I don't know what their plans are now."

Popular Peckett

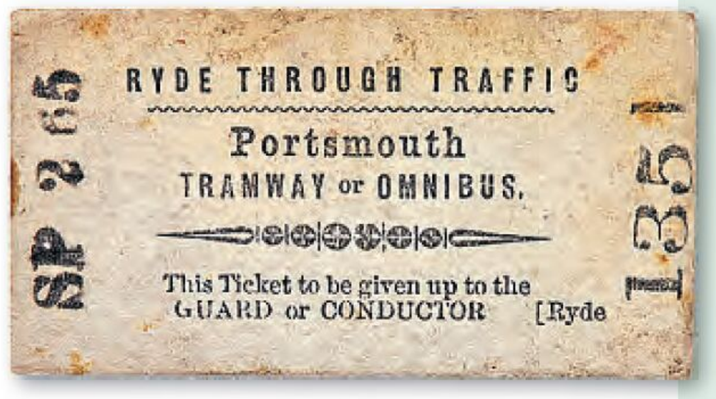
The engine has been a popular member of the KESR fleet for many years, and before the auction, the heritage line's general manager, Robin Coombes, said that although its capabilities were limited due to it being such a small locomotive, he and the railway's staff and volunteers would be sad to see it leave for a new home.

After learning that it had not sold at auction, he told *Heritage Railway*: "We have yet to hear from the family about its future, but we understand they are in discussions with an unnamed third party.

"For us to continue to keep, care for, and potentially operate *Marcia*, an entirely new agreement needs to be signed, either with the family or a new owner."

Just the ticket for Victorian travel

TWO Victorian era tickets, one of which was 159 years old, sold as a single lot for £6800 at a Paddington Ticket Auctions sale that ended on May 10 – the highest realisation ever achieved by the auction house.



One was a 'Ryde through traffic' Portsmouth tramway or omnibus ticket dated September 2, 1865, carrying the instruction that the ticket was to be given up to the guard or conductor. The second ticket was a Southsea Tramway example, undated but numbered 002, for a 'fore cabin and second class' journey from Shanklin to London Bridge, with the instruction that it should be given up to the guard on the journey from Ryde.

Runner-up at £1300 was a Somerset & Dorset Railway Glastonbury-Wells ticket dated September 11, 1873, and third was an LBSCR ticket from Lavant to Worthing (£820). Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

LMS report is no longer 'most secret'

AN LMS operating department four-volume report marked 'most secret' detailing the company's activities during the Second World War sold for £510 at the Paperchase quarterly email and postal auction that ran from April 14-30. Each volume contained up to 250 pages and included numerous tables and charts.

Two 600-page bound volumes of GWR South Wales service timetables dated October 1923 and July 1924, each including 'working of coaches' supplements, just topped the report's realisation by selling for £530 apiece. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12½%.

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Nigel Gresley Pacifics among early runners in TRA live saleroom auction



NAMEPLATES from three Nigel Gresley-designed Pacifics are the early headliners in Talisman's live saleroom auction at Newark Showground on July 13. The trio is led by *Sir Charles Newton* from A4 No. 60005, which emerged from Doncaster in June 1938 carrying the name *Capercaille*, was renamed *Charles H Newton* in August 1942 after the LNER's chief general manager, and 10 months later was again renamed following his knighthood.

This locomotive spent its later years working the three-hour Glasgow-Aberdeen expresses and was withdrawn from Aberdeen Ferryhill (61B) in March 1964. One of the Pacific's worksplates and the regulator handle will also be separately going under the hammer.



Accompanying the A4 plate in the LNER line-up are *Blair Athol* and *Neil Gow*, from A3 class stablemates Nos. 60058 and 60082.

The former was built at Doncaster in February 1925 and withdrawn from the Newcastle shed of Heaton (52B) in June 1963, while No. 60082, named after the winner in 1910 of the 2000 Guineas, was constructed by North British of Glasgow in November 1924 and taken out of service in September 1963 from another BR(NE) depot, Gateshead (52A).

The smokebox numberplate and one of the worksplates from No. 60058, which was named after the winner of the 1864 Derby and St Leger, will also be included in the auction and sold separately.

Another Big Four contender is *Hogue* – a name used three times by the Royal Navy – which was carried by Jubilee No. 45683, a January 1936 Crewe product that was withdrawn from Sheffield Darnall (41A) in December 1962, and finally there is *Shirenewton Hall* from No. 4967, which was outshopped by Swindon in December 1929 and pensioned off in September 1962 when a resident of Neath (87A).

One of the cabside numberplates from the hall, which was named after a 19th century Grade II-listed country house in Monmouthshire, will be sold separately from the plate, as will its smokebox numberplate and whistles.

The auction, further details of which will be in next month's column, will be held at Newark Showground and start at 10am.

GWR cabsides head Bristol auction



THREE GWR cabside numberplates achieved the highest prices in a Bristol Railwayana auction on April 21, with the top two, both of which sold for £500, being 6389 from a 4300 class 2-6-0 and 3748 from a 5700 class 0-6-0PT, while the third was 3677, from a classmate of No. 3748, which went under the hammer for £260. Bristol Railwayana does not charge a buyer's premium.

No. 6389 was the only pre-Grouping engine of the trio and the only one not built at Swindon, having been one of 35 in the 342-strong class constructed by Robert Stephenson & Co of Darlington. It entered service in October 1921 and was withdrawn from the Pembrokeshire shed of Neyland (87H) in September 1960.

No. 3748 was built in October 1937 and withdrawn from Cardiff East Dock (88A) in May 1964, and No. 3677 entered traffic in June 1940 and was withdrawn in December 1965 when allocated to Oxford (81F).

A number of the 5700 class of pannier tanks survived in service after the end of BR steam, mainly with London Transport, who bought 13 for use on permanent way trains, and the National Coal Board, which purchased five for operating at pits in South Wales. All the LT engines had been withdrawn by 1971 and those with the NCB by 1975.

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **June 13/14**
  Great Central Railwayana *('Bloxham' auction)*
- **June 15**
  Thirsk Railwayana
- **June 21**
  Lacy Scott & Knight *(railwayana and model trains)*
- **June 25**
  Special Auction Services *('Glorious Trains' larger scale models)*
- **June 27**
  Vectis *(model trains)*
- **June 29**
  Transport Auctions of London

GWR Castle outmuscles the King

CASTLE class nameplate *The South Wales Borderers* from GWR No. 4037 outmuscled *King Edward VIII* in an antiques and general sale held by Dorking auction house PF Windibank on April 27 when it went under the hammer for £8000. The King plate, from No. 6029, sold for £7200, some way ahead of the £4700 for *Lady Macbeth* from Saint class 4-6-0 No. 2905.

Next up was *Cardiff Castle* from No. 4075 (£3350), followed by *Odney Manor* from No. 7828 (£2600) and *Ludford Hall* from No. 4940, which fetched £1700.

Three further plates in the sale were *Gwendraeth* from GWR 0-6-0ST No. 2196, *Western Star* from Britannia Pacific No. 70025, and *Wroxall* from Isle of Wight E1 class 0-6-0T W4 that sold respectively for £210, £160 and £155. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 25% (inc VAT).

The auction appears to have evaded the normally alert antennae of many within the railwayana movement, and this may be reflected in some of the prices achieved.

When approached by *Heritage Railway* for a statement on some of the realisations, a Windibank spokeswoman said the plates were sold on instructions from solicitors.

"Our instructions were very clear – to sell them," she said. "We did what were instructed to do, and they found their own price level. We did carry out some research beforehand, but we had to sell them."

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GREAT RATES – SEE PAGE 30

Class 55 Deltic is on a plate

A CLASS 55 Deltic worksplate was among a collection that sold as one lot at a Stacey's of Rayleigh, Essex, auction on April 23. It was from D9001/55001 *St Paddy*, which was built by English Electric at Vulcan Foundry in February 1961 and in January 1980 became one of the first members of the class to be withdrawn.

The Co-Co diesel was named after the winner of the 1960 Derby and St Leger, and so continued the tradition started by the LNER of naming many of its main line locomotives after leading racehorses. Indeed, St Paddy's family tree reveals that his grandsire was Hyperion and damsire Bois Roussel. Both were also Derby winners and had their name carried by LNER Pacifics, the former by A3 No. 60037 and the latter by Peppercorn A1 No.60117.

Other diesel classes in the collection, which sold for £4800 (excluding buyer's premium of 25% inc VAT) were worksplates from Classes 08, 31, 37 and 47.

Lifetime collection under the hammer at TAL sale



RAILWAY publicity material dating from the 1880s pre-Grouping era through to the Big Four that represents an enthusiast's lifetime collection will be a highlight of a Transport Auctions of London sale on June 29.

Included are many hundreds of items ranging from holiday guides and foreign travel pamphlets to timetables and excursions.

Also from the days before Grouping comes a 1909 Great Northern Railway Underground-style pocket map of London that omits the Piccadilly Line north of King's Cross, as this route competed with the GNR's own tube line, the Northern City.



A number of London Underground cab destination plates includes a Denham/Liverpool Street example.

Denham was to have been the Central Line's new western terminus under prewar plans, but the extension to there was abandoned following the introduction of the Green Belt Act in 1938.

Among the Underground platform enamels is a Holborn frieze panel for the Piccadilly Line shuttle to Aldwych, which ceased in 1994, featuring a lighter shade of blue that was used on only this platform, and which was later adopted for the Victoria Line.

Also from the Underground, but with a hint of the main line, is a Transfer Porter armband brass plate carrying the No. 33.

The auction is live online and starts at 10am.

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OUR MOST SOUTHERLY LINE HEADS SOUTH – AGAIN!

Robin Jones visits the Helston Railway and although still a comparatively short line, it has the foundations of evolving into a major attraction for West Cornwall.

Recent decades have seen Cornwall take off big-time as a highly desirable location for second homes. One of the next such moves to the delectable Duchy will be from the opposite far side of southern England – 331 miles away from Wye, in Kent, in the form of the village's signalbox.

The 1893-built South Eastern Railway Saxby & Farmer Type 12 'box has been earmarked to play a pivotal role in the operation of the Helston Railway's planned southern extension to the edge of the market town that is internationally famous for its May 8 Flora Day, marking the coming of spring.

The heritage line currently runs for 1¼ miles from Prospidnick Halt, where its free car park is situated, to the superbly recreated Truthall Halt and its aim in the near future is to build a new station at Prospidnick – complete with Wye's signalbox. At the other end of the current operation, the railway plans to extend a mile from Truthall Halt to the industrial estate of Water-Ma-Trout on the northern edge of Helston, on a site accessible from the main B3257 Helston to Redruth road, on a main bus route and easy to find – and where a second-hand signalbox will be needed in due course!

The new station is planned to be a short hop from the main A394, the primary coastal route between Falmouth, Helston and Penzance, thereby opening up a potentially massive tourist catchment area for the railway and giving a significant boost to the local economy. However, the railway has not yet held detailed discussions with the current landowner on its exact needs and site layout; it has only had outline talks.

As reported in issue 315, the railway has launched a £350,000 Making Tracks appeal to cover the purchase of rails, ballast and infrastructure to further extend the line over the Cober Valley or Lowertown viaduct to the proposed new Helston station, to where the 'box will be moved.

Following two years of negotiations, Network Rail has given the Wye 'box to the heritage line free of charge, although it will cost £50,000 to dismantle it, to be moved brick by brick to Helston for reassembly. The Railway Heritage Trust has given the lion's share of that sum in the form of a £35,000 grant, with the heritage line set to launch a mini-appeal to find the remaining balance when the time comes.

During the partial resignalling of the SER's Ashford to Hastings line, in 1893, signalbox design was standardised on an attractive gabled-roof structure, comprising a brick base and timber upper half. The cabin at Wye was built at the northern end of the Up platform, providing the signalman with a clear view over the layout's sidings. Semaphore signals were a feature of Wye station until the end of 2003, when on December 15 that year, colour aspect lights were commissioned in the locality, controlled from the Canterbury Wye Area Control Centre. Accordingly, the Saxby & Farmer cabin at Wye was switched out of use. The 'box and retains its frame of 1888 Duplex pattern.

Its projected move to Cornwall somewhat mirrors that of the St Erth station footbridge,

On-loan Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2000 arrives at the beautifully restored Truthall Halt, which is complete with replica GWR pagoda. The railway also has Peckett R4 0-4-0ST No. 2100 of 19498 *William Murdoch*, obtained from Portsmouth Museums, which is under overhaul on the line and is considered ideal for brake van rides, driver experiences and short demonstration goods trains. HR



Helston in sight: On April 6, Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2000 became the first locomotive in 63 years to pass beneath the bridge at the southern end of Truthall Halt. HR



GWR prairie No. 4540 passes beneath Trannack bridge on the next section beyond Truthall Halt, which the heritage line intends to restore. ERIC CURNOW COLLECTION/HR

which is set for an imminent move in the opposite direction to the East Somerset Railway (see News, page 36).

The Wye 'box will not be the first substantial piece of railway heritage to move to the Helston Railway. Three years ago, the heritage line took delivery of the components of the 1882-built GWR footbridge from St Austell station a more modest 30 miles away. It was made redundant by Network Rail through being replaced by a fully-accessible footbridge equipped with passenger lifts, which was provided as part of the Access For All scheme. The components of the Victorian footbridge, which displays the iconic insignia of the GWR and is therefore part of Cornish railway heritage, is currently in storage at the heritage line's Prospidnick base and will be restored and erected at the new Helston terminus to serve its original purpose; again, when the time is right.

Sound progress

Helston lost its passenger services over the 8½-mile GWR branch from Gwinear Road station on the Plymouth to Penzance main line on November 5, 1962, and freight services were withdrawn on October 5, 1964.

The idea of reviving the original sharply-curved and steeply-graded branch, which passes through unspoiled countryside with ruling gradients on 1-in-60 and 1-in-54, was first mooted in 1994 when Helston-based and BR officials surveyed the line with the idea of carrying out a feasibility study. Eventually, the project was dropped, having been deemed not worth the effort because of the amount of work needed and the possible revenue that could be generated.

In 2002, the Helston Railway Preservation Society was formed, its ultimate goal being the restoration four miles of the branch as a tourist destination.

On April 28, 2005, 40 years after the line was dismantled, work began clearing the overgrown vegetation. The Victorian attraction of Trevarno Gardens, through which a stretch of the trackbed passes, became the society's base, and a half-mile section of track was laid by 2010. Ironically, Trevarno was the home of William Bickford Smith, the first chairman of the original Helston Railway.

On July 25/26, 2010, the embryonic heritage line welcomed steam for the first time in the form of diminutive Port of Par Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 2572 of 1934 *Judy,* from the Bodmin & Wenford Railway. This marked the completion of the latest station platform on the line, at Trevarno, and the newest since Truthall Platform in 1905. However, the line was unable to carry passengers, as the new Helston Railway Company had not yet been authorised to operate passenger trains.

At the National Railway Heritage Awards ceremony in London on December 1, 2010, the railway was announced as the surprise winner of the Ian Allan Publishing Heritage Railway of the Year Award.

The line was reopened for passengers in December 2011 for the Trevarno Gardens Winter Wonderland, and the society gained charitable status four months later.

In January 2018, calls were made to reinstate the original branch in its entirely as part of the National Rail network and in March 2020 an unsuccessful bid was made to the Restoring Your Railway fund for a feasibility study into reinstating the line.

Services now operate from a new temporary platform, Prospidnick Halt, 540 yards up the line from the platform at Trevarno (now a request stop with a sidings and an engine shed), en route to Truthall Halt, which is complete with a replica GWR pagoda – and is the only original station on the line to be restored. It is also the most southerly station in England.

One of the latest developments now taking place at Prospidnick is the construction





Above: Trainee fireman Sarah Norris features in the episode of Michael Portillo's Great Coastal Railway Journeys, pictured here aboard Peckett No. 2000. HR

Left: The redundant South Eastern Railway signalbox at Wye, in Kent, which is to be moved to the Helston Railway. MARATHON/CREATIVE COMMONS



The footbridge at St Austell station before it was dismantled and moved to the Helston Railway three years ago. NETWORK RAIL



Owned by the Menear family of nearby Praze An Beeble, Burrell steam roller No. 4040 was used to roll the new access road leading to Prospidnick Halt on May 19. MSL PHOTOGRAPHY/HR



One of the two 16hp Milnes-Daimler buses, with which the GWR inaugurated its ground-breaking road services to the Lizard in 1903, outside Helston station. CHARLES E LEE/THE RAILWAY MAGAZINE

of a vehicular access road which will facilitate the delivery of long loads such as locomotives and rolling stock, while making it much easier to reach the public car park 200 yards from the platform.

Once Helston is reached, the railway will look at pushing north from Prospidnick to Nancegollan, the biggest station on the original branch. It served the fishing port of Porthleven, Britain's most southerly port, which has in recent times also moved forward in leaps and bounds as a prime tourist destination

From small acorns...

A visit to the Helston branch is akin to taking a trip back in time to the earlier days of the heritage sector.

As was the case with many of today's far bigger heritage railways back in the 1960, 1970s and early 1980s, the line is being built step-by-step by volunteers as funds raised by proceeds from passenger rides, donations and membership subscriptions, revenue from the railway shop and a buffet, and sales of shares in the company allow.

While it is one of the shorter standard gauge outfits, the distinct impression is that its base is rock-solid and has a foundation for expansion as and when resources – backed by the tireless efforts of volunteers – become available.

Arrangements to acquire the parcels of land which comprise the vacant trackbed to Helston have been made, and purchases will proceed when the necessary funds are raised.

I remember my first sight of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in 1983, when Toddington station and a length of track heading south were being restored by the early members. Just look at what that line had achieved today, as highlighted in Headline News in this this issue. Once the Helston Railway has gained a presence next to the town, who is to say what future goals could not be achieved?

The railway received nationwide publicity on April 8 when it featured in episode four of the third series of Michael Portillo's Great Coastal Railway Journeys (available to view on BBC iPlayer).

The former Conservative politician turned broadcaster took a cab ride the line's current operational steam locomotive, on-loan Peckett B3 0-6-0ST No. 2000 of 1942, which was built for the Sproughton sugar beet factory at Ipswich and preserved in 1977, and has since been based at the Nene Valley Railway, the now-closed North Woolwich Old Station Museum and Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

Mr Portillo alighted at Truthall Halt and then proceeded to investigate the overgrown route to Helston, and walked over the Cober Valley viaduct, the biggest structure on the original branch.

Built in the 1880s, the six-arch viaduct is 373 feet long, and has been abandoned since the line closed. The revivalists plan to buy it and relay track over it on the approach to Helston.

Nearby Lowertown-by-Helston was once an industrial village, with mills and mines, all of which have long since closed.

Well off the beaten track today, it requires little imagination to see that the viaduct has all the ingredients of a major focal point for lineside photographers once the trains return.

Catch the bus?

The original branch was designed to serve the agricultural district of south-west Cornwall – farming produce accounted for about two-thirds of the traffic – but it found itself making history at the heart of a transport revolution.

There had been calls to extend the branch all the way to Lizard Town at Britain's southernmost extremity; indeed, Helston had been designed as a through station in that event. But GWR officials decided that the £85,000 cost could not be justified and came up with the then radical idea of using road buses on the route.

A pair of buses used temporarily by the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway were acquired and the service was launched on August 17, 1903, proving so popular and profitable that other routes were soon established – first locally to Mullion, Ruan Minor and Porthleven, and then further afield at Penzance. These were the first successful bus services operated by a British railway company; within a year, the GWR was running 46 motor buses.

When the Great Western Railway (Road Transport) Act was passed in 1928, the Swindon company boasted the biggest railway bus fleet. This act paved the way for the services to be transferred to bus companies, although the railway was to be a shareholder in these operations. So, on January 1, 1929, the GWR routes in Devon and Cornwall transferred to the new Western National Omnibus Company, owned half by the railway and half by the National Omnibus and Transport Company. That year the GWR acquired 30% of the shares in the Devon General Omnibus and Touring Company.





Above: The overgrown trackbed on top of the Cober Valley viaduct. HR

Left: The Cober Valley, or Lowertown, viaduct on the last mile of the line into Helston.
PHILIP MALE/CREATIVE COMMONS



Barclay 0-4-0DM shunter No. 446 of 1959 *Kingswood* is one of the operational fleet. ROBIN JONES

At Helston and on The Lizard peninsula, buses showed they could eradicate the need to build a railway; by the 1950s and 1960s, and with their landmark appearance in British transport history, they were helping to phase out rural railways. Enter Dr Beeching...

Road roots

Just as Cornish mining engineer Richard Trevithick developed the blueprint for the self-propelled vehicle, firstly in the form of steam road car and then, in 1802, a railway locomotive, the concept proceeding to shrink the globe, modern public road transport history also has roots sown in this part of the world.

On August 17, 2013, 110 years to the day that the first Great Western Railway bus service was launched from Helston to The Lizard, the Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust celebrated the inaugural service of the GWR bus with a cavalcade of historical buses along the original route.

The cavalcade included its 1927 GWR Guy bus, brought from Maidenhead especially. This bus originally operated from Penzance depot and later became a holiday home at Perranporth, surviving mechanically intact until it was rescued by Colin Billington in 1997 and subsequently completely restored to its original condition.

When the Helston Railway opens its new easily-accessible station at the town, there is every guarantee that for the rapidly-growing numbers of families who take their holidays in West Cornwall, a steam train ride will become a must on the days that wind and rain drives them off the beaches.

So – what if a double attraction could be developed, with a bus service? Maybe vintage, or once again open-top, taking rail passengers from Helston to The Lizard once more? At the recent joint gala held by the Great Central Railway and the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) to mark the 125th anniversary of the London Extension (featured in *Heritage Railway* issue 318), the connecting Routemaster bus link proved enormously popular.

At Helston, a heritage railway/bus joint ticket appears to have all the ingredients of a major winner for the Duchy and is already being considered by the line's officials as a potential project for the future.

The railway has just won two further awards, one at SME News's UK Transport Awards for Best Heritage Railway Restoration Society and the other at the Corporate Livewire Innovation and Excellence Awards for Historical Railway of the Year. HR



These two classic enamel signs from Gwinear Road station indicating the junction for the Helston branch have been said to have been possibly the biggest on the GWR, and are displayed at Prospidnick Halt on the Helston Railway.
ROBIN JONES



Help link up to Helston

➜ To donate to the Making Tracks appeal, visit www.helstonrailway.co.uk or send a cheque to: Helston Railway Preservation Society, Trevarno Farm, Prospidnick, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0RY. Alternatively, make a bank transfer to the society via sort code 30-13-88 and account number 00722128.

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

➜ Visit www.helstonrailway.co.uk for full details of opening times and special events, including the steam-hauled Back To The 40s event on June 15/16.



All that remains of the original Helston branch terminus in Station Road is a length of platform and the goods shed, which has been converted for residential purposes and would not be accessible to an extension of the heritage line.
GEOF SHEPPARD/ CREATIVE COMMONS



Right: Class 127 DMU driving coach No. 51615 in use as hauled stock. It arrived from the Great Central Railway in January 2020. Once its second car, No. 51622, arrives from storage, it will run as a proper DMU again and probably be repainted into a more appropriate colour.
ROBIN JONES



This van body at Prospidnick Halt acts as the line's museum, explaining the history of the branch and reinforcing awareness of its unique heritage.
ROBIN JONES

BO'NESS: THE HUB OF SCOTTISH HERITAGE!

A railway that has changed beyond recognition over the last 20 years has to be the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway. What was once a derelict site at Bo'ness alongside the station is now a haven for anything connected to Scotland's railway heritage, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.

The headquarters of the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway is also home to the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, a charity and operator of both the heritage line and the Museum of Scottish Railways, employing about 25 fully-paid staff and around 200 working volunteers.

Large, modern buildings and workshops have been constructed at Bo'ness to protect and restore as much of the collection as possible, while the site surrounding the station has expanded beyond recognition with the construction of carriage sheds, a locomotive workshop and the Scottish Railway Museum.

The extensive collection inside the museum includes examples from each of the pre and post-Grouping Scottish railway companies, alongside items from the country's private builders. Scotland became famous for its heavy engineering and the construction of steam locomotives, so it is appropriate that its collection reflects this.

The most famous builder has to be the Glasgow-based North British Locomotive Company. In 1863, Dübs & Co was founded, and when it amalgamated with Neilson Reed and Sharp Stewart & Company, North British was formed in 1903.

Other smaller companies included Andrew Barclay Sons & Co of Kilmarnock, which tended to specialise in industrial types.

Relocation and rebuilding of historic buildings

An excellent job has been done in removing and rebuilding railway buildings from various locations around Scotland which would have been demolished. Many of them are listed.

Situated alongside Bo'ness Dock, Bo'ness station is itself an amalgamation of various Scottish Railway companies, having been built from recovered buildings that blend well

BR black-liveried Caledonian Railway 419 class 0-4-4T 55189 crosses the Avon Viaduct on the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway during the May 2 charter.

No. 55189 drifts gently into Birkhill station on May 3.



Springtime in the woods with wild garlic in flower as 'Caley Tank' No. 55189 nears Birkhill.



Caledonian Railway 0-4-4T No. 55189 climbs past Todd's Mill, approaching Avon Viaduct, on May 2.





Above: The tender and bogie wheels of D49 *Morayshire* nearing completion inside Bo'ness works.

Left: Neilson & Co 0-4-0ST No. 2203 of 1876 No. 13 *Kelton Fell*, built at Hyde Park Works in Springburn, Glasgow.



Barclay 3ft gauge 0-4-0T No. 840 of 1899 Morrison & Mason contractor's locomotive No.5 inside the museum.

together – to the extent that members of the public would never suspect that they were not there originally.

The best example has to be the former Haymarket trainshed. Built by the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Company and opened in 1842, it was moved and re-erected in 1984 and now looks perfectly at home and forms an excellent overall roof to the station.

The booking office came from Wormit station at the southern end of the Tay Bridge. Built in 1887, it was moved here in the early 1980s – look out for the North British Railway cast iron drinking tap on the side wall.

The Caledonian Railway signalbox dates from 1899 and was relocated from Garnqueen South. It now controls the nearby semaphore signal gantry, which mostly came from Coupar Angus. The late 19th century cast iron Highland Railway footbridge comes from Murthly station, north of Perth, on the Highland Railway main line.

Historically, there was never a station at Birkhill – but you would not realise this because it blends beautifully in its surroundings now. The station building came from Monifieth, near Dundee, and is its third reincarnation. After being first dismantled, it was re-erected for the Glasgow Garden Festival in 1988. Once again, it was dismantled then moved to Birkhill.

A narrow-gauge wagon on display on the platform belonged to the Birkhill clay mine, which regrettably closed in 2013 due to council cutbacks.

Future plans include the opening of the second platform; a footbridge is in place but still needs more work. A signalbox will be built and the signal posts are already in place. The frame for it is inside the museum and is currently being worked on. Once completed, it will allow trains to pass here.

New Bo'ness overhaul shed

At Bo'ness is a new building complete with an overhead crane capable of lifting a loco boiler off its frames. The shed cost about £1.6 million and was partially funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund Steaming Ahead Project.

One of the funding stipulations was that it had to have a public viewing gallery, and its aim is to 'aid collection care, pass on skills and knowledge to future generations, and improve the visitor experience.' It was opened in March 2022.

Inside the shed on May 3 and in the final stages of overhaul was BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80105, which was built in Brighton in 1955. The overhaul is expected to be completed very soon.

No. 80105 ran on the London, Tilbury & Southend line until it was electrified in 1962.



Inside the workshops at Bo'ness, BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80105 is in the final stages of restoration on May 3. The tenders of 8F No. WD554 8F and D49 No. 246 *Morayshire* can be seen.

After storage at Old Oak Common, it was then used on the Cambrian Coast Line and shedded at Machynlleth, Shrewsbury and Croes Newydd.

Finally withdrawn in 1965, it went to Dai Woodham's scrapyard in Barry, South Wales, where it languished until 1975.

This class saw extensive service in Scotland, so it is fitting that No. 80105 moved north of the border to the SRPS's original base at Falkirk, where it was dismantled. Severe corrosion of the frame stretcher that supports the firebox seriously delayed further work, and it was not until 1992, after moving to Bo'ness, that restoration commenced.

No. 80105 finally steamed in 1999 and operated on the Bo'ness branch but also visited the Caledonian Railway in Brechin, the Strathspey Railway at Aviemore and Polmadie Depot in Glasgow for the 150th anniversary of the depot in 2000. Its last boiler ticket expired in 2010. Incidentally, its original boiler is still in existence – on No. 80079 on the Severn Valley Railway.

Also inside the shed was Bagnall Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 2777 of 1945 No. WD 75254, which, stripped to its wheels and frames, is in the process of reassembly.

Its working life was spent in army service at various depots including the Longmoor Military Railway until 1963. It entered National Coal Board service at Comrie Colliery, Fife, becoming NCB Alloa Area No. 7. At Andrew Barclay's Cowdenbeath workshops, it was fitted with a new boiler and a Giesl ejector. In 1985, it was acquired by the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, underwent a major overhaul, was fitted with a Lempor type exhaust, and returned to its original MoD livery.

Two main line Mk.1s are presently inside and being worked on. Also, the tenders of former Turkish Railways Stanier 8F 2-8-0 No. 45170 and LNER D49 4-4-0 No. 246 *Morayshire* are in the later stages of restoration in preparation for their return to steam. *Morayshire*'s tender and its bogie wheels look to be complete.

Inside the-brick built engine shed next to the station was No. WD 554, an 8F 2-8-0 repatriated from Turkey as No. 45170. Built by North British as works number 24745 in 1942, it never carried an LMS number. With works on the tender nearing completion, the locomotive is awaiting its turn inside the new overhaul shed. Many parts have been acquired, but more money is needed to return it to steam. Apparently, it will re-emerge in its original identity as No. WD 554.

Museum of Scottish Railways

The museum was opened in 1995 and extended in 2002, its superb collection covering all aspects of the Big Country's railways.

Inside are many steam locomotives of various sizes, predominantly from Scottish builders. Exhibits include Great North of Scotland Railway F class 4-4-0 No. 49 *Gordon Highlander,* which was built by North British in 1920 and is on loan from the Glasgow Transport Museum,



Left: Repatriated ex-Turkish Railways Stanier 8F No. 45170 of 1942 inside one of the Bo'ness sheds.



Right: No. 55189 sits underneath the Haymarket train shed at Bo'ness.

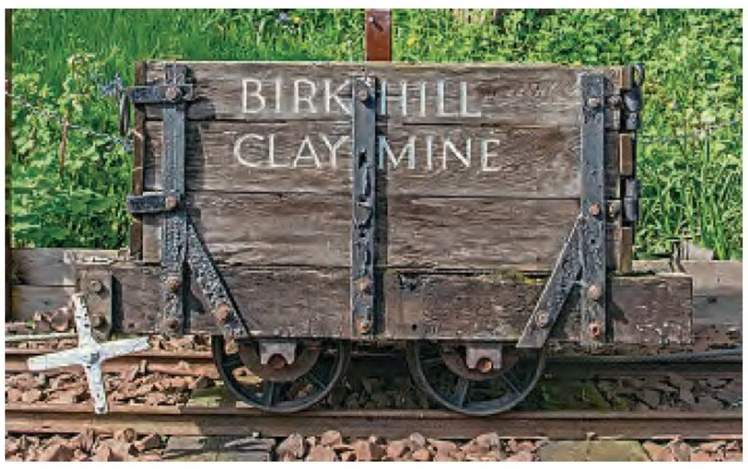




Above: No. 55189 stands at Bo'ness station on May 3.

Left: Recently-arrived Neilson & Co 0-4-0WT No. 1561 of 1870 and NBR J36 0-6-0 673 *Maude* on display in the Museum of Scottish Railways.

Below: Narrow-gauge wagon from the Birkhill clay mine on show at Birkhill station.



and also North British Railway J36 0-6-0 No. 673 *Maude,* which was built by Neilson & Co, Hyde Park Works, Glasgow, in 1891.

One recent acquisition is No. 1, an 0-4-0WT built by Neilson & Co as works number 1561 of 1870, which spent its working life at Beckton Gas Works in London. It arrived in January and was previously part of the National Trust's collection from Penrhyn Castle Industrial Museum in North Wales.

I found photography inside the museum difficult, but it is designed for the general public, whose numbers are greater than those of enthusiasts.

Around the site is a circular walkway which starts at the station, goes over the footbridge overlooking the station, past the new overhaul shed, museum and diesel sheds, and around the extensive carriage sheds.

More than 60 carriages are on site, the most important ones either restored or kept under cover for safekeeping. The main line fleet has recently had retention tanks fitted.

The biggest attraction for enthusiasts presently has to be Caledonian Railway 0-4-4T No. 55189 in its recent BR black livery.

Built by the Caledonian Railway in 1907 at St Rollox Works, Glasgow, it is normally in Caledonian blue livery as No. 419, but in its new guise has been doing the rounds of heritage lines and has become extremely popular especially with charters.

On May 2/3, David Williams organised a charter where it pulled a one-coach and two-coach train with a van tacked on the rear, evoking memories of a Scottish branch line train. The charter was run on the day by Andrew Fowler.

Despite the forecast, we were blessed with large amounts of sunshine, but the one downside was an easterly wind that made some locations difficult.

Train ride

Following the shoreline of this once-busy harbour, the railway skirts the edge of the town before passing through Kinneil Halt and the climb to Birkhill, and then over the Avon Viaduct to Manuel.

There is a run-round loop at Manuel, plus the main line connection. Passengers can get off to see the locomotive running round and watch main line trains on the network passing at speed,

A three-trains-a-day steam service starts from Bo'ness at 10.30am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm. On peak Saturdays, there is a 1.30pm additional diesel service.

There are also Thomas the Tank Engine weekends. For the timetable, go to www.bkrailway.co.uk/fares

Take time when visiting to soak up what this railway has to offer. It is so much more than a train ride. HR

Bachmann unveils a stunning summer line-up

SEVERAL preserved identities were to be found amid the reveals made by Bachmann on May 1 as the manufacturer confirmed its latest catalogue additions for the summer months. Included were full livery specifications for its recently announced OO gauge Palvan models (as reported last issue), with six different running numbers on offer, comprising four in BR bauxite livery and the final two in Johnnie Walker Whisky's corporate green colour. The RRP for each is set at £34.95.

1. Diesel

The project to develop a new model of the BR Class 25 locomotives for OO scale is nearly at its conclusion, allowing for confirmation of the first 11 models from this new tooling suite to be revealed, covering the 25/1, 25/2 and 25/3 call variations. A motorised roof fan and tinted window glazing will be included as features on the sound-fitted deluxe models. RRP starts at £199.95 for DCC-ready models, rising to £309.95 for the deluxe variants.

Liveries comprise variations of blue such as those with small yellow panel, along with both full BR and two-tone green with the yellow end variations on each. Included in the line-up is D7672 (25322) *Tamworth Castle*, which was one of the final six examples built, as well as the final member of the class to have seen main line service under British Railways. It now resides on the Churnet Valley Railway, where it currently awaits overhaul and restoration.

Elsewhere in the range, the iconic Class 03 shunters return with three versions covering BR blue and green liveries, along with British Industrial Sand white. Prices start at £149.95 for DCC-ready versions.

2. Steam

The LMS Fowler 'Jinty' 0-6-0Ts also make a comeback to OO scale, with two preserved identities joining the line-up. Great Central Railway-based No. 47406 will be available in BR black with early crest, while the East Lancashire Railway's resident No. 47298 will be available with BR's late crest.

The RRP for each starts at £134.95 for DCC-ready models.



1

Previously a DJ Models tooling produced exclusively for Kernow Model Centre, the LSWR 0-4-4T O2s return to the Bachmann EFE line-up with five different running numbers. The sole-surviving example of the class, No. W24 *Calbourne*, has previously been produced as an exclusive for the Isle of Wight Steam Railway and thus is not included; however, for the first time one of these models will be available in pre-Grouping LSWR livery, no doubt delighting modellers who seek out such schemes. The RRP for these is £174.95 for DCC-ready models, with no DCC-fitted examples on offer.

3. Mk.1 carriages

Following an announcement made at Model World LIVE on April 27, Bachmann also revealed samples of its three new tooling additions to the Mk.1 carriage range depicting the brake second open, first open and restaurant buffet variations – three types that have yet to be produced by the manufacturer in the scale.

Boasting flush glazing and a wealth of separately fitted details such as handrails and pipework, these new models will fit right in amid the other existing Mk. 1 carriages on offer, with bogie variations to suit.

Each variation is available in at least three different liveries, with BR maroon, crimson and cream, chocolate and cream, and BR (SR) green represented by at least one of these new tools. RRP is set at £67.95.

4. Narrow gauge

Hot on the heels of its revelation that it would be producing the Alice class Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0STs lfor its new NG7 (O-16.5) range, the line-up of four different identities was confirmed to comprise solely of preserved versions, with Bala Lake's *Alice* in Dinorwic quarry red, Ffestiniog's *Britomart* in Pen-yr-Orsedd quarry blue, Vale of Rheidol's *Margaret* in Penrhyn quarry black, and the National Slate Museum's *Una* in its recently-worn lined green. RRP starts at £199.95 for DCC-ready open cab models.

Three different accompanying wagons based on those used at Dinorwic Quarry will be released in grey and red colours, with flat wagons with an RRP of £21.95 and slate and coal wagons of £25.95.

In terms of rolling stock, the OO9 range takes a backseat this quarter, aside from the addition of a RNAD brake van presented in Stafold Barn Railway's brown livery, which has an RRP of £31.95. However, the range of buildings is expanded further with a slate-built workers cottage, platforms, waiting rooms and other buildings.



2



3





4

Send your model news to staff writer **Owen Hayward** on **OHayward@mortons.co.uk@mortons.co.uk**



Dapol revives auto tanks…

THE iconic GWR 0-4-2 auto tanks are set to return to OO scale following Dapol's announcement that it will be producing the 4800 and 5800 classes in an all-new high spec tooling – with the 517 class forerunners also joining the catalogue for the first time.

The 517 class was introduced by George Armstrong between 1868 and 1885, with examples converted for autotrain working from 1904.

Rebuilds by Charles Collett from 1924 saw them bear similarities to his 4800 class that were introduced from 1932. Dapol's models of this class will focus on the later examples that had a modified chassis with a longer wheelbase, and side tanks which replaced the original saddle tanks. Open and enclosed versions will also be offered.

Full cab detail, chimney variations, representation of internal motion and much more will ensure that this newest addition to the OO scene will be worth every penny. Five different versions will be released, with prices starting at £140 for DCC-ready examples.

Meanwhile, the 1400 and 4800 fill a gap left by the demise of DJ Models and Hattons, which previously produced the classes with new tooling in 2017.

With the class already in Dapol's N and O gauge catalogues, it made sense that the manufacturer added it to its OO scale range too.

Ten examples, covering early GWR through to later BR, will be released, with Titfield Thunderbolt star No. 1401 presented in BR black with GWR lettering.

As with the 517 class, prices start at £140.

Delivery for the 517, 1400 and 4800 class models is anticipated to be towards the end of 2025.

A



B



…and delivers trio of exclusives

A. To celebrate its diamond jubilee, Exe Model Railway Club has commissioned a limited-edition wagon from Dapol that presents a banana van in plain yellow with the club's logo printed on both sides, accompanied by appropriate diamond jubilee details.

Priced at £13 (plus P&P), the model is available to order now by emailing train@exemrs.co.uk or it can be purchased at the club's June 22/23 model railway exhibition at The Matford Centre, Marsh Barton, Exeter EX2 8FD on June 22/23. The show currently has more than 30 layouts booked, along with plenty of traders. Adult entry is £9; children go free. See www.exemrs.co.uk/exhibition/ for full details.

B. The 2874 Trust, which is restoring one of Churchward's heavy freight 2-8-0s at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, has produced a seven-plank open wagon numbered 74 with 'Summers' branding, based on the Messrs Summers of Hawarden Bridge steel works company that later became BSC Shotton. A limited run of 103 certificated models has been produced and are available in clean and lightly weathered variants. Priced £19.50, these can be acquired from the trust's sales stand at events or online by visiting www.2874trust.org

C. Finally, the South Devon Railway has an GWR conflat and container with the railway's GWR-styled logo printed on the container body and the stations at Totnes and Buckfastleigh identified for its allocation. Priced £21.50, it can be bought in person at the railway's shop or online at www.southdevonrailway.co.uk/gifts-and-models/

C



Devonshire delights: the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

With narrow gauge modelling getting a boost from manufacturers starting to produce more ready-to-run stock, **Daniel Long** turns to this Devonshire line and Lionheart Trains and Dapol's recent releases, which provide almost everything needed to get you started.

THERE is, perhaps, nothing so distinctive in railway circles as a narrow gauge railway. Often built on the cheap, almost always constructed for a unique purpose, these little lines have an idiosyncrasy all their own. No two narrow gauge railways are alike, and often their engines are singular too!

To my mind, the modelling of these does not simply depend on choosing a likely prototype, but on intrinsically understanding the purpose and intention of what they were to be used for. Just as the Quarry Hunslets are synonymous with the slate industry of North Wales, so too are Manning Wardles with the Lynton & Barnstaple.

One of the challenges with a prototype such as the Lynton & Barnstaple Manning Wardle 2-6-2Ts is that the fate of the locomotives is intrinsically intertwined with the railway at large. To tell the story of the engines, you have to tell the story of the line as a whole.

Origin story

Proposals for a line between Lynton and Barnstaple had been made many times before, with varying degrees of progress, but one of the major challenges was the cost of building even a single line of standard gauge track. The success of narrow gauge endeavours, such as the Ffestiniog, at providing a consistent service while saving costs proved inspirational to a group of businessmen, though the reality would be entirely the opposite.

The L&BR faced unique challenges. The contractors found hard rock instead of soft soil as they excavated the trackbed, and the company found landowners charging extortionate prices for land. In the end, the contractors went bankrupt, and the railway company fell into financial troubles it would never entirely escape from.

Not everyone was happy with the final route. The people of Barnstaple bemoaned the railway building across streets into the centre of town, while the people of Lynton found that while their station was discreetly positioned, it was also inaccessibly placed 250 feet above the town. Such height caused problems in dry summers for the railway as the water supply would fail, meaning that not only could engines not take on water, but people could not use the toilets!

The engines

The railway opened on May 11, 1898, with *Yeo* hauling the first train in front of excited crowds of local residents. Three engines had been bought to run the line, all named after rivers in the area. *Yeo*, *Exe* and *Taw* were built in Leeds by Manning Wardle. These 2-6-2 side tanks were to be the backbone of the railway's operation, lasting from inception right through to closure with the minimum of alteration. Curiously, the engines used Joy valve gear, in no small part because the driving wheels were small and the motion came remarkably close to track level.

These big engines had a rigid wheelbase of some 6ft 6in, which meant that curves could get a little tight. When a fourth engine, *Lyn*, was ordered from Baldwin in America, it became clear that though a smaller 2-4-2, the 5ft wheelbase made a significant difference to how it ran on some of the sharper curves. *Lyn* was deceptively powerful, managing five-coach trains – one more than the four to which the Manning Wardles were limited. Both engines and coaches were known to roll, even though efforts were made to keep the track in perfect condition to counter this.

Sixteen bogie coaches were built by the Bristol Wagon and Carriage Works, and one composite third by Shapland & Petter. Unlike many narrow gauge concerns, the L&B was a common carrier, not built to serve a specific industry like slate or coal; the needs of the local people was always a consideration. Originally outshopped in lake and white, they were a stunning combination visually with the bold brass work of the engines.

Good stock was also ordered, with 14 four-wheel wagons and four bogie wagons. Most stock was vacuum-fitted, so mixed trains were common. Although allowing the most operational flexibility, this choice also meant that journey times were tremendously slow, with higher speeds out of the question and long station pauses common.



Manning Wardles *Yeo* and *Exe* are ready to depart from Barnstaple Town in this undated image. This pair of 2-6-2Ts are the ones which the 762 Club will be replicating, having completed the new Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn*. L&BR ARCHIVES

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It could also lead to confusion for crews. The story of the driver who, having shunted his train at Chelfham, left it behind without knowing sounds like something from the tales of Thomas The Tank Engine. One can only imagine the reaction from passengers and railwaymen alike as the engine and its shamefaced driver returned to collect them again.

Regular running

The little Manning Wardles and their Baldwin compatriot made a name for themselves in the valley, despite the challenges facing them. On a regular journey, the engines were expected to climb a 1-in-50 grade for some eight miles without respite. It's little wonder that double-heading was frequent and train lengths were not over-long. Although only 19 miles – a pittance compared to most standard gauge concerns – the L&B struggled to maintain an allowance of 100 minutes to traverse the route thanks to the challenging climbs and the need to constantly stop for shunting.

That is not to say these impressive little locomotives could not deliver the goods when expected. When the pleasure fair visited Barnstaple, arounnd 600 residents of Lynton are recorded travelling on a train made up of nine coaches, double-headed by two engines. Market days at Barnstaple were not quite so heavy, but just as impressive, with six coach trains roaring up the valley.

Although the railway was never a success, it was not a total failure either. When the Southern Railway took over in 1923, it saw a need for renovation and repair to its wayward son. Nothing was overlooked, with a new Manning Wardle – *Lew* – purchased in 1925. Although similar to the previous Manning Wardles, it boasted a redesigned cab that was more accommodating to crew comfort.

The rest of the railway benefited too, with coaches overhauled and upholstered, track re-ballasted and re-sleepered, and even fences replaced to avoid stray cattle lengthening the already over-long journey time.



***Yeo* awaits departure from Blackmoor on August 5, 1935. The modern L&BR bought the station building - now the Old Station Inn - in April last year.** CN SOUTHERDEN/L&BR ARCHIVES

Although both engines and coaches were repainted into more mainstream Maunsell shades, this little narrow gauge line remained as idiosyncratic as ever. Even in Southern hands, the original Manning Wardles never travelled to Eastleigh.

But idiosyncrasies are nothing to practical considerations, and the slow speed of the railway couldn't begin to match the speed of the motor car. The advent of these removed local support, and thus the bottom fell out of the entire operation. With a little under 40 years of operation, the Southern Railway put the line up for sale.

The final end

The closure of the railway was a celebratory affair, with *Yeo* and *Lew* double-heading the final train.

The return to Barnstaple was raucous: despite running mostly in darkness, and in the rain, cheers and whistles could be heard as people came out to say goodbye to the railway for one last time.

Lew, the latest arrival, was put to work dismantling the railway, collecting track and sleepers for disposal. The other four steam engines were purchased by the scrap man.

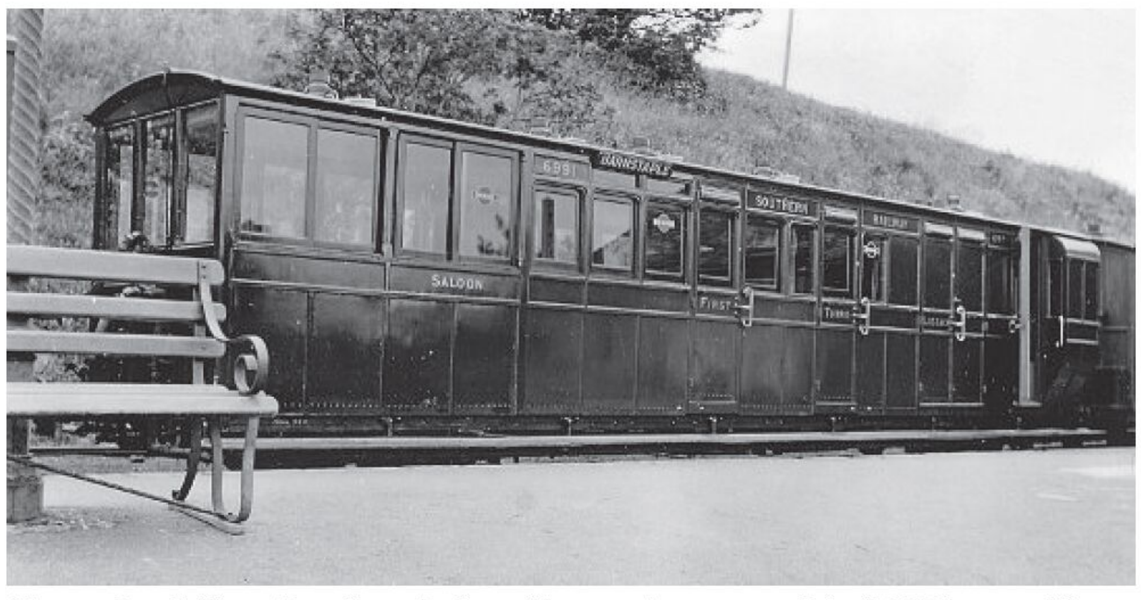
The coaches were scavenged for metal fittings before the bodies were burned. Despite this, parts of some 12 carriages have been found, with many reconstructed to have new lives on the newly rebuilt Lynton and Barnstaple. One example made its way to the Ffestiniog, where it was the template for a new fleet of vehicles, while another has travelled to the National Railway Museum where it can be seen unrestored.

The mystery of *Lew*

The only locomotive not scrapped on-site was *Lew*, and it is this lack of closure which makes it most intriguing. Having helped to dismantle the railway, *Lew* was returned to Manning Wardle and later sold for use in Brazil. Loaded at Swansea and sent to the port of Recife, you might think there is more to tell.

But it's not a story we can tell you yet. There's no actual evidence that *Lew* ever made it to Brazil, and many shipping records were destroyed during the Second World War. Its destination is not conclusively known, though there are reports of an engine being sent first to a sugar mill, then to a wood mill, in Argentina. Its fate is one which might never be uncovered.

Given how final the closure of the Lynton & Barnstaple was, with engines scrapped and coaches burned, it's little wonder that the idea of a



Above: Coach No. 1 (Southern Railway No. 6991) was one of the L&BR's magnificent observation saloon brake composites, seen at Lynton on July 2, 1935. Might this be a future choice for Lionheart Trains to model? CE BOX/L&BR ARCHIVES



Left: *Exe* awaits departure from Lynton in a shot from circa 1912. The locomotive's cab had not yet been modified, and the coaches were two years away from being repainted Southern Green. The station would also go on to be extended at a later date, too. L&BR ARCHIVES

quaint engine nestled in the heart of Brazil just waiting to be found is immeasurably appealing to anyone with a hint of romance in their soul.

Perchance it is not dead but sleepeth

When the line was closed, it was closed in as final a manner as possible. The rolling stock was disposed of, the track was recovered, and the land – bought piecemeal from numerous landowners – was reverted back to them. Although a railway had wound through the valley to Barnstaple, it was soon enough as though nothing had been there before.

But it was not forgotten

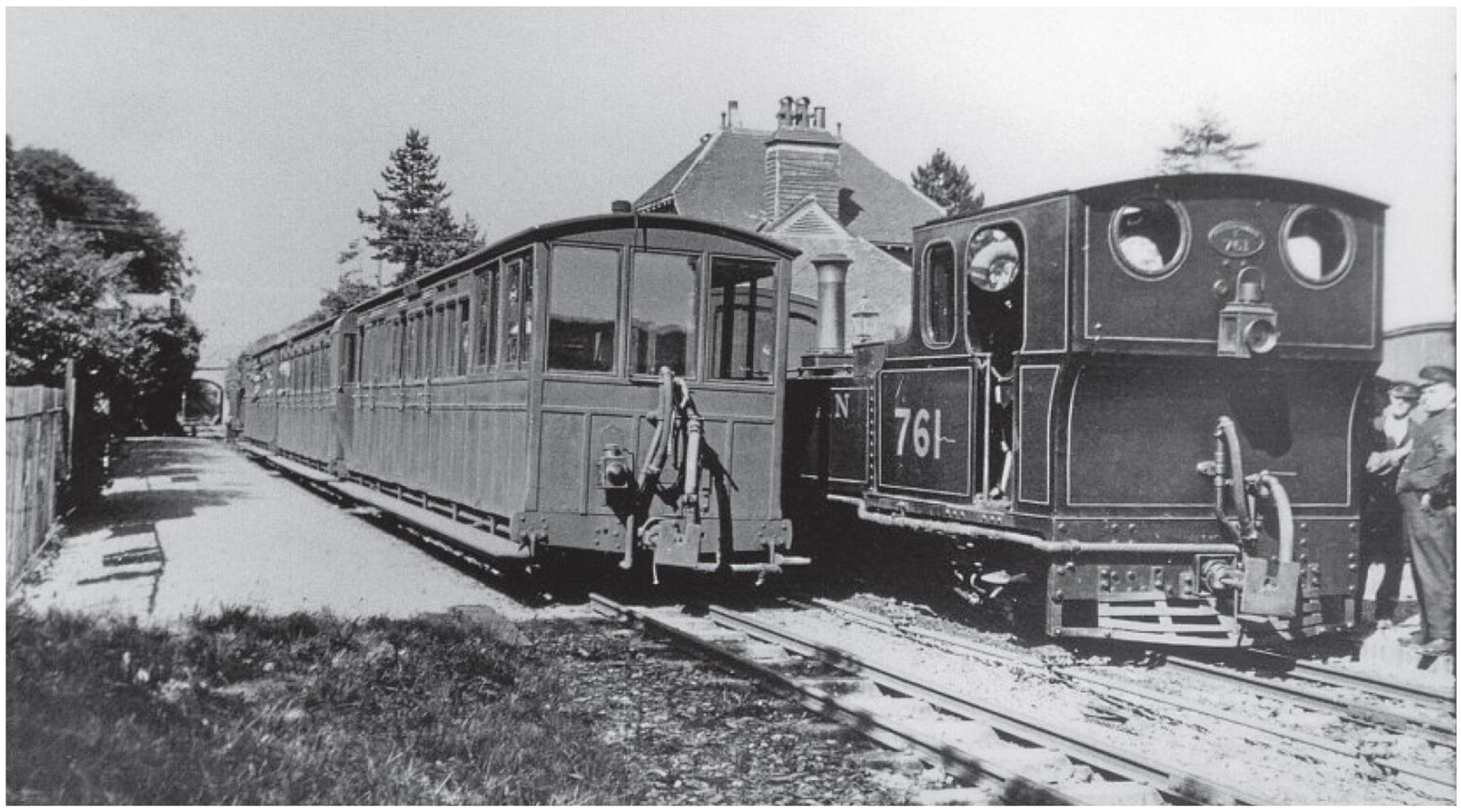
Preservation has achieved some truly remarkable things, and the ambition of the team at Woody Bay – the new railhead – is matched only by a determination to do things right. Over the years, members have bought back land, rebuilt stations and constructed coaches. There are plans in hand to build new Manning Wardles to replace those which used to run on the line, and a Baldwin can already be seen hauling trains.

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway has often been regarded as 'the last narrow gauge railway adventure', and although only offering a mile of track at present, humble origins at Woody Bay belie the enormous efforts made by hundreds of volunteers to reconstruct and a line around 20 miles long.

Work has been from the ground up, with land purchased, track brought, engines built, coaches constructed, and many of the iconic chalet-style buildings, such as at Woody Bay, lovingly restored from their foundations.

As ever, all that is needed to complete the set is a Manning Wardle. One has already been built at Boston Lodge in the form of *Lyd*, which was primarily based on *Lew*. Although a regular performer on the Ffestiniog, *Lyd* has made a number of trips to Woody Bay, along with their ex-Lynton and Barnstaple coach. More permanent representation of these iconic locomotives is underway, with various parts made for replicas of *Yeo* and *Exe*.

These new-builds will be the perfect showcase for what the Lynton and Barnstaple will look like in the future ahead.



On August 5, 1935, Manning Wardle *Taw* (No. 761) passes *Yeo* (No. 759) and its train at the head of a Down service at Blackmoor, with one of the first class observation saloons at the rear of the Up one. GN SOUTHERDEN/ L&BR ARCHVIES

Railway-in-a-box

The beauty of any model railway is not purely in the engines, but in the rolling stock and surroundings too. With such a distinctive line as the L&B, it's hard to imagine those low-slung Manning Wardles without those beautiful carriages, finished crisply to perfection. We are tremendously fortunate that manufacturers entering into the narrow gauge sphere seem to agree.

When Heljan first released models in OO9, its first port of call was the Lynton & Barnstaple, with Peco producing accompanying rolling stock, both goods and passenger. More recently, however, it is Dapol/ Lionheart Trains which have produced stunning models of these iconic locomotives in O-16.5 – or NG-7, as Bachmann has recently announced.

Previously, modellers have had to rely on kits if they wanted to do narrow gauge in this larger scale. This is the first British prototype released ready-to-run and sets an impressive standard that other manufacturers must live up to.

Manning Wardles

The focus of this release of models has been on the original locomotives, providing options which date from the opening of the railway right through to its closure. *Exe*, *Yeo* and *Taw* are all represented in different liveries, and visually the models capture the prototype effortlessly. To see the Joy valve gear in action is hypnotic, and the necessary detail differences, such as the cab and the motion covers, have been tooled exceptionally well. In a nifty move, the cab detail can be seen by lifting the roof, which is magnetically held in place.

The impressive specifications of the locomotives include diecast construction on boiler, tanks and chassis, as well as on the wheels with turned metal tyres. The chassis is also compensated, which means that electrical connectivity is exceptional.

The result is a model engine with tremendous weight and power. Combined with a five-pole skew-wound motor, this engine will tackle any work thrown its way.

For those who are inclined to explore DCC, there is a Next-18 decoder socket which allows for control not only over the working headlamp, but also the firebox flicker and a host of sounds sure to bring a little more life to these characterful locomotives.

Although it might seem dull, I'm particularly impressed with the couplings. These perfectly capture the Jones-Calthrop chopper prototype, while retaining a degree of operational flexibility through magnetisation. In a scale where there is not yet a standard for couplings, and numerous options used by modellers already, I think the decision to focus on a new, but accurate, solution is the right one.

As more models are released – and Bachmann is also hot on Lionheart's heels with its own Quarry Hunslets – I'm sure a more uniform approach will be taken in the long run.

My only hope is that they remain along prototypical lines as opposed to the somewhat more obtrusive tension-lock couplings usually seen in OO.

Such impressive specifications come with an impressive price. The model with DCC sound could set you back some £540. Building a railway, even one as humble as the Lynton & Barnstaple, could be an expensive proposition.



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Rolling stock

But it remains a tempting one, if only because the team at Lionheart Trains and Dapol have gone out of their way to create a range of products which tie together beautifully. Alongside the amazing locomotives are literal rakes of coaches to run alongside them.

Available, again, in a host of liveries, these carriages set a stunning standard for 7mm narrow gauge, including pre-installed lighting and a host of separately-added detail such as grab handles and lamp fittings.

Unfortunately, it seems the roofs on models fitted for DCC (so lights can be controlled) don't quite fit on tightly.

The couplings, again, are prototypical but include a little more flexibility for those tighter curves. However, the larger cut-out on the bufferbeam does not intrude on the appearance of the models at all.

Although not every coach that would have run on the railway, Lionheart's offering covers the majority and certainly provides enough variety for the three-coach trains often seen in the valley.

Goods stock has not been catered for, although Peco has produced kits for many years which resemble some of the four-wheel wagons for those wishing to expand their operational horizons.





Buildings

With Lionheart providing an authentic Lynton & Barnstaple train, it's delightful that Dapol has produced a host of buildings to go with them.

Under its Kitmaster Genesis brand, a selection of buildings from the Lynton and Barnstaple have been recreated as laser-cut card kits, using injection-moulded or 3D-printed accessory parts where appropriate.

The buildings chosen are based on those at Chelfham, with the station building, signal cabin and toilet block chosen for the task.

The use of multiple layers of card throughout the construction give a feeling of depth that is much appreciated. On the station building, the option of which porch to use is included, and little details like fire buckets and moveable doors are included on the toilet block and signal cabin respectively.

The decision to not choose one of the more idiosyncratic chalet-style station buildings gives modellers in other fields the chance to use these kits in different contexts. While based on Lynton & Barnstaple prototypes, the various kits would be fine additions to other narrow gauge or light railways.

There is something about the L&BR which appeals to many people. Despite being almost entirely destroyed, it remains a popular prototype and subject for modelling, as well as an attractive look into history.

The work of Lionheart Trains and Dapol have gone a long way to capturing this railway, producing the big-ticket items one would need to model this line.

They have made, to all intents and purposes, a one-stop-shop for RTR Lynton & Barnstaple items in 7mm. As first steps go, it was a bold choice. I can't wait to see what follows. HR







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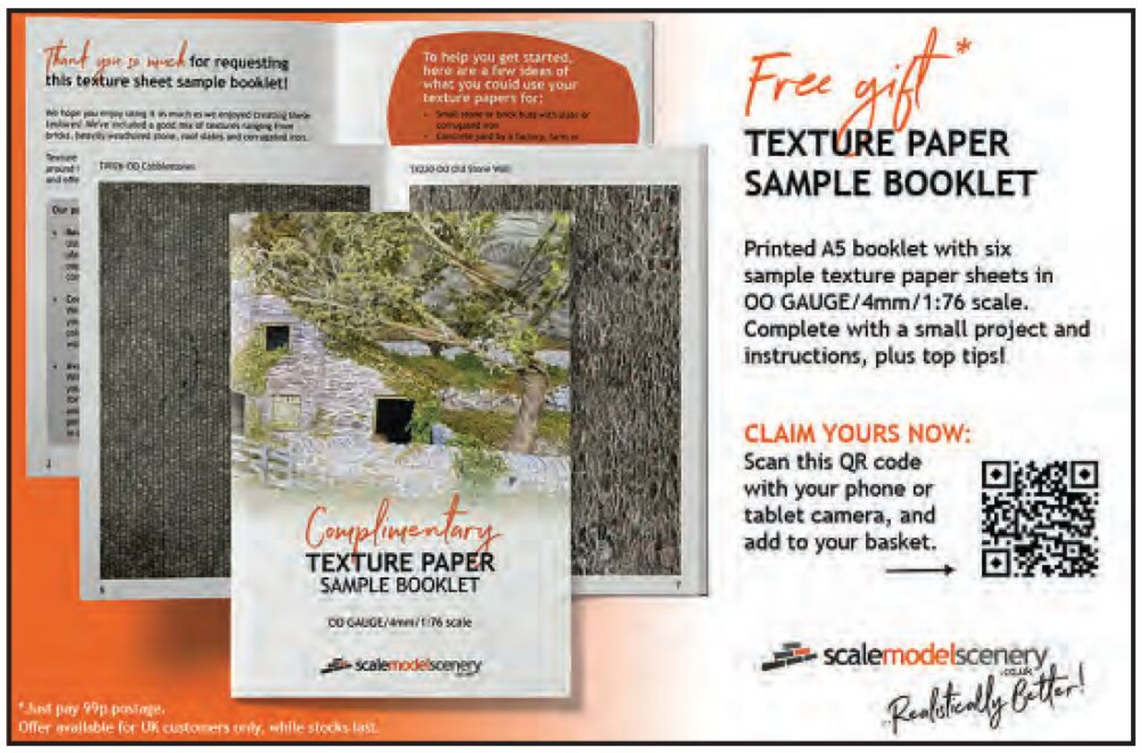
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SUNSHINE BRINGS SOARAWAY SUCCESS TO WEST SOMERSET GALA

A welcome break in the rainy weather that has dogged the UK for several months saw a huge upsurge in visitor numbers at the West Somerset Railway's May 3-6 Spring Steam Spectacular, reports **Robin Jones.**

Crowds flocked to West Somerset during the May bank holiday weekend as the region's heritage railway again proved beyond doubt that it is a major asset to the local economy.

The attendance at the Spring Steam Spectacular was 50% up on the corresponding event last year.

There were five visiting locomotives, with Locomotive Services Group's LNER-designed B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower* making its first-ever visit to the Minehead branch.

WR Modified Hall 4-6-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* arrived from the Great Central Railway, LNWR 0-6-2 'Coal Tank' No. 6695 from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, GWR 0-6-2T No. 6695 from the Swindon & Cricklade Railway and Mike Pearse's Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 1873 of 1937 *Jessie* from Blaenavon's Heritage Railway.

While No. 6695 has visited the WSR several times before, this was its first outing from its home line since overhaul, and also the first visit by a 66XX in GWR livery to the WSR. *Jessie*, which spent its working life on the internal system at East Moors steelworks in Cardiff and in the heritage era, was converted into a *Thomas* lookalike. Its saddle tanks were restored during a back-conversion process, and *Jessie* now carries the livery it wore during its steelworks days.

The gala gave the public the last chance to see *Jessie* in this livery as it was due to be repainted afterwards.

The five joined home fleet members WR 4-6-0 No. 7828 *Odney Manor*, West Somerset mogul No. 9351 and WR pannier tank No. 9466.

It was hoped that a sixth visitor would have been ready in time



Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Jessie* alongside West Somerset Railway mogul No. 9531 at Minehead on May 6. LAURA STANDERWICK/WSR

LNWR Coal Tank No. 1054 and WR pannier No. 9466 double head at Nornvis Bridge on May 3. NICK GILLIAM

WR 4-6-0s No. 7828 *Odney Manor* and No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* double-head past Leigh Woods on May 3. DON BISHOP



B1 4-6-0 No. 63106 *Mayflower* at Bishops Lydeard water tower on May 4. MIKE PINN/WSR



WR 4-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* at Bishops Lydeard. LAURA STANDERWICK/WSR



Hunslet *Jessie* pulls into Williton on May 5. LAURA STANDERWICK/WSR



Visiting GWR 0-6-2T hauls a demonstration goods across Kerr Moor on May 3. DON BISHOP

to take part in the gala, making its first-ever appearance on the WSR, but this did not happen.

As reported over in the past few issues, a series of last-minute delays in completing new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* meant it had to miss out, along with a number of other bookings.

July dates for *Betton Grange*

However, as reported in Headline News, the 81st Grange is set to visit the WSR in July, prior to spending three months in traffic on the North Norfolk Railway.

WSR general manager Kerry Noble said: "We are really excited to welcome No. 6880 *Betton Grange* to the railway in July. I am sure the locomotive will prove very popular with our visitors, and we look forward to running some special services during the visit."

During the gala, services ran over the rarely-used section between Bishops Lydeard and Norton Fitzwarren. Brake van rides, on-train dining and a photographic evening were some of the additional attractions available to visitors.

Kerry said: "We are extremely proud and grateful to our gala planning team for their efforts in organising such a complex and diverse event. Feedback from passengers has been extremely positive, and the event really showcased what the WSR can achieve. The gala planning team is predominantly made up of volunteers who co-ordinate the event alongside their other life commitments, and this highlights the amount of dedication and time that volunteers commit to the railway. Plans are already underway for the Spring Steam Spectacular for next year."

The railway will hold its Summer Diesel Festival on June 6-8, featuring Class 50 No. 50033 *Glorious* visiting from the Severn Valley Railway.

Again, some trains were scheduled to continue past Bishops Lydeard to the southern end of the line at Norton Fitzwarren. On all three days, the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group's depot at Williton was due be opened to visitors.

At Williton on the Saturday evening, Geoff Hudson, a former fleet manager at British Rail's Laira depot in Plymouth, will share his experiences of working with Class 50s, appropriately using No. 50033 as a backdrop for his talk.

Two more join railway's board

Meanwhile, two further directors have been appointed to the board of the West Somerset Railway PLC. Malcolm Smith has become director (operations) and Robin Wichard has been confirmed as director (external fundraising).

NEW GENERATION OF ENGINEERS ARE SUPPORTED THANKS TO VALUABLE LEGACY

THE WSR has acquired a new piece of equipment for its Williton workshops that will help foster a new generation of engineers.

The acquisition of a lathe has been funded by a generous legacy left to the railway by long-term supporter Kevin Trott, who sadly died last year. Living locally allowed Kevin to see the trains on a daily basis.

He was a precision engineer by trade who started himself as an apprentice, throughout his career working for companies in and around the Taunton area and felt there was not enough done to encourage younger generations into the trade, so he bequeathed the railway a sum in his will that has financed the purchase of a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) lathe for use at Williton Works, in what is the former Swindon shed.

The equipment is computerised and produces precision-engineered turned parts. It will vastly increase the WSR's workshop capacity and has been bought from Tiverton-based XYZ machine tools, which also provided a discount on the purchase.

The railway has been restricted from employing apprentices to undertake Mechanical Engineering level three qualifications in recent years due to an educational establishment requirement for employers to have a CNC machine, and with this purchase it will be looking to employ two apprentices from September 2024. In recognition of the contribution made to finance this valuable asset, without which this would not have been possible, all future apprentices on completion of the two-year course will be presented with the Kevin Trott Engineering Award.

WSR general manager Kerry Noble said: "We are so grateful to have received funding allowing us to move the business forward with new apprenticeships. This will help to ensure sustainability though future generations of railway engineers. Kevin's legacy will provide a lasting impact on the railway's future."



Williton workshop staff with the new CNC lathe that has allowed the West Somerset Railway to restart its apprenticeship scheme. WSR

Kevins' widow, who wished not to be named, added: "He was a very talented engineer and of course greatly missed, but I am so proud to work with the railway to ensure his legacy will endure alongside the many young engineers who will benefit in his name."

Visiting B1 4-6-0 No. 63106 *Mayflower* powers towards Leigh Bridge on May 6. DON BISHOP

Both had been acting for the previous three months as board advisers, as is the usual practice.

WSR plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said: "We warmly welcome both Malcolm and Robin as full board directors. They have both already made a significant positive impact around the railway in various ways.

"Among other tasks, Malcolm has been working with general manager Kerry Noble on the appointment of a new assistant general manager who will lead the operations department. In addition to his roles as Minehead stationmaster, Robin has been working on developing links with local business. With these two new appointments, our board is in a stronger position than it has been for several years."

Malcolm has been managing director of the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway CIC. Robin has held several roles on the WSR, including as stationmaster at Blue Anchor and co-ordinator of the successful annual 1940s event, both of which he will continue to hold. HR



Rebuilt West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* was on display in light steam in the Bay Platform at Bishops Lydeard on May 5, courtesy of Locomotive Services Ltd. MIKE PINN/WSR



STAR LETTER

This A3 is not the iconic *Flying Scotsman* we saved

ISSUE 318 mentioned Sir Nigel Gresley and his great achievement, *Flying Scotsman*, one of Britain's finest locomotives – so much so that in preservation it was put on sale, and fearing it may leave the country, the public was asked to raise funds to buy it for the nation. This we did; we did not intend to lose it.

Having raised sufficient money, it was purchased for the National Railway Museum when it was contracted out for restoration.

But when it next appeared, what had been done to it? It was no longer our *Flying Scotsman* with its double chimney and German smoke deflectors – even the livery and number changed.

That was not only an insult to Sir Nigel, but also to the many fundraisers. It is just not acceptable to make these changes to any British icon.

This may also be said of all restored and new-build locomotives, and I note that that both *Betton Grange* and the Brighton Atlantic have appeared as BR machines. Both owe their existence to the work of their Chief Mechanical Engineers and their teams and should be respected by maintaining their original livery. BR also built many fine engines, the 9F (*Evening Star*) and Britannia class, to carry the BR livery and there is no reason to steal the thunder from those who have gone before.

Derrick Martin, Hornchurch.



As LNER A3 Pacific No. 4472, *Flying Scotsman* departs from Marylebone station in the 1980s.

➜ Sarah Price, head of the NRM's Locomotion museum at Shildon, replied:

"Derrick, thank you for your letter and I understand the appeal of seeing Flying Scotsman numbered 4472 and in apple green livery. However, as you may know, Flying Scotsman has received extensive modifications over the years and the current form, in BR green with a double chimney and smoke deflectors, is, as far as practicable, a historically accurate representation of the locomotive at the end of its working life in the early 1960s. As stated previously, Flying Scotsman will remain with the double chimney, deflectors and British Railways livery, but we haven't ruled out possible changes in the future. The many guises of Flying Scotsman and other aspects of Flying Scotsman's history (such as how much is original) can be found on our website and museum blog at https://blog.railwaymuseum.org.uk/



LMS 'Black Five' No. 45110 crossing the Grand Union Canal at Watford. GARTH ALLEN

Artist's take on an anniversary scene

I WAS surprised and delighted to see John Titlow's excellent photograph of LMS 'Black Five' No. 45110 crossing the Grand Union Canal at Watford on May 29, 1999, on page 67 of issue 319.

I was there with my longtime friend, train buff and canal artist, the late Garth Allan. He took his photograph from which this watercolour picture came, at the same time as John's.

The locomotive is in the same position in both pictures. My watercolour then differs from the photograph.

Garth did not like the Metropolitan coaches behind No. 45110, as its exhaust enveloped them largely. At my suggestion, a number of contemporary boats disappeared from the marina to be replaced by the 70ft-long steam narrow boat *Ictus*, which was designed and owned by Garth Allan as an Edwardian canal directors' boat.

Ictus is seen here saluting No. 45110. My picture hangs either on my lounge wall or in my study.

Keith Adamson, email

Volunteers needed for Warrington restoration

THANKS for your great magazine and its support for heritage railways.

My locomotive and rolling stock restoration group, the Georail Heritage Volunteer Group, is looking to increase our volunteer numbers to undertake the restoration of another diesel shunter and LNWR D17 brake van.

The group was established in 2015 to bring together railway enthusiasts and like-minded people to volunteer their time for the purpose of restoration of locomotives and rolling stock.

The first project was 1956 standard BR 20t brake van No. B954406, which required extensive woodwork, chassis preparation, and a complete repaint. It was completed in 2018 and is now operating on loan at the Great Central Railway.

The second project was 1956 Andrew Barclay diesel shunter No. 400 *Duke of Edinburgh* from the locomotives at Port Sunlight.

Completed and ready to move on to a local heritage railway, this project required a complete engine and gearbox rebuild, rewiring, the fabrication of new side bonnets and new cab doors, and a complete repaint and overhaul of the air system. Completed in 2023, the group was awarded the Best In UK Diesel Locomotive Restored By A Volunteer Group title by the Heritage Railway Association in 2023.

The third project was 1958 BR 22T tube wagon No. B732837, which required extensive preparation, cleaning and repainting, and new wooden sides and a steel floor installed. It too was completed in 2023, ready for operation.

Current projects are the restoration of Hunslet diesel hydraulic shunter No. 7183, which requires cleaning and preparation, an electrical rewire, a replaced air system pipework, new side bonnets and a complete repaint.

The LNWR D17 brake van requires woodwork restoration from the chassis upwards and a repaint. Work undertaken so far has been to repair and restore the running gear and braking system.

The group is looking for additional volunteers who can dedicate some Saturdays in Warrington, Cheshire. If you have the skills or are willing to learn about the cleaning and preparation of metalwork, welding, mechanical repairs, painting and woodwork, get in touch at georailservices@btinternet.com or call me on 07811 673314 (age limit applies of 25 years and above due to insurance).

Michael Mazurkiewicz, email

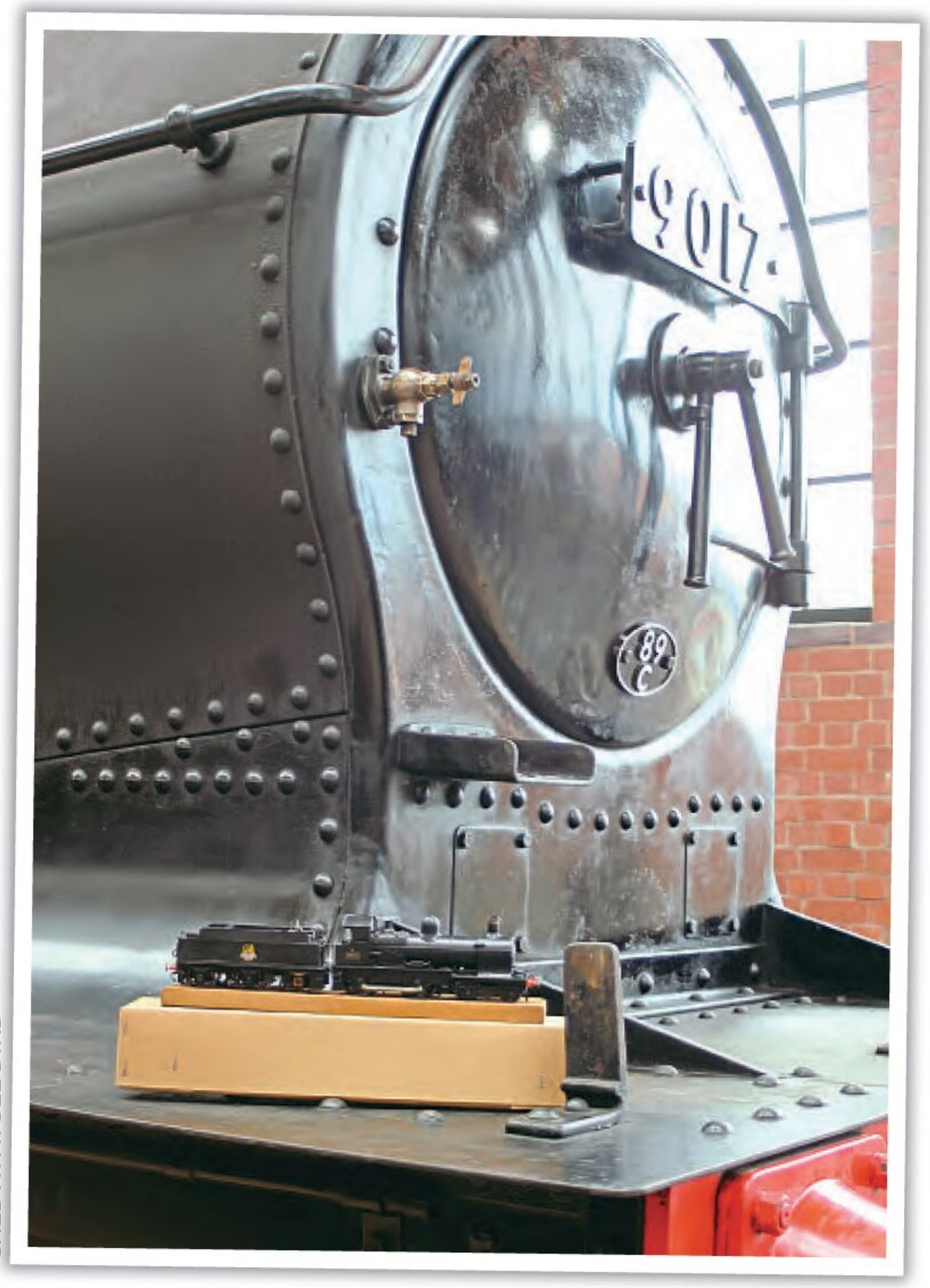


Right: Port Sunlight Barclay shunter No. 400 *Duke of Edinburgh*, fully restored. GHVG



Above: Hunslet diesel hydraulic shunter No. 7183, awaiting restoration. GHVG

Pre-order issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



CREDIT: NIGEL BIRD

Two Dukedogs meet at Rheidol!

THANKS for your article about the new Vale of Rheidol museum. I went on the opening day and was very impressed. I was particularly delighted to see Dukedog No. 9017 *Earl of Berkeley* back home.

I took my O gauge model to place on the real thing – see the accompanying picture – a bit twee, but it had to be done!

I do hope a Manor will visit at some point in the future.

Nigel Bird, Nigel Bird Books, Tregaron, Ceredigion

Heroes of our early Welsh preservation

I NOTICE in the story about the Corris Railway in issue 317, pages 10/11, there is no mention of Edward Campbell Thomas, stationmaster at Machynlleth in 1948, who prevented the Corris locomotives from being scrapped.

Keeping two locomotives for two-and-a half years in the open was an amazing achievement. He is gradually being airbrushed out of history.

I was pleased you mentioned Oliver Veltom for his role in saving No. 9017 in the story on page 14 – the right man at the right time.

Keeping Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway locomotives Nos. 822/823 from being scrapped from 1956 to 1962 was a team effort. It was only the standing Oliver Veltom (OV to his men) enjoyed that enabled all the other railwaymen involved, including the works manager, to save the locomotives.

Chris Magner, email

The refreshing black of A2 Pacific *Blue Peter*

THE owners of new-build A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* seem to prefer operating their locomotive with highly-polished smokebox door hinges.

For me, this is a downside to its appearance because A1s never ran like this in their BR days, so it was refreshing to see pictures of A2 Pacific No. 60532 *Blue Peter* in issue 318 in stunning BR blue – with a full black smokebox door.

Terry Huggett, Worthing, West Sussex

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When did that container body get shipped to Belgium?

REGARDING the story about the LNER container body unearthed by archaeologists in Belgium in issue 318 (News, page 29), what was found was simply a container body, and not the wagon.

The BK prefix code BK 1820 is that of the type of container, not the carrying wagon. A container body going to Europe would not be that odd, but it would not be on a UK wagon and would have been transferred somewhere.

There is, however, potentially quite a twist to this story. If the body found is marked as BK1820, then amazingly it featured in an official LNER works photograph! In A Pictorial Record of LNER wagons by Peter Tatlow (Oxford Publishing), page 73, plate 151, there it apparently is in 1940.

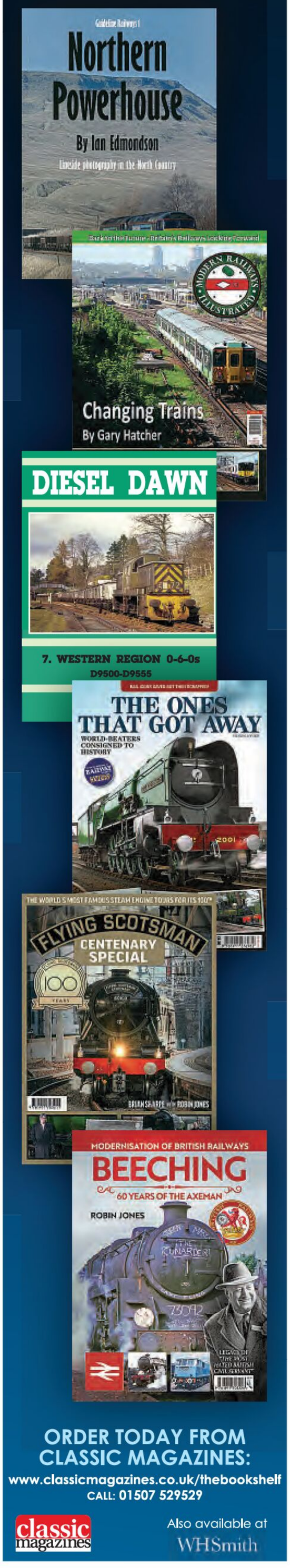
This does raise a question about when it went to Belgium, as by 1940 the war had started; was it sent just before the German invasion (on May 10, 1940), then getting trapped? It is more likely it went after the war and that it was simply not worth returning, having made its trip.

A further twist, probably inspired by the works photograph, is that BK1820 appears in UK proprietary models in N, OO and O gauges!

Peter Riley, email

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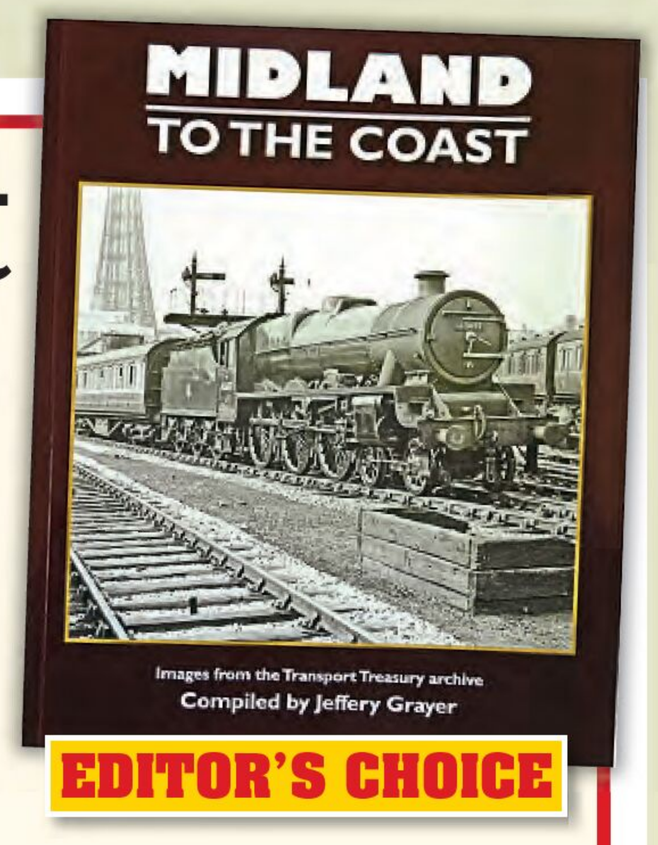
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Compiled by Jeffery Grayer (softback, 112pp, Transport Treasury Publishing. Cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing sent to: 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ. £14.95 plus £3 p&p ISBN 978-1-913251-67-3).



EDITOR'S CHOICE

TO many of us of a certain age, journeys to holiday coastal destinations usually meant travel by train to the West Country, and thus were by courtesy of BR's Western Region, or for those of an even more certain age, the GWR, **writes Geoff Courtney.**

Travelling on the London Midland Region to access the seaside was not a rarity, but neither was it the norm, unless perhaps to Blackpool, and so this latest publication from the combo of Transport Treasury Publishing and Jeffery Grayer may lead some to fear that the contents may be somewhat lacking.

But fear ye not, for under the stated aim of 'reviving the memories of yesterday,' the three main coastal areas of the Midland Region – North Wales, Lancashire and the Cumbrian coast bordering the Lake District – provide enough substance to satisfy the appetite of steam enthusiasts. It goes without saying, but I will say it anyway, that it helps if that enthusiasm includes an interest in William Stanier's 'Black Fives,' for they are inevitably the pictorial heartbeat of the book. Indeed, early doors we see Nos. 45348 and 45031 double-heading an Up express round the sharp curve from Britannia Bridge that crosses the Menai Strait, and there are stunning panoramic images taken from the heights above Bangor station that include more members of the class, although this selection also portrays Jubilee No. 45578 *United Provinces* and Princess Coronation Pacific No. 46235 *City of Birmingham*.

Rare sights

Another photograph of the latter class features No. 46228 *Duchess of Rutland* in the uncharacteristic menial role of shunting empty carriages at Holyhead in September 1961, and there is an image at the same station of Royal Scot No. 46155 *The Lancer* on what was recorded by the photographer as the last steam-hauled Up 'Irish Mail,' although the date for this is not given.

Talking of both 'The Irish Mail' and the Royal Scot class, a pristine No. 46110 *Grenadier Guardsman* is seen at Colwyn Bay in August 1953 on the Up working, and at the same location a month later, Patriot No. 45506 *The Royal Pioneer Corps* is at the head of what Jeffery describes as a 'rather motley collection of stock.'

Perhaps the ultimate named locomotive in the publication is No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* beside the sea between Colwyn Bay and Abergele in July 1962, just four months before its withdrawal. Away from the top brass is a variety of lesser, but still worthy, classes typical of the Midland Region, and diesel locomotives and DMUs too, while depots include Rhyl (6K), Blackpool Central (24E) and its subshed Blackpool North, Holyhead (6J) and Bangor (6H).

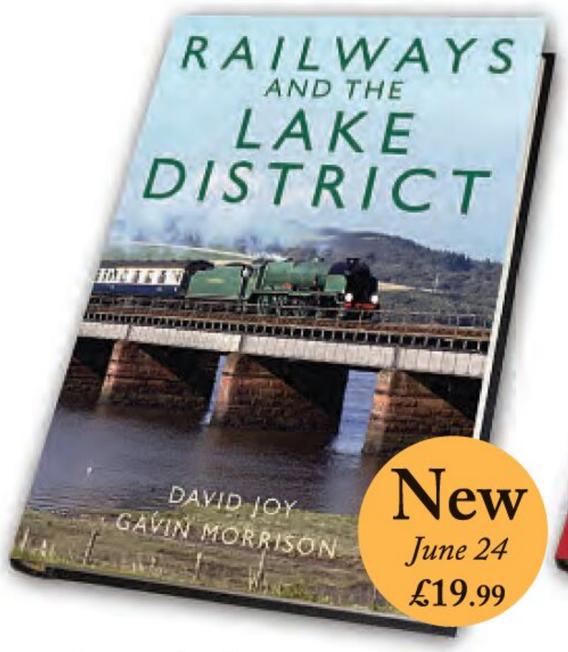
Another feature is extracts from the 1959 BR publication Holiday Haunts, listing the attraction of some of the resorts in the book's spotlight.

On this theme, Jeffery says: "It is salutary to read, after the passage of almost 65 years, some of the descriptions of the vast array of attractions on offer at these resorts, so many of which have experienced an almost terminal decline in their popularity with the rise of foreign travel. Hard now to believe that Blackpool at one time boasted no less than 14 cinemas and 15 live shows during the season."

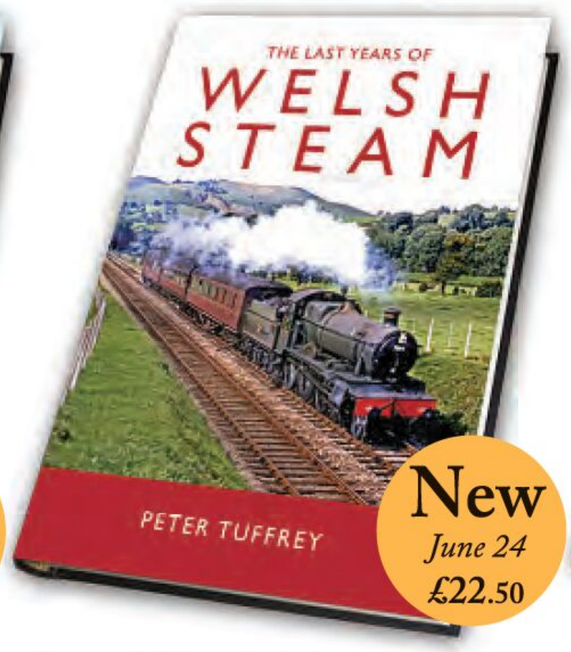
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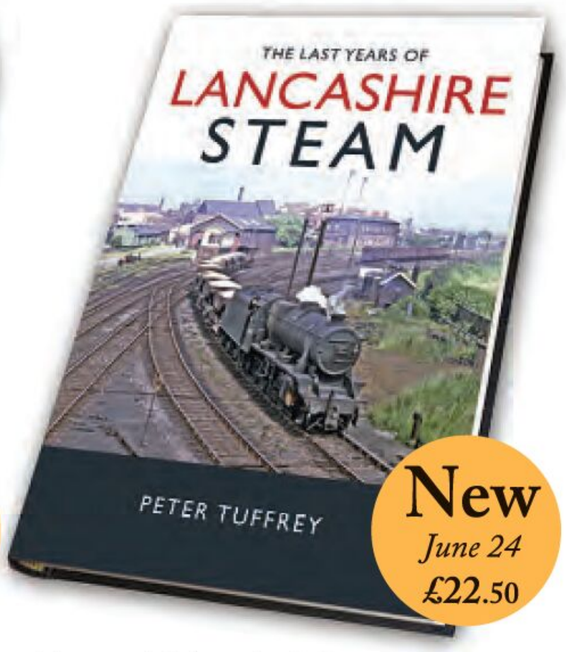
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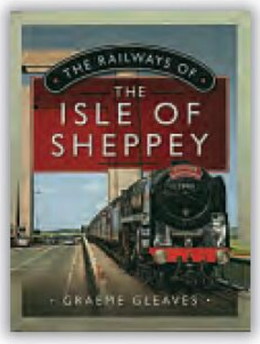
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The Railways of the Isle of Sheppey

by Graham Gleaves (hardback, Pen & Sword, 176pp, £30, ISBN 978-1-399095-09-9).



THE author, the founder of the Suburban Electric Railway Association, brings together all the railways of Sheppey, and his knowledge and fondness of the area where he worked for 17 years of his railway career is reflected in this book. He explores the variety of railways that once graced some of the 36 square miles of this island.

The isle's proud history includes a long-standing Royal Navy history, with its busy dockyards and its strong links with Chatham dockyard; also the training airport at Eastchurch which became RAF Eastchurch in 1918 but had been used as a flying school for naval officers prior.

Eastchurch Station on the Sheppey Light Railway (SR) had both a goods loop to the airport, as well as two sidings to support the airport. The-then busy steelworks and busy ports of Sheerness and Queenborough were of significant importance during both world wars.

While in other parts of east Kent railways were built from 1830, it was not until July 1856 that a line was authorised to be built linking Sheppey to the network at Sittingbourne, and the railway was opened in July 1860.

Various extensions were constructed from both Sheerness and Queenborough stations, some short-lived which included the extension to Queenborough Pier for the transportation of passengers for the docking paddle steamers; the pier was destroyed by fire in 1900.

Col Holman Fred Stephens was given the job of building a light railway to link both Sheerness and Queenborough to Leysdown further south. This opened in 1901 and although once busy, passenger numbers dropped and after Nationalisation it was closed by BR on December 4, 1950.

There was also a tramway serving Sheerness that could boast being the shortest-lived and shortest tramway. It opened in 1903, and while it had been busy in its early years, the 2½ miles of track ceased to see traffic when it closed in 1917.

After the closure of the SLR in 1950, Sheerness Dockyard Station was to be a further casualty for closure in 1963, while freight trains were still using Queenborough yard in the 1990s.

Following privatisation in 1993 the Sheppey Line became part of the South Eastern Franchise, with changes in both livery and running stock, and also the variety of stock used on the line. The industrial history of the railway chapter will really interest enthusiasts as it details Admiralty-owned stock and other unusual locomotives such as an ex-British Army shunter and some odd stock moved to the island's rail scrapyard.

The main line rail link has remained, and while Sheerness station was rebuilt, Queenborough station has largely remained in its former splendour.

The book winds up with the final chapter informing of some of the surviving locos and coaches that ran on the island's railways offering where they went and where they are now. A mention is given to the once-loved and busy 2ft gauge miniature that ran around Sheerness Amusement Park between 1947 and 1965.

Photographs showing what remains of the SLR and the plan compiled in 2022 to create a greenway (walkway and cycle path) from Queenborough to Leysdown on much of the former trackbed – this is proceeding well in 2024.

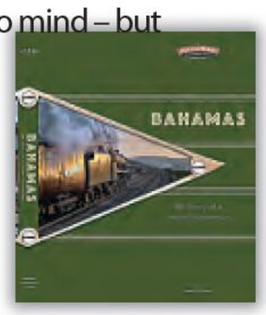
The 10 chapters and appendix are supported by numerous black-and-white and colour photographs, which not only cover all the railways of the Isle of Sheppey but also offer an informative history of an island that has had many ups and downs over the years. This book will inform and surprise many readers

REDISCOVERY OF KENT'S ISLAND LINES

Bahamas –The Story of a Steam Locomotive

by Peter W Skellon (hardback, Bahamas Locomotive Society, https://bahamas45596.co.uk, 256 pages, £35).

MANY classes of BR steam locomotives struggle to have a book dedicated to them, so what chance has a single type? *Flying Scotsman*, *Mallard* and *Duke of Gloucester* spring to mind – but here we learn the incredible story of how Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas*, ousted by new diesels, was saved from scrap by a friendly shedmaster and dedicated group of enthusiasts.



The reader is introduced to Stanier's design by way of drawings and diagrams, including a full-page image of 'the office' with all of the cab controls identified. Being one of the fleet built in Scotland, 14 pages are given to the North British Locomotive Company, and the Engine Record Card is reproduced in colour full of wonderful notations.

The first 25 years take up 16 pages, where we journey pictorially from Tebay in June 1935 to Sandbach in August 1960. There is a fine chapter on double chimneys and six pages on the Rugby Testing Station, where classmate No. 45722 was tested with an experimental double exhaust.

May 1961 was thought to be the beginning of the end, as a pristine *Bahamas* left Crewe Works to head home to 12B Carlisle to show off its double chimney to the Upperby men. However, in July 1962, and in answer to a request by Stockport Edgeley's shedmaster for Class 6 power to work the York mails, Jubilees Nos. 45596 and 45632 were sent to 9B.

The following 56 pages begin with a history of Stockport Edgeley shed and then the several brushes with management's attempts at reducing *Bahamas* to scrap metal. But shedmaster Terry Smith and member No. 1 of the newly-formed Bahamas Locomotive Society, Alan Bidder, were having none of it.

The purchase price was raised, then an overhaul at Hunslet paid for, followed by a new home at Dinting, leading to the locomotive's first main line outing as a preserved engine in October 1972.

Building to the next comeback in May 1989 involved no works visit, just the dedicated toil of the members at a new home in Ingrow, Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

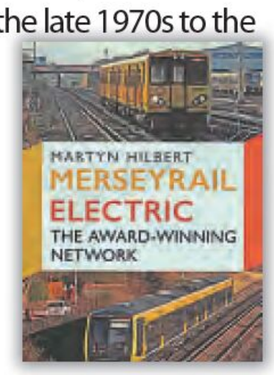
The rear of the book includes a full locomotive CV listing the 14 depots graced and all the tenders attached (including the donors). This is a very fine volume, excellently written and illustrated.

BIOGRAPHY OF A HERITAGE FLEET STALWART

Merseyrail Electric: The award-winning network

By Martyn Hilbert (softback, Fonthill Media, www.fonthill.media, 96pp, £20, ISBN 978-1-781559-09-3).

HERE is an illustrated history of the Merseyrail network, written by an expert on the subject, covering the history of the third-rail electric railway around the Liverpool area from the late 1970s to the arrival of the latest Class 777 units.



The book is split into six main chapters: in the beginning; onwards; operations; the Northern line; the Wirral line; and Merseyrail Miscellany. The text and captions are informative, and there are many high-quality photographs that have reproduced well.

With the last of the network's Class 508s now withdrawn and the Class 507s due to follow shortly (News, page 44), this is a useful guide to Merseyrail – especially for those planning to visit the area before the last of the old fleet disappears.

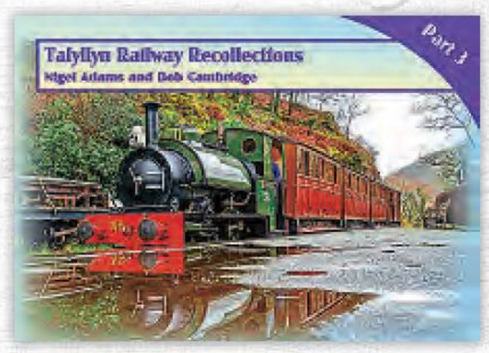
A NETWORK BEFORE ITS WATERSHED

HERITAGE RAILWAY

BOOK CORNER



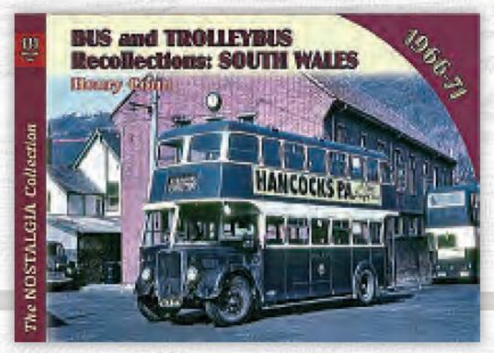
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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex. Tel: 01798 831370.
Open: Weds-Suns.

Bluebell Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL. Tel: 01825 720800.
Running: Weds-Suns, sch hols.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Weds + June 2, 16.

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.

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 + July 6.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: Sats-Thurs.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + Tues June 25.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: June 16, 30, July 14.

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Running: Thurs-Suns.

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.
Running: Suns.

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 + June 29.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es + July 12.

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 + June 7/8, 22, 29.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Tues-Thurs, Sats (from July 6), Suns + June 8, 22.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open daily. Running: W/Es.

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: Thurs-Suns + Weds from July 3.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + June 28.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Running: June 30.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Weds (from July 17), Thurs, Suns + June 15.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: Daily.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Running: Suns-Tues + Weds from July 17.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415. **Running: Daily.**

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 + June 15, 29, July 13.

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 + June 22, July 6.

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.
Running: Daily.

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.
Running: Daily.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Running: Sats (from July 6), Suns + June 15.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + June 7.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Running: June 16, 30, July 14.

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 + July 6.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: June 16, 23, 29, July 6/7.

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, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Running: Weds, W/Es.



The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's July 12-14 summer diesel gala will play host to British Rail class 26 No. 5310 for a Sulzer-centric event. Usually resident at the Llangollen Railway, the locomotive has previously visited the GW/R for repairs to a failed traction motor in 2020 but did not work trains there at the time. Classmate D5343, which is undergoing an overhaul of its own, will be on static display at Toddington during the event, while five other locomotives from the railway's home fleet, plus one DMU, will work service trains, with up to 10 services a day running between Cheltenham Racecourse and Broadway stations. Multi-day rover tickets are available, with one-day adult fares priced at just £29. See www.gwsr.com for more information. OWEN HAYWARD

Pre-order Issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Nine-locomotive cavalcade set to round off Lincolnshire Coast's diesel day

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway's June 15 diesel day will see no fewer than nine diesel locomotives in service to celebrate the evolution of internal combustion engines – with the event concluding with a cavalcade featuring all nine operating locomotives.

With designs stretching back as far as the trench railways of the First World War, over the years these have been modified developed by Motor Rail Ltd of Bedford under the brand name Simplex, and to this day many of these locomotives continue to put in sturdy and reliable service.

Spokesman John Chappell said: "It's our 1903-vintage steam engine *Jurassic* which attracts most attention, but many people come to see this remarkable range of diesel locomotives, some built as long ago as 1920 and 1926.

"Diesel Day 2024 will showcase them running in a variety of combinations."

Services will commence at 11am and conclude with the cavalcade at 3.50pm. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk.Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: Suns.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles. Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA. Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Daily.

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 + July 13.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon.
Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns + June 29, July 6.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon.
Tel: 01491 835067
Running: June 16, 29/30, July 7.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: Weds, W/Es.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex.
Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: W/Es + July 3.

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 + June 15, July 6.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Suns.

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.

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: W/Es + Weds from July 3.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys).
Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire.
Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands.
Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: W/Es.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Weds, W/Es + Tues from July 2.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Thurs.

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

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles. Norchard, Lydney, Glos. Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles. Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: Thurs-Suns.

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.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles. Toddington, Glos. Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles. Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW. Tel: 01509 632323. www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: Thurs, W/Es.

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.**

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: W/Es.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Suns.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: June 16, 30, July 14, 28.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles. Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Open: Tues, Thurs. Running: June 16, 30.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.
Running: June 16, 29.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

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 + June 8.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: Suns.

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.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs. Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: W/Es + Weds/Thurs from June 19.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles. Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.
Running: Suns.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Running: Sats.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 670453.
Running: Suns.

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Reopens: W/Es from June 15.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 662525.
Running: Daily.

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: Daily.

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.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles. Alston, Cumbria. Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

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.



One of Cornwall's most-loved attractions, the Lappa Valley Railway, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on June 14-16 with a gala event featuring guest locomotives, double-headers, parallel running and more. The event – billed by the railway as one of the biggest it's ever hosted – will also see the debut of the 15in gauge 0-6-4T No. 1 *Zebedee* following completion of overhaul. Built in 1974 by Severn Lamb, *Zebedee* was the LVR's first locomotive and has been undergoing overhaul at Sam Henwood Engineering in Newquay. All other operational locomotives will be in service, including 0-4-2T Nos. 3 *Ruby* and 4 *Ellie* (pictured), and memorabilia from the last 50 years will be on display. Visit www.lappavalley.co.uk/events/lappaat50 for further information. LVR

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: W/Es.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe. Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: June 8, 15, July 6, 13.

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.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Embsay, North Yorks. Tel: 01756 795189.
Running: Tues, W/Es.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge, Northumberland. Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily.

Pre-order Issue 321: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + June 21.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Running: June 15, then Weds & Sats from July 10.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Suns.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds.
Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Running: W/Es.

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: Suns.

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Suns.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es + June 28.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles.
Huddersfield, West Yorks.
Tel: 01484 865727.
Open: W/Es, sch hols.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Running: Suns.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: W/Es.

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 + June 16.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

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.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Daily.

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: Weds-Suns.

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: W/Es.

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: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles. Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Daily.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair Caereinion, Powys. Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + Tues from June 18.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Tues, W/Es, + July 5.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Brechin, Angus.
Tel: 01356 622992.
Running: W/Es.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Running: Sats from June 30.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire.
Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: Fris-Suns.

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.**

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.

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

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and heritage events in the coming weeks

JUNE
- 6-8 West Somerset Railway Summer Diesel Festival
- 7/8 Welsh Highland Railway Beer Festival
- 7-9 Avon Valley Railway Bitton Beer Bash
- 8/9 Statfold Country Park Summer Spectacle of Steam
- 9 Crich Tramway Village Model Trams Exhibition
- 9 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Brake Van Day
- 13 Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Ratty Arms 50th Anniversary
- 14/15 Kent & East Sussex Railway Beer Festival
- 14-16 Lappa Valley Railway 50th Anniversary Gala
- 14-16 North Yorkshire Moors Railway Diesel Gala
- 15 Corris Railway Falcons Will Fly Gala
- 15 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Music Festival
- 15/16 Middleton Railway Model Railway Exhibition
- 16 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Ridgeway Run Classic Vehicles 40th Anniversary
- 16 Great Central Railway Railwayana Swapmeet
- 16 West Lancashire Light Railway Strawberries and Steam
- 20-23 Keighley & Worth Valley Railway Diesel Gala
- 21-23 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Beer Festival
- 22/23 Crich Tramway Village Living History Weekend
- 22/23 Didcot Railway Centre Model Railway Exhibition
- 22/23 Statfold Country Park Midlands Fire & Rescue Event
- 23 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway East Anglian Classics
- 27-29 East Lancashire Railway Summer Diesel Gala
- 28-30 Mid-Norfolk Railway Steam Gala
- 28-30 Swanage Railway Roads to Rail Steam Rally
- 29/30 Bluebell Railway Model Railway Weekend
- 29/30 Kent & East Sussex Railway Steampunk Weekend
- 30 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Vintage Bus Day

JULY
- 5-7 Talyllyn Railway Beer Festival
- 6 West Lancashire Light Railway Volunteers' Day
- 6/7 Great Central Railway Vintage Vehicle Weekend
- 6/7 Isle of Wight Steam Railway 1940s Experience
- 6/7 Llangollen Railway Classic Transport Weekend
- 6/7 Middleton Railway Leeds Steampunk Festival
- 6/7 Talyllyn Railway Anything Goes & Garden Railway Gala
- 7 Crich Tramway Village Classic Motorcycles Day
- 7 Epping Ongar Railway Classic Car Rally
- 7 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Land Rover Day
- 7 Statfold Country Park Cars in Strawberry Park
- 12-14 Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Diesel Gala
- 12-14 Spa Valley Railway Summer Steam Gala
- 13/14 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Day Out with Thomas
- 13/14 Didcot Railway Centre Brick Adventures
- 13/14 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Vintage Weekend
- 14 Crich Tramway Village Model Trams Exhibition
- 14 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Brake Van Day

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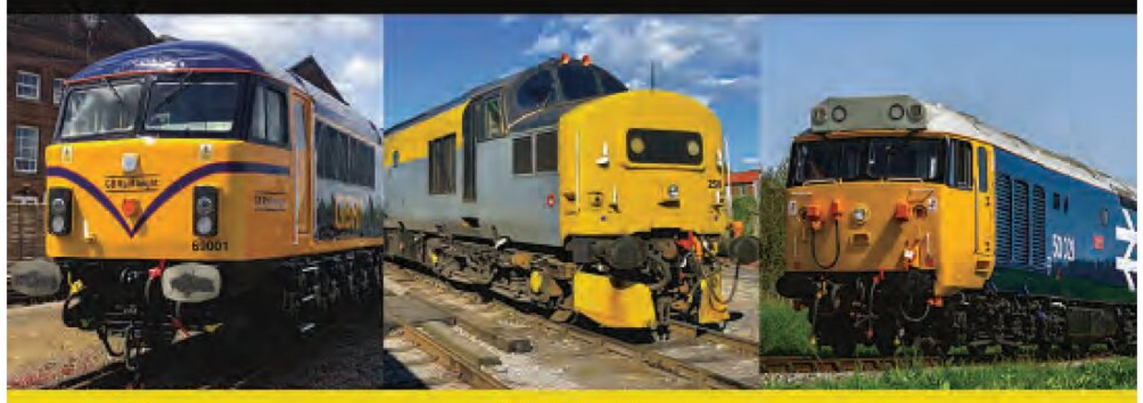
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Mona Drive, Douglas, Isle of Man IM2 4LF.



The Welbeck Hotel, Restaurant and Apartments are situated at the heart of the Manx railway network, in the central promenade, Douglas Bay, but set back 80 yards or so, thus avoiding much of the noisier traffic.

Like the IoM transport system, the hotel is Victorian but has been modernised for the requirements of today's travellers. All the rooms are en-suite, have free wi-fi, flat-screen television, safe, iron/trouser press, fridge, hairdryer and hospitality trays.

The Welbeck has been the number-one IoM hotel on TripAdvisor for many years. The chefs use fresh local ingredients wherever possible, Manx lamb, beef and pork, award-winning





eggs, and an excellent choice of fish, as well as vegetarian options.

There is a good stock of wines, spirits, draught beers and local real ale in the bar, where you can also avail yourself of the snack menu.

The one and two-bedroom apartments are all self-contained and have their own entrance, although they can also be accessed through the hotel. Bookings can be made online through www.welbeckhotel.com, though personal contact is enjoyed, so don't be afraid to pick up the telephone to ask questions or for advice, reserve a room, or for help with booking your passage to the IoM.

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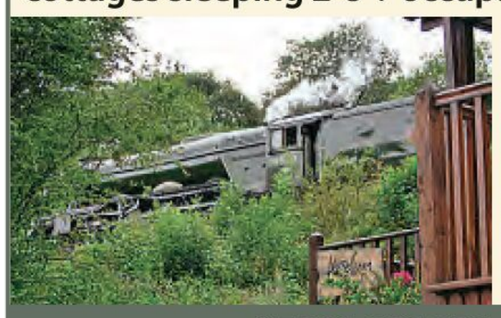
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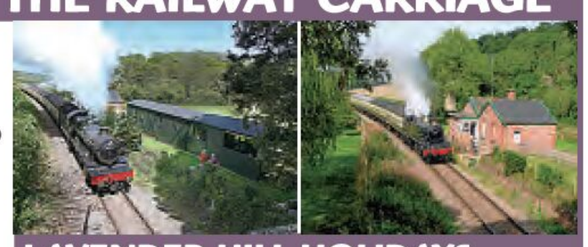
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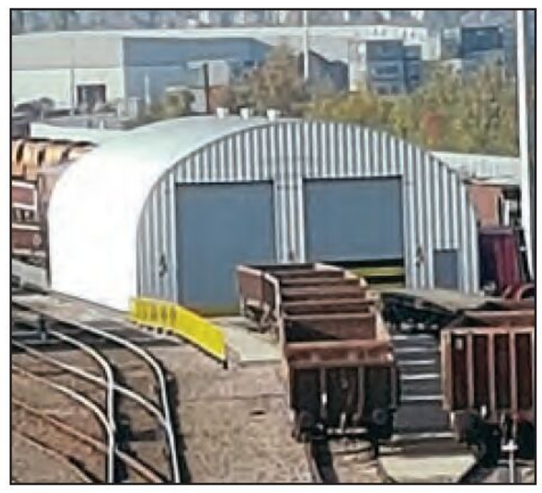
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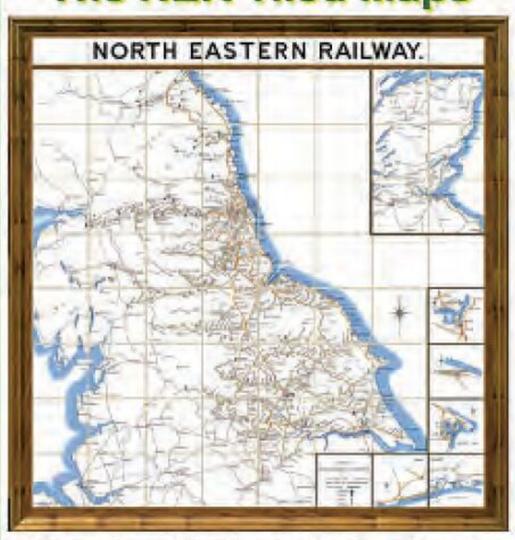
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Steam and diesel memories evoked by visiting engine

By Geoff Courtney

AS HE sat in the cab of Class 37 No. 37714 during its visit to the Kent & East Sussex Railway's diesel gala in mid-April, memories came flooding back to Robin Coombes, the heritage line's general manager.

Those recollections were enhanced by not only nostalgia, but also by the name now carried by the Co-Co diesel – *Cardiff Canton*. For this was the very depot which sowed the seeds of his love of railways that has led to him taking the helm of the heritage line that runs 10½ miles between Tenterden and Bodiam and is currently being extended to Robertsbridge.

Robin said: "Who could imagine that a small boy, standing on the footbridge overlooking the Cardiff Canton depot and gazing down at a vast array such as Brush Type 4s, now the Class 47s, Western Class 52s, Hymek Class 35s, and the ubiquitous Type 3s, would one day become the general manager of a railway?"

No. 37714, which was built by English Electric at the Vulcan Foundry in August 1961 as D6724, symbolised the full circle his rail journey has taken, he said wistfully. "Its arrival for the gala was a poignant moment as it brought back a flood of memories and the thrill of those childhood days spent dreaming among the giants of rail. During its stay I had a memorable ride in the cab, feeling the roar of its powerful engines as we ascended the 1-in-50 gradient to Tenterden."



Pacific at home: Britannia No. 70029 *Shooting Star* awaits its next turn of duty at its home shed of Cardiff Canton on April 5, 1959. KESR general manager Robin Coombes recalls these Standard Pacifics being a regular sight during his childhood. ALEC SWAIN/TRANSPORT TREASURY



Cab ride: Kent & East Sussex Railway general manager Robin Coombes wears an appropriate BR jacket as he 'cabs' Co-Co diesel No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* during its visit to the railway in mid-April. ROBIN COOMBES

Boyhood visits to Cardiff station were always thrilling, said Robin, and provided glimpses of such locomotives as Britannias, Kings and Castles heading towards Paddington – "icons of an era soon replaced by the Hymeks and then the Western diesels."

Cardiff Canton, coded 86C by BR, and later 88A and subsequently changed again to 86A, closed to steam in 1965, but before then Robin was taken round the depot by a neighbour who was a fireman.

"In addition, excursions to Barry Island offered the opportunity to observe the gleaming green express locomotives housed at Canton with their polished brass and copper, a stark contrast to Barry shed's assembly of tank engines used for goods and Valley services."

Sound of coal trains

Another early memory is the sounds of Cardiff's Tidal Sidings, and the clanking and rumble of coal trains travelling to and from the docks along the local line bordering Splott Park. "This park was once the domain of *Jessie*, a saddle tank from East Moors Steelworks that previously hauled slag wagons to Cardiff's foreshore for disposal in the sea.

"After its retirement, it found a second life as a central piece of the playground, becoming a fortress of imagination for many children, myself included. We would climb all over it, embarking on countless imagined adventures."

Robin witnessed the transformation of Canton during its rebuild from the steam era to accommodate the diesels. "I spent many Saturdays and summer evenings on the footbridge overlooking the depot. The Type 3s – later Class 37s – starting from D6819, dominated the new diesel freight fleet in South Wales, and as a boy I found it exhilarating to see these engines, freshly painted and powerful, from the vantage point of my school yard."

With the closure of the collieries and the resultant decline in freight operations, the Class 37s began to disappear, but before they did so, Robin vividly remembers the triple-headers powering the iron ore trains from Port Talbot to Llanwern. "Walking through the subway at Cardiff Central station as they passed was like experiencing a minor earthquake," he reminisced. Indeed, such was his fondness for the class that he made a model of one, which he describes as 'crude,' by cutting in half two Lone Star American-outline diesels and mounting them back-to-back.

Robin's love of railways continued into his post-school days. His first job was in Swansea, and he cherished the opportunity to linger after office hours to catch a glimpse and hearing the roar of a Class 37 travelling from West Wales to Cardiff up the 1-in-93 Stormy Down Bank.

"The flawless performance of No. 37714 at our gala was a credit to the dedication of its owner, the Heavy Tractor Group, and I was profoundly grateful for its efforts. In gratitude and nostalgia, I have reserved a spot on my office shelf for the forthcoming OO gauge model of the locomotive. Every glance will bring a smile and a flood of memories, and each detail a reminder of the indelible mark that railways have left on my life."



Diesel power: No. 6724 on the East Suffolk route in about 1970, by which time it was no longer carrying a D prefix. The preserved Great Central Railway-based Co-Co, now No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton*, was one of the stars of a Kent & East Sussex Railway mid-April gala, during which it brought back many happy memories for the line's general manager, Robin Coombes. DR IAN ALLEN/TRANSPORT TREASURY

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