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ISSUE 323 August 30 – September 27, 2024

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THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

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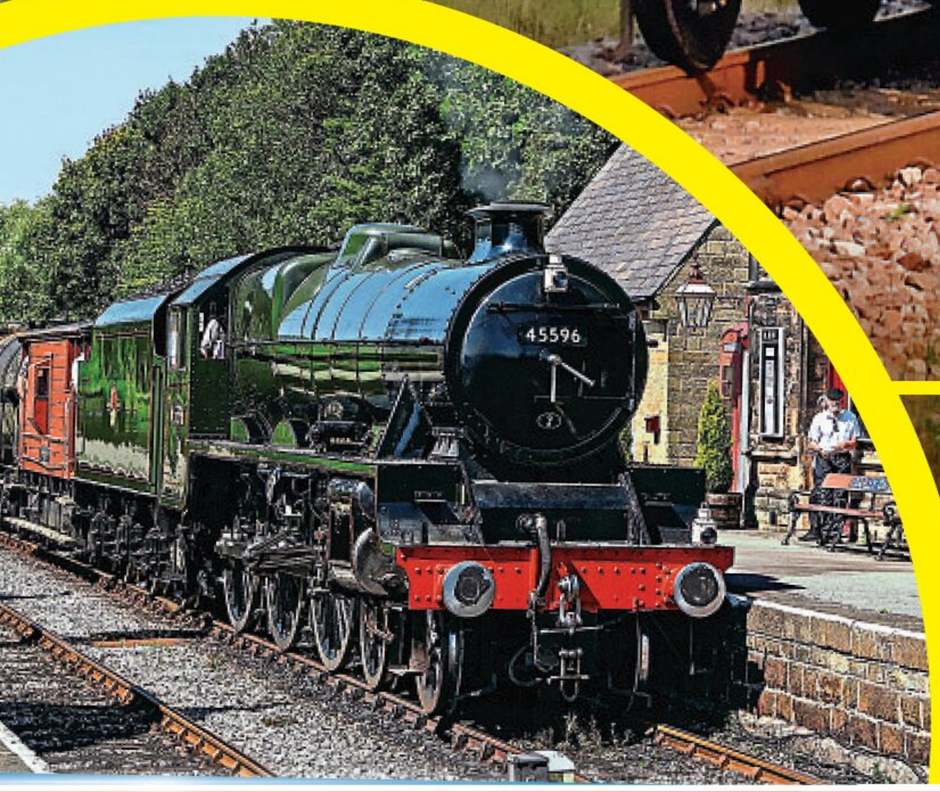

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BAHAMAS STARS IN PEAK RAIL SPECIAL EVENT

■ *TORNADO* NENE VALLEY VISIT DELAYED UNTIL OCTOBER ■ BLUEBELL GETS £250K LOTTERY GRANT FOR RAIL200 ■ IT'S 1966 AGAIN: GREAT CENTRAL'S RAILWAYS AT WORK SPECTACLE ■ RHEIDOL SHED HOSTS FIVE MUSICAL WORLD PREMIERES

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The keenly anticipated, FR heritage highlight of the year will once again feature a wide range of trains representing various eras of the railway's long history - from the 1830s through to early preservation days. Highlights will include...

The return of 'Taliesin' and 'Palmerston' - meaning that four Fairlies, one Small England, a Penrhyn Lady, a Manning Wardle and a vintage diesel will be in action, working a variety of passenger, freight and mixed trains.
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On July 25, the Talyllyn Railway ran a special evening train utilising all three of the Corris Railway locomotives available as it bid farewell to Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10, which had been visiting for the month. The convoy is seen passing Bryner West on the approach to Brynglas, with Falcon No. 3 *Sir Haydn* leading Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST No. 4 *Edward Thomas* and, finally, No. 10 on a rare triple-headed working. Following a pause for a photographic line-up at Brynglas, No. 3 banked the train to Abergynolwyn due to a weight restriction on the viaduct at Dolgoch. Meanwhile, No. 4, now outshopped in ex-works grey livery, had passed its final boiler test the week before and went out on test runs in the days prior to this special service. It officially debuted on normal service trains on July 29, while No. 10 returned home to the Corris Railway that morning. OWEN HAYWARD

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When our heritage lines make a showtime success!

I CANNOT but wholeheartedly agree with VisitEngland's 94% rating (News, page 18) it gave to the new £27 million Hopetown Darlington railway venue under its Quality Assured Visitor Attraction Scheme, as featured last issue. Making unrivalled use of 21st-century digital technology to highlight the world-changing nuts-and-bolts achievements of the steam era, Hopetown has ushered in a bright new dawn for popular museum culture.

The raison d'être for heritage railway venues from the outset was the burning desire of enthusiasts to preserve the rich legacies of our transport past – at least, for like-minded fellows.

Hopetown, however, offers a far wider-ranging public appeal, with education and enlightenment through fascination and entertainment for all.

In August, I visited the Great Central Railway's Railways at Work gala, which recreated scenes from the World Cup-winning year of 1966 using a horde of re-enactors (News, pages 28/29). As with the previous year's award-winning Beeching era event, the railway became a linear theatre in which visitors viewed the action close at hand from the edge of the stage itself. History was indeed brought to life for a family audience, big time.

Meanwhile, in the tourist hotspot of Cornwall, the Helston Railway attracted rave reviews in the local media for its production of The Railway Children (News, page 11). Here, members of the audience were not just invited to take their seats in the auditorium to watch the show, but also to travel by steam train to get there in the first place – an ultimate tribute to author Edith A Nesbit!

I see initiatives such as these as an essential future of the heritage sector. We must not continue to rely on custom mainly from those who fondly remember the age of steam on the main line or who have been enthralled by children's books as a youngster but use our imagination to the full to exploit the maximum potential that the living stages we have saved for posterity might offer. We need to become a melting pot of such ideas.

On a different tack, I join with those who have expressed great disappointment that our new Government has halted its predecessor's Restoring Your Railways scheme, designed to reverse several of the long-lambasted Beeching era closures. This is despite the visible success of the first line to be revived for regular public transport, the Dartmoor Railway from Exeter to Okehampton.

Our major parties make much of net zero – tackling global warming by the reduction of emissions – but surely the gradual replacement of petrol and diesel cars by public transport would be a sizeable step forward?

We all can point out railway routes 'that never should have closed' in the face of the booming car ownership of the 1950s and 1960s. As a very young child, I remember being shown a short local freight working on the Harborne branch; had it been saved, just think how much daily congestion could have been avoided in Birmingham!

For me, one of the worst mistakes of the Beeching closes was not keeping trackbeds intact for future use. Many ideas for reopening – and even extending some of our heritage lines – flounder at the first hurdle because of building that has been allowed to block them in perpetuity.

Save public spending, if we must – but the Government should take steps to ensure that when the economic climate improves, those Restoring Your Railways schemes they have just blocked could be considered again, especially if it pushes for a mass drive for housebuilding as it has promised.

Robin Jones Editor

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Don Benn remembers July 9, with No. 35028 *Clan Line* trips marking the end of Southern steam.

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COVER: The culmination of more than 20 years' worth of hard graft, on August 18 LBSCR Brighton Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* worked its first passenger-carrying trains on the Bluebell Railway with a dining service for the project's supporters. That same evening it ran three crew familiarisation training trips to Horsted Keynes, pictured in the mellow light at Sloop Bridge on the second of these runs. See Headline News, pages 6/7. OWEN HAYWARD

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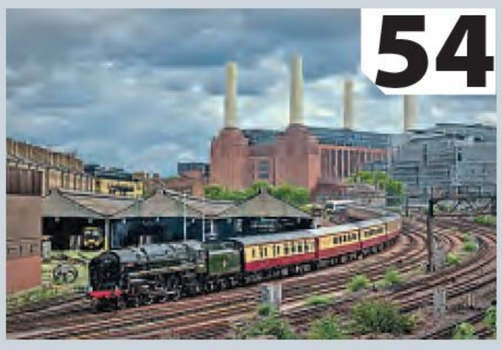
BR 7MT No. 70000 *Britannia* approaches London Victoria on July 23. ROB BATTY



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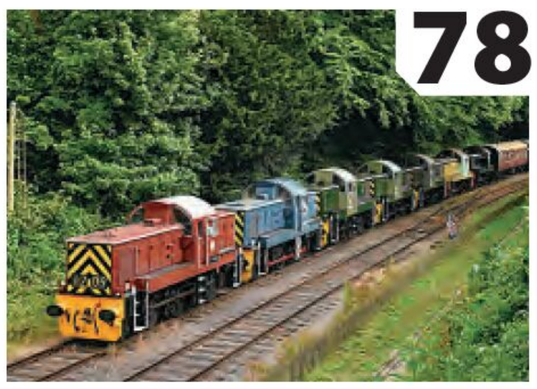
From Great Western to Eastern Region!
The first new-build to enter service in 2024, GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange,* has been delighting the crowds during summer visits to two of the UK's top seaside heritage lines on opposite sides of the coast, reports Robin Jones.



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Celebrating the 'Teddy Bears': Class 14s at 60
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A celebration of firsts 84
Every year the Isle of Man rail transport network hosts a week-long celebration incorporating all available traction. For 2024, the celebrations focused on several anniversaries – as well as the latest addition to the island's rail offerings. Owen Hayward reports.

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The empty space beneath the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's Grade II-listed water tower at Keighley station has embarked on an exciting new double life, as Sally Clifford reports.

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Preserved identities to be found amid Bachmann and Farish announcements. Rails of Sheffield unveils LBSCR K class in OO.

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Bluebell Railway's resident chaplain, the Rev David Murdoch, blesses *Beachy Head* at Sheffield Park during the locomotive's launch ceremony. JAMES CUMMINS/BRPS

Atlantic Group chairman David Taylor (right) shakes hands with PLC acting chairman Neil Glaskin, having formally handed over the locomotive to the company. JAMES CUMMINS/BRPS

Atlantic Group chairman Terry Coles gives his thanks to all who were involved with and supported the construction of No. 32424. OWEN HAYWARD

Blending in perfectly:

Bluebell's *Beachy Head* enters service

By Owen Hayward

AUGUST 18 was a day of celebration for supporters and all involved in the construction of the Bluebell Railway's LBSCR 4-4-2 Brighton Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head*, which has claimed the title of Britain's newest steam locomotive from GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange*.

The completion of new-build steam projects has seen a plethora of locomotives enter service in the past 12 months alone, with the aforementioned Grange having held the mantle of 'newest' since debuting at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in May. However while the Grange and the likes of GWR Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* fill a gap in the GWR 4-6-0 collection, *Beachy Head*'s completion is perhaps a little more significant in representing a design that harks back to the pre-Grouping era – at a cost of £1.25 million.

The original H2 class Atlantics were introduced in 1911 to a design of DE Marsh, being constructed at Brighton Works and sharing the London to Brighton express and Pullman services with their H1 predecessors.

The original *Beachy Head* was withdrawn in April 1958, by which time it was the last of its class still in service. The following month, it was cut up for scrap in a move lamented by many and cited in the December 1959 edition of The Bluebell Times as an "irreparable catastrophe" at a time when "as each week goes by, more interesting pre-Grouping classes [were becoming] extinct".

From the ashes

Thankfully, following the discovery of some ex-GNR Atlantic boilers at a site in Essex, the chance of reviving one of these lost locomotives was not without hope. Project manager Keith Sturt, who was one of those who went to inspect the boilers in 1986, said: "They had clearly not been touched since being removed from the locomotives as they still had asbestos present. They were stripped of this by a specialist in Brightlingsea, which is where we then inspected the two of them. One was scrap, but the one we ended up with was in very good condition, so was quickly purchased.

"It lay dormant at Sheffield Park until about 2000, although other parts were acquired in that time. In 2005 I decided I wanted to retire from my position in the railway's workshops and the group's chairman, Terry Cole, asked if I would head the project to build the new Atlantic, to which I agreed.

"After then it was simply a case of gathering parts and people, though I don't think it really got serious until we decided to build Atlantic House at Sheffield Park, which was completed in 2006.

"Perhaps the biggest challenge has been completing all the certification paperwork, which I often joke will weigh about the same as the completed engine."

On August 18, 2024, 56 years after original last ran in service, the new *Beachy Head* was launched into service at a handover ceremony at Sheffield Park, arranged to formally present the locomotive to the railway's plc.

Speaking to those gathered, Bluebell Railway Atlantic Group chairman Terry Coles gave his thanks to all involved in the project, from the hands-on engineers through to fundraisers and those with secretarial roles.

Of Keith's project management, he said: "Flexibility and thinking outside the box have always been key to solving many problems. Importantly, he assembled a small workforce with very different skills, capable of designing, making, assembling, and finishing the locomotive.

"Building a locomotive in a shed without a pit is no menial task; it could easily have become 'Eric Morecambe' – having all the right parts, but not

The local bovine population graze unfazed by *Beachy Head* as it approaches Horsted Keynes with its first passenger-carrying service on August 18. OWEN HAYWARD

Blue skies and sunshine graced *Beachy Head*'s launch train, with the Atlantic seen on Freshfield Bank with the 2.45pm 'Golden Arrow' trip for the new-build project's supporters. NICK GILLIAM

necessarily in the right order.

"Great credit must also go to Fred Bailey, whose design skills have enabled him to produce more than 1000 engineering drawings for the project, often from scant information, and many of these essential parts he then went on to make himself."

Invaluable support

As with any project of this magnitude, it can only happen thanks to dedicated support. With many of those who funded and built the locomotive present at the ceremony, Terry addressed them by highlighting that the day was in celebration of their support, and that it would not have been possible without them.

"You have stuck with us through the years leading up to date and heard me say 'just another two years' from about 2010.

"The result is this wonder locomotive that will become the pride of the Bluebell's fleet."

Group secretary David Taylor then presented PLC acting chairman Neil Glaskin with a certificate that officially handed over the locomotive, with Neil promising that the railway would "take great care" of it. "A masterpiece of outstanding dedication and achievement, *Beachy Head* represents the conclusion of a remarkable journey which has given everyone the chance to see this once-extinct class of locomotive return to life," he said.

No. 32424 then worked a 'Golden Arrow' lunch service exclusively for supporters and volunteers, putting the Atlantic at the head of the railway's Pullman stock in a scene reminiscent of the RCTS 'Brighton Works Centenary Tour' run on October 5, 1952.

Footplate crew have spoken highly of the locomotive's performance. Driver Henry Mowforth said: "It feels like an old engine but is a great machine for work. It's easy to prepare, is sure-footed, and will be a superb middle-sized job performer."

***Beachy Head* works the supporters' special away from Sharpthorne tunnel bound for East Grinstead.** COURTENAY FORDER

Beachy Head worked its first public trains on August 23, with the bank holiday weekend immediately following it dedicated to a celebration of Brighton Works locomotives, with BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80151 (running as No. 80154, the last locomotive outshopped there), SR battle of Britain Pacific No. 34053 *Sir Archibald Sinclair*, and LBSCR A1 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* in service. Full coverage of this will appear in the next issue of *Heritage Railway*.

What's next? Atlantic group commences B4 and Radial tank assessments

ATLANTIC House has not remained empty since *Beachy Head* vacated it in March, as another Atlantic was immediately moved in. LSWR Adams radial 4-4-2T No. 488 is one of the next locomotives being tackled by the group alongside B4 0-4-0T No. 96 *Normandy*, the latter of which is already well-stripped for work to commence.

The overhaul of *Normandy* is being carried out on behalf of the Bulleid Society, which owns the locomotive, and is perfectly poised to bring back a steam shunting turn for which the railway once had the only regularly rostered duty for it until its withdrawal for overhaul in 2006.

No. 488, meanwhile, is set to be a lengthy project, but its Atlantic wheel arrangement has ensured that Atlantic House does not need to be renamed. Keith Sturt, who was responsible for stopping the locomotive in 1990 when boiler issues were identified, saidd: "It is subject to an inspection, but a new boiler will be a last resort. Mechanically, it should be straightforward.

"It's a lovely locomotive. There's something graceful about it that portrays the Victorian and Edwardian era it worked through.

"We will raise the money as best we can before we either have enough to rebuild or replace the boiler as needed, which may involve sending it away to a contractor."

Although hesitant to commit to a timescale, it has been estimated that it will likely be at least 10 years before the Radial tank will be in or near a position to start running, subject to funding and volunteers.

*To donate, visit bluebell-railway.com/trust/make-a-donation/

Adams Radial tank No. 488 (above) is being readied for its assessment for overhaul, while B4 No. 96 *Normandy* (left) has been swiftly stripped since entering Atlantic House in May. OWEN HAYWARD

Tornado's Nene Valley visit postponed until October

By Robin Jones

THE planned August bank holiday weekend visit of Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* to the Nene Valley Railway was cancelled and will now take place in October, it was announced.

The two-and-a-half year overhaul of the locomotive had been due to be completed in time for it to be moved from Loughborough on the Great Central Railway to Wansford on August 19.

However, a statement issued by the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust issued on that date said: "Following a hopeful start to last week, with a warming fire lit, it has become apparent that we no longer have the time required to confidently meet our August bank holiday heritage line commitments and operate reliably.

"We had hoped to expedite the running-in process by having a boiler inspector visit the engine at the end of last week. However, despite provisional agreement, it did not prove possible. The relevant inspections are now booked for this week. The engine has today been in steam, with pressure raised to the full 250psi.

"In effect, with the necessity to cool the engine before travel, this left no time for meaningful mileage accumulation before moving to the NVR, leaving no contingency time to address any potential minor issues that may arise. This risked last-minute disappointment for the NVR and its visitors; something we did not wish to occur.

Recovering time

"Therefore, in conjunction with NVR, difficult decisions have been made to prioritise *Tornado*'s running-in closer to our engineering resources in Loughborough and move our NVR visit to an extended period in October. In so doing, we are able to recover four working days into the programme that would have been blocked for transport and thereby expedite the locomotive's return to the main line.

"Following work on the injectors, static steam tests are now underway at the GCR. Engineering director Ben McDonald and operations manager Huw Parker were both with the engineering team at Loughborough into the weekend, testing the atomisers, turbo generators, air pump and other auxiliary systems which require steam pressure. Once *Tornado* is signed off by the boiler inspector, the locomotive will commence mileage accumulation at the GCR, including running at up to 60mph. After a short period of running-in and testing, the engine will then move to Tyseley Locomotive Works as a base for main line testing in the first half of September."

***Tornado* steams outside Loughboroush shed after a warming fire was lit on August 13.** A1 SLT

A NVR statement said that the line was "extremely disappointed" that the trust has had to again postpone the visit of *Tornado,* but that the line recognises that this is the result of external factors over which the trust has no control.

"It is the nature of steam locomotive overhauls that not everything goes to plan, but we know that *Tornado* has a loyal and enthusiastic following and we hope that they will bear with us."

Tornado will be now visiting the NVR on October 17-19 during the half term week. Tickets are available at nvr.org.uk

As reported last issue, *Tornado*'s first main line tour since overhaul is booked to be 'The Ribblehead Rambler' from Leicester on September 21, picking up at East Midlands Parkway, Chesterfield, Doncaster and Leeds for a trip over the Settle and Carlisle line, crossing Ribblehead Viaduct in both directions and steam-hauled throughout. Its earlier September trips were cancelled after problems installing the braking system arose.

For details of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's tours and to book, visit www.a1steam.com or telephone 01325 488215.

Above: The first fire roars inside the grate. A1SLT

Left: The fire in *Tornado's* gate is stoke as the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's chairman, Steve Davies (right), watches on. A1SLT

Severn Valley Railway shortlisted as finalist for trio of local tourism awards

THE Severn Valley Railway has been selected as a finalist in three separate categories – Large Visitor Attraction, Business Event Venue of the Year and the Unsung Hero – for the 2024/2025 Visit Worcestershire Awards, which has received a record number of applications this year.

SVR's managing director, Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, said: "We pride ourselves in putting our visitors front and centre, while also keeping focus on the history, passion and commitment that have made us 'the leading standard-gauge steam railway', according to VisitEngland.

"We are constantly listening to visitor feedback and making improvements. This is borne out by 150 five-star visitor reviews on Tripadvisor in the last year, and the fact that we have held more than 50 bespoke corporate events in the past year, with excellent levels of satisfaction and repeat bookings.

"I am especially pleased that our young volunteer Charlie Delaney is now getting the recognition he deserves as a finalist in the Unsung Heroes category.

"At just 17 years old, Charlie volunteers in several roles, including trainee locomotive cleaner and trainee guard, and as a member of platform staff at our Kidderminster station. Plus, he's done plenty of shifts as a Christmas elf! He's nothing if not versatile, and Charlie embodies the dedicated spirit of all our volunteers."

Charlie said: "I've always loved railways and the SVR in particular. Volunteering here is my chance to pay back the place that has given me and my whole family such pleasure over the years. I love being part of this relaxed and happy family of volunteers."

Visit Worcestershire will announce the winners at a special event in March.

Pre-order Issue 324: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Left: On August 20, LSWR O2 0-4-4T No. W24 *Calbourne* returned to service at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway following the refitting of the wheelsets. The sole-surviving example of its class, *Calbourne* had been out of service for the past 10 months as its driving wheels required new tyres – the first time it has required this since entering preservation. As the IoWSR's flagship locomotive, a swift resolution was sought and the wheelsets were despatched to South Devon Engineering in March, with an appeal launched to raise the £36,000 needed to help foot the bill. Following their return journey across the Solent in July, *Calbourne* was swiftly reassembled. A steam test was carried out on August 13, with running-in performed three days later. Its first public duty was an evening fish and chips service, pictured approaching Ashey. JOHN FAULKNER/IOWSR

Wisbech revided – modified Drewry debuts at Mangapps

LITTLE over a year after moving to Essex from its previous home at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway, BR Drewry Class 04 No. 11103 has emerged from the workshops on the Mangapps Railway Museum at Burnham-on-Crouch in a guise not seen for nearly 60 years.

Built in 1952 at the Vulcan Foundry under contract from the Drewry Car Co, No. 11103 was one of three class members allocated to working the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway.

Originally operated by GER Class C53/LNER J70 0-6-0 tram locomotives, their displacement by the newly-constructed trio in 1952 saw the branch become the first line in Britain to be wholly operated by diesel traction under BR, with the line lasting up until closure under the Beeching axe in 1966. Much like the steam trams, the 04s were fitted with cowcatchers and sideplates in accordance with Board of Trade regulations, features that were removed from the locomotives when redeployed elsewhere.

No. 11103 is the only survivor of the trio built for the W&U route. It was offered for sale by its private owner in March 2023 and a sale was swiftly agreed, with the locomotive moving to Mangapps later that month. Since then it has been in the railway's workshops for radiator repairs to be concluded and the locomotive reverted to its original guise, complete with the tramway modifications.

On August 18, No. 11103 emerged ready for testing. It was due to operate at the bank holiday weekend gala alongside a later-build classmate No. 11104, as well as three Class 03s and up to two Class 31s.

A guise not carried for nearly 60 years, 04 No. 11103 has been returned to its Wisbech & Upwell tramway configuration at Mangapps and was due to work its first trains as such over the bank holiday weekend gala. JOHN JOLLY

New president for Tramway Museum Society inaugurated

NEW Tramway Museum Society president Jason Hardy was inaugurated at the National Tramway Museum in Crich on August 10. He has taken over the role from Sue Whiteley.

Jason works as a fire alarm engineer in South Yorkshire. A society member since from about 2018, he started as a conductor, went on to join the driving school and became a driver, and then finally became a duty inspector. He also heads up the volunteer care team at Crich, which undertakes tasks such as cleaning, painting and gardening during the winter months.

He said: "It's just such a huge honour. I love the museum and spending time there with my tramway family, especially with the care team in winter. I would like to focus my term on celebrating our volunteers and do whatever I can to promote the work they do."

"My grandad was a bus conductor and was the person who started my obsession with transport."

Jason Hardy at the helm of Sheffield tram No. 74. TMS

Turntable acquired by Helston Railway

THE Helston Railway has bought the former Hull Botanic Gardens shed 60ft turntable from the North Norfolk Railway.

It is the last in a series of merry-go-round moves for the turntable. Installed at Hull in 1955, it was later sold by Network Rail to the South Devon Railway for a nominal £1 for a planned new museum in Buckfastleigh. Resold to the Poppy Line in 2016, it was stored at Holt station but again became surplus to the requirements of developments planned there.

Helston general manager Colin Savage said that the turntable will be stored for use on the railway's planned new station on the outskirts of Helston.

Lottery £250k grant funding secures Bluebell's participation in Rail200

By Owen Hayward

FRESH from the euphoria of the launch of Brighton Atlantic 4-4 No. 32424 *Beachy Head* on August 18 (pages 6/7), the Bluebell Railway had further cause for celebration after successfully securing grant funding to enable it to participate in the Rail200 programme with a major event scheduled to take place on the line during summer 2025.

As previously reported, Rail200 will be a national programme of events to celebrate the bicentenary of the September 1825 opening of the first public steam-operated railway in the world between Stockton and Darlington. With many of the UK's heritage lines planning ways to be involved in the celebrations, the Bluebell is aiming to host Railway 200@Bluebell Railway that will not only feature Rail Past, as befits a heritage set-up, but also Rail Present and Rail Future too.

To this end, on August 19, the line revealed that it had been awarded a £250,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will help cover the costs of attractions and exhibitions, and to also fund essential repairs to Horsted Keynes station where they will mainly be located.

Horsted Keynes, often described as the 'jewel in the railway's crown,' has been the subject of major renovation works in recent years that has seen woodwork on its canopies renewed and repairs made to the Grade-II listed station building, with an appeal launched earlier this year to fund new platform edging slabs to replace the ageing and damaged ones that have been present for more than 140 years.

Bluebell Railway plc chairman Neil Glaskin said: "We are delighted by this support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will enable us to put on a great show for everyone to enjoy and, we hope, find educational."

Railway 200@Bluebell Railway will open to the public in August 2025.

Immediately beforehand, the railway is preparing to host many schools for educational and careers-orientated visits, combined with the chance to ride behind one of the heritage steam locomotives.

With school budgets becoming ever tighter, the railway is seeking sponsors to help fund these educational visits.

Roy Watts MBE, chairman of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, said: "We exist not just for the conservation of the UK's railway heritage, but also to educate and enthuse young people a general interest in railways.

"Both we and the rail industry urgently need an injection of youth to take up careers in the railway industry."

Interested sponsors should contact BRPS trustee Roger Kelly by emailing roger.kelly@bluebell-railway.com

Sarah Siddons comes home

WITH London Transport Museum's 1938TS unit having recently been gracing parts of the Underground network, many have wondered where another of the heritage icons of the capital had been hiding. That question was answered on August 5 when Metropolitan Railway Bo-Bo No. 12 *Sarah Siddons* emerged from Eastleigh Works, where it had been since 2022 for contract repair work.

In need of replacement wheelsets, No. 12 had been under the care of Arlington Fleet Services, which also carried out a repaint of the 102-year-old locomotive. The repaint was completed last July; however, conscious that the required work to jack the locomotive up to access the running gear would be lengthy, the bodywork was wrapped up to protect the paintwork.

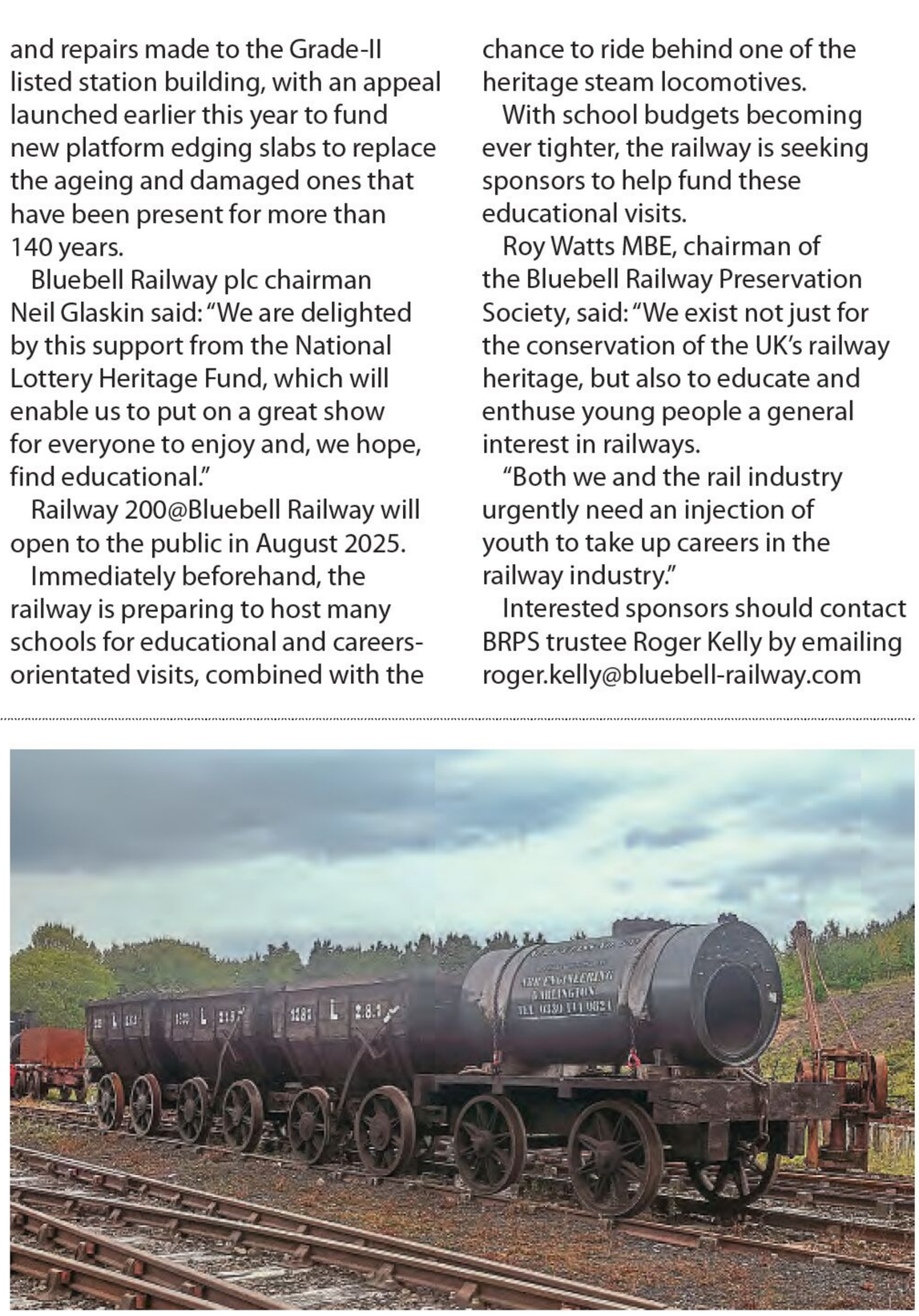
Since then, extensive research was undertaken in order to acquire the correct components required for the new wheelsets, made challenging by a lack of documentation relating to modifications that had been applied during No. 12's life to date.

An Arlington spokesman said: "This was indeed a very protracted process, but it was ultimately successful. The required pans and axles and so on were procured and our wheelshop manufactured the new wheelsets. Not bad for a 100-plus years old loco!"

***Sarah Siddons*, with the protective layer removed, emerged from the works sandwiched between a pair of Class 73s and was taken on test to Fareham and back to check that all was well. This test deemed successful and No.12, along with London Underground's 4TC unit, which had been stabled at Eastleigh following recent main line tour outings, were returned to LU's West Ruislip depot, the convoy including four of the electro-diesels for motive power.**

A LTM spokesperson advised that the locomotive was included in its plans for future heritage vehicle outings, but no such trips were currently confirmed.

Time to go home: Bo-Bo No. 12 *Sarah Siddons*, along with London Underground's 4TC unit, prepare to depart Eastleigh following the Metropolitan Railway locomotive's new wheelsets fitment and repaint by Arlington Fleet Services. CARL WATSON/AFS



The new boiler from Beamish Museum's scheme to recreate NER K class 0-4-0T No.559 was on show on August 19. As reported in issue 299, the project will recreate the first of the class that comprised just five examples, including the marine-style boiler that had a cylindrical flue into which the grate was fitted. Once completed, it will operate out of the museum's recreated NER Rowley station. JAMES GROUNDWATER

Swanage seaside concert to raise funds for railway

A LIVE music concert in aid of the Swanage Railway Trust's Save Your Railway £450,000 appeal and also the Isle of Purbeck cancer support group Cancare is to be held in the resort on August 31.

Music By The Sea will be staged in the natural amphitheatre of the Prince Albert Gardens, overlooking Swanage and the bay.

Now in its fourth year, the annual memorial concert is organised by Swanage couple Vicki and Jonathan Searle, whose 25-year-old son Henry died of a brain tumour in April 2021 after a seven-year battle against the illness.

It features music from across the decades thanks to more than 20 local bands and singers, who are performing free of charge in a nine-and-a-half-hour concert hosted by Brian Travers.

Vicki, who works in the line's office, said: "Henry loved to ride on the Swanage Railway's steam trains as a child and later on he worked on the heritage line's 'Wessex Belle' dining trains as a waiter."

Jonathan added: "Henry was a brilliant musician who played the guitar and sang in bands."

Tickets can be bought on the gate from 10am. No entry is permitted after 6pm.

To donate to Save Your Railway, visit www.swanagerailway.co.uk/save-your-railway

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Big variety and a return at two Dean Forest galas

THE Dean Forest Railway's Royal Forest of Steam weekend will have two classes of locomotive that have never visited the line before – and it was additionally poised to host two main line locomotives at its diesel gala too!

The latter event, which will run on September 14/15, will see resident Class 08 No. 08769, recently reliveried into BR blue, and Class 14 D9521 joined by a pair of Rail Operations Group's Class 37s, the numbers of which were yet to be confirmed as we went to press. The line-up also includes the previously announced Class 73 E6003 (appearing courtesy of the Electro-Diesel Group and the Swindon & Cricklade Railway) and Class 25 No. 25262, which has also been freshly turned out in BR blue by South Devon Diesel Traction, and its appearance marks the first time in preservation that a blue 'Rat' will have visited the forest.

The weekend will also see the National Wagon Preservation Group's rake of TTA tank wagons in action behind several of these locomotives, with rides aboard a brake van coupled to the consist expected to be available.

The November 2/3 steam gala will have up to five different locomotives in service too.

Headlining will be Jonathan Jones-Pratt's Hawksworth pannier No. 9466, from the West Somerset Railway, marking the first visit of an example of the class to the route in its history. It will be joined by GWR 0-6-2T No. 6695, courtesy of 6695 Locomotive Ltd, and which is usually resident at the S&CR with E6003. Again, this visit marks another first of its kind to the forest.

The pair will run alongside WR 0-6-0PT No. 9681 and 4575 GWR2-6-2T No. 5541, the latter making its final gala appearance before it is withdrawn for overhaul.

Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2147 *Uskmouth No. 1* may return to service in time for the Dean Forest Railway's November 2/3 steam gala. ANDREW LONG/DFR

It is hoped that the gala will mark the debut Peckett works 0-4-0ST No. 2147 of 1952 *Uskmouth No. 1*, its overhaul nearing completion at Norchard shed as this issue of *Heritage Railway* magazine went to press.

Built the Central Electricity Generating Board's Uskmouth power station, it arrived on the DFR in 1971 following withdrawal and became the first steam locomotive to work trips at the first Parkend Steam Day that year. Following receipt of £15,000 from two different grants, the Peckett was stripped in 2019, when work to return it to steam began.

Subject to completion and testing, it is expected to operate shuttles within Parkend's station limits each day. Goods trains and double-headed workings are also due to take place throughout the gala. For further details about both events, visit deanforestrailway.co.uk

Haworth comes to the Helston Railway!

THE Keighley & Worth Valley Railway has long been famous as the setting for the TV and movie versions of Edith A Nesbitt's classic The Railway Children – but the Helston Railway has now attracted rave reviews with its own production, staged in partnership with a Cornish theatre company during five nights in mid-August.

To watch the Helston Theatre Company's play, the audience had to travel aboard a steam train in the company of cast members dressed in Edwardian costumes. The train ran from Prospidnick to Truthall Halt, from where passengers walked to a nearby marquee to watch Mike Kenny's version of the novel.

Jenny Agutter, who starred in the 1970 big screen version, shared her well wishes for the production in a social media video (www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1669398487214586).

Grace Benney, Hollie Davis and Fraser Oliver played the Waterbury siblings Roberta, Peter and Phyllis in the Helston adaptation.

Helton Railway general manager Colin Savage said: "We all had a very busy but fabulous time doing this. Running trains in the dark was exciting for all our passengers, and the newly-installed lighting on Prospidnick platform proved its worth, as did our new access road."

Above: The Railway Children was staged in a marquee at Truthall Halt. SI COLGAN/HELSTON THEATRE COMPANY

Right: Mr Perks (aka Mike Hosking) with Wendy Ivell, who is the station manager at Truthall Halt alongside her husband Steve. STEVE IVELL

Storm closes Swiss cog railway

CENTRAL Switzerland's iconic Brienz Rothorn Railway has been closed for the rest of the season following a devastating storm on August 12 that has hit the local tourist industry.

The 1892-built Alpine steam-powered cog railway, which runs from May until October, sustained damage to about 1.3 miles of track during heavy rain, while another four-fifths of a mile may have suffered ballast contamination, with repairs estimated to take several months at a cost of £4.5 million.

The hotel at the summit of Rothorn mountain has also been closed.

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SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

The dark side of Santa appears on the West Somerset

AS heritage lines around the UK start taking bookings for their festive season services, the West Somerset Railway is offering one with a big bad difference - an adults-only Father Christmas trip.

The Bad Santa trip will be "brimming with inappropriate jokes and stories and is not for the faint-hearted!" said a railway statement.

The steam-hauled round trip aboard the First Class Quantock Belle dining train and departs from Bishops Lydeard on December 13 at 7pm.

"Expect an evening of delicious food and hearty laughs," said the statement. "Purchasing a ticket means you're ready for a night of risqué language, innuendo, and mischievous behaviour. This event is an excellent choice for a Christmas party and is strictly for adults only!"

The railway will also be running a host of the usual services for the season, including Santa Expresses, carol trains, a panto train, and a special train to Minehead station Christmas market on November 30 and December 1.

For more details of any of these services and to book, visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

More movie stardom for Severn Valley

THE Severn Valley Railway has been used for location filming of an upcoming movie, All That Glitters, inspired by Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

Written and directed by Peter Lavery, it features Elliot Grihault (Lucerys Velaryon in Home Box Office's House of the Dragon) in the leading role, Tim Downie (Outlander and Toast of London) and Paul Ready (Kevin Brady in BBC's Motherland).

On August 12, Bewdley station was transformed into one serving the fictional village of Kingley, while much of the filming took place in nearby Hagley, and other scenes were recorded in Bewdley town centre. The movie is earmarked for release next spring.

Bagnall No. 2819, formerly known as *Charles Wytock*, leaving Woody Bay for the first time after being renamed *Sir George Newnes* on August 13. TONY NICHOLSON/L&B

Renamed L&B locomotive is launched at Woody Bay

By Robin Jones

THE latest member of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's operational fleet was officially launched into traffic at a ceremony held at Woody Bay on August 13.

WG Bagnall 4-4-0T No. 2819 of 1945, formerly known as *Charles Wytock*, was renamed *Sir George Newnes,* after the founding chairman of the L&BR Company who contributed most of the money to build the line in 1898, by Christopher Newnes, his great nephew.

Built for the Tongaat Sugar Company of South Africa for £2775, the locomotive entered service there in 1946 and was named *Charles Wytock* after a company director. By 1963, the Bagnall was in use as a stationary boiler and was subsequently plinthed. Bought for preservation along with sister *Sinembe* in about 1993, the pair were stored at the Gelert's Farm Works on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway until 1997, when they were moved to Middlesborough for restoration.

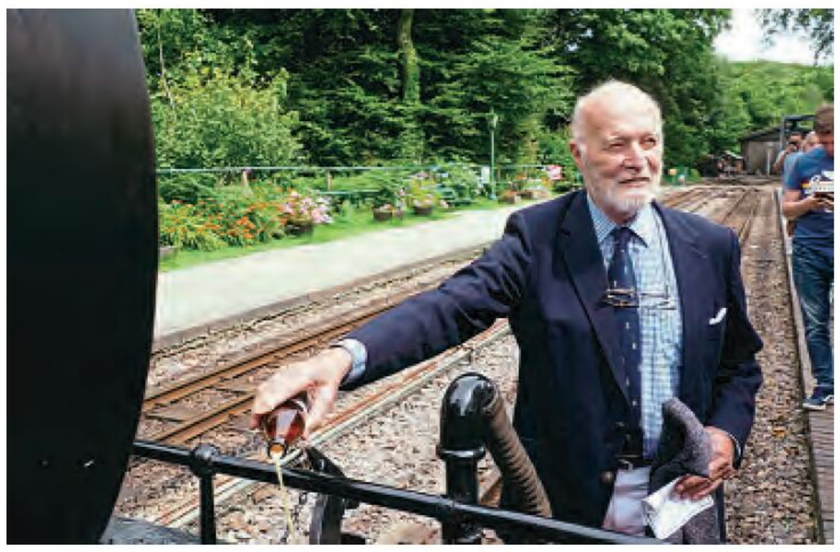
After extensive restoration work, No. 2819 was sold to an owner who brought it to Woody Bay in spring 2014 to complete the restoration, including the fitting of vacuum and steam brakes. It was used on several occasions until major boiler repairs were required.

In 2019, the locomotive was purchased by a consortium of L&B Trust members who set about bringing it back to working order for regular operation on the line. Six of the 13 Tongaat 4-4-0Ts survive: four in the UK, including the sister of *Charles Wytock*, *Isibutu*, now at the Statfold Barn Railway; one in Texas, *Simpola*; and the sixth, *Mono,* survives in a poor condition in South Africa.

During an extensive overhaul which included the manufacture of a new boiler, the decision was taken to rename No. 2819 and give it a decidedly local connection.

A wealthy London publisher whose *Strand Magazine* gave the world the Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir George Newnes built a holiday home in Lynton and also largely funded the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway and Lynton's magnificent Town Hall.

The locomotive will be in action at the line's September 28/29 autumn gala, in which the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's small England 0-4-0STT No. 4 *Palmerston* will be the guest.



Left: Christopher Newnes, the great nephew of L&B founding chairman Sir George Newnes, christens the Bagnall 4-4-0T in the traditional way. TONY NICHOLSON/L&B

As highlighted last issue, the engine has recently been overhauled by the Vale of Rheidol Railway (picture, page 37), where it will run for the next few weeks before returning to Porthmadog for the October 4-6 Bygones Weekend – but travelling back to North Wales the long way round via the L&B.

Also in the gala line-up will be replica L&B Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* and Keff Stuart Joffre 0-6-0T No. 2451 of 1915 *Axe*.

There will be 7¼in gauge and 16mm gauge garden railways in operation, classic vehicles and displays, First World War re-enactors West Country Tommies on both days, miniature traction engines, marquee attractions, a tea room, barbecue and real ale bar, and free children's games and a bouncy castle.

➜ The naming of *Sir George Newnes* is the subject of the latest short video about the L&B, which can be viewed at https://tinyurl.com/steamonthemoor

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Wartime Underground shelter visit in new Hidden London tours

A NEW trip to see the Clapham South Underground station deep-level Second World War air raid shelter is on offer as part of London Transport Museum's award-winning Hidden London guided tours, running to the end of March.

This expanded and revised tour of the shelter 11 storeys below ground will be hosted by two guides, with one portraying a 1940s warden to bring history back to life.

Visitors will be able to see the shelter as it looked in wartime thanks to meticulously reconstructed spaces such as the warden's booth and the canteen – all newly reconstructed and based on archive pictures and extensive historical research They will be able to interact with authentic Second World War artefacts sourced by historical experts, discover what an Anderson shelter looked like, and experience sitting on the bunk beds-turned-benches that families would spend their evenings on during air raids.

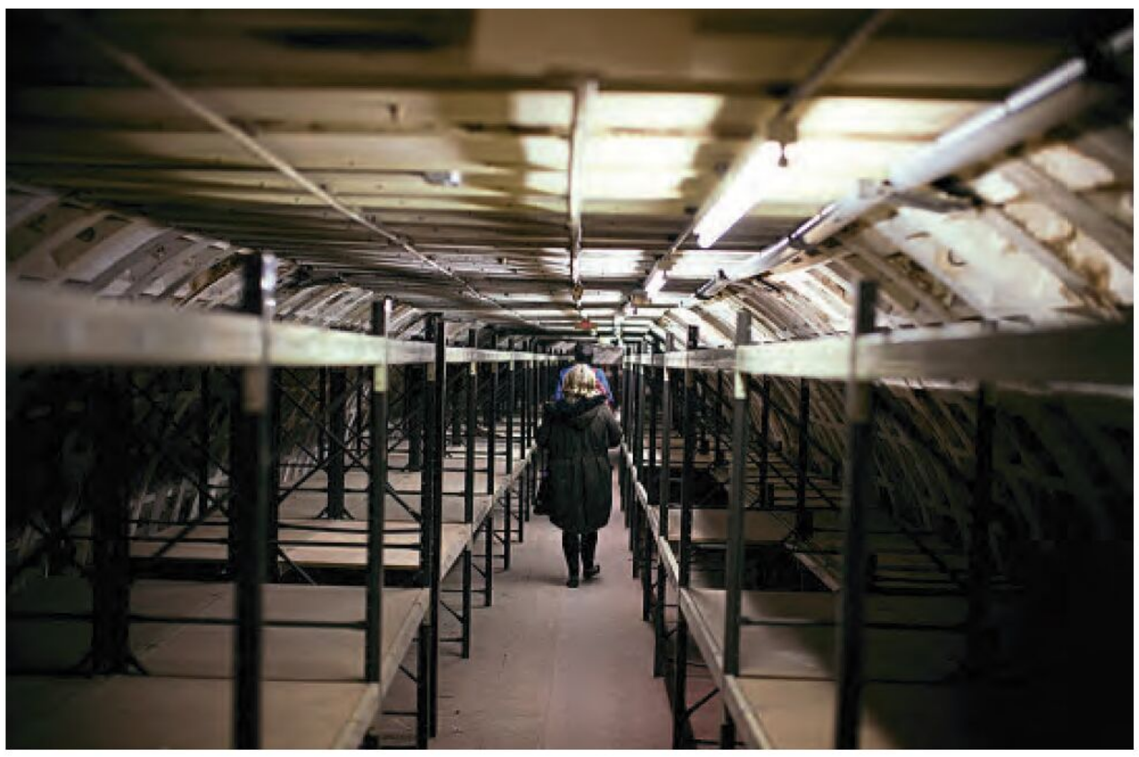
Bunk beds in the Second World War shelter. LTM

Opened in 1944, this secret underground maze was designed to protect more than 8000 people, and featuring canteens, medical stations, and sleeping quarters all hidden beneath the streets of London.

During its 80 years of existence, it sheltered not only wartime Londoners seeking refuge from the air raids, but also in 1948 became home to Caribbean migrants arriving on the Empire Windrush, and later visitors to the Festival of Britain.

The museum said that this tour will be the most immersive Hidden London experience to date.

LTM's director of content, Chris Nix, said: "It's incredibly powerful to present such unique history in such an authentic setting. Our decade-long research has ensured that we honour those who lived and worked here, delivering their story with the utmost respect and accuracy.



Inside Clapham South shelter you can visit on a new Hidden London tour. LTM

"We are looking forward to delivering Clapham South's story in a new and engaging way to the public."

The tour of Clapham South will start on October 16.

The new tour programme also includes additional dates now available for tours of Baker Street, Euston, Aldwych, Charing Cross, Piccadilly Circus, Clapham South and Holborn, but it will be the last chance to see Down Street, Churchill's secret station, before the tour will be retired for the foreseeable future at the end of September.

Located in Mayfair between Hyde Park Corner and Green Park stations, Down Street had a short life as a working station from 1932 but became critical when it covertly transformed into the Railway Executive Committee's bomb-proof headquarters from there the nation's railways were coordinated and Prime Minister Winston Churchill secretly took refuge inside at the height of the Blitz.

Profits from the tours are used to fund the museum's charity and to continue conserving and sharing London's transport and design heritage.

For more details and to book on the tours, head online to www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Return to Yorkshire for *Eddystone* as Bulleid joins Moorsline gala line-up

BULLEID West Country light Pacific No. 34067 *Eddystone* has been added to the guest list for the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's Annual Steam Gala on September 26-29.

Owned by Southern Locomotives Ltd and based on the Swanage Railway, *Eddystone*, which was outshopped from Brighton Works in 1946 and went straight into traffic from Ramsgate, last visited the NYMR in 2006.

It will join fellow guests GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, from Didcot Railway Centre, and Peter Best's USATC S160 No. 2253 *Omaha*, which is returning from the Dartmouth Steam Railway (News, page 46).

NYMR CEO Laura Strangeway said: "We are absolutely delighted to welcome *Eddystone* to our Annual Steam Gala. This locomotive has a storied history and a unique charm that we know our visitors will love.

"Alongside *Pendennis Castle* and *Omaha*, and our fantastic home fleet, this year's gala promises to be an exciting celebration of steam heritage."

West Country light Pacific No. 34067 *Eddystone* in service at Norden on its Swanage Railway base on January 7. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

The annual beer festival will also run at Goathland station, along with model railway layouts and trade stalls.

To find out more about the gala and to book tickets, visit www.nymr.co.uk/annual-steam-gala

£200k grant for Dundee's transport museum

DUNDEE Museum of Transport has been awarded a £200,000 grant from the Wolfson Foundation towards the restoration of Maryfield Tram Depot, its future home.

Furthermore, Dundee-based Northwood Charitable Trust has pledged £250,000 in addition to previous donations totalling £500,000.

The Grade B-listed tram depot is located in the heart of the Stobswell area, between Stobsmuir Park and Morgan Academy on the Forfar Road, and has been on the Buildings at Risk register since 2000.

The museum has raised more than £2.5 million to fund the renovation.

It aims to raise at least £700,000 more this year, which will enable a main contractor to be appointed in October, and restoration work to begin next spring.

Above: Class 03 No. 03063 *Paul A Mobbs* became the first of its class to run over the Spa Valley Railway when it visited for the gala. The shunter is seen bringing up the rear of an Eridge-Groombridge shuttle at Birchden Junction with Class 207 No. 1317 and Class 08 No. 08922. PHIL BARNES

Left: At first glimpse, it may seem like a timeless scene of a Class 50 with a short train out on the main line – but the reality is not quite so different, No. 50021 *Rodney* having been captured arriving with its short train of Mk. 1 stock at Eridge station on August 2 during the Spa Valley Railway diesel gala. To the left is Southern's Uckfield line, which often results in heritage and modern traction rubbing shoulders here. CHRIS GEE

'Hoover' cleans up at Spa Valley gala

By Owen Hayward

WHILE it cancelled its July 13/14 steam weekend owing to a haulier's tractor unit breakdown delaying locomotive movements, the Spa Valley Railway's August 2-4 summer diesel gala successfully welcomed three visiting classes.

Appearing courtesy of Paul Spacklen and recently repainted into BR large logo blue, Class 50 No. 50021 *Rodney* was undoubtedly the star of the event for many, while Class 03 No. 03063 *Paul A Mobbs* (from the Mid-Norfolk Railway) made history by becoming the first of its class to run between Tunbridge Wells West and Eridge in the heritage era – and possibly even ever! The iconic shunting locomotive ran in top-and-tail formation with Class 08 No. 089022, sandwiching resident Class 207 DEMU No. 1317 on shuttles between the main line interchange and Groombridge station.

The final guest, also from the MNR, was no stranger to the Spa Valley; Class 33 No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson* has visited on three previous occasions but with its Southern Region routes fits in perfectly on the High Weald line.

The event also marked the debut of freshly-outshopped Class 31 No. 31430 *Sister Dora,* which has recently been undergoing bodywork repairs, finished off with a fresh coat of BR blue and white buffers.

The gala welcomed just over 1000 passengers across the three days, which included those who had booked onto fish and chip, real ale and cider, and cheese trains run in tandem with the main event.

The 'Hoover' remained at the line during August and was expected to depart in early September to appear at another diesel gala elsewhere, while Nos. 03063 and 33202 returned to Norfolk in the week following the event, trading places with GWR large prairie No. 4144 which had made a brief return to the MNR to cover services there, making use of the same lorries that had been moving the diesels to and fro.

On September 21/22, the Spa Valley will host its annual model railway exhibition, with up to 30 layouts and displays set to appear as this issue went to press. Amid those will be *Heritage Railway* writer Owen Hayward, who will be joined by a team that includes Max Davies and Paul Lawrence, two former participants of Channel 5's The Great Model Railway Challenge programme. Over the course of the two-day exhibition, they will construct a layout live to demonstrate methods used and the joy of the hobby, while also promoting the benefits to mental and social health that it brings.

The build will be streamed live on YouTube each day, and the team is raising funds for the mental health charity Mind.

Red Wheel for Scarborough's Cliff Lift is a local 'first'

SCARBOROUGH'S Central Tramway has become the latest recipient of a National Transport Trust Red Wheel plaque, which was unveiled at the Top Station by the resort's Charter Mayor, Coun Janet Jefferson, on August 1, Yorkshire Day.

Hunmanby Brass Band provided musical entertainment and a pop-up exhibition celebrating the heritage of the tramway was on display.

NTT vice chairman Jerry Swift said: "This is Scarborough's first Red Wheel and is richly deserved.

"Not only did Scarborough have more funicular railways than any other British town, but transport, and in particular the railways, played such a substantial part in the town's development as one of the UK's premier seaside resorts."

Between Foreshore Road and St Nicholas Gardens by the Central Tramway Company Scarborough Ltd, which still owns it, the tramway opened on August 1, 1881, following the success of the South Bay Cliff Lift, which has been more substantially modernised.

Its winding gear was powered by steam, and the driver had no direct view of the cars as the equipment was sited 60 feet below the Top Station, presumably for safety.

The parallel standard gauge railway tracks are 255 feet long over a slope of 1-in-2. The steam-powered funicular was converted to electric drive between 1910 and 1920, drawing direct current from the town's tramway system.

It used alternating current after 1931, when trams were abandoned.

The motor was relocated under the Top Station and the driver has full view of the cars, which were replaced in 1932.

Safety brakes are located on a rail in the centre of each track.

Jerry Swift, vice chairman of the National Transport Trust, Charter Mayor of Scarborough Coun Janet Jefferson, town crier David Birdsall and Colin Powell, general manager of Scarborough Central Tramway, at the unveiling. NTT

Inset left: The new Red Wheel plaque. NTT

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Back after nine years: No. 3850 in Toddington yard on August 17. IAN CROWDER

Back in black as wartime GWR 2-8-0 steams again following nine-year overhaul project

GWR heavy freight 2-8-0 No. 3850 has moved under its own power following a nine-year overhaul at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway.

The 1942-built locomotive was first allocated to Bristol St Philips Marsh depot, and was later based at Westbury, Severn Tunnel Junction, Aberdare, Banbury and Oswestry, before being withdrawn from Croes Newydd (Wrexham) in August 1965. It was moved to Dai Woodham's scrapyard in Barry in October that year.

It spent more than 18 years in the scrapyard before it became the 151st locomotive to be preserved from there, moving to the West Somerset Railway in March 1984 as the first engine to be purchased by the group which became Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd. It returned to steam in 2006 and was taken out of service for overhaul in 2015 after clocking up 82,000 miles. It was transported to Toddington for the overhaul to be undertaken on the G/WR.

Plenty of work

Due to the cylinder block and both cylinders being cracked, new ones were cast.

No. 3850 has also had a new front end, including extension frames, drag box, buffer beam and racking plate.

The boiler came off No. 3845, which is also owned by DMLL and is in private storage. Riley & Son at Heywood overhauled the boiler before it was returned to the G/WR. The boiler from No. 3850 will be worked on by volunteers later.

The driving wheels from No. 2874 (which were of the later Collett type) were swapped with No. 3850, which had Churchward-type driving wheels, a common practice at Swindon Works.

After having moved under its own steam, on August 17 No. 3850 undertook a cautious runs up and down the yard. The locomotive was expected to carry out light and loaded test runs in the days that followed when a few small issues have been addressed.

No. 3850 has been turned out in wartime GWR black livery, including blacked-out cab side windows.

Two more weeks at Shildon for *Flying Scotsman*

A3 PACIFIC No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*'s stay at the Locomotion museum in Shildon has been extended until September 1.

More than 5000 people have already ridden behind the A3 during the Summer at Locomotion festival, sponsored by Hornby and CrossCountry, after it arrived on July 18, as reported last issue.

The locomotive was due to leave the museum on August 18. After its extended stay was announced, more opportunities to book a ride were released, plus a limited number of previously sold-out exclusive footplate experiences, which offer a once-in-a-lifetime chance to travel alongside the driver in the cab.

Flying Scotsman will also be on static display on selected dates, with an opportunity to explore the cab. The availability of experiences varies according to the date of visit, and full details are available on the Locomotion website.

Due to popular demand, Locomotion is now also offering footplate experiences on a replica of Stephenson's *Rocket* and its Class 08 diesel shunter.

Behind-the-scenes tours of *Flying Scotsman*'s support coach have also been extended until the end the festival.

'Huge hit'

Head of Locomotion Sarah Price said: "Summer at Locomotion has been a huge hit so far. I am thrilled that our visitors will now get the chance to experience *Flying Scotsman* up close right up until the end of the school holidays."

Hornby's marketing manager, Catherine Dunning, said: "At Hornby, we believe in the magic of railways and their ability to inspire, educate, and entertain.

"We look forward to celebrating the history and excitement of rail, and we hope this event will inspire and captivate railway enthusiasts of all ages."

Elsewhere, on Saturday, October 19, the National Motor Museum Trust Ltd at Beaulieu will host an evening called The Flying Scotsman: Restoring An Icon, as part of its Transport Torques lecture series. The National Railway Museum's senior curator of rail transport and technology, Antony Coulls, will share the succeseses and challenges of the 2006-16 restoration project.

To attend, booking details are available at https://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events/transport-torques/

IN BRIEF

➜ **THE East Somerset Railway will host an autumn volunteer recruitment day on September 21, starting from 10.30am, offering roles varying from train preparation and platform staff to permanent way, footplate crew and carriage restoration. To attend, email volunteers@eastsomersetrailway.com or telephone 01749 880417.**

➜ THE 7¼in/5in gauge Riverside Miniature Railway in Riverside Park, St Neots, has become the first of its kind in the country to receive a Keep Britain Tidy Green Flag Award. Award scheme manager Paul Todd MBE said: "Riverside Miniature Railway is a vital green space for communities in St Neots to socialise, enjoy nature, for children to play safely, and it provides important opportunities for park users to improve their physical and mental health."

➜ **THE Wensleydale Railway has become the latest UK heritage line to be awarded a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice award 2024, placing it in the top 10% of listed attractions worldwide listed on Tripadvisor. WR marketing and fundraising manager Nick Keegan said: "Our volunteers and staff regularly receive positive feedback from customers and it's fantastic to have their dedication recognised by this award."**

➜ SEVERN Trent's contractor Forkers has donated a defibrillator to Crich Tramway Village, home of the National Tramway Museum. Crich general manager Dr Mile Galer said: "We are very grateful to Severn Trent and Forkers for this defibrillator in case of any emergencies. We hope that it will not be used, but we have trained first-aiders on hand should it be necessary."

➜ **THE Great Central Railway has vacancies for volunteer travelling ticket inspectors who welcome visitors on board, provide advice and information, and check and clip tickets. "If you're friendly, enjoy engaging with people, and can spare a couple of days a month, we'd love to hear from you," said a GCR statement. Anyone interested should email at eddie.burke@gcrailway.co.uk.**

➜ LAPPA Valley Railway operations manager Ben Harding has been promoted to a director at the St Newlyn East line.

➜ **THE Abbey Station Visitor Centre in Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, will welcome visitors on September 7 and 14 as part of the nationwide Heritage Open Days scheme. The Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust will also be mounting a display at the Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings in Spring Gardens between September 6 and 15.**

Severn Valley line station with carriages up for sale

A STATION which served the Severn Valley line until its northern section closed in September 1963 is on the market for £975,000, complete with two converted Mk. 1 coaches and a pair of vintage freight wagons which are run as a successful holiday let business.

Coalport station, later known as Coalport West, located between Bridgnorth and Ironbridge & Broseley stations, opened in 1862. It is set in about two acres of grounds which include a detached four-bedroom residence, office, and carriages Nos. W25778 and W26014 on a short length of track between the platforms. The freehold of the property is for sale, along with the holiday let business.

The original platforms have been restored and the waiting room has been converted into an office. The site's woodland extends up into the hillside.

For details, contact estate agent Berriman Eaton of Bridgnorth at www.berrimaneaton.co.uk, by phone on 01746 766499 or by email at bridgnorth@berrimaneaton.co.uk

New beer festival at Nottingham museum

THE Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre in Ruddington is to stage a new Road, Rail and Ale Fest from noon to 9pm on Friday, September 6 and Saturday, September 7.

The event at the northern terminus of the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) will showcase about 40 beers from local microbreweries, along with cider and a selection of wine and spirits, with the backdrop of vintage buses, trains and trucks at the site in Mere Way.

Street food from local vendors will also be available, and there will be bands and musicians on stage in the music shed.

Drinkers will be able to have free trips on classic buses from the home-based fleet.

Shipbuilder revives its railway heritage with carriage project

By Robin Jones

Ulster Railway coach No. 33 takes a rare trip into the sunshine during a shunt. The underframe it is currently sitting on is far too large. DCDR

Left: Harland & Wolff operations manager Brian Welsh with his team of apprentices with the railway's underframe designer, David Crone, at the rear, with the marked-out steel for the new underframe. DCDR

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has joined forces with legendary Belfast shipbuilder Harland & Wolff to restore a unique Victorian railway carriage.

The project will serve as a pivotal training opportunity for Harland & Wolff apprentices, immersing them in the heritage skills essential to fabrication and engineering – and it also revives a long connection between the shipbuilder and Northern Ireland's railways.

In the 1930s, Harland & Wolff diversified its manufacturing expertise beyond shipbuilding to produce diesel locomotives that were used locally at Downpatrick and Ballynahinch, and also as far afield as Canada. This rich legacy is now being revitalised with the first railway vehicle to be built by the shipyard since the Second World War.

Built in 1862, carriage No. 33 is the sole survivor from Northern Ireland's first railway company, the Ulster Railway, and is only one of a handful of Irish coaches to survive from the dawn of the railway era into modern times. Indeed, the carriage is closer in age to Stephenson's *Rocket* than it is to most other vehicles in Northern Ireland's railway museums.

'Victorian gem'

The Ulster Railway was formed in 1836 and operated out of Great Victoria Street to Portadown and Armagh, later becoming the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) operating to Dublin. Ironically, this carriage's restoration coincides with rail services on its former home at Great Victoria Street site ending in May 2024.

DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said: "We are thrilled to partner with Harland & Wolff on this historic project. Its enthusiasm for the project to recreate this Victorian gem has completely knocked us over. Against the backdrop of our recovery from the devastating floods in November 2023, it is truly appreciated.

"The team's passion and expertise are invaluable in the restoration of the Ulster Railway No. 33. This collaboration not only honours our shared industrial heritage, but it also provides an excellent training ground for apprentices to learn and master heritage crafts."

No. 33 was a first class family saloon, with two large First Class compartments that were separated by a pair of lavatories. Wealthy families would hire these luxurious compartments for themselves for a day's travel, which, like Titanic, kept them apart from Third Class travellers.

The carriage was retired from railway service in 1920, and the body was removed from its wheels and used as a railway office, then later a farm shed, until it was saved by the DCDR in 1987.

Major milestone

In addition to severe wood rot and structural problems, a major barrier to restoration was the prior removal of the chassis – or underframe – in the 1920s. However, a century later, the recreation of this underframe now serves as a major educational tool, marking a significant milestone in the heritage railway sector in Northern Ireland.

The development of the design has followed best practice from fellow heritage railways in England, with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway providing specialist advice.

The DCDR first teamed up with Queen's University, Belfast, with students undertaking research and design work into the frame, stress calculations, and braking systems, and Harland & Wolff has now come on board to move to the fabrication stage. The required steel is being provided by long-time DCDR supporter Walter Watson Ltd Steel Stockholders, in Castlewellan.

Belfast & County Down Railway Harlandic diesel No. 2 at Ballynahinch. Harland & Wolff designed and built two locomotives for use on the old line between Downpatrick and Ardglass, plus the Ballynahinch and Saintfield branch, but neither have survived. DCDR

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Top marks for new Hopetown Darlington from VisitEngland

By Robin Jones

THE new £27 million Hopetown Darlington museum has been awarded 94% in a recent inspection by VisitEngland's Quality Assured Visitor Attraction Scheme.

As highlighted in our special feature last issue, the north of England's newest major visitor attraction opened on July 16, and it is expected to form a plank of the 2025 bicentenary celebrations of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, the world's first steam-powered passenger line, which are anticipated to attract a sizeable contingent of overseas visitors.

The VisitEngland accreditation covers attractions including museums, art galleries, safari parks, gardens, historic houses and theme parks. The assessor praised the interpretation in Hopetown's North Road Station Museum as "superb, with the story of the railways and Darlington's role in this significant time in history retold in creative and imaginative ways to appeal to a wide range of ages and levels of interest."

Hopetown has welcomed more than 30,000 visitors in the four weeks since it opened, averaging about 875-900 visitors daily. Its most-attended day saw about 1400 visitors.

One of a kind

The next stage in the development of Hopetown will see the launch of The Experiment in September, a fully immersive ride telling the story of how Darlington changed the world through rail travel.

Passengers sit in a reproduction railway carriage mounted on a hydraulic platform. Similar to rides found in theme parks and the only one of its kind in the North East, it was designed and made by the team behind the Shrek Experience in London.

The assessor also complemented the site's redevelopment: "The historic buildings have been lovingly restored to a very high standard and brought back into use while retaining many original features such as the booking office and toilets.

"New additions such as the tower leading to the locomotive works and The Experiment have bold, modern designs to complement the railway heritage.

"Having only been open three weeks, the standards of décor were excellent throughout."

Hopetown Darlington visitor experience manager Natalie Collins said she hoped that that Visit England "will continue to review the visitor experience as part of ongoing future planning and feedback from visitors."

Due to the high scores achieved, Hopetown Darlington will now be nominated for three prestigious VisitEngland accolades: Welcome, Best Told Story and Gold, reflecting the team's commitment to providing a quality visitor experience. Winners of the accolades will be announced later this year.

Development director Leona White-Hannant said: "Given that we had only been open for two weeks at the time of the visit, it is a fantastic achievement and testament to everyone's hard work."

Looking to 2025

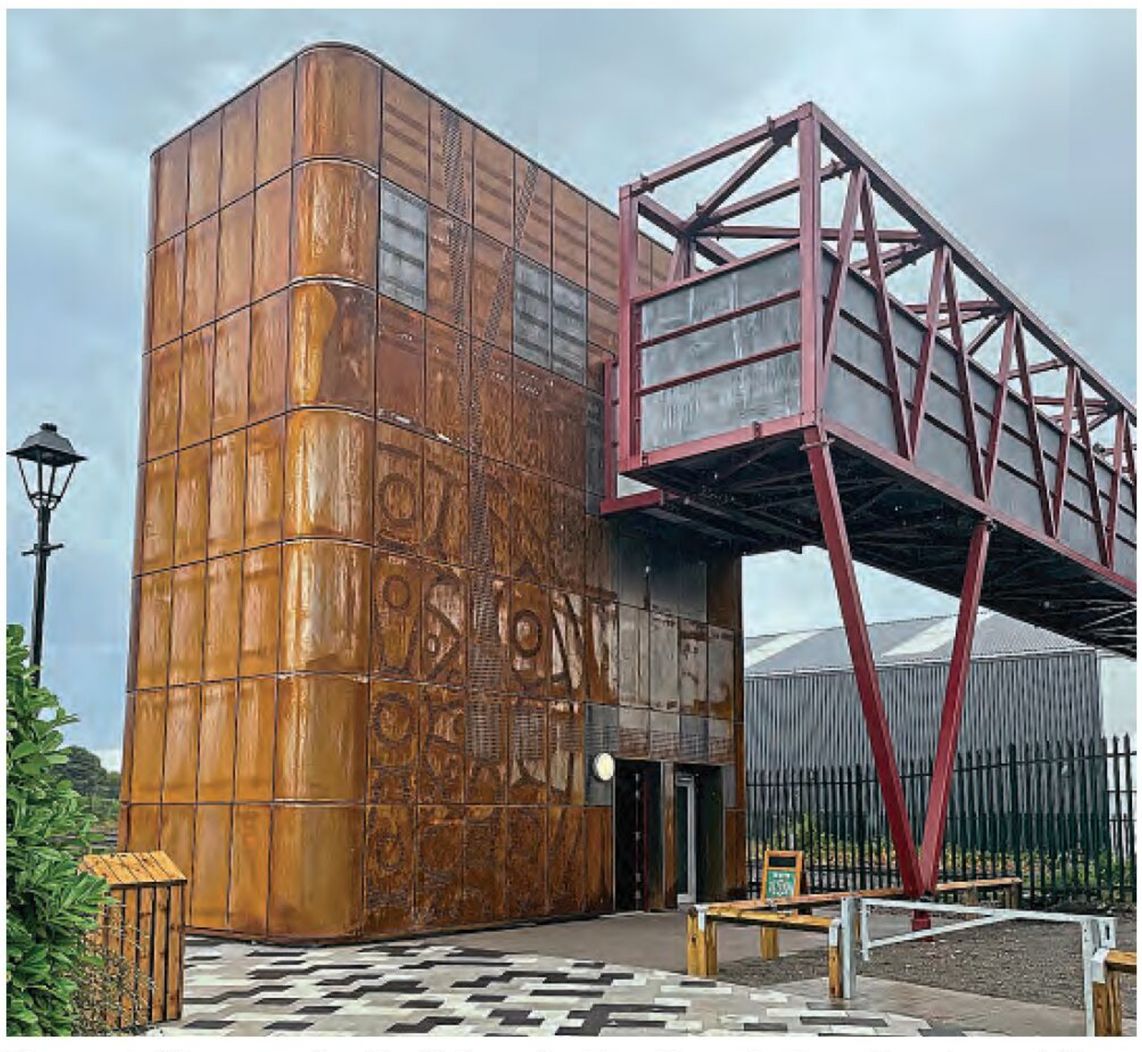
Coun Libby McCollom, Darlington Borough Council's cabinet member for local services, added: "The feedback from visitors has been incredibly positive in our first few weeks of operation. I am delighted that the high quality of experience and the work of everyone involved is being recognised by VisitEngland and hope that more people will visit and enjoy Hopetown Darlington as we build towards our 2025 celebrations."

Site admission is free, while some exhibitions, events and activities carry a separate charge. Pre-booking is recommended to avoid disappointment. More details can be found at www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk

A bridge to success as new A1 Trust workshop link is opened

THE footbridge linking the centre of the Hopetown site to The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's new Darlington Locomotive Works was completed after we closed for press last issue and has since proved highly popular with visitors – who can see full-time steam locomotives under construction and being maintained from the viewing gallery.

The works is being linked to the Bishop Auckland branch which runs alongside Hopetown. Once the connection is completed, the likes of A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* and under-construction Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* will be able to access it for servicing.



The new bridge spanning the Bishops Auckland branch allows Hopetown visitors to access The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's new Darlington Locomotive Works. A1SLT

Support for both ballast-laying and track-laying is being provided by the Army's 507 Special Team Royal Engineers unit, which comprises Reserves, many of whom are professional railway workers in their day jobs and who provide specialist railway expertise to the Army. The trust is anticipating the support of a Regular Army Royal Engineer Unit based in Catterick for a three-to-four week period later in the year.

The trust is benefiting from support from its own volunteers, in particular members of Darlington Railway Preservation Society that occupies a part of neighbouring 1861 Shed, which will become rail-connected as a result of this project.

Meanwhile, there has been a huge response to a public appeal for supporters to sponsor supplies of ballast for the new connecting link – at £22.50 per tonne or £650 per 28-tonne load – delivered from a quarry in Leyburn. So far, 3000 tonnes have been sponsored, and as *Heritage Railway* closed for press, about 25 loads were awaiting delivery, but more is needed to proceed with the project over the winter. To donate, visit www.a1steam.com/sponsoraton#/ or telephone 01325 488215 or email enquiries@a1steam.com

Members of the 507 Special Team Royal Engineers unit outside the 1861 Shed for tracklaying and ballasting duties. A1SLT

Taking shape: The tracks leading to the new Darlington Locomotive Works. A1SLT

Visitors queueing to enter Hopetown Darlington. DBC

Pre-order Issue 324: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey declared major Moorsline success

By Robin Jones

AT THE conclusion of the £10 million Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, the line has reviewed the achievements and progress made over the past seven years.

Launched in 2017 and continuing throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the National Heritage Lottery Fund-backed project involved large-scale initiatives focusing on helping to keep the UK's most popular heritage line, which carries about 300,000 passengers a year, steaming on for at least the next 50 years.

Engineering was a key focus and saw the replacement of bridges 24, 25 and 27, some of which were more than 150 years old and second-hand even before they were installed on the line and are now fit to carry traffic for future generations.

Bridge 27 was the first to be successfully replaced, spanning 65 feet and best recognised as the iconic track leading to Hogsmeade station in the movie Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

A £4 million carriage care facility was opened in 2021 providing shelter for up to 40 heritage carriages across five tracks with a special cantilevered roof. This is a much drier and more comfortable working environment for staff and volunteers undertaking servicing, cleaning and routine inspections too.

A new learning coach at Goathland featuring exhibitions and displays for schools and the public was opened, the first exhibitions being Fifty Years of Volunteering at the NYMR in 2023, followed by Lineside Legends this year.

The new Station Stories app is helping visitors to explore Goathland and Grosmont stations in new and different ways, discovering the stories and people behind the buildings.

A learning programme for schools and informal learning for families was created, including hands-on activities during key school holiday periods.

New facilities include specially-adapted accessible carriages, enhanced signage and accessible maps, meaning the line is now even more accessible for all to enjoy and feel included.

The Outstation was created from a former school and outdoor activity centre at Stape. Opened in July 2022, it accommodates up to 20 people in10 rooms and provides an important facility for both volunteers and residential groups.

Leading the way

The NYMR's apprenticeships in mechanical engineering are helping to create the engineers of the future. One of the first apprentices went on to secure permanent employment with the heritage railway attraction as a fitter, while four others are on track to complete their training in 2025 and 2026.

The joint initiative between the NYMR and the North York Moors National Park has funded 12 two-year Countryside Apprenticeships, offering the unique opportunity to learn about conservation within a heritage environment.

There is a strong team of 62 volunteers working in lineside conservation who are out up to five days each week helping with a huge range of initiatives including fencing and dry-stone walling, species surveys, boundary surveys and research and bridge maintenance. Indeed, the NYMR has been recognised as leading the way in lineside conservation among heritage lines and has been instrumental in sharing best practice and encouraging wider environmentally-responsible thinking in the sector. Lineside conservation manager Kerry Fieldhouse chairs the HRS Environment and Sustainability Group and has developed a suite of best practice lineside guidelines, which are peer reviewed by Network Rail and now available to all heritage lines in the Heritage Railway Association.

NYMR CEO Laura Strangeway said: "As the Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project comes to an end, I am filled with pride for all we have achieved. This initiative has helped preserve our historic railway and elevate our visitor experience. Our infrastructure improvements have enhanced the safety and efficiency of our operations, so we can offer a more reliable and enjoyable service to our passengers while ensuring our beloved railway is here for future generations.

'Remarkable'

"The success of Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our staff, volunteers and supporters. It has been a remarkable journey of collaboration and innovation, and we are excited to build on this legacy.

"Although this particular project has come to an end, the work involved to keep our railway steaming on will forever be ongoing."

For visitors interested in discovering more about the successes of the project, the Heritage Open Days event at the NYMR which, as reported last issue, will run from September 6-15 will provide opportunity to go behind the scenes and see many of these new developments in action.

➜ For more details, visit www.nymr.co.uk/heritage-open-days

Rush-hour at Levisham: The peaceful North Yorkshire Moors Railway station of Levisham, located in an idyllic rural setting five miles north of Pickering, is a hive of activity on July 31 with the arrivals of LNER 0-6-0 J237 No. 2392 and BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80136. The former, which was built at Darlington in September 1923, is heading the 2.10pm Pickering-Grosmont train, while the 1956-built 4MT is bringing in the 12.35pm Whitby to Pickering working. Although constructed 33 years before the Standard locomotive, No. 2392, renumbered 65894 by BR, outlasted No. 80136 in service by two years and was withdrawn in September 1967. BARBARA PRINCE

Two North Yorkshire Moors Railway apprentices pictured last December. NORTH EDGE PHOTOGRAPHY

A landmark during the seven-year Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project was the opening of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's £4 million five-track carriage stable at Pickering on September 22, 2021, accommodating up to 40 coaches. A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* is seen arriving for the official launch. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NYMR

Resilience Fund for operating costs raises more than £73k

SEVERN Valley Railway officials said they are delighted with the support for the SVR Resilience Fund, which has seen more than £73,000 donated since it was launched in May to meet its ongoing costs.

SVR's managing director, Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, said: "The response from the public to our appeal really has exceeded our expectations. We are hugely grateful to everyone who's responded, and it is heartening to see that they clearly understand the sheer expense of running a heritage railway like the Severn Valley.

"We want to keep highlighting how much we will need ongoing support. The SVR requires a steady stream of funding and will need it for some time. This isn't about making a big splash or hitting a target; it's about bolstering our resilience for the long haul."

The SVR Resilience Fund is being led by the SVR Company Limited, which is volunteer-run and separate from line operator SVR (Holdings) Plc.

SVR Company chairman Diane Malyon said: "We have seen so much engagement from our volunteers in terms of highlighting the appeal to our visitors at every opportunity.

"Our travelling ticket inspectors, for example, are distributing and collecting donation envelopes on the trains, and there are collection pots for spare change in our shops and cafes, and people can make card donations at the tills.

"We are receiving superb backing from our regular supporter base of members and shareholders, but we are making a concerted effort to explain the costs to people perhaps visiting for the first time in our leaflets and on our website."

The railway has been operating public services for almost 55 years. Next year, it will celebrate 60 years since the pioneering founders preserved the line.

➜ To donate, visit svr.co.uk

Diane Malyon publicising the SVR Resilience Fund with volunteers Rob Jones, Tony Davies and Annette Jones. LESLEY CARR

Severn Valley stages 'Super Saturday' gala in advance of big autumn steam event

By Robin Jones

THE Severn Valley Railway has arranged a mini enthusiast event for Saturday, August 31, to celebrate its "particularly superb line-up" of locomotives in current service.

LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas* and GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* – two of the four visitors booked for the eagerly-awaited September 19-22 Autumn Steam Gala – will run alongside home-based and newly-overhauled LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 and Class 42 D821 *Greyhound*, which is making its first runs of 2024 following extensive remedial work.

"We could not resist calling this our Super Saturday," said Lewis Maddox, the SVR's visitor engagement manager, "and it's going to be a great opportunity to see an interesting and somewhat unusual variety of locomotives on the railway. Standard fares apply, and we are looking forward to rounding off the summer with a splash."

Happy birthday

The August 31/September 1 weekend will also see the 100th birthday celebrations for GWR small prairie No. 4566, which is on static display at The Engine House, Highley. The 4566 Preservation Group is holding a country fete-style event during the weekend and is busy raising funds – with a £100,000 target – for its overhaul and return to service

Group member Sheena Strevens said: "We want to celebrate No. 4566's 100th birthday in grand style and thought a summer fete is fitting. There will be a party atmosphere, with art competitions, a magic show (Saturday only), classic games and activities, a raffle and tombola, opportunities to chat with group members, and of course things wouldn't be complete without a special birthday cake!"

On Friday, August 30, the SVR will run short footplate rides from Bewdley station, and a special footplate experience will give eight lucky participants the chance to drive and fire *Bahamas*.

Participants will work in pairs to drive and fire the Jubilee for 16 miles, with detailed instructions from the experienced SVR crew. They will be hauling a heavy rake of carriages, and each participant will be able to bring up to 10 guests to travel on the train as part of the experience package.

Lewis said: "We've had to put a strict limit on places for this amazing experience because we only have this one day's capacity."

The SVR has seen an eager take-up of footplate experiences this year, and dates for 2025 steam footplate experiences are now on sale. Diesel footplate experiences have sold out for this year.

Meanwhile, the two latest guests for the Autumn Steam Gala are LMS 'Black Five' No. 44932, from West Coast Railways, and Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 0-6-0ST No. 51456, courtesy of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Trust and the East Lancashire Railway, subject to confirmation of the agreement following examination.

"We are delighted at securing the appearances of both these locomotives," said Duncan Ballard, the SVR's head of steam engineering.

"For No. 44932, this is going to be an extremely rare appearance at a heritage line, and it's going to be a great honour to host the 143-year-old saddle tank, as one of the older locomotives still working."

Designed by Barton Wright and built by Beyer Peacock in 1881 as a 0-6-0 tender engine, No. 51456 was originally numbered 752 for the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway.

In 1896, it was rebuilt as a 0-6-0 saddle tank and was used primarily for colliery work throughout its career, which ended in the mid-1960s.

xxxxx

Its current identity as No 51456 in BR livery did not exist in reality, as it never passed into BR stock. However, it would have received this number had it not been sold to industry by the LMS in 1937.

The gala will see early-morning and late-evening services, double-headers and goods trains, and will also feature local services to the SVR's smallest station at Eardington.

As previously reported, Barclay 0-4-0WT No. 6 *Douglas* from the Talyllyn Railway will be on display at the Engine House, Highley, and visitors will be able to catch the RailArt 2024 exhibition at Kidderminster Railway Museum.

For further information and to book tickets for any of these events, including footplate experiences, visit svr.co.uk

➜ Go behind the scenes at the line on its YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/c/SevernValleyRailwayOfficial

Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 0-6-0ST No. 51456 is one of four guests at the Severn Valley Railway's September 19-22 Autumn Gala. KENNY FELSTEAD/SVR

Beer festival returns to Bridgnorth

THE 25th Bridgnorth Beer Festival will be held at the Severn Valley Railway from Thursday, September 5 until Saturday, September 7.

Held against the backdrop of the heritage line in Hollybush Road, Bridgnorth, and organised by volunteers from the Telford & East Shropshire branch of CAMRA, the festival will offer 40 cask ales, 20 ciders, a selection of keg craft beers and delicious food, and the Railwayman's Arms will also be open. Admission to the festival is free.

As well as regular train services on the Thursday and Saturday, a Beer Festival Special service departing Kidderminster Town at 12.45pm and stopping at Bewdley will arrive at Bridgnorth at 1.41pm. The return service leaves at 5.30pm, returning to Kidderminster 6.24pm.

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Government £17.6k grant is a welcome boost for Evergreens miniature line

A MINIATURE railway has been awarded a £17,634 Government grant to boost its facilities.

The 7 ¼in/5in gauge Evergreens Miniature Railway at Keal Cotes, near Spilsby, Lincolnshire, successfully bid for one of the final GRASSroots awards, part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Having worked hard to establish the railway on its new site at Dawn Bank over the last few years, the railway's management saw that more could be done to make it an experience available to people with a wider range of abilities by installing a new wheelchair-friendly path and a disabled access toilet, station shelter improvements and ground reinforcement.

There will be a new carriage for the 7¼in gauge track designed and constructed to take the majority of wheelchairs and young children in buggies.

Treasurer Richard Barnes said: "I thank YMCA Lincolnshire for its guidance, advice and comments which helped us so much. This award means so much to Evergreens, and the announcement could not have come at a better time. We can now get these plans underway and, hopefully, have the majority completed and in place before the end of the year. It would be great to start the 2025 season off being open to all abilities."

One of the conditions for the grant is that it must be spent by the end of December 2024. Under the scheme, a total of £612,078 has been shared across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, which comprises South Holland, Boston Borough and East Lindsey.

The Evergreens Miniature Railway in operation on July 31. EMR

***Hornpipe* (left) and *Swanscombe* on duty at Field Central on August 4.**
MARTIN CREESE

Another success for Fifield Railway's annual open day

THE annual charity fundraising open day at David and Patricia Buck's private Fifield Railway proved another big draw for the public on August 4.

Organised by the Oakley Green and Fifield Community Association, the fun day first held in 2006 – which also had a Punch and Judy show, a coconut shy and plant stalls – took place in the paddock of David and Patricia Buck's home.

David, the former owner of Steam Dreams and Thompson B1 4-6-0 No. 1306 *Mayflower*, has a standard gauge line in the couple's paddock.

Motive power this year was provided by two locomotives now in David's care, both of which began their preservation story at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, Northfleet Coal and Ballast company: Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 699 of 1891 *Swanscombe,* carrying Metropolitan Railway livery applied for the 150th anniversary in 2013, alongside former Holborough Cement Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 1756 of 1928 *Hornpipe*.

The railway runs in a teardrop formation from the station known as Fifield Central, which is also home to the engine shed, going first down to the southern extremity before reversing and coming back using a loop round the paddock and arriving back at the start point. Passengers travel seated in two open wagons, and each trip sees them undertake two circuits, one propelled and one pulled.

Tickets were on allocated trains, and by mid-afternoon all places had sold out such is the popularity of the trip.

The railway is also home to Britain's biggest operational steam locomotive, Finnish Hr1 Pacific No. 1016 *Lady Patricia,* which has its own 300-yard 5ft gauge line alongside. It is also home to the oldest Hunslet in preservation, under-restoration No. 243 of 1883 *Vigilant*.

Manx *Douglas* cab back on

AS the Isle of Man Transport Festival neared its end, the cosmetic restoration of IOM Steam Railway Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No. 9 *Douglas* took a significant step forward when the boiler was returned to the frames for the first time in four years.

As part of a scheme to decontaminate stored locomotives of asbestos, *Douglas* was moved in June 2020 to the goods shed at Port St Mary, where the boiler was lifted off.

It had since remained stored as a kit of parts until the IOMSR Supporter's Association announced in January 2023 that it would undertake the cosmetic restoration in hopes of completing it in time for this year's festival.

While it may have missed that target, this significant step will now expedite volunteer efforts to reassemble the locomotive. It dates from 1896 and aside from the two replacement boilers it received during its working life, largely remains in as-built condition.

➜ **Anniversaries and firsts at the annual Isle of Man Transport Festival: see feature, pages 84-86.**

Isle of Man Steam Railway Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No. 9 reunited with its cab.
GRANT TAYLOR/IOMSRSA

Former Dinting Railway Centre residents LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 and 0-4-0DH RS8 were brought together for the first time since 1989 at Rowsley. PETE SKELLON/BLS

Bahamas at Dinting Railway Centre in April 1980. HUGH LLEWELLYN/CREATIVE COMMONS

Revived: Dinting lives again!

By Robin Jones

DINTING Railway Centre at Glossop, a heritage railway haven for a third of a century and which closed 34 years ago, was 'reborn' at Peak Rail on August 11.

The volunteer Bahamas Locomotive Society was formed in 1967 to purchase LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas*. Once saved, *Bahamas* was moved to Bury sheds, now occupied by the East Lancashire Railway.

However, a permanent home for the locomotive was sought, and within less than a year the former Great Central Railway shed at Dinting near Glossop was 'discovered.' No. 45596 moved there on November 15, 1968, to great fanfare and paved the way for the venue become one of the major steam centres of the late 1960s and 1970s, like Steamport at Southport and Steamtown at Carnforth.

Major icons such as *Flying Scotsman*, *Bittern*, *Blue Peter*, *Scots Guardsman*, *Leander* and *Cheltenham* spent time at Dinting, until the centre was forced to close in 1990 and the society moved its collection to a new home at Ingrow West on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway to develop a new museum there. However, much of the Dinting collection could not be housed at Ingrow and so it moved to new homes.

As reported last issue, *Bahamas* began its first visit to Peak Rail when it arrived via the main line connection at Matlock on July 4 and was rostered for service trains over the coming weeks

Pure nostalgia

At the Dinting Remembered event at Peak Rail, No. 45596 was reunited with two former Dinting and shedmates, Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns Ltd 0-6-0ST No. 7136 of 1944 WD150 *Royal Pioneer* (then named *Warrington*) and the curious yellow-liveried RS8, a diesel which was converted from Avonside 0-4-0ST No. 1913 of 1923 to an 0-4-0DH in 1959, at Buxton Lime Firms/ICI's South Central Workshops at Tunstead, which served the local limestone quarries. It became part of the Dinting collection in the 1970s and when the museum closed, it was moved to the National Stone Centre near Wirksworth. It was added to Andrew Briddon's collection in 2016 and moved to Peak Rail, returning to Tunstead for restoration by apprentices.

Keith Whitmore, chairman of Bahamas Locomotive Society, said: "Although it was a nostalgic day for all former Dinting volunteers, with even a few tears shed, the reality is that, like those other pioneer steam centres, the preservation movement has moved on and visitors these days want some comfort and a ride on a railway rather than a short run up and down in a brake van ride.

"It was good though, just for a day, to remember everything that was great about those early days of preservation.

"Much of the Dinting collection can still be seen elsewhere, with *Blue Peter* having just returned to the main line in a splendid blue livery and *Scots Guardsman* a regular with West Coast; even the petrol locomotive *Jacob* can be seen at Statfold Barn. Meanwhile, *Bahamas*, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T *Nunlow*, LNWR Coal Tank No. 1054, Barclay 0-4-0ST *Tiny* and Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-4-0 crane tank No. 7069 *Southwick* can be seen together, with so many Dinting memories at Ingrow.

"We are absolutely delighted to have worked with Peak Rail on one of its most successful recent events. We know that *Bahamas* is very much the 'enthusiast's loco' and is always popular when out and about, drawing huge crowds when it is on the main line.

'Special event'

"This is the first time that *Bahamas* has been back on a preserved railway in Derbyshire since our days at Dinting Railway Centre and many old friends came to see the loco work between Rowsley and Matlock and enjoy our Dinting Remembered day, a special day for all steam enthusiasts 56 years on since the last day of BR steam.

"A special part of the day was to travel behind No. 45596 in a brake van, just as we did at Dinting. It is quite well-known that 2024 has been a difficult year for our society as we have not been able to turn a wheel on the main line with passengers due to matters beyond our control, so we are grateful that Peak Rail has helped us out for the loco to be seen in steam at a really special event.

"We now look forward to the loco being at the Severn Valley Railway for its autumn gala (see News, page 22), as well as additional steamings."

A small exhibition of Dinting ephemera was displayed in the exhibition coach at Rowsley station. PETE SKELLON/BLS

Bahamas Locomotive Society chairman Keith Whitmore welcomed the Mayor of High Peak, Coun Stewart Gardner, the leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council, Coun Steve Flitter, and its chairman Coun Peter Slack, to Dinting Remembered at Rowsley, acknowledging the significance of the both the Bahamas Locomotive Society and Peak Rail to Derbyshire. PETE SKELLON/BLS

Peak Rail general manager Mark Sealey, driver for the day on *Bahamas*, addresses local council dignitaries at the Dinting Remembered event. PETE SKELLON/BLS

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***Bahamas* heads a freight train at Darley Dale on August 11.** MARTYN TATTAM

Carrying 'The Palatine' headboard, Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* recreates days of old on the Matlock to Buxton line during the 30742 Charters photographic evening on July 27. MARTIN CREESE

Summer evening sunshine magic works for *Bahamas* photo charter

By Martin Creese

A MOST unexpected visitor this summer has been that of No. 45596 *Bahamas* from its home at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway to Peak Rail.

Jubilees were regular motive power over the former Midland Railway main line from Derby to Manchester via Matlock and Buxton, their workings including 'The Palatine,' which in BR days was the 7.25am from St Pancras and the 2.25pm from Manchester, stopping at Chinley, Millers Dale, Matlock, Derby and Leicester.

What is believed to the last Jubilee working on the route was the Locomotive Club of Great Britain's 'High Peak Countryman' railtour in September 1965, worked by No. 45705 *Seahorse* from Cheadle Heath to Derby.

Jubilees were not allocated to the former 17D Rowsley shed, the site of which now houawa Peak Rail's workshops and engine shed, as well as being the heritage line's current northern terminus, but they did make occasional appearances on shed there; it is perhaps fitting as 2024 marks the 60th anniversary of the closure of Rowsley Shed that a Jubilee once again visited.

On the evening of Saturday, July 27, after service trains had finished, a 30742 Charters photographic event took place. Included in the set was 1925 Period 1 vestibule third No. 7828, restored by the LMS Carriage Association and part of the National Collection.

In glorious summer evening light, 45596 performed several runpasts, especially around Darley Dale, the long loop creating the impression of a double-track main line.

As the sun set, we headed towards Matlock Riverside, and for a few glorious moments the unique sound as those 6ft 9in drivers accelerated our train towards Matlock saw steam days beautifully recreated

Peak Rail general manager Mark Sealey said that while it was a costly exercise, "the excitement of the volunteers and supporters along with the significant interest from the public has made it very worthwhile," and he expressed his gratitude to the Bahamas Locomotive Society for bringing No. 45596 to the line.

Restoring Your Railway scheme halted by Government

By Robin Jones

DISAPPOINTMENT has been widely expressed following the announcement by Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves in the House of Commons on July 29 that the Government's Restoring Your Railway Fund 'Beeching U-turns' programme is to be scrapped.

The fund was set up in 2020 as part of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Levelling Up agenda and received 141 bids to reopen routes, many of which were closed under the Beeching era. Thirty-eight bids received £50,000 to develop a strategic outline business case for reopening.

The first reopening under the programme was the Dartmoor Line between Okehampton and Exeter, heritage services having been previously over part of the route under the banner of the Dartmoor Railway. It officially reopened for year-round services on November 20, 2021, and recorded 555,000 journeys in its first two years.

It will be followed by the Northumberland Line, linking Ashington and Blyth to Newcastle-upon-Tyne with new stations at Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth Bebside, Newsham, Seaton Deleval and Northumberland Park. Unaffected by the announcement, it is on course to open in December.

Another 13 proposals were earmarked for further funding, having already submitted business cases, but now risk being scrapped following the Chancellor's decision, taken as a cost-cutting measure to tackle a £22 billion deficit in public finances left by the previous Government, she said.

These proposals include the reinstatement of the lines from Bristol to Portishead and Preston to Fleetwood, the restoration of passenger services on the Barrow Hill line from Sheffield to Chesterfield, and the Waterside line bordering the Solent, and the Ivanhoe line linking Leicester to Burton-upon-Trent.

The Chancellor's decision was made with a view to making savings of about £85 million.

'Body blow'

RailFuture director Neil Middleton said: "The Restoring Your Railway Fund could have been a key way for the Government to deliver on its strategic objectives in terms of transforming infrastructure, promoting social mobility and tackling regional inequality.

"This isn't HS2. The amounts of money involved are no more than rounding errors in the wider scheme of things, but the difference to isolated communities is huge. It's just the sort of investment we need if this country is to be more efficient and effective."

Ivanhoe Line campaigner Douglas McLay said the announcement came as a "body blow," while Michael Ireland, chairman of the Okehampton railway forum OkeRail, said that Labour's decision to abandon plans to reopen the Tavistock to Bere Alston line is "short-sighted."

This link was seen as vital for West Devon's economic growth, and campaigners hoped that it would be a first step in recreating the Southern Railway's Exeter to Plymouth line as an alternative to the existing route via the flood-prone Dawlish sea wall.

North Somerset Council leader Mike Bell said Network Rail had been poised to make final submissions on the Portishead route to the Department for Transport, with the reopening of a branch line reconnecting 50,000 residents to the national network.

The project "is a hugely important scheme for us, and one that will make a significant difference to the lives of local people, both now and in the future," he said. "We remain absolutely committed to reopening.

"Though we understand the difficult decisions facing national government, we believe there continues to be a strong case for the investment into the Portishead to Bristol rail line.

"This is a shovel-ready scheme that we can deliver, and for which on-the-ground preparatory work has already begun.

"We just need government support to make it happen."

A controversial Rossendale Borough Council bid to restore commuter services between Rawtenstall and Bury – which opponents said would threaten the East Lancashire Railway, and for which the case for the link was awarded £50,000 by then chancellor Rishi Sunak in 2021, as well as a plan to extend Metrolink trams from Bury to Bolton with an interchange at Buckley Wells – has also been halted by the Chancellor's announcement.

Stations to stay closed?

The plan to restore the rail link from Gobowen to Oswestry, the base of Cambrian Heritage Railways, which was approved last October, could also be scuppered. Several bids to reopen long-closed stations – the New Stations Fund – have too been halted.

Mid-Devon District Council has expressed disappointment at the cancellation of plans to reopen Cullompton station and has asked for the decision to reconsidered.

Initiatives that had been funded through Restoring Your Railway will still "be able to be reconsidered" as part of a "thorough review" to be undertaken by Transport Secretary Louise Haigh, the Chancellor told the Commons.

In her subsequent July 30 written statement to Parliament announcing the review, Louise Haigh said: "We will bring in external expertise and move quickly to make recommendations about current and future schemes."

Lord Hendy's appointment as Rail Minister welcomed by HRA

THE appointment of former Heritage Railway Association chairman Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, as Rail Minister in the new Labour Government has been warmly by the Heritage Railway Association.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "Long before Lord Hendy joined the board of the Heritage Railway Association, he was a notable friend of the sector. His passion for heritage rail and knowledge of transport history in many forms is exceptional.

"I am sure that having someone of Peter's calibre in this key Department for Transport position will be of huge benefit to everyone with an interest in rail transport of whatever form. I and the HRA board would like to warmly thank Peter for his time with the HRA and I look forward to working with him in the future."

New model engineers line in Essex set to open to public later this year

AFTER two unsuccessful collaborations with other local miniature railways, the Saffron Walden and District Society of Model Engineers, which left Audley End in 2020 following the death of Audley End Miniature Railway founder Lord Braybrooke, relocated to Down Farm near Elsenham, Stansted, in Essex. A 7¼in/5in dual gauge ground level loop track has been constructed and finishing touches are being applied to the site before it opens to the public later this year.

On August 15, unique Class 89 No. 89001 *Avocet* returned to Locomotive Services Group's Crewe depot from UK Rail Leasing in Loughborough, where it has been for the past 18 months. As reported last issue, the locomotive successfully moved under its own power for the first time in 25 years on July 3 following the installation of equipment for main line operation, along with the fitment of a repaired traction motor and other repair works. Further testing and commissioning will be required before *Avocet* can run on the national network, and so it was towed to Crewe by Class 37 D6817. The pair are seen here at Burbage Common. GRAHAM NUTTALL

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Above: A purple Queen Victoria and her entourage, including Eggbert, alongside No. 2807 at Broadway.

Right: GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807complete with purple headboard takes the 'Pershore Plum' express past Laverton. BOTH: IAN CROWDER

Queen of the plums takes steam trip for festival fun

A FRUITY Queen Victoria and her colourful entourage boarded the 'Pershore Plum' express from Broadway to Cheltenham, on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, on August 18.

The occasion marked the August-long Pershore Plum Festival, which culminated in the town during the bank holiday weekend.

As highlighted last issue, running the special train was entirely appropriate given that in the past the railway over which the present-day volunteer-run G/WR operates once carried thousands of tons of Vale of Evesham fruit (including plums) and vegetables to markets all over the UK from a special fruit packing and transfer shed at Toddington station.

The Pershore Plum itself was discovered growing wild in 1827 and was cultivated to provide the varieties we know today, an early purple and a late yellow. Its importance to Pershore was such that the National Farmers Union approached the Great Western Railway in 1927 to name a locomotive *Pershore Plum* to mark the centenary of the fruit's discovery, and so Bulldog 4-4-0 No. 3353 at Worcester depot had the honour.

Hauling the special train was GWR No. 2807, which dates from 1905 and is the oldest Swindon empire steam locomotive in working order – and therefore a contemporary of the 1900-built original *Pershore Plum* locomotive.

Left: On July 20/21, Amberley Museum welcomed Decauville 0-4-0T No. 648 *Lily* for its Rail Gala event, courtesy of the Richmond Light Railway where it now resides. Originally named *Dimitrias*, No. 648 was delivered new to the Thessaly Railway in Volos, Greece, in 1912 and is just one of four known surviving examples of its type. It was restored and returned to steam at the RLR in 2023, and its visit to the West Sussex museum made it the first guest locomotive there in eight years. Incidentally, the last visitors in 2016 (Arn Jung 0-4-0WT No. 3175 *Jenny* and Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0WT No. 3136 *Susan*) also came from the RLR. On July 20, *Lily* in seen departing Brockham with the two ex-MOD Lydd Range carriages. PHIL BARNES

New main line link calls for West Somerset following overcrowding claims

A FRESH business case to link the West Somerset Railway to main line services is being drawn up.

Over the years, several efforts have been made to link the heritage line's services with the modern-day Great Western Railway trains to Taunton, with a linking service between Taunton and Bishop's Lydeard trialled in summer 2019.

At a meeting of Somerset County Council in Bridgwater on July 17, a statement read out from transport campaigner David Redgewell said the current bus services between Taunton and Minehead suffered from overcrowding and called for the Taunton to Bishop's Lydeard and Minehead railway services to be reintroduced.

Retired Network Rail planner David Northey said that the Light Railway Order currently in place on the heritage line and limited speeds to 25mph was the main stumbling block.

He said that a future link between Taunton and Bishops Lydeard could call at Norton Fitzwarren station, which is currently accessible only by the WSR, which uses it on gala days, but near to where a developer is seeking planning permission for 400 homes.

The council's portfolio holder for transport and digital, Coun Richard Wilkins, said: "We are working with local interest groups which are developing a business case for a rail link between Taunton railway station and Bishop's Lydeard.

"This has been endorsed by Peninsula Transport. There are currently no proposals for a link beyond this as the line is managed and operated by the WSR.

"The business case will look at reconnecting, one stage at a time, Bishop's Lydeard to Taunton. We are looking at a modest investment of about £6 million to upgrade elements of the signalling and infrastructure, and to pay for operating the services.

"If you can get a regular service between Bishop's Lydeard and Taunton, there are options to look at extending to Minehead on peak days when the WSR doesn't operate, such as Butlin's changeover days on Mondays and Fridays.

"We have real problems on the bus and road network, and even if we only ran the train at 25mph, it's still quicker than the bus journey. It's a real balance between preserving the heritage and meeting modern transport needs."

Linked at last: split Quainton Road site finally becomes one

By Owen Hayward

A LONG-HELD desire for the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre to link its divided Up and Down yards has finally borne fruit. Network Rail has offered the museum, which is based in grounds around Metropolitan Railway's Quainton Road station, a rolling five-year lease of half a mile of the now-redundant freight line that passed through the middle.

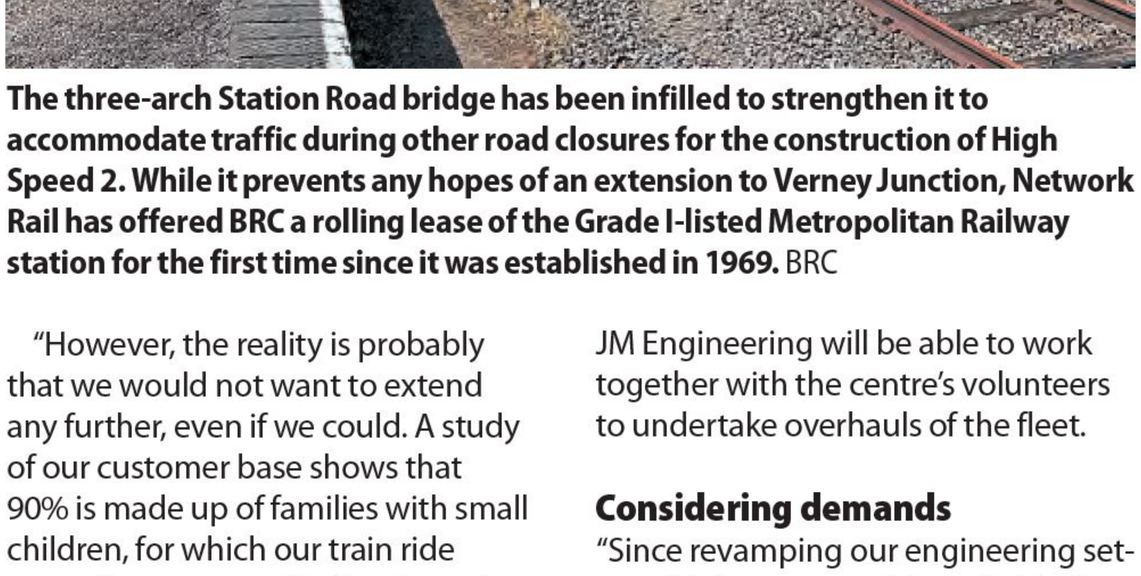
Although the station was closed to passengers in 1966, the Quainton Road Society forming three years later to preserve it, the line to Calvert tip was singled and remained open for occasional freight traffic, subsequently splitting the museum in half. A short demonstration line was established on each half, along which train services give rides to visitors, with only one of the two lines normally found operating except on special event days. Additionally, this has meant that each side has required its own locomotive servicing and maintenance facilities.

However, in recent months the BRC has been working closely with Network Rail, High Speed 2 and Buckinghamshire Council to facilitate work required to strengthen the three-arch station road bridge just beyond the Grade I-listed station, work that has been necessary to allow for other road closures in the area as a result of the construction of HS2.

The arches have been infilled using foam concrete, therefore removing a three-ton weight limit that had been imposed on the decaying structure.

BRC general manager Stephen Green said: "We worked closely with all parties, meeting weekly to discuss progress, as well as to identify and overcome any problems together. On that basis, and with its line through the site now divided as a result, Network Rail was happy to offer us a rolling five-year lease on the half a mile of line back towards Waddesdon Road station.

"This does also mean that any plans to extend towards the Metropolitan Line's terminus as Verney Junction are put to an end. Likewise, where our line now breaks before the NR line ends, there are a number of embankment slips, meaning we cannot go any further that way even if NR allowed us use of the line there too.



The three-arch Station Road bridge has been infilled to strengthen it to accommodate traffic during other road closures for the construction of High Speed 2. While it prevents any hopes of an extension to Verney Junction, Network Rail has offered BRC a rolling lease of the Grade I-listed Metropolitan Railway station for the first time since it was established in 1969. BRC

The new points linking the Up yard to the former through line to Verney Junction were installed and ready for use at the start of August. The Down yard set was due to be completed by the end of the same month, linking the once-divided site for the first time in more than 50 years. BRC

"However, the reality is probably that we would not want to extend any further, even if we could. A study of our customer base shows that 90% is made up of families with small children, for which our train ride currently proves perfectly adequate in duration before the kids' attention span is ready to move to the next thing on the site.

"What the old NR line through the middle of the site does mean, however, is that we can finally link the two halves of our base for the first time in more than 50 years."

Although NR leases the old line and station to the BRC, it is unlikely that it will reopen the route in the foreseeable future; aside from the embankment slips further back down the line, the Station Road bridge is a backdrop to the Grade I-listed station set-up and as such, work to remove infill and strengthen it would be subject to strict planning restrictions.

The first use of the original station's platforms by BRC steam services was due to take place on August 26 as part of its Auto Fest event, at which GWR 5600 0-6-2T No. 6695 (on loan from the Swindon & Cricklade Railway) was due to operate.

Since being handed the lease of the line, BRC engineers have already installed the linking pointwork from the Up yard, with the Down yard equipment due to have been completed by the end of August, therefore allowing for the transfer of stock between the two to take place as required. In particular, this will allow for locomotives on the former to move into the running sheds of the latter, where resident engineering firm JM Engineering will be able to work together with the centre's volunteers to undertake overhauls of the fleet.

Considering demands

"Since revamping our engineering set-up, which was something of a black hole before, we've been able to start building a pool of hire locomotives, such as WR 4-6-0 No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall,* which is on long-term loan to the Bluebell Railway.

"Our recently returned to service Hunslet 0-6-0 No. 3782 *Arthur*, formerly a saddle tank but now converted into a side tank to portray the character of Thomas the Tank Engine, has been run in at the Epping Ongar Railway, and since then we've already been approached with a long-hire request for it in a non-Thomas capacity.

"There is a rising demand for efficient and economical small tank engines, so we will carefully assess what locomotives are overhauled to meet both our own demands, as well as those from people looking to hire something."

In light of the change of direction for overhauls, work on Metropolitan Railway E class 0-4-4T No. 1 has been paused, save for that required to reassemble the locomotive for display.

"It requires much money spending on it, but once done, it won't be going out on hire," Stephen said. "To that end, it makes sense that we first prioritise something that can either go out and earn its keep on hire or that meets our own requirements without breaking the bank. That's not to say we are forgetting about it, but just pausing it for now."

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Above: Partially stripped in 2020 for an assessment for overhaul, Metropolitan Railway E class 0-4-4T No. 1, the star of London Underground's 150th anniversary celebrations in 2013, is being reassembled ahead of cosmetic work to allow it to be returned to static display while it awaits its turn in the overhaul queue. BRC

Right: During June, Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 3782 *Arthur* (which now has a side tank configuration for use as the titular character at Day Out With Thomas events) underwent running-in trials at the Epping Ongar Railway. With a rising demand for hire of similarly-sized locomotives, the BRC is looking at what can be overhauled to meet such demand. EOR

World-first for KESR as Mr Doodle makes his mark

By Geoff Courtney

TO many within the heritage railway movement, graffiti is a scourge that causes offence and frequently anger. However, the Kent & East Sussex Railway has turned it into a positive, and at the same time has used it to create a world-first.

Well, strictly it's not graffiti, but it's close enough to initially appear so. To be exact, it's doodling – and not just any old doodling, but artistic doodling that is both eye-catching and creative, and with the bonus of being home-grown.

It's the doodle train, which has been attracting attention throughout August on the Tenterden to Bodiam heritage line. Kids have loved it, mums and dads have admired it, and even grandparents have had to admit they've never seen anything like it. Perhaps canine passengers have been taken aback, but they are adaptable and happy as long as their travel companions are.

It was the work of 30-year-old Sam Cox, who grew up in Tenterden and still lives there. His name may not ring any bells, but his professional nom-de-plume doubtless will – Mr Doodle. He has turned doodling into an art form, and has become enormously successful at it, with millions of followers worldwide and his works frequently selling at auction for six figures.

He created the train over a night and a day at the railway's Tenterden Town station at the end of July, working on one of the railway's carriages that was covered in a protective wrap which he drew directly onto. He completed the task in front of an audience of fans and visitors on July 26, in time for the carriage to join scheduled services the following day, with the artist accompanying passengers on the first run.

'Very happy'

Having completed what was his biggest-ever vehicle challenge – previous assignments have included a Formula 1 car – and so creating the world's first doodle train, Sam, who funded the project himself, said: "I was very happy doing it, it was fun. It's the first time my drawings have appeared on a vehicle this size, and it was especially nice that it all happened in my home town."

The railway's Tenterden station became Doodle Town station for that first weekend, with children enjoying such activities as doodling their own cardboard train and taking part in a treasure hunt seeking Mr Doodle signature doodles around the site.

KESR general manager Robin Coombes said: "As a local artist and frequent visitor to the railway, we were delighted that Mr Doodle agreed to literally make his mark on our 50th anniversary celebrations. We would also like to extend our thanks to him for funding the project and giving his time to support the railway and the local community.

"Some heritage railway enthusiasts may raise their eyebrows at this initiative, but with this being our 50th anniversary year, we committed to not only celebrating the achievements of the past five decades, but also to looking to the future and how we can continue to thrive, not just survive – bringing new audiences to our railway and to the area as the opening of the reconnection to Robertsbridge gets ever closer.

"I also believe such innovations and experiments are very much in the spirit that Col Stephens himself demonstrated in bringing the light railway to the Weald more than 120 years ago."

He added: "The positive response – ranging from the look of the finished carriage, through to the many people who came to see the artist at work and ride the doodle trains – proved we were right in trying something new."

The doodled carriage is due to return to its traditional condition at the end of August, when the protective wrapping on which the artist worked will be removed.

Doodle bug: World-famous artist Mr Doodle completes his work transforming a carriage into a doodle train at the Kent & East Sussex Railway's Tenterden Town station on July 26. ALISON MILES

Welcome to 1966!

Great Central's award-winning event turns back the clock

By Owen Hayward

A WEEKEND of living history on August 10/11 saw the Great Central Railway step back in time by six decades for its popular Railways At Work gala. Re-enactors descended on Leicestershire en masse to recreate the earlier years of football hooliganism and the dying days of many goods yards across the network.

The event, which won the *Heritage Railway* magazine-sponsored Interpretation accolade at this year's Heritage Railway Association awards for its 1963-Beeching Axe themed weekend last summer, has become one of the GCR's annual highlights and is regularly praised for what is essentially a weekend of theatrical entertainment, giving as close a flavour as possible to scenes once commonplace on the UK network.

Goods wagons were brought in and out of Quorn yard, following which costumed re-enactors with period vehicles commenced loading and unloading the vehicles – just as would have been done in the railway's heyday. OWEN HAYWARD

Delivering the goods

With a broad selection of restored freight wagons residing on the line, one of the highlights of the format is the operation of goods trains which this year featured a lengthy tanker rake, the box van rake (also an award winner, having scooped the Morgan Award for Preservation at the HRA's 2022 ceremony) and a short pick-up goods set. The former pair made several trips each day between Loughborough and Rothley Brook (the start of the single line section towards Leicester North) with alternating locomotives each journey, while the latter set shuffled between Loughborough and the sidings at Swithland, with a pause in the goods yard at Quorn & Wodhouse mid-trip.

Quorn was, as ever at these events, a hive of activity, with the goods yard packed with vintage vehicles including Scammel Scarabs and motorised parcel trollies. Costumed re-enactors milled about, awaiting the arrival of the pick-up goods. Once shunted into place, they promptly leapt into action to load and unload crates, parcels, machinery and other goods, recreating scenes once the norm at yards large and small around the country.

Re-enactors spanned all ages and genders, with young children in period attire sneaking in to spot the locomotives on duty or, for the more mischievous among them, trying to tamper with and steal some of the potentially valuable packages. Each afternoon, protestors voicing their displeasure at the Beeching cuts and the demise of the local goods yards also descended with placards and made their presence known. Such antics were quickly dealt with by police officers, who gave chase to the rowdy offenders, bundling the most troublesome into their panda car.

Those same officers had further unruly antics to deal with. For the World Cup in 1966 – the year which the event weekend focused on, BR laid on many special trains to convey fans to the matches.

Such excursions became renowned from the 1970s for the exceptionally-rowdy behaviour of their patrons, with rolling stock often becoming damaged as a result of their antics and what ultimately led to what is known today as 'football hooliganism'.

Similar behaviour was acted out over the weekend (without the damage, of course), to which officers present once again grappled with the offenders to get them under control as 'fans' arrived at Loughborough Central to board trains.

Steam supreme

The Sixties were also a time of great change of motive power as steam gave way to diesel. Each day between 12.30pm and 2.30pm, a live BBC-style commentary was given at Quorn to explain to visitors the importance of everything that was happening, as well as championing the development of diesel traction over 'outdated steam.' During this time, one of the football specials arrived behind Class 37 D6700; an unadvertised feature that then took place was the staged failure of the 37 which, having been described as the pinnacle of 'modern' BR, would require rescuing from the 'outdated' Stanier 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305 waiting in the yard with the pick-up goods. This development then allowed for the train to continue to Leicester North double-headed with both steam and diesel traction at the helm.

Event organiser Jack Shaw said: "There was no doubt that the expectation on us to deliver an event on par with our 2023 Beeching-themed Railways At Work was high.

"The Heritage Railway Association award brought home how important our storytelling is, and how we conveyed that across to the ordinary visitor.

"It was important, therefore, that we brought our interpretation into focus for this year's event.

"A result of this was the development of our event programme in the style of a newspaper, which featured relevant articles and photographs to help the audience learn about our themes.

"The live narration at Quorn & Woodhouse again helped the ordinary visitor understand what was happening around them.

"We decided at an early stage that we wanted to tell the next stage in the Dr Beeching story; his new look for BR, the reform in the way in which we moved goods, and of course, the incoming of the diesel age.

"A particular highlight was a mock failure of a diesel loco at Quorn, resulting in a steam locomotive being drafted in to provide 'rescue' – all part of the theatre."

Each afternoon, protestors descended upon Quorn yard to march against the closure of railway branches and goods yards that were prevalent during the 1960s, the period during which the event was set. The interlopers were swiftly apprehended by the local constabulary. OWEN HAYWARD

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Recreating the daily occurrence of a 1960s pick-up goods between stations on the main line, No. 78018 heads the 10.58am departure from Quorn Goods yard to Swithland sidings on August 11. MARTYN TATTAM

Quorn & Woodhouse station was the focal point for much of the activity. As a BR DMU departs for Leicester North, period road vehicles shuffle about the yard where heavy duty crane No. 81549 was additionally undertaking lifting demonstrations. OWEN HAYWARD

On loan to the GCR for the year, Class 20 D8001 approaches Quorn & Woodhouse with the final pick-up goods working of August 10. OWEN HAYWARD

Posters from the time period were displayed at stations across the railway, such as special working notices for the 1966 World Cup specials. ROBIN JONES

One of the key events of 1966 was the FIFA World Cup, with re-enactors over the weekend donning attire sported by fans attending matches that summer. On August 10, a crowd descend the steps to the platform at Loughborough Central, with local police on hand to control the often unruly passengers among them. OWEN HAYWARD

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BR 5MT No. 73156 works a rake of restored vans towards Kinchley Lane on August 10 during the Great Central Railway's 'Railways at Work' gala weekend. OWEN HAYWARD

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Royal train: LNWR 0-4-0T No. 3001 with the custom-made carriages that transported King George V and Queen Mary round Crewe Works on April 21, 1913. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

New home is sought for LNWR royal visit plaque

By Geoff Courtney

A NEW home is being sought for a 111-year-old LNWR plaque commemorating a visit by King George V and Queen Mary to the company's Crewe Works.

The visit took place on April 21, 1913, and among the dignitaries who welcomed the royal party was Frederick Manning, the Mayor of Crewe, who was an LNWR signalman at Basford Hall Junction 'box south of the town's station.

During the visit, the monarch and queen toured the works on a custom-made train and met staff ranging from managers to shopfloor workers. The two carriages, hauled by 0-4-0T No. 3001, were constructed from wagons specifically for the occasion.

Following the high-profile and eagerly-anticipated visit, a plaque was erected in Frederick's signalbox bearing the LNWR coat-of-arms and stating that Frederick received their majesties on behalf of his fellow townsmen and presented them with an address on their arrival at Crewe station.

The plaque is now owned by Network Rail, and with the 1897-built 70-lever Basford Hall Junction signalbox scheduled for closure, the company has decided that, while it would retain ownership of the plaque and so ensuring that it remained in the public domain, it was offering it on transfer, with priority being given to accredited museums. Permission for the transfer has been given to NR by the Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board, which was established by statute in 2013 to ensure a secure future for railway records and objects.

The board reports to the trustees of the Science Museum, and its members are drawn from within the railway industry, archives and records offices, museums, and the heritage railway sector.

The closing date for expressions of interest in the plaque is September 20 and applications should be made to smgrailheritage@sciencemuseum.ac.uk

On offer: The plaque commemorating a visit by King George V and Queen Mary to Crewe Works that is available for transfer from Network Rail. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

Regal presence: A bowler-hatted George V, followed by Queen Mary wearing a rather more splendid hat, at Blackpool station in April 1913 during a visit to the north-west that included a tour of Crewe Works. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

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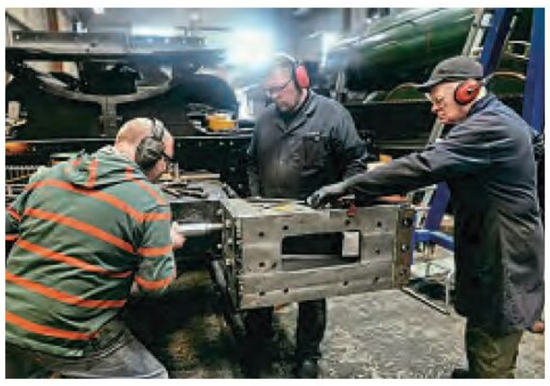
Toddington restoration project wins £151k grant

By Robin Jones

THE group which is restoring former Barry scrapyard GWR Churchward heavy freight 2-8-0 No. 2874 at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway has been awarded a £151,200 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to train and develop volunteers' heritage engineering skills.

No. 2874 was built at Swindon in 1918 and first allocated to Old Oak Common, where it worked coal trains between London and South Wales. Prior to Nationalisation, it was based at Reading, Leamington Spa, Tyseley, Neath, Cardiff and Banbury, and later at Stourbridge, Ebbw Junction, Cardiff Canton, Aberdare and Neath. It was withdrawn in May 1963 and sold to the Woodham Brothers scrapyard. It remained at Barry until 1987, when it was bought by Tony Rippingale and moved to the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway.



Above: Volunteers of The 2874 Trust Limited at work at Toddington. DAVID HOLMES

Left: What is and what will be: GWR Churchward 2-8-0 No. 2807 provides inspiration for the task ahead for the restoration of sister No. 2874 at Toddington on September 15, 2015. IAN CROWDER

Last survivor

Bought by the West Somerset Railway in April 2008, the engine (but not the 3500-gallon tender) was sold on by the Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd in 2009. The *Dinmore Manor* owning group formed The 2874 Trust Limited, an educational charity to restore it at Toddington, where in September 2016 the boiler was lifted off the frames.

It is likely that No. 2874 will be the sole-survivor of the class that will ever again run with its original internal steam pipe configuration.

A 2874 Trust statement said: "The engineering skills needed to repair, maintain and operate historic steam locomotives are increasingly rare and without this funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund could be lost forever, meaning the viability of the living museums that are heritage railways are consequently put at risk.

"The National Lottery-funded project will enable volunteers to develop their existing skills with activity on a 1918-built steam locomotive as the training platform. A variety of work projects will concentrate on teaching and developing the skills required for boiler restoration and so help ensure the preservation of this vital pool of knowledge.

Looking to the future

"A programme of activities will showcase the work of our existing volunteer workforce to a wide audience, with the aim of encouraging new generations to become involved in heritage. There will be events to suit different age groups, designed to interest and inspire the volunteers of the future.

"The project will enable us to reach out to groups of young people who have perhaps never had the opportunity to witness 'heritage in action.'

"With the expertise gained by the voluntary workforce, the resilience of the whole sector will be enhanced. Our website, www.2874trust.org, will publish regular updates and will advertise all the dates and venues for our display stand."

Trust chairman David Foster added: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, we will help ensure that the skills necessary to keep historic steam locomotives working are preserved so future generations can enjoy the sight and sound of our industrial heritage."

First passengers set for VEP in more than 10 years at Bluebell's diesel bash

THE centre of attention on January 27 when it returned to Waterloo for the first time in nearly two decades, now Class 423 VEP No. 3417 *Gordon Pettit* will leap into the spotlight once again when it carries its first passengers in 11 years at the Bluebell Railway's September 6-8 diesel gala.

Built in 1967, in 2004 No. 3417 was chosen by South West Trains to be refurbished and repainted into as near delivery condition as possible, a project overseen by Wimbledon Park-based fleet production manager Chris Buckland. He chose the unit as it was the freshest from overhaul, had suffered few mechanical failures, and its overall condition was found to be very good. Chris and a small group of fitters continued to tend to No. 3417 after its withdrawal, setting the stage for the Southern Electric Traction Group, which continues to maintain the unit on behalf of the Bluebell.

After being withdrawn by South West Trains in 2005, No. 3417, now named *Gordon Pettitt* after the former general manager of BR Southern Region, was presented to the Bluebell at its new East Grinstead station (which at the time was still divided from the heritage line's Sheffield Park-Kingscote section). Afterwards, the EMU moved into undercover storage at various depots on the Southern Region network.

Two firsts

Despite having seen use as locomotive-hauled stock at galas on other main line-connected heritage routes, the 4VEP – the only preserved and main line-registered EMU in the UK – has not carried passengers since 2013, nor has it yet to traverse the full route of the Bluebell, so this gala will be setting those two factors right.

The gala will have a predominantly Southern flavour, with the EMU working in push-pull mode with Class 33 No. 33111, courtesy of The Class 33/1 Preservation Company, and which is normally resident at the Swanage Railway.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the event will host the long-awaited debut of resident Class 73 E6040 *The Bluebell Railway,* which arrived on the railway in 2023 fresh from a bodywork refurbishment and has since been undergoing testing and mechanical work. It has recently received attention from Mainline Traction Services for help in replacing liner seals.

Also appearing will be Class 20 D8188 (courtesy of Somerset & Dorset Locomotive Ltd and currently resident on the Mid-Hants Railway), Severn Valley Railway-based Class 14 0-6-0DH 'Teddy Bear' D9551 (courtesy of SVR Class 14 Company Ltd) and Locomotive Services Ltd's main line-registered Class 37 D6851 *Flopsie,* as well as Bluebell resident Class 09 shunter D4106.

Book ahead

The railway promises that there will be double-headed workings and unique formations throughout the three-day event.

For those looking to stay late, the evenings of September 6/7 will each see a pie and mash dining service utilising D6851 and No. 33111; for more information or to book tickets, visit bluebell-railway.com/diesel-gala-weekend

No. 3417 will carry its first passengers in more than a decade when it appears at the Bluebell Railway's September 6-8 diesel gala. JAMES CUMMINS

Doon Valley issues SOS appeal for fresh volunteers

By Hugh Dougherty and Robin Jones

THE Doon Valley Railway has issued an urgent appeal for volunteers to come forward to keep the wheels turning at Scotland's only industrial heritage railway.

The move comes after some Sunday operating days in July and August had to be cancelled because of lack of volunteers, leading to public disappointment and a loss in vital revenue for the line.

Chairman Archie Thom said: "We are in the same position as heritage lines everywhere, especially as our age profile is concerned, and we have lost catering staff, for example, because of illness and retirements, while there has been a delay in finding a qualified assessor to pass me out on our steam loco. We do have other volunteers in the queue for steam training, and we already had qualified diesel drivers, but we need people of all ages to come forward to volunteer to keep us open on all advertised days.

Plenty for all

"If there is anyone out there with a weed-killing ticket or experience of track maintenance, they'd be especially welcome, while there is plenty to do around the site as well as on the trains themselves. Just get in touch with us at info@doonvalleyrailway.co.uk."

The appeal comes after the railway managed to overcome substantial difficulties presented by a landlord's sale of a large part of its site and was able to carry on thanks to local community support. Now, with firm plans for development, Archie said it is more important than ever for the railway to fulfil its commitment to the community and to the many enthusiasts who answered its appeal for funds to buy land.

"It would be a tragedy, after all we have gone through, if we disappeared because of a lack of volunteers," he said. "Please answer our call. You will be very welcome, and, above all, you will enjoy being part of our team."

The line is operated by the Ayshire Railway Preservation Group, which was founded in 1974 with the primary aim of saving industrial railway heritage, especially that of Ayrshire and south-west Scotland.

The NCB railway system at Waterside in the Doon Valley was one of the largest private systems in Scotland and also one of the last places where steam could be seen at work. When closed in 1978, the ARPG was determined to preserve at least a part of it.

In 1976, coal production had ceased at Minnivey, and Pennyvenie, the last deep mine in the area, closed two years later. The ARPG took over the lease of the derelict site at Minnivey in 1980, laid track, built a small engine shed, and converted the few remaining buildings to workshops, a museum and a shop.

Doon Valley Railway's steam in tandem, with Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2244 of 1947 No. 10 at Dunaskin platform and Barclay 0-4-0 fireless locomotive No. 1952 of 1928, the only one operating in the UK, alongside, awaiting new volunteers to keep them running. DVR

For the community

However, problems with the lease, including a failed attempt to buy the site, saw the ARPG decide in 2002 to close the site and relocate to Dunaskin, where the group already had a lease of the four-road locomotive shed and other railway infrastructure.

The group's landlord at Dunaskin, the Dalmellington and District Conservation Trust, went into liquidation in June 2005 and the site was sold off to various individuals and organisations.

In 2015, the ARPG bought the locomotive shed, the wagon repair shops, the Dunaskin Station and platform, the former ambulance station, the weighbridge house and associated lands. Other buildings and land which the group currently occupies has been leased to it. In 2019, the line was rebranded as the Doon Valley Railway to better reflect the local community.

New badge recalls early Donegal diesel shunter

DONEGAL Railway Heritage Museum has chosen County Donegal Railways diesel tractor No. 11 *Phoenix* for its limited-edition badge for 2024.

Built in 1929 for the Clogher Valley Railway as an Atkinson-Walker steam tractor, the unit was unsuccessful on the CVR and was bought for £100 by Donegal manager Henry Forbes, who saw its potential and had it fitted with a Gardner 6L2 diesel engine.

In 1932, after being converted at the Great Northern Railway of Ireland Dundalk works, and named *Phoenix* by Forbes, as it had arisen from the ashes, the CDR's new No. 11 worked until the closure of the system in 1959.

Most of its career was spent shunting at Strabane with occasional runs up the Finn Valley section to Stranorlar. The chain-driven tractor proved very successful in CDR service, running up a total of 204,577 miles. After closure, *Phoenix* was used to lift the southern section of the Letterkenny line and was then saved from the scrapman by the Belfast Transport Museum.

***Phoenix* alive and well in the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum at Cultra.** HUGH DOUGHERTY

It was then transferred in 1993 to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum railway gallery, where the shunter remains on display.

Museum manager Niall McCaughan said: "Each year we issue a collector badge to recall some aspect of the railways of Donegal.

"This year, we chose the iconic and unique *Phoenix*, which encapsulates so much narrow-gauge history and development. According to legend, Henry Forbes got the purchase cost back by selling the steam boiler to a local laundry for £100.

"In his pursuit of value, and in those best traditions, the badge is available from us at just €8 plus postage and packing."

See https://donegalrailway.com/shop for details.

***Phoenix* shunting at Strabane in 1954.** BERNARD L CURRAN/ HUGH DOUGHERTY COLLECTION

Right: The badge showing *Phoenix*, complete with buffers, chains and vacuum pipes. DRHM

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Fife wildlife centre opens new miniature line

A NEW miniature railway has been officially opened at the Scottish Deer Centre and Wildlife Park near Cupar in Fife – using a locomotive from the closed Kerr's Miniature Railway at Arbroath.

Class 25-based No. 25179 *Loch Lee* has been loaned to the new 273-yard 10¼in gauge line and hauled its opening train following a ribbon-cutting ceremony accompanies by a Scottish piper on August 7.

The new line has a tunnel and runs under one of the wings of a former RAF Blackburn Buccaneer attack jet XW530, which is displayed on a replica runway.

The 55-acre centre, which opened in 1988, is located on the estate of Over Rankeilour, at the former Over Rankeilour Farm close to the hamlet of the Bow of Fife.

The centre was sold to Edinburgh Woollen Mill in 1996 after being offer for sale by founders Ian and Evelyn Crombie, who wanted to move onto new ventures.

Birds of prey had been added to the ever-growing number of attractions by this time, and the centre is now home to 12 species of deer, wolves, arctic foxes Scottish wildcats, bears and others.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, several workers at the centre were made redundant by Edinburgh Woollen Mill, and in November 2020 the company was placed into administration.

In May 2021, businessmen David Hamilton bought the centre for an undisclosed sum, bringing it out of administration, and proceeded to add new attractions.

As reported in issue 273, the 350-yard Kerr's Miniature Railway at West Links Park in Arbroath closed in October 2020 after 85 years of operation. Passenger numbers had fallen from around 60,000 per season in the 1950s to 2550. It was well known for its proximity to the boundary with Network Rail, which allowed to view the narrow gauge operation alongside standard gauge traffic travelling between Dundee and Aberdeen.

No. 25179 *Loch Lee* heads the first train on the new miniature railway in the Scottish Deer and Wildlife Centre in Fife. SDWC

Hopes that it could be revived as part of plans for the redevelopment of the West Links area faded, but dee park co-owned David Hamilton contacted owner John Kerr after its closure and was eager to see it revived in some form.

John Kerr subsequently agreed to lay the track as the deer park and loan Loch Lee, which carries West Coast Railways maroon livery.

Members of the Northallerton and District ME/CFS Support Group enjoying a day out at their local heritage railway. NICK KEEGAN/WR

Wensleydale Railway hosts visit by local health support group

THE Wensleydale Railway recently hosted members of the Northallerton & District ME/CFS Support Group, whose secretary Sue Hill is one of line's volunteers and living history interpreters at Leeming Bar station.

The group joined the railway for a tour of Leeming Bar Station House and then enjoyed sandwiches and hot drinks before a train journey to Leyburn.

The visit was rounded off with cakes and more tea and coffee, back at Leeming Bar. Home baking was provided by Sue and Mo Park, the railway's catering manager.

The group was founded more than 20 years ago to help people with myalgic encephalomyelitis, commonly known ME, a life-changing and indiscriminate neurological condition leading to long-term disability, chronic fatigue syndrome, non-restorative sleep, cognitive difficulties and a lower quality of life, for which there is no known treatment.

WR marketing and fundraising manager Nick Keegan said: "We are a community railway, and local groups like this one share that sense of community spirit and purpose.

"What was most evident from meeting with the group's members was the clear bond of friendship and mutual support that they shared."

Bright boost for Cotswold line

PULSAR, Britain's leading supplier of personal protection equipment to the rail industry, has donated clothing worth £2500 to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's infrastructure team.

The donation followed an approach by Jonathan Taylor, a member of the railway's lineside drainage team, to Pulsar at its stand at the recent RailLive rail industry event at nearby Long Marston. The clothing, comprising hi-visibility certified long-sleeved polo shirts, shell jackets and certified stretch combat trousers, was handed over by Pulsar's sales director David Simth in a ceremony at Winchcombe station.

Jonathan said: "In the past we provided our own high-visibility clothing, but this new kit really gives a professional edge to the team.

"Given that we work in all weathers, it is important that we are safe, dry and comfortable – and can be seen.

"We are really grateful to Pulsar for donating this excellent kit."

The drainage team is responsible for maintaining about 60 culverts and drains that carry water off the Cotswold escarpment, crossing the railway towards the rivers Avon and Severn.

The line's civil engineering director, Dr Graham Plant, who is responsible for the infrastructure volunteers, said: "Given the history of landslips along the railway, drainage is vital to maintain the integrity of the railway's embankments and cuttings. Our volunteers play an essential role in securing the stability of the railway. This clothing will give the team a real boost."

David said: "I am amazed to learn that the railway is run by so many volunteers and so few paid staff, yet it is operated to the highest possible standards of maintenance and safety. I'm particularly struck by the challenges that the railway has overcome, not least the significant works to the very striking Stanway Viaduct."

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway infrastructure drainage team volunteers pose in their new Pulsar high-visibility clothing, presented by the firm's David Smith (front left) to volunteer Jonathan Taylor at Winchcombe. IAN CROWDER

On July 24, the railway hosted a concert as part of the annual local MusicFest. Five new pieces of music were specially composed, each making their world premiere at the evening performance as part of a scheme launched by Aberystwyth University to foster up-and-coming talent. OWEN HAYWARD

During the performance, one of the new compositions was performed from the balcony of the 1896-built Padarn Railway Directors' Saloon which is currently on display pending a future move to the Bala Lake Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

Rheidol's museum shed hosts Welsh musical world premieres

By Owen Hayward

IT has billed its conversion of the GWR locomotive shed at Aberystwyth as a multi-functional display space, and on July 24 the Vale of Rheidol Railway showed why when it welcomed Welsh musicians into the venue for not one – but five – world premieres from as many up-and-coming composers.

While primarily used as a museum space to display locomotives and rolling stock from its extensive collection, the set-up of the 1938-built shed allows exhibits to be shuffled and removed as required to open up floorspace for external hires including musical performances, food festivals and model railway exhibitions.

A small number of exhibits were temporarily removed from one end of the shed to open up space for Aberystwyth-based choir Philomusica and Welsh orchestral group Sinfonia Cymru, an ensemble of young professional musicians from across the country, to perform as part of Ceredigion's annual MusicFest, which fills venues around the town for one week of the month each year.

The first major event to take place within the VoR's new events space, the concert sold out to capacity in the days beforehand, and saw additional seating added to meet the high demand. All five pieces performed were composed as part of Creddwn, a scheme set up by Aberystwyth University with funding from Welsh music promoter Ty Cerdd and the Arts Council of Wales, which is seeking to create a world-leading hub for musical experimentation and innovation in mid-Wales. Each of the performed pieces made its world debut on the day.

The event's VoR liaison, Phil Budd, said: "Many of the orchestral musicians commented on the fantastic acoustics in the building, a product of the wooden floor and high ceiling, just like a concert hall, as well as the flexibility of the space as a concert and events venue. It is hoped that the venue will be an asset to the town, providing a location for many diverse events throughout the creative arts.

"The concert was sold out to capacity despite having had extra seating added twice. The set-up saw Philomusica perform at one end of the building, with smaller chamber ensembles performing in unusual spaces around the audience. A particular highlight was a woodwind duo playing from the balcony of the Padarn Railway saloon."

Throughout the summer, regular Sunday lunchtime concerts have been taking place with other local performers; the next major concert will take place on November 11, featuring music to commemorate Remembrance Day.

Busy season

The concert is just one event in what has been a busy season for the Vale of Rheidol Railway so far. Back in May, the railway partnered with local cycle shop Afan Cycles to run a 'Race the Rails' event that saw cyclists attempt to beat the train service to the line's terminus at Devil's Bridge.

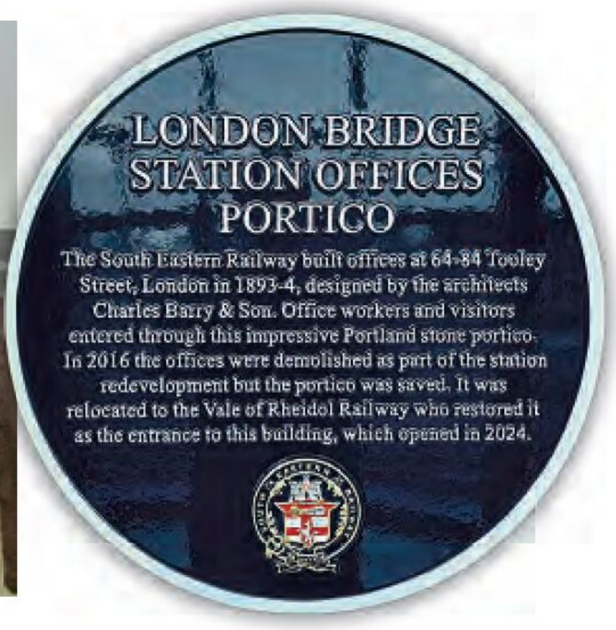
More than £850 was raised for the West Wales Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Earlier in the July it celebrated the success of 19-year-old Kian Holdsworth, who completed a two-year apprenticeship at the railway, studying a Level 3 NVW in mechanical engineering at Dolgellau College while working on the line. Arriving from an automotive background with no prior experience of railways, he learned skills such as lathe work, milling and fabrication, and he has also become one of the railway's guards and steam locomotive firemen.

On July 18, the VoR also hosted representatives of the Railway Heritage Trust to unveil a blue plaque in the entrance to the museum. The portico was once part of the South Eastern Railway's offices on Tooley Street, in London, and was rescued by the VoR during that building's renovation and now forms the entranceway to the locomotive shed.

The unveiling ceremony was performed by RHT executive director Tim Hedley-Jones, who first spoke about the project to bring the stonework from London to Aberystwyth, before inviting

Since the arrival of ex-GWR 'Dukedog' No. 9017 in March, many former Aberystwyth shedmen have been reunited with the locomotive. One person with a different connection is Ann Hatherill, whose father built a 5in gauge model of the locomotive that went on to win several awards for excellence. VOR



The blue plaque unveiled on the former SER offices entrance portico, which is now part of the Vale of Rheidol's museum shed at Aberystwyth. VOR

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George England No. 4 *Palmerston* simmers at Devil's Bridge on July 24 following arrival with its loaded test run, having passed its final boiler test the day before. It worked its first public passenger services two days later, which was the first of a series of summer Friday lunchtime trips. OWEN HAYWARD

Pictured at Quarry Cutting on July 19, Kerr Stuart 0-4-0ST No. 3114 *Wren* made its annual pilgrimage from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge, where it undertook driver experience courses on select days throughout the summer. ANDREW SIMMONDS

local schoolchildren to watch as he unveiled the plaque.

The next day, resident Kerr Stuart 'Wren' 0-4-0ST No. 3441 proceeded to make its annual trip up to Devil's Bridge, where it has been stationed over the summer, offering driver experiences on a short length of track adjacent to the Rheidol's terminus there.

The railway has also seen several ex-Aberystwyth shedmen visit to be reunited with GWR 'Dukedog' No. 9017 *Earl of Berkley,* which is currently on loan from the Bluebell Railway and displayed within the walls of what was once its regular base during its working life. Amid those coming to see it was Ann Hatherill, who passed out as the first female fireman at the Talyllyn Railway in 1957 and who saw locomotives such as No. 9017 running along the Cambrian route at the time. In particular, Ann's father, Bill Carter, built a 5in scale model of this particular 'Dukedog' that won awards at local model engineering exhibitions, including the Duke of Edinburgh trophy, an annual award for excellence regarded as the highest accolade for model engineering.

Throughout the summer, visiting George England 0-4-0STT No. 4 *Palmerston* has also been running Friday lunchtime trips to Devil's Bridge following completion of a swift contract overhaul at the VoR's workshops (as reported last issue), before partaking in the August bank holiday weekend's Rheidol Steam Fair event that saw up to six locomotives in steam together for the first time in several years.

The engine shed will once again be reshuffled in the autumn for the first model railway exhibition to be held within on October 2. Initially planned as only a small display of locally-built layouts, as *Heritage Railway* went to press it was confirmed that 15 layouts, along with display stands, were set to appear. Amid those will be the late Rev Wilbert Awdry's Ffarquhar branch, based on a station in his Thomas the Tank Engine stories and which is usually on display in the Narrow Gauge Museum at Tywyn Wharf station.

➜ For further details on VoR services and special events, visit rheidolrailway.co.uk

Help *Bluebell* bloom again via appeal for flagship P class

'FLAGSHIP' locomotives can be determined in several ways, and often prove to be a focal point for enthusiasts' passion for a specific railway, but rarely does one take its name from the line at which it resides. One such locomotive is SECR 0-6-0T P class No. 323 *Bluebell*, named after the Bluebell Railway, where it took up residence in 1960, and which has become the focal point for a £150,000 appeal to be brought back into service.

Last operational in 2019, the success of having a small locomotive available was proved in 2023 by LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* which saw No. 323 next picked for overhaul.

Uncovering problems

The project was intended to be a swift one, with the good components from classmates No. 178 and 323 (each having differing faults) being combined to make one operational locomotive. In particular, the boiler of No. 178 was thought to be better than *Bluebell*'s own, with the project first hoped to be completed this summer. However, non-destructive testing revealed that the backhead was in poor condition and so it had to be condemned.

Although the steep rise in costings would have deterred most railways from continuing the overhaul, the railway has recognised the appeal of having its 'icon' in service and has vowed to keep on with it. The new overhaul plan will involve a heavy repair of the boiler, replacing the affected areas and continuing to recover good components from between the two locomotives where possible, with the work being carried out by an external contractor in order to expedite the project.

All these factors have brought the estimated cost of the work up to a value of about £150,000, for which the railway is appealing for donations towards to allow the planned overhaul to continue – in the hope of seeing Bluebell partake in Rail 200 celebrations next year.

➜ Donations are invited either online at bluebell-railway.com/trust/make-a-donation or as a bank transfer or cheque (details for which will be provided on request).

Ffestiniog's young volunteers celebrate 25 years' service each

By Robin Jones

THREE Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways young volunteers have just clocked up 25 years' service each.

Oliver Bennett, Stephen Greig and Chris Harrison first became involved with the F&WHR in their early teens when they took part in Young Volunteers Week, known then as Kids' Week.

On their exact anniversary of joining, August 4, the trio teamed up to run the 10.40am 'Mountain Spirit' departure from Porthmadog Harbour station, with Stephen as guard, Chris as a volunteer driver and Oliver as on-train steward.

Stephen, now the F&WHR's visitor experience manager, said: "The team working on the then Kids' Week were passionate about making the railway as inclusive and open as possible to volunteers. Group leader Eileen Clayton MBE encouraged and engaged people at a level that was suitable and safe for them, ensuring that volunteering on the railway was made possible for everyone once they were too old for children's activities – matching the skill sets and levels of ability of people to available volunteering roles.

"It is especially important to not only say just how much our volunteers do for the railway, but also how it works the other way around as well.

"The railway has taught all three of us many skills, life lessons and experiences. It is thanks to these skills that Oliver and I have had the opportunity to work here full-time."

Chris was also a paid staff member but moved on to drive for other railway companies – again, using the skills he learnt on the F&WHR.

Oliver, now the F&WHR on-train services supervisor, said: "When I started all those years ago, I did not expect to work my way up to a senior position. It is fun working here, and busy – and one thing about it, you make lifelong friendships."

Chris, who drives for the modern-day Great Western Railway on the main line in his day job, said: "The best thing about being here, as well as the friends, has been qualifying as a driver – that was what I wanted to do when I first visited the railway."

Back in 2007, Chris became the railway's then youngest qualified steam driver.

He added: "It is really a cool thing to do and very nostalgic to get together with Ollie and Stephen to run the train today. I am looking forward now to clocking up 30 years as a volunteer!"

Left to right: Oliver Bennett, Chris Harrison and Stephen Greig on double Fairlie *James Spooner* pulling the 'Mountain Spirit' on August 4. CHRIS PARRY/ FF&WHR

Another anniversary

Also marking a milestone in the same week was guard Matt Hall, who joined in 2004 at just under the age of 14, when he was too young to properly participate in the volunteer week so had to bring his mum along. Undeterred, he has gone on to be a key member of the volunteering staff.

Matt said: "Having *Linda* haul 'The Quarryman' on my 20th anniversary was nostalgically appropriate, as her fellow Penrhyn lady *Blanche* hauled the induction train on my first Kids' Week 20 years ago! Passengers on 'The Quarryman' really added to the occasion – as I walked through the train checking tickets, each carriage applauded once they learnt the significance of the day to me."

F&WHR general manager Paul Lewin said: "Congratulations to Stephen, Oliver, Chris and Matt: they are a real asset to our railway. I hope the 2024 cohort from Young Volunteers Week follow in their footsteps. Volunteering is how I began my career; I would encourage anyone thinking about volunteering here to give it a go and become part of something special."

➜ More information about Young Volunteers Week and other ways to volunteer can be found at https://www.ffestiniograilway.org.uk/ways-to-volunteer

Super Power Weekend will see NG15 back in steam

FOUR articulated South African Railways Garretts will be in service for the Welsh Highland Railway's Super Power Weekend on September 14/15 – and NG15 No. 2-8-2 No. 134 will be in steam at Dinas following its lengthy restoration.

No. 134 was built by Society Anglo-Franco Belge in 1952 for SAR, and after becoming redundant there was imported with sister No. 133 for an abortive heritage railway project at Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire. The were sold to the WHR in 1998, and the railway also acquired NGG16s Nos. 87 and 130 from the same project.

The overhauled boiler of No. 134 was returned in January 2023 and placed in the frames, along with a new ash pan. Volunteers and staff proceeded to complete and install fittings and pipework, and on August 16 the boiler test was performed and passed, meaning No. 134, which has been painted in gloss black livery, will be in steam during the event, although not pulling any passenger services. It is expected to make its WHR passenger debut this autumn.

Running for the event will be NGG16s Nos. 87, 130 and 143 and pioneer Garratt No. K1, along with diesels *Castell Caernarfon, Vale of Ffestiniog* and Baguley No. 9.

There will be an intensive timetable between Caernarfon and Rhyd Ddu over the weekend, including regular services and extra event trains. Several mixed trains will be hauled by No. K1 or an NGG16, plus some diesel-hauled passenger outings, including an unusual one for No. 9.

Dinas, the main event hub, will be open from 8.30am to 6pm on both days, and visitors will be able see the NG15 in steam there. There will also be a hot food van and stalls in the goods shed, a 5in gauge line operating, tours of the works, and footplate rides. The goods shed cafe opens from 8.30am and stands from 9.30am, and they will close at 4pm. Tryfan Junction and Waunfawr station buildings will also be open and event ticketholders are encouraged to visit them.

On the Saturday, there will be a 90-minute guided walk down the Bryngwyn branch, with a minibus taking visitors to Cae Haidd. Two walks are planned, one leaving at about 9.45am and the other at about 1.45pm, both with a train back to Dinas.

Free to all event rover ticketholders, the walks should be booked so transport can be arranged.

On Sunday, there will be a guided walk around the Dinas site to explain the upcoming civil engineering and building construction work for the new layout and carriage shed.

There will be an 8.20am train from Porthmadog Harbour to Caernarfon on the Saturday, returning by 6.15pm, and on Sunday are additional Harbourmaster services.

A railway spokesman said: "This is likely to be the last event we run at Dinas for some time."

➜ For more details and to book, visit www.festrail.co.uk/september-14th-15th-whr-super-power

NG15 No. 134 will be in steam at Dinas for the Super Power weekend. FF&WHR

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Revived 'Hills of Donegal' success for Tailte Tours

TAILTE Tours reprised the legendary 'Hills of Donegal' tour, once operated by the Great Northern Railway of Ireland, to bring a bus load of excursionists from Dublin to the 15in gauge Difflin Lake Railway at Oakfield Park, where they experienced haulage behind *Countess of Difflin*, Donegal's only working steam locomotive, on July 6.

The tourists also enjoyed a run past the former County Donegal Railways Stranorlar headquarters and on though the Barnesmore Gap to view the CDR main line formation, before visiting Donegal Railway Heritage Museum.

Tailte Tours, which gives the profits from its tours to smaller Irish railway heritage outfits such as the Cavan & Leitrim and Downpatrick & County Down Railways, presented the museum with €600 worth of specially-commissioned badges depicting CDR 5a 2-6-4T *Blanche*, currently displayed in the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum at Cultra. The badges will be sold by the museum to raise funds.

Tailte Tours committee member Alan Richardson said: "The exquisitely designed badge features delicate artwork, right down to the loco's motion. The badge is a unique keepsake for visitors to the museum, badge collectors and railway enthusiasts alike, and we were delighted to put something back into the museum which is doing a sterling job of preserving and presenting Donegal's rich railway heritage to the public."

Museum chairman Mark McDaid said: "We were delighted to welcome the 'Hills of Donegal' excursionists to our museum, and we thank Tailte Tours for its generosity in the form of this donation to us."

Above: The 'Hills of Donegal' excursionists and the train crew gather round the Difflin Lake Railway's *Countess of Difflin*, carrying the Tailte Tours headboard, before enjoying a trip over the 15in gauge line on July 6. TAILTE TOURS

Right: Alan Richardson, of Tailte Tours, hands over the *Blanche* badge (detail inset) to Seamus, of Donegal Railway Heritage Museum, in front of 2-6-4T *Drumboe*. On the locomotive are DRHM chairman Niall McCaughan (right), Mark McDaid (left) and Tailte Tours marketing volunteer Niall Kelly. TAILTE TOURS

Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2069 of 1939 *Little Barford* running on its dedicated track, named the Fengate Agricultural Railway, at the Weeting Steam Rally in Norfolk on July 21. JAMES KINDRED

Ballyshannon's County Donegal Railways station is represented in the museum display by this 1950s view of a small boy, shod in wellies to withstand the summer weather, inspecting railcar No. 14 at the platform. BALLYSHANNON AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

Ballyshannon's railway past recalled in local museum's new collection

By Hugh Dougherty

A SMALL but significant railway heritage collection has been added to Ballyshannon and District Museum's displays, recalling that the days when Ballyshannon was served by the County Donegal Railways and Great Northern Railway of Ireland, both of which have separate stations in the town.

On show are a series of artefacts, all collected from the community by museum volunteers, with a rare GNR(I) driver's journal charting his goods train journey from Bundoran through Ballyshannon to Clones, on December 2, 1926, showing arrival and departure times at stations, shunting miles, and the number of wagons added and detached at each station taking pride of place. The engine recorded is AL class 0-6-0 goods No. 56, built by the GNR(I) at Dundalk in 1896 and scrapped by the Ulster Transport Authority in 1960, three years after the closure of the Bundoran line.

Nameplates and more

Train staffs for Ballyshannon, Bundoran and Belleek are displayed, along with GNR(I) cast iron nameplates once mounted on lampposts at Bundoran and Ballyshannon stations, tickets, handbills, and a picture of railcar No. 14 at the CDR's Ballyshannon Station in the 1950s.

A museum guide said: "We are keen to remind visitors that Ballyshannon was served by two railways, the GNR from 1866 to 1957 and the CDR from 1905 to 1959, so we asked the community to come forward with any mementoes of our railways, which both had a significant impact on life in Ballyshannon.

"The response was encouraging, and we will be adding more items to the railway collection as they are donated.

"There is no doubt that the railway display is attracting great attention from visitors."

The museum is in the town's former barracks building situated, appropriately enough, opposite the GNR(I) Market Square bus office and garage, now the Bus Eireann office for the town.

As well as the railways, the museum has a section on Ballyshannon-born rockstar Rory Gallagher and other local history interests.

➜ Entry is by donation. Opening times are available at facebook.com/Ballyshannonmuseum/

Ballyshannon station survives as private house and is referred to in the museum displays. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Kidderminster Town's original stationmaster from 1984, Malcolm Broadhurst, is interviewed by BBC Radio's Nina das Gupta. ANTHONY CARWITHEN

The youngest member of Kidderminster Town's present-day station staff, Andrew Lancett, cuts the 40th anniversary ribbon. BOB GREEN

Dave Insull was seven years old when the station opened; he has since played a major role in the recent overhaul of *Hagley Hall*. ANTHONY CARWITHEN

Kidderminster Town 40th: 'We're not quite finished with it yet!'

CELEBRATIONS to mark the 40th anniversary of the Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster Town terminus were held on July 27/28.

Senior railway figures paid tribute to the volunteers who saw the potential and importance of creating a southern terminus for heritage line (as featured in issue 391). SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We are celebrating the vision of those involved with the railway all those years ago who understood how transformational bringing the SVR to Kidderminster would be. They knew the positive impact it would have, with access to the national rail network and close proximity to major roads and motorway networks. It is therefore unsurprising that nowadays just over 80% of visitors to the railway begin their SVR experience at Kidderminster.

"Also, we are celebrating the vision of those whose ambition and desire to create something really special resulted in this magnificent station being constructed. In my view, it's the most impressive entrance to any heritage railway, and a space that has a unique and wonderful atmosphere at any time of the year."

Many of those attending the celebrations were part of that visionary team 40 years ago, including Malcolm Broadhurst, who played a key role at the time as Kidderminster Town's first stationmaster.

"It was an absolute privilege to be asked to be the first stationmaster for our new station, but also rather a challenge, as there was literally nothing there!" he said.

"It was an adventure, and I jumped at the chance. Contractors built the platform, but we formed a volunteer gang of about a dozen people and trawled West Midlands railway sites and beyond for bits and pieces so we could put together our station.

"When we opened Kidderminster Town station in 1984, even in its rather temporary state, it felt like the SVR had truly arrived!'

Current SVR chairman Chris Walton, who was involved in the often difficult logistical and financial planning that went on for several years before the station opened, said: "Believe it or not, Kidderminster Town station isn't quite finished yet. We are hoping that in the coming years we will be able to complete the original vision by extending the length of the platforms and installing a canopy all the way to the end.

"Next year, we will celebrate 60 years in preservation with special events and commemorations, and taking a leading role in showcasing Railway 200, Network Rail's initiative to mark 200 years of UK rail and its continuing importance. We have much to look forward to."

On both days, SVR flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* left Kidderminster Town station at 12.30pm, recreating the 'Kidderminster Venturer' special it hauled back in 1984 on the opening day.

Above: Recreation of Brian Troman's 1984 picture of GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* heading the 'Kidderminster Venturer' opening day train. ALAN CORFIELD

Right: The original view of the 'Kidderminster Venturer' leaving the newly-opened Kidderminster Town station on July 30, 1984. BRIAN TROMAN

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Best of both worlds: Class 52 D1062 *Western Courier* and GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* line up together at Kidderminster Town's 40th anniversary celebrations. JOHN OATES

Driver Lawrence Mortimer attaches the 'Kidderminster Venturer' headboard. BOB GREEN

Historic Skegness station building gets new role on the railway after 77 years

By Robin Jones

A GREAT Northern Railway building from Skegness is being given a new lease of life after being returned to railway use after 77 years – as another heritage line gets a new station!

The Old Coal Office, built at the resort's station in the late 1800s or early 1900s, is being renovated and moved to the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway as part of a new terminus under construction at the line's South Loop in Skegness Water Leisure Park

There it will also become an interpretation centre showcasing the history of the world's first heritage railway to be built by enthusiasts, and it will also tell the story of Ellis Bros (Contractors) Ltd, owner of the Water Leisure Park, and Waterford and Greenacres holiday parks in the Skegness area, and which for more than 70 years built much of the modern housing and other amenities in Skegness, Wainfleet and district.

Sold out of railway use, the wooden building was moved to Ellis Brothers' site in Lansdown Road, Skegness, in 1947 by the company's founders and acted as offices until last year, when the South Loop station scheme was developed.

The firm's founder, the late Fred Ellis, had a keen interest in the history and heritage of Lincolnshire and of Skegness in particular, and he wanted the building to be conserved and made available for public use, hence it forming the centrepiece of the new station.

A mysterious feature is its clerestory roof, similar to those found on early railway carriages used by the Midland Railway, GWR and NER – but not the GNR which operated the line to Skegness until its amalgamation into the LNER. Whether this feature was taken from an old carriage and added to the building to give extra light to those working in it is not known; a photograph in Skegness Library dated 1907 shows what is thought to be the Coal Office, but without a clerestory. Information about the building and how the GNR handled coal traffic for the developing resort is welcomed by those working on its renovation.

A front view of the old Skegness railway coal office being dismantled in Lansdown Road for renovation and re-erection at the new South Loop station on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway; the clerestory roof has already been removed. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

Construction of the new station is well underway, with Motor rail Simplex 4wDM No. 3995 of 1926 *Paul* in the platform road with a passenger service for Walls Lane, consisting of former Ashover Light Railway and the 'Queen Mary' ex-Nocton Estates Railway carriages. The combined age of the trio is about 300 years! DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

In remarkably good condition, the structure was set to be moved to the LCLR during August, ready for opening to the public in 2025.

A grant of £24,250 has been made jointly by East Lindsey District Council, South Holland District Council and Boston Borough Council, which administers the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (and Rural Prosperity Funding) in the area as the new station and interpretation centre will help boost the economy. Ellis Bros has contributed £8000.

Work on the site has been delayed and interrupted by the heavy rainfall experienced since last autumn, affecting the water table and the ability to move equipment and materials to the site.

Chief executive officer for Ellis Bros (Contractors) Ltd and LCLR company secretary John Chappell said: "We are delighted to be able to conserve this remarkable survival of Skegness' railway and industrial heritage.

"The new role for the Old Coal Office helps us ensure the long-term future for the railway and to enhance the existing achievements of the volunteers' work.

"This contribution from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will enable Skegness to escape from the widely-held perception that the town is some sort of 'cultural vacuum.' Anything which does that by adding to the appeal of the heritage attractions of the district will benefit all of the town.

"Skegness as we know it was brought about because of the railway; before it reached the area, it was a fishing hamlet of just six houses. Everything we have is down to the railway, and the LCLR contributes towards that heritage."

The chairman of the LCLR Historic Vehicles Trust, Richard Shepherd, said: "Rebuilding the Old Coal Office at our new station enables us to create a destination at the end of our line and let people learn about its unique history and heritage. At the moment, trains terminate beside Skegness Airfield, but passengers cannot disembark; the locomotive uncouples at South Loop from the carriages, runs round them, and then reattaches, to return to Walls Lane station.

Normandy veteran remembered in Drewry locomotive naming

Words and pictures by Sally Clifford

NORMANDY veteran Ken Cooke was among special guests attending a poignant locomotive dedication ceremony at the Derwent Valley Light Railway, near York.

For the 99-year-old surviving member of the York Normandy Veterans Association, the naming of Drewry Car Co. 0-4-0DM No. 2164 after fellow veteran, the late Ken Smith, made it a particularly emotional occasion.

Ken accompanied Ken Smith's widow, Gloria, in unveiling the name plaque at a special event held at the heritage line at the Farming Museum in Murton Park, York, on July 24.

"He would have been a very proud man today," said Gloria, who was overcome with emotion on seeing the plaque bearing her husband's name.

Ken that added it had been a brilliant day and that he was impressed with the engine's restoration.

Gloria Smith, the widow of the late York Normandy veteran Ken Smith, after whom the locomotive was named, with veteran Ken Cooke unveiling the nameplate on Drewry 0-4-0DM No. 2164

Guests acknowledge the Act of Remembrance as bugler David Ventress plays The Last Post and Reveille. PHOTO SALLY CLIFFORD.

Nick Beilby, chairman of the York Area Group of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and life member of Derwent Valley Light Railway, who organised the dedication event.

"We wanted its historical significance to be recognised as most people have no clue about its war service or the age of it."

Abroad and at home

Event organiser Nick Beilby, chairman of York Area Group of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and life member of the DVLR, said that the locomotive, 1941-built No. WD37, which was shipped to the Middle East during the Second World War and used in the military department in Egypt, "didn't do much because it was too small for the work required of it, but the interesting thing about it is it had some sisters and they came ashore a week or so after D-Day in Normandy and were used in places like Cherbourg."

He continued: "In 1947 they decided it needed to come home and it returned to the Ministry of Defence depot at Kings Norton, Birmingham. It was sold the following year to Shell-Mex at Trafford Park, Manchester, and it stayed there until 1964 and moved to work for BP at Saltend near Kingston-upon-Hull. It led a quiet life, and I don't suppose many enthusiasts knew much about it. By 1984 it was no longer needed, and BP donated it to the York Area Group. It was used on the NYMR until about 1995 by the permanent way department."

Nick said that mechanical failure led to the engine being taken out of service and, three years ago, it arrived at the DVLR where it was restored and is now returning to the rails.

"We wanted its historical significance to be recognised as most people have no clue about its war service or the age of it," said Nick.

Following the locomotive's arrival, a full mechanical assessment was carried out by Richard Gibbon OBE, former head of engineering at the National Railway Museum, and Tony Simons, who were among the team, including Jim Wright and Edward Fisk, that undertook the restoration. "They have done a tremendous job," Nick added.

Repainted in Middle East green livery, which the Drewry would have carried during its time there, it is dedicated to the memory of those who served in the region during the war.

Grace and blessing

Special nameplates have been cast commemorating the York Normandy Veterans Association and the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, in which Ken Smith served.

Father Adam Romanis, from St Lawrence Parish Church, York, performed the dedication, naming grace and blessing, a service which was also attended by York Garrison Sergeant Major W01 Brian Kiernan, and W02 Reggie Perrin, from HQ York Garrison, the Lord Mayor of York Coun Margaret Wells, Sheriff of York Fiona Fitzpatrick and Sherriff's consort Geoff Cossins.

RAF Veteran Bryan Airlie read from For The Fallen by Laurence Binyon, bugler David Ventress played The Last Post and Reveille, which included a minute's silence, and Ken Cooke read the poem The Veteran.

Nick said: "I am very proud of what has been achieved by so many and, most importantly, we now have an everlasting memorial to my York Normandy Veteran friend Ken and all of his comrades. That is the most important thing, but we have also demonstrated that we can still do engineering."

The Drewry is now on a 99-year loan with the railway.

Eight years ago, the line's Ruston Hornsby 4wDM No. 441934 of 1960 *Rowntrees No. 3* was named to honour Ken Cooke, who occasionally travelled on it while working for York's famous confectionery creator.

Great Victoria Street track recycled for Downpatrick railway

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has been donated large quantity of timber sleepers from Translink and Babcock, the main rail systems lead contractors on the new Belfast Grand Central Station project.

The sleepers were part of the approach tracks to the old Great Victoria Street station at Central Junction, which closed in May, and are now being replaced by new materials for the station that will replace the Europa and Great Victoria Street bus and rail stations.

This material contribution will support the DCDR's ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance its historical railway infrastructure as it continues to recover from the floods of November 2023. The DCDR has been closed since Halloween 2023 but is hopeful of resuming operations within the current year.

DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said: "We are immensely grateful to Translink and Babcock for their generous donation of these timber sleepers as it ensures we can continue to renew our infrastructure and operate our heritage railway for the enjoyment and education of future generations. That these sleepers come from Belfast Great Victoria Street station and are being recycled further underscores the positive environmental impact of this donation.

"By gifting them to a charity, Babcock is aiding the DCDR and promoting environmentally-friendly practices, as well as sustainability and community support."

Robert Gardiner (centre) with Babcock's project manager, Greg Ramsay, senior construction manager David Hutchinson, and the sleepers under Belfast Grand Central Station's new bridge. DCDR

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First World War Western Front wagons in operation

A RARE opportunity to see wagons which helped the Allies to victory in the First World War in operation will be presented on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway at Skegness Water Leisure Park on Saturday, September 21.

The LCLR is home to a unique collection of these vehicles which were used to transport men, materials, ammunition, food, medicine, hay for their horses, water and other supplies to the front line trenches of the battlefields in France – and to return the casualties for treatment and, with luck, transport in hospital trains to England for recovery.

These vehicles include the last-surviving ambulance van in the UK, bogie wagons used for transport from the railheads where supplies arrived, ration wagons (which were sometimes pushed by soldiers or pulled by mules into the trenches) and diesel locomotives developed from the designs that proved so successful on the lines operated by the War Department Light Railways.

They have been painstakingly conserved and restored by volunteers from the LCLR Historic Vehicles Trust, their owner and the line's registered charity, but the popularity of the line in its short summer season means there are few opportunities to let the public see them running.

Above: The uniquely surviving (in the UK) ambulance van which brought wounded soldiers back from the fighting to field hospitals, now on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway in Skegness. CHRIS BATES/LCLR

Right: Two Class D bogie wagons from the First World War with a Simplex diesel from the Second World War, which was developed from a successful First World War design. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

At the event, they will be run on special demonstration trains, in between a limited service of passenger trains (which also use vehicles either from the First World War or components from them).

After the Armistice in 1918, track and rolling stock were sold off by the Allies, some coming to Lincolnshire to form the legendary 'potato railways' which stretched into the Fens and the marsh and from where the LCLR, as the first heritage railway in the world to be built by enthusiasts, acquired its initial stock and rails when it opened at its first site in Humberston, south of Cleethorpes, in August 1960.

Trust chairman Richard Shepherd said: "This is a rare opportunity to see how these narrow-gauge railways helped the Allies overcome the problem of transport of men and materials over the muddy quagmires which had earlier prevented reinforcement and supplies reaching the men fighting in some of the terrible battles of the early stages of the conflict, resulting in catastrophic loss of life. Initially, the British were reluctant to use these light railways, despite the Germans, the Austro-Hungarians, the French and the Russians demonstrating their effectiveness, but once the decision was taken in 1916 to build a network, it rapidly created an efficient and effective system which made victory possible in 1918.

"The surviving vehicles are a significant part of our collection in Skegness, and seeing them in operation is a real, living demonstration of history."

Katie is first-ever visitor to 'northernmost' line

ENGLAND'S most northerly steam railway has welcomed its first visiting locomotive in his 35-year history.

***Katie*, an 0-4-0T built in 1896 by Sir Arthur Heywood in 1896 for the Duke of Westminster's private Eaton Hall Railway, made a guest appearance at the 15in gauge Heatherslaw Light Railway on August 1-4.**

A member of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway fleet from 1916 to 1919 after it was bought to run works trains, it was sold to run at Llewellyn's Miniature Railway, Southport, and then on the Fairbourne Railway, before being dismantled in 1929.

In 1992, the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Heritage Group formed to restore what remained of *Katie* to original condition.

The remains were donated by the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn and returned to Ravenglass.

In 2016, *Katie* went to Station Road Steam Ltd, near Lincoln, to complete the restoration using the original frames and running board angles, along with the whistle. After many years of fundraising and work, *Katie*'s rebuild was completed in 2017.

The Heatherslaw Light Railway, near Ford, in Northumberland, close to the Scottish border, was founded by Neville Smith and Sid Ford on the Forst and Etal estate and opened in 1989, running two miles from Heatherslaw to Etal village.

The railway's first locomotive from its opening was 0-4-2T *The Lady Augusta,* nominally built by the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway and subcontracted to Kirklees Light Railway to be completed, and it entered service in 1989.

***Katie* heads a Heatherslaw Light Railway train during its groundbreaking visit.** CARL FAIRLESS

HLR operations manager Carl Fairless said: "*Katie* was built for the Eaton Hall estate railway and the roots of our railway are an estate railway, and I've been humbled by the outpouring of affection towards this engine. It was actually built for a purpose, which was to transport produce and goods from the estate up to the main line; whereas ours was built primarily for tourism to get people from Heatherslaw down to Etal.

"Last year, I went on a visit down to Ravenglass, made some friends, and the culmination was *Katie's* visit, and for it to be our first-ever visiting steam engine."

Bagnall Nos. 2067 *Peter* and 1491 *Isabel* double-head a short train of ballast tubs away from Threlkeld bound for the inner quarry.

No.1491 *Isabel* shunts empty ballast tubs in the inner quarry sidings. In the background is Blencathra, also known as Saddleback.

Threlkeld Bagnall bonanza!

Words and pictures by Dave Wilson

THRELKELD Quarry & Mining Museum held its eagerly-anticipated annual steam gala on July 26/27, which saw four visiting locomotives line up in the beautiful Lakeland setting a few miles from Keswick, in the shadow of Blencathra (Saddleback).

The museum's 2ft gauge quarry railway includes a section of 1-in-20 up to the 'inner quarry'. The original line is about half a mile long: however, work on building a new quarter-mile extension is nearing completion and will eventually link the existing route with the new museum development taking place on the 'lower level,' which has just received a major funding boost.

A museum statement said: "We are delighted to announce that the museum has been awarded a grant of £120,000 from Cumberland Council as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. We have also been successful in applying for a grant of £50,000 from Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust.

"These grants will enable us to start the construction of our new museum building very shortly. This project has been quietly developing in recent years and we are so excited to see it become a reality."

Work on the project was planned to begin in August.

Working history

Commercial quarrying at Threlkeld is just a distant memory, with much of the site slowly returning to nature. However, while the commercial levels of quarrying may have ceased, Threlkeld is very much a 'working' museum and continues to quarry small amounts of stone, supplying the National Trust and the Lake District National Park with material for repairing paths on the fells. Local builders and dry-stone wallers are also customers for Threlkeld's granite.

The original Threlkeld quarry opened in the 1870s to supply railway ballast to the now long-lost Cockermouth Keswick & Penrith Railway. The original quarry railway was a narrow gauge line, using gravity, rope haulage and tubs, hand-loaded by men on 'piecework'; a growing demand which included, among other things, supplying ballast to the LNWR for use on what is now the West Coast Main line over Shap.

The original rope-worked system was replaced by steam locomotives running over a network eventually covering two-and-a-half miles between the crushing plant at Threlkeld to the quarry at Bram Crags, along with a short branch to the splendidly named Klondike quarry (there was sadly no gold rush!).

The end of quarrying operations in 1936 saw the railway system dismantled during 1937 and 1940. Today, all that remains are ghostly traces of the original trackbed down St John Vale to the Hilltop and Bram Crag quarries. This setback was not, however, to be the end of quarrying at Threlkeld as the quarry reopened in 1949 following a major programme of modernisation.

Threlkeld, which later became a part of the ARC group, finally ceased its quarrying activities in 1982 and demolition contractors removed everything saleable, leaving a grim wasteland behind.

Trust formed

The final closure came as something of a shock to the local community, and none more so than livestock farmer Ian Hartland, who worked land adjacent to part of Threlkeld quarry in the area around Bram Crag. In the 1990s, Ian, along with a small band of volunteers, formed the Lakeland Mines and Quarries Trust, which proceeded to transform the quarry into the present-day museum of mining and quarrying.

Threlkeld Quarrying and Mining Museum is also the home of the Vintage Excavators Trust, which was established in 1998 following

The Bagnalls stage a whistle-off: From left to right are *Sir Tom, Sybil, Isabel* and *Peter.*

Taking water at Threlkeld engine shed after working the morning shift is Amberley Museum's beautifully turned-out 0-4-0ST Works No.2067 *Peter*.

Hauling a short train of slate wagons, ex-Dinorwic slate quarries No. 1760 *Sybil* approaches the inner quarry.

a meeting held at Threlkeld, and organised by Ian Hartland and Philip Peacock runs 'working weekends' at various times throughout the year (details are available at www.threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk).

The ravages of weather and vandals had caused serious deterioration to what remained of the quarry buildings, leaving the newly-formed trust with the daunting task of cleaning up the mess and repairing the buildings, including removing or covering over old plant foundations and landscaping the worst of the ravages.

A few years later the trust was wound up and became the current museum company which now holds a 99-year lease and runs the day-to-day operations of the museum.

Bagnall builds

This year's gala had a decidedly Bagnall flavour, with three of the visitors being built by WG Bagnall of Stafford; one of them 127 years ago.

Amberley Museum's Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2067 of 1918 *Peter* was built to 3ft gauge and supplied to the Ministry of Munitions, which entered it into service at Longtown in Cumbria, which is still an important MOD facility.

After its Ministry of Munitions service ended, *Peter* returned to the Bagnall works, where all the essential working parts were transferred to a 2ft gauge set of frames.

Following the rebuild, *Peter* went to the Cliffe Hill Granite Co near Markfield, Leicestershire, and worked in the quarry there until 1949. Several owners later, *Peter* passed into the hands of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society which, in turn, handed it onto the Amberley Museum in 1983.

Ten years Later, *Peter* was restored to active service by a team of volunteers led by the late Doug Bentley, and it has been a popular attraction at Amberley ever since. It was the first time in 27 years that *Peter* had left Amberley.

Joining No. 2067 was Bagnall 0-4-0ST No.1491 of 1897 *Isabel*, visiting from the Amerton Railway. *Isabel* was delivered new to Cliffe Hill quarry in 1897 and was one of the earliest locomotives built to a design by Ernest E Baguley.

Typical of the idyllic Lakeland scenery through which the new extension runs, Bagnall 0-4-0ST No.2067 *Peter* work is a train of empty ballast tubs destined for the inner quarry.

Baguley began his engineering career as an apprentice with R & W Hawthorn Leslie on Tyneside before moving to Stafford in 1891. There he became chief draughtsman for WG Bagnall Ltd.

Isabel is fitted with Baguley's patent valve gear and is probably the last working example in the world of a locomotive using it.

Full set

Completing the visiting Bagnall line-up was former Dinorwic Slate Quarries 0-4-0ST No.1760 of 1906 *Sybil*, from the West Lancashire Light Railway. *Sybil* spent more than 50 years at the slate quarries near Llanberis and after closure in 1969, the locomotive was sold and moved to Cornwall where it remained until 2013 when it was purchased by the newly-formed Sybil Locomotive Trust. Restored to working order in October 2023 after a long overhaul, *Sybil* was making its first visit to Threlkeld.

Peter, *Isabel* and *Sybil* were joined by Threlkeld resident Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2135 of 1926 *Sir Tom*, which spent its working life at British Insulated Callander's Cables site at Erith, in Kent, and is named after BICC's founder, Sir Tom Callendar.

No. 2067 *Peter* with two empty ballast tubs heads into inner quarry while No. 2135 *Sir Tom* waits in the head shunt for its next duty.

Before coming to Threlkeld, *Sir Tom* had lain idle for more than 30 years and was, mostly, a kit of parts before being restored to working order in the workshop at Threlkeld, where it was returned to steam in 2010. *Sir Tom* works Threlkeld's regular train services on all the busy times during the summer months and school holidays.

No line-up of quarry engines would surely be complete without a Hunslet, and the four Bagnalls were joined by the Statfold Barn Railway's large quarry 0-4-0ST No. 921 of 1906, *Sybil Mary*. Built in Leeds in 1906 for the Penrhyn Quarry, *Sybil Mary* was, like several other Penrhyn quarry engines, named after a member of the Douglas-Pennant family who owned the quarry.

Moorsline builds £600k classroom to train next generation of footplate crews

By Robin Jones

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has secured vital grant aid to build a £600,000 Mutual Improvement Classroom (MIC) at Grosmont motive power depot, which will be used to train the line's next generation of locomotive drivers.

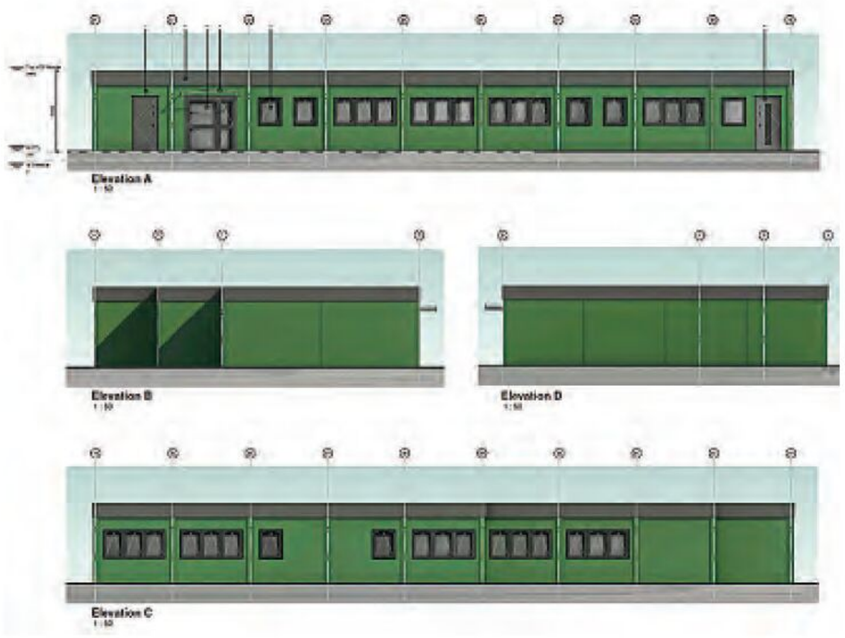
It will be the last surviving railway MIC in the world when it is completed by next March, and will replace the previous one at the Moorsline, which closed in January 2023.

Funding has been provided from North Yorkshire Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, a central pillar of the previous government's Levelling Up agenda, providing £2.6 billion of funding for local investment.

The fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances around the UK, by investing in communities and places, and supporting local businesses, people and skills.

The council has been allocated £16.9 million from the fund to support programmes, projects and activities until the end of March 2025.

Former NYMR plc chairman Peter Best, who, as reported in issue 321, was recently awarded a British Empire Medal for his services to steam and heritage railways, has gifted a donation of £250,000 which has enabled the project to come to life. Peter, 69, has bought and restored 11 locomotives with his own money, and said that seeing young people on a train hauled by one of them gives him "huge pleasure and pride."



Above: An overhead view of the existing MIC facilities at Grosmont which are due for renewal.
Right: Concert design for how the replacement classrooms might look. BOTH: NYMR

Knowledge base

The new MIC at NYMR will house components from numerous locomotive types. Most training tools in the collection are considered priceless, having been inherited or donated from long-lost MICs over time.

The facility will also house more than 100 technical books on all locomotive matters. Some of these are more than 150 years old and are used in conjunction with IT equipment to enable the NYMR to present classes globally.

MICs originate from the early days of railways. As enginemen became more experienced, they would give up their time to educate colleagues who were rising through the grades on the footplate, starting as engine cleaners before progressing to firemen and drivers.

The NYMR's director of civil engineering, Tim Bruce, said: "Thanks to North Yorkshire Council and Peter Best, a private benefactor, we can now have quality facilities to train the next generation of footplate staff.

"The new facilities will include a purpose-built classroom with the ability to broadcast training sessions worldwide.

"Additionally, it will provide much-needed shower and toilet facilities, including new office space."

Preservation

NYMR chief executive officer Laura Strangeway said: "The NYMR has an important role to play in the heritage sector, preserving the unique skills needed for the protection and safe operation of historic locomotives, carriages and infrastructure.

"We pride ourselves on sharing our skills with other industrial and heritage railway museums and organisations.

"Grosmont MIC will be the last-surviving railway MIC anywhere in the world and we believe the concept is worth preserving and building on."

S160 *Omaha* NYMR move to pioneer UK oil conversion

PETER Best's USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 2253 *Omaha* is to be converted from coal to oil burning at its new North Yorkshire Moors Railway home.

It is said to be the first full-sized steam locomotive oil conversion in Britain since the end of steam, and it is a crucial step forward in future-proofing the busiest heritage line in the country.

No. 2253 has been on loan to the Dartmouth Steam Railway where it headed special trains to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 321. It was built by Baldwin Locomotive Works and shipped to Britain in May 1943 in support of the war effort to work on the LNER from its base at Neville Hill depot at Leeds.

One of 800 S160s, after the Second World War ended, it was bought by the Polish State Railway and became No. TR203-288. Brought back to Britain in 1992, it was then sold to Peter in 2013.

The NYMR engineering department will be assisted in the oil conversion by FMW Solutions, a railroad contractor and consulting firm based in Duluth, which specialises in mechanical and engineering design and alternative fuel technology and research.

FMW president Davidson Ward said: "We are honoured to assist on this transatlantic effort, with key firing components being manufactured both at our workshop in Tennessee and by the NYMR at Grosmont. The final installation is anticipated to take place on the NYMR."

No. 2253, of which an 00-gauge model was recently announced by Rapido Trains (see also last issue), will return to the NYMR for its September 26-29 Annual Steam Gala, where GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle,* from Didcot Railway Centre, will be a guest locomotive.

After the gala, No. 2253 will take its place in the NYMR home fleet. The NYMR will convert the S160 from coal to oil over the coming winter period

NYMR's director of mechanical engineering, Paul Middleton, said:

NYMR director of mechanical engineering Paul Middleton prepares USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 2253 *Omaha* for a day's service on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, where it will make heritage sector history this coming winter by being converted to oil burning. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NYMR

"The conversion of No. 2253 will help not only reduce the railway's overall sustainability strategy, including reducing particulate emissions, but it will also help bring resilience during hot weather periods.

"In recent years, domestic sources for high-quality steam coal have dried up in the UK and sourcing coal from around the world is extremely expensive. Pre-pandemic, we were paying £165 per ton and at its peak reached £540 per ton. The conversion of No. 2253 to oil is key to ensuring the NYMR is resilient and can operate during the peak summer months.

"Coal is part of our history, and there is a balance between keeping our stories alive and bringing to life the importance of the railways, especially as next year is a major milestone with Rail 200."

The Moorsline's longer-term plan includes the conversion of WD 2-10-0 No. 3672 *Dame Vera Lynn*, for which donations to return it to service are invited at www.nymr.co.uk/dameveralynn

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Epping Ongar offers ex-Stratford 'Tractor' for sale

By Owen Hayward

Last operational in 2022, Class 37 D6729 has been offered for sale by the Epping Ongar Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

A SURPRISE announcement by the Epping Ongar Railway on August 12 saw its resident Class 37 D6729 offered for sale.

Outshopped by English Electric from Vulcan Foundry in March 1961, this particular 'Tractor' was first allocated to Stratford, a depot with which the EOR's route is all too familiar with, as the shed at Epping was officially designated a sub-shed for 30A. In the early days of the Ongar branch, services would have run on to Stratford and beyond.

While the line remained predominantly steam-operated by LNER class F5 2-4-2Ts even beyond the first stage of electrification, diesel locomotives were recorded to have occasionally ventured towards North Weald and Ongar. Although these were believed to be primarily Class 15 or 16 types, the local connection of D6729 on what is the closest heritage railway to both the nation's capital and the locomotive's former home has seen it develop something of a dedicated fanbase on the EOR.

Headline acquisition

The acquisition of D6729 in 2010 made headlines for the fledgling railway which, at the time, was in the middle of a substantial renovation following its purchase by Roger Wright. The EOR had been home to a Ruston & Hornsby locomotive, a Class 03 shunter and a Class 117 DMU beforehand, with the 37 becoming the first former large main line locomotive to arrive on the railway.

The Class 37 has had a fairly uneventful life, although four years after entering traffic it was damaged in an accident at Great Chesterford on April 8, 1965. Details of its cause are unknown, but images from the time show the locomotive surrounded by damaged wagons, a brake van having ended up on the platform, accompanied by several road vehicles which are believed to have been on wagons involved in the incident.

Withdrawn just before Christmas 1993, it passed into private ownership operating main line charter services, appearing at galas on the East Lancashire and Keighley & Worth Valley railways in 1997/98. A return to full main line service came in 1999 and, following further ownership changes, was withdrawn again by Direct Rail Services in 2009, which put it up for sale.

While many members of the class have continued in main line service, most saw their split headcode boxes removed at some point in their working life, with D6729 and just a handful of other examples retaining this feature throughout.

The locomotive has been in regular use since its arrival on the EOR, even operating rides at open days before its full May 2012 reopening. Though some mechanical work has taken place, along with new batteries fitted in 2021, bodywork deterioration saw the locomotive stopped pending a decision on its future at the end of the 2022 operating season.

An EOR spokesman said: "We are sad to see it have to go but feel now is the right time to let it find a new home. We invite interested parties to get in touch directly to discuss the locomotive in further detail."

Interested parties should contact Michael Drew for details and to arrange viewings by emailing michaeld@eorailway.co.uk

Wissington turns small into big for Poppy Line season

Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 of 1938 *Wissington* returned to the North Norfolk Railway this year after two seasons in Mid-Suffolk Light Railway service. *Wissington* was the last steam locomotive in commercial ownership in East Anglia and donated by British Sugar Corporation to the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society in 1978, and for this season the Poppy Line's management looked at how to make the best use of the diminutive engine.

The result was a small increase in the use of the line's magnificently restored train of Victorian carriages, which includes the unique Wisbech & Upwell Tramcar and an M&GNJR picnic saloon. The vintage set has run on bank holidays and at some special events, including Vintage Week in early July and Victorian Sundays through August.

"The train of quirky carriages and the charming engine have proved popular with visitors, with the set often filled to its capacity of 120 passengers," said general manager Graham Hukins. "The challenge of working with a small engine is something the crews have relished as well."

***Wissington* pictured at Sheringham station on August 11 after arriving with the Victorian carriage set.** ROBIN JONES

Wissington is set to star alongside visiting new-build *Betton Grange* at the NNR's Festival on Rails and will work the line's 100-year old Quad-Art set on August 30/31 and September 1 and will also be in action at the Autumn Showcase on October 5/6, rubbing shoulders with up to six other engines for the event.

Llangollen cats need to find new homes

THE Llangollen Railway has appealled for people to home one or more of the colony of feral cats that inhabit its carriage and wagon workshops which volunteers have tended to for many years.

LR trust manager Tom Taylor said: "Their presence has created many challenges within our engineering areas, prompting us to seek a more suitable resolution and permanent living arrangement.

"We are partnering with local animal rescue charity, Candy & Tibby Trust. Together, we are committed to finding loving homes."

Anyone who can help should phone Paul at Candy & Tibby Trust on 07552 200556.

BANKING FOR A FOXFIELD FUTURE!

Nicola Fox tells the story of one of the heritage sector's finest industrial lines, the Foxfield Railway with its legendary 1-in-19 gradient, and looks at its future hopes to expand and reclaim old ground.

What is now the Foxfield Steam Railway was originally completed in 1893 as a short branch line off the North Staffordshire Railway, also known as the Knotty. The branch was built solely to serve the Dilhorne colliery on the Cheadle coalfield and never served as a passenger route prior to preservation.

Interestingly, the name Dilhorne comes from the old English name of Delverne, which means 'place of digging' – unsurprising given there are coal pits in the area that date from at least the 1750s.

The first explorative work for what became the Foxfield Colliery began 1879 when trial shafts were sunk in an area known as the Fox Fields, with father-and-son team John and Enoch Mann, from Liversage, West Yorkshire, taking a lease on the area. The mine's first shaft was originally called Manns Pit, after the owners.

There is evidence to suggest that the owners intended to connect to the colliery to the then proposed Cheadle Railway to transport colliery output, but this scheme took so long to be realised, reaching completion only in 1901, that seeing which way the wind was blowing, the Manns tired of waiting and opted instead to build their own railway.

The first railway at the Foxfield in 1883 was a narrow gauge line which reused the route of an earlier horse-drawn plateway. This line headed towards Cheadle, where it served a landsale wharf, while further narrow gauge rails were laid up a very steep gradient to another landsale wharf that opened at Bank Top in 1887. However, the narrow gauge line was not capable of carrying enough coal, so between 1892 and 1893 Enoch Mann converted the existing routes to standard gauge and also continued the line south from Dilhorne woods to link with the NSR near Blythe Bridge, which still has a main line station.

The railway at this time was Y-shaped, with one arm of the Y taking coal to Bank Top, the other towards Cheadle, and the third down to Blythe Bridge.

The route chosen was the most direct and cheapest route available. At one point, the proposed route for the standard gauge alignment to Blythe Bridge was to follow a road and run as a street tramway; however, this idea was dismissed, and the final route selected follows field boundaries.

Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2623 of 1940 *Hawarden* and Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2081 of 1947 No. 11 head a minerals rake up Foxfield Bank on December 28, 1998. ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

Austerity 0-6-0STs *Dilhorne No.3* and *Arthur Leighton* at Foxfield on March 18, 1964. Sadly, neither was preserved. CA APPLETON

The first train in the Foxfield Railway's heritage era ran in 1967. ANTHONY DAWSON

The Foxfield is infamous for its difficult gradients, including Foxfield bank, the 1-in-19 climb out of the colliery, and these are largely due to the frugal nature of Enoch Mann and his wish to keep earthworks to a minimum. Although it no longer exists, the road into the original shed was reported to be an incredible 1-in-11. The final cost of the line was £3000, equivalent to about £250,000 today.

Construction took place at weekends, using both NSR labour and second-hand materials, and was supervised by the NSR foreman plate layer Noah Stanier. As it still does now, the 3.5-mile branch line passed through picturesque woodlands and farmland to just north of Blythe Bridge. Here the exchange sidings allowed for marshalling of wagons before the branch connected to the NSR Stoke to Derby line, and upon completion in 1883, the branch gave Dilhorne the proud boast of being the first mine in the Cheadle coalfield to have its own rail connection to the national network. The same year that the railway was completed, the owners registered their enterprise as Foxfield Colliery Co Ltd – and so the moniker of the Foxfield Railway was born.

A later addition a short distance from the main line link was Cash Heath Wharf, where the landsale operations were run from.

To combat the fiercely steep gradient out of the colliery yard, it was customary for two locomotives to take the train up six wagons at a time, using a siding in Dilhorne woods to marshal the train. Once this was done, a single locomotive would take the train (comprising up to 18 wagons) down from Dilhorne to the exchange sidings for transport onwards on the main line. It is not known precisely when the Cheadle branch of the Foxfield closed, but it is last featured on an Ordinance Survey map prior to the First World War, while the Bank Top branch closed in about 1921, leaving only the route to Blythe open. Foxfield Colliery continued production for many years, passing from the Mann's ownership to the nearby Parkhall Colliery in 1927, before entering public ownership in 1947 under the National Coal Board, whereupon the landsale yard was closed.

By 1965, after 80 years of operation, the colliery output had fallen so that it was no longer considered economically viable. The workforce was transferred to the nearby Florence Colliery, ending the operation of the last deep mine in the Cheadle coalfield.

The three surviving colliery locomotives were transferred to serve other Staffordshire collieries, with one locomotive later moving down to Kent, and the Foxfield Colliery land and railway was eventually purchased by Tean Minerals Ltd.

The intention was to turn the colliery site into a mineral processing plant to supply Stoke-on-Trent's porcelain industry, while restoring the by now near-derelict branch line to facilitate the transportation of the required minerals. Tean Minerals chairman Stuart Wetherby and manager Ted Trubshaw both happened to have an interest in steam, and with a growing movement to preserve old railways, an idea began to formulate.

Dawn of Foxfield heritage era

Following a meeting on October 30, 1966, attended by 63 people and catered by Tean Minerals, the Foxfield Light Railway Society (FLRS) began to take shape. The initial proposal was that the society would maintain the infrastructure and provide volunteers to run steam passenger trains at weekends, while Tean Minerals used the line for mineral traffic on weekdays.

Sadly, the former colliery locomotives were not available for preservation, but Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 933 of 1903 *Henry Cort* had been gathering dust for a year following the closure of Irthlingborough Quarry in Northamptonshire, and its owner was looking to donate it for preservation.

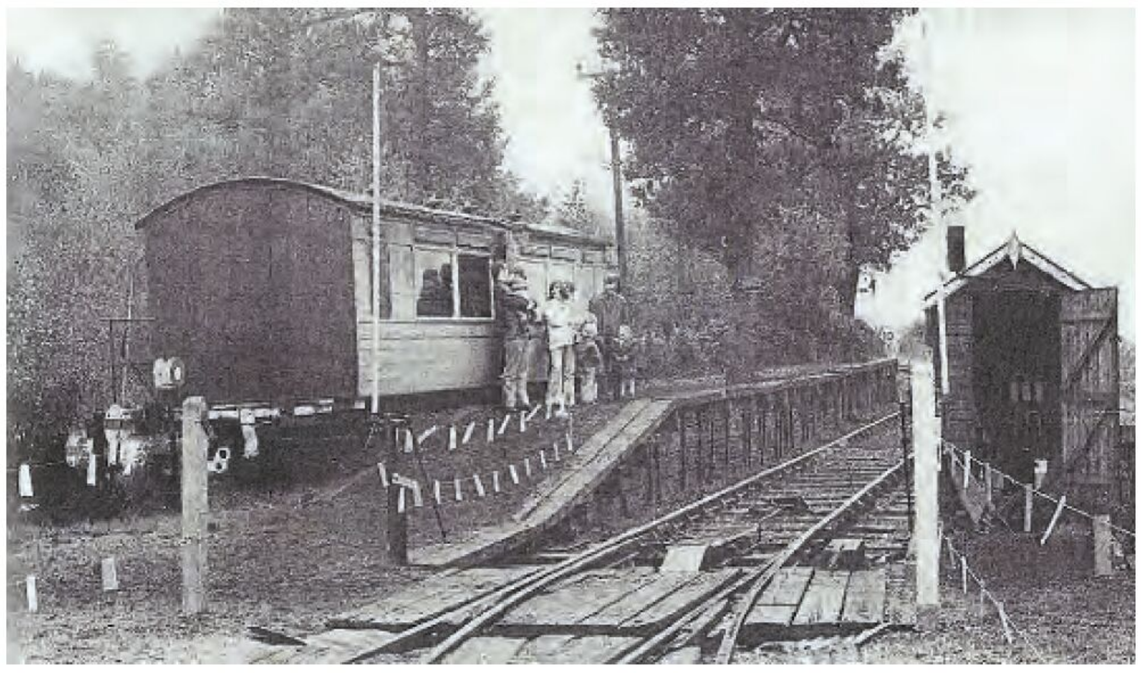
Henry Cort arrived at the Foxfield by low-loader on February 5, 1967, where it was lit up, entering the shed under its own steam – the first steaming under the fledgling banner of the FLRS. A week later, the inaugural meeting of the society was held in the colliery canteen with more than 50 signed-up members.

Allowed by Tean Minerals to use the old colliery site, the FLRS began overhauling the Peckett, which was soon joined by Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST No. 3581 of 1924 *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* from Burton-upon-Trent brewery. On May 14, 1967, four months after the establishment of the society, the FLRS ran its first passenger train.

The two locomotives top-and-tailed former LMS Vestibule Third No. 27249, which had arrived by rail. The inaugural train ran the full length of the line from the colliery to the exchange sidings. It was the beginning of a new era of railway preservation for Staffordshire.

The early days

After the initial train, the Foxfield built up to holding regular services on the second Sunday of the month, having as many as four engines in steam. The LMS coach lacked a screw brake and so was kept for special occasions, with



A family awaits the train on the old colliery platform, very little of which now remains. ANTHONY DAWSON

Peace in the woods at the heritage-era Dilhorne Park station. NICOLA FOX

Locomotives of the colliery

Sadly, none of the original Foxfield locomotives survive.

The first standard gauge locomotive was *Foxfield*, a Hudswell, Clarke locomotive built in 1893. It was followed sometime before 1900 by a second locomotive, *Burnley*, believed to have been used to build the Manchester ship canal. A third locomotive, *Excelsior,* was purchased from Kerr Stuart & Co in May 1900.

Both *Foxfield* and *Burnley* suffering ignominious ends: *Burnley* was cut up for scrap after running away from Bank Top and abandoning the track at Cresswell Ford Level Crossing, and *Foxfield* burst a boiler on the eponymous bank in 1932.

Excelsior's retirement was less dramatic, but it was still scrapped in the 1940s.

Later motive power came in the form of two second-hand Air Ministry locomotives in the 1930s and two ex-War Department 'Austerity tanks' post-Second World War. Efforts to preserve one of the two final Austerity tanks sadly proved fruitless. Details of these four locomotives are listed below in Table One.

Table One: Locomotive details

Name	Built by	Build date	Date scrapped
Foxfield (2)	Manning and Wardle	1917	1952
Blythe No 1	Manning and Wardle	1917	1969
Arthur Leighton	Hudswell Clark	1943	1972
Dilhorne No. 3	Bagnall	1945	1972

Hunslet 0-6-0STs No. 3694 *Whiston* and No. 3788 *Monckton No.1*, visiting from the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, on a rake of 12-ton mineral wagons on Foxfield Bank near Dilhorne on July 28, 2002. ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

passenger accommodation coming largely in the form of a North Staffordshire single plank wagon and a covered LMS van. The railway's rolling stock also included some LMS scenery vans and Marston Brewery vans.

The Foxfield built itself a reputation early on. Our sister publication, *The Railway Magazine,* ran a two-page feature on the revival in April 1970, stating: "The railway is fast becoming recognised as a working museum of industrial steam, where visitors can both see and ride behind locomotives working on a heavily-graded line." In these early days a platform was sited just above the colliery yard, but very little evidence of this now remains; instead, a second was installed in the late 1960s round the bend in Dilhorne Woods.

This station was once known variously as Red Line Siding and Red Lane Halt, and was moved slightly over the years, before finally getting the name it bears today – Dilhorne Park.

Until the mid-1970s, trains ran down the full length of the line all the way to the exchange sidings near Blythe.

From then until 1981, trains ran from the colliery to Caverswall run round loop. However, changes were afoot.

Victorian veterans Beyer Peacock 0-4-0ST No. 1827 of 1879 and Heath 0-4-0ST No. 6 of 1886 get to grips with a snowbound Foxfield Bank on December 28, 2000. ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

Upheaval

The Tean Minerals plan to run mineral trains along the line had never materialised and the FLRS was the only one using the railway. So, in the late 1970s, the society approached Tean Minerals with the intention of purchasing the line. After several years on the colliery site, the increase of locomotives and volunteer activity was becoming a point of contention with the landowners and so a condition was imposed on the purchase; the society must remove its operations from the colliery site.

Given the stock amassed, and the established nature of the railway by this point (now well over a decade into its preservation life), such an action was no mean feat, but the purchase was made, and some temporary sidings were constructed in Foxfield Wood just north of the colliery site for the railway stock.

During this period of upheaval, a new home was found in the former coal wharf site at Caverswall Road, which was purchased from the National Coal Board with money raised through donations, ticket sales, and the Foxfield's pioneering Wine and Dine Trains.

In August 1980, with full planning permission secured, earthworks began. Over the following year and a half, work progressed to build the new station and museum complex. The platforms were constructed from materials salvaged from the North Staffordshire Railway's Leek Brook station on the nearby Churnet Valley line, which had been closed to passenger traffic.

When complete, the site included a station with two platforms and a two-road 180ft shed that press officer Dave Scragg fondly referred to as having been an "everything shed," encompassing the running shed, the museum, and the booking office.

Facilities expanded

The site has grown since then through a series of purchases, but the original shed

and platforms are still in use, although the 'everything shed' now solely houses the museum displaying locomotives, vintage carriages, and artefacts.

The facilities expanded again in the 1990s, first with a signalbox, dating from 1894 and formerly from Hockley Crossing, near Uttoxeter, that was commissioned in 1994. A red-brick station building containing a booking office, dining area, amenities, and a cosy bar followed in 1995 and connects onto the museum.

Further land purchased from a nearby farmer allowed for the construction of a two-road running shed that was later brick-clad to blend seamlessly into the surroundings.

Several additional sheds also now occupy the site. These include the carriage and wagon shed, the workshop, the running shed, and a structure known as the Spencer shed, recently built to house Foxfield assets. Between them, they house the remainder of the Foxfield's fleet of locomotives, conditions varying between in service, overhaul or in longer-term storage. The new shed came into use shortly before the beginning of the 2024 season and provides much-needed additional undercover storage for the vast range of locomotives that make their home on this line.

Other onsite developments have included a small field for events and a model railway.

Above: Barclay 0-6-0T No. 1245 of 1911 *Carron Iron Co. No.14* visiting from the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway on July 20, 2019. FRANK BRODERICK-RICHARDS

Right: Haydock Foundry 0-6-0 well tank *Bellerophon* of 1874 in action on December 29, 2014. FRANK BRODRICK-RICHARDS

Rolling stock

The railway has an especially abundant collection of rolling stock. Since its inception, the Foxfield has remained true to its industrial roots and showcases industrial engines, eschewing former main line locomotives and instead focusing on those with a Staffordshire connection. The Foxfield mantra is for the fleet to have been locally made or locally worked, and the railway is home to a huge collection of standard gauge industrial steam locomotives, with several representing the various industrial designs that operated within the Staffordshire and Midlands area. A comprehensive list of the locomotives (both on-site and out on loan) would take up pages, but Foxfield officials are currently working on a stock list to add to their website, so watch that space!

With such a huge fleet to restore and maintain, Foxfield volunteers are kept busy. Locomotives requiring extensive and heavy work are sent away, but much of the restoration and overhaul work happens on-site. Good relations with neighbours the Churnet Valley Railway mean the team also receive additional people power to collaborate as and when required. The team regularly convenes on a weekly basis throughout the year to ensure progress on ongoing overhauls, and the atmosphere on shed manages to be both good humoured and productive.

The majority of passenger accommodation for service trains comes, unsurprisingly, in the form of BR Mk.1s. However, the Foxfield is also home to several Victorian gems thanks to the Knotty Coach Trust, which formed in 2008 with the aim of recreating a typical Victorian NSR train. Three NSR carriages, refurbished in connection with Stanegate Restorations, are on display in the museum when not in use for the railway's heritage train.

The trust also owns an 1884 Midland Railway carriage and Robert Heath & Sons 0-4-0ST No. 6 of 1886.

The MR carriage was a First Class vehicle, attached to trains as a private carriage to serve the wealthy. Believed to be one of the most luxurious carriages the MR ever made, its decades-long restoration returned the carriage from a former holiday home back to resplendent luxury on wheels.

The railway also owns a selection of mineral wagons which have been used on demonstration trains for galas and charters.

Foxfield in the 21st century

The Foxfield now own the entirety of the original line and currently runs services from Caverswall Road 2¼ miles up to the small woodland station of Dilhorne Park, where there is a run-round loop. Caverswall Road, alas, does not have this facility, but that only adds more visual entertainment for the passengers, as every train requires a shunt using a second locomotive to release the passenger locomotive for servicing and positioning at the head of the train.

A journey on the Foxfield takes passengers through fields and woods. Once over a volunteer-manned gated road crossing, the steep gradients that the line is known for become evident, eliciting a powerful beat from the locomotive exhaust, at times climbing to a challenging 1-in-36. Several ponds, reed beds, and the occasional brook add to the rolling and undulating landscape until the line plunges into trees that become denser and more atmospheric, signalling the end of the journey at Dilhorne Park.

On the day *Heritage Railway* visited, there was excitement on arrival at Dilhorne as a tree had fallen victim to a recent storm and lay afoul of the run-round loop. While the curious and chattering passengers waited, *Marston No. 3* sat cheerfully feathering at the unexpected hiatus.

Within a short while, volunteers armed with hand saws arrived on a diesel locomotive and immediately leapt into action. Despite unfortunately-timed rain showers, the team made short work of the fallen tree – within eight minutes the line was cleared, the throw of the final branch accompanied by a spontaneous round of applause from the gathered onlookers.

There is a passion and humour among the volunteers at the Foxfield that is infectious, and as the rescue crew bowed to their appreciative audience, the passengers returned cheerfully to the train. *Marston No. 3* was finally able to run around and couple on, and with the diesel hooked onto the back of the train, a thankfully uneventful top-and-tailed return journey was made to Caverswall Road.

This incident, while impacting timetabling for the rest of the day, showed the Foxfield Railway at its best: a problem arisen and swiftly dealt with, providing the passengers with some extra entertainment at no added cost.

The jewel in the industrial enthusiast crown

Many a casual visitor could be forgiven for not realising that the current traversable route of the Foxfield line is essentially sandwiched by two currently disused sections of the former line. These parts of the route are still intact but currently out of use due to work required on the permanent way. Tantalising glimpses of these, however, hint at what could be.

Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST No. 3581 of 1924 *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* rests after arriving into Caverswall Road on April 7. NICOLA FOX

Thomas Hill 4wDH No. 111C on shunting duties at Caverswall Road. Now carrying Cleveland Bridge & Engineering Company livery, No.111C was originally built as a Sentinel four-wheel vertical boiler steam locomotive, but was rebuilt by Thomas Hill in 1961, hence the C suffix. Behind it is the 1884 signalbox which came into use on the Foxfield Railway 100 years after it was first commissioned. NICOLA FOX

First among these, of course, is the notorious Foxfield Bank. From Dilhorne Park, the line can be seen falling steeply away in a curve that runs half mile towards the colliery down a staggering 1-in-19 gradient. This bank was once a big enthusiast draw and is arguably what the Foxfield is most famous for.

Following the purchase of the colliery site in 1988, for many years crowds flocked to see the spectacle of industrial locomotives storming up the 1-in-19 out of the colliery. However, the coronavirus pandemic put a temporary end to these, with the last gala and charter using those rails in 2019.

In bouncing back from the effects of Covid-19, the society put emphasis solely on the section of line predominantly used for passenger trains to ensure steady revenue generation; as such, the track into the colliery is currently in need of some TLC before trains can run on it again.

Returning trains to the colliery is very much on the Foxfield agenda, but it will take time and volunteers to get the permanent way up to the required standard.

Dave Scragg said: "The aim is to restore the galas, have the variety and the track open to passenger trains, and the colliery open to the public. However, there's permanent way work that needs doing and the costs of putting on a traditional gala are…" He stops and laughs in an eloquent expression of the high nature of these costs, before continuing.

"It is our clear intent to get the gala back. We decided not to do something half-baked this year but to put our efforts into a traditional gala for next year. A scrap drive has recently been undertaken on the railway to generate funds for this. We know we have our work cut out and so we're being cautious; revenue was up in 2023, but we are facing a two-thirds increase in operations cost. The galas will be back up and running, but we won't put ourselves in debt to achieve it."

The Foxfield is also hosting external courses training potential future main line permanent way workers. These courses provide practical opportunities to put p-way maintenance skills into action and though not confirmed at the time of writing, there is a possibility that Foxfield Bank may provide one such teaching ground.

The colliery itself is also receiving attention from a recent influx of new members who have started a colliery group with the intention of seeing the site once more reopened to the public.

One day…

Meanwhile, there is the intriguing – albeit distant – prospect of the southern section of the line, which takes yet another steep gradient down towards the main line.

These rails have been out of regular use since the 1970s, and it is a situation that looks unlikely to change any time soon. That is not to say that there are no plans to ever use the line in the future; in fact, as part of futureproofing this possibility, once a year a weedkiller train heads down the line to keep it open and usable.

Reinstating this section, however, would require a huge amount of work. The trackbed suffers from drainage issues near the bridge, and even the open and dryer sections are unsurprisingly plagued by rotted sleepers and aged rails, chairs, and other components.

Despite this, the majority of the trackbed is visibly in remarkably good condition and passes through fields in a highly photogenic arc, to curve around to where the branch once joined the main line. Spotting evidence of this link is very hard to do now, and the exchange sidings are currently home to a thicket of trees, several of which are growing through the four foot, and even in places atop and around the rails.

The undergrowth, however, reveals some very clear sights of the old colliery line, with remnants of wagons such as axles and leaf springs hiding in the long grass and brambles. The headshunt, at least, survives intact, where the remnants of a colliery wagon sit marking the end of the rails.

Although this section of the railway is off-limits to passengers and the public, a footpath

The steep fall away of the line to Foxfield Bank. SIMON FARNDON

A quiet rural scene on the disused Blythe section looking up to Caverswall Road. SIMON FARNDON

The former exchange sidings disappearing into a thicket of trees. NICOLA FOX

Two axles and a small amount of wood are all that survive of this wagon, which marks the headshunt and the end of the Foxfield line. NICOLA FOX

Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* shunting between trains at Caverswall Road. NICOLA FOX

crosses the line on the long straight to Blythe, allowing walkers and their dogs glimpses of this ghost line.

When queried on the future of the track to Blythe and the hefty investment that would require, Dave was pragmatic: "It would be nice to run freight demonstrations there again, but at present, going south is aspirational only. If a large sum of money was to appear, we'd do it in a heartbeat."

Final thoughts

The Foxfield is certainly something special; able to cater for the family day out or the die-hard enthusiast, it holds a treasure trove of carriages, locomotives, and history. Run by a passionate but pragmatic team, there is a no-nonsense feel to the place that perfectly fits its industrial roots.

Covid-19 may have briefly denied enthusiasts access to the sensational Foxfield Bank, but despite its diminutive length, the railway's practical approach and the promise of reinstating the galas means the line looks set to once again shine as a leader in showcasing industrial steam.

Like many railways, one resource the Foxfield could always do with more of is volunteers, particularly in the permanent way department. If reading this has inspired you to join the team, please contact memberships@foxfieldrailway.co.uk HR

Further highlights of the extensive Foxfield Railway collection

In addition to the expected Pecketts, Bagnalls and Kerr Stuarts both in service and in storage, the railway houses a few less common locomotives currently undergoing or awaiting restoration.

The Knotty Coach Trust acquired Robert Heath & Sons Ltd No. 6, a diminutive 1886 locomotive thought to be one of dozen locomotives built as a copy of the Falcon Engine Company's Heath's No 8.

A rare Dübs and Company locomotive, No. 4101 *Dubs*, is the only industrial Dübs locomotive in the UK. Built in 1901, this Crane locomotive returned to steam in 2010 after a major restoration that won it the Heritage Railway Association's John Coiley Award for locomotive restoration. It is hoped that No. 4101 will return to steam in 2024.

Barclay/Drewry 0-4-0DM No. 2157 of 1941 No. WD30 was built at English Electric's Vulcan Foundry and was sent to France in 1944 after the successful D-Day landings. It came ashore on the beach of Normandy, codenamed Utah, and was used in the Beyeux and Caen area of France supporting Allied forces until it returned to the UK following the war. No. WD30 is one of only two surviving War Department diesels that landed in France via the beaches and is undergoing restoration.

No. WD30's sister locomotive, No. WD32, being unloaded onto Utah beach as part of the D-Day landings in 1944.

Dubs 0-4-0 crane tank No. 4101 of 1901 departs Foxfield Colliery on December 29, 2011. ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

BR 7MT PacificNo. 70000 *Britannia* passes Victoria depot on the approach to the London terminus on July 23 with one of Steam Dreams' regular summer 'Sunset Steam Express' excursions that circle the garden of England via Chertsey. The skyline behind is dominated by the Grade II*-listed former Battersea Power Station, which was fully decommissioned by 1983 and now houses a multitude of amenities including retail and leisure facilities. ROB BATTY

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Clan Line heads 'Atlantic Coast Express'

MERCHANT Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* is set to haul the Railway Touring Company's 'Atlantic Coast Express' tour on Saturday, September 28.

Starting from Waterloo, the trip is scheduled to head through the West London suburbs via Clapham Junction to Woking for the first passenger pick-up, then on via the South West Main Line to Basingstoke for more passengers.

Taking the West of England Line to Salisbury, the tour will pick up further passengers here while *Clan Line* takes on water, then continue via Sherbourne and Axminster to the destination of Exeter St Davids.

It is hoped that there will be a brief stop at Exeter Central on the outward journey to allow passengers the option of alighting here with three hours to look around the city.

After No. 35028 is serviced, the return trip will take the Exeter to Bristol Line via Taunton where the locomotive will get a chance to stretch its legs across the Somerset Levels. Taking the Great Western Main Line at Bristol Temple Meads, a brief run to Bath is planned, before turning south-east on the Wessex Main Line, via Westbury, to Salisbury to set down passengers.

Tickets are available in Premier Dining, First Class and Standard Class, with a discount for junior travellers; see www.railwaytouring.net

Slieve Gullion moves again – but more funds needed

By Robin Jones

THE Railway Preservation Society of Ireland's flagship GNR(I) 4-4-0 No. 171 *Slieve Gullion* moved under its own power for the first time in 22 years at the group's Whitehead base on July 27. However, several small but expensive jobs remain to be done before No. 171 can return to the main line, said a RPSI statement.

"We have made a big step towards getting *Slieve Gullion* back in steam, something which is only becoming more urgent as the clock continues to tick down the boiler life of No.85. The pandemic constrained the time and finances available to work on No.171, but we are gearing up for the last big push!" the statement read.

Renewing the 171 Appeal, donations are invited at www.steamtrainsireland.com/appeals

Meanwhile, the RPSI at Whitehead has appointed Yvonne McIlree as its new general manager. Yvonne, who took up her post on August 1, succeeds Lisa Adair, who is stepping down after five years in post.

With extensive experience in the hospitality sector, Yvonne has worked in several locations on the continent, and her latest role was as director of sales and marketing at the Titanic Hotel in Belfast. A committee member the Chartered Institute of Marketing Ireland, she is also a mentor for Women in Business NI.

Married with two children, Yvonne hails originally from Glasgow. Her main leisure activity is running, and she runs Whitehead Runners.

"I am delighted to be taking on this role and am looking forward to getting my teeth into the challenges that lie ahead," she said. "As a resident of Whitehead for 14 years, I've long been aware of the society's existence, so when this opportunity came up I didn't hesitate.

GNR(I) 4-4-0 No. 171 *Slieve Gullion* makes its first moves after overhaul on July 27. RPSI

"I can see huge potential for the RPSI north and south and for Whitehead Railway Museum."

Lisa said: "I am confident that Yvonne will be a competent, enthusiastic and committed general manager and will bring new ideas and plenty of experience which will be important for the RPSI."

RPSI chairman Dr Peter Rigney added: "On behalf of the board, I wish Yvonne well as she takes up the reins at Whitehead.

"We look forward to working with her, and between us we are confident we can give the society a new impetus."

New general manager Yvonne McIlree. RPSI

Brunel's Culham ticket office marks 180th anniversary

THE Old Ticket Office at Culham station on the Cherwell Valley Line between Didcot Parkway and Banbury will be opening to the public free of charge between 9am and 5pm on September 14/15 to mark Heritage Open Days, which this year celebrates routes, networks and connections.

It will provide a rare opportunity to see inside an original Isambard Kingdom Brunel-designed broad gauge station building, which opened on June 12, 1844.

The Grade II*-listed ticket office on Platform 2 at Culham is one of the best-preserved of Brunel's characteristic small country station buildings and is the only survivor of this particular Tudor Revival design. It retains many of its original features, including a large fireplace, glass ticket window, unique architectural details and 1844-dated worktops.

On display will be original signalbox equipment, models of local coal wagons and much more, with some items of memorabilia on sale and many free souvenirs to take away, including postcards, colouring sheets, tickets and a 32-page illustrated Discovery Trail booklet. Among its many facts, it will show you where a bullet ricocheted from the ticket counter when a passenger was shot in 1868!

Free parking is available both by the ticket office and on the opposite side of the tracks at The Railway Inn. For more information about the Old Ticket Office, visit Culhamticketoffice.co.uk

Culham's Old Ticket Office was designed by Brunel to serve his GWR broad gauge. HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Pre-order Issue 324: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

No. 61306 *Mayflower* approaches Kennaway Tunnel on the Dawlish sea wall with the Saphos Trains Down 1Z49 5.47am High Wycombe to Kingswear 'English Riviera Express' on August 10. THOMAS MILLS

Mayflower replaces *Blue Peter* on Summer West Country jaunts

By Robin Jones and Tim Hobman

FOLLOWING its successful main line comeback trip to York following its rededication at King's Cross station on July 13, as highlighted last issue, Peppercorn A2 Pacific No. 6052 *Blue Peter* has been undergoing unspecified adjustments at Locomotive Services Limited's Crewe base.

As previously reported, the A2 had been scheduled to move to Bishops Lydeard on the West Somerset Railway for a series of Saphos Trains' 'English Riviera Express' trips, steam-hauled from Taunton to Kingswear on August 3, 10, 17 and 24. However, its place has been taken by LSL'S LNER B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower*.

As this issue of *Heritage Railway* closed for press, the next trip for which *Blue Peter* is rostered is the Saphos 'Welsh Marches Express' from Bournemouth to Shrewsbury (diesel-hauled from Bournemouth to Bristol Temple Meads) on September 4. "This could change closer to the time," said a Saphos spokesman. *Blue Peter* is also rostered for sections of 'The Golden Hind' on September 25, departing from Shrewsbury and running via Hereford and Bristol to Plymouth, and the October 9 trip from Worcester Shurb Hill via Cheltenham and Bristol to Plymouth.

The A2 is also booked for 'The Christmas White Rose,' which is scheduled to run from St Albans City, Luton, Bedford, Kettering, Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Stamford and Peterborough and on via the East Coast Main Line to York for the city's Christmas market.

For latest details and to book, visit https://saphostrains.com/trips-tours/

Meanwhile, Steam Dreams will run a trip from Paddington to Exeter using *Mayflower* on Saturday, September 28.

The tour will start behind diesel traction and head west along the Great Western Main Line for passenger pick-ups at Maidenhead, Reading and Swindon, continuing to Chippenham before deviating south onto the Wessex Main Line until Westbury.

From there, the train will take the Reading-Taunton Line via Castle Cary to Taunton, where the diesel will be swapped for the B1 to take the tour on to Exeter.

Customers will have three hours to explore Exeter before the return journey, this time taking a more direct route. Leaving Exeter St Davids, *Mayflower* is planned to stop at Exeter Central before heading along the Bristol-Exeter Line to Taunton. Taking the Reading-Taunton line, the tour will stop at Reading to set down passengers for Reading and Swindon, then along the Great Western Main Line back to the capital, setting down passengers at Maidenhead and finally Paddington.

Tickets are available in Pullman Dining, First Class and Premium Standard Class. For more details and to book, visit steamdreams.co.uk

***Mayflower* runs downgrade from Whiteball Summit with the 'English Riviera Express' on August 10. Running as the 1Z60 6am Wolverhampton to Kingswear, the initial leg was diesel-hauled top-and-tail by Locomotive Services Group's BR green-liveried Class 47s Nos. 47810 *Crewe Diesel Depot* and 47805 *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013*. On arrival at Taunton, the waiting B1 was added to the train, replacing No. 47810 for the run to Kingswear, No. 47805 remaining with the railtour by trailing on the rear.** STEPHEN GINN

Drink up with Bluebell's beer festival trip

A UK Railtours trip will give passengers the chance to visit the Bluebell Railway on a tour booked for Saturday, September 21, that coincides with the heritage line's beer festival.

Titled 'The Bluebell Railway,' the excursion is planned to start out from Nottingham, before heading to the East Coast Main Line for further pick-ups at Grantham, Peterborough, Huntingdon, Stevenage, Potters Bar and Finsbury Park.

Once in London there is planned a brief stop at Acton for a locomotive swap, as the Class 66 booked to start the tour is exchanged for two Class 73/1s, courtesy of GBRf. From Acton, the train is expected to pass Kensington Olympia and then cross the River Thames to negotiate the London suburbs through to Crystal Palace and eventually pick up the Oxted Line to East Grinstead.

Once on Bluebell metals at East Grinstead, the train will travel the full 11 miles to the southern terminus of Sheffield Park.

Capital break

There is then planned to be a break of about four hours, which will give passengers plenty of time to sample the beers of the festival or look around the museum and engine house at Sheffield Park. The price of this tour also includes a rover ticket for the heritage line, giving customers the chance to travel behind a selection of resident steam locomotives.

The return journey is scheduled to be via a slightly different route. Once back in the London suburbs, the train is planned to pass Tulse Hill, Brixton and Clapham Junction, before heading to Leigham Junction and back to Clapham. The route is then planned to revert to that of the outward journey, with a stop again at Acton to swap locomotives and then heading via Finsbury Park to the East Coast Main Line, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in either Standard Class, First Class non-dining or First Class dining, with a discount for junior travellers in Standard Class.

➜ For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com

Class 40 tour of freight lines and branches

ON Saturday, October 19, Pathfinder Tours will provide the chance to explore some non-passenger lines behind Class 40 D345.

'The Pennine Perambulator' is scheduled to start from Burton-on-Trent, with D345 piloted by a Class 37 hauling Intercity Mk.2 carriages. Heading north, the tour is planned to pick up additional passengers at Tamworth, Birmingham New Street, Tame Bridge Parkway, Stafford and Crewe.

At Crewe the Class 37 will run to the rear of the train, allowing the Class 40 to take charge over some passenger and goods loops, freight lines and branches.

After leaving Crewe, the planned route will take the train via Stockport, Guide Bridge, Romiley, New Mills South Junction and on to the Hope Valley Line to Sheffield. From here, the next locations are expected to be Woodhouse, Shireoaks and Woodend Junction for a reverse move to Worksop and Retford for a short break.

After reversing again, the train is scheduled to retrace the route via Worksop and pass Brancliffe East Junction onto the South Yorkshire Joint Line to Doncaster.

Passing Doncaster, there is a planned reverse move a Hatfield & Stainforth, before returning to the Doncaster area and taking the Doncaster North Chord to Haywood Junction, Askern, Knottingley West Junction, Oakenshaw South Junction and the Monk Bretton Branch.

Following another reversal, the train is planned to head towards Wakefield Kirkgate, Huddersfield, Standedge, and Stalybridge, before arriving back at Crewe and setting down passengers on route back to Burton-on-Trent.

Tickets are available in First Class and Standard Class for this tour. For more details about the journey and to book a place now, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk

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'Heritage' train is first over newly-rebuilt Varsity Line

By Phil Marsh

BY the time this issue is published, the 18-mile section of the former Varsity Line between Bletchley, Verney Junction and Bicester will have joined the national network after being rebuilt in a £1 billion project.

The final passenger train to operate between Claydon, Verney Junction and Bletchley flyover was a Branch Line Society sponsored three-car Class 117 DMU on May 31, 1993. The final steam movement over the line came after the Wolverton 150 event, when LMS Princess Royal Pacific No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* went from Wolverton westwards via Bicester at dusk on October 2, 1988.

In October 1993, that 12-mile section was officially mothballed in accordance with railway parlance, awaiting future developments. The six-mile section west of Claydon remained open for freight traffic.

The 18-mile rebuild commenced in February 2020 just as Covid-19 descended, the first of several unplanned challenges to be overcome by the Eastwestrail Alliance (EWRA).

Above: Class 37 No. 37418 (D6971) *An Comunn Gaidhealech* on the first passenger train from Bletchley High Level on August 7. PHIL MARSH

Left: BR Southern Region general manager's saloon *Caroline* on Bletchley flyover during the first trip on August 7. PHIL MARSH

Treat for passengers

With project completion due at the end of August, the EWRA booked Observation Saloon No. AZ5040A *Caroline* for five round trips of the line operated by Loram, which provided Class 37 No. 37418 for haulage.

The train had a combined age of 125 years, given that the 37 was built in 1965 at the English Electric Vulcan Foundry. Originally D6971, it now carries the number 37418 and is named *An Comunn Gaidhealech*, meaning 'The Highland Association' in English.

A guest at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's June 14-16 diesel gala, as reported in issue 321, No. 37418 pulled the first passenger-carrying train over the rebuilt Bletchley section to within sight of Bicester section of the rebuilt Varsity Line on August 7. Passengers travelled on the 1958-built inspection saloon *Caroline,* which made five return runs over the line on August 7/8 carrying EWRA staff.

The 37, built two years before the Varsity Line was closed to passengers (apart from the Bedford to Bletchley section) was withdrawn from main line traffic by EWS 40 years to the day that the Varsity Line carried its final through passengers on December 31, 1967. It served around the UK, hauling both freight and passenger trains, and was a regular sight on the scenic routes of the Scottish Highlands.

Historic connections

It had been named *East Lancashire Railway* and was based at that heritage line for several years but renamed *Pectinidae*. It entered preservation carrying a BR large logo blue livery at the ELR diesel gala in March 2015 following five years under repair.

Caroline was the BR Southern Region general manager's saloon. It formed the Charles and Diana honeymoon train from Waterloo to Romsey on May 28, 1982, and also conveyed the Pope between Gatwick and London Victoria.

It was the first train to enter the Channel Tunnel on October 22, 1992, running from Waterloo International and carrying the All-Party Parliamentary Channel Tunnel Group. The latest trips add another chapter to the Class 37 and *Caroline's* history.

On August 8, the new Bletchley High Level station saw its first steam, when LMS 4-6-2 No. 46100 headed a Steam Dreams tour from Southend Central to Chester, steam coming on at London.

The last steam movement between Claydon, Verney Junction and Bletchley flyover was the movement of LMS Pacific No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* from Wolverton Works in the evening of October 2, 1988. PHIL MARSH

Pre-order Issue 324: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* passing Birkett Common running about 10 minutes early with the 1Z59 the Carlisle-Leeds Northern Belle on August 10. DAVE WILSON

Rare tour to ex-MOD Eastriggs base

By Tim Hobman

UK Railtours is offering the unique experience of visiting the former Ministry of Defence site at Eastriggs on Saturday, September 14.

Under the title of 'The Eastriggs Eloper' as a nod to the nearby Gretna Green, UK Railtours has been supported by Rail Sidings Limited in providing a tour to the site. Closed for 14 years, the site has been transferred to civilian use and is expected to serve as a secure location for aggregate trains.

Starting out from Watford Junction, the tour is planned to head north on the West Coast Main Line for further passenger pick-ups at Milton Keynes Central, Northampton, Nuneaton, Tamworth, and Stafford.

Out of the ordinary

After Stafford, there is a plan to take in some track that is rare for a passenger train, with the tour scheduled to take the Crewe Independent Goods Lines and then run via Warrington for a further passenger pick-up at Preston. The Class 57 at the head of the train will then run fast north through the Lake District to Carlisle via the Carnforth goods lines.

At Carlisle, passengers will have an opportunity for a leg stretch while a GB Railfreight Class 66 locomotive is added to the train for a top-and-tail formation ready for entry to Eastriggs. Continuing north, the tour is expected to cross the border into Scotland at Gretna before arrival at the Eastriggs complex. It is hoped to explore several sidings within the site, as well as many non-passenger lines around Carlisle.

On arrival back at Carlisle there will be a chance for another leg stretch as the Class 66 is removed. A fast run back home via the Crewe freight yards is planned, setting down passengers en route back to Watford Junction.

This tour provides seats in Standard Class and First Class non-dining only. For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com

'Beamish and Durham Pullman' from Wales

ON Saturday, September 21, the Midland Pullman's luxury HST set will tour to the north east of England under the title of the 'Beamish and Durham Pullman.'

Starting from Newport in South Wales, the train will pick up passengers at Severn Tunnel Junction, before heading north along the River Severn to pick up additional passengers at Chepstow and Lydney. Continuing on to another passenger pick-up at Gloucester, the excursion is then planned to take the Cross Country Route north east to collect more passengers at Cheltenham Spa, Worcester Parkway, and finally Barnt Green.

After Barnt Green, the train is scheduled to take the Cross Country Route through Derby and Leeds to join the East Coast Main Line at York. There will then be a short sprint north to the destination of Durham.

City break

At Durham, customers will have the option of exploring the city for about four hours.

For those who choose not to stay in Durham, there is the option of visiting Beamish: The North of England Open Air Museum for a small supplement. Road coaches will be provided to convey customers to the museum, where visitors are transported back in time to the 1800s and early 1900s as they are given the chance to explore the town, colliery village, home farm, and Pockerley Manor areas of the site. The return journey is planned to be via the same route.

For more details and to book, visit midlandpullman.com

Catch InterCity push-pull for two-day Scottish getaway

INTERCITY Tours is to run a two-day tour of Scotland in its push-pull set over the weekend of October 5/6.

Starting from Crewe and picking up passengers en route north at Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston, and Carlisle, the first part of the tour will feature the West Coast Main Line as far as Carstairs.

From there the plan is to visit the City Union Line, Glasgow Queen Street (High Level and Low Level), the Sunnyside branch, Lanark, the Edinburgh Suburban Line and North Berwick, before arriving in Edinburgh Waverley for an overnight stop.

The next day is scheduled to see the train depart from Edinburgh Waverley early in the morning and take the Borders Railway south east for a brief stop at Galashiels to pick up additional passengers. From Tweedbank, the route is planned to be back to Edinburgh, then via the Forth Bridge on the Fife Circle Line and via Dunfermline to the newly-opened Levenmouth Branch to Leven. After leaving Leven, the plan is to take the coastal route on the Edinburgh to Dundee Line via Kirkcaldy back to Dunfermline for a short break.

The next destination is Stirling via the Alloa Branch, then via Larbert, Cumbernauld and Mossend to Carstairs. From there, the train is expected to follow the route of the outward journey, setting down passengers on route back to Crewe.

Overnight accommodation is not included with this tour, with passengers having the option of staying in Edinburgh or Galashiels for the night.

Tickets are available in First Class and Standard Class. For more details and to book, visit inter-city.co.uk

Tulyar start-up shows promise – but more work is still required

By Owen Hayward

AT Barrow Hill on July 30, after years of hard graft by Deltic Preservation Society volunteers, Class 55 Deltic D9015 *Tulyar* was started up for the first time in more than 25 years.

However, despite an initial celebration of the landmark occasion, a further fault arising means that its return to service will still be a little while yet.

D9015 last ran in public service in March 1997 at a 'Three Deltics' event the East Lancashire Railway, after which it returned to its then base at the Midland Railway – Butterley the following month, where it was shut down for a major bodywork overhaul.

It has been a long, arduous project that has seen the bodywork reskinned, a full mechanical overhaul undertaken, and a complete rewire, but there is hope that the end is in sight following its recent start-ups at the society's Barrow Hill base.

Ready for the moment

In the week leading up to the occasion, the locomotive underwent careful checks of its electrical circuits, with the power units being individually rolled over to ensure they would turn as expected and some circuitry isolated to prevent power being taken. The feed supply for fuel to the governor was also tripped to prevent the locomotive from starting up while inside the workshops. With the test of the units individually satisfactory, *Tulyar* was drawn outside, where on July 30 the engine was started for the first time since 1997.

The honour of pressing the start button went to long-standing DPS volunteer Geoff Brain, who was present at the final switch-off all those years beforehand. Following a minute of running the first power unit, No. 538 was shut down for inspection; this particular unit was last operational in 2019 when it suffered a generator failure while fitted to classmate No. 55009 *Alycidon*. Confident that there were no faults, and with the oil topped up, the unit was powered up again and left to run for a further 20 minutes, during which time the engine and radiator compartment were inspected to check for leaks, of which none were found.

Power unit No. 417, which had not been run since 2003, was then fired up with an almost clear exhaust. This unit followed the same process as No. 538, although a small oil leak was identified and swiftly dealt with after the first start-up.

With both units in fine fettle, the pair were finally run in unison before the day was out.

Confident with the outcome of the tests, the DPS swiftly announced that the first public start-ups would take place that coming Saturday, August 3, with three timed slots planned – an occasion that garnered much attention amid followers of the class and enthusiasts beyond. Sadly, the jubilation proved short-lived when power unit No. 417 became de-phased, meaning a gear had failed in the phasing case. The result is that the affected power unit will require a swap with a serviceable unit, something which was being planned as we went to press. A start on preparing unit No. 430 commenced almost immediately, with hoses changed ready for coolant and oil testing. Should this unit test successfully, it will be fitted in the locomotive with the hope that it will be ready for the autumn.

On July 30, D9015 *Tulyar* was fired up for the first time since 1997. Each of the two Napier power units was started individually to check for faults before being run in unison. Unfortunately, during a public test four days later one of the units became de-phased and will need to be swapped for another overhauled unit before the Deltic can take a step closer to a return to service. STEVE CLARKE/DPS

Next step

Understandably, the additional work brings unexpected costs which the DPS is asking for donations towards. In addition to the hire of lifting equipment to swap the power units over, new hoses will be required for them, as well as an overhaul of the main and auxiliary generators; work which will also be required for unit No. 423 that is required to return *Alycidon* to service following the failure of power unit No. 451 at the Nene Valley Railway in May. The society is seeking new members or donations towards the work required, information for which can either be obtained in person at its Barrow Hill Roundhouse depot at weekends or by visiting thedps.co.uk

Holden's iconic Richmond station receives a facelift

THE Art Deco Richmond station in south-west London is being refurbished at a cost of £325,000.

The programme of improvements, funded by South Western Railway, Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust, includes cleaning the Portland stone façade, repairing the timber entrance doors and polishing its bronze work, repairing flagpoles and refurbishing customer toilets – in what is hoped will be a larger project to restore the station to its former glory.

Richmond Council has also made a £100,000 contribution.

The station, on the Waterloo to Reading and North London lines, was designed by Southern Railway architects in 1936 under the direction of James Robb Scott, famed for his redesign of London Waterloo between 1910 and 1923.

Its Art Deco style was likely to have been inspired by the work of Charles Holden, the architect behind London Underground stations including South Wimbledon on the Northern line. His designs included multi-frame glazing, enamelled signage panels, the use of an iconic typeface for signage, and brick and tile detailing.

Similar features at Richmond have been lost or covered up over time, including in the station's last major refurbishment in 1985.

SWR and the RHT have worked with Benedict O'Looney Architects on designs that include restoring or replicating those and other features in future improvements.

The Art Deco frontage of Richmond station in south-west London. RICHMOND COUNCIL

The station's original hand-drawn plans are being used, together with promotional photographs from when the station first opened its doors to customers. Samples of the station's original paint are also being analysed by the University of Lincoln, specialists in the conservation and restoration of the interior and exterior features of listed and historic buildings.

RHT executive director Tim Hedley-Jones said: "We are delighted to be working with SWR on the restoration of Richmond station to help return it to its former 1930s glory. It has some beautiful features that have been lost or hidden over the years. We are very pleased that, once again, these will be enjoyed by rail passengers and the local community

Coun Gareth Roberts, the Leader of Richmond Council, said: "This project is not just about aesthetics, but it is also about ensuring that Richmond station and the surrounding town centre remain a hub for good business and cultural heritage. I am confident that the new station look will boost the appeal and status of Richmond within the borough and beyond."

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WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* (right), now based on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire railway, and GWR 2-6-2T No. 5500 at Par station on September 3, 1958. TRANSPORT TREASURY/HENRY PRIESTLEY COLLECTION

Par signalbox to become training centre

THE closed Grade II-listed signalbox at Par, in Cornwall, is to become a training facility, giving it a new lease of life for decades to come.

The 'box was finally closed on March 4 when a new digital signal system was launched in mid-Cornwall.

A ceremony was held to hand over the keys to the 1878-built structure, one of the oldest 'boxes still standing, from Network Rail's operations team to the maintenance team.

Network Rail Western section manager Paul Gardiner said: "We were honoured when asked to help preserve our railway history and bring Par signalbox back to life.

"It will now become a valuable training base and help educate railway workers for years to come."

Mechanical signalling is still in use in west Cornwall; boxes at St Erth, St Blazey, Goonbarrow and Liskeard operate the St Ives, Newquay and Looe branch lines.

Handing over Par signalbox for use as a training facility on July 18. NR

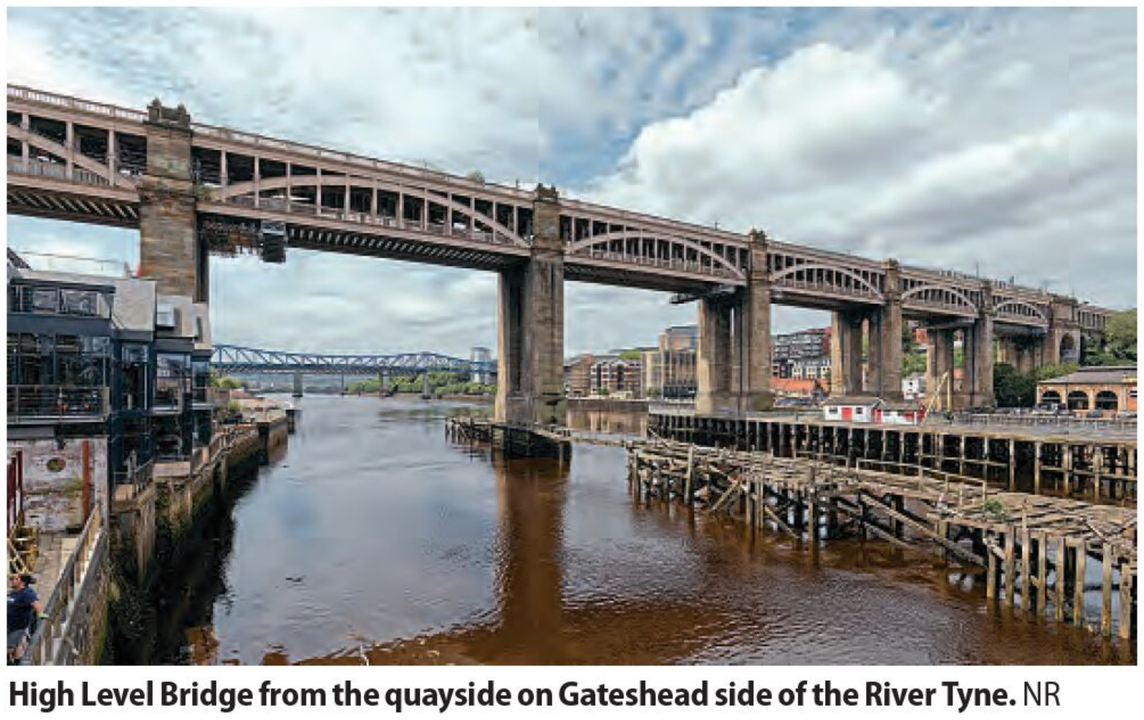
£5.2m upgrade of Tyneside bridge complete

A YEAR-LONG project to strengthen the iconic High Level Bridge which provides a vital road and railway link over the River Tyne is now complete, with £5.2 million having recently been invested by Network Rail to overhaul the underside of the Victorian structure which connects Gateshead and Newcastle.

The landmark structure, designed by railway pioneer Robert Stephenson and completed in 1849, is the world's first double-decker road and railway bridge.

Being 175 years old, it is recognised by NR that the bridge needs regular maintenance. This latest overhaul by NR and contractor AmcoGiffen has seen the structure grit-blasted and repainted, with repairs made to the wrought ironwork across the bridge and waterproofing of the road deck. The project has also seen the roadway resurfaced to provide a smoother ride for road users.

The work has not affected rail services across the bridge, with much of the work being carried out overnight. This latest project will ensure that the Grade I-listed structure is fit for use for many years to come.



High Level Bridge from the quayside on Gateshead side of the River Tyne. NR

Scotsman's £52k royal trip to Pickering

THE two-day Royal Train trip headed by A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* taking King Charles III to Pickering on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway on June 12 last year cost £52,000 to run, according to newly-released royal accounts.

As reported in issue 308, *Flying Scotsman* took over the train at York after it was hauled from London by DB Cargo's Class 67 No. 67006 *Royal Sovereign*. Details of the journey were kept under wraps for security reasons.

A spokesman for Buckingham Palace said that the Royal Train still "provides an effective and operationally efficient level of transport for His Majesty to perform individual duties.

"It provides overnight security and thereby mitigates security costs of others. We have said that we will review the usage of the Royal Train during this reign."

The visit boosted the NYMR's visitor numbers as it marked its 50th anniversary.

'Cathedrals Express' trip to city of Lincoln

ON Saturday, October 12, Vintage Trains will run a 'Cathedrals Express' behind either GWR Castle 4-6-0s No. 7029 *Clun Castle* or No 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* to Lincoln.

Starting from Birmingham New Street, the tour will head to Coleshill Parkway and then to Nuneaton, picking up passengers at both stations. The next scheduled pick-up point is Leicester, then Loughborough, and finally Nottingham.

With all passengers on board, the excursion is then planned to take the Nottingham to Lincoln Line via Newark Castle to the final destination.

Passengers will have just over five hours to explore the historic city of Lincoln, before the tour returns to Birmingham New Street, again steam-hauled via the same route and setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets remain available in all classes, with a concession for junior travellers. To book, visit vintagetrains.co.uk

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Photo: Tim Wetherell

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- Children's hunt and garden games
- Tea Room and Grill

Early Bird Tickets:

www.bwlr.co.uk/next-open-day

August

31 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Hull, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

31 'The Lakelander'
Hereford, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Preston and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

September

1 'The Royal Duchy'
Bristol Temple Meads, Par and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

1 'Shakespeare Express'
Birmingham Moor Street, Stratford-upon-Avon and return.
Loco: 4079 *Clun Castle* or 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

3 'The Pendle Dalesman'
Lancaster, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

4 'The Kentish Belle'
London Victoria, Faversham and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

4 'Welsh Marches Express'
Bournemouth, Shrewsbury and return. Steam-hauled between Bristol Temple Meads and Shrewsbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

5 'Cambrian Coast Express'
Bristol Temple Meads, Pwllheli and return.
Locos: Class 67 TBC, 2x Class 97s TBC. PT

5 'The Dalesman'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Hellifield.
Loco: TBA. WCR

7 Sugar Load & Stormy Push-Pull
Crewe, Cardiff Central and return.
Locos: 2x Class 37s TBA. IC

7 'The Stratford Flyer'
Norwich, Stratford-upon-Avon and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

7 'The Kent Coast Explorer'
East Midlands Parkway, Dover Priory and return.
Locos: 2x Class 73 TBC. UKRT

8 'The Waverley'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

8 Chichester Excursion
Paddington, Chichester and return.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

8 Sussex Coast Tour
Circular tour from Chichester.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

11 'The Swanage Belle'
London Victoria, Swanage and return. Diesel-hauled between Swanage-Southampton (return only).
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

11 'Settle & Carlisle Fellsman'
Crewe, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Chester and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

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.

In conjunction with the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway's 14s@60 gala event (see feature pages 78-81), Locomotive Services Group and InterCity ran a railtour from Bristol to York via Duffield, allowing for those wishing to arrive at the event by rail and in style a chance to do so. The outward journey had arrived almost 20 minutes early; now running to time and having emerged from Milford tunnel, Class 45 No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman* glides towards Duffield with the return leg of the excursion. OWEN HAYWARD

12 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

12 'The Cambrian Coast Express'
Swindon, Pwllheli and return.
Locos: Class 67 TBC, 2x Class 97s TBC. PT

14 Cotswold Excursion
Departs Hastings, destination TBC.
DEMU: 1001. HD

14 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Liverpool Lime Street, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

14 'The West Somerset Steam Express'
Paddington, Minehead and return.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. RTC

14 'The Melton Pieman'
Birmingham New Street, Melton Mowbray and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. VT

14 'The Harringworth Shuttle'
Melton Mowbray, Corby and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. VT

17 'The Dalesman'
Chester, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield (outward) and Carnforth (return).
Loco: TBA. WCR

19 'The Dalesman'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Hellifield.
Loco: TBA. WCR

21 'Ribblehead Rambler'
Leicester, Carlisle and return.
Loco: 60163 *Tornado*. A1SLT

21 'Coast to Coast Express'
Liverpool Lime Street, Scarborough and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

21 'Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: Steam: TBA. Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

21 'The Golden Arrow'
Birmingham International, Canterbury and return.
Loco: TBA. ST

21 'The Bluebell Railway'
Nottingham, Sheffield Park and return.
Locos: Class 66 + 2x class 73 TBC.

25 'the Golden Hind'
Shrewsbury, Plymouth and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Plymouth.
Loco: TBA. ST

26 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

27 'The Mayflower'
Birmingham New Street, Bristol Temple Meads, Plymouth and return. Diesel-hauled between BTM and Plymouth.
Locos: 4079 *Clun Castle* & 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

28 'The Atlantic Coast Express'
Waterloo, Exeter and return.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. RTC

28 Exeter Excursion
Paddington, Exeter and return. Diesel-hauled between Paddington and Taunton (outward only).
Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. SD

October

2 'The Golden Arrow'
Peterborough, Canterbury and return. Steam hauled between London and Canterbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

3 'The Dalesman'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Hellifield.
Loco: TBA. WCR

5 Central Scotland & Fife Push-Pull (Day 1)
Crewe, Edinburgh Waverley.
Loco: 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*. IC

Tour promoters

A1SLT	A1 Steam Locomotive Trust 01325 488215
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

Regular Tours

Daily 'The Jacobite'
Fort William, Mallaig and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Locomotive: 44871, 45212 or 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*. WCR

On July 9, 2022, *Clan Line* passes Hook with the 8.43am 'End of Southern Steam' excursion from Victoria to Weymouth. DON BENN

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW

TABLE ONE: BASINGSTOKE TO SALISBURY

Date	July 9, 2024
Train	8.46am Victoria to Yeovil Junction
Loco	Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	10 coaches + 47812 458 tons tare 480 tons gross
Driver	Bob Baines
Fireman	Andy Christie
Recorder	Alan Rawlings
Weather	Damp

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Basingstoke	0.00	0.00	00	00	
MP 49	1.20		03	39	34
Worting Junction	2.50	8.30	05	33	44
Battledown	3.20		06	32	47
Oakley	4.60		08	03	61
MP 53½	5.70		09	06	62
Overton	7.80		11	16	65
Whitchurch	11.40		14	24	71
Hurstbourne	13.30		16	02	74
MP 62½	14.70		17	17	69/71
Andover	18.55	26.00	20	28	68
Red Post Jct	19.95		21	43	67/70
Grateley	24.95		26	09	63
MP 73¼	25.45		26	39	62
Allington	27.80		28	38	74
Porton	30.45		30	56	73/75
Laverstock N Jct	33.70		36	44	21*sigs/27
Tunnel Junction	34.80	43.00	37	24	25*
Salisbury	35.90	46.00	40	29	

net time 39 minutes

*brakes or speed restriction

In **Don Benn's** latest column, July 9 is remembered, with Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* on that special date for Southern steam enthusiasts in 2024 and 2012. Also included is Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* in August 2007 on a 'Dorset Coast Express'.

JULY 9, 1967, is remembered as the day that the world ended for many Southern steam fans. It was the end of steam-hauled trains on the region, and so for many of us, after a frantic few years trying to cover every aspect of the last UK steam-worked main line.

The anniversary is commemorated by a steam-hauled excursion on the South Western main line, and I have been present on many of these; fewer recently as diesel locomotives have intruded, but not in 2012, when the train ran unassisted. I was not on this year's train as the use of air-conditioned 'closed' stock with the inevitable diesel locomotive made it unattractive to me. As it happened, the steam crews did their very best to run without diesel assistance as they had a very special steam locomotive to work the 10-coach train, namely Bulleid Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line*.

My good friend Alan Rawlings was on the train and his account of the excellent day follows. I have interjected throughout this narrative to add my comments and references to the tables of loco performance and estimated power outputs.

"As is traditional, the Railway Touring Company offers an annual pilgrimage to Weymouth via Yeovil and a return to Waterloo in commemoration of the day back in 1967 when the world of Southern steam came to an end, albeit temporarily as it has turned out. This year, *Clan Line* was available to do the honours, although a diesel had to tag along to haul the train from Yeovil down to Weymouth while *Clan Line* was serviced at the Yeovil Railway Centre. There was also the important power requirement for the Mk.2 rolling stock with its air conditioning that seemed just about up to the job of maintaining a reasonable on-board temperature; fortunately on a temperate and somewhat damp summer's day.

"As is the case at many Southern termini, of which Weymouth is one, there is a limit to the length of trains that can be accommodated. Consequently, the charter consisted of *Clan Line,* plus 10 vehicles and a Class 47 diesel. This is well within the typical load that the locomotive hauls regularly on the 'Belmond Pullman.' The trip therefore offered a rare opportunity, subject to the West Coast Railways

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***Clan Line* is seen awaiting departure at Victoria on July 9, 2024.** ALAN RAWLINGS

crews being happy to do so, to operate the day with the diesel just providing power for the rolling stock and was one not to be missed. Of course, the climb out of Weymouth would be another matter

'Excellent day'

"Despite the unseasonal weather, it was an excellent day. Time-keeping was generally good, *Clan Line* performed flawlessly, and, more to the point, the crews were happy to let *Clan Line* handle the train on its own. Consequently, there was some impressive steam-powered running and, as it turned out, some remarkable hill climbing.

"Table One covers the outward journey to Yeovil and the leg from Basingstoke to Salisbury that often produces some fine running. This was no exception. The tight timing, slightly longer water stop at Winchfield, and extended passenger pick-up put us 10 minutes late out of Basingstoke. Bob Baines set about gaining back some time but with nearly 500 tons, it was a steady start. However, once he got the train rolling, we swept along, hurried across Hurstbourne viaduct and powered up to the summit beyond Grateley with a minimum of 63mph that was pretty good considering the load and the slippery railhead.

"Despite a check on the approach to Tunnel Junction, we had made up most of the arrears by the time we arrived for our water stop (I calculated the net time to have been 39 minutes).

"Bill Monteith now took over and proceeded to flatten some of the hills en route to Yeovil. Semley was topped at more than 60mph and a speed of 30mph was maintained up towards Milborne Port despite the slow pass of Templecombe and a slight slip around Milepost 113. The usual dash through Sherborne took us into Yeovil on time, from where we were hauled by the diesel down to Weymouth.

"The climb out of Weymouth to Dorchester is not for the fainthearted – in steam days, anything over five, maybe six, coaches would be a double-header (or banked – see Don's photograph). So, for example, when I once travelled on the summer Saturday 9.24am from Weymouth to Waterloo with 11 on, the train had Nos. 35014 and 35029 on the front; we went over the summit at a little over 20mph, so I had no expectations with 480 tons on the drawbar. How wrong I was, as Table Two shows.

"Matt McManus was now in charge, apparently his first time with *Clan Line*. We set off a little bit late and the diesel gave us a nudge out and across the station throat but then all went quiet at the back. Speed increased steadily, with no assistance, to peak at 30mph by the end of the 1-in-74 section just beyond Upwey. The bank now steepened to 1-in-50 and speed fell away but settled to a steady 20mph that was maintained through to the site of Upwey Wishing Well Halt. I have learned that this was all achieved, remarkably, with three-quarters regulator and 55% cut-off.

"With Bincombe Tunnel imminent and the job mostly done, *Clan Line* was then eased a little just in case it was wet inside. We rolled over the top at 17mph and onwards to Dorchester and Bournemouth."

Before Alan completes his account of the day, it is worth looking at the work of No. 34067 *Tangmere* on the very late departing train on August 1, 2007, when it was helped up the hill out of Weymouth by Class 37 No. 37248. The speed at the summit was 22mph; the second log in Table Three shows how rebuilt light Pacific No. 34034 *Honiton* took six coaches up without assistance on a foul winter night in 1965, falling to the same 22mph at Bincombe Tunnel signalbox. One of the images shows No. 34098 *Templecombe* taking 11 coaches up, being banked by BR Standard class 5 No. 73041. After Dorchester, both trains took advantage of the lovely, mainly downhill stretch to Wareham, No. 34067 without any noise from the diesel and No. 34034 giving me an exhilarating dash in the darkness.

TABLE TWO: WEYMOUTH TO BOURNEMOUTH

Date	July 9, 2024
Train	5.36pm Weymouth to Waterloo
Loco	Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	10 coaches + 47812 458 tons tare 480 tons gross
Driver	Matt McManus
Fireman	Craig Stinchcombe
Recorder	Alan Rawlings
Weather	Damp

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Weymouth	0.00	0.00	00	00	6½ late
Radipole Halt	1.01		03	38	28
Upwey	2.34	5.30	06	24	29/30
Wishing Well Halt	3.45		08	56	21
Bincombe Tunnel In	3.69		09	35	20
Bincombe Tunnel Out	4.16		11	02	18
Bincombe Summit	4.29		11	19	17
Monkton and Came	5.60		13	38	43
Dorchester Jct	6.54	14.00	15	52	19*
Dorchester South	6.85	15.00	16	40	19*
Woodsford LC	10.76		21	44	62
Moreton	12.43	23.00	23	12	67
MP 128½	14.23		24	49	74
Winfrith GF	14.86		25	27	58*
East Burton LC	16.03		26	37	57
Wool	16.85	30.00	27	30	56*
Stoke LC	18.58		29	14	63
Worgret Jct	20.76	35.30	31	30	48*
Wareham	21.91	37.00	32	54	49*
Holton Heath	23.96	39.30	35	14	61
Hamworthy	26.76	43.00	38	52	32*
Creekmoor Viaduct	27.92		40	30	38
Holes Bay Jct	28.41		41	24	27
Poole	28.94	46.00	42	55	18*
MP 113	29.74		44	44	36/39
MP 112½	30.24		45	33	36
Parkstone	30.75		46	34	33
St Osmunds Road	31.18		47	20	31
Branksome	32.06	52.00	49	00	25*
Gasworks Jct	32.54		49	54	37/41
Bournemouth	34.71	56.00	53	35	26

*brakes or speed restriction

With 2007 and *Tangmere,* we had left Weymouth 55 minutes late and arrived at Waterloo just five late after some great work by Pete Roberts and Graham Bunker, but with very little help from the Class 37. The overall time was a remarkable three hours, 35 minutes and 58 seconds!

Reverting to 2024, I have tried to calculate the power output of *Clan Line* on the climb out of Weymouth. This is tricky as the distances are short, but my best estimates are between 1520 and 1700 edbhp (equivalent drawbar horsepower).

Alan continues: "After that superlative climb of Upwey, the short but sharp 1-in-60 of Parkstone bank was straightforward. We wound up to 39mph after Poole with a minimum of 31 beyond Parkstone before No. 35028 was eased for the restriction at Branksome. Another lovely run; Table Four shows the climb of Roundwood. The charter had a miserable path through Southampton and towards Eastleigh after the water stop in the goods loop. We crawled up the slow line before being finally released at the exit signal for Shawford Junction. Once again, *Clan Line* dug in to the-1-in-252 climb and could be heard barking away even from behind the sealed window carriages. To reach close on 60mph with nearly 500 tons from virtually a standing start is quite remarkable. A great day with a great locomotive – and a great set of West Coast crews who had the confidence to let *Clan Line* show off this thoroughbred powerhouse of a Merchant Navy."

No. 35028 *Clan Line* crosses Redbridge Causeway with the 5.38pm Weymouth to Waterloo leg of the 'End of Southern Steam' trip on July 9, 2012. DON BENN

TABLE THREE: WEYMOUTH TO WAREHAM

Date	August 1, 2007					January 24, 1965			
Train	6.30pm Weymouth to Waterloo					5.50pm Weymouth to Waterloo			
Loco	Battle of Britain class 4-6-2 No. 34067 *Tangmere*					Rebuilt West Country class 4-6-2 No. 34034 *Honiton*			
Load	10 coaches, 332 tons tare, 360 tons gross + 37248 37248 not working from Dorchester, so 437 tons tare, 465 tons gross					6 coaches, 201 tons tare, 215 tons gross			
Driver	Pete Roberts					Weymouth shed			
Fireman	Graham Bunker								
Weather	Cloudy, warm					Heavy rain			
Recorder	Don Benn, 10th coach					Don Benn			
	miles	**sched**	**mins**	**secs**	**speed**	**sched**	**mins**	**secs**	**speed**
Weymouth	0.00	0.00	00	00	55 late	0.00	00	00	R/T
MP 168	0.67		02	50	36				
MP 167	1.67		04	02	41				
Upwey	2.34		04	55	42		04	49	37½
Bincombe Tunnel SB	4.29		08	11	22		09	29	22
MP 163	5.67		09	58	56				54½
Dorchester Jct	6.54				*		12	52	**
Dorchester South	6.85	15.00	12	42			17.00	15	32
	0.00	0.00	00	00	51½ mins late	0.00	00	00	slipping
MP 134	1.80		03	33	60		03	08	62
MP 133	2.80		04	33	61		04	06	64
MP 132	3.80		05	32	60		05	00	69
MP 131	4.80		06	25	69		05	51	72
Moreton	5.58	8.00	07	00	67½/65½		06	29	75/74
MP 129	6.58		08	12	72½		07	22	76
MP 128	7.80		09	01	75		08	08	80½
MP 127	8.80		09	50	74		08	52	82
								sigs stop	
Wool	10.03	13.00	10	53	61*		11	12	0*
MP 124	11.80		12	39	66½		11	40	
Worgret Jct	13.93		14	43	53*	15.00	18	08	60
Wareham	15.02	20.00	17	06	48½ mins late	18.00	20	08	

*brakes or speed restriction

** stop and reverse into station after Junction
* brakes or speed restriction
Dorchester to Wareham net tine 15 minutes

"A great day with a great locomotive– and a great set of West Coast crews who had the confidence to let *Clan Line* show off this thoroughbred powerhouse of a Merchant Navy."

TABLE FOUR: SHAWFORD TO BASINGSTOKE

Date	July 9, 2024
Train	5.36pm Weymoith to Waterloo
Loco	Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	10 coaches + 47812 458 tons tare 480 tons gross
Driver	Matt McManus
Fireman	Craig Stinchcombe
Recorder	Alan Rawlings
Weather	Damp

	miles	**sched**	**mins**	**secs**	**speed**
Milepost 70½	0.00		00	00	4*
Shawford Up Jct	0.75	0.00	01	51	23
Shawford	0.80		02	29	26
Shawford Down Jct	1.50		04	00	32
St Cross	2.75		05	50	46
Winchester	4.00	6.00	07	24	53
Winchester Jct	6.21		09	48	57
Wallers Ash East	8.75	13.00	12	30	59
Weston	10.17		14	59	59
Micheldever	12.42		16	11	58
Roundwood	14.25		18	08	55
Waltham	15.50		19	29	57
Streventon	16.50		20	31	58
Wooton	18.00		22	07	52
Battledown Fyover	19.50		24	01	47
Worting Jct	20.25	24.00	24	52	49
Basingstoke	22.75	28.00	30	57	

*brakes or speed restriction

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July 6, 1963, and No. 34098 *Templecombe*, banked by BR 5MT No. 73041, climbs the 1-in-50 near Upwey with the 3.15pm relief Weymouth to Waterloo. DON BENN

I calculate that No. 35028 was producing about 1480 edbhp or 1950 ihp (indicated horsepower) over the 8.04 miles from Winchester Junction to Roundwood.

70mph average over 61 miles

Of all the many July 9 occasions, perhaps the best was in 2012, once again with *Clan Line*. The whole day was good, after some scares due to the poor weather, but best of all was the final leg from Eastleigh to Waterloo (see Table Five). In charge up front were father-and-son Don and Jim Clarke. Don is an ex-Nine Elms man.

Although the schedule to Waterloo wasn't very demanding at 93 minutes for the 73½ miles, we had high hopes of a good climb to Roundwood and some fast running afterwards, assuming that the path worked as planned. We knew that first of all a Cross Country service had to pass and make its Winchester call, but that after that we should be clear as far as the London suburbs. I am not sure how many of us actually believed that this would happen; the doubters, myself among them, were proved wrong, and what followed was the fastest long-distance run on Southern metals since 1967.

After the Eastleigh restart, we ran up the slow line to stop at the signal just on the country side of milepost 70½ to allow the Voyager to get past and after we got underway again were still being impeded with double yellow signals as far as Winchester. But then we got greens, amazingly all the way to Earlsfield, over 60 miles, which we ran at an average speed of more than 70mph, including getting up to speed after recovery from the checks. As we passed the site of Weston Box, speed was just over 60mph, but the rate of acceleration was growing, which made me think that Don Clarke had increased the cut-off or regulator, or both. In fact, he had lifted the regulator into the roof and set the cut-off at 35% at Winchester and the engine did the rest.

So, why the rapid rise in speed over the last four miles of the climb? Well, my old friend from the days of steam, Tony Leaver, a Bluebell Railway driver and one of the group on the train, explained to me afterwards: "One of the problems with the steam tours is when the loco stops for water; the firebox tends to cool down (more so if the loco has been working fairly hard). From the water stop in the loop before Southampton, the loco would not be working particularly hard to Eastleigh, where there was another stop and then a stroll up towards Shawford, where there was another stop, so not really time to get the box hot again. When a locomotive is started (with a good fire), there is often an initial drop in pressure. While this quickly recovers, this also depends on how hard the loco is being worked, which again relates to the gradients. On this run, the pressure continued to drop to 200lb until the box and brick arch had warmed up. This might explain the increase in speed after Weston, as with an increase in boiler pressure, with full regulator, there would be more pressure in the steam chest."

It was simply the good old Bulleid syndrome of the boiler pressure increasing the harder the engine was worked. I have calculated the power output during the later stages of the climb and although it didn't set any records, it was still excellent at 2000 edbhp and 2600 ihp for the final mile to Litchfield tunnel.

What followed from Roundwood would not have needed much effort from the engine but was a joy to time and will live long in the memory. When was the last time that a steam train had got a clear road through both Basingstoke and Woking? There is a spine-tingling video clip of us passing Woking at full speed on YouTube, and all achieved within the current overall speed limit for steam to give a flying average speed of just under 74mph from Wootton to Wimbledon. It was a superlative effort and a credit to all concerned. From being nearly eight minutes late at Winchester, we passed Wimbledon three minutes early, and with lots of time allowed for the finish to Waterloo, we realised that signal checks would follow. In fact, we very nearly got a second even time run of the day from the signal stop before Shawford to a signal stop before Queens Road, despite the adverse signals before Winchester and a severe check before Clapham Junction plus creeping slowly up to the stop; we were just 13 seconds outside the 60 mph mark.

After another stop, we ran into Waterloo just one minute late to stand at the buffer stops just as No. 35030 had done on the 2.11pm from Weymouth exactly 45 years before. I was told afterwards that there were still 3000 gallons of water left in the tender, so incredibly, *Clan Line* had used just 2700 gallons of water to produce the superb run we had all just witnessed. HR

TABLE FIVE: EASTLEIGH TO WATERLOO

Date	July 9, 2012
Train	5.38PM Weymouth to Waterloo
Loco	Merchant Navy class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	11 coaches 392 tons tare, 430 tons gross
Driver	Don Clarke
Fireman	Jim Clarke
Recorder	Don Benn gps
Position	11 of 11
Weather	cloudy, damp

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Eastleigh	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Allbrook Box	0.86		02	54	34½/38½
			sigs stop		
MP 70½	2.90		08	16	0*
			11	18	
Shawford	3.81	8.00	14	39	34
Shawford Jct.	4.66		15	49	37½
			sigs		33*
St Cross	5.70		17	49	40
Winchester City	6.95	13.00	19	32	48
Winchester Jct.	9.05		21	59	56
Wallers Ash Box+	11.75		24	40	59½
Weston Box+	13.25		26	18	61½
MP 59	14.45		27	28	63
Micheldever	15.38		28	19	64½
MP 57	16.45		29	20	66½
Roundwood Box+	17.25		30	00	67½
Litchfield Tunnel In	17.60		30	24	68
Steventon Box+	19.50		31	59	71
Wootton Box+	20.95		33	14	72/74
MP 51	22.45		34	27	72
Worting Jct.	23.18	30.00	35	06	75½
Basingstoke	25.70	33.00	37	10	71*
MP 46	27.45		38	35	76/73
Newnham Siding	29.75		40	27	75½/72½
Hook	31.28		41	39	76
Winchfield	33.61		43	34	74
MP 38	35.45		45	00	77
Fleet	36.96		46	13	74/75
Farnborough	40.25	46.00	48	51	74
Sturt Lane Jct.	41.25		49	41	72½
MP 31	42.45		50	40	72
Pirbright Jct.	43.80		51	45	77
Brookwood	45.45		53	01	75/76½
Woking Jct.	48.70	54.00	55	36	75
Woking	49.15	55.00	55	57	76
West Byfleet	51.76		58	03	74½
Byfleet Jct.	53.04		59	04	75½
Weybridge	54.29		60	11	70½/69½
Oatlands Box	55.35		61	02	72
Walton	56.36		61	51	75½
Hersham	57.55		62	44	75
Esher	59.05		64	02	73½
Hampton Court Jct.	60.10	68.00	64	55	72½
Surbiton	61.40	69.00	65	59	70
Berrylands	62.46		66	54	72
New Malden	63.66	71.00	67	51	73½
Raynes Park	64.80		68	48	73
Wimbledon	66.25	73.30	69	57	71½
Earlsfield	67.86		71	30	56*
			sigs		12*
Clapham Jct.	69.51	78.00	75	55	35½
			sigs stop		
MP 3	70.56		79	11	0*
			80	40	
Queens Road	70.63	81.30	83	02	19½
Vauxhall	72.13		85	42	31
			sigs stop		
MP 0.32			88	39	0*
			90	06	
Waterloo	73.44	93.00	92	57	
					* brakes

+ site of box net time: 68 minutes

NOTES: Weston to Roundwood = 1735 edbhp, 2300 ihp
Final mile to Litchfield Tunnel = 2,000 edbhp, 2600 ihp
67.66 miles from sigs stop before Shawford to sigs stop before Queens Road in 67 mins 53 secs = 59.80 mph
Average speed 60.91 miles Winchester to Earlsfield = 70.33 mph
Average speed 45.26 miles Wootton to Wimbledon 73.96 mph

Clan Pacific sets the Standard at GWRA's flagship auction

IN OUR post-Covid world almost everything seems to have changed, whether for better or worse being down to personal opinion, and the railwayana movement is no different. With the exception of Talisman, whose July 13 auction is reported in this month's column, saleroom auctions are an endangered species, and so too printed colour catalogues, although Talisman (again) and GW Railwayana are bucking that trend.

Some are also feeling uncomfortable with the arrival of a new IT-savvy, and invariably younger and thus diesel-orientated, audience, although others regard such a change, which has infused the movement with new blood, as being inevitable and even desirable.

One central element of railwayana, however, that has remained unstirred during the turmoil of the past few years has been the ability of nameplates to concentrate minds and demand attention. They are, quite understandably, the flagship bearers of the collecting movement, and even though there is an apparent surplus on the market for a variety of reasons, including collectors passing away or downsizing, they are the headline-grabbers, the bellwethers of the movement.

And thus, even if I wished otherwise for variety's sake, I begin my report of GW Railwayana's July 20 auction with the N word: nameplates. Simon Turner put 21 former GWR, SR, LMS, LNER and Standard plates under the hammer, and all but three sold, with five achieving five-figure realisations.

Top of the tree was one of the four Standard representatives, *Clan Mackintosh* from 1952 Crewe-built Pacific No. 72007, which went for £20,000, followed by *City of Winchester* from GWR City class No. 3441 (£18,000), *Windward Islands* from LMS Jubilee No. 45637, one of the locomotives involved in the Harrow & Wealdstone disaster on October 8, 1952 (£17,500), GWR *The South Wales Borderers* from Castle class No. 4037 (£15,000), and £10,000 for *Shorwell* from SR Isle of Wight O2 class W30, whose bunker numberplate sold immediately after for £4300.

Sub-£10k plates were led by the second Standard Pacific of the day, *Sir Chrisopher Wren* from Britannia No. 70039, which sold for £9000, while not too far adrift at £8200 was *Somme* from LNER Class D11 No. 2667/BR No. 62667, pursued by *City of Liverpool* (LNER B19 class No. 1493) that went to a new home for £6000.

Time now to take a deep breath, as the list continues with 10 more nameplates that sold for £5500 down to £3300.

First past the post in this section with a realisation of £5500 was *Lord Kitchener* from 'Brit' No. 70043, a short head in front of *Athelhampton Hall* from GWR No. 6971 (£5300) and LMS pairing *Sir Francis Dent* (Claughton class No. 5927) and *Royal Fusilier* from Royal Scot No. 6111/BR No. 46111, each at £5000.

A switch to the LNER brings us to *Sir Berkeley Sheffield* from D10 class No. 2657/BR No. 62657, which went for £4700, and then the GWR stepped in with a trio each at £3700 that comprised *Gwendraeth* from No. 2196, *Dummer Grange* (No. 6834) and *Ludford Hall* (No. 4940). The cabside numberplate from the Grange also sold, separately from its matching nameplate, for £2650, and the Hall's smokebox numberplate, for £440.

> "Nameplates were the usual mixed bag, steam is holding up, enamels still strong and buoyant, posters good, and some new bidders on board."

Those of you with a quick mathematical mind will realise that leaves just two steam nameplates: *Galopin* from LNER A3 No. 60076 and *Dorney Court* from GWR Saint No. 2940 that fetched £3500 and £3300 respectively, with the Saint's cabside numberplate selling separately for £1800.

Non-selling steam nameplates under the hammer were *Woodbastwick Hall* (LNER B17 No. 61613), *King Edward VII* (GCR Class C5 No. 259/LNER No. 2896), and *John Bunyan* from 'Brit' No. 70003, although the last-named sold after close of play for £6500.

Victorian 'Terrier'

Away from the A-lister heavyweights, a steam nameplate that punched above its weight was *Rolvenden*, which went for £7900. This was from an A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T built by the LBSCR in 1872 as No. 71 *Wapping*, sold to Colonel Stephens' Kent & East Sussex Railway in 1905, where it was renamed and renumbered 5, and was withdrawn in 1932.

Leaping across the divide from Victorian technology to heritage modern traction, we find nameplate *Spartan* from Class 43 D844, which sold for £13,000. This diesel-hydraulic Bo-Bo was built by North British of Glasgow in March 1961 and saw service for just 10 years before withdrawal in October 1971.

Heading the smokebox category with a hammer price of £2800 was 6011 from GWR *King James I*, while the highest-priced steam cabside numberplate at £3500 was 5045 from GWR Castle class *Earl of Dudley*. The top electric locomotive cabside was E3031 from an English Electric November 1960-built WCML Class 83 that went for £2100, and remaining with heritage modern traction, a worksplate from English Electric 1968-built D432/50032 *Courageous* sold for £3400.

Totem platform signs kept auctioneer Simon Turner busy, with the gold medal going to BR(NE) Scarborough Central (£5000), the silver to the Scottish Region's Arrochar and Tarbet (£4800), and bronze to BR(E) Tottenham, which made £4700. Not far behind this leading trio were a second Scottish Region representative, Tyndrum Upper, and the first Western Region example, Betws-y-Coed, at £4500 and £4400.

On a similar theme, a BR(M) Kentish Town West Station direction sign fetched £2900, LMS hawkeye Peak Forest £2200, a London Underground ticket office sign Turnpike Lane made £2,000, and SR target sign Ventnor £1800.

Moving on to signalling, we arrive at a BR(S) Tunbridge Wells West B signalbox enamel nameboard that went for £3700, while a north Cornwall line Petrockstow-Hatherleigh single line tablet achieved £2000.

On July 21, a day after the main auction, Simon held a supplementary sale of general railwayana, bringing the total number of lots over the two days to exactly 1000. Leading this Part II were a painting by Don Breckon of GWR 2-6-2T No. 4410 heading a mixed train over Dartmoor that went for £3100, and a circa 1878 West Lancashire Railway 12in dial clock that sold for £1900. Prices quoted for the two days exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

"Pretty amazed overall," said Simon as he assessed the two days of activity. "Nameplates were the usual mixed bag, steam is holding up, enamels still strong and buoyant, posters good, and some new bidders on board."

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Name and worksplates kept on their toes at Talisman's sale

BIG Four-era name and worksplates made the running in Talisman's saleroom sale at Newark on July 13, although a piece of history from a Deltic diesel ensured heritage modern traction at least got a foot in the door and totem platform signs made their customary bid for a place at the top table.

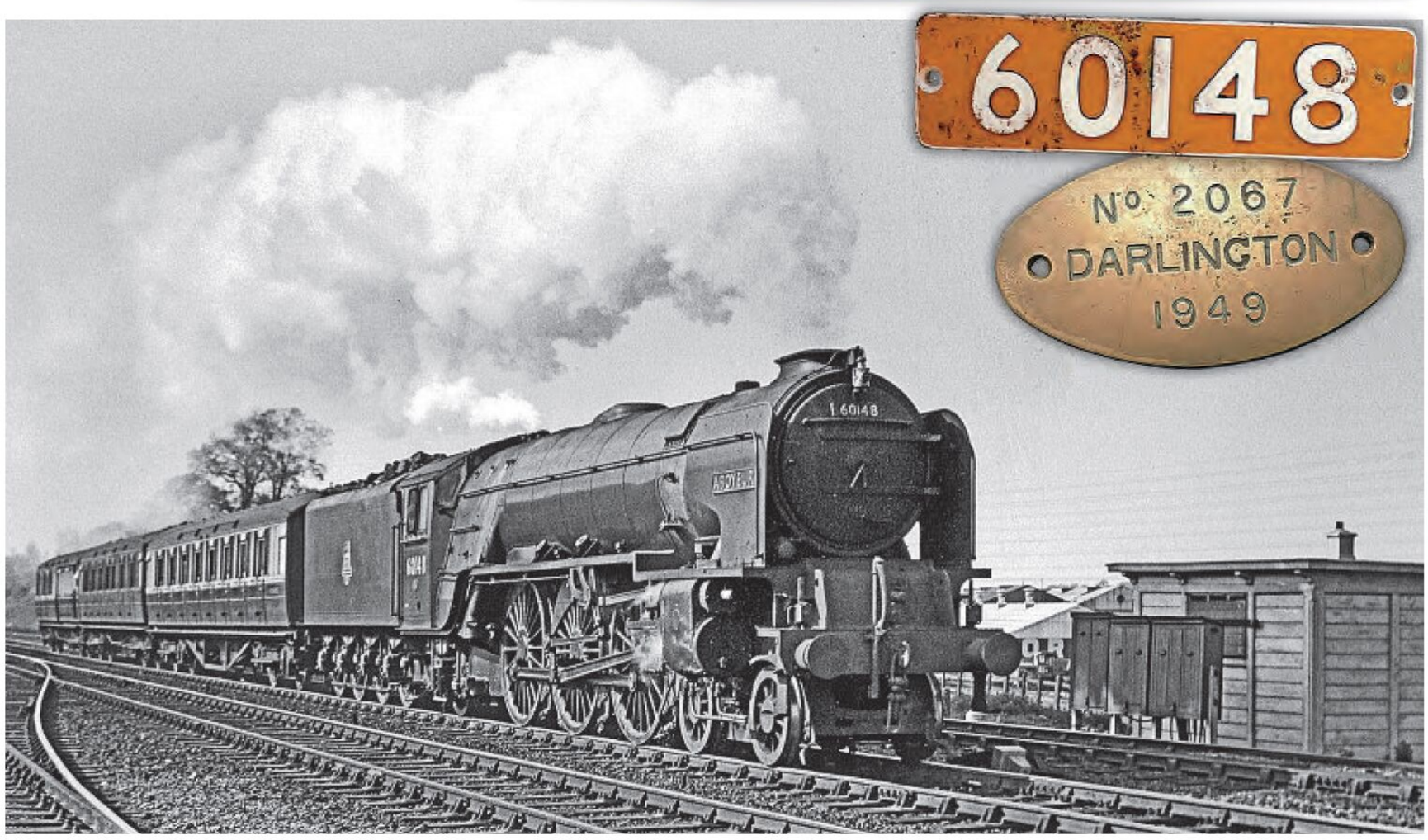
Heading the nameplate contenders was *Shirenewton Hall* from GWR No. 4967, which went under the hammer for £4400, followed by one of its cabside numberplates for £800, its smokebox numberplate for £560, and its pair of whistles for £380, while within touching distance was *Hogue* from LMS Jubilee No. 45683 that went for £4300.

The LNER then got in the act with *Blair Athol* from A3 No. 60058, although the plate's £4000 was trumped by one of its own Doncaster 1925 worksplates that sold for £4400 and also its smokebox numberplate (£4200). A second LNER nameplate, *Sir Charles Newton* from A4 class No. 60005, failed to find a new home, but one of its worksplates made amends when it sold for £4000. Other unsold nameplates were *Neil Gow* from A3 No. 60082 and *Tobago* from Jubilee No. 45635.

Still with the LNER, albeit with BR involvement, were one of the Darlington 1949 worksplates (works No. 2067) and the smokebox numberplate from Peppercorn-designed, BR-built, A1 class No. 60148 *Aboyeur* that went for £2300 and £600 respectively, while the chime whistle from Britannia No. 70043 *Lord Kitchener* sold for £1400. Before moving from locomotive memorabilia, a driver's master control unit from the cab of a Class 55 Deltic diesel caught the eye when it went under the hammer for £3100.

A GWR cast iron nameboard from Newton Abbot East signalbox sold for £2700, and station totem signs peaked at £2300 for BR(E) Harwich Town, behind which came BR(M) duo Gresley – surely a natural for a railwayana collection – and Hucknall Central, each at £1950.

BR(NE) doorplate enamel sign 'Parcels and left luggage' was a category winner at £2200, and so too a Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway permanent way handlamp (£2100), and a Northumberland poster by Tom Purvis (1888-1959) featuring Bamburgh Castle issued by the LNER in 1934 that went for £1700. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).



LNER-designed and BR-built Peppercorn A1 class Pacific No. 60148 *Aboyeur* near Little Ponton, on the ECML two miles south of Grantham, with a short train on May 11, 1953. Its smokebox numberplate and one if its 1949 Darlington worksplates (illustrated) sold at a Talisman Railwayana auction on July 13. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ ROY VINCENT

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **September 7**
  Great Central Railwayana
- **September 19/20**
  Great Central Railwayana (Bloxham-style auction)
- **September 21**
  Thirsk Railwayana

Positive reaction to railway negatives

BLACK-AND-WHITE negatives of GWR, LMS and Standard locomotives photographed mostly in the 1950s dominated the realisation list in the Paperchase quarterly auction held by Brian Moakes on July 14-30.

Top of the tree were 70 negatives of former LMS engines at a number of locations, including Birmingham, Carlisle, Derby, Hereford and Leeds, which fetched £410, followed by 200 negatives of ex-GWR locomotives in South Wales that were sold in two lots at £360 each.

At £330 came 100 negatives, again of former GWR engines but also including BR Standards, in the Cardiff area. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12½%.

No. 6024 is king of the track

A 7¼IN gauge model of GWR No. 6024 *King Edward I* that took a Formula 1 engineer 10 years to build sold for £40,000 at an auction held by Harper Field of Stonehouse, near Stroud, on July 11. The live steam model, measuring 8ft 7in long and only recently completed, was built to exhibition standard. It went under the hammer to make space and funds available for another model to be constructed.

Other live steam exhibition standard models in the auction included 3½in gauge LMS 'Black Five' duo Nos. 45395 (£3600) and 44767 (£3000), GWR 2-6-2T No. 6100 built in 5in gauge (£3500), and a 3½in gauge Highland Railway 2-2-2, which went for £1800. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 20% (+ VAT).

➜ A WRENN OO-gauge model of streamlined LMS Princess Coronation Pacific No. 6228 *Duchess of Rutland*, believed to be one of only 100 produced, was the top seller in a Vectis model train auction on July 25 with a realisation of £680, excluding buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

Jubilees and early GWR boost Great Central

TWO LMS Jubilee nameplates are among the latest additions to the Great Central quarterly mainstream auction on September 7. As reported in last month's column, early consignments included GWR, SR and BR Standard Pacific representatives, and these have now been joined by *Queensland* from No. 45566 and *Barham* from stablemate No. 45653.

The former was built by North British of Glasgow in August 1934 and withdrawn from Leeds Holbeck (55A) in November 1962, while No. 45653 was outshopped by Crewe in January 1935 and taken out of service in April 1965 when allocated to the Manchester shed of Newton Heath (9D).

It was named after Charles Middleton (1726-1813), the first Baron Barham, who achieved the rank of First Lord of the Admiralty and was also an MP.

Smokebox numberplates include 4090 from GWR *Dorchester Castle*, and among the GWR cabside numberplates are 7911, 1287 and 2667. The first of this trio is from *Lady Margaret Hall*, one of whose nameplates was, as reported last month, among the early declared GWR runners, while the other two are both from the pre-Grouping era.

Great Central auctioneer Mike Soden said No. 1287 was believed to be the oldest-surviving GWR cabside. It is from a member of the 'Buffalo' class, built at Swindon as an 0-6-0T in January 1878 (works No. 722), that was subsequently rebuilt with pannier tanks. It was withdrawn in September 1939, reinstated the same month, and withdrawn a second time in April 1946, but instead of being scrapped was used as a stationary boiler at Newbury and Leamington, finally being cut up in October 1953, aged 75.

No. 2667 is another old-timer, albeit from the Edwardian rather than Victorian era. It was outshopped by Swindon (works No. 1955) in September 1902 as a member of the 81-strong 'Aberdare' class of 2-6-0s which worked mainly coal trains from Aberdare to Swindon Works. BR inherited 12 of these locomotives, and No. 2667 was the last to be withdrawn, from Pontypool Road (86G) in October 1949.

A contrast to this duo of veterans is a 1950 Darlington worksplate (works No. 2106) from LNER-designed and BR-built No. 61404, one of the very last of the 410 Edward Thompson B1 class 4-6-0s to enter traffic, in May of that year. These mixed-traffic engines were underrated by us steam era trainspotters but were generally well-received by footplate crews and not unfamiliar on named expresses; indeed, I logged No. 61254 at Ilford on July 1, 1961 – well into the diesel era – on the flagship Liverpool Street to Norwich 'Broadsman' express.

Another mention goes to the LNER with a collection of four enamel shedplates that were fixed in the locomotive cabs. They were St Margaret's, Kirkby Stephen, Doncaster and March, but because these plates were a uniform length of 9¼in, the first was abbreviated to St. Mrgts and the second to K. Stephen. On Nationalisation, these depots were coded 64A, 51H, 36A and 31B.

The auction also includes a Midland Railway director's silver ticket in the name of Mr Hudson. This influential gentleman was George Hudson, who in May 1844 became the company's first chairman and was known as 'the railway king.'

An auction debutant is BR(W) station totem sign Blaina, which was opened by the Monmouthshire Railway & Canal Co on the Aberbeeg-Nantyglo route in December 1850 and closed to passengers in April 1962. Others in the category are BR(S) pair Ilfracombe and Devonport Kings Road, a SR target is Waterloo, and an Exeter (St David's) station direction sign will also be going under the hammer. The auction is live online and starts at 10am.

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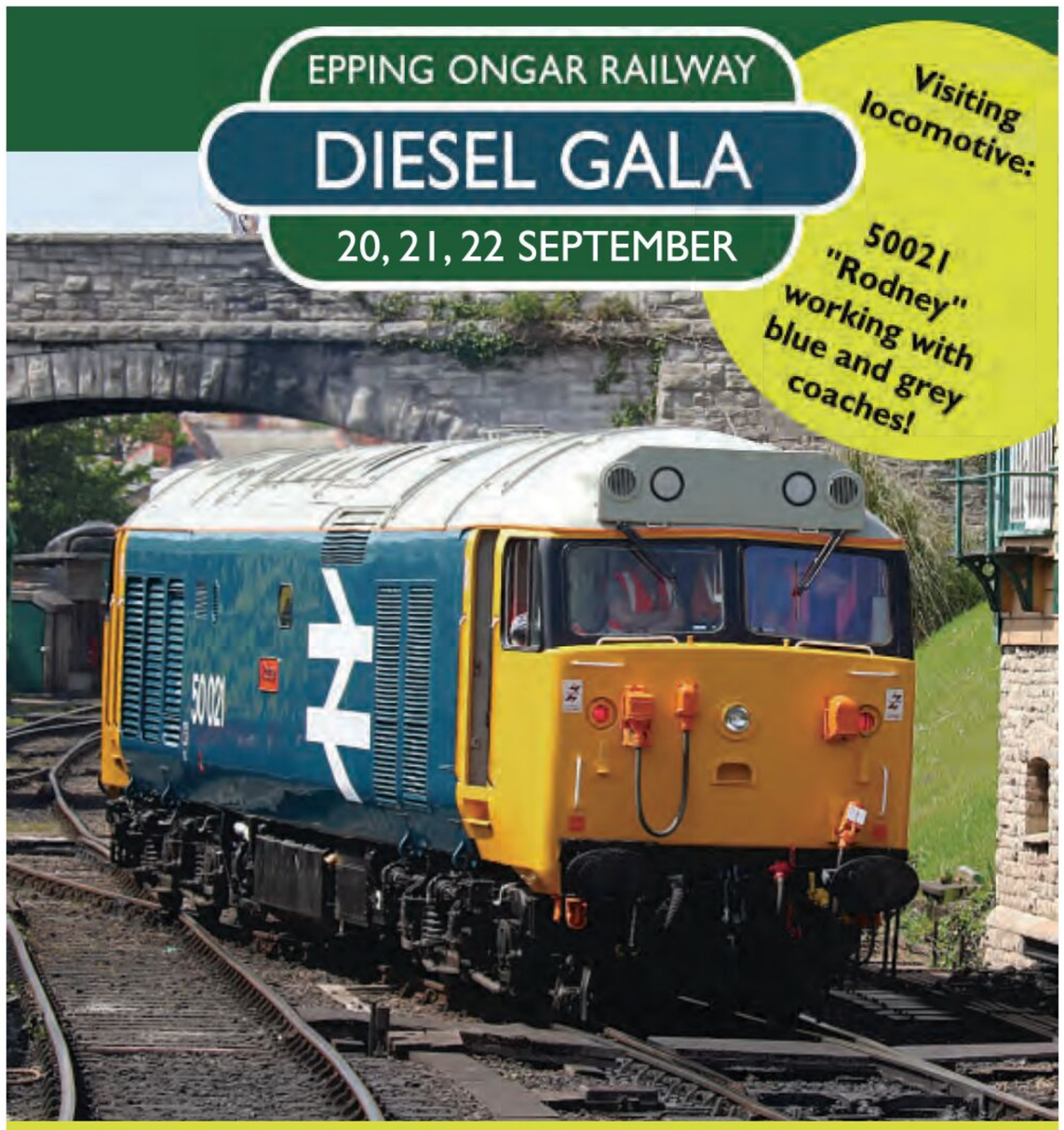

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FROM GREAT WESTERN TO EASTERN REGION!

THE ULTIMATE SUMMER HOLIDAY FOR A NEW BUILD?

The debuts of two new standard gauge steam locomotives continues to be a definitive highlight of 2024. We have just seen Brighton H2 Atlantic haul its first passenger trains on the Bluebell Railway, as reported in Headline News paged 6/7, while GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* has similarly delighted the crowds during summer visits to two of the UK's top seaside heritage lines on opposite sides of the coast, reports **Robin Jones.**

Those who visited the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's hugely-successful Cotswold Festival of Steam on May 25-27 will have been enthralled by the splendid traffic debut of GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880, the 81st member of its class.

Its appearance followed a series of false starts in the final stages of the 26-year new-build project when the need for a series of adjustments led to the cancellation of planned visits to heritage lines. However, most people who saw it in action might agree that its performance at Toddington was well worth the wait, as it fills in a major gap in the Great Western heritage fleet.

Next stop, the West Somerset Railway – where No. 6880 was booked for the entirety of July to run over Britain's longest standard gauged heritage line. It hauled services for a few days after it arrived but, as reported last issue, a gasket behind the superheater header failed and it ended up being shunted into Minehead shed for remedial work, missing the line's week of celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of its westernmost sectionbeing opened, as featured last issue.

A disappointment for many who had been eager to see the Grange in action, nonetheless it ended its loan period on a high. The railway staged a quadruple 4-6-0s Grange, Manor and Hall mini gala over July 27/28, also featuring GWR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* on loan for the season from the Severn Valley Railway, WR No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* making its final appearance before returning to the Great Central Railway, and home-based No. 7828 *Odney Manor.*

The crowd-pulling event saw 1481 passengers over the two days; an increase of 33% over the average figures for a standard weekend on the line.

Betton Grange ran very well during the weekend, including double-heading a 10-coach train with the Hall.

After the event, No. 6880 would continue to make the most of the recent glorious summer sunshine when it swapped the coast of the Bristol Channel for one facing the North Sea to begin a three-month loan period at the North Norfolk Railway.

Blue skies, summer temperatures and an inviting beach... whatever more might you want to complete the perfect picture than a new GWR locomotive heading past Kerr Moor towards Blue Anchor station on July 28? DON BISHOP

Betton Grange **is turned at Minehead station on July 27 during the Grange, Manor and Hall mini gala.**
QUENTIN MCGUINNESS

Heading back to Minehead, ***Betton Grange*** **passes through Blue Anchor station on July 28.**
QUENTIN MCGUINNESS

GWR 4-6-0s Nos. 6880 ***Betton Grange*** **and 6990** ***Witherslack Hall*** **double-heading an evening service into Blue Anchor on July 27.** MIKE PINN/WSR

"The event proved a crowd-puller, with 1481 passengers over the two days; an increase of 33% over the average figures for standard weekend on the line."

Betton Grange **pulls into Washford station on July 27.**
MIKE LANNING

Above: No. 6880 ***Betton Grange*** **and No. 7812** ***Erlestoke Manor*** **(rear, left) at Minehead station on July 25.** LAURA STANDERWICK

Left: ***Betton Grange*** **arriving at Bishops Lydeard on July 27.** LAURA STANDERWICK

***Betton Grange* runs round its afternoon service train at Sheringham on August 11.** ROBIN JONES

Home from home at Holt: The GWR planted rows of pine trees as a backdrop to many of its country stations, and the same scenario greeted GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* at Holt station on the North Norfolk Railway, where it is seen running round its service train on August 11. ROBIN JONES

Success in the Sheringham sunshine

After received some attention to the three-row superheater element at Weybourne shed, No. 6880 was tested and entered traffic on the North Norfolk Railway.

The Poppy Line's recently-appointed general manager, Graham Hukins, said: "*Betton Grange* has performed very well. The locomotive has attracted considerable admiration from passengers and has been popular with loco crews and other volunteers.

"Trains have been very well-loaded, and we are looking forward to No. 6880 headlining several of our late-summer and autumn events, as well as working regularly as part of our fleet for the next couple of months."

After were closed for press, No. 6880 was due to take part in the line's nine-day Festival on Rails, from Saturday, August 24 to Sunday, September 1, joining the other four visiting locomotives brought in to help with its popular holiday services alongside the resident working fleet.

The festival kicked off with a three-day gala across the August bank holiday, with six locomotives rostered for an intensive service including the NNR's unique LNER teak-bodied 'Quad Art' set which celebrates its centenary this year, plus a set of 1950s commuter carriages.

From Tuesday, August 27 until Sunday, September 1, four locomotives were scheduled to run each day with selected double-headers.

Two of the visiting engines originally worked in Wales: GWR 2-8-0T No. 4277 *Hercules*, on loan from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, was built in 1920 to haul heavy coal trains in the Welsh valleys; while Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3844 of 1956 No. 22 worked for the National Coal Board at Graig Merthyr Colliery, near Swansea.

Sister No. 18, now owned by Locomotive Maintenance Services of Loughborough, was built to the same design in 1953 but was shipped to Scotland and spent most of it working life on the East Fife Colliery network.

The final visitor, Class 25 D7659, continues the Great British theme and was the final locomotive built by Beyer Peacock at Gorton Works in Manchester. During a 20-year working life with BR, D7659 worked mainly in the Midlands and North West, but also saw service in Wales and Scotland, as well as hauling some summer holiday specials to Norwich in the 1970s.

Home-based locomotives to feature in the festival are scheduled to include the line's smallest locomotive, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 of 1938 *Wissington* (picture, page 47), and Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway 7F 2-8-0 No. 53808. And provided repairs are completed it time, it is hoped to run WD Austerity 2-10-0 No. 90775 *The Royal Norfolk Regiment*, which was built in 1943 at the North British Locomotive Company's Hyde Park Works in Springburn, Glasgow. As the third of a first of 100 and originally numbered 3652, it is believed that it was painted in MoD green. Sent for service in Egypt, in October 1945 the British military authorities there declared that the 16 2-10-0s in store were surplus to requirements and sent them all to war-ravaged Greece for use by Hellenic State Railways, which renumbered 3652 as 951.

It was repatriated in August 1984, arriving back in the UK at Ipswich Docks on board the Greek vessel *Empress*. Before departing from Greece, many worn parts had been interchanged with good (or better) ones from the other 'scrap' locomotives to ensure that restoration in the UK would be fairly straightforward.

The locomotive entered traffic at the Mid-Hants Railway in early 1988 as BR No. 90775, following on from original BR number series, the last one of which was No. 90774. It was repainted in 1989, this time into Longmoor Military Railway-style Railway Operating Division red and blue livery as WD601 *Sturdee*.

Sold in 1992 to the Essex Locomotive Society, it was transferred it to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and again painted in BR black as No. 90775, but this time with British Railways in full on the tender sides. There, it starred in two episodes of the popular ITV drama Heartbeat.

After a further overhaul, it departed from the NYMR in 2002 and spent a year at the Great Central Railway before moving to the NNR in June 2023. After being offered for sale, a generous benefactor enabled its purchase in 2006 for future use on the line.

Class 37 D6732 – representative of a type that once was a common sight on services from London to King's Lynn and Norwich – will complete the planned line-up.

Graham said: "With such a fantastic variety of engines representing railway history from the length and breadth of Great Britain here this summer, we felt we really ought to show them off, and this week-long event allows us to create a different spectacle each day."

The railway's standard services will run on most days between April and October. Details can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk

***Betton Grange* heads a train from Sheringham to Holt on the North Norfolk Railway on August 8.** PAUL LAWRENCE

Betton Grange **(left) rubs shoulders with fellow GWR visitor 2-8-0T No. 4277 *Hercules* from another magnificent seaside heritage line, the Dartmouth Steam Railway.** STEVE ALLEN

Recalling the first decade of the Granges

Betton Grange is rostered to star in another special event on the Poppy Line, the Steam Back to the Forties weekend on September 21/22, which will feature a wide range of activities on and off the tracks that recall the atmosphere of the wartime decade. All three stations will be taken over by live music, classic vehicles, vintage trade stands, historical displays and wartime fashions.

A half-hourly train service will operate between Sheringham and Holt, with rover tickets allowing passengers to hop on and off all day to travel behind the five steam locomotives scheduled to be in action.

Representative of a class which appeared in the years building up to the Second World War, No. 6880 is certainly an appropriate choice as the mixed traffic class of 80 were built between 1936 and 1939 at Swindon Works to replace the 43XX 2-6-0s. Indeed, several Granges used reconditioned parts from that class thanks to George Jackson Churchward's parts standardisation policy – which has also facilitated the creation of the 81st Grange over the past 26 years.

A third locomotive with a history reflecting the gala period is No. 18, representative of a type developed to be built cheaply during the war, although it was built in 1954.

Carriages in service will include the 'Quad Art' articulated set built in the 1920s.

Visitors boarding at Sheringham will be able to experience the 'Blitz spirit' of the Home Front, enjoying live recreations of favourites from the wireless and discovering how enterprising housewives stretched their rations with make do and mend demonstrations and live cooking displays using authentic Ministry of Food recipes.

From Sheringham, visitors can enjoy unlimited travel tickets, hopping onto one of the line's fleet of historic steam trains not unlike those that transported soldiers, evacuees and workers and carried vital supplies, to head down the line to Weybourne and Holt stations. A demonstration wartime goods train will also feature in the busy timetable for the weekend, while vintage buses will run to Holt to supplement the train service.

Weybourne station will host further historical displays, allowing visitors to join in with Royal Engineer Bomb Disposal training, helping the war effort on the home front!

A variety of traditional fete games – including beat the buzzer, tin can alley, hoopla and more – will be on offer, and there will also be a chance to brush up on moves with dance classes and live music. Visitors can take a trip to the NAFFI and get their rations or use the shoe-shining stand being run by the railway's Youth Development Club.

The main exhibition site will be adjacent to Holt station, where more than 80 military vehicles, a full-sized replica Spitfire and an array of vintage cars will be on show. Historical displays and talks throughout the day will include military camps, Scout camps and games, and the Women's Land Army, and there will be working horse demonstrations and a display of tractors and agricultural implements that were vital in the era.

Music familiar from the period will be performed by The Vibettes, The Three Chordettes, the Skyliner Big Band and Sarah Mai among a line-up on the main stage which sees performances from 10am to 4pm on both days. The exhibition field will house a wide range of trade stalls selling vintage clothing, jewellery, accessories, ephemera and homewares, as well as food and drinks.

The North Norfolk Railway's current western terminus of Holt was originally designed as a stop-gap in lieu of the realisation of long-term hopes that one day the heritage line might be able to extend into the town of the same name nearby, which lost its own station in 1964. In the meantime, it has blossomed into a multi-faceted attraction in its own right. On view is the interior of the William Marriott Museum in today's station's goods shed, operated by the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society on days when train services are running. ROBIN JONES

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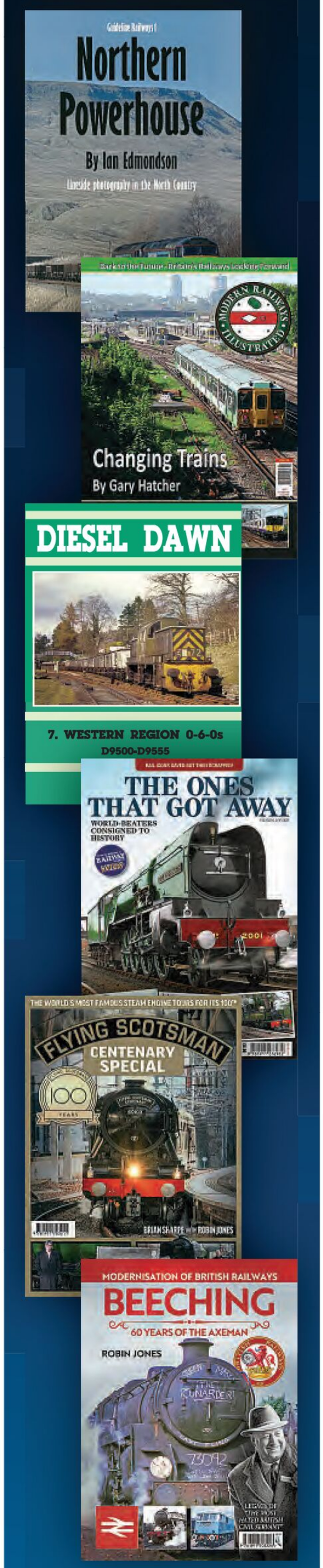

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On to the Autumn Showcase

Betton Grange will be among seven locomotives and a DMU in operation during the Poppy Line's Autumn Showcase weekend of October 5/6.

Also likely to run during the event will be *Hercules*, Austerity 0-6-0STs No. 18 and No. 22, WD No. 90775, Class 31 D5631, Class 37 D6732 and the Waterman Railway Heritage Trust's Class 25 D7659.

In service will be the railway's train of unique four and six-wheeled carriages dating from Victorian times and the 'Quad Art' set. Real ale will be available on selected trains from either the line's Gresley 1930s Art Deco buffet car or its Mk. 1 bar car.

At Holt station, visitors will be able to visit Reedham Junction signalbox and see the progress on the restoration and creation of an interactive signalling experience.

After its visit to the NNR, agreement in principle had been reached for No. 6800 to visit other heritage lines later this year and next.

The new Grange will continue to be a monument to the dedication and perseverance of the society whose members defied haved many odds to build it for the greater benefit of the heritage movement as a whole.

Betton Grange **takes on water at Holt before heading its service train back to Sheringham. It is said that about half the passengers on the North Norfolk Railway choose to board at this station to the train to the coast, as it is conveniently located next to the main A148 between King's Lynn and Cromer, has parking, and avoids busy high summer periods in Sheringham.** ROBIN JONES

The classic Colman's mustard van immaculately preserved next to the museum at Holt Station. Colman's was formerly based at Carrow, where it produced mustard for 160 years. ROBIN JONES

Now for a tender of its own!

The last chapter in this new-build story will be the completion of the building of an authentic tender to run with No. 6880, as highligted in the advertisement opposite.

None of Charles B Collett's original 3500 gallon tenders have survived and as previously reported, No. 6880 has run this year with the 4000-gallon one hired from WR 4-6-0 No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor,* which is undergoing overhaul. The 6880 Betton Grange Society is running an appeal to build a new tenderfor the Grange, one which would be suitable for use on the main line if current aspirations are realised. So far, around £40000 of the estimated £190,000 needed to build it has been raised.

The tender build continues at Tyseley Locomotive Works with regular working parties. Work is currently focused on cleaning the tender frames. The wheelsets from GWR 4-6-0 No. 5952 *Cogan Hall*'s tender will be reprofiled for use in the new Collett tender.

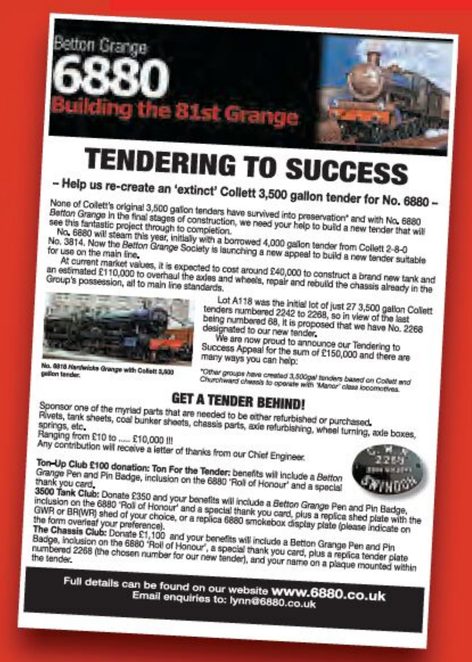
It is hoped to have the tender completed within two years.

Supporters are invited to sponsor one of many parts that are needed to be either refurbished or purchased – rivets, tank sheets, coal bunker sheets, chassis parts, axle refurbishing, wheel turning, axle boxes and springs – with prices ranging from £10 to £10,000.

For more information, visit www.6880.co.uk or email enquiries@6880.co.uk HR

No. 6880 ***Betton Grange*** **departs from Sheringham for Weybourne and then Holt on a sunny August 11 afternoon.** ROBIN JONES

We built the 'Grange'... ... now to build a tender!


Betton Grange
6880
Building the 81st Grange

TENDERING TO SUCCESS

– Help us re-create an 'extinct' Collett 3,500 gallon tender for No. 6880 –

None of Collett's original 3,500 gallon tenders have survived into preservation* and with No. 6880 *Betton Grange* in the final stages of construction, we need your help to build a new tender that will see this fantastic project through to completion.

No. 6880 will steam this year, initially with a borrowed 4,000 gallon tender from Collett 2-8-0 No. 3814. Now the *Betton Grange* Society is launching a new appeal to build a new tender suitable for use on the main line.

At current market values, it is expected to cost around £40,000 to construct a brand new tank and an estimated £110,000 to overhaul the axles and wheels, repair and rebuild the chassis already in the Group's possession, all to main line standards.

No. 6818 Hardwicke Grange with Collett 3,500 gallon tender.

Lot A118 was the initial lot of just 27 3,500 gallon Collett tenders numbered 2242 to 2268, so in view of the last being numbered 68, it is proposed that we have No. 2268 designated to our new tender.

We are now proud to announce our Tendering to Success Appeal for the sum of £150,000 and there are many ways you can help:

*Other groups have created 3,500gal tenders based on Collett and Churchward chassis to operate with 'Manor' class locomotives.

GET A TENDER BEHIND!

Sponsor one of the myriad parts that are needed to be either refurbished or purchased. Rivets, tank sheets, coal bunker sheets, chassis parts, axle refurbishing, wheel turning, axle boxes, springs, etc.

Ranging from £10 to ..... £10,000 !!!

Any contribution will receive a letter of thanks from our Chief Engineer.

Ton-Up Club £100 donation: Ton For the Tender: benefits will include a *Betton Grange* Pen and Pin Badge, inclusion on the 6880 'Roll of Honour' and a special thank you card.

3500 Tank Club: Donate £350 and your benefits will include a *Betton Grange* Pen and Pin Badge, inclusion on the 6880 'Roll of Honour' and a special thank you card, plus a replica shed plate with the GWR or BR(WR) shed of your choice, or a replica 6880 smokebox display plate (please indicate on the form overleaf your preference).

The Chassis Club: Donate £1,100 and your benefits will include a Betton Grange Pen and Pin Badge, inclusion on the 6880 'Roll of Honour', a special thank you card, plus a replica tender plate numbered 2268 (the chosen number for our new tender), and your name on a plaque mounted within the tender.

Full details can be found on our website www.6880.co.uk
Email enquiries to: lynn@6880.co.uk

No. 6880 *Betton Grange* is now a runner – the 81st member of C.B. Collett's 'Grange' Class for the GWR – after all 80 original locomotives were scrapped – the last ones withdrawn in December 1965, we now have a brand new 'Engineman's Engine' as footplate crews often referred to them.

However, the tender you see running behind No. 6880 is borrowed, from No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor* (with grateful thanks to them), so we need one of our own.

Many 'Granges' ran with hand-me-down Churchward 3,500 gallon tenders, or the bigger, boxier Collett 4,000 gallon versions. Only 27 new Collett 3,500 gallon tenders were built at Swindon, especially for the 'Granges', and it is this type that we favour to run with the new 'Grange'.

But none of those survive, so just like the engine, we are going to build a working replica!

The tenders were numbered 2242 to 2268, with the latter already selected as the number that will be applied to the new tender when it is completed.

It is estimated that we will need to raise £200,000 to complete the task, and so far we have around £40,000 of that secure.

This will allow us to overhaul the chassis that is already in our possession, including turning all six wheels (which we also have) and construction of a new tender tank and body, along with all of the running gear and equipment – all built to main line standards.

We launched our 'Tendering to Success' appeal three years ago (which is still open), and now we have some new initiatives. We hope you will be able to support us with one of them;

1 A Grand Ol' Shovelful

We are looking for 27 people to 'adopt' one of the original 'Grange' tender numbers by agreeing to pay £50 per month for 20 months, or paying £1,000 in one go.

Benefits will include a footplate ride on No. 6880 *Betton Grange*, the opportunity to place a shovelful of coal into the firebox, a fireman's breakfast cooked on the shovel and others, including a special framed certificate.

2 Spring into Action!

Be among the first to sponsor parts for the new tender.

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No. 6818 *Hardwicke Grange* with Collett 3,500 gallon tender.

On July 27, the day's penultimate service saw all seven of the event's 'Teddy Bears' (comprising six working and one dead-in-train) come together for a septuple-headed eight-coach departure from Duffield. The convoy is seen approaching Nether Lane and the site of the former Hazelwood station.

CELEBRATING THE 'TEDDY BEARS': BR'S CLASS 14 TURNS 60

Their time in service with British Railways was relatively brief, but this class of diesel-hydraulic has fostered a devout heritage era following. Ten years after the half-century gala in Lancashire, the Diamond Jubilee celebrations headed for Derbyshire. **Owen Hayward** spoke to Chris Baily, who masterminded both events, and reports in words and pictures.

"When the Class 14s 50th anniversary event at the East Lancashire Railway finished in July 2014, I said I'd never do it again. But what was meant to be a simple send-off for D9537 *Eric* grew and became something much bigger than we had initially considered."

Planning a gala on any railway is a challenge, but with something as special as the 60th anniversary of the Class 14 0-6-0 diesel-hydraulic locomotives, it is little wonder that its organiser and co-owner of classmates D9525 and D9537, Chris Baily, started work on this particular event two years ago.

The 2014 event to which he referred marked the class's half-centenary and was something of a record-setter, with 10 examples descending on Lancashire for a highly successful weekend of celebrations culminating in a service headed by nine locomotives (the 10th having unfortunately failed just a few miles into the event). Bowing out on a fanfare of two-tones, it is perhaps widely regarded by diesel enthusiasts as one of the best events of its type to take place in the heritage era – and to follow it up would be no simple feat.

However, as Chris mentioned, to follow up on that landmark gala was never the intention at the start, and that this year's July 25-28 14s@60 celebrations at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway came about somewhat by circumstance.

Second bite of the cherry

"*Eric* has been in service for 10 years now, but the engine in it was essentially thrown together with second-hand parts, so its time has come for the locomotive to be withdrawn for a full and proper overhaul," Chris explained. "This event really started off as being something of a send-off for it; we'd have a do for it before its final switch-off and then crack on with the work. Someone suggested we got a classmate in to keep it company, and the conversation just snowballed from there.

"At the time of the 50th, D9537 was based at the ELR, but with limited running opportunities there we relocated to the EVR permanently in 2019 following an initial

request for it to visit for an event. Suddenly, I find myself sitting down with the board and a proposal for another gala to celebrate the Class 14's 60th. Understandably, with an event of this scale and the high costs involved, they were hesitant at first and it took some persuading, but we worked through everything and got the okay, which started off two years of planning.

"At the start we had only planned for three visiting locomotives, and my aim was to look at ones that were not at the event a decade before. Of the final line-up, two were seen there, *Eric* and D9523. Both had valid reasons though, with *Eric*'s of course being its final runs before overhaul, while D9523 was the one that failed at the start of the golden anniversary celebration, so really it had unfinished business, and this was its second bite of the cherry."

The final line-up comprised an impressive seven locomotives, with five visitors travelling a combined total of more than 1600 miles to and from Derbyshire to appear.

D9504 came from the furthest south, where it is based at the Kent & East Sussex Railway. This particular locomotive only returned to service there earlier this year following completion of its own overhaul there, working its first passenger services in four years as part of the KESR's April 12-14 diesel gala.

D9553 ventured away from the Caledonian Railway at Brechin as the furthest from the north. Not only that, but it was the one of the first days in public service for this particular

A trio of green 'Teddies' shuffle around Duffield on July 26. The Kent & East Sussex Railway's D9504 prepares to bank the 6.15pm departure, while Severn Valley-based D9551, having collected out-of-service Ecclesbourne resident D9525 from its position on static display, begins to run round to the head of the awaiting train.

'Teddy Bear' following completion of its own restoration that has lasted some 27 years. So fresh into traffic it was that the painting had only been completed about a week prior to the lorry arriving to collect it. Its addition to the line-up was fairly circumstantial too.

"During the planning, I happened to get talking to the owner of D9553 and asked whether it would likely be finished in time and whether it would be available to attend," Chris said. "He said yes to both, and so I once again sat down with the EVR board asking if we could stretch the budget to include it, highlighting the draw it would be, having not run for more than quarter of a century. Their reply – 'we'll make it work' – was a very welcome one."

The other visitors comprised D9551 from the Severn Valley and D9529 from the Nene Valley railways, while the EVR's second resident example, D9525, was on static display at Duffield each day, where it was towed dead-

The 1-in-27 gradient of the Ravenstor incline proves no obstacle the Kent & East Sussex Railway's D9504 as it propels a Class 122 railcar up towards the summit.

The maroon of Wensleydale-based D9523 makes it stand out from the natural green colours of its surroundings of Franker Brook as it approaches Shottle with a freight working on July 27.

in-train to and from at the start and end of each day.

It was hoped that this locomotive would also be part of the operational fleet for the event, with its own overhaul (brought about by a seized power unit) having made excellent progress following its purchase and arrival at Wirksworth in early 2022. Chris and the locomotive's other owners had the 14s@60 event in mind for its official relaunch anyway, even if it was ready to go before then; however, during testing in April, the engine was observed to be running slower and slower and was swiftly shut down. Subsequent investigations revealed that it had seized once again, meaning that it would have to sit the event out (something that seems to be a developing trend, perhaps).

There was one positive to this – an extra locomotive. D9523, based at the Wensleydale Railway, had not been part of the line-up at the time. Chris approached its owner in the hope of borrowing surplus parts or a spare engine to make D9525 operational for the event but was instead offered the locomotive... with transport costs covered!

Nene Valley Railway resident D9529 approaches Duffield with a freight working on July 26. The track here was recently completed, having been slewed over following a landslip last autumn, with the old formation just visible to the right of the locomotive.

Working one of its first passenger services in 27 years and only arriving on the EVR that morning, Caledonian Railway-based D9553 departs Wirksworth with the 2.12pm service to Duffield. Originally scheduled as a freight working, the set was changed to passenger stock to accommodate the high volume of visitors wanting to travel behind the newest operational example of the Class 14 roster. CHRIS GEE

It almost didn't happen

Perhaps one of the biggest risks of any event of this scale is road transport. As reported last issue, the Spa Valley Railway had to cancel its planned summer steam gala following a haulier's tractor unit not being available and delaying time-critical movements of locomotives between lines. With just a week to go before the event, suddenly Chris found he was in a similar situation.

"When I was told that the booked haulier for all the locomotive movements could no longer do the job because one of its tractor units was out of action, it was very nearly a case of game over for the whole event," he admitted. "Nothing was able to move, so there would have been no event.

"Thankfully, a phone call to Simon at Reid Freight Services brought about a solution that included a workaround for the need for a police escort on lorries with trailers above a certain length. It did add an unbudgeted extra cost to the event, with some locomotives turning up after it had started on Thursday and Friday, but at least we didn't need to cancel it – and in the end, we still washed our faces too. I must give a huge thanks to the team at Reid's for pulling out the stops to help us as they did."

The weekend's timetable drew on almost every resource the EVR had at its disposal. Two four-coach rakes (comprising all available operational passenger stock with one Mk. 1 RMB only entering service days beforehand) were supplemented by a freight set, the latter looking quite at home behind the fleet of 'Teddy Bears' which were built for such short-distance duties. Additionally, Class 122 railcar W55006 was in use both under its own power and as loco-hauled stock, shuttling up and down the 1-in-27 Ravenstor incline that once served the stone quarries and put the Class 14s operating it each day through their paces.

Locomotives could be found working solo and in tandem throughout, with Saturday being the true showstopper date that concluded in style. The 3.40pm departure from Wirksworth saw all eight carriages put together to form one set, which was worked to Duffield (to where the EVR has recently resumed services following completion of a track slew in the wake of a landslip last autumn) by resident Class 47 D1842, with Class 14s D9504, D9553 and D9537 on the rear. Upon arrival there, the remaining three operational locomotives, together with D9525 in tow, joined the service for a septuple-headed departure back to Wirksworth at 4.30pm – a spectacle that was just two locomotives short of that at the ELR a decade ago, but nonetheless just as noisy as locomotive crews celebrated with a fanfare of the fleet's tones at every opportunity.

The Saturday afternoon septuple spectacular approaches Wirksworth at the end of its convoy from Duffield. In order, the locomotives are D9523, D9529, D9551, D9525, D9504 *Jon Grimwood*, D9553 and D9537 *Eric*; the formation was just two short of the record set at the East Lancashire a decade beforehand.

Upon arrival at Wirksworth, six of the locomotives detached and positioned themselves ready for the final day, while *Eric* and D1842 returned to Duffield in top-and-tail formation for what would be D9537's last working before overhaul. Its final arrival at the EVR's main terminus was met with a run of detonators placed on the railhead on the approach to Platform 2. Following this, *Eric* ran light engine to the yard, where it was shut down for the final time.

"We will be carrying out a full rewire, as that is almost 60 years old too," Chris told me. "There's some corrosion to address, and we need to lift it to do the springs too. One of the first jobs though will be to swap the engines between it and D9525 so that we can get that locomotive into service while we investigate its own engine seizing. Once that's repaired, we will swap them back over and overhaul *Eric*'s one properly.

"I'm estimating about five years for the whole job to be completed; if it's done early, then great, but if it takes longer, so be it. You can never be certain on these things as you never know what you will find until you start taking it all apart."

Successful weekend

Overall, the event far exceeded the EVR's expectations. More than 1000 passengers travelled on the railway over the four days, and amid that were a healthy number who arrived on an Inter-City/Locomotive Services Group railtour hauled by Class 45 No. 45118 from Bristol Temple Meads that Chris, an LSG employee, had pitched to the firm's MD as an idea to support the gala further.

Neil Ferguson-Leigh, a director of the EVR's operating company Wyvern Rail, said: "We were all delighted with how the Class 14 event went, despite coming very close to cancelling it when one of our hauliers let us down at very short notice.

"We received more than 1000 visitors, and this number was boosted by the Class 45-hauled excursion from Bristol to York, which deposited a large number of visitors when it stopped at Duffield.

"This is the first main line train to have stopped at Duffield, other than Matlock services, since 2011.

"Chris had undertaken a great deal of work in his own time and has been subject to considerable pressure, both through the railway and his professional life, in making this event happen.

"Without his dedication and determination, this event would not have succeeded, and I can only thank him for the very hard work he has put in.

"As an event, it was memorable and also received a great deal of interest from the locality and general visitors. The sight of seven locomotives arriving at Wirksworth was one to behold and the retirement of D9537, arriving at Wirksworth to the accompaniment of detonators, was again a memorable sight."

Chris added that in addition to the profit made, the event "has put the EVR on the map and showed to the heritage sector and enthusiasts the potential we have and just what we are capable of."

Will there be a similar occurrence for the 70th or even 75th anniversary? "Never say never," Chris added. "I've been saying no myself, but as soon as the event had finished, we all went out for a social do on the Sunday evening with ideas already being thrown about. We shall have to wait and see." HR

Having run for the first time in 27 years just a few weeks before, D9553 passes the stone cottage at Water Lane crossing shortly after departure from Duffield.

July 27, D9537 *Eric* was met by a sequence of detonators placed on the railhead for its final arrival into Wirksworth before it was shut down for the final time pending an extensive overhaul, which will include a full rewire and engine work.

New tools and old faces: Bachmann showcases autumn line-up

A NEW tool for an iconic class and some preserved identities were in the August 7 autumn catalogue announcement by Bachmann.

Leading the charge was an all-new N gauge tooling suite for the LNER Gresley V2s, the first time that the manufacturer has tackled this particular 2-6-2 tender locomotive in two decades.

Commonly referred to as 'the engines that won the war' because of their contribution to the World War Two effort, class pioneer No. 4771 *Green Arrow* entered traffic in 1936 and was named after the express goods services for which the type was designed.

That same locomotive is now part of the National Collection and is included in the first batch of retooled models as an exclusive for Locomotion Models.

The updated tools will include correct smokebox door and lamp iron configurations, along with a wealth of separately fitted details, metal buffers, fully decorated backhead and more. Tooling will cater for the three different tender patterns used by the class throughout its working life, as well as the variation of cylinder types. A coreless motor with flywheel will be mounted in a diecast metal chassis with separate metal bearings fitted to each driving wheel axle to act as pick-ups.

Bachmann's general range of models will start with an RRP of £219.95 for DC standard examples, while the LM exclusive of *Green Arrow* is set at the same price but with a £30 deposit payable; see locomotionmodels.com/exclusives for more information or to order.

Moving up to 009, the Ffestiniog Railway range expands further with the addition of Tan-y-Bwlch station house (RRP £49.95) and cottages (RRP £59.95), each available in either green or brown colour schemes as per the previously released range of FR-inspired structures.

Finally, the OO scale range adds a number of preserved identities to its roster, with WR 4-6-0 No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall* (which had previously been available as an exclusive but in Great Western livery) appearing in BR lined black as per its current appearance on the Epping Ongar Railway. The Swanage Railway'sCclass 121 'bubblecar' No. W55028 also appears in BR green with small yellow panel, again per its current preserved appearance.

The previously announced new-tool Class 08 and 09 shunters also saw a range of identities and liveries showcased, ranging from early BR schemes through to more recent corporate colours.

All is O-'K' with Rails' new Mogul

RAILS of Sheffield and Sonic Models have joined forces to produce the LBSCR K class in OO gauge.

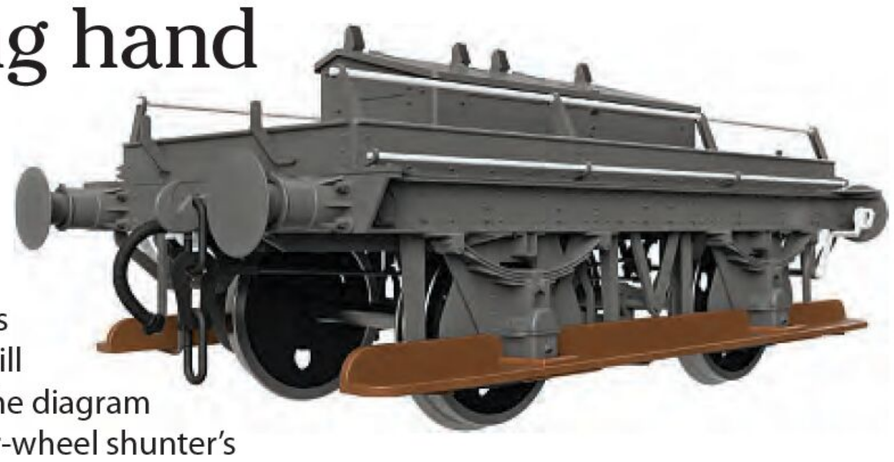
Introduced between 1913 and 1921, only 17 were ever fully built, with three being abandoned mid-construction owing to a decreased need for them following the end of World War One.

The project will comprehensively cover the full lifespan of these particular moguls, from their introduction by the LBSCR through the SR and finally BR, with tooling being designed to cater for the various differences and alterations applied to members of the class throughout those time periods.

The models will boast a heavy diecast metal firebox, boiler and smokebox to improve adhesion with engineering samples, bringing an assembled weight of 330g per locomotive. Detail variations will include dome covers, chimneys, tender designs, Westinghouse pumps and more.

Models are available exclusively via RoS, with prices starting at £179.95 for standard DC versions and the more extravagantly decorated SR versions priced at £189.95.

Dapol offers shunters a helping hand



ONCE a common sight in many of the GWR's goods yards, Dapol has announced it will be producing the diagram M3 and M4 four-wheel shunter's trucks in O gauge.

Both types lasted into BR, with 41 and 44 being built of the types respectively. These particular vehicles would travel about yards with locomotives, providing a vehicle on which the assisting shunter could easily travel with their required equipment to undertake their duties. In some cases, the extra distance when positioned in front of locomotives would afford drivers better sighting when approaching stabled stock.

Dapol's models will comprise a compensated die-cast chassis with prototypically correct spoked or disc wheels in brass bearing pockets, sprung buffers and instanter coupling, separately fitted fine details and more.

Twenty variants – including unnumbered examples for easy personalisation – will be produced in the first batch, with an RRP of £60 per wagon. Currently at an advanced CAD stage, delivery is forecast for the fourth quarter of 2025.

Send your model news to staff writer **Owen Hayward** on **OHayward@mortons.co.uk@mortons.co.uk**

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A CELEBRATION OF FIRSTS

ANNIVERSARIES AND MORE AT ANNUAL MANX TRANSPORT FESTIVAL

Every year the Isle of Man rail transport network hosts a week-long celebration incorporating all available traction. For 2024, the celebrations focused on anniversaries of the extensions to both the steam and electric railways – as well as the latest addition to the island's rail offerings. **Owen Hayward** reports.

The 2023 Transport Festival was truly something special, with locomotives from the steam railway travelling by road to revisit old haunts, trams on parade at Laxey, and opportunities to ride behind some of the rarer traction that can be found on the Snaefell Mountain line. Such was the extent of the celebrations that the festival lasted a whole week! For 2024, a sense of normality returned with its slightly shorter format, commencing on July 30 and lasting until August 4.

That was not to say that this year's event was less special, for while 2023 commemorated 130 years of the opening of the Manx Electric Railway to Laxey and the steam railway's 150th anniversary of services to Peel, this year there were further anniversaries celebrated on each – and the first trains in more than four decades along a newly-restored railway in Ramsey.

Queen's Pier debut

Officially opened in 1886 (though had been operating for a year beforehand), Ramsey Pier was intended as a landing stage for Steam Packet ships to pick up or disembark passengers at low tide. Construction included timbers of adequate strength to support a pier railway, although it was initially used by hand-propelled baggage carts; the first motorised passenger car did not arrive until 1937, although some photographic evidence suggests that horses were used for a time before then.

In 1970 the last ship departed the landing stage, but the pier continued to prove popular with tourists and remained open. However, as the abandoned boarding point fell into disrepair, the tramway was closed in 1981. Following continued deterioration, heavy vandalism and other structural concerns, the pier finally closed in 1991. The Friends of Ramsey Queen's Pier was formed in 1994

Beyer Peacock 2-4-0Ts No. 4 *Loch* (one of the locomotives built for the opening of the Port Erin line) and No. 13 *Kissack* ease the dining train away from a pause at Keristal on August 1. KARL HEATH

Celebrating the 125th anniversary of their introduction, the 'Winter Saloon' pairing of Nos. 20 and 21 started the day with a parallel run between Derby Castle and Groudle. DAVID WILLIAMS/IOMT

Derby Castle depot staff prepare to take 'Winter Saloon' motor car No. 20 out for the day during the 125th anniversary of the introduction of the design to the MER. CHARLOTTE WATTERSON/IOMT

to promote its retention and reinstatement, undertaking some remedial work before commissioning a study of the structure in 1999 which concluded that it was in better condition than previously thought, estimating that a full refurbishment would cost in the region of £1.2 million.

In 2012, a report by IOM Parliamentary body Tynwald recommended that the pier be restored in seven stages, but work never started, with the Queen's Pier Restoration Trust being handed a lease for the site in May 2016. Since then, work has commenced in earnest with a view to restoring the pier to as close as possible to its original design under modern legislation. Phase one saw the restoration of the covered entrance building, which has provided a base for the restoration and rebuild of the first three of the 55 pier bays, completed in 2020. Phase two is now focused on bays four to eight, which is nearing completion.

As part of the work, the tramway has been reinstated, with the original Hibberd 4wDM and 'toast rack' passenger car returned to the pier from the Jurby Transport Museum where they have normally resided since the closure of the line. Having just been awarded the necessary certification to allow trains to run, the pier's first services operated on August 4, with a bus connection ferrying visitors from the transport museum throughout the day.

A QPRT statement said: "August 4 saw us operating the train over the 70 metres of track we currently have restored. The train was non-stop for the first three hours and then we stopped for a performance by a ukelele group. Due to the train's popularity, and the queues, we were encouraged to run trains for another hour afterwards before the weather finally beat us.

"The generosity from our visitors was overwhelming, with our donation buckets containing £1515.15. A massive thank-you to everyone for your support. The train will be running every Sunday afternoon, unless we have other entertainment arranged on the pier."

Tramway anniversaries

As mentioned, the Manx Electric Railway celebrated its 130th anniversary of the opening of the line from Derby Castle to Groudle Glen in 2023. This year, celebrations centred on two further significant anniversaries, firstly the extension towards Laxey, which was completed and opened on July 28, 1894.

The current station at Laxey was not reached until 1896, the land it sits on having been owned by the church at the time, which refused to sell it to the tramway company. Instead, the original terminus was sited adjacent to where the tramcar sheds are on the opposite side of the viaduct, with passengers intending to visit Laxey and the wheel having to alight and walk down to and back up from the valley below.

Throughout the week, the MER ran a number of special excursions, including its popular early-morning parallel runs from Derby Castle to Groudle (which included G.F Milne-built cars Nos. 5 and 7, both also dating from 1894), motorman taster lessons, and the 'Crossover Crossbench' tour, which appealed to those looking to travel over some of the rarer rails of the network by visiting numerous sidings and using crossovers across the 17½-mile route that seldom (if ever!) see passenger traffic.

Another notable milestone was the 125th anniversary of both the Ramsey extension opening and the introduction of the MER's Winter Saloon trams. Also built by GF Milnes, these four motors, Nos. 19 to 22, were delivered for that very extension of the route in 1899.

Above: Ramsey's Queen's Pier ran its first services in more than 40 years using the original four-wheeled Hibberd locomotive and passenger car, both dating from 1937. LIAM MILLER/IOMT

Right: Manx Northern Railway No. 4 *Caledonia* pauses for water at Ballasalla on August 3 during a MNR-inspired photographic special to Port Erin. BARRY EDWARDS

They were larger in design than previous closed car trams, boasting a passenger capacity of 48. Despite their classification as 'Winter' vehicles, they often ran daily throughout the year. All four survive: No. 19 is currently being overhauled, and No. 22 is the only outlier of the quartet, having been heavily rebuilt after a fire at Derby Castle depot in 1992, with some enthusiasts considering it more a replica than original.

Both the MER and Snaefell Mountain Railway further offered rare traction to visitors, offering rides aboard the permanent way vehicles, including Wickham trollies Nos. 7442 and National Air Traffic Services (NATS) 3. As per the 2023 festival, Car 34 *Maria*, a diesel-electric Bo-Bo based on the scrapped SMR No. 7, could also be found on taster sessions and shuttles between Laxey and Dhoon Quarry.

The depots and sheds at Derby Castle and Laxey offered tours on select days, allowing for a behind-the-scenes look at some of the restoration work taking place on the historic fleet and a chance to spot some of the rarely-seen items, with many unique vehicles surviving thanks to the IOM Transport board rarely condemning vehicles for scrap.

Steaming ahead

Of course, it was not just the electric railways in the limelight – 2024 also marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the steam railway from Douglas to Port Erin, the stretch that survives still in use today.

On August 2, a plaque was unveiled at Castletown station commemorating the occasion and that the building here is the only original structure left on the railway from that year, remaining relatively untouched since that time.

Throughout the festival, the steam railway utilised its four operational locomotives – Beyer Peacock 2-4-0Ts Nos. 4, 11 and 13, along with Manx Northern Railway 0-6-0T No. 4 *Caledonia* – to full effect, with a photographic line-up at Port Erin on July 30, double-headed and banked services on August 1, and a MNR photography special across the line on August 3.

The latter saw *Caledonia* haul a short rake of some of the restored heritage vehicles to Port Erin, with stops for photography at specific locations along the way. Amid the consist was six-wheeled Cleminson coach No. 6, which was built in 1879 and, following withdrawal in the 1950s, was bought by an IOM Steam Railway supporter's association member in 1975. It was gradually restored over the ensuing years, returning to service in 2023 but normally found in the museum at Port Erin station.

Further rare haulage opportunities were presented at two stations on August 2, with Douglas station pilot *Ailsa* (a Hunslet 4wDM used on the London Underground Jubilee line extension) and Simplex No. 24 *Betsy* at Castletown each offering rides within station limits. Both the Laxey Mine and Groudle Glen railways also ran services on select days, with the latter closing proceedings on the Sunday with a gala that involved all of its operational locomotives pressed into service. HR

Beyer Peacock *No. 4 Loch* departs Port St Mary station in fine style sporting a headboard denoting the 150th anniversary of the opening of the route to Port Erin. DAVID ARCHER

On August 4, the Groudle Glen Railway brought out all of its operational locomotives – steam, diesel and electric – for a gala to round up the transport festival. The fleet is pictured at Sea Lion Rocks as the day drew to a close. GGR

Left: Rush hour on the promenade: Maggie, a Clydesdale breed born in 2015, brings heavily-laden 'toastrack' trailer No. 42 along the Douglas Bay Horse Tramway on August 3, the cruise ship tourists on the bus behind no doubt envious of the 'superior' transport delaying their onward journey. BARRY EDWARDS

Right: The MER's first motor car, unvestibuled saloon No. 1, remains in service to this day and fittingly holds a place in the Guinness Book of Records as being the oldest operational electric tramcar in the world, still operating on its original line. It was built in 1893. DAVE MARTIN/MER

Manx Electric and Snaefell Mountain railway permanent way vehicles line up at Laxey ahead of offering rides on the various routes. Left to right are Car 34 *Maria* and Wickham trolley No. 7442 (both MER) and Wickham-built NATS trolley No. 11730 (SMR). LIAM MILLER/IOMT

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Above: Wow factor: Inside the water tower which has been transformed into a visitor centre. JAMES CROSSLEY

Right: The Keighley station water tank house on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. SALLY CLIFFORD

HIGH WATER AT KEIGHLEY AND NEW VISITOR FACILITIES BELOW!

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's Grade II-listed water tower at Keighley station has embarkws on a new double life – with empty space beneath its tank converted into a new visitor centre, as **Sally Clifford** reports.

Since 1883 its imposing presence has flanked the end of Keighley's Platform 4. To this day, the Midland Railway water tower is doing its duty in keeping the locomotives on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway steaming along, and it is believed to be the only remaining structure of its kind still in action in the country.

A KWVR volunteer since 1966 and coordinator of external resources, David Pearson explained that the building, officially known as a water tank house, replaced the original which was demolished when the new station was built.

"It is a standard Midland Railway water tower. They came in various sizes; the one at Settle is probably the best known," he said, referring to the water tower at the Settle and Carlisle line which has been repurposed into a home.

"There were probably about eight water columns and cranes dotted around the station when I was a kid, and it would be filling these constantly. It was the only water tower between Leeds and Skipton and Bradford and Skipton."

Conveniently, the arrival of LMS Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41241 transporting visitors during the KWVR's Easter Express enabled the opportunity to see the water tower at work.

Refilling the boiler of the smallest locomotive in the line's fleet would take about 1350 gallons compared to the 5400 gallons required by USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 5820 *Big Jim*, the largest of the KWVR fleet.

Keighley assistant stationmaster James Crossley said that about 10,000 gallons of water can be used during gala days.

Considering the tower holds 30,000 gallons, there is plenty to keep the rolling stock on track. However, it is what is going on below the roof-top tank that is causing intrigue and interest as plans to transform the empty space into a visitor centre near completion. David said that the area was originally occupied by a steam pumping engine which was used to lift water up from the neighbouring River Worth. It is not known why the pump was removed, but its use would have become redundant following connection to the mains water supply.

The installation of a glass floor above the original well – a key feature of the water tower – from where the water was pumped adds viewing interest for visitors. Other works include a new raised floor allowing step-free access from the station platform and an access pathway to a new 'outbuilding' to house a heat exchange system being constructed at the Oxenhope end of the building. The water tank's level indicator has also been fixed and a new float valve fitted. Painting and electrical work were also part of the ambitious scheme, one of a range of projects underway at the KWVR. The work began last September and the water tower welcomed its first visitors over August 17/18.

James and Tom Marshall, the KWVR's publicity officer, have been researching the history of the Grade II-listed structure for the fully interactive space where wall projectors, photographs and artefacts will enable visitors to piece together the railway's past.

"It is going to be an interactive space, and it futureproofs it as well if we need to change it or add anything," said James.

"We have an archive of hundreds of thousands of images, and footage from the opening day, and we are making it more accessible because not everybody has the internet," added Tom.

Visitors can view archive footage on wall-mounted projectors, and James explained that part of a Midland Railway Brake Van will display original maps of line plans drawn in colour.

"The reason we have got this Midland Railway brake van is because the cartographer department had a brake van and used to go around drawing plans of the lines, and that is where the coloured plans come from," he said.

History alive

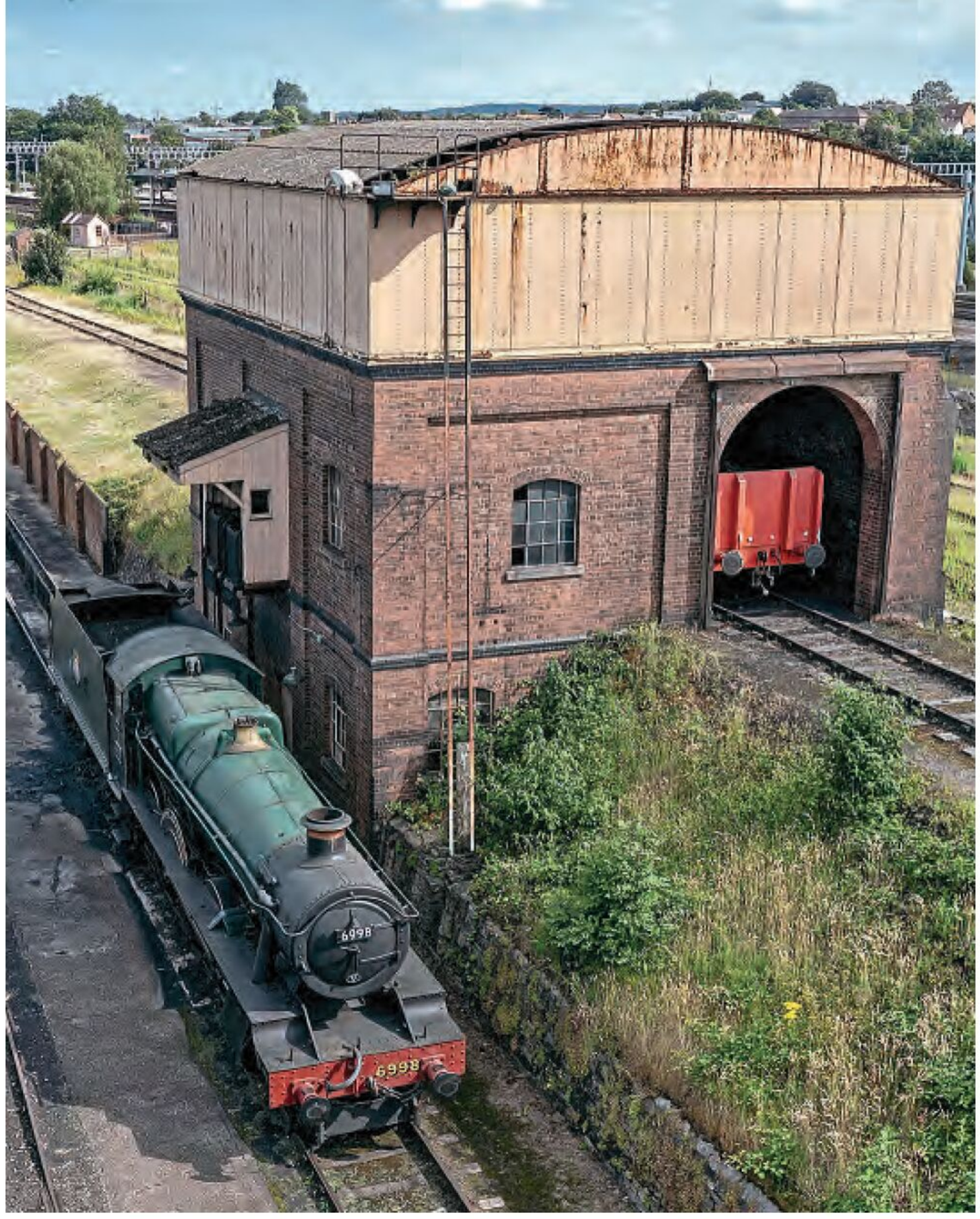
Touchscreen functions give visitors a hands-on history experience as they scroll through the fascinating legacy of the railway's life from its Midland Railway days to Nationalisation and preservation.

"There are three sections – Midland, British Rail and Worth Valley – talking about the history from the planning and building of the railway and the early days to Nationalisation, the railway closure and preservation," said James.

A model of the water tower, complete with three O-gauge model locomotives, enables visitors to spin the valve to see and be part of the refilling process.

David said that the railway had been wanting to do something with the building for years but did not have the funding. The project has been made possible after the railway received £100,000 from the Community Grant Scheme

As LMS Ivatt 2MT No. 41241 is refilled, the water tank house is still fulfilling the role it was created for in 1883 and will continue to do so alongside the new visitor centre. SALLY CLIFFORD



The water tank at Didcot Railway Centre is now fully operational following a 10-month repair project. DRC

of the Keighley Towns Fund and £42,000 from the Railway Heritage Trust. He said that the visitor centre will educate and entertain passengers in between their journeys along the five-mile branch.

"Many passengers and customers are genuine travellers. They are trying to get somewhere and are not just buying a ticket for a ride on a train," said David.

Annually, about a third of the railway's customers use it for travel, while the rest of its passengers, estimated to be about 120,000, come for pleasure and leisure.

David aded: "It is still being used for what it was built for – a water tank house. This is its official name and that is what it still is; it's just that we are using that fantastic space alongside it as a visitor centre.

"It is still fulfilling the function it was built for, and we are keen to emphasise that it is not a pastiche. It is a vacant space we had to do something with, and we are chuffed to bits. It really is brilliant."

Another fine example of railway property preservation is the restoration of the steel water tank topping the coal stage at Didcot Railway Centre.

Centre manager Richard Jermyn said that Didcot's coal stage was built in the 1930s to a standard GWR design for a non-mechanical facility.

The coal stage and water tank are understood to be the only surviving examples still in use for their original purpose of coaling and watering steam engines.

Holding 74,250 gallons, the tank supplies water to the columns outside the engine shed, where they can fill the tender of a steam engine in minutes.

After surveys identified rusting and deterioration of the steelwork, a 10-month repair project began, lasting from November 2021 to August 2022.

Work included removing and replacing the tank roof, surveys and repairs of the metalwork, high-pressure jetting and coating of the tank internally and externally, the reinstatement of the lettering on the south side of the tank, and repairs to the plumbing, access and electrical cabling.

In December 2023, the restoration of Didcot's water tank was entered into the National Railway Heritage Awards and was Highly Commended for the Network Rail Conservation Award. It is now back in use and fully operational.

Richard said that the second stage of the project is conservation work to the coal stage,

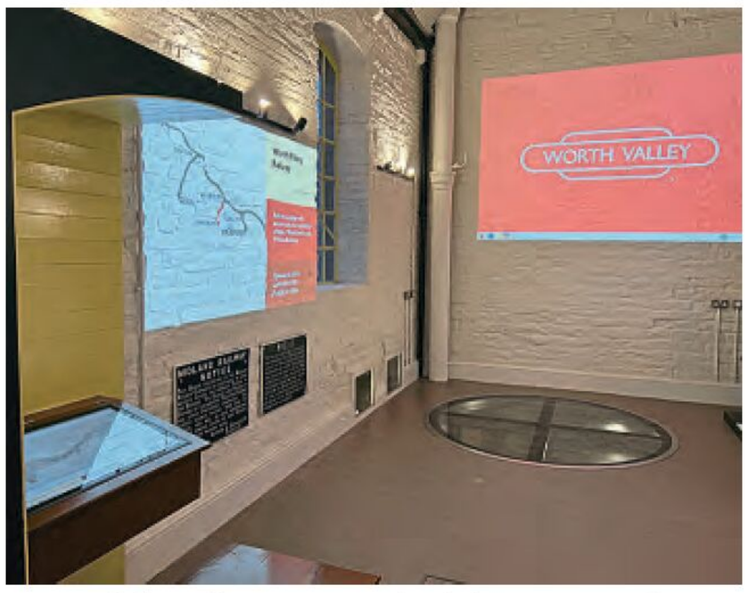
Work underway: James Crossley, assistant station master at Keighley, outside the water tank house which has been turned into a visitor centre while retaining its original purpose. SALLY CLIFFORD

including replacement of the steel tipping floor, renewal of the external staircase, and repair of the remainder of the ground and first floors.

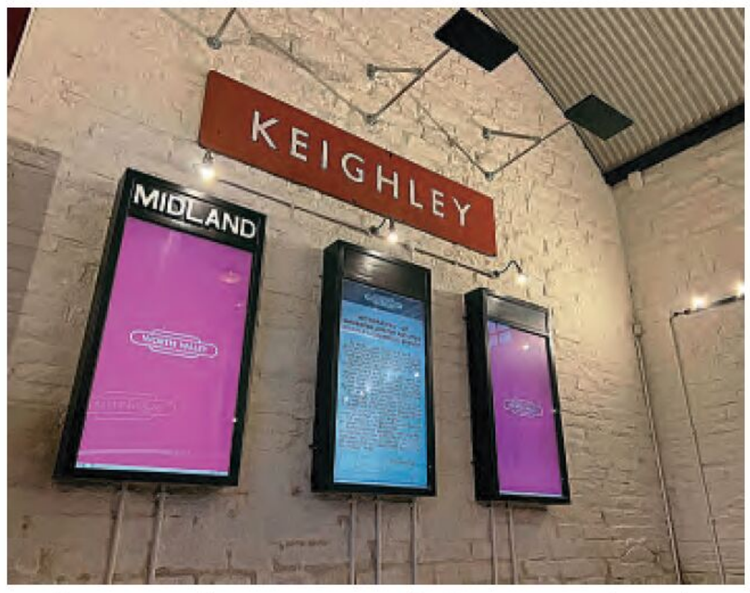
The current main capital project is the conservation of the 1930s engine shed, built at the same time as the coal stage, and the subject of a National Lottery Heritage Fund application, the first stage of which is planned to be submitted in November 2024.

For more information on the KWVR project, visit https://kwvr.co.uk/keighley-water-tower. To find out more about Didcot, visit www.didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk HR

The original well is now encased under glass in the water tank house visitor centre. SALLY CLIFFORD



Some of the information and exhibits on view for visitors to the water tower. JAMES CROSSLEY



Wall-mounted screens provide fascinating facts for visitors to the Water Tower. JAMES CROSSLEY

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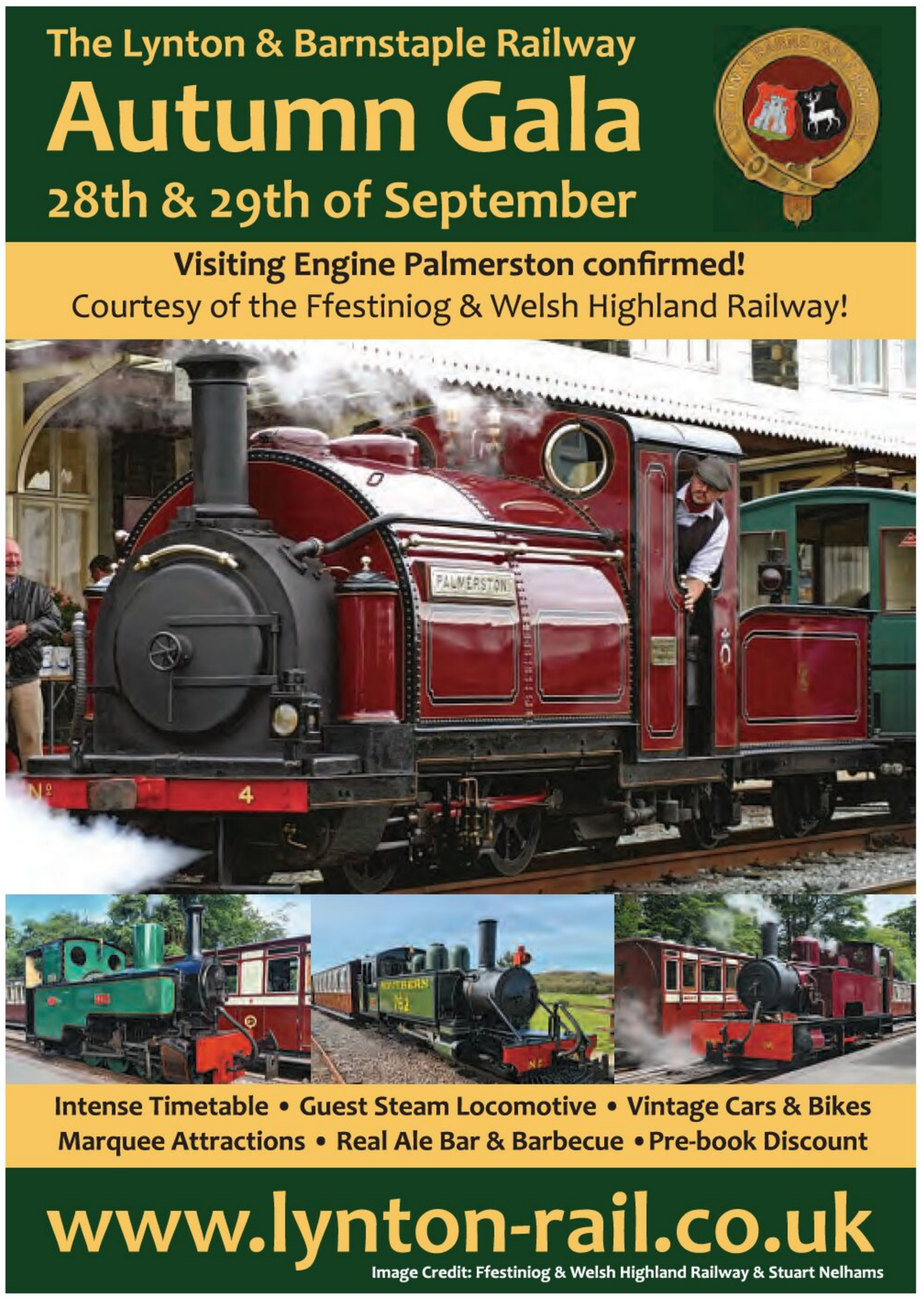

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STAR LETTER

Heritage lines must not rely on social media

I HAVE been an active infrastructure volunteer on a number of heritage railways over many years.

In recent years the marketing/communications of many heritage railways to members and volunteers for events and so on has become focused on social media, to the exclusion of other forms of communication, i.e., email.

For the vast majority of the gang I work with, they do not 'do' social media (and neither do I on principle as I object to the blatant censorship). That may come as a shock to the more youthful marketeers.

As a result, much of the good communications/branding/marketing by heritage lines is simply unseen/lost and therefore potential revenue lost.

However, when those who financially support lines, as I do in some cases, find themselves excluded, I suggest it's a greater problem as it feels like the organisation, while happy to take the money, does nothing to encourage a better relationship which in turn might just result in greater financial support in the longer term. In my case, one of the lines I do support financially, if only modestly, didn't even include me on the very limited communication emails, and my two emails to the marketing department asking to be put on the email circulation list produced no response of any description.

A subsequent personal letter to the general manager has resulted in emails now appearing (which are a tiny fraction of what appears on social media), but there has been no other response – not even an acknowledgement of my letter.

I would respectfully suggest such organisations need to reflect upon this approach, as those of us not perhaps in the first flush of youth often have significant funds and think about bequests.

Treating us as what amounts to disrespect does nothing to engender any sense of warmth towards such organisations which, I venture to suggest, might then well lose funds which, frankly, most can ill afford to lose.

In my case, I am now so incensed at the treatment I have received I am about to terminate all my payments to the line in question, and any possible bequest will now not materialise.

Iain Harris, email

I was there in 1963!

I REALLY enjoy reading the digital version of *Heritage Railway* every month – it enables me to enlarge the photographs! And on page 46 of issue 322, the photo of B1 No. 61004 *Oryx* at Ashbourne on May 11, 1963, really caught my eye.

My friend Alan and I were on the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society/Locomotive Club of Great Britain tour which started at St Pancras behind No. 34006 and lost so much time to Derby we didn't have time to visit the works as arranged. The B1 took us from Derby to Buxton and return to Burton via Ashbourne, where the train was so far ahead of time that we had time for the photo stop shown in that marvellous photograph.

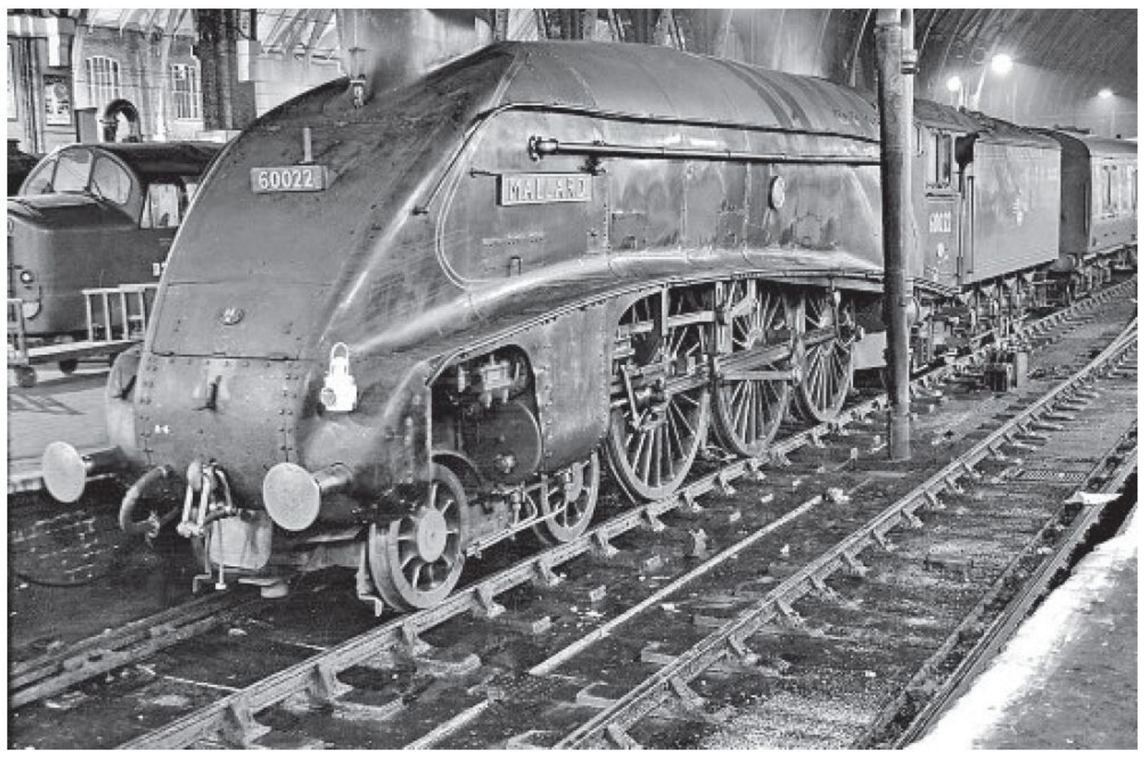
I remember taking the attached photograph of the B1 from halfway up a signal post on the platform and imagine my surprise when I saw my 15-year-old self in your photograph doing just that. My photograph and the one in the magazine must have been taken within seconds of each other, looking at the positions of the very small group of people on the opposite platform.

My photograph is not the best composition, but I have left the signal post along the right edge to show my position.

Caught in the act and now my railway trespassing has been exposed to the world 61 years later! The only disappointment is that I have been unable to spot my friend Alan in the crowd.

Philip Alexander, Dicky Beach, Queensland, Australia

B1 4-6-0 No. 61004 *Oryx* as seen from the signal post at Ashbourne on May 11, 1963. PHILIP ALEXANDER



A4 Pacific No. 60022 *Mallard* arriving at King's Cross at 9.40pm on August 24, 1960. DAVID DIPPIE

The non-supernatural explanation for ghostly figure

GEORGE Heiron's photograph caught my attention in Next Stop, *Heritage Railway* issue 322. Looking through my own 'spotter's notes' from 1960, I also took a photograph at King's Cross at a similar time.

Mallard had just arrived at about 9.30pm. I rested my camera on a ticket barrier and obtained the attached with a 90-second exposure at f8 using Ilford Selochrome Panchromatic film rated at 80ASA.

George Heiron's 'ghostly image' would suggest a tripod exposure which allowed time for the railwayman on the platform to turn his head from the driver to the cameraman and back.

This would leave the clear shadow and body image, while creating the continued exposure of both the front and side of his head.

David Dippie, Poynton, Cheshire

REGARDING the 'ghost' image in issue 322, I don't buy the suggestion that Heiron's photograph was a timed exposure into which the platform man walked and then stopped still for long enough to register sharply. There would have been a trail, if bright enough, or a blurred portrait beside the locomotive if not.

I think it is an example of 'mixed-light' photography, where a timed exposure was set up to burn in the lights in the distance and then a flash out of shot to the right was triggered just before the shutter was closed, to light the side of the loco.

The man on the platform would have walked into shot during the time exposure but not register at all as he did so, owing to the low light. Then, when beside the loco, the flash was fired manually, which froze the action, but a partial image without him was already present. Probably the driver was stationary throughout the whole shot, as his image doesn't seem to have the same issue.

RG Newman, email

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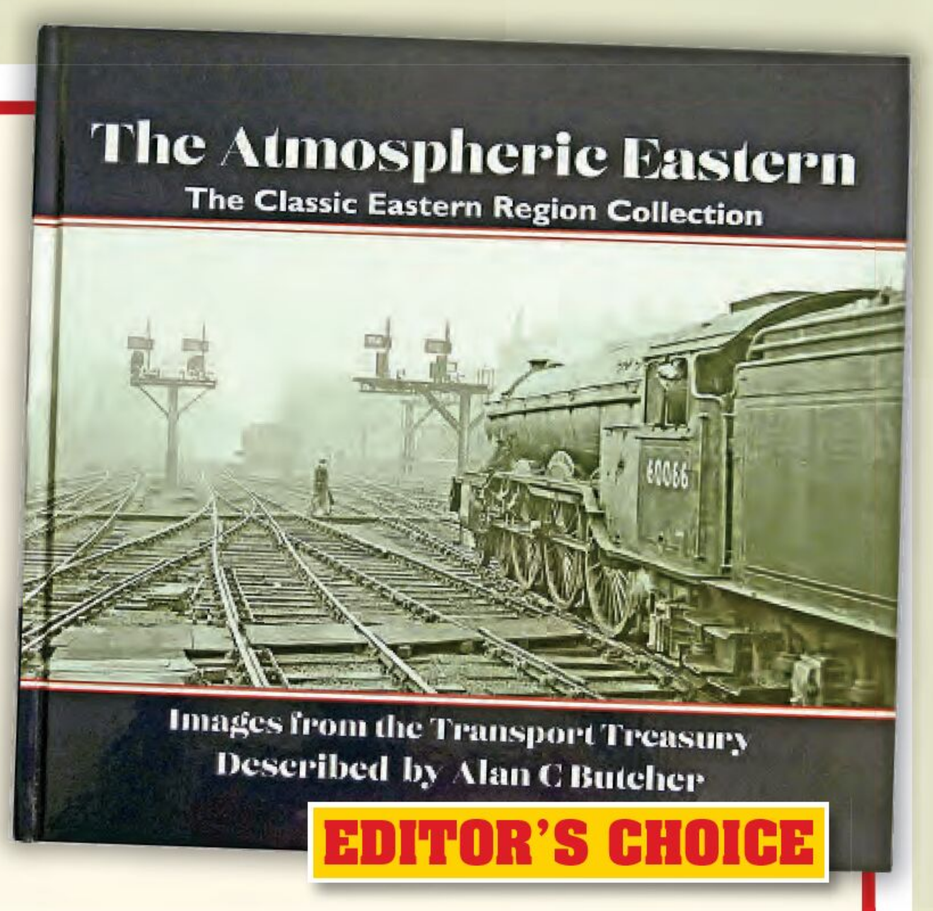
The Atmospheric Eastern

Described by Alan C Butcher (hardback, Transport Treasury Publishing 160pp, £29.95 + £3 p&p. Cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing and sent to: 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe, HP13 7PJ. ISBN 978-1-913251-72-7).



ALLEGIANCE by railway enthusiasts to one of the pre-Nationalisation 'Big Four', or even to the regions following the 1948 state takeover, can be as committed, although perhaps not quite as fierce, as among football fans and their favourite clubs, **writes Geoff Courtney.**

The GWR seems to have the greatest following, but there's no gainsaying the affection felt by many for the SR, LMS, or LNER. I'll hold my hand up and point to the last of these, probably due to my adolescent steam trainspotting being spent on the ex-GER main line out of Liverpool Street, and also because one of my uncles was a career-long LNER/BR(E) railwayman.

So it was with considerable eagerness that I delved into one of Transport Treasury's latest titles, The Atmospheric Eastern, an impressive tome that promised much and thankfully delivered.

Rather like a supermarket may put on display at its entrance its most attractive or tempting offerings, this hefty book starts with an absolutely cracking image spread over two pages of A4 No. 60010 *Dominion of Canada* and an unidentified A3 at the King's Cross buffer stops.

It was taken by George Heiron and is a classic example of this photographer's art, with much else on view in addition to the two locomotives. The main line arrivals board, the A4's young fireman standing beside the cab of the Pacific, poster advertisements for such companies as ICI, Eagle Star and the Woolwich, a stretcher trolley – thankfully not in use – and passengers bustling to and fro, all combine in a late 1950s/early 1960s moment in time at one of London's leading termini.

Busy station scene

Remaining in the capital, another Heiron photograph that shouts out for attention is of the concourse at Liverpool Street. It is undated, but the station clock is at 1.05 and the departures board shows an hourly service to Norwich, and so it is in the Britannia – i.e., post-1951 – era. There isn't a locomotive in sight, but indeed, rather than detracting from the image, that enhances it, as the reader is encouraged to study other elements of the busy scene.

The WH Smith stall on the left is in demand, a sailor is walking past and also a lady carrying her coat, which indicates it may be spring or summer, while another lady is striding away from the arrival gates towards the camera bearing a bulging suitcase and so has recently alighted from the train on the right. Beside her is a chap in drainpipe trousers staring intently down the platform into the distance, perhaps waiting for another passenger to come into view, two gents are in deep conversation, one wearing a trilby and the other carrying a briefcase, and a pipe-smoker is casually watching Heiron preserving the scene for posterity.

There's not a speck of dust on the floor or any rubbish, the aforementioned departures board is full of information but it still easily readable, and both the waiting and refreshment rooms are clearly signed.

Another highly-respected photographer whose work is heavily featured in the book is Neville Stead, who perhaps concentrates more on the motive power on view and so provides a different perspective that complements perfectly Heiron's work.

So varied are the subjects covered, and Alan Butcher's captions to the superbly-reproduced black-and-white photographs so absorbing and detailed, that it is difficult to give the publication justice in just one review. Suffice it to say, then, that turning every one of the 160 pages is preceded by a sense of keen anticipation of what awaits overleaf.

Variety is there, in abundance. An image of A4 No. 60034 *Lord Faringdon* at an unknown depot, but possibly King's Cross 'Top shed,' is immediately followed by a 1955 photograph of 59-year-old G5 class 0-4-4T No. 67282 bringing its train of two veteran coaches and a horsebox into Springfield Halt, an East Riding of Yorkshire station that comprised one-coach raised wooden platforms, two lamps on each platform, and nothing else.

Or Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60160 *Auld Reekie* storming past Edinburgh's West Princes Street Garden in 1954, while on the following page is J39 class 0-6-0 No. 64855 with just a single hopper and brake van in tow on the single track Masham-Melmerby branch line near Tanfield station in rural North Yorkshire.

Choosing a favourite among such a cornucopia of artistic delight is a challenge, but I'll go for a Neville Stead image of A5 class 4-6-2T No. 69838 crossing the impressive East Row viaduct at Sandsend on the Whitby West Cliff to Loftus line, with such attractions as a sweeping panoramic view of the beach, a shop and car park directly beneath the viaduct, and the seafront properties and distant hills.

ATMOSPHERIC EASTERN WITH ATMOSPHERIC IMAGES

The Robertsbridge Turntable

Compiled by Paul Baker (softback, the Rother Valley Supporters Association, 28pp, £5 plus p&p, purchased from Robertsbridge Junction station; or for it to be posted, email reception@rvr.org).

HERE is another superb booklet from the Rother Valley Supporters Association which tells the story of its recently-installed turntable, **writes Dana Wiffen.**

It starts with a decision to try and find a suitable turntable and then when one was found, how the enormous task of removing it from Hither Green Depot and then transporting it to Robertsbridge could be solved. First to be transported was 'the deck,' weighing in at 35 tonnes, and then the central area known as the 'heart' was lifted and transported.

While the turntable had been at Hither Green for 90 years and was in relatively good condition, it still needed a lot of work. Each part was painstakingly cleaned, repaired and refurbished, before any thought of installation could be considered.

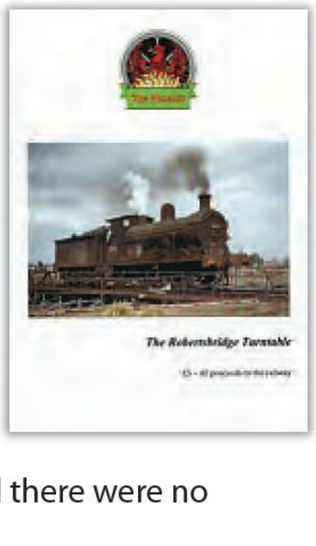
The booklet covers all of this hard work in detail, supported by some superb photographs and diagrams, and it highlights the amount of planning involved, including where to site it.

This meant there would be a need to widen the embankment at Robertsbridge to accommodate both the turntable and a new engine shed – some considerable work as well.

As the turntable was pieced together, with the finishing touches made at the end of 2022, testing then commenced in 2023, and the first loco to be carefully placed on the turntable was RVR's own resident Class 03 diesel D2112, with brake van, both weighing about 50 tons.

This booklet shows that with foresight, careful planning, and a strong and dogged determination to overcome problems, plus the dedication of the volunteers of both the RVR and Kent & East Sussex Railway, the turntable has no doubt become a valuable part of the railway, especially when the two sections are finally joined, hopefully by 2027.

The final test was in early June when visiting steam locomotive BR Standard 7 Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* was (as highlighted in issue 321) turned on the turntable for the celebration days of the KESR's 50th anniversary of becoming a heritage line. The locomotive pulled two carriages carrying passengers between Robertsbridge Junction station down to Northbridge Street and back on many runs – and there were no empty seats.



This booklet was put together by Paul Baker, who managed the rescue and refurbishment project of the turntable. It also contains some additional information on turntables and their history and should be a welcome addition to any enthusiast's collection.

DOCUMENTING A RECENT HERITAGE SUCCESS

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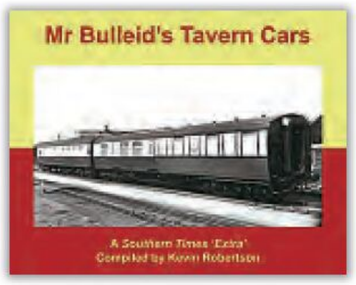
Mr Bulleid's Tavern Cars

By Kevin Robertson (hardback, Transport Treasury, 100pp, £18.95, ISBN 978-1-913251-66-6).



THE author's objective is to investigate whether or not the Bulleid-designed Tavern and Restaurant cars, which emerged from Eastleigh Works in 1949 to work as eight sets (one of each type in a semi-permanent pairing), really deserved the negative comments that their introduction generated.

The depth of research into these unconventional pub-themed vehicles and their accompanying restaurant facilities (with small windows at head height and longitudinal seating in First Class) is impressive, matched by a comprehensive selection of drawings and photographs depicting them in their original and modernised conditions.

Highlights include how they were unveiled to the media (including memoranda about the event and details from the invitation circulated at the time), as well as passenger and staff reactions to them entering service (drawn from letters to the press), and written feedback to railway managers. Together with other correspondence, these paint a picture of thoughts and feelings.

A chapter on the later revisions to their designs and a series of appendices give additional useful details regarding materials and equipment supplied by various contractors, and official descriptions of the cars and names and signage applied to them, as well as dates of modifications and withdrawals.

FASCINATING INSIGHT

Hydraulic Memories

Compiled by Roger Geach (hardback, Transport Treasury, 80pp, £17.50, ISBN 978-7-913-89-3).

HERE is a real visual feast for all with an interest in Western Region diesel-hydraulic traction in BR service – an era that ended with the Class 52 Westerns in 1977.

All the images reproduced are in colour, and the author has assembled a wide-ranging selection of images from this relatively short-lasting time in our railway history. The majority of the photographs feature the work of railwayman Colin Wreyford, now part of the Transport Treasury Collection.

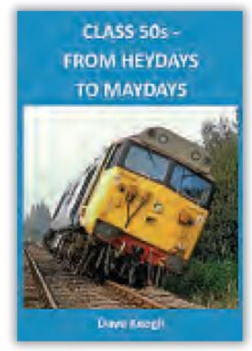
The book is organised in the form of a journey from Paddington to Penzance, with Devon featuring strongly but with a number of 'hydraulic traction diversions' along the way! Classes 52 Westerns, 42 Warships, 35 Hymeks and 22s are seen in everyday service – often in less than pristine condition. Sadly, there are no images of the five early WR Class 41 Warships which had been withdrawn at the end of 1967.

The quality of reproduction is very good and there are detailed captions throughout with locations, locomotives and workings identified wherever possible.

WORTHWHILE ADDITION TO THE DIESEL-HYDRAULIC HISTORY

Class 50s From Heydays to Maydays

By Dave Keogh (softback, The Fifty Fund, www.fiftyfund-alliance.co.uk, 208pp, £29.95, ISBN 978-1-838436-95-7).



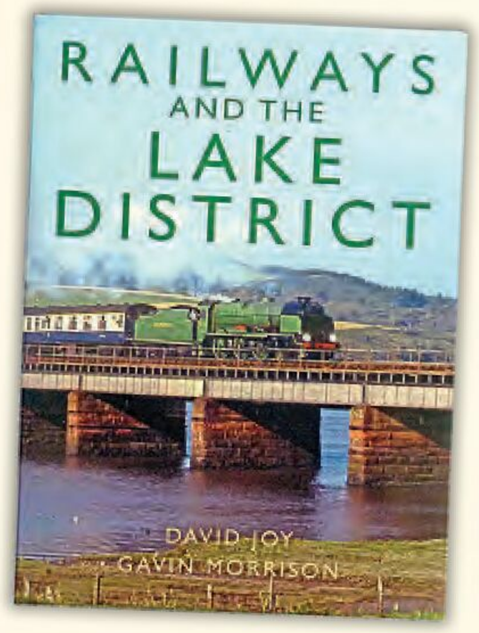
THIS is a follow-up to last year's Fifty Memories by the same author, this one subtitled 'A basher's account of how a fleet of modern locomotives were sidelined by BR as it prepared for Privatisation.'

It features more images from the author's photographic collection, but there is no need to worry that all the best images were used in the first volume as the ones here are just as good. There is a wide range of quality images and the text is entertaining and informative, with much of interest even for those only having a passing interest in the class. All profits from sales go towards the ongoing preservation of the locomotives managed by the Fifty Fund and Class 50 Alliance.

'HOOVER' DELIGHT

Railways and the Lake District

By David Joy and Gavin Morrison (hardback, Great Northern Books, 128pp, £19.99, ISBN 978-1-914227-64-6).



I'M sure neither David Joy nor Gavin Morrison, who have collaborated on this latest publication from Great Northern Books, would object to me describing them as railway veterans, **writes Geoff Courtney.**

David has written more than 50 titles on railways and the Lake District over nearly six decades, while top railway photographer Gavin obtained his first camera in the 1940s and has amassed 200,000 images – one of the largest personal collections still in the hands of the original photographer – and compiled more than 60 books.

In a sense, this book celebrates their 40 years of working together, with their modus operandi being Gavin selecting the images and then David writing the text. Coverage includes the main line over Shap, the route round the Lake District coast, branches past and present to Windermere, Coniston and Keswick, the preserved Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway, the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway, and the Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum.

In his preface, David says that he and Gavin's aim has been to capture the Lake District's railways from the late 1950s to recent times, and therein lies part of its dual appeal, to both steam era enthusiasts and followers of the modern scene. Thus, the very first image is of Class 87 electric No. 87019 *Sir Winston Churchill* on a Glasgow to London train at Lancaster in August 2001, followed in very short order by Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92006 on a northbound WCML car train 37 years earlier.

Such photographic juxtaposition continues throughout the book. Royal Scot No. 46133 *The Green Howards* heading a Manchester-Glasgow express through the Lune gorge in August 1962, with the next image being electric Nos. 86627 and 86614 double-heading a Freightliner at the same location in May 2007. Or how about 'Black Five' No. 44894 shunting in Windermere goods yard in August 1968, just days before the end of BR steam, and overleaf Class 20 diesels Nos. 20075 and 20131 near Staveley on the same line on a railtour in May 1993?

The combination of steam, diesel and electric traction against a background of glorious Lake District scenery is a delight. Sit back and enjoy.

RAILWAY VETERANS' TEAMWORK ON THE RIGHT TRACK

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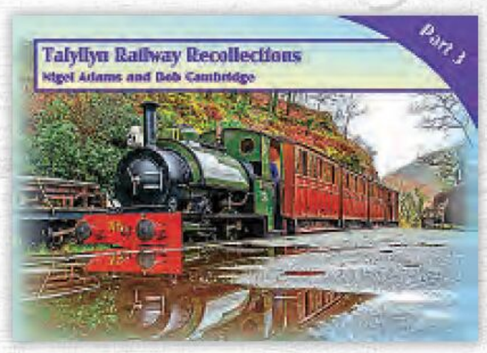

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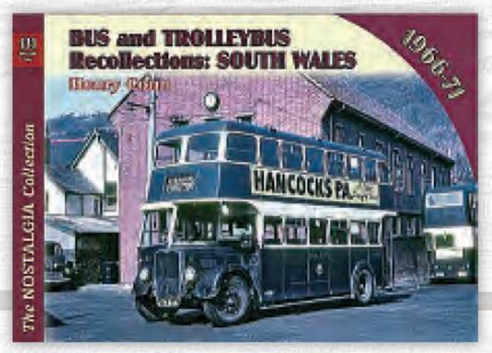

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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

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 + Sept 1.

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: Daily until Sept 30.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway
12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.
Open: Daily.

Hayling Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Hayling Island, Hants. Tel: 07902 446340.
Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols.

Hollycombe Steam in the Country
2ft gauge, 1½ miles. Liphook, Hants. Tel: 01428 724900.
Open: Suns + Sept 21, 28.

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.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: Sept 22, 29.

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 until Sept 29.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Running: W/Es until Sept 29.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.
Running: Daily until Sept 29.

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 until Sept 29 + Sept 28.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es + Sept 3-5.

Volk's Electric Railway
2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.
Running: Daily until Sept 30.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.
Running: W/Es until Sept 15, then Suns only.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.
Running: W/Es until Oct 27.

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.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: Weds, W/Es + Sept 12.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Running: Sept 29.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Thurs, Suns.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: Daily until Sept 29.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Running: Suns-Weds until Sept 18.

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: W/Es + Sept 2-6, 30.**

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 + Sept 14, 21.

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, Weds.

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.
Running: Daily.

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + Sept 2, 6.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Running: Suns + Sept 7, 21.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Running: Suns until Sept 15.

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 + Oct 5.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: TBA.

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. Tel: 01621 784898.
Open: W/Es.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.

The Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway's August 30-September 1 diesel gala and beer festival will see visiting Class 31 No. 31452 working public trains throughout for the first time since arriving on the line. Owned by Eastern Rail Services and turned out in InterCity livery, it had been brought in as part of a private filming assignment taking place and it is hoped that the gala appearance will prove a lure to enthusiasts, with a three-train service, on-board breakfasts and real ale bars, plus a free connecting bus service to Skipton's main line station. EBAR

Pre-order Issue 324: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

WR 4-6-0 No. 7828 *Odney Manor,* pictured here on the West Somerset Railway on July 27, is to make its first-ever appearance at the Great Central Railway for the line's October 3-6 Autumn Steam Gala, where it will be reunited with WR 4-6-0 No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall*, which it ran alongside during the latter's recent visit to the WSR. Visitors will be able to see the clear contrasts in design practice between BR and the GWR with the fleet in action. The event will feature a busy timetable of both passenger and freight trains.

"At one recent gala we welcomed a visitor from Australia who had timed his UK holiday around our event. We often receive visitors from the US; we are thrilled to have a growing international reputation of our heritage line," said general manager Malcolm Holmes.

LAURA STANDERWICK

Running: Weds (until Sept 25), W/Es + Sept 27.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: Sept 1.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles.
Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: W/Es + Sept 6, 11, 18, 25, 27.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles. Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Daily until Sept 19, then Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

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 + Oct 5.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon.
Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns + Sept 13, 14, 21.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067
Running: Sept 1, 7, 28, 29.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: Weds, W/Es + Sept 20.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex.
Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: W/Es + Sept 20.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge.
Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Running: Daily until Sept 29.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Running: Suns.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles.
Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Suns + Sept 28.

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.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys).
Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire.
Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Weds & W/Es until Sept 15.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: W/Es.

Railway Museums

Beamish
The Living Museum of the North, County Durham.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Coleford GWR Museum
Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Open: Fris, Sats.
Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Colonel Stephens Railway Museum
Tenterden station, KESR.
Open on KESR operating days.
Tel: 01580 765155.

Crewe Heritage Centre
Vernon Way, Crewe.
Open: W/Es, bank hols.
Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre
Donegal.
Open: Mon-Sat.
Tel: 00353 (0) 749722655.

Head of Steam
North Road Station, Darlington.
Closed for redevelopment.
Tel: 01325 405060.

Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum
Irchester, Northamptonshire.
Open: Suns.
Tel: 01604 675368.

Leeds Industrial Museum
Armley Mills, Leeds.
Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: 0113 378 2097.

Locomotion: The National Railway Museum, Shildon
Co Durham.
Open: Weds-Suns.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

London Transport Museum
Covent Garden.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0343 222 5000.

Manchester Museum of Science & Industry
Castlefield, Manchester.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Museum of Scottish Railways
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01506 825855.

National Railway Museum
Leeman Road, York.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Penrhyn Castle & Railway Museum
Bangor, Gwynedd.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01258 353084.

Rail Story
Ingrow, West Yorks.
Open: Carriage Works daily, Engine Shed Tues-Suns.
Tel: 01535 690739 or 01535 680425.

Railworld Wildlife Haven
Peterborough.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum
Glasgow.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0141 287 2720.

STEAM – Museum of the GWR
Swindon.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum
Tiverton, Devon.
Open: Tues-Sats.
Tel: 01884 256295.

West Cumberland Railway Museum
St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups – contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Thurs.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos. Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles. Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: Thurs-Suns until Oct 6.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns, Sept 13, 14.

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 + Sept 6, 20.

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 until Sept 22.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Sept 1, 8, 21/22.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton.
Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: Sep 8, 15, 29.

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: W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cottesmore, Rutland.
Tel: 07974 171068.
Open: Tues, Thurs. Running: Sept 22.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.
Running: Sept 14/15.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR.
Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: Weds (until Sept 11), Thurs, W/Es + Sept 20.

Statfold Country Park
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 until Sept 29.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: Suns until Sept 8.

Valley Railway Adventure
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: Weds, W/Es.

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: Weds-Thurs (until Sept 12), W/Es + Sept 13.

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 until Sept 28.

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.
Running: Suns until Sept 29.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Running: Daily until Sept 30, then Thurs-Mons.

Kirkby Stephen East
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Open: Suns + Sept 14.

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 until Sept 15, then Tues-Suns.

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 until Sept 28 + Sept 29.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles. Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: Tues, Thurs, W/Es until Sept 29.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Opens: W/Es.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Running: Suns.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: W/Es until Sept 15.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: TBA.

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.

On September 1, the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway will host its final summer open day with up to four locomotives in action. Joining resident Cockerill tram No. 2525, Ruston & Hornsby 0-4-0 No. 304470 and Fowler 0-4-0 No. 20337 *Shreddie* will be Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1219 *Caledonia Works*, which has been on hire to the line from the Blaenavon Heritage Railway since the spring. Following this, the railway will close until its October 27 vintage and bygones fair. MSLR

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Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks.
Tel: 01756 710614.
Running: Tues-Thurs (until Sept 12), W/Es.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily until Nov 3.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: W/Es + Sept 25.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Running: Sept 2, 7, 21.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Suns (until Sept 28) + Sept 7.

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. Running: Sept 8.

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-Thurs, Sats + Sept 1, 5, 12, 27.

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 + Sept 2, 9-13, 16.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Running: Suns.

The details in this list were correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise that you confirm details with the venue concerned. Pre-booking is often essential.
TBA = To Be Announced

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: W/Es until Sept 29 + Sept 13.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth.
Tel: 01654 761701.
Running: Sats + Sept 8.

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: Suns-Fris.

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.

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.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and heritage events in the coming weeks

AUGUST
- 30/31 Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway Diesel Gala & Beer Festival
- 30/31 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Steam Gala
- 31 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Loco Gala

SEPTEMBER
- 1 Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway Diesel Gala & Beer Festival
- 1 Epping Ongar Railway Vintage Bus Rally
- 1 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Everything Goes Gala
- 1 Statfold Country Park Mini National Day
- 1 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Steam Gala
- 6-8 Great Central Railway Autumn Diesel Gala
- 6-8 Swanage Railway Classic & Steam Vehicle Show
- 7/8 Crich Tramway Village Steampunk Weekend
- 7/8 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Cider & Cheese Festival
- 8 Southwold Railway Blythburgh Station Open Day
- 8 Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway Bus Rally
- 13/14 East Lancashire Railway Autumn Diesel Gala
- 14/15 Crich Tramway Village 60 Years of Electric Trams Gala
- 14/15 Dean Forest Railway Diesel Gala
- 14/15 Mid-Hants Railway Engineering Open Weekend
- 14/15 Statfold Country Park Road, Rail & Ale
- 14/15 Welsh Highland Railway Super-Power Weekend
- 15 Great Central Railway Railwayana Swapmeet
- 19-22 Severn Valley Railway Autumn Steam Gala
- 20-22 Bluebell Railway Beer Festival
- 20-22 Epping Ongar Railway Autumn Diesel Gala
- 20-22 Great Central Railway Beer Festival
- 21 Ffestiniog Railway Trailfest
- 21/22 Spa Valley Railway Model Railway Weekend
- 22 West Lancashire Light Railway Working Engines Gala
- 26-29 North Yorkshire Moors Railway Steam Gala
- 27-29 Didcot Railway Centre Autumn Steam Gala
- 27-29 Mid Norfolk Railway Mixed Traffic Gala
- 28/29 Talyllyn Railway Heritage Weekend
- 29 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre SHOWBUS Railway Bus Rally

OCTOBER
- 3-6 Great Central Railway Autumn Steam Gala
- 3-6 Severn Valley Railway Autumn Steam Gala
- 4-6 Ffestiniog Railway Bygones Weekend
- 4-6 Mid-Hants Railway Autumn Steam Gala

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Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.
Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + Sept 3, 10.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Tues, W/Es.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles.
Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.
Running: W/Es.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Running: Suns until Sept 29.

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-Suns.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway
3ft gauge. Drumod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Running: Sats-Mons.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
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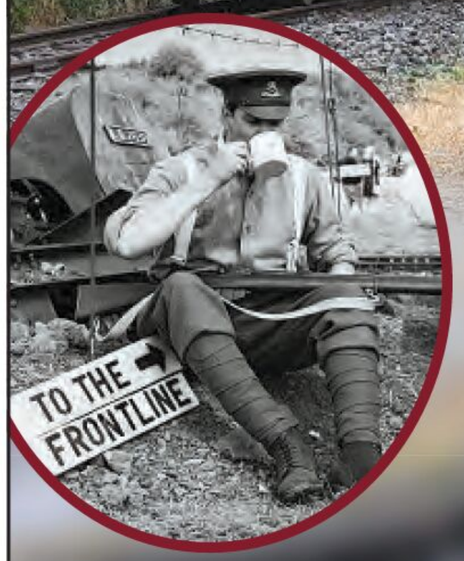

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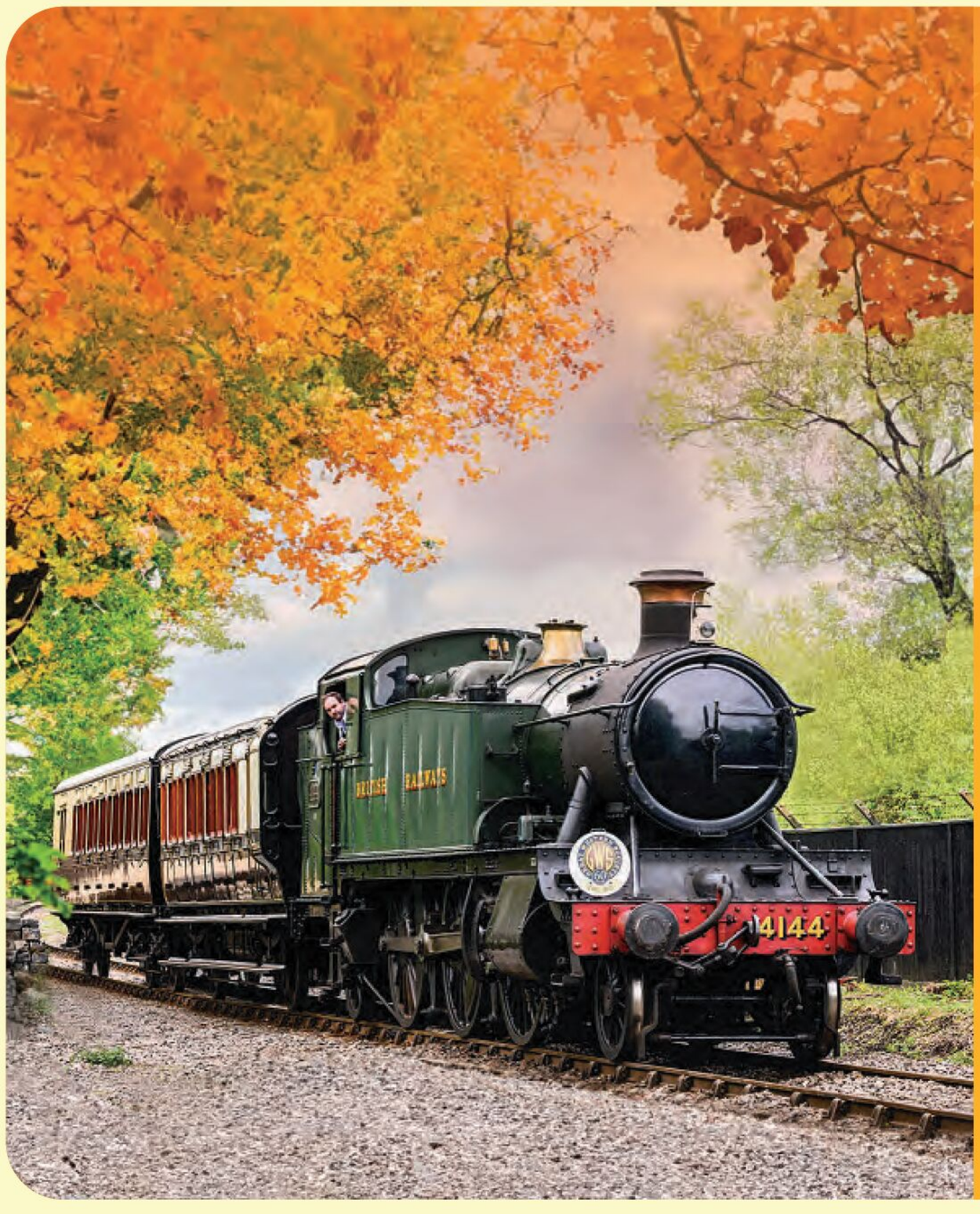

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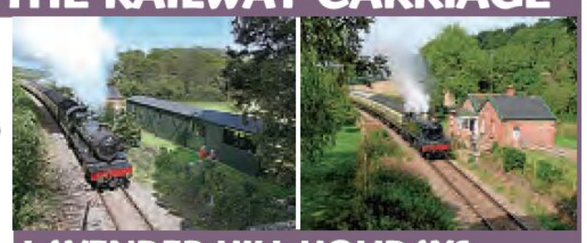

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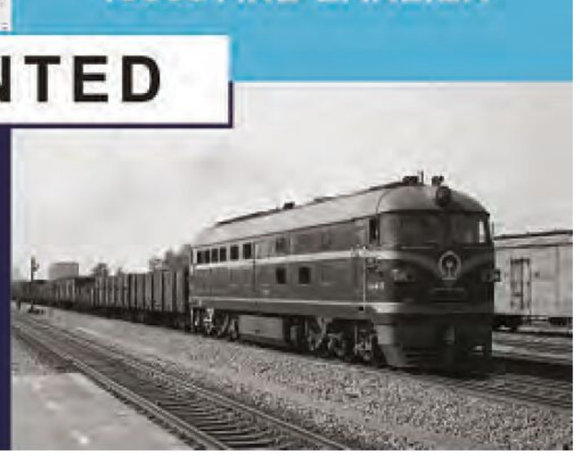

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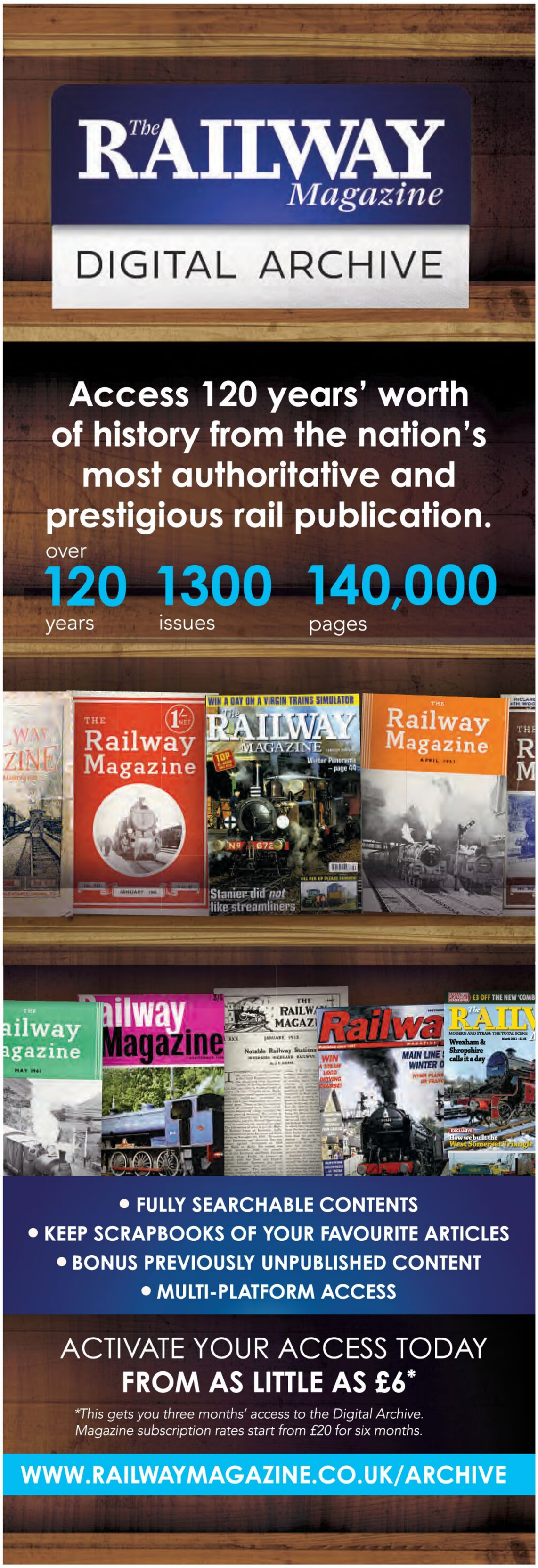


WANTED Your lighter takes

If you've got a quirky photo, tale, poem, or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email staff writer Owen Hayward on ohayward@mortons.co.uk

Does archive image shed light on mystery Antwerp wagon?

By Geoff Courtney

RECENT issues of *Heritage Railway* have reported on the mystery of a railway wagon that was unearthed during a road construction project in the Belgian city of Antwerp.

It is believed that the LNER-liveried vehicle was used for furniture removal, although research has failed to determine how or why it came to be in Antwerp or why it was buried.

Former railwayman Andrew Royle has followed the story with interest and believes he may have come across a photograph of a similar wagon taken many years ago at an unidentified location that he conjectures may be Neasden yard in north-west London.

Andrew, who was with Network Rail from 2004 until 2018, and has written a book about his time working on the NR monitoring fleet, is the archivist with High Wycombe-based Transport Treasury, and recently came across a photograph that caught his eye.

It is an image of an 0-4-2ST shunting in a London Transport yard, and what drew his attention was not the locomotive, but an LNER wagon in the distance.

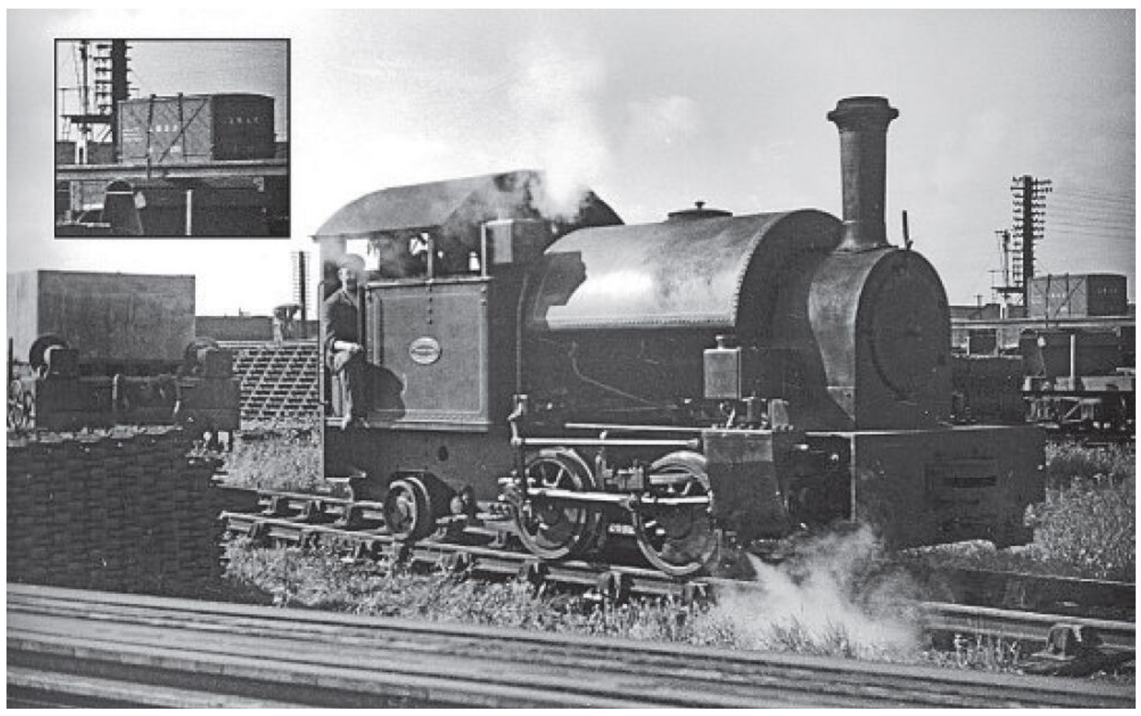
He saw images in *Heritage Railway* of the remains of the mystery Antwerp wagon that is believed to be nearly 100 years old and was immediately struck how similar it was to the one in the photograph.

"I was scanning LT images, and this one came up," he said.

"I zoomed in on the container in the background on the right, saw 'LNER,' and wondered whether it was similar to the one unearthed in Antwerp."

Does the mystery deepen? Or has Andrew shed a little light on a conundrum that may run and run?

In addition to the LNER wagon, the 0-4-2ST that takes centre stage in the photograph discovered by Andrew is part of London's railway history.



Wagon mystery: Although Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST No. L34 was the main subject for an undated photograph at an unknown location, possibly the London Transport yard at Neasden, archivist Andrew Royle wonders if the LNER wagon in the right background (enlarged in the insert) is of a similar type to the one recently unearthed in Antwerp. TRANSPORT TREASURY

It was built by Kerr Stuart & Co of Stoke in 1922 for engineering work on the City & South London Railway, the world's first deep-level underground railway and the first to use electric traction. It was subsequently used for similar operations on the Central Line eastern extension to Epping and was scrapped in 1949 when that project was completed.

The specification of the little locomotive, which was numbered L34 in 1930, included driving wheels of just 2ft 6in, a weight of only 14 tons, and a tractive effort of 6500lb-ft.

Tube map creator takes centre stage

A NEW play about the designer of the iconic version of the London Tube map is to be launched at London Transport Museum's on-site Cubic Theatre in Covent Garden.

Presented by the Natural Theatre Company, The Truth About Harry Beck, written and directed by Andy Burden, will run from September 14 to November 10, including on the 50th anniversary of Harry Beck's death on September 18.

Inspired by the culture and creativity of the West End, the introduction of theatre is one example of how London Transport Museum is expanding its programming for new audiences.

Museum director and CEO Elizabeth McKay said: "The opportunity to introduce this new play about the man behind the famous map was a no-brainer for us. London Transport Museum is a cultural cornerstone in Covent Garden, in the heart of theatreland, and this play lets you experience one of London's little-known stories in a brand-new live format. We are bringing the capital's rich history and characters alive for you."

Writer and director Andy Burden said: "About 16 years ago, I had the idea to put the story of the iconic tube diagram on stage. I met with Ken Garland, a designer whose book, Mr Beck's Underground Map, helped bring Harry Beck's story to public attention. He loaned me copies of Beck's letters and gave me a small insight into the man.

"He was a man dedicated to finding the perfect schematic representation of the Underground network and over a period of nearly 30 years worked tirelessly to improve the map, reflecting new stations, new lines and new suggestions from his bosses. Looking through Ken's book, I grew obsessed with the map and how he drew it, at one point being fixated on each minute change to its layout. Over 14 years I kept rewriting the play, trying to make it work at its best - life it seems was imitating art! The first short run of the play appeared in September 2021 at the Theatre Royal Bath Ustinov Studio. Sadly, Ken Garland had died just months before. I am so pleased that Harry's story is enhancing the experience at this fabulous museum. It keeps his name alive and connected to his wonderfully simple creation."

Book at https://cubictheatre.seetickets.com/timeslot/the-truth-about-harry-beck

Harry Beck, who designed the legendary map of the London Underground. LTM

First pocket edition of the Underground map by Harry Beck, dated January 1933. LTM

NEXT ISSUE

Out September 27

Sally Clifford looks at the latest of Stephen Middleton's vintage carriage restoration projects which is about to return to the rails.

PLUS

THREE DECADES OF CHINNOR REVIVAL

Owen Hayward visits the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway as it celebrates its 30th anniversary with its first steam gala.

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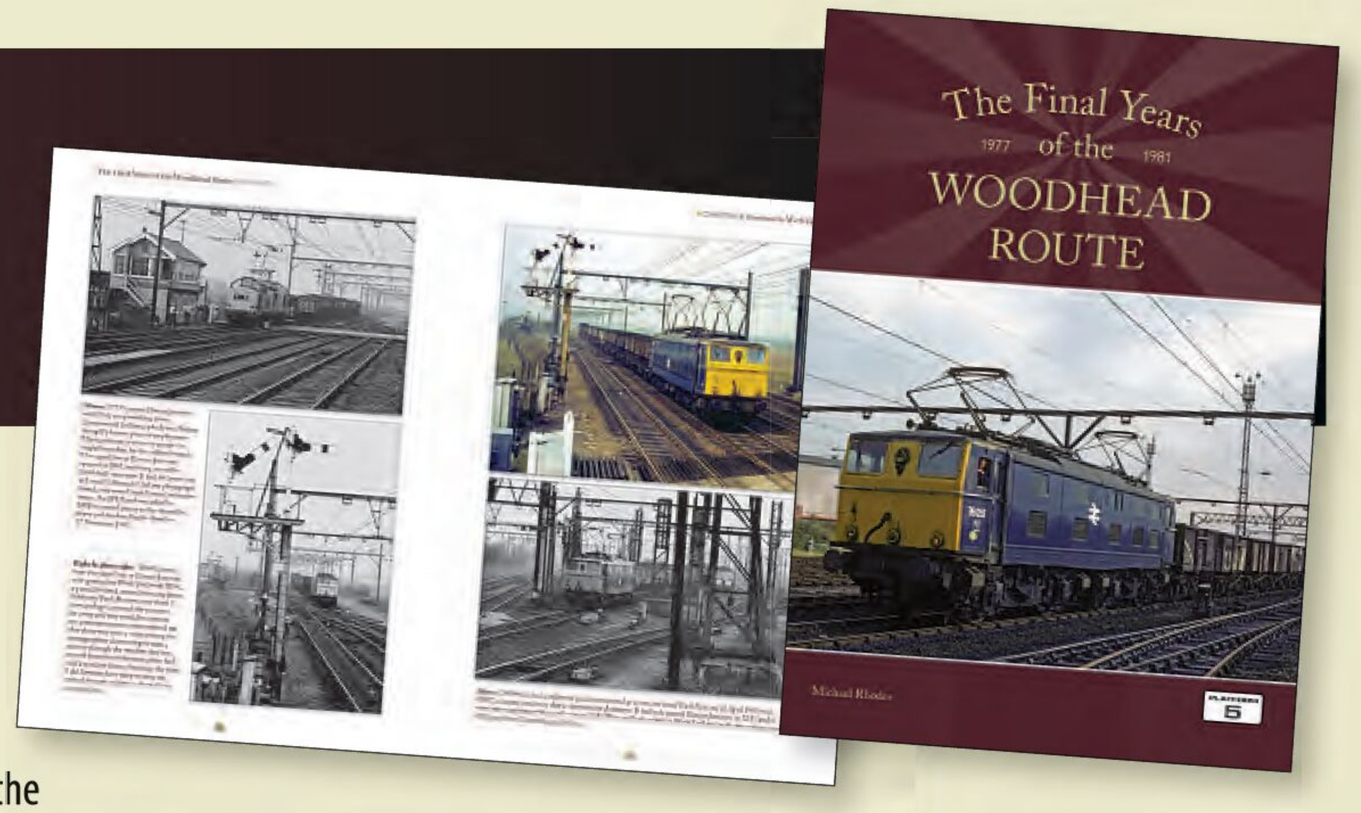
The Final Years of the WOODHEAD ROUTE 1977–1981



The railway between Manchester and Sheffield via Woodhead was one of the first long-distance routes in the country to be electrified and travelled through some dramatic and scenic landscapes. It also connected several important industrial locations on both sides of the Pennines, providing plenty of visual interest.

Accomplished photographer and author, Michael Rhodes, explores the full course of the electrified line during the last few years of its working life, plus several further visits after its closure to record the remnants of this once-vibrant railway. From the derelict Sheffield Victoria station in 1977, to observations at Wath, Tinsley, Penistone, Dunford Bridge, Dinting, Guide Bridge and Reddish, to name but a few, Michael records the relentless decline from 1977. This photographic collection illustrates the line and its key connections during that time. A4 size. 96 pages. Mail Order Price **£19.95** plus P&P. Website promotion code **FYWR.**

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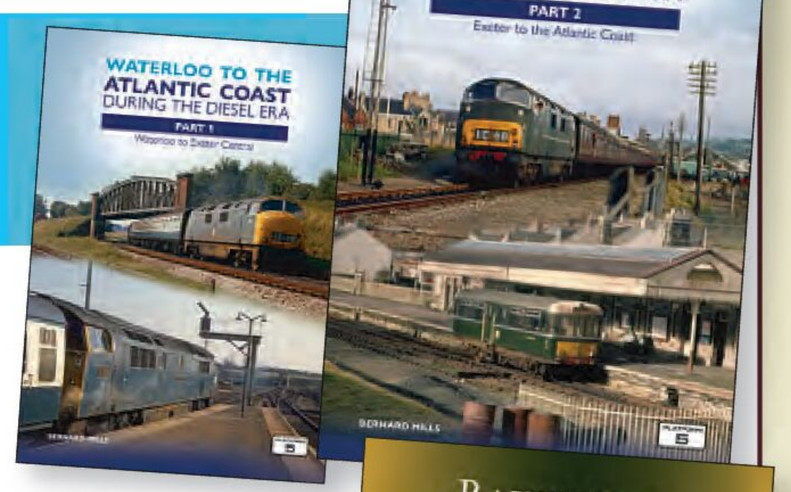

A two-part work containing high quality colour images from prolific railway photographer, Bernard Mills. Features the 1960s to the 1990s, when diesel-hauled trains were the order of the day. Includes very detailed captions and personal anecdotes. A4 size 96 pages. Mail Order Price **£19.95** each plus P&P. Website promotion code **WACDE**.

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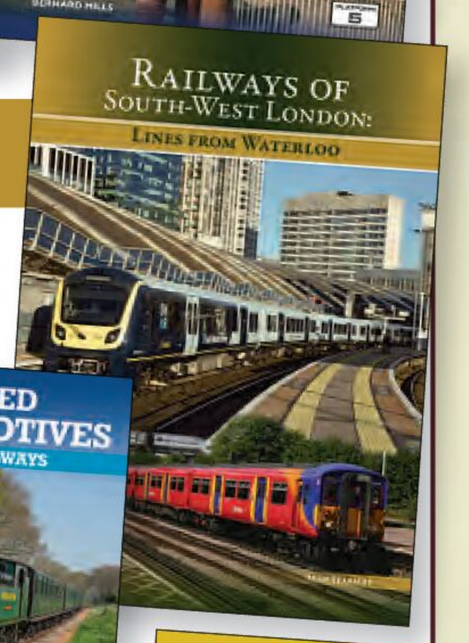

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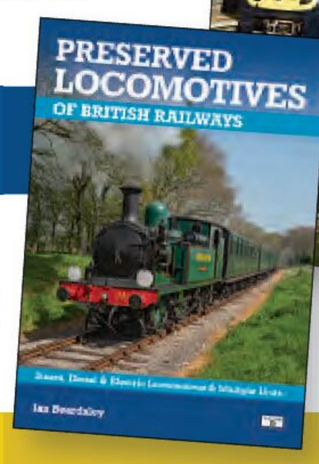

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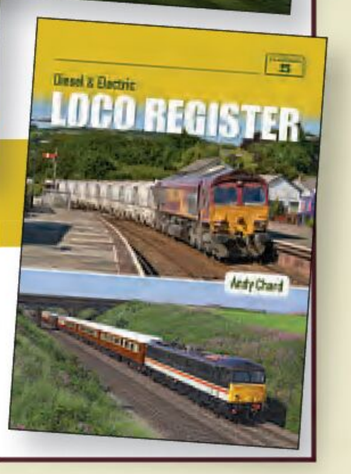

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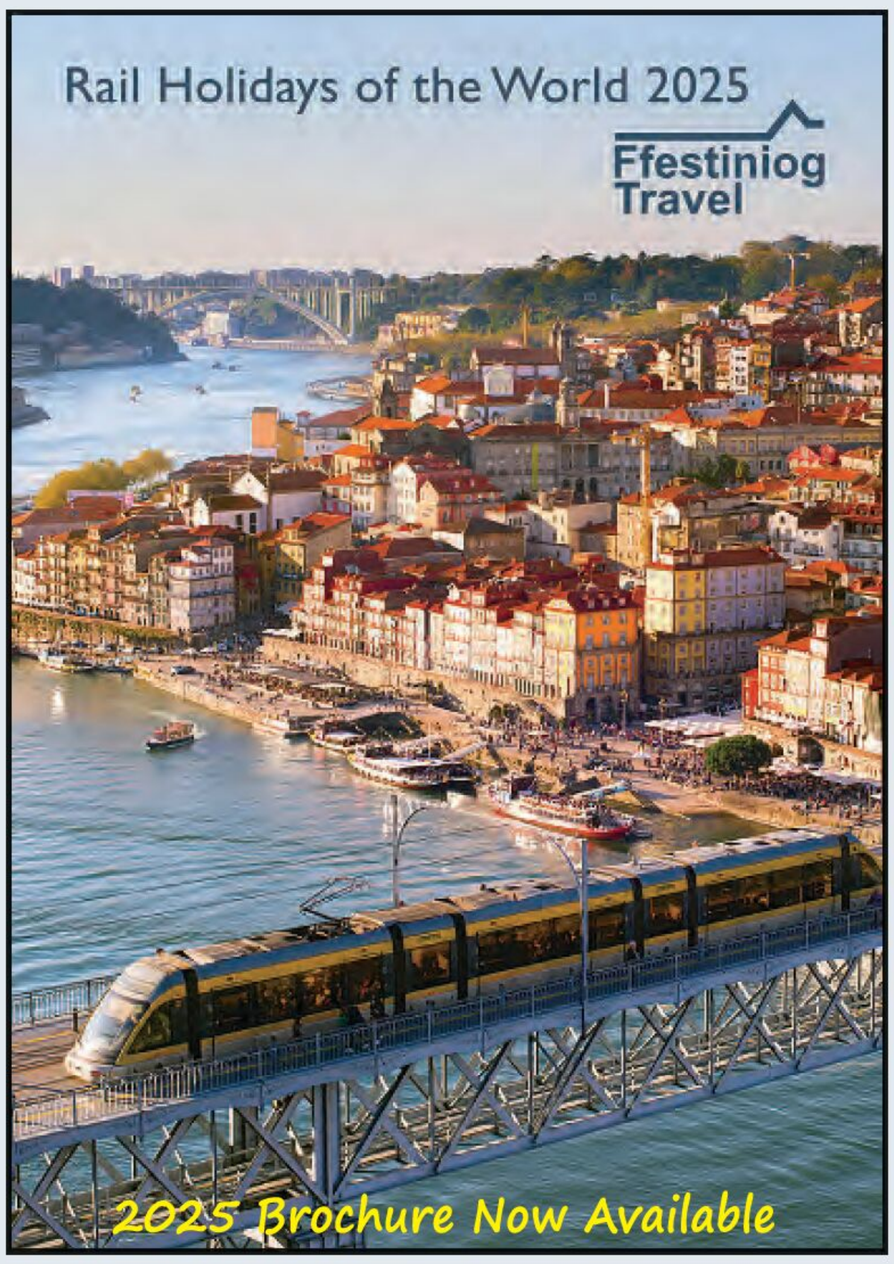

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