LANDSLIP DIVIDES SEVERN VALLEY AHEAD OF 2025 SEASON

ISSUE 329 February 14 – March 14, 2025

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Beachy Head comes top in HRA annual awards

FULL LIST OF WINNERS INSIDE

2025 Events List



BETTON GRANGE PULLS CROWDS AT LEICESTERSHIRE GALAS – AND SET FOR LLANGOLLEN RETURN

■ QUADRUPLE NEW-BUILD LINE-UP FOR BLUEBELL 'GIANTS' GALA ■ RESTORED 'BRIGHTON BELLE' ON MAIN LINE RUN ■ COUNTDOWN TO RAILWAY 200 GREATEST GATHERING AT DERBY ■ NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Homefire®

CPL

FUELLING THE FUTURE

made in the UK

HERITAGE

SMOKELESS STEAM COAL

DESIGNED & TESTED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF HERITAGE RAIL

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



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

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



LNER A4 No.60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* passes Willington en route from Crewe to Derby Litchurch Lane for Alstom's official launch on January 30 of The Greatest Gathering event as part of the Railway 200 programme: see News, page 12 for more details. STEVE DONALD

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

ADVERTISING
Advertising representatives
Andy Bruce 01507 529455
abruce@mortons.co.uk
Fiona Leak 01507 529573
fleak@mortons.co.uk
Group advertising manager
Sue Keily skeily@mortons.co.uk

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

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

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

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

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

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

© Mortons Media Group Ltd.

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

ISSN No 1466-3560

Published
Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
February 26, 2025
Next issue on sale
March 14, 2025

MORTONS MEDIA GROUP LTD
Independent publishers since 1885

Just ask!
Having trouble finding a copy of this magazine?

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Adversity brings out the best achievements

THE Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2025 saw the biggest-ever number of entries in its history, produced many stupendous and richly deserving winners, as listed in Headline News, pages 8-11. It came as no surprise to many that first place in the Steam Locomotive Award category went to the recreation of Brighton H2 Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head*, a guaranteed crowd-puller since its launch last summer. Who would have dared dream for a minute when the volunteer-led operational heritage sector began nearly three-quarters of a century ago with the saving on the Talyllyn Railway?

Then there were double awards for the magnificent Hopetown Darlington attraction, including one from this magazine, and also for the Downpatrick & County Down Railway for its heroic work in recovering from flood devastation.

> "We have every right to be proud of our rail heritage, not only the encyclopaedia of landmarks over the past two centuries, but also what's been accomplished in preservation..."

The keynote to each and every one of the award winners again is achievement, often against seemingly impossible odds, including a lack of cash in this current dire economic climate.

We have now embarked on the nine-month Railway 200 programme of events which will underline our country's legacy as the one which gave modern rail transport to the rest of the world, with the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 years ago.

We have every right to be proud of our rail heritage, not only the encyclopaedia of landmarks over the past two centuries, but also what has been accomplished in the preservation movement – and which must pull out all the stops to safeguard it for many future generations.

A few days before we closed for press, it was announced that the Severn Valley Railway had suffered a landslip which, until it is remedied, will prevent services from running north of Hampton Loade into Bridgnorth. It may be nearly 18 years ago, but the severe flooding following heavy thunderstorms which made this railway – one of the finest heritage lines in the world – impassible throughout for nearly 10 months, to the detriment of the local economy in 2007/8 will never be forgotten.

While we will enjoy the plethora of excellent Railway 200 events, big and small, that are set to entertain and enlighten us during 2025, we must all rally round to ensure that this line, a national treasure, reopens as soon as possible.

July will mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the society which was formed to save the line. We should celebrate that by making an all-out effort to see that the railway has the funds and resources to carry out the necessary work as soon as practical.

Donations to the SVR Resilience Fund are invited at svr.co.uk

Robin Jones Editor

CONTENTS

ISSUE 329
February 14 – March 15, 2025

News



Headline News
- Embankment collapse leaves Severn Valley Railway a divided line
- Heritage Railway Awards: Full list of 'heritage sector' Oscars revealed
- 'Brighton Belle' makes first main line test run appearances
- Bodmin drops 'Wenford' as restructuring sees charitable trust take over railway operations

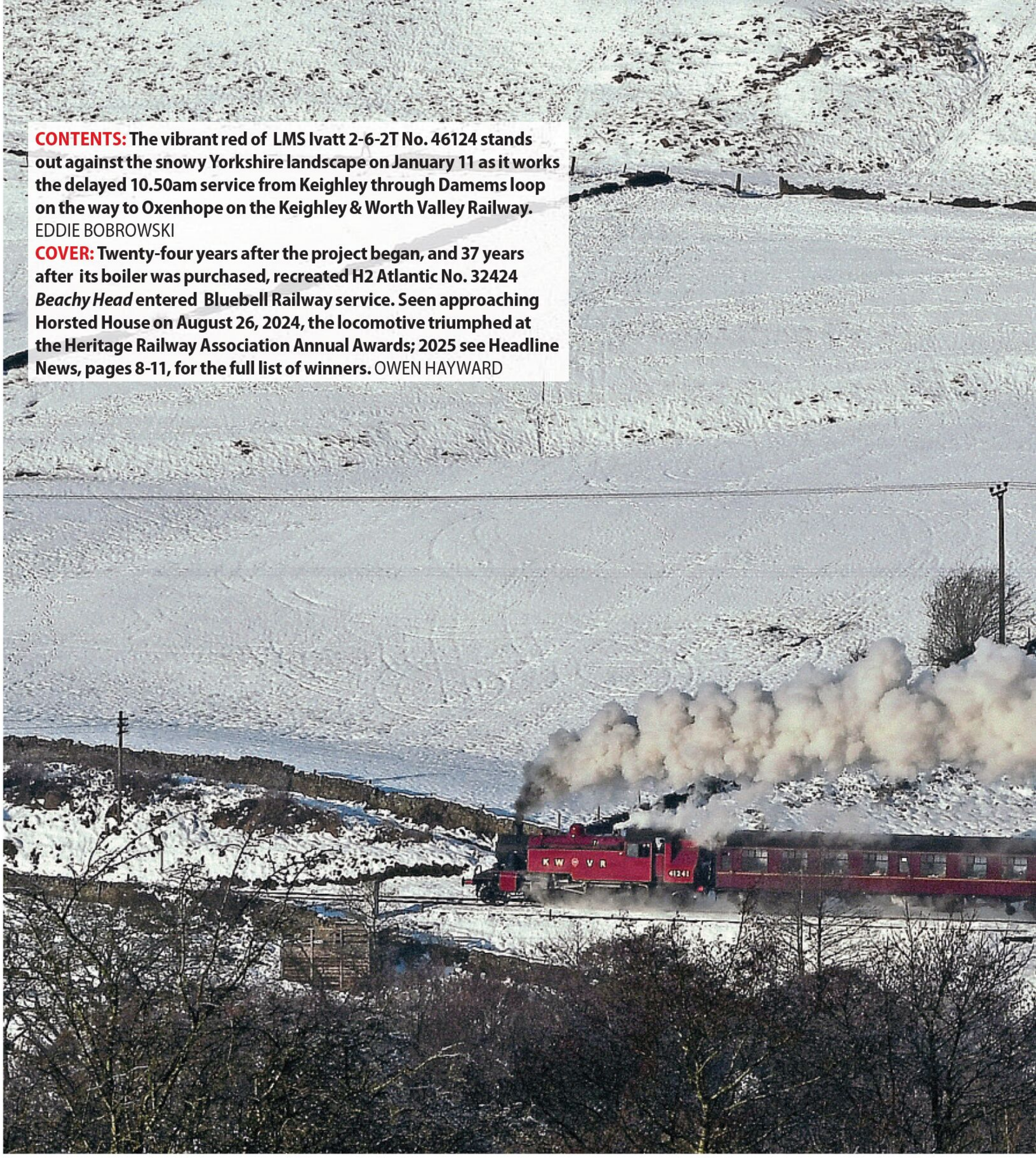


News
- Countdown to Railway 200 Greatest Gathering at Derby works
- Bluebell reveals new-builds celebration line-up for Giants gala
- Llangollen to welcome *Betton Grange* back in spring gala visit
- Unrestored Merchant Navy is searching for a new home
- National Railway Museum unveils 50th anniversary celebration plans
- New hydroshunter shows a promising green future
- £500k needed to help bring narrow gauge steam into Bala town
- Spring debut planned for once 'lost' Hunslet locomotive



Main Line News
- Second final outing for *Royal Scot* retraces route of first tour
- Hastings DEMU tribute tour adds new livery power car to consist
- *Scots Guardsman* earmarked for Settle & Carlisle 150th tour

With Full Regulator 58
Don Benn covers trips with *Clan Line* in 2024, plus *Sir Nigel Gresley* and *City of Wells* in February 1982.



CONTENTS: The vibrant red of LMS Ivatt 2-6-2T No. 46124 stands out against the snowy Yorkshire landscape on January 11 as it works the delayed 10.50am service from Keighley through Damems loop on the way to Oxenhope on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. EDDIE BOBROWSKI

COVER: Twenty-four years after the project began, and 37 years after its boiler was purchased, recreated H2 Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* entered Bluebell Railway service. Seen approaching Horsted House on August 26, 2024, the locomotive triumphed at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards; 2025 see Headline News, pages 8-11, for the full list of winners. OWEN HAYWARD

Regulars

Subscribe Today 30

Centre
No. 6880 *Betton Grange* emerges from the fog at Congerstone Road on the Battlefield Line during the Leicestershire line's January steam gala. JOHN TITLOW



Main Line Itinerary 57
Steam and heritage diesel railtours.

Railwayana 62
Geoff Courtney's regular column.

Up & Running 91
Your guide to upcoming heritage railway running days and events.

Next Stop 97

Features

Home on the Grange
New-build 4-6-0 *Betton Grange*'s busy winter schedule has resulted in it stealing the show at two January steam galas. Despite these lines both being in Leicestershire and less than 20 miles apart, each reported incredible footfall as enthusiasts sought out a post-New Year steam fix. Owen Hayward reports on these two successful events.



Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Duke of Gloucester rises again



As Britain celebrates the world's first steam-hauled passenger train, the country's last main line steam locomotive design is set to return to the national network. John Titlow recounts the history of No. 70000 *Duke of Gloucester*.

Dartmouth's fire train takes to the rails 72
As the threat of summer lineside fires increases, the Dartmouth Steam Railway has worked in partnership with its local fire service to create its own fire-fighting train. The railway's safety officer, Nick Dunn, explains how this came to be.

Preston's quayside heritage line 79
A chapter in its commercial history may have ended, but there is still plenty for the Ribble Steam Railway to focus on for the future. Sally Clifford takes a look behind the scenes at some of the projects taking place – and the people behind them.

2025 Events Calendar 83
From gala events to family fun days, there's something for everyone in this year of celebration. Find out what's happening throughout 2025 at your local heritage railway with our comprehensive annual events listing.

Celebrating Railway 200 88
Celebrations for both Railway 200 and the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary are taking place around the UK on the main line, at heritage lines, and in museums and local communities.

Models



Model News 78
Hornby unveils 2025 range with newly tooled GWR Saint and several preserved identities, and Accurascale showcases decorated samples of Hunslet Austerities and surprise clay hood wagons.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 330

No need to pop to the shops in four weeks' time... simply order your next *HR* from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529.**

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

SUBSCRIBE FROM JUST £47*

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

See page 30



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

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

Embankment slip divides Severn Valley as line between Eardington and Hampton Loade is closed

By John Titlow

THE Severn Valley Railway received reports on January 29 regarding an embankment slippage near Sterns, severing the line between Eardington and Hampton Loade stations. This latest slip came as a surprise, because this particular section of line had not been of concern.

The precise location of the slip is where Mor Brook runs underneath a hidden bridge which supports the railway. Hay Bridge, a popular photographic location, is about 100 yards north.

Previous landslips had taken place at Sterns where a 5mph speed restriction has been in place south of Sterns Cottage in the direction of Hampton Loade station. This section is continually monitored due to the close proximity of the River Severn and is unaffected; however, recent heavy and continual rain has left the land saturated.

Line divided

The section of line is now impassable, and it is uncertain how long before it is rebuilt and trains can once again run to Bridgnorth. The rest of the line, between Kidderminster Town and Hampton Loade, is unaffected and can operate.

On January 30, preliminary inspections took place. The SVR's head of infrastructure, Chris Bond, visited the site and later said: "We've suffered a significant embankment failure and damage to approximately 30 metres of the track and track bed. The area remains in a dangerous state and further slippage may occur, so we are warning people to stay well away.

"We will seek further guidance from specialist contractors, but it is already clear this will be a major infrastructure repair project that will take considerable time and money."

SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We are due to reopen on February 15 for half-term and the start of our 2025 season, but clearly services between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade cannot run.

"We want to reassure passengers who have pre-booked tickets that we will be in touch soon by email, and they don't need to phone us. We will get this sorted out as quickly as we possibly can.

"There is, of course, a further impact on us as a heritage line, and that's the cost we now face to bring our full line back into operation.

"Things were just beginning to stabilise for the SVR following several years of financial struggles, and this is the last thing we needed.

"Inevitably, we are going to have to find the funds to pay for this essential repair and would welcome all the help that we can get. If you would like to assist, we would be extremely grateful, and you can donate to the SVR Resilience Fund at svr.co.uk."

SVR volunteer structural engineer Antony Bartlam has also inspected the slip and said: "There are a number of solutions being considered which may include piling, but there needs to be a balance between the time to carry out the works and the cost. All options in this early stage of the repairs are being considered.



The damaged bridge at Sterns on January 29. It can clearly be seen where the bank has slipped away leaving the track hanging in mid-air. JOHN TITLOW

Detailed investigations

"We have a number of partners who work with the railway sector looking at these options, but until we have more data from a ground investigation, the design options cannot be worked up."

A statement issued on February 3 said: "A number of visits have taken place with specialist engineers, and Network Rail is sending a team of geotechnical and infrastructure experts later in the week beginning February 3, as part of the partnership agreement we have with it. We are carefully building a picture of what's happened, but it's still early days. We need to begin ground investigations by drilling boreholes to gather geotechnical data of what lies beneath the surface. This is important information that will assist with the engineering design of the repairs.

"It is essential that we don't rush this investigation. We need to gather extensive information so we can be sure that we take the most robust and effective measures to repair the embankment for the long term."

Meanwhile, the SVR has received almost £36,000 in donations from many hundreds of supporters, as well as practical offers of help from several sources.

Mr Dunster added: "It's a huge boost to know how much people care about the SVR and how they are prepared to dig deep to help us repair the damage and get our line fully up and running again. We are incredibly grateful to every single person who's rallied round."

Offers of help

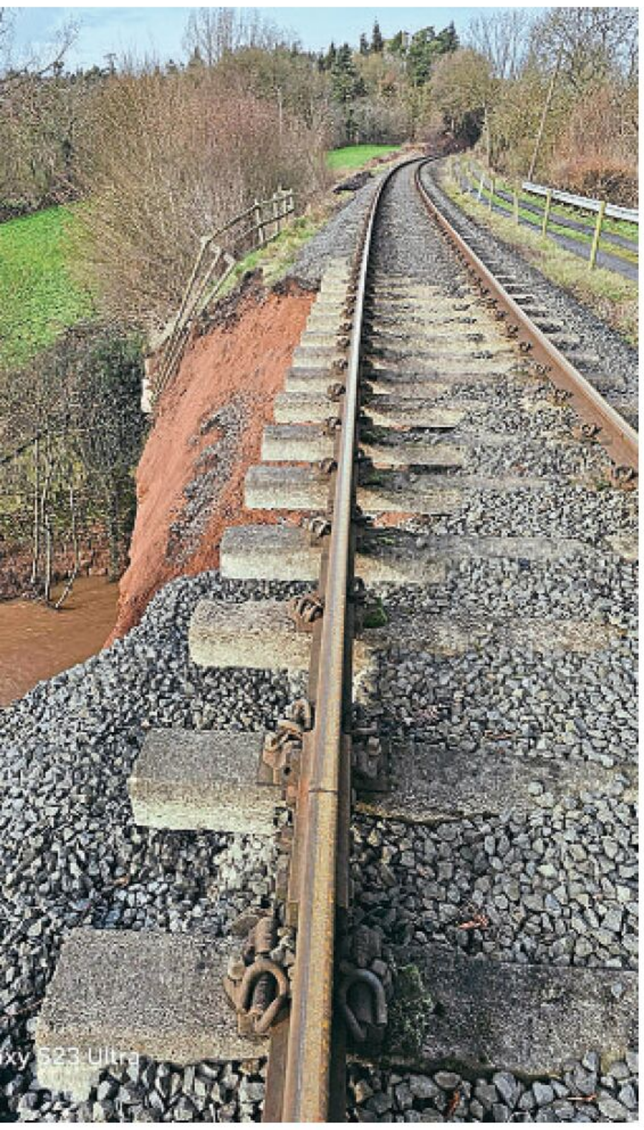
"We have also received offers of practical help, from both specialist companies which want to donate their services and from individuals who say they will join a volunteer working party, when the time is right. All of this support will make a tangible difference," he added.

With half-term services due to commence on February 15, including meetings with the character Paddington Bear at The Engine House, Highley, the SVR is reassuring passengers that they will be able to travel on the unaffected section of its line between Kidderminster and Hampton Loade. A revised timetable



No. 45596 *Bahamas* rounds the curve at Hay Bridge with a footplate experience on August 30, 2024. Where the line curves away at the rear of the train is where the bridge is located, hidden in the trees. JOHN TITLOW

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



About 30 yards of the line is affected. LEIGH KING/SVR

will be in place.

It has been contacting people who pre-booked Bridgnorth departures to offer an alternative departure from Kidderminster. The railway has also confirmed that its new Boogie Lights Express experience will go ahead as planned, starting on February 28.

Relocating locomotives

Having undergone its recent valve and piston examination, BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069 will travel by road to Kidderminster for these services. There will also be a DMU and diesel service.

It is not just the railway that will suffer; the incident will impact businesses in Bridgnorth as many people arrive by train to visit the historic town.

For this to happen now is a bitter blow, especially as the railway was overcoming recent financial and post-Covid problems. Regardless, the railway is looking to the future and will work towards reopening the line as soon as is feasible.

The SVR is renowned for resilience in the face of adversity, as was evident when the line was closed north of Bewdley due to flood damage at 45 separate locations, incurred during thunderstorms in June 2007 and was not reopened until the following March. Its strong team of working members will all pull together to reopen the railway at the earliest opportunity. At present, there is no timescale.

However, unique BR 8P Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* will still come from Tyseley for testing when it is ready: see feature, pages 66-71.



Top-and-tailed by Class 20s, the restored four-car 'Brighton Belle' unit sits at Chester on January 28 following arrival from Crewe on the first of two test runs that day. TOM MCATEE

'Brighton Belle' Pullman EMU makes first main line appearance on test

By Owen Hayward

RESTORATION of a 5BEL Pullman EMU may be something that has slipped under the radar for some observers, but its sudden appearance on the main line at the end of January saw enthusiasts look to Chester as the first test runs were carried out.

Launched in 2008 to return one of these luxurious dining trains to main line service, the 5BEL Trust has worked with Ramparts Engineering and Locomotive Services Limited to restore four vehicles to operational condition, with work on a fifth due to be started soon to bring the train back to its original five-car formation.

The 'Brighton Belle' units comprised three sets of five-car EMUs introduced by the Southern Railway in 1932 for the prestigious London-Brighton dining service. Initially operated under the name 'Southern Belle,' it was rebranded in June 1934. The last of these ran on April 30, 1972, following which all vehicles were withdrawn. Interestingly, all bar one survive, with one of the driving ends, *Car No. 90,* destroyed by a fire in 1991. Four are owned and stored by Belmond, with a further three in operation on its main line tours. *Car No. 89* (another driving trailer) currently resides at Fen Drayton, while the remaining survivors are owned by the 5BEL Trust.

Restoration work on four of these had previously been carried out at Rampart's workshops at Barrow Hill, with the four restored vehicles later transferred to LSL's Crewe Works for finishing off and certification.

Progress on preparing the current four-car train for main line operation had been kept behind closed doors, but that all changed on January 27 when the consist was seen outdoors in the work's yard and timings appeared on the tracking website RealTime Trains. The following day, the 'Brighton Belle' ran two return trips to Chester, worked top-and-tail by two Class 20s owing to the absence of third rail electrics on the route. The trips were undertaken to check the riding qualities of the vehicles, with speed being gradually increased on each journey. Further testing then took place on January 29 between the same two cities.

5BEL Trust chair Ian Brown said: "The trustees are very pleased to announce that the work to restore the 'Brighton Belle' is now largely complete, to the stage that it is ready to go out for initial loco-hauled train ride testing. The restoration work has been completed to a very high standard by LSL at its maintenance facility at Crewe.

"A big thank-you goes to all the train's supporters and donors who have stayed with the project despite earlier restoration difficulties and delays.

"You and our partners at LSL have achieved the seemingly impossible. Lovingly restored to original condition with the addition of modern safety features, an accessible toilet and two refitted modern kitchens, it is in as-new condition or better and is ready for testing and commissioning.

"The 5BEL has returned to Crewe for LSL to fit central door locking (CDL). This is a major financial liability for the trust, but we have decided to complete CDL fitment prior to the train entering service to avoid having to request an exemption from the ORR and then withdraw the train later for subsequent fitment.

"Following this, the 'Belle' will be ready to go as a fully certified electric train. The trustees have contracted with the Royal Scot Trust to operate and market the train alongside LSL's range of quality dining trains across the network. The focus here will be the electrified lines of the former Southern Region."

Initially, the EMU will run in a four-car consist, comprising trailer parlour kitchen first *Doris* and parlour third *Gravetye Manor* (formerly *Car No. 85*) and driving motor brakes *Mabel* (*Car No. 91*) and *Beryl* (*Car No. 88*). However, kitchen first *Hazel* is stored at Rowsley (along with parlour third *Car No. 87*) and will see restoration commence soon to bring the 'Belle' back up to full strength.

"The trust is currently reviewing the engineering and fund-raising feasibility of restoring the fifth car," Ian added. "This will be subject to a separate fundraising initiative with a view to raising an estimated £1.5 million. The aim would be to insert the fifth car in the train when this is complete."



Class 20 No. 20132 leads the 'Brighton Belle' test run towards Chester at Beeston Castle on January 29. KALLUM BUCKLEY

Beachy Head, Hopetown Darlington, Downpatrick and Severn Valley among prize winners in biggest-ever HRA Awards

By Robin Jones

BRITAIN'S newest steam locomotive, the replica of Brighton Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head*, the new Hopetown Darlington visitor attraction, the expansion of the National Railway Museum's Locomotion site in Shildon and Cornwall's multi-gauge Lappa Valley Railway were among the winners at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2025.

More than 200 staff and volunteers from heritage railways, tramways and rolling stock groups came together at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead for the awards evening on Saturday, February 8.

The Railway 200-themed event, sponsored by Fox and Edwards Events, celebrated the largest shortlist ever seen for the awards, which recognise excellence or innovation in almost every aspect of heritage railway and tramway restoration, preservation and operation.

The judging was carried out by a panel of experts from the sector, chaired by the NRM's Anthony Coulls.



Hauling the Bluebell Railway's vintage stock, Brighton H2 Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* climbs Freshfield Bank in beautiful autumn light on October 11, 2024. JOHN TITLOW

Steam champion

Beachy Head is unique among the currently completed new-build projects as a locomotive from the Southern Region, coupled with its Atlantic wheel configuration and LBSCR origins.

It is also the only example of a tender locomotive derived from that pre-Grouping company to be found in operational service in the UK, filling a major gap in the country's heritage fleet.

As highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 323, it made its debut at the Bluebell Railway on August 18, 2024.

The clear winner of the Steam Locomotive Award, sponsored by Paintman Paints, the engineering achievements and passion to recreate the distinctive locomotive during the 25-year project to recreate the H2 class engine that narrowly evaded preservation wowed judges. Receiving highly commended certificates were the Strathspey Railway's newly-restored Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46464, known as 'The Carmyllie Pilot', Severn Valley Railway Stanier mogul No. 13268, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway GWR 2-8-0 No. 3850 and 2ft gauge Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Sybil* on the West Lancashire Light Railway.

Railway of the Year

The Lappa Valley Railway was named Railway of the Year after judges were impressed by the quality and forward-thinking approach of the attraction that welcomes more than 100,000 visitors annually to its 15in, 10 ¼ in and 7 ¼ in gauge railways. As reported in issue 321, based at St Newlyn East on part of the trackbed of the GWR Newquay-Perranporth line, it celebrated its 50th birthday on June 14-16 last year.

On the Sunday morning, exactly 50 years to the minute, the team recreated the first-ever service as Severn Lamb 0-6-4T *Zebedee* pulled a full train, including the three original carriages, along the mile-long track between Benny Halt and East Wheal Rose.





Above: Inside the Vale of Rheidol Railway's new museum.

Left: Tramway Museum Society restorationists with London County Council 'Bluebird' No. 1.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

More than £6 million has been invested in Lappa Valley over the last 10 years.

The new Achievement of the Year category, supported by Wrigleys Solicitors, generated the largest number of entries for any single category, giving judges a tough time to select a winner. For what is believed to be the first time at the HRA Awards, a joint winner was decided upon, honours being shared by the Downpatrick & County Down Railway for its recovery from devastating floods and the Severn Valley Railway for its pioneering partnership with Network Rail. The East Lancashire Railway's hugely successful Santa specials and the Northampton & Lamport Railway's Boughton extension were runners-up.





Above: Weathering the storm: The Downpatrick & County Down Railway after the floods of November 2, 2023, as reported in issue 313.

Right: Inside the Central Tramway at Scarborough.

Left: Pullman *Car No. 54* on the Bluebell Railway.



Flood of appreciation

The Team of the Year Award, supported by Destination, had a standout winner in the shape of the D&CDR's flood recovery team. Its work to reopen the 5ft 3in gauge line after the devastating floodwaters really caught the judges' attention, giving the line a richly deserved second award.

Highly commended were the group that reopened the Alford Valley Community Railway in Scotland, the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland electrical team, known as The E Squad, and the Watercress Line's education and outreach team.

Another new category for the 2025 awards was Station of the Year, supported by Hargreaves Steaming Coals, and the clear winner was the Severn Valley Railway's Eardington, a 'hidden gem' restored to 1930s GWR condition. The award is a welcome boost for the team behind the station, which is currently isolated by the devastating embankment failure, as reported in Headline News, page 6.

Runners-up were the twin stations of Lynton & Lynmouth on the cliff railway of the same name and Weybourne station on the North Norfolk Railway.

The stunning restoration of London County Council 'Bluebird' No. 1 by the Tramway Museum Society at Crich won first place in the Diesel and Electric Locomotion category. The painstaking 10-year restoration of this historically significant car impressed judges with its attention to detail.

In a close-run field, LCC No. 1 narrowly pipped Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway Class 20 No. 20 228, Tanfield Railway-based Fowler 0-6-0DH *Ribblesdale Cement No. 6* and Seaton Tramway's rebuild of Modern Electric Tramways Car No. 23 to the post.

The combination of Pullman splendour and a well-executed, sensitive adaptation for passengers with reduced mobility meant that the Bluebell Railway carried off the Morgan Award for Rolling Stock.

The Sussex line's work on Pullman *Car No. 54* meant that the 1922-built vehicle was the narrow victor in an eclectic field.

The Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway-based restoration by Stephen Middleton of 1877-built GER royal saloon No. 8, the Bahamas Locomotive Society's breakdown train at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and the Ffestiniog Railway's recreated carriage truck were highly commended.

Rheidol reaps rewards

The amazing transformation of Aberystwyth's former standard gauge locomotive shed into the Vale of Rheidol Railway's new museum took the Infrastructure Award. The quality of the work and its transformative results for visitors impressed judges, as did the building's exquisite wooden block floor. Highly commended were the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's Bridge 27 renewal project at Haworth (see issue 327), the Gwili Railway's Abergwili Junction extension project, and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's work on its landmark Stanway Viaduct.

A high-tech approach to safety was the winner of Innovation of the Year Award, supported by Railway 200. The Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway received the honour for its work to digitise its safety management in a project that could prove to be a trailblazer for the sector. Runners-up were the East Lancashire Railway for its tailored Santa specials for those with special educational needs and disabilities and the North Norfolk Railway for its peer support group.

Another funicular, the Central Tramway in Scarborough, carried off the Marketing and Communications Award. The Victorian cliff railway's approach to marketing and communications shone with its strategic and measurable approach that generated real business results.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's marketing campaigns and the Kent & East Sussex Railway's Mr Doodle event were runners-up.

*Pictures supplied by HRA.



Exmoor Steam Railway-built 0-4-2T *Ruby* of 1997 carries a headboard celebrating the half centenary of the popular Cornish multi-gauge attraction.



On Thursday, September14, 2023, the first of the present-day timetabled services stopped at Eardington station, a four-coach train hauled by LMS Ivatt 4MT No. 43106, to much jubilation.



Funicular goes high-tech: New digital equipment in operation at the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway.

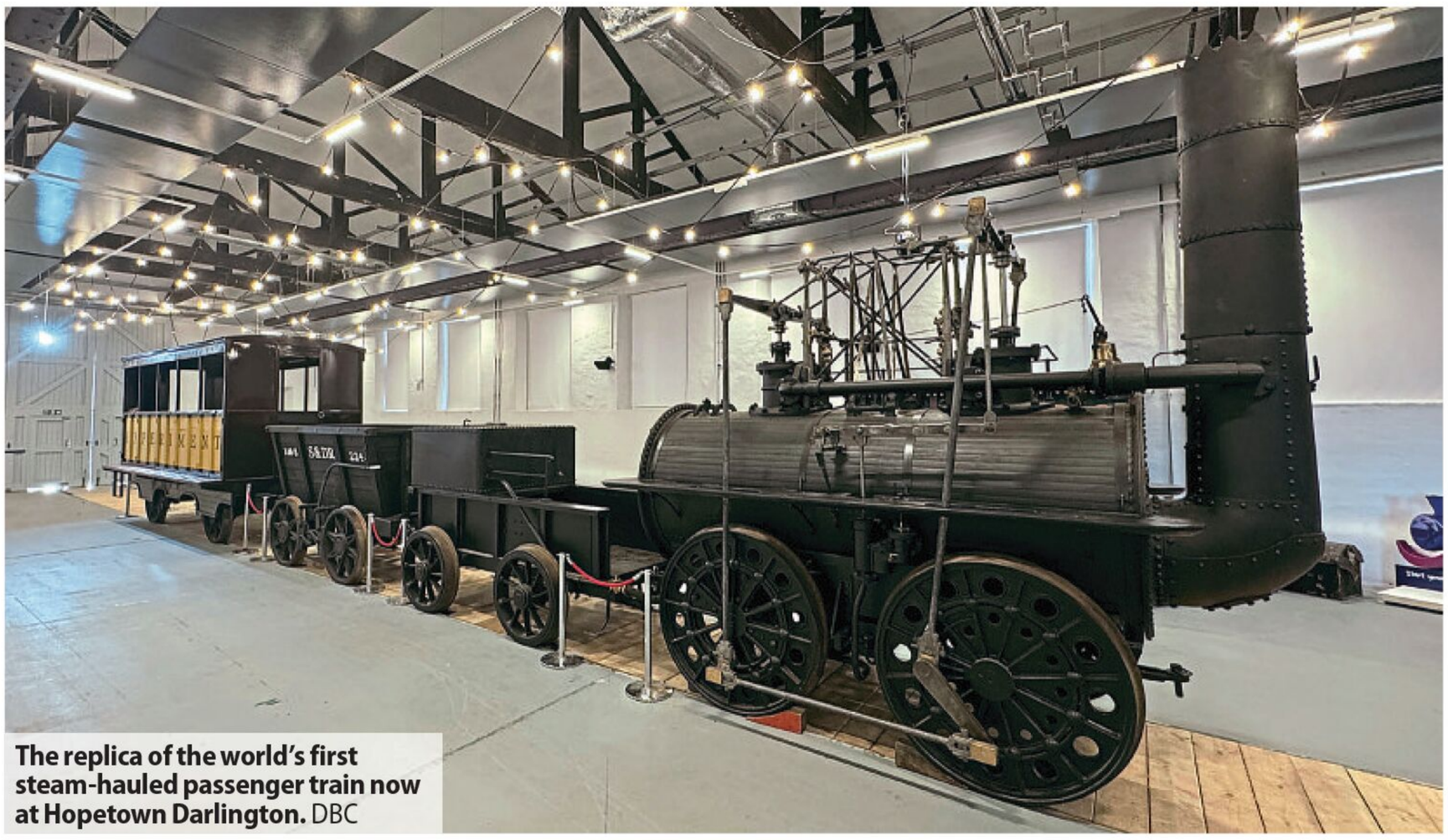
Double awards for Hopetown Darlington museum refurb

ALONGSIDE the 12 categories open to nominations from the heritage rail sector each year, the HRA Awards has two discretionary awards for outstanding projects or people. This year, the winners both had distinct Railway 200 links.

The Manisty Award for Excellence went to the National Railway Museum, in its 50th anniversary year, for its expansion of the Locomotion site in Shildon with the New Hall, together with the dedicated work of the teams responsible for moving and caring for its collections, and the ongoing transformation of its main site in York (see News, pages 18/19).

Hopetown Darlington was awarded the Railway 200 Special Award for the transformation and expansion of Darlington's Head of Steam museum. The historic North Road site in the town, which has long been a focus of Stockton & Darlington Railway heritage, has become a widely acclaimed and multi-faceted heritage site which opened to the public on July 16 last year. As well as its own collections and extensive facilities for exhibitions, lectures and tours, it is also host to three locomotive groups, as featured in *Heritage Railway* issue 322.

Furthermore, Hopetown Darlington was presented with the HRA Innovation Award, sponsored by *Heritage Railway* magazine/ Mortons Ltd.



The replica of the world's first steam-hauled passenger train now at Hopetown Darlington. DBC

Focal point for education

Editor Robin Jones said: "Hopetown Darlington has appeared in the right place at the right time, and it has established itself as a defining gateway to the celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the world's first passenger steam railway.

"Britain is renowned for its fabulous railway museums, but the ingenious use of modern technology to showcase many of the exhibits inside will springboard Hopetown into a third century of modern rail travel, promoting our rich heritage through a combination of entertainment and education. Where else, for instance, can you visit a museum to see new standard gauge steam locomotives under construction?

"Just as William Shakespeare made Stratford-upon-Avon an international focal point for literature and the arts, so Hopetown is on track to make the town the centrepiece of global rail transport heritage.

"The £37 million spent by Darlington Borough Council on the project will reap rich dividends many times over for decades to come.

"The award is given for interpretation of railway history and heritage, and Hopetown's trademark is interpretation in its purest sense."

Three main events are to be staged at Hopetown this year. Railway Pioneers, presented from April 4 to June 22 as part of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 festival, presents three iconic locomotives that will be on show, illustrating the advancements of rail technology in the early 19th century and engineering innovation which led to the opening of the S&DR. Steam to the Future, also presented by S&DR200, will comprise an exhibition taking a playful but important look at the future using commissioned art pieces showcasing the science behind how locomotives and steam works, and will run from July 11 to October 5.



Left: Judith McNicol, the then director of the National Railway Museum, speaks in front of prototype Deltic DP1 at the official opening on May 24, 2024, of Locomotion's New Hall, to house Europe's biggest undercover rolling stock collection. DREW FORSYTH/ NRM

The climax will be the 200th anniversary journey on September 27, when the replica *Locomotion No.1* will haul the newly-built replica passenger carriage *Experiment* and three chaldron wagons across nearby Skerne Bridge on Saturday, September 27.

Meanwhile, Darlington Borough Council has increased its budget for Hopetown by 24% from £380,000 to £469,000 for 2025/2026 as it continues to expand the facility, with new visitor spaces at the 7½-acre site.

New free comprehensive modern traction locomotive database launched

A NEW definitive public online database of every diesel, electric and gas turbine locomotive that has run on the national network from the 1890s through to the very latest changes in stock each month has been launched by the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society. All renumbering, naming and disposal information is included in the Modern Traction Locomotive Database, and each reallocation and explanatory notes where appropriate.

Its unique feature is that searches can be made by number, number range, class and so on, as well as by name, and there is a 'free text' search for disposal and preservation information. The database, accessible to all at locodata.org.uk, can be used to find details of every locomotive allocated to a particular depot or a combination of depots over any specified time period, and search results can be downloaded as pdf files.

Developed using thousands of hours of volunteer time, it is the culmination of the RCTS digitisation project which has also seen nearly every one of its books published since the 1950s being made available for download, along with every edition of its house magazine, *The Railway Observer*.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

The people making a big difference to rail heritage

THE outright winner of the Lord Faulkner Young Volunteer of the Year Award went to Elise Campbell, from the Tanfield Railway, who lives less than five miles from the awards event.

Judges were impressed with Elise's dedication in permanent way, her versatility, and the fact that she is also using her volunteer experience to kick-start a career on the national network as a signaller.

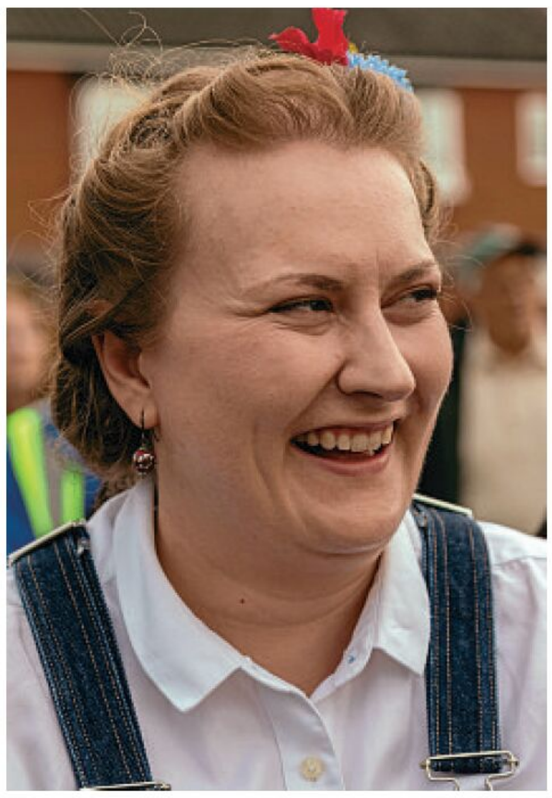
Highly commended were Jack Baldwin, from the Severn Valley Railway, who led a team of dedicated young volunteers taking forward the Hydroshunter project (as reported in News, page 21), Aodhan Kavanagh, from the Kent & East Sussex Railway, and Alex Raybould, from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway.

The Rising Star category, supported by PNP Events, is designed to celebrate up-and-coming staff and volunteers in heritage rail. The North Norfolk Railway's visitor experience and marketing manager, Hannah Drury, was the victor following a speedy rise from junior staff to becoming part of the line's senior management group.

Hannah joined the Poppy Line in 2022 and quickly became an invaluable member of the team, serving on the senior management group, working closely with the general manager, and taking a lead on most of the railway's commercial activities.



Young Volunteer of the Year Elise Campbell.



Rising star at Sheringham: NNR marketing manager Hannah Drury.

Just pipped to the post were Jack Ataou, from the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway, Luke Ryan, from the Talyllyn Railway, and Seb Welsh, from the West Somerset Railway.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "This year, perhaps more than any, the HRA Awards has demonstrated the determination of heritage rail to rise above the constant challenges our sector faces. From the stunning recreation of *Beachy Head* to the battles against the floodwaters at Downpatrick, this year's winners show that heritage railway people do astonishing things to make this sector what it is.

"The first few weeks of 2025 have shown that the challenges aren't likely to stop – but this event gives the evidence needed that heritage rail will continue to rise to meet them.

"Congratulations to each and every winner are more than merited, and runners-up should know that this has been the most hotly-contested HRA Awards in history, so making the finals is recognition of their achievement."

Entries for the 2026 Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards are expected to open during the autumn.

Bodmin drops Wenford as heritage trust takes over line's operations

THE Bodmin & Wenford Railway has become the latest heritage line to consolidate its operating arms and hand over operating control to a single body.

In recent months both the Severn Valley and North Norfolk railways have announced restructuring proposals of its operating companies (*Heritage Railway* issues 327 and 328 respectively), which have been put to shareholders to be vote on, while the Bodmin Railway is already well advanced in this matter – with the line becoming the responsibility of the Bodmin Railway Heritage Trust as of February 1.

Like many lines, the BWR had comprised several separate entities. Since 1984 the Bodmin & Wenford Railway plc was in charge of its operations, with the B&WR Trust as custodian of the principal assets, while volunteers and supporters formed the Bodmin Railway Preservation Society.

For the better

Following the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the railway was able to survive only thanks to the three bodies coming together, with a railway statement describing it as the trio "working more closely than they had since the railway was first formed." A post-pandemic funding award from the Cultural Recovery Fund came with financial provision towards the costs of restructuring the railway as it sought to improve its future resilience, and help and guidance was sought from within the sector and wider professional community.

It is hoped that the restructure and takeover by the trust will simplify its organisational structure, bringing about improved synergy and reduced running costs of the three individual bodies. In turn, the railway can reduce the number of people it needs to rely on at an executive level, while funding benefits include improved tax efficiency (particularly in claiming Gift Aid) and improved eligibility for grants and funding avenues.

Evolved with time

A railway statement said: "After a considerable amount of background work, the proposed restructured arrangements were approved by the boards of the plc and the trust, as well as the society's committee. At their annual general meetings in 2023, society members and the plc shareholders voted in favour of the proposed restructuring and the process could get underway.

"Under the new arrangements, the trust has evolved to enable it to take over the running of the railway. As well as a new set of Articles of Association for the trust, the opportunity was taken to revise its name, and it is now the Bodmin Railway Heritage Trust."

The previous plc has become BR Trading (Cornwall) and is responsible for the shops and catering outlets, with the newly-formed trust being the main shareholder and thus able to benefit from any trading surpluses.

The society has merged with the trust, sharing its tangible assets, money and members, who are now members of the trust. At this year's forthcoming AGM, members will be able to vote on the election of new and additional trustees, giving members a much greater influence on the running of the railway.

The statement also highlighted that "Bodmin and Wenford has disappeared from our name and branding – this reflects the realisation that we are no longer linked to Wenford, but we do still have the strong aspiration to return to Wadebridge. When that happens, you can expect further name changes but until then, we are Bodmin Railway."

Lottery grant supports Stockton & Darlington heritage after Railway 200

WHILE Railway 200 will this year celebrate the 200th birthday of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and start of the world's modern railway era, a £238,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund will ensure the long-term legacy of this internationally important 26-mile-long line long beyond the celebrations.

The grant has been awarded to The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway which, with support from Durham County Council, Darlington Borough Council and Stockton Borough Council, will allow the charity to take a leading role in the future management of the route. It will build on more than a decade of voluntary efforts by the charity's members to maintain the line, research its historical importance, and to engage the local community with its rail heritage.

Work funded by the grant will include commissioning a conservation management plan to inform the conservation of the unique heritage features along the line, access to the sites and the protection of wildlife habitats there, the development of a business and fundraising plan to ensure long-term sustainability of the charity's work, and to support and recruit volunteers.

Friends chairman Niall Hammond said: "The internationally significant heritage of the S&DR is something the people of north-east England are immensely proud of, and with this grant we can develop a fantastic partnership of volunteers, community and professionals to both safeguard its future and provide socio-economic and education benefits."

As previously reported, the friends group is campaigning to save the world's first railway station, Heighington, in County Durham, dating from 1826/7, which was targeted by vandals and neglected, and is on the Historic England Heritage At Risk Register; www.justgiving.com/campaign/save-heighington-station has received £130,000 towards its £500,000 target.

Spa Valley fundraising track walks to replace bridge

THE Severn Valley Railway is not the only line facing major infrastructure challenges. As reported in issue 328, the Spa Valley Railway also faces a hefty bill to replace one of the bridges along the line between its main station and locomotive depot at Tunbridge Wells West and the halfway point of its route at Groombridge. A £300,000 appeal was launched to fund this vital project, with hopes of replacing the rapidly expiring structure at Broom Lane later this year.

On January 2 the railway hosted a sponsored Stride the Line, in which participants were able to walk along the track as far as Birchden Junction, where the heritage line meets and runs parallel to the Southern Uckfield branch.

Encouraging start

A total of 175 people signed up to take part and raised more than £4000, bringing the total amount raised at time of this issue going to press to just shy of £20,000 in online and cash donations, something general manager Jonnie Pay said had "most of the design cost covered." He added: "We are grateful to everyone who has donated. We know £300,000 is a huge target to reach, but every small amount donated goes a long way to helping the project."

In 2012, the railway also suffered a landslip just outside Tunbridge Wells West. While the ground remains stable enough to run trains over it at a reduced speed, with the track alignment having changed for this, it is another area that is constantly monitored, and railway has indicated it will also need further expensive works in future.

Another sponsored track walk is planned in the summer on a date yet to be confirmed. Donations to the appeal can be made at justgiving.com/campaign/spvr-broomlane

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

Countdown is underway to Alstom's great Railway 200 celebration loco gathering

By Robin Jones

ALSTOM, one of the world's largest manufacturers of railway equipment, has announced details of the UK's largest ever gathering of historic rail vehicles – The Greatest Gathering – to mark the 200th anniversary of the modern railway.

On August 1-3, Alstom's historic Litchurch Lane site in Derby will open to the public for the first time in more 50 years. During the three-day festival, Britain's biggest and oldest remaining train factory will host more than 50 rolling stock exhibits from the past, present and future of the railways.

Senior figures from the rail industry attended the official launch event at Derby on January 30, with Gian Luca Erbacci, Europe region president at Alstom, Emma Roberts, programme manager at Railway 200, and Baggy Shanker, Labour MP for Derby South, giving speeches.

Vice Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire, Col John Wilson OBE DL, and legendary music and rail enthusiast Pete Waterman were also present.

Traction from all eras

Steam, diesel and electric locomotives were exhibited at Litchurch Lane on the eve of tickets going on sale, and they or other examples from the same class will appear at the event. The display included LNER A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* and Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35018 *British India Line*, both of which arrived at Derby under their own power for the launch.

Also present were Class 37 No. 37800 *Cassiopeia*, Class 50 No. 50049 *Defiance* and the recently preserved Merseyrail Class 507 EMU No. 507001.



Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35018 *British India Line* at Litchurch Lane. ALSTOM

Alongside displays of historic and modern main line locomotives, The Greatest Gathering will also feature rides along Derby's test track, and a variety of narrow gauge trains will be in operation. Fairground attractions, street food and live music will also add to the festival feel.

Layouts staged by some of the biggest names in model railways – including a section of Pete Waterman's record-breaking Railnuts layout – will take centre stage in the Model Railway Village, while historians and industry leaders will take part in engaging talks and discussions in the Mobility Theatre. Many thousands of visitors are expected to attend during the event's three days.

Alstom's legacy dates back to the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway on September 27, 1825. The first locomotive to run on the S&DR – *Locomotion No. 1* – was built by the Newcastle-based Robert Stephenson & Company, the first in the world created specifically to build railway engines and later manufactured several of the first locomotives for other countries. Through successive mergers, the Robert Stephenson Company became part of Alstom in 1989, giving the company a direct link to the dawn of the railways.

"The Greatest Gathering, presented by Alstom for Railway 200, is a unique opportunity to celebrate not only the incredible progress of the past two centuries, but also the bright future of rail," said Gian Luca Erbacci. "Since 1825, Alstom has played a pivotal role in shaping rail innovation and our Litchurch Lane site remains at the heart of that legacy. This event is about bringing people together to reflect on what we have achieved collectively and to inspire the next generation to push the boundaries of what's possible in sustainable transport."

Connecting people

Litchurch Lane is one of the world's largest rolling stock factories and the only UK facility that designs, engineers, builds and tests trains for both domestic and export markets. The factory was opened by the Midland Railway in 1876, and the city of Derby has been building trains continually since 1839. In 2022, Derby was chosen by the Government as the home of Great British Railways following a vote by the public between contender cities.

"Railway 200 is once-in-a-generation opportunity to celebrate rail's role in building connections and driving prosperity," said Emma. "Our railways are here for everyone. They bring friends and family together and enable us to enjoy new opportunities and experiences. It's wonderful that



Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.





Above: Andy Mellors, managing director at Avanti West Coast; John Smith OBE, chief executive officer at GB Railfreight; Emma Roberts, programme manager at Railway 200; Gian Luca Erbacci, Europe region president at Alstom; James Dobson, operations delivery manager at Avanti West Coast; Baggy Shanker, Labour MP for Derby South; and music mogul Pete Waterman. ALSTOM

Left: Class 507 EMU No. 507001 taken across the Severn Bridge en route to Derby. CLASS 507 PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Alstom is marking Railway 200 with this fun-packed festival for everyone to enjoy in Derby, the new home of the railway."

As a family-friendly event which is being supported by the wider industry and heritage operators, interactive science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities will feature at Alstom's 90-acre site during the event. Meanwhile, career pathways into the rail industry will be showcased among festival participants.

Nameplate displays and trade stands will also feature, with many more attractions to be announced by Alstom and its partners over the coming months.

Plenty of capacity

Tickets are priced at £30 for adults and £15 for children (aged five to 15), with a family ticket (two adults and two children) costing £65 – plus booking fees. Children under five go free; Alstom has said that 10,000 tickets are available for each day.

All profits will be split between Railway 200's five chosen charities – Alzheimer's Research UK, Railway Benefit Fund, Railway Children, Railway Mission and Transport Benevolent Fund CIO – and charitable railway heritage partners. To obtain tickets, visit www.alstom.com/greatest-gathering



Left: At the official launch of The Greatest Gathering are, left to right, Class 390 Pendolino No. 390200, LNER A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, Class 50 No. 50049 *Defiance*, Merchant Navy No. 35018 *British India Line* and Class 37 No. 37800 *Cassiopeia*. ALSTOM

Gresley set for Forth Bridge summer

LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* is to haul a series of five special trains over the Forth Bridge in August.

SRPS Railtours and the Sir Nigel Gresley Locomotive Trust, in association with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society and Locomotive Services Ltd, are working together to provide these services from Edinburgh.

Two trips will run each day over the Fife Circle on August 14 and 18, and with a tour to Aberdeen on August 23.

Trust chairman Nigel Wilson said: "I am very pleased that we have this opportunity to work with SRPS and in particular the return to Aberdeen, where *Sir Nigel Gresley* was based from 1962 until 1966 when it was purchased for preservation by SNGLT. I believe this will be our locomotive's first visit to the Granite City since 1974!

"The trust aims to make our locomotive accessible to as wide an audience as possible and these tours will be a very special opportunity to experience a trip on the main line network with *Sir Nigel* at the front."

SRPS Railtours chairman Alasdair Eadington said: "I am delighted to announce that SRPS Railtours will be offering steam-hauled specials over the famous Forth Bridge during our 55th anniversary year with a very famous locomotive which last featured on one of our trains in 2011."



Built to work over the Stainmore route in 1884, inspection saloon No. 21661 will return to Kirkby Stephen this summer for S&DR bicentenary celebrations. SRC

Stainmore's first gala guest is a coach which has local links!

LOCOMOTIVES are traditionally the highlight of a gala, but for the Stainmore Railway Company's Stockton & Darlington bicentenary celebrations at Kirkby Stephen East, a carriage has been the first visiting announcement.

Built in 1871, clerestory third saloon No. 1661 was originally built as a six-wheel carriage for the S&DR, passing into North Eastern Railway ownership in 1876, and it was modified to be an inspection saloon for the company's locomotive superintendent Edward Fletcher in 1884. In 1904 it was rebuilt into a 40ft-long carriage with bogies. Famous for its appearance in EMI's 1970 film adaptation of Edith Nesbit's The Railway Children, in which it was used as the Old Gentleman's Saloon and filmed at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, where the carriage still resides, it is believed to be the only surviving operational carriage built for the S&DR.

Furthermore, it was built specifically for working over the Stainmore route, meaning its visit to the railway this August bank holiday will see it return to familiar metals for the first time in several decades.

Visiting locomotives were also under negotiation for the August 23-25 event as this issue went to press.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES SEE PAGE 30



Bluebell 'Giants' gala becomes the great new-build gathering

By Owen Hayward

NEW-BUILD steam has dominated headlines in recent times, with LBSCR H2 Atlantic 4-4-2 No. 32424 *Beachy Head* having just carried off the Heritage Railway Association's Steam Locomotive Award 2025 (see Headline News, page eight).

It was only a matter of time before one of the UK's heritage lines would focus on these 21st-century steam locomotives for an event, and keen to celebrate its 65th anniversary as well as Railway 200, the Bluebell Railway is set to become the first such line to seize the opportunity. Its annual Giants of Steam weekend in October will be a celebration of new-build steam – with the popular event's date being moved back a week to accommodate the three visiting locomotives which have been booked to appear.

Previously advertised to take place on October 10-12, the event has been rescheduled to October 17-19 to facilitate the availability of the visitors, with the railway describing the gala as "the biggest gathering of newly-built operational standard gauge steam locomotives" to date. Last year saw two revived classes of locomotive enter service just months apart, with the Bluebell's own *Beachy Head* launched in August just a few weeks after the public debut of GWR Grange 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* (pictured pages 42-51) at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's annual Cotswold Festival of Steam gala in May. Having visited three other lines since then, and with further bookings potentially on the horizon for 2025, the 81st Grange will head for Sussex this autumn to join *Beachy Head* and work services between East Grinstead and Sheffield Park.

The Grange will be followed by another GWR recreation, with Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* also set to appear. Completed in 2019 at the Didcot Railway Centre, No. 2999 is the 78th member of the GWR's 2900 class. Designed by George Jackson Churchward and built at Swindon Works, three prototypes were built during 1902/03. Each was built as a 4-6-0 but the third, No. 171, was converted to a 4-4-2 in 1904 to enable a comparison of performance with a French-built de Glehn Compound. While No. 171 reverted to its original wheel arrangement in 1907, 13 of the Saints class would be built with a 4-4-2 configuration in 1905. As the merits of the 4-6-0 arrangement became more apparent, these GWR Atlantics were all rebuilt during 1912/13.



New-build Saint No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* is set to visit the Bluebell Railway for its October 17-19 Giants of Steam gala, which this year is a celebration of new-build steam locomotives. OWEN HAYWARD

The recreation of the class was first mooted as far back as 1971, with GWR Hall No. 4942 *Maindy Hall* purchased from Barry scrapyard in 1973 specifically for the project. An unsuccessful fundraising appeal saw the project mothballed in 1982 but was relaunched in 1995, with the ex-Hall boiler overhauled by Riley & Sons at its Bury workshops. The Hall connections of No. 2999 will offer comparisons with WR Modified Hall No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall,* which is on long-term loan to the Bluebell, therefore offering a trio of Swindon 4-6-0s to enjoy.

New-build pioneer

Finally, the line-up will see both the oldest and youngest of Britain's new-build standard gauge steam locomotives working side by side, with Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* making a return visit to the line, having last appeared there in 2013, when it was carrying BR lined express blue livery.

"This incredible event will shine a spotlight on the new chapter of railway preservation, highlighting impressive new-build steam locomotives," a railway statement said. "Our intention is to feature the work of new-build groups and projects and applaud the amazing talent, skill and dedication of all those who have made projects possible.

"After a successful event in 2024, which featured visiting A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* alongside our own new-into-traffic *Beachy Head*, it was always going to be a challenge to find a way to top that, so what better way than to bring so many of these completed builds together in one place for the first time in preservation?

"Giants of Steam 2025 therefore marks an important event in the calendar, not only for the Bluebell Railway, marking 65 years in preservation this year, but also the 200th anniversary of public rail transport worldwide.

"We are currently working on an intensive and exciting timetable to create journeys using our guest visiting engines."



Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* heads a Nene Valley Railway service out of Wansford on October 20, 2024. Following its overhaul, owner The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust was, as this issue closed for press, waiting for a date to be fixed for *Tornado*'s main line test runs. As reported last issue, *Tornado* is also booked to appear in the East Lancashire Railway's March 14-16 Legends of Steam Gala. ROBIN JONES

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Betton Grange becomes Llangollen's first steam gala guest in six years!

GWR 4-6-0 No. *Betton Grange* will return to Denbighshire and the railway where the new-build project was first conceived as it has been booked to headline the Llangollen Railway's April 11-13 branch line weekend – making it the first steam locomotive to visit for a gala event since 2019.

In 1998, the 6880 Society was established to build the 81st member of the GWR Grange class. Its construction was based at the Llangollen's workshops from its inception and supported by many of the members and working volunteers there. In 2021, with the railway facing administration, the engineering business was wound up, resulting in the 6880 Society relocating to Tyseley Locomotive Works, to where the locomotive had already been moved in 2018 for the contracted overhaul of the boiler taken from No. 7927 *Willington Hall* for the project.

Since the Llangollen Railway Trust's takeover of operating the line in July 2021, which followed the administration of its plc in March, the line has been gradually rebuilt and brought back onto a steady footing by careful planning of its services, making better use of its DMU fleet at times where lower footfall is predicted, and carefully rostering steam and diesel locomotives for times where they will provide a better return on operating costs.

Since resuming services, the LR has gradually reintroduced enthusiast events which have included diesel and DMU galas but predominantly featuring home fleet locomotives.

Events calendar

Following the return to service of flagship GWR pannier No. 7754 in 2023 and the completion of repairs to GWR 2-8-0 No. 3802 at the start of 2024, the LR scheduled its first large-scale gala event for April 12-14 last year (*Heritage Railway* issue 319), which saw the resident steam locomotives supported by Hudswell Clarke Austerity No. 1752 *Robert* (running as BR No. 68067), on loan to the line since August 2022, alongside Class 26 D5310 and examples of the DMU fleet in what proved to be such a success that its operating costs were covered by the end of the first day.

With 2025 marking 50 years since the first trains were run on the heritage line, gala organisers Matt Davies and Iain Ross were given permission to investigate options for a guest steam locomotive for its first gala event to celebrate this landmark, and with the railway having been the starting point for No. 6880, it was felt to be an appropriate choice.

"Creating the right theme for the branch line gala in the 50th anniversary year was very important," Iain said. "Matt and I looked at various options – locos that originally worked the line and locos that have visited or been based at Llangollen during preservation. We came to the conclusion that a star attraction would be a loco built at Llangollen."

"No. 6880 was what got me involved as a volunteer at Llangollen more than 20 years ago," Matt said. "I am really looking forward to seeing it in steam at our event. It will be a special moment."

A 6880 Society statement added: "We are delighted to be visiting Llangollen and are looking forward to the journey along the Dee Valley and renewing friendships."

Following appearances at the LR and its new Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway base, *Betton Grange* will then set off for a return visit to the North Norfolk Railway, where it successfully spent the majority of 2024. No. 6880 is due to arrive there in time to work in July and will remain there until September.

A NNR statement said: "We absolutely loved seeing No. 6880 steaming along the line in 2024 and we are very grateful to the 6880 Society for allowing the locomotive to visit us again."

Mid-Hants secures first T3 visit for spring steam gala

AWARD-WINNING LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563, which made headlines in 2023 when it pulled its first passenger trains after a gap of 75 years, is set to make its first visit away from the Swanage Railway since restoration was completed.

The Mid-Hants Railway has announced that No. 563, winner of the Chairman's Special Award at the Heritage Railway Association's Annual Awards 2024, will be starring at the line's April 25-27 spring steam gala when it will run over another route which, like the Swanage branch, was also once part of the LSWR. The gala will be the first time that the 4-4-0 has left Swanage for an external event appearance.

Since its restoration was completed in the summer of 2023, it has remained on the Isle of Purbeck, having been donated by the National Railway Museum to the Swanage Railway Trust in March 2017.

The MHR runs for 10 miles between Alton and Alresford. The Alton, Alresford and Winchester Railway built it to connect Alton to Winchester and opened on October 2, 1865, with trains operated by the LSWR, which then purchased it in 1884. The visit of No. 563 is fitting as the MHR celebrates the 160th anniversary of the opening of line.

The 4-4-0 will join Urie S15 No. 506, newly overhauled SR Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* and Ivatt 2MT tank No. 41312 which has had its boiler out of the frames during the winter months to allow for some firebox stay repairs to be undertaken.

Llangollen takes newly-overhauled 'Teddy Bear' for a year

RECENTLY-OVERHAULED Class 14 D9525 will be moving to the Llangollen Railway by the end of February for a minimum 12-month stay – with potential for that to be extended.

To date, the sole Class 14 to have run on the LR was D9521 when it visited for the 2010 autumn diesel gala. Though D9500 and D9502 were both LR residents in the late 1980s, neither ever turned a wheel under their own power while there, and to this day both remain unrestored, with the former now at a private site in Scotland and the latter at the East Lancashire Railway.

D9525 has passed through seven different owners, having been built by BR at Swindon in 1965 and allocated to Bristol Bath Road. Withdrawn in 1968, it was sold to the National Coal Board and worked at Lambton Philadelphia and Ashington quarries for nearly 20 years. Preserved at the Kent & East Sussex Railway in 1987, it was later sold to Great Central Railway, the Harry Needle Railroad Company, the Heritage Shunters Trust at Peak Rail acquired it, and D9525 Limited which was formed in 2021 and relocated it to the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway in February 2022.

Chris Baily, one of the owners of D9525, said: "There was uncertainty at the EVR as to how much running D9525 would see there, particularly during 2025. In the last few years we have invested nearly £50,000 in its repairs, so we want to make sure it is running often enough to start earning some of that back.

"I approached the LR as a potential hire for the locomotive as I am familiar with it, having been involved there in the past, and it is a well-established line which I know can make full use of.

"We have some jobs to attend to following the locomotive's running over Christmas which will be completed before it moves apart from the fitting of the coupling rods, which have been removed to allow the bearings to be white-metalled again. These will be refitted by our team once it has arrived in Wales."

LR press officer Terry Pickthall said: "We look forward to welcoming D5925, Chris, and his team to the railway and hearing the throaty growl of a Paxman Ventura putting the power down on Berwyn Bank."



Recently returned to service, Class 14 D9525 is set to join the Llangollen Railway's fleet for a minimum of 12 months. CHRIS BAILY

Following driver training at the LR, D9525 will feature as part of the April 11-13 Branch Line Gala alongside the three resident steam locomotives – GWR 5700 0-6-0PT No. 7754, 2884 class 2-8-0 No. 3802 and Kitson 0-6-0ST No. 5459 *Austin No. 1* – and *Betton Grange* (see separate story above).

Part of the line's 50th anniversary celebrations, the event will also see other examples of the diesel and DMU fleet in service. Visit https://llangollen-railway.co.uk/

Worksplate from oldest LNER engine set for auction debut

EXCLUSIVE

By Geoff Courtney

A works numberplate from what is believed to have been the oldest working locomotive inherited by the LNER in the 1923 Grouping of the Big Four is to go under the hammer at a GW Railwayana auction on March 16.

It is from an engine built as a three-cylinder 4-2-0 for the York & Newcastle Railway by Robert Stephenson & Co (works No. 618) in November 1846 that underwent several rebuilds before being scrapped by the LNER in June 1931.

The first rebuild was in 1853 that saw it converted by its original makers into a 2-2-2, given a new works No. 737, and numbered 77. Seven years later, by which time it was a member of the North Eastern Railway stable, it entered York works where it became a two-cylinder engine.

In 1881 it entered the works again to be fitted with a new boiler and cylinders, and 10 years later it took on a new identity as No. 1929. In January 1894 it was renumbered yet again, to No.1679, and finally in October of the same year was converted into a 2-2-4T at the NER's Gateshead works.

Further modifications

The locomotive became part of the LNER fleet in 1923, and the following year the company fitted it with a 'London & North Eastern Railway Gateshead works 1679' plate to record its October 1894 conversion at Gateshead into a 2-2-4T, and it is this plate that will feature in GWRA's March 16 sale.

Although essentially a goods locomotive, No. 1679 received special treatment in the hands of the NER, which described as an officers' special tank engine, painted it in fully lined-out passenger livery and used it mainly for hauling inspection saloons and ceremonial duties.

As part of this role, it was at the centre of a small part of Yorkshire's railway history when, on July 19, 1913, it led the opening ceremony of the Derwent Valley Light Railway, for which it was decked out in flags and bunting. This line ran for 15 miles from York Layerthorpe to Cliffe Common near Selby and closed in September 1981, although a short stretch has been reopened by DVLR Society preservationists within York's Murton Park.

GWRA's Simon Turner, who will be putting the plate under the hammer, said: "This is an interesting plate, partly because it comes from an engine built 179 years ago and because few Gateshead plates survive. It is also unusual in that it carries no date, and I suspect that may be due to the LNER, while wishing to 'promote' its Gateshead works, did not want to draw attention to the fact that it was such old locomotive.

"Even Paul Tilley, a long-time student of LNER plates whose advice I sought, did not manage to find it straight away. But once he did, he confirmed its provenance."

Paul told *Heritage Railway*: "When Simon asked me to research the plate, I realised it was uncommon due to Gateshead being identified, albeit with no date. The further I went, the more I realised it was quite special."

■ **See Geoff Courtney's railwayana column on pages 62-64 for further details of this auction and a round-up of other sales.**



Opening time: North Eastern Railway No. 1679 is admired at York Layerthorpe station after it had opened the Derwent Valley Light Railway on July 19, 1913. Although the 2-2-4T is the centre of attention in this historical image sourced by DVLR Society archivist Jonathan Stockwell, also of interest are the spectators who had joined in the ceremony, all in a variety of headgear typical of the era. A works numberplate from the 1846-built locomotive is set to go under the hammer at auction on March 16. DVLR SOCIETY ARCHIVES/YORK PRESS



On a plate: The LNER works numberplate from 1846-built 2-2-4T No. 1679 that is coming up for sale at auction on March 16. GW RAILWAYANA

New home is sought for Merchant Navy

THE General Steam Navigation Locomotive Restoration Society is looking for a new home for its locomotive after its current base, the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, said that a Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific does not align with it future vision and business plan.

The society has held 'positive discussions' with the potential contractor for No. 35011, Devon-based Leaky Finders, in the hope that the locomotive will be relocated there in the latter half of this year.

After the National Heritage Lottery Fund rejected in September a stage one pass for the restoration bid for the locomotive, talks with the fund have continued while future options are considered, including a revised application.

Eastleigh-built No. 21C11 *General Steam Navigation* entered service on December 30, 1944, in wartime black livery and was allocated to Nine Elms shed. It received full lined malachite livery in January 1947 and was renumbered 35011 by BR. Rebuilt, it re-entered service on July 4, 1959. No. 35011 famously hauled two special railtours on the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway route in January 1966, being the only Merchant Navy to run any distance on the line.

Withdrawn from service in February 1966, having run a total of 1,069,128 miles, following storage at Eastleigh it was sold to Woodhams Brothers in Barry in March 1967.

Bought for preservation, No. 35011 left Barry in March 1983 and it was stored at Brighton Preston Park and later RAF Binbrook, in Lincolnshire, until 2007. It then moved to Williton on the West Somerset Railway, where an axle swap took place with West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton*.

It was then taken to the Southern Locomotives Ltd site at Sellindge during 2009.

The private owner of No. 35011 transferred ownership to the society in 2016 and three years later No. 35011 was moved to Blundon on the S&C. A society spokesman thanked the railway for its ongoing support and assistance.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Established Since 2006

RAILWAYANA AUCTIONS UK LTD

CREWE RAILWAYANA

The UK's Leading Railwayana Auction Company

21st Online Auction

Free probate & insurance valuations on single items or whole collections

Next Online Auction 21st-23rd February 2025

QUALITY - RARITY - DIVERSITY

NOW CONSIGNING ITEMS - FOR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE
CALL NEIL TODAY 01242 620020 or 07836 225711

We offer a collection service from all corners of the UK

The UK Top Market Leading Railwayana Auction Company. Over 50 years of knowledge and experience. Contact the Auctioneer for an honest current market appraisal and guidance on your railwayana collection.



Enquiries please contact the auctioneer Neil Booth on 01242 620020 or 07836 225711
Email: office@railwayana.com or office@gwr1.com. View our website: www.ukrailwayana.com

Railwayana Auctions UK Ltd, Toddington Grange, Toddington, Glos GL54 5DN

NRM announces major 50th anniversary events and railway bicentenary celebrations

By Robin Jones

THE National Railway Museum turns 50 this year – as Britain celebrates 200 years of the world's first modern railway.

Station Hall at the York museum will reopen to the public in September following a £10.5 million refurbishment funded by the Department for Culture Media and Sport, including a new thermally-efficient roof to protect the collection, new full-length rear windows, and enhanced lighting. The refreshed exhibition space has been made possible by a generous donation from lead funder the Friends of the National Railway Museum. Visitors will be able to rediscover the grandeur of the historic space in time for a special birthday weekend on September 27/28, marking five decades since the museum opened in 1975. They will be offered the chance to access behind-the-scenes areas of the museum, previously unseen by the public.

The former goods station and Grade II-listed building represents about a third of the museum's exhibition space. It will benefit from refreshed interior decoration and new collection items, alongside timeless returning favourites such as the royal carriages. The building's new roof has been fitted with energy-efficient solar panels.

Other 2025 highlights include Railway Firsts, a new exhibition on display at both the NRM and sister venue Locomotion in Shildon, which opened on February 8. This shines the spotlight on the pivotal innovations and unexpected 'firsts' that shaped the railways and history, presented through a series of eye-catching pop-up displays as visitors journey through the museum.

In addition, shortlisted entries to the Young Railway Photographer of the Year 2024 competition will be on display from June to December at both museums. The Railway 200-themed competition announced in *Heritage Railway* issue 316 closed on January 31.

The museum will mark its 50th birthday year with a new campaign, NRM50, featuring photographs of cherished visits captured on camera by the public over the last five decades. A limited-edition NRM50 range of merchandise will be available to purchase later in the year.

Both the NRM and Locomotion are partners in Railway 200, which celebrates the first fare-paying passenger journey on the Stockton & Darlington Railway on September 27, 1825. The same date was chosen to open the NRM, the first national museum outside London, in 1975.

A four-carriage touring Railway 200 exhibition train called Inspiration, curated in partnership with the NRM, will criss-cross Britain for a year from this summer, promoting innovation and careers within the rail industry.

Inspiration will visit both the NRM and Locomotion, with the full schedule set to be announced in the coming months. A range of Railway 200-branded gifts has been created by the NRM, which are now available from both museum's gift shops and online store.

Craig Bentley became interim director of the National Railway Museum in January after Judith McNicol left to become managing director of the British Museum.

Having held senior roles at a variety of cultural and commercial organisations during the past 25 years, chartered surveyor Craig joined the Science Museum Group in 2017 and is also director of SMG Estate, leading the NRM through its largest redevelopment since its opening and including the expansion of Locomotion.

He said: "I stepped on board as director at the start of one of the most exciting years in the history of the railways. We have a truly exciting programme of activity ahead, and through our partnership with Railway 200, we are thrilled to be at the heart of a national celebration of the past, present and future of the railways.

"I can't think of a better 50th birthday present than a restored and revitalised Station Hall. I know how keen our visitors are to see the results of our hard work inside the space – with plenty of surprises still to reveal as we approach the reopening."

Station Hall will also host a brand-new dining experience, with visitors



Station Hall, pictured in 1908, was once York's goods station. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP



Station Hall's frontage has been restored to its original colour scheme. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP



The Railways First exhibition has opened at the York museum. SKELLON STUDIO AND SEEING THINGS



GWR 4-6-0 No. 4003 *Lode Star* on the turntable in the Great Hall at the National Railway Museum on December 5, 2024. ROBIN JONES



Dr John Coiley, the first director of the National Railway Museum, with the Duke of Edinburgh at the opening of museum on September 27, 1975. The opening coincided with the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, for which several working exhibits were provided. NRM

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.





Above: Anthony Coulls, the National Railway Museum's senior curator of rail transport and technology and a qualified *Flying Scotsman* driver. LOCOMOTION, SHILDON

Right: Jennifer Kilburn, commercial experiences manager at the National Railway Museum, wearing a virtual reality headset at the *Flying Scotsman* VR Experience at York. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

able to book afternoon tea aboard an LSWR dining saloon carriage, built in 1907 and restored by the museum. The popular outdoor play area and miniature railway will also reopen alongside Station Hall.

Further improvements will commence in 2025 on the museum's new welcome building, gallery and café, Central Hall – the next and most significant stage of a £100 million masterplan of improvement and investment that has regenerated and modernised both museums.

Flying Scotsman's February comeback visit

The world's most famous locomotive, *Flying Scotsman*, which is owned by the NRM, will play its part in the celebrations by returning to the track in 2025 with a mix of static display and operational trips. Its first outing of the 2025 season, to the Nene Valley Railway on February 22/23, March 1/ 2 and 8/9, will be the first time the locomotive has hauled passenger trains since 2023. It will be hauling three of the NVR's now sold-out 'Jolly Fisherman' evening fish and chip trains, as well as a photographic charter. Static visits to the footplate and the chance to walk through the famous corridor tender will also be made available. Afterwards, *Flying Scotsman* will make visits to both the NRM and Locomotion.

Throughout the year, the York museum's *Flying Scotsman* Story exhibition and immersive virtual reality experience will ensure that visitors can get their fix of the legendary engine, which on November 30, 1934, became the first steam locomotive to officially reach 100mph.

The STEM-focused interactive engineering gallery Wonderlab: The Bramall Gallery will also launch a new show from February half-term called Ultrasonic, demonstrating the cutting-edge technology used to detect faults on railway lines.

The NRM in York has the world's largest collection of railway objects and is the most visited free attraction in the region. It received more than 690,810 visitors in 2024.



Right: Railway 200-themed gifts are now available at the National Railway Museum. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

Enjoy a day with *Flying Scotsman* on first freight in three decades!

IN conjunction with the planned visit of the A3 to the Nene Valley Railway, the railway's wagon group has organised a photographic charter that will see the Pacific appear on a freight train for the first time in more than 30 years!

Photographic charters with *Flying Scotsman* are few and far between, and so the opportunity has been seized by the NVR Wagon Group to run a 'Scotch Goods'-themed event, with the A3 coupled to the restored express freight set that has been gradually restored by volunteers. Scheduled for February 28, the occasion is befitting for the NVR as it was there during a visit in 1994 that *Flying Scotsman* was last seen working a freight train. During charters at that time, No. 60103 took on the identity of two long-lost classmates – Nos. 60039 *Sandwich* and 60106 *Flying Fox*. Both entered traffic just five months apart in 1934, with the former withdrawn in March 1963, while the latter lasted in service until December 1964.

Given that the A3 wore different identities during that previous visit, it means that while it has been 31 years since it was last pictured working a freight, it has been even longer since the identity of *Flying Scotsman* has been photographed on such workings. Organiser Tim Hobman said there was no intention to approach the NRM with a proposal to run the A3 under an alias during this event.

There are almost 12 hours on offer, with the A3 split over two sessions: the first will commence at Wansford with a safety briefing at 9am, before participants are taken by rail to lineside locations where the consist will perform runpasts. Upon arrival back at Wansford, photographers will have an opportunity to photograph No. 60103 on shed while it is prepared for the evening session, which also commences with a safety briefing at 5pm, with activity concentrated on the areas within station limits.

Changing it up

While the daytime freight formation will remain unchanged, the evening session will see some of the wagons shuffled round to create the illusion of passing trains. Re-enactors in period attire will also help set the scene of the 1950s Eastern Region freight workings with parcels, packages and other props prepared for those looking to focus on the human activities. The night session will conclude at 9pm, with further shots of the A3 on shed after dark rounding the day off.

Due to the high costs and limited capacity, a select number of places are available on both sessions. The day session is priced at £200 per person and £100 for the evening.

On March 12, the NVR Wagon Group is running a daytime charter featuring visiting BR 7P No. 70000 *Britannia* also on the express freight rake, with places on this event priced at £140 per person. For full details and to book, see nvr.org.uk/section.php/2/1/whats-on

Island Ivatt's tribute to 'Chesham Flyer' at Bluebell's gala in March

SEPTEMBER 1960 saw the final steam-hauled workings to Chesham on the Metropolitan Line, with electrification resulting in three-car T stock units taking over the shuttles between there and Chalfont & Latimer. The Bluebell Railway will pay tribute to the services with BR 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313 paying a short visit to Sussex from its Isle of Wight home in March.

In the 1960s, steam was phased out from the London Transport network, and the short journey between the two stations had been worked by a push-pull shuttle comprising a rake of ex-Metropolitan Railway Ashbury carriages and a BR 2MT tank. No. 41284 was responsible for working the final trip along this section, after which the working was handed over to LT's electric trains.

While No. 41284 was eventually withdrawn in 1967 and later scrapped, four of the six carriages from that working went on be acquired by the Bluebell in 1961, where they remain to this day.

To mark the anniversary, No. 41313 will evoke scenes of the final days of steam on the Metropolitan line when it appears at the Bluebell's March 14-16 branch line weekend. During the event it will therefore be allocated at times to work with the four former 'Chesham Flyer' carriages. The visit of an example of the class also coincides with the 60th anniversary of the closure of the Guildford to Horsham branch on June 14, 1965, where other examples of the class were also regularly found.

The annual celebration of branch line traffic will feature mixed trains and freight workings, with shunting demonstrations taking place, all of which will recreate the hustle and bustle of once-common scenes on such lines.

Afterwards, No. 41313 will head to Dorset for the Swanage Railway March 28-30 steam gala weekend.

Fenchurch and *Bahamas* for West Somerset's spring gala

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway's May 2-5 Spring Steam Spectacular will now see two locomotives making their first ever appearances on the line.

LBSCR A1 0-6-0T 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* will be joining LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas* on the guest list for the gala.

Before it entered preservation, the 1872-built locomotive was regarded as being the oldest still in active service for BR.

Based on the Bluebell Railway, *Fenchurch* – which appeared in the 1975 Rail 150 Shildon cavalcade – will be the first 'Terrier' to visit the WSR since 2007, and likely to be the first to work at the southern end of the line in the heritage era. Furthermore, *Bahamas* will make the first run of a Jubilee past Bishops Lydeard to Minehead

A WSR statement said: "*Fenchurch* may be small, but it is a mighty little engine, and we look forward to seeing this locomotive working the 'local' train diagram with a couple of coaches at the gala.

"As part of our Railway 200 event theme this year, our gala planning team has aimed to find a wide variety of steam engines, big and small, old and new, and from various railway companies."

Also booked to appear is GWR 2800 2-8-0 No. 2807, which will arrive in March and stay at the line until shortly after the gala.

Further details and tickets can be found at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

Meanwhile, although unconnected, the gala starts halfway through Minehead's great May Day folk custom dating back to 1830, the parading of a brightly-decorated hobby horse around the locality, making two of the days a 'double whammy' for visitors.

The Original Sailors Hobby Horse appears from outside the Old Ship Aground on the quay at 6pm on April 30 and can be seen frolicking around the streets of Minehead, Dunster and Alcombe over the next three days. Two other hobby horses will appear between April 30 and May 3: the Traditional Sailors Hobby Horse and the Town Hobby Horse. The custom has similarities with Padstow's May 1 'Obby 'Oss festival; see www.facebook.com/Originalsailorshorse



LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* in service on the Bluebell Railway on May 11, 2024. JAMES CUMMINS

Wisbech line revival group becomes a charity

THE Bramley Line Heritage Railway, which aims to reopen part of the mothballed March to Wisbech branch, has been granted charitable status.

In December the group issued a statement reasserting its long-held ambition of opening the stretch of line between Waldersea, near Friday Bridge, and Coldham as a heritage line. It also aims to establish a heritage centre to preserve and pass on the history of the line and its workings to the local area, visitors, and schools.

Now a charitable incorporated organisation, secretary Terry Hartga said: "This is a great start to the new year and an important step forward for our members, potentially opening up new funding streams and volunteering opportunities. This year is Rail 200, and 2027 is the 180th anniversary of the opening of the line from March to Wisbech."



Paul Atterbury (left) and Great Western Trust collection manager Peter Rance opening the curtains to reveal the mosaic. FRANK DUMBLETON



The mosaic in pieces being examined at Didcot in July 2024 before being taken away for restoration. GWS

Antiques expert unveils rescued GWR coat of arms mosaic at Didcot centre

A UNIQUE GWR coat of arms mosaic rescued from Paddington station was unveiled in Didcot Railway Centre's Museum and Archives by TV Antiques expert and author Paul Atterbury on January 30.

The mosaic, which is 63in in diameter and weighs 492lb, is made of about 10,000 tessera, individual tiles used in creating a mosaic.

It formerly adorned the floor of the entrance foyer at the GWR's headquarters goods office which opened in 1906 at Paddington, and which has been walked over by many notable figures in railway management during the 79-year life of the building.

When the building was demolished in 1986, members of the Great Western Society recovered the mosaic in multiple sections. The fragments were stored over the intervening years until a generous bequest from railway photographer Peter W Gray enabled a £41,500 contract to be placed in 2024 with the Mosaic Restoration Company, a firm of renowned conservators which also undertakes work for cathedrals, universities, city halls, English Heritage and private clients.

Paul said: "This splendid work of art reminds us that the inspiration which drove Victorian industry was business, people, and materials. Today, the same should apply, but people seem to be down the list."

The mosaic incorporates the shields, crests and mottoes of the cities of London and Bristol, the two cities linked by the original GWR main line, which opened back in 1841.

The coat of arms will take pride of place on the wall of the Museum and Archives, where it will be the first exhibit seen on entry.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Hydroshunter 'first' at Severn Valley

By John Titlow

THE Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster Town terminus saw the UK's first hydrogen-powered freight locomotive unveiled to the press when it moved under battery power up and down the station on January 31.

The University of Birmingham's Vanguard Sustainable Transport Solutions teamed up with the SVR in 2021 to convert Class 08 No. 08635 to a hydrogen-battery hybrid traction system in Kidderminster Traction Maintenance Department.

D3802/08635 was built at Derby Works in 1959 and arrived on the SVR in 2007 after being bought as a source of spares, having suffered serious crankshaft damage.

Conversion began with the removal of its diesel engine, followed by a mechanical overhaul and the removal of redundant parts which were kept as spares. It has been repainted into a striking green livery and renumbered H3802.

A hydrogen fuel cell and batteries will be fitted to power the locomotive. This equipment is considerably lighter, so a six-ton steel plate has been fitted as a base which adds weight to increase adhesion, otherwise the locomotive would lose traction.

The fuel cell works by using electrolysis to react hydrogen with oxygen, generating an electric current and producing H2O as the exhaust. Hydrogen has zero emissions at rail level, although there will be carbon emissions from its transport and, possibly, manufacture.





Above: Externally there is little difference between a Class 08 and No. H3802.

Right: Hydrogen cell unit on display at Kidderminster Town. BOTH: JOHN TITLOW

Electricity from the fuel cell is then used to charge the lead acid batteries, which in turn sends the electricity to power the original existing electric motors. The batteries have been increased in size, and it has been fitted with regenerative braking.

From the outside there is little difference in appearance to an original 08, and the controls for the driver are the same. Two panels have been added for controlling and monitoring the fuel cell.

A Vanguard statement said: "Vanguard's hydroshunter locomotive represents the future of rail decarbonisation as a demonstration of how legacy rolling stock can be renewed using cutting-edge, zero-carbon solutions".

Only water vapour and steam is emitted, making it carbon neutral.

This is a prototype in the early stages of dynamic testing and there is interest from various bodies including Network Rail. Similar technology has been used in busses and lorries.

For further information, visit https://vanguardsts.com/uks-first-hydrogen-powered-freight-locomotive/ and https://www.svrwiki.com/BR_Class_08_D3802

Glyndyfrdwy signalbox to become 'green' attraction?

A LLANGOLLEN Railway signalbox could become a wildlife viewing hub.

The Llangollen Railway Trust has applied to Denbighshire Country Council's planning department for listed building consent to retain the 'box at the west end of Glyndyfrdwy station as it is building a wheelchair access platform next to the structure which would be linked to the station by a new path.

Built in 1890 by Dutton and Co, the Barmouth South 'box was given Grade II-listed status on June 4, 1986, but was closed just two years later. It was moved to the LR in 1999 but has remained unused there and consequently its condition has deteriorated.

The proposal for its conversion seeks to give it a new lease of life, in a project devised following discussions with officers of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley National Landscape, including the lead officer Howard Sutcliffe (a member of the British Trust for Ornithology and a member of the Glyndyfrdwy Village Hall committee), as well as LRT volunteers. Part of the inspiration for the conversion has come from a similar treatment to the former Penmaenpool signalbox, which was converted into a bird hide by Snowdonia National Park and the RSPB at its location overlooking the Mawddach Estuary.



The former Barmouth South signalbox at Glyndyfrdwy station could be set for a new life as a heritage and wildlife hub if plans submitted by the Llangollen Railway Trust to convert the disused structure are approved. LRT

It is intended to also develop the interior of the building to show how it would have operated and educate visitors as to the importance of these structures in safe train operation.

In its planning statement, the LR said: "The current volunteer stationmaster at Glyndyfrdwy is in a wheelchair and is understandably keen on this development and is happy to lend his understanding of what is needed to make this site genuinely fully accessible beyond what is legislated for.

"Interpretation would also introduce the history of Glyndyfrdwy and its links to Moel Fferna slate mines and promote the existing Nant Y Pandy history trail.

"In a visit to the station by a member of the British Trust for Ornithology in May last year, a total of 27 different bird species were identified in the vicinity of the 'box in one hour.

"This conversion would provide a wildlife hub in part of the Clwydian Hills, and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that currently has no provision of this kind, and is a development that could be supported by officers of the AONB."

Railway 200 tour for Pathfinder

By Tim Hobman

PATHFINDER Tours is to run an outing to mark Railway 200 with a Stockton and Darlington-themed tour on Saturday, April 5, under the title of 'The Weardale Explorer.'

Starting from Gloucester with a pair of Class 47s in charge, the tour will run via Cheltenham Spa, Worcestershire Parkway, Birmingham New Street, Tamworth and Derby, picking up additional passengers at each station. From Derby the tour is scheduled to take the cross-country route to York to connect with the East Coast Main Line.

Passengers can choose to alight at York for seven hours or stay on the train to continue north to Darlington. Taking a slight deviation, the train is planned to stop at North Road station where passengers may alight for five hours.

Museum destination

Those who decide to stay on board will travel along the Wear Valley Line to Shildon for the chance to visit the Locomotion museum. An alternative off-train option at Shildon will see road coaches take passengers to the Auckland Project, a unique collection of visitor attractions in and around Bishop Auckland. Those alighting at Shildon will have about four-and-a-half hours at either Locomotion or the Auckland Project.

The final offering for passengers is the Weardale Railway, with the train continuing from Shildon to Bishop Auckland and onto the 18-mile heritage line.

Passengers will have two hours here before the return trip, retracing the outward journey back to Gloucester.

Tickets are available in premier dining, first class and standard class for this tour, with a discount for junior travellers and parties of four.

➜ For more details and to book places, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Bala Lake appeals for £500k to start building extension

By Robin Jones

THE Bala Lake Railway has launched a £500,000 nationwide appeal to fund the first stage of engineering work for its long-awaited extension into Bala town centre, creating a major attraction for the region.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 324, on September 4 last year Snowdonia National Park Authority granted permission for the railway's plan to extend the 2ft gauge railway with 1200 metres of track, the installation of a level crossing, the erection of a new station building, ancillary engine and carriage buildings, a signalbox and associated developments at Bala.

The extension will bring the railway from its current northeastern terminus at Pen-y-bont to a prime site in the town alongside the A494, a major holiday route, which is anticipated to generate a sizeable boost in both passenger numbers and input into the local economy. Passing visitors will easily be able to stop off to hop on board the highly scenic three-mile journey alongside Lake Bala, the largest natural body of water in Wales, as well as visiting the town.

As reported in issue 306, the park authority's planning and access committee originally refused the Bala Lake Railway Trust's application for planning permission on April 19, 2023, largely because of concerns that additional visitors to Bala would result in a breach of recent Welsh Government guidance regarding the discharge of additional phosphates into watercourses; in short, more tourists using toilets in the town would result in higher sewage levels polluting the River Dee.

However, Welsh Water subsequently reassessed the likely impact of the extra visitors in view of the imminent completion of improvements to the Bala Waste Water Treatment Works, which will handle any greater capacity generated by increased visitor numbers because of the addition of the railway as a major attraction.

Planning permission is conditional on the work on the extension being started within five years from the date of the park authority's decision. Furthermore, no development must be made until such time that confirmation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority that the planned improvements to the waste water treatment works scheduled for March 31 have been completed.



Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0Ts *Winifred* and *Alice* double-head a Bala Lake Railway service alongside the lake on August 25, 2024. BLR

The trust's volunteers have now worked on the project for more than 10 years.

Jubilant BLR chairman Julian Birley said: "Up until now, any of the £1.6 million we raised and spent was entirely speculative. Having been refused planning permission once, it was by no means certain that we were going to get it at all.

"Thanks to everyone's belief in the project, we were able to satisfy the Snowdonia National Park Authority's concerns.

"From here on, every penny we raise and the work we do is towards the project definitely happening.

"The next financial target is £500,000. This is to actually begin the engineering works and infrastructure in order to lay the track from the new station in Bala to the far end of the town's flood defences. This will be over two-thirds of the route."

While the BLR has been built in the preservation era on part of the trackbed of the standard gauge Ruabon to Dolgellau line, its fleet contains locomotives and wagons that are key parts of Snowdonia's slate quarrying heritage.

To donate to the railway's extension appeal, visit www.balalakerailwaytrust.org.uk/donate/



The trackbed for the new extension into Bala town centre, for which £500,000 is needed to complete the first two-thirds. JULIAN BIRLEY/BLR

New savings account to help steam

DARLINGTON Building Society has hopped on board the celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the world's first steam-hauled passenger line with the launch of a new savings account.

For every 1825 Railway Saver account opened, the building society will donate £10 to The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, builder of Peppercorn Pacific No. 60103 *Tornado* and Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*.

Donations from the 1825 Railway Saver account will help fund places in the Tornado Team, which engages with children aged 5-15 to encourage a passion for industry and engineering.

Building society chief executive Andrew Craddock said: "This year is hugely significant for our region, and Darlington Building Society is commemorating the dawn of passenger rail in its heartland in many ways.

"We partnered with The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust after seeing the fantastic work it does inspiring the next generation of industrial trailblazers from our region."

A trust spokesman said: "The donations will go directly towards our new-build projects, continuing heritage engineering skills and passing on knowledge for future generations of engineers.

"We are proud to work with the society to highlight Darlington's place in the history of the railways."

For more details of the account, visit www.darlington.co.uk/savings-account/1825-railway-saver/

Locomotion goes green

THE Locomotion museum in Shildon has been given the green light to install 113 solar panels on its roof, which will provide a 59.89 kWp generation system.

Durham County Council has stipulated that the solar PV equipment must minimise its effect on the building's appearance and the area's amenities and should be removed promptly when they are no longer being used.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Harry Needle company sold to Austrian firm

THE Harry Needle Railroad Company has been bought by Austrian private track maintenance contractor Swietelsky AG, reportedly for an eight-figure sum.

HNRC was established in 1998 to process redundant rolling stock and recovering spares from vehicles to be scrapped. Based at Barrow Hill Roundhouse, it expanded to acquire its own fleet for hire (initially with a distinctive orange livery) and in 2019 bought the 15-acre former DB Cargo depot at Worksop. Services are supplied to both main line and heritage sectors, which have bought several locomotives from the company.

The two sites can offer storage for up to 700 railway vehicles, and about 30 staff are employed across both.

Swietelsky AG, the biggest firm of its kind in Europe, also operates UK sites in Reading, Manchester and Glasgow through a joint venture with Babcock.

CEO Peter Krammer said: "This strategic step not only enables us to expand our market position in the area of operate and maintain contracts for Network Rail, but it also significantly increases capacities for machine overhauls and future innovations such as the conversion of rail vehicles to European train control systems."



Brush Type 4 Class 47 No. 47714, which arrived on the Wensleydale Railway on November 11, was the star of the fundraising Leeming Bar photographic session on January 25. CHRIS GEE/WR

Meanwhile, Class 47 No. 47714, which was recently sold by the Harry Needle Railway Company to the Wensleydale Railway, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 327, was the centrepiece of an evening photographic session at Leeming Bar station which attracted more than 20 participants on January 25.

The event was organised by members of the railway's diesel traction team and gave the photographers a unique opportunity to access areas of the railway that are normally closed to the general public.

The funds raised will go towards repairs and a repaint of No. 47714 which are scheduled to start soon. WR marketing and fundraising manager Nick Keegan said: "This is the first time in many years that we have hosted a photoshoot event at the railway. It was very well-supported, and we will certainly consider organising similar events like this again. We are grateful to organisers Tom Robson, Rob Cooper-Williamson and Chris Gee and to everyone who supported this event on a rather cold Burns Night!"

Seeing double – in red? Matching Falcons planned for 2026

By Owen Hayward

IT has been more than a century since a pair of Hughes Falcon 0-4-2STs have been in service in matching schemes, but that is set to change as the Talyllyn Railway has confirmed that in its resident No. 3 *Sir Haydn* is to be outshopped in the livery of its original railway for 2026 for what will be a year of dual celebrations.

On May 14, 1951, the Talyllyn Railway became the first railway in the world to be run by volunteers, who took over the line which had served the Bryneglwys quarry, connecting it to the Cambrian main line via the transhipment yard at Tywyn Wharf. The actions of the dedicated group of enthusiasts set a precedent for the movement which followed, and 2026 will celebrate the 75th anniversary of that first train and the heritage railway sector as a whole.

Furthermore, the year will mark the 60th anniversary of the Corris Railway revival, where No. 3 had been based its entire working life.

Following the closure and lifting of the line between Machynlleth and Aberllefenni in 1948, a group of TR volunteers led by Alan Meaden began visiting Corris in 1966 and wished to establish a museum dedicated to the lost railway there.



The sole-surviving original Hughes Falcon, No. 3 *Sir Haydn*, will adopt the red livery of the Corris Railway from 2026 to acknowledge its origins during what will be Talyllyn Railway's 75th and Corris Railway revival 60th anniversary year. ROB PHILLIPS/CREATIVE COMMONS

The Corris Society was formed the same year, as too was the Corris Railway Preservation Society in the West Midlands, with the two merging to become the Corris Railway Society in 1968. Much of the original railway had been demolished and the only the railway stable block at Corris remained, which was purchased in 1970.

No. 3 was built in 1878 and lasted until the closure of the Corris, being heavily rebuilt in 1927 with components from the two other Falcons stored there (Nos. 1 and 2), which were subsequently scrapped. In 2023, the revived Corris completed a new-build example of the class (No. 10) and the two locomotives were brought together there in June 2024 for an historic occasion, being the first time a pair of operational Falcons could be seen together at Maespoeth locomotive shed in more than a century.

The decision to repaint No. 3 into the livery of its home line will pay tribute to its history which spans both railways, with the Talyllyn also home to Kerr Stuart 'Tattoo' 0-4-2ST No. 4 *Edward Thomas*, as well as some wagons and saloon carriage No. 17. Built in 1878, No. 3 arrived on the TR with No. 4 in 1951, meaning the pair have now spent longer based on the 7¼-mile line running between Tywyn and Nant Gwernol than when they worked on the railway for which they were built.

The outshopping of *Sir Haydn* in its Corris colours will not only present an opportunity for the two railways to bring both Nos. 3 and 10 together again for a further historic moment, with a pair of matching-liveried Falcons another sight that has not been witnessed in nearly 100 years, but it also means that the sole-surviving original Falcon will be wearing an appropriate livery for celebrating its own 150th anniversary in 2028. It is during that year when *Sir Haydn* is due to be withdrawn for overhaul, having had its last overhaul completed in 2018 at the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Penrhyn quarry Avonside marks 60 years of retirement

By Owen Hayward

PENRHYN slate quarry, near Bethesda, in North Wales, was once a bustling hub of narrow gauge activity, with many of its locomotives having survived into preservation. Sixty years after steam was retired there, two of them came together at the Apedale Valley Light Railway to celebrate the occasion.

Extraction of slate at Penrhyn is recorded as far back as 1570, with the quarry being subsequently developed during the 1770s. As with most of the slate quarries in the region, a network of narrow gauge lines serving the mining tunnels was developed.

In June 1801, the separate Penrhyn Quarry Railway was built in a bid to reduce costs of moving slate out of the quarry which was hitherto done by horse and cart over rugged mountain roads. Running for six miles, the railway connected to the quarry to Port Penrhyn, near Bangor.

Steam locomotives were introduced with a pair of De Winton 0-4-0VBTs in 1877, and more locomotives were acquired over the ensuing years, mostly coming from Hunslet but with some examples from other builders being acquired second-hand from elsewhere.

Two of those anomalies were 0-4-0s *Stanhope* and *Ogwen*. The former (No. 2395) was built by Kerr Stuart in 1917 for civil engineering contractor Holloway Brothers. Advertised for sale in 1930, it was subsequently bought by the Durham County Water Board that April and used at Burnhope Reservoir. It was accompanied by six other 'Tattoos,' all of which were named after local villages. In 1934, *Stanhope* was sold again, this time to the Penrhyn Quarry where its boiler was lowered by 6.5in and had added ballast weights to improve its stability.

From 1948, boiler issues saw it laid up outside the quarry's workshops and it was gradually robbed for parts to keep other locomotives in service; its remains were sold in 1966 to Colin Pealling. It moved between museums and changed hands several times until restoration was completed at Alan Keef's workshops in 1999.

Ogwen was built by Avonside in 1933 as No. 2066 *Durham* and was also owned by the Durham County Water Board, but it was not sold to the quarry until two years after *Stanhope*. Unlike the 'Tattoo,' which had kept its name, *Durham* was renamed after its arrival there.



Sixty years after the final day of steam at Penrhyn quarry, the chalk inscription left by driver Iorwerth Jones remains in the cab of Avonside No. 2066 *Ogwen*. ROBERT FALCONER

On January 15, 1965, steam operations ended at the quarry and *Ogwen* was the final locomotive to move there under its own steam.

The late Iorwerth Jones, a quarry driver who crewed *Ogwen* on its final day, inscribed the date in chalk on the cab wall – a detail which has been retained on the locomotive ever since then.

Ogwen was sold later that year and, along with several other locomotives that had once worked the quarry, was exported to North America. In May 2012 it was repatriated and displayed at Beamish Museum ahead of an eventual restoration at the private Workshop X in north Derbyshire, with the chalk inscription being carefully conserved during this time.

Ogwen moved under its own steam for the first time since retirement on September 20, 2018.

On January 18 this year – just over 60 years since steam operations ceased at Penrhyn – the AVLR sent both *Ogwen* and *Stanhope*, both of which are resident there, out for a day of photographic specials, the pair being coupled to a rake of slate wagons and posed in various positions.



Former Penrhyn locomotive *Stanhope* (left) simmers as *Ogwen* arrives at Silverdale with some slate wagons on January 18. ROBERT FALCONER



A night shoot on January 18 at the Apedale Valley Light Railway saw Kerr Stuart *Stanhope* and Avonside *Ogwen* posed with slate wagons to mark 60 years since steam ended at Penrhyn Quarry. ROBERT FALCONER

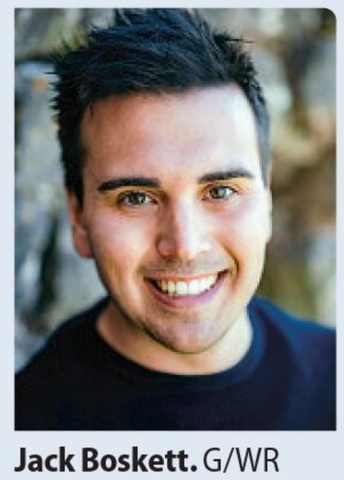
New head of marketing for Cotswold railway

MULTPLE award-winning photographer Jack Boskett has been appointed head of marketing for the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Plc.

Jack, 34, has been a volunteer on the line for 17 years and has accepted the role on a part-time freelance basis. He takes over from previous marketing manager Catherine Johnson, who left at the end of 2024 to pursue her career elsewhere. He is editor of the railway's house magazine, *The Cornishman,* and is due to qualify as a steam locomotive fireman this year

"I am thrilled to be taking on this important post," said Jack. "My passion for this wonderful railway and promoting it to the public really makes this a natural fit. I am looking forward to promoting the railway's growth through effective outreach and marketing campaigns.

"Being appointed at a time when Railway 200, the bicentenary of railway travel in the UK, gets underway makes it all the more special."



Jack Boskett. G/WR

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Struggling to see in the dark nights?



Your eyes love daylight. Give them the next best thing for the winter evenings.

In the dark winter evenings, it can feel like your reading or hobby time is being cut short. If your eyes are straining to read small print or see colours clearly, better light can make all the difference.

Serious Lights replicate the clarity of daylight, helping you see comfortably, even in the darkest hours. Our LED Daylight Wavelength Technology™ creates a balanced beam that enhances detail and true-to-life colours, so you can keep doing what you love, long into the night.

- **Up to TWELVE TIMES more light on your page than a traditional 60W bulb**
- **Recommended by over 500 opticians**
- **Available as a Floor or Table Light**

Try One Risk-Free For 30 Days

SAVE £150

HD Floor Light
Was ~~£449.99~~
Now £299.99

HD Table Light
Was ~~£399.99~~
Now £249.99

Quote offer code 9681 at checkout or when calling

FREE DELIVERY
Worth £12.95
While Stocks Last

feefo 2024 Trusted Platinum Merchant

For Advice. For a Brochure. To Order:
0800 085 1088
seriousreaders.com/9681

Serious Readers – Serious about light™

THE MODEL RAIL SHOW FOR LARGER GAUGES

MIDLANDS GARDEN RAIL SHOW

0 GAUGE, G SCALE, GAUGE 1, 16MM & MORE...



SATURDAY 1st & SUNDAY 2nd MARCH 2025

Open 10am – 4pm Daily

WARWICKSHIRE EVENT CENTRE



A Leading Garden Railway Exhibition



35+ leading suppliers for all your garden railway needs.

Over **15 layouts and displays** in action all day.

RESTAURANT AND COFFEE SHOP
FREE PARKING

BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW

Tickets can be purchased in advance via our website.

£12.50 Adult
£12.00 Senior Citizen (65+ yrs)
£5.00 Child (5-14 yrs)

Tickets will be available to purchase on the day of your visit also from the ticket office.

Meridienne Exhibitions cannot process any telephone bookings. If you have event specific enquiries, please call 01926 614101.

Please make sure you visit our website for the latest information prior to your visit.

Meridienne Exhibitions LTD

Inspiration for planning your garden railway - see live steam, gas and coal fired locomotives.

www.midlandsgardenrailshow.co.uk

Spring forecast for *Newstead*'s anticipated preservation debut

By Owen Hayward

A HUNSLET 0-6-0ST that has yet to work public services despite being preserved more than half a century ago is expected to be working trains by late spring this year after its boiler was returned to the frames on January 22.

Built in 1929, No. 1589 *Newstead* has been undergoing overhaul at the Spa Valley Railway in Kent, where it arrived in 2018. The locomotive has since been stripped by volunteers and, with the assistance of some skilled contractors, comprehensively overhauled, with near enough every component having been replaced, refurbished or repaired in readiness for its impending public debut.

Although it was preserved in 1972 by an enthusiast who had the locomotive repaired and running at Suffolk Steam later that decade, *Newstead* spent the majority of its retirement hidden in a purpose-built shed on land adjacent to a convent in Hertfordshire. It had been such a well-kept secret that by the 1990s it had been presumed scrapped, with its discovery following the death of its previous owner in 2015 coming as a surprise to enthusiasts, and the situation was described as something out of storybook, as highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 215.

On September 27, 2022, Newstead's boiler was sent away to Road Steam UK, in Wiltshire, for a contract overhaul. Amid other jobs carried out there, the crown and longitudinal stays were replace and a new tubeplate and angle ring made and fitted. Following the success of the out-of-frames steam test on December 3, 2024, the boiler was transported to Beever Ltd, in Tunbridge Wells, where it and the saddle tank were shotblasted and painted.

Both components were returned to the SpVR and following the fitting of the ashpan to the underside of the firebox, and the boiler was gently lowered into the frames once more. Work to lag and clad it commenced immediately as a major push was started by volunteers in a bid to see the locomotive enter traffic – which could be as soon as Easter.

A final in-frames test will be undertaken once further assembly work has been completed, which has already seen the refitting of the water tank and cab, with a start on fitting pipework into the boiler.

Further painting will also be carried out to finish off the tank in the same lined crimson lake as the cab and bunker, the livery having been chosen by volunteers involved with the overhaul at the start of the project owing to its similarity to a livery worn by some NCB locomotives. The frames have been finished off in lined purple brown, which records show was carried by the prototype of the class, No. 1954 *Fitzwilliam*, which was built back in 1923.



The boiler for No. 1589 *Newstead* was returned to the frames on January 22 after an overhaul carried out offsite by contractors. It is hoped that the locomotive will make its heritage era debut on public trains this spring. OWEN HAYWARD



Right: Less than two weeks after the boiler was lifted into the frames, *Newstead*'s saddle tank was placed back atop the lagged and clad boiler and the cab roof refitted as the locomotive's reassembly continued at a rapid pace. ALEX ALDER/ NEWSTEAD LOCO GROUP

Break-in at Embsay railway

POLICE issued an appeal for information after several large specialist tools were stolen during a raid on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway between January 16 and 23.

Among the items stolen was equipment including a Honda-powered petrol generator, Cembre eco rail drill, two-stroke petrol in a blue steel carrying box, a trolley-mounted Honda petrol hydrovane air compressor, a partner petrol-driven disc cutter with leather PPE leggings, and a Maxim Master 35 petrol-driven impact wrench and sockets.

Anyone with information about the theft or who has been offered these tools for sale is asked to email joanne.fawcett@northyorkshire.police.uk or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via its website, quoting reference 12250013491.

GCR gets £280k Government grant boost

THE Great Central Railway has scooped a £280,000 grant to create a new space for school visits, improve welfare facilities for staff and volunteers, and to add a train driving simulator.

The grant is part of a £16.9 million award to the Loughborough Town Deal for 11 separate local projects under the Government's Towns Fund.

The GCR's slice of the award will help preserve and develop rare employment skills which are rapidly dying out, create a heritage locomotive works and education centre, and deliver increased tourism opportunities. The railway currently attracts 110,000 visitors every year, all contributing to spending in the wider town economy.

The grant will also help to further develop a linked-up heritage quarter for the town.

GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "We are investing in the future of the GCR by improving the visitor and educational experience, which will help young people understand the country's steam train heritage. We are grateful for the support from Loughborough Town Deal and look forward to completing the works, which are focused on the Locomotive Shed.

"We believe it will greatly improve the site for staff, volunteers and visitors."



Left: Great Central Railway general manager Malcolm Holmes (left) and Martin Traynor OBE, chairman of the Loughborough Town Deal board, on board BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78108 at Loughborough. LTD

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Stockport Viaduct gets £1m revamp – but overshadowing fears expressed

By Robin Jones

THE landmark Grade II*-listed Stockport Viaduct, a major feat of British engineering and a pioneering structure of the early railway age which carries about 398 trains every day between the West Coast Main Line and Manchester Piccadilly, is to undergo a £1 million facelift.

Last year, Network Rail embarked on the project to remove overgrowing vegetation and graffiti and carry out extensive repairs to the 1840-built viaduct's 11 million bricks. So far, 23 of the structure's 26 spans have received the VIP treatment.

The 1800ft-long, 111ft-tall viaduct crosses the M60 and River Mersey. Engineers will abseil down the viaduct above the motorway to carry out work to the remaining arches. To do so safely, the M60 will close from February 17 until March 2 between junctions 27 and one in both directions, from 10pm to 6am.



Stockport Viaduct as seen from a vantage point over the M60. NR

Iconic landmark

Rob Stephens, principal route engineer for the North West route, said: "Stockport Viaduct is an important piece of cultural heritage for the railway and the Stockport community. We are proud to be responsible for its upkeep.

"The recent work means its overall appearance is much improved, but it also reduces the risk of damage caused by overgrown vegetation and graffiti."

Coun Grace Baynham, Stockport Council's cabinet member for Parks, Highways and Transport Services, said: "Stockport Viaduct is an iconic feature of our town, and it is great that Network Rail has been carrying out the restoration of this much-loved structure. With the £1 billion regeneration of our town centre continuing apace, it's even more important that our historical listed landmarks look their absolute best."

Stockport MP Navendu Mishra added: "I am delighted that Stockport Viaduct is being cleaned and repaired to its former glory. I have raised concerns in Parliament about the condition of the viaduct and called for funding to cover cleaning, maintenance and repair costs to this impressive and essential infrastructure."

The Victorian Society, however, has expressed concerns that the viaduct will be badly impacted by recently tabled plans for mixed-use development comprising tall, densely-packed buildings around it.

Society director James Hughes said: "The Stockport Viaduct is one of the most remarkable railway structures in Britain. Locally and nationally, it is hugely important – a fact that should be borne in mind, particularly in a year when the 200th anniversary of the birth of the railway is being celebrated.

"What is most remarkable though is the viaduct's arresting scale and its pre-eminence within the urban context of Stockport, lending the structure an unrivalled landmark quality. Implementation of this scheme would profoundly undermine that landmark quality, in the process causing a high level of harm to the setting of the viaduct and impeding views of it. The face of Stockport would be fundamentally changed and irreversibly disfigured.

"The society absolutely recognises the need for development, but the height, proximity and detailed design of the scheme proposed is unacceptable. We recommend that alternative options are explored that seek to introduce a certain density of development without challenging the prominence and isolation of the viaduct, which are crucial aspects of its significance."

The society fears the scheme will set a precedent for the construction of tall/high-rise buildings close to the viaduct, undermining its importance and reducing its visual dominance in the town and the ability for it to be appreciated by residents and tourists.

Industrial pair for Worth Valley fleet

TWO industrial steam locomotives have moved to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

Sentinel 4wVB No. 7232 of 1927 *Ann*, which worked at British Tar Products Limited in Cadishead, Lancashire, until it retired in 1969, subsequently moved to the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, where it eventually returned to steam in 1998. Bought by two individuals, *Ann* was then moved to the East Lancashire Railway where another overhaul was completed four years ago, before it was used on occasional passenger trains, brake van rides and shunting demonstrations.

At the KWVR, it has been joined by Avonside 0-4-0ST No. 1973 of 1927 *Dora*, which was supplied new to the British Electricity Authority at Barton, near Manchester.

First based in preservation at the KWVR where it was returned to steam but not thought to have been used in service, it was sold and moved to the Nene Valley Railway and later to the Rutland Railway Museum.

In 2005 it became the last standard gauge steam locomotive to work in a British quarry when the curtain was brought down on operations at Barrington Cement Quarry in Cambridgeshire.

Later based at privately-owned Rippingdale station in Lincolnshire, it has undergone an extensive overhaul at Riley & Son (E) works in Heywood.

Historic Crewe plaque given to local heritage centre

AN historic plague has been donated to Crewe Heritage Trust following a £191 million signalling upgrade on the West Coast Main Line, which has seen the control of movements at Basford Hall freight depot and the lines which serve it switched to the modern Manchester Rail Operating Control centre.

Commemorating the 1913 royal visit to Crewe Works, the plaque was handed over to the trust by Network Rail after its former signalbox home was decommissioned over Christmas as part of the upgrade.

The plaque will now be housed at Crewe Heritage Centre, which is sited on the original Crewe Works land. Some block instruments from the old signalling boxes were also given to the trust.

Established in 1843, the Old Works, as it is now known, was the original engineering facility for the railways in Crewe, producing some of the country's best-known steam locomotives.

The 1913 visit saw King George V and Queen Mary met at the station by large crowds waving flags and streamers, and the town was decorated with bunting and fairy lights.

Network Rail programme manager Jamie Morris said: "When we removed the old signalboxes, we wanted to preserve some of its history. The plaque is a cherished piece that highlights Crewe's pivotal role in the development of the railway industry."



The plaque commemorating the 1913 royal visit to Crewe. NR

Trust chairman Gordon Heddon said: "We are thrilled to be able to accept this important item which represents yet another facet of Crewe's significant industrial heritage. We look forward to putting it on public display at Crewe Heritage Centre in time for our new season opening on March 20."

Swanage appoints its first chief executive with aim of future-proofing Purbeck line

By Robin Jones

THE Swanage Railway has appointed its first chief executive with the aim of developing and future-proofing the Isle of Purbeck seaside line for generations to come.

Abbie King will join the Swanage Railway Company, which runs the heritage steam and diesel train service and undertakes other commercial activities for the Swanage Railway Trust charity, in the paid full-time role from March 17.

She said: "I am looking forward to coming back to Dorset and joining the established team at the Swanage Railway to help make sure the wonderful heritage line is future proofed for generations to come."

Growing up in Dorset, Abbie comes to the Isle of Purbeck from the Shrewsbury Ark in Shropshire, a charity helping homeless and vulnerable people. As the Shrewsbury Ark's charity director, she developed the charity's business, board and mission, as well as creating financial systems and supporting staff with their development.

Abbie studied travel and tourism at Weymouth College before studying business and finance at university. Seeking a career in museums and heritage, she worked at Weymouth Museum before moving to Merlin



Abbie King, the first Swanage Railway chief executive. BETH GREGORY

Entertainments within its Sea Life brand, which later led to a new challenge working for the Lulworth Estate in the Isle of Purbeck, where Abbie managed commercial interests at Lulworth Cove.

From 2012, Abbie was the visitor services manager for the Tank Museum at Bovington, near Wareham, where she helped increase the number of visitors and commercial activity while keeping the integrity of the museum's mission.

Abbie later became the assistant director of the Shire Hall historic courthouse museum in Dorchester before taking on the role of director at the museum in 2020, where she created a profitable museum while keeping its missions of learning and being a social justice hub.

In 2023, she moved to the Midlands to take on the role of chief operating officer at the Ironbridge Gorge museums, where she worked with a large and effective team caring for some of the world's most important industrial heritage sites.

Fresh perspectives

SRC chairman Gavin Johns said: "Abbie's wide breadth of experience is very relevant to the Swanage Railway and the way it needs to develop to position itself for the future.

"Her Dorset roots bring a vital perspective that will enable her to quickly establish relationships with staff, stakeholders and our visitors that will support the Swanage Railway's aims.

"The railway is working hard to stabilise its business following the pandemic – and the effects of increased material and operating costs – to create a sustainable base for the future, with 2024 trading being a positive step towards this aim.

"Part of our plan requires the extra day-to-day support of a chief executive for shaping and leading our management team, staff and volunteers. This newly-created role focuses on developing the business so it delivers our charitable aims and business plans to establish the Swanage Railway as a living museum by bringing in new thinking and experience, continuing the improvement of our railway management, and focusing on investing to improve the experience for our valued visitors."

Volunteer trust chairman Frank Roberts, a volunteer on the railway for 40 years, said: "Abbie's role is crucial and part of an important plan to take the Swanage Railway to the next stage in its development – bringing in fresh ideas to increase our income so we can achieve an enhanced heritage experience for our train passengers.

"There is so much the Swanage Railway can achieve to develop its current operation.

"Abbie's appointment, as our new chief executive, will bring an injection of experience and energy at the top of the SRC's management team."

Anyone interested in finding out more about volunteering at the Swanage Railway can contact volunteer recruitment and retention officer Lisa Gravett on 01929 475212 or email iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk.

Details about volunteering can also be found online at swanagerailwaytrust.org

Station opening consultant appointed to GCR board

A RAIL consultant with a third of a century of experience in the industry, including the founding of a company which opens new stations, has been appointed to the board of the Great Central Railway.



Qualified accountant Ian Walters began his career in the retail and defence sectors before joining the rail industry in 1991. At Chiltern Railways, he became finance director in 2001.

In 2009, Ian founded SLC, and independent rail consultancy operated by a team of rail professionals with a wealth of experience and expertise in a wide variety of environments and disciplines. Under his leadership as managing director, SLC has successfully opened 12 new stations, with an additional 11 set to open soon and numerous projects in development.

He also serves as a director of E-Rail, a pioneering company that utilises land value capture to fund rail schemes, and which has successfully funded part of the recently-opened Northumberland Line.

He also holds directorships at WSMR, an open-access rail proposal, and SLC Property and SLC Investments, further cementing his influence in shaping the future of rail.

Ian (pictured) said: "The GCR has a rich history and an important role in preserving the legacy of railways in the UK. I look forward to supporting the board to help it continue to inspire and delight future generations, while contributing to the broader community."

GCR chairman Richard Patching said: "We are thrilled to welcome Ian to the board. His extensive experience in rail development, his innovative approach to funding and infrastructure, and his proven leadership in delivering successful projects make him a tremendous asset to the GCR.

"His passion for rail aligns perfectly with our mission to preserve and enhance this historic railway, and we are confident that his expertise will help us achieve our ambitious goals."

Two key appointments at Crich

THE National Tramway Museum at Crich has appointed Graham Bennett as chief executive officer, with Victoria Dickerson taking on the role of volunteer coordinator and mentor.

Graham brings a wealth of experience in people and commercial leadership from the manufacturing and construction sector and is a trustee and volunteer at three other charities. He will oversee the museum's operations, strategic vision, and engagement activities.

"This is a place I have visited several times with my family, and I am excited to be given the opportunity to combine my commercial experience and time as a trustee and volunteer elsewhere to take the National Tramway Museum onto the next stage in its journey," he said. "I am looking forward to working with the team to build on the museum's successes, strengthen its reputation, and ensure its continued growth and sustainability."

Victoria, who has an MA in Public History and Heritage and experience in managing volunteers in historic buildings and museums settings, will lead initiatives to recruit, train and support the volunteers who play a vital role in the museum's day-to-day operations and special events.



Graham Bennett and Victoria Dickerson at Crich Tramway Village. NTM

She said: "I am really excited to be joining the National Tramway Museum and learning from our amazing team of volunteers.

"The museum has much to be proud of, and volunteers are a key element of its past success and future growth and sustainability."

A NTM statement said: "These strategic appointments will strengthen the museum's leadership and volunteer programs as it continues its mission to preserve and share the history of light railway systems in the UK."

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Seacole/Nightingale is offered for hire



Stephen Middleton with Hudswell Clarke No. 1208 *Seacole/Nightingale*, which he hopes to hire out this year. SALLY CLIFFORD



Hudswell Clarke No. 1208 at work on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway.

By Sally Clifford

THE sole survivor of locomotives built for the Nidd Valley Light Railway, which became a war workhorse, is available for loan throughout the year ahead.

Award-winning North Yorkshire-based preservationist and the proprietor of Stately Trains, Stephen Middleton, has announced his intention to hire out Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1208 of 1916 *Seacole/Nightingale* this year.

"It is a very attractive and useful engine and has seen work on the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway, North Tyneside Railway, Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway and Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway, as well as Fawley Hill," he said.

The sole survivor of two built in 1916, it was used for war work at the Ministry of Munitions at Gretna Green before being bought by Bradford Corporation to work passenger and goods trains over the Nidd Valley Light Railway to Scar House Reservoir.

Initially named *Mitchell* after the water works engineer who oversaw the reservoir project, it was later renamed *Illingworth* after William Illingworth, who opened the reservoir in 1936.

After joining Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd, where it worked on the construction of Ebbw Vale Steelworks in Wales, the locomotive became *Harold* and later *Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons 88*.



No. 1208 was previously owned by and worked for Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons. SALLY CLIFFORD



Past life: *Illingworth* working on the Nidd Valley Light Railway. STEPHEN MIDDLETON COLLECTION

Under the ownership of Mowlem, it was renamed *Swynnerton* while undertaking war work duties at Swynnerton and Ruddington. It worked on the Workington breakwater and Mowlem's Braehead power station in 1956.

The engine was consigned for scrap in 1957 but thankfully remained intact. In 1998 it came into Stephen's possession when he took on what is possibly one of his most ambitious preservation projects to date.

Following a lengthy and costly restoration project, the locomotive returned to the rails at the EBASR where in May 2017 it made its preservation debut hauling passengers for the first time in 80 years.

In April 2022 it was renamed *Seacole/Nightingale* in memory of the nurses Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale, and to honour those working on the frontline and throughout health care services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"When Covid came, it was so heart-rending what medical staff were going through that I thought we should give this a bit of relevance to the 21st century," said Stephen, referring to the nurses' nameplate. "It is like a memorial – something that will remember the tough times we all went through for future generations."

In 2023 Stephen was presented with a National Transport Award acknowledging the locomotive's preservation project by the Princess Royal. It is one of a number of awards he has received for his restoration projects.

"It was humbling because there were so many projects in air, sea and road," he said. Since returning to service, the locomotive has been proudly pulling the beautifully restored historic carriages in Stephen's Stately Trains collection along the picturesque EBASR.

However, being a small engine limits the number of coaches it can pull, which has prompted Stephen's decision to seek opportunities to hire out the engine this year so it can earn its keep. "While we have got to make money to keep it going, it isn't about the money. We can take on projects that never turn a penny because they have much to teach us," Stephen said.

To find out more about hiring the engine, email middletonmarketing@btconnect.com

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

WHICH *HERITAGE RAILWAY* SUBSCRIPTION SUITS YOU BEST?

1: 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION — BEST VALUE

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

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

SAVE £20.60

2: SIX-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION

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

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

SAVE £6.20

Visting Churchward 2-8-0 No. 2807 simmers at Shackerstone Station on the Battlefield Line during an evening photographic charter on January 11. The heavy freight locomotive was stopping over to appear at the Winter Steam Gala that weekend as it headed back to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, after having spent the winter at the South Devon Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

WHAT OUR READERS SAY ABOUT *HERITAGE RAILWAY*

★★★★★

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

IAN SANGSTER

★★★★★

An interesting and informative read alongside many excellent photographs.

FIONA MOYE

★★★★★

Informative, insightful and supportive of the heritage railway movement.

CLIVE WILSON

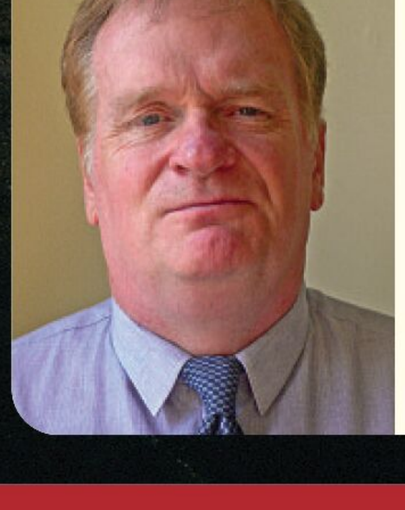
Call 01507 529529 and quote HRDPS

Online: www.classicmagazines.co.uk/HRDPS

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

WELCOME ABOARD THE BIGGEST RAILWAY COMMUNITY

HERITAGE RAILWAY



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

ROBIN JONES, EDITOR

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

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

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Rates are based on UK orders only – for overseas please visit www.classicmagazines.co.uk/hr-overseas. Subscriptions will start with the next available issue. Offer closes 14/03/24. Direct Debit payments will continue at the price you paid, on this offer, at these intervals thereafter unless you tell us otherwise. Full terms and conditions can be found at www.classicmagazines.co.uk/terms. Quoted savings are based on a direct debit subscription when compared to the same number of issues at full printed price

Grants fund skills and site growth at Weybourne sheds

A RECENT surge in focus on training and site improvements has seen many lines invest in these areas, with the North Norfolk Railway being one of the latest to do so, its goals having been supported by the securing of two separate funding grants.

Site improvements have included the installation of low-energy LED lights in the workshops at Weybourne to improve the environment for its staff and volunteers, while also reducing electricity consumption on the site.

An oil store and coal bunker have also been created, allowing for the storage of smokeless solid fuel ovoids alongside the traditional coal as the line seeks to reduce emissions as well as the risk of lineside fires.

These have been funded partly thanks to a grant of £34,427 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund.

Furthermore, a £5000 grant from Future Skills now means that the NNR can train its workforce in safety-critical tasks including banksman and slinger, woodworking, chainsaw use and abrasive wheel machinery roles, ensuring that these vital positions are filled for years to come.

'Invaluable'

NNR general manager Graham Hukins said: "We are delighted to have received this support which will allow us to improve not only our current infrastructure, but also the skills and understanding of our team.

"These improvements will make a material difference to day-to-day working conditions and also have a practical impact on our running costs.

"In common with many heritage railways, our overheads have increased significantly in recent years and it now costs about £3.8 million for us to run each year, making funding for enhancements such as these invaluable."

The North Norfolk Rural Business and Community project covering various infrastructure works is part-funded by the Government through the Rural England Prosperity Fund, supported by North Norfolk District Council, and delivered in partnership with Norfolk County Council.

It funds capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure which will help to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities.

Elsewhere in the carriage works, LNER 'Quad-Art' set No. 74 has had minor repairs carried out to a damaged door lock and surrounding woodwork, before the entire set was subjected to its two-yearly complete revarnished in readiness for the year ahead.



Having spent its entire pre-preservation working life on the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway, 7F 2-8-0 No. 53809 is now seen hard at work on the revived section of another joint line, the Midland & Great Northern – now the North Norfolk Railway – on September 9, 2024. STEVE ALLEN

Triple Poppy Line golden anniversary launch

Centenary of S&DJR 7F marked alongside revived pioneer DMU after an absence of 55 years

By Robin Jones

THE North Norfolk Railway is to mark the 50th anniversary of its first passenger service with a triple celebration to launch the season during the February 14-23 half-term.

Special birthday festivities will mark the centenary of Somerset & Dorset 7F 2-8-0 No. 53809 and its 50th year in the heritage sector. Built by Robert Stephenson & Co in Darlington to haul heavy goods trains on the S&DJR, it spent its entire pre-preservation career based on the trans-Mendip line. Withdrawn by BR in 1964, it was sent to Dai Woodham's scrapyard at Barry, from where it was saved in 1975.

NNR general manager Graham Hukins said: "This year marks No. 53809's 50th year in preservation and 50 years since the NNR ran its first ever steam train, so it is fitting that the giant locomotive will raise the curtain on our golden anniversary season."

Scheduled to take passengers on the 11-mile round trip between Sheringham and Holt, rover tickets are valid for unlimited travel, allowing passengers to hop on and off all day. Advance booking is recommended and passengers doing so will receive a 15% discount; more details are available at www.nnrailway.co.uk

The week will also see a heritage 'first' as working alongside No. 53809 will be a newly-recreated 'lightweight' heritage railcar of the type that ran on the line in the 1950s.

No. E79263 will be making its debut in this guise following an overhaul lasting almost two years. The vehicle entered traffic in 1957 as No. E56062, spending much of its life in the North East before working services on branch lines out of Norwich in the 1980s.



Metro Cammell Class 101 Driving Motor Brake Second E56062 taken back in time to represent 1950s 'lightweight' No. E79263. The original No. E79263 was allocated new to Norwich on January 5, 1956. NNR

Recreating the past

The railcar has been on the NNR since 2003, but its latest overhaul has included a degree of cosmetic reverse engineering to recreate a pioneering 'yellow diamond' DMU from the 1950s. The design was originally introduced in 1955 by Metro Cammell and formed the basis of the later Class 101 railcars such as No. E56062. These trains could be driven from either end and were classified lightweight as they did not need a separate (heavy) locomotive to haul them. The type was used extensively in East Anglia, including the line from Melton Constable to Sheringham.

"Half-term will be the first opportunity for the public to travel in this type of vehicle for more than 55 years as they were taken out of service by 1969 and all were scrapped," said Graham. "The recreated railcar represents a missing link in East Anglian rail heritage, and we are very grateful to its owner, the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society, and our carriage and wagon team for their work to achieve this.

"The railcar affords excellent driver's eye views of the line and will allow passengers to get a feel for travel on the line in the decade prior to its closure by BR in 1964."

The half-term week will also see the opening of a children's activity carriage at Holt, complete with mini ticket office, play train and a child-friendly model railway. There will also be special activity sheets available for every child.

Following half-term, the Poppy Line's popular steam trains will run on Sundays in March, with the main season commencing on April 5 and the railway open most days until November 2.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Major railway exhibition that was inspired by 50p poster purchase

By Geoff Courtney

THE purchase of an LNER poster for 50p more than 40 years ago has led to the opening of a major four-month exhibition as part of the nationwide bicentenary celebration of the world's first modern railway.

Rambles In Lincolnshire has on display nearly all of the county's railway posters issued by the LNER and BR and is the brainchild of Mike Fowler, who grew up in Spilsby, a market town in the east of the county. He has retained a strong attachment to the area ever since, although he now lives in Bedfordshire.

A former physics teacher, secondary deputy head, and radio and film producer, 78-year-old Mike started collecting Lincolnshire railwayana on October 5, 1970, the day BR closed the East Lincolnshire main line from Grimsby to Peterborough and the branch to Mablethorpe and the Bellwater Junction to Lincoln route.

"The main source of Lincolnshire objects at that time was direct purchase from the BR stores controller at York, former railwaymen, or two Scunthorpe auctions in 1971 and the following year," he said. "My first purchase was a booking office doorplate which I still have today. In those days, the main interest was cast-iron signage, with enamels being almost totally ignored."

Mike gradually built up his collection by buying, selling and swapping with other enthusiasts, although he continued to buy from the York stores controller, including totem station signs for £5.

Collectors' Corner

Due to his work, Mike moved to York in 1979, which resulted in a closer relationship with the stores controller and also the then recently-opened Collectors' Corner next to the station. At that time his collection did not include a poster, but that was soon to change. "One day, Collectors' Corner offered me an LNER Skegness poster for 50p, and I still have it.

"It's the wartime photographic example of the couple in a coach compartment that was also used for other resorts, including Great Yarmouth."

The collection of posters subsequently took a back seat until Mike attended a railwayana auction at Derby in about 2010, which featured an example by Jack Merriott depicting the Lincolnshire village of Somersby, where the poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson was born. "At £300 it was a shock, but I purchased it," said Mike.



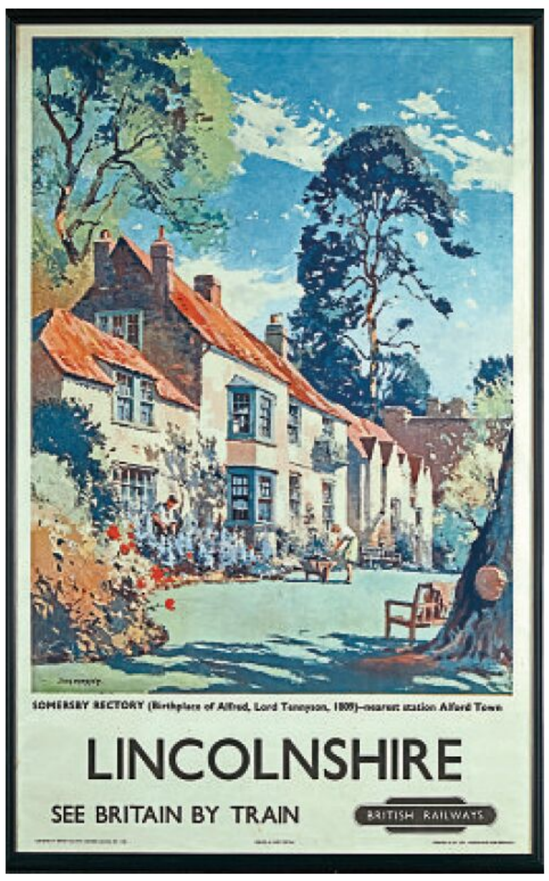
Opening time: Richard Furness and his wife Judi at the opening of the Rambles In Lincolnshire railway posters exhibition on January 11. LOUISE BOWEN



On show: Part of the Lincolnshire railway posters exhibition at Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre until May 4. RICHARD FURNESS



Trailblazer: The 50p LNER Skegness poster that was the inspiration for a collection that now comprises 100 Lincolnshire posters amassed by Mike Fowler.



Poster boy: A BR poster of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's birthplace in Somersby currently on display in a railway posters exhibition in Grimsby.

This was when an acclaimed series of 'railway journeys in art' poster books was launched by Richard Furness, a seminal moment in the world of poster collecting. The fourth volume in the nine-volume series, covering the Eastern Counties was a significant publication for Mike, as it provided him with a detailed and invaluable guide to posters in his beloved Lincolnshire, enabling him to know what to look for.

"The rest remains history, during which time I added further Lincolnshire posters and relics to the collection," he said.

The exhibition, which comprises Mike's 100 posters and station totem signs and carriageprints, is being held in the Muriel Barker Gallery at the award-winning Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre at Alexandra Dock and runs until May 4. It was opened on January 11 by Richard Furness, who described it as "a unique show" that featured virtually all the Lincolnshire posters issued by railway companies over the decades.

Fife Heritage Railway seeks expansion

THE Fife Heritage Railway has applied for planning permission to expand its facilities at Kirklands Yard with a new model railway exhibition area, reception, cafe, bookshop and museum display.

The railway, which has been based on the site since 2001, operates, maintains and restores preserved items from the former Lochty Private Railway.

It wants to reuse one of the temporary construction buildings left behind by Network Rail after the conclusion of the project to reinstate the Levenmouth rail link. The structure had been used as offices and welfare facilities.

The FHR's application to Fife Council said: "This will further enhance visitor facilities and will also provide opportunities for local volunteering, tackling skills gaps, developing young people, and provide opportunities for all ages and abilities for leisure and social interaction."

Model layout stolen on motorway

POLICE have appealed for information about the theft of a trailer containing a model railway layout following a breakdown near junction nine on the M56 in Cheshire.

Two Wrenbury and District Model Railway Club members were travelling to a narrow gauge show in Rainford, St Helens, on January 18 when their 4ft by 3ft camping trailer sustained a puncture.

A passing Highways Agency patrol stopped and said they had two hours to fix the problem before being towed off the motorway.

The men removed the trailer wheel and drove to Warrington to buy a new tyre – only to find when they returned that the trailer had vanished. It contained an 009 gauge layout, St Margaret Grange, on two main boards.

Anyone with information in relation to the theft is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101, quoting IML 2008024, or visit cheshire.police.uk/tell-us

Second overhaul starts on Corris Tattoo locomotive

By Owen Hayward



Up and away: The tank of Tattoo No. 7 is lifted as the overhaul begins. CR

FOR nearly 20 years it was the mainstay of the Corris Railway's services, but in 2024 new-build Kerr Stuart Tattoo 0-4-2ST No. 7 bowed out of service as its boiler ticket expired, paving the way for the line's second new-build locomotive – Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 – to take charge of trains. Now though, CR volunteers have started to strip down No. 7 as work gets underway on its second 10-yearly overhaul.

In order to survive the 21st century as a viable tourist attraction, the CR recognised quite early on that a steam locomotive was needed to appeal to visitors, and with the two surviving original locomotives (Falcon No. 3 and Tattoo No. 4) now plying their trade on the nearby Talyllyn Railway, a new-build locomotive was proposed and supported by society membership, with the project launched on February 1, 1995.

No. 7 entered service a decade later, returning the sight and sound of steam to the Dulas Valley once more.

Its first stint in service ended in 2014, with the first overhaul swiftly carried out, enabling No. 7 to return during the 2015 season. Since then it has covered nearly 4000 miles in service – an impressive feat considering the CR is currently only three-quarters-of-a-mile long, and the Talyllyn (which it visited in 2021) just 7¼ miles.

It suffered only one major failure during the last ticket, which occurred during the Santa special trains of 2018. While taking empty coaching stock to Corris station, a lubrication issue caused a section of the valve gear on the driver's side to seize. As the locomotive was working uphill with the regulator open, this caused stress and damage to the valve gear, resulting in No. 7 being temporarily withdrawn.

Repairs were effected with assistance from engineers at the Vale of Rheidol Railway, allowing the Tattoo to return to service in time for the next operating season.

Targeted deadline

Between Christmas and New Year, an entirely voluntary workforce descended on Maespoeth locomotive shed and began to disassemble the locomotive, with hopes of returning it to service in time for the gala planned to be held at the railway on Saturday, May 24.

The saddle tank, cab, coal bunker, boiler cladding, steam fittings and pipes and the motion have been removed and stored to allow work to progress on the boiler and smokebox.

The boiler will be retubed at Maespoeth, where the metal and welds will be inspected and measured to ensure that they meet the necessary safety requirements to pass certification for the next 10 years. After the boiler is lifted, the driving wheels and pony truck will be removed, and the frames repainted.

The VoR workshops have been contracted to fabricate a new stainless steel smokebox for the locomotive – something it has previous experience of, having done the same for No. 4 during its own recent overhaul – as well as reprofiling the tyres and fitting new crank pins. New bearings for the driving axles will be produced in-house at Maespoeth in the CR's newly revamped machine shop. A recently-acquired Huron mill has been used to take measurements to a three decimal place accuracy of the axle centres and the motion using a digital read-out.

Because of the need to cancel its 2024 Christmas trains due to Storm Darragh, the railway has suffered a hit to its finances at a critical time and is appealing for donations not only to help overhaul the locomotive to return to service during 2025, but to also tide it over through the winter months. Anyone wishing to donate to help with general running costs or the overhaul of No. 7 can do so via the Railway's website, www.corris.co.uk, or cheques payable to Corris Railway can be sent to: The Corris Railway, Station Yard, Corris, Machynlleth SY20 9SH.

Gala celebrations mark Railway 200

At the aforementioned gala on May 24, the CR will be putting out as many of its locomotives as possible as it joins the Railway 200 celebrations. The line-up is due to include some members of its fleet which rarely work public services, such as Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0DM No. 11 *Vlad*, which was imported from Austria in 2015, while society members will be presented with an opportunity to ride a gravity train like the slate workers of old.

Depending on crew availability, it is also hoped to use Motor Rail Simplex 4WDM No. 5 *Alan Meaden* to offer rides in guard's van No. 204 down to the railhead of the southern extension in exchange for a small donation. *Alan Meaden* was the first locomotive acquired by the Corris Railway Society and worked the first formal train of the revival between Maespoeth and Corris in 1985, making it a fitting choice to operate public trips along the newly laid lines.

Tours of the railway's workshop facilities will be available, with the event concluding with a cavalcade of all available locomotives which will depart Maespoeth for Corris station at 4pm.

Advance gala tickets are priced at £10 for adults, £5 for children aged five to15 (under-fives go free), and £1 for dogs.

Those wishing to join as society members for a chance to ride the gravity train can sign up at the railway or via its website.



The stripped-down No. 7 is shunted about the yard at Maespoeth while new-build Falcon No. 10 stands nearby. CR

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



No. 7802 *Bradley Manor* (right) arrived on the Severn Valley Railway on January 27 following its successful steam test at Tyseley. By February 2 it had been coupled to the tender of No. 2857 outside Bridgnorth works. JOHN TITLOW

Bradley Manor debut imminent!

By Owen Hayward and John Titlow

TWO GWR Manor 4-6-0s are soon set to grace the Severn Valley Railway as No. 7802 *Bradley Manor*'s return to service is due imminently, the locomotive having passed its final boiler test at Tyseley Locomotive Works in January.

Having been out of service since 2019 in need of repairs following damage sustained from a broken piston rod, *Bradley Manor*'s final steam test was undertaken in the presence of the boiler inspector on January 10. Having satisfactorily passed, it means the locomotive is all but ready to return to service, with testing due to commence in earnest.

No. 7802 arrived back on the SVR on January 27, its owner the Erlestoke Manor Fund having reached an agreement with the railway for it to be the prime locomotive of its collection to be based there. One of the reasons is so the locomotive will be close to hand while the new cylinders bed in, while additionally providing an attractive lure for the railway as a locomotive which has not run there for more than five years.

A new tender is currently under construction to be paired with No. 7802; while this project progresses, the locomive will be paired with that belonging to Churchward 2800 2-8-0 No. 2857, which has been loaned to run with the locomotive until the end of 2025. After 10 years of use, the tender has recently been repainted into BR lined green at the SVR's Bridgnorth paintshop to match *Bradley Manor*.

SVR painter Ronan O'Brien completed the work by hand-painting the crests on either side, rather than using transfers. The lining out is immaculate.

The tender swap is after an agreement was reached between the Erlestoke Manor Fund and the 2857 Society, and is expected to last for 12-15 months.

Mutual benefits

EMF chairman Adrian Hassell said: "The 4000-gallon tender, which has long been partnered with 7802, is in need of expenditure and repairs to ready it for further service. This would divert resources from the current focus of returning No. 7802 to service for the 2025 season, while the agreement provides useful income for the 2857 Society.

"With the loco returning to steam, No. 2857's smaller 3500-gallon tender will complement the Manor's appearance and give it a more authentic one rather than its larger 4000- gallon tender. Incidentally, tender swaps were commonplace in the days of steam."



New hand-painted logo on No. 2857's tender. JOHN TITLOW

Bradley Manor itself is now undergoing finishing touches following its arrival back at the SVR's main motive power depot.

Its return will provide a brief opportunity to see a pair of these locomotives running together, with No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* also based there but due to depart for the West Somerset Railway in late April on an extended hire period. The EMF is planning to run a special train for shareholders with both locomotives on a date to be confirmed, while the duo will also star in the SVR's April 18-21 spring steam gala.

Adrian added: "I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our EMF volunteers for their tireless work since 2019, input from the wider steam movement, and to colleagues at Tyseley Locomotive Works for their help and support in the first Manor cylinder block replacement in the preservation era. It will be so wonderful to see *Bradley Manor* back in action."

With the two Manors in regular service, EMF's focus will next turn to the overhaul of GWR large prairie No. 5164, which is also currently stored at Tyseley awaiting overhaul. Last operational in 2014, its overhaul is estimated to cost about £400,000; while steaming fees for Nos. 7802 and 7812 will contribute, the EMF is currently appealing for further donations towards this project, with people who donate in excess of £125 receiving an invitation to travel on one of the first trains behind it upon completion.

For details on how to donate or become a shareholder in the EMF, visit www.erlestokemanorfund.co.uk



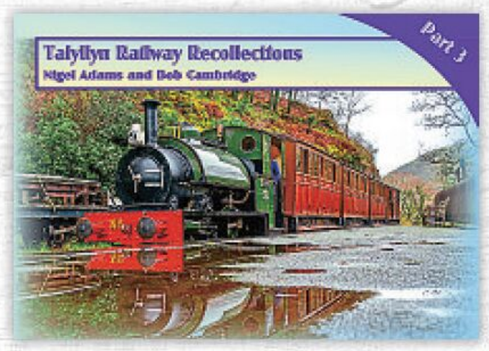
GWR 2-8-0 No. 2857's recently painted tender which will be used with *Bradley Manor*. JOHN TITLOW

HERITAGE RAILWAY

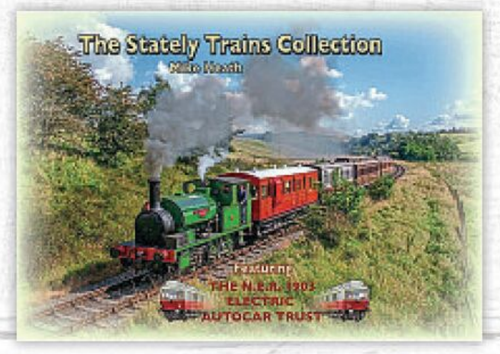
BOOK CORNER



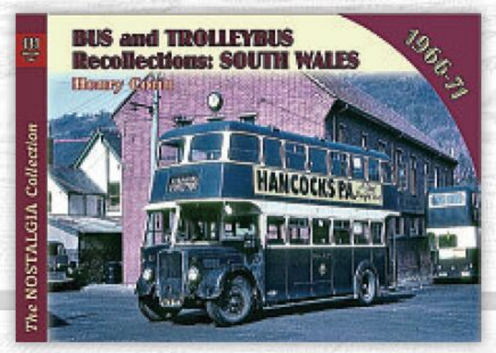
The Fairbourne Railway
Nigel Adams
£11.99 – Quote 15543



Talyllyn Railway Recollections
Part 3
Nigel Adams & Bob Cambridge
£10.99 – Quote 15811



The Stately Trains Collection
Mike Heath
£10.00 - Quote 15804



No 131 Bus and Trolleybus Recollections: South Wales
Henry Conn
£10.99 - Quote 15627

Order your copy today, visit
www.mortonsbooks.co.uk
Or call **01507 529529** and quote the five-digit number

MORTONS BOOKS
WANT TO HEAR ABOUT OUR LATEST BOOKS?
JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB!
AND GET **10% OFF** YOUR FIRST ORDER!
www.mortonsbooks.co.uk/newsletter
To view the privacy policy for Mortons Media Group, please visit www.mortons.co.uk/privacy

Swanage needs £20k to return diesel-hauled push-pull to service in 2026



4TC group volunteers Dan Bennett (left) and James Cox with DTSO No. 76725, which is the subject of a £20,000 appeal to help bring regular push-pull diesel services back to the branch for the first time since 1971. ANDREW PM WRIGHT



The interior of DTSO No. 76725, which will need refurbishing before it can enter service in time for the target of 2026. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

By Owen Hayward

A GROUP of Swanage Railway volunteers have been restoring a 1960s 4TC push-pull unit with a view to returning the sight of this once-common working to the seaside branch after more than four decades.

The TC push-pull trains are an important part of Dorset railway history because they spanned the decades covering the end of main line steam trains between Bournemouth, Poole, Dorchester and Weymouth in July 1967 to the start of new electric trains on the route in May 1988. The TC sets (BR Class 438) were built at Holgate Road carriage works, converting previously locomotive-hauled Mk. 1 carriages into vehicles with driving control ends (although not fitted with equipment to allow them to be self-propelling). They worked between Bournemouth, Southampton and Waterloo, coupled to new electric trains that came into use with the end of steam in July 1967.

They ran until BR introduced modern electric trains on the main line in May 1988. When traversing non-electrified lines, they would then be coupled to Class 33/1 locomotives with push-pull compatibility, enabling the locomotive to be operated from a cab at the leading end of the set as required.

The TC sets operated in consists of three (3TC) or four carriages (4TC); they could be found operating the line to Swanage between 1967 and 1969, with a special 4TC carriage set running to the resort in September 1971 – three months before the controversial closure of the branch from Wareham – when the Poole Grammar School Railway Society ran its 'Dorset Venturer' railtour around the county and 4TC carriage set No. 403 was worked by Class 33 No. 33111, fittingly now based on the Swanage Railway. In recent years the Swanage Railway Trust's 4TC group has been restoring former 4TC carriages, with Driving Trailer Second Open No. 76322 and Trailer Brake Second Corridor No. 70824 having been the focal point of efforts to date.



4TC unit No. 409 at Wareham on June 19, 1980, when they were a common sight in the region. A similar set-up is the target of the Swanage Railway's 4TC group. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

The group is hoping to see a 3TC unit enter service during 2026, after which it will work on other vehicles to upgrade it to a 4TC.

To reach this goal, £20,000 is needed in order to complete the third vehicle, Driving Trailer Second Open No. 76275.

The railway's volunteer diesel locomotive driver and 4TC group member Dan Bennett said: "The restoration of our third TC coach is the last hurdle in our goal of running a 1960s push-pull train at Swanage for the first time since September 1971.

"It will cost £70,000 to restore the coach but thanks to a generous benefactor, we only need to raise £20,000 from the public – donations that will be matched by the Swanage Railway Trust, of which the 4TC Group is a part.

"A TC push-pull train is not only an important part of the history of the Swanage branch line and the main line from London to Bournemouth and Weymouth, but it also offers operational flexibility to the Swanage Railway as it does not require the locomotive to run round the carriages at Swanage or Norden stations.

"The train could therefore be used on the three-mile line beyond Norden to Furzebrook and the River Frome.

"Many people aged between 45 and 70 will no doubt remember British Rail's TC trains in their blue-and-grey livery reliably running up and down the main line from Bournemouth to Dorchester and Weymouth."

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Frank Roberts added: "The tireless work of our 4TC Group's dedicated volunteers in restoring a unique TC train that operated on the main line through south Dorset is an important part of the trust's work to educate the public through living history.

"With the Swanage Railway Trust having restored a unique Victorian-era LSWR T3 from the 1890s, the restoration of a 1960s push-pull train will enable the railway to tell the fascinating story of the optimistic start and the sad end of the branch line from Wareham to Corfe Castle and Swanage."

More information can be found and donations for the restoration of the third TC vehicle made via the 4TC Group's website at www.4tcgroup.co.uk

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

New bunker for *Dunrobin* at Bridgnorth

REPATRIATED Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T No. 4085 of 1895 *Dunrobin* has received its newly fabricated bunker and rear cab, which was placed onto its rolling chassis by the overhead crane in Bridgnorth Works on January 16.

The locomotive, which was built for the fourth Duke of Sutherland to run his own private train on the Highland Railway between Dunrobin Castle and Inverness, is undergoing a complete rebuild on the Severn Valley Railway.

The original bunker was beyond economic use and little of it could be salvaged. A bunker was fabricated at the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's Boston Lodge works using the original as a template.

New side tanks, also manufactured by the FR, are onsite and waiting to be fitted on the locomotive. New inside crossheads have been fitted and its boiler and firebox is inside the boiler shop, with work progressing well.

In 1949, BR revoked the powers of the duke to travel in his own train and *Dunrobin* was sold to the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway. Exported to Canada in 1965, it was acquired in January 2011 by Beamish Museum and repatriated to the UK. On arrival, *Dunrobin* was brought to Bridgnorth on May 19, 2011, to be dismantled and the feasibility of restoration to working order assessed, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 150.

There have been many setbacks along the way, but these are being overcome. It is not helped that only one general arrangement drawing of the locomotive exists, and when it was in Canada many of the original parts were removed.

Both SVR and Beamish want the locomotive to be restored to its original pre-First World War condition. It is hoped to be completed either at the end of this year or the beginning of 2026.



***Dunrobin*'s bunker has been put on inside Bridgnorth Shed and it is starting to look like a locomotive.** JOHN TITLOW

Ground-breaking Donegal museum manager moves on

By Hugh Dougherty

DONEGAL Railway Heritage Museum manager Niall McCaughan has resigned to take up a new job as manager of tourism body Go Visit Donegal/Explore Innishowen.

In charge at Donegal since October 2018, Niall has been widely credited with turning around the fortunes of the railway museum by boosting visitor numbers and developing community involvement thanks to a series of innovative projects over the last five years.

The highlight was bringing County Donegal Railways Class 5 2-6-4T *Drumboe*, the locomotive which hauled the last passenger train on the narrow gauge system, on December 13, 1959, back home to Donegal in October 2021, generating renewed interest in the railway and its heritage and placing the museum firmly on the must-see lists of tourists and enthusiasts alike.

"When I took up the manager's post in 2018, I realised that we were missing a real 'wow' factor, something that would set us apart," said Niall, who came to the Donegal post with wide tourism and arts sector experience, but no background in railway heritage, a factor recognised by the board as providing a useful, fresh perspective. "We knew that a steam engine would not only become the centrepiece for the museum, but also a must-see for anyone interested in Donegal's heritage."



Niall McCaughan is moving to a new job, having been widely credited with turning round the fortunes of Donegal Railway Heritage Museum. DRHM

Niall was also responsible for the visualisation and installation of Ireland's first interactive steam locomotive driving simulator, as well as rebranding what was originally called Donegal Railway Heritage Centre as a museum and starting the process of seeking museum accreditation and the establishment of a Donegal railway archive there. The museum has also been very active in outreach work with school and community groups, while publishing a range of books on the railways of Donegal.

The outgoing manager said: "Working at the museum has been a career highlight for me, working with our great board staff and public. We have taken our museum to new heights, culminating in winning the title of top heritage attraction in the county and being one of the top five in Ireland. Although moving to a new post in Buncrana, I'll be available in an advisory role for the museum and, unless anyone thinks I'll be cutting my ties with the narrow gauge, my new office is in Railway Road in Buncrana, not far from the former Lough Swilly Railway station!"

Selwyn Johnston, of Headhunters Barber Shop and Railway Museum in Enniskillen, said: "I wish Niall every success in his new role and congratulate him on the sterling work he has done to promote railway heritage in Donegal and further afield."

County Donegal Railway Heritage Museum board member Jim McBride said: "We are sorry to lose Niall, who has really put the museum on the map due to his innovative approach to imaginative projects which have been delivered thanks to his enthusiasm, practical skills and ability to attract funding from a wide variety of sources.

"He has made a lasting impact on railway heritage, not just in Donegal itself but also much more widely.

"His contribution to developing Donegal Town itself too, through his work of integrating the museum into the community, has been much appreciated locally and is a lesson in making railway heritage both valued and relevant in its local area."

The full-time manager's post has been advertised at a salary of 37,500 Euros, on a Monday-to-Friday basis, with some weekend and evening work required.

New houses pose no threat to East Lancashire extension plans

THE site of a new housing development on former railway land adjacent to the East Lancashire Railway will not threaten any plans for future extension, although there is no immediate proposal for any such growth of the heritage line.

The Hawks View estate in Castleton, Rochdale, is set to see nearly 200 new homes built near to the ELR's Heywood station, occupying brownfield land once full of railway sidings but which has been vacant for more than a decade.

Housing developer Kellen Homes completed purchase of the land in September 2024 and revealed a plan for 191 new-builds, comprising a mix of two, three and four bed homes, 29 of which it says will be allocated for affordable housing. Its plan includes 3.83 hectares of open space, with a large garden square at its heart and an ecology park for wildlife.

However, there were concerns raised about its potential impact on proposals that would see the heritage railway extend to nearby Castleton. In response, Kellen Homes has provided land to the railway to safeguard this ambition. Coun Danny Meredith, cabinet member for housing and regeneration at Rochdale Council, said: "I am delighted to see this vacant brownfield site being brought into such an important use and I'm particularly pleased that some of these high-quality homes have been allocated for affordable housing.

"It will also support our aspirations around the ELR and bring significant investment into local education, highways and green spaces."

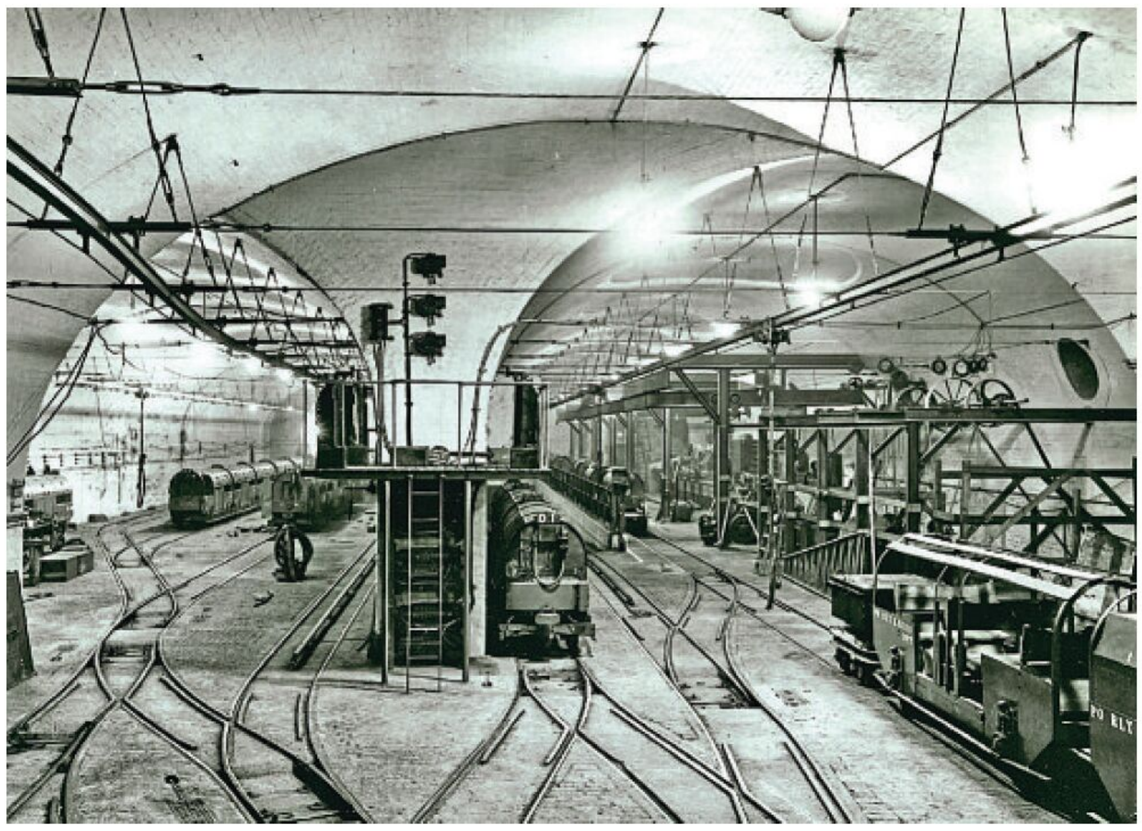
ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "The original ambition for opening up Castleton for heritage trains was set out in Rochdale Borough Council's 2010 Unlocking the Potential for Castleton and Heywood plan. As part of the housing development, which has been approved, a protected 'rail corridor' for use by the ELR has been secured as part of a section 106 agreement between Rochdale Borough Council and developer Kellen Homes.

"The ELR is working closely with Rochdale Borough Council on the operational and financial feasibility of extending the heritage line from Heywood station up to Castleton station. At this stage, there are no details on how long such work would take. We will keep all stakeholders regularly updated on our progress."

£1 million boost for Mail Rail visitors



Station approach: A Mail Rail train makes its way through the tunnel near Mount Pleasant station on the restored Post Office Underground Railway. GEOFF COURTNEY



Opening time: The Post Office Underground Railway maintenance and repair depot at Mount Pleasant in 1927, the year the line opened. The depot is now an exhibition, hospitality and passenger centre as part of the Mail Rail tourist attraction. ROYAL MAIL GROUP LTD, COURTESY BPMA

By Geoff Courtney

ONE of London's major tourist attractions, the innovative Mail Rail underground railway that carried 55,000 passengers in its first four months of opening in 2017, has unveiled a major £1 million project that includes improved facilities for visitors who are unable to ride on the railway's small carriages but still want to get a sense of its unique atmosphere.

The railway is a restored stretch of the former 2ft gauge Post Office Underground Railway that opened in 1927 and ran 70 feet below the capital's streets for 6½ miles from west to east London, carrying millions of letters and parcels 22 hours a day on driverless electric trains.

Dubbed London's secret railway because few residents and tourists knew of its existence, it closed in 2003, but instead of being sealed up, it was mothballed and a small maintenance team retained. That proved to be a masterstroke, for in September 2017 nearly a mile of the line based at Royal Mail's Mount Pleasant centre in Clerkenwell, near King's Cross station, reopened to carry passengers for the first time.

Passengers travel in custom-designed battery-powered trains that are boarded beneath the Mount Pleasant site in the railway's former maintenance and repair depot, which has been converted into a hospitality, exhibition and passenger centre.

The new project, which is due for completion by the end of the year, includes in the centre an immersive audio-visual experience for visitors who do not want to, or cannot, ride the railway, and a multimedia guide featuring sign language videos, and in the carriages audio segments for blind and partially-sighted passengers. The ride also includes two immersive shows during stops en route which are to be improved by new projection technology, while a new show will feature recollections from former Mail Rail staff.

Much of the funding for the project comes from the grant charity the Post Office Remembrance Fellowship, with further support from Arts Council England, both of which were thanked by Laura Wright, CEO of the Postal Museum, which includes Mail Rail.

"We have long wanted to improve the accessibility of Mail Rail, particularly for those who are unable to ride our unique underground experience, and we are grateful to the fellowship and Arts Council England," she said, while fellowship chairman Alan Bealby added: "We are delighted to support the museum to improve access to Mail Rail and to share the stories of the GPO workers who kept the mail moving."

Visit www.postalmuseum.org to book Mail Rail tickets.

Maldegem Steam Festival 2025 set for May

THE annual steam festival at the Belgian Maldegem-Eeklo Steam Railway will be held on May 3/4.

The railway is proud of the fact that its station and line have recently been recognised as a Flemish National Heritage Site by the Vlaams Agentschap Onroerend Erfgoed (Flemish Agency for Fixed Heritage).

The aim is to have five locomotives in steam on standard gauge, including the railway's resident Austerity 0-6-0ST No. WD196 *Errol Lonsdale*, which ran on the Longmoor Military Railway and in the heritage era was based at the Kent & East Sussex, Mid-Hants and South Devon railways, commemorating the 200th anniversary of modern railways. Alongside it will be 1893 St Leonard of Liege-built 0-4-0T No. 2 *Yvonne,* which will be working trains to Eeklo double-headed with Cockerill-type 4r 0-4-0VBT 3098 of 1926, which is visiting from Haaksbergen in The Netherlands.

La Meuse 0-6-0T *Bebert* will also be in service, returning to steam after a major overhaul carried out in house at Maldegem. The large Krupp Hannibal class 0-6-0T No. 22 *Tom*, which is now entering its third year on loan to Maldegem from the suspended Ijmuiden Steelworks steam train, will also be a mainstay of services to Eeklo. In addition to the steam locomotives, it is planned to have NMBS/SNCB Class 62 Bo-Bo diesels visiting from Infrabel and to use these to work some services.

Little and large

On the narrow gauge line, Maldegem's own Hanomag 0-4-0WT of 1906 No. 4 (also named *Yvonne*) will operate a frequent service, joined by a second steam locomotive for which negotiations were ongoing.

As usual, there will be an international selection of trade stands and model displays present and the popular food and beer terrace outside the workshop. This year is also the 100th anniversary of the first public bus services in Belgium, and to commemorate this occasion, there will be about 15 preserved buses on display. It will be possible to take a ride on one of these. For groups wishing to attend, transport from Bruges or Aalter railway station or elsewhere can be arranged by preserved bus.

For more details about the event, visit www.stoomtreinmaldegem.be/en



Krupp 0-6-0T No. 22 *Tom* with a Van Hool bus at Maldegem. MSF

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

PS Waverley backs Railway 200 in the paddler's 50th year in preservation

By Hugh Dougherty

PS Waverley, the world's last sea-going paddle steamer, is backing Railway 200. Carrying the year-long celebration event's logo on its website and publications, Waverley Excursions Ltd is reminding passengers that the ship was built in 1947 by the LNER and is every inch a railway boat.

"We are part of the celebrations," said general manager Paul Semple. "*Waverley* is as much part of railway heritage as it is of maritime history, and it's doubly apt to be part of Railway 200 as we are also marking our 50th anniversary of the boat in preservation.

"We are reminding passengers that we are offering sailings to connect with heritage lines, including the Brecon Mountain Railway, the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, the West Somerset Railway, Lynton & Barnstaple, Dartmouth Steam Railway and the Swanage Railway."

Meanwhile, a review of the 2024 sailing season has shown it to be have been one of the most successful to date, with 159,572 passengers carried on 125 operating days and bringing in total revenues of just over £4.8 million, when catering and sales are included. One of the highlights was sailing alongside *PS Kingswear Castle* on the River Dart, offering steam fans and visitors to the area the unique chance to ride on a heritage railway, the Dartmouth Steam Railway and on two paddle steamers on one day, as highlighted in *Heritage Railway*, issue 240.

Fuel and crew costs accounted for £1.4 million but, after paying all other bills, enough was generated to ensure that the paddler can undergo its winter maintenance and annual dry-docking to be fit to sail again on Friday, May 16 from its Glasgow berth. Winter refit work has included installing new burners on the vessel's boilers at a cost of £300,000, laying 200 metres of replacement wooden decking, repairing the outer walls of the passenger shelter and repurposing the former lower dining saloon as crew and storage quarters.



Paul Semple takes the chance to inspect the keel from within the ship as work starts to convert the former lower dining room into crew and storage quarters. HUGH DOUGHERTY

Paul said: "We will be offering new destinations and calling at new piers throughout the 2025 season and we are delighted to receive local authority support in the shape of Medway Council, which is rebuilding Rochester Pier with a landing platform so we can call there.

"We also plan to offer sailings from Belfast for the first time.



Traditional skills, provided by staff from Kerr's Boatyard of Arbroath, are used to replace deck timbers. HUGH DOUGHERTY

"The key to continuing to attract passengers to *Waverley* in its 50th year in preservation is to offer a quality experience and, crucially, to keep the timetable fresh with new events and destinations. Full details of our sailings on the Clyde, to the Western Isles, on the North Cost of Wales, the South Coast, Isle of Wight and the Thames, are at www.waverelyexcursions.co.uk and we will be delighted to welcome you aboard."

More location filming at Wensleydale

THE Wensleydale Railway has again been chosen for location filming for a drama production.

Footage for the locally-funded independent movie Wenlock Road has been filmed at the heritage line's Leeming Bar station, with actors George Heron (also the director) and Tony Chapman, cameraman Ben Dodds and Louise Heron, the first assistant director, present.

The film is set in the 1970s and tells the story of a boy called George who refuses to let his tough childhood in South Shields determine his future.

Previously, Leyburn station featured in the BBC TV series All Creatures Great and Small, based on the popular James Herriot books, and also in an episode of Great British Car Journeys on Channel 4 in 2019.

Finghall Lane also featured in All Creatures Great and Small and The Yorkshire Vet TV series and was renamed Rainby Halt.

ITV crime drama Vera was filmed at Redmire and Michael Portillo visited to film for his Great British Railway Journeys TV series.

The line's marketing and fundraising manager, Nick Keegan, said: "The Wensleydale Railway offers historic and scenic locations that are perfect for TV and film production. From our award-winning restored 1900s Edwardian and Victorian station buildings at Scruton and Leeming Bar that are ideal for period dramas, a growing collection of heritage diesel locomotives and restored carriages, to stunning Yorkshire Dales scenery and views, we have much to offer filmmakers.

"Heritage and history are at the heart of what we do at Wensleydale Railway. Visitors step back in time at our restored stations and our wonderful period-costumed living history interpreters share historical knowledge about railway life in the 1900s."

More details about Wenlock Road can be found at www.wenlockroad.info



Actors George Heron and Tony Chapman with Class 33 No. 33035 at Leeming Bar during filming for the movie Wenlock Road. NICK KEEGAN

Stout plea for *Guinness* to head on down to Downpatrick

DOWNPATRICK & County Down Railway chairman Robert Gardiner has written to the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland to invite the Whitehead-based society's Hudswell-Clarke 0-4-0ST *Guinness* to his line to help celebrate its 40th anniversary in 'stout' fashion.

In his letter to RPSI general manager Yvonne McIlree, Robert recalled that the 1919-built locomotive ran at Downpatrick in 1989 when, on lease to the County Down line, it inaugurated steam services over the fledgling railway just four years after its founding in 1985, originally as the Downpatrick & Ardglass Railway Company Limited.

"We had *Guinness* then as the toast of the line, and the loco, which worked on the Guinness system in Dublin until 1965, hauling wagons of stout from the brewery to Kingsbridge goods yard, was here until 1996, when *Guinness* flowed back to Whitehead," he wrote. "Just as heritage railways in England, Scotland and Wales host locomotives for special events, we hope that the RPSI will consider our sincere invitation positively to help us mark our 40th anniversary with this historic locomotive returning to County Down rails."

The pint-sized saddle tank ran on the internal Guinness system at Dublin's St James Gate brewery until withdrawal in 1965, when the company presented it to the RPSI as the group's first preserved locomotive.

After a residency at Whitehead, *Guinness* travelled to Downpatrick in 1989, helping the railway get its first steam-powered trains off the ground, and stayed there until 1996 before returning to Whitehead. The locomotive celebrated its centenary in 2019 and was retubed in 2024, being used on steam train rides and for shunting at Whitehead.

As the classic Guinness advert said, 'Guinness is good for you' – a sentiment that the D&CDR agrees with wholeheartedly as it awaits a response to its letter!



***Guinness* in action at the loop platform on the Downpatrick & County Down Railway in 1989. Will a return visit be possible?** DCDR

When holidays meant West Country sand and sunshine

By Geoff Courtney

FOR Brits in the 1950s, holidays usually meant a UK destination rather than a European mainland location or a long turboprop aircraft flight even further away. So, with sunshine on the agenda but often in short supply even during a home summer, the West Country was an overwhelming choice at the time. Sun, sandy beaches, Devon clotted cream, proper Cornish pasties and fresh fish formed an alluring combination.

Although a Londoner, renowned railway photographer Richard 'Dick' Riley had a deep love of the GWR and after Nationalisation its successor, the Western Region. Born in 1921, he acquired his first camera, a Box Brownie, in 1937, and combining a career in the banking industry with his fondness for steam, he took more than 18,000 black-and-white and later colour images around the country between then and 1968.

His love of the West Country scenery and the locomotives of the GWR is manifest in the publication Western Region Devon & Cornwall, a newcomer from Transport Treasury Publishing that brings to the public's eye examples of Dick's colour photographs in the two counties so beloved by Britain's holidaymakers as the country recovered from the devastation and deprivations of the Second World War.

Dick, who died in 2006 and is described by his wife Christine in the book's introduction as "a gentleman and gentle man," had a penchant for both the obvious and not so obvious when looking through a camera's lens, a talent that eludes those of us without photographic skills.

Thus among the obvious – a Castle 4-6-0 at Exeter St David's, for example, or a King at Newton Abbot – we find an image of the single-carriage Cold Harbour Halt on the Culm Valley branch from Tiverton Junction to Hemyock, for which the caption draws the reader's attention to the fact that despite documents and even the timetable spelling Coldharbour as one word, the tiny halt's platform sign made it two.

Sylvan setting

Another in a delightful sylvan setting is Shaugh Bridge, a platform on the Plymouth to Launceston line that Dick photographed on September 29, 1962. "Surely a candidate for one of the most delightfully located and characteristic Great Western halts," lauds the caption enthusiastically. "A single platform with the familiar pagoda shelter – what could be better?"

For the footplate crew of 2-6-2T No. 4555 that Dick captured in the image approaching the deserted station, a waiting passenger or two might be better, but such a lack of patronage was a portend of things to come, for the station was to close to passengers along with the line just three months later.

Moving on from the rural delights of Devon, Dick takes us to such GWR and trainspotting centres as Newton Abbot, Plymouth, Exeter, Truro, Penzance, and beside the



sea at Teignmouth, and from tank locomotives to the classes of 4-6-0s that were the heartbeat of the GWR and Western Region's expresses.

And on that latter theme, there is No. 5059 *Earl St. Aldwyn* at Teignmouth on 'The 'Devonian' and the same locomotive at nearby Dawlish Warren on the 'Torbay Express,' No. 5079 *Lysander* climbing the 1-in-46 Dainton Bank with The 'Cornishman,' No. 5049 *Earl of Plymouth* on the same bank heading 'The Royal Duchy,' and Nos. 6029 *King Edward VIII* and 4971 *Stanway Hall* at Plymouth in July 1957 double-heading the daddy of them all, the 'Cornish Riviera Limited.'

Variety of depots

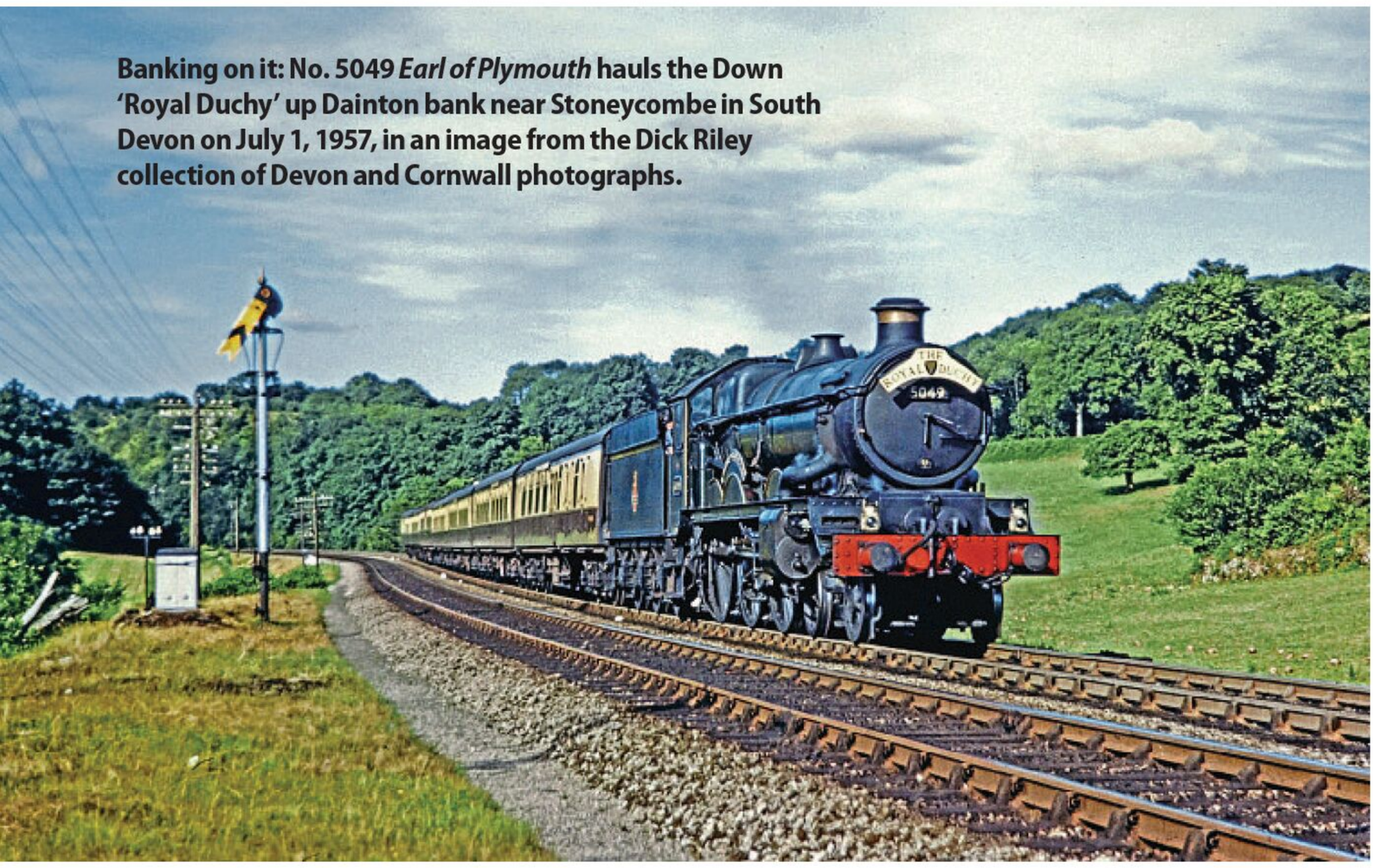
Dick also spent time photographing the rather more pragmatic side of railway operations in Devon and Cornwall, and this is illustrated by images of a variety of depots, among which were Exeter (83C), Plymouth Laira (83D) St. Blazey (83E), Penzance (83G) and Moorswater.

The last-named, near Liskeard, was a small two-road sub-shed of St. Blazey that opened in 1862, was closed by BR in September 1961, and was home to a handful of 45xx 2-6-2T locomotives. The book has two large 1960s pre-closure photographs of the shed, one of which is a stunning panoramic image taken from a Plymouth-Penzance Grade II*-listed main line viaduct that soars 147 feet above the site.

Indeed, Cornwall has quite a collection of viaducts, led by the tallest of them all, the 151ft-high Grade II-listed structure at St Pinnock on which Dick photographed an unidentified Grange 4-6-0 heading to Plymouth.

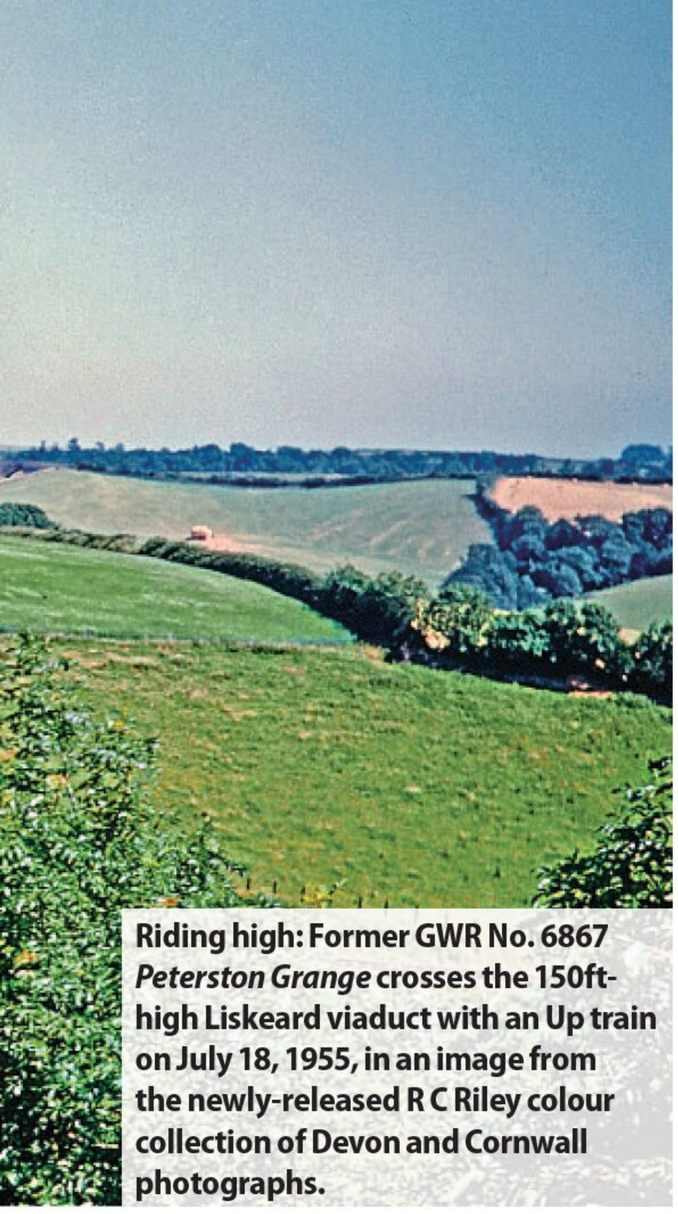
Also recorded for posterity by Dick was No. 4980 *Wrottesley Hall* passing the huge 206-lever Newton Abbot East signalbox with a Swansea-bound train consisting of mainly ex-SR and LNER carriages, and images of the Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash in 1960 and the following year with the partially-constructed adjacent

Banking on it: No. 5049 *Earl of Plymouth* hauls the Down 'Royal Duchy' up Dainton bank near Stoneycombe in South Devon on July 1, 1957, in an image from the Dick Riley collection of Devon and Cornwall photographs.





Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Riding high: Former GWR No. 6867 *Peterston Grange* crosses the 150ft-high Liskeard viaduct with an Up train on July 18, 1955, in an image from the newly-released R C Riley colour collection of Devon and Cornwall photographs.

Tamar road bridge dominating the background, its stark design being in complete contrast to the grace of the Brunel-designed railway bridge, which was opened in May 1859.

Without the determination, dedication and artistic skill of photographers such as Dick Riley, the history of the country's railways would be so much poorer. We enthusiasts owe them a great deal.

The R C Riley Colour Collection – Western Region Devon & Cornwall is compiled by Stuart Malthouse and published by Transport Treasury Publishing (hardback, 128 pages, £34.95, ISBN 978-1-913251-84-0).

GWR memories: In a quintessential GWR scene, albeit in the BR era, 2-6-2T No. 4555 passes a characteristic pagoda shelter as it pulls into Shaugh Bridge with a Launceston to Plymouth train on September 29, 1962. The image was taken by Dick Riley and features in a collection of his photographs in a newly-released Transport Treasury publication.



A treasured log as ex-GWR steam faced diesel takeover

AFTER five years of dedicated and enthusiastic trainspotting from 1957 until the early 1960s, I binned all my notebooks containing scribbled locomotive numbers and all but one of my Ian Allan Combined Volumes, keeping just the very last, **writes Geoff Courtney.** I was about to launch a career in journalism, which I still enjoy today, and my teenage head, if not my heart, told me that being a news reporter and a trainspotter were not perfect bedfellows. Anoraks and all that.

Fortune smiled on me, however, as for some reason I kept the detailed logs of train movements I made at Western, Eastern, Southern, and London Midland region locations up and down the country, starting with my home station of Ilford on April 9, 1957.

In August 1961 I logged trains at Teignmouth, Newton Abbot and Exeter St Davids during a fondly-remembered West Country holiday, and to accompany this issue's review of the newly released publication of the Dick Riley collection of Devon and Cornwall photographs, I thought it opportune to share with readers a log I made during that holiday at St Davids on a busy August 12.

This station was to become a magnet to both Western and Southern region trainspotters, and during my visit of 3½ hours I noted every train movement.

A GWR tone was set with the first entry in my log at 11.15am, being No. 1002 *County of Berks* on a Birmingham express, while traffic peaked between noon and 2pm when no fewer than 39 expresses were recorded – close to one every three minutes.

Highlights from noon to 1pm included Nos. 5999 *Wollaton Hall* and 6860 *Aberporth Grange* double-heading an Up Manchester train, and West Country No. 34011 *Tavistock* and Battle of Britain No. 34081 *92 Squadron* on two Up portions of 'The Atlantic Coast Express,' the latter of which I was to log 2¼ hours later on a Down portion of the same train.

Within this almost non-stop flow of expresses, 0-6-0PT No. 1608 came pottering through on an Up freight working. Three Castles also appeared on express duty – Nos. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*, 5053 *Earl Cairns*, and 7017 *GJ Churchward* – but they were outnumbered by Type 4 (later Classes 42 and 43) Warship diesel-hydraulics, of which five entered my log in that hour, all of them coincidently on Up expresses. For steam fans, that was an unequivocal sign of things to come, although their presence was slightly mitigated by some great names.



Steamy affair: No. 6026 *King John* makes its presence seen and heard as it departs Exeter St Davids with 'The Royal Duchy' in July 1957. This 4-6-0 was logged at the station by *Heritage Railway* contributor Geoff Courtney on an express to Paddington during a West Country holiday in August 1961. TRANSPORT TREASURY/JAMES HARROLD

Hall double-header

The clock was striking 1pm when No. 5003 *Lulworth Castle* came in on the Up 'Torbay Express,' followed two minutes later No. 34060 *25 Squadron* on a Down train, and shortly after by a Hall double-header comprising Nos. 4978 *Westwood Hall* and 5991 *Gresham Hall* en route to Paignton, and the only King of my visit, No. 6026 *King John*, bound for Paddington.

Among the express locomotives in the hour between 1pm and 2pm were Nos. 34002 *Salisbury* and 34086 *219 Squadron* on two further portions of the Up 'Atlantic Coast Express,' three more WC/BoB Pacifics, two other Castles, and five 'Warships.'

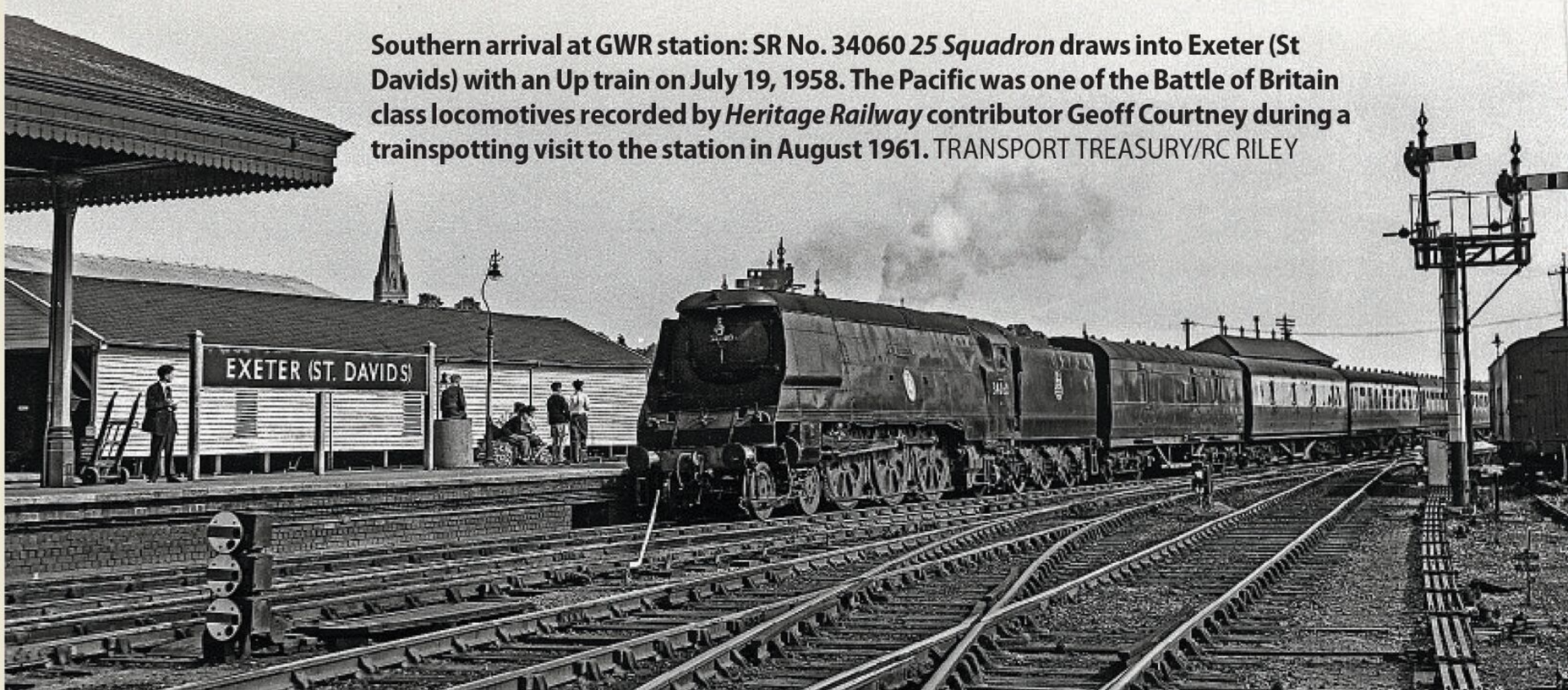
In addition, as with No. 1608 an hour or so earlier, 0-4-2T No. 1468 decided to join its rather more illustrious companions when travelling through light engine on the very day it had been transferred from St Blazey shed (83E) to Exeter (83C).

More to come

Steam highlights either before noon or after 2pm included No. 5045 *Earl of Dudley* on the Down 'Cornishman,' a clutch of three expresses within 10 minutes of each other hauled by Castles, comprising Nos. 5052 *Earl of Radnor*, 5063 *Earl Baldwin*, and 7013 *Bristol Castle*, and a named train that doesn't ring even a distant bell, the Down 'Surbiton Car Carrier' headed by No. 34056 *Croydon*.

No. 34079 *141 Squadron* on a Down portion of the 'Atlantic Coast Express' is another deserving a mention, as is the unlikely combination of No. 4997 *Elton Hall* and Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92003 double-heading an express to Kingswear, while diesels on named train duty were D823 *Hermes* on the Up 'Cornish Riviera' and 11 minutes later D805 *Benbow* on the Down working.

And so ended a visit that was a joy to experience and a delight to log, but also one tinged with a realisation that the days of GWR steam in BR service were soon to be consigned to history.



Southern arrival at GWR station: SR No. 34060 *25 Squadron* draws into Exeter (St Davids) with an Up train on July 19, 1958. The Pacific was one of the Battle of Britain class locomotives recorded by *Heritage Railway* contributor Geoff Courtney during a trainspotting visit to the station in August 1961. TRANSPORT TREASURY/RC RILEY

HOME ON THE GRANGE

New-build 4-6-0 *Betton Grange*'s busy winter schedule has resulted in it stealing the show at two January steam galas. Despite these lines both being in Leicestershire and less than 20 miles from one another, each reported incredible footfall as enthusiasts sought out a post-New Year steam fix. **Owen Hayward** started 2025 at a frost-bitten Battlefield Line…

January is traditionally downtime for our heritage railways. After a busy year rounded off with festive services in December, the trend once was that they would close for the first two months of each new year to allow essential works to be undertaken. For many enthusiasts, these two factors combined could sometimes mean a drought of three or four months between the operation of standard passenger services to enjoy. In the last few years though, this trend has been shaken up, with more and more running on dates into the first few weeks of January (or even through and beyond) – and a handful even going so far as to schedule galas to great acclaim.

Having spent the summer and autumn months running on the North Norfolk Railway, GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* transferred from Sheringham to Shackerstone during November 2024 to work Santa specials on the Battlefield Line, which the railway reported were incredibly successful and provided a very welcome cash injection to see it through the quieter months.



Eleven months after it was originally booked for a gala on the Battlefield Line, No. 6880 *Betton Grange* puts on the power through the mist south as it departs Market Bosworth on January 11. NICK GILLIAM

Better late than never

The Grange's appearance there came nine months after it was originally planned to star at the Battlefield's February 3/4 winter warmer gala at the start of that year. However, overrunning work on the completion of the 81st member of the GWR Grange class of locomotives unfortunately resulted in it missing what would have been its first public outing. Keen to make the most of the visit of No. 6880 before it headed off on its travels again, and to capitalise on the dearth of steam events, gala organiser Adrian Lock brought forward a planned winter steam event to the weekend of January 10/11, which saw four locomotives in action – and railway volunteers battling sub-zero temperatures that threatened to halt proceedings!

Betton Grange was the highlight for many, yet stealing the show in its own way was Robert Stephenson & Hawthorn-built Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 7289 *Fred,* which was working its first trains in almost half a century. Built in 1945, *Fred* entered preservation on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in 1969. There it worked until circa 1978, when it was placed in storage and eventually sold to John Lees, who had a collection of locomotives near Telford. Some years (and further changes of ownership) later, it arrived at Tyseley Locomotive Works, having been bought by Bob and Alastair Meanley.

Overhaul commenced in 2009 but it was not until October 2024 that a fire was lit in the completed locomotive, and it moved to Shackerstone on January 8 for some running-in ahead of the gala. While it may not be authentic, it has been finished off in Midland red with lining and lettering in Midland Railway straw. *Fred* will be based on the Battlefield Line and work services there throughout 2025.

GWR 0-6-0PT No. 1369 has been a well-travelled locomotive in recent years, frequenting galas throughout 2024 before spending the final few weeks of the year at the Chinnor & Princes



Working its first public train in nearly half a century, Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 7289 *Fred* disturbs the peace with a shuttle working from Shackerstone to Market Bosworth on a frosty January morning. MARTYN TATTAM



***Betton Grange* simmers at Shackerstone during a photographic charter during the evening of January 11.** OWEN HAYWARD



The South Devon Railway's well-travelled 0-6-0PT No. 1369 accelerates away from a speed slack near Congerstone Road on a much less frosty January 12. OWEN HAYWARD



Churchward 2-8-0 No. 2807 (paired with the tender from No. 3850) storms past a redundant platelayer's hut as it heads away from Shackerstone on January 12. OWEN HAYWARD



***Fred* bursts out from beneath the road overbridge near Poplar Terrace, passing the Shackerstone distant signal as it heads for Market Bosworth.** OWEN HAYWARD



Battling the elements: Temperatures plummeted to minus eight degrees Celsius on the night before the gala. While the station looked picturesque, with every branch and blade of grass highlighted by a hoar frost, it was not much fun for the volunteers who had to brave the cold as they valiantly tried to thaw out the frozen infrastructure using of flamed torches. JOHN TITLOW

Risborough Railway. Prior to its return to its South Devon Railway home, it put in one final guest appearance at the Leicestershire event.

The final locomotive in the four-strong line-up was one of two halves: GWR Churchward 2-8-0 No. 2807 spent the winter working Polar Expresses on the South Devon Railway and the front half of the locomotive stopped over in Leicestershire on its way back to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. The tender that ran with it during the weekend, however, came from recently-overhauled 2884 class No. 3850, which was destined for the Great Central Railway. Both locomotives carry unlined GWR wartime black, so without closer scrutiny the tender swap would not have been noticed by the majority of onlookers.

Braving a cold snap

The stage was set for an exciting weekend at the railway, but overnight Friday into Saturday saw temperatures at Market Bosworth drop to as low as minus eight degrees Celsius, which brought chaos in its wake. Along the five-mile line, points, signals and associated cables and rodding had frozen solid, requiring volunteers to venture out with burning rags and blowtorches as part of a concerted effort to thaw the infrastructure before even a single locomotive could move off shed. This situation did, of course, result in a delayed start to the day's services, but a strong determination amid those working that morning proved cancellation was not an option.

Furthermore, water pipes serving catering outlets froze too, leading to emergency supplies being ferried about the railway in containers to allow hot drinks to be served to arriving visitors.

Operational setbacks persisted further as the cold snap brought about frozen brakes on some of the carriages which required further encouragement to release. These factors, combined with a thick, freezing fog, resulted in the first train leaving Shackerstone an hour late.

Adrian said: "Despite the difficulties brought about by the weather, it was a really successful weekend. Our volunteers rose to the challenges, and we are indebted to them, as well as those who were visiting from other railways who stepped up to the mark to ensure we ran as advertised. We did face some delays, but over the course of the weekend we only cancelled three trains to bring us back to time.

"We've not got a precise passenger figure but at an estimate somewhere between 850 and 1000 people travelled with us during the two days. Most people seemed really happy and were very appreciative of us battling the elements to keep the show going.

"We were determined to do so as we wanted to cover the high costs of bringing in the locomotives, which we achieved with a surplus that put us in a very good position for the start of the year."

Off the back of lessons learned from last year's event, the railway advertised the services as starting from the central station on the line, Market Bosworth, where there is more parking space available, which Adrian felt worked well, although the forecast weather ultimately meant one rake of carriages was kept at Shackerstone overnight so it could be steam-heated in the morning.

While Nos. 2807 and 6880 worked the full length of line to Shenton, the two tank engines were in charge of Shackerstone to Market Bosworth shuttles, with the train shunting into a siding to allow the locomotives changed while the main set passed. Future plans will see this siding become a proper passing loop, allowing for a two-train service to run across the whole line.

"At one of our first galas a few years ago, the shuttle services proved really popular and helped fill a gap that would have otherwise been empty," Adrian explained. "The siding with its newly-laid headshunt at Market Bosworth also meant we could change locomotives there rather than have to operate in top-and-tail or push-pull formation all day.

"Operationally, things will become much easier once Market Bosworth has all the signalling infrastructure and the passing loop installed, meaning that we won't have to manually hand-wind, clip, and scotch the points for movements.

"Like everything though, this relies on time, money and people to do it. We would be really grateful for anyone who can help with leading the design, testing and implementation of this project."

While plans for a similar event in 2026 have not been decided, Adrian said it would depend on what locomotives might be available at that time.



5600 0-6-2T No. 6695 and its train are silhouetted just north of Quorn & Woodhouse as the sun sets on January 25. ROBERT FALCONER

…before following the Grange to Loughborough on the Great Central Railway, where a Great Western takeover enticed record visitor numbers to travel on its trains over the final weekend of the month.

Scenes of passing steam and diesel trains on a double-tracked route are normally a rare sight on heritage lines, but it is something that the Great Central Railway can offer as a unique selling point which, when combined with the ability to schedule departures off of Loughborough Central with intervals of as little as 10 minutes, regularly sees its galas packed to the brims – and the four-day event on January 23-26 proved to be no different, with record numbers in attendance!

The theme for this year's gala took on a Great Western flavour with three visiting locomotives drafted in to represent this particular quarter of the Big Four regions.



***Betton Grange* storms through Swithland with a rake of matching Mk.1 carriages during a photo charter on January 22. A posed freight train gives the illusion of passing trains.** DON BISHOP

The wandering Westerns

It was merely a question of when – not if – the GCR would bring in No. 6880 *Betton Grange* for a guest appearance, so given that it had spent Christmas working on the nearby Battlefield Line, it was perhaps no surprise that the new-build 4-6-0 was therefore booked for this event. Arriving just a few days after the winter gala at Shackerstone, the Grange was initially delivered facing Loughborough Central as requested for a series of photographic charters on January 21/22. The first of these paired No. 6880 with the GCR's award-winning rake of restored box vans, performing runpasts at a number of locations on the railway. A similar operation took place the following day but with a rake of matching 'blood and custard'-liveried Mk. 1 coaching stock. During a break for lunch, *Betton Grange* was turned to face south on the turntable at Quorn & Woodhouse and remained facing that way throughout the gala.

The class was designed as mixed traffic, and the GCR is spoilt for choice when it comes to freight workings. In addition to the rake of 14 box vans, there are, of course, the 20T mineral opens that form the 'Windcutter' consist, an increasing number of tank wagons, and plenty of other varying-purpose goods traffic and engineering vehicles to pick from – so many that one of the formations is being rested each year as an opportunity to undertake routine maintenance and repairs as there are simply not enough paths available at the events in which to run the whole collection!

The timetable saw No. 6880 rostered to a minerals working on the Friday, with a public outing on the van trains scheduled for the following day.

As reported in issue 328, *Betton Grange* has



On the bright and clear evening of January 25, No. 6880 *Betton Grange* crosses Swithland viaduct and the almost still waters of the vast reservoir which surrounds it. OWEN HAYWARD



Wowing the crowds: New-build *Betton Grange* proved an attractive lure as it arrives into a packed platform at Quorn & Woodhouse. OWEN HAYWARD

signed a long-term residency agreement with the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, and it is from that very same railway where the second guest was brought in from.

No. 3850 is a member of the GWR's Collett 2884 class of heavy freight 2-8-0s, which were a development of Churchward's 2800 class but with minor differences from new such as side window cabs and outside steam pipes (the 2800s having initially been without these features but later rebuilt to include them). Owned by Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd, No. 3850 returned to service on the G/WR only in the summer of 2024 having undergone an extensive overhaul since it was last operational in 2015. It has been outshopped in the Great Western Railway's unlined wartime black livery as it would have carried when it left Swindon Works in 1942; its class's predecessor and current Cotswold shedmate No. 2807 has also been repainted into an almost matching livery, with only the lettering and shading style of the company branding on the tenders the most obvious distinguishing differences.

As mentioned earlier, the tender for No. 3850 was making its second gala appearance, having run with No. 2807 at Shackerstone; the favour was not returned for the locomotive's visit to Loughborough and No. 3850 ran with its own throughout the event. It is not the first time this particular heavy goods locomotive has appeared on the Leicestershire heritage line. It previously appeared at the winter gala of January 2011,



Churchward 2884 class 2-8-0 No. 3850 bursts out from beneath Beeches Road as it sets off from Loughborough Central. KENNY FELSTEAD

albeit wearing unlined BR black.

The final guest of the line-up was GWR 5600 0-6-2T No. 6695, usually resident at the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. Outshopped by Armstrong Whitworth's Newcastle workshops in October 1928, the 5600 held the distinction of being the only locomotive with this wheelbase to be designed and built by the GWR, replacing older locomotives inherited by the company at the 1923 Grouping.

Many members of the class were initially allocated to South Wales coal workings, only to be reallocated elsewhere as that trade declined in the 1930s.

The nature of colliery traffic saw many work trains formed by mineral opens such as those at the GCR and so it was to be expected that No. 6695 would be allocated to work trips with these at times throughout the event, although when new it was first despatched to Tyseley depot and did not see a Welsh depot allocation until Swansea East Dock in September 1939.



No. 6695 cuts an image of a South Wales colliery working as it passes through Kinchley Lane with the 'Windcutter' mineral wagon rake in tow, once a common duty for members of its class. KARL HEATH

Returning friend

The three visiting locomotives were, for many, appealing enough to draw out the crowds, but for some the return of Hudswell Clarke-built Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 1752 *Robert* (currently masquerading as LNER/BR J94 No. 68067) to Loughborough was another reason to travel.

Built in 1943 for the Ministry of Defence, *Robert* was put to use at the War Department's transportation store depot at Marchwood in Hampsire, before next being utilised at a US Army's central ordnance depot near Norton Fitzwarren until 1945. In the following years it moved about further until sold to the National Coal Board in 1950, moving between several pits until it was withdrawn in 1982 and sold into preservation at Crewe Heritage Centre.

The Austerity was bought by Roger Hibbert in 2007 and moved to the GCR, where it was restored and eventually returned to service in 2017. It currently carries the identity of one of the class that became J94s under the LNER but was scrapped in 1971. Alhough based at Loughborough, *Robert* has spent the last few years away on lengthy hires to both the Llangollen and Embsay & Bolton Abbey railways. General manager Malcolm Holmes noted that both the tank engines were incredibly popular throughout the weekend, adding: "There's a lot of appeal with smaller locomotives at the moment, and both Nos. 68067 and 6695 certainly had a buzz about them.

"We have missed having *Robert* on the GCR, but understandably it's had to go away as we haven't had enough work for it to keep it here. I'm hopeful that this will change, and it will remain with us through 2025. Negotiations are currently under way with the owners, but we've not signed anything just yet."

Such potential use for the Austerity saddle tank may well be on the GCR's new freight train experience launched just days after the event. With such an impressive arsenal of vehicles at its disposal, a shorter freight consist has been put together with spaces for the public on offer to travel aboard it. Taking place on selected Sundays from April 13, participants will be given an insight into the vital role of goods traffic in railway operations before stepping into one of the restored brake vans for a return trip between Quorn and Leicester.

With both a morning and afternoon option offered, these new experiences are priced at £75 per person and include a day rover ticket to travel



Austerity No. 68067 works its Loughborough-bound van train away from Swithland sidings. PAUL MAYO/GCR

aboard the other passenger services running on these dates. Malcolm said they had proved incredibly popular and that some dates were close to selling out already.

The impressive line-up saw the visiting western trio join resident modified Hall No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall*, built in 1948 and actually operated over the Great Central main line during the locomotive exchanges that year. The BR era was represented by a trio of Standard class locomotives, namely 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73156 (built in 1956 and the only surviving member of the class to have been built at Doncaster) and 2MT 2-6-0 Nos. 78018 and 78019 (built at Darlington in 1953 and 1954 respectively).

Famous for its Bleath Gill snowdrift incident in February 1955, No. 78018 was temporarily withdrawn from the roster at the end of Friday, January 24 after something was found to be loose in one of the cylinders. Throughout the Saturday, engineers worked to extract this and check the area over, with the remaining locomotives seeing planned allocations tweaked to maintain as much of the advertised timetable as possible. The changes to locomotive duties did therefore mean that No. 6880 missed its booked outing on the van trains, one of only two freight trips it was due to work for the whole event. However, careful planning meant that out of all scheduled services, only one goods working was cancelled. Following a thorough inspection and with no damage found, the 2MT was passed to return to service for the final day of the gala.

The only in-ticket locomotive absent from the line-up was LMS Stanier 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305, which is currently stopped to allow new cylinder liners to be fitted.

Record-breaking

Great Central galas have always done well, and this year's January event was no exception, with a record number of passengers carried across the four days. In total, about 4500 people bought tickets to attend this particular winter gala – almost 500 more than the January 2024 event which previously held the record.

"It was a phenomenal event, really," Malcolm said. "I think of the things that makes our galas so appealing is just quite simply what we do at them. Whether you are travelling or observing,



The rake of 13 mineral wagons proves no challenge for No. 3850 as it glides effortlessly through Woodthorpe on January 24. OWEN HAYWARD



With the reservoir in the distance behind it, BR 5MT No. 73156 catches sunlight at Rabbit Bridge with a northbound service from Leicester North. JOHN TITLOW





A daily non-stop service hauled by the two Western region 4-6-0s was scheduled for Friday to Sunday. No. 6880 leads No. 6990 away from Rabbit Bridge beneath a clear blue sky on January 25. OWEN HAYWARD

you rarely have long to wait for a train to pass. Being fortunate enough to have the double-track formation of course helps with that, as does having such a wealth of freight stock.

"January galas have always done well because there is usually not much else on. Being able to put out eight locomotives also makes a difference. The frequency and variety of trains means it is quite a show."

The timetable for the Friday and Saturday saw up to 27 departures of freight and passenger services scheduled from Loughborough Central, with light engine and empty stock workings making the actual count much higher. Those visiting on January 24-26 were able to witness a performance of WR power, with Nos. 6880 and 6990 taking charge of a non-stop run to Leicester North – a working which has become a regular fixture of galas here. The shouldering days saw a reduced number of trains run, with day one concentrated on passenger-only services.

Carriage formations each comprised up to five Mk. 1 vehicles, which resulted in feedback about some overcrowding on certain services, with the Saturday (observed to be the busiest day) particularly affected by this. "We are working towards reinstating six-coach trains again, with the need to run as we currently are having been introduced following the incident in 2023," Malcolm explained, referring to when a passenger aboard a six-coach rake fell from the door of a carriage which was beyond the end of the platform at Loughborough Central.

Busy year ahead

The busy gala marks the start of another packed year for the GCR. A spring steam weekend is planned for March 1/2 and will work in a similar way to the annual November Last Hurrah gala, with the majority of the home fleet of locomotives in operation. It is hoped that No. 48305 will be back in steam for the occasion, which will likely be its last appearance at the GCR prior to moving to Yorkshire for the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's steam gala later that month. It will then remain over the summer before returning to Leicestershire in September.



Above: Modified Hall No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* races through Woodthorpe bound for Leicester North as a passing train of vans makes its way towards Loughborough Central. OWEN HAYWARD

Left: One anomaly to the predominantly steam line-up was Derby lightweight railcar M79900 *Iris*, which continues to ply its trade on the GCR on long-term loan from the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. PAUL MAYO/GCR



Having spent the last few years away on loan to other lines, Hudswell Clarke-built Austerity No. 1752 *Robert* (masquerading as BR No. 68067) works a short engineering set northwards at Kinchley Lane on January 24. OWEN HAYWARD

Following the success of the 2024 event, April 5/6 will see another reunification open weekend that brings the railway together with its Nottingham-based counterpart and grant tours of behind-the-scenes areas of the two lines not normally accessible to the general public. Once again, both destinations will be linked by a vintage bus connection.

Easter weekend will begin with the aptly-named Goods Friday on April 18, with several goods trains scheduled alongside passenger services, before the next three days gives way to the annual Road Rail Steam rally which will see the former Quorn goods yard become home to road rollers, traction engines, fairground attractions and more until April 21.

Meanwhile, the Loughborough workshops are being kept busy with the ongoing overhauls of numerous locomotives. The chassis for BR Standard 7 4-6-2 No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* is awaiting the return of the boiler from contract overhaul offsite, after which a big push to reassemble the locomotive will commence.

Robinson O4 2-8-0 No. 63601 is soon to be lowered back onto its wheels, and a fundraising appeal is due to be launched soon in a bid to raise what is estimated to be a six-figure sum needed to complete the overhaul. Rumours have circulated about the possibility of the locomotive being outshopped in its as-built GCR condition, but Malcolm stressed that "nothing has been decided, and we would need to include its owner, the National Railway Museum, in any such discussions." HR



Visiting 5600 class No. 6695 worked several freight trips throughout the event. On January 26, the 0-6-2T works the 'Windcutter' set northwards from Quorn & Woodhouse bound for Loughborough Central. PAUL MAYO/GCR



Having been failed at the end of day one and repaired during the course of the January 25, BR 2MT No. 78018 speeds through Rothley station on the morning of the final day with a freight working to Rothley Brook. OWEN HAYWARD



Vegetation clearance at Kinchley Lane has opened up new photographic vantages, with BR 2MT No. 78019 seen there on a short engineering freight on January 24. OWEN HAYWARD



Failing to catch the attention of a lonely hiker on the adjacent footpath, No. 3850 rounds the curve at Kinchley Lane with a train for Leicester North. OWEN HAYWARD

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Life begins at 40?

It is said that life begins at 40 and one little company is confident that is true

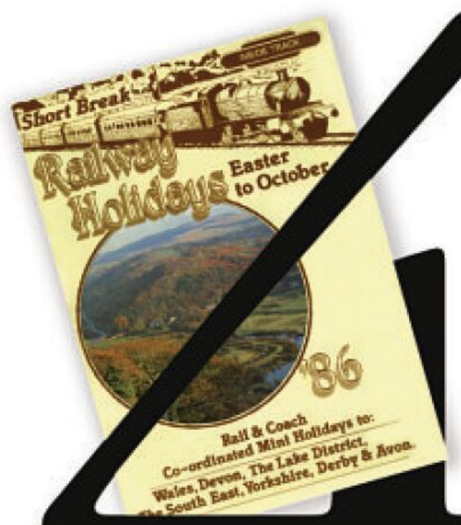
One of the hallmarks of Inside Track Railway Holidays has been its personalised approach. Every trip is more than just a sightseeing tour; it's a carefully constructed experience designed to match the unique interests of those keen on traveling by train, especially steam trains. Whether it's tracing the railways of the Scottish Highlands, exploring the palaces and vineyards of Europe, or experiencing the vast beauty of rural Ireland, Inside Track's itineraries offer unparalleled variety.

Over the years, the company has perfected its blend of leisurely travel and cultural immersion. Travellers are treated not just as customers but as cherished guests, making the experience more akin to travelling with friends. All of the tour leaders work solely for Inside Track and so have a vested interest in delivering the best holiday experience they can. The holidays are not cheap, on the face of it, but that is because they are high quality, full days out, and often include unexpected surprises. Happy 40th – Inside Track.

2025 destinations

Cumbria	Cardigan	Ireland
Cheshire	The Midlands	The Netherlands
Lincolnshire	Cornwall	Baltic Germany
Staffordshire	Devon	Bavaria
Essex	Snowdonia	France
Ulster	Worcestershire	Rhineland
Yorkshire	Wiltshire	Luxembourg
Scotland	Hampshire	The Alsace
Norfolk	Lancashire	
Isle of Man	Saxony	





INSIDE TRACK

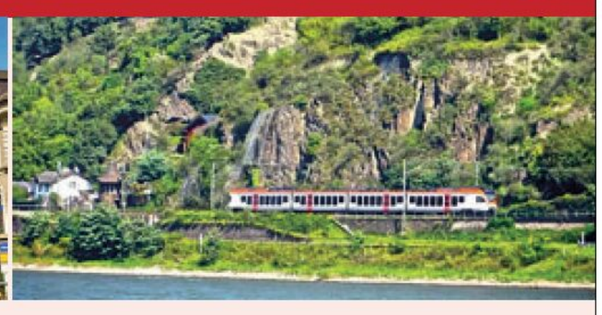
40 years of

Railway Holidays

Our 40th season of United Kingdom and European nostalgic rail tours like these:

Bonn Voyage — Germany

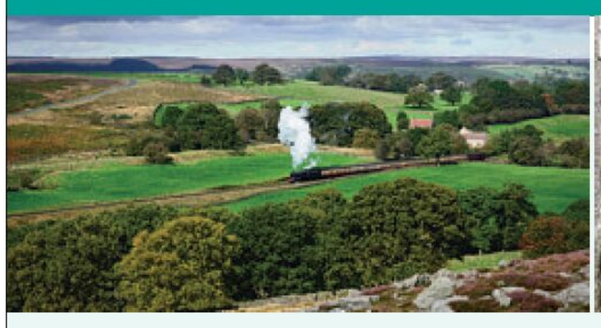




Thursday, 7th August 2025, 6 days **£1395**

- A terrific scenic cruise on The Rhine
- Steam to the volcanoes with the Brohtalbahn
- Fun swinging over the Wupper on a hanging railway
- Seek out a mountain top dragon by rail
- Visit the most popular German narrow-gauge line
- Enjoy steam in the Netherlands "mountain" region

All Yorkshire Great and Small — UK





Friday, 20th June 2025, 5 days **£989**

- Explore 'Herriot Country' – real and as seen on film and TV!
- Steam through the Worth Valley, Yorkshire Dales and Moors
- Rail experiences 'great and small' in Wensleydale and Scarborough
- Visit the James Herriot Museum in 'Darrowby'
- Learn about rural life and farming in Yorkshire
- All the fun of the fair at Scarborough



To see our full range of UK and continental tours please do request a brochure or visit our website.

For a free catalogue call

01869 324444

(Please tell us where you saw this advert)

View our full programme of holidays at

www.railwayholidays.com



HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Headlining the Battlefield Line's January winter warmer gala, No. 6880 *Betton Grange* emerges from the fog at a hoar frost-covered Congerstone Road foot crossing bound for Market Bosworth and Shenton on January 11.
JOHN TITLOW

Britannia set to haul 'Dreams' tour to Chester

BR Standard Class 7 Pacific No, 70000 *Britannia* will haul the London to Chester section of a Steam Dreams tour on Saturday, May 10.

Starting out from Horsham diesel-hauled, the train is scheduled to pick up additional passengers at Dorking, Leatherhead, Epsom, Wimbledon and Clapham Junction, before crossing the capital with a brief stop in north London while the diesel traction is exchanged for the steam locomotive.

The train is then expected to continue through north-west London to pick up the West Coast Main Line. It will then head north as far as Crewe, before taking the North Wales Main Line to Chester.

Customers will have three hours to explore that historic city, before the return journey by heritage diesel via the same route as the outward journey setting down passengers at their joining stations before arriving back at Horsham.

Tickets are available in Pullman Dining and First Class non-dining for this tour.

For more details visit steamdreams.co.uk

A Castle heads for the West Somerset

VINTAGE Trains will be visiting the West Somerset Railway with a returning favourite tour, 'The Whistling Ghost,' on Saturday, May 31.

Departing from Birmingham New Street, the express hauled by either GWR 4-6-0 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* will pick up at Barnt Green, Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham, Bristol Parkway and Bristol Temple Meads before heading to Bishops Lydeard.

There, the Castle will be detached and a WSR steam locomotive will then take the train to Minehead for a short stay. The return trip will see the Castle storm the 1-in-37 Lickey Incline.

For more details visit https://vintagetrains.co.uk

The final run: Take two – *Royal Scot*'s second farewell

By Owen Hayward

THE late appearance of a main line steam path to Holyhead booked to run on January 13 had enthusiasts speculating as to what was heading to the Welsh port town and why.

The answer came in the form of LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot*, which was making one final main line appearance ahead of its withdrawal from service pending overhaul at the end of last month.

With its last overhaul having been completed in 2015, following which it underwent testing at the Severn Valley Railway before appearing in that line's September 19/20 autumn steam gala, since then it has put in regular appearances on main line tours along with infrequent visits to heritage lines.

It had previously been assumed its private charter to Canterbury and Dover on December 3 would be the final outing for the locomotive but Locomotive Services Ltd, which has been responsible for operating No. 46100 on the main line over the past decade, arranged a second 'final' outing for it as a special charter for its employees. Furthermore, the route over which the excursion travelled retraced the route of *Royal Scot*'s first main line outing following completion of its last overhaul.

After taking over from a pair of diesels which had started the tour at Carnforth, on February 6, 2016, No. 46100 hauled Railway Touring Company's 'North Wales Coast Express' from Crewe to Holyhead.

Examples of the class were a regular sight on the route to the port town and it was felt an appropriate choice for its comeback main line outing at the time. As *Royal Scot* approached recent withdrawal, it was felt that it would also prove a fitting route over which to run the 4-6-0 on its final trip almost a decade later. Throughout the journey No. 46100 wore a headboard for 'The Irish Mail', one of the many named train services that ran between London and the ports around the UK.

Started by the London North Western Railway on August 1, 1848, 'The Irish Mail' ran out of Euston to connect with the ferries travelling out of Holyhead to Ireland. Initially the service terminated at Bangor owing to the Britannia Bridge not being completed, with passengers having to transfer to Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogery-chwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch to resume the journey. Upon completion of the structure in 1850, services were then able to run straight through. The service ran twice daily in each direction, though during the Second World War it was reduced to one daily trip.

Throughout the years following its introduction it passed between operators. While the route continued, the name was finally dropped by Virgin Trains on June 1, 2002, as part of a policy not to operate named services, meaning it had run for just two months shy of 154 years.

Although *Royal Scot*'s actual certification does not expire until March, its annual boiler test was due at the end of January and thus it was felt with few main line excursions taking place in the time between it was not worth putting the locomotive through a final exam for such little return. It is set to move to the One:One Collection building in Margate for storage, as reported last issue.

As well as featuring *Royal Scot*, the consist of the train to Holyhead saw the inclusion of Class 40 D213 *Andania* which was commemorating 40 years since it was last operated by BR. At 12:05am on January 4, 1985, D213 (as No. 40013) arrived at Crewe and was shut down for what became the final time under BR ownership, with the locomotive being officially withdrawn there a week later.



The final run: Take two! On January 13, No. 46100 *Royal Scot* passes through Abergele & Pensarn with a special charter for LSL. The outing was its final main line run before being withdrawn for overhaul and saw the 4-6-0 retrace the route of its first tour after its previous overhaul had been completed. RICHARD WALLIKER

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



A first for Hastings Diesels Ltd, the eight-car DEMU runs through Twin Bridges shortly after departure from Woking during the 'Mick Tester Memorial Tour' on January 18. JAMES CUMMINS

Hastings DEMU tribute outing welcomes new power car

HASTINGS Diesels Limited's first outing for 2025 paid tribute to one of its longstanding members – and welcomed into service a newly-overhaul power car too.

With a total of 15 Hastings DEMU vehicles in its collection, and with many having come from different units to the identity of No. 1001 that the popular consist carries today, restoration of Driving Motor Brake Second No. 60000 *Hastings* has brought the total count of operating vehicles to nine, with four of them comprised of motor vehicles.

No. 60000 was built in 1956 and purchased by HDL in 1986; return to main line operation came in April 1996. In 2005 the vehicle was stopped to allow for a thorough overhaul to be carried out which has included the fitting of central door locking, overhauled bogies and retention tank toilets.

In a change to the rest of the main operating set, *Hastings* has been painted into the BR blue and grey livery with full yellow ends. Prior to its first mainline outing, it underwent a certification trip on January 8 that ran from Hastings to Brighton.

HDL confirmed that it was intending to create two separate DEMU formations, with a three-car set comprising DMBS Nos. 60000 and 60116 *Mountfield* plus TSO No. 60501; the latter carriage has since had its paintwork finished off at St Leonard's depot where the unit and its other vehicles are stored and maintained. A second TSO, No. 60502, will eventually join the consist to create a four-car rake in matching livery; the remaining six carriages will continue to adorn BR(S) green.

HDL runs a limited number of tours during the spring and summer months, with autumnal outings avoided due to the risk of wheelset damage during the leaf fall season. It has, however, traditionally run a tour shortly after New Year's Day, with that for 2025 taking place on January 18. Entitled 'The Mick Tester Memorial', the DEMU departed Hastings just after 8am bound for Eastleigh, where it arrived on time at 12:05pm. The return departed at 2.56pm reaching Hastings at 6.43pm – just 13 minutes after its advertised arrival time.

The trip was run in memorial to Mick Tester, a long-standing colleague at HDL who passed away in the summer of 2024 and was personally responsible for ensuring that the DEMU was beautifully turned out both internally and externally. It comprised all eight available vehicles – a first for HDL.

The full itinerary for 2025 has yet to be confirmed, however, a provisional calendar outlines the intention for trips to Bicester and Oxford on April 8, the Bluebell Railway on May 17, somewhere in the Norwich region on June 21, and Warwickshire on September 20. See hastingsdiesels.co.uk/Railtours for more information and to book once dates are confirmed.



Another first for HDL is the outshopping of motor coach No. 60000 *Hastings* in blue and grey livery, with plans to create a dedicate set in this livery to supplement the main BR(S) green consist. HDL

Back-to-back tours with a difference – and four Class 20s for UK Railtours

By Tim Hobman

UK Railtours is to run two tours on consecutive days which form a positioning move with a difference from Preston to Watford Junction, before the main event the following day from London to Stratford-upon-Avon.

Starting from Preston on Friday, February 21, under the title of 'The Chopper Quartet', the train is scheduled to head south on the West Coast Main Line hauled by two Class 43, courtesy of Rail Adventure. Additional passenger pick-ups are planned for Crewe and Wolverhampton, before the route heads past Bescot, Perry Bar Junction, Soho Junction, and Smethwick Junction, then on to Stourbridge Junction, and finally Kidderminster.

At Kidderminster the train is expected to pass onto Severn Valley Railway metals and make the journey to Bewdley for a locomotive exchange. Passengers will have just under two hours at Bewdley to either explore the local area or watch as the 43s are swapped for a quartet of Class 20s.

Leaving Bewdley, the train is planned to return to Kidderminster and retrace the route back to Stourbridge Junction before making the climb up Old Hill with all four locomotives under power. Continuing on to Bescot the planned route will take the tour via Walsall and onto the Sutton Park freight line towards Water Orton and Nuneaton. From here the route south is once again by means of the West Coast Main Line, with the tour concluding at Watford Junction in the late afternoon. Because this is a one-way tour, the early finish leaves customers sufficient time to get home by their own means.

There are options of First-Class non dining and Standard Class tickets on this tour.

Exploring the Great Western

The following day, under the title of 'The Shakespearean Sonnet', the tour is planned to start from Paddington behind the four 20s from the previous day and head west on the Great Western Main Line. Further passenger stops are expected at Slough, Reading, and Didcot Parkway, before diverting from the Great Western Main Line to the Cherwell Valley Line, bound for Oxford.

Passing through Oxford, the next deviation is expected to be onto the Cotswold Line. Heading via Charlbury, Morton-in-Marsh, and Evesham, the train is scheduled to run via Worcester and Kidderminster, to Stourbridge Junction and onto the former Oxford-Worcester-Wolverhampton line, now relegated as a freight only branch to Round Oak steel terminal. The journey along the four-mile branch is expected to see the train run to Kingswinford Junction before returning to Stourbridge Junction.

Once in the Birmingham suburbs, the planned route is via Snow Hill and Moor Street to pick up the Chiltern Line, via Tyseley and onto the North Warwickshire Line to the final destination of Stratford-upon-Avon, where passengers will have around two hours to explore the town where Shakespeare was born, before making the return journey, this time via Leamington Spa and onwards to Oxford.

Following a reverse move, the train is planned to take the East-West Line to Bicester South Junction. Continuing on, the tour is scheduled to head to High Wycombe to set down passengers, before heading through Buckinghamshire back to Paddington.

Tickets are available in First-Class dining and non dining and Standard Class on this tour.

For more details visit www.ukrailtours.com

Class 40 to head 'The East Anglian 2'

INTERCITY Tours will be using Shaun Wright's Class 40 D213 on Saturday, March 1 on 'The East Anglian 2' tour.

In a similar format to the successful original East Anglian tour in March 2022, this excursion is planned to start out from Crewe and head south on the West Coast Main Line to pick up additional passengers at Stafford, Tamworth, Nuneaton, Rugby and Milton Keynes Central.

Continuing on the WCML as far as Wembley, it will cross the capital on the North London Line to reach Stratford. Taking the Great Eastern Main Line north, the tour is expected to pass through Chelmsford, Colchester, Ipswich and Diss, before arriving in Norwich with three hours to explore the city while the train is serviced. The return journey is via the same route, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in first class non-dining only. For more details and to book, visit inter-city.co.uk

'Yorkshire Coast Pullman' from Torbay

MIDLAND Pullman will be heading to York and Scarborough from the South Devon coast with the 'Yorkshire Coast Pullman' tour on Thursday, April 24.

Starting from Paignton, the train is planned to take the Riviera Line to collect additional passengers at Torquay, Newton Abbot, Dawlish and Exeter St David's.

From here, the tour takes the Bristol-Exeter Line to pick up further passengers at Tiverton Parkway, Taunton, Bridgwater, Bristol Temple Mead and Bristol Parkway.

The train is expected to pass through Cheltenham, Birmingham, Derby and Leeds, before arriving at York where passengers can either alight or carry on to Scarborough.

The return journey is expected to be via the same route. Tickets are available in Pullman dining or first class non-dining. Visit midlandpullman.com

Thundering triple bill from Kidderminster

By Tim Hobman

THE Branch Line Society is to run three back-to-back tours featuring Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer* as part of a five-day extravaganza in May.

The first tour from Eastleigh will form a positioning move on Friday, May 23 with a one-way journey to the Severn Valley Railway. It will pick up additional passengers at Basingstoke, Reading West and Didcot Parkway, from where the route is then scheduled to be via Hinksey Reception, Oxford Down Relief, Down Banbury Goods, Leamington Spa Through Line, Down Hatton Goods, Up and Down Dorridge Goods and Tyseley to set down passengers at Birmingham Snow Hill. From here, the route is planned to be via Rowley Regis Down Goods to Kidderminster, and then on to the SVR to set down remaining passengers at the tour's end.



Class 50 *Thunderer* at the Nene Valley Railway's diesel gala on April 9, 2017.
DJH PHOTOGRAPHY/CREATIVE COMMONS

Three-day getaway

The next day, under the title of 'The 16 CSVT Explorer,' a three-day exploration begins with No. 50008 and an as yet unannounced classmate in top-and-tail formation.

Starting from Kidderminster on Saturday, May 24, the planned route is to Birmingham New Street to collect additional passengers, then on to Tame Bridge Parkway, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe for further passenger pick-ups.

After leaving Crewe, the expected route will take the train to Manchester Airport for a reverse move, then Manchester Piccadilly for another reversal, Guide Bridge, Up and Down Hyde Loop, and then Glossop and Hadfield for a photographic stop and reverse move at each. The next destination is planned to be Manchester Victoria, then Ordsall Chord, Manchester Piccadilly again, Hyde Central, Woodley, Romiley and Rose Hill Marple for a reverse move. Heading to Ryder Brow next, the train once again returns to Manchester Piccadilly and reverses to Styal, Wilmslow, Wilmslow Down Styal reversing siding, Stockport Down Goods and Manchester Piccadilly for a fourth time. After another reversal at Piccadilly, the train is scheduled to pass through Stockport and Northwich Down and Up Goods on route to the final destination of Chester.

Day two will see the train leave Chester and head to Hooton and then Rock Ferry for a reverse move. Heading back to Hooton, the next locations are scheduled to be Ellesmere Port Up and Down Goods, Helsby, Warrington Bank Quay Down Slow, Earlestown Down and Up Loop, and Liverpool Lime Street for a photo stop and reversal. Lowton Junction is the next location, and then Bamfurlong Down Goods, Wigan Wallgate, Southport for a reversal, and then Sandhills reverser. At Ormskirk there is a planned photographic stop, and a reverse move will see the train enter Kirkdale EMU depot, before returning to Sandhills reverser, Southport, then Bootle, Bootle Branch and Liverpool Lime Street once again. With the evening destination being Chester once more, the route is planned to be via Ditton reception sidings and Runcorn.

The final day will return the train to Kidderminster, but not before covering a few miles. Starting out again from Chester, the planned route is first to Wrexham Croes Newydd Up Goods to reverse to Bidston, and then to Birkenhead North EMU depot. A reverse move here is expected to see the train head to New Brighton for a photographic stop, then reverse to Bidston East, and then make another reversal to West Kirkby for another photographic stop.

Once again returning to Bidston East, the train is planned to reverse for another visit to Wrexham Croes Newydd Up Goods, then head to Chester, Altrincham, Stockport Down Main, Manchester Piccadilly, Glazebrook DPL, Warrington Central and Liverpool Lime Street. After another reversal at Liverpool Lime Street, the next destination is scheduled to be Halewood reception, then Runcorn, Crewe independent lines and Stafford to set down passengers. Passengers will then be set down at Tame Bridge Parkway, before heading back to Kidderminster via Stourbridge Junction.

Passengers will be required to make their own arrangements for accommodation in Chester on this excursion.

Solo finale

To conclude the Class 50 marathon, a further positioning move is planned as a separate tour on Tuesday, May 27 behind No. 50008 flying solo once again.

Starting from Kidderminster, the route back to Eastleigh is planned to be via Worchester Shrub Hill Up Goods, Honeybourne, Oxford Up Relief, Up Kennington Goods and Didcot Parkway to set down passengers. Additional passengers will then be set down at Reading West, Basingstoke and finally Eastleigh.

Tickets are available in first class non-dining and standard class for these tours.

For more details and to book, visit www.branchline.uk

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
VISIT WWW.CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/HRDPS FOR MORE INFO



Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr or call 01507 529529.

Scots Guardsman booked to haul special marking Settle-Carlisle 150th

THE Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company will be running steam charter 'The West Yorkshireman' on Saturday, May 31 as a triple celebration to mark three special events: Bradford's year as City of Culture, Railway 200, and the Settle to Carlisle line's 150th anniversary.

The company has requested LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* to head the charter from Bradford Forster Square, with pick-ups at Shipley, Bingley, Keighley, Skipton and Settle.

Company deputy chairman John Moorhouse said: "This is a very special year for the Settle Carlisle line, marking the 150th anniversary of the line opening. It is also a very important year for the rail industry as we celebrate Railway 200, the 200th anniversary of passenger rail.

"With Bradford also celebrating being the City of Culture, we wanted to mark these events in a special way – and what could be more spectacular than a steam engine pulling out of Bradford to take in the views along the Settle Carlisle line? Passengers will have the opportunity to explore the historic landmarks in Carlisle, including Carlisle Castle, the cathedral, and Tullie House Museum before returning to the train for another scenic route home via the West Coast Main Line and the Bentham Line.

"This is the first time we have run a charter train from West Yorkshire, and we want to provide a unique opportunity to communities within this area of our line to experience the power of steam and celebrate our railway history and culture."

Tickets are on sale at www.settle-carlisle.co.uk



LMS 7P 4-6-0 No. 56115 *Scots Guardsman* at Carlisle station. SCRDC



The first steam excursion to traverse the Settle & Carlisle route in 2025 was the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' on February 1, with Bullied Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* the allocated locomotive. The Battle of Britain class is pictured at Stockber a few miles west of Kirkby Stephen, hauling a motley rake of carriages. DAVE WILSON

Tour seven counties on Class 20s trip

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society is to run the circular 'The Seven Counties Rambler' tour on Saturday, March 8.

Starting from Linlithgow behind a pair of Class 20s, it will head to Edinburgh Waverley for more passengers. Taking the Edinburgh Suburban Line, the train is planned to transfer onto the West Coast Main Line, before turning toward Glasgow at Midcalder Junction. Passing through Glasgow on the South West Line, it will head for Carlisle.

There, the original pair of Class 20s will be replaced with two others, giving passengers the opportunity to see all four Class 20s, Nos. 20096, 20107, 20118, and 20132, owned by Locomotive Services Limited together.

Leaving Carlisle, the tour is scheduled to take the Settle to Carlisle route passing Settle Junction to Hellifield and then on to Preston via Clitheroe. Picking up the WCML once again, the train is expected to head north over Shap to Carlisle for a second time. At Carlisle, there is another locomotive exchange planned, with the 20s being exchanged for a pair of Class 37s, which will include the SRPS-owned locomotive No. 37403 *Isle of Mull*.

From Carlisle, the route homewards is planned to be via the Tyne Valley Line towards Newcastle and onto the recently reopened Blyth and Tyne Line. Following this, the tour is scheduled to take the East Coast Main Line north, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in first class dining and non-dining, club class dining and standard class. For more details, visit www.srpsrailtours.co.uk

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Twin 37s to haul 'The West Highlander' Scottish exploration excursion

INTERCITY Tours is to run a three-day excursion of Scotland behind two Class 37s under the title of 'The West Highlander.'

Starting from Crewe on Friday, March 14, the tour will head north along the West Coast Main Line to Carlisle, picking up additional passengers at Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston and Carlisle. From there, the train will tackle Beattock Summit and then head through the lowlands of Scotland, passing Glasgow, and then joining the West Highland Line at Craigendoran Junction.

Passing Loch Long and Loch Lomond, the tour is expected to arrive in Fort William in the evening for an overnight stay.

The next day, Saturday, March 15, the train will leave Fort William after breakfast and head along the West Highland Extension to Mallaig where there will be a break of just under two hours, before retracing the journey back to Fort William for another overnight stay.

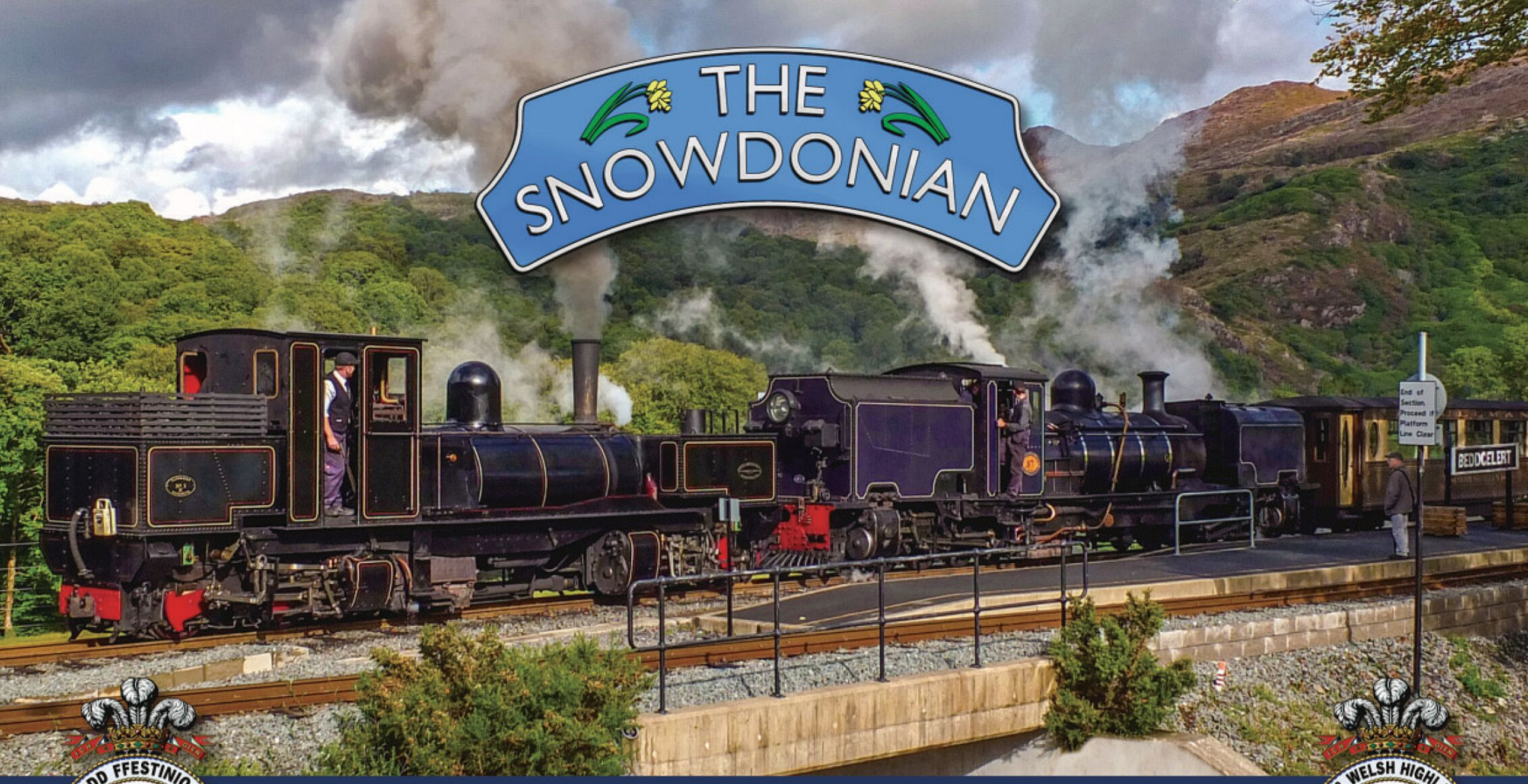
The final day of the trip will see passengers returned to their joining stations as the train retraces the route of the outward journey.

On this occasion, there is a plan to stop at Rannoch for a leg-stretch and photographic opportunity. After leaving Rannoch, the route south will see the first stop at Carlisle and then setting down passengers along the West Coast Main Line to Crewe.

The three-day excursion does not include accommodation in Fort William, so customers will be required to make their own arrangements.

Tickets are available in first class non-dining and standard class.

For more details, visit inter-city.co.uk



THE SNOWDONIAN

Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th April 2025

SATURDAY:

Our annual opportunity for you to savour 80 miles of travel over the entire length of the F&WHR in one day. Featuring a wide selection of F&WHR motive power: 'JAMES SPOONER' and 'WELSH PONY' on the FR, and combinations of an NG/G16 with 'K1' and an NG/G16 with NG15 'KALAHARI' No.134 on the WHR. There will also be cameo appearances from newly-repainted 'MERDDIN EMRYS' and 'PRINCE' along the way. Light breakfast served in Spooner's, Porthmadog. Buffet lunch at the Snowdonia Parc Brewpub at Waunfawr Tea and sweet treats on board the train in the afternoon. Refreshments available throughout the day.

SUNDAY:

We have arranged a number of inclusive tours of Boston Lodge in connection with 'The Snowdonian'- with travel by shuttle train across the Cob for an opportunity to see the latest NLHF-funded developments around the site.

FIRST CLASS - SOLD OUT **Inclusive fare for STANDARD CLASS - £260 ***

(A percentage of the ticket price will go to our Sustainability Projects to ensure the future of the F&WHR)

* An optional evening meal will be served in Spooner's on Friday 25th, which must be booked in advance with your ticket(s)

FFESTINIOG & WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAYS

Harbour Station, Porthmadog, Gwynedd LL49 9NF Book by phone: 01766 516024



February

15 'The Verney Venturer'
Rare tracks tour from Bristol Temple Meads.
Locos: 2x Class 33s TBA. PT

15 'The Valentines White Rose'
King's Cross, York and return. Diesel-hauled from Peterborough to London.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBA. RTC

20 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

21 'West Highland Pullman' Day 1
Watford Junction, Fort William.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

22 'West Highland Pullman' Day 2
Fort William, Mallaig and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

22 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. Steam: TBA. RTC

22 'West Highland Pullman' Day 3
Fort William, Watford Junction.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP



West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* crosses the magnificent Grade II*-listed Digswell Viaduct in Hertfordshire on November 28 with a Steam Dreams excursion to York. The 40-arch structure was completed in 1850 and was both the longest and tallest viaduct on what was the Great Northern Railway's route. OWEN HAYWARD

March

1 'The East Anglian II'
Crewe, Norwich and return.
Loco: D213 *Andania*. IC

1 'Settle & Carlisle Spring Express'
Newport, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. PT

1 'The Mancunian'
Manchester Piccadilly, Holyhead and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

6 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

8 'The Stratford Flyer'
Manchester Piccadilly, Stratford-upon-Avon and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

8 'The Seven Counties Rambler'
Circular tour from Lithinglow via Edinburgh Waverley, Carlisle, Preston, Newcastle, Morpeth.
Locos: 20096, 20107, 20118, 20132, 37403 *Isle of Mull* (+ 1x Class 37 TBC). SRPS

14 'The West Highlander' (outward)
Crewe, Fort William. Diesel-hauled.
Loco: TBA. IC

15 'The Thames Valley Wanderer'
Rare tracks tour from Swindon.
Locos: 2x WCR Class 57s TBC. PT

15 'The Cheshireman'
Euston, Chester and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

16 'The West Highlander' (return)
Fort William, Crewe. Diesel-hauled.
Loco: TBA. IC

19 'The Whitby Flyer'
King's Cross, Whitby and return. Steam-hauled between York and Whitby.
Loco: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. Steam: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

21 Far North Charity Charter Day 1
Bo'ness, Strathspey Railway, Inverness.
Loco: 37403 *Isle of Mull*. BLS

21 'West Highland Pullman' Day 1
Swansea, Fort William.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

22 Far North Charity Charter Day 2
Inverness, Thurso, Wick and return.
Loco: 37403 *Isle of Mull*. BLS

22 'West Highland Pullman' Day 2
Fort William, Mallaig and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

22 'The Blackpool Steam Express'
Euston, Blackpool North and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Blackpool North.
Loco: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. Steam: TBA. RTC

23 Far North Charity Charter Day 3
Inverness, Bo'ness.
Loco: 37403 *Isle of Mull*. BLS

23 'West Highland Pullman' Day 3
Fort William, Swansea.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

26 'The Golden Arrow'
Peterborough, Canterbury West and return. Steam-hauled between West London and Canterbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

28 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

29 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Manchester Victoria, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

29 'The Heart of Wales Explorer'
Circular tour from Eastleigh via Cardiff, Port Talbot, Llangynllo, Knighton, Shrewsbury.
Loco: 2x Class 37s TBA. PT

29 'The Edinburgh Flyer'
York, Edinburgh Waverley and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

29 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: Electric: 86529 *Les Ross*. Steam: TBC. RTC

29 'The Shap Mountaineer'
Birmingham New Street, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Hellifield (return).
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. VT

April

2 'The Golden Arrow'
Coventry, Canterbury West and return. Steam-hauled between West London and Canterbury.
Loco: TBA. ST

5 Bicester & Oxford Excursion
Hastings, Oxford and return.
DEMU: 1001. HD

5 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

5 'The Weardale Explorer'
Gloucester, Stanhope and return.
Locos: 2x Class 47s TBC. PT

5 'The Worcester Steam Express'
Norwich, Worcester and return. Diesel-hauled between Leicester and Norwich (return only).
Loco: 44871. RTC

5 'The Lakelander'
Llandudno Junction, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Preston and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

5 'The Snowdonian'
Euston, Holyhead and return.
Loco: West Coast Class 47/57 TBC. UKRT

6 'The Shakespeare Express'
Worcester Shrub Hill, Stratford-upon-Avon and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

The information in this list was correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise you confirm details of a particular trip with the promoter concerned.

Tour promoters

A1SLT	A1 Steam Locomotive Trust 01325 488215
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

Regular Tours

Daily (AM) from April 7
'The Jacobite'
Fort William, Mallaig and return.
Loco: 'Black Five.' WCR



Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* entering Hove station on December 14, 2024, on the 7.35am from Three Bridges. DON BENN

WITH FULL REGULATOR

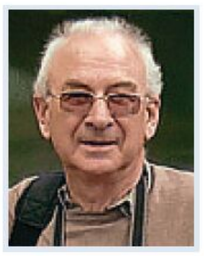
LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW

TABLE ONE: HOVE TO WORTHING

Date	Saturday, December 14, 2024
Train	7.35am Three Bridges to Bristol TM
Loco	MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	10 coaches, 335 tons tare plus mainly non-working No. 47848, 112 tons, 480 tons full
Driver	Bob Baines
Fireman	Jack Johnson
Position	Eighth coach
Weather	Sunny spells, calm

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Hove	0.00	0.00	00	00	6 late
Aldrington	0.48		02	18	24½
Portslade	1.50		04	12	38
Fishersgate	2.13		05	22	39½
Southwick	2.93		06	22	44/45
Shoreham	4.46	11.30	08	54	24*/20*
Adur Viaduct	5.00		10	25	25
Lancing	6.79		13	17	45
East Worthing	8.24		15	32	35½
Worthing	9.16	21.30	17	52	2¾ late

*brakes or speed restriction



In his latest column, **Don Benn** covers No. 35028 *Clan Line* working part of the 'Bath & Bristol Express' on December 14, 2024, and tells in full the story of Nos. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* and 34092 *City of Wells* on the 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman' in February 1982.

HAVING not been on a main line steam trip since an excursion with LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* in 2022, I decided that the Railway Touring Company offering a half-price deal on its December 14, 2024, trip from Three Bridges to Bristol Temple Meads, hauled by No. 35028 *Clan Line*, was too good to miss. This was despite the stock being Mk. 2, the certainty of a diesel locomotive on the back, and that steam would be on only as far as Salisbury.

I judged that the schedule would be very easy so as to fit in with scheduled trains on the busy West Coastway line and that the diesel would probably not need to assist, and so it proved. Getting to Three Bridges would require a drive to Havant and a mega early start, so I settled on the 7.08am Southern train Swanwick to Hove which would give me a fall back to the Worthing pick-up if Southern was having yet another duvet day. All was well, however, and there was time at Hove to see *Clan Line* and settle down for the easy trundle west.

The load behind No. 35028 was 10 Mk. 2s for 335 tons tare, plus Class 47 No. 47848 for another 112 tons, so about 480 tons full. In charge were Bob Baines driving and Jack Johnson on the shovel. We left six minutes late and on the easy schedule gained more than three minutes to the Worthing pick-up; Table One shows the detail. From there, it was just a matter of the crew staying close to the timings but still giving us a nice spell

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* performing a runpast at Wennington during the February 6, 1982 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman'. DON BENN



LNER A4 No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* backs onto its train at Carnforth prior to working the 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman' as far as Hellifield on February 6, 1982. DON BENN



As with the A4 earlier in the trip that day, *City of Wells* also performed runpasts, pictured during one performed at Appleby. DON BENN

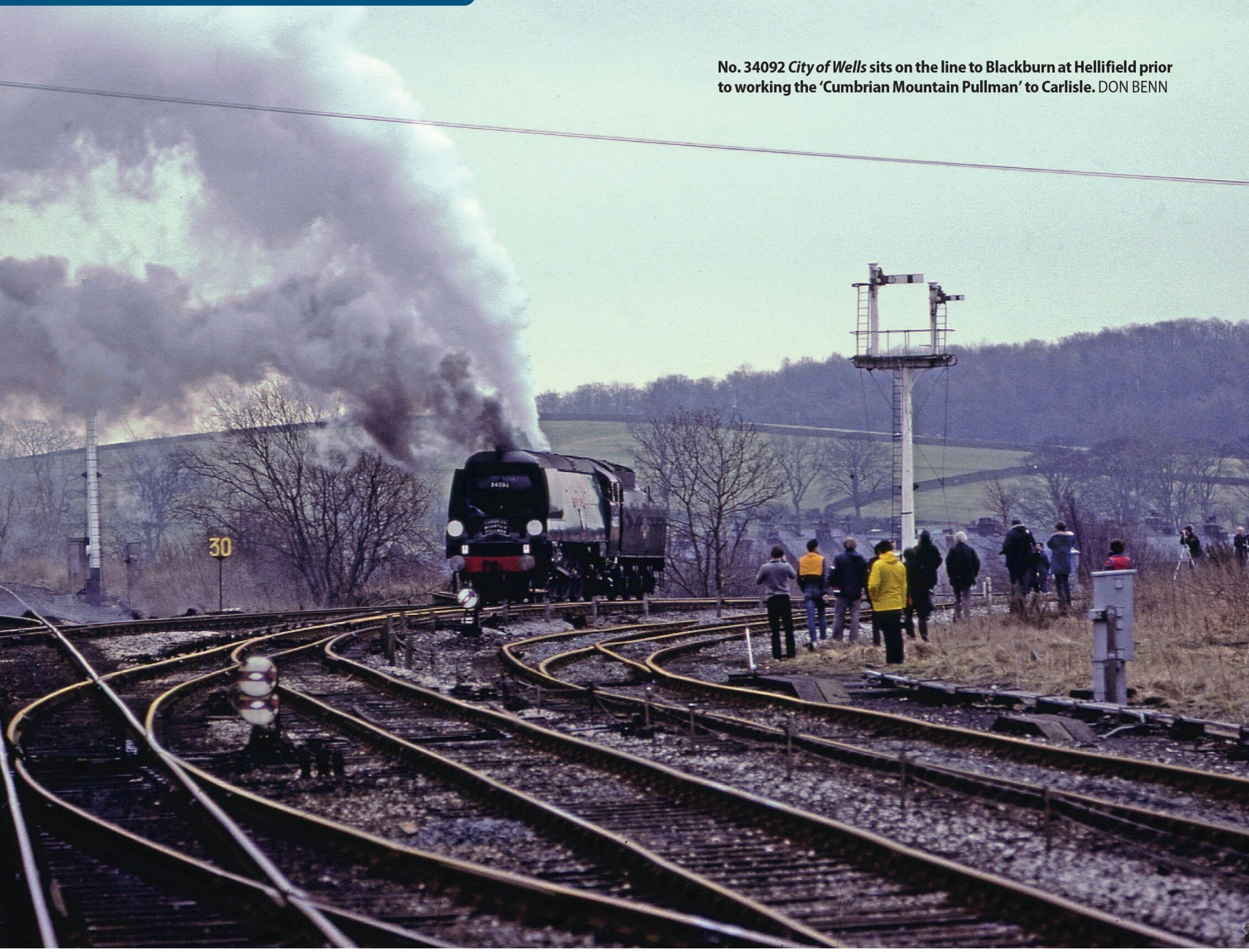
TABLE TWO: WORTHING TO HEDGE END

Date	Saturday, December 14, 2024
Train	7.35am Three Bridges to Bristol TM
Loco	MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*
Load	10 coaches, 335 tons tare plus mainly non workng No. 47848, 112 tons, 480 tons full
Driver	Bob Baines
Fireman	Jack Johnson
Position	Eighth coach
Weather	Sunny spells, calm

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Worthing	0.00	0.00	00	00	2½ late
West Worthing	0.75	3.00	02	59	30/33
Durrington	1.57		04	32	32*
Goring	2.46		06	24	25*
Ferring LC	3.08		07	51	33
Roundstone LC	4.38		09	51	43
Angmering	4.94		10	32	49
A259 OB	6.40		12	07	58
Toddington LC	7.00		12	45	52/13* sigs
Arundel Jct E	8.40		16	31	12* sigs
			sigs stop		
UB 422	8.68		17	30	0*
			17	44	
Ford	9.06	21.00	20	44	16½
MP 20	9.42		21	51	20
Yapton LC	10.36		24	12	39
Barnham	11.72	27.00	26	27	43
Woodgate LC	13.05		28	07	52½
Woodham LC	14.63		29	47	59½.61
Drayton LC	15.98		31	10	55½
A27 OB	16.75		32	02	56½
Whyke LC	17.26		32	32	58½
Chichester	17.94	36.00	33	14	60
Clay Lane LC	19.00		34	19	60½
Fishbourne	19.51		34	47	60
Bosham	20.96		36	12	59½
Drift Lane LC	22.15		37	23	60½
Nutbourne	22.55		37	50	56½
Southbourne	23.53		39	02	51/48
Emsworth	25.01	45.00	40	45	50½
Warblington	26.26		42	22	38
Havant	26.90	48.00	43	25	36/*
Farlington Jct	29.83	53.00	48	20	22*
			sigs stop		
Signal HT 401	30.01		49	26	0*
			50	10	
Cosham Jct	30.48	57.00	52	01	13* sigs
Cosham	30.99	58.30	54	52	17* sigs
Portchester	33.55		59	59	32
MP 87	34.03		60	52	32½/40½
Fareham	36.77	68.30	66	31	20*
			sigs stop		
MP 84	37.03		68	34	0*
			69	34	
Tunnel In	37.46		71	59	
Tunnel Out	37.81		73	12	
Knowle FB	38.55		74	39	29½
Tapnage Tunnel	39.61		76	22	37
MP 80½	40.53		77	50	47½
Botley	42.15	78.00	79	52	43
MP 78½	42.53		80	32	37
Hedge End	44.07	83.00	83	40	3¼ late

*brakes or speed restriction

"No. 4498 slipped heavily at the start and struggled to get the train away up the climb before getting into speed and to the Wennington stop..."



No. 34092 *City of Wells* sits on the line to Blackburn at Hellifield prior to working the 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman' to Carlisle. DON BENN

TABLE THREE: CARNFORTH TO HELLIFIELD

Date	Saturday February 6, 1982
Train	7.35am Euston to Carlisle 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman'
Loco	A4 class 4-6-2 No 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley*
Load	10 coaches, 380½ tons tare 405 tons gross (8 Pullmans and two first class brake coaches)
Crew	Not recorded
Recorder	Don Benn stop watch
Weather	Damp

	miles	Sched	mins	secs	speed
Carnforth	0.00	0.00	00	00	¾ late
Carnforth E Jct	0.33	3.00	05	15	11½
Borwick	3.13		10	34	51/40
Arkholme	6.93		15	38	55½
Melling	8.03		17	02	44 min
Wennington	9.60	20.00	20	08	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	¾ early
Bentham	3.20		06	56	41½/46
Shaw PC	6.12		11	00	42 sust
Clapham	7.45		13	22	32½*
Eldroth	10.53		17	52	54
MP 237¾	11.78		19	08	48
Giggleswick	13.14		20	48	60
Settle Jct	14.95	25.00	24	33	22*
Long Preston	16.98		28	32	38
Hellifield	18.20	33.00	32	32	¼ early

*brakes or speed restriction

of running at about 60mph. Crowds of people were at the stations to witness the unusual (and perhaps unique) sight of a Merchant Navy on this line. For me, the highlight was passing through Chichester at 60mph with smoke laying across the platforms. We inevitably paid for being slightly early by being stopped a number of times but managed to get to the Hedge End water stop still only just over three minutes late; Table Two shows the detail. I will discuss the continuation to Salisbury next time.

The 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman'

In 1982, British Rail and the Steam Locomotive Operators' Association ran a series of trains called the 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman' (CMP)d. These ran on consecutive weeks alternating Preston-Carnforth-Hellifield-Carlisle with connections to and from Euston. One steam loco was used Carnforth to Hellifield and another Hellifield to Carlisle. Runpasts were usually had at Wennington and Appleby. These have long since been dispensed with on health and safety grounds but were common then, when people were trusted to look after themselves. This is the full story of the one I chose: Saturday, February 6, 1982.

The day started on the 5.55am Paddock Wood to Charing Cross in Class 423 VEP EMU No. 7866, which left six late but was just one minute late into London. A quick transfer by Northern line 1938 stock got us to Euston in good time for the 7.35am to Preston, which was hauled by Class 87 No. 87025 on seven coaches and a bogie van for 285 tons full. The train ran the 191.5 miles in 142 minutes and 13 seconds from Watford Junction to Preston (including two signal stops), so we arrived five late but still with a start-to-stop average of 80.79mph. At Preston we joined the 'CMP,' behind which No. 86231 took us as far as Carnforth, booked 10.50am but in actuality ran eight late. The stock comprised eight Pullman cars and two first class brake coaches, 380.5 tons tare and 405 tons full.

We had just over an hour's break before A4 Pacific No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* backed on to take the train to Hellifield, leaving just under four minutes late; Table Three shows the detail of this section. No. 4498 slipped heavily at the start and struggled to get the train away up the climb before getting into speed and to the Wennington stop, having just kept the schedule from Carnforth. Here, 40 minutes was allowed for the runpasts before No. 4498 continued to Hellifield.

The restart was up 1-in-141/126 at 41.5mph and slightly easier grades to Bentham at 46mph and on up past Shaw, where 42mph was sustained on the 1-in-100 before the easing for Clapham. This was very good work by the A4. At Eldroth, 54mph put us over the final summit, before 60mph at Giggleswick saw us into the loco change at Hellifield more than three minutes early.

Right: No. 34092 during a runpast at Appleby on February 6, 1982. DON BENN

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

No. 34092 on the S&C

It was raining at Hellifield when Bulleid Pacific No. 34092 *City of Wells* took over after a break of half an hour for the next leg to Carlisle. It got the train moving well, being thrashed into speed, and doing 60mph at Settle Junction. Speed then fell away rapidly to 23.5 on the 1-in-100 at milepost 240 before a very good recovery to 36mph on the easier grades past Helwith Bridge, which was followed by a stop to pick up a pilotman for single line working to Blea Moor, where we dropped the pilotman without stopping! This was in the days before mechanisation of track renewal, so it was all done with the minimum of delay. Progress? Arguably not for the poor passengers on today's railway and the unacceptable mega cost of Network Rail.

We arrived at the Garsdale stop 16 minutes early and left 28 early for a water stop at Ais Gill, where we all surveyed what could be seen of the scenery in the rain, before running down to the final stop at Appleby where 25 minutes were allowed for further runpasts. The sights and sounds of No. 34092 being thrashed past were superb. For those interested in such things, the colour images were taken with my Pentax KX on Ektachrome 200 and the black-and-white with the same camera on Ilford HP5 rated at 800ASA.

We left just under a minute early for the last leg to Carlisle, covered in 43 minutes and 20 seconds with a maximum of 58mph and arriving just over two minutes early.

At Carlisle we caught the 5.25pm to Euston (with No. 87025 on the same stock as the morning train), which left on time and arrived in Euston nearly three minutes early at 9.13pm. Intermediate



No. 34092 waits to join the stock at Hellifield on February 2, 1982. DON BENN

times were: Carlisle to Preston 67 mins 3 secs for the 90.1 miles; Preston to Crewe 36 mins 42 secs for the 50.95 miles; 98 mins 46 secs for the 140.55 miles to Watford Junction; 85.39mph start-to-stop 110mph max with signal checks at Armitage, Tring and Kings Langley into Watford Junction; and 16 mins 32 secs on to Euston 17.45 miles with sigs at Camden. We did the transfer to Charing Cross again by Northern Line and were on the 9.30pm to Paddock Wood at 9.26pm! Class 411 4CEP unit No. 7207 got us back on time. Total miles by all modes came to 714.80.

Many years ago I remember the Rev JET Phillips used to time his fastest overall journey times over long distances, so here is one of mine: the return journey Carlisle to home indoors at Paddock Wood was done in a time of 5 hours 6 mins 25 secs, an overall average of 65.9mph for the 336.5 miles. I am willing to bet that could not be done today.

Next time I will conclude the story of No. 35028 on December 14 and take an in-depth look at a 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' in 1981. HR

TABLE FOUR: HELLIFIELD TO APPLEBY

Date	Saturday, February 6, 1982
Train	7.35am Euston to Carlisle 'Cumbrian Mountain Pullman'
Loco	West Country class 4-6-2 No. 34092 *City of Wells*
Load	10 coaches, 380½ tons tare 405 tons gross (eight Pullmans and two first class brake coaches)
Crew	Not recorded
Recorder	Don Benn stopwatch
Weather	Heavy rain

	miles	Sched	mins	secs	speed
Hellifield	0.00	0.00	00	00	4½ mins early
Long Preston	1.23		03	05	48½
Settle Junction	3.25	7.00	05	25	60
Settle	5.21		07	48	43
Stainforth Sidings	6.97		10	53	30½
MP 239	7.72		12	43	24
MP 240	8.72		15	18	23½
Helwith Bridge	9.22		16	33	29
MP 242	10.72		19	08	36
			pick up pilot		
MP 242½	11.22		20	40	0*
			21	46	
Horton-in-Ribblesdale	11.26	22.00	23	31	16
MP 243	11.72		25	13	22
MP 244	12.72		27	34	28
Selside	13.52		29	46	18* tsr
MP 247	15.72		35	48	25½
Ribblehead	15.92		36	20	24½
MP 248	16.92		38	10	24
Blea Moor	17.21	32.00	39	58	5**
MP 249	17.92		42	13	21/49
Dent	22.12	36.00	49	22	42
MP 255	23.92		51	28	45/47½
Garsdale	25.40	67.00	54	56	16½ mins early
	0.00	0.00	00	00	27¾ mins early
MP 259	2.35		05	31	
Ais Gill	3.05		08	19	0* water
			31	14	
Mallerstang	6.60		37	18	51/44*
Kirkby Stephen	9.95	17.00	41	26	53
Crosby Garrett	13.10		45	20	49*/45
Griseburn	15.30		48	19	50
Ormside	18.15		51	32	54
Appleby	20.60	35.00	56	56	5¾ mins early

5** to set down pilotman
*brakes or speed restriction

Worksplates march into spring auction scene

STEAM locomotive workplates certainly are the flavour of the month, with two of the leading players in the market, Great Central and GW Railwayana, each welcoming the arrival of collections for their forthcoming March sales.

GWRA's selection is featured on page 63 of this column, but first mention goes to Great Central's line-up at its March 1 auction, which chronologically starts with an 1869 De Winton & Co plate that is joined by four others from the reign of Queen Victoria, followed by an early 20th century example and a 1928 William Beardmore & Co plate (Works No. 355) from LMS Class 3F 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47607.

Two steam nameplates and one from heritage modern traction will also be going under Mike Soden's and Martin Quartermain's hammer, the former comprising *Fowey Castle* from GWR No. 7019 and *Malvern* from SR No. 30929, and the latter *Restive* from a Class 47.

The Castle was a post-Nationalisation locomotive, having been outshopped by Swindon in May 1949, and withdrawn from the Wolverhampton shed of Oxley (2B), in February 1965, while No. 30929, a Schools class 4-4-0, emerged from Eastleigh in July 1934 bearing the name of an independent school in Worcestershire, and was condemned in December 1962 when allocated to Bricklayers Arms (73B), where it spent most of its BR career.





The diesel nameplate is from D1603/47475, one of 512 in a class of main line locomotives built by Brush Traction of Loughborough and BR at Crewe. Named after a Royal Navy rescue tug launched in September 1940, D1603 was one of the BR-built products, having entered traffic in July 1964, and was withdrawn in January 2003.

Among the non-locomotive items is a 'South Wales Pullman' carriageboard, from the Paddington to Swansea express that ran from 1955-66. I recorded the Down and Up workings of this train during a marathon 11-hour stint at Reading General on June 8, 1959, hauled by No. 4093 *Dunster Castle* on the Swansea-bound train and No. 5016 *Montgomery Castle* on the Up version, both of these 4-6-0s being allocated to the Swansea shed of Landore (87E). On the subject of locomotive sheds, the auction's enamel selection includes a BR(M) notice warning of 'Private road to engine sheds only,' with the 'sheds' being plural rather than singular. The auction is live online and starts at 10am.

Diesel shunter makes its mark

NAMEPLATE *Mark* from a preserved BR diesel shunter was the winner by a country mile in Great Central's two-day 'Bloxham'-style auction on January 9/10 with a realisation of £3150. It was from a Class 08 that was outshopped by Derby in August 1956 numbered 13265, was renumbered D3265 in 1961, became 08195 under the TOPS system introduced in 1972, and was saved for preservation on withdrawal in 1983 and is now a resident of the Llangollen Railway.

Runner-up, albeit some way adrift, was a July 1941 LNER ledger of coaching stock with diagrams that fetched £580, followed at £560 by a locomotive brass safety valve and three items that each sold for £500, consisting of an industrial locomotive headlamp, an SECR Walker's signalbox communications/bell instrument, and an LNWR signalbox 'Down line blocked/clear' indicator.

Within touching distance of this trio came a high-backed Pullman chair (£440) and an LSWR brass-cased distant signal repeater that went for £410. The auction, which was live online, comprised 1000 lots, and the prices quoted exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **February 17-23** JustaClickAgo *(photographs, negatives and slides)*
- **February 22** Transport Auctions of London
- **February 27** Vectis *(model trains)*
- **February 28** Lacy Scott & Knight (*railwayana* and *model trains*)
- **March 1** Great Central Railwayana
- **March 7-10** Thirsk Railwayana
- **March 15/16** GW Railwayana

Both home and away gives the right image

LONDON and the south-east, Derby, Holyhead, Doncaster, and Hull, are among the UK locations featured in the online auction being held by railway slides, negatives, photographs and paperwork specialist JustaClickAgo on February 17-23, while from across the Channel, French and Belgian scenes will also make an appearance.

The Derby, London and south-east selection will comprise 500 enprint photographs compiled in an album by HC Casserley, a majority of which date from 1920 and thus are of pre-Grouping locomotives and scenes, while the Holyhead collection is 32 prints from 1953 and 1960 depicting railway operations, buildings, container handling and ships.

The entire class of Deltics, excluding Nos. 55001/20, is the subject of 85 colour slides taken in 1980 and the following year around Doncaster and Hull, and from further back in time come 500 black-and-white enprints taken mostly by Geoge Lander in the 1930s and 1940s of locomotives from all of the Big Four.

George Lander was also the photographer of 740 black-and-white contact prints of 1930's UK steam plus French and Belgian locomotives and railcars in five albums that are being sold as a single lot, while back home, an album of 23 b/w photographs featuring the early 1930's London Underground Piccadilly Line northern and western extensions to Cockfosters, Uxbridge and Hounslow, will also be going under the hammer. The album is not dated but is believed to be an official record dating from that period.

A collection of 46 b/w photographs of stations and infrastructure on the Elsenham & Thaxted Light Railway in the 1930s will bring memories of this 5½-mile line in Essex that opened in April 1913 and closed in June 1953, and memories too will be evoked by 50 items of pre-Grouping paperwork relating to the Lancashire Derbyshire & East Coast Railway.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

GWRA continues theme from the Victorian era onwards

TWO weeks after Great Central's March 1 auction that features a comprehensive selection of worksplates, a preview of which is included on page 62, GW Railwayana will continue the theme on March 15 with a line-up that also includes Victorian plates.

One of those is an 1890 Sharp Stewart & Co of Glasgow plate (works No. 3579) from Barry Railway Class B 0-6-2T No. 31 that became GWR No. 231 and survived into the Nationalisation era before being withdrawn in October 1949. Another plate from a pre-Grouping locomotive that made it into BR stock is a 1909 LBSCR Brighton Works example from I3 class 4-4-2T No. 75 that was renumbered 2075 by the Southern Railway, No. 32075 by BR, and was withdrawn from Three Bridges (75E) in December 1951. The more modern era gets a mention too, with three Darlington worksplates from LNER B17 duo Nos. 61649 *Sheffield United* and 61650 *Grimsby Town*, and D49 No. 62725 *Inverness-Shire*.

On the industrial front, a second Victorian era plate is an 1891 Black, Hawthorn & Co of Gateshead example (works No. 994) from an 0-4-0ST supplied to Bell Brothers ironworks of Port Clarence, Stockton-on-Tees, while an early 20th century representative is a 1903 Yorkshire Engine Co plate (works No.784) from another 0-4-0ST also built for the ironworks industry.

The spotlight now turns to steam nameplates, which initially comprised seven from the GWR, two apiece from the SR and LMS, and one from the LNER, as reported in last month's column. However, early in the new year auctioneer Simon Turner unveiled four more from the GWR, another from the Southern Railway, a second from the LNER, and a pre-Grouping representative.

From the GWR come *Tiverton Castle, Hopton Grange*, *Kelham Hall*, and *Birtles Hall*, carried respectively by Nos. 5041, 6865, 5904 and 6933. The Castle was built in July 1935 and withdrawn from Old Oak Common (81A) in December 1963, No. 6865 entered traffic in March 1939 and ended its days in May 1962 when allocated to St Philip's Marsh, Bristol (82B), and Nos. 5904 and 6933 were built in May 1931 and December 1941, and withdrawn in November 1963 from St Philip's Marsh and November 1964 from the Wolverhampton shed of Oxley (2B).





Boosting the SR participants is *Exmoor* with West Country Class scroll from No 34022, built at Brighton in January 1946 and withdrawn from Eastleigh (71A) in April 1965, while from the LNER comes *Boswell*, from Arthur Peppercorn-designed, BR-built A1 No. 60138, a December 1948 Darlington product that was pensioned off in October 1965 from its lifelong home, York (50A). I was convinced the name had a literary connection with Scottish novelist Walter Scott, as did some of the Pacific's classmates, but no, it was the name of the winner of the 1936 St Leger.

Pre-Grouping

Flying the pre-Grouping/LMS flag is *City of London*, carried by LNWR George Whale Experiment class No. 978/LMS No. 5461, built at Crewe in January 1906 and withdrawn in May 1934. This 4-6-0's name was popular with railway companies, for others to use it included the LMS with Princess Coronation No. 46245, the LNER (Class B17 No. 61670 and Class B19 No. 5427), and the GWR (City class No. 3439), and it has even popped up in the modern era, on ECML Class 91 electric locomotive No. 91001.

Talk of modern traction, albeit not as recent as a Class 91 electric, leads to nameplate *Resilient* from Class 47 D1597/47597, a BR Crewe June 1964 locomotive that was withdrawn in January 2003 after nearly 39 years in service.

A week or so after this new year update, Simon added five more main line steam nameplates to the auction, all from the LNER, comprising an A4, A1, and three D49s.The leader of the quintet is *Sir Ronald Matthews* from No. 60001, which was built at Doncaster in April 1938 carrying the name *Garganey*, was renamed a year later, and ended its career in October 1964 when allocated to Gateshead (52A). Joining the A4, and indeed its A1 classmate *Boswell*, will be *Sir Walter Scott* from No. 60143, which was outshopped by Darlington in February 1949 and withdrawn from York (50A) in May 1964.

The three Class D49 plates are *Argyllshire*, *Peebles-Shire*, and *The Zetland,* from Nos. 62708, 62719, and 62738. All were built at Darlington, in January and May 1928, and May 1932, with withdrawal dates being respectively May 1959 from Thornton Junction (62A), January 1960 from Hawick (64G) and September 1959 from York. My arithmetic tells me that's 24 main line steam nameplates in the auction as of mid-January.

Heritage modern traction

Heritage modern traction has a role to play in the cabside numberplate selection, with E3034 from a Class 83 Bo-Bo WCML electric locomotive built by English Electric in January 1960, and E3036 from another WCML Bo-Bo electric, a Class 84 built by North British Locomotive Co in March 1960.

Cabsides are more traditionally the realm of the GWR, and from these ranks come 1003 (*County of Wilts*), 4022 (Star class *King William*, later *Belgian Monarch*), 5010 (*Restormel Castle),* 5967, whose *Bickmarsh Hall* nameplate is in the auction, and 6946 *Heatherden Hall,* whose nameplate and smokebox numberplate will also be going under the hammer.

Onward then to the smokebox category, wherein lies not only 6946, but also from other named locomotives, 6952 (*Kimberley Hall*), 34026 (West Country *Yes Tor*), 45588 from Jubilee *Kashmir,* and finally 60075 from A3 *St Frusquin.* It may be difficult to see beyond the steam locomotive categories, but needs must, and rightly so, even if only in brief. Mention therefore will go to the totem category, which includes BR(W) Treforest Estate, a station that was opened by the GWR as late as January 1942 to serve an industrial estate near Cardiff and still does so, and also in the enamels' selection, five LNER station direction signs to Eskbank, Bishop Auckland, Durham, Selby, and Bridlington.

The auction starts at 9.30am, and on the following day, March 16, Simon will hold a sale of general railwayana, including posters, clocks and worksplates starting at 10am. Both are live online.





Enthusiasts' new auction house enters the market

A NEW railwayana auction house has been launched by two enthusiast collectors who are confident the market is strong enough to not only support them but allow them to grow. They are Steve Walker-Manuell and Edward Bird, who between them have a combined collecting span of 45 years.

The idea for their business, which will operate as Main Line Railwayana Auctions, was conceived during the pandemic, said 52-year-old Steve. "Social distancing highlighted that remote auctions could be successful, especially if an internal postage service was available. We aim to provide a smooth and reliable service while maintaining a high level of detail to ensure items are authenticated and described accurately with high resolution photographs so that buyers have as much confidence as if they were viewing the item in person.

"We believe it is important to safeguard the hobby and take it into the future, and to stop historical items from being lost forever. In recent times, a number of auctions have closed, and we believe the market is strong enough to support us and grow the business, and that the amount of railwayana coming to the market will not decline.

"While certain areas may have a perceived decline, we believe this is counterbalanced by growth in areas such as modern traction. We were both born well into the diesel era yet avidly collect steam era items, and we are not alone."

Steve has been collecting since a very young age, when his father bought him a BR Clifton Junction enamel sign from where BoB No. 34070 *Manston* was being restored at Richborough in Kent.



Steve Walker-Manuell, co-founder of new auction house Main Line Railwayana Auctions. LOUISE MANUELL

"That started my collecting bug, and I gradually got more items from such events as railway open days that I was taken to. College involved a regular commute down the Kent Coast Line, and I have achieved my aim of collecting a totem from each station on the route.

"University took me to London and the delights of the final years of Collectors' Corner, although I was always a poor student and could never afford the better items. After following into the family footsteps of Royal Mail, I was able to leave and concentrate with my wife Louise on our small antiques unit in Faversham, where we have been trading for about 10 years.

"I have a wide-ranging interest in all things Southern, collecting almost a anything from ephemera and worksplate to lamps and totems, and am active in the railwayana community, particularly onlíne."

Railwayana foraging

Edward, who is 38 and lives in Holbeach, Lincolnshire, spent many hours when he was younger walking the dog with his parents along dismantled lines, often foraging in the undergrowth for such items as track chairs and telegraph insulators, while during the same period his parents collected items relating to Holbeach station, which had closed to passengers in March 1959.

"In about 2012 I started collecting all manner of items relating to the western section of the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway and other areas of the Eastern Region, ranging from ephemera, cash bags and lamps to signalling, seatback plates, signage and totems, yet the Holbeach totem and BR fascia still elude me."

One of the reasons for getting involved with auctions, he said, was his love of seeing items come to light that had spent many years hidden away, perhaps in a shed or even an allotment. "I have become very active within the railwayana community both in person at events and on social media, making many friends along the way."

Both he and Steve emphasised their distaste for fakes and forgeries, on which subject Edward said firmly: "We will always raise any fakes discovered within the collecting community to ensure we all help each other."

The railwayana collecting fraternity is a very broad church, and there may be some within its hallowed walls who feel the market is already saturated with auctions and railwayana itself, or don't feel comfortable with its post-Covid reliance on the internet. But as one high-profile railwayana auction principal said to me on learning of Steve's and Edward's plans: "They will bring new and comparatively young blood to the movement, and that is to be welcomed."

Brothers make their entrance

FOLLOWING their recent takeover of Transport Auctions of London, brothers Ross and Guy Bowden will make their debut on February 22 with a sale of pre and post-Nationalisation and London Underground railwayana.

Headlining the main line selection will be a smokebox numberplate from J11 class 0-6-0 No. 64417, which was built by the Great Central Railway at Gorton in August 1907 and withdrawn from Staveley, near Chesterfield (41H) in August 1961 after a service life of exactly 54 years.

A BR(S) Bromley South totem and a Penge East SR target, from two stations on the Chatham Main Line Victoria to Dover and Ramsgate route, will also be going under the hammer, as will a second SR target, from Robertsbridge on the Charing Cross-Hastings line that will become the junction for the Rother Valley/Kent East Sussex Railway extension that is expected to open in 2028.

Other items to feature in the auction are Clearing House maps, and timetables and leaflets from the pre-BR and post-Nationalisation eras covering a variety of regions up to the 1970s. The auction is live online and starts at 10am.



Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

FROM STEAM TO DIESEL: EXPLORE OUR RAILWAY MAGAZINES

From the history of steam through to the 21st century rail transport news, we have titles to cater for all rail enthusiasts! Hop aboard and take advantage of our cracking savings today!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY & SAVE UP TO 30%

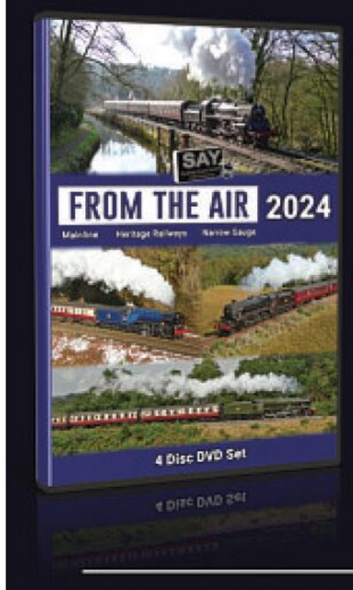
VISIT: **WWW.CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/RAILWAY25**

classic magazines CALL: **01507 529529** QUOTE: **RAILWAY25**

OFFER EXPIRES 31/12/25

SAY Steaming Around Yorkshire Film Production

New DVD & Blu-Ray titles for 2025



From The Air: 2024 Review

Our new four disc DVD / Blu-Ray features over 5 hours of footage, filmed throughout 2024 using drone technology across the UK. Each clip has had its sound carefully edited so you're able to hear the sound of the locomotive working hard.

Using drone technology has allowed us to film in a variety of new locations including over water, locations no longer accessible due to vegetation and much more.

DVD Price: ~~£23.99~~ £21.59 **Blu-Ray Price:** ~~£26.99~~ £24.29

Steaming Around Britain 2024

Featuring over 6 hours of footage, our four disc DVD / Blu-Ray showcases steam action from across the UK, throughout 2024. Featuring a mixture of mainline, heritage railways and narrow gauge action.

Highlights include the return of A2 No.60532 'Blue Peter', the launch of new builds 'Beachy Head' & 'Betton Grange', 'The Great Britain XVI' and much more.

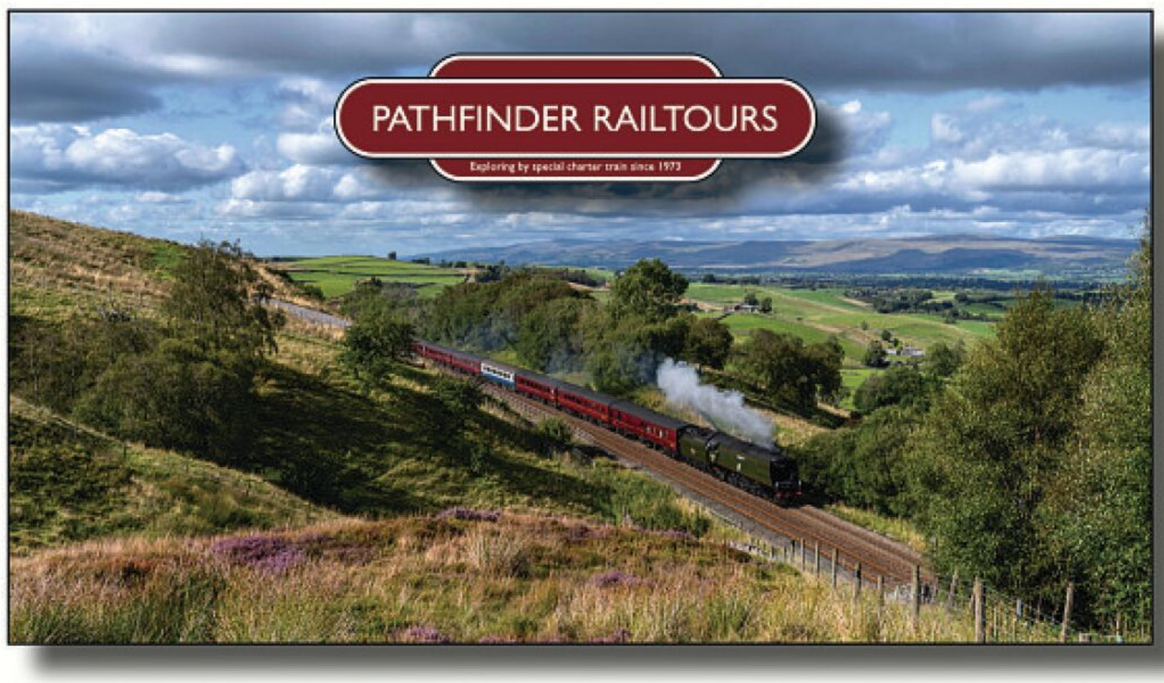


DVD Price: ~~£23.99~~ £21.59 **Blu-Ray Price:** ~~£26.99~~ £24.29

Save 10% using code: **HT24**

Available to order online or over the phone:
www.steamingaroundyorkshire.co.uk
Telephone: 07563019405

Terms & Conditions:
Copies are available in DVD and Blu-Ray formats via our website or writing to us at: Simon Roberts, 10 Maple Gardens, Whinmoor, Leeds, LS14 2FA. Cheque payment is accepted but all cheques must be payable to Simon Roberts. Discount expires 31/3/2025 - prices shown include discount. Free postage to UK customers, £6.00 international postage charge.







THE SETTLE & CARLISLE SPRING EXPRESS
SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2025

ENJOY A BREATHTAKING SPRING-TIME JOURNEY BY SPECIAL TRAIN, STEAM HAULED THROUGH THE SCENIC CUMBRIAN FELLS AND ALONG THE FAMOUS SETTLE & CARLISLE RAILWAY

Joining Stations:
Newport, Bristol Parkway, Cam & Dursley, Cheltenham Spa, Worcestershire Parkway, Birmingham New Street & Stafford.

The Settle and Carlisle Railway is famed for its stunning scenery, and what better way to see this marvel of Victorian engineering, than from a steam hauled train?

Beginning our day, diesel hauled at Newport, with pick-ups through Cheltenham and Birmingham to Stafford, we soon head north where upon arrival at Carnforth, Lancashire, we swap our diesel locomotive for the 'poetry in motion' of steam haulage, from the West Coast Railways pool.

We steam through the Lune Gorge and up to the 916ft Shap Summit. Our train then heads down towards the border city of Carlisle for a lunchtime break *(estimated 1240 – 1420)*. Here, you can perhaps visit the cathedral or castle, or take a wander around the shops and eateries in the city centre.

After the break, with everyone back on board, we begin our return journey along the Eden Valley and over the scenic Settle and Carlisle Railway.

From Appleby, we journey high along the roof of England. Our steam locomotive will be working extremely hard through Kirkby Stephen and along a ledge on the flanks of the Wild Boar Fell, with Mallerstang Edge towering across the now diminutive river Eden.

At Ais Gill, we reach the summit with superb views of the lofty Arten Gill and Dent Head viaducts, before a panoramic sight of the Three Peaks as we cross the magnificent 24 arch Ribblehead Viaduct – hopefully with a sprinkling of snow too!

There is much delight to come, as our train heads down Ribblesdale to Settle and Hellifield, across to Clitheroe, over the 48 arch Whalley Viaduct, up the hard climb to Wilpshire, then down through the cotton town of Blackburn and soon after, Preston.

We then revert back to our diesel locomotive, and after a quick reversal, it will take us homeward.

ON BOARD FEATURES INCLUDE:
– Reserved seats aligned with the carriage windows
– A printed excursion and journey guide for everyone
– A travelling licensed buffet with refreshments, including alcoholic and soft drinks
– The Premier Dining service includes: The Great British Breakfast, Elevenses & Four Course Evening Dinner
– Cheerful, friendly and helpful Pathfinder Stewards!

Fares:	Adult	Junior	Party x4
Premier Dining	£315	£295	£1220
First Class	£199	£179	£756
Standard Class	£135	£95	£520

Table for Two seats are available at a supplement of £50 per person in Premier Dining and First Class.

BOOKING OFFICE: 01453 835414 / 834477

WWW.PATHFINDERTOURS.CO.UK



Unique BR Standard 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* departs Paddington with 'The Great Britain' on April 6, 2007.

Duke of Gloucester rises again

In this year, when Britain is celebrating the world's first steam-hauled passenger train, the country's last – and unique – main line steam locomotive design is set to make another triumphant return to the national network, highlighting one of the heritage movement's greatest 'mission impossible' miracles. **John Titlow** recounts the history of BR Standard 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*, in words and pictures.

Unique three-cylinder British Railways Standard 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* is in the final stages of a very protracted overhaul and is expected to grace the main line with its power once again this year.

Robert Riddles was the BR executive for mechanical and electrical engineering in the early 1950s and responsible for the introduction of the range of simple two-cylinder Standard steam locomotives intended to be in service until the 1970s. However, he also drew up plans for a new class of Pacifics – but only the prototype was built.

Designed at Derby Works by Riddles in 1953, *Duke of Gloucester* was built at Crewe in 1954. Basically, it is an enlarged Britannia class Pacific using the same boiler but with a 12in longer firebox. It was a replacement for the LMS Princess Royal 4-6-0 No. 46202 *Princess Anne,* which was destroyed in the Harow and Wealdstone disaster of 1952.

Along with being the only three-cylinder Standard locomotive built, *Duke of Gloucester* is unusual for having Caprotti rotary valve gear, which is considered more efficient than Walschaerts or Stephenson valve gear. Initially, it was to have the Kylchap double blastpipe exhaust system, but as Swindon was given responsibility for the draughting, a bifurcated blastpipe manufactured at Swindon was fitted with a double chimney which it carried throughout its BR career.

No. 71000 was not the last steam locomotive to be constructed by BR: Standard 9F 2-10-0 *Evening Star* No. 92220 has that honour. However, No. 71000 marks another landmark in being the final development of a BR express passenger steam locomotive to be designed and built in the UK, and at the time it was seen as steam's future.

Following thorough proving in operation and the modifications that this would have highlighted, a class of 50 was envisaged to provide main line traction until the primary routes were electrified.

Yet it was not to be. Ironically, one year after it was built, the *Duke* was thwarted in its development by the 1955 modernisation plan to phase out steam in favour of diesel and electric traction, so it was never given the opportunity to fulfil its potential.

Apart from a period at Swindon Testing Plant from October 1954 until May 1955, it spent all of its life based at Crewe North depot. From Crewe, it was used to haul the boat trains on the North Wales Coast Line between Crewe and Holyhead.

Duke of Gloucester only saw about eight years of service under BR, during which it enjoyed, at best, a mixed reputation on the main line, with indifferent attitudes towards firing from various firemen.

It was often referred to as being 'shy for steam and hungry for coal.'

Being based at Crewe North (5A), the drivers were used to four-cylinder LMS Princesses and Duchesses; No. 71000 was used on the same diagrams, and they drove it similarly. The drivers who drove it more like a three-cylinder Royal Scot seemed to get the best results out of it.

Top link fireman Bill Andrews, who both fired it in BR days and also drove it in preservation, said: "I never had any issues regarding steaming."

However, No. 71000 was withdrawn in 1962 after a ridiculously short working life. Initially, it was earmarked to become part of the National Collection was sent for scrapping but after a change of mind.

Saved by pure chance

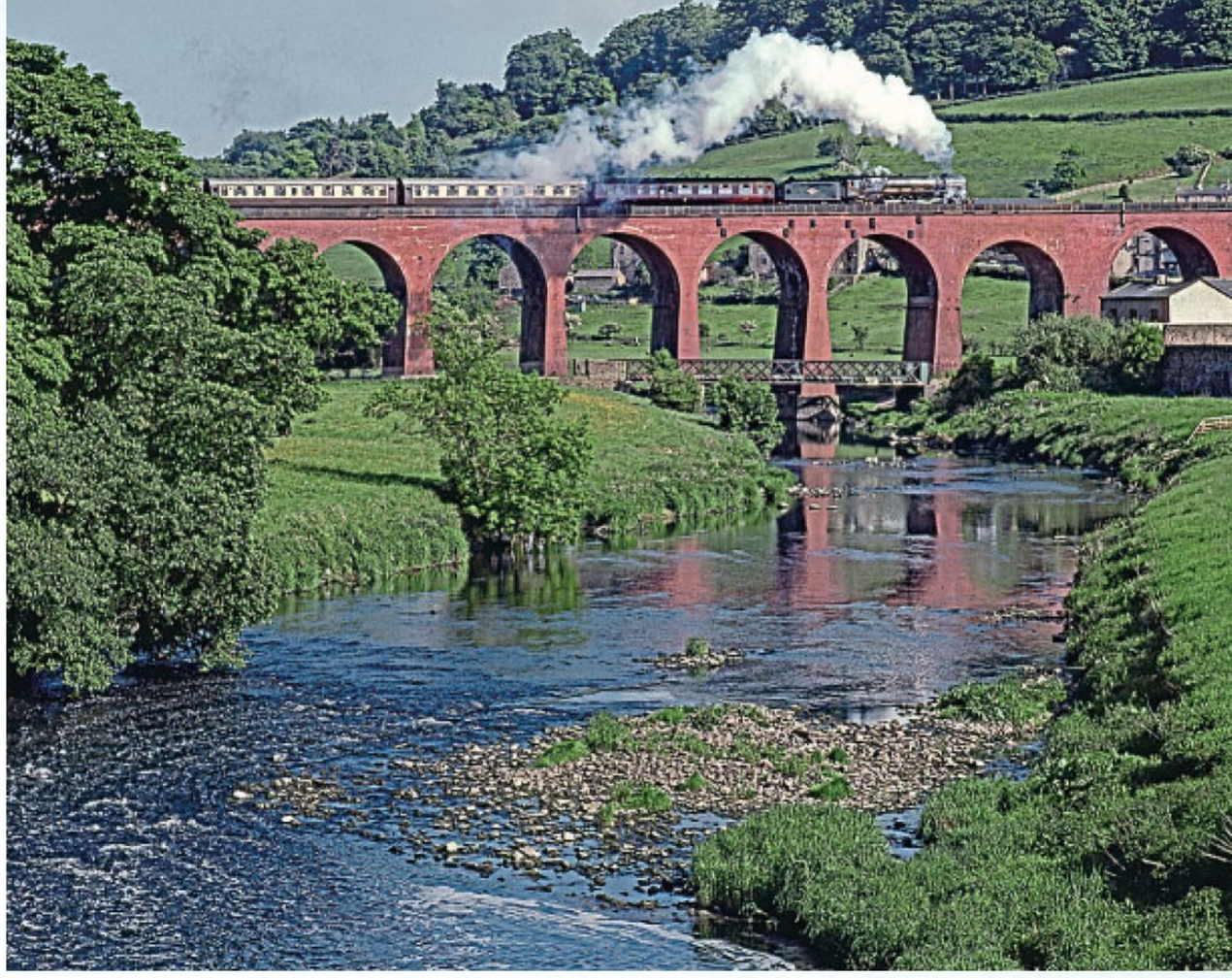
Before No. 71000 went to the scrap merchant, the two outside cylinders were removed at Crewe Works, the right one used as a test in preparation for sectioning the left one. Then the locomotive was sent for scrap. Its sectioned cylinder and associated rotary valve gear were initially preserved at the Science Museum, South Kensington, London, but are now at Crewe Heritage Centre.

The remaining hulk was towed to Cashmore's scrapyard in Gwent for cutting up. Luckily, former BR fireman Maurice Sheppard visited the yard and noticed that thee destination label on the *Duke* read 'Woodham's, Barry.'

Maurice was instrumental in ensuring that the remains ➔



Pinnacle of preservation: No. 71000 backs out of Didcot Yard preparing for its first run with two carriages to Derby on March 12, 1990.



No. 71000 crosses the 48-span Grade II-listed Whalley Viaduct across the River Calder, known locally as Whalley Arches, on June 1, 1991.



No. 71000 stands at Derby, where it was designed, in preparation for a loaded main line test run on March 14, 1990.



No. 71000 climbs Hatton Bank on its first main line run to Derby on March 12, 1990.

On its first full test run, No. 71000 passes Barrow Hill on March 14, 1990.

were towed to Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyard, where a decision had been made to scrap the rows of redundant wagons first and leave the steam locomotives until last. Had the *Duke* stayed at Cashmore's, it seems highly likely that we would not have it today.

No. 71000 languished at Barry for seven years, slowly deteriorating in the sea air, its tender having been sold to a South Wales steelworks.

At the time it was deemed by the still-nascent heritage sector as 'mission impossible' because of the absence of its two outside cylinders, the Caprotti valve gear and many other essential components.

However, much has changed thanks to the subsequent rapid strides made in the sector since those days and cylinder replacements are almost routine now, though still expensive. Two of the three Caprotti boxes had to be remade from new as only the centre one was still on the locomotive.



Returning its train to Didcot, No. 71000 departs Burton-on-Trent on April 7, 1990.

Schoolboy trainspotter plants the seed

The *Duke*'s preservation was started by a schoolboy who had seen it in operation on the main line and thought this unique locomotive should be saved for future generations to see. He wrote an open letter to various people to try and get support and enthusiast Colin Rhodes followed it up.

In 1973, the 71000 Preservation Society was formed and Colin advertised for members. They were often referred to as 'hopeless optimists chasing an impossible dream' – but they persevered in the face of adversity and ridicule… and succeeded for the benefit of future generations.

Raising £4950, they bought the locomotive, plus a tender and smoke deflectors from a 9F, and moved it to Loughborough on the Great Central Railway in 1974. From this point on, Colin provided overall control, with groups split into clear sections with the intention of restoring it to its original configuration when BR withdrew it, plus the addition of the Kylchap exhaust and double chimney.

A chance meeting with Caprotti enthusiast Hugh Phillips helped at this early stage. He had access to photographs of every drawing of the poppet valve gear which at the time were kept by Froude Engineering of Worcester, the manufacturer of the original equipment.

This meeting also led to an introduction to Tom Daniels, who was involved in the initial construction of the locomotive. He originally advocated the use of a Kylchap exhaust and was a representative for the company that supplied the original Caprotti valve gear. His wealth of knowledge and experience proved invaluable.

After 12 years of hard work and, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, No. 71000 was returned to steam in May 1986, confounding all critics.

The Association of Railway Preservation Societies recognised the *Duke*'s team by bestowing on it the premier award for the most outstanding achievement of 1986.

Subsequent groups like The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust will readily admit that this herculean achievement provided the incentive for the fantastic new builds they are producing.



Alongside GWR prairie No. 5572 at Didcot, No. 71000 is pictured outside the shed in one of its early steamings on March 3, 1990.

Heritage era operations and routes

Duke of Gloucester's first sojourn onto the main line was on March 3, 1990, when it ran from Didcot to Derby with two carriages.

Two days later on March 14 it did a loaded test run from Derby-Sheffield-Derby and then back to Didcot with 14 on.

Having passed its main line test, on April 4, 1990, No. 71000 ran its first passenger trip from Didcot to Derby and return. The sight and sound of it storming away from Didcot past Appleford in the morning sun was wonderful.

Several tours followed immediately thereafter, taking it



With safety valves feathering, No. 71000 approaches Ais Gill under Hangman's Bridge on June 1, 1991.



Climbing out of Chester, No. 71000 passes Northgate Lock, crossing the Shropshire Union Canal, on July 8, 1990.



Departing Paddington before electrification, No. 71000 heads for Sheffield on April 12, 1992.



On a murky London day, No. 71000 comes under the North London Line and is about to enter Copenhagen Tunnel at Belle Isle after departing King's Cross on September 13, 1995.



Heading toward Blackburn, No. 71000 bursts out of Gisburn Tunnel on June 6, 1991.

over the Settle to Carlisle route on June 1 and a Welsh Marches trip on June 30, before it returned to its BR era stomping ground from Chester to Holyhead.

Many further tours took place, several out of the capital. On April 12, 1992, it ran from an unelectrified Paddington one way to Sheffield via Banbury. On May 5, 1995, it graced the East Coast Main line from King's Cross to Crewe.

In 1995 the Shap trials took place over three days with three locomotives competing – LMS 4-6-2 No. 46229 *Duchess of Hamilton*, LNER A4 4-6-2 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* and the *Duke*. The A4 was said to have suffered from poor coal, the *Duchess* came second, but the *Duke* won hands down on wet rails and driving rain, topping the summit at 50mph.

Until the expiry of its boiler certificate in 1996, the *Duke* travelled over English and Welsh rails, gracing several heritage railways in the process.

Second overhaul

With the *Duke*'s first boiler ticket expired, the second overhaul took place on the East Lancashire Railway at Bury by the then support crew members, returning it to steam in 2003.

On June 9, 2007, it ran a tour from Carnforth to Carlisle but was stopped at Penrith with leaking tubes and was removed pending repairs. It returned in January 2008, working until 2012 when the boiler certificate expired.

At about this time, issues arose between the plc which owned the locomotive and the charitable trust it was leased to and which was responsible for its running and maintenance.

The situation eventually concluded with the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust being established, which is the custodian with total responsibility for No. 71000 for the next 100 years.

This new trust was set up on January 29, 2014, following the winding up of the previous body and inherited £13,345 and 120 members who at the time contributed £15,767 a year including Gift Aid.

Latest overhaul update and outstanding works

No. 71000 is now reaching the end of a 10-year major overhaul at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

This involved the complete stripping back to its basic chassis and completely rebuilding it from the bottom up, with the objective to incorporate the improvements Riddles would have made had he been given the time. After 50 years, 'the impossible dream' will be complete.

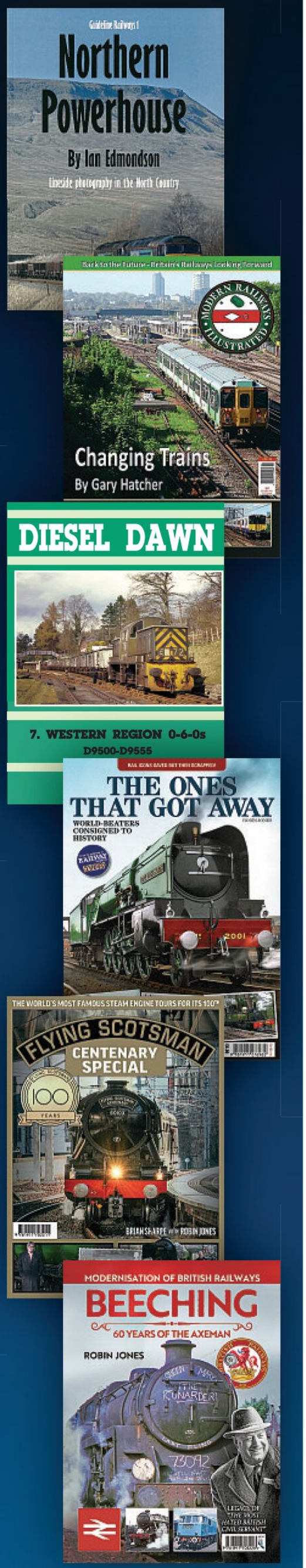
The cost of this overhaul will be in the region of £1.1 million; volunteer support crew members will have provided an additional £250,000 for the work they did. The final overhaul costs could total about £1.3 million when



Running two hours late in the fading sunlight, No. 71000 passes Keld while approaching Appleby on December 27, 1995.

Great reads from £6.99!

132-page full colour, perfect bound bookazines



ORDER TODAY FROM CLASSIC MAGAZINES:

www.classicmagazines.co.uk/thebookshelf

CALL: 01507 529529

classic magazines

Also available at WHSmith



After departing Garsdale, No. 71000 crosses Dandry Mire Viaduct on December 4, 1993.

it returns to main line working. The BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust now has 478 members who contribute £91,000 a year including Gift Aid.

The most expensive part of any overhaul is the boiler, and in November 2023 it passed the initial boiler hydraulic test. Its first fire was lit shortly afterwards, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 314, and during December that year, pressure was taken to well over 250psi.

All the superheater elements are now fitted, and the new centre con rod was set to be fitted in early February; this was delayed as the team towed the *Duke* on to the Tyseley turntable where the electrics for the Train Protection and Warning System were tested and passed off by Unipart on January 21 – which means all is good for the *Duke* to run back on the main line.

Regarding the main steam pipes which take the high-pressure steam from the boiler to the cylinders, previous repair welds have been deemed unacceptable and therefore must be replaced.

In further detailed discussions with the boiler inspector, a method of repairing the rejected welds, along with then X-raying them, has been agreed and this was being carried out as this issue of *Heritage Railway* closed for press. This method is deemed to be the most satisfactory and cost-effective solution to this problem.

Running-in and return

It is anticipated that once completed, the *Duke* will spend a month on the Severn Valley Railway being run in, followed by several main line loaded test runs around the Crewe-Shrewsbury-Wolverhampton-Stafford-Crewe circuit. Trust members will be invited along free as a thank-you for their support, and No. 71000 will carry an 'Impossible Dream' headboard to celebrate this. Trustees chairman Trevor Tuckley said that the SVR move is likely go ahead despite the current land slippage, as No. 71000 will probably run south of Hampton Loade.

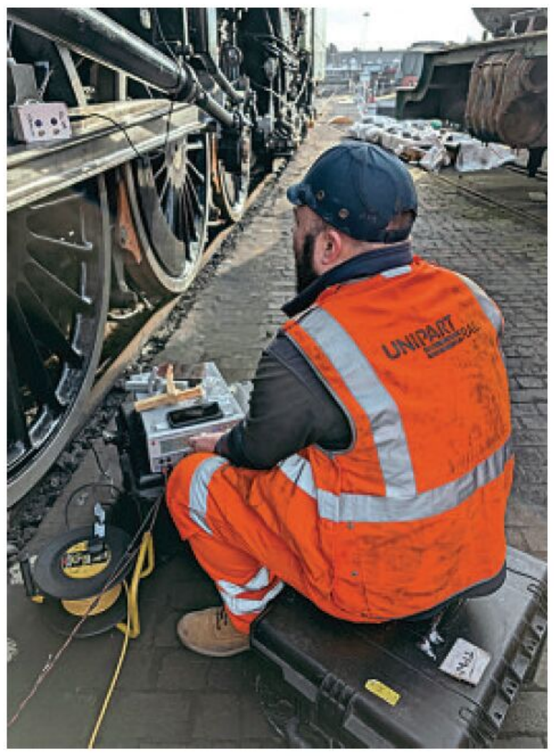
After all tests are complete, No. 71000 will be operated by Locomotive Services Limited after the trust signed an initial 10-year agreement with The Royal Scot Locomotive and General Trust Limited, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 217. Under the agreement, it will be limited to 12 trips a year. Based at Crewe, the *Duke* will rub shoulders with some of the main line's best locomotives.

No. 71000 looks superb at the head of Saphos Trains' carmine and cream set of Mk. 1 carriages and, subject to certification, will be used on the summer trains in the West Country. It is also anticipated that it will run on selected heritage lines.

A comment by Doug Landau and David Pawson on the *Duke*'s website sums it up: "Given the opportunity for another main line innings, the best may be yet to come. The evolution of the *Duke* is not complete. It will look perfect in its original 1954 livery, but inside it will be a different beast. Together, we can ensure the fulfilment of the impossible dream."

Trevor said: "As we approach the end of our 50-year journey to complete the impossible dream, I cannot thank enough our loyal members who have made this happen. We have faced and resolved very many enormous challenges along the way, but our members' support has never wavered. Over the coming years they can enjoy the results of their loyalty, being able to see the *Duke* back where it belongs – hauling trains on the main line."

For updates and details of how to keep No. 71000 back where it belongs on the main line, see https://www.theduke.uk.com/ HR

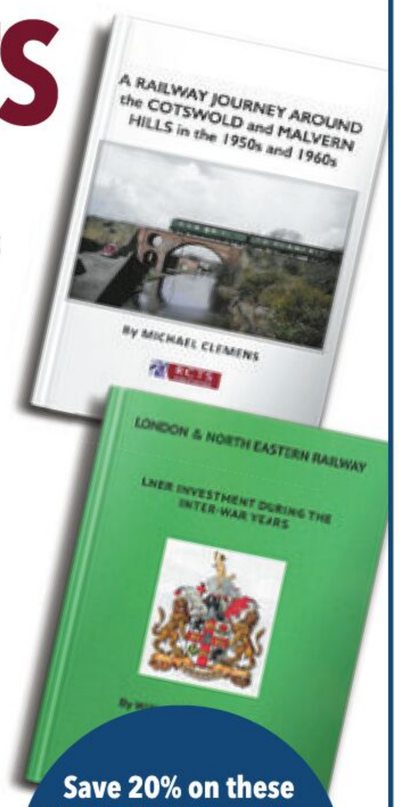




No. 71000 passes its TPWS/AWS examination with the Unipart engineers at Tyseley Locomotive Works on January 21. BRC8SLT

VISITS • BOOKS • DIGITAL ARCHIVE • LOCO DATABASE

New books from the RCTS



A Railway Journey Around The Cotswold And Malvern Hills In The 1950s And 1960s

From the renowned author Michael Clemens with photography by Ellis James-Robertson

A detailed look at the railways of Worcestershire, the Dean Forest, and Kington, Presteign and Fairford branches. An extensive commentary illustrated with 180 black and white and colour images. **Hardback, 118 pages, £25.**

LNER Investment In The Inter-War Years

by William Wilson

The story of the financial challenges faced by the LNER Surviving the postwar depression through to the streamliner era. An unusual and previously little documented account of the challenges to be overcome but eminently readable. Contains many previously unseen images. **Softback, 96 pages, £20**

A companion to the famed RCTS LNER series which is also now available on line as a series of downloadable pdfs.

£4 postage and packing for as many books as you like!
Order at rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/
By Post:- RCTS Sales, 16 Welby Close, Maidenhead SL6 3PY,
(Cheques made payable to Railway Correspondence & Travel Society)

Save 20% on these books by joining the RCTS – see our special new member offer at rcts.org.uk

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Registered Number 1169995

RCTS
THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE AND TRAVEL SOCIETY

The Transport Treasury

Transport Treasury Publishing



£16.50



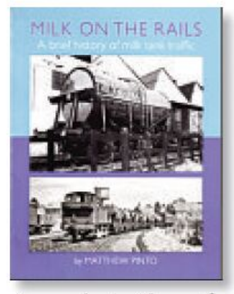
£16.50

01494 708939
orders@ttpublishing.co.uk
www.ttpublishing.co.uk

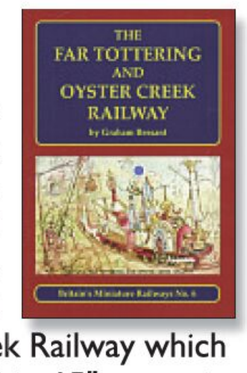
Find us on Facebook @TransportTreasuryPublishing

THE BEST IN BOOKS FOR 'SPRINGTIME' READING!

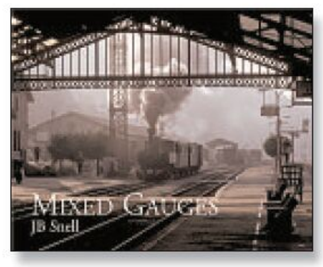
CAMDEN MINIATURE STEAM SERVICES RODE FROME BA11 6NZ



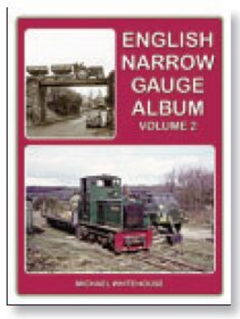
Milk on the Rails • Pinto • £34.90
The complete story of how wagons used to transport milk in bulk by the railways - after the development of the milk tank wagon and demise of the milk churn, but before road transport took over. There is a large amount of detail, covering in particular the development of the different types of railway milk wagons used, together with comprehensive details of the dairies and locations sending out milk by rail tank, and the varied destinations and depots that received it. Numerous B&W illustrations. 192 pages. Paperback. A fascinating book!



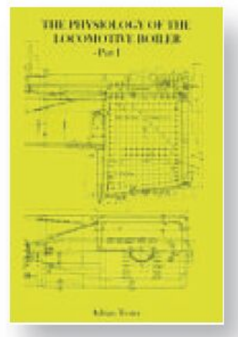
The Far Tottering and Oyster Creek Railway • Bessant • £14.98
1951 was the year of the Festival of Britain, mainly held in London on the South Bank of the Thames. Upstream in Battersea was to be found the 'Festival Gardens', in essence a gigantic fairground. This was populated by weird and wonderful contraptions invented by Rowland Emett, the popular cartoonist of the day. None was weirder and more wonderful than "The Far Tottering and Oyster Creek Railway which featured in many of Emett's cartoons, and was recreated in 15" gauge in the Festival Gardens, and transported 1000s of passengers during the Garden's two year life. 56 page A4 format telling the story of this wonderful railway, and its relatively shot life. Paperback. Innocent days!



Mixed Gauges - VERY SPECIAL PRICE - 69% off! • Snell • £22.70
The late John Snell's wonderful story of his life with steam, and his travels to 21 countries worldwide, told in 256 pages, 386 photos in full colour and 48 in B&W. As is clear from this book, John was a superb writer and photographer. - Hardbound and last remaining copies; *BUY WHILST YOU CAN! TREMENDOUSLY ENJOYABLE!*



English Narrow Gauge Album Volume 2 Whitehouse • £41.95
This is the second of two volumes showing the extraordinary individuality of narrow gauge railways in England, ranging from the remarkable Redruth & Chasewater Railway and the much loved Lynton & Barnstaple Railway to the Ashover Light Railway, the Jersey Railway and industrial lines such as Holman F. Stephens' Snailbeach Line, and many more. All profusely illustrated to show the variety of steam locomotives and their operating environment, with many historic pictures never published before. This is a really lovely book - a great read and an excellent source of information, not to mention high quality photographs, largely B&W but also in colour, plus maps, drawings etc., plus a good text. 224 pages and Hardback.



The Physiology of the Locomotive Boiler Part 1 • Tester • £56.95
Filling almost 600 pages, this first volume covers a broad range of topics, and it may be difficult to think of anything that has been left out. The Table of Contents is the best representation of the extensive subject matter covered in this initial volume, and full Table of Contents may be accessed via the book's entry on our website. The author has tried to simplify the mathematics with considerable success, and the text is generally understandable to the mathematically and technically inclined. Where it isn't, the general drift is clear. This big book contains a reasonable number of B&W photos, plus large numbers of charts, indicator diagrams and the like. Hardbound and recommended.

PLUS a wide selection of Second-Hand railway books also on our website.

Prices shown INCLUDE U.K. Post & Packing;
Buy two or more items and **SAVE ON POSTAGE** - this is automatically calculated if you order online, as is Overseas postage.

Buy online at: www.camdenmin.co.uk
or phone 01373 310285 to order



How does a steam railway mitigate against the risk of lineside fires? The Dartmouth Steam Railway has created a dedicated firefighting train by converting a brake van and tanker wagon that can be deployed to support local firefighters.

DARTMOUTH'S FIRE TRAIN TAKES TO THE RAILS

As summer temperatures get ever hotter and ground conditions become ever drier, steam railways have had to face the real threat of lineside fires. As part of its own mitigations for such occurrences, the Dartmouth Steam Railway has worked in partnership with its local fire service to create its own fire-fighting train. The railway's safety officer, **Nick Dunn**, tells how this came to be.

In common with all coal-fired steam railways, the risk of fire is a fact of life. There is much that can reasonably be done to prevent fire in the first place and our measures include vegetation management, spark arresting, ashpan watering, ashpan condition checks, regular ashpan clearing and careful locomotive handling and firing. Ultimately, the odd fire that does occur will need to be extinguished – and as quickly as possible.

The genesis of the fire train came in 2014 when we first started using our weedkilling wagon to assist the fire service. In addition to the spray bars, this had a length of one-inch (25mm) hose and carried about 1000 litres of water, which gave enough water for about 40 minutes of fire-fighting using a little Honda pump (ideal for spraying herbicide but somewhat limited for fire-fighting).

One deployment to a difficult section of track to access highlighted the significant effort required by the fire service in getting to where it was needed. After putting out this fire, it was suggested that firefighters might like to ride back with us to Churston on the weedkilling wagon and bring their gear as well; they liked this idea as it was a long climb back to the fire tenders and their kit is heavy.

An idea forms

Some useful discussions were had regarding the possibility of deploying together, but it was not always possible to man the wagon and shunter and, quite often, the timing did not work, so the fire service tended to deploy on its own and we attended separately. Subsequent discussions centred on what the firefighters really needed on site; the response was water – and lots of it.

A Shell-Mex fuel tanker wagon – which has the capacity for about 37,000 litres of water – was procured and christened *Flood*. When it arrived, we asked if our fire service liaison officer would like to see it; his jaw dropped open. "Oh dear," I said, "isn't it big enough?" "We don't have anything that big," came the reply.

Flood was air-braked, and on a predominantly vacuum-fitted railway it was obviously necessary to run with a manned brake van at the downhill end. This also meant that time was not wasted in running around at Churston to get the traction unit at the downhill end, which was the case with the weedkilling wagon, time that would be better spent fighting the fire.

It was thought that this would provide accommodation for firefighters and their kit deploying to the scene, which worked well on the rare occasions it was possible but, as previously explained, mostly it just didn't work. The next logical step was to fit a pump and nozzle so that we could assist in a more meaningful way or, if deploying separately, we could get on with getting the fire under control pending the arrival of the fire service.

Built to carry petrol, one interesting limitation of the wagon was that it should not be completely filled if it was to keep to a 22-ton axle load. Filling with water rather than petrol resulted in a heavier wagon due to the increased specific gravity. It has been calculated that keeping the water level 400mm below the top of the tank keeps the tank wagon within its axle weight. One potential issue with the tank was that it came without internal baffles. As we understand it, this was not an issue on the main line as the tank ran full or empty. It was initially thought that we would have an issue with water slopping around, hence the initial plan was to deploy with the tank full to prevent this but, after extensive experience, it has never proved to be an issue, and the tank wagon rides satisfactorily at all water levels at up to 25mph.

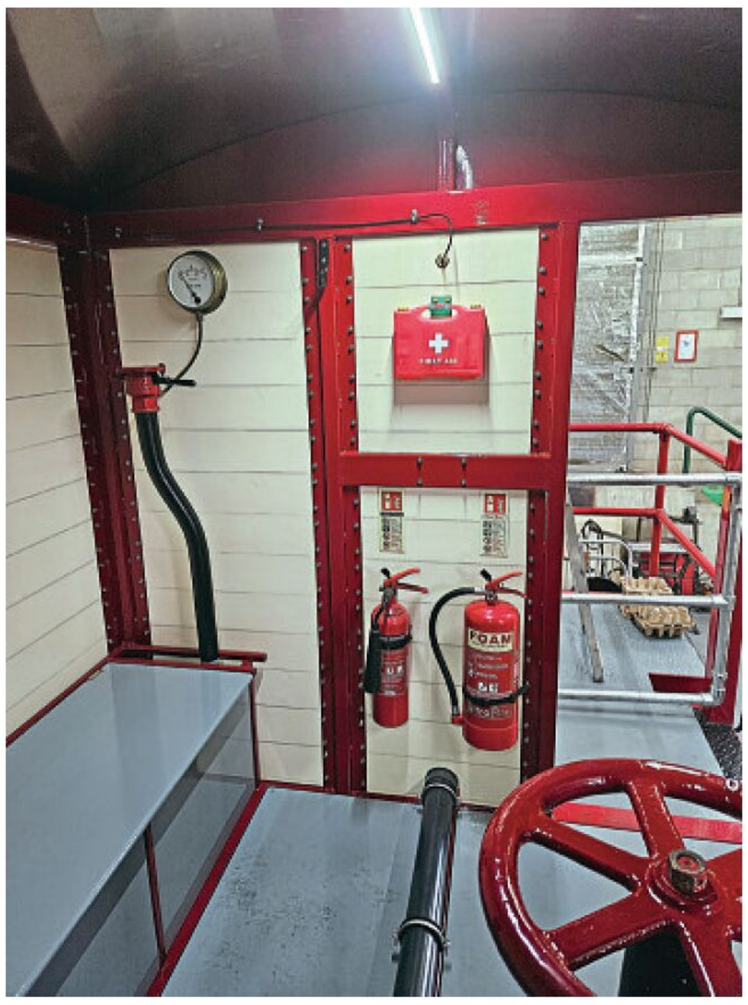
A Godiva Feather-Weight pump capable of producing 100psi and a high flow rate capable of emptying *Flood* in 23 minutes was acquired, along with the necessary hoses and other equipment; the fire service was particularly helpful in advising and donating surplus equipment. The pump, monitor and most of the other fittings were sourced from LW Vass Ltd, who were most helpful.

The concept therefore developed from assisting the fire service to one of being able to fight fires ourselves. Given the way that our railway is manned, it would need minimum manning: a driver and fire train operator. Therefore, all equipment had to be capable of being safely handled by the single operator.

There wasn't much of a budget for the fire train or much resource in terms of staff, so it took until the summer of 2016 to complete the fire train, but on August 23 a small group of interested staff went out for the first time. After a quick check of the pump at idle (unless fighting a fire, there are very few places where the pump can be run without the potential for damage), we initially proceeded to conduct



Above: A previous incarnation of the fire train entered service in 2016 – a BR standard 20T brake van fitted with firefighting equipment, including a pump that provided a water reach of 80 metres!



Right: The immaculate interior of the refurbished brake van has also been painted in firefighting colours. A pipe runs down the centre of the floor connecting the pump to the water tanker that forms part of the consist.



brake tests to ensure that the brake van could stop the train if required. With that being satisfactorily proven, we found a spot where we could fire water out to sea and started the pump up. None of us were quite prepared for what we found: a range of about 80 metres and the ability to dig a trench were quickly proven, so we put it all away and retired to the pub. This figure is useful in that it enables 99% of the railway within the fence to be in range.

The fire train had a lukewarm reception, particularly as it was not needed for the rest of 2016 or very often in 2017; white elephant was one of the more polite descriptions. However, the dry summer of 2018 showed its true worth, with many fires extinguished without interfering with trains or unnecessarily loading the fire service.

Limitations

A significant benefit of the train has been that anything could pull it, and it has even been out once with steam.

Initially, given the limited arcs of fire from the monitor, it could only operate out to the sides and the pump had to be on the opposite side in order for the throttle to be close to the operator so it could be shut down quickly if needed. In the event of a hose breaking loose, the quickest way of making the situation safe was not to close a water valve, but to immediately close the throttle and depower the system – wise advice from an old fireman. A different layout was required for each side which involved a lot of shifting around and the equipment was a bit of a trip hazard. The Godiva pump did not have an electric start and it could be quite a challenge to get going if you did not have the knack. There was also the risk to hands from hand-starting.

The space outside was limited with pump, monitor and hose, as was the inside space where the equipment was stowed. The pump did not have much clearance getting through the door, which risked staff knuckles every time.

Despite all this, the fire train worked very effectively and kept us going through some hot and dry summers, 2018 and 2023 being two that spring to mind. We also found other uses for it: it was very effective for washing out boilers, watering known dry spots in hot summers, and as an emergency supply for locomotives. Unable to operate into Paignton one afternoon, services were terminated at Goodrington and locomotives watered from the fire train,

Above and below: During the recent rebuild of the brake van, the pump has been installed inside the modified cabin of the brake vehicle. It now sits on a sliding shelf to allow it to be easily extracted from the van for servicing and maintenance when required. When in service, it is hidden behind a rather fitting firefighting emblem.





During the renovation of the brake van in 2023/24, the body of the 20T brake van was condemned. This allowed for a replacement structure to be built to meet the requirements of the firefighting team, with the cabin moved off-centre to create a dedicated and spacious platform at one end of the vehicle.



thus maintaining service using a bus between Goodrington and Paignton.

Water quality has been a concern from the beginning and in particular the risk from legionella has been carefully addressed. We have a monitoring system, and on the advice of a local water firm we maintain the chlorine levels at about the level of a swimming pool. This is important for health reasons (prevention of legionella) and in case the water is required to supply a locomotive, where chlorine in any quantity is not needed.

Improvements

Built on a limited budget with many components not ideal for the task, particularly the suction pipework which was sourced from a farming supplier, as were some of the suction joints and with the difficulties outlined, the concept was clearly proven and there was support for improvements. It was clear that the fire train could be significantly upgraded to bring it closer to the original concept, while at the same time removing a number of risks that had been identified. These upgrades included:

- Substituting fixed pipework for the flexible hoses.
- Removing standard fire service click-together fittings where possible and providing a fixed monitor that could reach both sides of the track without disassembling it, swapping sides, then swapping the pump and re-rigging the hoses.
- Ducting exhaust well away from the operator.
- Reducing noise.
- Making a safer working platform.
- Providing better facilities for maintaining and servicing the pumps.
- Providing electric rather than hand-start pumps.
- Improving deployment times.

The Brake Van *Noah* was taken out of service at the end of the 2023 season for the modifications. A makeshift fire train was generated using the old components and a Shark brake van and proved satisfactory for the 2024 season which, from a fire perspective, was rather wet. The wooden structure on the ex-BR 20T brake van would not have lasted very much longer, therefore the decision was taken to scrap it. This was good news, as it permitted the rebuild to be the size and shape needed, rather than trying to shoehorn equipment into an unsatisfactory space, as previously done. The bodywork was rebuilt in steel and wood with an aluminium roof. Doors were fabricated and spare bus parts used for the emergency exit and for access doors to the pump engines. The smaller Godiva pump is on a sliding shelf which allows it to be drawn out of the side for maintenance. The main pump is a Clarke type powered by an Iveco 8000 series diesel generator that was understood to originally have been fitted to a high-rise building to feed the fire main.



The connection between the brake vehicle and the water tanker is a straightforward large diameter hose.

The plan was to fit the pumps in parallel feeding a 4in main that distributed to standard fire service fittings on each side for the fire service to use. Dual pumps would allow immediate back-up in case of pump failure. The fixed monitor that was sourced from LW Vass originally came from a harbour firefighting vessel. For small fires in the cess, the monitor is rather like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut and runs the risk of destabilising cesses, ballast and earthworks.

Under the previous set-up we had acquired 100 feet of 1in hose for close-in work. This was good in theory but in practice was only used once as it required a couple of people to drag it around, so was only practical with fire service support. We therefore substituted a 30m hose-reel which is much easier to deploy, use, and recover. It can also be used at walking pace from the working platform to deal with small cess fires, as well as damp down particularly difficult smouldering stumps that are in range.

One concern as the project approached completion was whether the weight and balance had been altered, which could potentially affect braking and the ride. On weighing, it was found that the imbalance was negligible, and the riding and braking were unaffected.

Following painting and other finishing touches, the fire train rolled out of the paintshop on November 18, 2024. After completion of a few minor tasks, it was taken for a gauging run and brake testing towards Kingswear on December 2 and then pump testing in the yard, followed by a gauging run towards Paignton and high-power pump trials the following day.

So, how did it do? The fire train performed almost exactly as planned. A similar range is available and the whole set-up is quicker to deploy; the limiting factor in deployment is now the Class 03 locomotive getting sufficient air to move. Markedly less physical effort is needed to set up the fire train as there are no pumps to move, monitors to fix or hoses to be rigged for normal operation. The working platform is also clearer, although the main delivery pipe could not be put under the brake van so is routed down the middle.

A warning siren has been fitted, which is important when approaching the fire in case the fire service is already onsite; agreed protocols regarding track access keep its staff safely clear of the track. A blue light is even planned to be fitted at some point.

Difficulty was experienced with lower tank levels if the main pump was stopped as it lost prime and does not have the ability to self-prime. We had similar issues with the previous set-up, but the Godiva pumps were all fitted with a priming facility, so it was not an issue. The smaller pump does have a self-priming facility and can be used, but this is not considered satisfactory. It was not thought that this would be an issue with improved pipework so a priming tank between the pumps and the main tank should cure this, which is planned to be fitted in the near future.

The future

It is unlikely that the fire train will be upgraded in the foreseeable future. However, other railways considering a similar fire train might like to consider whether an electric pump powered by batteries would be suitable. Given the reliability of electric motors, a twin pump arrangement might not be considered necessary. Battery capacity would need to be, as a minimum, twice that required to empty the tank as we have on a number of occasions had to top up from the fire service's road tanker to complete damping down. The pump should either be fitted below the lowest level of the tank (which we were unable to achieve), be self-priming, or have a self-priming facility to ensure all water is available.

If railways are considering a similar set-up and would like to visit or advice, we welcome them to get in touch.

Many people on the railway have assisted in various ways, but particular thanks must go to Robin Coulton, at Churston Main Workshop, who carried out the majority of the 2024 refit and came up with many useful and practical modifications. Likewise, credit is due to the Devon and Somerset Fire Service, particularly the fire stations at Paignton, Brixham and Dartmouth, for all the support and assistance provided. HR



Following the refurbishment of the fire train over the 12 months prior, it was taken out on test in early December 2024. Testing proved that its reach was similar to that of the previous incarnation, with the whole set-up also much quicker to deploy.



While it is hoped that it won't need to see frequent use, the presence of a dedicated firefighting train will allow the railway to swiftly respond to any lineside fires that start during dry periods which are becoming more frequent.

TRANSPORT AUCTIONS of LONDON

TRANSPORT AUCTIONS *of* LONDON

The South of England's Specialist Auction House for

RAILWAYANA, LONDON UNDERGROUND, BUS, TRAM

Enamel & cast-iron Signs & Plates, Publicity, Posters, Timetables & much more



Looking to sell? Over 4,000 collectors subscribe to our auction catalogues!
Free advice and valuations. Collection can be arranged, subject to location



We are now welcoming entries for our February sale





Next sales: 22nd Feb 2025, 5th July 2025

enquiries@transportauctionslondon.com Tel: 01737 237505

www.transportauctionslondon.com





Registered Office: Transport Auctions of London Ltd, Hamilton House, 87-89 Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7AN
Registered in England & Wales. Company No. 9773357

Hargreaves Steam Railway Coals

Hargreaves will have available throughout 2025 for the UK Heritage Steam Railway market, a comprehensive range of different Steaming Coals in various sizes to suit all steam loco's. We also have available 2 grades of Steaming Ovoids.







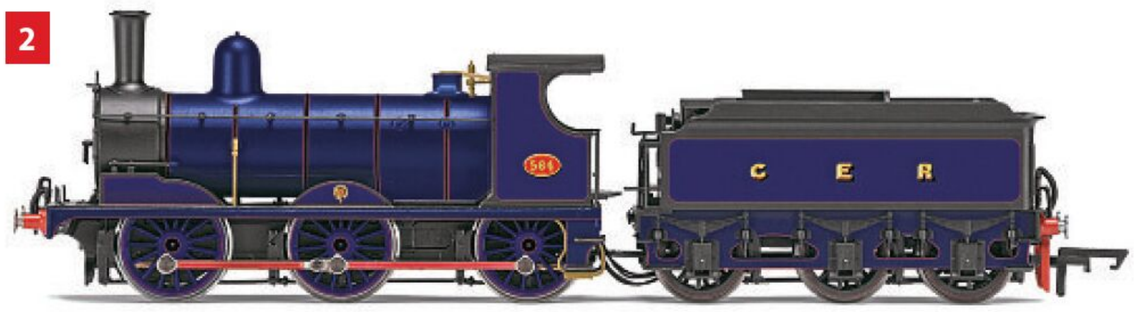
HERITAGE RAILWAY ASSOCIATION
COMMERCIAL PARTNER

To discuss and secure your 2025 Steaming Coal needs simply contact us by
Tel Sue McNaught on 07970 147205 or Paul Paddock 07968 048482
E-mail steamcoal@hsgplc.co.uk

1



2



Saint headlines Hornby 2025 line-up following bumper winter sales

A POST-CHRISTMAS surge in shopping was a welcome financial boost to model manufacturer Hornby, which announced the additions to its catalogue for 2025 on January 14 – with the inclusion of a highly requested locomotive that has been absent for nearly four decades.

Following its announcement in September 2023 that the firm was reporting a £5.1 million loss in the six months beforehand, Hornby entered what it called a 'consultancy arrangement' with billionaire Mike Ashley in March 2024 in a bid to 'steady the ship.' Fortunes have since appeared to take a turn, with the firm reporting a 23% revenue growth for December 2024 alone.

Chief excutive Olly Raeburn said: "In a tough economic climate, we are pleased to report growth in revenue, margins, and gross profits through this critical quarter.

"We are continuing to drive down the inventory levels that had built up in recent years and are delivering our change plans in a steady and sustainable way."

The annual announcement of new models is eagerly anticipated by many modellers, and while the quantity of new tooled models is lower than what it once was, the range continues to offer something for everyone.

1. Great Western Saint

Highlight of the range for the year ahead was the GWR Saint 4-6-0. The Saint has previously been made by Hornby in ready-to-run form, with the last incarnation of tooling being introduced in 1986. However, the last time it was available commercially was during the late 1990s. With the completion of the new-build project No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* in March 2019 reviving the class in real life, there have been calls from modellers to see the class reintroduced in OO scale, and while it has taken five years for those calls to be answered, Hornby has risen to the challenge and is promising a new high-spec tool of this class with two identities set for release in the first wave.

Of course, No. 2999 is one of these, with the second being No. 2975 *Lord Palmer*, the locomotive being introduced in 1905 as No. 175 *Viscount Churchill* but renumbered and renamed in 1912 and 1924 respectively. It was withdrawn in 1944 at Bristol Road Bath.

Hornby has yet to confirm full specifications of these new models, but they will be fitted with a five-pole skew-wound motor and sprung metal buffers. Artwork renders also imply that lamps will be fitted as standard, which follows similar treatment to the new LMS 'Black Five' tooling introduced in 2024.

RRP is set at £234.99 for DCC-ready models and delivery is expected in the winter months of 2025/26.

2. Railroad LSWR B4

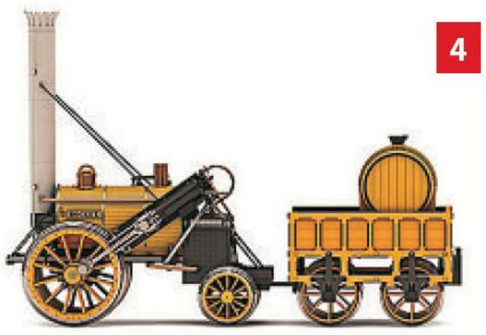
A project which many thought had been abandoned, the introduction of the LSWR 0-4-0T B4 as a new entry-level locomotive was showcased as far back as 2023 when it was the focus of an episode of the Hornby: A Model World documentary series on UKTV.

While marketed as an example of the B4, its design has been concentrated on fitting the pre-existing standard 0-4-0 chassis which

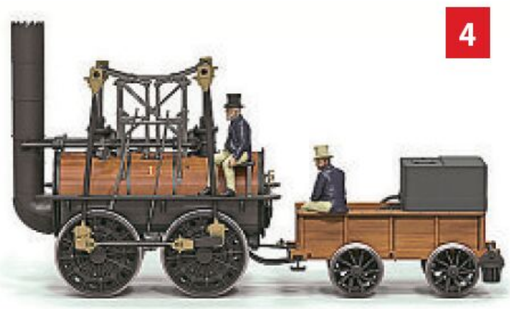
3



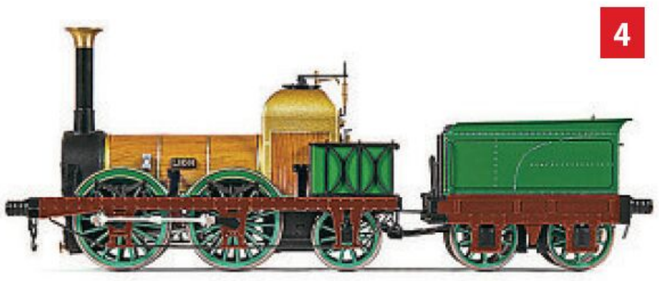
4



4



4



Darstaed Pullmans arrive at Ellis Clark Trains





O GAUGE has seen a surge in new models released ready-to-run in recent years, and while some manufacturers have focused on smaller locomotives and rolling stock, Darstaed and Ellis Clark Trains have set their sights on larger ambitions – with the delivery of the K-type Pullman cars marking its fifth ready-to-run carriage design to be released.

The all-steel Pullman cars made their initial debut in 1928 and were one of the first design of rail vehicles to be made entirely from steel over the traditional wooden construction. A total of 33 were built, with 20 allocated to the LNER 'Queen of Scots' service, while the remainder saw use on the likes of 'The Bournemouth Belle,' 'Harrogate Pullman' and 'Ocean Liner' services. Eight survive in preservation with a handful still in main line use.

Darstaed's models boast features such as finely detailed brass sides and interiors (including luggage racks), a die cast underframe and superbly detailed interiors with functional ceiling and table lights. Slots for coach destination boards (sold separately) are also included to allow customisation of vehicles to suit the individual modeller's needs.

As well as individual cars, carriage packs are also available to form some of the sets used on the named expresses, as well as a twin pack featuring cars Mary and Ann as preserved on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

Individual vehicles are priced at £399 each, while coach packs range from £795 (pack of two) to £3000 for a pack of eight. Models are available exclusively through Ellis Clark Trains' Skipton shop or via its webstore: www.ellisclarktrains.co.uk







is used on the majority of Hornby's starter locomotives (perhaps most commonly associated with its 0-4-0ST 0F 'Pug' *Smokey Joe*). Due this restriction, its proportions are somewhat distorted to make it fit; however, given the purpose for which it has been designed and its inclusion in the cheaper Railroad range, it provides a welcome new addition to the previously limited locomotive options on 'train set' level.

Interestingly, the chassis has received a minor modification to remove the oversized D couplings that formed part of the moulding and have been replaced with magnets; a selection of new rolling stock has also been tooled with compatible couplings. Could this be the way of the future for model railways?

Priced at a modest £39.99, No. 96 *Normandy* is included in the offerings, with the prototype based on the Bluebell Railway and currently undergoing overhaul.

3. Great Eastern Y14

The LNER/BR J15 class 0-6-0 locomotive has been in the range for some time now, but with a growing interest in the pre-Grouping era forming in the sector, Hornby is following the way of the North Norfolk Railway and modifying the tooling to showcase the earlier incarnation of the class, as was done with preserved example No. 65462 in 2015. Outshopped as its GER Y14 identity No. 564, Hornby is also presenting this locomotive in OO scale in its GER scheme.

Full detail specs have not been confirmed; however, minor variations will include the cab roof and safety valve designs.

RRP is set at £139.99, with delivery expected in the autumn of 2025.

4. Railway 200 Triple Pack

Era 1 has been a focal point for Hornby in recent years, and with the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway taking place throughout this year, it has brought together the three locomotives released to date for a special commemorative 'Birth of the Railways' train pack. Contained within this set will be *Locomotion No. 1*, which was the first locomotive to pull a passenger train on a public railway. Accompanying it will be Stephenson's *Rocket* and the more recently released Liverpool & Manchester Railway 0-4-2 No. 57 *Lion*.

This pack will be supplied with a display plinth (on which the locomotives can be mounted), along with three replica nameplate miniatures. RRP is set at £399.99, with delivery expected in the summer of 2025.

5. Preserved and main line identities

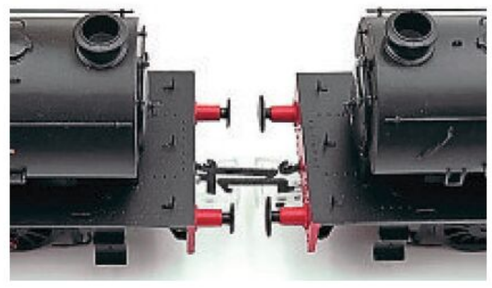
With a back catalogue of tooling already at its disposal, a few locomotive identities which exist in the real world have been included in the announcements. The BR 2MT 2-6-0 welcomes No. 78019 to its ranks as preserved on the Great Central Railway in BR lined black (£239.99), while the National Railway Museum's Class 55 Deltic No. 55002 *King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry* is on offer in BR two-tone green with full yellow ends (£74.99).

While not preserved, Class 73 No. 73128 is a regular performer on the main line with GB Railfreight and sports a heritage Network Rail livery; on May 31, it was named *Kent & East Sussex Railway* at Robertsbridge station in honour of the heritage line's 50th anniversary. Hornby's model represents it in this condition and forms part of the Railroad Plus range, with DCC sound fitted; RRP is £144.99.

Other models announced include new running numbers for various LNER, GWR, SR and BR era carriages, with the SR also benefiting from the addition of newly-tooled Bulleid tavern car twin packs, based on BR's experimental travelling pub vehicles introduced in 1949.







Fill your 'Buckets' with Accurascale Austerity samples…

FOLLOWING its earlier announcement of a plan to reintroduce the iconic Hunslet Austerity and LNER J94 locomotives into the OO scale world, Accurascale has received and showcased decorated samples for the six currently-announced models from the first wave of releases.

The range covers a wealth of versions not previously seen in the scale, such as NCB No. 59 with cut-down Lambton colliery cab and injectors mounted above the running board, while LNER No. 8008 in its desert sand livery will undoubtedly catch the eye on any layout. Another example of an NCB locomotive, No. 3823 *Warrior* (which survives unrestored on the Dean Forest Railway) comes fitted with a Giesl ejector. Accurascale has said that there are some corrections to be made following the delivery of these latest samples, which will be implemented ahead of the models entering full production. Delivery is on track for the second quarter of 2026.

A new innovation, the manufacturer has revealed the Austerity will be fitted with Invisilock couplings: these are standard NEM tension lock couplings but produced in clear plastic so as to reduce the impact of their presence when viewed from afar, with coupling hooks remaining as normal in black metal.

A manufacturer-exclusive model is due to be announced soon; prices are set at £149.95 for DCC-ready versions.

…And don your clay hoods

THE firm has also revealed a further range of wagons to supplement its growing presence in OO scale, with the BR 'clay hood' being chosen on this occasion. BR built a total of 875 of these wagons to replace the older GWR O.13 type, which were nearing 40 years old at the time.

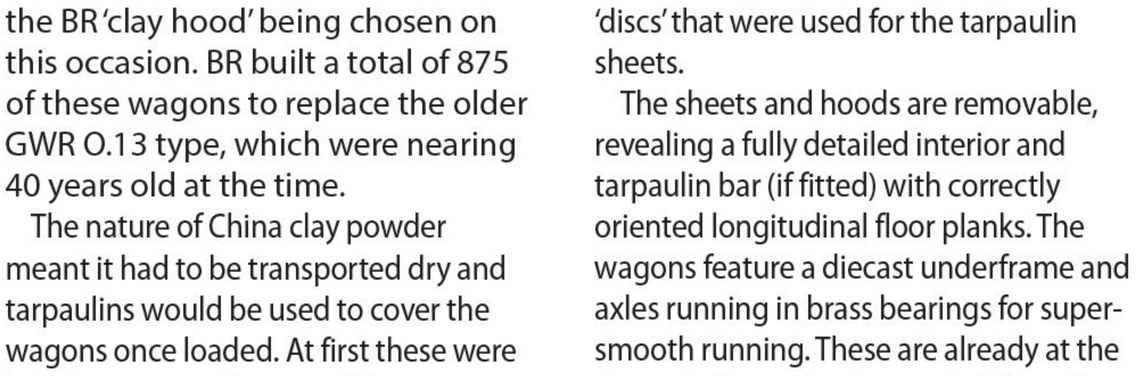
The nature of China clay powder meant it had to be transported dry and tarpaulins would be used to cover the wagons once loaded. At first these were just thrown over the top of the wagon as was, but problems developed during inclement weather, with water pooling and eventually seeping through and soaking the contents below, leading to wagons later being fitted with a retractable raised bar that allowed the tarpaulins to have a 'pent' that meant rainwater would run straight off and down the sides instead.

The models represent the wagons at various points from throughout their working lives, with tooling catering for different axle boxes, buffers and hood configurations, including the tie-down hooks that were added for the later pent hoods in a different position to the earlier 'discs' that were used for the tarpaulin sheets.

The sheets and hoods are removable, revealing a fully detailed interior and tarpaulin bar (if fitted) with correctly oriented longitudinal floor planks. The wagons feature a diecast underframe and axles running in brass bearings for super-smooth running. These are already at the decorated sample stage and delivery is expected to occur in the final months of 2025.

Wagons come available in triple packs priced at £89.95 each, with discounts for bulk orders of two or more packs.





Orwell Model Railways

Ipswich Model Railway Centre

48-52 Tomline Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 8DB
01473 724578

Opening times Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm,
Saturday 10am to 5pm,
with Late Night Opening until 6pm on Wednesday

enquiries@orwellmodelrailways.co.uk
www.orwellmodelrailways.co.uk

Coastal DCC
www.coastaldcc.co.uk

Friendly advice, support and installation services
Tel: 01473 710946 Email: enquiries@coastaldcc.co.uk
DCC by modellers for modellers

Kent Garden Railways

16mm and G Scale Specialists
LGB * Accucraft * Peco * Piko * Bachmann * Roundhouse * Pola * USA Trains and more



Great Stocks of OO, HO & N
We have large stocks from the leading manufacturers
Hornby * Bachmann * Peco * Gaugemaster * Metcalfe * Heljan * Graham Farish * Dapol *
Woodland Scenics * Kato * Walthers * Kadee * Expo * Noch * Oxford Diecast * Kestrel
Atlas * Broadway * Parkside * Ratio * Wills * Modelscene * Minitrains and more

68 High Street, St Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent, BR5 3NH
Tel 01689 891668 email sales@kgrmodels.com www.kgrmodels.com
Internet, telephone and exhibition sales only.

GUARANTEE YOUR COPY

PRE-ORDER YOUR NEXT ISSUE



3 GREAT REASONS

- Delivered straight to your door
- Free postage and packaging
- Buy direct from the publisher

Pre-order today:
www.classicmagazines.co.uk/issue/preorder

AC Models

www.acmodelseastleigh.co.uk



Stockists of Bachmann, Graham Farish, Hornby, Peco, Scalextric and much more for all of your modelling needs.

Find us on Ebay ACModels2

Gift Vouchers Available

www.acmodelseastleigh.co.uk

Now Open - R/C Department

Opening times Mon-Tue-Thurs-Fri & Sat 10am-4pm, closed Wed & Sun
ON-STREET PARKING OUTSIDE THE SHOP

9 High Street, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 5LF
Tel: 02380 610100
E: info@acmodelseastleigh.co.uk

YORK MODEL RAILWAY SHOW

At the KNAVESMIRE STAND York Racecourse

OPEN DAILY
From 10am to 5pm
Monday close 4.30pm

Easter Saturday, Sunday, Monday
19th, 20th, 21st April 2025

Signposted from A64 York Outer Ring Road

120* Stands including

Demonstrations by expert modellers - show you how.
TRADE STANDS to supply All your modelling needs.
Scale and Preservation Societies
Parking for over 800 cars. (ground conditions permitting)
Full Refreshment Service and Licensed Bar.
(* Estimated Numbers)



Admission Prices: Adult £15, Child £2, Family (2A+3C) £32

Visit our website for full details
www.yorkshow.org.uk
Scan the QR Code for advance ticket bookings

Preston's quayside heritage line

A chapter in its commercial history may have ended, but for the Ribble Steam Railway there is still plenty to focus on for the future. **Sally Clifford** takes a look behind the scenes at some of the projects taking place – and the people making them happen – in words and pictures.



Alison Pinch, a director at the Ribble Steam Railway, with Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20.

Change is often an accepted part of progress. It was the Ribble Steam Railway's relocation from Steamport Southport, where it was originally set up in the 1970s, to Chain Caul Road, Preston, that led to the return of regular freight traffic at the docks to support an industry which has been part of the area since the late 1920s.

The partnership resulted in the diversion of many thousands of tonnes of bitumen a year from road tankers to rail, initially travelling between Lindsey Oil Refinery in Lincolnshire and Preston, but more recently from Haverton Hill, Teesside.

The additional income was a welcome but unexpected contribution to the upkeep and maintenance of the railway and its fleet of historic locomotives, as the movement of bitumen by rail had ceased nine years before RSR moved to Preston.

In November 2024 and 20 years after it began, the freight contract came to an end when Total Energies switched to transporting incoming bitumen by road instead of rail due to a reduction in the volume being processed at the Tar Refinery at Preston Docks (as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 326), and so there has never been a more important time for the volunteers involved at the Ribble Steam Railway to focus on the future.



Piece of the past: The water column from St Pancras station, containing about 1200 gallons, now supplying locomotives steaming along the Ribble Steam Railway.

The final empty tankers ran over the RSR on January 20, arriving from Haverton that morning before heading to Eastriggs MOD.

Improving facilities

Attention has already been turned to expanding the appeal to visitors and making the RSR a better visitor attraction.

The addition of Mr Ribble's play area at the compact site keeps young visitors entertained while they wait to board steam and diesel-hauled trains. It was the line's first and only female director, Alison Pinch, who came up with the idea; similarly, the busy tearoom which proudly bears her name. Catering for cream teas on a special carriage at events is another success.

Taking time off from preparing bacon sandwiches with her team to satisfy the morning throng attending the autumn steam gala when I visited in September 2024, the final event of the season before the Santa specials, Alison described her time with the railway which began a decade ago

"I have been interested in railways from an early age. I used to go trainspotting with my



Welcome destination: The entrance to the Ribble Steam Railway.

brother," she said. She grew up in Lancaster but lived all her adult life in a small village just outside Carnforth, a market town with a history revolving around the railway, and the chosen location for David Lean's 1945 film Brief Encounter.

Alison's partner, Alan, a current steam engine driver at Ribble Steam Railway, introduced her to the heritage line. "This place is marvellous," she continued. "One of my initial jobs



Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 2680 of 1942 *Courageous* which is now out-of-ticket. Supplied new to the Birchenwood Gas & Coke Co works near Stoke-on-Trent where it worked until its closure in May 1973, it was initially purchased for preservation by the late Sir William McAlpine and moved to Market Overton, but little work was done on it, so it was sold again, moving to the North Norfolk Railway, where it was dismantled for an overhaul that never took place. No. 2680's owner, who acquired it in February 2009, rebuilt it from a condition akin to that of an ex-Barry wreck to a pristine working machine within five years. Seven examples of the Bagnall standard 16in class were based on the Preston Corporation system at Albert Edward Dock, which at the height of operations in the 1950s comprised 26 miles of track, the Ribble Steam Railway being the last-surviving part. Originally named *Birchenwood*, it now has the identity of one of the dock's fleet, only one of which survives: No. 2682 *Princess* at the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway.

was to design and get the playground built because not everybody who comes to heritage railways are interested in trains. We try to be a family-orientated business."

The railway's museum building also has a large space upstairs which is available to hire for events, further expanding the railway's offer and contributing to the funds preserved railways greatly rely on.

The forward-thinking of the trustees of the Southport Locomotive and Transport Museum Society, which was formed in the 1970s, led to the decision to move lock, stock and barrel, meaning that the RSR came to be. The original museum was established in the then derelict Southport Steam Shed – an ex-Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway structure – following negotiations with BR for a lease on the site and fundraising activities to support the scheme. It opened in 1974 showcasing railway artefacts and continued running train rides on the short demonstration line for more than 20 years.

In the 1980s the organisation purchased the site from BR, enabling it to eventually expand its facilities prior to the move in the Millennium to Chain Caul Road.

Dave Watkins, a director and chairman at the RSR, fondly recalls the last open day at Steamport, which featured the two preserved Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 'Pug' 0-4-0STs and was a "truly fitting closing ceremony." The location of the 1½-mile-long railway at Preston Docks, crossing the swing bridge at the entrance to the main dock, also offered greater potential to support freight traffic. A workshop and running shed have been built here and, following the development of a museum which is crammed full of carriages and locomotives, each with an important place in history and a story or two to tell, the railway opened for business on its new site on September 17, 2005.

Cross-section of history

The RSR is an important showcase of railway history: among the impressive collection of 50 locomotives are a few stars, including Britain's oldest working standard gauge locomotive, Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20.

Built by Sharp Stewart & Co in 1863, from 1870 it was to be found working at Barrow Haematite Steel Co, in Barrow, and is now owned



Marvellous makeover: Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1969 of 1929 *JN Derbyshire* sporting its original Tudor Purple livery.



Borrows 0-4-0WT No. 48 of 1906 *The King*.



Overhaul projects, including freshly painted Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 1935 of 1937 *Hornet*, in the RSR workshops.



Furness Railway Trust chairman Tim Owen with GWR 4-6-0 No. 4979 *Wootton Hall*. Outshopped from Swindon in February 1930, it was first allocated to Plymouth Laira shed, withdrawn by BR in December 1963, and acquired by Woodham Brothers for scrap in June 1964. It was sold to Fleetwood Locomotive Centre in Lancashire and left as the 179th departure from Barry scrapyard in October 1986. In 1994 it was purchased by the Furness Railway Trust and first stored at Lytham Motive Power Museum. Once restored, No. 4979 will become the largest engine to operate at the Ribble Steam Railway.



Regal transport: The Furness Railway Trust's Great Eastern Railway Royal Saloon No 5.

by the Furness Railway Trust (FRT), which is conveniently also based onsite with the RSR.

FRT chairman and RSR director Tim Owen said: "Furness No. 20 was in the playground of a school in Barrow-in-Furness for 23 years and my wife played on it as a lass – as did a generation of Barrow schoolchildren."

Tim's lifelong interest in trains also began in childhood. "I ended up working for BR as an accountant. My enjoyment of railways was blended with working as an accountant with BR," he added. Retirement has given him the opportunity to spend more time playing with trains.

Touring the FRT workshop, there are plenty of projects keeping the volunteers occupied, among them the overhaul of GWR 4900 Class 4-6-0 No. 4979 *Wootton Hall*, built in Swindon in 1930.

Further works-in-progress wait patiently in the neighbouring Ribble Steam Railway workshop. Peckett & Sons Works 0-4-0ST No. 1935 *Hornet*, owned by Dave Watkins, is currently undergoing restoration to run for the first time in preservation, hopefully making its operational debut in 2025. Industrial railways held a particular interest for Dave, who has been with the railway ever since becoming a volunteer when it was based at Southport.

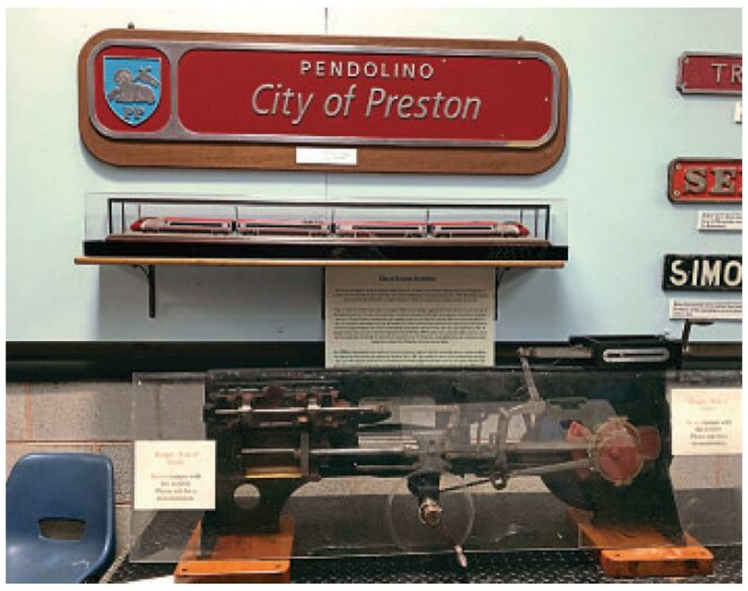
It is down to the railway's volunteer workforce that it continues to offer exceptional events and exhibits to entertain and educate. In the museum, visitors can literally step back in time and see how correspondence was sorted at speed on the Royal Mail Travelling Post Office, before exploring the many forms of bygone transportation carrying familiar goods from bananas to washing powder.

Railway rarities

One of the most unusual artefacts is a 1940s horsebox, one of the few surviving examples



Dave Watkins with BR Class 03 D2148 of 1960.



Some of the museum exhibits on display.

built and latterly used as a pay coach for the Manchester Ship Canal company's employees at Salford Docks.

Currently residing locomotives include E Borrows & Sons 0-4-0WT No. 48 *The King* of 1906, one of only three steam locomotives from this firm still in existence, with a second – No. 53 *Windle* of 1909 – currently under overhaul in the main workshop area.

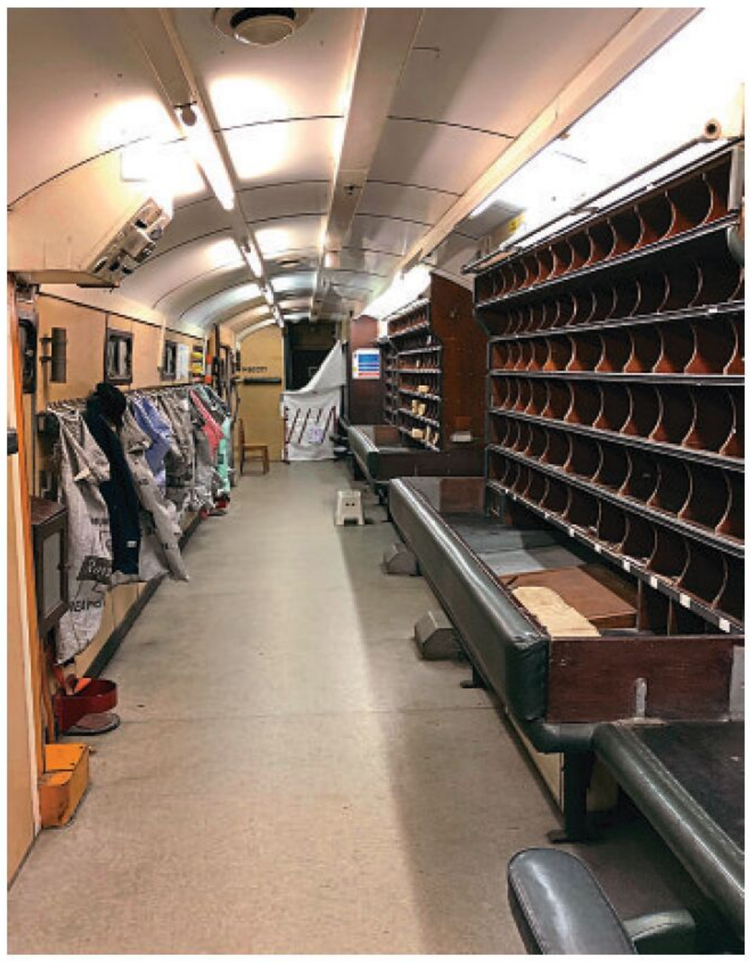
Standing out from the other locomotives in the fleet, Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1969 of 1929 *JN Derbyshire* has recently been restored and turned out in its original Tudor Violet livery, though is currently elsewhere in the region, having moved to the East Lancashire Railway.

"We are the custodians of these railway artefacts because we want them to be there for the next generation to enjoy, just like we have," said Tim.

For more details about the Ribble Steam Railway, visit https://ribblesteam.org.uk HR



The Travelling Royal Mail Post Office in the museum.



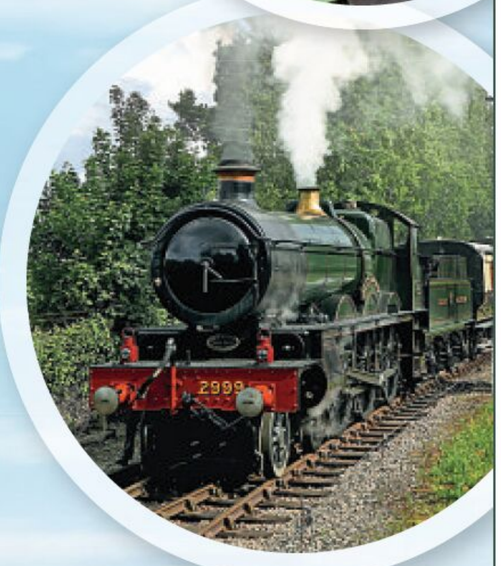
Inside the Travelling Royal Mail Post Office where mail would be sorted en route.

DIDCOT
RAILWAY CENTRE

Make tracks for a great day out

Explore this 21-acre living museum and unearth almost two centuries of railway history. Stroll through the original 1932 Engine Shed and see magnificent preserved locomotives – you can even climb onto the footplates of some!

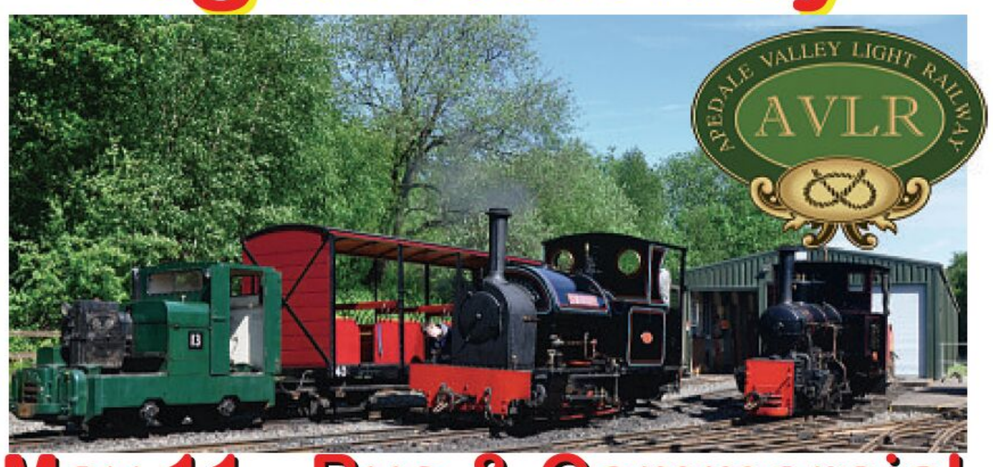






01235 817 200 | didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk
info@didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk

Apedale Valley Light Railway



May 11 - Bus & Commercial vehicles rally
August 2 & 3 - Full Steam for Forces weekend
September 13 & 14 - AVLR15 railway gala

Steam trains every Saturday, Bank Holiday & some Sundays April to October

www.avlr.org.uk

Apedale Community Country Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme. Staffs ST5 7LB

STATFOLD
COUNTRY PARK

20 YEARS OF STATFOLD BARN RAILWAY

ENTHUSIAST WEEKEND
STATFOLD COUNTRY PARK
SBR
SPECTACLE OF STEAM
ESTABLISHED 2005

10% DISCOUNT
BOOK ONLINE
HERITAGEMAG325

01827 830389
INFO@STATFOLD.COM
WWW.STATFOLD.COM
ASHBY ROAD, TAMWORTH

SCAN ME TO BOOK

NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY
MINIATURE RAILWAY
ROUNDHOUSE MUSEUM
TRADERS & EXHIBITORS
FAMILY FUN ACTIVITIES
FREE LOCAL SHUTTLE BUS



A highlight of the year for the Mid-Hants Railway will be the return to service of its flagship Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific*. A series of launch events are planned to run from March 20-23, with the locomotive also taking a starring role at the spring steam gala there a month later. MATT ALLEN/MHR

2025 EVENTS BY RAILWAY

From gala events to family fun days, find out what's happening this year at your local heritage railway with our comprehensive annual events listing.

Abbey Pumping Station
February 23 Steam Toys in Action
April 5 Model Railway Show
May 11 Emergency Services Day
June 7 Teddy Bears' Picnic
July 5 Meccano Day
August 17 Summer Family Fun Day
October 4 Model Show
November 30 Christmas Steam Day

Apedale Valley Light Railway
April 12 New Members' Day
April 19-21 Easter Egg Hunt
April 27 Classic Car Rally
May 11 Bus and Classic Commercial Vehicles Rally
June 14/15 Teddy Bears' Picnic
August 2/3 Full Steam for Forces
August 9/10 Teddy Bears' Picnic
August 23/24 Land Rover Rally
August 25 Classic Car Rally
September 13/14 15th Anniversary Gala
October 25/26 Halloween Trains

Bala Lake Railway
March 1 St David's Day
April 18-21 Easter Egg Hunt
July 12 Teddies Grand Day Out
July 26 Alice the Welsh Engine
August 23-25 Steam Gala
September 20/21 Model Railway Show
October 30/31 Halloween Trains

Barnards Miniature Railway
April 19/20 Easter Express
May 18 Small Engines Day
July 13 Visiting Engines Day
September 20/21 15th Anniversary Weekend

Battlefield Line
April 18-21 Easter Eggspress
May 4/5 Bosworth Bikefest
July 13 Transport Gala
July 25-27 Rails & Ales
August 9/10 Models Weekend
August 30/31 Rail 200 celebrations
October 11/12 Sausage & Cider Festival
December 30-January 1 Mince Pie Trains

Bluebell Railway
March 14-16 Branch Line Gala
June 28/29 Model Railway Weekend
July 19/20 Railway at War (VE Day 80th Anniversary)
August 8-10 65th Anniversary Celebrations
August 16/17 Music Festival
September 5-7 Diesel Gala
September 19-21 Beer Festival
October 17-19 Giants of Steam

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
March 1/2 Paddington Visits
May 30-June 1 Diesel Gala
June 7/8 Teddy Bears' Picnic
August 8-10 Steam Gala
December 30/31 & January 2/3, 2026 Black Bun Specials

Bodmin Railway
April 26/27 Spring Steam Gala
May 24/24 Branch Line Gala
September 13/14 Diesel Gala
December 29 Winter Steam Up

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
May 4 Bluebells in the Woods
June 1 50th Anniversary Gala
July 6 Classic Car Rally
July 12/13 Kent Downs Wood Fair
August 3 Model Railway Show
September 7 Farming & Agricultural Machine Show
October 5 End of Season Gala

Bressingham Steam Gardens
April 18-21 Easter Egg Hunt
April 20/21 *Martello*'s 150th Birthday
April 27 O Gauge Model Railway Show
May 3-5 Steam Gala
May 11 1940s Day
June 14/15 Commercial Vehicle Rally
July 5/6 Bressingham Bricks
July 12/13 Portable Steam Weekend
July 26/27 Fire Engine Rally
August 2/3 TUGs Weekend
August 9/10 Steam in Miniature

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
February 23 Paddington Visits
April 18-20 Day Out with Thomas
May 5 Dinosaur Day
May 25/26 Day Out with Thomas
June 15 Ridgeway Run
July 5/6 Day Out with Thomas
July 13 SHOWBUS
July 27 Emergency Services Day
August 9/10 Day Out with Thomas
September 21 Bluey Visits
October 11/12 Day Out with Thomas

Bure Valley Railway
February 15-23 Teddy Bear Express
April 5-21 Easter Eggspress
May 5 Dogs Day Out
June 7/8 35th Anniversary Gala

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
April 4-6 Diesel Gala
October 31-November 2 Steam Gala

Corris Railway
May 24 Railway 200 Gala
August 23/24 Model Railway Exhibition

Crich Tramway Village
April 18-21 Easter Eggstra
May 4/5 Seaside Fun
July 6 Classic Motorcycle Rally
July 19 Dinosaur Day
August 24/25 Teddy Bears' Picnic
September 6/7 Steampunk Weekend
September 13/14 Tram Gala
October 27-31 Halloween Fun

East Anglian Railway Museum
February 27-March 1 Beer Festival
April 12 Essex Electrics Exhibition
May 25/26 Transport Extravaganza
June 15 Steampunk Shenanigans
July 13 Rail 200 & 175th Anniversary Event
August 10 Small Trains Day

East Lancashire Railway
February 20 Travel to Wonderland
March 14-16 Legends of Steam Gala
April 10 Dinosaur Day
April 26/27 West Country Weekend
May 3-5 Day Out With Thomas
May 24/25 Vintage Vibes
May 28 Dinosaur Day
May 30 Villain Academy
July 3-6 Summer Diesel Gala
August 2/3 Day Out with Thomas
August 8 Travel to Wonderland

August 15 Villain Academy
August 21/22 Peppa Pig Visits
September 20 Bluey Visits
October 4/5 Day Out with Thomas
October 17-19 Autumn Steam Gala
November 8/9 DMU Gala

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway

April 11/12 Twin Peaks Diesel Gala
May 11 Vintage Road & Rail Rally
June 13-15 1940s Weekend

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway

June 27-29 The Hunslet Gala

Epping Ongar Railway

February 23 Winter Bus Rally
April 16, 19-21 Easter Egg Hunt
April 25-27 Spring Diesel Gala
May 3/4 160th Anniversary Weekend
June 14/15 Wartime & Rationing Weekend
July 6 Classic Car & Motorcycle Rally
July 25-27 Beer & Cider Festival
August 16/17 Vintage Transport & Traction Engine Rally
September 7 Autumn Bus Rally
September 19-21 Southern Giants Steam Gala
October 25/26, 29-31 Halloween services

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways

April 26/27 'The Snowdonian'
May 3/4 Ffestiniog Railway Society AGM
May 10 Caernarfon Food Festival
May 17/18 Model Railway Workshop
June 13-15 Rail-Ale @ Waunfawr
June 20-22 Ffestiniog Railway Society 70th Anniversary Weekend
September 13 Welsh Highland Railway Society AGM
September 27 Trailffest
October 3-5 Bygones Weekend

Foxfield Railway

April 6 Vintage Vehicle & Classic Car Rally
April 20 Teddy Bear's Picnic
May 17/18 War Wheels
May 31/June 1 Beer Festival & Traction Engine Rally
July 6 Animal Charity Day
August 9/10 Model Railway Exhibition & Miniature Mayhem
August 17 Teddy Bear's Picnic
August 23 Evening Beerex
October 5 Vintage Vehicle & Classic Car Rally

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway

May 24-26 Cotswold Festival of Steam
June 13-15 Beer Festival
July 25-27 Diesel Gala
September 27/28 Autumn Showcase

Great Central Railway

February 15-16 Extinct Express
March 1/2 Spring Steam Weekend
March 8 Paddington Bear Visits
March 23 Railwayana Swapmeet
April 5/6 Reunification Open Weekend
April 12 Peter Rabbit Visits
April 18 Good(s) Friday
April 19-21 Road Rail Steam
April 25-27 Spring Diesel Gala
May 11 Paddington Bear Visits
May 17/18 Heritage Bus Rally
May 23 Diesel Running Day
May 31-June 1 1940s Weekend
June 13 Diesel Running Day
June 14 Will Hay Day
June 21 Centenary of *Sir Lamiel*
June 22 Railwayana Swapmeet
July 5/6 Railway 200 Open Weekend
July 18 Railcar Running Day
August 2/3 Portable Railway Weekend & Extinct Express
August 8 Diesel Running Day
August 16/17 Railways at Work
August 24 The Gruffalo Visits
September 4-6 Autumn Diesel Gala
September 7 Mixed Traffic Day
September 13/14 Extinct Express
September 14 Railwayana Swapmeet
September 18-21 Beer, Cider & Gin Festivl
October 2-5 Autumn Steam Gala
October 25/26 Open Weekend
November 5 Bonfire Night
November 9 Remembrance Sunday
November 15/16 The Last Hurrah
December 27-30 Betwixmas Steam
December 31 The Nightrider

Groudle Glen Railway

April 20/21 Easter Egg Hunt
May 11 Diesel & Electric Day
August 10 Clifftop Concerts
September 14 Steam Gala
October 25/26 Hop Tu Naa Halloween Trains
December 26 Mince Pie Trains

Gwili Railway

March 15/16 '6 for 60' Gala

Isle of Man Railways

July 22-27 Transport Festival

Isle of Wight Steam Railway

February 20-23 Winter Gala and Dark Ales Festival
April 6-21 The Great Railway Easter Event
May 3-5 Real Ale Festival
May 18 Festival of Transport
May 25-30 Half Term Beside the Sea
June 14/15 Gin Festival
July 5/6 1940s Weekend
July 19 Real Ale Trail
July 26 Steam Railway Proms
August 22-25 50th Island Steam Fair
September 6/7 Cider Festival
October 11/12 Beer & Steam
October 19-31 Wizard Week

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

March 20-23 Steam Gala
May 3-5 Vintage Weekend
May 17/18 1940s Weekend
June 18-22 Diesel Gala
July 19-September 7 The Railway Children
October 16-19 Beer & Music Festival
October 27-31 Railway 200 Celebrations

Kent & East Sussex Railway

April 5/6 Bodiam 25th Anniversary Celebrations
April 5-21 Easter Bunny Trains
April 12 Land Rover Rally & Morning Birdwatching Experience
April 13 Green Fun Day
April 26/27 Midgets of Steam Gala
May 4 Star Wars Sunday
May 13 Morning Birdwatching Experience
May 17/18 1940s Weekend
June 6/7 Beer Festival

Sir Nigel Gresley and *Bahamas* to visit Moorsline

LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* and LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas* will complete a trio of visitors to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway is the first part of the season.

Following the visit of NER petrol-electric autocar No. 1310 during February 15-23, as reported in the last issue of *Heritage Railway*, *Sir Nigel Gresley* will make a return visit on March 22-25 and 27-30 hauling a selection of special services between Pickering and Grosmont. Tearooms at both stations will be open to enjoy a selection of refreshments while onboard passengers will be able to enjoy the buffet bar.

NYMR's head of mechanical engineering, Nick Simpson, said: "*Sir Nigel Gresley* is not just a locomotive – it's a masterpiece of engineering that represents an era of innovation and national pride. We are delighted to have this iconic engine back at the NYMR, allowing visitors to witness its power firsthand as part of our Railway 200 celebrations."

These celebrations will also include the 200 Trail (www.nymr.co.uk/the-200-trail), which starts on March 31 when the main season also begins, and Railway 200 Special Pullman Dining services during 2025. To book tickets for the A4's trips, visit //www.nymr.co.uk/gresley

From April 5-13, *Bahamas* will visit for the first time to haul standard services. It will be the first appearance of a Jubilee on the line since 1983, when No. 45690 *Leander* visited.

Afterwards, *Bahamas* will attend the Severn Valley Railway's April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala.



LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* rounds Darnholm bend on its previous visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in 2023. JOHN POTTER/NYMR



The Vintage Carriage Trust's Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST No. 1210 *Sir Berkley* will visit the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway this April, where it will operate alongside Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2315 *Clyde* (formerly *Lady Ingrid*), which has been sold by its previous owner and is shortly to leave the Spa Valley Railway where it has been resident. It is also hoped that the MSLR's extension – which will double the current length of operating line – will open during the summer pending approval of the Transport and Works Act order. IAN SMITH/VCT



It's a distinctively Midland affair for the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's spring steam gala. Previously announced visitor BR(M) 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305 will be joined by Fowler 3F 'Jinty' No. 16440, resplendent in its lined LMS crimson lake colours. Having returned to steam in 2024, its appearance will mark the first visit away from its Midland Railway – Butterley base since overhaul and will look right at home among the many other locomotives at Haworth MPD that were once also owned by the LMS. ROB BATTY/KWVR

June 21/22 Traction Engine Rally
June 28 Steampunk Saturday
July 18-20 Diesel Gala
August 10 Bus Rally
August 24 Alvis Car Rally
September 6/7 Country Fair
September 21 Stationary Engines
October 11/12 Austin Counties Car Rally
October 25-31 Magic Express
October 31 Fright Night Train
November 29 Quiet Train
December 29-31 Steam Into the New Year

Lappa Valley Railway

March 29/30 Original Engine Weekend
June 14/15 Rail 200 Gala
June 28/29 Newlyn Downs Branch Line 30th Anniversary
October 31/November 1 Fireworks Spectacular

Leighton Buzzard Railway

April 20/21 Easter Egg Hunt
May 4/5 Teddy Bears' Picnic
May 25 Peppa Pig Visits
May 26 Fun Day
May 31/June 1 Diesel Gala
June 22 Vintage Vehicles Day
July 5/6 Beer Festival
July 20 Dinosaurs Day
August 9 Jazz on the Sand
August 24/25 Pirates Weekend
August 31 Bluey Visits
September 6/7 Gala Weekend
October 26, 30/31 Halloween Trains

Llangollen Railway

April 11-13 Branch Line Gala
June 7/8 Diesel Weekend
July 5/6 Classic Transport Weekend
August 2/3 1960s Weekend
September 12-14 50th Anniversary Weekend
October 4/5 Heritage Railcar Weekend
October 31 Halloween Trains
November 1 Ride the Rocket
November 9 Remembrance Train

Mid-Hants Railway

February 15-23 Magic of Locomotion
March 20-23 *Canadian Pacific* Launch
April 17-21 Easter Bunny Train
April 25-27 Spring Steam Gala
May 24-June 1 Day Out with Thomas
June 14/15 Retro Wheels & Rails
July 11-13 Diesel Gala
August 3-10 Day Out with Thomas
September 13/14 Engineering Open Weekend
October 3-5 Autumn Steam Gala
October 25-November 2 Wizard Week

Mid-Norfolk Railway

March 1 Model Railway Show
March 22/23 30th Anniversary
May 11 Vintage Bus Rally
May 24-26 Spring Diesel Gala
May 29 Dinosaur Express
June 27-29 Steam Gala
August 2/3 1940s Weekend
August 13 Dinosaur Express
August 22-25 Beer, Music & Food Festival

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway

April 20/21 Easter Bunny Visits
May 25/26 1940s Weekend
June 1 Model Railway Exhibition
June 29 Vintage Bus Day
July 6 Land Rover Rally
August 24/25 Model Mania
August 31 Everything Goes Gala

Middleton Railway

April 5 Community Day
April 19-21 Easter Weekend
May 3-5 Teddy Bears Picnic
June 1 Classic Car Rally
June 14/15 Model Railway Exhibition
July 5/6 Steampunk Market
July 19 *Sweet Pea*'s 90th Birthday
August 2/3 Yorkshire Food & Ales Festival
August 16 Children's Day
September 6/7 Rail200 Gala
September 13/14 Heritage Weekend
September 28 Star Rails 2025

Midland Railway – Butterley

February 22 Paw Patrol Visits
April 5/6 TUGS Weekend
April 18-24 Easter Egg Hunt

Mizens Railway

April 20 Easter Sunday Trains
May 11 Visiting Engines Day

Moors Valley Railway

June 14/15 Grand Summer Gala

Nene Valley Railway

February 15/16 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
February 22-27, March 1-11 Best of British with *Flying Scotsman*
March 15/16 Best of British with *Britannia*
March 22/23 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
April 26/27 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
June 28/29 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
July 26/27 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
August 30/31 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
September 12/13 Rail 200 Gala
September 27/28 Thomas' Branch Line Weekend



Bressingham Steam Gardens & Museum will celebrate the 150th birthday of its ex-LBSCR A1X 'Terrier' No. 662 *Martello* this spring with rides behind the 0-6-0T in a brake van over its demonstration line on April 20/21. PAUL LAWRENCE



The Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway will host its first diesel gala in three years this April, with the East Lancashire Railway's Class 45 No. 45108 the first visitor confirmed as appearing. Also set to visit will be main line-registered Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer,* courtesy of Hanson & Hall. Further guests are also planned, to be joined by resident Class 37 No. 37227 throughout. Driver experience courses are also being offered aboard some of the locomotives on dates before the event. KEVIN DELANEY/C&PRR



The Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a gala event during the first bank holiday weekend of May. Newly-overhauled 0-4-2 No. 11 *Bonnie Dundee* (pictured) will work its first trains in 20 years, while Pacific No.1 *Green Goddess* will visit from the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway in Kent for the occasion. RER

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
February 15-23 Petrol-Electric Autocar Trips
March 22-30 *Sir Nigel Gresley* Excursions
April 5-8, 10-13 *Bahamas* Excursions
June 12-15 Diesel Gala
September 12-21 Heritage Open Days
September 25-28 Steam Gala
October 25-November 2 Ghost trains

Peak Rail
February 15 The Night Shift
April 11/12 Twin Peaks Diesel Gala
May 31/June 1 Rail & Road Steam & Vintage Gala
June 15 Bus & Train Festival
July 5/6 1940s Weekend
August 9/10 Steam Gala
September 20/21 Mixed Traffic Gala
October 5 Bus & Train Festival
December 26 Mince Pie specials

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
May 3-5 150th Anniversary Steam Gala

Richmond Light Railway
August 9 Charity Steam Fair

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
May 10/11 Rail 200 Spring Gala
June 15 Beer Festival
July 26 New Romney Country Fayre
October 18/19 Rail 200 Autumn Gala

Seaton Tramway
February 14 Twilight Tram
February 21 Story Tram
March 23 Birdwatching Tram
April 18-21 Easter Egg-tram-aganza

Severn Valley Railway
April 5/6 Open House Weekend
April 18-21 Spring Steam Gala
May 3/4 Model Railway Weekend
May 15-18 Spring Diesel Festival
June 7/8, 14/15 1940s Weekend
July 19 Day of Dance
July 26/27 60th Anniversary Celebrations
August 2/3 Brick Weekend
August 9/10 Vintage Transport Extravaganza
August 16 Singin' on the Train
August 23/24 Art & Craft Fayre
September 18-21 Autumn Steam Gala
October 2-5 Autumn Diesel Gala
October 18/19 O Gauge Get Together
October 25/26 Christmas Gift Fayre
October 30-November 1 Ghost trains

Spa Valley Railway
February 22 Bluey Visits
March 15 The Gruffalo Visits
April 26/27 Day Out with Thomas
May 3-4 Day Out with Thomas
June 13-15 Cuckoo Line Gala
July 5/6 40th Anniversary of Closure
July 19/20 Dinosaur Express
August 1-3 Summer Diesel Gala
September 20/21 Model Railway Weekend
October 16-19 Beer & Cider Festival

Statfold Country Park
February 15 Statbus at Night
March 8/9 Spectacle of Steam
March 22/23 Day Out with Thomas
April 12-14 Model Railway Exhibition
May 10/11 Steam in Miniature
June 7/8 Summer Spectacle of Steam
June 28/29 Fire & Rescue Show
July 19/20 1940s Weekend
August 16/17 Day Out with Thomas
August 22-24 The Big Statfold Weekender
September 13/14 Road, Rail & Ale Festival
September 27/28 Day Out with Thomas

Swanage Railway
February 22/23 Community Weekend
March 28-30 Spring Steam Gala
May 9-11 Diesel Gala
June 27-29 Roads to Rail Steam Rally
July 12/13 Corfe Castle Food & Drink Festival
July 26-August 2 Swanage Carnival
September 5-7 Classic & Steam Vehicle Show
September 12-14 Autumn Steam Gala

Talyllyn Railway
April 18 Stations at Stations
April 20 Dinosaur Easter Egg Hunt
May 10/11 Awdry's Railway Series 80th Anniversary Celebration
May 29 Dragons Day
July 4-6 Beer Festival
July 5/6 Anything Goes Gala
July 18-20 Awdry Extravaganza 5
August 5 Floral Train
August 8-10 Beer Festival
August 16 Race the Train
August 19 Young Members Group Day
August 24 Land Rover Rally
September 13/14 Heritage Weekend
October 30/31 Steam 'n' Scream
December 6 Tinsel & Turkey
December 13 Tinsel & Turkey
December 20 Carol Train

Tanfield Railway
March 30 Freight Train Day
April 18-21 Easter Eggstravaganza
April 27 Freight Train Day
May 3/4, 10/11, 17/18, 24-26 Great North Festival of Railways
June 20-22 Legends of Industry Gala
June 29 Freight Train Day
September 20/21 Diesel Pioneers Gala
September 28 Freight Train Day
October 18/19 Season Finale Gala

Volks Electric Railway
May 17 Shoreham-Brighton Line opening commemoration
June 22 Late evening running
July 27 Late evening running
September 21 VER Association 30th Anniversary

West Somerset Railway
May 2-5 Spring Steam Spectacular
June 5-8 Summer Diesel Festival
September 20/21 1940s Weekend
October 17-19 Autumn Steam Weekend

Yeovil Railway Centre
May 24/25 Model Railway Weekend
July 13 Steampunk & Classic Cars
July 26/27 Tractor Rally
September 27/28 Railway 200 Weekend

HR

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.

RH&DR

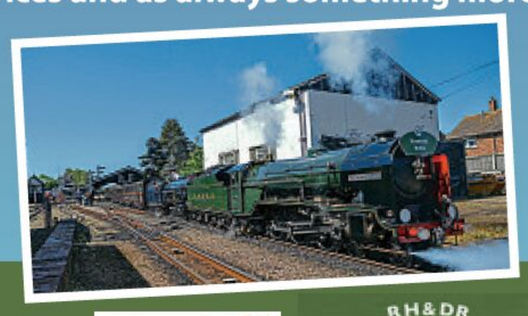
Spring Gala

- Make sure you have the date in your diary?

Saturday & Sunday 10th & 11th May, 2025

Advance weekend tickets available mid- February
Non-stop and multiple headed services and as always something more

BUY TICKETS NOW
SCAN FOR DETAILS
FROM OUR ONLINE SHOP



@rhdr @rhanddr @rhdr1927

www.rhdr.org.uk

200 Years of Train Travel since 1825

RH&DR
ROMNEY, HYTHE & DYMCHURCH RAILWAY

RIBBLE STEAM
RAILWAY AND MUSEUM

Hop aboard a Steam Train and discover the history of Preston's Docks and Railway...

With Ribble Steam Railway's fascinating working and static exhibits, the museum is a proud reminder of what makes Preston and Lancashire the vibrant place it is today.

Discover the history of Preston's Docks and the stories of the first electric trains, then hop aboard a steam train and travel the railway's 1¼ mile dock and riverside line. Uncover a hidden part of the city as the line passes Preston Marina and ventures over its impressive swing bridge.

Half Term - Pirates and Princess
Wed. 19th & Sat 22nd February



Contact us on 01772 728800 or visit www.ribblesteam.org.uk



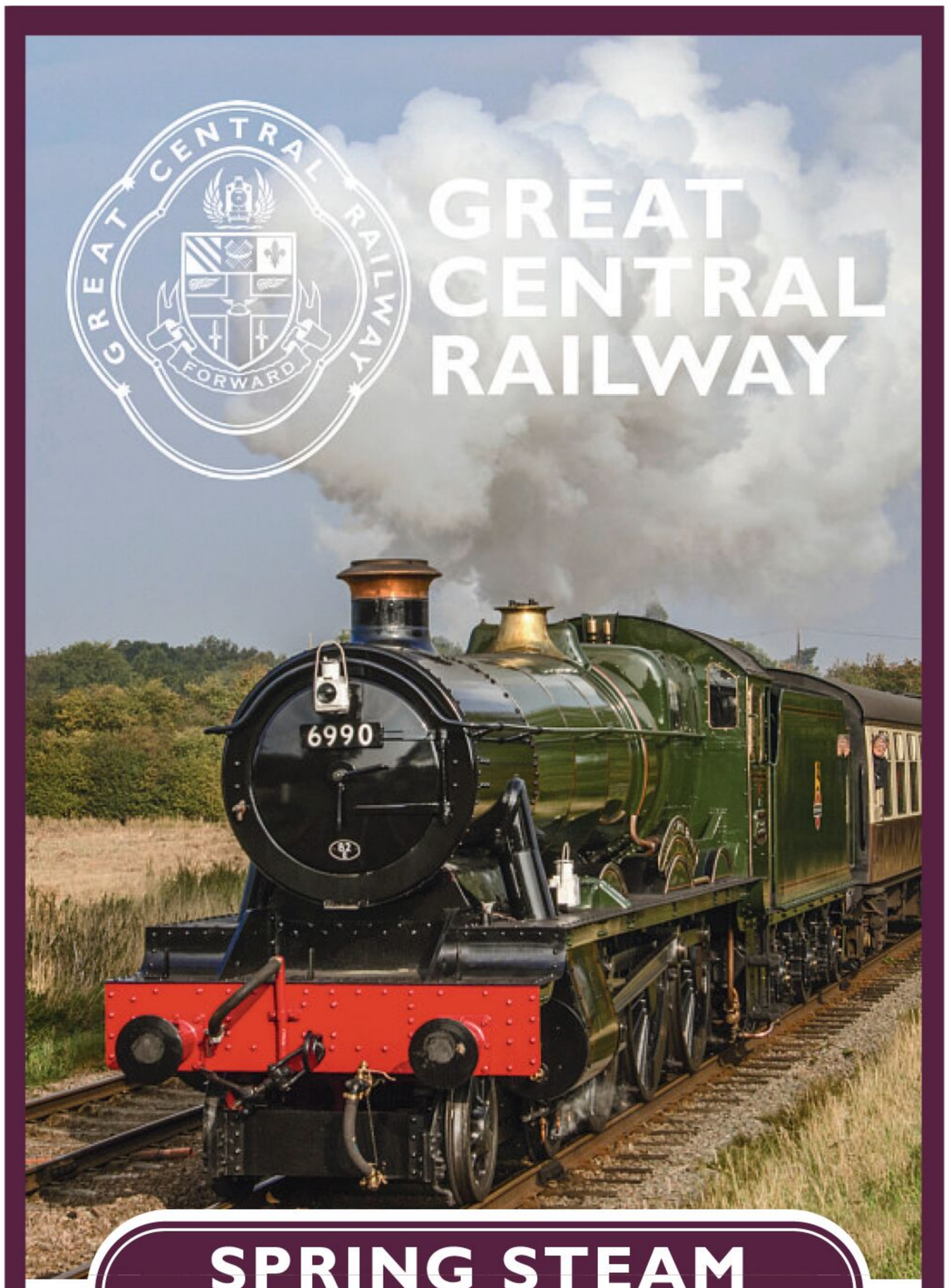
Steam, Classic & Country Fair:	17th & 18th May
HCVS Ridgeway Run:	15th June
SHOWBUS:	13th July
Auto Fest:	25th August
Moving the Mail:	14th September



Station Road
Quainton
Nr Aylesbury
HP22 4BY



For more details and booking visit:
www.bucksrailcentre.org



SPRING STEAM WEEKEND

1-2 March 2025

Join us for a fantastic weekend of vintage train travel at the UK's only dual track, heritage railway including:

The Preserved GCR Home Fleet

An Intensive Passenger Steam Timetable

Footplate Visits

Demonstration Goods Trains

Iris the GCR Diesel Railcar

Station cafes and Refreshment Rooms

A great day out for all the family

DISCOVER MORE & BOOK

200 Years of Train Travel since 1825

Website gcrailway.co.uk

Booking Office 01509 632 323

Great Central Road, Loughborough LE11 1RW

Celebrating Railway 200

CELEBRATIONS for both Railway 200 and the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary are taking place around the UK, involving main line operators, heritage lines, museums and local communities. Here is a preview of some of those happening in the next few months. If you're planning an event, exhibition, talk, or other way of celebrating the anniversary and would like it included in our listings, please email Owen Hayward at ohayward@mortons.co.uk with the details.

➜ For a full list of events taking place in 2025, visit railway200.co.uk and sdr200.co.uk

Headline events

August 1-3 – Alstom presents: The Greatest Gathering Litchurch Lane Works, Derby.
September 26-28 *Locomotion No. 1* on the Stockton & Darlington route.
March-September – Stockton & Darlington Railway Bicentenary Celebrations.

Extended celebrations

National Railway Museum and Locomotion Shildon – Activities, displays and events throughout the year including the reopening of Station Hall in York, throughout 2025.
Hopetown Darlington – Nine-month festival celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Enjoy immersive art installations and augmented reality digital games, see treasured artworks in the region for the first time, and join thousands of others for awe-inspiring outdoor events and see some of the world's favourite locomotives. March 29-November 30.

International events

May 3/4 – Maldegem-Eeklo Steam Railway (Belgium) Maldegem Steam Festival.

Heritage railways, museums and works

February 15 – Peak Rail
The Night Shift.
February 20-23 – Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Winter Gala & Dark Ales Festival.
February 25 – Mid-Hants Railway
Railway 200 Poetry and Prose.
February 28-March 29 – Severn Valley Railway
Boogie Lights Express.
March 8/9 – Statfold Country Park
Spectacle of Steam.
March 14-16 Heritage railways, museums and works
February 15 – Peak Rail
The Night Shift.
February 20-23 – Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Winter Gala & Dark Ales Festival.
February 25 – Mid-Hants Railway
Railway 200 Poetry and Prose.
February 28-March 29 – Severn Valley Railway
Boogie Lights Express.
Date??? xxxx – East Lancashire Railway
Legends of Steam gala.
March 20-23 – Mid-Hants Railway
Launch of 35005 *Canadian Pacific*.
April 12 – *Hengist* Locomotive Works Open Day
CTL Seal Ltd, Sheffield.
April 20/21 – Yeovil Railway Centre
Railway 200 Easter Weekend.

Dates throughout the year:

Heritage Open Days
Churnet Valley Railway
The Railway Children Theatre Show
Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Have a Go days
M Shed, Bristol
Riverside Depot tours
Seaton Tramway
Meet the Volunteers & 25th Anniversary
STEAM – Museum of the Great Western Railway, Swindon

Main line

February 13 – Rye Station 174th anniversary
Rye, East Sussex.
March 29 – Railtour: 'The Shap Mountaineer' with 45596 *Bahamas* (Vintage Trains).
Birmingham New Street, Carlisle, and return.
May 10/11 – Micheldever Station 185th anniversary. Micheldever Station, Winchester.

Talks

February 27 – Northumberland Line: Delivering sustainable transport (Simon Middleton, Tony Lloyd), Institution of Civil Engineers, London.
March 6 – Locomotion and the Stockton & Darlington Railway (Dr Michael Bailey MBE)
Museum of Bath at Work, Bath
March 11 – Railway 200 at Aston University launch event (Dr David Turner), Aston University, Birmingham.
March 15 – Thomas Brassey: The greatest railway builder in the world (John Violet), Llangollen Station, Denbighshire.
March 27 – 200 Years of Britain's Railways (John Parkin), Honeywood Museum, Carshalton.
April 1 – The Real Stockton & Darlington Railway (Dennis A Lovett), Enfield Drill Hall Sports Club, Enfield.
April 12 – The early days on and around the Llangollen Railway (Dave Waldren), Llangollen Station, Denbighshire.
April 12 – The Stockton & Darlington Bicentenary (Caroline Hardy, Niall Hammond), Friends Meeting House, Manchester.
April 23 - Hackworth: A Quest for Truth (Mike Norman), Shildon Railway Institute, Shildon.
April 24 – Rails to Midhurts (Bill Gage), The Novium Museum, Chichester.

Exhibitions

Until May 4 – Rambles In Lincolnshire: Lincolnshire tourism railway posters, Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre, Grimsby.
Until December 10 – East Surrey Railways
East Surrey Museum, Surrey.
January 27-February 8 – A Thousand Kisses: Kindertransport, Lowestoft Railway Station, Suffolk.
February 21-November 2 – 1825 and all that!
Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, Tywyn.
March 31-April 30 – Ashford's Railway Legacy
Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre, Kent.
April 12 – Essex Electrics, East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel & Wakes Colne.
April 26-September 7 – Smoke & Steel: the History of Scotland's Railways, Stirling Castle.
April 26-September 28 – 200 years of British Railway Locomotives, Ongar Station, Essex.
May 1-31 – The Heart of Metroland
Rickmansworth Library, Hertfordshire.
May 3-October 26 – The Bishop's Waltham Branch Line
Bishop's Waltham Museum, Hampshire.
May 26-30 – Railway 200 @ Dartmouth Town Council, The Engine House, Dartmouth.

Miscellaneous

March 8 – Guided walk: A woman's place in railway history (Tales from the Tracks)
Ashford, Kent.
March 14 – Passengers and Pioneers album launch, The Common Room, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
April 2-July 31 – Railway 200 Poetry Competition
Lordshill Library, Southampton.
April 5 – Brunel & the Great Western Railway: Kensal Green Cemetery tour, Kensington, London.
April 12 – MRX 2025 (High Wycombe & District Model Railway Society).
Cressex Community Centre, Buckinghamshire.
April 12/13 – Green Valley Railway O Gauge Open Weekend, Raynes Park, London.
April 19 – Guided walk: Pioneers Trail (Tales from the Tracks) Ashford, Kent.
April 24 – Teversal Trail Walk (Rushcliffe Ramblers)
Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire.
May 1-July 31 – FEATI University Railway Laboratory tours, Manila, Philippines.
May 3 – Heritage walk (North Eastern Railway Association)
Barnard Castle, Durham.
May 10 – Railway Bicentenary Tea Dance
Shildon Railway Institute, Shildon.
May 17 – BCIMO Family Day
Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre, Dudley.
May 25 – Hoddesdon Model Railway Club Extravaganza
Broxbourne, Hertfordshire.

Dates throughout the year:
Southport Model Railway Society Open Day, 57A Portland Street, Southport.

Vote to identify the public's favourite railway artwork

MEMBERS of the public are being encouraged to vote for their favourite pieces of railway artwork to whittle down more than 200 pieces to 20 finalists for a digital exhibition later this year.

In a unique partnership between art education charity Art UK and the Railway 200 campaign, people have until midnight on Friday, April 11 to pick their top three from a longlist of 200, which has been compiled by Art UK and its museum partners.

The longlist contains paintings, drawings, sculptures and more chosen from 94 public collections in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland dating from the 1830s to the 21st century. Among those included are works by renowned railway painters such as Terence Cuneo and Norman Wilkinson, alongside famous names such as Lucien Pissarro and JMW Turner.

Arts Minister Sir Chris Bryant MP said: "From the first puff of smoke from a locomotive, the railway and its stations have captured the imagination of artists.

"Through this wonderful array of work, Art UK has shown the true cultural and historical significance of the rail industry. I encourage everyone to vote for their favourite pieces and I hope these celebrations will help more people to be inspired by our beloved railways."

The 20 most popular artworks chosen will be announced on World Art Day on April 15, following which art lovers will then be able to vote again for an outright winner from these finalists. The world's favourite UK railway art will be announced on June 9, the birthday of rail pioneer George Stephenson.

➜ To vote, visit railway200.artuk.org







Vote online to help identify the world's favourite piece of railway artwork, with works such as these among the 200 on the longlist. NETWORK RAIL, NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM AND THE POSTAL MUSEUM

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

BRANCH LINE GALA AT THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY

200 Years of Train Travel Since 1825

BLUEBELL RAILWAY



PHOTOS KINDLY SUPPLIED BY DAVE BOWLES & THE ISLE OF WIGHT STEAM RAILWAY.







A CELEBRATION OF BRANCH LINE RAILWAYS

14-16 MARCH 2025

GUEST ENGINES,GOODS TRAINS, INTENSIVE TIMETABLE ACROSS THE WEEKEND & MUCH MORE!

FOR TICKETS & FURTHER GALA INFORMATION VISIT BLUEBELL-RAILWAY.COM

THE NORTH'S BEST SPRING STEAM GALA

THE KEIGHLEY AND WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY



48305 LMS 8F



7232 SENTINEL "ANN"



16440 LMS 3F



1973 AVONSIDE 'DORA'

ALONGSIDE THE HOME FLEET INCLUDING LMS JUBILEE 45596 'BAHAMAS',
'TAFFY TANK' 85, LNWR COAL TANK 1054 & IRONCLAD 52044 !

INTENSIVE PASSENGER SERVICE - SPECIAL DOUBLE-HEADED TRAINS - SHED TOURS
GOODS TRAIN DEMONSTRATION - FOUR DAY GALA - BRAKE VAN RIDES

THURSDAY 20TH TO SUNDAY 23RD MARCH

Visit the website for more information and ticket booking

KWVR.CO.UK WORTH VALLEY **01535 645214**

EVENTS AT THE K&ESR - 2025

A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME THROUGH THE BEAUTIFUL KENT AND EAST SUSSEX COUNTRYSIDE

The Kent & East Sussex Railway is situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, running between Tenterden and Bodiam.
To get the best value, book in advance online until midnight the day before your visit.
Many other running dates are available throughout the year. See our website for full details.

200™
Years of Train Travel
Since 1825

1825 - 2025

In celebration of 200 Years of British Train Travel

• FEBRUARY •

- We are open weekends during February
- 15th to 23rd **February Half-Term** Except Monday and Friday.



• MARCH •

- We are open weekends during March
- 5th **Canterbury Auction Galleries** Valuation Day at Tenterden.
- 29th & 30th **Mother's Weekend** Lunch or Afternoon Tea.



• APRIL •

- 5th & 6th **Bodiam 25 Year Anniversary Celebrations**
- 5th to 21st **Easter Holiday with the Easter Bunny** (various dates).
- 12th **Early Morning Bird Watching Experience**
- 13th **Green Fun Day**
- 23rd **Fish & Chips Special**
- 26th & 27th **Midgets of Steam Gala**

• MAY •

- 4th **Star Wars Themed Day** Dress as your favourite character.
- 7th **Fish & Chips Special**
- 13th **Early Morning Bird Watching Experience**
- 17th & 18th **1940s Weekend.** Featuring the D-Day Darlings (Trio.)
- 26th to 30th **Gaming on the Move** Trains 10.20am & 15.40pm.

• JUNE •

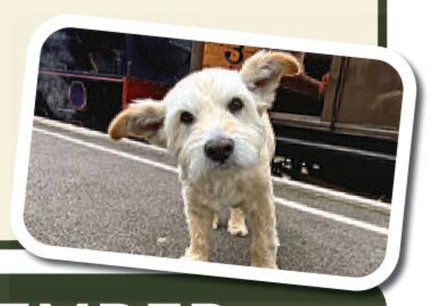
- 6th & 7th **CAMRA Real Ale Festival**
- 15th **Father's Day**
- 21st & 22nd **Traction Engine Display**
- 18th **Fish & Chips Special**
- 19th **Canterbury Auction Galleries** Valuation Day at Tenterden.
- 28th **Steampunk**

• JULY •

- **Early Service** 8.45am Wednesday and Saturday. Starting 23rd.
- 2nd **Fish & Chips Special**
- 16th **Fish & Chips Special**
- 18th, 19th & 20th **K&ESR Diesel Gala**
- 30th **Fish & Chips Special**

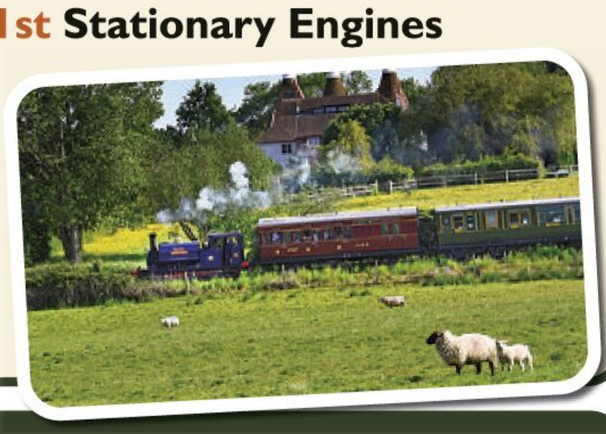
• AUGUST •

- **Early Service** 8.45am Wednesday and Saturday.
- 10th **Bus Rally**
- 13th & 20th **Fish & Chips Special**
- 24th **Alvis Car Rally**
- 27th **Fish & Chips Special**



• SEPTEMBER •

- 6th & 7th **Country Fair**
- 10th **Fish & Chips Special**
- 21st **Stationary Engines**



• OCTOBER •

- 11th & 12th **Austin Counties Classic Car Rally** Tenterden Station.
- 16th **Canterbury Auction Galleries** Valuation Day at Tenterden.
- 25th to 31st **October Half-Term & Magic Express**
- 31st **Fright Night Train**

• NOVEMBER •

- 29th **Santa Special Quiet Train** First train of the day will be for those who prefer a less intense visit.
- 30th **Santa Specials**



• DECEMBER •

- 6th • 7th • 13th • 14th • 20th
- 21st • 23nd • 24th **Santa Specials**
- 29th • 30th • 31st
- 1st Jan 2026 **Steam into the New Year!**



KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Tenterden Town Station, Station Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

www.kesr.org.uk • 01580 765155

OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex. Tel: 01798 831370.
Open: Weds-Sun.

Bluebell Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL. Tel: 01825 720800.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Feb 19-21, Weds from Feb 26.

Chatham Historic Dockyard
Standard gauge, one mile. Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800.
Open: Weds-Suns. Daily from Mar 5.

East Kent Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Shepherdswell, Kent. Tel: 01304 832042.
Reopens Mar 24.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway
10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway
12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.
Open: Daily from Mar 8.

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 from Apr 20 + Apr 18, 21.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: Feb 20-23. Tues-Thurs + Suns from Mar 24.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: W/Es + Feb 18-20.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: Feb 23, Mar 9.

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Running: Feb 15-23. Weds, Thurs, W/Es from Mar 5

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.
Reopens: Easter.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Reopens Mar 16.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.
Running: W/Es + Feb 18-20.

Royal Victoria Railway
10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent .Tel: 01795 424899.
Running: Suns from Apr 6.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es.

Volk's Electric Railway
2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.
Running: Suns + Feb 19, 22, Mar 29.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Feb 1, 18-20, 22. Weds + Suns from Mar 16.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.

Dartmouth Steam Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.
Running: Daily.

Devon Railway Centre
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon. Tel: 01884 855671.
Open Thurs-Suns + sch hols from Apr 5.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: W/Es from Mar 8.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Thurs, Suns from Apr 17.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: W/Es, sch hols.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Reopens Spring 2025.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es from Apr 1.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

North Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.
Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.
Running: Suns from Mar 16 +Mar 22.

Seaton Tramway
2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Somerset & Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY. Tel: 01761 411221 Open: Suns.
Running: Apr 6, 9, 16, 20/21.

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.
Running: W/Es from Mar 22.

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.
Running: W/Es from Feb 15.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Reopens Spring 2025.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: W/Es, Tues, Weds from Mar 22.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Running: Mar 16, 30 Apr 6, 20/21.

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum
Narrow and standard gauge, one mile. Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.
Open: Daily from Mar 27.

Bure Valley Railway
15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 733858.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Colne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.
Reopens: TBA.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Feb 16, 19, Mar 9, Apr 6, 9, 13.

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile.

Railway Museums

Beamish
The Living Museum of the North, County Durham.
Open: Fri-Suns. Daily from Feb 22.
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Coleford GWR Museum
Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Open: Fris, Sats.
Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Colonel Stephens Railway Museum
Tenterden station, KESR.
Open on KESR operating days.
Tel: 01580 765155.

Crewe Heritage Centre
Vernon Way, Crewe.
Reopens Mar 29.
Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre
Donegal.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 00353 (0) 749722655.

Hopetown Darlington
North Road Station, Darlington.
Open: Tues-Suns.
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: Daily.
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: W/Es.
Tel: 01258 353084.

Rail Story
Ingrow, West Yorks.
Open: Carriage Works daily, Engine Shed Tues-Suns.
Tel: 01535 690739 or 01535 680425.

Railworld Wildlife Haven
Peterborough.
Open: 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

Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. Tel: 01621 784898.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Running: W/Es.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk.
Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: April 20/21.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles.
Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: W/Es + Weds in Apr.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Suns, sch hols.

Southwold Railway Trust
3ft gauge.
Blyth Road, Southwold. Tel: 01502725422.
Open: Apr 20.

Wells & Walsingham Railway
10¼in gauge, four miles.
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.
Tel: 01328 711630.
Running: Daily from Mar 15.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Reepham, Norfolk. Tel: 01603 871694.
Open: Tues-Suns. Running: W/Es.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri.
Running: Feb 16, 19, 23. Suns from Apr 6.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns from Mar 30.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067
Running: Mar 30, Apr 12, 19-21.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: W/Es .
Running: Weds + Feb 15/16, 22/23.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex.
Tel: 01277 365200.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge.
Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Running: sch hols.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Suns from Mar 30.

London Museum of Water & Steam
2ft gauge, 400 yards.
Brentford, London. Tel: 0208 568 4757.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX.Tel: 0116 299 5111.
Open: Daily.

Amerton Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs. Tel: 01889 271337.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Running: bank hols, W/Es from Apr 19.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse
Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.
Open: W/Es from Mar 2.

Battlefield Line
Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.
Running: Feb 15/16, 18/19, 22/23. W/Es from Mar 22.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols from Apr 19.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily.
Running resumes Spring 2025.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: W/Es.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Fris-Weds from Mar 15.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.
Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Weds, W/Es from Mar 12.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: W/Es + Feb 19-21.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns.

Foxfield Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs.
Tel: 01782 396210.
Running: Mar 30.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.
Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: W/Es from Mar 1.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323.
www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: W/Es + Feb 20/21.

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.
Reopen Spring 2025.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: Feb 15/16, 19, 22/23.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Mar 30. Suns from Apr 13.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: February 15/16, 19/20, 22/23. W/Es from Mar 8.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Reopens: April 17.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: W/Es + Feb 18-20.

Statfold Country Park
Multiple gauges, 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.
Reopens Apr 20.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: Apr 20/21

Valley Railway Adventure
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: W/Es.

NORTH WEST

Blackpool Heritage Depot & Tram Tours
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Blackpool, Lancs. Tel: 01253 209521.
www.blackpoolheritage.com
Depot: TBA.
Heritage tram tours: TBA.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: W/Es + Feb 19-21, Mar 14.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 342309.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Running: Suns from Apr 20.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.
Running: Apr 20/21.

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Reopens Mar 20.

Kirkby Stephen East
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Open: Suns.

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Near Ulverston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01539 531594.
Running: Sch hols, March 29/30. Daily from Apr 5.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway
3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.
Reopens Mar 18.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass, Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.
Running: Feb 15-23.
Sats-Thurs from Mar 15.

Ribble Steam Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Preston, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 728800.
Running: Feb 19, 22, Mar 22/23, 29/30, Apr 5.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles. Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Reopens: April 5.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Reopens: Mar 23.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland.
Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.

Pre-order Issue 330: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Tel: 07889 297271.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

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: W/Es, sch hols.

Derwent Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near York. Tel: 01904 489966.
Running: W/Es.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks.
Tel: 01756 710614.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily from Mar 31.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Reopens May 24.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Mar 30, Apr 20/21.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds.
Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Running: Suns from Apr 5.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Grosmont, North Yorks.
Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Feb 15-23.

Scarborough North Bay Railway
20in gauge, ⅞ mile.
Scarborough, North Yorks.
Tel: 01723 368791.
Running: W/Es and sch hols.

Stephenson Steam Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields.
Tel: 0191 277 7135.
Open: W/Es. Running: Feb 23, 27, Mar 2.

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Suns from Mar 2.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Feb 6-8, 13/14, 19-21, 24.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: W/Es + Feb 19, 22.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles.
Huddersfield, West Yorks.
Tel: 01484 865727.
Open: W/Es, sch hols.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Reopens Apr 6.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Feb 15/16, 18-20, 22/23, 27, Mar 1.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Blaenavon, Torfaen.
Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: Feb 22/23. W/Es from Mar 22.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es from Apr 5.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth.
Tel: 01654 761701.
Running: Apr 12, 18-21.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Feb 15-22.

Ffestiniog Railway
2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es from Mar 29.

Gwili Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 01267 238213.
Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns from Apr 2.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns, sch hols.

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: W/Es + Feb 19, 26.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Reopens Apr 5.

Snowdon Mountain Railway
800mm gauge, 4½ miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870223.
Running: Daily from Mar 29.

Talyllyn Railway
2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.
Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.
Running: Feb 20-28. Daily from Apr 1.

Teifi Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Henllan, Ceredigion, SA44 5TD.
Tel: 01559 371077.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Vale of Rheidol Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion.Tel: 01970 625819.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Porthmadog, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 513402.
Reopens Apr 5.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles.
Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es from Mar 29.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles.
Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.
Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Weds, Thus, W/Es from Mar 29.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Feb 8/9, 11-13, 15/16, Mar 1/2.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles.
Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge.
Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire. Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: W/Es from Apr 5.

Lathalmond Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum,
Lathalmond, near Dunfermline.
Tel: 07379 914801.
Open: Suns from Mar 31.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Royal Deeside Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory, Kincardineshire. Tel: 01330 844416.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Strathspey Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Aviemore, Inverness-shire.
Tel: 01479 810725.
Running: W/Es from Apr 5 + sch hols.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway
3ft gauge.
Drumod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
5ft 3in gauge.
Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.
Reopens Spring 2025.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
5ft 3in gauge.
Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.

The details in this list were correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise that you confirm details with the venue concerned. Pre-booking is often essential.
TBA = To Be Announced

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and other events in the coming weeks

FEBRUARY
- 14 Seaton Tramway Twilight Tram
- 15 Peak Rail The Night Shift
- 15 Statfold Country Park Statbus at Night
- 15/16 Great Central Railway Extinct Express
- 15/16 Nene Valley Railway Thomas Branch Line Weekend
- 15-23 Mid Hants Railway Magic of Locomotion
- 15-23 North Yorkshire Moors Railway NER Autocar Trips
- 20 East Lancashire Railway Travel to Wonderland
- 20-23 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Winter Gala & Dark Ales Festival
- 22/23 Nene Valley Railway Best of British with *Flying Scotsman*
- 22/23 Swanage Railway Community Weekend
- 23 Epping Ongar Railway Winter Bus Rally
- 27/28 East Anglian Railway Museum Beer Festival

MARCH
- 1 Bala Lake Railway St David's Day
- 1 East Anglian Railway Museum Beer Festival
- 1/2 Great Central Railway Spring Steam Weekend
- 1/2 Nene Valley Railway Best of British with Flying Scotsman
- 3-7 Nene Valley Railway *Flying Scotsman* footplate visits
- 8/9 Nene Valley Railway Best of British with *Flying Scotsman*
- 8/9 Statfold Country Park Spectacle of Steam
- 10/11 Nene Valley Railway *Flying Scotsman* footplate visits
- 14-16 Bluebell Railway Branch Line Gala
- 14-16 East Lancashire Railway Legends of Steam Gala
- 15/16 Gwili Railway '6 for 60' Gala
- 15/16 Nene Valley Railway Best of British with *Britannia*
- 19-23 Mid-Hants Railway *Canadian Pacific* launch

Are you organising a gala or other big event and would like it included in these listings? Let us know the details by emailing Owen Hayward at ohayward@mortons.co.uk

CLASSIFIED

EXPRESS GOODS

Contact Andy Bruce on 01507 529455 • abruce@mortons.co.uk

AUCTIONS



Thirsk Railwayana Auctions

TIMED ONLINE AUCTION

Friday 7th March to Monday 10th March 2025

Special sale of Carriage Prints, Model Railway Engines, Rolling Stock etc, Corgi & Matchbox Die-Cast Models – The Collection from the late Keith Archer, Beverley.

Plus usual selection of Railwayana from other sources.

Viewing – Tuesday 4th – Friday 7th March 2025

Full details at www.thirskmarket.co.uk or Tel – 07730 765569

BOOKS

The Smokebox bookshop of Kingston revived

Stall F2B at Antiques of Kingston KT2 6ND
specialises in rail and road transport, selling books, photographs and ephemera.

Reasonable prices. Open 7 days. Close to rail and bus stations.

Contact Nick 07722 084314 Email: nickcountertenor@gmail.com

NICK TOZER
RAILWAY BOOKS

RAILWAY BOOKS BOUGHT AND SOLD

Free Railway Booksearch Service

155 Church Street, Paddock, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 4UJ
Shop open: Tue & Wed 11:00-17:00 + Thu 14:00-20:00
Tel: 01484 518159 (answer machine)
web: www.railwaybook.com email: nick@railwaybook.com

BOOKS

Railways Buses Aviation Canals

DEREK'S TRANSPORT BOOKS

All Transport Subjects Covered
www.derekstransportbooks.com
Over 10,500 Books in Stock on-line
Based in the New Forest
Est. 1995

Shipping Commercial Motoring Trams

RAILWAY BOOKS

Rare and out of print • 5,000+ to view at

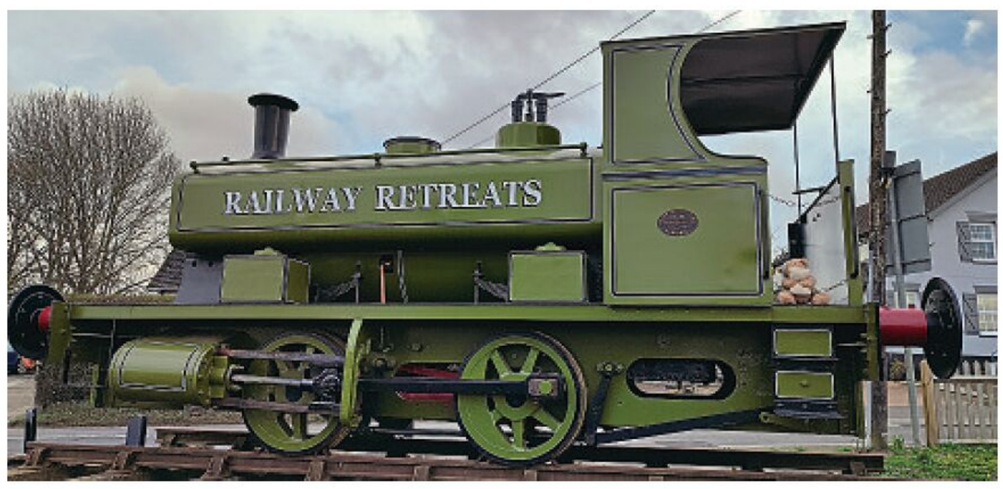
www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk

01974 821281

FOR SALE

Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 - "Tom Parry"

This locomotive was built by Andrew Barclay in 1935 and was supplied new to the Central Portland Cement Company Ltd., Kirton Lindsey in Lincolnshire.







Following the withdrawal of the locomotive from service at their Houghton Regis plant in Bedfordshire in 1967 APCM donated it to the Quainton Railway Society. This Locomotive has recently undergone an extensive nut and bolt cosmetic restoration (This loco has been restored for display purposes only). No expense spared. We had planned to keep this for a lifetime but now have had a change of circumstances and it is no longer required. The "Railway Retreats" is in vinyl so can be removed easily. The remaining pinstriping has been done by hand. Must be seen to be appreciated.

Serious enquiries only £POA

Personalised number plates RA12 WAY & RA14 WAY

(spelling RAILWAY)

RAI2WAY

RAI2WAY

RAI4WAY

RAI4WAY

We had these number plates on our company cars for our Railway Retreats business and are now no longer required.

Great for promotions.

RA12 WAY - £3000 RA14 WAY - £2500 or £5000 for the pair.

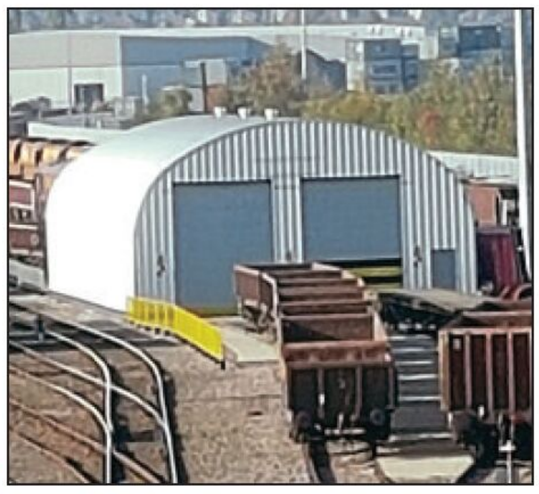
PLEASE CALL BEN ON 07769 677332

BUILDINGS

STEEL BUILDINGS

HEAVY DUTY STEEL BUILDINGS

- Extremely cost effective
- Workshops/Garaging/Storage
- Widths from 20ft to 70ft
- Unlimited Lengths
- Buildings to BS 5950
- Finance available



Tel: 01709 578333

BLUELINE BUILDINGS LIMITED
e: sales@bluelinebuildings.co.uk • www.bluelinebuildings.co.uk

MODELS

Redcar Models & Hobbies
Stocking a wide range of '00' railways by Bachmann, Hornby, Peco and Gaugemaster
Also Model Kits and Diecasts and all other modelling accessories
FREE PARKING FOR THE FIRST HOUR

130 High Street, Redcar, Cleveland

T: 01642 494 912 E: andrewnpaton@ntlworld.com

RAILWAYANA

BARRY JONES

Wanted Railway Publicity, b/w photographs BR period, timetables, posters, RCH maps and other official items.
Model railway items always sought.
28 Marine Crescent, Worthing BN12 4JF
Tel: 01903 244655 Mobile: 07947 100711
Email: barryjones28@virginmedia.com

SERVICES

ATEN LIGHTING
LED Bus Bulbs
with pearl glass bulb, 10-30V DC



Aten Lighting,
Unit 14 North St,
Melton Mowbray, Leics. LE13 1NL
01664 569457
info@atenlighting.co.uk
www.atenlighting.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

SERVICES

HAWKINS INSPECTION SERVICES LTD

- *Boiler inspections carried out to current regulations*
- *Annual inspections*
- *Repairs assessed & overseen*
- *AIBI Member*
- *Specialist in heritage plant, rivetted boilers, loco type boilers, air receivers workshop & loco*
- *Modern plant also catered for*

T: 01243 554623 M: 07872 903401
www.boiler-inspector.co.uk
office@boiler-inspector.co.uk

WANTED



WE WANT TO BUY YOUR COLLECTION OF SLIDES AND NEGATIVES.

UK AND OVERSEAS - 1990s AND EARLIER

WANTED

If your collection, **big or small**, is gathering dust we'd like to hear from you. We will scan the original images and return a copy to you for personal use free of charge.

Call: 01494 490544
Email: info@bbfimages.com



STAY A WHILE

DERBYSHIRE



Luxury Lodge Holidays in Derbyshire.
Home to many heritage railways.



Darwin Forest
LUXURY LODGE HOLIDAYS

Call 01629 732428 or visit www.darwinforest.co.uk

NORTH YORK MOORS



HUNGATE COTTAGES
11 highly individual self catering cottages set in peaceful gardens, a short walk to Pickering Railway Station, the starting point of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Tel 01751 476382 • Mob 07876 404152
Book online at **hungatecottages.co.uk**

FFESTINIOG/WHR

Penrhyndeudraeth near Porthmadog
Bungalow, sleeps 4, GCH, superb views, FREE WiFi, available all year.
Ffestiniog trains pass below. No pets.
Tel: 01766 770740
Email: alanmaureenpye@gmail.com

WEST SOMERSET

BLUE ANCHOR



WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY
Traditional Great Western camping coach.
Updated to comfortable modern standards. Sleeps 6. Right by station, yards from beach, steam trains running by...
www.britishrailholidays.co.uk
or call 07850 741628

WEST SOMERSET

RAILWAY COTTAGE and THE RAILWAY CARRIAGE

* Fabulous views of West Somerset Railway
* THE RAILWAY COTTAGE - 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, sleeping 6 in comfort
* Wood burning stove * 1 mile from great pub
* THE RAILWAY CARRIAGE - 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, sleeping 4 in comfort

BOTH HAVE: * Hot tubs * Wi-fi
* Plasma TVs etc * Allow well behaved dogs
* Enclosed gardens with views of the Quantock Hills and Exmoor.



LAVENDER HILL HOLIDAYS
Tel: 01984 656622 * kate@lavenderhillholidays.co.uk
* www.lavenderhillholidays.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

To advertise contact Andy
01507 529455
abruce@mortons.co.uk

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

ESTD RAILS 1970
OF SHEFFIELD

FAMILY BUSINESS
FRIENDLY SERVICE

PRE-OWNED & SECOND HAND

WANTED CASH OR EXCHANGE

BUY • SELL • EXCHANGE • ANY GAUGE • ANY AGE

LOCOS - COACHES - WAGONS - TRACK-WORK - CONTROLLERS - ACCESSORIES
DIE-CAST - LORRIES - BUSES - PLANES - SOLDIERS - RAILWAYANA - AND MORE

DECEASED ESTATES - EX SHOP STOCK A SPECIALITY
FAST SERVICE WITH COMPLETE DISCRETION ASSURED

WE VALUE YOUR COLLECTION VERY HIGHLY!

1 CONTACT US
get in touch by email, phone or post with your list of items

2 OUR OFFER
our friendly staff will review your list and make an honest valuation offer

3 PACKAGE
either visit the shop, send us your items, or we can collect larger collections

4 PAYMENT!
fast, secure payment via your choice on confirming of the value offer – easy!

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT IN 4 EASY STEPS

GUARANTEED
TOP PRICES PAID

Ref: HERITAGE24

DON'T DELAY - GET IN TOUCH TODAY!

+44 (0)114 255 1436 secondhand@railsofsheffield.com

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE Stuff to Sell? LINK:

www.railsofsheffield.com

HORNBY MODEL RAILWAY Awards 2023
RETAILER OF THE YEAR!

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

Historical railway poster lives again after chapel discovery

By Geoff Courtney

A COMBINATION of dogged determination, good luck, and digital technology, has led to the restoration of a 132-year-old railway poster that was discovered torn and incomplete during the demolition of a chapel more than three decades ago.

The poster was issued by North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways – the forerunner of the Welsh Highland Railway – in 1893 to promote its line as the "shortest and most picturesque route to Snowdon & Beddgelert", a claim that was supported by nine sketched images of contemporary photographs and a map.

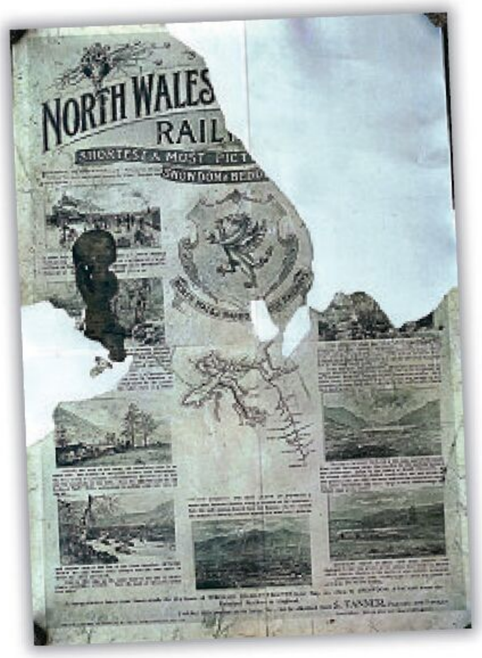
When unearthed during the demolition of the chapel at Llanberis in 1993, ironically exactly 100 years after being printed, it was in very poor condition with a large piece missing, but Mike Kerr, who discovered the poster, pasted it onto card to halt any further deterioration, and sent a photocopy of it to Ffestiniog Railway archivist Michael Seymour.

Nick Booker, chairman of the WHR Heritage Group, takes up the story. "With the intention of creating a restored version Michael, who was a talented graphic artist, began to slowly fill in the missing sections, although the subject of one of the nine illustrations would need to be identified or guessed.

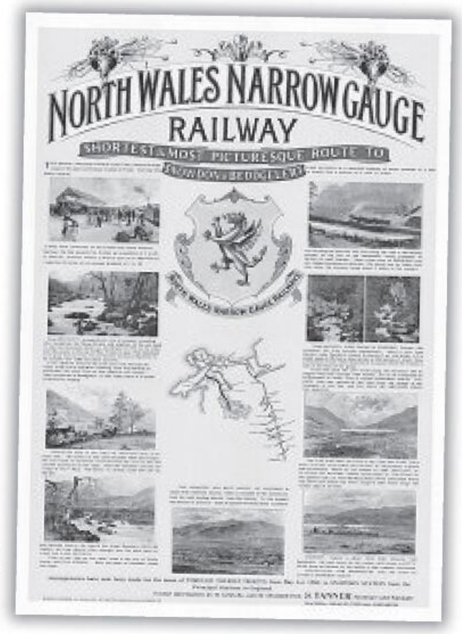
Deciphered

"Sadly he died in 1999, and there the matter rested until 2013, when on my being appointed the chairman of the heritage group, Tom Bowen of the Ffestiniog Railway Society passed to me four photocopies of the poster and a listing of all the illustrations and words that could be deciphered or guessed."

Subsequently Nick liaised with Welsh Highland and Ffestiniog railways archivist Chris Jones, who is also a WHR Heritage Group trustee, and in recent years the pair has worked with a company that specialises in the scanning of archive material, and also Caernarfon Records Office, where the damaged poster had been conserved following its discovery, who confirmed that the remains were robust enough for scanning.



Before: The remains of the 1893 North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways' poster that were unearthed during the demolition of a chapel in 1993.



After: The NWNGR poster after its recently completed restoration.

BOTH: WHR HERITAGE GROUP

Another missing link was bridged when Chris accessed an 1892 NWNGR guidebook from which he scanned all the photographic illustrations of the time, and also unearthed an 1892 poster timetable in which he found the poster's missing words for transcription.

In addition he worked with a Bradford photograph restoration business and within weeks the reconstruction of the poster was complete, just over 30 years after it had been discovered and 132 years after the original had been printed.

"One of the intriguing aspects of the story is that most, or possibly all, of the original poster's illustrations were sketches of photographs of which we have copies, and that shows that the poster's artist used imagination in some cases," said Nick.

"We can only assume that the printing technology for posters at that time could not cope with photographic images.

"Overall it has been a long but very rewarding project that brings back to life an aspect of railway marketing in the Victorian era."

Heritage line's secret weapon – a dustpan and brush

FOR Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway members busy on essential maintenance during the closed season, the latest item of vital equipment acquired by the track gang to aid this work is… a dustpan and brush!

The volunteers spend the winter months replacing worn sleepers along the eight-mile route. While these have traditionally been made of wood, in recent years the railway has, like most in the heritage industry and Network Rail, adopted composite sleepers made from recycled plastics.

As well as reusing bottles, food packaging and other unwanted plastics that may otherwise end up in a landfill, composite sleepers last much longer than their traditional counterparts. Wooden sleepers have been made either from softwood treated with creosote, which is today not considered to be a very environmentally-friendly product, or hardwood, the growing of which can put pressure on tropical rainforests.

However, when drilling a hole in a wooden sleeper for rail fixings, the sawdust produced could be allowed to disperse into the surrounding scenery, but the plastic shavings from a composite sleeper are not so environmentally-friendly.

Therefore each time the track gang drills a hole, the waste plastic is diligently swept up with the dustpan and brush and saved. And once a large builder's bag full of waste plastic has been collected, it is sent away – for it all to be recycled again.





CREDIT: WLLR

WLLR general manager James Brett said: "Using plastic sleepers is both a cost-effective and sustainable solution for us but they come with their own responsibilities – we are glad that with a little extra effort we can continue the 'cycle of recycling'".

➜ Anyone who might like to volunteer for the track gang is invited to contact volunteerliaison@wllr.org.uk.

NEXT ISSUE
Issue 330 out Mar 14
The long road ahead: We check in with the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust about the overhaul of No. 61264 and its future plans.

PLUS
LASTING SEASIDE APPEAL
The seaside miniature railway has long been an accepted part of the UK heritage scene. Despite facing many challenges, the future for them has never been sunnier, writes Dr Joseph Brennan.

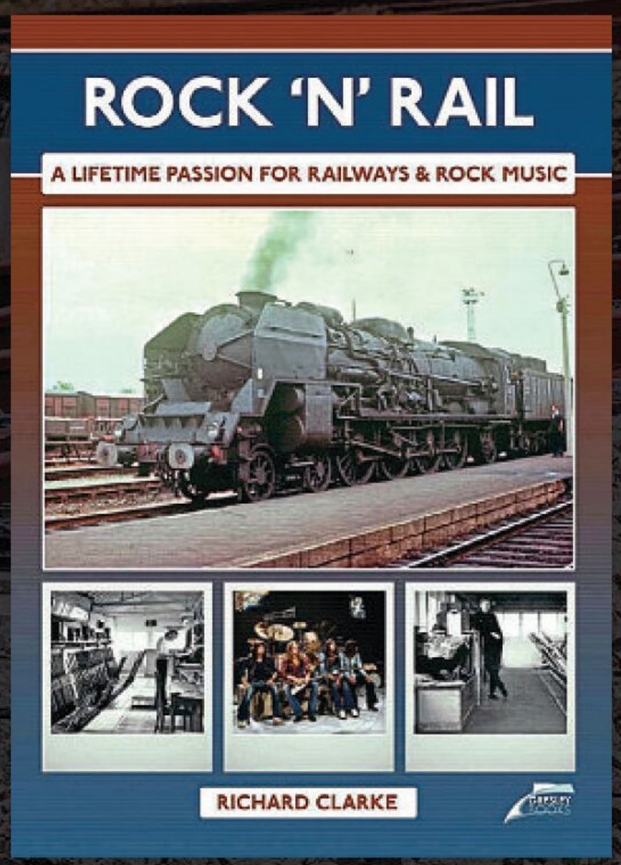


PRE-ORDER ISSUE 330
No need to pop to the shops in four weeks' time... simply order your next *HR* from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529.**
SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

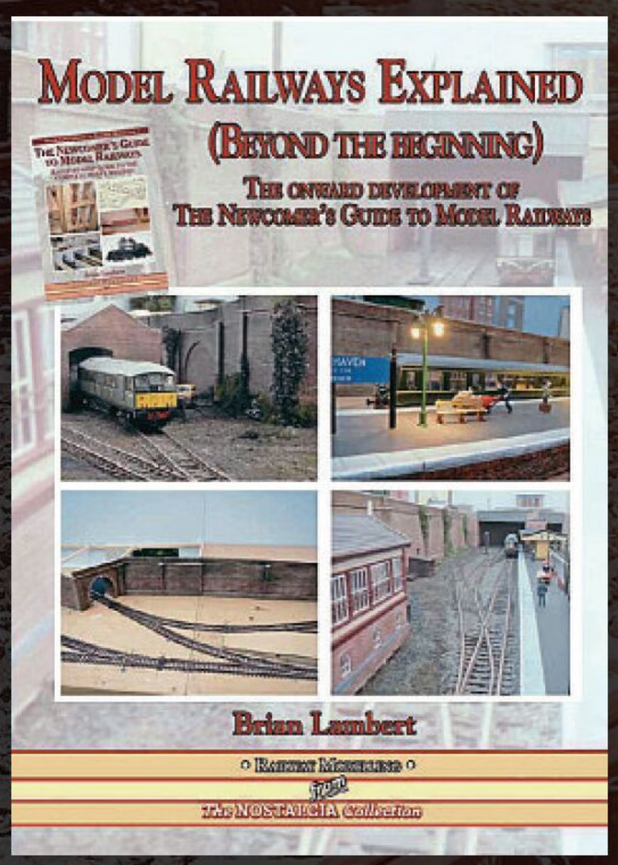
GET ON TRACK WITH OUR RAILWAY COLLECTION

Immerse yourself in the world of railways with our huge collection of rail books. Whether you're interested in historical lines, the golden age of steam, or modern diesel and electric locomotives, we have a read for everyone.

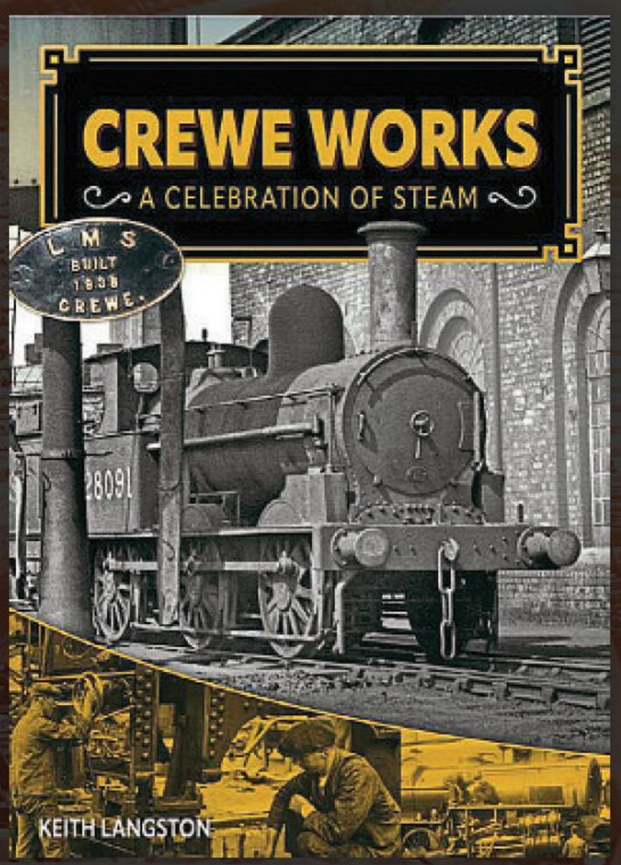
mortons books



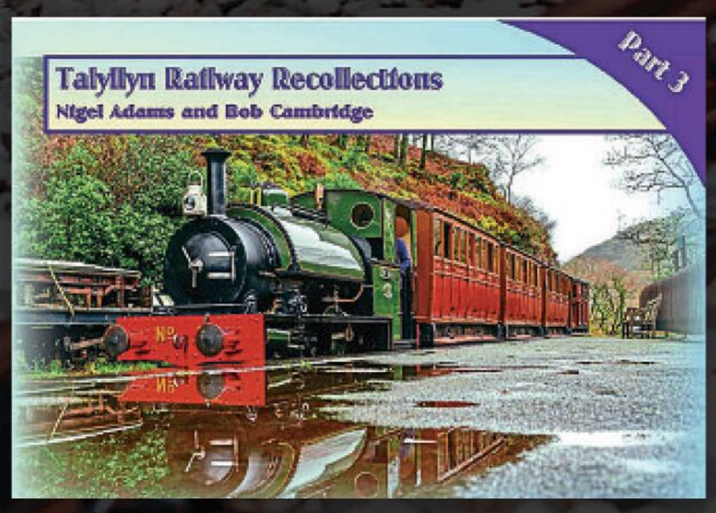
Rock 'N' Rail
Richard Clarke
£22



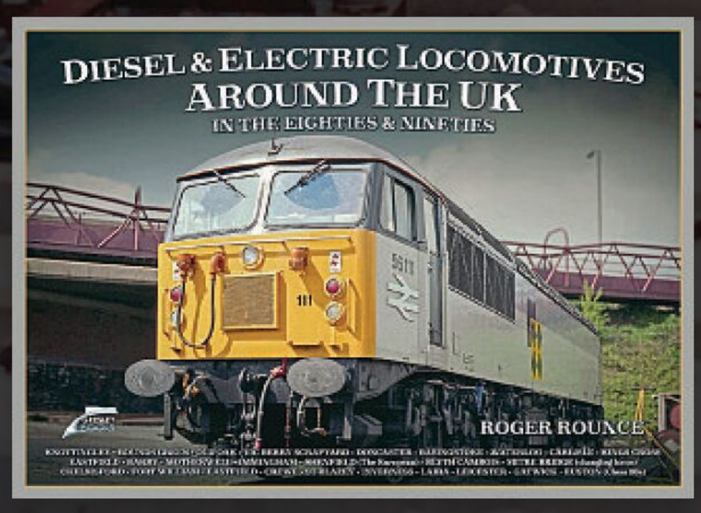
Model Railways Explained (Beyond the Beginning)
Brian Lambert **£20**



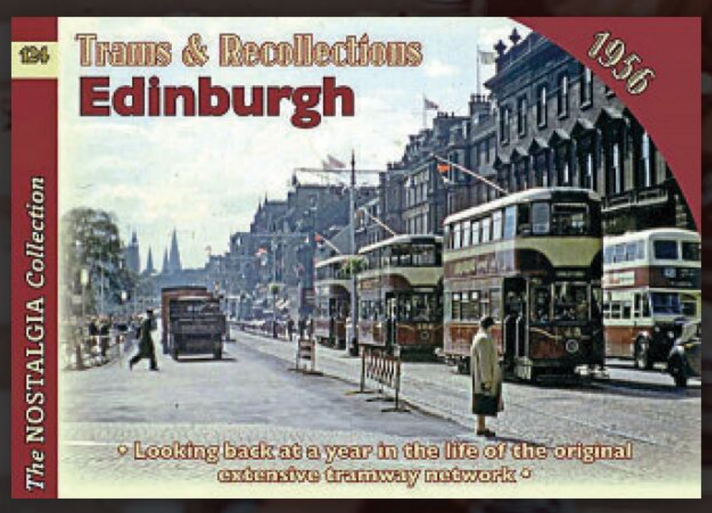
Crewe Works: A Celebration of Steam
Keith Langston **£39.99**



Talyllyn Railway Recollections Part 3
Nigel Adams and Bob Cambridge **£10.99**



Diesel and Electric Locomotives Around the UK in the Eighties and Nineties
Roger Rounce **£30**



Trams & Recollections Edinburgh 1956
Henry Conn
£11.99

ORDER TODAY

FREE UK DELIVERY

www.mortonsbooks.co.uk

To find out more about our latest releases, join our book club at www.mortonsbooks.co.uk/book-club

GRESLEY BOOKS
SLP The NOSTALGIA Collection Past and Present
SILVER LINK PUBLISHING LTD • PAST AND PRESENT PUBLISHING LTD •

Rail Holidays of the World



Scenic Holidays by Rail ~ Journey through breathtaking landscapes!

Rhätischebahn Explorer ~
Departs 22 May 2025 - 7 days from £2,150pp

This is a tour for those who love all kinds of rail travel. We spend a week exploring the UNESCO World Heritage Rhätischebahn in the stunning mountainous canton of Graubünden. Based in Chur this is a relaxing but informative holiday in spectacular surroundings.

- ★ Albula Railway Museum
- ★ Return trip on Bernina Express
- ★ 3 course meal on the Gourmino dining car
- ★ Rhine Gorge Experience train
- ★ Heritage train
- ★ 5-day Graubünden Ticket



Austrian Tyrol & More ~
Departs 14 June 2025 - 14 days from £3,150pp

Travel by train to Austria's stunning Tyrol region and enjoy exploring the cultural cities of Innsbruck, Vienna and Salzburg as well as riding scenic narrow gauge railways in spectacular scenic surroundings that will stimulate all your travel senses.

- ★ Journey on the Achenseebahn, Europe's oldest steam cog railway
- ★ Scenic round trip to Zugspitze
- ★ The Zillertalbahn & Mayrhofen's Cable Cars
- ★ Travel on the Semmering Line - a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ★ Day trip to Bratislava
- ★ Time to explore Innsbruck, Salzburg and Vienna

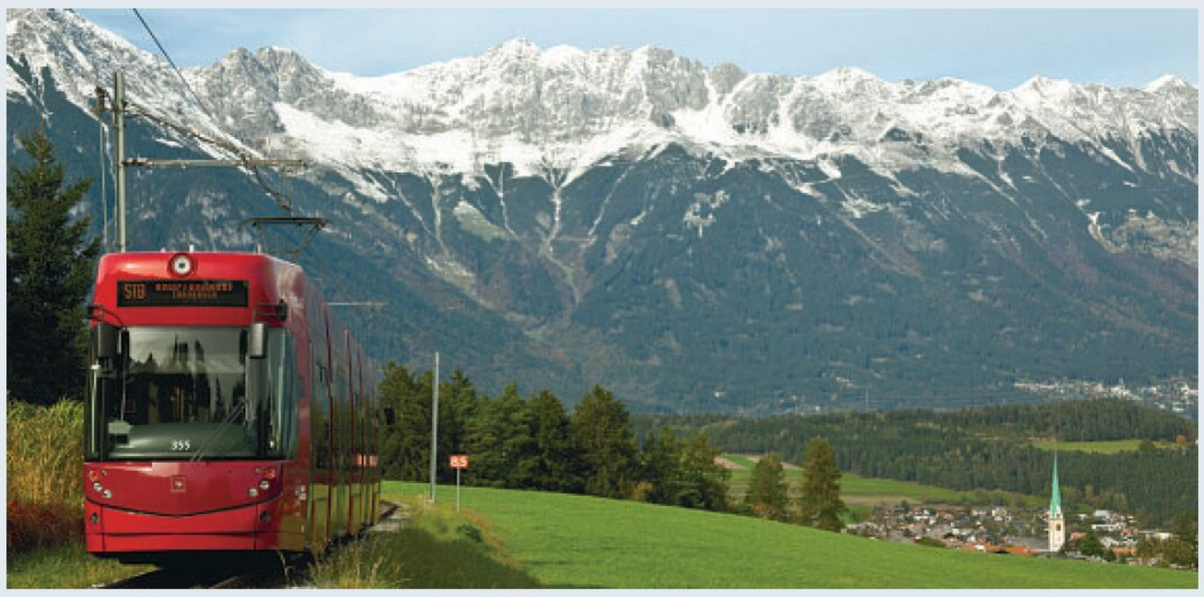




Harz Explorer ~
Departs 31 May 2025 - 7 days from £1,565pp

Discover a beautiful region of Germany by train. By rail to the charming medieval town of Wernigerode, home to the wonderful Harz Railway, whose steam trains travel across 140km of narrow gauge tracks through the stunning Harz Mountains, including an unforgettable steam-hauled trip to the top of the Brocken. A beautiful place to explore whether you are a rail enthusiast or not.

- ★ Explore 140km of the HSB with an unlimited travel pass
- ★ Visit the UNESCO World Heritage town of Quedlinburg
- ★ Steam train journey to the top of the Brocken
- ★ Welcome and farewell dinners
- ★ Explore Frankfurt with travel card included



Portuguese Cities, Trains & Douro Valley ~
Departs 14 June 2025 - 10 days from £2,895pp

This 10-day escorted tour is a wonderful way to discover Portugal's vibrant cities of Lisbon and Porto, riding their famous trams and travelling by train through scenic countryside including the stunning UNESCO Douro Valley wine region.

- ★ Tram Museums in Lisbon & Porto
- ★ National Railway Museum in Entroncamento
- ★ Douro Historic Train
- ★ Scenic Douro Valley
- ★ Port Tasting
- ★ Walking tour of Porto

*** Tel: 01766 512400 * Email: info@ffestiniogtravel.co.uk * Book Online at www.ffestiniogtravel.com ***

50 Years of Unforgettable Rail Journeys

Ffestiniog Travel

Ffestiniog Travel is owned by a charitable trust and profits go to support the world famous Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways every booking helps preserve the railways.

SILVER CREST
models

MARKET LEADER IN LARGE SCALE, READY-TO-RUN, LIVE STEAM

5” GAUGE CORONATION CLASS

LAST 3 MODELS AVAILABLE.

ORDER NOW TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!



£14,995.00 + p&p

The Coronation Class

Designed by Sir William A. Stanier the first locomotives out of Crewe works were originally built as streamliners. Later some were built without streamlining.

All of the streamliners were finally re-built in un-streamlined form, and all eventually featured double chimneys. The model offered here is representative of the class as re-built. The locomotives were produced in a variety of liveries in BR days including maroon, blue and lined green.

- 5 YEAR WARRANTY
- BUY BACK GUARANTEE
- 1/2 PRICE SHOWCASE OFFER
- FLEXIBLE PAYMENT TERMS

See website for details

“My GWR King arrived as expected. What a lovely model, I am delighted with it. You did well with the bell, even the inscription, amazing.

Thank you and your team for the model it was well worth the wait”.

P.N. Wiltshire

Request your free brochure today

Request your free brochure today by e-mail, telephone, or by returning the coupon opposite.

Telephone: **01327 705 259**

E-mail: **info@silvercrestmodels.co.uk**

Find more information at **www.silvercrestmodels.co.uk**

Summary Specification



Approx length 80”

- Stainless steel motion
- Boiler feed by axle pump, injector, hand pump
- Etched brass body with rivet detail
- 4 Safety valves
- Choice of liveries
- Painted and ready-to-run
- Coal-fired live steam
- 5” gauge
- 4 Cylinder
- Piston Valves
- Walschaerts valve gear
- Drain cocks
- Mechanical Lubricator
- Silver soldered copper boiler
- Superheater
- Reverser

Approx Dimensions:

- (L) 80”x (W) 10”x (H) 14”
- Weight: 116 kg

The 5” Gauge Model

This magnificent model is built to a near exact scale of 1:11.3.

Although a 4 cylinder model of this size and quality can never be cheap it certainly offers tremendous value-for-money. You would be hard pushed to purchase a commercial boiler and raw castings for much less than the £12,495.00 + VAT we are asking for this model. Certainly a one-off build by a professional model maker would cost you many fold this with some medal winning examples changing hands at auction in excess of £100,000.

This model is sure to be a real head turner on the track pulling a substantial load, or when on display in your home, or office.

The model comes complete with a silver soldered copper boiler, hydraulically tested to twice working pressure. All our boilers are currently CE and UKCA marked, supplied with a manufacturer’s shell test certificate and Declaration of Conformity. **As testament to our confidence in the models we now provide a full 5 year warranty on every product**. The new batch is limited to just 15 models.

Order reservations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. We are pleased to offer a choice of names and liveries.

Delivery and Payment

Save £195.00. Free p&p for any order received within 28 days.

We are happy to accept your order reservation for a deposit of just £1,995.00. For orders taken now model completion is presently scheduled for July 2025.

We will request an interim payment of £5,000 in March 2025 as the build of your model progresses, a further stage payment of £5,000 in April and a final payment of £3,000 in June/July 2025 in advance of shipping from our supplier.

FREE BROCHURE REQUEST FORM

Please send, without obligation, my free full colour brochure for the 5” gauge Coronation Class.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____ Post Code: _____

Please send to: Silver Crest Models Limited, 2 Gresley Close, Drayton Fields Industrial Estate, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 8RZ **HR**

Company registered number 7425348