GREAT CENTRAL: KEY REUNIFICATION LINK GETS GREEN LIGHT

ISSUE 334 July 4 – August 1, 2025

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Flying Scotsman to reopen repaired Severn Valley

First train tickets sell out in three minutes!





TORNADO, SCOTSMAN AND *GRESLEY* TO MEET AT THE GREATEST GATHERING

■ FFESTINIOG CELEBRATES 70 YEARS WITH LOCOMOTIVE CAVALCADE ■ SIX ICONS FOR HOPETOWN DARLINGTON ICONS OF STEAM ■ SCRAPPED ENGINES REVIVED AT SPA VALLEY CUCKOO LINE GALA ■ FRENCH WARTIME REDRESS FOR LMS 'JINTY'

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Sunday 20th July 2025



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Our route into Wales will be via Chepstow, itself a picturesque destination popular with walkers. Our train will not pause however as we rejoin the Great West mainline at Severn Tunnel Junction and race towards Newport and Cardiff.

Still we continue our unrelenting journey west, now passing through the industrial region of Port Talbot which eventually gives way to the suburbs of Swansea. We bypass Swansea station in our quest to maximise our time at the beach.

After pausing at Carmarthen to drop off passengers for The Gwili Railway we continue westward and it is not long until we reach Whitland Junction where we deviate south onto the single line towards Tenby and Pembroke Dock.

We are now just minutes from our first destination of Tenby where we are booked to arrive at around lunchtime. We will have nearly three hours to explore everything this gem of coastal resort has to offer, or you may prefer to remain on the train to complete the journey to the end of the branch line at Pembroke Dock. Those who elect this option will first have about 90 minutes in Tenby when perhaps you might visit the sea front or one of the many pubs before journeying onward to Pembroke Dock where there will be a brief photographic opportunity before returning to Tenby. Our route home is via the Swansea District line and the Severn Tunnel.

First Class Dining is not available on this train. A buffet car is available for those in Standard Class and First Class Non Dining. The supplement for the Gwili Railway includes coach transfers and a return trip by steam train.

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Gloucester	09.47	N/A
Bristol Parkway	N/A	19.12
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Despite persistent hot and dry weather, A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, one of the latest guests for The Greatest Gathering, cruises past Atherstone with only a trace of exhaust, working the 5M43 10.19am Southall West Coast Railways to Carnforth Steamtown positioning move on June 16. GRAHAM NUTTALL

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The first big triumph of Railway 200 year!

WE are now fast approaching the dizzy heights of the Railway 200 year, with the major landmark events celebrating the bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway within grasp.

However, The Greatest Gathering at Derby, the newly-announced Titans of Steam at Hopetown Darlington, and the operation of the replica 1825 train over the S&DR main line – dazzling as all these events look set to be – will now all be pre-empted by the latest magnificent achievement of the heritage sector: the reopening of the landslip-hit Severn Valley Railway sooner than many observers anticipated, with none other than *Flying Scotsman* hauling that first public train on July 25, tickets having evaporated quicker than you could input your bank card details.

A herculean effort on all fronts – administration, volunteers and contractors – helped by a richly deserved public response with donations, has ensured that services will now again pass over rebuilt Mor Brook bridge, meaning one of Europe's finest heritage lines certainly has a double reason to celebrate its first 60 years as we enter the third century of the modern railway.

The Severn Valley must also be praised for doing the utmost to keep both its regular services, albeit truncated, and special events running during the six months that it was severed, defying the odds. Like so many of our heritage lines, the Severn Valley is firmly established as a major plank of its regional tourist economy and has again shown that it will always merit support at all levels.

Switching to beyond the opposite side of the West Midlands conurbation, huge congratulations must go to Statfold Barn Railway founder Graham Lee, who was made a Member of the British Empire in the 2025 King's Birthday Honours list. In 20 years, Graham has tirelessly overseen the development one of the world's finest collections of narrow-gauge traction, including one that was the last word in pre-heritage era UK steam locomotive engineering, and new Hunslets have been built in the venue's workshops too.

> "We will relish the accomplishments during two centuries of railway history which changed the world, but we must never forget the volunteers..."

During Railway 200, we will relish the accomplishments during two centuries of railway history which changed the world, but we must never forget the volunteers who, since the takeover of the Talyllyn Railway 74 years ago, have not only kept our country's rail legacy alive for future generations, but also continue to make remarkable advances in the heritage sector.

We can now look forward to the reunification of the two heritage Great Central railways, now that the local authority has approved the final link between them, with the stark realisation of the potential for a world-class attraction coming into sight near the heart of England.

Robin Jones Editor

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ROBERT FALCONER

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Pre-order Issue 335: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

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COVER: **A sight soon to be recreated: Gresley A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* approaches the Severn Valley Railwaty's Bewdley Tunnel with the teak stock on September 25, 2019. As reported in Headline News, pages 6/7, the A3 has been booked for the repaired line's July 25 reopening and Swinging Sixties weekend.** JOHN TITLOW

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Sold out in minutes: *Flying Scotsman* booked for Severn Valley reopening

By Robin Jones



A3 Pacific No.60103 *Flying Scotsman* and its support coach pass Highbridge & Burnham station on June 17, making its way to the West Somerset Railway from Didcot Railway Centre. JOSHUA BRINSFORD

A3 PACIFIC No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* is to haul the first service over the reopened Severn Valley Railway full line on July 25 – and the £45 return tickets for the landmark trip sold out within three minutes of going on sale.

After its Severn Valley visit, the world's most famous steam locomotive will then head by rail to Derby, as one of the latest visitors to be announced for The Greatest Gathering extravaganza at Alstom's Litchurch Lane works on August 1-3 – one of the biggest highlights of the Railway 200 programme (see News, page 14).

'Significant' progress on repairs to the failed embankment at Mor Brook bridge between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade since specialist engineering contractor CML took possession of the site at the beginning of June has seen a SVR reopening date earlier than many observers had expected. Since the landslip on January 29, the railway has only been able to operate between Kidderminster and Hampton Loade.

Flying Scotsman will run to the SVR after completing its current loan to the West Somerset Railway. SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We simply couldn't have wished for a better result than this! It's amazing, and a real vote of confidence in the SVR and the fact that we've been able to secure *Flying Scotsman* for this very significant milestone in our history.

"We are very grateful to the National Railway Museum for agreeing to this visit and to Northern Steam Operations Limited and DB Cargo for their assistance.

"We will be pairing *Flying Scotsman* with the SVR's set of Gresley teak carriages to make sure we celebrate both the SVR's 60th anniversary and the reunion of our full line in the most stunning way possible.

Plenty of chances

"As well as hauling our reopening service, No. 60103 will run two more return trips on July 25 and then take part in our Swinging Sixties weekend on July 26/27, hauling three return services each day.

"Even if you missed out on getting tickets to travel behind it, you'll still be able to see *Flying Scotsman* in action by buying an event ticket to the Swinging Sixties weekend, when we celebrate 60 years of the SVR in preservation.

"There's so much going on during the event, with plenty of other steam and heritage locomotives in service, plus live music, a Ferris wheel, vintage cars and a real ale festival. We are going to celebrate in true SVR style!"

There will also be three other steam-hauled trains including one double-header, plus a heritage diesel-hauled service. Full information on the timetable and tickets can be found at svr.co.uk

> "We simply couldn't have wished for a better result than this!"

NRM director Craig Bentley said: "We are delighted to make this visit possible and help the SVR mark an important moment in its recovery.

"The NRM is keen to support heritage railways like the SVR in this, the 200th anniversary of the railways, and the line's determination to reach this milestone is truly inspiring."

When No. 60103 last visited the SVR in 2016 during its first year back in service after restoration, it also proved a sell-out success.

Work continues

Meanwhile, CML excavated more than 2500 tonnes of material from the track formation and embankment and completed temporary culverting works on the watercourse below the bridge to facilitate full access to the embankment for plant and machinery for further excavation to take place around the collapsed wing wall of the bridge.

The next stage saw a concrete footing installed, with CML lifting in more than 100 huge Legato concrete blocks, each weighing around 2.5 tonnes, onto it to form a solid structure. CML will then backfill the embankment structure, using alternate layers of geogrid matting and imported aggregate, to tie the new wall into the embankment.

Large L-shaped precast concrete units across the top of the bridge to form a strong base to carry the trackbed were to be installed ready for the reinstatement of the rail itself by the SVR, which will then carry out load testing in preparation for the July 25 reopening.

CML contracts manager Stuart Hale said: "This really is something different, not just a run-of-the-mill embankment failure. We needed to find a robust and permanent solution that we could build at speed and which was affordable to a heritage line. It also needed to comply with the local authority's mitigation measures, working around the watercourse. We are very glad to now be at the boots on the ground stage and looking forward to getting this finished, hopefully with no undue problems."

Necessary wait

Jonathan said: "We have had many frustrating delays, but all of them were necessary. We needed to get clearance for the temporary culverting of the watercourse, for example, along with ecological surveys to determine the impact of the works on wildlife such as otters, fish and crayfish. We also had to work with National Grid, whose high-voltage power lines run right across the middle of the site.

"As soon as the embankment failure happened at the end of January, we saw a tremendous groundswell of support from the public. Thousands of people have donated, and together with money from our insurance company, this has meant we could go ahead with this essential repair work to reunite the whole length of the line to Bridgnorth."

The resounding public appeal of the world's most famous steam locomotive was only too evident in its three-week reunion with GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* at Didcot Railway Centre, which attracted 11,571 visitors.

On June 17, the A3 headed to the West Somerset Railway where it was booked for services on June 28-30 and July 1/2 and 8-12 and static display at Bishops Lydeard station on July 7 and 13/14. For information, visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/events/flying-scotsman-events-and-tickets



Left: Artist's impression of the finished repair at Mor Brook bridge. CML



Right: Covering the culverted Mor Brook watercourse at the bridge on June 12. ANTONY BARTLAM

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A locomotive cavalcade has not taken place at the Bluebell Railway since 2010, but one of these locomotive parades at Horsted Keynes will see out its 65th anniversary celebrations on August 10. ANDREW STRONGITHARM/BR

Cavalcade finale planned for Bluebell's 65th anniversary

IT will be a case of turning back the clock on August 8-10 as the Bluebell Railway prepares to celebrate its 65th anniversary with a mini gala starring its entire home fleet of locomotives, with the celebration culminating in a cavalcade of locomotives at Horsted Keynes as would once have been enjoyed at galas past.

The anniversary gala will see the railway split into two sections, with three passenger sets travelling between Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes, while a further three will run between the latter and the railway's northern terminus at East Grinstead. These consists will see almost all of the available carriages pressed into service, including the iconic Metropolitan Chesham vehicles, a rake of restored four-wheelers from the LBSCR and SECR, and the LNWR observation saloon. A rake of Maunsell vehicles, which will feature newly-restored Hastings brake third No. 3687, will be boosted by the presence of two Pullman vehicles, parlour third *Car 64* and kitchen first *Fingall*, which will be available to all ticket holders for travel aboard.

The six rostered steam locomotives will include award-winning new-build H2 Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head,* which entered service in 2024 following construction spanning more than two decades. For diesel enthusiasts, a rare opportunity will be presented to travel behind Class 73 E6040 *The Bluebell Railway*, which is not often rostered to work public services, although it has appeared on occasion as a 'Thunderbird.' E6040 will be one of those working the northern end of the line, where it will be coupled to a rake of Mk. 1s each day. On both Friday and Saturday of the event, the electro-diesel will take charge of a non-stop run departing Sheffield Park at 8.15am each day to connect with main line services at East Grinstead, enabling those arriving via National Rail to get the most out of their visit.

Sunday afternoon will see all seven locomotives in a cavalcade at Horsted Keynes, where they will parade through the station at 4.20pm before resuming duties to take people back to their starting points. Such spectacles were once common at Bluebell galas, though none have taken place since the 50th anniversary gala in 2010.

➜ The railway has also launched a season ticket option, allowing unlimited travel on services between July 23 and September 7 inclusive. Ideal for those looking for ways to entertain youngsters during the school holidays, these are priced at £60 for one adult and £100 for two, with each ticket also valid for up to three accompanying children. Some restrictions on use at events apply; visit www.bluebell-railway.com/season-ticket for full details.

Green light given to Great Centrals for last key Reunification link

A MILESTONE in their Reunification scheme, the two heritage era Great Central railways have been given planning permission to build the crucial missing link between the pair.

After an 11-month process, Charnwood Borough Council has given the go-ahead for the construction of 550 yards of new line as a major step forward in joining the GCR at Loughborough to its northern counterpart, the GCR (Nottingham).

Using funds donated by well-wishers around the world, three parts of the project have already been constructed, including a new bridge over the Midland Main Line and one over the A60, while the bridge over the Grand Union Canal has been fully renovated. So far, £5 million has been spent, with another £2.5 million raised.

Further work, including the construction of a new viaduct between the bridge and Railway Terrace, was granted planning permission by Charnwood Borough Council on June 16. Work will now resume on site, with a team carrying out a ground investigation survey to support final design work. This contract alone will cost nearly £250,000.

Once complete, the link will connect the GCR to the national network, allowing incoming charters from different parts of the country and boost Loughborough as a tourist destination.

GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "This is a really important moment for the Reunification project. We're grateful to Charnwood BC for carefully working through our application.

"I'd also like to say thanks to our volunteer project manager Larry Greenwell and planning consultant Bob Woollard for diligently preparing our application and the dozens of reports which went with it. It has been a major piece of work which in itself has cost a six-figure sum. Now we are masters of our own destiny as we press ahead with our ambitious plans.

"We have a lot to raise yet, but every donation take us closer to finishing this incredible project and delivering substantial economic benefits to the area."

Andy Fillingham, of the GCR(N), said: "It's a big moment for both halves of the GCR. Reconnecting the two lines will create an 18-mile-long living history of Britain's railways on the doorsteps of millions of people, telling the stories of how they shaped the nation, from the Victorian era to the 1960s.

"The majority of the work so far has been funded by people making small, regular donations – people power on an epic scale. With planning permission granted, we need to raise much more money to finish the job!"

➜ Donations are invited at www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify

Six Titans of Steam to appear in Hopetown's autumn steam gala

By Robin Jones



Titan of Steam: LNER K1 2-6-0 No. 62005. JAMES PEARCY/NELPG

SIX locomotives will line up at the Titans of Steam Gala at the multiple award-winning Hopetown Darlington, announced as part of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 Festival.

The free-to-enter event will run from Wednesday, September 20 until Sunday, October 5, and will also be partially held on a new track which is being laid to link The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's new £4.5 million Darlington Locomotive Works.

It will see the first homecoming by rail of Darlington-built A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* to the new works. *Tornado* will line up alongside LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* and LNER K1 2-6-0 No. 62005, which will both be on static display at the works, with LNER Q6 0-8-0 No. 63395, LNER J27 0-6-0 No. 65894 and BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 all on show at the adjoining Hopetown site.

For an additional fee, there will also be time-slotted footplate tours available where visitors can step aboard the cab of the main line trio.

Tours and more

Visitors can also take tours of the works and The 1861 Shed, home to Darlington Railway Preservation Society and the North East Locomotive Preservation Group.

Mike Crawshaw, Darlington Borough Council's head of heritage and culture, said: "We are thrilled to bring a gathering of legendary locomotives to Hopetown Darlington which offer a glimpse into the historic engineering that took place in Darlington and helped railways not just in the region, but around the country, and indeed the world, thrive. We cannot thank our partners at A1SLT, the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group, the Darlington Railway Preservation Society and the Sir Nigel Gresley Locomotive Trust for working with us to get this special gathering off the ground to give families and heritage and railway enthusiasts."

Steve Davies MBE, A1SLT chairman and managing director of International Railway Heritage Consultancy LRS, said: "The Titans of Steam Gala unleashes six magnificent and historic locomotives into the birthplace of the modern railway. Steam was a catalyst for the railway revolution and the six titans showcase the innovation of steam, knowledge and engineering."

NELPG chairman John Hunt said: "The P3 (LNER J27) and LNER Q6 were ordinary, unglamorous freight engines – workhorses built to carry coal from the pits in Durham and Northumberland to the power stations and to the staithes for shipping to destinations all over the world – and they did this for 50 years.

"It is great to see them on display to tell their own story alongside the more well-known locomotives."

Tickets for the Titans of Steam Gala, including the light steam events and footplate tours, are available now at hopetowndarlington.co.uk/titans and should be booked in advance.

The A1SLT is turning its works into a home for its locomotives, with a direct connection to the national rail network in the form of the Bishop Auckland branch, part of the original 1825 Stockton & Darlington Railway. Its facilities including a running track, and inspection pits will also be available to visiting locomotives, with railtours to Darlington becoming more efficient, making Hopetown a destination in its own right and boosting the local economy.

"It is recognised that the constant movement of large steam locomotives on the back of road vehicles is not conducive to their health given the unnatural stresses placed on the frames from the loading and unloading process. That's why A1SLT view the track infrastructure at DLW as being as important for the engines as is the normal maintenance regime," said a trust statement. "The rail connection directly onto the Bishop Auckland branch will fulfil this need."

It is planned that the A1, A4 and K1 will all arrive at the newly-laid DLW sidings by rail in September in time for the Titans of Steam Gala – via the new network connection being installed this summer.

'Well advanced'

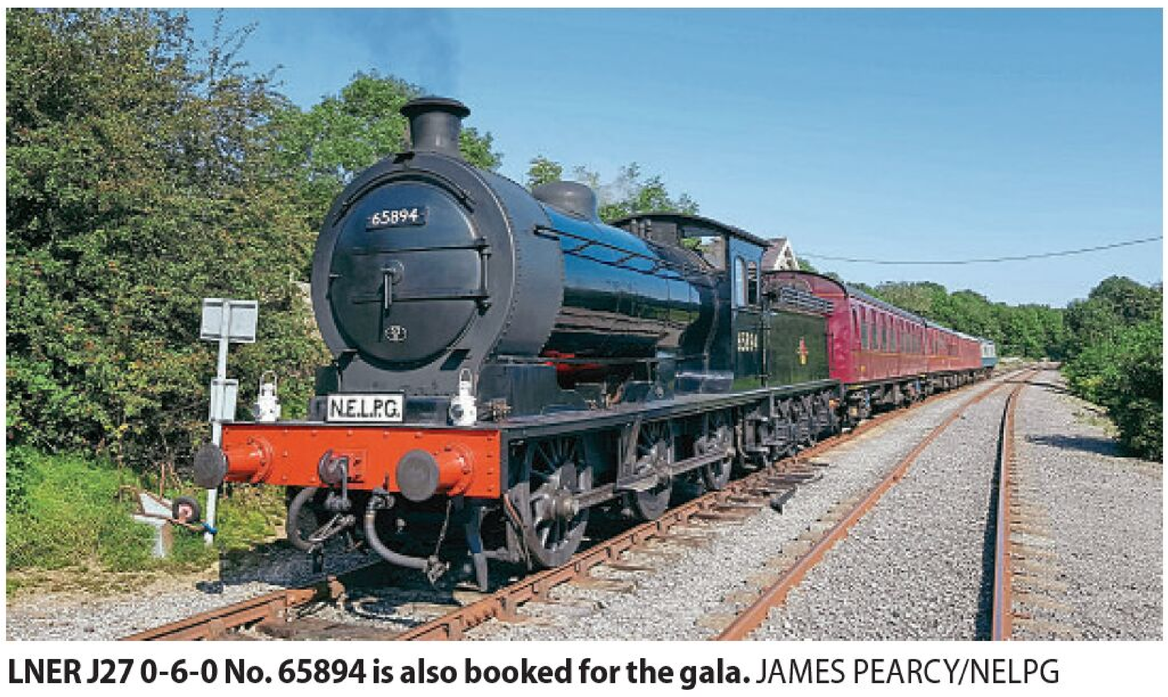
The delivery plan is well advanced, with the majority of track obtained and installed, including the acquisition and stockpiling of rails and track fittings, but considerable amounts of ballast and additional sleepers are needed, for which a public appeal (as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 321) is ongoing.

The Army has been involved in the initial tracklaying project, running training exercises to further the project in October 2023 and June 2024, and returning last November. However, to fully realise the unique opportunity presented by the S&DR bicentenary, another 2000 tons of ballast needs to be laid before autumn.

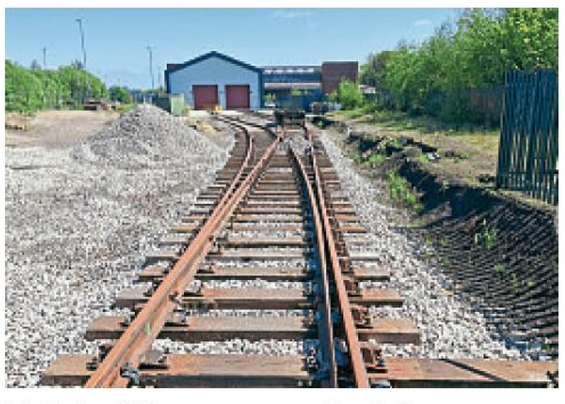
So far, the trust has raised more than £220,000 for the tracklaying, but an additional £75,000 is required to complete the connection. Supporters are being invited to sponsor a ton of ballast for £22.50 and £50 for a sleeper.

"On the eve of the S&D bicentennial, we ask that you consider supporting this project as its legacy will live on to ensure the future of new-build steam in Darlington and ensure that Hopetown Darlington functions as a live steam destination for the UK, as well as a national and international visitor centre," said the statement.

➜ Visit www.a1steam.com/pwayballast or telephone 01325 460163 to donate.



LNER J27 0-6-0 No. 65894 is also booked for the gala. JAMES PEARCY/NELPG



Help build a new stretch of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 years after the original opened to change world transport forever! More materials are needed to complete the connecting line to the new Darlington Locomotive Works. A1SLT

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Bagnall 0-4-2T No. 3023 of 1953 *Isaac*, which spent seven years on the Lynton & Basrnstapel Railway after being repatriated from South Africa, in action during the Summer Spectacle of Steam. SBR



Graham Lee MBE with Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0WT+T No. 10750 of 1923 *Sragi No. 14* at Statfold Barn. GRAHAM LIGHTFOOT

Narrow gauge Mecca's founder honoured with MBE in King's Birthday Honours list

By Robin Jones

GRAHAM Lee, who founded the Statfold Barn Railway with his wife Carol, has been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire in the 2025 King's Birthday Honours list for services to heritage railway preservation and charity.

A passionate advocate for preserving the UK's railway heritage, Graham, 81, has been instrumental in establishing Tamworth-based Statfold as one of the country's foremost centres for narrow gauge preservation. Chairman of the Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust, under him it grew into a thriving hub for enthusiasts, families, and educational groups alike.

The prestigious recognition is granted in acknowledgment of his exceptional commitment to the railway industry and his significant charitable work over many decades, and it coincides with the railway's 20th anniversary.

Graham chaired the family-owned LH Group, with its main focus on railway engineering services. After LH Group acquired what remained of the Hunslet Engine Company in 2005, he pursued the opportunity to acquire the last steam locomotive built by Hunslet, and indeed for non-heritage purposes in the UK, 0-4-2ST No. 3902 of 1971 *Trangkil No. 4* (picture, News page 14), which was suppled by Leeds-based based Robert Hudson & Co Ltd for the Trangkil sugar mill estate in Indonesia. He also recovered several other interesting but defunct steam locomotives of European origin in Indonesia.

After Wabetc acquired the LH Group in 2012, Graham retained the rights to produce steam locomotives under the Hunslet name and produced the first new steam-powered Hunslet in 2005, 0-4-0ST No. 3903 *Statfold*, followed by 0-4-0ST No. 3904 of 2005 *Jack Lane*.

In addition to his work with Statfold, which has evolved into a country park, Graham has supported numerous charities and heritage organisations, contributing time, expertise and funding to causes that promote education, community engagement and historical preservation. His wealth of knowledge learnt through the business world allows him to offer invaluable support to organisations to encourage and foster success.

"I am deeply honoured and humbled to receive this recognition," he said. "Railways have been a lifelong passion, and it has been a privilege to work alongside so many dedicated individuals who share that enthusiasm.

"This award is as much a tribute to them as it is to anything I have done personally. I hope it brings further attention to the importance of preserving our railway heritage for future generations."

A trust statement said: "The trustees and team at Statfold, along with colleagues in the heritage railway community, congratulate Graham on this well-deserved honour and thank him for his continued leadership and vision."

Statfold's recent Summer Spectacle of Steam on June 7/8 proved another success for the venue, attracting more than 1000 visitors, with many trains being full to capacity on both the 2ft and 12 ¼in gauge Mease Valley Light Railway. Burton & Ashby Light Railway tram No. 14 gave rides on the Sunday.

The next railway event is Rails to Victory on July 19/20, followed by the popular Road Rail and Ale weekend on September 13/14.

August 9 will see a Carrying the Load" shunting and freight operations event staged alongside the normal weekend opening as part of the anniversary and Railway 200 celebrations, featuring Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2050 of 1944 *Harrogate*.



Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 No. 972 of 1912 *Fiji Lautoka No. 11* and Hunslet 0-4-2ST No. 1842 of 1936 No. 2 *Howard*, renamed after Graham Lee's father, face-to-face during Summer Spectacle of Steam. SBR



London Transport Museum's chair, Keith Ludeman OBE. LTM

OBE for London Transport Museum chair

LONDON Transport Museum chair Keith Ludeman has been awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours list for services to transport.

Joining the museum's board in 2014, Keith became its chair three years later. He had already enjoyed an extensive career in the UK transport sector, from London General and Go Ahead to Eversholt Rail Group, Luton Airport and High Speed 1.

Working with the LTM teams, Keith has guided, supported and championed the museum's ambition to inspire young people to see the role they can play in shaping the future. Since then, London Transport Museum has welcomed more than 154,000 school students and teachers to its museum in Covent Garden and depot in Acton to learn about the capital's transport history and imagine what the London of tomorrow could look like.

A total of 103 young people have also been supported into apprenticeships and jobs in both the transport and cultural sectors through the museum's dedicated and industry-backed employability skills programmes Enjoyment to Employment and Creative Careers.

Ahead of its 50th anniversary in 2030, Keith and the board are supporting the museum to be ambitious about making its building, visitor offer, and programming fit for the future.

Keith said: "Chairs lead their boards and provide support and inspiration to their CEO and management teams. This honour thus recognises the brilliant work of the senior leadership team at LTM, all of our staff and volunteers, and my dedicated and hard-working board of trustees, without whom we could not have achieved the stellar progress the museum has made over the past decade."

London's Transport Commissioner, Andy Lord, said: "Keith's work at LTM has helped the board and the team in Covent Garden work towards bigger and better achievements, introducing thousands of people to the history of transport in the capital and moving the museum into an even brighter future."

First tests for *Newstead* as launch day edges ever closer

By Owen Hayward

COMPLETION is within sight for the volunteers behind the restoration of Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam' 0-6-0ST No. 1589 *Newstead*, which is set to make its heritage era debut on passenger trains at the North Norfolk Railway this summer.

The previously-thought scrapped *Newstead* made headlines in 2016, when it was revealed to have survived hidden in a shed at a Hertfordshire convent, as reported in issue 215.

It was purchased by Alex Alder, who first took it to the Nene Valley Railway where an initial assessment of the work required was conducted, before the locomotive then moved to the Spa Valley Railway where overhaul commenced in earnest.

As reported in issue 330, as completion neared, the SpVR advised that with other contract commitments, it would be unable to offer *Newstead* sufficient work to see it remain there, and on March 5 it departed for the Poppy Line, arriving at Sheringham the following day at the start of a 10-year loan agreement. Since then, volunteers have continued with the final jobs, which have included setting the valve timing, pipework assembly and further painting.



No. 1589 *Newstead* heads towards Weybourne during its first loaded test run on June 16, preparing for its impending debut on passenger services on the North Norfolk Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

Good to go

On June 6, the final boiler test was carried out in the presence of the inspector, who gave *Newstead* the all-clear to move on to the next stage of its return to service. Following some initial testing within the confines of Weybourne yard, that day the locomotive undertook its first light engine tests across the whole 5½-mile line between Sheringham and Holt – the furthest that *Newstead* has moved under its own steam since being withdrawn from Woolley Colliery in 1970. It has been steamed since being preserved, but only along a short stretch of track at Suffolk Steam in the 1970s, and June 6 was the first time *Newstead* ran in public view in 55 years.

Following work to rectify teething problems that surfaced during this first outing, a further light engine test was carried out during the morning of June 16.

With confidence in the locomotive's capabilities increasing, combined with the need to trip some empty coaching stock to the sheds at Holt following the June 13-15 Rails and Ales mixed traction gala, that afternoon saw No. 1589 undertake its first loaded test run coupled to a rake of three Mk.1 suburban carriages – the first time it is known to have ever been coupled to passenger stock, so adding another chapter to its story.

Further testing was due to be carried out from June 27, with additional carriages being added as the locomotive proved itself, with a view to having it available in time for the summer season, although a date for its launch had not been confirmed as we went to press.

It is planned for *Newstead* to see regular use on NNR service trains and at events.

➜ **The story of Hunslet's 'standard' design: see Chris Eden-Green's heritage in miniature feature, pages 80-82.**



***Heritage Railway* staff writer Owen Hayward gets to grips with the controls of the once 'lost' locomotive during a test run on June 16.** RUBEN PEARCE

Fringe Festival exhibition to showcase Scotland's railway revolution

A NEW public exhibition exploring how the birth of the railways transformed Scotland will be part of this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival from August 4-29.

Scots on the Move: Railways and Tourism in Victorian Scotland will be staged at the at National Records of Scotland's General Register House's spectacular Adam Dome, in Princes Street.

The exhibition, which is free and open to all, will draw on Scotland's national archives, taking visitors to the dawn of the steam era, from before the first passenger railway in the early 19th century, up to the rise of the motor car more than a century later, and focusing on moments which changed the Big Country forever. Spectacular viaducts and stations sprang up as remote communities became connected with iconic rail routes including the West Highland Line, making public transport possible in the mountainous landscape with its harsh weather.

Visitors will follow the evolution of the train from Stephenson's *Rocket* to Queen Victoria's royal carriages and explore how Victorians felt about railways and the new tourist industry. Items on display chart the development of the railway throughout the century including tourist guides, posters and letters.

NRoS chief executive Alison Byrne said: "Our summer exhibition will capture an exciting moment in Scotland's history. Railways normalised travel and shaped holiday habits which we still recognise today."

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Industrials to the fore for North Norfolk Summer gala in anniversary celebrations

MAIN line locomotive types may be viewed at the staple of the modern heritage railway, but many of the sector's most well-known lines owe thanks to humble industrials for starting them off as their journeys began. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025, the North Norfolk Railway will turn the clocks back to those early days this August with a week-long festival where industrial steam will take centre stage – complete with the return of one of the line's original locomotives.

Peckett No. 1970 of 1939 was delivered to the Ashington Coal Company's Ashington colliery in Northumberland, which then was one of the most extensive railways of its type in existence.

No. 1970 arrived there with a second locomotive and became the company's No. 5 locomotive, spending its working life based there. In 1947, when the industry was nationalised, it passed into ownership of the National Coal Board and was kept on right the way through to 1970, when replaced by a Class 14 0-6-0DH. No longer needed by the NCB, it was sold and moved to the NNR, where it became one of the first locomotives to work services after the line was bought by revivalists, the honour of hauling the first train having been taken by Kitson 0-6-0ST works No. 5470 *Colwyn*.



GB Railfreight Class 69 No. 69010 was officially named *North Norfolk Railway* at Sheringham on June 13 as part of the Poppy Line's 50th anniversary celebrations. Pictured at the naming are (left to right) Sheringham town mayor Sue Brisbane, GB Railfreight intermodal director Julie Garn, NNR Chairman Steve Allen and general manager Graham Hukins. LEIGH CAUDWELL

While No. 1939 remained in East Anglia until 1991 when it was bought by the Stephenson Railway Museum (now North Tyneside Steam Railway), *Colwyn* departed for the Northampton & Lamport Railway in July 1985, following which an overhaul project began but was aborted part way through, meaning that *Ashington No. 5* was the perfect alternative to pursue to play a part in the NNR's golden anniversary celebrations.

The Peckett is expected to appear on trains during the August 23-31 Festival On Rails, during which at least three locomotives will be in service each day. The August 23-25 bank holiday weekend will concentrate primarily on industrial steam, with resident Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 *Wissington* and Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam' 0-6-0ST No. 1589 *Newstead* (see separate story) also expected to star.

From August 26-28, industrial traction will work side by side with new-build GWR Grange No. 6880 *Betton Grange*, which is returning to the railway for a second summer stay.

The week-long celebration will conclude with a gala event on August 29-31, with at least five steam locomotives due to be in service with freight trains also featuring.

Playing a starring role in the Tanfield Railway's June 20-22 Legends of Industry Gala was Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2320 of 1952, resplendent in its red livery as National Coal Board No. 54. Having spent much of its working life at East Hetton colliery in County Durham, it was saved in 1976 by the Yorkshire Dales Railway and is currently general manager David Watchman said that No. 54 is a "rare survivor from the East Durham coalfield", making a return to the county after nearly half a century. During the gala, a highlight of the Tanfield300 and Railway 200 celebrations, No.54 hauled passenger and demonstration freight trains It is pictured piloting RSH 0-4-0ST No. 7409 of 1948 Sir *Cecil A Cochrane* out of Marley Hill sidings with the empty stock for the first train of the gala. DAVE WILSON



Relive the great decade of change at the GCR

THE 1960s will be the theme of the Great Central Railway's award-winning Railways At Work gala, which returns on August 16-17.

Titled All Change!, Railways At Work 2025 will see each station showcase a different aspect of the sweeping changes brought about during the decade which laid the foundations of today's network.

Loughborough Central will explore the passenger journey in 1960-62, looking at a run-down railway in the midst of change in the need for modernisation. Quorn & Woodhouse station will look at the freight story of 1963-64, featuring the popular pick-up goods train, shunting and crane-lifting demonstrations in years surrounding the announcement of the Beeching axe, with narrated displays and period commercials.

Last year's 1966 theme will be reflected at Rothley, with the station looking at a new era for BR – a new name, new logos, and a focus on containerisation. Leicester North will focus on 1968-69 and the end of steam, and also the birth of the heritage sector.

At all stations' re-enactors will enhance storytelling appropriate to each era, porters will assist passengers with their luggage and policemen will help with enquiries, in among a plethora of travelling public each with their own stories to tell, around an intensive train timetable with a mix of steam and 60s diesel traction.

At Quorn & Woodhouse, the Tin Shed will be open serving real ale, accompanied by the sounds of 1960s DJ Soul Sauce, who will stay late into Saturday evening.

Full details can be found at www.gcrailway.co.uk

Severn Valley takes major 'historic' step towards One Railway unification

MEMBERS of the Severn Valley Railway's owning and operating company, SVR (Holdings) Plc voted overwhelmingly in favour of a special resolution authorising its conversion into a Charitable Community Benefit Society.

The resolution, passed at the company's annual general meeting on June 21, required the support of at least 75% of voting shareholders in order for this first part of the railway's planned organisational restructure to go ahead. The company will now take the necessary steps to enact the conversion.

SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "This historic vote by our shareholders paves the way for changes that will secure a strong and resilient future for the SVR. As a CCBS, we will be eligible for significant new streams of grant funding and will be able to apply for Gift Aid recovery on donations received and potentially on many of our ticket sales.

"This will increase the railway's income and help us to achieve greater financial resilience."

In August, members of the separately-constituted Severn Valley Railway Company Limited will vote on whether to support the amalgamation of their organisation with the newly-formed CCBS. "If they vote in favour by at least the same 75% majority, this will mean the railway will be able to achieve substantial cost savings by avoiding duplicate charges for services such as banking, accounting and auditing," said Jonathan. "It makes so much sense all round, as well as reducing other financial and administrative burdens which, in the end, use up money that could be better spent on developing the railway and protecting the heritage assets in our care.

"Before putting the proposal to our shareholders, we consulted widely. We saw that there was a groundswell of support for what we called the One Railway project. Now we know for certain that the majority of our shareholders want us to continue with the conversion to a CCBS, and we thank them for their clear mandate."



The SVR (Holdings) Plc annual general meeting underway in St George's Hall, Bewdley, on June 21. LESLEY CARR





1: Just a few days after arriving in Cumbria, *Northiam* was pressed straight into service on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway on June 11, where it is seen passing the old ironworks shortly after departure from Haverthwaite and still carrying KESR branding on its saddle tank. WILL SMITH

2: On June 19, Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T No. 1245 became the first steam locomotive to cross the new bridge over the A60 on the GCR(N) following its arrival at Ruddington earlier that day. MARTIN SARGENT

One in, one out as Lakeside 'swaps' industrial 0-6-0s

By Owen Hayward

THE Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway bid farewell to one of its resident 0-6-0s as it set off for pastures new on the back of a lorry – before promptly welcoming a new one to its roster.

Barclay 0-6-0T No. 1245 of 1911 spent its working life in Scottish industrial settings, being delivered new to the Carron Iron Company at Falkirk before transferring to the National Coal Board in 1949, being withdrawn in 1972. Sent to Thomas Muir scrapyard in Kirkcaldy, in 2004 it was purchased by Alex Sharphouse and moved to the LHR where restoration was completed in just 19 months. It became a stalwart of the fleet and for a time was even dressed up to play the titular character for Day Out With Thomas events there.

After 21 years on the LMR, it was sold to Nemesis Rail director Martin Sargent and departed in May.

"I've been involved with railways for a long time and have always wanted a steam locomotive, so when the opportunity was there to buy one, it just had to be done," he said.

No. 1245 initially moved to the contract maintenance and restoration firm's depot at Burton-on-Trent, where it was steamed on a handful of occasions prior to a subsequent move to Ruddington on the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) on June 19. Later that same day, No. 1245 underwent a test run, becoming the first steam locomotive to cross the new bridge over the A60. It will remain on loan to the GCR(N) for a while, making its passenger debut there at the July 5/6 Railway 200 open weekend.

"We are glad to be able to help out in bringing steam back to this northern part of the line. It's also the furthest south this locomotive has travelled, it having spent the majority of its life in Scotland and the Lake District," Martin said.

Little more than a fortnight after No. 1245 departed the LHR, a replacement arrived in the shape of Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3797 of 1953, initially employed by the Ministry of Defence at its Bicester base where it was numbered WD197 and later named *Sapper* in May 1965. Still owned by the MoD, in 1977 it was taken to the Kent & East Sussex Railway, which later sold it to Rolvenden Steam Enterprises in 1979. Following restoration it entered service there as KESR No. 25 in 1981, carrying in a lined blue livery similar to that it had carried during a short stay at the Longmoor Military Railway. As the *Sapper* nameplates were not available, it was renamed *Northiam* and has remained in this guise for most of its years of service.

Now owned by Steve Latham, it relocated to Cumbria on June 10 on long-term loan to the LHR, where it will in time be joined in service by fellow Austerity No. 3698 (NCB No. 11) *Repulse* which is undergoing overhaul there. This move followed an earlier sale of sister No. 24 *Rolvenden* (WD 200) to another private buyer in 2014. RSE continues to retain ownership of No. 23 (WD191 *Black Knight*), which is currently out of service awaiting overhaul.

A LHR statement said: "*Northiam* is in the same series of Hunslet-built Austerities as the Furness Railway Trust's No. 3794 *Cumbria* (WD194) and they both spent time in MoD ownership at Bicester. *Cumbria* also spent many years at the LHR as the mainstay of our early operation.

"As the overhaul of *Repulse* is likely to take some time, *Northiam* will perfectly fill the need for another loco capable of hauling our heavier trains."

Northiam continues to carry KESR branding on its saddle tanks, although it is expected that a repaint will be carried out in the coming months.

Robin Coombes, KESR general manager, said: "We are sorry to see No. 25 go, having been such a stalwart of the fleet during my time here. However, the agreement was reached privately and amicably between the parties concerned, and they are fully entitled to make such arrangements as the locomotive was only on hire to us. We are simply pleased that the locomotive will continue to be used and maintained, and we wish the new owner every success."

Meanwhile, Haverthwaite-based Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 2682 of 1942 *Princess* (one of seven which worked at Preston Docks and for the last 41 years was owned by LHR director Graham Magee) has now passed into ownership of the railway's operating company.



On June 21, custodian the 5305 Locomotive Acociation held a special event to mark the 100th birthday of the sole-surviving Southern Railway Maunsell 4-6-0 No. 777 *Sir Lamiel*, under overhaul at Loughborough on the Great Central Railway since 2020. The association's volunteers gave guided shed tours to the public who could see the progress on the 1925-built North British Locomotive, which is part of the National Collection, and a special cake was displayed. The final part of the overhaul will see the locomotive repainted in lined-out BR Green with early crests on the tender, replacing the current Malachite green. Once the overhaul is finished, a second five-year loan agreement will be negotiated to enable *Sir Lamiel* to begin main line tours and visit other heritage lines. 5305LA **Inset:** PAUL MAYO/GCR

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French 'Jinty' redress takes Severn Valley to the continent for 1940s event

By Owen Hayward

SEVERN Valley Railway driver Tom Clarke saw an opportunity for the line's hugely popular 1940s double weekend to pay tribute to the work of British steam by temporarily redressing a locomotive.

Tom, who has been involved with the events for 25 years, was asked by the organisers whether there was anything appropriate from the out-of-service fleet that could be displayed on June 7/8 and 14/15.

"The choices were WR 2-6-0 No. 7325 again or do something with Folwer 'Jinty' 3F No. 47383," he said.

"My first thought was a temporary relettering into LMS livery, although I had an inkling that some were exported to France for the war effort.

"Some hefty research to dig out some photographs and words from online and in books was in order to make a good go at recreating one of these locos.

"I found that eight of these locomotives were taken over to France after being purchased from the LMS by the War Department for £3100 each; all were steam brake-only engines and not fitted with vacuum train brakes. Five survived the war, were repatriated in 1948, repaired at Derby, and reinstated into BR service. From the records of No. 1 Railway Operating Group Royal Engineers, based at Rennes, it can be determined that all eight arrived at Calais during the first week of March 1940 and put to work."

No. 47383 has not run since being withdrawn pending overhaul in 2002 and up until 2024 was displayed inside the Engine House at Highley. It currently resides in the carriage shed at Kidderminster. Though it wasn't one of those shipped to France, a temporary change of identity proved to be a perfect way to bring it out for display.



LMS 'Jinty' No. 47838 dressed up as No. 7611, one of its classmates which was exported to France during the Second World War. MARTIN CREESE

Creating the changes

"Of the eight which were exported, the best side-on view was of No. 7611, complete with ALA via Dunkerque and other markings denoting its export. Permission was sought from the SVR and Frank Cronin, one of the locomotive's owners, and a large roll of glossy black vinyl sheet was acquired. This was laid out on my patio floor with the measurements of a 'Jinty' side tank to hand, and the lettering was all drawn out and painted. This vinyl was then applied to the locomotive with a layer of petroleum jelly in order for the adhesive to not damage the paintwork when removed.

"The smokebox numberplate was cut out from a piece of plywood, painted, and then bolted over the fitted BR one which isn't removable, while the shed plate was covered over with another piece of vinyl. The main platform viewing side of the loco was treated to a thin layer of petroleum jelly then painted with watered-down grey and black poster paints – this ensured a duller shine than the high-gloss museum-ready finish the locomotive carries. The final touch was my pair of WD loco lamps, which were placed in various positions on the front of the loco during the event."

The 'Jinty' was displayed in one of the bay platforms at Kidderminster station each day of the event, where there were also several appropriately-themed home interiors set up for a series of living history displays. At stations across the line, reenactors in period attire hopped on and off of trains, with appearances by Winston Churchill and a wartime wedding bringing further points of interest for visitors to enjoy.



On June 11, the Bluebell Railway's SR Battle of Britain 4-6-2 No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair* made a fleeting return to main line metals when it was towed from East Grinstead (pictured) to Willesden Euroterminal for a private event there, organised by those involved with the construction of HS2. It was substituting for BR Standard 5MT No. 73802 *Camelot,* which was stopped at short notice for mechanical attention. It was the first time since withdrawal in 1966 that No. 34059 has run on the main line network and was towed along with Bulleid BTO No. 2526 by a Class 66 diesel, with barrier wagons at either end providing additional braking capacity owing to the lack of vacuum braking equipment on that locomotive; the consist was returned to Sussex a few days later. JAMES CUMMINS/BLUEBELL RAILWAY

Steam out, diesel in as fire risk soars

A PROLONGED hot and dry late spring and early summer saw heritage lines substitute steam with diesel as fire risks increased.

On June 17, the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway announced that with a further predicted heatwave approaching, it would be withdrawing steam and opting for diesel traction for the coming days. The Statfold Barn Railway said 24 hours later: "Our railway line runs through farmland and countryside, so to keep the crops and countryside safe in these conditions, the decision has been made to replace all steam locomotive operations with either diesel or battery-electric locomotives until further notice."

On June 19, which, as this issue closed for press, was recorded as the hottest day of the year, the Nene Valley Railway called on Class 45 No. 45041 *Royal Tank Regiment* to work the following weekend's services, while the Great Central Railway advised it would run diesel-hauled train until further notice following reports of several fires earlier that day.

Diesels back on the Moors

Having already experienced a steam ban in May, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway announced on June 20 that it was again changing over "until further notice." Three days later it announced that the situation had changed sufficiently to enable steam to work on Network Rail's Grosmont-Whitby section; but as we went to press, steam towards Pickering had not resumed.

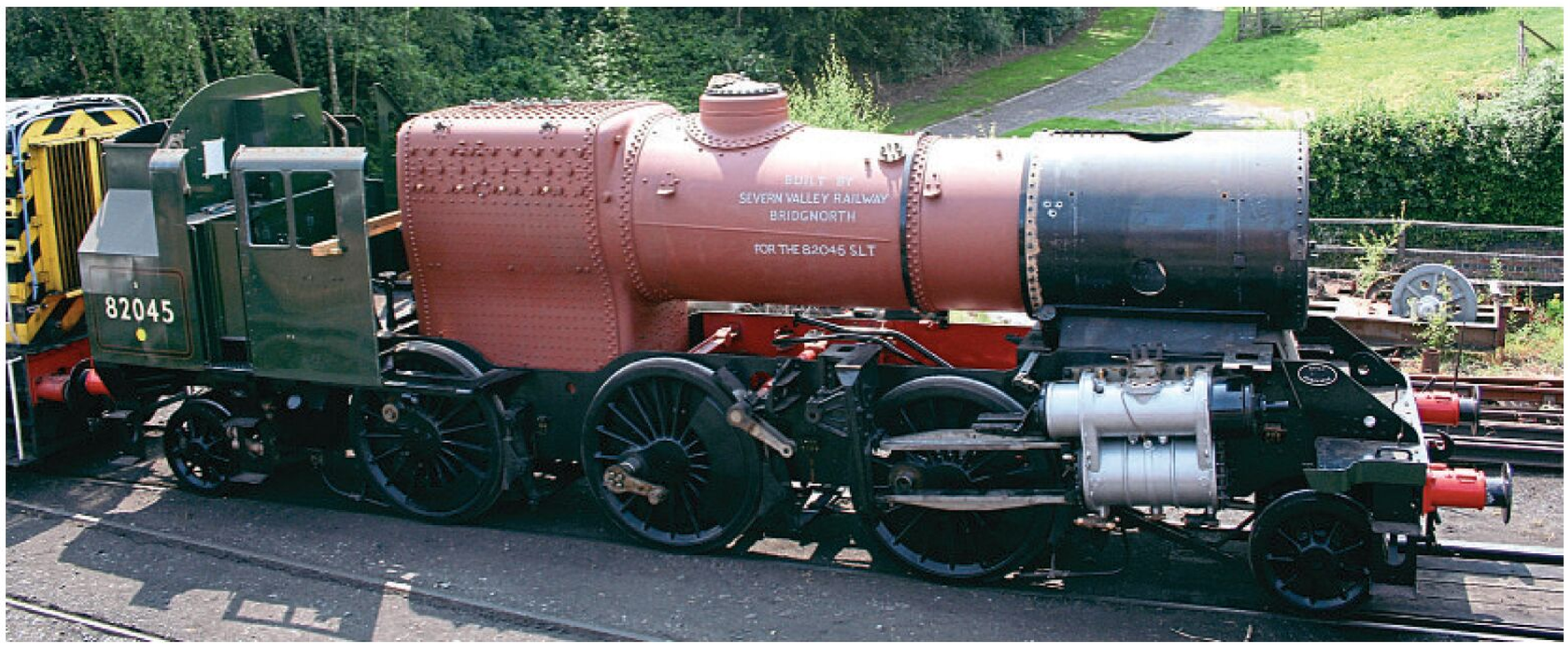
On June 21 on the 15in gauge Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, a short section of line buckled in the heat at Seaview Road level crossing, near Dungeness. Responding to *Heritage Railway* about this, a spokesperson said: "We had an issue with track expansion due to the extreme weather, but this has now been resolved and was resolved before any passengers travelled on the line."

Main line tours have also required diesel assistance to take the load to enable a steam presence to remain, while on June 19, Merchant Navy No. 35028 *Clan Line* was withdrawn completely from its regular Belmond Pullman Kent circular outing.

Greatest Gathering adds A1, A3 and 3MT to roster

The Greatest Gathering

By Robin Jones



BR 3MT No. 82045, with its newly-completed boiler fitted at the end of June, will head to Derby in August. 82045 SLT

LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* and new-build duo A1 Peppercorn 4-6-2 No. 60163 *Tornado* and BR Standard 3MT No. 82045 have become the latest locomotives to be booked for The Greatest Gathering at Alstom's Litchurch Lane plant in Derby on August 1-3.

Rob Whyte, managing director at Alstom UK and Ireland, said: "*Flying Scotsman*'s attendance is a powerful tribute to Britain's steam legacy and a moment of railway history not to be missed.

"While we proudly honour icons of the past like *Flying Scotsman*, we also hope The Greatest Gathering will ignite the imagination of tomorrow's engineers as we showcase the latest sustainable and digital rail innovations at our Derby site."

The A1 (picture, page 3) and A3 (picture, cover) will take their places at Britain's biggest and oldest remaining train factory among the world's largest-ever gathering of historic and modern rolling stock, with the site opening to the public for the first time in nearly 50 years. The pair will take part in a steam cavalcade including A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*.

Flying Scotsman will temporarily leave Litchurch Lane on the morning of Saturday, August 2 to haul the luxury Belmond British Pullman train between Wellingborough and Derby, returning to the event in the early afternoon. Due to its own operational availability, *Tornado* will appear at The Greatest Gathering on August 1 and 2 only.

3MT joins the ranks

In addition to the Gresley Pacifics, the new-build 3MT No. 82045 will attend, the 2-6-2T having had its completed boiler refitted to the frames at the end of June.

With the smokebox needing to be rivetted to the barrel and limited time to complete this, only one of the water tanks will be fitted prior to its departure from Bridgnorth.

On June 27, Alstom released an additional 2500 tickets for each day of the hitherto sold-out event, which were expected to sell out fast.

Flying Scotsman's owner, the National Railway Museum, will sell merchandise to commemorate the key exhibits from the National Collection appearing at the event.

Other standard gauge locomotives recently added to the growing guest list include LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea*, Class 17 D8568, Class 24 D5054, Class 37 No. 37508, Class 37 No. 37418, Class 46 No. 46045, Class 55 D9000 *Royal Scots Grey*, Class 56 No. 56301, Class 57 No. 57003 and Class 86 No. 86401. Also present will be Inspection Saloon No. 975025 *Caroline*, originally the Southern Region general manager's saloon.

A 2ft gauge demonstration line will be installed, over which the world's oldest operating narrow-gauge locomotive, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's recently overhaul England 0-4-0STT No. 1 *Prince* of 1863 (pictures, pages 46-49) will run alongside Hunslet 0-4-2ST No. 3902 of 1971 *Trangkil No. 4*, the last steam locomotive built in the UK for non-heritage purposes, from the Statfold Barn Railway.

There will also be a 15in gauge line over which Exmoor Steam Railway-built 0-6-2T *Anne,* from the Perrygrove Railway, and 0-4-0T *Katie*, the first locomotive built by Sir Arthur Heywood for the Eaton Hall Railway in 1896 and now owned by the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society, will run. This track is being provided by the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway.

An Alstom statement said: "A key part of the railway story over the last 200 years belongs to the many and varied smaller gauge railways which transported goods and passengers, often in more challenging terrain than their larger standard-gauge cousins.

"In Britain alone, there were more than 1000 narrow-gauge railways, serving everything from slate quarries to seaside resorts. These lines were often lifelines for the communities they served, and many have since become beloved heritage attractions. It's only fitting that their history is showcased at Alstom's Railway 200 event, where visitors can experience first-hand the charm, ingenuity and enduring legacy of narrow-gauge steam."

A 5in gauge rideable railway will be operated by the Derby Society of Model and Experimental Engineers and a display by the Ground Level 5in gauge Main Line Association will take place along the length of one of the giant workshops.

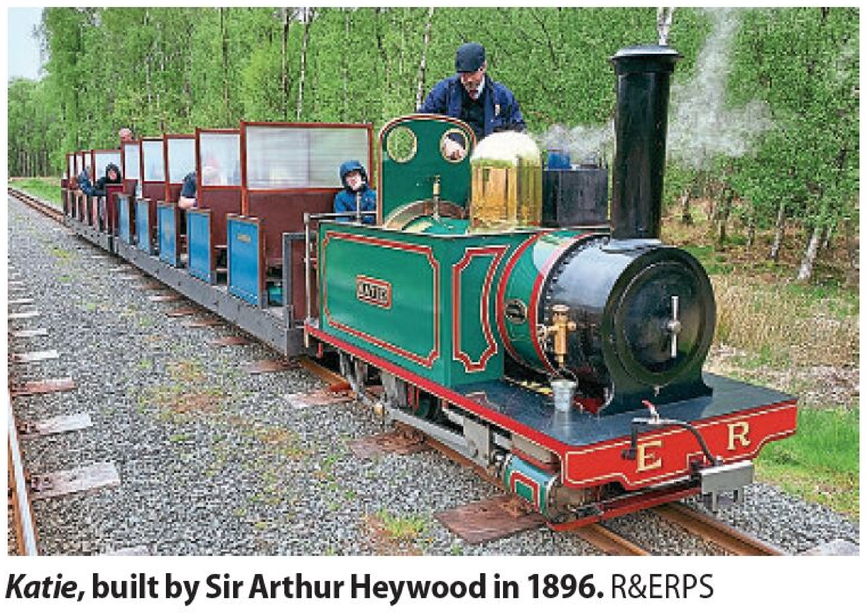
Elsewhere, entrants to the Railway Challenge organised by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers will showcase the skills, expertise, knowledge and business acumen of rising stars in the rail industry. Now in its 14th year, it participants design and manufacture a 10¼in gauge locomotive in accordance with a set of strict rules and a detailed technical specification. Students from the University of Derby, along with Alstom apprentices and graduates, will present The Derby Express at the festival, alongside a locomotive from the University of Sheffield.



Hunslet 0-4-2ST *Trangkil No. 4*, the last steam locomotive built in the UK for non-heritage purposes, 167 years after Richard Trevithick gave the first public demonstration of a steam locomotive. JOEY EVANS



Exmoor Steam railway-built 0-6-2T *Anne*. PERRYGROVE RAILWAY



***Katie*, built by Sir Arthur Heywood in 1896.** R&ERPS

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Narrow-gauge at Severn Valley Railway 200 event too – with *Scots Guardsman* as new guest

TWO narrow-gauge locomotives will join the line-up for the Severn Valley Railway's Railway 200: Trains Through The Ages event on July 5/6. However, LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* will replace the previously planned guest, new-build A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, which now has main line commitments elsewhere.

De Winton 0-4-0VBT *Chaloner* of 1877, from the Leighton Buzzard Railway, will appear alongside Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 779 of 1902 *Holy War,* from the Bala Lake Railway. Both will run on specially installed temporary tracks at the Engine House Visitor Centre at Highley, offering footplate rides to visitors.

Holy War was the last steam locomotive to work in any slate quarry in the UK and in 1969 ended nearly a century of association between steam traction and slate quarries.

Chaloner was built at De Winton's Union Works in Caernarfon. For more than 70 years, it worked in slate quarries before being withdrawn in 1950 and being preserved in 1960. It has made several visits to the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway, the most recent being for the 'Snowdonian' event on April 26.

The SVR's managing director, Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, said: "As one door closes, another one opens! While obviously we are sorry that *Tornado* is no longer able to come to us, we are delighted that *Scots Guardsman* has been drafted in, and we are very grateful to David Smith and West Coast Railways for providing such a high-profile replacement locomotive.

"This particular loco will be a big draw. It's rarely seen on a preserved line – we believe the last time was more than a decade ago – and it hasn't hauled any train now for two years. It's definitely what enthusiasts would term a 'red pen' locomotive!

"No. 60163 is needed for main line tour duties following the failure of another locomotive, and this is just one of those unavoidable situations that you encounter in heritage rail. Plus, it means we've got something to look forward to, as *Tornado* will definitely be coming to us for a future visit."

HydroFLEX, the UK's first hydrogen-ready passenger train, will also appear at the event, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 333.

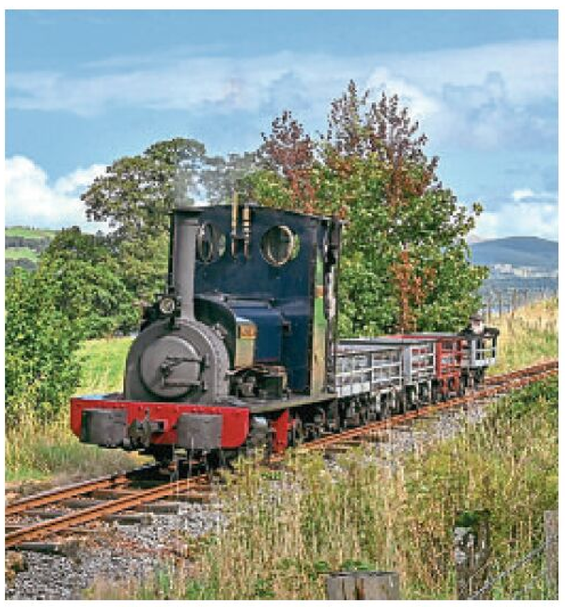
"Things are shaping up very well for our Railway 200 event," said Gus. "It's going to be unmissable.

"With all our guests, plus our own GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall*, GWR 0-4-2T No. 1450 operating an auto train, LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 and a range of heritage diesels from our fleet, we will have more than 130 years of rolling stock on site, with locos from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries!'

Other attractions include a pre-Grouping goods train and a flypast from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Lancaster. The weekend will also offer the final chance to see *Inspiration*, the Railway 200 exhibition train, at the SVR on the first leg of its UK-wide tour (see separate story).



LMS 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* turns around the triangle at Hatton with the Railway Touring Company's 'The Stratford Flyer' from Manchester Piccadilly to Stratford-upon-Avon on March 11, 2023. JOHN TITLOW



***Holy War* hauls a freight rake on the Bala Lake Railway.** JOEY EVANS



De Winton *Chaloner* will bring vertical boiler steam trips to the Severn Valley Railway. JOEY EVANS

➜ More information, a timetable, and tickets can be found at https://svr.co.uk/event/railway-200-trains-through-the-ages/

Thomas celebrates 80th birthday with new documentary

THE Greatest Gathering will also feature the UK premiere of An Unlikely Fandom: The Impact of Thomas the Tank Engine, a new documentary marking the character's 80th birthday.

Directed by Brannon Carty, the documentary examines the origins of Thomas the Tank Engine, its global impact, and enduring legacy and the passionate community of fans that has grown around it.

Brannon, an independent filmmaker from Greensboro, North Carolina, will travel from the USA to take part in a question-and-answer session following the screening on August 2, where he will be joined by the film's producers, Ahmad Akfa, Joshua Hood and Nicholas Maniscalco, along with co-producer James Garder.

"Collaborating with Alstom for the UK premiere of An Unlikely Fandom is an incredible honour. Longtime fans and newcomers can finally experience the film that moved audiences at our New York premiere in November 2023," said Brannon.

"At its core, this documentary tells the story of how one little blue train connects fans across generations, cultures and communities.

"Sharing our passion project at such a landmark event feels like the perfect way to celebrate Thomas' 80th anniversary."

Ben Goodwin, director of communications UK and Ireland at Alstom, said: "For many of us rail fans, it was watching episodes of Thomas the Tank Engine as children that drew us into the wonderful world of trains and railways.

"Therefore, it was only fitting that we shone a spotlight on Thomas and his friends at The Greatest Gathering and invite the filmmakers to premiere their fantastic documentary at our historic site.

"For visitors coming to our festival on Saturday, August 2, this will be a perfect way to end their day."

The popular character began his adventures in a book published in 1945 – the first in the Rev W Awdry's The Railway Series. These stories were later adapted by Britt Allcroft into a live action television show that starred the anthropomorphic railway engines, and which ran from 1984 until 2021.

Tickets to the UK premiere of An Unlikely Fandom: The Impact of Thomas the Tank Engine are available for purchase only by existing ticketholders of The Greatest Gathering on August 2 only.



Britt Allcroft, Thom3as the Tank Engine & Friends series creator, and Brannon Carty, director of the documentary. AN UNLIKELY FANDOM

The price is £10 per person plus booking fees, and are available via www.alstom.com/greatest-gathering and https://thegreatestgathering.seetickets.com/event/an-unlikely-fandom-uk-premiere/alstom/3437750

Railway 200 takes top tourism prize at VisitEngland Excellence Awards

By Robin Jones

THE Railway 200 campaign has carried off the Outstanding Contribution to Tourism Award at the VisitEngland Excellence Awards 2025.

Highlighting the finest of England's outstanding tourism industry, which generates about £76 billion in annual domestic visitor spending, the winners were announced at a ceremony in the Brighton Dome Corn Exchange on June 4.

It was the first time that this special award, made in addition to the 16 regular awards, has been given for a campaign that is not yet completed, recognising the huge engagement programme last year, which created awareness of the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary and triggered a large and varied national programme of events, activities and shared storytelling around the UK.



Left to right: Jon Beardmore, from the Bluebell Railway, and Emma Roberts, Rob Lowe and Suzanne Donnelly, from Railway 200, holding the Outstanding Contribution to Tourism Award trophy at the Brighton Dome Corn Exchange. RAILWAY 200

Vital role

VisitEngland director Andrew Stokes said that the award went to Railway 200 "in recognition of its valuable role in highlighting the importance of our railway heritage and rail travel to domestic and inbound tourism in England."

The award is given each year by the VisitEngland Advisory Board to an individual, institution or collective that has contributed something special and unique to tourism in England.

The board recognised the excellent planning, the commitment to partnership working, and the sheer determination of the small team with a limited budget, which have already worked tirelessly on the anniversary celebrations for more than a year.

Emma Roberts, programme manager for Railway 200, who collected the award, said: "The response to the bicentenary opportunity from within and beyond the rail industry has been amazing – and there's more to come!

"This award is very welcome recognition of their immense contribution, so far, in partnership with a small national team which I am proud to manage."

Year of celebrations

The 200th anniversary celebrations kicked off on New Year's Day with a global Whistle-Up, which saw 200 locomotives on five continents blowing horns and whistles to signal the start of Railway 200, as highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 328.

Subsequent highlights to date include a commemorative rail coin from the Royal Mint, a successful anniversary rail sale offering more than two million cut-price tickets, heritage railway galas and festivals, locomotive namings, and a global poll to choose the nation's favourite railway artwork (see page 20), alongside the launch of the partner nine-month S&DR200 festival in the North East.

More than 360 events

As previously reported, June 27 will see the launch of unique new exhibition train *Inspiration* (separate story below), Alstom's sold-out The Greatest Gathering (see story opposite), the National Railway Museum's 50th birthday celebrations, and the Railway 200 Bluebell Railway Festival running for three months to September.

More than 630 activities and events have been registered so far on an interactive map on the Railway 200 website, and many others have taken place or are planned.

For more information, see our listings on page 90 of this issue or head online and visit www.railway200.co.uk

Book your tickets for unique *Inspiration* exhibition train now

By Robin Jones

BOOKINGS are now open for Railway 200's unique exhibition train *Inspiration* after the schedule for the first six months of its year-long tour was confirmed on June 11.

It now covers 27 locations in England, Scotland and Wales up to the end of the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary year.

The train opens to the public on June 27 at the Severn Valley Railway and will criss-cross Britain for 12 months, visiting 60 locations to showcase rail's past, present, and future.

Tickets to board it are now available for booking up to August 17 and registrations of interest are open for visits from August 23 to December 20. Those who register their interest will be the first to be informed when new bookings open.

Curated in partnership with the National Railway Museum, *Inspiration* will be the only exhibition train on the rail network and aims to attract the next generation of pioneering talent to the industry. As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 330, the train comprises four carriages, fitted out with the aid of a £250,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund with funding from Porterbrook covering the distinctive livery, and powered by a locomotive.

Rail's pioneering pedigree will be explored in a Railway Firsts coach, highlighting landmark moments in rail's development. Next will be a Wonderlab on Wheels, inviting visitors to test their engineering skills with hands-on exhibits, followed by a Your Railway Future carriage, showcasing some of the more hidden roles in rail and encouraging people to join the railway to shape the next 200 years. The final coach is a Partner Zone, offering free and flexible exhibition space.

Mass appeal

More than 200,000 people, including many schoolchildren, are expected to visit by prior booking. While admission to the train will be free, normal entry charges to heritage railways and private sites where it is located will apply.

After its launch at Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway on June 27, the train was next set to head for Birmingham Moor Street station (July 8-10); Euston (July 12-15); Waterloo (July 18/19); Margate (July 20/21); the Bluebell Railway (July 23-29); Alstom's Litchurch Lane depot in Derby for The Great Gathering (August 1-3); Norwich (August 7-10); Lowestoft (August 7-10); Freightliner Doncaster Railport (August 16/17); National Railway Museum, York, as part of the NRM's 50th birthday (August 23-31).

It will visit the North East in September – rail's 200th anniversary month – as part of the nine-month Stockton and Darlington Railway festival, at Darlington station (September 10-17) and the Locomotion museum in Shildon (September 20-October 1).

Next stop will be the Hitachi Open Day at Newton Aycliffe (October 4), followed by the North Yorkshire Moors Railway (October 5-7); Glasgow Central (October 11/12); Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway (October 13/14); Strathspey Railway (October 16/17); Aberdeen (October 19/20); Edinburgh Waverley (October 22/23); Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, as part of Bradford UK City of Culture (October 25-November 2); Blackpool North (November 4-7); and West Somerset Railway, Bishops Lydeard (November 24-29). Llandudno will be added to the tour in November once dates are confirmed, and further destinations are being explored for Wales in 2026. In December, the train will visit Paddington (8-13), Southampton Central (14-16) and London Victoria (18-20)

Booking open

Booked visits will take place between 10am and 5pm, with the on-train experience expected to last up to an hour.

A virtual tour of the exhibition experience will be available for those who are unable to visit in person.

Emma Roberts, programme manager for Railway 200, said: "This special exhibition train is set to become a new, national visitor attraction, providing an unforgettable experience for hundreds of thousands of people across Britain, including many schoolchildren. It will excite, enlighten, entertain and inspire them to take a fresh look at the railway, as part of its anniversary celebrations."

➜ To book tickets or register your interest, visit https:// railway200.co.uk/ inspiration/

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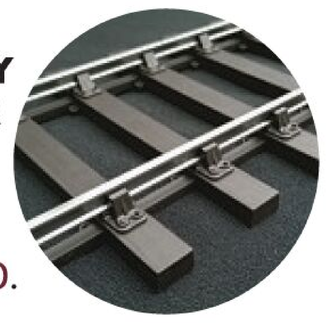
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Unique liveried GWR tank steals East Somerset spring show

By John Titlow

GWR tank engines formed the central theme of the East Somerset Railway's spring gala, with one of them appearing fresh from overhaul and wearing a newly-applied unique transitional BR black.

Taking place on the weekend of May 31/June 1, the ESR's annual event ran much later than usual this year, a break with tradition because it is normally held in the middle of March.

The gala was a Great Western affair – apart from Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1719 of 1920 *Lady Nan*, which provided the usual footplate duties around Cranmore station, with driver experiences costing £10.

However, the star of the show was the return to full working condition of Great Western 2-8-0T No. 4247, making its debut after its recent overhaul at Cranmore.

Designed by George Churchward, it was built at Swindon in 1916 for heavy freight work principally in South Wales. Not only did it spend part of its working life in South Wales at Ebbw Junction, but also some of it working out of St Blazey in Cornwall.

It was withdrawn from Tondu shed in 1964 and sent to Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyard.

After being in rescued in 1985 by the 4247 Preservation Society Ltd, the locomotive returned to Cornwall and the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, where it spent much of its heritage era life.

It arrived at Cranmore from Bodmin by road in 2022 and had to wait for work on GWR prairie No. 4110 to be completed before its booked heavy general overhaul, overseen by Steve Masters, could begin in earnest.

Before the gala. No. 4247 was undergoing the finishing touches and now looks resplendent in its British Railways black livery, as reported last issue. The gala saw its first public running days in about seven years.

July will see No. 4247 move to its new home on the Dartmouth Steam Railway, running in with empty coaching stock gauging runs, and final finetuning before it will join the steam locomotive roster fleet there.

No. 4247 has also appeared at several other heritage railways since being restored in 2001. It has visited the West Somerset twice, Great Central, Swanage, Avon Valley, Gloucestershire Warwickshire, Kent & East Sussex, Swindon & Cricklade and South Devon railways and Didcot Railway Centre, East Somerset Railway and, soon, Dartmouth Steam Railway.

Owner 4247 Ltd has signed a 20-year loan agreement with the DSR, with a further 10-year option on the table. Under the agreement, it will have the opportunity to visit other heritage railways on a maximum of three occasions in a 10-year period. However, both parties have agreed that it is highly unlikely that No. 4247 will be hired out for two years due to the overhaul and financial outlay.

Both the DSR and the owning group are hoping that three 42XXs based there will at sometime be seen together, hopefully around the turntable at Churston, depicting the different liveries being carried by each: GWR and British Railways 1948-on black livery, with No. 4247 carrying the unique transitional livery applied by Caerphilly Works for a short period in 1948 before the standard typeface was set by Swindon.

Perfect Prairies

Meanwhile, at the East Somerset gala, the other two Great Western locomotive in action were 2-6-2Ts Nos. 4555 and 4110.

No. 4110 is one of the Class 5101 Large Prairies built at Swindon in 1936, power classification 4MT. It moved to the ESR in 2020 and was restored at Cranmore, appearing first at the line's March 2023 gala. No. 4555, built at Swindon in 1924 as part of the 4500 class, now carries the late BR steam era livery after having recently undergone a repaint. Appropriately, No. 4247 started



Making its public debut in its new livery, GWR 2-8-0TR 4247 runs into Cranmore with the first train of the gala as 2-6-2T No. 4555 waits on shed on May 31.

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Above: *Lady Nan* is prepared for a day of footplate rides at Cranmore shed.

Left: Double Prairie action: No. 4110 leads No. 4555 with the penultimate train of the day, returning to Cranmore.

proceedings each day on the 10am departure from Cranmore to Mendip Vale. Seven full return passenger trains ran to Mendip Vale, the first being the 10am adeparture and the last at 4.15pm.

The weekend saw a mix of passenger and goods trains, as well as two double-headers. The morning's double-header was No. 4110 leading No. 4247 to Cranmore. In the afternoon, it was the turn of No. 4110 to lead No. 4555 out of Mendip Vale.

There was one long freight, made up mainly of milk tanks, covering the full line. No.4555 led the outward bunker first and No.4247 led the return to Cranmore. The 2-8-0T also looked perfectly at home on the freight and no assistance was needed from No. 4555.

Around Cranmore, there was a one morning and one afternoon demonstration short goods. All locomotives faced Cranmore and performed well, and timekeeping on both days was reasonable.

Passenger numbers were slightly down on last year. Overhead costs were reduced considerably due to not having to pay for the transportation of a visiting locomotives

Regular services take place throughout the summer on Wednesdays, Thursdays and weekends hauled by steam or diesel. For more information, visit https://eastsomersetrailway.com



GWR Prairie No. 4555 climbs through the cutting after departing Mendip Vale.



No. 4247 starts the climb as it departs Mendip Vale.



GWR 2-8-0T No. 4247 rests at Cranmore after pulling the first train of the event.



With No. 4555 banking, No. 4247 is doing all the work and looks perfectly at home on the freight departing Mendip Vale on May 31.

Wiltshire winner for public's favourite railway artwork

200 Years of Train Travel 1825–2025

By Robin Jones

THE world's best-loved railway artwork in the UK has been named as Train Landscape by artist Eric Ravilious following a global poll held to mark Railway 200, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 329.

The announcement of the winning artwork on June 9 coincides with the birthday of rail pioneer George Stephenson.

The watercolour was painted in 1940 and shows the chalk white horse of Westbury, in Wiltshire, viewed through the window of a third-class carriage. Tirzah Garwood, wife of Eric Ravilious (1903–1942), made the collage using elements from different watercolours Ravilious painted while travelling by train. The painting is held in the collection of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums and has now been placed on public display there.

Runners up

The second most popular artwork was Rain, Steam and Speed by JMW Turner (1775-1851), pictured in *Heritage Railway* issue 332, and the third most popular was Service by Night, created by the late East Somerset Railway founder David Shepherd (1931-2017). A curated exhibition of the top 20 paintings in the poll will run online at https://artuk.org/discover/curations/the-worlds-favourite-railway-artworks until December 31.

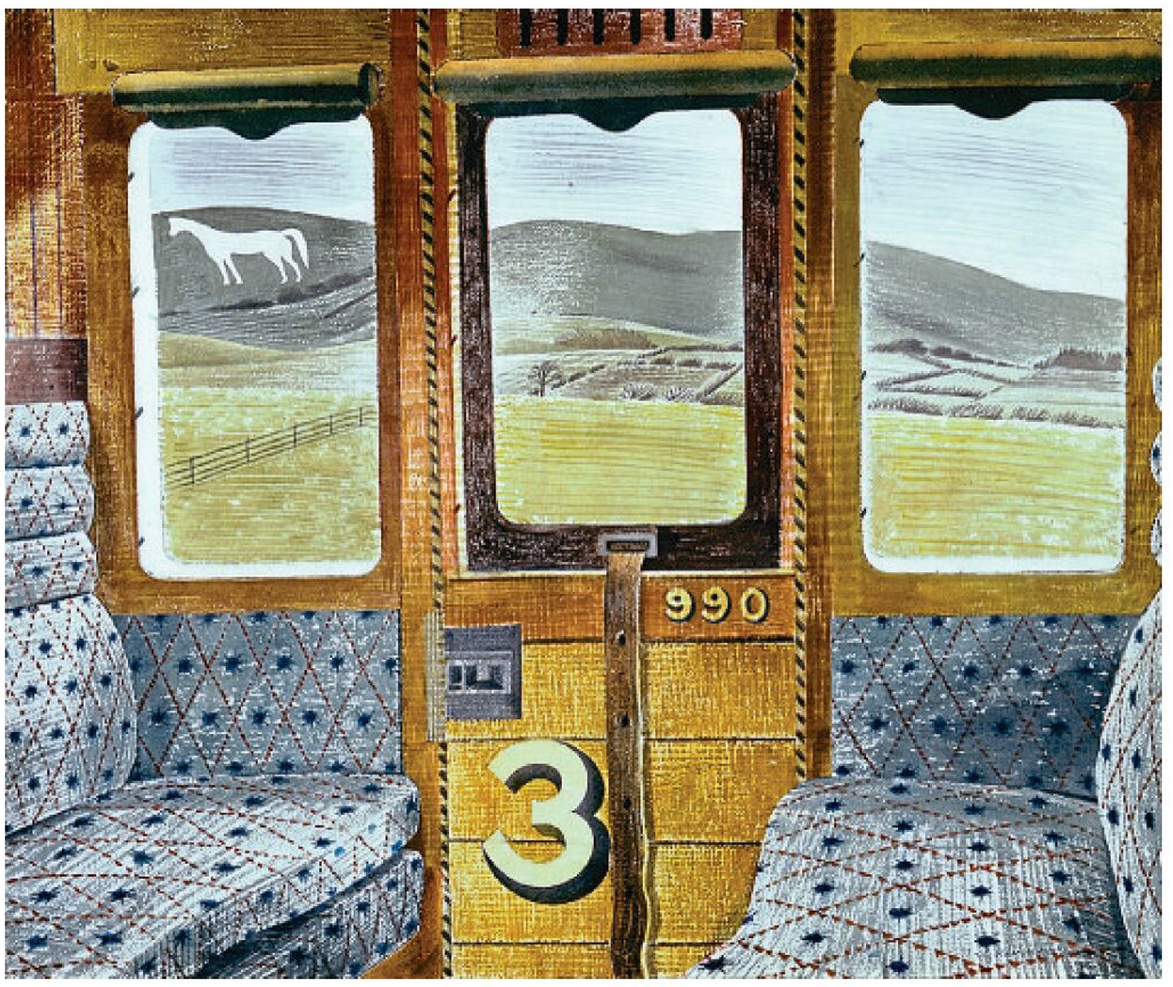
Heritage Minister Baroness Twycross said: "Congratulations to Eric Ravilious's Train Landscape as our nation's favourite railway artwork.

"This evocative watercolour invites us all to experience a railway journey through an artist's eye, capturing a uniquely British perspective that resonates today.

"Art offers a powerful way to engage with our past, and this selection of artworks tell the unique story of Britain's relationship with railways over 200 years.

"In the year of Railway 200, I encourage everyone to explore these magnificent works and find inspiration from our shared cultural heritage."

The artist's granddaughter, Ella Ravilious, said: "I'm thrilled. Eric rode back and forth on the train,



Train Landscape, by Eric Ravilious, has been voted the UK's most-loved train-related artwork. ABERDEEN ARCHIVES, GALLERY & MUSEUMS

making several watercolours, none of which he was totally happy with. Tirzah collaged the best bits of each painting together to create a successful picture.

"Train lovers might notice that the chalk figure visible from the train window should be the Long Man of Wilmington rather than the Westbury Horse because it was painted on the Brighton to Eastbourne line."

Captured imagination

Alan Hyde, from Railway 200, said: "Like the amazing artworks, this competition has captured the imagination of people around the world, highlighting an enduring connection between art and the railway."

Andrew Ellis, chief executive of Art UK, added: 'Art UK is delighted to have partnered with Railway 200 to connect the public to a truly wonderful selection of railway-inspired artworks.

"We are thrilled that the work will now be on display and we encourage everyone to make the train journey to Scotland and see it.'

Coun Martin Greig, Aberdeen City Council's culture spokesman, said: 'It's a tremendous source of pride for all of us here in Aberdeen that the public vote has recognised Train Landscape in this way – to steam into first place ahead of a painting JMW Turner is really quite something.

"This painting has been a favourite of mine since childhood.

"We hope this news will encourage people to travel to Aberdeen to experience Train Landscape, along with all the other outstanding works on display at Aberdeen Art Gallery – just a short walk from the train station!'

In a two-stage public vote, a list of 200 railway artworks was selected from 94 public collections in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, including works dating from the 1830s to the 21st century, chosen by Art UK and its museum partners.

It was whittled down to a shortlist of 20 paintings on World Art Day before the outright winner was selected. More than 6500 votes were cast, including from the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.



In third place was Service by Night, painted by the young David Shepherd, who was paid £60 – the equivalent of six weeks' average wages in the mid-1950s. It shows a northbound train leaving King's Cross, hauled by what appears to be one of Sir Nigel Gresley's A3 Pacifics. Night trains in the 1950s still conveyed the bulk of the nation's mail and newspapers.
NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM/SCIENCE & SOCIETY PICTURE LIBRARY

The final order of the top 20 best-loved UK railway artworks is:

1. **Train Landscape**, 1940, by Eric Ravilious, Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.
2. **Rain, Steam, and Speed – The Great Western Railway,** 1844, by Joseph Mallord William Turner , The National Gallery, London.
3. **Service by Night,** 1955, by David Shepherd, National Railway Museum (NRM).
4. **The Travelling Companions,** 1862, by Augustus Leopold Egg (1816–1863), Birmingham Museum s Trust.
5. **Clapham Junction,** 1961, by Terence Cuneo (1907–1996),NRM.
6. **By Rail to Wales**, by Frank Wootton (1911–1998), National Railway Museum.
7. **The 'Coronation Scot' Ascending Shap Fell, Cumbria,** 1937, by Norman Wilkinson (1878–1971), NRM.
8. **Talyllyn Railway on the Dolgoch Viaduct,** 1967, by Terence Cuneo, Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum.
9. **View from a Railway Carriage; Beginning of the Carriage**, by Anna Todd (b.1964), Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.
10. **Blue Train at Bowling Harbour**, 1965, by Terence Cuneo. Glasgow Life Museums.
11. **Waterloo Station,** 1967, by Terence Cuneo (1907–1996), Science Museum.
12. **Mallard**, 1980s, by Ann Emily Carr (b.1929), Hopetown Darlington.
13. **A Diesel Train on the Shore of Bassenthwaite Lake**, near Keswick, Cumberland, by Barber (active c.1950–1961), NRM.
14. **The Opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway**, 1825, 1949, by Terence Cuneo (1907–1996), NRM.
15. **The Erecting Shop of the North British Locomotive Company's Hyde Park Works**, Glasgow, 1924, by Ralph Gordon Tetley (1910–1985), NRM.
16. **Train Crossing Monsal Dale Viaduct**, by Norman Wilkinson (1878–1971), NRM.
17. **The Day Begins**, 1946, by Terence Cuneo (1907–1996), National Railway Museum.
18. **The Railway Station**, 1862, William Powell Frith (1819–1909), Royal Holloway, University of London;.
19. **Euston Station: Loading the Travelling Post Office**, 1948, by Grace Lydia Golden (1904–1993), The Postal Museum.
20. **'Crimson Rambler',** 1992, by Philip D Hawkins (b.1947), The Postal Museum.

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Artists' murals start new Stockton & Darlington 200 trail

By Robin Jones

THE first two murals in a series of nine being created by six artists to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway have been unveiled.

As reported last issue, the murals will be located along the S&DR Trail of Discovery, a new trail between Witton Park in County Durham and Stockton in Tees Valley that closely follows the original 26-mile route of the world's first passenger and goods train journey on the S&DR.

Each artist has been working with local community groups, including young creatives and asylum seekers, to reflect the people and places shaped by the S&DR and reveal the hidden histories of its key stations.

Adébayo Bolaji's Time and Place was unveiled at Grade II*-listed Darlington station on June 10. His first mural has been created with the festival's Young Producers programme, and he will then create a second piece in response to the first, again working with its members. His mural is a celebration of place and the first women of S&DR.

Connecting time and people

Adébayo said: "Creating this first mural at Darlington station has been a journey of connection between time, community, and identity. This piece is about honouring the past while embracing the power of change; it's designed for the producers and myself to then collaborate on the next phase and create something that speaks to the place it's now hanging in, so that part two is an evolution of part one."

Kate Jackson's Motion 200 at Grade II*-listed Heighington station, originally known as Heighington & Aycliffe station and held to be the oldest in the world and still in use as part of the Bishop Line, was also created in collaboration with the Young Producers programme

Kate said: "I was over the moon to be asked to make a mural design for Heighington station to celebrate 200 years of rail travel. It blows my mind that global rail travel all began here at this unassuming platform, and therefore so did the concept of universal time.

"Travelling by train is special to me – romantic, nostalgic and meditative. I wanted my mural to celebrate the design, look and feel of train travel through the ages and took the image of *Locomotion No. 1* travelling through Heighington as a starting point. It is a celebration of speed and motion, universal time, and this special place where it all began."

Part of the nine-month S&DR200 festival, the artwork project is supported by funding from Historic England and the Railway Heritage Trust. To follow will be murals by Morag Myerscough at Grade II-listed Stockton station, Aida Wilde at North Road station in Darlington, now home to Hopetown Darlington, Lewis Hobson on the Trail of Discovery footpath in Shildon, Caroline Cardus at The Masons Arms in Shildon and a second by Kate Jackson at The Aviary in Preston Park

As part of DR200, two public art installations will also be unveiled, each capturing a unique story of the railway's legacy and its connection to the community. One will be in the Locomotion museum in Shildon by local artist Ivan Black and its volunteers, and the other will be on the riverside in Stockton by artist James Bawn and poet Lizzy Lovejoy, with the Young Producers Group from Stockton Arts Centre.



Artist Adébayo Bolaji with his work, Time and Place, at Darlington station.
GRAEME ROWATT PHOTOGRAPHY

Exploration trail

The trail can be explored at a variety of waymarked sections on foot, by bicycle or by train from stations along the route. Visitors can see important heritage structures, including Skerne Bridge, the oldest railway bridge still in continuous use, and the Brusselton Incline, where a section of the original S&DR track is still visible.

A new Trail of Discovery game, voiced by broadcaster Steph McGovern using augmented reality to bring the parts of the route to life, is a legacy project developed and created by TUCan and the University of Teesside.

Lord Mendoza, chairman of Historic England, said: "These vibrant new murals will help tell the remarkable story of the S&DR, which dramatically changed the technology and transport systems of our world 200 years ago. Historic England is proud to help fund this project, bringing together artists and local communities to celebrate this extraordinary piece of our national heritage. By blending art with history along the trail, we are helping more people discover and enjoy this important story that helped shape Britain."

Railway Heritage Trust executive director Tim Hedley-Jones added: "Making stations relevant and vibrant places for the communities they serve is important, and this is a great way of involving local communities in achieving that."

➜ **More information about the S&DR Trail of Discovery can be found at www.sdr200.co.uk/discovery-trail**





Left: Motion 200 by Kate Jackson at Heighington station.
GRAEME ROWATT PHOTOGRAPHY
Right: Artist Kate Jackson at Darlington on June 10.
GRAEME ROWATT PHOTOGRAPHY

Railway pioneers celebrated – and now for the next Hopetown art stunner!

THE multiple award-winning Hopetown Darlington attraction is set to stage a second major exhibition at part of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 celebrations.

STEAM to the Future, which follows Railway Pioneers: Celebrating the Railway Rockstars of the Past, which was held in Hopetown's Exhibition Hall, will use commissioned art pieces showcasing the design and science behind the rail industry and where it will head during the next 200 years, with a second rail revolution driven by the growing green technologies sector in the Tees Valley and County Durham.

S&DR200 has commissioned an immersive installation by AA Murakami (Studio Swine), inspired by steam as a source of power, and the chance to create a 22nd century-inspired locomotive using virtual reality software.

The free event will be held in partnership with LNER, Hitachi Rail, Network Rail, Cummins and delivered by Darlington Borough, Durham County and Stockton Borough councils. It will open on July 11 and run until October 5, from 10am to 5pm, with the last entry at 4.30pm.

New manager sought to lead Llangollen into next 50 years

By Owen Hayward

FOLLOWING the departure of Tom Taylor, who joined the Llangollen Railway in 2021 to help re-establish it on sound footing as it recovered from administration, the heritage line is seeking to recruit a new LR Trust manager to be responsible for leading it into the next chapter of its now 50-year story.

Since joining the railway, Tom has overseen several major changes in the railway's governance, as well as helping to steer it towards a more stable footing. His work has seen him spend countless hours in talks with all manner of differing external bodies, not least those which have culminated in grant funding, and while he will no longer be involved in an employed leadership capacity, he has promised to continue providing support and advice to the board and management to ensure the railway continues along its path to stable and established growth.



GWR Pannier No. 7754 runs through Llangollen station on April 13. The Grade I-listed bridge over the River Dee can be seen in the background.

Bringing about change

"Reflecting on the past four years since the receivership process, I am proud of what we have accomplished together, even if some may still hold doubts," he said. "From stabilising numerous behind-the-scenes organisational matters to nurturing relationships with partner organisations and funding bodies, I believe there is much to be hopeful about in the years ahead.

"While there are still improvements to be made, both organisationally and operationally, our collaborations with like-minded public and third-sector partners will remain crucial for our progress. We simply must continue to maintain an open mind to change while welcoming innovation and diversification.

"It has been a genuine privilege to work in support of our trust membership. With the foundational blocks we have established, I am confident that we are in a better position to thrive amid ongoing change."

The LR has advertised for a new experienced trust manager who will be responsible for supporting both the board of trustees and the senior management team.

In turn, they will be in charge of overseeing positions such as the commercial, operations and heritage engineering managers, with whom they must work closely. They will also develop and maintain links with external partners, support and identify funding and income opportunities, and much more.

Fresh opportunities

While experience of leadership in a volunteer-led tourism or heritage environment is desirable, candidates must be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the challenges that the sector faces, as well as have experience of working to external funding performance management protocols. The position is full-time, with expectation for some weekend working. The successful candidate will be entitled to 28 days' annual leave, and the salary is negotiable depending on level of experience.

A LR statement said: "As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Llangollen Railway, and after significant consolidation and restructuring over the last four years, we are looking for a passionate and dedicated trust manager to help shape the next chapter of our journey. As a strategic thinker, you will lead the continued development of a strong culture of governance and collaborative working to ensure regulatory compliance, financial stability and the future sustainability of the railway.

"Supporting both the board of trustees and the senior management team, you will play a pivotal role in delivering outstanding volunteer experiences, enriched learning opportunities and an engaging visitor offer – all through the powerful lens of our railway's unique heritage. If you are ready to take on the challenge of guiding our railway into its next 50 years, we'd love to hear from you."

An application pack can be requested by emailing hr@llangollen-railway.co.uk or further information obtained by contacting interim trust manager Tim Pulford at trustmanager@llangollen-railway.co.uk or by telephoning 07908 241575.

Great Eastern signalbox moved to museum after 120 years

THE GER Oulton Broad North signalbox from Norfolk and Suffolk's Wherry Lines has been lifted by crane and moved to a new home at the East Anglia Transport Museum in Carlton Colville.

Made redundant by Network Rail's multi-million-pound scheme to modernise signalling along the Norwich to Lowestoft route, the landmark manually operated 'box, which signalled trains and controlled level crossing gates at the northern entrance to Oulton Broad, and was one of 12 on the line, was gifted to the museum.

Cut in half to facilitate the move in the early hours of Sunday, June 8, the 1905-built structure was lifted out by crane. Volunteers from Network Rail Anglia, the Lowestoft Central Project and Norfolk Railway Foundation stayed up throughout the night to help.

Once secured down, the 'box was then transported by two lorries with a police escort to the museum.

There, it will be reassembled on a specially constructed base alongside the venue's 2ft gauge East Suffolk Light Railway before restoration – with the aid of donations – will begin.

A museum spokesman said that the arrival of the signalbox was a huge step forward for its new land development.

The move coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnership.



The top half of Oulton Broad North signalbox is lifted for removal to East Anglia Transport Museum. THE WHERRY LINES

It was masterminded by Matt Newman, a Network Rail principal technical officer in signalling technical support for the area, who had previously successfully managed the relocation of the Reedham Junction 'box to Holt on the North Norfolk Railway, where it has now been restored as a signalling education centre.

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Historic crane returns to Somerset & Dorset

A CRANE which started life transferring barrels of beer from a private industrial railway to the Somerset & Dorset main line has been resurrected at Shillingstone station on the North Dorset Railway.

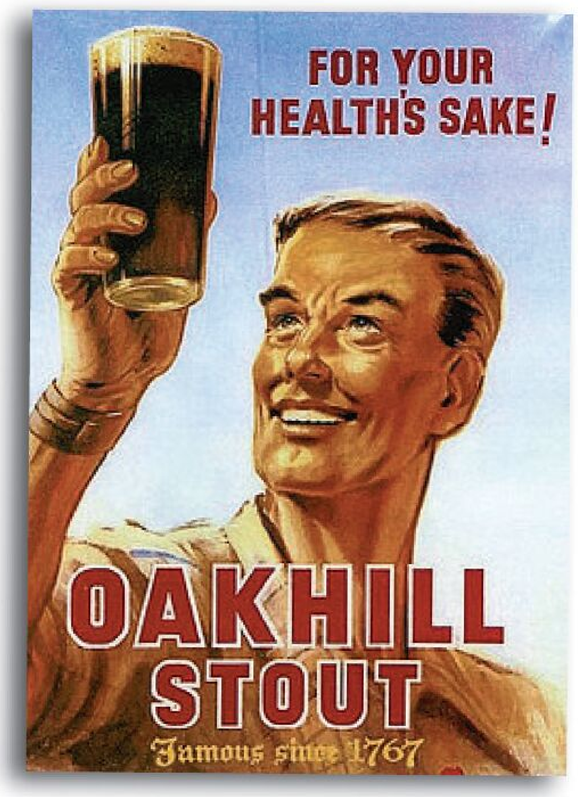
Binegar station in Somerset was the terminus of a 2ft 6in gauge railway which exclusively served a brewery in Oakhill two miles away. The line was built in 1904, when the brewery was producing between 2000 and 2500 barrels a week.

Oakhill is a source of spring water from the Mendip aquifer, noted for its purity, having percolated through limestone for thousands of years, and in 1767 a brewery was founded to take advantage of this water supply. In its heyday, the brewery was a major producer and its most famous beer was its award-winning Invalid Stout, which laid claim to restorative properties thanks to the quality of the water used in the fermentation. At its peak, Oakhill was making more stout than Guinness.

At Binegar, the line terminated within a goods shed, with the standard gauge running alongside the shed's open front. The hand-operated crane was sited in this shed, transferring barrels from the narrow gauge to standard gauge wagons.

The outbreak of the First World War saw a heavy tax imposed on British beer to discourage drunkenness. Sales of untaxed Irish Guinness overtook those of taxed Oakhill Stout, and the brewery began a long, slow decline. Its railway ceased operating in 1921, the main brewery building was largely destroyed by a fire in 1925, and a new owner moved all brewing to nearby Shepton Mallet.

At Binegar, the transfer shed remained in use, but only for storage, until the closure of the station in 1966. The crane was rescued by the Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust in 1991 and taken to its depot at Washford, on the West Somerset Railway, where it remained until the trust's lease came to an end. A new home was needed, and in spring 2023 the NDR became the new host of the Binegar crane, which moved to Shillingstone station on long-term loan.

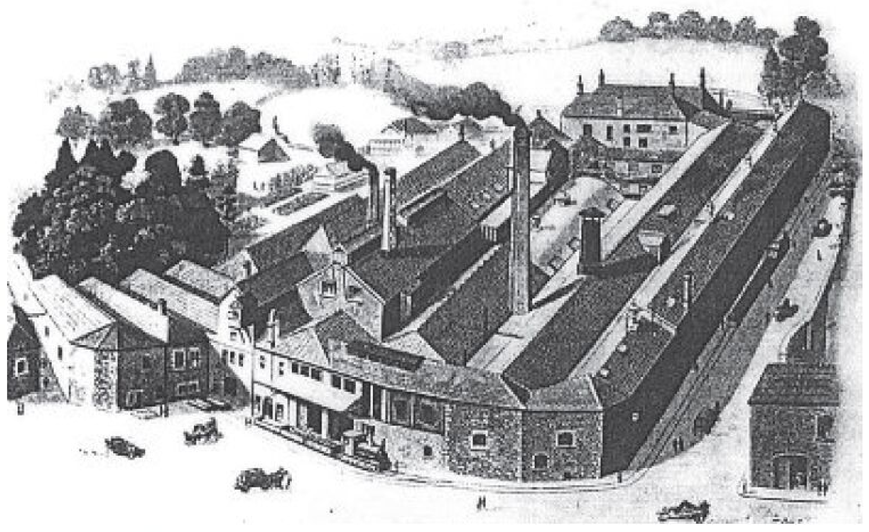


A poster advertising Oakhill Stout.

A team of volunteers, including pupils from a nearby school, took on the restoration and refurbishment, which was completed last year. The 120-year-old timber and ironwork were in remarkably good shape, needing little more than fresh paint.

The next stage was to plan its installation on the station's loading dock. In early June, foundations were laid and a specially designed and constructed support structure was bolted into place. The crane was finally lifted into place at the end of the station's loading dock on June 10.


Back on the Somerset & Dorset, the crane is finally installed at Shillingstone station. NDR COLLECTION


An aerial illustration of the brewery complex shows the 2ft 6in gauge line running round its perimeter, with both its trains, 0-4-0Ts *Mendip* and *Oakhill*, in action. ASHWICK PARISH COLLECTION

Strathspey's northern terminus extended to handle eight coaches

THE Strathspey Railway's current northern terminus station has been expanded to accommodate eight-coach services.

Three miles south of Grantown-on-Spey, the platform at Broomhill station, also known as Glenbogle and featured in the popular TV programme Monarch of the Glen, has been extended in a project which began in January in order to expand its passenger capacity.

The line's permanent way team modified the track alignment, including one switch, foundations were laid in March, and the walls were completed in April. The platform top and edges were finished in May. Until then, the Broomhill platform was constrained as to the number of coaches it could accommodate on regular services without special arrangements being made.

The extension will provide up to 20% extra seats on each train, which does three daily return journeys, Wednesday to Sunday inclusive.

The service train now comprises six BR Mk. 1 coaches sandwiched between the Gresley observation car and the recently-overhauled LMS inspection saloon, which is slightly shorter overall but allows viewing of the Spey Valley scenery.

The line extends for approximately a mile beyond Broomhill to cross the River Dulnain on its way towards Grantown, the long-term objective of the railway.



LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5025 waits to return to Aviemore. STRATHSPEY RAILWAY


The Bala Lake Railway pump trolley to be used in the nine-mile fundraising challenge. BLRS

Pump trolley marathon run to boost Bala extension campaign

A NINE-MILE hand-propelled pump trolley run will be staged on the Bala Lake Railway to raise the profile of its Golden Jubilee President's Appeal for funds to buy new signalling equipment for when the planned extension in the town opens.

A group of four volunteers – BLR Society chairman Tim Williams, Joe Stevens, Peter Newhouse and Dave Rutt – will take the trolley all the way from Llanuwchllyn to Bala and back again, including half a mile at 1-in-70, on the evening of Sunday, July 20, after the final service train of the day arrives at Llanuwchllyn at 4.20pm.

It will be no mean feat if the team achieves this goal, since the trolley has not previously travelled beyond Pant-yr-hen-felin, about two-thirds of the way along the line, and it rarely leaves the yard.

To support the appeal, visit https://tinyurl.com/blrs-pres-50

KESR answers 'what if?' for summer diesel gala line-up

By Owen Hayward

CLASSIC Southern Region traction will star at the Kent & East Sussex Railway's July 18-20 diesel gala, with the booking of a classic DEMU to star providing the answer to the question 'what if the line had remained open under British Railways?'

Opened in 1900, the light railway was closed in 1954 nearly a full decade before the Beeching Report decimated the UK railway network. With diesel traction in its infancy and the Modernisation Plan not yet published, the line therefore never saw a full diesel takeover before services were terminated, with steam remaining the choice of motive power until the final day. This year's diesel gala will once again bring together iconic motive power to show what might have been.

Multiple units are seldom sought as gala guests owing to their high transportation costs and often comparatively little appeal. However, the Class 205 'Thumper' DEMUs were once commonplace in the region, with some theorising that one may have ended up running the line if not for its early closure.



DEMU No. 1118 made the journey from Isfield to Tenterden at the start of June, ready for the July 18-20 diesel gala. ROBIN COOMBES/KESR

"It's hard to overstate the appeal of the Thumpers," said Jack Marlow, one of the gala organisers. "They are utterly distinctive – the sound, the look, the memories. Unit No. 1118 was one of the very first, entering service in 1957, and if the KESR had remained open under BR, it's almost certain a 'Thumper' would have been seen here, so this is a rare chance to rewrite history for one weekend."

Built at Eastleigh Works, No. 1118 formed part of the pioneering 2H sets that revolutionised non-electrified regional services in Hampshire and later the wider Southern network. This unit now runs with power car No. 60117 and driving trailer No. 60828, the latter having been rebuilt following a tragic crash at Cowden in 1994. Owned by Nigel Remmington, it is usually found on the Lavender Line in Isfield.

The DEMU joins Network SouthEast-liveried Class 50 No. 50017 *Royal Oak*, which currently carries livery and will become the longest diesel to have ever run between Tenterden and Bodiam. Additionally, visiting Severn Valley Railway-based Class 14 D9551 will give the KESR a pair of matching BR green 'Teddy Bears,' with D9504 *John Grimwood* resident on the railway.

"We are immensely grateful to Nigel Remmington for making the visit of No. 1118 possible," said KESR general manager Robin Coombes.

"The story of this DEMU bridges decades of railway history, from steam replacement to modernisation and right into the preservation era. Having it here in 2025, alongside a main line stalwart like *Royal Oak*, offers visitors something truly special.

"It captures the 'what might have been' of our own railway's story, and it honours the engineering and everyday working trains of the Southern Region."

The three-day gala will feature a packed schedule of diesel-hauled services, cab ride opportunities, model displays and trade stands, with four locomotives from the home fleet in service alongside the visiting traction. The demonstration freight rake was also expected to feature.

Retired shunter set for new dock life as bicentenary monument

A RETIRED Class 08 shunter is safe from the cutter's torch after proposals were submitted to Middlesbrough Council to mount it for display on a roundabout on the outskirts of the town's port complex, complete with a fresh look designed by a local student to pay tribute to the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary.

The project has been led by freight logistics group AV Dawson, a subsidiary of which oversees the management of the Port of Middlesbrough. Recently withdrawn 'Gronk' No. 08600 (built at Derby Works in 1959) has received bodywork refurbishment and its engine has been removed. In its place, water butts have been fitted which collect and hold rainwater to support planting around its intended display location on the Riverside Park Road and Ironmasters Way roundabout.

In place of any BR or private owner livery, the locomotive has been finished in a vibrant scheme that was the result of a partnership with the Northern School of Art, where first year 3D design and visualisation students were tasked to create a commemorative livery for DR200.

The winning design was created by Pheobe Allan and the shunter has thus been named after her.

AV Dawson communications business partner Lucy Tyreman said: "Looking ahead, we are keen to see similar celebrations for Middlesbrough's railway bicentenary in 2030, marking the 1830 opening of the Middlesbrough branch line that connected the S&DR to the new port on the Tees, originally named Port Darlington, now the Port of Middlesbrough, owned and operated by AV Dawson."



Class 08 No. 08600 in its vibrant new livery, ready to be displayed on a roundabout near to Middlesbrough's port complex. AV DAWSON

As this issue went to press, a decision on the application was expected imminently, with installation expected to take place within weeks.

First for Cotswold diesel gala with pioneering BR 'Tractor' pairing

TWO visiting locomotives – including the first-built Class 37 – have been booked for the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's July 25-27 diesel gala.

Making its first visit to the line, courtesy of the National Railway Museum and custodians, the Heavy Tractor Group on the Great Central Railway, is D6700, which was completed in February 1960 and is restored to its as-built condition in BR green livery. It will join the home fleet Class 37s, D6948 in BR green with small yellow panel and BR blue No. 37215, both owned by the Growler Group. There will be Class 37 double and triple-headers during the event, and making a return visit is 1968-built Class 50 No. 50021 (D421) *Rodney*, courtesy of the 50021 & 50026 Owners' Group. Withdrawn from Stratford in 1990, the locomotive was bought by the 50021 Locomotive Association and overhauled at Toddington, working its first trains in preservation from 1993 and moving away two years later.

Class 26 D5343, owned by the Cotswold Mainline Diesel Group, will be relaunched following an extensive overhaul of both the engine and bodywork and carries BR Blue livery.

Also running from the home fleet will be Class 26 No. 26043, Class 20s Nos. 20137 and 20228, Class 45 No. 45149 and Class 47s Nos. 47105 and 47376.

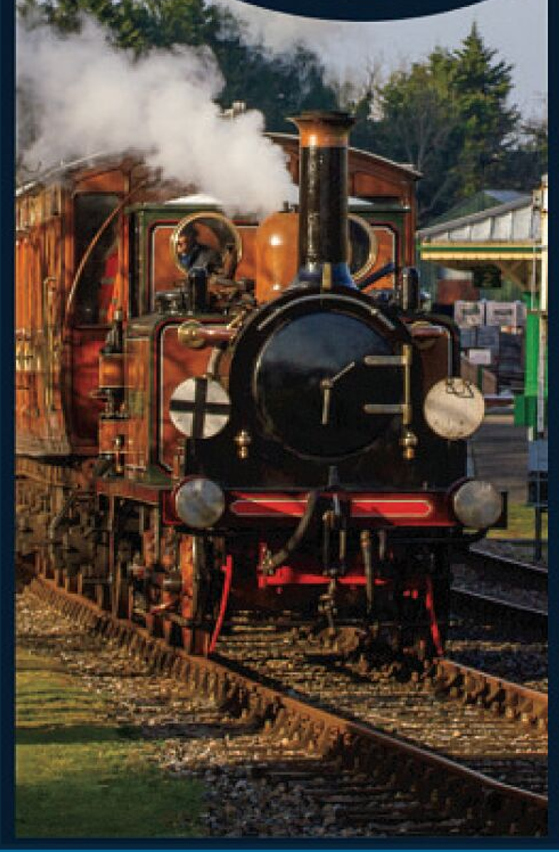
Class 03 D2182 and Class 04 D2280 will both work brake van rides.

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Spring gift as BR Standards presented to Worth Valley

By Robin Jones

TWO longstanding members of the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway steam fleet were officially gifted to the heritage line by their owning group at a ceremony at Oxenhope on June 7.

After 53 proud years of looking after BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75078 and Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022, the Standard 4 Locomotive Preservation Society has decided to wind up and hand both locomotives to the KWVR, their home since the 1970s.

"This transition marks the end of an era, but also the beginning of a new chapter – one that ensures these treasured locomotives will continue to steam through the Worth Valley for generations to come," said a society statement.

The society's origins date back to December 1969 when a small group set out to acquire BR Standard 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76077, currently being restored by the Toddington Standard Locomotive Group for use on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, from the Woodham Brothers scrapyard at Barry. However, in 1972, the newly-formed society bought 1956 Swindon-built No. 75078 from Dai Woodham instead, which was in a much better and more complete condition, having been withdrawn in 1966 after only 10 years' BR service. When moved to Haworth, No. 75078 became the 21st locomotive to leave the scrapyard. Encouraged by progress on No. 75078, 1954 Darlington-built No. 78022, which was withdrawn in February 1967, was also bought from Barry in 1975.

Both locomotives turned heads as they double-headed regular Worth Valley services, delivering a powerful tribute to mid-20th century British Rail (BR) engineering.

Following restoration, No. 75078 first steamed in February 1977 and No. 78022 in October 1992. The pair have since operated regularly on KWVR services.

"Sustaining this level of preservation has become increasingly challenging for society members, both financially and logistically," the statement continued.

KWVR Preservation Society chairman Matthew Stroh said: "The Standard 4 Loco Preservation Society members were true pioneers of the heritage railway movement, clubbing together to purchase a Standard 4 and later a Standard 2 in the early 1970s. We are honoured that they have now chosen to donate the fleet to the railway, passing the custodianship to the charity so that their future is secure. The railway will be eternally grateful both for the society's gift, and also for its members' many decades of care, attention, and hard graft, which means the locomotives are still in excellent operational condition today."



BR Standard Nos. 78022 and 75078 double-heading on June 7 to mark their official handover to the railway. KWVR



A drone view of the two locomotives at Oxenhope on June 7. KWVR

Rheidol announces oil firing reversion for steam locomotive

OIL firing will return to the Vale of Rheidol following announcements that 2-6-2T No. 9 *Prince of Wales* will be reverted to this condition at its upcoming overhaul, as the railway responds to changing weather patterns and varying coal quality. The news followed an precedented three-week suspension of steam services in May, during which only reduced capacity diesel services could operate.

That withdrawal of steam came at a difficult time, affecting the railway's operations and revenue. Had the dry conditions continued, the financial impact could have been far more severe. To mitigate against future circumstances, Bagnall 0-6-0DM No. 3124 has moved to Aberystwyth from the late Peter Rampton's Collection X in Surrey and will be restored to provide a powerful locomotive capable of hauling a full train, ensuring that services can continue even during fire-risk periods or steam locomotive breakdowns.

Furthermore, Rheidol tank No. 9 will return to oil firing condition, which it and its two classmates were modified to in the 1970s, all having been converted back to coal burners by 2013. "We are not reacting with temporary fixes – we are implementing long-term, sustainable solutions," said Llyr ap-Iolo, VOR's managing director. "This is a proactive step to protect our operations and ensure that families, enthusiasts and our visitors can continue to discover the Rheidol Valley with us for generations to come."

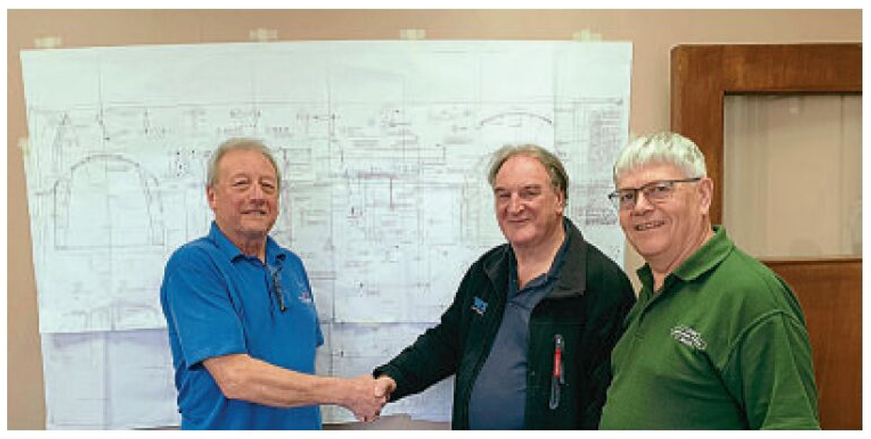


No. 9 *Prince of Wales,* which is currently undergoing overhaul at the Vale of Rheidol's Aberystwyth workshops, will be returned to oil firing condition as it was between 1981 and 2013. SIMON FOZARD/VOR

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Cut parts for the new *Morning Star* cab at the J&S Laser premises in Southampton, ready for transportation to Midsomer Norton. SDRHT



Peter Keynes (left), from J&S Laser, with No. 92207's project managers Keith Bottomley (centre) and Barrie Papworth. SDRHT

Unrestored 9F gets steel parts for new cab delivered to Midsomer Norton

By Robin Jones

A MAJOR milestone in the restoration of BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92207 *Morning Star* has been reached with the delivery of steel for the construction of its cab to the Somerset & Dorset Heritage Railway Trust at Midsomer Norton.

Built in Swindon in March 1959, No. 92207 served the Western Region before its withdrawal in 1965 after six years during the rapid shift to diesel traction. It was then sent to Woodham Brothers scrapyard in Barry, where it languished until October 1986 – five times longer than its period in BR service.

Bought for preservation by Keith Bottomley and named *Morning Star*, it was first moved to Bury Bolton Street railway station on the East Lancashire Railway. In December 2005, the locomotive was relocated to the Shillingstone station revival project on the former Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway, where it was planned to complete its restoration. However, in September 2022, the trust agreed to buy it from Keith, who continues to lead the restoration project, with the support of Barrie Papworth, the trust's Chief Mechanical Engineer.

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated team of volunteers, *Morning Star* is progressively being brought back to life, with the bottom end now a rolling chassis.

The cab steel has been laser-cut by J&S Laser at its Totton workshops, worked from original BR drawings which were provided to them by the 92207 Project Team. Indeed, it is the first 9F cab to be produced since those constructed for the final batch, which included No. 92220 *Evening Star,* at Swindon.

The arrival of the cab sections at Midsomer Norton heralds a new phase in the restoration. Fabrication of the cab will begin shortly, and it will then form an interactive display at Midsomer Norton while the restoration of the locomotive continues at a separate location in Poole, Dorset.

"This is a huge milestone for everyone involved in the project," said Barrie. "To see physical progress like this is not only exciting for our team, but also for all the supporters and donors who have backed us over the years, including our legendary S&D patrons, Peter Smith and Aubrey Punter.

"The location of the cab both during its construction and when complete will bring the presence of No. 92207 to Midsomer Norton and double as an on-site attraction until it's time to attach it to the locomotive. It will allow our visitors a prospect of visiting the footplate of the engine and educate the next generation on what it was like to be a driver and fireman of a 9F on the S&D."

The restoration is estimated to cost more than £500,000 in total and will include the fabrication of a new tender and the overhaul of the boiler. The is being funded through a combination of public donations and legacies, and the trust is currently inviting supporters to join its growing monthly covenantor scheme, starting from £10 per month.

Once restored, 92207 will act as a roaming ambassador for the S&D and will see one of the last remaining unrestored Barry locomotives to return to the rails.

➜ **To contribute to the funding scheme, visit www.sdjr.co.uk and select the Support Us tab.**

General Steam Navigation is on the move in new plan

THE group aiming to restore Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35011 *General Steam Navigation* to as-built condition with air-smoothed casing and Bulleid's unique patented chain-driven valve gear has drawn up a new plan following the requested move from the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, its home of five years.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 329, the S&CR asked the General Steam Navigation Locomotive Restoration Society to vacate the Blundson station site and find another home as a Merchant Navy locomotive no longer aligned with its vision and business plan for the heritage line.

No. 35011 is to move to a private site near Templecombe for storage until funds are reached to place a contract with a heritage engineering company to commence work on the rolling chassis.

Agreement has been reached with the Yeovil Railway Centre that society's volunteers can hold working parties at the site using its facilities, allowing them to overhaul existing and fabricate new items. The society is also in discussion with the Devon-based engineering firm Leaky Finders to commence work on the frames, initially producing the unique frame stretchers required for an original Merchant Navy.

Work continues behind the scenes producing the 'Bill of Materials' a task that underpins future procurement and restoration phases and a CAD design, particularly for 'original' components where drawings are unavailable.

Because No. 35011 donated its crank axle to 35026 on withdrawal in 1966, design work for a replacement is almost complete and order placement for the new crank axle materials is imminent.

Once sufficient components have been procured, No. 35011 will go into the works for a rebuild and restoration. No company has yet been selected for this stage of the project at this time, which will be subject to competitive tender when funding allows.

Welsh funicular gets £150k boost towards carriage refurbishment

THE Aberystwyth Cliff Railway is benefitting from a £150,000 loan from the Development Bank of Wales, which has funded the refurbishment of its Victorian carriages.

The Grade II-listed structure, which opened in 1896 and is run by registered charity Constitution Hill Limited, is the second longest electric funicular cliff railway in the UK.

The refurbishment programme has safeguarded 20 jobs and created two more. The investment has been welcomed by the First Minister of Wales, Eluned Morgan, who visited the Cliff Railway with colleagues Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Deputy First Minister and Julie James MS, Minister for Delivery/Counsel General.

The First Minister said: "Tourism is one of the most important industries in Wales, contributing more than £6.2 billion to Welsh GDP and 172,000-plus jobs.

"I'm pleased the Welsh Government, via the Development Bank, is providing support so that attractions like the Cliff Railway can bring in visitors, create new jobs, and continue their important contribution to the local economy in Aberystwyth."

Powered by motor and high-tensile steel cables supported by a sophisticated electronic safety system, the carriages travel to the summit of Constitution Hill at 4mph via a deep cutting, where 12,000 tons of rock was excavated to allow the winding footpath to cross via a series of bridges overhead. At the summit, visitors enjoy spectacular views of Aberystwyth, Cardigan Bay and 26 Welsh mountain peaks. There is also a children's play area, a gift shop, a cafe and space for picnics and walking.

The loan for Constitution Hill Limited came from the £50 million Wales Tourism Investment Fund, financed entirely by the Welsh Government.



The Aberystwyth Cliff Railway in service in 2017. JEREMY SEGROTT/CREATIVE COMMONS



On June 7, RHDR locomotives Nos. 6 *Samson* and 9 *Winston Churchill* recreate the opening train from July 10, 1990, when the pair were on loan to the Bure Valley in the absence of having any of its own steam locomotives at the time. COURTENAY FORDER



On June 8, the former leader of Broadland District Council, David Hastings, was reunited with *Samson* at Aylsham. He was instrumental in the creation of the BVR by taking seriously the suggestion of Graham Fowler, then the council's economic development officer, to allow a railway to be built along the former GER trackbed as a way of reducing the cost to the council of creating a proposed footpath along the route, the bill instead being footed by those responsible for building the railway. Both men have remained strong supporters of the railway throughout its life, professionally and personally. OWEN HAYWARD

Bure Valley excels itself with 35th anniversary celebrations

By Owen Hayward

ANNIVERSARY events are usually a sure-fire success when it comes to heritage railways, and that certainly proved the case on the weekend of June 7/8 when the Bure Valley Railway marked three-and-a-half decades of operations – with the two locomotives that worked the first services brought back for one weekend only!

On July 10, 1990, the BVR commenced services between Aylsham and Wroxham, in Norfolk, traversing nine miles of what was once a standard gauge branch's trackbed and is today the county's second longest heritage line, coming in just behind the Mid-Norfolk Railway (which covers an impressive 17.5 miles). The route formed part of the former East Norfolk Railway which branched off of the Norwich-Cromer route at Wroxham. It survived under the Great Eastern, London North Eastern and British Railway companies; passenger services ceased in 1952, with freight following in 1981, and the track being lifted by 1984.

On the opening day, services were worked by two steam locomotives which had been hired in from the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway in Kent, as it had none of its own at the time. These were Nos. 6 *Samson* and 9 *Winston Churchill*, and this particular gala weekend saw them both running in Norfolk together for the first time since 1990.

From rough starts

The embryonic BVR encountered problems from the start. There was strong opposition from local residents to the proposal for the construction of a tourist line, with issues raised including congestion on locals roads, the effect on property values, and the appearance of the railway in the landscape. Many of these issues were overcome by conducting a comparative study between the railway's proposals and the established RHDR, which saw permission for the construction of the 15in gauge line given in 1987, with construction starting two years later. The choice of using narrow gauge rather than reinstating standard gauge tracks was to allow for a footpath to be created along the same route.

The inaugural train encountered its own setbacks when, carrying numerous dignitaries including media personality Miles Kingston, it left Wroxham overloaded. This, combined with the complications of RHDR's vacuum-braked locomotives and the BVR's air-braked rolling stock, ultimately resulted in the train stalling at Coltishall for near on half an hour!

Six months later, in January 1991, the railway's parent company, RFK Leisure, went into receivership, leaving the railway being operated jointly by the receivers and Broadland District Council while a buyer was sought.

This ended up being BDC itself, which was keen to prevent the land being snapped up by developers and subsequently built upon, thus securing the long-term future of the railway.

In April 1991, a new company was formed to take charge of operations, with Ffestiniog Railway director Mike Hart setting up Bure Valley Railway



No. 7 *Spitfire* nears Buxton on June 7. The BVR's locomotives wore commemorative headboards throughout the gala, denoting both the railway's 35th anniversary and its part in the wider Rail 200 celebrations. COURTENAY FORDER



Winston Churchill double-heads with *Blickling Hall* on the approach to Buxton with a train bound for Wroxham. OWEN HAYWARD

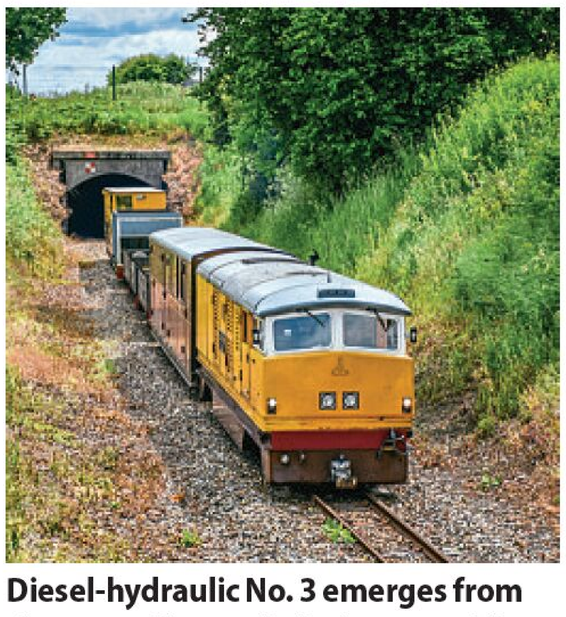
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Having just been turned, RHDR's No. 6 *Samson* watches the arrival of BVR No. 8 *John of Gaunt* at Aylsham on June 8. OWEN HAYWARD



On June 8, No. 9 *Mark Timothy* passes the old station building at Buxton. OWEN HAYWARD



Diesel-hydraulic No. 3 emerges from the tunnel beneath the bypass with a demonstration engineering train. OWEN HAYWARD

(1991) Ltd, which leased the line from BDC.

The two Romney engines were returned, and alternative motive power arrived in the form of the 2-4-2 *Sian* (then based at the Fairbourne Railway) and 2-6-2 No. 24 (based on a Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes locomotive).

A steam outline diesel locomotive also arrived. Named *Tracey Jo*, this was converted into a full steam locomotive by Winson Engineering in 1992 and remains on the BVR to this day, now called *Wroxham Broad*.

Mike sold his interest in the company to Robert Baker in 1993, who realised the need for investment in more powerful locomotives and so ordered the first of the purpose-built ZB locomotives.

No. 6 *Bickling Hall* arrived in April 1994 and No. 7 *Spitfire* the following month. Their design was inspired by the 2ft 6in gauge locomotives used on Indian Railways and over the years have been heavily modified to improve reliability.

The railway has changed ownership two further times since 1993. Westernasset Limited acquired the operating company in 1995 and in 2001, Andrew Barnes, the BVR's current managing director, acquired control of Westernasset and wound that company up. As the sole shareholder of BVR (1991) Ltd, he has established the railway to run as a not-for-profit enterprise.

resident steam locomotives *Blickling Hall* and *Spitfire* joined by a freshly repaired 2-6-2T No. 8 *John of Gaunt* (a tank engine variant of the ZB design but bearing similarity to the Vale of Rheidol locomotives) and privately owned No. 9 *Mark Timothy*.

No. 9 was built in 1999 by Winson Engineering as an oil-fired 2-6-4T based on the design of the 3ft gauge locomotives that ran the County Donegal Joint Railways in Ireland. However, a number of issues meant it was not a successful design for a 15in gauge locomotive and so was redesigned by Alan Keef.

A rebuild saw it take on the shape of the Kitson locomotives built for the 2ft 6in gauge Leek & Manifold Valley Light Railway, and a number of components are now shared with the ZBs, allowing for easier maintenance across the BVR fleet.

It was hoped that the overhaul of No. 1 *Wroxham Broad* would be completed in time to allow it to debut at the gala, but this was not to be; instead, it was available to view in a partially complete state in the workshops at Aylsham.

Initially requested as a 2-6-2 tender steam locomotive in 1964, the order was cancelled after construction began, so it was finished off as a steam outline petrol-hydraulic, retaining the full valve gear which had already been completed for the steam locomotive. The eventual rebuild not only saw it rebuilt as a steam locomotive, but the wheel arrangement also changed to become a 2-6-4T. Supplementing the steam locomotives were a pair of diesel locomotives. No. 3 *2nd Air Division USAAF* is a diesel-hydraulic constructed in 1988 and powered by an engine salvaged from a Bedford TK army lorry. It was the first locomotive to work on the BVR when in May 1989 it hauled the trains involved in the construction of the line.

A more recent acquisition, No. 4 is a 4WDM Hudson-Hunslet which started life as a 2ft gauge locomotive, purchased by the Friends of the Bure Valley Railway in 1993 and regauged during restoration. It is primarily a yard pilot at Aylsham.

Clockwork departures

The gala saw an intensive timetable with departures off each end of the line at intervals of about 40 minutes, making use of the numerous passing points along the route.

Double-headed formations saw the two Romney visitors paired up with their BVR numeric counterparts, while on the Sunday evening, service concluded with an impressive quadruple-headed working from Wroxham back to Aylsham.

The diesel locomotives also put in appearances on workings, with No. 4 (seldom seen on such duties) leading a trip to Brampton Halt at the end of the Saturday. On June 8, both steam and diesel locomotives could also be found working demonstration freight trains, with the engineering wagons making two full round trips of the line.

Managing director Andrew Barnes said: "We are not traditionally a gala railway, and while a small number of enthusiasts visit us, we do not generally seem to attract them. It was therefore with a degree of trepidation that we agreed to host our first gala in 10 years, which involved a year of careful planning and preparation, but I am pleased to say it paid off.

"Transport prices have escalated in recent years and are now a major cost factor, as is putting up staff for a week. Both of these combined meant costs were £11,000 for the event. With advance and on the day ticket sales, we covered our costs by close of business on Saturday. By close of business on Sunday, we had covered indirect and incidental costs and showed a small profit.

"The cafe staff are the unsung heroes of events such as this and the turnover on both days in ours was treble the normal levels – both days were our busiest ever days in the café at Aylsham.

"It was also great to see that many of the original staff from 1990 were able to visit and catch up. Likewise, Simon Batten was able to come as *Winston Churchill*'s driver as his father Richard drove that locomotive on the opening day, so he maintained a family connection. Massive thanks are due to all who made it possible and to the visitors for supporting the event."

Big celebrations

Planning for the gala began nearly a year ago, with conversations between the BVR and RHDR facilitating the return of both *Samson* and *Winston Churchill* to Norfolk for the occasion.

Though both locomotives have returned to Norfolk independently for galas in recent years, this particular weekend was the first time they have both appeared on the BVR together since the 1990s. On June 7, a recreation of the opening train ran with the two locomotives double-heading – thankfully without any of the setbacks encountered by that first train 35 years beforehand.

The pair formed part of a eight-strong locomotive line-up, with



The big gala finale: RHDR's Nos. 6 and 9 and BVR's Nos. 6 and 7 quadruple-head the last train from Wroxham to Aylsham on June 8. OWEN HAYWARD

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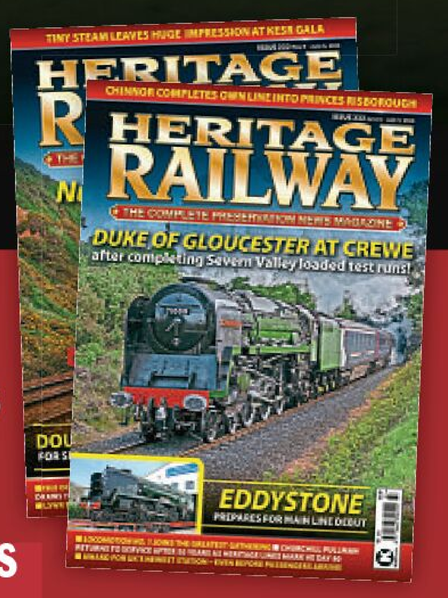
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ROBIN JONES, EDITOR

On May 3, LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* gathers speed as it heads away from Williton on the West Somerset Railway during its appearance at the line's spring steam gala. OWEN HAYWARD



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Western Region diesel power reclaims West Somerset!

By Robin Jones

IN the wake of the success of its spring steam gala, as featured in *Heritage Railway* issue 333, the West Somerset Railway followed up with another big success, its June 5-8 Summer Diesel Festival, which recreated the days of the Western Region.

The event witnessed the appearance of several visiting locomotives, and all performed well, including Class 25 No. 25185, courtesy of South Devon Diesel Traction; Class 45 'Peak' No. 45108, courtesy of Peak Locomotive Limited; Class 50 No. 50015 *Valiant,* courtesy of Bury Valiant Group; and Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion,* from the Diesel Traction Group.

The Class 45, 50 and 52 were brought to the event via a convoy hauled by Rail Adventure's High Speed Train power cars Nos. 43465 and 43484. The pair were placed on display and opened for cab visits at the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group depot at Williton for the entire weekend before returning the trio to their home railways on June 9.

Joining the guests were home fleet members Class 03 D2133, Class 14 D9526, Class 33s Nos. D6566 and D6575 and Class 35 Hymek D7018, which worked its first gala services since 2022.

Members of the DEPG fleet which are currently undergoing major restoration, including Class 14 D9518 and Class 52 D1010 *Western Campaigner,* as well as restored Barclay Royal Ordnance Factory 0-6-0DH No. 578, were on static display at the depot.

The railway once again ran an intensive timetable over the four-day gala with regular semi-fast passenger services and brake van rides on the heritage goods train, which proved popular. The Minehead station pilot, Class 03 No. D2133, worked a shuttle service between Minehead and Blue Anchor, offering brake van rides that were very much appreciated by fans of this smaller traction type.

One of the highlights during the event saw, for the first time on a passenger train, Class 33s D6566 and D6575 working in multiple on June 6.

D7018 worked perfectly on the Friday and most of Saturday and the timekeeping was excellent until the locomotive refused to change direction when running around its train at Minehead on the Saturday evening. To avoid blocking access to the platform at Minehead, D7018 was dispatched along the line to Dunster yard, where it was sidelined so that the issue could be investigated. D6575 was instead rostered to cover the Hymek turns on the Sunday.

This replacement was the only issue that affected the timetable, which was otherwise excellent, with a very interesting mix of workings, including some rare combinations such as the Western and the Hymek in tandem, and two small Sulzer's of Classes 25 and 33 working together.

The whole weekend was a resounding success, despite the weather making more than one attempt to dampen the spirits of the many visitors.

Positive experiences from many visitors were shared on the railway's various social media platforms. The event also saw an increase in revenue and passenger numbers compared with 2024, with a total of 2755 people carried.





Above: Visiting Class 52 D1015 *Western Champion* double-heading with resident Class 35 Hymek D7018 pass Longlands Farm between Norton Fitzwarren and Bishops Lydeard on June 6. STEPHEN GINN

Left: Driver John Leach waits with visiting Class 45 Peak No. 45108 to cross an Up train at Crowcombe Heathfield on June 6. DON BISHOP



The mixed traction day on June 8 saw visiting new-build GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend,* from Didcot Railway Centre, hauling a DMU. LAURA STANDERWICK



Heading a service train, visiting Class 50 No. 50015 *Valiant* makes a valiant attempt to raise travellers' spirits during a shower on June 7. LAURA STANDERWICK

NRM celebrates volunteer pioneers as part of 50th anniversary year

By Robin Jones

THE National Railway Museum has paid tribute to long-serving helpers who have played vital roles in its 50-year history as part of the national June 2-8 Volunteers' Week.

Among them is Rob Tibbits, who recently received the museum's Sapphire Award in recognition of an extraordinary 50 years of volunteering. He started on the museum's opening day, September 27, 1975, as part of a small team invited to prepare for the grand opening.

"I was asked to clean *Flying Scotsman* on the day the museum was officially opened by Prince Philip," Rob said. "The Duke of Edinburgh only caught a glimpse of us as the Royal Train approached York station, but it was an unforgettable moment and the start of a lifetime of volunteering."

Rob was joined that day by fellow volunteer David Eastoe, who retired last year after 49 years' service. Together, they went on to become key members of the museum's Locomotive Support Group, maintaining and operating National Collection engines.

While there was no formal volunteering structure in those early years, in 1977 the Friends of the National Railway Museum was formed. The group that remains is a vital support network and major funder of the museum today. Founding member David Thomas said: "At the inaugural meeting, it was clear there was real enthusiasm among our volunteers. We aimed to support the restoration of locomotives, and this laid the groundwork for what became the locomotive and operations volunteer teams."



Rob Tibbits receives the Sapphire Award. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP



Volunteer Peter James gives A4 No. 4468 *Mallard* a spruce-up during his time at the National Railway Museum. SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

During the following decades, volunteer teams were central to several landmark projects, from preparing *Green Arrow* to run on the Settle to Carlisle line in 1978 to returning *Duchess of Hamilton* to steam for the Liverpool & Manchester 150th anniversary in 1980. Their expertise also ensured that several key locomotives, including *Evening Star*, *City of Truro* and *Mallard*, could operate on the main line throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Another long-standing volunteer, Peter James, joined in 1977 and played a leading role in the overhaul of *Flying Scotsman* between 2006 and 2016. He continues to support the museum today as a rail operations volunteer.

Volunteers' Week, which was launched in 1984, is an annual UK-wide campaign held celebrating and recognise the contributions of volunteers, fostering connections between national organisations and grassroots groups.

Charlotte Kingston, the NRM's head of public programme and communications, said: "Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the museum. For 50 years, they have worked behind the scenes, on the footplates and with our visitors to help bring railway history to life.

"Their knowledge, experience, and generosity have helped make the museum what it is today."

➜ To volunteer at the NRM, contact volunteer.nrm@railwaymuseum.org.uk to join the mailing list and be first to hear about new opportunities.

TPO restoration boost from new Nene Valley charity shop

By Robin Jones

THE Nene Valley Railway has opened its new charity shop to fund smaller projects on the heritage line – and its next goal is to finance the £25,000 overhaul of the Southern Railway Travelling Post Office currently located on Platform 4 at Wansford.

The shop at Wansford station was officially opened to the public on May 28 following two months of determined efforts from the line's buildings team and shop manager Sarah Hudson-Mann. They were joined by Martin Randall, client manager of local construction firm RG Carter, which donated the shop unit, and his colleague, Jason Hinch. After presenting Sarah with a plaque for the shop, Martin cut the ribbon and pronounced the new charity shop open. Throughout the morning, groups were given the



Martin Randall, client manager of RG Carter, officially opens the new Nene Valley Railway charity shop, watched by Sarah Hudson-Mann (left), Jason Hinch and volunteer Sally Nash. NVR



The Southern Railway TPO coach at Wansford station before it was covered by protective tarpaulins. ROBIN JONES

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Surprise civic accolade for Mangapps volunteers

By Geoff Courtney

VOLUNTEERS at Mangapps working railway museum in Essex are celebrating an unexpected 'full steam ahead' local community award that took owner John Jolly by surprise.

John and his wife June were attending a civic service dinner on May 11 at Burnham-on-Crouch, where the museum is located, when it was announced that it had won the accolade for its contribution to the local community.

After being presented with the award by the town's mayor, Coun Douglas Bown, a delighted John said: "I was very surprised, and it's rather special for a visitor attraction to get such positive recognition from its community. The award includes a number of medals for the volunteers, so we are planning an investiture – as long as we can get everyone together."

Referring to the return of resident steam locomotive *Brookfield* at the end of last year after a major overhaul at the museum that included significant work on the boiler and firebox, and a full repaint, John said: "With the award being titled 'Full Steam Ahead,' it's a good job *Brookfield* is back steaming!"

This 0-6-0PT, which is owned by Mangapps's volunteer Richard Moore, was built by WG Bagnall of Stafford (works No. 2613) early in the Second World War. It was originally to be constructed in metre gauge for operations in the coalfields of Turkey but was commandeered as part of the war effort. After being built as a standard gauge engine, it was put to work in September 1940 at the Admiralty machinery depot in Stoke-on-Trent.

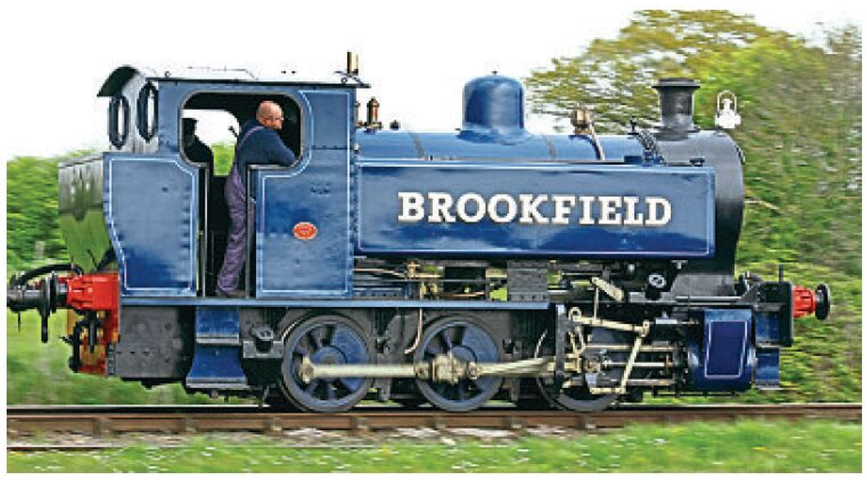
On the closure of the depot in 1959, it was purchased by Brookfield Foundry, which took over the site, and worked there for several years before being stored and subsequently saved for preservation, becoming a Mangapps resident in 1993. The museum is home to a large fleet of locomotives and has a three-quarter-mile standard gauge line with two stations and one of the country's largest privately-owned railwayana collections on public display, while its operational facilities include a recently extended locomotive shed and a three-road 150ft-long carriage shed.



Happy days: Mangapps Railway Museum owner John Jolly (front centre) shares a moment with six of the museum's volunteers, including John Whiskin, the railway's first volunteer in 1987, who is the bearded gentleman in the back row. Something – or someone – has caught the attention of the museum's three-year old labrador, Roly. JOHN JOLLY



Medal winners: Mangapps Railway Museum volunteers display their community award medals on the railway museum's main station platform. Sharing the limelight is resident Bagnall 0-6-0PT *Brookfield*; its owner, Richard Moore, is in the back row, third from left. JOHN JOLLY



In good fettle: Mangapps Railway Museum resident 0-6-0PT *Brookfield* shows off its fine profile after its recent return to service. JOSHUA COOPER

opportunity to visit the workshop to view the progress of the restoration of Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1539 of 1924 *Derek Crouch*, an ongoing project financially supported by the charity shop. Once the shop opened, it welcomed a regular stream of enthusiastic customers, while in the David Ray Education Centre a coffee morning and tombola were also well supported and saw £625 raised for the shop.

The 1939-built TPO, originally used on the Southern Railway night postal service from Waterloo to Exeter, before being moved to Dover for the Eastern Division's night postal service, has long sat at the platform covered in tarpaulin, but it has finally been decided that the time is right to return it to its original condition. Once this is complete, the coverings can be removed, and the coach will be seen properly for the first time in many years before being used as an exhibition/educational piece. However, the restoration will be primarily cosmetic and not include returning the coach to running order.

In 1977, the coach was taken out of service and came under the ownership of the National Rail Museum as part of the National Collection.

That same year, it was loaned to NVR as a static coach, since when it has housed the NVR Exhibition, which includes the original Post Office racking. Recently, the NRM transferred sole ownership to NVR, allowing it to complete the works necessary to ensure that it will be weatherproof and able to be used for many years to come.

The NVR fundraising team will be seeking external grants to help cover some of the restoration costs, while the charity shop will raise additional funds to financially support the project as it progresses.

The railway has also appealed for volunteers to help with the TPO project as well as in the shop; email adminassistant@nvr.org.uk

'Fantastic' response to Nene Valley's £300k SOS appeal

THE Nene Valley Railway has raised more than a third of its £300,000 Back On Track survival appeal, launched in the face of sharply rising operational costs and a two-year deficit triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

About £120,000, including grants and donations, has been received in the year since the appeal, announced in Heritage Railway issue 320, was launched – a "fantastic" response, according to a NVR statement: "It will enable the railway to maintain operations, conduct essential repairs and embark on vital infrastructure upgrades and restoration projects to ensure its long-term viability. However, we have some way to go to refill our reserves. Donations are just one way people can support the NVR.

"The best way to support us is to come and have a ride on the train. Currently, we have reduced our ticket prices, saving up to 27% off last year's price."

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

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

➜ Donations to the appeal may be made at https://nvr.org.uk/product.php/164 or https://gofund.me/5F75CA51

Peers seek change in law permitting young people to work on heritage lines

By Robin Jones

THE Government has been asked to amend a 105-year-old law to allow 14-16-year-olds carry out voluntary work on heritage railways and tramways.

During a House of Lords debate on the new Employment Rights Bill on June 9, Heritage Railway Association president Lord Faulkner of Worcester proposed an amendment to the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act 1920, which barred children from work in 'any industrial undertaking,' including in mines, construction or transport.

Lord Faulkner, an active member of the Lords since 1999 and a deputy speaker since 2010, said: "The amendment's purpose is to remove what is, in effect, an unintended consequence of a piece of outdated legislation on the training, education and skills development for a group of young volunteers, particularly young female volunteers, on heritage railways.

'Moribund' law

"No prosecution has ever been brought under section one of the 1920 act, and the provision languished unknown on the statute book for many years until it was brought to light in 2015. The HRA… was so concerned at the implications that it sought counsel's opinion, which confirmed that the 1920 act remained in force and that it was unlawful to allow volunteers under 16 to undertake work on a heritage railway.

"On July 15, 2022, I introduced a Private Member's Bill that sought to repeal the relevant sections of the act, which passed all its stages unamended and received widespread support in the chamber. Disappointingly, the bill made no progress in the Commons.

"Subsequent meetings with, among others, the Health and Safety Executive and the Office of Rail and Road produced some helpful assurances. Any prosecutions would rely not on this outdated act but on more recent legislation. Officials were unwilling to repeal the relevant sections of the 1920 act partly because, in their view, it was unnecessary and because it might have unforeseen implications on other activities, although those were never specified.

"Although they were helpful, the HSE and ORR views do not solve the basic problem if the 1920 act remains on the statute book. That is because, even if a prosecution may not be brought by official bodies, it could be brought by a local authority or by a relative of a young person, regardless of the assurances given. Heritage railway managers, not surprisingly, do not wish to break the law even if it is moribund and other safeguards exist.

"Safety is assured by each railway's safety management system, overseen by the ORR, with its statutory responsibilities for rail safety. Through risk assessment, this would take account of the capability and competence of young volunteers, as well as such issues as fatigue and the nature of supervision and support. Heritage railways employ 4000 paid staff and 22,000 volunteers, and they are supported by many more people through donations and shareholdings. A recent survey by the HRA showed some 774 younger volunteers under 16, and that number is probably slightly understated. At present, these are mainly confined to activities not involving working on the railway but supporting it in other ways.

"Heritage railways offer significant wider benefits to the rail industry and to society. They train young volunteers, and that has led to many seeking careers on the national rail network. In some cases, they have provided training and apprenticeships appropriate to their future career choices. Volunteering has taught young people social skills and teamworking and has provided a productive and satisfying outlet for their energies and creative skills."



Heritage Railway Association president Lord Faulkner of Worcester.

'Unnacceptable' position

"The present position is unacceptable and leaves young people, particularly those aged between 14 and 16, unable to enjoy and benefit from the experience of working on a steam railway. The railways are thus unable to engage their enthusiasm at a crucial time in their development, and the opportunity to encourage enthusiastic recruits to the rail industry is being lost."

His amendment was supported by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay and the Earl of Clancarty, who said: "Steam railways are an important part of this country's heritage and as each year passes, that importance surely grows.

"We are getting closer to a time when there will be no one with a personal memory of such trains in their working life."

In his response, government whip Lord Katz said that amending or repealing the 1920 act "would not be a straightforward matter" and "could have unintended consequences across a number of sectors." He said: "There may be activities that are unsuitable for young volunteers to carry out, for example, safety-critical tasks such as train diving, but I am pleased to say that both regulators are very willing to work with the HRA… to determine what sorts of activities would be safe, appropriate and suitable for young volunteers aged 14 to 16 to perform on the railways.

"I am more than happy and willing to facilitate a meeting with my noble friend Lord Faulkner of Worcester and the HRA, the Department for Transport, the ORR and the HSE to further pursue this issue."

Withdrawing his amendment in response, Lord Faulkner said he would "take up the minister's kind offer" but believed that, without a solution being found, "the house as a whole would like the opportunity to express its view on the report" as the draft new law progresses.

Pete Waterman returns to Devon to celebrate *Claudine* turning 20 years old

POP mogul Pete Waterman OBE made a special visit to Pecorama to celebrate the 20th birthday of single Fairlie 2-4-4T No. 9 *Claudine*, built at Beer Works in 2005.

Having first unveiled *Claudine* two decades ago, Pete returned on May 31 to lead a rededication ceremony and take the locomotive on a celebratory lap of honour.

He spent the day with staff, volunteers and visitors at the Beer attraction. The event was made even more special by the presence of *Claudine*'s original builder, Chief Mechanical Engineer John Macdougall, who joined a live interview with Michael Pritchard, chairman of PECO Model Railways and owner of Pecorama. *Claudine* is named in honour of Michael's mother, Claudine Pritchard.

Pete, president of The Railway Benefit Fund (RBF), used the event to raise awareness for the charity, which provides vital support to railway workers past and present. Past patrons have included Charles Dickens.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of Pecorama, so the attraction is offering 50% off all tickets throughout the season.

For more information and to book tickets, visit the website www.pecorama.co.uk



Pete Waterman at the controls of No. 9 *Claudine* as it double-heads with 2-4-2T+T *Mr P* on the Beer Heights Light Railway at Pecorama on May 31.
CALLUM WILLCOX/PECORAMA

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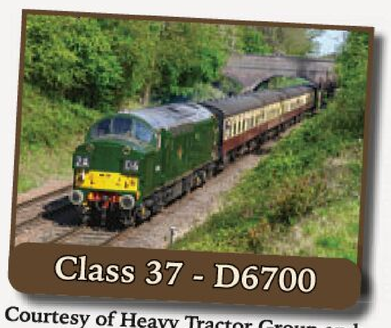
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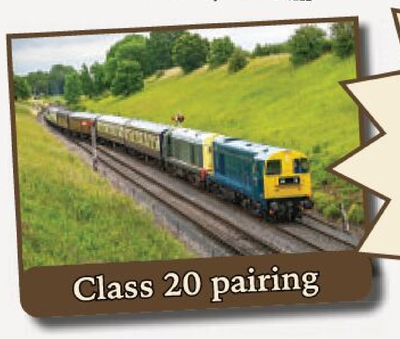
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Piccadilly Line heritage trips to celebrate double anniversary

By Robin Jones

UNDERGROUND trips aboard a restored Art Deco-style burgundy 1938 train will mark Railway 200 and Transport for London's 25th anniversary.

The Piccadilly Medley journeys will be run on July 11-13 aboard the four-car London Transport Museum unit.

Passengers can choose from a selection of routes on the Piccadilly line. On Friday, July 11, journeys will start from Northfields for a Heathrow Loop round trip, on the Saturday from Acton Town station to Uxbridge (round trip), and on the Sunday from both Ealing Broadway, through central London, to Cockfosters (single trip) and from Cockfosters to Ealing Broadway (single trip).

As passengers travel along the Piccadilly line, they can see the modernist architecture of Charles Holden, who designed many of the outer London tube stations as it was extended at both ends in the 1930s.

Passengers can alight at Northfields, Acton Town and Cockfosters to view Holden's influence, with the train also passing through other classic examples, including Arnos Grove, Southgate and Sudbury Town.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Holden's birth, with design fans able to see how Holden created a unified look and identity for many London Underground stations. On all three days, an actor playing Holden will be on the station platforms talking to passengers about his life, career, and the golden age of travel.

Travellers will be able to pick up a souvenir flyer or family activity sheet and visit the London Transport Museum Friends stall to browse transport memorabilia.

Tickets for all trips must be bought in advance at www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/heritage-vehicle-outings.

TfL chief operating officer Claire Mann said: "It has been a great year of celebrations so far, and these heritage train journeys as part of TfL 25 and 200 years of train travel in UK not only allow customers to take a step back in time, but to also feel the change in train travel during the last century.

"We hope those attending enjoy the day, and we look forward to hosting more celebratory events during the remainder of the year."

The next heritage journeys on the tube network will be Metropolitan Line specials taking place on September 5-7, also celebrating Railway 200 and TfL 25.



An Art Deco set dating from 1938 running from Acton Town to Heathrow Terminal 4 for the 'Tube 160 Birthday Special' on June 10, 2023. ELEANOR BENTALL/LTM

Commission for Rail Regulation report highlights heritage railways

By Hugh Dougherty

THE Commission for Rail Regulation in the Ireland's annual report for 2024 highlights the strict regime of safety inspections applied to the heritage sector by the national body.

Annual inspections were carried out on the Cavan & Leitrim Railway, Irish Steam Preservation Society, Lartigue Monorail, Fintown Railway, the Difflin Lake Railway and Waterford & Suir Valley Railway. Advice and points for action included warning the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland to not let stewards hang out of windows during main line tours, as well as noting that a door was observed to be open on a generator van on the main line.

The commission noted that the RPSI is subject to higher and more demanding standards than heritage lines as it operates trains on the national network.

A minor derailment was reported and investigated on the Connemara Railway during its Santa specials season at Maam Cross, while the Cavan & Leitrim received advice on safety paperwork compliance, but all the heritage lines received operating certificates, with the commission content that safety and operating procedures are compliant.

The report noted that the Tralee & Dingle Light Railway at Blenerville and the West Clare at Moyasta Junction do not have operating certificates as both are currently out of use.

The report stated that between them, Ireland's heritage and all narrow gauge carried an impressive total of 93,127 passengers in 2024, the leader being Donegal's Difflin Lake Railway with 44,237, the Waterford & Suir Valley the next busiest with 27,318, the Fintown Railway recording 6139, and the Cavan & Leitrim 5000. The Connemara Railway, operated for the first time at Christmas 2024, carried 264, a figure which will increase considerably in 2025, the first full year of the line having its full operational certificate.

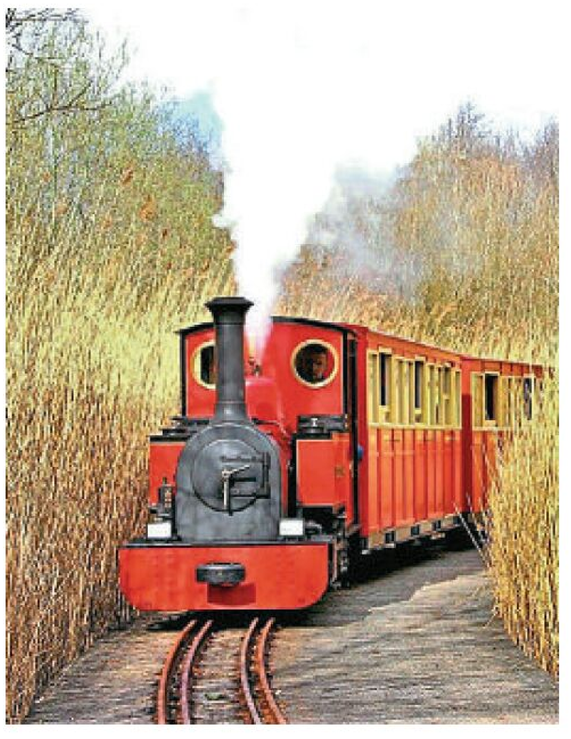
A spokesman for the commission said: "We are committed to supporting heritage lines operating safely and conforming to the demanding national standards that we set. Our work with them includes on-site inspection visits, observation, and giving advice and support to ensure that they operate safely."



***The Earl of Oakfield* brings its train down to the lakeside on the DLR.** HUGH DOUGHERTY



The Waterford & Suir Valley Railway was Ireland's second busiest narrow gauge heritage railway in 2024. W&SVR



***Countess of Difflin* in action on the Difflin Lake Railway, which satisfied the railway inspectors and carried the highest number of all the Irish heritage lines in 2024.** DLR

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Museum's appeal for supporters to make a 'material difference' in restoration of District Line stock

By Owen Hayward

LONDON Transport Museum's restoration of its 1930s Q stock unit continues apace at both Rampart Engineering's Chesterfield workshops and LTM's own base at Acton Depot, with a new appeal for help to complete the reupholstering of the seats throughout the full set.

Introduced in 1924 after the London Passenger Transport Board took over operation of the District line from the District Railway in 1933, this three-car Q stock unit restoration has been ongoing since 2018, with vehicles being dispatched in turn to Rampart for work to be carried out on the underframes, bogies and wheelsets. Meanwhile, LTM volunteers and contractors in South London continue to work on the bodywork and passenger bays.

The interiors of the cars are being restored to reflect different moments from the design's long history in service. One will explore life in wartime London, the second will reflect life during the postwar years of austerity, and the third and final vehicle will illustrate the growing optimism and prosperity of the 1950s, as well as telling the story of direct recruitment to London Transport from the Caribbean.

With the unit being restored to reflect long service history across all three vehicles, the seating requires reupholstering into iconic tube moquettes. Funds have already been secured to finance this on the first of the three cars, but LTM is now seeking £30,000 from public support in order to complete this work for the final two.

Elizabeth McKay, LTM's director and CEO, said: "Q stock Underground carriages transported Londoners on the District line throughout a significant era of change and hold countless memories. From wartime evacuations to the buzz of the 1960s, and from life-changing journeys to quiet commutes – they were a constant in a city always on the move.

"These iconic Underground cars wouldn't be complete without distinctive moquette seats, which we know were designed by pioneering women like Joy Jarvis and Enid Marx. The museum has been able to secure funds to reupholster one Q stock car as part of the restoration project, but we need the public's help to raise £30,000 for the final two.

"Every donation will safeguard this treasured part of history to inspire and delight future generations."

Since the creation of London Transport in 1933, artists and designers have been specially commissioned to create stylish contemporary moquette patterns for tube trains, buses, trams, trolleybuses and, more recently, London's cable car over the Thames.

As part of London Transport Museum's work to bring the Q stock cars back to their former glory, its curatorial team have been working hard to determine historical moquette designs for each vehicle. This project has included carefully examining more than 300 historic photographs from 1920 to the present day and the museum's archive of more than 400 moquette samples.

The chosen designs for the two Q stock Underground cars that the museum is seeking support to reupholster highlight the central role women played in deciding how train and bus interiors would look. Joy Jarvis was a textile designer during the 1940s and responsible for the iconic roundel and bullseye moquette design which, until recently, was erroneously attributed to a male designer. It was seen on trains during the 1948 London Olympics through to the arrival of the Windrush generation to the UK. It will be used as part of the restoration project in car No. 4416 and will represent the year 1956.



The interior of the trio of Q series cars will reflect three different periods of the design's working life – but £30,000 is needed for upholstering the seats.
LTM COLLECTION



Two different styles of moquette will pay tribute to the women designers. On the left is Enid Marx's roundel pattern which was previously attributed to a male designer, while Joy Jarvis's shield variation on the right first appeared circa 1948.
LTM COLLECTION

Enid Marx, meanwhile, will be represented by her shield pattern moqutte in car No. 4417. Enid was an influential artist and designer whose wide-ranging work included textile design, printmaking, book illustration and even postage stamps, with London Transport being one of her many clients. The pattern first appeared in 1934, with the green and red variant introduced on sub-surface trains on the District line towards the end of the Second World War.

The public's support can make a material difference to help finish the Q stock restoration project and tell the stories of these women designers. Donations of £150 would secure a full roll of material; £220 would fund a complete single seat, cushion and back; £320 would finance a double seat combination; and £500 would cover the cost of armrest material for an entire car.

➜ Donations to the appeal can be made online by visiting www.ltmuseum.co.uk/make-donation?campaign=qstock



Q stock restoration has largely been undertaken by museum volunteers at Acton, with the long-term aim of bringing the three-car unit back into operational condition.
LTM COLLECTION

Bumper crowds at first nine-day Beamish heritage festival

By Robin Jones

BEAMISH – The Living Museum of the North's first-ever nine-day transport festival proved a resounding success in both operational and commercial terms, attracting more than 36,000 visitors as the venue's contribution to Railway 200.

The Festival of Transport 2025 on May 24-June 1 saw the reopening of Rowley station and running line, as reported last issue.

The station last saw passengers during the February 2020 half term, before the Covid-19 pandemic brought everything to a stop.

Due to the long period of financial recovery and lost work time caused by the pandemic, other priorities came ahead of reopening the station line, particularly the tramway and completion of the museum's 1950s town development and bus route.

The Vintage Carriage Trust's Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST *Sir Berkeley* was hired to haul the long-awaited resumed services over the line. It was joined by Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST *Keighley Gas Works No.2,* from the Tanfield Railway, which had been scheduled to work in the colliery, but due to the surge of public interest in the reopening of Rowley station, it ended up sharing duties with *Sir Berkeley* on that line.

The other highlight was the reunion of Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 1760 of 1906 *Sybil,* from the West Lancashire Light Railway, and Quarry Hunslet No. 409 of 1886 *Velinheli*, currently based on the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway. The pair became the first former Dinorwic slate quarry locomotives to visit the narrow gauge line at Beamish, and could be seen running together on May 31 and June 1.

The last time these two locomotives were together was in 1965, on a lorry heading for Cornwall after being sold by the slate quarries in Llanberis.

The Titfield Thunderbolt film was shown in the museum's 1950s cinema The Grand as part of the railway theme, and the festival also included displays of buses, vintage and veteran vehicles, and road steam.

On one day, the operating team recorded that 27 trips were run over 0.27 miles long, giving a return mileage of 15 miles on this short route, carrying 1598 passengers in what was a very intensive operation.

Beamish officials were hoping for a similar public response at the forthcoming October half term, in anticipation of the completion of the overhaul repatriated Sharp Stewart 0-4-0T No. E1056 of 1895 *Dunrobin*, which was built for Highland Railway financier the third Duke of Sutherland, who had powers to run his own train over the line until revoked by BR in 1949.

Dunrobin and accompanying saloon No. 58A were sold in 1950 to the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. In 1965, the pair were exported to Canada, but acquired by Beamish in 2011. The locomotive has been under overhaul by Severn Valley Engineering Services at Bridsnorth Works.

Beamish has been announced as one of five finalists for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2025, the world's largest museum prize.

Visit www.beamish.org.uk



Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST *Keighley Gas Works No.2* awaits departure from Rowley station, complete with a Highland Railway-liveried compartment coach and the former Duke of Sutherland saloon 58A. BEAMISH



***Sir Berkeley* operating at Rowley station.** BEAMISH



***Sybil* and *Velinheli* in the colliery stockyard, with Pit Heap as a backdrop.** BEAMISH



Bagnall *Sybil* and Stephen Lewin 0-4-0ST *Samson* on the narrow gauge line, with the colliery winding house and gantry in the background. BEAMISH

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Pioneer locomotive model donated to Middleton Railway

By Sally Clifford

A MODEL of railway pioneer John Blenkinsop's early locomotive invention, *Salamanca*, has arrived at the Middleton Railway.

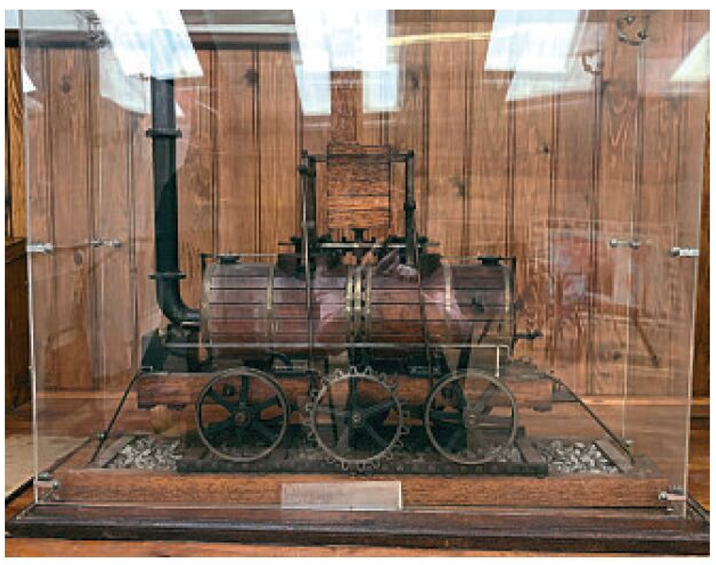
The 1:8 scale model of Blenkinsop's 1812 rack-and-pinion prototype was built by Mr H Murray, who documented its creation in an article in *The Model Engineer* dated June 1939.

"We know he built and operated it himself. It last operated in 1960 and was in store for years," said Middleton Railway vice president Ian Smith, adding that the model, which has worked in steam, was donated by a relation of Mr Murray's.

The model's arrival at the line's Moor Road site in the Railway 200 year, commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of the modern railway, celebrates the part pioneers such as Blenkinsop and Matthew Murray played in early locomotive design.

Although the original engine was largely designed by Blenkinsop, it is thought Matthew Murray would have contributed to the engine's detailed arrangement.

Although they share the same surname, it is not believed that the model creator was related to the renowned locomotive designer, although it demonstrates the creator's precision and skill – albeit on a smaller scale. Sketches, including the drawing wheel, are included in *The Model Engineer* article, along with detailed information of what looks to have been a painstaking yet diligently executed small-scale replica.

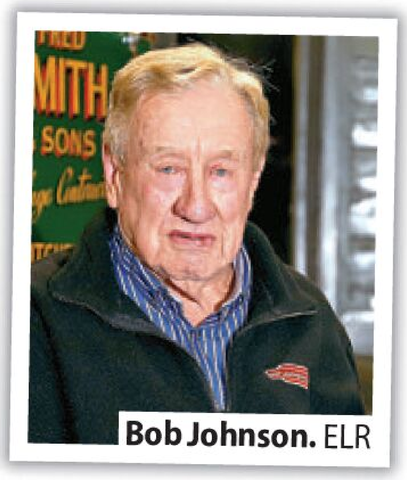


The small-scale replica of John Blenkinsop's 1812 locomotive donated to Middleton Railway. SALLY CLIFFORD

In the piece, Mr Murray explained how he made all the patterns for the model, the castings for which were machined on a 3in lathe and the gears cut with a specially-made milling attachment.

Ian said that the railway was delighted about the model's arrival and would now be focusing on where to locate it after it has been sympathetically conserved. "It is absolutely superb and it will help to tell the story," he said.

East Lancashire tribute to 'godfather' Bob Johnson



Bob Johnson. ELR

THE East Lancashire Railway has been in mourning for Bob Johnson, its oldest working volunteer, who recently celebrated both his 93rd birthday and 36 years of service to the heritage line.

Bob, who lived in Bury, died peacefully in Fairfield Hospital.

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "Bob was a giant of the ELR, dedicating so much of his life to develop, improve and preserve the heritage railway. He will be hugely missed by so many staff and volunteers, past and present.

"He was an inspiration to so many on the railway and so generous with his time to help others. Throughout those many years, Bob has seen and been part of many milestones, from being dressed as a snowman on the first Santa specials more than 30 years ago, taking on the role of a storyteller on the first Thomas The Tank Engine events, and leading the present picking team on Santa specials, through to serving as a director and ELR ambassador with visitors from China.

"Bob also launched the volunteer Hit Squad midweek maintenance team 32 years ago, and all his volunteer pals fondly remember those fun-filled days with Bob's wit, humour and storytelling.

"It was my privilege to work with Bob on the Hit Squad and who is, quite rightly acknowledged as the 'godfather' of the ELR."

The ELR has extended its condolences to Bob's wife Gill and the Johnson family.

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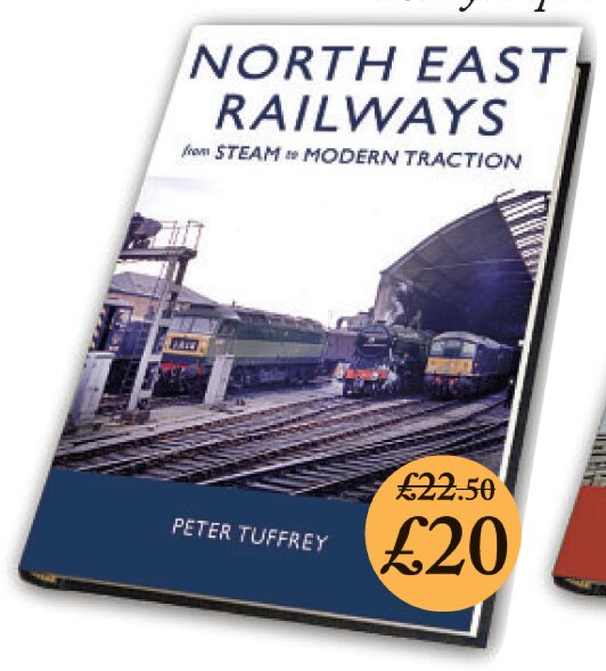
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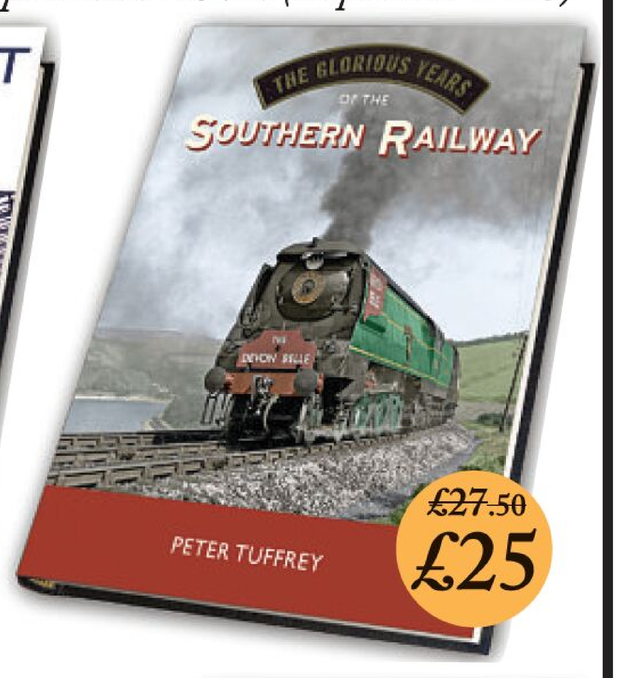
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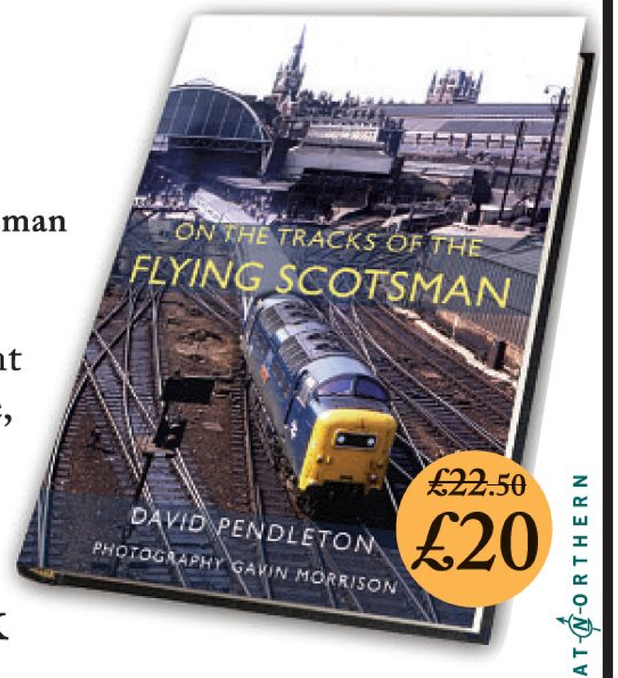




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GREAT NORTHERN

Plea to help new-build Kerr Stuart project reach its upcoming stages

By Owen Hayward

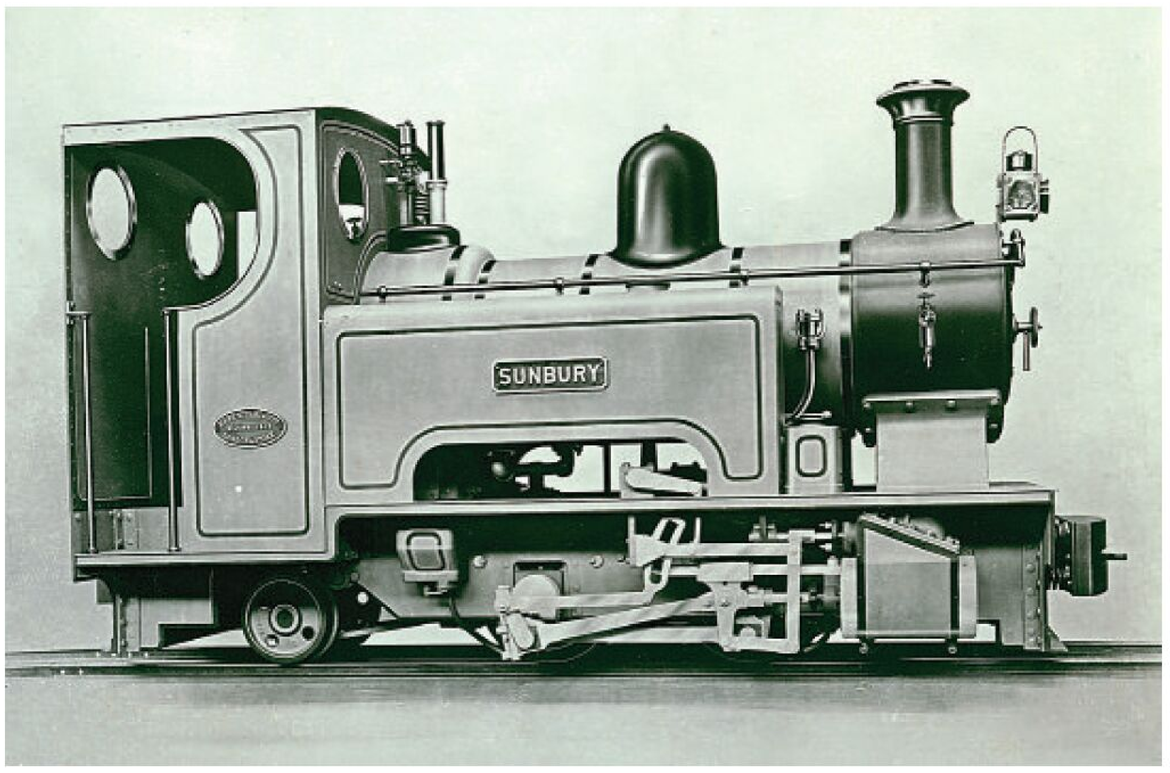
CONSTRUCTION of a replica of a unique Kerr Stuart locomotive design to fill a gap in the history of a waterworks railway has reached the stage where the frames are close to being assembled – but funding is needed before this next big step can be taken.

Started in 2020, this new-build by Webb Locos will create the fourth member of the 0-4-2Ts that once served the Metropolitan Waterboard Railway from 1914 until the mid-1940s. Three were built and numbered accordingly, with the names *Hampton*, *Kempton* and *Sunbury* carried, and they were used to transport coal to the pumping engines at the waterworks in Kempton Park before ultimately being scrapped in full, with no components surviving the cutter's torch. As such, Webb Locos, led by Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway volunteer Josh Webb, has used original engineering drawings in starting off this new-build of a unique design.

Significant progress has already been made since the launch of the project. The completed wheelsets were unveiled to members at an annual supporters' event on November 9 last year, with other components such as spring hangers and the smokebox saddle also in hand. Now ready to commence with the drilling and riveting of the frames, more funds are required before the work can continue. "The project relies on donations to progress, so we are looking for people to give one-off or recurring donations to enable us to commission this work," Josh explained.

"If you would like to support the project, there are various options, such as becoming a member for £30 a year, sponsoring a component (for which prices range from £10 to £5000), or setting up a donation via Direct Debit, which is particularly helpful as this allows the team to place orders for work with a known monthly income."

Dependent on the amount given, donors will receive various rewards, and those who give £5000 will have their name featured on a brass plaque in the completed locomotive's cab so they will be forever part of its journey as it brings history to life for all those who see it when it enters service at the HKWR.



Kerr Stuart 0-4-2T No. 3 *Sunbury* was one of three identical locomotives that ran the Metropolitan Waterboard Railway before being scrapped in the 1940s. It is this design which is the focus of a new-build effort for the Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway. WEBB LOCOS COLLECTION

➜ More information on the project and making donations can be obtained by visiting webblocos.co.uk or emailing info@webblocos.co.uk





The wheelsets for MWB No. 4 were delivered in November last year, while the frame sheets are ready and waiting to be assembled providing funding can be obtained. WEBB LOCOS

Striking red Ivatt set for an autumnal Lancashire return

FORMER East Lancashire Railway resident Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46441, which carries a non-prototypical yet striking lined crimson livery, will return to Bury after being booked for the line's October 17-19 autumn steam gala.

Currently based on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway, No. 46441 was at on the ELR through the 1990s, during which time it also ran 'Steam on the Met' trips over part of the London Underground network, but it last steamed at Bury in 2002.

Following expiration of its boiler ticket, it was later moved to the Ribble Steam Railway for static display. With a return to steam on the cards, it was moved in 2018 to the LHR, a route it once ran over in BR days and which was its intended destination when first preserved, its arrival there prevented when the line was severed from the national network by the rerouting of the A590 at Haverthwaite. Instead, its saviour, Dr Peter Beet, took it to Carnforth Steamtown before later relocating it to Bury.

Built in 1950 at Derby, it was allocated to Southport Derby Road depot and remained a Midland Region locomotive right up until withdrawal 17 years later. With its colour resembling the colours of the LMS, it will join a trio of other ex-MR locomotives, with 'Pug' 0-4-0ST No. 11243, Class 23 0-6-0ST No. 11456 and 'Jinty' 3F 0-6-0T No. 47298 also scheduled to be in service.

An ELR statement said: "The loco hasn't appeared at the ELR in over 20 years and is making a much-welcomed return following a recent overhaul. No. 46441 joins a home-fleet line-up and further guest locos for what promises to be a packed three-day event!"



Ivatt 2MT No. 46441 at work on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway in March 2024. OWEN HAYWARD

Further details and guest locomotives will be announced at www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk/events-activities/autumn-steam-gala

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Diesels moved out – but West Clare Railway and Museum 'will not close'

By Hugh Dougherty



West Clare in happier times: *Slieve Callan* waits with a train at Moyasta Junction. VISIT CLARE

STEPHEN Whelan, the son of West Clare Railway and Museum founder and owner Jackie Whelan, has said that the line is not up for permanent closure and wants to quash persistent rumours claiming that it is being disbanded and that its assets being offered for sale.

Stephen, who is involved with the museum and the mile-long narrow gauge line at Moyasta Junction, said: "We are staying closed this year and are looking at options for the future, which could include reopening. The fact is that we're both too busy with our quarry business at present to be playing trains!"

Stephen's statement comes in the wake of the decision taken last autumn by the Irish Traction Group to move its four stored non-operational diesels from the museum to the Downpatrick & County Down Railway. "We decided to do that as the West Clare Museum project has stalled," said the ITG's Peter Jones. "We thank Jackie Whelan for allowing us to store our locos at Moyasta for the last 15 years, but we moved the first two, Nos. 190 and 124, o the first weekend of June, with No. 152 and A3R, all formerly with CIE and Irish Rail, being transported to Downpatrick the following weekend.

"We are very grateful to the DCDR for accommodating us, and the stored locos have joined our operational fleet there."

New home

The locomotives were moved by two specialised low-loaders, brought over especially from England, to a new siding in the DCDR station yard, which was laid after more than a year of planning, tracklaying and preparatory work. Each locomotive was inspected and serviced over the workshop pits before being moved to their storage and restoration location.

In 2023, severe flooding caused significant disruption to DCDR operations and highlighted the need to reinforce the diesel fleet. DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said, "Having access to additional locomotives allows us to rotate our existing diesel locos for essential maintenance and cosmetic restoration without impacting our services as we continue our recovery.

"Of the four locomotives being relocated from Moyasta, two will be restored and returned to operational service, while the other two will provide valuable spare parts to support the existing fleet.

"The arrival of these locomotives, especially No. 124 – which was the very first American-built locomotive to arrive in Ireland in 1961 – significantly strengthens our collection and operational resilience."

Peter Jones, of the Irish Traction Group, added in a recent ITG newsletter: "Although covered and secured, the locomotives have suffered from exposure to the sea air at Moyasta.

"Fortunately, recent inspections revealed their internal mechanical and electrical components remain complete, and the engines still bar over."

The West Clare Railway hit the headlines when original WCR 0-6-2T No. 5 *Slieve Callan*, built in Glasgow by Dubs in 1892, and which had been preserved and plinthed by CIE at Ennis after the railway closed in 1961, returned in steam to Moyasta Road after a £500,000 overhaul by Alan Keef Limited. Hopes were high that the original WCR tracked could be extended to Kilkee. Despite planning permission being granted in 2015, no further progress was made.

Unclear future?

The line and museum, which contains WCR artefacts in the original Moyasta Junction station building, have been closed for the last three seasons, a source of concern to Clare County Council, which regards the line and museum, privately funded by the Whelans, as a valuable tourist asset, while *Slieve Callan* is currently stored partly dismantled in its shed. The railway does not have an operating certificate from the Irish Commission for Railway Regulation and is listed in its annual report for 2024 as non-operational.

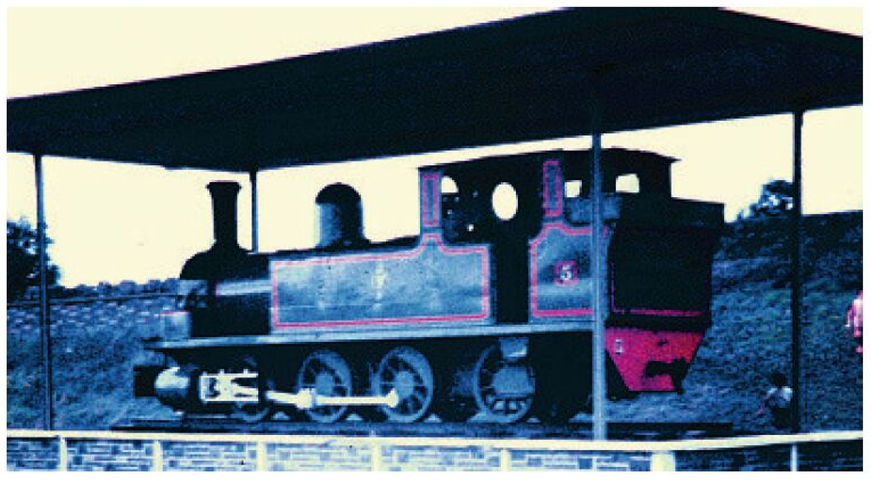
Irish railway enthusiasts have expressed concern that unless the line does reopen, it will become the third failed narrow gauge revival scheme, joining the Tralee & Dingle and Foyle Valley railways, both of which were once operational with ambitious plans for development, but which are now both closed, with little hope of being reopened.

Jim Deegan, owner of Railtours Ireland and founder of the Connemara Railway heritage project, said: "It's all very sad and reminder to everyone in the heritage railway sector that nothing is forever."

➜ The Irish Traction Group has launched a fundraising appeal to help cover the transportation and restoration costs of all four locomotives, estimated to be about £40-£50,000. Supporters and members of the public interested in contributing are invited to visit www.irishtractiongroup.com/donate or www.downrail.co.uk/donate/



Left: Irish Rail General Motors Bo-Bo No. 124 squeezes around the tight corner onto Market Street, with the iconic Down Arts Centre (formerly Downpatrick Town Hall) in the background. DCDR



Right: *Slieve Callan* in 1971, preserved by CIE and plinthed at Ennis, before being removed for restoration to working order. HUGH DOUGHERTY

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Railway fears 'increased risk' from flooding due to planned new defences planned following review

By Robin Jones

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has given a "cautious welcome" to the publication of the Department for Infrastructure's Downpatrick Flood Alleviation Scheme Feasibility Report – but has expressed fears that one of its stations would face a greater risk.

The report, commissioned following the devastating Storm Ciarán floods of November 2023, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 313, recommends Option N as the preferred scheme, with permanent flood defences installed both within Downpatrick and along the River Quoile.

The floods had a serious and prolonged impact on the volunteer-run railway, crowned the Northern Ireland Social Enterprise of the Year in 2024 and Team of the Year at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards on February 8.

Substantial costs

The site was underwater for seven days, affecting buildings, track, signalling systems and rolling stock. While the heritage line was able to partially reopen in time for Halloween last year, full service and infrastructure recovery remains ongoing, and the total cost of repairs is now estimated between £2.33 million.

DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner gave a "cautious welcome" to the study's findings. He said: "We welcome the fact that Option N avoids placing demountable barriers across our tracks, which was one of the alternatives considered, but would have raised significant questions about deployment and management for a volunteer-run railway.

However, it is clear from the report's modelling that our Inch Abbey station would be at increased risk of flooding under the proposed scheme."

The railway has requested the opportunity to contribute to the next stage of the evaluation process to explore whether these downstream effects can be mitigated, potentially through the use of a flap gate on the watercourse beneath the causeway to Inch Abbey.

However, the railway also expressed disappointment that dredging around the Quoile railway bridge has been ruled out. Robert said: "The significant silt build-up presents ongoing issues for both asset inspection and the physical appearance of the river.

"DCDR continues to advocate for targeted dredging at this critical structure from a safety management perspective."

Northern Ireland Infrastructure Minister Liz Kimmins reiterated her commitment and support for the regeneration of Downpatrick and the railway heritage sector in visits to the town and heritage line on June 5. During her visit to the railway, the DCDR expressed to her its desire to be recognised as a key stakeholder during the upcoming six-month evaluation period, particularly where proposed works such as the rising main may intersect with railway property.



Minister Liz Kimmins (centre) with (left to right) Downpatrick & County Down Railway president John Wilson, chairman Robert Gardiner, the line's Ian Cross and Chris Johnston, and operations manager Morgan Young.

Impressive regeneration

She said: "I was particularly impressed by the work that is ongoing in Downpatrick to regenerate the town centre and promote our storied railway heritage.

"It was inspiring to see and hear how the volunteers and the local community responded to the autumn 2023 flooding events.

"A feasibility study which has been published has identified a preferred option providing the target standard of flood protection to approximately 106 properties, including the railway facility.

"I have also noted their continued work to preserve railway heritage, with the very recent transportation of two American-made locomotives, which first arrived in Ireland in the 1960s, to the DCDR site for storage and restoration."

A DCDR statement said that it will continue to work in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure to help deliver a flood scheme that safeguards the whole town and serves the wider community for the long term and hopes that the recommendations are implemented sooner rather than later.

The one they could not save….

THE end finally came for one of the Downpatrick & County Down Railway's CIÉ steam heating vans, No. 3189, when it was taken away by road to be scrapped.

Bought from Iarnród Éireann, it arrived at Downpatrick in 2007 and was given a second life as a guard's van, generator vehicle and storage facility, before being retired at the end of the 2019 Lapland Express season.

Spending years out of service during the Covid-19 pandemic, No. 3189 was one of the carriages damaged in the autumn 2023 flooding at the heritage line, and its condition had deteriorated significantly.

An internal review found restoration economically unviable, with costs estimated at well in excess £100,000 to restore it even as a basic van – let alone convert it back for passenger use. It was not considered of significant enough rarity or historical importance to warrant fundraising for its restoration, given its advanced corrosion and limited operational use.

Attempts to find another home for the vehicle, including approaches to other heritage lines, proved unsuccessful. DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said: "I desperately tried to find a new home for it. There were a few expressions of interest, but nothing firm.

"As much as I'd have loved to restore our only Mk. 1, it realistically would have been a complete money pit – and we have much more pressing needs at the railway."

On May 14, Ahoghill-based contractor Thomas Hamill and Sons cut the van in half and loaded the body halves onto lorries for the final trip to County Antrim. The bogies and an assortment of spare parts were kept by the DCDR for potential reuse in future projects. Built at Wolverton in 1961, No. 3189 began life as BR No. 81029, a standard Brake Gangwayed Mk.1 coach. It was converted into a steam heating van by CIÉ in 1973, becoming one of a small which operated in Ireland to provide heating to older carriages without onboard generators.



Steam heating van No. 3189 cut in half at the Downpatrick & County Down Railway on May 14. DCDR

Rare railbus is an 'ideal fit' for Gwendraeth Valley line

By Robin Jones

REVIVALISTS of part of the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley line have been donated a rare experimental railbus which will fit the restricted loading gauge of the Carmarthenshire line.

Built in 1981 by British Rail Engineering Limited at Derby as one of four experimental lightweight railbuses designed to serve lightly used rural lines, No. RB3 was originally used in the Western Region, mainly around Bristol Temple Meads, for passenger services and then sold to Northern Ireland Railways. First used on the Coleraine-Portrush line, it was later displayed at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, before arriving the Downpatrick & County Down Railway in 2001.

However, No. RB3 has now been donated to the Gwendraeth Valley Railway that perfectly suits its unique dimensions and capabilities. The revivalists face structural limitations such as low bridges dating back to its canal origins, making traditional main line stock impractical, but No. RB3's compact design makes it an ideal fit, alongside other modified vehicles such as the 'cut-down' Class 03 locomotives, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 328.

DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said: "RB3 was always an unusual and significant piece of railway heritage, but one that didn't quite fit our future plans. With its limited capacity, it was never going to be a high priority for restoration here. We are absolutely delighted that it's found a home where it's needed.

"This is bittersweet," he added. "We are proud to have cared for RB3 over the years and are grateful for its role in our history. But it's even better to see it going somewhere it can be useful again and where people will be able to ride on it one day."

Stuart Thomas, chairman of the Gwendraeth Railway Society, which in 2022 signed a 99-year lease with Network Rail for the remaining nine miles of its branch, said: "It's been an absolute pleasure working with the Downpatrick team to bring No. RB3 to Wales. Its narrow and low profile suits our railway's restricted gauge perfectly, and we see it as a fitting modern continuation of Col Holman F Stephens' early railbus innovations on rural lines.

"We are incredibly grateful to the DCDR for its generosity, not just the vehicle but also for the crates of drawings, spares, and even moquette to help us with its restoration."

Lengthy planning process

The transfer of the railbus involved more than a year of logistical planning and was carried out in coordination with another major heritage railway transport operation involving the Irish Traction Group. No. RB3 was taken to be loaded onto a ferry as a backload after the ITG's General Motors No. 152 was delivered to Downpatrick, as reported on News, page 42, making efficient use of available transport resources.

On Sunday, June 8, No. RB3 was shunted for the last time through the Downpatrick workshop and carriage gallery, with many volunteers taking one last trip on it, before being winched onto a trailer and beginning its journey to a temporary storage site in England ahead of work starting.



Experimental railbus No. RB3 moves on to a low-loader prior to its journey to West Wales. DCDR



Left: The Downpatrick & County Down Railway's Morgan Young presents the keys to No. RB3 to Stuart Thomas from the Gwendraeth Valley Railway. DCDR

The restoration will include regauging the vehicle back to UK standard gauge, a mechanical overhaul, minor bodywork repairs, and a full interior and exterior refurbishment. With many of No. RB3's components shared with the Leyland National bus and the later 'Pacer' railcars that were derived from the design, the new custodians hope to draw on the UK bus preservation community for additional support.

Chance to take Cheltenham's Tram 21 for a new ride in life!

A NEW home and potential restorer is being sought for Cheltenham's last-surviving tram.

Tram 21 was one of three built by English Electric at the Dick Kerr works in Preston in 1921. Supplied to the Cheltenham & District Light Railway, it remained in service until the 3ft 6in gauge system closed in 1930.

While the other teams were scrapped, the body of No. 21 was sold to the Boote family of Huntscot Farm who stood it on sleepers and used it for storing crates for the transport of the family's produce.

A pitched corrugated metal roof erected above the car's top deck ensured the car's long-term future. In 1961, the body was acquired by the Cheltenham Tramcar No. 21 Group and taken to Cheltenham Corporation's Leckhampton depot in Moorend Road, where restoration began. The late Brian Jones, a founding member of the Rolling Stones who was born in Cheltenham and attended school there, was part of the project.

Three years later, the depot was sold and cleared, and on July 10, 1965, the partially restored tram was paraded through Cheltenham before being taken to the National Tramway Museum at Crich in November 1981. Not restored to running order, Tram 21 was transferred to Bournemouth Transport Museum. However, due to its lack of local relevance, in 1991 agreement was reached for it to move back to Cheltenham and The Wilson, the town's art gallery and museum.

Stored there away from public display since 1992, the museum has now said the tram is too large to show and too costly for it to restore, and so Cheltenham Borough Council has made the decision to deaccession it from the museum collection and offer it to anyone who is interested in taking it on a project for the benefit of the community if a new home can be found.



Right: Cheltenham Tram 21 currently in storage at the town's The Wilson art gallery and museum. CBC

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200 (AND SOME) FOR 200: FFESTINIOG'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

When you have a big personal anniversary coinciding with a worldwide year of celebration, you can only push the boat out and go big with your festivities – and that is just what the Ffestiniog Railway did, with a parade of locomotives across the Cob. **Owen Hayward** reports on this once-in-a-lifetime spectacle.

Celebrations in the railway world come in many shapes and forms, from the simplicity of a specially chartered train right the way through to a full-scale gala which, in the case of the Ffestiniog Railway, contain quite literally all the bells and whistles – for 2025 marks 70 years since the very first trains run by preservationists departed Porthmadog on July 23, 1955. Since that initial journey of just about one mile across the Cob to a halt at Boston Lodge, the FR has expanded drastically, returning to Blaenau Ffestiniog and undertaking substantial engineering challenges to do so, such as the construction of a 2.5-mile diversionary line where the original trackbed was no longer passable.

The three-day celebrations took place on June 20-22 and put out near enough every piece of operational rolling stock at the railway's disposal, all of which culminated in a cavalcade across that first section of line starring both active and retired locomotives, and a journey through time on each day reflecting all seven decades of the line's preservation years.

Echoes of 1955

In reality, while billed as a three-day event, theproceedings had begau on the evening of June 19. Anticipating the high visitor footfall making the pilgrimage to North Wales for this occasion, special services were put on to connect with main line trains at Blaenau Ffestiniog. The return departure of the afternoon 'Quarryman' was delayed to 5.35pm to coincide with an arriving Conwy Valley line service, while an additional 'Sunset Special' departed Porthmadog at 7.10pm to connect with a later one, therefore making travel to the event much easier for those attending the celebrations. This latter departure saw newly-overhauled George England 0-4-0ST+T No. 2 *Prince* at the helm, its first official passenger-carrying turn since returning to service after overhaul.

Following *Prince*'s departure, it was time for 4WPM *Mary Ann* to shine. On July 23, 1955, it was this very Simplex locomotive that worked the first train across the Cob, pulling carriage No. 23 and van No. 12. Rather appropriately, its departure time from Porthmadog was at 7.55pm (which in 24-hour clock terms is, of course, 19.55), with the return from Boston Lodge half an hour later (20.25). During those early days there was no run-round loop at Boston Lodge, meaning that a number of shunting moves were needed for the locomotive to swap ends, something made easier nowadays thanks to sidings and loops within the complex of the works site.

Coincidentally, the situation with *Prince* further echoed those first days of 1955 when, having laid dormant since the closure of the line in 1946, the Small England was returned to service just over a week after the inaugural service.

This was aided by the locomotive having been fitted with a new boiler and firebox



On June 20, *Merddin Emrys* rounds Tank Curve with the long goods train, the wheel count of which totalled 200. The slate wagons would detach at Ddualt on the return journey from Blaenau Ffestiniog, returning to Porthmodg by gravity power. NATHAN SPENCE



Echoes of '55: Simplex *Mary Ann* with the two bogie coaches at Boston Lodge, 70 years after the same formation first crossed the Cob at the start of the Ffestiniog Railway's revival. NATHAN SPENCE



People power: Just a small number of those involved in keeping the Ffestiniog Railway's platinum jubilee celebrations going. NATHAN SPENCE

about a year before that closure, prior to which *Prince* had been out of service since 1936! Now, just as it was then, No. 2 was outshopped carrying Garroway Green, the first time this scheme has been seen on any of the England locomotives since the 1980s.

Its most recent overhaul started in the workshops in early 2024, though it had been out of service since September 2022, with the work having included the construction of a completely new saddle tank, despite valiant efforts to repair its previous one.

The following day, proceedings kicked off formally. After a 7am diesel-hauled departure behind 4WDM *Upnor Castle*, which was then followed the full way up the line at 7.40am by Quarry Hunslet *Britomart*, the stalwarts of the line's early days – *Mary Ann*, *Prince* and double Fairlie *Merddin Emrys* (filling the role of the now withdrawn *Livingston Thompson*, which was then named *Taliesin*) – taking centre stage in a photographic line-up at Porthmadog just after 10am, coupled to appropriate carriage sets reflecting those early days of operation.

Following this, a sequence of trips to both Minffordd and Tan-y-Bwlch ran with an array of motive power.

Clearance trains resembling those that helped the advance of services to Tan-y-Bwlch were recreated with 2-4-0DM No. 11 *Moelwyn*, while Baguley Drewry 0-6-0DH *Harlech Castle* offered a comparison with the more modern engineers' set.



Spectacle of steam: Nearly every available space at Harbour station on June 22 was occupied by a steam locomotive as the FR paraded more than 200 wheels across the Cob for Railway 200. CHRIS PARRY/FF&WHR

Despite the best laid plans, the prolonged dry spell necessitated several ad hoc service alterations, with some trains needing to run double or even triple-headed to mitigate for the increased fire risk. However, a lineside fire early on in the day did temporarily cut off running to Blaenau Ffestiniog.

By mid-afternoon, trains were able to run right through once more, and while the published timings were adhered to,



Fresh from overhaul, *Prince*, in its 1955 Garroway Green livery, rounds Whistling Curve with a train comprising former RAF wagons. HARRY BRADLEY



The cavalcade saw some out-of-service locomotives make a rare appearance, with *Earl of Merioneth* one of those, carrying the headboard worn in 1982 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Festiniog Railway Company, which is the world's oldest-surviving railway company name. CHRIS PARRY/FF&WHR





Above: Liz Saville Roberts MP and Lord Faulkner of Worcester give the green flag to start off the cavalcade proceedings. CHRIS PARRY/FF&WHR

Left: Both built in 1893 as 0-4-0STs and converted to 2-4-0ST+Ts in preservation, *Linda* and *Blanche* skirt the Afon Glaslyn on the Welsh Highland section on June 20. NATHAN SPENCE

locomotive and set allocations varied from what would have been expected to keep the show on the road.

Normality restored

Thankfully, such disruption was fairly short-lived, and Saturday's services ran as advertised, although the high demand for boarding and alighting at Boston Lodge – where the works were open for tours and a bar was also present – did result in delays throughout the day, necessitating in the cancellation of one Tan-y-Bwlch service to recover some of that lost time.

Another early-bird departure offered a chance to enjoy a journey along the line behind single Fairlie No. 9 *Taliesin*, which is the third locomotive to carry this identity after the original was scrapped between 1935 and 1937, the name then being transferred to double Fairlie *Livingston Thompson*.

As with the day before, this was swiftly followed by a second train, on this occasion a lengthy goods set worked by *Merddin Emrys*; careful planning saw that the total number of wheels on this train counted 200, tying in with the Railway 200 theme which also played into the celebrations of the weekend.

On the return journey, the train stopped at Ddualt where the double Fairlie was shunted into the siding, allowing the wagons to continue downhill under gravity power – a feature which has become an icon of the FR's biggest events and which recreates sights that were once common during the pre-preservation slate quarrying days.

Ddualt became a hotspot for activity in the afternoon, with ex-Penrhyn quarry main line Hunslets *Linda* and *Blanche*, along with *Prince*, arriving with passenger and RAF wagons respectively for a sequence of runpasts on the spiral, which was built as part of the 14-year-long deviation construction necessitated by the flooding of the old trackbed by the Central Electricity Generating Board's hydro-electric station.

The spiral, which raises the track up high enough to meet the diversionary route, is unique for a passenger-carrying railway in the UK and allows for shots of trains crossing over others on the line below.

Further opportunities saw a simultaneous departure from the station here, with the two Hunslets heading out of the loop in the downhill direction while *Merddin Emrys* set off uphill.

Harking back to its industrial days, *Blanche* could be found with a bucket hung off the smokebox door throughout the celebrations; when working at the quarry, this was a common sight on both *Linda* and *Blanche*, as well as the third example of these larger Hunslets, *Charles*, now resident at the Penrhyn Castle Railway Museum. Typically of galvanised steel, the bucket would carry sand used for gritting the rails by hand when the locomotives struggled with adhesion. On this occasion, it carried donations collected towards *Blanche*'s upcoming overhaul. The locomotive is due to bow out of service in a few years' time, although it is said to be currently very tired mechanically.

Elsewhere, the Welsh Highland Railway's regular services ran with a multitude of motive power combinations as locomotives made their way to Porthmadog, ready for the Sunday afternoon spectacle.

200 wheels (and some extra)

The third and final day was undoubtedly one for the history books and seldom has such an impressive display of steam been seen in one place since the Rail 150 celebrations of 1975. Initially billed as '200 wheels for Railway 200,' the cavalcade of locomotives during the afternoon of June 22 actually topped out at 234 locomotive wheels, with nearly every steam locomotive (both operational and not) from the FR, WHR and Welsh Highland Heritage Railway drafted in to star. The cabs and tanks of ALCo 2-6-2T *Mountaineer*, which is currently undergoing overhaul, were mounted on a flatbed which was topped-and-tailed by *Britomart* and visiting 0-4-0VB *Chaloner*; if you factor in the eight wheels of that wagon, then the total increases to 242.

In the run-up to the big moment, the line between Porthmadog and Minffordd was a hive of activity as the FR locomotives were positioned for a parade back to the harbour station, passing by Boston Lodge where a special photographer's gallery was



The 70 years story of the FR has seen it outshop several new-builds, including L&B replica Manning Wardle 2-6-2T *Lyd*, which was completed in 2010 at Boston Lodge Works. HARRY BRADLEY



Bird's eye view: Harbour station packed with people and engines during the June 22 cavalcade. CHRIS PARRY/FF&WHR

LOCOMOTIVES OF THE CAVALCADE

Wheel arrangement	Name/number	Total wheelcount
0-4-0ST+T	*Prince*	8
0-4-4-0T	*Merddin Emrys*	16
2-4-0ST+T	*Linda*	26
2-4-0ST+T	*Blanche*	36
0-4-0ST	*Britomart*	40
-	*Mountaineer*[1]	-
0-4-0VB	*Chaloner*	44
0-4-4-0T	*Earl of Merioneth*[2]	52
0-4-4-0T	*David Lloyd George*	60
0-4-0ST+T	*Palmerston*	68
0-4-0ST	*Velinheli*	72
0-4-0ST	*Lilla*	76
2-6-2+2-6-2T	NG/G16 No.143	96
0-4-4T	*Taliesin*	104
2-6-2T	*Russell*[2]	114
0-4-0+0-4-0T	K1	122
2-6-2+2-6-2T	NG/G16 No.87	142
2-6-2T	*Lyd*	152
0-4-0ST	*Hugh Napier*	156
0-4-0ST+T	*Princess*	164
0-4-0ST+T	*Welsh Pony*	172
2-6-2+2-6-2T	NG/G16 No.130	192
0-4-4-0T	*James Spooner*	200
2-8-2 (+ tender)	NG15 No.134	220
0-8-0 (+tender)	C2 No. 221[2]	234

1 Tanks and cab mounted on a flat wagon; not included in official wheel count

2 Not operational and towed by one or more of the locomotives listed before and/or after it.

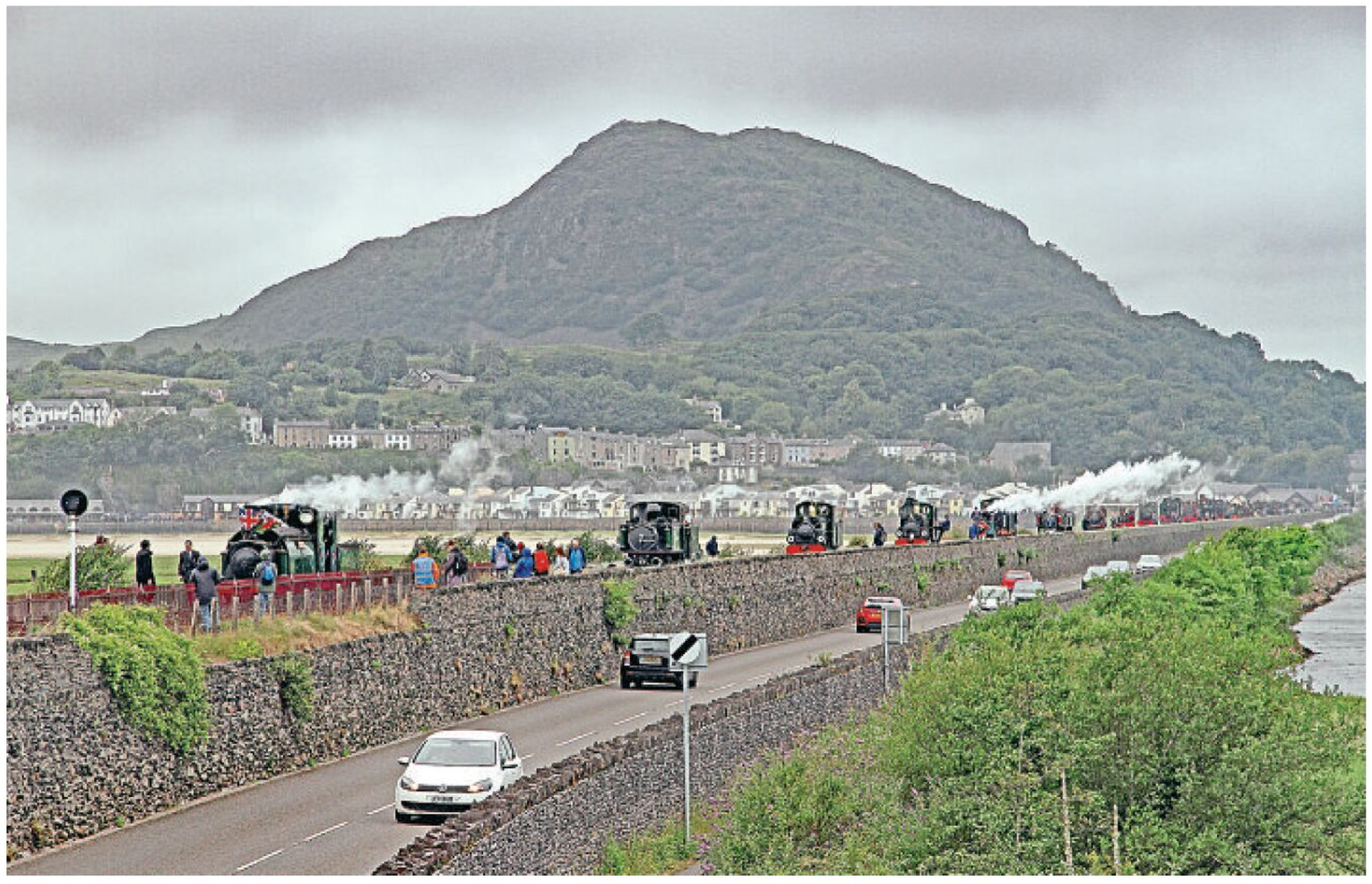


***Prince* climbs the spiral at Ddualt on June 21 with some ex-RAF wagons during a photo stop.** NATHAN SPENCE

established to capture proceedings. Here also was commentary from railway historian Tim Dunn and National Railway Museum curator Anthony Coulls, who detailed the history of each locomotive as they passed by, the order of which reflecting the sequence each made its debut on the Ff&WHR since 1955.

This was a rare opportunity to see some of the railway's hidden gems, such as double Fairlie No. 11 *Earl of Merioneth* (often referred to as 'The Square' owing to its unusually sloped water tanks), which has been out of service since 2018 and was stored at Glan y Pwll until June 2024, when it was brought back to Boston Lodge for display there. For many, this was also the first opportunity to see both the recently restored South African Railways NG15 No. 134, which pulled its first passengers trains on the WHR during the celebrations, and the partly -restored Chinese 0-8-0 C2 locomotive.

Following some careful shunting at Porthmadog, the locomotives then all lined up across the Cob for one final photo call, before the majority returned to the sheds at Boston Lodge for one final time that weekend.



Having paraded down the Cob towards Harbour station, the 25 locomotives then proceeded to line up along it in the order which they emerged during preservation years. CLIFF THOMAS

While this spectacle was taking place, services beyond Minffordd on the FR and in the direction of Caernarfon on the WHR were left to the diesel locomotives. Steam took over in the late afternoon with *Linda* working the final vintage outing recreating 'Y Cymro' (a non-stop service that ran to Tan-y-Bwlch in the 1960s), while the double Fairlies ferried people making main line connections up to Blaenau Ffestiniog.

Once in a lifetime

The idea for the cavalcade was germinated more than a year ago.

FR operating manager Michael Baker explainined: "The idea for the event itself started at New Year 2023/24. While we were repainting *Linda*, we kept coming up with ideas of what we could do for the 70th anniversary.

"Proposing the event to general manager Paul Lewin a bit later, he was all in favour but was keen for us to come up with something that would be a real draw. My initial idea was a cavalcade culminating in all the FR steam fleet gathering at Harbour station as the 'grand finale' to the event. Having mentioned this in passing to Paul one day, he went away to have a think and decided he wanted to go ahead with the cavalcade but expand it to tie in with the Rail200 celebrations, so of course we'd need 200 wheels! And it grew from there really, incorporating everything we wanted and more."

Speaking after the event, Paul said: "When Lord Peter Hendy first mentioned Rail 200, he asked all the heritage railways to get behind it. We took that message to heart and our team was tasked with putting together an event which would be the landmark occasion for Rail 200 in Wales. The team here have excelled and delivered precisely that.

"I think it fair to say that all the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland family are very proud to have delivered that. Combining the celebrations with the 70th anniversary of services on the restored Ffestiniog Railway attracted a strong audience of about 1000 visitors. Furthermore, we believe that the cavalcade presented the largest operational steam fleet on any heritage line in the UK right now.

"We look forward to our flagship locomotive *Prince* having pride of place in the forthcoming The Greatest Gathering too." HR

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Approaching Stenson Junction with the Trent and Mersey Canal in the foreground, WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* races south of Derby heading for Stratford-upon-Avon with a Vintage Trains 'Shakespeare Express' service on June 8. ROBERT FALCONER

You can still catch a train to The Greatest Gathering!

By Tim Hobman and Robin Jones

ON Saturday, August 2, Pathfinder Tours will run a trip behind two Class 33 locomotives to various locations around Derbyshire titled the 'The Bicentennial and Peak District Explorer' – with the option to attend The Greatest Gathering.

Starting from Eastleigh, the train will take the South West Main Line to pick up additional passengers at Southampton Central.

From there, the route is expected to be via the Wessex Main Line for further pick-ups at Romsey, Salisbury, Westbury and Bath Spa, then Bristol Parkway, Cam and Dursley, and Cheltenham Spa on the Cross Country Route.

Continuing on the Cross Country Route via Birmingham New Street and Burton-on-Trent, Derby is the planned first stop, where passengers have the option to attend The Greatest Gathering at Alstom's Litchurch Lane plant for just under five-and-a-half hours.

With general sale tickets sold out (as reported in News, page 16), from June 27, Alstom was making 2500 extra tickets available for each day of the August 1-3 event. Pathfinder has also secured a limited number of tickets for those wishing to attend. Alternatively, passengers can choose to spend the same time exploring Derby.

More options

Those who decide to stay aboard have the option to travel to Duffield and alight there for a trip on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. They will have about five hours here, which is enough time to travel to Wirksworth and take a look around before heading back.

The next stop is Chesterfield, where there is the option of a coach tour of the Peak District, including a short break in Bakewell.

The final off-train option is Barrow Hill Roundhouse via the Midland Main Line. About three hours are scheduled to explore the site while the train is being serviced.

The route back to Derby will pick up passengers who have alighted at Chesterfield and Duffield. From Derby, there is expected to be a slightly different route via Leicester on the Midland Main Line, and then back to Cheltenham on the Birmingham-Peterborough line. Passengers will then be set down at their joining stations en route back to Eastleigh.

Tickets are available in Premier Dining, First Class or Standard Class for this tour, with a discount for junior travellers and parties of four. There is also a supplementary fare for most of the off-train options.

Forr more details and to book, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk

Meanwhile, Vintage Trains is also offering the chance to visit the initially sold-out The Great initiallyGathering at Alstom's Litchurch Lane plant in Derby. It still had seats on its own tour available as this issue of *Heritage Railway* closed for press.

Travel in style

The trip, on Sunday, August 3, starts from Coleshill Parkway at 9.35am (returning 8.05pm) and arrives at Derby at 1.25am (departing 7.19pm).

Tickets include entry to the event, a bacon roll and a cup of tea or coffee on the outward journey, and a cup of tea or coffee on the return journey

For those who have already bought tickets to The Greatest Gathering, tickets are also available for the return train trip alone.

Prices are £75 for adults and £45 for children. For just the return trip from Derby, tickets are £45 for adults and £30 for children.

For information and tickets, visit vintagetrains.co.uk/train rides



Rare heritage traction appeared on the Great Eastern Main Line on June 21 when Class 201 DEMU – which runs under the identity of No. 1001, although it comprises several different vehicles from a variety of units – traversed part of it with 'The 'Wymondham Wanderer' to Norwich. Having rounded the capital via Kensington to join the East Coast Main Line for part of the outward journey from Hastings, the return route took it through Essex and the East London boroughs. Captured passing through Romford at 6.25pm with 1Z22, the second vehicle (TSO No. 60502) was making its first outing in 39 years following completion of a lengthy restoration at St Leonards depot by Hastings Diesels Limited's sister company. On August 16, UK Railtours will take the Hastings DEMU from Tonbridge to the West Somerset Railway. OWEN HAYWARD

Steam rebirth scheme for key site

A PLANNING application for a 425ft canopy at the former LMS 12B Carlisle Diesel Depot has been submitted to Cumberland Council by Crewe-based Locomotive Storage Ltd.

The application states: "The Carlisle Upperby site holds significant historical importance as a key part of the city's railway infrastructure, with a rich legacy dating back to the age of steam. The 12B carriage shed formed part of the broader Upperby Depot complex, which historically served as a major maintenance, storage, and operational centre for steam locomotives and carriages operated by successive railway companies.

"Locomotive Storage Limited has acquired this section of the site with the express purpose of returning it to a sympathetic and historically appropriate use – the storage and safeguarding of steam locomotives and heritage rolling stock."

Double 50s and a 4TC on offer

A restored 4TC unit will be hauled by two Class 50s on a tour of Kent on Saturday, August 23.

UK Railtours''The Kent Conundrum' will start from Princes Risborough and head north on the Chiltern Main Line to pick up additional passengers at Haddenham and Thame Parkway. Taking the Oxford-Bicester Line, the next planned pick-up point is Oxford, before taking the Cherwell Valley line to Didcot Parkway for more passengers.

Now firmly on Great Western metals, the tour is scheduled to head towards the capital for additional passengers at Reading. After leaving Reading, the route is planned to be along the Great Western Main Line and via Acton Wells Junction and Mitre Bridge Junction towards the River Thames, then via Shepherds Bush to pick up more passengers at Kensington Olympia. Bypassing Clapham Junction on the Kensington and Ludgate Lines, the train is then bound for Bromley North. This part of the trip is expected to include a rare opportunity for a through train on this line and possibly the first time a Class 50 has travelled the branch to Bromley North.

Once back at Grove Park, the train is planned to head towards the River Medway on the Chatham Main Line and take the Ramsgate branch to pass through Whitstable and Herme Bay, arriving at Margate at about lunchtime. Passengers may alight here or continue on to Ramsgate for a brief leg-stretch before returning to Margate for about an hour's break.

Homeward diversion

Leaving Margate, the train will retrace the route back along the Chatham Main Line as far at Sittingbourne. From here, the plan is to take the Sheerness Line the seven miles to the terminus at Sheerness-on-Sea. After a brief pause, the tour will retrace the route back to Strood and then take the Medway Valley Line towards Maidstone West and Paddock Wood to pick up the South Eastern Main Line.

Passing through Tonbridge and Sevenoaks, the train is expected to make a sprint towards the capital, taking the slight diversion through Bat and Ball and Otford, then heading to London Blackfriars for a brief stop. From here, the route is scheduled to be via Clapham Junction to set down passengers and then towards Richmond and Staines on the Waterloo-Reading Line.

Arriving at Reading to set down passengers, the tour is then planned to retrace the outwards route, setting down passengers at their joining stations en route back to Princes Risborough.

Tickets are available in First Class non-dining and Standard Class.

➜ For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com

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Saturday, May 31 was a welcome back day in the north of England for new-build Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* steaming once again over the Settle to Carlisle line for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic. Tornado is seen heading 'The West Yorkshireman,' a West Coast Railways Bradford-Carlisle day excursion return, while crossing Ribblehead Viaduct with the equally iconic outline of one of Yorkshire's three peaks, Ingleborough, beyond. *Tornado* will appear on the first two days of Alstom's August 1-3 The Greatest Gathering at Derby, as reported on News, page 14.. RODNEY TOWERS

Main line staff visit Strawberry Hill to help prepare 4VEP for landmark event

THIRTY-FIVE volunteers from Govia Thameslink Railway's infrastructure department visited Strawberry Hill Depot on June 19 to help the Southern Electric Traction Group prepare 1967-built Southern Region 4VEP No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* for its visit to The Greatest Gathering.

The volunteers included infrastructure director Keith Jipps, who is about to retire in July after 43 years on the railway.

They assisted with cleaning the entire unit, named after the late Bluebell railway president Gordon Pettitt OBE, both inside and out and restoring seats.

Several improvements to the depot were made, including sweeping the entire site and repainting the yellow lines and rail stops for both the pit roads in the SETG shed.

Volunteer Matthew Teller said: "SETG was incredibly welcoming and put on a fantastic day for us. It is a challenge for it to bring such a big group into a main line operational depot, including walking over staff foot crossings over main line tracks to access."



The Govia Thameslink Railway's infrastructure department volunteers with 4VEP Mo. 3417 *Gordon Pettit* which they spruced up for one of the biggest events of the Railway 200 programme. MATTHEW TELLER

Come on board with the Duke!

FOLLOWING the move of unique BR 8P Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* to Crewe after its initial running in on the Severn Valley Railway, progress continues with the planned fine-tuning and commissioning, which is taking a little longer than originally hoped but was to be expected.

The target for its loaded test runs, which will include the members-only trip, has now moved to mid-July, with its first main line outing from Carlisle to Edinburgh in August.

Accordingly, its final painting has been postponed until the season ends in September.

The BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust is now looking for volunteers to help expand and consolidate its management structure for the future.

Help is needed in these roles: engineer, with steam locomotive experience preferred but not essential; financial; webmaster; membership; retail and marketing, support crew members; and general administration. Role holders will join the management committee, which meets monthly via a video link to avoid unnecessary travel.

Anyone who would like to become involved is invited to email the chairman of trustees, Trevor Tuckley, at chairman@theduke.uk.com or managing trustee Steve Wakeland at steve.wakeland@theduke.uk.com

Autumn's first steam in six decades over East West line

By Robin Jones

STEAM is to return to the Bletchley and Bicester section of the LNWR 'Varsity Line' for the first time since the 1960s, with the Railway Touring Company running two trips this autumn.

'The Varsity Explorer' will run on Saturday, October 25, and 'The Chiltern Explorer' on Saturday, November 1.

Part of the East West Rail project to deliver a modern rail connection between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge following the closure of the 'Varsity Line' to passenger services on January 1, 1968, leaving only Bletchley to Bedford open to passengers, the Bletchley to Bicester stretch of about 41 miles reopened in 2024. However, the two RTC charters will comprise the first trains to be steam-hauled over this reinstated section.

Both trains will use the newly-reconstructed Bletchley Flyover, a major engineering feat that utilises a box section flyover and will pass through the new Winslow station.

'The Varsity Explorer' will start at Slough, picking up at Reading, Oxford Parkway, Bicester Village, Milton Keynes and Rugby. It will be the first train this century to travel steam-hauled between Bicester and Bletchley and will head for Chester, giving passengers the opportunity to explore the ancient walled city.

The Chiltern Explorer will depart from Manchester Piccadilly, picking up at Stockport, Wilmslow, Crewe, Nuneaton, Rugby and Milton Keynes. As well the novelty of steaming along the Bletchley to Bicester section, passengers will have the opportunity to visit Oxford or Reading with its museum housing Britain's Bayeux Tapestry, the Museum of English Rural Life and Abbey.

"We are constantly looking for new and interesting routes for our main line steam excursions," said RTC managing director Kelly Osborne,

"It's great to see former railways being reinstated and we know rail enthusiasts will appreciate this opportunity to travel by steam on another section of the historic 'Varsity Line.'"

The locomotive power is to be announced closer to the dates of the tours, which will both make their return journeys diesel-hauled.

Standard tickets start at £115 per person. First and Premier Dining options are available. For details and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net

Meanwhile, early-stage ground investigations along the proposed East -West Rail route have revealed fossils including sharks' teeth and ammonites dating back to the Jurassic and cretaceous periods.

The East West Railway Company is undertaking borehole testing and soil sampling to better understand ground conditions and avoid delays when construction starts.

It is not only uncovering vital geological data, but also revealing fascinating glimpses into the region's prehistoric marine past.

New plaque unveiled at Doncaster to commemorate Sir Nigel

ON June 19, Doncaster's elected mayor, Ros Jones CBE, unveiled a plaque at the entrance to Doncaster station to commemorate one of the country's greatest railway engineers, Sir Nigel Gresley, who was born on that date in 1876.

The plaque and information board are situated close to an existing display and highlights the important role Sir Nigel played in the development of Doncaster as a major railway centre.

He lived in Thorne Road from 1905, following his appointment as carriage and wagon superintendent and later locomotive engineer with the GNR. Although he moved to London in 1923 on becoming Chief Mechanical Engineer of the newly-formed LNER, the extensive workshops at Doncaster remained his responsibility.

It was here, in the famous 'Plant' works, that his big Pacifics and many others were designed and built, including *Flying Scotsman* and the streamlined A4 Pacifics.

Ros Jones said: "Doncaster has a proud connection to the railway industry, and this is another splendid acknowledgment to a man who gave so much.

"It will be a lasting reminder and attraction to those who live in and visit Doncaster of his ongoing influence."

Linda Wain, engineering director at the modern-day LNER, said: "His legacy is deeply woven into the history of Doncaster and the wider railway industry.

"It is especially fitting to mark his contribution in this year of Railway 200, as we celebrate two centuries of rail innovation and achievement."

Sir Nigel's grandson, Ben Godfrey, expressed delight that his relation's work and his importance to the great railway centre of Doncaster was recognised on the date of his birth.



Standing alongside the new plaque are Philip Benham MBE, chairman of The Gresley Society Trust, LNER's Ed Turner, Ros Jones CBE, and Matthew Delaney, the great grandson of Joe Duddington, who drove *Mallard* during its 126mph speed record run on July 3, 1938. LESLEY BENHAM/THE GRESLEY SOCIETY TRUST

Inter City plans tour in tribute tour in memory of Mark Hare

INTER CITY Tours is to run a tour from Crewe to London on Saturday, July 19, under the title of 'A Little Bit of Mambo' in memory of colleague Mark Hare, from Chiltern Railways, who died earlier this year.

The title is a nod to Mark's nickname of Mambo, and as a fitting tribute, the tour will feature a pair of Class 47s in top-and-tail formation with the Scotrail set of coaches, as the 47s were a favourite of Mark's.

After leaving Crewe, the spiritual home of the 47s, the tour is planned to head east on the Crewe-Derby Line via Kidsgrove to the next pick-up point of Stoke-on-Trent. From here, the route is scheduled to be via Uttoxeter to Derby to pick up the Midland Main Line towards London. At Bedford, the tour is expected to take the Marston Vale Line through Ridgmont to Bletchley for the final passenger pick-up.

After leaving Bletchley, a reversal at Denbigh Hall Junction will see the train join the East West Rail route to Oxford. Another reversal at Oxford via Gavray Junction to Princes Risborough, followed by a further reversal to Aylesbury, is expected to see the train enter the Aylesbury Depot Reception Line, thanks to Chiltern Railways.

Capital break

Following a further reversal at Aylesbury Depot, the tour is planned to retrace the route back to Princes Risborough and then head to London Marylebone for a break of about 90 minutes.

Leaving the capital via the Chiltern Main Line, the train is scheduled to head to Gavray Junction to divert towards Bicester Village. After a reversal here, the train is expected to retrace the route along the East West Rail link to set down passengers at Milton Keynes Central, then Nuneaton, before returning to Stoke-on-Trent, and Crewe.

➜ Tickets are available in First Class non-dining and Standard Class. For more details and to book, visit inter-city.co.uk

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LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* at Helwith Bridge with Saphos Trains' 'The Fellsman' from Crewe to Carlisle and return. BARRY MARTIN

Gresley heads over Forth Bridge in August

By Tim Hobman

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society is offering customers four opportunities during August to travel from Edinburgh Waverley behind LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* over the Forth Bridge in a circular tour.

On Thursday, August 14 and Monday, August 18, there are scheduled departures at 10am or 6pm. The tour is planned to take passengers from Edinburgh Waverley and not long afterwards cross the Forth Bridge to head for the Fife coast.

Passing through Aberdour, Burntisland and Kirkcaldy on the Fife Circle Line, the tour will head inland to circle back to Dunfermline City for a water stop and a leg-stretch for passengers.

Leaving Dunfermline, the train will take the freight line towards Kincardine and on to Culross to pick up the line to Stirling for another short break and photographic opportunity. After Stirling, the A4 will get the chance for a sprint on the Edinburgh to Glasgow main line en route back to Edinburgh Waverley.

As part of the same tours, passengers have the option of First Class dining with a twist as they get to experience two hours of entertainment while enjoying a three-course meal as part of the Faulty Towers experience. Those who choose this option will get to experience the immersive and interactive mayhem of Basil, Sybil and Manuel from the comfort of their seats.

Tickets remain available in all classes on this each of these tours, including dining with the Faulty Towers experience.

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



Tyseley is blooming marvellous! Volunteers who look after Tyseley station, including the Friends of Vintage Trains, Vintage Trains and the Friends of the Shakespeare Line, have been presented with West Midlands Railway's annual Best In Bloom award as part of Community Rail Week. Volunteer Neil Ewart said: "The work we do on Tyseley station is all on a voluntary basis and our aim is to enhance the station, such as with our floral displays, for the local community." Each station along the Shakespeare Line, between Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon, has volunteers who help to maintain them. WMR

Waterloo station relives its name

SOUTH Western Railway and Network Rail marked 210 years since the Battle of Waterloo at London Waterloo station on June 18.

The pair partnered South Western Railway and Network Rail with veteran wellbeing charity Waterloo Uncovered and the Household Cavalry Museum in an exercise that saw passengers transported back to the Napoleonic Wars by reenactors, hands-on historical experiences, and the presence of serving Life Guards and Chelsea Pensioners.

The battle fought on June 18, 1815, near the village of Waterloo in modern-day Blegium saw the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte by British and allied forces led by the Duke of Wellington, ending decades of war in Europe. It gave its name first to Waterloo Bridge, followed in 1848 by Waterloo Bridge station, now known as London Waterloo and Britain's biggest.

The celebration began with a bugle call by Trooper Davis, a trumpeter for the Life Guards regiment in the Household Cavalry. He was joined by fellow Life Guard Trooper Barlow and Chelsea Pensioners donning their iconic scarlet coats.

The Household Cavalry Museum showcased the moving story of John Edwards, a 16-year-old Life Guard who sounded the charge at Waterloo, and it also invited customers to try on authentic Household Cavalry uniforms and helmets.

Peter Williams, South Western Railway's customer and commercial director, said:

"As Britain's busiest station, it's fitting that we begin our Railway 200 celebrations at London Waterloo station by marking the anniversary of its historic namesake, the Battle of Waterloo."



London Waterloo station remembers the great victory over Napoleon 210 years before. SWR

Home tribute to world's top railway pioneer



Trailblazer: The newly unveiled statue of railway pioneer Thomas Brassey that greets passengers and visitors outside Chester station.
MIKE LAMPORT

By Geoff Courtney

A STUNNING statue of Thomas Brassey, the world's leading railway pioneer during the Victorian era, has been unveiled at his home town station of Chester. In front of a huge audience on the station forecourt that included several local dignitaries, the Duke of Gloucester revealed the statue that depicted Brassey studying a 19th century map of one of the lines he built, the Chester-Holyhead route.

The unveiling on May 28 of the bronze statue, which cost £80,000 and was sculptured by Andy Edwards, was testimony to many years of dedicated planning and fundraising by the Thomas Brassey Society, several members of which were in the watching crowd.

Everywhere around them were examples of Brassey's engineering and construction skills, including the station itself, which opened in 1848, is now Grade II*-listed, and handles five million passengers a year, and opposite the 1860-built Grade II-listed Queen Hotel, while nearby is an open-air events venue that is also Grade II-listed and was originally another part of Chester's Brassey-built railway infrastructure.

Brassey was born in Aldford, six miles south of Chester, in 1805, and on leaving school started an apprenticeship with a local surveyor, during which time he worked under Thomas Telford. Subsequently, he set up his own construction company and so launched a career during which he built a third of all the railways in this country, including parts of the Chester-Crewe, Chester-Holyhead and Chester-Birkenhead lines, and the complete Chester to Shrewsbury line, and three-quarters of those in France.

Perhaps the most astonishing statistic, however, was that he built one in 20 miles of the world's railways in the 19th century on four continents, with these projects including the required bridges, stations and viaducts. And that wasn't all, for he also constructed a number of major civil engineering works, including in London and Birkenhead docks.

Another of his achievements was to hastily build at no profit to his company a railway in Crimea to provide the British and French armies with food and ammunition to assist in the fall of Sevastopol in 1855, while the two-mile Victoria Bridge in Montreal was prefabricated in his Birkenhead works before being shipped across the Atlantic to become part of the 540-mile Grand Trunk Railway project.



Railway pioneer: It's 2.55pm on an unknown date in the 1930s, and LMS Class 2P 0-6-2T No. 6894 and an unidentified second engine have brought a train into Chester station, which was opened in 1848 and constructed by Thomas Brassey, a local-born world-leading railway pioneer who is now honoured by a statue that was unveiled by the Duke of Gloucester on May 28.
TRANSPORT TREASURY/ARTHUR MACE

Inner calm

At the height of his company's activities in the late 1840s, he employed 80,000 people worldwide yet initially had no office and did all his own correspondence. His drive, allied to engineering and organisational skills, became legendary, but he also gained a reputation for having inner calm and being trustworthy and fair, in which his word was his bond. Research by the society has revealed a man whose concern was the wellbeing of his staff and who was responsive to their needs, attributes that led to a loyal and motivated workforce.

Brassey died from cancer in December 1870 at the age of 65, and on hearing of his impending death, a group of his North Country employees walked for days, gathering worksmates as they went, to assemble in vigil at his home at St Leonard-on-Sea, near Hastings.

A society member who travelled to the unveiling was retired career railwayman Mike Lamport, who spoke for many when he said: "I am confident everyone will be delighted with the statue, which is most impressive and enables us to look over the great man's shoulder at his plan for his Chester & Holyhead Railway."

Sharing Mike's enthusiasm was society chairman Stephen Langtree: "It was the long-term aim of the society to erect a statue outside the magnificent Chester station, which Thomas Brassey built, and through energetic fundraising and the general support of many benefactors, our dream of a statue has become reality. We hope this results in many more people appreciating his remarkable achievements."

Mixed traction excursion for Branch Line Society

By Tim Hobman

THE Branch Line Society is offering the chance to travel behind several different locomotives over some rare metals from the Midlands to Tytherington Limestone Quarry, on a tour titled the 'Tytherington Quarrier' on Saturday, July 12.

In partnership with national freight operator DC Rail, the tour is planned to start at Derby behind a Class 57 and take the Midland Main Line to pick up additional passengers at East Midlands Parkway and Bedford. On reaching London, the tour is scheduled to see the first bit of rare track as it takes the Hendon Chord and the Up Hendon Line to access Acton Yard. While in the yard, there is expected to be a locomotive swap from the 57 to two Class 60s.

Making a reversal to leave Acton Yard, the booked route is around West London for further passenger pick-ups at Clapham Junction and then Wimbledon.

After leaving Wimbledon, the tour is planned to run fast to Basingstoke and take the West of England Line to Salisbury, then on to the Wessex Main Line to Westbury for a brief leg stretch. Continuing from Westbury, the next destination is Bath Spa, where passengers have the option to alight for a break of about four hours.

Those who choose to stay on board will leave Bath Spa and run via the Bristol Loop and Yate to Tytherington Quarry, which is a main supplier of aggregates for the delayed HS2 project.

The Class 60s are expected to run round the train at Tytherington before returning the tour to Bristol and once again taking the Bristol Loop to the next rare location of Bristol East Depot. Here, the 60s are set to be exchanged for a pair of Class 56s for a run via Kingsland Road to Bristol Temple Meads for another leg-stretch. After the locomotives have run round the train, a reverse move will see the tour head for home.

From Bristol, the train will retrace the route back to Bath Spa to pick up passengers who alighted there. Taking the Great Western Main Line via Swindon, the next stop is Reading to set down passengers and allow others a brief leg-stretch again.

Taking the Reading Spur onto the Waterloo-Reading Line, the tour will run via Wokingham, Staines and

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Above: Army recognition: Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Gregory salutes rededicated Class 45 No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman* at Salisbury station on May 30. NETWORK RAIL



Right: Lighting-up time: 'Peak' Class D67 *The Royal Artilleryman* lights up Leicester London Road station with the 6.35pm St Pancras to Derby train on January 5, 1966. The 1Co-Co1 was renumbered 45118 under TOPS and is now the only preserved main line certified member of the class. TRANSPORT TREASURY/MIKE MITCHELL

Army salutes restored main line 'Peak'

By Geoff Courtney

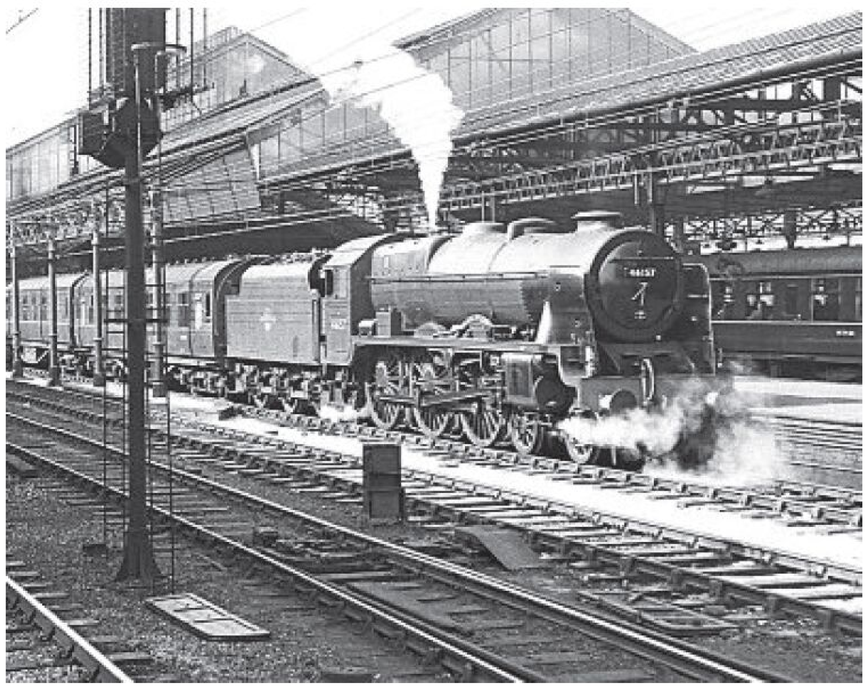
THE only main line certified 'Peak' Class 45 diesel was the subject of high-level military interest on May 30 when it was rededicated at Salisbury station in a ceremony led by the dean of the city's cathedral.

Originally numbered D67 and subsequently No. 45118 under the TOPS system, the 1Co-Co1 was built at Crewe in May 1962 for operating on the Midland Main Line and in September 1965 was named *The Royal Artilleryman*. The name was removed in August 1986, and on the locomotive's withdrawal the following May, the diesel was saved for preservation, and in February 2018 it became part of the Crewe-based Locomotive Services Ltd fleet.

Now fully restored and proudly carrying its traditional name, No. 45118 was the centre of attention when it was rededicated by the dean, Nick Papadopulos, under the watchful eye of Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Gregory, who was accompanied by other Royal Artillery personnel. Salisbury was the chosen location for the rededication as it is close to the RA's Larkhill Garrison regimental headquarters on the edge of Salisbury Plain.

"It gives the Royal Artillery enormous pleasure to see our locomotive restored to its full glory, with a level of care and attention to detail which is truly impressive," said Sir Andrew. "As it roams the national rail network, it will be a lasting memorial to the gunner family and a symbol of the British Army's long relationship with the railway industry."

Phil Swallow, a director of Locomotive Services, said: "We are honoured and delighted to be able to formally rededicate the locomotive to the Royal Artillery," while Mark Goodall, Wessex route director for Network Rail, said the railway had a proud record of supporting the country's Armed Forces. D67/No. 45118 was not the first main line locomotive to be named *The Royal Artilleryman*, for this was the identity given by the LMS to Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 46157, which was built at Derby in July 1930 and withdrawn from Carlisle Kingmoor (12A) in January 1964.



Smart turn-out: Immaculate Royal Scot No. 46157 *The RoyalArtilleryman* simmers at Crewe on May 30, 1961, four years before the name was given to 'Peak' Class D67. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ALEC SWAIN

Richmond before setting down passengers at Clapham Junction. From here, the route will see the train run via Willesden Junction High Level to Gospel Oak and on to the East Coast Main Line, heading north. Setting down passengers at Potters Bar, the train is planned to head north via Stevenage to set down more passengers at Peterborough.

The train will then head to Birmingham via Melton Mowbray to rejoin the Midland Main Line and to the journey's end at Derby.

Tickets are available in First Class, and Standard Class on this tour, with a discount for junior travellers.

➜ To book, visit branchline.uk

Take the 'Highland Clansman Pullman' to Aviemore

MIDLAND Pullman will be heading to Aviemore twice over the summer with the 'Highland Clansman Pullman' tour, on board its luxury High Speed Train set.

The first tour for this offering is scheduled for Wednesday, July 9, departing from Chester. The train will pick up passengers at Frodsham, Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston, Lancaster, Oxenholme Lake District, Penrith, Carlisle and Lockerbie.

It will then head through the Scottish Lowlands on the Glasgow-Dundee Line via Stirling before joining the Highland Line at Perth, and then pass through breathtaking scenery via Pitlochry, Blair Atholl and Kingussie to the final destination of Aviemore.

Passengers will have two hours to explore Aviemore before the return trip via the same route as the outward journey.

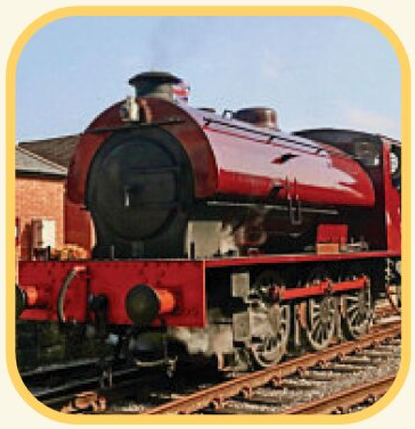
Change of route

The next date is planned for Thursday, July 24, this time starting out from Thirsk. The train will take the East Coast Main Line north to pick up passengers at Northallerton, Darlington, Durham, Chester-le-Street, Newcastle, Cramlington, Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick-upon-Tweed. Taking the Edinburgh-Dundee Line at Edinburgh Waverley, the tour will take the Highland Line at Perth and continue to Aviemore.

Again, passengers will then have two hours in Aviemore before the return journey via the same route.

Tickets are available in Pullman Dining or First Class non-dining for each of these tours.

➜ For more details and to book, visit midlandpullman.com



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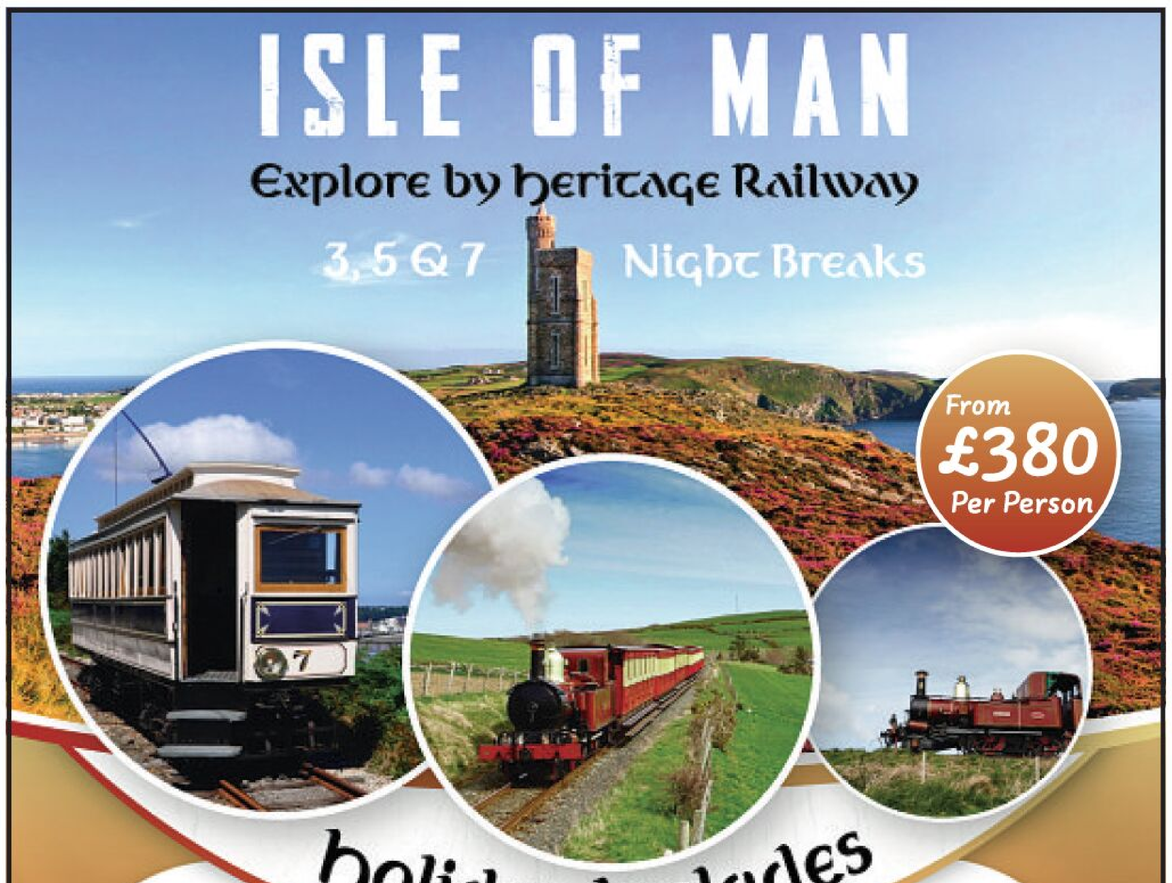
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On May 10, Class 52 *Western Champion* skirted the Dawlish coast at Sprey Point with Vintage Trains' 'South Devon Explorer,' which ran between Birmingham and Plymouth and included a trip along the South Devon Railway between Totnes and Bukfastleigh. CHRIS GEE

July

5 'North Wales Coast Express'
Euston, Llandudno and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Llandudno.
Loco: TBA. RTC

5 'The Lakelander'
Hereford, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

5 'Cathedrals Express'
Birmingham New Street, Swansea and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 45596 *Bahamas*. VT

6 'The Waverley'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

9 'The End of Southern Steam'
London Victoria, Yeovil and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

9 'The White Rose'
Birmingham New Street, Scarborough and return.
Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

10 Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

10 'Spirit of Summer'
Circular tour of Kent departing Paddington.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

10 'Sunset Steam Express'
Circular tour of Kent departing Paddington.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

10 'The Thundering Positioning Move'
Princes Risborough to Ropley only.
Loco: 50008 *Thunderer* + LU 4TC. UKRT

10 'The Dalesman'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. WCR

12 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Crewe, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. RTC

12 'The White Rose'
King's Cross, York and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 60163 *Tornado*. RTC

12 'English Riviera Express'
Three Bridges, Kingswear and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: 5029 Nunney Castle. ST

13 'North Wales Coast Express'
Liverpool Lime Street, Holyhead and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

15 'Pendle Dalesman'
Lancaster, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. WCR

16 'Edinburgh Summer Explorer'
Stoke-on-Trent, Edinburgh Waverley and return. Steam-hauled between Carlisle and Edinburgh.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

19 'The Salt and Pepper Shaker'
Hastings Goole, and return.
DEMU: 1001. BLS

19 Mark Hare memorial train
Crewe, Marylebone and return.
Loco: 2x Class 47s TBA. IC

19 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Leeds, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

19 'West Somerset Steam Express'
Paddington, Minehead and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

19 'English Riviera Express'
Crewe, Kingswear and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: 34067 *Braunton*. ST

19 'The White Rose'
Birmingham New Street, Scarborough and return.
Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

22 'The Dalesman'
Chester, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled from Hellifield.
Loco: TBA. WCR

23 'The Dorset Coast Express'
London Victoria, Weymouth and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

23 York Excursion
King's Cross, York and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

24 Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

26 'The Torbay & Dart Express'
Derby, Kingswear and return.
Loco: 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*. IC

26 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Coventry, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

26 'The Tynesider'
King's Cross, Morpet and return. Steam-hauled between York and Morpeth.
Loco: TBA. RTC

26 'The Lakelander'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Preston and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA. ST

26 'Scarborough Spa Express'
Carnforth, Scarborough and return.
Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

27 'The Royal Duchy'
Bristol Temple Meas, Par and return.
Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 61063 *Tornado*. RTC

31 'Scarborough Spa Express'
Carnforth, Scarborough and return.
Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

August

2 'The Greatest Gathering'
London Victoria, Derby and return.
Steam-hauled from Wellingborough to Derby only.
Loco: 60103 *Flying Scotsman*. BEL

2 'The Bicentennial and Peak District Explorer'
Eastleigh, Derby, Barrow Hill and return.
Locos: 2x Class 33s TBC. PT

2 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Locos: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. Steam: TBA. RTC

2 'English Riviera Express'
Wolverhampton, Kingswear and return.
Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.
Loco: TBA. ST

3 'The Waverley'
York, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 61063 *Tornado*. RTC

3 'The Greatest Gathering'
Coleshill Parkway, Derby and return.
Diesel-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. VT

5 'Pendle Dalesman'
Lancaster, Carlisle and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

Regular Tours

Daily – 'The Jacobite'
Fort William, Mallaig and return.
Loco: 'Black Five'. WCR

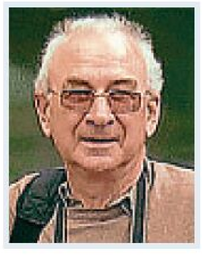
Suns from July 27 – 'The Shakespeare Express'
Birmingham, Derby, Leicester or Worcester to Stratford-upon-Avon.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

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	RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222	SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk	SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk	SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364	ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com	UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk	VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414	WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

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LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



Don Benn continues his report on steam-hauled trains in Scotland, featuring Nos. 70037 in 1965, and 62005 and 45212 in 2002, plus Nos. 35028 *Clan Line* and 45212 on the 'Great Britain XVII' earlier this year.

THIS time I am carrying on initially with my Scottish theme. The final table in the the previous issue was a good run with BR Standard Class 7 4-6-2 No. 70037 *Hereward the Wake,* and Sandy Smeaton sent me another good run with the same engine from July 1965. This time it was on the heavily l-aded 9.25am Crewe to Aberdeen and details are shown in Table One. Sandy comments: "It was the heaviest load I timed on this train. This was the last weekend of the Glasgow Fair, and congestion in the south no doubt caused the lateness."

Moving on to the steeply graded Fort William to Mallaig line, Tables Two and Three show runs behind LNER K1 2-6-0 No. 2005 and LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45212, the latter having put in much good work over many years and indeed appears many miles away in the south later in this column.

No. 2005 was working a photographic charter on Monday, October 7, 2002, and speeds can be compared to those with No. 45212. Even taking into account the lighter load, the climb of 1-in-48 to Beasdale was remarkable, with speed sustained at 26-28mph. Sandy again comments: "This was the third day of three on that year's West Highland photographers' bash based at Fort William. The first two days had been on the main line as far as Crianlarich, with the last on the extension. The log was timed on the second westward run to Mallaig; the first had gone to Arisaig before returning to Fort William.

"After taking water at Glenfinnan, the departure was right time. The decision was taken to squeeze in shots at Lochailort so the departure was delayed, giving incentive for the excellent climb of Beasdale. From the records I have, 26 minimum is the highest recorded, albeit with the lightest load. In Nock's publication, British Locos From The Footplate, he describes a run to Mallaig on the footplate of K2 No. 4701 *Loch Laggan* with 174 tare/180 full, when the minimum was 17½mph despite a cut-off of 50%, so No. 2005 was being worked hard. From the 1956 Section F working timetable, the 'standard' time given from Lochailort to Arisaig start-to-stop was 18½ minutes, so the K1 only did what was normally expected in steam days, although the speed restriction approaching Arisaig would spoil the start-to-stop time."

Stanier comparison

Next is No. 45212 over the same route but with a morning train on Saturday, October 15, 2002, with the normal load of seven coaches for 285 tons full. This showed on the climb out of Glenfinnan and to Beasdale.

Sandy describes the run: "Nos. 45212 and 45407 were sharing 'The Jacobite' duties in 2002, No. 44871 having returned south when the afternoon train ceased at the end of September. This was the last day of No. 45212's penultimate week of operation and followed a night of heavy rain. Fortunately, the sky started to clear at about 10am and the sun shone from Glenfinnan westward. The driver was Matt Earnshaw, while Jayne-Louise Emsley, from the Strathspey Railway, fired. The load was seven Mk.1s for 258 tons tare and almost full, about 285 tons gross. The 1957 load limit for a Class 5 on the route was 240 tons tare.

"A very cautious start up the immediate 1-in-200 out of Fort William was made, passing the junction box at 14mph and the Lochy Viaduct crossed at 32mph, before scrupulously observing the restriction over Banavie swing bridge at 2mph. The short climb up the 1-in-80 from the canal towpath was managed without a slip and once clear of the Corpach and Annat LC restrictions, No. 45212 ran along Loch Eil's northern shore at a smidgeon below 40. After Locheilside, the short 1-in-90 near MP10¼ brought speed down to 21, presumably with regulator untouched. However, it was opened before MP11½ for the climb to Glenfinnan Viaduct, speed rising to 39 and falling to a steady 28½ before shutting off for the viaduct, where the usual slowing was made for the view up Loch Shiel. The 1-in-50 climb from the viaduct to Glenfinnan was started at 15, falling to 10½ at MP14½ just before the station.

"The restart continued on 1-in-50, varying to 1-in-70/75 for short sections until MP15½, where the gradient eases. MP15½ was passed at 14½, with the effect of the curves seen from the recorded speeds. A maximum of 31½ was reached before easing





No. 2005 at Creag Ghobhar on July 28, 1987, with a Fort William to Mallaig working. DON BENN



TABLE ONE: STIRLING TO GLENEAGLES

Date	Saturday, July 31, 1965
Train	9.25am Crewe to Aberdeen
Engine	BR 7MT 4-6-2 No. 70037 *Hereward the Wake*
Load	Eleven coaches; 337 tons tare, 365 tons gross
Crew	Carlisle Kingmoor
Recorder	Sandy Smeaton
Method	Pocketwatch, stopwatch, rail joints
Weather	Dry

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Stirling	0.00	0.00	00	00	47 late
Stirling North	0.17		01	07	*
Cornton SB	1.83		03	41	52/54
Bridge of Allan (Old)	2.90		04	55	53
Dunblane	5.06	9.00	07	43	41½/36
Kinbuck	7.69		11	54	43
Greenloaning	10.94		15	25	65/69
Blackford	15.04		19	02	~
Gleneagles	17.34	25.00	21	36	43½ late

* slipped on starting

TABLE TWO: GLENFINAN TO ARISAIG

Date	Monday, October 7, 2002
Train	12.40pm Fort William to Mallaig photo charter
Loco	K1 class 2-6-0 No. 62005
Load	Five coaches; 186 tons tare, 195 tons gross
Driver	T Brassington
Recorder	A Smeaton with GPS
Position	Fourth coach
Weather	Overcast

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Glenfinnan	0.00	0.00	00	00	R?T
MP 15	0.28		01	41	15
MP 15¾	0.78		03	27	18
MP 16	1.28		04	46	28
MP 16¾	2.03		06	18	32
Summit	2.53		07	17	30
MP 22	7.28		17	06	30½
MP 23	8.28		19	11	29
Lochailort	9.11		21	17	
	0.00		00	00	
MP 24½	0.66		02	03	~/26
Polnish	1.16		03	16	24
MP 25½	1.66		04	20	31
MP 26½	2.66		06	25	~
Tunnel No. 116	3.14		07	30	28
MP 27¼	3.41		08	05	28
MP 27½	3.66		08	37	26
MP 28	4.16		09	44	28
MP 28¼	4.41		10	16	29
Summit	4.66		10	50	26
Beasdale	4.78		11	04	32
Borrowdale Tnl	5.55		12	33	~
MP 30	6.16		13	54	*
Arisaig	8.19	36.00	19	11	25 late



Above: 'Black Five' No. 45212 enjoys a pause at Newport on April 27, 2025. ALAN RAWLINGS

Left: On July 26, 1987, K1 No. 2005 is pictured at Glenfinnan on the 11.05am Fort William to Mallaig. DON BENN



'Black Five' No. 44871 with a 'Jacobite' at Polnish on September 23, 2022. SANDY SMEATON

for the summit.

"We rolled along the south side of Loch Eilt in the 30s and went over Polnish minor summit at a minimum of 16½. The 30mph limit for all other traction (except Class 156s) prevents any run at Beasdale bank, so the bottom tunnel was entered at 31, falling to a respectable 14 on the final curve at the top of the 1-in-48 climb.

"The schedule on both sections to Glenfinnan and Arisaig was exceeded by 2½ minutes, but departures from both stations were more or less right time. Arrival at Mallaig was 3½ early".

'Great Britain XVII'

My correspondent Alan Rawlngs was on part of this annual tour and he sent logs and details of two sections: Guildford to Havant with No. 35028 *Clan Line* are shown in Table Four and No. 45212 from Port Talbot Parkway to Carmarthen in Table Five.

"'The Great Britain rail cruise promoted by the Railway Touring Company is a highlight of the main line calendar and this year was no exception, with some interesting and rare track. The final locomotive deployment turned out to be more varied than many anticipated, with *Clan Line* booked to haul the train on day one from Victoria to Bristol, and the later appearance of A1 No. 60163 *Tornado* in Scotland and the North East. It was hoped that alongside the significant manpower commitment from West Coast Railways to operate the tour, there would also be as much effort to provide the traditional Mk. 1 rolling stock, modified to the new ORR requirements. Sadly, despite the time to do so, this was not to

TABLE THREE: GLENFINNAN TO MALLAIG

Date	Saturday, October 15, 2022
Train	10.15am Fort William to Mallaig
Loco	LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No. 45212
Load	Seven coaches; 258 tons tare, 285 tons gross
Driver	M Earnshaw
Fireman	J L Ernsley
Recorder	A Smeaton, GPS from third coach
Weather	Mostly sunny after previous heavy rainfall

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Glenfinnan	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 late
MP 15	0.30		02	02	11½/15½
MP 15½	0.80		04	19	14½/14
MP 15¾	1.05		05	11	22
MP 16	1.30		05	46	29½/28½
MP 16½	1.80		06	47	31/31½
Summit	2.55		08	20	27½/29
MP 18	3.30		09	54	32/26½/31
Essan	5.30		13	57	27½/30
MP 22	7.30		18	01	28/31/26½
Lochailort	9.14		21	47	30
MP 24½	9.80		23	09	27½/16½
Polnish	10.30		24	34	17/26½
Arnbol Viaduct	11.55		27	43	24½/31
MP 27½	12.80		30	35	21½
MP 28	13.30		32	07	16½
MP 28¼	13.55		33	00	17
Summit	13.80		33	57	14
Beasdale	13.91		34	23	21½/31
MP 30	15.30		37	16	23½/22½/32½
MP 31	16.30		39	21`	27½
Arisaig	17.31	40.00	42	22	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 early
MP 32¼	0.24		01	26	20
MP 32½	0.49		02	05	24/29/27½
Craig Moor	1.99		05	26	29½/30½
FB	3.40		08	19	24/32
McLeans O/A	4.41		10	52	11½*/13½
Morar	4.72		12	19	10½
Summit	5.49		14	29	27½/29½
MP 38	5.99		15	33	28/29
			stop to set points		
MP 39m 24ch	7.29		19	13	0*
			19	48	
Mallaig	7.45	23.00	21	35	3½ early

*brakes or speed restriction

TABLE FOUR: GUILDFORD TO HAVANT

Date	Saturday, April 26, 2025	Sunday, March 13, 1966
Train	'Great Britain XVII'	12.30pm Waterloo to Bournemouth
Loco	MN Class 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line*	WC Class 4-6-2 No. 34017 *Ilfracombe*
Load	10+57314; 450 tons tare, 470 tons gross	10 Pullmans + bogie van; 431½ tare, 460 tons gross
Driver	Bob Baines	Nine Elms with Guildford Pilotman Berriman
Fireman	Jack Johnson	
Recorder	Alan Rawlings	Don Benn
Position	Fourth coach	
Weather	Dry	Very cold and grey, calm

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed		sched	mins	secs	speed
Guildford	0.00	0.00	00	00	21*	Guildford	0.00	00	00	8½ late
Shalford Jct	1.15	2.00	02	39	39	Shalford Jct		03	29	38
Farncombe	3.13	5.00	05	15	52	Peasmarsh Jct		04	17	44
Godalming	4.10		06	19	56/29*sigs	Farncombe		06	08	54½
Milford	5.91		08	39	36	Godalming		07	12	54
MP 37	6.64		09	49	37	Milford		09	14	50½/53
MP 38	7.64		11	33	32					
MP 38¼	7.89		12	00	32					
Witley	8.09		12	20	42/54	Witley		11	58	42
MP 40½	10.14		15	07	37	MP 39½		12	51	57½
MP 41	10.64		15	57	34					
MP 41½	11.14		16	52	32					
MP 42	11.64		17	55	29					
MP 42½	12.14		18	57	26	MP 42½		17	51	28½
Haslemere P1	12.62	21.00	20	49		Haslemere	20.00	18	34	44
	12.62	0.00	00	00						
Hammer Lane PC	14.57		03	32	61	MP 45		20	48	67
Liphook	16.48		05	19	67/73	Liphook		22	37	55
MP 49	18.64		07	07	68	MP 48½		24	27	53
Liss Forest PC	20.27		08	25	76	MP 50		26	13	50
Liss	21.12		09	13	61	Liss		27	36	72½
Sheet XC	23.54		11	54	36*sigs	MP 53½		29	21	69
Kings Fernsden XC	23.78		12	24	22*sigs					
Petersfield	24.52	14.00	14	11	24*	Petersfield	35.00	30	41	57½
MP 56	25.64		16	21	34	MP 55½		31	19	62½
MP 57	26.64		18	28	37					
Buriton Tnl In	27.23		18	59	37*	Buriton Siding		33	22	44½
Buriton Tnl Out	27.50		19	27	33					
MP 58¼	27.90		20	05	32	MP 58		34	27	40
MP 59	28.64		21	15	54/74	MP 59		36	53	49*
Idsworth XC	30.84		23	13	67	Idsworth XC		38	02	68½/70½
Rowlands Castle	32.90		25	04	66*	Rowlands Castle		39	59	53*
MP 64½	34.14		26	09	68	MP 65		41	49	63
Havant	36.07	28.30	28	28	41*	Havant	49.00	44	24	4 late

* brakes or speed restriction

Safety valves open at Guildford, but 140lb steam after Liphook. Rain from Petersfield. Buriton Siding 27.00 miles

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Above: No. 35028 *Clan Line* pauses at Haslemere at the start of the annual 10-day land cruise of the UK on April 26. ALAN RAWLINGS



Right: 'Black Five' No. 45212 with the 4.45pm Mallaig to Fort William empty stock working from Fort William to Tom-na-Faire depot, seen at Earl of Inverness Road on May 7, 2021. SANDY SMEATON

be. Passengers therefore missed out on the larger panoramic windows through which to view the varied scenery and routes available throughout the week. There was also the necessary diesel accompaniment throughout to power the electrics and, at times, assist the locomotive. This had to be added to minimise the possibility of lineside fires in parts of the UK that were tinder dry after a largely rainless early spring.

"I was on the train for the first two days and the optional 'red eye' trip to Wick on day six so as to be hauled southwards with No. 45407. This was a delight, simply because of the route and the spectacular scenery, to include the Highland gorse in all its glory.

"On the Saturday, *Clan Line* started at London Victoria and went via Herne Hill and Streatham to access the South West Main Line at Wimbledon for Woking. The route then continued along the Portsmouth Direct line to Havant and forward via Southampton and Salisbury to Bristol. This may well turn out to be the last steam charter on the Pompey line before the LSWR signalboxes are turned off later this year when signaling transfers to Basingstoke. Table Four therefore covers the run between Guildford and Havant under the control of the 'boxes at Farncombe, Haslemere and Petersfield. Alongside it I have included a good run which I timed behind Bulleid light Pacific No. 34017 *Ilfracombe* on the 'Bournemouth Belle' on March 13, 1966. The loads were almost equal, as were the timings.

"I must say that the light Pacific edged *Clan Line,* especially on the climbs to Haslemere and Buriton. I am not sure whether the Nine Elms man or the Guildford pilot was driving, but they certainly knew what they were doing. Back with No. 35028, the slow exit from London, with its regular checks, illustrated the complexity of slotting a charter in with other traffic. The load of 470 tons gross was no more than *Clan Line* normally takes around Kent with the Pullmans and so the whole journey to Bristol was unassisted. Beyond Guildford are a short couple of miles of 1-in-82 up to Witley and this was dismissed at 32mph, even after a signal check approaching Milford. The climb to Haslemere of 1-in-80 posed more of a challenge but was helped by a turn of speed in the dip after Witley. The loco could be heard chattering away up front, even through the sealed windows, and the climb was judged nicely by driver Bob Baines.

"During the water stop at Haslemere, cameras captured the combination of steam with LSWR infrastructure before we swept down through Liphook towards the next climb over the South Downs. There was a speed restriction through Petersfield before *Clan Line* dug into the 1-in-100 and entered Buriton tunnel at 37mph, with a minimum of 32 just after the tunnel exit. It was then just a matter of holding speed back as we dropped down to join the coastal route at Havant. The train continued to Salisbury for a servicing stop and then onwards to Temple Meads, arriving five early.

"Day two covered lines in Pembrokeshire and was arguably the most interesting part of 'GBXVII.' The routes west of Carmarthen have long single-line sections and few paths available. With no run-round loops, they also now require trains to be top-and-tailed, and so the Class 57 diesel had to earn its keep hauling the train one way. It is also some time since steam went to, for example, Pembroke Dock and so anticipation was high, even though there was little time to do more than drop in and out of each location. The tour was originally planned to visit both Pembroke Dock and Fishguard Harbour, but at a late stage of planning, Network Rail found a slot for the tour to visit Milford Haven, which last saw steam in 1993.

The Welsh lines

"All the excitement of Pembrokeshire almost made you forget that the tour had to climb the formidable 1-in-52 of Cockett Bank beyond Swansea; Table Five covers the run from Port Talbot Parkway to Carmarthen that includes Cockett, on which steam can sometimes falter. An onboard medical emergency and unscheduled stop at Bridgend put the train 15 late into the Port Talbot water stop and 10 late away, so we were still behind time as we rounded the Swansea avoiding curve. The climb started slowly off the junction and I was fully expecting the diesel to power us up to the tunnel, but all that seemed to happen was a nudge to get us away from the junction restriction. The 'Black Five' was then allowed to dig into the climb at a steady 8mph or 9mph and entered the tunnel at 10mph when it seems as though the loco was eased and the diesel provided some power to pick up speed over the summit as we sped away towards Gowerton.

"There followed a lovely spell of running at close to our maximum permitted speed and we omitted the pathing stop at Pembrey and Burry Port, much to the surprise of crowds, who were expecting to see the locomotive rather than a blur. The much slower speed restricted approach to Carmathen alongside the River Towy did not prevent an arrival five minutes ahead of time. I was told by one of the diesel drivers that practice varies in the extent of support given, dependent on what the crews may ask for. Fortunately for passengers on day two, with quite a lot of rain having fallen in Pembrokeshire over preceding days, there was no need to manage the fire risk. As it turned out, there was much to be pleased about, though it was unfortunate that by the time we returned to Cardiff in the evening, No. 45212 had developed a tender hot box, which meant it could not continue up north." HR

> "The Great Britain rail cruise promoted by the Railway Touring Company is a highlight of the main line calendar..."

TABLE FIVE: PORT TALBOT PARKWAY TO CARMARTHEN

Date	Sunday, April 27, 2025
Train	'Great Britain XVII'
Loco	LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No. 45212
Load	10+57314; 450 tons tare, 470 tons gross
Driver	Bill Monteith
Fireman	Craig Stinchcombe
Recorder	Alan Rawlings
Position	Fourth coach
Weather	Dry

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Port Talbot Parkway	0.00	0.00	00	00	10 late
M4 Tunnel	0.90		03	16	45
Baglan	1.99		04	33	51
Briton ct	11.90		20	20	18*
Landore E Jct	12.10	19.30	21	01	17*
Swansea Loop W Jct	12.49	21.00	22	49	8*
MP 215½	12.81		24	30	14
MP 216	13.31		27	02	8
Cwmdy OB	13.54		28	30	9
MP 216¼	13.56		28	58	9
Cockett Tnl In	13.66		29	19	10
Cockett Tnl Out	14.11		30	21	31
MP 218	15.51		31	49	57
Gowerton	16.81		33	24	54
Loughor Viaduct	19.02		35	49	57
Duffryn XC	20.04	35.00	36	50	59
Llandeilo Jct	20.92	36.00	37	43	58
Llanelli	22.56	38.00	39	34	53
Tywyn Bach Tnl	25.42		42	48	55
Pembrey & Burry Port	26.51	46/57	43	58	57
Penybedd XC	29.16		46	44	59
Kidwelly Jct	31.26		48	52	57
Kidwelly	31.69	65.00	49	22	58
Bertwyn XC	33.06		50	46	58/15*sigs
Ferryside	35.94	72.00	55	44	19
Cwmbwry No 1 XC	37.34		58	32	37
Ty'r Isha OB	41.02		64	46	22*
MP 244	41.31		65	36	22*
Pibwrilwyd OB	42.05		67	20	22*
Carmarthen Jct	42.44	84.00	68	15	24
Carmarthen	43.02	87.00	71	05	5 early

* brakes or speed restriction

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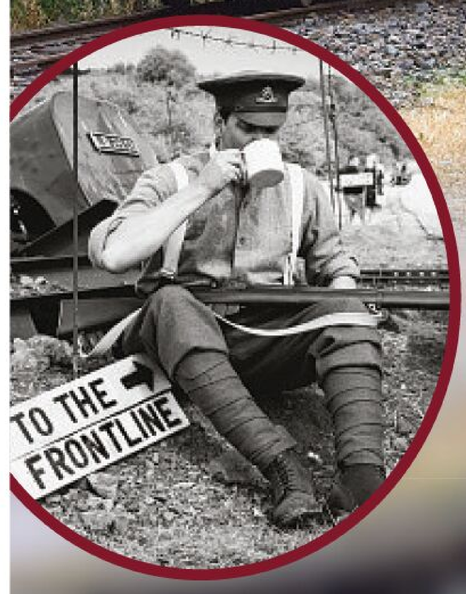
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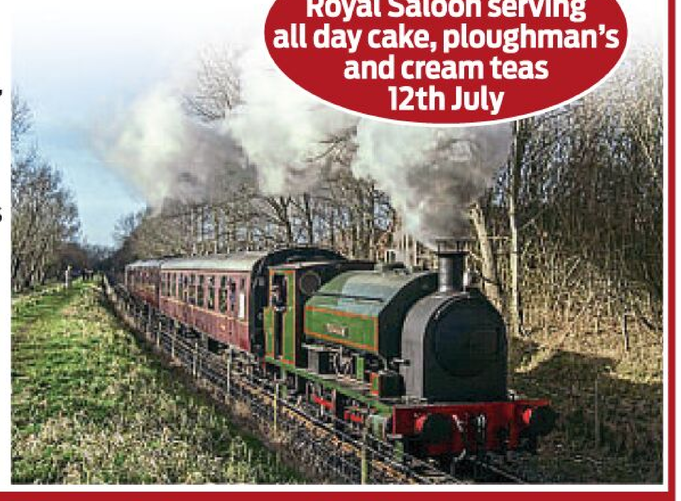
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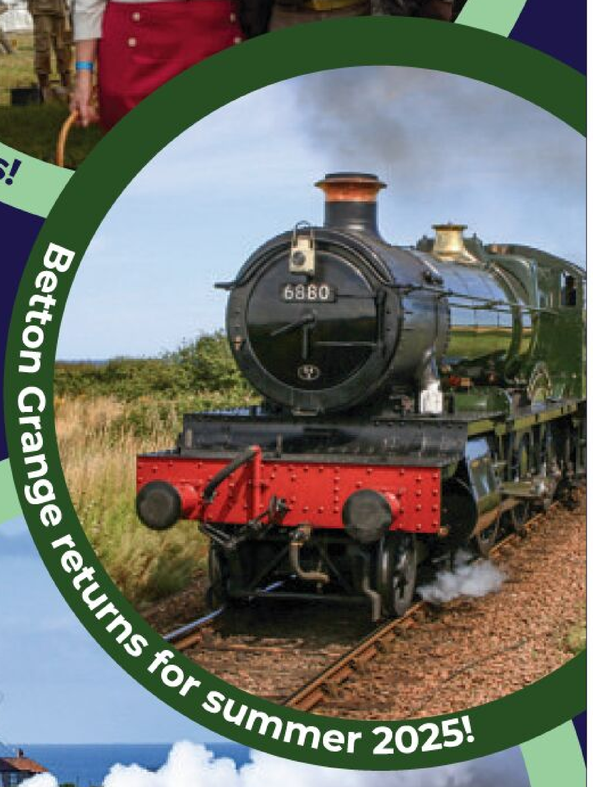
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BULLEID'S LIGHT PACIFICS AT 80

With the forthcoming heritage era debut of West Country light Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone* on the main line, as reported last issue, former BR footplateman **Dave Wilson** looks back at the history of Bulleid's Southern Railway icons and his experiences with them.



No.34046 *Braunton* emerges from the 110-yard Shotlock Tunnel, about a mile from Aisgill summit, with the Saphos Trains 'Fellsman' tour to Carlisle on June 15, 2022. DAVE WILSON

Bulleid Pacifics, especially the original air-smoothed versions, are Marmite engines – you either love them or you don't. Growing up surrounded by Stanier and Gresley engines in the north of England, I used to think they looked a little strange in comparison to the 'Black Fives,' Jubilees, A3s and A4s, which were very much the bread-and-butter engines of my youth. However, after becoming a footplateman and then moving to Nine Elms in 1963, my view changed to absolutely loving working with them.

Born in Invercargill, New Zealand, to British parents, Oliver Vaughan Snell Bulleid grew up in Wales and began his railway career in Doncaster with the Great Northern Railway as a premium apprentice under H A Ivatt in January 1901. He was promoted to works manager and chief draughtsman in 1908. Following almost five years of wartime service in a variety of postings, Bulleid returned to Doncaster as manager of the carriage and wagon works. In 1923, he moved to London as Gresley's personal assistant within the newly-formed London & North Eastern Railway. During the period which followed, Gresley was designing all his most famous express locomotives and Bulleid was directly involved with the P2 2-8-2 design and testing.

In 1934, Bulleid spent several months at the SNCF's testing facility at Vitry-sur-Seine running tests on Gresley's P2 2-8-2 *Cock O' the North*. The tests included some runs over the French main lines, and the engine was put on public exhibition at the Gare Du Nord. However, from the perspective of Bulleid's own work and career, it was probably his working connections with the French locomotive engineer Andre Chapelon which was most valuable.

With this wealth of experience behind, him Bulleid was appointed Chief Mechanical Engineer to the Southern Railway on October 1, 1937, a post he held until 1949 when the Southern Railway had become the Southern Region of British Railways.

Upon taking office, Bulleid's first tasks were to clear up outstanding projects and oversee the completion of the Maunsell-designed Q Class, but his own ambition was to provide the Southern Railway with some up-to-the minute express locomotives. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, his first instinct was to build a 2-8-2 but in the end was persuaded to go with a Pacific wheel arrangement – and, as they say, the rest is history.

In 1942, with the first batch of his revolutionary new express passenger design, the Merchant Navy Pacifics, in service, Bulleid was obliged to turn his attention to producing a goods engine. The result was his Q1 'Austerity' 0-6-0, affectionately known to generations of Southern railway enginemen as Charlies. The first of the Q1s appeared in 1942, and 40 were constructed between March and December at Brighton and Ashford works. Despite this diversion into goods engines, Bulleid was busily working on another express passenger locomotive design.

Undeterred by the early minor teething troubles with the Merchant Navies, Bulleid had begun work on designing what has been described as a 'light' Pacific. However, to circumvent war time restrictions, a little subterfuge was engaged in, and the locomotives were sold to the 'powers that be'

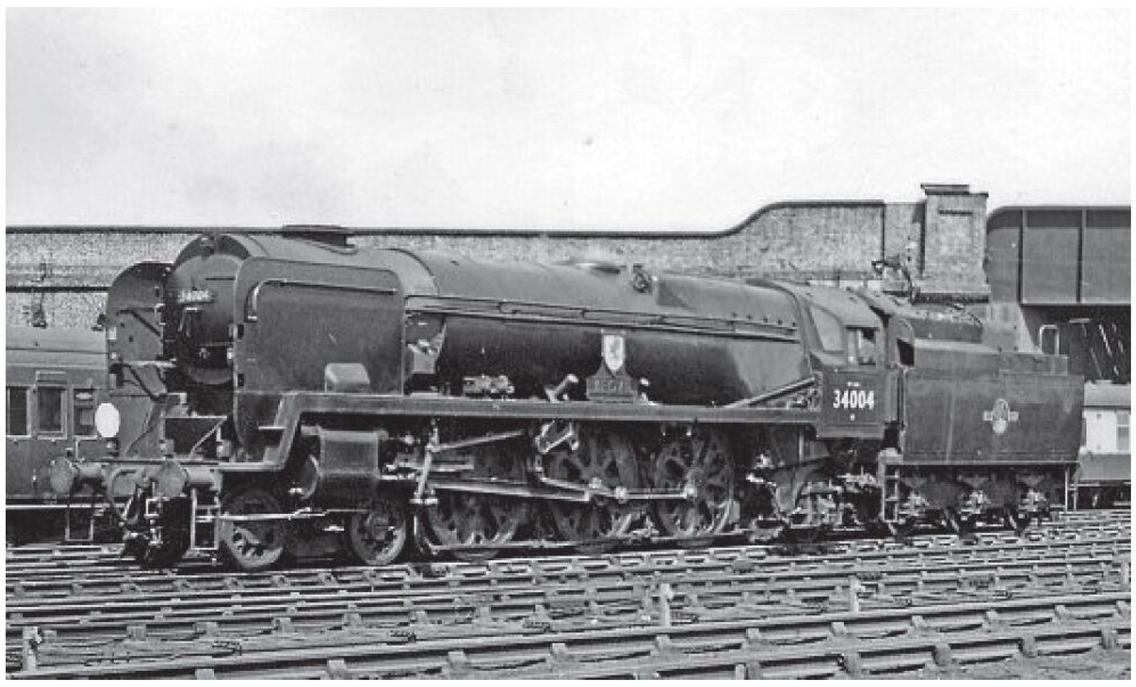
Echoes of the 'Bournemouth Belle': No. 34067 *Tangmere* passing Greengates on the southbound climb to Aisgill summit with the Northern Belle luxury dining train on September 2, 2023. DAVE WILSON



No.34100 *Appledore* leaving Waterloo with the 5.41pm service to Salisbury on September 16, 1966. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY



No. 34012 *Launceston*, a Bricklayers Arms engine at this time, at Waterloo East with a Charing Cross-Ramsgate service on May 27, 1961. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY



Rebuilt West Country 4-6-2 No. 34004 *Yeovil* comes off the Bricklayer's Arms branch at the junction at South Bermondsey, on July 8, 1958; the bridge behind carried the South London line. BEN BROOKSBANK/CREATIVE COMMONS



No. 34006 *Bude*, in an echo of the 1958 Exchange Trials, awaits departure from St Pancras with the Locomotive Club of Great Britain's North Midlands Rail Tour on May 11, 1963. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY

as being of a mixed traffic design. There was, I believe, even a publicity stunt involving photographing one of the locomotives hauling a substantial goods train.

Merchant successors

When the final batch of the 30-strong Merchant Navy class was still in production at Eastleigh in 1944, construction of the new 'light' Pacifics began, the tenders being built at Ashford and the boilers at Brighton. These new engines, which came to be known as the West Country/Battle of Britain class, contained many of the innovative features of the Merchant Navies, although they were lighter (the design brief was for an engine weight of 86 tons and an axle load not exceeding 19 tons) and with narrower cabs, which at 8ft 6in allowed them to work over some of the more restricted routes of the Southern Railway, such as, for example, the Hastings line.

The doyen of the West Country class, No. 21C101 *Exeter* rolled out of Brighton works 80 years ago this year, at the end of May 1945, and was quickly followed by 20 more, with No.21C120 *Seaton* being delivered at the end of December. All were allocated to Exmouth Junction, with the next to be built in the first six months of 1946, Nos. 34021-32 inclusive, being sent to Ramsgate. The first to be allocated to Nine Elms were Nos. 34058-61 inclusive and, remarkably the first two of these, No. 34058 *Sir Fredrick Pile* and No.34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair*, survived into the heritage era. No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair* is now part of the active fleet at the Bluebell Railway. No 34058 Sir *Frederick Pile* has fared less well and remains in an unrestored condition.

Like their big Merchant Navy sisters, the light Pacifics had air-smoothed casing Bulleid Firth Brown wheels and Bulleid's chain-driven valve gear – and therefore the external appearance of the two classes was virtually indistinguishable. The most readily identifiable difference was that the Merchant Navy has six wash-out plugs along the top of the firebox, while the West Country/Battle-of-Britain has only five. However, under the bonnet, as it were, there are quite a few important differences which I have listed in the table on the right; the West Country Battle-of-Britain are on the left and the Merchant Navy on the right.

The West Country/Battle of Britain classes were given power classifications of 7P/5F and the Merchant Navy 8P (both the MN and WC/BoB were capable of exceeding these power classifications by some margin). Both classes had 6ft 2in driving wheels of the Bulleid Firth Brown design, sometimes inaccurately referred to as Boxpok. Their respective tractive effort was (WC/BoB) 27715lb and (MN) 33,495lb.

Following the first order for 70 locomotives, more orders followed and the class eventually numbered 110. The final engine to be built was No/ 34110 *66 Squadron*, in January 1951, technically making it a BR locomotive. It was the only 'Squadron' not to carry a crest because, apparently, the firm who made them went bankrupt.

It was not the only exception to the norm; at various times, during their period of service, the class saw alterations to the shape and size of the cab. Although they could, theoretically, work over the Hastings route, so far as I can tell, they did not and the original 8ft 6in cab of the first 70 locomotives, which would have allowed them to work do so, was replaced by a 9ft version. Locomotives Nos. 34071 *601 Squadron* to 34110 *66 Squadron* were all built, from new, with these new wider cabs. There were trials with different lengths of smoke deflectors; No. 34006 *Bude* carried the

Class differences

	MN Class	BoB/WC Class
Cylinders	(3) 16⅝in x 24in	(3) 18in x 24in
Valves		
Diameter	10in	11in
Travel	6¼in	6¼in
Boiler pressure for both was 280lb per sq-in, later reduced to 250lb per sq-in. Both classes had boilers which were 6 ft 3½ in maximum diameter, with a distance between the tube plates of 17ft.		
Tubes	(112) 2¼in	(124) 2¼in
Flues	(32) 5¼in	(40) 5¼in
Heating surface		
Total evaporative	2122 sq-ft	2451 sq-ft
Superheater	545 sq-ft	822 sq-ft
Grate area	38¼ sq-ft	48½ sq-ft
Length: Engine and tender	67ft 4¾in	69ft 7¾in
Weight in working order	86 tons	94¾ tons



The classic Waterloo end-of-platform shot sees the rebuilt and now preserved No. 34101 *Hartland*, one of the Eastleigh-built engines, closest to the camera and No. 34041 *Wilton,* which was in 1951 based at Bath Green Park and for many years a regular performer over the Somerset & Dorset route from Bath to Bournemouth. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY



No. 34005 *Barnstaple*, the first of the rebuilds, is pictured on September 3, 1966, in Great Western territory at Banbury. On the right is its nemesis in the form of Class 47 Brush Type 4 D1572. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY

extended version, from them being fitted in 1948, until it was withdrawn in March 1967. In 1962, No. 34064 *Fighter Command* was fitted with a Giesl oblong ejector in place of the multiple-jet Lemaitre-designed exhaust used by Bulleid on both his Pacific classes.

A total of 104 of the WC/BoBs were built at Brighton. The remaining six were by Eastleigh: Nos. 34095 *Brentor*; 34097 *Holsworthy*; 34099 *Lynmouth*, the now-preserved 34101 *Hartland*; No. 34102 *Lapford;* and No. 34104 *Bere Alston*, an engine I worked on with the late Clive Groome in September 1965. *Bere Alston* was also the last member of the class to be 'rebuilt' – the biggest of all the differences.

There were other idiosyncrasies. No. 34023 *Blackmore Vale* was named *Blackmoor Vale* until 1950, while No. 34025 *Whimple* was apparently named *Rough Tor* for a short time in 1948. Purely by chance, *Whimple* was another of the engines I worked on with Clive Groome during our four days on the footplate together, back in September 1965. No. 34092 was originally named *Wells,* becoming *City of Wells* in March 1950 – keeping the theme going, No. 34092 has been preserved and during the heritage era was also fitted with a Giesl oblong ejector.

Just for good measure, there were plans in 1947 to convert 30 of the light Pacifics to oil burners. However, only two engines, Nos. 34019 *Bideford* and 34036 *Westward Ho!*, were so treated, both having the burners removed during 1948. Even the nameplates were anomalous; some of the West Country class carried a name scroll along with a matching coat of arms, others just the name scroll and no coat of arms.

When it comes to liveries and tender totems, the situation is equally idiosyncratic as a few examples will show. No. 21C111 (34011) *Tavistock* was built in October 1945 but not officially named until June 13, 1947. It was given its BR number in May 1948 and at the same time painted apple green, but was then repainted into BR green in September 1950, and finally gained a BR totem in August 1957. Six other engines were painted apple green in 1948, those being Nos. 34056 *Croydon*, 34064 *Fighter Command* and 34065 *Hurricane* (which reverted to Malachite green in February 1949) and three new engines built in December 1948, Nos. 34086 *219 Squadron*, 34087 *145 Squadron* and 34088 *213 Squadron*. By early 1951, all these engines had been repainted into BR green. No. 34091 *Weymouth* to No. 34110 *66 Squardon* were all painted in BR green from new, while Nos. 34001 *Exeter* to 34090 *Sir Eustace Missenden* were all, at some point, painted in malachite green.

To complement the minor differences, there were differences and modifications to their tenders too. Between 1957 and 1963, many of the class were fitted with cut-down tenders; the raves, which originally gave the tender a profile similar to that of a coach, were removed. Some locoomtives were fitted with 4500-gallon tenders, others with 5250 or 5500-gallon ones.

All of this brings us to the really big changes: the rebuilding of all Bulleid's Pacifics to the design of Ron Jarvis – the so-called 'rebuilt' or 'rebuilds.' Jarvis was in the CM&EE department at Brighton and by the end of 1954 had finished the designs and drawings to modify Bulleid's original design, which were put forward at the beginning of 1955. The plan was to modify all the WC/BoB and MN Pacifics at a cost of £760,000 which, it was estimated, would save £2,051,400 by the locomotives' estimated scrapping date of 1987. However, the plans changed and only the Merchant Navy class and just 60 of the 110-strong WC/BoBs were actually modified in this way, and all were withdrawn from service by 1967, a full 20 years before their estimated withdrawal date.

Out went the air-smoothed casing, the Bulleid chain-driven valve gear and steam-operated reverser, replaced by the more conventional Walschaerts motion and hand-operated reversing gear. The three-cylinder arrangement was kept, but this necessitated new cylinder castings being constructed. The Bulleid Firth Brown wheels were retained, as were the thermic siphons, the welded steel fireboxes and Lemaitre



No. 34025 *Whimple* missing nameplates but still remarkably clean for one so close to the end of steam. On April 17, 1967, it leaves Waterloo with the 6.54pm service to Salisbury. "On most days we reached 50mph by milepost 31 after leaving Farnborough, but No. 34025 did 55mph with full regulator and 35% cut-off," said Clive Groome about our trip back from Basingstoke to Waterloo in the first week of September 1965. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY



Doyen of the West Country Class is No. 34001 *Exeter* in a filthy and rundown condition and minus nameplate, topping the long climb from Shawford with an Up boat train service from Southampton Docks to Waterloo on September 5, 1966. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY



No. 34092 *City of Wells* passing Kinchley Lane on the Great Central Railway. If you look closely, you can clearly see the oblong shape of the Giesl ejector fitted during its time in preservation. DAVE WILSON

multiple jet exhausts. What emerged from the rebuild was a locomotive of a more conventional appearance, with the raised framing over the driving wheels offering easier maintenance and servicing for the shed staff and footplate crews.

It might be worth noting that the rebuilt engines, 43 members of the West Country class and 17 of the Battle-of-Britain Class, were heavier than the originals, weighing 90 tons 1cwt, which prevented them from operating over the North Cornwall route across Meldon Viaduct.

Footplate musings

From a fireman's perspective there was one change which definitely made life a little easier – the replacement of the original drop grate arrangement with a full rocking grate. Cleaning the fire by a rocking grate involves using a metal 'rocker' bar to tilt the grate segments fore and back through about 70-75 degrees or so, which allows the dirty fire and clinker to fall through into the ash pans. The drop grate involved tipping a single central section of the grate through about 60 degrees before using various fire irons to move the dirty fire and clinker into the dropped section of the grate – a much more labour-intensive process.

Questions I'm frequently asked are which was the easiest to work on, which was the fastest, and which was freer-running? From a strictly unscientific and fireman-centric view, both versions steamed well, and if one used more coal than the other, then it certainly was not a noticeable difference on the footplate; you could experience more differences between individual locomotives than between the modified and unmodified versions. Some engines rode better than others, all steamed well, but some steamed really well. Having said that, there could be small issues with the Bulleid valve gear and steam reverser. The latter had, on some engines more than others, a tendency to creep; the driver could set cut-off at 20%, but that might creep out to 25% or even 30% before it became noticeable – inevitably, this would have shown up in the coal consumption. Once again, the differences would not be so great as to be really noticeable on a day-to-day basis by the fireman.

Only marginally more scientific than my anecdotal footplate memories were the 1948 Locomotive Exchange Trials. The Southern Railway/Region entered three West Countries – Nos. 21C104 (34004) *Yeovil*, 21C105 (34005) *Barnstaple* and 21C106 (34006) *Bude* – all of which were, of course, to the original Bulleid design. Later, Nos 34004 *Yeovil* and 34005 *Barnstaple* were rebuilt, the former in February 1958 and the latter in June 1957, making it the first of the class to be modified.

I worked on all three and have a log of a run with No. 34006 *Bude* firing for Bert Hooker, who was the fireman on No. 34004 *Yeovil* over the Highland main line from Perth to Inverness, and on No. 34006 *Bude* over the Marylebone to Manchester route. *Bude* had the distinction of turning out the highest edhp of any of the trial locomotives.

On the Up run from Manchester to London on June 11, driver Jack Swain and fireman Bert Hooker set the highest figure recorded in the trials, churning out 2010 edhp on the 1-in-176 climb between Whetstone and Ashby Magna.

The 1948 Exchanges did not exactly flatter the Bulleid Pacifics, with the West Country class bottom of the list in terms of coal consumption. However, and this is an important point, the top three drawbar outputs were recorded by the West Countries, and as DW Winkworth comments in his book Bulleid's Pacifics, "...so far as can be gathered from external sources, because the official report doesn't help much, the Southern engines were good, with the timetable being honoured. It would be nice to think that the railway authorities could persuade a passenger on the Marylebone-Manchester route, for example, to agree that his arrival 25 minutes late behind a Class 5 engine was of more merit than a one minute early arrival behind West Country No. 34006 *Bude* because the coal consumption had not been great!"

On the Highland main line, such was the performance of No. 21C104 that there was, I believe, consideration given to allocating some of the class to Perth and Inverness. This was not followed up due, I understand, to problems relating to the availability of spares and maintenance issues for the shed staff rather than any shortcomings on the part of the locomotive, as these details from the Locomotive Exchanges by Cecil J Allen explain: "On the test run on July 13, again working the 4pm departure from Perth and with a load of 380 tons, they took a minute and 45 seconds off the time from Blair Atholl to Straun."

A Bert Hooker footnote said: "Afterwards, I was told that following this little sprint the banker arrived at Straun with 120lb of steam and very little water, so he required all the time at Straun to have a 'blow-up'."

For context, the distance from Blair Atholl to Straun is about five miles at gradients of 1-in-100/ 1-in-500, followed by two miles at 1-in-80, 1-in-100, 1-in-300 and a final mile at 1-in-80.

After leaving Straun, the climb to Druimauchdar summit is roughly 13 miles at gradients, for the most part, between 1-in-70/85.

Further regional spread

Although the WC/BoB didn't go to the Highlands, several were transferred to the BR Eastern Region. In April 1949, *Sir Archibald Sinclair* went on a month-long loan from its home depot of Nine Elms to Stratford, a precursor to a plan to transfer 15 members of the class to the Region. This trial with No. 34059 proved inconclusive and no further action was taken. In May 1951, Nos. 34057 *Biggin Hill* and 34065 *Hurricane* were transferred to Stratford, followed in November by Nos. 34039 *Boscastle*, 34076 *41 Squadron* and 34089 *602 Squadron;* they were employed for the most part on the Liverpool Street to Norwich services to Cambridge and to Parkstone Quay and Clacton via Ipswich. The reasons for these transfers seem to have been related to teething troubles with the BR Britannia Pacifics. All the on-loan engines returned to the Southern Region between March and June 1952.

I have seen some references to haulage trials being conducted involving Battle of Britain No. 34073 *249 Squadron* and unidentified members of the Merchant Navy and Britannia classes between Dover and Chislehurst during 1952; I have been unable to ascertain which other locomotives were involved or the results. All three classes did work over the Central and Eastern sections, with two of the Britannias – Nos. 70004 *William Shakespeare* and 70014 *Iron Duke* – allocated to Stewarts Lane.

The Eastern and Central sections of the Southern had substantial allocations of the WC/BoBs from new, with no less than 36 being allocated to Ramsgate from January 1946 to December 1949. Other allocations included 16 to Stewarts Lane, nine to Brighton and two to Dover. The engines allocated to the Eastern and Central sections worked the Dover Boat trains, including the 'Night Ferry' (unique among British trains in that the coaches crossed to the continent by train ferry) and the 'Golden Arrow' Pullman services, along with expresses like 'The Man of Kent' and duties to Ramsgate, Ashford to London Bridge, and Waterloo East. OS Nock, in his book Locomotive Practice & Performance Volume 1: The Age of Steam 1959-68, gives details of some fine runs between Ashford and London with Nos. 34004 *Yeovil*, the preserved 34027 *Taw Valley* and 34037 *Clovelly*.

With the opening, in stages, of the Kent coast electrification schemes, these numbers dwindled rapidly. As my pal Bryan Benn recalled, he and his elder brother Don (the compiler of *Heritage Railway's* With Full Regulator column) "went to Murray Avenue road bridge over the line just east of Bromley South station to watch the last steam-hauled Up run of the 'Golden Arrow' on June 11, 1961, behind No. 34100 *Appledore*." This was a Stewarts Lane engine at the time, moving to Brighton in late November 1962 and from there to Salisbury in September 1963, where it remeained until the end of steam in July 1967.

The WC/BoB formerly allocated to the Eastern and Central sections were among the first to be withdrawn – including the now-preserved No. 34067 *Tangmere,* which went in November 1963. The first withdrawals, in June 1963, were Nos. 34035 *Shaftsbury*, 34043 *Coombe Martin,* 34055 *Fighter Pilot* and 34074 *46 Squadron,* and more followed. By the beginning of 1967, only 35 of the original 110 remained. In July 1967, only 22 were left in service and all were withdrawn on July 9.



No. 34081 *92 Squadron* in the so-called 'sunshine livery,' seen here at Kinchley Lane on the Great Central Railway showcasing the mixed traffic credentials of the West Country/ Battle of Britain locomotives with this van train – not unlike the ones I used to work from Southampton Docks to Nine Elms goods loaded with bananas, although the usual motive power for those turns were the 'Standard Arthurs' (or Riddles BR Standard 5MTs to give them their proper name). DAVE WILSON



This classic high angle departure shot shows No. 34047 *Callington* leaving Waterloo on September 8, 1966, with the 4.35pm 'Royal Wessex.' *Callington* was another of those engines I worked on with the late Clive Groome in September 1965, and the 'Royal Wessex' is one of those turns for which I have a log of my run, firing Merchant Navy No.35030 *Elder Dempster Line*, and working with top link man driver Tom Cutting. DAVID IDLE/TRANSPORT TREASURY

Nearly a fifth survived

The WC/BoB class members undoubtedly proved their worth. They were more than capable deputies for their big sisters, the Merchant Navies, and their performance in the 1948 Exchange Trials was extraordinary – albeit it at the expense of coal consumption.

During my time at Nine Elms, I worked on about 75% to 80% of the class over the Bournemouth and Salisbury routes, amounting to thousands of miles on their footplates. I can say, hand on heart, that I never had any shortages of steam or water and enjoyed some quite phenomenal runs with them.

The end was not quite the end, as 20 of the original 110 were saved from the cutter's torch. The oldest of the survivors is the original air-smoothed No. 34007 *Wadebridge* and the newest, also one of the air-smoothed originals, is No. 34105 *Swanage*. The others are: Nos. 34010 *Sidmouth*; 34016 *Bodmin*; 34023 *Blackmore Vale*; 34027 *Taw Valley*; 34028 *Eddystone;* 34039 *Boscastle*; 34046 *Braunton*; 34051 *Winston Churchill*; 34053 *Sir Keith Park;* 34058 *Sir Fredrick Pile*; 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair;* 34067 *Tangmere*; 34070 *Manston*; 34072 *257 Squadron*; 34073 *249 Squadron*; 34081 *92 Squadron*; 34092 *City of Wells;* and 34101 *Hartland*.

Many have at some point worked during the heritage era but *249 Squadron,* which seems to have become a source of spares for *Tangmere* and *Sidmouth*, languished for many years in the head shunt at Grosmont shed and has never yet run in preservation; No.34051 *Winston Churchill* is on static display at Locomotion in Shildon. HR

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Nameplate blitz as 17 late arrivals boost selection



IN a blitz of main line steam locomotive nameplates that is surely unprecedented in the decades-long history of specialist railwayana auctions, Simon Turner unveiled in early June a list of 17 plates newly consigned to his GW Railwayana July 19 auction, bringing the total to 30.

In days of yore, that may have been the total going under the hammer at various auctions throughout a whole year, but we now live in very different times for the hobby, due to a combination of circumstances that have been well aired in this column and by other observers. Suffice it to say that my use of the word 'hobby' might be a misnomer, for railwayana auctions are now firmly within the business category.

However, my role today is to take readers through the 17 newcomers, which is a challenge in itself, so enjoy the ride as we travel from east to west with an occasional diversion northwards.

In essence, east means the LNER, which contributes nearly half of the new arrivals, including no fewer than four B17s to add to that from No. 61653 *Huddersfield Town* which I listed last month.

The quartet making its entrance comprises *Holkham* (No. 61601), *Quidenham* (No. 61609), *Naworth Castle* (No. 61629), and *East Anglian* from No. 61659, all of which were built between December 1928 and June 1936, the first two by North British of Glasgow and the latter two at Darlington Works.

No. 61659 was one of two in the class fitted with Class A4-style streamlining in 1937 that was removed in 1951, and all four were withdrawn between January 1958 and March 1960, variously from Stratford (30A), Ipswich (32B), and Lowestoft (32C).

Also from this part of the LNER/BR empire is *Gazelle* from B1 class 4-6-0 No. 61003, a Darlington product that entered traffic in November 1943 and spent much of its life on the former GER main line before being withdrawn from Colwick (40E) in December 1965, and *Rudyard Kipling* from 'Brit' No. 70035, built at Crewe in December 1952 and removed from service in December 1967 when allocated to Carlisle Kingmoor (12A).

> "Suffice it to say that my use of the word 'hobby' might be a misnomer, for railwayana auctions are now firmly within the business category."

Nostalgia

Nostalgia is obviously an important part of the railwayana movement, and sure enough three of the newly-arrived B17s and the 'Brit' that will feature in the sale have stepped up to the mark, in my case.

On April 9, 1957, I logged No. 61659 at my then home station of Ilford on a Down Clacton express, nearly two weeks later No. 61601 on an Up working and No. 70035 on the Down 'Broadsman,' No. 61003 ex-Harwich the next day, and on August 19 the following year, No. 61629 on a Down express.

Still with the LNER, but across to the ECML, come *Windsor Lad* and *Steady Aim* from two Doncaster-built Pacifics, A3 No. 60035, which entered traffic in July 1934 and was withdrawn from Edinburgh Haymarket (64B) in September 1961, and A2 No. 60512, outshopped in August 1946 and retired in June 1965 from Dundee Tay Bridge (62B).

A final nameplate from a former LNER locomotive is *Robert H Selbie*, which emerged from the Yorkshire Engine Co's Sheffield works in January 1916 as Metropolitan Railway G class 0-6-4T No. 95, was classified M2 by the LNER and renumbered 6155, and withdrawn by BR from Neasden (34E) in October 1948 before its new No. 69076 could be applied.

At this point the LNER passes the baton to the GWR, which contributes eight nameplates from locomotives built at Swindon between 1899 and 1945. The Victorian representative is *Vulcan* from Duke class 4-4-0 No. 3330, which was rebuilt as a Bulldog in 1908, renumbered 3318 in 1912, and withdrawn from Hereford in February 1934.

The Star class provides Norwegian *Monarch* from No. 4027, built in September 1909 and withdrawn in October 1934, and *Queen Elizabeth* from No. 4036, which entered traffic in December 1910 and made it into BR stock before being withdrawn from Swindon (82C) in March 1952. Another 4-6-0 to feature in the sale is Saint class No. 2924, one of whose *Saint Helena* nameplates and a cabside numberplate will go under the hammer. This September 1907-built engine also survived into the Nationalisation era before being pensioned off from Hereford (85C) in March 1950.

A quartet of post-First World War locomotive nameplates rounds off GWR proceedings, starting chronologically with *Cranmore Hall* (No. 4914, built in February 1929 and withdrawn from 82B Bristol St Philip's Marsh in December 1963), continuing with *Longford Grange* and cabside from May 1939-built No. 6878 that was taken out of service from Worcester (85A) in November 1964, *Arbury Hall* and cabside and smokebox numberplates from No. 5986, built in November 1939 and withdrawn from Westbury (82D) in September 1963, and ending with *County of Berks* from No. 1002, which entered service in September 1945 and was withdrawn in September 1963 when allocated to Shrewsbury (89A).

The live online auction is spread over two days, starting at 9.30am on July 19 and 10am the following day.

West Coast Main Line 'box instruments certainly have a long shelf life

STATION totem signs and diesel Class 37 English Electric worksplates caught the eye in the debut online auction held on June 2-8 by enthusiasts Steve Walker-Manuell and Edward Bird under the mantle of Main Line Railwayana, but before these two sectors could gain a foothold, a complete set of shelf instruments and the diagram from the WCML signalbox of Scout Green, between Shap and Tebay, set the bar at £2500.

That proved a mite too high for the plates and totems, but both categories put on strong shows, with the latter achieving £1800 for BR(W) Kensington Olympia, £1700 for BR(E) Tilbury Town, £1200 for a second Western Region representative, Avonmouth Dock, and £1000 each for BR(E) Brampton and BR(M) Deganwy.

Top of the Class 37 worksplates' roll of honour was achieved by D6734/37704 at £1650, a tad ahead of D6783/37083 (£1600), while a similar plate from D6716/37016 went for £1150. Also within the heritage modern traction corner was nameplate *Saint Aidan* from Class 47 D1649/No. 47535 that fetched £1100. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15%.

As he mulled over his and Edward's first railwayana auction, Steve said: "We are very pleased and have received some nice, positive feedback, and we will introduce a few tweaks to make the process easier for the next auction. We would like to thank all the vendors and buyers who have turned this dream of ours into reality."



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Diesel do nicely for landmark locomotive

AN early BR trial of main line diesel traction made its mark on Great Central's flagship quarterly auction on June 7, when a worksplate from one of the locomotives involved sold for £14,500, nearly 12 times its middle estimate.

The plate, which was featured in last month's column, was from No. 10000, an HG Ivatt-designed Co-Co built by the LMS at Derby Works in November 1947. After successful trials including regular service on the West Coast and Midland main lines, it was withdrawn in December 1963.

Accompanying the plate, albeit sold separately, were the locomotive's set of LMS letters, which went for £1500, and air horns, which made £300. All went to the same bidder, thus ensuring these artefacts from a landmark diesel remain together.

A second five-figure realisation was £10,000 for nameplate *Christ's Hospital* from SR Schools Class No. 30913, while other prices in this main line category were £7800 for *Silurian* from Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60121, £4600 for *Etarre* from BR Standard Class 5MT No. 73114, and £2400 for *Saint Agatha* (GWR No. 2911), leaving as a non-seller *Earl Roberts of Kandahar* (GCR Class 1A No. 446/LNER Class B8 No. 5446).

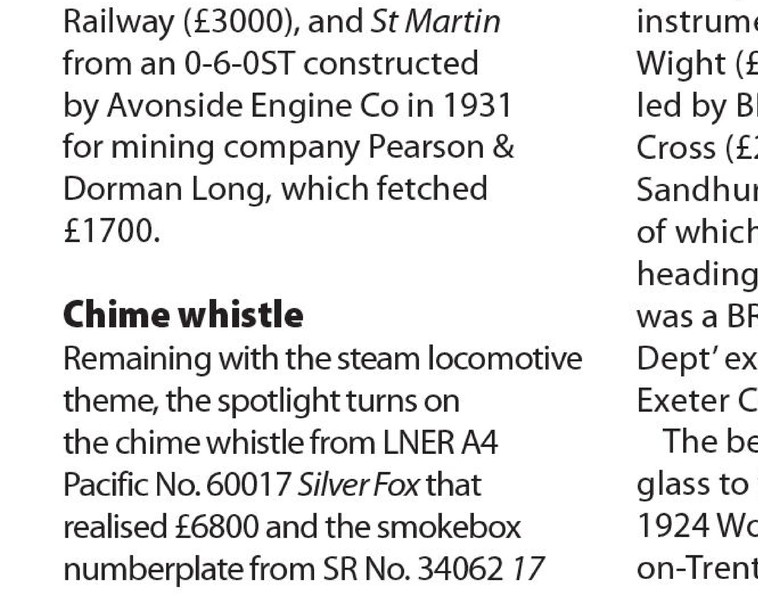
Also among the nameplates was *Eske* from a 4-6-4T constructed by Nasmyth Wilson in 1904 for the 3ft gauge County Donegal Railways Joint Committee (£4000) and *Ballyshannon* from a 2-6-4T also built by Nasmyth Wilson for the railway that was outshopped in 1912 (£2800), while in the same category came *Bamburgh* from an 0-6-0ST built by Manning Wardle in 1898 for the North Sunderland Railway (£3000), and *St Martin* from an 0-6-0ST constructed by Avonside Engine Co in 1931 for mining company Pearson & Dorman Long, which fetched £1700.



Chime whistle

Remaining with the steam locomotive theme, the spotlight turns on the chime whistle from LNER A4 Pacific No. 60017 *Silver Fox* that realised £6800 and the smokebox numberplate from SR No. 34062 *17 Squadron* which went for £2800, following which we turn our attention to the bountiful selection of worksplates seeking new collections.

Although the aforementioned plate from diesel No. 10000 was the runaway winner in this category, other realisations deserving of mention are £5200 for a Grant Ritchie & Co example from a standard gauge 0-4-0ST named *John* that was built in 1901 for the Ministry of Munitions and ended its days with the National Coal Board and £5000 for an 1885 St Rollox plate from Caledonian Railway 0-4-0ST No. 612/LMS No. 16027/BR No. 56027 that in 1957 moved into departmental stock at Crewe Works and was withdrawn in October 1960.



Top of the busy signalling sector was an ex-Smallbrook Junction Railway Signal Co miniature staff instrument from the Isle of Wight (£3600), totems were led by BR(S) Rotherfield & Mark Cross (£2800) and SR targets by Sandhurst Halt and Boxhill, each of which sold for £1600, and heading the doorplates at £2600 was a BR(S) 'Signal and Telegraph Dept' example believed to be from Exeter Central.

The beer industry also raised a glass to the auction thanks to a 1924 Worthington & Co of Burton-on-Trent owner's plate from a four-wheeled petrol locomotive, selling for £2000, and a 'gates opening' warning notice from the town's brewery railway system, fetching £1900, while a Yard Master cap badge sold for £1300, followed by two category leaders at £1000 apiece, a BR(E) 'Queen of Scots' poster by Reginald Mayes (1900-1992) featuring a speeding A4 Pacific and a Southern Railway/ BR(S) 8in dial wall clock.

Finally, we travel on the London Underground, where we find three platform target signs – Victoria at £2800 and, at £1600 each, Westminster and Warren Street. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **July 5**
  Transport Auctions of London
- **July 11**
  Great Central Railwayana *(model trains)*
- **July 14-29**
  Paperchase
- **July 19/20**
  GW Railwayana
- **July 30/31**
  Vectis *(model trains)*

Heritage modern traction turns up trumps online

HERITAGE modern traction turned up trumps in a JustaClickago online auction of railway photographs, negatives and slides that ran from May 19-26, when more than 1200 colour negatives of various diesel classes sold for £1550.

Central to the collection were Class 52 'Westerns' taken in the mid-1970s, supported by Class 35 'Hymeks,' Class 44 'Peaks' and Class 50s.

Second at £540 were 640 slides of working and preserved steam and modern traction in Poland and Portugal, and a bid of £460 secured 375 slides of freight wagons in East Anglia taken mainly in the 1980s/1990s.

Prices exclude buyer's premium of 18%.



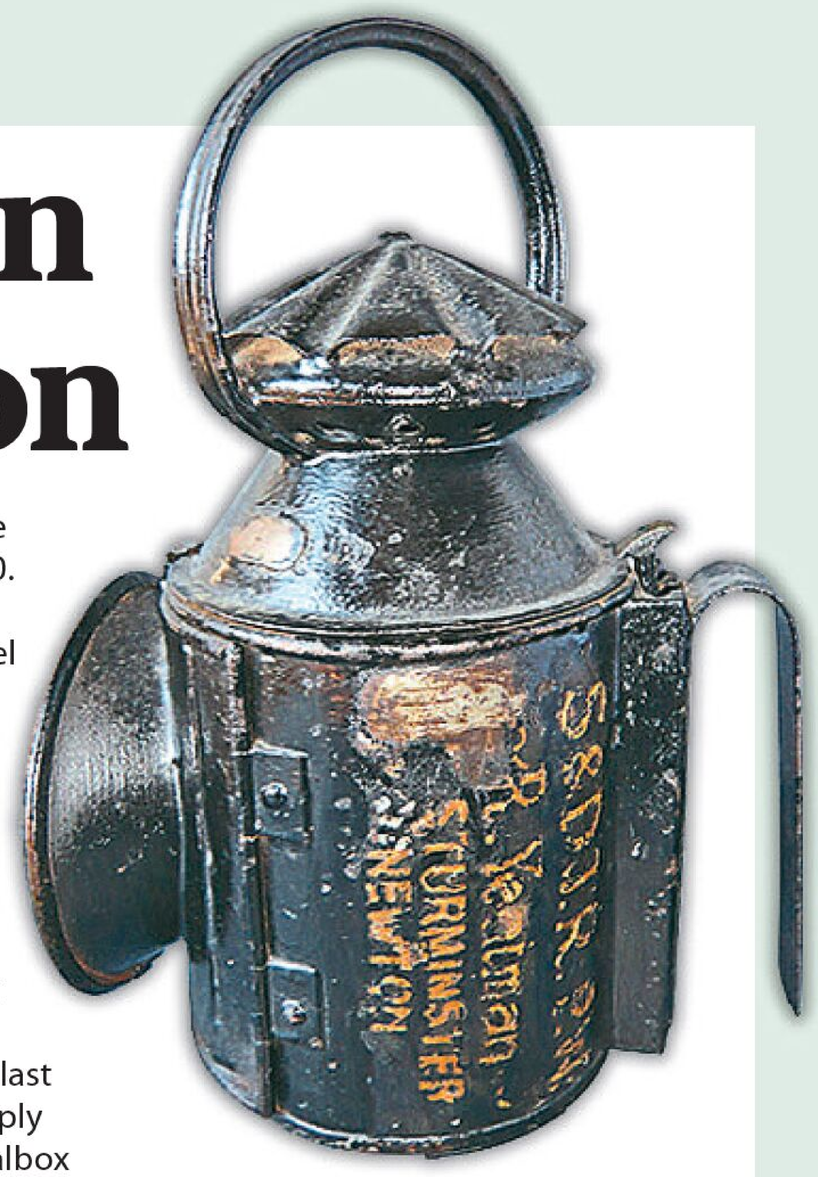
Duchess takes centre stage

NAMEPLATE *Duchess of Gloucester* from LMS Princess Coronation No. 46225 was the dominant force with a price of £18,200 in the sale of a single collection held by Piers Motley Auctions of Exmouth on June 3.

This Pacific was built at Crewe in May 1938 as one of the early batch of streamlined members of the class. When withdrawn from Carlisle Upperby (12B) in September 1964, it was the oldest Princess Coronation still in service, albeit it by then its distinctive streamlining having long been removed.

Four other plates from the collection that also went under the hammer comprised *Geoffrey Chaucer* from Britannia No. 70002 (£4400), *Thirlestaine Hall* from GWR No. 6965 (£3400), *Stackpole Court* from GWR Saint class No. 2948 (£3300) and *Defence* from a second LMS representative, Jubilee No. 45722, which fetched £3200. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 20% (+ VAT).

LNER plays top role in TRA saleroom auction



WHILE a BR(NE) Whitby Town totem led the way in Talisman Railwayana's May 17 auction, with a quartet of nameplates also jostling for position, as reported in last month's column, there was enough activity in other categories to keep visitors to the sale's Newark venue on their toes.

In this respect, LNER locomotive memorabilia played its part, as illustrated by the smokebox numberplate from A4 No. 60031 *Golden Plover* achieving £4200, a 1925 Doncaster worksplate (works No. 1616) from another of that company's Pacific fleet, A3 No. 60061 *Pretty Polly*, making £3800, and a second Doncaster plate (works No. 2030) from LNER-designed, BR 1948-built A2 No. 60539 *Bronzino* (£3400). The same LNER/BR combo was also responsible for A1 class No. 60116 *Hal o' the Wynd*, one of whose 1948 Doncaster worksplates (works No. 2033) fetched £3000.

Final mentions within the locomotive sector go to GWR No. 5044, which started life in March 1936 as *Beverston Castle* and was renamed *Earl of Dunraven* the following year, one of whose cabsides sold for £2500, and the chime whistle from Standard Pacific No. 70034 *Thomas Hardy* that sold for £2100.

A headboard that caught the eye was 'The Thames-Clyde Express' that fetched £4400. This London St Pancras to Glasgow train was the jewel in the Settle-Carlisle Line crown, and that leads us to a selection of items from that iconic route that also went under the hammer.

Three totems within this S&C line-up were Dent (£4500), Settle (£1400) and Appleby West (£1000), the last of which was renamed simply Appleby in 1968, and signalbox nameboards from the line also enjoyed being the limelight, with New Biggin achieving £3400, Ribblehead £3100 and Garsdale £1500.



Two non-S&C totems that sold for £3100 each were BR(M) Skipton and BR(E) West Runton, the leading SR target sign was Sidmouth Junction (£1600), and two other category winners were a Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway ex-Sturminster Newton station handlamp at £1250 and an LNER 16in dial wall clock that saw service at Lincoln Central and subsequently Thirsk stations that went for £1050. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

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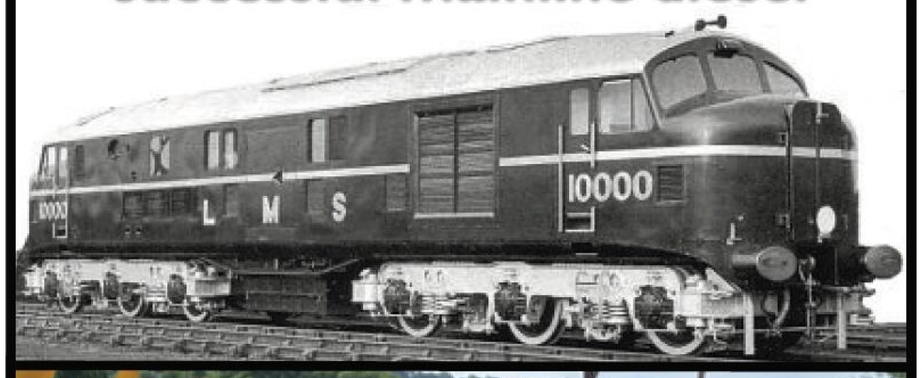


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ONE WEEKEND ONLY: THE CUCKOO LINE REVIVED

Sixty years after the last train ran on one of the many Southern Region routes closed by BR, **Owen Hayward** reports on what became a hugely-successful event for the Spa Valley Railway, featuring locomotives that were once to be found working the route in its heyday. Pictures by the author other than where stated.



Nos. 31803 and 34050 *Royal Observer Corps* at Lealands shortly after departure from Groombridge on June 14.

Attendance numbers at galas can rise and fall drastically, and often those with a strong theme to link everything will come out on top. This could not have been evidenced better than at the Spa Valley Railway on June 13-15, when gala planners hit the nail on the head in commemorating six decades since the closure of the Cuckoo Line.

With a highly appealing locomotive line-up and a rare opportunity to walk a normally closed-off section of trackbed, the weekend resulted in the railway recording the highest attendance for an enthusiast event to date – surpassing the previous record-holder that was the Scottish steam spectacle of 2022 by some margin.

One of the most ambitious events ever staged on this heritage line, the roster comprised no less than four steam and one diesel locomotive, plus a DEMU, all of which represented classes which were once found operating over the line to Polegate from Eridge. Furthermore, while the odd renumbering of a locomotive is not uncommon, a total of six scrapped identities were revived by the steam fleet, with one locomotive alone responsible for carrying half of that number.

Going Cuckoo

The gala was arranged to mark the 60th anniversary of the closure of the Cuckoo Line, which ran from Eridge to Hailsham via Heathfield and Hailsham. The route was built by the LBSCR in two sections, with the branch from Polegate to Hailsham opening first on May 14, 1849. The line to Eridge was not completed until April 1880; from September that same year, it connected to the line serving Lewes, Uckfield, Tunbridge Wells and London via a junction just south of Eridge. Like many lines of the time, stations were located some distance from the villages they were built to serve, but some saw developments grow up around them, such as at Horam and Heathfield, the latter ending up as the busiest station on the line.

An annual fair held at Heathfield had a tradition whereby a lady would release a cuckoo from a basket, which was supposedly the first cuckoo of spring and symbolising the arrival of that season as the birds return from migration. It was this tradition that resulted in local drivers nicknaming the route the Cuckoo Line.

The line was identified for closure in the 1963 Beeching report, though the section between Eridge and Hailsham was not closed to passengers until June 1965. Freight continued to run between Heathfield and Hailsham for a further three years, when closure was brought about following a lorry colliding with and damaging a low bridge. Passenger workings remained between Polegate and Hailsham until September 8, 1968, the closure being a cause of major upset with local communities and even saw BR admitting that bus services would be unlikely to manage the growing population at Hailsham.

Resident Battle of Britain light Pacific No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* may already be temporarily running carrying the name *303 Squadron* (as reported in *Heritage Railway* 324), so another temporary change of identity may well feel natural now as it became No. 34050 *Royal Observer Corps* for all three days. Built in 1946 at Salisbury as No. 21C150, it was named in honour of the Observer Corps which in 1941 was award the royal title by King George VI for its service during the Battle of Britain.

Scrapped steam revivals

Having moved between depots at Salisbury, Nine Elms, Exmouth Junction and Bricklayers Arms, No. 34050 was withdrawn at Eastleigh on August 29, 1965, and cut up for scrap just four months later. Before that though, it played its part in what became the final steam working over the Cuckoo Line when it hauled LCGB's 'The Wealdsman Rail Tour' from Waterloo to Horsham and then Three Bridges, where a pair of SR Moguls took over for the next leg to Hastings via Eridge and Polegate.

One of those Moguls was N class No. 31411, while the latter was U class No. 31803. Neither survived into preservation; however, the sight of the latter could be enjoyed as Swanage Railway resident and sole-surviving 'U Boat' No. 31806 (owned by JMB Locomotive Services) took on its lost classmate's identity. On June 13, the opportunity was taken to recreate the LCBG railtour – exactly 60 years to the day it ran.

This year also marks 60 years since the withdrawal of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway's BR Ivatt 2-6-2T 2MT No. 41313 in June 1965. This particular locomotive has



U class No. 31806 (as 31803) starts off from Eridge on June 15.



Making its first trip away from the West Somerset Railway since being preserved, D6566 passes through the woodlands at High Rocks with an Eridge-bound service.



Despite already carrying the temporary identity of *303 Squadron*, No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* ran as No. 34050 *Royal Observer Corps* for the duration of the gala. MARTYN TATTAM



On June 15, another change of identity saw No. 80078 become another former 75F resident, this time No. 80140. JAMES CUMMINS

crossed the Solent to appear at a Spa Valley gala before, visiting for the June 2023 Southern Steam Gala. For this second visit it became No. 41319, an apt choice for two reasons. When built in 1952, Tunbridge Wells West was that locomotive's first allocation, it remaining based there until moving to Ramsgate in June 1956, followed by Three Bridges 12 months later.

It returned to 75F briefly in October 1958, before being moved on again to Eastleigh (July 1958) and finally Nine Elms in April 1967, where it was withdrawn only three months later. Some of its parts survive today, with components fitted to No. 41313 being stamped with the number of this now long-since scrapped classmate.

The final steam locomotive on the roster was BR 2-6-4T 4MT No. 80078, a regular visitor to the Spa Valley in recent years. Outshopped by Brighton Works in February 1954, while it may have been first allocated to the Eastern Region at Plaistow shed, it was first tested between Brighton and Tunbridge Wells when it ran without a shedcode plate on the smokebox. This condition was how the 4MT appeared during the first day of the gala, while over the remaining weekend it carried no less than three further identities!

On June 14, it became No. 80144. Built in 1956, that particular locomotive received the honour of working the final timetabled passenger service between Tunbridge Wells West and Polegate on June 12, 1965. For the final day of the event, it first carried the number for 80140, before changing to spend the afternoon as 80011, both locomotives having been regulars at 75F.

Diesel days

To represent the later BR years of diesel traction, Class 33 D6566 was brought in from the West Somerset Railway to represent a class once common in the Southern Region. Entering service in 1961, it was withdrawn in 1995 and acquired by one of the founder members of the Diesel Electric Preservation Group in 1997. Its visit to Kent not only marked the first time it has returned to SR metals since its BR days, but also its first working visit away from the WSR since being preserved. Finally, the Spa Valley's class 207 'Thumper' No. 1317 completed the line-up, the DEMU having worked over the Cuckoo Line during its working life; it was running on the line through Tunbridge Wells West right up until the closure of that line in 1985.

A herculean effort was made by volunteers in the weeks before the gala. Following damage to paintwork on one side of the unit following a graffiti attack on April 20, repairs had progressed to the point where the affected side had been brought up to green primer, allowing it to operate as planned.

With a plethora of motive power at the line's disposal, an intensive timetable saw departures from each end at intervals of as little every 45 minutes, with the gaps being filled by Groombridge shuttles to and from both Eridge and Tunbridge Wells West.



BR 4MT No. 80078 approaches Broom Lane bridge on June 14, carrying the number 80144 and chalked-up smokebox – as how the original ran when it pulled the last timetabled passenger service between Eridge and Polegate in 1965.



The final departure of the weekend was a quadruple-headed express between Eridge and Tunbridge Wells West. Nos. 41319, 80011, 34050 and 31803 accelerate past Poke Hill Farm with D6566 attached to the rear.

The gala was not just about the trains at the heritage railway, for visitors were presented with the rare opportunity to walk through Heathfield Tunnel on part of the old trackbed throughout the three days. The 265-yard-long tunnel allowed the railway to pass beneath the village.

Once regularly open as a walking route, antisocial behaviour and vandalism saw it closed up once more. Following discussions with the local council, safety reviews, and preparatory work, it was reopened for the weekend, allowing people to walk through the tunnel for the first time in more than a decade.

An astonishing 5000 people seized this rare opportunity, with many of those passing through being current and previous local residents and users of the line. A free bus service ran from Tunbridge Wells to ferry visitors between the gala and the tunnel, spreading the weekend's celebrations right the way along the route.



Despite having been damaged in a graffiti attack in April, Class 207 No. 1317 was able to run as planned, the affected side having been put into green undercoat ahead of further painting to be completed after the gala.

Huge success

A total of 1759 people travelled on the railway during the three days, beating the Scottish Steam Up by 500.

General manager Jonnie Pay said: "What started as an A5 poster in November and an email to Wealden District Council has led to our most successful enthusiast event in terms of timetabling, variety of what we had on offer, and visitor numbers.

"It was a gamble though, and the cost of hosting this event was substantial. Thankfully, ticket sales and a photo charter have covered the majority of those costs, while secondary spend has covered the steaming fees, coal, water, lubricants and other fuels and expenses associated with it. I am confident that we have not lost money and that we have broken even. When this event was conceived, it was never the intention to raise thousands, but to commemorate something close to the hearts of several people. It is the closest thing we can do to a closure event surrounding the steam era.

"A huge thank-you must go to those who gave up their free time not only to look after the opening of Heathfield tunnel, but also to help get everything ready in the lead-up to the event.

"We had to inspect the structure, clean the surface, and install temporary lighting to enable this to happen, as well as be on hand throughout the event to keep an eye on things.

"Not only did many people pay their £1 entry fee, but they also left us their change from a £10 note, which has helped with the high transport costs.

"While we need to make money to survive, I am hopeful that this weekend brought everyone as much enjoyment as possible, because we do this for that very reason, not just to keep making money.

"We all had a great time making that possible and showcasing our railway."

Following the gala, all four of the steam locomotives headed to the Mid-Norfolk Railway, where they then ran for that line's own Southern Steam gala, taking place on June 27-29. HR



Throughout the event, visiting 2MT No. 41312 carried the identity of scrapped classmate No. 41319, a locomotive once shedded at 7F and from which several parts were taken to be fitted to the surviving example.





For the firs time in a decade, Heathfield tunnel was opened to the public throughout the weekend. More than 5000 people visited to take up the opportunity to walk through the 265-yard-long structure.
PHIL BARNES.



Pre-Grouping re-run from Kernow

CORNISH retailer Kernow Model Centre has announced a rerun of its popular LBSCR Open A five-plank wagons following the success of the first run of models announced in May 2024.

A new production run of the three LBSCR livery versions, that quickly sold out, was announced, along with three new versions with different running numbers. These exclusive models are from tooling designed, developed, and owned by Kernow Model Rail Centre.

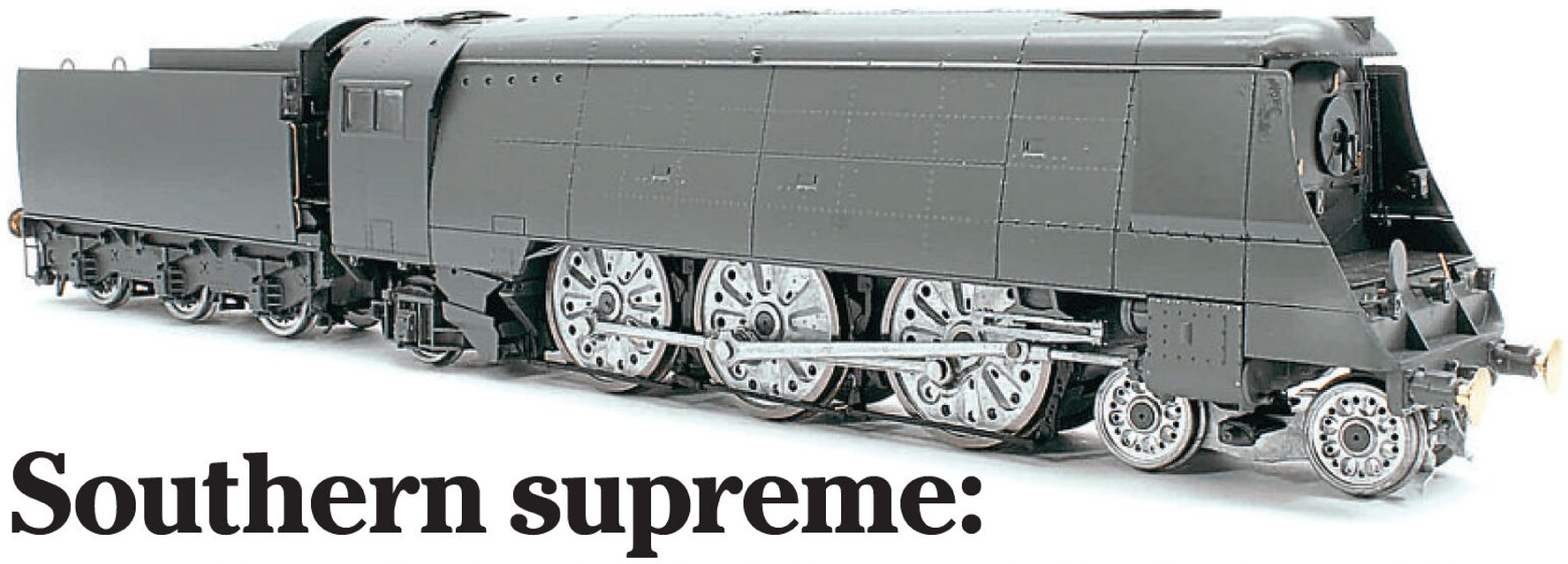
The specification of the model includes highly detailed body and chassis, prototypical brake gear and safety loops fitted, fully posable sheet rail (diagram 1369) sprung metal buffers, etched brake handles that can also be posed in the on position complete with locking peg chains, coupling hooks and metal three-link couplings.

Preserved example

An example of these wagons in LBSCR livery survives at the Bluebell Railway and product code SB009R represents this wagon as it preserved.

The six new LBSCR livery models are currently in production and priced at £32.99 per wagon; they are due to arrive during the summer.

Other livery versions are in stock online at www.kernowmodelrailcentre.com or at the Cambourne or Guildford stores.



Southern supreme:

Dapol and Rails' 'ultimate' light Pacifics

WITH the release of super-spec Black Label A4s expected imminently, model retailer Rails of Sheffield and manufacturer Dapol have teamed up once again to offer OO scale modellers the SR Battle of Britain and West Country classes as the next highly-detailed locomotives. Revealed to be at the engineering sample stage, the models of these incredibly popular Bulleid 4-6-2s will cover the as-built examples with air-smoothed casing fitted.

The Black Label range is championed for its high-level detail, and that is not set to change, with a largely diecast metal body and separately fitted details that range from fine handrails to etched metal ladders. With minute details such as lamp irons and pipework covered, this is a substantial upgrade on models of the class in OO scale which have been about since the early 2000s. Even the unique look of the wheels has been captured, and the numerous differences from the class – which includes prominent features such as the cab and tender designs through to smaller fixtures such as steps and ladders – are catered for in the tooling to ensure that these models meet the modern expectations of railway modellers.

One of the significant selling points of Black Label is the wealth of DCC-controlled features, with working lamps and a full lighting suite that includes 15 user-selectable options – believed to be a first for an OO gauge steam locomotive. Sound and smoke generators all also fitted as standard, while firebox glow and flicker will add life to the cab, which comes with a fully detailed backhead.

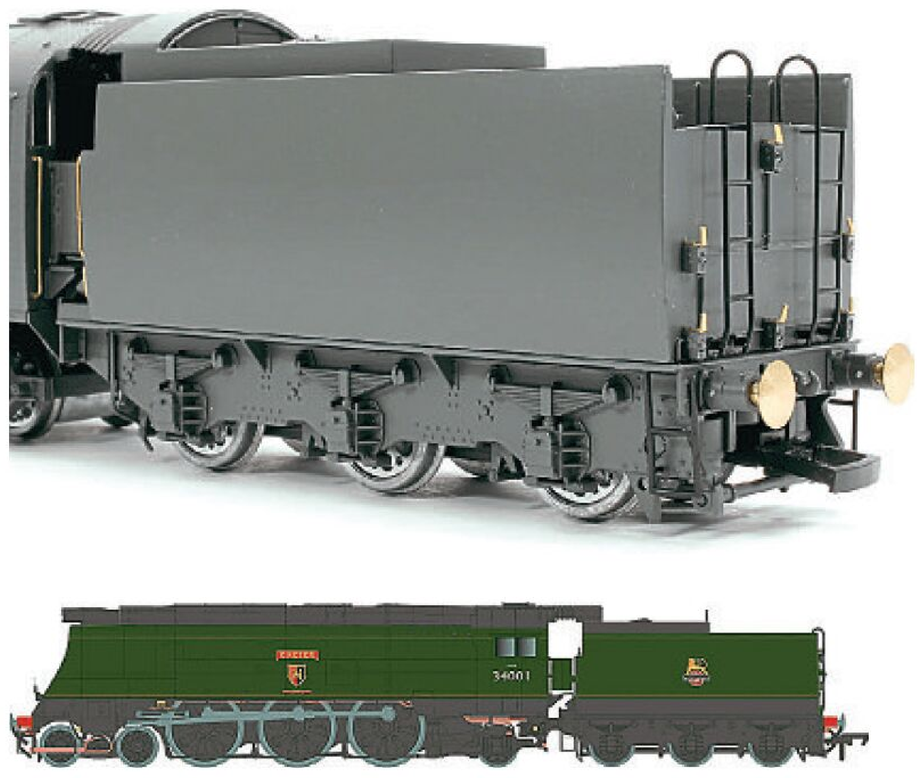
For those running analogue layouts, chuffing sound effects will operate in DC mode. Pick-ups on all driving and tender wheels will ensure reliable power to a powerful and smooth five-pole skew-wound motor with flywheel.

A total of seven identities will be available in this first batch covering both SR and BR liveries, including Nos. 34066 *Spitfire*, 21C113 *Okehampton* and 34001 *Exeter*, while the Bluebell Railway's resident example, 21C123 *Blackmore Vale* (which is currently undergoing overhaul split between there and Leaky Finders in Devon), will be available in the condition in which it has been preserved.

These high specs come with an understandably high price tag; each example costs £399 plus postage and packaging. However, when compared to the prices of some standard models available on the market at the moment, the promised features and quality certainly make these excellent value for money.

Advanced orders can be made by visiting www.railsofsheffield.com, with models expected to be delivered at an as-yet unconfirmed point during 2026.

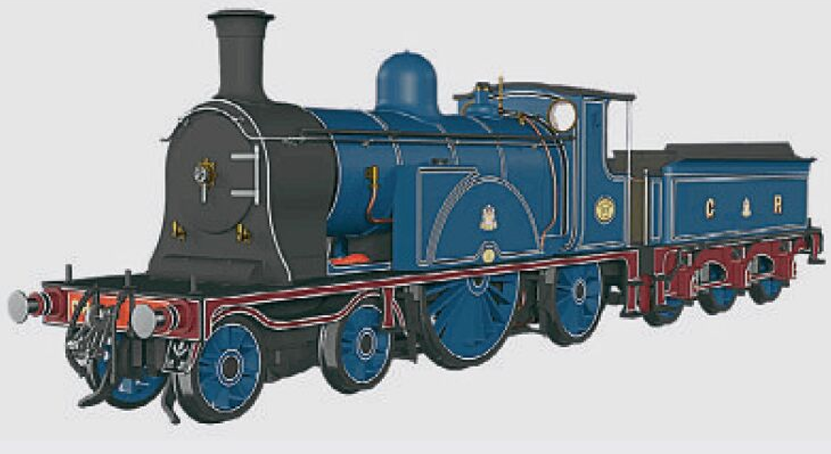




Rails bags fictional 'what if' livery exclusive for Rapido's Caledonian 'Single'

IN addition to the Bulleid models announcement, Rails of Sheffield has also announced it has commissioned an exclusive model of the Caledonian Railway single-wheeler 4-2-2 No. 123 carrying the darker blue livery of the Scottish rail company as would have been worn during the pre-Grouping era. During this period, the locomotive carried a different boiler which is not featured in the Rapido tooling suite, so it is described as a 'what if.' The model is, however, physically different, to the manufacturer's other light blue livery model, with differences such as an eight-point smokebox dart backer, later standard type buffers with plain housing and external pipework on the left-hand side of the tender, along with a high tender rear backplate.

Models can be pre-ordered now for £224.95 (DCC ready) or £324.95 (DCC sound-fitted).



Prelude to a Bucket

While the heritage sector may never do without the Hunslet Austerity saddle tank design, many have made the case for its smaller elder predecessor. Having grown so popular among railway modelers in recent years, **Chris Eden-Green** examines the appeal of Hunslet's standard 'Fitzwilliam' locomotives.

THE year 1923 was one to celebrate for Bolton Wanderers fans, having beat West Ham United in the 'White Horse' FA Cup Final at Wembley. Breakthroughs in technology were made with the first electric shaver, the invention of frozen food, and the imagination was captured by Dr Le Forest's public demonstration of Phonofilm – the combination of sound and motion pictures on the same stock.

In the world of railways, Britain had just grouped 120 independent railway companies into the Big Four. The Great Western and London & North Eastern railways built the first of its Castle 4-6-0ss and Gresley A1 Pacifics respectively, with the two going head-to-head in a battle of prestige and efficiency the following year.

Meanwhile, in Leeds, the Hunslet Engine Company produced the first of an unassuming saddle tank design. With 16in by 22in cylinders, a boiler pressure of 160psi and 3ft 9in driving wheels, this prototype engine was delivered to the Hemsworth Colliery, south of Wakefield, on February 28. Weighing in at 38.5 tons, the new locomotive boasted a tractive effort of 15,020lb, though this was measured with Hunslet's yardstick of 75% boiler pressure and not the 85% that is normally calculated to measure tractive effort.

The previous name for Hemsworth, sunk between 1876-1880 to the Shafton seam of coal, was Fitzwilliam Main, named after the local village. It therefore seemed fitting that Works No. 1438 was named *Fitzwilliam* in local honour, but few could have imagined the name would stick to the whole design and its derivatives.

Diverse range

Soon after *Fitzwilliam* entered service, a follow-up engine with smaller 15in by 20in cylinders was ordered by Airedale Collieries Ltd. While subsequently nicknamed the Airedale class, the differences between Works No. 1440 and its larger predecessor were minimal; 28.5in shorter, 2.5 tons lighter and with 3ft 7in driving wheels, a further 27 engines were built to these specifications.

An even smaller type with 14in by 20in cylinders found its way into Hunslet's catalogue in 1929, and while normally available with inside cylinders and valve gear, a dozen outside-cylindered examples were ordered by Crown Agents for use in the Middle East to supply stone for port and sea defence construction in Haifa.

Presumably, the choice for external valve gear was influenced by the ease of maintenance in more rugged terrain. However, of the 12 ordered, only four of these were built in time for shipping to the Middle East.

When completed in 1931, the remaining eight were sold on to John Mowlem & Co. Employees at Southampton Docks may have been surprised to see them on the construction of the Southern Railway's graving dock, but if you imagine one of these next to the more elegant Adams B4 0-4-0Ts of 1891 being quite a contrast, that was nothing compared to Works No. 1648 being displayed with LNWR No. 3020 *Cornwall* and LNER W1 No. 10000 at the Liverpool & Manchester Railway Centenary Celebrations in September 1930. But if the 14in variant could be likened to the 'super-mini' of the range, there was an even smaller 'city car' version with 12in diameter cylinders, of which only six were made and none were preserved.

In 1923-58, Hunslet built 123 0-6-0STs in this 'standard' family. Of these, 44 were of the popular 16in variant. Interestingly, some of the 16-inchers went overseas too. Besides five that were ordered by the Peruvian Corperation in 1930-50, Works No. 1825 was bought by the Public Works Department in New South Wales. When shipped over in 1938, the engine was shedded in Port Kembla, about 56 miles south of Sydney Harbour Bridge. Following transfer to New South Wales Government Railways in 1949, it worked until 1963. Amazingly, however, it has ended up preserved with a trio of C38 Pacifics and Garratt No. 6029 at the NSW Rail Museum in Thirlmere.

In 1937, a larger 18in type was introduced, though this did not officially carry the same name. With 4ft ½in driving wheels and a boiler pressure of 170psi, the first of the



No. 1589 *Newstead* sits at Holt on June 6, having completed its first light engine test run on the North Norfolk Railway where it is now based. NEWSTEAD LOCO GROUP

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No. 1982 *Ring Haw* in the woodlands of High Rocks on the Spa Valley Railway shortly before it was withdrawn for overhaul at the end of December 2019. To aid with oiling, this locomotive has been fitted with a mechanical lubricator. OWEN HAYWARD



Heavily rebuilt, having been intended for use as a Thomas for character events, *King George* now runs as a side tank but is a member of the 15in version of the Hunslet 0-6-0ST design. COURTNEAY FORDER



The 'standard' design elements were often employed on variations. Outwardly similar to the 16in locomotives, No. 1873 *Jessie*, pictured here, is a larger 18in example. COURTENAY FORDER



Resident on the Middleton Railway, *Brookes No. 1* is a member of the smallest of the Hunslet 'standards,' built with 14in cylinders. MIDDLETON RAILWAY



It might look like a standard Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam,' but No. 2705 *Beatrice* has been modified to make it more user-friendly, including a rocking grate, hopper ash pan and Lempor blastpipe. OWEN HAYWARD

48150 type emerged from Hunslet's works. It would eventually inspire Hunslet's 50550 type, with the 1000-gallon water tank extending over the top of the smokebox to hold 1200 gallons. This was, of course, the version selected by the Ministry Of Supply in 1943 as the Austerity design we know today.

Hunslet built its final 'standard' 0-6-0ST, Works No. 3872 *Frank,* for the Oxfordshire Ironstone Co in 1958. Rolls-Royce/Sentinel 0-4-0DH shunters began replacing the steam engines here in 1965, and the ironstone company closed just two years later.

In today"s heritage sector, just a dozen of these popular saddle tanks are listed. Two of the 14in variants include *Brookes No. 1* of 1941, currently based at the Middleton Railway, Leeds.

Then there's two of the 15in type, with *King George* of 1942 being rebuilt as a side tank in the early 2020s.

Only one of the 48150 18in variants remains, this being *Jessie* of 1937. The rest are of the 16in type, which can be seen at numerous heritage lines, including *Jacks Green* at the Nene Valley, *Ring Haw* at the North Norfolk, *Beatrice* at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey and *Darfield No. 1* (often running as *Holly Bank No. 3*) at Chasewater.

Newstead – the 'lost' engine

It seems like only yesterday that news got out about Works No. 1589 being rediscovered in 2016 after spending decades out of the public eye, as reported in News, page 10.
Built in 1929 as another of Hemsworth's fleet, *Newstead* finished its working life at Woolley Colliery at Darton, West Yorkshire, famous for being the first workplace of Arthur Scargill, who later became the president of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Having been laid aside in 1970, *Newstead* was privately purchased two years later by Hertfordshire-based toolmaker Malcolm Saul and was eventually moved a plot of land outside a convent in Ware. There it was placed on a short length of track and given a custom-built shed to protect it from the elements.

Despite a two-year overhaul, completed in 1990, and plans to build a longer line for it to run on, *Newstead* steamed only on limited occasions out of the public eye.

When Saul died in 2015, his widow Jane faced the difficult task of ensuring that the engine found a suitable home. Step forward, the Nene Valley Railway's Small Loco Group, which helped Alex Alder secure the purchase of the engine in early 2016. It has spent the last seven years undergoing an overhaul to working order. It must have been quite a moment when it finally made the first round trip from Weybourne to Holt on the June 6.

The mouse that roared

Despite an obvious disadvantage in pulling power due to a lower weight and tractive effort, many heritage railway volunteers have remarked the smaller 'Fitzwilliam' design is nippier than the Austerity. Arguably, an engine with smaller cylinders needs less force to move the pistons, uses less steam, and ends up with less to push out of the exhaust. Furthermore, while a driving wheel of 4ft ½in travels further, a lighter 3ft 9in one needs less power to rotate it. Hence, a number of footplate crews believe that, while the bigger Austerity is more powerful, the smaller 'Fitzwilliam' may have more noticeable performance at light railway speeds.

It's worth pointing out that, while weighing less than 28 tons, *Brookes No. 1* boasts 11,700lb of tractive effort, so it reportedly has more oomph than a Brighton 'Terrier. And with 3ft 4in driving wheels', it's anyone's guess at how much effort is needed to get up to line speed.

Speaking on behalf of *Beatrice*, Embsay fireman Matthew Berry sang high praise: "To the casual observer, *Beatrice* looks like a standard Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam,' but delve a bit deeper and you find creature comforts like a rocking grate and hopper ash pan. You won't find a standard blastpipe in the smokebox, either – instead, it has been fitted with a Lempour exhaust."

According to Berry, any driver would find *Beatrice* easy to prepare, with fully accessible lubrication points, many of which now use grease instead of oil, and firemen can expect a machine that's free steaming with a reliable pair of injectors. "Give me a choice between an Austerity and *Beatrice* on load five, I would choose *Beatrice* every time. It is equally happy plodding along slowly on an evening dining train as on a normal passenger service."

Berry also had a little experience of *Brookes No. 1* at Middleton, adding: "It's nowhere near as strong as the 16in or 18in, but is quite gutsy



for its size. The buckets do feel more sluggish, almost brutish, to be honest.

"They are also less refined, but that is the nature of the design."

Ben Boggis, from the North Norfolk Railway, said of *Ring Haw*: "Most things are quite accessible, so it's not so important to set the engine for oiling, unlike an Austerity or 5700/6400 pannier tank, where it's preferable to have them at seven o'clock on the driver's side."

Boggis also reminded us that *Ring Haw* boasts a mechanical lubricator, which cuts down on oiling time by lubricating the pistons, valves and crossheads all at once.

"Being a saturated engine, the regulator is quite responsive," he said. "Also, being an industrial design, you have the advantage that you can from either side of the cab."

The models

The 16in Hunslet has existed in kit form from Judith Edge Kits for a number of years, with 4mm and 7mm versions available, but the vast majority of modellers know of the ready-to-run version, which has been available from Rapido Trains UK since 2021.

The range consists of 10 variants, including *Beatrice* in NCB Red and as preserved in green. Each model is largely made up of die-cast construction and has a high level of detailing, including firebox glow for DC users and flicker for those with DCC. While certainly numerous and popular in OO gauge, you'd think there would be call for N gauge; while enquiries have been made, not enough have come through to warrant producing a batch.

"It's always complicated, but simply it needs to be commercially viable," said Rapido UK's manager, Andrew Hardy. "If someone commissioned it, it's a different story. Putting it in the standard range without the confidence of sales is risky."

Batch one of Rapido's range included other locomotives, such as *Arthur* in Markham Main Colliery lined green, *Holly Bank No. 3* of the Staffordshire Area in NCB Lined Blue and *Jacks Green* of Nassington colliery in lined green.

A second batch is due to arrive soon and contains locomotives such as *Clement* in wasp stripe black, *John Shaw* in plain dark green and *Glasshoughton No. 4* carrying lined green. HR

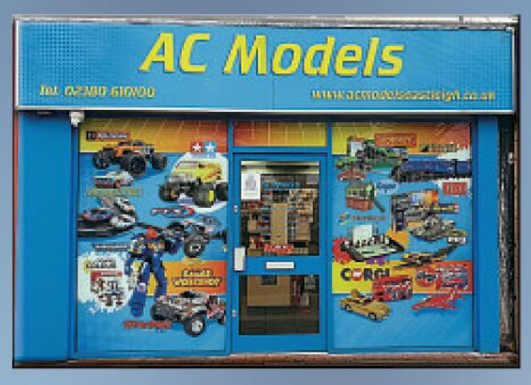




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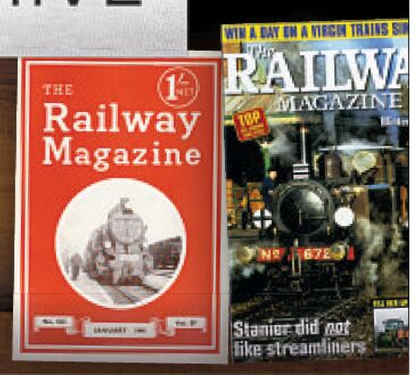
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AUGUST 30th	York	OCT 25th	Blackpool
SEPT 14th	Rainton	NOVEMBER 9th	Rainton
SEPT 28th	Glasgow (New Venue)	NOVEMBER 22nd	Edinburgh

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DELTIC HOMECOMING BOOSTS YORKSHIRE DIESEL GALAS

The return of a Deltic to Yorkshire in June brought with it two successful galas on successive weekends – including one held on the line where that locomotive's journey in preservation began, reports **Owen Hayward.**

Built in 1961, Class 55 No. 55009 *Alycidon* began its heritage era career on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway after being purchased by the Deltic Preservation Society in 1982. Having been bought fresh from withdrawal and still in operational condition, it was pressed into service there immediately and remained a regular performer on the line for eight years, before departing in November 1990 for overhaul at ICI Wilton.

It was another eight years before *Alycidon* emerged once again, returning to the Moorsline on August 28, 1998. Its stay there this time was brief; with main line running in the sight of the DPS, No. 55009 departed again on December 8 for Barrow Hill, where work commenced to bring it up to the required standards, and it had not returned to the NYMR since.

Its first appearance at the NYMR this side of the millennium helped the June 12-15 diesel gala perform much better than expected, with the railway advising that ticket sales were 10% higher than initially forecast.

Furthermore, those attending the event were the first to see *Alycidon* outshopped in its 1982 condition sporting white cabs as it would have worn at the time when allocated to Finsbury Park and harking back to how it would have been when it entered preservation more than 40 years ago.



Making a welcome return to the Moorsline, where its preservation story began, Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* passes through Water Ark sporting its newly-applied Finsbury Park white cabs. CHRIS GEE/NYMR

Although an electrical fault materialised on the Saturday afternoon causing *Alycidon* to be temporarily withdrawn from service, DPS engineers worked hard to rectify this and successfully returned the Deltic to service in time for the final day of the event.

In total, eight locomotives could be seen and heard tackling the 18 miles of line through North York Moors National Park between Grosmont and Pickering; during this weekend, no services ran over the Network Rail section to Whitby.

Joining the Deltic was Class 50 No. 50021 *Rodney*, which arrived from its extended winter stay at the Epping Ongar Railway, Mid-Norfolk-based Class 33 No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson*, owned by Steward Robinson, plus a pair of Class 37s represented by Nos. 37418 from Loram and 37688 *Great Rocks*. The latter,



Not in use but still on show: Nos. 20007, D7628 and D5061 were lined up in the yard at Grosmont during the gala. CHRIS GEE/NYMR



No. 50021 *Rodney* departs at Grosmont with a Pickering-bound service on June 13. PETER HORNER/NYMR

owned by D05 Preservation Ltd, had initially failed before the gala with problems on the vacuum braking system, but following repairs and a successful test run on June 13, it was able to partake in the event on the Saturday and Sunday.

The home fleet flag was flown by a third Class 37, No. 3726, and Class 31 Nos. 31128 *Charybdis* and 31466, while out-of-service locomotives such as Class 24 D5061 and Class 25 D7628 *Sybilla* were on show in the yard at Grosmont, where the depot was also open for viewing.

Rising to the challenge

From young families to first-time railway explorers, the line reported that stations buzzed with excitement, curiosity and admiration.

Paul Middleton, the line's director of mechanical engineering, said: "Behind the scenes, the event was made possible through months of preparation by NYMR's dedicated staff, volunteers and locomotive owners.

"From meticulous engine prep to top-tier customer service and seamless logistics, every detail was handled with care and professionalism.

"Despite a few locomotive issues along the way, the diesel team at Grosmont MPD, supported by visiting crews, rose to the challenge and ensured an exceptional visitor experience."

On to the Valley

No sooner had the Moorsline gala concluded, *Alycidon* was off to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway to start at that line's own June 19-22 diesel gala. Whereas the Moorsline appearance was a return to familiar ground, this second event took it to new territory, drawing in more than 3500 vistors in the process.

The line-up for this weekend comprised a mix of both main line and heritage line traction, with the Deltic being joined by Class 37 No. 37508, Class 47s Nos. 47714 and 47715, and even *Rodney*, which travelled in convoy from the NYMR to attend, as examples of locomotives found on heritage lines. A second Class 37, No. 37057, was provided by Colas, with Freightliner sending in Class 70 No. 70017 for an appearance, the latter not known to have ever hauled a passenger service to date. Brake van rides were offered aboard vehicles which formed a demonstration ballast train.



No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson* pauses at the idyllic country station of Goathland on June 12. CHRIS GEE/NYMR



Resplendent in it's new livery, No. 47714 sits at Keighley on June 19 ready to depart for Ingrow West with an engineering train. TOM MCATEE



The ballast wagons prove no challenge for *Alycidon* as it climbs Keighley Bank with the 1.30pm departure on June 19. TOM MCATEE

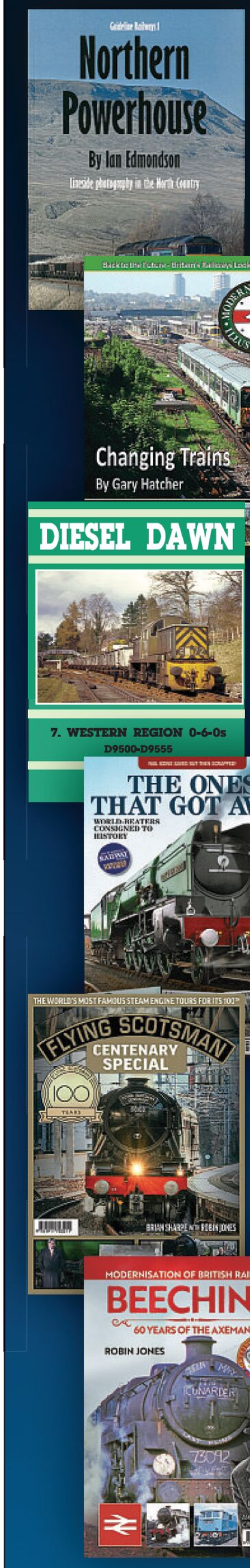
"This year marked the KWVR's most ambitious diesel gala yet, with 11 visiting locomotives at an incredible four-day event," said organiser Kieran Pilsworth. "Every train was busy, every platform alive with conversation, cameras and smiles. It was everything we'd hoped for and more."

However, misfortune struck on June 22 when No. 50021 was running into the headshunt at Keighley station and the centre wheel of one bogie dropped in between the rails.

The cause was under investigation as this issue went to press. No damage was sustained, although the Class 50 was taken out of service for the remainder of the day for inspection, with the Class 70 also missing turns owing to it being trapped by the partial derailment. HR

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FRED YOUELL

THE MAN WHO MADE THE FIRST STANDARD GAUGE HERITAGE LINE HAPPEN

The centenary of the birth of one of the original founders of the Middleton Railway has been celebrated, reports **Sally Clifford** in words and pictures.



Sarah Lister, Harriet Woodcock and Matthew Youell cut the special cake commemorating their father Fred's 100th birthday.

It was the foresight of a former Leeds University lecturer and some of his students that led to the Middleton Railway becoming the first volunteer-run standard gauge heritage line.

Had Fred Youell and others not had the commitment and tenacity to assemble the voluntary workforce – some of whom are still involved today – the Moor Road site in Leeds could have been repurposed and would most certainly look markedly different from its current form.

Home to what is believed to be the oldest continuously running railway in the world, fittingly, it is also the resting place of Fred and his wife, Susan. Fred's ashes were scattered at the beginning of the line and Susan's at Park Halt, on what was a colliery and freight line before it began carrying passengers in the 1960s.

So, on a bright sunny spring day, the railway that played such an integral part in Fred and his family's life was the appropriate location for a special posthumous celebration commemorating Fred's 100th birthday.

Among those gathered were Fred's son, Matthew – named after Middleton Railway pioneer Matthew Murray – and daughters Harriet and Sarah. The line is familiar territory to them, having spent many pleasurable hours in their childhoods accompanying their parents to 'work.'

Harriet fondly recalls that she and Sarah would help to print off the railway newsletter on a machine. It evident the railway was an integral part of theirs and their parents' lives.

"I didn't know anything else. I thought everybody else's parents did that – it was just what we did," said Harriet. "We went on holiday and would go to different railways. When I hear a steam engine, my ears prick up."

Sarah said: "It was their whole life for many years, and they would both be incredibly proud of how the railway is today, and at the number of volunteers and the amount of energy they are putting in to keeping it going."

Movie magic

Comparable to the 1950s film The Titfield Thunderbolt, about a group of villagers who save their local railway line, of which Matthew said his father was a fan, he recalled how Fred and his fellow volunteers secured the line's future running freight services during those early days.

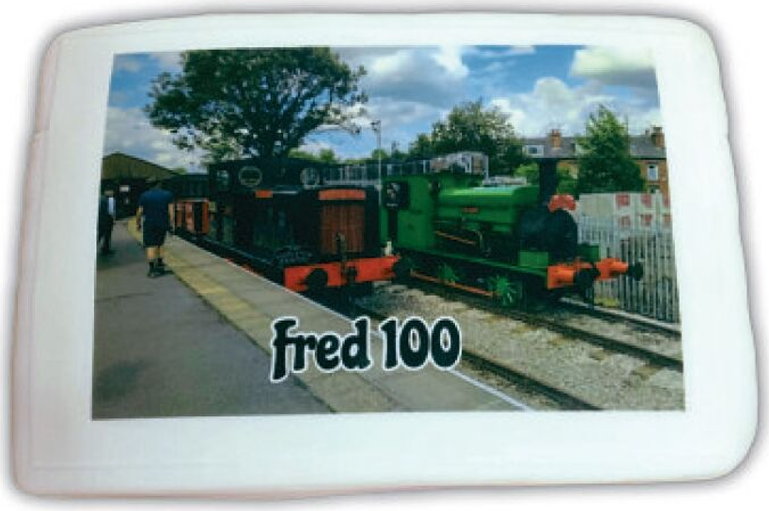
"That is how they kept it going because the university students came down between lectures," said Matthew.

In contrast to the subsequent on-site developments, Matthew said there was a little hut and a platform when he started coming to the railway in the early 1970s.

As well as guard duties, Fred also had an interest in track work. This led to his involvement with other lines including the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam, North Yorkshire Moors and Llangollen railways.

Matthew, who was employed by BR before privatisation and now works for National Highways, said his father was a motivator: "He was one of those people in the early railways who was a character, an eccentric, and driven."

Fred originated from Ilford and came to Leeds to study his doctorate. He had a particular interest in minerals and lectured in the university's physics department.



The special cake commemorating Fred Youell's 100th birthday.

Matthew recalled that his mother, who originated from Nottingham, was a keen spotter before meeting his father. Their shared interest in rail ways brought them together. Susan was secretary of both the Middleton Railway and the Association of Railway Preservation Societies under the leadership of Capt Peter Manisty, RN. She was also a member of the Leeds University Transport Society, as it was originally known, which Fred helped to set up and Matthew later joined.

The society brought together many student railway enthusiasts, among them Middleton chairman Charles Milner.

Charles came to study chemical engineering at Leeds University when he became involved in the railway which, he said, was within walking distance of his digs.

"I have always been interested in railways and knew about Middleton Railway before I came to Leeds. On Wednesday afternoons, students didn't work, so I would walk across the road to the railway and get involved, and





Left: Middleton Railway vice president Ian Smith and Fred Youell on September 11, 1983, on the footplate of Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2003 of 1941 *John Blenkinsop*, the last train into Dartmouth Yard before closure.
MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST
Right: Fred Youell at the 1962 Annual Dinner of Middleton Railway Preservation Society, held jointly with the Leeds University Union Railway Society.
MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST



Middleton Railway volunteers past and present with Fred's family and friends.



Sarah, Harriet and Matthew beside 1966-built Hudswell-Clarke D1373 MD&HB 45 ahead of their journey to Park Holt.



Mike Crew during guard duties as a young volunteer with the Middleton Railway in June 1960. MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST



Mike Crew signals the return journey to Moor Road, re-enacting the image of him (left) during his guard duties when the passenger services began at the railway.



Middleton Railway chairman Charles Milner with Hunslet 0-4-0DM No. 1786 of 1935 *Courage,* fondly known as 'Sweet Pea,' which he drove during his Leeds University student days.

that is where I met Fred. He was determined to get things done and very much the controlling mind of the railway.

"He was also kind to the students who helped out. He always looked after the people there."

Fred and his family also shared an affinity with the Great Eastern Railway. Fred had been keen to preserve the LNER *Claud Hamilton* – Sarah's middle name is Claudia after his favourite engine – but, according to Matthew, it was sadly scrapped.

Instead, Fred purchased an N7 0-6-2T for preservation. The locomotive was ordered as No. 999 by the GER at Stratford Locomotive Works in 1924. It had several works numbers during its working life, which ended in 1962 after 38 years of service.

N7 No. 69621, which was a year older than Fred, was put in trust with another place he was involved with, the East Anglian Railway Museum, following his death in 1998 at the age of 73.

Fred's legacy runs on still, certainly at Middleton where the running shed bears a name plaque in his honour.

'Special place'

"He thought it was going to be named the Matthew Murray Building – it is the only time I have seen Fred Youell speechless," recalled Middleton vice president Ian Smith when addressing the gathering on Sunday, May 25 – the day after what would have been Fred's 100th birthday.

"Fred will always have a special place in the Middleton Railway's heart, and we are always pleased to welcome his relatives and celebrate his contribution to the railway."

Matthew added: "This is something which is intrinsic to the whole family, what we were interested in, the family ethos, and which is why we came down here for the 100th anniversary."

The railway has grown both in ambition and size over the years. Today's voluntary workforce has continued Fred's legacy with the transformation of the Engine House, increasing the size of the shop, incorporating a café with seating and the introduction of conference, function facilities, and additional space in the museum to accommodate the impressive fleet of locomotives, each with a significant heritage.

"Fred's spirit lives on in the work being done by members who are continually improving the railway," said Ian.

The journey to Park Halt aboard carriages Nos. 1867 and 2084, pulled by Hudswell-Clarke D1373 MD&HB 45, signalled the end of the celebrations.

With a wave of the green flag for the return journey to Moor Road, Mike Crew, who was the first guard on the train when the heritage line ran its first passenger service, proudly re-enacted his guard duties as captured on a black-and-white photograph more than 60 years ago.

"It is 65 years ago that we started it, and it is still going strong today, after all this time," said Mike. HR





Above: The late Susan Youell, a former secretary of the Middleton Railway. MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST

Left: The first goods train takes to the rails at the Middleton Railway on September 1, 1960. MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST

DOUBLE-HEADED 'FIRSTS' MARK 45 YEARS OF BRECON MOUNTAIN

The Brecon Mountain Railway celebrated 45 years in operation with a special anniversary event over the weekend of June 7/8, with both Baldwin locomotives double-heading over the full length of the line from Pant to Torpantau, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.



Right: The Brecon Mountain Railway crew at Torpantau on June 8. Left to right are Dave Nash, Lucan Turner, Phillip Jones and Neil Cooper.

Below: After passing Dolygaer Loop, Nos.1 and 2 open up for the climb to Torpantau on June 8.

The Brecon Mountain Railway is the southernmost of the 12 Great Little Trains of Wales. Like the others, it runs through stunning scenery, climbing into the Brecon Beacons National Park, yet it is still one of the least-known Welsh narrow gauge railways.

Its trackbed was part of the standard gauge Brecon & Merthyr Railway, which opened between Brecon and Dowlais Top in 1863. The line was notable for its fierce gradients and having the highest standard gauge tunnel in the UK at Torpantau, 1313 feet above sea level and 666 yards long.

In 1923 the line became part of the GWR and then BR in 1948. Passenger trains ceased in 1962 and then freight ended in 1964, when the line was abandoned and the track lifted. The route laid dormant until the mid-1970s; all infrastructure had gone, apart from bridge abutments, Pontsticill station house and its waiting room.

The dream of the railway we have today is down to one man, Tony Hills. He was an accountant from the Midlands with a passion for railways, particularly US 2ft gauge. After becoming an active volunteer on the Ffestiniog Railway, he restored several wagons at his home in Birmingham. He also restored his own Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST, No. 827 of 1903 *Sybil*.

Leaving accountancy in 1970, he moved to Gilfach Ddu, Llanberis, to establish an engineering business there. Meanwhile, he was searching for a location to build a railway. His criteria was that it had to be scenic and near a large conurbation. The closed section of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, between Pant and Torpantau, fitted the bill perfectly.

It took nearly five years of negotiations with 12 different landowners, including Welsh Water, before he acquired the use of five miles of the trackbed from Pant in 1977. The original section to Pant station was unavailable so adjoining land was bought for a deviation.

In 1977, his locomotives and the engineering business he created at Llanberis moved to Pontsticill and construction began to reinstate the line. Pontsticill station house was renovated during this time, the old waiting room was converted into a small workshop, and a new storage shed was built. The first passenger trains started running on the rebuilt section between Pant and Pontsticill in June 1980 using Quarry Hunslet *Sybil* and a single carriage. Extensions took place in 1995 from Pontsticill to Dol-y-Gaer, and the final section to Torpantau opened on April 1, 2014. At Torpantau station, the old trackbed can be seen heading towards the tunnel in a small cutting.

Pant station was built over three periods between 1982 and 1996. It provides the full passenger facilities one expects from a heritage railway, plus an extensive workshop capable of maintaining and building locomotives, carriages and wagons.

Blending in nicely are three ventilation shafts that belonged to the LNWR line 80ft below in Pant station's car park. The large car park is on the site of the former Brecon & Merthyr branch line into Dowlais.

Tony wanted this railway to be different from other UK narrow gauge lines and to that end he has succeeded, especially with the American flavour. He sadly died in 2015 but was fortunate to see his railway reopening throughout.



Motive power

The fleet has two US-built Baldwin steam locomotives in full working order, Nos. 1 and 2. Both were in operation during the weekend



Baldwins Nos. 1 and 2 climb the last few yards into Torpantau station.



No.1 pilots No.2 departing Pant as Quarry Hunslet *Margaret* runs on the demonstration line on June 7.





Above: Under construction inside Pant Works is new-build replica Forney-type Baldwin 2-4-4T No. 10.
Left: The author's son, Daniel Titlow, is given a driving lesson on visiting Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Margaret* by VoR driver Tom Curtis at Pant on June 8.
Right: On display inside the shed at Pant is 1894-built De Winton vertical boilered 0-4-0 *Pendyffryn*.



– and for the first time together. Baldwin 2-6-0 No. 1 *Santa Teresa No. 1* was built in 1897 in Philadelphia and spent its working life in Brazil, where it started on the Mogiana Railway as No. 26 with a four-wheel tender, Later, it was sold to Santa Teresa Sugar Mill and regauged to 2ft 6in.

The sugar mill closed in 1976, leaving No. 1 rusting, and it was brought to the UK in 1990. There was a failed rebuild attempt, during which it was regauged to 2ft, and the abandoned project was purchased by the BMR in 2002 as a kit of parts. Its boiler, cab and tender were scrapped.

The 2ft gauge Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad in Maine had the same class of locomotives which it rebuilt in 1913 as 2-6-2s at the standard gauge Maine Central workshops.

Because little was left of No. 1 worth salvaging, apart from the rods, cylinders, valve gear and mainframe, the decision was made to not just to rebuild it, but to convert it to the 2-6-2 rebuilt version.

To do this, the locomotive needed a bigger boiler and a new tender, cab, wheels and axles – all of which was done at the BMR's workshops at Pant, including all boiler works. It entered service in 2019, but sadly, Tony had passed away by then and so never saw the completed locomotive running.

No. 2's history is considerably easier. Built in 1930 for the Eastern Province Cement Company in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, as a 4-6-2, while driverless in 1973 it ran away derailing and wrecking itself.

The BMR bought it as salvage from the insurance company in 1974 and shipped it to the UK. It was fully rebuilt at Pant workshops between 1993 and 1997 after completing two 10-year stints of operating. It is now on its third.

On display at Pant

The event's special guest visiting from the Vale of Rheidol Railway was Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Margaret*, built in 1894. It was giving driving experiences on the long siding alongside the shed and parallel to the running line, which proved popular.

The workshop was open for visits. Inside on static display was *Pendyffryn*, an 0-4-0 VBT built by De Winton & Co of Caernarfon in 1897 for the Pen-Yr-Orsedd Slate Quarry. Also on show were two diesels. TU7 1698, a Bo-Bo diesel hydraulic built by Kambaka in Russia in 1981, was imported from Latvia in 2010 before being rebuilt and regauged from 750mm to 2ft by the BMR. The second on display was 0-6-0DH No. 001, which was built in 1987 at Pant workshops.

The line's collection of goods vehicles was available for inspection, too; these are copies of regular American 2ft gauge wagons. The original wheel lathe and hydraulic press from Southend Pier Tramways, dating back to the 1890s, was certainly worth a look.

Under construction from the original drawings is new-build Forney type Baldwin 2-4-4T No 10 of 1916, which ran on the Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad, the original having been scrapped in 1936.

The frames and cylinders have now been erected, the driving wheelsets, front and rear trucks are complete, and so is the rolling chassis. The boiler is temporarily in the frames and having various fittings and controls constructed.

Services

Three trains daily ran during the weekend on a similar basis to the line's normal timetable, at 10.30am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm. The later two were the busiest.

This unique railway was built purely for passenger use and gives a journey of about five miles, taking 90 minutes. Operating days are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and weekends throughout the year. The crews are employed by the railway, full of enthusiasm and very friendly.

It is a very scenic line, with wonderful views across the Taf Fechan Reservoir and into the national park. If you enjoy Baldwins thrashing their hardest up the 1-in-47 grade to Torpantau, then this railway is highly recommended.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 333, the Welsh Assembly has given approval to the Vale of Rheidol Railway to operate services once it has bought the line, having begun negotiations to that event in 2023 and submitting a Transport and Works Act Order application. The two lines will continue as separate entities but work together the share financial benefits. HR

➜ Writer and actor Ruth Jones, best known for starring in and co-creating comedy series Gavin & Stacey, and comedian Steve Spiers took a trip on the line for a new one-hour BBC One Wales documentary called Ruth and Steve: From Merthyr With Love, meeting volunteers and staff, looking at the locomotives and gaining insight into running a heritage line. It was broadcast on June 13 and is also available to watch on BBC iPlayer.

Celebrating Railway 200

CELEBRATIONS for both Railway 200 and the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary are taking place around the UK, involving main lines operators, heritage lines, museums and local communities. Here's a preview of some of those happening in the next few months. If you have an event, exhibition, talk, or other way of celebrating this anniversary planned and would like it to be included here, 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
August 23-25 – Stockton & Darlington Bicentenary steam gala
Stainmore Railway, Kirkby Stephen East
September 20-October 5 - Titans of Steam Gala, Hopetown Darlington
September 26-28 – *Locomotion No. 1* on the Stockton & Darlington Railway

Extended celebrations:

National Railway Museum and Locomotion Shildon – Activities, displays and events including the reopening of Station Hall in York. Throughout 2025.
Hopetown Darlington – Festival celebrating the 200th anniversary of the S&DR. Enjoy immersive art installations and augmented reality digital games, see treasured artworks in the region for the first time, awe-inspiring outdoor events and see some of the world's favourite locomotives. Until November 30.

Heritage railways, museums and works:

July 5/6 – Great Central Railway Open Weekend
July 5/6 – Stoke Park Miniature Railway Gala Weekend
July 5/6 – Talyllyn Railway Anything Goes Gala
July 18-20 – Talyllyn Railway Awdry Extravaganza
July 19 – Middleton Railway 90th anniversary of *Courage* – the world's smallest standard gauge diesel locomotive
July 24-August 31 – Bluebell Railway Rail Present and Future
July 25-27 – Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Diesel Gala
July 27 – Plym Valley Railway Drive A Train day
August 2/3 – Welsh Highland Heritage Railway 45th anniversary weekend
August 22-25 – Isle of Wight Steam Railway 50th Island Steam Fair
August 30/31– Battlefield Line Railway 200 Gala
September 6/7 - Veluwsche StoomTrein Maatschappij (Netherlands)
Greatest Gathering
Litchurch Lane Works, Derby
September 1 – Alstom Glasgow Traincare Centre 150th Anniversary
Glasgow Traincare Depot, Glasgow
September 27 – Railtour: 'Railway 200 Special' (Railway Touring Company)
Carnforth, Stanhope (Weardale Railway) and return.
September 28 – Railtour: 'Boulby Flyer' (Saltburn Railtours)
Freight lines tour between Middlesbrough and Boulby
Back In Time gala
September 13/14 – Fife Heritage Railway
Open Doors Day
September 13/14 – Talyllyn Railway Heritage Weekend
September 27/28 - Heatherslaw Light Railway
Railway 200 Gala
September 27/28 – Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Autumn Showcase Gala
October 25/26 – North Tyneside Railway
Railway 200 Gala

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:

July 5 – Railtour 'The Cathedrals Express' (Vintage Trains)
Birmingham New Street, Swansea and return
July 26 – Penmere Platform Station 100th anniversary
Penmere Platform Station, Falmouth
August 1-3 – Alstom presents: The

Talks:

July 16 – Timothy Hackworth's Institute (Dave Reynolds)
Shildon Railway Institute, Shildon
September 23-26 – Eighth International Early Railways Conference
Central Hall Dolphin Centre, Darlington

Exhibitions:

Ongoing:
Until September 7 – Smoke & Steel: The History of Scotland's Railways
Stirling Castle, Stirling
Until September 28 – 200 years of British Railway Locomotives
Ongar Station, Essex
Until October 26 – The Bishop's Waltham Branch Line
Bishop's Waltham Museum, Hampshire
Until November 2 – 1825 and all that!
Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, Tywyn
Until December 10 – East Surrey Railways
East Surrey Museum, Surrey
Until January 26, 2026 – Railway Firsts
National Railway Museum, York
Locomotion Shildon, Co. Durham

Upcoming:
July 19 – Railway History
Dorset History Centre, Dorchester
August 1-14 – A Pilgrim Destination
The Old Railway Station, Little Walsingham, Norfolk
September 1-30 – Railart 2025
Kidderminster Railway Museum, Worcestershire
September 1-30 – Steaming Forth
North Queensferry Railway Station, Fife
September 27/28 – Railways on Canva: The art of Chris Pulham
Newton-le-Willows Village Hall, North Yorkshire

Other:

Until July 31 – Railway 200 Poetry Competition
Lordshill Library, Southampton
Until July 31 – FEATI University Railway Laboratory tours
Manila, Philippines
Until September 30 – Barton Cleethorpes Community Rail Partnership Railway 200 Photo Competition
Online: www.bccrp.co.uk
July 12 – Guided walk: Life between the tracks (Tales from the Tracks)
Ashford, Kent
August 9 – Joseph Locke and others: Kensal Green Cemetery tour
Kensington, London
August 30 – Guided walk: Folkestone's Railway Transformation (Tales from the Tracks)
Folkestone, Kent
September 13 – Heritage Open Day
Poppleton Community Railway Nursery, York
September 13/14 – Darlington Model Railway Club Exhibition
Oakleaf Sports Complex, Newton Aycliffe
October 4/5 – Advanced Steam Traction Trust 2025 Conference
Hopetown, Darlington

Dates throughout the year:

Southport Model Railway Society
Open Days
57A Portland Street, Southport



Steam may be front and centre for the majority of Railway 200 events this year, but diesel traction is also playing its part. Pioneer of the Class 37, D6700 (pictured), will not only be heading to The Greatest Gathering in Derby in August, but will first attend the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's July 25-27 diesel gala. Currently under the custodianship of the Heavy Tractor Group at the Great Central Railway, the National Railway Museum-owned 'Tractor' was built in 1960. With 2025 therefore also marking the 65th anniversary of the class, this theme will play into the Severn Valley Railway's October 2-5 diesel gala, which will feature several examples of the class. Already confirmed to be attending that event is the G/WR's own No. 37248, which currently carries its pre-TOPs identity of D6948. PAUL MAYO/GCR

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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex. Tel: 01798 831370. **Open: Weds-Sun.**

Bluebell Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL. Tel: 01825 720800.
Running: Tues-Suns, bank hols, sch hols.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Weds + Thurs & Fris (from July 24 + July 6, 12/13, Aug 3).

Chatham Historic Dockyard
Standard gauge, one mile. Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800. **Open: Daily.**

East Kent Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Shepherdswell, Kent. Tel: 01304 832042.
Running: Suns.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway
10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway
12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.
Open: Daily.

Hayling Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Hayling Island, Hants. Tel: 07902 446340.
Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols.

Hollycombe Steam in the Country
2ft gauge, 1½ miles. Liphook, Hants. Tel: 01428 724900.
Open: Suns, bank hols + Tues-Fris (fromJuly 30) + July 19, 26.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols, bank hols.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es + July 18, 25.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: July 20, 27, Aug 10.

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + Tues & Fris from July 29 + July 11, 25.

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.
Running: Suns.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Running: W/Es.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353. **Running: Daily.**

Royal Victoria Railway
10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01795 424899.
Running: Suns, bank hols + Weds from July 30 + July 26.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es, bank hols + Weds & Thurs from July 23.

Volk's Electric Railway
2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.
Running: Daily.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.
Running: W/Es + Weds from July 30.

Bodmin Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns, bank hols + Sats & Mons from July 26.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.
Running: July 12/13, 19/30, Aug 2/3.

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: Weds-Suns, sch hols.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Running: July 27.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Thurs, Suns.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: Daily.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Running: Suns-Weds +Thurs from Aug 7.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415.
Running: Daily.

North Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.
Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.
Running: Suns + Sats from July 26.

Seaton Tramway
2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.
Running: Daily.

Somerset & Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY. Tel: 01761 411221 **Open: Suns.**
Running: July 5/6, Weds & Suns from July 23.

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.
Running: Daily.

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.
Running: Daily.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Running: Thurs & W/Es from July 26

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Open: Suns.
Running: July 13, 26/27, Aug 5, 10.

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum
Narrow and standard gauge, one mile. Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.
Open: Daily.

Bure Valley Railway
15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 733858.
Running: Daily.

Colne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.
Running: Suns, bank hols + Weds & Thurs from July 23.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Suns,.

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex.Tel: 01621 784898.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Running: Weds, Fris, W/Es, bank hols.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: Suns.



The North Norfolk Railway's vintage week returns for July 19-24. During this time, the line's collection of Victorian four-wheeled and six-wheeled carriages will make up one of the service sets, offering a comparison between late 1800s splendour and the more modern standards of the 1950s Mk. 1 stock. On April 20, Austerity No. 3809 (NCB No. 18) was on vintage train duty with the set, including the Wisbech & Upwell tramway coach. OWEN HAYWARD

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Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: Weds, Thurs (from July 24), W/Es, bank hols.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Daily.

Wells & Walsingham Railway
10¼in gauge, four miles.
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.
Tel: 01328 711630.
Running: Daily.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Reepham, Norfolk. Tel: 01603 871694.
Open: Tues-Suns. Running: W/Es.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri.
Running: Weds (from July 30), Suns.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Thurs (from July 31), Suns + July 19, 26.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067
Running: July 20, 24, 31, Aug 3, 7, 9/10.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: Weds-Suns, bank hols.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: Weds (from July 30), W/Es, bank hols + July 9, 25.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Running: Daily.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Running: Suns + June 14.



The weekend of June 14/15 saw the Lappa Valley Railway celebrate Railway 200 with a gala featuring up to 10 locomotives in operation. The highlight of the weekend was when six locomotives and 16 carriages came together to form the longest train that the 15in gauge railway has run to date. Operations director Ben Harding said: "Myself and owners Keith and Sara were delighted with how the weekend went. It was a huge success, filled with excitement, nostalgia, and a wonderful sense of community. The highlight for many was the grand finale on Sunday afternoon when we ran the longest train we have ever assembled at Lappa Valley – at 455 ft long – smashing last year's standing record. It was an incredible sight and a fitting tribute to the spirit of Railway 200." For upcoming events at the award-winning Cornish line, visit www.lappavalley.co.uk LAPPA VALLEY RAILWAY

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Weds & Thurs (from July 23), Suns, bank hols.

London Museum of Water & Steam
2ft gauge, 400 yards. Brentford, London.
Tel: 0208 568 4757.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX.
Tel: 0116 299 5111.
Open: Daily.

Amerton Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs. Tel: 01889 271337.
Running: W/Es.

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse
Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.
Open: W/Es.

Battlefield Line
Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.
Running: Weds (from July 23), W/Es, bank hols + July 25.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands.
Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: Weds (from July 24), W/Es, bank hols.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs. Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Weds, W/Es + July 18.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Weds. Daily from July 25.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.
Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Tues (from July 22), Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: Thurs-Suns, bank hols.

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: Weds (from July 23), Suns.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + July 25.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323. www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: Weds (from July 30), Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts. Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Open: W/Es.
Running: July 5/6, 27.

Railway Museums

Beamish
County Durham. The Living Museum of the North. Open: Daily.
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Blythburgh Station
Suffolk, off A12 in Blythburgh.
Open: Tuesdays 07379 789665

Coleford GWR Museum
Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Open: Fris and Sats.
Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Crewe Heritage Centre
Vernon Way, Crewe. Open: W/Es, bank hols until Nov 2. Tel: 01270 212130.

Hopetown Darlington
North Road Station, Darlington.
Open: Tues-Sun in term time, daily in school holidays. Tel: 01325 405060.

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: Weds-Suns in term time, daily in school holidays. Tel: 033 0058 0058.

National Railway Museum
Leeman Road, York. Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Rail Story
Ingrow, West Yorks.
Open: Tues-Suns in term time, daily in school holidays.
Tel: 01535 690739
or 01535 680425.

Railworld Wildlife Haven
Peterborough.
Open: Weds, W/Es and school holidays.
Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum
Glasgow.
Open: Daily. Tel: 0141 287 2720.

Southworld Narrow Gauge Railway
Southwold, Suffolk.
Open: Jul 6, 27 + Suns in Aug.

STEAM - Museum of the GWR
Swindon. Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum
Tiverton, Devon.
Open: Thurs-Sats.
Tel: 01884 256295.

West Cumberland Railway Museum
St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups – contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
Cultra, Co. Down.
Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: +44 (0)28 9042 8428.

Leek & Rudyard Railway
10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.
Running: W/Es, sch hols, bank hols.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: Weds (from July 30), W/Es, bank hols.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: July 13, 27, Aug 10.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: Weds, Thurs (from July 31), W/Es, bank hols.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Open: Tues, Thurs.
Running: July 27.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.
Running: July 25-27.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: Tues (from July 22), Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Statfold Country Park
Multiple gauges, one mile. Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU. Tel: 01827 830389.
Open: Weds & Thurs (from July 23), Fris-Suns, sch hols, banks hols.

Tanat Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Nantmawr, Shropshire SY10 9HW. Tel: 01691 780042.
www.tanatvalleyrailway.co.uk
Open: TBA.

Telford Steam Railway
Standard gauge, one mile. Telford, Shropshire. **Running: Suns, bank hols**

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: Suns + July 26.

Valley Railway Adventure
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: Weds, W/Es, sch & bank hols.

NORTH WEST

Blackpool Heritage Depot & Tram Tours
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Blackpool, Lancs. Tel: 01253 209521.
www.blackpoolheritage.com
Depot: Mons, Weds, Sats.
Heritage tram tours: resume October.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: Weds, Thurs, Fris (from Aug 1), W/Es, bank hols + July 25.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.
Running: Suns, bank hols.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Running: Suns.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.
Running: Weds, Suns.

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Running: TBA.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Running: Daily.

Kirkby Stephen East
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Open: W/Es.

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Near Ulverston, Cumbria. Tel: 01539 531594.
Running: Daily.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway
3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.
Running: Daily.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass, Cumbria.Tel: 01229 717171.
Running: Daily.

Ribble Steam Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Preston, Lancs. Tel: 01772 728800.
Running: Sats, bank hols.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles.
Alston, Cumbria. Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: Tues, W/Es, bank hols.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Open: Tues-Suns, bank hols, sch hols.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.**Running: Suns.**

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: Weds (from July 23), W/Es.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: July 5, 12, 19, Aug 2.

Bowes Railway
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles. Springwell, Tyne & Wear. Tel: 07850 916484.
Open: Tues & Thurs to pre-booked groups only.

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles. Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire Tel: 01472 604657.
Running: Daily.

Derwent Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near York. Tel: 01904 489966.
Running: W/Es.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks.
Tel: 01756 710614.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es, sch hols, bank hols.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge, Northumberland. Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, sch hols, bank hols.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Running: Sats & Weds from July 9.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Weds (fro mAug 6), Suns.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Running: Weds (from July 23), W/Es, bank hols.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles. Grosmont, North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Daily.

Scarborough North Bay Railway
20in gauge, 7/8 mile. Scarborough, North Yorks. Tel: 01723 368791.
Running: W/Es and sch hols.

Stephenson Steam Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields. Tel: 0191 277 7135.
Open: W/Es. Running: Suns.

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles.
Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Sats (from July 19), Suns, bank hols.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Weds, Sats + July 18, Aug 3.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: Tues, Weds, Fris-Suns.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.
Open: W/Es, sch hols, banks hols.



The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway's new halt at Seathorne Bank, which was due to be officially opened on June 28, saw its first passenger-carrying steam service arrive on May 24, worked by Peckett 0-6-0ST *Jurassic* with carriages from the former Ashover Light Railway and the Nocton Estates Railway, both more than 100 years old. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

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Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft.
Fimber, East Yorkshire.
Tel: 01377 338053.
Open: Suns, bank hols.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles.
Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Daily.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Blaenavon, Torfaen.
Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: Weds (from July 23), W/Es, bank hols.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.
Running: Mons (from July 21), Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth.
Tel: 01654 761701.
Running: Sats, Suns (from July 27), bank hols.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles.
Fairbourne, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Tues-Weds, W/Es, sch hols.

Ffestiniog Railway
2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Daily.

Gwili Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 01267 238213.
Running: Tues (from July 22), Weds, Thurs, Suns, bank hols.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Daily.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 07956 082305.
Running: July 5, Aug 9.

Llangollen Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen, Denbighshire. Tel: 01978 860979.
Running: Weds-Suns.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Snowdon Mountain Railway
800mm gauge, 4½ miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870223.
Running: Daily.

Talyllyn Railway
2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles. Tywyn, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01654 710472.
Running: Daily.

Teifi Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Henllan, Ceredigion, SA44 5TD.
Tel: 01559 371077.
Running: Sats-Thurs from July 20.

Vale of Rheidol Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.
Running: Daily.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.Porthmadog, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 513402.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles.
Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: Daily.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles.
Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.
Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Tues-Thus, W/Es, sch hols.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Tues, Thurs-Suns.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles.
Brechin, Angus.
Tel: 01356 622992.
Running: W/Es + Aug 1.

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge.
Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Running: Suns.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire.Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: W/Es.

Lathalmond Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum,
Lathalmond, near Dunfermline.
Tel: 07379 914801.
Open: Suns.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire.
Running: Suns.

Royal Deeside Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles.
Banchory, Kincardineshire.
Tel: 01330 844416.
Running: July 13, 27, Aug 10, 16/17.

Strathspey Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Aviemore, Inverness-shire. Tel: 01479 810725.
Running: Tues-Suns, sch hols.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway
3ft gauge. Drumod, Co. Leitrim. Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Running: Sats-Mons.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
5ft 3in gauge. Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.
Running: Saturdays from July 19 + July 5/6.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.
Running: Sats in August.

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...

JULY
- 5/6 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Day Out With Thomas
- 5/6 Great Central Railway's Railway 200 Open Weekend
- 5/6 Isle of Wight Steam Railway 1940s Weekend
- 5/6 Leighton Buzzard Railway Beer Festival
- 5/6 Llangollen Railway Classic Transport Weekend
- 5/6 Peak Rail 1940s Weekend
- 5/6 South Tynedale Railway Rail 200 Celebrations
- 5/6 Spa Valley Railway 40th Anniversary of Closure
- 5/6 Talyllyn Railway Anything Goes Gala
- 6 Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway Classic Car Rally
- 6 Crich Tramway Village Classic Motor Cycle Rally
- 6 Epping Ongar Railway Classic Car & Motorcycle Rally
- 6 Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Land Rover Rally
- 11-13 Mid-Hants Railway Diesel Gala
- 12/13 South Tynedale Railway Rail 200 Celebrations
- 12/13 Swanage Railway Corfe Castle Food & Drink Festival
- 13 Barnards Miniature Railway Visiting Engines Day
- 13 Battlefield Line Transport Gala
- 13 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre SHOWBUS
- 13 East Anglian Railway Museum Rail200 & 175th Anniversary Day
- 13 Yeovil Railway Centre Steampunk & Classic Cars
- 18 Great Central Railway Railcar Running Day
- 18-20 Kent & East Sussex Railway Diesel Gala
- 18-20 Talyllyn Railway Awdry Extravaganza 5
- 19 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Real Ale Trail
- 19 Middleton Railway Sweet Pea's 90th Birthday
- 19 Severn Valley Railway Day of Dance
- 19/20 Bluebell Railway Southern at War (VE Day 80th Anniversary)
- 19/20 Spa Valley Railway Dinosaur Express
- 19/20 Statfold Country Park 1940s Weekend
- 19-24 North Norfolk Railway Vintage Week
- 20 Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Blythburgh Station Open Day
- 20 Leighton Buzzard Railway Dinosaurs Day
- 20 South Tynedale Railway Dinosaur Special
- 22-27 Isle of Man Railways Transport Festival
- 25-27 Battlefield Line Rails & Ales
- 25-27 Epping Ongar Railway Beer & Cider Festival
- 25-27 Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Diesel Gala
- 26 Bala Lake Railway Alice the Welsh Engine
- 26 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Proms
- 26 Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway New Romney Country Fayre
- 26/27 Nene Valley Railway Thomas' Branch Line Weekend
- 26/27 Severn Valley Railway 60th Anniversary Celebrations
- 26/27 Yeovil Railway Centre Tractor Rally
- 27 Buckinghamshire Railway Centre Emergency Services Day
- 29-31 Swanage Railway Swanage Carnival

AUGUST
- 1-3 Spa Valley Railway Summer Diesel Gala
- 1/2 Swanage Railway Swanage Carnival
- 2/3 Apedale Valley Light Railway Full Steam for Forces
- 2/3 East Lancashire Railway Day Out With Thomas
- 2/3 Great Central Railway Portable Railway Weekend & Extinct Express
- 2/3 Llangollen Railway 1960s Weekend
- 2/3 Middleton Railway Yorkshire Food & Ales Festival
- 2/3 Severn Valley Railway Brick Weekend
- 3 Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway Model Railway Show
- 3 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway Steampunk Extravaganza
- 3-10 Mid-Hants Railway Day Out With Thomas

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

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or Fiona on 01507 529573 • fleak@mortons.co.uk

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WANTED Your lighter takes

If you've got a quirky photo, tale, poem, or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email staff writer Owen Hayward on ohayward@mortons.co.uk

What led BR to a last-minute change of heart?

By Geoff Courtney

THE sight – and sound – of preserved Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway annual diesel gala in mid-June was a nostalgic reminder for even we dedicated steam era trainspotters of a long-gone teenage passion.

I had logged the prototype, unnumbered but carrying the name *Deltic*, on the East Coast Main Line at Wood Green on September 15, 1960, on an Up Hull express and my first production examples at Hadley Wood on July 8 the following year, comprising D9001 on a Down Edinburgh express and D9004 on the Down 'Aberdonian,' both at that time unnamed but still incredibly impressive.

Ten minutes after D9004 thundered through, I logged A3 Pacific No. 60063 *Isinglass* on the Up 'White Rose,' so providing trainspotters within a matter of minutes a stark contrast between 1920s and 1960s railway motive power, while at Stevenage two weeks later I noted D9005, then just nine weeks old, on an Up Hull train. Seeing No. 55009 at Goathland reminded me that my original November 1959 Ian Allan Combined Volume, which I still have, lists the 3300bhp class as 'To be introduced' and to be numbered D1000-21, but of course they entered service as D9000-21, and the Western Region Class 52 'Westerns' were given the D1000 numbering instead, starting with *Western Enterprise*.

The Class 55 Deltics were in service for 20 years, in comparison with the 31-year lifespan of the A4 class of Pacifics they replaced, and the Class 52 diesel-hydraulics for a mere 16 years, well under half that of such steam predecessors classes as the Kings and Castles. Apart from taking this opportunity to beat the drum for the longevity of steam, I am wondering, for no obvious reason, whether that late-1959 Combined Volume was the only one to list the Deltics in the D1000 series, and secondly, why BR changed its mind at what I presume was the last minute to swop the class numbers around.



Tea time: Class 55 Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* en route from Grosmont to Pickering with the 4.05pm 'Moors Explorer' tea service train on June 12 during the railway's popular annual diesel gala. The class was originally to be numbered D1000-21 by BR, but in a last-minute change of heart prior to the 3300bhp locomotives entering service in 1961, they were allocated the numbers D9000-21. *Alycidon* became D9009 and later No. 55009 under the TOPS system.
MATTHEW DONALD/NYMR

New youngest driver at Wensleydale Railway makes the grade on 21st birthday

WENSLEYDALE Railway staff member Oliver Kirkby qualified as a train driver after passing his training on his 21st birthday in June.

Harrogate-based Oliver, who is studying computer science at York St John University, started working for the railway in 2023 as a guard and progressed to become a signaller and an operations administrator. He also assists with rolling stock maintenance and started his driver training in 2024, and he is now qualified to drive the line's Class 142 and 143 DMUs.

He said: "I love railways, and to celebrate my 21st birthday by becoming a train driver is a dream come true. I really appreciate all the support and encouragement that I have received from my railway colleagues to make this possible.

"My family celebrations included a delicious lemon cake from Bettys of Harrogate, so I've had the perfect birthday!"

Oliver follows in the footsteps of Harrogate resident and long-term volunteer Sue Threadgold, who qualified as the line's first female driver in 2023, and colleague George Stephens, from Darlington, who passed his driver training in April when also aged 21, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 332.



Birthday boy Oliver Kirkby with Class 142 No. 142060.
JANETTE STEWART

WR engineering and operations manager Robert Cooper-Williamson said: "It's very important that we develop the younger generation and ensure that they have the skills needed to help keep the heritage railway sector going into the future."

Brotherly first on Lincolnshire coast

FOR the first time in its 65-year history, two brothers have operated a service train – one as driver, the other as guard – on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, from its terminus at Walls Lane in the Skegness Water Leisure Park to the soon-to-be officially opened new station at Seathorne Bank. David Yates, 24, from Wainfleet, passed his guard's exam, and a few days later, his brother Stuart, 33, who lives in the nearby village of Thorpe St Peter, qualified as a diesel driver, so the pair were able to operate the morning services on Saturday, June 14 with Motor-Rail 4wDM No. 4 *Wilton*.


CREDIT LCLR

NEXT ISSUE
Issue 335 out Aug 1
Hunslets aplenty – we cover the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway's showcase of steam from the renowned locomotive builders.

PLUS
POPPY LINE: THE NEXT 50 YEARS
General manager Graham Hukins tells Owen Hayward about some of the challenges the North Norfolk Railway faces as it celebrates its golden anniversary.



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