

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Duke of Gloucester back on the main line!

EARLY
AUTUMN
GALAS
SUCCESS!



LOCOMOTION NO. 1
ON NORTH YORK MOORS AFTER
S&DR BICENTENARY STUNNER



■ P2 BOILER ON WAY AND TENDER ASSEMBLED ■ LOST ENGINE DISCOVERED UNDER
NEW ZEALAND BEACH ■ SEVEN HERITAGE SITES AWARDED LISTED STATUS ■ SECOND
9F TO VISIT GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY ■ SEARCH BEGINS TO FIND GRESLEY'S VOICE



15 - 16 NOVEMBER 2025

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY LAST HURRAH GALA

Round off the season in style at the Last Hurrah Gala, our end-of-year celebration of steam and diesel power.

Expect an action-packed timetable, a great line-up of locomotives, and plenty of atmosphere as we bid farewell to another fantastic year on the railway.

Featuring guest locomotive **Class 35 'Hymek' No. 7018** along with our home fleet locomotives **48305, 78019, 7818, 68067, 73156** and **Class 101 railcar**. In full flight along the UK's only double-track heritage main line — a spectacle not to be missed.

Highlights include:

- **Goods Trains** – The famous Windcutters & box van sets showcase our freight heritage.
- **Non-stop Expresses** – Watch trains steaming through Quorn & Woodhouse, recreating the drama of the main line.
- **Double-headed Services** – Big power, noise & atmosphere with paired locomotives.



**GREAT
CENTRAL
RAILWAY**

DISCOVER MORE & BOOK



Website gcrailway.co.uk

Booking Office 01509 632 323

Great Central Road, Loughborough LE11 1RW



This painting of Princess Coronation Pacific No. 46231 *Duchess of Atholl* by Malcolm Root was voted visitors' favourite at the Guild of Railway Artists' six-week 2025 Railart exhibition which closed on September 28, held at Kidderminster Railway Museum. Malcolm's painting features the ex-LMS Pacific in the early BR era approaching Dillicar water troughs south of Tebay with a Down WCML express to Glasgow. Further details of the exhibition, including the paintings voted second and third, will be published in next month's issue.

Britain shows the world again!

IN 1825, Britain inspired the globe by attaching one passenger coach to a lengthy rake of coal wagons and running it as the opening train of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. The crowds marvelled – and so did the rest of the planet. The self-propelled transport revolution had begun and a new age of human society dawned.

To recreate that inaugural modern train two centuries to the day, attracting a crowd of about 100,000 – a figure said by those who attended to be a very conservative estimate

– to Shildon, Darlington & Stockton, with a 21st century carnival atmosphere, again combined meticulous years of planning and honest hard graft, backed by strokes of genius and five-star-plus leadership.

The globe could not help but to sit up and take notice again, even if only watching some of the superb live videos of the train movements posted online.

The Anniversary Journey of the replica train during September 26-28 indeed generated the expected headlines around the world and as the peak of the Stockton & Darlington 200 Festival and the Railway 200 programme will undoubtedly be remembered as a defining apex of the heritage railway movement which, in 2026, will have spanned 75 years. What Stratford-upon-Avon is to world drama and literature, Darlington is now surely to global transport history.

The event was not only a prize treasure for the enthusiast sector but, judging from the response, a

source of great inspiration to the general public at large, both at home and overseas.

It appears to have succeeded superbly in invigorating a much wider awareness of railways past and present, a process that will no doubt be helped by the visit of the replica *Locomotion No. 1* and its train to other venues, starting with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway; let's hope that a nationwide tour will follow. There is enormous potential here waiting to be unlocked, both in terms of our tourist economy and educational value.

The time is certainly right for everyone who played a role in organising this magnificent event and pulling it off to be honoured with civic recognition.

Again, I sincerely hope that the positive public reaction will rekindle the desire to visit our

rich portfolio of heritage lines and their splendid gala events, with many rich pickings to be had this autumn, as highlighted in the pages of this issue, and better still, support them in other ways, not least of all joining as members and volunteering.

For the past two centuries, we have earned our precious rail heritage and we must never let it diminish. While the replica train was running through Darlington, a third century of steam engineering was already well advanced in the form of the new Gresley P2 'Mikado' No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* taking shape in the town.

Robin Jones Editor

EDITORIAL

Editor Robin Jones
rjones@mortons.co.uk
Staff writer Owen Hayward
ohayward@mortons.co.uk

Senior news and
railwayana contributor
Geoff Courtney
Senior contributor
John Titlow

Contributors

Don Benn, Hugh Dougherty,
Tim Hobman
Designer Tim Pipes

Production editor Lucy Wood
Publisher Tim Hartley

Editorial address

Heritage Railway magazine,
Kelsey Media Ltd, PO Box 99,
Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ

Website

www.heritagerrailway.co.uk

ADVERTISING

Advertising representatives

Andy Bruce 01507 529455
abruce@mortons.co.uk

Connor Crowley 01507 529411
ccrowley@mortons.co.uk

Group advertising manager

Sue Kelly skelly@mortons.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES

General Queries & Back Issues

01507 529529
Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm
Answerphone 24H
help@classicmagazines.co.uk
www.classicmagazines.co.uk

DISTRIBUTION

& PRINTING

Distribution

Frontline Distribution Solutions
2 East Poultry Avenue,
London, EC1A 9PT.
Tel: 020 7429 4000

Printing

Acorn Web Offset, Normanton,
West Yorkshire

KELSEY MEDIA LTD

Sales and distribution manager

Carl Smith

Customer marketing director

Kevin McCormick

Head of marketing

(subscriptions)

Claire Aspinall

Publishing director

Dan Savage

ARCHIVE

Enquiries Jane Skayman

01507 529423

jskayman@mortons.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION

Full subscription rates (but see page 30 for
offer): (12 months 13 issues, inc post and
packing) – UK £39.99. Export rates are also
available – see page 30 for more details.
UK subscriptions are zero-rated for the
purposes of Value Added Tax.
Enquiries: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to this magazine should be
clearly typed and ideally sent by email.
Photographs, which should be clearly
marked with the contributor's name and
address, are submitted at the owner's risk.
Kelsey Media Ltd cannot be held responsible
for loss or damage, however caused.

All postal submissions must include an
appropriate SAE for the return of all material.
Opinions expressed in this magazine are not
necessarily those of the editor or his staff.

© Kelsey Media Ltd.

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

ISSN No 1466-3560

Published

Every four weeks on a Friday.

Advertising deadline

November 5, 2025

Next issue on sale

November 21, 2025

K KELSEYmedia

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

ISSUE 338

October 24 – November 21, 2025

News



6

Headline News

- *Locomotion No. 1* joins *Flying Scotsman* for Moorsline visit
- Tallyllyn Railway announces gala dates for diamond jubilee
- The search is on to find audio recordings of Nigel Gresley
- P2 progress with boiler completed and tender assembled
- Severn Valley auto tank and coach sold – but will remain on the line



10

News

- Unique Class 89 makes first main line moves in 25 years
- Locomotive buried in New Zealand sandbank for 70 years is saved
- Power Hall reopens at Manchester's Science and Industry Museum
- New leadership appointments at Llangollen and Mid-Norfolk railways
- Tallyllyn Railway celebrates heritage with return of horse-drawn wagons
- Cotswold line's freight-driven Railway 200 celebrations
- New crimson coat is first for Bo'ness Caledonian locomotive
- Family ties draw renowned artist to Epping's gala guest locomotive



52

Main Line News

- *Duke of Gloucester* makes an eventful main line return
- Wheel flats result in cancellation of London Underground 4TC stock tour
- End of an era as charter firm Pathfinders announces closure

With Full Regulator

58

Don Benn looks at runs with *Clun Castle*, *Bahamas*, a Class 47, and two of the 1965 Southern summer extras when steam stood in for diesel.



Regulars

Subscribe Today 30

Railwayana 72

Geoff Courtney's regular column

Centre

Crowds gather to see the recreation of *Locomotion No. 1* crossing Skerne bridge, just as 40,000 people turned out to watch the original at the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway two centuries before. DARLINGTON BC



50

Main Line Itinerary 57

Steam and heritage diesel railtours

Up & Running 92

Your guide to upcoming railway operating and event dates

Next Stop 106

Features

Back on top of the world – 200 years after changing it forever

The climax of the Stockton & Darlington 200 Festival and the pinnacle of the Railway 200 programme to mark the bicentenary of the world's first modern train saw an estimated 100,000 people turn out along the historic 26-mile route to glimpse the replica 1825 train as it passed by, reports Robin Jones.



44



CONTENTS: The penultimate day in service for No. 45596 *Bahamas* was graced with glorious autumn sunshine. On October 11, the Jubilee double-headed the final service of the day at the Great Central Railway with visiting Stanier Mogul No. 13268, the pair seen at Kinchley Lane. As reported on pages 76-79, the now withdrawn *Bahamas* will be fitted with air-braking equipment thanks to a partnership with the GCR's Heavy Tractor Group, which will enable it to find more use on main line tours. ALAN CORFIELD

COVER: The 'Impossible Dream' realised: On October 8, BR Standard Class 8 No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* made a triumphant return to the main line when it hauled a members' special around the Shropshire circuit from Crewe to Shrewsbury, pictured near Albrighton in the afternoon sun. See also Main Line News, page 52. ALAN CORFIELD

The golden hour

The sky lightens in the east to lift the gloom of night and herald the start of a new day, the rising sun lightening up the scene with glorious rays, helping to create pictures of pure gold. This is the start of what they call the golden hour, as Robert Falconer explains.

A trio of duos headline 68 Moorsline's early autumn steam spectacle

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway's decision to hold its gala on the same weekend as the major Stockton & Darlington bicentenary event was considered a gamble by many, but it paid off, as Owen Hayward reports.

Gresley meets Bulleid 62 over the Hampshire Alps

The Mid-Hants Railway's autumn steam gala celebrated two of rail engineering's finest. Despite being synonymous with rival regions, these designers in reality had a close link, as Owen Hayward explains.



Bahamas bows out 76 at Great Central's Midland themed gala

A main line stalwart, LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* saw out the final days of its boiler ticket at the Great Central Railway, including a starring role at the line's autumn steam gala. Owen Hayward reports.

Severn Valley Autumn 86 Steam Gala stunner

The Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Steam Gala, showcasing four days and three nights of non-stop steam action, has been hailed a resounding success, attracting more than 5700 visitors, writes John Titlow.

Models



Model News 80
Rails of Sheffield and Bachmann collaborate for Caley tank and Rapido plans a dual-region 4-4-0.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 339

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

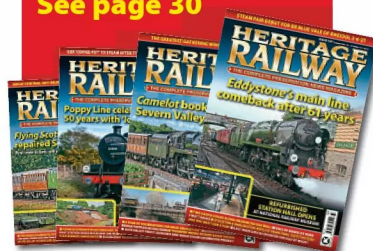
SCAN ME
WITH YOUR
PHONE
CAMERA!



SUBSCRIBE FROM JUST £49*

*THAT'S JUST
£3.77 AN ISSUE
IF YOU PAY BY DIRECT
DEBIT EVERY 12 MONTHS

See page 30



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



Like us facebook.com/
heritagerailway



Follow us
@HeritageRailMag



Connect with us
heritage-railway-
magazine

Locomotion No. 1 and replica train to run Moorsline services

By Robin Jones

THE first on the foremost: the replica 1825 Stockton & Darlington Railway train, which generated waves of international headlines as it ran on the main line to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the world's first steam-hauled passenger train, is to have an autumn season of running public services on one of Britain's most popular heritage lines.

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway, which has often topped the charts in terms of passenger numbers, will be offering trips on the train during October and November.

As highlighted in our special feature on pages 44-49, the replica train spectacularly recreated the pioneering spirit of 1825 during the September 26-28 climax to the S&DR200 festival, drawing tens of thousands of visitors to Shildon, Darlington Stockton.

After the conclusion of the event, the replica train visited Hitachi Rail's Newton Aycliffe factory where, on October 4, the public was admitted for the first time for a rare behind-the-scenes look at

one of the UK's most advanced train manufacturing facilities. More than 1500 visitors attended.

Rail: old and new

With the factory located alongside the S&DR, the event – tickets for which sold out within 72 hours and organised in partnership with both Railway 200 and S&DR200 – offered a unique opportunity to celebrate both the railway's remarkable heritage and its exciting future.

The replica train ran on the factory's test track under overhead wires for the first time and offering rides to visitors. Railway 200's unique exhibition train *Inspiration* was present as part of a 60-stop tour of Britain.

The open day also coincided with the factory's 10th anniversary. Hitachi Rail made a 'substantial' donation which enabled Grade II* listed Heighington station – considered to be the oldest in the world and at risk – to be sold to the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and therefore saved for the nation.

The station, designed by local mason John Falcus Carter, was built



The replica *Locomotion No. 1* and its train of three chaldron wagons and carriage Experiment in service on the Hitachi Rail test track at Newton Aycliffe on October 4. HITACHI RAIL

in 1826 and opened in 1827 to meet the demand from passenger and railway users for facilities and was the first to be built by a railway company. It was here in 1825 that George Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* was placed on the track prior to its globe-changing first journey.

S&DR200 festival director Niccy Halifax said: "Two hundred years on from the birth of passenger rail here in the North East, we are proud to celebrate that legacy with Hitachi Rail as it opens its doors for Railway 200 – showing how far our industry has come and why it still matters to communities and the economy today."

After its open day appearance, the replica train was taken by low-loader to the NYMR's New Bridge sidings. Families and rail enthusiasts can take a return journey from Pickering station to the New Bridge Crossing on October 25/26 and 28 and November 1/2, 4/5 and 8/9, with services running from 10.10am each

day. The journey will last about 15-20 minutes and costs £10 for adults aged 16-plus and £5 for children aged three to 15, with babies and under-threes travelling free on a parent or guardian's lap.

On selected dates, visitors can also ride behind A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* with a seat-allocated return journey from Grosmont to Pickering.

Visitors can pre-book seats for a return journey, with departures at 8.45am, 11.40am, or 3pm for about two hours and 35 minutes of immersive steam travel.

Other non-seat-allocated services between Pickering, Grosmont, and Whitby, hauled by different locomotives, will run on these dates, and visitors are welcome to board these services with a valid *Flying Scotsman* ticket.

Tickets for the journey start at £54.50 per person. For more details and to book, visit www.nymr.co.uk/ events



The replica 1825 train on test at Pickering on October 14, as No. 34072 257 Squadron arrives with 'The Moorlander' dining train. PAUL MIDDLETON/NYMR

Search is on to hear Sir Nigel Gresley's voice once more

By Robin Jones

A NATIONWIDE appeal to rediscover any surviving recordings of the voice of LNER Chief Mechanical Engineer Sir Nigel Gresley has been launched as part of the celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of his birth in 2026.

Sir Nigel (June 19, 1876 to April 5, 1941), one of Britain's most celebrated engineers, is best known for designing the world's most famous steam locomotives in *Flying Scotsman*, *Cock O' The North* and *Mallard*, the latter holding the world speed record of 126mph for

steam locomotives. While numerous photographs and newsreel footage of Sir Nigel exist, no known recording of his voice has ever been identified.

Appeal launched

The Gresley Society Trust, founded in 1963 to honour his life and works of Sir Nigel Gresley, is launching this appeal to locate any audio recordings that may have captured his voice, offering a unique opportunity to bring the engineering legend's legacy to life. As part of the 2026 celebrations, the trust aims to compile a comprehensive archive

of Sir Nigel Gresley's life and work, and "a voice recording would be a priceless addition," said trust chairman Philip Benham MBE, FCILT.

"Finding a recording of Sir Nigel Gresley's voice would be to hear history speaking. It would give us a direct connection to the man behind some of the world's greatest steam locomotives, and we urge anyone who might have such a treasure to come forward and share it with the world," he said.

"The Gresley Society is calling on the public, historians, archivists, and collectors to search their collections,

attics, and archives for any audio material such as radio broadcasts, speeches, interviews, or private recordings that might feature Sir Nigel's voice."

Anyone with information about or access to potential recordings is asked to contact the trust on info@gresley.org. All submissions will be carefully reviewed by the trust's archival team, and contributors will be acknowledged as part of the 2026 celebrations.

Year of celebrations

The centrepiece of the festivities will

Talyllyn gears up for diamond jubilee gala celebrations

By Owen Hayward

FOLLOWING this year's Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary celebrations and the nationwide Railway 200 programme, 2026 will be the next significant year for the heritage movement as it marks 75 years since the Talyllyn Railway became the first volunteer-run line anywhere in the world – and the railway has announced it will be holding a three-day gala in May to celebrate the occasion.

Although there were steam-operated tourist railways before the TR's opening date of May 14, 1951, it was the first anywhere in the world to be solely run by volunteers.

The establishment of a preservation society to finance and support the work required to restore and maintain the line and its stock in operational condition set a precedent, and while it is likely that the sector would still have established itself in some form, the success of the endeavours of those early pioneers lay the foundations for many of the heritage railways that followed in the years after.

The inaugural meeting of the newly formed TRPS was held on October 11, 1950, following the death of Sir Henry Haydn Jones who had



Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT No. 2 Dolgoch was the pioneering locomotive of the heritage railway movement, pulling the first train on a wholly volunteer-run railway in 1951. In May 2026, the diamond jubilee of that historic day will be celebrated with a three-day gala on the Talyllyn Railway. OWEN HAYWARD



previously bought and saved the line from closure when he was serving as a local MP elected in 1911.

A public meeting was called in Birmingham and led by engineer and renowned author Tom Rolt, who was keen to save the line from being scrapped and lost forever. On May 14 the following year, the revived railway ran its first train from Tywyn Wharf station to Rhydyronen.

Since then, heritage railway organisations established themselves not only all over Britain, but also around the entire world. On October 11, three-quarters of a century after

that all-important first meeting of its founding fathers, the TRPS revealed plans were under way for a four-day celebration to mark the anniversary next May.

The actual anniversary day itself will see invited representatives from the railway world descend on Tywyn for a special train to mark the occasion.

Following this, a three-day gala will be held on May 15-17 to the theme of TR's Greatest Hits.

Each of those three days will feature recreations of iconic moments from the TR's 75 year post-preservation era: on Friday, May 15, the clock will

be turned back to the 1950s and 1960s, while on the Saturday it will be the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. Finally, Sunday, May 17 will take up the story from the 1990s through to the present day.

Furthermore, for the first time in 11 years, the railway will run overnight trains from Saturday into Sunday, offering an opportunity to enjoy the atmosphere of steam through the Fathew Valley in the dark.

Further details of the full gala plan will be published in due course, but a TR spokesman promised it would be one "not to be missed."

be a symposium and gala dinner on Saturday, June 20, 2026, at the Mansion House, Doncaster – a date set to mark the 150th anniversary. The symposium will feature presentations by esteemed speakers exploring Gresley's personal history, professional achievements, and enduring influence on modern railways.

Topics will include his early career, LNER locomotive and coaching stock development, the iconic streamliners, and his legacy in preservation and today's railway industry.

The evening's 1930s-themed gala dinner will offer a nostalgic culinary experience inspired by menus from

famous LNER trains, including the 'Flying Scotsman,' 'Silver Jubilee' and 'Coronation.' Tickets are priced £25 (members) and £30 (non-members) for the symposium and £75 (members) and £85 (non-members) for the gala dinner, with spaces limited to 100.

Celebration of Gresley's life

Additional highlights of the 2026 celebrations include a new plaque at Doncaster station being unveiled on June 19, marking Sir Nigel's birthday; an exhibition at the Danum Gallery, Doncaster, showcasing his life and works, with part becoming a permanent display; a series of events with partner organisations including

those connected to A4 No. 4498 Sir Nigel Gresley and the LNER Coach Association on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway; and the digitisation of the Gresley Society Trust's archive to ensure broader access and long-term preservation.

There will be short film on Sir Nigel's life and achievements, a Gresley-focused theme at The Festival of British Railway Modelling at Doncaster Racecourse on February 7/8 featuring award-winning Grantham: the streamliner years' layout, and the creation of a commemorative logo for partner organisations.

To register for the symposium and gala dinner, visit Gresley.org or



A colourised image of Sir Nigel Gresley timing a train. TGST

contact The Gresley Society Trust, c/o City of Doncaster Archives, Chequer Road, Doncaster DN1 2AE.

Double boost plus royal visit for new Gresley P2 project

By Robin Jones

THE £5 million project to build new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* has taken two major steps forward.

At builder The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's 35th annual convention, held in Darlington on October 4, to which chairman Steve Davies MBE welcomed nearly 200 supporters, it was announced that the locomotive's boiler is now complete and ready to be delivered from the DB Meiningen works in Germany at the end of October, allowing for logistics planning and customs processes.

Certification body TÜV Thüringen attended the works to witness the hydraulic test and announced it was satisfied, before fixing a CE mark to it.

On display in the trust's Darlington Locomotive Works was the P2's completed tender. Timken attended in September to install the roller bearings onto the balanced wheels, and the axle boxes were fitted before the frames were lowered on. With all four wheelsets now in position, the tender tank could be trial-fitted as well. Works on the tender will now turn to making adjustments needed to enable the fitting of European Train Control System apparatus.

A trust statement said: "This was a fantastic sight to greet our supporters, with both locomotives in the shed for the first time. Not only did this help with the difficult weather conditions of Storm Amy, it also provided a spectacular view of how important Darlington Locomotive Works has become."

Cylinder fitting begins

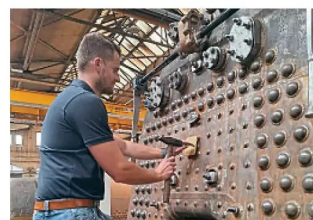
The trust's commercial director, Graeme Bunker-James, said that the P2's monobloc would be installed before Christmas, with the support of Riley & Sons engineering. The boiler will be steam-tested in the new year so that once the monobloc is fitted, the pipework can be installed.

Finance director Martin Welsh said that the trust had raised more than £1 million of income in the last 12 months, with more than £800,000 coming from donations and covenants and more than £175,000 of commercial income.

The week before the convention, the new *Prince of Wales* was inspected by none other than Prince Edward, the Duke of Edinburgh, who, as reported in our special Stockton & Darlington Railway 200, anniversary feature on pages 44-51, attended the celebrations and travelled on the



The newly assembled P2 tender. A1SLT



Final touches to the new P2 boiler in Meiningen. A1SLT

Above: Together for the first time in the recently main line-connected Darlington Locomotive Works: A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* and Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*. A1SLT

Left: Prince Edward viewing the new P2 *Prince of Wales* with trust chairman Steve Davies MBE (left) and commercial director Graeme Bunker-James on September 26. A1SLT

Below: Bear with me: Japanese ambassador His Excellency Hiroshi Suzuki in *Tornado*'s driving seat. A1SLT



replica 1825 train hauled on the main line to the Locomotion museum in Shildon, before calling in at Hopton Darlington and DLW.

The trust statement said: "It was an honour to welcome the Duke of Edinburgh to DLW, where he took lunch before visiting our locomotives."

"Chairman Steve Davies hosted the duke and explained the history of the trust before Graeme Bunker-James briefed him on P2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* and the latest developments in the digital rail space. Rob Morland was then on hand to give a short presentation and demonstrate the ETCS installation on *Tornado*, which was powered up specifically.

"The duke was very interested in the developments with P2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*. While remarking that it is now the title of his nephew, and discussions around *Tornado* hauling the Royal Train several times, his focus was on the engineering challenge.

"He was keen to learn about how modern techniques such as 3D CAD and computational flow dynamics had been used to optimise the design of the monobloc."

Worldwide appeal

Also visiting DLW for the first time was Transport Minister Lord Peter Hendy, who sat in the cab of *Tornado*

and was particularly keen to see the ETCS installation, a project he personally supported when chairman of Network Rail.

September 26 also saw a visit by Japan's ambassador to the UK, His Excellency Hiroshi Suzuki, who was given the chance to sit in the driver's seat of *Tornado* – and then surprised his hosts by producing his own Paddington Bear for a photo call on board the star of the Paddington 2 movie, which was released in 2017.

➔ To find out more and support the project to build the new P2, visit www.a1steam.com/prince-of-wales/home

GWR auto tank and trailer sold – but to stay at SVR

By John Titlow

A STAR of the Severn Valley Railway's autumn steam gala (feature, pages 86-89), GWR Collett 0-4-2T No.1450 and matching autotrailer W238 have been sold by Pull Push Limited to an unnamed buyer.

Originally numbered 4850 by the GWR, No. 1450 was built at Swindon Works in 1935 for work on small branch lines. The 4800 class was renumbered in 1946, becoming

the 1400s. Seventy-five examples were built and the first rolled off the production line in 1932. Under BR, they were classified 1P.

After a working life totalling 823,012 miles, No. 1450 was withdrawn from Exmouth Junction shed in May 1965. Bought by the nascent Dart Valley Railway, now the South Devon Railway, it became the line's mainstay during the 1970s and 1980s, spending its early heritage era days running between Buckfastleigh

and Totnes. Last sold in 1991, it was owned by private company Push Pull Limited, whose sole director and minority shareholder is Mike Little.

It arrived at the Severn Valley in 2014 and has been a regular since.

The class and the autotrains they hauled are no stranger to Severn Valley metals as they worked local services in BR days and before.

SVR's head of communications, Lesley Carr, announced: "No. 1450 and W238 autotrailer coach have a

new owner, who has requested to remain anonymous.

"We are pleased to confirm that both will continue to be based at and operate on the SVR for the foreseeable future."

As this issue closed for press, No. 1450 was undergoing regular maintenance at Bridgnorth Shed and was expected to be working service trains during October. It will also be working during the SVR's winter gala on January 3/4.



Farewell for now: On one of its final days in service before being withdrawn for overhaul, double Fairlie Merddin Emrys climbs up Handy Bank with the slate wagons which would become a down gravity train at Ddualt.

KENNY FELSTEAD

Farewell for now: Ffestiniog's Fairlie's finale

DOUBLE Fairlie *Merddin Emrys* bowed out of service at the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways on October 5 following the line's annual Bygones weekend, which celebrates the long history of the line and variety of heritage rolling stock in its collection.

Built in 1879 in the company's own workshops at Boston Lodge, *Merddin Emrys* was the only double locomotive still available for service when the railway closed in 1946. Despite this, owing to the closure coming so suddenly, it remained stored in the locomotive shed with

water in the boiler and tanks, and coal in the bunker awaiting its next turn of duty that never came. By the time the preservationists had taken over, corrosion had taken its toll and the locomotive would not steam again until 1961 after receiving many new key components.

A regular performer throughout the years since, the most recent overhaul was completed in October 2016; over last winter, it was repainted into the lined green livery as had been carried by many of the locomotives in the 1950s when the line was gradually

being reopened. Immediately after its final day in service, *Merddin Emrys* entered the workshops at Boston Lodge for overhaul to commence, with the double Fairlie set to be outshopped in the iconic Indian red livery it is normally seen wearing.

The Bygones event is a fixture of the F&WHR's calendar and sees much of the line's historic locomotive, carriage and wagon collection brought out, recreating trains and scenes from both pre and post-preservation.

This year's event saw diminutive 0-4-0WT *Samson* visiting from the Beamish Living History Museum, it having been undergoing contract overhaul at Boston Lodge during 2025.

Built in 1874, it is a replica of a locomotive built in 1874 for the London Lead Company by Stephen Lewin, of Poole, Dorset, and was used in Weardale for a quarter of a century before being scrapped in about 1904.

Throughout the weekend, *Samson* could primarily be found shunting wagons at Porthmadog Harbour but was also given a run to Rhiw Goch with a few wooden-bodied wagons.

Despite the weather conditions brought about by Storm Amy that weekend, services ran largely unaffected, with just one of the gravity trains being cancelled on the morning of October 4.



Replica 0-4-0WT *Samson* saunters away from Penrhyn with a short train of wagons bound for Rhiw Goch. KENNY FELSTEAD

Monoloco back at Tanat Valley after overhaul

BELIEVED to be the only operating one of its type in the world, Monoloco No. 146 will be in steam running at the Tanat Valley Railway at Nant Mawr, Oswestry, on October 25/26.

The 0-2-0ST was built in 1997 to the design of John Vineers by Century Millwrights on an island in the River Thames.

It was part of the Richard Morris Monorail collection, originally based in Blaenau Ffestiniog and which is the largest collection of industrial monorail equipment in the UK. It includes more than 70 engines each carrying the name of the place where it originally operated. Also included is a large number of monorail wagons, a rail taxi, a BMW Isetta bubble car on narrow gauge railway wheels and bogie, a rail bike, a vertical boiler tram, a narrow gauge Whickham inspection vehicle and numerous other railwayana artefacts. The complete collection is now at the Tanat Valley.

After spending the last eight years inside a steel container, No. 146 had been undergoing a complete restoration at the Rudyard Lake Railway Workshops and was due to arrive back at the Tanat Valley on October 19.

Admission to the event is free and donations are appreciated.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES SEE PAGE 30

Old, new, and a bumper success for Barrow Hill rail bicentenary gala



By Robin Jones

MORE than 4000 visitors turned out for the Barrow Hill Roundhouse celebration of 200 years of railways.

The October 10-12 event at the UK's only surviving operational railway roundhouse featured more than 50 locomotives and other traction types, including the latest hybrid locomotives to operate in the UK, with A3 Pacific No. 60163 *Flying Scotsman* the star of the show.

Scotsman was on display to visitors on the Friday and hauled trains on the Saturday and Sunday. Class 55 Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* hauled services on the Friday.

A late change to the programme was the return of former long-time Barrow Hill resident Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2000 of 1941, which replaced the advertised LMS 'Jinty' 3F No. 16440, which was unavailable due to undergoing work at its Midland



A line-up on October 12 sees, from left to right, Rail Operations Group Class 93 No. 93002, *Flying Scotsman*, Class 50 No. 50050 (D400) *Fearless* from Locomotive Services Group and Freightliner Class 66 No. 66501. MERVYN ALLCOCK

Railway – Butterley home. Supplied new to the Sproughton sugar beet factory at Ipswich, No. 2000 entered



Happy homecoming: Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 2000 of 1941 back on the turntable in the roundhouse after several years operating elsewhere. HARRY BISBY



Old and new side by side: Class 37 No. 37423 and Rail Operations Group Class 93 No. 93002. CHRISTOPHER BRAILSFORD

the heritage sector in 1977 on the Nene Valley Railway, where it remained until 1984. It then went on static display at the North Woolwich Old Station Museum.

It has visited many heritage railways since 2000 but was for years based at Barrow Hill until 2019, subsequently going on hire to Beamish Museum and the Helston Railway.

Gala star

No. 2000 is currently based at Peak Rail, which readily agreed to send it to the roundhouse for the gala and also supplied a support crew. The locomotive assisted on all train rides throughout the three days. Meanwhile, the Branch Line

Society provided the opportunity to travel behind the Rail Operations Group's new Class 93 tri-mode Bo-Bo No. 93002, the second of a batch of 30 being built by Stadler Rail in Valencia, Spain. These locomotives are capable of running on electric, battery or diesel and will be used to haul freight and the new high-speed intermodal services.

While the first to arrive in Britain, No. 93001, gave cab rides at Alstom's The Greatest Gathering in Derby in August, No. 93002 had not pulled passenger trains before the Barrow Hill event. Agreement was reached with the owner to run trips on the Springwell branch.

The Class 93 ran four trips in the evening, with Class 58



East Coast Main Line powerhouses Class 55 Deltic D9015 *Tulyar* and A3 Pacific No. 60163 line up at dusk, with Class 25 D7659 in the background. MERVYN ALLCOCK



The display of steam rollers outside the roundhouse. BHL



The performance of I Am George Stephenson underway. After the production, the cast went for a ride on a train hauled by No. 60103 Flying Scotsman. GRAVES YOUTH THEATRE

No. 58023 powering back to the Roundhouse platform.

Another new type on display, also built by Stadler Rail, was GB Railfreight Class 99 No. 99001, a dual-mode Co-Co electro-diesel which will haul freight trains on both electrified and non-electrified lines and which, as pictured in *Heritage Railway* issue 336, also attended The Greatest Gathering.

Theatrical premiere

The roundhouse was also the venue for the sold-out world premiere of *I Am George Stephenson*, a play created by the youngsters of Graves Youth Theatre in Sheffield and Paul Whitfield. It took a humorous look at the life and achievements of the 'father of the railways' and was devised using letters, newspaper articles, and other historical sources.

A display of steam rollers, along with locomotive cab brake vans visits, plus a variety of society stands and trade stalls further enhanced the event. A free bus service for ticketholders ran between Chesterfield station and the roundhouse on all three days.

Barrow Hill general manager Meryn Allcock said that the venue had undertaken much to celebrate Chesterfield's links with the railways and George Stephenson, who played such an important part in the events of 200 years ago.

Mark those calendars: railways announce first gala dates for 2026!

KEEN to get a head start in the diaries of potential visitors, a number of heritage railways have already confirmed dates for some of their regular events set to take place during 2026. Post-New Year galas dominate the first weekend of 2026, with the South Devon, Severn Valley and Swanage railways all set to host winter steam galas on January 3/4.

Once a month otherwise devoid of galas, later in January will see the Great Central Railway's own winter steam gala return on January 22-25. Just a month later will be a further spring steam weekend on February 28/March 1.

These will then be followed by two diesel galas, with the spring event taking place on April 24-26 and the autumn one on September 3-6, before the annual Last Hurrah gala drops in on November 14/15.

Small locomotives will take centre stage at the East Lancashire Railway on February 21/22 for the return of the small engines gala, while April 10-12 will see the third successive annual Legends of Steam weekend, for which previous galas have seen some big name main

line locomotives including *Sir Nigel Gresley* and *Mayflower* play starring roles. A summer diesel gala will run on July 2-5, followed by an autumnal event on September 18/19. A final steam gala is then scheduled for October 16-18, before the DMU fleet gets its annual turn in the spotlight on November 14/15.

From North West to North East

Across the border in Yorkshire, the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's annual spring steam weekend is booked for March 19-22, with a celebration of the 1940s scheduled for May 16/17. Diesel enthusiasts will then get their turn here on June 18-21, with more event dates still to be announced.

Visitors to the North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway's autumn gala were among the first to find out the date for next year's event which, as is tradition, will take place on the final weekend of the same month, covering September 24-27.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's calendar currently opens with a vintage weekend on April 11/12, which will be followed by the

annual showcase steam event that is the Cotswold Festival of Steam on May 23-25.

Real ale fanatics will no doubt be interested in the June 12-14 festival, while the summer diesel gala is scheduled for July 24-26. A model railway show will occupy the weekend of September 26/27, before the mixed traction extravaganza sees out the enthusiast-centric events for the year on October 9-11.

Meanwhile, down in the south, March 20-22 sees the Bluebell Railway dropping the traditional branch line weekend for a more generic spring steam gala.

This will currently be followed by the annual model railway weekend on June 27/28, while those who favour diesel traction will be pleased to know that September 4-6 will see a gala catering for their desires.

Finally, the ever-popular Giants of Steam will take place on October 16-18.

Further events are expected to be announced by each line in due course, while other heritage venues will announce their own plans later this year or in early 2026.

Moors-based 'Spaceship' is all set to land at Great Central for January 2026 steam gala

THE Great Central Railway is set to play host to a second BR 9F 2-10-0 as it kicks off 2026 with the January 23-26 winter steam gala.

With resident BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019 having been one of the stars of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's September 25-28 gala (see feature, pages 68-71), the GCR will benefit from a reciprocal arrangement that will see 9F 2-10-0 No. 92134 head to Loughborough at the start of the New Year. Built at Crewe in 1957, the 'Spaceship' was in service for just nine years before its withdrawal in 1966. Although eight members of the class were saved for preservation, No. 92134 is

the only single-chimney example remaining. The visit will no doubt be a delight to many, with classmate No. 92214 being resident on the GCR; a previous member of the NYMR fleet, it relocated to Loughborough in 2014. Having been a popular member of the GCR's own fleet since then, it was withdrawn for overhaul in December 2023. Both of these 9Fs ran together in September that year, when No. 92214 briefly returned to Yorkshire for the Moorsline's autumn steam gala, during which they double-headed some services.

The gala also presents the last opportunity to see BR 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018 before it bows out of

service pending overhaul. Malcolm Holmes, general manager at the Great Central Railway, said: "We are excited to welcome No. 92134 to our Winter Steam Gala and are very grateful to the Self family and the NYMR for making this visit possible."

"The 9Fs represent the pinnacle of British steam freight design, and seeing one in action on our main line is something truly special for enthusiasts and visitors alike."

A further guest locomotive is also due to be announced to supplement the visiting 'Spaceship'. As is to be expected of GCR galas, the timetable will feature an intensive pattern of goods and freight workings.

Blue plaque tribute to Thomas the Tank Engine author

THE Rev Wilbert Awdry, author of the *Thomas the Tank Engine* stories, has been honoured by the unveiling of a Historic England blue plaque at his former place of residence in Stroud, commemorating 80 years since the first book in the series was published.

The tales were originally created to amuse his young son Christopher when he was sick with

measles. The first book, *The Three Railway Engines*, was published in May 1945, and he settled in the Gloucestershire town upon his retirement.

On October 17, a blue plaque was unveiled at his former home by his daughter Veronica Chambers, and it is the first national blue plaque to be nominated by a member of the public.

Duncan Wilson, Historic England chief executive, said: "Loved around the world, it's an honour to remember the Rev Awdry and the happiness he brought to so many childhoods. The early books laid the foundation for a global phenomenon, based on the magic of the steam train, which has appealed to all ages down the generations."

Glasgow depot's open day celebrates 150 years of heritage

By Robin Jones

ALSTOM opened its Glasgow Traincare Centre to the public on October 12 for the first time in 25 years to celebrate Polmadie 150, the depot's 150th anniversary.

Located about two miles south-east of Glasgow Central station, the facility is currently the main base of the iconic Caledonian Sleeper service, where it is maintained and cleaned by more than 100 staff who provide a round-the-clock service. The depot typically welcomes 17 trains per day, including Avanti West Coast's fleet of Alstom-built Class 390 Pendolinos.

"Polmadie stands as more than a depot – it represents a beacon of engineering excellence and a vital pillar in Scotland's rich railway heritage. For 150 years, this site has played a crucial role in keeping the country moving, and we're incredibly proud of the dedicated teams who continue that tradition today," said Rob Whyte, managing director UK and Ireland at Alstom.

Milestone honoured

"Opening our doors to the public for the first time in a generation is not only a celebration of our past, but also a powerful reminder of the innovation and talent that will drive the future of sustainable rail in the UK. It's a privilege to honour this milestone with the community and showcase the people and technology that make Polmadie so special."

Originally opened as Polmadie Shed on September 16, 1875, by the Caledonian Railway Company, it was subsequently rebuilt and extended for the maintenance of steam engines and rolling stock – some of which returned to the site as part of

Polmadie 150. BR assigned the code 66A to the depot.

Arriving in shuttle buses from Glasgow Central, provided by Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust, the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum and McGill's, more than 1000 visitors were greeted by a unique line-up of more than 20 rail vehicles that have been based at the depot throughout the last 150 years.

At the front and centre of the line-up was Caledonian Railway No. 419, courtesy of the Scottish Railway Preservation Society. The oldest preserved steam locomotive to have been based at Polmadie Depot, No. 419 took part in the Rail 150 cavalcade in Shildon in 1975 to mark the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1825. As reported in News, page 26, it has recently been repainted in LMS Crimson Lake livery as No. 15189.

Also on display were Class 08s Nos. 08451, 08696 and 08954 courtesy of Alstom, Class 37 No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* from the SRPS, Class 43s Nos. 43468 and 43484 from RailAdventure, Class 90s Nos. 90018 *The Greatest Gathering* and 90021 *Donald Malcolm* from Freightliner, Class 334 No. 334034, Alstom-built Coradia Juniper courtesy of ScotRail, Class 99 No. 99001, Class 92 No. 92023, Class 73/9 No. 73968 and Class 66 No. 66710 *Karen Harrison* from GB Railfreight; Class 93 No. 93006 from Rail Operations Group, Class 334 No. 334034, an Alstom-built Coradia Juniper from ScotRail, Class 390 No. 390119 *Progress*, an Alstom-built Pendolino courtesy of Avanti West Coast, Unimog U 430 road-rail vehicles from Network Rail, Mk. 1 coaching stock from SRPS and Mk. 5 coaching stock from Caledonian Sleeper –



The line-up of locomotive and stock for the Polmadie depot open day on October 12. ALSTOM

which were opened to showcase its 'hotel on wheels' that links various locations in Scotland with London via the West Coast Main Line – a route that has carried passengers overnight since 1873.

Rare track tour

The day before Polmadie's open day, the facility welcomed its first-ever passenger train, giving a unique opportunity to ride along rare track across the depot site. Hauled by two Rail Adventure Class 43s, with Mk. 3 coaches from the 125 Group, and organised by the Branch Line Society, passengers were able to board a special charter at Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane train factory, linking the two Railway 200 sites. It was also the first-ever passenger train to depart Alstom's Derby site. At Polmadie, the unit was shunted along multiple depot tracks by the facility's resident Class 08s.

Marking both events, Alstom and Network Rail hosted a stakeholder breakfast at Glasgow Central on the morning of October 12 with speeches from Alan Fravaloni, project director at Alstom, Graham Kelly, interim managing director at Caledonian Sleeper, Alex Kirk, commercial director at GB Railfreight, and Gerry McQuade, capital delivery director at Network Rail Scotland.

Following the speeches, Class 92 No. 92023 was named *Polmadie 150 1875 – 2025* in recognition of the site's milestone birthday. The locomotive was specifically chosen, as the previous locomotive to carry the name *Polmadie* was Virgin Trains' Class 87 No. 87023. The invited guests then travelled on a heritage bus to explore Polmadie Depot itself.

All profits from the event will be split between the Beatson Cancer Charity and the Railway Children's Glasgow Project.



On October 10, volunteers from the Talylyn Railway's Young Members' Group completed a challenge that saw them manually push one of the railway's carriages the full length of the 7¼-mile line. Starting at Tywyn Wharf in the afternoon, the group, which comprised mainly under-25s, used a specially designed piece of equipment to spread the load between the pushers, pausing briefly at Brynglas loop where the final passenger service passed on its way back down the Gwernol Valley. Upon a triumphant arrival at Nant Gwernol, the carriage was pulled back to Tywyn Wharf – with all the volunteers on board – by a diesel. A fundraising target of £1000 was exceeded, with the total raised being £1667.50 including £300 in GiftAid. The money raised has gone into the railway's Graham Guilford Fund, set up in memory of a beloved volunteer following his death. Graham made a bequest to the railway to establish a fund specifically to support young volunteers starting on the Talylyn Railway, with the monies helping to cover accommodation and living expenses during their time volunteering. It is one of the reasons for the success and high number of young volunteers that the railway has welcomed in the years since its introduction.

MATT JORDAN/TRYMG

Carrying a 'Cathedrals Express' headboard as it arrives at Quainton Road station on October 5 but painted in its striking maroon livery for its role pulling the 'Hogwarts Express' in the eagerly-awaited Harry Potter television series, Buckinghamshire Railway Centre-based WR 4-6-0 No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall* will return to the film set in 2026 and remains on long-term loan to the Bluebell Railway, where it will be based between filming over the next eight years. BRC



Swanage volunteers back air ambulance appeal

SWANAGE Railway volunteers who help maintain and develop Herston Halt are supporting a Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance appeal to raise the final £1 million for a second life-saving helicopter.

Two large advertising boards have been installed at the halt, which was built in 1983 off Washpond Lane and now looks very different to the original basic wooden platform once sited there.

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Frank Roberts said: "In operation for 25 years, every life-saving mission flown by the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance is funded by generous public donations. When every second counts, the air ambulance brings the hospital to the patient and is often the



LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 stands at Herston Hall alongside the air ambulance advertising boards.

ANDREW PM WRIGHT

difference between life and death. You never know when it may be needed."

Tracy Bartram, communications manager at the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, said: "By placing

these lovely boards at Herston Halt, and with the backing of the local community, they are helping us raise awareness of our vital work and our latest 2ndHeli fundraising appeal."

Laying track to remember Omagh rail disaster

THE RAILWAY Preservation Society of Ireland is to relay a seven-yard section of the Derry Road from Portadown to Londonderry 50 years after it closed.

The society is providing track and manpower to install the stretch of track which will form the centrepiece of a display to mark the 75th anniversary of a tragic railway accident in which five men died.

The crash occurred at Omagh railway station in dense fog on November 24, 1950, when a train from Derry ploughed into a track squad working on the permanent way.

The victims had not been warned that the express was on its way and failed to hear the train because of the noise caused by a recently arrived train from Enniskillen.

The crew of the Derry train had no idea that the men were working on the track until the train swept round the curve into the mist-shrouded Omagh station and by then it was too late.

Fermanagh and Omagh Council, which mark the anniversary, reached



Pictured prior to departure from Whitehead of the lorry-load of track materials on October 9 are RPSI site officer Dermot Mackie and maintenance inspector Maurice Smith (left), from Fermanagh & Omagh Council. RPSI

out to the RPSI and asked if the society could provide rails, chairs, and sleepers.

Dermot Mackie, RPSI site officer at Whitehead, said: "After being contacted by the council, we were able to locate a length of authentic period rail and nine original GNR(I) chaired wooden sleepers.

"We cut the rail into two short sections to suit the requirements of the display and made sure that the chairs, which hold the rail in place, were suitable.

"We were particularly pleased that we were able to source genuine GNR(I) track material as this will add to the authenticity of the memorial,

given that it was the Great Northern that operated the Omagh line.

"We hope shortly to send a squad of volunteers down from Whitehead Railway Museum to Omagh to set the trackwork and ballast in place.

"It is our pleasure to assist the council on this valuable initiative and we hope that this memorial will help raise awareness of the town's rich railway history."

The line closed in 1965, but the recently published all-Ireland Strategic Railway Review suggested that it could be reopened in future.

The permanent way material was transferred by lorry from Whitehead to Omagh on October 9.

IN BRIEF

Grant aid boost for Tyneside line

THE Stephenson Steam Railway in Wallsend, North Shields, is one of 12 venues to share in a £438,300 Government funding boost to North East Museums, formerly known as Tyne & Wear Archives and Museum.

The grant aid from Art Council England on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport has come via the Museums Renewal Fund.

North East Museums director Keith Merrin said: "We are incredibly grateful to receive £438,300 from the Museums Renewal Fund. The money allows us to build resilience so that we can continue to deliver enriching museum experiences for local people long into the future.

"Our 12 museums and galleries celebrate the North East region, support the growth of our creative and visitor economies, and provide learning opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds."

Help build a servicing pit at Ruddington

A £75,000 appeal to build a proper steam locomotive servicing pit outside the locomotive running shed the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington on the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) has been launched.

The East Midlands Transport Heritage Trust aims to have the pit operational by the end of the year.

All donations are welcome, but those who contribute more than £100 will have a decorative brick put close by with their name on it.

The pit will be used for servicing both the home fleet and locomotives on incoming main line charter trains.

For more details, visit <https://emtht.org/locomotive-pit-appeal/>

'Coffee Pot' for roundabout

A 'COFFEE POT' 0-4-0VBT, built in 1870 by the Head Wrightson Iron Foundry at Thornaby for shunting in the yard, is to be displayed on a roundabout near its original industrial home by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to mark Stockton & Darlington Railway 200.

The locomotive had been stored at Preston Park Museum and will now be placed on a brick and concrete plinth with a set of rails and sleepers on the roundabout at Council of Europe Boulevard and University Boulevard, near the council's new headquarters at Dunedin House.



Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway



Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Avocet makes its main line return after dark as testing commences

By Owen Hayward

THE full return to service of unique Class 89 locomotive No. 89001 *Avocet* has moved a significant step closer following the first run under its own power on the national network in 25 years!

The prototype example of a class that never went into production, *Avocet* was designed by Brush Traction with construction subcontracted to BREL at Crewe, being completed in 1986. The slanted ends led to the locomotive being nicknamed 'Aardvark' by locomotive crews at the time, while enthusiasts dubbed it 'The Badger.' Had the class gone into production, they would have likely been allocated to the East Coast Main Line hauling rakes of Mk. 3 coaches.

Unfortunately, by the time of *Avocet's* completion, BR had started to favour fixed-formation consists with Class 91 locomotives semi-permanently attached to one end. Despite this, *Avocet* remained in fairly

regular use until it suffered failed traction motors in October 2000 and was withdrawn by GNER. After a period of use as a static generator, it was bought by the AC Locomotive Group in December 2006 and a protracted overhaul to return it to main line operating condition has been ongoing since.

In December 2021, it was announced that a partnership had been formed with Locomotive Services Limited in a bid to expedite work, with the firm gaining a five-year operating deal with the locomotive in return for the works and funding involved in completing it.

In November 2023, *Avocet* moved to UK Rail Leasing's works at Loughborough for installation of the necessary main line equipment, returning to Crewe on August 15, 2024. While there, it had moved under its own power for the first time in a quarter of a century. Since then, it has been undergoing further works to prepare it for its first main line



Under the cover of darkness on September 29, No. 89001 *Avocet* makes a triumphant return to the main line after a 25-year absence as it begins a period of test runs. LSL

tests, which took place in the late hours of September 29, crossing out of the depot and onto the network at 11.13pm. With Class 90 No. 90001 *Royal Scot* in tow for insurance, the 'Badger' ran from the holding sidings to Stafford and back at the start of two nights of successful testing.

A LSL statement said: "This achievement is the result of tireless work behind the scenes by the AC Loco Group and our dedicated LSL

team. Over two nights of testing, we ensured the locomotive's systems are in good health and gave our crew valuable hands-on experience.

"The data gathered will help us complete the final formalities before further running.

"Testing will continue to ramp up in the coming weeks and months. While there's a little wait before No. 89001 joins an Intercity Charter, trust us – it will be worth it!"

First passenger train in 97 years planned for Blythburgh

By Robin Jones

THE first passenger service on the original trackbed of part of the western section of the Southwold Railway since it closed in 1929 is being planned to run next year.

The announcement was made by the Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway CIO after holding its annual Heritage Open Days event at Blythburgh Station Heritage Centre on September 14, with the show also celebrating Railway 200.

Blythburgh station has been part-restored from complete dereliction in less than five years and is centred around the last building from the original 3ft gauge railway, the 1879

goods shed. This building is restored, and the platform – with running-in board and lamps, signal shed, main line and sidings – have all been recreated on their original site. A collection of archaeological relics found under the old car park is on display, including the remnants of the ticket machine and the platform weighing machine, and even the stationmaster's rabbit traps which still work, despite lying underground for eight decades.

Trustee James Hewett said: "Thanks to enormous efforts from the volunteers, trustees, supporters and exhibitors, the Open Day was the best one HSNR has ever run. The railway was very pleased to see many

old friends and also welcomed a large number of new visitors, mainly families with young children.

"Many new members were signed up, and new visitors and returnees alike all enjoyed the quirky and unusual model railway show. Solar-charged goods trains ran, using the replica SR open coal wagon and the 75-year-old Greenwood and Batley 4WBE locomotive.

"There was a shunting and loading demonstration between the sidings and the main line, showing how goods were moved on the railway in the 1920s, guided tours of the station, and a large live-steam model railway was particularly entertaining for the many children – and for the

enthusiasts! Entry and entertainment were both – unusually – completely free, and even the light refreshments, including home-made cake, at the Village Hall were also free.

"Visitors were very generous, and donations towards the charity's railway restoration aim were substantial."

Displays showed the projects and plans of the HSNR. A complete heritage train is under construction with two more items almost complete (a covered van and one of the unique Cleminson six-wheeled MOY coal wagons) and the complex and time-consuming process of achieving permission to extend the railway westwards along the trackbed is in hand.

James added: "In 2026, there will be more open days at the station. It is planned that HSNR will run the first passenger service on the original trackbed since 1929 during that season; confirmation will be announced at www.halesworthtosouthwoldrailway.co.uk and our Facebook page.

"The main event for 2026, the model railway show and Heritage Open Days event at Blythburgh station, will be on Sunday, September 13 between 10.30am and 3.45pm. Everyone is invited to see the progress on what has always been considered to be an impossible railway restoration."



The Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway's Greenwood and Batley 4WBE ran during the September 14 open day. HSNR



The restored platform at Blythburgh station. HSNR

Blackpool trams set for brief return to promenade

FOLLOWING their withdrawal from service in December 2024, the reason given being down to the rising challenges posed by operating the ageing fleet of vehicles on a modern tram network, heritage trams returned to the seafront at Blackpool on October 15.

The announcement of the withdrawal was initially met with widespread condemnation from local residents and enthusiasts concerned about the impact on tourism for the seaside resort their absence would result in. A further reason cited was the ongoing refurbishment of Rigby Road depot where many of the heritage trams had normally been stabled, with operations having to temporarily move to Starr Gate where the modern fleet is maintained.

Blackpool Transport quickly issued a statement confirming that their absence would only be temporary and that it and the local council remained committed to the operation of the heritage fleet.

On July 3, BT announced there would be a phased return. Heritage operations manager Martin Gurr said: "Inspections are set to start in the next few weeks and the resulting technical reports will give us a clear idea of how many trams we can bring back into service. We will then carry out the additional work, including fitting them with the latest

speed restriction technology and a programme of intensive driver and conductor training."

On October 8, BT announced that two of the heritage trams would return for a fortnight starting October 15, ending November 1, during which they would run a series of illumination tours during the town's Lightpool festival.

Managing director Jane Cole said the return marked a significant milestone in its plans for the heritage fleet: "Over the past few months, our engineers have worked tirelessly to ensure these trams can operate to the latest safety standards, and I would like to thank everyone who has made this possible.

"Everyone at Blackpool Transport is really excited about seeing these much-loved vehicles return to service for the special tours during the Lightpool Festival, and we can't wait to welcome passengers aboard for these special trips. Following the festival, the trams will temporarily return to storage while we plan for future heritage tours."

Coun Lynn Williams, leader of Blackpool Council, said: "We have always known how important heritage trams are to our visitor economy. They are a big part of our history and heritage, and it will be great to see them back on the tracks. We've worked exceptionally hard with Blackpool Transport to make



HMS Blackpool (left) and Balloon No. 717 worked the first heritage tours of Blackpool's promenade in nearly a year when they returned to service on the town's tram network on October 15. They will run until November 1, after which the fleet will be temporarily withdrawn again.

GARY MITCHELL/BLACKPOOL TRANSPORT

sure they can return for Lightpool Festival, and I really hope that people enjoy seeing the trams and more importantly show their commitment by booking on the pre-paid tours."

For details of times and how to book, see www.blackpooltransport.com/blackpool-heritage

→ Operations at the Heaton Park Tramway in Manchester remain suspended owing to ongoing power supply issues from a local substation. Company chairman Keith Whitmore said this was owing to life-expired

equipment. "Manchester City Council, which owns the substation, has committed to its repairs but it is currently a matter of waiting until there is money to do the work," he said.

"Until then, we are unable to operate our fleet, though have been able to hold occasional open days.

"Next year is the 125th anniversary of Manchester Corporation Tramways, which the council is fully aware of, and we remain hopeful that we will be able to celebrate with the return of our tram services."

New partnership sees HSTs move to East Lancashire Railway

THE East Lancashire Railway and the 125 Group have announced a new partnership that will see the latter's fleet of preserved HSTs take up residence at Bury, where they will form an exciting new addition to the line's operational collection.

Both the largest and oldest HST interest group and the only charitable organisation promoting the memory of the HST, the 125 Group, which was custodian of the National Railway Museum-owned

prototype between 2011 and 2019, has until recently been based at the Midland Railway – Butterley.

The news comes ahead of the 50th anniversary of the InterCity 125 class, which will be celebrated in 2026, and this new partnership opens up further operational possibilities for the group. Trustee Alex Wood said: "With a train as large and iconic as ours, working in collaboration with preservation partners is essential to ensure we can keep, maintain, and

operate both at preservation sites and with access to the main line.

"Partnering with the ELR gives us the best of all worlds and will allow us to celebrate 50 years of HSTs in fine style. We are looking forward to staging a wide range of events to celebrate and demonstrate our historic railway masterpiece."

ELR chairman Mike Kelly added: "We are absolutely thrilled and honoured to be working with the 125 Group to bring the InterCity 125

to the East Lancashire Railway. Each generation lives through their era of railway history and now a new generation can, through this unique partnership, enjoy seeing and riding behind the iconic InterCity 125."

The HST set will make its debut at the ELR's DMU gala on November 8/9, at which Derby Lightweight railcar No. 79900 *Iris* will also feature.

→ For full event details, visit www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk/events-activities/dmu-gala

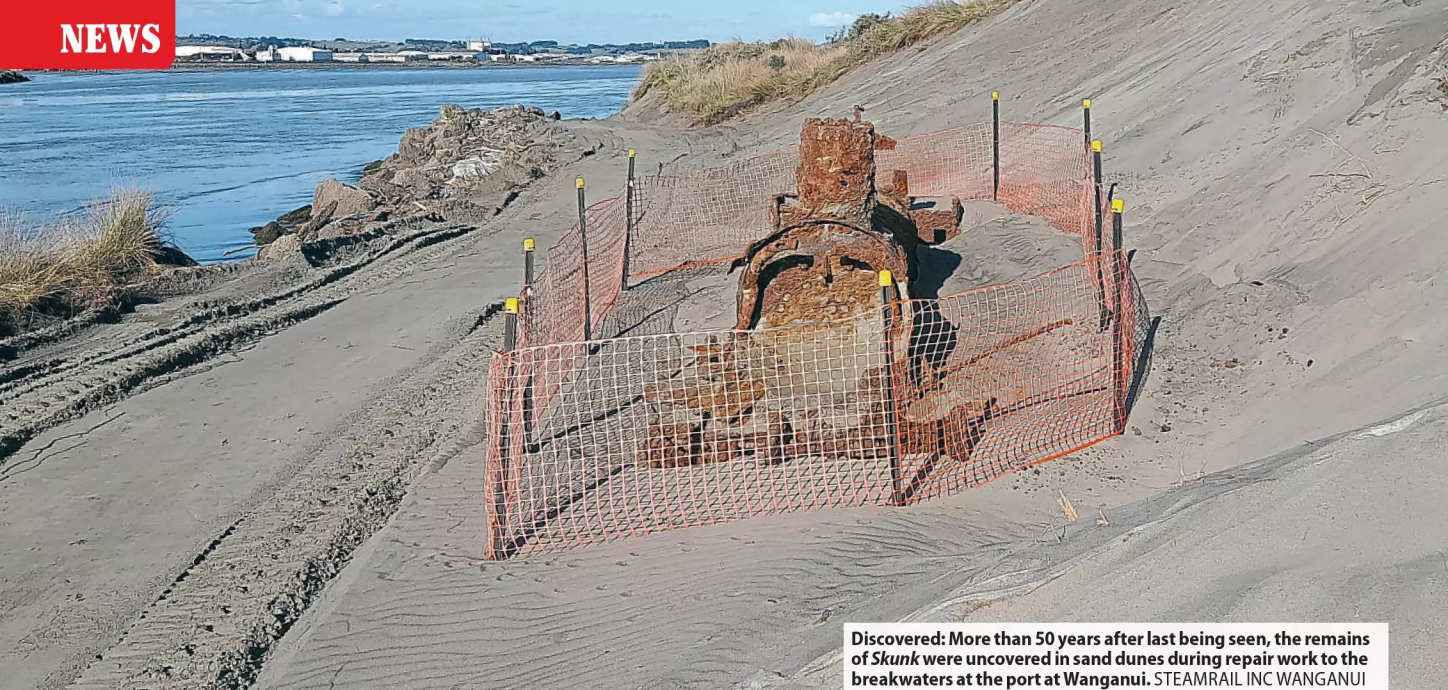
East Lancashire Railway staff and volunteers gathered at Bury Bolton Street station on September 27 to mark the 200th anniversary of the world's first modern train. Chairman Mike Kelly said: "The railway was part of the boom in railway construction during the mid-1800s. Thanks to the dedication and determination of our staff and volunteers, this heritage line continues to thrive today. We are proud to be part of the national celebrations and to honour those who helped shape the railway legacy we all benefit from."

ELR



Visiting Derby lightweight railcar *Iris* will star at the East Lancashire Railway DMU gala in November.

OWEN HAYWARD



Discovered: More than 50 years after last being seen, the remains of *Skunk* were uncovered in sand dunes during repair work to the breakwaters at the port at Wanganui. STEAMRAIL INC WANGANUI

Saved: locomotive buried in sandbank for 70 years rescued in New Zealand

By Owen Hayward

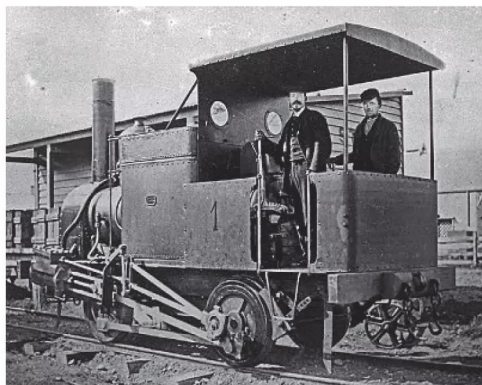
A LOCOMOTIVE dating from 1875 which ended up buried in sand for more than half a century has been recovered by enthusiasts in Wanganui, New Zealand, and has gone on public display for the very first time.

Built in 1875, 0-4-0T No. 1 *Skunk* was one of three identical eight-ton locomotives built for the tramway that linked the towns of Foxton and Palmerston North, both on the west coast of the North Island, with No. 1 being the first to arrive in Foxton that August. The line on which they were to run had previously been a wooden-railed horse-drawn tramway. When the locomotive arrived, these were being replaced by steel rails, with *Skunk* put to work assisting.

The first passenger trains hauled by Nos. 1 and 2 *Wallaby* ran in April 1876, but the unique and experimental design of the locomotives saw them plagued by issues, with contemporary reports stating that they would 'go when they wanted to, and not when the driver wanted them to'. It is believed that these issues meant that No. 3 *Opossum*, which had also been delivered to Foxton, was never used on the line.

By 1878, they had been replaced by F class 0-6-0ST locomotives ordered from Dubs & Co and Neilson & Co works in the UK.

The three experimental locomotives were sold, with *Skunk* and *Opossum* ending up on the South Island engaged in a variety of work, including harbour building, coal mining, and timber industries.



Skunk as it would have looked in 1876.
CHARLES MARIBOE/NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY OBSERVER

It is believed that while there, both locomotives were converted to chain drive, though the reason for this is not known. *Skunk* then returned to the North Island in about 1907 to assist in the construction of a new larger port at Wanganui, where it worked hard more than a decade building the breakwater. It is believed that the locomotive was last used in 1918, following which the harbour board, finding itself unable to sell the quirky locomotive, left it in situ. Over the ensuing years, shifting sands began to cover *Skunk*, which by the 1950s had been completely buried.

Rediscovered and rescued

On September 5, contractors undertaking work as part of a redevelopment of the harbour unearthed the remains of *Skunk* 13ft beneath the sand, the discovery happening after the bucket of an excavator (which it transpired was sat directly on top of the locomotive's

resting place) struck it. Volunteers from the heritage group SteamRail Wanganui Inc, which was formed in 1989 to preserve a nearby turntable and has since amassed a collection of local railway memorabilia and other artefacts in the nearby buildings at Taupo Quay rail yard, were invited to inspect and identify the remains three days later.

Committee member Ewan Pound said "We did that with pleasure and much excitement.

"We always knew it was there somewhere, but many local folk had been over there with shovels looking for the locomotive in recent years, but to no avail.

"We believe *Skunk* is the oldest-surviving New Zealand-built locomotive, closely followed by its slightly younger sister *Opossum*, which survives at Shantytown in Greymouth."

A month after the contractors first set eyes on it, *Skunk* was successfully



Exposure to the elements prior to, combined with the effects of, being buried have taken their toll on the locomotive, which will be conserved as they are now seen.
STEAMRAIL INC WANGANUI

extracted from the sand on October 8 and taken to SteamRail's base 10km away, where it will go on display.

While still owned by the Harbour board, Ewan said the process was underway to donate it to the heritage group. The years both exposed to the elements and buried in sand have taken their toll on the locomotive, which is severely corroded.

"Initial plans are to try and conserve the remains as best as possible, as an artefact of the past and NZ's early foray into engineering," said Ewan.

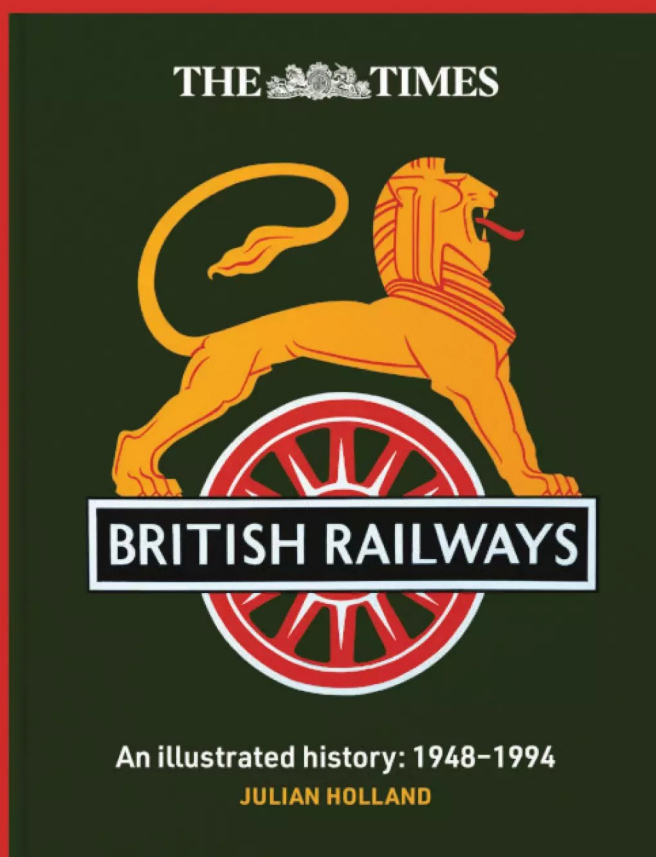
"SteamRail Wanganui Inc is a very small group with only about 20 members. We are believed to be the country's smallest licenced rail operator.

"If anyone is interested in supporting us, either by joining as a member or by donating funds towards *Skunk*'s care, we'd be delighted to hear from you."

➔ To contact the group, email at steamrailwanganuiinc@gmail.com

THE  TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

A stunning book for any railway enthusiast



**OUT
NOW**

“If the author is Julian Holland, and the subject is railways, you know you are going to be in for a treat.”

Cotswold Life

Available wherever you buy your books and online at timesbookshop.co.uk

Power Hall reopens after six years to showcase Manchester engines legacy

By Robin Jones

THE Science and Industry Museum in Manchester has reopened its Power Hall after six years of closure.

The Grade-II listed building was constructed in 1855 as the shipping shed for Liverpool Road station, the world's first purpose-built passenger station. It reopened in September 1983 to house one of the UK's largest collections of historic working engines, ranging from those employed in cotton mills and chip shops to electricity generators and railways.

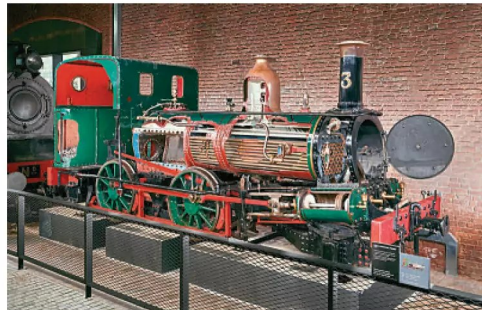
The free Power Hall: The Andrew Law Gallery temporarily closed in 2019 to allow urgent repair and renovation works to take place. Since then, the museum has collaborated with architect and lead designer Carmody Groarke, Manchester building contractor HH Smith & Sons, exhibition designer Studio MUTT and building service engineer Max Fordham to repair and protect the building's heritage, improve the experience for all, and ensure that the globally significant collections and building continue to take pride of place.

Multi-million-pound refurb

On October 17, it became the latest building to reopen as part of a multi-million-pound regeneration project taking place at the museum. The gallery is entered through a new entrance accessed via the newly landscaped Upper Yard, which together with Power Hall has reopened more than 1.4 acres of the museum's publicly-accessible space. Among the collection of



Beyer-Garratt articulated Class GL 4-8-2+2-8-4 No. 2352.
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SCIENCE MUSEUM



The sectioned Pender on display in the reopened Power Hall.
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

Manchester-built or connected locomotives on display is Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No. 2965 of 1873, which became Isle of Man Railway No. 3 *Pender*, named after a director of the company, Sir John Pender, a key figure in the establishment of the underseas telegraph networks that linked the British Empire. He was a textile merchant with warehouses and offices in Manchester and a Liberal MP who later invested in the IOMR.

Withdrawn in the 1950s, it was cannibalised for spare parts to keep other locomotives in service. It left the island in 1979 and the following year was sectioned to reveal its internal workings for museum display.

Pender sits opposite Beyer-Garratt articulated South African Railways Class GL 4-8-2+2-8-4 No. 2352, which hauled coal trains weighing up to 2000 tons. One of 1116 Garratts built at Gordon Works, No. 2352 was acquired from South African Railways for the museum collection in 1984.

India's North Western Railway 4-4-0 No. 3157 was built by Vulcan Foundry

at Newton-le-Willows in 1911. At the end of the steam era, it was presented by the government of Pakistan to the UK.

Inside Power Hall also sits Class 77 EM2 No. 27001 *Ariadne*, built at Gorton Works for the Woodhead Line. After the line closed in 1970, *Ariadne* was sold to The Netherlands State Railways, where it worked until 1986.

Historic replicas

Two replicas are displayed, the first being of Robert Stephenson & Company's 0-2-2 *Planet*, the original having been constructed in 1830 and which hauled trains on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. The replica was built by the Friends of the Museum of Science and Industry in 1992.

The second is a reconstruction of *Novelty*, originally developed in 1829 by John Braithwaite and John Ericsson for the Rainhill Trials, and which incorporates original wheels and a cylinder

The replica was built by the Science Museum in 1929.

Museum director Sally MacDonald said: "This is a significant moment for our museum, the Science Museum Group and for Manchester. Power Hall symbolises the city's innovation, creativity and resilience, and we are overjoyed that visitors will soon be back to enjoy the amazing objects.

"Ideas that began in this city have impacted people and places around the world and shaped life as we know it, and Power Hall showcases this in a very physical way. Our colleagues who first set up this gallery in 1983 knew that science and engineering have always been crucial to Manchester's success and future growth. Many people have told me that the Power Hall was inspirational for them as children, and I hope now it can inspire a new generation of inventors and technicians.

"A massive thanks to our fantastic collaborators, partners and funders for helping us to create this must-see Manchester experience, and of course to our visitors for their patience and sustained interest while Power Hall has been closed."

New trust manager is appointed following Llangollen's 50th anniversary

A FEW weeks following its 50th anniversary weekend, the Llangollen Railway announced that it had appointed a new trust manager to lead it on the next part of its journey. Following the departure earlier this year of the previous position holder Tom Taylor, a recruitment drive has seen David Hennigan successfully step in as his replacement.

David brings a wealth of leadership experience from the cultural, heritage and local government sectors, including his role as a director of the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod and senior leadership positions in local government. He has a proven track record in transformation, fundraising, volunteer engagement and community partnership building.

"It is a huge honour to be appointed trust manager of the LR during a landmark year," he said. "This is a hugely exciting time as we celebrate 50 years of heritage railway running in

the Dee Valley and look forward to our next half century. My focus will be on strengthening our sustainability, supporting our volunteers, and ensuring the railway remains at the very heart of



Llangollen Railway board members and managers with newly appointed trust manager David Hennigan (third from left). LR

our community and visitor economy. Together, we can make sure that the LR continues to inspire and delight for generations to come.

"What makes this railway truly special is its incredible volunteer family. Their dedication and passion keep the railway running day in, day out, and it is a privilege to work alongside them. This is an especially busy and exciting time as we ramp up for our ever-popular Santa special season, which brings joy to so many families every Christmas."

Trust chairman Bob Creasey said: "We are thrilled to welcome David as our new trust manager. He brings not only strong leadership and financial expertise, but also a real passion for Llangollen and the wider Dee Valley. This is an exciting new chapter for the railway, and under David's stewardship we are confident that Llangollen Railway will go from strength to strength."

Eight-car farewell to Llangollen's stalwart railcar

ONE of the Llangollen Railway's DMU fleet bowed out in spectacular fashion at the line's October 4/5 railcar gala as all eight operational trailers came together on the Sunday morning for a combined jaunt up the Dee Valley.

The annual gala weekend celebrates the varied fleet of DMUs which have been instrumental in the LR's survival in recent years, having been the first motive power to work services after its administration period and providing cheap but high-capacity traction for off-peak services when steam or diesel locomotives would otherwise have proven operating to be non-viable.

DMUs are often considered as 'Cinderellas' of heritage railways; while they may lack the perceived glamour of a named express steam locomotive or the impressive engine hum of diesels such as a Deltic, the panoramic views of offered by many of these humble units is often a huge marketing boon. For many youngsters, the view into their cabs can be just as exciting, getting to see first-hand how they are driven.

Among those on the LR is the Class 104 design. Built by the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company, it was introduced in 1957, and examples lasted in service until 1993. Designed for general commuter routes and branch lines, the first units were employed around the London Midland Region – including the Gospel Oak to Barking route – with the majority allocated across the North West.

They would vary in consist, ranging from two to four-car examples with constituent vehicles, including driving motor brake seconds and lavatory composites, and trailer second lavatory and brake second



Farewell, old friend: The Class 104 DMU brings up the rear of an unusual eight-car formation to depart Pentrefelin depot on October 5 as part of the Llangollen Railway's railcar gala. This particular unit has now been withdrawn to undergo some much-needed TLC. JOHN JOYCE/LR

lavatories. While only two centre cars survive in preservation, 10 driving trailers remain, although only five are in operation.

DMBS No. 50454 and DMCL No. 50528 have been in almost constant use at the LR for 31 years. Following the railcar gala, the set was withdrawn to allow the two vehicles to undergo bodywork repairs. The longevity of their use and condition is no doubt owed in part to the undercover storage at the Pentrefelin carriage sheds, but also to the dedication of the railway's volunteers who focus on their upkeep.

A railway spokesmann said: "We believe the Class 104 has run every

year at the railway for the last 31 years – nearly two-thirds of our 50 years as a heritage railway. In that time, the Class 104 has carried many thousands of happy passengers along the Dee Valley and has been an invaluable member of our fleet.

"Enjoy your rest, old girl – you've earned it. And well done to our railcar team who have worked hard to keep this popular machine in use for so long."

On the Sunday morning, a high number of pre-booked groups saw all eight of the LR's operational DMU vehicles pressed into service as one consist for possibly the first time, with the unusual formation

running as far as Glyndyfrdwy before splitting in two and heading off in opposite directions.

Although the 104 has now been withdrawn, the LR is not left struggling for DMU power; also operational are a rare pair of Wickham-built Class 109 motor trailers, along with examples of Classes 105, 108 and 127 trailers.

In addition to full-line services, which ran between Llangollen and the wholly new terminus at Corwen which opened in 2023, trains ran on the Saturday evening as far as Glyndyfrdwy station where the Porter's Bar was open, serving a selection of ales.

Museum donation sees Bishops Castle signal post return home

A SIGNAL post owned by the National Railway Museum dating back to 1865 has finally returned home to Shropshire and will be displayed at the Bishops Castle Railway Museum.

Hidden out of sight for about 90 years, the signal was originally located at Horderley station on the BCR, which ran from Craven Arms to the market town, as described in issue 335.

Manufactured by Stevens and Co, of South London, this type of signal was supplied to several railways. Of wrought iron lattice construction, it was purchased by the BCR in about 1865 when the line was constructed.

When the BCR closed in 1936, schoolmaster Selwyn Pearce Higgins purchased the complete signal for £2, then had it transported free of charge by the LMS and LNER to the York railway museum, but it was never displayed.

The BCR Society has known of its existence for many years, but until the recent establishment of the railway museum in Bishop's Castle on the old weighbridge site,

there was nowhere to display it. In 2020, BCRS director David O'Neill approached the NRM about releasing the signal post to the society. He said: "The staff at the NRM were most helpful and efficient" – and the transfer to the society was agreed.

On July 15, the 20ft signal post was collected from the NRM storage facility at Wroughton by society members and returned to Shropshire. Further discussions between the BCR and the NRM are underway regarding its conservation and siting.

The final, signal arm and spectacle plate are missing and will need replacing. Some parts are still in storage at the NRM and a request has been made to release them.

Its restoration is in a queue; once LNWR van No. 62272 is complete, work will start on it. While not rare, the post is one of the few remaining large artefacts of the BCR and as such is priceless to the society.

→ For information regarding opening days, see <https://bcrailway.co.uk/>



The Bishops Castle Railway signal post back on home ground. BCRS



The signal post in service at Horderley station. BCRS



Left to right are Class 37s Nos. 37248, 37264, 37263, 37688 *Great Rocks*, 37901 *Mirrless Pioneer*, 37508, 37250, 37518 *Fort William/An Gearasdan* and 37423 outside Kidderminster Diesel Depot during an evening photographic session on October 6 after the completion of the Severn Valley Railway's 65 Years of Class 37 event. STEVE DONALD

'Tractor' bash harvests the crowds!

By Robin Jones

NEARLY 4100 visitors attended the Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Diesel Bash, which marked the 65th anniversary of the Class 37s entering service.

Ten 'Tractors', a class of 309 Type 3 diesel-electrics built by English Electric at Vulcan and Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns between 1960-65, and which took their nickname from their distinctive sound, took part in the October 2-5 event.

One enthusiast who travelled from Cornwall to attend wrote to the SVR afterwards, saying: "From start to finish, it has been nothing but brilliant, with plenty of awesome English Electric music on tap!"

The line-up, which included both heritage vehicles and those still in regular main line service, comprised No. 37508 (courtesy of Loram UK Ltd and Steve Beniston); D6948 (37248, The Growler Group and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway); No. 37250 (Vince Minto and the Wensleydale Railway); 37263 (currently based on the SVR); 37264 (John Harris and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway); 37518 *Fort William/An Gearasdan* (West Coast Railways),

D6948 approaches Bewdley South Viaduct on October 2. JASON HOOD/SVR



37901 *Mirrless Pioneer* (Europhoenix Limited); 37688 *Great Rocks* (D05 Preservation Limited and the NYMR); 37423 (Europhoenix); and 37501 *Teesside Steelmaster* (Rail Operations Group).

Managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We are incredibly grateful to many individuals and organisations which provided locomotives. I thank West Coast

Railways, Europhoenix Rail Ltd, Rail Operations Group, The Growler Group, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, the Wensleydale Railway, Loram, John Harris, Steve Beniston, Vince Minto and Kevin Jones. Without the sterling support and collaboration of this extensive group of SVR friends, we wouldn't have been able to put on such a glorious event.

"I'd also like to pay tribute to the dedication and professionalism of our team at our railway itself for planning and delivering another outstanding occasion.

"It's been operationally and commercially successful, and feedback from our visitors has been great."

On November 1/2, Bridgnorth station will hold a mini gala in collaboration with the County of Salop Steam Engine Society, with a line-up of more than 10 road-going miniature steam engines to the station, including a Foden steam lorry, Burrell steam roller, and Fowler ploughing engine.

Bridgnorth stationmaster Chris Thomas said: "It will be a delight to see such impressive examples of miniature engineering in operation, and such a wide variety of different ideas – in particular, the 'Waterous' engine. Although many think it must be a one-off, this is in fact a model of a production run of more than 2000 examples constructed in Ontario for use in North America."

Train services will run between Bridgnorth and Kidderminster all weekend, for what will be the final two days of the 2025 season. The railway will then close to prepare itself for the start of its Christmas season.

→ Tractors in convoy: see also Main Line News, page 53.



No. 37901's token exchange at Bewdley North. DAVID BISSETT/SVR



No. 37518 *Fort William/An Gearasdan* passes a wet Hampton Load station on October 3. DAVID BISSETT/SVR

UK RAILTOURS

Britain's favourite Rail Tour Operator

At UK Railtours we're justly proud of being family owned since 1978.

Many people associate a train journey with their daily commute to work, very much a 'grudge purchase' and hardly a memorable experience. We're here to show that on board a private excursion train with like-minded travelling companions, things are very different.

There really is a pleasurable side to rail travel and it's here ready for you to enjoy to the full!

THE *festive* FLYING SCOTSMAN

Sunday 14th December 2025

UK Railtours, in proud association with the Science Museum Group, DB Cargo, Northern Steam Operations and Eastern Rail Services, bring you a classic Christmas excursion train from London to Newcastle featuring the world famous Flying Scotsman.

Our day begins at Finsbury Park with a powerful Class 67 diesel locomotive in charge of our spacious Mk3 carriages which will be suitably decorated for the time of year. Join the train here or at one of our further pick up points of Potters Bar, Stevenage or Peterborough to begin the truly remarkable day that awaits

Settle in to your comfortable seat as we make our way north by way of the East Coast Main Line, and relax while suburban sprawl gives way to open countryside and fenlands as we head beyond Peterborough. Perhaps visit our well stocked buffet car where a variety of hot and cold drinks will be on offer, along with the essential breakfast baps of course! We expect to arrive at York around lunchtime, and it is here that we bid farewell to our diesel locomotive and welcome celebrity steam locomotive 60103 Flying Scotsman to the head of our train for the journey onward to Newcastle.

It's now time for the main event as Flying Scotsman steams into action! Watch plumes of steam pass the window as we speed past the city of Durham, and look out for the historic cathedral which dominates the skyline, perched dramatically above the city. We continue onward towards the cosmopolitan city of Newcastle, catching a brief but striking view of Antony Gormley's massive sculpture The Angel of the North and then crossing the King Edward VII Bridge over the mighty River Tyne and reaching our destination where we expect to enjoy a break of around three hours.

THE CITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE AT CHRISTMAS

Set on the banks of the River Tyne in North East England, Newcastle is a city renowned for its vibrant cultural scene, impressive Victorian architecture and warm Geordie hospitality. Historic landmarks such as the iconic Tyne Bridge and medieval castle can be seen alongside bustling shopping districts and ample culinary offerings, making it a popular destination for travellers all year round. But it's during the festive season that Newcastle truly comes alive with glittering lights, spirited markets, and a contagious sense of celebration sure to encourage that festive feeling!

This year's yuletide celebrations promise something for everyone. Wander through an extended Christmas Market full of local traders or visit the Christmas Village at Old Eldon Square. The little ones can enjoy live shows on the Rockin' Reindeer stage where there is sure to be plenty of festive fun for the whole family. Look out for the iconic North Pole igloo pods perched above the market, where you can cosy up with food and drinks while taking in the stunning views of Grey Street. Whether you're shopping for Christmas gifts or simply soaking in the festive atmosphere, Newcastle's Christmas Market is the perfect way to embrace the holiday spirit.

After our break we will rejoin the train for the journey home, once again behind Flying Scotsman which will stretch its legs on the East Coast Mainline towards York. During the journey our buffet car will be ready and waiting to offer refreshments. Perhaps a mince pie or a festive tippie is in order?

All too soon we will find ourselves back at York, where we say goodbye to Flying Scotsman and welcome back our Class 67 locomotive to whisk us home, once again via the East Coast Mainline.



Station	Depart	Arrive
Finsbury Park	09.00	22.00
Potters Bar	09.20	21.40
Stevenage	09.30	21.30
Peterborough	10.00	21.00

Fares	
Standard Adult	£175
Standard Junior	£155
First Class Adult	£275

All timings are provisional and intended only as a guide.

Today's train features Mk3 carriages from Eastern Rail Services and buffet car catering from The Railway Diners. Photos of 60103 Flying Scotsman by and with thanks to Jack Boskett.

Departing from a station near you!

www.ukrailtours.com
01438 715050

New general manager at Mid-Norfolk

By Robin Jones

THE Mid-Norfolk Railway has appointed Samantha Taylor as its first female general manager.

Samantha brings 30-plus years of senior leadership experience from the charity and small and medium enterprise sectors, with a career that has spanned the UK and Asia.

While new to the heritage railway world, she brings a strong track record in building resilient organisations, driving operational excellence, and engaging diverse teams, said a MNR statement.

"Supported by a small team of committed paid staff and an amazing group of volunteers, Samantha's appointment reflects the MNR's ongoing commitment to inclusivity, modernisation, and building a sustainable future rooted in community values," it said.

The railway already benefits from the leadership and insight of women serving both on its board, in trustees Lesley Sparks and Marie Saville, and in business manager Kellie Woodard.

"I may be new to railways, but I have a deep respect for history and the traditions that shape our communities," said Samantha.

"The MNR is clearly a place where passion runs deep. This is especially visible through the energy and commitment of our volunteers. Their dedication is the beating heart of this railway and supporting them will be one of my top priorities. I've been made to feel incredibly welcome. It's clear that this railway means a great deal to a great many people. I'm here to listen, learn, and lead – and I'm truly excited about what lies ahead."

Samantha, one of three female general managers currently working



New general manager Samantha Taylor (front row, far right) with the Mid-Norfolk Railway team. MNR

in the heritage sector, is committed to increasing the railway's external profile, strengthening partnerships across East Anglia's heritage sector, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the line.

"There's a finite pool of funding, visitors, and volunteers. If we want heritage to thrive, we must work together – not in competition, but in partnership," she said.

She added that she is most looking forward to the line's 'Polar Express' services in November and December: "I've heard so much about it and can't wait to see it in action. It is amazing to see the passion and dedication expressed for this event by the staff and volunteers, and to understand how their hard work and determination creates such magic

for families – it really is something very special."

Samantha's appointment followed that of the line's new operations manager, Graham Wigglesworth, who said: "After spending 20 years in IT, I finally escaped and managed to get my job and hobbies to line up and now work in the heritage sector."

"It has been an interesting route to get here. I started volunteering in heritage railways on the steam side in 2010 while seeking a new hobby after finishing sidecar racing."

"It was a coincidence while attending an event with my classic bus that made me want to get involved."

"Seven years later, while redundant, I managed to get an opportunity to spend a summer as a seasonal guard

at the Wells & Walsingham Light Railway. This resulted in me being operations manager by the end of the season and starting my full-time career in heritage railways. I then had the opportunity to go to the National Tramway Museum as engineering manager, during which time I helped to bring the organisation to its next stage. Eventually, the lure of locomotives took me back to the MNR where I am now operations manager, via a brief stint at the Tallylyn Railway."

The arrival of Samantha and Graham completed a trio of major appointments this year. In January, the MNR appointed trustee Nigel Smith, who had been involved as a volunteer with the line since childhood, as its new chairman.

New chairman is being sought for Patriot project

THE LMS-Patriot Company, builder of new 4-6-0 No. 5551 *The Unknown Warrior*, is seeking a new chairman after Colin Hall announced he is to step down after six years.

Colin said: "I believe that the responsibilities and practicalities of the chairman's role are no longer compatible not only with my changed family position circumstances but also with my own physical and mental well-being."

A company statement said: "The board would like to thank Colin Hall for his excellent leadership after taking on the voluntary role as chairman during a difficult time for the project since 2019. Colin's railway management experience,

enthusiasm, and humour have guided the project to better times where we now see reassembly of No. 5551 *The Unknown Warrior* actively taking place."

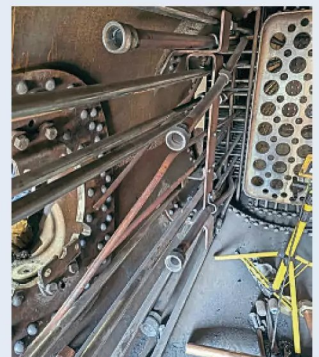
Current deputy chairman John Hastings-Thomson will lead the board until a new chairman is appointed. David Tuffin, director of hazard and risk management, has taken on the responsibility of leading the process to appoint a new chairman. The board wants to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining it and possibly taking on the role of chairman.

The completion of No. 5551 remains on course with the assembly of the frames at Tyseley Locomotive Works and the

construction of the new boiler at Heritage Boiler Steam Services.

There, the fitting of the middle cylinder with machined bolts has been undertaken. The two outside cylinders are due back from Ian Riley Engineering, while 12 new spring hanger brackets have been manufactured, and the machining of these has been completed. Three new rear cylinder covers have been cast and drilled for final quality checking of the castings.

Work on the machining of the six new driving wheels will recommence at Ian Riley Engineering, after the firm's move to a new premises earlier this year. The driving wheelsets are due be delivered to Tyseley next spring.



Unions fitted to various pipes within the Patriot boiler. HBSS

→ For more information about the project membership details and the range of branded merchandise, visit www.lms-patriot.org.uk

KESR volunteer set for key role in link with RVR

By Geoff Courtney

KENT & East Sussex Railway volunteer Helen Douglas is to spearhead the fundraising campaign to provide facilities at the Rother Valley Railway's new Robertsbridge Junction station as part of the ongoing £6 million project to link the two neighbouring lines.

In the new role of appeals director, 38-year-old Helen becomes a trustee of the RVR Heritage Trust, with her sights set on three fundraising objectives, the first being for the fitting out of the new station building, which is nearing completion. Phase two will be for the locomotive running shed and the third for the carriage shed.

"Our railways are more than just track and trains – they are living narratives of our nation's history,"

said Helen. "Preserving this vital part of our heritage is crucial not only for tourism, but also for creating significant experiences and memories that resonate across generations. By sharing the rich stories of our railways, we honour the past and illuminate the integral role of railways in our country today."

With the two-mile link between the current western end of the KESR at Udiam and the eastern extremity of the RVR at Northbridge Street expected to be completed by 2028, creating a 14-mile line between Tenterden Town station and Robertsbridge Junction, Helen said she was committed to joining not only the mission to reconnect the two railways, but also to reconnect communities, residents, and visitors.

The KESR has been a recurring theme through much of Helen's



Fundraiser: Long-time KESR volunteer Helen Douglas, who has been appointed a trustee and appeals director of neighbouring Rother Valley Railway, at Tenterden Town station in the company of Class 4MT 2-6-0 No. 76017. HELEN DOUGLAS/RVR

life. Both her parents were KESR volunteers, and she herself helped as a youngster in the Tenterden Town station refreshment rooms and is the former sales and marketing manager,

while her husband Jamie has been variously the railway's permanent way manager, trustee, and chairman of the trustees, and is currently a volunteer driver.



Crowds gather at Woody Bay station for the International Parade of all 10 locomotives at the autumn gala on the Sunday of the autumn gala. GILES PERKINS/LBR



Chaloner and Peter Pan heading a goods train out of Killington Lane. Peter Pan, which became the first steam engine to head a passenger train from Woody Bay since 1935 on March 20, 2005, was owned by Devon County Council in 1929-59 and stored as a reserve engine in the 1950s at Beacon Down Quarry in Parracombe; Beacon Down is the hill on the right of the photograph. GILES PERKINS/LBR

International narrow gauge parade at Woody Bay

By Robin Jones

WHILE the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 celebration reached its grand climax on September 27/28 to widespread acclaim, an International Parade of locomotives was staged on the Sunday of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's autumn steam gala to mark both the 90th anniversary of the closure of the original line on September 29, 1935, and Railway 200.

Four visiting locomotives joined the six resident ones for the event, built on the theme of 'narrow gauge, the wider story' to reflect their geographical range.

The parade featured de Winton 0-4-0VBT of *Chaloner* of 1877, built for the Welsh slate industry, Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST contractor's locomotive No. 4256 of 1922 *Peter Pan* (both visiting from the Leighton Buzzard Railway), FC Hibberd Planet 4wDM

No. 1830 of 1933 *Boothby*, from the Westonzoyland Pumping Station, near Bridgwater, Kerr Stuart 0-6-0T No. 4251 *Axe* of 1915 for service on the Western Front and currently out of action pending its 10-yearly overhaul and therefore propelled by Hunslet

4wDH No. 6660 of 1965 *Heddon Hall*, which worked at the Dean Hill Royal Naval Armament Depot, *Faith*, the diminutive 0-4-2T built by the L&B Engineer John Uphill, Bagnall No. 2819 of 1945 *Sir George Newnes*, built for service in the sugarcane fields

of South Africa, replica L&B Baldwin 2-4-2T No. 762 *Lyn*, Baguley-Drewry 0-6-0DM No. 2393 of 1952 *Pilton*, supplied for use in the sugarcane fields of Queensland, and Hunslet 4wDH D6552 of 1965, also built for Dean Hill.



FC Hibberd Planet 4wDM Boothby giving rides at Woody Bay station. GILES PERKINS/LBR



Replica No. 762 Lyn carrying a wreath commemorating the wreath of bronze chrysanthemums sent to the line the day after it closed by Capt Thomas Woolf, of Woody Bay, with the inspiring message 'Perchance it is not dead but sleepeth.' He was right! GILES PERKINS/LBR

Horse-drawn wagon stars at Talyllyn's weekend of heritage celebrations

By Owen Hayward

A RETURN to horsepower at the Talyllyn Railway's September 13/14 Heritage Weekend helped the world's first volunteer-run preservation railway revive the long-distant days when steam power was still to be conceived.

Building on the success of the previous two years and a growing reputation, the weekend was created to depict the rich heritage of the TR, such as the local slate industry, personalities involved in the railway, and the history of other railways whose locomotives and rolling stock are now based on the line. This year's event welcomed hundreds of visitors to ride the themed trains and explore the displays.

A strong focus on the TR's slate heritage reflected its original role as a means of transporting slate from Bryn Eglwys quarry in the hills above the western end of the railway, with the old quarry, Abergynolwyn village (built to house the quarry workers and their families), and the railway itself now proudly part of the UNESCO Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site. As part of the itinerary, for the first



Working horse Molly demonstrated how wagons were moved around the quarries without locomotives. A specially-laid temporary track was put down in the showground at Abergynolwyn for the occasion. LUKE RYAN/TR

time since 1946, a TR slate wagon was moved by horse, once a common sight in the days of the quarry where horses were used to pull the wagons along the level sections of railway.

Equine haulage

These served the quarry in between inclined planes that winched wagons up and down steep slopes. Thanks to the hard work of Carnog Working Horses, which has operated in the

area previously undertaking logging work, working horse Molly took to her new role to the delight of watching visitors.

The event was also supported by Amgueddfa Lechi Cymri National Slate Museum as part of its Museum on the Move initiative, bringing its people, collections and stories to partner locations at the heart of the slate communities. Talks on the Friday and Saturday evenings by

Talyllyn Railway volunteers covered the subjects of famous writer and preservationist Tom Rolt, who was one of those who preserved the railway in the early 1950s, and the railways which served Abergynolwyn village and the horse-worked sections up to the quarry, using previously unseen images of the tracks in use.

Multi-rail histories

The trains themselves were specially geared towards the heritage of the railway, with Saturday featuring trains well into the night and focused on the Talyllyn and Corris railways in the pre-heritage era, seeing carriages from both railways in use, together with wagons from the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, and the newly recreated Gunpowder van constructed by the Talyllyn's Young Members (as reported last issue).

The group also conducted wagon hand-shunting demonstrations at Tywyn Wharf station, organising the wagons in order to be taken out on trains.

Sunday shifted its focus to portray the railway in its early preservation years, with sights such as CR locomotives pulling TR original carriages, a diesel locomotive taking tipper wagons up the line, as seen during the extension of the passenger railway between Abergynolwyn and Nant Gwernol in the 1960s and 1970s, and a typical 1950s goods train used to take materials to relay what was by then poor condition track in the early heritage era.

The Heritage Weekend will return next September during the line's 75th anniversary year, celebrating it becoming the world's first volunteer-run heritage line, for which other plans are being formulated.



Above: A mixed train comprising original TR carriages and wagons, along with the newly-built gunpowder van, is propelled into the platform road at Tywyn Wharf station. NATHAN SPENCE

Right: Ruston & Hornsby 4WDM No. 5 Midlander departs Tywyn Wharf with a short passenger rake similar to services it worked in the early days of the heritage era. NATHAN SPENCE





Diminutive in size with a distinctive 'bark'

Whether it be for hauling passengers on congested commuter routes or navigating branch lines in the south, the Hornby TT120 Terrier is the perfect addition to your model railway layout. Available in Southern Railways, London Brighton & South Coast Railway and early British Railways liveries.



NEW **HM** 7000

R7321

HM7000-6 Bluetooth & DCC
6 Pin Decoder

NOW AVAILABLE!

TT3038M	SR Terrier W14 Bembridge	DCC READY	6 PIN CONNECTION	TT4051/52/53/54	SR 4 Wheel Coach - 1st Class / 3rd Class / 3rd Class Brake / 3rd Class Brake Baggage
TT3039M	LB&SCR Terrier Brighton	DCC READY	6 PIN CONNECTION	TT4055/56/57/58	LB&SCR 4 Wheel Coach - 1st Class / 3rd Class / 3rd Class Brake / 3rd Class Brake Baggage
TT3040M	BR Terrier 32655	DCC READY	6 PIN CONNECTION	TT4059/60/61/62	BR 4 Wheel Coach - 1st Class / 3rd Class / 3rd Class Brake / 3rd Class Brake Baggage

Available at selected stockists.

For further information or to buy online go to [Hornby.com/HornbyTT120](https://www.hornby.com/HornbyTT120)



Hornby Model Railways



hornby



officialhornby



officialhornby



hornbymodelrailways

Crimson coat is a heritage first for Bo'ness Caley tank

By Owen Hayward

REPRESENTATION of the LMS era has recently expanded as Caledonian Railway 439 class 0-4-4T No. 419 was unveiled in the striking lined crimson livery of the company at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway.

Following an extended period of running in BR black as No. 55189, the locomotive entered the workshops last November for maintenance and some repairs, with the opportunity taken to apply a fresh new look in time for reemerging in the Railway 200 year.

Built in 1907 at St Rollox Works in Glasgow, No. 419 was renumbered as 15189 at the 1923 Grouping. Until that point it had been air-braked only, but the LMS opted to fit it (along with other members of the versatile class) with vacuum braking in addition to this, which further enhanced its capability. Withdrawn in 1962, it was swiftly purchased by the Scottish Railway Preservation Society. Restoration was completed in 1965, following which No. 419 featured in the Stockton & Darlington 150th anniversary cavalcade a decade later.

Seeing red

In recent years, it has adorned CR lined blue – a scheme with which it has become synonymous – but in early 2023, a repaint saw it revive its BR guise for what had only been intended to be a year, but external demand for it as No. 55189 saw a stay of execution through 2024. In November of that year, it travelled to the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway, where it had been planned to feature in a few days of photographic charters. Unfortunately, during testing following its arrival there, several tubes developed leaks and it was swiftly returned to Scotland.



Crimson glory: 439 class No. 419 has ditched the Caledonian blue and BR black to adopt the vibrant colours of LMS crimson, a scheme it has yet to wear in preservation. For its unveiling, the locomotive was coupled to North British Railway invalid saloon No. 461, which is nearing the end of a lengthy restoration of its own. JONNY GOURLAY/SRPS

Since then it has been in the workshops at the BKR, where volunteers have also carried out a repaint into the planned LMS lined crimson livery – a scheme only currently carried by one other locomotive in preservation, 3F 'Jinty' No. 16640 at the Midland Railway – Butterley. Explaining the reason for this choice of livery, locomotive manager Taylor Shaw said: "It has never carried LMS in preservation, so we thought it would be good to do it while we still can."

"We are not sure when it will be overhauled next due to other locomotives in the queue ahead of it, but having it in the crimson makes it a bit more unique."

The cost of the repaint has been funded by railway volunteers and organised photoshoots.

Story over authenticity

Although the livery is inauthentic for No. 419, BKR volunteer Jonny Gourlay said this should not be an excuse to write off the locomotive's own history and that of its class: "The SRPS aim to showcase as much of the history of Scottish railways as is possible, as seen when No. 419 was repainted into British Railways black for the 2023 season. There was a desire then to conduct something that hadn't yet been done in preservation with the engine before – a repaint into LMS. While to our understanding,

No. 15189 never carried the crimson, a large number of the 439 class did, so the current repaint is to tell the class history rather than solely that of the preserved example. It'll never be 100% perfect for the individual example; as such, we need to go down the representation of the class route.

"No. 55189 never carried lined black with the chimney it currently wears, but it was either never wear BR or fit a stovepipe if we were to stick to 100% accuracy. In the current crimson, there's one or two accommodations we've made due to rivet placements or such, but we've found contemporary photos that suggest our efforts are still accurate."

Any takers for Clevedon miniature line? Council hopes for railway's revival

NORTH Somerset Council wants to revive the 15in gauge Clevedon Miniature Railway.

The council has advertised for an operator for the line at Salthouse Fields, which last ran in 2022. A lease on the seafront site would see the construction of a new train shed and the ongoing management of a permanent and accessible food and beverage site, miniature golf course, and an area for children's activities.

The railway first opened in 1952 and runs in a loop around Salthouse Fields, which is within walking distance of surrounding woodland areas and the coastal path with access to open-water swimming at Clevedon's marine lake.

Coun Mike Solomon, cabinet member for culture, leisure, and open spaces, said: "I am pleased to say that North Somerset Council is putting the wheels

in motion and hoping to get Clevedon's miniature railway back on track.

"The miniature railway is part of a great day out for residents and visitors alike and a fantastic draw to the local area, bringing smiles to the faces of families and a boost to our economy.

"Clevedon residents have told us how popular and important the miniature railway is, and this is a great example of the council

listening to those voices, working with leisure providers and the voluntary and community sectors to ensure we deliver together for the benefit of our residents."

→ Anyone interested in taking on the lease and reviving the line is invited to write to Beth Wadley at North Somerset Council, the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset BS23 1UJ. Alternatively, email beth.wadley@n-somerset.gov.uk or phone 01934 427535.



General Motors Class 121 No. 124, which, as reported last issue, in 1961 became the first-ever US-built locomotive in Ireland and is now based on Downpatrick & County Down Railway, heads a rake of 'bubble wagons' in Dublin's North Wall depot in the early 2000s. STEPHEN LYNCH/DCDR



The Downpatrick & County Down Railway crew who coordinated the acceptance, delivery and fundraising of the wagon, Mike Beckett, Morgan Young, Niall Kelly, and Jonathan King. DCDR

The bubble they could not burst!

By Robin Jones

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has added a vehicle thought to be extinct to its collection, a CIE 'bubble wagon'.

No. 25199, built in 1972 at Inchicore Works in Dublin, is the very last of its class of 150 distinctive vehicles which for more than three decades were a familiar sight in Ireland, north and south, hauling cement until the traffic ended in 2009.

Every known example was scrapped... almost! One example eluded the cutter's torch because of the efforts of dedicated enthusiasts

Mike Murphy and moved to a remote collection where for 16 years it remained undisturbed and undiscovered.

It has now been donated to the DCR, whose chairman Robert Gardiner said: "One look at it and you can see how these wagons got their nickname. Ours was the last of 150 built at Inchicore Works in 1972, and for more than 30 years the bubbles were a familiar sight on cement trains in Ireland, regulars in NIR's depot in Adelaide.

"It's like finding a dodo in your back garden. While we might not have much need to carry cement on our

network, it's safe to say that most enthusiasts and members of the public who remember them have a soft spot for these iconic wagons.

"The humble goods wagon often gets overlooked in railway preservation, but freight was every bit as important to the story of Ireland's railways as the glamorous passenger trains. These were the workhorses that kept industry moving in the days before the HGV, and we are delighted to make sure that part of the story is represented here in Downpatrick."

A public fundraising appeal quickly followed to cover the cost of transporting the wagon, attracting

strong support and sponsorship from model manufacturer Accurascale UK and Irish Railway Models.

On October 4, the wagon completed its long journey from its secret location near Killbarragh to Downpatrick, arriving at about 9am. Within 45 minutes, it was safely craned onto the heritage line's metals thanks to expert handling by haulier David Baker.

Now resting in the DCDR's yard, the wagon is visible to visitors from the station platform. It will soon undergo cleaning and a mechanical inspection, with hopes of operating on future demonstration freight trains.

Western Front trenches are reborn on the Lincolnshire coast

THE increasingly popular First World War event at the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway was spectacularly successful in its new two-day format on September 20/21.

Highlights included the first operation of a horse-drawn train on the LCLR with Trixie, from the Silverleaf Poplar Private Railway, at nearby Old Leake, pulling a First World War Class P ration wagon, recreating the way supplies were moved into the trenches of the battlefields, while farrier Jarvis Browning, from Fadmoor, near York, demonstrated with a working forge how the many horses used in the conflict had their shoes prepared.

The living history group Hull Rifles appeared in period uniforms,



Trixie takes to the tracks with a Class P ration wagon, restored to its First World War condition – showing how supplies reached the frontline trenches. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

camping on site in tents based on those used in the battlefields, demonstrating drill and firing their replica weapons, including a spectacular trench mortar. They travelled in LCLR vehicles which were

used to take troops to battle in France and to evacuate the wounded.

Strong winds, however, prevented the arrival on the adjacent Skegness Airfield of de Havilland Tiger Moth biplanes, although the owners have said that they would still like to participate in future events.

The Skegness Water Leisure Park-based 2ft gauge line has roots in the First World War when much of its rolling stock and some of its rails were used in the War Department Light Railways in France, supplying the

Left: The Hull Rifles board a First World War Class D wagon, coupled to the Ambulance Van, ready to travel to Seathorne Bank. A passenger service stands in the adjacent platform.

JOHN RABY/LCLR



First World War wagons and replica weapons at Seathorne Bank station, Britain's newest. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

British Army and rescuing casualties. They include the only surviving railway ambulance van in the UK, bogie wagons of Class D (one now used as a disabled access passenger carriage still carries shrapnel holes inflicted by German artillery) and four-wheeled ration wagons which could be moved by soldiers, ponies or mules to deliver supplies where they were needed in the trenches and to evacuate the wounded for treatment.

The LCLR's Historic Vehicles Trust chairman, Richard Shepherd, said: "The event was very much enjoyed by the public and all our participants. What was gratifying to me was that much of the detail of the event was planned and carried out by our young volunteers and new supporters who have joined in recent months."





No. 6880 *Betton Grange* departs Winchcombe at the head of the goods set on September 28.



The crew of 1905-built No. 2807 at the head of the freight working take a break at Winchcombe station.

Cotswold line celebrates Rail 200 with freight workings

Words and pictures by John Titlow

WHILE the big national celebrations were taking place on the route of the Stockton & Darlington Railway on September 27/28, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway gave a different twist to Rail 200 by running freight trains between timed passenger services.

The aim was to explain what makes a heritage railway run in the 21st century, both front-of-house and behind the scenes. Representatives from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust were on hand to chat to visitors and explain the benefits of becoming a member and joining the 900 working volunteers.

Steam locomotives taking part were new-build GWR No. 4-6-0 6880 *Betton Grange*, GWR 2-8-0 No. 2807 and WR 4-6-0 No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, which was taking the place of Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35006 *Peninsular* and *Oriental S. N. Co.*, which had failed with injector issues, for which repairs have since been completed.

No. 35006 will be making its last appearance at the line's October 25/26 Autumn Showcase weekend due to its boiler ticket running out. October 31 is its final day of service on a charter organised by Jack Boskett.

Diesel power

Diesels in use on the Saturday were Class 20 No. 20137, Class 26 No. 26043 and Class 47 No. 47105, while Sunday's line-up consisted of Class 37 No. 37215, Class 47s Nos. 47376 and 47105, plus Class 20s Nos. 20228 and 20137 double-heading. Three sets of passenger stock were used throughout.

Identical timings took place over the two days, running eight passenger returns. The goods train, which started each day at 8.15am departing Toddington to Broadway behind No. 2807, was followed by the first passenger train leaving Winchcombe at 9.08am to Broadway and from Toddington at 9.19am to Cheltenham Racecourse. The goods continued its journey during the day, stopping

at Toddington and Winchcombe to allow passenger trains to pass before continuing to Cheltenham Racecourse. The return stopped at Winchcombe before completing its journey to Toddington, giving plenty of time for passengers to photograph it.

There was some minor late running, but timings were generally good, the last train completing its journey at Winchcombe at 5.57pm.

The carriage shed at Winchcombe, along with the locomotive shed and machine shop at Toddington, were open for viewing.

At the rear of the carriage shed, a viewing area was cordoned off to see trains arriving and departing Winchcombe.

Toddington staged an exhibition from the photographic team led by Jack, plus presentations from groups like the drainage team and first responders; the public never usually see what goes on behind the scenes and how these unsung heroes keep the railway running.

At Gotherington, the private gardens alongside the station were open and visitors could have a go on the pump trolley. Light refreshments were served from the station building.

Curtain call

The Autumn Showcase weekend will bring down the curtain on the line's events that celebrate 200 years of passenger railways. An intensive timetable will be operating over the full length of the line with goods trains, and brake van and footplate rides are available on a first come, first served basis.

There will be behind-the-scenes viewing and local stopping services at Hayles Abbey Halt, plus non-stop expresses.

Fireworks trains will run on November 8 and race trains on November 14/15, while Santa specials start on November 22, followed by mince pie specials from December 27 to January 1. For further information, visit www.gwsr.com/your-visit/events-experiences



Above: The 2ft gauge North Gloucester Railway offered timetabled steam train rides behind Jung 0-4-0WT No. 939 of 1906 *Justine* which, seen here departing Toddington, entered into the spirit of Rail 200 with having a small headboard on its bufferbeam.

Right: Celebrating Rail 200, No. 7903 climbs away from Winchcombe with a morning train.



Princess Royal visits refurbished Station Hall at NRM

By Robin Jones

THE Princess Royal was among the first visitors to attend the National Railway Museum's newly refurbished Station Hall following its two-year £10.5 million renovation.

The Grade II-listed building closed to the public in 2023 for a full refurbishment, including a re-roof and a £577,000 refresh and re-display of its exhibition, supported by the Friends of the National Railway Museum, as reported in the last issue of *Heritage Railway*. A reception on the evening before it reopened to the public on September 26 was held to mark the York museum's 50th anniversary.

Since 1990, Station Hall has been home to the museum's collection of six royal carriages, including Queen Victoria's grand 1869 saloon and one of Queen Elizabeth's former carriages from the Royal Train – and now, the floral funeral wreath that was placed

on the front of *Royal Sovereign*, the GWR locomotive which transported Queen Victoria's funeral cortège from Paddington to Windsor, as part of the state funeral procession in February 1901.

Floral display

The wreath has been under wraps for more than 30 years. Measuring more than 3.5ft in diameter and weighing 148kg, it is composed of dried white Immortelle flowers (*Xeranthemum annuum*), crepe, and satin bows, with a black satin bow at its base. After the funeral procession, it was mounted on velvet and sealed in a wooden display case.

During the painstaking conservation process, which took more than 150 hours, the case was opened for the first time in 100-plus years, its contents carefully removed, cleaned, and repaired. Conservators discovered that the original colour of the velvet mount was Royal Purple.

Martha Jones, objects conservator for the Science Museum Group, said: "It is rare to see organic matter conserved in this way. On opening the case, our primary concern was the stability of the dried flowers – there was every possibility that they would disintegrate once we opened the lid and exposed to the wreath to oxygen for the first time in more than 100 years. Despite some petal loss, the flowers were surprisingly stable and durable.

"The most fragile component was, in fact, the crepoline, which would break and disintegrate at the slightest pressure.

"I consulted a specialist textile conservator before removing the original material – a fine, silk netting susceptible to decay – and replacing it with a new lining of the same material composition. In all, more than a metre

of fabric was used for each side of wreath – a testament to its size."

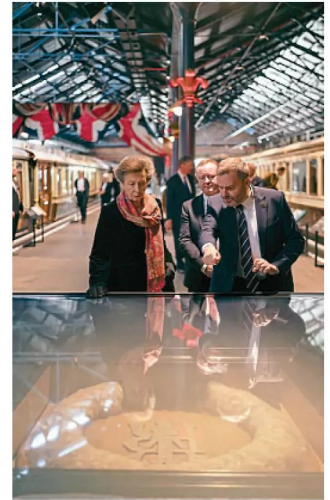
The wreath is just one of the objects newly displayed in Station Hall. A WH Smith bookstall, first installed Waterloo in 1921, can be seen following an extensive restoration process, along with a newly acquired set of photographs by British photographer Howard Grey depicting Windrush migrants just arrived from the Caribbean as they set out on train journeys from Waterloo station to their new homes around the UK.

Also displayed is the Euston Clock, which stood in the Great Hall of Euston from 1849 until it was demolished in the 1960s. "As well as observing time, stations have directly transformed how we think about it," said an NRM statement. "It was not until 1841 that the GWR announced that it would observe 'railway time,' ending the local time zones and aligning the whole country around what we now know as Greenwich Mean Time."

Visitors can also view the original Bradshaw's timetable, which compiled all train times in pocket-sized form and was a national phenomenon in the 1840s and 1850s.

Same faces, new settings

The exhibition reinterprets much-loved rail vehicles while adding new items, archive images and audio. Displayed for the first time is *The Countess of York*, an historic dining car which has been refurbished to provide afternoon tea. Built in 1907 as a dining car, it was converted to an ambulance car by the US Army Transportation Corps in 1943 and subsequently an inspection saloon on a military railway in the 1960s. The carriage has been refurbished and will now resume its original purpose of hospitality.



Princess Anne and the National Railway Museum's head curator, Andrew McLean, view Queen Victoria's funeral wreath in Station Hall. DREW FORSYTH/BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP



The Euston Clock in Station Hall. OLIVIA BRABBS/ BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

The building has undergone major architectural and structural improvements including a new thermally-efficient roof. During this time, the royal carriages remained in situ, encapsulated within mobile scaffold frames and clad with solid steel sheeting and membrane wraps to protect them throughout.

Museums Minister Baroness Twycross said: "The NRM is a much-loved institution that explores the history of transport. This renovation will ensure that the national collection is protected for the next generation by improving the structure of the building, making it weatherproof and sustainably powered for its future, which I am delighted that the Department of Culture, Media & Sport could support."

Lord's visit to Cotswold line pays tribute to the long-standing dedication of volunteers

THE Saturday of the GW/R's Railway 200 weekend was graced by two highly respected guests, with Sir Tim Laurence, husband of the Princess Royal, and Lord and Lady Faulkner of Worcester both in attendance on September 27. Sir Tim is president of the GW/R Trust, while Lord Faulkner is president of the Heritage Railway Association and a patron of GWSR PLC.

The day began with the distinguished guests presenting long service awards to several of the heritage line's volunteers at a ceremony held in the Tim Mitchell Building at Winchcombe station, where there was also a display tracing the history of the line.

Sir Tim praised volunteers for the remarkable job they had done in the past and present, and what they will continue to do in the

future, applauding their tenacity as the railway has developed. Sir Tim also made a point of meeting many of the railway's young volunteers at the country station, recognising that they represent the future success of the railway. He and Lord Faulkner then toured the Cotswold line, first visiting Gotherington – travelling there in a GWR Toad brake van at the end of the goods train – before trying their hand on a pump trolley on the private siding.

Philip Young, chairman of the GWRT, said: "This was an outstanding day and clearly enjoyed by both Sir Tim and Lord and Lady Faulkner. They took a great deal of interest in what they saw and the volunteers they met, and I have no doubt that that interest will remain as the railway develops in the future."



Sir Tim Laurence (left) and Lord Faulkner of Worcester (centre) enjoy a trip on the pump trolley at Gotherington under the careful supervision of one of the line's many volunteers. IAN CROWDER/GW/R

13 ISSUES FOR JUST £39.99*

GIVE A
SUBSCRIPTION TO
**HERITAGE
RAILWAY**

EVERY ISSUE INCLUDES

- Exclusive news and updates from across the railway scene
- In-depth historic features and well-researched stories
- Stunning atmospheric trackside photography
- Coverage of revival schemes, railwayana, tours, volunteers, carriages, wagons and modelling

Reasons to buy

A magazine subscription is a great gift for someone special:



Personal and thoughtful
- match their interest



Fuel their passion, help them
stay inspired and informed



Provide enjoyment all year
round, delivered monthly



Perfect for people who
are difficult to buy for



Delivered directly to
their door!



Saves you money on the
shop price

Buy for someone special, or treat yourself!

Terms & Conditions: * UK Direct Debit or Continuous Credit Card offer, you will pay £39.99 on annual Direct Debit or Continuous payment. Savings are based on the standard cover price of £5.40. Offer ends 31st January 2026

EXCLUSIVE CHRISTMAS SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT THAT LASTS ALL YEAR!

STEAM FAIR DEBUT FOR BR BLUE VALE OF RHEIDOL 2-6-2T

ISSUE 337 September 26 - October 24, 2025

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Eddystone's main line comeback after 61 years

REFURBISHED STATION HALL OPENS AT NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

■ TWO CASTLE CHASE ALONG ON DAWLISH SEA WALL ■ VALE OF BERKELEY RUNS FIRST TRAINS ■ STOCKTON & DARLINGTON: REPLICA TRAIN FINAL TESTS SUCCESS - AND THE WEST SIDE STORY ■ LAST MAIN LINE 03 SHUNTER FOR ISLE OF WIGHT

GER 'COFFEE POT' TO STEAM AFTER

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Poppy Line celebrates 50 years with 'first'

FLYING SCOTSMAN FOR AUTUMN VISIT
FIRST STATION SAVED IN RAILWAY 200 YEARS
YEAR WINNERS ANNOUNCED ■ BAHAMA

WINS WIDESPREAD ACCLAIM

ISSUE 336 August 29 - September 26, 2025

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

WINS WIDESPREAD ACCLAIM

FULL AUTUMN STEAM GALA GUESTS ROUND-UP

DR200 main line
enary for replica
25 train co

SAVE UP TO 43%

EASY WAYS TO BUY YOUR GIFT SUBSCRIPTION
GO TO **CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/XMASHR**
SCAN THE QR CODE AND GO DIRECTLY



CALL 01507 529529 AND QUOTE 'XMASHR'

Southern steam reigns supreme at London's local annual gala

By Owen Hayward

A PAIR of visiting Southern steam locomotives helped the Epping Ongar Railway deliver what it described as its "most successful gala yet," with more than 1000 people visiting on September 19-21.

Billed as a Southern Giants gala, the steam line-up saw resident GWR 4-6-0 No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall* joined by visiting SR Schools 4-4-0 No. 926 *Repton* and Battle of Britain light Pacific No. 34027 275 *Squadron*.

Both locomotives had starred at the Swanage Railway's own steam gala the previous weekend (as reported last issue) and made the stopover in Essex on their way northwards to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, where *Repton* is normally resident, for a gala there the weekend immediately after (see feature, pages 68-71).

The appearance of both visitors came off the back of the visit of *Pitchford Hall* to these two other lines within the past 12 months; No. 4953 featured on Swanage's spring gala in March, while its trip to the Moors took place in September 2024. Such reciprocal arrangements are becoming more common as railways seek improved collaboration. The sharing of gala guests is also on the rise as planners look to reduce the costs of arranging such events by splitting or sharing bills for transportation of guest locomotives by road.

Over the course of the three-day event, the trio of large locomotives took charge of services along the six-mile branch between Ongar and Epping Forest, with services terminating a few hundred yards shy of the boundary with London Underground's limit of operations at Epping. With a wide range of locomotive classes having starred at previous galas, the visit of both the



Above: No. 34027 275 *Squadron* climbs away from Ongar carrying a 'Pines Express' headboard. KATIE PICKERSGILL/EOR



Right: *Pitchford Hall* observes the arrival of visiting Southern giant 257 *Squadron* at North Weald. TONY GOULDING/EOR

Schools and Bulleid marked the first time an example of either class have run over this part of former Central line track. No. 34027 is also one of the largest locomotives to have visited, coming in behind BR 9F No. 92214, which visited in June 2014.

Also starring was Hunslet Austerity conversion No. 3781, which began life in 1952 as an 0-6-0ST with the National Coal Board. Preserved in 1977 at the Kent & East Sussex Railway, in 1994 it was sold to the Mid-Hants Railway where it was converted into its current side tank arrangement in order to become a licensed Thomas replica for Day Out With Thomas events – a duty it still serves today.

Owing to licensing restrictions, it ran without a face and the character's iconic number on the water tanks, instead displaying a BR-style numberplate on the smokebox door. Once known as *Linda*, it has been

nicknamed *Dave* by MHR crew and is on loan to the EOR until January 2026.

Following a prolonged period out of use for track renewal work, which over the winter saw a substantial excavation and relaying of the trackbed beneath the M11 overbridge, the section from North Weald to Epping Forest was reopened just in time, allowing the four locomotives to tackle some of the steep climbs of this section which can see gradients reach 1-in-56 on the approach to the LU boundary.

No. 3781 worked shuttles to and from the forest hauling a Class 121 driving trailer between full line services worked by the three larger locomotives.

Attached to one of the main carriage sets was also a BR shark brake van, aboard which passengers could pay a supplement to travel and enjoy the sights and sounds of

the steam locomotives working from close quarters. A limited number of footplate rides were available aboard the three larger locomotives each day.

Nick Artherton has spent more than 30 years working in the rail industry, including as Elizabeth line commercial director, and on August 18 started as the EOR's new general manager.

He said: "Our steam gala has been a resounding success – a real hit with our customers.

"This event perfectly showcased the EOR's mission to educate, preserve, and celebrate rail heritage, making history inspiring and relevant for everyone. I'm incredibly grateful to our dedicated volunteers and staff who worked so hard to make this event happen.

"The three days received five-star ratings, with nearly 2000 attendees who enjoyed an intensive schedule of steam action under sunny Essex skies."



Steam department volunteers come together for a team photograph with *Repton* on shed at North Weald. NICK ARTHURTON/EOR



No. 926 *Repton* became the first example of its class to traverse this former LU Central line branch when it appeared at the EOR's steam gala, pictured awaiting departure from North Weald on September 19. DAVID PALMER

Family tie draws top railway artist to Bulleid Pacific

By Geoff Courtney

ALTHOUGH an Essex resident all his life and a dedicated member of the GER Society, top railway artist Malcolm Root is also a keen advocate of Oliver Bulleid's Battle of Britain and West Country light Pacifics.

He speaks of a "great affinity" for these locomotives, taking pride in having 'copped' most of the class when trainspotting at Winchester and Eastleigh during the 1960s. There is, though, one in particular with which he feels a bond. It is No. 34072 257 Squadron, and his fondness for this engine is due to the strongest tie of all, a familial link. For that was the squadron his father was attached to after training as an armourer in 1943 and with which he remained until the end of the Second World War.

No 34072 is one of nine members of the class to have survived into preservation, and Malcolm seizes every opportunity to view the Swanage Railway-based Pacific whenever he can, the most recent being just 40 miles from his home in Halstead at an Epping Ongar Railway gala on September 19.

"I was delighted to be asked to take along several paintings and prints to form a small display, and one of



Ready for action: Malcolm Root's father is pictured second from left with three fellow armourers on the wing of a 257 Squadron Hawker Typhoon during the Second World War. MALCOLM ROOT COLLECTION

the deciding factors to accept the invitation, apart from always being made to feel welcome there, was the guest appearance of 257 Squadron," said Malcolm, aged 75, a fellow and vice-president of the Guild of Railway Artists.

"My father was interested in both aircraft and railways for much of his life, but sadly he didn't live long enough to see No. 34072 restored

and operational in 1990 after it had languished at Barry for 19 years.

"You can imagine the emotions and memories I encounter every time I see the locomotive, and I had a most enjoyable day talking to visitors and staff at the Epping gala.

"There is an interesting parallel with the Hawker Typhoon, the aircraft operated by 257 Squadron, which was powered by a giant 24-cylinder Napier



Cab ride: Malcolm Root cabs Battle of Britain No. 34072 257 Squadron on September 19 during the Pacific's visit to the Epping Ongar Railway. MALCOLM BATTEN

Sabre engine rather than the more familiar Roll-Royce, and the unrebuilt Battle of Britain engines, as both could be considered unconventional."

Malcolm's father George, who died in 1986 aged 64, joined the Post Office as a messenger boy before the war, and returned as a Royal Mail driver delivering to local villages, following which he became a Post Office counter clerk.

Swanage honours wartime refugees with plaque

A COMMEMORATIVE plaque has been unveiled at Swanage station recognising its role in one of the most remarkable humanitarian efforts of the 20th century.

In 1938/39, the station became an arrival point for many of the 10,000 Jewish children fleeing Nazi persecution in Europe.

As part of the Kindertransport initiative, thousands of unaccompanied minors – known as 'the Kinder' – were granted entry to Britain after the then government temporarily waived visa requirements.

Many arrived in Swanage with little more than a suitcase, photographs, or treasured keepsakes like dolls, leaving their families behind to begin new lives in safety.

The Swanage branch played a vital part in their journey, carrying the youngsters away from danger and into new homes and communities.

The plaque, now affixed to the station building, reads: "Swanage Railway Station was an arrival point for many Jewish Refugees 1938-1939. Thank you to Florence Nankivell, Trevor Chadwick, Nicholas Winton, Bournemouth Refugee Committee and Roger Brown for giving them a new life in Dorset."

giving them a new life in Dorset." It was unveiled by second-generation Kinder Craig Saul and his son Daniel.

The event, organised by the Rev Elaine Glover, was attended by Swanage's mayor, Coun Mike Bonfield, who cut a memorial cake.

Abbie King, CEO of The Swanage Railway Company, said: "We are deeply proud that Swanage and its railway were part of such a significant humanitarian story.

"This new plaque ensures that the bravery of those children and the kindness of those people who welcomed them will never be forgotten."



The unveiling of the Kindertransport memorial plaque at Swanage station. SR

Brighton museum restoration is almost complete

A MAJOR transformation of Brighton Toy and Model Museum, in Trafalgar Street, is due to be completed on October 17.

The project will see several of the museum's Grade II*-listed arches below the Brighton station forecourt revert to their 1930s appearance, with glassed fronts and ornamental window framework and lighting.

The Railway Heritage Trust has pledged 40% towards structural costs, as well as grants to appoint railway heritage architect Benedict O'Looney to design the new museum facade.

Founded in 1991, the museum contains more than 10,000 toys and railway models.



Are you a user of online professional networking website LinkedIn?

If so, follow the recently launched *Heritage Railway* magazine page on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/heritage-railway-magazine/

Bo'ness model arsonist jailed for 32 months

A MAN who caused £100,000 of damage after breaking into and setting fire to a carriage containing the Bo'ness Gauge O Group's model collection at the Bo'ness & Kinnel Railway has been jailed for 32 months at Stirling Sheriff Court.

Daniel Rodger, 33, of Edinburgh, who appeared in court by video link on September 24, pleaded guilty to wilful fire-raising.

Inexplicable act

His co-accused, Keith Walker, of Corbiehall, Bo'ness, who admitted breaking into the carriage and stealing model locomotives and rolling stock, as well as two vacuum cleaners, was sentenced to 300 hours of unpaid work and was placed under social work supervision for two years.

Sheriff Euan Gosney said: "This was an inexplicable act of wanton vandalism."

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 320, the burglary took place in the early hours of May 19 last year. The fire damaged the interior of the layout's fiddleyard coach and caused smoke damage to the viewing coach.

Deeply saddening

At the time, the group's chairman, Chris McDonald, said: "Most of our model railway is hand-made from scratch and it is deeply saddening to see how the pointless theft and vandalism can destroy what brings joy to so many of thousands of visitors every year."

The model railway was closed to the public for 11 months while it was restored.

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



Happy days: former Stratford railwaymen take a break from nostalgia and memories at their annual reunion at Mangapps Railway Museum on September 27. Organiser Dave Brennand is standing second from left, beside one of the museum's resident preserved locomotives, Class 31 No. 31233, which started life in 1960 as D5660. DAVE BRENNAND

Stratford railwaymen recall their days at a vast depot

By Geoff Courtney

MEMORIES of the huge east London shed and works complex of Stratford (30A to the steam era trainspotters and SF to the diesel generation), reverberated around Mangapps Railway Museum on September 27 as former drivers swapped tales at their annual reunion.

The working museum welcomed about 30 ex-Stratford men to its Essex home near Burnham-on-Crouch in an event organised by Dave Brennand, who embarked on his 40-year career at Stratford in 1973 as a 16-year-old cleaner and within five years was driving diesels.

With attendees from near and far, including Chris Maguire, from

Aberdeen, much banter was exchanged, many stories told, and the museum's rolling stock and facilities greatly admired.

As he relaxed after a busy day, a delighted Dave said: "All footplatemen share a common bond, whether they were based at King's Cross, Old Oak Common, Willesden, Kentish Town, Nine Elms or Stewarts Lane, and thousands all around the UK are passionate about keeping long-held traditions alive. Our Mangapps' reunion is one of the few gatherings held at a working railway museum. Long may it continue."

"Stratford was the best depot to work at, but anybody who worked at any engine shed will tell you their's was the best. Nobody can argue

against that. We all extend a big thank-you to John, June and James Jolly for hosting us at their museum."

The railway came to Stratford in 1839 with the opening by the Eastern Counties Railway of the first section of its line from Devonshire Street to Romford, followed by the first shed in 1840 and an erecting shop in 1846, and by 1895 it had become the largest depot in the UK, with an allocation of no fewer than 763 locomotives.

In December 1891, the works built GER Class Y14 (LNER Class J15) 0-6-0 No. 930 in nine hours and 47 minutes, a world record that has never been beaten. Steam ended at the depot in September 1962, but diesel maintenance and repairs continued until March 1991.

Avon Valley takes on 'Taffy Tank'

GWR 5600 0-6-2T No. 6695 has taken up temporary residence on the Avon Valley Railway, where it worked its first trains during the weekend of September 27/28.

Owned by the 6695 Locomotive Group, No. 6695 was built by Armstrong Whitworth for the GWR and was withdrawn in 1964. While it never ran over the line through Bitton itself, it is believed that three members of the class passed through in the 1950s on their way to the Somerset & Dorset route for trials.

Following an appearance at the West Somerset Railway's May 2-4 steam gala, No. 6695, which was previously based on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, entered the Minehead workshops for repairs to the foundation ring. It moved to Bitton on the AVR in mid-September and a contract has been signed that will see the locomotive based there on long-term loan.

After successful testing, it returned to service on September 27 as part of the line's Railway 200 celebration weekend, where it worked trains



No. 6695 departs Bitton on September 28 during the Railway 200 celebrations weekend. ADAM ASHFORD

alongside Class 31 No. 31101. Meanwhile, 4WVB Sentinel No. 7492 (which spent its life at Fry's Somerdale chocolate factory just over a mile away in Keynsham) and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0DM No. 358 *Grumpy* (one of a batch of 10 identical locomotives for the Ministry of Supply) were

on static display in Platform 2 at Bitton station.

Guided shed tours allowed guests to take a glimpse of projects happening behind the scenes, while model railways and classic cars were on display and archive British Railways films were screened in a buffet coach.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES SEE PAGE 30



CELEBRATE

THOSE SPECIAL MOMENTS
WITH A UNIQUE RANGE OF
LUXURY GIFT ITEMS

CROCKERY & TEA SET, AFTERNOON TEA

**PLUS ENJOY AN EXPRESS AFTERNOON TEA FROM
ONE OF OUR STATION LOCATIONS**

**GIFT VOUCHERS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE
FROM OUR WEBSITE**

Available at Taunton, Moor Street and Leamington Spa



centenarylounge.com





The Cleveland Bay in Yarm Road, Eaglescliffe, the 'world's first purpose-built railway pub' from 1825, a quarter of a mile from the Etherley Incline on the Stockton & Darlington Railway. EH



Havenstreet station will have its centenary next year. EH



Northbrook Road overbridge on the Swanage Railway. EH

Seven heritage sites are granted listed status to mark Railway 200

By Robin Jones

FIVE stations on heritage railways, along with two other rail locations, have been awarded Grade II listing status by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of Historic England to celebrate Railway 200.

The world's first public house specifically built in association with a railway, The Cleveland Bay, in Eaglescliffe, was built for the chairman of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, Thomas Meynell, for the opening of its Yarm branch line on October 17, 1825, and has been listed because of its historic and architectural interest.

Sheringham and Weybourne stations on the North Norfolk Railway, Havenstreet on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Woody Bay on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, and the Swanage engine shed and turntable were also listed in recognition of their historic and architectural interest, along with the Swanage Railway's Northbrook Road overbridge.

Originally known as The New Inn, The Cleveland Bay is classed as a prototype railway station and was

designed to oversee the coal and lime depot at the end of the branch, the depot being owned privately by Meynell. The establishment proved a success and appears to have prompted the S&DR to commission its own public houses at its coal depots at Stockton, Darlington and Heighington. All four buildings can be seen as early proto-railway stations, built before the concept of the railway station had fully evolved.

The Cleveland Bay remains in use as a public house and is located within the Eaglescliffe Conservation Area.

M&GN splendour

Sheringham and Weybourne stations were designed by William Marriott, company engineer of the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway, and built in 1887 and 1900 respectively. Historic England stated that both display impressive architectural qualities in comparison to many rural stations of the same age.

The buildings are a testament to Marriott's skill and ingenuity in producing well-functioning stations while working under financial constraints.

NNR general manager Graham Hukins said: "We are honoured to receive this recognition. That the buildings have survived to now have extra protection afforded by a Grade II listing is a tribute to the volunteers and staff who have cared for them since the line closed in 1964.

"Any additional profile is also very welcome. Caring for the buildings, track, structures, locomotives and carriages costs more than £4 million a year, so anything that helps attract more visitors to support our heritage work is greatly appreciated.

"The railway transformed the area into a popular holiday destination. Sheringham was a sleepy fishing village before the trains arrived. The stations were built to cater for tourists and are still doing that more than 125 years later. Their original features, together with careful maintenance and sympathetic restoration, mean they immediately evoke a steam age atmosphere.

"They are as popular as ever, ensuring the railway is still a key part of the local tourism economy."

Havenstreet was built in 1926 for the Southern Railway. A small rural station,

its design combined a signalbox and booking office with an adjoining waiting room. It was built before the transition to a Modernist style which became more widely used in the 1930s and is an example of a single-manned station which would have been operated by a single railway worker acting both as a railway porter and as signal machinery operator. Many key elements including the lever frame, ticket counter and the ticket window are believed to be original.

'Best-surviving example'

Dating from 1898, Woody Bay is the best-surviving example of a station on the original L&BR in Exmoor National Park. The railway was funded by publisher and philanthropist Sir George Newnes, who had a clear interest in connecting communities and seized the opportunity for an onward rail link from Barnstaple to Lynton and Lynmouth to bring tourists from locations between Devon and London, but also to enable local people to access markets and events in Barnstaple.

The railway's success was partly due to the beautiful landscape of



Swanage engine shed and turntable with Class 08 No. 08436 standing on it. EH



WD 2-10-0 No. 90775 arrives at Weybourne station with a passenger service. EH



Class 104 DMU No. 56182 stands at Sheringham's restored station with an unusual evening service. DAVE BALLARD/NNR

north Devon, which attracted many visitors inspired by contemporary writers and poets who travelled to the Alps and subsequently compared them with English landscapes. Woody Bay station's 'chalet-style' design reflects the area's nickname, Little Switzerland. The station has survived mostly unchanged and is now the headquarters of the heritage railway.

The Swanage engine shed and turntable are both situated within the Swanage Conservation Area. The shed is a rare surviving example of this type of railway building. Built in 1885 using rock-faced Purbeck stone when the rail network in England was being completed, it continues to be used today.

The turntable pit is also a rare example on the British railway system since so few survive, and it is still in working order. Despite the loss of the original turntable, the pit was modified only slightly to

accommodate the 1950s turntable installed in 2012.

Shared characteristics

Designed by engineer WR Galbraith, Northbrook Road overbridge stands to the east of the engine shed and turntable and west of the Grade II-listed goods shed. All three were built at the same time and share clear characteristics, demonstrating similar architectural qualities and reflecting the style employed on the Swanage Railway and on the wider LSWR. The construction of the Swanage branch contributed to the widespread use of Purbeck stone in Dorset and beyond, and also to the development of Swanage as a seaside destination, said an English Heritage statement.

Claudia Kenyatta CBE and Emma Squire CBE, joint incoming chief executives of Historic England, said: "The development of England's railway system was one of the



Bagnall 4-4-0T No. 2819 Sir George Newnes, renamed following restoration after the British publisher who played a significant role in the creation of the original Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, arrives at the 'chalet-style' Woody Bay station with a passenger train from Killington Lane. EH

greatest achievements of the Victorian era. These new listings highlight key milestones in its growth and demonstrate how the railway has shaped our local places today.

"Every newly listed station is open to the public to visit, so the protection of these sites means that they will continue to be seen and enjoyed by visitors for generations to come."

Heritage Minister Baroness Twycross added: "These seven sites are stunning examples of our railway heritage. They remind us how vital the railways have been for connecting people across the country, whether it's for business or pleasure.

"Listing all of these incredible sites is the perfect way to celebrate the Railway 200 year and shine a light on the role of railways in shaping our national story over the last two centuries.

"These listings will ensure they are protected and can be enjoyed for another two hundred years."

→ English Heritage has launched The Missing Pieces Project: Railway 200, inviting members of the public to tell their own stories about their favourite listed railway places by adding photographs, videos, stories and memories on the National Heritage List for England at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/missing-pieces/>

Oldest Gresley loco on track for spring comeback

THE oldest surviving locomotive built to a Sir Nigel Gresley design has successfully completed its steam test at the North Norfolk Railway's Weybourne workshops in the latter stages of its six-year overhaul.

GNR N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 was withdrawn from service in late 2018 for an overhaul that has proved to be considerably more extensive and costly than anticipated, and which was delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Once stripped down, it became evident that far more work was needed than anticipated. An extensive programme of mechanical and boiler work led to the overhaul cost of about £650,000.

Since arriving at the workshop in mid-December 2024, work completed includes the successful non-destructive testing and examination of the two carbon steel steam pipes that serve from the superheater header to the steam chests.

All the new No. 17 washout plugs have been procured, and these will now be fitted to the boiler following the successful completion of the steam test. A final hydraulic pressure

test of the boiler once the reassembly of the engine is complete will reset the clock for the 10-year boiler certificate.

The superheater header is currently being prepared for hydraulic testing to 255psi and one of the NNR's fitters has been carefully preparing all the lubrication pipework and fittings for fitting to the engine during its reassembly. New expansion links were delivered in September.

The N2 is now on course to return to traffic in its distinctive GNR livery next spring, when it will again be paired with the Midland & Great Northern Society's unique set of Quad Art carriages.

Funding shortfall

Built by the North British Locomotive Co in February 1921, it became LNER No. 4744, then 9523 in the 1946 renumbering scheme, and finally BR No. 69523. Withdrawn from service at New England in September 1962, it was purchased by the current owner, The Gresley Society Trust, in September 1963. It had been based on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and the Great Central Railway, before arriving



GNR N2 suburban 0-6-2T No. 1744 in the Weybourne workshops on August 28. GRESLEY SOCIETY

at the NNR in early 2017. The NNR has agreed to initially fund the completion of the overhaul, with the value reimbursed later through operation of the locomotive for a period without charge. However, the society still faces a substantial funding shortfall to meet the final overhaul cost and has launched The N2 Overhaul Completion Club to raise the required £100,000 from 100 people each donating £1000 in up to eight instalments.

Special benefits for club supporters include a certificate signed by

president John Cameron and chairman Philip Benham MBE, an exclusive opportunity to visit No. 1744 under overhaul at the NNR, the chance to buy a ticket for one of the first comeback trains hauled by No. 1744, an exclusive print limited to an edition of 100 of No. 1744 in GNR livery by Matthew Cousins, of the Guild of Railway Artists, and a year's free membership of the trust.

The club has already raised more than £30,000. Details of how to join The N2 Overhaul Completion Club can be found at gresley.org

Archaeologists find 'earliest' standard gauge railway

By Robin Jones

THE earliest standard gauge railway in Scotland – and possibly Britain – may have been discovered. Archaeologists from the 1722 Waggonway Heritage Group, working on the Tranent-Cockenzie Waggonway, have found evidence dating its use of 4ft 8in gauge to about 1775.

The waggonway was built in 1722 by the York Buildings Company to carry coal from pits at Tranent to fuel salt pans on the coast at Cockenzie. It became connected to the North British Railway via a short branch in 1849; the southern section of it serving Fleets Colliery remained in operation with steam locomotives until the colliery closed in 1959 and was used in the 1960s by the NCB as a wagon store.

The archaeological team was working on the route of the waggonway where it crossed the fields where Battle of Prestonpans was fought in September 1745, in which the waggonway played a crucial role. Because a large part of this landscape was bog and marsh, the engineers who built the waggonway 'floated' it on a timber raft – more than 100 years before George Stephenson built the Liverpool & Manchester Railway over Chat Moss.

The waggonway was at first constructed in wood and was horse-drawn, and the archaeological team found evidence of its remains surviving in the ground as wet and mineralised wood. Its preservation was sufficiently good enough to show how the rails and sleepers were jointed and secured with wooden dowels called trenails. So far, 65ft of the waggonway has been uncovered. While its existence was known



Archaeologist Alan Braby excavates the cobbled horse track between the rails. 1722WP

from trenches dug in 2021, the archaeologists were most surprised was that it was built to standard gauge of 4ft 8in, give or take half an inch; evidence suggesting a date of about 1775. If so, it would be the earliest standard gauge railway in Scotland, after the line at Carron Ironworks dated to 1810.

The Willington Waggonway of 1785/6 is usually considered the earliest example of the 4ft 8in gauge in England. Built in 1795 to carry coal from the Tyneside mines to the river, it was rediscovered in 2013 during archaeological work being carried out prior to redevelopment of the former Neptune shipyard in Walker due to its proximity to the Roman fort Segedunum.

Early railways historian and archaeologist Anthony Dawson said: "Coming as it does during Railway 200, the discovery of the earliest standard gauge railway in Scotland, on what is considered to be the first railway north of the border, is remarkable.

"It shows how railways originated before the steam age, and how standard gauge, which is so often associated with George Stephenson, goes back well before his time. It is a fantastic piece of archaeology which asks a lot of questions: on which side of the border does standard gauge originate, for example?"

During the September 2-7 archaeology event, more than 500 people visited the dig, many of them volunteering with archaeological tasks around the site.

"The dig has been another huge success," said Ed Bethune, chairman of the 1722 Waggonway Project. "With the combined help of professionals and community volunteers, we have yet again added significant information to the archaeological record and made new discoveries to add to the incredible history of this earliest of Scottish railways.

"To discover that this gauge which we consider 'modern' was in use earlier than we could have



Archaeologist Anthony Dawson discovered that the gauge between the rails was 4ft 8in. 1722WP

imagined is not only exciting, but it is nationally significant."

The 1722 Waggonway Project's excavations were supported by East Lothian Council, CFA Archaeology, Dig It! Scotland, Open Past Productions, Eagle Plant Hire and McLaren Motor Company. Managed by the not-for-profit 1722 Waggonway Heritage Group, which was founded in 2017, the findings were presented at the eighth International (Hybrid) Early Railways Conference at the Central Hall in the Dolphin Centre, Darlington, on September 23-26.

Stephenson spent much of his early engineering career working for County Durham mines and favoured 4ft 8in gauge for the waggonways and Durham and too on his Killingworth line. The Hetton and Springwell waggonways also used it.

His Stockton & Darlington Railway was built primarily to take coal from collieries near Shildon to the port at Stockton-on-Tees, and its 4ft 8in gauge accommodated the hundreds of horse-drawn chaldron wagons already in use.

He introduced 4ft 8½in on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway for when it opened in 1830 to enhance free movement and reduce binding on curves. The success of this project led to Stephenson and his son Robert being employed to engineer several other larger railway projects, and so 4ft 8½in became dominant firstly in Britain and then a world standard.

The S&DR changed to 4ft 8½in in about 1850.

The Mount Washington Cog Railway, the world's first mountain-climbing rack railway, used 4ft 8in gauge when it opened in 1868 and still does so today.



How the waggonway would have looked, in artwork by Peter Savee.



The wood of the waggonway rails and sleepers left a negative imprint in the soil. 1722WP

Flatpack diesel makes first return to 'home' territory

By Robin Jones

A UNIQUE shunter which had been assembled in the North East from a 'flatpack' collection of components returned to the region for the first time to star in the Tanfield Railway's September 20/21 Diesel Pioneers event.

Work on building 0-4-0DH *Myfanwy* and two identical locomotives was started by the Stafford-based locomotive builder WG Bagnall in February 1961, just as the firm was being taken over by Brush. The locomotives were then moved as kits of parts 175 miles away to be completed by Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns in Darlington during 1962. Accordingly, *Myfanwy* ended up carrying two works numbers – Bagnall 3211 and RSH 8366.

It was delivered new to the Royal Ordnance Factory at Pembrey and later purchased by construction company Tarmac for work on the Jubilee line extension in London and heavily converted by contractors in Wales to a cut-down state, with lowered cab, narrowed steps and buffer beams, and various safety features. It was here where it

picked up its Welsh name *Myfanwy*. After the work ended in London, the locomotive was moved to construction company Carillon's Rugby yard but deemed too small and light for shunting duties and was parked up. In September 2003, the current owner's father, who worked at the Rugby depot, bought *Myfanwy* to save it from being scrapped. It was then moved to Foxfield Railway and used for general shunting, with the odd appearance at galas, and underwent a full restoration to original condition which was completed in 2019, emerging in black and yellow livery.

Tanfield general manager David Watchman said: "The North East pioneered commercial locomotive building. For 140 years or so, the region built engines of all different shapes and sizes for railways around the globe, but *Myfanwy* is one of the most unusual stories.

"We are here to celebrate the North East's railway history, so it's great to be able to tell *Myfanwy*'s story here, where it was actually built, despite appearances."

Myfanwy was joined at the event by home-based Fowler 0-6-0DH No. 4240010 of 1960 *Ribblesdale*



'Flatpack' diesel *Myfanwy* in action during the Diesel Pioneers event. BEN WILSON/TANFIELD

Cement No. 6, which was built in Leeds but ended its commercial life working at a cement plant in the centre of Newcastle, where it became the last industrial locomotive in the city. Completing the line-up were Ruston and Hornsby 0-4-0DE No. 418600 of 1958 *Tyne Improvement Commission No. 35*, which was built in Lincoln and worked at Albert Edward Dock in North Shields before being saved from scrap, and Armstrong Whitworth

0-4-0DE D22 of 1933 *Reyrolles No. 2*. One of the first commercially successful diesels, it worked in Tyneside its entire life before being preserved during the 1970s. "Everyone knows the North East played a pioneering role with steam locomotives, but in reality the region also had a massive part to play in the early development of diesel and electric railway locomotives too," David added.

SteamLights Returns This Winter To The Bluebell Railway!

BOOK NOW!

Light, Steam, and a Touch of Magic!

Ice Queen

& Mythical Creatures

A Brand New Story For Steamlights This
Winter At The Bluebell Railway!

NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 28 2025

Book online today at www.bluebell-railway.com

Sandstone steam rested due to lack of qualified engineers

By John Titlow

THE world's largest collection of 2ft gauge locomotives and rolling stock in South Africa has drastically reduced steam running due to a lack of qualified and skilled engineers.

This situation is one also faced in the UK, with insufficient young engineers being trained to take over the role of experienced counterparts, and the skills are not being handed down the generations.

With Sandstone's experienced locomotive engineers reaching retirement age, they have unsuccessfully tried to find replacements to fill the void. Accordingly, its once large collection of working locomotives has been reduced to the bare minimum.

A Sandstone spokesman said "Since we began operations in 1999, we have always kept a reasonable supply of parts and associated equipment for the ongoing and scheduled maintenance of our steam locomotives and rolling stock, together with the employment of qualified personnel to operate and maintain them.

"Over recent years, the situation for parts and maintenance, together with the availability of qualified personnel, has changed dramatically and to the detriment of our planned maintenance programmes.



Left: Services pass at Mooihoeck with Garratt NGG11 No. 52 on a mixed train and NG6 No. 97 with a short passenger trip on April 9, 2019.
JOHN TITLOW

"Parts and personnel to maintain the fleet of locomotives are just not available. This has had an immediate impact on the availability of locomotives for service.

Unfortunate outcome

"Many of our locomotives are standing idle for the lack of parts and qualified and capable people to maintain them. Therefore, we have reluctantly decided to restrict Sandstone's steam railway operations, although all the locomotives and rolling stock will be available to visitors as museum exhibits in the locomotive workshop for years to come.

"Sandstone has tried extremely hard to avoid this situation, but without success."

Sandstone Heritage Trust is a private preservation initiative established on a commercial arable farm growing wheat, maize and sunflowers covering 20,000 acres near Ficksburg, in the Eastern Free State.

It is located under the Maluti Mountains, along the Caledon River, the border with land-locked Lesotho, and was bought by its present owner, a British-owned company, in 1995.

In *Heritage Railway* issue 253, the article 'Mountains meet the stars' described what this wonderful place is capable of, and it is sad that it will now revert to a mainly static museum.

It is now left with just one working articulated Garratt. In addition to 2ft gauge, several 3ft 6in Cape Gauge

steam locomotives and carriages are also safely preserved on site.

The situation is not helped by the rail regulator because it classifies the heritage railway in the same way as the main line, demonstrating a perceived lack of understanding.

If any engineers fancy taking on this task, Sandstone would be interested to hear from them via www.sandstone-estates.com

Furthermore, following a recent break-in, all of Sandstone's brass bearings for narrow gauge carriages were stolen.

The sale of scrap metal in the UK was changed years ago where proof of identity was essential for payment; it is thought that if this law was implemented in South Africa, it could reduce similar thefts.

TPO group at Quainton Road unveils exchange apparatus

THE installation of lineside exchange apparatus was celebrated at Buckinghamshire Railway Centre's Moving the Mail event at Quainton Road on September 14.

A ceremonial cutting of ribbon was undertaken by John Smith, formerly cross docking night shift manager at Royal Mail's National Distribution Centre at Crick, and who is now a member of the Travelling Post Office Group at Quainton road.

The apparatus was donated by Winchcombe Railway Museum and conserved by centre volunteers.

An illustrated talk on the history of the apparatus was given at the event as well as in a nod to the national Railway 200.

Another illustrated talk on 194 years of Mail by Rail focussed on how the needs of Royal Mail influenced the development of the railways.

Visitors were also able to see displays of recently acquired artefacts in the TPO carriages, along with a

wealth of historical detail in poster form. The opportunity to try sorting letters with fictitious addresses was enjoyed by younger visitors.

The talks at the event were well-attended, and the rain held off until

after the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon had taken place.

Visitors on a general steaming day at the centre can go inside the TPO carriages and see the displays and artefacts, as well as see the

newly-positioned apparatus in place. Booking and more details

are available online at www.bucksrailcentre.org or by visiting the centre in person at Station Road, Quainton HP22 4BY.



Above: The newly installed lineside apparatus.

Left: Former Royal Mail employee John Smith cuts the ribbon at the ceremony held for unveiling of the lineside exchange apparatus at Buckinghamshire Railway Centre's Moving the Mail event on September 14. BOTH PHOTOS: BOB FRISE

Join Britain's Leading Railway Society

Just £10 for membership until December 2026*

Membership benefits include:

- Discounts on many of the Society's books
- Exclusive visit programme to railway facilities and heritage sites
- Talks and illustrated presentations at branches throughout the UK
- Discounted access to the Modern Traction locomotive database
- Extensive library and archive, plus...

The Railway Observer (digital edition) - A monthly 64 page full colour magazine, featuring:

- Superb quality pictures
- Network operating reports
- Loco and unit stock changes
- Infrastructure news
- Articles on a range of railway subjects and much more...

www.rcts.org.uk/join

See our four new books: Complete Allocation History of the CI. 31s • Rails Around Scotland • BR Diesel and Gas Turbine Prototypes • Observing the Railway 2024

These titles and more are available from: <https://rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/>

* Applies to new members, with digital magazine. Terms and conditions apply - Total annual fee = £10
** Applies to new members, with printed magazine. Terms and conditions apply - Total annual fee = £29
RCTS is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Registered Number 1169995



Royal Forest of Steam 2025 November 1st & 2nd 2025

Featuring BR Std 2 No. 78019, 'Newstead'
'Uskmouth 1' and BR(W) Pannier No. 9681

Tickets & info - www.deanforestrailway.co.uk

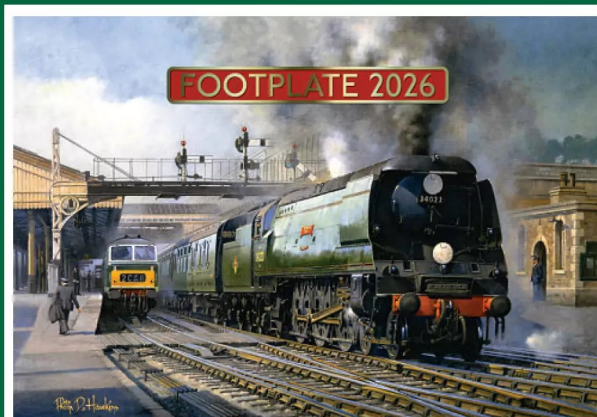


Visitors appearing courtesy of the LSLG, GCR, Charles Newton Trust and Alex Alder



Our 2026 'Footplate' calendar
from superb paintings
by
Philip D. Hawkins FGRA

2026 'Footplate' Calendar



Another year and another wonderful selection from the original paintings by Philip D. Hawkins FGRA. Titles included are:- 'The Master Cutler', 'King On The Cambrian', 'Blackmore Vale', 'Evening At Barmouth Junction', 'Preparing For Nightfall' & 'Small Heath Winter'.

Overall size 19.5in x 13.5in. Image size 15in x 10.5in. Price £25 inc p&p

Just a few of our Limited Editions & Artists' Proofs



'Crewes' Finest'



'Snow Hill - Sunlight & Steam'



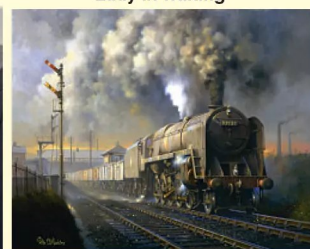
'Southern Pacifics'



'Lady In Waiting'



'Express Freight - East Coast Style'



'Battle At Brickyard Crossing'

To learn more about the artist, his paintings, books and how to go about commissioning work visit www.philipdhawkins.co.uk

VISIT US ONLINE

www.quicksilverpublishing.co.uk
for our full catalogue and more

Or send your order to: **Quicksilver Publishing,**
1 Stockton Hill, Dawlish, Devon EX7 9LZ
Tel: +44(0)75 9639 9151

Please allow 14 days for delivery and make cheques and postal orders payable to **QUICKSILVER PUBLISHING.**

Please add £8 for EU orders and £12 for rest of the world.





Above: Celebrations abound as Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0DM *Ashdown* cuts the ribbon. NDR



Right: 'Yankee Tank' No. 30075 carried a Railway 200 headboard for the occasion. NDR

Grand opening of new track at Shillingstone station

By Robin Jones

A RIBBON-CUTTING ceremony at Shillingstone station on September 18 marked the formal opening of the North Dorset Railway's new 440-yard length of track.

Witnessed by the High Sheriff of Dorset, Callum Bremner JP, North Dorset MP Simon Hoare and local county and parish councillors, together with about 70 NDR volunteers, home-based Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0DM D1186 of 1959 *Ashdown* cut the ribbon. The sole survivor of a unique design built for the Manchester Ship Canal, it was waved off by the station's youngest long-term volunteer, 13-year-old Joe

Bond. It was followed by on-loan Wickham trolley Type 17A No. 8267 of 1959, its full restoration having been completed earlier this year, with the addition of passenger seatbelts.

Then came Yugoslavia-built Class 62 'Yankee Tank' 0-6-0T No. 30075, which, as reported in issue 336, passed its boiler inspection on August 6 and was given a new 10-year ticket.

NDR chairman Gavin Collins listed the many achievements are the station this year, including a new car park and leases and planning permissions granted.

The High Sheriff described the station's restoration as a symbol of what can be achieved by a community coming together with

vision and enthusiasm, and he congratulated the volunteers on their persistence, teamwork, and dedication. "May the line ahead be bright," he added.

Mr Hoare spoke of when he was first invited to Shillingstone, thinking that the volunteers had a great plan but doubting that it could be accomplished, and how pleased he was to have been proved wrong. He noted the importance of the station to the local community and economy, and he said he looked forward to the heritage line going even further, both north and south.

As reported in the last issue of *Heritage Railway*, planning permission was granted in August for the NDR to

change its status from museum to an operational railway with a museum. It is hoped that brake van rides can begin in autumn next year, likely hauled by *Ashdown*, with occasional Wickham trolley trips.

The station closed in March 1966 when the original Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway line closed under the Beeching cuts and the track was ripped up within weeks.

The only remaining example of the Dorset Central Railway standard design, it was rented out for various purposes until 1998 but had visibly deteriorated by 2000.

The North Dorset Railway Trust was granted a 99-year lease on the station in June 2005.

Council blocks plan to build near historic railway

PLANS for the construction of an agricultural dwelling for a shepherdess near to the route of the Liskeard and Caradon Railway has been refused by Cornwall Council following objections that it could harm the landscape setting of the historic line.

The standard gauge mineral railway opened in 1844 to carry copper and tin ores and also granite from Caradon Hill to Moorswater for onward transport via Looe Harbour, which was first reached by the Liskeard and Looe Union Canal and later by the Liskeard and Looe Railway. In 1909, the GWR bought the Liskeard and Caradon Railway, which closed in 1917, its track materials being removed in aid of the war effort.

The planning application involved a site at Darite, near the line's trackbed, and was supported by St Cleer Parish Council.

However, the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site (WHS) Office stated: "The former mineral railway is one of the seven key attributes that expresses the outstanding universal value of the WHS. The application site forms the immediate rural setting to the mineral railway, with this rural setting being unchanged as can be ascertained via a historic map regression, with its undeveloped character persisting over all these years into the present day.

"The rural landscape character very much helps to define this attribute type in that it enables for what is essentially a man-made linear historic

industrial feature to stand in contrast to the more pastoral landscape.

"The WHS Office is concerned that the proposed development of the application site will erode what remains as a very rural setting to the former mineral railway that has persisted here for a very long time, introducing levels of domesticity into the field setting to the former railway that will permanently alter the historic landscape character here."

In refusing the application, Cornwall Council said: "The site is located within the Caradon Mining District World Heritage Site and within close proximity to the historically significant extant former Liskeard and Caradon Railway, representing a key attribute of the WHS. The proposed development



A surviving Liskeard and Caradon Railway bridge at Darite. CRISPIN PURDY/CREATIVE COMMONS

would diminish the contrast of the undeveloped rural landscape against the railway, making it less legible as a historic feature which is critical to the understanding and preservation of the railway's industrial heritage."

lucy PITTAWAY



— 200 Years —
Stockton & Darlington
RAILWAY

Discover the latest artwork by **award-winning** artist Lucy Pittaway.
Prints and Canvases available online and in all seven galleries.

Scan the QR code with your
phone to explore our artwork



BACK ON TOP OF THE WORLD – 200 YEARS AFTER CHANGING IT FOREVER

The climax of the Stockton & Darlington 200 Festival and the pinnacle of the Railway 200 programme to mark the bicentenary of the world's first modern train saw an estimated 100,000 people turn out along the historic 26-mile route to glimpse the replica 1825 train as it passed by, reports **Robin Jones**.



National pride in Britain's transport heritage reached a new high with the Stockton & Darlington 200 Festival's magnificent recreation of that globe-changing first-ever steam-hauled passenger train of September 27, 1825, two centuries to the day.

'Iconic' is an understatement when describing Ignatius Bonomi's Grade I-listed Skerne Bridge, which was built to carry the fledgling railway over the river of the same name a short hop from today's Hopetown Darlington attraction. It was immortalised as a defining image of the early railway era in John Dobbin's 1875 painting of George and Robert Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* hauling a rake of chaldron wagons and, most importantly, the passenger coach *Experiment*. The restaging of that classic scene using the replica of *Locomotion No. 1* and its newly-built train, all of which

had been main line-approved for the bicentenary, brought huge crowds flocking to Darlington from both home and overseas – see centre, pages 50/51.

While the replica train on its Anniversary Journey was the focal point of the bicentennial celebration on September 26-28, the event straddled Darlington and also Shildon, home of the National Railway Museum's Locomotion outpost, and Stockton-on-Tees, with a succession of amazing artistic displays performances based on the groundbreaking event 200 years before which sparked a revolution in global transport as other counties emulated what developed here.

The event began with the replica train undergoing test runs at Locomotion on September 25.

The following day, queues formed outside Locomotion from as early as 8.45am, and

about 3000 people arrived to see both the restored original *Locomotion No. 1* inside the museum, while an estimated 15,000 people lined the route between Shildon and Darlington to watch the replica train make its first public main line journey.

Ticketed viewing sites were set up along the 26-mile route of the train for the next three days, but spectators packed every other vantage point they could find.

Replacement buses were arranged by train operator Northern to cover those of its services which were cancelled or rearranged to allow the replica train to pass.

And unlike the original event, the 2025 restaging included no less than a Royal Train! Surprise guest the Duke of Edinburgh arrived at Locomotion by helicopter on September 26. He was met by dignitaries a few hundred yards up the line from Locomotion, and among them was his

The replica train passes through Heighington just after noon on September 26. It was at this station that George Stephenson has the original *Locomotion No. 1* loaded on the rails for the first time in 1825. The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway had taken ownership of the station just two weeks before, thanks to a substantial grant from Hitachi Rail, as reported in *Headline News*, page 6/7. MATT DITCH





Prince Edward greets Bev Crowley and Tony Hall, dressed as George Stephenson and his third wife Ellen Gregory, at the Locomotion museum in Shildon on September 26. RICK WOODWARD

brother-in-law Sir Tim Laurence, husband of the Princess Royal, and who is chairman of the Science Museum Group and president of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust.

Prince Edward then boarded *Experiment*, pulled by the replica *Locomotion No. 1*, for the short journey into the museum grounds.

He met Chris Cubitt, the driver, and the team of engineers behind the newly restored replica and TV presenter Guy Martin, who was part of the crew on the day and was filming a documentary about the train.

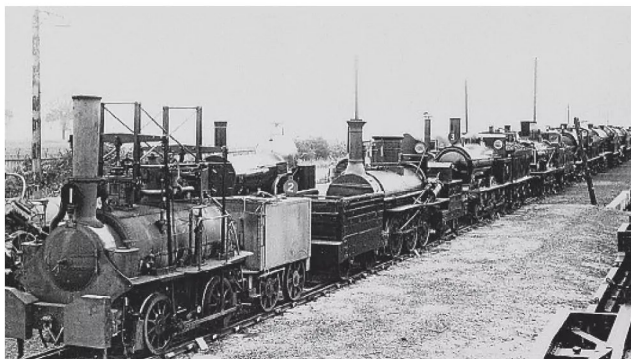
He met the public at Locomotion before touring the museum and travelling directly onwards to Darlington, where he then visited Hopetown. There he toured the museum and the carriage works exhibitions and visited The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's new Darlington Locomotive Works, as reported in Headline News page 8, before leaving the region by helicopter.

His visit carried on the long history of royal visits to Stockton & Darlington Railway anniversaries. The Duke and Duchess of York attended the centenary celebrations in 1925, while in 1975, Prince Philip, the late Duke of Edinburgh, opened the National Railway Museum in York and Darlington's North Road Station Museum to celebrate the 150th celebrations.

En route to Darlington, the replica train passed Heighington station, where the original *Locomotion No. 1* was first loaded on to the tracks in 1825. Hundreds turned out to watch it pass along the world's first railway platform.

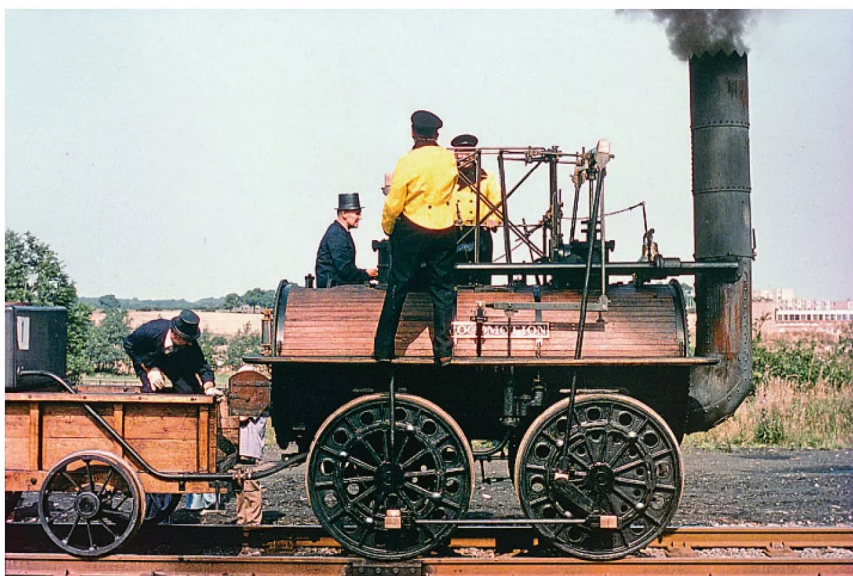
How it happened back then

The mass public welcome to the replica train invited comparison with similar scenes 200 years before. A press report dated October 15, 1825, said: "The opening of this stupendous work which effects a communication between the port of Stockton and the coalfield in the interior parts of the county of Durham, took place on Tuesday fortnight. About eight o'clock, thirteen waggons, twelve of them laden with two tons of coal each, and the other with sacks of flour, the whole covered with people, were drawn up the inclined plane at Brusselton, amidst the cheers of assembled thousands. This inclined plane is above a mile and a half long, yet, by means of the two powerful steam engines erected at its top (each being of eighty horse power), the waggons, with their immense loads were drawn up in eight minutes, by a patent rope, in one piece, which extends the whole length. After a short time the waggons descended the other side



Left: A cavalcade of locomotives marking the 100th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1925.

Below: The then newly-built *Locomotion No. 1* replica took part in the Stockton & Darlington Railway 150th anniversary steam calcade at Shildon in 1975. BRITISH RAIL



of the hill, and took their station on the level below, whence the procession was to set out.

"About 10 o'clock, the locomotive engine, or steam-horse, as it was more generally termed, gave note of preparation; the cry of 'all ready' was heard and the engine, with its appendages, moved forward in the following order: the company's locomotive engine; the engine's tender, laden with water and coals; five waggons, laden with coals, one with flour, and one containing surveyors, engineers, and the committee and other proprietors in the coach belonging to the company; six waggons, with strangers; fourteen waggons, with workmen and others; six waggons, laden with a coals. The whole of the above was attached to the locomotive engine.

"Then followed 24 waggons, filled with workmen and others, drawn by horses. Flags with inscriptions were displayed on four of the waggons. The scene, on the moving of the procession, sets description at defiance; the welkin rang with loud huzzas, while the machine moved onward at the rate of 10 or 12 miles an hour, with a weight of not less than 80 tons attached to it.

"Notwithstanding a delay of more than half an hour, the procession reached Darlington about 12 o'clock, there being in and on the waggons attached to the locomotive engine no less than 548 persons. At Darlington, 10-12,000 persons were assembled. The procession afterwards, drawn by the locomotive engine, proceeded onward, followed by some other waggons drawn by horses, and filled with company, towards

Stockton, which they reached about a quarter before four o'clock. The engine and its appendages moved on the descent at the rate of fifteen or sixteen miles an hour. On reaching the company's wharf at Stockton, a salute of seven guns was fired, and the band struck up God Save the King, which was followed by three times three stentorian cheers. It was ascertained that nearly 700 persons were in and upon the waggons attached to the locomotive engine when it entered Stockton.

"The distance from Brusselton engine to Stockton is twenty and a half miles, and the entire length of the line from Witton Park colliery nearly twenty-five miles, being, we believe, the largest railroad in the kingdom. We believe not less than 40 or 50,000 persons were assembled to witness the proceedings of the day. A dinner was afterwards given, at which nearly 200 gentlemen attended. Among the toasts were 'success to the Manchester and Liverpool railway' and 'success to the Leeds and Hull railway.'

Running the same train 200 years later!

Project managing the replica train of the main line throughout the event was Steve Davies MBE, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, which, as reported last issue, had just opened the main line connection to its new Darlington Locomotive Works at Hopetown.

Giving his early thoughts on the experience of operating the replica train, he wrote: "I have had the distinct pleasure of being

at the heart of a number of eye-catching and ambitious railway heritage projects over the years – the gathering of the six surviving LNER A4 Pacifics to mark Mallard 75 and establishment of the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum in Freetown being up there among the most memorable – but even I didn't realise the enormity of project managing the replica 1825 Stockton & Darlington Train until we actually came to operating it on the main line.

"This project initially bore all the hallmarks of something quite simple and straightforward (yeah, right!) when with more than two years before delivery we assembled the team and contractors necessary to create a train which would be allowed to operate on the main line.

"The brief was straightforward: using the 1974/5-built replica of *Locomotion No. 1*, create a representative train which could operate under its own power to recreate the original journey as much as the surviving S&DR infrastructure would allow. The full detail of the construction and testing of the train is a story for another time, suffice to say that ownership of the locomotive was transferred from Beamish Museum to Darlington Borough Council, which then entrusted its

overhaul to Locomotive Maintenance Services at Loughborough.

"It was to haul three chaldron waggons, and the S&DR Directors' Coach was built by Northern Heritage Engineering of Darlington, and the completed ensemble was then tested extensively at the wonderful and very scenic Weardale Railway. His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Railways, at the time Ian Prosser CBE, was incredibly supportive and appointed one of his team to act in an advisory capacity, such was the unique and unusual nature of this project, an initiative which helped to ensure there would be few surprises for the regulatory bodies when the time came to operate the train.

"To satisfy the powers-that-be that the train was fit for the main line, we had to undertake a full and very comprehensive certification process, essential if we were to be allowed access to the National Network. This was very ably led by Graham Nicholas, whose expertise, in conjunction with Ricardo, resulted in a very professionally delivered, fully certified train.

"The quality of Graham's work made the job of the Train Operating Company – Vintage Trains, which would be responsible for operating the train – that much easier.

"A team of volunteers was assembled to ensure that everything went well, with the testing regime at the Weardale Railway being essential in identifying and remedying various performance inhibiting features of the locomotive. I think it is fair to say that without the support, tolerance and forbearance of the Weardale Railway, we would not have had the train in the efficient condition it evolved into, with the risk that the celebrations would not have been the faultless event they subsequently turned out to be. We therefore had much to thank the Weardale team for.

Late-night testing

"In advance of the actual celebrations, the train was tested on the main line after normal services between Bishop Auckland and Shildon. This memorable run, conducted after dark, saw the train efficiently climb the three miles of 1-in-240, including the incredible experience of the 1200-yard Shildon Tunnel, a journey I will never forget, especially the thrill of travelling under the control of Network Rail colour light signals for the first time!

"The test run was essential for Network Rail staff to rehearse their control arrangements and to act as a positioning move given that



The view over the moving train from the window of *Experiment*. S&DR200



Above: Steve Davies MBE, project manager of the replica train during the bicentennial event. S&DR200

Right: 'Ancient meets modern' was surely a gross understatement when *No. 1* and its replica train met an LNER Azuma set at Darlington Bank Top of September 27. S&DR200



The replica train departs from Dinsdale on September 28. STOCKTON BC



Clear road ahead for the 1825 train. S&DR200



The replica *Experiment* coach stands on top of Skerne Bridge on September 27. DARLINGTON BC

Shildon was the start point for the main celebrations starting on September 26.

"And so the big day arrived. We had prepared the train well, and I had no qualms that it would do all that was asked of it (we had accumulated nearly 200 miles of testing on the Weardale), but that first eight miles from Shildon to Darlington was almost dreamlike and certainly surreal. I had to pinch myself that this plucky little locomotive and its curious train was actually on the main line!

"We had so many organisations to thank for aiding us in this endeavour, including Northern Rail, which was incredibly flexible with its timetable to accommodate us, but by far the biggest hero was Network Rail.

"Once it was clear that the event was to proceed, Network Rail swung into action with almost military precision and panache to ensure that the appropriate signaling and control arrangements were in place.

"From the very top of the organisation, through middle and local management, down to the people on the ground and the Mobile Operations Managers actually on the train, the whole organisation came together in an enthusiastic and highly impressive way, with emphasis on enthusiastic.

"Over the three days of operations, we made many friends at Network Rail, too many to name, but you all know who you are, and I believe that the country owes you all a debt of gratitude for enabling such an amazing act of commemoration.

"Following the Shildon to Darlington leg, the following day marked the actual 200th anniversary, and it was celebrated in style with runs over Skerne Bridge, including posing for photographs, and a midnight run down the East Coast Main Line into Darlington Bank Top station for an extraordinary rendezvous with an LNER Azuma train, accompanied by much fanfare and celebration. This was a powerful image and made plain the 200 years of technological advancement that has resulted in the modern, efficient railway we enjoy today.

"But that was not the end. After an hour or so at Bank Top, we then embarked on an overnight expedition to Stockton, taking in Dinsdale and Eaglescliffe on the way, and with some foul weather thrown in for good measure (we all gained a new-found respect for the crews of 200 years ago who had to suffer inclement weather frequently).

"The arrival at Stockton was as dreamlike as our entry into Darlington two days earlier, but there was still more to come. After a further stop at another viewing point, which included the firing of a salute by the Royal Artillery, we then proceeded the 12 miles of hilly terrain to Ferryhill, where the train was to be loaded onto road trailers for onward transportation.

"We had undertaken 41 trouble-free miles on the national network and in the process entertained thousands of domestic and international visitors. We had also provided a unifying uplift for the rail industry, at the same time creating personal experiences for the support crew which will take a long time to fade, if ever! Key among the latter would be those experienced by our principal driver Chris Cubitt (two Northern drivers, Paul Dore and Matthew Jackson, completed the driving roster) who had fired at the 1975 celebrations and was determined to drive this time around.

"It would be remiss not to record the efforts



The replica 1825 train newly arrived at Locomotion in Shildon on September 25. PAUL BICKERDYKE



An aerial view of the replica 1825 train on Skerne Bridge on the afternoon of September 27. DARLINGTON BC

of the firemen, fitters and other support crew who made all this happen, and I will be forever grateful to Richard Pearson, Hazen Bowskill, Nick Procter, George Bee, James Percy, Paul Bailey, Kevin Richardson and Paul Winstone. Gentlemen, you did us proud."

The Great Central guard

The guard on the replica train for the event was none other than Great Central Railway general manager Malcolm Holmes. He said: "My becoming guard on this train was a rather a combination of luck and being in the right place at the right time. The weekend that *Locomotion No. 1* was scheduled to run, Vintage Trains had a charter taking place elsewhere which I had originally been booked to work. However, I didn't have time to do the route learning for that run and so two of the other qualified guards took it on instead. With most of the others away on holiday, purely by chance that left just me as able to do this historic train – and very privileged I was to do.

"From a personal perspective, to be in the right place at the right time and end up being the first guard to work the train on the main line in 50 years is something that will stay with me forever. To be involved with something that's just so hugely symbolic is probably the highlight of my railway career to date. All railway enthusiasts will have seen photographs from the cavalcade in 1975, but never in my wildest dreams did I imagine I would be guarding *Locomotion No. 1* when it came around in 2025.

"Another thing to say is that as well as all of those things – the Royal Train, cheering



Multiple award-winning artist Lucy Pittaway's new work, Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 and Railway 200, shows *Locomotion No. 1* pulling the inaugural passenger train over the Skerne Bridge. Lucy, who is based just a few miles away from Darlington and has seven galleries in North Yorkshire, the North-East and the Lake District, was inspired by the iconic painting by John Dobbin (pages 50/51). She said: "I wanted to bring the story to life in my own way and using my own style while capturing the huge significance of the anniversary and all it means to so many." See advertisement, page 43.



Locomotion No. 1 arrives at Stockton station and Rochester Road on September 28. DAVE CHARNLEY



Titans of Steam was not restricted to the biggest locomotives: Bill Parker's GER 'Coffee Pot' 0-4-0ST No. 299 meets A3 No. 60613 Flying Scotsman and A1 No. 60163 Tornado. RAIL SUPPORT SERVICES

crowds, bands and so on which were fantastic personal memories – it was working with such a superb professional team. That's not just those who were on the train, but all who contributed to make it happen before the event as well as those on the day in the control offices, on platforms, and everywhere else. It was the rail industry at its best, doing what it does best.

"There was a huge sense of pride not just from doing it, but also from being involved with such an incredibly talented, competent and capable team of people making it happen."

Nick Edwards, head of operations for Tyseley-based Vintage Trains, said: "I am very proud of Vintage Trains' involvement in such a special event witnessed by a huge crowd. It really was a team effort working with colleagues from the project team, Network Rail and Darlington Borough Council to make it happen and shows what the railway can deliver by collaboration."

Hopetown wins again!

At the heart of the S&DR 200 festival was

the multiple award-winning Hopetown Darlington museum attraction, which staged its free-to-enter Titans of Steam event from September 20 to October 5.

The event featured on various days A3 Pacific No. 60613 *Flying Scotsman*, A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, A1 No. 60163 *Tornado*, BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78018, LNER Q6 0-8-0 No. 63395, LNER J27 0-6-0 No. 65894, GER 'Coffee Pot' 0-0-4-0ST No. 299 (steaming for the first time since, it is believed, the 1950s); Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2142 of 1953 *Northern Gas Board No. 10*, Wickham Trolley No. MPP0007, Class 37 D6898, Class 56 No. 56045, GB Railfreight Class 66 No. 66710 in Railway200 special livery and a Class 04 0-4-0DM.

A special free ticketed Anniversary Journey viewing area gave a vantage point from which visitors could see the replica train on Sterne Bridge and attracted the maximum capacity of 6000 attendees.

A separate S&DR200 family-friendly exhibition, STEAM to the Future, was held at the same time, showcasing the design and

science behind the rail industry.

A total of 12,621 visitors attended Titans of Steam, including 1367 who went on the Titans footplate tours. STEAM to the Future recorded 31,030 visitors, and Night at the Museum (the Ghost Train at Hopetown only) had 2527 visits. The preceding Railway Pioneers event attracted 22,194, making a total of 74,372 over all of the special events.

Mike Crawshaw, head of heritage and culture at Darlington Borough Council, said: "Titans of Steam brought visitors from around not only the country, but also Europe and beyond – opening up a whole new audience to this magnificent attraction located where the birth of the modern railway happened.

"It has been incredibly humbling to welcome iconic locomotives such as *Flying Scotsman*, *Sir Nigel Gresley* and *Tornado* to Hopetown to showcase to these many thousands of new visitors the pioneering influence Darlington had on railways starting in the early 19th century."

"Titans of Steam has certainly helped to put



S&DR200 commissioned Avanti Display and Walk the Plank with artists Andy Plant, Bryan Tweddle and Chris Squire to coproduce Ghost Train, a spectacular two-part outdoor performance in Stockton and Darlington.

The procession began in Darlington Market Square on Saturday, September 20, where a theatrical reimagining of *Locomotion No. 1* was installed on a large plinth, its cogs and wheels moving as they did 200 years ago.

From 3pm in Market Square and the town centre, six large-scale structures, each mounted on customised Nissan Micras, brought to life through performance, music, sound and feats of engineering some of the most significant inventions of the last 200 years. At 7pm,



Locomotion No. 1 steamed to life, fuelled by 'coal of the future' made by 900 primary school children from in Darlington, and led its carriages on a magical procession to Hopetown (pictured). Organisers spoke of youngsters in their pyjamas

sitting on their doorsteps to watch the procession as it passed their homes.

A spectacular display saw Ghost Train: The Arrival in Stockton performed in Stockton Riverside at 7.30pm on September 28.



To mark S&DR200, the Bowes Museum, in Newgate, Barnard Castle, is hosting a new display until February 1, exploring the transformational impact of rail on everyday life. **Dressed for Departure: Fashion in the Age of Rail**, brings together historic fashion, artwork and objects that reflect on how engineering advances reshaped lives and culture and but also personal style, artistic expression and social habits, especially in the North East. Set within the Fashion & Textiles gallery at the museum, the display journeys from the early 19th century to the end of the 20th century when rail travel had long become an everyday reality. Visitors can see items worn and used by members of the family of S&DR founding pioneer Edward Pease (1767-1858), including a train and track from the 1840s, which almost certainly belonged to his granddaughters, and which form one of the first-ever toy train sets. **BOWES MUSEUM**

both Hopetown Darlington and Darlington itself firmly back on the map. Starting at Easter 2026, live steam rides will steam ahead as a permanent new addition to the visitor attraction."

And there was more – much of it!

The S&DR200's packed events programme, which started in March, continued around and alongside the Anniversary Journey, which was transmitted for public viewing on a big screen in Darlington's market place and also broadcast to the world on social media.

The Saturday saw an anniversary picnic at Hackworth Park, in Shildon, with performances from The Auckland Shanty Singers, Easington Brass Band, Sam Slatcher and Railway Institute Singers. Newly commissioned by the S&DR200 Project, a landmark piece by Southpaw Dance Company with a blend of contemporary dance, compelling narrative, and striking visual elements, captured the essence of an era when steam power began to shrink the world.

In Stockton, there were two High Street performances of STEAM: Ghost Train: The Arrival, and in the evening, the show was staged at Stockton Riverside. The after-dark show included a specially composed musical score by Sarah Llewellyn, live music, projection, and a community cast of national and local performers, including performance students and local volunteers from Darlington and Stockton, combining storytelling, music, and physical theatre with fire and pyrotechnic effects, bringing the week of anniversary events to a close.

Organisers estimated that about 100,000 people attended the event over the three days.

Festival director Niccy Halifax said: "The SDR200 anniversary weekend was a powerful celebration of our legacy, our people, and our future. From the thousands of people who visited the various activities, to the communities and volunteers who took part,

the energy and pride were truly inspiring.

"We are incredibly proud of our region and its pioneering heritage. This weekend was a testament to everything we stand for."

Standing room only as hundreds honour George Stephenson

About 100 miles to the south, Chesterfield's Holy Trinity Church welcomed more than 800 people on September 27/28 as it honoured Stockton & Darlington Railway pioneer and *Locomotion No. 1* designer George Stephenson, who was laid to rest there.

On the Saturday, visitors packed into the church for George Stephenson Day, enjoying talks, displays, and family activities that brought the 'Father of Railways' to life. A costumed interpreter portraying Stephenson delivered two popular talks titled *The Railway that Changed the World*, while families, railway enthusiasts and residents discovered how one man's vision reshaped modern transport.

The following day saw a George Stephenson Commemoration Service, attended by distinguished guests including the Duke of Devonshire. Sir Andrew Haines OBE, chief



Distinguished guests included the Duke of Devonshire (fourth from left). **GLENN ASHLEY**



A new mural celebrating the town's groundbreaking rail event of 1825 and Arthur Wharton, the world's first black professional footballer, has been unveiled in Widdowfield Street, Darlington, as part of the S&DR200 celebrations. Commissioned by the Arthur Wharton Foundation and funded through Darlington Borough Council's Creative Darlington project, *We Changed The World From Here* was created by artist Dan Walls (Illumination Wall Art). It depicts Skerne Bridge alongside George Stephenson, *Locomotion No.1* and Wharton, who played as a goalkeeper for Darlington FC in the 1880s. Wharton also became a champion sprinter, cricketer, and rugby player in a career was closely entwined with Darlington's railway heritage, travelling by train to matches and athletic events around the country.

SCOTT AKOZ/DARLINGTON BC

executive of Network Rail, delivered a keynote address, and Tom Ingall, of BBC Look North, also spoke as part of the moving tribute to the railway pioneer.

Bonanza for stamp collectors

Meanwhile, Royal Mail has issued a new set to 10 stamps celebrating British steam locomotives and the development of the country's rail network.

The main set features six iconic locomotives that helped to shape the history of UK rail travel: *Locomotion No. 1*, *Rocket*, *City of Truro*, *Mallard*, *Duchess of Hamilton* and *Evening Star*.

Furthermore, a miniature sheet containing four stamps marking 200 years since the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and includes artwork depicting the 1825 opening, *Locomotion No. 1* at Darlington, c1890, a commemorative postcard from the S&DR centenary in 1925 and A photograph of the replica *Locomotion No. 1* in 1975.

The stamps and a range of collectible products are available to pre-order at www.royalmail.com/steamlocomotives or by telephone on 03457 641641. **HR**



HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Just as 40,000 people turned out to watch the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway two centuries to the day before, an enthralled crowd watches as the replica *Locomotion No. 1* and its train crosses Skerne Bridge on September 27 as the apex of the S&DR200 anniversary celebrations. DARLINGTON BC



The Opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, 1825 by John Dobbin shows *Locomotion No. 1* pulling wagons full of coal, flour and, for the first time, people, across Skerne Bridge. Darlington-born Dobbin and would have been about 10 years old when the railway opened and painted this 50 years later from sketches (made by his father) and possibly from his own memories of the great day. COURTESY HOPETOWN DARLINGTON





The crowds turned out again early on Sunday morning, September 28, as the replica 185 train stood on Skerne Bridge again. DARLINGTON BC

'The Duke' returns to main line with much to prove after modifications

By John Titlow

THREE-CYLINDER BR Standard 8 Pacific 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* is back in main line service after a 10-year overhaul at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

On October 7 it hauled the Saphos Trains rake of Mk. 1 carriages on a test train starting and finishing at Crewe round the Shrewsbury circuit. The following day, it hauled a BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust members' special on the same route with the headboard 'The Impossible Dream.'

Designed at Derby Works by Robert Riddles, it was constructed at Crewe in 1954. Along with being the only three-cylinder Standard locomotive built, it is unusual for having Caprotti rotary valve gear, considered to be more efficient than Walschaerts or Stephenson.

Initially, it was to have the Kylasa-Chapelon (Kylchap) double blastpipe exhaust system, but it was fitted with a Swindon-designed double chimney which it carried throughout its BR working life. A Kylchap exhaust and chimney was fitted at its first rebuild at the GCR.

As a prototype, 71000 was the final development of a BR express passenger steam locomotive to be designed and built in the UK and seen as steam's future. At the time, the modifications Riddles proposed never took place because of BR's 1955 Modernisation Plan to phase out steam in favour of diesel and electric traction. It was never given the opportunity to fulfil its full potential and was withdrawn in 1962. It was then sent for scrap to Woodham Brothers at Barry Island in for cutting up.

During the latest rebuild, the modifications Riddles would have made have been implemented, so after 50 years 'The Impossible Dream' has been completed.

In May, No. 71000 visited the Severn Valley Railway for running-in and test trains before returning to Locomotive Services Ltd at Crewe for final fettling,



With what is being proved a possible dream despite its headboard, No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* runs through Wellington Station with a BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust members special on October 8. JOHN TITLOW

as highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 333. During August, it was to continue main line tests but these were cancelled by Network Rail due to lineside fire risk after the long dry spell. Instead, the opportunity was taken for No. 71000 to enter the paint shop at Crewe.

On October 7, it ran a Crewe-Chester-Shrewsbury-Telford-Stafford-Crewe test, departing Crewe at 10.29am and returning at 3.33pm, with a service stop at Coton Hill, Shrewsbury.

Following the same route on October 8 with the members' special, things did not quite go according to plan. A morning service train travelling between Shrewsbury and Wrexham hit cattle on the line at Baschurch, closing it to all traffic,

and it took several hours for the line to reopen.

Meanwhile, 'the Duke' sat in Crewe station as its planned 10.29am departure slipped to 12.58pm. It left Shrewsbury 121 minutes down, returning to Crewe at 5.17pm, 102 minutes down.

Running with a 'The Impossible Dream' headboard, No. 71000 had no issues hauling nine custard and cream carriages and Class 57 No. 57003 on the rear.

At Wellington, the train had been booked for the Up main line, but due to flood damage earlier in the year it went through the platform road instead.

On Friday, October 10, it took over the Crewe to Blackburn section of the LSL Chairman's Special which

originated from Euston. Again, there were impressive displays of running along the West Coast Main line before 'the Duke', this time carrying the 'Royal Scot' headboard, was stopped with a lubrication valve problem in the form of a stuck tappet, said a spokesman for the owning group.

No. 71000 was taken off at Carnforth while the tour continued behind diesel traction.

Work to repair the locomotive continued into the next morning before it was able to be moved. A brief visit into the West Coast Railways' depot saw it make use of the turntable before returning under its own steam to Crewe.

No. 71000 is set to head several tours prior to Christmas: details are at www.theduke.co.uk

Head for Oxford's dreaming spires on December journey

STEAM Dreams is giving the chance to travel from Essex to either Oxford or Bicester Village behind BR Standard 8P No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* on Wednesday, December 17.

Starting diesel-hauled from Southend Central, the proposed route is towards the capital, stopping at Leigh-on-Sea, Barking,

and Stratford, to pick up additional passengers. From here, the train will skirt the north of the city, pausing for a change of locomotive in West London.

With 'the Duke' in charge, the expected route is north-west along the Chiltern Main Line through High Wycombe and Princes Risborough as far as Bicester. Taking the Oxford-

Bicester Line, the first stop of the tour is scheduled to be Bicester Village, where passengers may alight to indulge in some Christmas shopping for six hours.

Those who decide to stay on the train will be transported the short distance to Oxford and have five and a half hours to explore the city. The return journey is

expected to retrace the route of the outward trip, with steam once again giving way to diesel traction in West London, then setting down passengers en route back to Southend Central.

→ Tickets are available in Pullman dining and First Class (non-dining). For more details and to book, visit steamdreams.co.uk



LMS 'Black Five' No. 44871 at Chester-le-Street with the Stanhope to Newcastle leg of the Railway Touring Company's 'The Railway 200 Special' on September 27. DAVID GILLIS

Tour steams into heartland of the 200th anniversary celebration region

THE Railway Touring Company added a steam train of its own to the Stockton & Darlington Railway during the climax of the 200th anniversary celebrations.

Setting out diesel-hauled from Carnforth early on Saturday, September 27, 'The Railway 200 Special' headed via Hellifield to the pick-up points at Hellifield, Keighley, and Leeds to York, where it was joined by LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44871.

Departing at 9.26am, the tour headed north up the East Coast Main Line to Darlington.

As it passed the multiple award-winning Hopetown Darlington attraction, passengers could see the replica *Locomotion No. 1* and its 1825 train and Titans of Steam guests including A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* and A4 No 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*.

From Darlington, the train headed up the Tees Valley line, calling at 10.45am at Shildon, the world's first railway town, when passengers had the opportunity to visit the Locomotion museum, where the exhibits included the original Locomotion No. 1.

The train arrived at Stanhope station, on the Weardale Railway, at noon.

Homeward bound

On the return journey along the Weardale line, the train was diesel-hauled to Bishop Auckland and onwards to Darlington, calling at Shildon to pick up those passengers who alighted there.

At Darlington, the train reversed its direction of travel and ran steam-hauled again northwards along the ECML through Durham to Newcastle. At Newcastle, the train turned via the

Tyne bridges loop and headed south again, passing through Durham to the Ferryhill Junction, where it headed along the freight line towards Stockton to rejoin the route of the S&DR as far as Eaglescliffe, from where it continued southwards to Northallerton.

Steam came off at York, and the tour returned diesel-hauled via the pick-up points to Carnforth.

RTC managing director Kelly Osborne said: "What better way to mark this major milestone in railway history than travel by steam train along the route?"

"The Railway 200 Special' was a tribute to the early pioneers of rail and was a great way for people to participate in the celebrations."

The special ran again on October 4, this time from King's Cross, with No. 44871 waiting at York to take over for the leg to Shildon and Stanhope.

Wheel flats result in tour cancellation

THE development of wheel flats during a stock move led to the last-minute cancellation of UK Railtours' September 27 'Ulster Express'.

During the positioning move from Wembley Reception sidings, in West London, to Barking in the east, London Underground's 4TC unit, which was being used as coaching stock for the excursion, developed serious flats on some of its wheelsets, which made it unfit to undertake the planned journey to Morecambe. It is understood that the damage was caused after the handbrakes were left applied to the unit.

Change of plans

The tour was due to be hauled by Hanson & Hall's Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer*, along with DB Cargo class 92 No. 92011, from Barking to Crewe; however, following the announcement of the failure, the consist was instead taken to the sidings at the former Ripple Lane TMD in Dagenham. Live rail tracker website Traksys confirmed that it had been issued a 'no-go' classification once there; the severity of the flats may mean the unit has to be moved by road. As this issue went to press, the unit was still in-situ.

UKRT confirmed that all passengers would be issued a refund and apologised for the disappointment the late cancellation caused.



Like us facebook.com/
heritagerailway



Follow us
@HeritageRailMag

A3's jaunt with 'The Festive Flying Scotsman' to Newcastle

ON Saturday, December 14, UK Railtours will run a festive trip to Newcastle involving A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*.

Starting from Finsbury Park in Mk. 3 coaching stock behind a Class 67, 'The Festive Flying Scotsman' is scheduled to head up the East Coast Main Line. Picking up additional passengers at Potters Bar, Stevenage and Peterborough, the train will then run fast through Grantham and Doncaster to York.

At York, diesel traction will make way for steam as *Flying Scotsman* is coupled to the train. Passing

Durham and arriving in Newcastle mid-afternoon, passengers will then have three hours to explore the city, which will be hosting its annual Christmas market.

The route home is expected to be a reverse of the outward journey, with No. 60103 taking the train south as far as York, with the Class 67 completing the run back to Finsbury Park, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

→ Tickets are available in first or standard class for this tour. For more details and to book, visit www.ukrailtours.com



Passing through Derby on October 7, EWS-liveried No. 37250 brings up the rear of a convoy of Class 37s led by Loram No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* and comprising Nos. 37508, 37264 and 37688 *Great Rocks* through Derby, while working the 0235 from the Severn Valley Railway, where the 65th anniversary of the class had been celebrated during the four-day Autumn Diesel Bash (News, page 20), to the Wensleydale Railway. SAM PEDLEY

End of the line: Pathfinder tours announces closure after 50 years

By Owen Hayward

AFTER more than five decades of running excursions and charter services over the main line network, Pathfinder Railtours has announced it will close its doors in December following both the retirement of its owner and in the face of the ever-increasing challenges of planning tours.

Founders Tony Fielding and Peter Watts ran their first tour in 1973 under the name F&W Railtours, the precursor to Pathfinder Railtours, which was adopted from 1987 when Peter rebranded the company. The following year, it was one of the first train charter businesses to introduce a full dining service.

Half a century of touring

During the last 50 years, the team at Pathfinder has run special trains to almost everywhere and have done just about everything, from steam trips over unusual routes to taking a diesel-hydraulic Western locomotive

to the north and west of Scotland, reaching Inverness and Kyle of Lochalsh. The company has also been the only one in recent years to organise tours along the Cambrian Coast Line from Dovey Junction to Pwllheli. However, the changing challenges of organising excursions and fluctuation in bookings have played their part in the decision to wind the business up.

Peter said: "When five years is a long time in the rail industry, to have achieved more than 50 years of continued operation is truly remarkable and something I am incredibly privileged to have undertaken.

"Equally, I am proud, not only of the team that over the years has delivered our programme, but also our wonderful stewards who have volunteered their time on board to ensure safe operation of the trains.

"Finally, last but not least, my sincere thanks to our loyal passengers who have supported us, enjoyed numerous excursions and

have hopefully travelled to many places they may not otherwise have visited."

Barry Cordell, the now chief executive and owner of Pathfinder, said: "During the almost 30 years I have been involved with the company, we have achieved so much, but I now feel it is the right time to step back and retire. I would like to join Peter in thanking our team, our volunteers, and our passengers for their support and we wish you all well in the future.

"The positive support we have enjoyed from the majority of the rail industry has always been appreciated and my thanks also go to them and the Train Operating Companies that have run our many charter trains over the years."

A statement said that the company is "not insolvent in any way and will be wound down in an orderly fashion, leaving no outstanding debts.

"We are looking forward to running our final tours, ahead of bidding farewell, following the operation

of the pre-Christmas charter in December."

Final fling

Following its penultimate outing on November 22, a jaunt from Oxford Parkway to Chester behind a pair of West Coast Railways' Class 37s, Pathfinder's last outing is on December 20. Aptly named 'The Pathfinder Finale', the tour will depart Salisbury at 6.10am with pick-ups at Wesbury, Bath Spa, Bristol Parkway, Cam & Dursley, Cheltenham Spa, Worcestershire Parkway and Birmingham New Street as it heads towards Manchester Piccadilly. Initially hauled from Salisbury by a West Coast Class 47 or 57, Class 52 Western D1015 *Western Champion* will take over at Gloucester to lead the train solo to its destination. On the return working, it will then detach at the same station for the WCR to take the train to its final destination.

Tickets for this tour went on sale at 10am on October 2 and sold out within 54 minutes.

South Wales 'Hoover' tour set for an industrial exploration

By Tim Hobman

UK RAILTOURS is giving the chance to travel in Mk. 3 comfort to the industrial heart of South Wales behind a Class 50 and then tackle the famous Lickey Incline on the return journey.

'The South Wales Industrial Explorer' is planned to start out from Derby on Saturday, November 29 behind Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer* and head south to the first passenger pick-up at East Midlands Parkway.

From here, the next pick-ups are scheduled for Leicester, Nuneaton, Coleshill Parkway, Birmingham New Street, Worcestershire Parkway, Gloucester, and then into Wales for the final pick-up at Cardiff Central.

Once all passengers are on board, the opportunity for some rare track is provided as the train is destined for Margam Knuckle Yard and into road 9 or 10, where a DB Cargo Class 66 is planned to be attached for a reversal.

Heading back east and retracing some of the route to Margam, the next bit of rare track is expected to be the Ogmere Vale Extension Line, before heading west once again through Port Talbot and onto the Swansea District Line.

The final push west is planned to involve access to the Llanelli Up

Goods Loop to allow for a reversal. Heading east once more and over the Swansea Avoiding Line, there is another reversal planned at Landore Junction to allow *Thunderer* to take charge once again and head to Swansea.

Here, there is a planned break of about 90 minutes for a brief leg-stretch around the coastal city.

After leaving Swansea, the plan is to enter the Landore Depot Complex, with thanks to Chrysalis Rail, and then head east, returning to Margam Knuckle Yard for an exchange of locomotives, swapping the Class 66 for a Class 67.

Back on the move again, and as dinner begins to be served to those in First Class dining, the tour is planned to set down passengers at Cardiff Central, then head via the Severn Tunnel and Bristol Parkway for a reversal, setting down passengers at Gloucester.

With the 50 in charge of the train once more, the route back to the Midlands is scheduled to be via the Lickey Incline, before setting down passengers at their joining stations en route back to Derby.

→ Tickets are available in First Class dining, First Class non-dining and Standard Class for this tour: visit www.ukrailtours.com

Railway family gives thanks for 200 years at Durham evensong

FOUR days after the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 Festival's recreation of the 1825 world's first steam passenger train came to a close, the railway family came together on October 2 for a special celebratory LNER Evensong at Durham Cathedral giving thanks for 200 years of rail travel.

The Deputy Lieutenant of County Durham, David Gray, the Mayor of Durham, Coun Gary Hutchinson, and the chairman of Durham County Council, Coun Robbie Rodiss, were among

the invited guests who joined representatives from LNER, Network Rail, Northern Trains, TransPennine Express, Grand Central Rail, British Transport Police and young people from the Stockton and Darlington Railway Youth Team and the community.

In a poignant service lead by the Very Rev Dr Philip Plymington, Dean of Durham, the innovation of the North East was celebrated and prayers of thanks offered for the profound effect the railway has had on the world.



The Dean of Durham, Dr Philip Plymington, and LNER managing director David Horne at evensong in Durham Cathedral. LNER



A2 No. 60532 *Blue Peter* passes Grange-over-Sands with Steam Dreams' 'Lakes Express' on September 12. DAVE COLLIER

'The Christmas 'Sussex Belle' on south coast with *Clan Line*

MERCHANT Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* is set to haul 'The Christmas Sussex Belle' tour for a circular excursion of southern England on Wednesday, November 19 for the Railway Touring Company.

Starting out steam-hauled from London Victoria, the train will take the main line towards Brighton, passing East Croydon, Redhill, Gatwick Airport, Three Bridges and Haywards Heath, before leaving the Brighton Line at Keymer Junction.

Heading south-east on the East Coastway Line, the train will head through Cooksbridge and Lewes, before picking up the Brighton section of the line to pass Berwick and Polegate, arriving in Eastbourne in the early afternoon.

At Eastbourne, passengers will have about an hour and a half to explore the seaside resort while the steam locomotive is serviced.

Due to a reversal at Eastbourne, the train is planned to leave diesel-hauled and head towards Hastings, passing through Normans Bay, Cooden Beach and Bexhill. At Hastings, there is scheduled a brief pause while there is another reversal, and the train then gets underway steam-hauled once again.

Taking the Hastings Line north through Crowhurst, Battle, Robertsbridge and Tunbridge Wells, the tour will pick up the South Eastern Main Line at Tonbridge and head towards Sevenoaks. Here, the tour is scheduled to diverge onto the Maidstone Line to run via Bat & Ball and Otford to Swanley. Picking up the Chatham Main Line at Swanley, it will then be a straight run via Bromley South and Herne Hill to the final destination of London Victoria.

Tickets are available in premier dining, First Class and Standard Class, with a discount for junior travellers.

➔ For more information and to book tickets for the tour, visit www.railwaytouring.net

Spooky adventure for Branch Line Society

THE Branch Line Society is to run a one-way trip to the Severn Valley Railway behind a Class 47 on Friday, October 31.

'The Brush and Broomstick' is planned as a positioning move in conjunction with the BLS's Class 50 tour to Paddington entitled 'The Fantastic Four', with two depot track bashes included, on Saturday, November 1, but as we closed for press, no further details of that trip had been released.

Leaving Peterborough on the afternoon of October 31, the route is planned take the Stamford Line to Leicester to pick up additional passengers, before heading onwards past Nuneaton and Water Orton to Birmingham New Street, where passengers will have the option to alight. Continuing via Soho South Junction, Galton Junction and Smethwick Junction, customers will have the option to again alight at Stourbridge Junction,

before arrival at Kidderminster in the early evening. Passengers will then have the option of a relaxing evening or booking onto the Severn Valley Railway 'Scream Train' to celebrate Halloween.

Tickets are available only in Standard Class for this trip, with a discount for passengers under the 18.

➔ For more information and to book, and for details of the tour on November 1, visit branchline.uk



LNER A4 Pacific 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* with support coach at Newcastle station on September 16 with the 5Z07 11.53am Carlisle Upperby TMD to Heaton TrainCare Centre move for the Heaton depot open day on September 20. Held as part of the Railway 200 national celebrations, it marked the centre's 150 years as a working depot. PAUL BIGGS

'The Christmas White Rose to York' double from Birmingham

VINTAGE Trains is offering two steam-hauled trips during the festive season under the banner of 'The Christmas White Rose to York.'

The first tour is planned for Wednesday, December 3, behind one of the resident Castle 4-6-0s, either WR No. 7029 *Clun Castle* or GWR No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*.

Starting from Birmingham New Street, the train is scheduled to travel to Coleshill Parkway for the

next passenger pick-up point, before carrying on to Tamworth, Burton-on-Trent and Derby for further passengers. After leaving Derby, the route will be via Sheffield and Leeds on the Cross Country Route to the final destination.

Passengers will then have about four hours to explore the city, with its Christmas market in full swing. The tour train is then planned to return via the same route to Birmingham

New Street, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

On Wednesday, December 10, the motive power is booked as A1 4-6-2 No. 60163 *Tornado*, the final opportunity to travel behind the locomotive on the main line in 2025.

Departing from Dorridge, the route will be via Widney Manor, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton, Leicester, East Midlands Parkway and Ilkeston, picking up passengers at each

station. From Ilkeston, the train will continue north, picking up the Cross Country Route to York.

Passengers will once again have about four hours to explore York, before the return train via the same route to Dorridge.

Tickets are available in Pullman dining, First Class dining and Tourist Class for these tours.

➔ For more details and to book, visit vintagetrains.co.uk

Seasonal sell-outs for Saphos

By Tim Hobman

SAPHOS Trains will run six steam-hauled Christmas tours this season, with two heading to York and the remaining four for Bath. As we closed for press, two of these were already sold out and the remaining four were close to selling out or had limited availability.

The first two tours are titled 'The Christmas White Rose,' the destination being York. The first, on Saturday, November 15, is fully booked.

It scheduled to run diesel-hauled from Potters Bar, picking up passengers at Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage, Hitchin, St Neots, Huntingdon and Peterborough.

At Peterborough, diesel is expected to give way to steam for a run up the East Coast Main Line to York. There is then planned to be a break of three hours in the city before the return trip.

The next 'Christmas White Rose' will start from St Albans, again diesel-hauled, and run up the Midland Main Line, picking up at Luton, Bedford, Kettering and Leicester, before taking the line to Peterborough. The next passenger pick-ups are Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Stamford and Peterborough, where diesel will be swapped for steam for a straight run to York. After three hours in York, the return journey retraces the outward route south back to St Albans.

Change of destination

With a change of destination to Bath, the next tour is planned for Tuesday, December 2. Starting diesel-hauled from Rugby and picking up passengers at Long Buckby, Northampton, Milton Keynes Central, Leighton Buzzard, Hemel Hempstead and Watford Junction, the tour will run into West London to exchange diesel traction for steam. From here, the train is expected to pick up the

Great Western Main Line for a straight run to Bath Spa.

Customers will then have three hours in the city before the return trip via the same route.

Two days later on Thursday, December 4, the next tour to Bath, with limited availability at the time of writing, is planned to start out from Dorridge and run south on the Chiltern Main Line. Picking up additional passengers at Warwick Parkway, Leamington Spa, Banbury, Bicester North, Haddenham and Thame Parkway, Princes Risborough, High Wycombe, Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross, the tour will once again exchange diesel for steam in West London. As before, the route is planned to be along the Great Western Main Line to Bath Spa for a break of three hours before returning home.

On Saturday, December 6, the destination is Bath again, with a tour on which only one place remained at

the time of writing, this time starting out from Ely diesel-hauled.

From Ely, the route is planned to start out heading east on the Ipswich-Ely Line via Soham to the first passenger pick-up of Bury St Edmunds, followed by Stowmarket and Ipswich. From Ipswich, the next pick-up point is scheduled to be Manningtree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Shenfield on the Great Eastern Main Line. Having arrived in the capital, the train is expected to cross North London to exchange diesel for steam as per the previous tours, then a run along the Great Western Main Line to Bath Spa for a break of three hours before heading back towards East Anglia.

The final tour to Bath, from Three Bridges on December 12, is also fully booked.

→ Tickets for the remaining spaces are available in Pullman dining and First Class (non-dining): visit www.saphostrains.com

Town bridge renamed in honour of heroic footplateman

A BRIDGE in the heart of Stockport has been renamed to honour a steam locomotive driver who died while trying to stop a runaway train in 1957.

Born in the town in 1900, on February 11, 1957, John Axon was at the controls of a freight train travelling from Buxton to Warrington when the pipe connecting to the steam brake failed just short of Dove Holes in Derbyshire, filling the cab with scalding steam.

While he fought for control, Axon instructed his fireman, Ron Scanlon, to apply the handbrake and then jump clear to try to apply as many of the brakes on the unfitted train as possible.

Despite managing to alert the signalman, the 500-ton train continued out of control down the steep hill towards Chapel-en-le-Firth station, where it ran into the back of another freight train. The impact killed both Axon and Frank Cremer, the guard of the second train involved. Axon's heroic actions meant that many more lives were saved and he was posthumously awarded the George Cross in May 1957.

On September 30, Stockport Council officially renamed Thomson Street Bridge, which was built in 2022, as the Driver John Axon Bridge in his memory.

The ceremony included the unveiling of a blue plaque, with Rail Minister Baron Peter Hendy of Richmond Hill, members of Axon's family, local councillors and representatives of the wider railway community in attendance.



From left to right: Keith Whitmore, chairman of the Crewe to Manchester and South East Manchester CRP; Coun Grace Baynham, cabinet member for parks, highways and transport services at Stockport Council; Rail Minister Baron Peter Hendy; and Axon's grandchildren Melanie and Andrew Axon at the renaming ceremony. STOCKPORT COUNCIL

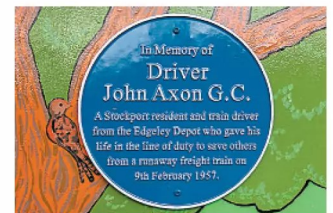
Coun Grace Baynham, cabinet member for parks, highways and transport services at Stockport Council, said: "Renaming the John Axon GC Bridge is our way of honouring one of Stockport's own who acted with extraordinary bravery.

"Axon's sacrifice is part of our shared heritage, and we hope this will serve as a lasting reminder of courage in the face of an extreme incident.

"It is fitting that people crossing this bridge every day will see his name

and remember what he stood for."

His granddaughter Melanie added: "His bravery and selflessness have always been a source of pride and inspiration to us, and it means so much to see his legacy remembered in this way. The bridge, which is close to where the family lives to this day, stands as a daily reminder of his courage as and this is incredibly special to us all. We are truly grateful that the community continues to celebrate his memory."



The blue plaque now displayed on John Axon Bridge, denoting the steam driver's brave actions in 1957. STOCKPORT COUNCIL

October

25 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Grantham, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. NB

25 'The Varsity Explorer'
Slough, Chester, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

25 'The Brick & Tile'
Finsbury Park, Cleethorpes, and return.
Locos: 50008 *Thunderer* + 1x Class 50 & Class 37 TBA.

26 'The Shakespeare Express'
Derby, Stratford-upon-Avon, and return.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

27 'Muncaster Express'
Manchester Piccadilly, Ravenglass, and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

29 'Muncaster Express'
Penrith, Ravenglass, and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. WCR

November

1 'The Chiltern Explorer'
Manchester Piccadilly, Reading, and return. Steam-hauled outward only.
Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

1 Farewell to Steam special
Birmingham New Street, Paddington, and return. Steam-hauled return only.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*.

8 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special
Telford, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: TBA. NB

8 'The Exe-Parrett'
Dorridge, Exeter, and return. Diesel-hauled between Dorridge and Swindon.
Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. PT

9 'The Shakespeare Express'
Birmingham Snow Hill, Stratford-upon-Avon, and return.
Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

11 'The Armistice Steam Express'
London Victoria, Sheerness-on-Sea, and return via Dover. Diesel-hauled between Strood and Sheerness.
Loco: TBA. RTC

15 'The Christmas White Rose'
King's Cross, York, and return. Diesel-hauled from Peterborough to King's Cross.
Loco: TBA. RTC

15 'The Christmas White Rose'
Potters Bar, York, and return. Diesel-hauled between Potters Bar and Peterborough.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

15 'The Portsmouth Pullman'
London Victoria, Portsmouth Harbour, and return. Diesel-hauled from Havant to Portsmouth Harbour.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

The information in this list was correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise you confirm details of a particular trip with the promoter concerned.



SR West Country class 4-6-2 No. 34046 *Braunton* awaits departure from Shrewsbury on September 18 with the return leg of Saphos Trains' 'Welsh Marches Express'. To the right of the image stands the Grade II-listed Shrewsbury signalbox, the largest mechanical 'box in use in the world'. MARTIN CREESE

Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. UKRT
15 'Blackpool Illuminations Explorer'
Birmingham New Street, Blackpool, and return.
Loco: 37240. VT

18 'The Christmas White Rose'
St Albans City, York, and return. Diesel-hauled between St Albans City and Peterborough.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

19 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Watford Junction, Edinburgh Waverley, and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

19 'The Christmas Sussex Belle'
London Victoria, Eastbourne, and return. Diesel-hauled from Eastbourne-Hastings.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. RTC

21 York Excursion
Colchester North, York, and return. Diesel-hauled between Colchester and Peterborough.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

22 'The Chester Christmas Explorer'
Oxford Parkway, Chester, and return.
Locos: 2x WCR Class 37s. PT

22 'The Edinburgh Christmas Market'
York, Edinburgh, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

22 'The Christmas Cheshireman'
Bristol Temple Meads, Chester, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

24 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Swindon, Edinburgh Waverley, and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

26 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Oxford, Edinburgh Waverley, and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

27 'The York Yuletide Express'
Norwich, York, and return. Diesel-hauled

from Peterborough-Norwich.

Loco: TBA. RTC

27 Edinburgh Christmas Markets (day one, outward)
King's Cross-Edinburgh only.
Loco: 60532 *Blue Peter*. SD

28 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Cardiff Central, Edinburgh Waverley, and return.

Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

29 'The Bath & Bristol Christmas Express'
Paddington, Bristol Temple Meads, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

29 'The Capital Christmas Express'
Newcastle, King's Cross, and return. Electric-hauled return.

Loco: Steam: TBA. Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. RTC

29 Edinburgh Christmas Markets (day three; Forth excursion)
Circular tour from Edinburgh Waverley.
Loco: 60532 *Blue Peter*. SD

29 'The South Wales Industrial Explorer'
Derby, Swansea, and return.

Locos: 50008 *Thunderer* + 1x DB Cargo Class 66. UKRT

30 Edinburgh Christmas Markets (day four, return)
Edinburgh Waverley-King's Cross only. Diesel-hauled from Carlisle.
Loco: 60532 *Blue Peter*. SD

December

1 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Baginbun, Edinburgh Waverley, and return.
Loco: Midland Pullman HST. MP

2 'The Bath Christmas Market Express'
Rugby, Bath, and return. Diesel-hauled between Rugby and Southall.
Loco: TBA. ST

Tour promoters

A1SLT	A1 Steam Locomotive Trust 01325 488215
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

3 'The Sherbourne Christmas Carol'
London Victoria, Yeovil Junction, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 35028 *Clun Castle*. RTC

3 'The Christmas White Rose'
Birmingham New Street, York, and return.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

BR 4MT No. 73022 approaching Southampton Central on April 4, 1965, with the 2.15pm from Weymouth to Waterloo. DON BENN



TABLE ONE: NEWTON ABBOT TO PLYMOUTH

Date Saturday September 6, 2025
Train 'The Mayflower'
Locos WR Castle 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle*
LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas*
Load 11 coaches, 387 tons tare 415 tons gross
7029 crew Andy Taylor and Sam Perry
45596 crew Kevin Cronin and Mike Stevens
Timed by Alan Rawlings
Position 11th coach
Weather Fine

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Newton Abbot	0.00	0.00	00	00	34*
NA West Jct	0.45	2.00	00	48	41
Aller Jct	0.95		01	32	47/56
MP 216	1.95		02	37	51
MP 216½	2.45		03	13	43
Stoneycombe SB	2.88		03	46	38
MP 217½	3.45		04	43	31
Dainton Tunnel	3.74	9.00	05	14	31
Dainton Summit	3.95		05	39	40
MP 219	4.95		06	52	49
MP 220	5.95		08	06	42
MP 221	6.95		09	32	39/17* sigs
Totnes	8.80	21.00	13	18	26*
MP 224	9.95		15	37	33
MP 224½	10.45		16	32	31
MP 225	10.95		17	28	31
Tigley	11.45		18	25	32
MP 226	11.95		19	19	37
MP 226½	12.45		20	05	
Rattery Viaduct	13.43	29.00	21	30	41
Marley Tunnel In	13.73		21	55	48
Marley Tunnel Out	14.23		22	29	50
Brent	15.60		23	59	58
Aish Crossovers	16.45	32.00	24	53	55/53
Wrangaton	17.95		26	33	55
Bittaford Viaduct	19.00		27	43	57
Ivybridge	20.28	40.00	29	11	37*
Cornwood	22.59		33	11	57
Hermenden	25.20	48.00	34	56	51
MP 241	26.95		36	41	66*
Plympton	27.95		37	36	56
Tavistock jct	28.95	51.30	38	42	53
Laira Jct	30.00		39	47	53
Lipson Jct	30.39	54.30	40	24	41
Mutley Tunnel	31.35		43	03	19
Plymouth	32.93	58.00	45	07	30 early

* brakes or speed restriction

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



Don Benn looks at some of the work of the two 4-6-0s 7029 *Clun Castle* and 45596 *Bahamas* on 'The Mayflower' to Plymouth, Class 47 D1592 on 14 coaches, also to Plymouth, and two of the 1965 Southern summer extras when steam stood in for diesel.

VINTAGE Trains still run a good number of pure steam-hauled trips and always state when no diesel will be involved. One of these was 'The Mayflower' on Saturday September 6 and my good friend Alan Rawlings was on this for the steam sections. He tells the story of the day.

"For all the reasons we know about there have been many occasions in 2025 when an unassisted main line steam charter has not been possible. However, Vintage Trains made it clear from the outset that this trip to Plymouth would not be one of those. The diesels that were to bring the train down from Birmingham to Bristol would again shadow the train to Plymouth, as in 2024. It was also a final opportunity for, arguably, the finest example of the Jubilee Class, *Bahamas*, to get an outing prior to its imminent overhaul. A cursory look at the published timings suggested that the legs across the Somerset Levels would be punctuated by the usual pathing arrangement whereby a stopping service would be not far ahead of our train. Neither was it clear why the section from Exeter to Plymouth needed a 24-minute pause at Totnes. However, the prospect of tackling Rattery from a standing start was something to

look forward to.

"We left Temple Meads on time and it was soon apparent that the footplate crews on this combo of *Clun Castle* and *Bahamas* meant business. We flew through Nailsea at top permitted speed only to be slowed for a gauging restriction at Yatton. This was before coming to a stand for four minutes at Uphill Junction so that the Cardiff to Exeter service could exit from Weston ahead of us. Nevertheless there was some spirited running through to our pathing stop at Taunton that we reached on time. The first main test for our duo was the short run over Whiteball to Tiverton Junction Loop where we would take water. This is shown in Table Two. Although the load was one less vehicle than the equivalent trip last year, the Pullmans in the consist pushed the gross figure to over 400 tons. It was a good climb with a similar speed through Wellington and an overall speed profile similar to last year, albeit one mph slower at the summit.

"The onward run to Exeter was quick and we recovered well after slowing for St Davids to be over 70 mph again by Exminster. At this point we caught up a procession of trains including, directly ahead of us, the Saphos trip to Kingswear with



Left: Driver Kevin Cronin on No. 45596 at Plymouth.
ALAN RAWLINGS

TABLE TWO: TAUNTON TO TIVERTON LOOP

Date	Saturday September 6, 2025
Train	'The Mayflower'
Locos	WSR Castle 4-6-0 No. 7029 <i>Clun Castle</i> LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 <i>Bahamas</i>
Load	11 coaches, 387 tons tare 415 tons gross
7029 crew	Andy Taylor and Sam Perry
45596 crew	Kevin Cronin and Mike Stevens
Timed by	Alan Rawlings
Position	11th coach
Weather	Fine

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Taunton	0.00	0.00	00	00	5 early
Silk Mills LC	1.30		03	11	47
Norton Fitzwarren	1.85	3.00	03	54	54
Victory LC	2.90		04	58	59
Bradford OT LC	4.48		06	32	63
Poole Sidings	5.84		07	48	64
Wellington	7.03		09	00	65
MP 171	7.84		09	43	62
MP 172	8.84		10	45	56
MP 173	9.84		11	47	52
Whitball Summit	10.84	16.00	12	55	53
Burlecombe	11.59		13	44	60
MP 176	12.84		14	58	64/65
Tiverton Parkway	14.17	19.30	16	08	49*
Tiverton Jct East	16.01		18	27	20*
Tiverton Jct Loop	16.12	22.30	19	24	8 early

* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE THREE: EXETER TO PLYMOUTH

Date	Saturday June 15, 1968
Train	12.30pm Paddington to Plymouth
Loco	Class 47 Co-Co D1592
Load	14 coaches 489½ tons tare 530 tons gross at start
Timed by	Don Benn
Weather	Fine

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Exeter St Davids	0.00	0.00	00	00	2¼ late
Exeter St Thomas	0.92		02	15	43
MP 197	3.10		04	38	67½
MP 198	4.10		05	30	70
Exminster	4.79		06	13	72
MP 200	6.10		07	08	74
Starcross	8.55		09	40	55½/45½
Dawlish Warren	10.60		12	08	54
Dawlish	12.25		14	11	44*
Teignmouth	15.01	19.00	18	41	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	1¼ late
Newton Abbot	5.14	10.00	08	16	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
Aller Jct	0.90		02	22	45½/47½
Stoneycombe SB	2.80		04	47	32
Dainton SB	3.90		07	09	23
			pws	*	
Totnes	8.76	16.00	15	14	#
	0.00	0.00	00	00	2¼ late
MP 224	1.35		03	00	28½
Tigley	2.70		06	03	21
Rattery	4.55		10	22	37
			pws	12*	
Brent	6.85		16	08	44
Wrangaton	9.05		18	48	60
Bittaford	10.15		20	02	51*
Ivybridge	12.35		22	55	40*
Cornwood	14.80		25	45	53
Hermerden SB	16.45		27	34	55½/80
Plympton	19.10		29	55	58*
Tavistock jct	20.30		31	20	38*
Laira Jct	21.20		32	35	41*
Plymouth	23.15	38.00	36	21	¾ late

timing point mileages are those applying in 1968

* brakes or speed restriction

pulled up



On September 6, 2025, Nos. 7029 *Clun Castle* and 45596 *Bahamas* enter Bristol Temple Meads with 'The Mayflower' to Plymouth. ALAN RAWLINGS

"We left Temple Meads on time and it was soon apparent that the footplate crews on this combo of *Clun Castle* and *Bahamas* meant business."

No. 5029 *Nunney Castle*. A fine sight along the sea wall of two GWR locomotives hauling separate trains on 'home territory'. The next log (Table One) picks up our trip at Newton Abbot after the Saphos train had cleared. Dainton was tackled in customary style with a good pace falling away after Stoneycombe as the short section of 1-in-36 started to bite. The minimum was 31 mph, as last year, but by the time we passed the actual summit

in the last coach, *Clun* and *Bahamas* were well away on the descent to Totnes. It was around this time that we learned that signalling problems in the Totnes area meant we would not take our 24 minute pathing stop and instead continue directly to Plymouth but we would nevertheless still have to go via the platform road. Our potential standing start of Rattery therefore improved slightly to a 26 mph 'pass' rather than a 60mph charge on the



Battle of Britain class No. 34077 603 Squadron passing Surbiton with the 3.05pm Waterloo to Plymouth extra working on May 15, 1964. DON BENN

TABLE FOUR: WATERLOO TO EXMOUTH AND SIDMOUTH

Date Saturday July 24, 1965
Train 8am Waterloo to Sidmouth Junction
Loco BR Standard SMT 4-6-0 No. 73022
Load 10 coaches, 328 tons tare 360 tons gross
Driver Hooper Salisbury
Recorder Don Benn
Weather Fine

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Salisbury	0.00	0.00	00	00	10 late
MP 85½	1.70	03	56	30½	
Wilton South	2.50	5.30	05	20	46/55½
Dinton	8.30	12	20	52½/51	
Tisbury	12.60	17	17	53½/54½	
Semley	17.60	23	12	44½	
Gillingham	21.70	26	56	78	
MP 107½	23.95	28	54	61	
MP 109½	25.95	30	40	77½	
Templecombe	28.50	29.30	32	43	64½
MP 113½	29.70	34	14	47	
Milbourne Port	30.90	35	38	57	
Sherborne	34.55	38	59	79	
Yeovil Junction	39.15	38.00	42	56	67½
Sutton Bingham	41.40	45	05	60	
MP 126½	42.70	46	38	51	
MP 130	46.45	50	09	72½	
Crewkerne	47.95	51	26	63	
MP 133½	49.70	53	52	38	
Hewish Crossing	50.60	54	56	53	
Chard Junction	56.00	59	56	71½/70	
MP 142	58.45	62	07	72½	
Axminster	61.10	59.00	65	23	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	13¾ late
MP 146½	1.60	03	20	53	
Seaton Junction	3.30	7.30	05	85	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	12¾ late
MP 149½	1.70	04	46	26½	
MP 150½	2.70	07	02	25	
MP 151½	3.70	09	16	27/26½	
MP 152½	4.70	11	29	27	
MP 153½	5.70	13	32	30½	
Honiton	6.90	15	00	58	
MP 158	10.20	17	55	76	
Sidmouth Junction	11.65	18.00	20	32	15¼ late

A valiant effort on a run timed for Warship diesel haulage

TABLE FIVE: SEATON JUNCTION TO SALISBURY

Date Saturday August 21, 1965
Train 2.13pm Exmouth to Waterloo
Loco Rblt BoB 4-6-2 No. 34077 603 Squadron
Load 9 coaches 301 tons tare 325 tons gross
Crew Fred Hoare and Pete Allen, Salisbury
Recorder Don Benn
Weather Cloudy and rain from Templecombe

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Seaton Junction	0.00	0.00	00	00	13¾ late
MP 146½	1.55	02	55	56½	
Axminster	3.30	7.00	05	18	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	10 late
Chard Junction	5.10	07	54	57/56	
Hewish LC	10.60	13	17	63	
MP 133½	11.40	14	07	60	
Crewkerne	13.15	15	47	74	
MP 130	14.65	16	50	83	
Hardington Sdg	16.65	18	16	78	
MP 126½	18.40	19	39	72½	
Sutton Bingham	19.70	20	50	73	
Yeovil Junction	21.95	25.00	22	42	72/70
Sherborne	23.55	26	31	75	
MP 115½	29.15	28	48	56½	
Milborne Port	30.20	29	53	66	
MP 113½	31.15	30	58	64/sigs*	
Templecombe	32.60	34.30	33	28	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	9¼ late
MP 110	2.05	03	04	61½	
MP 107½	4.55	05	42	51	
Gillingham	6.80	07	51	73	
MP 102	10.05	10	55	60½	
Semley	10.90	12	25	21* sigs	
Tisbury	15.50	18	15	74/77½	
Dinton	20.20	22	48	22* sigs	
MP 89	23.05	26	16	63/66	
Wilton South	26.00	28.00	29	11	39*
MP 85½	6.80	30	30	49	
Salisbury	28.50	33.00	33	13	9½ late

Booked for Warship DL
net times: Axminster to Templecombe: 32¼ mins
Templecombe to Salisbury 29½ minutes
* brakes or speed restriction

through road, as last year. However we need not have worried; we hit the 1-in-66 at 33mph and as the gradient steepened to 1-in-52 just before Tigley, speed only fell away to 31. The locomotives blasted their way up to Rattery, slowly picking up speed as the gradient ease slightly. We were up to the high forties by the time we entered Marley Tunnel, quicker than last year and quite a bravura performance by locomotives and crew. At no point was there any sense that this climb was proving to be problematic. A challenge, maybe, but handled well. The rest of the table shows our onward progress to Plymouth where we arrived 30 minutes early on schedule, with a net gain of around eight minutes from Tiverton when you disregard the missed pathing stop.

Assault on Hemerden

"On the return the assault of Hemerden as always offers much but I was unprepared for what happened. We flew out of Plymouth and were through Tavistock Junction in well under five minutes in the low sixties. This impetus was capitalised on as we powered up to Hemerden Sidings in under 10 minutes, no less, with a minimum of 24mph. This was the time to be in the first passenger carrying coach and those who chose to listen to the multiple exhausts through open top-light windows were also 'rewarded' with a sprinkle of what was coming out of the chimneys. It was a lovely onward run to Newton Abbot and a similarly powerful punch up Dainton with its sting in the tail over the final mile where the minimum was 31 mph. The remaining journey to St Davids was dogged by an Exmouth stopper ahead of us and an operational delay that had prevented us leaving Plymouth on time put us over ten minutes late for our final water stop at Exeter St Davids.

"While we waited for our path to leave, the returning Saphos charter drifted through without taking its planned pathing stop and preceded us to Taunton. As a result, our superior power capacity up front meant we caught it up around Cullompton. This thwarted us achieving a decent summit speed that on our progress beforehand was on the cards and we dropped a few minutes



Nos. 7029 and 45596 at Plymouth after arrival with Vintage Trains' 'The Mayflower'. ALAN RAWLINGS

on schedule. The onward run back to Bristol was two minutes inside even time to Uphill Junction but the stopping Taunton to Gloucester service was slipped out ahead of us at Worle Junction and we followed it to Bristol. Despite the 25 minute late arrival at Temple Meads, (and an interesting sprint for my own onward connection), to my mind this was one of the stand out trips of 2025. Both locomotives performed brilliantly, the enginemanship was superb, the scenery was beautiful."

As a comparison Table Three shows a run with Brush Class 47 D1592 on the 14-coach 12.30pm Paddington to Plymouth on Saturday June 15, 1968, which was taking us to a week's holiday in Devon and Cornwall all done by train and bus. I don't have a load limit for this train but I guess it was probably a bit over at 530 tons. After an eleven minute late start we ran well throughout and left Newton Abbot on time for good climbs of Dainton and Rattery banks. A comment in my notebook at Newton Abbot states 'no pilot'. The 80mph down from Hemerden was fearless but braking was good and we weren't far off right time into Plymouth.

Summer steam extras

Regular steam haulage on the SW main line to Exeter finished in September 1964 when WR diesel hydraulic Warships took over. However, there was sufficient demand in the summer of 1965 for two extras to run to and from Exmouth on Saturdays in July and August. These were at 8am and noon from Waterloo and 11.15am and 2.13pm from Exmouth. All were timed for diesel haulage with tight

"Fred said that the engine was very rough and had to be pushed hard, confirmed by my notes which stated 'thrashed hard' and 'fantastic' in a number of places."

times, but all except the midday were steam hauled, mainly by Bulleid 7P/5F light Pacifics but on more than one occasion by a BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0. Nine Elms men worked the trains on the Waterloo to Salisbury section and Exmouth Junction crews the 11.15am from Exmouth, returning on the noon with a Warship. The 8am down and 2.13pm back were in the hands of Salisbury men. I spent the day covering these trains on July 24 and August 21 and both gave me some good or even excellent running on the very tight schedules.

Table Four shows how BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73022 got on with 10 coaches for 360 tons driven by Hooper of Salisbury shed. It was a great effort on such a tight timing of 59 minutes for the 61.10 mile to the first stop at Axminster. I thought that the Class 5MT did particularly well on the 1-in-80 climb from the Seaton Junction restart.

On August 21, I went down on the 8am behind rebuilt Battle of Britain No. 34077 603 Squadron which was in poor condition and steaming badly. With nine coaches, it lost time even with Fred Hoare and Pete Allen in charge from Salisbury. I went as far as Seaton Junction then returned to Salisbury behind Rebuilt West Country No. 34026 Yes Tor on 10 coaches with Driver Jury of Exmouth Junction turning in a good

performance – more on this one next time. I went back with the same crew to Seaton Junction on the midday down hauled by Class 42 D818 Glory on 10 coaches for 345 tons. It ran well doing the 61.10 miles to Axminster's in 56 minutes 49 seconds. During the wait, Pete Allen had worked hard on the fire of No. 34077 to get it in good shape for the return run on the 2.13pm from Exmouth. This train had an extra stop at Templecombe due to the Warship-hauled 2.30pm from Exeter St Davids which missed the Templecombe stop when the 2.13pm Exmouth ran but called at Yeovil Junction and Gillingham.

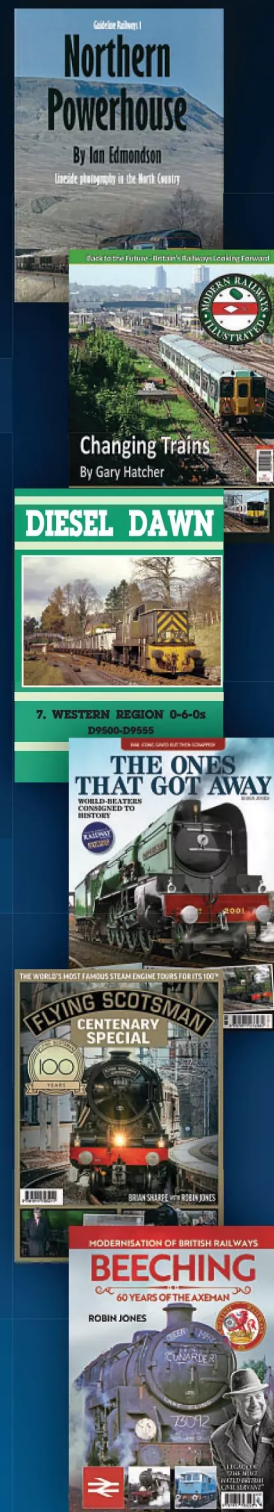
Fred Hoare and Pete Allen put in a superb performance (as shown in Table Five) but caught the aforementioned 2.30pm approaching Templecombe and again at Semley and Dinton. We left over 13 minutes late and arrived in Salisbury just over nine late despite the checks.

Fred said that the engine was very rough and had to be pushed hard, confirmed by my notes which stated 'thrashed hard' and 'fantastic' in a number of places. I got some cine of the train entering Seaton Junction and of Fred at Salisbury. This run was a tribute to that ace engineman just before he retired.

Next time more from 'The Mayflower' and these summer extras. **HR**

Great reads from £6.99!

132-page full colour, perfect bound bookazines



ORDER TODAY FROM CLASSIC MAGAZINES:

www.classicmagazines.co.uk/thebookshelf
CALL: 01507 529529

classic
magazines

Also available at
WHSmith

THE GOLDEN HOURS

The sky lightens in the east to lift the gloom of night and herald the start of a new day. The sun slowly peeps above the horizon, lightening up the scene with glorious rays of light, helping to create pictures of pure gold. This is the start of what they call the golden hour, the first of two in a day, as **Robert Falconer** explains.

At either end of the day, when the sun lies low above the horizon, there is an extra magic to the light that can be found at any time of year — but this feature becomes more prominent as the nights draw in and the sun arcs lower in the sky, making that golden light last for longer. Some of my favourite ever images have been taken at this time of day, sometimes with a great deal of planning to be exactly in the right place for a golden glint on the train and at other times down to a little luck.

Timing is everything when photographing railways. There can be times when you wait for a train in the most stunning golden light, only for the train to be running late — and you witness the heartbreaking sight of the light literally vanishing before your eyes, sometimes just minutes before the train does arrive. It is worth trying again and again because when you get it right, they will be moments that you cherish forever.

Getting it right on the main line can be the biggest challenge of all as there is a greater chance of trains not running at the moment you hope for, and there can be locations which don't see steam regularly at that time of day, so working out the angles of where the light is at its best can be harder to do.

On heritage lines, it can be much easier to find out where the light is right for that

golden moment as every angle has been well used over many years, such as Safari Curve on the Severn Valley Railway. However, knowing where the best locations are is only half the battle to put all the pieces in place to make a masterpiece.

One of these classic locations, Burrs, on the East Lancashire Railway, can be a great place at dawn, and for a few years there has been a pre-gala charter organised for runpasts as the sun comes up, waking everyone in their caravans! A visiting engine for that weekend's gala is often the chosen locomotive on a parcels or goods train, and the runpasts keep going until it's time to move on.

The star of the autumn gala in 2014 was B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower* and it was used on the early-morning train with a set of lovely restored wagons. It was exceptionally still, with a touch of frost and a slight mist in the cold air.

The crew had done a great job of being up early, getting the engine ready to depart Bury on time, arriving at Burrs before the sun had risen above the housing estate.

As the sun started to climb, lighting up the surrounding area, a sense of excitement could be felt among the expectant crowd, with one or two shouting 'call him' before the light was fully on the track. Then the whistle sounded — and action!

There were at least half a dozen run-pasts in the time allowed, every one different from the last, the light catching the train changing from gold to a silvery glint.

The mist rose, and the exhaust from previous runpasts hung in the air, adding to the atmosphere. Then it was time for the train to head to Ramsbottom and get the main gala underway, making it very worthwhile leaving home in pitch darkness to make it to Burrs in time. The rest of the day still had lengthy sunny spells, but none of the images would be able to compete with those taken just after sunrise.

Charters can be the best way to ensure you get some golden moments as you have much more control of the train and can plan to have it at the right location for when the low sunshine bathes the scene in that magic light.

Early morning is my favourite time of day, when it is very still and crisp, leaving exhaust hanging in the air which is much colder than at dusk, often with an added coating of frost on the ground.

As locomotives are steamed up, ready for the day, sheds and yards provide many opportunities, although many of them these days have access restrictions due to increased health and safety measures. The railway staff work hard getting the fires going and cleaning the locomotives, which can be a

Catching the setting sun, A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* passes Gregson Lane between Blackburn and Preston on September 19, 2020.





South African Railways 7B 4-8-0 No. 1056 greets the sunrise. The sole survivor of the class, which was built in 1900, is preserved at The Railway Museum in George, under ownership of Transnet.



Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad K-27 2-8-2 No. 453 at Ferguson's Trestle, on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railway, USA, on September 30, 2018.



Thompson B1 4-6-0 No. 61306 *Mayflower* heads a dawn freight at Burrs on the East Lancashire Railway on October 21, 2012.



Severn Valley Railway flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* raises steam first thing on December 14, 2024, getting ready for the day's Santa specials.

good opportunity to get pictures of the crews as we often focus so much on the locomotives that we forget the human aspect. A driver climbing onto the footplate set against the golden light can be well worth capturing

Stations, too, can be good places as the first train of the day awaits departure. Rays of sunshine filter through the canopy, while the stationmaster diligently checks his watch and the crew wait for the signal and green flag to depart.

With the train on the way, more preparation is needed. Using maps can be good to work out the angle the sun will be at. The best location can change at different times of year as the sun moves round.

When going for the glint shot, exposure can be tricky. Taking a meter reading before the train passes will not give an accurate reading as often the ground is very dark. The best option can be to try for a reading from a mid-tone and then add more, maybe up to a stop.

It will be impossible to take a reading off the train as it passes as there is no time to make adjustments.

Having the camera on shutter priority rather than manual will allow the camera time to change the exposure; practice and experience will give you the best results. It is much easier today as digital is more forgiving than transparencies, but digital does not cope well with burned-out highlights. It will be impossible to get any detail back and ruin ➡



Sunset panorama: LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea* heads the 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' over Lancashire's Grade II-listed 49-arch Whalley Viaduct on February 24, 2018.



Vintage Trains' GWR Castle 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* roars on the climb to Old Arley, near Nuneaton, with 'The Christmas White Rose' just after sunrise on December 9, 2017.



Fairburn magic as 2-6-4T No. 42073 heads a late afternoon service on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway on November 18, 2018.



East Lancashire Railway gold: Bulleid West Country light Pacific No. 34092 *City of Wells* heads away from Irwell Vale with a Santa special on December 19, 2021.



Stanier 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305 on a dawn 'Windcutter' working on the Great Central Railway on January 20, 2023.



LMS Jubilee 4-6-0s Nos. 45596 *Bahamas* and 45690 *Leander* double-head as dusk descends on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway on March 10, 2023.

the look of the picture. If in doubt, I prefer to have the image a little too dark from the perfect exposure than too light as you can retrieve the image better in Photoshop.

Backlit and glinting trains do make impressive pictures, but you can also go to the dark side of the track and get just as good a result by going for the silhouette. Here, the best option is to take a reading from the sky just above the track. There can be fewer opportunities for silhouettes as the train can blend into the background.

You need to find a viaduct or high embankment to make the train stand out against the sky. It can be a good way of prolonging your day's photography after the light has gone following the second golden hour. Yes, the train can look good against a golden sunset, but you don't have to wait until the sun dips below the horizon to do silhouettes. With the sun still shining, the exhaust can have an effective rim light, and with careful timing you can get an effective sunburst through the wheels, cab, or between the coaches.

An aperture of f16 and higher will give a better starburst from the sun than a smaller one such as f5.6. If you have a motor drive, you have a better chance of getting a burst of light through the train. For this, you may have to readjust your position as you wait for the train and the sun gets lower in the sky.

If the sun is just above the track and you plan to have it behind the train, getting a reading can be impossible from the very bright light and also very dangerous for your

eyes if you look through the viewfinder at the sun.

Shutter priority comes in handy, so you have the right speed. I may add a stop to the exposure compensation to keep detail in the sky and as the train passes, blocking out the bright sun, you will get an exposure you can work with during processing.

The evening potential can be extended after the sun has set with a blaze of golden colour in the sky; it gives a great opportunity to photograph the train in silhouette. This also gives a new challenge as many railways run in cuttings or are tree-lined, making it very hard to get an outline of the locomotive. A high embankment or a viaduct can give a great chance to get the result.

Unfortunately, British weather is hardly reliable and grey skies first thing in the morning – when you have woken up in the middle of the night – can make you wish you had stayed in bed!

An alternative is to go abroad where there can be much more reliable and settled conditions. South Africa is renowned for its golden light, and many photographers went back again and again to capture its magical light on the specialist photography tours that travelled there.

China, with its working steam, operates 24 hours a day and can give some great opportunities for golden hour moments. I made my first visit to Sandaoling in 2013, and our first day there was just after the workers had gone back to work from their Chinese New Year holidays.



Looking into the hole towards the golden light as JS 2-8-2 No. 8194 works away from the coal loader with a train full of coal at Sandaoling in Xinjiang, China, on February 21, 2013.

It was very busy, with coal train after coal train leaving the open cast pit, getting production back on track.

We were able to get many pictures from different vantage points before the shadows lengthened and the sun vanished. Our tour guide shouted for us to hurry back to our bus; we thought we may have to be at our hotel for a certain time to check in, but after a great first day we did not mind. Our guide, though, had other ideas, and took us to a spot high above the pit where you could see the line on an S-bend with the rails glinting pure gold. We could also see another coal train on its way.

It was so direct into the light there was a great amount of flare into the lens. I had to hold my left arm at full stretch to shield the camera. As the train came round the corner, I started taking pictures. As my hand moved, quite a few shots suffered badly with flare and were deleted later, but I managed enough to capture my favourite shots of the nine days spent at Sanadoling on the first afternoon.

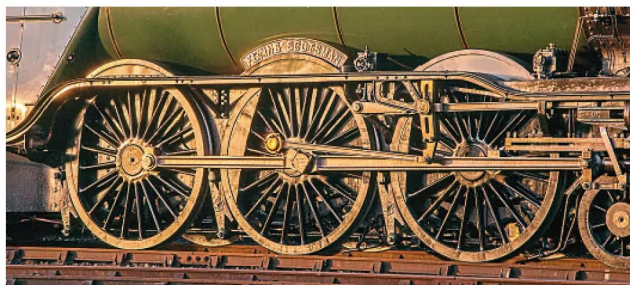
As we arrived at the very end of winter, the days became warmer, and we never had exhaust or the clear quality of light like that for the rest of the trip in the late afternoons. Our guide's knowledge had proved invaluable.

When your hard work does finally pay off and you get that bit of luck, it really does make up for past failures.

And at that point, be sure to remember those volunteers that sacrifice so much to keep steam alive! **HR**



Maunsell Q 0-6-0 No. 30541 hauls a goods train at the bottom end of Freshfield Bank during a Jon Bowers charter on the Bluebell Railway on January 3, 2017.

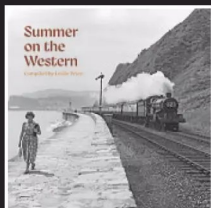


A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* turns to gold as its wheels catch the setting sun in the yard at Didcot Railway Centre on August 27, 2017.

Christmas Gift Guide



Transport Treasury Publishing



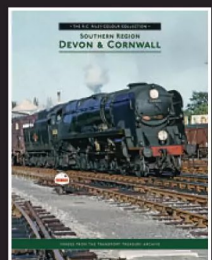
Summer on the Western
by Leslie Price £29.95



Wiltshire Wisdom
by Bob Meanley £75.00



BR Standard Classes
by Alan C Butcher £24.95



Southern Region Devon &
Cornwall by Jeff Gray £24.95

(01494) 708939 orders@ttpublishing.co.uk

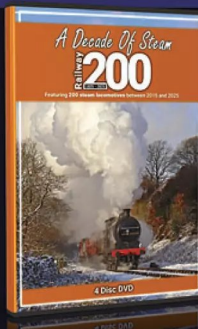
www.ttpublishing.co.uk

Find us on Facebook @TransportTreasuryPublishing

A Decade Of Steam Railway 200

Featuring 200 steam locomotives
between 2015 and 2025

Available in DVD, Blu-Ray and
digital download formats



Celebrating Railway 200, our new 4-disc
set showcases 200 steam locomotives
from heritage railways and the mainline
over the past decade.

With over five hours of footage, presented in
order of construction from Furness Railway
No. 20 to the new-build Atlantic 'Beachy
Head', our new product showcases 200
steam locomotives in action at railways
across the UK, including the Bluebell
Railway, North Yorkshire Moors Railway,
Great Central Railway, North Norfolk Railway,
West Somerset Railway and more.



Save 10% when using code: HERITAGE200

DVD Price:
£22.99
£20.69

Blu-Ray Price:
£24.99
£22.49

Download Price:
£20.99
£18.89

Available to order online or over the phone:

www.steamingaroundyorkshire.co.uk

Telephone: 07563019405

Terms & Conditions:

Copies are available in DVD and Blu-Ray formats via our website or writing to us at: Simon Roberts, 10 Maple Gardens, Whinmoor, Leeds, LS14 2FA. Cheque payment is accepted but all cheques must be payable to Simon Roberts. Free postage and packaging is offered to UK residents; a £6.00 international delivery charge applies. Prices shown above include 10% discount. Discount code expires 30/11/2025.

VISITS • BOOKS • DIGITAL ARCHIVE • LOCO DATABASE

Quality books from the RCTS

Here's just a small selection
of what's available:

History and Nostalgia titles:

- BR Diesel and Gas Turbine Prototypes
- A Railway Journey Across South Wales
- A Railway Journey Across
The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills

Modern Traction titles:

- Rails Around the North & Scotland
- Observing the Railway 2024
- The Complete Allocation History of the Class 31s
- The Complete Allocation History of Classes 24-27

New titles appearing all the time: Go to [rcts.org.uk/](http://rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/)
shop-for-books/ or click on the QR code below

£4 postage and packing for as many books as you like!
Order at rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/ By Post:-
RCTS Sales, 16 Welby Close, Maidenhead SL6 3PY,
(Cheques made payable to Railway Correspondence & Travel Society)

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Registered Number 1169995

Special
offers on many
other titles, both
hard copy and
digital

20%
off books for
members



RCTS

THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE
AND TRAVEL SOCIETY

NEW GIFT IDEAS!



Remember when journeys were enhanced by framed
prints, adverts, photos & maps? - A train became a ...

TRAVELLING ART GALLERY

3,000 unique images to browse or buy

www.travellingartgallery.com

Tel: 07971 168 299

See the VIDEO DOCUMENTARY on YouTube, featuring Nick Crane from BBC TV Coast!

Mainline & Maritime
3 Broadleaze, Upper Seagry,
Chippenham. SN15 5EY
01275 846178
www.mainlineandmaritime.co.uk

MAINLINE & MARITIME

PLEASE ADD
10% UK P&P,
MINIMUM £3, MAXIMUM £8

BUY A BOOK THIS CHRISTMAS!

ScotRail Traction In Detail

Tim Wood

£14.95



STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY WEST SIDE STORY

£13.95



ROBIN COULTHARD, KEN HARPER, NEIL MACKAY,
JOHN MIDCALF, DAVE STUBBINS & MIKE THOMPSON

THE FAIRBOURNE RAILWAY TRANSITION YEARS

Graham Billington

£17.50



Britain's Miniature Railways No. 7

THE FALL & RISE OF KIRKBY STEPHEN EAST

£23.95

Standard Gauge
Album No. 4



by Mike Thompson

Valleys Pacer Farewell

£16.95



Jeremy Segrott

BRISTOL TO BLAENAU

60 YEARS OF THE
FFESTINIOG RAILWAY SOCIETY BRISTOL GROUP
by Tim Maynard, Group Chairman

£23.95

Narrow Gauge
Album No. 8



From agricultural innovation to national network;
now in island folklore:

THE RAILWAYS OF TRINIDAD

£40

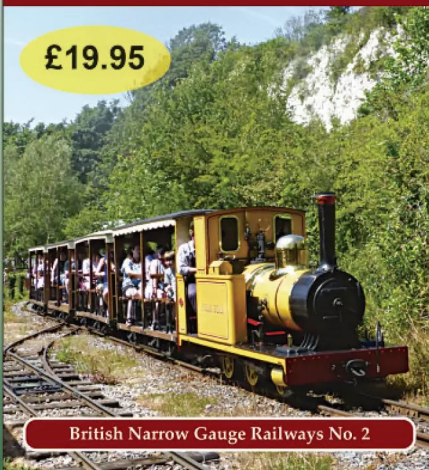


Glen Beadon & Roger Darsley

THE AMBERLEY RAILWAYS

John Martin & "The Book Gang"

£19.95



British Narrow Gauge Railways No. 2

THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS RAILWAY THROUGH THE YEARS

by John Hunt

£28



A TRIO OF DUOS HEADLINE MOORSLINE'S EARLY AUTUMN STEAM SPECTACLE

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway's decision to hold its gala on the same weekend as one of the major Stockton & Darlington bicentenary events of the year was considered a gamble by many, but it paid off. **Owen Hayward** reports on the weekend, which was largely dominated by the designs of Riddles and Stanier.

While September 26-28 will go down in history for many, marking the replica *Locomotion No. 1* returning to the main line to mark the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, as covered in our special feature on pages 44-51, for the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, it was business as normal. This final weekend of the month has traditionally been the time for its annual steam gala. There had been some concern among enthusiasts that with such a significant event happening at Darlington, a little over 30 miles away from

Grosmont as the crow flies, visitor numbers for the Moorsline gala might be affected. Such worries were swiftly to rest alights over the four days (starting September 25), huge crowds descended on the railway to sample the line-up, which contained three sets of different pairings, along with strong representation for Robert Riddles.

Standard affair

One of the biggest gala line-ups on a UK heritage line, matched only by that of the Severn Valley Railway a week beforehand (see

pages 86-89), no less than 11 locomotives were in operation throughout. Six of those date from 1948 onwards, with five of that number being drawn from the various classes of BR Standards.

Resident 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80136, built in 1956 at Brighton Works, was joined by classmate No. 80078, which had been outshopped by the same venue two years earlier. Both were allocated to the Eastern Region and could be found romping along the London, Tilbury & Southend line out of the capital until the route's electrification in 1962.





Same, but different: Nos. 41313 and 78019, both members of BR's 2MT class of Standards, pass through Beckhole on September 27. JAMES KINDRED

Both then joined the Western Region when they moved to Shrewsbury in July that year; six months later, No. 80078 was transferred to Croes Newydd, where it remained until withdrawal in 1965, while No. 80136 headed for Oswestry. Following a further move to Machynlleth in June 1964, it returned to Shrewsbury that September, before it too was withdrawn the following year.

The pair were reunited once more in 1966, albeit under less fortuitous circumstances at Barry Scrapyard, where they awaited their fate.

No. 80078 was saved by the embryonic Southern Steam Trust in 1976, with its classmate having to wait a further three years before it was rescued and taken to the Churnet Valley Railway. Despite having been preserved later, No. 80136 returned to steam first at the Churnet Valley Railway in 1998, although this was only a year before No. 80078 first steamed at the Swanage Railway; the latter remained based there until 2012, when it was sold to Stewart Robinson, and is now based on the Mid-Norfolk Railway. Throughout the weekend, the pair

sported the identities of scrapped classmates, with No. 80136 running as 80116 and 80078 carrying 80119. Both were Whitby-based locomotives, the former having had the honour of working the last train from Scarborough to Whitby West Cliff on May 5, 1958.

The 4MT design was one of many overseen by Robert Riddles, with the 2-6-0 2MT another and represented by No. 78019, visiting from the Great Central Railway. The design was derived from the Ivatt-designed LMS Class 2 moguls, with a reduced cab



Visiting BR 2MT No. 78019 catches the morning sun at Darnholme as it heads southwards to Pickering with the first train of the gala. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ



'Black Five' duo Nos. 45428 and 44806 round the curve at Darnholme with a Pickering-bound service. MATT DITCH



Left: SR Schools class No. 926 *Repton* arrives at Grosmont with the final service from Whitby on September 28. Throughout the day it had worn headboard for 'The Kentish Venturer,' a rail tour on February 25, 1962, organised by the LCGB as part of its Farewell to Steam excursions. *Repton* (then as BR No. 30926) hauled the final part of the journey from Appledore to Charing Cross. OWEN HAYWARD



257 Squadron approaches Green End as it climbs away from Grosmont on September 26. OWEN HAYWARD



Double standards: BR 4MTs No. 80078 and 80136 pass through Water Arc, running as scrapped Whitby-based classmates Nos. 80119 and 80116 respectively. OWEN HAYWARD

to fit within universal loading gauges and a number of other standardised fittings. Much of the same was also true of the 2-6-2T members of the class, with Isle of Wight Steam Railway resident No. 41313 making what was its third trip off-island this year to travel the furthest north it has ever been.

Built at Crewe in 1952, No. 41313 entered service allocated to Brighton shed, before moving to Exmouth Junction. It spent its whole life working in the South and South West regions before being withdrawn in November 1965. Its larger counterpart was built at Darlington in 1954, which made its visit to the Moorsline gala rather apt given the timing. It lasted until 1966 before being sent for scrap, and sharing a classification with No. 41313 enabled a comparison between the tender and tank versions.

Right: The completion of repairs to BR 9F No. 92134 leading up to the gala enabled it to put in a previously unplanned appearance during the weekend. On September 27, the 'Spaceship' speeds through Fen Bog bound for Pickering, where it worked shuttles to and from Levisham during the day.

OWEN HAYWARD

Surprise addition

The first of the BR 9F 2-10-0s was completed in 1954, and the class had a shockingly short life, with the earliest withdrawal coming a decade later and the final being in June 1968 – some members of the class served as little as five years before being consigned for scrap. As with the other Standards, their design was another of Riddles', and No. 92134 emerged from Crewe in 1957. While many received double chimneys, this particular example is the only survivor to retain a single chimney. It had been out of service since earlier this year following the failure of its superheater elements, however, thanks to being allowed to use those from No. 92214 (which is out of ticket on the Great Central Railway), a late change to allocations saw it added to the line-up on September 26 and 27, on the latter date



taking charge of shuttles between Pickering and Levisham.

While Riddles was perhaps the most represented locomotive designer at the gala, William Stanier came a close second, whose flag was flown by a third pair of doubles – the iconic LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0s.

No. 44806 was constructed at Derby in 1944 and was primarily a Midland-allocated steed, its time at Lostock Hall being one of its most notable sheds from where it served as a station pilot at Preston in its final days before withdrawal. Classmate No. 5428, meanwhile, was built by Armstrong Whitworth in Newcastle in 1937 as part of the largest single order placed by a British railway company with a private manufacturer, being one of 227 locomotives requested. When allocated to Leeds Holbeck, it often worked services from the West Riding to Whitby, travelling over what is now the NYMR route. It hauled the last steam-worked express from Bradford to Leeds on October 1, 1967, following which it was preserved and named *Eric Treacy* in honour of the former Bishop of Wakefield, a notable railway photographer.

Having recently been running in LMS black, the need for a repaint saw No. 5428 adopt its BR guise of No. 45428 and has been turned out in unlined BR black. While other members of the class have carried this livery in preservation, it is believed this is the first time it has been carried authentically, its condition reflecting that as worn when smartened up at Leeds Holbeck shed for Royal Train duties in



Outshopped in unlined BR black, 'Black Five' No. 45428 arrives at Levisham on September 28. For each day of the gala it carried different chalk markings, with that day's reflecting those carried on October 1, 1967, when it worked the final London-bound express between Bradford and Leeds. OWEN HAYWARD



Kitson 0-6-2T No. 29 arrives at Goathland station with a shuttle working from Grosmont. OWEN HAYWARD



Cockerill 0-4-0VBT *Lucie* glides through Levisham, where it spent the weekend running brake van rides around station limits between passing trains. OWEN HAYWARD

1967. Despite the work carried out to smarten it up for that work, it never saw use on such workings, instead being kept as standby to LMS Jubilee No. 45562 *Alberta*. A number of different chalk markings were applied to the smokebox throughout the gala.

Southern interlopers

The fourth member of the visiting line-up was SR Battle of Britain class light Pacific No. 34072 257 *Squadron*, which had travelled from its home on the Swanage Railway via the Epping Ongar Railway (see news, page 32), where it had been joined by Moorsline resident Schools class 4-4-0 No. 926 *Repton*.

The Bulleid was outshopped in 1948, one of the first examples of the class to have been completed under the newly-formed British Railways. Initially allocated to high-profile Boat Trains such as the 'Night Ferry' between Dover and London, it was later transferred to Exmouth, before moving on to Eastleigh. At its withdrawal in 1964, it had amassed some 700,000 miles travelled.

Repton was designed by Richard Maunsell and emerged from Eastleigh works in 1934, being put to use initially on the Bournemouth route. In 1960, it was one of the last of the class to be overhauled by BR, which made it an ideal candidate for preservation upon withdrawal in 1962. Stored at Fratton shed, near Portsmouth, it moved to Eastleigh in 1964 for restoration, before being donated to Steamtown USA in Vermont. During its time aboard, it was put on loan to Cape Breton Steam Railway in Canada,

where it operated regular passenger services. It was sold to Clifford Brown in 1989, who repatriated it and took it to the NYMR, where it returned to service in 1990. *Repton* is unique in currently being the only 4-4-0 certified for main line running, albeit restricted to the Esk Valley line between Grosmont and Whitby.

Having arrived back at New Bridge depot on the outskirts of Pickering on the first day of the gala, *Repton* saw use on September 28 only, when it ran two Whitby services with a pair of Goathland shuttles in between. It did, however, carry a headboard for 'The Kentish Venturer', a Locomotive Club of Great Britain railtour which ran on October 1, 1962, as part of a series of farewell to steam outings, with electrification of routes in Kent completed that June. The tour was worked by King Arthur class 4-6-0 No. 30782 *Sir Brian* from London Victoria to Ashford, where H class 0-4-4 No. 31263 and C class No. 31690 took over for a run to Appledore via New Romney. From there, *Repton* (as No. 30926) worked the final leg of the tour to Charing Cross.

The final two locomotives on the gala roster were Kitson-built Lambton, Hetton & Joicey Colliery 0-6-2T No. 29 (built in 1904 and withdrawn 1969) and Cockerill type IV 0-4-0VB No. 8 *Lucie* (built in 1890 and originally served the East Brussels Tram Company).

The former worked shuttles between Grosmont and Goathland on each of the four days, while the latter operated brake van rides around the station limits of Levisham.

The only setbacks encountered throughout the gala were the sudden failures of Nos. 34072 and 92134 on the Sunday morning, the former with an issue with the firebox grate while a broken spring was discovered on the latter, their duties being taken over by the 'Black Fives.'

Huge success

Despite the huge competition posed by the celebrations at Darlington, it seemed that many people took the opportunity of visiting the Moorsline too, with more than 5000 people travelling on services.

Nick Simpson, head of mechanical engineering, said: "This year's Annual Steam Gala was such a success thanks to the staff, volunteers, and locomotive owners and all of their hard work behind the scenes to make everything run smoothly. It's all hands on deck for the whole NYMR team, from the engine prep all the way to customer service, to provide an unforgettable experience."

Events and guest experience manager Charlotte Hawes added: "The gala is always a highlight of the calendar, and this year was no different."

"It was great to see so many returning visitors riding behind some incredible visiting locomotives and also welcome budding rail enthusiasts riding behind steam for the first time – and what an atmosphere for it too."

"We are delighted that the event was such a success and are already in planning stages for 2026!" **HR**

Steam and diesel in line-up behind SR's Merchant Navy

ALTHOUGH the £27,500 success of nameplate *United States Lines* from SR Merchant Navy No. 35012 was a major talking point after Great Central's quarterly auction on September 6, as reported in my brief and initial report in last month's column, there was obviously much else for the cognoscenti and the railwayana movement in general to discuss and debate.

There was, for example, a tie for second spot which highlighted one of the trends in the marketplace, that of heritage modern traction making significant inroads into what was previously almost exclusive steam territory. The ever-reliable GWR made the case for the old order with a £12,000 hammer price for *Fairey Battle* from Castle class No. 5077, but this realisation was matched by *Western Warrior* and one of its cabsides from Class 52 diesel-hydraulic D1017.

Moving below the five-figure mark, we find *The Southwold* from LNER D49 No. 62748 (£9200) and then a return to the GWR with *County of Carmarthen* from No. 1009 and *Princess Charlotte* from Star class No. 4054 at £7800 and £7600 respectively, closely followed by *Chard* (West Country No. 34033) that went for £7000.

Bringing up the main line steam rear with a price of £3500 was *Dumfries-Shire*, from No. 62732, a D49 classmate of No. 62748, while non-sellers in this category were LNER trio *Felstead*, *Loch Laggan*, and *Bedfordshire*, from Nos. 60089, 61791 and 62724. Finally in the nameplate sector, *George Romney* from Metropolitan Railway Bo-Bo electric locomotive No. 11, a City to Rickmansworth regular, achieved significant success when it sold for £5400.

The top smokebox numberplate was from *Britannia* No. 70051 *Firth of Forth*, which sold for £3000. This Pacific was in the headlines on June 5, 1965, when a blowback engulfed the footplate north of Crewe and caused 80% burns to 33-year-old driver Wallace Oakes, who averted a disaster by remaining at the controls to bring the loaded train to a halt before falling from the cab.

He died from his injuries and four months later was posthumously awarded the George Cross, the second highest award in the honours system. This medal was bought by the NRM at a GCRA sale in September 2017 for £60,000 and is now on display there, and during research, we at *Heritage Railway* discovered that Wallace lay



in an unmarked grave in a Cheshire churchyard and so launched a fundraising appeal to pay for an appropriate headstone.

Jean Hoskins, Wallace's second cousin and his closest surviving relative, heard of the appeal and became an enthusiastic supporter. Such was its success that in February 2018, a headstone recording Wallace's heroism was dedicated at his previously unmarked grave at St Matthew's Churchyard in Haslington, Cheshire.

With her pride of Wallace's bravery undimmed, Jean, who lives with her husband Rob in Rochester, Kent, visits the grave at least annually, and has told *Heritage Railway* that the headstone and grave are well cared for.

1866 worksplate

Returning to the Great Central auction, another locomotive category winner was an 1866 Black Hawthorn & Co worksplate from an 0-4-0T named *Fairy* that went for £8800. The plate carries the works

No. 3, but the engine was the first to be constructed under the Black Hawthorn name due to the first two being general engineering contracts for which plates were not required. The engine was built to 3ft 6in gauge for the General Mining Association, was rebuilt to standard gauge in 1885, and was scrapped after the First World War.

Still with this category, a McCulloch Sons & Kennedy plate from an 0-4-0ST built in 1890, the year the company closed down, realised £5400. This engine also worked in the mining industry and survived into National Coal Board ownership until being scrapped in 1959. From the ranks of the national network, the highest priced worksplate was a 1927 William Beardmore example from N7 class 0-6-2T No. 69697, fetching £4000.

In the vanguard of the totem selection was North Eastern Region Malton at £5200, some way ahead of the £3400 for Western Region's Swansea (Victoria), while the leading SR target sign was Sandown from the Isle of Wight (£2300) and the top London Underground platform sign Highgate (£1400).

To round off proceedings, five category leaders that sold for around the £2k mark comprised a Bulleid Merchant Navy class whistle and a BR Station Master doorplate each at £2400, an 1870s LSWR ex-Okehampton branch 'one engine in steam' train staff and a 'Belfast Boat Express' headboard at £2200 apiece, and a SR 1938 'All ways by Southern' poster featuring steam and electric traction that realised £2000. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

On the previous day, September 5, Great Central held a sale of model trains, in which the highest realisations of £2800 were achieved by an Aster of Japan gauge one live steam No. 34051 *Winston Churchill* and a Golden Age of Swanage set of 'Coronation' carriages, followed at £2600 by a Wuhu of China gauge one live steam A4 No. 60023 *Golden Eagle*. Prices on both days exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).



Tragic 'Brit': *Britannia* No. 70051 *Firth of Forth*, whose smokebox numberplate sold for £3000 at a Great Central Railwayana auction on September 6, rests between duties at Carlisle Kingmoor shed (12A) in the late 1950s. The Standard Pacific was at the centre of a tragedy in 1965 when a blowback engulfed the footplate and caused burns to the driver, from which he died. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ROY VINCENT

New arrivals make their GWRA entrance

THE steam nameplate selection at GW Railwayana's November 15 auction, early details of which were in last month's column, has been boosted by six new arrivals, four of which are from Nigel Gresley-designed engines, comprising an A4 Pacific and a trio of B17s, while the other two are both from BR-built locomotives.

From the A4 class comes *Sir Murrough Wilson*, carried by No. 60002, the B17s are *Framlingham*, *Serlby Hall*, and *Hinchingbrooke* (Nos. 61603, 61631, and 61634), and the post-Nationalisation-built representatives are *Meg Merrilies* from Peppercorn LNER A1 No. 60115 and *John Bunyan* from Britannia No. 70003.

No. 60002 emerged from Doncaster in April 1938 as *Pochard*, was renamed the following year after LNER director and MP Sir Murrough Wilson, and was withdrawn from Gateshead (52A) in May 1964, and the three B17s were built at North British Glasgow or Darlington between 1928-31 and withdrawn in 1958/59 variously from Cambridge (31A), Ipswich (32B), and March (31B).

No. 60115 was outshopped by Doncaster in September 1948, named after a Sir Walter Scott character, and withdrawn from Leeds Copley Hill (56C) in November 1962. One of the Pacific's worksplates and its smokebox numberplate will also be going under the hammer.

Secondly from the ranks of BR-built engines, No. 70003 emerged from Crewe in March 1951 and was pensioned off from Carlisle Kingmoor (12A) in March 1967, meaning it and No. 60115 were in service for a combined total of just 30 years. What a waste of two fine engines, whatever the undoubted merits of the heritage modern traction that replaced them.

On that subject, diesel nameplates that will feature include *Honourable Artillery Company* with integral crest from Class 45 'Peak' D89/45006, *Zebra* (Class 42 'Warship' D866) and *Western Patriarch* with one of its cabsides from Class 52 'Western' D1053. The plate from D89 brings into the

spotlight Britain's oldest regiment, which can trace its history back to 1087 and was incorporated by Henry VIII in 1537.

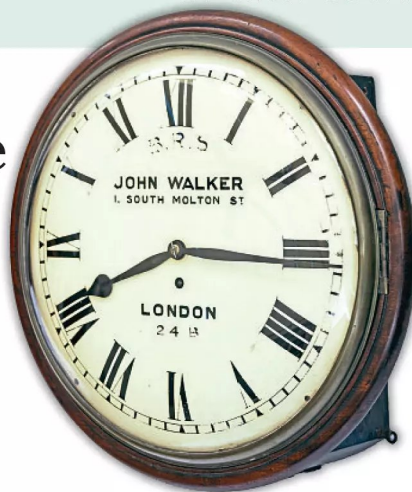
Back then to steam and a lengthy line-up of GWR cabside numberplates, among which are 1020 *County of Monmouth*, 4078 *Pembroke Castle*, 4984 *Albrighton Hall*, 5019 *Treago Castle*, 5020 *Trematon Castle*, 6006 *King George I*, 7824 *Iford Manor*, and Saint duo 2921 *Saint Dunstan* and 2950 *Taplow Court*, and in the heritage modern traction cabside sector are E3010 and E3303 from WCML electric locomotives.

Locomotive crest

In addition to the worksplate from No. 60115, there is another from an LNER engine, a 1937 Doncaster example (works No. 1859) from A4 No. 60003 *Andrew K. McCosh*, and delving deeper into railway history, a GER locomotive crest from a Class S46 'Claud Hamilton' 4-4-0 will also be seeking a new home.

Smokebox numberplates will include 5046 *Earl Cawdor*, 7907 *Hart Hall* and 35018 *British India Line*, and headboards 'The Norfolkman' and 'Butlins Express'. I recorded the former at my local station of Ilford on a number of occasions, firstly on July 24, 1957, in the hands of No. 70009 *Alfred the Great*, and for the last time on August 2, 1961, headed not by a Type 3 diesel that had by then gate-crashed this express's party, but most unusually by a B1 class 4-6-0, No. 61254.

Platform totem signs, a long-standing favourite category but one which is recently attaining even more extraordinary



popularity, will as ever be out in force, with no fewer than a projected 115 in the pipeline. Selecting one or two to highlight is needle-in-a-haystack territory, but I'll go for two that are making their auction debuts, BR(Sc) South Beach and BR(E) Linton.

The former is one of three stations that are still open in Ardrossan, on the north Ayrshire coast 35 miles south-west of Glasgow and is the location of a former engine shed coded 67D by BR, while the ex-Stour Valley Railway station of Linton, in Cambridgeshire, opened in 1865 and just made it past its century before closing in 1967.

On November 16, the day after this flagship auction, GW Railwayana boss Simon Turner will hold part two, comprising such general memorabilia as signs, clocks and watches, signalling equipment, shedplates, carriageprints and posters, in which the oldest item is a 14in dial railway clock believed to be about 183 years old.

It was supplied to the London & Brighton Railway in about 1842 by M Mosely, carries on its dial the No. 24B, and was in service in the cloakroom at London Bridge station and subsequently in the lobby of Victoria station's yard foreman.

Other features of the clock, which is believed to be one of the oldest-surviving railway clocks, include its original cast bezel with convex glass, and 24B also stamped on the rear of the mahogany case.

Both parts of the auction are live online, that on November 15 starts at 9.30am and on the following day at 10am.

Railwayana Auction Calendar

October 24

Lacy Scott & Knight (*railwayana and model trains*)

October 25

Transport Auctions of London

Ends October 28

Paperchase

October 29/30

Vectis (*model trains*)

November 15/16

GW Railwayana

November 17-23

JustaClickago (*photographs, negatives and slides*)

Railway LNER memories of a Co Durham port

MEMORIES of Hartlepool's railway history were at the forefront of Thirsk Railwayana's September 20 auction thanks to two LNER items that topped the 730-lot realisation list. The first, at £820, was a wood with metal letters nameboard from Stranton signalbox, which was opened by the North Eastern Railway in 1911 and closed in 2010.

Following was a direction sign to the port's West Hartlepool station that fetched £640. This station opened as Hartlepool West in 1841, was renamed West Hartlepool in 1848, re-sited in 1880, had the 'West' prefix dropped by BR in 1967, and is still open today, handling more than 625,000 passengers annually. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12% (+ VAT).

→ The totem bandwagon was on a roll on September 25/26, when a Vectis 1217-lot live online auction of railwayana and model trains was headed by a BR(W) Birmingham Snow Hill example that went under the hammer for £2000. Leading the model trains' category was O-gauge LNER V3 class 2-6-2T No. 7684, whose £520 realisation was closely followed by an Ace Trains' O-Gauge SR West Country class Pacific No. 34004 *Yeovil* that fetched £500. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES
SEE PAGE 30



Like us facebook.com/heritagerrailway

HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY

Colliery plates outshine main line rivals

ALTHOUGH the two main line steam nameplates in Great Northern's September 24-October 4 auction – *Cory Hall* from GWR No. 5968 and *Selkirkshire* from LNER D49 No. 62731 – failed to sell, plates from two colliery locomotives did make their way into new collections.

They were *Progress* from a Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-6-0ST built in 1946 (that survives at the National Coal Mining Museum in West Yorkshire), which sold for £1550, and *Kia Ora* (a Māori greeting or a brand of soft drink) from a Peckett 0-4-0ST (£500).

The auction's leading realisation of £1800 was achieved by a Stratford 'cockney sparrow' diesel era depot plaque, followed by three other official such plaques for between £1010 and £600, while an unofficial version got into the act by selling for £1000, and two BR(M) enamel doorplates that also made their mark were 'Refreshments' and 'Goods agent' that went for £920 and £540 respectively. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15%.

Hitting the heights with Eastern sign and signal

NON-MAINSTREAM memorabilia hit the heights both literally and financially in Great Central's live online auction of general railwayana on September 18/19.

Top of the 1000 lots with a £1780 realisation was an 8ft 6in high level crossing road sign complete with triangle, while at £1150 was a 9ft 10in tall Great Eastern Railway wooden post signal. Between this pair were two Stevens' NER Middleton-in-Teesdale signalbox brass lever plates that sold as a single lot for £1700 and a collection of

telegraph insulators and stands, including LMS examples, that fetched £1600.

Just below the four-figure mark was a 'Scandinavian' headboard which carried a 'to be returned to Liverpool St loco' instruction on the rear and was sold for £920. This London to Harwich Parkeston Quay boat train was a regular entrant into my Ilford trainspotting logs, firstly on April 18, 1957, with 'Brit' No. 70005 *John Milton* at the helm, and for the last time on July 8, 1961, headed by D5533. From the same era

came an illuminated boxed map of the entire BR system for which the winning bid was £820. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

Auctioneer Martin Quartermain said of the event, which was a 'Bloxham'-style sale of the type followed by bargain-hunters over a number of years: "Signalling was very buoyant, and it's also worth noting that cast-iron signs are holding their own and carriageprints, especially those that are framed, are showing signs of recovering."



Victorian latecomers set for new homes

Two BR(S) totems, Ash Vale and Wivelsfield, and from the centre of the capital a bronze framed Central Line sign, will be among the lots in a Transport Auctions of London live online auction on October 25, starting at 10am.

Ash Vale is on the London-Alton route in Surrey, adjacent to the

Basingstoke Canal 32 miles out of Waterloo, while the West Sussex station of Wivelsfield is on the London Bridge and Victoria line to Brighton. Both were comparative latecomers onto the Victorian railway scene, Ash Vale being opened by the LSWR in May 1870 and Wivelsfield by the LBSCR 16

years later, in August 1886. Both are still open today.

The auction, which will be live online from 10am, will also include the first lots from a large London Underground and railway ticket collection, with the second selection going under the hammer in TAL's February 2026 sale.

The **RAILWAY** Magazine

DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Access 120 years' worth of history from the nation's most authoritative and prestigious rail publication.

over
120 years
1300 issues
140,000 pages



ACTIVATE YOUR ACCESS TODAY
FROM AS LITTLE AS £6*

*This gets you three months' access to the Digital Archive. Magazine subscription rates start from £20 for six months.

- FULLY SEARCHABLE CONTENTS
- KEEP SCRAPBOOKS OF YOUR FAVOURITE ARTICLES
- BONUS PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED CONTENT
- MULTI-PLATFORM ACCESS

WWW.RAILWAYMAGAZINE.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

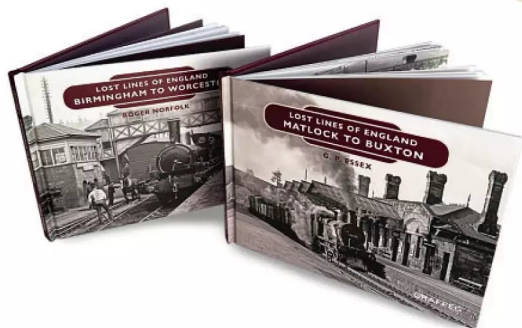
ORDER NOW FOR CHRISTMAS

Choose any 4 books for £20. Search for Lost Lines or Lost Tramways bundles at www.graffeg.com.

LOST LINES OF WALES AND ENGLAND



Bundles
order link



New November titles:

- Birmingham to Worcester
- Matlock to Buxton

Books £8.99 each. Bundle price: 4 for £20.

- Aberystwyth to Carmarthen
- Bangor to Afon Wen
- Birmingham to Oxford
- **Birmingham to Worcester (NEW*)**
- Brecon to Newport
- Cambrian Coast Line
- Cheddar Valley Line
- Chester to Holyhead
- Conwy Valley
- Llandoverly to Craven Arms
- **Matlock to Buxton (NEW*)**
- Monmouthshire Eastern Valleys
- Monmouthshire Western Valleys
- Rhyl to Corwen
- Ruabon to Barmouth
- Ryde to Cowes
- Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth
- Shrewsbury to Chester
- Swansea to Llandoverly
- Stratford-upon-Avon to Gloucester
- The Heads of the Valleys
- The Mid Wales Line
- Vale of Neath
- Wye Valley

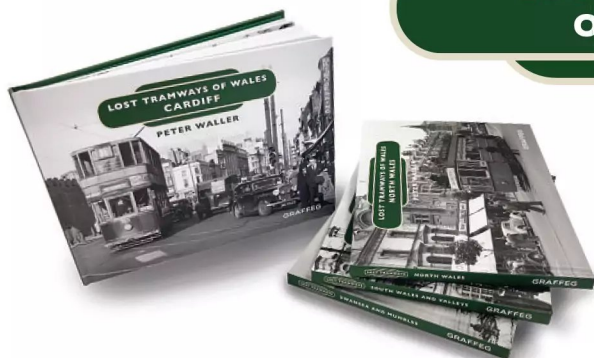
**New books are not included in the 4-book bundle*

Beautifully produced hardback books, edited by heritage transport experts Tom Ferris and Peter Waller.

LOST TRAMWAYS OF BRITAIN



Bundles
order link



Lost Lines 24 book set £96.
Lost Tramways 30 book set £120 including UK delivery.

Books £8.99 each. Bundle price: 4 for £20.

- Aberdeen
- Belfast
- Birmingham North
- Birmingham South
- Bradford
- Brighton
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Coventry
- Devon and Cornwall
- Dundee
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow North
- Glasgow South
- Leeds East
- Leeds West
- London North East
- London North West
- London South East
- London South West
- Manchester North
- Manchester South
- North Wales
- Nottingham
- South Wales & Valleys
- Southampton
- Swansea & Mumbles
- Dublin
- Scotland West
- Bolton, SLT, Wigan and St Helens

All books need to be added to the basket for the discount to apply.

Order online www.graffeg.com or call 01554 824000

GRAFFEG

BAHAMAS BOWS OUT AT GREAT CENTRAL'S MIDLAND GALA

A stalwart of main line tours in recent years, LMS Jubilee No. 45596 *Bahamas* saw out the final days of its boiler ticket at the Great Central Railway, including a starring role at the line's autumn steam gala, as **Owen Hayward** reports.

It was a Midland takeover of the Eastern Region at the start of October as the Great Central Railway hosted its annual autumn steam gala, at which no less than three visiting locomotives were drafted in to star, each proving popular with visitors and once again drawing the crowds to Leicestershire for the occasion.

For many, the star of the occasion was Jubilee 4-6-0 No. 45596 *Bahamas*. Normally a resident at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway but also a regular on main line charters, it has been exceedingly rare for this particular locomotive to visit a line without a direct connection to the national network. Its visit to Loughborough was therefore a product of fortunate circumstances. Several GCR shed staff are supporters of No. 4556's owning group, the Bahamas Locomotive Society, and with the gala dates of October 2-5 being just before its boiler certification was due to expire, this enabled a rare move by road for the locomotive to be agreed to allow it to appear at the UK's only double-track main line heritage railway.

Built at Crewe in 1934 as No. 5596 for the LMS, in 1961 *Bahamas* was fitted with a double blastpipe and chimney during a BR experiment to improve the performance of

steam locomotives. This modification for that reason was the last undertaken by BR; with more than 1.4 million miles clocked up in service, the Jubilee was withdrawn on July 1966 following a hot axlebox being discovered while working 'The Fellsman' the month before. Rather than being sent for scrap, it was stored at the back of Stockport Edgeley shed until it was purchased directly from BR by the newly established BLS the following January.

Main line stalwart

An overhaul at the Hunslet Engine Co in Leeds saw it return to service in March 1968, establishing a home at what became the Dinting Railway Centre until 1990 when it relocated to the KWVR; in fact, when Dinting closed, much of the collection followed it there, taking up residence in the former goods shed at Ingrow station.

Prior to that, *Bahamas* worked its first main line tour in 1972 after BR lifted the private owner steam ban. It has since then seen regular outings and proven to be a popular choice for charter firms. It largely operated in partnership with West Coast Railways until recently, but due to ongoing discussions over the fitment of central door locking to its fleet

of vacuum-braked Mk. 1 carriages, since 2024 it has been employed on charters run by Tyseley-based Vintage Trains. Its last main line tour took place on September 6 when, as reported last issue, it double-headed VT's 'The Mayflower' with WR Castle No. 7029 *Clun Castle* to Plymouth on an historic run that saw it chase Saphos Trains' 'English Riviera Express' from the block section immediately behind along the Dawlish seafloor.

Many main line locomotives will not visit heritage lines not connected to the national network as the stresses imposed when being loaded onto a lorry can result in damage such as broken springs, so such moves are perceived to be high-risk. With no subsequent main line work booked and the end of its boiler ticket imminent, these circumstances enabled *Bahamas*' appearance at the GCR. Such a limitation will not exist there much longer; once the reunification project has been completed, a main line link will exist once more.

Joining the Jubilee was LNWR Webb 0-6-2T coal tank No. 1054, another product of Crewe works albeit one that dates from 1888. It's survival was down to the Second World War. Originally withdrawn in 1939, it was earmarked for scrapping but following

***Bahamas* rounds the curve at Kinchley Lane on October 2 with a service bound for Leicester North.**
OWEN HAYWARD





the outbreak of war and an accompanying shortage of locomotives, it was overhauled and reinstated in December 1940.

It then moved around the network. Despite passing into LMS ownership under the grouping of smaller companies, following Nationalisation it could be found on Western territory at Shrewsbury and Abergavenny. It was even loaned to the National Coal Board for 12 months in 1954 to work alongside two of its classmates at Windsor Colliery, near Pontypridd. When it returned to Abergavenny, it was not only the sole survivor of its type, but it was also the last Webb-designed locomotive in operation.

It was withdrawn in 1958 after working the last train over the line to Merthyr with 0-8-0 'Super D' No. 49121. Up for scrapping again, its second escape came thanks to a group of enthusiasts, led by former Bagnor shedmaster Max Dunn, who purchased it and subsequently had it repainted into LNWR livery at Crewe. It initially went into storage at Hednesford, Staffordshire, for storage before ownership was transferred to the National Trust in 1963, which put it on display at Penrhyn Castle.

Coming together

In 1973, No. 1054 was transferred to Dinting where it joined *Bahamas*; a brief main line return occurred in 1980 for the Rocket 150 cavalcade at Rainhill, followed by another in 1984 when hired by Wilsons Brewery in Manchester to haul a one-coach train to a specially erected station adjacent to the brewery at Newton Heath.

Above left: Webb coal tank No. 1054 coasts away from Swithland and towards Rabbit Bridge with a short local working bound for Loughborough Central.
OWEN HAYWARD

Above right: Robert (running as BR J94 No. 68067) works its train of vans through Bridge 336 on the approach to Loughborough.
GEOFF GRIFFITHS/GCR

Right: On October 5, Stanier mogul No. 13268 races through Swithland loop with the 9.45am departure from Loughborough.
GRAHAM NUTTALL



The coal tank briefly visited the KWVR in 1986, returning there in 1990 and remaining ever since. During this time, it was placed into the care of the BLS, albeit still owned by the NT. This arrangement remained until February 2024, when ownership was formally handed over.

Away from the Worth Valley, it is rare to see both of the BLS's operational locomotives together in one place.

No. 1054 has become a roving ambassador during the middle months of the year, something necessitated in part by West Yorkshire Police's insistence that road movements in and out of Ingrow have a police escort, which adds a substantial sum to the already hefty lorry costs. The bringing of these two locomotives together was therefore an apt way of bidding *Bahamas* farewell at the end of its ticket. ➔



Above: Persistent rain falls as WR 4-6-0 No. 6990 Witherslack Hall climbs away from Rothley on October 3, having been turned to face northwards for the first time since 2000. GRAHAM NUTTALL

Right: No. 1054 arrives at Loughborough Central with a mixed goods working on a rather damp October 3. GEOFF GRIFFITHS/GCR



Marvellous Mogul

The final guest in the line-up was Stanier mogul 2-6-0 No. 13268. Built in the same location and at the same year as *Bahamas*, it lasted in service until December 31, 1966. During that time, it covered more than 710,000 miles and carried six different boilers, the last being fitted during a heavy general overhaul in 1957. Taken to Woodham's scrapyards at Barry in 1967, it was the final example of its class by the time it was saved in 1973. Its historical importance saw the formation of the Stanier Mogul Fund, which bought it and took it to the Severn Valley Railway, where it has remained based ever since.

A return to steam came in 1990 before it formally entered traffic in April 1991. There were early ambitions to see it returned to main line operating condition, however, concerns about the lack of patronage on services it would work saw that proposal initially abandoned.

Following the fitting of equipment and several false starts at test runs, a successful outing to Gloucester happened in August 1996. Its main line comeback was cut short in 1998 when it was discovered that the firebox crown stays had deteriorated to a condition that was unacceptable for such running. An overhaul commenced that saw it return to service in 2003, this time seeing out its full boiler certificate before being withdrawn in 2012.

Its most recent overhaul was completed in October 2023, the mogul adopting its LMS identity in place of the BR one it carried since withdrawal. Its visit to the GCR was the first time it had ventured away from home since this most recent return to service and came ahead of its visit to the East Lancashire Railway for a similarly LMS-flavoured gala on October 17-19; this will be covered in the next issue of *Heritage Railway*.

The three Midland Region locomotives were due to work alongside GCR resident 2-8-0 8F No. 43805, which had returned from the KWVR where it had spent the summer working services transporting audiences to performances of The Railway Children in the museum at Oxenhope. On its penultimate day in service, firebox cracks were discovered which have necessitated its total withdrawal from service pending a full overhaul.

Unusually for a GCR gala, most of the locomotives ran facing northwards which, while creating challenges for photographers,



Having returned from its Yorkshire holiday the weekend before, BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No.78019 is cleared to approach Loughborough with the 'Windcutter' rake on October 3. GEOFF GRIFFITHS/GCR

opened up many new opportunities. The likes of WR modified Hall No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* were turned especially, with this particular locomotive not having faced this direction since 2000!

Turn of events

BR Standard 2MT Nos. 78018 and 78019 both faced this direction following their respective returns from Hopetown Darlington's Titan's of Steam and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's own steam gala.

Other starring locomotives included Hunslet Austerity No. 1752 *Robert* (masquerading as J94 No. 68067) and BR 5MT No. 73156, the latter being just one of three locomotives to face south throughout the event. Derby Lightweight railcar *Iris* also featured to ensure a regular pattern of departures throughout the day.

As is expected of GCR galas, the double-track formation enabled regular departures off each end of the line, with some services swapping locomotives and reversing at Rothley. Freight workings featured the restored box van rake, 'Windcutter' mineral wagons, and a mixed train formed of a variety of goods vehicles, all helping to recreate the bygone days of steam. The gala once again attracted several thousand visitors. General

manager Malcolm Holmes said: "Heritage railways are always at the mercy of the weather, but this weekend has shown just how resilient our team and our visitors are. The sight and sound of eight steam locomotives at work and passing on our unique double-track main line railway was really something very special. We are delighted so many people came to enjoy it."

On the weekend of October 11/12, *Bahamas* made its final appearance in service, working alongside Nos. 13268 and 73156. This included a farewell double-headed trip from Loughborough to Leicester North each evening, with the retiring Jubilee leading the Mogul on what was a non-stop run.

BLS chairman Keith Whitmore said: "Although this is only the seven-year ticket for main line running that is expiring, we are taking the opportunity to do a full overhaul to reenter service with a fresh 10-year boiler certificate on *Bahamas*."

"As part of that, we will fit the locomotive with air-braking equipment so we can once again work with further main line charter operators, it having been some 18 months since we were last able to work with the Railway Touring Company."

"To achieve this, we are working with the GCR's Heavy Tractor Group while the overhaul is carried out at Tyseley." **HR**



Bahamas glides across the rather depleted Swithland Reservoir bound for Leicester North. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 1054 creeps past the housing estate at Woodthorpe with the 12.15pm departure from Leicester North to Loughborough. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 13268 accelerates through Woodthorpe on October 2.
OWEN HAYWARD

Roamwild PestOff 2.0 Bird Feeder

NOT JUST SQUIRREL PROOF!

Improved in every way imaginable.
This Bird Feeder is a fortress against
any squirrel, crow, pigeon or rat.

Hurry! Order online now for superfast delivery

www.roamwildproducts.co.uk

CREDIT CARD ORDERLINE: 0208 327 0455

During office hours only Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm excluding bank holidays

OVER ONE MILLION SOLD ACROSS THE UK AND USA

HOW IT WORKS

PORT OPEN

PORT CLOSED



INDIVIDUALLY SPRING LOADED

when anything heavier than a songbird
lands on the perch it closes.

ROAMWILD GUARANTEE If you are not completely satisfied with your
purchase return within 7 days for a full refund of purchase price.

Please send cheque in stamped envelope to: Oakthrift, Sevenacres,
Sevenacres Lane, Maldon CM9 8HD. Please send me the following:

Item	Price	Qty	Total
1 x Roamwild™ PestOff 2.0 Bird Feeder	£34.99		
Please add £4.99 postage to complete order			£4.99
I enclose a cheque (payable to Roamwild) for £		Grand Total	£

or charge my Mastercard/Visa/Maestro/Switch. Card No:

Security Code (last 3 digits): / / Expiry Date: / /

Issue No (Switch/Maestro): Signature:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Tel No: _____ Email: _____



GUARANTEED

PATENTED

roamwild



PRACTICAL • FUNCTIONAL • EXCEPTIONAL

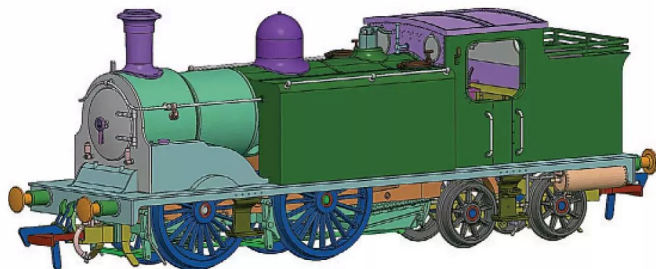
Caley tank exclusive expands pre-Grouping offering from Rails and Bachmann

IT would appear that retailer Rails of Sheffield has a soft spot for pre-Grouping locomotives of the LMS constituent, particularly those from the Caledonian Railway, as the firm announced it has commissioned Bachmann to produce a range of exclusive models of the 0-4-4T 439 class of locomotives, which includes variants of the sole-surviving preserved example.

The CR had a long history of using locomotives with this wheel arrangement, with examples being built from the mid-1880s right through until 1925. The 439 class was the most numerous example, with 92 built. The first was introduced in 1900, becoming classed as the 'standard passenger' class; 74 survived into BR ownership

and the class was one of just a few tank engine designs with pre-Grouping origins to survive into the final decade of steam. CR No. 419 (BR No. 55189) was saved for preservation and resides at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway in Scotland. Rails and Bachmann have worked closely with the locomotive's owning charity, the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, during the development of the new models.

They will boast a coreless motor and electrical pick-up from all wheels. Weight is expected to be fairly hefty, helped by a fully diecast chassis block, running plate, and gearbox, the latter being arranged for prototypical running speeds and haulage capabilities. Separately fitted details include the usual fare, such as



handrails, lamp irons and whistles, with further fine details including Westinghouse air pump, oil pots, and turned brass safety valves.

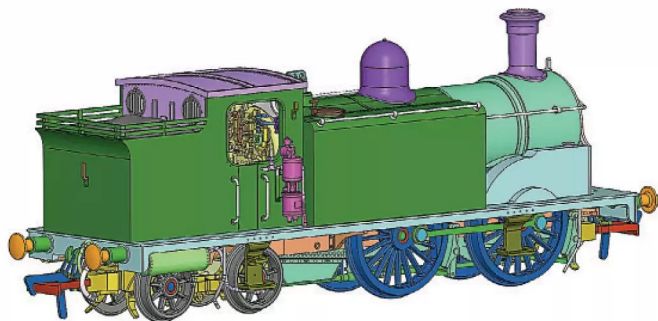
Cab interior is expected to be fully represented, including a separately fitted regulator, reverser, handbrake and valve wheels, while running gear details will cover springs, brake gear and sandpipes. Each model is supplied with an accessory pack featuring air tanks, additional bufferbeam pipework, cab steps and screwlink couplings.

Firebox glow will be present on all models, with DCC and sound-fitted versions also having the capability for flickering effect, as well as Bachmann's recently introduced automatic coupling system.

The project has seen all CAD artwork completed, and the first engineering samples are due to

be delivered for review soon. Six different models have been planned in the first wave of releases, with four focused on No. 419, which will be offered in two different CR blue schemes: LMS crimson, which it was outshopped in during September 2025, and the CR blue variant it carried during the Stockton & Darlington 150th anniversary cavalcade, the latter example forming part of the Railway Icons range. Classmates Nos. 15216 and 55224 will be offered in LMS lined black and late crest BR black respectively.

Prices start at £184.95 for DCC-ready models, rising to £324.95 for the deluxe examples. In addition to those available directly from the retailer, a limited number are available to purchase from the SRPS webstore with a £30 deposit. See <https://shop.srps.org.uk/>



North, south, or maybe both: Rapido's dual-region 4-4-0

UNSURE whether to make another Scottish locomotive or something from further south, Rapido Trains UK opted to settle for both in one locomotive with the LNER D40.

Introduced as the Great North of Scotland Railway V and F class, when the original order for 10 was made in 1899, the company realised that five was all it could actually afford, and the remainder were deemed surplus. As they had already been built, Neilson, Reid & Co sought a buyer, which came thanks to the South Eastern & Chatham Railway

in the south, for which they became the G class. A total of 18 would survive into BR ownership, but only one made it into preservation – No. 62277 *Gordon Highlander*, which is currently on display at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway.

In all, 17 different models will be produced, including five versions exclusive to Rails of Sheffield which will cover the class's story south of the Scottish border and incorporate both SECR grey and lined Wainwright green liveries, along with lined SR olive green.



RRP is set at £229.95 for DCC-ready models, rising to £334.95 for sound-fitted versions. Currently at the

tooling stage, no release date has yet been confirmed, but advance orders are open.





SCAN
FOR
MORE
INFO!

ESTD

RAILS

1970

OF SHEFFIELD

FAMILY
BUSINESS

FRIENDLY
SERVICE

PRE-OWNED & SECOND HAND

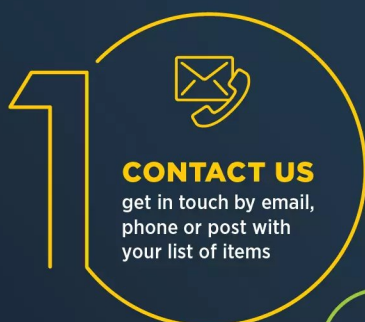
WANTED CASH OR EXCHANGE

BUY • SELL • EXCHANGE • ANY GAUGE • ANY AGE

LOCOS - COACHES - WAGONS - TRACK-WORK - CONTROLLERS - ACCESSORIES
DIE-CAST - LORRIES - BUSES - PLANES - SOLDIERS - RAILWAYANA - AND MORE

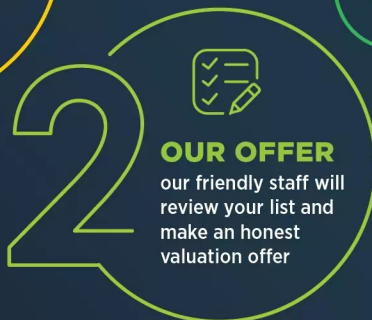
DECEASED ESTATES - EX SHOP STOCK A SPECIALITY
FAST SERVICE WITH COMPLETE DISCRETION ASSURED

WE VALUE YOUR COLLECTION VERY HIGHLY!



CONTACT US

get in touch by email,
phone or post with
your list of items



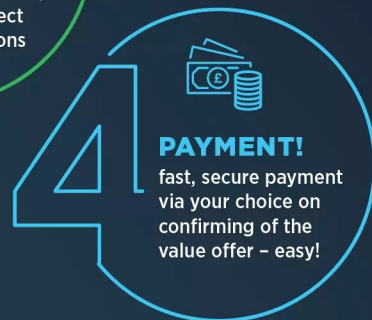
OUR OFFER

our friendly staff will
review your list and
make an honest
valuation offer



PACKAGE

either visit the shop,
send us your items,
or we can collect
larger collections



PAYMENT!

fast, secure payment
via your choice on
confirming of the
value offer - easy!

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT IN 4 EASY STEPS

GUARANTEED

**TOP
PRICES
PAID**

Ref: HERITAGE24

DON'T DELAY - GET IN TOUCH TODAY!

+44 (0)114 255 1436 ✉ secondhand@railsofsheffield.com

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE Stuff to Sell? LINK:

www.railsofsheffield.com

HORNBY
MODEL RAILWAY
Awards
2023
RETAILER OF
THE YEAR!

GRESLEY MEETS BULLEID OVER THE HAMPSHIRE ALPS

The Mid-Hants Railway's autumn steam gala celebrated two of rail industry engineering's finest. Despite becoming synonymous with rival regions, these well-known designers in reality had a close link, as **Owen Hayward** explains.

While the modern rail industry perhaps does not have quite as many stand names in terms of its chaps and designers, there's no doubt that the likes of Bulleid and Gresley are two from history with which railway enthusiasts are very familiar. They were responsible for a wide range of very successful locomotive classes – some being produced under more challenging circumstances than others – but both widely associated with two different regions of the pre-Grouping era.

Despite this, their stories are much more closely linked than some may realise, and it was that often forgotten chapter of their life stories that was celebrated by the Mid-Hants Railway at its October 3-5 steam gala.

Born in 1882, the rail career of Oliver Vaughan Snell Bulleid began when he became an apprentice at the Great Northern Railway's workshops at Doncaster at the age of 18. Upon finishing this tenure, he briefly became an assistant to the locomotive superintendent and works manager, before moving to France in 1908 to take up the position of chief draftsman at the Westinghouse Works, near Paris. His time there was also short-lived, and he returned to the UK in 1911, becoming personal assistant to the GNR's Nigel Gresley.

At that point, Gresley's own career was well-established. Born in 1876, he had entered

the industry some years before the turn of the millennium, apprenticing at Crewe Works with the LNWR under another well-known name, F W Webb. Following the completion of his apprenticeship, he spent a year working in the fitting and erecting shops before moving to the L&YR's Horwich Works under JAF Aspinall.

A special pairing

By 1901, Gresley had been appointed as assistant superintendent of the Carriage and Wagon Department there but in 1904 moved to the GNR, so beginning his association with the Eastern Region that would remain for the rest of his life. With the retirement of previous position holder, Henry Ivatt, Gresley was promoted to Chief Mechanical Engineer in 1911, when he took on Bulleid as PA, and the two worked together through to 1937. Ideas flowed between the two men, with the characteristic wedge shape of the streamlined A4 Pacifics worked out by both after a visit to Bugatti. Bulleid is also thought to have been the driving force behind the adoption of the Kylchap exhaust for many of Gresley's locomotives.

Keen to expand his own career, in 1937 he moved to the Southern Railway to take up the post of CME there, where he was free to pursue a variety of novel innovations.

His first contribution was to oversee the construction of three diesel-electric shunters ordered the year before by his predecessor, Richard Maunsell. The design later became designated Class 12 under BR.

In 1938, Bulleid gained approval for the construction of the Merchant Navy class, the first being completed in 1941. They incorporated a number of innovations such as electric welding, air-smoothed casing, thermic syphons, American 'Boxpok' wheels, and oil bath chain-driven valve gear, the latter due to a shortage of suitable gears in wartime Britain. Similar would be found on his later locomotives, the West Country and Battle of Britain classes, though it has been said Bulleid's ambition to achieve so much at once resulted in their issues, which included a reputation for excessive slipping, along with valve oil bath leakages and fires.

In late 1939, the Southern Railway, until then primarily a high-density commuter railway, found itself facing a severe lack of freight-handling capability. The most modern freight locomotive was the Maunsell Q class of 1938. With available materials at a premium, Bulleid developed the Q1 class. Their nickname of 'Ugly Ducklings' was derived from their fairly rugged appearances; to save on weight and material, all non-essentials were removed, which included

Wartime connections: Battle of Britain class No. 34059 Sir Archibald Sinclair and Merchant Navy No. 35005 Canadian Pacific climb the grade through Rookwood with the final train on October 5. JAMES TAVINER





Above: No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley emerges into the light from Sun Lane cutting shortly after departure from Alresford. OWEN HAYWARD



Right: BR 2MT No. 41312 passes through Bishops Sutton with a local working on October 4. NICK GILLIAM



Now carrying BR unlined black, Urie S15 No. 30506 puts in a turn of speed at Alreside with a freight working to Ropley on October 5. OWEN HAYWARD



Sir Archibald Sinclair puts on a stormy display as it rounds the curve at Bighton Lane. OWEN HAYWARD

otherwise common features such as running boards. Despite weighing in at only 46 tons, the class proved to be one of the most powerful designs of 0-6-0 locomotives produced in Britain.

While Bulleid was working on these projects, Gresley was continuing his own at Doncaster. The VE 2-6-2T was introduced in 1939, the first locomotive to come following his apprentice's jump to the rival region. This was followed by the V4 2-6-2 in 1941, the last of his steam locomotives, which was accompanied by a Bo-Bo electric locomotive.

No. 6701 was a prototype for a fleet planned to operate the Woodhead route following a mooted electrification. The war delayed that project, along with the planned construction of 69 further examples of the locomotive, and Gresley's death in the April of that same year meant he never saw it enter full service.

Pacific power

Earlier this year, the long-running overhaul of one of Bulleid's Merchant Navy class, No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific*, was concluded and it returned to service to much acclaim, as reported in issue 331.

One of the key angles of the launch event was the focus on the people who were employed in locomotive construction, specifically the women on this occasion



No. 34059 races through Ropley on October 4, while to the left No. 41312 awaits to be cleared into the platform with a freight train. Outside the shed, Peckett No. 1718 prepares to commence driver experience courses in the locomotive yard. EDWARD DYER



who filled the void left when men were called up to fight on the front lines.

Sticking with the celebration of people, the Mid-Hants saw an opportunity to celebrate the two respected names by bringing in one of the Eastern Region's most successful designs – A4 No. 60007, which carries the name of the class's knighted designer. The 100th Pacific to be outshopped by the GNR and LNER, it was named at a ceremony at Marylebone station in November 1937, at which Bulleid was present despite having changed employer.

On May 23, 1959, *Sir Nigel Gresley* achieved 112mph on the 'Stevenson Locomotive Society Special,' the first train in the UK with a booked or advertised schedule of more than 100mph. In achieving that speed, the A4 also set the official postwar speed record for steam traction. Rather aptly at the time, it was working with the tender that had been coupled to A3 Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* when it achieved the first officially recognised record of 100mph in 1934.

The pair were joined by a second of Bulleid's designs, Battle of Britain class No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair*, thus presenting a chance to compare two similar-looking locomotives in that and *Canadian Pacific*.

This particular visitor was notable for several reasons. Having been preserved in 1979 and taken to the Bluebell Railway in Sussex, it had never left that line since. That is partly down to the fact that restoration was not completed until 2009, when it made its first moves under its own steam since 1966. Although a joyous occasion, in October 2011, the discovery of fractures in the thermic syphons led to the locomotive being withdrawn from service, with the locomotive not becoming operational again until December 2023.

Secondly, the appearance of No. 34059 along the former Alton to Winchester link was not a complete first. On May 15, 1966, just two weeks before it was withdrawn, it was diverted along the route while working the 10.34am Bournemouth to Waterloo service as the main line to Southampton was being installed with electrification equipment. With similar BR(S) green carriages at its disposal, the gala provided an opportunity to recreate that moment of history almost 60 years later.

The starring trio of Pacifics were joined by MHR resident stalwarts 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41312 (the design of which was taken from a George Ivatt locomotive, who was the son of Henry Ivatt that Gresley succeeded at the GNR) and Urie S15 4-6-0, which has



No. 30506 heads for Ropley with a shortened mixed freight working comprising an array of wagon types as the gala weekend draws to a close. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 41312 glides into Medstead & Four Marks station with an Alton-bound service. OWEN HAYWARD

recently returned to service following firebox repairs in its BR identity of No. 30506.

The latter was predominantly found on freight workings throughout, with the train being shunted and reformed during layovers ensuring the consist varied for most runs.

The A4 remained in Hampshire for a further week, with static footplate tours offered on October 8/9 (a photography evening with Nikon experts on the latter), footplate rides the following two days, and further running days on October 11/12. **HR**

PLATFORM
5

www.platform5.com

PLATFORM 5 POCKET BOOKS 2026

Complete fleet lists of the rolling stock of Britain's main line railways. Includes:

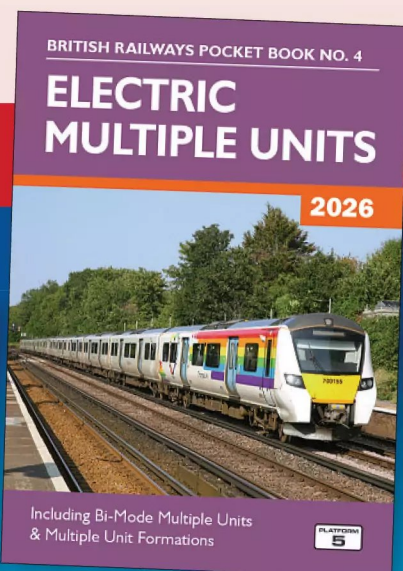
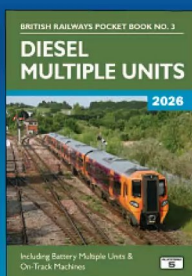
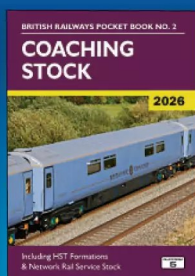
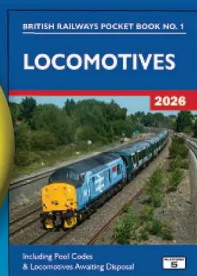
- *Numbers and Names* • *Livery Details* • *Depot Allocations* • *Class Totals & Detail Differences*
- *Owner and Operator Information* • *Multiple Unit Formations*

Each book is A6 size and is illustrated in colour. Published 3rd November.

**SAVE £1.25 PER BOOK. ORDER DIRECT FOR
£7.00 EACH PLUS P&P.**

Pay just **£7.00** each plus P&P at www.platform5.com by using the promotion code **PB26** at the basket, or order by post/telephone from Platform 5 Mail Order. Offer ends 28/02/2026.

AVAILABLE
EARLY
NOVEMBER



THE BEATEN TRACK VOLUME 5

The much anticipated fifth volume of 'The Beaten Track' contains over 250 high quality colour images from 1970–1985 illustrating an assortment of traction types, very few of which can still be seen on the main line. Many of the images feature locations that have long since disappeared from the railway network or have changed beyond all recognition. All the photographs are accompanied by extensive captions, containing considerable historical and anecdotal information relating to the lines, stations and trains depicted. Hardback. **176 pages. A4 size. £36.95.**

Now
Available!



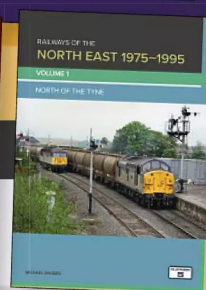
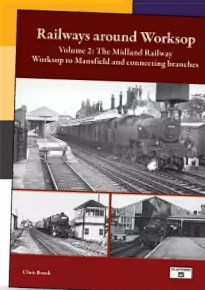
SAVE £3. ORDER DIRECT FOR £33.95 PLUS P&P

Pay just **£33.95** plus P&P at www.platform5.com by using the promotion code **BT5** at the basket, or order by post/telephone from Platform 5 Mail Order. Offer ends 31/12/2025.

ALSO RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

Railways around Worksop Volume 2: The Midland Railway Worksop to Mansfield and connecting branches £29.95 plus P&P

Railways of the North East 1975–1995 Volume 1: North of the Tyne £22.95 plus P&P



Mail order prices shown are only available from www.platform5.com or the Platform 5 Mail Order Department.

ORDER BY POST, TELEPHONE OR AT www.platform5.com

POSTAGE & PACKING: Please add 10% UK (maximum £8.50); 30% Europe; 50% Rest of World. Telephone your order and credit/debit card details to our 24-hour sales orderline:



24-hour Order Line: 0114 255 8000 or Fax: 0114 255 2471

Or send your credit/debit card details, sterling cheque or British Postal order payable to Platform 5 Publishing Ltd. to:

Mail Order Department (HR), Platform 5 Publishing Ltd, 52 Broadfield Road, SHEFFIELD, S8 0XJ, ENGLAND

SEVERN VALLEY AUTUMN STEAM GALA STUNNER

The Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Steam Gala, showcasing four days and three nights of non-stop steam action, has been hailed a resounding success, attracting more than 5700 visitors, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.

The September 18-21 Autumn Steam Gala was the first major enthusiast event since the full line reopened in July following the repair of a devastating landslip at Mor Brook that isolated Bridgnorth – and for the first time this year, trains stopped at Eardington.

The gala celebrated the SVR's 60th anniversary by running an ambitious programme, the centrepiece of which was a spectacular 60-hour continuous running schedule. With locomotives in action day and night from early Friday morning through to Sunday evening, it brought back overnight running for the first time in several years.

Before the gala, there were worries regarding fire risk due to the summer spell of long, dry weather, but the rain in the week before helped dampen the linesides.

A working LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T returned to the SVR for the first time in many years. On the Friday, it was allowed to run with five coaches between Kidderminster and Bewdley instead of the usual four.

No. 47298 came courtesy of the East Lancashire Railway and was making its first visit to another heritage line since its overhaul in 2023. It was one of four visiting

locomotives which all proved very popular; all visitors arrived before the gala and left immediately afterwards.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway sent Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co*; its boiler certificate is due to expire in October. No. 35006 was failed on the Sunday morning so missed its first working, but the fault was soon rectified and it hauled its second booked train of the day.

The Bluebell Railway sent BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 73082 *Camelot*, and it was nice to hear a chime whistle echoing around the valley once again.

Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns J94 0-6-0T NCB No. 49, from the Tanfield Railway, joined its old shed partner, GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813, which appeared as Backworth Unit No. 11, as described in the previous two issues of *Heritage Railway*.

From the home fleet, SVR flagship No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* and fellow 4-6-0s GWR No. 7802 *Bradley Manor* and BR Standard 4MT No. 75069 were in action, plus LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 and GWR 0-6-0PT 7714. For the first time in the heritage era and sporting its new livery,

GWR 0-4-2T No. 1450 mixed it up. Over two days it became an auto-tank, running in sandwich mode with GWR autococh No. 178 and GWR autotrailer third W238W *Chaffinch*. It also ran on Sunday with two GWR carriages and another day with *Chaffinch* only.

Resident No. 813 masqueraded as No.11 with NCB detailing, its brass safety valve bonnet and cabside numbers removed. There is reportedly no space in the paintshop at Bridgnorth for it to be returned to its GWR livery before Christmas, so there is the likelihood of it still appearing in this guise for the winter steam gala on January 3/4 next year.

Three double-headers ran with the smaller locomotives. No. 49 was coupled with No. 47298, Backworth shedmates Nos. 11 and 49, and then at night Nos. 1450 and 7714.

Nos. 7802, 11, 49 and 13268 took turns on the goods.

To add to the confusion, No. 35006 was turned on the Saturday afternoon, followed by Nos. 75069 and 7714 on the Sunday. After services on Sunday, most locomotives returned to Bridgnorth for a well-earned rest.

LMS Stanier Mogul No. 13268 sits in Bridgnorth station at about 1.40am on September 21 with Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co* and Ivatt 4MT 2-6-0 No. 43106 on shed.





Visiting No. 73082 *Camelot* climbs the last few yards before entering Bewdley Tunnel.



The signalman awaits the token as No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* runs into Bewdley with the goods, while GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813, as NCB No. 11, awaits departure on September 21.



A nice place to sit beneath the stars after an awful wet day. BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73082 with the 'Greek Line' headboard rests at Bridgnorth at about 1.30am on September 21.



One-time NCB shedmates 'No. 11' and No. 49 dig in for the final climb up Eardington Bank on September 21.

Special workings and events

Workings at Bewdley were complicated with Platforms 1 and 2 being bidirectional. Island Platforms 2 and 3 were the main platforms allowing passengers to change trains without having to use the footbridge.

The DMU saw action throughout and at Kidderminster on Saturday there was the launch of carriage No. 9581, as described in *Heritage Railway 337*.

The Engine House at Highley was open during the event, as well as a RailArt exhibition on show at Kidderminster Railway Museum.

Services started on Thursday at 8.10am from Bewdley and 9.30am from Bridgnorth, with continued running to Sunday, the last arrival at Kidderminster being at 8.05pm and Bridgnorth at 7pm.

Headboards were the order of the weekend, with all of Southern origin connected to boat trains. Locomotive crews were instructed to ensure the correct headboard was used on the right train with the information in the public timetable booklet. No. 35006 carried six headboards over the course of the event, while No. 73082 had just one.

On the Thursday, No. 35006 carried the headboard 'Holland American,' a train which ran between Southampton Docks and Waterloo in London.

On the Friday, it was No. 35006 on 'The Cunarder' at 10.25am and at 8.55pm (all timings from Kidderminster) masquerading as 'The Night Ferry.' Similar to the 'Holland

American,' 'The Cunarder' ran from Waterloo to Southampton Docks and started in 1952.

The 'Night Ferry' was considered the night version of the 'Golden Arrow'; special carriages built by Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits to British gauge were ferried over the Channel. Passengers could depart London Victoria without detraining to arrive in Paris Gare du Nord the following morning.

The Saturday saw No. 35006 on the 'Bournemouth Belle' at 10.25am. The train's origins go back to LSWR days and were continued by the Southern after amalgamation in 1923. It ran from Waterloo via Southampton to Bournemouth with up to 12 Pullmans, making it one of the heaviest trains on the Southern; Merchant Navies regularly hauled it.

Also on Saturday, No. 73082 ran with the 'Greek Line' headboard, departing at 5.40pm. This service was yet another boat train between London and Southampton, established for passengers travelling on specific shipping lines.

On the Sunday, No. 35006 carried the 'Atlantic Coast Express' headboard, departing at 1pm. The 'ACE' was one of the Southern's longer-distance trains, running from Waterloo to Devon and Padstow.

One other headboard carried by No. 35006 was the 'Statesman, United States Lines.' This train was similar to 'The Cunarder' but connected to SS *United States* which docked at Southampton.

Behind the scenes and preparations

What the general public do not see and have little knowledge of is what goes on behind the scenes to prepare for such an event.

The internal workings booklet was more than 80 pages long, listing every move, shunting arrangements, carriages and goods vehicles weights, how many carriages each locomotive could pull, the turning of locomotives, which services carried the headboards, and coaling and watering facilities, right down to ash pan emptying.

Days before the event, all stock and locomotives had to be positioned ready for their duty. On the Wednesday, more than a normal day's worth of shunting took place and sidings had to be emptied beforehand.

With such an intensive timetable, inevitable late-running slowly crept in. By late afternoon each day, this had accrued to between 25 and 40 minutes, slipping further in the evenings. All it can take is the failure of a set of points, track circuitry not to work, or, as happens quite frequently, sheep on the line around Arley!

By Saturday, timings had slipped considerably to about 85 minutes late, leading to the cancellation of two overnight trains to get the timetable back on track. Despite the late running, comments on social media were positive.

The weather played ball apart from on the Saturday, when rain poured down all day. Yet it transpired it was the busiest



Visiting No. 49 takes the freight train out of Bewdley Tunnel, heading for Bewdley.



A peaceful scene at Arley as the crew of LMS 'Jinty' No. 47298 relax waiting for a train to pass on September 19.



With one of the last trains of the gala, No. 47298 approaches Stanley Cutting and Highley.



Above: The autotrain runs up grade out of Bewdley Tunnel on September 19.

Left: Two of the first trains of the gala pass each other at Hampton Loade, No. 73082 *Camelot* from Bridgnorth and No. 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co* No. 35006 from Bewdley, on September 18.



Stanier Mogul on the Great Western goods with No. 13268 departing Highley on September 18.

day! The Friday was extremely mild, with temperatures at about 20 degrees, offering little exhaust, while Sunday was the sunniest day.

Resounding success

"We delivered another showpiece event," said Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, the SVR's managing director. "The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. It was heartening to see the level of support and enthusiasm, particularly given the challenges of some adverse weather and a few late-running services. We will look at the learning points but this was a stand-out gala overall."

One of the most talked about moments was the rare pairing of two NCB locomotives, No. 813 as No. 11 and No. 49 double-heading to evoke the industrial past in evocative style.

"The return of 813 in its Backworth guise at No. 11, alongside the visiting No. 49, was a very special moment," said Gus. "It was a rare opportunity to see two NCB locomotives from the same depot working together again."

The gala also welcomed other headline-making locomotives, which were visiting the

SVR for the first time. No. 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co* drew significant crowds, marking the first-ever appearance of a Merchant Navy at the railway.

Camelot also impressed visitors with its debut run along the Severn Valley line, as did the 'Jinty'.

"This was a strongly supported and very well-received event," said Gus. "Well done to everyone across the whole railway – your efforts are very greatly appreciated. Events like this don't come together without a huge team effort from staff, volunteers, and our many supporters."

Future running days, winter gala, and new bus partnership

Half-term running will take place between October 25 and November 2, and autumn colours should be at their best during this time. The Christmas specials are booking well, with services running from both ends of the line from November 29.

Post-Christmas services run daily from December 26 until January 2. The Winter Diesel Day returns on Monday, December 29

and will feature home fleet locomotives that are serviceable and not winterised. However, with the Class Forty Preservation Society's No. 40106 *Atlantic Conveyor* having left the railway by then, just Class 46 No. 46045 (D182), which took part in The Greatest Gathering at Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane plant, will be working with an operational steam heat boiler, so steam locomotives could be used to provide heat on the other two sets of stock.

Expected to take part will be some, or all, of Nos. 20048, 33108, 46045, 50007/033/049, D9551, D1015/62 and possibly Nos. 20142/189; D821 *Greyhound* could also be used if it is operational.

It is followed by the Winter Steam Gala on January 3/4, where Nos. 813, 1450, 4930, 7714, 7802, 13268 and 75069 should be in action. For more information, see <https://svr.co.uk/all-events/>

Meanwhile, the SVR has launched a new partnership with local provider Select Bus Services, aiming to encourage more visitors to 'leave the car at home' and travel sustainably to Bridgnorth station.

Passengers on Select Bus Services routes from areas including Telford, Shifnal, Shrewsbury and Much Wenlock will now be rewarded for their eco-friendly choice.

By presenting a valid bus ticket or pass, travellers can claim a 10% discount at cafes and gift shops located on the entire heritage line.

Bus timetables and fare information can be found at selectbusservices.com **HR**



Above: Merchant Navy No. 35006 *Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co.* carrying the 'Statesman, United States Lines' headboard makes a good departure from Bridgnorth with the Great Western set crossing Oldbury Viaduct.

Left: A delightful scene at the top of Eardington Bank as GWR 0-4-2T No. 1450 passes Crossing Cottage on September 21.



CHINNOR & PRINCES RISBOROUGH RAILWAY



October 31st, November 1st & 2nd

Steam Gala - visiting Steam locos and road vehicles with intensive timetable on the main line and brake van rides at Princes Risborough.

Visiting locos 4079 "Pendennis Castle", 6695 GWR Class 66XX, 6046 USA Class 160, Sentinel 7109 "Joyce"

Advance bookings and full details at
<http://www.chinnorrailway.co.uk>
STATION ROAD, CHINNOR, OX39 4ER



STEAM ILLUMINATIONS

NOVEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

COME AND JOIN THE FUN
ONBOARD A STEAM TRAIN

- EPIC LIGHT SHOWS TO MUSIC
- ENTERTAINMENT ONBOARD WITH 'X-FACTOR'S' VOICEOVER MAN
- STUNNING NEON VIEWS
- INTERACTIVE WRISTBANDS
- PLUS... NEW FOR 2025**
- LIVE ENTERTAINERS ONBOARD



AMAZING LIGHT
SHOW INSIDE THE
TRAIN CARRIAGE!

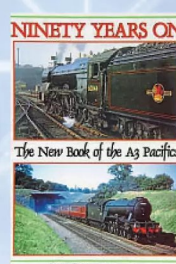
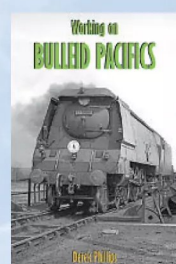
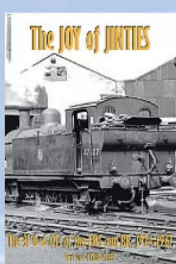
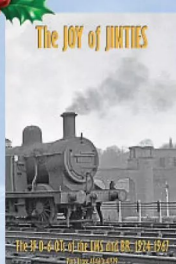
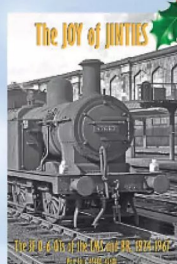
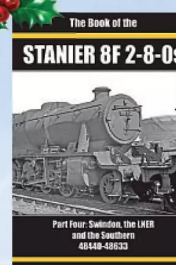
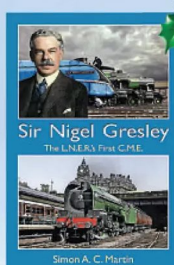
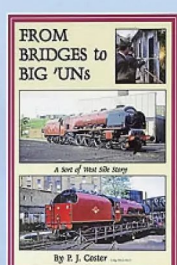
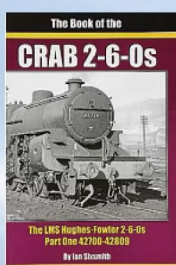
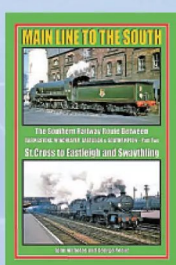
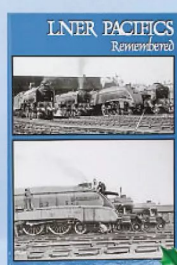
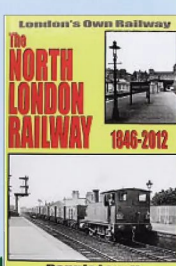
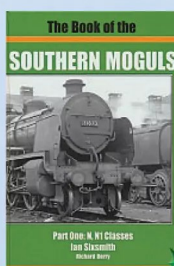
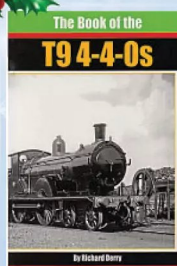
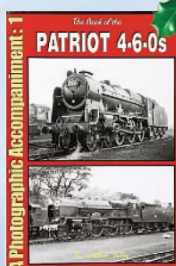
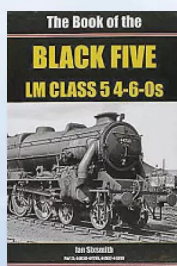
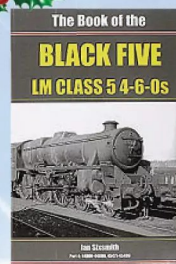
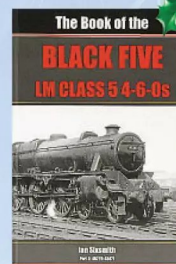
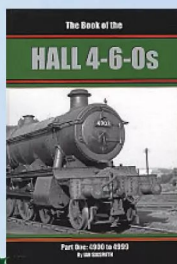
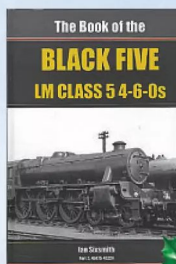
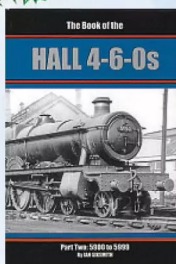
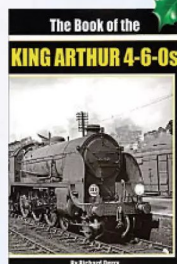
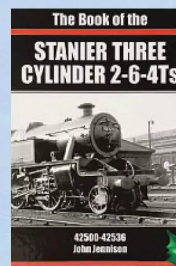
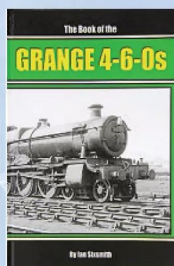
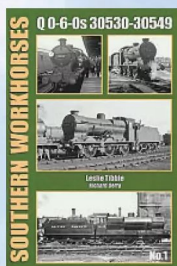
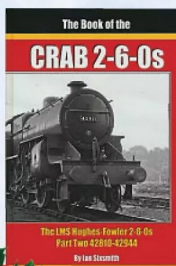
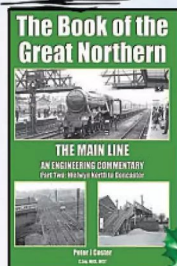
BOOK TICKETS AT
WATERCRESSLINE.CO.UK/LIGHTS
OR SCAN THE QR CODE





BAG A BARGAIN UNTIL THE END

Hundreds of items are already di



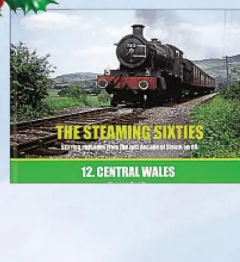
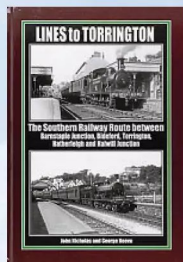
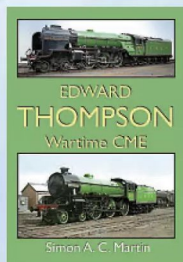
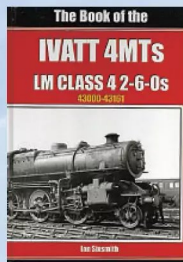
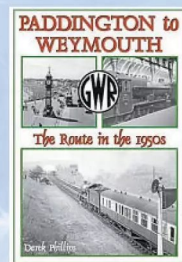
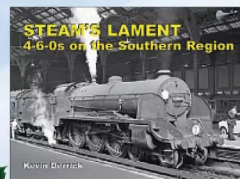
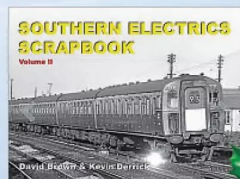
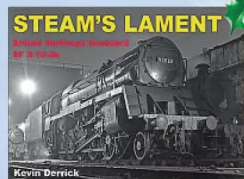
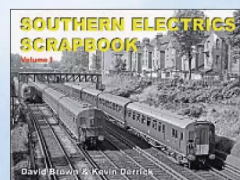
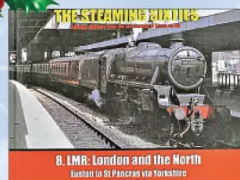
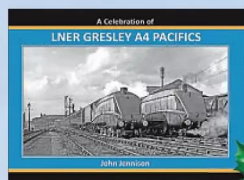
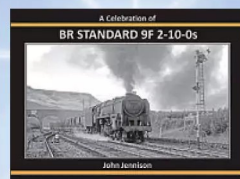
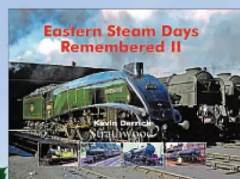
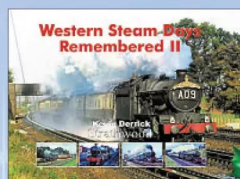
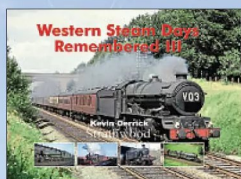
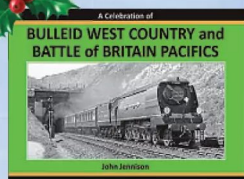
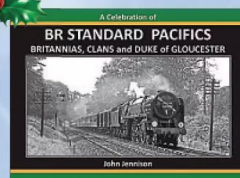
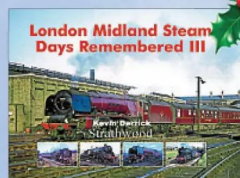
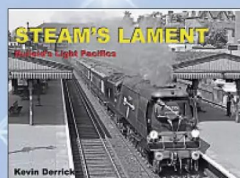
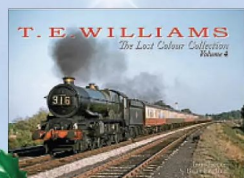
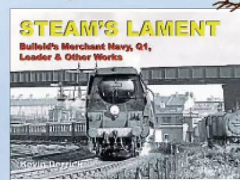
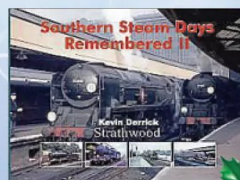
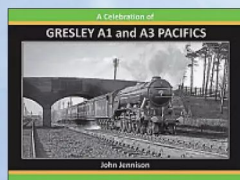
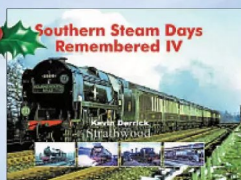
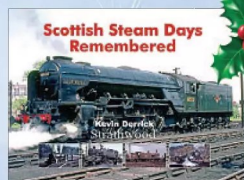
Strathwood Publishing, Unit 4 Shuttleworth Road, Elm Farm Industrial Estate, Bedford, MK41 0EP



ORDER HOTLINE 01234 328792

OR TWO WITH US ND OF 2025

discounted by up to 50% or more



2000+ further titles on our website
www.strathwood.co.uk
 UK Postage & Packing £4.95 POST FREE above £60.00 net



VISIT www.strathwood.co.uk
TO SELECT FROM 2000+ SPECIAL OFFER TITLES



OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum

2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex.
Tel: 01798 831370.

Open: Weds-Sun until Nov 2.

Bluebell Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL.
Tel: 01825 720800.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne,
Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Oct 25/26.

Chatham Historic Dockyard

Standard gauge, one mile. Chatham, Kent.
Tel: 01634 820800.

Open: Thurs-Suns until Nov 2.

East Kent Railway

Standard gauge, two miles. Shepherdswell,
Kent. Tel: 01304 832042.

Regular running resumes spring 2026.

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 until Nov 2.

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.

Reopens Spring 2026.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Havenstreet, Isle of Wight.
Tel: 01983 882204.

Running: Thurs, suns, sch hols + Nov 29.

Kent & East Sussex Railway

Standard gauge, 10½ miles.
Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: Oct 25/26, 28-31.

Lavender Line

Standard gauge, one mile.
Isfield, East Sussex.
Tel: 01825 750515.

Running: Oct 26.

Mid-Hants Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG.
Tel: 01962 733810.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es until Nov 2
+ Oct 28, 31.

Mizens Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey.
Tel: 07962 400922.

Regular running resumes Spring 2026.

Old Kiln Light Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile.
Farnham, Surrey.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, Nov 1/2.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway

15in gauge, 13½ miles.
New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.

Running: W/Es.

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.

Regular running resumes Spring 2026.

Spa Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
Tel: 01892 300141.

Regular running resumes Spring 2026.

Volk's Electric Railway

2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.
Reopens Spring 2026.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.
Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, Nov 1/2.

Bodmin Railway

Standard gauge, 6½ miles. Bodmin,
Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.

Running: Oct 26, 28-30, Nov 1/2.

Bristol Harbour Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf,
Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.

M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.

Running: Oct 25/26, Nov 1/2.

Dartmouth Steam Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.
Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Devon Railway Centre

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon.
Tel: 01884 855671.

Open: W/Es until Nov 2 + Oct 28-31.

East Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Cranmore, Somerset.
Tel: 01749 880417.

Running: Oct 25-26, 29.

Gartell Light Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston,
Templecombe, Somerset.
Tel: 01963 370752.

Running: Oct 26.

Helston Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston,
Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.

Running: Oct 26, 30.

Lappa Valley Railway

7¼in, 10¼ & 15in gauge, one mile.
Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.

Open: Thurs-Suns.

Launceston Steam Railway

1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston,
Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665

Running: Oct 26-30.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay,
North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.

Running: Oct 25/26, 28-30, Nov 1/2, 9.

Moors Valley Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants.
Tel: 01425 471415.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

North Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone,
Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills,
Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.

Running: Oct 31, Nov 1/2.

Seaton Tramway

2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road,
Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Somerset & Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3
2EY. Tel: 01761 411221

Open: Suns. Running: Oct 26, 29, Nov 2.

South Devon Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.
Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.

Running: Tues-Suns until Nov 2 + Nov 8/9.

Swanage Railway

Standard gauge, six miles.
Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.
Blunsdon, Wiltshire.

Tel: 01793 771615.

Running: Oct 26.

West Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, 20 miles.
Minehead, Somerset.
Tel: 01643 704996.

Running: Oct 25/26, 28-30, Nov 1/2.

Yeovil Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¾ mile.
Yeovil Junction station, Somerset.
Tel: 01935 410420.

Open: Suns. Running: Oct 25, 31.

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum

Narrow and standard gauge, one mile.
Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.

Open: Daily until Nov 2.

Bure Valley Railway

15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk.
Tel: 01263 733858.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Colne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle
Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29/30.

East Anglian Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne,
Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Running: Oct 25/26, Nov 1/2.

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: Oct 25/26.

Mid-Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham,
Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.

Running: Oct 31.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.

Regular running resumes: Jan 1.

Nene Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 7½ miles. Wansford,
Peterborough, Cambs.

Tel: 01780 784444.

Running: Oct 25-26, 29, 31, Nov 1/2.

North Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.

Tel: 01263 820800.

Running: Daily until Nov 2 + Nov 9.

Wells & Walsingham Railway

10¼in gauge, four miles. Wells-next-the-
Sea, Norfolk. Tel: 01328 711630.

Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Reepham, Norfolk. Tel: 01603 871694.

Open: Tues-Suns. Running: W/Es.



Peckett works 0-4-0ST No. 1788 *Kilmerdon* is returning to home territory and will be working services through the autumn and winter months at the Somerset & Dorset Railway at Midsomer Norton. Built in 1929, it was based at the nearby Kilmerdon Colliery and is now owned by the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust. Its first public day of services at Midsomer Norton will be on **October 26**. S&DRT

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri.

Running: Oct 26, 31, Nov 1.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366

Running: Oct 26, 31, Nov 1/2.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067

Running: Nov 1.

Didcot Railway Centre

Standard gauge, Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.

Open: W/Es + Oct 29-31.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, Nov 1/2.

Epping Ongar Railway

Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29-31.

Great Whipsnade Railway

2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway

2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.

Running: Oct 26, Nov 1.

Leighton Buzzard Railway

2ft gauge, three miles. Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 01525 373888

Running: Oct 26 + Oct 30/31

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 until Nov 2.

Amerton Railway

2ft gauge, one mile.
Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs.

Tel: 01889 271337.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, 31 Nov 1/2.



Baldwin No. 778 will make its last appearance at the Leighton Buzzard Railway on October 26, after which it will be withdrawn for overhaul. PAUL INGHAM

Last chance for trips behind Buzzrail's Baldwin

The Leighton Buzzard Railway's 10-12-D Baldwin 4-6-0T No. 778 will make its final appearance on the line on October 26 as part of a four-strong locomotive line-up, following which it will be withdrawn for overhaul. The end-of-season Halloween jamboree will also feature De Winton 0-4-0VBTs *Taffy* (visiting from Alan Keef Ltd) and LBR-based *Chaloner*, together with Kerr Stuart 'Wren' 0-4-0ST *Peter Pan*, making four locos in steam for the day. Owned by The Greensand Railway

Museum Trust, a registered charity, No. 778 has run at the Leighton Buzzard Railway since it was restored to operation in 2007. Following the expiry of its boiler ticket on November 30, work will begin swiftly to overhaul the locomotive. "We aim to ensure the overhaul of No. 778 is undertaken as rapidly as possible," commented GRMT chairman Cliff Thomas. "The LBR, a line built with First World War surplus equipment and opened in 1919, with its extensive collection of

First World War era locomotives and stock, is the perfect home for No. 778 and doubtless will remain so into the foreseeable future.

"The one factor which could hold up its return is available finance, so any help that people can contribute would be hugely appreciated by the trust and the railway."

Donations towards the cost of overhauling No. 778 can be sent to GRMT c/o Pages Park station, to be paid into a GRMT 778 Restricted Fund held by LBR.

Apedale Valley Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.

Tel: 0845 094 1953.

Running: Oct 25/26, 31, Nov 1/2.

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: Oct 25/26, 28/29.

Cambrian Heritage Railways

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, Nov 1/2.

Chasewater Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.

Open: Daily.

Running: Oct 29-Nov 1.

Churnet Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.

Tel: 01538 360522.

Regular running resumes Spring 2026.

Crich Tramway Village

Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 854 321

Open: Sats-Thurs until Nov 2.

Dean Forest Railway

Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.

Tel: 01594 845840.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, Nov 1/2.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire.

Tel: 01629 823076.

Running: W/Es until Nov 16 + Oct 31.

Echills Wood Railway

7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.

Running: Oct 26.

Foxfield Railway

Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs. Tel: 01782 396210.

Running: TBA.

Gloucestershire

Warwickshire Railway

Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.

Tel: 01242 621405.

Running: Oct 25-26, 28-30, Nov 1/2.

Railway Museums

Beamish

County Durham. The Living Museum of the North. Open: Weds-Suns, Sch hols.
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: Oct 26.

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.

Great Central Railway

Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323.
www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: W/Es.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)

Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts. Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Open: W/Es.

Running: Oct 29, Nov 1.

Midland Railway – Butterley

Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley,
Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: Oct 25/26, 29, 31, Nov 1.

Northampton & Lamport Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants. Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Oct 25/26.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill,
Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: Oct 26.

Peak Rail

Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 580381.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29, 31, Nov 1/2.

Perrygrove Railway

15in gauge. B4228, Coleford,
Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore,
Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Reopens Spring 2026

Rudyard Lake Railway

10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.
Running: W/Es + Oct 31.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden,
Northants.
Tel 0300 3023 150.
Running: Oct 25/26.

Severn Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster,
Worcs DY10 1QR.
Tel: 01562 757900.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Statfold Country Park

Multiple gauges, one mile. Tamworth,
Staffs B79 0BU. Tel: 01827 830389.

Open: Oct 29–Nov 1.

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.

Regular running resumes December 28.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway,
Toddington.

Reopens Spring 2026.

Valley Railway Adventure

15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of
Evesham, Worcs.
Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: W/Es, sch 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: Daily until Nov 1.

East Lancashire Railway

Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.

Running: W/Es + Oct 29–31.

Eden Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 342309.

Running: Oct 26.

Great Laxey Mine Railway

19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.

Running: Oct 25/26.

Groule Glen Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.

Running: Oct 25/26.

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: Oct 25–27, 30/31, Nov 1/2.

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 until Nov 2.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway

3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.
Running: Oct 25/26, 28–30, Nov 1/2.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway

15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass,
Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Ribble Steam Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Preston, Lancs. Tel: 01772 728800.
Reopens: Nov 30.

South Tynedale Railway

2ft gauge, 4¾ miles.
Alston, Cumbria. Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: Oct 25/26, 29, 31.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.

Open: Daily until Nov 2.

West Lancashire Light Railway

2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Running: Oct 26, Nov 2.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick,
Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: Nov 1/2.

Appleby Frodingham Railway–Scunthorpe

Standard gauge, 15 miles.
British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.

Reopens Spring 2026.

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 until Nov 2.

Derwent Valley Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near
York. Tel: 01904 489966.

Running: Suns.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks. Tel: 01756 710614.
Running: Oct 25/26, 28.

Heatherslaw Light Railway

15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge,
Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.



Class 55 Deltic D9000 *Royal Scots Grey* is to visit the North Norfolk Railway for the line's 50th anniversary finale celebrations, where it will run alongside visiting BR standard class 7 4-6-2 No. 70000 *Britannia* on the weekend of November 1/2. Both locomotives are examples of types once found in the Eastern region, working named expresses such as 'The Norfolkman' and 'The East Anglian.' *Britannia* will run every day until October 31, offering one round trip between Sheringham and Holt, with tickets valid for unlimited travel on supporting services run by another locomotive from the NNR resident pool and a DMU. On the weekend of November 1/2, *Britannia* will be two of four locomotives starring at the Fiftieth Finale Gala, with one resident steam and diesel locomotive also starring alongside the two visitors. See nnrailway.co.uk/fiftieth-finale-weekend for full details. STEVE ALLEN/NNR

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway

2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.

Running: Oct 25.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.

Running: Oct 26.

Middleton Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.

Running: Oct 26.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles. Grosmont,
North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.

Running: Sats-Weds until Nov 10.

Scarborough North Bay Railway

20in gauge, ⅞ mile. Scarborough, North
Yorks. Tel: 01723 368791.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Stephenson Steam Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields.
Tel: 0191 277 7135.

Open: W/Es. Running: Oct 26, Nov 2.

Tanfield Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.
Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.

Regular running resumes Dec 27.

Weardale Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Oct 25/26, 29-31, Nov 1, 9.

Wensleydale Railway

Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.

Running: Nov 1.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)

15in gauge, four miles.
Huddersfield, West Yorks.
Tel: 01484 865727.

Open: W/Es, sch hols.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1,000ft.
Fimber, East Yorkshire.
Tel: 01377 338053.
Open: Oct 26, 29.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway

2ft gauge, 4½ miles.
Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01678 540666.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Blaenavon, Torfaen.
Tel: 01495 792263.

Running: Oct 25/26, 30/31.

Brecon Mountain Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.

Running: Oct 25/26, 28-31.

Corris Railway

2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth.
Tel: 01654 761701.

Running: Oct 25, 31, Nov 1.

Fairbourne Railway

12¼in gauge, two miles.
Fairbourne, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01341 250362.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Ffestiniog Railway

2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog,
Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Gwili Railway

Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd
Arms, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 01267 238213.

Running: Oct 29-31.

Llanberis Lake Railway

2ft gauge, three miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870549.

Running: Daily until Nov 2 + Nov 4-6.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 07956 082305.

Running: Oct 26.

Llangollen Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen,
Denbighshire.
Tel: 01978 860979.

Running: W/Es until Nov 9 + Oct 31.

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 until Nov 2.

Talylyn Railway

2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.
Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Teifi Valley Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Henllan, Ceredigion,
SA44 5TD. Tel: 01559 371077.

Running: TBA.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, 12 miles.
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion.
Tel: 01970 625819.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog,
Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Welsh Highland Railway

2ft gauge, 26 miles.
Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, eight miles.
Llanfair Caereinion, Powys.
Tel: 01938 810441.

Running: Daily until Nov 2.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and other events in the coming weeks...

OCTOBER

- 19-31 Isle of Wight Steam Railway Wizard Week
- 25/26 Apedale Valley Light Railway Halloween Trains
- 25/26 Great Central Railway Open Weekend
- 25/26 Groudle Glen Railway Hop Tu Naa Halloween Trains
- 25/26 Severn Valley Railway Christmas Gift Fayre
- 25/26, 29-31 Epping Ongar Railway Halloween Services
- 25-31 Kent & East Sussex Railway Magic Express
- 25-31 Mid-Hants Railway Wizard Week
- 25-31 North Yorkshire Moors Railway Ghost Trains
- 26, 30/31 Leighton Buzzard Railway Halloween Services
- 27-31 Crich Tramway Village Halloween Fun
- 27-31 Keighley & Worth Valley Railway Rail 200 Celebrations
- 30/31 Bala Lake Railway Halloween Trains
- 30/31 Severn Valley Railway Ghost Trains
- 30/31 Talylyn Railway Steam 'n' Scream
- 31 Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway Steam Gala
- 31 Kent & East Sussex Railway Fright Night Train
- 31 Lappa Valley Railway Fireworks Spectacular
- 31 Llangollen Railway Halloween Trains
- 31 South Tynedale Railway Halloween Trains

NOVEMBER

- 1 Lappa Valley Railway Fireworks Spectacular
- 1 Llangollen Railway Ride the Rocket
- 1 Severn Valley Railway Ghost Trains
- 1/2 Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway Steam Gala
- 1/2 Mid-Hants Railway Wizard Week
- 1/2 North Yorkshire Moors Railway Ghost Trains
- 1/2 Dean Forest Railway Royal Forest of Steam Gala
- 5 Great Central Railway Bonfire Night
- 8/9 East Lancashire Railway DMU Gala
- 9 Great Central Railway Remembrance Sunday
- 9 Llangollen Railway Remembrance Train
- 15/16 Great Central Railway The Last Hurrah
- 29 Kent & East Sussex Railway Quiet Train
- 29/30 Isle of Wight Steam Railway 150th anniversary gala
- 30 Abbey Pumping Station Christmas Steam Day

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

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Oct 25/26, 28.

Caledonian Railway

Standard gauge, four miles.
Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.
Reopens: Nov 29.

Doon Valley Railway

Standard gauge.
Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Reopens Spring 2026.

Keith & Dufftown Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire. Tel: 01340 821181.

Running: Oct 31, Nov 1.

Lathalmond Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum,
Lathalmond, near Dunfermline.
Tel: 07379 914801.

Reopens Spring 2026.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South
Lanarkshire.
Reopens Spring 2026.

Royal Deeside Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles.
Banchory, Kincardineshire.
Tel: 01330 844416.

Reopens: Spring 2026.

Strathspey Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Aviemore,
Inverness-shire.
Tel: 01479 810725.

Running: Oct 25/26, 29/30, Nov 1/2.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway

3ft gauge. Drumod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.

Reopens Spring 2026.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway

5ft 3in gauge. Downpatrick,
Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.

Running: Nov 1/2.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.
Running: Oct 31, Nov 1.

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

CLASSIFIED

BOOKS

Railways
Buses

Aviation
Canals

DEREK'S TRANSPORT BOOKS

All Transport Subjects Covered
www.derekstransportbooks.com
Over 10,500 Books in Stock on-line
Based in the New Forest
Est. 1995

Shipping
Commercial

Motoring
Trams

The Smokebox bookshop of Kingston revived

Stall F2B at Antiques of Kingston KT2 6ND
specialises in rail and road transport, selling books,
photographs and ephemera.

Reasonable prices. Open 7 days. Close to rail and bus stations.

Contact Nick 07722 084314 Email: nickcountertenor@gmail.com

RAILWAY BOOKS

Rare and out of print • 6,000+ to view at

www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk

01974 821281

BUILDINGS

STEEL BUILDINGS

HEAVY DUTY STEEL BUILDINGS

- ♦ Extremely cost effective
- ♦ Workshops/Garaging/Storage
- ♦ Widths from 20ft to 70ft
- ♦ Unlimited Lengths
- ♦ Buildings to BS 5950
- ♦ Finance available



Tel:
01709 578333

BLUELINE BUILDINGS LIMITED

e: sales@bluelinebuildings.co.uk • www.bluelinebuildings.co.uk

EVENTS



**RIBBLE STEAM
RAILWAY AND MUSEUM**

With Ribble Steam Railway's fascinating working and static exhibits, the museum is a proud reminder of what makes Preston and Lancashire the vibrant place it is today.

Discover the history of Preston's Docks and the stories of the first electric trains, then hop aboard a steam train and travel the railway's 1 1/4 mile dock and riverside line. Uncover a hidden part of the city as the line passes Preston Marina and ventures over its impressive swing bridge.

Hop aboard a Steam Train and discover the history of Preston's Docks and Railway...

Murder Mystery Night
26th October
Santa Special starting
30th November &
3 following weekends
in December



Contact us on 01772 728800 or visit www.ribbonsteam.org.uk

Contact Andy on 01507 529455 • abruce@mortons.co.uk

or Connor on 01507 529411 • ccrowley@mortons.co.uk

FOR SALE

Procast Foundry Ltd

SUPPLIERS TO THE RAILWAY
INDUSTRY & ENTHUSIAST OF:

NAMEPLATES, TRAIN HEADBOARDS,
SHEDPLATES, SMOKEBOX NUMBERS,
LOCOMOTIVE COMPONENTS, ETC.



PROCAST.CO.UK

01274 871111

Email: info@Procast.co.uk

SERVICES



LED Bus Bulbs

45mm or 50mm glass bulb, 10-30V DC



Aten Lighting,
Unit 14 North St,
Melton Mowbray, Leics. LE13 1NL

01664 569457

info@atenlighting.co.uk

www.atenlighting.co.uk

MODELLING

Coastal DCC

www.coastaldcc.co.uk

Friendly advice, support and installation services

Tel: 01473 710946 Email: enquiries@coastaldcc.co.uk



DCC by modellers for modellers

www.heritagerrailway.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY

Colour-Rail



prints and downloads

160,000 images at
www.colour-rail.com

Looking for a good
home for your treasured
negatives and slides?

Then e-mail colourrail@aol.com or write to
558 Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, B61 0HT

WANTED



WE WANT TO BUY YOUR
COLLECTION OF SLIDES
AND NEGATIVES.

UK AND OVERSEAS -
1990s AND EARLIER

WANTED

If your collection, big or small, is
gathering dust we'd like to hear from you.
We will scan the original images and
return a copy to you for personal
use free of charge.

Call: 01494 490544

Email: info@bbfimages.com



SERVICES

HAWKINS INSPECTION SERVICES LTD

- Boiler inspections carried out to current regulations
- Annual inspections
- Repairs assessed & overseen
- AIBI Member
- Specialist in heritage plant, rivetted boilers, loco type boilers, air receivers workshop & loco
- Modern plant also catered for

T: 01243 554623 M: 07872 903401

www.boiler-inspector.co.uk office@boiler-inspector.co.uk

STAY A WHILE

DERBYSHIRE



Luxury Lodge
Holidays in
Derbyshire.

Home to many
heritage railways.



Darwin Forest
LUXURY LODGE HOLIDAYS

Call 01629 732428 or visit www.darwinforest.co.uk

NORTH YORK MOORS



HUNGATE COTTAGES

11 highly individual self catering cottages set in peaceful gardens, a short walk to Pickering Railway Station, the starting point of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Tel 01751 476382 • Mob 07876 404152
Book online at hungatecottages.co.uk

Self-catering holiday accommodation **THE OLD STATION**

The Old Station, Allerston, North Yorkshire
This former station ticket office has been carefully renovated and converted into a **spacious** two bedroomed cottage, each with a walk-in shower. Lounge and dining area contains several restored period features. There is a wood burning stove in the original fireplace and underfloor heating throughout. Kitchen includes freezer, dishwasher and washer dryer.

Contact 01723 859024 • www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk



Old Manse Hotel

Middleton Road,
Pickering YO18 8AL

4 mins from NYM Railway • Secure car park • Extensive gardens

All rooms en-suite. Sky Sports and Sky Cinema lounge area.

At the minute only 6 rooms available • Nr Dalby Forest great for mountain bikes
Perfect for a visit to the NYMR.

Book your stay with us. Available for exclusive use subject to availability. We're still open for walkers when North York Moors Railway is closed. Open New Year (minimum 2 nights stay).

Reservations 01751 476484 • email: info@oldmansepickering.co.uk
www.oldmansepickering.co.uk

Self catering railway carriages

Five miles east of Pickering
Twelve miles from the coast

- Each self contained carriage sleeps up to six
- Bed linen, towels etc included
- Heating & electricity included

For full details visit www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk • Tel: 01723 859024



WANTED

Model Railway & Collectables

We buy all makes, all gauges, live steam, aeroplane kits, boats, tanks, radio controlled, die cast and more.



Top prices paid for your models

Swift payment made on collection



01778 594604 or 07578 708785



contact@littleworthmodels.co.uk

LITTLEWORTH MODELS

1 Contact us for a valuation

2 We make an offer

3 Bring, send or collect

4 Payment made

Find out more and get a **FREE** valuation at
www.littleworthmodels.co.uk



18+ years trading
in collectables



Collection made in person
from across the UK



We carefully dismantle
your displays for you



Honest valuations
and fair offers given

Littleworth Models • 26a Meadowgate • Bourne • Lincolnshire • PE10 9EZ • United Kingdom

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



Left: Standing room only: The Platform 1 station bench on September 30.
MATTHEW COOPER/YCCRP



Right: The marathon-length station bench erected by the NER at Scarborough station 142 years ago. YCCRP

Where Railway 200 became 239!

By Robin Jones

THE Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership successfully staged one of the most unusual events of the Railway 200 programme – by setting a new record for the number of people sitting on what is claimed to be the world's longest station bench.

On Tuesday, September 30, the group beat its previous record of 200 people seated side by side on the 456ft-long Grade II-listed bench on Platform 1 at Scarborough railway station.

The bench was installed in 1883 to accommodate growing numbers of Victorian tourists heading to the seaside and is about as long as 12 double-decker buses.

On the day, a total of 239 people filled the seat, many participating

in period attire, and students from Scarborough's sixth form college turned out to swell the numbers sitting shoulder to shoulder.

Among the guests was Scarborough's Deputy Mayor, Sarah Mason, who joined the celebration to show her support for the town's railway heritage.

David Birdsall, Scarborough's town crier, announced the official total of people seated on the bench.

YCCRP chairman Pete Myers told the BBC: "We only planned to put 200 on the bench but managed well above that."

Andrew Watkins, community and development manager at TransPennine Express, which funded the event, said: "We were delighted to support this unique celebration at Scarborough station.

"The famous bench has been part of the town's railway story for more than 140 years and this event was a wonderful way to connect people with that history while looking ahead to the future of rail."

YCCRP community rail officer Rachael Osbourne added: "The huge bench was fixed to a retaining wall on Platform 1, which was known as an excursion platform.

"As holiday traffic increased in the late 1800s, they had to build longer platforms, and Platform 1 was specifically used for that enormous holiday traffic.

"It's hard nowadays to imagine how busy it was, but the bench would be filled with people waiting for trains. The railway company wouldn't have built a bench of this length if they didn't need it."



A new record has been set, announces Scarborough town crier David Birdsall.
TPE

One observer posted on the YCCRP's social media: "Never in over 50 years of going to Scarborough on train and working on the line have I ever seen so many on that seat! Well done to all involved."

A celebration held half a world away – literally!

AT the Russell Ridge heritage centre, 62 miles north of Sydney, is the privately owned 2ft gauge Mandalong Valley Railway.

The railway's four engines were in steam to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington railway, led by Baldwin-built 0-4-2RT No. 10533 of 1889 No. 1 carrying a Railway 200 board on its headlamp. It was the first steam engine to be imported to Australia when purchased by the Fairymead Sugar Mill, near Bundaberg, Queensland.

Painted in Mosman Mill red, John Fowler 0-4-2T No. 19547 Ivy ran at

the mill north of Port Douglas, in north Queensland.

Just returned to steam in grey undercoat, 0-4-2T No. 7 was built by Pery Engineering South Australia in 1951 for the Mourilyan Sugar Mill, north of Townsville, Queensland.

Last in the line-up was Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 No. 1862 of 1952 *Wauchope*, which was built for the Victoria sugar mill, also north of Townsville. It was the second from last sugar cane steam locomotive imported to Australia.

These four engines cover the whole history of steam engines in the Queensland sugar cane industry.



The row of Queensland sugar cane locomotives celebrating Railway 200 half a world away. GRAHAM BLACK

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 339 out Nov 21

Owen Hayward speaks to North York Moors CEO Laura Strangeway about how it is adapting to survive the current economic climate.

PLUS

NEW BUILD BONANZA

A look at the Bluebell Railway's gala celebrating steam locomotive construction completed in the 21st century.



PRE-ORDER ISSUE 339

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

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!





RAILTRAIL®

QUALITY ESCORTED HOLIDAYS BY TRAIN

KENT & SUSSEX STEAM EXPLORER

DEPARTS: 28th May 2026

Fares
From
£995

5
DAYS



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- * Steam on the narrow-gauge Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
- * Ride behind steam on the quirky Bredgar & Wormshill Railway
- * Visit the charming Hastings Miniature Railway
- * Exclusive steam charter at the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway
- * Experience the fantastic "Road & Rails" event at Kent & East Sussex Railway
- * Steam nostalgia on the historic Bluebell Railway
- * Enjoy a scenic journey on the Lavendar Line

NORTHERN GERMANY BY STEAM

DEPARTS: 9th July 2026

Fares
From
£2365

9
DAYS



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- * Enjoy a full day at the fantastic Flensburg Steamboat Festival
- * Experience a day of steam on the Molli with its renowned street running
- * Enjoy an exclusive photography session and guided tour at the Molli depot
- * Relax on a steamboat cruise on the Alster Lake
- * Visit the "Miniatur-Wunderland" in Hamburg – the world's largest model railway
- * Tour Rostock on a vintage tram charter
- * Steam nostalgia on the idyllic Rasender Roland

DUTCH MAXIMUM STEAM WEEKEND

DEPARTS: 3rd September 2026

Fares
From
£1345

5
DAYS



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- * Experience a full day at the fantastic Veluwsche Stoomtrein Festival
- * Tickets allowing unlimited rides throughout the event
- * Enjoy a nostalgic journey on the Hoorn to Medemblik Steam Train
- * Explore the fantastic Zuiderzee Museum at Enkhuizen
- * Cruise on an old-fashioned steamer across the IJsselmeer
- * Steam nostalgia on the narrow-gauge Katwijk-Leiden Stoomtrein and explore their collection
- * Ride on the historic RTM Steam Tram

NORTH WEST STEAM ADVENTURE

DEPARTS: 24th September 2026

Fares
From
£875

5
DAYS



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- * Steam on the "Owd Ratty" at Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
- * Journey on the picturesque Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
- * Experience the fantastic "Autumn Steam Gala" event at Ribblesdale Railway
- * Relax on a leisurely cruise on Lake Windermere
- * Enjoy an exclusive vintage tram charter in Blackpool
- * Visit the fascinating Bury Transport Museum
- * Travel on the scenic East Lancashire Railway



Scan the QR code to view all our upcoming steam tours.

OVER 150 DEPARTURES ON OUR WEBSITE

Detailed fares, itineraries, and galleries can be found on our website at www.railtrail.co.uk

QUOTE CODE: HR025

SAVE £25 PER PERSON ON ANY TOUR BOOKED

www.railtrail.co.uk

01538 382323



Rail Holidays of the World



Explore India - A Journey of Culture, Heritage and Unforgettable Rail Adventures

For over 25 years, Ffestiniog Travel has been escorting travellers through the rich tapestry of India.

BOOK SOON!



Whether you are drawn to colonial architecture, spiritual landmarks, or the sound of a steam loco travelling on narrow gauge tracks, winding through misty hills and mountains - this tour promises an unforgettable journey.

Immerse yourself in India's cultural heartbeat – the Golden Temple, the poignant Wagah-Attari border ceremony, Taj Mahal and Red Fort in Agra, Delhi's India Gate, Humayun's Tomb and Railway Museum.

Rail enthusiasts will relish the engineering marvels: trackwork from colonial times, metre gauge, steep switchbacks and workshops where artisans and volunteers maintain heritage stock.



Traverse the legendary Kalka-Shimla Railway aboard a private heritage carriage, creaking up through zig-zags and steep gradients to the Queen of Hill Stations. Continue by private steam charters on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway including the spectacular Joy Train, where views open out across valleys and ridges. Ride the Nilgiri Rack Railway, which pushes upward into the Blue Mountains past tea-gardens and peak vistas.

As experts in touring India, Ffestiniog Travel's escorted tour provides the reassurance and security of small group travel. Logistics are seamless: flights, transfers, comfortable hotels, full board at hill-station hotels, local guides and the services of a Ffestiniog Travel leader from London throughout. Many meals, excursions, entry fees, and gratuities are included.

Indian Hill Railways ~ Departs 15 February to 5 March 2026 - 19 Days from £7,095pp

Highlights include:

- ★ Private heritage carriage on Kalka-Shimla Railway
- ★ Two private steam charters on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) plus the Joy Train & Batasia Loop
- ★ Visits to iconic landmarks: Taj Mahal, Red Fort, Golden Temple plus Delhi's Railway Museum & Amritsar's vibrant culture
- ★ Workshop tours at Kalka-Shimla & DHR, giving behind-the-scenes access to engineering heritage
- ★ Scenic journeys on Nilgiri Rack Railway, wandering in the Blue Mountains, tea gardens, botanical gardens

*Embark on this extraordinary tour ~
step outside your comfort zone, embrace vibrant new horizons, and make early 2026 truly unforgettable.*

Book Online at www.ffestiniogtravel.com

*** Tel: 01766 512400 * Email: info@ffestiniogtravel.co.uk * www.ffestiniogtravel.com ***



Ffestiniog Travel is owned by a charitable trust and profits go to support the world famous Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways every booking helps preserve the railways.