

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Summer scorcher: Heatwaves hit heritage hard!



**Three-cylinder monobloc
fitted to Gresley P2**



**West Somerset pannier
offered for sale**



**East Coast icons meet for
Nene Valley gala**



3-6 SEPTEMBER

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY AUTUMN DIESEL GALA

Gear up for an action-packed weekend at our annual Autumn Diesel Gala!

Our home fleet will be joined by visiting guest locomotives, offering the chance to ride behind an impressive range of traction with an intensive timetable.

Appearing courtesy of the Deltic Preservation Society, **Class 55 D9015** will be making its GCR gala debut – a historic moment in preservation history not to be missed!

Class 33, 33103 courtesy of Nemesis Rail and the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, will be paired with classmate **D6535 (33116)** appearing with thanks to 5305 Locomotive Trust and the National Railway Museum

Class 14 D9525 on an extended visit to the Great Central Railway with thanks to D9525 Ltd.

Plus get a front row seat to the action with our cab and brake van rides, Goods Trains and our HST simulator.

Check our website for more guest locomotive announcements coming soon!

DISCOVER MORE



Website

gcrailway.co.uk

Booking Office

01509 632 323

Great Central Road, Loughborough LE11 1RW





WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* scurries through Atherstone with Vintage Trains' 'Ticket to Ride' excursion to Liverpool on July 11. The return journey returned to Birmingham nearly three hours late after a lineside fire on the West Coast Main Line brought everything to a halt that afternoon; see Main Line News, page 52.
MARTIN CREESE

EDITORIAL

Editor Robin Jones
robin.jones@kelsey.co.uk
Staff writer Owen Hayward
owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk
Senior news and railwayana contributor
Geoff Courtney
Senior contributor
John Titlow
Contributors
Don Benn, Sally Clifford,
Hugh Dougherty, Phil Eldridge,
Tim Hobman, Jimmy James,
Daniel Long
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
andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk
Connor Crowley 01507 529411
connor.crowley@kelsey.co.uk
Group advertising manager
Sue Keily sue.keily@kelsey.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES

General Queries & Back Issues
01507 529529
Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm

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
Managing director
Dan Savage

ARCHIVE

Enquiries Jane Skayman
01507 529423
jane.skayman@kelsey.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION

Full subscription rates (but see page 30 for offer): (12 months 13 issues) – UK 72.80.
Export rates are also available – see page 30 for more details.
UK subscriptions are zero-rated for the purposes of Value Added Tax.
Enquires: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to this magazine should be clearly typed and ideally sent by email. Photographs, which should be clearly marked with the contributor's name and address, are submitted at the owner's risk. 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
August 12, 2026
Next issue on sale
August 26, 2026



Achieving, accomplishing – and awesome: The A1 Trust

IN this year of celebrations to mark the 150th birthday of one of the world's greatest steam locomotive designers, we saw in our last issue the special anniversary headboards distributed to and displayed on of all on Nigel Gresley's surviving locomotives around the world, and on Headline News, pages 8/9, is the official relaunch into traffic of the oldest of them that it still with us, newly overhauled N2 No. 0-6-2T No. 1744, at the North Norfolk Railway.

However, those magnificent feats have now been overtaken by a pivotal moment in the landmark project to build the seventh example of Britain's biggest and most powerful express passenger steam locomotive – Gresley's P2 three-cylinder 'Mikado' 2-8-2, in the form of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*.

A new pinnacle in the UK heritage sector has been reached with the lowering into the frames of the monobloc at builder The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's modern Darlington Locomotive Works.

The fitting of the welded monobloc, which combines all three cylinders into a single fabrication, has opened the door for a downhill run towards the aim of a completion date of 2027 for the estimated £6 million project.

The trust steamed ahead with its first new-build, that of A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, which has achieved so much more than simply filling a gap in the UK's heritage fleet. A star performer both on the main line and heritage railways, it is considered by many people in many aspects to be a 21st-century version of *Flying Scotsman*.

The *Prince of Wales* project has already surpassed the popular concepts of 'preservation' or recreating

lost locomotive types. While the new P2 is designed to look and perform like the original six, the trust has employed modern engineering techniques to address historic design problems, improve maintenance, and ensure that it will comply with modern railway standards – in doing so, it has firmly elevated steam engineering into the present day, rather than leaving it consigned to history books. Gresley would have surely approved, big time!

Once operational, the new P2 is guaranteed to become a major tourist magnet, hauling sell-out tours over the network and drawing crowds to every heritage line on which it appears, boosting the local tourist economy.

Tornado, the most recent exploits of which are featured on pages 68-69, has made its builder

a byword for engineering excellence, and yet the success of the trust has depended on so much more. Its fundraising plan should be a compulsory read for all heritage projects; its practice of setting up individual clubs for members of the public to donate towards set components has ensured essential income streams, giving contributors

a sense that they are helping to build 'their' locomotive – which, indeed, they are.

Furthermore, the trust's effective publicity drive over the years has been key to raising and fostering public awareness. I have long believed that two of the most important positions in our heritage sector organisations are the Chief Mechanical Engineer, who might work wonders to make it all happen, and the press officer, who lets the potential customers know that it has.

Robin Jones Editor

"Once operational, the new P2 is guaranteed to become a major tourist magnet..."

ISSUE 348

July 31 – August 28, 2026

News



6

Headline News

- New-build Gresley P2 'Mikado' has three-cylinder Monobloc fitted
- Nene Valley steam driver appointed A1 Trust's new operations director
- King Charles samples horse power in Manx tramway visit
- Sole-surviving Gresley tank engine returns to service in Norfolk



10

News

- Soaring temperatures result in changes to heritage lines' services
- Tovil footbridge set for new life at KESR's Northiam station
- North Dorset Railway gains ORR approval to run public trains
- German re-enactors walk out of Severn Valley wartime weekend
- New engineering project aims to boost Quainton Road sustainability
- Nene Valley set to welcome its second Danish tank engine



52

Main Line News

- Fire causes tour disruption as Network Rail instigates steam ban
- Decommissioned Riviera signalbox faces new life as a holiday home
- Sarah Siddons' first Underground runs after seven years of repairs
- Flying Scotsman tours announced

60 With Full Regulator

Don Benn looks at recent main line runs with No. 35028 *Clan Line*, a trip behind No. 34067 *Tangmere*, and compares two fine efforts behind Bulleid light Pacifics in 1966.

CONTENTS: LNER A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* took a break from main line duties on July 3-5 and pulled public trains along the West Somerset Railway, seen here at Nornvis as it approaches Crowcombe Heathfield on July 4. The 'Streak' has been stabled at Bishops Lydeard since May to work railtours to Kingswear, although the ongoing dry spell saw its planned July 11 outing dropped owing to high fire risk. DON BISHOP
COVER: Having seen out its contracted steamings at the East Somerset Railway, GWR 5101 class 2-6-2T No. 4110 has returned home to the Dartmouth Steam Railway. The large prairie climbs past a rolling tide at Goodrington Sands with the 4.30pm to Kingswear on July 14. MARK WILKINS



Regulars

30 Subscribe Today 50 Centre

Seeing double on the West Somerset Railway as GWR 4-6-0s Nos. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* and 7802 *Bradley Manor* work a members' special for the Erlestoke Manor Fund. DON BISHOP



50

58 Main Line Itinerary

Steam and heritage diesel railtours.

64 Railwayana

Geoff Courtney's regular column.

90 Off the Shelf

Latest book and DVD releases.

92 Up & Running

Your guide to upcoming railway running dates and events.

98 Next Stop

Features

Building on the success of London's heritage transport hub

Almost 20 years after it last received a facelift, London Transport Museum is about to undergo a refurbishment to accommodate growing visitor numbers. Owen Hayward visits the Covent Garden venue to speak with its director and CEO, Elizabeth McKay, about why now is the time for such a major project to begin.



46



68 East Coast Icons: Take 2

Ten years after its hugely successful East Coast Revival gala brought together two generations of the London to Scotland route's express locomotives, the Nene Valley Railway chased a second bite of the cherry by repeating the spectacle, as Owen Hayward reports.

72 Small is big at new Severn Valley summer gala!

While the Severn Valley Railway's winter gala has now become a regular event with temperatures below freezing, the line ran its first new summer gala following heatwave temperatures, reports John Titlow in words and pictures.

80 Balmoral returns for Bolton Abbey

Sally Clifford checks in on the progress of the latest Stately Trains restoration efforts and discovers a vintage carriage with a particularly fascinating past.

70 Horsepower meets heritage at The Mid-Hants diesel gala

Modern diesels met heritage traction at the Watercress Line's annual diesel gala, which brought in some main line machines to appeal to the changing enthusiast tastes, as Owen Hayward reports.

76 High history created in the Snowdon Mountain Railway's 130th anniversary year

Phil Marsh makes an out-of-season visit to Britain's unique public rack railway to view the modernisation of a passing loop which removes the need for the country's highest blockman.

80 A riveting good job!

Sally Clifford revisits the Stephenson Steam Railway in North Shields to look in on the latest BESTT training course, organised to help train and pass on essential skills from the steam era to the next generation.

Models



82 Adams' finest?

Following the recent release of the class in OO scale, Paul Lawrence looks back over the journey of the LSWR T3 4-4-0 from Victorian-era machine to a modern-day preservation star.



89 News

Rapido announces its first TT:120 scale models, Ellis Clark unveils LMS parcels van, and KR Models enters liquidation.

SUBSCRIBE FROM £57.99*

*THAT'S JUST £4.46 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

New P2 milestone as three-cylinder monobloc installed

By Robin Jones

IN the year that celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of its designer LNER Chief Mechanical Engineer Sir Nigel Gresley are underway, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust reached another significant milestone in the construction of P2 'Mikado' No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* at its Summer Supporters' Day on Friday, July 24, when its three-cylinder monobloc was successfully lowered into the frames before an audience of supporters whose continued backing is making the ground-breaking £6 million project possible.

Manufactured by Howco Ltd of Ayrshire, Scotland, the fabricated monobloc represents one of the most complex engineering components of the new locomotive.

Its design was led by the trust's former engineering director, David Elliott, who refined Gresley's original concept to address several known shortcomings.

These improvements include balancing the clearance volumes between the cylinders and reducing heat transfer between inlet and exhaust steam, resulting in a more efficient and refined design while remaining true to Gresley's vision.

Sadly, David did not live to see this magnificent landmark moment as he died in late 2023. However, his meticulous engineering and attention to detail ensured that the installation proceeded smoothly, a fitting testament to his immense contribution to the project.

Earlier this year, Darlington Locomotive Works took delivery of a 15-tonne overhead crane. Following its installation, the crane's first major task was lifting the monobloc into the P2's frames, with the final stages of the operation witnessed by several dozen supporters attending the event. The next stage will see



Above: The right-hand side of the fitted monobloc. A1SLT

Left: The monobloc craned into place on the P2 at Darlington. A1SLT

Right: The monobloc sitting inside the frames of *Prince of Wales*. A1SLT



"This has been a major engineering challenge and is probably the first three-cylinder monobloc to be installed in a main line steam locomotive for more than 60 years."

the assembly carefully checked for alignment before the fitted bolts secure the monobloc permanently within the frames are installed.

P2 project director Richard Courteney-Harris said: "This has been a major engineering challenge and is probably the first three-cylinder monobloc to be installed in a main line steam locomotive for more than 60 years, if not considerably longer. The team at DLW should be immensely proud of this achievement as they continue to build upon the legacy of David Elliott's talent and vision. During this 150th anniversary year, it is especially fitting to recognise the foresight and ingenuity of two remarkable engineers whose work has shaped this locomotive."

The monobloc has been built to operate with a rotary cam poppet valve gear, based on the Lentz design and developed for the P2 by David.

Full-size 3D-printed prototypes of the cambox have already successfully

demonstrated the design, paving the way for manufacture of the metal components.

The P2s, of which six were built between 1934 and 1936 for working heavy express trains over the Edinburgh to Aviemore line, were capable of hauling 600-ton trains and the biggest and most powerful steam locomotives to run in the UK. However, Gresley died in 1941, and restrictions during the Second World War caused the P2 to suffer mechanical problems which contributed to the decision by his successor Edward Thompson to rebuild them into the A2/2 class during 1943-44. The rebuilds improved reliability and reduced maintenance, but they also suffered from several issues during service, and all were withdrawn and scrapped between 1959 and 1961, with none surviving into the heritage era.

The trust announced its P2 project in 2013, following the completion and success of its debut

new-build project A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* 2008. Construction began in 2014, its design based on the first P2, No. 2001 *Cock o' the North*, with modifications to address historic design problems, improve maintenance and comply with modern railway standards. The boiler was constructed at Meiningen Steam Locomotive Works in Germany and delivered to Darlington last December.

Those wishing to help complete the seventh P2 can join The Valve Gear Club and, from just £10 per month, covenantors are helping to fund the manufacture of the innovative valve gear that will bring No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* one step closer to steam.

To maintain the project's momentum and see the locomotive completed as soon as possible, the trust is encouraging more supporters to get involved.

➔ Be part of the *Prince of Wales* journey at p2steam.com

Limited-edition P2 whisky to help build *Prince of Wales*

BRITAIN'S railway heritage supporters can now raise a glass to one of the country's most ambitious new-build steam locomotive projects with the launch of an exclusive limited-edition Highland single malt Scotch whisky.

Created to raise funds for the construction of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*, this special release brings together two of Scotland's most celebrated traditions: railways and whisky.

Drawn from a single cask at Glen Garioch Distillery, near Aberdeen on the East

Coast route once travelled by the original P2 locomotives, the whisky reflects the locomotive's rich Scottish heritage. With just 250 individually numbered bottles to be produced, it is set to become a highly desirable collector's item for railway enthusiasts and whisky lovers alike.

The whisky is a 14-year-old Highland single malt matured in a unique Oloroso sherry cask. Each 700ml bottle features a bespoke Art Deco-inspired label incorporating key facts about *Prince of Wales* alongside an illustration of

the locomotive, with premium foil detailing providing a fitting finish for this exclusive release.

Available exclusively by pre-order, bottling will take place once the minimum order threshold has been reached, with delivery anticipated in late 2026.

All profits will go directly towards completing No. 2007.

Find out more at a1steam.com/shop

Right: The new 2007 single malt Scotch whisky. A1SLT





Paul Roe with *Tornado* on July 11 during its recent East Coast Legends gala visit to the Nene Valley Railway, as featured on pages 68-69. A1SLT

Nene Valley's Paul Roe becomes A1 Trust's operations director

THE A1 Steam Locomotive Trust is has appointed long-serving Nene Valley volunteer Paul Roe as its operations director and a trustee of the charity.

He will lead the trust's operations team, ensuring the safe, efficient and successful delivery of Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*'s operations across the national network and heritage lines.

He will work closely with the commercial team, engineering team and deputy operations director Jorge Gorman, and he will also oversee operational planning, governance, budgets and safety compliance, while taking responsibility for the safe operation of Darlington Locomotive Works, supporting succession planning within the operations team, and, as a trustee, contributing to the trust's strategic direction.

Paul served for more than 30 years as a police officer, including 12 years with the British Transport Police. He has volunteered at the NVR for nearly 40 years, where he currently serves as locomotive department manager, and he is a qualified steam driver.

He said: "I am honoured to be joining the A1SLT. The trust has earned a unique reputation within railway preservation through its professionalism, engineering excellence and the dedication of its volunteers and supporters. I look forward to working alongside such an experienced and committed team to ensure *Tornado* continues to operate safely and successfully, while helping to support the trust's ambitious plans for the future."

A1SLT chairman Steve Davies MBE added: "On behalf of the board, I am delighted to welcome Paul as a trustee and operations director. He brings significant operational leadership experience, together with decades of practical involvement in heritage railways.

"His appointment further strengthens the trust's leadership team as we continue to deliver an increasingly demanding programme of operations for *Tornado*, support the construction of P2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*, and develop the trust for the future. I look forward to working with Paul as we build on the trust's achievements."

King Charles samples horse power on Manx tramway visit

By Robin Jones

KING Charles took a ride on the Douglas Bay Horse Tramway when he visited the Isle of Man on July 14.

Thousands of people gathered to welcome His Majesty as he undertook a programme of engagements celebrating the Isle of Man's parliamentary democracy, cultural heritage, community spirit and charitable organisations.

The visit was his first to the island both since becoming king and as Lord of Mann, the local title inherited by the monarch. He last visited the island in 2012, when he was the Prince of Wales, as part of the Royal Family's tour to mark the late Queen Elizabeth's diamond jubilee.

The visit began with a special sitting of the Manx government, at which the President of Tynwald, Laurence Skelly OBE MLC, delivered a loyal address. He highlighted the island's proud traditions, distinctive identity and continued progress. The king responded, before being presented with a commemorative scroll, and he reflected on the island's marvellous scenery, from the heights of Snaefell to its wooded glens and beautiful beaches – and also spoke some Manx during the address.

Following the sitting, King Charles met members of the public during a walkabout in Douglas before travelling to Government House, where he attended a garden party hosted by the Lieutenant Governor,

Sir John Lorimer. There he met a wide range of community groups and organisations representing many aspects of island life. Guests included Cleveland Medal winners, Manx speakers, cultural representatives, members of the Manx Wildlife Trust, participants in community and rehabilitation projects, and representatives from the agricultural sector and Laxey Woollen Mills, together with some of the island's distinctive Manx Loaghtan sheep.

One of the highlights was a journey on the Douglas Bay Horse Tramway as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations. The tram took the king on a short journey to the bottom of Summer Hill.

He met staff, volunteers, supporters and representatives from the Home of Rest for Old Horses, and then unveiled a commemorative plaque at the Strathallan Crescent terminus.

Following a second walkabout, he travelled aboard the recently restored Tram No. 18, the world's oldest in-service tramcar, pulled by Bobby, a 16-year-old Clydesdale horse.

His final engagement took place at Heroes on the Water, in Port Soderick, where he met volunteers, supporters and service users of the charity, alongside representatives from Beach Buddies, Isle of Man Civil Defence Corps and the Isle of Man Ambulance Service. During the visit, the king was also reunited with Burma Star veteran James Fenton.

Lieutenant Governor Sir John



King Charles riding aboard tramcar No. 18 pulled by Bobby, a 16-year-old Clydesdale horse, on July 14. IOM GOVERNMENT

Lorimer said: "It was a tremendous privilege to welcome the king to the Isle of Man as Lord of Mann.

"Wherever he travelled, His Majesty received an exceptionally warm and enthusiastic Manx welcome."

As we closed for press, Tynwald approved the Department of Infrastructure's request £2.5 million with th a further £500,000 held in

reserve by the Treasury to restore the tramway to the Sea Terminal to finish what was previously approved by the Manx government in 2017. The tramway currently runs between Derby Castle and Broadway, about half the 1.6-mile distance of the original. → King Charles receives Science Museum Group Fellowship – News, page 32.

Gresley's oldest survivor returns to service for designer's 150th

Words and pictures
by Owen Hayward

GREAT Northern Railway N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 successfully returned to revenue-earning service on the North Norfolk Railway on July 18 after an eight-year overhaul costing more than £750,000!

Outshopped by the North British Locomotive Company's Glasgow works in 1921, No. 1744 spent nearly all of its working life working services out of King's Cross and Moorgate, with just a brief transfer to New England shed near Peterborough in May 1962 shortly before withdrawal that September.

Preserved in 1963 by the newly-formed Gresley Society, founded to honour the life and works of renowned engineer Sir Nigel Gresley, it was moved to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in 1965 where, running as LNER No. 4744, it gained fame appearing as the 'Scotch Flyer' in the EMI film adaptation of *The Railway Children*.

In 1975, it moved to the Great Central Railway following an agreement being reached with the Main Line Steam Trust to overhaul and run it there. After returning to service in April 1978, it remained based at the GCR until 2017. During one of the overhauls carried out in this time, modifications were made to revert the locomotive to as close to original GNR condition as possible. In 2017, the Gresley Society announced it had reached an agreement in principle with the NNR for the locomotive to operate there, which would have included fitting main line equipment during its approaching overhaul to allow it to operate the line's dining trains to Cromer.

While this upgrade never came to be, had it gone ahead, the result would have seen the N2 become the oldest locomotive capable of



Gresley Society trustees with N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 at Holt after its first passenger-carrying trip on July 17.

operating on the main line. While it may not have been able to stake that particular claim, it remains both the oldest-surviving locomotive and the only tank engine to be designed by Gresley.

Long-running project

The overhaul commenced in 2018 and included significant mechanical and boiler work, which was initially carried out by Northern Steam Engineering in Stockton-on-Tees and later completed at Weybourne on the NNR.

Other key elements included fitting new driving wheel and pony truck tyres, a new front boiler ring and tubeplates, a new firebox wrapper sections, and the manufacture of new superheater tubes. Although it was hoped that the locomotive would be completed in time for

its centenary year in 2021, several factors – including continuously rising costs and the Covid-19 pandemic – unfortunately meant this was not to be.

As reported in issue 346, No. 1744 successfully passed its hydraulic test in April, which was followed by the final in-steam examination on May 20. On June 8, running-in between Sheringham and Holt had commenced and continued over several days before it returned to the workshops for finishing off.

It has been outshopped in GNR livery once again, the painting predominantly carried out by Ruben Pearce and signwriter Brian Ashby at Weybourne.

Eight years after it last ran, and after work that has cost an estimated £800,000 to complete, the N2 pulled its first passenger-

carrying trains on July 17 when Gresley Society members were invited to Sheringham station for the locomotive's rededication, in the year they have been celebrating the 150th anniversary of Sir Nigel's birth and in which a landmark step forward towards the recreation of his biggest type, as reported in *Headline News*, pages 6/7.

Speaking to the gathered crowd, society chairman Philip Benham MBE said: "We are delighted to see No. 1744 back in steam, fulfilling the vision of our founders to preserve a working Gresley locomotive for the benefit and education of current and future generations. This has been a much more complex overhaul than we at first envisaged, possibly the most extensive the locomotive has ever had, and of course more expensive! But now, this magnificent



Right: Gresley Society president John Cameron (left) with driver and newly-appointed locomotive manager Keith Ashford (centre) and NNR Running Shed Foreman Alex Harper-Bourne at the N2's rededication ceremony.

Left: No. 1744 at Holt with the Quad-Art stock on its first day in service after overhaul.





Class 37 D6732 arrives at Weybourne on July 18, passing a line of vintage caravans on display in the adjacent picnic area.

tank engine, resplendent in GNR green, will once again haul trains on the NNR, including the unique Quad-Art carriages.

"We remain deeply grateful to all the contractors who have worked on the locomotive, but especially to the NNR for its generous support, which has been so critical to ensuring completion of the overhaul."

A celebratory bottle of champagne was smashed against the front running boards by society president John Cameron, before two round trips of the line were run for the gathered guests.

Fittingly for the occasion, No. 1744 pulled the NNR's restored LNER Quad-Art carriages just as it would have done out of King's Cross during its previous working life.

The Gresley Society also announced the appointment of Keith Ashford as the new locomotive manager. A Chartered Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Keith brings more than 50 years' experience, including time served as Chief Mechanical Engineer at the NNR, a post he held for seven years until his retirement in April 2026.

He has been actively involved in the mechanical restoration and operation of preserved steam locomotives, including significant work on the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society's fleet, of which he is a volunteer trustee director and Chief Mechanical Engineer.

Keith will oversee the ongoing care, maintenance, and operation of No. 1744, ensuring the locomotive continues to operate safely and reliably for the benefit of visitors and enthusiasts to the Poppy Line.

Golden years

The day after its launch ceremony, the N2 pulled its first trains for the general public as part of the NNR's July 18/19 Golden Years weekend,

an event which celebrated the atmosphere of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

Accompanying No. 1744 in service were Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam' 0-6-0ST No. 1589 *Newstead*, which made its heritage era debut 12 months earlier, and BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80080, which had returned to service in June following a period of maintenance to replace defective tubes and superheater elements.

Flying the flag for the diesel era were Class 37 D6732 and a four-car DMU comprising Class 101 and 104 driving trailers.

In addition to the Quad-Art set, the NNR's rake of BR Mk. 1 Suburban carriages were also in use. Many of these also saw use out of King's Cross during the latter days of steam and early diesel period, thus presenting an opportunity to compare these two different types of vehicle that share a common history and purpose.

The railway-wide celebration welcomed Norfolk Fire Museum to Holt with a selection of vintage firefighting vehicles and equipment on display alongside an interactive simulation, giving visitors an opportunity to experience extinguishing a fire.

Also on show at the station were a selection of vintage cars and buses, with some of the latter offering free return trips to Cromer and Melton Constable at hourly intervals each day. Live music from the three decades was performed.

Meanwhile, at Weybourne, a display of vintage caravans could be found one of the picnic areas adjacent to the line.

In the week leading up to the event, the NNR moved Gresley TK No. 12493 from Sheringham to the storage shed at Bridge Road, near Holt, where it will be kept in the dry until such a time as restoration can commence for its eventual use in



With its debut the day beforehand having been blighted by the first heavy cloud cover in weeks, No. 1744 catches the sun as it passes Sheringham golf course during the Golden Years event on July 18.



Above: Philip Benham MBE, chairman of the Gresley Society, thanked those who have supported the long-running and expensive overhaul.

Right: Recently returned to service following boiler tube and superheater repairs, BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80080 bursts out from beneath Bridge Road as it climbs away from Holt at the start of the NNR's Golden Years weekend.



Join the club!

ALTHOUGH the N2 overhaul has been generously part-funded by the North Norfolk Railway, which will be reimbursed through operational use of No. 1744, the Gresley Society continues to seek support to help cover the cost of the most extensive overhaul the locomotive has seen to date. The N2 Overhaul Completion

Club was established a few years ago and so far has raised almost £60,000 towards the £100,000 target, offering attractive benefits for those contributing £1000 each (payable in up to eight instalments).

Details of how to join The N2 Overhaul Completion Club can be found at www.gresley.org

the railway's planned LNER train. Purchased in 1976, it has latterly served as a children's play vehicle in Sheringham's bay platform, where it has stood for 23 years. The railway's proposed consist is planned to include five vehicles turned out in BR 1950s blood-and-custard livery, with buffet No. 9128 already in service and soon to be joined by brake third open

No. 16631 (undergoing restoration by an off-site contractor in Derbyshire) and Thompson brake first open No. 1866 (nearing the end of its own restoration at Weybourne). In time, this will include No. 12493 and tourist third open No. 13548, the latter also currently stored but due to be the next carriage to enter the workshops for restoration.

What a scorcher! Summer heatwaves hamper heritage steam operations

By Owen Hayward

HERITAGE railways were once again moving to diesel traction as linesides dried up following nearly two months without rain and some of the hottest conditions experienced in recent years.

As reported in issue 347, temperatures in June neared 40C and saw some lines cancel services altogether out of concern for volunteer and visitor welfare. Since then, conditions have barely changed, with landscapes becoming seas of brown as vegetation and crops dry up, with barely a cloud in sight for weeks in some parts of the country.

Such was the conditions that even narrow gauge railways, typically the outliers in heritage steam bans, instigated diesel-only operations.

A first in Tywyn

For the first time in its 161-year history, the Talyllyn Railway cancelled all steam-hauled services on July 19 following a spate of lineside fires the day before. July 18/19 had been billed as the line's Little Engines Weekend, celebrating its connections with author the Reverend Wilbert Awdry, who based the fictional Skarloey Railway on the pioneering heritage line in his Thomas the Tank Engine books.

Despite having sent one of its ex-RNAD Baguley Drewry locomotives



On July 18, Baguley Drewry No. 12 *St Cadfan* passes through Rhydyronen on the Talyllyn Railway with a wagon carrying water bowser tanks spraying the lineside in hopes of preventing fires. ANDREW SIMMONDS

along the line with water bowser spraying the lineside in hopes of mitigating such instances, blazes occurred in the Brynglas area on July 18, causing substantial delays to services while fire crews attended to extinguish the flames.

These fires followed earlier disruption after a carriage partially derailed at Pendre during an empty stock movement, severing the line's terminus at Tywyn Wharf from the rest of the line. In a bid to keep the show running, trains were starting and ending at the halt adjacent to the 1800s-era locomotive shed, with visitors arriving at Wharf enjoying a 'walking train' to Pendre to meet the steam-hauled services that were still running at the time.

Following advice given by Tywyn Fire Service, the railway announced

that evening that all of the Sunday services would be diesel-hauled, utilising its Baguley Drewrys Nos. 11 *Trecwn* and 12 *St Cadfan* as well as Ruston & Hornsby 4WDM No. 5 *Midlander* and Hunslet 0-4-0DM No. 9 *Alf*, while two 0-4-2ST steam locomotives – Fletcher Jennings No. 1 *Talyllyn* and Hughes Falcon No. 3 *Sir Haydn*, masquerading as fictional counterpart *Sir Handel* – were in light steam at Tywyn Wharf, allowing visitors a chance to step onto the footplate and blow the whistle.

Train services for the first few days of the week commencing July 20 were also announced to be in the care of diesels, with the situation being continuously monitored and reviewed in hopes of reinstating steam haulage as soon as possible.

Mitigation matters

While several lines opted to jump straight to diesel operations during the successive heatwaves, others sought to implement measures to continue steam services for as long as possible.

The full withdrawal of steam locomotives at times like this has, in some instances, seen visitor footfall drop by almost half, which can have a huge impact on a heritage line's finances despite the lower cost of operating diesel locomotives.

During the same mid-July weekend, the Llangollen Railway was celebrating the start of the school summer holidays with a two steam train running, featuring GWR duo 0-6-0PT No. 7754 and 2884 class 2-8-0 No. 3802. Just as the TR was doing, a dedicated fire patrol service followed trains through the areas deemed to be of most high risk for fires, with the train equipped with pumps and firefighting equipment to respond immediately to any discovered blazes.

In addition, all operating steam locomotives and trains are fitted with hoses and fire beaters, while crews

continually monitored conditions throughout the day.

The Brecon Mountain Railway has ensured all of its own steam locomotives are fitted with adequate spark arrestors and also reduced some trains in length to limit the amount of effort required by the locomotives, which in turns reduces the number of sparks being thrown from the chimney.

Lineside vegetation between the railway boundary fences has been maintained to a very high standard. This includes keeping the grass and undergrowth short; if a fire should start, the shorter vegetation keeps the flames nearer to the ground, which makes it easier to control and extinguish.

A spokesman did stress, however, that the situation was constantly being monitored, with diesel locomotives on standby should the need to swap traction arise.

Also in Great Western territory, the Dartmouth Steam Railway has continued to run steam services as planned, with its own firefighting train on standby.

As featured in issue 329, this facility was a development of the line's weedkilling train, and its creation was supported and aided by local fire services. With the DSR operated wholly by paid staff, it is able to have crews on standby to rapidly respond to any reports of fire and either fully extinguish blazes or help to bring them under control pending arrival of local fire services.

However, for many, the best method of mitigation was the full substitution of steam with diesel. This affected lines including the Corris, Gloucestershire Warwickshire, Mid-Hants, Mid-Norfolk, Kent & East Sussex, Severn Valley and Swanage railways, with some having implemented a steam ban of their own as early as the start of July, while others retained steam operations for specific days such as special events.



The Kent & East Sussex Railway was one of several which reverted to diesel haulage during the heatwave in July. BR Class 14 0-6-0 DH D9504 *Jon Grimwood* departs from Tenterden Town for Bodiam on July 5. GRAHAM NUTTALL



During the Amberley Museum Railway's July 18/19 summer gala, Bagnall 2-4-0T *Polar Bear* was brought out for static display. Last operational in October 2022, it has been undergoing a thorough overhaul in the museum's workshops and in recent months has started to resemble a complete locomotive once again. There is still much to do to finish reassembling the former Groudle Glen Railway resident, but it is hoped that it will be ready for Amberley's 2027 spring gala. Donations are sought at www.amberleymuseum.co.uk/support-POLARBear PHIL BARNES



West Coast Railways Class 37s Nos. 37668 and 37685 *Loch Arkaig* towed tender-first LMS 'Black Five' No. 44871 and its support coach from Crewe Heritage Centre to Tom Na Faire depot, Fort William, on July 16/17, a journey of more than 24 hours. Because a steam ban was in force, the 'Black Five' was dead and ran with its connecting rods removed. The convoy is seen at Hincaster after No. 37668 had replaced No. 37706 at Carnforth. See also Main Line News, pages 52/53. ANDREW NAYLOR

Hagley Hall out of action after Bridgnorth incident

By Robin Jones

AN investigation into an incident in which Severn Valley Railway flagship GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* was damaged and taken out of service was underway as this issue closed for press.

The incident occurred at Bridgnorth shed on the evening of July 12, and the statutory authorities, along with the line's insurers, have been notified.

SVR chief executive officer Gus Dunster said: "An incident involving the Severn Valley Railway's 4930 *Hagley Hall* occurred at Bridgnorth motive power depot.

"The locomotive is currently awaiting assessment, and I'm pleased to report that no one was injured. We have begun a full investigation to establish exactly what happened and cannot comment further until that is complete.

"We have informed the Office of Rail and Road, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch and our insurers.

"Once we know the extent of the damage to the locomotive

and its tender, we will commence repairs. As the damage is still to be fully determined, we cannot give a timescale for the locomotive's return to service."

Outshopped from Swindon Works in May 1929, *Hagley Hall* arrived at Barry scrapyard in June 1964 following withdrawal. Bought by the SVR, it became the 29th locomotive to be saved from Dai Woodham's yard when it arrived at Bridgnorth in January 1973. Restored to running order in 1979, it hauled the official reopening train into Kidderminster Town in 1984, and was also a regular main line performer from 1979 to 1986 when it was withdrawn for overhaul.

It returned to service following overhaul on September 9, 2022, and has a boiler ticket which expires in 2032. On August 1-3 last year, it appeared at Alstom's Railway 200 The Greatest Gathering exhibition at Litchurch Lane, Derby, its movement there with Stanier mogul No. 13268 behind a diesel locomotive was the first time since 1986 that it had run on the main line.



The train team with the strongman, left to right: Phil Stubbs, Julian Lane, Stuart Lambert, Katy Bowser, David Tong and Ivan Merino. MIKE HOPPS

Strongman pulls 70-ton train at Yorkshire Wolds Railway

STRONGMAN Stuart Lambert has pulled a locomotive, two freight wagons and a guards van – weighing a total of 70 tons – 82 feet along the Yorkshire Wolds Railway at Fimber Halt.

Stuart, from Market Weighton, trained for six months for the challenge, which took place on July 19. He has pulled pieces of machinery for charity before, but the train, English Electric 0-4-0DH No. 5576 *Sir Tatton Sykes*, was the heaviest until now.

Locomotive driver Katy Bowser was on board to stop it so that it did not run him over at the end, and visitors

to the line watched the feat from the platform.

"I've pulled trucks and other machinery before, but a locomotive coupled with two wagons is entirely different," said Stuart. "The sheer inertia you have to overcome is immense."

The feat was shown on ITV News and BBC Look North.

A railway statement said: "The event was a complete success and a great spectacle for all who came to witness it. We are really grateful to Stuart, the YWR volunteers, and the visiting public for making the event what it was!"

Moorsline invests in new classroom to preserve skills

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has officially opened its new Mutual Improvement Classroom, allegedly the last remaining facility of its kind in the world – marking a major investment in preserving traditional railway skills and creating new opportunities for learning, training, and career development.

The new building also includes Motive Power Depot offices and accessible welfare facilities.

Designed as a dedicated learning environment, the MIC provides a space where experienced footplate crews volunteer their time to pass on specialist knowledge to volunteers and staff looking to develop their skills, gain practical experience

and increase opportunities. The project was part-financed by the Government through the Rural England Prosperity Fund via North Yorkshire Council, with a £350,000 grant alongside a £250,000 donation from Peter Best, a long-standing benefactor of the NYMR.

The facility replaces a Portakabin classroom that served the railway for more than 30 years. The previous accommodation, along with the MPD offices and welfare at Grosmont, had become increasingly cramped and no longer met the needs of the workforce.

NYMR CEO Laura Strangeway said: "As someone who is passionate about both preserving our heritage and



Lyla Simpson ceremoniously cuts the ribbon to formally open the new MIC building, watched by her proud father, Nick Simpson (top extreme right) on July 4. JOHN HUNT

securing our future, the opening of the MIC was a particularly special day – it represents the very best of our industry's culture, and I am incredibly proud that we are continuing that legacy for future generations."

Established during the Industrial Revolution, MIC facilities enabled

railway workers to educate one another by sharing technical knowledge, pooling resources, and teaching practical skills. While these societies gradually disappeared across the industry during the 20th century, the NYMR has preserved the tradition.

Grant funding helps advance key bridge plans for a unified KESR

By Owen Hayward

INSTALLATION of a new footbridge at a station on the Kent & East Sussex Railway is set to go ahead thanks to the securing of grant funding, with the structure playing a vital role in the future operations of its trains once the link with the Rother Valley Railway at Robertsbridge is complete.

The footbridge was previously situated along the Tovil branch near Maidstone. Opened in September 1884, the line ran off the Medway Valley line, near Maidstone West, and was built to cater for the civil parish's goods traffic, which included several paper mills. Passenger traffic ceased in 1943, with most of the station demolished soon after, while freight soldiered on until 1977. The footbridge remained in situ until 2014, when Network Rail decommissioned and donated it to the RVR, which has in turn donated it to the KESR.

The bridge will play a crucial role in the reunified line's future operations. At present, passengers changing platforms at Northiam either have to exit the station and use the level crossing at the east end of the station or the controlled foot crossing at the west end, near to the signalbox. Both of these options come with an increased elements of risk, such as close proximity to traffic, and can be time-consuming owing to the long walk required to the platform ends, as well as the wait for any passing trains to cross.

The installation of the former Tovil footbridge will create a more efficient method of crossing between platforms and a new vantage point from which to watch the trains, while the previous crossing options will still be retained for those with accessibility needs.

The dismantled structure is off-site in Ticehurst for repairs and a repaint

by a contractor; the cast-iron pillars were in a poor state and have required specialist attention to rectify. Once complete, the parts will be delivered to Northiam for final installation, although its precise location has yet to be determined.

"There are two possibilities for the footbridge location," KESR chairman Derrick Bilsby said. "The first is mid-platform, which would be the best case for passengers, and the second is at the Tenterden-end of the platform. The final choice will depend on if we opt for a new water crane at Northiam, as this will require signalling alterations. A group has therefore been asked to look at the options and provide a recommendation to the board before applying for the necessary planning permission."

With Northiam at the halfway point of the soon-to-be 14-mile-long line between Tenterden and Robertsbridge, it will naturally become a passing point for services. The ability to change trains will therefore allow better flexibility for visitors who wish to make shorter trips along the line, such as those with young children or who only have a limited amount of time.

The work is largely being funded thanks to a successful recent grant application. Further funding has come from the Railway Heritage Trust, Rochester Bridge Fund and other donors.

The KESR has also purchased a second Reverse Osmosis machine to provide better-quality water for its steam locomotives. These machines filter out contaminants such as dissolved salts and organic compounds, the result being a reduction in the build-up of scale inside locomotive boilers, which in turn reduces the frequency for wash-outs. One of these machines will be installed at Tenterden, while the other



A footbridge (pictured in 1963) which once crossed the branch line to Tovil is to find a new home at Northiam. KESR COLLECTION

is set to be installed at Northiam, where a water tower already exists at the Bodiam end of the Down platform, meaning locomotives will only need to take on treated water at Rolvenden at the start of the day.

Tea club

A new fundraising venture has been established to drive improvements of the locomotive works at Rolvenden station, led by KESR volunteer driver and managing director of Rapido Trains UK, Andy Hardy. "Rolvenden is the beating heart of the locomotive overhauls on the KESR. Without it, our steam and diesel fleet wouldn't be in the condition they are in," he said.

"It's fair to say, however, that that over the last few decades, Rolvenden hasn't really received the funding it has needed to improve and meet both the commercial and legislative requirements of a modern working locomotive facility. We now think it's time to do something about that, and are launching the Rolvenden Tea Club."

Its aim is to encourage 100 people to contribute £2 a week – less than the cost of a cup of tea from a high street

coffee shop – over a five-year period to achieve a target of £50,000.

Funds raised will be used to purchase and replace equipment within the works, ensuring that the railway's skilled teams can work more efficiently, safely and accurately, leading to a long-term benefit for the locomotive fleet.

"The Tea Club will have a restricted fund and be run by a committee – an independent team of staff and volunteers who will ensure funds are spent solely for the task of improving Rolvenden Locomotive Works and the surrounding areas," Andy explained.

"When we need money to carry out improvements, the committee will appropriate funds based on four criteria: safety, efficiency, accuracy and training."

"This won't be a fund to keep the day-to-day going – it's to develop Rolvenden into the future. Rapido Trains UK has offered £10,000 a year over the next five years as match-funding."

→ For more information and to join the Rolvenden Tea Club, visit kesr.org.uk/rolvenden-tea-club-appeal or email teacub@kesr.org.uk



Rolvenden, the engineering hub of the KESR, has not seen substantial investment for several decades. A new fundraising club has been set up to raise £50,000 over five years, with Rapido Trains UK pledging £10,000 per year in match-funding. JULIE WILKINSON/KESR



The sight of two trains passing at Northiam station, pictured on May 27, 2023, will soon be a reality. OWEN HAYWARD

Campaigners lose battle to save 1950s Sheringham bus shelter

A 1950s brick-built bus shelter near the North Norfolk Railway's Sheringham station which featured a mural of LNER B12 4-6-0 No. 8572 by artist Colin Dean has been demolished despite a long-running protest by town residents.

The shelter in Station Approach, opposite Otterndorf Green, was knocked down on July 11 as part of a £580,000 transport hub scheme led by Norfolk County Council.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 340, campaigners trying to save it had camped in the shelter on a 24-hour basis. Objectors argued that the shelter could have been adapted at a lower cost, while supporters of the transport hub scheme said that it will improve accessibility and support the wider town centre.

A crowd of protesters gathered near the shelter before the

demolition process began, some chanting and others placing messages on it.

A NNR statement said: "As far as the bus shelter itself was concerned, we have remained neutral throughout, recognising that it was not owned by us and that there were strong feelings on all sides – bus users, bus operators, visitors, business people and townsfolk.

"The lengthy suspension of work since December has meant the approach to the railway has been past an abandoned building site. We need permission to access our own land, and have to obtain approval in writing for train movements across track we own.

"We hope people will therefore appreciate that, in common with most stakeholders, we are relieved a resolution has been found."



The bus shelter prior to demolition, with the transport hub work site alongside the North Norfolk Railway tracks. HUGH VENABLES/CREATIVE COMMONS



BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73082 approaches Horsted House farm crossing with the 9.20am from Sheffield Park on July 19 during the Bluebell Railway's Southern at War: Home Front & Occupation event weekend. NICK GILLIAM



As a tribute to this month's 100th anniversary of the start of the Southern Railway's 'Atlantic Coast Express' named train, Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34059 Sir Archibald Sinclair departs Horsted Keynes on the Bluebell Railway during a Jon Bowers photographic shoot on July 4. ROBERT FALCONER

West Somerset hits 50-year 'first' and adds sleuth trains

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway broke new ground by welcoming three incoming excursion trains in one day for the first time since its reopening in 1976.

On Saturday, July 18, the first visitor was the Belmond 'Britannic Explorer', which makes regular Friday evening round trips over the WSR as part of a weekend journey to Cornwall that begins at London Victoria. Stabling for the night while passengers enjoy their rest, the journey to the Duchy then resumes on Saturday morning.

Later in the day, an excursion from Paddington left the main line at Norton Fitzwarren Junction en route to Minehead, headed by West Coast Railways Class 33s Nos. 33025 and 33207 and tailed by WCR Class 47 No. 47848.

More vintage diesel traction followed with Hastings DEMU No. 1013 forming the 6.10am 'Cotswold and Exmoor Explorer' from Hastings. Organised by the Branch Line Society, it followed a circuitous

route taking in some sections of line not normally traversed by passenger trains.

In addition, the WSR ran its own steam and diesel trains, making it a busy day for the volunteers and staff on duty.

Trains on the WSR will operate on five days a week during August, with no services on Mondays and Fridays. The railway is launching a new venture on these non-operating Fridays called The Ticket to Nowhere, hoping to tempt the would-be detective or special agent. Arriving at Bishops Lydeard station, teams of two to eight players will find a railway carriage from which all of the passengers have mysteriously gone missing.

Have they been abducted? Or did something cause them to flee in terror? The challenge for the amateur Marples and Moneybags or Palmers and Poirots is to find the clues that will let them explain what has occurred in the Escape Room Carriage. They have just one hour to do so.



Hastings Diesels operated the 'The Cotswold and Exmoor Explorer' to Minehead via Oxford and Worcester on June. Operating as a six-car formation with power cars Nos. 60119 and 60118, it is seen passing through Doniford Halt on the final leg of the trip, the 4.20pm Minehead to Hastings. RUSSELL AYRE

As these Ticket To Nowhere challenges will take place on days when the railway is not operating, the train, which includes the Escape Carriage, will not leave the station, unlike the WSR's Murder Mystery Trains. The dates of the experiences will be on selected Fridays from the end of July and on some Saturdays in November.

The WSR sees this new venture as a possible morning or afternoon attraction for lovers of murdermystery events, perhaps as a treat for a special occasion, or as a team building exercise for employers. More information about The Ticket To Nowhere and booking details are available at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

IN BRIEF

The Greatest Gathering in line for more national awards

ALSTOM'S record-breaking multiple-award-winning Railway 200 event, The Greatest Gathering, has been nominated for even more national accolades.

Last August's event has been shortlisted for Railway 200 Event of the Year in a one-off category in the National Rail Awards, in which Alstom's communications manager, Kathryn Lancaster, has been nominated for the Outstanding Personal Contribution award.

This year's ceremony will take place on September 17 at JW Marriott Grosvenor House, London.

The Greatest Gathering has also been nominated for Campaign of the Year in the National Transport Awards, along with Best Practice in Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility for running the world's first Pride parade on a train.

The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on October 1 at Park Plaza, Westminster Bridge, London.

Waterman hits the beach for Rheidol model display

MUSIC mogul Pete Waterman has taken his record-breaking 7ft Making Tracks Watford Junction model railway back to Aberystwyth, on the Vale of Rheidol Railway – but with a decided seaside twist.

It has been given a beach facelift, featuring miniature deckchairs, beach brollies, sandcastles and seagulls. Visitors can also take part in a coastal treasure hunt as they explore the layout, which will be on display until August 9.

New road signs for NRM visitors are approved

TEMPORARY banners and flags to show visitors the way to the National Railway Museum have been approved by City of York Council.

The 36 signs were agreed after the local authority heard that online maps had not caught up with changes to access roads leading to the venue.

Work on the museum's new Central Hall has seen the roads changed and the main entrance in Leeman Road temporarily closed, as reported.

London charity model show

THE South Croydon Charity Model Show will be held in St Paul's United Reformed Church, Croham Park Avenue, CR2 7HF, on Saturday, September 12, from 10am to 4pm.

There will be 20 layouts, plus club stands, trade support and second-hand stalls.

Admission is £6 for adults, £3 for children aged 5 to 16, free for under-5s and £15 for families of four.

North Dorset becomes the latest heritage line approved for services

By Robin Jones

PASSENER trains are to return to Shillingstone station after more than 60 years as the North Dorset Railway has received the necessary permissions from the Office of Rail and Road to allow it to run passenger trains.

After losing its freight and goods services on April 5, 1965, as part of the rundown on the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway system, Shillingstone was closed on March 7, 1966, as a result of the Beeching Axe.

Track-lifting at the station was carried out between March and May that year, and the signalbox and platform shelters were demolished. The last train through the station was hauled by a small diesel shunter.

Fast-forward to the modern day, and a new track extension was completed by revivalists last year, running northwards from the station. The NDR is hoping to be granted planning permission to extend southwards, and the ORR permissions cover the entire planned network.

NDR chairman Gavin Collins hailed the granting of the permissions as an important milestone and thanked the dedication of the volunteers who had made it possible. He particularly paid tribute to operations manager Phil Jacques who "led the work to ensure that not only have we received this permission, but also that the embankment, bridge and track are ready for us to run passenger trains on."

The NDR hopes to use its 1950s 12-seater brake van for some inaugural passenger services later this year. However, it will probably be 2027 before regular services will be offered to the public.



An aerial view of the new track leading from Shillingstone station. SDR

The brake van has only recently been extracted from the workshop, where it had been rebuilt from the chassis up, but the roof still has to be finished now it is back on the rails, as there was insufficient headroom to complete this in the workshop. It was hoped that the brake van will be complete by mid to late August, to be followed by four to six weeks of volunteer training in its operation – but this leaves only a small window before Christmas and deteriorating weather to get some rides in, the brake van being unheated.

It will be hauled by the NDR's Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0DM D1186 of 1959 *Ashdown* in a reversal of the demolition train in 1967.

Ashdown was supplied new to the Manchester Ship Canal Railway,

where it was No. D1. It was bought by the NDR from a subsequent heritage sector owner and since it arrived in working order at Shillingstone in September 2020, it has been regularly used for moving rolling stock. As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 340, late last year, *Ashdown* was the first locomotive to cross Lamb House Bridge since 1966 during the ballasting of the revived line's extension.

It is also hoped that NDR's recently-acquired Wickham railbus (see News, page 42) will become available later next year or in early 2028 for use as a carriage, which will greatly increase seating capacity, and be heated too, extending the running season. While visitors will be charged for rides, the station will remain free to visit.



Shillingstone station on July 9. NDR



The 1950 brake van being used for the inaugural passenger services, pictured on June 20. NDR

Loaded tests for ex-Barry locomotive

GWR 2-6-2T No. 4150, which, as reported last issue, has become the 154th and latest former Barry scrapyards to return to steam, has been undergoing loaded test runs at its Severn Valley home.

The large prairie ran for the first time in 61 years June 16 and has been undergoing the test runs by hauling the line's Gresley teak set.

On July 2 and 3, No. 4150 covered the full line from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster Town twice.

Minor braking issues were discovered due to a blocked flexible hose. These faults have been rectified, and further testing was scheduled to commence during the week beginning July 20.

No. 4150, which emerged from Swindon Works in June 1947 and was last shedded at Severn Tunnel Junction in 1962, was expected to enter service during September 17-20, when the railway holds its steam autumn gala.



No. 4150 makes a storming departure from Highley getting to grips with the 1-in-100 gradients away from the station on July 7. JOHN TITLOW

Bid to save the 'world's fastest' station

By Robin Jones

A BID to save the last remaining part of the nearest station to where A3 Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* and A4 No. 4468 *Mallard* set world speed records was underway as this issue closed for press.

A crowdfunding page to save the 1,081sq ft single-storey stone ticket office at Little Bytham station on Stoke Bank, on the East Coast Main Line between Grantham and Peterborough, was launched in a race against time to buy the building, to be auctioned online on July 28 by BTG Eddisons Property Auctions on behalf of Network Rail, with a guide price of £100,000 to £115,000.

The station opened on October 2, 1853, and closed on June 15, 1959.

When *Mallard* set the 126mph world steam speed record on July 3, 1938, coal smashed the station windows as a test train thundered past at more than 200 miles per minute.

It is also the last remaining station building on the old LNER Stoke Bank 'racing stretch', where the Intercity 125 and Intercity 225 later set speed records for diesel and electric traction. In subsequent decades the platform was cut back, so now the ticket office stands about 30ft from the southbound running line. The building, to be sold on a freehold basis, comes with about a fifth of an acre of land.

A statement from the auctioneer said: "This historic and well-located property may be suitable for a number of alternative uses, subject to any necessary consents."



The front of the Little Bytham station ticket office.
BTG EDDISONS

Community bid

A small team of enthusiasts set up the online page to raise sufficient funds to buy the ticket office at www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/lbtop and launched a Facebook page titled Save Little Bytham – World's Fastest Railway Station! Donations were to be refunded if the purchase proved unsuccessful.

The team's plan is to incorporate a Community Interest Company which would purchase the building if the bid proved successful, with the aim of permanently safeguarding what they regard as a site of significant historic importance from potentially being lost to private commercial redevelopment.

The site and building will be 'asset locked' into this proposed Community Interest Company to allow preservation and community activities to follow.

The long-term objective of the team is to restore the building to serve as a dedicated community heritage hub, with a core focus on preserving railway history through the creation, display, and operation of detailed model railways and related displays celebrating the achievements of pioneering engineers who made the British railway network the envy of the world. It would provide an educational

resource, foster community cohesion, and celebrate Little Bytham's historic links to the railways of the UK and the globe, the team said.

While the ticket office has stood empty for many years, in 2010 it was the subject of a scheme by a local enthusiast who took out a 10-year lease on a peppercorn rent with the aim of converting it into a museum, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 142. He wanted it to be both a memorial to the steam exploits on Stoke Bank and also a local community facility, filled with artefacts from everyday life from Victorian to mid-20th century times. However, his scheme did not come to fruition.

A spokesman for the campaign said that the building has the potential to become "a home for community events, model railway exhibitions, expert lectures and more – all in the building which No. 4468 *Mallard* passed on its way to steam speed record glory!"

Also running through Little Bytham was the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway between Saxby and Bourne. The village was also served by the Edenham Light Railway, or Lord Willoughby's Private Railway, as it was otherwise known. This private railway linked Little Bytham with Edenham from 1857 to 1884.

Bath Railway Society marks 70 years

THE Bath Railway Society will celebrate its 70th anniversary when its latest programme of meetings starts on September 3 at the Museum of Bath at Work.

Its origins came when 12 men attended an informal meeting at the Midland Hotel to discuss the formation of a railway society following several outings to Swindon Works.

Railway author OS Nock became the first president and held the position until he died in 1994. He was followed by railway artist and conservationist David Shepherd, founder of the East Somerset Railway, who died in 2017. Pete Waterman OBE DL became the third president in 2018.

Early members included Harold Morris, shedmaster at Bath Green Park and prominent photographers Ivo Peters, Norman Lockett and the Rev Alan Newman.

On September 3, Stephen Gay will present a talk, *Scenic Britain by Train*, and next June, current chairman John Froud will give a presentation titled *70 Years of the Bath Railway Society*.

→ For further information, visit www.bathrailwaysociety.co.uk

Ride on world's first steam passenger train to mark its 201st anniversary!

By Robin Jones

THE replica locomotive and carriage which were the focal point of last year's Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 celebrations will be offering public rides to mark the 201st anniversary of the world's first steam-hauled passenger train in September.

Hopetown Darlington's recently completed heritage line, on which public services were launched on May 26, will see the replica of George Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* hauling the *Experiment* coach. Seats will be offered to the public at just £7.50 each, and each ride comes with a souvenir ticket.

"This is a rare opportunity to experience a recreation of the train that changed the world right here in the birthplace of the modern railway," said a museum statement. "Whether you're a lifelong railway enthusiast or discovering steam for the first time, create unforgettable memories where heritage, engineering and family fun steam ahead together."

Locomotion No. 1's duties will be shared with A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, which is based at owner The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's adjacent Darlington Locomotive Works, which is linked via the new line to the Bishop Auckland branch.

Dates for the trips on the replica train are the weekends of September 5/6 and 19/20, and Saturday, September 26, with *Tornado* taking over on September 27, the anniversary of the official opening of the S&DR. There will be nine return trips between DLW and the 1861 Shed at Whessoe Road, home of the North Eastern Locomotive



All set to thrill the masses again while offering more public rides is the replica of *Locomotion No. 1*, seen here outside the 1861 Shed. A1SLT

Preservation Group, on each day that the replica train or *Tornado* runs, the first at 10.30am and the last at 3pm. Before then, trips on the line will, as reported, feature Barclay Coronation 0-4-0ST No. 2134 *W.T.T.*, which was one of five locomotives that worked for British Gypsum at sites along the Settle to Carlisle line, and LSWR passenger carriage No. 2134, on loan from the Bluebell Railway, on the August 29-31 bank holiday weekend.

The trips are also being staged as part of the award-winning Hopetown Darlington's second birthday celebrations.

To book tickets, visit www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk/whats-on/Steam-Train-Rides or call in at the welcome desk in the goods shed.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 338, the replica 1825 train ran passenger services on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway last autumn.

Stanier mogul reunited with BR numberplate

SEVERN Valley Railway-based LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 is to be reunited with its BR era smokebox numberplate after 60 years.

Owner the Stanier Mogul Fund made the winning bid in a GW Railwayana Auction sale on July 18 for the number 42968. The bid was £950, plus a buyer's premium of 18%.

The plate will be reunited with the locomotive in the near future, although there is no plan for it to be fitted as it does not match the original LMS livery and No. 13268 the locomotive currently carries

The top realisation in the auction was £20,500 (plus the buyer's premium) for nameplate *Gannet* from Gresley A4 Pacific No. 60032. See Geoff Courtney's railwayana column in next month's issue for full details of this auction.

Chinnor books a Saint

THE Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway has booked new-build GWR Saint 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* as the first guest locomotive for its steam gala on October 30 to November 1, appearing thanks to the Great Western Society and Didcot Railway Centre.

Currently on loan to the Bluebell Railway, the Saint will join USATC 2-8-0 No. 6046, currently on long-term loan to the railway, and resident Sentinel 0-4-0VBGT No. 7109 *Joyce*, the latter giving brake van rides around Princes Risborough station.

New home sought for Taff Vale bridge

AMGUEDDFA Cymru (Museum Wales) is offering a former Taff Vale Railway footbridge free to a new home as it thins out its collection currently kept at its facility at Nantgarw, near Cardiff.

The steel lattice structure, believed to date from the early 20th century, once crossed a road adjacent to Aberdare North signalbox on the TVR until it was dismantled by the local authority when a road construction project was rendered the structure redundant and donated to the museum in 1975.

The footbridge was then displayed at former Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum in Cardiff Bay until its closure in 1998. When the structure was dismantled there, it was carefully unbolted, so it is believed that no components were cut during this process.

It has since been stored outdoors at the National Collections centre, near to the Welsh capital, in its dismantled state, meaning that the wooden stair treads and deck need replacing due to rot.

Although it has been offered to other UK museums via the Museums Association website, the listing resulted in no expressions of interest. Neither did offers to Welsh standard gauge heritage railways, and so it is now being drawn to the attention of the wider UK heritage railway movement in the hope of successfully rehoming it, before the museum



The Taff Vale Railway footbridge in store at Nantgarw. Amgueddfa Cymru is seeking expressions of interest to find it a new home. AMGUEDDFA CYMRU

explores other means of disposal. While it is being made available for free, any organisation that successfully takes on the bridge will be responsible for the costs involved in removing it from Nantgarw and transportation to its new home.

Any organisation that wishes to express an interest and view the bridge must let Amgueddfa Cymru know by September 30. If there are multiple interested parties, then potential recipients will be asked to submit short statements of no more than one page of A4 setting out their aspirations for display or use of the asset to assist the museum in making any rehoming decision.

Expressions of interest should be emailed to haadmin@museumwales.ac.uk




LONDON TRANSPORT MUSEUM
COVENT GARDEN | KIDS GO FREE

MAYOR OF LONDON

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

ltmuseum.co.uk
Registered charity number 1123122



DIDCOT RAILWAY CENTRE

**11TH - 13TH
SEPTEMBER**

**AUTUMN
STEAM GALA**

**AUTUMN STEAM GALA
AT DIDCOT RAILWAY CENTRE**
**A Celebration of Steam – with special
guest “The Coffeepot”**

See home fleet locomotives alongside a very special visitor – **“The Coffeepot”**, courtesy of **The Flour Mill Works**. Steam-hauled trains, shunting displays and up-close encounters all day, plus the historic engine shed, signal box and museum to explore.

**Don’t miss “The Coffeepot” in steam
at Didcot Railway Centre.**

Full details and tickets online.

DIDCOTRAILWAYCENTRE.ORG.UK



Steam, swing and wartime spirit return to Severn Valley

Words and pictures by
John Titlow

IN the midst of a recurring heatwave, the Severn Valley Railway held its renowned Step Back into the 1940s weekends on June 27/28 and July 4/5.

One of the most popular summer events on the railway, passenger numbers exceeded 4000.

All motive power came from the home fleet, with GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall*, LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268, GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714 and BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069. With the lineside tinder dry and the fire risk at red, instructions were given to footplate crews to take it easy.

On the diesel front, visiting Class 35 Hymek D7018 hauled the first Saturday train from Kidderminster at 8.35am, followed by the 1.30pm departure from the same station that same day, while the rest were steam-hauled. Steam was the biggest draw by far because these trains were much more crowded than the diesel-hauled ones.

All stations entered into the spirit with concerts and displays. Kidderminster Town had the most interesting examples, with recreations of a 1940s kitchen and living room.

On both Saturday evenings, Kidderminster Town also resounded to the sounds of the ever-popular Big Band Shows, providing a

memorable finale to each day's activities.

Platform 2 was used for arrivals and departures, services leaving the station, and passed on the double-track section alongside the carriage shed.

Also on display at Kidderminster was LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47383, which was again given a change of identity by Tom Clarke and friends to No. 7611, having been exported to France by the British Expeditionary Force in 1940.

Roughly half of the passengers entered into the spirit by dressing up, too. Military uniforms were the biggest choice, although they must have been hot. Fabrics then would have been cotton or wool.

Dave Brattan, chairman of the 1940s volunteer-run committee, said it worked "tirelessly to plan, organise and execute another highly successful event. We would like to thank all the volunteers and staff who helped."

"The committee is committed to putting on another outstanding event next year, with a number of changes. Planning has already begun with some big new displays and attractions expected," he added.

The railway has thanked everyone who attended the event, together with the organisers, volunteers, exhibitors and entertainers whose enthusiasm and hard work helped make this year's Step Back into the 1940s another memorable occasion.



Above:
Protecting
Kidderminster
Town station.

Right: Guarding
Highley station.

Below: Fashion
from the 1940s to
the fore at Arley
station.



Above: A Ford model A
leaves Bridgnorth station
on July 4.

Left: A policeman gives the
all-clear as the air raid is over
at Highley station on July 5.

Right: A discussion takes
place after the air raid on
Kidderminster Town station.



A 1940s living room on display at Kidderminster Town station.



The 1940s kitchen recreated at Kidderminster Town.



GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* sits at the head of its train as LMS 2-6-0 No. 13268 drifts in Bridgnorth on July 4.



Above: LMS 0-6-0T No. 47383 at Kidderminster station, taking on the identity of No. 7611, one of the 'Jinties' that went to France during the Second World War.

Right: It was holidays at home in the 1940s. Passing an unexploded bomb and people camping alongside the line, GWR pannier No. 7714 departs Bewdley.



German troops walk out from wartime weekend

By Owen Hayward

IT may be one of Shropshire's and Worcestershire's biggest events of the year, but the Severn Valley Railway's 1940s weekend saw some of its reenactors walk out following a disagreement over those wearing German military uniforms.

"We received several complaints from members of the public who were upset to see re-enactors portraying German military personnel with insignia mixing with the crowds during the first weekend of the 1940s events," SVR CEO Gus Dunster said. "We explored options that would have allowed the scheduled re-enactments to continue while limiting the presence of German military portrayals to specific re-enactment locations and performances. Unfortunately,

we were unable to reach a workable agreement."

The news of the walkout broke on July 2, when event planners shared a statement online saying: "The Severn Valley Railway Society Limited has requested this week that all promenading re-enactors attend this year's event only in Home Front, British, or Allied portrayals. This is to help avoid causing potential offence to visitors."

It attracted a mixed response, with some claiming the decision was "wise and long-needed," adding that "Nazi uniforms and insignia has no place in this country." Others argued that "if we are going to tell the story of the war, then we need to tell the whole story – not just the nice bits."

One attendee to the first weekend said online that anyone who met the German re-enactors present "would

have found them to be most honest, sympathetic and empathetic. There was no malice or offence to be taken from them, only education. Now we're being made to tell only one side of the story."

The event's planners emphasised that they were abiding by rules imposed upon them, saying: "The team remains committed to working collaboratively to ensure the Second World War is presented in a sensitive, inclusive and historically accurate manner, providing context, understanding and educational value for current and future generations."

However, Gus stressed that despite the way in which the story had been reported elsewhere, there had not been an outright ban on these re-enactors from attending the event, adding: "We asked that they confine themselves to the

designated re-enactment areas, rather than mingling with the public. However, we were unable to secure this commitment and the German military re-enactors decided to withdraw entirely from the event. This was not the decision of the Severn Valley Railway.

"We recognise that the events of the Second World War, the Holocaust, and associated symbolism remain deeply sensitive subjects for many people. Our priority is to ensure that the SVR remains a welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable place for all visitors."

He added that he hoped discussions would continue to take place and reach a favourable outcome for future events.

➔ **What are your thoughts? Write in to robin.jones@kelsey.co.uk and share your opinions.**

New Quainton Road engineering project aims to make heritage self-supporting

By Robin Jones

A GROUNDBREAKING scheme to use locomotive restoration to train the young engineers of tomorrow has been launched by the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre – and it is appealing for public support.

Two years ago, the centre at Quainton Road embarked on a process to rebuild its engineering team and services and combine them with its small hire fleet on the basis that revenue earned from loaning locomotives to other venues will fund further engineering.

Revival Project organiser Stephen Green said: "The strategy was simple – engines went into the workshop, came out fixed and then went into the hire fleet to earn the money to pay for engineering. This simple wheel was the basis of the project. It was controversial because decisions were taken on a commercial basis with no sentimental attachments.

"If you spend £200,000 on an engine and it just sits in the shed, where does the next £200,000 come from for the next project? So, you can see how controversial it can be.

"The customer base at Quainton Road is 90% families with children; therefore, as long as you have an engine pulling carriages and can offer a ride, does it really matter which engine it is?

"Engineering in its many forms is one of the largest employment sectors in Buckinghamshire.



Above: Metropolitan Railway E class 0-4-4T No. 1, in the platform at Quainton Road on April 12, is the subject of the first crowdfunding appeal launched by the new Revival Project to return it to steam. BRC

Right: The Revival Project mission poster made with AI assistance. BRC



New Government statistics show one million young people not in employment, education or training. What young people consistently lack is meaningful, hands-on experience that bridges the gap between education and employment."

The project is currently working with Henley College supporting its engineering courses, by integrating real world engineering with its syllabus-based course projects. The current syllabus is batch production, and the college students making boiler stays for WR 4-6-0 No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall*, which in the future they can assist in the fitting of them.

Wightwick Hall will play the role of the iconic Hogwarts Express in the highly-anticipated new Harry Potter television series. The Hall,

which in January 1978 became the 88th locomotive to be rescued from Barry scrapyard, then underwent a meticulous restoration process, spanning more than 40 years. "Having once been bound for scrap metal, this beautiful loco will now have the privilege of stepping up to play one of the most well-known steam locomotives in the world, and this collaboration will ensure its future for many years to come," said a BRC statement.

The Revival Project has appealed for corporate sponsors to back its aims – and as this issue closed for press, a completed woodworking shop has been donated to it.

It will also aim to raise financial backing through crowdfunding appeals, the first of which will be to restore the centre's flagship locomotive, unique survivor Metropolitan Railway E class 0-4-4T No. 1, to running order.

It has just had a cosmetic overhaul after being dismantled to appraise the boiler condition. When it is back in steam, it can enter the hire fleet and earn its living on the gala circuit.

Next in line will be privately owned WR 4-6-0 No. 6984 *Owsden Hall*, which in October 1986 became the 178th locomotive to be saved from Barry scrapyard and is currently under restoration at Quainton Road, now having reached the rolling

chassis stage. The boiler has been examined and a quotation for it to be overhauled is awaited, and when No. 6984 is completed, it will become the reserve engine for the Warner Brother Harry Potter filming, enabling its sister, *Wightwick Hall*, to be taken out of service for maintenance.

"The restoration of well-loved locomotives for use as *Hogwarts Express* and *Thomas and Friends* brings heritage to a whole new generation. While heritage purists may prefer traditional green liveries, our position is simple – better red than in the shed," added Stephen.

"When these locomotives were static, they generated little interest or income. Today, they are commercially viable assets funding education, skills and opportunity. By working alongside Mattel and Warner Bros and the film industry, we are not only bringing heritage to a new audience we are ensuring the survival of our heritage organisations.

In the workshops at Quainton Road, the cab for the new-build Gresley B17 4-6-0 *The Spirit of Sandringham* is taking place under contract, again highlighting how engineering skills are helping to fund the venue.

➔ To sponsor the Revival Project or contribute to one of its crowdfunding schemes, contact Stephen Green on 01296 655720 or email Stephen@bucksrailcentre.org



WR 4-6-0 No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall* being taken to the Mid-Hants Railway, where 120 small boiler tubes will be replaced. BRC

IoW Ivatt 2MT set for West Country comeback in the autumn

ISLE of Wight Steam Railway-based Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313 is to appear in the West Somerset Railway's September 25-27 Autumn Steam Festival.

Built at Crewe in 1952, it was initially based at Brighton, then subsequently transferred to Barnstaple and Exmouth Junction and ran at Torrington, Bideford,

and the lines radiating from Halwill Junction. It may have worked over the Barnstaple to Taunton line, which closed in October 1966.

Withdrawn from Eastleigh in 1965 and sold to Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyard, it was bought by the Ivatt Trust in 1975 and originally taken to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre.

The owning group moved it, together with classmate No. 41298, to the IoWSR in 2006, and it was then overhauled at the East Somerset Railway at Cranmore, where it returned to steam in June 2017.

The festival will see its first appearance on the WSR. Further guest locomotives are being

planned for the event, which will feature as enhanced timetable and demonstration freights, with the museums at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor stations open. Visitors will be welcome at the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group's at Williton depot. Rover tickets can be bought at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk or 01643 704996.

Prairie's Dartmouth debut nearly seven years after purchase

By Robin Jones

THE Dartmouth Steam Railway has just taken delivery of the latest addition to its operational fleet in the form of GWR large prairie No. 4110 – the last locomotive to leave Barry scrapyard.

On June 30, No. 4110 was delivered to Churston station from the East Somerset Railway, where it has been on loan following the completion of its restoration to running order there.

Built at Swindon in 1936 and first shedded at Severn Tunnel Junction, after two months it was switched to the GWR Wolverhampton Division, where it spent 26 years on local passenger services from Birmingham Snow Hill and Moor Street to Leamington and Stratford-upon-Avon and those to Stourbridge, Kidderminster, Dudley, Wolverhampton Low Level, Wellington and Worcester, with a brief spell at Birkenhead during the Second World War.

It moved to Taunton in 1962, from where it worked on the Minehead branch before being transferred to Neath the following year. In April 1965, it was moved back to Severn Tunnel Junction, where it began its career and from where it was withdrawn two months later during the Western Region transition into the diesel era. It arrived at Dai



No. 4110 climbs past the beach huts lining the seafront at Goodrington Sands with an afternoon service from Paignton to Kingswear on July 11. CALLUM WILLCOX

Woodham's scrapyard that August, having run more than 730,000 miles in main line service.

In May 1979, the Southall Railway Centre-based Great Western Preservation Group bought and moved it to the Birmingham Railway Museum at Tyseley for contract restoration. However, only a limited amount of work was completed before the owner offered it for sale to raise funds for the completion of work on WR 0-6-0PT No. 9682.

The West Somerset Railway bought No. 4110 in 2015 and moved it to

Minehead in June 2015. With no work carried on the locomotive by May 2018, consideration was being given by the West Somerset Railway to reselling it. It was subsequently sold to the DSR.

In September 2019, the ESR announced a deal with the DSR to restore No. 4110, with the locomotive operating at Cranmore for three years following its return to steam. It arrived on the ESR in January 2020, and the boiler was lifted off the frames the following month. In August 2022, a fire was lit

in the boiler for the first time since June 1965.

In September 2022, the boiler was lifted back onto the frames. The following February, it became the next Barry scrapyard survivor to move under its own steam, doing so for the first time in 58 years. Following testing and running trials, No. 4110 made its heritage era service at the ESR's March 18/19 steam gala.

Unlike other members of the steam fleet, there are currently no plans to give No. 4110 a fictitious name.

Match-funding pledge offers vital boost for Mid-Suffolk carriage shed project appeal

A GENEROUS Mid-Suffolk Light Railway supporter has offered to match-fund donations up to £25,000 towards the cost of building a second carriage shed at Dovebrook.

The total anticipated cost of the project is £100,000, with £50,000 for the first stage, installing a second siding including carrying out major earthworks, followed by £50,000 for building the shed.

The railway plans to start work on the second siding in January,

but needs to ensure that funds are in place so that tracklaying contractor TES2000 can be booked in time.

MSLR marketing manager John Reeve said: "With this match-funding offer making every pound worth two, and even more with Gift Aid, we have every chance of making this target date.

"We now have four Victorian coaches, one of which, No. 14, is believed to be the only existing

vehicle to have run on the MSLR. All four are of mainly wooden construction and suffer constant damage from outdoor storage.

"This is our most important infrastructure project since the extension of the railway last year. Match-funding your donation will speed the project to protect our unique coaching stock."

To donate to the Dovebrook Carriage Shed Appeal, visit www.MSLR.org.uk

During June, the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway welcomed Waggon & Maschinenbau railbus No. 79963, from the East Anglian Railway Museum, at Chappel & Wakes Colne station for a month of running days, utilising the most modern traction to have ever worked passenger services over the route. Closed in 1952, the line saw only steam traction operate across it, even under its short stint owned by BR. This type of railbus design was trialled on many branches in East Anglia, and so its visit was a chance to see what might have been had the rural route survived beyond its 48 years. On June 6, No. 79963 is seen approaching Brockford station passing the locomotive and workshop shed.

JAMES KINDRED



'Coffee Pot' for Didcot gala

GER 0-4-0ST 'Coffee Pot' No. 229 will visit Didcot Railway Centre for its September 11-13 Autumn Steam Gala.

Built by Neilsons in Glasgow in 1876, it was sold by the GER for use in the National Shipyard in Chepstow during the First World War, where it remained until sold by Fairfield Mabe in 1982. After cosmetic restoration, it was displayed at the now closed North Woolwich Old Station Museum.

Owner Bill Parker began its return to working order in 2013 at the Flour Mill workshops at Bream in the Forest of Dean. It has since ran at several venues, including the Cotswold Festival of Steam on May 23-25, as featured in *Heritage Railway* issue 346.



Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway



Follow us @HeritageRailMag

After Railway 200, time to get set for *Rocket: All Aboard!*

By Robin Jones

THE phenomenally successful Railway 200 programme, which celebrated the bicentenary of the world's first steam-hauled passenger train, has handed its baton to the next big UK rail festival with similar global relevance and appeal.

The legacy of Railway 200 was officially passed to *Rocket: All Aboard* at a Liverpool City Region, Downtown in Business parliamentary reception held at the House of Commons on July 9, signalling the start of the journey towards the bicentenary celebrations of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.

The symbolic handover took place before parliamentarians, civic leaders, railway representatives, business leaders and cultural partners, recognising the success of Railway 200 and the opportunity to build on its achievements through this next major cultural, heritage and community programme connecting people and places across the Liverpool-Manchester corridor,



Left: Railway 200 passes its legacy forward to *Rocket: All Aboard* at the Houses of Parliament. From left are Rob Lowe, Elena Metcalf, Emma Roberts, Laura Pye and Karen Shannon. DOWNTOWN IN BUSINESS

drawing on the bicentenary of the Rainhill Trials in 2029 and the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway in 2030.

Representing Railway 200 at the handover were programme manager Emma Roberts and project manager Elena Metcalf, with Rob

Lowe representing the Network Rail chair's office. Receiving the official legacy ticket on behalf of *Rocket: All Aboard* were Karen Shannon, CEO of Manchester Histories and development and delivery partner, and Laura Pye, director of National Museums Liverpool.

Passing on a legacy

Emma said: "Railway 200 demonstrated the power of partnership, heritage and community engagement to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds. Thousands of events and activities celebrated the remarkable story of the railway and its continuing impact on our lives. We are delighted to pass this legacy forward to *Rocket: All Aboard*, a programme that will build on that success and shine a spotlight on the railway that changed the world."

Karen said: "We are honoured to receive this symbolic handover from Railway 200. Over the past few years, the Railway 200 team has been incredibly supportive, generously sharing their experience as we have developed *Rocket: All Aboard*.

"Their work has inspired communities around the country to discover and celebrate the extraordinary impact of the railway."

Laura added: "This isn't simply a story about railways – it's about a moment that reshaped the world. From powering the Industrial Revolution to transforming global travel, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway changed how we live, work and connect."

In June, Railway 200 published a 44-page commemorative review outlining the initial goals of its bicentenary celebration, its subsequent success, and impact.

In her foreword, Lady Victoria Borwick, chair of VisitEngland Advisory Board, said: "As a national celebration of the 200th anniversary, Railway 200 surpassed all expectations.

"Commemorating rail's rich heritage while galvanising nations and communities to take part in a year-long celebration of its past, present and future is no mean feat.

"The result was an extraordinary outpouring of affection for and pride in the railway, expressed in numerous



Replicas of Stephenson's *Rocket* and a Liverpool & Manchester Railway coach in the National Railway Museum at York. ROBIN JONES

Will Stockton become Britain's first Town of Culture?

THE legacy of the Stockton & Darlington Railway has helped Stockton be shortlisted for the competition to become the UK's first Town of Culture.

Stockton is one of only 15 towns to make it onto the shortlist, unveiled on July 9, from nearly 400 applications for the inaugural contest.

The high-profile initiative is part of the Government's Plan for Change, aiming to drive local economic growth and opportunity, create a lasting sense of pride in towns, and open doors to the arts for everyone.

Stockton's bid was compiled by a collective of cultural partners from a host of town centre venues and organisations, alongside colleagues

from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

Among the bid highlights was Stockton's significant historical global influence in the wake of the first passenger train arriving in the town in 1825 and transformed forever how the world traded, travelled and communicated. Also featured was the town's connecting

communities and promoting enjoyment with iconic festivals and cultural town centre venues like the Globe, Arc, The Georgian Theatre and Ku, and collaborating closely with venue operators and cultural representatives from the town and far beyond.

Every summer, the world-renowned Stockton International

creative and collaborative ways. The scale and variety of involvement was awe-inspiring."

It was reported that 1.4 million people visited and engaged with Railway 200 and partner events and activities, while 100,000 young people engaged with careers and STEM-based events and activities. A total of 89% of events were aimed at a non-rail audience, reaching communities and young people

A total of £1m was awarded in National Lottery Heritage Fund grants to Railway 200-related projects, and it forecasted that £200,000 would be raised for rail-related charities by the end of 2026.

Once-in-a-generation

While Railway 200 focused on the national celebrations, S&DR200 concentrated on the regional ones.

In the anniversary week, all eyes turned to the region as the replica of Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* recreated the 26-mile journey made 200 years before.

More than 100,000 people, including Prince Edward, the Duke of Edinburgh, watched.

The review concluded: "Railway 200 was a once-in-a-generation opportunity to celebrate a transformative British invention... but what will its legacy be?"

"For many, it will be renewed feelings of pride in rail and a deep appreciation for how this British technology transformed the world. For others, it will be Railway 200's role in uniting the industry around a shared celebration, helping to bring partners together ahead of Great British Railways.

"In years to come, we will see the effects of bringing the railway to more than 100,000 young people – sparking enthusiasm for rail travel and inspiring the next generation to pursue careers on the network.

"We will also see other countries celebrate their own rail milestones, using the Railway 200 model to tell the rail story to millions more people.

"Closer to home, in 2030, *Rocket: All Aboard* will mark the opening of the world's first inter-city railway, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway."

Inspiration tour comes to an end – with two new permanent homes for carriages

By Robin Jones

UNIQUE Railway 200 touring exhibition train *Inspiration* has completed its ground-breaking mission – and has itself now entered preservation.

Over the past year, *Inspiration* has been visited 104,000 times as it travelled 12,000 miles, making 65 stops, ranging from the Scottish Highlands to the Cornish coast.

Many of the locations on its tour did not have easy access to the UK's national museums, so *Inspiration* brought a fun, fascinating and free exhibition to people's local stations. As reported, it told the story of rail through interactive exhibits, historic artefacts and amazing stories while aiming to spark appreciation for rail and inspire people to choose a career in the rail industry.

Inspiration's final day on tour was on June 22 in Scarborough, where it welcomed its 104,000th visitor after spending almost 250 event days at main line stations, heritage railways, museums and a freight depot, during which it received a succession of rave reviews, recording an 86% public satisfaction score.

There was a carnival atmosphere at the TransPennine Express station as those involved in designing, creating and touring the train gathered to say goodbye.

Secure future

Artwork by Glynis Dray, who has painted *Inspiration* in watercolours at 50 of its destinations, were on display, and locals were given cab tours by GB RailFreight, locomotives from which have hauled it.

Railway 200 programme manager Emma Roberts announced that the Wonderlab on Wheels carriage is heading to the Locomotion museum in Shildon.

Its interactive engineering challenges, designed by the NRM, will become a popular destination for the thousands of weekly visitors to the free museum located in the world's first railway town, and which is also home to the biggest undercover

Scarborough was the last stop for Railway 200's popular *Inspiration* touring exhibition train. NR



collection of historic rail vehicles in Europe.

The Your Railway Future carriage is being retained by Network Rail, to be housed at its Test Track facility in Melton, which is part of the Rail Innovation and Development Centre.

Positioned within this working innovation hub, the carriage will help visitors connect what they see on the railway today with the opportunities and careers that will shape its future.

Emma said: "Turning a train into a multimedia exhibition and touring it across one of the world's busiest rail networks was hugely ambitious – and there were many people who said it could not be done.

"This unique project stands as testament to the skill, creativity and sheer determination of hundreds of rail industry colleagues. To everyone who played their part, thank you. You have achieved something truly extraordinary – something that will shape the future of our railway."

George Thomas, strategic development and stakeholder director for TransPennine Express, said: "Scarborough was a fitting

place to bring the journey to a close, reflecting the town's proud railway heritage and our own Railway 200 celebrations at TPE. It was fantastic to see so many people come aboard the exhibition and celebrate this important anniversary with us. As we reflect on the railway's remarkable past, we also hope the event has inspired visitors to look ahead with excitement to a more joined-up, reliable and customer-focused railway for the future."

Fitting new home

Locomotion head Sarah Price said: "We are so excited to bring Wonderlab on Wheels back to Locomotion. It was incredibly popular when it visited last year, bringing engineering to life for visitors of all ages. We are also hoping to incorporate it into our school programme too, helping address the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) gap and engaging children with experimentation and problem-solving in a fun and creative way."

More than 100,000 young people engaged with careers and STEM-based activities.

Inspiration's tour was supported by a £250,000 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, while Porterbrook funded its eye-catching livery. The project also included 273 bespoke tours for 6000 students from 188 schools, including 35 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) schools.



The *Inspiration* exhibition train banner. NR

Riverside Festival takes place. For the past four decades, it has transformed the town centre landscape with a blaze of colour and sound, uniting local and international artists alongside a joyful community carnival.

Lisa Nandy, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "What our industrial towns make and build forges the heart of their culture and identity. Stockton

Town Centre Ward's cultural scene has so much to shout about, from a riverside festival to having the widest high street in the country. I can't wait to see the final bid."

Borough council leader Coun Lisa Evans said: "To be shortlisted for this prestigious accolade from such a high number of entries is wonderful news for Stockton town."

Each shortlisted town will receive a £60,000 development grant from

the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and be invited to submit a full application.

The winning town will be awarded a £3 million prize to help deliver a major cultural programme in 2028. Two runners-up will each receive £250,000 to deliver some of the key elements highlighted in their bids.

Meanwhile, Stockton's Preston Park Museum has laid on a vibrant programme of family-friendly

events throughout the school holidays, including an interactive railway themed exhibition specially created for children.

Little designers, engineers and drivers can get hands-on with wheels to turn, coal to shovel and pistons to pump in the giant replica train and themed play zones. Families can take part in a journey of discovery through play to understand the story of the S&DR.

Euro-steam: Nene Valley set to welcome second Danish tank

By Owen Hayward

WITH European steam traction being its unique selling point and its ability to run continental loading gauge stock, the Nene Valley Railway looks set to welcome a classmate for one of its popular tank engines following its current owners' offer to sell it to the line.

The Danske Statsbaner (Danish State Railways) class F 0-6-0T locomotives were introduced in 1898, with examples built until 1949. In total, 120 were outshopped, their construction split between eight different works, with 10 of those surviving into preservation.

Six are in Denmark, while one, No. 656, was brought to the Nene Valley Railway in 1975. There, it was unofficially referred to as Tinkerbell, but has more recently been given the official name of *Doc*.

Continental classmate

Classmate No. 654 is one of those preserved on the continent; currently based at the Kulturlokschuppen museum, in Neumünster, Germany, it was previously owned by the Angeln Steam Railway and pulled trains until 2017, when it was withdrawn in need of boiler repairs. With the Kulturlokschuppen museum due to receive a new locomotive in 2027, and limited space available to accommodate it, its owners were tasked with finding No. 654 a new home. Aware of the recently completed overhaul of a fellow member of the design in the UK, they reached out to the NVR to see if there was any interest in the railway taking on No. 654, resulting in the establishment of the European Steam Preservation Society, which will be

responsible for raising funds for and overhauling the locomotive.

"The NVR was approached by the current owner, Dr Thomas Kittel, of the Kittel Foundation, as they were looking to sell No. 654," said ESPS chairman Nathan Wilson. "They did initially speak to a railway in Denmark that had two, but it wasn't interested. It did, however, point them in our direction due to us having No. 656 and that I've been in contact with it previously. Dr Kittel contacted the NVR, and after I got information and details, it was clear we were all really interested."

"However, it was at about this time that the NVR was about to go live with its resilience fund, and as much as the railway wanted the locomotive, it just wasn't plausible at that time."

"A group of volunteers then discussed it and approached the railway, asking that if a separate society was formed to purchase and restore the engine, could we look at bringing it to NVR? This was agreed by the board, so fellow volunteer Lewis and I went over to Neumünster to inspect No. 656."

"We'd already got the last few reports and all sounded good, and on further inspection, the locomotive appears to be in mechanically good order. It does require similar boiler work to that recently carried out on No. 656 – namely, a new boiler and crown stays, tubes and rivet replacement – but hopefully, there will be no plate work replacement required."

"We then put a proposal to the NVR, which accepted it, and have since signed a purchase agreement with the current owners. We now aim to raise funds to have the required money to see the locomotive arrive with us in March 2027."



Left: Currently stabled in the roundhouse at Germany's Kulturlokschuppen museum, No. 654 is set to head to the Nene Valley Railway in 2027, when it will join classmate No. 656.

NATHAN WILSON/
ESPS

"We opted to pursue acquiring No. 654 is because it is in good order; our own No. 656 has proven very popular with crews and public alike. It is a powerful and economic locomotive which fits the NVR's USP and came at a very good price to make it feasible. We've also found 656 very light on maintenance work."

Sole focus

Nathan added that at the present time, the ESPS is concentrating solely on the acquisition and restoration of No. 654, with no plan to take on any of the other continental steam locomotives already based at the NVR. However, he acknowledged that there is much interest in these locomotives, with the railway being asked more often by visitors when No. 656 and Polish TKp 0-8-0T No. 5485 are due to run over its British steam fleet.

During June, repairs to No. 656 at Wansford advanced to the point where the locomotive was seen undertaking shakedown test runs within the confines of the yard. In October, a number of leaks were

discovered which necessitated a full boiler retube as advised by an external inspector. Weld repairs to the inner firebox copper tubeplate have also been carried out, and the locomotive was due to re-enter service during the summer months.

Elsewhere, the Middleton Railway has announced that DSB Hs class 0-4-0WT No. 385 will be returned to steam for the first time in nearly 30 years, it having entered the workshops in May for overhaul to commence. It arrived in Leeds in 1972 and operated between 1985 and 1999, when a crack in its well tank resulted in its withdrawal from service.

The decision to overhaul it now is merely coincidental, with MR Trust vice president Ian Smith saying: "We received a legacy from the late Bill Hampton, from the Steam Power Trust, for the overhaul of both No. 385 and NER H class 0-4-0T No. 1310. In light of this, the MRT brought forward the overhaul of No. 385 as this was very much his favourite of the two. It hasn't run for some considerable time, and our engineer believes the boiler hasn't been lifted for 50-plus years."



Left: No. 656 has recently undergone boiler repairs at Wansford and is expected to be back in service this summer. NVR

Right: At the Middleton Railway, DSB Hs 0-4-0WT No. 385 has entered the works for overhaul, which will see it steam for the first time since 1999. MR



Karel bows out as Avon Valley seeks replacement steam

by Owen Hayward

THE Avon Valley Railway has bid farewell to its Polish TKh 0-6-0T, which dropped its fire for the last time on July 12 and joined the queue to await overhaul.

No. 4015 *Karel* was outshopped by Fablok locomotive works in Chrzanów, southern Poland. It was part of a 480-strong class of lightweight locomotives as the T3A 'Ferrum,' adapting an Austrian design of locomotive that dated back to the 1920s. Colloquially, the locomotives were officially referred to in service as TKh, with T designating a freight locomotive, K a tank engine, and h an 0-6-0 wheel arrangement. It is believed that construction of No. 4015 commenced in 1954, but the boiler was built by an external contractor, and the locomotive was not completed until 1957.

It was then sent to Ostrowiec steelworks in the south east of the country, where it saw out its full working career, with just two brief trips to the locomotive works in Olesnica for overhauls. In 1991, it and the rest of the steelworks' locomotive fleet were put up for sale, with No. 4015 being acquired by enthusiast Rob May, who had seen some of the redundant but complete locomotives from a carriage window of a rail tour in 1986. After a few months of



Polish TKh 0-6-0T *Karel* approaches Bitton on its final day of service, carrying a 'Bristolian' headboard. ADAM ASHFORD

negotiations, *Karel* was purchased and brought to the UK, where an overhaul commenced, with most work undertaken at Bill Parker's Flour Mill Workshops at Bream, in the Forest of Dean.

The TKh steamed for the first time on British soil at the Cholsley & Wallingford Railway in 1998, and Rob gave it the name *Karel* by mistake.

The given Christian name of Pope John Paul II, a Pole who had made history in 1978 by becoming the first non-Italian head of the Catholic church in more than 400 years, is correctly spelled Karol. Rob's brother was making the pattern for the nameplates, but was given the wrong spelling, and it was not until the pattern was finished that the mistake was realised.

Bitton bound

Karel arrived at Bitton in 1999, having moved between a handful of other lines after a short stay at the C&WR. Since then, it has established itself as a reliable performer and stalwart of the fleet, operating longer in preservation than it did in Poland.

On the weekend of July 11/12, the locomotive worked four round trips of the AVR, following which it was withdrawn to await overhaul. Limited-edition merchandise was produced for the occasion, and trains

were reportedly well-loaded by well-wishers coming to catch a final trip behind the railway's 'Polish Princess.'

However, the AVR has issued a call to any locomotive owners who may be able to help with supplying a locomotive for a short length of time to cover a shortfall in motive power.

The withdrawal of *Karel* has left the railway with only two operational locomotives – Andrew Barcal 0-4-0DM No. WD824 *Grumpy* and Sentinel 0-4-0VBT No. 7492 – neither of which are suited to working the main passenger service loads.

Privately owned GWR 5600 class 0-6-2T No. 6695 is currently undergoing firebox repairs, while Class 31 No. 31130 is also undergoing its own scheme of works, although both locomotives are hoped to be back in service later this Summer.

→ Anyone able to assist is advised to contact the railway by calling 01173 320435 or emailing info@avonvalleyrailway.org

On July 12, the TKh's smokebox was chalked up with traditional farewell messages as it approached withdrawal to await overhaul. ADAM ASHFORD



West Somerset chairman places GWR pannier on the market

TWO years after being sold by the Bodmin Railway, a Great Western Railway pannier tank has gone back up for sale, this time on the West Somerset Railway.

Built in 1937 at Swindon Works, 6400 class 0-6-0PT No. 6435 was bought by WSR Association chairman Jonathon Jones-Pratt in 2024 mere weeks after it was listed for sale by its previous home line, as reported in Heritage Railway issue 316. Last operational in 2022, the reason for its sale at the time was cited as being necessary in response to financial pressures following the Covid-19 pandemic. Jonathon's decision to personally purchase it was because he saw it as an "ideal engine" for the WSR once overhauled, and so it joined his GWR collection that also contains Hall class 4-6-0 No. 4936 *Kinlet*

Hall and 9400 class 0-6-0PT No. 9466. Now, he has made the sad decision to part with the auto-fitted locomotive.

"I own a number of heritage assets and, if I'm honest, it's simply grown beyond what one person can realistically manage," he said. "I want to bring the enjoyment back into the hobby rather than constantly feeling like I'm chasing an ever-growing list of projects. Some people maybe can do it, but I am at that point where I want more time with my family."

"The idea of restoring No. 6435 has always been exciting, but the reality is that with current commitments, it is years away from receiving the attention it deserves."

Serious enquiries are invited through the WSR communication channels.



No. 6435 has been offered for sale at the West Somerset Railway, where it is seen at Minehead on May 1, 2026, when it was dressed up as the *Flockton Flyer*, from the 1970s TV series of the same name, with numberplates borrowed from classmate No. 6412. OWEN HAYWARD



Above: The advertisement for the play above the front entrance to Nottingham Playhouse. ROBIN JONES

Right: The EM gauge layout Woodcroft, based on a fictitious GNR single-track station in the Peterborough area, which includes a small brickworks and goods yard, was the only layout to survive the vandal attack. It was used as a prop and focal point in the stage production and has since been presented to Nottingham Playhouse. ROBIN JONES



Five-star triumph over adversity!

By Robin Jones

THE Market Deeping Model Railway Club, the name of a new play by William Ivory inspired by a calamity which befell the organisation of the same name, attracted rave views when it received its world premiere at Nottingham Playhouse in July.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 255, four boys (three aged 15 and one 16) were arrested after breaking into Welland Academy's sports hall in nearby Stamford, where the club was holding its annual model exhibition, going on a wrecking spree on May 18, 2019, deliberately smashing hundreds of hand-crafted models and miniatures, some of which had taken 25 years to build, including one locomotive worth £8500 alone.

It was said that they had drunk alcohol during a pre-GCSE party to celebrate finishing school, entered the sports hall, and began kicking a football around, smashing one of the layouts before attacking everything else in the room, causing an estimated £30,000 damage.

After police were alerted by the school's alarm system, the teenagers were found in the toilets and arrested.

Club chairman Peter Davies, a railway modeller for 60 years, said that grown men were in tears at the scene of "utter devastation."

Rallying support

Just hours after the attack, distraught club members launched a £500 JustGiving appeal in a desperate bid to start repairing damage. However, the aftermath of rampage saw a huge unexpected response, with about £107,000 donated by more than 5500 members of the public around the world, many who were not enthusiasts but simply appalled at the mindless damage to people's treasured possessions. Model railway manufacturers also offered replacement stock, and rock singer Rod Stewart, himself an enthusiast, owning a model of New York's Grand Central station, famously pledged £10,000 just 48 hours after the wrecking spree.

Brought before youth courts, the culprits admitted criminal damage and were handed 12-month referral orders, with their parents ordered to pay £500 in compensation.

About a year after the vandal attack, playwright William and Adam Penford,

artistic director of Nottingham Playhouse, contacted an astonished Peter with the idea of writing a play based on it. They discussed it with a group of club members, and William was convinced about the stage potential, so went away to write it, spending several years doing so while checking the minute details to ensure they were correct.

The club, which was founded in 1976, is now based in premises at Essendine, a stone's throw from Stoke Bank on the East Coast Main Line 'racing stretch,' where several world speed records were set. A videographer filmed the club's models and two layouts which were projected across the stage.

The production, sponsored by LNER, opened on July 6 with an impressive cast including Gavin and Stacey actor Adrian Scarborough, Paul Bradley, who has appeared in *Eastenders*, popular TV entertainer Babatunde Aleshe and theatre, TV and film actress Lucy Briers.

The characters, a group of seven men and one woman, are all fictitious and are gradually introduced in the first half of the play, each explaining their interest in model railways while

not bombarding non-enthusiast audience members with fine details of their hobby.

Perfect casting

The membership may seem like old and middle-aged white men, until young comedian Babatunde Aléshe turns up as university graduate Jordan, the first new member in 11 years, impressing with his subject knowledge and fresh, modern stance – and at several times, he steals the show. Playing the role of chairman Graham's wife Linda is Linda Briers, a devoted club secretary who argues that model rails is just a hobby and he should pay her as much attention.

Geoffrey Beevers, who has appeared in *Doctor Who*, plays George, a normally quietly spoken vicar in his much later years of life whose language at times erupts into the raucous.

James Bradshaw takes the part of Neil, who sees the good in everyone, Matt Bardock, from *Casualty*, plays Chris, and Deka Walmsley, from Shakespeare's *Globe*, is Ken.

William's scriptwriting is exceptional, slowly but surely uncovering the true nature of the people who have come



Above: Geoffrey Beevers, playing George, carefully holds a model train out in front of him. MARC BRENNER

Left: The cast of the play sit and stand around a table in their model railway club, having a pleasant conversation. On the table are various components of a layout, including buildings, trains, tracks and greenery. MARC BRENNER

Right: The whole world cares about us after all! Following the appeal for funds to repair the damage, members stand in their club where full Royal Mail postbags litter the floor, while chaotically holding on to one another with shocked and confused facial expressions... and two lying down.
MARC BRENNER



together to pursue their hobby, with personal loyalties strained at times to near-breaking points and secrets and true emotions exposed; indeed, the play is first and foremost about real people and how they interact with each other and the frailties of human nature.

The first act is the period up until the show in 2019. The club had won awards for the best layout in the show for the previous two years, and had been working on a new layout in hopes of completing a hat-trick of successes.

However, the four vandals began smashing up the layouts as the Sex Pistols' hit *Anarchy in the UK* booms out and deafens all before the curtain falls.

After the interval, it rises again to reveal great scenes of despair and

disarray. The second half of the production deals with the recovery as the donations flooded in, with Rod Stewart rightly hailed at a hero of the hour. However, life will never be perfect, with one character passing away, while other relationships continue to struggle.

Audience hit

Peter, who is now the club's vice chairman and joined the audience in a standing ovation when he attended the opening night, said: "The production was incredibly funny.

"The heightened drama and language belong to the theatre rather than a real model railway club. What the play does capture beautifully is the dedication behind the hobby and the emotional investment people make in it."

Indeed, the show is witty, funny and absorbing through, and is a stand-out testament to the writer, producer and the entire playhouse team who were involved in staging it at a superb modern venue. Several published reviews have given it five-star ratings, and having been thoroughly entertained by the production, I fully concur with them.

Running until July 25, the play is a standout original classic with universal appeal that should now be taken on tour to other theatres throughout the UK and ideally, adapted for television and/or the big screen.

→ The club, which is now a registered charity, now has 77 members, including 19 under the age of 18, which Peter believes may in itself be a record for a club of this type: to join, email secretary@mdmrc.org



Playing university graduate and young model maker Jordan is Babatunde Aléshé, who has appeared on ITV in *I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!*
MARC BRENNER



Paul Bradley in his role as Jerry, holding an open copy of a Peco Setrack N Gauge Planbook, while looking away to the left with a serious expression.
MARC BRENNER

Sir Berkeley model a big hit

AN OO gauge model of Manning Wardle 0-6-OST No. 1210 of 1891 *Sir Berkeley* has been a runaway success for the Vintage Carriages Trust.

Speaking at the Chairman's Day at the VCT Museum in Ingrow on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, Ian Smith, VCT vice chairman and vice president of the Middleton Railway, said that Rapido Trains UK had been keen to make a model of *Sir Berkeley*, and a Class H and came to the Middleton two years ago to take sound recordings for use on the digital versions for the models.

"We steamed *Sir Berkeley* and NER 0-4-OT No. 1310, and they got the

digital sounds. In return, Rapido generously donated a number of models of *Sir Berkeley* to the VCT and Middleton Railway, for which we are extremely grateful," said Ian.

"I am delighted to say they sold out almost immediately, so we are very grateful to Rapido for doing that for us."

Andy Hardy, general manager at Rapido Trains, said: "The team here at Rapido Trains are always excited to give something back to the preservation movement. Without the help of the VCT and Middleton Railway, we would not have been able to achieve such a high-quality



The model of Manning Wardle L class 0-6-OST No. 1210 *Sir Berkeley* 1968 at the Vintage Carriages Trust Museum at Ingrow. SALLY CLIFFORD

sound file, so the least we could do was to provide them with some models of their own locomotives

to help raise funds and continue their ongoing conservation and restoration work.!"

Cotswold line helps families cut the costs of days out this summertime

CHILDREN are at the fore of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's peak summer holiday season, with up to three youngers under 15 able to travel for just £1 each with one full fare-paying adult.

The promotion, which runs until the end of August, includes a free activities pack to keep youngsters

entertained on their journey on the 14-mile line.

Teddy Bear Picnic trains will run on Thursdays August 6, 13 and 20

Trainmaster Kids' Playtime sessions will be held daily until August 9 in the Tim Mitchell Building at Winchcombe, with free entry for ticket-holders. The

hands-on railway-themed fun was a huge success when it was launched last year.

Summer Holiday Family Fun & Crafts sessions will be held in the Tim Mitchell Building on August 11-23 and include activities from colouring and model-making to locomotive-inspired crafts. Again,

entry is free with a train ticket. GWR marketing officer Fiona Tarbet said: "We know times are tough, with many families having to draw the purse-strings tight, so we hope this will make it easier to give children a fun day out."

For more details and to book, visit www.gwsr.com

Collection X loco is latest to go on display at Aberystwyth

By Robin Jones

A GERMAN 0-6-2T which was hidden from view for nearly six decades has been placed on public display at the Vale of Rheidol Railway's award-winning Aberystwyth museum.

Borsig No. 6022 of 1906 *Sotillos* No. 7 is the latest locomotive from the late enthusiast Peter Rampton's legendary Collection X to emerge into view following a week-long scrub and clean.

As highlighted in our special feature in *Heritage Railway* issue 339, Peter, heir to the successful Freemans mail order business, amassed a private collection of more than 50 locomotives from around the world and stored them at his Surrey farm, where he built his own private 2ft gauge line. Peter, who later became VoRR chairman after helping to buy the line from BR in 1989, began collecting in 1968, buying eight 600mm gauge steam locomotives from the Hulleras de Saero y Anexas coal mine railway in northern Spain, including *Sotillos* No. 7, which, at 26 tons, was the largest and heaviest.

Coal mover

Built in Berlin, *Sotillos* No. 7 hauled hundreds of tons of coal each day for decades, but in 1967, the Sabero Railway on which it worked closed down, leaving it and the other locomotives facing



Above and right: Borsig 0-6-2T No. 6022 of 1906 *Sotillos* No. 7 now on display at the Vale of Rheidol Railway museum in Aberystwyth. VORR



the scrapyard. Peter stepped in and had them shipped to his farm, where they were shunted into a huge complex of barns for long-term storage, each covered in a thick layer of oil for protection. The railway's management, delighted with the sale, threw in the four-wheeled wooden President's Saloon balcony inspection car as a goodwill gesture.

Peter died in 2019, and while some of his locomotives were sent for restoration with new custodians, 32, including *Sotillos* No. 7, were moved to Aberystwyth, where the museum and large storage sheds had been constructed.

VoRR CEO Llŷr ap Iolo said: "Peter Rampton's legacy to us – and the wider world – was unprecedented in terms of its scale and heritage value."

"He saw his role as just a rescuer of engines; he wanted others to work out what to do with them, once he had

done his bit. We are so pleased to have had the opportunity to not just work on this fascinating piece of historic engineering, but also now share it with the world at long last."

Historian's new role

Railway historian and TV presenter Tim Dunn recently took on an extra role – that of the VoRR's head of collection development.

His remit includes deciding what we do with the Collection X locomotives on site. His first move was to get *Sotillos* No. 7 out of storage and on display.

He said: "This is truly an extraordinary survivor – a piece of industrial equipment that should have ceased to exist a lifetime ago, but because of Peter's passion, foresight, and dedication to preservation, we now have something that people thought was lost."

"By itself, this unrestored engine is a fascinating time capsule, but what's thrilling is that there are another two dozen further hidden locos, each with their own stories to tell. We are only just assessing them and realising their full potential. Watch this space!"

He added that many visitors have asked whether *Sotillos* No. 7, which steamed at the Surrey farm, would run again, but while it is complete and in good condition, there are no such plans at the moment.

"Still, it's made an impact in the museum, right in time for its 120th birthday," he said.

As reported in issue 343, at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Award 2026, the VoRR was presented with the Interpretation Award, sponsored by this magazine for its innovative presentation of Collection X. It also won the Achievement of the Year Award, sponsored by Allelys.

Aln Valley commemorates 60 years since end of branch steam

THE Aln Valley Railway marked the 60th anniversary of the last steam trains on the Alnmouth to Alnwick branch on June 20/21.

Passenger trains, including the NER Directors' saloon, were hauled by Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST

No. 3686 of 1948 No. 60, while demonstration goods trains ran behind Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1366 of 1919 *Renishaw Ironworks* No. 6, which carried a 52D shedplate (Tweedmouth depot, sub-shed Alnmouth).

Each passenger train carried a commemorative headboard, plus a second board beneath, advertising the name of train's sponsor.

The headboard carried by the locomotive of the goods train was that of the Worcester Locomotive

Society, some members of which attended the event and travelled in the brake van.

A special commemorative cake was baked, and a piece was handed out to each passenger on the last train of the day.



With its commemorative and sponsors' headboards, No. 60 is ready to depart from Lionheart station, Platform 1, with an afternoon train. The NER directors' saloon is the first carriage on the train. AVR



The cake commemorating the 60th anniversary of the branch closure bears a picture of Thompson K1 2-6-0 No. 62011 at the head of an Alnmouth passenger train at Alnwick station in the 1960s. AVR



No. 6, adorned with a 52D shedplate, runs round the demonstration goods train at Greenrigg Halt, ready to haul it back to Lionheart station. AVR

Big Four's big stars: Moorsline confirms gala line-up

By Owen Hayward

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has revealed its star-studded line-up for its annual steam gala, which this year takes place on September 24-27.

Great Western, North Eastern and South Western regions are reflected in the guest identities which, when combined with the NYMR's resident LMS Stanier 'Black Fives,' means that all five of the 'Big Four' companies are being represented.

Flying the flag for the GWR is 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, visiting thanks to the Great Western Society and Didcot Railway Centre. This locomotive was previously booked to attend the same gala weekend in 2024, but problems with the *Castle* excessively priming meant it was withdrawn for investigative work to be carried out. Its place was filled by late replacement 4-6-0 No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall*, from the Epping Ongar Railway.

Representing the LNER on this occasion will be streamlined A4 No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, conveniently fresh from a summer of 'English Riviera Express' workings on its rival's region between Taunton and Kingswear on the Dartmouth Steam Railway.

The A4 recently appeared at an open day at Doncaster Works, hosted by engineering firm Wabtec, which is closing the site later this year, bringing an end to 170 years of railway engineering there and placing up to 400 jobs at risk.

Finally, LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 will bring a taste of the Southern Railway



Left: No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* will be returning to the Moorsline for the first time since 2023, this time in BR express blue livery. JOHN HUNT/ NYMR



GWR *Castle* No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* will be making its first visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to work dedicated round trips on two weekends in October.

FRANK DUMBLETON

to the Yorkshire Moors, with this particular locomotive having passed into the company's control at the 1923 Grouping. Although not an express locomotive to the standards of the A4 and *Castle* that followed it, the T3s were, at the time of their construction in 1892/93, more than capable of working express services over the Bournemouth, Salisbury and Exeter routes (see feature, pages 82-84).

In addition to the two LMS Stanier 4-6-0s (Nos. 44806 and 45428 *Eric Treacy*), the home fleet will also include LNER J27 No. 2392 and SR Schools 4-4-0 No. 926 *Repton*. Supporting them will be locomotives including BR 9F No. 92134 and oil-fired USATC S160 No. 2253 *Omaha*, among others.



Flying the flag for the Southern Railway will be visiting LSWR T3 No. 563 and resident Schools 4-4-0 *Repton* for the four-day gala. On June 27, No. 563 departs Norden with a brake van ride to Furzebrook during the Swanage Railway's successful Roads to Rail steam rally. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Rockstar Services

In addition to pulling trains during the gala days, both *Sir Nigel Gresley* and *Pendennis Castle* will work dedicated steam Rockstar Services between Pickering and Grosmont on dates during September and October.

The streamlined 'Streak' will be the first of the pair to strut its stuff, pulling two round trips on September 18-20 and then again on October 17-20, while *Pendennis Castle* will operate during the weekends of October 3/4 and 10/11.

Options for all running days include standard travel or premium packages, the latter including special-edition magnet and keyring souvenirs, along with a cold drink

and sweet treat served at your table during your journey.

As previously reported in issue 346, the NYMR and LNER Carriage Association are planning on having four of their iconic teak carriages back in service in time for the steam gala. The set last ran in 2023, the autumn of which was also when *Sir Nigel Gresley* last visited and hauled the rake for a LNERCA member's special. It had not been confirmed whether these vehicles would also be used on the A4's services either side of the gala event this year; the NYMR was approached for comment but had not responded by the time this issue went to press.

For further details on all services and to book tickets, visit nymr.co.uk

West Somerset prepares for summer celebration of its diesel pioneers

WHILE the West Somerset Railway has been celebrating the 50th anniversary of its first passenger services in the heritage era, the line's next big event will mark 65 years since its diesels entered British Railways service.

During the rapid transition from steam to diesel traction, the line's locomotives constructed in 1961 included Class 09 D4107, Class 33 'Cromptons' D6566 and D6575, and Class 35 'Hymeks' D7017 and D7018. While the majority of their classmates have since been withdrawn and scrapped, these four are very much active in the care of

the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group, the depot and workshops of which are at Williton.

The DEPG has been part of the WSR since its early days. D7017 was bought directly from BR at a time when the concept of diesel preservation was a novelty. D7017 was on static display at Minehead when the first heritage era trains ran on March 28, 1976, and it worked trains as part of the celebrations on March 28 this year. Since then, the DEPG has locomotives have made a major contribution to the history of the WSR.

The Diesels at 65 event will take place on August 29-31. The DEPG depot will be open to visitors, where they will be able to see Class 14 'Teddy Bears' D9518 and D9526. The latter has given good service since its purchase from its previous role as a shunter at the Westbury cement works, while the former is being completely overhauled and has yet to work a train on the WSR. Also at Williton are Class 08 No. 08401 and Class 52 D1010 *Western Campaigner*, which is also having a comprehensive overhaul before returning to traffic.

The DEPG will man its sales and membership stand inside the depot building, and its members will talk about the group's history and plans for the future. The museums at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor stations will be open, and passengers can purchase the commemorative 50th Anniversary Beer brewed by Quantock Brewery, adjacent to Bishops Lydeard station, from buffet cars on the trains.

Rover tickets for the event can be purchased from www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk or by calling 01643 704996.

Welcome to **Heritage Railway magazine**, renowned for page after page of news, with hard-won exclusive stories in every edition. The magazine also boasts some of the finest atmospheric trackside photography in the business, and well-researched historic features leave no stone unturned. Regular sections cover main line news, modern-day revival schemes, railwayana, tour listings, young volunteers, carriages and wagons. Plus, get the latest news from the world of modelling, and much, much more.

Robin Jones

Editor

REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

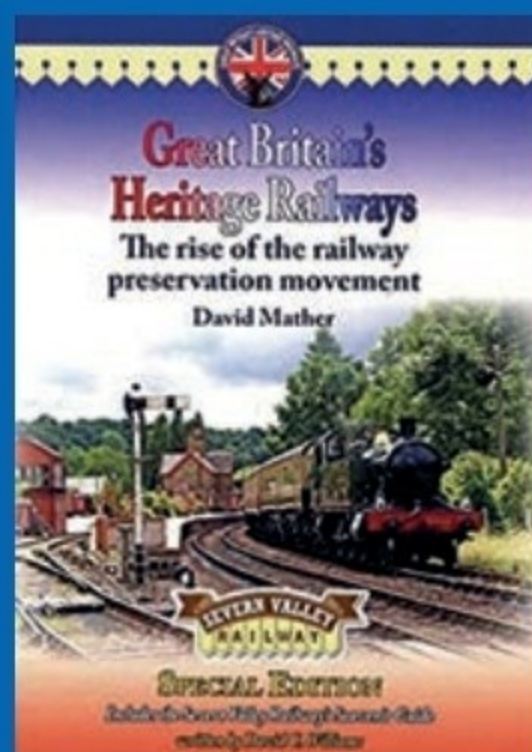
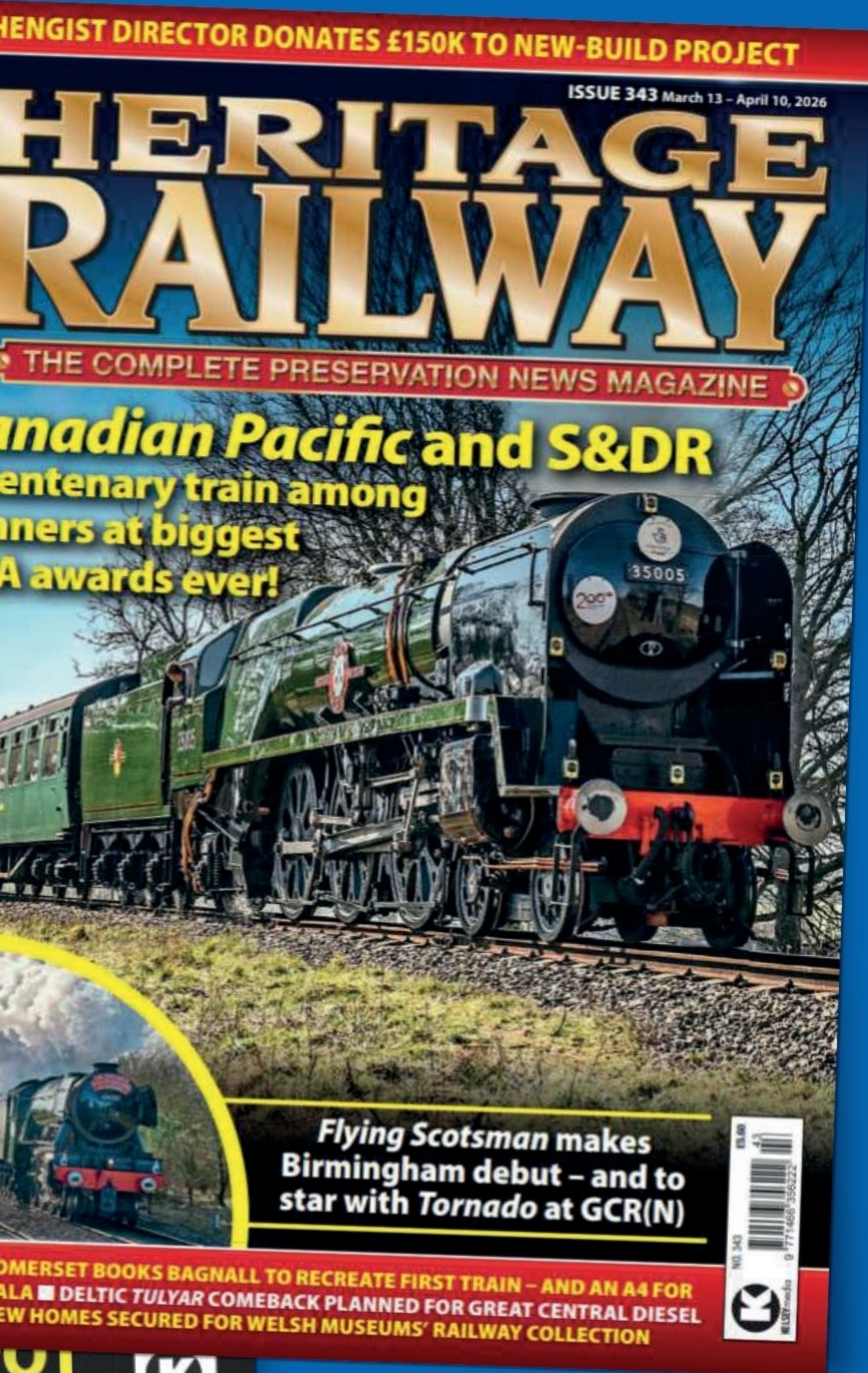
- 1** Exclusive news and updates from across the railway scene
- 2** In-depth historic features and well-researched stories
- 3** Stunning atmospheric trackside photography
- 4** Coverage of revival schemes, railwayana, tours, volunteers, carriages, wagons and modelling.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY



Terms & Conditions: UK Direct Debit, you will pay £57.99 for 12 issues, then £57.99 annually thereafter. Savings based on the standard price per issue for 12 issues. Offer ends December 31, 2026. Your subscription will start with the next available issue and you will receive 12 issues in a year. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms-and-conditions. We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time.

GET A FULL YEAR OF HERITAGE RAILWAY FOR JUST £57.99



PLUS

A FREE COPY OF
GREAT BRITAIN'S
HERITAGE RAILWAYS
- SVR EDITION

SAVE £1.14 PER ISSUE



Scan
me

EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

1. GO TO CLASSICMAGAZINES.CO.UK/HRBOOK26
2. CALL US 01507 529529 QUOTE HRBOOK26
3. USE THIS QR CODE TO GO DIRECTLY TO OUR WEBSITE

Lines open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5:30pm. Calls charged at your standard network rate.

‘Royal’ Tyne & Wear Metro train donated to museum for display

By Robin Jones

THE Tyne and Wear Metro train in which the late Queen Elizabeth II travelled when she officially opened the system in 1981 has entered preservation at a local museum.

Carriage No. 4020 has been given to the North East Land Sea and Air Museum (NELSAM), at Washington, near Sunderland, where it has gone on public display. Metro operator Nexus said it was delighted to have found a home for the train, fulfilling its pledge that two would be retained for heritage purposes as the old fleet is phased out.

The late queen travelled in the vehicle from Monument to Gateshead on November 7, 1981, when she visited the region to officially declare the Metro system open at a ceremony at Gateshead Interchange.

King Charles also travelled on the same carriage from Central to Haymarket in November 2021 when he visited Newcastle, as Prince of Wales, for Metro’s 40th anniversary.

The Metro’s last remaining original trains completed their final scheduled runs on June 26, with the network’s operations now largely transitioned to 46 new Stadler sets.

Nexus managing director Cathy Massarella said: “We are delighted to have donated this old Metro train to North East Land Sea and Air Museum.

“We are over the moon that a museum has been able to take this train and put it on display for the public.

“It is part of the region’s proud railway heritage. We have achieved our commitment to keep two original trains for heritage purposes, meaning they can still be seen by the public for generations to come.”

Metro’s first-ever train, carriage No. 4001, was donated to the Stephenson Steam Railway in North Tyneside in 2025. It was the first prototype Metro carriage delivered to the Metro test track in 1975, five years ahead of the system opening.

NELSAM chair of trustees David Charles said: “The arrival of the Metro unit at the museum marks the



The future of Tyne and Wear Metro carriage No. 4020, which carried Queen Elizabeth II on an historic journey nearly 45 years ago, is now assured.

REBECCA DIXON/NELSAM

completion of the transition from an aircraft museum to a transport museum.

“The Royal Metro is a nationally significant rail item and cements the importance of the museum as a regional heritage location.

“The delivery marks the end of a journey that started three years ago to add this significant item to the collection.

“The trustees are honoured to be chosen by Nexus and the Rail

Heritage Board to be custodians of the Metro. It will form the centrepiece of a new Metro experience to keep alive the memory of the first light railway system in the country.”

NELSAM is situated on the former RAF Usworth and Sunderland airport site, next to the Nissan factory, and comprises of the former aircraft museum and military vehicles collection. The North East Electric Traction Trust is also based there.

Downpatrick railway presented with King’s Award for Voluntary Service

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has been formally presented with The King’s Award for Voluntary Service which, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 340, was announced following the success of the line’s team in paving the road to reopening from the devastating floods of 2023.

The award is the highest honour that a voluntary group can receive in the UK, equivalent to an MBE.

A group of DCDR volunteers attended a ceremony where the award was formally presented by the Lord-Lieutenant for County Down, Gawn Rowan Hamilton, in the line’s 40th anniversary year, who said: “The volunteers at DCDR deserve the recognition they have won. Their sheer grit and determination means that we can all be all beneficiaries of what the railway has to offer.

“You only have to visit to share their joy in ensuring our industrial heritage is not forgotten. Congratulations to every single one of them.”

The ceremony was held at Killyleagh Castle, and volunteers were afterwards treated to a private tour of the venue, one of Ireland’s oldest inhabited castles, which has connections to the English Civil War, the American and French Revolutions and the 1798 Rebellion.

Also attending were Sandra Adair MBE, a member of the King’s Award for Voluntary Service National Assessment Committee, Judith Harper, who nominated the DCDR for the award, and Coun Callum Bowsie, representing the incoming chair of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Coun Glyn Hanna.



The Lord-Lieutenant for County Down, Gawn Rowan Hamilton, and Sandra Adair MBE present the award to DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner, along with several volunteers. DCDR

Two coaches arrive for Winchcombe restoration

MK. 1 TSO No. 3961 arrived at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway from Carnforth on June 26, having been bought from West Coast Railways by a private owner.

Although the bodywork needs repairing, the underframe and bogies are reported as being in good condition, with the interior being of an early style with wooden panelling and ‘flying saucer’ lights.



EYES ON THE FUTURE: Although the Talylyn Railway is marking 75 years of its preservation history this year, on June 8 it took delivery of an item which will help to safeguard its future – a battery electric locomotive. Built to 2ft gauge by Wingrove & Rogers and used on various jobs including a construction project at Heathrow Airport, two were acquired in 2022 and sent to Alan Keef’s, where No. 6504 (pictured) was regauged to 2ft 3in for use on the TR, with the second (No. 6502) currently retained as a source of spares.

Once restored, No. 6504 will provide the TR with an environmentally-friendly locomotive for shunting duties at Pendre and Tywyn Wharf, cutting down both the diesel emissions and noise pollution. The second example may also be restored for use in the future, although no firm decision on this has yet been made and will rely on the current project proving successful. LUKE RYAN/TR

King receives Science Museum Group fellowship

KING Charles III has received a fellowship of the Science Museum Group in a joint audience with the Royal Society at Buckingham Palace.

The fellowship was presented on June 23 by the group's chair, Sir Tim Laurence (also president of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway Trust), and its director, Sir Ian Blatchford, in recognition of his many years of dedicated work raising public awareness of environmental issues and promoting careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects.

Also attending were Sir Paul Nurse, president of the Royal Society, and Dame Julie Maxton, its executive director. They witnessed the king sign a new page of the charter book in his capacity as the society's royal patron.

The book was first signed by Charles II in 1665, and this will be the first time a new royal page has been signed in more than 70 years.

The SMG Fellows Programme recognises individuals who have made outstanding contributions to research, design, technology, science communication and philanthropy.

Every year, the Fellowship Nominations Committee nominate a small number of individuals to become fellows.

Sir Tim Laurence said: "It is an honour to present King Charles with the Science Museum Group fellowship.

"Through decades of advocacy and public engagement, his majesty has helped deepen awareness of some of the most important issues facing our world today, while also encouraging discussion about the choices that lie ahead. His work has left a lasting impact both in the UK and internationally. We are immensely appreciative of his continuing support of the SMG."

The king's relationship with the SMG spans more than four decades. As Prince of Wales, he first visited the National Railway Museum in 1981 and officially opened the Science Museum's Telecommunications gallery two years later. Over the following decades, he continued to support the group through several significant engagements, including opening the Science



Science Museum Group director Sir Ian Blatchford and chair Sir Tim Laurence (right) present King Charles with a fellowship of the Science Museum Group. SMG

Museum's climate science gallery, Atmosphere, in 2010, reopening Station Hall at the National Railway Museum in 2013, and launching the Science Museum's Engineer Your Future exhibition in 2014. In 2018, he returned to the Science Museum during the Commonwealth Heads of Government summit to tour the exhibition Illuminating India: 5000 Years of Science and Innovation. In

2023, he helped mark the centenary of A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*, cared for by the NRM, by travelling behind the locomotive aboard the Royal Train.

Several members of the Royal Family have previously accepted a SMG fellowship, including Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, in 2014, and the Princess Royal, Princess Anne, in 2018.

Reality as seen through the eyes of railway artists

By Geoff Courtney

KIDDERMINSTER Railway Museum will open its doors on August 15 to the world of some of the most talented railway artists on the planet.

The occasion is the Railart exhibition, an annual feast of extraordinary artistic skill that draws visitors into steam, diesel and electric traction and other railway scenes as seen through the eyes of Guild of Railway Artists members.

It has been said for many decades that the camera never lies, but of course it undoubtedly does, especially in this age of AI's ability to computer-generate photography. Artists have their own version – artistic licence. But if this is employed, it is purely to enhance what the onlooker is viewing.

I have in my study a carriage print of a town I know well. The artist was Claude Buckle, a renowned railway artist, and the print was released by BR Midland Region in 1950, at which time the town's most obvious landmark was a brewery chimney. There's not a sign of it in Claude's carriage print, presumably because he felt it too dominant for his purpose.



Transport of delight: This painting by Malcolm Root is one of the attractions at the Guild of Railway Artists Railart 2026 exhibition, being staged at Kidderminster Railway Museum on August 15-September 27. It depicts SR Battle of Britain No. 34081 92 Squadron arriving at Southampton Docks with 'The Cunarder' boat train from Waterloo. Malcolm, a keen artist of various forms of transport, has included in the work an Austin FX3 taxi (with a MTR – Malcolm Trevor Root – registration plate), a Bedford Duple coach, an AEC Regal coach and, dominating the background, the 77,400-ton *Queen Mary* ocean liner. MALCOLM ROOT

The exhibition's promotional literature features a fine painting by guild president John Austin of LMS Princess Coronation No. 46235 *City of Birmingham*.

A painting by another guild fellow, Malcolm Root, of SR Battle of Britain No. 34081 92 Squadron bringing 'The

Cunarder' Waterloo-Southampton boat train to its dockside destination, will also be making its exhibition debut.

Malcolm is one of the guild members who is regarded as a transport artist, and his painting also includes a couple of coaches

of the era, commercial vehicles, the liner *Queen Mary*, and an Austin taxi waiting for the SR Pacific to pass.

Anna Bastin, the guild's exhibition administrator, said about 50 paintings will be on display, including some by new members. The free exhibition will run until September 27.

Columbine is finally back in one piece after a 26-year split

By Robin Jones

A NATIONAL Collection locomotive has been reunited with its tender after 26 years.

Grand Junction Railway 2-2-2 *Columbine* has been moved back to the National Railway Museum in York from its previous home at the Science Museum in London.

A complex and delicate night-time conservation operation carried out by specialist teams, equipment and expertise, involving 26 people from across the Science Museum Group, undertook the move of more than 200 miles early on June 17, supported by dozens of pieces of specialist equipment such as an electric forklift and large low-loader.

At York, the 1845-built locomotive was reunited with its tender which itself had been based at the Science and Innovation Park in Swindon since 2000.

Both the 18-tonnes locomotive and tender are now on display on the turntable in the Great Hall in the NRM.

Becky Peacock, conservation and collections care manager at the NRM, who visited the Science Museum to supervise the move, said: "The return of *Columbine* to York and its reunification with its tender is a significant milestone for the locomotive itself and the National Collection.

"We are delighted that visitors can once again experience *Columbine* as a complete vehicle and appreciate its important place in Britain's railway story."

Columbine was removed from the NRM in 2000 when



Columbine and tender back together after 26 years for all to see on the turntable at the National Railway Museum in York. JASON HYNES/BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

it became part of the Science Museum's popular Making the Modern World gallery in London. While the original intention was for both locomotive and tender to move south, space constraints meant only the locomotive could be accommodated.

One of the most significant locomotives in the National

Collection, *Columbine* was the first example of the standard Crewe-type locomotive with 6ft driving wheels and played an important role in the evolution of British locomotive engineering.

At a time when many locomotives relied on inside cylinders and crank axles that could prove vulnerable, engineers WB Buddicom and Francis

Trevithick developed an innovative outside-cylinder design. Their work would influence British locomotive design for more than four decades.

The locomotive is displayed without its cab, reflecting how it would have appeared in the early 1870s and providing visitors with a clearer view of its pioneering engineering.

Preparing a train fit for a queen!

By Geoff Courtney

ALICE in Wonderland mischief, a moaning queen, a white rabbit and riddle-solving will present Spa Valley Railway passengers with challenging steam-hauled rides at the end of August and into September.

'Alice's Wonderland Express' is described by Spa Valley general manager Jonnie Pay as "a magical train adventure that promises curious characters, playful challenges and plenty of Wonderland mischief." Created by PNP Events, the journey sees the Queen of Hearts grumbling her way through Wonderland after her Royal Train breaks down, and the white rabbit, Alice, and the Mad Hatter must race to get everything ready for her arrival. But, as ever in Wonderland, nothing quite goes to plan.

Passengers will be drawn into the story as soon as they board, helping the white rabbit recover some missing words, finding their way through a maze, solving riddles, and discovering surprises as they journey from Tunbridge Wells West to Eridge.

During the trip, passengers will complete a set of curious activities in their activity booklet, including colouring the queen's roses, creating royal decorations, and helping to transform the train into a carriage fit for the monarch. Each completed challenge will earn a royal railway stamp, bringing the train nearer to completion.

The trains will run on August 29-31 and September 5/6, and motive power will be either Bulleid Battle of Britain 4-6-2 No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* or 1899-built Caledonian Railway 812 class 0-6-0 No. 828 (BR No. 57566).



Wonderland travel: SR No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* is ready for the right away at Spa Valley's Groombridge station on April 19. The former SR Pacific will be sharing duties with 0-6-0 No. 828 on Alice in Wonderland-themed trains on five dates in August and September. CAROLINE EDMUNDS



Steam and Diesel Gala
4 - 6 September
Garden Railway Show
5 September



www.wllr.org.uk
 SY21 0SF | SY21 7LT

info@wllr.org.uk
 01938 810441



**SATURDAY 26th
 & SUNDAY 27th
 SEPTEMBER 2026**



**THE LARGEST
 HERITAGE
 RAILWAY
 MODEL
 SHOW IN 2026**



**Adult £28
 Children £9**
Prices include unlimited train travel that day!

www.gwsr.com



**FEATURING AT TODDINGTON &
 WINCHCOMBE STATIONS:**

- 45 EXHIBITION LAYOUTS ACROSS MANY GAUGES
- MODEL RAILWAY DEMONSTRATIONS
- TRADE STANDS
- STEAM TRAINS & DIESEL SHUTTLE SERVICES

Includes unlimited travel on all standard GWSR services calling at all GWSR main stations, as well as the special additional diesel shuttle operating between Toddington and Winchcombe. Wristbands: When you arrive, your ticket will be exchanged for a wristband — please keep this on throughout your visit, as you'll need it to access the exhibits.

NORTH YORKSHIRE



MOORS RAILWAY

**ANNUAL
 STEAM GALA**

24 – 27 SEPTEMBER

Experience a four day celebration
 powered by steam.

NYMR.CO.UK/STEAMGALA



‘La’al Ratty’ to celebrates 150 years since first passengers

By Robin Jones

THE Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway is to hold a special Victorian-themed event on August 22 to mark 150 years to the day when it carried its first passengers.

Visitors are encouraged to attend in period costume and join in with a range of traditional Victorian crafts and games in and around the Ravenglass Railway Museum.

The event looks to recreate the centenary celebrations held at the line in 1976, when it was teeming with visitors dressed in Victorian attire.

A highlight will be a special event train, which will offer ticket-holders a full return trip on the line, primarily in the traditional open coaches, travelling just as those first passengers from the Whitehaven Scientific Association did in 1876, when it became England's first public narrow gauge Railway. In another nod to the centenary celebrations,



Peter van Zeller alongside a 1923-built Davey Paxman 2-8-2 at Dalegarth Station during the 1976 centenary celebrations. RRM

this special train will be hauled by 2-6-2 *Northern Rock*. Celebrating its golden jubilee this year, *Northern Rock* was launched at those 1976 celebrations.



Postcard view of *Northern Rock* displaying a 'Ratty 100' headboard in 1976. RRM

Ravenglass museum curator Peter van Zeller, who was a driver for the railway during the centenary event, said: "It will be splendid to recreate the atmosphere of the celebrations held in 1976. It's a credit to the railway's engineers that the loco has now given half a century of unbroken service."

The ideal cake for period celebrations, a Great Victoria Sponge-Off is being held at The Ratty Arms. Open to both junior and adult bakers, prizes include railway tickets, pub meal vouchers, toys and books. Full details and how to enter can be found at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-grand-victorian-day-out-in-ravenglass-tickets-1989913738559,

with all proceeds supporting the Ravenglass museum.

The ticket price is flexible so that people who would like to attend can choose how much they can pay.

Museum manager Claire Winter-Moore said: "We are looking forward to welcoming people of all ages to the railway to celebrate this special anniversary.

"We hope that there may be visitors joining us for this 2026 event who took part in the centenary celebrations in 1976.

"Our flexible ticketing keeps the event accessible to all budgets, while encouraging visitors to support the museum with a donation of their choosing."

Right: Children getting into the Victorian spirit at the 1976 event. RRM



Scotland's newest new-build blessed before entering service

By Hugh Dougherty

SCOTLAND'S newest steam locomotive, new-build LMS 4-6-0 'Black Five' *Covenanter*, took to the 7¼in gauge track of the Strathaven Miniature Railway, the Big Country's oldest miniature line, on June 15 after being ceremoniously named and blessed by the Rev Ross Blackman, minister of Hamilton Old Parish Church.

Designed and built from scaled-down plans of the real item, *Covenanter* was manufactured in-house inside the railway's own workshop in Strathaven.

The new locomotive's name recalls the Covenanters, the 17th century, Presbyterian rebels who refused to accept the imposition of the Book of Common Prayer on Scotland and for whom Strathaven was a stronghold.

In 1679, Covenanters defeated government forces at the Battle of Drumclog, just outside Strathaven, while some were imprisoned in Strathaven Castle.

Railway company secretary Ian Samson said: "Our members have done a wonderful job building this fine locomotive which has gone into service on our line. 'Black Fives' are noted for their pulling power, and our model, No. 52026, is no exception to the rule.

"The class is also known for its persistence when handling a heavy train, and the Covenanters were also known for their persistence in support of their beliefs. Given the strong links between them and Strathaven, it seemed very appropriate to call the engine *Covenanter*, and that has been well-received locally.

"We decided to ask Mr Blackman to bless the engine given the religious associations of its name, and he was more than happy to oblige – the first time, I believe, that a miniature railway engine has been given some divine assistance when going into service!"

The locomotive was built from scratch by society members Brian Sullivan, Bobby Watt, Alan Court, Mike Veitch, Tom McIlree, Eric Chandler and Gordon Cheape.



Above: The Rev Ross Blackman reads the blessing over *Covenanter* before unveiling the nameplate as the 'Black Five' builders bow their heads in prayer. SMR

Left: Society members prepare the powerful new engine for service. SMR

Special centenary at a 'second' Poppy Line

By Robin Jones

TWO of south-west London's best-kept secrets are to combine for a special celebration involving a 123-years-old steam locomotive fuelled by poppy power.

On September 26/27, Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway will take visitors on a journey around its picturesque Hanworth Loop track and through 100 years of The Poppy Factory in celebration of the charity's centenary in Richmond upon Thames.

Guests will hear a specially recorded audio commentary about the story of The Poppy Factory, which has been helping veterans into civilian employment since after the First World War, and see a display of the giant wreaths that are used in Remembrance services each November.

Information boards produced in partnership with the Museum of Richmond will enable visitors to learn more about The Poppy Factory, which was established in the borough in 1926 and now helps more than 1200 veterans and family members around the country each year.

Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 984 of 1903 – which was built for the Provan Gasworks in Glasgow, withdrawn in 1961, and bought from a scrapyard for preservation two years later – will be in operation throughout the weekend, its carriages all decked out with poppy wreaths and bouquets.

Volunteers from the charity's visitor centre will work alongside the railway team to show guests how to make poppies and offer refreshments, cakes, and limited-edition gifts.

All funds raised during the weekend will be split equally between the two charities.

The railway's creative director, Roger Harris, said: "We are very excited to be joining The Poppy Factory in celebrating its centenary with a stunning weekend. Our 1903 heritage steam engine will be running throughout the day alongside our miniature sit-on railway. We plan to stage a cavalcade of our historic engines – something we've never done before."

"Described as one of London's best-kept secrets, Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway has become a favourite destination for families looking for an affordable day



While the North Norfolk Railway is affectionately known as the Poppy Line, another venue, the Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway, will 'borrow' the title for a unique event on September 26/27. HKWR

out, enjoying heritage steam train rides and picnics in a unique setting.

"We are looking forward to welcoming even more visitors during this very special weekend."

Amanda Shepard, chief executive of The Poppy Factory, said: "We are thrilled and honoured that Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway has chosen to mark our centenary in Richmond in such a special way. I

can't wait to see the smoke billowing and the crowds gathering in celebration of how far we have come as a charity, as we move full steam ahead to support more of today's veterans and families."

The event will run from 10am to 4pm each day, with the first passenger train at 10.30am and the last at 3.40pm. Tickets can be booked in advance at bit.ly/steampoppy

Vintage Trains welcomes much smaller locomotives to its fleet

By Owen Hayward

MAIN line tour operator Vintage Trains has taken delivery of two new steam locomotives and a railcar into its collection – but don't expect to see them pulling charter workings out of Birmingham any time soon, as they are much smaller than the standard gauge types the company is known for.

Work is advancing on the Tyseley Miniature Railway, which will be built around part of VT's base and utilises assets recovered from the former Sutton Miniature Railway. Among these are 4-4-2 *Sutton Flyer* and *Sutton Belle*, along with petrol railcar *Dudley*, which arrived at VT's Tyseley locomotive works on June 16.

The two steam locomotives were constructed to the iconic Basset Lowke design. No. 1 *Sutton Belle* was built in 1915 by Douglas Clayton along with No. 2 *Sutton Flyer*; both arrived on the SMR in 1948, although the latter was a kit of parts and not reassembled until 1952. No. 4 *Dudley*, meanwhile, was built by G&S Light Engineering in Stourbridge in 1946 for the Dudley Zoo Railway, and its exterior design was based on that of some of the GWR railcars.

The SMR was a 15in gauge line built at Sutton Park in Sutton Coldfield.

It was originally opened as 10 ¼in gauge in 1902, running over 210 yards of track, but with popularity growing, it was regauged in 1908 and extended to more than 400 yards.

The outbreak of the First World War saw the line mothballed, not reopening until 1921. However, this reprieve was short-lived, and by 1925 the site had become derelict.



A second lease of life came in 1938 when Pat Collins acquired the Great Yarmouth Railway and moved it to the SMR. The track was substantially extended to become a 1970-yard route with a balloon loop. Another ownership change came in 1948 when bought by TG Hunt, whose improvements included construction of additional carriages.

After a nearby amusement park closure impacting visitor numbers, the SMR too ceased operating in 1962. Stock, track, and other equipment were all placed in

storage, where they remained for nearly 40 years until acquired by the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway in 2000.

While a popular addition for the line, it was found the additional maintenance burden was not viable in the long term, and so the collection was acquired by VT in 2022.

Community focus

The arrival of the locomotives marks the beginning of a new chapter for the much-loved miniature railway stock. Work is already underway to restore the original carriages and lay approximately half a mile of track, creating a fully operational miniature line that will complement the main line and heritage activities already based at VT's site. Furthermore, the Tyseley Miniature Railway has been created with the aims of providing opportunities for young people and adults to gain hands-on experience in railway engineering, operations and maintenance within the safe and accessible environment of the 15in gauge railway.

This new line will include offering opportunities to learn practical engineering and operational skills in a welcoming, social environment. It is also hoped that the group will



No. 2 *Sutton Flyer* becomes exactly that, as it is unloaded at its new home at Tyseley Locomotive Works where a new miniature railway is being laid. VT

be able to promote the well-being and positive mental health benefits that involvement with such an organisation can bring. To that end, the TMR is seeking volunteers and supporters to help bring the project fully to life. Anyone interested in getting involved – whether in engineering, operations, restoration, or general support – is invited to make contact and discuss options.

For further information or to express interest, contact Tony Watson on tony.watson@TMRP.UK

Longest-ever Lincolnshire Coast cavalcade in 66 years!

By Robin Jones

THE longest-ever locomotive cavalcade on the world's first heritage railway to be built by enthusiasts on a greenfield site concluded the spectacular Narrow Gauge At Work event on June 19/20 at the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway.

Eleven locomotives – steam, diesel and petrol – were coupled together to bring the successful event to a close, comprising the entire fleet of the LCLR, with all but one under power.

The event was operated on the Friday for photographers who had paid for exclusive access to the line within Skegness Water Leisure Park in Ingoldmells, attracting participants from around Britain and The Netherlands to view combinations of locomotives and rolling stock – some not seen since the mid-1950s or even ever before.

This was enhanced by a reminder of how many farm railways in Lincolnshire operated a century ago, with a wagon once used on the Nocton Estates Light Railway (which ran for 23 miles across the Fens from Nocton to the outskirts of Bardney) pulled by Trixie, a horse trained to operate on light railways, visiting from the Silverleaf Poplar Railway, a private line at Old Leake, near Boston.

A rake of tipper wagons – once a familiar site on construction sites and brick pits around the county a century ago – was also loaned by the Old Leake line, enabling LCLR steam engine *Jurassic* to recreate how it worked such trains until 1955 at the Rugby Portland Cement quarries at Southam.

The public joined in on Saturday, riding passenger trains interspersed with goods workings, again with rare combinations of rolling stock.

Other highlights included the former Nocton Estates Light Railway Simplex 4wDM No. 1920 of 1935 (now named *Nocton*) making its first foray along the line fitted with a replica wooden cab recreating its appearance in the 1930s; the first journey on a passenger train of Simplex No. 8905 of 1944, which worked for Carlisle Horticulture and which has been rebuilt by its owner from a rolling chassis to an operating locomotive, fitted with electric starter and air brakes; the first journey along the track of petrol-powered First World War Simplex No. 3859 of 1918, acquired from the Imperial War Museum in May; and combinations of former First World War rolling stock which once worked on the Nocton



The cavalcade of 11 locomotives returns to Walls Lane station after its historic journey to Seathorne Bank and back. CHRIS BATES/LCLR



One horse power: *Trixie* from the Silverleaf Poplar Railway at work with a World War One ration wagon. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR



Left: A sight not seen since 1955: Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 1008 of 1903 *Jurassic* steams along with 'skip' (tipper) wagons recreating its role at the cement works in Warwickshire where it was based before being bought by the LCLR in 1961. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR



Above: Simplex 4wDM No. 1935 of 1920 in the condition in which it worked on the Nocton Estates (which grew potatoes for Smiths Crisps and sugar beet for the Bardney sugar factory), with Class D wagons from the First World War trench railways, recreating a sight not seen since the closure of most of the Fenland system in 1958. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR



Above right: Volunteers who made the event happen. Some have been part of the line since 1960/1, while many have joined more recently and made renovation, restoration and operation of the event possible. Left to right are Richard Shepherd (chairman, LCLR Historic Vehicles Trust), Robert Piper and Chris Bates, and on the track in front of *Paul* are (also left to right) Stuart Yates, Dave Yeomans, Mick Allen, Tracy Stronge, Jim Smith, Aaron Knight, Dave Enefer, David Young, Iain Stirling and Paul Baker. DAVE ENEFER/LCLR

Estates Railway before its acquisition by the LCLR for its construction on its first line on land leased from Grimsby Rural District Council at Humberston. That included its original centenarian Simplex No. 3995 *Paul* of 1927, which has been restored into the 1960 condition and colours in which it opened that pioneering line on August 27, 1960, again heading

passenger and goods trains.

→ The popular First World War weekend will return to the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway on September 12/13 and follow the pattern of last year's event. Passenger trains will take visitors from Walls Lane station to Seathorne Bank, where they will be entertained by demonstrations and talks by the

Hull Rifles, in full wartime uniform, along with their impressive range of weapons on display.

Also making a return visit will be *Trixie* the pony, which will be giving demonstrations of hauling narrow gauge wagons.

All the LCLR trench railway stock will be on display and most demonstrated on the line.

Groudle Glen locomotive returns back home after mammoth steam journey

By Owen Hayward

THE last steam locomotive to have been built on the Isle of Man to date has returned home to the Groudle Glen Railway following a six-figure restoration bill and a journey that included road-going steam haulage.

Completed in 1998, 0-4-2T *Annie* was built by GGR superintendent Richard Booth in the garage of his home in Laxey for the 3ft gauge tourist line. It is a replica of a locomotive of the same name constructed in 1911 by W G Bagnall and which was exported to New Zealand to operate the Gentle Annie Tramway, near Gisborne. That locomotive was later moved to a quarry at Motuhora, where it was unfortunately buried during a landslide in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Recovered in 1976, its remains are now on display at the East Coast Museum of Technology in Gisborne.

The replica, meanwhile, was built with its mechanics almost identical to those of ex-GGR resident Bagnall 0-4-2T No. 1781 *Polar Bear*, albeit with the wheel configuration reversed. It holds the claim of being the last steam locomotive to have been built on the island; *Ant* and *Bee*, replicas of 0-4-0Ts which worked the nearby mines, were completed in 2004 for the Laxey Mine Railway but built at Darlington.

Last operational in 2024, *Annie* was sent to John Fowler Engineering in Cumbria for an overhaul, funded in part through a legacy from the Williamson family, long-time supporters of the railway. The overhaul cost close to £100,000, but the extensiveness of the work carried out means that *Annie's* future on the railway is now secure for many years.

On June 24, the locomotive set out on its journey home, transported behind *Talisman*, a recreation of a 1925 Fowler B6 'Big Lion' road engine and one of the most powerful of the type ever built.

Constructed in Cumbria by engineer Alex Sharphouse and his team using original Fowler drawings, the ambitious project was completed in 2019 and demonstrated that Britain still retains the skills and craftsmanship required to build heavy steam machinery from scratch.

After arriving back at the port at Douglas the next day, the crossing from Heysham having been sponsored by ferry operator Isle of Man Steam Packet, *Talisman* towed *Annie* on a tour of the northern part of the island which included a visit to the Isle of Man Steam Railway's nearby locomotive yard, running parallel trams on to the Manx Electric Railway, and making stops at a number of places to allow people to meet the crew, learn about the



Annie's return to the Isle of Man saw it towed throughout by John Fowler Engineering's Fowler B6 road engine *Talisman*, seen here at Douglas shortly after alighting from the ferry on June 25. GGR



Annie (right) returns to service on June 28, running alongside fellow Bagnall Sea Lion. GGR

machine's remarkable story and witness first-hand the spectacle of steam power in action.

Having then arrived at the GGR and undergoing final testing, *Annie* was officially launched back into revenue-earning service on June 28, where it was welcomed by volunteers and former owner Richard.

Throughout the day, it ran alongside GGR's other resident Bagnall, *Sea Lion*, pulling services between Lhen Coan and Sea Lion Rocks.

GGR volunteer James Quirk said that *Annie's* return carried particular significance because of its role in Manx heritage: "It's a privilege to be part of such a special day in bringing *Annie* back to the Isle of Man."

Alex Sharphouse, director of John Fowler Engineering, added: "The world's a funny place at the moment. It moves forward really quickly and all of a sudden, there will become generations where people don't even understand what these things are about. This is our history."

East Lancashire celebrates workforce with special 'thank-you' evening of entertainment

THE East Lancashire Railway held a thank-you party as a special reward for its army of volunteers and paid staff.

The event on Sunday, June 28 at the Stables Country Club in Bury featured music, food, and a drink or two, and was attended by more than 150 staff and volunteers, along with their friends and partners.

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "These are challenging times for heritage railways, and we are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from very committed people to preserve the heritage railway as we look forward to celebrating 40 years of operations in July 2027.

"It was good to see everyone who could make it let their hair down, and quite a few even doing the conga – good on them!"

Alex Thomas, director of the ELR's volunteer workforce, added: "The event was planned for some



Party mood in full swing as the East Lancashire Railway celebrates its volunteers and paid staff. ELR

time as a way of recognising the invaluable contributions made by everyone who gives their time and enthusiasm. Strengthening relationships and reinforcing the sense of community is so important to our continued success.

"We hope this will become an annual event. Looking ahead, we could explore the introduction of awards to recognise individuals and teams who have demonstrated outstanding dedication, commitment and service throughout the year."

August gala date for Aviemore

THE Strathspey Railway has announced a summer gala for August 14-16. The line's regular steam locomotives, LMS 'Black Five' No. 5025, Ivatt 2MTs Nos. 46464 and 46512 will be joined by a trio of BR first-generation diesels, namely Class 27 No. 27050, Class 31 No. 31327 and Class 37 No. 37674, to work services along the full length of line between Aviemore and Broomhill.

Meanwhile, Ruston 48DS *Queen Anne* and BR Class 08 No. 08490 will be offering cab rides and driver-for-a-fiver experiences respectively. The 'Gronk' and North British 0-4-0DM D2774 will also pull the penultimate service from there back to Aviemore.

An engineering train will be included, with rides aboard the brake van on offer for £10 per single journey.

Finally, the line's Class 117 DMU will make three trips each day along the extension to the Dulnain Bridge.

For full details, see www.strathspeyrailway.co.uk

Last chance to enjoy narrow gauge steam in Templecombe

By Owen Hayward

THE owners of the Gartell Light Railway have announced that 2026 will be the line's last year of public operation. Its doors will close after the final open day on October 25.

Owned and operated by the Gartell family on their private land in Yenston, near Templecombe, south Somerset, the 2ft gauge line first opened in 1991, with the public able to visit on the select days each year since.

The line runs for three-quarters of a mile, partly along the trackbed of Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway, and has four stations: Common Lane, Pinesway Junction, Park Lane and Tower View.

However, age and the work required to meet standards required for public running will now see the line closed and remain a private site.

"Age has caught up with us all, and the amount of work required to keep the locomotives, coaches, platforms, permanent way and all other aspects of the railway running must not be

underestimated," said owner John Gartell.

"This work has been carried out by our hard-working team of volunteers, including the unsung heroes in the buffet who have kept us and our visitors fed and watered.

"I would also like to thank all the volunteers, past and present, who have helped make the railway what it is today. I hope you are all proud of how the railway looks now.

"We are saying goodbye to about 45 years of work, from the time construction began through to the open days, which started in 1991.

"In those early days, my late father parked the cars in the works yard and my late mother sold the tickets for the train rides.

"Christine, my wife, thought I was mad to start this project, but I am incredibly grateful for her endless support and hard work behind the scenes, as well as that of our family, whose unseen efforts have helped make the railway what it is today.

"We do intend to keep things operational for a while for special



Seen heading the 'Pines Express' – recalling the legendary Somerset & Dorset named train which ran along the route on its journeys from Manchester to Bournemouth between 1901 and 1967 – along the Gartell Light Railway on May 31, 2014 is 0-4-0T+T No. 9 Jean, which was built by Alan White in 2008.

THE BASINGSTOKER/CREATIVE COMMONS

events, just to keep the railway alive a little longer, without the commitment of regular open days.

"Finally, I must thank our visitors for their support of the railway over the years. We have met some lovely

people along the way, and hopefully we will go out on a high."

The railway's remaining open days are on August 30, September 27 and October 25. For details, see newglr.weebly.com

Vandals hit Norwich miniature line twice

NORWICH'S Eaton Park Miniature Railway has reopened after being targeted by vandals twice in a week.

Volunteers discovered damage to trackwork, signalling posts, and electrical wiring at about 9.30am on June 21, Father's Day, and was forced to close.

Three days later, it was discovered that the repairs to the pointwork and posts had been undone.

Further repairs saw the line reopened on June 28. Witnesses were being sought and police informed.

The railway, which has 3 ½in, 5in and 7 ¼ gauge lines, is owned by the Norwich and District Society of Model Engineers, which has run it since 1957.

Driver days replaced Ecclesbourne steam gala

THE Ecclesbourne Valley Railway's steam gala, planned for the weekend of July 10-12, was cancelled because the intended guest locomotive was not due to be ready in time.

The identity of the locomotive in question has not been revealed. Instead, the railway staged three days of driver experiences, featuring diesel locomotives on Friday and Saturday and steam on Sunday.



Are you a user of online professional networking website LinkedIn?

If so, follow *Heritage Railway* magazine's page at www.linkedin.com/company/heritage-railway-magazine/

New agreement means future is secured for popular Severn Valley riverside pathway

THE Severn Valley Railway has struck a new deal to protect the popular path that runs along its land between Country Park Halt, near Highley and Hampton Loade station.

Highley Parish Council has agreed to take on responsibility for maintaining the route after the previous funding arrangements between Sustrans and Shropshire Council ended in December 2024. The route forms part of Route 45 on the National Cycle Network and had faced closure, with public access for walkers, cyclists, families and visitors potentially being removed and the path blocked.

The announcement follows 18 months of negotiations between the SVR and the parish council.

The origins of the route date back to 2004, when Shropshire Council took out a 20-year lease on SVR land to create this section of Route 45, the path being subsequently maintained by Sustrans under a separate agreement with the county council.

When both agreements expired in 2024, the county council and Sustrans advised that they no longer had the financial resources to continue their involvement, and neither does the SVR to maintain the route itself, placing the popular amenity at risk of closure for insurance reasons. The new arrangement will see the parish council will

maintain the route under a peppercorn fee with the SVR.

A formal Memorandum of Understanding is now being prepared for signing, with maintenance work is expected to begin this autumn through a combination of contractors and volunteer support.

SVR's head of infrastructure, Chris Bond, said: "This agreement demonstrates what can be achieved through cooperation and shared commitment to the local community.

"Thanks to the hard work of everyone involved, this valuable riverside route can continue to be enjoyed by residents and visitors for many years to come."



The Severn Valley Railway's Chris Bond with Highley Parish Council chairman Tom Quinn. ALISON PALMER

Mallard aims for new success – on the football pitch!

By Robin Jones

SPEED is now of the essence for League One club Doncaster Rovers – which has adopted the distinctive blue livery of world record-holder LNER A4 Pacific No. 4468 *Mallard*, one of its home town's greatest locomotive products, for its new away kit.

On July 3, 1938, then just four months out of Doncaster Works, *Mallard* reached 126mph during a trial of the quick-acting Westinghouse QSA brake, operated by driver Joseph Duddington as it hauled a seven-coach train including a dynamometer car down Stoke Bank between Little Bytham and Essendine on the East Coast Main Line. It beat the previous record of 124.5mph set in Germany in 1936 by DRG Class 05 4-6-4 No. 002.

Rovers' new away kit has been finished in the A4's rich Garter blue, which it carried as it flew down Stoke Bank 88 years ago, with fine black and gold detailing throughout. The

36A Doncaster BR shed code sits proudly on the hem.

On the inner neck tape, stitched in close to the badge, *Mallard's* own engine number rides with every player and every fan though every shirt sold.

The new kit was launched on July 3, 88 years to the day the record was set.

A Rovers statement said: "A gleaming streak of Garter blue, thundering south down Stoke Bank, whistle screaming, smoke trailing behind it like a promise... *Mallard*, made in Doncaster and built by Doncaster hands, wasn't just built to run – it was built to win.

"Engineered right here, in our town, *Mallard* scorched its name into history and took Doncaster with it.

"This season, we take to the road wearing 36A, the historic shed code stamped onto Doncaster's locomotives, marking them as ours, built here, belonging here. Now it belongs to us too.

"Every away day, every long trip



The Doncaster Rovers FC away kit replicates the livery carried by *Mallard* during its unbeaten world record run. DONCASTER ROVERS

down the motorway, every away end bouncing in someone else's back yard, we carry it with us. That's what 36A means. That's what it's always meant. Wear it with pride.

"From the plant to the pitch. From Stoke Bank to away days up and down the country. Some records are never beaten. Some towns are never forgotten. One engine. One town

that never stopped being proud of it. And now, that same fire is running through Rovers."

Mallard is on static display at the National Railway Museum in York. The new kit is now on sale at the Club Doncaster Sports Village club shop, which can also be accessed at www.eliteprosports.co.uk/doncaster-rovers/

Australia gets Bideford's railway back on track

WHEN the Bideford Railway Heritage Centre realised that its Hibberd Planet 0-4-0DM No. 3832 of 1957 kept losing air pressure, it was advised that a new air regulator valve was needed. Without air pressure, the brakes did not work, so this was a serious issue.

The locomotive is one of only five left in the UK, so finding it a replacement valve was not an easy task. The component was built in Italy, but upon trawling the internet for many days, the only valve available online was for sale in Victoria, Australia.

Group Member Chris Connolly set about shipping the brand-new part over – and it arrived within just six days!

The new valve is now fitted, and the locomotive is now working perfectly, all set for the centre to offer cab rides on the public on July 26.

The locomotive has been repainted in Southern Region 1950s Departmental black livery and renumbered DS1170.

It was never a BR locomotive, but the number DS1170 was the next available in the departmental locomotive series.

The locomotive was originally sold to Dorman Long & Co, at Dock Street Foundry, Middlesbrough. In about 1974, it was acquired by dealer Frank Berry, of Leicester, who sold it on to Vaynor Quarries Ltd for use at Machen Quarry in Gwent. In 1986, dealer Thomas Hill Ltd, of Kilnhurst, in South Yorkshire, resold it



Planet Hibberd 0-4-0DM No. 3832 of 1957 at Bideford. BHRC

to British Industrial Sand Limited at Redhill in Surrey. It was preserved in 1999 when it was purchased by the Bridgend Valleys Railway, along with a sister diesel-hydraulic locomotive.

When the BVR decided to standardise on the hydraulic version, No. 3832 was purchased for use at Bideford, where it subsequently arrived by low-loader on September 14, 2000.

Right: The old and the new air regulator valves for the Bideford Railway Heritage Centre's Planet Hibberd. BHRC



IN BRIEF

Diesel service replaced on Swindon & Cricklade

AN investigation was underway after the Swindon & Cricklade Railway cancelled its diesel service from Blunsdon to South Meadow Lane on July 19 to make repairs following what was described as a "minor incident," with no injuries to passengers or staff.

The service was replaced on the day by a Wickham trolley running from Blunsdon to Swindon Mouldon Hill only. The railway has informed the Rail Accident Investigation Branch of the incident, further details of which remained undisclosed.

Triple 'Gronks' in action

THE Cholsey & Wallingford Railway is to run all three of its Class 08 shunters during a special 08 Day on Sunday, August 9. The aim is to double-head on some trains, and a triple-headed train may even run. Services will depart from Wallingford at 11am, 12.30pm, 2pm and 3.30pm. Departures from Cholsey will be at 11.30am, 1pm and 2.30pm.

Haulwen for Blaenavon

A MOUNTAIN Ash Colliery reunion is the theme of the Blaenavon Heritage Railway's September 25-27 gala, with Austerity No. 3879 *Haulwen* the latest to be added to the line-up.

It arrived at the South Wales colliery in 1979, joining WR 0-6-0PT No. 7754 and Andrew Barclay No. 2074 *Llantarnam Abbey* there.

Unique Wickham railbus to run first-ever passenger trips

By Robin Jones

A UNIQUE Wickham railbus has been delivered to its new permanent home at Shillingstone station on the North Dorset Railway.

Wickham & Co of Ware built only five four-wheeled railbuses for passenger use, but none survive. A sixth was constructed as a departmental vehicle, however, to specifications designed by early computer pioneer Elliott Brothers of London for the purpose of track inspection at speed.

At the time, no automatic track inspection vehicle was considered as accurate as manual measurement, which was time-consuming and interfered with normal rail operations. The British Transport Commission asked Elliott Brothers to come up with a design, which was then built by Wickham & Co as a dedicated Track Recording Coach.

Accordingly, No. 999507 went into service in early 1959 in a smart pale yellow and brown livery. Later



The railbus in its *Laboratory 20* livery at the Lavender Line in 2017. MIKE FLOATE

renamed *Laboratory 20*, it took on the BR Research Department's red and blue.

Developing technology

The on-board equipment tracked measurements on photo-sensitive paper and display any previous record alongside, making differences instantly apparent. Recordings could be made at speeds up to 30mph.

The Wickhams were among many railbuses from different manufacturers trialled by BR in the 1950s because they were cheap to buy and economical to run; the Wickham railbus, which was generally considered the best, could do about nine miles per gallon of diesel.

They were lightweight, with a normal tare weight of 11½ tons thanks to the tubular construction, and the body was rubber-mounted on the underframe.

Wickham's radius-arm controlled axleboxes with underslung semi-elliptic springs and Woodhead-Monroe hydraulic shock absorbers made the railbus unusually steady, and therefore ideal for track data collection. Measurements were further stabilised by a high-speed gyroscope mounted immediately above the axle.

While its passenger-carrying cousins were mostly on minor lines in Scotland, No. 999507 continued



No. 999507 in its track recording days. STUART MACKAY COLLECTION

to be useful and was not withdrawn until 1991, late enough to enter the heritage sector. In 1997, it went to the East Lancashire Railway, where it was mechanically restored and repainted in BR green, although the interior, stripped of its data recording equipment, remained empty.

In 2003, it was sold to a private owner and moved to the Middleton Railway, where it was fitted out with seats salvaged from scrapped from Class 101 DTCL No. 56220, and so it became a passenger-carrying vehicle for the first time. In 2005, it went out to the Llangollen Railway railcar gala and stayed on until the following year, returning to Middleton in August 2006, where it was restored to its Derby Research Department red/blue livery.

Home to home

In 2008, the private owner decided to sell No. 999507, and it went to the Lavender Line, where it was in regular passenger service for more than a decade. In recent years it has been in storage but has now been acquired by the NDR.

The line already has planning permission to go operational, and as reported on News, page 14, has just been granted the necessary Office of Rail exemptions. It hopes to start carrying passengers on its half-a-mile of track either later this year or early in 2027.

Passengers will initially be carried in a 12-seater brake van, which emerged from the station's workshop just a few days before the railbus arrived. However, the plan is to restore the railbus and use it as a 48-seater coach. If the mechanics prove suitable and parts can be sourced, the railbus can then made self-propelled and might then be offered for visits to other heritage railways.

The railbus will be joining another and contemporary Wickham design at Shillingstone – a fully-restored type 17A trolley built in 1959.



The unique Wickham railbus delivered to Shillingstone on June 23. NDR



Driver Dave Hallett takes in a breath of fresh air as 2-4-2T No.762 *Lyn* heads up the gradient with the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's 10.45am train from Killington Lane to Woody Bay station on a blisteringly hot June 25, pictured against the glorious North Devon landscape and a deep blue sky. The temperature that day approached 31 degrees centigrade (88F) in nearby Parracombe, making it one of the hottest days that the 1ft 11½in gauge line had ever operated on throughout its entire 128-year public and heritage railway history. BARBARA PRINCE



Lord Faulkner of Worcester, president of the Heritage Railway Association, and guests at the naming ceremony. MR



Hunslet 0-4-0DH No. 6981 back on track and gleaming in the sunshine ahead of the naming ceremony. SALLY CLIFFORD.



Members of re-enactment group His Majesty's 33rd Regiment of Foot 1812 to 1816 flanking the obelisk for the wreath laying at Matthew Murray's resting place. MR

Salamanca the second now in traffic at Middleton

By Sally Clifford

DIGNITARIES and guests gathered at the Middleton Railway for the naming of a memorial locomotive ahead of its official return to the rails.

To coincide with the 200th year since the death of Leeds locomotive builder Matthew Murray, Hunslet 0-4-0DH No. 6981 of 1968 carries the nameplate *Salamanca* in honour of the first viable twin-cylinder steam engine built by him in 1812 for the Middleton when it was a colliery line serving the local quarry, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 345.

Salamanca is understood to take its name from the Battle of Salamanca, successfully fought by the Duke of Wellington. Performing the official naming was Lord Faulkner of Worcester, president of the Heritage Railway Association.

"We are commemorating the life of Matthew Murray. It is 200 years since

he died, and we are commemorating his life by naming a modern Leeds-built loco with the same name of the first loco that was ever built in Leeds – that is the link," said Middleton vice president Ian Smith.

"Murray's big contribution was he invented what is known as the double-acting cylinder. Prior, many engines had a fly wheel. With Murray's invention, you always had steam, and that was a practical proposition.

"It is more than 200 years since an engine has carried the name *Salamanca*. The railway's view has always been that we should celebrate our history, and one way of doing so is to put historic names on our locos because it helps to tell the story."

Re-enactment group His Majesty's 33rd Regiment of Foot 1812 to 1816 performed a guard of honour to welcome invited dignitaries and guests to the event held on Sunday, June 21.

Among those in attendance were Middleton president Hilary Benn, Labour MP for Leeds South and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Coun Stephen Holroyd, and his partner and consort, Simon Mapals; and the former leader of Leeds City Council, Baroness Blake of Leeds CBE.

Following the ceremony, guests boarded Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 2387 of 1941 *Brookes No. 1* – the last Hunslet 14in saddle tank and only survivor of its class, which was built for Brookes Limited to use at the Lightscliffe Works in Halifax – for a trip along the mile-long line to Middleton Park.

No. 6981 served its working life at Conoco Ltd, Immingham, before being preserved in 2011. It has been under restoration since arriving at Middleton a decade ago.

Ian said: "The engine is a standard Hunslet 1960s design. Hundreds of these were built with different power

ranges. The first *Salamanca* was a ground-breaking pioneer loco. This was the last major design by the Hunslet Engine Company, so you have a book-end – the first and the last."

"It was flame-proofed for use in the oil refinery; that has now been taken out. It operated on an oil refinery until it was preserved in 2011. Then it was privately bought and brought to the railway, where it has been restored and repainted in its original livery. Now, it is going to be a memorial to Matthew Murray by using the name *Salamanca*."

No. 6981 will now assist on running days and at events throughout the year. In remembrance of the pioneering engineer, Middleton chairman Charles Milner, accompanied by some of the guests, laid a wreath at the obelisk at Matthew Murray's final resting place in St Matthew's Church, Holbeck, Leeds.

Cavell Van to feature in Channel 4 documentary

THE story of the return of a SECR PMV to Dover last November is to be told as part of a new Channel 4 documentary series about the port's daily activities.

As reported in issue 339, PMV No. 132 was placed on static display inside cruise terminal one ahead of Remembrance Day and to commemorate the 105th anniversary of when it carried the body of The Unknown Warrior from the port to London in 1919, ahead of his burial in Westminster Abbey. Before that, it also transported the bodies of two other national heroes – nurse Edith Cavell, killed for helping Allied soldiers escape during the First World War, and merchant seaman Capt Charles Fryatt, who was executed by the Germans in 1916.

The documentary captures the emotional return of the vehicle to Dover, including the journey there from its usual home at Bodiam station (where it is on static display and open to visitors on Kent & East Sussex Railway running days) to form the centrepiece of a Remembrance

event held at the former Dover Marine station, as well as its significant history.

After the service, the van stayed at the terminal for a few days for the public to visit and hear about its story from KESR volunteers. The visit was made possible through a collaboration between the Port of Dover, Southeastern, the KESR and the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum, allowing television cameras unprecedented access to document the story and the people involved.

KESR chairman Derrick Bilsby said: "The return of the van to Dover was an incredibly moving occasion, and we are delighted that this and its important story will be shared with a national audience. It is far more than a railway vehicle – it is a powerful symbol of remembrance and service, with direct links to some of the most poignant events in 20th century British history.

"The producers recognised the emotional significance of the story, making it a fitting conclusion for the series. We hope that railway



SECR PMV No. 132 inside the former cruise terminal one at Dover, from where it carried the body of The Unknown Warrior 105 years previously. KESR

enthusiasts, those interested in history and the wider public will enjoy seeing this remarkable piece of heritage and learning more about its unique place in our nation's story."

The Cavell Van will be featured in the final episode the second series of Dover 24/7 – Britain's Busiest Port, to be broadcast on Monday, August 10.

Main line return for flagship Pacific

By Geoff Courtney

ONE of the world's flagship preserved locomotives has returned to the main line two years after being taken off railtour services for a major maintenance, repair, and safety upgrade.

It is ex-New South Wales Government Railways Class C38 No. 3801, a streamlined Pacific revered Down Under as Australia's *Flying Scotsman*.

Unlike its iconic Sir Nigel Gresley-designed counterpart, however, it has endured more than its fair share of ups, downs, and controversies since being saved for preservation by the NSW state government after its withdrawal in 1962 with one million miles on the clock.

The biggest setback, and by far the most dramatic, came during a restoration in 2007 when its custodian, Transport Heritage NSW, rejected as unfit for purpose a brand-new £600,000 boiler built for the locomotive by DB Meiningen of Germany.

This unexpected development set off alarm bells throughout the Australian heritage railway movement, and indeed NSW taxpayers, who were indirectly funding the restoration of the state-owned Pacific, and belief grew that No. 3801 may end up being suitable for only heritage lines rather than the main line, or, worst of all, as nothing more than a static exhibit. Those fears, understandable

as they were due to the rocky path the locomotive had travelled on, proved to be unfounded, and that could be no better illustrated than the sight of the machine emerging into the limelight from its NSW Rail Museum home in Thirlmere, south of Sydney, on June 20 after its latest two-year break from duty.

In a country that has honed insouciance into a fine art, even those most adept at the practice would surely have been impressed by the look of the green with yellow lining engine.

British devotees would have applauded if the scenario involved a UK-built locomotive here on home soil, but while that may not be the way Down Under, a sense of pride, and perhaps even relief, was surely just beneath the surface.

David Bennett, head of engagement at Transport Heritage NSW, said the work included realignment of the driving wheels, replacement of the motion gear, and preparatory work for roller bearing replacement, which would likely take place next year, while there had additionally been safety upgrades.

After undertaking its successful 100-mile main line trial on June 20 from Thirlmere to Wollongong and return, the 36,273-lbft tractive effort Pacific was cleared for a return to revenue-earning railtour duty, which was launched on July 25 and is scheduled to run through to October.



Many happy returns: Australian heritage railway enthusiast Michael Kemp captured this fine shot of preserved ex-NSW Government Railways No. 3801 passing through the southern Sydney suburb of Como during post-overhaul main line test runs on June 20. Following the success of these trials, the flagship Pacific was scheduled to return to railtour duty on July 25. MICHAEL KEMP

Readers – keep up to date with all the latest!

YOU may have seen recent news reports regarding the planned closure of a number of TG Jones stores (formerly WH Smith). At present, it remains unclear whether your nearest store will be affected.

To ensure you continue receiving future issues without interruption, we encourage you to consider one of the following alternative options should your local store close.

→ Subscribe – see page 30 of this issue for great offers. It guarantees best price and reliable delivery.

→ Go on-line to our shop, where you can buy a copy and have it delivered to your door. shop.kelsey.co.uk

→ Use the online store finder to see other stockists in your area. www.frontline-group.co.uk/store-finder

→ Order a copy at your local newsagent for collection by yourself or request home delivery.

An hour's *Trojan* haulage raises cash for charity

By Robin Jones

SIXTEEN Alstom staff from Great Western Railway's Reading depot hauled a 25-tonne steam locomotive by hand in a one-hour challenge at Didcot Railway Centre to raise money for Variety, the Children's Charity.

On July 1, the Alstom team hauled Avonside 0-6-0ST No. 1340 *Trojan* of 1897 along a 273-yard stretch of track continuously for an hour as

they were cheered on by visitors. The squad pulling *Trojan* were further strengthened by three members of staff from Great Western Railway, and the fundraising event was supported by Alec's Angels, which provided specialist equipment and guidance.

Clocking up 1640 yards, the test of endurance has raised more than £1500 so far, with further donations invited at www.justgiving.com/page/che-mccarthy-5



Pulling with purpose: The Alstom team hauling *Trojan* at Didcot Railway Centre. BEN GOODWIN

Pulling with Purpose: The Steam Locomotive Challenge was the brainchild of Che McCarthy, project supply chain leader at Alstom. "Hauling a 25-tonne steam locomotive by hand was a huge achievement and a brilliant day for everyone involved," he said. "We've brought together colleagues, partners and the public to support Variety, and that's something we're really proud of."

"It started as a simple idea in the office – wondering whether we could actually move a locomotive ourselves – and quickly grew into something much bigger. In the lead-up, the team trained together, building the same trust and coordination we rely on every day in the depot. That shared effort is what made it possible, and it's even more rewarding knowing we've done it for such an important cause."

The UK's leading supplier of new trains and train services, the Alstom team at Reading provides technical support and spares supply for the Class 387 fleets based there, and operated by both Heathrow Express and Great Western Railway.

Unlimited railway adventures during the Summer holidays, all for one great price!



Photos Kindly Supplied By Jon Bowers

Available from the 23rd July to the 1st September 2026.

The season ticket can be used as many times as they wish throughout the time listed above.

£60.00 – One adult/up to three children.
£100.00 – Two adults and up to three children.

BLUEBELL RAILWAY SEASON TICKET 2026



Find Out More Online At
Bluebell-Railway.Com

Enjoy The Summer With The Bluebell Railway!



**BLUEBELL®
RAILWAY**



Bluebell

ON PARADE
7-9 AUGUST 2026

Tickets available to buy now!



**BLUEBELL
RAILWAY**



The former flower market building's exterior in 1980, shortly before the transport museum opened inside. TFL



The exterior of the museum in Covent Garden as currently presented. OWEN HAYWARD

BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF LONDON'S HERITAGE TRANSPORT HUB

Almost 20 years after it last received a facelift, London Transport Museum is about to undergo a refurbishment to accommodate growing visitor numbers. Owen Hayward visited the Covent Garden site and spoke to its director and CEO, Elizabeth McKay, about why now is the time for such a major project to begin.

Few places could complain about being the victim of their own success. Rising visitor numbers are something most visitor attractions would celebrate, especially in today's challenging climate, in which heritage railways are seeing passenger numbers changing in response to a slew of external factors – and, in some cases,

dramatically so. For the London Transport Museum, however, there is such a strain on its Covent Garden base that the venue is now near enough hitting capacity.

It opened inside the former flower market building at one end of the famous piazza in central London in 1980, fighting off a plan that included turning the site into a car park – and

how better off the city is for this. Within its walls are a myriad of artefacts from decades of the capital's transportation history, from concept models of London Underground stations to vintage taxis, trams and buses.

Prior to establishing itself at its now iconic home, the collection was started by the London General Omnibus Company at the



An digital rendition of how the new entrance to the museum may look when completed. The café and shop entrance to the right will still be retained, but museum access will be through the original 1980s route. DE MATOS RYAN/LTM



Above: Some reconfiguration will take place, as this artist's impression shows, but no current exhibits will be lost.
DE MATOS RYAN/LTM



Left: The museum occupies a former flower market site which closed in 1971. This view shows its interior in 1979, prior to fitting out after LTM took occupancy of it.
TFL



Above: While mezzanine floors have been installed since its flower market days, the structure of the museum building is largely unchanged, with the original ornate columns, roof and windows adding character.
OWEN HAYWARD

turn of the 20th century, preserving examples of the fleet as they came up for retirement. This was later taken over by the London Electric Railway, which in turn became part of the London Passenger Transport Board and, ultimately, through various successors, Transport for London. The contents of the collection in those years expanded to cover all transport offerings from the city – road, rail, and everything associated with them.

Many of the vehicles in the collection were initially displayed at the Museum of British Transport in Clapham, housed in a former tram depot building on Clapham High Street. Opened in 1963 but closed nine years later, what would be come the LTM's assets moved to Syon Park in Brentford in 1973, remaining there until 1977. When the flower market at Covent Garden closed in 1971, the Victorian-era building presented an opportunity to establish a museum in the heart of the city, opening its doors on March 28, 1980.

In 2005, the museum temporarily closed for a £22-million refurbishment project to enable the expansion of its displays and better accommodate the increasing visitor count, reopening on November 22, 2007.

Now, here we are, a year under two full decades later, seeing LTM announce a plan for another multi-million pound refurbishment, as reported in the previous issue of *Heritage Railway* magazine.

Modern needs

"I think we were part of the original place-making when the flower market moved out in 1980, and I want to make sure that we're here for another 50 years," explained CEO Elizabeth McKay, "but you can only do that if you invest, look after it, and you keep it relevant and interesting. Success means we have to step up; in 2007, we were welcoming

300,000 people, and now that's 450,000 museum visitors alone. If you look at all of the people who cross our threshold for whatever purpose, it's 1.7 million! That's a massive growth.

"That's not to say the museum hasn't had any investment since 2007; it just hasn't had significant capital investment. There have been gallery renewals and things such as temporary exhibitions to keep it interesting, but it's now time for that in a serious way.

"Museums typically undergo major transformations only once every few decades, yet the last time London Transport Museum had an upgrade was only 2007. This is really our moment to look ahead to ensure the museum remains not only relevant, but also leading, and that the children visiting today will bring their own kids here."

So, given that the previous refurbishment took place so recently that anyone born at that time will have only just become classed as a legal adult, why is now the time for such a major project to be repeated?

"We are welcoming more visitors than ever before, and last year was our busiest to date, with 1.7 million people crossing the threshold here, 450,000 of those specifically for the museum," Elizabeth points out.

"Our current space limits what we can offer. If we want to reach more people, tell more stories and have a greater impact in the community, we need to be thinking long term.

"The museum here in Covent Garden turns 50 in 2030, and we want it to remain a place that isn't just preserved, but one which is genuinely future-fit.

"This programme really is not optional – it is absolutely essential. At its heart, this is about reimagining and upgrading this iconic Grade II-listed building so it can do more for more people. When the museum opened in 1980,

it was a bold moment for Covent Garden, transforming these historic market buildings into a place for culture, learning, and public enjoyment. Since then, we have welcomed more than 10 million people through our doors to this wonderful space.

"Covent Garden's history of heritage and reinvention is exactly why today matters, because now it's our turn to get this building ready for what comes next."

This plan has not been a spur of the moment decision; it has been bubbling away since before Elizabeth took up her current position at the top of LTM. "The inspiration for the vision came in the summer of 2023, just before I was appointed as director of the museum. I wanted LTM to be fit for the future, and that meant in everything that we do, so not just modernising the museum, but also our ways of working, the way we tell stories, and how the commercial activities all work together.

"After doing a walkabout around in the piazza and looking at the museum's position, I found myself thinking that we actually need a statement here. We've become a bit too quiet and recessed. I was deputy director at the time, so I knew the museum really well, and because we have a great team, we were able to start putting together this vision, which we've been working on getting ready ever since.

"What we've been doing behind the scenes are mundane yet vitally important things such as planning permissions, assembling the team, and appointing a master plan architect. Now it's time for it all to become reality."

New spaces, new stories

At present, visitors to the museum enter the building through the shop to one side of the main building. Part of this renovation will include creating a new entrance point – coincidentally being the museum's

original one when opened in 1980 – along with creating 500 square metres of new floorspace for galleries and exhibitions. But how is such a feat achieved in somewhere so restrictive as central London?

“We can’t go up, out, or down, so we had to get really creative with what we could do inside our footprint. Some of it is through repurposing existing space not previously open to the public. The new media gallery and learning and exhibition space, for example, will occupy what was once back-of-house office space. We are fortunate to have museum offices above Leicester Square station, which is just four minutes away, so we’re able to move some of our admin activity. The next two galleries are clever extensions of existing mezzanines, one at the back of the museum near Tavistock Road and the other overlooking the piazza. Those are the two significant larger galleries that will come on later in the programme.

“The entrance will be a wonderful welcome dedicated to the museum, and then visitors will exit through the shop, resulting in a new and improved flow as when visitors are in the museum, we are creating more options for where they go next. That will necessitate some reconfiguring of the main flower market hall with the large buses and trams. We’re not losing any vehicles, though – it’s just about helping to better tell the story.

“What visitors will really experience are these additional new galleries. One will be about the people who’ve made London what it is (past, present, future), and the second about innovation, problem-solving and engineering, such as great breakthroughs and the things that are being worked on now that will become the future of London. Much of what will happen in the future is already being worked on right now.

“For our younger visitors, we are expanding the All Aboard play area, and we have an additional surprise we’re devising for that age group in between the little ones and teenagers. We are really trying to have something for everyone, as well as more relevant stories and exhibitions for them to enjoy.”

All of this ties in with the upcoming 50th anniversary of the museum, and Elizabeth has several goals to achieve which have been incorporated into this refurbishment plan, including the reduction of emissions – something which is currently a hot topic in



One of the rail exhibits inside is Metropolitan A class 4-4-0T No. 23, built by Beyer Peacock in 1866 and withdrawn in 1948. OWEN HAYWARD

much of the tourism sector.

“Environmental sustainability is also a core goal of LTM50, and by investing in greener infrastructure, including low-carbon heating and cooling, we are targeting a 90% reduction in scope one and two emissions by 2030. I think we could not ask for a better example of the need to futureproof against adverse weather conditions than with what we have experienced in recent months.

“It’s all integrated, and the roof renovation project helps with that. We are looking at cooling and heating systems with less of a carbon footprint. We already have solar panels on the roof, but they come to a natural end, so they do need to be regularly replaced. By doing this, they will then become 70% more efficient. We’re additionally phasing out our gas boilers, so there are many measures we’ve thought about and are implementing.

Huge cost and funding

“The whole roof project has gone to Arts Council England, which has contributed £999,999 towards the cost of this area of focus. There will be some refurbishment carried out, some parts replaced, and some repaired. It’s something that happens with all heritage buildings, so we have also consulted with other colleagues in the sector who also look after listed heritage buildings.

“That kind of investment is so important: you don’t see it, but if you don’t have it, forget

the rest.”

With such a huge amount of work to be carried out, the question on everyone’s mind is, no doubt, what will it all cost? “This is a £26m capital project,” Elizabeth reveals, “but the good news is that we are more than halfway there. We have primed the pump with our own museum reserves for £2m, and I’d like to recognise those who have helped us to reach this exciting point. Transport for London is investing £12m between now and 2030, and the London Transport Museum Friends is also generously donating £300,000 in that same time.

“Those of you good at maths will realise that means we still have a little funding gap, and who doesn’t have a funding gap these days? We need to bring more people with us on this journey, whether it’s through investment or collaboration or advocacy. There are many ways to be part of what we’re building today, and I can promise you the impact will be long-lasting not just for the museum, but also for the communities and audiences we serve. This museum tells the story of a city that doesn’t stand still, a city that has constantly adapted, evolved, and reimagined itself. Now it’s our turn to do the same, and your chance to join us on this great journey and make it happen.

“This transformation goes way beyond the building itself. It will allow us to expand our role as a centre for education, STEM skills, and creativity. It will bring new energy to Covent



Metropolitan Railway carriage No. 400, which was restored to portray how some of the vehicles were converted to EMUs for electrified lines. Just behind is Bo-Bo No. 5 John Hampden. OWEN HAYWARD



A 1938 tube car used on the Northern Line and a Routemaster bus inside the Covent Garden museum. OWEN HAYWARD

Garden, attracting broader, more diverse audiences through expanded exhibitions, events and public programming.

“This transformation will unfold over the next four years. We will remain open throughout the carefully managed works to minimise disruption. Along the way, we’ll have lots of key milestones and moments of celebration. New spaces will be revealed, new experiences launched, and new stories shared.”

TfL Commissioner Andy Lord spoke of his excitement for what is to come: “At TfL, we often talk about keeping London moving, but transport is about much more than movement – it underpins most, perhaps arguably all, of what makes this city work. It connects people to jobs, family education and opportunity, and it supports businesses, growth and livelihoods. Transport shapes the kind of city London becomes, and it sits right at the heart of London’s economic success and its future growth

“That’s where the LTM plays such a critical role as a unique part of our family. We are incredibly proud to own it, but what makes it work especially well is that it operates independently as a charity, with the creativity and partnership that allows. This combination means the museum can preserve London’s transport heritage and bring it to life in ways that are relevant and keeping with the times, all under the incredible leadership of Elizabeth and her team, who are far better at coming up with these ideas than any of us in TfL are.

“We spend a lot of time thinking about the future at TfL, including how to make it greener, safer, and more accessible. We also think how we continue to best support this growing city that within a year or two will have a population of more than 10 million and will be Europe’s first mega city. But any time we look to the future, we have to first understand the past and the journey that got us here today.

“That’s what the LTM does so incredibly well and why the investment in its future is so important and so vital. Let’s keep the story going, reaching new audiences and helping shape the next chapter in London’s story.”

Landlord backing

The value of LTM to the local area is also recognised by its landlord, Shaftesbury Capital PLC, whose director of marketing and communications, Catherine Riccomini, added: “We are incredibly proud to have the



A K2-class trolleybus (left) and a 1:6 scale model of London County Council Tramway No. 1 Bluebird are examples of how electricity helped to drive London’s transport development. OWEN HAYWARD

LTM as part of our community. What makes the museum quite so special is that it does far more than preserve the story of London’s transport network. In many ways, the museum is a wonderful example of how tradition and innovation can go hand in hand.

“As London continues to grow and to evolve, our cultural institutions have a vital role to play. They are places of learning of discovery, creativity, and connection. They help define the characters of the neighbourhoods that they’re in, and they contribute to the vibrancy that makes London one of the world’s great cities.

“They are also part of London’s economic infrastructure. Cultural institutions attract talent, visitors and investment. They support local businesses, strengthen neighbourhoods, and ensure that London remains globally competitive as a place to visit, work and live.

“Great destinations should offer great opportunities for people to encounter culture in the everyday, to spark curiosity and to enjoy communities coming together to enjoy something special. Those moments should only really belong and feel true to that individual place. That’s why London’s cultural institutions matter quite so much,

whether it’s the transport museum, the Royal Opera House, the ballet school, or the many theatres, galleries, and creative institutions that surround us. They’re all fundamental to the success of places like Covent Garden, but also to the city itself. By attracting visitors and supporting local businesses and enriching local communities, they help ensure that London remains one of the most dynamic cities in the world.”

The future looks bright for LTM, and Elizabeth is clearly optimistic about that: “The one thing personally I love is whenever I mention I work here, people’s faces brighten and they tell me how much they love the museum. Perhaps they came as a child, or they’re currently visiting with their own children or grandchildren, who also love it. I love their reactions, and I rarely meet someone who has not visited or doesn’t know about the London Transport Museum.

“The next museum director is going to have a fun job carrying this on, and visitors are going to have many tangible benefits – the new galleries, the investment in visitor amenities, things that might be invisible to them like how they move through the museum... it’s going to be a better experience for all.” **HR**



Left: Creating opportunities for young people is one mantra of the modern LTM; during the press launch on June 25, attendees were treated to a musical soiree by local while talent surrounded by heritage assets. OWEN HAYWARD

Right: LTM Director and CEO Elizabeth McKay, who started work on the refurbishment plans before she was appointed to the role in 2023. OWEN HAYWARD



HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Seeing double on the West Somerset Railway as GWR 4-6-0s Nos. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* and 7802 *Bradley Manor* head through Kentsford shortly after departing from Watchet with a members' special for the Erlestoke Manor Fund on July 4. DON BISHOP





Code Black results in steam ban – but not before tour disruptions!

By Owen Hayward

WEEKS of continuous hot weather with little to no rainfall culminated in Network Rail upping its fire risk level to black, resulting in a temporary ban of main line steam operations – but not before two large fires caused travel chaos.

On July 10, the fire brigade received almost 40 calls reporting vegetation ablaze alongside the lines at Stratford, East London, at 6.54pm. The affected areas were between operating lines and resulted in the power to overhead wires being switched off, causing travel chaos during the evening peak hours.

Firefighting crews came from stations at Plaistow, Poplar, Ilford and Bethnal Green to bring the blaze under control, with a London Fire Brigade statement confirming that this had been achieved by 10pm. However, damage had been caused to some signalling infrastructure which saw delays carry over to the following day. The cause of the blaze was unknown, but was not steam locomotive-related owing to no tours having passed through the area.

However, in the afternoon of July 11, a fire broke out beside the line near Winsford, Cheshire, crippling the rail network in the area for several hours. A leaked Network Rail daily log attributed the cause to a passing steam locomotive, LMS 'Black Five' No. 44871 having gone through the area shortly beforehand, although it was being towed in light steam by a Class 47 at the time. The Stanier 4-6-0 was being moved from West Coast Railway's Carnforth depot to Crewe

Heritage Centre in readiness for the Railway Touring Company's 'North Wales Coast Express' the next day, which started at Liverpool Lime Street and ran to Holyhead.

Following the blaze at Winsford, which also damaged signalling equipment, this tour instead ran diesel-hauled throughout, with No. 44871 spending the day on static display in the heritage centre.

Steam alterations

No less than four steam-hauled tours had been scheduled for that date; one of these saw WCR take SR West Country Class 4-6-2 No. 34028 *Eddystone* out of King's Cross to York on its first railtour up the East Coast Main Line, working a Railway Touring Company 'The White Rose' trip. Heading out via Welwyn and Stevenage, *Eddystone* was largely there for aesthetic reasons, with a Class 47 coupled to the rear of the train providing much of the power throughout the run each way.

Another RTC tour was the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' from Crewe to Carlisle which, unlike the York jaunt, started out diesel-hauled to Carnforth. From there it was worked by another of WCR's Bulleid pool, No. 34067 *Tangmere*. The return journey to Preston, where diesel took over again, was via Settle to Carlisle line as opposed to the WCML, meaning that this tour was largely unaffected by the resulting fire-caused delays, with the most being 30 minutes lost on the schedule by the time it departed Edge Hill.

Meanwhile, Saphos Trains' 'English Riviera Express' from High Wycombe to Kingswear had been due to swap diesel for steam at Taunton,

where LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* was scheduled to take over for the journey to the terminus of the Dartmouth Steam Railway. However, the decision was taken prior to the tour's departure that it would instead run diesel-hauled throughout.

Castle delayed

Vintage Trains' 'Ticket to Ride' to Liverpool, the name taken from a Beatles hit, was the unfortunate outlier and fell victim to the delays caused by the incident at Winsford.

The morning's outward departure from Birmingham New Street behind Class 37 No. 37240 had already been delayed by nearly 50 minutes owing to a points failure in the Coleshill area. WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* – which had made an unexpected return to service on VT's 'White Rose' to York on July 4 following a boiler retube and maintenance – took over Nuneaton for the remainder of the journey, arriving at Liverpool Lime Street just eight minutes late overall.

Departure for the run back to Birmingham was just 17 minutes down, but as the train approached Huyton, the brakes came on. It then sat stationary for more than two hours as a result of the ongoing delays, before slow progress finally saw the tour arrive at Crewe at 11.02pm. Here, the assisting diesel was run round to pilot No. 7029 for the remainder of the run back to Birmingham, although this route had to be altered as the Trent Valley line was soon due to enter an engineering possession.

The consequence of this was that passengers who had joined

at Lichfield, Tamworth, Nuneaton and Coleshill would no longer be able to reach their starting stations, so buses were arranged to convey them from Stafford.

Customer feedback shared online praised the efforts of VT's staff for their continued attentiveness and provision of refreshments in the hot temperatures during the delays, despite some of the passengers not having made it home until 4am on July 12!

Meanwhile, the rerouted stock finally arrived back at Birmingham New Street at 12.50am and thereafter returned to Tyseley depot at the end of what was an exceptionally long day for its crew and on-board volunteer stewards.

It was subsequently announced the Network Rail was upping its fire risk rating to black from midnight on July 13; this threatened to trap Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* in Cambridgeshire, where it had been running on the Nene Valley Railway for two weekends (see feature, pages 68-69). Initially scheduled to depart Overton during the afternoon of July 13, a Class 66 was arranged and dispatched from Belmont during the Sunday evening, meeting the A1 there shortly after 8pm and then towing it to The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's headquarters at Hopetown Darlington, where it will be spending most of the summer following its visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway from July 27 to August 8.

Railtours earmarked for steam haulage in the week immediately following were either cancelled or saw diesel traction take over for the duration.

On July 10, a highly polished West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* heads Locomotive Services Limited's 'The Chairman's Train' from Hellifield to Carlisle Upperby. Owing to the high fire risk at the time, Class 50 No. 50050 *Fearless* was assisting, the pair seen here on the climb towards Ribbleshead. ANDREW NAYLOR





With no hint of an exhaust visible, Swanage Railway SR West Country 4-6-2 Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone* crosses Digswell Viaduct, in Hertfordshire, with the Railway Touring Company's 'White Rose' to York on July 11. This was the Bulleid light Pacific's first jaunt up the East Coast Main Line, although with the high risk of fire at the time, the assisting diesel at the rear was doing most of the work.
BARRY GOODEY/B G DRONE SHOTS

A new RTC tour to Warwick and Reading

by Tim Hobman

THE Railway Touring Company has announced a brand-new tour for the current season from East Anglia to Reading via the Midlands on Saturday, September 5, titled 'The Wensum and Thames Explorer'.

Starting from Norwich behind West Country light Pacific No.34028 *Eddystone*, the tour will head west on the Breckland Line to pick up more passengers at Thetford. Continuing west, the train is booked to take the Ely-Peterborough line and stop at March for more travellers.

The next pick-up point is planned to be Peterborough as *Eddystone* briefly flirts with the East Coast Main Line heading north, but instead takes the Stamford line to run through Oakham, and Melton Mowbray, to arrive at Leicester for yet more passengers.

Heading for Nuneaton on the West Coast Main Line, the tour is booked to pick up at Nuneaton and then run via Water Orton to the West Midlands. Taking the Chiltern Main Line to run via Tyseley, Solihull and Dorridge, and the tour will arrive at the first destination of Warwick.

Those who decide to alight at Warwick will have just over four hours to explore the county town located on the River Avon, with its impressive castle.

Leaving Warwick, the trip will continue on the Chiltern Main Line, through Leamington Spa and Banbury, before picking up the Cherwell Valley line to the next destination of Oxford. Those leaving the train here will have three hours to look around the university city.

The final stop is planned to be Reading, and so the tour will leave Oxford and head south to Didcot,

before turning east on the Great Western Main Line.

There will be just two hours for a leg-stretch in Reading before the return journey, this time diesel-hauled back to Norwich via the same route as the outward journey, picking up passengers at Oxford and Warwick, and setting down customers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in Premier Dining, First Class and Standard Class, with a discount for junior travellers and family bookings on this tour.

➔ For more details and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net

English Riviera signalbox may become holiday home

By Robin Jones

AN ideal seaside home for enthusiasts has gone to auction.

The disused Grade II-listed structure on the platform at Torre station, on the Newton Abbot to Paignton line, was offered for sale online by Paul Fosh Auctions with a guide price of £54,000, with full planning permission for conversion to a holiday home.

The three-storey rectangular brick and glass-fronted 'box' dates back to 1848 when the station opened.

Sean Roper, of Paul Fosh Auctions, said: "We have had a great deal of interest from rail enthusiasts and also from local people in this former signalbox and its possible future.

"The top floor of the property retains its now non-functioning rows of ancient signal levers and handles and even a signalman's armchair.

"The top floor signal room has a cast-iron pot-bellied coal-fed stove originating from the age of steam, wood panelling and high ceilings, and it is flooded with light from the panoramic windows. What makes this of particular interest is that the



The former signalbox on Torre station in Torquay was listed for auction as we closed for press. PAUL FOSH AUCTIONS

railway line to the English Riviera at Torquay is still very much in use both by tourists, commuters, and by schoolchildren.

"We've built up a fair reputation for having individual, quirky lots at our auctions amid the more traditional properties, and this is most certainly among the most unusual we've offered over the years.

"I'd say the property would be just perfect for the avid trainspotter or perhaps a holiday home owner who wants to be able to go on a weekend

away and simply step from the train and be at home. The signalbox is within walking distance of Torquay's famed beach and attractions. It really is a wonderful opportunity for those who prefer something a little bit different."

Planning consent has already been implemented by installing polycarbonate protection on the windows, and building regulations have been passed by the local authority. The accommodation comprises three floors with proposed

plans for a snug ground floor living area, a first-floor en suite bedroom, and the third floor having an open-plan dining room and kitchen.

Torre station is managed by Great Western Railway but unstaffed. With its ornate main buildings and intricate designed passenger footbridge, the railway station was designated a world heritage site in January 1975.

The 'box' was among 120 properties offered in an online sale from July 28-30.



The levers inside Torry signalbox. PAUL FOSH AUCTIONS

Duke to go retro in Gloucester – and double-header with ‘Brit’ is mooted

By Owen Hayward

UNIQUE BR standard Class 8 No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* will be visiting its namesake city for one day of the upcoming August bank holiday weekend, during which it will be on static display in the city's station as an attraction of the Gloucester Goes Retro festival.

The event on August 29 will take place along the streets and dock areas, which will be filled with more than 500 classic vehicles, along with live entertainment and stalls. Meanwhile, No. 71000, a prototype for a class that never saw further examples constructed, will be placed in the station's Platform 3 for the day, allowing visitors to step up onto the footplate and learn about its unique history from members of the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust.

The locomotive's visit was first mooted by late Gloucester City councillor Colin Organ, who not only said that the visit of the *Duke of Gloucester* to Gloucester itself would be an appropriate feature, but that it should also be greeted there by HRH Duke of Gloucester. At that time, however, the locomotive was undergoing overhaul. Colin died in 2022.

With No. 71000 back in service and a convenient gap in its main line commitments, the visit has now been facilitated, with funds to help cover the cost through a grant from the GWR Customer and Community Improvement Fund, enabling the BRC8SLT to also reach out to young people from the local area for educational visits.

"Through engagement with young people unfamiliar with the railway, this project will deliver fundamental social impact by exploring the history

of No. 71000 and steam locomotives in general," said managing trustee Steve Wakeland. "Our aim is to fulfil our charitable mandate to advance public education, scientific learning, and skills development. In partnership with the Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership, we will engage about 20 under-represented young people from the Barton and Tredworth area adjoining the station, one of the most deprived areas in the city and county.

"Most of these participants will have never visited a station or travelled by train. This initiative includes a heritage talk, creative workshops, and an up-close experience with the locomotive.

"Through three co-creative sessions in community settings, participants will explore rail heritage, creativity and build rail confidence.

"These workshops will allow them to develop a sense of pride as their work evolves into submissions for the Colin Organ Photography Competition.

"A specific category for young people will focus on The Duke, with the winning entry displayed at the nearby Hotel Indigo and the winner receiving a £50 Gloucester Gift Card."

The Duke, Brit and Shap

Steve also confirmed that LSL was planning to put on a double-headed ascent of Shap which would see *Duke of Gloucester* paired up with No. 70000 *Britannia* – the prototype of the Standard Class 7 design. This had initially been penned to take place in May; however, after the Brit experienced a bearing failure at Oxenholme during the April 8 'Cumbrian Mountaineer' railtour, the outing was postponed.

Although no date had yet been set, Steve said he was expecting it to be this autumn, but this was dependent on it fitting into LSL's calendar, the



No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* inside Locomotive Services Group's Crewe depot on April 29. BR CLASS 8 STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST

company being responsible for the main line operation of both Nos. 70000 and 71000.

"When it does happen, I hope we will be able to have a number of low-priced, affordable tickets available to meet our charitable aims of making opportunities to see and ride behind The Duke as accessible as possible," Steve added.

Those looking to enjoy main line trips behind No. 71000 this year still have opportunities to do so. Although it was stood down from its planned outing on Steam Dreams' July 16 'Spirit of Summer' and 'Sunset Steam Express' trips because of a Network Rail-imposed steam ban owing to the fire risk (see separate story, page 52), Steve confirmed that there are a trio of Saphos Trains excursions that No. 71000 is planned to work.

The first of those will be part of the three-day 'Cornish Riviera' excursion on September 22-25. *Duke of Gloucester* will take over the train at

Taunton on the first day for the rest of the run to Truro and Penzance, making history in the process as it is believed that the locomotive has never previously been further than Plymouth.

After two days of exploring the region at their leisure, passengers will then be steam-hauled back to Taunton, from where diesel or electric traction will take over for the rest of the journey back to Paddington.

On September 30, it will head 'The Golden Arrow' to Canterbury, taking over at Southall from diesel traction which will have commenced the journey at Norwich earlier that morning.

Finally, on December 17, it is scheduled to work 'The Pennine Peaks Christmas Explorer', which will start out from Rugby and see The Duke attached to the front at Crewe for the circular run through the Yorkshire Dales and Pennines before swapping locomotives at Crewe once more.

Unique Class 89 No. 89001 *Avocet* on the West Coast Main Line at Scout Green, near Tebay, while making its passenger-carrying debut at the head of Locomotive Services Group's Chairman's Train on July 14. CHRIS GEE



Clan Line to Worcester

By Tim Hobman

UK Railtours is offering a trip on Saturday, September 26 under the title of 'The Worcester Pullman', with different routes for the outward and return journeys.

Starting from London Victoria behind Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line*, customers on board the carriages of the British Pullman will be treated to a glass of bellini as the train navigates the West London line to join the Great Western Main Line at Acton.

Running via Slough, Reading and Didcot, the tour will take the Golden Valley line at Swindon and head north-west through Kemble, Stroud and Stonehouse. At Gloucester, the train is booked to take the Cross Country route through Cheltenham to arrive at the destination of Worcester.

Passengers will have three hours to explore Worcester before the return journey, where those on board will be treated to a four-course dinner.

Leaving Worcester, the tour is expected to take the Cotswold Line, through Evesham, Honeybourne, Moreton-in-Marsh and Charlbury. Just after Oxford, the locomotive is planned to make a stop for water, and then the tour is booked to pick up the Cherwell Valley Line to run south to Didcot.

From Didcot, the route of the outward journey is expected to be retraced, through Reading and Slough, to return to London Victoria via Acton.

Tickets are available in Pullman Class only for this trip, with the option to book a Pullman Coupe for four people.

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



Clan Line passes the remains of the East Putney flyover with the Railway Touring Company's 'The End of Southern Steam' special from London Victoria to Weymouth on July 9. OWEN HAYWARD

Second life for West Coast seaside signalbox

A REDUNDANT main line signalbox has become the first in the country to be turned into a classroom for local schoolchildren while still standing in its original position.

The London Midland Type 15 'box at Hest Bank, at Slyne-with-Hest on the West Coast Main Line in Lancashire, was built by BR and opened in December 1968. It has become a new STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education centre, accommodating groups from more than 50 local schools to help pupils learn about the railway and the ecology of nearby Morecambe Bay.

The 'box in The Shore road became redundant in 2013 with the removal of its original equipment and was earmarked for demolition. In association with the Leeds-Morecambe Community Railway Partnership Company Ltd, Network Rail North West and Central converted the 'box with £14,000 in grant funding from Network Rail, Avanti, TransPennine Express and



The signalbox at Hest Bank on the West Coast Main Line. NR

Northern after control of the line was transferred elsewhere. The building now includes a display showing the latest train movements that pupils can follow live.

School's in session

On July 10, Year 5 pupils from Heysham St Peter's Church of

England Primary School became the first to use it, and took their lesson just inches away from the operational WCML, with trains thundering past at 100mph.

Headteacher Alison Dodd said that the new workspace "brings the learning from inside the classroom into real-life perspective in such a wonderful environment."

Brian Haworth, from the Bentham Line Community Rail Partnership, who helped set up the facility, said the location is "just absolutely brilliant."

"A core subject for bringing the children here is rail safety, and I can't emphasise enough that you can't get a better location for talking about it," he added.

The site remains notable as being the point at which the WCML comes nearest to the coast. Views of the adjacent of Morecambe Bay can be glimpsed from passing trains and the top floor of the 'box.



The new classroom inside the redundant Hest Bank signalbox. NR

'The Highland Peak' heads north to Inverness

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society is to run a tour to Inverness on Saturday, September 19.

'The Highland Peak' will start from Linlithgow behind Class 45 No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, hauling the Mk. 1 coaches of the SRPS.

Heading east, the tour is scheduled to cross the Forth Bridge for the next passenger pick-up at Inverkeithing. Staying on the Edinburgh-Dundee Line, the next opportunity for passengers to join the train is expected to be Kirkcaldy, followed by Ladybank.

Taking the line to Perth for the final passenger pick-up, the tour is then planned to follow the River Tay to Dundee and then along the Grampian coastline to Aberdeen.

From here, the route to Inverness is expected to be via Inverurie, Keith, Elgin and Forres, arriving in Inverness in the early afternoon.

Passengers will then have two-and-a-half hours to explore the Highlands capital before the return journey, this time via a different route.

Leaving Inverness in the late afternoon, the tour is booked to take the Highland Main Line via Aviemore, Kingussie and Pitlochry, back to Perth.

The tour will then retrace the route of the outward journey back to Linlithgow, setting down passengers at their joining stations en route.

Tickets are available in First and Standard Class, with a discount for junior travellers in standard class.

→ For more details and to book, visit www.srpsrailtours.co.uk

Three days of tours for *Flying Scotsman's* main line return

By Robin Jones

LNER A3 Pacific No. 60163 *Flying Scotsman* is to return to the main line this September, the year that the 150th anniversary of the birth of its designer Sir Nigel Gresley is being widely celebrated.

Journeys from Bristol, Chesterfield, Derby and York – including seaside jaunts to Minehead and Scarborough – will be included in the first major programme of long-distance passenger tours with the locomotive for several years.

Efforts to return the A3 to the main line have been led by promoter Fox & Edwards Events, which is making its first forays into express steam travel alongside successful partnerships with 22 heritage railways. The promoter is working with Northern Steam, which cares for the locomotive, leading railtour operator Vintage Trains, and its custodian, the National Railway Museum.

First class and traditional seating options are on offer, with tickets priced at £99 for a return trip. The

journeys are expected to last several hours, with a break before the return leg to give passengers a chance to explore local history and attractions.

Oliver Edwards, director and general manager of Fox & Edwards Events, said: "*Flying Scotsman* is the one of the world's most famous steam locomotives, and these journeys mean that hundreds can enjoy the magic of being pulled by it for long distances. We are proud to be taking the engine to brilliant destinations."

Vintage Trains managing director Nick Ralls said: "We are very experienced at operating steam on the 21st century rail network at main line speeds. As a Train Operating Company, we are looking forward to working with Fox & Edwards Events and building on previous successes with this incredible machine."

The NRM's head of public promotion, Sarah Price, said: "*Flying Scotsman* remains one of the most recognisable locomotives in the world and, as its custodians, we want as many people as possible to



Carrying a Fox & Edwards Events headboard, *Flying Scotsman* heads a passenger service during its first-ever visit to the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) in May. F&E

experience the magic of seeing it in steam. Main line tours like these enable the locomotive to reach new audiences, bringing railway heritage directly to communities across the country."

The tours are as follows:
Wednesday, September 16: Derby to York and return; York to Scarborough

and return; Saturday, September 19: Stourbridge and Birmingham to Bristol; Bristol to Minehead; Wednesday, September 23: Chesterfield to York and return; York to Newcastle and return.

→ Full details of the trips can be found at www.foxandedwards.com/events/flying-scotsman

Settle to Carlisle success praised at Westminster

By Robin Jones

CARLISLE'S Labour MP, Julie Minns, tabled a motion in the House of Commons on July 7 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Settle to Carlisle line.

She said: "One hundred and fifty years on, it remains a railway of national significance, renowned for its engineering, celebrated for its scenery and cherished by the communities it serves."

"For Carlisle, this railway is far more than a transport link – it is part of our city's history and identity. It has helped to connect our city to the wider north for generations, bringing people, ideas, commerce and opportunity. Today, it is fitting that we come together to celebrate not only its past, but also the people who ensured that it would have a future."

"The story of the Carlisle-Settle railway began in the great age of Victorian railway building. It was one of the last great railways constructed in Britain and was undoubtedly one of the most ambitious."

"Building it required extraordinary determination. More than 6000 navvies worked along the route, enduring isolation, appalling weather and dangerous working conditions to

carve a railway through some of the most challenging terrain in England.

"In the 1970s, the railway suffered years of under-investment. Freight traffic was diverted on to the electrified West Coast Main line, ageing infrastructure deteriorated, and viaducts and tunnels were allowed to fall into disrepair. By the early 1980s, British Rail was arguing that the cost of maintaining the railway could no longer be justified, and proposals were made to close it entirely."

"What followed was one of the most inspiring grassroots campaigns in British railway history. In June 1981, before closure had even been formally announced, the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line held their inaugural meeting in Settle town hall. They recognised the threat, and they acted. Soon, they were joined by local authorities, rail users, railway development groups, environmental campaigners and communities along the route."

"Campaigners challenged BR's assumptions and highlighted the railway's wider value. They argued that its tourism potential had been overlooked. They argued that its role as a strategic diversionary route had been underestimated. They



Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* heads the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' at Carlisle station on March 28.

JAMES GROUNDWATER

argued that closure would damage the communities who depended on the railway. They were right. The campaign also exposed what many regarded as a policy of closure by stealth: reduced services, diverted traffic and inflated repair estimates, all to justify closure."

"The publicity surrounding the campaign encouraged people to start using the railway in unprecedented numbers."

"The number of passenger journeys rose dramatically, from 93,000 in 1983 to 450,000 by 1989. In 2025, almost one million journeys were made along the Carlisle-Settle railway."

In response, Keir Mather, the Under-Secretary of State for Transport, said: "The Government is firmly committed to honouring our railway heritage and improving services for passengers in rural communities across the north. She [Julie Minns] continues to be a resolute champion of the Settle-Carlisle railway, and the Government is committed to supporting her and her constituents. Here is to the 150 years to come."

At The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's annual dinner, held at the RAF Club in Piccadilly, David Tinsley, of the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line, was applauded for his illustrated talk about its history.

Metropolitan Bo-Bo returns to service on summer specials

By Owen Hayward

THE sole-remaining operational example of a Metropolitan Railway Bo-Bo has returned to operational use on the London Underground network following an absence of seven years, during which time it has undergone a major overhaul.

With infrastructure changes on the Underground network ongoing, including introduction of modern in-cab signalling, heritage operations on it have been the sole domain in recent years of Art Deco-style 1938 tube stock and mostly run on the northern extremities of the Metropolitan Line.

In the early 1900s, the Metropolitan Railway ordered a batch of electric locomotives for its routes from Baker Street towards the outer suburbs known as Metroland. After several years of development and design improvements, the 20 now iconic Bo-Bo types aptly emerged from Metropolitan Vickers between 1922 and 1923. All members of the design were named after historical and fictional figures with Met-Line connections, excepting of No. 15, which in 1925 was named *Wembley 1924* after having been exhibited at the British Empire Exhibition there.

Sarah Siddons

No. 12 was named *Sarah Siddons* after the Welsh actress (born July 5, 1755-died June 8, 1831). From the mid-1770s, she enjoyed a 20-year stint of being known as the Queen of Drury Lane owing to her acting ability.



Inspection saloon No. LT45029 *Florence Nightingale* on display at Acton Depot on July 3 as part of the site's open weekend. THOMAS MILLS

After she died, she was buried at Paddington Green cemetery, not far from the Metropolitan Railway's original terminus.

The locomotive in her name led an uneventful life until the withdrawal of the remaining electric locomotive fleet from passenger use in 1962, after electrification had reached Amersham, with three examples retained as depot shunters. One of these was later scrapped, while No. 5 *John Hampden* (named after an English politician, born 1595, from Oxfordshire, who was killed in 1943 fighting for Parliament in the First English Civil War) went into the London Transport Museum's collection. It can be seen in the museum at Covent Garden. No. 12 was retained by London Underground for use on brake testing and leaf-clearing duties until 1982, before being allocated to the heritage fleet for events.

In 2019, *Sarah Siddons* was withdrawn from operation after it was discovered that new wheelsets were needed. Commencement of this work was put on hold when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and it was not until 2022 that it was finally taken to Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh for this, alongside other work which included a bodywork repairs and a full repaint.

In the latter months of 2024, it returned to LU's West Ruislip depot, where further work was undertaken by the company's own engineers. This was briefly interrupted with its visit to Derby to appear at Alstom's The Greatest Gathering on August 1-3 last year.



The 1938 stock inside LTM's Acton Depot on July 3. On July 26/27, it too was to be found running over the northernmost part of LU's Metropolitan Line. THOMAS MILLS



On July 9, *Sarah Siddons* arrives at Amersham with the first of the day's test runs from Harrow-on-the-Hill. On July 25-27, it pulled its first passenger-carrying trips between here, Watford and Harrow since 2019. OWEN HAYWARD

On July 6 this year, the Bo-Bo commenced five days of testing on the Metropolitan line, first running from the depot to Harrow-on-the-Hill before reversing for the jaunt up to Amersham, alternating between the slow and fast lines, the latter bypassing the LU stations as far as Rickmansworth. For these tests, No. 12 hauled LU's 4TC unit, now back in service after repairs to rectify wheel flats that failed it at the start of a UK Railtours excursion on September 27, 2025.

The runs also saw the first outing on the network of ex-LMS district engineers' saloon No. 45029, which now carries London Transport red and the name *Florence Nightingale*. At the south end of the consist was LT-liveried Class 20 No. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman*, which led all runs working southwards, as well as the positioning moves out of the depot.

On July 3-5, both *Sarah Siddons* and *Florence Nightingale* were on static display at LTM's Acton Depot open day, where numerous other stored items of rolling stock are kept in a temperature-controlled environment. Acton also serves as the home for the operational 38TS (1938 tube stock), which is currently the only fully operational heritage unit on the LU network.

Heritage outings

On July 7, one Amersham trip was substituted for a journey to Watford in order to acquire some publicity photos ahead of the planned public heritage services operating between there and Amersham on July 25-27, organised by the London Transport Museum, and which utilised the same consist. Running over the Saturday and Sunday of the same weekend was the 38TS, marking what is believed to be the first time in several years that two heritage trains have worked simultaneously on the London Underground network.

Trips on the Friday and Saturday ran between Amersham and Watford, which included rare passenger mileage over the north curve of the Watford triangle, with a final single journey on offer from Amersham to Harrow-on-the-Hill available as part of the pair's journey back to depot. On the Sunday, no Watford trips were run.

Further outings with the heritage fleet are planned to take place later in the year, with dates to be announced closer to the time.

See www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/heritage-vehicle-outings for details when available or to sign up to be notified when they are published.

Rail chef Nick earns prestigious national culinary honour

MAIN line tour operating firm Locomotive Services Group has announced that one of the members of its on-board team has gained national recognition after becoming a member of Master Chefs of Great Britain, one of the UK's most respected culinary associations. The organisation promotes excellence in professional cookery and supports

chefs at every stage of their careers, and on June 22, LSG's executive chef, Nick Allen, became a member of this prestigious association.

"For me, it's great to be part of a nationally recognised organisation which supports professional chefs, whether they're new to the industry or, like me, have been around for quite a while –

spending 24 years in kitchens," Nick said. An LSG statement added: "This recognition reflects Nick's dedication, experience and passion for delivering exceptional dining experiences aboard our trains, helping to make every journey a memorable one for our guests. Please join us in congratulating Nick on this well-deserved recognition."



LSG's executive chef, Nick Allen. LSG

August

1 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam

Circular tour of Kent via Dover from London Victoria.

Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

1 'The Avon Gorgeous'

Crewe, Bristol Temple Meads, and return.

Loco: 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*. IC

1 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'

Euston, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).

Locos: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*.

Steam: 34067 *Tangmere*. RTC

1 'The English Riviera Express'

Shrewsbury, Kingswear, and return.

Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. ST

5 'The Fellsman'

Crewe, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled from Chester.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). ST

6 'The Dalesman'

Chester, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

8 'The West Somerset Steam Express'

Paddington, Minehead, and return.

Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

8 'The English Riviera Express'

Ely, Kingswear, and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.

Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

9 'The Waverley'

York, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

11 'The Dalesman'

York, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

13 'The Dorset Coast Express'

London Victoria, Weymouth, and return. Diesel-hauled Southampton-Weymouth only.

Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

15 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Lincoln, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). NB

15 'The Cumbrian Coast Express'

Crewe, Ravenglass, and return.

Steam-hauled between Carnforth and Ravenglass.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

15 'The Slate Miner'

Oxford, Blaenau Ffestiniog, and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.

Locos: 2x WCR Class 37s TBC. RTC

15 'The English Riviera Express'

Three Bridges, Kingswear, and return. Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.

Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

19 'The Scarborough Spa Express'

Carnforth, Scarborough, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). WCR

20 'The Spirit of Summer'

Circular tour from Paddington.

Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

20 'Sunset Steam Express'

Circular tour from Paddington.

Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

22 'The Blackpool Steam Express'

Euston, Blackpool North, and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Blackpool.

Loco: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*. Steam:

TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

22 'The Thistle and Dragon'

Leven, Llandudno, and return.

Loco: D213 *Andania*, 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*. SRPS

22 'English Riviera Express'

Bedford, Kingswear, and return.

Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.

Loco: 61306 *Mayflower*. ST

23 'The Waverley'

York, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

25 'The Dalesman'

York, Carlisle, and return.

Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

26 'The Welsh Marches Express'

Chesterfield, Cardiff Central, and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Cardiff.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). ST

29 'The Lakelander'

Leicester, Carlisle and return.

Steam-hauled between Crewe and Carlisle.

Loco: TBA. ST

30 'The Royal Duchy'

Bristol Temple Meads, Par and return.

Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

September

2 'The Fellsman'

Crewe, Carlisle, and return. Diesel-hauled from Crewe to Chester.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). ST

2 'The Scarborough Spa Express'

Lancaster, Scarborough, and return.

Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). WCR

3 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam

Circular tour of Kent from London Victoria.

Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

5 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Coventry, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). NB

5 'The East Yorkshireman'

Manchester Victoria, Scarborough, and return. Diesel-hauled from York to Manchester.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

5 'The Wensum and Thames Explorer'

Norwich, Reading, and return. Steam-hauled outward only.

Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

5 'English Riviera Express'

Poole, Kingswear, and return.

Steam-hauled between Taunton and Kingswear.

Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. ST

5 'The Cambrian Coast Express'

Dorridge, Aberystwyth, and return.

Loco: 37240 + Class 97 TBC. VT



BR(E) A2 4-6-2 No. 60532 *Blue Peter* crosses Whalley Viaduct over the River Calder with the northbound Fellsman from Crewe to Carlisle on July 1.

DAVID MOGG

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.

9 Oxford Excursion

Horsham, Oxford, and return. Steam-hauled between Southall and Oxford.

Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

10 'The Dalesman'

Chester, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

12 'Toots Express'

Hitchin, Edinburgh, and return.

Loco: 2x Class 50s TBC. BLS

12 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Liverpool Lime Street, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). NB

12 'The Weardale Explorer'

King's Cross, Stanhope, and return. Steam-hauled between York and Stanhope.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

12 'The Mayflower'

Birmingham Snow Hill, Plymouth, and return. Steam-hauled between Bristol and Plymouth.

Locos: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* + 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

13 'The Waverley'

York, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

15 'The Dalesman'

York, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Hellifield and Carlisle.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

16 'The Swanage Belle'

London Victoria, Swanage, and return. Diesel-hauled from Swanage to Southampton.

Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

19 Nottingham Excursion

Hastings, Nottingham, and return.

DEMU: 1001, 1018. HD

Tour promoters

BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PNP	PNP Events londonthepolarexpressride.com
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

Regular Tours

Daily (AM and PM)

'The Jacobite'

Fort William, Mallaig, and return.

Loco: 44871 and 45407. WCR

Sundays (until Aug 30)

'The Shakespeare Express'

Birmingham Snow Hill, Stratford-Upon-Avon, and return.

Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* or

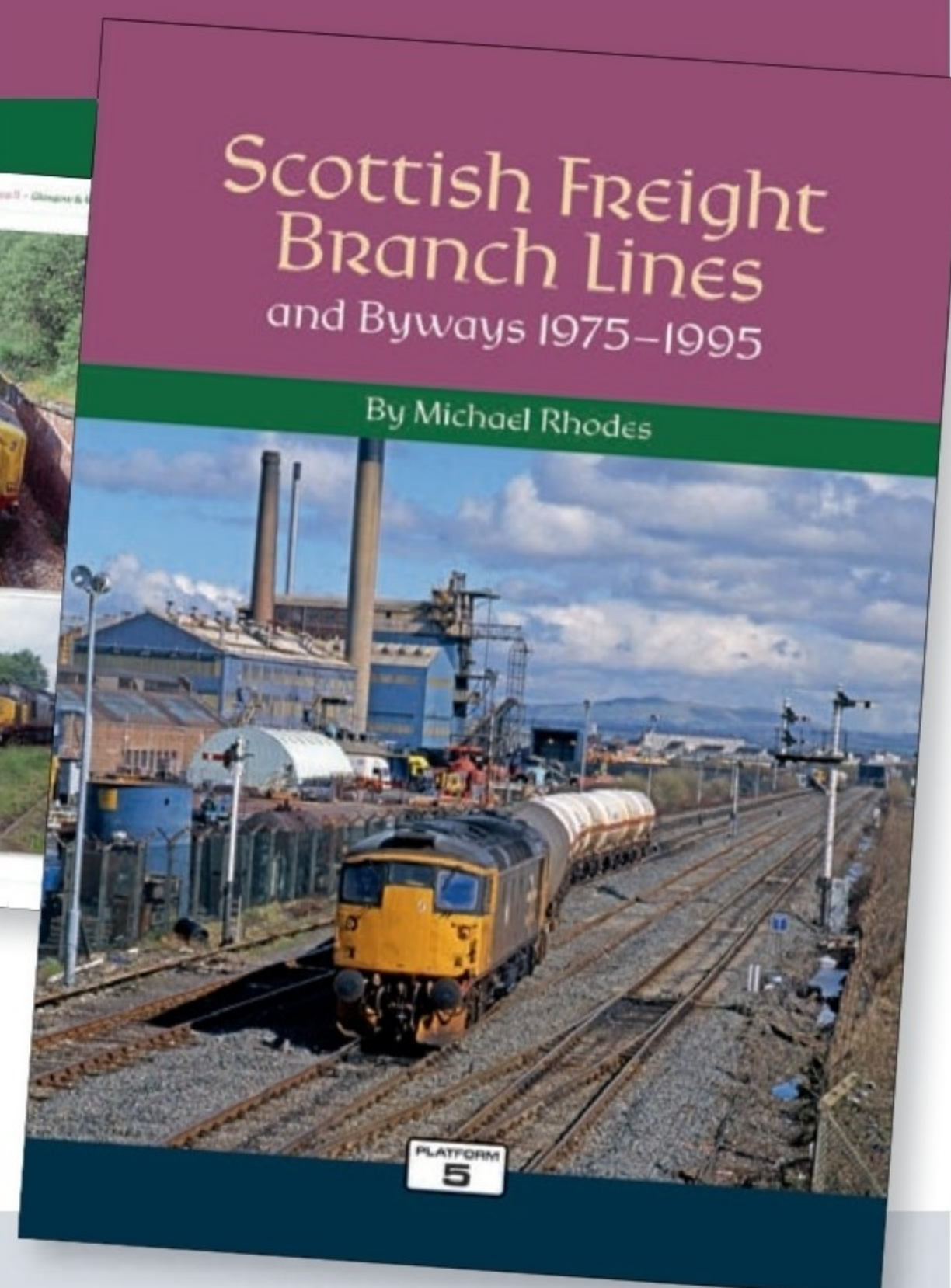
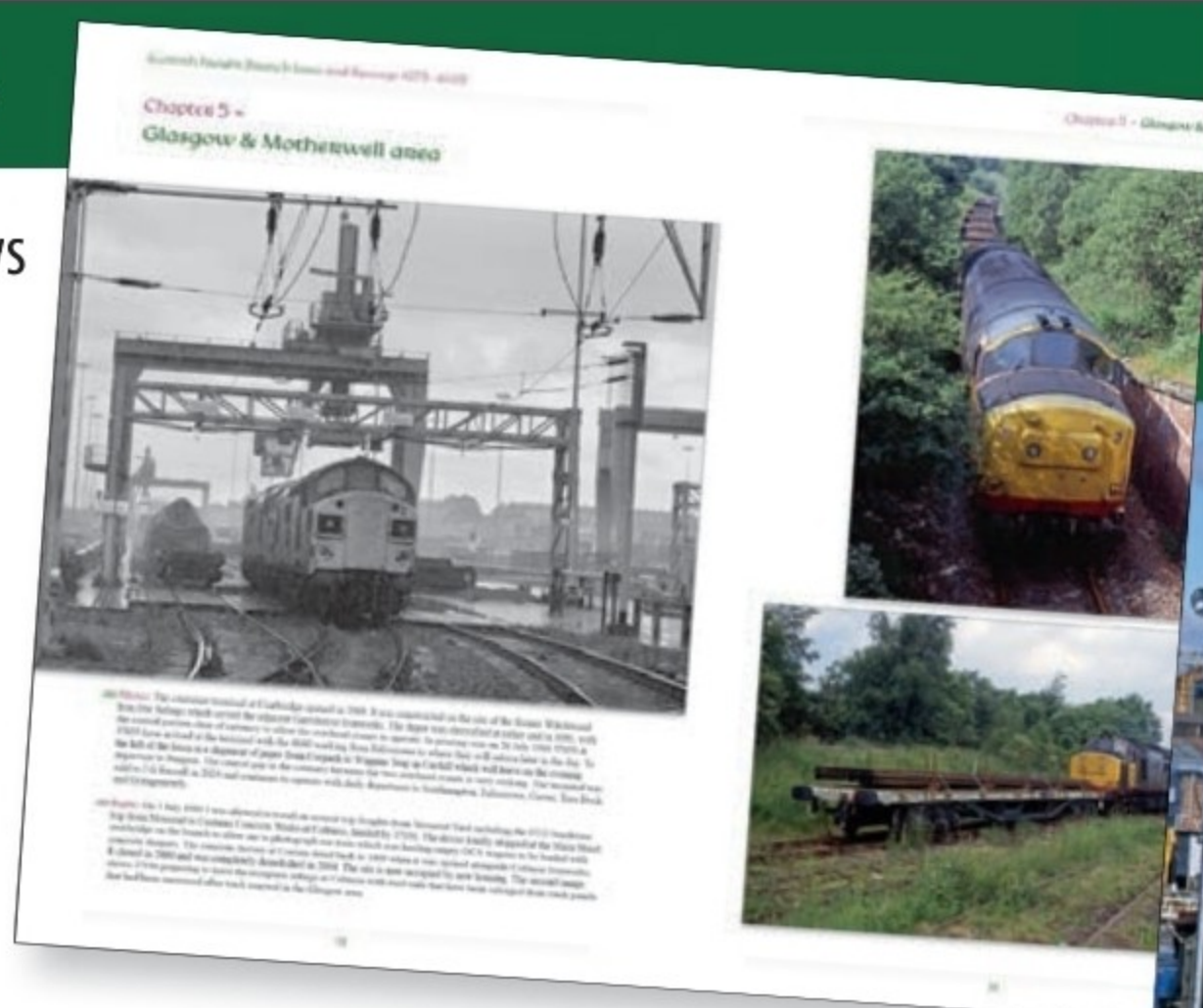
7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

Scottish Freight Branch Lines and Byways 1975–1995

By Michael Rhodes

Between 1975 and 1995, Scotland's railways saw many freight lines and branches serving collieries, power stations, and distilleries close. Some lines reopened for passengers in the 21st century. Michael Rhodes visited Scotland from the 1970s to 1990s, capturing rare images of soon-to-close lines and withdrawn locomotives.

The book covers regions from Aberdeen, Inverness, and the north to Edinburgh and Millerhill, a former hump yard now an EMU depot, plus Stirling, Perth, Dundee, Fife, the Central Belt, Ayrshire, and South West Scotland. With over 160 photos and detailed captions, it depicts freight traffic during this transformative period. **A4 size. 96 pages. £22.95 plus P&P.**



SAVE £3. ORDER DIRECT FOR £19.95 PLUS P&P

Pay just £19.95 plus P&P at **www.platform5.com** using promotion code **SFB** at the basket, or order by post/telephone from Platform 5 Mail Order. Offer ends 31/10/2026.

PRESERVED LOCOMOTIVES OF BRITISH RAILWAYS 22nd EDITION

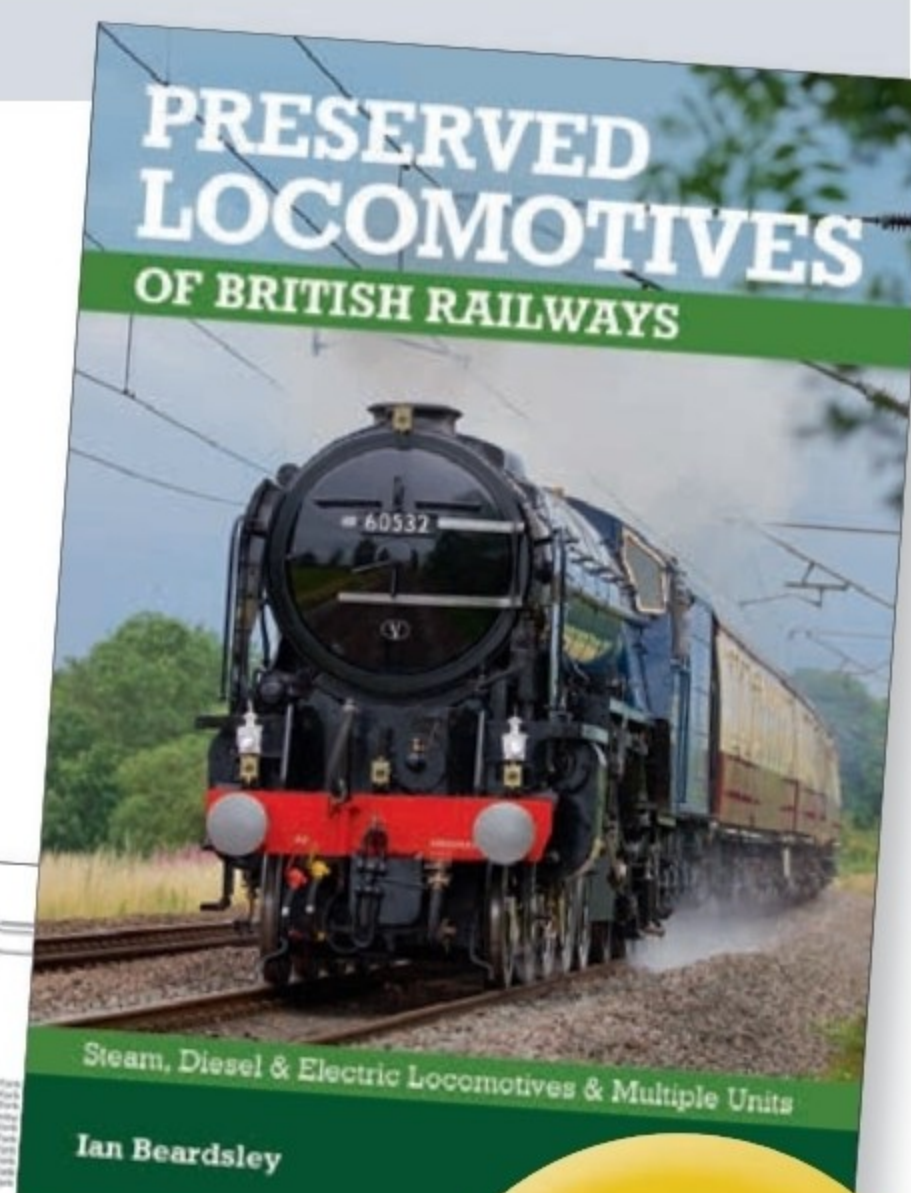
A revised and updated edition of the complete Platform 5 guide to all former main line steam, diesel and electric locomotives and multiple units that are still in existence. Contains a complete list of all such locomotives formerly owned by British Railways, its constituent companies and its successors. It includes numbers, names, home location and builder details for every locomotive and multiple unit, plus technical data for every class.

For each locomotive or unit, current number, former numbers, names, build dates, builder and home locations are provided. Also includes a comprehensive list of preservation sites and operating railways. Fully updated to Spring 2026.

176 pages. Illustrated with over 90 colour photographs. £23.95 plus P&P.

SAVE £2. ORDER DIRECT FOR £21.95 PLUS P&P

Pay just £21.95 plus P&P at **www.platform5.com** using promotion code **PL22** at the basket, or order by post/telephone from Platform 5 Mail Order. Offer ends 31/08/2026.



**LAST
CHANCE TO
SAVE**

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:

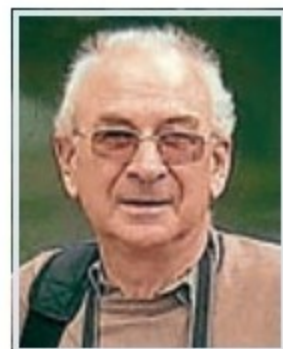
24-hour Order Line: 0114 255 8000 or Fax: 0114 255 2471

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



WITH FULL REGULATOR LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



In his latest column, **Don Benn** looks at recent main line runs with No. 35028 *Clan Line*, a fine heavily-loaded trip behind No. 34067 *Tangmere* and compares two very fine efforts behind Bulleid light Pacifics in 1966.

NO. 35028 *Clan Line* has been back out on the main line again recently, and although I have only been out to see it, Alan Rawlings has sampled the performance. He writes: "It is rare for a heritage main line locomotive to repeat a journey it undertook when in BR ownership, but that is precisely what *Clan Line* did on May 23, 2026, with the 'Atlantic Coast Express'."

"The first train to carry the 'ACE' headboard was 100 years ago, when a King Arthur Class locomotive departed from Waterloo on July 19, 1926. The chosen name was as a result of an internal competition by the Southern Railway and won by a guard based, appropriately, at Woking, a station along the route. That route was the same one *Clan Line* was to traverse along its full 172 miles, although in double the time of the original train when at its zenith!"

The former LSWR main line has never been the same since it was butchered by the Western Region, and despite the reintroduction of some passing loops en route, the line struggles to handle the growing volume of traffic. Slotting a steam service

into the timetable has increasingly become a difficult art, and that partly explains the Waterloo departure at 7.14am. There were pick-ups at Woking and Basingstoke, by which time inroads had been made into the late departure from London. Nevertheless, the diesel at the back woke up to give us a nudge away towards Salisbury and then allowed *Clan Line* to hurry us down the West of England main line in 36 minutes 27 seconds for the 36 miles.

"Onward progress (via loops) was hindered by service trains, and at the former Chard Junction we waited for an Exeter service to pass, 20 minutes late, before getting the road up Honiton Bank. It then became clear that, in common with most of the journey down, the crew on *Clan Line* had agreed with the driver on the diesel that this leg was definitely one that the 8P could handle on its own. Table One shows the climb.

"Passage through Axminster at 61mph was a rather poignant moment, as this is where No. 35028 reached 104mph on the 'ACE' in 1961. The signal check to 15mph before leaving the loop meant that

there was everything to do as we passed Seaton Junction at 46mph. Speed checked, dropped, and then steadied to 35mph on the 1-in-80 as driver Bill Monteith let *Clan Line* find its way up to the tunnel. Even to the rear we could hear the locomotive chattering away through the sealed windows, and I was told that this was achieved with three-quarters regulator and 40% cut-off, so more was available if necessary.

"There was a slight easing through the tunnel, and we topped the bank at an impressive 34mph with a load well over 450 tons on the drawbar. That effectively ended our run down as we had to slot in behind a stopper from Exmouth for the final few miles and arrived 25 late into St Davids.

"Sadly, train regulation on our journey home via Bristol and Westbury was not at its best. Nevertheless, we blasted over Whiteball at 58mph and made a slow pass of Taunton in only 32½ minutes, before fast running across the Somerset Levels to a protracted stop at Weston-super-Mare, plus further delays. This was a great trip, with about 400 miles of steam haulage



Left: *Clan Line* stands at Exeter St Davids after arrival with the 'Atlantic Coast Express' on May 23.

Right: *Clan Line* pauses at Haslemere on June 13 for the signalbox's handover ceremony, with Network Rail passing custodianship to the Haslemere Signalbox Trust. BOTH: ALAN RAWLINGS



TABLE ONE: CHARD JUNCTION TO HONITON

Date	May 23, 2026
Train	'Atlantic Coast Express'
Loco	Rblt MN class 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i>
Load	10 coaches plus 47802, 445 tons tare, 470 tons gross
Driver	Bill Monteith
Fireman	Craig Stinchcombe
Recorder	Alan Rawlings from ninth coach
Weather	Fine

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Chard Junction	0.00	0.00	00	00	13 late
Chard Jct West	0.39		01	23	19
Broom XC	1.77		03	39	54
Axminster East Jct	3.88	6.00	06	08	51*
Axminster	5.16	8.00	07	27	61
River Axe U/B	6.34		10	40	16* sigs
Axminster West Jct	6.69	10.00	11	36	31
Seaton Junction	8.43		14	03	46
MP 149	9.64		15	40	42
MP 149½	10.14		16	25	38
MP 150	10.64		17	12	35
MP 150½	11.14		18	03	35
MP 151	11.64		18	55	34
MP 151½	12.14		19	47	35
MP 152	12.64		20	38	35
MP 152½	13.14		21	29	34
Tunnel In	13.20		21	35	34
Tunnel Out	13.96		22	54	34
MP 153½	14.14		23	13	34/5* sigs
Honiton	15.36	22.30	28	41	19½ late

* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE TWO: LAVERSTOCK TO WORTING JUNCTION

Timed by Alan Rawlings

Date	May 23, 2026	June 13, 2026
Train	'Atlantic Coast Express'	'The Portsmouth Flyer'
Loco	Rebuilt Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i> .	Rebuilt Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35028 <i>Clan Line</i> .
Load	10 + Class 47 No. 47802. 445 tons gross (470 tons net)	10 + Class 47 No. 47802. 445 tons gross (470 tons net)
Driver	Matt McManus	Matt McManus
Fireman	Simon Scott	Craig Stinchcombe
Location	Carriage nine of 10	Carriage nine of 10
Weather	Fine	Fine

Miles		Schedule	Times	Speeds	Miles		Schedule	Times	Speeds
0.00	Laverstock North Junction	0	0.00	33 sr	0.00	Laverstock North Junction	0	0.00	30 sr
1.20	Milepost 81		1.44	45	1.20	Milepost 81		1.35	44
2.20	Milepost 80		2.59	49	2.20	Milepost 80		2.56	49
4.20	Porton	5	5.21	50	4.20	Porton	6	5.10	52
6.70	Allington		8.16	59	6.70	Allington		7.54	59
7.20	Milepost 75		8.42	61	7.20	Milepost 75		8.23	60
8.20	Milepost 74		9.39	65	8.20	Milepost 74		9.21	63
8.95	Milepost 73¼		10.23	67	8.95	Milepost 73¼		10.03	64
9.60	Grateley	11	10.58	71/73	9.60	Grateley	12	10.44	68/75
14.68	Red Post Junction		15.17	67	14.68	Red Post Junction		14.46	67
15.98	Andover Junction	17½	16.21	72	15.98	Andover Junction	18½	16.03	75
18.20	Milepost 64		18.18	64	18.20	Milepost 64		17.58	63
19.70	Milepost 62½		19.45	61/71	19.70	Milepost 62½		19.26	61
21.24	Hurstbourne		21.05	70	21.24	Hurstbourne		20.44	68
23.14	Whitchurch	25	22.49	66/64	23.14	Whitchurch	26½	22.27	67
26.77	Overton	29	26.04	67	26.77	Overton	30½	25.37	69
28.70	Milepost 53½		27.49	66	28.70	Milepost 53½		27.26	68
29.92	Oakley		28.57	69	29.92	Oakley		28.25	71
31.20	Battledown Flyover		30.17	55	31.20	Battledown Flyover		30.00	41
32.05	Worting Junction	35	31.00	55	32.05	Worting Junction	39½	31.10	*40 to SL



TABLE THREE: SHALFORD TO VICTORIA

Date	Thursday, November 4, 2004				
Train	Herfordshire Railtours 'The Downsman' 12.28pm Victoria-Surrey Hills Circular				
Loco	Class 7 Battle of Britain 4-6-2 No. 34067 <i>Tangmere</i>				
Load	13 coaches, 469 tons tare, 505 tons gross				
Driver	Don Clarke				
Weather	Dry and sunny				
Recorder	Don Benn, stopwatch and mileposts				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Shalford	0.00	0.00	00	00	1¼ late
MP 40	1.05		05	07	26½
Chilworth	1.80		06	50	28
MP 38	3.05		09	15	31½
MP 37½	3.55		11	15	29
MP 36½	4.55		12	24	24½
Gomshall	5.80	9.00	14	14	52
MP 34	7.05		15	59	41½
MP 33	8.05		17	12	56½
MP 32	9.05		18	09	64
Dorking Town	10.45		19	25	72
Deepdene	11.25		20	01	75½
MP 29	12.05		20	42	70
MP 28	13.05		21	37	63
Betchworth	13.85		22	26	57
MP 26	15.05		23	36	65½
MP 25	16.05		24	31	64
Reigate	16.70	24.00	25	09	59½
Redhill	18.55	29.00	28	49	21*
MP 21	20.00		32	27	36
Merstham	20.28		32	50	41½
Tunnel South	20.90		33	41	43
Tunnel North	21.93		34	59	55
Star Lane	22.52		35	52	64½
Coulsdon South	24.02		36	55	70
Stoats Nest Jct	25.11		38	00	45*
			sigs stop		
Purley	25.89		41	59	0*
			42	19	
Purley Oaks	26.84		45	10	40
South Croydon	27.99	46.00	46	55	43
			sigs		18*
East Croydon	28.90	48.00	49	14	31½
Windmill Bdge Jct	29.39	49.00	50	06	40
Selhurst	30.01	50.00	50	56	49
Thornton Heath	30.76		51	42	56
Norbury	31.96		52	50	65½
Streatham Common	32.81		53	35	69
Balham	34.75		55	50	48*
Wandsworth Common	35.35		56	35	51/57
Clapham Junction	36.69	58.00	58	11	35*
Pouparts Jct	37.35	59.00	60	17	27*
Battersea Pier Jct	38.45	66.00	62	54	*
			sigs stop		
MP ½	39.10		65	50	0*
			67	01	
Victoria	39.60	78.00	69	35	7 early

* brakes or speed restriction



Above: No. 35028 passing Bursledon at 47 mph with the 4.08pm Portsmouth Harbour to Victoria working of June 13. DON BENN



Above: On September 8, 2006, No. 34067 *Tangmere* passes Merstham at full blast on the 12.28pm Surrey Hills circular from London Victoria. DON BENN



Left: Bill Monteith, driver for the Merchant Navy's May 23 trip to the South West. ALAN RAWLINGS

– something that is seldom matched on other day trips. Throughout, *Clan Line* performed flawlessly.”

Repeated and compared

I am grateful to Alan for the contribution and the comparison shown in Table Two, about which he says: “It is not often possible to compare like with like in the performance of a locomotive or how it is driven as there are factors that vary, especially the driver in charge and, of course, the route. That said, *Clan Line* covered the same route recently within three weeks, on the ‘ACE’ and then the ‘Portsmouth Flyer,’ travelling the west of England main line up from Salisbury. The train formation, load and driver were the same, so the two logs are set side by side. Neither involved additional diesel support.

“For those unfamiliar with the route, the lines from Salisbury and Southampton come together at Laverstock North Junction, where the logs commence. The line climbs fairly steeply at 1-in-169, briefly at 1-in-140, until after Porton, where the gradient eases but continues to climb to shortly before Grateley. Thereafter, it is downhill to Andover, followed by a sharp climb of Enham Bank at 1-in-178, then down to Hurstbourne Viaduct, followed by easier running to Oakley, where the gradual fall towards Basingstoke commences. The logs stop at Worting Junction as the approach of the ‘ACE’ remained on the fast from this point, whereas the ‘Flyer’ turned onto the slow for its planned water stop.

“What is noticeable is the similar behaviour of locomotive and train, presumably down to the similar settings chosen by the driver. It also illustrates that a good overall pace can be maintained even on an undulating route. I am told that on the ‘Flyer,’ the boiler pressure was between 220 and 240 psi for the whole trip, with the valves not lifting at any point. That was impressive management by the fireman.”

Surrey circular

Next is a very impressive performance by Bulleid light Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* on Hertfordshire Railtours’ ‘Downsman’ on November 4, 2004. At that time, No. 34067 was the regular engine on this afternoon Surrey Pullman, so the 13-coach, 505-ton load would have been similar. Ex-Nine Elms fireman Don Clarke was in charge of *Tangmere* and turned in a phenomenal performance throughout.

After reaching 28mph on the level/1-in-100 to Chilworth, speed rose to 31½mph on the very brief level stretch at Milepost 38 before falling to 24½mph on the 1-in-96/100 to the summit at Milepost 36½, where I suspect the cylinders were beating the boiler. Over the top and down through Gomshall at 52mph to the 1-in-96 Gomshall summit at 41½mph and then a flight down to Deepdene at 75½mph. Undulations to Reigate and a remarkably unchecked run through Redhill was followed by a solid climb up the 1-in-264 to Merstham tunnel (reached at 43mph). A quick 70mph at Coulsdon South and signal stop at Purley saw us safely into London Victoria after a stop outside seven minutes early. My best-ever run behind *Tangmere*.

Earlier in Table Two, Alan Rawlings showed remarkably similar performances between No. 35028 *Clan Line* and now, in Table Four, I show two runs from Waterloo to Eastleigh between two Bulleid light Pacifics: No. 34057 *Biggin Hill* in original condition and No. 34071 *601 Squadron* in rebuilt form. Apart from this, the two runs on the 5.30pm Down had the same loads and crews – the redoubtable Gordon Porter driving and fireman Tom Moulton. The main interest lay in the recovery from the temporary speed restriction at Walton-on-Thames/Oatlands to Milepost 31. I was standing

TABLE FOUR: WATERLOO TO EASTLEIGH

Date	Tuesday, March 8, 1966					Thursday, March 10, 1966				
Train	5.30pm Waterloo to Bournemouth					5.30pm Waterloo to Bournemouth				
Loco	Battle of Britain class 4-6-2 No. 34057 <i>Biggin Hill</i>					Rebuilt Battel of Britain class 4-6-2 No. 34071 <i>601 Squadron</i>				
Load	11 coaches, 374 tons tare, 410 tons gross					11 coaches, 374 tons tare, 410 tons gross				
Crew	Gordon Porter and Tom Moulton, Nine Elms MPD					Gordon Porter and Tom Moulton, Nine Elms MPD				
	also on footplate					Brian Smith to Basingstoke				
Weather	Dry					Rain				
Recorder	Don Benn					Don Benn				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed		sched	mins	secs	speed
Waterloo	0.00	0.00	00	00	½ min late/WL priming	0.00	00	00	slipping	¼ min late
Vauxhall	1.29		04	08		03	20	41		
Queens Road	2.81		05	54	49½/51		04	56	57	
Clapham Junction	3.93	7.00	07	26	46*	7.00	06	24	46*	
Earlsfield	5.58		09	32	53		08	24	55½	
Wimbledon	7.24		11	22	56½		10	07	60	
Raynes Park	8.64		12	45	63		11	25	64½	
New Malden	9.78		13	49	66		12	26	70	
Berrylands	10.98		14	53	70		13	27	73	
Surbiton	12.04		15	48	73		14	21	76	
Hampton Court Jct	13.34	18.00	16	52	76	18.00	15	22	79½	
Esher	14.39		17	41	80		16	09	80/79	
Hersham	15.91		18	53	74*		17	21	80	
Walton	17.08		20	03	13*	tsr half mile	18	19	14*	tsr
Oatlands Box	18.12		24	04	31½		20	41	38	
Weybridge	19.15		25	30	50		22	01	54	
Byfleet	20.40		26	53	66½		23	21	67½	
West Byfleet	21.68		28	02	67½		24	29	68½	
Woking	24.29		30	22	70		26	48	70	
Woking Jct	24.75	28.00	30	44	70½	28.00	27	09	70	
Brookwood	27.99		33	30	72½		29	58	70½	
Pirbright Jct	29.49		34	52	70		31	22	67½	160 lb steam
MP 31	31.00		36	08	68½		32	39	63	
Sturt Lane Jct	32.15		37	06	70		33	46	64	
Farnborough	33.20		38	02	71½		34	44	65	
Fleet	36.48		40	44	74		37	44	65½	
Winchfield	39.83		44	09	43*	tsr	41	42	35*	tsr
			sigs stop				sigs stop			
MP 41	41.00		46	44	0*		44	40	0*	
			54	12			49	04		
Hook	42.16		57	52	43*	sigs to slow line	52	28	30*	sigs to slow line
Newnham Siding	43.70		60	15	49/58		54	45	54/63/3*	sigs
Basingstoke	47.75	63.00	65	26	SV0	63.00	61	47		
	0.00	0.00	00	00	5½ mins late	0.00	00	00		1½ mins late
Worting Jct	2.51	5.30	05	25	44½/53	SV0	5.30	05	14	43/47½
Wootton Box	4.75		08	12	46*	tsr	08	19	36*	tsr
Steventon Box	6.20		11	46	11*	tsr	11	55	17*	tsr
Waltham Box	7.35		13	49	45½		13	43	47	
Roundwood Box	8.45		15	17	58½		15	05	60/64	
Micheldever	10.30		17	04	71		17	16	37*	sigs
Weston Box	12.45		18	46	80		19	30	65½	
Waller's Ash Box	13.95		19	50	83		20	47	76	
MP 63	15.35		20	48	87		21	49	83	
Winchester Junction	16.70	21.30	21	43	90		21.30	22	47	85
Winchester City	18.80	25.00	23	57		25.00	24	57		
	0.00	0.00	00	00	5 mins late	0.00	00	00	slipping	1¼ mins late
St Cross Box	1.23		03	05	45½		02	35	53½	
Shawford Jct	2.47		04	21	56		03	40	66	
Shawford	3.12		05	08	61½		04	19	74	
MP 71½	5.05		06	54	64		05	47	78	
Allbrook Box	6.06		08	22	24*/33	to slow line	07	04	30*/41½	to slow line
Eastleigh	6.96	11.00	10	37	4½ mins late	11.00	08	47		1 min early
WL: Windsor line start net times Waterloo to Basingstoke: 45 minutes Basingstoke to Winchester: 20 minutes						net times Waterloo to Basingstoke: 45 minutes Basingstoke to Winchester: 20 minutes				

in the brake coach for No. 34057’s run, with the microphone of my tape recorder fixed to the open toplit. The sound as we stormed away on the 1-in-387/326 and through Woking at 70mph with the whistle blasting was spine-tingling and the best I ever had. Whenever I want to hear what a real Bulleid sounds like at full blast, I play this and always get very emotional – as does my bother, Bryan (Wedgie). Acceleration continued to 72½mph up the 1-in-314 to Brookwood but then fell to 68½mph on the

final 1-in-298/304 to Milepost 31. The performance of *601 Squadron* was similar to Woking but then dropped away due to a shortage of steam, despite Brian Smith being on the footplate. *Biggin Hill* went on to reach 90mph down Roundwood and No. 34071 to 85mph both after the long TSR at Steventon and a signal check at Micheldever for the latter Bulleid. Such was the South Western main line in 1966, the year before the end of steam on the Southern Region. 

Great Central declares early runners – led by *Pegasus*

AMONG the early declared runners in Great Central's September 5 auction are nameplates from two locomotives built in the early 1900s, another from 1930, and a fourth from a Pacific constructed between the end of the Second World War and Nationalisation.

The oldest of the quartet are a GWR combined name, number, and works number plate from

Bulldog 4-4-0 No. 3331 *Pegasus*, built at Swindon in February 1900 and withdrawn in February 1934, and *Lord St. Levan* from Southern Railway 757 Class 0-6-2T No. 30758, a Hawthorn Leslie 1907 product that lasted well into the BR era until December 1956, when it ended its days at Eastleigh (71A).

From the LNER is *Hatfield House* from B17 No. 61621, which was outshopped by Darlington in November 1930 and sent to the graveyard by the March (31B) shedmaster in November 1958, and finally, the Southern Railway makes a second appearance courtesy of West Country



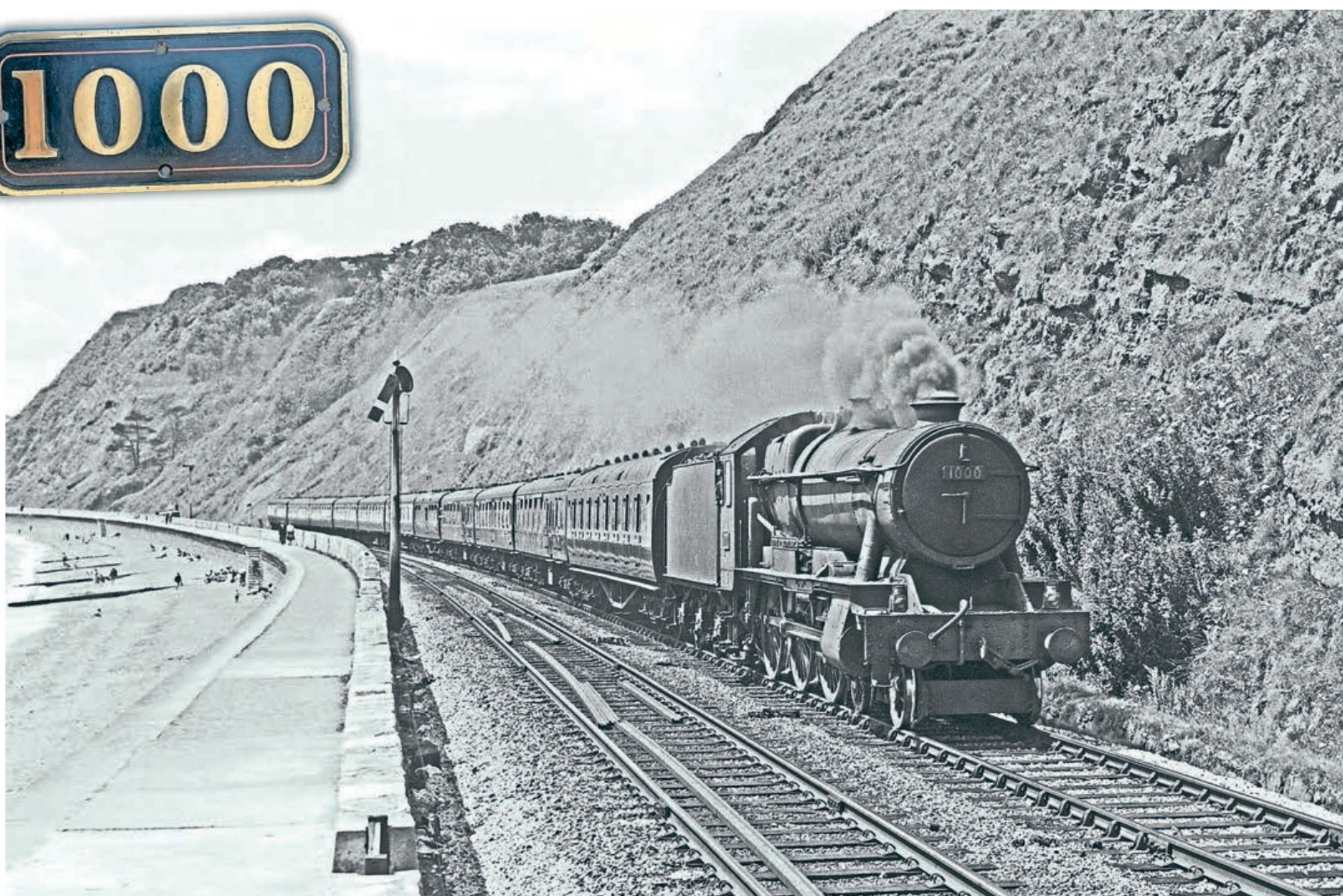
No. 34030, one of whose *Watersmeet* nameplates, with scroll, will be going under the live online hammer.

This Bullied-designed Pacific entered traffic in May 1946 after its construction at Brighton and earned its keep for 18 years until becoming surplus to requirements in September 1964 when allocated to its long-time home Exmouth Junction (83D).

Other locomotive items that have made an early entry into the auction's catalogue include GWR cabside numberplates 1000, 5032, and 7913, from respectively *County of Middlesex*, *Usk Castle*, and *Little Wyrley Hall*.

I have sometimes wondered, when I don't have more pressing matters to ponder on, why the GWR chose Middlesex for the first of its new postwar express class locomotives rather than one of the more 'traditional' counties associated with the company, such as some of those given to later members of the class. The order of counties for trains out of Paddington, perhaps?

Smokebox numberplates include those from No. 5007 *Rougemont Castle* and No. 34012 *Launceston*. A second preview of the auction will be published in next month's railwayana column.



On the level: Former GWR No. 1000 *County of Middlesex* passes sunbathers near Dawlish on June 14, 1959, after negotiating the challenging South Devon banks with a Penzance to Swansea express. One of the 4-6-0's cabside numberplates (insert) will be going under the hammer in a Great Central Railwayana auction on September 5. TRANSPORT TREASURY/R.C.RILEY/GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAYANA



Making its mark: A worksplate from G5 class No. 67326 was the top seller in Thirsk Railwayana's June 20 auction with a realisation of £940, as reported on this page. The 1901 Darlington-built 0-4-4T, which was withdrawn in 1957 after a service career of well over half a century, is seen here on October 2, 1954, at the Northumbrian station of Newsham, which was opened by the Blyth & Tyne Railway in 1851, closed by BR in November 1964, and reopened to passengers as a new station in March last year as part of the Newcastle-Ashington line. TRANSPORT TREASURY/NEVILLE STEAD COLLECTION

JaCA travels by steam from the IoW to Indonesia via the North West

STEAM on the Isle of Wight and the North West, heritage modern traction in the 1960s and views of the Vic Berry scrapyard in Leicester at the end of the 1980s will be among a variety of photographs, negatives, slides, films and paperwork going under the hammer in a JustaClickAgo auction being held on August 24-30.

The Isle of Wight will be among a varied selection of official BR prints featuring all the regions, with subjects ranging from GWR pannier tanks and railcars to LNER A4s and B17s, LMS Stanier 2-6-0s, Beyer-Garratts and old SR shed views.

North-western steam comprises such locations as Rose Grove, Carlisle, Tebay and Shap in the late 1950s, and the heritage modern traction slides collection dating from the 1960s onwards includes Warships, Westerns, Deltics, the advanced passenger train experimental (APT-E) that first ran in July 1972, and early EMUs.

From across the seas comes 1960s steam in Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Finland, and from further afield, the sugar mills

of Indonesia in the 1990s, while closer to home is steam and diesel traction on UK heritage lines in the 1970s/80s and early this century.

The Vic Berry slides were taken in 1987-9 and feature cab views, and among the paperwork is a copy of the 2003 Ian Allan historical atlas by Colonel Michael Cobb, with a 2005 revised edition. This acclaimed publication, a monumental 18-year project by the author, records and maps every railway station and line opened in Britain from 1807 to 1994, and such was its impact that it earned Col Cobb a PhD from Cambridge University, making him – at 91 years of age – the oldest person ever to be so honoured by the university.

Still in the paperwork category, also in the auction is a collection of BR letters and permits to visit sheds and depots, the Holy Grail for we steam trainspotters as they enabled us to stroll through the lines of locomotives without having to keep a wary eye open for the shedmaster or one of his jobsworths eager to boot us out.

Railwayana Auction Calendar

■ August 3-28

Paddington Ticket Auctions

■ August 18

Lacy Scott & Knight (*railwayana and models*)

■ August 24-30

JustaClickAgo (*photographs, negatives, slides and paperwork*)

■ August 25/26

Vectis (*model trains*)

→ A Japanese Government Railways D51 class 2-8-2 No. 200 constructed by Deagostini of Italy in G-scale (1:24) electric sold for £440 in a Lacy Scott & Knight of Bury St Edmunds toys and models sale on June 17. The price excludes buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

→ Two weeks later, on July 3, W & H Peacock of Bedford realised £2400 (+ buyer's premium of 17½% + VAT) for a large-scale live steam model of 9F 2-10-0 No. 92220 *Evening Star* in an antiques and collectables sale.

Darlington tank makes its mark as worksplate from 0-4-4T scoops the number-one award

A Darlington 1901 worksplate from G5 class 0-4-4T No. 67326 made its mark at Thirsk Railwayana's June 20 auction by scooping the top

realisation award when it sold for £940, some way ahead of the runner-up, a BR(NE) 'Parcels and left luggage' enamel sign that went

for £680. Following were a wooden with metal letters nameboard from Castleton 'box on the Rochdale to Manchester line (realising £460)

and a BR(S) Bromley South platform totem that fetched £420. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12% (+ VAT).

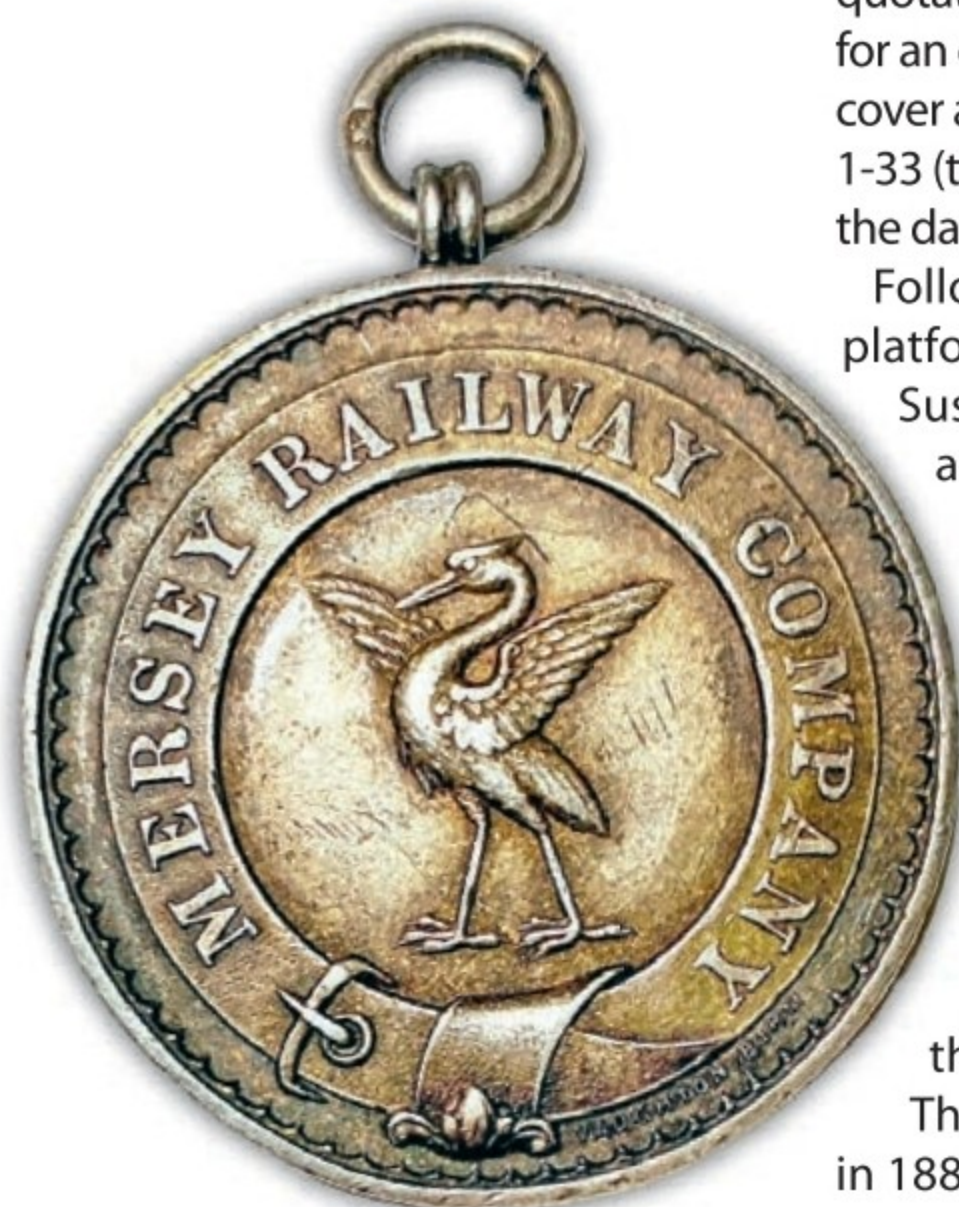
Hornby heads Bassett-Lowke in battle at the top

A BATTLE for O-gauge supremacy in a Vectis model train sale on June 24/25 ended with a resounding victory for Hornby over Bassett-Lowke after a 20v electric model of Swiss pantograph locomotive No. 10655 made by the former sold for £2700, a substantial distance ahead of a Bassett-Lowke clockwork GWR No. 6000 *King George V* produced in the mid-1930s and a second Hornby product, a three-rail electric LMS Princess Royal No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*, each of which went under the hammer for £900.

Hornby continued its O-gauge winning run when LMS 0-4-0T No. 70 and GWR 4-4-0 No. 3821 *County of Bedford* sold for £520 apiece, while Hornby O-gauge clockwork SR L1 class No. 759 and Ace Trains three-rail electric streamlined Princess Coronation No. 6229 *Duchess of Hamilton* both achieved £500. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

World-first map shows the way

A fold-out first edition pocket map of Harry Beck's worldwide copied diagrammatic map of the London Underground system dated 1933 was the top seller in Transport Auctions of London's sale on June 27 with a hammer price of £1500. It carried the



quotation 'A new design for an old map' on the front cover and a print code of 750M-1-33 (the number of copies printed and the date).

Following at £700 was a BR(S) platform totem sign from the West Sussex station of Pulborough and a Southern Railway Wrotham target sign that was renamed Borough Green & Wrotham in 1962 (£450), and at £420 came a Mersey Railway hallmarked pass. This was issued to H Wood Esq, who research indicates may have been Walter H Wood, the railway's general manager in the early 1900s.

The railway itself was opened in 1886, became part of BR on

Nationalisation in 1948, and remains in operation today as part of the Merseyrail network and is the world's oldest underground railway outside London.

This realisation of £420 was matched by a fold-out map of London's District Railway dated April 1, 1908. The map shows other underground railways operating in the capital at the time, and also the Franco-British Exhibition that was held at the White City, London, that year from May 24 to October 31. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).



Steamy affair: Princess Royal No. 46201 *Princess Elizabeth*, a Hornby model of which sold for £900 at a Vectis auction on June 24/25, departs from Glasgow Central on March 28, 1959. The ex-LMS Pacific was allocated to Glasgow Polmadie (66A) at that time, but carries what appears to be a 10D shedplate, the BR code for Sutton Oak in St. Helens from 1955 to 1958, although No. 46201 was never allocated to that depot, and to add to the enigma, the code was not being used by BR at the time the photograph was taken. TRANSPORT TREASURY/JOHN ROBERTSON

A great British summer ... so get out & about!

The milestones and events are coming at us thick and fast in the railways heritage sector – from Gresley's 150th to the Talyllyn's 75th and many more – and there really has never been a better time to learn about Britain's industrial past... how we lived, how we worked and what made this country.

With Wimbledon over, England depressing us with the cricket and football's World Cup just days from the final, it's another of those wonderfully varied British summers, but something we CAN predict is that there are fantastic events for all the family – ranging from the die-hard enthusiasts to those in need of a great day out.

We're sure you and your family will have your favourite attractions to visit, somewhere with special memories and a phone full of photos, but if you are looking for somewhere a little bit special, perhaps a part of the country you may not have been to for a while, or an attraction on your doorstep you'd forgotten all about, then take a look at our map and the adverts on this page to gain some inspiration.

All the venues and businesses here provide a memorable day out or help with that essential short break that often combines inspiration, entertainment and education... you really can't beat a super day out with the family at one of the fabulous attractions highlighted on these pages... and maybe some lovely locally-sourced food and hospitality too.

Even better, you can always find some interesting byways and highways to and from any attraction, so it's a great opportunity to get off those busy motorways and explore the great British countryside. As you can see from the map here, there are venues to visit across the country, so go on, support these great British attractions... you will not be disappointed!

To feature on this map contact Andy on 01507 529455
andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk



1

THE TROLLEYBUS MUSEUM
at Sandtoft

The world's largest collection of preserved trolleybuses

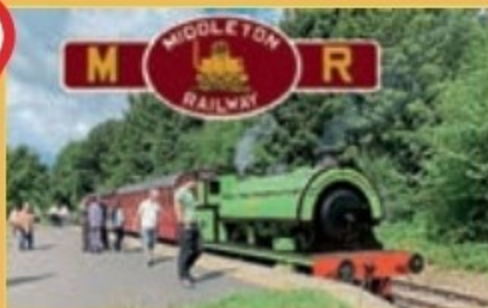
We're open selected weekends and Bank Holidays from Easter to mid-November

Visit www.sandtoft.org for full details



Belton Road, Sandtoft,
North Lincs DN8 5SX

2



RAILWAY OPEN EACH WEEKEND UNTIL END SEPTEMBER
Diesel Saturday - Steam Sunday
Regular train services commence 10.30am
Railway Station and Museum opens from 10am
Refreshments available. The railway is fully accessible

Hallowe'en Trains 31st October • Santa visits in December
Please check website for full details www.middletonrailway.org.uk

MIDDLETON RAILWAY

3

NTM
National Tramway Museum

Where history is heard, felt and ridden.

- Unlimited Tramrides
- Woodland Walk & Sculpture Trail
- Indoor & outdoor play
- Exhibitions
- Events
- Shops
- Cafe & Pub

The National Tramway Museum,
Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 5DP

www.tramway.co.uk
email: enquiry@tramway.co.uk



4

CHINNOR & PRINCES RISBOROUGH RAILWAY

07979 055366
www.chinnorrailway.co.uk

STATION ROAD . CHINNOR . OX39 4ER



5

Dean Forest Railway
Forest Road, Lydney, Glos GL15 4ET

Steam trains every Wednesday & weekend until November 1st.

Plus Steam & Diesel Galas,
Afternoon Teas, Murder Mysteries,
Fish & Chip Evening, Santa Specials and more!

www.deanforestrailway.co.uk



6

MID-SUFFOLK LIGHT RAILWAY
Steaming every Summer Sunday & Bank Holiday until 31st August

19th July - Steam Railway & Suffolk Craft Fair Day
26th July - Steam Railway & Vintage Motorcycle Clubs visit
2nd August - Steam Railway & Land Rover Owners Day
9th August - Big Bus Day - shuttle bus services to and from Stonham Barns + the Old Ram Vintage Tractor Club visit
16th August - Vintage Commercial Vehicles & Royal Enfield Motorcycle visit
23rd August - Model Mania & Hornby Collectors Club Days
30th/31st August - Steam Gala Weekend with railway and traction engines

For details visit www.msrlr.org.uk or call 01449 766874, email: enquiries@mslr.org.uk
Brockford Station, Wetheringsett, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5PW



7

Sittingbourne's Steam Railway

Trains are running every
Wednesday, Sunday and
BH Monday in August 12-4pm

www.skrlr.net | 01795 424899 | @SandKLR



8

GWSR
GLoucestershire & WARWICKSHIRE RAILWAY

www.gwsr.com



9

BRESSINGHAM
STEAM MUSEUM

Open Daily: March to October

Find out more!
WWW.BRESSINGHAM.CO.UK



EAST COAST ICONS: TAKE 2

Ten years after its hugely-successful East Coast Revival gala brought together two generations of the London to Scotland route's express locomotives, the Nene Valley Railway chased a second bite of the cherry by repeating the spectacle, as **Owen Hayward** reports.

The main line rail scene has changed rather considerably since the heyday of steam and early BR era. There is little difference to be discerned nowadays between all the electric units plying their trade along the myriad main and branch lines. Operating companies are gradually being nationalised once more, and there is also seemingly none of that competitiveness that once fuelled the growth and development of the industry.

In 1925, the GWR loaned its rivals at the LNER a 4-6-0 in the form of No.4079 *Pendennis Castle* for comparative performance trials on the East Coast Main Line, going up against the likes of Gresley Pacifics such as No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* on 16-coach trains between King's Cross and Grantham. The Castle famously put the Pacifics in their place, achieving the initial climb to Finsbury Park in less than six minutes – something its rivals could not match, while also proving to be more economical on both coal and water.

As BR sought to replace steam with diesel traction, its engineers worked hard to develop types capable of matching or even beating the capabilities of their predecessors' designs, turning out some

true rail workhorses and icons in the process. Some found their place on the winding suburban and rural routes, while others were better suited to the long-distance routes such as the East Coast Main Line. This 393-mile artery of the rail network connects King's Cross with Edinburgh, travelling northwards through the likes of Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage, Doncaster, Darlington, Newcastle and Reston. Its construction was carried out in three stages by three different pre-Grouping companies, all of which were building railways for their local areas but had in mind the intention to create a link to form a through route; these were the North British Railway, North Eastern Railway and Great Northern Railway. The fully-linked route was opened in 1850, and in latter years it became synonymous with Gresley's Pacifics, namely the A3 and A4 classes.

In 2016, the Nene Valley Railway brought one icon from both the steam and diesel ages together for an August bank holiday weekend, giving enthusiasts an opportunity to sample both types of motive power strutting their stuff in fair circumstances, albeit travelling much slower than the ECML speeds for which their types are

better known. It saw Peppercorn A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* (a new-build example of Arthur Peppercorn's 1948 design for the LNER/BR) and Class 55 Deltic No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* (built in 1961 as one of a class designed to replace the streamlined A4s on ECML expresses) running in turn between Yarwell and Peterborough NVR stations.

A decade on

The success of the 2016 mini gala clearly struck a chord and proved to be hugely successful. Now, a decade later, the NVR seized an opportunity to repeat the occasion.

Following *Tornado's* arrival there from Ruddington on June 29, Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon* followed two days later on the back of its recent visit to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. On the weekend of July 4/5, the Deltic was on static display at Wansford while *Tornado* operated public trains along the full length of line. In the week following, footplate courses allowed a select few the opportunity to take to the controls of the A1 for light engine trips along the line.

On July 11/12, both locomotives worked alternating services from Wansford, where

East Coast Icons: *Tornado* and *Alycidon* on shed at Wansford on July 7. Although the Peppercorn A1's design came to be 78 years ago, the Deltic is the older of the two, having been built in 1961, with *Tornado* emerging in 2008. CHRIS O'REGAN/NVR





No. 60163 *Tornado* departs Orton Mere for Peterborough on July 12, passing the split-off for the Fletton Branch at Longueville Junction. HAYDEN SHEPPARD



***Alycidon* puts down the power at Yacht Club Crossing as it heads towards Overton on July 13.** OWEN HAYWARD

the waiting locomotive was available for cab visits before its next working.

Just as it was before, the gala proved immensely popular and visitors flocked from afar to enjoy the sight and sample the performances of the two rivals of these local classes, with the ECML passing not far from the Western terminus of the heritage line.

The seven-coach train was by no means a challenging load for either locomotive, the A1 having a tractive effort of 37,400lbf, while the Deltic – the most powerful British diesel of its era – had a maximum of approximately 50,000lbf.

Both designs share a maximum speed capability of 100mph, so the 25mph limit of the UK's heritage railways is a gentle plod by comparison.

The A1 swiftly departed the NVR for Darlington on July 12 before a steam ban on the national network came into effect (see Main Line News, page 52), leaving the Deltic in Cambridgeshire for almost a full week of its own driver experience courses, followed by two more weekends of public running. The first of those, on July 18/19, saw a continuation of the icons theme, with the Saturday putting the Deltic out alongside a Midland Region rival in the shape of Class 45 'Peak' No. 45041 *Royal Tank Regiment* (the latter pulling a train of continental stock).

Sunday was meant to continue the East Coast theme with 125 Preservation's Class 125 HST set appearing; however, on July 17 it was announced the set had been withdrawn due to "operational reasons."

Alycidon's final weekend of running at the NVR was July 25/26, where it supplemented shuttles worked by Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 1800 *Thomas*. These dates had originally been advertised as *Thomas's* annual days of working trains all the way to Peterborough, it normally being restricted to trips between Yarwell and Wansford. However, following a prolonged period of hot and dry weather, on July 13 the railway opted to implement a steam ban on the majority of its line, which passes by tinder-dry farmland and runs close to residential areas on the approach to Peterborough.

Busy itinerary

After briefly returning to The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's base at Hopetown Darlington, *Tornado* is due to be operating at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway until August 8, pulling two dedicated pre-booked return trips between Pickering and Grosmont each day. Following this, its next public outing is currently scheduled to be its visit to the Swanage Railway in September. While there, it will appear at the Dorset



***Tornado* leads *Alycidon* over the River Nene on July 13 on the approach to Overton.** OWEN HAYWARD



Facing off: The Peppercorn A1 watches on as the Napier engine-powered Deltic arrives back at Wansford on July 12. OWEN HAYWARD

line's September 11-13 autumn steam gala, which will include services operating to the railway's boundary with Network Rail.

On September 26, *Tornado* will return to the main line for a Vintage Trains tour. 'The Great Northern' will depart Birmingham New Street for Carlisle, with the return route taking the train over part of the ECML towards Newcastle and Darlington, followed

by dates in October, when it will work shuttles on the demonstration line back at Hopetown Darlington.

Conversely, as this issue went to press, there was no other work lined up for *Alycidon*. It will therefore be heading back to the Deltic Preservation Society's base at Barrow Hill to receive maintenance while it awaits its next booking. **HR**

HORSEPOWER MEETS HERITAGE AT THE MID-HANTS DIESEL GALA

It was another case of modern machines meeting heritage traction in Hampshire when the Watercress Line hosted its annual diesel gala, which brought in some main line machines to appeal to the changing enthusiast tastes, as **Owen Hayward** reports.

There's no denying that as enthusiast tastes change, galas must adapt to suit. While steam galas tend to fare better in terms of visitor support for what some might call 'standard' line-ups, diesel enthusiasts are a little harder to please. And while some classes have devout followings wherever they go, getting the wrong guest line-up for a diesel gala can be slightly more detrimental and thus might, in the eyes of some, pose a greater risk.

This year has seen the Spa Valley Railway drop plans for a diesel gala, partly down to the lack of availability for a star guest locomotive that would have attracted sufficient numbers to cover the costs, but also because of the rising costs of transportation and fuel, which were putting the line into the realms of financial risk. While it may run parallel to Southern Railway's Uckfield line, the Spa Valley does not have a physical connection to the national network, meaning any locomotive movements must be carried out by road.

This is not a situation unique to the Spa Valley, of course, and there are many other heritage lines standing separate from main line rails. There are, however, several which

do enjoy the benefits of a main line link, and among these we are witnessing a growing trend of locomotives from current main line freight and charter operators being booked as gala guests. These bring with them rarity appeal – there may be many of these sorts of locomotives still running about the network today, but seldom do they pull passenger trains, let alone ones on heritage railways. That is gradually changing, but just as trainspotters in the days of Ian Allan books would try to tick off all the numbers possible, many diesel enthusiasts also chase after rare locomotives for haulage.

Fancy a 'Tug'?

On July 10-12, the Mid-Hants Railway hosted its own annual gala – a prime example of such an event to benefit from main line visitors, with a trio of classes drafted in for the occasion.

Arguably the headline for some was Class 60 No. 60099 *Ben More Assynt*. Built between 1989 and 1993 as part of a powerful fleet designed for heavy freight workings, the Class 60s are among the most formidable diesels in the UK, with their powerful capabilities being likened to that of naval tugboats, resulting

in the class's nickname of 'Tugs.' No. 60099 is powered by a Mirrlees Blackstone eight-cylinder engine producing about 3100hp, typically moving vast quantities of aggregates for construction projects ranging from housing developments to major infrastructure such as HS2.

While members of the class have been seen on heritage railways before, this particular example has not, thus proving a highly alluring choice for the gala line-up, appearing thanks to DC Rail, which also supplied the second guest – Class 56 No. 56103.

This class was built between 1976 and 1984, with 135 examples each fitted with a Ruston-Paxman power unit producing 3250bhp. They received the nickname of 'Grids' owing to the grid-like horn cover on the cab ends fitted to No. 56056 onwards. The first 30 were built in Romania by Electroputere (and were plagued by issues of poor construction that eventually required rebuilds), with BREL Doncaster outshopping the next batch up to No. 56114, and Crewe the remainder.

Despite the design being now more than 50 years old, examples are still to be found in service, along with a handful of preserved examples.



No. 47579 passes Ropley Top Sidings as it starts the climb out of the station towards Medstead & Four Marks. JEREMY DE SOUZA/MHR



Visiting 'Grid' No. 56103 arrives at Ropley with 4VEP No. 3417, working the 10.50am from Alresford to Alton on July 12. PHIL BARNES



DC Rail's No. 60099 arrives at Alresford with the 2.55pm from Alton. PHIL BARNES

Meanwhile, Freightliner has proven itself a keen supporter of heritage railway galas over the years and has regularly loaned locomotives from its fleet to such events. This occasion was no different, with Class 66 No. 66613 putting in a brief appearance by running on the Friday, before spending Saturday on static display, with cab visits available. This was intended to continue through the Sunday; however, it was recalled for main line work at short notice and so double-headed an afternoon service to Alton, where it crossed over to SouthWestern Railway metals to head off for its working commitments.

Heritage fleet

Supporting the main line trio were a fleet of heritage locomotives, including Class 33 No. 33108 from the Severn Valley Railway, stopping over while on its way into Sussex to spend the summer at the Bluebell Railway.

Originally built in 1960 as D6521, it was converted in 1967 into one of the Southern Region's distinctive push-pull Class 33/1 locomotives. These played a vital role following the Bournemouth electrification, working with 4TC units to provide seamless through services between London Waterloo and Weymouth. It was based at nearby Eastleigh depot for its whole BR career before withdrawal, giving it a suitably local connection to the MHR.

To allow the 'Crompton' a chance to display its push-pull capabilities, BR class 423 4VEP No. 3417 *Gordon Pettit* was brought in from Strawberry Hill depot, where it is undergoing restoration to main line condition. It also provided an air-braked rake of passenger stock that could be used by the main line visiting locomotives without the need of a translator locomotive for the MHR's vacuum-braked BR Mk. 1 carriages.

The 4VEP arrived by rail on July 9, a day later than intended owing to issues with one of the towing locomotives. Hanson & Hall had agreed to the appearance of Class 31 No. 31210 at the gala, it due to be towed there with the 4VEP by classmate No. 31128 *Charybdis*. However, issues were encountered before departing the depot at Burton-upon-Trent the day previous. Despite both locomotives subsequently making it to pick up the EMU from south-west London, ongoing problems saw No. 31210 left there while *Charybdis* undertook the empty stock move solo, remaining on static display at Ropley for the duration of the gala. The two movements were then reversed on July 13.



Class 33 No. 33108 heads for Ropley on July 11 with the 10.35am from Alton. JEREMY DE SOUZA/MHR



Class 66 No. 66613 put in a brief appearance on passenger trains for one day only. On July 10, it sits at Alton ready for departure to Arlesford. JEREMY DE SOUZA/MHR



The Westfields Shopping Centre looms over Shepherds Bush station as 4VEP No. 3417 *Gordon Pettit* is towed by No. 31128 to Alton from Strawberry Hill depot on July 9. OWEN HAYWARD

Joining from the railway's own locomotive fleet were a pair of Class 20s (D8059 and D8188), Class 47 No. 47579 *James Nightall* GC, Class 08 D3462 and No. 08288 *Phoenix*, and Class 11 No. 12082. The final member of the line-up was the recently-arrived Class 150 DMU No. 150231, making its first gala appearance since entering service earlier this year. Its presence on the MHR has enabled a much more flexible timetable to be operated, including the scheduling of an earlier train to meet visitors arriving at Alton via the national rail network and thus presenting a more cost and time-efficient day without the need to fire up another steam or diesel locomotive.

Visitors were able to enjoy guided tours of the workshops at Ropley, with the usual offering of locally sourced ales and ciders available on board. In addition to the aforementioned static locomotives in the yard, Class 50 No. 50027 *Lion* was also on display. This particular locomotive has been out of service for several years as it has been undergoing engine repairs; although it had been hoped the work would be completed in time for an appearance at the gala, it was not to be. It is, however, in the final throes of assembly, after which testing will be able to commence. Perhaps it will not be long before this 'Hoover' is back out and drawing crowds itself once more. **HR**



GWR pannier No. 7714 pulls the first train of the gala from Kidderminster Town through Eardington station on July 18.

SMALL IS BIG

AT NEW SEVERN VALLEY SUMMER GALA!

The Severn Valley Railway's winter gala has become a fixture in the calendar, with this year's event taking place in sub-zero temperatures. In striking contrast, as heatwave conditions began to ease, the line staged its first new Summer Gala on the weekend of July 18/19, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.

The Severn Valley Railway's new Summer Gala was a mixed traffic event, leaning heavily towards diesel power while also celebrating the smallest steam locomotives in the home fleet. They were joined by three hired-in industrial steam locomotives.

From the home fleet came stalwart GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714 (currently in its last year of working before overhaul) and GWR 0-6-0ST 813, recently returned to service, plus a very wide variety of diesels.

Three guests were brought in to make the event different. The first was Witch class 0-4-0ST No. 4388, courtesy of Jack Dibnah, and the Foxfield Railway. Built in 1926 by Kerr Stuart & Company for the British Gas Light

Company's gas works at Etruria in Stoke-on-Trent, it was used to shunt coal wagons from the main line at Etruria yard, work which was previously carried out by horses.

Its design is unusual, with outside cylinders, no front footplate and a notably small saddle tank. Local model railway retailer Footplate of Kidderminster sponsored the cost of its road transportation.

The second guest locomotive joining the line-up was attractive Neilson & Company 0-4-0ST No. 2937 of 1882, appearing courtesy of Keith Sergeant and the Chasewater Railway. It entered service at Bedlay Colliery, near Glenboig; with the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1947, it passed into the ownership of the National Coal Board and was saved by

the Railway Preservation Society, Hednesford, eventually ending up at Chasewater. It returned to traffic in 2025.

The only disappointment of the weekend was the failure of Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 3783 *Hollybank* No. 3 from Chasewater. Its trains were instead worked by No. 813, while the booked diesels took over No. 813's trains.

On July 15, No. 3783 was steamed in Bridgnorth Yard but sadly deemed a failure. It was on display throughout the event at Kidderminster Town station and will return to Chasewater having not worked a single service.

It was hoped that Class 07 D2996 was going to be in service, but it was still in the testing stage, resulting in Western Region diesel-hydraulic Class 42 Warship D821 *Greyhound*



Above: The crew enters into the spirit of driving a Victorian locomotive as Neilson 0-4-0ST No. 2937 of 1882 departs Bewdley.



Right: Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 3783 of 1953 *Holly Bank No. 3* runs along the shed yard at Bridgnorth past Stanier mogul No. 13268 before failing on July 15.



Class 42 D821 Greyhound runs into Bewdley with the Great Western carriage set on July 19.



GWR pannier No. 7714 alongside visitors Kerr Stuart Witch No. 4388 and Neilson No. 2937 at Bewdley early morning on July 19.



Above: A rather unusual double-header as Class 20 No. 20048 and Class 42 No. D821 enter Bewdley station on the Saturday.

Left: Former Port Talbot Railway & Docks Company GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 nears its journeys end as it approaches Bridgnorth on July 18.

being brought in as the replacement. Also in service on the diesel front were Class 09 No. 09107, Class 14 D9551, Class 17 D8568, Class 20 No. 20048 and the line's Class 101 DMU.

Many double-headers took place, some stranger than others. One of the weirdest had to be No. 20048 leading D821.

A busy timetable was in operation, with full line trains running between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth. At either end, local shuttles ran between Bewdley and Kidderminster or Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade.

On the Bridgnorth shuttle were Nos. 813 (facing north) and D8658, the pair top-and-tailing four Gresley teak coaches.

At the southern end on two auto carriages, the Neilson and Kerr Stuart double-headed, the pair performing faultlessly. Both locomotives took turns in leading the trains.

Timekeeping very good throughout the weekend, with many trains spot on time. The lineside was tinder-dry, but surprisingly, there were no reports of lineside fires.

Various additional improvements have taken place at Eardington station, which was fully

open. The new tin shed blends in nicely, and a new lamppost in keeping with the ones on the platform has been erected by the crossing. Local trains stopped here, giving the feel of a country wayside station.

Kidderminster Town also hosted a live-steam Gauge 1 model railway which ran throughout the weekend.

One of the strangest sights of the entire event was a passenger with a large white parrot on his shoulder. Dogs are charged for train journeys, but it would be interesting to see what the rulebook has to say about parrots! ➡

Visitors took advantage of the summer weather and turned out in large numbers on the Saturday, the reduction in heatwave temperatures no doubt having helped.

SVR's CEO, Gus Dunster, said: "Our inaugural Summer Gala proved to be a fantastic way to kick off the main school holiday period – a brand-new event that clearly captured the imagination of visitors of all ages. Advance bookings for the event were strong.

"The combination of smaller steam and diesel locomotives, together with the ever-popular opening of Eardington station, proved to be a winning formula.

"The atmosphere was enhanced even further by glorious sunshine, with temperatures thankfully a little cooler.

"That Sunday also coincided with National Ice Cream Day added an extra touch of summer fun for our visitors."

The upcoming Autumn Gala, taking place at the line on September 17-20, has a theme that is an evocative look back into the line's pre-preservation days, especially with the announcement of a third visiting locomotive.

GWR small prairie No. 5526 will be attending from the South Devon Railway and work alongside recently restored GWR 2-6-2T No. 4150 which, subject to testing, is expected to make its debut in passenger service for the first time since 1968.

The 45xx and 4575 class prairie tanks were synonymous with branch line operations across much of the GWR network, making No. 5526 an ideal addition to the pre-preservation theme.

It will be the second time the locomotive has visited the Severn Valley Railway, it last having appeared on the Valley in 2008.

Previously announced guests, as reported, include Ivatt Class 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313, appearing courtesy of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.

Its visit marks several notable milestones, including the locomotive's first-ever appearance at the SVR and the first visit by an Isle of Wight-based locomotive to the line. It will also become only the third member of the Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T family to visit the SVR in the heritage era.

Ivatt 2MTs worked out of Shrewsbury and may have ventured onto Seven Valley metals.

WR pannier No. 9681 will also be visiting from the Dean Forest Railway and will run with resident No. 7714. It will be almost 30 years since No. 9681 last operated away from its long-time home.

Gus said: "We're delighted to welcome No 5526 to the Autumn Steam Gala and are very grateful to our friends at the South Devon Railway for making the visit possible.

"Our aim this year is to transport visitors back to the Severn Valley of old, and this latest announcement helps us do exactly that.

"Seeing a small prairie working alongside our own beautifully restored large prairie No. 4150, together with our other guest locomotives, will create some wonderful sights and sounds for visiting enthusiasts and families alike.

"We also have one more visiting locomotive still to announce, so there's even more to look forward to."

Other locomotives from the home fleet appearing in the line-up will be Ivatt mogul No.13268 and BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75069. **HR**



Saddle tanks: No. 2937 pilots No. 4388 as the pair depart from Bewdley.



Pannier No. 714 departs Kidderminster Town as Class 09 No. 09107 awaits it turn in the siding.



Above: Gauge 1 display at Kidderminster Town station.

Left: Class 17 D8658 banks a train as it approaches Eardington on July 19.

BRESSINGHAM
STEAM MUSEUM

FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT

Saturday 29th-Monday 31st August 2026



**Traction Engines, Locomotives,
Tractors and much more!**

WWW.BRESSINGHAM.CO.UK

WHEN TORNADO HITS SWANAGE... YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IT

See Tornado return after 12 years.
Autumn Steam Gala | 11-13 September

photo: Andrew PM Wright

**SWANAGE
RAILWAY**

Find out more
and book at
swanagerailway.co.uk

NORTH YORKSHIRE
NYMR
MOORS RAILWAY

ROCKSTAR SERVICES

**Selected dates
18 Sept – 11 Oct**

Upgrade your journey with our
souvenir and snack packages



NORTH YORKSHIRE
BOOK NOW
MOORS RAILWAY

Don't miss your chance to ride behind British legends
– Sir Nigel Gresley and Pendennis Castle.

NYMR.CO.UK/ROCKSTARS

HIGH HISTORY CREATED IN THE SNOWDON MOUNTAIN RAILWAY 130TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Phil Marsh makes an out-of-season visit to Britain's unique public rack railway to view the modernization of a passing loop which removes the need for the country's highest blockman.

THE Snowdon Mountain Railway, the UK's sole example of a public rack-and-pinion line, has just commenced its 130th anniversary season.

The 4.7-mile 2ft 7½ (800mm) gauge line climbs about 3200ft between its Llanberis base to just below the 3550ft summit of Wales' highest mountain, Eryri (Snowdon).

The SMR was originally conceived by the LNWR, which built a branch line to Llanberis from Bangor, but Thomas Assheton-Smith, the landowner of the proposed route of the mountain railway, initially opposed the plans. However, the threat of a rival railway from Rhyd Ddu connecting with the Welsh Highland Railway changed his mind. He had made a fortune from the nearby slate mines and owned the Vaynol Estate through which the rack railway would be built on.

He decided to build the SMR to attract Victorian tourists who had been on similar Alpine railways while on The Grand Tour of Europe. He also built a hotel by his Llanberis station to further attract income. Hence, the name of his firm, formed in 1894, was The Snowdon Mountain Tramroad and Hotels Company. The hotel was sold 30 years later,

and the name was contracted to the Snowdon Mountain Railway.

The railway did not require parliamentary powers given it was constructed on his estate without lineside fences or crossings. Construction of the line, designated a tramway, was carried out by about 150 men using muscle and dynamite between December 1894 and February 1896, costing £63,800 – about £11 million today.

Five steam locomotives were purchased from Winterthur in Switzerland, each costing £1525, with three more added in 1922. It is estimated that 0-4-2T No. 2 *Enid* covered the same distance as four return trips to the moon while travelling on the line! The 1896 trains were a mix of an open wagon and a carriage which was fitted with curtains and 'air conditioned' or exposed passengers to the elements at all times. In the 1950s, the carriages were modernised by glass fitted in the window spaces.

Powerful Hunslet diesels were introduced in 1986 and 1992, with railcars three years later, followed by new carriages in 2013 and 2014. These are modern reconstructions of the 1896 carriages, helping to carry about 140,000 passengers annually. The

diesels have powerful 320hp six-cylinder turbocharged Rolls-Royce 120-litre engines.

Diesel trains operate from the end of March to the end of October, with steam services running between May and September, operating on a line-of-sight basis without signalling.

Until last October, the SMR boasted the UK's highest manually operated set of switches and crossings, located 2556 feet up the mountain at Clogwyn loop, one of three on the line. A blockman based in a shed changed the manually-operated points for every train movement, more often than not in atrocious weather.

As with heritage railways, the SMR has a winter closed period when intrusive track maintenance is carried out, between November and March. The modernisation of Clogwyn Loop, which abolished the role of the UK's highest blockman, needed all this time because of the worst winter weather in years.

Start of operations

The inaugural public trains commenced on April 6, 1896, with a two-train operation. On that official opening day, disaster was

Hunslet 0-4-0DH No. 9250 of 1986 No. 10 Yet takes the first train over the new track at Clogwyn Loop on March 3. PHIL MARSH





Left: Snowdon Mountain Railway permanent way manager Chris Mace checking renewal plans. SMR



Installing the new points indicator at Clogwyn, looking towards Llanberis. PHIL MARSH

narrowly averted when on the first descent, locomotive No. 1 *L.A.D.A.S.*, named after Mr Assheton-Smith's wife, Laura Alice Duff Assheton-Smith, with two carriages, derailed due to subsidence and consequential trackbed settlement. This led to the rack connection being lost, and No. 1 tumbled down the mountainside. The carriages ran away, colliding with the second train's carriages, resulting in one fatality when a passenger jumped from the train. Deemed beyond repair, No. 1 was broken up for spare parts.

The operation was immediately reversed with locomotives propelling, but not coupled to, a single carriage uphill and leading while descending. A secondary rack gripper was fitted to maintain the connection between the track and locomotive.

Carriages have their own independent braking system and a handbrake. They are fitted with an automatic overspeed braking system applied at 7.6mph by two weights spinning outwards driven by centrifugal forces past a predetermined limit, automatically applying brakes via a fixed linkage.

The three passing loops have illuminated points indicators confirming if the points are set correctly for each train, but they do not give authority to move; this comes by radio from the traffic controller in an office on the platform at Llanberis. The extreme terrain and climate on the route means that a very strict safety regime is in place.

When gusts exceed 70mph, all services are suspended and nothing departs from Llanberis. This principle is dictated by safety concerns in case of a rescue by the Summit Service Vehicle (SSV) if a train failure takes place. All operational staff are required to undergo a SMR rulebook assessment at the start of every season to ensure knowledge is up to date.

The winter engineering project automated the Clogwyn Loop switch and crossing at an altitude of 2550 feet. This upgrade entailed removing the manually operated point levers and associated mechanical cess linkages, therefore obviating the requirement for the blockman operation.

The blockman's base was a purpose-built shed painted deep green, blending in with the surroundings, with power provided by a generator.

Following completion of the track renewal and points automation, electricity is now generated by solar and wind generating equipment linked to leisure cells powering the switch and crossing and the points' indicators.



An historic position soon to be made redundant. The blockman, in torrential rain and high winds at Clogwyn on October 24, 2025, walks to change the points. PHIL MARSH



Clogwyn Loop being lifted last October prior to being relaid. SMR



Gauge checking by the first train to run on the new track on the ridge above Clogwyn. PHIL MARSH



Checking the gauge at the Clogwyn works on March 3. PHIL MARSH



Sowing special seed on new soil deposited on former points runs. PHIL MARSH

A small patch of almost level land is adjacent to the loop and was used as the worksite. Last year, a search and rescue helicopter landed there to take a walker to hospital and the downdraft blew ballast chippings against the shed chipping the paint!

Trains can enter or exit loops only with permission from the traffic controller. The guard sits in a quasi driver's seat in the centre

of the leading end of the carriage when ascending the mountain, looking out for sheep, dogs, and errant walkers. The latter unintentionally sometimes kick stones or ballast onto the rack system when ignoring the footpath and use the trackbed, causing delays.

Diesel-propelled carriages have eight compartments, and the guard sits just in front of the compartment seats. This





The works team in the staff caboose travelling back to Llanberis. PHIL MARSH



Original section of 1895 rack replaced at Clogwyn. PHIL MARSH



With all equipment loaded, the works train departs from Clogwyn Loop at the end of the March 3 shift. PHIL MARSH



Living up to its name: Snowdon summit covered thickly in the white stuff on January 26. SMR

compartment affords the best view, even in rain or just in a cloud. Steam services have a capacity of 34 seats and are in replica 1896 carriages.

The train travels through three vegetation and climate zones as altitude changes. Llanberis station is situated on the valley floor, but just outside station limits the line climbs, crossing the 13-arch listed viaduct over the Afon Hwch River, where a stretch of very rare temperate rainforest takes over. Not long after, the tree-less zone is reached, and if conditions allow, tremendous scenic views appear around every bend – especially above Clogwyn Loop.

The climate also rapidly changes with altitude. In summer, Llanberis can be enjoying a hot summer's day, but by 2250 feet up the mountain at Rocky Valley platform and viewpoint, rain can be torrential, cloud can obscure vision, and howling gales can occur. If a steady windspeed exceeding the 42mph operating limit is reached, trains go no further up the mountain and, until last year, passengers had to remain on the train in such weather.

Over the winter, the SMR has constructed a viewpoint platform looking down on the Llanberis pass far below.

Conditions often allow trains to serve the summit visitor centre, built costing £8.3 million between 2006 and 2009, from where it is a short climb up a path to the summit. The centre is served by a staff and goods train every morning using the SSV. This also serves as a rescue vehicle should weather conditions deteriorate to the extent that service trains cannot operate.

Family connections to the opening day

It is said that every family in Llanberis has either a member working on the SMR or who did in the past. *Heritage Railway* chatted to Peter Williams in Llanberis Works, who has 38 years on the SMR. That day, he was consulting original 1894 Winterthur locomotive plans as he had to fabricate some new parts. He is a workshop machinist, permanent way team member and locomotive driver.

"I fix whatever needs repairing on traction and rolling stock, making new parts for the locomotives such as brake pins, piston rings, referring to the original Winterthur locomotive drawings," he said. His family has worked continuously since the railway's official opening day, when his great-great-grandfather was a driver.

The longest serving member of staff is Gwyn Jones, with 45 years of SMR service so far. He is multi-skilled as a boilersmith and welder in the works, also driving as required. He told amusing tales of training in local quarries

before joining the SMR, and recalled: "In addition to steam locomotive boiler work, I also carried out contract boiler work for local schools, hospitals, factories and shipyards back in the day!"

Steve Williams, a permanent way trackman, and locomotive driver, explained the rack part of the rail operation: "The locomotives are propelled by the axle-mounted pinions acting against the rack. The wheels are not powered, but guide or steer the vehicle on an individual rotational flexible basis" – the same principle as many street-running trams today,

SMR permanent way manager Chis Mace added: "Given it is more than 30 years since any previous rack switchand crossing (S&C) was renewed here, and Henry Boot, the company which carried out that work no longer does it, a new designer, supplier and installer of rack S&C had to be found."

Well-known to heritage railways of all gauges, KGJ Price Railway Contractors was selected to design, fabricate and deliver the rack-and-rail S&C to Clogwyn. Its manufacturing base is at Bedwas Works, near Caerphilly, South Wales. In addition to its heritage railway activities, the firm also maintains main line shunting yards and MoD rail facilities, and it has more than 40 years of experience to call on, but it has not previously been involved in a rack railway.

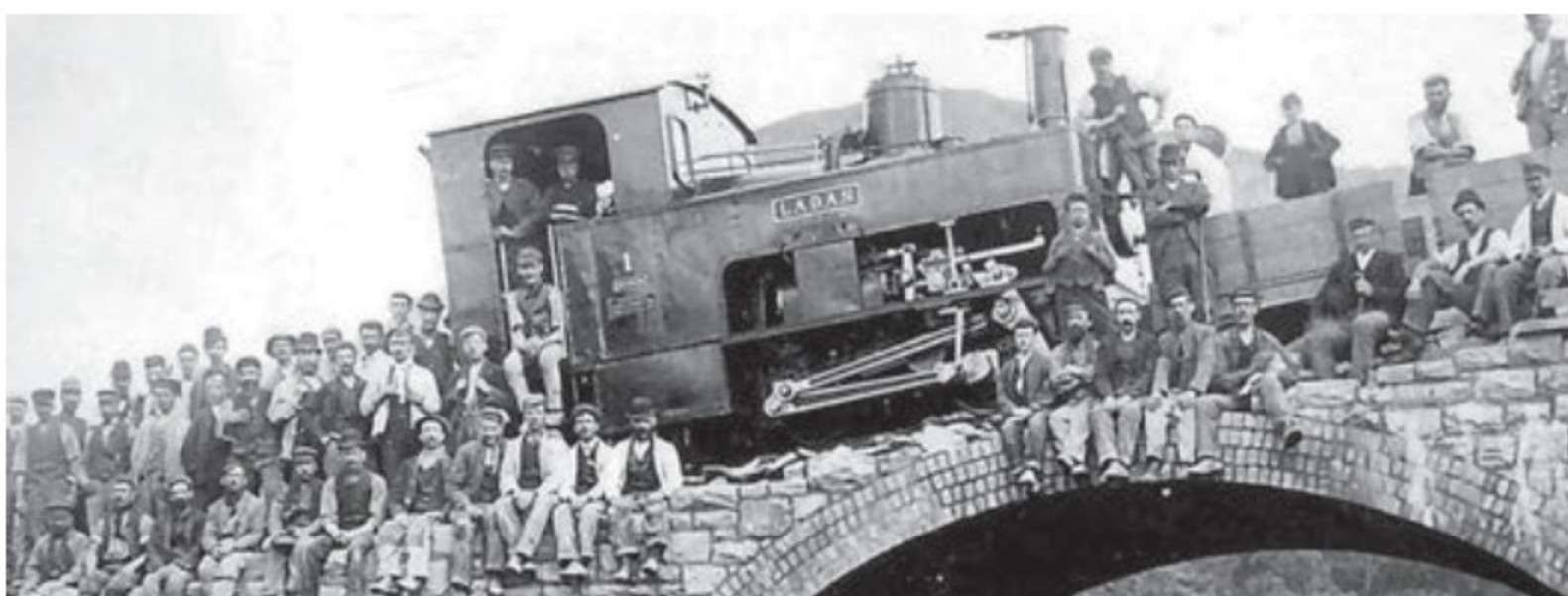
Following discussions at a Railway 200 visit at the end of October (in atrocious weather), it was agreed to visit to see the high-altitude engineering works at Clogwyn being tested with a works train. This visit should have been in December or January, but severe weather pushed this back to March 3, the first dry day in 2026, which had a bitterly cold windchill but was cloudless.

Engineering innovation at altitude

The author joined Anthony Moyle, the KGJ Price quality and design manager, who designed the new track layout, on the works train to Clogwyn to inspect the works and to supervise the first train movements across the new infrastructure.

Asked what the biggest challenge was, he replied: "My 26 years' rail experience helped the biggest challenge, which was the logistics in getting the turn-outs from where they were manufactured at Bedwas to Llanberis, despite having our own transport."

Like SMR staff, he did not have any rack railway S&C design experience but used 1980s engineering drawings from the last similar works to design the turn-outs: "Therefore, the rack part of the work was a challenge, but a turn-out is a turn-out, so it was fine. There are many more moving parts involved, but



Above: The ill-fated 0-4-2T No. 1 L.A.D.A.S with the railway's construction workers in 1896. SMR

Right: No. 6 Padarn on a Snowdon Mountain Railway service train in 1930. PHIL MARSH COLLECTION



SNOWDON MOUNTAIN RAILWAY STATISTICS

Track gauge: 2ft 7½in
Route length: 4.7 miles (five miles including loops)
Average gradient: 1-in-7.86
Ruling gradient: 1-in-5.5
Journey time: Hour each way
Maximum permitted speed: 6.5mph
Average speed: Just under 5mph
Three passing loops: Hebron at 1069ft; Halfway at 1641ft; and Clogwyn at 2556ft

THE LOCOMOTIVE FLEET

Steam	Diesel
No. 3 Wyddfa	No. 9 Ninian
No. 5 Moel Slabod	No. 10 Yeti
No. 6 Padarn	No. 11 Peris
	No. 12 George



Above: SLM 0-4-2Ts No. 5 *Moel Slabod* and No. 3 *Wyddfa* on an end-of-season steam test outside Llanberis works on October 24, 2025. PHIL MARSH

basically, it was how to make the rack work with the turn-out as both sections have to move.”

How did the team plan disruptive and innovative engineering work that involved electrifying a passing loop that has no electricity or access road in a very exposed location? Chris Mace explained: “We planned to commence in November at the start of the winter closed season and timed to accommodate the normal poor weather at that altitude. But the wettest, windiest and snowiest winter for some years really hindered progress for a couple of months.”

When asked what happens if any tools or equipment were forgotten, Chris replied: “The works train would have to return to Llanberis, a 90-minute round trip. It’s the same as the SSV, like a tender providing supplies for a ship, so nothing can be forgotten!”

The works train is formed from a combination of a staff caboose with a large generator, a flatbed wagon used to carry track and a Kubota tracked machine, and an original 1895 wooden unbraked wagon, not fitted with a rack-enabled axle.

This veteran wagon carries a red square mounted on a spiked metal pole, an anemometer, plus a three-link chain only attached to the caboose when running downhill. The red square is manually placed by the track at any location, where caution is required by a passing train. Staff travel in a carriage built on an original 1895 steam locomotive chassis between Llanberis to and from worksites.

Clogwyn Loop sits between two very exposed locations with limited access areas and serious deep drops. Going uphill, the line runs on an extremely narrow ridge supported



Above: Hunslet 0-4-0DH No. 9312 of 1992 No. 12 *George* at Llanberis on July 4, 2025. PHIL MARSH

Left: No. 3 *Wyddfa*, built by the Swiss Locomotive and Machine Works of Winterthur in 1895, arriving back at Llanberis on July 4, 2025. PHIL MARSH

by two layers of stone-filled gabions held in place by former running rails placed vertically into the ground.

Over lunch, the Clogwyn permanent way team were asked why they like the work despite the privations involved. “Today [March 3] is the first dry day this year,” the members replied. Unanimously, they suggested everyone enjoyed the scenery, the varied work, the natural environment, and the experience of working in the varied mountain conditions.

The Clogwyn works involved removing the track and points, renewing the ballast bed, then laying new track, which commenced in December despite challenging torrential rainy and freezing conditions. Where the Clogwyn point lever and linkage were removed, trunking hollows were filled with local soil and reseeded with special National Park-provided seed to ensure no imported vegetation is planted.

Chris was asked what he considered was the most challenging aspect of the project: “The weather this winter has been very wet and windy, preventing work taking place with winds in excess of 125mph, combined with snow!” A dynamic risk assessment is carried out for all works being conducted. When bad weather such as a steady windspeed more than 42mph arrives, staff retreat down the mountain to a safer sheltered location.

Continuing to talk about extreme weather, he added: “There are operating limits above Rocky Valley, the last bit of shelter, of 42mph steady windspeed or gusts of 72mph or above. Gales can hit the mountain without warning, leading to having to use the SSV to evacuate staff. This can operate in higher windspeeds and has been known to rescue people who had to crawl to the vehicle in 125mph winds!”

The new sleepers used at Clogwyn are mainly steel but composite material on turn-outs with an 80-year life expectancy. While removing running rails-and-rack rails, some were dated 1895, so they had lasted 130 years!

Chris explained that the low line speed and light tonnage have meant railhead wear and tear is minimal, and the new turn-out life expectancy is about 45 years. “This is because the well-lubricated rack system takes the wear and stresses away from the tramway rails with matching wheel profiles. The rails were originally 40lb a yard, but in the last decade, 50lb a yard has been laid.”

His team also relaid a 175-yard track section between Rocky Valley and Viewpoint over the winter. “Basically, anything you plan to do on the mountain, triple the estimated time and you’ll be about right!” quipped Chris.

Other work being carried out in March was on structures requiring a team from Rappel abseiling from bridge and viaduct parapets. They were removing vegetation, cleaning masonry, rodding drainage weepholes and when dried out and repointing.

This railway is a microcosm of heritage lines, but with a 130-year history of operating in a harsh environment, it is one that should be visited as it is an experience not to be missed. Diesel services operate until October 25, while steam services commenced on May 4 and run until October 16. Despite a half-hourly service, trains often sell out well in advance as there is limited capacity on the single-carriage trains. **HR**

→ Full details of services and prices are available at snowdonrailway.co.uk

BALMORAL RETURNS FOR BOLTON ABBEY

Sally Clifford checks in on the progress of the latest Stately Trains restoration and discovers a vintage carriage with a fascinating past.

It is hard to comprehend that its previous use was for habitation. Then again, the repurposing of redundant railway coaches is nothing new. Cricket pavilions and holiday homes are just some of the conversions which have given this beautiful form of bygone transport a new lease of life.

Built in 1882, the *Balmoral* was supplied in kit form to the Midland Railway at Derby, which assembled the body and fitted it on to a six-wheel underframe, eventually changed to a short bogie underframe to improve riding as a day/night sleeper. Following its tenure at the Midland Railway, the coach's ownership transferred to the Great Northern Railway and then to the Highland Railway.

In 1919, *Balmoral* was withdrawn from service and, along with sister coach *Dunrobin*, formed a retirement bungalow for the manager of the Pullman car works. Stripped of their wheels, the carriages were located side by side within an external roofed and clad structure. The bungalow was complete in 1920, and it provided a comfortable home until its demolition in the 1980s.

Sadly, lack of interest in the pair led to *Dunrobin* being scrapped but, fortunately, the largely intact body of *Balmoral* was saved and moved to the Brighton Railway Museum, which was then based in the former Pullman works at Preston Park.

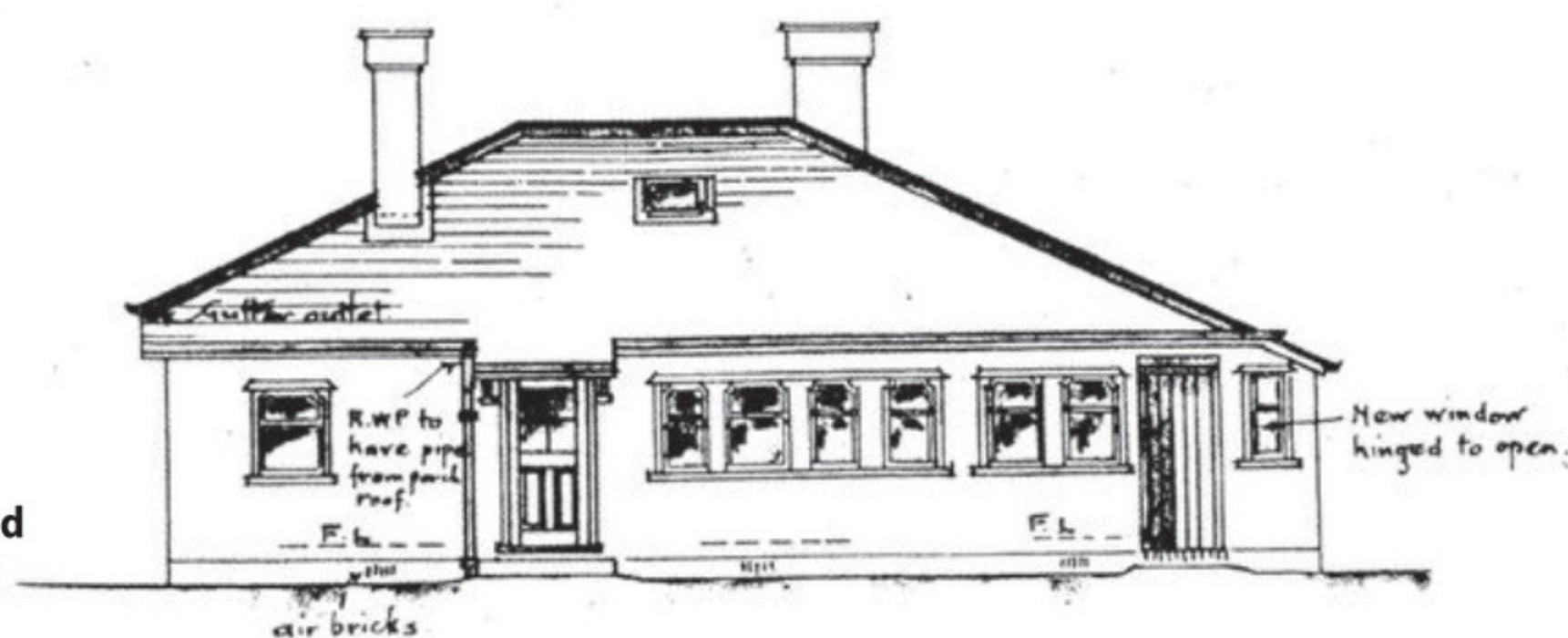
Right: Drawing of the north side of bungalow built around *Balmoral* and *Dunrobin*.
STEPHEN MIDDLETON

Balmoral's future was once again hanging in the balance following the closure of the museum, but it was a fortunate twist of fate that led to the latest chapter in its fascinating history, and it joined Stephen Middleton's Stately Trains collection at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway in North Yorkshire in 2000.

Stephen recalls taking a telephone call from the family of the former owner, who had fortunately salvaged much of the interior, considered to be of international significance, and who was keen for Stephen to save the carriage. So it transpired to be a concerted team effort that led to Stephen adding *Balmoral* to his vintage carriage fleet, which includes nine other coaches. "After some years and some expense, and the closure of the Brighton London main line to get *Balmoral* out, it happened," he said.

Stephen credits Network Rail with helping with its removal, along with the Highland Railway Society, a grant and loan from which helped to make the acquisition possible.

"Network Rail was very kind and allowed this rescue, together with freight company



Move Right International," he explained. Through research, something Stephen has become accustomed to when taking on preservation projects, he discovered that the bogies had survived and were at Foxfield Railway, which he acquired, along with the original buffers too. According to him, the coach is believed to be the oldest Pullman still on its original wheeled underframe.

Climbing the stepladder to see inside, the once stripped-out carriage is gradually being painstakingly pieced back together. Beneath thin layers of dust, the decorative detail and intricate marquetry in the panels sectioning off the areas within the carriage, which comfortably accommodates 16 passengers, document an important social history of travel.

It is testimony to the keepers of this carriage that much of its original contents have been retained. Untouched by time in many respects, some of the decorative ceiling panelling, which has suffered from age and weather-related conditions, will need to be restored, along with the decorative painted linen exposed when the panels are lowered into position converting seats into beds, as was the custom when day became night, for passengers opting for premium travel in a Pullman carriage.

"Pullman went over the top because they were premium carriages," said Stephen.

Restoration, which will incorporate much of the original interior and the intricate marquetry and glass work, continues at pace – although the carriage's current outdoor location is proving to be challenging in inclement weather.

Originally made of softwood, with the ends tied together with steel rods, the coach sides have been repanelled in durable Tricoya wood. New windows have been made and fitted and are now ready for painting. The coach ends have also been painted. Externally, the clerestory windows and surrounding trims are awaiting fitting.

For Jonathan Shardlow, working on *Balmoral* has given him the opportunity to use his cabinetry skills. The musician, model railway and steam enthusiast was seeking something to do in retirement. He contacted the EBASR and found his forte working with

***Balmoral* under restoration at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway. Tricoya panelling has completed the outside restoration. SALLY CLIFFORD**





Inside the carriage, the original panelling has been put back in place. SALLY CLIFFORD



Jonathan Shardlow and Stephen Middleton, who are restoring *Balmoral* to its former glory. SALLY CLIFFORD



The attention to detail in the panelling which has been preserved. SALLY CLIFFORD

Stephen on his carriage projects. “There is a lot more detail, most evident by all the marquetry you see,” said Jonathan, who relishes being able to replicate traditional hands-on skills. “It will have been a long time by the time we have finished it, but it will be worth it.”

Completion of this opulent overhaul – which will also see the installation of basin and toilet, some of the original seats and beds – will be temporarily put on hold as work is due to shortly commence on Stephen’s latest acquisition which, he estimates, will take about two years to complete.

LNWR No. 74 is the third historic royal coach in Stephen’s impressive vintage carriage collection, which also comprises GER No. 8 (converted in 1881 for the private use by Prince Albert Edward, Prince of Wales) and his mother Queen Victoria’s LSWR No. 17 – one of the most prestigious in his fleet.

The former was a semi-royal carriage built in 1903 as part of King Edward VII’s Royal Train. Semi-royals were used for royal family members, equerries, guests, and, on occasion, for hire. Six were built, one of which was used during the Second World War by Sir Winston Churchill. No. 74 is the sole survivor, and is similar in build to the Edwardian royal carriages preserved in the National Railway Museum.

Following withdrawal from service in 1971, No. 74’s future was secured by the Birmingham Railway Museum at Tyseley, and its restoration was undertaken by a Community Programme scheme.

Its grand launch was opened by King Charles, then the Prince of Wales, for use on the main line, but restrictions on wooden-bodied coaches meant this was no longer possible.



LNWR No. 74, which will complement the royal trains in Stephen Middleton’s Stately Trains Collection. RICHARD SALMON

In 2000, the coach went into private ownership, operating on the Bluebell Railway, later being sold and kept in the car park of an Indian restaurant in Kent. After being placed on the market, it was taken back to Tyseley for safe keeping in 2022.

Last August marked the start of a new chapter for No. 74 when it was offered to Stephen to compliment his royal carriages collection.

“I am delighted to be entrusted with this most special carriage,” he said. “I can see it having a variety of uses, running with the GER and LSWR royal saloons and with gangway connections, forming a useful partner with the LNWR 12-wheel directors saloon.

“The LNWR directors’ saloon and No. 74 met on occasion, most famously being part of King George V’s Royal Train during his visit to Crewe works in 1913.”

To make way for No. 74, three of Stephen’s carriages – GER No 14, the first of his restorations, GER No. 37 and Great North of

Scotland Railway No. 34 – have been relocated to other railways.

“You could say GER No. 14 is going back home because it was the last coach to run on the Mid-Suffolk Railway, and that is where it has gone,” said Stephen. No. 37 has gone to the North Norfolk Railway and No. 34 to Ferryhill in Aberdeen. “In many ways,” he added, “I have found them appropriate homes, because they are going back home.”

An EBASR spokesman said: “The EBASR has developed at an incredible rate over the past five years, encouraging a greater number of visitors to enjoy a wide range of themed trains and heritage railway attractions.

“As such, the shorter trains have become less viable and so Stately Trains and EBASR management took the decision to move some carriages to other, appropriate railways.

“This, in turn, allows Stately Trains to concentrate on carriages that better serve the railway while having a unique heritage element.” **HR**



Above: The original ashpan beneath *Balmoral*. SALLY CLIFFORD



Right: The chisel discovered between two panels during restoration and believed to have been hidden since 1882. STEPHEN MIDDLETON



The original spring-loaded mechanism to lower the bed into place. SALLY CLIFFORD



Artefacts from its use as a day/sleeper carriage have been preserved, including the original bed frames. SALLY CLIFFORD



The linen used to line the carriage roof is being restored to its original splendour. SALLY CLIFFORD

Adams' finest?

Following the recent release of the class in OO scale, **Paul Lawrence** looks back over the journey of the LSWR T3 from a modern Victorian era machine to a modern-day preservation star.

THE London & South Western Railway was one of three pre-Grouping railway companies in the south of England for the Victorian and early Edwardian years. With a grand terminus in the form of London Waterloo, the network stretched its way through the capital's suburbs all the way to the ports of Southampton, Portsmouth and Bournemouth, and to the resorts of Ilfracombe, Bude and Padstow.

WITH such an array of routes across the network, it came to William Adams, of former North London, Great Eastern and London, Tilbury and Southend fame, to produce a design suitable for the routes west of Salisbury towards Exeter and the line to Portsmouth. He could have continued with his X2 design – a 4-4-0 with 7ft 1in driving wheels (bigger than the width of Broad Gauge) – but these were not suitable, and so Adams took the design and made some minor adjustments. This became the T3.

Looking at the X2s and T3s, you would initially think that they are identical machines. The two designs had the same cylinders and boiler pressure, but with a firebox six inches longer and 6ft 7in driving wheels,

the T3s were able to beat the X2s on tractive effort, with 17,670lbf compared to the latter's 16,426lbf. Looking at the T3's tractive effort, it isn't exactly hair-raising compared to bigger and more powerful locomotives from The Big Four, let alone designs from British Railways, but when the class was rolling off the production line, the LSWR's big rival – the Great Western – was still in the early stages of standardising its fleet and phasing out Brunel's broad gauge network. In addition, with Adams having been designing 4-4-0s for nearly 15 years by this point, it's safe to say he was able to put much of what he learnt from previous designs into the T3 and his following 4-4-0s, the T6 and X6. Along with the X2s, this gave the LSWR a total of 60 modern (for the time) express locomotives at its disposal on its main line network by the mid-1890s.

The 4-4-0 boom

Adams' designs went on to be supplemented by those of his successor, Dugald Drummond, who brought about other 4-4-0s such as the L11s, the K10s and, most famously, the T9s. Although they were similar in appearance – to an



Prior to entering the National Collection and moving to a museum established near Clapham, No. 563 could be found at Eastleigh Works, where it is pictured on August 3, 1955. DR T GOUGH/TRANSPORT TREASURY

extent – to the T3s, the T9s were later fitted with superheating by Drummond's successor, Robert Urie, which certainly changed the look of the design. Despite this, the T3s and T9s would end up having very similar tractive effort, with only 3lbf difference. One can only imagine how well the two designs would work if crews competed against one another.

It also wasn't only the T9s that gained a nickname in service; while they were referred to as 'Greyhounds', Adams' T3s became affectionally known as 'Hill Climbers', which would have been proven when working the Salisbury to Exeter route. This, however, wasn't enough to keep them on express status, and as time went by, more powerful designs emerged from Robert Urie, Richard Maunsell and Oliver Bulleid. This led the T3s to only having three survivors by the early 1930s, with the last one in service being based in Salisbury and went on to be quite well-known.

Enter stage: No. 563

Built in 1893, No. 563 began its working life at Nine Elms before venturing off to various parts of the LSWR network such as Guildford, Eastleigh and Salisbury.

As time went on, and with the locomotive's age showing, it failed while working a goods train in March 1939. This would have meant that withdrawal for No. 563 would be right round the corner, but due to global events that unfolded about six months later, the railway network needed as much of the fleet in working order to assist with the war effort. That, of course, meant this locomotive was given a saving grace and received a general overhaul.

The locomotive carried on throughout the war at Eastleigh and Basingstoke until the conflict passed. By this point, at 52 years old, it had run a total of 1,571,150 miles. Now it had done its duty for the Southern and the entire country, the time had come for its withdrawal.



In October 2023, No. 563 returned to service following a lengthy restoration. On October 8, it heads for Norden on the final trip of the day, with the ruins of the castle for a backdrop. PAUL LAWRENCE



Above: A look into the locomotive's cab as restoration neared completion in 2023. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Left: The National Railway Museum deaccessioned the T3 in 2017, passing it into the hands of the Swanage Railway. Prior to its restoration. It spent some time on static display at Corfe Castle. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

From the summer of 1945 to early 1948, the T3 was in storage awaiting its fate, until it was eventually towed to Kimbridge Junction, where it would await being scrapped at Dinton.

Fate, however, can work in mysterious ways, and No. 563's future looked to get better once again. There was to be a celebration at London Waterloo in June to mark the terminus' centenary, and upon further investigation it was found that all tender engines once built by William Adams would very soon be scrapped.

Plans were made to find a locomotive in the best condition possible to attend, and after a visit to Kimbridge, No. 563 was chosen and saved yet again.

It was sent back to Eastleigh and returned to its LSWR colours for the first time since 1923.

The big day eventually came, and on June 11, 1948, No. 563 pulled into London Waterloo with a former LSWR coach (also done up in LSWR colours) and put on show alongside Bulleid light Pacific No. 34017 *Ilfracombe* and a locomotive that would not have worked on the LSWR back in the day – LB&SCR A1 'Terrier' No.82 *Boxhill*.

Once the exhibition was over, No. 563 went back into storage again for 10 years at the electric carriage shed in Farnham.

During this time, it was brought out for public appearances on rare occasions. As time went on, the condition of the old locomotive visibly got worse and worse, until it was sent to Tweedmouth. In 1959, it returned to Eastleigh and was received more restoration work, before then going on show at the Clapham Transport Museum in 1961, and it was later moved to the then newly established National Railway Museum in York in 1975.

As time progressed, No. 563 moved from York to the NRM's secondary base in Shildon. While there though, the NRM was approached by a theatre company and asked if the T3

could appear in a production of *The Railway Children* – but instead of this being in York or London like previous productions, this set of performances was to be staged in Toronto, Canada!

The answer was yes, and once it had returned from across the pond, it went on to perform in the UK stage productions of the famous book and movie.

Aside from being a star in these stage plays, No. 563 looked to continue having a rather quiet retirement at Shildon... until fate would change things once more in 2017.

Retiring to the coast

For some time, the Swanage Railway on the Isle of Purbeck had expressed interest to the NRM about bringing one of the locomotives in the collection back into full working order. At first, it was in talks regarding the sole-surviving Bulleid Q1 0-6-0 No. C1. When a review of the collection came about, the NRM approached Swanage about whether it would be interested in becoming the new custodian of the T3 instead. With the railway line being a former

LSWR branch, the No. 563 looked to be quite the contender as the next locomotive to join the fleet at Swanage.

In early spring 2017, it was announced that the 563 Locomotive Group had been formed to restore and care for the locomotive at the Swanage Railway.

Only a couple of weeks later, the T3 had moved to the railway to be on display for a period at Corfe Castle, before the tender was sent to Herston Works, while the locomotive portion went to The Flour Mill works in the Forest of Dean. After a lengthy restoration, carried out during the worst times of the Covid-19 pandemic, and £650,000 raised, No. 563 returned to Swanage in August 2023 and worked its first passenger train since the Waterloo station celebrations in early October that year.

After spending its first year in ticket at Swanage, No. 563 visited two heritage railways in 2025, with one being very familiar turf and the other once belonging to a South Western rival. In April, the T3 ventured back to the Hampshire Alps for the Mid-

Hants Railway's spring steam gala, running with guest locomotives from the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and the newly returned to traffic Bulleid Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 Canadian Pacific. In the autumn, it was a star guest at the West Somerset Railway's steam gala, running alongside guest and main line resident GWR Castle No. 5029 *Nunney Castle*.

The T3's presence in preservation has now prompted a resurgence of interest in other LSWR locomotives, with the Bluebell Railway-based Brighton Atlantic Group presently overseeing the overhauls of B4 No. 96 *Normandy* and Adams Radial Tank No.488 (BR No. 30583).

The 563 Locomotive Group then went on to announce that it would work with the NRM to overhaul the sole-surviving Drummond T9 No. 120, which is in its early stages at the time of this article being published. It makes you wonder if the big Southern Region heritage lines have plans for a big LSWR gala, which probably wouldn't have been thought of had the T3 not been brought back to life. ➔



Shortly after departure from Swanage on March 28, 2026, No. 563 approaches Dickers Crossing with a spring steam gala service to Norden. PAUL LAWRENCE



The models

First announced in September 2024 at the Bachmann Collector Club event at the Swanage Railway, this was heavily welcomed by modellers, mainly as it would be the first brand-new LSWR locomotive made in OO gauge since Hornby released its Adams Radial Tanks. There have been previous iterations of the Beattie well tanks and O2 tanks between then, but the tooling originated from DJ Models, before EFE Rail acquired the tooling for its range, with little to no changes made. There have also been the M7s and 700 Class (otherwise known as 'Black Motors'), also produced by Hornby.

For a model of a Victorian 4-4-0, EFE Rail has pulled out all the stops. It comes with a die-cast metal boiler and chassis, five-pole motor, flywheel, all-wheel pick-ups, and a close locomotive-to-tender connection that has been featured on other new models in recent years.

Add this to the typical details of metal valve gear, a sprung front bogie, sprung metal buffers and separately applied handrails and detailing, and it's safe to say that this model is quite possibly the most up-to-spec OO gauge LSWR model that's been made to date.

In the first batch of the models, five variants of the T3 have been made: three in various LSWR liveries and two in Southern olive green.

For the LSWR variants, there is one in Adams Green (No. 561), one in Urie Green (No. 564), and one in Drummond green – No. 563, a model of the as-preserved T3. For the Southern-liveried samples, Nos. 558 and 560 have been selected. With how the models are



presented, having seen the initial photos and then in person, the detailing and crispness of the liveries is exquisite and certainly adds to the overall quality.

With the tooling, elements of it have been made so that the T3s can be depicted as accurately as possible throughout their working lives: some have the traditional stovepipe chimneys, while others have a more standardised style with a lip at the top.

In addition, some examples of the models have the safety valves set in the usual spot above the firebox in front of the cab, but the tooling has been made so that, as seen on Southern example No. 558, the safety valve is placed within the dome.

A slight downside are the noticeable gaps where the dome and safety valve parts are attached to the boiler, and a gap between the boiler and the section of it that is part of the frames.

Some people may also be put off the T3 models by the price. With an RRP of £199.99, this amount for a mid-2020s spec 4-4-0 seems on the steep side compared to other models you can get. However, with retailer

discounts, it proves to be more value for money compared to other 4-4-0s due to be released, such as the Sonic Models/Rails of Sheffield exclusive NBR 'Glen' Class which, at most, costs £189.99, and Rapido Trains' UK GNSR D40, HR 'Loch' Class and MR 483 Class models, all ranging between £174.99 and £194.99. Even the Dapol/Rails of Sheffield exclusive SECR D1 models, which were announced four years ago, are still in stock at Rails at an RRP of £199.99.

As for the performance of the model, with the combination of the metal bodywork, the type of motor, flywheel and all-wheel pick-ups give this model a very smooth performance and haulage capabilities similar to other recent models, such as the Dapol GWR 517s.

Pairing the T3 models with the likes of EFE Rails' 'Cross Country' coach packs and the upcoming suitable livery variants of Evolution coaches from Rapido Trains UK will certainly add to the picture-perfect look of this new pre-Grouping model, in which its real-life counterpart has certainly proven to bring in the crowds wherever it may be. **HR**





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



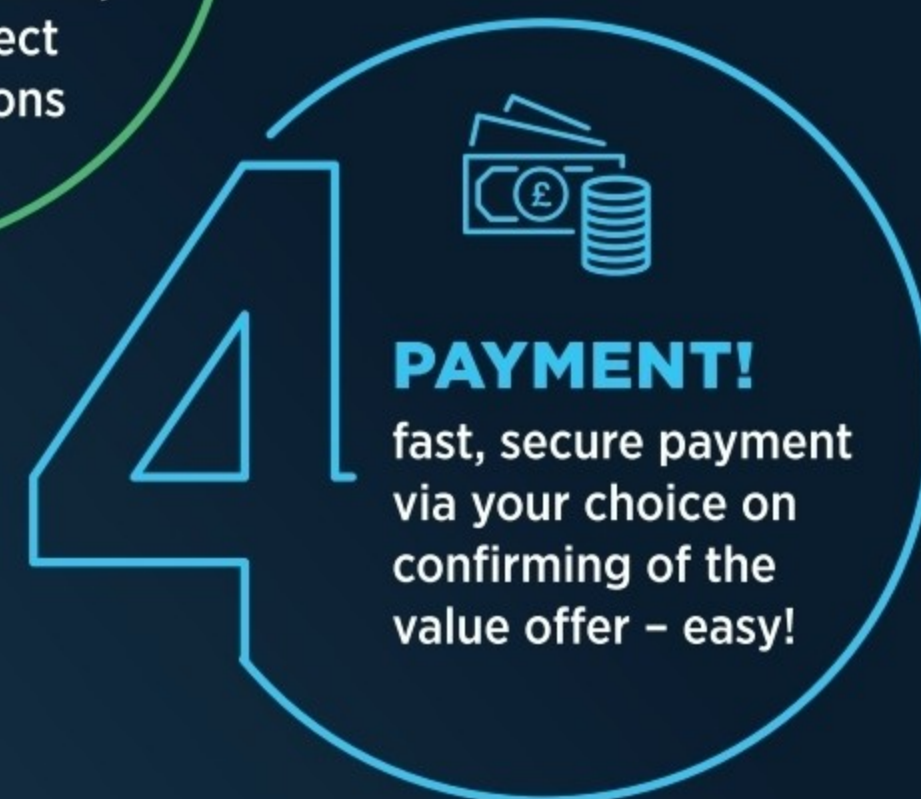
OUR OFFER

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: HERITAGE26

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

PROUD
WINNERS
OF THESE
RECENT
AWARDS:

HORNBY
MODEL RAILWAY
Awards
2025





Ben Wood (left) and Robert Hopper, who participated on the BESTT riveting course at the Stephenson Steam Railway. SSR



Aaran Denny (left) and Robert Hopper put their knowledge learned on the course to the test in practice. SSR



Hard at it! Participants get stuck in on the course. SSR

A RIVETING GOOD JOB!

Sally Clifford revisits the Stephenson Steam Railway in North Shields to look in on the latest BESTT training course, organised to help pass on essential skills of the steam era to the next generation.

The Stephenson Steam Railway is keeping on track with its training. For the first time, the North Shields venue, dedicated to pioneers George and Robert Stephenson, has placed its latest cohort of four volunteers through a riveting course run by BESTT (Boiler and Engineering Skills Training Trust).

Established in 2006, BESTT is a partnership of steam heritage organisations representing railways, ships and traction engines, and which is developing a range of training courses.

The four-day riveting course, which took place during last autumn's half-term, is the third course BESTT has run at the railway, as engineering and railway operations manager David Grindley explains.

"Previously, they have done the boiler washout courses (as featured in *Heritage Railway* issue 327), but we are trying to focus on boiler management, how to replace rivets, and to expand on the knowledge and heritage skills within the youth group," he said, referring to the group for young volunteers that he set up at the railway in 2021.

Having previously worked at Beamish – the North of England Open Air Museum as a steam technician, David is well aware of the importance of heritage skills being preserved and passed on.

"When I worked at Beamish, they sent me on a boiler wash-out course through BESTT, so I have experienced it hands-on, and I have done a presentation with BESTT at the start of the year explaining why I feel heritage skills are really important.

"It is about keeping such skills alive, and I think it is vital that other railways support

BESTT, because if were to disappear, there is nobody else delivering these courses, that I am aware of."

During the course, funded by The Community Foundation and The Platten Family Fund, the volunteers, ranging in ages from 16 to 35, gained invaluable knowledge from lead trainer Colin Hatch, assisted by BESTT chairman Gordon Newton, which they were able to put into practice through hands-on experience in the workshop.

Among the participants was 16-year-old Robert Hopper. This was the second BESTT training course that he has embarked on, having completed the boiler wash-out course at the railway, where he has been volunteering for more than a year.

He said he enjoyed both courses, and found that the riveting course offered more practical-based skills.

Sharing knowledge

Robert also acknowledged the importance of preserving heritage skills, adding: "I also think it is important to listen to other volunteers. We are lucky with the skills we have already got, and it is useful for them to be passed on."

Gordon said: "It is crucial, because if you don't do this, someday there will be nobody to repair a boiler.

"If you want to continue having steam trains, you need people trained to operate and repair them."

The course proved to be a busy week for the Stephenson Steam Railway as the adjacent North Tyneside Steam Railway – with which it shares a building on Middle Engine Lane, adjacent to the Silverlink Retail Park, the pair

being managed in a partnership between North Tyneside Council, Tyne & Wear Museums and the North Tyneside Railway Association – hosted its biggest-ever event on October 25/26 (as reported in issue 339) as part of the Railway 200 celebrations.

Peckett 0-6-0ST No. 1970 of 1939 *Ashington* No. 5 and Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 401 of 1950 *Thomas Burt* MP 1837-1902 and, visiting from Beamish, Teeside-built Head Wrightson 0-4-0VB 'Coffee Pot' of 1871 supported diesels Class 03 No. 03078, Class 08 No. 08915 and Consett Iron Company 0-6-0DM No. 10 in shunting around the yard and hauling passenger and demonstration freight trains.

"I think it is quite satisfying because we are celebrating our history, and it is nice to invite people on site to see what we do.

"They can listen to our story and what we stand for – celebrating George and Robert Stephenson, because that is what the museum is centred around and the important role they played," said David.

International appeal

Riveting is among a range of courses organised by BESTT, and the appeal is proving far-reaching – one participant on a previous course, held in Cheltenham, travelled all the way from Slovakia.

Jakub Durinda, an industrial heritage and railway enthusiast since childhood, was keen to visit the UK to find out more about the country's industrial heritage and to learn essential riveting skills.

"I work on several restoration projects, mainly for the railway museum of Slovakia. I am a member of the team that refurbished the steam boiler of its 1908 cog locomotive and



The North Tyneside Steam Railway gala on June 5 featured (left to right) ex-Ashington Colliery Peckett 0-6-0ST Works No. 1970 *Ashington No. 5*, guest locomotive Peckett E class 0-4-0ST No.1352 of 1914 *Lion*, from the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway, and BR Class 03 No. 03078. JAMES GROUNDWATER



Jakub Durinda, pictured right, with fellow trainees and instructors on the BESTT riveting course in Cheltenham. BESTT

now operates steam trains on the Tisovec cog railway,” he said, adding that embarking on the course gave him a “solid basis for riveting,” which he can now develop.

“I’m really thankful that I could learn much more than fundamentals of riveting. All of the instructors were a well of wisdom, so I could ask any question I was interested in, and so did I – boiler refurbishment, tube plate cracks, seam caulking, stationary boilers, English technical literature and much more was discussed.” Jakub said it is essential that these skills are passed on. “It’s simply crucial. It’s essential to give the possibility to learn them to the people who are working outside of big entities such as heritage railways.”

Gordon said: “Jakub is one of several trainees from European countries who have participated in one of BESTT training courses over the past few years and we at BESTT are helping other countries to preserve and reignite traditional skills which have almost disappeared. This gives me great satisfaction.” **HR**

→ For more information about BESTT and the courses it provides, visit www.bestt.org.uk



Ex-Blyth Harbour Commission Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST No. 2918 of 1912 No. 2 *Pony* at the North Tyneside Steam Railway on June 5. The locomotive, which last steamed in 2004, is currently being worked on by apprentice volunteers passing down the skills to restore and fix old steam engines. JAMES GROUNDWATER



Bagnall-built 0-6-0ST No. 2994 of 1951 No. 401 under restoration at the North Tyneside Railway, pictured on June 4. Built for the Steel Company of Wales for use at the Abbey Works at Port Talbot, in September 1957 it went to Austin’s Longbridge car factory in Birmingham with sister *Victor*, and in November 1973 the pair were sold to the nascent West Somerset Railway, where *Vulcan* returned to steam in December 1977. However, they were unsuited to operations over the long heritage line and proved rough riders because of the short wheelbase. JAMES GROUNDWATER



Jones Springs have been supplying UK heritage rail operators for over 50 years giving us a reputation for being reliable and trustworthy as well as allowing us to develop a range of skills and techniques which we have been able to apply to our work in the manufacturing of springs.

All our work on railways and locomotives is produced to British Rail standard 166 and British Rail standard 148a ensuring that all products we manufacture are created and tested to the levels of quality and precision required by British Rail.

With a general engineering shop based locally in the Midlands we can offer a range of services such as the manufacturing and repair of springs, our facilities also allow us to carry out load tests to make sure that your products are fit for purpose and use. We can also provide full certification for any test we carry out for you at our site.

For assistance please call us on: 0121 568 7575
Email: sales@jones-springs.co.uk

JONES SPRINGS (ENGINEERING) LTD.

Gladstone Street, Darlaston West Midlands WS10 8BE

T: 0121 568 7575 F: 0121 568 7692

E: sales@jones-springs.co.uk

www.jones-springs.co.uk

Reg. in England - Company No. 00520744

RAILART 2026

An exhibition by the **GUILD of RAILWAY ARTISTS**

KIDDERMINSTER RAILWAY MUSEUM

Station Approach, Kidderminster DY10 1QX

FREE ADMISSION



From **Saturday 15th August** (2pm)

Open Daily 10am - 4pm

Until **Sunday 27th September** (2pm)



www.railart.co.uk

Painting: City of Birmingham by John Austin FGRA

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



18+ years trading in collectables



Collection made in person from across the UK



We carefully dismantle your displays for you



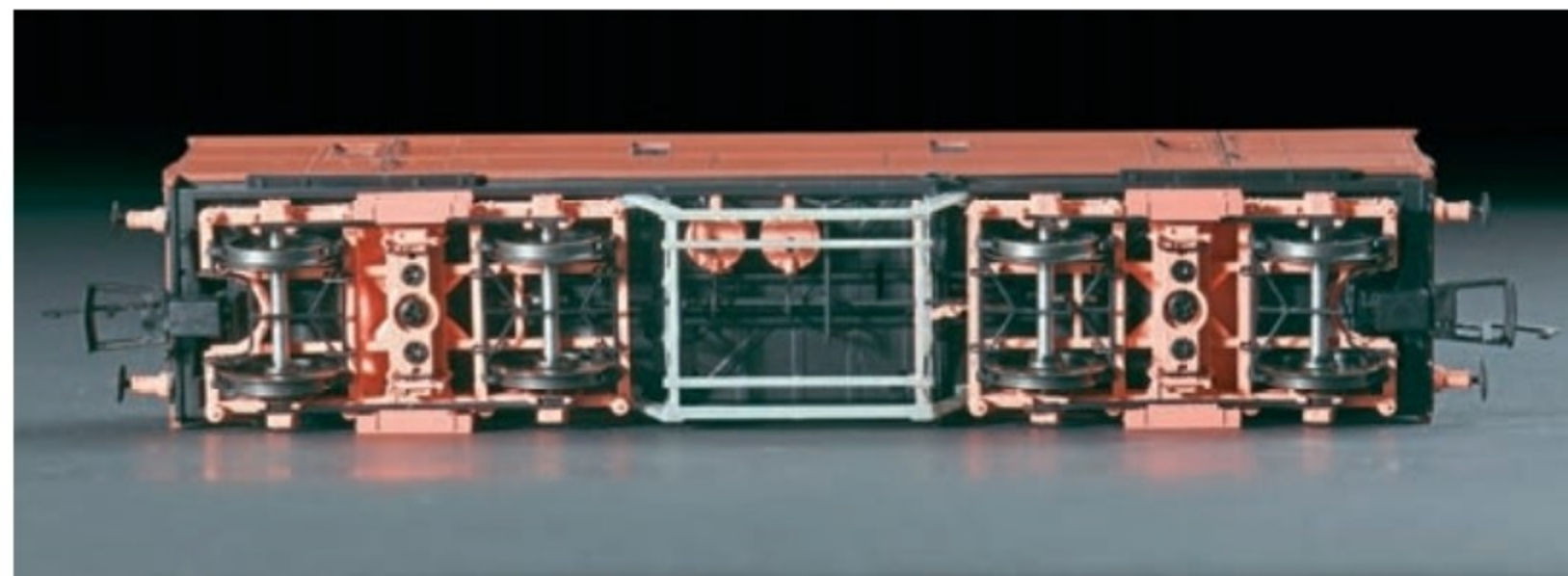
Honest valuations and fair offers given

LITTLEWORTH MODELS

- 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

Littleworth Models • Unit 7 Mays Wharf • Eastgate Industrial Estate • Cherry Holt Road • Bourne • Lincolnshire • PE10 9LA



Special delivery: LMS GUVs from Ellis Clark and Railworks

CLARKS Railworks has revealed it is treating the LMS 42ft GUV parcel vans to the standards of modern tooling by announcing that the vehicles will be joining firm's the ever-growing OO scale range of models.

The LMS GUVs were a staple of passenger and goods services from the 1930s to the 1970s; the LMS constructed 240 of these bogie parcels vans between 1933 and 1937 at both Derby and Wolverton works. Classified as Non-Passenger Coaching Stock, they were known as Covered Carriage Trucks (CCT) at the time, designed to carry parcels and luggage alongside other general goods. They often ran in dedicated parcels trains but were

sometimes included in passenger services, where their coach-like profile ensured they blended in well. Despite the high number built, only three survive, and all can be found at heritage lines in Scotland.

The OO scale models will feature the usual Clark Railworks hallmarks of die-cast chassis, brass bearings and impeccable levels of chassis and underframe detail. They will be fitted with 'ultraflex' vacuum pipes and – like all of the firm's wagons – will be easily converted to EM or P4 gauges.

Reflecting the array of variations the design experienced, no two of the eight planned models will be the same, with subtle variations to



bogies, roof vents and bodyside panelling according to how and when they were used.

Liveries planned include LMS lined Crimson Lake, BR maroon, and blue, along with several departmental schemes. Included in this first run is No. 37909 in BR crimson and

cream, reflecting the condition of this preserved example at the Royal Deeside Railway.

Models are priced at £75 each, and the project has already seen the first tooling samples delivered, with completed models estimated to arrive in early 2027.

Reaching the TT:120 Peaks

NOT content with its N, OO and OO9 scale product ranges, Rapido Trains UK has taken a step into new ground with the announcement of its first locomotives in TT:120 – the Class 45 and 46 'Peaks'.

A previous award-winning model for the firm's N gauge range, these BR 1Co-Co1 Class 45 and Class 46 models have been designed using a combination of archival materials and



drawings, maintaining the standards expected of its products. They will be available in a variety of liveries covering the loco's almost 30-year main line tenure, and several as preserved examples too. In addition to a high-quality motor and drive

mechanism for smooth running, each model is fitted with a Next18 decoder socket, which is compatible with Hornby HM7000 decoders, and a front and rear NEM coupling system compatible with other TT:120 models.

Modellers can look forward to directional and cab interior lighting, an etched radiator fan grill and lots

of other separately fitted parts, including lamp irons and wipers.

The RRP is set at £159.95 per model for DCC-ready versions, rising to £259.95 for sound-fitted examples, although discounts through Rapido's stockists will offer some savings on these. Models are currently in tooling, with no estimates on delivery yet available.



'Global economic uncertainty' sees KR Models in liquidation

CANADIAN-BASED manufacturer KR Models confirmed it entered liquidation on June 18. "Sadly, economic trading conditions at the moment are very tough for everybody," owner Keith Revell said in an official statement. "With global economic uncertainty, costs to every

business have been pushed up to unforeseeable levels.

"We have not been immune to these issues, and following news that one major manufacturer has been bought out to ensure its survival, and another has increasingly shifted to a direct sale approach to preserve the

viability of its business model, we have reached a major crunch point.

"Our warehouse contains a large quantity of unsold stock. This is a lot of money tied up in assets that just are no longer selling, and we have been faced with an inability to raise the money required to pay

the outstanding balance on our newest model that had just finished production in China.

"As the factory will understandably not release the models until the full batch is paid for, we have reached a point at which we have no choice but to shut our doors."

The Twilight of the Class 40s

Compiled by Colin Alexander (hardback, Transport Treasury Publishing, 80pp, £13.50 + £3 p&p, cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing and sent to: 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ, ISBN 978-1-913893-22-4).

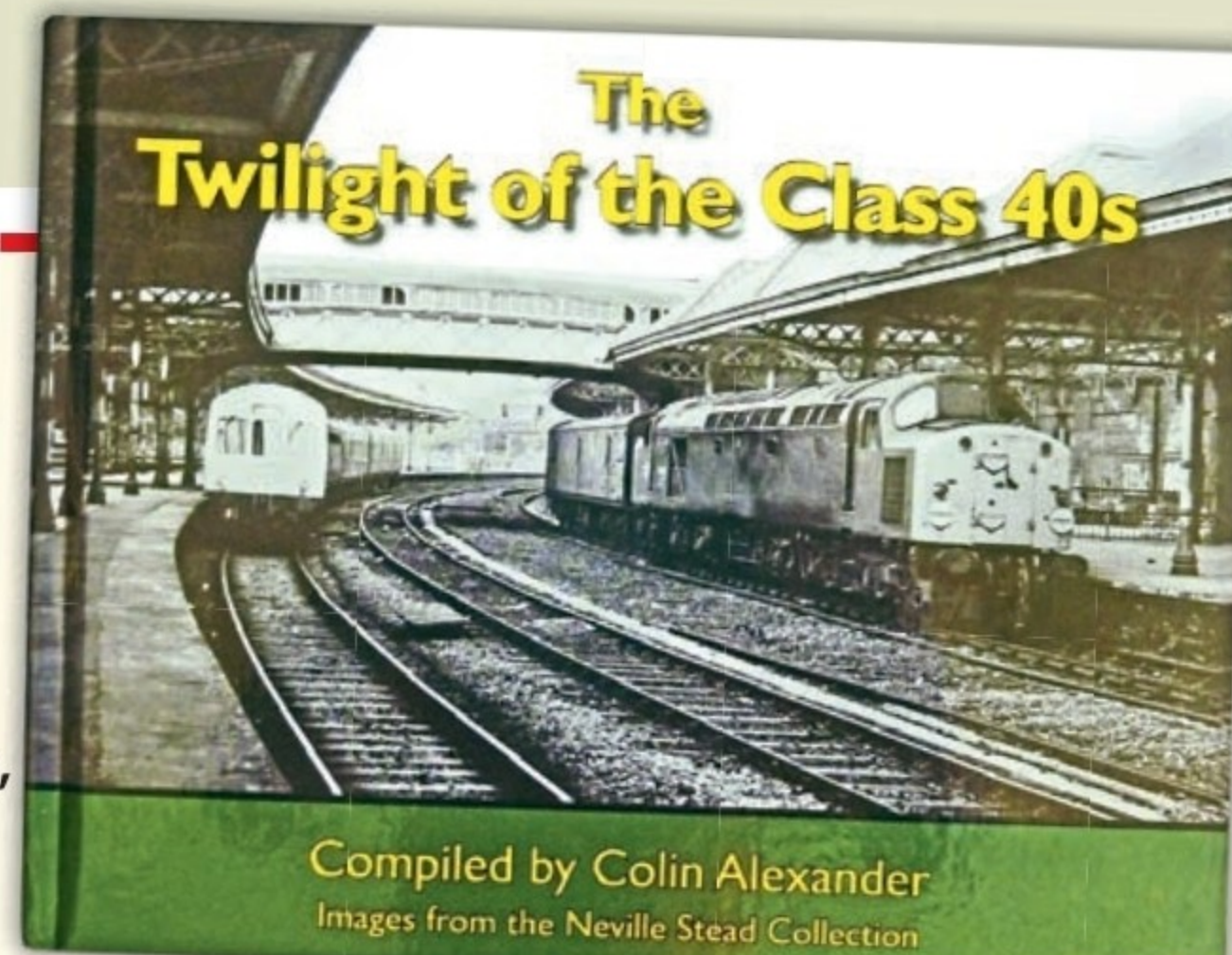
THE first entry of a Class 40 into my trainspotting logs, writes **Geoff Courtney**, was at Ilford on June 24, 1958, when D204 – they were numbered D200-D399 initially – came through on the Down 'Broadman', while the class made its West Coast Main Line debut into my notes at Lichfield Trent Valley on August 6, 1960, when three passed me by on Up named expresses in the space of 32 minutes, comprising D217 on the 'Emerald Isle', D226 in charge of the 'Mancunian', and D230 at the helm of the 'Merseyside Express'.

Representing as they were the changing of the guard, I should have paid them more

attention, or at least recognised the implications their arrival had for my trainspotting hobby, but I didn't. My teenage mind was soaked in the Victorian technology of steam, as if such outmoded technology could never be usurped. Yet now, 68 years later, as I sit at my computer writing a review of a book about the Class 40s twilight years, I feel a genuine scene of nostalgia for these 16-cylinder beasts, and gratitude that seven have been preserved, including in the National Collection class pioneer D200, which I first recorded at Ilford on a Liverpool Street-bound express on August 19, 1958.

Much has been written in books and magazines about these 1Co-Co1 locomotives, which are nicknamed 'whistlers' and are avidly followed by the fraternity due to the 'thrash' of their mighty engine.

Such enthusiasm for them is evident in Colin Alexander's cover notes, when he writes: "For more than 30 years, the throaty whistling noise of these versatile locomotives could be heard up and down BR's main lines from East Anglia to North Wales, and London to the Scottish Highlands. The cacophony produced by the 16-cylinder engine was something to behold, as they climbed to Ais



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Gill, Shap, or Druim Uachdar with a heavy freight train."

Colin offers this advice: "Relive the halcyon days of steam-heated Mk. 1 coaches, of football specials, Merrymakers, and Sunday diversions, of engine sheds and proper freight and parcels trains hauled by proper locomotives."

With his captions, and photographs from the Neville Stead Collection, I did just that, and even for a steam enthusiast such as me, it was an absolute pleasure.

**AN ICONIC DIESEL CLASS
SECOND TO ONLY THE DELTICS**

A Railway Journey Around South West England During the late 1950s and 1960s

By **Michael Clemens** (hardback, The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society, rcts.org.uk, 128pp, £25, ISBN 978-1-0683883-2-3).

THIS volume features photographs from the archives of Ellis James-Robertson, Alan Maund, and the author's father, Jim Clemens.

As well as covering the period stated in the title, there are

occasional images from diesel days in the 1970s. Incorporating main routes and branches, it begins at Cheltenham Spa Malvern Road in 1959 and heads in a south-westerly direction via Andoversford, Cirencester, Swindon including the works, Chippenham, Calne, the Midland & South Western Junction Railway and the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway via Bath and Radstock.

Heading west, it takes in Southern and Western metals and Crediton, Barnstaple, Taunton, Minehead, Exeter, Newton Abbot and Kingswear.

The frontispiece is particularly inspiring. It shows a steam-hauled

mixed train making its way over the six-arch curving Cober or Lowertown Viaduct while running from Helston to Gwinear Road.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 344, the 373ft structure has recently been acquired by the Helston Railway Preservation Society, and we eagerly look forward to the day when we can replicate this picture.

For those who love the West Country and are enthralled by its transport history, there is so much to discover in these pages. We see the Stephenson Locomotive Society's March 6, 1966, special at Templecombe that comprised the final train over the S&DJR. There is the bell-shaped Sentinel 0-4-0VBGT No. 47130 at Radstock, where it was used on the local colliery branch in June 1960.

A colour image shows GWR Churchward 'Night Owl' 2-8-0 at Newton Abbot in May 1962. The are views of the RCTS/Plymouth Railway Circle's 'The Exmoor Ranger' tour, headed by Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2Ts Nos. 41206 and 41291, to Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. At Wadebridge, we see two of the LSWR Beattie 2-4-0WTs which were retained for services on the curving Wenfordbridge branch china clay freights.

Then there is a colour image of a rare appearance by an LNER A4 Pacific in the West Country, with No. 60024 *Kingfisher* at Exmouth Junction shed after working the

Locomotive Club of Great Britain's 'A4 Commemorative Rail Tour' from Waterloo to Weymouth and Exeter. We also see colour views of the Basset-Lowke Great Northern Atlantic in the late 1960s on the Clevedon Miniature Railway, which is now being rebuilt after years or dormancy.

TREASURE TROVE OF WEST COUNTRY GEMS

Railways of Herefordshire and the Southern Marches

By **Heather Hurley** (softback, Logaston Press, www.logastonpress.co.uk, 246pp, £20, ISBN 978-1-910838-85-0).

THIS scholarly yet very readable text is a veritable goldmine of information about the myriad lines that served Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Brecknockshire and Radnorshire built between 1845 and 1900 and which ran until the 1960s.

Extensive research by the author has drawn on a rich variety of sources including original Acts of Parliament, company minutes and accounts, newspapers, photographic archives and toll tables, and she has condensed her findings

into a richly accessible and superbly illustrated format.

Lines, the histories of which are covered in detail by separate chapters include the South Wales, Newport, Abergavenny and Hereford, Worcester & Hereford, Hereford, Hay & Brecon, Mitcheldean Road and Forst of Dean, Newent, Golden Valley, Leominster and Kington, Shrewsbury & Hereford, Ross & Monmouth and Hereford, Ross & Gloucester.

Out of the 18 individual lines covered, the final chapter deals with the Severn & Wye Railway, of which today's Dean Forest Railway is a proud heritage part-successor.

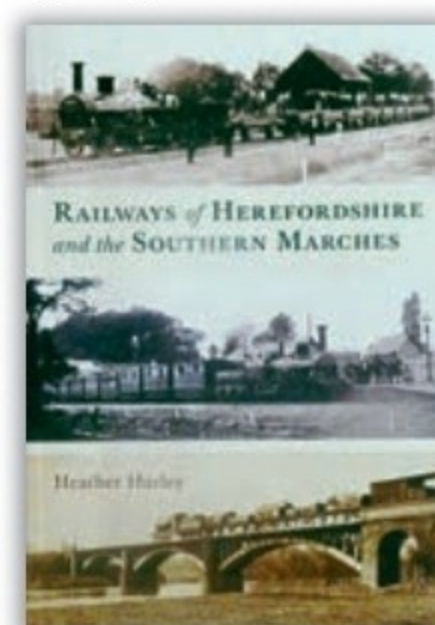
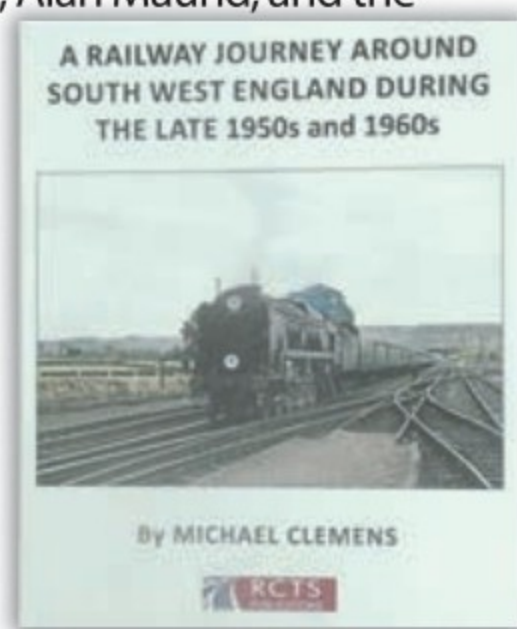
EXCELLENT REGIONAL TRANSPORT HISTORY

Locomotives of Portugal and Spain - CP and RENFE in 1966

By **Henry Finch** (softback, Transport Treasury Publishing (address above), 112 pages, £19.95, ISBN 978-1-915281-23-4).

FOLLOWING the author's previous book from his travels in South America in the 1960s, this new publication depicts the locomotives – mostly steam but also some then-new diesel and electric locomotives – seen during a 1966 road trip from Vigo in western Spain, through northern Portugal and to Andalucia and Catalonia.

The sheer variety of locomotives, locations, and the quality of the



photographs would suggest they had been taken over months or years, but in fact they were taken in a trip lasting just under four weeks!

In 1966, Spain, and Portugal to a lesser extent, had begun modernising their railways with main line electrification and modern diesel locomotive entering service. This upgrade did not prevent the author and his friends finding 1880s-built steam locomotives in daily use, along with oddities such as a Sentinel steam railbus dating from the 1920s. Narrow gauge systems still flourished alongside the Iberian gauge main lines in both Spain and Portugal and are depicted in the book.

Multiple units were not ignored either, despite the main purpose of the trip being to find steam locomotives, and there are images of then new, but now long withdrawn, German design 'Schienenbus' railcars, as well as early Spanish-made DMUs.

Much has changed since the mid-1960s, but some of the stations depicted such as Cadiz or Valencia Norte still look familiar in the 2020s. Others, such as the fine overall roofs in Seville or Zaragoza, have been replaced by modern stations underneath new buildings. The pictures are accompanied by

detailed captions which include information about the history of the railway companies and locos depicted, plus the author's travels.

Anyone who has ever visited the railways in Spain or Portugal will find this book fascinating, as will anyone interested in railway scenes that have, just like those in the UK, changed almost beyond recognition in the last 60 years. Highly recommended.

A LIFETIME'S WORTH OF EXPLORATION INSIDE A MONTH!

'A History of the Berks and Hants Line Volume 2 - Westbury to Taunton'

By Peter Simmonds (hardback, The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society, rcts.org.uk, 156pp, £30, ISBN 978-1-0683883-1-6).

THIS comprehensive, fact-packed and well-illustrated volume examines the development and fortunes of the route from the 1830s to 1993. Presented in nine chapters, maps of each defined area are included, plus information on all relevant Acts of Parliament pertaining to each section of railway opened or closed.

Facts regarding GWR and LSWR involvement have been woven into the story, supported by a collection of historical material such as posters, notices, local

announcements and public concerns or expectations.

DEFINITIVE ACCOUNT OF A MAJOR ROUTE'S HISTORY

The Mid-Norfolk Railway: The Story Of Its Preservation

By Chris Bell, Adam Cartwright and John Hull (softback, Amberley Publishing, 96pp, £15.99, ISBN 978-1-3981-2800-2).

FEW counties of England are as well endowed with heritage railway schemes as Norfolk, and this definitive volume throws light on one of the bigger players.

The surviving section of the Wymondham to Wells-next-the-Sea branch, the Mid-Norfolk Railway, currently runs for nearly 12 miles from Wymondham to Dereham, with another six miles of land and track for an eagerly anticipated extension to its northern outpost of County School.

While BR passenger services ended in 1969, freight traffic carried on for another 20 years, giving welcome breathing space to the revivalists who wanted to create a heritage line.

Many trials and tribulations for the would-be revivalists would follow; by January 31, 1995, Breckland Council agreed to buy the line for £125,000 and lease it to the MNR.

After authorisation to run services was granted, the first heritage era service ran on December 23, 1995, over the modest 1½ miles between the temporary Rashes Green Halt and Yaxham, comprising Class 20 No. 20206 and four Mk. 21 coaches.

Days later, the line ran its first Santa specials.

Separate chapters described reopening the line into its Dereham headquarters, constructing the Wymondham Loop to enable access by locomotive-hauled services from the main line, the first galas and the evolution into a modern heritage railway.

A detailed appendix lists all locomotives that, to date, have visited the line since it reopened.

This handy-sized volume, which is splendidly illustrated with colour pictures throughout, should be essential reading for visitors to the line who want to make the most of it.

It also comes across as an inspirational story about how ordinary people can make rail revivals happen – again, highlighting the fact that preservation is the art of the possible.

All royalties received from the sale of this book will go to the railway.

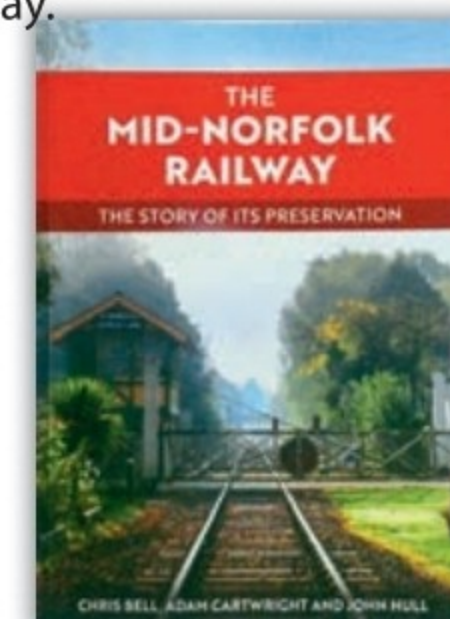
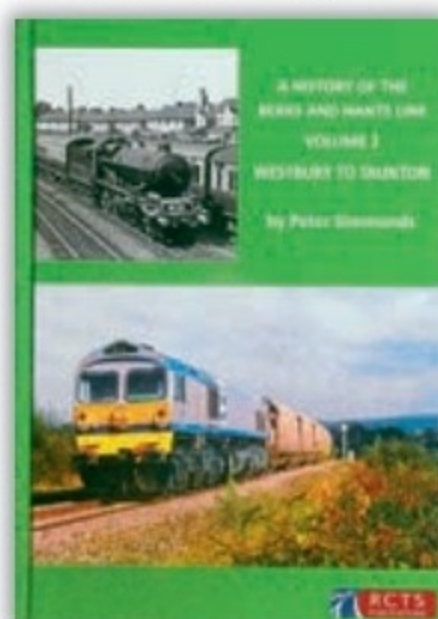
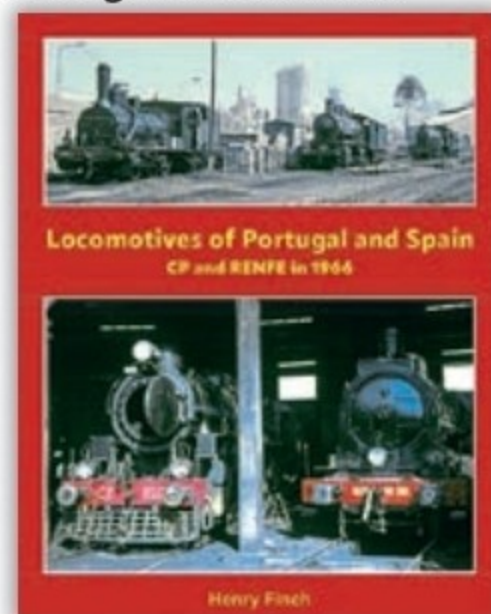
AN INSIGHTFUL LOOK BACK AT A HERITAGE LINE'S INTERESTING HISTORY



Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway



Follow us @HeritageRailMag



London Underground Gallery 1954-2000

By Kevin McCormack (hardback, Pen & Sword 120pp, £25, ISBN 978-1-036129-80-4).

THIS volume is a real treat for anyone interested in London Underground, boasting 230 colour photographs of stock over 46 years. Many of them have not been published before, adding to the book's interest value.

Steam is included as its last passenger trains ran in 1961 and non-passenger in 1971. Also included are the Metropolitan's electric locomotives and battery trains, as well as a wide variety of rolling stock that will surprise many.

Examples include a strange-looking Acton works shunter (L10) built in 1930 from two American driving cars and scrapped in 1978, 1910-1914 (six motor cars and six trailers) District line trains used only for shuttle service for Olympia Exhibitions until 1958, and a photograph of Neasden Depot and sidings offering a

variety of stock including T, F, and P cars.

You will see the unusual-looking F class stock, built in 1920/21 for the District railway, which later replaced E stock on the East London Line, running until September 1963.

There are also photographs of now-closed sections of the Underground system, such as Epping-Ongar and Drayton Park (when the Drayton Park track was removed, it was acquired by the Ffestiniog Railway).

We see the first LU unit, 037 class No. 486, arriving at the Isle of Wight in September 1966, being towed by Class 02 0-4-4T W24 Calbourne.

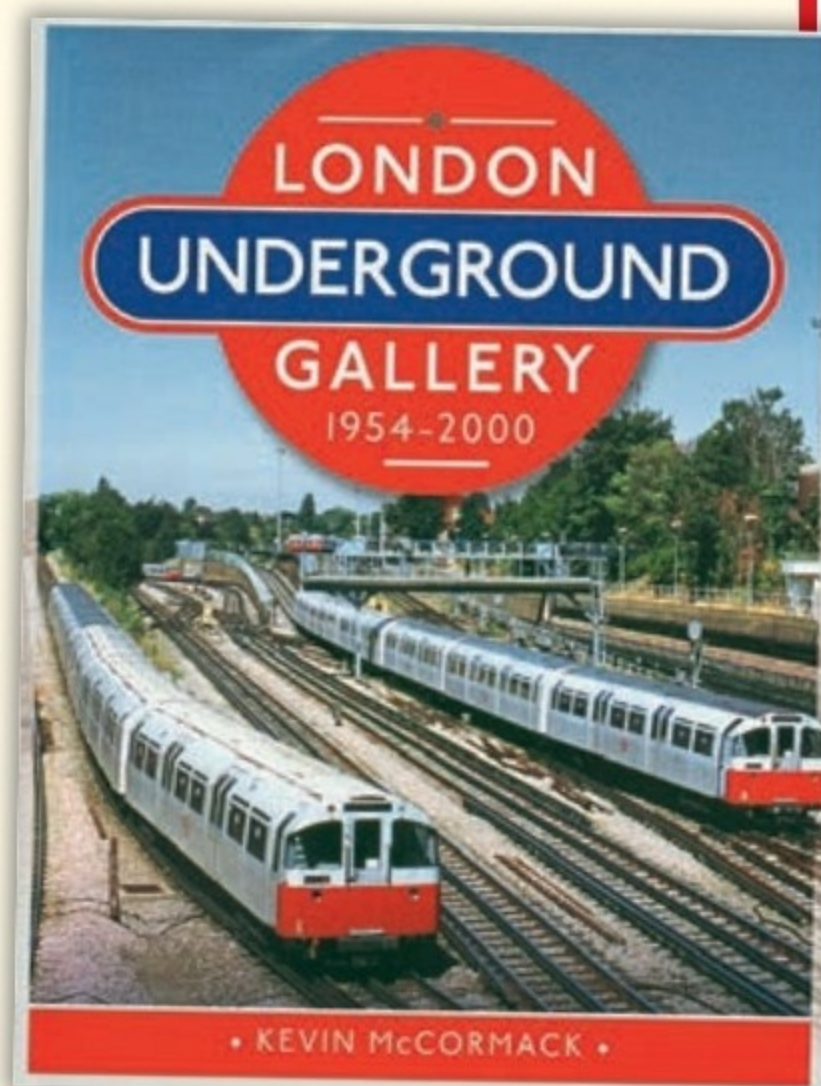
Pannier tanks were replaced by three Sentinel diesels, DL81-83, but these could be used only for restricted service, unlike

the 0-6-0PTs, and they were withdrawn in 1993.

There is superb interior photograph of CO-CP trailer car No. 013096 in service in 1975, showing partitions for the doors which originally divided first from third class sections, first class being abolished in 1940. There is too a photograph of battery locomotive No. L17 standing at Stanmore station on the Bakerloo line.

Many enthusiasts upset at the loss of steam on the Underground would have also been sad to see the last Q Stock withdrawn after 49 years of service.

Also included is the Docklands Light Railway, which was originally part of London Regional Transport and the Waterloo & City line, which joined London Underground in 1994.



All the photographs include rolling stock details and location.

This book will captivate the reader, whether you are a London Underground enthusiast or not, and its photographic journey will not disappoint.

A FRESH UNDERGROUND INSIGHT

OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum

2ft gauge, ¼ mile.
Arundel, West Sussex.
Tel: 01798 831370.

Open: Weds-Suns.

Bluebell Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL.
Tel: 01825 720800.

Running: Tues-Suns.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.

Running: Weds-Fris until Aug 28.

Chatham Historic Dockyard

Standard gauge, one mile.
Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800.

Open: Daily until Sept 6.

East Kent Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Shepherdswell, Kent. Tel: 01304 832042.

Running: Suns.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway

10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.

Running: Daily until Sept 27.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway

12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.

Open: Daily until Oct 31.

Hayling Light Railway

2ft gauge, one mile.
Hayling Island, Hants. Tel: 07902 446340.

Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols.

Hollycombe Steam in the Country

2ft gauge, 1½ miles.
Liphook, Hants.
Tel: 01428 724900.

Open: Tues-Fris (until Aug 26), Suns.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Kent & East Sussex Railway

Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.

Running: Tues-Suns until Aug 30.

Lavender Line

Standard gauge, one mile.
Isfield, East Sussex.
Tel: 01825 750515.

Running: Aug 2, 16, 30/31, Sept 13, 27.

Mid-Hants Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.

Running: Tues-Suns + Aug 17, 24, 31.

Mizens Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.

Running: Suns.

Old Kiln Light Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.

Running: W/Es and bank hols.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway

15in gauge, 13½ miles.
New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.

Running: Daily until Sept 13.

Royal Victoria Railway

10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01795 424899.

Running: Weds, Suns, bank hols.

Spa Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Aug 12, 20.

Volk's Electric Railway

2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton. Running: Daily until Sept 30.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.
Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.

Running: Weds, W/Es.

Bodmin Railway

Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.

Running: Sats-Thurs.

Bristol Harbour Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Princes Wharf, Bristol.
Tel: 0117 352 6600.

M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.

Running: Aug 1/2, 15/16, 29-31.

Dartmouth Steam Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.
Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.

Running: Daily.

Devon Railway Centre

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon. Tel: 01884 855671.

Open: Tues-Suns, bank hols.

East Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Cranmore, Somerset.
Tel: 01749 880417.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Gartell Light Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset.
Tel: 01963 370752.

Running: Aug 30.

Helston Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall.
Tel: 07901 977 597.

Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns, bank hols.

Lappa Valley Railway

7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile.
Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.

Open: Daily until Oct 4.

Launceston Steam Railway

1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665

Running: Suns-Thurs.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Moors Valley Railway

7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415. Running: Daily.

North Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.

Running: W/Es + Aug 20.

Seaton Tramway

2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.

Running: Daily.

Somerset & Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY.

Tel: 01761 411221 Open: Suns, bank hols.

Running: Weds & Suns until Sept 20.

South Devon Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.
Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.

Running: Daily.

Swanage Railway

Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.

Running: Daily.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.
Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.

Running: Thurs, W/Es.

West Somerset Railway

Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Yeovil Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.

Open: Suns.

Running: Tues & Suns until Aug 25.

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum

Narrow and standard gauge, one mile.
Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.

Open: Daily until Nov 1.

Bure Valley Railway

15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 733858.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Colne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.

Open: W/Es. Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

East Anglian Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Running: Weds & Suns + Aug 29, 31.

August activities at Tarka Valley

THE Tarka Valley Railway, based at Torrington station in Devon, will be running demonstration freight trains and offering brake van rides during August.

The trips will operate each Thursday headed by Ruston & Hornsby 192hp 0-4-0DE No. 544998 of 1969 *Torrington Cavalier*, the last standard gauge locomotive built by the company.

It will haul restored clay wagon No. B743169 and BR 20-ton brake van No. B954681.

On Thursday, August 20, 1985-built Class 143 DMU No. 143617 *Rod Garner* will be in service.

August 1 will see an open day at Torrington celebrating the centenary of the Southern Railway's 'Atlantic Coast Express' which used to stop at the station en route from London to resorts in the south west and is currently operated as a summer-only



service by Great Western Railway between Paddington and Newquay. The event will also offer brake van rides.

Above: Ruston & Hornsby 0-4-0DE No. 544998 *Torrington Cavalier* with the clay wagon and brake van attached at Torrington. TVR

Ferry Meadows Railway

10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01733 398 889.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. Tel: 01621 784898.

Open: W/Es, sch hols.

Mid-Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.

Running: Weds, Fris-Suns, bank hols.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899.

Running: Suns.

Nene Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 7½ miles.
Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01780 784444.

Running: W/Es.

North Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Wells & Walsingham Railway

10¼in gauge, four miles.
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.
Tel: 01328 711630.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Reepham, Norfolk.
Tel: 01603 871694.
Open: Tues-Suns. Running: W/Es.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Quainton Road, Bucks. Tel: 01296 655720

Cafe open Mon-Fri. Museum: Suns.

Running: Weds, Suns, bank hols + Aug 15.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon.
Tel: 07979 055366

Running: Tues, Suns + Aug 15, 31.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon.
Tel: 01491 835067

Running: Aug 2, 6, 8/9, 13, 21, 30/31.

Clive is all set for making return Solent crossing

STEAM is not the only motive power set to be crossing the Solent this autumn as the Bluebell Railway is set to play host to BR Class 03 No. 03179 *Clive* for a brief visit this September.

With Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313 set to head off the Severn Valley Railway for the September 17-20 steam gala there, *Clive* will head to Sussex at the start of the month for the Bluebell's September 4-6 diesel gala, aptly turned out in Network SouthEast livery for the company's 40th anniversary being celebrated during the event.

Clive was the last of its class still in use on the national network at the time of its retirement in 2016 and has recently undergone an extensive restoration. As reported in issue 340, it made its in-service debut on the weekend of November 29/30 at the Isle of Wight Steam



Clive will visit the Bluebell Railway in September for the railway's autumn diesel gala weekend. ANDY WEST

Railway, where it now resides. A former IoW locomotive, it aided in the electrification of the Island Line between Ryde and Shanklin before returning to mainland Britain in 1998. The gala will also feature themed displays, historical

interpretations and elements designed to highlight the impact and legacy of NSE to celebrate its 40th anniversary, with fellow guest Class 50 No. 50026 *Indomitable* also carrying the firm's iconic 'toothpaste' livery.

Didcot Railway Centre

Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.

Open: Weds, W/Es bank hols.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Epping Ongar Railway

Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex.

Tel: 01277 365200.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Gunpowder Railway

2ft 6in gauge. Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

Running: Sats.

Great Whipsnade Railway

2ft 6in gauge.
Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.

Running: Daily.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway

2ft gauge.
Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.

Running: Suns.

Leighton Buzzard Railway

2ft gauge, three miles.
Leighton Buzzard, Beds.
Tel: 01525 373888

Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns.

London Museum of Water & Steam

2ft gauge, 400 yards. Brentford, London.
Tel: 0208 568 4757. Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station

2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX. Tel: 0116 299 5111.

Running: Tues until Aug 18.

Amerton Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs. Tel: 01889 271337.

Running: Weds, W/Es.

Apedale Valley Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.
Tel: 0845 094 1953.

Running: W/Es.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse

Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.

Open: W/Es.

Battlefield Line

Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics.
Tel: 01827 880754.

Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Cambrian Heritage Railways

Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys).
Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire.
Tel: 01691 728131.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Chasewater Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands.
Tel: 01543 452623. Open: Daily.

Running: W/Es.

Churnet Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 360522.

Running: Weds, Fris-Suns.

Railway museums

Beamish

County Durham. The Living Museum of the North. Open: Daily until Oct 23.
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Coleford GWR Museum

Coleford, Gloucestershire. Open: Fris and Sats. Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Colonel Stephens Railway Museum

Tenterden, Kent.
Open when KESR trains are running.
Tel: 01732 809143

Crewe Heritage Centre

Vernon Way, Crewe. Open: W/Es & bank hols. Tel: 01270 212130.

Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway

Blythburgh station, off A12 in Blythburgh,

Suffolk. Open Tues. Running: Sept 13.
halesworthtosouthwoldrailway.co.uk
Tel: 07379 789665

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. Tel: 01535 690739 or 01535 680425. Open: Tues-Suns in term time, daily in school holidays.

Railworld Wildlife Haven

Peterborough. Open: Weds, W/Es and school holidays. Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum

Glasgow. Open: Daily. Tel: 0141 287 2720.

Southwold Railway Steamworks

Southwold. Tel: 01502 725422.

www.southwoldrailway.co.uk
Open: Suns. Running: Aug 2, 16, 30
STEAM – Museum of the GWR
Swindon. Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum

Tiverton, Devon. Tel: 01884 256295.
Open: Thurs-Sats.

West Cumberland Railway Museum

St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups. To arrange, contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

Ulster Folk & Transport Museum

Cultra, Co. Down. Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: +44 (0)28 9042 8428.

Dean Forest Railway

Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos. Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway

Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 823076.

Running: Thurs-Suns, bank hols.

Echills Wood Railway

7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.

Running: Suns.

Foxfield Railway

Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs. Tel: 01782 396210.

Running: Weds, Suns + Aug 1, 8, 29.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway

Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.
Tel: 01242 621405.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Great Central Railway

Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323.

www.gcrailway.co.uk

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols + Aug 7.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)

Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts.
Tel: 0115 940 5705.

Open: W/Es.

Running: Weds until Aug 26.

Midland Railway – Butterley

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Ripley, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 570140.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

National Tramway Museum

Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321

Open: Daily until Aug 31.

Northampton & Lamport Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.

Running: Aug 2, 9, 16, 29-31.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.

Running: Aug 2, 16, 30/31.

Peak Rail

Standard gauge, four miles. Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Perrygrove Railway

15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.

Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.

Open: Tues & Thurs.

Running: Aug 9, 30/31.

Rudyard Lake Railway

10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.

Running: Daily until Aug 31.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.

Running: Aug 2, 29-31.

Severn Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Statfold Country Park

Multiple gauges, one mile. Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU.

Tel: 01827 830389. Open: Weds-Suns.

Tanat Valley Light Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Nantmawr, Shropshire SY10 9HW.
Tel: 01691 780042.

www.tanatvalleyrailway.co.uk

Open: Aug 15/16.

Telford Steam Railway

Standard gauge, one mile. Telford, Shropshire.

Running: Suns, bank hols + Aug 8.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Valley Railway Adventure

15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

NORTH WEST

Blackpool Heritage Tram Tours

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Blackpool, Lancs. Tel: 01253 209521.
www.blackpoolheritage.com

Running: TBA.

Douglas Bay Horse Tramway

3ft gauge, 1 ½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 697473.

Running: Tues-Suns, bank hols.

East Lancashire Railway

Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.

Running: Weds-Suns, bank hols.

Eden Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Great Laxey Mine Railway

19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.

Running: Sats.

Groudle Glen Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 670453. Running: Weds, Suns.

Heaton Park Tramway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester. Tel: 0161 740 1919.

Running: TBA.

Isle of Man Steam Railway

3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.

Running: Daily until Oct 5.

Kirkby Stephen East

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.

Open: W/Es.

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Near Ulverston, Cumbria. Tel: 01539 531594.

Running: Daily.

Manx Electric Railway

3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.

Running: Daily until Sept 20.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway

15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass, Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.

Running: Daily.

Ribble Steam Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Preston, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 728800.

Running: Sats, bank hols.

Snaefell Mountain Railway

3ft gauge, 5½ miles (SMR).
Laxey, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.

Running: Daily until Sept 20.

South Tynedale Railway

2ft gauge, 4¾ miles. Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.

Running: Tues, W/Es.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.

Open: Tues-Suns, sch hols.

West Lancashire Light Railway

2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe

Standard gauge, 15 miles.
British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.

Running: Sats until Aug 22.

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 1.

Derwent Valley Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near York. Tel: 01904 489966.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks. Tel: 01756 710614.

Running: Tues-Suns.

Heatherslaw Light Railway

15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.

Running: Daily until Sept 6.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway

2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.

Running: Mons, Weds, Sats.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Ludborough, Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.

Running: Weds, Suns, bank hols.



Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. WD75189 *Rennes* will star at Peak Rail's August 8/9 steam gala weekend. Recently overhauled and turned out in LMR livery, it will join fellow Andrew Barclay-built Austerity No. 2183 *Earl David*, currently in its Wemyss Private Railway livery as No. 15. The pair will join home fleet locomotives Hudswell Clarkes Nos. 750 *Waleswood* and S102 *Cathryn* and Peckett No. 2000 for a five-strong line-up with passenger and goods trains, turntable demonstrations and 'driver for a fiver' using one of the resident diesel locomotives. *Rennes* is seen at Afflington on the Swanage Railway during its appearance at the March 27-29 gala there. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

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

Middleton Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds.
Tel: 0845 680 1758.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.
North Yorkshire Moors Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles. Grosmont, North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.

Running: Daily until Sept 9.

Scarborough North Bay Railway

20in gauge, 7⁄8 mile. Scarborough, North Yorks. Tel: 01723 368791.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Stephenson Steam Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields.

Tel: 0191 277 7135.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Tanfield Railway

Standard gauge, three miles. Near Gateshead, Tyne & Wear. Tel: 07508 092365.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Weardale Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles.

Stanhope, Co. Durham.

Tel: 07729 765504.

Running: Tues, Weds + Aug 2, 8, 14/15, 30/31.

Wensleydale Railway

Standard gauge, 22 miles. Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire. Tel: 01677 425805.

Running: Tues, Weds, Fris-Suns + Aug 31.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)

15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.

Running: Daily until Aug 31 .

Yorkshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1,000ft.

Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.

Running: Weds (until Aug 26), Suns, bank hols.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway

2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.

Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Brecon Mountain Railway

1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.

Pant, Mid-Glamorgan. Tel: 01685 722988.

Running: WSats-Thurs until Oct 4.

Corris Railway

2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.

Corris, near Machynlleth.

Tel: 01654 761701.

Running: Sats-Mons.

Fairbourne Railway

12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Ffestiniog Railway

2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog, Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Daily.

Gwili Railway

Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd Arms, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 01267 238213.

Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns + Aug 21, 31.

Llanberis Lake Railway

2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870549.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.

Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 07956 082305.

Running: Aug 29.

Llangollen Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles.

Llangollen, Denbighshire.

Tel: 01978 860979.

Running: Weds-Suns, bank hols.

Rhyl Miniature Railway

15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.

Tel: 01352 759109.

Running: W/Es, bank hols, sch hols.

Snowdon Mountain Railway

800mm gauge, 4½ miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870223.

Running: Daily.

Talyllyn Railway

2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.

Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.

Running: Daily.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

1ft 11¾in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.

Running: Daily.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.

Running: Daily until Sept 3.

Welsh Highland Railway

2ft gauge, 26 miles. Caernarfon, Gwynedd.

Tel: 01766 516000. Running: Daily.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair

Caereinion, Powys. Tel: 01938 810441.

Running: Daily until Sept 6.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.

Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.

Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es + Aug 6, 13.

Caledonian Railway

Standard gauge, four miles.

Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.

Running: W/Es.

Doon Valley Railway

Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.

Running: Suns.

Keith & Dufftown Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.

Dufftown, Banffshire.

Tel: 01340 821181.

Running: Fris-Suns + Aug 12.

Lathalmond Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ½ mile.

Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, athalmond, near Dunfermline.

Tel: 07379 914801.

Open: Suns. Running: Suns.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South

Lanarkshire. Running: Suns.

Royal Deeside Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory,

Kincardineshire. Tel: 01330 844416.

Running: Suns.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Galas and other events in the coming weeks...

A list of currently published special events. For full details of these services, as well as any additional ones, you are advised to check the websites of the railway or museum you are intending to visit.

AUGUST

1 A Day with Alice the Welsh

Engine, Bala Lake Railway

1/2 Manx Transport Festival, Isle of Man Railways

1/2 1960s Weekend, Llangollen

Railway

1/2 Brick Weekend, Severn Valley Railway

2 Steampunk Extravaganza,

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

2 Land Rover Rally, Mid-Suffolk

Light Railway

7 Dino Academy, East Lancashire

Railway

7-9 Bluebell on Parade, Bluebell

Railway

7-9 Diesel Gala, Spa Valley Railway

7-9 Summer Beer Festival, Talyllyn

Railway

8/9 Friendly Engines Weekend,

Apedale Valley Light Railway

8/9 Models Weekend, Battlefield

Line

8/9 Steam Gala, Peak Rail

8/9 Vintage Transport

Extravaganza, Severn Valley

Railway

9 Local Produce Market, Aln Valley

Railway

9 Model Railway Show, East Anglian

Railway Museum

9 Tenterden Town Bus Rally, Kent &

East Sussex Railway

9 Big Bus Day, Mid-Suffolk Light

Railway

9 Steampunk and Classic Car Rally,

Yeovil Railway Centre

11 Floral Train, Talyllyn Railway

12 Wonderland Adventure, East

Lancashire Railway

13 Villains Academy, East

Lancashire Railway

15 Tea With Alice, Gloucestershire

Warwickshire Railway

15 Junior Engineers Experiences,

Kent & East Sussex Railway

15 Singin' on the Train, Severn

Valley Railway

16 Baby Sulzer running day,

Gloucestershire Warwickshire

Railway

16 Teddy Bears Day, Lincolnshire

Wolds Railway

16 Royal Enfield Rally, Mid-Suffolk

Light Railway

21 Teddy Bear Adventure, East

Lancashire Railway

22 Peppa Pig, East Lancashire

Railway

22/23 Comic Con, Llangollen

Railway

22/23 Art & Craft Fayre, Severn

Valley Railway

22-31 Festival on Rails, North

Norfolk Railway

23 Model Mania, Mid-Suffolk Light

Railway

28-30 Big Stafold Weekend, Statfold

Country Park

28-31 Island Steam Fair, Isle of

Wight Steam Railway

29/30 Leafers at t'pit, Apedale

Valley Light Railway

29/30 Thomas Branch Line

weekend, Nene Valley Railway

29-31 Teddy Bears Weekend, Aln

Valley Railway

29-31 Steam Gala, Bala Lake

Railway

29-31 Diesels at 65 Gala, West

Somerset Railway

30 Land Rover Rally, Talyllyn

Railway

30/31 Steam Gala, Mid-Suffolk

Light Railway

31 Classic cars & steam train day,

Apedale Valley Light Railway

31 Auto Fest, Buckinghamshire

Railway Centre

SEPTEMBER

3-6 Autumn Diesel Gala, Great

Central Railway

4 Steam Shanty, Bodmin Railway

4-6 Diesel Gala, Bluebell Railway

5 Tanker train day, Dean Forest

Railway

5/6 September Steam Up, Moors

Valley Railway

6 Bus Rally, Romney Hythe &

Dymchurch Railway

6 Photo Char-TR, Talyllyn Railway

Organising a gala or other big event?

Email the details to Owen Hayward

at owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

Strathspey Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles.

Aviemore, Inverness-shire.

Tel: 01479 810725.

Running: Sats-Thurs + Aug 14, 28.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway

3ft gauge. Dromod, Co. Leitrim.

Tel: +353 71 963 8599.

Running: Sats-Mons.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway

5ft 3in gauge.

Downpatrick, Co. Down.

Tel: 028 4461 5779.

Running: Sats until Sept 12.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.

Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.

Museum open: Thurs-Sats.

Running: Sats until Aug 29.

CLASSIFIED

BOOKS

The Smokebox bookshop of Kingston revived

Stall F2B at Antiques of Kingston KT2 6ND
ENLARGED stall specialising 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

Railways
Buses

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

Aviation
Canals

Shipping
Commercial

Motoring
Trams

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



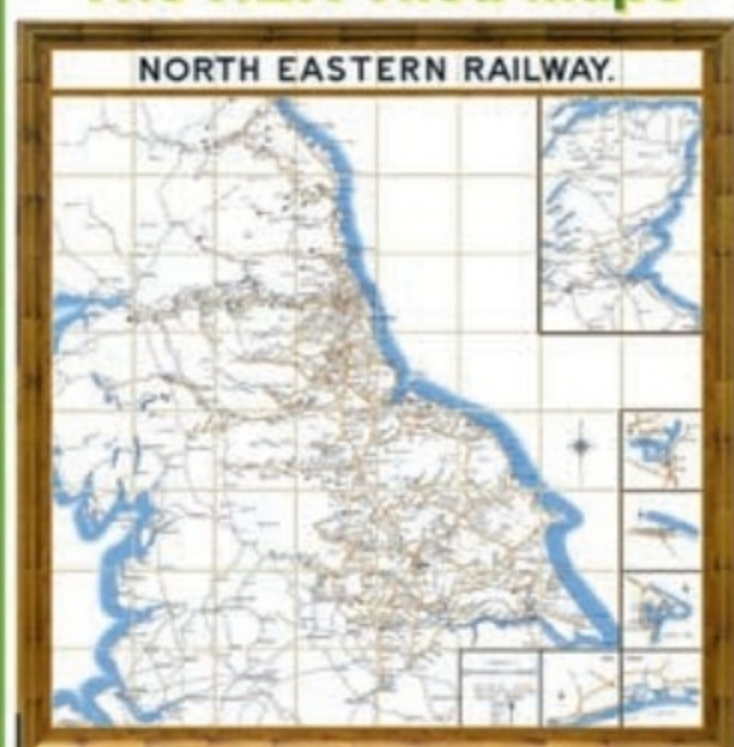
Tel:
01709 578333

BLUELINE BUILDINGS LIMITED

e: sales@bluelinebuildings.co.uk • www.bluelinebuildings.co.uk

FOR SALE

The NER Tiled Maps



Handcrafted again by their original manufacturers

Full, threequarter and half sizes are now available from

The North Eastern Tile Company
4 Foundry Cottages, Wreton, Pickering, YO188PF
01751 477216

www.northeasterntilecompany.co.uk

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPHY

Quality Photographs of
Railways, Ships and Aircraft
(Fresh images regularly added)

NOW OVER 20,000
IMAGES AVAILABLE

Please send £5.95 for our list/sample print.
(UK Mainland & Northern Ireland only.
For overseas please enquire via email)

Please state which list you require.
(cheques payable) to:- MR D SMITH, 2 Briain Way,
St. John's Road, Clacton on Sea, Essex CO16 8LR

10% off orders over £50 (exc P&P)

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS NOW AVAILABLE

If you're looking for a good home for your treasured
pictures then please email us mail@phototransport.com
or write to us at the above address.

www.phototransport.com

Contact Andy on 01507 529455
andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk

MODELLING



Redcar Models & Hobbies

Stocking a wide range of '00' railways
by Bachmann, Hornby, Peco and Gaugemaster

Also Model Kits and Diecasts and all other
modelling accessories

FREE PARKING FOR THE FIRST HOUR

130 High Street,
Redcar,
Cleveland

T: 01642 494 912 E: andrewnpaton@ntlworld.com



Orwell Model Railways

Ipswich Model Railway Centre

48-52 Tomline Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 8DB
01473 724578

Opening times Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm,
Saturday 10am to 5pm,
with Late Night Opening until 6pm on Wednesday

enquiries@orwellmodelrailways.co.uk

www.orwellmodelrailways.co.uk

TOY & TRAIN COLLECTORS' FAIRS

YORK TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR

AUGUST 22nd, 10.30AM - 3.00PM

York Sport Arena, University of York Sport Centre, James Way, Heslington, York, YO10 5NA

Admission: Adult - £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s - £2.50

GLASGOW TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR

SEPTEMBER 6th, 10.30AM - 3.00PM

Glasgow Club Bellahouston, 31 Bellahouston Drive, Bellahouston, Glasgow, Lanarkshire G52 1HH

Admission: Adult - £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s - £2.50

RAINTON TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR

SEPTEMBER 13th, 10.30AM - 3.00PM

Sunderland Live Arena, Mercantile Road, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne & Wear DH4 5PH

Admission: Adult - £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s - £2.50

For table bookings and enquiries contact Jim 07504 035955
email: jim_corr73@hotmail.co.uk • www.northerntoyfairs.com



DURHAM VINTAGE TOYS

Durham Indoor Market, Unit 68, DH1 3NJ

Open 6 days per week 10.30am-4pm

Old & New Diecast, Trains, Star Wars, Model Soldiers,
Old Comics & Football Programmes, Collections wanted



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

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

To advertise contact Andy

01507 529455 • andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk

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

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

Old Manse Hotel

Middleton Road,
Pickering YO18 8AL

4 mins from NYM Railway • Secure car park • Extensive gardens

All rooms en-suite. Sky Sports & 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
- Only a few minutes from Dalby Forest Great Cycling

Book your stay with us. Available for exclusive use. Open throughout December (North Yorkshire Moors
Railway Santa Express) & January. Also open for walkers when the Railway is closed (all subject to availability)

Reservations 01751 476484 • email: info@oldmansepickering.co.uk
www.oldmansepickering.co.uk

www.heritagerrailway.co.uk

WANTED



WE WANT TO BUY YOUR
COLLECTION OF SLIDES
AND NEGATIVES.

UK AND OVERSEAS -
1990s AND EARLIER

WANTED

If your collection, **big or small**, is
gathering dust we'd like to hear from you.
We will scan the original images and
return a copy to you for personal
use free of charge.

Call: 01494 490544
Email: info@bbfimages.com



The
RAILWAY
Magazine

DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Access 120 years' worth
of history from the nation's
most authoritative and
prestigious rail publication.

over
120 **1300** **140,000**
years issues pages



- FULLY SEARCHABLE CONTENTS
- KEEP SCRAPBOOKS OF YOUR FAVOURITE ARTICLES
- BONUS PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED CONTENT
- MULTI-PLATFORM ACCESS

SECURE YOUR ACCESS TODAY

A subscription to The Railway Magazine includes
free access to this fantastic resource.

WWW.RAILWAYMAGAZINE.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

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 owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

Vintage cars and tiny trains: quirky loads for heritage galas

By Owen Hayward

DEMONSTRATION freight trains at heritage railway galas are a chance to showcase services that were once the backbone of the UK rail network. The conveyance of goods drove the development of railways as it evolved from horse-drawn waggonways to roads of iron worked by machines of steam.

Such trains can also provide talking points and, if scheduled cleverly, create breaks in a visitor's day as they await the arrival of such a service, perhaps visiting the station shop or café to fill the downtime. But beyond putting a few standard BR-era box vans or ballast hoppers together, how else might these become a stand-out feature of an event? The answer: find a suitably quirky load!

The Talylyn Railway has, on occasions, placed a heritage vehicle such as a Land Rover onto a wagon to take on a jaunt up and down the

Fathew Valley, something which often turns heads. Last July it went a step further and put *River Mite* (a 15in gauge 2-8-2 from the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway) onto a flatbed as part of its hugely successful Awdry Extravaganza weekend. Such a practice is not new ground; its own Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT No. 6 *Douglas* have both been used as loads themselves during visits to standard gauge heritage lines.

The TR was not the pioneer of such practices, but is perhaps one that comes to mind pretty quickly as an example. Yet, for its recent Extreme Steam Extravaganza, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways borrowed two classic cars to use as wagon loads during the three-day gala.

One of these was a grey Austin A30 that dates from 1956, while the other was a vibrant orange 1980s Mini, another Austin product.

These were swapped over between days and marshalled as part of various



Bodmin and Perrygrove railways managing director David Nelson-Brown with Mr Hallworth and Judy on the Bodmin Railway on June 20. BODMIN RAILWAY

demonstration goods and mixed train workings, and certainly caught visitors' eyes as they passed by.

Meanwhile, down in the south west, it was a steam locomotive on a wagon that turned heads.

Having appeared at the Lappa Valley Railway's gala on the weekend of June 13/14, Darlington-built Perrygrove Railway resident 0-6-0ST *Mr Hallworth* stopped over at the Bodmin Railway where, on June 20, it was placed onto a Lowmac and enjoyed a trip to Boscarne Junction station behind equally diminutive Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2572 *Judy*.

Built in 2021, the 15in gauge locomotive was named after the late Anthony Hallworth, who was central figure of the standard gauge line and nurtured a generation of volunteers including David Nelson-Brown, who is the managing director of both lines.

"Since commissioning our new locomotive in 2021 and deciding to call it *Mr Hallworth*, I've always wanted to bring it to Bodmin," David said.

"On June 20, we had a fabulous day out taking *Mr Hallworth* to green and hallowed lands with guest of honour Vicky Hallworth, along with her son Mark Hallworth.

"The train was, of course, hauled by *Judy* in matching Port of Par green. The sun shone, the banter flowed, and the memories of our dear friend Tony were shared once again.

"What wonderful fun we had and memories made, as well as recalled.

"I don't think Tony would have approved of the whistles, the brass or the name, but I'm sure he would have been chuffed with the legacy he has left behind.

"Thanks to everyone for such a fabulous day."



A 1980s Austin Mini could be seen on a wagon at the Ff&WHR's Extreme Steam Extravaganza event. CHRIS PARRY/FF&WHR



Moelwyn shunts a wagon with an Austin A30 loaded aboard at Boston Lodge Halt. FF&WHR

NEXT ISSUE Issue 349 out Aug 28

Among the many delights North Cornwall has to offer, Nicola Fox discovers historic railway gems – some hidden, others less so – during a visit to the winner of 2025's Railway of the Year award.

PLUS BRITISH LOCOS IN JAPANESE MUSEUMS

John Titlow looks at railway museums in Japan while searching for British locomotives plinched off the beaten track, including the Harry Potter Studio Tour in Tokyo, where GWR 4-6-0 No. 4920 *Dumbleton Hall* resides.



CREATING THE VISION FOR 2050

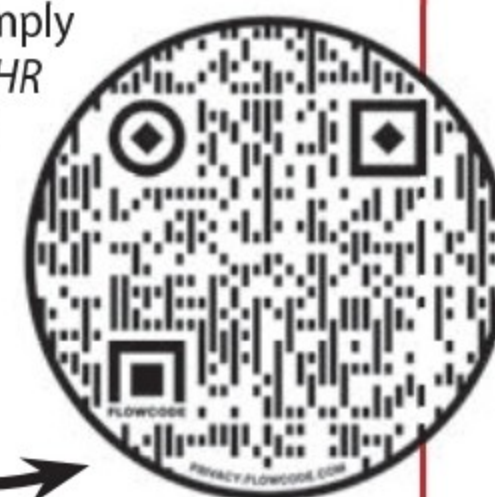
Owen Hayward pays a visit to the Mid-Hants Railway to meet CEO Rebecca Dalley and discuss the line's new strategy to see it through to 2050 – including the overhaul of locomotives such as three-cylindered SR 4-6-0 No. 850 *Lord Nelson*.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 349

OR TURN TO PAGES 30/31 AND SUBSCRIBE!

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!



**BEST FOR THE COMPLETE COVERAGE OF THE PRESERVATION SCENE:
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN HERITAGE RAILWAY!**

MARKET LEADER IN
FULLY MACHINED LIVE
STEAM KITS

NEW! OUR 5" GAUGE BRITANNIA IS NOW AVAILABLE AS A FULLY MACHINED KIT!



Pre-production model shown

£13,995.00 + £195.00 p&p

"What a thoroughly enjoyable experience it has been to build the GWR 15xx kit. May I take this opportunity to thank both you and Mike. It has enabled me to get involved in this amazing hobby in my mid-70's"
A.S. Worcestershire

The Advantages of Kit Building

The success of our GWR 15xx kit model clearly demonstrated that our customers love the idea of building their own model. Self-assembly provides a great sense of achievement for the novice and is a real time saver for the experienced model engineer who may not have the time for another scratch build. By assembling the model you will learn how a live steam engine works, providing confidence when running and maintaining the engine over the years to come.

Complete and Fully-Machined

Our kits are fully machined and include everything you need to complete a working live steam locomotive. There is no drilling, soldering, or machining of any sort required. Every single one of our kit models is trial assembled at the factory before being disassembled and packed for shipping - your guarantee of quality. Complex assemblies e.g. cylinders are supplied pre-assembled and the boiler comes with the back head controls fitted. You will receive a comprehensive instructions book with illustrations and enjoy access to a telephone helpline should you need advice during the build. We will ask Mark Harris to create a video series showing a kit by kit assembly as a guide to your own build. His GWR 15xx videos attracted over 150,000 views!

Request your free brochure today

Request your free brochure today by e-mail, telephone, or by returning the coupon opposite.

Telephone: **01327 705 259**

E-mail: **info@silvercrestmodels.co.uk**

Find more information at

www.silvercrestmodels.co.uk

Summary Specification



Length approx 77"

- Coal-fired
- Sprung axle boxes with needle roller bearings
- Two safety valves
- Silver soldered copper boiler
- Etched brass body with rivet detail
- Available in choice of names
- Painted and ready-to run
- Stainless steel motion
- 2 Outside Cylinders
- Walschaerts valve gear
- Piston valves
- Mechanical drain cocks
- Mechanical lubricator
- Reverser in cab
- Boiler feed by axle pump, and hand pump
- Length 77"
- Width 10"
- Height 14"
- Weight approx 120kgs

The 5" Gauge Britannia Model

This coal-fired live steam model is built to a near exact scale and is an excellent representation of the full size locomotive. The kit model is supplied with the regular BR1 tender and you can select the name and number of your choice. The copper boiler is silver soldered, hydraulically tested to twice working pressure, and supplied with a shell test boiler certificate. Every model benefits from a full 5 year warranty.

The manufacture of the kit version of this model is presently scheduled for completion December 2026.

High quality kit models are expensive to manufacture and the cost of raw materials is spiralling ever higher on a weekly basis. However, once you have paid your deposit your price is guaranteed. We are pleased to offer this kit at the fantastic value-for-money price of just £13,995.00 + p&p. The model can be supplied built and ready-to-run for an extra £1,000.00.

Save £195. We are pleased to offer free UK delivery for any order received within 28 days.

Delivery and Payment

The order book for the 5" gauge Britannia kit is now open and we are happy to accept your order reservation for a deposit of just £1,995.00.



We will then request a stage payment of £5,000.00 in August 2026 as the manufacture progresses, a further payment of £5,000.00 in October and a final payment of £2,000.00 on completion of batch presently scheduled for December this year.

Please send, without obligation, my free 5" gauge Britannia colour brochure.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Please send to: Silver Crest Models Limited,
2 Gresley Close, Daventry,
Northamptonshire NN11 8RZ

HR

Company registered number 7425348

**FREE
BROCHURE
REQUEST FORM**

Rail Holidays of the World



See More at Ground Level ~ Discover the World by Rail in 2027

Indian Hill Railways ~

Departs 14 February 2027 - 19 days from £7,285pp

A firm favourite returns as we mark 37 years of escorting travellers to India's remarkable UNESCO World Heritage mountain railways. Experience the famous 145-year-old Darjeeling Joy Train, the Nilgiri Mountain Railway and the Kalka-Shimla Railway while discovering colourful hill stations, tea plantations and the rich culture of one of the world's most fascinating destinations.

NEW TOUR

South Korea Rail Adventure ~

Departs 17 May 2027 - 13 days from £5,340pp

One of Asia's best-kept secrets, this brand-new tour explores South Korea's impressive rail network, linking dynamic cities with beautiful countryside and centuries of history. From the bustling streets of Seoul to the coastal city of Busan, discover a captivating blend of ancient traditions, modern innovation and outstanding rail travel on this exciting new addition to the programme.



NEW ITINERARY

Japan - North to Hokkaido ~

Departs 1 September 2027 - 18 days from £7,800pp

This redesigned itinerary ventures beyond the familiar to explore northern Japan and the island of Hokkaido. Combining iconic Shinkansen journeys with scenic rural railways, heritage steam trains and spectacular natural scenery, this holiday reveals a quieter, less-visited side of Japan while showcasing one of the world's finest railway systems.

Eastern Canada in the Fall ~

Departs 6 October 2027 - 14 days from £5,145pp

Travel through Canada's eastern provinces at their most spectacular as forests are transformed into a blaze of autumn colour. Scenic rail journeys, cosmopolitan cities, beautiful national parks and the breathtaking landscapes of Ontario and Québec combine to create an unforgettable escorted holiday during one of Canada's most beautiful seasons.



Jordan: Trains, Petra & the Dead Sea ~

Departs 1 November 2027 - 10 days from £3,635pp

We welcome a return of travel to Jordan in 2027. This popular escorted holiday once again offers the chance to experience one of the Middle East's most rewarding destinations. Explore the breathtaking rose-red city of Petra, relax beside the Dead Sea and enjoy unique railway experiences linked to the historic Hejaz Railway, combining ancient history with unforgettable rail heritage.

The Very Best of Australia ~

Departs 7 November 2027 - 21 days from £9,565pp

Discover the vastness and diversity of Australia on an unforgettable rail adventure featuring some of the world's greatest train journeys. From vibrant cities to dramatic outback landscapes, this epic itinerary combines iconic rail travel with remarkable natural wonders, showcasing the country's extraordinary scenery, vibrant cities and way of life.

2027 Brochure Now Available

See full itineraries and book now 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.