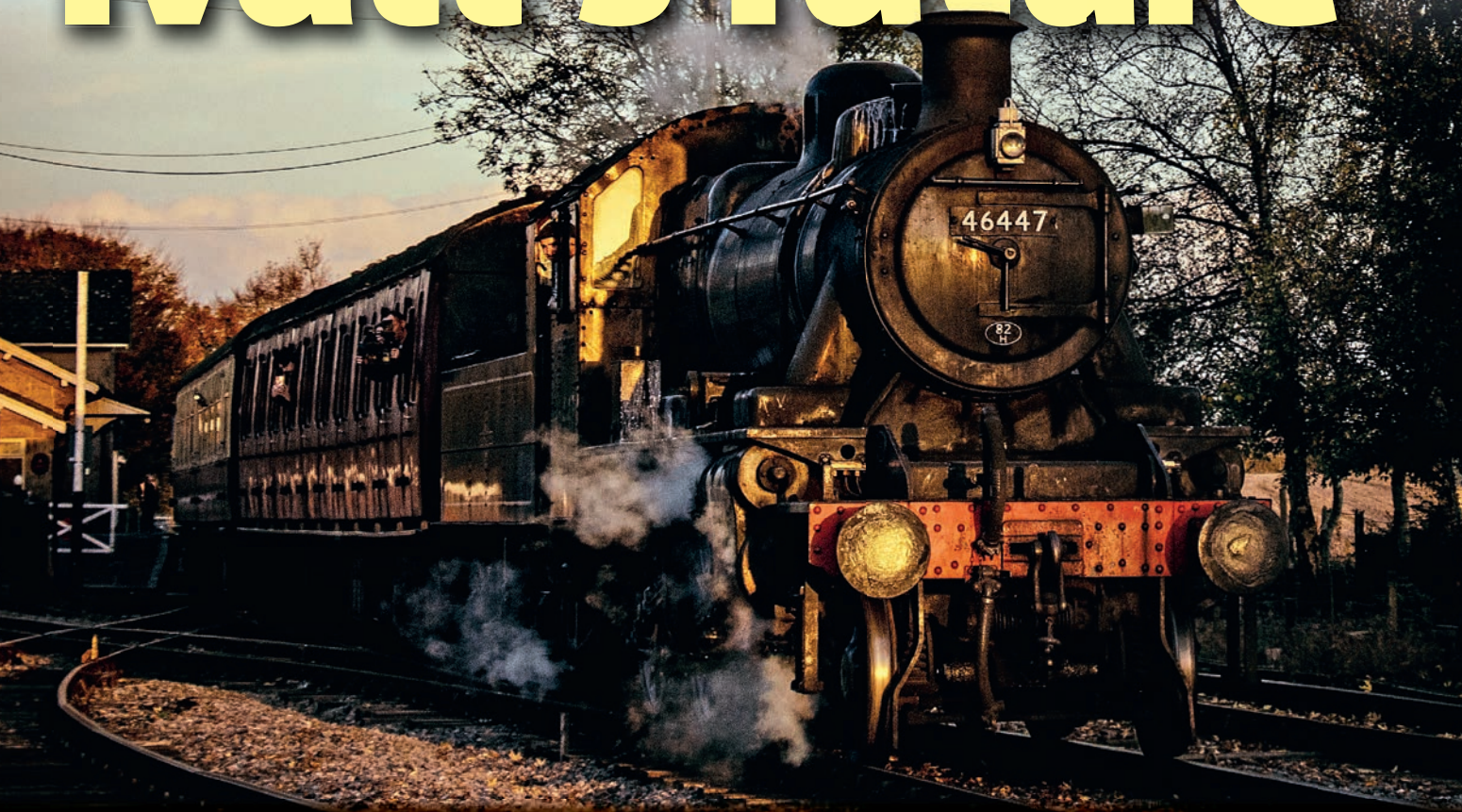


ISSUE 349

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Isle Of Wight contemplates Ivatt's future



Severn Valley trials commuter services – as Stanier mogul prepares for main line return

- 'Royal' Norfolk station offered for sale
- Vision 2025: Mid-Hants' plans to meet future operational requirements
- McAlpine paintings fetch six-figure sum after going under the hammer



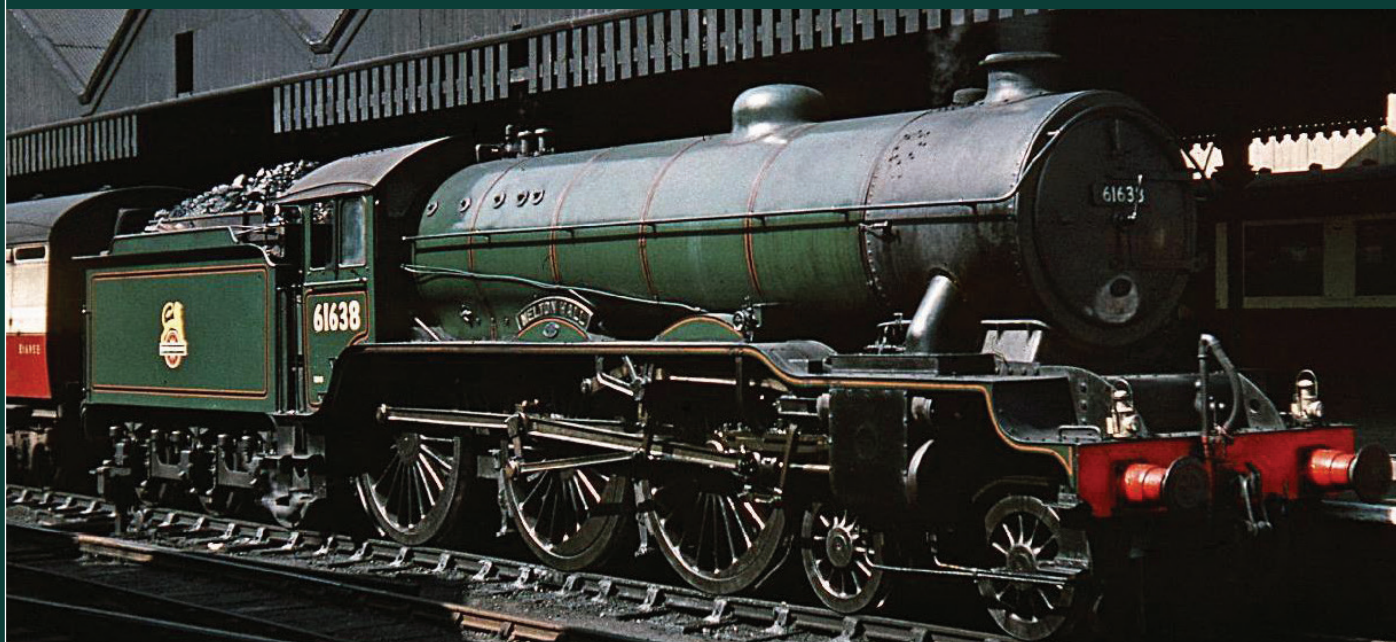
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Before the switchover to diesel and oil-fired traction in the shape of USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 2253 *Omaha* at the height of the record heatwaves was held *Tornado: The Steam Superstar*, an event which ran from July 27 to August 1 and August 3-8, with visiting new-build A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 hauling special services along the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, including daytime and evening trips, and is seen here at Grosfont station on August 8. KENNY FELSTEAD

What do our future summers have in store for UK steam?

IN the wake of the five successive heatwaves recorded this summer as this issue went to press, questions are being asked the world over as to the exact nature of climate change and where global weather is taking us.

Many of the same questions were being asked in 1976 following that year's record heatwave. The previous year had a shorter, unduly warm summer spell, leading to assumptions that rising temperatures were heading on one direction, yet 1977 and several successive summers turned out to be disappointing.

During August, I have seen reports of traditional tourist haunts like the North Cornwall beaches and Bourton-on-the-Water in the Cotswolds being packed to overflowing with bumper crowds who have overridden the soaring humidity – despite many more would-be visitors staying at home in air-conditioned indoor comfort.

Over the last 75 years, the volunteer-led heritage railway sector has blossomed into a sizeable plank of the UK tourist economy, especially in the school summer holidays. Steam remains the predominant image of the sector, especially with the general public and family visitor market, and the cancellation of so many peak-period steam services due to the risk of wildfires will have impacted on the essential annual income of many of our lines.

Massive thanks are due to diesel preservationists whose locomotives have stepped in to keep services running on many of our heritage lines when steam has to remain firmly shedded for safety reasons. Modern traction has been much of our saving grace this time round, as well as highlighting the heritage of the past half-

century of UK rail transport for the benefit of future generations.

We can but hope for many weeks of catch-up rainfall to clear the decks so our popular autumn steam galas can go ahead as planned. But what if 2026 is not a one-off like 1976, when the sector was but a fraction of the size and economic importance that it is today, when so many of our treasured steam locomotives were still rusting away in Barry scrapyard? What radical changes must the sector now consider making to cope with future hot summers, and indeed, to survive at its present extent?

Should more special events and running weeks be arranged out of the traditional high season, such as in late February and March, or immediately post-Easter?

“What radical changes must the sector now consider making to cope with future hot summers, and indeed, to survive at its present extent?”

Might we run more services on heritage lines whereby diesels push trains ostensibly headed by crowd-pleasing but effectively inactive steam locomotives, as the Dartmouth Steam Railway and others have just tried?

Could a national contingency grant aid fund be set up to bail out lines which slip into financial difficulties through unexpectedly hot summers or other severe mishaps?

As we have seen on many occasions in the past, when popular heritage lines are closed by accident, such as the floods which caused landslips on the Severn Valley Railway in June 2007, the local visitor economy is hit big time. Preservation has long been a true art of the possible, but volunteers can do only so much unaided in the face of repeated adversity on this scale.

Robin Jones Editor

EDITORIAL

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COVER: Ivatt 2MT No. 46447 catches the light of the setting sun at the East Somerset Railway on October 26, 2010. Recently returned to steam, the Isle of Wight Steam Railway is considering options for the locomotive's future; see *Headline News*, pages 6/7 for the full story. ADAM ASHFORD

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Isle of Wight looks at options for Ivatt 2MT and industrial

By Owen Hayward

LOOKING at the futures of two of its locomotives, the Isle of Wight Steam Railway was due to hold a meeting at Havenstreet on August 26, when its members would get to voice their opinions about proposals for BR Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447 and Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-OST No. 3135 *Invincible*.

No. 46447 was one of a trio of Ivatt 2MTs donated to the IoWSR in 2008, having been acquired by the Ivatt Locomotive Trust and stored at Quainton Road. Alongside the mogul were 2-6-2Ts Nos. 41313 and 41298, and while the latter were identified as being suited to use on the line between Smallbrook Junction and Wootton, No. 46447 was generally deemed too large and unable to fit into the headshunt at the latter station. In 2012, an agreement was signed that saw No. 46447 move to Cranmore, on the East Somerset Railway, where its restoration was completed in October 2014.

The agreement with the ESR was felt to be mutually beneficial and also saw the IoWSR acquire LBSCR E1 0-6-OT No. 110 *Burgundy* from a private owner who was storing it at Cranmore.

Aside from a brief visit to Havenstreet to run alongside the two tank engines at the IoWSR's Three Ivatts gala in 2018, No. 46447 saw out its first preservation-era boiler ticket on the ESR, following which a new agreement was reached between the two lines to allow it to be overhauled at Cranmore once more, with a new deal for it to run there once completed. This overhaul lasted from October 2024 through to May 2026.

A recent review by the IoWSR of its collection saw the need for No. 46447 come under scrutiny; in addition to its size preventing its use on the line, it has no historical connection to the island and its railways aside from it being donated by supporters. Acknowledging there will likely be no future operational requirement for it there, the railway's board of directors determined that options for its future should be investigated.

"Given the ongoing agreements with the ESR, those options were narrowed down to exclusive discussions with the ESR about their long-term aspirations for the future utilisation of the locomotive," said a statement sent to society members on August 11. "One of our key concerns has been the liability to the IoWSR if the ESR decided to end the arrangements at the end of the new operating loan period. Following discussions, they indicated that they



Donated to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway in 2008 but of little use to that line, Ivatt 2MT No. 46447's future is under review, with interest from the East Somerset Railway to buy it. It is pictured during a photographic charter at Cranmore on September 29, 2024, just before its most recent overhaul started. MARTIN CREESE



Hawthorn Leslie No. 3135 *Invincible* approaches Calloway Crossing shortly after departure from Smallbrook Junction on March 19, 2009. JOHN FAULKNER/IOWSR

would prefer to acquire No. 46447 to give them better security in the long term, seeing the locomotive as a permanent member of their operational fleet."

Appeal too early?

Although no formal decision was to be made before the August 26 consultation, the ESR appeared to jump the gun, launching a £275,000 appeal in the hope of raising money to purchase No. 46447, should that option go ahead.

Although it has been operating as a heritage line since August 1974, the ESR has never owned a steam locomotive of its own, instead relying on those hired in from external sources. In recent years, this has predominantly been from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, the two organisations having a strong working relationship, including a restore-and-run arrangement, such as with GWR 2-6-2T No. 4110, which ran for the first time in preservation at the ESR in February 2023 after restoration was completed in Cranmore. Launching its appeal, the ESR said such a purchase for No. 46447 would "allow the ESR to

retain the locomotive for the full 10-year ticket and save enough money to overhaul it again in 2036."

While the target amount may seem cheap for a locomotive of this size and power, particularly one freshly back into service, it likely includes a discount following its recent ESR-funded overhaul. Incentives are offered for those making larger donations, including the chance to drive the locomotive when pledging £1000.

However, the appeal has divided opinion among some IoWSR supporters, who felt that selling the locomotive might be considered a disservice to those who originally donated it to the railway.

In response, an IoWSR statement said: "Discussions have taken place to establish what a sale could 'look like,' but with a clear understanding that any decision on the options (sale or no change to the current loan) would be brought back to our board for decision."

It added that the announcement of the ESR appeal had caught IoWSR board members by surprise: "Clearly, they have wanted to test the availability of funding – we had not

expected this at this stage." It went on to stress that all options for No. 46447 were first to be discussed with society members.

Industrial might

At the August 26 meeting, options regarding the future of No. 3135 *Invincible* were also being placed before members.

Built in 1915 to work the docks of Woolwich Arsenal and moved to the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough in 1955, it arrived on the IoWSR in 1971, having been purchased by Tom Jeffris a few years earlier. It provided essential cover in the line's embryonic years at Havenstreet while LSWR O2 No. W24 *Calbourne*, the only working steam locomotive the IoWSR had at the time, underwent a much-needed overhaul. After being fitted with the necessary air-braking equipment to work passenger trains, *Invincible* single-handedly managed the workload between 1973 and 1977, when *Calbourne* finally returned to steam, relegating the Hawthorn Leslie locomotive to back-up duties. In 1979, it was donated to the Wight Locomotive Society and has since been given the IoW-style number of W37.

As the railway extended to Smallbrook Junction and Wootton, *Invincible's* limitations rendered it unsuitable for regular daily operations, requiring more stops to replenish coal and water supplies while struggling to cope with longer trains. It was failed with a broken spring in 2009, but with the arrival of Nos. 41313 and 41298 and their restorations to contend with, *Invincible* was sidelined to wait in the queue. In 2020, work commenced on the boiler, but in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to overhaul more powerful locomotives, it stalled, and the locomotive has barely been touched since, apart from a cosmetic reassembly for display in the Train Story building at Havenstreet.

Its long-term future is also being given serious consideration, with options including a run-and-restore agreement with a UK mainland line or a full cosmetic restoration at the IoWSR until such a time as it can be overhauled in-house and returned to use, recognising its vital role in the line's preservation story.

The meeting was scheduled to take place after this issue closed for press.

→ To support the East Somerset Railway's £275,000 appeal to potentially buy No. 46447, visit <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/46447>



The crew of Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* await the solar eclipse on August 12. The Mid-Hants Railway ran a special service that evening which paused at Rookwood, between Ropley and Medstead stations, to allow its passengers to observe the occasion from their seat on board the train. Such was the demand that the five-coach train was completely sold out as people sought a different way to enjoy the rare lunar event. OWEN HAYWARD



On August 13, Class 20 Nos. 20132 and 20107 top-and-tail the 'Brighton Belle' at Slindon while working 5Z21 Derby Litchurch Lane to Crewe Holding Sidings. The luxurious Pullman EMU had been taken to the testing centre at Derby on August 11 to facilitate trials of the third rail electrical systems. "Following some modifications over the next few weeks, the EMU will return and undertake further testing at Derby" a 5-BEL Trust spokesperson said. BRAD JOYCE

Reside in a royal station: Wolferton is on the market

By Owen Hayward

A STATION which once saw royal family members detrain there when heading to the adjacent Sandringham estate is being offered for sale through estate agent Landles for £1.25 million.

The three-bedroom, Grade II*-listed property, called Downside, stands on the former Down platform of Wolferton Royal Station, situated on the Lynn & Hunstanton Railway line. It was the closest station to the Royal Family's Norfolk residence and opened in 1862, the year in which the large estate was also purchased for the Prince of Wales.

This royal patronage prompted the station's rebuild in 1898, when extensive Tudor-style platform buildings were constructed, including the royal waiting rooms on the Down platform, which were fitted with oak panelling, couches and easy chairs.

Royal Trains ran to the station until it closed in 1969, and BR then sold its buildings – those on the Down side going to railwayman Eric Walker.

The following year, he reopened the royal waiting room as a museum which contained his 6000-item collection of royal and historical memorabilia.

Following Eric's death in 1985, his son, Roger Hedly-Walker, sought to sell the station after being unable to gain permission to erect larger signage to advertise the museum's presence, citing that the 18,000 visitors it welcomed annually were insufficient to meet the running costs. While the sale of the building never came to fruition, the contents



Above: Wolferton's royal station on the former King's Lynn to Hunstanton line. LANDLES

Right: Wolferton station's showpiece restored platforms. LANDLES



were successfully auctioned and in 2001, the station was bought by Richard Brown, who then undertook a substantial refurbishment of it, along with the crossing gates and signalbox – the latter still housing the original lever frame and gate wheel – and turned it into a private residence.

The restoration won several awards, including the King's Lynn Mayors Award for Design in the Environment, recognising the creation of a design or project of special quality which enhanced its surroundings in the borough.

Now, both the station building and the signalbox are being sold together. The whole property is described by Lansdale as "a home of particularly unique character and history with a wealth of features in this delightful setting" of 0.55 acres.

The central breakfast kitchen forms the hub of the home, with the opulent range of the former royal suite providing reception rooms,

one bedroom and the eastern range, while the former public waiting room provides a further two bedrooms, one en suite.

Landles also highlighted that the property still displays its past royal patronage both internally and externally.

"The walls are constructed in masonry work including sawn Carstone brickettes laid to tight bed joints showing no mortar. There are numerous carved bosses including Tudor roses and a fine Prince of Wales's feathers. Moulded barge boards, overhanging eaves, and scrolled console brackets, all in the Tudor manner," it said.

"The walls throughout the Royal Suite are clad in heavy English oak Wainscot panelling surmounted by a moulded cornice and framed with deep moulded architrave and skirting. The internal doors are equally impressive in design... including original gold-plated door furniture."

The signalbox offers its own open-plan breakfast kitchen, which has been installed on the ground floor below the lever frame. A bedroom/studio/lounge combination and shower room are also included.

Access to the property is via two principle gated entrances, or three if you count the crossing gates, including a right-of-way along a private road to the north. The grounds on this side are bordered by brick pillars with stone caps, ball finials and wrought iron decorative lanterns, with heavy metal railings between the pillars and low brick walling with stone copings. The entrance layout was designed to allow the royal parties to alight from the train, enter the station building and then depart in awaiting carriages straight to Sandringham House.

Viewing must be arranged through the agent; for more details, visit tinyurl.com/Landles-Wolferton-Station or call 01553 772816.

Steam and diesel commuter services in eight-week trial at Severn Valley

By Robin Jones

A GROUNDBREAKING eight-week scheme to investigate the potential return of regular passenger services from Bewdley, on the Severn Valley Railway, to Birmingham will start on September 1 – using both steam and heritage DMUs over the heritage line's 3 ½-mile section.

The SVR has paired up with West Midlands Rail Executive and West Midlands Railway to launch the feasibility trial which, if it proves popular with travellers, could see current main line services at Kidderminster extended permanently to Bewdley in the long term.

The arrangement is believed to be one of the first of its kind in the UK, with main line ticket holders travelling over part of their journey on a heritage line behind heritage traction and operated by heritage railway staff.

The weekday commuter service will operate on Tuesdays to Thursdays, with two morning departures from Bewdley at 6.40am and 7.40am. During the period, passengers will change trains at Kidderminster to complete their journey. After connecting there, passengers will arrive at Birmingham Snow Hill at 7.46am and 8.46am respectively, with a total journey time of just over an hour, allowing time for the Kidderminster changeover. The evening return services will leave Snow Hill at 4.46pm and 5.46pm, arriving at Bewdley at 5.57pm and 7.02pm respectively.

Morning trips will be aboard the line's DMU, with steam hauling the evening return trips wherever possible.

Prices to be confirmed are: Bewdley to Kidderminster single, £2; Bewdley to Kidderminster return, £3.60; and Bewdley to Birmingham anytime return, £16.

Gauging demand

The project aims to assess passenger demand and demonstrate the wider benefits of connecting Bewdley more closely with the regional and national rail network.

With significant housing growth in the local area, improved rail connectivity has the potential to reduce road congestion for commuters, while making Bewdley an even more accessible destination for leisure, tourism and business.

West Midlands mayor and WMRE chairman Richard Parker said: "I am committed to building a transport system that's affordable, reliable and better connected. That's why I'm investing £2.4 billion into more tram

routes, new railway stations, and bringing the bus network back under public control.

"But this pilot shows how we can improve our network by being more innovative with the infrastructure we already have. What better way to start or end your daily commute than on board a heritage SVR locomotive."

SVR CEO Gus Dunster said: "This is a hugely exciting opportunity for the SVR. Not only does it allow us to support an important regional transport initiative, but it also sees our railway fulfilling the purpose it was originally built for by carrying everyday passengers between Bewdley and Kidderminster.

"It is a highly unusual arrangement that will see main line rail passengers completing part of their journey on a heritage railway using their normal rail tickets. We are delighted to be providing the trains and crews for the heritage section of the journey, using our DMU for many of the services and, where it fits with our existing operations, steam-hauled return trains on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

"We are proud to be working alongside our partners on this innovative trial and look forward to welcoming commuters and leisure travellers alike on board the SVR."

Bewdley's mayor Sharon Harvey said: "Bewdley Town Council warmly welcomes this exciting trial which responds directly to the strong local demand for better public transport links. It has the potential to improve access to employment, education and leisure opportunities, while bringing more visitors into the town to support local businesses. We encourage everyone to use the service during the trial and help demonstrate the case for a permanent rail connection."

Denise Wetton, integrated managing director at GBR West Midlands, said: "I am delighted that West Midlands Railway is supporting this trial, which is a great example of collaboration and innovative thinking across the rail industry to benefit customers.

"Improving connectivity across the region is hugely important in supporting the economy, and by better utilising our existing rail infrastructure we can offer an attractive alternative to the car and encourage more people to travel by train."

Observers have been asking if the trial could be repeated on heritage lines elsewhere.

Bewdley station opened in 1862 on the West Midland Railway line from Hartlebury to Shrewsbury. The GWR, which absorbed that company,



The SVR's heritage DMU will haul morning commuter services from Bewdley to Kidderminster during the trial. ANTHONY CARWITHEN/SVR



A DMU service at Arley on the Severn Valley line prior to its closure by BR in 1963. SVR ARCHIVES

opened a loop line to the original Kidderminster station in 1878, leaving Bewdley as a double junction with two signalboxes.

Historic moment

The Severn Valley line to Shrewsbury closed in 1963, but until January 1970, BR continued to serve Bewdley, Stourport-on-Severn and Foley Park Halt from Kidderminster.

Preservationists formed the Severn Valley Railway Society in July and BR agreed to sell it the 5½ miles between Bridgnorth and Alveley Colliery, the initial deposit being paid in February 1967. A new Severn Valley Railway Company was incorporated in May that year, with the objective of restoring the Bridgnorth to Kidderminster line. The end of coal trains from the colliery in 1969 allowed the SVR to acquire the 8½ miles of the line from Hampton Loade to Foley Park in 1972. The Bewdley to Foley Park section was bought to maintain the connection with the main line network, which was still

operating Kidderminster Foley Park to British Sugar Corporation traffic. The first SVR Bridgnorth to Bewdley services ran on May 18, 1974.

The two-mile Bewdley-Foley Park section was not used by the SVR until 1980, apart from on special occasions such as enthusiast weekends. BR ran DMU services to Bewdley from Kidderminster and later Birmingham New Street on peak Saturdays and bank holidays from August 4, 1979, along with occasional diesel-hauled long-distance excursions.

During 1983/84, part of a SVR share issue bought the 1½ miles from Foley Park to Kidderminster Junction. The balance of the share issue capital was used to develop the former BR goods yard site at Comberton Hill to form a new SVR passenger station, designated Kidderminster Town. The 3½-mile section from Bewdley to Kidderminster Town was opened to passenger services on Monday, July 30, 1984, when GWR 4-6-0 No. 4930 *Hagley Hall* arrived with a train from Bridgnorth.

Kidderminster Town Raise the Roof appeal passes £250k

THE Severn Valley Railway Charitable Trust's Raise the Roof appeal, announced in *Heritage Railway* issue 347, had raised more than £250,000 as this issue closed for press. It is to fund the construction of a GWR-style platform canopy at Kidderminster Town station, completing the original vision for the railway's award-winning southern terminus.

The completed canopy will provide improved shelter for passengers and create an impressive architectural feature. It will include salvaged steelwork from the GWR Wolverhampton Low Level station, which closed to passengers on March 6, 1972, and freight in 1981, and so will preserve an important piece of railway heritage while enhancing the visitor experience.

Trust chair Judith Meredith said: "To have reached well over £250,000 in such a short time is a tremendous achievement, and we are enormously grateful to every single person who has supported the appeal so far. Whether someone has made a small donation or a much larger contribution, every gift is helping to bring this exciting project closer to reality.

"We are also incredibly thankful for a remarkable legacy that has recently boosted the appeal. It is



Left: An artist's impression of how the new Kidderminster Town canopy will look, with Stanier mogul No. 13268 alongside. BEN WRIGHT/KENNY FELSTEAD/SVR

Below: Elements of the steelwork from Wolverhampton Low Level awaiting restoration for reuse at Kidderminster Town. SVR

a powerful reminder of the lasting difference that gifts in wills can make. The kindness and foresight of one supporter is now helping to create something that will benefit the railway and its visitors for generations, and we cannot thank them enough for that extraordinary act of generosity.

"Although we have reached a significant milestone, there's still a long way to go. Together, we can complete this project and give Kidderminster Town station the finishing touch it deserves."

SVR CEO Gus Dunster said: "This canopy is far more than a practical improvement. It will complete a vision that has been decades in the making, transforming the experience for our visitors from the moment they arrive. Kidderminster is the front door to the railway, and this project will create a gateway that truly reflects the quality, heritage and ambition of everything beyond it.

"We are delighted with the progress made so far and hope this milestone will encourage



even more people to become part of the story."

➔ To donate to the appeal, visit www.svrtrust.org.uk/raisetherooft

Lock, stock and barrel: park's miniature railway up for sale

CHESTER'S popular Grosvenor Park Miniature Railway is on the market for £125,000.

The 7 1/4 in gauge line was established in 1996 by miniature railway author Roger Greatrex, with the aim of running it for just one season to celebrate the centenary of the Duke of Westminster's railway at nearby Eaton Hall. The next owner, who took over in 2000, upgraded the line and its motive power.

It runs for a quarter of a mile around the park's ornamental lake, crossing a bridge and two level crossings, passing a playground and weaving through trees before returning to Grosvenor Park station.

The business includes a spacious gift shop on-site offering railway-themed toys and souvenirs.

The line is currently closed, and the sale would include all trade, fixtures, fittings, rolling stock and equipment.

The railway is being sold on a leasehold basis because the current owner wishes to retire, with a rent of £7500 a year.

A new lease will be made available by the park's authority subject to contract. The turnover for the



Union Pacific replica Byron John at Grosvenor Park station with the 'Chester Flyer'. GRMR

business, up to July 2025, is shown as £105,089.

The line's four locomotives are all fully serviced and maintained. The main motive power is Greatrex-built Union Pacific 4-4wPH No. 6602 of 2004 *Byron John*. There is also diesel *Braveheart*, which was built in 2017, and petrol locomotives *Boy Peter*, which is about 10 years old, and 2022-built *Aslan*.

The sale is being handled by Hart & Co, Chester, on 01244 403547 or at www.hartagents.com

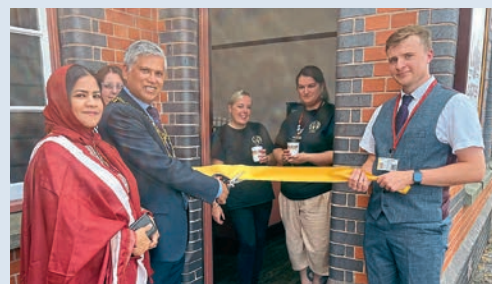
New Kidderminster refreshment bar gets mayoral opening event

THE Severn Valley Railway has opened its new Coffee Express grab-and-go refreshment outlet at Kidderminster Town station, with the Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun Shazu Miah, performing the opening ceremony on July 29.

Located at the front of the station building just yards from Kidderminster's main line station, Coffee Express is serving hot and cold drinks and freshly made snacks, providing a convenient new option for commuters, students, local residents and visitors. It is open on weekdays 6am-9am and 3pm-6pm.

The SVR's head of commercial and customer service, Victoria Evans, said: "As well as bringing new life to the front of our station, every purchase helps support the work of the SVR, so it's a great way for people to enjoy a coffee while also supporting one of Britain's best-loved heritage railways."

Coun Miah said: "I grew up and still live in this area, and I've passed the SVR on my way to school and then catching the main line train to Birmingham and beyond. I can see how valuable this service is going to be, and I'm very proud to be here on its opening day."



Kidderminster Mayor Coun Shazu Miah officially opens the SVR's Coffee Express. SVR

Record heatwave results in a steamless summer for many

By Robin Jones

RECORD-BREAKING heatwave conditions have continued to hit the heritage sector hard, with numerous lines reducing or abandoning the use of steam temporarily because of fire risks.

The Dartmouth Steam Railway gave the impression that steam was still running with top-and tail services headed by a Class 37 to Dartmouth and a steam locomotive appearing to pull the train back to Paignton Queen's Park. While there was a fire in the firebox, steam emitted, and the whistle sounded, the dampers were all closed and the train was being push by the diesel from behind in reality.

On Friday, August 15, Prime Minister Andy Burnham issued a wildfire emergency alert, sent to millions of people around the country by mobile telephone requesting residents, landowners and visitors to "not undertake any activity that could start a fire." It came at the end of a record-breaking 10th day in 2026 in which baking heatwave temperatures exceeded 35C or more in the UK, according to the Met Office. Accordingly, numerous heritage railways imposed steam bans.

Mass response

Among the many lines that immediately went diesel-only included the Epping Ongar, Foxfield, Great Central, Mid-Hants, Romney Hythe & Dymchurch, South Devon, Spa Valley (where a track defect on the Eridge section left it running only as far as Birchden Junction) and Swanage railways. The latter had turned to diesel-assisted steam on August 11, before going diesel-only from August 15.

Swanage CEO Abbie King said: "We want to reassure our visitors and neighbours that the enhanced fire precautions we have introduced this year are working.



Class 37 No. 37703 *Vulcan* at Goodrington en route to Kingswear on the Dartmouth Steam Railway on August 11. DSRRC

"We have seen a significant reduction in lineside fires compared with previous years, despite experiencing prolonged periods of exceptionally hot and dry weather.

"We appreciate that many visitors come to the Swanage Railway specifically to experience steam and are sorry for any disappointment this temporary change may cause. The safety of our railway, our neighbours, the surrounding countryside, our volunteers and our visitors must always come first."

However, many other railways had made their no-steam decision before the alert was issued, including the Bodmin Railway, which replaced GWR 2-6-2T No. 5522 with Class 47 No. 47306 *The Sapper*.

As we closed for press, the Severn Valley had not run steam since August 2, as depicted on our centre pages. On August 16, its diesel services were delayed by a fire in a field near Bewdley station, nothing to do with the railway, and there was speculation that the steam ban could run until the end of the month.

The East Lancashire Railway

stopped steam on August 9, with the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 'Pug' 0-4-0ST No. 11243 in steam at Bury Bolton Street for footplate visits only. A statement said: "Due to the current prolonged dry conditions and increased risk of lineside fires, the ELR has taken the decision, in conjunction with the fire and rescue service to temporarily suspend steam locomotive operations for the foreseeable future.

"During this period, our scheduled services will continue to operate using heritage diesel locomotives, so visitors can still enjoy a journey along the ELR as planned."

On August 13, Peak Rail paused steam until further notice following a fire near Church Road, Darely Dale.

Risk reduction

On August 8, the North Norfolk Railway began a steam shuttle from Sheringham to Weybourne, but not passing through the dry Kelling Heath, with a diesel service running on to Holt. Following the Government warning, steam was limited to running within Sheringham's station limits

on August 15-17 utilising Hunslet 0-6-0ST No. 1589 *Newstead*, before the Weybourne service resumed on August 18.

The North Yorkshire Railway had already switched to its diesel fleet, with oil-fired USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 2253 running on selected days, while all West Somerset Railway steam services were suspended up to and including August 20, with diesels heading all trains. The Bluebell Railway said it would rely on modern traction until after its September 4-6 diesel gala, with steam-hauled brake van rides at Sheffield Park where risks were reduced; see News, page 32.

Whipsnade Zoo replaced steam with diesel on its 2ft 6in gauge Great Whipsnade Railway, while the 7 1/4in gauge Fancott Miniature Railway near Toddington, the UK's oldest public house miniature railway, followed likewise. The 2ft gauge Old Kiln Light Railway cancelled its August 22/23 gala. The Leighton Buzzard Railway rescheduled its September 12/13 gala, to October 24/25.

Network Rail had already raised its fire risk level to black in July temporarily banning main line steam operations, as reported in *Heritage Railway* last issue.

Thee Railway Preservation Society of Ireland was unable to run its main line trips despite its locomotives being fitted with spark arrestors which stop 99.9% of sparks but still leaving a slight risk of igniting the tinderbox lineside vegetations. Accordingly, diesels took over Sea Breeze and Marble City excursions.

➔ Could future summers become the season for diesel traction? What are your thoughts on the matter? Share them with us by sending them to robin.jones@kelsey.co.uk



Preserved No. 58023 *Leicester Depot* hauls an East Lancashire Railway service train on August 14, the first day of the line's Class 58 running weekend. ROB BATTY



Class 33 No. 33002 just outside Staverton station on the South Devon Railway, working the 12.10pm Buckfastleigh to Totnes Riverside service on August 16. COLIN WALLACE

Ivatt tank added to Bluebell's 'Giants' line-up – and will then head to Cranmore for overhaul

By Owen Hayward

IVATT 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313 has been added to the Bluebell Railway's line-up for its October 16-18 Giants of Steam weekend, bringing the total to five different Standard class locomotives coming together.

Having already been booked to appear at autumn galas for the Severn Valley (September 17-20), West Somerset (September 25-27) and Mid-Hants (October 2-4) railways, No. 41313 will return to Sussex just over 18 months after it appeared at the Bluebell's 2025 Branch Line Gala, further enhancing the theme of BR Standards that this year's Giants weekend has taken on.

Built in 1952, the design was introduced by Henry Ivatt for LMS in 1946 and went on to be modified by Robert Riddles for the BR Standard 2 class, which were built to a slightly smaller loading gauge with slanted cab sides. None of the latter survived into preservation, although a group at the Bluebell is rebuilding an example of the 2-6-0 fleet, No. 78059, into an example of the BR-era type.

No. 41313 joins previously announced guests No. 92134, from the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, and unique main line-faring No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*, as well as resident 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80151 and 5MT No. 73082 *Camelot* for a weekend with heavy trains and a packed timetable to maximise mileage opportunities with them.

The 4MT will also be turned to face north ahead of the occasion in order to facilitate a locomotive line-up at Horsted Keynes on the Sunday afternoon, similar to that which took place at last year's new build-themed event.



Ivatt 2MT No. 41313 will undertake a farewell tour this autumn including a return to the Bluebell Railway for a BR Standard-themed gala, after which it will head to Somerset for overhaul. OWEN HAYWARD

While the other two guests will then return to Grosmont and Southall, No. 41313 will remain at the Bluebell into the winter, helping to operate some Christmas services there.

Afterwards, it will travel to the East Somerset Railway in readiness for an overhaul to be carried out there on behalf of the IOWSR. The locomotive saw its restoration

completed in the workshops at Cranmore in 2017, and the two railways have a strong working relationship with other IOWSR-owned 2MT No. 46447 currently based there on a long-term operating agreement (see *Headline News*, page 6).

With No. 41313 seeing out the end of its ticket while on tour, its final day at the IOWSR was scheduled for August 27.

→ LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* will head across the Solent to spend several months at the IOWSR next year. Set to arrive at Havenstreet in April 2027 and remain until September, the visit is a reciprocal arrangement for the extended hire of No. 41313 through the upcoming winter. Accordingly, the IOWSR will temporarily have two working 'Terriers' for the first time since 2018, when W8 *Freshwater* was withdrawn, leaving W11 *Newport* on its own until withdrawn in 2023; the former returned to service in 2025, while the latter is currently stored and not expected to be overhauled until restoration of LBSCR E1 No. 110 *Burgundy* (running as W2 *Yarmouth*) is complete.

Mid-Hants line in mourning after sudden death of beloved volunteer

EMERGENCY services were highly praised by staff and volunteers of the Mid-Hants Railway following their quick response to a medical emergency on July 24, which unfortunately saw a long-standing volunteer at the heritage line suddenly die shortly after turning up for duty.

Footplateman Bill Read, who was aged in his 60s and had recently passed a medical assessment to allow him to continue volunteering, arrived at Alresford in readiness to help conduct an evening shunt to prepare stock for the following day when he collapsed on the train. MHR staff initiated CPR and paramedics were called, who took over upon their arrival, but they were unable to save him. The following day, flags outside the station were flown at half mast and locomotives carried wreaths in tribute to Mr Read, a former RAF Tornado pilot. Although the precise details regarding the cause of his death were not disclosed, it was stressed that it had been "a railway tragedy, not a railway accident."

Watercress Line CEO Rebecca Dalley said: "Bill was a hugely dedicated volunteer who was as much at home in the engineering sheds as he was firing a steam locomotive. Following a distinguished career as a pilot in the Royal Air Force, his contribution to the railway was immense and he threw his energy into every physical and learning task with gusto. He was hugely active in the sheds and on the footplate and will be missed.

"We are deeply grateful for the response of the local surgery in Alresford, as well as the paramedics and staff who attended the incident."

McAlpine railway scenes sell for an impressive £123,000

By Geoff Courtney

THREE original railway paintings commissioned by the former *Flying Scotsman* owner, the late Sir William McAlpine, sold for a total of £123,000 at auction on August 12. They were the work of Terence Cuneo (1907-1996) and David Shepherd (1931-2017), two of the highest-profile and most respected railway artists in the country.

The highest price of £45,000 was achieved by a Cuneo painting of the iconic Pacific passing the halfway point of the East Coast Main Line between King's Cross and Edinburgh, while another by the same artist, titled 'Epitaph for steam' and

depicting a GWR locomotive on shed at night, went for £40,000. Behind these two came a David Shepherd work of *Flying Scotsman* on shed which sold for £38,000.

A fourth railway item in the auction was an 1897 Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Royal Train coat-of-arms produced in brass at Swindon that sold for £22,000. All four prices exclude buyer's premium of 27% (+ VAT).

The paintings went under the hammer in an auction of Sir William and Lady McAlpine's collection held by Dreweatts of Newbury.

See Geoff Courtney's Railwayana column on pages 64-66 for all the latest railwayana auction news.



Flying Scot: The Terence Cuneo painting of No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* that sold for £45,000 at the auction of the Sir William and Lady McAlpine collection on August 12. DREWEATTS

Rother Valley link-up 'crosses' yet another major milestone

By Owen Hayward

THE first of a trio of level crossings has been installed for the Rother Valley-Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Work began at the site of the Northbridge Street crossing, a few hundred yards east of Robertsbridge station where the RVR's laid track currently terminates, on July 27.

This was made possible following thorough planning processes with all the required local governing bodies, resulting in the temporary closure of the road, with only a pedestrian through-route connecting the two sides throughout the three-week period.

The existing road surface was scraped back and sent to be recycled into new tarmac for road repairs elsewhere. Once the exposed ground was prepared, it needed to be millimetre-perfect in height, and new concrete slabs were lowered into position to form the main structure of the crossing. This set-up has been used at other crossings along the KESR, with only the rails being affixed

to the concrete through 'troughs' in the surface. The installation of the first of these slabs at the western end was the most crucial, as it needed to line up with the existing track, but once its final resting place was signed off, the remaining three sections followed in quick succession.

Swift progress

Within five days of the road closure's start date, the slabs and rails were in place. A glue-like substance was then poured into the grooves that will hold the rails in place; known as corkelast, this polyurethane/elastomer compound sometimes mixed with cork fillers has been developed specifically for bonding and supporting rails inside concrete or steel channels.

The cork element provides tuned elasticity to reduce noise, ground vibration and stray electrical currents in light rail, heavy rail and tram systems. Once cured, it becomes a tough, elastic bond unlike more traditional household



By August 14, the Northbridge Street level crossing was completed to the point of allowing the road to reopen. RVR

glues, and it is a natural product made using cork oak.

With this work completed, a start could be made on infilling the gap between the slabs and the tarmac

road, including covering cable ducts crossing beneath the line that needed encasing in concrete and digging holes for the bases on which the crossing equipment was to be mounted.

This task alone included eight foundations; four for the lifting barrier boxes, while the remainder were for the warning lights.

Early finish

Despite the heatwave, work continued at such a rapid pace that by August 14, the work had been completed and the road was reopened to traffic a day ahead of schedule, although the crossing equipment still needs to be fitted.

Elsewhere along the remaining track bed, a start has been made on some of the bridges requiring replacement and groundworks completed at the site of the passing loop in the middle of this section of line.



The first of the concrete slabs that will carry the railway over Northbridge Street was lowered into position on July 30, its alignment carefully monitored to match the existing RVR track. RVR



Corkelast, a specially-designed bonding material, was poured into the grooves that will both hold the rails in place and reduce noise. RVR

Restored Haslemere signalbox is now accepting booked visits

THE first regular public opening of the Grade II-listed LSWR Type 4 signalbox at Haslemere station took place on July 26.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 337, South Western Railway offered a 15-year lease on the unique platform-level structure to the Haslemere Community Station & Signal Box Trust so it could become a heritage centre and visitor attraction.

The operational days of the 'box end with the completion of the Portsmouth Direct Line resignalling

project and the transfer of control to the Basingstoke Rail Operations Centre. However, it retains its classic 47 levers.

Over the past nine months, volunteers including several teams from the rail industry have refurbished the 'box to its Southern Railway condition, while accommodation above the station entrance and booking hall, which the trust leases on a peppercorn rent, has been turned into a compact railway museum with a model of the station and its goods

yard. The trust welcomes visitors on the second and fourth Sundays of the month from 11am to 3pm for pre-booked one-hour visits. These consist of hands-on demonstrations in the 'box including level pulling and a museum tour.

Pre-booking is essential by emailing ken@haslemeresignalbox.co.uk

The trust now wants to compile a roll of honour featuring the names of all the signallers who worked in the signalbox from 1895 until it closed on October 25, 2025.



Restored and refurbished, Haslemere signalbox is now a working museum. HCSSBT

Brocklebank Line earmarked for possible main line comeback

By Owen Hayward

A HITHERTO unrestored Merchant Navy Pacific may have a main line future as Bulleid supremo Southern Locomotives Limited has been approached by an undisclosed potential buyer for No. 35025 *Brocklebank Line*.

One of the final 10 of the class to be built at Eastleigh in 1948, but also one of the first to be withdrawn in 1964, *Brocklebank Line* is a particularly fortunate survivor. In July 1980, when the flow of scrap wagons and track had dried up, Dai Woodham announced that three unreserved locomotives in his scrapyard at Barry would be cut up.

The first two, a BR 9F and GWR large prairie, succumbed to their fate, but the third, No. 35025, was saved by the arrival of a two-week summer holiday for the staff. Upon their return, more wagons had arrived in sufficient

numbers to keep them occupied for some time.

In 1985, the Southern 8P Preservation Group – forerunner to the 35025 Brocklebank Line Association and led by Brian Seddon – raised £8500 to be able to purchase the locomotive and secure its future. However, before it could leave the scrapyard, asbestos needed to be removed, which set the group back a further £910.

To Loughborough

The locomotive arrived at the Great Central Railway in 1986, but after 21 years of being exposed to the elements, it was in a poor condition, with many parts missing or corroded and damage sustained from a shunting accident at Barry. Although some work was undertaken, the locomotive was requested to leave the site in 2005. A new home at SLL's Sellindge site was found and

it moved there in 2007, although thieves stole valuable parts from a storage container at Loughborough shortly beforehand.

In 2020, Brian approached SLL with a view to No. 35025 entering the group's custodianship, which went ahead despite reservations about what might be achievable with so many other locomotives to manage.

Further work was carried out there in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, with the commitments to the overhauls of its BR Standard 4MT No. 80104, Austerity No. 7806 *Norman*, West Country No. 34072 257 *Squadron* (due to commence in late 2027) and to complete the restoration of No. 34010 *Sidmouth*, SLL said that it does not have the manpower to continue to restore *Brocklebank Line*.

On August 17, SLL advised shareholders that there was interest from a third party looking to take on No. 35025 and restore it for main line

running, but to facilitate this sale, the company was seeking approval for the proposed transfer of assets. Chairman Simon Troy told *Heritage Railway* that the initial response to this was "overwhelmingly positive," although the consultation was ongoing as this issue went to press.

Best option available

"To take on the restoration of a Merchant Navy would be a step into the unknown for the potential new owners, but with their wealth of experience, we think this is the best chance we will ever have of seeing No. 35025 returning to steam," he said. "We are very confident that they will be entirely successful. We may well be involved in some of the restoration, especially the early stages, and will doubtless be jointly purchasing items which we need for Nos. 34010 *Sidmouth* and 34058 *Sir Frederick Pile*."

Four new dates for outings on *Flying Scotsman*

FOX & Edwards Events has announced an additional three dates for main line tours to be pulled by LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*, bring the total number of outings it is spearheading this autumn to 11.

Following trips to destinations including Scarborough, Minehead and Stourbridge, as announced in *Heritage Railway* issue 348, the independent events firm has announced that the iconic 4-6-2 will be in charge of an outing from Coleshill Parkway and Chesterfield to York on October 14 and 15 respectively, with each arrival in the historic city followed by a separate onward journey to the coastal resort of Scarborough. These dates will then be followed by two more of consecutive running between Didcot Parkway and Newbury, on October 17/18, each offering a 133-mile jaunt



LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* at Locomotion museum in Shildon giving rides in two Shark brake vans on trips lasting eight minutes on August 11. PAUL BIGGS

taking in views of the Kennet & Avon canal, Westbury's White Horse and the GWR-stronghold of Swindon.

Once again, these tours will be operated in partnership with Northern Steam, the A3's current operator, Tyseley-based Vintage

Trains and the owner, the National Railway Museum.

For details of all of *Flying Scotsman*'s upcoming main line tours and heritage railway appearances, see railwaymuseum.org.uk/flying-scotsman/events

Heritage Open Days shed new light on Moorsline

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has arranged a bumper series of events for the Heritage Open Days 2026 programme on September 11-20, inviting visitors to discover the people, places and stories that have shaped it.

A highlight this year is Living Histories: A Dive into the Archive exhibition, being held in the Learning Classroom at Pickering station on September 14-16. Visitors can explore archive material spanning the railway's main line years through to the heritage era.

Pickering, Goathland and Grosmont station tours will take place on September 14-16, while a motive power depot walking shed tour will be held between 11am and 3pm on September 12/13, with the opportunity to take photographs of the locomotives and see restoration and maintenance first-hand.

Motive power depot guided talks will be staged from 1pm to 3pm on September 14-16 and signalbox demonstrations will be held from 10am to noon and 12.30pm to 2pm on September 14-16, when visitors will have a chance to try changing a signal and using the token machine.

During Behind the Scenes at Armstrong Oilers on September 13-16 and 20, visitors can meet meet Brian and Tammy, the team behind the manufacturing and production facility based at the MPD in Grosmont.

Many activities are available on a drop-in basis, while selected tours and demonstrations can be reserved at learning@nymr.co.uk

Castle Cary takes a step back in time for the future

CASTLE Cary station has been transformed by an £835,000 restoration celebrating its history early 20th century heritage.

The refurbished station building was officially opened on August 17 by Department for Transport Operator Limited chairman Sir Andrew Haines.

Funded by £560,000 from the Department for Transport and £275,000 from the Railway Heritage Trust, the Great Western Railway project has restored many of the station's original features, while making it more accessible and welcoming for customers.

The transformation has seen the station on the Reading to Taunton



The refurbished waiting room at Castle Cary station. GWR

line's original entrance reopened, alongside a new accessible ramp providing step-free access. The ticket office has been relocated to improve customer flow, while historic features including fireplaces, skirting, dado rails and cornices have been

uncovered. New timber furniture and joinery complement the station's early 20th century character.

GWR managing director Mark Hopwood CBE said: "Castle Cary is a wonderful example of how we can celebrate our railway heritage while making our stations work better for today's customers."

RHT director Tim Hedley-Jones added: "The project shows that looking after our railway heritage also delivers benefits to passengers such as better accessibility and improved waiting facilities. All those who worked on this project are to be commended for their attention to period detail."

Southern heads north for East Lancashire autumn gala

SOUTH Western and South Eastern locomotives will take on starring roles for the East Lancashire Railway's October 16-18 steam gala as two visiting goods locomotive types venture beyond their home territories.

Representing the former of the two will be Urie S15 4-6-0 No. 30506. One of the first batch of five ordered in March 1917 and delivered in 1920, it was built for the LSWR and sent to Nine Elms, moving between depots in the region throughout its working life until withdrawn in 1964. Preserved in 1973 by the Urie Locomotive Society, it now resides on the Mid-Hants Railway. Meanwhile, Bluebell Railway-based O1 0-6-0 No. 65 will fly the flag for the SECR. Both classes were designed with goods traffic in mind but were no strangers to passenger work either.

Even in the heritage era, the pair have seldom strayed far from their home in Southern territory, meaning their trip to Bury will be the furthest away they will have travelled to date, although the S15 did previously visit in 1993. It also provides an opportunity to compare performances between three pre-Grouping era goods locomotives, with the visiting pair running alongside Class 27 No. 52322, a product of the LYR which is resident at the ELR. This particular locomotive previously met No. 65 during a visit to the Bluebell for the line's April 2023 branch line weekend and two years later joined No. 30506 for the MHR's own spring steam gala. Having proved itself on the gradients of both lines – including the steep 'Hampshire Alps' – now comes a chance for its Southern rivals to prove themselves on the ELR's line, including its famous 1-in-36 graded 'ski jump' out of Bury on the line to Heywood.

Injecting something slightly different into the mix will be GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714, making what might be its final trip away from the Severn Valley Railway before the expiration of its boiler ticket early next year. The visiting trio will join the ELR's home fleet, of which up to five locomotives will be operating over the course of three-day event.

Big steam, big dreams: mighty giants on both sides of Atlantic

By Robin Jones

UNION Pacific 'Big Boy' 4-8-8-4 No. 4014 ended its five-month crowd-pulling coast-to-coast tour of the USA in Cheyenne, Wyoming, on July 29, having generated a multitude of national headlines way beyond the 14 states that it passed through.

In March, No. 4014 – which was built in Schenectady, New York, in 1941 – made a round trip to California over four weeks. On April 10, it embarked on its marathon tour in celebration of America's 250th anniversary of independence, with a kick-off ceremony held at Milepost 0 in downtown Sacramento, where Central Pacific Railroad began construction on the first transcontinental railroad line in 1863. During the first leg of the journey, No. 4014 travelled across California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming before returning to its home base in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and embarking on the eastern leg on May 25, traveling across Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania – its first journey on eastern rails since 1941. It travelled over Northern Southern lines to spend July 4, Independence Day, in Philadelphia.

UP CEO Jim Vena said: "Celebrating our nation's 250th anniversary in Philadelphia is truly spectacular, and there's no better way to honour this milestone than with the world's



Tens of thousands gathered as No. 4014 took centre stage in Philadelphia on the July 4 for America's 250th independence anniversary celebrations. UP

largest operating steam locomotive – a reflection of rail's role in building America.

"Big Boy's first-ever coast-to-coast journey reflects our proud history building communities and our commitment to the future as we continue delivering safe, reliable service that keeps the US supply chain moving."

The event included a ceremonial driving by Jim Vena of a silver spike, which had travelled with Big Boy from Sacramento, California, as it paid homage to the golden spike that first connected the nation at Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869. The spike commemorates the first-ever coast-to-coast Big Boy tour and will be part of the Union Pacific Railroad Museum's

travelling Experience Car. An actor portraying Charles Carroll – the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence who laid the ceremonial cornerstone for the first commercial railroad in the US on July 4, 1828 – also helped highlight rail's earliest ties to the nation's founding.

Leaving Philadelphia, No. 4014 ran towards Chicago, before heading south for St Louis and Kansas City.

Tens of thousands of onlookers turned out along the route as the locomotive ran up a total of 7,145.48 miles on the tour.

A UP statement said that No. 4014 "visited communities from Sacramento to Philadelphia, making more than 75 whistle-stops and 16 display day appearances, bringing



'Big Boy' No. 4014 crossing the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct in north-eastern Pennsylvania with two commemorative diesels in tow for braking services, Norfolk Southern's No. 1776 *The Bell* and Union Pacific's No. 1776. The viaduct was built in 1915 for the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad. Often called the Nicholson Bridge, this massive concrete structure rises above the Endless Mountains landscape and highlights the region's deep railroad history. UP



Size is everything as far as these admiring the world's biggest operational steam locomotive are concerned as it visits west Chicago.



Union Pacific CEO Jim Vena taps the commemorative silver spike in Philadelphia on July 4. UP

railroad history to life for thousands across the nation. "To every person who waved, photographed, cheered and shared in the experience, thank-you for helping make this tour one to remember," the statement added.

One of eight surviving Big Boys of a class of 25 and the only one still in operation, No. 4014 was withdrawn in December 1961 after travelling 1,031,205 miles. Union Pacific reacquired it in 2013, restored it in Cheyenne, and returned it to service in May 2019.

Setting the stage for the UK's newest crowd-puller

Meanwhile, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's ground-breaking project to build Britain's most powerful and largest example steam passenger steam locomotive is reaching an exciting stage as the new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* takes shape following the recent fitting of the three-cylinder monobloc, as revealed in *Heritage Railway* issue 348. The boiler stands poised to follow, and the valve gear is the only large component now required to complete the locomotive.

More than £5 million of the £6.5m required to complete No. 2007 has now been raised, entirely through public donations.

With nearly 1000 regular donors, the trust is able to plan work on the project, but to accelerate the build and bring forward the date for steaming this behemoth, more supporters are needed. From just £10 a month, the public have the chance to become involved and play a part in the resurrection of Gresley's lost class, a Big Boy counterpart of this side of the Atlantic. Visit a1steam.com/p2donation to help drive the P2 to its target.

Larger donations are also welcome, and the P2 fundraising focus is on The Valve Gear Club, seeking to raise £300,000 from individuals donating £1000. The fascinating design study taking Gresley's flawed design on No. 2001 *Cock o' the North* uses Lentz and Franklin principles, with modern CAD and 3D printing to refine the design for maximum efficiency and power – visit a1steam.com/p2valvegear

With all of the design work now complete, all that stands between this locomotive and the main line work it is destined for is the support of those who are passionate about British steam. For this project, every donation, no matter the size, makes a difference, bringing the first turn of those eight coupled wheels closer, said a trust statement.



Bringing Hotchley Hill signalbox back to as-new condition. PHIL SHARPE/GCR(N)

Hotchley Hill's 'box revival signals a remarkable return

THE rags-to-riches rise of the LNER Hotchley Hill signalbox on the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) continues to make headway, and now a block shelf has been installed for the first time in decades.

The 'box has also been fitted with enamel lighting shades, including one thrown away after it closed and rescued from the ditch behind.

Volunteers are about to fit the remaining levers in the 1946-built structure north of Rushcliffe Halt, ahead of a programme of installing signals and remodelling track.

The distinctive brick and concrete 'box was derelict until a few years ago. Major work has been undertaken to repair the roof and concrete, install new downpipes, windows and a working stove. A lever frame has been fitted and the floor replaced.

With the help of British Gypsum, whose factory is opposite the 'box, the interior has been plaster-boarded and painted.

The 'box is situated a little over half way along the nine-mile GCR(N) between Loughborough and

Ruddington, and when the Great Central is 18 miles long following reunification, it will be a key passing point for trains. The loops at the station will be around the-quarters of a mile long, giving the appearance of a double-track main line in an industrial setting.

Period-appropriate signalling equipment has been purchased at auction and it will one day be used control trains again. However, it has proved very difficult to find the Bakelite box indicators which show the signalman how points are set and what signal aspects are displaying, so the team are employing modern technology and 3D printing for accurate replicas, which are expected to be more durable.

East Midlands Transport Heritage Trust is appealing for funds to help purchase the 50 replicas needed for the complicated block shelf inside the 'box. A pair can be purchased for £25.

Anyone interested in supporting the appeal is invited to visit www.emtht.org and click on the 'support the Hotchley Hill signalbox' button.



The new block shelf installed inside Hotchley Hill signalbox. TOM INGALL/GCR(N)

Summer sales: multiple lines look to move surplus stock

By Owen Hayward

A RATIONALISATION of collections would appear to be taking place at several heritage lines after a slew of rolling stock and even locomotives have been placed on the market in hopes of finding new owners and generating cash.

BR Mk. 1 carriages are currently dominating such listings, with at least five been publicly listed for disposal, with three of that number by the East Lancashire Railway. First Open No. 3124 was built at Swindon in 1963 and following retirement by BR in 1997 was bought by a private owner and used by Rail Charter Services for main line tours. By 2012, it was out of use and moved between several depots for storage until bought from Riviera Trains by the ELR in 2014, although it has remained unrestored since.

Also available is Restaurant Miniature Buffet (RMB) No. 1848 (built at Wolverton in 1960) and Corridor Composite (CK) No. 15928, both of which have been operational during

preservation but have recently been stored out of use.

The railway is also offering former LYR carriage No. 604 for free to a good home in order to ensure its survival. Formerly a four-compartment lavatory brake vehicle built at Newton Heath in 1910, it served as a vehicle in an ambulance train during the First World War before later being converted into a cinema coach at the Longmoor Military Railway. Although it is now an empty shell, it is hoped that a suitable organisation will see a bright future for the vehicle, with the contract to include an agreement that it will not be broken up for scrap.

Interested parties and offers are to be directed to carriage and wagon manager Jonathon Valentine by emailing Jonathon.valentine@eastlancsrailway.co.uk

Meanwhile, the Colne Valley Railway at Castle Headingham has offered two carriages for sale, namely Corridor Second (SK) No. 25967, which was built in 1958 and is described as being in serviceable condition, and Brake Gangwayed (BG) No. 80785, built in



RMB No. 1848 is one of three Mk. 1 carriages put up for sale by the East Lancashire Railway in August. ELR

1955 and has served at an exhibition carriage. Former GNR Corridor Third No. 2440 is also available; built in 1906, it was converted into a tool van in 1954 and remains in this configuration today. In addition to these, a BR CCT and Mk. 1 type horsebox are both listed for sale.

For those looking to acquire a steam locomotive, Robert Stephenson & Hawthorn Works 'Ugley' 0-6-0ST No. 7671 *Jupiter* has been made available. Built in 1950 for the Stewart & Lloyds Corby steelworks, where it became the company's No. 60, it was one of seven identical locomotives delivered at the same time, with a further example delivered in both 1945 and 1958, bringing the total to nine. The nickname was derived from their rather unusual appearance, with short saddle tanks that stopped short of the locomotive's large firebox, but they were found to be more powerful the similar-looking Hunslet Austerity types.

Five were preserved, with *Jupiter*

initially moved to Chappel & Wakes Colne in the early days of the East Anglian Railway Museum and by the 1980s had moved to the CVR. While it has run in preservation, it currently requires a full overhaul before it can run again.

The CVR is also seeking interest in its Class 31 No. 31270, which is currently on loan to Didcot Railway Centre. Overhauled by Nemesis Rail in 2022, a start has been made on applying BR blue livery to the bodywork. With its hire to the DRC nearing an end, the CVR is looking for a new hire or buyer to take ownership of it. Interested parties are requested to email finance@colnevalleyrailway.co.uk in the first instance.

Elsewhere, the Llangollen Railway is disposing of Mk. 1 Suburban No. 46147, recognises the limited volunteer and finance resources available to restore it. Interested parties should contact Paul Bailey by calling 07745 223946 or email paulbaileywincham@yahoo.co.uk



RSH 'Ugley' 0-6-0ST No. 7671 *Jupiter* is seen stored at the Colne Valley Railway in 1993, by which time it was out of use awaiting overhaul. It has now been offered for sale, along with other items of stock. STEVE KNIGHT/CREATIVE COMMONS

Flagging down the era of an era

THE Flagmen, a traditional sight on the Leighton Buzzard Railway since it opened in 1919, are on track for redundancy.

From the earliest times of the line to the present day, getting the trains safely across the main roads has been controlled by flagmen and ladies stopping traffic with red flags, a safety routine still in use today. They have always been one of the best-known features of the line.

Over the years, the only change to the system was the size of the flags, which are slightly smaller, and in recent years the word 'STOP' was added onto the flag for the benefit of

those who don't know the meaning behind the colour!

However, following a recent safety review by the Office of Road & Rail, the railway has started a project to replace flagmen with 'Wig-Wag' colour light signals.

While it will take some time to complete the project at all main roads, it is expected that the first lights could be installed as soon as this autumn.

Right: Flagging Barclay 0-6-0T No. 1641 of 1919 *Doll* across one of the railway's ungated level crossings in 2024. MARK LEWIS





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Landmark legal clarification opens new doors for younger volunteers

By Robin Jones

UK heritage railways have been given total clarity for the first time regarding the recruitment of young volunteers aged 14-16.

The Office of Rail and Road has published new guidance that supersedes a century-old law which inadvertently made recruiting young volunteers illegal.

Issuing of the ground-breaking guidance for the first time in the 75-year history of the volunteer-led sector comes after months of work by the ORR, undertaken in close partnership with the Heritage Railway Association and the Health and Safety Executive.

The guidance applies to volunteers who are aged between 14 and their minimum school leaving age, which is typically about 16, but which may occur before or after their 16th birthday, and provides a full list of tasks considered suitable in line with normal risk assessment processes. It means that tasks such as being involved in cleaning and preparing steam locomotives, assisting on station platforms and learning how rolling stock is restored and maintained in a workshop environment should now become more accessible.

Until an amendment to the Employment Rights Bill, pushed through the House of Lords by HRA president Lord Faulkner of Worcester and HRA chairman Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay late last year, there was a risk that heritage lines could find themselves in legal difficulties when



Left: A new record may have been set at the Bodmin Railway when the line's youngest-ever steam crew was in charge of the service train. Will Dingle (right), 21, was the driver of GWR 2-6-2T No. 5552, while newly passed-out Finley Carden, 19, was his fireman. Both young joined the railway as 14-year-old volunteers and became engineering apprentices. When not on the footplate, they are busy in the workshops. A spokesman asked: "Is a combined age of 40 years a record for standard gauge heritage railways in the UK?" JIMMY JAMES/BR

encouraging volunteers under 16. The Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act, 1920 became law three decades before the first volunteer-run heritage railway appeared. However, in recent years, legal advice indicated that this law could have been used to prosecute a railway or tramway that permitted volunteers under 16.

The successful amendment required in law that the Office for Rail and Road and the Health and Safety Executive draw up guidance explaining what sorts of roles are appropriate for young people to perform when volunteering for a heritage railway. Published in late July, that key guidance now means young volunteers can secure training opportunities in heritage rail.

Heritage railways and tramways have a long and successful history of

training young people who progress to senior positions in the rail industry.

Current examples include Tim Shoveller, the chair of Heavy Haul Rail, who began developing his railway interests as a 14-year-old volunteer platform assistant on the Mid-Hants Railway. Paul Lewin, now general manager of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, began as a 15-year-old volunteer there.

HRA research discovered that half of all heritage railways and tramways in the UK have been unable to offer voluntary opportunities to under-16s because of the outdated legislation – and it is estimated that more than 1500 potential young volunteers have been turned away as a result.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "This is one of the biggest legislative successes that heritage rail has ever seen.

"We now have a law that specifically facilitates young volunteers being a key part of heritage railways or tramways, and from today guidance from the ORR and HSE that backs that up in a very practical way.

"I started my life in heritage rail as a teenage volunteer on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. It helped shape my skills for careers in commercial radio and local government as well as heritage rail by helping me grow in confidence at a vital stage.

"It's frustrating that so many young people haven't been able to have that boost during their teenage years because of a piece of outdated legislation that was never written with heritage railways or tramways in mind. This is a crucial step forward for heritage rail, but also for young people and the countless number of organisations which will benefit from their new skills during a long career in rail or elsewhere."

Lord Parkinson said: "This small but vital change follows 10 years of campaigning by the Heritage Railway Association and Lord Faulkner. I pay tribute to them and all the heritage railways and tramways which have provided examples of how the law has been holding them back – and the life-changing opportunities which will now be unlocked."

Those seeking a copy of the new guidance on tasks suitable for young persons aged 14-16 on heritage railways can find it on both the ORR and HRA websites.

Former Longmoor Military Railway USATC S160 No. WD701 (3278) Franklin D. Roosevelt is seen at Hills Wood, on the Churnet Valley Railway, working the 7pm Froghall to Leekbrook dining train – its first revenue service since its overhaul and derailment on April 18, as reported in Heritage Railway issue 345. See also feature, pages 82-84, FRANK BRODRICK-RICHARDS





Morgan Young, now in his 13th years of volunteering at the Downpatrick & County Down Railway. DCDR



'Youth team' Downpatrick & County Down Railway volunteers working on a steam locomotive. DCDR

Downpatrick line calls for the same rights for Northern Ireland's heritage

THE Northern Ireland Assembly is being urged to give young people there the same volunteering opportunities now available to their counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Downpatrick & County Down Railway wants the Northern Ireland Executive to adopt the newly-issued guidance that clears up confusion over the law on volunteers aged 14 to 16, claiming it has left charities throughout Ulster to become too cautious about letting young people get involved.

Young volunteer Morgan Young joined the DCDR aged 14 and is now its operations and safeguarding director. He was runner-up for the HRA Young Volunteer of the Year in 2022 and won Social Enterprise NI's Emerging Leader Award in 2024.

The DCDR won the HRA Small Groups Award in 2015 for its work with young people.

"Volunteering from the age of 14 changed the direction of my life," said Morgan. "It gave me confidence, practical skills and leadership experience that I still use every day as a teacher.

"Without clear guidance, charities understandably err on the side of caution. Young people can miss out on opportunities that could shape their future, not because they can't be delivered safely, but because organisations lack the confidence that they are acting within a recognised framework."

DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner said the charity was simply asking Northern Ireland's heritage railways are given the same clarity as those

elsewhere in the UK: "There is no need for Northern Ireland to reinvent the wheel. The heritage railway sector in Northern Ireland is relatively small, therefore adopting the existing guidance would provide immediate clarity for heritage railways here, ensure consistency around the UK and strengthen opportunities for the next generation of young volunteers."

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald has acknowledged that the new guidance could create a divergence between Great Britain and Northern Ireland and has confirmed officials will explore adopting it. DCDR has now written to her urging the executive to formally recognise the guidance and give it statutory backing.

VJ Day celebrated at Derwent Valley with Normandy veteran

By Sally Clifford

THE Derwent Valley Light Railway hosted a special service of remembrance to commemorate Victory over Japan Day.

Guest of honour at the Murton Park railway in York on August 9, six days before the UK's official VJ Day, was the city's last-surviving Normandy veteran, Ken Cooke, who celebrated his 101st birthday in August, and was presented with a surprise birthday cake created by a member of York Inset Scooter Club, of which Ken is president.

Ken, who was recently awarded the Freedom of the City of York and also has a locomotive at DVL and one of the city's buses named after him, laid a wreath on the railway's War Department Locomotive No. 37, which was named in honour of his fellow Normandy Veteran, the late Ken Smith. The service was attended by about 40 guests including the

Lord Mayor of York, Coun Margaret Wells and her consort Trevor Gant, and the Sheriff of York, Geoff Cossins. RAF Veteran Bryan Airlie read Laurence Binyon's poem For the Fallen, while Emily Hope, a member of St Lawrence Church, York, played the Last Post and Reveille, following which Ken laid the wreath and recited the Kohima Epitaph.

Guests embarked on a train ride top-and-tailed by Ruston & Hornsby 88DS No.441934 of 1960 *Rowntree No. 3* and Drewry 0-4-ODM WD37 (DC2164 of 1941) *Ken Smith*.

As a former member of the Green Howards Seventh Battalion (Yorkshire Regiment), and surviving member and president of the York Normandy Veterans, an organisation for veterans who participated in the D-Day landings and the battles to liberate France during the Second World War, Ken is keen to acknowledge comrades wherever and whenever possible.



Left: Normandy war veteran Ken Cooke, president of York Inset Scooter Club, beside Ruston & Hornsby 88DS No.441934 of 1960 *Rowntree No. 3* at the VJ Day Remembrance Service. DAVID HARRISON

He has participated in many high-profile commemoration events over the years, returning to Normandy several times where, as an 18-year-old serviceman, he landed on Gold Beach.

The service at the DVL was the final destination for the York Inset Scooter Club's Planes to Trains ride from Digbys Café in Sherburn in Elmet, raising funds for The Magnolia Centre at York Hospital.

Club member Nick Bielby, who is also a member of the York Normandy Veterans, chairman of the York

Area Group on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and life member of the Derwent Valley Light Railway, said: "We did it as much as anything for Ken. It is, quite simply, about remembrance and for us to continue to remember all those who gave their lives. I know it is often said, but we have the life we have got because of those people, and they should never be forgotten. It is important for us, and Ken in particular, to pass on the message to young people, and there were lots of young people there, which was great."

Leighton Buzzard Junior Club has waiting list

SUPERMARKET giant Tesco has given its support to the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Junior Railway Club.

The JRC, which was founded in April 2025 for 10-17-year-olds, is raising money to buy suitable tools and safety equipment for use by the young members for carrying out maintenance and operating activities on the railway. Three Tesco stores in Leighton and Linslade will be accepting votes for three different organisations in store, with the most

voted-for organisation getting £1500, second place £1000 and last place £500.

Voting runs through to the end of November. To participate, shoppers must make a purchase within the stores of any value to receive one token per transaction.

Apart from working with the trains, JRC activities look at the wider world. One recent project the members completed was to turn a pile of redundant railway sleepers into a bug hotel for the benefit

wildlife at Stonehenge Works. Since its launch, the JRC has grown to 25 members and there is now a waiting list of others wanting to join. Monthly meetings are held covering all areas of the railway such as maintenance activities, learning about engineering and the history of the railway, supervised by a team of adult volunteers. In addition, the JRC members get the opportunity to support operating days, helping passengers or shadowing adult volunteers.



The new bug hotel made of old sleepers at Stonehenge Works. JACK PALMER

The Racehorse returns: *Tulyar's* 'Great' Central comeback

Words and pictures
By Owen Hayward

CROWDS gathered at Loughborough Central on July 31 to witness what they had been waiting almost three decades for – the return of BR Class 55 D9015 *Tulyar*, which has been undergoing an extensive, expensive and seemingly ever-extending overhaul since 1997. Turned out in the two-tone BR green livery it wore when delivered new, this highly anticipated moment is significant in more ways than one, for it now gives its owning group – the Deltic Preservation Society – a trio of operational examples to its name.

A while the society has no plans to vacate its established depot at Barrow Hill Roundhouse, where most of the work on *Tulyar* was carried out, the signing of a new agreement with the Great Central Railway will see the Leicestershire line become the new operating home of its locomotive trio, news which will no doubt excite many.

Stable of racehorses

The Deltic class was introduced in 1961, with only 22 examples built, the name coming from the prototype locomotive DP1 Deltic built in 1955 by English Electric in Preston in a building that was formerly a tramworks.

Outshopped by the Vulcan Foundry at Newton-le-Willows, the design saw little change in the way of the mechanical set-up, but it received



Crowds of Deltic Preservation Society members and guests watch as *Tulyar* breaks through the ceremonial banner during its July 31 launch.

a notably different bodywork configuration. Its success might best be attributed to the high power output and low axle loading, but the twin Napier power units fitted (and the noise they in turn produced) are perhaps the reason the class found favour with enthusiasts. It was allocated to depots serving the East Coast Main Line, along which members plied their trade to great acclaim; locomotives were capable of speeds of 100mph, although some were recorded as exceeding this, and

reaching 125mph during the descent of Stoke Bank.

The fleet was split between three depots which each allocated the names to a different theme. Those at Gateshead and Edinburgh took names from British Army regiments of the North East and Scotland respectively. Just to be different, the locomotives shedded at Finsbury Park followed a LNER tradition of naming locomotives after winning racehorses; the name for D9015 came from the 1952 winner of the Derby, St Ledger and Eclipse

stakes, while the name given to another of the DPS fleet, No. 55009 *Alycidon*, was taken from the winner of the 1949 Ascot Gold Cup. This connotation led to many enthusiasts of the time referring to the class not by the 'Deltic' nickname, but as 'Racehorses' instead.

Tulyar remained based at Finsbury Park for its entire BR working life. In May 1980, it represented the class at the Rocket 150 celebrations at Rainhill, and plaques to commemorate this honour were subsequently presented to the DPS and are now carried on its route indicator panels. On the final day of the class's service on January 2, 1982, it hauled the 'Deltic Scotsman Farewell' between King's Cross and Edinburgh, from where No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* (also preserved but owned by Locomotive Services Limited) took over for the return. Upon its withdrawal, D9015 was bought by enthusiast Peter Sansom, who took it to the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley and then sold it to the DPS in 1986.

Thereafter it spent much time touring other heritage railways with its final public outing being at the society's Three Deltics event, held at the East Lancashire Railway in March 1997. From there it returned to Derbyshire for overhaul to commence, before transferring to Barrow Hill in 2003 after the erection of the dedicated DPS facility there. With that, however, came a challenge: the



D9015 crosses the viaduct over the gradually depleting Swithland Reservoir with one of its six round trips during the DPS members' day.



DPS chairman John Minards (left) and GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes with the memorandum of understanding that will aim see at least one operational Deltic based at the line each year.



Mike Hallum-Rudd, who was the last person to shut down the locomotive before its overhaul commenced in 1997, at the controls of *Tulyar* during the launch event.

locomotive had been near enough completely stripped of its internals, but little had been marked up, resulting in what some described as an 'Airfix kit with the instructions taken away'.

"Any sensible person, when dismantling something, would put the bolt back into the bolthole so you know where it came from and what you'd specifically need for replacing it," said Nigel Julian, DPS social media editor and part of the team involved in D9015's restoration. "In *Tulyar*'s case, they'd all been thrown into one tin together. Parts weren't all labelled and those that were had become illegible through age by the time we got to them."

From one Deltic to another

With such a monumental task, it is no surprise that the restoration took so long. Work stalled on several occasions, sometimes because attention was needed on the other two locomotives and other times through lack of people.

That all changed when Peter Stojanovic took on the role of project lead in 2021. Having led the operation of the NRM's own example, No. 55002 *Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*, until 2017, he was the right person for the job. A dedicated team was put together and the momentum kicked in.

"I'd been a DPS member before but at this point, *Tulyar*'s overhaul had stagnated, so the chairman at the time asked if I would take it on," Peter explained.

"At that time, it was a kit of parts with no bogies and very little inside the engine room."

Of particular benefits were the electrically-minded (referred to by some as the 'Delectricians') who pored over miles and miles of cabling which needed to be continuity tested – and had no colour coding either. "They



D9015 *Tulyar* approaches Kinchley Lane on its first day of passenger service in 29 years. MARTYN TATTAM



Living up to its racehorse nickname, *Tulyar* opens up as it passes through Quorn & Woodhouse station on its way back to Loughborough Central.

spent a good year going through all of that to sort it all out," Peter said. "We then put the radiators in, which had been overhauled some time in about 2010, when I also had No. 55002's own ones done. We gradually worked through the list, and by the end of 2023, *Tulyar* was back on its bogies fitted with the engines. We then found that the 18 fuel pumps and injectors needed overhauling, so it wasn't until the winter of 2024/25 that we finally started to get it to take power.

"We worked through connecting two traction motors at a time and addressing any issues, and come April 2025, *Tulyar* was able to run on the branch at Barrow Hill on its own. This effectively started the snagging list, addressing yet more issues such as problems with the brakes; this we didn't finally fix until April this year, when we found a fractured pipe elbow, which we repaired by borrowing a part from No. 55019.

"When we came to running tests at the GCR, it was quite pleasing to find nothing major needed addressing

– only minor adjustments such as tightening unions."

After years of hard graft, those who have worked on *Tulyar* are revelling in the fruits of their labour. "Seeing it run during the launch weekend was great, and all the smiling faces from those who came to travel behind it made everything worthwhile," Peter added.

"The pressure is off us now. There is still a list of snagging things to do, but these are purely cosmetic which we can do in our own time. We won't be constantly being asked when it will be ready any more, at least."

With *Tulyar* complete, attention can now turn to the society's two other locomotives. Having appeared at the Nene Valley Railway during July, *Alycidon* has returned to Barrow Hill for repairs to address an oil leak, as well as preparatory work for a second attempt at returning it to the main line, with hopes that a test run will take place later this year. Also in the works is No. 55019 *Royal Highland Fusilier*, which is undergoing some electrical attention and repairs to

a corroded cab. At some point, this locomotive will also take steps towards main line operation.

"No. 55019's relays and contacts have probably not been touched since BR days, so we need to get its reliability right first before it goes near the main line," Peter said. "Our plan is to get it back running for the society's 50th anniversary in 2027, and then withdraw it at the end of the year to finish the work off and fit the equipment it needs for this.

"There is no current commitment for *Tulyar* to join these ranks. We'd need to know we can justify the work and expense, which could cost more than £100,000, but we've not ruled it out entirely."

With January 2, 2027 also marking the 45th anniversary of the class's withdrawal, hints have been dropped that the society might be planning something big, but it would not confirm if this included all three locomotives pulling trains in the same place for the first time this side of the millennium.

Slough Estates No. 3 gifted to Middleton

Words and pictures
by Sally Clifford

THE Middleton Railway has become the official owner of a steam locomotive which has been in its care since 2011.

A special gathering was held on August 9 at the Moor Road site of the world's oldest continuously running railway for the official handover Hudswell-Clarke 0-6-0ST No.1544 of 1924 of *Slough Estates Ltd No. 3*.

Constructed by the Leeds-based locomotive builder, the factory of which was based in Hunslet, a short distance away from the railway, No. 1544 was the first of two sister locomotives to be acquired by the Slough Trading Company.

During its working life on the estate, it shunted wagons between the main line sidings and the factories, and transporting coal and oil to the estate's power station were among its later tasks.

The locomotive's original blue and white lined livery was changed to green and white lined, which it has retained in preservation.

When the estate railway closed in 1973, both *Slough Estates Ltd No. 3* and sister No. 5 entered preservation, the former at the Mid-Hants Railway and the latter at the Emsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway.

Pillar to post

Slough Estates No. 3 was too small to be of use to the Mid-Hants and in 1986 the Slough & Windsor Railway Society took over the care of the locomotive. Following restoration, it returned to service in 2000 on the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, with a subsequent overhaul completed in 2009.

As the Swindon and Cricklade Railway expanded, No. 1544 was no longer able to meet their requirements and so the owning group looked for a new home for it. In 2011 it was placed on long-term loan to the Middleton Railway.

Since then, No. 1544 was in regular use helping to run Middleton's steam timetable until it was withdrawn from service in 2021 for overhaul.

This work was carried out by the Middleton's expert volunteers, led by the line's mechanical engineer, Steve Roberts, and assistant engineers Roger Walton and Geordie Brown. It included work on the frames, retubing the boiler and new cab roof and machining components of the running gear which was carried out by the railway's chairman emeritus, Malcolm Johnson. After repainting the locomotive was ready to return to service in July.

Jim Ballantyne has been a member of the society since 1989 and performed the official handover of



Slough Estates Ltd No. 3 under overhaul in the workshops at the Middleton Railway.



The plaques exchanged between the Middleton Railway and the Slough & Windsor Railway Society.



The locomotive's works plate and its Slough Trading Estate (top) plate.

Slough Estates No. 3 in the absence of chairman John Medley, who was unable to attend for medical reasons.

Jim has been the SWRS loco liaison officer for No. 3 for the past 15 years and was thus the interface between the SWRS and the Middleton. He explained that the Middleton was the obvious choice when the society was seeking a secure location for the locomotive and where it would be in safe hands and usefully used.

"The MR came to mind for several reasons," he said. "Firstly, the loco was built in Leeds and was an industrial locomotive. The MR was a historical industrial railway and had used a very similar locomotive during NCB days.

"The locomotive had been on loan to the MR for the past 15 years, cared for and maintained by the MR using its own resources with the help of donations from the SWRS. The recent overhaul more than demonstrated



Above: The official handover of *Slough Estates Ltd No. 3* to the Middleton Railway by Jim Ballantyne, of the Slough & Windsor Railway Society, to Charles Milner, the line's chairman, on August 9.



Left: Back on track, *Slough Estates Ltd No. 3*, restored to its former glory.

Below: Members of the Slough & Windsor Railway Society at the handover of *Slough Estates Ltd No. 3*. ROSS NEEDHAM



the skills and knowledge of the MR volunteers, amply supporting the view that the loco would be well cared for in the future. Moreover, the MR is a very popular railway and has a great deal of local support!"

Long-standing partnership

During the exchange of plaques for the locomotive, Middleton chairman Charles Milner said: "The MR is delighted and honoured to be entrusted by the SWRS with the custodianship of its locomotive *Slough Estates No. 3*.

"This marks the culmination of a long and successful partnership between the Middleton Railway Trust and the SWRS, which initially placed the locomotive on loan to the Middleton Railway in 2011.

"With the support of the society, the trust has completed a major overhaul of *Slough Estates No. 3*

which included the replacement of a critical component of the frames and installation of a new chimney cast from the original pattern.

"The locomotive has also been repainted in its Slough Estates livery, and it is the trust's intention to maintain it in this livery to retain its connection with where it spent its entire working life.

"The locomotive should now be good for service on the MR for many years to come."

In recognition of the society's generosity, Charles announced that the society had been made an honorary life member of the trust and would receive a copy of its house magazine, *The Old Run*, to keep them in touch with the railway's news and events, and that members of the society would be entitled to free travel on the railway on production of their membership card.

Moorsline staff and volunteers prepare to drop in bungee jump for Grosmont bridge repair appeal

THRILL-SEEKERS and rail enthusiasts are preparing for a daring and unusual activity to raise money for an appeal at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway – by bungee jumping off the impressive Larpool Viaduct, near Whitby.

On September 20, staff and volunteers from the heritage line will leap from the top of the 13-arch structure in what is the only bridge bungee jump in England, with hopes of raising an additional £10,000 to go towards the £800,000 Bridge 42 appeal. As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 342, this vital structure on the NYMR needs urgent repairs to ensure trains can continue to access Grosmont station. Last year, the bridge's condition was found to have deteriorated more quickly than anticipated, necessitating all movements across it being stopped following the completion of the line's Christmas services. Careful consideration was given to whether to proceed with repairs straight away – which would have seen the station closed and no trains to Whitby for at least 12 months – or to install props to support it temporarily and undertake a phased repair process that would keep trains running for longer. Although the latter option will ultimately prove to be more costly, the importance of the Whitby services to the Moorsline's business models was felt to justify this choice, with the propping completed in May this year.

The fundraising appeal for this major structural repair project is nearing the halfway mark, and so the bungee jumpers are hoping to add to that with their venture.



LMS 'Black Five' No. 45428 *Eric Treacy* emerges from beneath Larpool Viaduct on September 30, 2025. NYMR supporters will bungee jump from this structure on September 20 to raise money for the Bridge 42 appeal at Grosmont. OWEN HAYWARD

Also known as the Esk Valley Viaduct, the Grade II-listed structure was built between 1882 and 1884 for the Scarborough & Whitby Railway to carry a single-track line over the River Esk.

As well as both the Esk Valley and Whitby, Redcar & Middlesbrough Union Railway ran on the shores below. The branch that crossed it was closed in March 1965 as a result of the Beeching Report, and in 2000, much of the trackbed – including that over the viaduct – had been

turned into a public footpath and cycle track. NYMR digital marketing campaigns lead Peter Fisher said: "I'm taking part as I would love for the railway bungee crew to raise an extra £10,000 towards the important Bridge 42 appeal.

"It's been great to see the group of us come together for this from various areas of the railway, all with the common goal of raising money to protect the heritage railway we love so much. It's very exciting and such a different way of raising funds for the

NYMR. Thank-you to everyone for their donations so far, each one really does make a difference."

During the current operational season, the NYMR will finalise a full repair programme for Bridge 42, scheduled for implementation over the winter of 2026/27. This programme will restore the bridge to its long-term structural integrity and ensure its preservation for future generations.

➔ To support the appeal, visit www.nymr.co.uk/bungee

Appeal to aid final boost for Seaton Tramway depot facilities

THE Seaton Tramway has launched an appeal to raise the final £37,000 to complete the £92,000 extension to its Riverside Depot to create space for at least three additional trams and provide room for the line to grow in years ahead.

The project has already received £25,000 from the Swire Foundation and a further £30,000 investment from the tramway itself.

The long-term ambition is to build three new fully accessible saloon trams, providing more opportunities for wheelchair users and passengers who benefit from level, low-floor boarding. These would complement the three accessible trams already operating on the line, which were built in the 2000s as open-top double-deck trams with dedicated accessible bays on the lower deck.

As part of the project, the current welding bay will be converted into storage space for new trams. The depot extension will then create a purpose-built replacement welding bay at the end of the depot, ensuring maintenance and restoration work can continue.

Tramway chief executive Jenny Nunn said: "This project is about much more than extending a building. It's about protecting Seaton Tramway for future generations. The additional depot space will allow us to continue preserving our historic fleet while creating opportunities to introduce new trams in the future, ensuring the Tramway remains one of Devon's leading visitor attractions for many years to come."

➔ Contributions are invited at <https://www.tram.co.uk/donate>

Didcot set sights on a totem record – and yours is invited!

DIDCOT Railway Centre has announced its intention to host an exhibition of station totem signage next year – and perhaps even attempt a record for the most examples gathered in one place.

Echoes Along The Line will take place at the museum on May 29, offering a chance to step back to the golden age of rail travel by curating an exceptional display of authentic railway totems, many rarely seen in public.

Representing stations around Britain, these distinctive enamel signs tell the story of the railways, the communities they served, and the evolution of railway branding during the British Rail era. Visitors will have the opportunity to explore exhibitions showcasing the history, design and manufacture of railway

totems, learn about the collectors, and gather together the largest collection of railways totems ever seen in preservation.

Set against the backdrop of one of the country's premier heritage railway museums, Echoes Along The Line will combine this unique exhibition with everything visitors love about Didcot Railway Centre, including its impressive collection of GWR locomotives, rolling stock, historic buildings, demonstrations and train rides.

The museum wishes to hear from any totem owners who would like to bring examples from their collections along to add to the display. Interested parties should contact events coordinator Sarah Jermyn at sarah.jermyn@didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk

'World's fastest station' sold to undisclosed auction winner

THE surviving part of the nearest station to where A3 Pacific No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* and A4 No. 4468 *Mallard* set world speed records sold for £112,000 at an online auction on July 28.

The 1081 sq ft stone-built ticket office at Little Bytham on Stoke Bank on the East Coast Main Line was sold on a freehold basis by BTG Eddisons Property Auctions on behalf of Network Rail.

A spokesman for the auction company said it was unable to disclose information about the buyer. While the property was marketed as "a wonderful site for a railway-themed café or community workspace," along with "plenty of other potential uses," the buyer had yet to make an announcement as to their intended future use of the site as this issue went to press.

As reported last issue, a small team of enthusiasts had set up a crowdfunding page to raise money to bid but were understood to have been unsuccessful.

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

Standard tank set for Severn Valley BR days autumn gala

By Robin Jones

BR Standard 2-6-4T No. 80097 will be the fourth guest for the Severn Valley Railway's September 17-20 Autumn Steam Gala, it has been confirmed.

BR black-liveried No.80097 will visit courtesy of the East Lancashire Railway, joining previously announced guests GWR small prairie No. 5526, from the South Devon Railway, WR 0-6-OPT No. 9681, from the Dean Forest Railway, and Ivatt 2MT No. 41313, from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, for a gala celebrating the Severn Valley in its pre-heritage era days.

No. 80097 had only 11 years in BR service before being withdrawn in 1965 and sent to Barry scrapyard. In May 1985, it became the 162nd locomotive to be saved from Dai Woodham's scrapyard when it was taken to the ELR, where it underwent more than 34 years of repairs and restoration by 200-plus volunteers. The extensive project included the construction of a completely new boiler before No. 80097, owned by the Bury Standard 4 Group, entered service on the ELR in 2019.

As a BR Standard tank active in the final years of steam, No. 80097 is an authentic addition to this year's pre-preservation theme, representing the type of locomotive that would have been a familiar sight on lines



BR Standard 4MT No. 80097 in service at its East Lancashire Railway home on October 15, 2021. BOB GREEN/SVR

including the Severn Valley during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Gus Dunster, the SVR's CEO, said: "Every preserved locomotive has an incredible story behind it, and No. 80097 is a remarkable symbol of endurance, determination and volunteer dedication.

"After spending twice as long in Barry scrapyard as it did in BR service, it is wonderful to see it back doing exactly what it was built for, and we're looking forward

to seeing it working on the Severn Valley. This year's Autumn Steam Gala is all about recreating the atmosphere of the line before preservation, and the combination of our guest locomotives with home fleet engines, including the expected gala debut of our newly restored GWR large prairie No. 4150 (see *Heritage Railway*, issue 347), promises a wonderful four days of steam."

Further information and advance tickets are available at svr.co.uk

National Railway Museum turns up the heat on heatwaves

THE National Railway Museum has joined with Network Rail to highlight how this summer's heatwaves are affecting Britain's railways.

The York museum is now home to Network Rail's Summer Rail Garden. Originally displayed at London Victoria, the installation highlights the challenges that extreme weather can create for the railway and some of the measures being taken to keep passengers and freight moving safely and reliably.

Impacts of hot weather include buckled rails, when high temperatures cause steel rails to expand, which can lead to them bending or buckling, and which can then require trains to run at lower speeds to be safer.

Soil moisture deficit also occurs in prolonged dry weather, causing clay soils and embankments to shrink, increasing the risk of ground movement that can affect track stability.

Heat further reduces the tension of overhead wires on electrified routes, increasing the risk of sagging or wires making contact with trains, which

can disrupt services, while extreme temperatures can cause signalling and other electrical systems to overheat, therefore increasing the likelihood of faults.

Drier vegetation during hot weather can create a higher risk of wildfires with a variety of possible causes, with potentially significant disruption to services.

Lisa Angus, Network Rail's industry weather response director, said:

"Due to the effects of climate change, periods of extreme heat and dry weather are becoming more frequent. This summer has already demonstrated some of the challenges that hotter conditions can bring for the railway, with impacts on track, ground conditions, and power and signalling systems.

"The Summer Rail Garden helps explain these impacts in a way that is accessible and engaging, showing visitors how high temperatures can affect rail infrastructure and why adaptation is becoming increasingly important.

"We are planning years in advance to adapt to changing weather



The Summer Rail Garden at the National Railway Museum in York. NR

conditions through proactive monitoring and investment in smart technologies – including remote sensors and innovative cooling solutions – to protect critical infrastructure and keep passengers moving safely and reliably during extreme weather."

NRM's head of public programmes, Sarah Price, said: "Throughout its

history, railway infrastructure has adapted and evolved to meet new challenges. As climate change brings more frequent periods of extreme weather, understanding how the railway is responding and innovating has become an important part of that story."

The loaned garden will be open to the public until late summer.

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Passenger services return to Sharpness after 62-year gap

By Robin Jones

PASSENGER services have run on the Vale of Berkeley Railway for the first time in 62 years.

During Friday, July 31 to Sunday, August 2, the VoBR ran its successful Return to Sharpness event with packed trains. It took place just over a year since the heritage line completed its move from a small diesel engine shed to its more expansive Oldminster Sidings base.

Six trains a day over all three days saw more than 1200 passengers board the VoBR's Class 143 Pacer DMU No. 143603 for the journey from Oldminster Sidings, alongside Sharpness Docks, to just short of the Berkeley Road junction with the Bristol to Gloucester main line.

The landmark event attracted passengers from around the UK, with an average 75% loading, and Driver For A Fiver sessions on the line's Hibberd Planet 4wDM No. 3947 of 1960 were fully booked almost immediately.

Celebrating 150 years since passenger services to Sharpness began on August 1, 1876, after the Midland Railway built the four-mile branch, the event's first departure was flagged away by a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Gloucester, accompanied by two Deputy Lord Lieutenant colleagues. Commemorating a milestone in the development of Sharpness, the railway's history was brought to life by onboard narration as the trains passed key points along the branch.

As well as the 18-train programme, the VoBR set up a bus transfer service from Cam & Dursley Station, provided by local firm Applegates. It also operated the shuttle bus service to Oldminster Sidings from the Sharpness Sports and Social Club, which provided the VoBR's check-in and exhibition space, car parking and refreshments.

The original line was extended to Lydney and the Forest of Dean when the Severn Bridge Railway opened on October 17, 1979.



Left: Passengers board the first train at Oldminster Sidings at Sharpness on July 31. VoBR

Below: Class 143 Pacer DMU No. 143603 crossing the bridge at Newtown Sharpness. STROUD TIMES/VOBR

The through route was closed on October 1960 when an accident involving petroleum barges on the River Severn brought down part of the railway bridge, which was judged to be beyond economic repair, as highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 344, and the Sharpness line resumed its earlier status as a branch. However, passenger services lasted for only four more years until they were withdrawn in November 1964 under the Beeching axe, and the stations at Sharpness and Berkeley were closed.

The line remains open for occasional freight traffic to and from Sharpness Docks.

A VoBR statement expressed thanks to its Return To Sharpness partners: Train Operating Company Rail Adventure, the team at Network Rail, Applegates Coaches and the staff and patrons of the Sharpness Sports and Social Club and the "exceptional commitment" of the line's volunteers.

The event doubled up as a fundraiser to improvements to the VoBR facilities at Oldminster.

The VoBR is focused on educating the public about how the railway served Sharpness Docks and helped shape the local community. New members and volunteers are always welcome: find out more at www.vobr.org.uk



Above: The Pacer nears Berkeley crossing. VoBR

Left: One of the Return to Sharpness specials approaches Abwell Brigg. VoBR

Vandals target Churnet Valley digger within hours of arriving

THE Churnet Valley Railway has been hit by vandal attacks, with one of its mini JCB diggers completely destroyed.

The vehicle had been awaiting collection from its maintenance team and had only been on its land for 24 hours, during which

controls were ripped off, electrical components torn out, the dipstick removed, and dirt and grit poured into the engine sump.

A newly fitted fence at the site of the future Leek station was also dismantled, having been unscrewed paling by paling.

In a statement issued on August 1, the CVR said: "The real victims are our volunteers. They give up their own time, freely and willingly, to preserve and improve this railway for everyone to enjoy. They now find themselves without a vital piece of equipment that makes so many

maintenance tasks quicker, safer and easier.

"We simply cannot understand why anyone would choose to do this. It serves no purpose, benefits nobody and only diverts money and volunteer effort away from improving the railway."



The trio of ex-Penrhyn quarry locomotives lined up outside the shed. From left to right are *Cegin*, *Marchlyn* and *Glyder*. ROBERT FALCONER



Meeting in steam for the first time since 1965, Penrhyn quarry's Andrew Barclay locomotives *Glyder* and *Cegin* are seen in the quarry at Threlkeld Quarry and Mining Museum during a photo charter on July 23. ROBERT FALCONER

Penrhyn reunion at mining museum and a first meeting in Lancashire are highlights at summer narrow gauge galas

By Owen Hayward

WHILE many of their standard gauge counterparts had dropped steam for diesel traction amid an ongoing heatwave, narrow gauge steam took centre stage with both the Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum and West Lancashire Light Railway hosting gala events on two successive weekends.

The former was the first in the calendar, taking place on July 24-26 and boasting a particularly notable angle – the reunion of three former Penrhyn Quarry locomotives which were all in steam together for the first time since 1965!

Many of Penrhyn's locomotives operating at the time survived into preservation following the slate quarry railway's decision to transition away from steam, with some exported overseas while others remained at home in the UK. Some of those that left the British Isles have also since returned, and the occasional

reunion of locomotives once found there seldom fails to catch people's attention.

On this occasion it was the turn of Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT duo *Cegin* and *Glyder*, which had not been together since leaving the quarry. *Cegin* was built in 1931, and when sold in 1965, it found itself at a mining museum in Puerto Rico, where it remained until being repatriated in 2016, when it was delivered to the Statfold Barn Railway. In June 2021, its restoration was completed, and it ran for the first time in 56 years.

Glyder, meanwhile, was built a year earlier than *Cegin* and delivered first to the Durham County Water Board's Burnhope Reservoir. There it was named *Grey*, but it was renamed after its contract ended and it entered service at the quarry in 1952. Just as with *Cegin*, it was exported when retired from use there, but on this occasion found itself in the hands of a collector in the USA alongside several

other locomotives. It was returned to the UK by Graham Morris in 2012 and restored at Beamish, where on June 19, 2019, it steamed for the first time since its Penrhyn days and has been a regular there ever since.

The third ex-Penrhyn resident appearing was Avonside 0-4-0WT No. 2011 *Marchlyn*. This particular locomotive is no stranger to Threlkeld having visited several times before. While the event was the first time the two Andrew Barclay locomotives had met, with *Marchlyn* also being based at Statfold, it has run alongside *Cegin* there and previously met *Glyder* at Threlkeld.

The trio featured in a photographic charter on July 23, being posed around the museum's quarry site with various wagons to recreate once common narrow gauge scenes. On the gala weekend itself, locomotives alternated between double-heading and solo working on passenger trips and demonstration goods trains.

Following this, *Marchlyn* and *Cegin* then headed to the West Lancashire Light Railway for that line's own August 1/2 gala, joining the line's two resident locomotives there. The first of these was Orenstein & Koppel-built *Montalban*, another four-coupled well tank design which was built in Berlin in 1913. It was employed at the mines around Utrillas in Spain until, in a scenario the reverse of the Penrhyn locomotives, it was retired and brought over to the UK, arriving at the WLLR in 1984.

Rounding off the line-up there was *Sybil*, an 0-4-0ST WG Bagnall product of 1906 built for another of Wales's many slate quarries, on this occasion the one at Dinorwic. Retired in the same year as its Penrhyn counterparts, it was preserved by the Evans family for the Inney Valley Railway before ultimately being acquired by the Sybil Locomotive Trust and moved to Lancashire.

With narrow gauge locomotives perhaps being slightly better travelled in preservation than standard gauge counterparts, many have unsurprisingly met at some time or other, yet the WLLR gala was the first time that *Sybil* and *Cegin* have worked together.

Just as with at Threlkeld, the WLLR event saw locomotives alternate between passenger and demonstration goods workings.

Right: *Sybil* (left) and *Cegin* met for the first time at the West Lancashire Light Railway's steam gala. The pair served rival quarries in their working lives, the former having been at Dinorwic while the latter came from Penrhyn.

RICHARD MARSTON/WLLR



Above: *Montalban* passes Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0DM No. 38 with a goods train on August 2.
RICHARD MARSTON/WLLR

Severn Valley board changes for One Railway restructuring

THE Severn Valley Railway Society Limited has announced changes to its board.

Following its first board meeting after the annual general meeting in June, Charlie Wright has been elected chairman, with Mike Hulme as deputy chairman.

Charlie is a chartered accountant and chief executive of a group of manufacturing businesses. An active SVR volunteer, he led the line's One Railway organisational restructure which saw the conversion of the former SVR (Holdings) Plc

into the Severn Valley Railway Society Limited.

Mike brings extensive senior rail industry experience, having retired as site managing director of Alstom's rolling stock site at Derby after a career spanning engineering, operations and executive leadership in the rail sector.

The railway has also co-opted Antony Bartlam and Phil Swallow to the board as directors. Antony, a structural engineer and long-standing SVR volunteer, will take special responsibility for

infrastructure. He played a leading role in coordinating the railway's response to the Mor Brook embankment collapse and has been instrumental in developing long-term infrastructure resilience and inspection programmes.

Phil has more than 30 years' experience in technology and business transformation, together with a long-standing passion for heritage railways as a co-owner of the SVR-based Bulleid West Country light Pacific No. 34027 *Taw Valley*. The changes also mark the retirement

of two long-serving directors: Chris Walton has stepped down after 40 years at board level, including serving as chairman, and Andy Barr retires after 12 years.

SVR chief executive officer Gus Dunster said: "These appointments bring together an exceptional combination of commercial, engineering and railway expertise. Charlie, Mike, Antony and Phil each have a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing heritage railways, and I look forward to working closely with them."

Sulzer supreme as Cotswold gala spotlights the roaring 'Twenties'

By Owen Hayward

WHILE diesel galas can be challenging to get the right line-ups for, the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway found a winning combination for its own July 24-26 event as it brought together four locomotives from successive classes – and in matching livery to boot.

Enthusiasts can be a picky bunch, and that cannot be any more obvious than when it comes to announcing gala line-ups. Some guest choices will be praised as the 'golden goose,' while others are deemed 'run-of-the-mill.' In some cases, locomotives can illicit both of these responses, further highlighting just how vast individual tastes can be. Such attitudes are not unique to one form of traction – both steam and diesel enthusiasts will have their favourites and a mental list of those they'd not waste time travelling to see for whatever reason.

Challenging planning

The response to gala guest revelations can be influenced by a number of factors such as whether said choice is a sole survivor of its type, how often a particular locomotive has left its home line, or if it is one that has 'done the rounds' and appeared at nearly every event going over a certain period of time.

Appeal is, however, only one aspect to consider, as there is also cost to factor into the balance. This can be both the hire charge paid to whichever group or line owns a particular locomotive, as well as the transportation bill to move it. As has been seen at several lines lately, a balance can be struck by bringing in main line locomotives which have the lure of rare haulage to entice visitors with (in some cases) cheaper



A busy moment at Toddington on July 25 as Class 37 D6948 awaits departure for Cheltenham Racecourse, while 'bubble car' W55003 is readied for the run to Broadway on the adjacent platform. CHRIS GEE

movement costs as they arrive via links with the national network. Such arrangements are most common with diesel galas, where there is a plethora of ever-changing traction to pick from.

But while it is not theoretically impossible for these locomotives to arrive by road, the demands on the fleets of main line companies typically mean that the window of availability is too tight to accommodate the extra days these movements would require, which restricts those without main line. It therefore falls to gala planners to get creative and find other ways of attracting the crowds.

For its annual diesel weekend, the G/WR brought in a trio of locomotives to star alongside 10 resident members of the fleet. The first of these was BR Class 35 Hymek D7018, stopping by on its way back home to the West

Somerset Railway, having been spending an extended period on hire to the Great Central Railway, where it starred in that line's own autumn diesel gala last September. Built by Beyer Peacock in 1962 and withdrawn in March 1975, two years later than BR had intended owing to locomotive shortages, D7018 entered preservation at Didcot Railway Centre before later being purchased by the Diesel Electric Preservation Group at the WSR, where it joined classmate D7017.

The 'Rat' race

While the diesel-hydraulics have a devout following and can usually be relied on for attracting healthy visitor numbers in their own right, on this occasion D7018 might have been considered to have played second fiddle in the roster. While the two

accompanying guest locomotives may not be glamorous express types or examples of designs from the development era of internal combustion, their presence did result in a gathering of locomotives from BR's twenties locomotive classification.

The first of these was Class 25 No. 25262, from the South Devon Railway, followed by Class 27 No. 27056 *Hertfordshire Railtours*, from the Great Central Railway. These joined the G/WR's own Class 24 No. 24081 and Class 26 No. 26043 for a line-up of 'Rats' at Toddington shed; the nickname was largely associated with the Class 25 locomotives, it having come about due to the class's strong presence on the British Rail network having been likened to the commonness of the rodent.

This was carried over to the Class 26 and 27s which, spending most of their time in Scotland, were accordingly referred to as 'McRats.' While some did also refer to the Class 24s as 'Rats,' their more common nickname was 'Skinhead,' which was derived from the bald-looking space above the cab where they were built without centre headcode boxes.

These four matching Type 2 locomotives were lined up on-shed at Toddington for a photographic session on July 23 – the first time a line-up of this sort has taken place on this particular heritage line and possibly even in preservation!

Furthermore, throw in the G/WR's own pair of Class 20s – nicknamed 'Choppers' thanks to their distinct whistling sound likened to that of some helicopters – and there was a six-strong locomotive presence drawn from the 'Twenties' classification.

Nos. 20137 and 20228 were built by English Electric in 1966 and 1968 respectively, while the Sulzer-powered



'Chopper' duo Nos. 20228 and 20137 pass through Hayles Abbey Halt carrying a headboard from the 'Skegless Pair,' one of Pathfinders' many railtours, on July 27. CHRIS GEE



With many locomotives at the gala having once worked excursions arranged by Pathfinder Tours, July 27 saw some of these carry headboards used before the company ceased trading. Class 45 No. 45159 is seen at Cheltenham Racecourse shortly after arrival with 'The Broadway Greeter.' JACK BOSKETT



Sulzers at sunset: A photographic evening took place at Toddington on July 23, with the quad of Sulzer 'Twenties' lined up outside the shed. From left to right are Nos. 27056 *Hertfordshire Railtours*, 26043, 25262 and 24081. DON BISHOP

No. 24081 emerged from Crewe in 1960, No. 25262 from Derby in 1961, and both Nos. 26043 and 27056 from the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company in 1959 and 1962 respectively. Aside from No. 20137, all currently wear an iteration of BR blue – a theme which dominated most of the line-up, with Class 37 No. 37215, Class 45 No. 45149 and Class 47 No. 47105 also carrying this scheme.

The sole BR green 'Chopper' was kept company by Class 27 D6948, Class 122 'bubble ar' No. 55003 and the visiting D7018 all carrying the same livery to represent the early BR diesel era, supplemented by Class 04 D2280, which was on static display at Toddington depot where it is used as a shunter.

The final operational locomotive on the roster was No. 47376 *Freightliner 1995*, which aptly wears its namesake firm's corporate grey livery, the precursor to the more common green seen on modern locomotives of its fleet.

Railtour remembrance

The G/WR for long had strong ties with the former Pathfinder Tours, and several of its locomotives have hauled charters arranged by that firm at some point in their lives. To that end, a collection of headboards from some tours were brought out and carried on the relevant locomotives



Looking right at home on Western Region territory, 'Hymek' D7018 emerges from Greet Tunnel as it approaches Winchcombe. JACK BOSKETT

in tribute to the company which ceased trading in December 2025 after more than 50 years.

On this day, visitors were also able to meet members of the Pathfinders' team, including founder Peter Watts, in what was expected to be their final public appearance in this capacity.

A one-off railtour-style service named 'The Broadway Greeter' departed for Cheltenham Racecourse station at 2.15pm, returning to Broadway almost 90 minutes later.

A specially-made headboard carried on this service by the 'Peak' was subsequently raffled off alongside several other prizes, the proceeds of which went back to into the railway's coffers.

The line reported that somewhere in the region of 2500 people bought tickets to travel over the course of the weekend.

Diesel gala chairman Neal Whitehead said: "It will be difficult to match the success of this year's event,

but we are already thinking about what we might bring next year.

"For me, the highlight this time really was seeing so many happy passengers and guests – especially enjoying the unprecedented sight of Classes 24, 25, 26 and 27, all in BR blue, together in preservation. And, with all four on the last train of the gala heading a jam-packed train, it was surely a first and a real triumph to round off a quite extraordinary weekend."



Sulzer superpower: No. 24081 leads the quadruple-headed finale on July 27, with Nos. 27056, 26043 and 25252 tucked in behind. NICK JONES/G/WR



Sulzer supreme: Nos. 25262 and 27056 are seen heading through the old site of Bishops Cleeve station on July 25. MARTYN TATTAM

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.

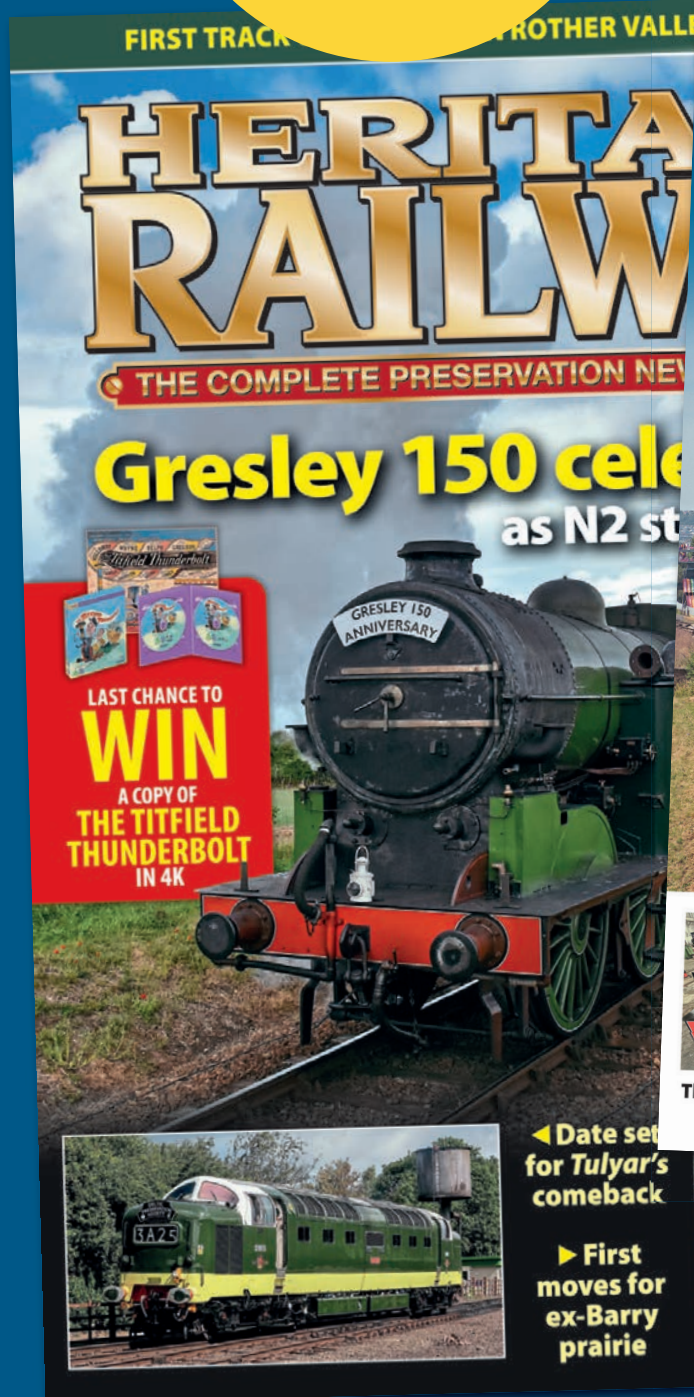
Robin Jones

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Bluebell mini-gala a foretaste of bigger diesel event as autumn line-up expands

By Owen Hayward

A WEEKEND of mixed traction intended as a 66th anniversary celebration for the Bluebell Railway did not quite happen as planned – but what replaced it acted almost as a prelude to a much larger event in September.

August 7-9 was originally listed in the railway's calendar as its Bluebell on Parade weekend, designed to showcase the best of what the railway has to offer, including its pre-Grouping era locomotives pulling equally vintage carriages. Following the success of last year's event, which celebrated the line's 65th anniversary and culminated in an impressive locomotive cavalcade through Horsted Keynes (as reported in issue 336), this year's event would have followed in a similar vein, with almost all available carriages having been planned to be in service, along with seven steam and two diesel locomotives.

Unfortunately, with high temperatures continuing through July and no rainfall to dampen the surrounding landscape, along with several lineside fires in the latter week of the month, the railway announced on July 29 that it was suspending steam services for the foreseeable future following consultation with local fire services. It then confirmed the following afternoon that the On Parade gala was accordingly also cancelled.

Southern diesel takeover

Severn Valley Railway-based Class 33 No. 33108 was already booked to arrive in mid-July, touching down at Sheffield Park just a few days after its appearance at the Mid-Hants Railway's July 11-13 diesel gala. With Class 73 E6040 *The Bluebell Railway* being its namesake's only operational resident diesel, the 'Crompton' was already intended to provide resilience



Class 33 No. 33108 descends Freshfield Bank towards Sheffield Park on August 9. NICK GILLIAM

over the summer, but it was pressed into service much quicker than was perhaps expected. Both locomotives were therefore deployed to an emergency timetable introduced in the wake of the steam ban, as well as pulling the luxurious 'Golden Arrow' diner on certain dates.

With the resident BR Class 09 D4106 currently out of service undergoing repairs, the railway rapidly sought additional traction to offer further cover. BR Class 201 Hastings DEMU No. 201001 had been announced as a guest for the September 4-6 diesel, with a movement to the line initially planned for late August.

Following conversations with Hastings Diesels Ltd, this loan was rearranged and took place on July 31, the four-car unit travelling from St Leonards depot via the national network, providing further capacity for the Bluebell and relieving some of the pressure placed on the two Southern Region diesels.

Although this unit has visited heritage lines as part of railtour excursions, it seldom works general service trains on them; in 2025, this same four-car unit was hired by the Bluebell to assist with workings during its Railway 200 celebrations, before also going on to appear at that September's autumn diesel gala.

During the evening of August 4, an external assessor from the Spa Valley Railway attended to pass out some of the Bluebell's own crews to drive the main line-registered DEMU, which has features like central door locking that can catch out those unused to its operation. With three items of relevant traction on hand, the Saturday and Sunday of On Parade were reworked into a Southern Region running weekend.

This change saw No. 33108 pulling a set comprising Maunsell and ex-SECR carriages, plus a pair of Pullman parlour cars; seldom seen on services beyond the fine-dining 'Golden Arrow' workings, travel was available for an additional fare supplement, with those travelling on the first departure from Sheffield Park and East Grinstead each day able to enjoy a full English breakfast served to them at their seat, while later departures offered afternoon tea with either a choice of cake or scones.

E6040, meanwhile, hauled a rake of four blood and custard-liveried BR Mk. 1 carriages, which had a real ale bar on-board, while the Hastings DEMU ran in its fixed four-car formation.

EMUs to the fore

The impromptu diesel weekend offered a taste of what's to come in

September at the line's diesel gala.

The Class 201 will not be the only unit in use, with Class 416 EPB No. 5759 and Motor Luggage Vans Nos. 9001 and 9002 all due to be enjoying a rare trip away from their base at Southall depot. These play into the event's Network SouthEast 40th anniversary theme, with No. 9002 currently sporting that company's livery, both the MLV and EPB types having operated under that firm during its existence.

Additionally, Class 73 No. 73128 *The Kent & East Sussex Railway* (named at Robertsbridge during that line's 50th anniversary in 2024) will also be in attendance, bringing the total of NSE-liveried locomotives to four, with BR Class 03 No. 03179 *Clive* and Class 50 No. 50026 *Indomitable* also a part of the line-up.

Those who go for modern traction will undoubtedly seek mileage behind Class 60 No. 60028, visiting courtesy of DC Rail. Notably, it is the first visit of an example of this class to the railway, while simultaneously being the first time one of these 'Tugs' has travelled to East Grinstead over the Oxted line.

Full details, including timetables and attractions, were due to be announced after this issue closed for press; see www.bluebell-railway.com/special/diesel-gala



Back in Sussex for a second summer season, Class 201 DEMU No. 201001 sits at Kingscote as it waits for an East Grinstead-bound service to arrive and pass. OWEN HAYWARD



E6040 *The Bluebell Railway* approaches Horsted House Farm as it heads towards Horsted Keynes on August 9. OWEN HAYWARD



Network SouthEast-liveried No. 9002 is one of two MLVs attending the September diesel gala. JAMES CUMMINS

Minehead seeks professionals to protect its future

By Robin Jones

THE West Somerset Railway Association has appealed for new people with professional, practical and volunteering skills to help protect and develop the heritage of the UK's longest operational standard gauge line.

In its Corporate Plan for 2026-31, the WSR has unveiled an ambitious programme to strengthen heritage preservation, education, community engagement, volunteering, closer collaboration across the railway family and financial sustainability in support of the Minehead line.

However, the WSRA is clear that the successful delivery of the plan will depend on attracting additional resources, particularly new trustees, volunteers and advisors with the skills, time and experience needed to support an increasingly wide range of work.

Key priorities include completing the restoration of GWR small prairie No. 4561 and BR Standard 2-6-4T No. 80064, both targeted for a return to service in 2028; developing a long-term plan for the future restoration of WR 4-6-0 No. 7821 *Ditcheat Manor*; progressing a carriage-by-carriage restoration strategy; and exploring options for covered accommodation for the carriage fleet.

The plan also places strong emphasis on growing membership, expanding educational outreach, increasing community engagement and developing the railway corridor as a 'living corridor' supporting biodiversity and environmental education.

Alongside these heritage objectives, the WSRA will continue to modernise its digital systems, strengthen governance, improve risk management and build



The 'West Somerset Steam Express' on August 8 was anything but. Due to Network Rail's Code Black temporary ban on main line steam, the tour from Paddington to Minehead was hauled not by Bulleid West Country light Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone* but by West Coast Railways Class 33s Nos. 33207 *Jim Martin* and 33205, with Class 47 No. 47848 on the rear, seen from the sky approaching Blue Anchor station on the return leg.

STEVE DONALD

organisational resilience through disciplined financial planning.

The board oversees assets exceeding £3.25 million, including cash and investments of more than £2.1m, providing a platform for future restoration projects and charitable activity. There are also substantial costs involved with the restoration of the locomotives and carriages and the carriage shed. The association also continues to build constructive relationships with the West Somerset Railway Plc, the West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust, the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group, local communities, educational partners and funders.

WSRA chairman Edward Martin said: "We recognise that the aspirations we have set out in this plan are challenging. Like all heritage bodies and many charities, we are finding resourcing our plans increasingly difficult. We hope that showing clearly what we are planning and outlining how we hope

to achieve those plans will provide a solid foundation to support grant applications and attract more donors and volunteers to support our work.

"We are also looking to appoint a number of new trustees at our annual general meeting in September to strengthen the board.

"If anyone, or any organisation, wishes to support us as a trustee, professional advisor or volunteer, we would be delighted to hear from them."

West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust chairman Mike Thompson said: "The emphasis on collaboration is particularly encouraging. By working closely together across the railway family, we can achieve more for heritage conservation, public engagement and the long-term resilience of the railway than any organisation can achieve alone."

The annual general meeting will take place on Saturday, September 26 at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall from 2pm.

➔ Meanwhile, a key step forward with the overhaul of the boiler of No. 4561 as seen a new throatplate manufactured at the South Devon Railway. It was the first to be made for a GWR No. 5 standard boiler at the SDR, using new tooling at its Buckfastleigh workshops

The throatplate cost £19,875 plus VAT, and it has since been moved to the works of Riley and Son at Bury, where the major reconstruction of the boiler is being carried out under contract.

Work on the motion has continued, with the driving wheel eccentrics machined and fitted in the workshops at Williton.

Donations towards the cost of the overhaul of 4561 can be made online via www.wsra.org.uk or cheques, made payable to West Somerset Railway Association, can be posted to: West Somerset Railway Association (4561), The Railway Station, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton, Somerset TA4 3BX.

Donation of equipment boosts East Lancashire

CLOSE working relations with Network Rail are set to give the East Lancashire Railway an invaluable boost with permanent way equipment due to be donated to the heritage line.

In January, the two organisations signed an agreement that meant the ELR would benefit from materials such as track no longer fit for main line use – but still very much safe for heritage purposes – being donated, and this has resulted in a substantial windfall, with tools and other equipment also now set to find a new home at Bury.

In return, the ELR is providing facilities and opportunities for NR to

showcase and test equipment and train its staff in a safer environment than on the high-speed rail network.

Among the latest swathe of items are a number of permanent way trollies, as well as a road-rail personnel carrier, all of which was delivered to the railway at the end of July.

Clare Waller, NR's Manchester area director, said: "Our partnership with the ELR is great for both parties. It means our staff get to support an amazing cause and some of our lesser-used pieces of equipment can have a new life. We are really proud to be working with the team at the ELR and helping them to delight passengers and visitors."



A road-rail personnel and equipment carrier in the Network Rail redundant asset donation made to the East Lancashire Railway. NETWORK RAIL

The ELR's chairman, Mike Kell, added: "We are delighted to part of such a unique partnership based on mutual respect and desire to help each other out.

"This partnership is voluntary, and it is a vote of confidence and support to the ELR from a great

bunch of dedicated professionals. We have enjoyed a very close working relationship. Both organisations have key transport roles, and I always say NR looks after the future and the ELR preserves Manchester and Lancashire's proud industrial transport heritage."

Last orders for Bass locomotive? New home sought for saddle tank

By Owen Hayward

A SADDLE tank might end up leaving Burton upon Trent for the first time in its history after Staffordshire County Council announced it was searching for a new home for the locomotive to safeguard its future.

Neilson Reid & Co 0-4-0ST No. 5907 of 1901 was delivered to the Bass Brewery for use on its sizeable rail complex, shunting wagons around the complex which even had its own directors' vehicle for inspections and dignitary visits. It became the company's No. 9, and its short wheelbase meant it was well-suited to the site's sharply curved lines, over which it could handle up to 30 wagons at a time. At one point, the firm purported to have the UK's largest privately-owned rail network which linked its various premises in the town but, as with many other sectors at the time, it transitioned to road transport through the 1970s.

No. 9 was withdrawn in 1964 and displayed at the adjacent National Brewery Visitor Centre, alongside the director's coach it had once worked; in 1978, ownership was transferred

to council's archives and heritage service, but it remained on loan to the centre. However, in October 2022, Molson Coors, which owned the site, announced it was moving its headquarters into the heritage buildings, resulting in the museum being closed permanently.

Acknowledging the historic importance of the locomotive and carriage, the firm committed to preserving the pair until a new home could be established.

It was hoped that money made available through the UK Government's Levelling Up fund would enable East Staffordshire Borough Council to convert Bass House, on the nearby high street, into a new museum, but this never happened.

Both No. 9 and the directors' carriage have remained on their short sections of track since the museum's closure almost four years ago, partially exposed to the elements, although weatherproof sheeting offer some protection.

Coun Hayley Coles, the council's deputy leader and cabinet member for communities and culture, said:



Neilson Reid 0-4-0ST Bass Brewery No. 9 might leave Burton upon Trent for the first time ever when a new home is found for it by Staffordshire County Council. CHRIS ALLEN/CREATIVE COMMONS

"These railway items are closely tied to our county's industrial and brewing heritage. We want the items to remain in Staffordshire, and our best option is to relocate them to an accredited museum where they can be cared for properly and restored to their former glory. We are now

looking for expressions of interest from eligible museums that may be interested in hosting the items."

Stafford Narrow Gauge Museum Trust was rumoured to be one of the organisations being consulted about taking on the vehicles but declined to comment when asked.

IN BRIEF

Industrial weekend at Wensleydale Railway

THE Wensleydale Railway will once again be hosting its Industrial Diesel Weekend on August 29/30, with a special timetable operating between Scruton, Leeming Bar, Bedale and Leyburn.

The proposed locomotive line-up is ex-British Steel Corby Class 14 D9523 alongside ex-NCB Ashington classmate D9513, ex-Tyne & Wear works WL40 (which also worked on the Channel Tunnel), ex-Hope Cement Works Sentinel *Derwent*, Class 37 No. 37250 and, subject to repair and operational needs, ex-MOD Class 03 No. 03144.

Charitable status for Helston

THE Helston Railway Preservation Company Ltd has passed a new milestone by becoming a registered charity.

A statement said: "Our new charitable status enables us to maximise the value of donations through Gift Aid, reclaim eligible VAT... and ensure that funds entrusted to us are applied directly towards the operation, maintenance, preservation and future extension of the Helston Railway."



The railway's Greenbat & Batley battery-electric locomotive hauling its coach. HSR



New artwork depicting Blythburgh station. EAST SUFFOLK PLEIN-AIR PAINTERS

Free open days at Blythburgh station

THE Halesworth to Southwold Railway displayed its three replica wagons at its Blythburgh Station Open Day on July 26.

The trio, all replicas of original Victorian rolling stock, including a Cleminson flexible-wheelbase open, were displayed and operated with typical goods on board, complementing the newly completed Odams' private owner shed and goods platform.

On each hour, the small semi-open coach, running along part of the original Southwold Railway track bed, gave views of the entire station. The railway invited East Suffolk

Plein-Air Painters to the event. The group's members were able to set up onsite to capture the restored station and the passenger trips. The painters said that they had a really good time, and want to come back next year.

Again, entry and refreshments were free, with a small ticket price for the solar-charged battery-electric trains in what is the first year of passenger operation since 1929.

The railway has a planning application lodged for a westward extension towards Wenhaston and is hoping for positive news early next year. Work continues on

building regulations compliance and services planning for the proposed new visitor centre, which already has full permission.

On Sunday, September 13, between 10.30am and 3.45pm, the next Blythburgh Station Open Day will feature the Norfolk and Suffolk Narrow Gauge Modellers' Model Railway Show, with a large live steam model railway in addition, and the usual films, souvenirs, and refreshments all free – while train rides will have a £5 charge to cover expenses. There is free parking near the station, just off the A12 opposite the White Hart pub.

Every Visit Keeps Heritage Moving



What to look out for at our railway



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September**



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**18-20
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**16-18
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Britain's longest iron viaduct bridges past with the future

By Robin Jones

A NEW visitor centre and café serving historic Bennerley Viaduct, which crosses the border between Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, was formally opened on July 18.

Following the completion of the adjacent eastern ramp to the viaduct, the centre is the final milestone in a 10-year project to bring a new lease of life to the 16-arch, quarter-mile-long and 60ft-high wrought-iron structure with lattice truss girders, originally known as Ilkeston Viaduct and informally as the Iron Giant.

Funded by the Kimberley Means Business Fund, the building, with its Corten steel cladding, is inspired by railway carriages, giving it an industrial appearance reflecting the viaduct's past. The steel is uncoated to minimise future maintenance.

Inside is a welcoming café serving refreshments made with locally sourced ingredients, an education and exhibition space that will feature local artists and information about the history of the bridge, and toilets.

The official ribbon-cutting ceremony was hosted by Claire Ward, the Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority, and attended by several local civic representatives including James Dawson, leader of Erewash Borough Council, and Coun Barbara Carr, Mayor of Broxtowe.

Claire Ward described the viaduct and its new facilities as a symbol of renewal, adding that the people and communities involved in the project were beacons of hope for its future. The tourism economy was an important factor in regenerating an area, she said, and the viaduct would certainly play its part.

Andy Savage, chairman of the Railway Heritage Trust, which has supported the viaduct restoration, also addressed the gathering. Entertainment was provided by the Shirland Welfare Band, playing as its

musicians marched down the new ramp to take their place under the visitor centre pergola.

Engineered by Samuel Abbott, the viaduct was built to carry the GNR's Derbyshire Extension trains across the Erewash Valley between Cotmanhay and Awsworth and was completed in 1878. The main line of the extension ran from Nottingham Victoria to Burton-upon-Trent via Derby Friargate.

Saved by expense

Passenger services were withdrawn in 1964 and the viaduct closed altogether, along with the rest of the line, in 1968 as a result of the Beeching cuts.

Plans to demolish the viaduct failed because of the cost of dismantling the ironwork and it became a listed building in 1974, but it received little maintenance and fell into disrepair.

Railway Paths, a walking and cycling charity and a sister organisation to Sustrans, acquired it for preservation in 2001 but was hampered by a lack of funding. The viaduct was listed on the Heritage At Risk register in 2007 and the 2020 World Monuments Watch because of its condition and lack of use. A detailed survey was undertaken in 2016 and funding for restoration work was obtained in 2019.

The Friends of Bennerley Viaduct (FoBV) group, formed in 2015, repaired and restored the viaduct and opened it to the public as part of a cycling and walking route in January 2022.

The only other surviving wrought-iron railway viaduct in the UK is the taller Meldon Viaduct, near Okehampton, which, unlike Bennerley, has been significantly altered since it was built.

Broxtowe Borough Council's portfolio holder for asset management and development, Coun Milan Radulovic, said: "What the FoBV group has been able to



The magnificent Grade II*-listed Bennerley Viaduct. GRAHAM HOGG/CREATIVE COMMONS



Left: East Midlands Combined County Authority mayor Claire Ward cuts the ribbon to open the new facility. BROXTOWE BOROUGH COUNCIL.

"A symbol of renewal, and the people and communities involved in the project as beacons of hope for its future..."

achieve in saving, preserving and improving this part of our local industrial heritage is nothing short of remarkable. Our borough's industrial past has shaped the lives of so many in Broxtowe and beyond, and preserving it for generations to come is of paramount importance."

FoBV chairman James Dawson said: "The deck and western ramp project was achieved in partnership with Railway Paths Ltd (RPL), the owner of the viaduct, and financial support from a dozen donors including the National Lottery Heritage Fund. For the eastern ramp and the visitor centre, we have Broxtowe Borough Council to thank."

The viaduct was mentioned in several works including *Sons and Lovers* by novelist DH Lawrence, who grew up in the Erewash Valley.

Visitors will be able to discover the viaduct's history through a free storytelling sessions at the structure accessed via Woodiwiss Road off Shilo Way, Awsworth, produced by the borough council in partnership with the FoBV. Local theatre group Beeston Players has transformed a poem about it into *Iron Giant: A Valley's Story*, to be performed on the skywalk of the viaduct itself.

Participants will be taken on a journey through the viaduct's inception, its role in the booming local coal mining industry, its decline, and subsequent rescue and transformation by the Friends group. Volunteers from the Friends will also be on hand to give free guided tours of the site.

Live entertainment

Adding to the experience, live music and street performers will wander round the grounds with industrial and railway themed music and performances.

The event will be held on Sunday, September 6 from 1-4pm, with storytelling performances from 2pm. The new visitor centre café on site will be serving coffee, cake and a special event menu.

Broxtowe's portfolio holder for health and leisure, Coun Teresa Cullen, said: "This is a unique opportunity for our residents to experience the Iron Giant in a special way."

"The Beeston Players are such a fantastic group, always finding new and inventive ways to bring different stories to life. I'm sure this will be popular."

Dickens' supernatural Signalman to be performed at Minehead station

MINEHEAD station is to stage a dramatisation of Charles Dickens' classic supernatural thriller *The Signalman*.

The production by Pleasure Dome Theatre Company, adapted by Jonathan Holloway and directed by Scott Le Crass, will take place on Friday, September 4, at 3pm and 8pm and will star Gerald Dickens, the great great grandson of the author.

→ For more details and to book tickets, visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/events

Porthmadog trio return to service ahead of peak summer season

By Owen Hayward

"YOU wait forever for one, then three come along at once" is how the old saying goes, and that was very much the case for narrow gauge steam in North Wales as the summer arrived.

Those visiting Porthmadog at the end of July and the start of August had their pick of locomotives to choose from, but it was the return of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's Baldwin 10-12-D 4-6-0PT that caught much attention. Nearly three years after its failure during the Welsh Highland Railway's 100th anniversary celebrations, No. 590 was rolled out of the works at Gelert's Farm on the WHHR and successfully pulled its first passenger trains since then along the short operating line there. Built in 1917 as No. 794 for use during the First World War, it was then sold to a sugar plantation in India before being repatriated in 1985 and displayed at the Imperial War Museum's Duxford site, where a short demonstration line was planned.

When this plan folded, the locomotive was sent to the WHHR in 2004, with an agreement reached that it would operate there and carry the identity of No. 590, an almost identical locomotive allocated to the WHR in 1923 and scrapped in 1942.

A generous bequest saw funding secured for a new boiler to be built, and the locomotive was sent to the Vale of Rheidol Railway's workshops to be completed.

On February 3, 2023, the IWM transferred ownership to the WHHR, and on May 22 that same year, it was delivered to Boston Lodge for testing to commence.

This initially appeared successful, and it was formally launched at a supporters' event at Gelert's Farm on May 27. However, during further testing ahead of the June 23-25 WHR centenary gala, the locomotive was failed with bearing issues after some of the axleboxes ran dry, necessitating its return to Aberystwyth for rectification work.

It arrived back in Porthmadog in March 2025, but further work was still

Baldwin No. 794 (running as ex-WHR example No. 590) arrives at Pen-y-Mount Halt on August 2. ANDREW SIMMONDS



found to be required as cracks were discovered in some of the coupling rods and deformed pins. All of this has resulted in the 'new' No. 590 spending considerably longer out of service than initially intended.

Following completion of this extensive work, the Baldwin was able to appear at the WHHR's August 1/2 steam gala event. A WHHR spokesman, however, confirmed that there were no plans for No. 590 to run on the main WHR line to Beddgelert in the immediate future, and that it would therefore only work trains on the shorter heritage line's metals until there was sufficient confidence in its condition. At the gala, the Baldwin joined the WHHR's other resident locomotive, *Gelert*, a 0-4-2T Bagnall built in 1953 for the Rustenberg Platinum Mines in South Africa.

The Pony returns

Another locomotive marking its return to service was Ffestiniog Railway large England 0-4-4ST+T No. 5 *Welsh Pony*, which since restoration was competed in 2020 has suffered a few unfortunate setbacks. A crankpin on one of the rear driving wheels was found to be loose in late 2023, which subsequently revealed

a crack in the wheel centre when the axle was removed in July 2024. Although this fault was repaired and the locomotive was back in traffic by February 2025, the axleboxes were found to be getting warm, which required further attentive works. The problem was ultimately down to a misalignment caused by a machining issue and, just as with the Baldwin, it was completed and made available in time to appear at the gala, after which it returned to the FR to work trains there.

The third and final returnee was double Fairlie No. 8 *James Spooner*. A new-build example of this powerful type of locomotive synonymous with the FR, it was completed in 2023, and cracked firebox stays were discovered at the start of this year.

While it was hoped they could be fixed in-situ, their positioning ultimately meant that the locomotive had to be almost completely dismantled and the boiler removed from the frames to enable access to the affected areas. Having successfully passed a steam test on July 31, it returned to service trains, taking over 'The Aberglaslyn' duties to Beddgelert on August 2 (which would have seen it pass the neighbouring WHHR's gala

en route) and then various FR trips to Tan-y-Bwlch and Blaenau Ffestiniog from the Monday morning.

The England and Fairlie, along with their other operational classmates, will both feature in the F&WHR's October 2-4 Victorian Weekend.

Billed as "a celebration of the locomotives, carriages and wagons that have helped shape the remarkable story of the Ffestiniog Railway," it will see much of the railway's heritage stock in use recreating services one seen in the days prior to its preservation.

The weekend will include vintage services to Beddgelert, authentic Victorian and 1920s trains, goods trains, two gravity train demonstrations each day, evening shuttle services to Minffordd, and the ever-popular Sunday morning line-up of locomotives at Porthmadog, which on this occasion is themed around the resident green-liveried ones.

Costumed re-enactors will also be milling about adding to the ambience, and visitors are encouraged themselves to consider dressing up in appropriate attire for the occasion to become a part of the experience.

For full details, visit www.festrail.co.uk/victorian-weekend



Double Fairlie No. 8 *James Spooner* approaches Pen-y-Mount with a service to Beddgelert on August 2, its first day back in traffic following completion of firebox repairs. ANDREW SIMMONDS



Ffestiniog Railway England No. 5 *Welsh Pony* in service at the WHHR's steam gala weekend. ANDREW SIMMONDS

Rising from the floods a decade ago: Leeds museum's loco hall

Words and pictures
by Sally Clifford

AN ambitious project to retell the tale of the history of locomotive building in Leeds held a special open weekend on August 15/16.

The product of some of the city's world-renowned builders were displayed as work on the Railway Gallery at Leeds Industrial Museum in the Grade II-listed Armley Mills, once the world's largest woollen mill, progresses at pace.

The gallery sits behind the doors of the engine shed – a story in itself as it was rebuilt stone by stone from its original site at Esholt Sewage Works in Bradford. The shed has been closed since being damaged by the 8ft-deep Storm Eva flooding of Boxing Day 2015.

Among the locomotives on display are Hudswell Clarke 0-4-OST No. 1888 of 1958 *Elizabeth*, which worked at the aforementioned Esholt Sewage Works, along with Hudswell Clarke 0-4-OST No. 1435 of 1922 *Nellie*, now cared for by Bradford Industrial Museum.

"*Elizabeth* is probably the youngest one we have, built in the 1950s, but what is really interesting is it was used locally in the area and it ran on wool fat, not on carbon coal," said Leeds Industrial Museum keeper Chris Sharp.

Sitting beside *Elizabeth* is the John Fowler 2ft gauge 0-6-OWT

No. 15991 of 1923. Chris said: "It was built in Leeds but exported to India where it worked with the Karachi Port and later at a sugar mill. There is an interesting story because when the Partition happened in 1947, it ended up in Pakistan without having to move because a new country was created. It has a retro-fitted big lamp because they were using it at night. They also added a water tank which was lost in restoration."

Hudswell Clarke 2-6-2DM D557 of 1929 is the largest and heaviest of the museum's collection of about 30 locomotives. Currently cloaked in plastic

wrapping for protection, the diesel worked in a desert mine 60 miles from the Port of Chile and was one of two locomotives whose arrival at the waterside museum, which is sandwiched

between the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the River Aire, was made possible through a cleverly orchestrated transportation plan.

"The museum is in the middle of an island, in the middle of the canal, so access has always been complicated," said Chris. The arrival of Junin and Fowler 0-4-ODM No. 22893

of 1940 *Fort William* was made possible by the army. "In 1990, a temporary footbridge was built as a training exercise, and the army pulled these engines from what is now the Vue Cinema over the River Aire," said Chris.

Today, such a feat would not be possible due to the flood defence wall built to protect the site as part of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Legacy marked

Documenting the legacy of flooding on the site are two plaques mounted on the side of the locomotive shed,

indicating the water levels of the original flood in November 1866, which was subsequently surpassed by the 2015 floods, the peak of which is dated as December 27.

Originally built in the 1600s, with other

buildings dating back to 1805, the former water mill was predominantly involved in shoddy manufacturing creating blankets and items for the army during the first and second world wars. Before closing in 1970, it contributed wool for electric blankets. Under the stewardship of Leeds City Council, it reopened in

1982 as a Museum of Science and Industry.

"We still talk about the industries of Leeds, but it has evolved in the way we do that," said Chris. "We are more conducive for families and people from different backgrounds and the railway gallery, when it opens next year, is a big part of that evolution."

In addition to funding from Leeds City Council, Arts Council England and MEND, enabling the rebuild of part of the locomotive shed damaged in the floods and the installation of an internal flood defence wall to protect the displays from future damage, a grant of £233,125 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the Reimagining Railways project will enable the museum to create an interactive gallery, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 347.

Future expansion

This ambitious scheme, along with future plans to run a Leeds-built locomotive on the narrow gauge track in the grounds at special events, will expand the museum's offer to visitors.

Elsewhere in the grounds, an overgrown space has been cleared and railway tracks uncovered with the help of Leeds-based organisations Lighthouse Future Trust, a specialist trust for young adults, the environmental charity Hyde Park Source, and Careers for All, a programme bridging the gap between learning and earning, to profile the importance of the city's mining locomotives. Close by, an engine built by John Fowler & Co sits among other railway-related memorabilia ripe for renovation.

Conscious of the railway gallery's completion and the many more projects on the to-do list, Chris is keen to recruit volunteers to get involved: "We are looking for a small team of volunteers to help get the collection ready to display."

The special open days were held part of the museum's annual Trains, Trains exhibition, celebrating its connection with the National Railway Museum of Sierra Leone which has its own collection of Leeds-built locomotives.

"It is essential for use to be able to tell Leeds' story and for us to be able to share our pride in Leeds' engineering and manufacturing that the city should be proud of and is responsible for," Chris added.

➔ For more details, visit www.museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk

"It is essential for use to be able to tell Leeds' story and for us to be able to share our pride in Leeds' engineering and manufacturing..."



Chris Sharp, keeper at Leeds Industrial Museum, with Hudswell Clarke 0-4-OST *Elizabeth* in the locomotive shed.



Fowler 0-6-OWT *Cheetal* worked for the Karachi Port Trust and the Upper India Sugar Mills at Khatauli.



Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0 DM D625 of 1942 *Southam No. 2*, which is stored outdoors at the museum.



The locomotive shed which was rebuilt stone by stone from its original site at Esholt Sewage Works.



Left: The plaques on the side of the locomotive shed indicating the flooding levels.



Right: A large lamp was added to *Cheetal* for night work.



The Railway Gallery taking shape prior to reopening.

Disabled students visit helps Mid-Hants with accessible carriage vision

By Owen Hayward

A VISIT to the carriage workshops of the Mid-Hants Railway by students from a specialist college have helped engineers envisage and map out plans to create a new accessible carriage on the railway.

During July, the heritage line welcomed four students from Treloar's College in Alton as part of the educational facility's groundbreaking Let Me In programme, a student-led initiative that offers accessibility audits to local businesses to help them improve access and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The students, all of whom require wheelchairs to aid their mobility, attended the works at Ropley, where an accessible carriage is being made from BR Mk. 1 FO No. 3063. It forms part of the Accessible Heritage Carriage Project, which aims to create a welcoming and inclusive social space where everyone can enjoy the unique experience of travelling on a heritage railway.

Following on from a previous visit to the line, they were shown a proposed floorplan of the carriage's interior layout, which was marked out on the workshop floor, allowing students to navigate the space in their wheelchairs and test manoeuvrability, turning circles and access. Their practical feedback provided insight into how the design performs in a real-world setting.

Insightful discussions

Beyond the floorplan itself, discussions with workshop staff and volunteers covered a range of important considerations, including the design of accessible toilet facilities, the space required for comfortable movement throughout the carriage, and the weight of powered wheelchairs – a factor that will help inform the engineering and construction of the carriage floor.

The plan is that No. 3063 will become a vehicle not only for regular trains, but also for the line's dining services, thus opening these up to a broader audience.

MHR chief executive officer Rebecca Dalley said: "This was a hugely rewarding and useful collaborative session that demonstrated how lived experience can directly influence heritage engineering. We wanted to ensure that accessibility is considered from the earliest stages of design. The feedback from the students is helping us create something truly special – not just an accessible carriage, but a welcoming social space where



Teloar's College students in the MHR's workshops at Alton during their visit to help the railway improve accessibility – including the fitting out of a new accessible carriage.

STEVE MORLEY/MHR



FO No. 3063 (right) is starting on its journey back into operational condition, which will include better accessibility modifications.

OWEN HAYWARD

everyone can enjoy the magic of heritage rail travel together.

"It's a huge investment to restore this wonderful 1955 First Class carriage into a space fit for today's world, and the railway must raise precious funds to make it happen.

"Projects like this can only succeed through genuine collaboration, and the feedback we have gained will have a lasting impact on the final design of No. 3063."

Accessible commitment

The visit also gave students the opportunity to tour the engineering facilities at Ropley, where they got to see locomotives up close and witness railway operations, offering a behind-the-scenes look at how the Watercress Line maintains its collection.

The railway is committed to making heritage rail travel more accessible, and the development of No. 3063 represents a significant step towards ensuring that more people can experience and enjoy the railway for years to come. It forms part of a broader plan to bolster the railway's operational fleet of vehicles and provide better resilience for its day-to-day operations.

➔ **Getting future-fit:** Read our interview with Rebecca on feature pages 44-49 to find out more about what the railway is doing with its rolling stock as part of its new vision to ensure it is on sound footing by 2050.



GWR pannier tank No. 7754 departs Carrog for Llangollen.



The Class DMU set and Class 26 No. 5310 pass at Carrog.

Back to the 1960s at Llangollen!

Words and pictures by John Titlow

THE Llangollen Railway held its regular Step Back in Time event on August 1/2, recreating the atmosphere of the 1960s across the whole Dee Valley line.

Despite the drought which was declared in Wales and a parched landscape, steam ran its booked turns, helped by a little rain the preceding week.

The crew of GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7754 and teams with fire beaters monitored conditions throughout each day.

Class 26 No. 5310 on four suburban carriages and the line's Classes 108 and 109 DMUs coupled together comprised the other services. A parcels van was attached to the diesel's set and also the DMU on occasions, giving the feel of the 1960s, when the railways were on their knees.

An evening photographic shoot took place on the Friday at Llangollen station, giving participants the opportunity to capture scenes of the period. The station was specially decorated with posters dating back to the decade,

while re-enactors in period dress portrayed passengers, police officers and railway porters in authentic uniforms, further helping set the scene by loading and unloading goods onto barrows as would have been done.

Branch line scenes

A typical branch line train consisting of No. 7754, which was built in 1930 not at Swindon but by North British in Glasgow for the GWR, heading a small rake of BR suburban coaches and a goods van was posed in various positions in each

platform, and also included arrivals and departures.

On the Saturday, a three-train service was in operation running the full length of the line between Llangollen and Corwen.

The pannier ran three full return workings, and the diesel completed two, breaking its return journey on its second run at Carrog for a short layover.

The DMU set ran one full return during the day and a shorter return to Carrog. In the late afternoon, it departed Llangollen at 4.10pm to Corwen in preparation for an

A typical 1960s scene as GWR 0-6-0PT 7754 heads away from Glyndyfrdwy towards Llangollen through a parched landscape on August 1.





The day is done as the driver removes the lamp from the last steam working at Llangollen station.

evening return special getting passengers to Llangollen for the evening music and dance which took place on the station, enabling passengers to jive and twist the night away.

Sunday saw a slimmed-down timetable with two full steam returns and two diesel. The DMU ran two returns, plus a shorter return working to Glyndyfrdwy.

Throughout the weekend, trains passed at Llangollen Goods Junction, Glyndyfrdwy and Carrog stations.

Aiding the atmosphere

The weekend was enhanced by reenactments, live music, vintage vehicles, goods demonstrations, exhibitions and period displays, bringing to life the era of Beeching, British Railways modernisation and the fight to save our rural railways.

This year's theme was the 'Welsh Bobbies' in their British Transport Commission Police uniforms, which were once a familiar sight on the railways throughout the 1960s. Officers patrolled on foot and in a 1968 Morris Minor Panda car, ready to clip the ears of any trainspotter

who misbehaved or ventured where they should not.

At Llangollen, Driver For A Fiver experiences took place, where participants could drive Class 08 shunter No. 08202 within the station limits. On the Saturday only, four tours of the motive power depot were held, offering a chance to see activities going on in the shed.

On the platform, Beeching's Bar served a wide selection of real ales, while Beeching's agents surveyed passenger numbers as part of his traffic research.

Goods loading demonstrations were performed by railway porters in period uniforms and an exhibition of appropriate cars from the Llangollen Motor Museum were parked on the entrance road that leads down to the station.

Rowdy demonstrations occurred at Glyndyfrdwy in opposition to the line's closure.

According to the stationmaster, more than 200 people surrounded the station at one point.

From Corwen, vintage rail-replacement Crosville bus tours took place with a 30-minute tour

of the local area aboard a beautifully restored 1950s Bristol L5G. Travel aboard these were also included in the ticket price.

Last year, Berwyn was voted the prettiest station in Britain, restored to pre-Nationalisation condition, and so there was staged an exhibition of the Ruabon-Barmouth line.

Daily unlimited travel cost £36 and £65 for two days. Passenger numbers were good, at about 1000 passengers carried. Temperatures were high for the weekend, which brought many people out. The 1960s music evening at Llangollen cost £10 or £5 for those with a day ticket.

Future events to look out for is the line's bicentenary celebrations taking place on September 12/13 and a heritage railcar gala on October 17/18.

More musical magic

The award-winning Wrexham-based mixed voice choir The James Lambert Singers will return the sound of music to the railway on September 20, performing three special free platform concerts.

The 22-strong choir will begin with a performance on Llangollen

platform at 11.45am, before travelling by train to Corwen to entertain passengers during the train's stopover. They will then return to Llangollen for a final performance, with each set lasting 20-25 minutes, using modern portable sound system and professional backing tracks to perform beneath historic station canopies.

The visit has an added significance for the railway, as station volunteer Ian Bibby is a member of the choir and will be performing.

Founded in 1955, the group has previously performed at Llangollen station for Santa specials and also appeared at this year's Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, during which the railway ran its World Voices Trains.

Meanwhile, teaming up with the community-run Owain Glyndwr Hotel in Corwen, the railway is running the Glyndwr Steam Roast train every Sunday, departing Llangollen at 12.20pm and returning at 5pm, for £40, which includes return travel, a reserved table and a main course. Only 30 places are available on each trip, which run until November.



A traction trainee checks the road ahead at Carrog.



A 1960s scene with re-enactors at Carrog.



Cars from the period on display.



A 1950 half-cab Bristol bus and police re-enactors at Carrog.



A 1968 Morris Minor police car outside Llangollen station.



watercressline



watercress_line



thewatercressline



The Watercress Line



Railway Manager

Salary: Up to £65,000 per annum DOE

Location: Ropley and Medstead with some working at Alresford –
Primarily on site working required.

The Watercress Line are now looking to recruit an experienced Railway Manager.

In this role, you will be reporting directly to the CEO and will be part of the Senior Management Team. This is an infrastructure role to manage the delivery and forward planning of railway works and projects in:

- Rolling stock engineering
- Permanent Way
- Signals & Telecoms
- Estates

As the Railway Manager, you will be accountable for the infrastructure and engineering activity at The Watercress Line.

The objectives of the role are to:

- Provide safe and compliant railway infrastructure
- Provide safe, compliant and appropriate rolling stock
- Manage and develop trained and competent staff and volunteers
- Develop and manage appropriate work banks of maintenance
- Develop and oversee strategic investment in the railway infrastructure, estate and rolling stock aligned with the business plan.

Permanent Way Manager

Salary: Up to £40,000 per annum DOE

Location: Medstead and Four Marks Station - on site working required.

The Watercress Line are now looking to recruit an experienced Permanent Way Manager.

In this role, you will be responsible for the management of the Permanent Way up to the edge of the Boundary covering routine inspection and maintenance; work and work bank planning; and contributing to the planning and delivery of major project and renewals.

This Permanent Way Manager role is governed by the Mid-Hants Railway Ltd Safety Management System Standards for Permanent Way and all other relevant Standards.

The role covers:

- The Permanent Way to the edge of the boundary to include trackwork, drainage, fencing and vegetation management
- Civils maintenance up to agreed levels and contributing to the identification of issues and movement including earthworks monitoring and reporting, managing minor bridge issues and bridge strikes

As the Permanent Way Manager, you will be responsible for:

- Planning and organising work
- Safety and compliance
- Leading and developing teams
- Liaison with external stakeholders
- Developing and managing assets and budgets
- Budgets and Resources

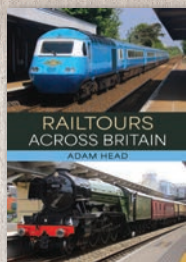
For full role specifications and to apply please contact / visit

sally-ann.king@realityhr.co.uk or visit www.watercressline.co.uk/support/recruitment/

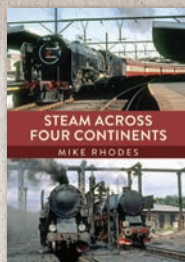
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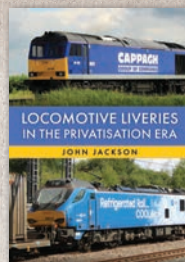
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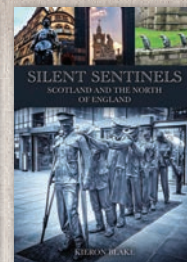
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Steam large and small for Welland at 60

Words and pictures
by Martin Creese

THE Ross-on-Wye Steam Engine Society hosted the 60th Annual Steam and Country Rally at its home at Welland, near Great Malvern, on July 24-26.

Bringing together vintage machinery, ranging from steam engines of both road and rail sorts to military vehicles and heavy machinery, the number of exhibits on show throughout the event was more than 1000.

The ethos of the rally is to be a working event, allowing visitors to see the exhibits in operation and doing what they were built for, rather than everything sitting static on display. This is achieved through working areas where road building is demonstrated, excavators can be seen in action, steam engines working ploughs, and saw mills and threshing equipment on show, along with a playpen for engines working singularly and in multiple to tow heavy loads up the hill. In addition, showman engines could be found powering a vintage fairground, with 23 of these machines in attendance this year.

Railways had a presence too, with a short section of standard gauge track hosting centenarian Kerr Stuart 'Witch' class 0-4-OST No. 4388 from the Foxfield Railway, which had been at the Severn Valley Railway the preceding weekend for its summer gala (as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 348). Slightly tongue



Kerr Stuart 'Witch' No. 4388 ran on the standard gauge line during the Welland steam rally, where it appeared on its way back to the Foxfield Railway after a visit to the Severn Valley Railway. Alongside is a steam roller once owned by Fred Dibnah, whose son owns the locomotive.

in cheek, this is known as the Great Welland Railway (with the obvious GWR acronym) and so No. 4388 carried a vinyl overlay for this on its saddle tank. The locomotive was outshopped from the Stoke-on-Trent works on July 30, 1926, so the Welland rally weekend doubled up as its birthday celebration. The locomotive is also now owned by Jack Dibnah, and the opportunity was taken to pose a steam roller that once belonged to his father, the late Fred Dibnah, alongside.

Continuing the standard gauge theme in the working area was a second section of standard gauge

track on which could be found the organising society's own Thomas Smith & Sons (of Rodley in Leeds) crane. The crane was in steam to move tree trunks over to the sawing benches, where they were subsequently cut into planks.

A 2ft gauge line runs alongside the road building area, the arena itself now in its 13th year. A collection of vintage machinery was on show here, with stone collected either by rail in the society-owned tiplers or by road vehicles and taken up to the stone crushers where, once crushed to the right size, the rubble was added to the growing strip and flattened

by all manner of steam and diesel road rollers. Rail motive power was provided by Alan Keef-built replica De Winton 0-4-OVB *Taffy*.

At the end of the line currently sits a small coal mine created on the principle of free mining in the Forest of Dean.

The weekend was graced with warm and dry weather and the fire risk was well-managed, with water bowlers and fire hoses at strategic points around the site.

The date for the 2027 annual Welland steam rally has been set for July 23-25: for details nearer the time, see wellandsteamrally.com



A Grafton steam crane lifted logs onto sawing equipment each day, the machines being steam-powered by the flywheel of traction engines.



On July 24, replica De Winton *Taffy* transported stone in tipper wagons, with the rubble being used for road-laying demonstrations throughout the rally weekend.

Heritage Railway readers – here's how to 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.

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RIGHT STOCK, RIGHT STORIES: GETTING THE MID-HANTS FUTURE-FIT

With its 50th anniversary on the horizon and an ever-changing set of challenges facing the sector, **Owen Hayward** speaks to Watercress Line CEO Rebecca Dalley about the development of a plan which hopes to carry the line to a sound footing by 2050, with a focus on getting the carriages and locomotives required back to a level needed to sustain it.

Enthusiasts can be a fickle bunch – we can be driven by our passions, but that can sometimes lead us to lose sight of the bigger picture. We each have our favourite locomotives we would fight the case for when it comes to its place in the overhaul queue, but as prices continue to soar and audiences change, so to must our heritage railways continue to adapt to ensure that the heart does not always lead

the head when it comes to the core business. With experience of heritage in other fields of tourism and leisure, Watercress Line CEO Rebecca Dalley is all too aware of such matters. Since stepping into the role three years ago, she has worked closely with the railway's volunteers and trustees to help guide it through some turbulent waters. There is still much work to be done; the development of a short-term plan to

see it through the next five years and the beginnings of a long-term one to take it to 2050 will undoubtedly be of benefit.

“Question one of the museum's accreditation process is, ‘what do you do and who are you for?’” Rebecca points out. “The trustees have been doing an enormous amount of work over the last year so we are absolutely clear about what we are here for, because if we're not here for it now, then can

The ‘ace in the hole’: Currently stored under cover in Margate, the MHR's ‘Black Five’ No. 45379 may not be part of the immediate short-term plan for overhauls, but its capabilities are very much in mind. The Stanier locomotive is seen at Bishops Sutton against a glorious sunset on April 16, 2016. STEVE MORLEY





Above: BR Standard 4MT No. 75079 is considered an ideal locomotive both in terms of power and economics. Having been based locally, it also has a regional connection which may play into its launch event when completed, in a similar manner to *Canadian Pacific* and the women of Eastleigh who built it. OWEN HAYWARD

Right: Once a stalwart of the MHR's fleet, BR 5MT No. 73096 is seen at Bowers Grove on March 29, 2011. It was sold to an undisclosed buyer in 2025 to allow the MHR to establish itself on a sounder financial footing, but there is no current plan to return it to service. STEVE MORLEY



we guarantee we'll be here in 2050? It's still early days for the long-term strategy, but it helps to know who you are to begin with.

"Much of this builds off the interim strategy I put together three years ago, focusing on some of the basic and not particularly big things that probably should have been but weren't necessarily being done at the time."

Shout about strengths

One of those tasks was to improve the railway's connections with its communities, making sure that they know, understand and appreciate why the railway is there – as well as its purpose, both historical and current. "That was about making sure we are pushing the Watercress story, creating that sense of place and cohesion, and just getting ourselves out there. There are still some areas to work on, of course; I don't think we've given the Alton end as much heft as we need to yet.

"To me, there was also a perception gap between what I found here in terms of how good everybody was and what outside people's expectations were. I would sometimes ask people outside the organisation, 'what are we good at? What do you think the railway is amazing for?' They didn't necessarily give a negative response, but there was a sense that they didn't really know what we did. They might have had a nice day out, but they weren't going away with the perception of 'they're amazing'.

"Local councillors and potential funders also had no idea what we were doing, so we needed to make a bigger thing of saying how brilliant we are at what we do. We are hoping that in September we might be the first heritage railway to get something called the Sanford Award, which is a really prestigious award for learning outside the classroom. It's very competitive and highly regarded, and Daniel Ball, our education and outreach coordinator, will be going to Kensington Palace to find out to find out if we've been successful. It's more of a benchmark award as opposed to a competitive award; if you've applied, you get the opportunity to participate. There was a big assessment which Daniel prepared brilliantly for, and some expert assessors looked at what we do.



Urie S15 No. 30506 (right) and Merchant Navy No. 35005 Canadian Pacific currently represent two-thirds of the MHR steam fleet capable of pulling full-line trains – something which is deemed unfeasible in the long term. An overhaul strategy aims to have four to five steam locomotives available at a time, balancing out operational, maintenance and overhaul requirements. OWEN HAYWARD

"Accessibility is also an ongoing matter. This isn't just in terms of catering for mobility impediments – it also refers to the explanation of the railway and our engineering at a level everyone can understand. I found it very difficult to access that information when I arrived for my first ride as a visitor and I want to solve that problem. I'm not saying that we do this now, but there's a whole piece on explaining how railways changed society; we need to do that really creatively, because we are not a museum – we put people on trains and give them a great railway experience.

"We've broken the organisation down into groups and are actively looking to identify what we already know and where we need to come together to understand where we are

heading. We want a shared central purpose, an agreed response to the changing environment, clear thinking, and to make the most of opportunities while avoiding costly mistakes, because there have been instances where, in hindsight, we could and perhaps should have done things differently. Having come from big funding backgrounds, I would rather raise a bit more money and get it right than raise just enough and end up with something that's not quite suitable for our needs.

"Essentially, we've got a vision, and one that I wouldn't want to say is not ambitious, because I think continuing to be a heritage railway in Hampshire in 2050 is going to be really hard. We need to make sure that the organisation isn't just running a railway, but that we



Class 205 DEMU No. 1125 is another item of stock to have once frequented the line under BR ownership, seen here in the sidings at Ropley on July 27. Fundraising for its overhaul is continuing, with a strong desire to see this 'Thumper' back in service in the near future. With limited resources available in the railway's own works, this may mean the two-car unit is sent for the work to be completed by a contractor off-site, although no decision has yet been made. In the meantime, donations are sought in readiness for when the time comes to start the work. OWEN HAYWARD



Lord Nelson, the sole-survivor of its namesake class of 4-6-0s, celebrates its centenary this year and has been on display in the yard at Ropley during the summer. Although there is much affection for this National Railway Museum-owned locomotive among both enthusiasts and MHR volunteers, Rebecca says the railway must first focus on its own fleet – but a possible overhaul has not been ruled out. To the left is some of the cladding for West Country No. 34007 Wadebridge, which will be returning in SR Malachite green and spend at least a year at the railway before going main line. OWEN HAYWARD

continue to make emotional connections with people. That's quite challenging because by 2050, nearly everybody's first experience of steam will be on lines such as ours."

Commitment to coal

Where some railways are exploring oil-burning for steam locomotives as a response to the now regular 'steam ban season,' Rebecca is keen to see the Watercress Line continue to rely on coal, at least for the next five years.

"I would rather put efforts towards ensuring we can continue to burn coal, partly because as beneficial as it is as a concept is for the sector, I don't think anyone has quite got oil-firing right yet and we don't need to be pioneers in that area – we've got enough on our plate," she said. "I don't want to say never, but I think it's really important that the skills of firing a big locomotive up a hill are maintained.

"Conversion to oil-firing would also involve a huge retraining programme – that's a distraction we don't need right now. I think people probably underestimate how challenging it is; we've got a big bank of drivers and firemen, and it is not a simple job to introduce new technology and roll the training out across the entire volunteer base of footplate crews. Some of them don't get all that many turns as it is, and it can be hard enough jumping from firing 'Thomas' running up and down the yard at Ropley and *Canadian Pacific* on a heavily-laden dining train over the Alps – that is already a massive difference.

"We want to continue to be a living, working railway connecting the past with the future, for generations beyond 2050. There's a quite a lot to unpacking that to allow us to get to grips with and work out the answer to the questions of how we emotionally connect somebody when nobody remembers steam, how we, as a heritage railway, make sure they are going to be connecting to the heritage of their past, and how controversial it is.

"We've had a really good practice with the Class 150; it has been a revelation that people have an emotional connection to something that, to me, is still quite a recent thing, and most of my trustees have been baffled, but we cannot ignore it, and we'll need to recognise into the future.

"We want to grow our footfall from 130,000 visitors a year to 200,000, and that's just part of

the realities of life. Given what it costs to run, if we haven't got that kind of footfall coming through as a visitor attraction, we're not going to survive.

"To some extent, the numbers are secondary to the fact that it's all about the thresholds: the visitor experience, the community engagement, and the storytelling. We are not going to be able to move people emotionally in order to move them physically unless we get that visitor experience right.

"We must be making the case that people's lives are enriched by our railway to an extent where they want to keep it, they fight to keep it, and they hopefully fight to allow us to burn coal."

Youthful insight

While every heritage railway is mindful of volunteer and staff retention, change in a workforce should not necessarily be frowned upon either, said Rebecca, as it can bring fresh eyes and ideas from people who might be better connected with potential audiences.

"I have a very new and very young team on the on the visitor side in terms of marketing, ticketing and commercial, and that is something I really celebrate. Only they can look at what we've got and say, 'this is interesting to my generation' or 'this is going to stand the test of time' or 'this is how we make it fun,' which really gives us confidence and hope that there is a genuine future.

"It's also got us thinking about whether we still want to be the Watercress Line. Whatever we do, we must make sure that we're clear about it, because not everyone knows what the Watercress Line is – it's not always obvious that a line is a railway, and we certainly don't say where we are either.

"The term Mid-Hants isn't something that the public really understands the meaning of anymore – it was a contraction used for addressing envelopes, but when was the last time most of us hand-wrote a letter? Even a drop-down box on a website now normally says Hampshire, not Hants.

"When I asked some of my team if they knew what Hants meant in the context of this area, they didn't, and some had never heard it before, because why would they? We need to make it very clear that we're Hampshire's heritage railway.

"Furthermore, the key to creating an emotional connecton is that everybody coming to the railways goes away with something that they didn't know before and look at the world in a different way.

"One of the things I was very struck by during the Railway 200 year was how little of the railway story I knew. I love to talk to others about 'my' railway, and it was only really last year that I was catching up on the wider story, which I found fascinating to the extent that I look at landscapes and the way industry works in a different way.

"I spent quite a lot of time on the edges of the financial world in my career, but I can go to high finance people now and point out how the democratisation of shareholding was a railway concept.





The response to the arrival of the Class 150 'Sprinter' caught some at the MHR by surprise. Despite examples of the class still in use on the national network, many were excited by the decision to preserve No. 150231, which shows how the term 'heritage' is constantly changing. Rebecca points out that being aware of this fact will be essential to maintaining an "emotional connection" with potential future audiences, many of whom will not remember their heyday of steam but are more likely to have travelled on units like the 'Sprinter' on daily commutes. OWEN HAYWARD

"One of the things I find brilliant about the Watercress Line is that we've got every story here. We have freight carriage, strategic contribution to war, commuters... Jane Austen's nephew was a part of the investment group which set up the original railway."

The right carriages

So, just how does the rolling stock fit into this vision? Fundamentally, it's about getting the right stock in both quantity and purpose to deliver it.

"We had some principles for our carriage planning, and this phase of the project was to identify what our business needs. In the past, we had more carriages available than we do currently, but that has dwindled over time and we're just about running three sets at the

moment. This means there is an enormous amount of pressure when it comes to doing the annual inspections, because it doesn't take that much to fail something needing a lot of repair work, and we don't have spares available to just swap it.

"Steam illuminations is our event with the biggest capacity, and for this we use absolutely everything we've got on the railway – that's quite perilous, because there's no wiggle room at all.

"The first of our new principles is that the first four carriages in our overhaul process are not currently running carriages, so we create new capacity that allows us to occasionally run bigger trains, but more importantly gives us resilience so something can fail without it becoming a drama.



A diesel strategy is currently being worked on separately to the steam plan, recognising the importance of such locomotives to the railway's ability to maintain operations and appeal to broader audiences. Class 47 No. 47579 and Class 20 D8059 rub shoulders in the sidings at Ropley; a recent fundraising appeal will now see a lean-to style structure put up to create some undercover storage space for the locomotives and Thumper, thus sheltering them from the worst of the elements. OWEN HAYWARD

"We then recognised that there's one coach that is the highest risk of all – our bar car, which sits in the Alresford set all day, every day, and then does the evening Real Ale Trains. That does the highest mileage of anything we currently have, and that's not sustainable. If we need to take it out for whatever reason, such as the overhaul we know it needs, we've got no bar car. The Real Ale Train is a brilliant earner and fantastic driver of people to the railway, so we can't afford to lose it.

"The second principle was a really interesting one for me: prioritising vehicles with multiple functions. I was interested to learn about the heritage of some of the sets we have that were created with such use in mind, particularly on these smaller branch lines where you had types of coaches that did a bit of everything. ➔

"A bit of a diva": While having a locomotive such as No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* is great for a flagship, it isn't the most economical of locomotives, said Rebecca. The *Merchant Navy* is seen here at Northside Lane on February 14, 2026. OWEN HAYWARD



They had a guard's compartment with storage for luggage, First Class compartments and Second Class compartments, so as well as having some stock that we want to present as realistically heritage as it could, we also thought about what a multi-function coach for the 21st century would look like and do. We don't necessarily need First or Second Class compartments or somewhere for all the post luggage to go – what we do need are vehicles that allow wheelchair use and buggies and make people welcome. We do need more brake coaches, and it was these types that were very often the multi-functional ones.

"Part of this plays into the aim of having accessibility on every service, but not necessarily in every carriage. We did start off thinking that every coach should have accessibility in mind, but the reality is that our platforms don't allow us to get people using wheelchairs into every carriage – we must be realistic. But we absolutely want accessibility on every set. For a whole year after I started, we didn't have accessibility on the set that started the day at Alton. We want those with mobility needs to find it really easy to use our services.

"Our third principle recognises that there isn't a need for full catering on every set, which is really important, especially as we have just invested a huge amount in our kitchen car. You don't build a hotel and construct a second kitchen – you make the use of the one you've got.

"If it does go down, the reality is we can make it work and fix it. What we need to focus on are smaller investments to speed up service and make it really easy for us to do because we're doing much, much more of putting things onto trains to enhance people's journeys – pie and mash, fish and chips, afternoon tea... anything on a train you can find, you get, because that's what the market demands, and that's really working for us. We just need to be able to facilitate that a bit better.

"With all of this in mind, we have scored the needs for all of our coaches through a thorough assessment to identify what state they are in and what resilience we require should it go down, as well as how big a business impact it has.

"The Real Ale Train's brake coach, No. 4024, is in the works at the moment and we've improved the accessibility there, so that will go into the Alton set. Once those are done, there's a series of minor works on existing operational stock, followed by another two big overhauls

on some TSOs. There's a clear pipeline of capacity, resilience, and skill-building; this plan gives everybody a defined sense what needs to be done to take the pressure off things.

"I don't want us to be in a situation where we need people working overnight in order to repair something essential so we can run a train the next day. We haven't had to do that for several years, but it did happen.

"Some people have asked about the LMS saloon, No. 45045. That doesn't fit into the plan at the moment only because it doesn't solve any of the problems we're facing – it's a 'nice to have.'

"It is covered in tarpaulin currently, but in regard to the next five years, we are in the position where we must focus on the business. If a benefactor walked through the door, gave us the money and told us to do it, then we could send it away to be overhauled, but for the immediate future, we have to focus on very boring but nonetheless crucial principles, because despite what people say, the saloon won't make us money.

"Yes, it could be used for private hires, but the amount of those you would need just to cover that cost means it is a non-starter right now. At the end of the day, running a railway is about putting bums on seats – and we need lots of them."

Locomotive plan

In addition to getting the right carriages for the passengers, you also need the right motive power to move them. Weighing up business and operational needs, said Rebecca, has led to the conclusion that the railway needs four and a half locomotives available each year, but it has only two and a half at the moment. A study of the fleet has resulted in a plan for overhauls to expand the fleet as required.

"Once again, our motive power strategy is driven first and foremost by the operational requirements of the Mid-Hants Railway. We must have the right motive power that's not going to break the bank. We are still finalising the diesel strategy, and that will be quite an interesting thing to digest because it will recognise the harsh realities of changing climates and the changing demographics, but for the core business we want to continue running, we need steam.

"Factors that have shaped this include reliability and workshop efficiency. For optimum maintenance cycles, our ambition is to use each locomotive for between 70 and

80 steaming days each year. Too many more than that means a higher chance of short-term failure or even early withdrawal.

"Currently, we are using some locomotives for 100 days a year. You might think that's great because you only get 10 years on a boiler ticket, but that actually means it's likely to fail more quickly, and it also means more wash-outs must be planned for. That then also makes business planning hard, because we then have to take staff away from third-party contract jobs to fix our own assets.

"Efficiency is an important factor too; we need big engines to manage big loads up a big hill. That alone defines a minimum size; in this case, power class four and above. When I see *Canadian Pacific* just doing its thing, it's an absolute joy to behold, but it is a huge locomotive – a bit of a diva, perhaps – and I certainly wouldn't want 10 of them. They're a very hungry and high-maintenance class.

"We do recognise the star power of some locomotives, such as No. 35005, and that some just make a statement when you see them, but we need locomotives that just do what you need them to do. Having a variety means we have the ability to tell different stories all at the same time, and broadening that out becomes a really critical piece too.

"In the works at the moment is BR 4MT 4-6-0 No. 75079 under restoration, which is a trust-owned locomotive. That will have great efficiency, easily able to pull six coaches, and it has been progressing through the works for about 15 years. It's the one we will be going hell for leather with to finish. You can't put an exact date on these things, but we're aiming to see it running at some point in 2028.

"We've also got 9F No. 92212 from Locomotive Services Limited in there at the moment, on which we're doing the bottom end overhaul while they focus on the boiler. Nothing has been signed in terms of an operating agreement and we're not committing to it, but there is the option of having it is available, and we have provisionally included it in the strategy as a stop-gap measure.

"Then there is the Urie Locomotive Society's second S15, No. 499. The society's long-term intention is to keep at least one of the two in service at any time. Our enthusiasm to support the group and the operation of the locomotives is utterly undimmed – the society is a fantastic resource for us and has fully signed up to being an embedded part of our strategy. At the moment, we're forecasting to see a brief window with the two together in 2029, just before No. 506 is due to be withdrawn that June.

"No. 34007 *Wadebridge* is another diva, so to speak – it doesn't quite hit all the marks, but it's been externally funded, and there is a plan for it to go onto the main line. When it's completed, we will have it for the first year before it goes back in for the equipment needed to be fitted and tested; thereafter, it will be available to us for short stints between its tour duties.

"The National Railway Museum's No. 850 *Lord Nelson* is something else we get asked about quite often. We do need flagships that people recognise, and this is an interesting one. We adore it as a locomotive and love having it here, but we must look at our own locomotives first.



The chassis for the front half of S15 No. 499 has recently been moved into the main workshops at Ropley for attention as its restoration continues apace under the Urie Locomotive Society...

OWEN HAYWARD



...while in the yard, the tender has seen new metalwork on the tank welded into place. It is hoped that both of the society's locomotives will be in steam together for a brief window in 2028, when No. 506 is due to be withdrawn.

OWEN HAYWARD

Seen at Wanders Curve on April 30, 2024 is the SDJR Society's LMS 7F No. 13808. Now out of ticket, it is undergoing overhaul at Ropley, although there is currently no agreement signed to see it operate there once completed. OWEN HAYWARD



"There is provision for it in the plan, but we're not going to commit to it either at the moment. We have brought it out of storage and cleaned it up as it celebrates its centenary this year, so it will be on static display in the yard at Ropley, allowing people to see it properly for the first time in quite a while.

"The 'Black Five' No. 45379 is another locomotive belonging to the trust and is currently stored in the One:One Collection building at Margate. It's been away for a long time, but that is in part because we need to finish what we already have on our plate.

"We don't want to do everything at once because this is a long cycle, but the 'Black Five' definitely fits into that – it's a good workhorse, which is why there are several of them in preservation.

"At the moment, I'd say it's an ace we are holding on to – otherwise, we'll have overhauled everything all at once, with nothing available further down the line.

"4MT 2-6-4T No. 80150 was a local locomotive and is making gradual progress; there's a group focused on that, but it is a huge job so we've not factored it into the short-term plan. It was one of the last to leave Barry, so was about as stripped down and tired as you could get, but the team are doing a brilliant job of keeping it ticking over, making sure we are collecting the bits needed so we can figure out where it sits in the longer-term plan.

"One locomotive definitely not in the plan is 5MT No. 73096, which we sold to a private owner last year. That's their responsibility to overhaul but nothing is expected to happen any time soon, and we certainly don't know what the next step for it will be. Being honest, with Nos. 75079, 45379 and the enthusiasm behind 80150, realistically, we probably don't need it. It might have been an easier one to have overhauled than the 4MT tank, but it was also the best choice to sell on and keep the railway in business.

"Short-term, we have No. 4247 from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, which will be staying until the end of 2027, giving us the reassurance that we can deliver our Steam

Illuminations in full. Last year we had nothing in hand, and No. 506 had a problem on the last very day, so we swapped for diesel. We lucked out there, because if that had failed on the first day with a big enough issue, then we would have had no steam locomotive to replace it with – and it is 'steam' illuminations, not diesel illuminations. While the experience on board is still great and people were very understanding, it's not what it says on the tin."

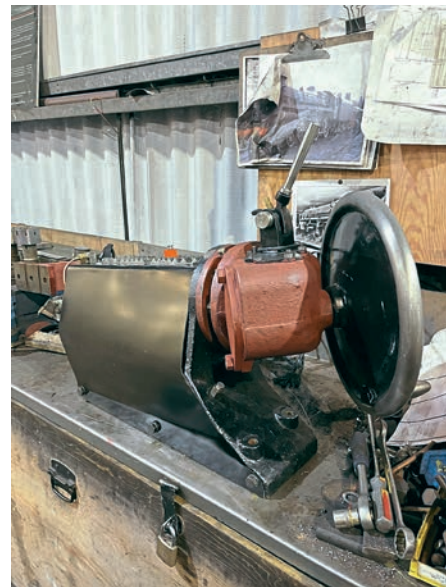
Clearly, the railway is on an upward trajectory towards a much more stable footing that it had in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, and while there is still work to do, things look very promising – or, as Rebecca puts it: "We've become so much better, but we hope to be much more so. The patient is out of intensive care and is definitely on the mend in the hospital, but recovery is a little bit slower than we hoped." **HR**



Above: Another locally-shedded locomotive, known to have run over the Watercress Line in BR days, is No. 80150, which arrived from Barry in January 2011. Although it has not been factored into the short-term strategy, a group is currently raising the funds and acquiring the parts needed to return it to service. OWEN HAYWARD



Above: Part of the locomotive's overhaul includes the fabrication of a new tender tank, the previous one having been found to be life-expired. The tender chassis will need the front-end framework completely rebuilt due to substantial corrosion. ROGER HARDINGHAM/SDJRT



The locomotive's reverser assembly has recently been completed, while new sandboxes and cab floor brackets have been made. MARTIN ORFORD/MHR



25346

LMS

13268

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Passing by: the driver of LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 grabs the chance of a quick cuppa while the locomotive is held at the gantry signal outside Kidderminster Town with an empty stock movement as GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7714 passes with the 10.15am service to Bridgnorth on August 2. JOHN TITLOW



Stanier mogul to make return to the main line after 28 years

By Robin Jones

SEVERN Valley Railway-based LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 is to return to main line service later this year.

Under a new arrangement between the owning Stanier Mogul Fund, the heritage line and Tyseley-based Vintage Trains, No. 13268 will haul main line rail tours once again, alongside its ongoing appearances at the SVR.

It is planned that its first Vintage Trains outing will be heading the 'Worcester Shakespeare Express' on November 8.

Outshopped in January 1934 and first allocated to Willesden motive power depot, the 2-6-0 originally entered service as No. 13268 before being renumbered 2968 the following year. After Nationalisation came in 1948, it became No. 42968 and was the penultimate class member in service, lasting until December 31, 1966.

Among the high points of its career was hauling the 8.40am Bournemouth to Bradford Exchange express via the Lickey Incline on August 8, 1959, heading it from Bath at least as far as Derby. Its last recorded working was on December 14, 1966, when it was seen passing Preston on the 6.35pm parcels train from Liverpool Lime Street.

It carried six boilers throughout its career prior to withdrawal at Wigan Springs Branch motive power depot on December 31, 1966, after which it was towed to Woodham Bros' scrapyard in Barry for scrap in June 1967.

The fund was established in 1971 with the aim of preserving it. It was



LMS Stanier mogul No. 13268 appearing at The Greatest Gathering Railway 200 event at Alstom's Litchurch Lane plant in Derby on August 3, 2025. ROBIN JONES

purchased in 1973 and moved to Bridgnorth on December 13/14 that year as the 45th locomotive rescued from Barry, by then the sole class survivor.

After restoration to working order in its second LMS livery, No. 2968 entered revenue-earning service with the SVR on April 20, 1991, and immediately became popular with footplate crews as a strong, sure-footed, powerful and free-steaming locomotive.

Main line comeback

Between December 7, 1996, and January 31, 1998, the mogul took part in 14 main line runs, visiting Carlisle, Weymouth, Holyhead and York in the east, covering many lines over which the class had never previously worked and without a single failure recorded. Its heritage era 'firsts' included a steam-hauled

train up the Lickey Incline, aided by SVR-based GWR mogul No. 7325, the first eastbound steam over Copy Pit since 1968, and taking part in the first diverted steam special in preservation history.

Apart from periods out of traffic for overhaul, the locomotive gave many years of sterling service until 2013 and carried both the Nos. 2968 and 42968 identities, earning the nickname 'the Mighty Mogul'. After its most recent overhaul, it returned to traffic in 2023 temporarily as No. 2968 before emerging from the SVR's paint shop in April 2024 carrying its original LMS number for the first time in more than 80 years.

SVR CEO Gus Dunster said: "It's going to be fantastic to see 13268 back out on the national network, hauling prestigious main line rail tours once again. It's a striking locomotive that's hugely

popular with our visitors, and it has become a stalwart of both our regular services and special events.

"We are delighted to be working in partnership with Vintage Trains and the Stanier Mogul Fund to make this happen. This collaboration ensures the locomotive can continue to delight passengers both on the SVR and on the national network, giving even more people the opportunity to experience this remarkable survivor in action."

Operational ambassador

Fund chairman Peter Holder said: "Our founders rescued this locomotive from Barry more than 50 years ago, and generations of members, volunteers and supporters have worked tirelessly to ensure that the sole-surviving Stanier Mogul remains an operational ambassador for Britain's railway heritage. Seeing the locomotive back on the main line is another significant milestone in its remarkable preservation story, and we are grateful to the SVR and Vintage Trains for working with us to make this possible."

Vintage Trains managing director Nick Ralls said: "We are delighted to welcome No. 13268 into the VT fleet. It's a locomotive with tremendous character and historical significance, and we know our passengers and enthusiasts alike will be excited by the opportunity to travel behind the only surviving Stanier mogul."

Until No. 13268's first appearance on the main line, visitors will continue to be able to see and ride behind the locomotive in service on the SVR as part of its operating fleet, including at the upcoming steam gala.

West Country tour to Swanage will take Bulleid No. 34028 back to its home

By Tim Hobman

THE Railway Touring Company's annual trip to Swanage this year will be on Wednesday, September 16, hauled by West Country light Pacific No. 34028 Eddystone.

Titled 'The Swanage Belle' and starting out steam-hauled from London Victoria, the tour will cross the River Thames at Battersea and again at Barnes for the next passenger pickup at Brentford. Passing through Feltham, the next stop will be Staines for yet more passengers. Crossing the Thames for the third time, the

tour is expected to pick up the South Western Main Line at Byfleet Junction for the next passenger pick-up at Woking. Following a water stop at Winchfield, the final pick-up point is will be Basingstoke.

Taking the West of England Line to Worting Junction, the tour will run over the South West Main Line via Southampton and Bournemouth to Wareham. There, the four will take the reopened link from Worgret Junction to Norden and on to Swanage Railway metals to head to the resort.

Passengers will then have just under three hours to explore

Swanage before the return journey. Leaving Swanage diesel-hauled, the tour will retrace the route back to Wareham and then run via Bournemouth and Poole to Southampton.

At Southampton, the diesel is scheduled to be exchanged for steam, which will then follow a slightly different route from the outward journey. Running via Romsey to the outskirts of Salisbury, the train will take the West of England Line at Laverstock North Junction to Andover and the first passenger set-down at Basingstoke.

After Basingstoke, the tour is scheduled to retrace the route of the outward journey, setting down passengers at their joining stations en route back to London Victoria. Once in the capital and just before Victoria, there is an option to alight from the train at Clapham Junction, but this is only for the return leg of the tour.

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



An experience that most people in England and Wales could only dream of during this record heatwave summer: filling in for the booked steam locomotive following Network Rail's Code Black ban on steam, Class 40 No. 40013 climbs Langho Bank on Saphos Trains' 'Settle and Carlisle Fellsman' tour from Crewe and return on August 6 as the sky darkens. Moments later, linesiders were to suffer a drenching from the incoming heavy downpour. TOM MCATEE

Oldest living Taunton station staff member honoured

By Robin Jones

THE guest of honour at the unveiling ceremony of a new sensory garden at Taunton's main line station was West Somerset Railway Association long-standing member and volunteer Clive Goddard, who joined British Railways there in 1949 straight from school aged 15.

Clive, who turned 92 on the same weekend that the WSR celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, as highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 344, is the last living member of the Taunton station staff from that time. Back then, the heaviest of the express trains passing by him in the telegraph office were headed by GWR King 4-6-0s, and after he retired, he modelled one of them. The large-scale result has pride of place in Taunton station's entrance hall and booking office area. The model was donated by Clive to the WSR which made a long-term loan arrangement with GWR, in part to

serve as a promotional display for West Somerset Railway and also to acknowledge Clive's long and valued service to WSR, GWR and BR.

Constructed from recycled materials including aluminium signs that were part of the flowerbeds on the station's central platform, in anticipation of Prince Charles's succession, he named his model *King Charles III* and gave it the number 6030 (the last of the King class was No. 6029, originally named *King Stephen* and later *King Edward VIII*).

Blooming career

Clive established and maintained the Taunton flowerbeds after his retirement, and furthermore as head gardener, he was a leading light for many years in the work that ensured Bishops Lydeard station also had attractive award-winning floral displays. His efforts brought multiple Taunton In Bloom awards to both stations. Clive and his wife were also caretakers of the GWR volunteer

accommodation coach previously located in the Bishops Lydeard locomotive compound.

The official opening of the new 83B Garden at Taunton was the reason for Clive being asked to attend on the afternoon of July 22, but he was unaware that he was also going to unveil the former nameplate carried by a Class 43 power car.

When the modern-day GWR bade goodbye to its Class 125 Inter-City High Speed Trains, it retained several with a reduced number of carriages in the formation and dubbed them the Class 255 Castle class. One of the power cars was named *Taunton Castle* and, to his surprise, Clive was asked to unveil one of the nameplates, which is now plinthed and mounted in the booking office following the withdrawal of the vehicle. The nameplate was refurbished by Newton Replicas of Derby.

Taunton's mayor, Coun Bev Fernandes, accompanied by David Northey, of Severnside Community

Rail Partnership, and Adam Hopkins, GWR's Taunton station manager, formally opened the new floral area at the station, before Clive led the celebrations inside the booking hall.

After the unveiling, attendees visited the adjacent Great Western Hotel for light refreshments.

Sensory experience

The new floral area is intended to offer a sensory experience. Occupying a large part of a former bay platform area adjacent to Platform 5, and named 83B after the BR Taunton locoshed code, it has a variety of plants intended to support insect life and seating to offer passengers a chance to relax.

→ Three years after Clive began his railway service, No. 7036 *Taunton Castle* emerged as a new build from Swindon Works. As the penultimate member of its class, it had a short working life, the onset of dieselisation leading to its withdrawal in 1963.



Clive Goddard officially unveils the nameplate from Class 255 *Taunton Castle*. WSR



Above: The sensory garden opening group on July 22. WSR

Left: Clive (seated) inside Taunton station alongside the GWR King 4-6-0 he built. WSR

Bo-Bo's comeback a triumph – but could Met trips days be at an end?

Words and pictures
by Owen Hayward

HERITAGE trips along part of the London Underground Metropolitan Line saw crowds flock to Metroland to see two forms of traction found running between Amersham, Watford and Harrow-on-the-Hill.

However, as the LU network continues to adapt, modern signalling equipment means that the future of such operations may now be in jeopardy.

As reported last issue, July 25-27 saw the return to service of Metropolitan Bo-Bo No. 12 *Sarah Siddons* following an extensive overhaul split between Eastleigh and South Ruislip depots. Initially withdrawn in 2019 for new wheelsets, it was then found that new axles were needed too, with further delays resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The first day of the three-day weekend saw two trips run between Amersham and Harrow, with BR Class 20 No. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* leading in the southward direction and *Sarah Siddons* on the northward return. Passenger stock came in the form of LU's 4TC unit, turned out in matching London Transport maroon following a repaint in late 2017 that ditched the faux teak effect it had carried for many years.

This consist also contained LMS district engineer's saloon No. 45029 *Florence Nightingale*, making its first appearance on a public service since at least 1999; built in 1942, it is believed to hold the claim of being the last vehicle aboard which the whole Royal Family travelled in 1969.

On June 30 that year, the Royal Train departed Euston at 10.25pm, destined for Menai Bridge, where it arrived at 3.10am, briefly stabling there before moving to a temporary platform in the Ferodo factory to allow the family to alight for the remainder of the journey to Prince Charles's investiture



Sarah Siddons passes through Rickmansworth on July 24 on its final trip to Amersham for the day. In the early days of the Metropolitan Bo-Bos, this station would be the point on the line where steam would take over the rest of the run towards destinations such as Aylesbury.

at Caernarfon Castle. At some point that morning, before the move to the investiture, an outing to Britannia Bridge and back ran, with the saloon conveying 14 members of the family, those on board including HRH Princess Anne, the Duke of Gloucester and the late Queen Elizabeth II.

On January 30, 1972, the saloon was also used on a reopening special for the Britannia Bridge, which had been severely damaged in a fire on May 23, 1970.

No. 45029 fell out of use just before the turn of the millennium and was stored at Motherwell depot. This site closed in 2007, and repeated vandalism saw its quick decay, with the saloon known to have become a home to local drug addicts as a result.

The Railway Heritage Committee identified No. 45029 as a vehicle of significant railway history, so it was saved and moved to Ruislip on April 30, 2009. An extensive restoration has since taken place, including structural work at Eastleigh Depot in 2010.

It is named after the woman who founded the practices of modern nursing.

Over the Saturday and Sunday of the running weekend, arranged by London Transport Museum

in partnership with London Underground itself, this locomotive-hauled consist ran three return trips between Amersham and Watford, which included the opportunity to enjoy rare passenger conveyance over the north side of the Watford triangle, typically only used by one or two LU services at the very start and end of each day.

This run was then followed by a single trip to Harrow-on-the-Hill, from where the formation reversed to head for the depot.

Running in tandem over the weekend was the 1938 tube stock; this has been a regular sight on the network over the last few years, having been LTM's only operational heritage unit. It is believed that this weekend is the first time that two heritage trains have operated on LU metals since the early 2000s, when Steam on the Met specials were a common fixture and could sometimes see parallel runs taking place.

Signalling the end?

While LTM's heritage trips largely sold out, there are concerns that their days are now numbered.

Much of the LU network has seen upgrades to in-cab signalling to



No. 20147 *Sir John Betjeman* crosses onto the London-bound line as it departs with one of the heritage trips on July 24.

enable an increased frequency of trains to operate, which has done away with the conventional colour light signals, and as such, heritage stock is presently incompatible.

This situation means that the central London lines are currently out of bounds. The result of these upgrades is that sights such as those witnessed during the 150th anniversary events of 2013 – which saw Metropolitan E class 0-4-4T No. 1 return to work trips between Edgware Road and Moorgate – are not possible, with the Metropolitan Line north of Harrow currently the only parts available for such services.

However, this route too is soon due to see the upgrades fitted, which could bring down the curtain on the enjoyment of heritage stock running on the Underground until such a time as funding and compatible equipment can be found.

Despite this, LTM remains committed to finding ways of operating its heritage fleet on the network. Curator Henry Flynn said: "The vehicles are the pride and joy of our collection. While it's lovely to see them as static displays, it's really nice to get them back as they were meant to be used, and to see the public enjoy them and interact with them directly."

"The stations we can currently run to and from are determined by LU and Transport for London, but we have a very good relationship with them. It would be lovely to see our trains go back down into the tunnels – I think that's what people enjoy, but there are currently practical reasons why we can't do this."

"The 1938 stock in particular really is one of the jewels of our collection and it's beautifully restored. It is so nice to actually get to sit in it and experience what it was like to travel on a tube train in the mid-20th century. We are hopeful that there will be more of these events next year."



The driver observes the line ahead as a modern S stock unit passes on its way south. The dim lighting, brass gauges and exposed cables and pipes add to the ambience of *Sarah Siddons*'s cab.



LMS saloon No. 45029 *Florence Nightingale* has been exquisitely restored since being rescued from the abandoned Motherwell depot in 2009. It now serves as a support vehicle for heritage operations and LU's engineers.



Locomotive Services Limited's two-tone green-liveried Class 47 D1924 *Crewe Diesel Depot* powers the Saphos Trains Down 1207 5.40am Ely to Kingswear 'The English Riviera Express' over the viaduct at Dawlish on the approach to Marine Parade on August 7. D1924 was left in sole charge after D1935 *Roger Hoskins MA 1925-2013*, which had been on the rear of the charter, was taken off at Westbury following reports of a fire. Dragging brakes on D1935, which was checked out by the fire brigade, had caused shifted tyres, so it was deemed unsafe to continue and was left in Patney Siding at Westbury. THOMAS MILLS

A pair of 50s for Toots charity tour to the Scottish capital

By Tim Hobman

THE Branch Line Society has announced a tour from London to Edinburgh on Saturday, September 12 in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support.

The 'Toots Express' will start out from the slightly unusual location of Alexandra Palace behind a pair of Class 50s and a rake of Mk.3 carriages. Heading north on the East Coast Main Line, the next passenger pick-ups are scheduled for Potters Bar, Stevenage and Hitchin. From there, the tour will take the East Coast Main Line to the flyover at Hitchin Junction and run onto the Cambridge branch. The next passenger pick-ups will be Letchworth Garden City, Royston, and Cambridge, before the tour heads to Ely on the Fen Line for yet more customers.

Taking the Ely-Peterborough Line, the next stop will be March and then Peterborough for the next passenger pick-ups.

After leaving Peterborough, in true BLS style, the route north is

not planned to be direct. Leaving the ECML at the Werrington Deviation, the tour will head to Lincoln via Spalding and the Sleaford Avoider.

Passing through Lincoln and taking the line to Doncaster, the tour will pass through Saxilby and Gainsborough Lea Road before rejoining the ECML just prior to Doncaster.

Heading north

The final sprint north is booked to be on the ECML through Doncaster on the Down Fast, then to York Platform 10 for a brief leg-stretch of about 20 minutes and the final opportunity for passengers to join.

On the move again, the tour will continue north to Durham and then Newcastle, where passengers have the option to alight at both locations.

Those leaving the train at Durham will have just under seven hours to explore the area, whereas those who choose Newcastle will have just over six hours to look around. The final leg is scheduled

to be through Morpeth and Berwick-upon-Tweed, to arrive in Edinburgh mid-afternoon.

After two-and-a-half hours in the Scottish capital, the journey home is planned to be by a more direct route, this time straight south on the ECML. Picking up those passengers who alighted at Newcastle and Durham, the train is then planned to run to York to set down those that joined the tour there. Running fast through Doncaster and Newark North Gate, the next passenger drop-offs are planned for Peterborough, March and Ely as the train retraces the route of the outward journey.

Setting down passengers at their joining stations, the final stop of the tour is planned to be Finsbury Park rather than Alexandra Palace, arriving just after midnight.

Tickets are available in First Class dining, First Class non-dining and Standard Class. There is a discount for junior travellers, and a buffet car will be on board the train.

→ For more details, visit www.branchline.uk

'Dreaming Spires Pullman' heads to Oxford

MIDLAND Pullman is to run a tour featuring its luxury HST set from Penzance to Oxford on Saturday, September 19, titled the 'Dreaming Spires Pullman.'

After Penzance, passenger pick-ups are planned for St Erth, then Redruth, Truro, St Austell, Bodmin Parkway, Liskeard and Plymouth, before heading to Exeter.

Heading north, the tour will deviate after Taunton toward Swindon on the Great Western Main Line. From Swindon, the tour will run to Didcot and onto the Cherwell Valley Line for a short run north to the destination of Oxford.

Passengers will have two-and-a-half hours to explore the city before the return journey over the same route, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in either Pullman dining or First Class non-dining.

→ For more details and to book, visit midlandpullman.com



Locomotive Services Limited's Class 43 Midland Blue Pullman HST, with power cars Nos. M43050 *Loch Morar* and M43055, heads east along the Dawlish seawall in early-morning sunshine with the 1Z32 6.16am Paignton to Scarborough 'Yorkshire Coast Pullman' tour on August 12. THOMAS MILLS



The 125 Group ventured to the South West for the first time on August 8 with 'The Summer Riviera' tour from Manchester Victoria to Paignton. The tour employed the group's smart seven-coach InterCity Executive-liveried Mk. 3 set, comprising coaches Nos. 41067, 41057, 40730, 42119, 42120, 42111 and 44000, powered by Class 43 No. 43025 *Exeter* in Swallow livery and No. 43089 in East Midlands Trains livery. The return leg is seen powering towards Cogload Junction with No.43089 leading the 4.45pm Paignton to Manchester Victoria, the Blackdown Hills providing the backdrop. RUSSELL AYRE

Sell-out trip for UK Raitours

By Tim Hobman

UK Raitours' 'The Southern Seaside Sparrow' tour on Saturday, October 3 was fully booked as this issue closed for press, although an extra carriage may be added. In addition, there is a positioning move advertised for the previous day, with places still available.

Starting from Ely behind a Class 37/4, 'The Southern Seaside Sparrow' is scheduled to run to Cambridge North to pick up additional passengers, then take the Cambridge branch to Hitchin, picking up more passengers at Letchworth Garden City.

Once on the East Coast Main Line, the route south is expected to see a stop at Stevenage and then a deviation at Langley Junction onto the Hertford Loop to collect more passengers at Hertford North. Continuing south via Bayford, Cuffley, Enfield Chase and Bowes Park, the next opportunity for passengers to join the tour is at Finsbury Park.

Running via Gospel Oak, Willesden High Level and Kensington Olympia,

the train is planned to negotiate the lines of the capital to arrive at the final pick-up point of London Bridge.

Leaving London Bridge, the route out of London is expected to be a rarity for a Class 37, as the train passes through New Cross and Lewisham, before taking the Mid-Kent Line towards Elmers End and the terminus at Haynes. There is then scheduled to be a short break for a leg-stretch and some photographs before retracing the route back to New Beckenham, then via Beckenham Junction and onto the Chatham Main Line via Penge East to Herne Hill.

Southern circuit

Here, there is expected to be another reversal as the tour takes the former LBSCR line to run via Tulse Hill, Crystal Palace, Croydon and Sutton, then onto the Mid-Sussex Line. Passing through Dorking, Horsham, Amberley and Arundel, the tour is then scheduled to pick up the West Coastway Line to run through Barnham to the destination of Bognor Regis.

Customers will have about two hours in the seaside resort before the return journey over a slightly different route.

Heading east along the coast, through Worthing and Shoreham to Hove, the tour will take the Cliftonville Curve through to Preston Park and onto the Brighton Main Line. Running fast through Three Bridges, East Croydon and Clapham Junction, the train is planned to arrive at London Victoria, the first station to set down passengers. After London Victoria, the tour will head via Kensington Olympia back to Finsbury Park to set down more passengers. The tour is then to follow the same route back to Ely, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

The day before, Friday, October 2, a positioning move is planned under the title of 'Another Cockney Comes Home.'

Starting from Great Yarmouth behind what is hoped to be a Class 37/0, the train will head via Reedham to Norwich to pick up further passengers at both stations. Taking the Breckland Line via Thetford to Ely,

the tour will collect passengers at Ely, before taking the Ipswich-Ely Line via Soham and Bury St Edmunds and onto the Great Eastern Main Line.

Running through Ipswich, there is another passenger pick-up planned for Manningtree, followed by a straight run through Colchester, Chelmsford, and Stratford to Liverpool Street.

London departure

After a short break of about 15 minutes, the Class 37 on the rear of the train is now planned to lead the tour out of Liverpool Street on the West Anglia Main Line, setting down passengers initially at Broxbourne. Continuing north, the train is expected to run through Bishop's Stortford and Audley End, before another passenger drop-off at Cambridge North. From here, it is just a short run along the Fen Line to the final destination of Ely.

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

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

Into the Garden of England with steam, diesel, and Saphos Trains

By Tim Hobman

SAPHOS Trains is to run a tour from East Anglia to Canterbury on Wednesday, September 30, behind unique BR Standard Class 8 No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*.

Starting from Norwich behind a heritage diesel, the tour will take the Great Eastern Main Line to pick

up additional passengers at Diss, Stowmarket, Ipswich, Manningtree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Shenfield. Once in the capital, the tour will make its way across North London to exchange diesel for steam at Southall in west London.

On the move again, the train is bound for Kent, through Ashford, and then north to Canterbury West station

for an afternoon break. Passengers are expected to have two hours to explore the ancient city before continuing by rail with a circular tour of the Kent coast, through Dover and Folkestone, prior to joining the high-speed route back to London.

Taking the South Eastern Main Line through Ashford and Tonbridge, the tour will return to West London

for another locomotive exchange, this time swapping steam for diesel, before the journey home over the same route as the outward excursion, passengers being set down at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in Pullman dining and First Class (non-dining).

For more details and to book, visit saphostrains.com

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August

29 'The Lakeland'

Leicester, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and Carlisle.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). ST

30 'The Royal Duchy'

Bristol Temple Meads, Par, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA. RTC

30 'The Shakespeare Express'

Birmingham Snow Hill, Stratford-Upon-Avon, and return.

Loco: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* or 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

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

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 Hellfield 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.



WR 4-6-0 No.7029 *Clun Castle* catches the crowd's attention as it sits at York station on July 4, having arrived with the stock for Vintage Trains' 'White Rose' to Scarborough. This was the Castle's first appearance in 2026, having been undergoing a boiler retube and interim overhaul at Tyseley that will see it continue to run on the main line for the next three years, after which its boiler certification will expire. ROB BATTY

Locos: 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* + 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 Hellfield 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

19 Settle & Carlisle Steam Special

Liverpool Lime Street, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (LSL Crewe). NB

19 'The Cornish Branchliner'

Crewe, Carne Point, and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.

Loco: Class 47 TBC. RTC

19 'The West Somerset Steam Express'

Paddington, Minehead, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

19 'The Highland Peak'

Linlithgow, Inverness, and return.

Loco: 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*. SRPS

SRPS

22 'The Cornish Riviera' Day 1

Paddington to Penzance only. Steam-hauled from Taunton.

Loco: 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*. SD

23 'The Dorset Coast Express'

London Victoria, Weymouth, and return. Diesel-hauled from Southampton to Weymouth.

Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

25 'The Cornish Riviera' Day 4

Penzance to Paddington only.

Diesel-hauled from Taunton.

Loco: 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*. SD

26 'The Worcester Pullman'

London Victoria, Worcester, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. UKRT

26 'The Great Northern'

Birmingham New Street, Carlisle, and return. Diesel-hauled from Darlington to Birmingham (return only).

Loco: 60163 *Tornado*. VT

26 Lune Rivers Trust 2026

Carnforth, York, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 34067 *Tangmere*. WCR

27 'The Royal Duchy'

Bristol Temple Meads, Par and return. Steam-hauled throughout.

Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

30 'The Golden Arrow'

Norwich, Canterbury West, and return. Steam-hauled between Southall and Canterbury.

Loco: 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*. ST

→ The information in this list was correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise you confirm details of a particular trip with the promoter concerned.

→ Due to ongoing hot and dry weather conditions, steam-hauled tours may be cancelled or substituted for diesel-haulage at late notice.

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 londonthe polarexpressride.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 Train 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

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'The Jacobite'

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Loco: 44871 and 45407. WCR



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In his latest column, **Don Benn** looks at a particularly-memorable run behind LMS Jubilee No. 45699 *Galatea* from 2018, as well as trips behind West German 012 Pacifics and high-speed Class 47s.

As there is very little main line steam activity at present due to the heatwave and drought, I have looked back in my records to find a number of memorable runs. I start with Jubilee class 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea* on a quite extraordinary run on the northbound 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' on February 17, 2018. Our driver was Mick Rawling, the hard-working fireman Chris Holmes, and it was obvious from the start that they meant business. Table One shows the detail of this great run.

Yealand summit was topped at 35½mph and then, with the characteristic Jubilee roar, speed was worked up to 64½mph at Milnthorpe, where we started the 13-mile-long climb to Grayrigg. Oxenholme on the 1-in-178 was passed at 51½mph, and then we were on the long 1-in-131/106 drag to the top. By Hay Fell, the decibels had increased significantly, the equivalent drawbar

horsepower (edbh) figure proving to be a very high 1350. In order to see the mileposts I was standing by a fixed window in the middle of my coach, and so there was no doubting the readings. With slightly less power, we topped Grayrigg at an excellent 35½mph but there was no respite as we stormed through the Lune Gorge, reaching 72½mph at end of the level stretch.

This section is always exhilarating when taken at such speeds, and we rushed by Tebay at 70mph before hitting the four-and-a-half-mile slog up the 1-in-75 to Shap summit.

The fall-off in speed was at first slow and only dropped below 40mph just after Scout Green, and then we gave the gallery a real treat with a final assault to the top, where speed just fell in the last quarter-mile to a quite astounding 28.7mph. This is the highest known speed with a Jubilee over Shap

with a big load. It was achieved partly because the day was fairly dry and there was no slipping on the Scout Green flange lubricator, but mainly due to the perfect firing by Chris Holmes. Chris mastered the art of firing the narrow firebox Jubilees, and Mick had the regulator just into the main valve and drove on cut-offs 40-45% on the main climbs; I calculate the edbh on Shap as 1470.

A swift descent to Carlisle resulted in a time of under 70 minutes, a superb effort that puts this run into my top few with steam. This was a technically grossly overloaded LMS Class 5 express locomotive performing like a Class 7 or 8.

German comparisons

Next, we move to what was then West Germany and the oil-fired Class 012 Pacifics on the Rheine to Emden line in Lower Saxony. I made several ovisits

No. 45699 *Galatea* at Ais Gill with the southbound 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' on February 17, 2018. SHEP WOOLLEY





Galatea at Shap Old Station on with 7.10am Euston to Carlisle 'Cumbrian Mountain Express'. SHEP WOOLLEY

to this line from 1971 until the Pacifics finished in 1975. In 1974, I had a particular interest in the heavy long-distance trains, and Table Two shows a very fast run with an immaculate No. 012.066 on 410 tons. The line from Rheine to Norddeich is easily graded and slightly downhill overall. However, there is a climb at about 1-in-280 from Meppen to km post 274, then a roughly equal

descent to Lathen, of Bruns fame. The main impediments to high-speed progress on this line, apart from the individual speed restrictions placed on certain trains, were the line limits caused mainly by the four single-line sections and by the state of the track, the latter being improved gradually over the period 1971-1974. The line speed limit was 120kmph (75mph), although some Schnellzug (express trains) were allowed 130kmph (81mph).

Our train was headed by an immaculate No. 012.066 hauling 10 cars (totalling 410 tons) including sleepers, and had originated in Austria. The running was superb, with excesses not justified by the timetable but probably inspired by the group of eisenbahnfreund (railway enthusiasts) in the front coach. Note the slow start, the nearly 10mph excess of the speed limit at Meppen, the 82mph maximum speed at Lathen, and the bone-shaking rush through Papenburg, again 10mph over the speed limit.

The overall time of 63 minutes and 47 seconds for the 71.05 miles, or just over 62 minutes net at an actual average of 66.9mph, was quite brilliant. The continuation to Emden was spoilt by signal checks, which could sometimes be a problem on this section.

The previous day had produced a reasonable run on D1337, the 9.12am Rheine to Norddeich summer relief train with No. 012.066, just keeping the 68-minute schedule for the 71.05 miles to Leer with 360 tons gross and a maximum speed of 77½mph.

This was followed by a very good run on the 10.20am from Leer (ex-09.20am from Norddeich) D715 express to Munchen. This train had a very tight diesel timing of 66 minutes for the 71.05 miles to Rheine. On this day, No. 012.081, with seven cars, 285 tons gross, beat this with a time of 65 minutes and 17 seconds, including a long but moderate permanent way restriction north of Elbergen. Maximum speed was 80mph and net time 63 minutes. Actual start-to-stop average was 65.3mph. These two runs produced my

"A swift descent to Carlisle resulted in a time of under 70 minutes, a superb effort and puts this run into my top few with steam."

TABLE ONE: CARNFORTH TO CARLISLE

Date	Saturday, February 17, 2018
Train	7.10AM Euston to Carlisle
Loco	LMS Class 5XP 4-6-0 No. 45699
Load	11 coaches, 405 tons tare, 435 tons gross
Driver	Mick Rawling
Fireman	Chris Holmes
Recorder	Don Benn GPS
Position	Fourth coach of 11
Weather	Cloudy and calm

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Carnforth DGL	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Yealand MP 9½	3.51		07	58	35½
Burton and Holme	4.61		09	41	55
Milnthorpe	7.44		12	25	64½
Hincaster Junction	9.41		14	20	58½
Oxenholme	13.12	19.00	18	08	51½
Hay Fell	16.41		22	26	45
Lambrigg	18.21		24	47	43
Grayrigg Summit	20.01		27	29	35½
Low Gill	22.01		30	01	55
Dillicar	24.01		32	00	67½/72½
Tebay	26.18	35.00	33	53	70
MP 33	27.01		34	34	65
MP 34	28.01		35	33	55
MP 35	29.01		36	46	44
Scout Green	29.13		36	59	41½
MP 36	30.01		38	18	35½
MP 37	31.01		40	10	30/30½
MP 37¼	31.26		40	40	30/28½
Shap Summit	31.51		41	10	29½
Shap Old Station	33.59		44	05	63
Harrisons Sidings	35.54		45	49	69
Thrimby Grange	37.01		46	56	72/80
Clifton	41.01		50	06	78
Lowther Viaduct	42.61		51	17	75/70½
Penrith	45.21	57.00	53	25	72½/70
MP 54	48.01		55	46	73½
Plumpton	50.07		57	29	73½/70½
Calthwaite	52.33		59	25	75
Southwaite	55.61		61	59	78/76½
Wreay	58.15		63	52	78/81
Upperby Bridge Jct	61.61		66	53	58*
Carlisle	63.11	77.00	69	53	

* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE TWO: RHEINE TO LEER

Date	July 13, 1974
Train	D1337 Muncieon-Rheine-Norddeich Mole
Engine	012 Class 4-6-2 No. 012.066
Load	10 coaches, 385 tonnes tare, 410 tons gross
Weather	Rain

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Rheine	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Block Bentlage	1.35		03	20	44
Salzbergen	4.85	6.00	07	11	64
Leschede	10.40	10.00	11	54	75½
Elbergen	14.35	13.00	15	12	*66
Lingen	19.30	19.00	19	26	74/72
Holthausen	22.30	22.30	22	54	75½
Geeste	24.95	24.00	24	02	76
Meppen	31.95	30.00	29	43	*68½
Hemsen	34.85	33.00	32	38	sigs *47
Haren	38.25	36.00	36	04	68
KM Post 274	40.45		37	56	72
Lathen	43.65	41.00	40	26	82
KM Post 284	46.70		42	45	77½/79
Kluse	48.55	45.00	44	19	75
Dorpen	51.30	47.00	46	32	*65
Aschendorf	57.15	52.00	51	29	74½
Papenburg	60.45	58.00	54	14	*70
Steenfelde	64.25	61.00	57	29	73
Irhove	66.15	63.00	58	59	75
Leer	71.05	68.00	63	47	

net time 62¼ minutes

*brakes or speed restriction

start-to-stop average 66.9mph



TABLE THREE: MEPPEN TO LEER

Date	April 15, 1975				
Train	7.07am Munchen to Norddeich				
Engine	012 Class 4-6-2 No. 012.075				
Load	Six coaches, 221 tonnes tare, 230 tons gross				
Weather	Rain				
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Meppen	0.00	00.00	00	00	
Hemsen	3.00		04	24	60
Haren	6.40		07	29	70½
KM Post 274	8.60		09	21	68½
Lathen	11.80		11	54	76
KM Post 282	13.60		13	20	73/75
Kluse	16.70		16	05	71
Dorpen	19.45		18	25	*60
Aschendorf	25.30		23	45	70½
KM Post 304	27.25		25	49	tsr *48/55
Papenburg	28.60	28.30	27	37	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Steenfelde	3.80		04	58	67
Irhove	5.70		06	35	74
KM Post 318	7.35		07	49	75
Leer	10.60	11.00	11	10	

*brakes or speed restriction

Above: 012 Pacific No. 012.063 near Meppen on the 1.35pm Rheine to Norddeich service. DON BENN

Below: On July 12, 1974, No. 012.055 is seen leaving Meppen with the 3.09pm Norddeich to Koln working. DON BENN



TABLE FOUR: ASHFORD TO TONBRIDGE

Date	August 31, 1987			
Train	5.54pm Dover Western Docks to Manchester Piccadilly			
Loco	Class 47 No. 47613			
Load	7 Mk. 2s + bogie van, 269½ tons tare, 280 tons gross			
Position	Fourth carriage of eight			
Weather	Fine and warm, light east breeze			
	miles	mins	secs	speed
Ashford	0.00	00	00	
Chart Siding (site)	2.11	03	05	66
Pluckley	5.67	05	43	92
MP 49	7.11	06	37	94
MP 46	10.11	08	28	104
Headcorn	10.86	08	55	105
MP 43	13.11	10	11	107
Staplehurst	14.25	10	51	103
Marden	16.72	12	16	101
MP 38	18.11	13	05	102
MP 36	20.11	14	19	97/95
Paddock Wood	21.29	15	03	98
MP 33	23.11	16	11	96
MP 31	25.11	17	32	78*
	sigs	14*		
Tonbridge	26.59	20	34	

Average MP46-MP38 103.9 mph
Pluckley-Paddock Wood 100.45 mph
Start-to-stop average 77.57 mph (net 80.78 mph)
net time 19% mins

only ever back-to-back mile-a-minute steam runs anywhere. From leaving Rheine to arriving back there, 142.10 miles occupied only 135 minutes and 24 seconds, involving a fairly rapid transfer from one side of Leer station to the other in less than two minutes.

Diesel timings

Table Three shows one of my last runs on this line before the 012 Pacifics finished. It was on the diesel, timed 7.07am Munchen to Norddeich, and was behind No. 012.075 on six coaches for 230 tons. This was, as usual, a very good run, and the section from Meppen to Leer is shown.

The 28.60 miles were completed in 27 minutes and 37 seconds – a gain of one minute on schedule despite a permanent way restriction approaching Papenburg, giving a net time of just under 27 minutes, with no real effort needed.

The 10.60 miles on to Leer were booked in only 11 minutes, a diesel timing which was not kept very often; however, our reliable beast, at the very end of its life, managed it in only 11 minutes and 10 seconds with a maximum of 75mph.

It was at this speed at km post 318 in heavy rain that I passed a personal milestone of 100,000 miles behind steam, an emotional moment that could only have been surpassed if haulage had been with a Bulleid Pacific.

The remaining tables show two very fast runs behind the long-lived BR Class 47 Co-Co diesels.

I had several 100mph-plus runs with them, including 104mph on the Midland Main Line, but the fastest of all was in the most unlikely place: on the South Eastern Main Line between Ashford and Tonbridge in Kent. The details of this extraordinary run are shown in Table Four.

We had been returning from a day in Folkestone and picked up the train at Ashford; 107mph must be close to the record speed for this class and is supported by the averages.

It wasn't the only 99-100mph run I recorded on one of these trains during the time they ran. Tables Five and Six set out the details of a full-power effort making up time on the Great Western Main Line in 1970. This was before the introduction of modern restraints that prevent such extravagancies and was a joy to time.

I had gone down to Bristol behind D1605 (on 11 coaches for 390 tons) and that in itself was a very good run, 81 minutes net for the 106.85 miles to Bath with 95 down Dauntsey bank and at Box tunnel south.

It is the return journey on the 2.15pm behind D1918 which is shown in Tables Five and Six. My notes state "very good braking. Acceleration in the high speed ranges brilliant. One of the best runs timed with any form of traction." **HR**



Above: No. 012.066 is pictured at Rheine on July 12, 1974, waiting to take over the 9.12am to Norddeich. DON BENN



Above: BR Class 47 No. 47502 at West Ealing with the 5.42pm Paddington to Oxford service on June 5, 1975. DON BENN



Left: On October 4, 1986, an unidentified Class 47, recorded as being at 100mph, is seen near Paddock Wood in Kent working the 10.45am from Dover Western Docks to Liverpool Lime Street. DON BENN

TABLE FIVE: BATH SPA TO READING

Date	Monday, April 13, 1970					
Train	2.15pm Bristol TM to Paddington					
Loco	Brush Class 47 Co-Co. 2580hp D1918					
Load	10 coaches, 338 tons tare, 365 tons gross					
Recorder	Don Benn with stopwatch					
Position	Back					
Weather	Sunny					
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed	
Bath Spa	0.00	0.00	00	00	10½ late	
Bathampton	2.25	3.30	03	39	62½	
MP 103	3.85		05	03	72	
Box	5.00		05	57	75½	
Box Tunnel S	5.87		06	39	75	
MP 99	7.85		08	24	70	
Corsham	8.55		08	57	76	
Thingley Jct	10.75		10	33	85	
Chippenham	12.90	13.00	12	03	91	
MP 92	14.85		13	17	94	
Christian Malford	16.90		14	35	97	
Dauntsey	19.10		16	04	90	
MP 86	20.85		17	14	85	
MP 85	21.85		17	57	82	
MP 84	22.45		18	41	84	
Wootton Bassett	23.95	23.00	19	24	86	
MP 81	25.45		20	49	87	
Hay Lane	27.10		21	41	86½	
Swindon	29.55	28.00	24	52	7½ late	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	6¾ late	
Stratton Park	2.25		03	35	65	
MP 73	4.30		05	15	78	
Shrivenham	5.60		06	18	85	
MP 70	7.30		07	21	86½	
MP 68	9.30		08	41	92	
Uffington	10.80		09	40	93	
MP 65	12.30		10	38	94	
Challow	13.50	13.00	11	22	92	
MP 63	14.30		11	55	94	
MP 62	15.30		12	33	96	
Wantage Road	16.90		13	31	97	
MP 60	17.30		13	48	98	
MP 59	18.30		14	25	97	
Steventon	20.80		16	00	95	
MP 55	22.30		16	57	94	
				pws	56*	
Didcot	24.20	20.00	18	19	58*	
Moreton SB	25.85		19	57	67½	
MP 50	27.30		21	07	76	
Cholsey	28.85		22	14	83	
MP 47	30.30		23	15	88	
MP 46	31.30		23	55	90	
Goring	32.55		24	43	92	
MP 44	33.30		25	13	93	
MP 43	34.30		25	51	95	
Pangburne	35.75		26	44	97	
MP 40	37.30		27	44	93	
Tilehurst	38.65		28	37	90	
				sigs	*	
Reading	41.30	35.00	32	46	4½ late	

* speed restriction
start-to-stop average 75.66mph
net time 30¼ minutes

TABLE SIX: BRISTOL TM TO PADDINGTON SUMMARY

Date	Monday, April 13, 1970						
Train	2.15pm Bristol TM to Paddington						
Loco	Brush Class 47 Co-Co. 2580hp D1918						
Load	10 coaches, 338 tons tare, 365 tons gross						
Recorder	Don Benn with stopwatch						
Position	Back						
Weather	Sunny						
	miles average	sched average	mins	secs	net	actual	net
Bristol TM to Bath Spa	11.50	13.30	14	52	12¾	46.43	54.11
Bath Spa to Swindon	29.55	28.00	24	52	71.30	71.30	
Swindon to Reading	41.30	35.00	32	46	30¼	75.66	81.92
Reading to Paddington	35.83	31.00	29	50	28	72.07	76.78



Middle price sector outshone by heavyweights

I'M not very good at reading the runes, so I will leave readers more adept at the practice to analyse any trends that emerged from GW Railwayana's July 18/19 auction. I'll present the facts that strike me as relevant – and one shouts out.

Of the 16 BR main line steam nameplates that sold under the hammer or within hours of the sale's closure, only five were within the normally popular £3000-£5000 price bracket.

These comprised *Sir Meliagrance* from SR King Arthur No. 30452 (£4000), LMS Royal Scot pair *Irish Guardsman* (£4600) and *Queen Victoria's Rifleman* (£4800) from, respectively, Nos. 46116 and 46160, and *Hazel Hall* (£4200) and *Litte Linford Hall* (£4900) from GWR classmates Nos. 5901 and 7912. Dipping below £3k were LNER Class B17 duo *Houghton Hall* (£2300) from No. 61612 and *Blickling* from No. 61607 that sold for £2900, and *Bickmarsh Hall* from

GWR No. 5967, which went to a new home for £2600.

Leaping across the divide to the £5000-plus contingent, we find eight on parade, starting with *Compton Manor* from GWR No. 7807, which achieved £5200; a third B17, *City of London* from No. 61670, that perhaps unsurprisingly outshone its two classmates by attracting a top bid of £6500; and *Eastbourne* (SR Schools class No. 30914), which realised £6900.

At this juncture came GWR name, number and works 'combine' No. 3342 *Bonaventura* (£7000), followed by a return to the LNER and to B1 No. 61002, one of whose *Impala* nameplates sold for £7100, and thence another leap, to *King William III* from GWR No. 6007 (£12,000), after which we soar to *Gannet* from Gresley A4 No. 60032, which flew away at £20,500.

Although not in the stratosphere with this Pacific, Belfast-based Northern Counties Committee

A1 class 4-4-0 No. 65 deserves acknowledgment after one of its *Slieve Bane* nameplates fetched £5600, so leaving just one plate that fell at the last hurdle, *Bahram* from LNER A2 No. 60531.

Modern traction success

Locomotives within the heritage modern traction sector can claim a 100% nameplate success albeit with just five participants: Warships *Roebuck* from D841 (£11,000) and *Cambrian* from D806 (£8000), *Royal Engineer* from Class 45 Peak D98 (£11,000), *Western Reliance* with matching cabside from Class 52 D1068 (£9800), and *Titan* from Class 47 D1665, which fetched £7600.

The top cabside numberplates were 7807, which sold for £3300 immediately after its aforementioned matching nameplate had gone under the hammer, and E3040 from a Class 84 WCML electric Bo-Bo locomotive (£3100), and smokebox numberplates peaked at £3600 for

70029 from 'Brit' *Shooting Star*, with 34071 from SR Battle of Britain 607 Squadron keeping a close eye on proceedings at £2900.

Worksplates also had a busy time due to three of the contenders exceeding £5000, these being an 1899 Grant Ritchie & Co plate from a steel works 0-4-0ST (£5800), a 1938 LNER Doncaster example from the auction's star lot, A4 No. 60032 *Gannet* (£5200), and a 1915 Dick Kerr & Co plate from one of seven locomotives built by the company that year (£5100).

Heading the totems were BR(M) Derby Friargate and BR(S) Chisle Colliery Halt which achieved £8300 and £7900 respectively, the top SR target at £3000 was Plymouth Friary – the location of shed 72D (later 83H), and leading the London Underground platform roundels were Covent Garden and Paddington, each at £3100.

With the auction being held on the weekend that England beat India in a one-day cricket match at Lord's, I must highlight the most appropriate lot of them all – BR(S) signalbox nameboard Bat and Ball, which sold for £3500.

This 'box was located at a former SECR station that opened in 1862 named Sevenoaks, was subsequently renamed Sevenoaks Bat and Ball after a local pub, and renamed Bat and Ball by BR in 1950.

A second four-figure signalling realisation was £1600 for a Tyer's No. 6 single-line Exmouth-Littleham tablet on the Exeter-Budleigh Salterton route.

Other category winners included a c1915 London Underground and tramway connections enamel map (£3000), an original 1978 painting by Don Breckon of GWR 2-6-2T No. 5518 arriving at Looe station (£2100), and an ex-North London Railway Bow Works Bin dial bracket clock dating from 1889 that sold for £1700. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).

"Some recent auctions have been a bit of a struggle in regard to worksplates, nameplates, and smokeboxes, but not this one so much," said auctioneer Simon Turner.

"Also, totems are a bit of an enigma. We had 125 in this auction, yet some exceeded their reserves two or three-fold. Needless to say – but I'll say it anyway – I was bowled over by the result of the of the Bat and Ball boxboard."





Former GWR No. 7807 *Compton Manor* departs from Aberystwyth on May 23, 1953. One of the 4-6-0's nameplates and a cabside numberplate sold for £5200 and £3300 respectively at a GW Railwayana auction on July 18/19, as reported in this column. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ERIC BLAKEY

Deltic makes expected grand entrance

HERITAGE modern traction made its expected impact on Main Line Railwayana's live online July 25 auction, but a pair of totems and a GWR Castle Class 4-6-0 ensured it wasn't one-way traffic. The overall winner was never in doubt – a cabside flamet cut from Deltic Class 55 No. 55008 (ex-D9008) *The Green Howards* that went for £2850. An English Electric/Vulcan Foundry worksplate from this Co-Co failed to sell, but EE/Vulcan worksplates from four Class 37 diesels were more successful, comprising No. 37241 (originally D6941) at £1500; No. 37417 (D6969), which went for £1000; No. 37321 (D6737), which achieved £850; and No. 37710 (D6744), selling for £700.

Another diesel to get in on the act was Class 47 No. 47133 (ex-



D1724) thanks to one of its 1964 Brush Sulzer worksplates selling for £550, and from an earlier era were two final pieces of locomotive memorabilia that went to new homes: the smokebox numberplate from GWR Castle class No. 7001 that started life in 1946 named *Denbigh Castle*, but was renamed *Sir James Milne* two years later within weeks of becoming part of the nationalised BR fleet (£1050), and a cabside numberplate from GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7433 (£500). Onward now to the flavour of

the month/year/decade (delete as appropriate), the platform totems, a category in which pride of place was shared by BR(M) Fleetwood and Eastern Region's Wickham Market, each of which realised £1400, while

a Southern Railway target sign from Durrington on Sea, a suburb of Worthing in West Sussex, realised £750. The Southern Railway chose not to hyphenate the sign, but on today's railway network it is, although the town's local authority plays it safe by titling itself simply Durrington Town Council. Ah, the niceties of English grammar. Other signage sales were a BR(E) Finsbury Park running-in board (£780) and a BR(W) Tucker Street direction sign (£550). Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15%.

Railwayana Auction Calendar

■ August 24-30

JustaClickAgo
(photographs, negatives, slides and paperwork)

■ August 25/26

Vectis
(model trains)

■ September 5-7

Great Central Railwayana

■ September 16

Lacy Scott & Knight
(models and railwayana)

■ September 19

Thirsk Railwayana

■ September 26

Main Line Railwayana



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Market has big ideas and exceeds estimated prices 40-fold

JUST occasionally, one of the lots in a railwayana or model trains auction jumps out of the catalogue and makes a mockery of its estimated sale price big time.

All it takes is two, or maybe more, collectors determined to outbid the competition, and the stage is set, and so it was at a Vectis two-

day sale on July 28/29, in which a mixed selection of O gauge steam locomotives went under the hammer as a single lot, one of which was based on a tank engine designed by Charles Bowen-Cooke, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the LNWR in 1909-1920. The valuers at Vectis are a knowledgeable bunch,

and the estimated selling price for this selection was £80-£100, but the market had other ideas, and the hammer came down at £3400, nearly 40 times the middle estimate of £90, following which a second four-figure realisation was £1000 for an O-gauge three-rail electric GWR No. 6000 *King George V*.

In the wake of these successes were two lots each at £950 comprising a collection of five O-gauge clockwork LNWR-liveried tank and tender locomotives and an Accucraft 15mm scale diesel named *Viking*.

Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

GCRA unveils late additions to autumn auction

THREE BR main line nameplates have joined the ranks of Great Central's September 5 auction, comprising *Borwick Hall* from GWR No. 6921 and LNER pair *Holkham* from B17 No. 61601 and *Loch Long* from K4 No. 61993. The first of this trio was built at Swindon in July 1941 and withdrawn from Oxford (81F) in October 1965, the B17 was outshopped by North British of Glasgow in December 1928 and taken out of service in January 1958 when allocated to Stratford (30A), and No. 61993 emerged from Darlington in January 1937 and ended its days at Thornton Junction (62A) in October 1961.

As reported in last month's column, Great Central unveiled early doors an initial batch of four main line plates, and so with this latest announcement the line-up totals seven, with the possibility that number could increase before auctioneer Martin Quartermain starts proceedings on Saturday, September 5.



Another nameplate in the sale is *County Down* from Northern Counties Committee of Belfast B3 class 4-4-0 No. 21, built by Beyer Peacock in May 1890 and withdrawn in June 1947, which is believed to be the first plate from this class to have been offered for sale outside Ireland.

Within a comprehensive worksplate selection is an 1861 R & W Hawthorn example (works No. 1128) from a standard gauge 2-2-2 well tank that was delivered new to the Whitehaven Junction Railway as No. 10 *Queen Mab* and in 1873 was sold to the Isle of Wight Railway who renamed it *Newport*. The end came in October 1894, by which time it had become IoW Central Railway No. 6.

In the same category are an 1897 Dubs & Co plate (works No. 3518) from London & South Western Railway 700 Class 0-6-0 No. 695 which survived into BR stock as No. 30695 and was withdrawn from Eastleigh (71A) in December 1962, a 1947 LNER Darlington plate from B1 No. 61039 *Steinbok*, and a 1909 Hudswell Clarke from ex-Burly Port & Gwendraeth Railway 0-6-0T No. 2197 *Pioneer* withdrawn by BR from Llanelly (87F) in October 1952.

Cabside numberplates have within their ranks GWR 6867 (*Peterston Grange*), and 15104 from an 0-6-0 diesel shunter, and Southern Railway E759 from Lynton & Barnstaple Railway 2-6-2T *Yeo*, and headboard 'The Cornishman'

will revive memories of a long-distance BR express.

Platform totems will be joined by a selection of SR targets that includes Lydford, Ventnor, Sandown, Shanklin and Exeter Central, and the Isle of Wight will additionally feature in the signs category with a Ventnor West station direction sign, while also from the Southern Railway will come a Southampton Docks baggage sign and a 'Railway station through Queen Street' example.

The GWR weighs in with a Signal Dept Telegraph Inspector's Office sign, the LNER with a Gordon Hill station direction sign (is it too much to hope that there's a railwayana collector so named out there?), and a 1903 Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway trespass sign will be seeking a new home.

The auction will run for three days, September 5-7, starting at 10am each day.



No. 61601 *Holkham* is given a clear road as it approaches Beccles in the early 1950s. One of the B17's nameplates will be going under the hammer at a Great Central Railwayana auction starting on September 5. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ROY VINCENT



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JAPAN AND ITS RAILWAY MUSEUMS

Some parts of the world spring instantly to mind when it comes to railway preservation, yet despite having an efficient and busy rail network, Japan is perhaps less often thought of in that regard. **John Titlow** took the opportunity of a visit to the country to find examples of railway heritage there – including locomotives that were built here in the United Kingdom.

AN extremely advanced country, Japan's railways are renowned around the world, particularly its high-speed bullet trains. In the UK, we hear very little about Japan regarding railway preservation and its museums, but it has certainly not forgotten its past.

Scattered throughout the central belt of Japan's largest island, Honshu, is a good variety of railway museums large and small, each telling their own story. Furthermore, there are many preserved steam locomotives plinthed in obscure locations, such as children's parks and outside municipal offices. Among these are some very early British gems from builders Nasmyth Wilson, Dübs & Co,

Beyer Peacock, Vulcan, Manning Wardle, Yorkshire Engine Co., North British and Sharp Stewart. One Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T, built in 1874, is in working order and running at the age of 152!

History of its railways

During the feudal Edo period between 1603 and 1868, Japan was ruled by a hereditary military dictatorship, the Tokugawa Shogunate. Its borders were closed to foreigners and the country turned in on itself, banning travel in and out of the country. Due to isolation, exposure to railways was slow and, with all things western, viewed with suspicion. Towards the end of the Edo period, railways

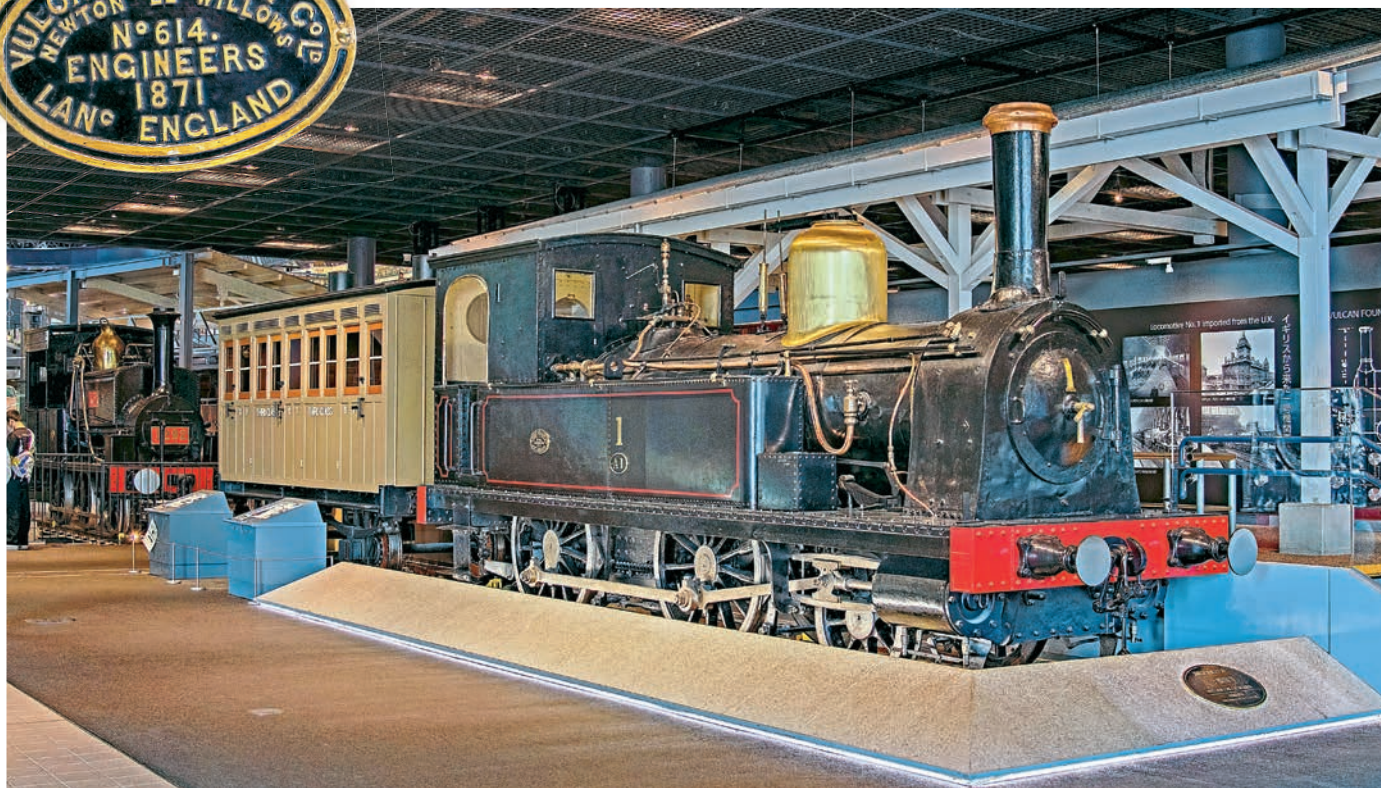
were already established throughout the world and Japan was left behind. However, railways were known about through limited contact with Dutch traders.

In 1853, Russian explorer Yevfimiy Putyatin visited Nagasaki aboard the Imperial Russian Navy frigate *Diana* to negotiate opening trade relations, and he brought model railways with him. Also on board was Russian engineer Alexander Mozhaysky, who demonstrated a model steam engine during a shore visit.

Despite opposition by the isolationist Tokugawa Shogunate, inventor and mechanical engineer Tanaka Hisashige, an expert in studies of foreign developments in



Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T
No. 12 of 1874 running
at Museum Meiji Mura.
Inset: The locomotive's
builder's plate.



Two British-built locomotives in the Omiya Museum: Vulcan Foundry 2-4-0T No. 1, which hauled Japan's first train in 1871, and Manning Wardle 0-6-0T No. 1292 of 1881 in the background.

science and technology, reverse-engineered it to build the first miniature Japanese steam locomotive. He went on to become founder of the Toshiba corporation.

In 1863, 20-year-old Inoue Masaru secretly travelled to the UK to study western science and engineering at University College London. During this time, he visited stations and took a great interest in railways, realising the need for them back in Japan. His travelling companion was Ito Hirobumi.

The pair returned to Japan in 1868 when the Shogunate were overthrown during the Meiji Restoration and power was returned to the emperor. Ito Hirobumi became Prime Minister and Inoue Masaru opened the first railway between Shimbashi (Tokyo) and Yokohama in 1872.

The line was built with British financial and engineering assistance, and the first train was hauled by No. 1, a 2-4-0T built by Vulcan Foundry in 1871.

This landmark ignited rapid modernisation, transforming the nation into a global rail pioneer. No. 1 is today designated as



Japan's version of King's Cross: GWR 4-6-0 No. 5920 Dumbleton Hall as No. 5972 Hogwarts Castle with a 'Hogwarts Express' headboard in the Warner Brothers Harry Potter museum on the outskirts of Tokyo.



With Mount Fuji looming large in the background, electric No. 1 is preserved outside Kawaguchiko station, greeting passengers upon arrival.



Sharp Stewart 4-4-0 No. 39 of 1898 at the Freight Railway Museum.



Above: C62 17, which became the fastest narrow gauge steam locomotive in the world, displayed in the SCMaglev and Railway Park, Nagoya.

Left: C57 135, which hauled the last steam passenger train on the Japanese main line, on the turntable that spins inside Omiya Museum.

'Important Cultural Property' and is preserved in the National Railway Museum at Saitama.

Inoue Masaru went on to become the father of Japanese railways and director of the Railway Bureau. He died in London in 1910 while inspecting European railways at the age of 68.

The main gauge throughout the country is 1067mm (3ft 6in), while high-speed Shinkansen routes are standard gauge and there are three 2ft 6in gauge lines.

The NRM in York already had a sister agreement with both Japan's NRM in Omiya and the Kyoto Railway Museum. This was reinforced this year when it was extended to include the SCMaglev and Railway Park in Nagoya. This partnership further strengthens ties with Japan's rail and cultural sectors, building on existing relationships.

The UK is fortunate to have one of only two preserved bullet trains outside of Japan.

Omiya National Railway Museum

The main National Railway Museum is located in the railway town of Omiya, about half an hour by train from central Tokyo. It opened as the centrepiece of the JR East 20th Anniversary Memorial Project in 2007. The new south building opened in July 2018 and the main building was fully renovated at the same time.

Originally, the museum was under central Tokyo station, opening in 1921 to celebrate 50 years of Japan's railways. It moved in 1936 to

nearby Manseibashi station until 2006, when it moved to Omiya.

When entering, one of the first locomotives to be seen is the abovementioned 150 class No. 1, which hauled that first train. Behind is a replica carriage, and behind that is Manning Wardle 0-6-0T No. 1292 of 1881.

Four other steam locomotives here are Japanese-built Pacifics C51 No. 5 and C57 No. 135, which hauled the last passenger steam service in 1975 (although freight work continued), American-built 2-6-0 No. 7101 and sectioned Mallet 0-6-6-0 No. 9856. There are many stock items of interest including ED17 No. 1, built by English Electric's Dick Kerr works at Preston in 1923. The exhibition is centred around a turntable that rotates at certain times where No. 135 resides.

According to the museum's website, 36 different variations of rolling stock are on display, including passenger carriages, freight wagons, steam, diesel and electric locomotives, right up to retired Shinkansen power units.

There are several driver experience simulators, notably a D51 steam locomotive and an E5 Shinkansen. Admission is just over £7, and an English guide is available. For more information, see www.railway-museum.jp/e/

Harry Potter World

Not a railway museum, but telling a completely different story is the Warner Brothers Harry Potter museum on the outskirts of Tokyo, where ex-Barry scrapyard GWR 4-6-0 No. 4920 *Dumbleton Hall* resides. Rescued

in 1974 by the Dumbleton Hall Preservation Society and restored at Buckfastleigh by 1988, it was deemed too heavy to work what is now the South Devon Railway and was moved to the Dartmouth Steam Railway. It also ran on other lines before it being sold in December 2020 and subsequently exported.

The exhibition hall replicating King's Cross can only be described as superb. I was brought up near that terminus, remembering it in steam days, and I was very impressed at the attention to detail. No. 4920 'puffs' steam and whistles at the head of one-and-a-half Mk.1 carriages. For the railway enthusiast, it is completely unauthentic in red livery but very well looked after, loved, and has to be the centrepiece of the exhibition. The museum is extremely proud to have it.

It can be controversial having a Swindon-built locomotive exported and placed into a museum, but it is opening eyes to what we have in this country. It's not as if we are short of working Halls, but dating from 1929, this one is the oldest survivor.

Admission costs £32, and the experience is an absolute must for any Harry Potter fan, who will be avidly awaiting the arrival of the forthcoming new TV series.

SCMaglev and Railway Park Nagoya

This museum is dedicated to speed, and you enter through a hall with an impressive display of three power units – all record-breakers. C62 No. 17, a 4-6-4 built in 1948 by Hitachi, is



North British 0-6-2T No. 2221 of 1905 at Ome Railway Park.



Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No. 5540 of 1897 and Kisha Seizō 2-6-0 No. 8620 of 1914 displayed at Ome Railway Park.



C56 160 providing short passenger trips at the Kyoto Railway Museum on April 30.

the fastest steam locomotive to run in Japan. In 1954, it broke the world record for narrow gauge (3ft 6in), achieving 80mph.

Next to it is experimental Shinkansen (colloquially known in English as the bullet train) Class 955 300X, which achieved a world speed record of 275mph for an EMU in 1996. If that is not impressive enough, it stands alongside Maglev (Magnetically Levitated Vehicle) MLX01-1, which achieved the fastest train speed record of 361mph.

You then enter the vast main exhibition hall that can only be described as stunning, with a display of 39 items of rolling stock from carriages, goods wagons, four steam locomotives (including a steam railcar), diesels and electric locomotives.

The museum's display focuses on the development of the Shinkansen over the years. You cannot fail to be impressed by this attraction, featuring so much at the cutting edge of railway technology. The admission fee is a bargain at £5.50.

Kyoto Piano & Railway Museum

The Kyoto Railway Museum stands on the site of the former Umekoji steam shed, built of reinforced concrete in 1914 as a 20-road roundhouse with a central turntable.

Japan's biggest railway museum, with a collection of 23 steam locomotives, it is designated 'Important Cultural Property' by the Government of Japan, being the oldest shed of this type of construction there.

It closed as a steam depot in 1971, but still retained everything for overhauling steam locomotives, including experienced workers, making it a good place for a museum.

When Japan's railways celebrated its centenary in 1972, it became the Umekoji Steam Locomotive Museum. In 2016, it was expanded and modernised, becoming the Kyoto Railway Museum, and celebrates its 10th anniversary this year.

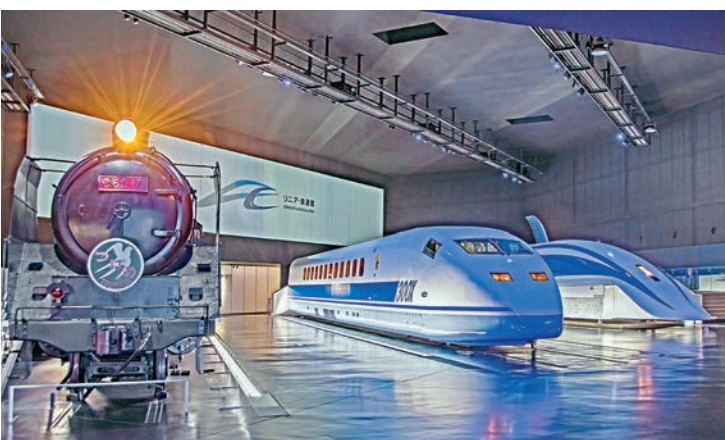
Inside the museum are two British locomotives, No. 40 (a Kitson 0-6-0T built in

1881) and, in the roundhouse, standing in a very difficult position for photographs, is Dübs & Co 4-4-2T No. 1080 of 1900. No. 1080 was originally built as a 4-4-0 and converted into a 4-4-2T in 1926 at Hamamatsu locomotive works, and it was then used by various mine railways until 1979.

Here is a working museum restoring steam locomotives, and it has a short demonstration line. On the day I visited, C56 No. 160 was in steam. Of interest is US-built *Yoshitsune*, a 4-4-0 made by HK Porter & Co in 1880. It is one of the first American locomotives imported into Japan and in working order.

The collection covers diesels, electrics, Shinkansens, multiple units, a variety of rolling stock and buildings. Admission is £7.

Nearby is the Piano and Railway Museum at Arashiyama, though I am baffled what connections there are between these two very different things! Three steam locomotives, including the front end of one, are preserved inside. Admission is free. ➔



Above: Three record-breakers: C62 17, Class 955 (300X) and MLX01-1 at the SCM Maglev and Railway Park.



Right: ED 11 2 behind ED 18 2, which was built by English Electric, displayed at the SCM Maglev and Railway Park.

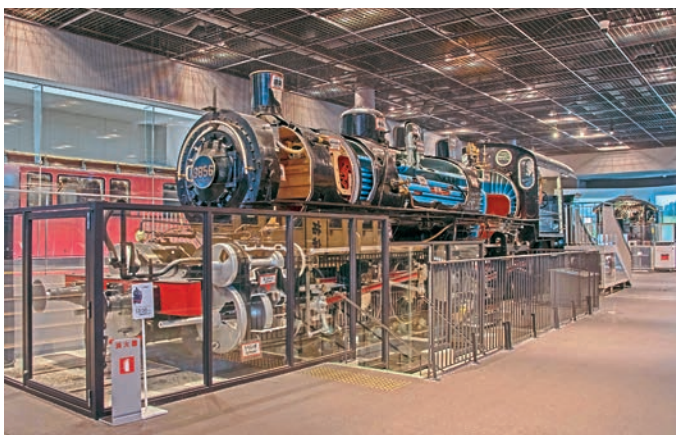


Above: C62 No. 26 is the first locomotive you see when entering the Kyoto Railway Museum. The special headboard celebrates the venue's 10th anniversary.

Right: Yoshitsune, an HK Porter & Co 4-4-0 of 1880, was one of the first locomotives imported from the USA and stands inside the Kyoto roundhouse.



Right: Sectioned Mallet No. 9586, which can be viewed underneath, with the D51 steam driver simulator in the background at Omiya Museum.



Below: C 62 No. 1, built by Hitashi in 1948; No. 9633, built at Kawasaki Dockyard in 1914; and No.1080, built in 1901 by Dübs & Co in Glasgow rest inside and out of the rain at the Kyoto Railway Museum.



Ome Railway Park

Established in 1962 and a 15-minute walk from Ome Station, the museum became a must because of the two British locomotives on display. Its location has to be one of the strangest due to it being on the top of a hill, unconnected to any railway. Seven steam locomotives are here, plus one electric and a Shinkansen. The British locomotives are North British 0-6-2T No. 2221 of 1905 and Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No. 5540 of 1897. Admission is about £1.

Museum Meiji Mura

Not a typical railway venue as such, but an open-air museum in the Nagoya area focusing on historic buildings from the Meiji period (between 1868-1912), opened in 1965.

The gem here is Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T No. 12 of 1874 hauling three old clerestory carriages on an 875-yard running line.

Entrance costs £12, and the train works when the museum is open, with a small supplement charged to ride it. Of other transport interest is a Kyoto tram, built in 1911, and a historic bus giving rides.

Freight Railroad Museum, Nyūgawa

This museum at Nyūgawa is marketed as the only freight railway museum in the world. It too became a must-see because Sharp Stewart 4-4-0 No. 39 of 1898 is preserved at the head of a rake of freight wagons. Little did I know how complicated it would be to get there!

While visiting Kyoto, I tried several times at various railway companies' information offices to get to Nyūgawa but got nowhere – even being told all trains were full.

My Japanese friend, Yamamoto Takahide, who lives in nearby Nagoya, had just returned from the UK after following the Railway Touring Company's 'Great Britain' tour. We spent more than an hour pawing over complex timetables from the various railway companies on the telephone, eventually finding a way which worked perfectly.

Nyūgawa is along a main line of the private Sangi Railway Company, opened in 1931 to transport cement running from Kintetsu-Tomida to Nishi-Fujiwara. EMUs dating from the early 1990s are in use and due for replacement this year. All stations are manned despite few passengers, and great care is taken over the station gardens.

The museum, which opened in 2003, is alongside the line a short walk from Nyūgawa station, where No. 39 is on display under cover. When I visited, the museum was closed – it opens only on the first Sunday of each month –



Left: ED17 No. 1, built by English Electric's Dick Kerr works at Preston in 1923, on show at Omiya Museum.

Right: Very different front ends at Omiya Museum with Kuha 481, Kumoha 455 and Kuha 181.





Above: C 62 No. 1, built in 1948 by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, at the Kyoto roundhouse.

but you can walk alongside the wagons... where the discovery was made that No. 39 is not the only British exhibit there. Almost hidden under several layers of paint is a covered wagon built in Scotland, plus several other freight wagons and tankers.

Kawaguchiko and the Fujikyū Railway

The Fujikyū Railway runs from Otsuki on the Japan Rail network to Kawaguchiko, the nearest station to Mount Fuji. The volcano is the highest mountain in Japan with an altitude of 12,388ft.

Immediately outside Kawaguchiko station is electric No. 1, nicely positioned for photographs, with Mount Fuji in the background.

Five of this type were built by Fuji Sanroku Electric Railway especially to cope with the steep gradients on the line, which opened in 1929. A predominantly tourist railway, it also runs everyday commuter trains.

Thomas the Tank Engine is big in Japan, and on the Fujikyū Railway a complete train has been transformed internally and externally into the Thomas Land Train. One carriage was on display at Shimoyoshida station.

Also on display at Shimoyoshida station, hidden behind the Thomas carriage, was the driving car of the 'Fujisan Express,' part of a three-car unit. It has a raised driving cab, giving passengers a front-row seat. Several freight wagons and other electrics were also on display.

Generally, the museums are well patronised by all ages and genders. It is nice to see younger women taking a big interest in the locomotives and museums.

A traveller's afterthoughts

Japan is unique regarding its culture and perceived as a difficult country to visit for the independent traveller, but it is one of the



Left: Inside the Piano Museum at Arashiyama: C56 No. 98, small tank Wakataka, and the front of D51 No. 603 and C58 No. 48.

safest countries in the world. The people are friendly, courteous, and willing to help. Streets are spotlessly clean with no litter, recycling bins are everywhere, and you are encouraged to take your rubbish home.

English is not widely spoken, even in tourist hotels, but that is slowly changing. Hotels are surprisingly cheap, with many under £50 a night, but rooms are small in comparison to those in the UK. As you would expect though, all are very clean.

Driving is on the left, but speed limits are very slow, with country roads limited to 37mph, seemingly often exceeded by about 6mph. There is a fixation with traffic lights: minor road junctions in the countryside which see little traffic have them.

When crossing the road at lights, people wait even though no cars can be seen for miles. Pedestrians do not look at uncontrolled crossings because they have priority, and motorists stop without fail.

Food is interesting. The Japanese have a love of offal and noodles, but there is plenty of alternatives. Western, Vietnamese and Chinese food is widely available.

Trains are fantastic, generally run to time, are very crowded in big cities, and

are the best way to get around. There is a Japan rail pass covering most of the system which runs consecutively, but certain lines do not recognise this, while some charge a supplement. I recommend working out the cost of each separate journey and comparing it to the cost of the pass. For my wife and I, it was considerably cheaper buying individual tickets.

In large cities, especially Tokyo, there is no integrated ticketing system, which makes it difficult. The Metro and independent rail companies are completely separate, so on leaving one rail company, you have to buy another ticket for the next, followed by the next! There is an IC prepaid card used as a method of payment, which is more convenient.

There are non-stop flights taking 14 hours which are not for the faint-hearted – many used to stopover in the Middle East, but the war in Iran has made this difficult. Interestingly, return routing was over Alaska and Canada, completing an around-the-world journey.

Visiting and touring takes much research and planning, but the scenery and rewards are superb. **GJR**

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Image Credit: Kenny Felstead

Visiting locomotive 41313, courtesy of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway

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DISCOVERING TREFFRY TREASURES IN TREVITHICK COUNTRY

Renowned as the birthplace of engineer Richard Trevithick, who developed the first working railway steam locomotive, and industrialist Joseph Treffry's pioneering development of tramways, **Nicola Fox** rediscovered several Cornish gems during a visit to an award-winning heritage line and nearby seaside resort.

Cornwall has many delights to recommend it. Stunning, sweeping beaches are blessed with adrenalin-fuelling surf, while craggy cliffs and picturesque harbours provide ample visual delights. Towering chimneys stand as monuments to its industrial past, and there is plenty for the palette, from fresh fish and seafood to cider, pasties, and that nectar of the gods, beer (Skinners of Truro is a particular favourite!).

However, while rail enthusiasts may take holidays, their passion doesn't take a day off, and among all of the aforementioned delights, the duchy also boasts several railway gems, some hidden, some less so, but all worth seeking out. A heritage railway is the most natural pilgrimage for a rail enthusiast, but a few less obvious locations can also be found. As a large county, Cornwall has much rail history to offer, and the following delights are all located within easy distance of each other in the north and west. Variety, as they say, is the spice of life, and these offerings include an attraction that utilises a former

standard gauge line and a dive through the backstreets of one of Cornwall's most popular towns on the hunt for surviving railway archaeology.

From industrial clatter to children's chatter

First up, and to be sure of interest to enthusiasts with young families, is the Lappa Valley Railway. The brainchild of Eric Booth, this delightful attraction packed full of entertainment for the young (and young at heart!) sits on the site of the East Wheal Rose silver-lead mine, once an important mine south-east of the village of St Newlyn East, only four miles south of Newquay.

For his retirement project, rather than build a shed and tinker on the small scale, Eric chose to realise a lifelong dream of building a narrow gauge railway to run as a tourist attraction. After a long search and drawn-out negotiations, he eventually took possession of part of the former GWR Newquay to Chacewater branch, and the Lappa Valley Railway was born.

The history of the track far predates the Chacewater line, its origins dating back to the fledgling days of Cornish rail. Unless they've purchased a Lappa Valley guidebook (highly recommended), it's not immediately obvious to visitors travelling along the leafy corridor behind a narrow gauge steam or diesel locomotive the very rich history contained within the trackbed beneath.

To understand the wealth of heritage memories supporting the Lappa Valley rails, it is necessary to step a little further back in time to the construction of one of Cornwall's oldest rail networks – the Treffry Tramways.

Treffry Tramways

Pioneered by Joseph Treffry, a Plymouth-born member of the gentry who inherited Cornish land that contained multiple mines, the Treffry Tramways were a way to solve the significant challenge of transporting heavy mineral output via horse drawn wagons, over country roads. Having taken an interest in civil



The finale of the Lappa Valley Railway's June 13/14 Grand Gala Weekend, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 347, with all five steam locomotives that took part, led by visiting North Bay Railway Engineering Services 0-6-0ST *Mr Hallworth*, from the Perrygrove Railway Adventure, and Alan Keef diesel *City of Truro* at the rear, heading up into East Wheal Rose. JOWAN ROBERTS/LVR



View from the Lappa Valley's 15in on the way back to Benny Halt showing Metha Bridge and the wartime brickwork from when the bridge was widened during the Second World War.



The 15in gauge line encircles the Lappa Valley engine shed, soft play area and cafe, lake and more. Visionary entrepreneur as he was, could Joseph Treffry have for a minute foreseen the day when the site centred around the East Wheal Rose mine served by his tramway would become a major local tourist attraction, winning both local and national awards?



Shunting at the Lappa Valley gala: Exmoor Steam Railway 0-6-0T *Spirit of Adventure*, from the Perrygrove Railway Adventure, on the turntable in the foreground with Severn Lamb 0-6-4T *Zebedee* emerging from overbridge over the former GWR line to Newquay.

engineering, Treffry sought more efficient ways to export the mine's mineral output, such as improving the quay at Fowey, building the harbour in Par and moving wagons by rail.

Branching out

The line that the Lappa Valley now runs on started life as a branch off Treffry's Par to Newquay Harbour tramway. It changed hands many times during its life before becoming a tourist attraction.

In 1874, all of Treffry's Tramways were taken over by the Cornwall Minerals Railway and horses replaced by steam locomotives. Then, just over two decades later in 1896, the Cornwall Minerals Railway was taken over by the GWR.

History of the Par branch

The Newquay to Par line was built to utilise the harbour at Newquay for sending copper ore to South Wales for smelting and receiving the coal to keep the engines that kept Treffry's mines clear of water.

Treffry had begun work at the south end of the Par line, and following the purchase of Newquay harbour, he turned his attention north in 1844, constructing a line that connected the harbour with Hendra, a place near St Dennis, in the heart of China clay country, and a branch to the prosperous East Wheal Rose mine.

The first cargo of ore from East Wheal Rose was carried along Treffry's horse-drawn tramway on February 26, 1849; 177 years later, the Lappa Valley now runs its main services where these tubs of ore once rumbled.

In 1905, the GWR upgraded the route to carry passenger traffic for the first time, extending the line to become part of it. Passing through Perranporth to connect with the main line to London at Chacewater, west of Truro, it improved the mobility of local people and carried holidaymakers to coastal resorts.

An additional upgrade took place in the war years when Metha Bridge, a stone bridge crossing the railway, was widened to allow wartime traffic, including tanks on flat wagons, to pass through.

Alas, as with many rural lines, Dr Beeching selected it as a candidate for closure and on February 4, 1963, the final standard gauge train ran along this line. After more than 100 years of use, the former East Wheal Rose branch was left to become a wilderness.

Reincarnation

When Eric Booth took possession of the line, mechanised tree cutters, bulldozers and tractors were required to reveal the original trackbed, but once it was exposed, it was clear it was still in good condition. A brand-new steam locomotive, 0-6-4T *Zebedee*, was designed by David Curwen, ordered from Severn-Lamb, carriages were built locally by Jayes Gates, and rails of aluminium alloy (steel was scarce) were laid, ready for the 15in gauge railway to steam into action in 1974.

Fifty-two years later, the railway goes from strength to strength. It remains a popular tourist attraction and in 2025 was named the UK's Railway of the Year in the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2025, as reported in

An author's inspiration

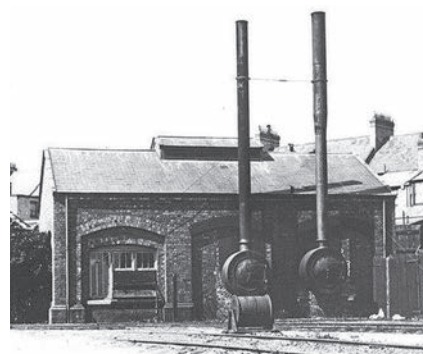
Treffry's harbour later became the Port of Par, famous in railway circles for its distinctive low-roofed Bagnall 0-4-0STs *Alfred* and *Judy*, which would become the inspiration for the Rev W Awdry's Bill & Ben in his Thomas the Tank Engine series, which are now residents of the Bodmin Railway.

Treffry originally considered building a tramway from the Luxulyan Valley to Fowey, but the owner of the intermediate lands required to reach Fowey happened to be Charles Rashleigh. Rashleigh owned the harbour at Charlestown, which would be disadvantaged by Treffry's scheme. Understandably, he refused to allow Treffry use of the necessary land. But Treffry was not deterred; following the successful construction of a narrow gauge tramway on an incline plane a little north of Par, he turned his sights north and built not just one line, but a whole network of tramways. Carrying heavy excavated materials like metals, granite and china clay, Treffry's network ultimately stretched to between Par and the Luxulyan Valley north of St Austell and Newquay.



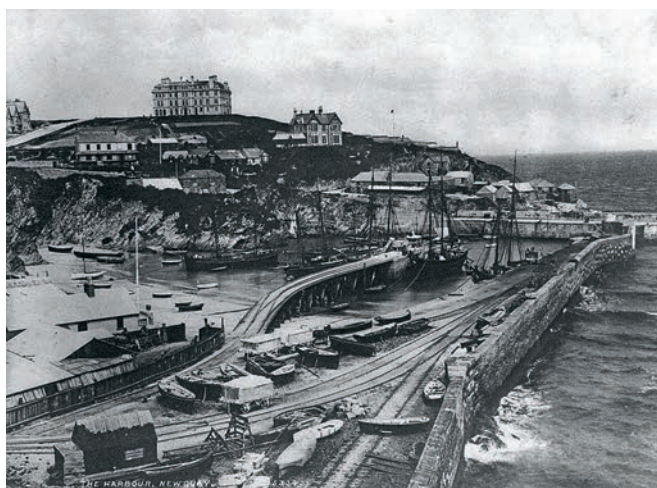
Coal wagons in front of the Newquay harbour tunnel in about 1910.

NEWQUAY OLD CORNWALL SOCIETY COLLECTION



Two stationary boilers on *Whim*, winding wagons to and from Newquay harbour.

NEWQUAY OLD CORNWALL SOCIETY COLLECTION



Above: The view across Newquay harbour today.
Left: Newquay harbour in 1900, with much activity on the rail sidings – and no sign of surfers who were still decades away from making the resort their own! NEWQUAY OLD CORNWALL SOCIETY COLLECTION

Heritage Railway issue 329. The original aluminium rails are now all steel, and the aforementioned Metha Bridge is still a large feature of the railway. Those who look closely will spot the change from stone to brickwork where the bridge was widened to accommodate wartime traffic.

The railway also boasts a large fleet of locomotives that run on a total of three railways (15, 10¼ and 7¼ in gauge). Lappa Valley even welcomed its first 15in gauge visiting locomotives for the Grand Gala Weekend in June.

The Lakeside Railway provides a circular journey within the park, while the half-mile 10¼in gauge Newlyn Downs branch line continues the journey along more of the former GWR trackbed. Untouched since 1963, further heavy machinery was required to reveal this section of trackbed prior to relaying the track in time for the opening of the railway in 1995.

The locomotive purchased for this line was Severn-Lamb diesel 4-4wPH *Duke of Cornwall*, which moved to the Lappa Valley from Carlyon Bay, near St Austell. Currently on cosmetic display in a livery honouring the Cornwall Air Ambulance, *Duke of Cornwall* was allowed some respite with the purchase of an Alan Keef Ltd 0-6-0DH in 2008. That locomotive was named *Eric* in honour of the founder of Lappa Valley.

Sharing an historical trackbed, the 15in and 10¼in gauge lines used to meet, but during the winter of 2023/24, the East Wheal Rose end of the 10¼in gauge line

was moved to a purpose-built station to offer improved accessibility and capacity.

The Lappa Valley's railways and industrial setting provide boundless interest for the enthusiast, while any younger members of the visiting party are happily entertained by the attractions on offer – or better still, made into enthusiasts of the future.

For details on the railways opening days and times, see www.lappavalley.co.uk

Hidden history

Just a short drive down the road, more of Treffry's Tramways can be traced through the streets of Newquay. Once famous for its stag and hen party culture, the town does not immediately seem to be a magnet for railway enthusiasts, but it has an active and vibrant local history scene and has also been undergoing a conscious change in recent years.

Shedding its boozy culture, Newquay now boasts an atmosphere more geared to families, food, and coastal activities. It is worth setting aside any preconceptions about the town based on its recent past to take in the wealth of history hidden in plain sight.

Originally part of the line between Newquay harbour and Hendra (near St Dennis in the heart of china clay country), much of this line survives as a passenger railway to this day as it was extended to form the Newquay to Par passenger line under the aegis of the Cornwall Minerals Railway.

Tolcarn junction, just outside Newquay station, was the junction between this branch line and the former East Wheal Rose line (later Chacewater branch).

The harbour section of the branch line closed a century ago; however, despite this loss and the modernisation of the remainder of the line, there are still sufficient traces of the past for those willing to look for them to make an enjoyable historical stroll.

Reality check

That said, the approach to Newquay's main line station is hardly picturesque. Boarded-up shop fronts and empty business properties fill the parade that runs beside the station, which in itself is not an attractive location.

In an incomprehensible act of cultural vandalism, the original Victorian station building was demolished in 1992. The recent additions of a new canopy in 2025 and reinstated second platform give it a little more presence, but nothing to tempt the enthusiast. However, a short walk either down the hill towards Trenance Gardens near the zoo or down to the harbour will reward the curious.

But be warned: the hills in Newquay are not for the faint-hearted, although they certainly constitute an excuse for a pasty or ice cream (or both!).

The Spider

Those who choose to head towards Trenance Gardens will find a notable survivor of the Treffry era – the Trenance Viaduct.

Known as Treffry's Spider or the Tolcarne Spider, it was opened on January 29, 1849. The original structure was of slate construction, except for the top quarter, which consisted of wooden arms extending from each pillar, giving it its spidery appearance.

The viaduct was upgraded twice, once in 1874 for the opening of the passenger railway when the pillars were raised to the top and iron girders were added, but it was only single-track. The second and final upgrade was achieved in 1939 by building granite, brought in by train, around the original viaduct, with the arches constructed under the existing girders,



Above: The harbour tramway route moves away from the coast, crossing the main thoroughfare to pass behind the houses.
Left: The harbourside entrance to the old tramway tunnel.
Right: A bridge crossing the route of the Newquay harbour branch.





Above: The view over Newquay's Great Western Beach from the former harbour tramway trackbed. Before the railway came to Newquay in 1876, the beach was known as Bothwick Sands. After the Great Western Hotel was built in 1879 overlooking the beach, it slowly became known as Great Western Beach, but both names were used up to the 1960s.



Left: A 27-yard by 19-yard wave-shaped platform canopy has been installed as part of significant upgrades to the branch. The station's fortunes declined following the closure of the Newquay to Truro with Chacewater branch on February 4, 1963, with the roof on Platforms 2 and 3 removed in 1964. The Office of Rail and Road has authorised significant upgrades to the station as part of the Mid-Cornwall Metro project to provide an enhanced service from Newquay to Par and with better access to the railway in central Cornwall, with the upgrades doubling capacity at Newquay from one train per hour to two.

The station's second platform, which was taken out of use following the closure of the signalbox on October 5, 1987, was reopened to passengers after 38 years in November 2025 as part of a £50 million infrastructure project. Digital signalling, which replaced the previous token system, facilitated the return of trains to return to the second line.

which were then lifted out and the track relaid to stand as it does today.

While this line is still in use, the interest to the historian lies not in what you can see, but what you cannot. The road-facing pillars were fully dressed in granite and none of the original Victorian struture can be seen, but money was saved on the less visible areas. A short detour off the footpaths to look on the other side of the pillars reveals the face of the original slate pillars from 1849 enclosed within the 1939 structure.

For added rail enthusiasm joy, not only is this line still in use to carry the Newquay to Par branch, but it can also be seen from the nearby park, where the Little Western Railway, a 7¼in gauge miniature line, runs circular rides for children. This railway was built by none other than the Lappa Railway's Eric Booth.

Harbour heritage

The other jaunt from Newquay station requires crossing over the road to the public footpath that follows the trackbed of the 1849 harbour line, Newquay's first-ever railway.

Operational until 1926, horse-drawn wagons carried minerals along this tramway to the winding house above Newquay harbour. Never modernised with steam haulage or for passenger use, once the line's original purpose was no longer required, it became obsolete and was closed. However, a century later it is still possible to walk almost the full route.

The journey begins by leaving the station and crossing the road to the busy footpath that runs beside an Aldi and a Travelodge. *Heritage Railway* believes that in recent decades, glimpses of rails were still visible

along this stretch of the route, but the path has been repaved and these remembered traces have now vanished. If anyone recalls these rails and can confirm or deny their existence, they are invited to contact this magazine, as the writer of this piece is beginning to question these memories.

Real or misremembered rails aside, there are several clear signs along the way as to the original purpose of the route. In homage to its previous life, the aforementioned paving is detailed with two long stripes of brick paving that resemble rails. A stone bridge in distinctive railway style that takes the imaginatively titled Bridge Road over the line still stands and is in use.

Where the footpath ends, the road that continues the journey of this former railway is called The Tram Trak and emerges out onto the junction of the main streets of East Street, Bank Street and Manor Road, the latter of which continues the journey of the tramway. Sadly, there is little left to see here, and following the curve of the route takes you into Sainsbury's car park, which stands on the site of the entrance to the tunnel that inclined steeply down to the harbour, known as Treffry's tunnel.

Beneath the surface

While standing among the day-to-day urbanity of the car park, the average visitor would never know that a double-tracked tunnel, 17 feet wide and 14 feet high, used to be accessed from here, passing under Fore Street and South Quay hill to emerge in the corner of the harbour. Wagons were lowered down the steep rails by means of a whim, a form of windlass. The whim was originally horse-powered, but the

Further tramway gems

If the walk along the old line to the harbour (and the subsequent trek back up the hill) has been too tiring, perhaps it's time to stop by Newquay's The Red Lion for a drink, as this establishment was the location of the tramways' grand opening celebration in 1857.

The Treffry Tramways left their mark on the Cornish landscape, and there are many other reminders of the network dotted about the county, such as Toldish Tunnel, near Ruthvoes, which was bypassed and closed in 1874, and the stunning 650ft-long and 100ft-high Treffry Viaduct in the Luxulyan Valley.

Possibly adventures for another day...

animals were later replaced by a steam-powered engine. Sadly, the winding house and other buildings fell into disrepair and demolished in the 1960s.

Now housing the Newquay Watersports Centre, the entrance to the tunnel on the harbour side is still very clearly visible and can be viewed by heading down on foot using the steps off South Quay Hill or by following the road as it curves down. Hemmed in between buildings, the mouth of the tunnel is nonetheless visible in the corner of the harbour.

From here the tracks accessed all parts of the harbour, including the central pier, which was built in 1872 to increase harbour capacity. A wooden trestle bridge once linked it to the harbour, allowing wagons to run right up to the boats, but now the stone pier stands alone, a ghost of the harbour's former busy days as a trading port.

Obsolescence

Closure of the East Wheal Rose mine in 1885, substantial damage to the north quay in 1889 and the harbour's inability to accommodate larger steam ships led to a decline in harbour trade and then owner CMR was taken over by the GWR. In its latter years, the harbour line also conveyed Royal Mail between Bank Street Post Office and the railway station; however, with the decline in traffic, this was not enough to sustain the route and the GWR closed the line in 1926, turning the harbour over to the local authority. The rails were lifted in 1928.

Fortunately, thanks to the Newquay Old Cornwall Society, a wonderful collection of photographs survives to document the history of this tramway, bringing back to life this fascinating piece of Newquay. **HR**



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Here come the Yanks: The USATC S160s

They may not have the elegance and grace of your typical British-built steam locomotives to some, but there is no denying these particular locomotives were more than suited to purpose, evidenced by their use within much of Europe. With new OO-scale models hitting the shelves from Rapido, **Paul Lawrence** delves into the history of this widespread American design.

THE year is 1942. The world has been at war for a second time since 1939, and Britain has continued to recover from the Blitz. The railway network is constantly on the go, shifting troop trains, evacuees and military supplies around the country. For freight, each region has quite a variety of locomotives to choose from. The Southern has the Qs and S15s, joined by the newly designed Bulleid Q1s and 'Merchant Navy' locomotives (the latter being cheekily classified as mixed traffic machines, while actually being built with express passenger work in mind). In the West are the likes of the Dean Goods, Churchward and Collett moguls, along with the 2800s and 2884s. In the Midland

region are the 7Fs of the Somerset and Dorset line, while the 4Fs, with the Stanier 'Black Fives' and 8Fs, are scattered across the network. Then, in the Eastern Region are various pre-Grouping designs, alongside the Robinson O4s from the Great Central Railway and the newly-launched Thompson B1s. But with every locomotive being pushed to the limit, the railways need help, so Britain turns to its wartime allies across the pond. The reply comes in the form of two designs: a shunting locomotive known as the S100s and a heavy freighter that would go on to work all around the globe – the S160.

Built by ALCO (the American Locomotive Company), Lima and

Baldwin between 1942 and 1946, a staggering 2120 of these 2-8-0s were made – about two-and-a-half times the amount of Stanier 8Fs built between 1935 and 1946! With all their fittings and pipework being easily accessible, a small smokebox door and an air pump that sticks out like a sore thumb, it's hard to miss their Stateside-design influences on the outside. But while they were built to a British and European loading gauge, they went on to help influence some features that were later seen on the BR Standard classes. The S160s were one of the first types of locomotives in the UK with a rocking grate, self-cleaning smokebox and cabs fitted to the

boilers instead of the frames.

In addition, the S160s origins came from another design, also ordered by the UK and built by ALCO, Baldwin and Lima. This was the S200, a 2-8-2 'Mikado' to be used by the UK for operations in the Middle East, with 200 examples being made between 1941 and 1942.

After serving in Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon, some from the 1942 batches were sent to work on the Trans-Iranian Railway, while others ran in Italy, Turkey and China after World War Two ended; only two of the Turkish examples survive today. If you think the S200s were well-travelled, you would be surprised as to how far the S160s went.



No. 2253 *Omaha* arrives at Arley on the Severn Valley Railway on September 19, 2023, during its visit to for that year's autumn steam gala. PAUL LAWRENCE

Globe-trotters

Although a minority remained in America, the UK had the biggest allocation of the S160 class. A grand total of 400 were launched into working service once they touched British soil, with a further 400 stored at Ebbw Junction, South Wales, as strategic reserve.

But while they looked complete from a distance, and the House of Commons told the MP for Abingdon that “they would be under steam within a few days of their arrival,” they actually weren’t even fully finished, still requiring lamp irons, pistons and handbrakes before they could turn a wheel, along with adjustments to the braking system, which proved to be faulty.

Of the first 400 sent, 396 were split between the Big Four: 174 to Great Western, 168 to the LNER, and 50 to the LMS, while the Southern received six.

As for the international appeal, 200 were built to 5ft gauge for working in Russia and 60 were built to 5ft 6in for working in India.

After the events of the war, Poland and Hungary each took delivery of 500 S160s, while other examples ventured to China, Peru, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and North and South Korea. In total, the S160s were to be found in 23 countries around the globe.

Of the 2100-plus built, 25 are known to still exist, eight having been repatriated to the UK. Although three of these – Nos. 1631, 2138 and 2361 – are still awaiting restoration, the other five have made quite a name for themselves on the heritage railway circuit in various ways.



One member of the class found its way onto the Longmoor Military Railway’s books. No. 93257 became WD700 *Major General Carl R Gray Jr* and received the line’s distinctive red-lined blue livery. It was the only member of the class to end up there and was cut up following an accident in 1957, which left it with flats on all driving wheels and no spares available. Variations of the livery have since appeared on classmates in preservation. PAUL CHANCELLOR/COLOUR RAIL

Until recent years, the most visually interesting example was No. 3278 which, when based at the Watercress Line, ran in a Longmoor Military Railway-inspired livery for a period. It was given the number 701 and named for the American wartime president – *Franklin D. Roosevelt*. Then there is possibly the most iconic of the S160s – No. 5820, otherwise known by enthusiasts and volunteers at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway as *Big Jim*. This stalwart of the Worth Valley is currently under overhaul and has often been a favourite of enthusiasts and crews, so to see its return will be quite the sight.

You then have the Churnet Valley Railway resident duo of Nos. 5197 and 6046. These two have regularly visited other heritage railways and,

while in plain black liveries, they certainly put on a show wherever they go, even playing the role of ‘The Polar Express’ in the lead-up to Christmas.

They are now joined by No. 3278. Having been recently overhauled, in April this year it derailed on what was meant to be its first day in service. Thankfully, damage appears to have been minimal, for it pulled its first passenger-carrying trains again on August 7, turned out in LMR livery, albeit a slightly more subdued version than what it wore before.

Lastly, we have No. 2253 *Omaha*, currently based at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. It gained the name from its owner, Pete Best, after his father fought on Omaha Beach during D-Day.

Returning to working service

following a lengthy overhaul in 2019, this S160 went on to be well-travelled.

After being based at Churnet Valley for a while, it then spent a period of time at the Dartmouth Steam Railway, before being a guest at the Severn Valley Railway’s Autumn steam gala in 2023 and then heading to the Moorsline.

During its time at the CVR, an opportunity came about for a running weekend with Nos. 5197 and 6046. This finished with a triple-header of the three S160s, and footage of the event shows that they put on quite a performance.

Nowadays, *Omaha* has been in the spotlight for being converted to burn oil instead of coal, as a way of the NYMR being able to run steam services in the summer months.



Above: Built in 1945 and shipped to Poland, No. 5820 arrived at the Keighley & Worth Valley in November 1977. It has carried authentic USATC grey livery since 2014 and is a favourite among crews and visitors, although it is now undergoing overhaul. TOM MARSHALL/KWVR

Right: One of three locomotives based at the Churnet Valley Railway in Staffordshire, No. 6046 is seen reflected in a puddle in the yard at Cheddleton on December 31, 2024. OWEN HAYWARD



The models

With a locomotive as unique as the S160s running on Britain's railway network, many were hoping for a manufacturer to make a model of this American import for quite some time. Over the years, surveys of what locomotives modellers hoped to be made in OO gauge have shown the S160s had been requested for well over a decade, and to an extent, their prayers were answered. Roco released a HO scale version of the S160 in 2017, with only one variant in USATC grey, coming in both analogue and DCC sound-fitted. This looked to be the only option for getting an S160 model for a while... until rumours began to spread in 2022 about a manufacturer new to the market looking to bring the class in OO gauge. Sure enough, on August 10, 2023, Rapido Trains UK issued a post revealing that they were working on making the unique wartime locomotive.

From the get-go, Rapido looked to have a lot of fun with the marketing for the project, with posts of new information often appearing in forms similar to wartime documents – it goes to show that while railway modellers can be serious, they can also have a bit of fun with the hobby too, something very common with the Rapido Trains UK team in particular.

As time went by, CADs of the model were disclosed, and just over a year after the initial announcement, engineering samples were revealed showing the level of detail that was being put into these models. Then, in late November 2025, some of the early decorated samples arrived for the public to view at the National Festival of Railway Modelling, giving people the long-awaited chance to see the quality of work that had been put into them. Fast-forward to July 2026 and the models finally arrived.



With it being a wartime locomotive, the general public would assume not many variants would likely be made, but as I have said before, Rapido like to have a bit of fun.

Having made 18 variants of the LBSCR E1 and 13 variants of the GNR J13, and being currently due to make 14 variants of the upcoming LYR Class 25 'Ironclads,' it is safe to say Rapido likes to cater for its customers when it comes to variety of liveries.

With three exclusive S160 models – two for Rails of Sheffield and one for Clark Railworks – Rapido has made 13 variants for customers to choose from.

Those available from the wider retailers include four in wartime livery (each being an example from those allocated to the Big Four), one in LMR blue, and five variants depicting the most well-known preserved examples, with *Big Jim* getting two variants including its wartime grey and the briefly-worn 'what if' BR livery from Rails of Sheffield. Then there is a

variant depicting *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (in its Longmoor-style livery it wore on the Watercress Line) and No. 2582 *Pvt. H. J. O'Brien*.

Clark Railworks, meanwhile, has the War Department khaki green example No. 2044 which, alongside the Longmoor variants and *Omaha*, certainly helps to add a splash of colour to such a utilitarian locomotive.

As for the specs of the models, Rapido looks to have worked thoroughly in this area too.

The models come with two factory-fitted speakers (one located in the smokebox area and another in the tender), a dual LED set-up for the firebox glow with a dynamic fire draw effect adding to the realism, a rather sizeable motor with two flywheels, pick-ups on all the driving wheels and tender bogies, along with a 21-pin DCC decoder socket in the tender.

When it comes to the decoder and the sounds, Rapido could have done a fairly simple set of files like other

manufacturers do, but this is Rapido, which does not go for simple.

Through research, it found that various S160s had different types of whistles and have had each variant's DCC chip programmed with the correct one, along with the option to switch them to whichever whistles are wanted.

For its performance, some people were a bit sceptical after the engineering prototypes were revealed to have plastic bodies. But underneath that is a metal chassis, giving the model a total weight of more than 480g – more weight than the newly-tooled Hornby 9F and the streamlined LMS Coronation. It is actually very close in weight to, if not the same as, Hornby's latest iteration of the LNER P2 2-8-2, a far bigger model by comparison. Combined with the immense weight, its motor and flywheels, the S160 models do have quite the pulling power, as proven when Rails of Sheffield put one of the engineering samples to the test at Rapido HQ. Without any wheelslip, the model managed to haul 101 wagons, and a decorated sample of *Big Jim* was seen running on Pete Watermans 'Making Tracks' layout hauling 16 carriages – eight Hornby teaks in addition to eight Hornby Mk. 1s. Both hefty loads were handled easily, whereas other similar models would have likely struggled. It does make one wonder how much one of the S160s could actually pull, given the chance.

All in all, Rapido has met the mark with these models, creating what railway modellers would expect for one like the S160s. Given what many people and reviewers have said online, this could be Rapido's own best model to date, and quite possibly the best to have been made by all the manufacturers. It looks right, it sounds right, and it could move any load given on a typical model railway. The S160s are certainly up there.



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NEW LOOK FOR NEW TIMES AT INGROW MUSEUM

The Vintage Carriages Trust Museum at Ingrow, on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, has expanded and refreshed its displays to educate and entertain visitors, reports **Sally Clifford** in words and pictures.

NEW exhibits and information boards are the culmination of a lengthy project bringing bygone railway transportation to life at the Vintage Carriages Trust Museum at Ingrow station.

Within, visitors can step inside beautifully restored vintage carriages in the care of the VCT. The scanning of QR codes find out more about their history, heritage and, in some cases, TV and film appearances, demonstrating the museum's move into the digital age.

The introduction of technology is imperative for the museum to appeal to younger visitors who visit the VCT, and the refresh of the information boards and interpretation displays over the past three years keep this important visitor attraction current.

Among the railway memorabilia, some of which is from the museum's stock and some kindly donated, is a framed colour poster for the 1970 film *The Railway Children*, which was more recently signed by some of the original cast, including Jenny Agutter and Sally Thomsett.

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway played an integral part in the film and, interestingly, five of the museum's carriages were used in it. Three also appeared in the March 1968 BBC TV series of *The Railway Children*, also starring Jenny Agutter, and two were featured in the 2021 production *The Railway Children Return*.

Alongside this, visitors can view archive film footage dating from 1965 to 1969, which includes short clips of the making of the BBC version.

A confectionary trolley from Scarborough station, previously used for distributing refreshments along the railway platform, and a 1935 poster documenting the LNER Silver Jubilee service, which is currently being



The Vintage Carriages Trust museum at Ingrow, at the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, where the annual Chairman's Day was held in June.

"We are doing everything in our power to future-proof the society and preserve this collection..."

conserved and framed, are among the 37 new displays which have been refreshed and redeveloped by volunteers including Paul Holroyd, a member of the VCT for 45 years.

Morecambe is among more than 80 original railway signs adorning the walls alongside Rochdale, Ripon, Brierfield, Wetherby and Preston Blackburn and Liverpool.

The collection also features a rare temporary sign for Leeds (Whitehall) and a Way Out Also to Forster Square Station and Midland Hotel reminder of bygone train travel in Bradford.

Among the signs and posters – some advertising holiday destinations for train travel down the decades to educate younger visitors about the important part railways

played in pleasure travel in the past – is a 1950s destination roller blind from a diesel multiple unit carriage based in the Norwich area which has been specially framed to eventually go on display.

There is also a nod to London in the new displays with signs from Baker Street, Paddington and Neasden.

Making its debut in the wall-mounted collection is the display board about London's first railway, built entirely on a brick 878-arch viaduct from London Bridge to Greenwich.

A map of Metropolitan Railway and Connections and the World's first London Underground and the mention of the Harry Potter attraction Platform 9¾ at King's Cross



Destination signs inside the Museum.



Above: Some of the artefacts being introduced into the balcony area within the VCT workshop. VCT

Left: A collection of old platform signs adorn the museum walls.



A signed *The Railway Children* poster from the original 1970 film, part of the displays at the Vintage Carriages Trust Museum.

Right: In honour of the former Bishop of Wakefield, the Rt Rev Eric Treacy, who was also a renowned railway photographer. VCT



station also form part of the fascinating display documenting an interesting chapter in the capital's past and present train travel.

Artefacts including an original The Carline template used to replace the Midland carriage roof; two pieces of the original gas piping and valves from the Midland carriage No. 358 and the upper panel from the 1973 restoration of No. 3554 to Southern Railway olive green and an original Great Northern Railway side panel have also been introduced into the balcony area of the workshop where interpretation panels featuring carriages in various stages of restoration will also be included. It is envisaged that guided access to this area will be available from April 2027.

"We must interpret railways and railway history to lots of people who weren't around when the railways had their heyday," said Paul. "It is more than 50 years now since many of the local railway lines closed, so there have been three generations growing up who have never seen a train in Cleckheaton."

The project to update the displays is all part of future-proofing essential to safeguarding the VCT.

Addressing members and guests at the VCT Chairman's Day, held at the museum in June, VCT chairman Debbie Cross spoke about the challenges the organisation faces, among them the cost-of-living crisis, the threat to heritage skills and an ageing voluntary workforce.

"I think you will agree with me that the main thing we have is this wonderful, significantly

important collection of carriages, locos and artefacts," she said.

Referring to the work being done over the past few years to improve the displays within the museum, Debbie also talked about the importance of keeping the displays current for younger generations to enjoy: "We are now able to display our collections and tell our story in lots of ways, and we are improving the conditions so our collections are preserved better for the future."

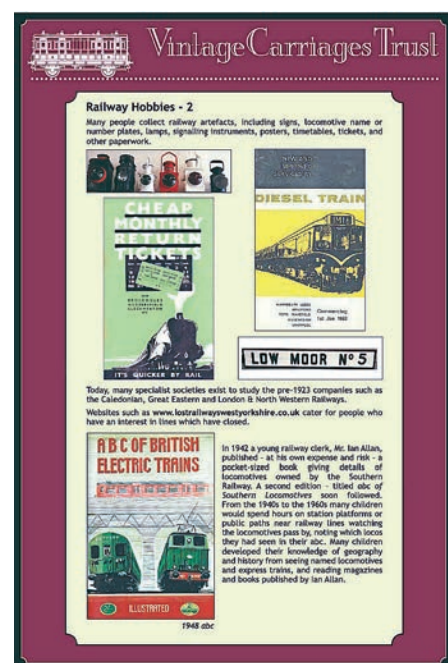
Elaborating, VCT secretary Katharine Carlton referred to the work ongoing behind the scenes, including the installation of data loggers in the museum, which log the temperature and humidity to help preserve the collections and mitigate against damp. "The data tells us if things are going awry, and we can take action about that," said Katharine.

VCT vice-chairmen Trevor England and Ian Smith updated the gathering on the progress of restoration projects, in particular the Midland Railway six-wheel carriage No. 358, built in 1886, which has been under restoration for 15 years, and the activity of the locomotives including Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST No. 1210 of 1891 *Sir Berkeley*, the tenure of which at Beamish Museum was recently curtailed due to boiler issues.

VCT treasurer Bob Sprot spoke about future plans to develop model railway interest within the museum's retail operations, alongside the regular second-hand magazines, books and other railway-related stock.



A confectionery trolley from Scarborough is one of the new exhibits.



Railway artefacts are also the focus of one of the many new information boards found at the museum. VCT

Opportunities to grow VCT's membership is another focus for the future. "We have this fabulous and generously loyal membership, and many of you form that, and we are so grateful for everything and the incredible hard work of the volunteers and staff, so we are in a strong position and that is a real positive, but we are aware there are challenges ahead," said Debbie.

"We have identified those, and we are doing everything in our power to future-proof the society and preserve this collection."

One of the ways of ensuring the VCT's survival is by increasing the number of volunteers, so there are sufficient people to take hold of the baton to carry forward this important chapter in Britain's transportation history.

"We are working to make sure we are prepared for those challenges that may come our way. We are definitely looking at ways of adapting and futureproofing," added Debbie.

If you want to get involved with the VCT, visit www.vintagecarriagestrust.org. **HR**

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.

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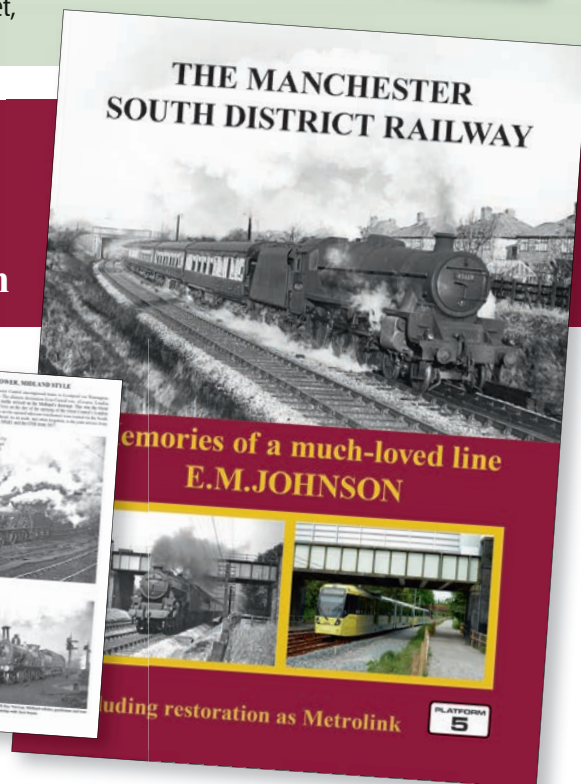
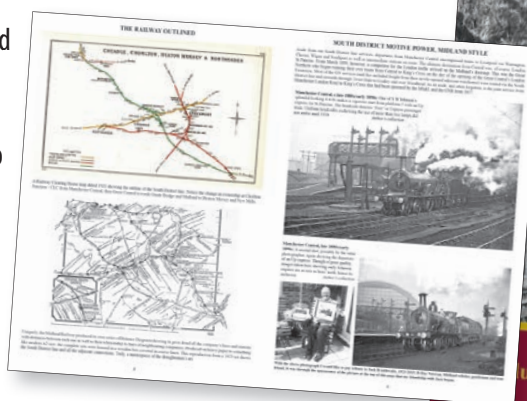
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Hunslets, 'Tractors' and more: Bachmann's summer slate

IN its latest quarterly product announcement, Bachmann Europe unveiled no less than three new tooled products in two different scales, as a whole host of new liveries on existing popular tools across the scales.

N gauge

The first of these new tools is the N gauge Class 37/7 for the Graham Farish – the first time this particular sub-class has been produced in the scale, designed from the ground up and accurately capturing the class's distinctive look while incorporating modern features such as cab lighting, all-axle drive and pick-up, gearing for prototypical running and the usual wealth of detail both separately fitted and moulded. Four liveries are available in this first wave, with RRP set at £179.95 for analogue models and £294.95 for DCC sound variants.

The second new tooling is another first for the scale, this time wagon: the 24.5-ton mineral wagon. A comprehensive tooling suite allowing models of both the diagram 1/115 and 1/118 wagons to be offered, along with options for fabricated or pressed steel side doors, meaning these particular wagons will bring variety to mineral and coal trains. Having seen some three decades of use, they will additionally suit modellers from the 1950s onwards. RRP is £22.95 per wagon, with a



£2 uplift for weathered examples; alternatively, a triple pack is also planned, the RRP for which is £61.95.

Another highlight of the N gauge announcement is the return of the BR 4MT 2-6-4T locomotives, with two running numbers (80033 and 80117) and covering both early and late BR crests. RRP is £164.95, with no DCC-fitted versions planned.

The latest Bachmann Collectors Club exclusive is wartime grey-liveried SECR C class 0-6-0 No. 689, mirroring the OO version released a few years ago. Only 210 analogue and 150 sound-fitted models have been made, with club members benefiting from a discount on the RRP (£144.95 and £254.95 respectively).

009 gauge

When the Quarry Hunslet models first hit shelves, they were snapped up pretty quickly, so it is therefore

no surprise that additional identities have been added to the range, both of which are preserved examples. The first is No. 605 *Margaret*, which will be presented in its early Penrhyn Quarry lined black colours, while the second, No. 873 *Una*, will be in lined green, as has been carried in preservation. The former can currently be seen at the Vale of Rheidol Railway in Aberystwyth, while the latter is undergoing overhaul at Boston Lodge on the Ffestiniog Railway, from where it will return the National Slate Museum at Llanberis once completed.

RRP is £149.95 and £159.95 respectively, the difference reflecting the latter model being fitted with an enclosed cab.

The four-wheel RNAD vans also make a comeback, with two versions planned for release. Both preserved variants, the first (No. 42539) reflects that at the Statfold Barn Railway

in Tamworth, while the second (No. 221) is derived from that at the Corris Railway at Maespoeth; RRP for both is £33.95.

OO gauge

It's a rare occasion where the main OO range has played second fiddle to the other scales in Bachmann's portfolio, with no new locomotives – existing tools or new – including in this summer announcement. That said, it has not been entirely overlooked. There are carriages and wagons aplenty, though predominantly from the late diesel and preserved/modern era, including two West Coast Railway-branded Mk. 2 coaches.

Here, though, can be found the third and final new tool for the quarter: the MLA Bogie Box Wagons – something that will no doubt interest modellers of the more recent rail years.



↑ OXFORD'S CRANE SAMPLES

Oxford Rail has shown off samples of its upcoming OO scale Cowans Sheldon crane and accompanying match wagon. These have been in development for several years, but the end is in sight at long last. Five liveries are being produced, covering LMS, LNER, GWR and BR variants, each with an RRP of £99.95. Models are expected to arrive at the retailers towards the end of 2026 or in early 2027.



↑ BR FLYING SCOTSMAN FOR HORNBY TT:120

It was only a matter of time: Hornby's latest announcements for its TT:120 scale range sees Gresley's famous A3 *Flying Scotsman* rejoin the range, this time in its currently preserved guise as BR No. 60103. RRP is set at £194.99.

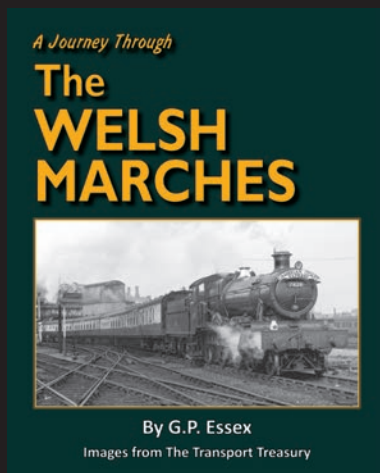


← CALEDONIAN GEMS

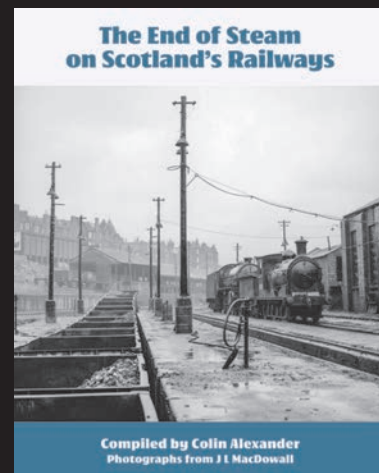
Rails of Sheffield's exclusive OO scale models of the Caledonian Railway 812 class locomotives proved so popular that another run of the preserved example, No. 828, has been commissioned, which arrived in stock at the end of July. Two versions are available, portraying it in its current form in the darker CR blue and as-built in the lighter shade. Prices are £214.95 for DC-ready models and £329.95 for sound-fitted variants.



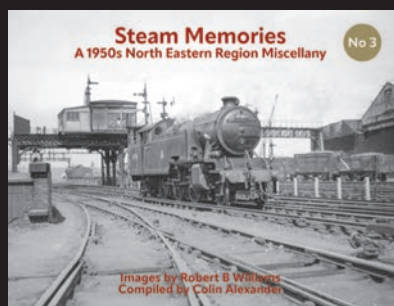
Eastern Times Issue 10
by Peter Sikes
£13.50



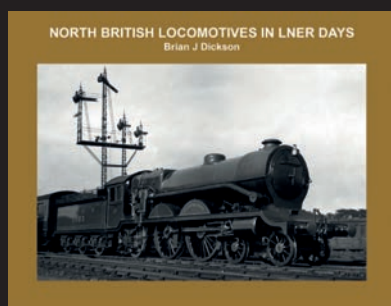
A Journey Through The Welsh Marches by G. P. Essex
£14.95



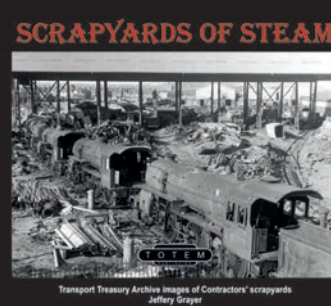
The End of Steam on Scotland's Railways by Colin Alexander
£14.95



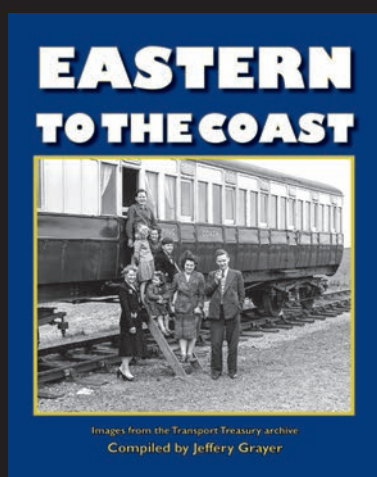
Steam Memories No 3
by Colin Alexander
£14.50



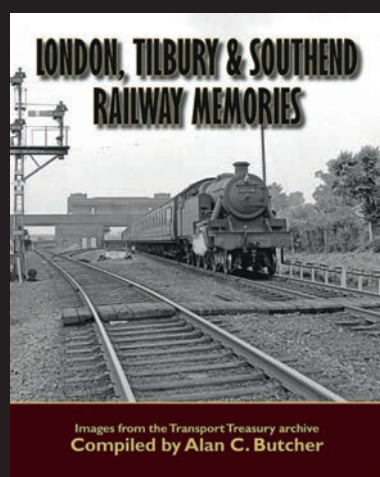
North British Locomotives in LNER Days by Brian J. Dickson
£13.50



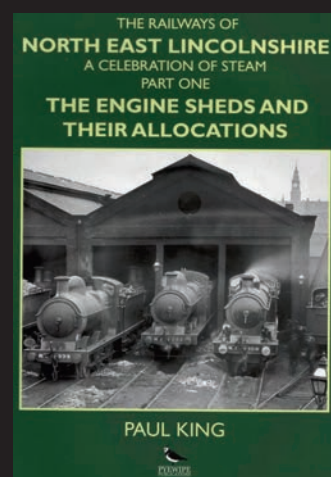
Scrapyards of Steam
by Jeffery Grayer
£13.50



Eastern to the Coast
by Jeffery Grayer
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London, Tilbury & Southend Railway Memories by Alan C. Butcher
£14.95



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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum

2ft gauge, ¼ mile.
Arundel, West Sussex.

Tel: 01798 831370.

Open: Weds-Suns.

Bluebell Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL.
Tel: 01825 720800.

Running: Tues-Suns.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne,
Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.

Running: Wed.

Chatham Historic Dockyard

Standard gauge, one mile.
Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800.
Open: Weds-Suns, sch hols.

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: Suns + Aug 29, 31, Sept 19, 26.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet,
Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.

Running: Sats-Thurs.

Kent & East Sussex Railway

Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden,
Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.

Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Lavender Line

Standard gauge, one mile.

Isfield, East Sussex.

Tel: 01825 750515.

Running: Aug 30/31, Sept 13. 27.

Mid-Hants Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants
SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

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, then Tues-
Thurs and W/Es.

Royal Victoria Railway

10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley,
Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.

Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, 1¼ miles. Sittingbourne,
Kent. Tel: 01795 424899.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Spa Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge
Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.

Running: W/Es, bank hols.

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: Aug 29-31, Sept 5/6, 19/20.

Bodmin Railway

Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin,
Cornwall. Tel: 01208 735555.

Running: Tues-Weds, Suns + Sept 26.

Bristol Harbour Railway

Standard gauge, ½ miles.

Princes Wharf, Bristol.

el: 0117 352 6600.

M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.

Running: Aug 29-31, Sept 12/13, 26/27.

Dartmouth Steam Railway

Standard gauge, seven miles.

Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.

Running: Daily.

Devon Railway Centre

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon.

Tel: 01884 855671.

Open: Thurs-Suns, 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, Sept 27.

Helston Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston,
Cornwall.

Tel: 07901 977 597.

Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns + Sept 2, 5.

Lappa Valley Railway

7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile.

Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.

Open: Daily until Oct 4.

Launceston Steam Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston,
Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665

Running: Suns-Weds until Sept 16.

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: W/Es.

North Dorset Railway

Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone,
Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills,
Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.

Running: Suns + Sept 12.

Seaton Tramway

2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road,
Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

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 until Nov 1.

Swanage Railway

Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset.
Tel: 01929 425800.

Running: Daily until Oct 4.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway

Standard gauge, three miles.

Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.

Running: W/Es until Oct 4.

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: Sept 13.

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: W/Es, bank hols.

East Anglian Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne,
Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.

Open: Weds, W/Es.

Running: Aug 29-31, Oct 4.

Celebrate S&DR
201 at Hopetown
Darlington

FOLLOWING the landmark celebrations of S&DR200 in the region last year, Hopetown Darlington is proud to launch S&DR201 celebrations, a programme of events, exhibitions and steam experiences that continues the story of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and its lasting impact on the world.

The celebration begins on Saturday, September 5 with Memory of a Journey: Final Station, a vast collection of thousands of wooden peg dolls decorated during the S&DR200 celebrations.

Filling the Exhibition Hall, this unique installation brings together scores of individual creations into one remarkable display, celebrating the communities, journeys and shared experiences that rail travel has brought to ordinary people.



Rides behind the replica of *Locomotion No. 1* will be available on dates throughout September to celebrate the 201st anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. HOPETOWN DARLINGTON

Throughout September, visitors will be able to experience the sights, sounds and atmosphere of the steam age through a range of heritage activities, including steam train rides and special events.

The programme culminates in the S&DR201 Steam Festival

on September 26/27, when the attraction, including Darlington Locomotive Works and the 1861 Shed will be open for a fun-packed weekend of steam-powered celebration.

Find out more at www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk/sdr201

Full steam ahead for Llangollen's golden finale

THE weekend of September 12/13 will be one of celebration at the Llangollen Railway as it brings the curtain down on the last 12 months of marking the 50th anniversary of the line's heritage era.

Since the very first open day at Llangollen station in September 1975, preservationists have expanded the line beyond that initial few hundred yards of track to the current 10 miles between there and the village of Corwen. Last September, the railway marked the occasion with a gala-style weekend, which it is planning to repeat this autumn.

An intensive timetable will run featuring steam and diesel locomotives, as well as multiple units, allowing unlimited travel all for the



Llangollen station largely fell to the hands of Mother Nature after the line closed. LR COLLECTION

price of £30 for adults and £8 for children. An 'Ales from Wales' service will run offering locally-sourced brews, with afternoon tea on board also set to be made available. Those keen to see behind the scenes will be able to

book tours of the locomotive shed at Llangollen, and an exhibition at the station will tell the whole 50-year story of North Wales's only standard gauge heritage railway. The railway is inviting all members and volunteers from that

time to come together to celebrate the occasion.

Full details of the programme will be published in due course; see llangollen-railway.co.uk/50th_anniversary/



Flagship GWR pannier No. 7754 will star in the railway's Fiftieth Finale weekend this September, celebrating all that has been achieved since the first open day at the station in 1975. OWEN HAYWARD

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: Aug 28-31.

Mid-Norfolk Railway

Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Brockford, Suffolk. Tel: 01449 766899. Running: Aug 30/31.

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: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + Sept 7, 14.

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: Suns, bank hols.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.

Chinnor, Oxon. Tel: 07979 055366

Running: Suns + Aug 31, Sept 5.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway

Standard gauge, 2½ miles.

Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067

Running: Sept 4-6, 19, Oct 3/4.

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: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 25.

Gunpowder Railway

2ft 6in gauge. Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

Running: Sats + Sept 6, 20.

Great Whipsnade Railway

2ft 6in gauge.

Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.

Tel: 0344 225 1826.

Running: Daily until Sept 27.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway

2ft gauge. Hanworth, Middlesex.

Tel: 01932 212235. Running: Suns.

Leighton Buzzard Railway

2ft gauge, three miles.

Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

Tel: 01525 373888

Running: Suns until Oct 18.

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: Oct 3.

Amerton Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs. Tel: 01889 271337.

Running: W/Es.

Apedale Valley Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. Tel: 0845 094 1953.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse

Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.

Open: W/Es.

Battlefield Line

Standard gauge, five miles.

Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 2, 9.

Cambrian Heritage Railways

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys).

Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire.

Tel: 01691 728131.

Running: Weds, W/Es, bank hols.

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 30, Sept 20.

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.

Chasewater Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands.
Tel: 01543 452623. **Open: Daily.**
Running: W/Es until Sept 13.

Churnet Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 360522.

Running: Weds, Fris-Suns.
Dean Forest Railway

Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.
Tel: 01594 845840.

Running: 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: Suns + Aug 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: Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)

Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts.
Tel: 0115 940 5705.

Open: W/Es. Running: Aug 29.

Midland Railway – Butterley

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Ripley, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 570140.

Running: W/Es, bank hols.

National Tramway Museum

Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.

Tel: 01773 854 321

Open: Sats-Thurs.

Northampton & Lamport Railway

Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.

Running: Aug 29–31, Sept 6, 20, Oct 4.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill,
Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.

Running: Aug 30/31, Sept 13, 20.

Peak Rail

Standard gauge, four miles. Matlock,
Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.

Running: Weds, 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 30/31, Sept 27.

Rudyard Lake Railway

10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.

Running: W/Es, bank hols.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway

Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden,
Northants. Tel: 0300 3023 150.

Running: Aug 29–31, Sept 5, 19/20.

Severn Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster,
Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.

Running: Tues, Weds, 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: Sept 19/20.

Telford Steam Railway

Standard gauge, one mile. Telford,
Shropshire.

Running: Suns, bank hols + Sept 12.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway

2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire
Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.

Running: Aug 30/31, Sept 26/27.

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: Weds-Suns, bank hols.

East Lancashire Railway

Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.

Running: Weds & Thurs (until Sept 17),

W/Es, bank hols + Sept 18.

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 until Sept 26.

Groudle Glen Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.

Running: Suns.

Heaton Park Tramway

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester.

Tel: 0161 740 1919.

Running: 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 until Nov 1.

Manx Electric Railway

3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.

Running: Daily until Sept 20, then Tues-
Thurs & W/Es.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway

15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass,
Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

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, then Tues-
Thurs & W/Es + Sept 25.

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. Hesket Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.

Running: Suns, bank hols until Nov 1.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick,
Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 2, 9.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe

Standard gauge, 15 miles.
British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.

Tel: 07889 297271.

Running: Sept 19, 26, Oct 10, 17, 24.

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, Weds, W/Es.

Heatherslaw Light Railway

15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge,
Northumberland.

Tel: 01890 820244.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.



The Dean Forest Railway has announced that LNWR Webb 0-6-2T coal tank No. 1054 will visit the line to star at its Royal Forest of Steam gala on October 31 and November 1. It joins resident 5700 class 0-6-0PT No. 9681, Hunslet 0-6-0ST Austerity WD75189 Rennes and Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2147 Uskmouth No. 1, with the timetable expected to include double-heading, goods trains and more. The latter locomotive will also visit Peak Rail for that line's Mixed Traffic Gala on September 19/20, at which four more steam locomotives will operate, alongside two diesel locomotives and a DMU. OWEN HAYWARD

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

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.

Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.

Tel: 01535 645214.

Running: Daily until Sept 6, then W/Es + Weds from Sept 23.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway

2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.

Tel: 07407 500884.

Running: Sats until Sept 26 + Sept 2, 5.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.

Ludborough, Lincolnshire.

Tel: 01507 363881.

Running: Aug 31, Sept 6, 20.

Middleton Railway

Standard gauge, 1½ miles.

Hunslet, Leeds.

Tel: 0845 680 1758.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 23, 27.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles. Grosmont,

North Yorks. Tel: 01751 472508.

Running: Sats-Weds.

Scarborough North Bay Railway

20in gauge, ⅞ 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: Suns, bank hols + Sept 12.

Weardale Railway

Standard gauge, 18 miles.

Stanhope, Co. Durham. Tel: 07729 765504.

Running: Tues + Aug 30/31,

Sept 2, 6, 12, 20.

Wensleydale Railway

Standard gauge, 22 miles. Leeming Bar,

North Yorkshire. Tel: 01677 425805.

Running: Weds, W/Es + Aug 31, Sept 4.

Whistletop Valley Railway (Kirklees)

15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West

Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 25.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway

Standard gauge, 1,000ft.

Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.

Running: Suns, bank hols.

Fairbourne Railway

12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, bank hols.

Ffestiniog Railway

2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Gwili Railway

Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd

Arms, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 01267 238213.

Running: Weds, Thurs, Suns, bank hols.

Llanberis Lake Railway

2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd.

Tel: 01286 870549.

Running: Tues-Thurs, Suns until Sept 27

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway

Standard gauge, ¼ mile.

Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.

Tel: 07956 082305.

Running: Aug 29, Sept 26.

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 until Oct 25.

Talylllyn Railway

2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.

Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, 12 miles. Aberystwyth,

Ceredigion. Tel: 01970 625819.

Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway

2ft gauge, one mile. Porthmadog,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 513402.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es.

Welsh Highland Railway

2ft gauge, 26 miles. Caernarfon, Gwynedd.

Tel: 01766 516000.

Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway

2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair

Caereinion, Powys. Tel: 01938 810441.

Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway

2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn,

Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.

Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es + Sept 7.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway

Standard gauge, 3½ miles.

Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.

Running: W/Es, bank hols + Sept 25.

Brecon Mountain Railway

1ft 11¼in gauge, five miles.

Pant, Mid-Glamorgan. Tel: 01685 722988.

Running: Sats-Thurs until Oct 4.

Corris Railway

2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.

Corris, near Machynlleth. Tel: 01654 761701.

Running: Aug 29-31, Sept 12/13, 26/27.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.

Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.

Running: Tues, W/Es.

Caledonian Railway

Standard gauge, four miles.

Brechin, Angus. Tel: 01356 622992.

Running: Aug 29/30, Sept 6, 12.

Doon Valley Railway

Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.

Running: Aug 30, Sept 6, 17.

Keith & Dufftown Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.

Dufftown, Banffshire.

Tel: 01340 821181.

Running: Fris-Suns until Sept 27.

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

28-30 Big Statfold 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, Talylllyn

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, Talylllyn Railway

6-12 Chappel Beer Festival, East

Anglian Railway Museum

11-13 Autumn Steam Gala, Didcot

Railway Centre

11-13 Autumn Steam Gala,

Swanage Railway

12 Bluey & Bingo, East Lancashire

Railway

12/13 Diesel Gala, Dean Forest

Railway

12/13 Engineering open weekend,

Mid-Hants Railway

12/13 Heritage Weekend, Talylllyn

Railway

12/13 Diesel Pioneers Gala, Tanfield

Railway

12/13 Road, Rail & Ale Steam Rally,

Statfold Barn Railway

12/13 1940s Weekend, West

Somerset Railway

13 Car boot sale & autojumble,

Apedale Valley Light Railway

13 Blythburgh station open day,

Halesworth to Southwold Railway

17-20 Autumn Steam Gala, Severn

Valley Railway

18/19 Autumn Diesel Gala, East

Lancashire Railway

18-20 Beer Festival, Bluebell

Railway

19 Junior Engineering experiences,

Kent & East Sussex Railway

19/20 Gala weekend, Apedale

Valley Light Railway

19/20 Model Railway Show, Bala

Lake Railway

19/20 Cogwarts Steampunk,

Llangollen Railway

19/20 1940s Weekend, North

Norfolk Railway

19/20 Mixed Traffic Gala, Peak Rail

19/20 Fairytale Afternoon Teas,

Romney Hythe & Dymchurch

Railway

Organising a gala or other big event?

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at owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

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andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk

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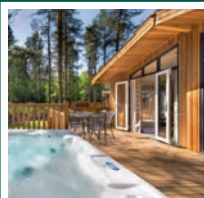
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HS2 honours tunnelling giants Brunel and son with blue plaque beneath pair's tomb

By Robin Jones

A BLUE plaque has been installed in honour of transport tunnel pioneers Sir Marc Brunel and his son Isambard Kingdom Brunel on the wall of High Speed 2's Euston Tunnel – marking the spot beneath Kensal Green Cemetery where the pair are buried.

HS2 Ltd chief executive Mark Wild joined Katherine McAlpine, director of the Brunel Museum, and engineers from Skanska Costain STRABAG, the joint venture delivering this section of the rail project, to install the plaque on the tunnel wall 130ft below ground.

Marc Brunel invented the tunnel shield method, patenting the rectangular tunnelling shield in 1818, inspired by the boring mechanism of the shipworm. It was successfully used in 1825 to excavate London's Thames Tunnel, the world's first underwater tunnel. More than 200 years later, HS2 Ltd continues to use tunnel boring machines adorned with cutter discs based on his tunnelling shield.

Revolutionary engineer

Isambard Brunel continued with revolutionary tunnelling projects as chief engineer of the GWR, building Box Tunnel, which was the longest railway tunnel in the world at the time and is today considered one of his most celebrated structures.

As HS2 constructs tunnels across the route between London and the West Midlands, expert teams undertake extensive monitoring before, during and after the tunnelling works, and



Left: HS2 CEO Mark Wild (left) and Katherine McAlpine, director of the Brunel Museum, install a plaque in the Euston Tunnel beneath where HS2 passes the tomb of Sir Marc Brunel and his son Isambard. HS2

Right: The HS2 Euston Tunnel under construction. HS2



where there are sensitive historic sites, detailed assessments and specialist works ensure any vulnerable heritage assets are protected.

Mr Wild said the significance of the engineering achievements of the Brunels "cannot be underplayed," adding: "How we build our tunnels today is because of Sir Marc's work, and how we build our railways is because of how Isambard Brunel built the Great Western Main Line.

"He built railways flat and straight, and future-proofed them for improvements in speed and capacity, which is why we still use them today.

"Installing this plaque gives me the opportunity to reflect on the scale of what the 30,000-strong workforce on HS2 are building – a new railway for future generations that will stand the test of time, despite all the challenges we face."

Katherine McAlpine added: "Modern tunnelling of the scale of HS2 would not have been possible without Marc Brunel. His tunnelling shield made

way for the Tunnel Boring Machines of today. Two hundred years ago, the father-and-son team embarked on an audacious project to dig the world's first tunnel under a navigable river, laying the foundations for huge projects like this.

Fitting testament

"I am delighted we are able to mark this milestone underneath the final resting place of Marc Brunel and Isambard Kingdom Brunel as a testament to their ingenuity."

Eddie Edmonds, delivery lead of the Skanska Costain STRABAG joint venture, said: "It's a privilege to be able to recognise Sir Marc and Isambard Brunel as we pass beneath their memorial. They paved the way for safe modern tunnelling methods and the use of shielded tunnel machines that have enabled us to be safely tunnelling today.

"For the SCS team delivering the tunnel, passing beneath both Brunel's final resting place is a technical

achievement and a moment of reflection. Unveiling this plaque recognises the extraordinary engineering legacy Brunel left behind while celebrating the expertise and commitment of our workforce today and the way we're delivering the works that will shape the country's infrastructure for generations to come."

→ The Grade II-listed Torquay mansion commissioned by Isambard Brunel as his retirement home is on sale for £4 million. Currently split into three separate properties, Brunel Manor, Brunel Court and Brunel Lodge, the Teignmouth Road site has planning permission for a further 35 homes.

ATA Estates bought the site five years ago from the Woodlands House of Prayer, a charity that ran the property as a hotel and Christian retreat/conference centre.

Brunel died before he could move in. The property is being marketed through estate agents Savills; call 01392 455700 for details.

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 350 out Sept 25

Behind closed doors: Owen Hayward visits Margate for the One:One Collection's 2026 open weekend to see its unique collection of historic locomotives, rolling stock and railwayana.

PLUS

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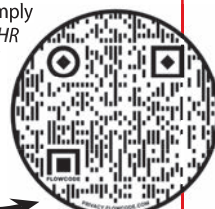
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01-04 OCTOBER

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