WIN: A PRIVATE COMPARTMENT ABOARD SEVERN VALLEY SANTA SPECIALS

ISSUE 350

HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Commuting by steam in Severn Valley service trials

WIN
A fantastic Viking cruise worth £5,990.
See inside for details.
VIKING
*only available in the UK



◀ Battery conversion demonstrates EMU's potential

▶ Bluebell goes all Network SouthEastern



£5.60
50
NO. 350
9 771466 356222
KELSEY media

FREE THE SPIRIT

THE B17 STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST



THE SPIRIT OF AN ERA RETURNS

First introduced in 1928, Gresley's B17 'Sandringham' class was born in the golden age of Art Deco – a time of style, elegance and bold new possibilities. With its graceful lines inherited from Gresley's A1 of 'Flying Scotsman' fame, the B17 captured the spirit of an era when railways opened up a new world of travel; linking cities, connecting communities and giving people the freedom to explore.

BECOME A B17 MEMBER

HELP US BUILD THIS AMAZING LOCOMOTIVE



Become a B17 Steam Locomotive **Trust Member for just £10 a month** (payable by Standing Order or Bank Transfer) or become a **Lifetime Member for £1,000**, covering both you and your partner.

Students under 26 years of age can have an **annual membership for just £15.**

Click the link below and fill out the application form.
Thanks for your support!

b17steam.com/joinasamember

SCAN
TO BECOME
A MEMBER

SPIRIT OF SANDRINGHAM
61673

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1144738



The abundance of late summer floral displays at Corfe Castle station must make it one of the most beautiful and well-kept in the heritage portfolio. Bullied Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34072 *257 Squadron* is seen arriving with a passenger service from Swanage on September 3. The Swanage Railway was a market leader in the development of park-and-ride facilities, the awarding-winning one at nearby Norden. In August 1995, it became the UK's first steam-served all-year-round park-and-ride scheme when it received the first passenger train from Swanage since the branch closed in 1972. Norden is promoted as serving visitors to Swanage and Corfe Castle, relieving road congestion on the tourist destination of the Isle of Purbeck at peak periods, whereas the eight-week trial scheme currently underway on the Severn Valley Railway as described below and on page 6 is aimed at city commuters. ROBIN JONES

EDITORIAL
Editor Robin Jones
robin.jones@kelsey.co.uk
Staff writer Owen Hayward
owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk
Senior news and railwayana contributor
Geoff Courtney
Senior contributor
John Titlow
Contributors
Don Benn, Sally Clifford, Martin Creese, Hugh Dougherty, Alex Hando, Tim Hobman
Designer Tim Pipes
Production editor Lucy Wood
Publisher Tim Hartley
Editorial address
Heritage Railway magazine, Kelsey Media Ltd, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ
Website
www.heritagerailway.co.uk

ADVERTISING
Advertising representatives
Andy Bruce 01507 529455
andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk
Connor Crowley 01507 529411
connor.crowley@kelsey.co.uk
Group advertising manager
Sue Keily sue.keily@kelsey.co.uk

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

help@classicmagazines.co.uk
www.classicmagazines.co.uk

DISTRIBUTION & PRINTING
Distribution
Frontline Distribution Solutions
2 East Poultry Avenue,
London, EC1A 9PT.
Tel: 020 7429 4000
Printing
Acorn Web Offset, Normanton, West Yorkshire

KELSEY MEDIA LTD
Sales and distribution manager
Carl Smith
Customer marketing director
Kevin McCormick
Head of marketing (subscriptions)
Claire Aspinall
Managing director
Dan Savage

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

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

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

© Kelsey Media Ltd.

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

ISSN No 1466-3560

Published
Every four weeks on a Friday.
Advertising deadline
October 7, 2026
Next issue on sale
October 23 , 2026

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

SVR commuter trials: a route to the future?

A double helping of heritage era history has just been made on the Severn Valley Railway, 61 years after a society was formed to save part of the line.

Not only has a pioneering exercise involving the SVR working hand in hand with local national rail authorities seen the successful launch of an eight-week trial running commuter trains from Bewdley to Birmingham three days a week, but also, on the second day, steam headed two of them, with more to follow in the weeks ahead, after the line's diesel-only month ended with scorching heatwave temperatures having lowered.

The results of the trial and potential benefits will be assessed after the eight weeks are up. The big question, of course, is if such a service become a permanent feature, and if so, might other network-connected heritage lines elsewhere follow suit? The ideal scenario is a format wherein the network authorities share the cost of running the chosen section of line with the heritage railway, reducing the cost burden on the latter while freeing up finance for further key developments.

Passenger services on the Bewdley to Kidderminster section were withdrawn by BR in January 1970, nearly five years after Dr Beeching left his post as its chairman, having achieved immortal notoriety for rail closures in a period where mass car ownership provided greater freedom in travel. However, the unabated rise in motor vehicle ownership which has seen two-car households become the norm and nightmarish rush-hour traffic congestion has, in more recent times, led to frequent demands for rail reopenings.

The preservationists who bemoaned the loss of branch lines and took steps to save, revive or even rebuild them deserve an eternal debut of gratitude. Those who reopened the SVR could so easily have stopped at saving just Bridgnorth to Hampton Loade or Bewdley if they simply wanted to run 'old steam trains,' but perseverance and a far wider vision and commitment proved to be the order of the day here, as slowly the stretch to link with the main line was acquired and the splendid new Kidderminster Town station was opened.

> "If the SVR trial proves a success, will it open other doors throughout the country?"

Had the SVR not saved this section, it would likely have met with the same fare as countless other closed trackbeds that fell victim to modern housing estates and industrial development being built on them, ensuring permanent blockages. While readers may condemn the Beeching Axe, it may well be argued that the biggest fault lay with local planning authorities which lack the vision to protect trackbed for future use, even only as footpaths, greenways, or even local roads if rail reinstatement was not on the cards.

We now look forward to the reopening of the freight-only Portishead branch to commuter traffic and wonder if the SVR trial proves a success, will it open other doors throughout the country?

Robin Jones Editor

CONTENTS

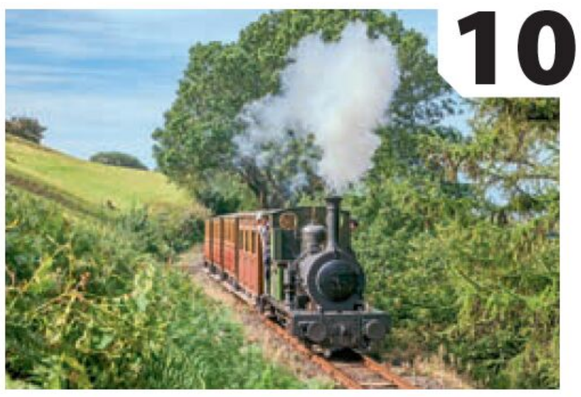
ISSUE 350
September 25 – October 23, 2026

News



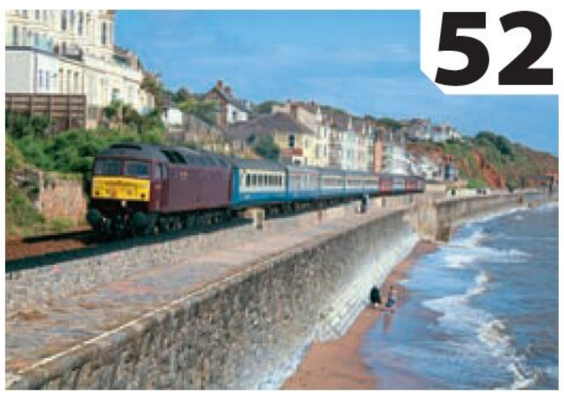
Headline News

■ West Midlands Trains trials Bewdley commuter trips over Severn Valley
■ National Railway Museum launches new 'Adopt an Object' scheme
■ 'Coffee Pot' stars in first gala on former Great Eastern territory
■ Boiler assessment adds £50k to estimated T9 overhaul bill
■ Santa specials accessibility boost thanks to sign language interpreter



News

■ Bure Valley locomotive returned to original oil-burning condition
■ Bagnall 0-4-0ST returned to steam at Bala Lake Railway after 100 years
■ Preservation first as EMU undergoes successful battery trials
■ Worth Valley 'Black Five' returned as main line future deemed unviable
■ Purbeck mining line announces bridge over Swanage Railway plans
■ East Somerset and Isle of Wight plan triple Ivatt gala
■ Heritage lines help to create movie magic in Yorkshire and Essex
■ Young volunteers prove their worth at Llangollen and Talyllyn lines



Main Line News

■ *Clun Castle* to head for Severn Valley with anniversary tour
■ Debut outing rescheduled after fault fails 'Badger's' comeback tour
■ Joint Plymouth outings for *Nunney Castle* and *King Edward I* in 2027

58 With Full Regulator
Don Benn breaks his steam tradition to look at the work of some of the Southern Region's EMUs and DMUs.



CONTENTS: Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41312 evokes memories of branch line days gone by as it works round Wanderers Curve on the climb up towards Medstead & Four Marks on the Mid-Hants Railway, hauling a matching pair of SR Bulleid carriages on September 5. JAMES TAVINER
COVER: Whoever would have thought that steam-hauled commuter trains would run both in the preservation era and on a heritage line? On September 3, GWR 5700 class 0-6-0PT No. 7714 departs Kidderminster with the 6.40pm service to Bewdley, a part of the West Midlands Railway eight-week trials that includes utilising the Severn Valley Railway to link people with services to Birmingham Snow Hill. For the full story, see Headline News, page 6. JOHN TITLOW

Regulars

30 Subscribe Today
50 Centre
LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* skirts the shoreline near Dawlish. STEVE DONALD



57 Main Line Itinerary
Steam and heritage diesel railtours.
64 Railwayana
Geoff Courtney's regular column.
88 Off the Shelf
Latest book and DVD releases.
90 Platform
Where your views matter most.
92 Up & Running
Your guide to upcoming railway running dates and events.
98 Next Stop

Features

Delivering on freight expectations
Despite the railways being built for goods, representation of this traffic is often overlooked by our heritage lines. Owen Hayward visits some of those responsible for the restoration of freight vehicles to find out what their presence can bring to their railway – providing the right approach is there to support them. Here, in part one, he focuses on two of the most recently revived groups.



Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

68 Main line and British steam locomotives preserved in Japan
John Titlow continues his journey through the Land of the Rising Sun to find as many British-built steam locomotives in the areas he visited, discovering some unexpected surprises along the way.

76 Beating the Summer blues: North Norfolk's Festival Triumph
An estimated six-figure drop in revenue caused by the challenges of a sweltering summer failed to dampen the North Norfolk Railway's spirits, with a healthy attendance for its annual Festival of Rails week.

78 Modelling One:One Scale: the marvels of Margate
Locomotive Services Group opened the doors to its Kent-based storage facility for one weekend in August, and Owen Hayward found out what lays hidden away in the former Hornby factory's warehouse.

80 Bowater reunion tops the bill for Welshpool gala
The first weekend in September feels very much like the starting gun for the autumn steam gala season. The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's three-day event reunited former Kent-based shedmates, as Martin Creese reports.

82 That 1980s look for Bluebell's Big Diesel Bash
It may have ended its BR days as a Southern Region station in 1963, but for one weekend only, Horsted Keynes took on a modern look as the Bluebell Railway celebrated the 40th anniversary of Network SouthEast.

86 New Middleton museum manager will show 'Leeds was first'
The Middleton Railway has appointed a museum manager to oversee a development which will help emphasise its place in the origin of the development of steam.

Models



91 News
Rails of Sheffield announces Great Central exclusives, Rapido goes Sentinel-mental, and Clarks Railworks unveils Mink G models.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 351

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

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

SUBSCRIBE FROM £57.99*

*THAT'S JUST **£4.46 AN ISSUE** IF YOU PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT EVERY 12 MONTHS

See page 30



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

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

Steam returns in time to haul trial commuter trips on Severn Valley line

By Robin Jones



The driver puts the lamp on GWR pannier No. 7714 before the 5.45pm trial commuter service departs from Kidderminster Town for Bewdley on September 3. JOHN TITLOW

STEAM returned to the Severn Valley in time to haul two of its ground-breaking 'Bewdley Express' commuter trips on the second day of its eight-week trial period.

As reported in our last issue, the SVR has joined with the West Midlands Rail Executive and West Midlands Railway to investigate the potential return of regular services from Bewdley to Birmingham using heritage DMUs and steam haulage over the line's 3½-mile section to Kidderminster. The trial runs on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with passengers changing trains at Kidderminster.

The SVR aims to have steam traction for the evening trips when running on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Tuesday evening services and all morning services will be provided by the DMU. The £3.20 cost of a return fare from Kidderminster to Bewdley (£2 single) during the trial period makes it a candidate for the cheapest standard gauge steam ride on a UK heritage railway.

The trial got off to a flying start on September 1 as representatives of the three organisations involved, Bewdley Town Council, Worcestershire County Council, press and photographers assembled to see the first service leave Bewdley at 6.40am. The last BR services to that destination were withdrawn in January 1970.

SVR CEO Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "To see the first 'Bewdley Express' leave Bewdley with people using it to begin their working day is a fantastic moment after months of planning and preparation.

"This service could make a real difference to people living in the town and the surrounding area, giving them another option for getting to work in Birmingham and elsewhere without having to rely on the car. It also opens up wider opportunities for education, business and leisure.

Reliant on demand

"But this is a trial, and we need people to use it. The level of demand we demonstrate over the next eight weeks will be hugely important in determining whether there is a case for making services like this a permanent fixture.

"If this service could work for you, please give it a try, tell your friends, and make use of it. The more people who use the 'Bewdley Express,' the stronger the evidence will be for its future."

Taking the controls of the inaugural train was Bob Dunn, the SVR's most senior diesel driver, who said that the first run felt "extremely special."

Passenger Sarah Graham, who works as a clinical scientist at Birmingham Women's Hospital, said she leapt at the chance to use public transport for the entire journey.

"Normally, I have to use my car for part of my daily commute, but I really prefer to use public transport," she said.

"There must be many people who need to commute from Bewdley, and linking up with the main line rail is a no-brainer. It's taking cars off the road, and I'd love to see it become permanent. I'd use it every day."

Catrina Ferris, travelling to Birmingham Snow Hill to her job as a project manager with the Environment Agency, said: "I think it's vital to reduce road traffic as much as we can. I'll be spreading the word and sharing the news online because I think it's important for as many people as possible to use this service."

Making a huge difference

Matt Green, who was travelling to Rowley Regis to run errands, said: "I'd love to make as much use as possible of this as Bewdley station is only walking distance from my house. Decent public transport is what we need and would make a huge difference."

The same day saw steam services resume on the SVR following a month of diesel operations because of the risk of lineside fires due to the extended record heatwave period.

On September 2, GWR pannier No. 7714 hauled the two early-evening community trips departing from Kidderminster Town at 5.45pm and 6.50pm, arriving in Bewdley 12 minutes later.

The trial is testing whether existing heritage railway infrastructure and facilities can play a role in improving connectivity with the modern rail network. No details of passenger loadings will be released while the trial is in progress.

The morning services depart Bewdley at 6.40pm and 7.40pm and arrive at Birmingham Snow Hill at 7.46am and 8.46am respectively. Evening services leave Snow Hill at 4.46pm and 5.46pm and arrive at Bewdley at 5.57pmand 7.02pm. Anytime Return fares are £16.

➜ **See page 89 for details on how you could win a private compartment for six people aboard one of this year's Santa specials at the Severn Valley in November.**



The ECS for the first 'Bewdley Express' arrives at Bewdley station on September 1. JOHN TITLOW



Severn Valley Railway CEO Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster (left), driver Bob Dunn (centre) and Bewdley's mayor, Sharon Harvey, before the departure of the first 'Bewdley Express' on September 1. JOHN TITLOW

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Midland Railway – Butterley-based LMS 3F 'Jinty' No. 13440 heads a demonstration freight working on March 21, 2025. KENNY FELSTEAD/GCR

Pannier and Hunslet join Great Central line-up

THE final two guests for the Great Central Railway's October 1-4 Little and Large-themed autumn steam gala have been announced, with the pair of 0-6-0s rounding off a line-up that celebrates the smaller types of steam locomotive design.

Fresh from its appearance at the Severn Valley Railway's own autumn event just two weeks before, the Dean Forest Railway's GWR pannier No. 9681 will be joined by Hunslet 'Fitzwilliam' No. 1589 *Newstead* from the North Norfolk Railway.

Crimson lake-liveried *Newstead* will work alongside LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 16640, which is turned out in lined LMS maroon livery, visiting from the Midland Railway – Butterley. A further industrial example to the line-up will be Sentinel 0-4-0VGBT No. 7372 *Ann* from the East Lancashire Railway.

Ex-Port Talbot Railway & Docks Company GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 of 1900 will also visit from the Severn Valley Railway.

Alongside the visiting engines, the GCR's home fleet will be out in force, including Hudswell Clarke-built Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 68067, BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 No. 73156 and Derby Lightweight railcar No. 79900 *Iris*.

The usual intensive timetable of passenger and freight workings will be in operation, which will include *Newstead* on at least one of two rakes of 'Windcutter' mineral wagons, the sort it may well have once been seen shunting at the collieries to which it was allocated before withdrawal.

GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "The Autumn Steam Gala is always a highlight of the GCR calendar, but this year's Little and Large theme gives us a particularly exciting opportunity to showcase just how varied steam locomotive design could be. From the compact Sentinel *Ann* and diminutive GWR No. 813 through to the larger members of our home fleet, there will be a fantastic contrast in size, design and engineering for visitors to enjoy.

"We are incredibly grateful to the organisations and individuals who have made it possible for these visiting locomotives to join us.

"Combined with our own fleet, the intensive timetable should make this a memorable four days for enthusiasts, photographers and families alike."

For more information and to book tickets, visit www.gcrailway.co.uk/visit/events/20261001-autumn-steam-gala/

'Firsts' for Sittingbourne mixed gala weekend

THE Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway's Kerr Stuart 'Brazil' 0-4-2ST No. 4219 of 1924 *Melior* will make its first special event appearance during the September 26-27 Steam, Diesel & Electric Gala Weekend since returning from its 10-yearly overhaul this summer.

Melior, which returned to traffic on August 23 complete with a new boiler, will share the weekend's steam services with sister No. 886 of 1905 *Premier*, fresh from its successful visit to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's September gala (see feature, pages 80/81).

The duo will work individually on both passenger and mixed train services, double-heading the 5.05pm to Kemsley Down at the end of each day.

Ex-RNAD Hunslet 4wDM No. 2266 of 1940, bought by three of the railway's volunteers earlier this year, will make its passenger train debut on the Saturday morning, working the 11.20am departure from Kemsley Down to Sittingbourne Viaduct, hauling the rake of Chattenden & Upnor Railway coaches. It will work the same departure on the Sunday too, as well as a demonstration freight train from Sittingbourne each afternoon.

Also making its passenger and gala debut will be another recent acquisition, Clayton 4wBE No. B0483 of 1976 *Tank II*,



Kerr Stuart 'Brazil' 0-4-2ST *Melior* will make its first gala appearance since overhaul. SKLR

which bears a marked similarity to the Bowaters Railway's original English Electric 4wBE *The Tank*, was scrapped in 1969. *Tank II* is set to haul the 11.40am freight train from Kemsley Down each day, before working back from Sittingbourne with the 12.55pm passenger service.

Resident Hudson-Hunslet 4wDM No. 4182 of 1953 *Victor* will also head passenger trains while the Fuller family's Aveling & Porter eight-ton roller *Rhoda* will be in steam at Kemsley Down.

New alliance for UK's top charter train companies

THE UK's four principal charter train operators have formed a collaboration alliance.

Mainline Heritage & Charter Alliance, Locomotives Services Ltd, DB Cargo, Vintage Trains and West Coast Railways will share best practice in respect of the standards of operations and safety, work with the relevant regulatory and safety bodies to ensure that the particular requirements of the sector and the wider industry are fully understood, and work together to ensure that all participants within the sector are subject to the same level of scrutiny and compliance by the industry regulatory bodies.

They are also advocating to retain the rights afforded to the sector under the privatisation era under the transition to Great British Railways and into the future. As a single voice, they will represent main line charter and heritage operators by engaging with industry stakeholders at senior level with a clear mission of protecting and enhancing charter operations on the national network.

Together, the four companies account for the majority of charter, tourist and heritage operations.

Adopt a landmark exhibit at the NRM!

THE National Railway Museum in York has launched a new adoption scheme for six objects from its vast collection. From just £3 per month, adopters receive a personalised adoption certificate and exclusive updates for a year, and funds will ensure the upkeep of the museum's exhibits and learning programmes.

The six items are Furness Railway 0-4-0 'Coppernob' No. 3, Queen Adelaide's Royal Saloon, the oldest royal carriage in the UK, BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92220 *Evening Star*, GWR diesel railcar No. 4, one of the first-generation driving cars from Japan's Shinkansen Bullet Train, and a model of an LSWR third class carriage smoking compartment that was used in a murder trial in 1901.

Anthony Coulls, senior curator of rail transport and technology, said: "Whether you're buying for a railway enthusiast, a history lover or someone who's simply hard to buy for, adopting an object offers a unique way to connect with some of the most fascinating objects in our collection. Every adoption helps us care for these extraordinary pieces of railway history and share their stories with future generations."

Visit www.railwaymuseum.org.uk/adopt-an-object for more details.

Gala tour visit sees 'Coffee Pot' pull trains in Great Eastern's territory

By Owen Hayward

GER Class 209 0-4-0ST No. 229 was the star attraction of both the Mangapps Farm Railway's August bank holiday weekend and Didcot Railway Centre's own annual September gala, with the former booking the diminutive locomotive for its first operational appearance in its home region since returning to steam last year.

While it is unlikely any member of the class made it as far at Burnham-on-Crouch, having been predominantly used for depot shunting and later carriage heating duties, the MFR is located deep in Great Eastern territory. While No. 229 appeared outside the company's former London terminus at Liverpool Street last December after its overhaul was completed (as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 340), it had yet to work any public trains on home turf since, appearing at galas elsewhere such as Hopetown Darlington's 2025 Titans of Steam Gala (issue 338) and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's Cotswold Festival of Steam in May this year (issue 346).

After serving its GER career at Stratford, it was sold into maritime use in 1917 and put to work at Beachley Dock, Chepstow, where it remained until 1982 when rescued by Bill Parker, cosmetically restored, and later displayed at the North Woolwich Old Station Museum in East London. That closed in 2008, so No. 299 was eventually taken back to Nill's Flour Mill workshops at Bream, where restoration was gradually carried out, returning to steam for the first time in preservation last Summer.

The MFR event ran from August 29-31 and saw seven BR diesels pulling trains on the Saturday, with steam being added to the mix on the Sunday and bank holiday Monday. Joining No. 229 was Bagnall 0-6-0T No. 2613 *Brookfield*, which also has connections to the admiralty. Built in 1939 for an order that was meant to see it shipped to Turkey to run on metre gauge track, it was commandeered for the war effort as construction started and thus modified for standard gauge and given Walschaert valve gear – a feature uncommon for industrial types of this size. It was used at the Admiralty Machinery Depot's California Works in Stoke-on-Trent until the site's closure in 1959, whereafter the site and locomotives were sold to the Brookfield Foundry. Rail operations there only lasted a short while after, with traffic having ceased by 1962.

Brookfield remained there until 1982, when the company went into liquidation and was sold by auction a year later. The locomotive was bought by Richard Moore, a member of the East Essex Locomotive Preservation Society, but it was in poor condition, with many parts having gone missing during its years out of use. Despite this, restoration took only three years, it returning to service at the Big Pit Railway in South Wales before travelling between several other railways and eventually settling down at the MFR.

Among the plethora of diesels running at gala was Class 04 No. 11103. Constructed in 1952, it is the sole-surviving example of the four locomotives built to the order for traction to replace ageing GER steam trams on the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway, which became the first BR line to be entirely dieselised. These particular examples of the class were unusual for being fitted with sideplates and cowcatchers, as was legally required at the time for tramway running, although after the line was closed, these fixtures were removed. Following arrival at the MFR in 2020, it has been returned to this guise.

Back to the West

Following the MFR event, No. 229 went back on its travels as it ventured to Oxfordshire to star the Didcot Railway Centre's September 11-13 steam gala. There it joined GWR steam in the forms of GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, large prairie No. 4144 (which will be withdrawn for overhaul in the new year) and Alexandra Dock Railway 0-4-0ST No. 1340 *Trojan*, the latter also having been a dock worker in Newport between 1897 and 1923.

The gala saw No. 229 operate on both DRC's branch and main lines, along with shunting demonstrations to and from the coaling stage. Each day concluded with a double-header of the two smallest locomotives (built 23 years apart) pulling a pair of newly outshopped GWR carriages that have been restored in the workshops onsite and which entered service just over a week beforehand, allowing two other carriages in use to be temporarily withdrawn for maintenance.





Above: BR Drewry Class 04 No. 11103 (right) is the last-surviving locomotive built for the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway and has been refitted with the skirts and cowcatchers it would have needed there. JAMES KINDRED

Left: Appearing at its first gala in former GER territory, and becoming the first example in the region since 1949, No. 229 sits in the loop at Old Heath siding on August 30 with a pair of LNER teak carriages and *Brookfield* assisting from the rear. JAMES KINDRED





Above: No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* sits on Didcot's turntable while Nos. 229 and 1340 pass by on the museum's main line in the background. OWEN HAYWARD

Left: On September 11, Nos. 229 and 1340 *Trojan* round off the DRC's gala with a double-headed run on the museum's main line, pulling a pair of newly restored GWR carriages. OWEN HAYWARD

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Celebrations for Stockton & Darlington's bicentenary end with massive display of dolls

A UNIQUE exhibition of thousands of hand-decorated wooden peg dolls created by communities, schools, groups and visitors to mark the Stockton & Darlington 200 celebrations was unveiled at the start of the last month of the bicentenary festival.

Memories of a Journey: Final Station opened in the Carriage Works Exhibition Hall at the award-winning Hopetown Darlington museum attraction on September 5 and was featured on ITV Tyne Tees.

A Darlington Borough Council statement said: "Early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with visitors describing the installation as moving, inspiring and fitting tribute to a project that has brought so many communities together during the bicentenary.

"Seeing thousands of individually crafted peg dolls displayed in one place creates a powerful visual reminder of the people, memories and journeys that have been at the heart of the S&DR200 programme."

The exhibition runs until September 27. Throughout September, visitors can experience the sights, sounds and atmosphere of the steam age through a range of heritage activities including steam train rides and special events.



Part of the myriad of dolls displayed in the Memories of a Journey: Final Station exhibition at Hopetown Darlington. DARLINGTON BC

As reported in *Heritage Railway* magazine issue 348, the programme culminates in the SDR201 Steam Festival on Saturday and Sunday, September 26/27, when Hopetown, including The A1 Steam Trust's Darlington Locomotive Works and the 1861 Shed, will be open for a spectacular weekend of steam-powered celebration with journeys behind replica *Locomotion No.1*.

The centrepiece of the festival takes place on Sunday, September 27, the anniversary of the opening of the S&DR, the world's first steam-hauled passenger line, when Darlington-built A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* runs.

Brand-new platework required for T9

THE overhaul of LSWR 4-4-0 T9 No. 120 by the Swanage Railway and the Flour Mill workshops has seen the recently dismantled locomotive's boiler assessed to gauge the full extent of work required, with the conclusion reached that a brand-new throatplate will be required to ensure adequate life on its return to steam.

An inspector visited Bill Parker's workshops at Bream during the summer to fully inspect the boiler following its removal from No. 120's frames and that of the throatplate from the firebox area, where scouring was identified in the curved areas that join it to the boiler barrel. He also looked at the condition of the crown stays and the girders, slings, and supports. Considering the possibility of failure of any repair carried out, it was decided that full replacement of the throatplate would prove the best value for time and money, it otherwise being likely to need further repairs a few years after completion that would necessitate the boiler being removed from the frames again.

"The crown stays must be replaced, and the other components at the very least freed up and descaled, but more likely replaced as well," said a spokesman for the Swanage Railway Trust 563 Locomotive Group, which is managing the overhaul.

"It's quite likely that these areas have not been renewed since the locomotive was withdrawn by BR in the 1960s, so it is not surprising that the inspection has revealed some issue now.

The cost of this previously unanticipated task is expected to set the overhaul back a further £50,000 which, while not welcome news in one sense, will nonetheless represent "excellent investment" which will "hopefully ensure that not only will the boiler be in good shape for the next 10 years, but long beyond that too," the spokesman added. "If the two overhauls the locomotive has had since preservation were what we might call 'light intermediates,' then the intention now is to undertake a 'heavy general' in anticipation of a long life ahead."

Meanwhile, the components for the locomotive's new dragbox have been fabricated and delivered to Herston Works, where they are now in the process of being cleaned up ahead of assembly.



Still carrying its London Transport livery, GWR 2-6-2T No. 5521 passes Bronwydd Cricket Ground with the 10am service from Abergwili Junction to Danycoed on August 30, the first Gwili Railway steam working after a temporary ban was imposed earlier in the month. JAMES TAVINER

Santa special accessibility boosted by Sign Language interpreter

WITH accessibility currently a hot topic for many heritage railways, the East Lancashire Railway has taken steps to ensure that its annual festive offerings can be enjoyed by even more children, arranging for a British Sign Language interpreter to be present on some of its forthcoming Santa pecials.

Having teamed up with leading foster care and special needs provider Family Care, a family-owned organisation based in Chorley, it is the first time that an interpreter will have been provided on board these popular annual trains at the ELR – and possibly the whole sector.

In 2023, the railway ran its first-ever SEND Santa special train, adapting the Christmas experience to make it an accessible adventure for those with special educational needs. It involved several refinements made with expert advice, such as the lights on the station footbridge being toned down, with fewer flashing bulbs, and the arrival window for these departures extended to avoid the usual hustle and bustle of boarding in crowds. The SEND Train proved to be hugely popular with local families, and it has since been expanded to further trains on multiple dates.

Booked interpreter Marie Marshall has been employed in such roles for 26 years and involved with football interpreting in both mainstream and deaf football, taking part with Great Britain's Deaf Women's Football Team in the 2025 Tsokyo Olympics.

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "As we look ahead to the 40th anniversary of our Santa Specials in 2027, our vision is simple – that every visitor, whatever their additional needs or challenges, can experience the wonder and excitement of Christmas and create treasured memories."

Passengers will meet colourful Christmas characters and also be visited by Father Christmas, who will hand out gifts to children.

To find out more, visit www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk



Visiting from the Plym Valley Railway for the summer, Polish Tkh 0-6-0T No.5374 *Lord Oliver Brown* shunts stock at Bishops Bridge Loop on September 13 during the South Devon Railway's Heritage Open Days weekend. DAVID HUNT



The DMU set departs from Berwyn.



The Llangollen Railway proudly marked 50 years of operation in 2025.



GWR 0-6-0P 7754 arrives at Glyndyfrdwy with a mixed train and Class 31 No. 31271 on the rear on September 12.

Llangollen celebrates finale of 50th anniversary with gala weekend

Words and pictures by John Titlow

THE Llangollen Railway brought its half-century celebrations to a fitting conclusion with an all-out gala a year on from the landmark occasion.

The September 12/13 event featured an intensive timetable packed with steam, diesel, heritage railcars, freight workings and unusual train movements to bring year-long 50th anniversary celebrations to a spectacular close.

It has not been a straightforward journey to reach this milestone, however, especially as five years ago, this railway could have been lost.

Built by the Vale of Llangollen Railway along the northern side of the River Dee, the line originally branched off the Shrewsbury to Chester Railway line south of Ruabon, opening for goods traffic in 1861. Passenger trains commenced in 1862, terminating at a temporary station east of the present Llangollen station, and the line was operated by the GWR. The present Llangollen station was built in 1865 when the line was extended to Corwen. In 1896, it was formally amalgamated into the GWR.

Llangollen was a holiday destination, and during the railway's working life it carried holidaymakers to the area as well as local passengers, and through carriages ran to Paddington during the summer months.

Freight was a mix of timber, stone, farm produce and parcels. GWR panniers and prairies generally worked the route, and tender locomotives were used on heavier goods work and longer passenger trains.

Closure of the Ruabon to Barmouth route, of which today's LR is part, took place under the Beeching's Axe, with passenger trains withdrawn in 1965 and goods in 1968. The track was lifted and the stations fell into disuse.

Preservation origins

The Flint and Deeside Railway Preservation Society initially looked at preserving the Dyserth to Prestatyn section of the line, but it was still used for a small amount of freight traffic and therefore an unsuitable target. Instead, the society focused its attention on the 10-mile Llangollen to Corwen section.

In the hope that the reopened railway would benefit the economy of the area, the local council granted a lease to the society for Llangollen station and three miles of trackbed in 1972. The heritage line's first public open days were from September 1975, running into 1976, on a short length of track.

Lack of funding slowed early progress, but this was helped in 1977 when Shell Oil donated a mile of unused track, which was then laid over three-quarters of a mile to Pentrefelin near the River Dee bridge and completed in 1981. The remaining track was used to lay sidings at Llangollen Goods Junction.

By this time, the Dee bridge had fallen into disrepair since the line's closure but the local council spent £30,000 on its refurbishment, enabling trains to reach Berwyn in 1986. Deeside Halt was reached in 1990, Glyndyfrdwy in 1993, and Carrog in 1996.

It was not until 2014 that trains reached a temporary platform at Corwen East. Corwen Central opened in 2023, complete with an island platform, run-round loop and operational signalling, marking the completion of the heritage line from Llangollen to Corwen in full.

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of services, reducing ticket sales, and in 2021, the railway went into receivership, temporarily suspending operations, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 278. Appeals went out, and donations amounting to £125,000 were raised, helped by a £161,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund saving the railway. Operations were handed over to the Llangollen Railway Trust and the line reopened in July 2021.

Incredible growth

Fifty years has seen the line completely relaid, plus an extensive network of lines around Llangollen Goods Junction, with a motive power depot and carriage sheds built (the original Llangollen goods shed has been turned into a machine shop), stations restored, operational GWR signalboxes and signals, bridge restoration/rebuilding and many other works incorporated in the running of a railway, the majority of which was done by volunteers.

During the gala weekend, services were run by locomotives from the home fleet. On the steam front were GWR pannier No. 7754 and GWR Collett 2-8-0 No. 3802. Diesels in use were Class 26 No. 5310, Class 31 No. 31271 on Saturday only and Class 47 No. 47449 on the Sunday, plus the line's Classes 127/108 DMUs running coupled together.



On September 12, the first train of the gala departs Llangollen behind Class 31 No.31271 with Class 26 No. 5310 banking.



GWR pannier No. 7754 is held at Llangollen Goods Junction for GWR 2-8-0 No. 3802 to pass.

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

On Saturday, the first departure off Llangollen was at 8.45am, with the last train returning at 6.04pm; on Sunday, it was 8.43am, returning at 5.02pm. Trains passed at the usual places of Llangollen Goods Junction, Glyndyfrdwy and Carrog Stations.

Two double-headers ran on Saturday morning, the first with Nos. 31272 and 5310 to Corwen and the return with Nos. 7754 and 31271 on the rear. The goods train also made an appearance.

It was the most intensive weekend of operation on the railway this year, with a very busy timetable giving passengers the chance to complete up to 14 journeys.

Services on board the trains included special ales from Wales and traditional afternoon tea services. There were behind-the scenes shed tours, exhibitions celebrating the railway's first 50 years, and opportunities to meet the founders, early volunteers and those who helped build the railway.

Good value

Limited cab rides were available on both steam and diesels for £75. Unlimited travel cost £30 for adults and £8 for children, and standard tickets were available. On Saturday, timekeeping was good. Afternoon teas were fully sold out.

Four rakes of stock were in use: a rake of Mk. 1s and a mixed train of suburban carriages, plus passenger carrying brake vans, a rake of suburban coaches and the non-stop goods train for demonstration only. Trains were well patronised with a mix of enthusiasts and general public.

From very small beginnings, to have reached the end of its 50th year in operation is a major achievement. The railway is in a positive position and looking ahead to the next 50 years. For the rest of this year, it is running a mix of steam, diesel and DMU services through the Dee Valley until November 8, when the autumn colours should be at their best.

A heritage DMU gala will run on October 17/18, and the last day of steam services is November 1.

Christmas trains start on November 28, followed by Mince Pie specials on December 27-31, plus New Year's Day. In 2027, the Branch Line Gala will take place on April 2-4. For further details, see www.llangollen-railway.co.uk/timetable/



GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7754, with Class 31 No. 31271 on the rear, departs Glyndyfrdwy to Llangollen with a mixed train.



A peaceful scene on Llangollen Shed as GWR 2-8-0 No. 3802 and pannier No. 7754 are readied for the day on September 12.

BunkFest boom time at Wallingford!

Words and pictures by Robin Jones

MORE than 20,000 visitors attended Wallingford for BunkFest 2026 – believed to be the biggest multi-day free festival in England, which takes its name from one of its core venues, the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway, the nickname of which is The Bunk.

The volunteer-run end-of-summer event, now in its 22nd year, features a broad range of music, traditional dance displays, a beer festival, food from all over the world, boats on the River Thames and heritage trains, with the C&WR benefitting from a healthy income from it.

BunkFest was started in 2002 by a small group of local folk music enthusiasts including the late Bob Wyatt, then the landlord of the town's Cross Keys public house, Colin Dolton and Jo Clyde, chairman of the CWR Preservation Society, which was at that time in its 11th year.

Passenger services on the GWR Wallingford branch ceased on June 15, 1959 and goods services at the now-demolished original station on September 13, 1965, and the line was cut back to the Associated British Maltsters (ABM, later Paul's) plant to become a long siding. The last official movement of grain wagons by the so-called Wallingford Fly ran on April 29, 1981, with the 'Wallingford Wake' special DMU from Paddington comprising the final train over the line in BR days on May 31 that year.



The BunkFest 2026 logo is based on the railway that gave its name.

"It is a massive effort on the part of a wholly volunteer-organised event – both BunkFest itself and the operation of the railway –and new volunteers are always most welcome!"

On board was 16-year-old Wokingham schoolboy Philip Garvey, who distributed leaflets inviting people to join a preservation society to save the branch. He sought 20 acceptances, but received just 17 and decided to proceed anyway – and accordingly, the C&WR Preservation Society was officially launched on August 18, 1981.

The first issue of the society's journal *The Bunk* was issued in November 1981, with Philip as secretary, treasurer and editor.

In early 1983, an area of land at the front of the ABM plant was offered to the society on a leasehold basis at £10 per annum, and the society also purchased 308 yards of in-situ track including the points into the plant sidings.

Salt wagon No. 45 was the first item of rolling stock to arrive at the embryonic heritage line on September 17,1983, closely followed by Esso tank No. 2606, now beautifully restored by local firm Grundons.

In February 1984, ownership of the trackbed passed from BR to Wallingford Town Council, which granted a lease to the society, which in turn went on to complete the purchase of the track and ballast on June 26 that year.

On July 7, 1985, the society celebrated the 150th anniversary of the GWR by holding its Railfair 85, and it was given Railway Inspectorate permission to run a short passenger service behind Class 08 No. 080123 as far as milepost two.

Although it is one of the UK's shortest standard gauge heritage lines at slightly over two miles long, during the past decade, the C&WR has been a stage for a myriad of special events.

From a small marquee in a pub car park, Wallingford's BunkFest has steadily grown over the years and now encompasses the whole of the open spaces at the Kinecroft



Class 08 D3190 *George Mason* heading 'The Bunk' shuttle services into Cholsey statioon August 30.



Philip Garvey, who sowed the seeds of the C&WR Preservation Societry 45 years ago, entertains the customers in the Old Carriage Café.



One of a succession of groups of morris dancers performing at Wallingford station and throughout the town.

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Esso tank wagon No.2606 was recently overhauled by local form Grundon which kindly repaired, shot blasted and painted it at their works in Ewelme as part of its continuing support for the heritage railway.



Performing live on board the train service were Yooks, a group of four ukelele players who incorporate close harmonies into popular songs from the Sixties onwards.

and Bullcroft, as well as many other venues in the town centre, all with free entry, and also at the new Wallingford station built by the preservation society. This year, there were more than 170 bands, other acts, workshops and events at 25-plus fringe venues around the town, including performances by more than 50 groups of Morris dancers from around the country, several of them performing at the station. The festival attracted about 700 volunteers this year.

The railway ferried visitors into town from Cholsey, its service hauled by Class 08s D3030 *Lion* and D3190 *George Mason*, either individually or in top-and-tail mode, and also provided a 'Singing Train' with a succession of musical acts performing live on board, accompanied by unlimited day fares on offer. On the first day of the festival, (Friday) 'Bubblecar' No. W55034 provided this service.

Inside the Old Carriage Café parked at the end of Wallingford station, musical performances were given by none other than Philip Garvey – who had set the ball rolling to save the line 45 years before – and his friends.

Services again ran over the Wallingford bypass level crossing, which had been closed for two months following a road traffic collision in early July, and free rides were offered for August Bank Holiday Monday only.

Takings for the railway throughout BunkFest 2026 appear to have been about 14% up on 2025 and 28% up compared to 2024, as the overall size of the town's festival continues to grow every year.

A C&WR spokesman said that the event is the second biggest earner for the line after its Christmas services. For next year's events, discussions are already underway about extending the timetable for trains into later in the evening. "It is a massive effort on the part of a wholly volunteer organised event – both BunkFest itself and the operation of the railway – and new volunteers are always most welcome!" they said.



Left: On the Sunday afternoon, the King's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award given to voluntary groups in the UK, was presented to BunkFest volunteers by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Marjorie Glasgow BEM.
CHRISTIAN SINKINSON/MORE THAN IMAGES

Right: An open-top double-decker bus ferried BunkFest visitors from locations including the station into the town centre and back again, the fare being an optional donation.





A headline act at this year's free-to-enter festival was the 11-piece tribute band The Delicate Sound of Pink Floyd, which performed on the Kinecroft main stage on the Friday evening backed by a dazzling light show.



Tornado heads west past Corfe Castle on September 11.

Tornado takes Swanage gala by storm!

Words by Robin Jones
Pictures by Andrew PM Wright

THE summer crowds returned home at the end of the school holiday season, leaving Swanage in comparative peace… until, that was, the Swanage Railway's popular annual steam gala filled one of the finest of all south coast resorts with its star attraction, visiting A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*. Its fifth visit to the Isle of Purbeck resulted in busy platforms and packed carriages on September 11-13.

The event saw the oldest surviving operational express passenger locomotive, LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563, which was outshopped from Nine Elms in 1893, stand alongside the newest, *Tornado*, which first steamed at its Darlington birthplace in 2008. *Tornado* found fame in the cinema and on television, appearing in the 2017 enchanting live action Paddington Bear animated comedy film Paddington 2 and also starring in BBC Top Gear's 2009 Race to the North against a classic Jaguar XK 120 sports car from late 1940s and early 1950s and a Vincent Black Shadow from the same period.

On April 11, 2017, in secret controlled night time tests on the East Coast Main Line between Doncaster and Newcastle, monitored by certification bodies and rail industry engineers, *Tornado* reached 100mph – the first steam locomotive to reach such speeds on the national network since the 1960s; my own GPS device flashed up 101mph, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 228. The new preservation era record has prompted observers to consider *Tornado* as 'the *Flying Scotsman* of the 21st century,' and its popularity shows no sign of waning – quite the opposite.

> "After what has been one of the most challenging summers we've faced for some time, it feels particularly special to welcome steam back in such style."

Five locomotives steamed for the event: home-based Bulleid Battle of Britain Light Pacifics Nos. 34070 *Manston* and 34072 *257 Squadron* and U class 2-6-0 No. 31806, in addition to the T3 and A1. *Tornado*'s previous visits to Swanage were excursion trains from London in June and September 2010, and in July 2014 it hauled services to celebrate the heritage line's 35th anniversary since it ran its first train. In July 2021, it arrived with another trip from the capital.

The autumn gala also marked a 50th anniversary for the railway, for it was in 1976 that the revivalists began work at Swanage station after being granted limited access by the town council the year before.

Book signing

Children's railway author Christopher Awdry signed copies of his new book, The Canadian Wonderland Tour 1980, a diary of George and Wilbert Awdry, at Harman's Cross station on the Saturday, two days before its general release by publisher Full-Steam-Ahead. Some services ran towards Wareham as far as the River Frome,



LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 simmer at Swanage station alongside A1 No. 60163 *Tornado*.



U class 2-6-0 No. 31806 passes Bulleid No. 34070 *Manston* at Corfe Castle on September 10.

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.





Above: T3 No. 563 powers out of Swanage station on September 12.

Above right: Bulleid 4-6-2 No. 34070 *Manston* with a freight working at Holme Lane on September 11.

Right: Bulleid *257 Squadron* crosses Corfe Castle viaduct with a goods rake on September 12.



while the last train of the gala saw the two Bulleids haul the 'Royal Wessex' with *Tornado* tender first at the rear. A freight train also featured.

After the gala, *Tornado* was due to stay on the Purbeck line for another two weeks during which its duties will include driver experience courses.

Swanage Railway CEO Abbie King said: "After what has been one of the most challenging summers we've faced for some time, it feels particularly special to welcome steam back in such style.

"The prolonged hot, dry weather and the resulting fire risk made it an incredibly stressful period for everyone across the railway, so our Autumn Steam Gala really did feel like the start of a new chapter in the season.

"To have No. 60163 as the star was fantastic. It is an extraordinary locomotive and exactly the sort of engine that creates a real sense of occasion.

"Seeing it working through the Purbeck countryside alongside our home fleet has been something very special.

"Our staff and volunteers have worked incredibly hard through a difficult summer, adapting time and again to keep the railway running. Now autumn has arrived, steam is back, *Tornado* is here, and our autumn of steam has well and truly begun."

Gala organising committee chairman Alexander Atkins, who is also a steam driver on the line, said that visitors numbers were up on the event last year.

"Platforms and trains were packed," he said. The public response again highlighted the value of heritage railways to local economies both in and out of high season.



***Tornado* powers through Harman's Cross on September 11.**



Bullied Battle of Britain Pacifics Nos. 34070 *Manston* and 34072 *257 Squadron* double-head the 'Royal Wessex' over Corfe Castle viaduct with A1 4-6-2 *Tornado* on the rear in the last train of the gala on September 13.

Return to oil-burning for Bure Valley locomotive – and more are planned!

By Owen Hayward

IN response to the record-breaking temperatures experienced this summer, which are expected to be more common in future, the Bure Valley Railway has reconverted one of its locomotives to burn oil, returning it to the condition in which it entered service nearly 30 years ago.

The line's 2-6-2T No. 8 *John of Gaunt* was built in the Aylsham workshops in 1997 and entered service on December 19, with its outline based on the Vale of Rheidol Railway's iconic locomotives but with the mechanical chassis similar to the BVR's other engines. Back then, oil cost just 11p per litre, and coal was variable in quality, so the locomotive was built to be oil-fired. It proved to be inefficient, however, because its steam passageways and ports were poor, and the noisy system saw it nicknamed 'Thunder.'

Withdrawn for overhaul towards the end of 2005, improvements were made during the rebuild to improve its performance. At the same time, oil prices rocketed, which saw it modified to become a coal burner before it returned to service in July 2008.

Oil to coal – and back again!

Following increases in the price of coal, along with the high fire risk posed by prolonged dry spells, the decision was taken to return No. 8 to its original configuration – aptly mirroring one of the locomotives on which it was based, with the VoRR's own No. 8 having also been modified for oil burning at Aberystwyth, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 346.



The oil tank easily drops into the coal bunker space and can be removed just as simply whenever the locomotive reverts to coal-firing. BVR



Bure Valley Railway No. 8 *John of Gaunt* has been converted back to oil-firing. BVR

"As everyone will know in the heritage railway world, we are seeing increasingly hot summers, and this one has been no exception when we've had to stop running steam," said BVR managing director Andrew Barnes. "Like many other railways which have gone back to oil-firing to continue to run steam, we thought that, as we've done it before, have the technology, and that our locomotives are more efficient, we'd give it another go with No. 8.

"We had retained most of the equipment from its previous incarnation, so we took out the firebars and ashpan to replace them with the oil-burning gear. This means in future, we can operate steam in even times of high fire risk."

The conversion began earlier this summer but was delayed by waiting for deliveries of components from third parties, meaning No. 8 was unable to be pressed into service during the most recent steam ban. Since then, the work has been completed, and the locomotive has been tested within the yard at Aylsham and on the full line, the first taking place on September 4.

Another to follow

"If testing proves successful, which I see no reason why it would not be, we will hopefully convert another of our locomotives to oil-firing over the winter," Andrew continued.

"This will probably be one of the ZB locomotives, specifically No. 7 *Spitfire*.

"Our trials so far have shown that oil consumption has reduced from 100 litres per trip to 60, which was helped in part by all the improvements No. 8 has undergone in the years since to improve its performance."

Just like the VoRR locomotive, the conversion is not permanent, and it can be returned to burn coal swiftly. "Our aim was not to simply convert back to oil-firing, but also to create a changeable assembly, so we could swap between oil and coal in about 72 hours, most of which is time to allow the locomotive to cool down if it has been in use," Andrew explained.

"When No. 8 was built, it had an oil tank on each side. When it was modified in 2008, one was left disused while the other was removed to become a coal bunker.

"We have fabricated a brand-new oil tank which drops into this space, making the transition between the two incredibly swift and easy, and it is plumbed into the original tank with a balance pipe.

"Heritage railways are all about preserving the past, but that doesn't mean the engineering has to stand still. In this case, rather unusually, part of the answer to keeping steam running in the future may be technology we stopped using nearly 20 years ago."

Steam tram gets ready for a new life at Swindon & Cricklade

A BELGIAN 0-4-0VB is relocating from the Lavender Line to the Swindon & Cricklade Railway.

Built in 1920 by Société John Cockerill, No. 2945 *Yvonne* spent the last 13 years at the Isfield line after being bought by Colin Healey, but it had travelled quite substantially prior. Originally employed at a Brussels gasworks, it was withdrawn in 1967 and saved from a local scrap merchant in 1987. First taken to the Northampton & Lamport Railway, where it was returned to steam, it subsequently visited East Midlands heritage lines before taking up residence at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre from December 9, 2002. After an overhaul was completed there in 2005, No. 2945 left first for the Nene Valley Railway, followed by both the Statfold Barn and Telford Steam railways, and then the Hollycombe Working Steam Museum before finally settling down at Isfield, where it was renamed *Lady Lisa*.

After just a year in service there, it was again withdrawn for overhaul, which included fitting a new firebox. *Lady Lisa* returned to steam in 2018, operating many of the line's services at its open days.

Its final day in service at Isfield was on September 13, prior to moving to the S&CR before the end of the month, with crew familiarisation training scheduled before working any services there. It is set to bring steam back to the S&CR for the first time this year, and it will remain there for the foreseeable future.



Left: Cockerill 0-4-0VB No. 2945 *Lady Lisa* will depart Isfield for a new home at the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. COLIN HEALEY

"*Lady Lisa* has been a very special part of the Lavender Line, giving our visitors the chance to experience the sights, sounds and atmosphere of steam on our railway," said a spokesman. "We would like to thank the owners, Colin and Lisa, for allowing us to enjoy having it as part of our railway. We'd also like to thank Colin for his personal contribution to the Lavender Line over the years as a volunteer and trustee."

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Jones Springs have been supplying UK heritage rail operators for over 50 years giving us a reputation for being reliable and trustworthy as well as allowing us to develop a range of skills and techniques which we have been able to apply to our work in the manufacturing of springs.

All our work on railways and locomotives is produced to British Rail standard 166 and British Rail standard 148a ensuring that all products we manufacture are created and tested to the levels of quality and precision required by British Rail.

With a general engineering shop based locally in the Midlands we can offer a range of services such as the manufacturing and repair of springs, our facilities also allow us to carry out load tests to make sure that your products are fit for purpose and use. We can also provide full certification for any test we carry out for you at our site.

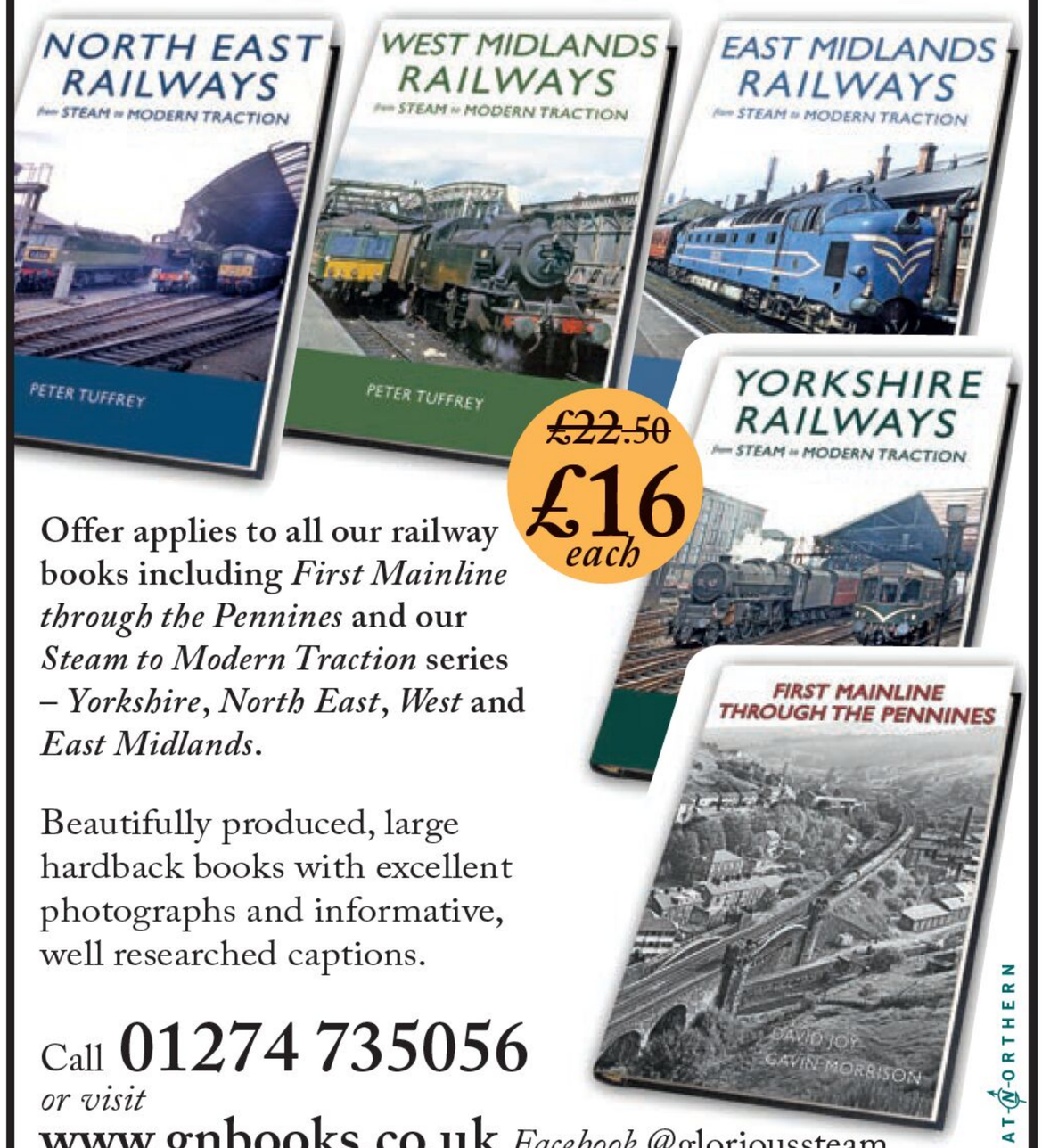
For assistance please call us on: 0121 568 7575
Email: sales@jones-springs.co.uk

JONES SPRINGS (ENGINEERING) LTD.
Gladstone Street, Darlaston West Midlands WS10 8BE
T: 0121 568 7575 F: 0121 568 7692
E: sales@jones-springs.co.uk
www.jones-springs.co.uk

Reg. in England - Company No. 00520744

SAVE 20% WITH CODE HRM 26

Free UK delivery. PLUS: Save £2.50 per book
when you spend over £21. (coupon code **PDX5***)*
ON ALL OUR RAILWAY BOOKS



~~£22.50~~ **£16** *each*

Offer applies to all our railway books including *First Mainline through the Pennines* and our *Steam to Modern Traction* series – *Yorkshire*, *North East*, *West* and *East Midlands*.

Beautifully produced, large hardback books with excellent photographs and informative, well researched captions.

Call **01274 735056**
or visit
www.gnbooks.co.uk *Facebook* @gloriousssteam
Great Northern Books Limited, PO Box 1380, Bradford BD5 5FB

GREAT NORTHERN

Homefire®
CPL
FUELLING THE FUTURE

made in the UK



HERITAGE
SMOKELESS STEAM COAL

DESIGNED & TESTED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF HERITAGE RAIL

- High performing, easy alternative to coal
- Consistent high quality performance every time
- Up to 80% less smoke & 25% less CO_2 than coal
- Runs cleaner with low ash residue
- Reduced risk of trackside fires
- Nationwide availability
- Prepack or loose
- Comparable price to coal

Contact us today for information, pricing and availability
Call: 07939 166 414 Email: heritage@cplproducts.co.uk

Buses galore at Great Centrals

A MAJOR event celebrating the history and heritage of bus transport will take place at the Great Central Railway and Great Central Railway (Nottingham) on May 8/9, 2027.

Organised jointly by both heritage railways, the new Midlands Bus Festival is expected to showcase more than 100 vehicles at Quorn & Woodhouse station yard and Ruddington Fields.

Buses will be both on static display and take to the road as part of an extensive programme of passenger rides.

GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes said: "We are incredibly excited to be planning what we hope will be one of the biggest bus gatherings the Midlands has ever seen.

"It will be a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the region's rich bus heritage on a truly impressive scale.

"We are now inviting owners and preservation groups to get involved and help us make the event as spectacular as possible. If you have a bus or heritage vehicle that you'd like to feature, we'd love to hear from you."

Email buses@gcrailway.co.uk

Special GWR wartime open day at STEAM

SWINDON'S STEAM Museum of the Great Western Railway will host its Golden Age Festival on Saturday, September 26, celebrating the style, music and spirit of the 1930s to the 1950s.

The Mary Lou Revue, Midwest Big Band and other vintage performers will entertain visitors while celebrating the golden age of rail travel and wartime Britain, with 20% off standard admission prices.

Activities include Second World War object handling, giant floor games, marble games, footplate visits and hands-on scientific experiments inspired by the former Swindon Works laboratory, plus opportunities to visit STEAM's reconstructed air raid shelter, which is not usually open to the public.

Saddle tank *Dorothy* back in steam – after a century

By Robin Jones

THE owner of a Bagnall saddle tank which steamed at the Bala Lake Railway's August bank holiday gala for the first time in 100 years has praised the line's engineering team for its restoration against numerous odds.

Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 1568 of 1899 *Dorothy* was the third of three similar locomotives supplied to JW Greaves Ltd, of Llechwedd Slate Quarry, in Blaenau Ffestiniog, the earlier ones being No. 1278 of 1890 *Edith* and No. 1445 of 1895 *Margaret*. The trio formed the quarry's core steam fleet at the turn of the century.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, the fleet became the subject of experiments in transport technology, with steam locomotives converted to overhead electric traction. The quarry was an early adopter of hydroelectric power, installing its first generator in 1891.

Abandoned conversion

Margaret was converted into *The Eclipse* in 1927, while three years later, *Edith* became *The Coalition*. *Dorothy,* too, was partially dismantled at Llechwedd, but any conversion of it was never completed. Many parts were mislaid over time, but the chassis survived and avoided scrapping, probably because it was left in an inaccessible area.

In 1972, the chassis and nearby loose parts believed to belong to *Dorothy* were purchased by Rich Morris and moved to the Gloddfa Ganol collection housed in the Oakley slate quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog. When Gloddfa Ganol closed in 1998, *Dorothy* was acquired by Brian Gent and later by John Selway for his family's collection.

The Selways embarked on a major restoration project, assisted by engineers Alan Civil, who was also building 0-4-2 inverted saddle tank *Pearl 2* (later named *Joan* and now based at the Golden Valley Light Railway at the Midland Railway – Butterley), Alan Davenport, who produced castings from new patterns, Eddie Draper at the GVLR, Ben Hicks, Chris Arrowsmith and Will Dakin.

New components manufactured included the boiler, wheelsets, cylinders, motion work, the blastpipe and numerous cast parts. While the project progressed over a several years, it eventually stalled due to other commitments.

The BLR was then selected as the most suitable base to complete the restoration, and it arrived there on July 17, 2021. The line had already demonstrated expertise with major rebuilds such as Hunslet 0-4-0STs No. 364 of 1885 *Winifred*, which was repatriated from the USA, and No. 680 of 1898 *George B*, a long-term restoration.

Bala's Chief Mechanical Engineer, Rob Houghton, and his team worked tirelessly to return *Dorothy* to running order after it was restored from near-scrap condition without the benefit of original drawings.

"We must give full and well-deserved credit to Rob and his team, for the final completion of *Dorothy*," said the locomotive's Ireland-based owner, Richard Selway.

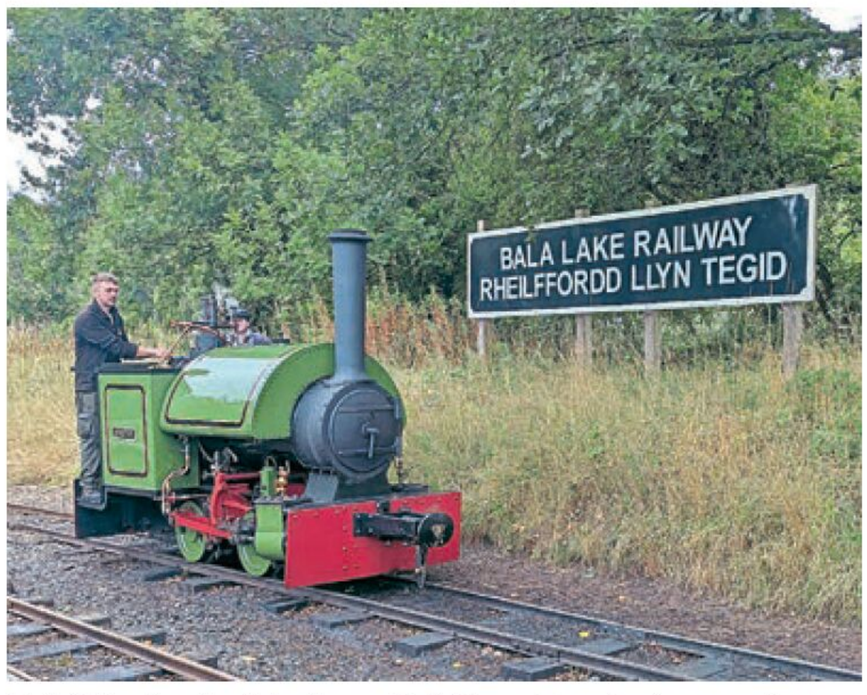
Gala debut

While some last-minute hitches threatened to derail the process, Rob successfully got *Dorothy* into steam and running for the August 29-31 steam gala. Initial light engine test runs were completed during the weekend, which graduated to light freight turns and culminated in *Dorothy* taking charge of what many believe might be the first-ever passenger train it has hauled.

"The Selway family would like extend its most sincere heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all those who have helped to return *Dorothy* to steam over the years, and especially Rob and the team at Bala, who agreed to take on the project and provide a most wonderful long-term home for *Dorothy*," said Richard, who described the project as "one of the most ambitious narrow gauge restorations in Wales."



A rare survivor of Llechwedd Slate Quarry's steam fleet, *Dorothy* calls at Llangower station on August 31. Was this one of its first-ever passenger trains? ANDREW SIMMONDS



Chief Mechanical Engineer Rob Houghton in charge of *Dorothy* on a test run. JON KNOWLES/BLR



Hunslet 0-4-0STs No. 855 of 1904 *Hugh Napier,* visiting from the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway, and No. 779 of 1902 *Holy War* head away from Llangower on August 31. ANDREW SIMMONDS

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Steam-to-electric convert also being restored

ALONGSIDE the work ongoing at Bala Lake Railway to return Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Dorothy* to steam, a parallel project is underway to restore one of its sister Llechwedd Quarry locomotives.

Bagnall No. 1278 of 1890 *Edith*, which was converted to electric locomotive *The Coalition* in 1930, has been under restoration back to running order for well over a year.

With the BLR workshops at Llanuwchllyn full to capacity, *The Coalition* is being restored off-site at a workshop in Warwickshire. A conservation plan has the stated intent of retaining and reusing as many of the original materials as possible, and the locomotive has been dismantled to assess the extent of repairs required.

Work has already begun on restoring the body panels, patching up where necessary rather than full replacements.

The main frames were discovered to be in much better condition than expected, and these have been stripped down, sand-blasted and repainted in primer, but they need some remedial work where they have corroded.

Unique pair *The Coalition* and *The Eclipse,* which hauled slate wagons around Llechwedd Slate Quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog, were among the first forms of mechanised motive power in the Welsh slate industry that could be regarded as environmentally friendly, running on an electric supply generated by the quarry's own hydroelectric plant.





Above: The restored frames of *The Coalition*. MIKE HAYWARD/BLR

Left: Former Bagnall steam saddle tank and electric conversion *The Coalition* in the Bala Lake Railway workshop prior to restoration starting on one of Britain's earliest electric locomotive experiments.
MIKE HAYWARD/BLR

Suffering in the elements

After withdrawal from service in the 1970s, the pair were displayed for several years at the quarry as part of Llechwedd Slate Caverns tourist attraction.

Stored mainly in the open air, they deteriorated badly and, in an attempt to stop them both being lost forever, they were offered a covered home by the Statfold Barn Museum Trust. An agreement was reached with the locomotive's owners, JW Greaves and Sons Ltd, in 2024 for a 25-year loan of *The Coalition* to the Bala Lake Railway Trust to restore it back to running order.

While the original powertrain and electrical pick-up system would not be a feasible proposition on a heritage railway today, it is planned to run the locomotive using a battery pack and updated drive system.

The Eclipse is not part of the agreement and will remain at Statfold in its unrestored state for the foreseeable future in the hope that eventually it too will be returned to working order.

An appeal among BLR supporters of the Bala Lake Railway has raised the necessary funds to cover the costs of transportation, setting up the workshop, and initial exploratory work on *The Coalition*.

Further funding will be required for the refurbishment and replacement of worn and corroded components, and to source the updated motor and gearbox, drive control system, and battery pack.

Donations are invited via The Bala Lake Railway Trust, stating clearly that they are for The Coalition Project, at www.balalakerailwaytrust.org.uk/coalition-appeal/

Nominees, please: 2027 HRA Awards now open for entries

ENTRIES for the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2027 are now being invited.

The 13 categories include a new one that recognises lifelong achievements in the sector, as well as titles for restoration of steam locomotives, diesel or electric locomotives, and carriages or wagons and those for young volunteers and rising stars, plus infrastructure projects and the recently introduced Event of the Year category.

Railways, tramways, funiculars, museums and rolling stock owning groups have until Monday, November 9 to finalise submissions for the awards, widely considered to be the most sought-after honours in the field. They recognise excellence or innovation in almost every aspect of heritage railway and tramway restoration, preservation and operation.

The new Lifetime Achievement award is open to heritage rail staff and volunteers, and entries are being encouraged for figures who have led from the front to people with lower profiles who have made a difference that few outside their organisation know about.

HRA chairman Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said: "Despite all of the challenges our sector faces, heritage rail continues to achieve so many great things each year.

"Every year, we speak to winners who didn't think their project would be picking up an award. Your project or volunteers genuinely could be winners – there's nothing hidden or complicated."

The 2027 Heritage Railway Association awards evening and dinner for finalists will be held in Gateshead during March, featuring a three-course meal, entertainment, and networking opportunities.

All HRA member organisations are eligible to enter the awards. The online process at www.hra.uk.com is simple and normally takes about two hours to complete.

A judging panel featuring some of the most experienced names in the sector, chaired by Anthony Coulls, from the National Railway Museum, will consider all the entries later this year to produce a shortlist.



Bogie pin fitted between the frames of No. 5551.
KEITH RICHES/LMS-PATRIOT COMPANY



Bogie centre casting as delivered to Tyseley Locomotive Works.
KEITH RICHES/LMS-PATRIOT COMPANY

Progress on Patriot No. 5551 is speeding ahead at Tyseley

WORK is continuing at a rapid pace on new-build LMS Patriot express passenger 4-6-0 No. 5551 *The Unknown Warrior* at Tyseley Locomotive Works.

Inspection of the drag box and adjacent frames is complete, successfully enabling the drag box to be reinstalled. Machining of the bogie horn guides has been completed also.

Painting has been carried out on the frames by volunteers during regular working parties at Tyseley. Delivery of the bogie frame plates, bogie centre casting and the bogie pin casting has taken place, and the bogie pin casting has been temporarily fitted between the frames.

The new bogie will be to the original design used on the later members of the 52-strong Patriot class instead of the modified version that was originally planned to accommodate the 8F axleboxes from No. 48518.

To help finish *The Unknown Warrior*, donations can be made via www.lms-Patriot.org.uk

Preservation first sees EMU converted to battery operation

By Robin Jones

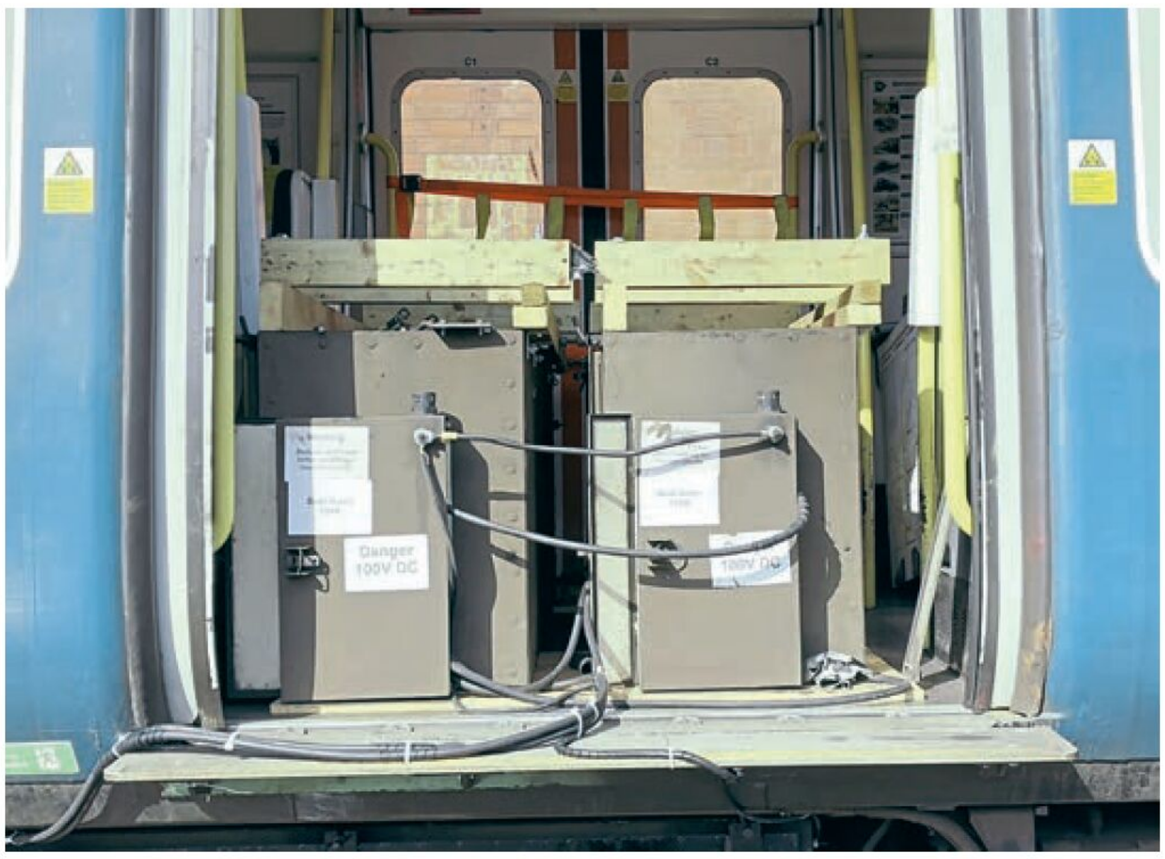
A MILESTONE in electric railway preservation has been achieved by the Class 507 Preservation Society, which has successfully converted an EMU to battery operation.

In the first such conversion in the UK, the society's Merseyrail No. 507001 successfully ran under its own power without a third rail in tests on the afternoon of September 1 at Alstom's Litchurch Lane works, in Derby, where it has remained since appearing at The Greatest Gathering in August last year.

The feat was made possible thanks to batteries being fitted inside the train's driving cars, and it has paved the way for future operation of the EMU – and potentially others – on unelectrified railways including heritage lines. During three hours of low-speed test runs, it travelled for 2.8 miles at speeds of up to 8mph, all on a single charge. The next stage will involve designing structural modifications to No. 507001 to permit higher-capacity batteries to be fitted to the underframe, keeping all three cars available for passenger use. Initial modelling suggests that speeds of up to 25mph will be possible.



Left: Class 507 EMU No. 507001 is reflected in a pool of rainwater as it pauses during battery test runs at Litchurch Lane works in Derby on September 1. PIOTR MICKIEWICZ



Batteries mounted in the vestibule door area of No. 507001 with temporary wiring connecting to the train's underframe-mounted equipment. CLASS 507 PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Society chairman Robert Hampton said: "This is an historic moment for our society and electric train preservation.

Keeping things running

"We have always been determined that No. 507001 would remain as an operational train, and not be a static museum piece. Being able to run under its own power makes No. 507001 a useful asset to a heritage railway and enables it to do what it did so well for 46 years on Merseyside – transport passengers."

The society's head of engineering, Tom Camps, who is leading the battery project, said: "The challenges of adapting a 50-year-old train design for batteries are considerable, but we have now proved that the conversion is feasible. To see No. 507001 operating is a tribute to the hard work of the society's engineering team, and we look forward to refining the concept to allow passenger service in the future."

Jake D'Arcy, the society's head of operations, said: "I am incredibly proud of what our society has achieved today. We will analyse the data from yesterday's test runs to further develop this concept which will enable the unit to operate in passenger service on a heritage railway in the future."

No. 507001 was built by British Rail Engineering Limited at Holgate Road works in York and entered service on October 25, 1978. Its first passenger duty was to carry the late Queen Elizabeth II on a 'Royal Special' from Liverpool Moorfields to Kirkby. Its last working was on November 3, 2024, when it worked the 'Sefton Sparkler' farewell tour of Merseyrail's Northern Line.

The society was founded in 2023 to preserve a Class 507 unit as they were replaced by new Class 777 EMUs. To join, visit class507.org.uk



Oil bath components for *General Steam Navigation*. GSNLRS

General Steam Navigation rebuild starts again at society's new home near Yeovil Junction

By Robin Jones

THE next phase of the restoration of ex-Barry scrapyard Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35011 *General Steam Navigation* to as-built condition – with air-smoothed casing and Bulleid's unique patented chain-driven valve gear – has begun following its relocation from the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, its home of five years, to the Yeovil Railway Centre.

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

The boiler left Blunsdon on May 16 and the frames departed on June 22, followed by the group's storage container on July 9. A new working base has been created at the centre, where society's volunteers have commenced working parties and training to not only overhaul items which have been removed from No. 35011, but also to fabricate new parts and assemblies, commencing with the new oil bath casing, for which materials have now been delivered to site.

Additionally, the boiler and frames have been successfully relocated to a private site near Templecombe for storage until sufficient funds are

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212, with its connecting rods removed, is seen at Hellifield on September 4 during its journey from Bury back home to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. ANDREW NAYLOR

'No longer economically viable' – Worth Valley's 'Black Five' returned as main line contract ends

By Owen Hayward

A REGULAR main line performer for the best part of a decade, the role of LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45212 on the national network has concluded for a second time as it has been sent back home to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway by Ian Riley.

Withdrawn by BR in 1968 shortly after having pulled the last regular steam-hauled passenger train scheduled by BR on August 4, it bypassed the scrapyard when it was purchased for preservation by enthusiast Ron Ainsworth, who took it to the fledgling KWVR that October. It was famously covered in wallpaper shortly thereafter as part of a marketing stunt by Solvite Wallpaper Paste. In 2000, No. 45212 was transferred to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, returning to its previous home just a few months before its boiler ticket expired in 2011. Two years later, an agreement between the KWVR and Ian Riley was reached that saw the latter's engineering firm take on the 5MT's overhaul in exchange for operating it on the main line. This saw it fitted with the necessary air-braking and signalling equipment, and it returned to service in 2016 at the KWVR.

Over the ensuing years, it gave sterling performances on numerous occasions, including the annual Railway Touring Company's annual land cruise and West Coast Railways' 'The Jacobite' tours.

Last seen in service on RTC's 'The Great Britain XVII' last year, for which it led the final leg from Norwich to King's Cross on May 4, it was officially withdrawn four months later. Many presumed it would be overhauled at Riley & Sons workshops in Bury and return to main line service once more, but with two other classmates already owned by Ian out running on the network (Nos. 44871 and 45407), plus a third (No. 45163) on a 23-year-long arrangement that will see it run for the first time in preservation, the decision to end the agreement relating to No. 45212 was a mutual one based on economic viability.

Having had its main line equipment stripped, on September 4, the locomotive was towed by rail, with its rods removed, back to Keighley, from where it was subsequently taken onwards to Haworth locomotive depot.

With several other locomotives currently under overhaul, there was no indication as to just how long No. 45212 will wait there in the queue.

A KWVR statement said: "After a cracking 10-year partnership, Riley & Son (E) Ltd has made the difficult decision to return No. 45212 to the Worth Valley.

"We had all hoped to continue the arrangement, but with the rising costs of labour and materials, it simply isn't financially sustainable anymore.

"We are still very much friends with Riley's and will continue working together on other projects.

"Now No. 45212 is at Haworth, we'll give it a good look over and work out where it fits into our long-term overhaul plans. We are every bit as keen as everyone else to see our 'Black Five' back in steam."

reached to place a contract with a heritage engineering company to begin work on the rolling chassis.

Ongoing work

Devon-based engineering company Leaky Finders has already manufactured the all-new front buffer beam, and attention has now been switched to producing the unique frame stretchers required for an original Merchant Navy.

With No. 35011 having donated its crank axle to No. 35026 on withdrawal in 1966, the design has been completed for its replacement design work and order placement for the new crank axle materials is imminent. Work will soon commence on the crank axle wheelsets removing the old crankpins and preparing the axle bores, while the main chain sprocket has been manufactured, and the entirety of the required 'Morse' chain has been procured to ensure the proposed fit and integrity of parts as a crank axle and wheel set as a whole.

Eastleigh-built No. 21c11 *General Steam Navigation* entered service on December 30, 1944 and was fist allocated to Nine Elms shed. Withdrawn from service in February 1966, it was sold to Woodhams Brothers in Barry in March 1967 and left the scrapyard in March 1983. First stored at Brighton Preston Park and later RAF Binbrook in Lincolnshire, an axle swap took place with West Country light Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* at Williton on the West Somerset Railway.

Taken to the site of Southern Locomotives Ltd at Sellindge during 2009, the private owner of No. 35011 transferred it to the society in 2016, and it was moved to Blunsdon three years later.

New society members and volunteers interested in joining the working parties to become part of the project are very welcome to get involved. No previous experience is required, and all the necessary training will be provided. For more information, visit www.35011gsn.co.uk



The chain sprocket for No. 35011. GSNLRS

Double-take farewell as Isle of Wight announces second Ivatt trio gathering

By Owen Hayward

THE final day billed for a stalwart of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway's fleet turned out to not quite be the case – after the locomotive was drafted in to cover for a failed one just days later!

As reported last issue, BR Standard 2-6-2T No. 41313 will be spending the last few months of its boiler ticket on a tour of heritage railways on the opposite side of the Solent, having been booked to appear at galas for the Severn Valley (September 17-20), West Somerset (September 25-27), Mid-Hants (October 2-4) and Bluebell railways (October 16-18), after which it will remain at the latter through the majority of the upcoming winter before finally heading to the East Somerset Railway, where its overhaul will be carried out – but not before one final gala appearance in 2027.



Left: Just three days after its official farewell event ahead of its autumn gala tour, No. 41313 departs Havenstreet with the 2.41pm to Wootton after being called on to cover for a failed Austerity. NICK GILLIAM

Brief reprise

The locomotive's final day of operation on the IoWSR was scheduled to for August 27, when it operated alongside Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. WD192 *Waggoner* and was seen off at the end by a brass band on the platform at Havenstreet.

However, three days later, the island's second Austerity, No. WD178 *Royal Engineer*, was failed, which resulted in the Ivatt being drafted in to cover services for the final two days of the Island Steam Fair.

The result was an opportunity to sample motive power from two different ends of Southern Region steam, with No. 41313 representing the BR period and LSWR O2 No. W24 *Calbourne* flying the flag for the pre-Grouping days.

Upon arrival at Cranmore in the new year, No. 41313 is expected to undergo its annual examination that is hoped to see it remain available for service on the ESR, enabling it to appear at the line's March 13/14, 2027, steam gala. This will see it reunited with another Ivatt design, 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447 (picture, page 94), also owned by the IoWSR and on long-term loan to the ESR.

After this final appearance in steam, No. 41313 will then enter the works for the estimated £200,000 overhaul project to commence, which is expected to last three years.

Upon its return to service, the locomotive will remain in Somerset for running-in, with the two railways planning a joint gala that will see classmate No. 41298 also cross the Solent to appear in the line-up.

It will be the first time all three of the IOWSR-owned Ivatt locomotives will have run together since the IOWSR's Three Ivatts gala in May 2018.



Right: *Calbourne* approaches Whitefield Farm crossing with the 5.51pm departure from Smallbrook Junction on the final day of the Island Steam Fair weekend. NICK GILLIAM

Future decisions

Meanwhile, IoWSR chief executive Marc Morgan-Huws told *Heritage Railway* that no decision on the future for two of its locomotives had yet been made following a consultation with members on August 26.

As reported last issue, the railway was considering options for No. 46447 and Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST No. 3135 *Invincible*, which included the suggestion of selling the former to the ESR.

"We are in no hurry to make any decisions and simply set out the rationale for our steam locomotive strategy and options around the two specific examples for members and volunteers to make comment on at and following the meeting," he explained.

He also confirmed that a possible diesel gala weekend was planned for November, with a visiting locomotive being negotiated as this issue went to press, but had no dates or further details were available.

Steam back at Chatham

AUGUST bank holiday weekend saw steam return to the Chatham as Sentinel 0-4-0VBGT works No. 7232 *Ann* visited for the historic dockyard's Steam on the Square event. The three-day celebration of steam, heritage and engineering saw classic vehicles from industry and military lined up around the site, with model railways and boats on show for visitors to admire.

Although it never worked any dockyards itself, having spent its whole working life at the British Tar Products plant in Irlam, near Manchester, examples of Sentinel locomotives were no strangers to such environments. Throughout the three days, *Ann* shuttled back and forth along the remaining lines of the once extensive dockyard complex, with Andrew Barclay 0-4-0DM No. 70042 *Overlord* for company.

Its trip away from the East Lancashire Railway was sponsored by model railway manufacturer Rapido Trains UK, which took the opportunity to announce a new OO scale model of this design set for release in 2027; for further details, see Model News, page 91. *Ann* will also star at the Great Central Railway's October 1-4 steam gala, which this year shines a spotlight on the smaller locomotives once found running across the UK's rail industry.



Making a brief visit to Kent for Chatham Historic Dockyard's Steam on the Square weekend, *Ann* sits alongside HMS Gannet on August 30. COURTENAY FORDER

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

East Lancashire celebrates line's first female driver

IT was once viewed as 'the men's domain,' but as evidenced on many occasions, this is definitely no longer the case as women are welcomed onto the footplate throughout the heritage sector.

The latest promotion publicly celebrated took place at the East Lancashire Railway which saw volunteer Steph Elwood become its first steam locomotive driver in the heritage line's nearly 40-year history.

After working her way up through the ranks of cleaner and fireman, Steph successfully passed her practical driving assessment on August 28, after taking control of Bulleid West Country 4-6-2 No. 34092 *City of Wells*. The ELR hopes that her achievement will not only be recognised as a personal one, but also celebrated as an important milestone for the railway and serve as inspiration for other women who may aspire to join footplate crews in the UK.

Steph, whose love of trains began with a Santa special when she was just two months old, said: "I'm so pleased to be able to say that I've now successfully passed all my driving assessments to become the first female steam train driver at the ELR. It feels like such a huge achievement, and I still can't quite believe that I'm now officially a passed fireman, allowing me to carry out both firing and driving turns.

"From being a little girl fascinated by steam trains to now having the opportunity to drive one myself is a dream come true.

"I'm incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported, encouraged and helped me along the way. There have been challenges and much to learn, but every step of the journey has made reaching this moment even more rewarding.

"I hope my achievement will show other women that the railway really is a place for them. If my journey inspires even one woman to take that first step, get involved, and discover what they can achieve, then I would be incredibly proud.

"The ELR has given me the opportunity to turn a lifelong passion into something I never thought possible. I'm excited to continue that journey and play my part in keeping the wonderful tradition of steam alive for future generations."

ELR chairman Mike Kelly said: "Becoming a steam locomotive driver requires commitment, determination, skill and passion, and Steph has demonstrated all of those qualities throughout her journey. I want to offer Steph my warmest congratulations on this outstanding achievement.

"She may not see herself as a pioneer or a role model, but she should take a moment to appreciate what she has achieved. By following the traditional route from cleaner through the steam crew ranks to the footplate, she has not only achieved her own ambition, but she has also helped open the door for other women who may dream of becoming steam locomotive drivers.

"The ELR depends on passing skills and traditions from one generation to the next, and we hugely appreciate the dedication of our volunteers who give their time and passion to keep our railway's heritage alive. Steph is now very much part of that tradition, and I hope her achievement will inspire and encourage many more women to consider becoming involved in the fascinating world of heritage railways."



Traction inspector Fraser Birrell shakes hands with Steph Elwood, who has become the ELR's first female driver, following her successful driving assessment on *City of Wells* on August 28. ELR

A Victorian-era first will star at North Norfolk's annual gala

AN entirely 19th century train will run on the North Norfolk Railway for the first time this autumn. It was announced that Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20 will be visiting for the line's annual steam gala, which runs on October 24/25.

Built by Sharp, Stewart & Co. works in 1863, No. 20 is the oldest operational standard gauge locomotive. Its visit will see it paired up with an equally vintage rake of carriages for the weekend. This five-strong rake comprises vehicles from the Midland & Great Northern and Great Eastern railways, as well as the Wisbech & Upwell tramway, and all were built between 1884 and 1899. The rake tends to appear on certain days and at special events throughout the year, such as the Festival on Rails (see feature, pages 76/77), but it is usually hauled by a locomotive built in the 20th century, the youngest in the NNR's fleet being GER Y14 No. 564, built in 1921, but which is currently awaiting overhaul.

The visit of the Furness Railway locomotive will therefore be the first time one from the 19th century has been seen paired up with the carriages in preservation.

With the LNER Quad Art and both BR Suburban and Mk. 1 stock also set to be in service, it will present an opportunity to sample an array of vehicles in one visit, with dining cars offering brunch on board one set and a Gresley Buffet car serving a selection of real ales.

Late-evening services are also planned for October 24, when British Summertime ends and the clocks go back an hour overnight. A fish-and-chips supper is available to pre-book on selected departures on this date.

A total of eight different steam locomotives are due to feature throughout the weekend, with one allocated spare each day but alternating to ensure each one gets a turn in the spotlight. The line-up will feature the smallest of the fleet, Hudsewell Clarke No. 1700 *Wissington* of 1938, and the largest, BR 'Dub Dee' 2-10-0 No. 90775 *The Royal Norfolk Regiment* of 1943, with a varied timetable.

General manager Graham Hukins said: "We are looking forward to putting on an excellent show at the gala. Furness No. 20 hauling our Victorian carriages will be a highlight for many.

"Each of the five coaches is unique, and to have a whole train dating from the 19th century is very unusual indeed. The Victorian train will also be one of those that makes an after-dark run, the first time the train has done so on public services.

"With seven steam engines each day, demonstration goods trains, real ale and shed tours, it promises to be a packed weekend, and we should particularly like to thank the Furness Railway Trust and Ribble Steam Railway for allowing No. 20 to appear."



Furness Railway No. 20's visit to Norfolk will see it paired with the NNR's vintage carriages, the first time they will have been pulled by a 19th century locomotive in preservation. NNR



A diesel-hauled clay train crosses Skew Arch Bridge as a Swanage branch passenger service passes below on July 4, 1969, with the ruins of medieval Corfe Castle in the background. GEORGE MOON/PMMM



Southern Railway U class 2-6-0 No. 31806 heads a passenger service beneath Skey Arch Bridge on September 10. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Narrow gauge mining line may cross Swanage Railway again

By Robin Jones

A MAJOR scheme to restore a narrow gauge overbridge which carried mineral trains over the Swanage Railway in pre-preservation days is being prepared.

The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum is looking to rebuild and reopen the historically important Skew Arch Bridge at Norden station, which could create a major attraction through the sight of narrow gauge trains once again crossing over the standard gauge heritage line.

The museum currently has an operational 550-yard 1ft 11½in gauge line, and its fleet of two Ruston Horby 48DL 4wDMs includes No. 392117, which ran on the industrial Fayle's Tramway before it closed in 1971 – just months before BR axed the Swanage branch in January 1972.

The narrow gauge line evolved from the 3ft 9in gauge Middlebere Tramway, Dorset's first railway and one of the first in southern England to carry ball clay – a major employer in Corfe Castle and the surrounding villages – from the Norden area to a wharf on the edge of Poole Harbour at Middlebere.

Project revisited

A proposal for the restoration of Skew Arch Bridge was written in August 2011 by a specialist engineering consultancy. However, work is now required both to rectify the effects of years of neglect and to repair damage due to a Swanage Railway road-rail excavator striking the bridge in June 2015. Two damaged bridge beams were removed for safety reasons; these beams have been subsequently returned to the SR and are stored nearby at Eldon sidings pending assessment.

Reopening the bridge with track relaid across it will allow today's narrow gauge line access to important former ball clay workings at Matchams Pit to the south of the museum. The restoration could also incorporate additional walking access to the old clay workings and a footpath network.

Initial funding of £10,000 has been granted by the Swanage Railway Trust to help the museum team generate a detailed project proposal which will cover actions such that the bridge could be integrated into the Swanage Railway's visitor offering at Norden.

While basic details of the necessary repair work were prepared in 2016, an updated survey is now needed to ensure that the proposed work is fully planned into the SR annual operating plan. The grant will help pay for expert structural engineers and surveyors, and it will generate an up-to-date, accurate and well-informed project plan.

Gradually implemented

Once the plan is developed over the next six months and completed, a programme of fundraising is needed to implement it.

Any major future work will have to be concentrated into the annual winter shutdown during January and February each year. A museum statement said: "The impact of not repairing the bridge is that the structure will continue to deteriorate and become increasingly expensive to rectify, leading to potential safety issues and the loss of an important and integral heritage structure and continuing aesthetic issues around the southern end of Norden station."

Housed in the last underground mine building that worked in Purbeck, the volunteer-run museum is an independent Arts Council England Accredited venue which exists to preserve and interpret everything to do with the Purbeck ball clay industry and its association with the Swanage branch.

When the Fayle's Tramway complex at Norden was regauged in 1948, Hunslet 2-6-2T No. 901 of 1906 *Russell* – which began its career on the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway – was bought for use in Purbeck.

In 1954, the Birmingham Locomotive Club bought *Russell* for preservation and returned it to Wales. It is the sole-surviving original Welsh Highland locomotive.



Paul Abbott with the chimney from *Tiny* that he rescued as a teenager. PMMM

Tiny's top hat stands tall – at its original home once more

THE distinctive chimney from one of the original narrow gauge steam engines used to haul clay across the Purbeck heathland has returned home 150 years after it first went into service.

Called *Tiny*, the engine was based at Norden and operated on the Fayles Tramway for more than 50 years before it was scrapped in 1948. The stovepipe chimney is the only remaining feature of *Tiny,* and its survival owes everything to the inquisitive mind and determination of a tenacious 15-year-old boy.

It has now been donated to the Purbeck Mining Museum at Norden by Paul Abbott, from Lyndhurst.

Chance discovery

During one of his many visits, he found a discarded chimney in one of the work sheds. The engineers confirmed it was the chimney from *Tiny,* which had been dismantled several years prior to provide spare parts for repairs and modifications to other engines.

As a young boy fascinated with trains and steam engines, Paul paid many visits to the Pike Bros clay industry railway at Furzebrook. He became a familiar face to the engine drivers and mineworkers and was frequently given rides in the engine cabs.

"I remember many discussions with the engine drivers – with Alfie Gover in particular," said Paul. "They always gave me such a warm welcome, and I was over the moon when they said I could have the chimney. But it was pretty heavy – and very sooty – so it was quite a struggle for a young boy to take it home! Thankfully, I was given a lift in a Pike's lorry to Wareham station. From there, I took it by train to Brockenhurst and then by bus to our home in Lyndhurst.

"My mother was not terribly impressed at the time, but the chimney has always been a treasured possession and has spent

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

New design loco to be tested on rebuilt Clevedon line

By Robin Jones

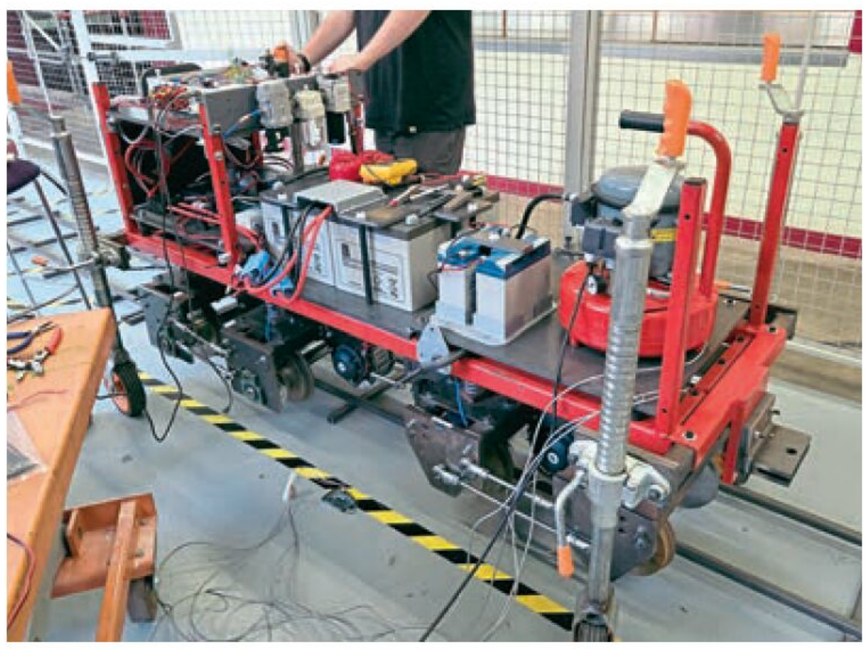
AN all-new battery electric locomotive designed at Cardiff University is to undergo test runs at the seaside miniature railway in Clevedon, which is being relaid after several years out of use.

Cardiff School of Engineering has developed the locomotive through successive student projects since 2017, when discussions with Arriva Trains took place.

The aim is to enter it in the Institution of Mechanical Engineers' Railway Challenge, which gives university students, apprentices and graduate engineers the opportunity to design, build and operate miniature locomotives in a live railway environment.

At the Stapleford Miniature Railway, near Melton Mowbray, teams undertake challenges covering areas such as traction, automatic stopping, ride comfort, reliability and maintainability.

Welsh railways helped inspire the Cardiff students' unusual, independently driven wheel concept. The arrangement was intended to reduce wheel and track wear on curves while also providing opportunities for improved traction and braking control. Building on work completed in 2024/25, the 2025/26 team concentrated on turning the inherited locomotive into a safe, dependable and fully integrated test platform.



The new locomotive taking shape in the Cardiff workshop. DR MICHAEL RYAN



The new locomotive tested on the Garw Valley Railway's miniature line two years ago. DR MICHAEL RYAN

The students rewrote the control software, reorganised the electrical systems and connected the drive, braking and sensing systems through a central controller.

A new primary suspension system now works alongside the locomotive's existing secondary suspension. Track testing recorded a 58.4% reduction in maximum vertical acceleration amplitude compared with the unsuspended configuration. The team also developed closed-loop control of the spring-applied, pneumatically released brakes, allowing controlled braking while retaining fail-safe application if electrical power or air pressure is lost.

Camera and ultrasonic systems support automatic stopping and collision avoidance.

Wheel-speed, temperature, pressure and vibration sensors provide additional information for control, performance assessment and condition monitoring.

The 500kg 10¼in gauge locomotive can haul loads of up to four tonnes, and four 12v traction batteries supply its two powered bogies.

It has a central Arduino-based control system with RoboteQ motor controllers and a LattePanda computer for camera processing, and its automated functions includes Automatic stopping, collision avoidance and condition monitoring.

The test runs at Clevedon are likely to take place in late September or October. Disused since 2019, the Clevedon line is being revived by Emma Coles – daughter of previous operator Len Harvey – and her family alongside a wider programme of rejuvenation at Salthouse Fields and Clevedon seafront.

The line has been regauged to 10¼in, and about three-quarters of it has been relaid so far.

The revivalists are based in Station Café alongside, which is open for business, but their plans also include a new indoor cafe, redevelopment of the adventure golf course and a refreshed children's rides area.

The family hopes to have trains running again before next year.



Left: Fundraiser Chris Davies with Emma Coles in front of the Station Café. EMMA COLES



Right: Part of the relaid and regauged track. EMMA COLES

---

the last 50 years as an unusual flowerpot holder. It is only right that it should now come back to its former working home and I'm delighted it is on display at the Purbeck Mining Museum."

In its rightful place

"It is more than 70 years since *Tiny* was withdrawn from operation," said museum lead Peter Sills. "We thought the only remaining evidence of this small but unique and powerful locomotive was confined to archive photographs and grainy films.

"The engine was originally called *Corfe* but soon adopted its popular nickname in view of its dimunitive size. Interestingly, it wasn't just used to haul clay across the heathland. About 100 years ago, it also hauled a wagon that resembled a mobile shed to ferry the children of clay miners to and from their school in Corfe!

"It's a great addition to the myriad of artefacts and audio-visual presentations we have on display in the restored mine building at Norden, showcasing an industry that played a pivotal role in the Purbecks for several centuries. We are indebted to Paul for his teenage enthusiasm in helping to save such an iconic artefact and for his generous donation."

Open most days until late October, museum opening times can be found at www.purbeckminingmuseum.org



***Tiny* in clay tramway service at Goathorn in Dorset in 1935.** PMMM

One in, one out: service status swap for S160 duo at Churnet Valley line

By Owen Hayward



Newly-overhauled S160 No. 3278, running as fictional LMR No. 701 *Franklin D Roosevelt,* waits at Consall with the first train of the day on August 16, not long after returning to traffic a week earlier. ROBERT FALCONER

A CELEBRATION was also one for a sad farewell as the Churnet Valley Railway saw one of its stalwart locomotives withdrawn pending overhaul.

To many observers, the CVR has become the unofficial home of the USATC S160 2-8-0s, with three examples nominally based there. While No. 6046 has been on long-term loan to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway since spring 2024, classmate No. 5197 has largely been holding the fort alone during the last 18 months while No. 3278's overhaul was completed.

The latter was ready to make a return to service earlier this year until its shock derailment on April 18, the day which was meant to be its official debut, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 345.

After being returned to the workshops for necessary repairs resulting from this incident, it finally entered traffic on August 12 – with little fanfare to mark the occasion.

Military imposter

No. 3278 has been turned out in a variation of the Longmoor Military Railway livery; only one member of the class was ever allocated to this Hampshire site, namely No. 93257, which was then given the MOD number 700 and named *Major General Carl R Gray Jr* upon its transfer there in 1955.

Two years later, it was involved in an accident that left it with wheel flats, and as there were no spares available to repair it, it was subsequently cut up on site.

No. 3278, meanwhile, travelled Europe after serving in the UK during the Second World War, being put to use in both Italy and Greece before it was repatriated by John Bunch in the 1990s and returned to steam at the Mid-Hants Railway.

There, it carried the fake LMR identity of No. 701and named *Franklin D Roosevelt* for the first time, with the livery including bright red frames and whitewall tyres.

Overhaul commenced in the early 2000s, and the locomotive moved between the MHR, Tyseley Locomotive Works and, in 2020, the CVR at the start of a 10-year loan agreement. While outshopped in LMR colours once more, the livery this time is more subdued, losing the vibrant red frames but instead gaining steel letters and numbers on its cab and tender sides. Since returning to service, further minor tasks were identified to overcome the usual teething troubles that emerge post-overhaul, but No. 701 has otherwise been reported to be performing well.

However, while this long-awaited moment was being celebrated, the less welcome news came that No. 5197 had been withdrawn for its own overhaul to commence. Owned by Batt Holden Limited, it returned to service in February 2017 and has been a stalwart of the fleet.

"The fantastic effort and reliability of No. 5197 over recent years have been instrumental in allowing us to focus our attention on No. 701," said a company statement. "Throughout its time in service, No. 5197 has proved itself to be a steady and dependable locomotive, firmly living up to the S160 reputation of being, in our words, near enough bomb-proof.

A new chapter starts

"Right up until its final day of operation, No. 5197 continued to haul seven-coach trains up the 1-in-40 gradient, demonstrating the reliability for which it has become so well-known.

"We would not have been able to concentrate on bringing No. 701 back into traffic in the way we have without No. 5197 providing that dependable service. Its withdrawal therefore marks the beginning of another important chapter as we turn our attention to its overhaul while continuing the running-in and development of No. 701."

The withdrawal of this locomotive does mean that any hope of a line-up featuring the three CVR-based S160s has been temporarily dashed, with enthusiasts having to wait for a few years before the opportunity presents itself once more.

The CVR previously hosted a S160 Superpower gala in February 2020 featuring Nos. 5197, 6046 and 2253 *Omaha*, which was based there under Pete Best's ownership but has since moved to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, and it was the first time three members of the class were seen in steam together in the UK since 1944.

Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3839 (NCB No. 7) *Wimblebury,* meanwhile, has remained at Cheddleton through the summer, it having arrived earlier this year on hire from the Foxfield Railway to provide assistance for No. 5197 and cover while No. 701 is run in.

Late changes made to the bill of big autumn gala at Severn Valley Railway

TWO major changes to the Severn Valley Railway's September 17-20 Autumn Steam Gala were made with the booking of LMS 'Royal Scot' 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman,* from West Coast Railways, and GWR 2-8-0 No. 3850, from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway.

The pair replaced the previously -booked visiting locomotives BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097, from the East Lancashire Railway, and GWR small prairie No. 5526, from the South Devon Railway.

Another scheduled highlight of the gala was the heritage era debut in passenger service of ex-Barry scrapyard GWR large prairie No. 4150. As highlighted in *Heritage Railway* issue 347, 1947-built No. 4150, which was withdrawn by BR 61 years ago, ran under its own power for the first time since then on June 16, becoming the 154th locomotive rescued from Barry to be returned to steam.

Also rostered were visiting Ivatt 2MT 2-6-2T No. 41313, from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, and WR 0-6-0PT No. 9681, from the Dean Forest Railway. SVR CEO Gus Dunster said: "There has been an extraordinary amount of goodwill and generosity from organisations and individuals across the heritage railway movement.

"I want to pay tribute to everyone who has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make these last-minute changes happen."

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Preservation pioneer gets the 1940s treatment

By Owen Hayward

MAKING a good first impression often results in locomotives being polished to the nines, but for one day only, the Talyllyn Railway ran its pioneer Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT No. 2 *Dolgoch* in a less than pristine appearance, but for a very good reason.

September 6 saw the fourth and final Talyllyn Photo Char-TR of 2026 take place, with a focus on the 1940s when the railway was beginning to show signs of its age. No. 2 was noticeably very grimy, to the extent that some mistook its boiler barrel cladding for being painted black, when in reality it was green, masked by layers of filth. For this charter, that weathered look was revived with careful application of water-based poster paints, and the Tal-y-llyn Railway branding was even reapplied to the side of the coal bunker just as it had been back then.



Left: A heavily weathered *Dolgoch* catches the sun at Six Bends on September 6. The consist behind was missing its brake van, evoking memories of the late 1940s when this particular vehicle was stopped for repairs and no van featured on the passenger trains for three whole years! NATHAN SPENCE

Surprise emergence

The brief emergence of No. 2 in this look had not been an advertised feature of the charter, it only being given the green light in the weeks beforehand following careful planning to ensure the existing paintwork would not be damaged.

What had previously been the main selling point of the event was the plan to perform runpasts with *Dolgoch* and the vintage carriages – without a brake van. In 1946, Brown Marshalls No. 5 was in need of new wheelsets and taken out of service, but rather than rush its repair or find a back-up vehicle to replace it, the railway ran its trains without the van, the guard instead taking up residence in the rearmost compartment of the carriages in use. This practice continued right through to 1949, when Van No. 5 was finally rewheeled and put back into traffic. To recreate such scenes during the charter, the van was detached out of sight for a number of runpasts at locations across the railway which, when combined with No. 2's weathered appearance and the largely unspoilt landscape of the Fathew Valley, resulted in some shots that could very well have been taken from the history books.



Right: Carrying heavy weathering just as it did in the 1940s, as well as its name chalked on the boiler and railway branding on the coal bunker, No. 2 *Dolgoch* simmers at Tywyn Wharf during a photo charter on September 6. NATHAN SPENCE

Proud student's achievement

These photo charters have been arranged in-house by 22-year-old Nathan Spence, a student at Aberystwyth University but a regular volunteer on the TR. As highlighted in our feature in issue 345, his love and skills development for photography has been fostered by his activities since joining the railway, and arranging these charters has been another step into the unknown for him – but one that has been very well-received, with all charters having either sold out or come close to doing so.

"I had many sleepless nights in the build up to this one," he explained. "The railway is understandably proud of the smart presentation of its locomotives, so it took a lot of work to convince people to let us weather it and that it wouldn't damage the existing paintwork. I carried out several test patches to prove the point and am relieved that it got the okay to go ahead.

"We were able to weather No. 2, run the charter, and clean it off again all within 48 hours, and I have to thank all of the volunteers who stepped up to help with this, as well as those who helped to run the charter in whatever capacity they did. It's been a stressful year figuring these out, but we have had four hugely successful charters and some wonderfully positive feedback about each.

"I think it's proved there's an appetite for this sort of thing; we shall have to see what the future brings in terms of any more."

Honorary County Donegal life membership for Jim

COUNTY Donegal Railway Restoration has conferred honorary life membership on railway author and historian Jim McBride for his long and outstanding contribution to preserving Donegal's railway heritage.

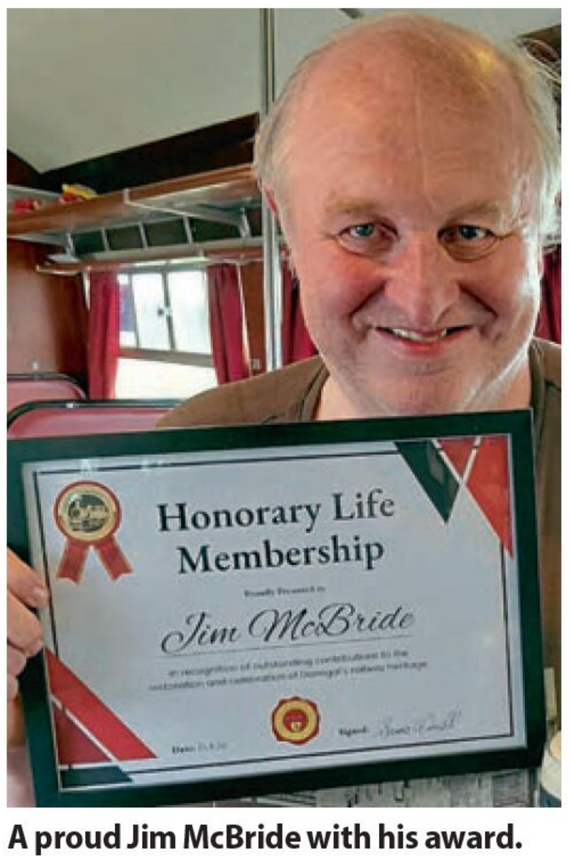
The retired history teacher stepped down from his post as a board member of many years because of health reasons. He has now been recognised for his sterling work in helping shape the success story that is the Donegal Railway Heritage Museum today.

A member of the North West of Ireland Railway Society, which was instrumental in saving several items of County Donegal Railways rolling stock from being scrapped, including CDR 2-6-4T No. 5 *Drumboe* currently on display at the museum, Jim has lectured widely on the railways of Donegal.

He is the author of four best-selling books published by CDRRS, covering the CDR itself, railways around Strabane, the Lough Swilly Railway and the Ballycastle Railway, with all proceeds going to developing the museum. As an NWIRS member, Jim was very much behind the 2003 transfer of CDR railcar No. 18 from the Foyle Valley Railway Museum to the Fintown Railway, where it is in service during the summer operating season.

CDRRS chairman Seamus O'Donnell said: "Over the years, Jim has contributed enormously to developing the museum and the work we do in keeping the story of the railways of Donegal very much alive and relevant to audiences today. He richly deserves this award, and we thank him for all he has done for us."

Jim, who lives in Whitehead and is also a member of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland and an enthusiastic participant in that society's railtours, said: "I was surprised, honoured and delighted to be conferred with honorary life membership. I may have stepped down from the board, but, of course, I'll be keeping an eye on developments at Donegal."



A proud Jim McBride with his award. CDRRS



Above: Santa Express The Movie director and actor Daniel Coll and York-based screenwriter David C Thorp on the bufferbeam of *Repton*. SETM

Right: On August 18, Schools 4-4-0 No. 926 *Repton* returned to North Yorkshire Moors Railway service after being out of action since last October and having undergone repairs. Turned out in Southern Railway olive green livery, it is seen arriving at Grosmont with the 2.10pm from Whitby. TONY WINWARD



Festive cheer as new Christmas blockbuster filmed on Moorsline

By Robin Jones

A NEW potential blockbuster, Santa Express The Movie, is planned for filming on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway for a release this Christmas.

Stepping out of the Tardis to play the lead role as Father Christmas and ride behind Southern Railway Schools V class 4-4-0 No. 926 *Repton* will be 1960s Doctor Who companion Peter Purves.

Other star names in the cast include singer-songwriter, actress and television presenter Toyah Willcox, former Coronation Street star Victoria Ekanoye and Irish actors Fiona Sinnott and Joe Savino.

The film has been written by York-based screenwriter Dave C Thorp and is produced by independent British production company Picture Point Films.

David came up with a modern-day fantasy adventure following Bob Browning, a man whose dearest wish is to play Father Christmas aboard his local steam railway. His determination finally wins him the job of a lifetime – but it is not the job, or the world, he expected. David described the film as a story about childhood, nostalgia, loss and love – and about rediscovering wonder for adults and children alike. Romance, comedy, excitement and danger run through a festive journey filled with memorable characters, heroes and villains, with steam, snow, Christmas magic and the beautiful Yorkshire landscape at its heart.

The NYMR is working closely with Picture Point Films to bring the story to life against the spectacular backdrop of its landscapes.

Producing and directing the film and playing Bob Browning is Daniel Coll, whose screen work includes Braveheart, Emmerdale, The Crown, EastEnders, Coronation Street, Gentleman Jack and Netflix's Red Rose. His stage career includes Les Miserables and the original West End production of Billy Elliot.

He said: "For me, the attraction of Santa Express The Movie is that it can be spectacular without ever losing sight of the people at its centre. The steam locomotive and the Yorkshire locations give us scale, but the story is really about family, second chances, and finding your way back to wonder.

"As an actor as well as a producer and director, I care deeply about creating the space for performances to feel honest. We are building a magical Christmas world, but the emotion has to be real. If audiences laugh, feel moved, and leave wanting to believe again, we will have done our job.

"York and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway give the film an identity no studio could manufacture. We want to make something proudly Yorkshire and unmistakably British, capable of travelling to families around the world."

Peter, 87, was aged 27 when he played Steve Taylor, a companion of the first doctor, played by William Hartnell. He later presented Blue Peter for 11 years, and said: "It is such a pleasure finally to have the go-ahead on filming this lovely script. It is nice, at my age, to be doing something totally new!"

The appeal of the role, he said, lies in finding the character behind one of the world's most familiar festive figures and placing him at the heart of a proper family adventure.

"Father Christmas is one of those characters everybody thinks they know, but there is still room to discover the man inside the red suit," he said. "I want him to have warmth and humour, with just a little mystery – someone children can believe in and adults can remember believing in.

"Steam railways and Christmas belong together. The sound, the movement, and the sense of travelling towards somewhere magical give the film an atmosphere that is impossible not to enjoy."

David added: "The film is about the enchantment of Christmas past... those delightful, magical Christmases we can all remember from back when we were maybe nine or 10 years old. What happened? Where did they go?"

Victoria Ekanoye will play the part of Santa's helper, Connie the Great Elf, while Toyah Willcox will take on the role of Bob Browning's wife, Nancy.

Dublin-born Fiona Sinnott will play Charlotte Moon, a warm but formidable woman whose honesty and humour help drive the story forward, while Joe Savino will become Chester Rutherford, a gloriously self-important actor who is convinced the world is waiting for him.

Fiona and Joe both appeared in the Dublin company of the first UK and Ireland tour of Les Misérables when it swept into the Point Theatre in 1993, while Daniel Coll appeared in the same touring production as Enjolras.

"Fiona and Joe were part of a defining chapter of my early career," said Daniel. "They are terrific actors, with warmth, instinct and enormous screen presence. To be working together again after all these years feels wonderfully full circle."

After recently viewing *Repton* with David, Daniel said: "At more than 100 tons, it is certainly the biggest star we have ever worked with, and at 92 years old it is probably the oldest too.

"It is still elegant, graceful and very beautiful, and it fits the story perfectly."

Santa Express The Movie will be premiered at City Screen Picturehouse in Coney Street, York, on December 10. It will be also screened in cinemas and arts centre around the UK this Christmas and on TV during the 2027 festive season.



Left: Former Doctor Who star and Blue Peter presenter Peter Purves will play Santa Claus. SETM



Right: Victoria Ekanoye, who has appeared in Coronation Street. SETM

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Epping Ongar works practical movie magic for Mk. 1 carriage studio trip

By Owen Hayward

IT is usually film crews that turn up at a railway for feature film productions, but for the Epping Ongar Railway, matters worked a little differently for one of its recent filming contracts, when a carriage headed off to Herefordshire.

Filming for the Warner Bros American romantic fantasy Practical Magic 2, sequel to the original 1998 movie directed by Griffin Dunne, which was based on the 1995 novel by Alice Hoffman, saw producers contact the EOR in January 2025, seeking a railway location with specific requirements.

These entailed location shooting in Essex, combined with subsequent studio work around it. The result saw the EOR selected for the purpose, with one of the line's BR Mk. 1 carriages transported to the Warner Bros studios at Leavesden as part of the contract.

The original call enquiring about the possibility of the railway's use as a filming location was received by EOR operations manager Rob Bentley, who accompanied the Mk. 1 to the studios and oversaw its care while there.

"I didn't really know what to expect at first," he said. "We've had a fair bit of filming here on the railway over the years, but nothing quite as big as this production.

"It was the first time I'd ever been on a film set in a studio. It was an amazing experience. Everyone was incredibly friendly and focused on working together to create something special. It felt odd to see the carriage outside its usual setting, but I was proud that our heritage railway could contribute to such a big Hollywood film."



Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman inside a Mk. 1 carriage from the Epping Ongar Railway, which served as a location for Practical Magic 2. EOR/ALCON ENTERTAINMENT

The carriage in question was one of those in regular use by the EOR for its passenger services, meaning visitors can easily retrace the steps of the stars in the movie.

"We were the perfect fit for them in terms of what they wanted to film," said Rob. "What's really cool is that you can sit in exactly the same seats where the stars sat in.

"I'm watching the trailer thinking, 'that's our train'."

It is the latest in a line of film work for Essex's longest heritage railway, which also featured in a Christmas special for BBC's Beyond Paradise (a spin-off to the Caribbean-based murder mystery Death in Paradise), Netflix's Man vs Baby (starring Rowan Atkinson), and even music videos for the likes of Boy George and Clean Bandit.

Other railways to see use as filming locations include the Bluebell and Swanage railways, which feature in the silver screen adaption of Enid Blyton's The Magic Faraway Tree stories and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway for Santa Express The Movie (see separate story).

Local mayor cuts ribbon for Chesterfield's miniature line's half-centenary celebrations

CHESTERFIELD Borough Council has celebrated 50 years of the town's 10¼in gauge Queens Park Miniature Railway.

Mayor Coun Shirley Niblock cut a ribbon to launch two days of special events with resident 1988-built Severn Lamb steam outline 2-6-0DH *Puffin Billy* on August 18/19.

Activities included an on-train puzzle and sessions to make a model train. On the second day, Sheffield University brought a locomotive students had made as part of their engineering course. In term time, the students bring their locomotives to the park for testing, as do their counterparts at Derby University.

The line first opened in 1976, laid by Cromar White Railways Ltd for the council on a former BR track bed. It was originally an end-to-end line, becoming a 550-yard circular route around the park lake.

Trains were originally operated by an Ian Allan locomotive until the Severn Lamb stock was purchased from the Bickington Steam Railway.



Right: Mayor Coun Shirley Niblock cuts the ribbon across diesel-operated *Puffin Billy* to start two days of celebrations . ROBERT FALCONER

IN BRIEF

Nene Valley donations appeal as three coaches vandalised

THE Nene Valley Railway has appealed for donations towards purchasing of a set of protective tarpaulins after windows of three carriages awaiting restoration at Wansford were smashed by stone-throwing vandals during July.

The three damaged coaches are Restaurant Miniature Buffet No. 1872, built in 1962, Second Open No. 4794, built in 1957 and Tourist Second Open No. 4200, built in 1956.

The police were informed about the incident, and the railway has now appealed for donations of cash or industrial-grade tarpaulins, which cost about £3000 in total, to protect the carriages from the elements while they await repairs.

A NVR statement said: "We urgently need to purchase heavy-duty industrial tarpaulins of the type used on lorries to properly protect the three coaches while they remain in open storage."

For more details, visit https://nvr.org.uk/product.php/818/tarpaulin-appeal

Readers: keep updated with all the latest!

YOU may have seen recent news reports regarding the planned closure of a number of TG Jones stores (formerly WH Smith). At present, it remains unclear whether your nearest store will be affected.

To ensure you continue receiving future issues without interruption, we encourage you to consider one of the following alternative options should your local store close:

- **Subscribe** – see inside this issue for great offers. It guarantees best price and reliable delivery.
- Go online to our shop, where you can buy a copy and have it delivered to your door: **shop.kelsey.co.uk**
- Use the online store finder to see other stockists in your area: **www.frontline-group.co.uk/store-finder**
- Order a copy at your local newsagent for collection by yourself or request home delivery.

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

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

Robin Jones

Editor

SUBSCRIBE TODAY



REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

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

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

GET ONE YEAR OF HERITAGE RAILWAY FOR JUST £57.99



COME ABOARD FOR THE VERY BEST RAIL NEWS, FEATURES AND IMAGES COVERING THE UK PRESERVATION MOVEMENT.

NOT ONLY THAT, BY SUBSCRIBING YOU WILL

SAVE £1.14 PER ISSUE

Scan me

EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

1. GO TO shop.kelsey.co.uk/heritage-railway
2. CALL US 01507 529529
3. USE THIS QR CODE TO GO DIRECTLY TO OUR WEBSITE

Lines open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm. Calls charged at your standard network rate.

Young members prove their worth in annual takeover at Talyllyn line

By group chairman Alex Hando



A group photo at Nant Gwernol marked the end of the day for the young members responsible for the TR's operations on August 22. ADAM TEBBS

AUGUST 22 saw an annual tradition for the Talyllyn Railway upheld as its Young Members Group almost completely took over the operation of the world's first volunteer-run heritage railway for the day.

The event had been a long time coming, with planning for it having begun in earnest in October. This was my second year coordinating the event, with many lessons learnt from last year's one, including the rule of thumb to work ahead of time to prepare paperwork well ahead of the deadline. A further challenge was that I was now solely at the helm, but able to call upon the help, support and assistance of my friends and fellow volunteers. Having submitted the event pro forma with plenty of notice during the winter of 2025, the YMG committee was very pleased to learn in January that the event's Special Traffic Notice was the second to have been drafted at the beginning of the year.

For 2026, I decided to follow on the helpful precedents of 2025 and ensure things were simple. Following consultation, the YMG committee collectively agreed to follow the base peak season timetable, with some additional goods trains added to provide some variety.

Our social events coordinator, Ed Neve, made the excellent suggestion of running a Royal Navy Armaments Depot demonstration goods train, which, to the best of my knowledge, had not been done before at the TR. We also chose to reprise locomotive cleaning at Tywyn Wharf station, a great opportunity to get the public engaged and encourage discussion about volunteering as young people.

Over the following months, the committee made sure to keep advertising the event to volunteers, with the aim of maximising bookings from volunteers aged 30 and under in operational roles in the locomotive and traffic departments.

The final preparations saw the midweek formation and shunting of the goods set with much thanks to YMG members Ed, Henry Pearsall and Luke Bowerman.

Friendly atmosphere

On a clear Saturday morning, I arrived at Pendre to find a great atmosphere, with the cleaners working thoroughly while chatting and bantering, as the guards and their assistants busily cleaned and prepared their carriage sets for the day ahead.

I set to work getting Hughes Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 3 *Sir Haydn* ready for the light engine trip to Pendre, with a clean of the inside and outside motion and ensuring that the rags and gloves were sufficiently stocked for members of the public later on.

At 9.15am, *Sir Haydn* headed over to Tywyn Wharf with a full footplate, leaving me to walk to the terminus in my bib and brace. Once at Wharf, I set up shop, putting a sign out directing visitors to the cleaning and signwriting demonstrations taking place in the yard. Our talented signwriter, Keira Thompson, had agreed to demonstrate her skills on one of our heritage wagons, providing an added attraction.

Between each service train, curious people of all ages came over to chat and have a go at cleaning the Falcon. I met many enthusiastic young people who I very much hope will be encouraged to get into volunteering. One 14-year-old visitor said he planned to volunteer once he turned 16, which was very promising to hear.

In the afternoon, upon the return of Baguley Drewry 4wDM No. 12 *Trecwn* with the RNAD goods train to Tywyn Wharf, No. 3 *Sir Haydn* took charge of the set and headed up the line, making what was already a rare RNAD train rarer still, now a steam-hauled MOD train and much to the gratification of Railway Series enthusiasts present.

Multitude of roles

Beyond Wharf station, members had excellent trips up the line firing, guarding, blocking (the TR's equivalent of signalling) and serving as stationmasters, assistant guards and second and third men. I was so pleased to see the great turnout from our younger volunteers, more than two thirds of whom were officially Young Members, aged between 14 and 25. The contribution of the 'young at heart' – the 'old' and honorary young members – must



Cleaner Will Wharton (centre) presents the Nant Gwernol section token to blockman Luke Ryan (left) as No. 1 *Talyllyn* arrives at Abergynolwyn with a Down train on August 22. SAM GLEAVE



Baguley Drewry No. 11 *Trecwn* arrives at Brynglas with a RNAD goods consist during the Talyllyn Young Members' takeover. SAM GLEAVE

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Young Members Group chairman Alex Hando demonstrates locomotive cleaning to a curious visitor at Tywyn Wharf. LUKE BOWERMAN



Kiera Thompson demonstrated her signwriting skills at Tywyn Wharf on one of the heritage waggons, seen here marking a level white line for the top of the lettering to follow. SAM GLEAVE

not be forgotten, and it was great to have them involved.

In the evening, once the service and goods trains had been put away, the volunteers, now washed up, piled into the blue open carriage No. 8. With the right away at 6.30pm, Hunslet 0-4-0DM No. 9 *Alf* took the volunteers' train on a slow but spirited trip to Nant Gwernol, where we topped off the day with a group photograph featuring all of the YMG headboards, including the rare appearance of the yellow-painted aluminium prototype), and supper and drinks at the Railway Inn in Abergynolwyn.

In all, the 2026 Young Members' Day was a great success. I was delighted to receive positive feedback from the public and older volunteers alike. The event really showed the best that the YMG and, by extension the TR, can be; the friendliness, fellowship, cooperative spirit.

Many thanks go to my fellow committee members, Izzy Coulls, Luke, Ed and Ioan Rhys Martin for their ideas and support, as well as my friends in the wider YMG who gave their spare time to set up the occasion. I am also very appreciative of the railway's management and departmental roster clerks, who every year have allowed us to run the event.

Revived youth group's volunteers take their first steps into a new department

THIS summer has been one for younger volunteers to shine, and those at the Llangollen Railway made good use of their six-week break to join the line's permanent way department and learn what is involved in maintaining the 10 miles of track.

Revived earlier this year to help with the restoration of goods vehicles (as covered in our feature on pages 44-49), five of the LR's youngest members joined permanent way manager Dave Shaw for a walk of the line on August 28, broadening their understanding of one of the most important areas of work needed to ensure trains continue to run safely. As part of this exercise, they were shown how defects in the track are monitored and learned how to carry out spot repairs.

The importance of this venture was highlighted further as they walked sections of track that are soon due for renewal.

This visit followed a busy operating weekend that included an intensive two-train service, where resident Class 47 No. 47449 was out; this locomotive can be particularly harsh to the track, and the addition of a diesel-hauled fire train meant that there were many keys (metal clips that hold the rails and chairs together) out of place, so there was plenty to monitor and do. Wagon group volunteer Douglas Hebson, who helped facilitate the outing, said: "Although only a small first step, this was about showing a young audience the harsh realities in what keeps a railway running.

"If this work wasn't undertaken and there wasn't a team of dedicated volunteers on hand who can help with the bigger jobs when required, the track would be left in a state of disrepair, and we wouldn't be able to operate.

"But hopefully, if we can encourage more volunteers to join and invest the time away from the more 'glamorous' side such as working on locomotives, the dividends will pay off with a greater involvement in its day-to-day upkeep.

"All this will help keep the future of rail operation in the Dee Valley in a more secure place."



Members of the Llangollen Railway's youth group at Pentrefelin bridge during a track walk on August 28. DOUGLAS HEBSON

West Somerset gala guest makes an historic third visit

By Robin Jones

ONE of the guests at the West Somerset Railway's September 25-27 Autumn Steam Weekend will be making its third visit to the line.

GWR large prairie No. 4110 was built at Swindon in 1936 and spent the next quarter of a century working West Midlands suburban trains.

In 1962/63, it was allocated to Taunton shed where its duties included the Minehead and Taunton-Yeovil branches, local services between Taunton and Exeter, and assisting heavy trains on the climb towards Whiteball summit. After leaving Taunton, it spent time at Neath and worked some of the final day trains on the Heads of the Valleys route between there and Pontypool Road.

In June 1965, it was withdrawn from Radyr and sent to Dai Woodham's Barry scrapyard. In May 1979, it became the 100th locomotive to leave the scrapyard after being bought by the Great Western Preservation Group and moved to its Southall base. Sent to Tyseley Locomotive Works for contract overhaul, it was then offered for sale and in 2015 was bought by the WSR.

The intention was to have No. 4110 back in action by 2022, but in 2018 it was sold again, this time to the Dartmouth Steam Railway, its present owner.

Back in steam

The DSR sent it for contract overhaul at Cranmore on the East Somerset Railway, where it finally returned to steam in February 2023, returning to Torbay earlier this year, as featured on the cover of *Heritage Railway* issue 348.

"Although this is the first time that No. 4110 will work over the WSR in the part of the line's history as a heritage railway, some longer-term local residents may have ridden behind it between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard before," said a statement. Furthermore, the Bahamas Locomotive Society's LNWR Coal Tank No.1054, from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, will make its second visit to the WSR, the first having been the 2024 spring gala.

The pair will run alongside Ivatt 2-6-2T No. 41313, visiting from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, and GWR 4-6-0s No. 7802 *Bradley Manor* and No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor,* from the Severn Valley Railway, WR 4-6-0 No. 7828 *Odney Manor*, West Somerset mogul No. 9351, Barclay fireless 0-4-0 No. 1984 of 1930 No.1984 *Boots No. 1* and NCB Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No.1857 of 1952.

The locomotives will head an intensive timetable, with other attractions including the museums at Bishops Lydeard and Minehead, the Taunton Model Railway Group welcoming visitors at Bishops Lydeard and a chance to see inside the Diesel and Electric Group's base at Williton.

Farewell gala is planned for Tenterden's beloved 'Terrier'

By Owen Hayward

THE Kent & East Sussex Railway will take visitors on a journey through time on November 7/8 after announcing a late addition to its events calendar – the Southern Through the Ages Gala – which will also be the final appearance of its beloved LBSCR 0-6-0T 'Terrier' No. 2678 before it is withdrawn from service.

Built in 1880 as LBSCR's A1 class No. 78 *Knowle* and rebuilt to A1X in 1911, the 'Terrier' currently carries its late SR identity of No. 2678, which it received after returning from the Isle of Wight in 1936.

Knowle has an historic connection to the KESR between 1940 and 1958, when the branch was closed to freight traffic, passenger services having ended four years earlier. In that time, it met with an unfortunate accident when track subsidence saw it derailed near Wittersham Road on March 26, 1949, the locomotive becoming buried in the dirt, which hampered its recovery.

Light overhaul

Now owned by the Terrier Trust, it underwent a light overhaul at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway between 2018 and 2020, during which it regained the extended IoW-style coal bunker. Although its boiler was still fit for service, No. 2678 was withdrawn with mechanical issues in 2022. As the KESR's 50th anniversary approached, workshop staff brought it into the workshops in March 2024 to get it running in time for the celebrations scheduled for that May. While it emerged in time to feature in the festivities, it has remained limited to light duties since as it was still not in perfect fettle.

Although it was intended to see *Knowle* withdrawn in April 2027, this has now been brought forward, and it will bow out of service following this gala weekend, which the railways promises to be an exciting showcase of the rich history and development of Southern Region motive power.

In addition to passenger services between Tenterden Town and Bodiam, demonstration goods and mixed trains will also feature as the line recreates many similar workings once common through history.

Although the full line-up had yet to be revealed, the KESR confirmed that joining *Knowle* from the home fleet will be Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 68032 and Class 205 'Thumper' No. 1118. It also added that the guest locomotives to represent different eras of the theme were under negotiation as this issue went to press and would be announced once contracts had been agreed.



Left: No. 2678 *Knowle* stands at Bodiam station with the KESR's vintage train on August 6. After its final appearance at the November 7/8 gala, it will be withdrawn to await overhaul. PAUL LAWRENCE

KESR chairman Derrick Bilsby said: "Our Southern Through the Ages Gala will celebrate the remarkable heritage of the Southern Railway and the generations of locomotives and rolling stock that have served that network over the years.

"We look forward to welcoming enthusiasts, supporters and families for what promises to be a memorable event."

More to come

Gala co-ordinator George Harman said: "As our first major gala since the award-winning Dwarves of Steam and the diesel gala in 2025, this will be a chance to celebrate the rich history of this remarkable line and a fitting way to give *Knowle* a good send-off for its upcoming overhaul.

"There's lots more news to come, and we can't wait to reveal the identities of the next locomotives to join the party."

Meanwhile, the line confirmed that repairs to classmate No. 70 *Poplar* have been signed off by insurers, and the firm appointed to manufacture replacement rods was due to visit Rolvenden to take required measurements in order to ensure 100% accuracy. It is hoped work will be completed soon so that a 'Terrier' remains in service on the line.

Fury over destruction of Caledonian railway railings

Words and pictures by Hugh Dougherty

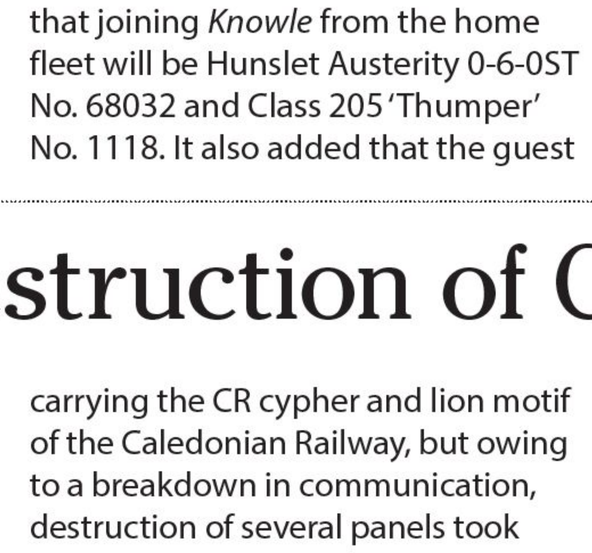
POLITICIANS and heritage and railway historians have expressed their fury after a contractor working for Glasgow City Council demolished cast-iron Caledonian Railway screens and railings surrounding a public toilet in Glasgow's St Vincent Place.

The council had ordered the contractor to dismantle the artefacts carrying the CR cypher and lion motif of the Caledonian Railway, but owing to a breakdown in communication, destruction of several panels took place before Coun Ruairi Kelly ordered the work to stop.

The city convener for housing and development said: "It is difficult to express how furious I was when I discovered that the panels were being destroyed instead of conserved as part of the demolition work.



The CR logo is prominent on one of the undamaged panels from Glasgow Cross station.



The Caledonian lion motif is clear to see on this panel, which was saved when demolition was stopped by Coun Kelly.



Left: A surviving line of railings and screens stands intact above the work site, awaiting removal to the safety of a council depot.

"I immediately ordered all work to cease on the site and for the undamaged panels to be recovered. We are now looking at how the damaged panels can be restored."

The Victorian panels were originally installed by the CR to keep pedestrians away from the street-level ventilation shaft of Glasgow Cross station, situated underground at Trongate. They remained there until 1977, after the station closed in 1964.

The ironwork was then moved to St Vincent Place to form heritage external cladding for a public toilet, which is now life-expired and being demolished.

Local railway heritage champion MSP Paul Sweeney said: "It's been depressing to see the old CR cast-iron screens from Glasgow Cross station being damaged in this botched demolition. Thankfully, there is enough left to restore them."

The city council said that it had intended the panels to be used as part of a future, planned display in association with a heritage body, to celebrate the city's railway heritage, and that work is now ongoing to conserve the undamaged panels and to repair the rest.

"It is very clear that there was a lack of care during the removal of the panels by the contractor," said a council spokesman. "The panels have now been recovered for safe storage in a council depot."

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Join East Lancashire Railway for the last large scale steam event of the year. Starring guest locomotive Urie S15 No. 30506 who will be visiting the ELR for the first time since 1993, running alongside home fleet engines.

Locos subject to availability. Find out more and book online:

WWW.EASTLANCSRAILWAY.ORG.UK • 0333 320 2830



CHINNOR & PRINCES RISBOROUGH RAILWAY

Autumn Steam Gala

Friday 30 October, Saturday 31 Ocober & Sunday 1 November 2026



Special Guest locomotive Class 2999 "Lady of Legend" confirmed.

2026 resident Steam locomotive USA Class 160 (6046)

Sentinel 7109 Joyce providing Brake Van rides at Princes Risborough

Various steam road vehicles will visit Chinnor Station during the weekend.





1,2 and 3 day rover tickets are available online, 1 day rover tickets available each day from the Booking Office.

http://www.chinnorrailway.co.uk STATION ROAD, CHINNOR, OX39 4ER

Lottery winner fulfils his boyhood dream at the Great Central Railway

By Owen Hayward

A FATHER from Grantham who has spent three decades dreaming of becoming a train driver was able to bring that ambition to life after winning more than £160,000 in a EuroMillions draw earlier this year.

For Pete Thursby, trains are a lifelong passion, having become fascinated with railways and locomotives at just seven years old.

As with many young boys, he was left dreaming of what it would be like to be a qualified train driver but never got the opportunity to pursue that chance – that was until he matched five main numbers and one lucky star in the July 3 National Lottery draw this year.

The result of this saw him win £164,357.70, but despite this, he remained remarkably calm. "I waited 30 years to finally become a train driver," Pete said. "Waiting for my EuroMillions win has been easy, I've just left the direct debit to do its thing!

"In fact, I've been so relaxed about winning, I even waited to claim. I took a screenshot of the message and sent it to my partner saying, 'I've won the lottery, I'll check it tomorrow' – and then I went about my day.

"I did toy with splashing out on a real diesel locomotive to fulfil all my childhood dreams, but the practicalities of owning an engine and the costs involved in maintaining it meant I headed to Birmingham instead to look at a Ford Focus ST."

Although owning a locomotive may be impractical, the win is allowing Pete to spend more time enjoying one of his greatest passions.

He looked around for opportunities that would allow him to get behind the controls of a train for the very first time, ultimately booking onto a DMU driver experience at the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire – and reckons he may be visiting the line a little more often from now.

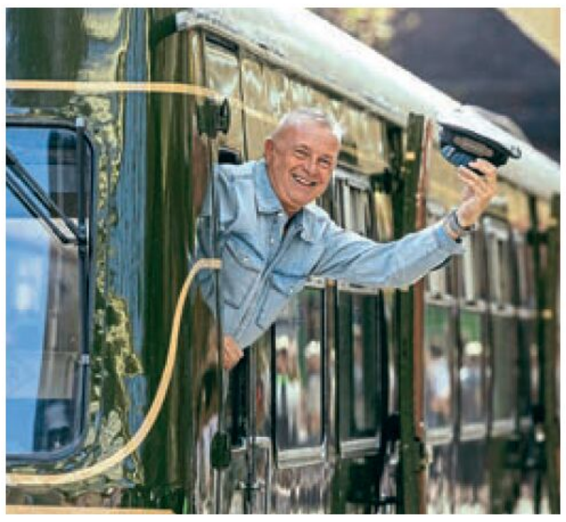
"There is no denying that this win is some serious icing on the cake of life," he said. "It will enable me to enjoy and explore more railway lines, near and far. Further afield, I've always wanted to step aboard the Rocky Mountaineer in Canada, so I think that may well be the first big trip."

Discovering his windfall, he said, is a moment he will never forget, just how he "will never forget the first time I spotted the 11am daily Reading to Redhill newspaper and parcels train, a Class 33 locomotive, from the window of my middle school at the age of 10."

Delighted to see Pete celebrating his win aboard the DMU at the GCR was Allwyns' Winner's Advisor to Pete, Penny Yeates, who said: "Pete's story goes to show dreams really can come true!

"While he won't have a diesel locomotive on his driveway, we wish him well as he enjoys some of the incredible railway adventures around the world."

In May, the GCR was awarded £250,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for Safeguarding the Great Central Railway: People, Heritage and a Sustainable Future, a programme aimed at improving the volunteer experience, enhancing passenger and visitor visits, and strengthening environmental sustainability throughout the entire railway.



Pete Thursby, who won more than £160,000 through the National Lottery EuroMillions, got to enjoy a day driving a DMU on the Great Central Railway using some of his winnings. NATIONAL LOTTERY

Twenty-seven descendants of first GWR driver are reunited

By Robin Jones

DESCENDANTS of Jim Hurst – the first GWR engine driver who joined the company in 1837 – came together at Didcot Railway Centre on August 22.

The principal purpose of the visit was to scatter the ashes of Jim White, a great great great grandson of Jim Hurst, who died earlier this year.

Jim himself had visited Didcot in 2005 to scatter the ashes of his mother, using the 2005-built replica of 1840-built *Fire Fly* for the ceremony.

A total of 27 descendants of Jim Hurst arrived from different parts of the world to see *Fire Fly,* which he would have driven in the early stages of his career.

Jim Hurst was born in 1811 near Manchester. Aged 14, he assisted his father and George Stephenson in surveying the route for the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.

When that railway opened in 1830, he became an engine driver for the company, until he was offered a job by Daniel Gooch, who in 1837 had just been appointed locomotive superintendent for the GWR.

The centre has plans to return *Fire Fly* to steam, which would also require simultaneous work to replace worn-out timbers in the broad gauge baulk road line, which was laid in the early 1980s, to make it safe to run passenger trains.

The replica last ran in 2012.



Above: Family members on the footplate of the *Fire Fly*. Left to right are a namesake Jim Hurst – a great great great grandson – and four great great great great grandchildren, Dominique, Francine, Michelle and Chris. FRANK DUMBLETON



All 27 family members who visited Didcot, alongside GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*. FRANK DUMBLETON



Jim White visiting Didcot in 2005. FRANK DUMBLETON



This engraving of Jim Hurst was printed in the November 1890 edition of *Great Western Railway Magazine* alongside an interview about his career in the pioneering railway industry. He died in 1892. GWS

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Merchant Navy reunion on the cards after MNLPS successfully takes ownership of *Brocklebank Line*

By Owen Hayward



No. 35025 *Brocklebank Line* at Salisbury shed on June 4, 1961. TERENCE DORRITY/SLL

A STEWART'S Lane depot reunion could be on the cards after the Merchant Navy Locomotive Preservation Society announced it had successfully taken ownership of *Brocklebank Line* from Southern Locomotives Limited just days after the proposal was put to the memberships of both organisations.

As reported last issue, on August 17 SLL announced it had been approached by a then undisclosed party interested in taking on the currently unrestored Merchant Navy Pacific, which was later confirmed to be the MNLPS. With no prospect of No. 35025 being restored by the Bulleid supremos in the short term, it was felt that this offer was the most beneficial for its future and the one in which it would most likely see a return to steam.

The proposal was put to the shareholders and within hours had garnered strong favourable support, and so just eight days later on August 25, the MNLPS announced that *Brocklebank Line* and all the parts for it had been transferred into its custodianship. The restoration of a locomotive from scrap condition will be a step into the unknown for the society.

"Work will soon get underway to assess No. 35025 to establish the next steps required and thereby the wider future of the project" said a spokesman.

"*Clan Line* remains the principal focus of MNLPS, but we are delighted nonetheless to be entrusted with the future of *Brocklebank Line* and look forward to sharing more information as the project develops. While the long-term aim is to restore No. 35025 to full operational condition for main line operation, work will initially focus on its boiler so that when *Clan Line* is due for overhaul, the two components can simply and swiftly be swapped with one another to expedite its return to service. The prospect of No. 35025's return to service alongside its classmate at Stewart's Lane presents an opportunity to recreate history as both were allocated there between April 1950 and March 1952, with *Clan Line* now based there for its Belmond Pullman duties.

"We very much hope that, one day, the two locomotives can once again stand side by side."

Historical notebooks donated to Donegal museum

By Hugh Dougherty



William Napier is on the left and company chairman Trew Colquhoun on his right as they survey the result of a train being blown off the line on February 7, 1923, between Crolly and Kincasslagh on the wild and remote Burtonport line. DRHM VIA ROGER FARNWORTH



Pages from the notebook showing calculations on a locomotive crank, a memo to staff about a retirement scheme and other notes. DRHM

A UNIQUE collection of personal notebooks kept by William B Napier, locomotive superintendent of the Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway from 1918 to 1951, has been donated to Donegal Railway Heritage Museum by his granddaughter.

The handwritten books contain personal notes on significant incidents, such as the Owencarrow Viaduct disaster of 1925, the closure of the Carndonagh line in 1935, coal shortages in the Second World War and the gradual move away from narrow-gauge services to operating replacement bus and lorry services. They have still to be examined in detail by museum staff and volunteers and contain a wealth of hitherto unknown information about the Lough Swilly.

Napier began his career as a pupil apprentice and later draughtsman to Robert Miller, Belfast & County Down Railway locomotive superintendent, being promoted to locomotive foreman in 1911 and assistant superintendent, before leaving for the Swilly in 1918. Napier succeeded a succession of short-lived post-holders at Pennyburn, where he was in charge of 16 steam locomotives, 52 carriages, 276 goods wagons, and by 1931, 37 lorries and buses too.

A highly-skilled engineer and administrator, he brought stability to the post and saw that Swilly locos, such as its famous 4-8-4Ts, built for the 74-mile-long run from Derry to Burtonport, were superbly maintained and turned out, although several railway writers and photographers recorded that Napier did not encourage visits to the Pennyburn sheds, with enthusiasts recommended to ask permission while the boss was away on his lunch break!

In 1931, he was sent to the County Donegal Railways HQ at Stranorlar to see the new petrol and diesel railcars making such an impact on the CDR, the sworn enemy of the Swilly. The result was that the Swilly sourced a quote from Armstrong Whitworth for two diesel-electric railcars at a cost of £2343 each for use on the Burtonport line, which did not go ahead as the company had decided to switch all traffic from rail to road. Napier retired in 1951.

"There is a massive amount of information in these notebooks," said museum manager Marty Gilroy. "We've only started to scratch the surface of what they contain.

"There is no doubt that they are a unique historical resource and that our study of them will add to what is already known about the Lough Swilly, and, indeed, locomotive engineering practice and developments throughout the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, a period when the company was fighting for its existence."

L&B makes a second bid to extend towards Parracombe

By Robin Jones

THE Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust has made a second planning application to extend the line to the former Parracombe Halt.

The application to extend the line by about two-thirds of a mile from the current Killington Lane western terminus, which opened in 2006, been submitted to the Exmoor National Park Authority.

In May last year, the authority's planning committee rejected the previous application for the extension on the grounds that it would harm the scenic beauty and character of the national park, the significance of Parracombe Conservation Area, and the listed buildings of Heddon Hall, along with its kitchen garden wall.

Following engagement with the local community through an extraordinary parish council meeting in Parracombe, an open event at the village hall and one-to-one meetings with landowners and other interested parties, the trust has considered views and concerns and taken into account the advice from park authority officers as expressed during the pre-application process.

The site comprises the dismantled track bed and cutting structures at Killington Lane Halt and the historical infilled cutting the north and south of Parracombe Lane, which has the original overbridge, owned by Devon County Council, that carries the lane over the railway.



Parracombe Halt in 1935, when it closed along with the rest of the railway. After its closure, the site was infilled and a bungalow was built there. LT CATCHPOLE



Parracombe Halt photographed from a similar angle in 2021. The concrete shelter erected by the Southern Railway still stands on the right, but the bungalow built on the site in 1987 will be demolished if the railway's reinstatement plan is approved. TONY NICHOLSON/LBR

The site falls within Agricultural Land Classification Grade 4 (poor quality agricultural land) and is not located within any statutory environmental designations or priority habitats, and does not contain listed buildings or scheduled monuments within its boundary.

Regarding the refused 2025 application, the new proposal removes the raised embankment at the rear of Heddon Hall and associated engineering works to create a new halt.

The trust said there are clear public benefits chiefly related to new visitors to the conservation area, the Grade I-listed St Petrock's Church, Holwell Castle (a scheduled monument) and the now listed Woody Bay station.

"This will increase public understanding of the historic environment. These elements could be signposted from the station to maximise this opportunity," a spokesperson said. The trust acquired the halt in 2021 using a bequest from the late Rick and Barbara, lifelong supporters of the heritage line who would often run the L&B sales stand in the marquee at special events and galas.

The new planning application includes the removal of the bungalow on the site of the halt is as it does not contribute positively to the conservation area.

The application was open for consultation until August 27, after which the park authority will determine it.

Exhibition set to celebrate 90 years of Mancunian heritage society

THE Manchester Locomotive Society is to stage an exhibition celebrating its recent 90th anniversary.

Established in December 1935, the society will formally launch the exhibition at Manchester Central Library to invited guests on April 15, 2027, with an opening address by its president John Tate, followed by three keynote speeches presented by eminent guest speakers.

Following the launch, the exhibition will open to the general public and remain on display until June 30, accessible during the normal opening hours of the library, which are Monday to Thursday, 9am to 8pm, and Friday and Saturday, 9am to 5pm.

During the three months the exhibition is being held, there will also be a programme of four two-hour railway-themed illustrated talks in the lecture theatre with free admission.

Offenders lend helping hands to the Nene Valley Railway during preparations for summer visitors

COMMUNITY service offenders helped prepare the Nene Valley Railway for its peak summer season.

Supervised Community Payback teams completing court-ordered unpaid work requirements supported the heritage line by carrying out track repairs and grounds maintenance, ensuring that those people on probation repay their debt to society. The work teaches offenders practical construction and landscaping skills which can help them turn their backs on crime. The teams have undertaken heavy construction work on the site, including replacing sleepers and ballast on the tracks, as well as landscaping, pathway maintenance, painting and general grounds upkeep.

NVR general manager Tracy Spring said: "The support provided by the Community Payback teams has had a significant positive impact on our organisation. As a heritage railway, we rely heavily on volunteers, and due to financial constraints, employing additional resources to do the work is simply not possible.



People on community service repairing tracks at the Nene Valley Railway's Wansford shed. NORTH EAST GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION SERVICE

"The support in delivering essential maintenance and infrastructure projects helps us keep the railway safe, operational and preserved for future generations. The partnership delivers real community value."

Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending, Catherine McKinnell MP, said: "Projects like this make sure offenders give back to the communities they've harmed through hard, manual work.

"As well as supporting valuable charity-run attractions like Nene Valley Railway, the unpaid work means offenders gain skills and work experience, helping them to find employment and reduce reoffending. Delivering punishment that also works to cut crime will make our streets safer and better protect the public."

Courts can order offenders to complete between 40 and 300 hours. Research shows that more than 60% of people convicted of offences reoffend if they serve a prison sentence of less than a year, which can be significantly higher than those given community sentences.

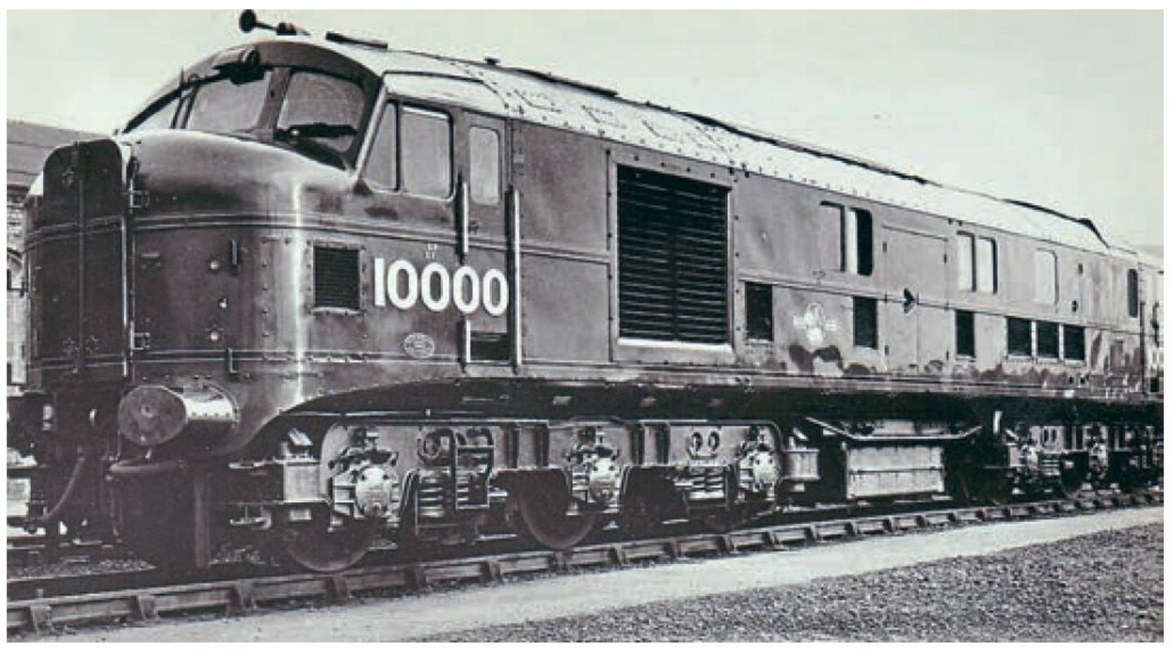
Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78022 heads the 11am from Keighley to Oxenhope between Oakworth and Haworth on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway on August 24. EDDIE BOBROWSKI

First diesel-electric replica project advances

By Robin Jones



No. 10000 on a British Railways trial run with sister No.10001 through Chinley in 1950. KEITH HOLFORD ARCHIVE/CREATIVE COMMONS

THE project to build a replica of Britain's first main line diesel-electric locomotive, LMS No. 10000, has taken another significant step forward with the donor Class 58 underframe being cleaned and painted red.

The proposed adaptation lines have now been marked out on to the freshly painted frame, showing how the underframe will be adapted to take on the distinctive shape of a Class D16/1.

Furthermore, fitted to the underframe was a white wooden mock-up of the adapter plate required to match the Class 58 frame to former EM2 bogies.

Built in association with English Electric at Derby Works, where it was presented to the press in December 1947 and later at Euston on December 18 that year, No. 10000 was withdrawn in 1963 and scrapped at Cashmores, Great Bridge, in January 1968, despite pleas from railwaymen to save it as a historic landmark.

In 2011, the Ivatt Diesel Re-creation Society announced plans to build the replica using contemporary parts as well as new-build components.

The society has a Mk. 1 English Electric 16SVT diesel engine from the 1940s and the sole remaining Metropolitan Vickers bogies dating from the 1950s, formerly used by a Class EM2 electric locomotive, these bogies being of the same design as on the original No. 10000. Class 58 No. 58022 was bought to contribute the chassis.



The newly-painted underframe for the replica LMS No. 10000. IDRS

The project's lead engineer, Paul Etherington, said: "We are making tangible progress – professional engineering is underway, the next physical stage is defined, and we are now looking for experienced people to help us deliver it."

Before adaptation work can take place, further deflection measurements will be taken and compared with those recorded before the heavy equipment was removed some years ago, providing a further check on the condition and behaviour of the frame before further work begins.

The project is currently raising funds toward the cost of this work via lms10000.charityhive.co.uk/shop

Alongside the physical work on the underframe, the project is progressing with a programme of professional engineering work. Contracts are in place with Mott MacDonald and Risktec Solutions (TÜV Rheinland) to develop the CAD model of the locomotive and undertake risk assessment, safety and performance modelling.

This will support the eventual operation of No. 10000 on heritage railways, establishing the engineering and assurance necessary to progress the project towards construction and, ultimately, operation. A new fundraising scheme will shortly be launched to support these costs.

As the project moves towards construction, the society is now looking to strengthen its volunteer leadership with an experienced railway manager who can help guide the design, certification and delivery processes. "This would be an ideal opportunity for someone recently retired from the rail industry who would like to put their experience to use in a unique engineering project," said a statement. "The opportunity is to play a defining role in guiding the construction of LMS No. 10000 and helping bring this historic class of locomotive back to life."



Unique steam tram *Thomas Telford*, seen at Horsehay Pool station. TSR

Taking the Telford tram at Woody Bay!

THE star guest at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's September 26/27 autumn gala at Woody Bay will be *Thomas Telford*, the 2ft gauge steam tram assembled by Alan Keef Ltd for the Telford Development Corporation in 1979.

It was designed to run on the Telford Town Tramway, built by the corporation to run around Randlay Pool in Telford Town park to the Blists Hill Museum. An official naming ceremony in 1980 saw Thomas the Tank Engine author the Reverend Wilbert Awdry name the tram *Thomas,* after Thomas Telford.

The tramway became less frequently used until it was mothballed. By 1987, Telford & Wrekin Council had taken ownership of the corporation's assets and offered the tramway to the Telford Steam Railway. Its components including the tram were moved to Horsehay.

Once there, the tram was all but completely rebuilt to fix issues with the original mechanics and repainted in a red and cream livery. The tram rarely leaves the site.

Also in operation throughout the gala weekend will be new-build Baldwin 2-4-2T *Lyn* and ex-Tongaat Sugar plantation Bagnall 4-4-0T No. 2819 of 1946 *Sir George Newnes,* providing an intensive service.

There will also be live music, vintage cars, marquee attractions, a real ale bar and a barbecue.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES – SEE PAGE 30

Effort to save unique Pullman hidden at Shepperton offices

By Robin Jones

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to save a rare Pullman kitchen carriage marooned alongside the former Ian Allan Publishing offices at Shepperton.

The Westerham Valley Railway Association hopes to save No. 92 *Malaga*, a rare 12-wheel H Type Pullman car used as a royal saloon by King George VI during his travels as well as on luxury trains like the 'Bournemouth Belle.' *Malaga* is also unique in that it was one of the early 1920s Pullman carriages fitted with six-wheel bogies prior to successive vehicles using the standard four-wheel bogies from later in the decades onwards.

In a decisive move to secure the vehicle's future, the association has also submitted a formal application for official listing status to protect the carriage from destruction or neglect as a crucial piece of British transport heritage. If approved, the listing would provide *Malaga* with legal recognition of its historical importance

For decades, it served as the iconic integrated boardroom for Ian Allan, making it a landmark for enthusiasts worldwide, said the association's acting chairman, David Rowlands.

With the carriage now facing an uncertain future, the association has already carried out a preliminary study to evaluate the feasibility of moving *Malaga* from its present site.

While relocation will be extremely challenging, professional opinion confirmed that with the right funding, safely moving the carriage is entirely possible.

In a separate move, the association has applied to the Charity Commission for charitable status to further bolster its long-term preservation and fundraising strategy.

Once *Malaga*'s future is secured, a suitable preservation society or heritage railway will be announced to carry out the full restoration. The association is set to release further details regarding fundraising campaigns, volunteer opportunities, and the technical roadmap for the carriage's relocation.

David said: "*Malaga* is far more than just a railway carriage; it is a rolling museum and a direct link to our royal and publishing heritage.



***Malaga* outside the former Ian Allan offices at the western end of Shepperton station on August 24.** WVRA

"We cannot stand by and watch a vehicle of such immense historical value disappear.

"By launching this preservation campaign, applying for listing and also for charitable status, we are drawing a line in the sand to protect our shared history.

"We call upon rail enthusiasts, historians, and the public to support us in this vital mission."

The 4½-mile Westerham Valley branch linked Westerham, Brasted and Dunton Green with Dunton Green and the South Eastern Main Line. Following its closure on October 28, 1961, the original Westerham Valley Railway Association was formed in a vain bid to reopen it. Today's association was recreated by enthusiasts committed to preserving the railway history of the Westerham Valley and surrounding area.



Oil-fired USATC S160 2-8-0 No. 2253 *Omaha* on Platform 4 at Grosmont, preparing to work the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's Pullman dining train on August 25. TONY WINWARD

Redundant GWR trackbed-turned-footpath awarded national accolade

A SECTION of the Strawberry Line near Winscombe in Somerset – which was part of the GWR Cheddar Valley route– has been voted Britain's Favourite Path 2026 by walking charity The Ramblers.

THE path, which is now part of a traffic-free route from the Mendips to the sea, follows the track bed of the branch line which ran from Witham Junction to Yatton via Shepton Mallet, Wells and Cheddar, transporting strawberries until the late 1960s.

Volunteers have transformed it into a path more than 20 miles long, enjoyed by walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, mobility scooters, and even equestrians.

The annual competition is supported by Postcode Lottery players. Since 2015, The Ramblers has received more than £26 million in funding raised by the lottery to protect and champion Britain's paths and green spaces.

Resident Amanda Jane Baldwin nominated the path: "I moved to Winscombe over seven years ago, and this path has been trod by myself more times than I can count.

"It's accessible in all weathers, it goes on for miles, it's an absolute pleasure to walk on, it's beautiful, and I appreciate the nature all around me while on the path.

"It is maintained by volunteers, which makes it all the more precious to walk on."



Winscombe station was demolished after closure but the platform has been has been reinstated with GWR seats and railings as a feature on the path and now part of the Millennium Green. GEOF SHEPPARD/CREATIVE COMMONS

As the winner, Amanda will receive a £250 Cotswold Outdoor voucher.

Rachel Mulrenan, campaigns manager at The Ramblers, said: "Local paths are lifelines. They connect people with green space, fresh air, and better mental and physical health. Right now, we need these things more than ever. But across Britain, millions are cut off from nature because local paths are missing, blocked or unusable.

"The Strawberry Line Path is a fantastic example of how communities can benefit from paths being opened up and expanded."

After being listed in Dr Richard Beeching's 1963 The Reshaping of British Railways, the Cheddar Valley closed to passengers on September 9 that year and to freight in October 1964.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 351

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

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Free passes to the past

By Hugh Dougherty

IN response to the news item about Henry Forbes, the legendary manager of the County Donegal Railways, in *Heritage Railway* issue 347, reader Roger Gray sent on an image of Mr Forbes's free pass, issued by the Cork & Macroom Direct Railway.

Exactly why it was issued, given that the CDR and C&MDR were situated at the opposite ends of Ireland, is not clear, while Henry would have used it for one year only as the Cork line was taken over by the Great Southern Railway in the amalgamation of 1925.

It is the sort of hidden information waiting to be discovered in Roger's growing collection of first class free passes such as these. They were issued only to directors and executive officers by most Irish railways, and were also common in Britain up to the Grouping of 1923 and, less so, given the drop in the number of companies after that date, but still issued and in use up until Nationalisation in 1948.

Roger acquired his Irish collection as a job lot from a dealer two years ago, paying £440 for eight leatherette passes from various Irish lines, both broad and narrow gauge, and one unused, blank paper example from the Waterford & Limerick Railway. The rare Henry Forbes pass cost £150 alone because of its scarcity.

"I'd be interested in acquiring more Irish passes and UK ones if and when they become available," said Roger. "These turned up unexpectedly."

With 11,000 tickets to his name, specialising in the Southern Railway, the GWR in the South West and in Wales, plus the LNER and its constituents in East Anglia, Roger began collecting in 1954, buying penny platform tickets.

His first Irish examples came in the 1960s, when he acquired a bundle of used Ulster Transport Authority examples.

That led to his interest in Irish matters and, although he has only researched Henry Forbes' pass so far, he aims to look into the stories behind the others, the most intriguing being a pass issued by the Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway to RH England of the Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad, New York. Why, exactly, is not at once clear, as the other issues tend to between Irish companies.

"What I've discovered is that the passes were issued to company directors, who sat on the boards of various regional lines," Roger explained.

"The directors received all-lines system-wide access. Senior managers and officials such as general managers, secretaries and committee members were granted passes, often for life, in recognition of their office, while there were also what were known as interchange officials – officers from connecting or partner railways who were granted reciprocal access to ease network co-operation.

"Until 1923, free railway passes tended to be annual or lifetime metal tokens, frequently engraved in silver or gold, and issued to high-ranking directors or managers, as well as government inspectors.

"It's a very interesting subject, and I'd be delighted to hear from other readers who could help me in my research."

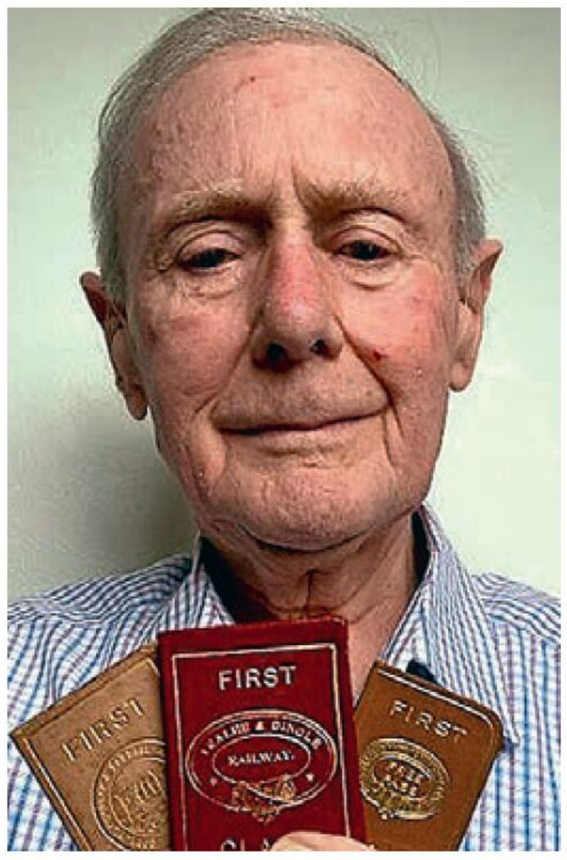
Interestingly, the final traditional railway passes were issued by the last two Irish railway companies which outlived all the others, namely the narrow-gauge County Donegal Railways and the Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway. The intriguing fact is that, after 1959, both were bus and road freight operators only but kept the traditional pass format to stress their railway heritage.

Roger would like to know if any of today's heritage railways have kept up the tradition of issuing passes to directors and managers of other lines, perhaps as replicas of the traditional sort which he collects.

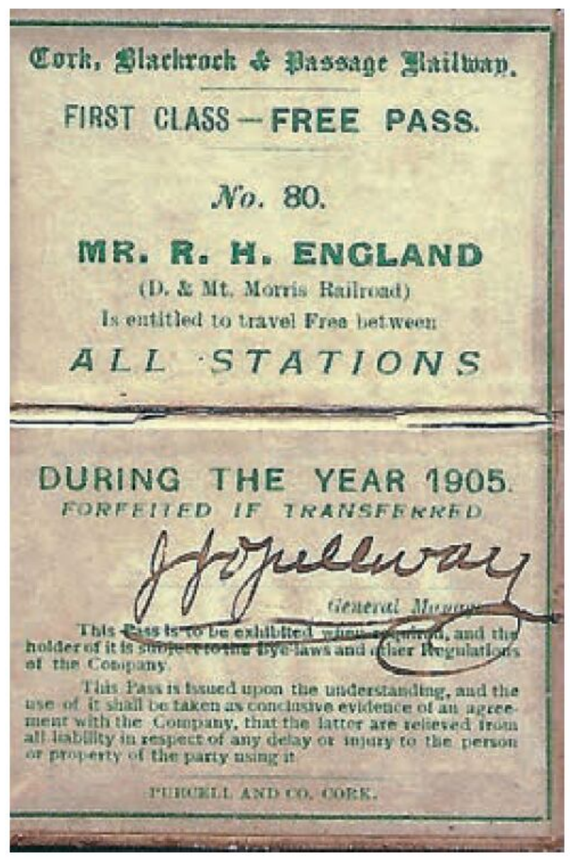
"It would be interesting to know if this important part of railway history lives on," he added.

"If anyone can help, either with this information or research on passes, I'd be delighted hear from them.

"I can be contacted via the *Heritage Railway* editor."



Roger Gray with some of the Irish railway passes he has collected. ROGER GRAY


Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway.

FIRST CLASS—FREE PASS.

No. 80.

MR. R. H. ENGLAND

(D. & Mt. Morris Railroad)

Is entitled to travel Free between

ALL STATIONS

DURING THE YEAR 1905.

FORFEITED IF TRANSFERRED

J. J. Pulleyway

General Manager.

This Pass is to be exhibited when required, and the holder of it is subject to the bye-laws and other Regulations of the Company.

This Pass is issued upon the understanding, and the use of it shall be taken as conclusive evidence of an agreement with the Company, that the latter are relieved from all liability in respect of any delay or injury to the person or property of the party using it

PURCELL AND CO. CORK.

The mysterious CB&PR pass issued to RH England, of the Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad, New York, in 1905. What's the story behind this one? ROGER GRAY


No. 23

TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

FIRST CLASS—FREE PASS

AVAILABLE TO 31st DECEMBER, 1909,

(Unless previously cancelled or withdrawn.)

GRANTED TO

S. B. HUMPHREYS, Esq.,

Gen. Mgr. Sligo, Leitrim & Nrthrn Co.'s Ry.

STATION TO STATION.

NOT TRANSFERABLE.

CONDITIONS.

This Pass is issued by the Company without any money consideration, on the express condition that the Company is freed and discharged by its acceptance and use, from all liability arising from delay, accident, loss, or injury to the person or property of the holder while travelling on, or using this Pass. The use of the Pass is admission of the assent of this condition.

This Pass must be produced for examination whenever required by an officer of the Company, and is issued subject to the right of the Company to call it in at any time. The holder is subject to rules and regulations appertaining to other passengers.

R. A. Parkes

GUY & CO. LTD., CORK. *General Manager.*

Wording inside a Tralee & Dingle Free Pass. ROGER GRAY


Cork & Macroom Direct Railway

FIRST-CLASS FREE PASS.

No. 44.

Mr. H. FORBES,

Secretary, Co. Donegal Rly.

Is entitled to travel Free between

ALL STATIONS

DURING THE YEAR 1924.

Forfeited if Transferred.

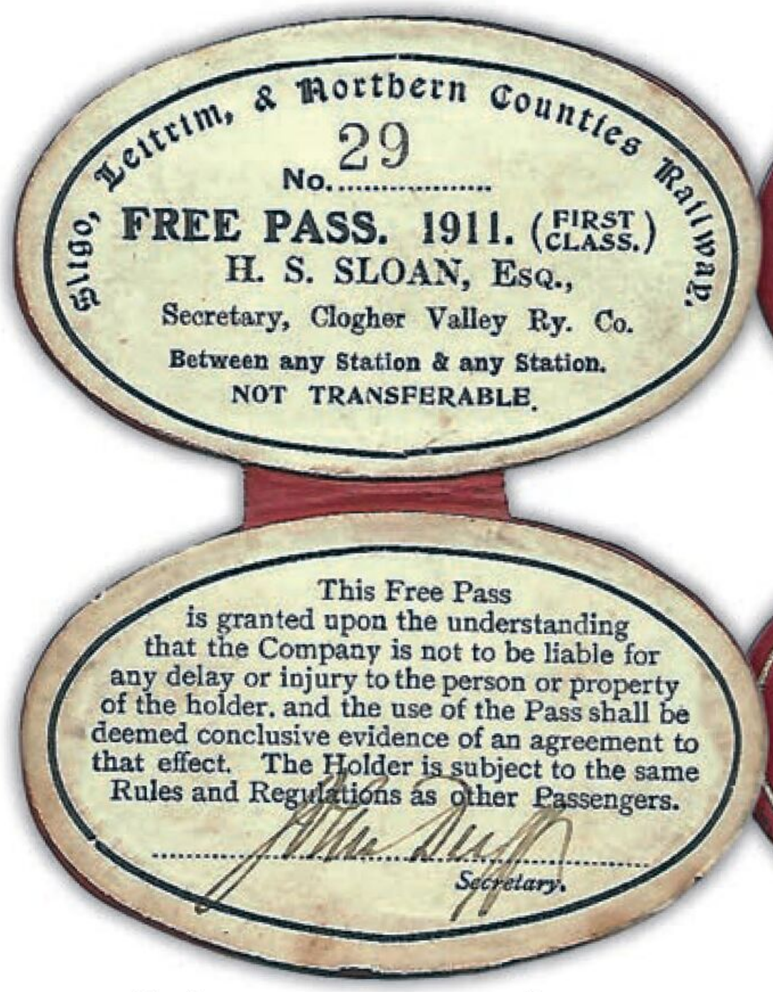
J. J. Bagwell

General Manager.

This Pass is to be exhibited when required, and the holder of it is subject to the bye-laws and other regulations of the Company.

This Pass is issued upon the understanding and the use of it shall be taken as conclusive evidence of an agreement with the Company, that the latter are relieved from all liability in respect of any delay or injury to the person or property of the party using it.

Henry Forbes' free pass for the Cork & Macroom Direct Railway. ROGER GRAY


Sligo, Leitrim, & Northern Counties Railway.

No. 29

FREE PASS. 1911. (FIRST CLASS.)

H. S. SLOAN, Esq.,

Secretary, Clogher Valley Ry. Co.

Between any Station & any Station.

NOT TRANSFERABLE.

This Free Pass is granted upon the understanding that the Company is not to be liable for any delay or injury to the person or property of the holder. and the use of the Pass shall be deemed conclusive evidence of an agreement to that effect. The Holder is subject to the same Rules and Regulations as other Passengers.

Secretary.

Inside the SL&NCR pass granted to H S Sloan, Clogher Valley Railway secretary. ROGER GRAY


NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY

FIRST CLASS.

Free Pass.

SLIGO, LEITRIM, AND

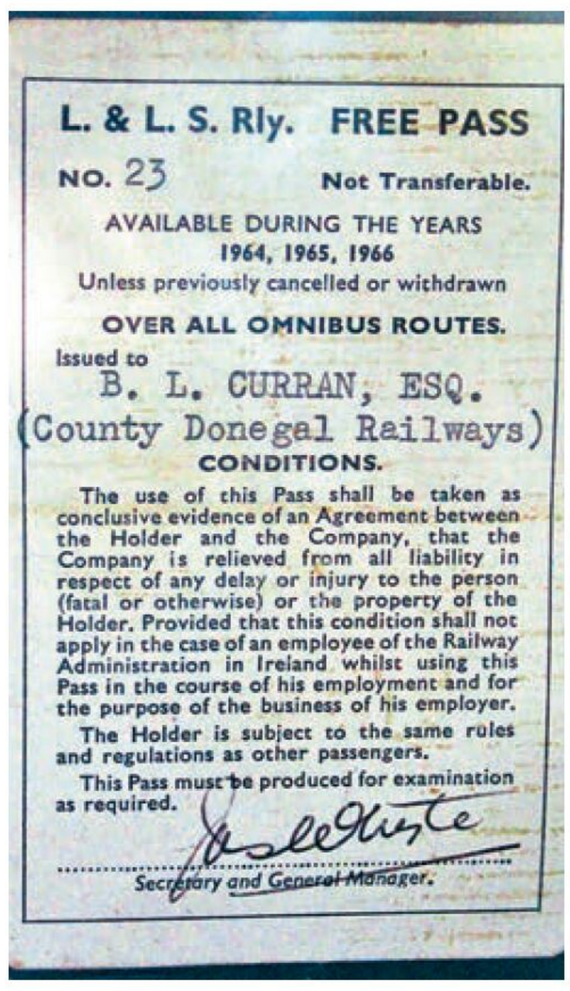
SLIGO, LEITRIM, AND

Free Pass.

FIRST CLASS.

NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY

The exterior of the Sligo Leitrim & Northern Counties Railway pass, showing its oval shape. ROGER GRAY


L. & L. S. Rly. FREE PASS

NO. 23 Not Transferable.

AVAILABLE DURING THE YEARS

1964, 1965, 1966

Unless previously cancelled or withdrawn

OVER ALL OMNIBUS ROUTES.

Issued to

B. L. CURRAN, ESQ.

(County Donegal Railways)

CONDITIONS.

The use of this Pass shall be taken as conclusive evidence of an Agreement between the Holder and the Company, that the Company is relieved from all liability in respect of any delay or injury to the person (fatal or otherwise) or the property of the Holder. Provided that this condition shall not apply in the case of an employee of the Railway Administration in Ireland whilst using this Pass in the course of his employment and for the purpose of the business of his employer.

The Holder is subject to the same rules and regulations as other passengers.

This Pass must be produced for examination as required.

James Whyte

Secretary and General Manager.

One of the last traditional passes issued by an Irish railway company – incredibly enough, issued by James Whyte, manager of the L&LSR to BL Curran, the manager of the CDR, the Swilly's arch rival! HUGH DOUGHERTY

West Somerset celebrates 65 years of diesel preservation

By Robin Jones

A SUMMER in which diesels threw a vital lifeline to the heritage sector, with steam bans in force because of heatwaves and wildfire risks, reached a landmark high point on the West Somerset Railway with a special three-day August bank holiday event to celebrate 65 years since the introduction of both the Western Region Class 35 'Hymek' Bo-Bo diesel hydraulics and construction of the three other modern traction locomotives taking part.

Diesels At 65 featured the home fleet of Class 35s D7017 and D7018 – returning to the WSR after visiting other lines – Class 33 'Cromptons' D6566 and D6575 and Class 09 D4107. Their custodian, the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group, held an Open Yard event at Williton on all three days, with the locomotives present open for cab visits, and shed visits also available by arrangement with the volunteers onsite.

Five decades on

The day before the event marked 50 years since trains returned to Washford, Watchet and Williton following the reopening of the Minehead branch as a heritage line on March 28, 1976, as highlighted in issue 344. On the Saturday, that milestone was marked with a special afternoon service running between Minehead and Williton.

The timetable saw the diesel fleet operating in a variety of formations, including single locomotive workings, top-and-tail services and double-headers. There was the rare opportunity to travel behind D4107 on passenger services to and from Williton.

Steam was not excluded from the event, with on-loan Severn Valley Railway-based GWR 4-6-0 *Erlestroke Manor* heading a supporting service to recreate the atmosphere of 1961 when the 'Hymeks' first entered service, and new-build WSR 2-6-0 No. 9351 also hauled a 'Quantock Belle' dining service on August 31.

At Bishops Lydeard, the Gauge Museum produced additional diesel-era exhibits and themed model railway displays and demonstrations, with storyboards giving detailed information about the locomotives featured during this special weekend.

More than 1600 passengers were carried.





Above: Double-headed Class 35s D7018, carrying a special anniversary headboard, and D7017 call at Crowcombe Heathfield on August 31. Because of their Mekydo design hydraulic transmission units, the locomotives became known as 'Hymeks.' MIKE LANNING

Left: Class 09 D4107 with a short passenger service at Bishops Lydeard on August 31. This locomotive also entered BR service 65 years ago, first being allocated to Carlisle Upperby in November 1961. LAURA STANDERWICK

Below: GWR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* passes Castle Hill with the 12.20pm from Minehead to Bishops Lydeard service on August 31. DAVID HUNT





Left: Also celebrating 65 years of service was Class 33 D6575, which entered service on the Southern Region (SR) of BR in November 1961. Withdrawn in 1996 following a bogie fire that damaged No. 2 traction motor and the electrical wiring at No. 1 cab end, it passed through several owners during the following nine years before being acquired by the owner of D6566 as a source of spares, arriving at Williton in September 2005. There, it was deemed repairable and following work by the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group, Brush Traction in Loughborough and Cranmore Traincare & Maintenance Services on the East Somerset Railway, it returned to Williton in April 2011 in original two-tone green livery with small yellow warning panels at each end – and eventually ran alongside sister D6566, rather than donate parts to it! MIKE LANNING

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Young fundraising volunteer is a true inspiration, says grateful Rother Valley

By Geoff Courtney

ROTHER Valley Railway volunteer George Adams, who suffers from autism, epilepsy and learning difficulties, has been hailed as an inspiration after raising £1250 for the heritage line in the past year through a series of sponsored walks over the South Downs and a craft fair.

Helen Douglas, the railway's appeals director, said of the 26-year-old: "His dedication has been inspiring to all of us. He has raised the money by walking a total of 33 miles across the Downs, which was an extraordinary effort, and he has every reason to be proud. He brings energy, kindness and commitment to his volunteering, and we are very lucky to have him as part of the team."



Top fundraiser: George Adams (centre) with his donation certificate and fellow volunteers at the Rother Valley's Robertsbridge Junction station. Behind the group is the railway's Class 03 0-6-0 D2112. RVR/HELEN DOUGLAS

Thanks from mum

His mum Louise, who helped him organise the craft fair, said that thanks to a scheme run by the Parchment Trust, which supports adults with disabilities, George had been volunteering at the RVR for a year.

"The difference in his confidence has been incredible," she said. "He's made friends, enjoys being part of a team where he is accepted exactly as he is, and is thriving in an environment he's passionate about. It means the world to see him working so happily towards something he truly loves."

George, who is accompanied on walks by his carer, David, said he found walking entertaining, adding: "I am very very proud to have raised such a large amount especially because it helps the railway."

A well-earned bonus for George is that as a donor, he will be given a free ticket to become one of the first passengers to ride over the two-mile link between the Robertsbridge-based railway and the Kent & East Sussex Railway when it opens in 2028.

Help L&B swing *Axe* back into action!

THE Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust has been given a grant of £2500 by the Veronica Awdry Charitable Trust towards the overhaul of Kerr Stuart 0-6-0T No. 2451 of 1915 *Axe* and is appealing for further donations.

Axe last steamed at the 2024 Remembrance Service, the boiler ticket expiring after having been in regular service since 2009. The overhaul is estimated to cost £50,000 and will involve lifting and inspecting the boiler, changing the boiler tubes, stripping down and refurbishing the running gear and improving pipework in the cab.

Veronica Awdry is the daughter of the Reverend Awdry, creator of Thomas the Tank Engine, and the trust makes grants to various heritage railway projects and charitable causes that enhance the lives of people in Devon.

A range of incentives for donors has now been launched by the line.

Gold rewards are offered for donations of more than £2000. The names of donors will appear on a plaque on *Axe*, alongside the names from the last reconstruction, receive exclusive updates and access to see progress at the Woody Bay workshop and exclusive travel behind *Axe* before it returns to public service. Silver donations of more than £1000 l get exclusive updates and workshop access. Bronze donations of more than £500 will get exclusive updates.

For more information and to donate, visit www.lynton-rail.co.uk/project-axe





Above: *Axe* waiting for the boiler inspector. TONY NICHOLSON/LBR

Left: The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway has outshopped prototype Hunslet No. 1 in its stunning Great Eastern Blue livery with red lining. Constructed by Hunslet Locomotive Hire Ltd in 1996, No. 001 is an exact copy of a Jenbacher Type DH25 built under licence by Hunslet Engine Co, Leeds. Bought by Alan Keef in 2004, after a period in private ownership in Devon, it was purchased by a group of L&B working volunteers for use at Woody Bay, where it undertakes regular shunting duties. LBR

Weardale night for skygazers is a sell-out!

A STARGAZING train on the Weardale Railway has sold out two months in advance.

The train is one of almost 30 activities taking place during the 10th annual North Pennines Stargazing Festival, which runs from Friday, October 23 until Sunday, November 1 during the school half-term holiday.

Other activities include dark sky astronomy and stargazing nights at Grassholme Observatory, stargazing suppers and family stargazing at High Force and the Lord Crewe Hotel and a guided dark skies run, as well as the train scheduled for Wednesday, October 28.

The train experience starts at Stanhope station with space-themed activities for all the family prior to the 6pm departure. Passengers will disembark at a unique location and enjoy stargazing using telescopes, while listening to experts from the Bishop Auckland Astronomical Society.

Shared guidance

The North Pennines National Landscape team will be sharing astronomy tips and blogs on social media throughout the week to provide people with handy stargazing ideas, advice, and things to look out for in the night sky. The railway announced on August 24 that the special train had sold out.

Shane Harris, responsible tourism lead with the North Pennines National Landscape team, said: "The North Pennines is the darkest mainland National Landscape and is one of the best places in the UK to enjoy stargazing. Our annual festival is designed to make it easier for people to celebrate the area's fabulous starry skies."

➜ More information about the other planned activities can be found at https://northpennines.org.uk/what_we_do/dark-skies/north-pennines-stargazing-festival/

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
GREAT RATES – SEE PAGE 30

DELIVERING ON FREIGHT EXPECTATIONS

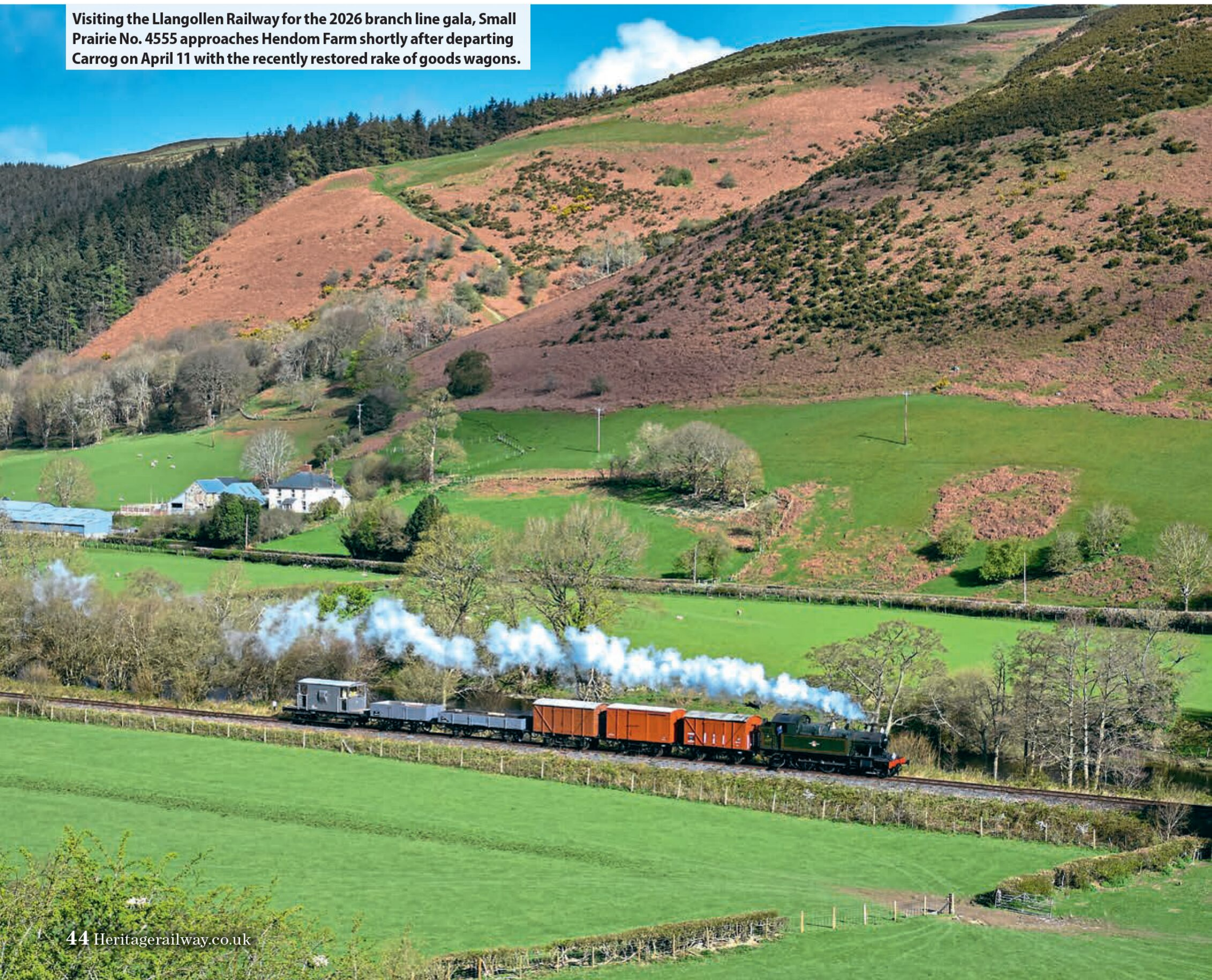
Despite the railways being built for goods, representation of this traffic is often overlooked by our heritage lines. **Owen Hayward** visited some of those responsible for the restoration of freight vehicles to find out what their presence can bring to their railway – providing the right approach is there to support them – and in this first instalment of the story, he focuses on two of the most recently revived groups.

We've all heard it said that goods trains don't make heritage railways money. Ironic really, given that freight was once the major staple of the rail industry, yet go to many of the steam galas – and occasionally some of the diesel ones – and they are a fixture of event itineraries.

There is nothing quite like the experience of standing on a platform, enjoying your refreshments purchased from the station café, and watching a demonstration goods train thunder through. If you think about it, there have been countless variations of goods wagons over the years, many specialised to carry specific cargo. Fish, meat, livestock, containers, coal, oil... you name it, the railways probably conveyed it. Just as locomotive designs adapted and improved to meet the demands facing the network, so did wagons, although the differences between types are sometimes not as immediately apparent as those of the traction upfront.

With opportunities to photograph passenger workings being ten a penny, goods trains can have quite the impact by offering something visually different to the norm, but despite the vital importance of this traffic to the history of rail development, their presence on many heritage railways often feels shunned, playing second fiddle to locomotives and carriages.

Admittedly, a goods vehicle cannot carry passengers – not without some serious modifications and red tape addressed, at the very least. If the choice comes down to restoring a wagon or a carriage, then the priority will understandably always be to do



Visiting the Llangollen Railway for the 2026 branch line gala, Small Prairie No. 4555 approaches Hendom Farm shortly after departing Carrog on April 11 with the recently restored rake of goods wagons.



Wagon restoration at the Llangollen Railway earlier this year proved an ideal opportunity to revive its Youth Group, helping on projects such as five-plank open No. 24361. DOUGLAS HEBSON



Work to lay a new headshunt for the sidings at Carrog station is underway, with a new point having recently been installed. Some hope that in the long term, this may open up opportunities for shunting demonstrations during events using the former goods yard. The space to the right has also been cleared in an effort to make it more presentable to those on passing trains.



There's sometimes a little fun to be had with goods stock, which saw numerous changes through the years. Occasionally, volunteers have a bit of fun by sneaking in surprises. Llangollen Railway goods guard Douglas Hebson cracks a smile having overheard someone spot that the return destination for a Toad brake van is denoted as the fictional village of Mallingford.

the latter to maximise the number of bums on seats.

It is because of this that many heritage railways have seen independent wagon groups established by volunteers keen to see these fleets maintained. In some cases, individuals have financed the acquisition and restoration of entire collections. While these teams may all appear to be working towards the same goal, some have a different ethos and approach to both their presence and ambitions, ranging from entry points for youth groups to turning out period-specific rakes, meaning that in many cases, no two groups are the same.

Llangollen Railway Suburban Coach and Wagon Restoration Group

You cannot get more recently reestablished than this year – February, to be precise. As highlighted in issue 345, goods trains made a return appearance at the Llangollen Railway's branch line gala in May, the first time any non-engineering wagons ran in a train since 2019, it has been estimated.

That is partly down to the well-documented administration process, meaning that some wagons were moved on, and then, as the railway rebuilt itself, priority was given to the more essential carriages. Eighteen months ago, Peter Jump, head of the separately established Suburban Coach Group, decided the time had come to show the wagons some love, particularly as the various brake vans – some of which are privately owned by members – were proving useful during galas.

"I approached the management and asked if they would like a freight train," he explained. "They replied in the postive, and that there would even be some budget for it.

"Before we could start, however, we had to go through everything on the railway and identify what could be restored, as well as what was actually ours to restore. Like every railway, things turned up in the early years with 'back of fag packet' agreements but nothing formal, let alone any paperwork clarifying ownership. It took quite some time, but once we had sorted that out, in some cases taking over custody where nobody stepped forward to claim certain wagons, we had a clearer picture and did move some stock on.

"That then left us with vehicles we felt we could feasibly achieve the restorations of."

Plans gathered momentum at Christmas last year, when 20-year-old Douglas Hebson saw an opportunity to use wagon restoration as an opportunity to help revive the once thriving youth group. A formal launch of the project occurred on February 7, and it was in just a matter of weeks – sometimes working just one or two days – that volunteers turned out four wagons in time for the April 10-12 event, the work having ranged from simple repaints to substantial replacement of woodwork.

"It's become something of a stepping stone for younger volunteers to find their way into the railway," Douglas said. "It was great to bring the youth group back to life and give them something to do in the quieter shoulder months of the year. Other departments have since followed our lead; we are seeing younger volunteers in both the locomotive and DMU sheds, for example, and I recently arranged for some of them to go on a track walk with our permanent way team (see News, page 33). We are keen to find more work for them with wagon restoration, too."

With the momentum of those first few weeks driving them forward, attention has now turned to three further vehicles, including Pooley van No. 150169. Originally a GWR Bloater fish van, it was one of numerous vehicles converted for use as mobile workshop to service and calibrate the many weighing machines and scales within the UK rail network.



Pannier tank No. 7754 sits at Carrog on April 12 with the Llangollen Railway's goods train during its first outing at the recent branch line gala.

This project has recently been completed, with the vehicle retained in its modified form to demonstrate how lives of freight vehicles went on after their original careers had ended.

Restoration of a second van, No. 150236, is now under way, with it set to revert to its original Bloater condition, the work being funded by its private owner, meaning a physical comparison will be possible between the two.

"The nice thing about our collection is that, brake vans aside, we seem to have things in pairs," Peter pointed out.

"We have two of several types of open plank wagons, the Bloaters and departmental types, plus both a GWR and BR-designed Tubefit.

"We are quite lucky because of this as we are actually able to show things in two different conditions, both of which nonetheless formed important parts of wagon and rail history."

Also advancing is brake van No. 950551. Built in 1949 to a GWR Toad design, it too was converted into a Pooley van, but is also being returned to its original configuration, albeit with the alteration of wider doors to enable wheelchair users to travel aboard it for brake van rides.

Might this be the first time such a modification has been applied to one of these vehicles in preservation?

Visual variety

Interestingly, where Bauxite is the typical common livery seen on freight vehicles at heritage lines elsewhere, the LR's fleet includes some in grey. It is often forgotten that colour coding was used to differentiate between those that were fitted with vacuum brakes and those that were not. More vehicles are on the agenda, with the view to turning out a train representing the 1950s/1960s BR era.

That said, one exception might be Cement Hopper No. 8953 which was built in 1960 at the Butterley Company's Codnor Park Works, where the grandfather of Les Gregory, one of the group's members, worked at the time. Furthermore, it is thanks to the presence of the wagons that Les even became a volunteer in the first place.

"For a long time I was unable to volunteer because of family circumstances," he said. "When that changed a few years ago, I was uncertain about what I wanted to do here. I came down for a ride and as we passed the sheds at Pentrefelin, I saw a wagon in pieces in the yard. I've always liked freight trains. My grandparents lived near to Toton goods yard in Nottinghamshire, where there was one passing every three minutes.

"I spent my first year here helping restore one of the Suburban carriages, but I'm really pleased now to finally get a chance to work on wagons and restore those. My only reservation is that you never saw a freight train running with wagons as polished as these, but I'm sure the paint will weather in time."

So far, the wagons have featured at two events, the first being the aforementioned spring gala, with some of the box vans also getting an outing at the August 1/2 Back to the Sixties weekend, being used as part of mixed trains that were once commonplace on branch lines everywhere. The group hopes that the freight set will see more use in future, and not just at galas.

Douglas said there is a wellbeing aspect to wagon groups that many may not have considered: "Not only do they have an educational benefit, but for many volunteers who feel they don't or can't fit into high-pressure environments such as in the carriage works doing time-critical repairs to the vital carriage fleet, or even customer-facing platform duties, this group is like a second home. Les only lives across the road, and he's been coming down almost every day to work on them for the last few months.

"There are not many places on heritage railways where you can go and not necessarily be left alone, but where you can enjoy doing something that isn't necessarily a commercial priority and that still makes a difference."



Class 14 D9525 approaches Garth-y-Dwr with a rake of brake vans that have featured as a service train at several Llangollen Railway galas in recent years, giving visitors a chance to travel on them through the Dee Valley. Now, they can serve their intended purpose as volunteers are restoring wagons to run goods trains with.

Something this group is keen to stress is how goods trains could be considered vital to meeting the charitable aims that almost every heritage line works to. "It's hard to find a heritage railway whose goals are anything other educational, but if they lose sight of that, then what use is their existence as a charity other than the convenient tax reasons?" pondered Douglas. "Goods trains aren't the number-one revenue generator, but they are still important to our history.

"The Llangollen Railway was, like so many others, not a major commuter line, nor was it a singular goods route. It was a secondary line with a mix of everything, transporting people and freight between communities. If we had left things for another few years, we might have lost more of our wagons through deterioration, but once they've been restored, it is slightly easier to keep on top of them. We reckon at the moment we could probably manage about a dozen or so, which is pretty good.

Addressing potential

"I don't think their full value is realised in many places – not just through the volunteering opportunities, but also through things such as use for photo charters and events. I hope in time our goods fleet will become just as important a piece of the railway as everything else."

One obvious hinderance to goods portrayal is the loss of once extensive goods yards; as lines were closed, land where sidings once stood was often sold off for development. When preservation societies moved in, new sidings often had to be put down wherever space permitted – in some cases, away from the eyes of the public. Where goods yards did remain, these were often repurposed, with that at Llangollen, for example, becoming the locomotive depot and workshops.

Carrog station also retains some of its former goods yard space, with two sidings used to store stock including carriages that house shops for locomotive owning groups based at the railway. Those in the wagon restoration group hope to transform this area into something more representative of a working goods yard, with work to install a headshunt already underway.

"There's a lot of logistical work still to figure out," Douglas said, "but we hope in time it will become somewhere we can hold demonstration activities during events. A freight train could travel up first thing in the morning; the wagons deposited in the yard, and a shunter then spends the day moving them back and forth without the need to encroach on the running line. Potentially, it offers great entertainment value to guests while providing a reason for them to alight and spend time at the station rather than staying in their seats all day."

Keep updated with the Llangollen Railway's restorations by visiting tinyurl.com/LR-Subs-and-Wagons



Pooley Van No. 150196 was completed at the Llangollen Railway in August and shows how some freight vehicles found use beyond their intended purpose…



…as the restoration of No. 150236 has recently commenced. While it had also previously been converted into a Pooley van, this vehicle will be returned to its original GWR 'Bloater' design.



BR-built Toad brake van No. 950551 is another vehicle being returned to its original configuration but will gain wider doors so wheelchair users can enjoy better access to brake van rides in future.

Making a rare appearance on the Bluebell Railway's freight train on January 1 was BR Standard 5MT No. 73082 *Camelot*, seen on the climb at Holywell while heading for Horsted Keynes.



SR Motor Car Truck/Conflat D No. 39617 is the latest restoration project at Horsted Keynes, but it requires an estimated £5000 to cover the cost of gritblasting, painting, and timber for the decking. The SR never built vehicles specifically for container traffic, and this type was introduced primarily for the carriage of motor vehicles. Behind it is six-wheeled milk tanker No. 4430 which, among other jobs, is undergoing remedial work to replace wooden packers and have its drawgear inspected.



LSWR 10T 'Road Van' No. 5706 has been considered for restoration in the short term, not having run in preservation despite being the first item of goods stock purchased back in 1962. However, estimates on the cost have come close to equalling that for restoring some of the vintage four-wheeled carriages and has thus pushed it down the queue for the time being.



Five-plank SR Bulleid open No. 12058 is possibly unique among preserved wagons, being the only unpainted hardwood wagon currently running. Its restoration was nominated for the Morgan Award at the 2023 Heritage Railway Association awards. BGD

The Bluebell Goods Division

The Bluebell Railway has seemingly embraced goods wagons for as long as anyone can remember. Looking back through the years, there are ample photos of locomotives such as SR U class No. 1638, LBSCR E4 No. 473 and SECR C class No. 592, to highlight but three examples, at the helm of rakes of anywhere in the region of six to 15 wagons. In April 2007, a goods train weekend took place celebrating the importance of such traffic, which even saw vintage lorries move goods to and from these trains and involved nearby properties including Barcombe Station, Chailey Windmill and Gravetye Manor.

By 2016, the group responsible for looking after the wagons had disbanded as age caught up with many of those in it. As wagons began to suffer at the hands of the elements, it seemed that the 'goods' old days were set to vanish. That changed after a chance conversation in a pub in 2018.

"I was walking out of Brighton's Lovers Walk depot as an apprentice there one evening and bumped into fellow Bluebell Railway volunteers Jack Gregory and Will Hawks, so we decided to go for a pint," recalled goods division member Laurie Anderson. "We were merrily chatting away and the subject of goods trains at the railway came up. We all agreed it was a shame that our wagons were no longer being run and they were looking a bit of a sorry state.

"For whatever reason, I asked if we should do something about it. The others said yes, so I wrote to our engineering director at the time, Bob Pammet, who replied that he had actually been looking for a group to take on care of the wagons.

"We went down to Horsted Keynes, met some of the people there, and that was it. We were given Bulleid five-plank open wagon No. 12058, which had been abandoned par tway through restoration, and talk about the deep end of the swimming pool for a starting project! We took it right back to a basic underframe, but rebuilding had us all scratching our heads; we found some drawings for it, but it still required a little bit of guesswork to figure out.

"It was at this point we realised we needed to source our own funding, and that was when we set up a shop to sell second-hand goods and our own merchandise. We have also been very fortunate in that the Bluebell Railway Trust match-funded what we raised to £5000 in our first few years. That has made a massive difference, and the Bulleid Society also helped by sponsoring some of the work on No. 12058.

"Later on, Rapido Trains UK came along and asked if we wanted to be one of its official suppliers, to which we obviously replied yes, absolutely. We'd had trouble getting hold of any of the other major manufacturers, so that was incredibly welcome, especially as Rapido has produced some of our wagons, for

which they came down to measure up and take photographs."

The group members identified a selection of wagons they thought could be returned to service fairly swiftly, but just as with locomotives, it was often found that the work required was more substantial than first been thought. A project list was drawn up identifying which vehicles would be the focus, although this has changed due to factors including the need for some vehicles to be brought to Horsted Keynes from other locations on the railway. In some cases, wagons not on the short-term plan have jumped onto the list, such as a pair of tankers.

"We had no plans to do these for quite a while, but a production company approached the railway last year and asked if any were available for use for a film shoot due to take place at Horsted Keynes.

"I pointed out these two but stressed that at the time, they were not serviceable. The film company paid for the majority of the restoration, which has given us another two vehicles for the rake.

"After filming completed last autumn, we brought them back into the works for finishing-off, with one of them, No. 812, turned out in its Air Ministry colours as carried when new. The second, No. 4497, wears a rather striking Shell Spirits scheme.

"The signwriting on these has been carried out by Matthew Lander, who is self-taught and learned the skill by working on our wagons. One of the perks of goods wagons is that they were never tidy vehicles for long when in service, so if we get something a bit wrong, then actually it can still look right. They are great projects for honing all sorts of skills."

Lofty goals

The BGD is perhaps unique among its peers; rather than setting its sights on creating one goods train from a specific period of time, here, the goal is to create no less than three different consists.

Furthermore, this goal is intrinsically tied in with the Bluebell Railway's own policy. With the railway leaning heavily on its pre-Grouping and SR carriage stock to operate services, along with some locomotives to suit, the immediate goal is to finish enough wagons to form matching goods rakes.

There are already several vehicles from the LBSCR, SECR and SR finished to form such examples.

"At the moment, we are focusing on getting a decently-sized SR period rake," Laurie explained. "The only other place to have this is the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, so we will really stand out for it. We have just started work on a Carflat which has been on our list for some time, but like everything, restoration won't be cheap. We estimate it will cost in the region of £5000 to do up because we're going to have it grit-blasted to get it right back to bare metal – we don't want to do half a job as we'll only end up having to repeat it again in a few years' time."

Once the SR rake has come to fruition, focus will turn to the two other goals: completing a pre-Grouping era train and progressing with a BR one. There are enough vehicles for the former already done, although at the moment misses a suitable brake van. This is very much on the agenda – SECR Dance Hall No. 11916 is on the cards but requires releasing from an isolated siding at Kingscote.

"We are waiting on the civil engineering gang to reconnect it so we can get that and some of the other wagons there out and down to the workshops," Laurie continued. "Understandably, it isn't top of their to-do list right now, but it will happen. The brake van requires its axles to be swapped with those on the unrestored SR Shark brake van No. 62864 – not because its own are damaged, but so we can get the correct pattern of axlebox under the SECR one. That will then give us a suitable brake van while also freeing the Shark up to be sold.

"SR Pillbox No. 55993 is also waiting to come in for repairs to a hot axlebox developed a few years ago. The jacks in the works are currently taken up with a LBSCR four-wheel carriage, but this is one of several small jobs set to follow once that is done with.

"The one we would all like to see restored is LSWR Road Van No. 5706. Investigations were carried out to ascertain what this might cost with some contract help, and what came back was close to what it has cost to restore some of our four-wheeled carriages, so that will sadly have to be pushed back down the queue unless there is a generous benefactor out there willing to help.

"We want to tell as broad a story of freight carriage as possible; everyone else has done BR stuff – probably because that was withdrawn in some cases with a lot of life left in vehicles – so while our immediate focus



LBSCR E4 No. 473 approaches Horsted Keynes with an 11-wagon consist on March 16, 2016. Creating a dedicated SR era train is one of the Bluebell Goods Division's current aims. JON BOWERS

SECR C class 0-6-0 No. 592 storms towards Rock Cutting during a photographic charter on July 15, 2016. Many of the wagons featured here have since received attention to get them running again, with hopes of achieving in future a rake as long as that pictured. JON BOWERS

Underloved or overhyped?

Do you feel goods trains deserve greater prominence, or do you have suggestions for ways they can be interpreted better? Is there a particular group whose efforts should be highlighted in this field, or perhaps a unique wagon that might be at risk? Or maybe you feel it's all a waste of time. Share your thoughts with *Heritage Railway* by emailing owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

is the pre-Nationalisation stuff, this will come in time. A few years ago we secured a Shoc Open that was deaccessioned from the National Collection, and the policy also makes provision for acquiring any vehicles that might fit into this, such as a standard BR 20T brake van, though we would have to look at parting with something to make space as there is a one-in, one-out policy, although some were sold during a clear-out about five years ago.

"Many people forget that, certainly before the BR days, there was a huge variety of freight stock because you had private owner wagons being mixed in with railway-owned ones. Because we're not focused on one thing, we've probably got the most colourful rake out there. There were many wagon builders, but not many – if any – wagons remain from some of them, so there's history to be told there too."

There is also a running joke between the BGD and the group restoring resident 9F 2-10-0 No. 92240, a locomotive from a class renowned for its performance with heavy goods services.

"When that overhaul got underway in 2022, they came to us for advice on matters such as fundraising, and the subject of going after grants came up," Laurie said. "Off the back of that, someone made comment about how nice it would be to see it at the front of a decently-sized goods train at the railway, and that perhaps a joint application might be possible. Foolishly, I said that if it happened, I'd get 40 wagons running for it... and they have never let me forget it. I think we're actually approaching 20 at the moment, so it's not entirely impossible, I suppose – they've still got several years ahead of them yet. If you factor in all the engineering ones, there's probably about 60 at the railway."

To support the Bluebell Goods Division, including by purchasing exclusive Rapido models, visit bluebell-railway-goods-division.square.site



Left: LBSCR 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* looks quite at home on a short goods set on March 16, 2025. While this consist contained LMS and BR-era wagons, the Bluebell Goods Division hopes to have more pre-Grouping wagons restored in the future to create one of three proposed period-specific rakes to better tell the story of freight through the years.

Dispelling the myth

One thing both groups are insistent on is that the belief that goods trains don't make money is nonsense. Douglas Hebson drew attention to the Great Central Railway, saying: "What it has done with Railways at Work is excellent and has paid dividends. Running goods trains or having activities at stations involving them can encourage people to stay in one place, watch, and spend money there in the process. What groups like ours do is help to enhance a railway, not detract from it."

"On paper, the point we don't make money might look to be the case, but their appeal goes beyond even the enthusiasts," Laurie said.

"In the last few years, the majority of what film companies have wanted at the Bluebell has been goods wagons, whether that's been front and centre – we had a couple with fake bodies that were blown up in one – or for use as set dressing because they help to set the time of a production. The majority of what railways did was related to goods.

"Then, of course, they are great for photographic charters. You can see passenger workings on most operating days, so a rake of wagons can give you a different selling point.

"Even for galas, they can be the difference between someone staying at home because they've seen the locomotives appearing multiple times over or coming out because they know they can sit at the station and watch a goods come thundering through between everything else.

"Wagons are the adjectives of the railway world; they are little features that sit in the background everyone overlooks, but you'd miss them if they weren't there – and so would your visitors." HR



Self-taught signwriter Matthew Lander applies lettering to the solebar of Air Ministry tanker No. 81 2. BGD

Next time

The story continues with a visit to the Mid-Hants to discuss the introduction of goods portering demonstrations there, as well as looking at the preservation of modern freight vehicles by the National Wagon Preservation Group.



HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

Sun, steam and surf: After a hiatus of almost two months, main line steam returned on September 5. On this occasion, LNER A4 Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* took charge of Saphos Trains' 'English Riviera Express' from Taunton to Kingswear and return, seen here along the shore near Dawlish with the outward run. This outing was the last of what was intended to be a busy summer of such trips for the locomotive, disrupted by the hot and dry weather. The following day, it returned to Crewe ahead of its visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. STEVE DONALD

Clun Castle to celebrate 75 years of heritage rail with Severn Valley trip

By Robin Jones

PRESERVATION pioneer WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* will haul a specially chartered train from Birmingham Snow Hill to the Severn Valley Railway on November 2 in a three-way partnership between the Heritage Railway Association, Vintage Trains and the Severn Valley Railway to mark the 75th anniversary of the heritage rail movement.

'The Volunteer' has been timed to coincide with the HRA Autumn Conference in Birmingham, designed to evoke the early days of railway preservation when main line steam charters carried enthusiasts out to the first fledgling heritage lines.

Tyseley Locomotive Works-based *Clun Castle* will depart Birmingham Snow Hill at about 11.30am, running via Stratford-upon-Avon before joining the Severn Valley Railway and proceeding as far north as Highley, where passengers will have the chance to visit the Engine House museum. The tour is due back into Snow Hill at about 7pm, with exact timings still to be confirmed with Network Rail.

'The Volunteer' is being run on a not-for-profit basis. The HRA and SVR are waiving their costs, while VT is looking to cover only its direct operational expenses, keeping ticket prices to a minimum so that as many current and former heritage rail volunteers as possible can take part.

Clun Castle has been hailed as the locomotive which began main line preservation. It hauled the last official steam train out of Paddington to Banbury on June 11, 1965 and was officially withdrawn that December.

Sold for scrap at £2400 to Patrick Whitehouse in 1966, its ownership then passed to 7029 Clun Castle Ltd and played an integral role in the founding and operation of Vintage Trains.

In 1967, carrying a Great Western livery, it hauled trains to mark the closure of the GWR route to Birkenhead, from King's Cross to Newcastle and over the Settle to Carlisle line. In 1972, it joined in the 'Return to Steam' tours.

VT managing director Nick Ralls said: "With *Clun Castle* being key to the beginning of main line steam preservation, we feel there is no better engine to mark 75 years of the movement it helped create. This is a day for the people who have kept heritage railways running, often as volunteers, for decades."

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "The 75th anniversary of heritage rail is a huge and important milestone.

"Heritage rail has achieved some astonishing feats in the last 75 years, from rebuilding railways most thought had been lost forever to restoring locomotives and rolling stock seen as nothing more than rusting scrap.

"Hundreds of thousands of volunteers have made all that possible, so this train is a celebration of their determination and achievement as much as the anniversary itself.

"An iconic locomotive, a high-speed trip over the main line, and a journey along one of Britain's most successful heritage railways in one trip... I can't think of a better way to celebrate."

SVR CEO Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, added: "The SVR is pleased and proud to be playing our part in this unique event.

"In particular, it is so important that we recognise the dedication and commitment of the generations of volunteers who have devoted their time to keep the spirit of 'travel as it used to be' alive for future generations to enjoy.

"This special train is a unique and fitting way to do just that, and we look to forward to what surely will be a most memorable day."

Tickets for 'The Volunteer' have been priced from £100 per person, with a discount of 25% for those also attending the HRA's Autumn Conference over the following two days.

First class seats and reserved compartments with high-quality catering and afternoon tea are available for those who want to celebrate the milestone in style.

Bookings can be made now at www.hra.uk.com



On July 4, main line preservation pioneer WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* threads its way through early ripening cornfields at Barton le Willows in the Yorkshire Wolds on the return from Scarborough with Vintage Trains' 'The White Rose' to Birmingham New Street. STUART BROWN

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

Autumn activities to celebrate 120 years of Piccadilly Line

LONDON Transport Museum will mark 120 years of London Underground's Piccadilly Line with a host of public activities during the October 24-November 1 half-term week.

Families can take part in a wide range of interactive activities inspired by the line and the places it serves. Through storytelling, arts and crafts and tinkering challenges visitors can explore how the line has evolved since opening in 1906 and imagine what it might look like in future.

For details see ltmuseum.co.uk

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Dry weather sees double Castles to Plymouth rescheduled to 2027

By Owen Hayward

A VINTAGE Trains excursion to the South West that would have seen both of its Castle class locomotives working together unassisted has been rescheduled as a result of the prolonged hot and dry weather that wreaked havoc throughout the rail industry this summer.

'The Mayflower' was scheduled to run on September 12, starting out diesel-hauled from Birmingham Snow Hill before swapping over to steam at Bristol Temple Meads for the remainder of the run down to Plymouth, with Nos. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and 7029 *Clun Castle* at the helm. The route would have included a run along the sea wall at Dawlish, once common ground for not only this class of 4-6-0, but also for numerous others too during the Grouping and BR eras.

However, as the hot weather continued unabated and steam bans were implemented, VT sent an email on August 17 to those who had booked onto the tour advising that the situation was being monitored and a further update to confirm whether or not the tour would run would follow in early September.

Although much of the country had experienced some rainfall by then, the fire risk was still deemed high as vegetation remained tinder-dry in some locations.

On September 1, it was announced that the tour was being rescheduled and will now take place on March 20, 2027.

"Because of the continued fire risk precautions on the main line, we will not be able to run the train double-headed steam as planned on this date, and we are sorry for the disappointment this will cause," VT wrote. "A doubleheaded steam run to Plymouth is a rare and special thing, and we want to make sure that when it happens, it does so unassisted by diesel and delivers the experience our passengers rightly expect. Spring also gives us the best chance of the conditions needed to run it as intended.

"To thank passengers who keep their booking with us, we will invite you to a special open day at Tyseley in the new year, ahead of the March journey, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the depot to see the people, locomotives and facilities that make our main line steam journeys possible."

Tickets for those who had already booked onto the September 12 run were automatically transferred to the new date, but VT advised customers to get in touch to discuss alternate options if this did not suit.

The September trip was due to be the last appearance of No. 5043 before it was temporarily withdrawn from service as it requires new wheel tyres. Although it was unclear whether it would work any trips during the intervening months, it will be kept operational, with the rescheduled 'Mayflower' still expected to be its final appearance before the required work gets underway.

The 'Settle to Carlisle and Tyne Valley Pullman' aboard 'Blue Pullman' HST

by Tim Hobman

ON Wednesday, September 30, Midland Pullman will run a tour from Hertfordshire to Carlisle on board its distinctive High Speed Train.

Starting from St Albans on the Midland Main Line, the 'Settle to Carlisle & Tyne Valley Pullman' will collect passengers at Luton, Bedford, Wellingborough and Kettering.

The tour is then planned to take the Oakham-Kettering Line for a further pick-up at Corby, before crossing the Welland Viaduct and joining the Peterborough-Birmingham line.

Heading west, the train is expected to pause for more passengers to join the tour at Oakham and Melton Mowbray, before rejoining the Midland Main Line for even more passenger collections, this time at Loughborough, Ilkeston and Alfreton.

Picking up the Cross Country route at Sheffield, the train is expected to head via Rotherham and Leeds, then onto the Airedale Line via Skipton and Hellifield to take the Settle and Carlisle railway at Settle Junction, before crossing Ribblehead Viaduct and descending into the Eden Valley to the destination of Carlisle.

Passengers will have about two hours to explore Carlisle before the trip home via a different route.

Heading east, the return journey is planned to be via the Tyne Valley Line, through Haltwhistle and Hexham to join the East Coast Main Line at Newcastle. From here, the route is expected to be south through York and back towards Leeds, before retracing the outward journey, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets remained available as this issue went to press. For more details, visit midlandpullman.com



Class 201 Hastings DEMU No. 1001 approaches London Victoria in the shadow of Battersea Power Station on September 8 with 'The 1066 Return' from East Grinstead. Having spent the summer at the Bluebell Railway, a special one-way tour ran as the unit headed back to St Leonards ahead of Hastings Diesels Limited's September 19 outing to High Marnham. OWEN HAYWARD

End in sight for a steam-less summer as main line ban lifts

AS the soaring temperatures in this summer's record prolonged heatwave fell and gave way to overcast skies and some rainfall, Network Rail eased its temporary ban on steam traction.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 348, NR raised its fire risk level to black in July because of the increased risk of wildfires in dry lineside vegetation.

To reduce the possibility of sparks igniting fires, main line operators were asked to replace steam locomotives with diesel traction in line with NR's Steam Charter Fire Risk Policy.

The restrictions remain under regular review as NR assesses the fire risk each morning using weather forecasts provided by MetDesk alongside the planned routes for steam services. However, the restrictions in much of the country were relaxed during the first week of September, allowing steam trains to operate in the West Country (see centre, pages 50/51), with diesel assistance as required in England as part of current mitigation.

A steam-hauled trip with diesel assistance was due to run on Wessex routes in the Southern Region the following week, a NR spokesman said.



Locomotive Services Limited Intercity livery Class 47 No. 47593 *Gallow Princess* heads over the Dawlish viaduct in full summer sunshine with Saphos Trains' Down 1Z07 5.30am Bedford to Kingswear 'English Riviera Express' on August 22. Class 57 No. 57302 was on the rear. THOMAS MILLS

Flying Scotsman in Weardale 'first' for November outing

By Robin Jones

LNER A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* will visit the Weardale Railway during newly announced journeys on November 13-15.

On its 60-mile trip from Darlington towards its destination of Stanhope, *Flying Scotsman* will make its debut journeys over the heritage line.

A morning departure will leave Darlington at 8.40am, while an afternoon option departs at 1.40pm. The return trip is scheduled to take four hours, including time at Stanhope, which will no doubt be popular with passengers.

These dates are part of a wider return of the A3 to the main line being led by promoter Fox & Edwards Events, as reported, alongside successful partnerships with 22 heritage lines. They are working with multiple partners including Northern Steam, which cares for the locomotive, and the National Railway Museum, its custodian.

These journeys will be particularly significant for main line train operator RailAdventure, marking the introduction of steam passenger train services ahead of exciting plans for future years.

Mk. 2 carriages are being provided by the rolling stock specialist Eastern Rail Services. First class and traditional seating options are being offered, with tickets from £79 for a return trip.

Weardale general manager Claire Gibbons: "We are beyond thrilled to be welcoming the iconic *Flying Scotsman* to Weardale for the very first time.

"This will be a truly special occasion for our railway, our local communities, and for the wider region, providing a boost for tourism and local economy and giving people a fantastic opportunity to experience one of the most famous locomotives in railway history right here in the Durham Dales.

"We are delighted to be working with Fox & Edwards Events to make this milestone possible and, with services running between Darlington and Stanhope, we hope it will encourage visitors from the region and further afield to discover everything Weardale and the surrounding area has to offer."

Sarah Price, head of public programme at the NRM, added: "Following a popular run at Locomotion railway museum during the summer holidays, it's wonderful to see *Flying Scotsman* returning to the North East for what promises to be a spectacular journey though the North Pennines."

Oliver Edwards, director and general manager of Fox & Edwards Events, said: "This November, a truly wonderful steam locomotive will bring pleasure, nostalgia and memories to thousands in the North East on these brand-new journeys."

Debut journey is rescheduled after *Avocet* fails to take flight

By Owen Hayward and Tim Hobman

A TECHNICAL fault brought a premature end to the maiden public run of Class 89 No. 89001 *Avocet* on August 18.

Setting out from Crewe at 10.42am, the Locomotive Services Group's InterCity outing, 'The Avocet Achievement,' was billed as the locomotive's first public passenger-carrying service in 26 years. It was destined for Glasgow Central, which would have also taken it the furthest north it had ever been since entering service in 1986.

The occasion was made all the more special with the InterCity-liveried locomotive having been pulling a rake of matching Mk. 3 carriages, with Class 91 DVT No. 82139 *My Lovely Horse* bring up the rear.

Although it successfully completed loaded test runs in the months beforehand, as well as pulling 'The Chairman's Train' from Carlisle to Euston on July 14, it encountered a fault with its battery charging circuits that impacted its power delivery, causing it to struggle and therefore make an unscheduled stop at Warrington Bank Quay, where it was ultimately declared a failure.

Outing cut short

Class 90 No. 90001 *Royal Scot* was despatched from Crewe to rescue the service, but as it was 87 minutes late by the time it got under way, it was decided that the trip would be cut short at Carlisle, where it arrived nearly 99 minutes late. After a break and shunt to position *Royal Scot* at the opposite end of the stock, the return to Crewe departed Carlisle just three minutes later than its booked time of 4.37pm, with the run consistent thereafter for arrival at its destination at 6.39pm – just two minutes behind schedule.

Within 24 hours, operator LSL InterCity had contacted its customers and offered either a full refund, which would have made the trip a free outing for those on board, or the option to transfer to the advertised rescheduled date of October 7, this outing sharing the name of the 'Badger's' original attempt at reaching Scotland.

If all goes to plan, this trip will be the first time that the locomotive has run north of Carlisle on the West Coast Main Line. It has been made possible by the collaboration between Locomotive Services Group and the AC Locomotive Group.

Avocet was withdrawn from active main line service with GNER in October 2000 and since then has spent time at Doncaster Works, Bounds Green, Barrow Hill, and latterly Crewe LSL.

It was purchased by the AC Locomotive Group in late 2006 and while stabled at Barrow Hill, restoration commenced to return it to working order. In late 2021, a partnership was announced between the AC Locomotive Group and Locomotive Services Group to see the outstanding work completed.

To return *Avocet* to the main line, it had to meet modern-day running requirements, so a partnership with Network Rail was established which involved carrying out several successful test runs on the main line. Plans were set in motion for this abandonded railtour following its successful appearance on the July 4 'The Chairman's Train.'



No. 89001 *Avocet* sits at Carlisle on August 18 after being rescued from Warrington Bank Quay, where it failed shortly after the start of its first public tour since restoration was completed. CHIS GEE

Attempt two

Starting from Crewe once again, the route is planned to be northwards on the WCML via Warrington Bank Quay and Wigan North Western to the next passenger pick-up point of Preston.

From here, the train will venture further north through Lancaster and into the picturesque Lake District to tackle the climb over Shap and down through Penrith to Carlisle. At Carlisle, the train is scheduled to pause for the final passengers to join the tour, before the journey continues north across the border at Gretna.

Running through Lockerbie, Carstairs and Motherwell, *Avoctet* is expected to arrive into Glasgow Central at about 2.15pm.

Passengers will then be able to enjoy a break of about an hour before the return journey over the same route, departing at 3.10pm and setting down customers at their joining stations. The estimated arrival at Crewe is 6.40pm.

Tickets remain available for this tour. For more details and to book, visit inter-city.co.uk

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Locomotive Services Limited Class 50 No. 50050 *Fearless* crosses the River Weaver at Frodsham with the outward Scottish Railway Preservation Society's 'Thistle & Dragon' railtour from Kirkaldy to Llandudno on August 22. BRIAN DOBBS

Saphos plans for two King and Castle joint outings to the South West in 2027

By Owen Hayward

TWO of the GWR's most popular express 4-6-0s will double up for a pair of Saphos Trains tours in their home region in 2027.

The Locomotive Services Group-owned operator has unveiled its itinerary for the year ahead. Taking place on June 30 and September 8, 'The Great Western' offers a scenic trip through the landscape of Somerset and along the English Riviera coast, taking in the taxing Devon banks as it makes its way to the maritime city of Plymouth. The return journey for both trips include travelling through the Exe Valley and, perhaps most importantly for some, along the iconic Dawlish sea wall.

Utilising locomotives expected to be stabled at Bishops Lydeard on the West Somerset Railway for its summer 'English Riviera' excursions to Kingswear, these 'Great Western' tours will see No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* and King class No. 6024 *King Edward I* at the helm, the pair both having returned to service from overhaul in 2025 and 2026 respectively.

It will be the first time a double-header featuring this combination will have appeared on the national network for many years, and the pair will cut quite the picture together, both currently – and appropriately for the upcoming occasion – carrying liveries from their GWR days.

The tours will start diesel-hauled, on June 30 commencing from Milton Keynes Central at 5.30am, followed by pick-ups at Leighton Buzzard, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction, Slough, Maidenhead, Reading and Newbury.

The September 8 trip begins in Great Western territory at Severn Tunnel Junction at about 5.50am, then stopping to collect passengers at Chepstow, Lydney (near to the Dean Forest Railway), Gloucester, Stonehouse, Stroud, Kemble, Swindon (nearby to the works where both locomotives were built), Chippenham, Bath Spa and finally Bristol Temple Meads.

Following the run down to Taunton, diesel will give way to the two steam locomotives, and this will continue for the remainder of the journey into the South West.

The return journey for both outings will again start off steam-hauled, with the King and Castle detaching upon arrival back at Taunton to allow the diesel locomotive to finish off the day.

Seating options are limited to first class non-dining and Pullman dining only, with prices starting at £245 and £485 respectively; the former includes complimentary tea and coffee served to passengers at their seats, along with a selection of light snacks.

Those opting for the full on-board experience will enjoy a welcoming glass of fizz upon boarding, followed by a full English breakfast and pastries for the outward journey. A chilled glass of champagne with a selection of canapes will greet them after the sightseeing break in Plymouth, with a sumptuous five-course dinner then served as the train works its way back to the first of the drop-off points.

In addition to these and the 'English Riviera' tours, the 'Fellsman' tours over the Settle & Carlisle route also feature in the published Saphos 2027 calendar, while some of the operator's other regulars do not.

For full details of all the tours and to book, visit saphostrains.com/trips-tours

Coast-to-coast tour for RTC

By Tim Hobman

THE Railway Touring Company has announced a steam-hauled tour for Friday, October 9, running from the west to east coast of northern England.

'The Esk Valley' starts steam-hauled from Carnforth, and the route east is planned to be along the Leeds to Morecambe line to pick up additional passengers at Bentham, Skipton and Leeds.

From there, the train is bound for York for the final passenger pick-up, and then onto the East Coast Main Line to run north through Thirsk to Northallerton. Taking the Eaglescliffe line after Northallerton, the tour will run via Yarm and over the River Tees on the Yarm Viaduct, to Eaglescliffe, and then on via Thornaby to Middlesbrough.

Joining the Esk Valley Line, the tour will run via Nunthorpe to Battersby, where it is required to make a reversal to continue along the rest of the line. Accordingly, the final part of the tour will be diesel-hauled by the locomotive which was previously at the rear of the train.

Heading into the North Yorkshire Moors, the tour will run via Kildale, Commondale, Danby and Glaisdale, before passing Grosmont. The full length of the Esk Valley Line will be travelled, running through Sleights and Ruswarp, and then under the Larpool Viaduct before arriving into Whitby early afternoon.

Passengers have just over an hour for a brief exploration of the coastal town before the return journey.

Leaving Whitby steam-hauled, the run back along the Esk Valley Line as far as Battersby will then see a reversal for the diesel locomotive to take charge. Continuing on the Esk Valley Line to join the Tees Valley Line, the train is planned to head to Stockton to allow the steam locomotive to once again take over.

The route home is planned to be via Northallerton to York, then retracing the route of the outward journey to set down passengers at their joining stations.

Tickets are available in premier dining, first class and standard class, with a discount for junior travellers and family bookings on this tour.

For more details and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net



Right: West Coast Railways Class 47s Nos. 47237 and 47746 *Chris Fudge 29.7.70-22.6.10* top-and-tail the Railway Touring Company's 8.47am Down 1Z48 Bristol Temple Meads to Par 'The Royal Duchy' on August 30. THOMAS MILLS

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Connect with us heritage-railway-magazine

'The Ayrshire Artilleryman' from Linlithgow

by Tim Hobman

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society is to run a tour to Ayr on Saturday, September 26.

'The Ayrshire Artilleryman' starts from Linlithgow behind Class 45 No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, hauling the SRPS's Mk. 1 coaches.

Heading east, the tour will run into Edinburgh Waverley to collect more passengers before making a reversal to head back west.

Crossing the Forth Bridge, the tour will head for Inverkeithing; a pick-up point only for this tour. Taking the Fife Circle line along the coast to Kirkcaldy, the journey will then turn inland at Thornton South Junction and run via Lochgelly to Dunfermline City.

Turning onto the freight-only line to Alloa, the trip will then run along the River Forth and through Culross, then on to Stirling.

From Stirling, the route is planned to be via Cumbernauld, Polmadie and Paisley to the destination of Ayr.

Passengers will have about two hours to explore the town before the return journey, this time by a different route.

Leaving Ayr, the route home will be via the Glasgow South Western Line to Carlisle.

There, the Class 45 is planned to be exchanged for a SRPS locomotive for the journey back to Edinburgh and Linlithgow, setting down passengers at either station.

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 351

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

SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Stranraer signals removed and sidings disconnected

By Hugh Dougherty

ALL signals, including ground discs and the station's characteristic gantry and starter – survivors from steam days – have been removed from Stranraer station to drive down maintenance costs and rationalise the station layout, most of which is redundant following the relocation of the Stena Line ferries to Cairnryan in 2011. The one-time harbour station's Platform 2 road has also been disconnected, along with all points and a siding which formerly led to a car loading ramp. Retained after car traffic ended should tanks be sent to Northern Ireland during the Troubles, and out of use for years, this siding has also been lifted.

Network Rail carried out the work, which included slewing the running line and relaying it with flat-bottomed rail and concrete sleepers, between Saturday, August 8 and Friday, August 21, leading to the line being closed south of Girvan. Bus substitution was provided.

According to Network Rail, the work is preparatory to further modernisation and the potential construction of a new station, all of which is scheduled to be completed during the current Control Period 7, which runs until 2029.

The alterations will not threaten the operation of steam and charter trains, as the running line, which has been relaid with flat-bottomed rail and concrete sleepers, still provides sufficient length for eight or 10-coach trains, topped-and-tailed by locomotives, to access the existing station's remaining connected platform.

Network Rail said the signals and pointwork were not needed for current timetable operations by Scotrail Class 156 units, and that exposure to corrosive sea air had put the infrastructure beyond economic refurbishment.

Stranraer signal cabin remains switched out and the line is worked on the one-unit-in-section principle, with a key token from Dunragit to the terminus, the train tablet working using Tyers instruments from there to Glenwhilly, Glenwhilly to Barrhill, and Barrhill to Girvan – the last line in Scotland to use the Victorian system. Signalling modernisation planned for before 2019 would eliminate train tablet working, one of the features which endears the line to enthusiasts.

Local MSP and rail champion Finlay Carson has held discussions with Network Rail to ensure that future modernisation work and the provision of a new station will provide for steam excursions and charter trains: "I believe that I and NR are singing from the same hymn sheet, and that provision will be made.

"I welcome investment in the railway which has so much to offer and which is under-utilised today."



LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44871 sits under the now removed signal gantry waiting to depart with the 'Great Britain VII' special from Stranraer on April 30, 2013. The trackwork in the foreground has also been lifted as part of the rationalisation scheme. HUGH DOUGHERTY



Beside MP 53 – a reminder that mileage at Stranraer is still calculated from Castle Douglas on the closed 'port Road' to Dumfries rather from Girvan – work goes on lifting panels from the car ramp siding on August 9. HUGH DOUGHERTY

'Dorset Coast Statesman' from Shropshire over the Welsh Marches

ON Saturday, September 26, Statesman Rail is to run its 'Dorset Coast Statesman' trip from Whitchurch via on the Welsh Marches Line.

Head south for the passenger pickup at Shrewsbury, before turning east onto the Wolverhampton Line and stopping at Wellington, Telford Central, Codsall, and Wolverhampton for more passengers, the tour is set to join the line to Birmingham New Street for yet more customers to join the train. After leaving Birmingham, it will head via Solihull, Dorridge, Warwick Parkway, and Leamington Spa on the Chiltern Main Line, picking up passengers at each station.

The route towards Bournemouth is expected to be similar to the previous 'Dorset Coast Statesman' tour which ran from Ludlow on September 17, with the train heading towards the Great Western Main Line, before turning south.

Once again, passengers will have four hours in Bournemouth, three hours in Poole and two hours in Weymouth, before the return trip over the same route, setting down passengers at their joining stations.

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

September

26 'The Ayrshire Artilleryman'
Linlithgow, Ayr, and return.
Locos: 37025 *Inverness TMD*, 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*. SRPS

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

October

3 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour of Kent from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

3 'The Cumbrian Mountain Express'
Euston, Carlisle, and return. Steam-hauled between Carnforth (outward) and Preston (return).
Loco: Electric: 86259 *Les Ross*.
Steam: 34067 *Tangmere*. RTC

7 'The Avocet Achievement'
Crewe, Glasgow Central, and return.
Loco: 89001 *Avocet*. IC

9 'The Esk Valley'
Carnforth, Whitby, and return. Diesel-hauled from Battersby to Carnforth (outward) and Battersby to Stockton (return).
Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

14 York excursion
Coleshill Parkway, York, and return.
Loco: 60103 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

16 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour of Kent from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

17 Newbury excursions (AM+PM)
Didcot Parkway, Newbury Racecourse, and return.
Loco: 60103 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

17 'The Bournemouth Belle'
Waterloo, Swanage, and return. Diesel-hauled from Swanage to Fareham (return).
Loco: 34028 *Eddystone*. RTC

18 Newbury excursions (AM+PM)
Didcot Parkway, Newbury Racecourse, and return.
Loco: 60103 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

24 'The Settle & Carlisle Explorer'
Edinburgh Waverley, Keighley, and return.
Locos: 2x Class 20s TBA + 37025 *Inverness TMD*. SRPS

25 'The Shakespeare Express'
Derby, Stratford-upon-Avon, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle*. VT

30 'The Whitby Goth Express'
Preston, Whitby, and return. Diesel-hauled throughout.
Locos: 2x Class 47s TBC. RTC

31 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour of Kent from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

November

7 The Golden Age of Travel by Steam
Circular tour of Kent from London Victoria.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. BEL

8 'The Shakespeare Express'
Worcester Shrub Hill, Stratford-upon-Avon, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 13268. VT

11 'The Armistice Steam Express'
London Victoria, Canterbury West, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

13 Stanhope excursions (AM+PM)
Darlington, Stanhope, and return.
Loco: 60163 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

14 Stanhope excursions (AM+PM)
Darlington, Stanhope, and return.
Loco: 60163 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

14 'The Cathedrals Express'
Coleshill Parkway, Edinburgh Waverley, and return. Steam-hauled between Darlington and Edinburgh.
Loco: 60163 *Tornado*. VT

15 Stanhope excursions (AM+PM)
Darlington, Stanhope, and return.
Loco: 60163 *Flying Scotsman*. FE

16 York excursion
King's Cross, York, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

17 'The York Yuletide Express'
London Victoria, York, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

19 Chester excursion
Southend Central, Chester, and return. Steam-hauled between Southall and Chester.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

21 'Edinburgh Christmas Markets excursion
York, Edinburgh Waverley, and return. Diesel-hauled between York and Carlisle.
Loco: TBA (WCR Carnforth). RTC

21 'The White Rose'
King's Cross, York, and return. Steam-hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC

23 'The White Rose'
Hereford, York, and return. Steam-hauled between Crewe and York.
Loco: TBA. ST

25 'The Christmas Sussex Belle'
London Victoria, Eastbourne, and return. Diesel-hauled from Eastbourne to Hastings (return only).
Loco: TBA (WCR Southall). RTC



West Coast Railway's Class 37 No. 37669 heads 'The Scarborough Spa Express' through Saltaire on August 19. Originally due to be worked by steam, it was one of many tours that saw diesel traction takeover owing to Network Rail's steam ban imposed as a result of tinder-dry lineside conditions. CHRIS GEE

26 Edinburgh excursion (outward)
King's Cross to Edinburgh Waverley only. Steam-hauled from York to Edinburgh.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

28 Forth Bridge excursion
Circular tour from Edinburgh Waverley.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

29 Edinburgh excursion (return)
Edinburgh Waverley to Liverpool Street only. Steam-hauled from Edinburgh to Carlisle.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

Regular Tours

Daily (until October 23)
'The Jacobite'
Fort William, Mallaig, and return.
Loco: 44871 or 45407. WCR

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.

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

Tour promoters

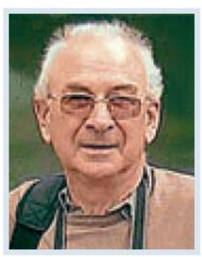
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
FE	Fox & Edwards Events foxandedwards.com
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PNP	PNP Events londonthepolarexpressride.com
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



Class 415 EMU Nos. 5110 and 5140 are seen approaching Beckenham Junction on May 9, 1985, with the 11.06am from Victoria to Orpington. DON BENN



In a break from tradition, **Don Benn** looks at the work of some examples of the Southern Region's Electric Multiple Units, covering both prewar and BR era Mk. 1 types.

AS there is still very little main line steam activity due to the drought, I have abandoned my usual format and looked at the many runs I recorded with Southern Region multiple units during the post-steam years of 1968 to 2005. Most of this selection is taken from my book The Southern After Steam, published by Pen and Sword.

Prewar electric multiple unit 1936 stock: the 4SUB Class 405.

By 1972, none of the prewar SUB stock was left and remaining units were numbered in the 4277-4299 and 4617-4754 series, which were introduced from October 1948 to 1952. English Electric 339 traction motors, rated at 275hp with suburban gearing, were fitted, though this did not stop determined drivers reaching some extraordinarily high speeds down Brockley bank. On October 10, 1968, No. 4736 and another 4SUB (number not recorded), working the 6.17pm from East Croydon to London Bridge, ran the 5.81 miles from Norwood Junction to New Cross Gate in six minutes 30 seconds start-to-stop, with a maximum speed of 78mph at Brockey; on the same train on April 10, 1969, Nos. 4122 and 4720 ran the section in six minutes 18 seconds – a maximum 80mph!

In the period covered by the book, the 4SUBs worked suburban trains on the Central and South Western divisions. Many were withdrawn in 1976 following service reductions and all were gone by

TABLE ONE: EAST CROYDON TO VICTORIA

Date	October 9, 1967
Train	4.51pm East Croydon to Victoria
Units	4736 + 4SUB
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	Sched	mins	secs	speed
East Croydon	0.00	0.00	00	00	1 early
Windmll Bridge Jct	0.50		01	09	40
Selhurst	1.15		02	04	53
Thornton Heath	1.90		02	48	61½
Norbury	3.10		03	58	68
Streatham Common	3.95		04	46	70½
			sigs stop		
MP 5	5.55		06	43	0*
			07	31	
Balham	5.90		08	31	42½
Wandsworth Common	6.50		09	17	56
MP 3½	7.05		09	52	62½
Clapham Junction	7.85		10	47	50*
			sigs		*
Victoria	10.55	16.00	16	54	R/T

TABLE TWO: 4.49PM EAST COYDON TO LONDON BRIDGE, REIGATE TO LONDON BRIDGE (SCHEDULE 15 MINS)

Date	February 2, 1967					February 3, 1967			
Units	4LAV 2953 + 2 x 4LAVS = 12 LAV					4LAV 2923 + 2 x 4LAV = 12 LAV			
Driver	James, Reigate					James, Reigate			
Recorder	Don Benn					Don Benn			
	miles	time	mins	secs	speed	time	mins	secs	speed
East Croydon	0.00	5 L	00	00		16 L	00	00	
Windmill Bridge Jct	0.50		00	55	40		00	59	41½
Norwood Junction	1.67		02	37	53½		02	26	54
MP 8¼	2.11		03	08	54½		02	58	55½
Anerley	2.77		03	51	56		03	38	57
Penge West	3.17		04	18	59		04	06	59
Sydenham	3.86		05	02	60½		04	49	62½
Forest Hill	4.73		05	47	63		05	37	64
MP 5½	4.86		05	56	64½		05	45	65½
Honor Oak Park	5.62		06	36	72		06	25	70
MP 4	6.36		07	11	76		07	02	75
Brockley	6.66		07	25	80		07	16	78
MP 3½	6.86		07	33	82		07	25	80
New Cross Gate	7.48		07	58	*70		07	52	*72
Bricklayers Arms Jct	8.71		08	46	*63/60		08	43	*51 sigs
Spa Road	9.21		09	47	61½		10	15	52/sigs 16*
London Bridge	10.36	1½ L	11	43		14 L	12	54	
	net time 11¾ mins					net time 11¾ mins			

"I recorded some very fast runs, notably from driver James..."

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Above: On December 21, 1984, Class 201 Hastings DEMUs Nos. 1031 and 1014 work the 7.38am Hastings to Cannon Street, their SRKT diesel engines working hard on the approach to Sevenoaks. DON BENN

Below: Making up a 12-car formation, Class 201 DEMUs Nos. 1017 and 1034 worked the last scheduled 7.34am Hastings to Cannon Street service on April 25, 1986. DON BENN



TABLE THREE: ELMERS END TO CATFORD BRIDGE

Date	August 6, 1968
Train	4.02pm Hayes to Cannon Street
Units	10 coaches, EPB stock. Unit 5040
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Elmers End	0.00	0.00	00	00	¾ min
MP 10½	0.55		01	02	46
Clock House	0.80		01	18	51
MP 9¾	1.30		02	03	40*
New Beckenham	1.47		02	18	48½
Lower Sydenham	2.05		02	54	54½
MP 8¾	2.30		03	12	60
MP 8	3.05		03	56	65½
Catford Bridge	3.52	06.00	04	34	

record time

TABLE FOUR: LONDON BRIDGE TO NORWOOD JUNCTION

Date	March 7, 1966
Train	7.55am London Bridge to East Croydon
Unit (EPB)	5337
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
London Bridge	0.00	0.00	00	00	1½ late
Spa Road	1.05		02	07	48
Bricklayers Arms Jct	2.15		03	18	60
New Cross Gate	2.85		03	58	63½
MP 3½	3.50		04	33	60
Brockley	3.65		04	45	58½
MP 4	4.00		05	05	55½
Honor Oak Park	4.70		05	55	54
MP 5½	5.50		06	46	52
Forest Hill	5.55		06	56	53
Sydenham	6.40		07	47	60½
Penge West	7.10		08	29	65
Anerley	7.50		08	54	67
MP 8¼	8.25		09	28	68½
Norwood Junction	8.65	12.00	10	06	½ early

the end of 1983, though unit No. 4732 is preserved and was even used on the main line for a while.

They never carried the blue and grey livery, so they are in BR blue with yellow ends in this article. Table One shows an above-average run for an East Croydon to London Victoria train.

4LAVS

The original series of 4LAV (four-car Lavatory stock) units, numbers 1921-1953, were built at Eastleigh carriageworks during 1931 and 1932 for use on the newly electrified London to Brighton line and were fitted with four Metropolitan-Vickers 275hp traction motors. Despite the prominence given to the provision in the SR designation, there was actually only one vehicle containing a lavatory in the whole four-car unit, and due to the lack of corridors, only passengers in that coach had access to it. The units were renumbered 2921-2953 in the January/February 1937 renumbering of SR EMUs.

In their last years, the LAVs worked mainly on the London Victoria to Brighton semi-fast services and peak hour extras, including a Reigate to London Bridge, the 4.49pm from East Croydon to London Bridge, which was my usual train to start my journey home from work for a while and on which I recorded some very fast runs, notably from driver James. Table Two shows two very fast runs, with this driver trying to make up time. It should be noted that the inner suburban speed limit at that time was 60mph! All of these units were withdrawn by 1969.

1951 and 1957 electric multiple unit stock

4EPBs Nos. 5001-5053, 5101-5264, 5301-5370 (BR Class 415)
2EPBS Nos. 5651-5684 (6301-6334), 5702-5779 (6202-6279), 5781-5795 (BR Class 416)

EPB (electro pneumatic brake) suburban units were introduced from 1951 to Southern Railway, and later BR, design.

They had EE507 traction motors rated at 250hp, again with suburban gearing, giving 1000hp per four-coach unit; a few had express gearing. Their use was widespread across all three divisions, though mainly concentrated in the London Suburban area. Unit Nos. 5781-5795 were built in 1954/55 for use on the Newcastle and South Shields line and transferred to the Southern in 1963 after the line was de-electrified.

They could easily be identified by the larger guard's van section. Once again, the EPBs could be very speedy in the right hands. All EPBs were withdrawn by 1995.

I have many memories of the EPBs as they worked the local lines where I lived in Bromley and later near West Wickham.

I travelled to work in London and Croydon aboard them from 1961 until my marriage in

TABLE FIVE: WATERLOOO TO WIMBLEDON

Date	March 7, 1966					May 20, 1966			
Train	12.22pm Waterloo to Guildford (New Line)					12.22pm Waterloo to Guildford (New Line)			
Unit (EPB)	5248					5307			
Recorder	Don Benn					Don Benn			
	miles	**sched**	**mins**	**secs**	**speed**	**sched**	**mins**	**secs**	**speed**
Waterloo	0.00	0.00	00	00		0.00	00	00	
Vauxhall	1.29		02	25	44½		02	14	50
Loco Jct	2.35		03	26	59½		03	14	56½
Queens Road	2.81		03	54	61		03	42	64
Clapham Junction	3.93	6.00	05	20	47*	6.00	05	00	40*
Milepost 5	5.00		06	37	53½		06	20	55
Earlsfield	5.58		07	15	60		06	55	63
Durnsford Road	6.31		07	58	62		07	37	64
Wimbledon	7.24	10.30	09	09		10.30	08	48	

Note the incredibly fast starts compared with what is normal today



On May 26, 1963, 4LAV Nos. 2933 and 2930 pass through Coulsdon North with an Up Brighton Stopper, working at 9.39am. DON BENN

1968, the little trundle along the line from Elmers End to Addiscombe being particularly noteworthy. Well, anything was better than the dreaded 54 bus.

Some of the drivers really thrashed them on the semi-fast peak hour services to and from London, and not just to recover lost time. They were incredibly reliable, and I cannot recall any failures in service which affected me.

Table Three shows a very fast section from my home station of Elmers End to Catford Bridge, which included an amazing stop from over 65mph in 38 seconds for the 0.47 of a mile. The gradient there is 1-in-264 down.

Table Four shows an EPB climbing the 1-in-100 of Brockley bank; speed was still falling at the summit, so it was difficult to estimate what the minimum balancing speed would have been if the climb had continued. It was, however, a very fast run overall.

Finally, Table Five shows two ordinary runs from Waterloo to Wimbledon. At that time, I worked at Waterloo and used this time to fill my lunch hour and photograph the 12.30pm 'Bournemouth Belle.'

2SAP Nos. 5604-5635, 5901-5950
2HAP Nos. 6022/6023/6053-6173 (BR Class 414)
4CAP Nos. 3201-3213 (BR Class 413/2) and Nos. 3301-3311 (Class 413/3)

Technically similar to the EPBs but with express gearing, these units had first class compartments and were used on all three divisions for main line stopping services and Coastway work. The 5604-5635 series were built to Southern Railway design on underframes of 2NOL units in 1934-36. The

TABLE SIX: CANNON STREET TO TONBRIDGE

Date	June 18, 1969
Train	5.10pm Cannon Street to Ramsgate
Units	7160+7013+7134
Load	12 coaches, 3000hp
	445 tons tare, 480 tons gross
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Cannon Street	0.00	0.00	00	00	
			sigs		3*
London Bridge	0.71	2.00	02	50	30
New Cross	3.68		06	44	61
St Johns	4.42	6.00	07	33	50*
			sigs		29*
Parks Bridge jct	5.01		08	30	40
Hither Green	6.03	9.00	09	41	54
Grove Park	7.81		11	30	57
Elmstead Woods	9.09		12	53	58
Chistlehurst	10.07	14.00	13	50	62
Petts Wood	11.52		15	07	64
Orpington	12.64	17.00	16	09	67
			pws		30*
Chelsfield	14.14		17	39	17*
			pws		18*
Knockholt	15.38		20	27	43
Polhill Tunnel North	16.08		21	17	56
Polhill Tunnel South	17.53		22	57	74
Polhill Box (site)	18.03		23	19	78
Dunton Green	19.41		24	22	83
Sevenoaks	20.94	25.30	25	30	73
Sevenoaks Tunnel North	21.48		25	54	70
Sevenoaks Tunnel South	23.48		27	19	84
Weald Box	23.93		27	52	87
MP 26	24.83		28	28	90
Hildenborough	25.86		29	07	96
MP 28	26.83		29	45	93
Tonbridge	28.56	33.00	31	50	

Net time: 27 min 15 sec
Timed from front power car

TABLE SEVEN: CHARING CROSS TO ASHFORD

Date	November 1, 1968				May 22, 1970			
Time	1pm Charing Cross to Ashford				6.56pm relief Charing Cross to Ramsgate			
Units	7184 + 4BEP				EPBs 5717+5043+5240			
Recorder	Don Benn				Don Benn			
Points	**Miles**	**Sched**	**Actual**	**Speed**	**Miles**	**Sched**	**Actual**	**Speed**
Waterloo	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	
London Bridge	1.10	3.00	2.58	*	1.10	3.00	2.26	*
New Cross	4.10	7.00	7.02	60	4.10	7.30	6.10	58½
			p.w.s.	21*				
St.Johns	4.85		8.38	20*	4.85		6.51	47*
Parks Bridge Jct	5.40		9.47	45	5.40	10.30	7.38	50½
Hither Green	6.45	10.00	10.48	54	6.45	11.30	8.41	53½
Grove Park	8.25		12.44	56	8.25		10.44	50
							sigs	38*
Elmstead Woods	9.50		14.10	57	9.50		12.26	46
							sigs	45*
Chistlehurst	10.50	15.00	15.11	61	10.50	16.30	13.34	54½
Orpington	13.05	18.00	17.41	64	13.05	19.30	16.25	57½
Chelsfield	14.55		19.00	62	14.55		18.00	54½
Knockholt	15.80		20.15	60	15.80		19.23	53
Polhill Box (Site)	18.50		22.30	78	18.50		21.59	74
Dunton Green	19.80		23.28	83	19.80		23.03	78
Sevenoaks	21.35	26.30	24.38	72	21.35	27.30	24.20	71
Tunnel North	21.95		25.09	70	21.95		24.50	67
Tunnel South	23.95		p.w.s.	23*	23.95		26.30	75½
Weald Box (Site)	24.35		28.14	61	24.35		26.56	78
Hildenborough	26.25		29.51	80	26.25		28.14	83/85
MP 28	27.25		30.35	82	27.25		28.56	82½
Tonbridge	28.80	33.30	32.15	55*	28.80	34.30	30.50	
Paddock Wood	34.10	38.30	36.39	86/88				
Marden	38.65		39.52	84				
Staplehurst	41.15		41.33	88				
Headcorn	44.50		43.50	91				
MP 47	46.25		45.02	87				
MP 49	48.25		46.28	84				
Pluckley	49.70		47.32	86				
Chart Siding (Site)	53.25		50.03	83				
Ashford	55.35	57.30	52.14					

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



CAPs were four-coach sets formed from 2HAPs. My journey to work in Maidstone from Paddock Wood often involved travelling in a HAP unit aboard the non-stop 8.51am train.

4BEP Nos. 7001-7022 (BR Class 412)
4CEP Nos. 7101-7211 (BR Class 411)

Six prototype express units, Nos. 7101-7104 and 7001/2, were introduced in 1956 with 1951 electrical equipment and express gearing; CEP designated a Corridor EPB and BEP meant Buffet EPB. Further batches with 1957 electrical equipment followed from 1958 through to 1963, initially for phase one of the Kent Coast electrification scheme. Unit No. 7153 was rebuilt in 1975 with a revised formation, and the remainder followed in due course.

They worked on the South Eastern and Central Divisions and proved to be very speedy on the faster services, though rough riding was experienced until fitted with Commonwealth bogies. In 1980-1983, they were renumbered into the series 1501-1620 (CEPs) and 2301-2307 (BEPs), with some reformed into three-car formations as 3TEPs. I travelled home from work in London to Ashford for many years, mainly on the 5.10pm from Cannon Street which was allowed just 62 minutes with one stop at Tonbridge. It was a 12-car consist comprising two 4CEPs plus a 4BEP aboard which the buffet car attendants served the city gents in their first class compartments.

This train was nearly always on time or early into Ashford. It was on this train that I timed many very good runs, sometimes with the drivers ignoring the 90mph speed limit to make up time. They finished their days in 2004/5 on the South Eastern and on the South Western Division, where some were modified as Greyhound CEPs with an extra stage of field weakening. It was on the SW Division that I timed one at 100mph.

Table Six shows a very fast run, the aforesaid 5.10pm Cannon Street; net time was inside even time and the maximum 96mph at Hildenough was helped by 73mph through Sevenoaks (where the limit was 60mph). One wonders how the gents in first class got on with their gin and tonics? Table Seven shows two more very fast runs down the SE main line, including my fastest run of many from Waterloo to Ashford, helped again by passing Sevenoaks well over the speed limit and by Tonbridge 5mph over the limit, which was most uncomfortable. Net time for this storming run with two restrictions in speed for trackwork was about 50 minutes. The second section was an extraordinary run with EPBs on a relief train. Maybe some of the stock had express gearing, but No. 5717 certainly would not have. The 85mph was my highest with EPBs.

Bournemouth Stock
4REP Nos. 3001-3015 (BR Class 430/432)
TCs 401-434 (BR Class 491/438)

These units were introduced in 1967 and 1974 for the Bournemouth electrification. The REPs were tractor units with one 400hp English Electric traction motor on each axle of each motor coach, of which there was one at each end of a four coach unit – 3200hp in total – and were therefore very powerful. Normally, they would work with two 4TC units as far as Bournemouth, where one unit would then be taken forward to Weymouth by a Class 33 diesel locomotive.

When working as REP, plus one TC unit, the acceleration could be very rapid, far exceeding anything else working on the Southern at that time. I once timed one at 106mph, and it gave me a faster time between Basingstoke and Woking than the best I had in the days of steam – but not by much! Only the Class 50 locomotives could equal this, though the current excellent Class 444s can do so on a daily basis as they are allowed 100mph. A more normal run to Southampton with a REP/TC combination is included in this column.

Speed was officially limited to 90mph due to braking distances. They were replaced by September 1991 with Class 442 electric units. Table Eight shows a good timekeeping run on one of the non-stops which ran for a while in 70 minutes for the 79.24 miles, a time not possible

Above: A trio of 2HAPs at Whetstead on July 29, 1983, with No. 6156 bringing up the rear of the six-car formation of this 4.03pm working from Charing Cross to Ramsgate. DON BENN

TABLE EIGHT: WATERLOO TO SOUTHAMPTON

Date	December 14, 1968
Train	10.30am Waterloo to Weymouth
Units	REP 3005 and TC 405
Load	8 coaches, 3200hp, 311 tons tare, 335 tons gross
Recorder	Don Benn

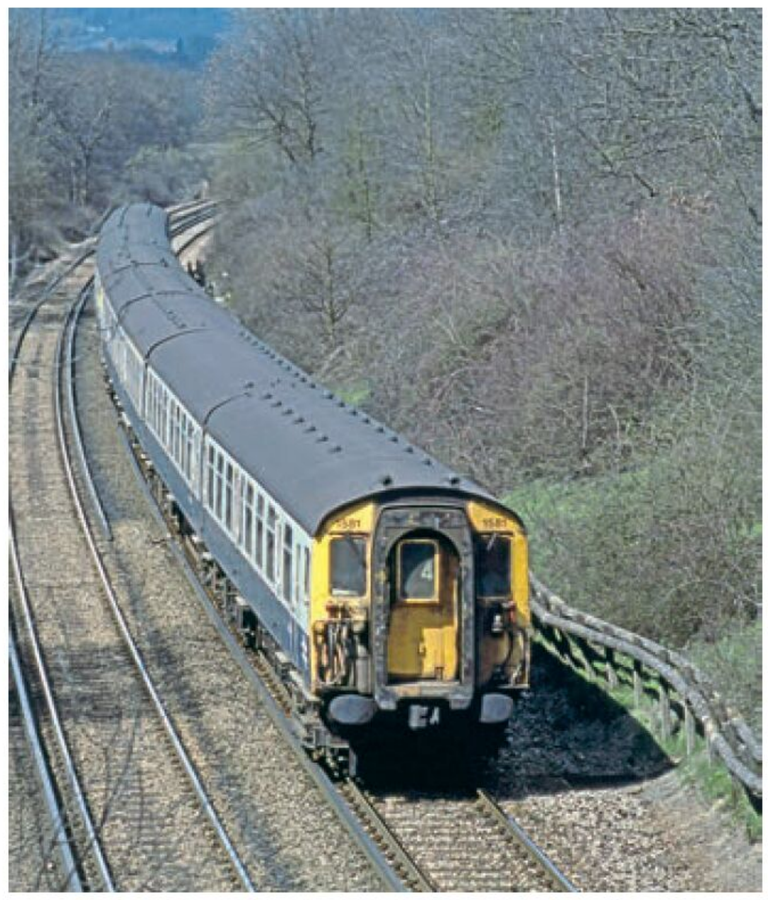
	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Waterloo	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Vauxhall	1.29		02	22	44/60
Clapham Junction	3.93	6.30	05	25	40*/62
Wimbledon	7.24		10	37	4* tsr/sigs
New Malden	9.78		13	21	62/51* sigs
Surbiton	12.04		16	10	60
Hampton Court Jct	13.34	16.00	17	25	64
Hersham	15.91		19	30	82
Walton	17.08		20	20	85
Weybridge	19.15		21	46	88
Byfleet and New Haw	20.40		22	38	92
Woking	24.29	25.00	25	20	87/86
Brookwood	27.99		27	54	87/89
MP 31	31.00		29	55	88/94
Farnborough	33.20		31	22	90/85
Fleet	36.48		33	39	90/94
Winchfield	39.83		35	54	86/85
Hook	42.16		37	31	87
Basingstoke	47.75		41	38	65*/73
Worting Jct	50.26	45.00	43	51	60*
Wootton Box	52.50		45	54	75
Roundwood Box	56.20		48	31	90/92
Micheldever	58.05		49	47	90/86
Wallers Ash Box	61.70		52	17	90/92
Winchester Jct Box	64.45	56.00	54	03	88/61* tsr
Winchester	66.55		55	56	86/92
Shawford	69.61		58	06	88/92
Eastleigh	73.45	62.30	60	55	60*
St Denys	77.12		64	0	76
Northam Jct	78.20	67.00	65	11	14*
Southampton Central	79.24	70.00	67	43	

Net time: 65 min

* brakes or speed restriction



4REP No. 3005, with 4TC No. 418 trailing, approaches Basingstoke with the 9am from Bournemouth to Waterloo on February 2, 1986. DON BENN



Class 411 EMU Nos. 1581 and 1563 at high speed near Hildenborgh with the 12.25pm Charing Cross to Dover Priory service on April 25, 1986. DON BENN

today due to all the extra stops needed to cater for traffic growth. The net time of 65 minutes was equaled by Merchant Navy class No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* on the night of May 15, 1965, by estimating the net time less all the time for the stops and the time taken slowing down and accelerating from these.

TABLE NINE: TUNBRIDGE WELLS TO BATTLE

Date	May 1, 1984
Train	9.15am Charing Cross to Hastings
Units	1011 and 1019
Load	12 coaches, 2000hp
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Tunbridge Wells Central	0.00	0.00	00	00	
Grove Jct	0.26		01	01	30
Frant	2.26		04	01	56/60
Wadhurst	4.89		07	03	47*
MP 42	7.60		09	40	72
Stonegate	9.17		11	05	83
MP 46	11.60		12	36	90
Etchingham	13.03		13	36	84
MP 48½	14.10		14	22	82
Robertsbridge	15.19		15	14	78
Mountfield	17.58		17	54	53*
MP 54	19.60		19	20	67
Battle	21.20	24.30	21	12	

Start-to-stop average exactly 60mph
Power on all the way from MP 42 to MP 51
Timed from third car back in 1011
* brakes or speed restriction

TABLE TEN: TONBRIDGE TO SEVENOAKS

Date	May 9, 1986
Train	8.40am Hastings to Charing Cross
Units	1016 and 1011
Load	12 coaches, 2000hp
Recorder	Don Benn
Position	Back
Weather	Rain

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Tonbridge	0.00	0.00	00	00	5¼ late
MP 28	1.55		03	07	42½
Hildenborough	2.55		04	35	42
MP 26	3.55		05	58	43
Weald	4.45		07	07	43½
Tunnel South	4.90		07	52	44
Tunnel North	6.90		10	30	47
Sevenoaks	7.45	11.30	11	29	

Diesel multiple units

6S Class 201 Nos. 1001-1007
6L Class 202 Nos. 1011-1019
6B Class 203 Nos. 1031-1037
3R Class 206 Nos. 1201-1206

These six-coach units were introduced in 1957/58 to replace steam on the Charing Cross to Hastings line via Tunbridge Wells. Due to tight clearances in the tunnels, they were 8ft 2½in wide with flat-sided bodies. 6S referred to short-bodied types, 6L long bodies, and 6B had buffet cars. Each of the two motor coaches had an English Electric four-cylinder 4SRKT engine feeding two EE507 250hp traction motors, giving 1000hp per six-coach unit or 2000hp for a 12-coach train, as compared to 3000hp for a 12 CEP formation. This meant the trains had to be allowed extra time on the main line between London and Tonbridge, especially as they were limited (in theory) to 75mph. Performance uphill could be dreary, particularly with two of the heavier 6L units. They were, however, my favourite class of Southern Region multiple units, and I have a great number of photographs and train running logs of them.

To get an 'even time' start-to-stop run was very unusual and one is shown here, achieved with the help of a complete disregard of the 75mph limit; they could be very rough riding at speed. They were withdrawn when the Hastings line was electrified in May 1986, but one unit, No. 1001, and formed of various coaches including Mk. 1 trailer stock, is preserved and works on the main line from time to time. There was much reforming of the units, and in 1965, Nos. 1002-1004 were disbanded and formed into six three-coach (3R) units (Nos. 1201-1206), each with a driving trailer from a 2EPB. This gave them their nickname of 'Tadpoles.' For some years I travelled home from work in one between Redhill to Tonbridge. Table Nine shows a very rare even time run with a 90mph maximum speed, this between Tunbridge Wells and Battle.

I had two other 90mph runs with these units, one at Hildenborough on the 5.24pm Charing Cross to Hastings and one on the last day below Stonegate. I have this one on tape, and you can hear my shouts of joy as I counted the rail joints to confirm the speed. Finally, Table Ten shows a climb of the 1-in-122 Hildenborogh bank, which shows a balancing speed of about 43mph before the gradient eased to 1-in-144

Next time, I will revert to my more conventional subject of steam. HR



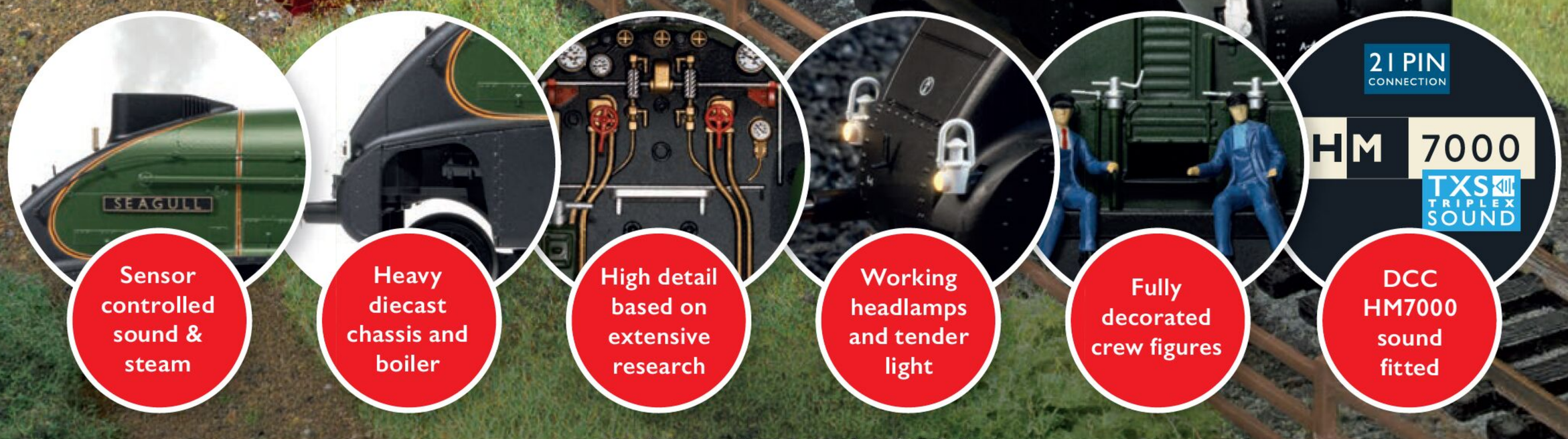
4SUB No. 4291 at Wandsworth Common on September 30, 1982, working the 2.13pm from London Victoria to Beckenham Junction. DON BENN

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

HORNBY®

STEAM GENERATOR

‘THE STREAKS’



AVAILABLE NOW

R30552SS	BR, Class A4, ‘Seagull’, 60033 (With Steam Generator)	HM 7000 TXS TRIPLEX SOUND 21 PIN CONNECTION
R30553SS	BR, Class A4, 60024 ‘Kingfisher’ (With Steam Generator)	HM 7000 TXS TRIPLEX SOUND 21 PIN CONNECTION
R30554SS	BR, Class A460002 ‘Sir Murrough Wilson’ (With Steam Generator)	HM 7000 TXS TRIPLEX SOUND 21 PIN CONNECTION

00 GAUGE MODEL RAILWAYS

For more information please visit your local Hornby stockist or go to **hornby.com**

Hornby Model Railways · hornby · officialhornby · officialhornby · hornbymodelrailways

Pegasus combine flies to the top



GWR name and numberplate 'combine' *Pegasus* from Bulldog 4-4-0 No. 3331was the stand-out winner in Great Central's September 5 live online auction when it went under Martin Quartermain's hammer for £10,500, although the LNER just failed to join it in the five-figure sector when *Loch Long* from K4 class 2-6-0 No. 61993 sold for £9600.

In a show of 'Big Four' democracy, the third of the elite, the Southern Railway, then joined in with *Watersmeet* and West Country Class scroll from No. 34030 (£7200) and *Lord St. Levan* from 757 class 0-6-2T No. 30758 (£4600), although the fourth member of the steam aristocracy, the LMS, failed to make an entrance. Instead, the GWR returned with *Borwick Hall* and matching 6921 cabside numberplate (£4400), and the LNER too with *Hatfield House* from B17 No. 61621 (£3800) and *Holkham* from classmate No. 61601 that went for £3400. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT). Further details of the auction, including an Irish nameplate that gave the mainland representatives a run for their money and Isle of Wight memorabilia, will be published in the railwayana column in next month's issue.

MLR spans the ages with steam and diesel traction

A worksplate from an LNER locomotive withdrawn 91 years ago and a cabside flamecut and worksplate from a 1961-built Class 55 Deltic will span the ages as the highlights in Main Line Railwayana's September 26 auction.

I will defer to age and turn the spotlight firstly on the steam contender, a worksplate from J21 class 0-6-0 No. 316 built at Gateshead Works in 1890 to the design of North Eastern Railway Chief Mechanical Engineer Thomas Worsdell and withdrawn in 1935. A total of 201 of these sturdy workhorses were constructed at Gateshead and Darlington between 1886 and1894, and 21 were still in service at Nationalisation in 1948. The last survivor, No. 65033, was saved for preservation on withdrawal in April 1962, although this wasn't the first time it had evaded the cutter's torch, the first being in December 1939 when it was condemned but was subsequently returned to work due to wartime shortages.

The flamecut is from No. 55003, which was outshopped by English Electric/Vulcan Foundry in March 1961 as D9003, named *Meld* four months after entering traffic, and withdrawn from its long-time Finsbury Park home in December 1980.



There will also be a selection of worksplate from Class 37 diesels, and from the BR Standard era comes the smokebox numberplate from No. 80146. This Class 4MT 2-6-4T was built at Brighton in October 1956 and spent its short operational life on the Southern Region before being withdrawn from Bournemouth (70F) on July 9, 1967, the very last day of Southern steam. The auction will be live online and starts at 10am.



Even when stationary, a Class 55 Deltic exudes power, illustrated by D9003 *Meld* seen here at an unidentified location. The date is also unknown, although it would have been between July 1961, when the locomotive was named, and February 1974, when it was renumbered. A flamecut cabside numberplate carrying the Co-Co diesel's later No. 55003 and also one of its worksplates will are in a Main Line Railwayana auction on September 26. TRANSPORT TREASURY

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

TRA's main line *Resolution*

SIR William Stanier and Arthur Peppercorn design excellence will be at the forefront of Talisman's 25th anniversary October 24 auction when nameplates *Resolution,* from LMS Jubilee No. 45708, and *Bois Roussel,* from LNER A1 No. 60117, will seek new owners, although heritage modern traction will also be eyeing up the top slot with a Class 40 contender.

The LMS representative was a June 1936 Crewe product that was withdrawn from Farnley Junction near Leeds (55C) in March 1964, while No. 60117 was built by BR at Doncaster in October 1948 and withdrawn from Ardsley (56B) on June 1965 after fewer than 17 years in service. This Pacific was named after the winner of the 1938 Epsom Derby, who was the great-grandfather of none other than three times Grand National winner Red Rum.

The heritage modern traction sector includes *Scythia Cunard Lines,* from D230/40030, a Class 40 built by English Electric/Vulcan Foundry in September 1959 and named in April 1961. I logged this 1Co-Co1 at Lichfield Trent Valley on August 6, 1960, in charge of the Up 'Merseyside Express' during seven hours of trainspotting, when I also noted no fewer than 17 other members of the class (and, since you ask, five Princess Coronations and 12 Royal Scots representing the ex-LMS steam elite).

Back to Talisman's auction line-up, a selection of LNER Doncaster worksplates includes



1924 works No. 1605 from A3 No. 60050 *Persimmon,* 1947 works No. 2014 from A2 No. 60523 *Sun Castle*, and from a more humble locomotive, 1928 works No. 1658 from No. 68961, a J50 class 0-6-0T that was withdrawn from revenue-earning duties in September 1962 when allocated to Doncaster (36A) but stayed at the works there as Departmental No. 14 until final withdrawal in September 1965.

A Great Northern Railway plate from another Doncaster-built engine will also hope to catch the eye. It is from C1 class 4-4-2 No. 295 (works No. 1071), which entered traffic in May 1905, was renumbered 3295 and subsequently 2823 by the LNER, and withdrawn from King's Cross 'Top shed' in August 1947, just five months before it would have been numbered 62823 by BR following Nationalisation.

Further details of the auction will published in next month's railwayana column.



Right: Talisman Railwayana's Sandra and Roger Phipps share a happy moment on the footplate of world-record holder A4 No. 60022 *Mallard* at the NRM. The couple will be celebrating the auction house's 25th anniversary at its next sale at Newark Showground on October 24, a preview of which is included in this column. TALISMAN RAILWAYANA

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **September 26**
  Main Line Railwayana
- **September 29/30**
  Vectis
  (model trains)
- **October 7/8**
  Harper Field
  (model trains)
- **October 14**
  Lacy Scott & Knight
  (model trains and railwayana)
- **October 24**
  Talisman Railwayana

LSK models put on a top variety show

EIGHT model locomotives in a variety of gauges were in the four-figure hammer price category of a Lacy Scott & Knight of Bury St Edmunds auction on August 18. At their head was a gauge one live steam GWR No. 6990 *Witherslack Hall* that went for £3300, closely followed at £3100 by a 3½in gauge live steam Midland Railway 115 class 4-2-2.

A gauge one live steam Britannia No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* was next up at £2100, and at £1600 came an O-gauge LNER P2 class 2-8-2 No. 2003 *Lord President*, and at £1250 a three-rail electric LMS No. 6100 *Royal Scot*. A4 No. 4482 *Golden Eagle* in O-gauge achieved £1200, a gauge one live steam GWR 0-6-0PT No. 3738 sold for £1100, and a bid of £1000 secured an O-gauge GWR 0-6-0PT No. 5747. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

■ THREE small collections of O-gauge models were the dominant force in a Vectis sale on August 26, with the leader of the pack at £750 being four clockwork GNR, LMS, GWR and LNER tender and tank engines that included GWR No. 3433 *City of Bath*. At £680 came four kit-built models, one of which was No. 70000 *Britannia,* and at £620 were six Bing live steam models including a GWR model numbered 489. Close behind these three collections was a Hornby O-gauge three-rail electric LMS No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* that fetched £600. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

Late driver's Doncaster legacy and infrastructure shots

A COLLECTION of 160 official BR prints featuring private owner wagons and vehicles in 1971 topped the JustaClickAgo August 24-30 sale of railway photographs, negatives, prints, slides and paperwork with a realisation of £560, behind which were 75 slides taken by Doncaster driver the late Kevin Downes that sold for £350.

This selection included Class 55 Deltics in service in the early 1980s and also in store or being cut up. Another selection of official BR prints that sold for £330 illustrated rolling stock, road delivery vehicles and historical infrastructure construction, including London Bridge station, Charing Cross bridge, Meldon Viaduct, Britannia Bridge in Conway, the piers at North Woolwich, and the Romford station widening scheme.

A total of 450 images of infrastructure far and wide in the 1980s, from Swansea to Inverness and Bristol to Bolton and Settle, fetched £310, and a collection of BR steam in 1963 mainly on the Southern Region but also featuring Sentinel Y3 class 0-4-0T Departmental No. 7 at Lowestoft sleeper works, attracted a top bid of £260. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 18%.

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

GNRA travels north of the border

SCOTLAND will make its presence felt in Great Northern Railwayana's September 23-October 3 online auction thanks to a Glasgow-built LMS Royal Scot headlining the 10-day sale and a Fife station getting in on the act with two enamel signs.

The Royal Scot is No. 46133, one of whose *The Green Howards* nameplates with regimental crest will be going under the hammer. This 4-6-0 was built by North British of Glasgow in October 1927 and withdrawn from the Manchester shed of Newton Heath (26A) in February 1963 after many years at Leeds Holbeck (55A). Meanwhile, Cupar is the station that will be reinforcing the Scottish presence, with the two enamels that comprise firstly a platform totem sign and secondly what GNRA boss Dave Robinson believes is either a seatback or posterboard header. Located on the Edinburgh-Dundee route, this



Category B-listed station was opened by the Edinburgh & Northern Railway in 1847 and is still operational today, nearly 180 years later.

Another Scottish totem is Kilpatrick, a station 11 miles from Glasgow Queen Street that was opened by the Glasgow Dumbarton and Helensburgh Railway in 1858 and is also still open as part of the North Clyde rail network, while Stirling and Bridge of Allan platform totem signs will also be seeking new owners.

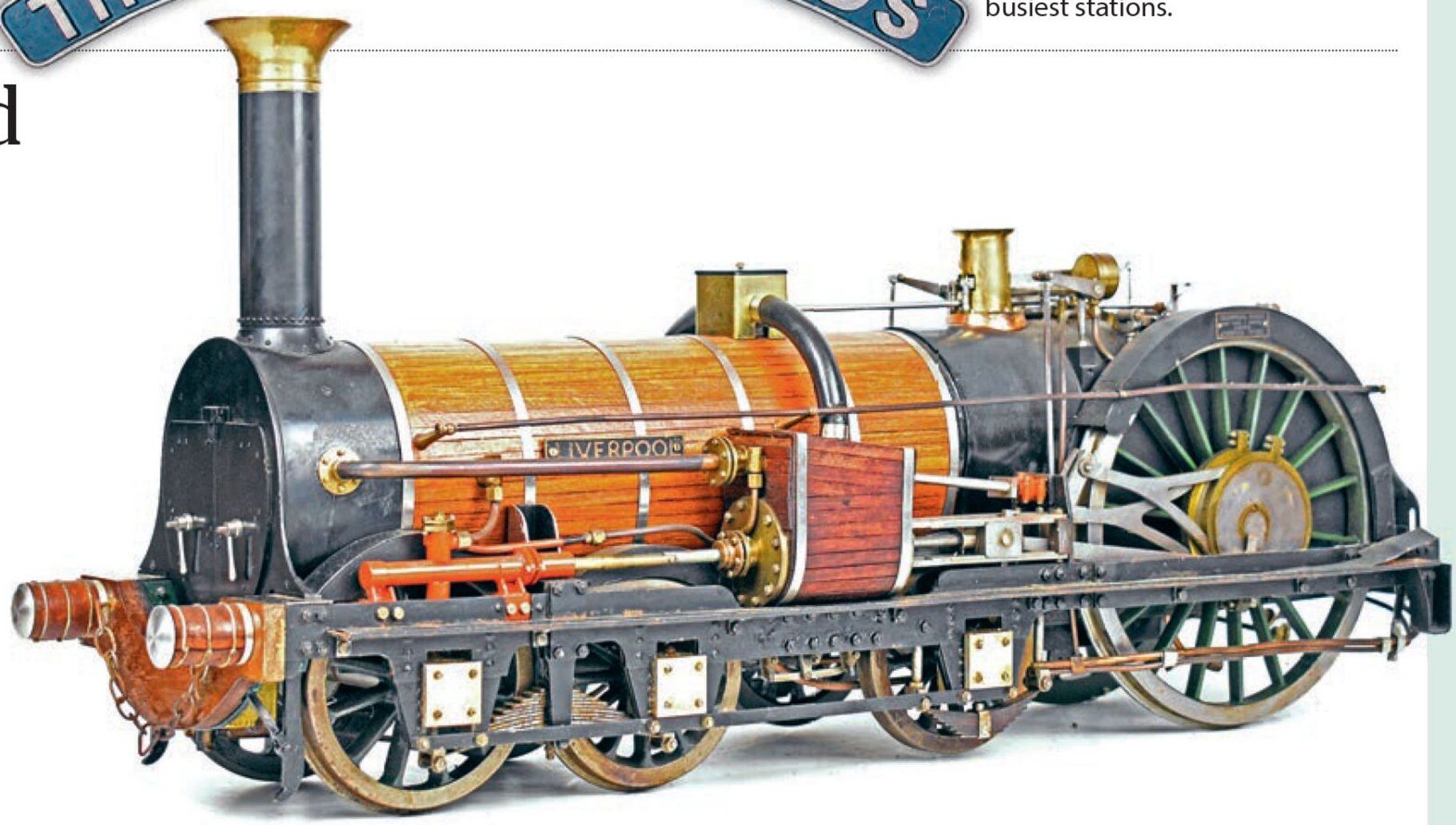
We now travel across the border to Manchester, from where three station totems show their hand – Central, Exchange and Victoria, a trio ably supported by Stockport Tiviot Dale and Stockport Edgeley direction signs, and continuing our enamel journey we finish in south-west London with a Southern Railway target sign from Clapham Junction, one of Europe's busiest stations.

Harper Field raises the standard

A LIVE steam model of an LNER A3 constructed to exhibition standard and a 5in gauge Crampton 6-2-0 based on an LNWR award-winning locomotive headline a Harper Field of Stroud auction on October 7/8.

Modelled on No. 2581 (BR No. 60082) *Neil Gow*, the 3½in gauge A3 was built in about 1924 by John Ballingall, who was born in 1867 and worked at the Caledonian Railway's St Rollox Works in Glasgow. After his death in 1928, it was loaned to the city's Kelvingrove Art Gallery. Nearly 100 years later, it is now being put on the market by John's granddaughter.

The Crampton model is based on a locomotive named *Liverpool* that was constructed by Bury Curtis & Kennedy for the LNWR in 1848 and was awarded a gold medal at the Great Exhibition held in Hyde Park, London, in 1851.



Another exhibition-standard live steam model in the auction is 5in gauge Palatine Railways P4 class 4-4-2 *von Frauendorfer* that carries J.A. Maffei of Munich 1905 maker's plates on the cylinders and is estimated to sell for up to £10,000. The auction, which includes railwayana, is live online and starts at 10am each day.

Like us facebook.com/heritagerailway

Follow us @HeritageRailMag

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 351

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

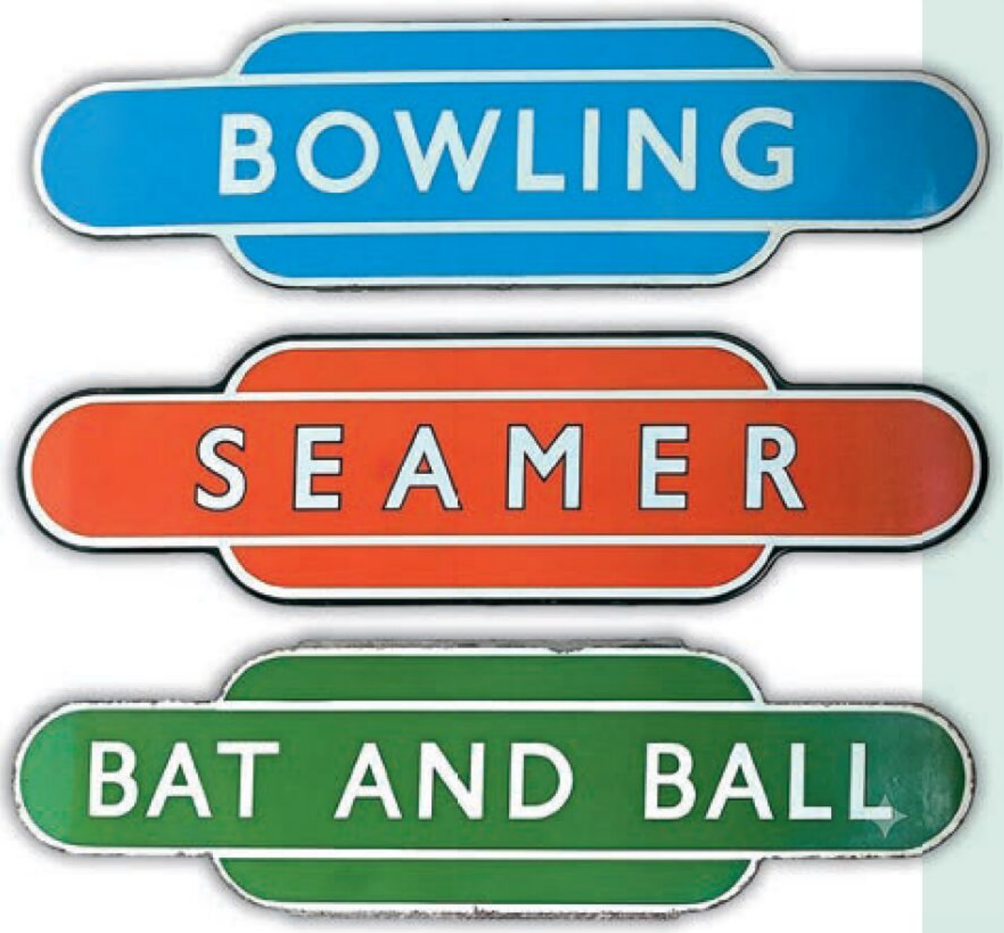
SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Totems are a platform for a themed collection

ONE of the most popular long-standing railwayana collecting categories is platform totem signs, due to such attractions having an ability to induce memories of one's childhood village or town, or a location that recalls trainspotting memories, or quite simply because they are small enough to display without taking over a large amount of wall space while offering the bonus of being available in a range of colours.

Another draw to some is a particular theme, an example of which I have often mulled over but never pursued, being UK vehicle manufacturers, with Ford probably the most obvious, followed by Vauxhall, Caterham, Singer, Bentley, Leyland, and a real outlier in vehicular terms, Rochdale. All of these stations carried totems, which were introduced by BR shortly after Nationalisation and had all been removed by 1988.

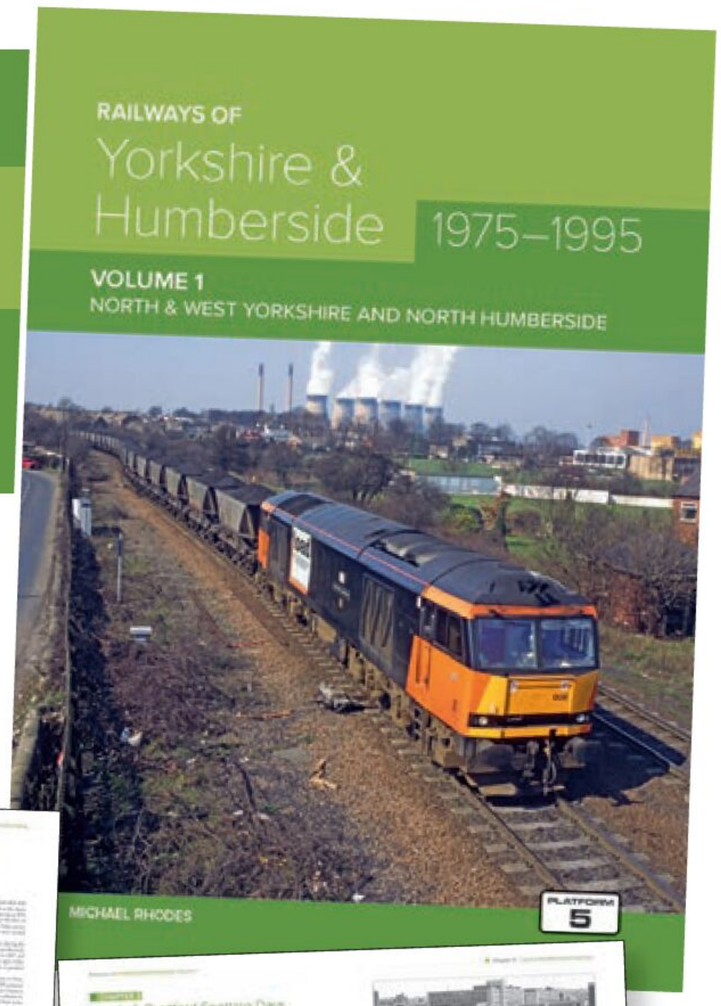
Next month's issue will include some more thoughts on this subject and highlight a themed cricket collection (see accompanying photograph) owned by one of the UK's highest-profile railwayana personalities.



Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

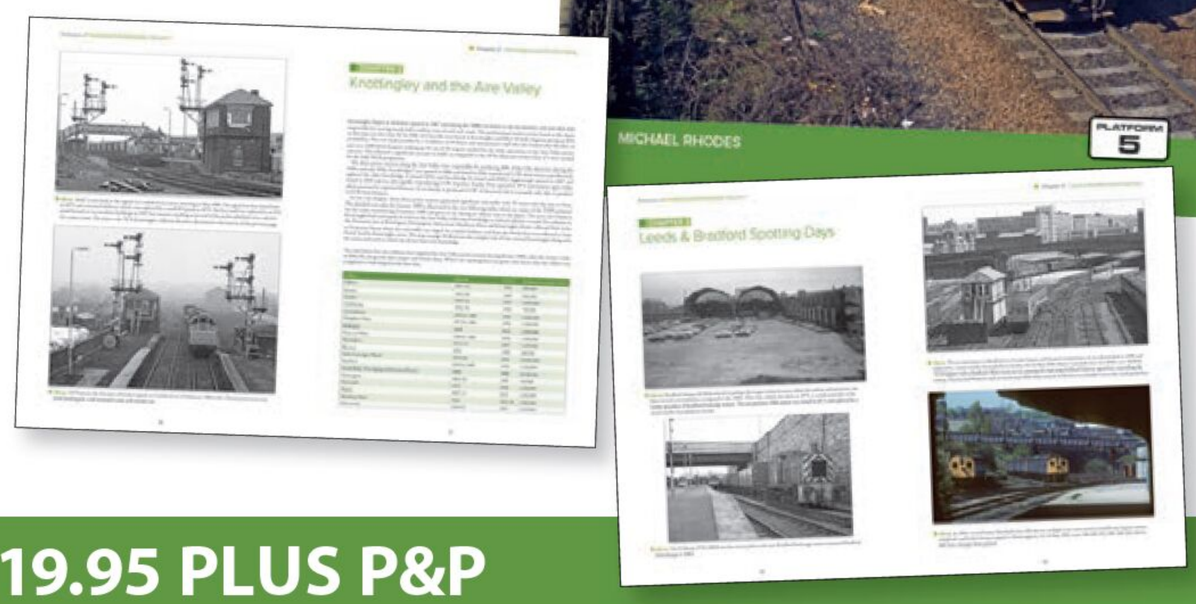
www.platform5.com

RAILWAYS OF 1975–1995
Yorkshire & Humberside
VOLUME 1
NORTH & WEST YORKSHIRE AND NORTH HUMBERSIDE



The period between 1975 and 1995 saw significant changes to the railways of Yorkshire and Humberside, with the closure of many lines serving collieries, quarries and other industrial sites such as the Rowntree's chocolate factory in York. The author visited the region on several occasions in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, during which time he took the opportunity to capture many soon to be unrepeatable images from the area's once extensive network of freight lines, as well as the railways in and around Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Hull, York and Scarborough.

In this first of two books, Michael Rhodes provides an illustrated guide to the railways of North and West Yorkshire and North Humberside. Using over 160 photographs and extensive captions, Railways of Yorkshire & Humberside Volume 1: North & West Yorkshire and North Humberside illustrates and describes the railways of the area during this period of enormous change. **A4 size. 96 pages. £22.95 plus P&P.**



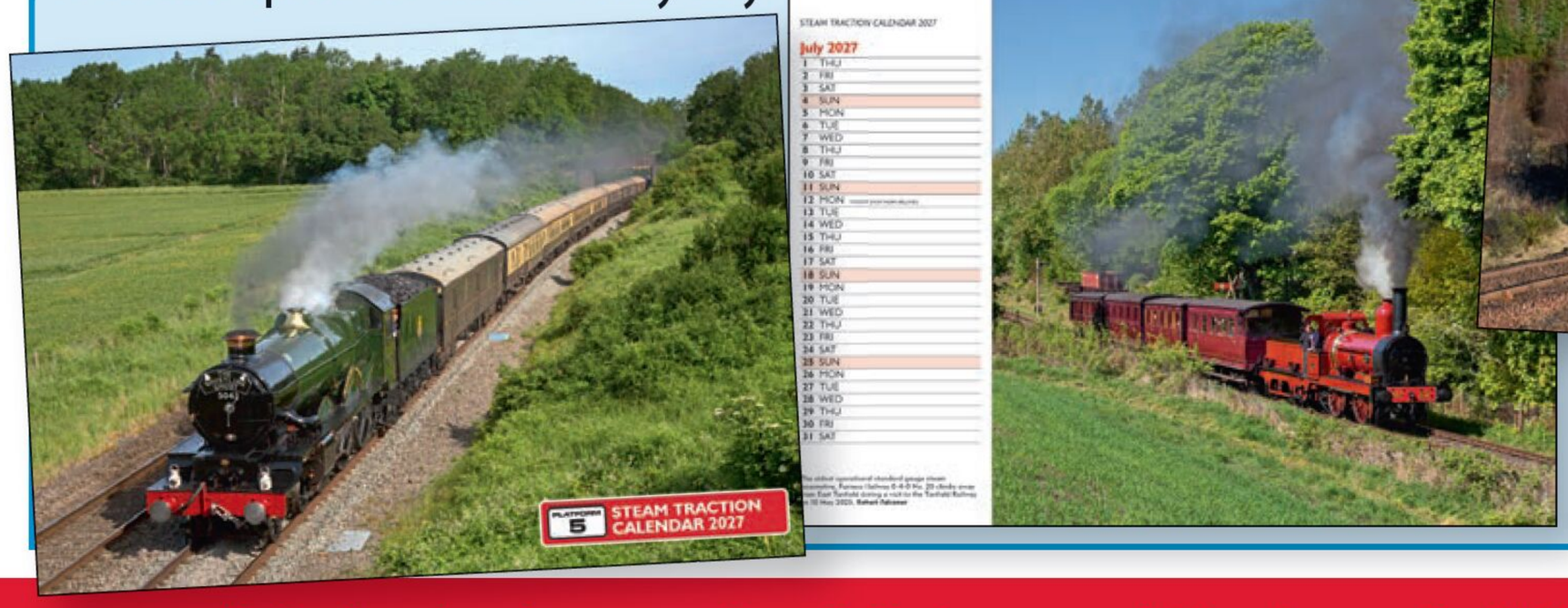
SAVE £3. ORDER DIRECT FOR JUST £19.95 PLUS P&P

Pay just £19.95 plus P&P at **www.platform5.com** using promotion code **ROYH** at the basket, or order by post/telephone from Platform 5 Mail Order. Offer ends 31/12/2026.

PLATFORM 5 STEAM TRACTION CALENDAR 2027

PLATFORM 5 MODERN TRACTION CALENDAR 2027

High quality colour images from some of Britain's best railway photographers. Produced in one-month-per page format with reserved space for notes every day.



£10.50 each plus P&P.

Mail order prices shown are only available from www.platform5.com or the Platform 5 Mail Order Department.

ORDER BY POST, TELEPHONE OR AT www.platform5.com

POSTAGE & PACKING: Please add postage based on order sub-total: **UK Delivery:** Sub-total under £35 - add £3.00, sub-total £35-85 - add £6.00, sub-total over £85 - **FREE DELIVERY!**
Europe Delivery: Under £35 - £10.00, £35-85 - £25.00, Over £85 - £35.00. **Rest of World Delivery:** Under £35 - £15.00, £35-85 - £35.00, Over £85 - £50.00

24-hour Order Line: 0114 255 8000

Or send your credit/debit card details, sterling cheque or British Postal order payable to Platform 5 Publishing Ltd. to:

VISA mastercard

Mail Order Department (HR), Platform 5 Publishing Ltd, 52 Broadfield Road, SHEFFIELD, S8 0XJ, ENGLAND

MAIN LINE AND BRITISH STEAM LOCOMOTIVES PRESERVED IN JAPAN

In our last issue, **John Titlow** looked at Japan's railway museums and the British-built gems preserved from a number of recognised locomotive builders. Here he continues his journey through the Land of the Rising Sun to find as many British-built steam locomotives in the areas he visited, discovering and photographing some unexpected surprises along the way.

After visiting the beautiful city of Kyoto and its railway museum, the return to Tokyo by bullet train was impressive, reaching a top speed of 175mph and covering 290 miles in two hours and 15 minutes.

Hiring a car set me up for a week to search for gems, visit the only heritage railway run by volunteers in Japan, and see two main line steam trains in action on very scenic lines.

Railway preservation is completely different from the UK, especially working steam on the main line. Everything is done in-house by the various railway companies and no private steam trains run on the national network. The closest to a preserved railway as we know it is the Rass Chijn Railway Society at Narita.

Plinthed steam locomotives are in some of the most unlikely places, hidden in small children's parks and villages scattered all over the country. Their locations are well-documented, particularly on Rob Dickinson's excellent website, www.internationalsteam.co.uk, which I used as a guide.

Steam on the main line

With the world's weather patterns changing and drought becoming the norm, the worry of lineside fires has, in this summer's heatwave, stopped steam running on the UK heritage railways and main line. In early May, two scenic lines were visited in Japan and both were running coal-fired steam locomotives.

The closest main line steam working to Tokyo is about 40 miles north, where heritage steam has operated since 1988. There, the 'Paleo Express' runs on the Chichibu Railway between Kumagaya and the end of its main line to Mitsumineguchi. The route between Kumagaya and Yorii opened in 1901, but it was not until 1930 that it reached Mitsumineguchi.

Stopping at several stations, services travel at a leisurely pace, taking just under three hours one way to cover the 35-mile journey. The name Paleo comes from an ancient marine dinosaur that was discovered to have lived in the area about 20 million years ago.

The service was hauled by C58 363, a 2-6-2 built for Japanese National Railways by Kawasaki Sharyō in 1944 and is now owned by the Chichibu Railway. In 2012, it suffered two separate derailments and was taken out of service due to heavy wheel damage. It was repaired at Hirosegawahara Depot, re-entering service in 2013. General repairs and inspections are done at Gunma General Rolling Stock Depot and Ōmiya Railway Works, near the National Railway Museum.

Apparently, it is rare to see this locomotive operating as it is not fitted with the latest safety equipment.

Scenery around this electrified line is generally flat, but the hills close in around the middle section and approaching the terminus at Mitsumineguchi.

This final section after Chichibu is the hardest climb on the line, with many barrier-free village crossings, and the locomotive's American chime whistle works overtime as it works hard against the grade and continual tight curves. It makes light work of its four carriages on most other sections.

There are some very attractive – though tight – locations and river bridges. At one superb location, two elderly photographers appeared shocked when a westerner



Mitsubishi Heavy Industries 4-6-2 C57 180 crosses the River Ichinoto approaching Yamoto, while returning to Niitsu on May 5.

C57 180 Approaching Shinseki on the Ban-etsu line on May 5.

appeared on the scene; the angle would have improved had they not parked one car in shot, too close to the line!

At Mitsumineguchi, the locomotive can be viewed turning from SL Turntable park immediately alongside the line.

Tickets are available online and at stations. Cost of a return journey is very reasonable at £10, with an additional £7 charge for steam, but no reductions for children. Operating days are public holidays, festival days and weekends between March and December 6.

For further information, see www.chichibu-railway.co.jp/slpaleo/ and use auto-translate.

JR Ban-etsu West Line

Completed 1917, the scenery of this unelectrified line compares to the Settle and Carlisle. Most of it follows a different valley from the main road, with much of it inaccessible by road.

The train runs from Niitsu, about 200 miles due north of Tokyo, to Aizuwakamatsu through rugged and picturesque mountains that separate Niigata and Fukushima prefectures. Journey time is about three hours one way, covering nearly 70 miles, and diesel trains take between two to two-and-a-half hours.

Seven carriages were hauled by Pacific C57 180, built by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries at its Mihara Plant in 1946. It entered service at Niigata Depot for use on express passenger trains and remained there for much of its working life. It received a new Hitachi boiler in 1958 and was transferred to Niitsu in 1963 before pulling its last passenger train in 1969, making it a very local engine!

Once withdrawn, it went on display at Niitsu Daiichi Elementary School, running to the school gates on a temporary track under its own power. The engineer in charge described the operation as 'scary due to the lack of



Dübs & Co 0-6-2T No. 2109 of 1891 outside its shed in the Museum of Industrial Technology at Miyashiro-cho.



Near Toyosu station in south Tokyo is Nasmyth Wilson 0-6-2T No. 403 of1886, plinthed in the open.

ballast.' It was cared for by former employees of Niitsu Depot, local residents and students from the elementary school.

In 1997, an association to operate the locomotive was formed by Niitsu residents to restore it to running order at a cost of £1 million; half of this was funded by them. It was rebuilt at Ōmiya Works and re-entered service in 1999.

Tickets are available online and at stations. Cost of a return journey is very reasonable at just over £20, but again, there are no reductions for children. Operating days are primarily weekends and national holidays between April and November.

Main line overview

My friend Yamamoto Takahide says the stock and headboards are not authentic, but from a personal viewpoint, having never seen Japanese main line steam, I was not disappointed. The carriages were a uniform rake with units on top for air conditioning. Timetables are published on the web.

There are several other lines that operate steam but are miles away from Tokyo. For example, the Oigawa Railway, 130 miles from Tokyo, runs Thomas the Tank Engine trains hauled by bright-blue C11 190.

Japanese railway photographers have a very different style, tending to use huge telephoto lenses while almost standing on the ballast; all you would see is the front end and little of the wheels. Standing on the ballast is acceptable in Japan, whereas it would not be considered a place of safety in the UK – ironically, in Japan you are still not allowed to cross the line! There appears very little train-in-landscape style of photography. Locations can be tight.

The trust and honesty in Japanese society is visible when tripods are left out overnight to secure that optimum position for the following day. I saw this happen in a few locations. It would not happen here, sadly.

Rass Chijin Railway Society at Narita

By all accounts, the Rass Chijin Railway Society, located at the Narita Dream Dairy Farm, is the only volunteer-run heritage railway society in Japan that operates steam trains.

It was established in 1973 to preserve what is left of light railways in the country, and at Narita it has constructed a 2ft-gauge circular track, complete with a wooden trestle bridge, built sheds, workshops and a statio.

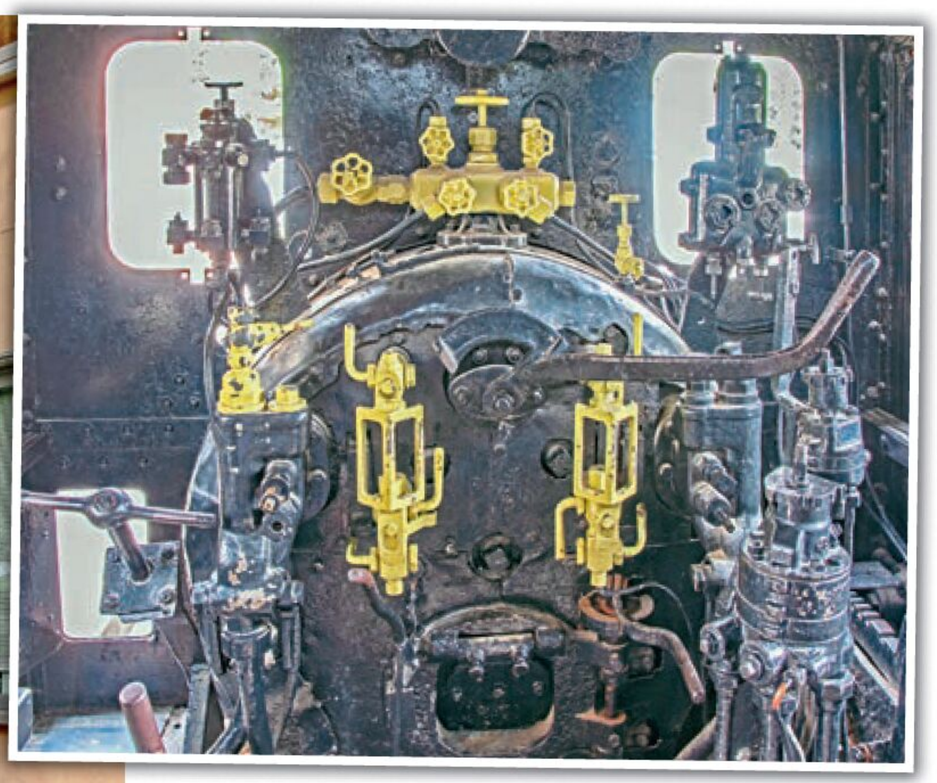
It has an interesting collection of diesel and steam locomotives, some of which are newly built, and most restorations are carried out on site. Freight wagons and passenger stock have been restored, including one wooden carriage made for the Igasa Railway which dates back to 1913.

Of interest is replica Porter No. 7 *Ginger,* which was built by Rass Chijin at Narita in 2018. It is an extremely strange-looking 0-4-0T, its cab resembling a garden shed.

The society comprises a very friendly bunch of like-minded people building their railway from scratch. Some spoke very good English who were happy to describe their work with enthusiasm, and I was made very welcome.

Entrance to the farm costs £8, with a supplement to ride the trains. The nearest station is Namegawa, from where a shuttle bus takes you to the farm. For operating days, see rass-railway.com



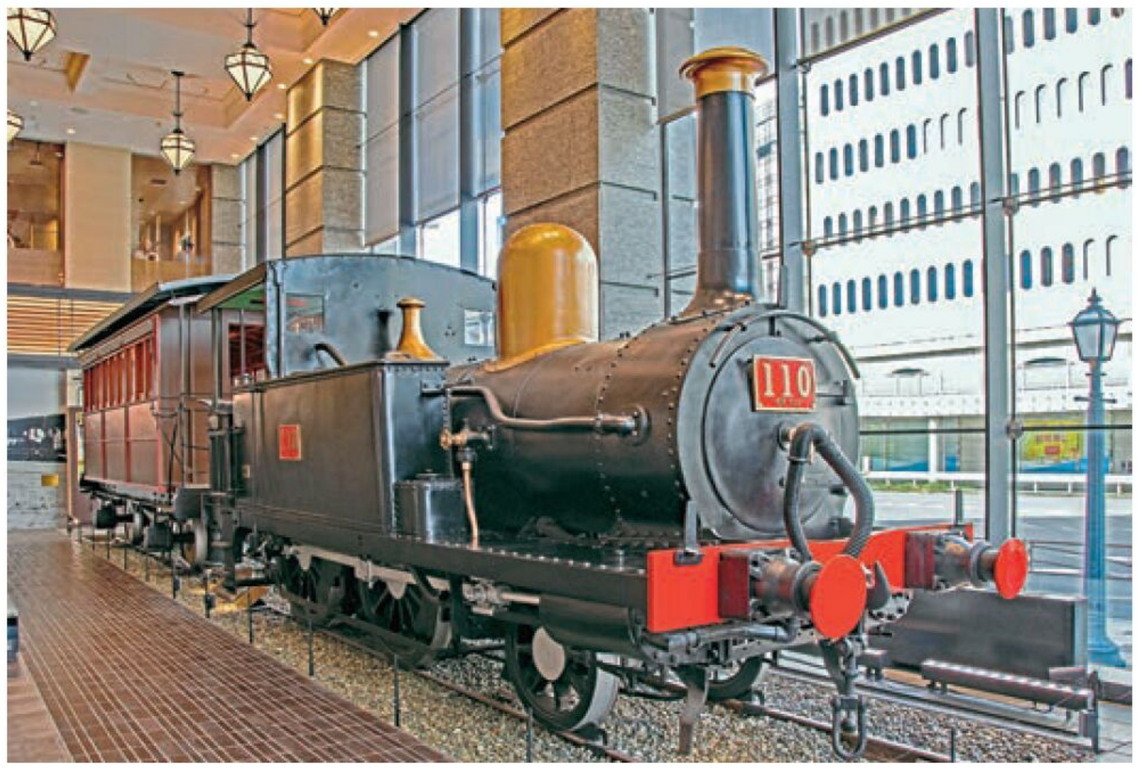


Left: Outside Miyashiro Town Hall on display in a playground is Sharp Stewart 4-4-0 No. 40 of 1898.

Above: Cab fittings of No. 40.

Below left: In the entrance to Sakuragichō station is Yorkshire Engine Co 2-4-0T No. 110 of 1871, with most of its cab fittings intact.

Below right: Tobu Railway No. 34, a Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 from 1914, and tram No. 7008, inside a children's play compound in Haginaka Park, near Otori station.





Museum of Industrial Technology at Miyashiro-cho

Established in 1987, the Museum of Industrial Technology at Miyashiro-cho is well worth a visit. Sadly, it does not see many visitors and definitely deserves more.

Inside is a collection of industrial machinery, plus it is home to Dübs & Co 0-6-2T No. 2109 of 1891. No. 2109 steams 10 times a year but has only 165 feet of track to run on and no wagons or carriages to pull. A new shed and workshop was built in 1993 specifically to house the locomotive, while plinthed outside is an EMU from the Hakone Tozan Railway.

The oldest exhibit in its collection of historic machinery is a hand-driven lathe dating back to 1889 and a typical belt-driven workshop from 1907 in full working order. Of British interest is a railway wheel lathe built in 1905 by Craven Brothers Ltd in Manchester.

Industrialisation came late to Japan due to its isolation during the Tokugawa Shogunate period, which ended in 1868, so this museum is of huge importance.

Getting in touch beforehand reaped benefits, giving ample time to look round the museum. My thanks go to curators Uehara Yoshihiro and Saotome Hiroki, who kindly showed me around and pulled No. 2109 out of the shed for photographs. We had a good conversation via a translation app, and they both enjoyed looking at videos of steam, in particular of a double-header approaching Devil's Bridge on the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Admission here is free. For further information regarding opening days, see museum.nit.ac.jp/en

Nearby in the centre of the town, outside Miyashiro Town Hall on display in a playground is No. 40 a 4-4-0, built by Sharp Stewart in 1898. It was not easy to spot when driving around. Again, most of its cab fittings are still intact.

Railway museums in central Tokyo

There are two railway museums in central Tokyo on separate railway lines. The Tobu Railway Museum is underneath Higashi Mukojima station and the Metro Museum beneath Kasai station.

Inside the Tobu Museum in pride of place is Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No. 5 of 1898, which spins its wheels several times a day. There is also a collection of early electric locomotives, including one built by English Electric in 1928.

You cannot miss the place when exiting the station because outside is a tram and the front half of an EMU of the Deluxe Romance Car. Entrance is from 10am to 4.30pm and costs £1. Be careful about opening days, but generally, it is closed on Mondays: see www.tobu.co.jp/museum/en

Just around the corner from the museum in what I can only describe as a terrible location rests sister locomotive Beyer Peacock No. 6 of 1898. It is partially hidden by concrete pillars underneath an overpass, so almost impossible to photograph. This location is a very sad place for such an historic locomotive.

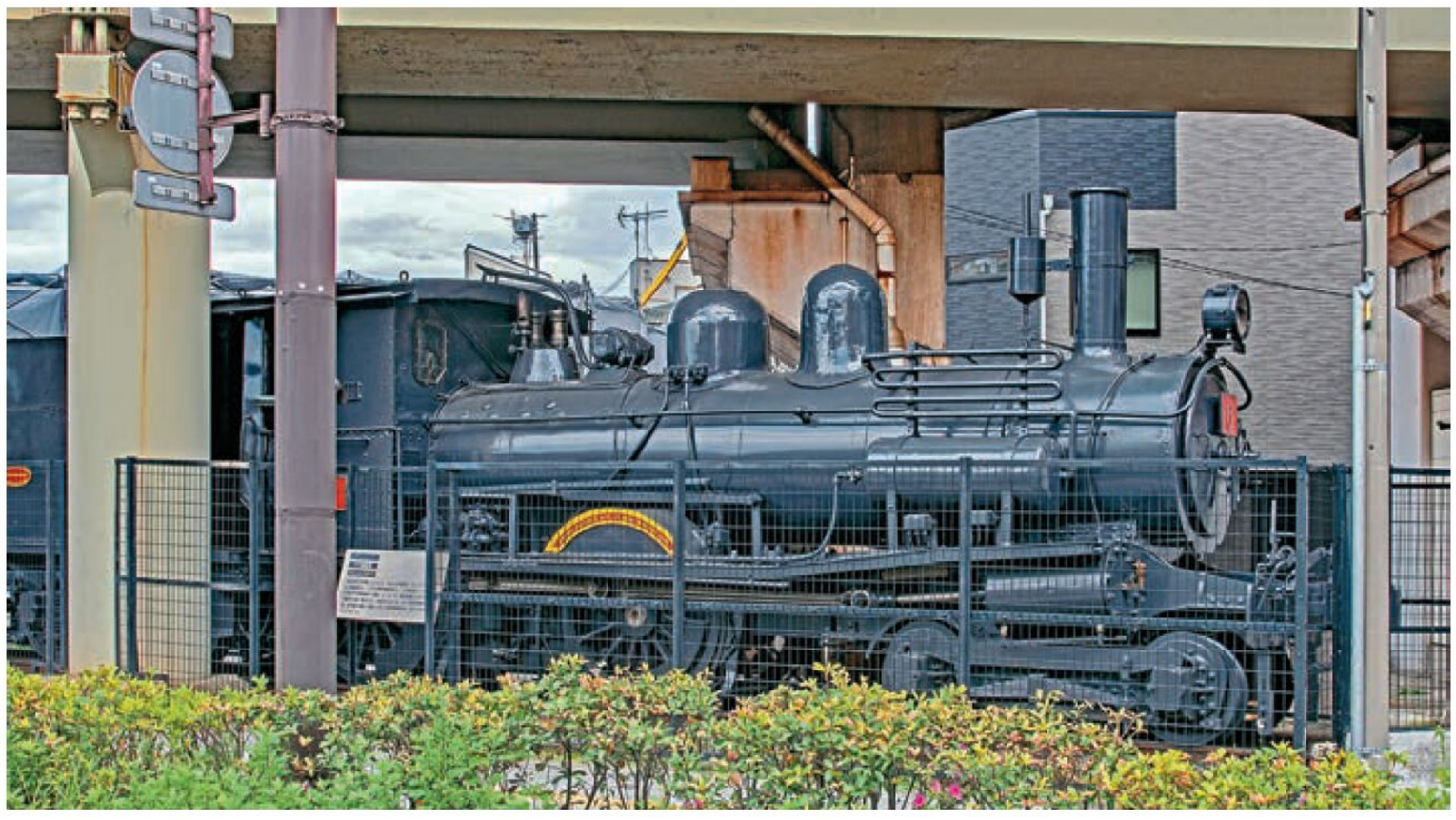
The Metro Museum houses two driving carriages displayed alongside, which hauled inaugural trains on both underground lines 27 years apart. No. 1001 of 1927 represents the Ginza Line in yellow livery, and red-liveried No. 301 of 1953 the Marunouchi Line. Japan was late to build railways, opening first in





Above: Kawasaki Sharyō 2-6-2 C58 363 leaves Higuchi on May 9.

Left: No. 7 *Ginger* was built by the Rass Chijin Railway to a design based on an American-built HK Porter locomotive imported into Japan about 120 years ago and popularly known as the Kamenoko Porter (tortoise porter). However, it also incorporates a variety of modern technologies, including an oil-fired fire-tube boiler. Its most distinctive external feature is its American-style appearance, characterised by a low-set boiler and a large wooden cab. It is seen about the cross the venue's trestle bridge.



In a very difficult place to take photographs is Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No. 6 of 1898, preserved underneath the main line nearby the Tobu Museum, Tokyo.

1872, but it was not until 1927 when the Ginza Line opened and Tokyo got an underground railway, 64 years after the Metropolitan opened.

In 1954, the Marunouchi Line became the second. In an unusual move, both are standard gauge and third rail, while the majority of the vast Tokyo system is 3ft 6in and overhead electric.

The museum is at Kasai station on the Tozai Line. Entrance is from 10am to 5pm and costs about £1. It is closed on Mondays: see www.chikahaku.jp/en/

Plinths around Tokyo

In the entrance of Sakuragichō station is Yorkshire Engine Co. 2-4-0T No. 110 of1871. Behind is a replica wooden passenger carriage which is spotlessly clean even with its doors open.

At the Shōwa Tetsudō High School in Ikebukurohonchō in Tokyo rests Dübs & Co 220 type 2-4-2T No. 3 of 1891, tucked undercover alongside the school building. The nearest station is Ikebukuru, and as it is on school premises, permission to visit is required.

Between Haneda Airport and central Tokyo is Tobu Railway Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No. 34 of 1914. It stands alongside Toei Arakawa Line Tram No 7008, built in 1956. Both are inside a children's play compound in Haginaka Park near Otorii Station. The compound opens at 9am and closes at 5pm on the dot; there is no flexibility after the warden fully checks the locomotive to ensure that no children are hiding inside.

Above: Outshopped in 2020, saddle tank No. 8 *Bambino* was constructed by the Rass Chijin Railway. It is pulling a restored wooden carriage made for the Igasa Railway as it crosses the trestle bridge at the Narita Farm Museum on May 4.

Below: Kawasaki Sharyō C58 363 departs the end of the branch from Mitsumineguchi station on May 10.



Nippon Sharyo 2-6-4T C11 292 of 1945 is plinthed immediately outside Shimbashi station.

South of central Tokyo, near Toyosu station, is lovely Nasmyth Wilson 0-6-2T No. 4 of 1886, plinthed in the open alongside the Shibaura Institute of Technology Junior and Senior High School.

Since 1972, C11 292, a 2-6-4T built in 1945 by Nippon Sharyo, has been plinthed immediately outside Shimbashi station in what must be a rather incongruous location. In those 54 years, the city has grown up around it, and it must be rare to see a steam locomotive plinthed in a dense metropolitan city like Tokyo.

All plinths seen were 3ft 6in gauge, with the oldest dating back to 1871. Those preserved in open spaces and parks generally still have the majority of cab fittings, with some still carrying their original builders' plates. No thoughts ever turn to stealing them, such is Japanese society.

Basic facts for visitors

There are many websites for hotels, and all bookings went perfectly for me. Washing and cooking facilities are available at some hotels, and all are spotlessly clean. Auto-check-in/out is the preferred option. Fast food restaurants have robots to bring your food, and ordering is by QR code on your telephone, which can be confusing at first. As an independent traveller, I was made welcome. An international translator on your telephone works well enabling conversation and can also translate text and menus. There is no tipping in restaurants.

Car hire is easy, but an international licence is obligatory, and driving is on the left. Internet navigation systems work well, and road signs are in English lettering as well as Japanese. Long journeys are slow due to 37mph speed limits in open countryside. Motorways are very expensive and very crowded in the big cities. Back streets are narrow, making small cars very popular, and parking can be difficult. There is no pavement, and pedestrians have priority.

All cities and towns have a good public transport networks that are cheap compared to UK prices, and it is much easier to get around. The lack of an integrated ticketing system, especially in Tokyo, can make it difficult, but once you understand the system, it is okay, although inconvenient. There is always someone to help at stations.

It was great fun navigating around the railways of Tokyo searching out British-manufactured locomotives located in the suburbs way off the tourist trails. They are cared for, but with such a collection and variety, you would think there exists scope for a museum of British locomotives, though I cannot ever see them moving locations. HR



Inside the shed of the Rass Chijin Railway Society at the Narita Farm Museum on May 5 were Decauville lookalike No. 1 which ran on the private railway of Toyo Activated Clay Co Ltd in Itoigawa, Niigata Prefecture, and No. 6, built by Kusunoki Works, Osaka, for the Keelung Coal Mine in Taiwan and later the Toyo Activated Clay Co Ltd in Japan.



Dübs & Co 220 type 2-4-2T No. 3 of 1891 at the Shōwa Tetsudō High School, Ikebukurohonchō .



Beyer Peacock 4-4-0 No.5 of 1898 spinning its wheels inside Toyko's Tobu Museum.



Inside Tokyo's Metro Museum beneath Kasai station are underground line driving cars Nos. 301 and 1001.

SAMPLE JAPANESE HERITAGE ON 18-DAY 2027 GETAWAY

IF you've been inspired to check out Japanese railways after reading John Titlow's two features, you may be interested in a curated 18-day holiday to the region, set to depart from London in September 2027.

Arranged by Porthmadog-based Ffestiniog Travel, travellers will arrive in Tokyo for a three-night stay in the nation's capital, with sightseeing and travel on Metro and Shinkansen services, along with visits to railways in the surrounding areas for steam-hauled journeys. Over the course of the following fortnight, you will take in Niigata, Akita, Hokkaido, Honshu and more, travelling between destinations almost exclusively by rail, with visits to tourist railways and museums on the itinerary.

Prices start at £7800 per person, which includes a 14-day rail pass offering unlimited first class travel on Japan's railway network, hotel stays, an English-speaking tour guide and more.

This tour runs on September 1-18, 2027; for full details, visit **www.ffestiniogtravel.com/worldwide/japan-north-to-hokkaido**

Win an unforgettable 2027 Lyon & Provence river voyage for two, with Viking

Worth £5,990 enter online

Win an unforgettable 2027 *Lyon & Provence* river voyage with Viking, and experience the beauty, culture and charm of southern France from the comfort of an award-winning Viking Longship. This journey offers the perfect opportunity to slow down, soak up the scenery and discover some of France's most captivating destinations.

Sailing along the Rhône River, you'll discover the historic city of Lyon, famous for its gastronomy and UNESCO-listed Old Town, as well as charming Provençal towns such as Avignon, Arles, and Viviers. Along the way, enjoy stunning scenery, fascinating local heritage, and opportunities to experience the flavours, art, and traditions that make this region so unique.

The prize includes flights, accommodation in your elegant stateroom, meals, selected beverages with lunch and dinner, and a range of included shore excursions. You will also enjoy onboard enrichment talks, complimentary Wi-Fi, and access to Viking's beautifully designed public spaces and amenities.

Whether you are strolling through medieval streets, admiring vineyards and lavender landscapes, or simply relaxing on the Sun Deck, this *Lyon & Provence* journey promises an enriching and memorable French adventure filled with culture, history, and Viking's renowned hospitality.



How to enter

To enter this amazing competition, scan the QR Code.
Full T&Cs are available on entry.
Entry is free. Open to residents of the UK aged 21+

VIKING

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

ESTD RAILS 1970
OF SHEFFIELD

FAMILY BUSINESS
FRIENDLY SERVICE

PRE-OWNED & SECOND HAND

WANTED CASH OR EXCHANGE

BUY • SELL • EXCHANGE • ANY GAUGE • ANY AGE

LOCOS - COACHES - WAGONS - TRACK-WORK - CONTROLLERS - ACCESSORIES
DIE-CAST - LORRIES - BUSES - PLANES - SOLDIERS - RAILWAYANA - AND MORE

DECEASED ESTATES - EX SHOP STOCK A SPECIALITY
FAST SERVICE WITH COMPLETE DISCRETION ASSURED

WE VALUE YOUR COLLECTION VERY HIGHLY!

1
CONTACT US
get in touch by email, phone or post with your list of items

2
OUR OFFER
our friendly staff will review your list and make an honest valuation offer

3
PACKAGE
either visit the shop, send us your items, or we can collect larger collections

4
PAYMENT!
fast, secure payment via your choice on confirming of the value offer – easy!

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT IN 4 EASY STEPS

GUARANTEED
TOP PRICES PAID
Ref: HERITAGE26

DON'T DELAY - GET IN TOUCH TODAY!

+44 (0)114 255 1436 secondhand@railsofsheffield.com

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE Stuff to Sell? LINK:

www.railsofsheffield.com

PROUD WINNERS OF THESE RECENT AWARDS:
HORNBY MODEL RAILWAY Awards 2025
MODEL RAIL MODEL OF THE YEAR 2024
BRITISH RAILWAY MODELLING AWARDS 2024

BEATING THE SUMMER BLUES: NORTH NORFOLK'S FESTIVAL TRIUMPH

An estimated six-figure drop in revenue caused by the challenges of a sweltering summer failed to dampen the North Norfolk Railway's spirits, with a healthy attendance for its annual Festival of Rails week helping to lessen that impact. **Owen Hayward** spoke to general manager Graham Hukins to find out more.

There is no denying that the summer of 2026 has perhaps been the most challenging for our heritage railways for many a year. Temperatures soared from very early on and, for the first time, numerous lines cancelled operations altogether. The result has been a trying period, with passenger figures reduced and revenues suffering as a result.

As reported last issue, the NNR was one of numerous railways in the UK affected by the swathe of heatwaves, which brought substantial wildfires that pushed fire services everywhere to their limits. While many implemented measures to reduce the chances of blazes being started by passing trains, the majority of heritage lines responded to a national alert on August 15 by entirely withdrawing steam locomotive usage. A few weeks later, as temperatures finally began to cool and rain was welcomed in some places for the first time in two months, steam was phased back in, with the NNR initially restricting its locomotives to the section between Sheringham and Holt from August 18.

This was agreed in consultation with Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service based on the conditions at the time, with the section through Kelling Heath towards Holt the most at risk.

Challenging time

NNR general manager Graham Hukins told *Heritage Railway*: "The last few weeks have been challenging, to say the least. We have had to balance our visitors' very strong preference to see and ride on a steam train with our responsibilities to our neighbours and the wider community at a time when the countryside has been very dry and the fire service has been under severe pressure.

"Our mitigations meant we were able to run steam for longer than many, and we have not suffered any lineside fires as a result of our steam operations this summer. Ironically, it was a major incident more than 50 miles away that finally meant we suspended steam in order to support NFRS.

"Mitigations we have include smokebox spark arresters and ashpan screens which are inspected daily before locomotives come off shed. Crews are asked to modify their driving and firing techniques, so locomotives are not worked hard, and firing is done away from the highest risk areas or at stations. Train loads were limited, again ensuring locomotives do not have to work hard. Lineside vegetation is controlled, with high-risk areas a priority, and contractors flail fire breaks at Kelling cutting.

"Neighbouring landowners are encouraged to create breaks on their land as well, and several have helped by ploughing or cutting strips close to the line. Diesel-assistance and diesel substitution complete the suite of measure we can deploy.

"On August 13, during the period only diesels were operating from Weybourne to Holt, a fire on Kelling Heath, which started in woods some distance from the railway, burnt towards our property and was dealt with by four appliances from NFRS. We suspended trains between Weybourne and Holt for three hours to allow NFRS access to the track to fight the fire on the adjacent land.

"It is difficult to isolate the impact to individual causes as government tax rises and war in the Middle East have created economic uncertainty which resulted in reduced passenger numbers early in the season. Numbers recovered slightly in July but were still fragile as the hot weather tends to pull people to the beach. Days when we have only run diesels are generally 35-40% down on similar days when steam is running. The part-line steam days performed better with declines typically about 20% compared to days when steam has run Sheringham to Holt. Overall, high fire risk throughout what is usually our busiest period of the year has reduced August ticket revenue by almost £100,000."

A typical North Norfolk scene as Class 37 D6732 heads for Sheringham with a rake of Mk. 1s. The iconic Weybourne Windmill is in the background. OWEN HAYWARD



Suburban traction from across the years: BR 4MT No. 80080, once a staple of LT&SR routes, hauls the LNER Quad Art stock, which served suburban stations out of King's Cross, away from Weybourne on August 27, passing a Class 101 DMU stabled in the yard. OWEN HAYWARD



Evocative of scenes once common on light railway systems, *Wissington* climbs effortlessly towards Deanman's Cutting with a mixed rake of vintage coaches, including former Wisbech & Upwell tramcar No. 7, which can be seen immediately behind the locomotive. OWEN HAYWARD



***Wissington* begins the climb through Kelling Heath Cutting on its way to Holt with the vintage carriages.** PAUL LAWRENCE



No. 90775 slows for the token exchange as it departs Sheringham on August 24. An extension to its boiler certificate will now see it remain in service until the end of 2027. DAVE BALLARD

Bouncing back

Despite the challenges the year has thrown at it, the NNR seemed to claw back some of its support during the 10-day end-of-summer festival, which ran on August 22-31 and saw a rotation of stock as the days went on, with eight locomotives featuring in the roster.

To compliment those, the railway put out a variety of carriages, thus giving passengers an opportunity to sample rail travel from across the decades ranging from pre-Grouping four-wheelers and tramcars, LNER articulated stock and BR Mk. 1s to complete the story.

Some of the pairings witnessed were quite unusual; the first few days saw BR 'Dubdee' 2-10-0 No. 90775 *The Royal Norfolk Regiment* hauling the LNER teak Quad Art rake, supplemented by a matching Pigeon Van; a deliberate choice, the lighter weight of these vehicles meant the locomotive was not being worked hard on its journey between Sheringham and Weybourne. Its appearance was well-timed, coinciding with the news that it had been granted a 14-month extension to its boiler certification that will enable it to run until November 2027.

From Tuesday, August 25, BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80080 took over from the 'Dubdee' for two days. Accompanying both locomotives throughout was diminutive Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST No. 1700 *Wissington*, the first time it had run this year after undergoing maintenance. It hauled the vintage rake comprising carriages from the GER, M&GN and Wisbech & Upwell tramway.

Come August 28, it was all change, with GWR 4200 2-8-0T No. 4277 *Hercules*, on long-term loan from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, and Hunslet Austerity No. 3844, running in its United Steel Company guise as No. 22, in use, before the latter was replaced by another Hunslet, 'Fitzwilliam' type No. 1589 *Newstead*, for the final few days of the event.

Meanwhile, Class 37 D6732 ran with the Mk. 1 rake for nearly the full event, with its diagram on August 28 seeing it substituted by Class 31 D5631; the latter locomotive is currently being sparingly used as, having run almost continuously since arriving at the NNR in 2003, it is need of some interim maintenance to ensure its continued reliability. The final day of the event, which fell on the Bank Holiday Monday, also saw D6732 reach a notable anniversary, celebrating 30 years since it first entered service on the Poppy Line.

It was hoped that newly overhauled GNR N2 No. 1744, which returned to service at the end of July, would feature heavily in the line-up. However, after its launch weekend, a spring on the trailing axle broke. Being of a unique design, it was awaiting a replacement to be manufactured and so did not run, although daily shed tours each day enabled visitors to see it in the workshops.

That variety of traction and stock saw more than 5800 people head to the railway to travel aboard services over the course of the festival, with Graham pointing out there was a noticeable uptick when steam began running the full line. Planning the event in the face of challenges brought about by the weather did not make things easy, and different timetables were held in reserve, ready to implement as and when required. "By locking in the two-steam-one-diesel service, we were able to roster the appropriately qualified crews and communicate to the public at an early stage," he explained. "In the end, the high fire risk service ran for the first three days, and we switched seamlessly to the full service from August 25."

Festival origins

While it may feel like an event that has been a staple of the NNR's calendar for many years, 2026 is only the third time it has taken place. It was first introduced as a three-day event on the August bank holiday of 2024 with the aim of showcasing a wide range of locomotives and rolling stock. For the railway's golden jubilee in 2025, that was expanded to encompass the week following the bank holiday and lead into the annual steam gala. For 2026, things were changed up – and quite fortunately so.

"This year, bank holiday Monday fell right at the end of the school holidays, and that, coupled with our decision to move the steam gala to October and away from concerns around high fire risk – how prescient was that? – meant the festival was conceived as a 10-day celebration of trains from Victorian times through to the 1960s, with three locomotives in action each day.

Highlighting this variety of what we have to offer has helped maintain visitor numbers through the final week of the school holidays."

The visitor count was also boosted by offerings such as fish and chip, sausage and mash, and on-board brunch dining offerings, some of which Graham said the railway had been "able to resource and sell at short notice," – all helping to claw back some of the lost revenue from the preceding weeks. HR



SECR P class No. 178 (right) greets visitors as they enter the One:One Collection, as do a number of miniature locomotives, including 1:8 scale LNWR 'Alfread the Great' class 4-4-0 No. 1941 (left).

MODELLING ONE:ONE SCALE: THE MARVELS OF MARGATE

Locomotive Services Group opened the doors to its Kent-based storage facility for one weekend in August, allowing visitors a chance to see some artefacts up close and personal. **Owen Hayward** paid a visit to see what lay hidden away in the former Hornby factory's warehouse.

Those who are fortunate enough to have their own collections of rolling stock, locomotives, or even private railways such as the late Sir William McAlpine's Fawley Hill set-up are referred to as having a 'full-sized personal train set.'

It is therefore rather apt that Locomotive Services Group chose to acquire the former factory buildings of model railway manufacturer Hornby in Margate in 2018 to use it as the base for a new storage facility in Kent, given that much of the firm's own rolling stock belongs to businessman Jeremy Hosking.

Over the past few years, the contents of that warehouse have changed as LSG has swapped some of its own locomotives, such as LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* with LNER A4 Pacific No. 4464 *Bittern* in 2025, while other rolling stock from private individuals, heritage railways and preservation societies has also taken up residence within its walls. Long term, it is hoped that the site will open regularly to the public; in the meantime, those wishing for glimpse within are making do with the occasional open event. The one and only opportunity this year was on August 15/16, in partnership with the adjacent Wonderworks, the museum dedicated to the history of the Hornby brand.

They say first impressions matter, and here they certainly do. As you walk in, you are met by SECR P class 0-6-0T No. 178, from the Bluebell Railway, a collection of miniature locomotives on plinths made from racking from the old factory, and walls of locomotive name and numberplates, station signs and more. Railwayana collectors can be quite competitive, but even the most avid would no doubt be in awe after seeing everything here. This first room is also home to Kerr Stuart 'Brazil' class 0-4-2ST No. 926 *Leader*,



Undoubtedly one of the jewels of the displays is LNER 'Beavertail' observation car No. 1729, owned by Railway Vehicle Preservations and restored to immaculate condition.



A 50T Cowans Sheldon crane (left) sits next to GWR No. 6960 *Ravingham Hall* on the lower warehouse floor. Just visible behind is GWR special saloon No. 95005, built in 1937 and designed to appeal to the nouveau riche.



Three generations of motive power: LMS No. 46100 *Royal Scot* (left, 1930), BR Class 55 D9016 *Gordon Highlander* (centre, 1961) and Class 373 Eurostar driving trailer No. 373304 (right, 1995).



4SUB unit No. 4732 (left) is another example of stock stored on behalf of external organisations. Beside it is type 27A Mk. 3 Wickham trolley B30W and behind that is BR inspection saloon No. 999506.



***Leader* was withdrawn from service at the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway in 2022 and is currently stored in the museum building awaiting its turn for overhaul.**



The 22 metre-wide departures board from Euston station, displaced from there in 2024, continues to show live information from the London terminal despite being more than 80 miles away.

which is stored undercover on behalf of the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway.

From here, you walk out onto what was the first floor of the factory main, which was strengthened during construction to accommodate the weight of machinery and which fortunately enables it to support that of the locomotives and stock now placed upon it. Here can be found vehicles from the LNER (namely 'Beavertail' saloon No. 1729 from the prestigious 'Coronation' set), NER, SDJR, and even a pair of 4CEP EMU trailers which have been modified and parked adjacent to one another to serve as a café. Above all of this stands the old digital departures board taken from Euston station, which was displaced by modern screens only a few years ago.

It is not just trains occupying the space, though. A range of classic cars, motorcycles and even a tank are all on show.

From this floor you can enjoy the view overlooking the lower floor, home to further rolling stock comprising steam and diesel locomotives from across the years, further historic carriages, and more modern traction such as an SR EMU and two vehicles from a Eurostar class 373 that date from the first days of the Channel Tunnel operations. Access to these is via a flight of stairs (a lift is also available), and some vehicles were open to allow access inside.

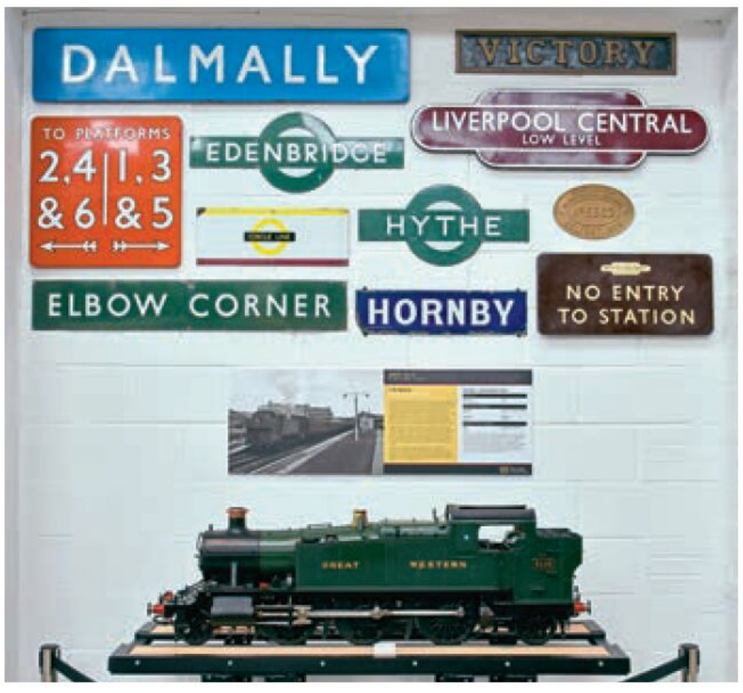
Another floor down are rooms displaying model railways of varying vintages and scales, with some in attendance from local modelling societies. Interspersed between them both here and across the other floors on my visit were society stalls for railways connected with some of the exhibits or locality, such as the Mid-Hants Railway (its LMS 'Black Five' No. 45379 is stored there) and the nearby Kent & East Sussex and Rother Valley railways.

Back up on the middle floor, passage through to the main Hornby Wonderworks building takes you through further displays telling the story of the manufacturer and its varying brands.

There is already quite a lot to see within the One:One Collection, but there remains much space available to be filled, and therein lies the potential for a future National Railway Museum equivalent in the south of the country.

This particular open weekend may have come and gone, but private tours are available for groups of 20 or more, with prices set at £20 per adult and £10 per child (ages five to 15).

For further details about tours and the collection, visit www.oneonecollection.co.uk HR



Above: The walls are lined with locomotive plates and station signage. A selection is seen here above 1:8 scale GWR large prairie No. 6110.



Right: Two visitors pause to admire a surviving part of the arch through which patrons to the 'Brighton Belle' passed on their way to board the luxurious Pullman service.

BOWATER REUNION TOPS THE BILL FOR WELSHPOOL GALA

The first weekend in September feels very much like the starting gun for the autumn steam gala season. In its traditional spot was the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway with its three-day annual steam event on September 4-6, reuniting former Kent-based shedmates, as **Martin Creese** reports.

Headlining this year's Welshpool & Llanfair Lighr Railway roster were visiting duo Kerr Stuart 'Brazil' class 0-4-2ST No. 886 *Premier,* from the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway, and Manning Wardle 0-6-2T No. 1877 *Chevallier*, which is owned by Bill Parker, of the Flour Mill workshop at Bream in the Forest of Dean.

Both of these locomotives were formerly part of the Bowater Paper Mill fleet at its Sittingbourne works, with part of that railway still running as the preserved S&KLR. The occasion was notable in that the there are two further former Bowater locomotives, both built by Bagnall, at Welshpool – articulated 0-4-4-0T No. 3024 *Monarch* and 0-6-2T No. 2192 *Conqueror* were both on static display. *Conqueror* was previously a part of Peter Rampton's Collection X and was, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 343, recently donated to the W&LLR by the Vale of Rheidol Railway, which took ownership of the extensive collection of stock that had long been hidden away in Surrey following Peter's death.



Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T *The Earl* passes Heniarth halt on September 6 carrying a headboard commemorating the 150th anniversary of the death of Charles Beyer. MARTIN CREESE



The signalman prepares to collect the token as visiting Kerr Stuart *Premier,* assisted by Diepholzer Works No. 17, arrives at Llanfair Caerinion. DYLAN CREESE

All four former shedmates were brought together at Welshpool on the Friday evening for a photographic session, with *Monarch* and *Conqueror* remaining posed outside the display shed for the duration of the weekend.

Also marked over the weekend was the 150th anniversary of the death of Charles Beyer. Born in 1813 in Saxony, he arrived in England in 1834 and gained employment in the Atlas works of Sharp, Roberts and Company, going on to be their Chief Mechanical Engineer.

He was the first engineer whose designs allowed boilers to expand in the locomotive's frames and became one of the founders of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers in 1847, alongside other notable names including George Stephenson, James McConnell and Richard Peacock.

Having left Sharp, Roberts and Company in 1853, he founded Beyer Peacock alongside Richard Peacock in 1854.

Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T No. 822 *The Earl* carried a headboard marking the anniversary throughout the gala, with the 10am departure from Llanfair Caereinion taking place on Friday, September 4, which saw W&LLR president and former Conservative Party leader William Hague unveil the headboard before departure.

This had previously been carried during commemoration events at both the East Lancashire and Llangollen railways, with more appearances elsewhere still to come on other railways with strong Beyer connections.

Alongside the three steam locomotives, Diepholzer Works-built 4WDM Taiwan Sugar lines No. 17 *Diema* and Baguley Drewery Railcar No. 9150 nicknamed The Wasp, also participated. The latter ran shuttles from Llanfair Caereinion to Cyfronydd, which could be booked in advance for a small supplement.

It is tempting to describe The Wasp as the narrow-gauge equivalent of the Waggon and Maschienbau railcars that British Railways





Above: Out-of-service Bagnalls *Monarch* (left) and *Conqueror* on display outside the museum shed at Welshpool Raven Square. These two locomotives, along with the visiting pair, could once be found on the Bowater Paper Mill lines in Kent, and this was the first time the quartet have joined together since retiring. ANDREW SIMMONDS

Left: *Chevallier* approaches Cyfronydd during the gala on September 6. DYLAN CREESE

trialled on branch lines in the 1950s. Built to standard gauge for use at Ministry of Defence at Longtown, Cumbria, it was regauged by RMS Locotec in 2008. Designed for 14 passengers, it is normally used to carry track maintenance tools and personnel to worksites along the railway but proved popular over the course of the gala.

A goods train ran each day from Llanfair Caereinion to Cyfronydd, *The Earl* doing the honours on Friday and No. 1877 on Saturday and Sunday. Initial timetables saw considerable steam and diesel double-heading to reduce fire risk, but these were revised in the week leading up to the event after considerable rainfall, enabling full line steam haulage to be restored.

Premier completed a full line trip, assisted by No. 17, and then a short trip to Cyfronydd with two four-wheel carriages which looked quite superb, as well as double-heading with No. 1877 on short shuttles and full line trips.

Other attractions during the weekend included traction engines – both miniature and full-sized – and vintage tractors at Llanfair Caereinion, along with other vintage vehicles at Welshpool.

Also at Welshpool were out-of-traffic locomotives *Joan* and Sierra Leone Railway No. 85, which were displayed in the bay platform alongside the newly acquired observation carriage from the Zillertal Railway in Austria. HR

TOY & TRAIN COLLECTORS' FAIRS

GATESHEAD TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR
OCTOBER 4th, 10.30am - 3.00pm
Gateshead International Stadium, Neilson Road,
Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE10 0EF
Admission: Adult – £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s – £2.50

BLACKPOOL TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR
OCTOBER 17th, 10.30am - 3.00pm
Blackpool Sports Centre, West Park Drive
Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 9HQ
Admission : Adult – £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s – £2.50

EDINBURGH TOY, TRAIN & SCI-FI FAIR
NOVEMBER 1st, 10.30am - 3.00pm
Musselburgh Sports Centre, Newbigging, Musselburgh,
Edinburgh EH21 7AS
Admission : Adult – £4.50, Senior - £3.50, Under 16s – £2.50

2026/2027 TOY FAIR DATES

NOVEMBER 15th	Durham	JANUARY 9th	York
NOVEMBER 29th	Glasgow	MAY 31st	York
DECEMBER 13th	Gateshead	AUGUST 30th	York

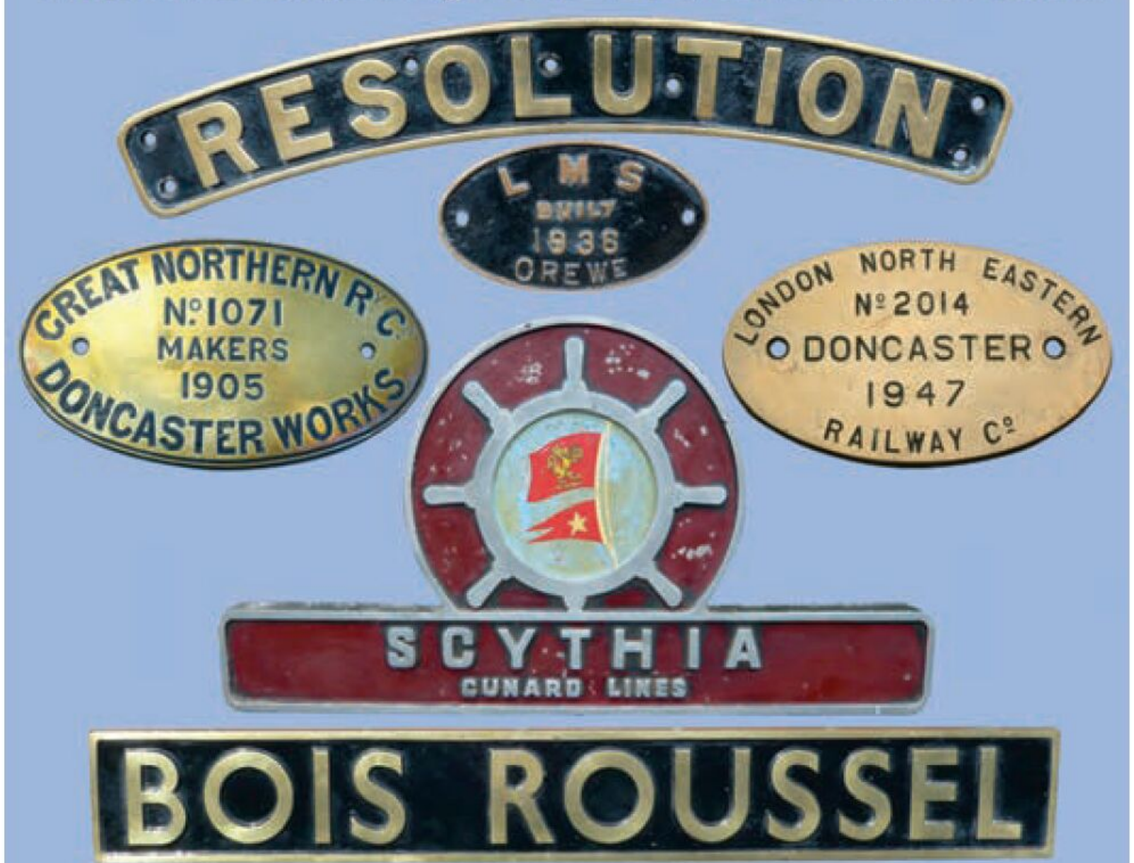
For table bookings and enquiries contact
Jim 07504 035955 email: jim_corr73@hotmail.co.uk
www.northerntoyfairs.com

DURHAM VINTAGE TOYS
Durham Indoor Market, Unit 68, DH1 3NJ
Open 6 days per week 10.30am-4pm
Old & New Diecast, Trains, Star Wars,
Model Soldiers, Old Comics & Football
Programmes, Collections wanted





TALISMAN
RAILWAYANA AUCTIONS
Saturday 24th October 2026
CEDRIC FORD PAVILION, NEWARK SHOWGROUND,
LINCOLN ROAD, NEWARK, NOTTS, NG24 2NY.
Viewing morning of sale from 8.00am. Sale starts 10.00am.
Ample free car parking. Refreshments. Railwayana Stalls.



For our free colour catalogue please contact
ROGER OR SANDRA PHIPPS at TRA,
AMBERGATE HOUSE, SCREVETON, NOTTS, NG13 8JL.
Tel: 01949 21105 info@talisman-auctions.com
or visit our website www.talisman-auctions.com

THAT 1980s LOOK FOR BLUEBELL'S BIG DIESEL BASH

It may have ended its BR days as a Southern Region station in 1963, but for one weekend only, Horsted Keynes took on a slightly more modern look as the Bluebell Railway celebrated the 40th anniversary of Network SouthEast with its biggest gala lineup to date. **Owen Hayward** spoke to organiser Mike Hawkins to find out more.

In 1982, BR's regions were abolished and the network was sectorised into three business sectors for passenger traffic, bringing with it a drive to concentrate on market-focused and responsive business models. These sectors were merely business and planning units rather than operational or administrative ones, and so the regions maintained control over the day-to-day running of trains while the sectors specified the nature and quality of service to be provided, prepared investment projects, developed new products and marketing initiatives, and took profit responsibility for the services.

Three corporate identities emerged for passenger traffic in this time: InterCity (first been introduced in 1966 for long-haul express services), Network SouthEast and Regional Railways (the latter was originally called Provincial but renamed in 1989; its operating costs at the time of formation were reported to be four times its revenue). NSE initially started out as the London & South Eastern sector before being relaunched under the new brand on June 10, 1986, with its operations concentrating on commuter operations within Greater London and the South East, but would go on to reach as far as Exeter in the South West.

The rebranding, which introduced the iconic 'toothpaste' livery of blue, white and red, was intended to be more than superficial – it was an attempt at reinvigorating the sector and saw substantial investment made for its trains and stations to achieve this. It had been arranged by its first manager, Chris Green, who would later transfer to InterCity in 1992 but remains synonymous with the NSE brand.

On the launch day, a promotion run enabled passengers to travel anywhere on its network for just £3, for which 200 extra services were provided – and more than 200,000 passengers took up the offer.

When sectorisation was completed in 1992, NSE went from a business unit with about 300 staff to an operational one with some 38,000 employees, along with an asset value for £4.7 billion, which saw it ranked as the 15th biggest business in the UK. Two years later, however, when privatisation was introduced, NSE was disbanded, but it has remained well-loved by rail enthusiasts, particularly those who grew up during that time.

Varied line-up

For its September 4-6 diesel gala, the Bluebell Railway arranged perhaps the most varied line-up it has had to date, with both diesel and electrical multiple units included in the roster, many of which came with direct NSE-connections. Locomotives appearing in the iconic livery were BR Class 03 No. 03179 *Clive* from the Isle of Wight Steam Railway (the only one of its type to have ever carried the scheme in its working life), Class 50 No. 50026 *Indomitable* (which archive pictures show carried the scheme from 1987 through to at least 1991) and Class 73 No. 73128. The latter class was plentiful across NSE, and this locomotive, owned by GB Railfreight, was repainted into this retro-livery in 2024 and named *The Kent & East Sussex Railway* in honour of that line's 50th anniversary that June.

Making rare appearances away from their base at Southall in West London were Class 416 2EPB No. 5759 and Class 419 Motor Luggage Vans Nos. 9001 and 9002. The former is a one of a class of units designed with electro-pneumatic braking during the early development of EMUs by BR for the Southern Region in the 1950s and saw heavy use on commuter services in South London, Kent and Surrey.

The MLVs, by comparison, were built for use on boat train workings to destinations such Dover and Folkestone; they would run down to these ports coupled to other EMUs before detaching and running over the non-electrified lines under battery power to allow luggage to be transferred to and from the cross-Channel ferries. Both the MLVs and EPB are owned by the EPB Preservation Society, with future aims hoping to see the vehicles return to main line service.



Job well done: An impromptu line-up of all the Network SouthEast-liveried stock rounded off the gala on September 6, with some of the many volunteers who made the event possible gathered around the visiting Class 03 on Platform 4. JAMES CUMMINS



Above: A contender for the most unusual pairing of the year, MLV No. 9001 heads south from Horsted Keynes with the LNWR observation saloon in tow. OWEN HAYWARD



Right: A split-flap clock hung over Platforms 3 and 4 added to the Network SouthEast ambience of Horsted Keynes, while No. 73128 arrives at Platform 2 behind. JAMES CUMMINS



When motive power outweighs passenger capacity: An unusual SR combination crosses Imberhorne Viaduct on September 5 with (from left to right) ED No. 73128 *The Kent & East Sussex Railway*, MLV No. 9001 EPB No. 5759, MLV No. 9002 and ED No. E6040 *The Bluebell Railway*. OWEN HAYWARD



One of two visiting Class 31 locomotives in matching livery, No. 31210 arrives at Horsted Keynes on September 5 with the 10.40am from East Grinstead. Here, it would swap stock with an arriving Up train – something that was conducted regularly throughout the event, giving the station a busy junction feel. TOM MCATEE

Further main line visitors came in the form of Class 60 No. 60028, which was provided by DC Rail and the first member of the class to both reach East Grinstead via the Oxted line and pull passenger trains on the Bluebell Railway, and Class 31 No. 31210, which is operated by Hanson & Hall. The latter was joined by classmate No. 31108, from the Midland Railway Centre, and is owned by A1A Locos Ltd, with both wearing matching Railfreight grey livery.

Finishing off the line-up were Class 33 No. 33108 and Class 201 DEMU No. 1001, both of which have been in regular operation throughout the summer after the railway suspended steam due to the high fire risk present.

On static display were Class 207 DEMU No. 1305 (of which DTSO No. 60904 was turned out in NSE colours for the occasion), with visits to see its restoration progress at Horsted Keynes on offer, and driving trailer composite No. 76048 (from Class 421 4CIG No. 1753 *Chris Green OBE*) at Sheffield Park, which is also undergoing restoration into NSE condition with the hope of main line running in the future.

The NSE anniversary celebrations were not just driven by the visiting traction; working with The Friends of Network SouthEast,



Crowds watch on as visiting Class 60 No. 60028 arrives at Horsted Keynes with No. 31108 acting as a translator for the vacuum-braked coaching stock. JAMES CUMMINS



No. 73128 departs Platforms 4/5 at Horsted Keynes with the MLV/EPB combination, while Nos. 31210 and 50026 *Indomitable* head for the sidings to stable. CHRIS GEE



It could almost be anywhere else in the 1980s: Station dressing for the event included features such as red bins and benches, which were synonymous with the NSE brand, with MLV No. 9002 stabled in Platform 1 on September 5. TOM MCATEE

Horsted Keynes station underwent a transformation, with signage to the corporate branding style overlaying the more traditional SR type present for the weekend, supplemented by fixtures such as red benches and bins that could have once been found on its stations. Two working split-flap display clocks were even suspended from the station's canopies as volunteers went all-out for the occasion.

Complicated planning

This was undeniably the railway's biggest diesel event to date, one that Mike Hawkins, part of the organising team behind it, is particularly proud of.

"I don't think in the 40 years I've been volunteering at the railway I've seen trains as busy as they were during this weekend," he said. "We saw almost 3000 people travelling on our trains across the three days, and I was particularly surprised to see how busy Sunday was, given that is usually the quietest of any three-day event.

"The proposal for the theme was brought to us quite early on by the Friends of Network SouthEast, which wanted to do something to mark the occasion. It did prove a challenge in that there isn't much out there that is both turned out in that division's livery and was available at the time we needed it – GBRF was only able to confirm No. 73128's attendance just a few weeks away from it – so we expanded it to look at what else would have been running at about the same time.

"Everyone we approached was completely on board with the idea. We are exceedingly fortunate that the Bluebell Railway has many volunteers who are involved in some of these companies and groups, which helped matters.

"From there, we looked at how we could make Horsted Keynes the hub of it all. It is the largest junction station in preservation, so we wanted to make the best use of it, particularly as Platform 1 can now be used following its repairs last year. Swapping locomotives between trains there meant it was a hive of activity, and it certainly kept signallers on their toes, but it also no doubt pleased the 'Red Penners' because they didn't need to leave their seats to cop certain locomotives.

"Something that particularly stood out was seeing the MLVs appear on passenger trains with the LNWR observation saloon each morning. That was a particularly interesting combination, and we could probably have filled that and the morning brake van trips behind *Clive* 15 times over.

"The EPB's runs, sandwiched between these and the two Class 73s, was also rammed, reminding me of commuter trains in and out of London during the rush back in their heyday.





Above: Class 201 'Hastings' DEMU No. 1001 crosses Imberhorne Viaduct as it departs East Grinstead destined for Sheffield Park. OWEN HAYWARD

Left: NSE-liveried *Clive* approaches Horsted Keynes on September 5 with its daily morning brake van ride from Sheffield Park. OWEN HAYWARD

"I thank DC Rail in particular for their support; Network Rail imposed a weight restriction on the line to East Grinstead which would have meant Nos. 50026 and 60028 were too heavy to come down it. DC Rail wanted to bring its locomotive down to name it after the gala and worked hard with NR to overcome that restriction, getting the pair cleared for the route. That is not to say everyone else's input to the event was any less important, and I tried to thank as many people as possible in person.

"Because the Bluebell was steam-only for so long, it has sometimes made things tricky when planning our diesel galas because we are late to that game, but given the immense interest for this one, I hope that we have well and truly shown we are very much a mixed-traction destination. Steam will still be the focus – and I'll continue to fight my fellow volunteers for turns on certain locomotives – but diesel very much has a place here too.

"We are starting to get owning groups reach out to us offering locomotives for future events, which we never had before, so that's a very clear indication that things are moving in the right direction.

"When you total it all up, with the resident fleet, such as the carriage works' Sentinel shunter, not only was it our biggest ever diesel gala, but it was also the largest number of post-steam traction gathered on the railway to date."

Mike also highlighted how supportive the railway's volunteers are when a late change to the plan was suggested on Sunday afternoon, seizing the opportunity to line up the NSE-liveried stock together. "Everyone was completely up for it – it was one of those things where if we didn't do it now, when would the chance happen again? There was just a half-hour gap where we needed to clear the platforms and position everything at the south end of the station in just the right place so nothing was obscured by signal posts, water columns or signage. If it overran, it would have delayed both the Class 33's arrival from East Grinstead and the 03's departure to Sheffield Park with the brake van and observation saloon. All the crews stepped in and helped in whatever way they could beyond operating their locomotive, which is truly symbolic of the camaraderie we have at the railway.

"There followed a busy few days afterwards to get everything refuelled and most of the visitors back out via the main line connection, but all in all, it was absolutely worth it. The question now is: can we better it for next year? That will prove to be quite a challenge, I'm sure." HR

Help to floor the 'Thumper'

RESTORATION of Class 207 Oxted DEMU No. 1305 is continuing apace, with some body repair recently carried out on DMBS No. 60130 and work underway to replace the floor in the passenger bays. To achieve this, the group restoring the DEMU need to raise a modest £5000 to purchase the materials required. Once the floor is secure, work can then concentrate on everything above the solebar, including further replacement of bodywork, with hopes of the unit being ready for traffic by 2030.

➜ To support the project, see visit tinyurl.com/Bluebell-1305-Donate or visit the 1305 Oxted Thumper Gang's stall during special events at the railway.



Ahead of the diesel gala, driving trailer No. 60904 was repainted into NSE livery in just five days! It will remain carrying this until such a time as this vehicle undergoes the necessary bodywork repairs, with the complete unit set to be outshopped in SR green livery. JAMES CUMMINS


NVR
NENE VALLEY RAILWAY PETERBOROUGH ENGLAND
TRAVEL WITH A KING
GWR 6024 EDWARD I
10th & 11th OCTOBER 2026
Nene Valley Railway
Wansford Station, Stibbington
Peterborough PE8 6LR
01780 784444
www.nvr.org.uk
NeneValleyRailway
nene_valley_railway
BOOK ONLINE
NVR.ORG.UK


Steam Days
Experience Steam Days at Didcot Railway Centre – unlimited steam train rides, historic locomotives, engine shed tours, and hands-on railway fun.
www.didcotrailwaycentre.org
DIDCOT
RAILWAY CENTRE
Living Museum of the Great Western Railway


Join us for our Autumnal celebration of Steam!
BLUEBELL RAILWAY
GIANTS OF STEAM 2026
BLUEBELL RAILWAY
71000
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER
92134
34059
SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR
41313
73082
CAMELOT
80151
PHOTOS KINDLY SHARED BY JAMES CORBEN & DAVID CABLE
BRITISH RAILWAYS
16th-18th
OCTOBER 2026
Book Your Tickets Now!
www.bluebell-railway.com

NEW MIDDLETON MUSEUM MANAGER WILL SHOW 'LEEDS WAS FIRST'

The Middleton Railway has appointed a museum manager to oversee a development which will help emphasise its place in the origin of the development of steam-operated lines, reports **Sally Clifford** in words and pictures.

A unique exhibition has united four models of early locomotives for display at the Middleton Railway.

It is believed to be the first time that the four ⅛-scale models, built from 1910 to the 1930s, of the first locomotive built in Leeds have been displayed together – the significance of which is of huge importance to enthusiasts and visitors to the Moor Road site.

Each of the models depicts *Salamanca*, the first commercial steam locomotive built in Leeds by Matthew Murray and John Blenkinsop in June 1812. One of these models of *Salamanca* was donated to the railway two years ago by the family of its creator, Harry Murray.

A second is on long-term loan from Leeds Museum and Galleries, while a third, built by a coal miner in Wigan to depict the Blenkinsop locomotives used at the Orrell Colliery, is on loan from Beamish. The fourth, from the National Railway Museum, was created by the Science Museum in 1910 from a set of drawings originally published in France in 1815, and from which all four models are based.

The railway in Hunslet, Leeds, has appointed academic and museum professional Anthony Dawson as museum manager to coordinate the exhibitions.

"It's the first time since 1818 that four Blenkinsop & Murray locomotives have been present in Leeds, irrespective of scale," said Anthony. "Four were built for the Middleton Railway by Fenton, Murray & Wood between 1812 and 1815,

> "We see Middleton evolving from being a 'heritage railway with a museum attached' to a 'museum with a demonstration line.'"

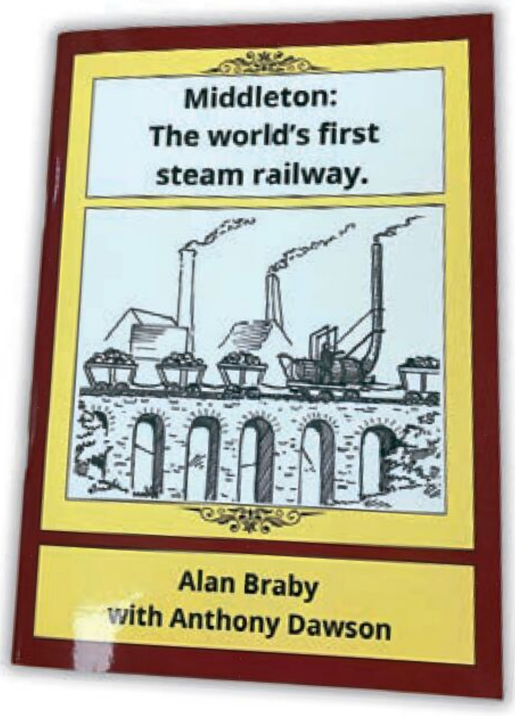
"Railways didn't begin in 1825, nor did the locomotive. The Middleton has operated continuously since 1758 when it was granted the first railway Act of Parliament. Yet, other than among academics and members at Middleton, no one is aware of the importance of this little railway in the global history of railways: the first Railway Act of Parliament; the first steam railway; and the first preserved standard gauge railway. Without the Middleton, well – where would railways be?"

Utilising the mezzanine space within the railway's Engine House, overlooking the displays of some of its iconic locomotives including Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 1329 of 1921 Manchester Ship Canal No. 67, which featured in the original The Railway Children film, the launch exhibition will run for a year.

"The mezzanine space opens up many opportunities to expand and enhance our storytelling," said Anthony. "It adds considerably to the square meterage we have available to us, and it means we can put on special displays, like this one for Murray 200, or host travelling exhibitions or exhibitions co-curated with our local community.

"The present display is flexible in how it can be arranged and can leave the main area free for other events such as the model railway



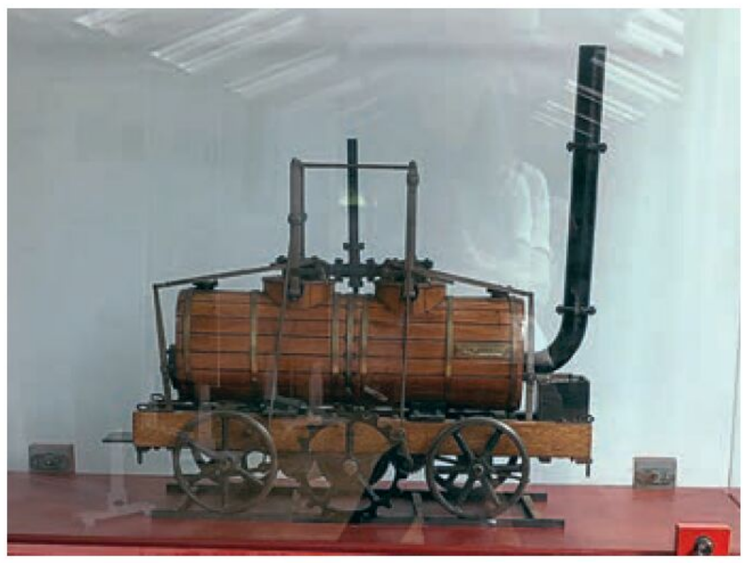


Right: Middleton: The World's First Steam Railway is a new book launched at the heritage line.

Left: The Matthew Murray 200 Exhibition at the Middleton Railway.

Below: Newly appointed museum manager Anthony Dawson.
ANTHONY DAWSON

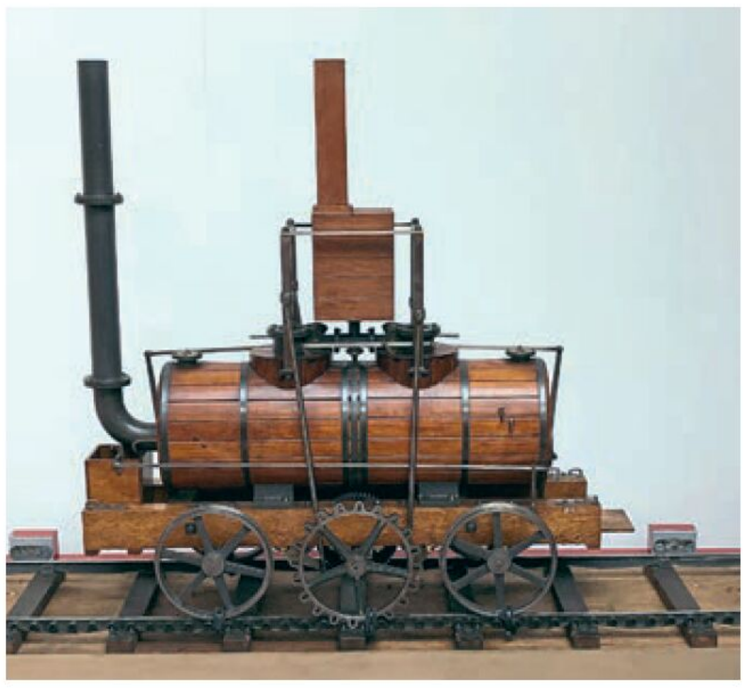




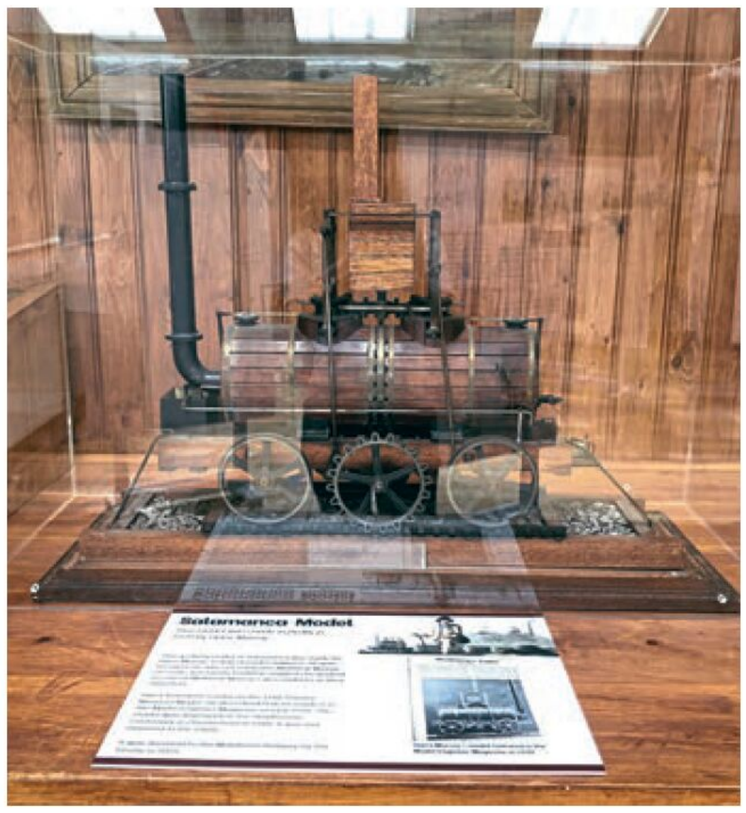
Above: The second model of *Salamanca* on loan from Leeds Museums and Galleries.



Right: The third model of *Salamanca* on loan from Beamish Museum.



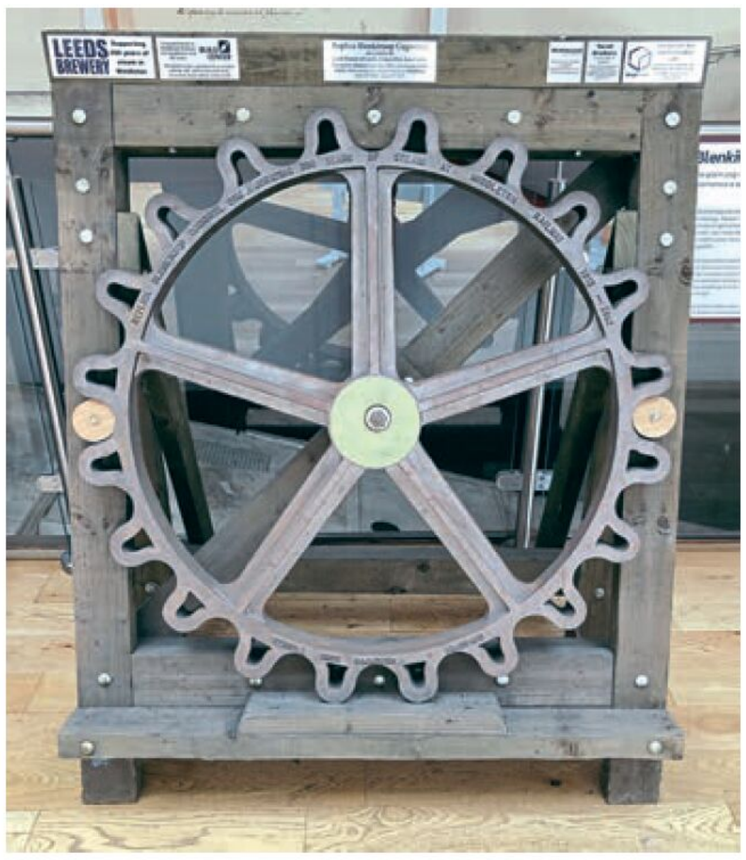
The fourth model of *Salamanca* after being lifted into position.



The working model of *Salamanca* built by skilled model engineer Harry Murray on display.



Rebecca Plumbe, conservator, and Chris Upton, assistant registrar at the National Railway Museum, York, with the fourth model of *Salamanca,* on loan from the NRM until next October.



A replica of the Blenkinsop cogwheel.

exhibition or waiting room for our Santa trains. The present exhibition could even evolve into a permanent 1812 Gallery, telling the story of the birth of the commercial steam locomotive and its global impact."

Information boards, also featured in the exhibition, educate visitors about the important part the railway played in Leeds' industrial past.

Storytelling through interpretation is an integral focus for the museum's future development. Anthony said: "That's what museums and heritage railways are for; it's about telling the stories of how people used to travel, and how people used to work and live in the past, and doing so in a relatable, hands-on tactile, sensory way.

"Linked to that is doing object handling and costumed interpretation: wearing well-researched historical garments, and talking in first person about what a Victorian railway guard would have done, allowing members of the public to see garments and objects which are often on show behind glass, in a living, breathing way."

Anthony said that the railway is busy reinterpreting the Engine House with new displays about the Middleton Colliery and the link between coal mining and railways.

A new display telling the story of locomotive building using objects such as a 19th century lathe and patterns, along with personal recollections, is also in progress.

The reinterpretation of the railway's LMS brake van will tell the story of the people who lived and worked in them.

The railway has also published a graphic novel or comic book history of the Middleton Railway, as well as a large format A4 art book. Both were illustrated by Alan Braby, a leading archaeological and historical illustrator, to appeal to visitors of all ages. Craft activities, such as cut-out models of coal wagons and *Salamanca*, are being developed for younger visitors.

Anthony said: "We see Middleton evolving from being a 'heritage railway with a museum attached' to a 'museum with a demonstration line.'

"With just over a mile of track, and little chance for ever having an extension, we cannot compete with other longer lines. Nor can we really compete in terms of the beauty of the scenery glimpsed from the carriage windows, so we need to pivot to doing what we can do best, and that is to tell the fascinating story of the Middleton Colliery and the Middleton Railway.

"It was, after all, the world's first steam railway. We want to put Leeds back on the map as where the steam railway began – not Liverpool, not Darlington, but in Leeds in 1812. That's before Stephenson. I don't think many people ever realise that there was a coal mine, fireclay works and brick works in what is today inner-city Leeds, so that's a story we have to tell: the story of our local community.

"Linked with that is telling the story of locomotive building in Leeds – how that impacted Leeds and life in South Leeds. Leeds built more railway locomotives than any other English city. It was an important centre of

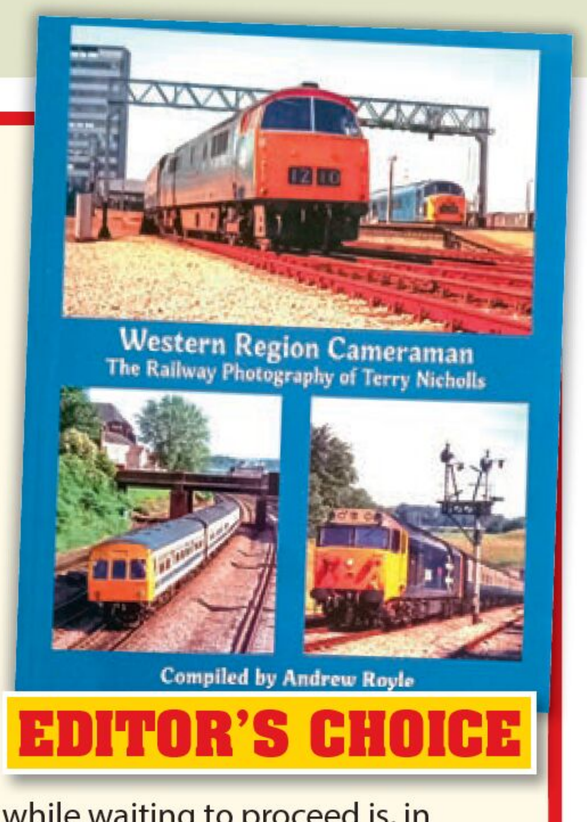


Horses To Horsepower is among the interesting stories told through educational information boards in the exhibition.

heavy engineering and railway engineering, of which a fragment survives, so it's about engaging with our local community, with older generations who remember the colliery or the engineering works, or who worked for Hunslet or Hudswells or Fowlers to record their memories, of how they lived and worked, and to share them with present and future generations – and perhaps inspiring them to take up engineering or railway work as well." HR

Western Region Cameraman

Compiled by Andrew Royle (softback, Transport Treasury Publishing, 112pp, ISBN 978-1-917776-36-3, £19.95 + £3 p&p, cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing and sent to: 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ).



EDITOR'S CHOICE

THIS latest Transport Treasury publication has introduced me to a new (to me) name in the roll call of railway photographers, **writes Geoff Courtney**. It is Terry Nicholls, a Bristol-based Western Region railwayman who took his camera on his business travels and photographed diesels from the late 1960s to the early 1980s, with an emphasis on his favourites, the Class 52 Westerns, (D1000-D1073), the last of which was withdrawn in 1977.

These diesel-hydraulics were also the favourites of the book's compiler, Andrew Royle, so understandably there's no shortage of images of this class, but aided by Terry's railwayman son Steve, who helped fill in gaps in some of the photographs' details, Andrew has ensured there are plenty of other classes on show. The contents guide steers readers from Westerns, Class 47s and DMUs, down through Class 33s and Peaks and other subjects, to 'might have beens,' scrapyards and 'Westerns at rest' – i.e., on shed.

As is the trend with publications that feature images taken by railwaymen during the course of their working day, this book isn't about immaculate engines and rolling stock in pastoral or other picturesque surroundings. It's about D1045 *Western Viscount* at Merehead limestone quarry in Somerset, for example, or a filthy D1015 *Western Champion* at Temple Meads looking, says Andrew, as if it belonged on the scrap line at Laira rather than heading a train of oil tanks, or a pair of grubby and unidentified Class 37s leaving a trail of pulverised fly ash scattered over Bristol as they head a train of wagons from Aberthaw power station in Glamorgan to Pixton siding in Somerset.

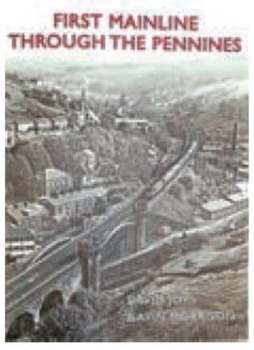
The occasional glamour is, though, thrown into the mix, and this includes Class 55 Deltic No. 55003 *Meld* (ex-D9003) at Newton Abbot in March 1978, waiting to return to Paddington on railtour duty.

However, as a petrolhead as well as a railway enthusiast, my favourite image among a fine selection features Class 03 No. 03382 (formerly D2382) shunting across the road at Avon Street wharf sidings on the Lawrence Hill-Avonside branch, while waiting to proceed is, in Andrew's words, "one very smart Michelotti-designed Triumph 2500S." Andrew draws attention to the fact that the 0-6-0 diesel in the photograph carries no fewer than seven OHL (overhead line equipment) warning signs, and to the casually dressed gent holding up the Triumph with a red flag who, he speculates, was employed at the nearby yard rather than BR.

RAILWAYMAN'S IMAGES OF HIS WORKING DAY

First Mainline Through the Pennines

By David Joy and Gavin Morrison (hardback, Great Northern Books, 128pp, £22.50, ISBN 978-1-914227-90-5).



I LIKE main lines, and the Pennines too, **writes Geoff Courtney**, but I must admit that the former crossing the latter was never high up in my literary thinking. However, the names on the book's cover, David Joy and Gavin Morrison, piqued my interest, which was enhanced when I read on the rear flyleaf that Yorkshire-born David derived special pleasure portraying a railway that linked his home county with Lancashire that was at first so dreadful that it carried passengers in open trucks.

Indeed, there were other failings too, and these, says David, provided a rare source of agreement for the inhabitants of the two counties who otherwise argued over virtually everything, including Lancashire hotpot versus Yorkshire pudding. And so my appetite was whetted, and I tucked in.

The book is divided into three sections: firstly, the main line's beginnings in Manchester; how it went on to serve Bradford; and a look at the branch from Todmorden over Copy Pit summit to Burnley. All unspectacular stuff, but that is one of the publication's attractions. Geographically, the area covered by the book isn't all hedgerow-bordered byways and village greens – although as a former news journalist on Sheffield and Leeds daily and evening newspapers, I can vouch for the fact that it most definitely has its moments in this regard – and thus the images are more a reflection of an industrial region populated by hard-working folk.

There's also enormous variety in the subjects covered in Gavin's images and David's captions. Early on is 'Black Five' No. 44823 in "the smoke, grime and mill chimneys" of Sowerby Bridge in June 1961, and soon after Class 195 DMU No. 195122 at a busy Hebden Bridge station in June 2023, while deeper into the book is a grand selection of steam and diesel double-headers.

In this context, my attention was drawn by ex-GCR D11 class 4-4-0 Nos. 62662 *Prince of Wales and* 62664 *Princess Mary* on an Ian Allan special near Hebden Bridge in May 1956, and Class 31 pair Nos. 31452 (ex-D5809) and 31602 (ex-D5614) also on a special, at Horbury cutting in May 2002.

But David and Gavin don't concentrate purely on fancy doubled-headed specials hauled by pristine locomotives, and I can illustrate that no better than by highlighting two images, the first featuring a filthy 1898-built ex-L&Y Class 2P 2-4-2T No. 50818, complete with a gas-lit smokebox lamp and steam leaking from every pore, departing Bradford Exchange in January 1957 with a local service in a scene that could have been from the days of Queen Victoria.

The second is an image described by David as "the saddest of sights." It was taken by Gavin from an overhead location at Mirfield station between Huddersfield and Dewsbury in November 1981 and illustrates a lonely Class 37 Co-Co No. 37170 (ex-D6870) with a payload comprising a single wagon and a brake van in the midst of a run-down scene that includes a deserted island platform which David writes "epitomises past glory."

PENNINE STEAM AND DIESEL: TELLING IT AS IT IS

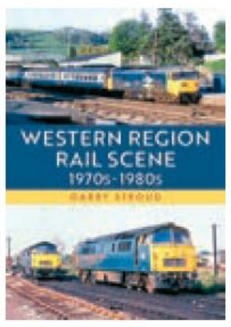
This was a time when semaphore signalling proliferated and the growth of vegetation had not encroached on railway views to the extent photographers find these days! First-generation diesel haulage and operation was the order of the day.

The quality of these colour photographs is first-rate, and this is a feast for modern traction followers, especially those of Western Region. There is a wide spread of images recording the surviving GWR rail scene.

WHERE THE 'CHANGEOVER YEARS' BEGAN IN EARNEST

Western Region Rail Scene 1970s-1980s

By Garry Stroud (softback, Amberley Publishing, www.amberley-books.com, 96pp, £15.99, ISBN 978-1-398125-21-6).



THE Western was the first British Railways region to phase out steam at the end of 1965, and Gary Stroud's excellent publication captures the scene on the old GWR network during the 'corporate blue' 1970s and 1980s. During this era, much of the steam age infrastructure survived to add real interest to the photographic record – as can be seen in this album.

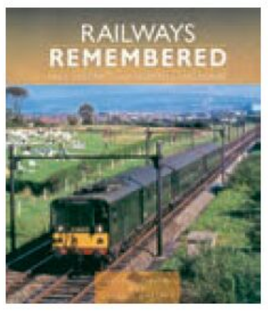
The author's images celebrate the period that still saw diesel-hydraulic and diesel-electric locomotives in operation on mostly long-distance services. DMU and HST services are not neglected either.

Railways Remembered: Lake District and North Lancashire

By Martin Jenkins and Charles Roberts (hardback, Crécy Publishing Ltd, https://crecy.co.uk/ 160pp, £22.50, ISBN 978-1-800353-51-0).

THIS lavish full-colour title provides a feast of steam and early modern traction activity from the late 1950s to the 1970s, with most of the images not having been published before – many coming from the Charles Firminger Collection in the Online Transport Archive.

The area covered is dominated by the West Coast Main Line from Preston to Lancaster and Carlisle. Its challenging gradients, including the legendary Shap, presented



Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

WIN TICKETS FOR SIX ON SANTA'S STEAM SPECIAL





IT'S one of the highlights of any railway lover's Christmas, and a magical experience for the whole family – and thanks to our friends at the Severn Valley Railway, you can enjoy a brilliant start to your festive season.

We have three compartments, reserved and ready to welcome six people each aboard the top heritage line's Santa Steam Special.

Just take part in our easy-to-enter Christmas competition and you could be stepping aboard a magical steam train from Kidderminster Town station and journeying into a world of festive wonder, whether you're four... or slightly older!

You'll join Santa and friends for The Recipe for Christmas, a heart-warming theatrical adventure brought to life at Arley station.

Departures run throughout the day from Kidderminster Town station (DY10 1QX), and the full experience lasts at least 2½ hours.

After the show, your train will take you on the return journey to Kidderminster – with a special surprise on board. Every child will receive a present from Santa's team to take home as a keepsake of their magical day, while on selected departures you can also hop off at Bewdley Station to explore the charming riverside town before heading back to Kidderminster later in the day.

It will be a festive experience like no other – filled with laughter, music, and Christmas magic from start to finish, and for the Severn Valley Railway's seasonal spectacular, the trains depart from Kidderminster Town station between 10am and 4.30pm from November 28 all the way up to Christmas Eve.





Please note, Santa does not meet guests personally. Instead, you'll see him take centre stage during The Recipe for Christmas at Arley station.

It's a busy time for the Severn Valley Railway, so our prizes are **ONLY available on the weekend of November 28/29.** You will also need to make your own way to and from the station. There are no cash alternatives, and you will not be able to exchange your prize for another event at the railway.

So, how could this amazing experience be yours?

All you have to do to stand a chance of winning is to enter our prize draw online at: **www.therailwayhub.co.uk/73808/christmas-competition/** or scan the QR code on your phone to head straight there.

Entries must be with us by **5pm on Thursday, November 12**, and you must be available to attend the railway over the weekend of November 28/29.

For full terms and conditions see our website: shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms-and-conditions

a challenge not only for steam locomotives and crews for decades, but also for photographers seeking out new locations to record them at work.

Also featured are the spectacular Cumbrian Coast, together with Blackpool, Morecambe and picturesque branch lines.

The evocative images are well-reproduced in a larger-than-usual format and reflect the huge variety of rail operations in the North West, featuring steam, diesel and early electric motive power. However, steam activity dominates in this volume.

There is an excellent introduction, together with useful maps of the area's rail network. All the images have detailed captions.

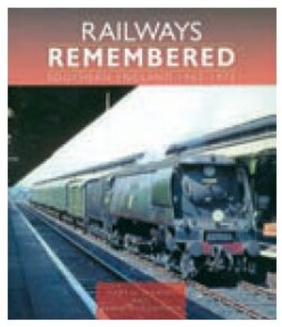
A superb book – 'time travel' is made easy here.

NEW HEIGHTS FOR WEST COAST MAIN LINE COVERAGE

Railways Remembered: Southern England 1962-1972

By Martin Jenkins and Kevin McCormack (hardback, Crécy Publishing Ltd, 160pp, £22.50, ISBN 978-1-800353-49-7).

THE second book in Crécy's superb Railways Remembered series to use the photographs of Blake Paterson,



a professional railwayman, enthusiast and accomplished photographer who worked for the Western Region.

Realising how much the railway scene would change after Dr Richard Beeching's The Reshaping of British Railways report appeared, he set out to record in colour as much of the railway scene as he could.

Paterson sought to find innovative views, and he made a point of including railway infrastructure and staff in his images. Few, if any, of these evocative photographs have been published before now.

The years 1962-1972 included the swansong of British Railways main line steam and the increasing use of modern diesel and electric traction on the Southern Region. A huge variety of railway operations and motive power is dominated by steam activity in this portrait of a soon-to-vanish world.

The territories of the LBSCR, SECR and LSWR, including the Isle of Wight, are the prime focus of this excellent publication.

A quality product, for sure.

CAPTURING THE LAST DAYS OF SOURTHERN STEAM

LEIGHTON BUZZARD NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY

2026 STEAM GALA

- INTENSIVE TIMETABLE WITH 3 DIFFERENT PASSENGER TRAINS AND FREIGHT SERVICES
- DUSK RUNNING ON BOTH DAYS
- CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR TWINNING WITH "P'TIT TRAIN DE LA HAUTE SOMME" FRANCE
- DECAUVILLE 'VICTORY' VISITING FROM THE BREDGAR AND WORMSHILL RAILWAY
- MORE VISITNG LOCOMOTIVES TO BE REVEALED
- DAY AND WEEKEND ROVER TICKETS AVAILABLE
- HOME FLEET - DOLL, GERTRUDE, CHALONER AND PETER PAN



PHOTO CREDIT: KIERAN HARDY PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO CREDIT: MARK LEWIS (ABOVE AND BELOW)



More information www.buzzrail.uk

10am to 5pm 24th and 25th OCTOBER

PAGE'S PARK STATION
BILLINGTON ROAD
LEIGHTON BUZZARD
LU7 4TG

STAR LETTER

A good friend and top photographer

I RECENTLY became aware of the passing of a very good friend of mine, to whom I owe a great deal. He was Tom Boustead, who lived in the Nottingham area and was an exceptional photographer, particularly of railways, which were a great passion of his.

He was never happier than when photographing the Gresley Pacifics on the East Coast Main Line in the area that encompassed Grantham.

Had it not been for Tom, I might never have embarked on a long career painting railway and transport subjects, for he bought many of my early paintings which encouraged me to think I might succeed.

His photographs, which always gave me a great deal of pleasure, ranged from the artistic – one in particular of Nottingham Victoria springs to mind – to the mighty and powerful such as Duchesses on Shap, and an image of a V2 south of Grantham which was a particular favourite.

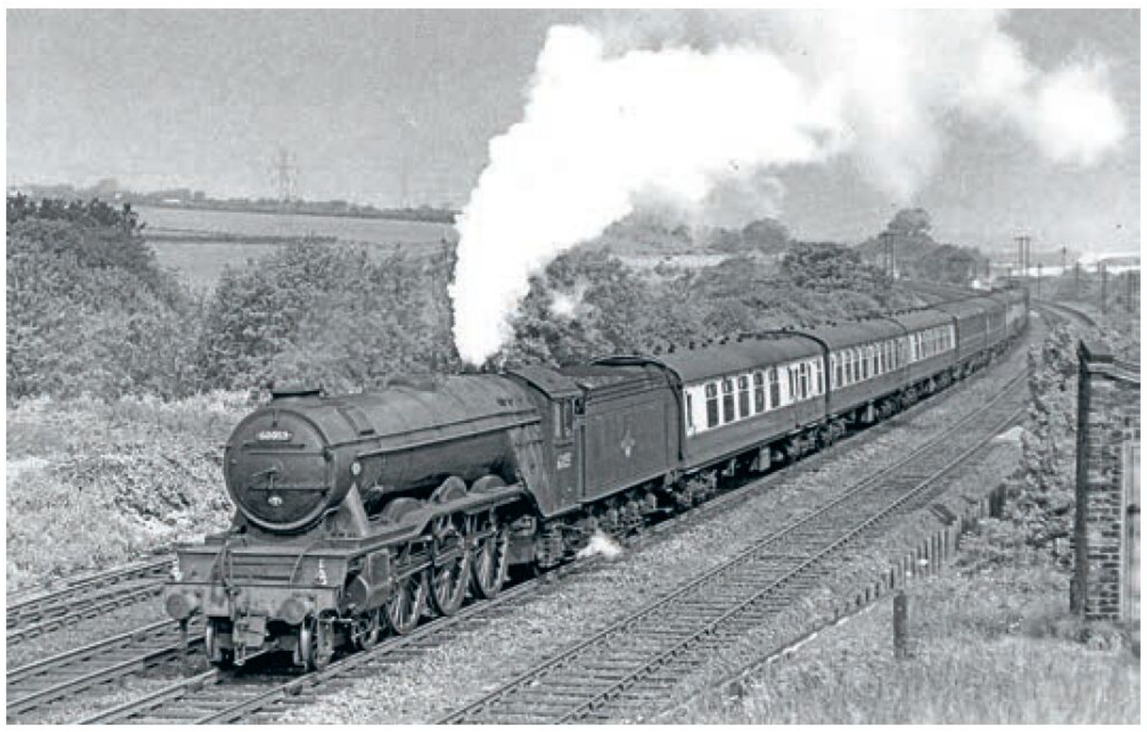
Serenity was not ignored either, with a picture of A3 No. 60059 *Tracery* at Great Ponton which Tom chose as a subject for a painting.

When BR steam ended, Deltics and preserved steam became subjects in which he took an equal pride.

He belonged to railway photographic clubs and was highly regarded by his peers.

Railway historians and enthusiasts, especially those living in the East Midlands, will be much the poorer for his passing. On a personal note, I have lost a very good friend and a warm and gentle man that changed the path of my career. Thank you, Tom, for all the pleasure that your photographs have brought.

Malcolm Root, Halstead, Essex



This photograph of A3 No. 60059 *Tracery* on the ECML was taken by Tom Boustead, who chose it as the subject for a painting by top railway artist Malcolm Root.

Heritage Railway has received several letters in response to our new story in issue 348 regarding some reenactors at the Severn Valley Railway's 1940s weekends this summer walking out over as disagreement regarding the wearing German military uniforms. Below are some of them:

German WW2 insignia at 1940s events

I DO NOT agree with any events which set out to sanitise the awful times suffered by this country during the Second World War.

Principally because, apparently, no lessons were learned from either of the world wars: you only have to look at any news outlet to realise wars are raging everywhere around the world, but also because it was so long ago.

I am 71 years old and know of wartime experience only as told by my deceased grandfather and father who were loco men throughout the war.

My grandfather recalled the very long hours without the certainty of booking off duty and at least a couple of memories of being so hungry as a result of these long hours and, though enhanced with extra cheese in his rations, lack of food, that he and his fireman foraged for carrots from the fields adjoining the passing loops in which they were held.

My father, still a teenager, was out firing on the main line. His memories included standing in passing loops outside Birmingham witnessing the infernos coming from the city as a result of the bombing.

Another recollection was working a train by Defford Airfield when a home-coming damaged airplane's landing wheel clipped the cab roof.

In conclusion, the wartime memories as relaid to me certainly weren't the jolly scenes that too many heritage railways set out to portray.

I have recently hung up my own footplate boots after 39 years at my local heritage railways, where despite having our own WD locomotive from 1940 and hiring in other WD locomotives, I have taken part only in school education trains re-enacting evacuation services.

Incidentally, my uncle became a decorated Royal Marine, fighting the 'forgotten' war in Burma because my grandfather would not agree to him becoming a locomotive man.

Clive Wilson, email

No place for Nazi uniforms on reenactors

I WORK on a heritage, railway and when I saw Nazi SS insignia on re-enactors uniforms, I objected to my manager as I considered what it stood for to be abhorrent. I do not think this occurs now.

The Germans operated thousands of concentration camps administered from about 21 centres by the Wehrmacht. There were also six death camps operated by Himmler's SS, where human beings were exterminated on an industrial scale, resulting in the deaths of about seven million innocent people.

Based on these facts, why would some people, as in the article, claim that "they need to tell the whole story – not just the nice bits"?

To accomplish this aim, let's get it right, then. Does that person plan to have a pop-up Auschwitz and start picking on anyone whose face doesn't fit and burn them?

Incidentally, German SS (Schutzstaffel) insignia is strictly banned in Germany under Section 86a of the Strafgesetzbuch section 86a (Criminal Code), which outlaws the public display, distribution or manufacturing of symbols belonging to unconstitutional and extremist organisations.

Some people may need to read history and reflect on it.

Name and address withheld by request

Doncaster Works trophies need good home

THE Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board is offering several items for transfer to new homes.

The board was established by statute to ensure a secure and sustainable future for railway objects and records. Its latest list includes a cupboard containing trophies and awards relating to achievements and competitions at Doncaster Works between 1853 and 2026.

As reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 347, Operator Wabtec UK and City of Doncaster Council organised a final public open day at 'The Plant' on June 19/20, marking the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sir Nigel Gresley, before its scheduled closure at the end of the year.

Also on offer separately is a commemorative plaque marking the 150th anniversary of the works (1853-2026).

Any organisation which would like to acquire these items must apply to the RHDAB before October 12.

➜ For more information or to express an interest, email smgrailheritage@sciencemuseum.ac.uk



Above: Plaque marking the 150th anniversary of Doncaster Works.
Left: The cabinet filled with trophies from Doncaster Works. BOTH RHDAB

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Rails goes Great Central with latest exclusive commissions

RETAILER Rails of Sheffield has announced its latest line of exclusive OO scale products, which are being produced by Rapido Trains UK and will appeal to Eastern Region and pre-Grouping era modellers – the Great Central Railway 4-6-0 'Sam Fay' class.

Constructed in 1912/13, only six locomotives were ever built, with the first, No. 423, named after the Great Central Railway's general manager, Sir Sam Fay, which also became the class's nickname. International celebrity status was calling No. 423, as plans were made for the loco to be exhibited at the 1914 Ghent Exhibition in Belgium. In readiness for its appearance, it received a special finish, a copper-capped chimney and a unique builder's plate that displayed the builder's country of origin. Unfortunately, these added features became a wasted effort as a model was sent in the locomotive's place.

Designed by the railway's Chief Mechanical Engineer John G Robinson, the class broke his usual 4-6-0 locomotive design conventions – they featured inside cylinders. The reasons for this are still unknown; irrespective of this, the class's performance did not match its imposing aesthetic, and despite enthusiasts commending the noise they made, their power output was somewhat lacking and they were assigned to mixed traffic duties rather the expresses they had been intended for.

All six survived into LNER ownership, under which they were classed B2, although they were reclassified B19 in 1945 to make way for the new Thompson-designed locomotives, which received the original class identity. None of the six locomotives made it into BR stock with the first withdrawn in 1944 and the last in 1947.

Rails' models of the class will cover its entire timespan, with both green and black variations of the GCR and LNER liveries, supplemented by BR black variants for 'what if' representation – something that is becoming commonplace for new models in this scale.

Nine different versions are being produced with each available as DCC-ready and sound-fitted products. A MoPower stay-alive capacitor will be included to ensure smooth, continuous running, with tooling catering for the different chimneys, domes, safety valves and countless other subtle changes applied throughout the class's working life.

Prices start at £239.95, and delivery is expected to be towards the end of 2027, with design completed and tooling already under way. Advance orders can be placed online with only a 10% deposit required.

To accompany these new locomotives, Rails of Sheffield has also commissioned a selection of GCR mahogany-liveried coaches using the tooling for Rapido's generic Evolution range, with five different carriages available individually (£69.95 each) as well as a triple pack (£199.95), all due to arrive at the same time as the 'Sam Fays.'

Rapido goes all Sentinel



CONTINUING its trend of bringing quirky prototypes to the mainstream OO scale market, Rapido Trains UK's latest announcement is not sentimental – but certainly a Sentinel one!

These unusual 0-4-0s were derived from Sentinel's road vehicle designs, and unlike conventional locomotive practice, they were fitted with a vertical boiler and chain-driven. Their short wheelbase, quick steam-raising time and impressive fuel economy made them ideal for industrial sites, where tight curves and frequent shunting necessitated compact but powerful locomotives. Body styles differed either side of the war years, and Rapido is catering for both of these distinctive designs, of which several have survived into preservation. East Lancashire Railway-based No. 7232 *Ann* is included amid the prewar 'BE' type set for release, alongside Avon Valley Railway's No. 7492 *Fry*.

Postwar, these locomotives received metal cladding over the water tanks and cylinders giving them a much 'boxier' look. Works No. 9559, which survives at the Tanfield Railway, is one of the preserved examples from this type included in the identities being released.

Six versions of each type are being produced with a cornucopia of colour resulting from their varying liveries, a consequence of their exceedingly widespread industry usage. RRP is set at £139.95 per locomotive.

RAPIDO has also revealed its first diesel locomotive for its growing 009 scale range of products, with the Fowler & Co 'Resilient' class being the prototype of choice on this occasion. Eleven different versions are planned of this compact industrial design, which saw use on construction sites and in quarries. In addition to a highly detailed body as standard, a bag of additional detailing parts such as dumb buffers, cab doors, headlights and more will be included to allow modellers to fully customise to their own needs. RRP is set at £129.95.





CLARKS Railworks has revealed it is taking its first steps into Great Western territory with the announcement of its Mink G van in OO scale. A total of 100 of these 20-ton capacity vehicles were built at Swindon in 1930/31 and could carry twice the load of any of their standard predecessors. During the 1960s, the were gradually withdrawn, with some passing into departmental duties. Five have been preserved, with examples to be found at places such as the National Railway Museum in York and Didcot Railway Centre. Eight different versions have been planned for the first models, each costing £47.50 and exclusively available from Ellis Clark Trains. Delivery is expected in the spring of 2027.



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, sch hols.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Running: Weds + Oct 29-Nov 1.

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: W/Es, sch hols.

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: W/Es until Oct 17 + Oct 31.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Havenstreet, Isle of Wight.
Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: W/Es, Tues-Thurs, sch hols.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: W/Es, Weds + Sept 30.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Running: Sept 27, Oct 11, 25, 31.

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Running: Thurs-Sunds, sch hols.

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey.
Tel: 07962 400922.
Running: Sept 27.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Running: Sept 26/27, Oct 11, 17/18, 21, 25.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles.
New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Royal Victoria Railway
10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01795 424899.
Running: Sept 26/27.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es + Oct 15/16.

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: Suns until Nov 1+Oct 24/28/30.

Bodmin Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Princes Wharf, Bristol.
el: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.
Running: Sept 26/27, Oct 10/11, 24/25.

Dartmouth Steam Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles.
Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.
Running: Daily until Oct 31.

Devon Railway Centre
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon.
Tel: 01884 855671.
Open: W/Es until Nov 1 + Oct 27-30.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Cranmore, Somerset.
Tel: 01749 880417.
Running: Weds, W/Es + Oct 27, 29.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset.
Tel: 01963 370752.
Running: Sept 27, Oct 25.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall.
Tel: 07901 977 597.
Running: Thurs & Suns until Oct 29.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile.
Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: Weds-Suns, sch hols.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Running: Oct 25-29.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es + Oct 27.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants.
Tel: 01425 471415. **Running: W/Es, sch hols.**

North Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.
Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.
Running: Sept 27, Oct 4, 18, 31, Nov 1.

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: Sept 27, Oct 3, 11, 28, 31, Nov 1.

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: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles.
Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Running: Sept 26/27, Oct 4.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es until Nov 1.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Open: Suns.
Running: Oct 24, 30.

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 until Oct 31.
Running: Suns + Oct 3, 28, 29, 31.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Oct 4, 25, 28, Nov 1.

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: W/Es until Oct 18.

Home fleet diesels take centre stage

The Severn Valley Railway's October 1-4 Autumn Diesel Bash is a strictly home fleet affair this year, but it still promises to be an event worth attending.

Up to eight classes of traction will be represented by about 12 different locomotives and multiple units, including several of the Western Region diesel-hydraulic types residing on the 16 ½-mile line.

SVR CEO Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster said: "We are incredibly proud of our diesel fleet, and this year's Autumn Diesel Bash gives us the perfect opportunity to let it shine. There's something particularly exciting about seeing a whole range of locomotives from our own collection working together in an intensive timetable. It's a fantastic demonstration of just how much depth and variety we have here at the SVR."

The full timetable and locomotive allocations is at svr.co.uk/specialevents/autumn-diesel-bash/



Class 42 'Warship' D821 *Greyhound* will be one of the Severn Valley Railway's many resident locomotives starring at the home fleet-centric Autumn Diesel Bash this October. KEVIN WHITEHURST/SVR

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Victory: Barclay and goods vans to make their debut at Blaenavon



Above: No. 2201 *Victory* and two newly restored box vans will make their debut at the BHR's South Wales-themed steam gala on September 25-27. BHR



Right: A former Mountain Ash colliery locomotive, No. 1680 *Sir John* was to receive a cosmetic restoration in time for the event. BHR

An Andrew Barclay that has not run for a quarter of a century will be in action at the Blaenavon Heritage Railway's September 25-27 steam gala after completion of its restoration, conveniently further supplementing the event's South Wales theme.

Built in 1945, 0-4-0ST No. 2201 *Victory* spent its industrial working life at the Newport plant of Stewart & Lloyds. When retired, it was handed over to the National Museum for Wales. After being placed in the care of the Caerphilly Railway Society and kept at the Gwili Railway, it was donated to the BHR in 2014 with the intention that it would be returned to steam once more; however, it was sold on again in 2021, with the buyer first moving it to the Avon Valley for overhaul assessment, before then going to the workshops at Williton on the West Somerset Railway for the job to be carried out there under contract.

On August 10, it made its first moves under its own steam in about 25 years in the yard there before arriving back at Blaenavon just over two weeks later, where running-in and finishing-off work was completed.

It will remain based at the BHR for the foreseeable future, which puts it just 16 miles away from where it once worked in Newport.

BHR volunteers also completed restoration of two BR box vans in time for them to feature at the gala – Pallet Van No. 77322 and Shocvan No. 853119, neither of which have previously run in preservation.

Meanwhile, as this issue went to press, Avonside 0-6-0ST No. 1680 *Sir John* was being treated to a cosmetic restoration so as to go on display during the event, in the hope of having four locomotives on show together that all once served Mountain Ash Colliery, the others being Andrew Barclay 0-6-0ST No. 2074 *Llantarnam Abbey*, GWR 5700 0-6-0PT No. 7754 and Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3879 *Haulwen*.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk.
Tel: 01449 766899.
Reopens: Dec 6.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles.
Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: W/Es until Nov 1.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

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: Oct 4, 17/18, 25, 30/31.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon.
Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Suns + Oct 17, 30/31.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon.
Tel: 01491 835067
Running: Oct 3/4, 17.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Weds + Oct 25/25, 28, 31, Nov 1.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex. Tel: 01277 365200.
Running: Sept 25-27, Oct 24/25, 28-31.

Gunpowder Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey , Essex.
Running: Sept 26/27.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

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 + Oct 24, 28/29, 31.

London Museum of Water & Steam
2ft gauge, 400 yards. Brentford, London.
Tel: 0208 568 4757.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX. Tel: 0116 299 5111.
Running: Oct 3, 20.

Amerton Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs.
Tel: 01889 271337.
Running: W/Es until Nov 1 + Oct 28.

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.
Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Running: W/Es until Oct 31.

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 until Oct 25 + Oct 20/21, 27/28.

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.
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: Oct 4, 25.

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.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Oct 24/25, 28, 31, Nov 1.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Walsall, West Midlands.Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Running: Suns + Oct 24, 27, 30/31.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 360522.
Running: Sept 25-27, 30, Oct 3/4.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.
Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Weds & W/Es until Nov 1.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 823076.
Running: Fris-Suns.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles. Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns until Oct 25.

Foxfield Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs.
Tel: 01782 396210.
Running: Suns.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.
Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323.
www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: W/Es + Oct 1/2.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts.
Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Open: W/Es. Running: Oct 30, Nov 7.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Ripley, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 570140.
Running: W/Es + Oct 28.

National Tramway Museum
Standard gauge, one mile. Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Open: Sats-Thurs + Oct 30.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Oct 4, 31, Nov 1.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunsbury Hill, Northampton.
Tel: 01604 702031.
Running: Oct 4, 18, Nov 1.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 580381.
Running: W/Es + Oct 28.

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: Sept 27, Oct 4, 18.

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: TBA.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles.
Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR.
Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: Weds, Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Statfold Country Park
Multiple gauges, one mile.
Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU.
Tel: 01827 830389.
Open: Fris-Suns + Oct 22, 28, 29.

Tanat Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Nantmawr, Shropshire SY10 9HW.
Tel: 01691 780042.
www.tanatvalleyrailway.co.uk
Open: Oct 17/18.

Telford Steam Railway
Standard gauge, one mile. Telford, Shropshire.
Running: Sept 27.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Running: Sept 26/27, Oct 10/11.

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, Thurs, W/Es.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: W/Es + Oct 16, 28/29.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.
Running: Suns until Oct 25.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Running: Sept 26.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.
Running: Suns until Oct 18.

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: Thus-Mons until Nov 1.

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: Tues-Thurs & W/Es until Nov 1.

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: Sept 26, Oct 31.

Snaefell Mountain Railway
3ft gauge, 5½ miles (SMR).
Laxey, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.
Running: Tues-Thurs & W/Es until Nov 1.

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 until Oct 31.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Running: Suns until Nov 1.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick, Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: Suns + Oct 10, 17, 31.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
British Steel Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Running: Sept 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.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks. Tel: 01756 710614.
Running: Tues, Weds, W/Es until Oct 28.

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles. Ford Forge, Northumberland. Tel: 01890 820244.
Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth, West Yorks, BD22 8NJ. Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols + Oct 15/16.



The final guest set to feature at the Mid-Hants Railway's October 2-4 steam gala is Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46447, owned by the Isle of Wight Steam Railway but currently on long-term loan to the East Somerset Railway. Its presence means there will be a trio of Ivatt locomotives there, with 2-6-2T duo Nos. 41312 (MHR resident) and No. 41313 (from the IoWSR) included in the line-up. The latter two are meeting for the first time since parting ways from a shared allocation to Brighton shed in 1964, having been allocated to the same depots as one another since Faversham in 1955. MHR

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

Pre-order Issue 351: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Running: Sept 26, Oct 24.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough, Lincolnshire. Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Oct 11, 31.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunslet, Leeds.
Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Running: Suns until Oct 25 + Oct 31.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Grosmont, North Yorks.
Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Sats-Weds until Nov 1.

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 until Oct 18 + Oct 17.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham. Tel: 07729 765504.
Running: Weds + Oct 6, 10, 13, 25, 30/31.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles. Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire. Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: W/Es until Oct 18 + Oct 31.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles. Huddersfield, West Yorks. Tel: 01484 865727.
Running: W/Es, sch hols + Oct 16.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft.
Fimber, East Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Running: Suns until Oct 25 + Oct 28.

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Running: Thurs, W/Es, sch hols.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Blaenavon, Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Running: Sept 25-27, Oct 24/25, 30/31.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan. Tel: 01685 722988.
Running: Tues-Thurs & W/Es until Nov 1.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth. Tel: 01654 761701.
Running: Sept 26/27, Oct 10/11, 24/25.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne, Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Running: Tues-Thurs, W/Es, sch 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: Sept 26/27, Oct 1, 3/4, 7, 14, 17.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Sept 27, Oct 20-22, 24-Nov 1.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire. Tel: 07956 082305.
Running: Sept 26, Oct 31.

Llangollen Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen, Denbighshire. Tel: 01978 860979.
Running: Weds, W/Es + Oct 1/2, 8/9.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Snowdon Mountain Railway
800mm gauge, 4½ miles. Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870223.
Running: Daily until Oct 25.

Talyllyn Railway
2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.
Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.
Running: Daily until Nov 1.

Vale of Rheidol Railway
1ft 11¾in 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, sch hols.

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: W/Es & sch hols until Nov 1.

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian. Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Tues, W/Es + Oct 9, 14.

Caledonian Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Brechin, Angus.
Tel: 01356 622992. **Reopens: Nov 28.**

Doon Valley Railway
Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Running: Sept 27.

Keith & Dufftown Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire. Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: Sept 25-27, Oct 30/31.

Lathalmond Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, athalmond, near Dunfermline. Tel: 07379 914801.
Open: Sept 27

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire. **Running: Sept 27.**

Royal Deeside Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory, Kincardineshire. Tel: 01330 844416.
Running: Oct 11, 18, 25.

Strathspey Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Aviemore, Inverness-shire.
Tel: 01479 810725.
Running: Sats-Thurs.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway
3ft gauge.
Dromod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Running: Sept 26-28.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway
5ft 3in gauge.
Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.
Running: Oct 30/31.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
5ft 3in gauge. Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.
Running: Oct 30.

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.

SEPTEMBER
24-27 Steam Gala, North Yorkshire Moors Railway
25-27 Steam Gala, Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
25-27 Autumn Diesel Gala, Epping Ongar Railway
26 Trailfest, Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways
26 End of Season Gala, Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
26/27 Mixed Traction Gala, Aln Valley Railway
26/27 Autumn Diesel Gala, Bodmin Railway
26/27 Model Railway Weekend, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
26/27 Thomas Branch Line weekend, Nene Valley Railway

OCTOBER
1-4 Autumn Steam Gala, Great Central Railway
1-4 Autumn Diesel Bash, Severn Valley Railway
2-4 Victorian Weekend, Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways
2-4 Autumn Steam Gala, Mid-Hants Railway
3/4 Day Out with Thomas, East Lancashire Railway
3/4 Road & Rail Steam Rally, Gwili Railway
8-11 International Feldbahntreffen, Apedale Valley Light Railway
9-11 Mixed Traction Extravaganza, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
10/11 Austin Counties Car Rally, Kent & East Sussex Railway
10/11 Llangollen Food Festival, Llangollen Railway
10/11 Warley at Statfold, Statfold Barn Railway
15-18 Beer & Music festival, Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
15-18 Real Ale & Cider Festival, Spa Valley Railway
16-18 Giants of Steam, Bluebell Railway
16-18 Autumn Steam Gala, East Lancashire Railway
17/18 Heritage Railcar Gala, Llangollen Railway
17/18 Autumn Steam & Diesel Gala, Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
17/18 O Guage Get Together, Severn Valley Railway
17/18 Run It Gala, Tanfield Railway
24 Goods train day, Dean Forest Railway
24 Halloween trains, Yeovil Railway Centre
24/25 Steam Gala, Leighton Buzzard Railway
24/25 Autumn Steam Gala, North Norfolk Railway
24/25 Model Brick Show, Spa Valley Railway
24-31 Wizard Week, Mid-Hants Railway
25-31 Halloween specials, Apedale Valley Light Railway
28-31 Fright Week services, Epping Ongar Railway
29/30 Steam 'n' Scream, Talyllyn Railway
29-31 Ghost Trains, Severn Valley Railway
30 Halloween trains, Yeovil Railway Centre
30/31 Halloween Trains, Bala Lake Railway
31 Halloween trains, Aln Valley Railway
31 Royal Forest of Steam Gala, Dean Forest Railway
31 Spooky Specials, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
31 Halloween Spooktacular, Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
31 Halloween trains, Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
31 Spooky Express, Llangollen Railway
31 Thomas Branch Line weekend, Nene Valley Railway
31 Halloween Trains, Peak Rail

Are you organising a gala or other big event? Email the details to Owen Hayward at owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

CLASSIFIED

Contact Andy on 01507 529455
andy.bruce@kelsey.co.uk

BOOKS

The Smokebox bookshop of Kingston revived
Stall F2B at Antiques of Kingston KT2 6ND
ENLARGED stall specialising in rail and road transport
Selling books, photographs and ephemera
Reasonable prices. Open 7 days. Close to rail and bus stations.
Contact Nick 07722 084314. Email: nickcountertenor@gmail.com

Railways Buses Aviation Canals
DEREK'S TRANSPORT BOOKS
All Transport Subjects Covered
www.derekstransportbooks.com
Over 10,500 Books in Stock on-line
Based in the New Forest
Est. 1995
Shipping Commercial Motoring Trams

RAILWAY BOOKS
Rare and out of print • 6,000+ to view at
www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk
01974 821281

BUILDINGS

STEEL BUILDINGS
HEAVY DUTY STEEL BUILDINGS
- Extremely cost effective
- Workshops/Garaging/Storage
- Widths from 20ft to 70ft
- Unlimited Lengths
- Buildings to BS 5950
- Finance available



Tel: 01709 578333
BLUELINE BUILDINGS LIMITED
e: sales@bluelinebuildings.co.uk • www.bluelinebuildings.co.uk

DERBYSHIRE



Luxury Lodge Holidays in Derbyshire.
Home to many heritage railways.



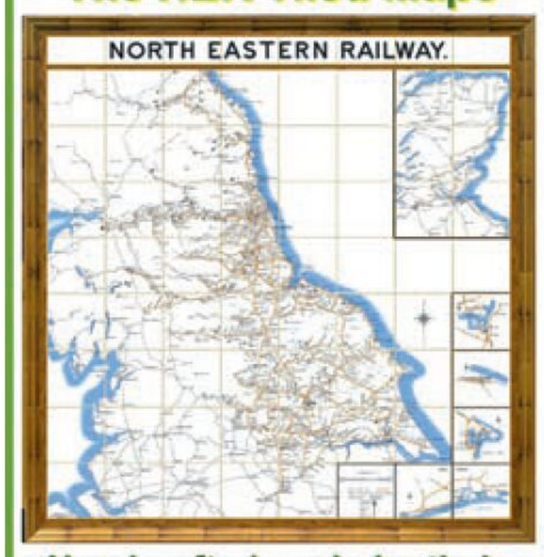
Darwin Forest
LUXURY LODGE HOLIDAYS
Call 01629 732428 or visit www.darwinforest.co.uk

MODELLING

Redcar Models & Hobbies
Stocking a wide range of '00' railways by Bachmann, Hornby, Peco and Gaugemaster
Also Model Kits and Diecasts and all other modelling accessories
FREE PARKING FOR THE FIRST HOUR
130 High Street, Redcar, Cleveland
T: 01642 494 912 E: andrewnpaton@ntlworld.com

FOR SALE

The NER Tiled Maps



Handcrafted again by their original manufacturers
Full, threequarter and half sizes are now available from
The North Eastern Tile Company
4 Foundry Cottages, Wrelton, Pickering, YO188PF
01751 477216
www.northeasterntilecompany.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY

Quality Photographs of Railways, Ships and Aircraft
(Fresh images regularly added)
NOW OVER 20,000 IMAGES AVAILABLE
Please send £5.95 for our list/sample print.
(UK Mainland & Northern Ireland only.
For overseas please enquire via email)
Please state which list you require.
(cheques payable) to:- MR D SMITH, 2 Briain Way, St. John's Road, Clacton on Sea, Essex CO16 8LR
10% off orders over £50 (exc P&P)
DIGITAL DOWNLOADS NOW AVAILABLE
If you're looking for a good home for your treasured pictures then please email us mail@phototransport.com or write to us at the above address.
www.phototransport.com

HERITAGE RAILWAY
THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

SUBSCRIBE

Aviation Classics Monthly



The legendary aircraft of WWII to the Cold War, brought to life. Aviation Classics Monthly delivers expert features, rare archive photos and stunning commissioned art – plus a 6-page gatefold poster cover in every 88-page issue.

Subscribe today!
shop.kelsey.co.uk/aviation-classics-monthly

Please mention HERITAGE RAILWAY when responding to adverts

NORTH YORK MOORS



HUNGATE COTTAGES

11 highly individual self catering cottages set in peaceful gardens, a short walk to Pickering Railway Station, the starting point of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Tel 01751 476382 • Mob 07876 404152
Book online at **hungatecottages.co.uk**

Self-catering holiday accommodation

THE OLD STATION

The Old Station, Allerston, North Yorkshire

This former station ticket office has been carefully renovated and converted into a **spacious** two bedroomed cottage, each with a walk-in shower. Lounge and dining area contains several restored period features. There is a wood burning stove in the original fireplace and underfloor heating throughout. Kitchen includes freezer, dishwasher and washer dryer.



Contact **01723 859024** • **www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk**

Self catering railway carriages

Five miles east of Pickering
Twelve miles from the coast

- *Each self contained carriage sleeps up to six*
- *Bed linen, towels etc included*
- *Heating & electricity included*



For full details visit www.theoldstationallerston.co.uk • Tel: 01723 859024

www.heritagerailway.co.uk

SERVICES

HAWKINS INSPECTION SERVICES LTD

- *Boiler inspections carried out to current regulations*
- *Annual inspections*
- *Repairs assessed & overseen*
- *AIBI Member*
- *Specialist in heritage plant, rivetted boilers, loco type boilers, air receivers workshop & loco*
- *Modern plant also catered for*

T: 01243 554623 M: 07872 903401
www.boiler-inspector.co.uk office@boiler-inspector.co.uk

WANTED



WE WANT TO BUY YOUR COLLECTION OF SLIDES AND NEGATIVES.

UK AND OVERSEAS - 1990s AND EARLIER

WANTED

If your collection, **big or small**, is gathering dust we'd like to hear from you. We will scan the original images and return a copy to you for personal use free of charge.

Call: 01494 490544
Email: info@bbfimages.com



WANTED

Model Railway & Collectables

We buy all makes, all gauges, live steam, aeroplane kits, boats, tanks, radio controlled, die cast and more.

Top prices paid for your models
Swift payment made on collection

LITTLEWORTH MODELS

1. Contact us for a valuation
2. We make an offer
3. Bring, send or collect
4. Payment made

01778 594604 or **07578 708785**
contact@littleworthmodels.co.uk

Find out more and get a **FREE valuation** at
www.littleworthmodels.co.uk

Est. 2007 — 18+ years trading in collectables

Collection made in person from across the UK

We carefully dismantle your displays for you

Honest valuations and fair offers given

Littleworth Models • Unit 7 Mays Wharf • Eastgate Industrial Estate • Cherry Holt Road • Bourne • Lincolnshire • PE10 9LA

WANTED Your lighter takes

If you've got a quirky photo, tale, poem or anything else you think might be appropriate, please email staff writer Owen Hayward on owen.hayward@kelsey.co.uk

Two families and a passion for preserving steam

Words and pictures by Alexandra Wilde

A PASSION for preserving steam is often passed down through several generations of one family. It also extends to a collaboration between families in Europe, surrounding the continuing story of a German locomotive saved from scrap by English enthusiast Dr Peter Beet in 1974.

Peter was born in Kendal in 1937. After qualifying as a doctor in 1964, he practised as a GP in Morecambe, and his love of steam locomotives remained a large part of his life. In tandem with his medical career, he preserved some British engines that were otherwise destined for scrap.

Realising it would be necessary to have a base where they could be housed, serviced and maintained, in 1968 he acquired the lease on an LMS shed at Carnforth. Under his leadership, it continued as Steamtown, and after Sir William McAlpine invested in it, bringing his A3 Pacific *Flying Scotsman* to the site, it became a major regional visitor attraction.

Peter was eager to acquire LMS Coronation 4-6-2 No. 46243 *City of Lancaster*; alas, this proved impossible, and it was sent for scrap by Central Wagon Co in 1965.

Over the years, however, he was instrumental in saving nearly two dozen locomotives.

While Steamtown in Carnforth no longer functions as a museum, the site is as the operational headquarters and storage depot for West Coast Railways, and Carnforth station has become a visitor centre.

Although unable to save *City of Lancaster*, Peter's determination to preserve other locomotives from scrap continued to burn bright. While on holiday in Germany, he fell in love with continental steam and made his first contact with DB (Deutsche Bahn), the German national rail company.

Peter taught himself German and French so he could communicate with fellow lovers of steam in both countries. He became friends with Jürgen and Judith Nicklich in Germany, who, with their sons Sandor and Marko, were equally keen to preserve these magnificent engines.

He set his heart on acquiring 01 class 4-6-2 No. 01-1104, built in 1940 by the Berliner-Maschinenbau-Actien-Gesellschaft (BMAG) in Berlin. It was also destined for an appointment with the cutter's torch, so in January 1974, Peter wrote to the then Chancellor of Germany, Willy Brandt, saying he would like to buy it.

One month later, he received a reply from the German Minister of Transport, agreeing to the proposal at a cost of DM 29,000 – with the rate of exchange at that time, that is approximately £5800.

The arrangements made for transporting the locomotive to England were complicated. First drawn across Germany and Holland, it was then taken by sea from Rotterdam to Hull, where it was unloaded in King George Dock, before commencing the final part of its journey.

Because of its great size, it was taken by trailer with a police escort along A roads across the Pennines to its new home in Carnforth. It was steamed there for three years, giving rides in a hired air-braked Mk. 2 coach. It also enjoyed a short stint at Crewe.





Left: German Pacific No. 01-1104, proudly flying the British Union flag.

Below: Sandor Nicklich, driver of No. 01-1104, and Chris Beet (right), Dr Peter Beet's son.

Return journey

In all, Peter Beet and his family enjoyed the ownership of No. 01-1104 for more than two decades until in 1995, they decided to return the locomotive to the main line in Europe.

Sponsorship was needed to fund this return journey, and together with Jürgen and Judith Nicklich and Raimund Wilhelm, the money was raised to repatriate No. 012 back home to Germany.

Another torturous, but ultimately successful, journey was accomplished. The locomotive was first taken by road to Immingham, then by sea to Rotterdam, and transported on the final leg by rail to Nordlingen in Germany.

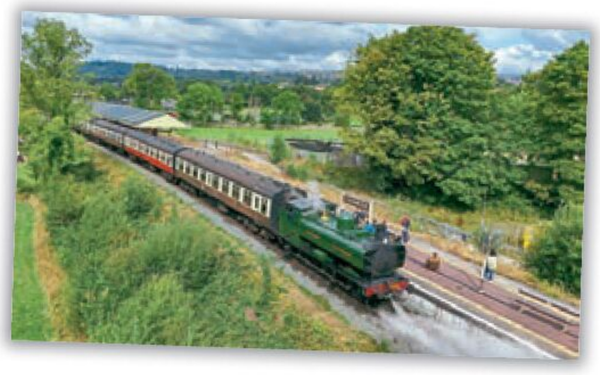
Maintaining the Beet family's attachment to steam, and their long and close association with this German locomotive, Peter's son, Chris, travelled with No. 01-1104 from England to Germany.

A small group of like-minded enthusiasts in Germany got together and founded a club to ensure future successful maintenance and running of this magnificent engine.

Called Faszination Dampf, which translates into English as The Fascination of Steam, it now has about 30 members who always follow the locomotive.

NEXT ISSUE
Issue 351 out Oct 23
Modern heritage: Owen Hayward speaks to the National Wagon Preservation Group about its growing collection of specialised freight vehicles.

PLUS
DEE-LIGHTFUL TIMES!
Following the conclusion of its 50th anniversary year, we speak to the new manager of the Llangollen Railway to find out how it continues to go from strength to strength.



PRE-ORDER ISSUE 351
OR TURN TO PAGES 30/31 AND SUBSCRIBE!
No need to pop to the shops in four weeks' time... simply order your next *HR* from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529.**
SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

AUTUMN GALA SEASON 2026 COMMENCES
A London & South Western Railway locomotive in Yorkshire, a reunion of Welsh colliery locomotives in South Wales and tank engines to the fore in Leicestershire: autumn's steam gala season gets underway with comprehensive coverage from events at the North Yorkshire Moors, Blaenavon, Great Central and more!

BEST FOR THE COMPLETE COVERAGE OF THE PRESERVATION SCENE:
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN HERITAGE RAILWAY!



14-15 NOVEMBER

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

THE LAST HURRAH GALA

One final weekend of steam to round off the season!

Round off the season in style at the Last Hurrah Gala, our end-of-year celebration of steam power. Expect an action-packed timetable, a strong line-up of locomotives from our home fleet, plus one visiting guest locmotive and plenty of atmosphere as the railway enjoys one final steam-filled weekend before we switch over to our magical Great Central Santa Express.

With trains running throughout the weekend, this is your last chance to enjoy steam gala action on the Great Central Railway this year – the perfect way to round off the season.

One final weekend. One last hurrah. Don't miss it!





DISCOVER MORE & BOOK

Website gcrailway.co.uk

Booking Office 01509 632 323

Great Central Road, Loughborough LE11 1RW



Rail Holidays of the World

Tours to Suit Every Rail Holiday Goal

Snow on the Alps ~
Departs 9 February 2027 - 10 days from £2,955pp

Experience Switzerland at its sparkling winter best, with spectacular Alpine scenery, unforgettable mountain railways and snow-covered landscapes creating a magical rail holiday in one of Europe's most beautiful regions.

- ★ First Class Swiss Pass for unlimited travel whilst in Switzerland
- ★ No expensive excursions to pay for
- ★ Stays in Chur and Thun
- ★ Centrally located hotels allowing easy access on free days with your travel pass
- ★ Reservations in First Class on both Bernina and Glacier Express trains (subject to availability – may use scheduled services instead)
- ★ Dinner in one of the heritage dining cars operated by Rhaetian Railways
- ★ Arranged optional escorted excursions on free days

Northern Lights ~
Departs 9 February 2027 - 10 days from £3,790pp

Journey north in search of nature's greatest light show, combining spectacular Arctic scenery, memorable rail travel and the chance to witness the magical Northern Lights dancing across the sky.

- ★ Opportunity to see the amazing Northern Lights
- ★ Leisure time in Oslo, Trondheim and Tromsø
- ★ Spectacular rail journey across the Arctic Circle
- ★ The Lofoten Islands
- ★ Visit the Viking Museum and guided tours of Svolvær and Henningsvær
- ★ The Ofoten Railway – Narvik to Kiruna
- ★ Visit to Jukkasjärvi Ice Hotel





Dresden Steam Festival ~
Departs 8 April 2027 - 8 days from £1,990pp

Experience the sights, sounds and spectacle of Dresden's renowned Steam Festival, where magnificent locomotives, historic trains and Germany's rich railway heritage create an unforgettable specialist rail adventure.

- ★ Dresden Steam Engine Festival, including evening photographic session at Roundhouse 1
- ★ Return journey on Kirnitzschtal tramway
- ★ Return journey on the Weisseritztalbahn & Loessnitzgrundbahn steam railways
- ★ Travel by paddle steamer on the Elbe River
- ★ Public transport ticket for central Dresden

Poland & The Wolsztyn Steam Locomotive Parade ~
Departs 29 April 2027 - 14 days from £2,825pp

Celebrate Poland's living steam heritage at the spectacular Wolsztyn Locomotive Parade, combining historic railways, fascinating cities and unforgettable steam-hauled experiences for railway enthusiasts seeking something truly special.

- ★ Visit two of Poland's best railway museums
- ★ Explore the tram networks of Poznan, Warsaw and Krakow
- ★ Full day excursion to the Steam Loco Parade in Wolsztyn
- ★ Chabowka Rolling Stock Heritage Park
- ★ Visit Wieliczka Salt Mine and Auschwitz
- ★ Chartered historic tram ride in Frankfurt an der Oder

2027 Brochure Now Available ~ See full itineraries and book now at www.ffestiniogtravel.com

*** Tel: 01766 512400 * Email: info@ffestiniogtravel.co.uk * www.ffestiniogtravel.com***

Ffestiniog Travel

Ffestiniog Travel is owned by a charitable trust and profits go to support the world famous Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways every booking helps preserve the railways.