

TRAINS OF THE DESERT
A rare look at the railways of Saudi Arabia

CLASS 87 GOLDEN JUBILEE
In praise of the West Coast stalwarts



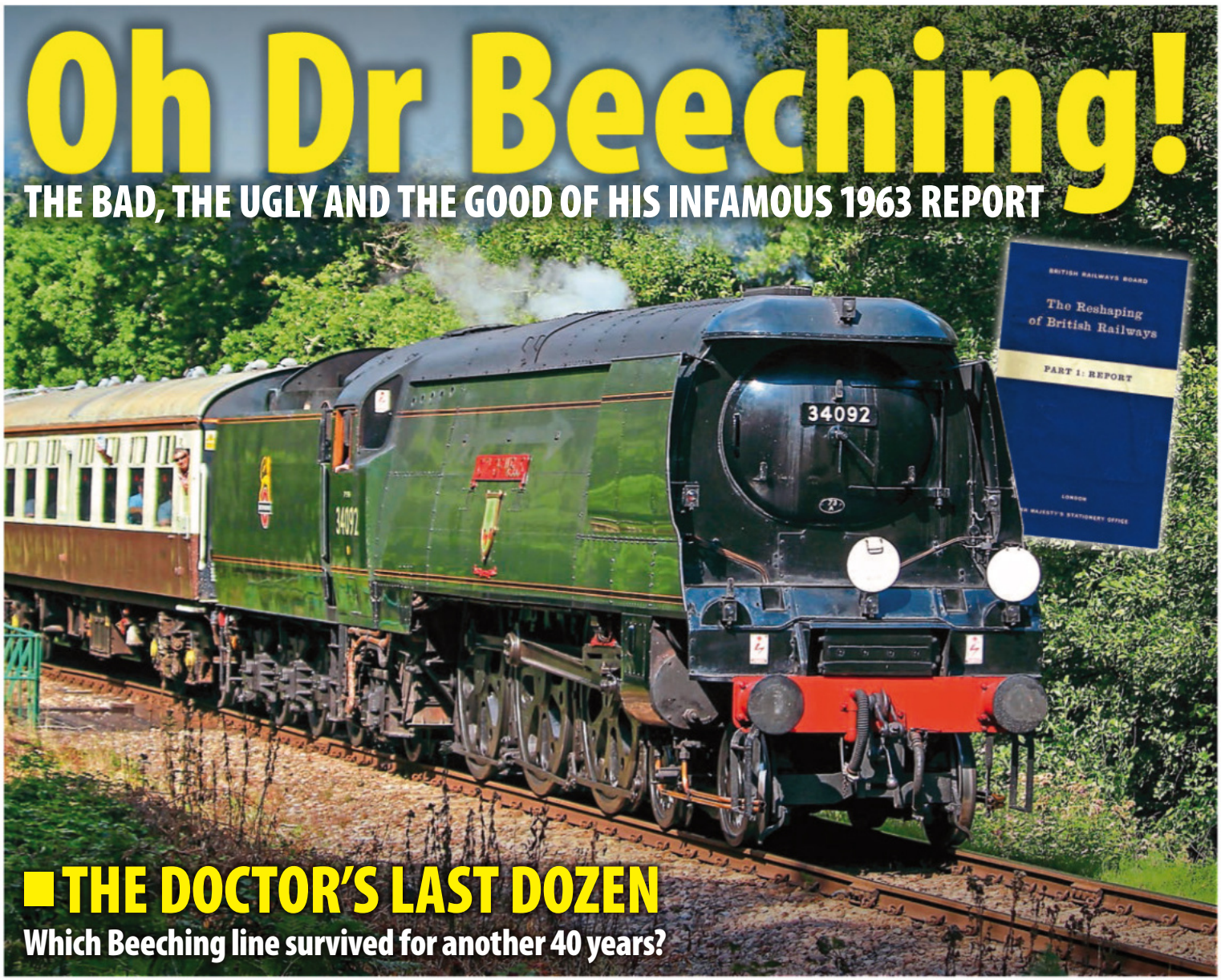
The RAILWAY Magazine

BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING RAIL TITLE

April 2023

Oh Dr Beeching!

THE BAD, THE UGLY AND THE GOOD OF HIS INFAMOUS 1963 REPORT



THE DOCTOR'S LAST DOZEN

Which Beeching line survived for another 40 years?



GALA CELEBRATION
50 years of heritage diesels



EXTENSION SETBACK
Lynton plans hit the buffers



NEW ARRIVAL
T&W gets first Class 555



The West Somerset Steam Express

Saturday 22nd July, 12th August and 16th September

This series of trains from London Paddington to Minehead features haulage by two steam locomotives in one day.
One steam locomotive will haul our train from London Paddington to the West Somerset Railway at Bishops Lydeard.
The Heritage Railway will then provide a steam locomotive to haul our train to Minehead and back. This provides a truly fascinating day out through beautiful scenery to the Bristol Channel coast.

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Cumbrian Mountain Express
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Join us from London Euston, Watford Jct, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe and Preston to travel steam hauled over the Settle & Carlisle line.

End of Southern Steam
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Join us from London Victoria, Woking and Basingstoke to visit Weymouth.

Cumbrian Mountain Express
Saturday 15th July
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The White Rose
Saturday 15th July
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North Wales Coast Express
Sunday 16th July
Join us from Liverpool Lime Street, Broad Green, Warrington Bank Quay and Chester to visit Llandudno, Bangor or Holyhead.

The Welsh Mountaineer
Tuesday 18th July
Join us from Preston, Warrington, Frodsham and Chester to visit Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The Dorset Coast Express
Wednesday 26th July, 2nd August and Thursday 17th August
Join us from London Victoria, Staines, Woking and Basingstoke to visit Bournemouth or Weymouth.

The Kentish Belle
Wednesday 9th August
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This issue was published on April 5, 2023.
The next will be on sale on May 3, 2023.

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recycle



The site of Euston's HS2 station has been cleared for construction, but trains might not arrive there now until 2041. HS2

Cutbacks then and now



TRAIN OF THOUGHT
Editor's Comment

I WONDER if Dr Beeching ever thought that his name, or rather his (in)famous report of 1963, would still be resonating round the railway world some six decades later?

Time seems to have softened the harsh criticism that has long been aimed at Dr Beeching and his proposals, which swept away thousands of miles of lines, hundreds of stations, and a whole way of railway life.

I know many *Railway Magazine* readers will have been lucky enough to have travelled over a number of these lines before they were closed. I envy that, and would welcome a time machine to allow at least one trip over the likes of Waterloo to Padstow via North Devon, or Marylebone to Manchester on the Great Central, or the Waverley Route from Carlisle to Edinburgh.

In assessing the man, and with the benefit of hindsight, we must not forget he was tasked with making the railways break even in less than a decade – an impossible task that was recognised within a few years, but not before much damage was done.

To mark the 60th anniversary of his report being published, we examine some of the things Dr Beeching got right, and how he arguably sowed the seeds for what is good in the current railway age. We then follow up with a look at the last dozen lines to close as a result of being named in his 1963 report – the final one of which did not officially close for another 40 years.

HS2 shambles

It is perhaps supremely ironic that, in the same month we mark 60 years of the Beeching Report, the Government announced that HS2 – the new main line that will put back some of the capacity lost in the 1960s – has been cut back or delayed even more (page 7).

Most surprising of all is that when Phase 1 opens to Birmingham (sometime between 2029-2033), the southern terminus will now be Old Oak Common, where passengers will have to change to reach central London.

Over the two decades or so between Phase 1 gaining Royal Assent in early 2017 through to Euston possibly opening in 2041, just imagine how many route miles the Victorians would have built in the same period!

PAUL BICKERDYKE, Editor

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April 2023. No. 1,465. Vol 169. A journal of record since 1897.

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The Luton DART is now in operation between Parkway railway station and the airport. CHRIS MILNER

On the cover

MAIN IMAGE: **The Tunbridge Wells to Eridge line was the penultimate one to close under Dr Beeching's 1963 report (in July 1985, see page 26), happily reopening from December 1996 as the heritage Spa Valley Railway – and visiting 'West Country' No. 34092 *City of Wells* is seen at Cold Bath Bridge on August 27, 2022 with the 10.15 Eridge to Tunbridge Wells West.** JAMES TAVINER



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Talyllyn Railway No. 4 *Edward Thomas* operated training trains on Sunday, February 12. BARBARA FULLER



The latest addition to Andrew Briddon's fleet is a Barclay 0-6-0DH named *Bagnall*. PETE BRIDDON

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No. 37422 at Little Fenton on March 7. CHRIS GEE



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PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE: This incredible shot was taken to the east of Lichfield on March 13, as 'Jubilee' No. 45699 *Galatea* (running as No. 45562 with *Sierra Leone* nameplates) heads north on the West Coast Main Line with the 5Z43/09.48 positioning move from Southall to Carnforth, passing over the construction site of HS2's Streethay Cutting, which will take the high-speed line under the WCML. This work is at the northern end of HS2 Phase 1 (there will be a connection from HS2 to the WCML north-west of Lichfield) and therefore not affected by the recent announcement of delays to the project (see page 7). JOHN WHITEHOUSE

Features

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The many miles of line closures were bad, the sweeping changes to a long-established way of life were ugly, but did Dr Richard Beeching's report of 60 years ago in fact sow the seeds for what's good in the current railway age? Mike Jones investigates.

26 The Doctor's last dozen

Graeme Pickering tells the story of the final 12 passenger lines closed due to Beeching's 1963 report, the official end of the very last one coming some 40 years later!

32 Trains of the desert

Saudi Arabia is investing in its railway network with modern passenger trains and the first high speed rail line in the Middle East – and, with an economic plan to move away from solely depending on the oil industry, it is now opening up to tourist visits. Keith Fender reports.

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Class 87s ruled the West Coast Main Line from the early 1970s, being the first locomotives to really flatten the climbs of Shap and Beattock, but – as John Heaton FCILT describes – their full potential was perhaps let down by ageing infrastructure and network constraints.

44 Farewell to 'Kings', reprised

Sixty years ago in April 1963, and four months after the class had been withdrawn, there was to be one last 'King'-hauled railtour until the main line preservation era began in the 1970s. John Heaton FCILT describes the 'readeption' of *King Henry VI*.



ANALYSIS: Was Beeching inevitable? – p20



LAST LINES: Beeching's final 12 route closures – p26



PRACTICE & PERFORMANCE: Class 87s – p38

Significant setback for Lynton & Barnstaple revival

Planning permission for a line extension within National Park boundaries has expired after conditions were not met.

By Cliff Thomas



The current end of the L&BR line at Killington Lane station, seen on September 28, 2019 looking south-west towards Parracombe, Blackmoor (and Barnstaple). ROSSER1954 (CC BY-SA 4.0)

LYNTON & Barnstaple Railway Trust's (L&BRT) planning permission to reconstruct the line between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate expired on March 7. This 3.5 mile section would have formed an extension to the current mile-long line from Woody Bay to Killington Lane.

Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) granted planning permission to rebuild the line to Blackmoor in March 2018. However, the permission was conditional on all required land being in L&BRT ownership and all money needed to complete the project being secured before work could commence.

Although L&BRT owns most of the required land, it has not been able to buy a section of trackbed south of Parracombe where the revived railway would run 100 yards from the current owner's house. Money to rebuild the entire route is also not currently available.

In May 2022, following professional advice, L&BRT submitted a Section 73 application to ENPA to vary the planning conditions to allow reconstruction from Killington Lane in stages.

A 'Return to Parracombe Appeal' was also launched aimed at raising £1.6 million to cover rebuilding the first 1600 yards (1463 metres) from Killington Lane to Parracombe Halt. This reached some £700,000 by January this year – very creditable, but only sufficient to reinstate Bridge 65 (where the railway needs to pass under Killington Lane) and continue as far as Bridge 64.

However, this January, ENPA told the L&BRT it seemed unlikely the necessary statutory processes concerning the Section 73 application would be completed before the planning permission expired and they were minded to reject the application anyway. L&BRT did not challenge this decision since it would have involved more time and expense with no guarantee of success.

Not all bad news

While extending from the Killington Lane end of the old railway has now apparently stalled, L&BRT does still have planning permission covering rebuilding the line between Blackmoor and Wistlandpound. This section is outside the National Park, with permission having been granted by North Devon Council in June 2016. This permission did not have the same onerous conditions, and work on this trackbed has been undertaken with the reconstruction in 2019 of Bridges 54 and 55 south of Blackmoor.

The RM understands the L&BR Trustees will now consider various remaining options for expansion of the railway, which will then be discussed with the L&BR membership to decide on the way forward.

Ukrainian Railways mark first year of war

By Keith Fender

ON February 24, exactly a year since Russia's invasion of Ukraine began, a ceremony was held at Kyiv's main station, when a memorial to the 353 Ukrainian railway workers who had been killed in the previous year was unveiled.

The chairman of state railway Ukrzaliznytsia (UZ) Mr Oleksandr Kamyshin also revealed that Russian attacks on the rail system – which have occurred across the country, even close to the borders with the European Union – had also resulted in 819 employees being injured during the year.

New electrification

Despite the war, UZ managed to complete 82km (50 miles) of new electrification in 2022, plus nearly 5000km (3100 miles) of track renewals. UZ says it has also rebuilt 25 of the 69 bridges destroyed in fighting in 2022, and continued to reopen cross-border lines closed in the last three decades.

On January 17, the Rakhiv-Berlebash cross-border line connecting Ukraine with Romania reopened, and a month later two border crossings in south-east Poland reopened, along with 68.3km (42 miles) of track, most of it in Ukraine.

Just before the one-year anniversary, UZ announced a major programme called 'Rail Ukrainization' to remove Russian and Soviet legacies from the rail network.

"It's time to finally get rid of the Soviet and imperial past, which permeated the Ukrainian railway for more than 100 years," said Kamyshin.

The programme, planned to run from 2023 to 2025, will remove the use of Russian language and Soviet era memorials. The ticket system currently in Ukrainian and Russian languages will be modernised, with tickets in future only in Ukrainian along with English.

UZ also plans to restructure its railways and will rename two of its operating divisions known by their old Soviet names, with public votes planned to decide on new ones. Railway mileages calculated in Soviet days from Moscow will be rebased from Kyiv; the first new 'zero' marker was installed this year at Kyiv's main station. Longer-term, signalling systems using Russian technology will be replaced progressively with new European standard systems.



The interior of the UZ saloon car now dubbed 'Rail Force One'. PESA BYDGOSZCZ

'RAIL FORCE ONE' FOR US PRESIDENT BIDEN: UZ operated a very special train on February 20, taking US President Joe Biden from Przemyśl, Poland, to Kyiv on his way to visit Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

This trip has led UZ to nickname the VIP saloon coach used as 'Rail Force One' after the call sign normally assigned to the US president's aircraft. The coach, which has been used since the start of the war for visiting foreign leaders – including UK Prime Ministers Johnson and Sunak – was built in 2005 by Polish train builder Pesa Bydgoszcz and is equipped with two bedrooms and a conference room.

Massive blow to HS2

Further cutbacks and delays means the route will not reach central London until 2041.

By 'Industry Update'

THE Government dealt a major blow to the HS2 project on March 9, when it announced that Euston would not be reached until 2041 – almost two decades from now – and that Old Oak Common would become the 'temporary' southern terminus.

The decision to proceed with HS2 was taken at the start of January 2012, with construction organised into two phases for an initial line between London Euston and Birmingham, followed by two spurs to reach Manchester and Leeds.

There would also be a number of connecting sections linking the high-speed route to HS1 (St Pancras-Channel Tunnel) and the West Coast, Midland, and East Coast Main Lines. Parliamentary powers for Phase 1 were granted in February 2017 and as far as Crewe for what was described as Phase 2a in February 2021. Plans for Phase 2b, which would allow construction between Crewe and Manchester with stations at the airport and Piccadilly, were also well advanced.

Network Rail had pushed for a new line as forecasts suggested there would be insufficient future capacity on the West Coast Main Line to meet the demand for longer distance commuter services and expected growth in intermodal traffic. HS2 was considered to be more cost effective and less disruptive than the alternative of upgrading existing infrastructure.

An important part of the plan was an aim to integrate the new route with the existing network with a series of interconnections. This reflected the successful use of HS1 by domestic services, which has resulted in significant journey time reductions between London and coastal towns in Kent.

With emerging policy about the green agenda and the need for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, it was also seen that a switch from airline travel between Europe and the UK, as well as a reduction in domestic flights, would be a significant contribution to the HS2 business case.

Gradual descoping

The first project cost estimate in 2012 was £37 billion, which was regarded as a manageable investment using taxpayer funding from the Treasury. Once detailed planning started, however, it became clear that the cost of construction was a gross underestimate – but the go-ahead created a momentum to proceed in terms of property acquisition and enabling works.

Nevertheless, the project scope was reduced and an early casualty was the link between HS1 and HS2 using an upgraded North London Line. The intention that Heathrow Airport would be served was another cutback, with a decision that Old Oak Common would become a hub where airline passengers could connect with services to destinations beyond London.

The development of a spur to Crewe was an alternative to providing a section of high-speed line to Liverpool, and the approval of Phase 2a allowed trains to go forward from Crewe to Liverpool using existing infrastructure.

But worse was to follow, as a core part of the original project justification to provide services to reach Leeds was abandoned in 2021 – replaced by terminating the line at East Midlands Parkway, from where services would run on the current network to reach Sheffield. Alternative routing to provide a high-speed service to Leeds was to be evaluated, with the expectation that a link with the East Coast Main Line would be upgraded to permit higher running speed.

The removal of the eastern leg also had a big impact on the aspirations for Northern Powerhouse Rail, as significant improvements in connectivity were planned to take place by speeding up services between Birmingham and the East Midlands and beyond to Leeds, York and Newcastle.

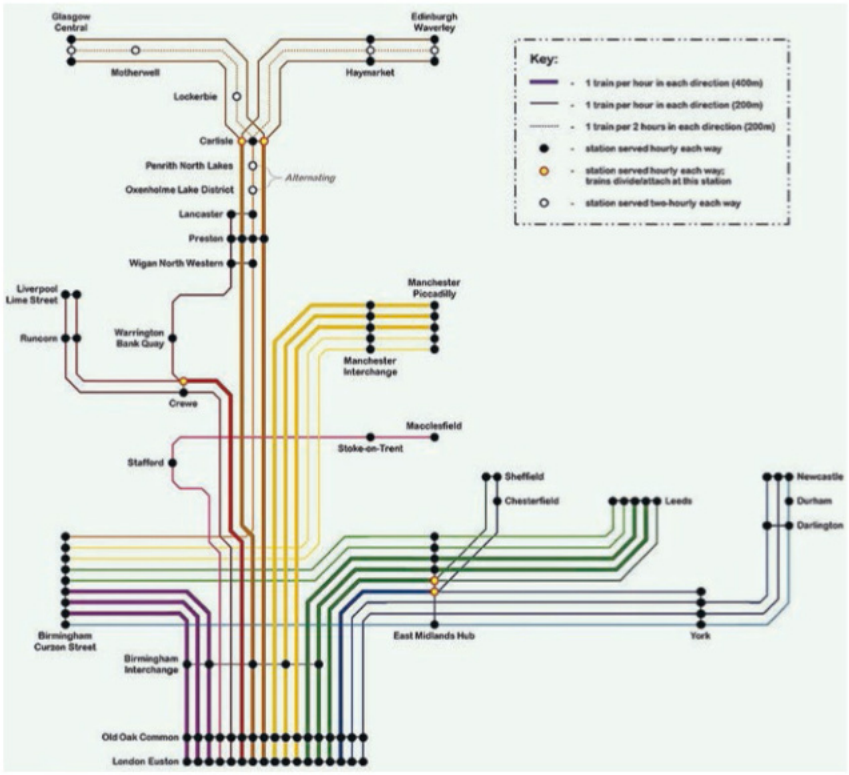
Another cutback took place in 2022, with the removal of the Golborne Link from the Manchester branch to reach the West Coast Main Line at Wigan, meaning that trains running to Scotland will have to be routed via Crewe and from there continue on the existing network.

Change for London

The Government has now decided that it can only afford the truncated route, most recently estimated to cost £71 billion, if there are extended timescales for completing construction. Calls for cancellation of the project have been fended off because work is too far advanced, with £29 billion already committed.

Despite a recent commitment that the first section of route would see the operation of trains between Euston and Birmingham Curzon Street, it is now intended that services will terminate at Old Oak Common, where passengers will need to change trains and use the Elizabeth Line to reach central London.

Both the extension to Euston and the Phase 2b line to Manchester are not now expected to be completed before 2041, and no completion date has been revealed for reaching East Midlands Parkway, which suggests this section may not be built.



Above: The original schematic map of 2012 showing 17 departures an hour from Euston to many destinations in the North. All services will now start and end at Old Oak Common until 2041, while what happens to the eastern side of the country is now unclear.



FIRST AVANTI '807' BREAKS COVER: The first of 10 seven-car Class 807 electric units for Avanti West Coast has emerged from the Hitachi factory at Newton Aycliffe, County Durham – No. 807002 being seen there on February 28. They are due to enter traffic later this year and work alongside the 13 five-car Class 805 bi-modes also being built to replace 20 five-car Class 221 'Voyagers' on the WCML. JAMES GARTHWAITE

SIDELINES

£2m for HNRC

HARRY Needle Railway Company has secured £2m funding to support ambitious growth plans to increase its capacity and develop greener locomotives, creating 50 jobs over the next five years.

The investment was provided by Frontier Development Capital and will go towards adding an engineering shed, a paint shop, and additional sidings across its sites at Worksop and Barrow Hill. An R&D program will look at modifying existing locomotives to become more eco-friendly.

'99' fleet for GBRf

BEACON, Stadler and GB Railfreight have signed an agreement to finance, build and operate 30 Class 99 bi-mode locomotives. The Co-Co locos will be powered by 25kV AC overhead or on board 2150hp low emission diesel engine. They are expected to enter service in 2025.

ROG Class 93

TESTING of the first Rail Operations Group Class 93 tri-mode (25kV AC, 1200hp diesel, 540hp battery) locomotive is underway in Valencia, Spain. Stadler is building an initial batch of 10, but there is an option for 20 more. The first loco No. 93001 is expected to arrive in the UK at Portbury Docks on April 11, then move to the Rail Innovation and Development Centre at Old Dalby to start testing.

Fatal Greek crash

A HEAD-ON collision between a passenger train and a freight train between Tempi and Evangelismos in Greece's Thessaly region killed 57 people on February 28, said to be the worst in the country's railway history.

The 19.22 Athens to Thessaloniki passenger service collided head-on with a Thessaloniki to Larissa intermodal at 23.21 on the same southbound track about 17 miles (27km) north of Larissa – the closing speed was estimated to be over 100mph.

Manual signalling was in place and human error was blamed. Four people had been charged with various offences as this issue went to press: the stationmaster at Larissa, his supervisor, and two other stationmasters who reportedly left work early.

XC HSTs to go

CROSSCOUNTRY has announced it fleet of five HST sets will be withdrawn by October. The operator has 12 power cars and 40 sliding door Mk.3s, but these are currently underused as since the Covid-19 pandemic there are only two daily diagrams.

It is expected that two sets will be withdrawn in September and the other three the following month, all to be replaced by pairs of 'Voyager' sets.

With GWR set to remove its remaining 'Castle' sets by the end of the year, this will leave ScotRail as last remaining major operator of HSTs.

Legislation next step for GBR

Following February's Bradshaw address by Transport Secretary Mark Harper, that effectively relaunched the GBR project, Network Rail chief Andrew Haines briefed *The RM* on progress.

By Phil Marsh



NR boss Andrew Haines at the Bradshaw Lecture in central London on February 7. PHIL MARSH

WITH the Great British Railways project given Government permission to proceed, a mix of primary and secondary legislation is now required to create the public body, making it the licence holder (taking over from Network Rail) and removing franchising authority from the Department for Transport.

"Until primary legislation has been achieved nothing can be formalised," said Network Rail chief executive and GBR transition team lead Andrew Haines. "But it can be achieved before the next general election as the legislation has been slimmed down… the gap between the main political parties appears small… [and] no real issues are envisaged.

"It is anticipated that aiming for Royal Assent in autumn 2024, the parliamentary process would need to start this autumn. Once the second reading has been completed, GBR can begin working in shadow mode to reflect the Bill's contents, enabling a swift activation after assent is given."

Transport Secretary Mark Harper's Bradshaw lecture in February suggested that private sector involvement would increase and, when asked for more detail, Mr Haines added: "[The Williams Rail Review] was very clear that where franchise contracts were based on the economy and revenue risk, you should not contract on revenue risk alone. It could be included to a degree in the future, but not to the extent it atrophied the franchise system.

"[The next decade] will carry significant revenue risk given the three big intercity lines (Great Western, West Coast and East Coast) will be subject to a decade or so of long-term revenue disruption due to HS2 and the Transpennine Route Upgrade, so revenue growth incentivization is not realistic for years".

Mr Harper also said that open access was to play a major part in future operations. Mr Haines said that using a standard hour timetable to create more capacity could mean one path an hour could be available for auction by open access operators, but Moderation of Competition rules would need to be changed, and it is a political view on how much is agreed.

DERBY WINS COMPETITION TO BE GBR HEADQUARTERS

THE Government has chosen Derby to be the base for Great British Railways, the public body that will take over responsibility for running Britain's railways from Network Rail.

Derby was chosen over shortlisted rivals Birmingham, Crewe, Doncaster, Newcastle and York.

The announcement on March 21 said it scored highest against the six criteria of levelling up, connectivity, opportunities for GBR, value for money, heritage and public support. It was also said to score highest in the summer 2022 public vote, with support from the many rail businesses based in the city, such as Alstom, Loram, Sperry, and East Midlands Railway.

The exact location of the headquarters is yet to be confirmed.



↑ **OLD MEETS NEW: Tyne & Wear Metro Class 555 No. 555004 was put on display to the media and local guests on March 17, at the new £70 million South Gosforth depot in Newcastle. It is pictured alongside No. 4012 from the current fleet of Metro-Cammell built trains, which will be replaced by the 46 Class 555s on order from Stadler. The Swiss company will also maintain them for Metro operator Nexus. No. 555004 arrived at its new home in the early hours of March 11, joining No. 555003, which had been delivered at the end of February (see also page 75). The units will begin trials on the system after the completion of static tests. GRAEME PICKERING**



→ **GRAND SUITES FOR SIX GRAND: Belmond has unveiled two new luxury suites for its 'Royal Scotsman' train that will enter service in May 2024. Decoration of the two Grand Suites is said to take inspiration from Scottish culture and its natural beauty. They are aimed at those with deep pockets, however, as prices start at £6000 per person for a two-night trip, including private transfers, and treatment in what is claimed to be Europe's only on-train spa. BELMOND**

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- Inlandsbanan from Gällivare to Östersund
- Time to explore Bergen, Oslo, Trondheim & Stockholm

Harz Explorer ~ Departs 3 June 2023 - 7 Days from £1,420pp

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- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage town of Quedlinburg
- Steam train journey to the top of the Brocken
- Time in the charming town of Wernigerode
- Explore Frankfurt with travel card included





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SIDELINES

DRS open day change

DIRECT Rail Services' depot open days, which alternate between its sites in Carlisle and Crewe, has switched from annual to every two years to allow more time for planning. This means the next open day will be at Carlisle Kingmoor in 2024.

Sleeper switch

OPERATION of the Caledonian Sleeper services will be taken over by the Scottish Government after the Serco-run franchise ends on June 25. An arm's length company will be created in line with the statutory Operator of Last Resort duty.

'Q' withdrawn

EIGHT years into its 10-year boiler certificate, Maunsell 'Q' 0-6-0 No. 30541 has been withdrawn from traffic at the Bluebell Railway due to firebox problems. Having had its cylinders rebored and steam pipes and piston rods replaced early in 2022, it is mechanically fairly sound.

Consideration might be given to a rapid boiler repair if suitable finance is available.

Neville Stead

RENOWNED railway photographer Neville Stead passed away on March 9 aged 85, *writes Robin Fell*.

He was born in Hull on April 11, 1937 and was a railway enthusiast from an early age. In the mid-1960s he moved to Whitley Bay and made a great contribution to the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group (NELPG), being a major influence in the saving of 'J27' No. 65894 and 'Q6' No. 63395. From 1976 he became devoted to his negative collection, acquiring others from various sources with the goal of creating a vision of Britain's railways in the steam era – a process he continued up to his death.

His ashes are to be scattered at his favourite location at Enthorpe Bank (on the closed Driffield to Market Weighton line), and the image collection is now in the Transport Treasury archive.

John Parry

ULTRA-LIGHT rail pioneer John Parry MBE passed away on February 17 aged 85.

John was best known for his flywheel-powered Parry People Mover rail vehicles, in particular the two Class 139 units used on the Stourbridge Town branch since 2009.

John also worked with Nick Mallinson of Warwick University's WMG group, seeking funding for a larger version of the '139', which led to the development of the Revolution VLR railcar and ultimately to the Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre that opened in Dudley last year.

HRA Awards celebrate preservation year

The Heritage Railway Association's annual 'Oscars' were awarded in Birmingham in March.

By Paul Bickerdyke

THIS year's winner of *The Railway Magazine's* lifetime achievement award for preservation has been awarded to Martyn Ashworth. The presentation took place as part of the Heritage Railway Association's annual awards event, which took place in central Birmingham on March 11.

Martyn is a well known figure to many within the heritage movement, having notched up more than 50 years of service so far. He began volunteering at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in 1970, but has taken on roles such as director at Peak Rail (including extending the line to Matlock); chief mechanical engineer at the Swanage Railway; events manager at the Great Central Railway; steam manager at Barrow Hill; and founder of Heritage Transport Supplies.

He has also been influential in the restoration of main line locomotives such as Standard 4MT No. 75078, Standard 2MT No. 78022 and '9F' No. 92214; and built, restored and imported many narrow gauge locos through his 'Workshop X'.

Other achievements include being a qualified Independent Competent Person advising heritage railways across the country, and traction inspector for the National Railway Museum.

Martyn said he was "gobsmacked" at the award but added that, despite it being for lifetime achievement, his work was far from done.

Railway 'Oscars'

The HRA Awards celebrate the best in railway preservation across 12 categories, plus four magazine-sponsored awards.

The Railway of the Year prize went to the **Isle of Wight Steam Railway** for offering a consistently exceptional visitor experience. The Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering went to the 2ft 6in gauge **Sittingbourne and Kemsley Light Railway** for its restoration of 1905-built Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST *Premier*. And the Manisty Award, only ever given for exceptional projects, went to the **Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways** for its gravity slate train project.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "The sheer variety of projects this year showed the strengths that the sector has; a real grasp of our history, huge volunteer commitment, and a level of dedication to the cause that so many will be envious of."

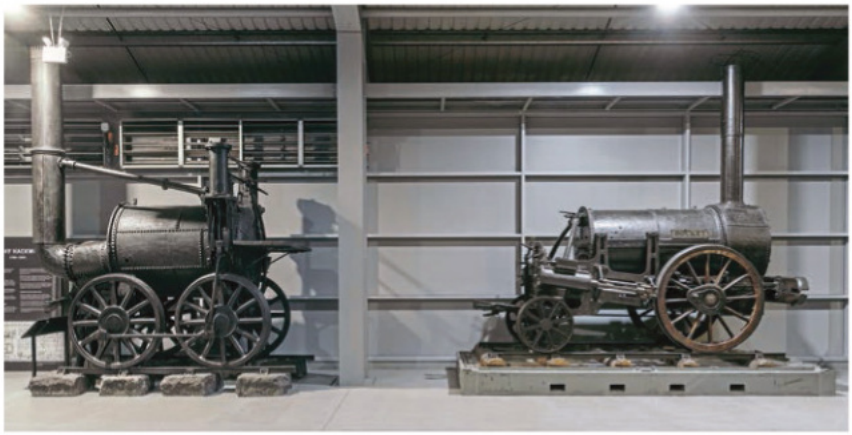
Other winners on the night were **Peak Rail** volunteers (Team of the Year); the **Bodmin and Wenford Railway** (Business Innovation); the **West Somerset Railway's** general manager Kerry Noble (Rising Star); **Georail Heritage Volunteer Group** (Diesel and Electric Locomotion); the **Talyllyn Railway** (Marketing and Communications); the **Hampton and Kempton Waterworks Railway** (Infrastructure); the **Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway** (Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation); the **North Yorkshire Moors Railway** (Environmental Innovation); and the **Keighley and Worth Valley Railway's** Oliver Harrison (Lord Faulkner Award for Young Volunteers).

The other magazine-sponsored winners were: **Crewe Diesel Preservation Group**, for returning a Class 47 push-pull set to the main line (*Rail Express*); the **Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway & Broadway Museum** for the 'Journey through Steam' exhibition (*Heritage Railway*); and the **Talyllyn Railway** for its Tŷ Dŵr loco watering project (*Steam Railway*).

■ Network Rail chairman and Science Museum trustee Lord Peter Hendy has been appointed as the new chairman of the HRA Board, replacing outgoing chairman Brian Simpson.



Martyn Ashworth (left), receives his Lifetime Achievement award from *The Railway Magazine's* editor Paul Bickerdyke and the HRA's Paul Lewis. HRA/JACK BOSKETT



RIVALS REUNITED: The original *Rocket* (right) and *Sans Pareil* (left), locomotives built for the 1829 Rainhill Trials, were united at Locomotion in Shildon on March 1, for what is believed to be the first time since 2000, when they were at the National Railway Museum in York. The museum went one step further later in March, however, by displaying these two with the original *Locomotion No. 1* – the first time ever these three locos have been seen together. NRM

Bid to secure Darjeeling tank

A GROUP that has cared for the late Adrian Shooter's Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) loco for 20 years, is now hoping to secure it from Mr Shooter's estate, *writes Gareth Evans*.

DHR 'B' Class 2ft gauge tank loco No. 19 was built by Sharp Stewart in Glasgow in 1889, one of the original batch of four that survives today thanks to Mr Shooter, who rescued it from the USA and had it overhauled at Tyseley Locomotive Works in 2003.

The Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust has been set up by 19B's support crew. The loco is due to be sold by auction in June, and the trust urgently seeks support to purchase the engine to fulfil its aims of keeping it in the public benefit. Visit darjeelingtank.org.uk for more details.



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2023 STEAM TOURS UPDATE

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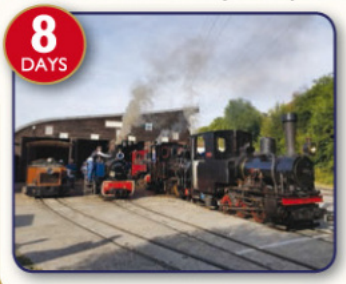
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8 DAYS



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- ★ Steam charter on the Chanteraines Railway in Paris
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- ★ Mainline steam running

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8 DAYS



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- ★ Travel across the stunning Brünig Pass by train to Brienz
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7 DAYS



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9 DAYS



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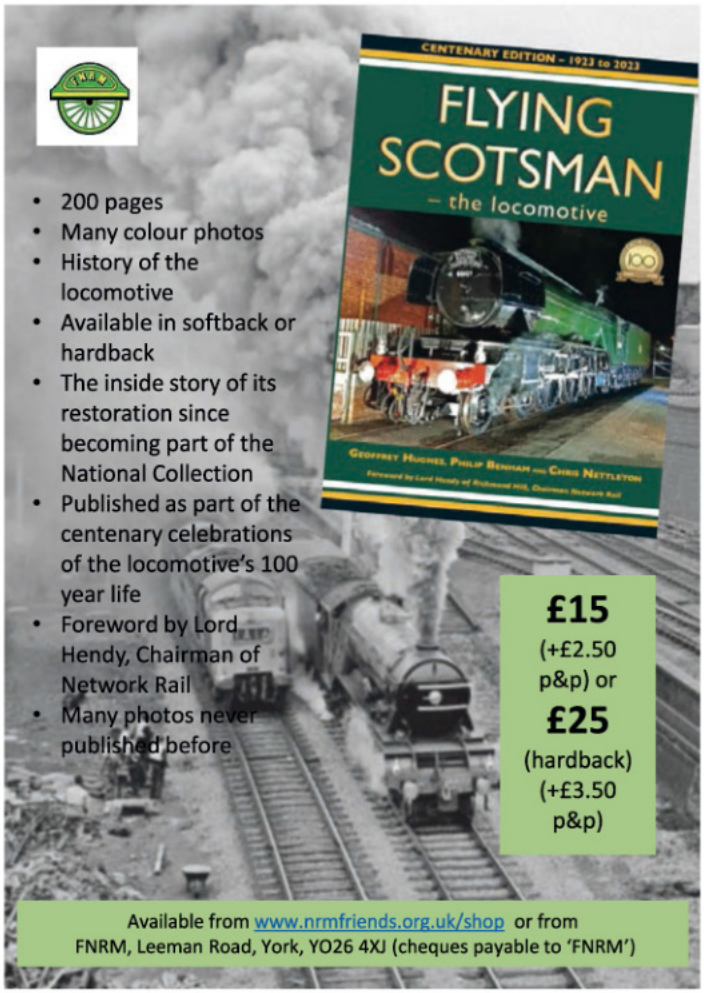
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Scotsman's special year starts with a trip to Scotland

'A3' No. 60103 visited Waverley station as the first in a year-long series of events to mark the loco's 100th anniversary.

By Paul Bickerdyke



Kevin MacDonald, of Celtic rock band The Red Hot Chilli Pipers, celebrates the arrival of *Flying Scotsman* at Waverley station on February 24, to mark the loco's official centenary. PAUL BICKERDYKE

GRESLEY Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* began its centenary year celebrations on February 24, with an event at Waverley station in Edinburgh. The date marked exactly 100 years since the world-famous locomotive left Doncaster Works to officially enter service with the LNER as No. 1472.

Back then, the loco was just another in the new 'A1' (later 'A3') fleet, but it acquired fame when chosen to be displayed at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924/25, for which it was named after the LNER's prestigious 'Flying Scotsman' service that connected London and Edinburgh.

Renumbered as No. 4472, the loco became the first to officially top 100mph in November 1934, while a preservation-era trip to Australia in the late 1980s saw it set another record for the longest nonstop run by a steam locomotive, when it ran for 422 miles across New South Wales on August 8, 1989.

For the centenary event in February, *Flying Scotsman* arrived at Waverley to the sound of a piper, mirroring its arrival there with the first nonstop 'Flying Scotsman' service from King's Cross on May 1, 1928.

There were also performances by dancers from the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, while poet laureate Simon Armitage read a new poem called 'The Making Of *The Flying Scotsman*', which he said was composed while riding on the locomotive.

Mr Armitage added: "There's something very dreamlike about the whole contraption and the experience of standing next to it." His poem describes how the loco "coughed into life" with "vast steel circumferences" and "rippling bodywork pouring with sweat." The full work can be read on his website at www.simonarmitage.com

All female crew

Following the event in Edinburgh, the loco and its support coach ran back to the East Lancashire Railway, where on March 8 it took part in International Women's Day by hauling three round trips crewed by an all-female team on the loco and train.

The loco stayed at the ELR until March 25, then returned to the National Railway Museum in York for the next event in its year-long centenary programme, going on display there from April 1-23 and giving visitors the chance to access the cab.

The full programme of events can be found on the NRM's website at www.railwaymuseum.org.uk, but of note is the recent addition that it will visit the Strathspey Railway in Scotland from September 15-October 1, while a date for the loco to visit its home city of Doncaster is expected to be announced as this issue went to press.



The all-female crew in the cab of *Flying Scotsman* at the East Lancashire Railway on March 8, where the loco ran three trips to mark International Women's Day. Pictured from left are: Steph Elwood (fireman), Beth Furness (driver), Linda Henderson (driver conductor) and Charlotte Instance (cleaner). NRM



No. 60103 pictured at Castleton on February 22, just after leaving the East Lancashire Railway on its way to Joppa Sidings, east of Edinburgh, in readiness for the centenary event two days later. The loco ran tender first via Manchester Victoria to Carnforth, where it was turned, then continued on to Joppa via Carlisle. GREG MAPE



One of Royal Mail's 12 special stamps issued to mark *Flying Scotsman's* centenary.

Scotsman stamp set

ROYAL Mail has issued a set of 12 *Flying Scotsman* stamps to mark the loco's centenary year, and these are also the final set of stamps to include the silhouette of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Eight of the stamps show the loco at work in recent times on main and heritage lines, while four others feature related LNER poster artwork from the 1920s and 1930s.

Luton DART replaces bus link

New people mover connects Luton Airport Parkway station with the nearby airport.

By Chris Milner



One of Luton's four-car, cable-powered DART shuttles on March 13. CHRIS MILNER

LUTON'S Direct Air Rapid Transit system (DART) opened with a soft launch on March 10, replacing the existing bus connection between the main line station and airport with a four minute step-free transfer – half the time of the bus journey.

The DART means that London St Pancras to the airport terminal will now take around 32 minutes using East Midlands Railway or 40 minutes with Thameslink. The system is operated by Luton Rising, a business and social enterprise owned by sole shareholder Luton Council, which also owns the airport.

During the soft launch period, the shuttle operated for around four hours per day, in preparation for full opening on March 27, when DART will be in operation 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

The DART is a twin track, cable liner system manufactured by the Austrian Doppelmayr Cable Car company, which also has a contract to operate the 1.4 mile-long system for the first five years. The vehicles are built by another Austrian manufacturer, Carvatech, with each train having four carriages and a capacity of 170 passengers with luggage.

Planning permission was first granted in 2017 and work began in April 2018, which required construction of a pre-fabricated 80 metre-long, 1000-tonne curved bridge over the A1081 road.

A new transit station has been completed on the east side of Luton Airport Parkway, linked to the rest of the station by a new footbridge, lifts and escalators.

The original target for opening was 2021, but a combination of the Covid-19 pandemic, additional technical testing, and development of the ticketing system, created further delays before passenger trials began in February.

In December 2022, King Charles III visited the Luton terminal and unveiled a plaque before travelling on the new transit system.



The shuttle terminal at the Parkway station end. CHRIS MILNER

Through fares

Single fares are £4.90, which does make it quite expensive per mile, but holders of concessionary bus passes, disabled blue badge holders and airport workers can travel for free. Local residents will be able to apply for concessionary fares too.

Rail passengers intending to travel to the airport should select that as an option (rather than Parkway), as the rail fare will then include the DART shuttle. Rail passengers will face two gatelines, one to exit the station and the second to access the transit system.

Initially estimated to cost £225 million, the CEO of Luton Rising, Graham Olver, said the final figure would be between £290 million and £300 million.

There are plans to extend the system to a new terminal, and in connection with this a Development Consent Order was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate to expand the airport's capacity from 18 million passengers a year to 32 million.

Mr Olver said that DART is 'future-proof', as more carriages can be added to trains taking their capacity to 240 passengers and the line can be extended to the proposed site of the new terminal.

Regulator approves management buyout of Abellio UK

AGREEMENT was reached on February 28, for Transport UK Group to acquire Abellio UK operations from Dutch National Railway Nederlandse Spoorwegen, *writes 'Industry Update'*.

This is a significant management buyout led by Dominic Booth, who has been Abellio UK's managing director since 2007. As well as approval from industry regulator the Office for Rail and Road, a go-ahead has also been given by the Department for Transport, Transport for London, and Merseytravel.

The agreement covers all of Abellio UK's existing rail and bus services. Abellio has been operating in the UK since July 2003 and currently runs three train operating companies under interim National Rail Contracts negotiated with the DfT, plus the Merseyrail concession operated in partnership with Serco, as well as 60 London bus routes.

Fleet investments

The management of the rail contracts has been characterised by significant rolling stock investment. The Greater Anglia contract was secured from February 2012 on a short-term deal that was renewed in October 2016 based on replacement of the complete rolling stock fleet. Two types of EMUs were ordered comprising Class 720 'Aventra' vehicles from Bombardier (now Alstom) and Class 745s from Stadler. For secondary routes, bi-mode Class 755 units were also provided by Stadler.

For the East Midlands Railway agreement, which commenced in August 2019, there was the inheritance of a decision not to electrify the Midland Main Line, which created difficulty with future rolling stock provision because the legacy HST sets were scheduled for withdrawal as being non-compliant with mobility regulations.

Electrification to Corby did take place, however, and EMR opted to deploy the Class 360 'Desiro' fleet displaced by Greater Anglia. For InterCity operations, it ordered Class 810 Hitachi bi-mode units to be known as 'Aurora' trainsets.

Following the pandemic, the DfT awarded a four-year National Rail Contract for operations until October 2026, with the option for a further four-year extension.

Midlands and Mersey

The West Midlands franchise began in December 2017 and, although operating under altered contractual arrangements, it is to continue until March 2026. A significant fleet replacement programme is taking place, with a total of 81 Class 730 electric units being built at Derby using the 'Aventra' platform for use on West Coast Main Line semi-fast services.

In addition, replacement DMUs have been introduced, with Class 196 sets and three Class 230 conversions from former London Underground vehicles. These latter units are not in current service following the collapse of Vivarail, which has meant that replacement bus services have had to be introduced on their intended route between Bletchley and Bedford.

There is also a fleet replacement programme taking place with Merseyrail, where 53 Class 777 units are being delivered from Stadler, including seven units fitted with battery power. There is an option for a further 60 units to be provided based on aspirations by the Liverpool City Region for extending the Merseyrail network.

Action urged to enable more rail freight

A new study finds Government support could triple rail freight by 2050 as well as reducing transport's contribution to greenhouse gases.

By 'Industry Update'

RAIL Partners, an organisation that represents the private passenger and freight operators, commissioned the University of Hull to study the impact of a significant transfer of freight traffic to rail as part of its input to legislation that will help form Great British Railways.

The *Freight Expectations* report outlines the benefit of Government action to support a target of 4% annual growth in rail freight, which would result in three times the amount of traffic being carried by 2050. It suggests that the 2021/22 volume of 18,710 million tonne kilometres (tkms) could reach 54,897 million tkms if that rate of growth took place.

The statistics reflect a growing domestic intermodal market, with an uplift from 720 to 5286 million tkms and maritime intermodal growing from 5780 to 18,605 million tkms. By 2050, the largest commodity traffic is forecast to be construction materials, growing four-fold to reach 20,031 million tkms.

Incentives

The core justification for Government intervention is the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the use of heavy goods vehicles, where even if the great majority of rail operations use diesel locomotives there is a 76% reduction in CO_2 per tonne.

Rail Partners believes that more incentives are needed to encourage customers to use rail. The Mode Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) scheme operated by the DfT supports modal shift on flows where rail would not otherwise compete on cost and has current funding of £20m per year.

Applications are mainly made by freight operators, but Tesco and Maritime Transport have also been recipients of grants as well as Varamis, the newly-established express parcels operator.

The environmental and congestion benefits are significant: in 2019/20, the grant awards delivered a benefit to cost ratio of over 6:1.

Similarly, the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) has been instrumental in Scotland in encouraging more rail freight. FFG supports the construction of new or improved rail-connected facilities, paying up to 50% of the total cost, and Rail Partners has called for the restoration of the grants in England.

There would be greater environmental benefit if electric haulage was increased, and this could occur if some short sections of route were electrified – such as the connections to major ports – although little is said about the capability to reach destination terminals.

Gauge clearance for high cube containers has also lagged behind the use of this equipment and a number of routes need urgent improvement to meet the requirements of freight forwarders – in particular for trans-Pennine flows, and between Didcot and Cardiff.

In all, there is a forecast for the future that as many as 20 million lorry journeys could be removed from the roads, delivering economic benefits of £5 billion annually. Current benefits are estimated at £2.45 billion per annum.



An impression of how the UKRL's new Leicester depot will look. UKRL

UKRL to build new £1.5 million depot for bi-mode locos

SPECIALIST maintenance and engineering provider UK Rail Leasing has begun work on a new £1.5m maintenance depot at its current Leicester base, *writes Chris Milner*. The two-road building with pits will be able to accommodate four locomotives.

This new facility has been designed to maintain a new class of bi-mode locomotive, but will provide UKRL with significant extra capacity to expand its maintenance business. Construction of the shed will be completed later this year and, after fitting out, it will become operational in early 2024. The new facility will create 15 highly-skilled jobs.

Putting spades in the ground for the new depot on March 15 were Leicester's elected mayor Sir Peter Soulsby, GB Railfreight CEO John Smith, Adam Lothian from HSBC (which has provided the development loan) and UKRL managing director Mark Winter.

Sir Peter Soulsby said: "UKRL's expansion with this new locomotive shed is good news for the city. Since founding in Leicester almost 10 years ago, this important and innovative engineering company has gone from strength to strength, making major local investment, creating new skilled jobs and helping to put our city on the map as a fantastic place to do business."

Mark Winter said: "The new shed increases our capacity for all our customers who know our expertise in maintenance and servicing rail vehicles ensures reliability."

Maintenance of Class 170 DMUs for CrossCountry and locos for DC Rail and others will continue unchanged.



GBRf-liveried Class 67 No. 67027 on shed at Leicester on March 15, for the ground-breaking ceremony for the new facility. CHRIS MILNER

Freight terminal plan withdrawn

A PLAN to build a new rail freight terminal at Elmesthorpe, near Hinckley in Leicestershire, has been withdrawn by developers Tritax Symmetry.

The Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange is proposed for construction on 440 acres of land north-east of Hinckley, where the aspirations are for 850,000sq metres of warehouse space.

The Planning Inspectorate has told Tritax it failed to provide a required technical report in its submission documents, which will take several weeks to prepare.

A statement by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council said: "The scheme's consultation falls short of what should have been undertaken, highlighting deficiencies in the time and details available during consultations. There were limitations and gaps in the baseline details provided."

Tritax will now need to resubmit its application to restart the process from the acceptance phase.

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Helter-skelter downhill then to Machynlleth and to Dovey Junction, where we take the north side of the Dyfi Estuary, running on a seawall towards Aberdyfi, then turn north to Tywyn, onto the cliffs at Friog and down to cross Morfa Mawddach on the half mile viaduct to Barmouth/Abermaw.

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Option D – PWLLHELI (1435/1620):
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Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Bristol Temple Meads	0600	0050
Bristol Parkway	0620	0040
Cam & Dursley	0640	0010
Cheltenham Spa	0710	2350
Worcestershire P'Way	0740	2320
Bromsgrove	0800	2300
*Birmingham New St.	0840	2220
*Wolverhampton	0900	2200
*Shrewsbury	1015	2105

Estimated Timings

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Option C – St Erth for St Ives *(12:50 - 16:10)*
For the scenic branchline to picturesque St Ives

Option D – Penzance *(13:00 - 16:00)*
Enjoy time at leisure in Cornwall's most westerly town of Penzance. Perhaps take a bus to visit nearby Marazion for St Michaels Mount, Mousehole, Newlyn or Lands End.

This train will be hauled by a pair of West Coast Railways Class 37 diesel locomotives.

Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Dorridge	0550	2315
Warwick Parkway	0605	2300
Leamington Spa	0615	2250
Banbury	0635	2250
Oxford	0700	2200
Swindon	0750	2115
Chippenham	0810	2055
Bath Spa	0830	2030
Bristol Temple Meads	0850	2010

Estimated Timings

PREMIER DINING

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SIDELINES

£816m of contract work awarded

CONTRACTS with a total value of £816 million were awarded to companies in the West Midlands during 2022 for work on HS2.

According to figures released by HS2 Ltd in March, over the last six years 422 local firms have benefited from deals with a combined worth of £1.7billion. It says small and medium-sized businesses have taken a 78% share of local contract awards.

The company adds that 8800 people are working on the project in the region, including 729 local people who had previously been out of work. Nearly 400 people have been given apprenticeships.

Bridge takes strain away from roads

A TEMPORARY access bridge, put in place during construction of the 2.1 mile-long Colne Valley Viaduct is estimated to have taken more than 10,000 road vehicle journeys off local roads in its first year of operation.

Running alongside the viaduct itself at Denham in Buckinghamshire, it provides a route for construction vehicles to cross a series of lakes and waterways as well as facilitating the movement of equipment for the construction of the viaduct's piers.

Managing materials using photographs

THE achievements of a small business that has developed a system to assist contractors in logging materials and waste transferred during construction using photographs were highlighted by HS2 Ltd to mark International Women's Day on March 8.

An app from London-based Qflow, founded by Brittany Harris and Jade Cohen, allows calculations to be made regarding the quantity of carbon embodied in materials used and provides a detailed assessment of emissions linked to the construction process.

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Balsall Common Viaduct plans submitted

Project to build 10 metre-high bridge also aims to improve local woodland, wildlife habitats and flood resilience.

PLANS for the 425 metre (465 yard) Balsall Common Viaduct in Warwickshire have been submitted by HS2 Ltd to Solihull Council, following a year of engagement with local people over its construction.

The structure will span Station Road, Bayleys Brook and Heart of England Way Walk as well as the local floodplain on 16 piers, 10 metres (33 feet) above ground level. Refinements to its design have reduced the size of the piers giving it a lighter appearance, and a section at Station Road will be finished with a pattern reflecting the area's history.

HS2 Ltd says understanding the bridge's place in the landscape was of real importance to the design. The revised proposals also include wet woodland planting, including local species midland hawthorn and black poplar, as well as woodland edge planting for screening and hedgerows to improve the surroundings for wildlife.



An image showing the eventual intended appearance of Balsall Common Viaduct and its surroundings, looking towards the southern side of the Lavender Hall abutment. HS2

Concept

Design joint venture architecture director Shaun Ruffles said: "The concept of 'reflect and reveal' has been key to this, with views of the viaduct revealed and filtered by the mature oak trees in the wider historic landscape. The viaduct is further integrated through its reflection in local water features and in the polished acoustic parapets which will reflect the skyline, lightening the structure further."

A mix of grass species including blue flax (historically used for linen weaving in the area), cornflower and forget-me-nots will be planted and bird boxes located on trees.

Bayleys Brook will be realigned to increase habitats for fish and other aquatic creatures. A reduction in the size of the embankment parallel to the watercourse aims to improve resilience to flooding.

To improve connections to the area, the Kenilworth Greenway will be extended to Station Road and other potential greenway and cycling and bridleway improvements are being considered.



BRIDGE'S FINISHING TOUCHES: Following consultation with people who live in the area a facing of local ironstone will feature in the design of the HS2 viaduct over the Oxford Canal near Wormleighton in Warwickshire. Composed of three concrete spans, which will carry the railway a total of 62.5 metres (205 feet) over the canal, towpath and a country lane, an ironstone finish will be used for the piers and abutments which face the towpath and passing boats. HS2

Switches and crossings contract

VOESTALPINE Turnout Technology UK has been awarded a contract to deliver track switches (points) and crossings for Phases 1 and 2a of HS2.

The deal includes the design, manufacture and delivery of around 180 switches and crossings, configured for traffic travelling over them at up to 360 kph (225mph) and diverging at up to 230kph (143mph), which will be installed between London and the connection with the West Coast Main Line at Crewe.

The contract includes around 70 lower-speed switches and crossings for Washwood Heath and Calvert depots.

Another half-mile of tunnelling

TUNNEL boring machines (TBMs) *Florence* and *Cecilia* had excavated 5.5 miles of HS2's 10-mile twin-bore tunnel under the Chiltern hills by early March.

Last month, *The RM* reported that the pair of 2000 tonne, 170-metre (558 feet) machines had reached the halfway point of tunnelling the southbound and northbound bores respectively, removing more than 1.3million cubic metres of chalk and flint in the process.

The TBMs (which are operated by Align, a joint venture comprising Bouygues Travaux Publics, Sir Robert McAlpine and VolkerFitzpatrick) have passed the vent shaft at Amersham, the third of five, which will also provide emergency access.



UNTOLD LONDON STORIES: A free exhibition, featuring an interactive art installation, offers an insight into the lives of five Londoners who were laid to rest at St James's Burial Ground near Euston station in London during the 18th and 19th centuries. It continues at St James's Church on Piccadilly from April 10-23. Archaeologists say ongoing research following careful excavation of the site as part of the HS2 project has given a new perspective on the people who lived during a period of great change. HS2



Railways in Parliament

by Jon Longman

Scrutinising GBR

RACHAEL Maskell, the York Central MP, questioned the responsibilities that Great British Railways will have for ensuring train reliability and the Department for Transport oversight of this responsibility.

Transport Minister Huw Merriman replied: "The Secretary of State set out his vision for rail last month, including the creation of Great British Railways as the guiding mind to coordinate the railways and end fragmentation. New Passenger Service Contracts, including strong performance and revenue incentives, will ensure operators compete to deliver high-quality, punctual services.

"Ministers will have strong levers to hold GBR to account, including the ability to issue directions and to licence GBR. As the independent economic and safety regulator for Britain's railways, the Office of Rail and Road will monitor and enforce compliance with GBR's licence."

2050 freight target

BATH MP Wera Hobhouse asked the Government to set a target of trebling rail freight by 2050.

The Transport Minister replied: "The Government is committed to introducing a long-term rail freight growth target, recognising the economic and environmental benefits of moving goods by rail.

"My officials are currently working with the GBR Transition Team to develop options. The Government's rail freight growth target will be announced in autumn and will be evidence-based, taking into account feedback from industry, particularly drawn from the Call for Evidence that ran last year."

Wires to Southport

SOUTHPORT MP Damien Moore wanted the DfT to support Southport to Wigan electrification.

Mr Merriman told the MP that the DfT does not have any plans to electrify the Southport to Wigan line at present.

"In the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, the Government committed to delivering a net zero rail network by 2050, with sustained carbon reductions in rail along the way, said Mr Merriman. "To help deliver this, we will electrify additional lines and deploy battery and hydrogen trains on lines where it makes economic and operational sense.

"The GBR Transition Team will bring forward costed options for the Government to carefully consider in terms of overall deliverability and affordability."

Silence over Radlett

ST ALBANS MP Daisy Cooper asked if the DfT had received correspondence from Hertfordshire County Council on changes to rail freight capacity requirements in the county.

Mr Merriman replied: "I can confirm that letters were received regarding a strategic rail freight interchange at Radlett from Oliver Dowden MP in June 2020 and from Anne Main MP in July 2020.

"There have been no recent discussions or correspondence with Hertfordshire County Council in relation to changes to rail freight capacity requirements in the county."

Monopoly winners

LIFE Peer Lord Blencathra asked His Majesty's Government in the House of Lords how it expects demand-led pricing will work in the railway sector, given that each rail company has a monopoly on its routes.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere of Norbiton replied: "In the Plan for Rail, we set out the intention to simplify fares and allow long-distance operators more commercial freedom.

"In the Bradshaw Address, we committed to trialling demand-based pricing on some London North Eastern Railway services to better manage capacity. … This will provide useful learning about the passenger experience which we will carefully consider before taking decisions on any wider extension. We will announce more details in due course."

HS2 link to Leeds

BARNSLEY Central MP Dan Jarvis wanted to know when the DfT planned to publish the terms of reference for a study into high-speed rail between Sheffield and Leeds.

Mr Merriman said: "The Terms of Reference for the HS2 to Leeds Study will be published soon. "In the meantime, the DfT has been working with Network Rail and key local stakeholders, including West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Council, to prepare for the work anticipated in the HS2 to Leeds Study."

10 MINUTES 10 QUESTIONS

Steven Knight meets Direct Rail Services's senior operations planning manager, Sam Dixon, for this month's grilling.

SAM Dixon started his railway career in 1997, working for Connex South Central in station management in the Brighton area. In 2002, he moved to Cheshire to join Virgin Trains as station manager at Crewe. During his time with Virgin, Sam worked as group station manager for the North West Region before becoming customer experience manager for the Manchester-London route, where he led a team of over 300 on-board and station staff.

In 2015, he joined Direct Rail Services as its control manager based in Carlisle, and since 2020 has been its senior operations planning manager.

Sam has been an active volunteer driver and guard on the narrow gauge Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway in Cumbria for more than 30 years. He is also an ambassador for the Railway Children charity and one of the organising team for its annual Three Peaks by Rail fundraising charter train.

Q. What was your first-ever job?
Fresh out of university, I became duty station manager at Brighton. A vibrant and exciting place to start my railway career and learn about intensive railway operations in the era of slam door trains!

Q. Were you interested in trains/railways before you joined the rail industry?
I was! My dad worked in the rail industry and has been a lifelong rail enthusiast, so I got the bug from him. I grew up watching trains on the nearby North London Line, but as a teenager we moved to Whittlesford, south of Cambridge, in the Network SouthEast era of Class 47/86-hauled trains between London and King's Lynn. I became a volunteer at the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway during this period – a chance to play with narrow gauge trains! I strongly believe having a passion for the industry you work in makes you more engaged and better at your job.

Q. What attracted you to your current role?
Change was clearly coming to Virgin Trains, with a subtle shift of emphasis away from customer service to stricter financial management. I loved my time there and the people I worked with were wonderful, but it was time to try something different. Having worked in the passenger sector for 18 years, I was keen to broaden my experience and learn about the freight side of the industry. Direct Rail Services seemed ideal with its wide portfolio of traffic across the country, including the exclusive nuclear traffic and intermodal flows. The job also allowed me to move to Cumbria and settle my family in one of the most beautiful parts of the country.

Q. What has been your biggest achievement?
Leading multiple teams of brilliant railway people to deliver high quality service to their customers whether passengers, freight users or internally.

Q. …and the low point of your railway career?
Although subsequently reversed after a legal challenge, the announcement in August 2012 that Virgin Trans had lost the West Coast franchise to FirstGroup was a hammer blow to all of us who worked there. We were a high performing TOC, universally praised by its customers and yet it seemed to count for nothing in the eyes of the Government. It came just after the conclusion of the London Olympic Games that had been a hugely exciting period for the business, as we demonstrated to an international audience our flair for customer service and moving huge passenger volumes. It came as such a shock. I have never known staff morale to be as low as it was that day. Even some of the customers were crying!

Q. If you were transport secretary for a day, what would you do to support or change the industry?
I would want to create a level playing field for rail freight when competing with other modes by ensuring road and air meet their full costs. I believe this would result in greater use of the railways.

Q. How do you relax away from work?
Spending time with my wife Zoe and our two boys. We spend probably too much time in our village pub, but also enjoy hiking in the Lake District and travelling to visit friends and family.

Q. What is your view on the current state of the railway industry?
There is much to be positive about, but it frustrates me that the industry doesn't sell itself well, or campaign robustly for what it needs. I believe it needs to change, to reform outdated working practices and to embrace technology. This would create a more attractive proposition for winning new freight and passenger customers and help the country meet its environmental targets.

Q. …and where do you see the industry in 2050?
I very much hope it will have embraced change and been able to invest heavily to reduce costs and improve efficiency for freight and passengers. I hope that HS2 will be directly serving the northern cities (and dare I say Scotland?) releasing capacity on the classic network for significantly increased freight volumes. Can I also hope for a network of international passenger services linking UK cities with continental Europe?



Senior operations planning manager Sam Dixon. DRS

Q. Finally, is there something about you that you can share with us that our readers are unlikely to know?
I once took Her Majesty The Queen for a ride in a lift! I was presented to her in 2010 when I was station manager at Crewe and had to escort her in the station lift up to the concourse, in order to join her waiting Bentley. I'd arranged for a lift engineer to be sat in the machine room just in case there were any problems. He was primed to pump like mad if the lift stopped!

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The bad, the ugly and the good

The many miles of line closures were bad, the sweeping changes to a long-established way of life were ugly, but did Dr Richard Beeching's report of 60 years ago in fact sow the seeds for what's good in the current railway age? Mike Jones investigates.



Richard Beeching's report *The Reshaping of British Railways* was to have a profound effect on rail transportation for decades to follow its 1963 publication date.

Beeching's report *The Reshaping of British Railways* was published on March 25, 1963 and yet – 60 years later – it continues to resonate as one of the most influential documents that has shaped transport policy over subsequent decades.

After the railways were nationalised in 1948, the country's economic landscape changed beyond measure, as Britain recovered from the hardship of the Second World War. But the railway industry carried on much as before – continuing with steam traction, uncompetitive journey times, low-capacity wagons, and vacuum rather than air brakes.

Despite an ambitious modernisation plan being revealed in 1955, financial performance continued to deteriorate. By 1961, receipts of £474 million were a long way short of the £562 million working expenses and, with the cost of capital added, the deficit reached some £136 million (equivalent to £2.9 billion today).

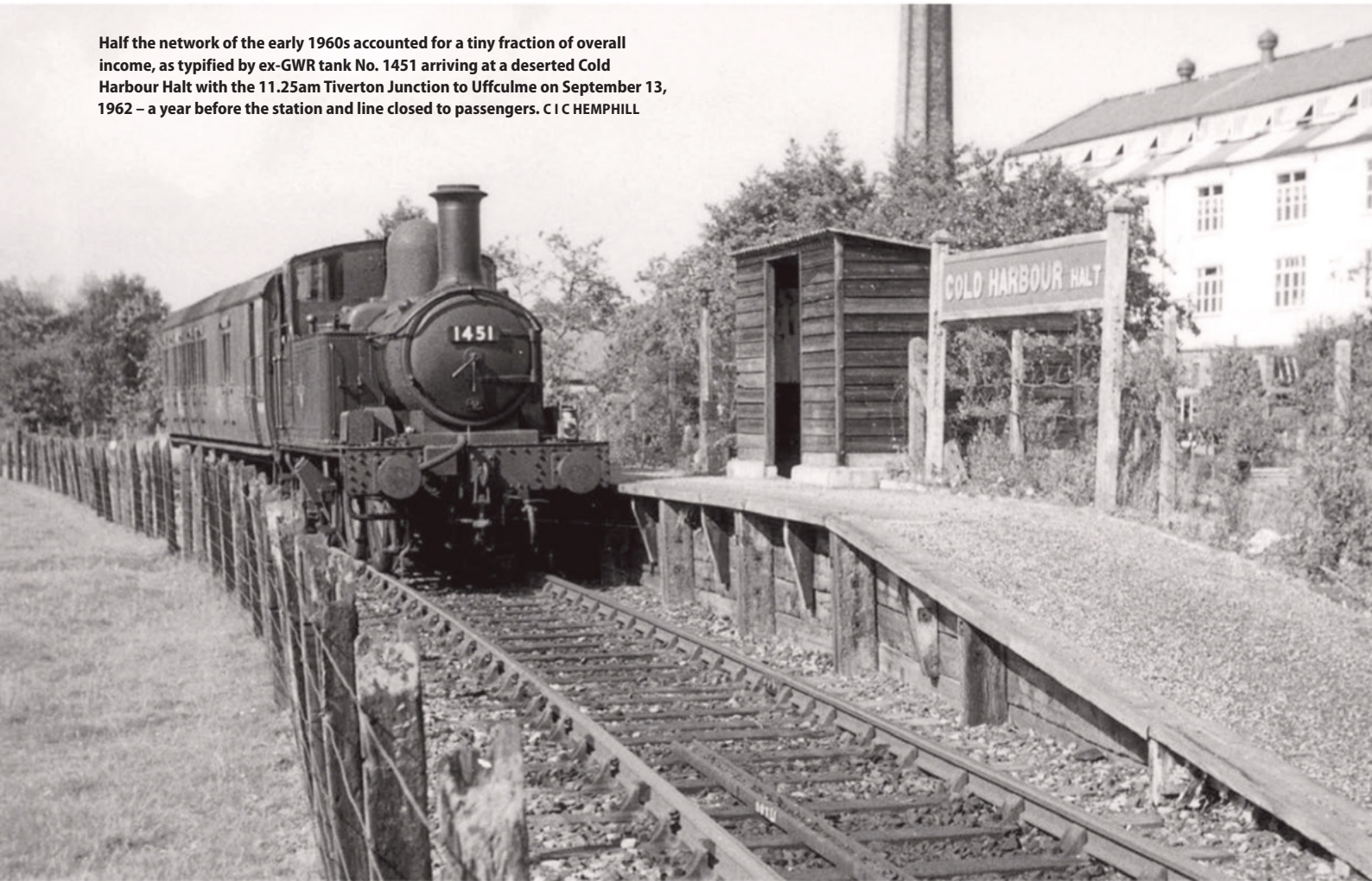
What was to follow was undoubtedly a tragedy for a way of life that was familiar to many, as route and station closures acknowledged the reality that car ownership would be the future way to travel about for most people. There was also growth in commercial road transport that reduced rail goods traffic, even before construction of the motorway network.

Prior to publication of his report, Beeching spent time analysing what he described as the problems that faced the railway, as well as the potential it offered. On the one hand, the rail network was a system of set routes for exclusive use that made high fixed costs inevitable; but on the other, it offered the benefit of safe, reliable and scheduled high-speed movements and an ability to operate high-capacity freight trains with low unit costs.

Vast underusage

Investigation revealed that one third of the route mileage carried around 1% of passenger and freight volumes, while figures for half the network were little better at just 4% of passenger and 5% of freight.

So much for the diagnosis, but what about the remedy? It was pretty stark: the network was simply too big for the level of demand that existed and was incapable of attracting sufficient traffic to pay for the infrastructure costs. It was found that a typical secondary route required



Half the network of the early 1960s accounted for a tiny fraction of overall income, as typified by ex-GWR tank No. 1451 arriving at a deserted Cold Harbour Halt with the 11.25am Tiverton Junction to Uffculme on September 13, 1962 – a year before the station and line closed to passengers. C I C HEMPHILL

at least 10,000 passengers per week to pay its way if freight was also carried, and 17,000 if no freight was present.

Then there was the poor financial characteristics of passenger operations, where the day-to-day demand expanded massively during the peak holiday season, requiring a total fleet of 18,500 coaches for sufficient capacity. The all-year timetable needed 5500 vehicles, plus a further 2000 for extra timetabled trains during the summer; the remaining 11,000 vehicles were used for relief trains to timetabled services, each making just 10-18 journeys per year at a cost of £4 million per annum against revenue of just £0.5 million.

Freight operations had their own challenges, in that depots existed to serve small populations within the delivery radius of a horse and cart. The pick-up goods services needed to move the loaded and empty wagons to marshalling points were a drain on the overall financial result. Despite the construction of large-scale marshalling yards to sort wagons for trunk haul services, local services continued to be necessary to serve depots and private sidings.

The Government set a remit for rail's overall loss to be eliminated by 1970 and the actions proposed in Beeching's report need to be seen in that context. His findings were not based on reducing the deficit to a level that might allow those services seen as having wider social value to be retained. The only way to avoid closure of a loss-making service was if the statutory Transport Users Consultative Committee deemed that, even if a substitute bus service was provided, hardship would remain.

The ink was hardly dry on the report before the looming General Election in October 1964 led to concern from Conservative MPs that their prospects for re-election were being weakened by rural and suburban rail closures. As a result, a private meeting was held between Beeching and Government representatives at which financial information for 66 proposed closures was requested. That request was declined, but a sample of 10 cases was provided which revealed that, for example, savings from the significant closure of the Far North line to Thurso would be as little as £6500.

The honeymoon period of simply rubber-stamping closure proposals was over, and the Far North Line was reprieved by the Government in April 1964. This followed an earlier rejection in February that year to close the Central Wales Line between Llanelli (then spelt Llanelly) and Shrewsbury.

A revised approach

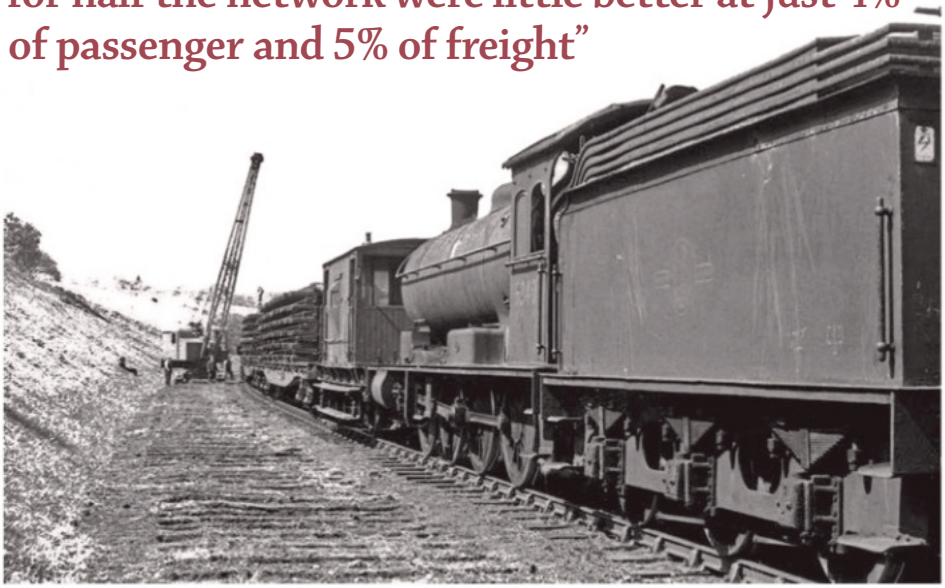
The 1964 election resulted in the return of a Labour Government and the closure process changed in that the Railways Board then had to advise the Minister of an intended closure before a notice was published. The decision had been influenced by the proposed closure of the Manchester to Buxton line in July 1964, where the TUCC had found that hardship would be so extensive it had simply said so without the bother of writing up a detailed report, and the Government subsequently declined to authorise the withdrawal of services.

Clearly the original remit that financial losses should be eliminated was no longer tenable, given the ever lengthening list of closure rejections, and so it was not long before Beeching left British Railways at the end of May 1965 – although whether he was sacked or it was by mutual agreement is not entirely clear.



Freight of the early 1960s was typified by wagonloads and pick-up freights, which were inefficient compared with the growing road haulage competition. 'J38' No. 65913 heads a pick-up freight with one wagon near Cadder Yard (north-east of Glasgow) in 1963. S RICKARD

> "One third of the route mileage carried around 1% of passenger and freight volumes, while figures for half the network were little better at just 4% of passenger and 5% of freight"



The Beeching report led to mass line closures, but they were already underway – such as the line from Bishop Auckland to Tebay/Penrith via Barnard Castle. This closed as a through route in January 1962 and a track lifting train is seen near Belah signalbox on June 14 that year headed by 'Q6' No. 63407.

Before he departed, Beeching had also recognised that the idea of eliminating loss was flawed, and that the withdrawal of some services – such as the electrified line between Liverpool and Southport – called for a wider remit recognising these as an essential part of a co-ordinated system of public transport sponsored by local government. It did not take long for that principle to be recognised through the 1968 Transport Act, which established Passenger Transport Executives.

The Act led to significant investment in networks such as Merseyrail and the Tyne and Wear Metro, and the retention and development of local rail services elsewhere. The principle has continued to expand, with a recognition that locally-elected mayors are best placed to sponsor public transport, which has resulted in regeneration of rail services in areas such as the Tees Valley. There were also provisions for grant aid for services throughout the network, which resulted in 307 proposals being put forward that required subsidies totalling £61 million.

Despite all this, the closure programme continued, with significant examples including Matlock-Buxton/Chinley/Manchester (1968), Oxford-Cambridge (1968), Carlisle-Edinburgh (1969) and Barnstaple to Ilfracombe (1970).

There was no reprieve for many rural branch lines where it was judged that a substitute bus service would alleviate any hardship – but, despite this, some routes did survive. This was thanks to British Rail instituting the concept of a basic single-track railway, with 'Paytrains' removing the need for station staff, a prime example of which was the East Suffolk (Ipswich-Lowestoft) Line.

The debate about closures drowned out proposals to develop major trunk routes to provide faster InterCity services. Improved rolling stock was a key feature of this, and Mk.2 coaches based on the experimental XP64 trainset were built in increasing numbers.



Most passenger stock was kept for relief services and hence saw very low utilisation over a full year. This Newcastle-Liverpool relief on July 30, 1953 is headed by 'V2' No. 60868 and seen at Eaglescliffe. JOHN S PHILLIPS



The modern face of British Railways included electrification of the West Coast Main Line, this view on November 15, 1957 shows the wires going up between Wilmslow and Mauldeth Road, which was to be a proving ground for the new system. 'Super D' No. 49439 is in charge of the electrification train. BR

"The road haulage industry had little difficulty persuading users that a throughout road journey was more reliable and economic"



Another block train idea was the Liner train, which later became Freightliner, based on carrying goods in standard-sized containers and which today is a booming global business. BR

The prospects for rail expansion were not that great, as motorways had little of today's congestion, while short-haul air flights became dominant on routes between London and Scotland. Improvement was needed in every aspect of what British Rail offered, and the introduction of widespread diesel and electric traction allowed the 1965 timetable to schedule more than 600 daily trains running at point-to-point timings of 60mph or more.

The difference in approach from the past was to run the whole timetable on a given route at faster speeds – rather than have a small number of flagship express trains while the rest had lengthy journey times.

Combined with greater frequency, rolling stock utilisation improved and the construction of new coaches could be justified, allowing InterCity to be established as a network brand in 1966. The accelerated services were a forerunner to the introduction in 1976 of the 125mph High Speed Train, which was a game changer in terms of journey time between major population centres.

Improving freight

The poor financial performance of passenger operations was mirrored in the movement of freight. A primary reason was the level of wagon utilisation, where the average time between loads was 11.9 working days; the average loaded transit time was no more than two days, with the rest being time spent at terminals and in the return of empties to loading points. The average loaded journey length was also just 67 miles.

The characteristics of the wagon fleet had failed to match the emerging capability of the road haulage industry, with short wheelbase vehicles loading to a maximum of 12 tons and generally restricted to a speed of 45mph. Attempts had been made to introduce larger wagons, but the inheritance of a variable loading gauge across the network, and the curvature of some private siding layouts, had restricted the size.

Coal forwarding in 1961 amounted to 146 million tonnes and, although larger customers received their supply on a trainload basis, 89 million tonnes of this moved through marshalling yards destined for private sidings and station yards. There were further issues at loading points, as many collieries took days to load sufficient wagons to supply power stations with a trainload.

Beeching identified the solution for supplying power stations as 'Merry Go Round' working, with measures that encouraged the National Coal Board to modernise loading arrangements and the provision of suitable rail layouts at the new power stations being commissioned by the Central Electricity Generating Board. Seven locations at West Burton, Ferrybridge, Eggborough, Fidler's Ferry (Widnes), Ratcliffe-on-Soar, Cottam and Didcot were to be constructed with a rail layout that featured a continuous oval loop, allowing a nonstop circuit to be made by the train that could then return for its next load. Typically, each would need a throughput of 16,000 tonnes of coal per day, requiring 175 wagons and five locomotives (Class 47s hauling loads of up to 1600 tonnes).

A fleet of new high-capacity, two-axle hopper wagons was constructed with a capability to load 32 tonnes each (with a gross laden weight of 45 tonnes). Critically, their



Beeching saw block/dedicated trains as the future for freight, notably in the supply of coal from collieries to a new generation of power stations, for which the 'Merry-go-Round' concept was developed. In the late 1960s, Class 47 No. D1614 approaches Crewe with an unknown MGR coal working.

dedicated use meant there was no need for compatibility with common-user rolling stock, so they could be built with air-operated disc brakes, and bottom-door discharge could be undertaken while moving at slow-speed.

The success of the concept was demonstrated when BR introduced sector management in 1982, and Railfreight found that many flows from collieries to power stations were running with income at five times the direct operating costs. It was later claimed the size of the surplus funded the purchase of InterCity rolling stock.

Trainloads not wagonloads

For bulk traffic, it became clear that the unit of movement had to be a complete train rather than an individual wagon. Beeching brought in new commercial staff at a senior level to negotiate contracts with the major forwarders, who were also expected to provide privately-owned wagons for their traffic. The phrase 'block' or 'company' train was adapted and, to promote the concept, it was agreed that privately-owned wagons could be painted in their company colours.

Perhaps the most notable success was the movement of petroleum products between refineries and distribution terminals, where the oil industry invested heavily in new high-capacity wagons. The expansion of car ownership and road haulage had increased the need for petroleum products even in the pre-Beeching era – but use of rail to transport it was declining, with a market share of 12.5% recorded in 1962.

There were opportunities to transform what the railway could offer by encouraging the oil companies to invest in modern wagons and transport higher payloads using diesel locomotives. This led to 15 oil companies agreeing 10-year contracts for rail haulage based on block train working using wagons capable of operating at 60mph. Shell-Mex and BP, for example, agreed to upgrade its fleet of 6700 wagons at a cost of £14 million. Esso had also acquired a similar fleet of 2000 vehicles by the end of 1964.

Other sectors mirrored this approach – including cement, where wagon design created a competitive advantage through the use of lightweight aluminium bodies, allowing the tare wagon weight to be reduced to 8.5 tonnes for a payload of 26.8 tons of cement. In this case it allowed the transfer of traffic to rail, not from road, but from coastal shipping.

Coal handling at station yards was a tough nut to crack, however. In 1960, there were no fewer than 5031 locations to which a wagon could be sent for unloading, although just 64 stations received 50,000 tonnes or more per year.

The solution was to provide coal concentration depots served by trainloads from appropriate marshalling yards, from where coal merchants were expected to collect their consignment when required (rather than storing it in wagons until needed, which had been the common practice). Some 80 terminals of this type were proposed but, in the event, far fewer were commissioned as coal merchants sought alternative transport arrangements.

Much the same circumstances applied to general merchandise traffic, although in this case there was the added cost of collection and delivery and, as local stations closed, the road haulage industry had little difficulty persuading users that an end-to-end road journey was more reliable and economic.

Beeching's response was to look at traffic being moved by road hauliers, which in 1961 amounted to 223 million tonnes. The analysis concluded that 93 million tonnes of this could be moved between private sidings or, if the distance exceeded 70-100 miles, by the proposed containerised Liner services.

When Beeching's 1963 report was published, the Liner train vision had not been fully developed. The idea was an expansion of the existing 'Condor' freight service that had been introduced between London and Glasgow in 1959. This single route linked the manufacturing base of Glasgow with London consumers, while return traffic conveyed imported raw materials from the London docks.

The 'Condor' ran as a fixed formation of 27 upgraded conflat wagons, with a specific pool of containers dedicated to the service. It ran daily overnight, one each way, with a transit time of 10 hours.

The Liner train concept was much more ambitious, made up of permanently-coupled platform wagons carrying ISO standard containers of 8x8ft cross-section in lengths of 10ft, 20ft and 30ft. The first five routes were authorised in 1964, one of which replaced the 'Condor'. Authority was also secured to containerise the short sea shipping routes from Harwich, which attracted a very significant flow of traffic from the Ford Motor Company to link with its manufacturing plants.

Although there have been bumps along the way, the Freightliner (as the Liner trains became known) network really proved its worth when international shipping was containerised and deep sea terminals were established at major ports. The critical factor has been that all use the standard ISO container – although the height has been increased to 9ft 6in over time, which has meant gauge clearance work on some main line routes in Britain.

The Liner legacy is that today, container movement from ports to distribution centres has become the largest traffic category on the network, while some domestic flows remain – in particular for Tesco, which has a growing rail-based distribution network.

Collections and deliveries

At the time of the 1963 report, freight sundries (that were accumulated into wagon

loads) and parcels carried by passenger trains, were two very distinct traffic categories. It is hard for us now to visualise the scale of depots handling sundries traffic at places like King's Cross. A way to envisage it is to think of a highly-automated Amazon distribution depot, except that everything was moved on a barrow between the road collection vehicles and the wagons to be dispatched throughout the network, and vice versa. Thousands of people were employed in road collection and delivery, handling goods, wagon shunting, and equipment maintenance.

The decision to establish a Sundries Division, and ultimately transfer it out of railway control to the National Freight Corporation, was a recognition that end-to-end road operation would soon supersede intermediate transit by rail, which occurred in a short timescale as major depots saw track lifted or closed altogether.

Beeching had hoped that containerisation would prove a competitive solution for longer-distance traffic between major population centres or industrial hubs. In reality, however, the development of the logistics industry with point-to-point road transits on an ever widening motorway network proved more economic than a local journey to and from a rail terminal and the cost of the container lift, despite the lower cost of the trunk route haulage.

Parcels traffic, which included the distribution of newspapers, earned significant revenue but was found to be increasingly uneconomic when the cost of collection and delivery services was evaluated. As a result, customers were encouraged to use the Red Star Parcels service (founded April 1963), where offices to receive and collect parcels were created at most major stations. The initial success of the offer began to decline as road-based courier services increased, while cost pressures reduced the availability of staff at stations to handle any parcels.



Beeching recognised that some rail services could form part of a coordinated public transport system under local government control, which ultimately led to initiatives such as the Tyne & Wear Metro in the 1970s. Car No. 4012 is seen on at Tynemouth in summer 1980, when Metro services were extended there. WALTER DENDY (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Was Beeching inevitable?

The legacy of Beeching is all around us, both positive and negative, but could it all have been different? Was there really a benefit of nationalising the system in 1948, rather than allowing the 'Big Four' to continue with the investment programmes and innovation that had been interrupted by the Second World War?

The intention to dieselise main line services had led to the LMS building the twin prototypes Nos. 10000/1, with the LNER establishing its own business case to acquire similar machines rather than building the postwar 'A1' and 'A2' steam locos.

These and other initiatives were put off by the British Transport Commission and Railway Executive in favour of steam locomotive standardisation to reduce costs, although it was investment in obsolete technology. The Great Western Railway's diesel railcar development was also halted, although 38 vehicles had been built up to 1942.

The operational losses that had brought the appointment of Dr Beeching would not have been tolerated by the 'Big Four' private companies. Lower cost solutions would have been adopted and, if these failed, there would have been closures as private car ownership increased – but, if so, these would most likely have been better judged, with retention of the more important routes that were closed. There is much to reflect upon. ■



It is interesting to speculate that if the 'Big Four' rail companies had continued after 1948, then the railway could have looked very different and, while some closures would have been inevitable, former main lines like this one between Matlock and Manchester would almost certainly have survived. On March 5, 1967, 'Peak' No. D50 arrives at Millers Dale with a St Pancras-Manchester Central express – the station closed that day but the through line continued for another year. STEPHEN C DENT

THE A1 STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST
New Steam for the Main Line

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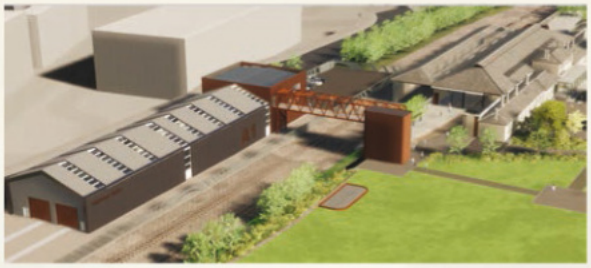


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Jack Boskett

The Doctor's last dozen

Graeme Pickering tells the story of the final 12 passenger lines closed due to Beeching's 1963 report, the official end of the very last one coming some 40 years later!

A FRENZY of closures began in the wake of Dr Richard Beeching's *The Reshaping of British Railways* report in March 1963, but a number of routes clung on for considerably longer.

Given the sheer volume of Beeching-related cuts, proposals and subsequent changes, attempts to categorise the lines involved can be subject to a certain degree of interpretation, but based on Section 1 of the document, our list ranks, in chronological order, the last dozen for which closure to passengers would mean the end of the line.

1 Ilfracombe-Barnstaple
Closed October 1970

Ilfracombe gained its railway in 1874 in the shape of a 14-mile line working northwards from Barnstaple.

The Barnstaple & Ilfracombe Railway (a subsidiary of the London & South Western Railway) had steep gradients and much of it required cuttings and embankments.

Other engineering features included a curved 17-span iron bridge over the River Taw at Barnstaple, a swing bridge at Pottington and a 69-yard tunnel, itself on a gradient, as trains descended towards Ilfracombe. There were intermediate stations at Barnstaple Quay (later Barnstaple Town), Wrafton, Braunton and Mortehoe & Woolacombe.

Holiday traffic reached its peak in the 1930s, but demand for travel was much lighter outside the summer months and the increasing popularity of road travel hastened its decline.

Closure was authorised by the minister of transport subject to additional bus services being introduced and the final trains ran on October 3, 1970, the last leaving Ilfracombe at 19.55.

The North Devon Railway Company (NDRC) entered into negotiations with British Rail with the aim of purchasing the line before it was dismantled. Unfortunately, its share issue failed to realise the sum required and, by this time, BR had reportedly increased its valuation of the line from £410,000 to £750,000.

Combe Rail, established as a registered charity in 2015, is campaigning for a light rail line to be built between the current Barnstaple station (northern terminus of the Tarka Line) and Braunton.

An application was made to further the case through the Department for Transport's 'Restoring Your Railway Fund', but the DfT judged that, despite merit, financial assistance would have to be sought from other sources.

2 East Lincolnshire routes
Closed October 1970

The railway had already contracted from parts of East Lincolnshire by the time that Beeching recommended closure of the bulk of the network serving the area.

Two public inquiries were held by the Transport Users' Consultative Committee to examine the proposals. As a result of the first meeting on September 15/16, 1964, which involved heated debate, BR was asked to reconsider.

The TUCC held its second inquiry (this time into BR's revised plans) in May 1968 and once again reported its findings to the Transport Minister, who agreed to the withdrawal of passenger services between Lincoln Central, Midville and Firsby; Firsby and Grimsby; and Willoughby and Mablethorpe. Peterborough-Boston was also included. The last services ran on October 3, 1970, although trains between Peterborough and Spalding were restored less than a year later.

Services were retained between Grantham, Sleaford, Boston and Skegness (the line to which had originally been part of the closure proposals) and between Lincoln, Sleaford and Spalding, with expresses between Grimsby and London rerouted via



1: With about a month to go to full closure, there is a desolate air at Ilfracombe – once a destination for the famous 'Atlantic Coast Express' – as Class 118 DMU Nos. 51314+59481+51329 departs for Paignton on September 1, 1970. HAWTHORNE COLLECTION



2: The Mablethorpe route, off the main line from Grimsby to Boston via Louth, was one of the Lincolnshire lines that closed in 1970 – this two-car Class 105 DMU pictured at the seaside town in the late 1960s.



3: The former railway line between Cambridge and St Ives is now a guided busway that opened in 2011, this view looking towards Cambridge on May 13, 2017 is the bus stop on the site of the former station at Swavesey. Stagecoach No. 21308 is heading for RAF Wyton, which is just beyond St Ives. DAVID KEMP (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Lincoln and Newark (instead of Louth).

Freight continued to run to Horncastle via Woodhall Junction until April 1971, after which the terminus of the line from Lincoln was Bardney, where a sugar beet factory was served by rail until January 1981. The railway remained in use between Grimsby and Louth until 1980 to serve Associated British Maltsters.

3 Cambridge-St Ives Closed October 1970

Closed on the same day as the East Lincolnshire branches, the Cambridge line was the last survivor of three routes serving the Huntingdonshire market town of St Ives.

The RM of October 1970 remarked what a desolate sight it had become: "Once an important junction, with former Great Eastern tracks from the south diverging over the GE & GN [Great Eastern and Great Northern] Joint branch to Huntingdon and Midland thence to Kettering and towards March and Ely, St Ives will lose its remaining passenger trains from Cambridge from October 5."

The line to Huntingdon had closed to passengers in 1959 (freight to Godmanchester continued until 1962) and the route to March in 1967, by which time, the line that had diverged from it to Ely had also closed.

Even prior to the Cambridge route's closure, the railway had begun its retreat and the station footbridge had been demolished. Having previously used the Huntingdon platform (albeit reduced to a siding), in their final months trains were switched to the opposite side of the main island platform as track was lifted.

Somewhat controversially, the trackbed from St Ives to Cambridge reopened as a guided bus route in 2011 (and at 16 miles in total, it is claimed to be the world's longest).

4 Taunton-Minehead, Closed January 1971

The West Somerset Railway reached the Somerset town of Minehead in 1874, through an extension of its broad gauge route (converted to standard gauge in 1882) from the existing Bristol & Exeter Railway (B&ER) line at Norton Junction, then running over the Quantock Hills via Watchet.

It handled an increasing volume of holiday traffic, leading to a series of improvements including extensions to platforms and passing loops, and addition of further loops and double track. Due in part to its rail link, Minehead was chosen by Butlins as the location for a holiday camp, which opened in 1962.

Outside the summer months, the line fared less well for passengers. The decision to switch local school travel from rail to road was another blow and, having survived almost eight years since the closure recommendation was made, the line shut in January 1971.

By this time, attention had turned to running it as a private operation, the first trains were operated between Minehead and Blue Anchor by the new West Somerset Railway in 1976. The 20-mile line is now one of the largest visitor attractions in the South West of England.

5 Penrith-Keswick Closed March 1972

The movement of freight was the primary motive for the construction of this route through the northern Lake District, which took place in two stages.

The first 8.75 miles from Workington to Cockermouth, completed by the Workington & Cockermouth Railway, opened in 1847. The Cockermouth, Keswick & Penrith Railway then built the 31.25 miles between Cockermouth and Penrith, which opened in 1864.

Combined with the lines across Stainmore and through the Eden Valley, they provided a more direct route between east and west for the movement of ore and pig iron from



4: Minehead station pictured in the final full year of BR operation, 1970. A Class 119 DMU has just arrived from Taunton. Today the station is in much better shape as part of the West Somerset Railway heritage line.



The location of the final 12 lines to close under Beeching's 1963 report.



5: The through route from Penrith to Workington closed in 1966, but the section as far as Keswick survived for another six years. This view shows a two-car Derby Lightweight DMU at the newly created 'terminus' in August 1967. GEOFFREY SKELSEY (CC BY-SA 4.0)



6: Another of the final Beeching 12 to become a heritage line is that from Alton to Alresford – today's Mid-Hants Railway – which formerly carried on through to Winchester. Two-car Class 204 DEMU No. 1122 calls at Medstead & Four Marks on its way to Alton sometime in the early 1970s.

Cumberland to the North East, and the movement of suitable coal for coke-making in the opposite direction.

Although tourist traffic played an important part in generating revenue, and there were additional services during the summer, in the 1880s the basic service consisted of just five trains in each direction between Penrith and Workington.

Heavy freight declined during the course of the early to mid-20th century and, despite the introduction of diesel multiple units in 1955, passenger services were considered for withdrawal, their reprieve coming little over two years before the 1963 report once again recommended the whole line for closure.

In April 1966, the section between Workington and Keswick was closed. It had been concluded that the impact of losing the eastern end of the route would have been greater, given Keswick's importance as a holiday destination.

The Penrith-Keswick service survived supported by Government grants, but in December 1969, the Minister of Transport informed Parliament it was one of seven routes where further evidence of social or economic need would be required to extend funding beyond December 31, 1971. This time, the case for closure was upheld and the last passenger services ran on March 4, 1972.

6 Winchester City-Alton Closed February 1973

Services between Winchester and Alton were withdrawn in 1973, the final day of train operation under British Rail being Sunday, February 4.

Had it not been for intense opposition, it would have closed much sooner. *The RM's* February 1968 issue reported that the weight of feeling had prompted BR to defer closure on May 6 that year while the case was considered by the Transport Users' Consultative Committee.

The 17-mile long Mid-Hants Railway connected to existing lines at Alton and Winchester with the intention of providing an alternative route between London and Southampton.

Alresford was the biggest intermediate centre of population, but there were also stations at Ropley, Itchen Abbas and, from 1868, Medstead (later renamed Medstead & Four Marks), close to the highest point on the line, 644 feet (196 metres) above sea level. The 1-in-60 gradients leading to it from either side led to engine crews nicknaming this section of route 'the Alps'.

At Alresford, the coming of the railway made it possible to grow watercress on a commercial basis, as it could be sold in London within hours of being picked.

'The Watercress Line' is the name used today for the heritage railway which runs for 10 miles between Alfresford and Alton.

7 Newcastle-Riverside-Tynemouth Closed July 1973

The Riverside Branch was a 6.5 mile loop off the main Newcastle-Wallsend-Tynemouth route (used today by the Tyne & Wear Metro), running from a junction at Heaton in Newcastle to Percy Main West Junction on North Tyneside.

Built by the North Eastern Railway to provide a link to the growing populations and industry along the River Tyne, it opened on May 1, 1879 and would eventually boast seven stations – Byker (closed in 1954), St Peters, St Anthony's (closed in 1960), Walker, Carville, Point Pleasant and Willington Quay – and, along with the main route, was electrified using the 600V dc third-rail system. Electric services were officially inaugurated on July 1, 1904.

By 1938, an hourly service was supplemented by additional trains at peak times on weekdays and on Saturday lunchtimes. The timetables varied considerably over the next 25 years, although provision continued to be made for local shipyard workers.

Interestingly, the *Reshaping* report referred to removal of "local" services rather than the



7: Newcastle's Riverside branch was little photographed, this view of Byker station looking towards Newcastle was taken on September 18, 1974 – just over a year since the line's closure to passengers, although this particular station had closed back in April 1954. BEN BROOKSBANK (CC BY-SA 2.0)



8: Dorset's Bridport branch from the main line at Maiden Newton once ran through to West Bay in the hope of developing a seaside resort, but passenger traffic was cut back to Bridport in 1930 and freight in 1962. With a month to go before closure, single-car Class 121 No. 55033 is pictured at Bridport in April 1975.



9: Kilmacolm was built on a through route from Paisley to Greenock, but became a terminus in 1966 (after the last through passenger train had run the previous November) and survived through to 1983. This April 1977 view shows Class 107 DMU set No. 133 waiting to depart for Glasgow Central

branch's complete closure. In 1964, it was agreed that trains would continue until road improvements had been made, allowing buses to provide an alternative service.

Ministerial consent for the withdrawal of passenger services and closure of the five remaining stations was given in 1973. *The RM* reported that even "a restricted service of diesel trains, as presently operated on the branch" had been deemed incompatible with the "proposed rapid transit system" (Tyne & Wear Metro), legislation for which was at that time progressing through Parliament.

Final passenger services ran that July. The last goods service on the branch's truncated remains between Heaton and St Peters ran in September 1987.

8 Maiden Newton-Bridport
Closed May 1975

Until 1975, the Dorset market town of Bridport was linked to the railway network by a 9¼ mile line from Maiden Newton.

Initially broad gauge, the line officially opened on November 12, 1857 and was extended to Bridport Harbour, later known as Bridport West Bay, which closed to passengers in 1930 and goods in 1962. The branch's closure was formally proposed in October 1965, but rejected by the minister of transport.

"It is considered the route for proposed alternative road services is generally inadequate, and the high cost of improving the route to the necessary standard would not be justified," explained an article in August 1967's *The RM*. At this time there were 10 weekday trains in each direction and two extra on summer Saturdays.

By 1975 however, after British Rail had applied again for closure, citing annual losses of £54,000, it was decided that a suitable alternative bus service could be provided.

The branch's last day was Saturday, May 3, 1975 and the usual single-car diesel unit was supplemented by a three-car suburban set. An additional train was run in connection with the 'Dorset Dawdler' railtour, which called at Maiden Newton on that day.

The final train carried a wreath that was later hung on the sign that had directed passengers to the Bridport bay at Maiden Newton.

9 Glasgow-Kilmacolm
Closed January 1983

By the time the line to Kilmacolm closed in 1983, its original Glasgow St Enoch terminus was just a memory.

St Enoch had been recommended for closure by Richard Beeching and the last train arrived there shortly before midnight on Sunday, June 26, 1966. But trains along the Paisley Canal line to the village of Kilmacolm, west of Glasgow, continued and, along with the others that previously ran into St Enoch, were diverted to Glasgow Central.

The Greenock & Ayrshire Railway (later absorbed by the Glasgow & South Western) opened Greenock Albert Harbour station (renamed Greenock Princes Pier and subsequently replaced by a new, grander station nearby), on the Firth of Clyde, in order to provide a rail connection with passenger steamer sailings. Regular services beyond Kilmacolm ended in 1959.

Given its rural nature, patronage on the route was never particularly high. In June 1968, *The RM* reported this as the reason that evening services had been cut, the last train to Kilmacolm then leaving Glasgow Central at 18.32 and the last into the city at 19.07.

The line survived through financial support from both central and local government, but by 1980, Strathclyde Regional Council decided it could no longer afford annual assistance of £300,000. Withdrawal of services was effective from January 10, 1983, Kilmacolm closing, along with intermediate stations at Corkerhill, Mosspark, Crookston, Paisley Canal, Houston and Bridge of Weir. Services for Largs were diverted via Paisley Gilmour Street.

On July 27, 1990, following a £3 million investment, the line reopened as far as a new station at Paisley Canal, serving stations at Dumbreck, Corkerhill, Mosspark, Crookston and (the following year) Hawkhead.

10 Clayton West branch
Closed January 1983

The branch from Shepley to Clayton West and the Huddersfield-Penistone route were jointly listed for closure, but the latter has survived.

Construction of a railway through Skelmanthope and Clayton West had been the subject of no fewer than 28 failed proposals by the time legislation was finally enacted in 1866 for a 3.5 mile branch to Clayton West, leaving the main (Huddersfield-Penistone) line between Shepley & Shelley station and Cumberworth Tunnel.



10: Crowds gather at Clayton West, West Yorkshire, on January 22, 1983 to see one of the final day's trains (formed of a Class 110 DMU) as it prepares to leave for Huddersfield. Today this station is part of the Whistlestop Valley narrow gauge railway.



11: Tunbridge Wells West had extensive siding space which filled up at night with DEMUs used on the non-electrified lines of Kent and Sussex. Today there is a supermarket where the sidings were, while the impressive station building is a bar and restaurant. The heritage Spa Valley Railway operates from a base on the far side of the station in this 1975 view, with a new platform alongside the motive power depot. LAMBERHURST (CC BY-SA 4.0)

The branch's first train ran on September 1, 1879, almost seven years after the first sod of earth was cut. It served the two stations and dealt with coal traffic from Emley Moor Colliery (near Skelmanthorpe) and Park Mill Colliery (close to Clayton West). This helped to ensure the line's survival after the initial closure recommendation, but ceased in 1979.

In late 1982, Transport Secretary David Howell gave consent for the withdrawal of passenger services and closure of Skelmanthorpe and Clayton West stations. *The RM* noted in its December 1982 issue that the branch "was lightly used and there were few objections to closure."

The last passenger services ran on January 22, 1983 and the line closed completely in October that year. It has since been revived between a new station at Shelley and Clayton West as the 15-inch gauge Kirklees Light Railway.

11 Tunbridge-Groombridge Closed July 1985

Discontinuation of passenger services between Tunbridge Wells Central and Eridge in 1985 also led to the closure of the stations at Tunbridge Wells West and Groombridge. For West station, opened in 1866 by the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, this was the final in a series of cuts which had seen its status reduced.

The Beeching report had anticipated that both stations would be shut and the piecemeal fashion in which the line closures recommended therein took place meant that West station, opened in 1866 by the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, became gradually isolated from the network.

The 'Cuckoo Line' between Eridge and Polegate (which had allowed through services to Eastbourne) closed as far as Hailsham in 1965, with the remaining section to Polegate following three years later. The route between Three Bridges and Tunbridge Wells West (via East Grinstead) shut in January 1967 and was followed by the 1969 closure of the line between Uckfield and Lewes, which severed the link to Brighton.

BR stated the Tunbridge Wells Central-Eridge withdrawal would save track renewal costs of more than £0.75million. The Transport Users' Consultative Committee for the South East said its loss would cause considerable hardship to a significant number of users. Around 750 passenger journeys were made daily between Monday and Friday over the line and 450 to 500 on Saturdays.

The last services ran between Tunbridge Wells Central and Eridge on July 6, 1985.

A month later, the first seeds were sown for the eventual acquisition and preservation of the line with the formation of the Wealden Railway Company, now responsible for the operation of the Spa Valley Railway, which today runs heritage services between Tunbridge Wells West and Eridge.



12: Croxley Green was a real oddity, surviving to the dying days of British Rail in 1996, but not officially closed until 2003 – and with various plans for revival ever since. This view on November 8, 1970 shows the unusual sight of 4-COR/Class 404 EMU No. 3135 at the ramshackle terminus with a LCGB tour from London Victoria – these wooden buildings became so run down that they were demolished in early 1989 and replaced by a new platform on the opposite side of the line.

12 Watford Junction-Croxley Green Closed September 2003

Despite a formal proposal for its closure being published within a year of the *Reshaping* report, Minister of Transport Barbara Castle refused consent for the closure of the Watford Junction-Croxley Green branch.

Built by the London & North Western Railway, it had come into existence just over half a century earlier. *The RM* reported in 1912 that the 1.25 mile line to Croxley Green had "opened for local traffic on the 15th of June" along with the "widened portion of the Rickmansworth branch" from which it diverged.

The latter line closed to passengers in 1952 and goods in 1967, but Croxley Green and its branch (with an intermediate station, Watford West) retained a fairly healthy shuttle service through the 1970s, although its remaining Saturday trains were lost (Sunday services had gone in 1959).

Remarkably, on December 4, 1982, the line gained a new station. Inaugurated by then chairman of Watford Football Club Elton John, and Football Trust chairman Lord Aberdare, Watford Stadium halt was added to help cope with matchday crowds following the club's promotion to division one.

In 1988, Network SouthEast attempted to increase passenger numbers with more frequent daytime trains, but in 1990 the service was cut back to peak hours and three years later, to one train each way.

Trains ceased running in March 1996, although provision for transport by taxi was made until September 2003, when the line was officially closed.

Plans to utilise the route for an extension of the Metropolitan Line stalled, but it could yet have a future as a transport link. Hertfordshire County Council and Watford Borough Council have set aside £275,000 to develop a strategic outline business case to support future bids for funding. ■

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SCAN ME

TRAINS OF THE DESERT

Saudi Arabia is investing in its railway network with modern passenger trains and the first high speed rail line in the Middle East – and, with an economic plan to move away from solely depending on the oil industry, it is now opening up to tourist visits. Keith Fender reports.

BEFORE the modern Saudi Kingdom was created in 1932, the former Turkish imperial government had built a 1050mm (3ft 5½in) gauge line from Damascus (now Syria) to Medina, reaching there in 1908, although the planned section south from there to the pilgrimage city Mecca was never built.

During the First World War, the line – known as the Hejaz Railway – became a target for Allied Forces, especially those led by 'Lawrence of Arabia' and his Arab allies to prevent German and Turkish forces from using it. After 1920, the badly damaged line was largely abandoned.

Modern railway construction in Saudi Arabia began in 1947, and the first line in the country, built initially to help the growth of the then new oil industry, opened between Riyadh and Dammam via Haradh in October 1951. Rolling stock made in the USA, including Alco-built RS1 diesel locos and RDC DMUs, were used in the early days – although the line mainly served the interests of the Arabian American Oil Company.

Classic EMD-built cab unit (FP7A and FP9A) locos were added to the fleet later, with modifications for operating in the country's hot, dry interior. This original line, plus a shorter northern route now used by passenger trains that opened in 1985, is now operated as the East Line of Saudi Arabian Railways (SAR), which since 2021 has run all railways in the country after taking over the former Saudi Railways Organization (SRO) that had formerly run the East Line (Lines 1 and 2 on the map accompanying this article).

Train fleets

During its seven decade history, SRO built up a varied diesel loco fleet, although almost all of the locos were built in North America by EMD. In the 1960s and 70s, small numbers of four-axle GP18/GP38 design locos were added to the fleet, followed in the 1980s by 51 six-axle EMD SDL50 locos. In 2014, SRO ordered eight SDD17 locos from Chinese company CRRC. CRRC Qishuyan had previously supplied two similar locos in 2011. The newer SDD17 locos equipped with Chinese-made 12-cylinder 12V280ZJ engines have not been accepted into use and are now in store.

The most recent additions to the SRO



CAF power car No. 0006.010 at Hail on the North-South Line with the 09.30 from Riyadh on January 20, 2022. PAUL GRIFFIN



Haramain High Speed Railway Talgo 350 sets Nos. 10 and 04 in Medina Depot on November 26, 2022. IAIN SCOTCHMAN

"Two new lines have opened this century, between them totalling more than 3000km"



fleet have been built by EMD's new owner, Progress Rail, with S2000C locos (Nos. 2010-2029) between 2009 and 2014; and six similar SDL38s (Nos. 2030-35) in 2017. The most recent addition to the fleet being 17 model GT46ACS locos (Nos. 4300-4316) fitted with a 16-cylinder, 4300hp 16-710G3C-ES engine.

Over the decades, increasingly sophisticated air filtration and cooling systems have been fitted to the loco fleet, helping withstand the heat and sand of the desert environment. Locos are also fitted with adjustable sand ploughs to cope with drifting sand.

The ex-SRO line between Riyadh and Dammam is now only operated by CAF push-pull trains built in Spain in 2011, with up to six train pairs running each day. The units replaced loco-hauled trains and are capable of speeds up to 180kph (112mph). They are formed of single power cars with five trailers working in push/pull mode, although they tend to push more often than pull, being turned on the triangles at terminus stations to reduce exhaust fumes entering the air conditioning intakes.

There are 14 power cars (Nos. 5001-5014) in the fleet and 11 trailer sets. The last loco-hauled trains were Dammam to Hofuf local services worked by EMD SDL50s (Nos. 3500-3530) hauling a mix of coaches; these switched to the CAF trains in April 2022.



A schematic map of railways in Saudi Arabia. MAXIMILIAN DÖRRBECKER/WIKIMEDIA (CC BY-SA 2.5)

Some loco-hauled coaches have been retained as a reserve fleet on the East Line.

New lines

Two new lines have opened this century, between them totalling more than 3000km (1875 miles), and there are ambitious plans to expand further and connect to the developing network of the other five Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Eventually a railway line all the way down the coast from Kuwait to the United Arab Emirates might be built, although currently it is unclear when.

The North-South Railway line is a 2750km (1700 mile) network, which includes the Buraidah to Phosphate Junction (Al Nafudof) section shared with the Riyadh to Al-Qurayyat passenger line plus several currently ▶



Before loco hauled passenger trains ended, two EMD SDL50 locos Nos. 3518 and 3515 are seen at Riyadh (East) on February 22, 2022, during a period when loco-hauled trains temporarily replaced CAF push-pull trains. ALASTAIR FYFE



freight-only lines serving mining customers (both bauxite and phosphates).

The North-South lines were built specifically, at a cost of $8 billion, to enable mining to be economically viable; the first 1392km (870 mile) section from Al Jalamid in the north of the country to Ras Al Khair on the Gulf coast opened in May 2011, with heavy haul phosphate trains formed of three SD70ACS locos and up to 160 wagons carrying 16,000 tonnes of cargo.

EMD supplied an initial batch of 25 of the 4500hp SD70ACS Co-Co locos in 2010, which were built at its now closed factory in London, Ontario (Canada). Subsequently, another 36 locos have been delivered. Etihad Rail in the United Arab Emirates also has similar locos. In addition, Progress Rail delivered seven 2200hp GPL38S to SAR equipped with EMD 8-710G3B engines around 2013 for shunting and trip work on the Northern network.

From Ras Al Khair, connections to the rest of the future Gulf rail network are possible. A branch from Ras Al Khair south to Al Jubail serves the largest industrial area in the Middle East, and this is currently being extended southwards to connect with the East Line west of Dammam. The entire North-South line uses ERTMS Level 2 signalling, somewhat ironically (as a European system) this is the largest single use of the system anywhere in the world!

The 1242km (776 mile) Riyadh to Al-Qurayyat line opened to passengers in stages between 2017 and 2022. The first 353km (220 mile) stage connecting Riyadh to Qassim opened on February 26, 2017, extending to Hail (622km/389 mile from Riyadh) later that year; daily trains connect Riyadh and Hail. In 2018, the line opened to Al Jouf (924km/578 mile), with a weekly overnight train from Riyadh. Passenger services to Al-Qurayyat, close to the border with Jordan, began in April 2022 with the overnight service extended north. Six large passenger stations have been built on the line, most located out of town.

The line has been completed 19km (12 mile) further north of Al-Qurayyat to Al Haditha on the Jordanian border and ends just short of the border fence without a station. Long-term plans are for connections to as-yet unbuilt lines in Jordan and Syria, allowing through freight trains to access Mediterranean ports or Turkey and Europe.

> **"The line only operates for one week each year during the annual Hajj pilgrimage"**

Passenger services on the North-South line are all operated by six CAF-built 200kph (125mph) diesel trains comprising a power car at either end, and up to 12 trailer coaches. There are 12 power cars (Nos. 0006.001-0006.012) and six trailer sets, which include an overnight train with sleepers and four fully covered car carrying wagons.

SAR is planning to expand its fleet and in August 2022 issued a tender for 10 trainsets to increase capacity on the Riyadh to Dammam route, with an option for a further 10 trainsets to accommodate growth on the Riyadh to Hail section of the North-South Railway.

The 453km, 300kph (283 mile/188mph) Haramain high-speed line electrified at 25kV ac connects Medina (Madinah) via Jeddah airport and the holy city of Mecca (Makkah). This means the original dream of the Hejaz Railway reaching Mecca has been realised, although the section north of Medina has been out of use for a century. The new line was opened in September 2018 after nine years' construction, the Jeddah Airport branch following in December 2019.

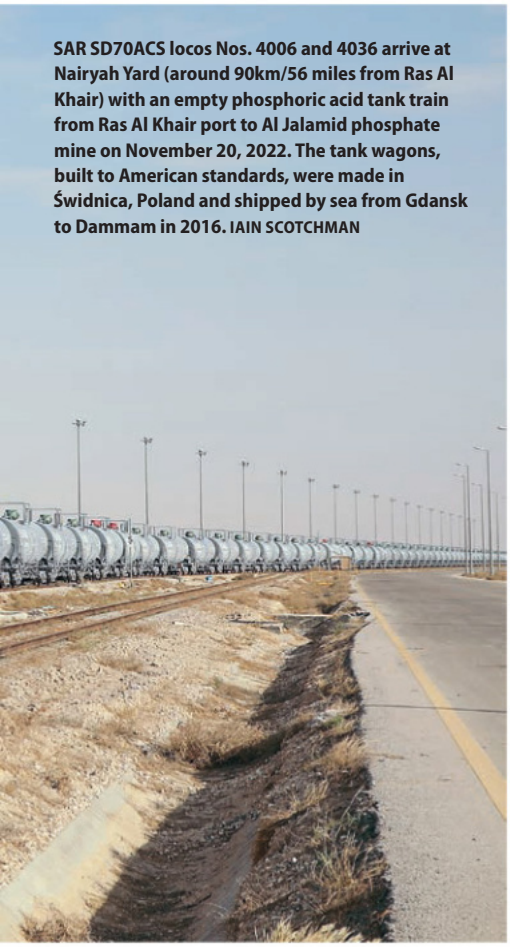
Talgo has supplied 25 'Talgo 350' trains, built in Spain, similar to the Class 102/112 EMUs used on the Spanish high-speed network. The trains are designed to work in temperatures up to 50°C and are all based at a depot in Medina. An additional Haramain trainset was built as a Royal Train, solely for use by the Saudi Royal Family.

Spanish railways (RENFE), along with Spanish rail infrastructure manager ADIF, has the operating contract but has recruited and trained Saudis to do most jobs. RENFE also specifically sought to recruit women drivers (in a country where women were banned from driving cars until fairly recently); 28,000 women applied for the 32 training positions available.

To operate engineering and rescue trains on the new line, RENFE has provided six regauged Class 319 locos from Spain (Nos. 319226/232/234/235/246/247).

Future plans

Ambitious plans have been drawn up to add thousands of kilometres of new railways. Exactly when they will be built is not clear,



SAR SD70ACS locos Nos. 4006 and 4036 arrive at Nairyah Yard (around 90km/56 miles from Ras Al Khair) with an empty phosphoric acid tank train from Ras Al Khair port to Al Jalamid phosphate mine on November 20, 2022. The tank wagons, built to American standards, were made in Świdnica, Poland and shipped by sea from Gdansk to Dammam in 2016. IAIN SCOTCHMAN

but a 950km (594 mile) 'Landbridge' line connecting Jeddah on the Red Sea coast with Riyadh, where it will link up with both the North-South Railway and the lines to Dammam, has been planned in detail and is likely to be the first to be built.

In addition to the main line railways, there is an extensive metro system in Riyadh under construction since 2014 and due to open during 2023. Unlike other cities that have built metros incrementally over decades, all six lines totalling 176km (110 miles) are due to open at the same time. Siemens, Alstom and Bombardier have supplied the train fleets.

A shorter automated 11.5km (7 mile) elevated metro, normally only accessible to women, operates at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University for Women in Riyadh using 22 two-car trains built in Italy by Ansaldo Breda in 2011/12. Hitachi Rail operates the system.

In Makkah (Mecca), an 18km (11 mile) line serves religious destinations in the Al Mashaaer Al Mugaddasah valley. The line only operates for one week each year during the annual Hajj pilgrimage, with access restricted to pilgrims. Operational staff are seconded from Muslim countries around the world as access to Mecca for non-Muslims is prohibited. It uses a fleet of 17 twelve-car Chinese built EMUs. ■

■ *Our thanks to the photographers for information used in this feature. Readers planning to visit the country should note photography may be difficult, even at stations, and access to depots is only possible to organised groups. Most of the pictures in this feature were taken on the first rail enthusiast tour of the country run by UK firm PTG in November 2022.*



Chinese-built SDD17 loco No. 4008 in store along with the rest of the class at Dammam on November 19, 2022. KEVIN HOGGETT



Ex-RENFE diesel loco No. 319246 at a Haramain high speed line maintenance base on December 15, 2021. ALASTAIR FYFE



Around 2013 Progress Rail delivered seven 2200hp GPL38S to SAR, equipped with EMD 8-710G3B engines, for use on the Northern network. Most are used at Nairyah Yard and Nos. 2007 and 2005 are seen there on November 20, 2022. IAIN SCOTCHMAN



Still in SRO livery, the latest GT46ACS locos Nos. 4305 and 4307 at Al-Qurayyat, near the border with Jordan, after working light engine from Hail on November 24, 2022. IAIN SCOTCHMAN



CAF power car No. 5007 leads the 13.38 from Riyadh (East) to Dammam in Riyadh on May 18, 2016. ALASTAIR FYFE

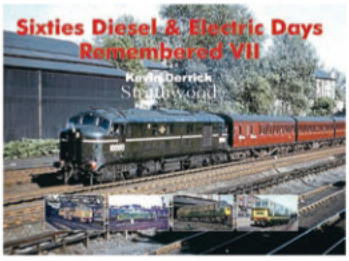
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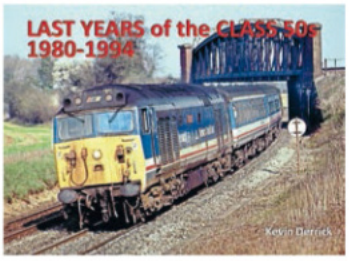
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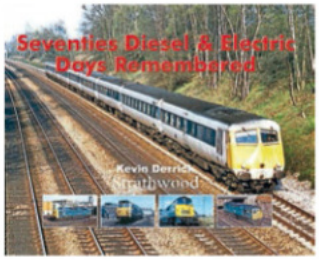
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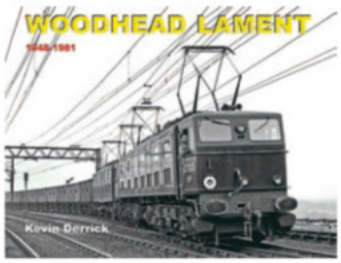
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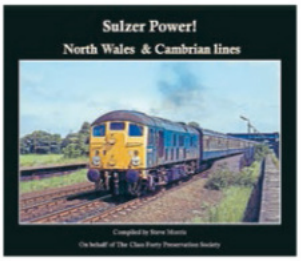
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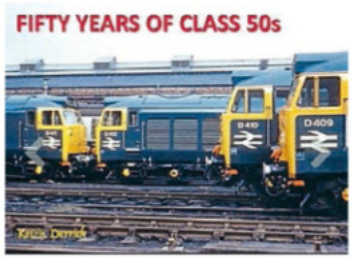
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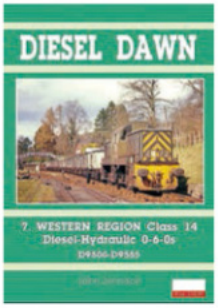
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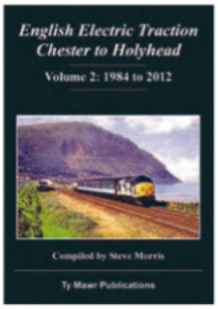
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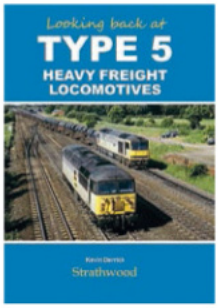
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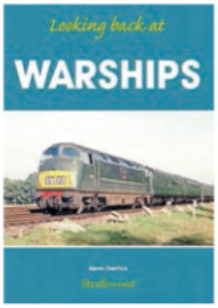
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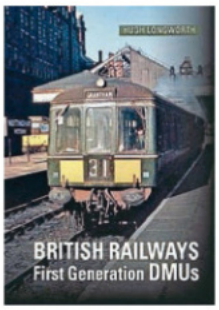
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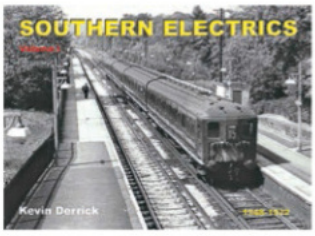
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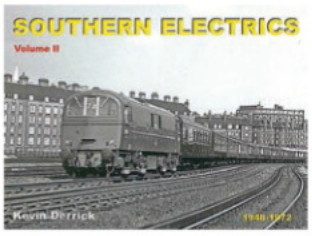
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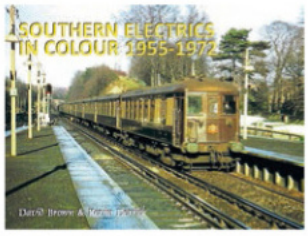
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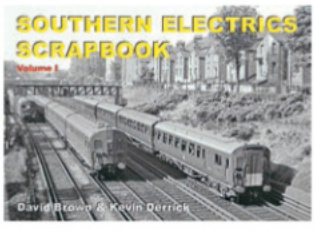
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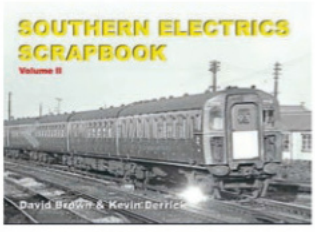
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CLASS 87 GOLDEN JUBILEE



Class 87s ruled the West Coast Main Line from the early 1970s, being the first locomotives to really flatten the climbs of Shap and Beattock, but – as John Heaton FCILT describes – their full potential was perhaps let down by ageing infrastructure and network constraints.

THE Golden Jubilee of Class 87s presents an opportunity to celebrate the standards achieved by these West Coast Main Line stalwarts prior to the employment of Class 90s and then 'Pendolinos'. One '87' remains operational in Britain, LSL's No. 87002 *Royal Sovereign*, which sees regular use on railtours and thus endorses the view that these 1973 Bo-Bos are still – just – 'in service' after those 50 years rather than 'in preservation'.

At the end of the 1960s, the WCML AL6 (Class 86) electrics represented the pinnacle of British motive power. The East Coast 'Deltics' were their only rivals, but these diesels had the power and grace of a male Olympic shot-putter compared to their sleek and elegant electric sisters, which were more 'Jessica Ennis-Hill' to a Deltic's 'Geoff Capes'.

When the extension of West Coast electrification from Crewe to Glasgow was authorised, it became necessary to build more electric locomotives. The routine reaction of most European mainland nationalised rail systems at this time would have been to order a further batch of successful existing locomotives – but that was, for right or wrong, not British Rail's way. Keen to develop even more powerful locomotives for the northern topography, and committed to technical innovation, the Class 87s were designed to meet this new need.

> "A copy of the train graph indicated 27 northbound trains over Shap in the first 3½hrs after midnight"

The process did not end there either. Within just one generation, British electric locomotive production raced from the 1958 AL1s (that became Class 81), via the AL6 and the Class 87s, then to late-1980s Class 90s and Class 91s. Each was radically different from their predecessors, but the Class 87s could rightly be categorised as the first of the modern electric locomotives. Whereas a Class 86/2 passenger loco was rated at 6100hp maximum and 4040hp continuous, the respective figures for Class 87s were 7860 and 5000.

Career bookends

A review of their performance in the Railway Performance Society (RPS) database reveals few surprises concerning their deployment, which was obviously constrained by high demand on their core duties, as well as the insular WCML electric network of the mid-1970s.

In preparation for the full 'Electric Scot' service of May 1974, electrification had reached Preston by 1973, when some of the first logs with Class 87s were recorded. Table 1 shows a July southbound run from Preston to Crewe timed by David Adams, with No. 87004 running the 51miles in a net 37½min at an average start-to-stop speed of 81½mph. Euxton Junction was passed in 5min 18sec



A classic BR-era shot of a blue-liveried No. 87020 leaving Euston with a rake of Mk.3s and heading for the North in May 1985. HAWTHORNE COLLECTION



After West Coast Main Line electric services began running all the way through from Euston to Glasgow Central in May 1974, Class 87s became the first locos to really flatten the former daunting climbs of Shap (Cumbria) and Beattock (Dumfries and Galloway). On February 19, 1988 an unidentified '87' and a matching rake of Intercity-liveried coaches climbs Shap at Greenholme with a down express.

from Preston, decelerating from over 90mph with 12 bogies grossing 420tonnes, the load being typical of the WCML of the early 1970s. The contrast with their Class 40 antecedents could not have been more marked.

If 1973 saw the first runs with Class 87s, then 2005 experienced their last widespread deployment. A shortage of 'Pendolinos' often resulted in a Mk.3 standby set being pressed into service, sometimes on a planned basis. Certain train timers took great delight in following the exploits of these trains, which usually ran to 'Pendolino' timings, as well as they could. And sometimes that was very well indeed.

The sets were used mainly on Euston-West Midlands trains in order to keep them relatively captive and to reduce the damage to the timetable by their limited 110mph top speed when compared to the faster accelerating, 125mph, tilting Class 390s.

Cliff Hudson enjoyed a special Class 87 day in 2005 with No. 87001 *Royal Scot,* which had first appeared in the RPS Archive on a 1973 Crewe to Euston trip, having been called up for active service. Mr Hudson had travelled south from Tamworth to Euston by 'Pendolino' to find the locomotive on its substitute rake of Mk.3s having worked the 06.38 from Wolverhampton. He was pleased to see it turned round for the 09.08 to Birmingham, although the run was rather perfunctory. Mr Hudson stuck with the trainset for its 11.00 return from Birmingham to Euston, a good run to Coventry before being held at Trent Valley Junction for a 'Pendolino' to pass. A frustrating journey followed, signal-checked most of the way and arriving 19min late.

Undaunted, our intrepid timer returned to Birmingham with No. 87001 on the 13.10, a similar run to his earlier down trip, and still disappointing. The 15.00 southbound return was much the most exciting run so far, unchecked by signals, with averages slightly in excess of the maximum permissible speed from Tring to Berkhamsted, and greatly so from Harrow to Wembley.

A fifth loco-powered leg followed, with the 17.40 from Euston right through to Wolverhampton, another good run (see Table 2 for Euston-Milton Keynes Central) keeping in touch with right time and robbed of a precisely punctual arrival by signal checks on the last leg. No. 87001 was not yet finished for the day, being allocated to the 20.06 back to Euston, but Mr Hudson changed his plans when EWS's No. 90029 turned up with the 18.24 from Manchester Piccadilly to Birmingham New Street. No. 87001, a 32-year-old locomotive still earning its keep, departed without him.

TABLE 1: PRESTON TO CREWE

Loco	87004
Vehicles/tare/ gross tons	12/398/420
Train	16.15 Glasgow C-Euston
Date	July 31, 1973
Recorder	D Adams

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	PRESTON pass	0	0 00	
2.20	Farington		3 04	77/91
5.51	Euxton Jct	5½	5 18	84/90
9.24	Coppull		8 04	75/70
11.84	Standish		9 58	88/95
15.09	WIGAN NW	12½	12 19	70
17.71	Bamfurlong		14 07	100
21.06	Golborne Jct		16 28	82/83
23.45	Winwick Jct	18½	18 20	75/83/73a
26.86	WARRINGTON B Q	21	20 58	80
28.83	Acton Grange Jct	22½	22 23	90/93
31.48	Norton Crossing	[3]	24 07	87/sigs82
34.48	Weaver Jct	29½	26 16	87
36.49	Acton Bridge		27 32	100
39.15	Hartford		29 44	sigs 30
			sig stop	31.14-33.54
43.50	Winsford	34½	38 55	98/101
47.80	Coppenhall Jct	38	41 35	92/sigs
50.98	CREWE d	42	47 50	

[x]= minutes recovery time

TABLE 2: EUSTON TO MILTON KEYNES CENTRAL

Loco	87001
Vehicles/tare/ gross tonnes	9+DVT/-/-
Train	17.40 Euston-Wolverhampton
Date	April 6, 2005
Recorder/Position	C Hudson 9th of 11

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	EUSTON Pfm 3 d	0	0 00	-/tsr20
5.48	Willesden Jct	6	7 13	45.6
7.95	Wembley Central	7	8 53	88.9
11.34	Harrow and W	9	10 44	109.9
13.23	Hatch End		11 54	97.2
17.38	WATFORD JCT	13	14 14	106.7
20.90	King's Langley		16 24	97.5
23.04	Apsley		17 34	110.1
24.45	Hemel Hempstead		18 18	115.4
27.86	Berkhamsted		20 16	104.0
31.65	Tring	20	22 24	106.6
36.06	Cheddington		25 00	101.8
40.11	Leighton Buzzard		27 19	104.9
46.60	Bletchley	27	31 15	99.0
49.76	MILTON KEYNES C a	29	34 03	67.7

Note: Arrived Wolverhampton 1L

Night freight

The vast majority of the Class 87s' existence was on passenger work, but they were not unknown on freight, especially overnight. The modern railway has lost sight of the fact that locomotives could be used 24 hours a day, while their coaches were being serviced. Electric locomotives needed far less maintenance and, of course, no depot visits for fuel, so could be used more flexibly than diesels.



Above: Although mostly known as a passenger loco, Class 87s were also used on freight turns – often at night while the passenger stock was being serviced. However, this daylight shot shows Nos. 87029 *Earl Marischal* +87002 *Royal Sovereign* double-heading a northbound Freightliner at Rugby on October 25, 1984. COLOUR-RAIL

TABLE 3: WIGAN SOUTH TO CARLISLE FREIGHTLINER

Locos	87010 + 87019
Vehicles/tare/ gross tonnes	20/-/1067
Train	21.42 Garston-Glasgow
Date	1976
Recorder	O S Nock

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	Wigan South	0	0 00	
0.58	WIGAN N. W.		2 25	14.3
2.70	Boar's Head		4 53	51.7
6.41	Coppull		7 51	75.1
10.20	Euxton Jct	9½	10 55	74.1
11.65	Leyland		12 07	72.5
15.66	PRESTON	14½	15 45	66.3
20.41	Barton		20 35	59.0
25.10	Garstang		24 18	75.7
28.41	Scorton		26 56	75.5
36.65	LANCASTER	33½	33 45	72.5
39.79	Hest Bank		36 17	74.3
		sig. stop	42.30-47.52	
42.90	Carnforth	38½	-	
46.15	MP 9½		52 35	23.4
50.19	Milnthorpe		55 58	71.6
55.75	OXENHOLME	49½	60 30	73.6
60.90	Lambrigg		64 45	72.7
62.81	Grayrigg		66 16	75.7
68.86	Tebay	61	71 10	74.1
74.40	Shap Summit		76 10	66.4
76.38	Shap		77 53	69.0
83.65	Clifton		83 40	75.5
			20mph tsr	
87.89	PENRITH	79½	89 11	46.1
92.74	Plumpton		93 03	75.3
98.41	Southwaite		97 30	76.5
100.84	Wreay		99 30	72.7
		sig stop	103.55-108.10	
105.76	CARLISLE a.	97	110 25	27.1

O S Nock covered a Garston-Glasgow Freightliner in the August 1976 edition of *The Railway Magazine*. Although the diagramming is not known, it is likely that two Euston-North West evening trains had their locomotives dispatched for freight work and then worked up Glasgow-Euston services the following day, counter-balanced by a southbound night Freightliner. If this was not the working, then perhaps it should have been.

The log is reproduced in Table 3. This varies slightly from the previously published details as it has used different timing points, more accurate distance information and has been derived from the original notebook held in the RPS archive.

Mr Nock described how consistent running with a 1067 tonne, 20 vehicle Freightliner train managed to secure a path through the heavy overnight traffic. A copy of the train graph indicated 27 northbound trains over Shap in the first 3½hrs after midnight. It is sobering to reflect that the randomly selected sample early morning of February 16, 2023 could muster only 11 paths, with just eight of them used.

Having been recessed at Carnforth for the West Coast Postal, the pair of Class 87s then took the 1-in-134 climb to MP 9½ at 70mph. Grayrigg was passed at 75mph, the maximum permitted vehicle speed, with O S Nock reporting that the locomotives were nevertheless "working a little inside full power".

Following a neutral section, the pair of Class 87s passed Tebay at only 70mph and the



Virgin repainted some of its Class 87s into celebrity liveries to mark the end of their West Coast use. No. 87012 *The Olympian* gained a retro Network SouthEast look, and is pictured at South Kenton (North London) on July 3, 2006 while hauling mail unit No. 325005 from Polmadie (Glasgow) to Wembley.



The northern end of the Class 87s' reign was at Glasgow Central, where No. 87027 *Wolf of Badenoch* has just arrived on February 2, 1988 with a working from Euston.

"Over 15 years after the first Class 87 export, American diesels are still working freight trains on British electrified main lines"

RM article author recorded 62mph at Shap summit, with the loco having been slightly eased after 65mph above Shap Wells. It should be noted that the 1067 tonnes trailing load should not be taken as gospel, as Freightliner container weights were not accurately known and timing loads reflected full trains. In contrast, however, the unoccupied gaps between containers cause increased resistance.

Flattening climbs

Class 87s featured less regularly to and from Manchester, and when they did it was often on the fewer trains that ran via Wilmslow as opposed to Stoke, because it was for work on the northern and Scottish gradients that the Class 87s were designed. It cannot be denied that the power they could lay down on just eight wheel/rail surfaces often caused slipping in damp and wet weather but, when they did take grip, they were capable of excellent performances. It was the Class 87s that first flattened out the climbs to Shap and Beattock, resulting in a requirement to ease before the summit, particularly on Shap. Before electrification it had never been possible even to consider coasting on any part of these uphill stretches.

Looking through the archive for heavy down-direction trains, a run with the Inverness sleeper of 1986 behind No. 87024 *Lord of the Isles* sprang to attention. Alan Varley showed commendable devotion to train timing duties as he logged the train's progress over the banks from a Mk.2 coach, permitting himself an occasional doze only on the downhill stretches (see Table 4).

The sleepers had left Preston 25min late and then halted at Fylde Junction for the driver to go back to inspect the train. A clear run to Carlisle was to follow, with perhaps a slight signal check through Oxenholme. With a trailing load of 16 vehicles weighing some 595 tonnes gross, the single Class 87 was doing 66mph at Shap summit from 85mph at Tebay, but did even better on Beattock bank where Mr Varley was able to supply a rare set of milepost recordings with this train, although his parallel geographical timings have been retained in the log. Speed seemed to balance at around 76½mph from Harthope, which Alan calculates at 5250 equivalent draw-bar horsepower, although he would not claim his resistance formula to have been necessarily accurate.

The flexibility of the Class 87s was demonstrated by their use with Motorail vans, the southbound formation of the early afternoon Glasgow-Euston being: DVT, Mk.3 coaches, Class 87 and then the vans. Runs with these services often showed a hint of the extra load, the cumbersome formation, and later acceleration from permanent and temporary speed restrictions owing to the longer train.

The most prestigious working associated with the Class 87s was the 'Royal Scot', which the locomotives regularly worked non-stop for the 209 miles to Preston on a schedule of 140min, although this was eased during West Coast modernisation. The RPS's fastest recorded time is 130m17s timed by Nigel Smedley with No. 87022 *Cock o' the North* on September 26, 1990 – but this was unusual as the train frequently failed to receive the priority it deserved, also having tight paths both at Crewe and Preston, and not to mention having to negotiate increasingly unreliable infrastructure.

Table 5 shows a more typical run, a few minutes late, through no fault of the locomotive or its driver, on a 143min schedule. The high incidence of temporary speed restrictions reflected work being done, or needing to be done, so the train was booked a few minutes longer than its loco-hauled heyday. This log, perhaps more than any other in this article, demonstrates the sheer graft required by these locomotives in adverse circumstances, dropping just ½min on the gross timing, its net time matching Nigel's actual record.

TABLE 4: PRESTON TO MOTHERWELL

Loco	87024
Vehicles/tare/ gross tonnes	16/577/595
Train	2100 Euston-Inverness etc
Date	July 31, 1985
Recorder/Position	A Varley 3 of 17 to Carlisle, 13 of 17 forward

Miles	Timing Point	M S	M.P.H
0.00	PRESTON d	0 00	25L
0.50	Fylde Jct	signal stop 10m36s	
1.40	Oxheys	15 28	47
4.81	Barton	18 16	92/94
9.50	Garstang	21 24	85
12.80	Scorton	23 24	96
15.31	Bay Horse	25 11	92/91
17.86	Oubeck	26 50	94
19.89	Lancaster Old Jct	28 21	69
21.05	LANCASTER	29 17	76
22.96	Morecambe S Jct	30 38	85
24.19	Hest Bank	31 31	82
27.30	Carnforth	33 36	94/95
30.55	MP 9½	35 43	83
31.80	Burton	36 35	90/94
34.59	Milnthorpe	38 24	93/89
38.05	Sedgwick	40 42	92
40.15	OXENHOLME	42 10	76/75
41.75	Peat Lane	43 26	79/82
43.55	Hay Fell	44 45	80
45.30	Lambrigg	46 00	87/89
47.21	Grayrigg	47 20	81
48.79	Low Gill	48 36	71/86
53.28	Tebay	51 55	85
56.18	Scout Gn	54 08	76
57.55	Shap Wells	55 15	72
58.66	Shap Summit	56 14	66
72.31	PENRITH	66 27	ave 80.1
77.14	Plumpton RR	69 51	ave 85.2
82.81	Southwaite	73 40	ave 89.1
85.26	Wreay	75 17	ave 91.4 85/97
88.80	Upperby Br UB	77 38	Ave 90.1
90.16	CARLISLE a	**80 37**	31½L
0.00	d	84 16	33L
2.03	Kingmoor	4 11	54
6.04	Floriston	7 39	80
8.55	Gretna	9 25	ave 85.2
10.33	Quintinshill	10 40	ave 85.4
12.96	Kirkpatrick	12 34	ave 83.1
14.45	MP 14½	13 36	ave 86.5
16.70	Kirtlebridge	15 25	-/35
20.16	Ecclefechan	20 10	50 tsr
25.79	Lockerbie	25 19	87
28.65	Nethercleugh	27 15	90/92/87
31.72	Dinwoodie	29 20	90/95
34.46	Wamphray	31 06	91/96
36.84	Murthat	32 37	93/87
39.71	Beattock	34 34	90
42.46	Auchencastle	36 28	84
45.11	Greskine	38 24	78/75½
46.97	Harthope V S	39 52	76.5
49.75	Summit	42 02	77/95
57.86	Abington	48 18	42* tsr
63.24	Lamington	53 06	90/86
68.50	Thankerton	56 38	96
70.05	Leggatfoot	57 37	93/100
73.62	CARSTAIRS	59 48	90/82
78.47	Craigenhill	63 13	85/98
81.95	Carluke	65 29	sigs
89.47	MOTHERWELL a	73 12	28½L

Note: Mileages adjusted for change of position at Carlisle.

A short dash

However, it was not necessarily on such long runs that Class 87s showed their prowess. In 2012, the class remained in possession of 50 sectional fastest locomotive-hauled times on the RPS list despite the advent of the Class 90s. Some are runs that were rarely undertaken in recent years, but many others are regular short sprints.

Warrington Bank Quay to Wigan North Western is a case in point, where the 8min 50sec locomotive-hauled record was then equal to the fastest authenticated 'Voyager' time and 2sec faster than the best 'Pendolino' run, despite this pair of stations having long-remained a staple calling pattern of Euston to Preston services.

Table 6 shows the run by No. 87034 *William Shakespeare* on a dry rail with no slipping on emissions from the adjacent detergent factory as the train left Warrington Bank Quay or, much less so, on the climb from Winwick Junction. It was felt that this run was within 5-10sec of the best achievable time.

The skilled and committed Longsight driver took advantage of the rising gradient to make a fast entry into Wigan North Western, but there are few who have the nerve to make such an approach in the face of current Draconian penalties for getting it wrong. As the Bard himself put it: 'Time travels at different speeds for different people.'

The driver has commented that Class 87s have "a power superiority that was not always apparent, due to the technique used in notching up during acceleration." High voltage power supply was necessary for the power advantage to be developed in the upper speed range and rail adhesion had to be favourable.

In practice, normal daytime voltages on the southern half of the West Coast route often meant that the locos could achieve only 90% of their potential. As for adhesion, our driver routinely experienced wet sand and blocked sanders that converted the high horsepower into a liability.

Many of his colleagues accelerated at 200-300amps lower than the theoretical maximum, thereby reducing the margin Class 87s had over an '86'. Conversely, running on 'max' increased the risk of overloading and discomfort within the train. The result of these factors was erratic performance and sometimes a puzzling failure to deliver their design capabilities.

British Rail pursued its quest for innovation by building No. 87101 to explore the use of thyristor control, the '87' receiving the appropriate name *Stephenson* in recognition of earlier pioneering developments. This locomotive seems to have worked as a supernumerary, spending more time on trains to non-electrified destinations such as Shrewsbury, Holyhead and Stranraer, and being assigned to Cross-Country trains for some of its existence.

Table 7 shows a run with a charter from King's Cross to York, timed from Grantham by Jeremy Hartill. The running is remarkably consistent, chivvying along its 13 Mk.1 coaches at an average of 98.3mph for 41.16miles, during which it touched 100mph just once (and that only momentarily). Although most electric locomotives could achieve the average, the narrow speed band was unusual, especially with such a heavy load. The success or failure of the experimental No. 87101 does not seem to have been well-documented, but the testbed no doubt showed the way forward for succeeding engineers.

TABLE 5: EUSTON TO PRESTON

Loco	87031
Load*	8+DVT/330/350
Train	10.30 Euston-Glasgow C
Date	March 22, 2002
Recorder/Position	J Heaton 8th of 10

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	MPH
0.00	EUSTON d	0	0 00	Pfm 2
3.63	Queens Park		6 02	-
5.27	Willesden W L Jct	6½	7 20	-/20tsr
8.01	Wembley Central		11 07	99/110
11.33	Harrow and W	10½	13 03	106
15.95	Bushey		15 43	100
17.37	WATFORD JCT	14	16 33	106
20.88	King's Langley		18 32	110
23.02	Apsley		19 47	100tsr
24.43	Hemel Hempstead		20 38	98
26.27	Bourne End Jct		21 42	104/90tsr
27.86	Berkhamsted		22 46	85/83
31.65	Tring	22	25 14	99
36.06	Cheddington		27 57	96/70tsr71
37.22	Ledburn Jct	25½	28 52	94/97
40.12	Leighton Buzzard		30 45	89/85
46.60	Bletchley	30½[2]	24 47	107/106
49.77	MILTON KEYNES C	34½	36 34	107/105
52.35	Wolverton	[3]	38 02	107/40tsr42
63.10	Blisworth		45 26	107
69.62	Weedon	48½	49 25	92
78.13	Kilsby TNP		54 24	106
82.47	RUGBY	56	57 26	66
87.87	Brinklow		61 30	101/40tsr35
93.47	Bulkington		65 44	68/94/ sigs84
97.02	NUNEATON	65	68 17	90
102.27	Atherstone		71 28	105
106.46	Polesworth		74 02	88/106
110.00	TAMWORTH	72½	76 08	100/102
113.60	Hademore		78 16	99
116.22	LICHFIELD T V	76	79 50	101/108
121.47	Armitage		83 25	sigs64/91
127.08	Colwich	82½	87 41	48(psr)
129.42	Milford & B	[3]	89 46	88/70
133.51	STAFFORD	90	92 45	73
136.85	Great Bridgeford		94 56	102
138.82	Norton Bridge	93½	96 14	87
143.35	Standon Bridge		98 59	104
147.47	Whitmore		101 23	101
149.90	Madeley	100	102 46	106
153.22	Betley Road	[2]	104 40	104
156.26	Basford Hall Jct	106 (2)	106 46 sig stop	sigs54 107.18-109.19
158.03	CREWE	109	110 38	74
161.16	Coppenhall Jct		112 51	104/106
165.45	Winsford	113½	115 19	105/107
169.82	Hartford		117 48	105
174.48	Weaver Jct	118½	120 26	107
182.07	WARRINGTON B Q	123	124 53	88/76
184.32	Winwick Quay		126 34	88
185.50	Winwick Jct	125½	127 24	76/75/89
187.90	Golborne Jct		129 11	75
191.55	Bamfurlong Jct		131 28	102
193.87	WIGAN N W	131	133 06	76
196.00	Boar's Head		134 40	88
201.47	Balshaw Lane Jct	136	137 55	107/108
203.50	Euxton Jct	137	139 04	103/108
207.37	Farington Curve Jct	[2]	141 35	70/sigs13/-
208.96	PRESTON	144	144 44	

[x]= minutes recovery time, (2)= mins pathing allowance.

TABLE 6: WARRINGTON BQ TO WIGAN NW

Loco	87034
Vehicles/tare/ gross tonnes	8+DVT/-/+20t
Train	18.34 Euston-Glasgow C
Date	September 18, 2000 S R Griffin

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	WARRINGTON B Q	0	0 00	
0.35	*MP 182½*		0 44	28.6
1.85	*MP 184*		2 00	71.1
3.41	Winwick Jct	3½	3 02	91.0
5.80	Golborne Jct		4 46	85.7
9.40	Bamfurlong		6 50	104.5
10.40	MP 5¼	8	7 23	109.1
11.65	MP 6½		8 20	79.2
11.74	WIGAN N W	10	8 50	10.6

A new life abroad

When the Class 87s' British shelf-life expired, some locomotives were sold to Bulgaria, where they continued to work with their original identity still easily visible. An example of their running appears in the RPS archive, timed on a PTG railtour by Tony Leopard. I will spare readers the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in a Bulgarian log, but the 10-hour marathon reached its destination just 1½min late. At least the Class 87s that had been consigned to this 'corner of a foreign field', and even survived a downturn in Bulgarian freight traffic, suffered significantly less indignity than having succumbed to the scrapman's torch in some industrial wasteland.

Although these locomotives continue to see use on Bulgarian chemical trains, they should instead have been cascaded to British secondary



After the introduction of 'Pendolinos' in the early 2000s, a number of Class 87s and Mk.3 rakes were retained to cover some of the shorter-distance diagrams. On June 30, 2006 Virgin-liveried No. 87026 passes Headstone Lane (North London) with the 16.51 Euston-Birmingham New Street.



Twenty-one of the original fleet of 36 locos are now in Bulgaria (three others are still in the UK and the rest scrapped), and on October 7, 2011 No. 87006 was used on a PTG Charter from Varna-Sofia – seen during a stop at Septemvri. KEITH FENDER



LSL's No. 87002 *Royal Sovereign* keeps the class in 'active' status in Britain, here seen in miserable weather at Shenfield on March 16, 2022, while heading 'The East Anglian' railtour back from Norwich to Crewe. IAIN SCOTCHMAN

services, and would have been so treated in a country that had such lesser lines electrified and had different criteria for railway accountancy.

It is true that reliability declined in later years, but this could have been addressed had there been the will and organisational framework to do so. Over 15 years after the first Class 87 export, American diesels are still working freight trains on British electrified main lines, with British-built electrics having spent their premature retirement on the coast of the Black Sea – one of the many achievements of British railway privatisation?

It is more fitting to remember the class in full flow on a down Scottish express of the mid-1970s, conquering Shap and Beattock, sweeping past with no fuss and no more noise from the locomotive than a purposeful hum.

As a dramatic finale, Table 8 shows yet another fine effort by No. 87001, recorded by Alan Varley in 1986 with a diverted Glasgow to Euston service that had regained the WCML at Rugby. Mr Varley is convinced that *Royal Scot* had an under-reading speedometer for much of its existence, and the combination of this and some urgent driving served to emphasise the capabilities of Class 87s by achieving some astoundingly fast running.

On another run that month, Alan once again experienced an astonishing performance with this locomotive, recording speeds as high as 118mph at Wamphray and 117mph on the level to Lancaster.

I would not deny there is a frisson of guilty excitement attached to recounting such outrageous speeds. Pausing to consider them more seriously, they occurred in the intervening years between the then recent abandonment of the Advanced Passenger Train tilting train programme and the future privatised West Coast modernisation, which was also based on tilt. A more effective response at that stage might have been 125mph electric locomotives working trains of different lengths, according to daily and seasonal market requirements, over improved infrastructure targeted at low-speed locations and four-tracking to address capacity at critical freight/passenger interfaces. ■

TABLE 7: GRANTHAM TO YORK

Loco 87101
Vehicles/tare/gross tonnes 13/479/505
Train 07.30 KX-Lackenby
Date November 18, 1995
Recorder/Position J Hartill 5th of 14

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	GRANTHAM d	0	0 00	
4.23	Barkston South Jct	4	4 31	92
9.89	Claypole		7 58	100
14.70	NEWARK N	11	10 52	99
20.86	Carlton		14 37	98
26.55	Tuxford MP 132		18 06	97
29.05	Askham TNP		19 38	98
33.16	RETFORD	22	22 09	99
38.53	Ranskill		25 24	99
45.91	Rossington		29 54	99
50.54	DONCASTER	32	32 42	98
54.84	Shaftholme Jct	36	35 19	99
60.44	Balne		38 43	99
63.80	Temple Hirst Jct	43	40 46	98
69.55	Hambleton North Jct		44 19	95
74.60	Ryther V South		47 26	99
77.55	Colton Jct	54	49 14	98
81.55	Dringhouses Jct		52 00	70
83.05	YORK a	60	56 02	

TABLE 8: RUGBY (PASS) TO EUSTON

Loco 87001
Vehicles/tare/gross tonnes 10/347/365
Train 13.10 Glasgow C-Euston
Date September 22, 1986
Recorder/Position A Varley 3/11

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	Ave MPH
0.00	RUGBY pass	0	0 00	66/50tsr
5.71	Kilsby TSP		4 16	110
7.25	Welton		5 06	115
10.50	MP 72		6 44	121
12.85	Weedon	8	8 08	85/82½
15.50	Heyford		9 59	93½
18.04	Banbury Lane		11 30	105/104
19.65	Blisworth		12 24	108
25.78	Hanslope Jct.	14½	15 41	114/120
27.78	Castlethorpe	[4]	16 42	118/114
30.11	Wolverton		17 56	116
32.70	MILTON KEYNES C a		19 17	108½
35.88	Bletchley	24	20 58	116
38.53	MP 44		22 19	118½/94
42.36	Leighton Buzzard		24 34	98
45.25	Ledburn Jct.		26 20	100/97
46.41	Cheddington		27 03	104/110
50.83	Tring	33	29 32	107/98
54.61	Berkhamsted		31 47	100
58.04	Hemel Hempstead		33 46	121
59.44	Apsley		34 29	117/118½
61.58	King's Langley		35 34	117½/119
63.03	MP 19½		36 19	110/20tsr
65.10	WATFORD JCT a	42	**40 38**	
1.43	Bushey		2 00	75½
6.04	Harrow and W.	[4]	4 53	104
9.38	Wembley Central		6 38	119
12.04	Willesden 12		8 03	98
14.39	Kilburn H R		9 36	88
16.43	MP 1		11 51	-/sig stop 88s
17.38	EUSTON Pfm 12 a	20½	17 19	

Notes: Schedule is an undiverted equivalent for comparison purposes; [4]=4min recovery time.

"Another run experienced an astonishing performance, recording speeds as high as 118mph at Wamphray and 117mph on the level to Lancaster"

Farewell to 'Kings', reprised

Sixty years ago in April 1963, and four months after the class had been withdrawn, there was to be one last 'King'-hauled railtour until the main line preservation era began in the 1970s. John Heaton FCILT describes the 'readeption' of *King Henry VI*.

WHEN the last of Collett's 1927 'King' Class 4-6-0s was withdrawn in December 1962, the vast majority of railway followers thought they would never see their like again powering along the routes of the former Great Western Railway.

But the very next passenger run by a 'King' was to be only a few months away, as one of the final batch of withdrawals – No. 6018 *King Henry VI* – was surprisingly restored to full running order to work a Stephenson Locomotive Society charter from Birmingham Snow Hill to Swindon Works via its former racing ground through Bicester then Greenford, Southall and the Bristol main line.

The loco was removed from store at Old Oak Common in March 1963 and sent to Swindon Works for repairs and a repaint, emerging on April 18 and heading for Wolverhampton Stafford Road shed, then Tyseley the next day. Unbeknown to many, the 'King' worked a six-coach running-in turn on April 22-25, the 6.05pm Birmingham to Leamington local, while on the 26th it had a boiler wash and inspection ready for the tour.

Economy might have suggested the special could have delivered No. 6018 to its probable scrapyard at the Works, with the return trip worked by a newly-built D1000 'Western' Class diesel straight off the production line. But fortunately this was not an option, as Swindon was producing only one D1000 Class loco a month at that time, so No. 6018 duly worked the return leg of the 'Farewell to the Kings' railtour all the way back to the capital of the Midlands via Oxford – culminating in a final and tumultuous ascent of the 1-in-103/110 Hatton Bank.

The trip was scheduled for a Sunday, so met more than its fair share of engineering work, including single line working from Claydon to Banbury Ironstone Siding on both the out and back legs. A cynic might suggest that today, 60 years on, this sort of project would have resulted in a full week's blockade and no special train.

A good load

Support for the special justified a proper king-sized load of 12 coaches, almost 400 tons tare, 440 tons gross, with Tyseley driver A Slater and fireman R S Potts rostered for the full trip. There are entries in the Railway Performance Society electronic archive from Mark Warburton and David Houston, but I have used the log of David Adams in the table.

The departure from Birmingham met with a dead stand for signals before Hatton but, once on the way, the 'King' passed Warwick at 68mph. After the Leamington call, there was the single line working approaching Banbury, eventually passed at 50mph.

After taking the Chiltern line from Aynho Junction, driver Slater gave the loco its head down the 1-in-200 gradient, passing Bicester at 81mph and recording 88mph on the level at Blackthorn. I understand that some recorders might have been urging on their stopwatches to greater achievements, but Mark Warburton agreed the 88mph figure. The 1-in-200 uphill stretch to Brill tunnel brought speed down to 76mph.

Ashendon Junction was taken at 54mph, followed by a maximum of 69mph before a water stop intervened at High Wycombe, Denham troughs being out of action. Would this put paid to any more high speed running before London? Certainly not. The downhill 1-in-175 through Denham Golf Club was too good a final opportunity to miss. Driver Slater eventually eased his 'King' after touching a magnificent 90mph, as shown in the accompanying table.

The Greenford to Southall curve was taken at a respectful 15mph before the 650+ people on the train climbed down ladders to descend on the locoshed. After they had rejoined, there was what was then believed to be a last chance to savour a 'King' on Brunel's 'billiard table'.

What special reception was to be given by the signalling staff? Well, it was Sunday and Mark Warburton's log describes No. 6018's progress: Relief line then signals to main line at Slough, signals to the relief and back to the main line at Reading, back to the relief at Pangbourne reaching 69mph before returning and main line before Didcot.

I think the tour participants might have been browned-off by then and driver Slater probably read the runes. He was signal checked to 49mph at Steventon and contented himself with a maximum of 66mph before reaching Swindon.

David Adams knew fireman Potts and

'King' No. 6018 at Southall on April 28, 1963 heading the SLS's 'Farewell to the Kings' railtour some four months after the class had been officially withdrawn.





After the Southall stop, No. 6018 *King Henry VI* is seen getting underway again near Hayes & Harlington, taking the tour west towards Swindon. HAWTHORNE COLLECTION

inspector Rainbow well enough to share a post-retirement drink and relates that on the way home fireman Potts was driving with inspector Rainbow on the shovel. Dick Potts accelerated to 82mph by Uffington before being put through the platform line at Challow and stopped to challenge a wrong routing at Oxford. Not up to Great Western standards there then? Two temporary speed restrictions, one to 10mph and another to 18mph, and then the single line working did not prevent a final dash to 79mph down the 1-in-175 to Fosse Road.

With driver Slater back at the controls, Warwick was taken, signal-checked, at 38mph. The loco was accelerating hard to 48mph, at what is believed to have been 40% cut-off, before the bank began to bite. Nevertheless, the summit was taken at no less than 42mph, a fitting end to a memorable chapter in British locomotive history.

Had this episode represented an example of history repeating itself? King Henry VI was monarch from 1422-1461, having become king at the age of nine months, subsequently suffering setbacks in France and fighting the War of the Roses, all while enduring bouts of mental illness. He was supplanted by Edward IV but reinstated or, as the now archaic official term had it, 'readepted' in 1470 – circumstances which his eponymous steam loco was to mimic by its 1962 withdrawal and 1963 readeption. ■

"Unbeknown to many, the 'King' worked a six-coach running-in turn, the 6.05pm Birmingham to Leamington local"



The last British Railways 'King' No. 6018 *King Henry VI* brings the tour into Swindon, its passengers then having 2½ hours to look round the Works before the return trip to Birmingham. J D MILLS

LEAMINGTON SPA (DEPART) TO GREENFORD (PASS)

Vehicles/tare/gross tons	12/391/440
Train	09.15 Birmingham S H-Swindon Works
Tyseley crew	Driver A Slater, Fireman R S Potts
Date	April 28, 1963
Recorder	D Adams

Miles	Timing Point	M S	MPH
0.00	LEAMINGTON SPA d	0 00	
3.77	Fosse Road	6 18	51/50
6.16	Southam Road	9 09	51½/65
11.10	Fenny Compton	14 05	57½
16.18	Cropredy	Single Line Working	
19.90	BANBURY	36 36	48
22.08	Astrop Sdg	38 53	62½
25.05	Aynho Jct	41 36	67/57½
30.14	Ardley	46 36	63½
33.95	BICESTER	49 38	82½/88
39.99	Brill & Ludgershall	53 52	80
43.42	Ashendon Jct	57 09	55
47.32	Haddenham	60 53	65½/69
52.67	PRINCES RISBOROUGH	65 55	59½/55½
55.85	Saunderton	59 10	61½
60.79	HIGH WYCOMBE a	81 38	Water Stop
60.79	d	88 44	
65.65	Beaconsfield	95 41	52
69.94	Gerrards Cross	99 40	77
72.55	Denham	101 33	90
77.30	Northolt E Jct	105 06	70
79.82	GREENFORD pass	108 22	10

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STAR LETTER

The 50 loco challenge



I READ your loco challenge article (March issue) with fond memories of the time I lived in Nuneaton in the early 1970s. Things were much more difficult trying to see all of the traffic through the station then.

Firstly, loco-spotters were banned from the platforms and, despite our attempts to sneak onto the platforms via the long-closed Weddington Terrace subway, we were always caught by a porter and escorted off the station. So, most people congregated on the Leicester Road bridge in all weathers, where most traffic, with the exception of movements in the Down Sidings, could be viewed.

To get the numbers of locos on the Nuneaton Avoider, however, avid eyes were needed to spot the semaphore signals being off, and then a quick bike ride to Oaston Road Crossing or Weddington Road bridge, depending on whether the train was up or down.

Back then there were plenty of locos: WCML electric Classes 81, 82, 85 and 86; an abundance of Class 25s with the local residents Nos. D7663, D7664 and D7665 always to be seen; Class 27 on the Hams Hall coal trains; Class 47s and Class 50 on the Rootes car trains and other Class 4 freights; Class 31s on the Whitemoor ballasts; Class 20s on the coal trains from Moria; Class 45s on many West/East freights and Saturday-only services to Paignton.

The weekends would see Class 24s and 40s on engineering trains originating from Crewe and the North West. Very occasionally a gem would appear, such as a Class 73 heading north to Crewe light engine, a Class 35 heading to Birmingham, and Class 37s based at Healey Mills collecting ballast from Judkins quarry.

Carl Phillips
By email

I WAS interested to read your article on the 50 Loco Challenge and would like to suggest that Reading West may possibly creep into the top six. Besides seeing the intermodals and cars for export which ply between Southampton, Oxford and the North, you can see all the aggregate trains which come off the Berks & Hants line, plus engineering trains to and from Eastleigh.

There is also an oil empties from Theale once a week, which comes up from South Wales via the B&H and goes back Didcot/Swindon. I also believe some of the aggregate trains which start from Bristol use the B&H.

In terms of tonnage/volume passing through it could possibly be No. 1! Not the best station to spot though – no refreshments and I don't think there are toilets either.

Richard Croucher
Reading

I USED to live next to the railway in Chinley in the early 1970s (alas too late for steam) and well remember the steady stream of freight heading down from Buxton day and night.

I thought I would take a quick look on Realtime Trains www.realtimetrains.co.uk to see how much traffic there is on that route now and was surprised to discover 48 in a 24-hour period on March 7.

With the triangle junction, the full volume can only be seen at Chapel-en-le-Frith or Peak Dale, but does this make it the busiest freight-only line in the country? Buxton still has a passenger service on the ex-LNWR route, though you can see both lines as one passes over the other at Chapel.

Dianne Turner
By email



Bears of the month

WE were very concerned to read about Hunslet's brush with high voltage electricity (December 2022 issue), but we are pleased he has found a good home at Soho Depot.

We went on holiday to Scotland in September with our mummy and daddy, which included a ride on the 'Jacobite' steam train to Mallaig. Our photo shows us cabbing the loco at Mallaig, it was a great day.

Our daddy is a guard at Great Central Railway. He has taken photos of the bears who sit out at Leicester North Station watching the trains come and go. There is Station Master Bear and wife, Fireman Bear, and Big Ted and friend in a pram.

It was also great to read about all the other railway bears. We do sometimes get to ride on Great Central's trains, and even trains at other railways.

Jane and Edward Bear.
Via Philip Thorpe

Regarding Island woes

PHIL Marsh's excellent article (November 2022 issue, which has just reached me in Thailand) reminds me of that saying relating to organising a drinking party in a brewery! What a way to run a railway, and what a complete shambles all the parties have made of this important historical line.

I have felt for years that the complete IoW railway system is so well suited to becoming a fully-fledged heritage railway in its own right. The Isle of Wight Steam Railway could be connected to the Island Line at the double track just north of Smallbrook Junction and steam trains could run between Wootton and Ryde Pier Head, with heritage DMUs running from the Pier Head to Shanklin to complete this island railway experience.

An added attraction could be a connecting bus service between Shanklin and Wootton with Southern Vectis open top buses in the summer months… what a wonderful day out that would make.

I accept this would take time and money but maybe, just maybe, all the powers that be could work together in this direction to ensure a guaranteed future for this wonderful unique island railway.

Roger Cook
By email

Going with the flow

AM I alone in thinking the FLOW bridge (March issue) to be the most stylish example of railway infrastructure seen in the UK for decades?

Its satisfying simplicity and elegant curves are in marked contrast to the ugly, lumpen structures foisted on us by Network Rail: grim steel fencing and forests of masts, poles and cameras at stations conspire to make rail travel as unwelcoming as possible; elephantine footbridges tower belligerently over the railway's neighbours; ludicrously complex disabled ramps remain unused because they are too long; vast grim acreages of grey concrete walls are soon disfigured by the moronic scrawls of graffiti vandals. NR's collective lack of sensitivity and imagination are turning the railways into the worst kind of dystopian landscape.

It doesn't have to be like this. Victorian engineers and architects were sufficiently well educated to understand that a practical structure can – indeed should – also be pleasing the eye. They designed stations, bridges and tunnel mouths that complemented the landscape to the extent that many were immortalised by artists. The 19th century railway companies sought out leading architects because they understood the power of imagery. Despite the 21st century being an even more image-conscious age, NR and the TOCs seem to have forgotten the value of great design.

The designers of this new bridge deserve our congratulations.

Stephen Spark
Balham

Revenue loss

REGARDING the letter from John Watmough (March issue) about the lack of revenue protection, I recently treated myself to an East Midlands Day Ranger and, of the six rail journeys made, only on one was I asked to produce my ticket.

The trip took me to Nuneaton and from there I decided on a further leg to Crewe. The direct route is not included in the above ticket, although available from Derby. My conscience got the better of me and I purchased the required single fare – but needless to say, no check was carried out between Nuneaton and Crewe, so I might well have got away with it!

As the above correspondent indicates, we are constantly told of shortfalls in revenue, yet the TOCs seem reluctant to tackle the problem at its very root.

David Dunkerley
Loughborough

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MEETINGS

COMPILED BY JON LONGMAN

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

Bradford Railway Circle. Bradford Mechanics' Institute Library, 76 Kirkgate, Bradford BD1 1SZ. 14.00. 'A History of Low Moor MPD': Granville Dobson.
Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'Northern Rail West of the Pennines': Steve Armitage. Further details on www.penninerailwaysociety.com.
Railway Correspondence & Travel Society (RCTS) (Furness, Lakes & Lune branch). Station Hotel, Carnforth. 19.30. 'Railways of Warwickshire': Anthony Hicks.
RCTS (Merseyside, Chester and North Wales branch). Haig House Social Club, Woolton Road, Garston, Liverpool L19 5NQ. 13.30. 'The Superb Years – the 1950s and 60s': John Sloane. Contact: Alan Turton 01606 854227 or Merseyside@rcts.org.uk

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Great Central Railway Society (Sheffield branch). Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP. 19.30. 'The Railways of Mansfield': Bill Taylor.
Lutterworth Railway Society. Lutterworth Bowls Club, off Coventry Road, Lutterworth LE15 4RB. 19.30. 'The Unlikeliest Source – Thomas the Tank Engine' and 'On a Wing and a Prayer – The British Imperial Airship Scheme': Rudi Newman.
Norfolk Railway Society. United Reformed Church Hall, 40-42 Ipswich Road, Norwich NR4 6QR. 19.30. 'The Days of the Norwich Trams': Frances and Michael Holmes.
RCTS (Milton Keynes branch). The Quadrant (Network Rail building), Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1EN. 19.30. 'Nothing stays the same': Mike Corbett, retired Wolverton Works manager.

FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Kettering & District Locomotive Society. Cornmarket Hall, London Road, Kettering NN15 7QA. 19.45. 'Railways of Northamptonshire, Part VII – Industrial': Mick Dix.
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. Good Friday Railwayana and Miscellaneous Auction.

MONDAY, APRIL 10

Stephenson Locomotive Society (SLS). Lauriston Hotel, 15 South Crescent Road, Ardrossan KA22 8EA. 19.30. Centre annual meeting and members' night.

TUESDAY, APRIL 11

Great Western Society (Bristol group). Room 4, BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol BS34 7RF. 19.30. 'In Search of the Red Dragon': Colin Brading.
Locomotive Club of Great Britain (LCGB) (North London branch). Parish Room, St Michael's Church, Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HE. 14.00. 'On the Route of the East Coast Express': Richard Crane.
Pewsey Vale Railway Society. Woodborough Social Club, Smithy Lane, Woodborough SN9 5PL. 14.45. 'The Swanage Railway': Mike Wilmott.
RCTS (Cambridge branch). The Swift, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5HD. 19.30. 'Colchester in the Age of Steam': Dave Goodyear. Branch secretary: Tony Field. Contact: rctscambridge@gmail.com
RCTS (Croydon & South London). Small Hall, East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon CR0 5LP. 19.30. Branch annual meeting and members' images.
RCTS (East Midlands branch). Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham NG1 4EZ. 19.30. '30 Years on the Footplate': Lee Davies. Contact: branch secretary David Coxon 0115 941 7353.
The 8E Railway Association (Northwich branch). The Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich CW9 5RB. 19.45. www.8erailwayassociation.org.uk
Wells Railway Fraternity. Wells Town Hall, Wells, Somerset. 19.30. 'To North Wales for Steam (including the slate quarries)': Michael Clemens.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12

LCGB (Dorking branch). Friends Meeting House, Butter Hill, South Street, Dorking RH4 2LE. 19.30. 'The Birkenhead to Margate Route – Then and Now': Ken Owen.
North Yorkshire Moors Railway (York area group). St Lawrence's Church Hall, Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP.12.00. 'Sandtoft Trolleybus Museum': Chas Alan.
RCTS (Sheffield branch). Sheffield Scouts and Guides, 60-68 Trippet Lane, Sheffield S1 4EL. 19.30. '43 years on the railway': Robin Skinner.
SLS (South Lakeland branch). Abbot Hall Social Centre, Dowker's Lane, Kendal LA9 4DN. 19.30. TBA.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

Bath Railway Society. The Museum of Bath at Work, Julian Road, Bath BA1 2RH. 19.30. 'Woodhead: The Lost Railway': Stephen Gay.
Continental Railway Society. St Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ. 19.15. 'Best of New Zealand Steam and Lost Lines of Iberia – Digital film show': Nick Lera.
LCGB (North West branch). Red Lion Hotel, 9 Ash Brow, Newburgh, Wigan WN8 7NF. 19.30. TBA.
LCGB (St Albans branch). St Bartholomew's Church, 47 Vesta Avenue, St Albans, Herts AL1 2PE. 19.30. 'The Great Eastern Railway – Rarely Other Than Idiosyncratic': Ray Schofield.
Monmouthshire Railway Society. Lysaght Institute, Orb Drive, Newport NP19 0RA. 19.00. 'The West Country in 1965 (Derek Chaplin collection)': Peter Brabham.
Nuneaton Railway Circle. Chilvers Coton Conservative Club, Bridge Street, Coton, Nuneaton CV11 5UD. 19.45. 'The Railways of Worcestershire': Chris Wilkinson.
South East Essex Railway Society. Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 19.30. Test Track Night.
Shropshire Railway Society. Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Chester Street, Shrewsbury SY1 1NB. 19.00. TBA.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14

RCTS (Bristol group). St Teresa's Church Hall, 71 Gloucester Road, North Filton BS34 7PL. 19.30. 'East Coast Main Line – King's Cross to York': Stephen Gay.
SLS. Newport Community Hub, Union Street, Middlesbrough TS1 5NQ. 19.00. 'A Lifetime of Railway Discoveries': Michael Bunn (SNCF Society).
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. TBA.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15

North Yorkshire Moors Railway (York area group). St Lawrence's Church Hall, Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP. 10.00-16.00. Model railway show.
South East Essex Railway Society. Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 10.00. Formal opening by special guests John and June Jolly from Mangapps Railway Museum, Burnham-on-Crouch. (NB: This summer's SEERS Walk on July 18 will be along part of the aborted Northern Line extension).
SLS. Kidderminster Railway Museum, Severn Valley Railway station, Kidderminster DY10 1QX. TBA.
SLS. Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street Manchester M2 5NS. 14.00. 'High Over The Alps – Rhaetian Railway's World Heritage Line': Dr Michael Bailey.

MONDAY, APRIL 17,

Plymouth Railway Circle. St Edward's church hall, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4PG. 19.30. 'Okehampton to Torrington via Halwill: Bernard Mills.
RCTS (Merseyside, Chester and North Wales branch). Town Crier, junction of City Road and Station Road, Chester CH1 3AE (opposite station entrance). 19.30. 'Dorset and Somerset Steam': Michael Clemens.
Southern Electric Group (Sussex branch). Porter Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick BN42 4TE. 19.30. Annual meeting and 'A Further Selection of the late Mike Stringer's pictures': David Start.

TUESDAY, APRIL 18

Leicester Railway Society. Braunstone Civic Centre, 209 Kingsway, Leicester LE3 2PP. 14.00. 'The Miscellany of Original Slides in My Collection': Richard Binding.
RCTS (Humberside branch). The Black Beauty, Keddington Road, off Messingham Road, Scunthorpe DN17 2QH. 19.30. '55 Years of Railway Photography': Les Nixon.
RCTS (Thames Valley branch). Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN. 19.00. 'All Aboard the Pines Express – Part 2': Chris Youett.
SLS. Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham TS8 0TF. 14.00. 'Talking Railways – the NER and LNER': Colin Hatton.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group. The No.1, Station Approach, Cleethorpes DN35 8AX. 19.30. 'The Great Western Broad Gauge': Ken Grainger.
Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'Saxonia': Graham Lightfoot. Further details on website www.penninerailwaysociety.com.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20

Aln Valley Railway. Barter Books, The Old Station, Alnwick NE66 2NP. 19.30. 'Nostalgic Steam in the 1960s': Trevor Ermel and 'Tyneside Electrics': David Fraser.
Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts' Society. Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. 19.30. 'SER Main Line from Charing Cross to Dover': Tony Riley.
Lutterworth Railway Society. Lutterworth Bowls Club, off Coventry Road, Lutterworth LE15 4RB. 19.30. 'Hornby': Simon Kohler
Marlow & District Railway Society. Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End SL8 5SX. Also on Zoom for MDRS members. 19.30. 'The Route of the Master Cutler': Richard Crane. Visit www.mdrs.org.uk.
Norfolk Railway Society. United Reformed Church Hall, 40-42 Ipswich Road, Norwich NR4 6QR. 19.30. 'GER light railways': George Falkner.
Railways Remembered. The Memorial Hall, Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes DN35 8AH. 19.30. 'Bygone NE Lincs Transport' and book launch: Rob Foxon. Details: 0116 289 0531.
RCTS (Cheltenham branch). Victory Club, Burlington House, Lypiatt Road, Cheltenham GL50 2SY. 19.00. Branch annual meeting and members entertain.
RCTS (North East branch). Darlington Cricket Club, South Terrace, Feethams, Darlington DL1 1SG. 19.00. '12 Years of China Steam': Barry Burns.
RCTS (Surrey branch). Woking United Reformed Church, White Rose Lane, Woking GU22 7HA. 19.15. Branch meeting.
RCTS (West Riding branch). Saltaire Methodist Chapel, Saltaire Road, Shipley BD18 3HJ. 19.30. Branch annual meeting and members' presentations.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

Great Western Society (Taunton group). Village Hall, Stoke St Mary, Taunton, Somerset TA3 5BY. 19.30. 'Fifty Years of Main Line Steam': Roger Marsh.
LCGB (Central London branch). Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA. 18.30. 'Spirit of Sandringham – an update on the new-build B17 project': Brian Hall.
SLS. Newcastle Arts Centre, 67 Westgate Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 1SG. 19.30. 'NCB Backworth System 1965-1976 – Photographs by the late Alan Clothier now in the care of the SLS Newcastle Centre SLS': Malcolm Paul.
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. TBA.

MONDAY, APRIL 24

LCGB (Bedford branch). Weston Favell Parish Hall, Booth Lane South, Northampton NN3 3EP. 14.00-16.30. The Ashes Quiz v RCTS Northampton branch, hosted by Bryan Benford.
LCGB (Brighton branch). Brighton Model Railway Club Room, London Road Station, Shaftesbury Place, Brighton BN1 4QS. 19.30. 'Southern Push Pull!': Mike King.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25

RCTS (East Midlands branch). Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham NG1 4EZ. 19.30. 'GWR Scene 1970s to date': Richard Binding. Contact: branch secretary David Coxon 0115 941 7353.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26

RCTS (Chichester branch). Bassil Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7LG. 19.15. 'An Evening with My Father's (Derek Cross) Slides': David Cross.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

Nuneaton Railway Circle. Chilvers Coton Conservative Club, Bridge Street, Coton, Nuneaton CV11 5UD. 19.45. Annual meeting and 2023 photographic competition.
RCTS (South Essex branch). Shenfield Parish Hall, 60 Hutton Road, Shenfield CM15 8BL. 19.30. 'Baltic Coast Express – a pictorial journey through Germany and Poland to Finland': Peter Robins.
Shropshire Railway Society. Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Chester Street, Shrewsbury SY1 1NB. 19.00. Annual meeting and buffet.
South East Essex Railway Society. Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 20.00. Annual meeting.
Stevenage Locomotive Society. Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, Stevenage. 19.30. 'Irish Surprises': Colin Boocock.

FRIDAY, APRIL 28

Railway Club of the New Forest. Village Hall, Highwood Road, Brockenhurst. 19.30. Annual meeting and 'Where it all began – Southampton to Weybridge': John Goodrich.
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. Annual meeting.

MONDAY, MAY 1

Peak Rail Association (Sheffield branch). Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP. 19.30. 'A Cine Show from the Doug Copley and David Odd Collections'.

TUESDAY, MAY 2

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts' Society. Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. 19.30. 'Disused London Underground Stations': Nick Catford.
LCGB (Bedford branch). St John's Church Hall, St John's Street, Bedford MK42 0DL. 19.30. 'The Corris Railway Yesterday and Today': Chris Jones.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

Bradford Railway Circle. Bradford Mechanics' Institute Library, 76 Kirkgate, Bradford BD1 1SZ. 14.00. 'My Footplate Experiences': Granville Dobson.
Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'The Reunification Project of the Great Central': Tom Ingall. Further details on www.penninerailwaysociety.com.
Southern Electric Group (South Hants branch) & Light Rail Transit Association (Southern area). Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 19.30.'Live action from tramway DVD series featuring LRTA 2022 tour to Germany and Poland': Bob Hodges. (TBC).

THURSDAY, MAY 4

Bath Railway Society. The Museum of Bath at Work, Julian Road, Bath BA1 2RH. 19.30. 'Branch Lines of the Salisbury to Exeter Line': Stuart Isbister.
Great Central Railway Society (Sheffield branch). Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP. 19.30. 'The Hull & Barnsley Railway': John Law.
Lutterworth Railway Society. Lutterworth Bowls Club, off Coventry Road, Lutterworth LE15 4RB. 19.30. 'Northamptonshire Railways – Part Six': Robin Cullup.
RCTS (Milton Keynes branch). The Quadrant (Network Rail building), Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1EN. 19.30. 'Journey from King's Cross to York': Stephen Gay.
Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire branch) and Light Rail Transit Association (Southern Area). Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 19.30. 'Talyllyn Railway': Eric Nicholass.

FRIDAY, MAY 5

SLS. Newport Community Hub, Union Street, Middlesbrough TS1 5NQ. 19.00. Centre annual meeting and '30 Years on the Railway': Pete Myers.
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. TBA.

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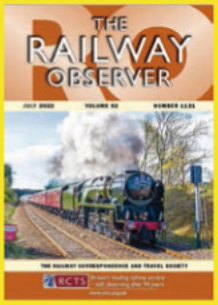
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FROM *THE RAILWAY MAGAZINE* ARCHIVES

100 YEARS AGO APRIL 1923

Day trips to France

BEGINNING March 15, the London-Boulogne excursions were established by the Southern Railway for the 1923 season. The trips operate daily, including Sundays, and the Third Class fare (return) is 23s 6d as compared with 29s 6d last year. The passenger leaves Victoria (SE & C) at 9.15am and arrives back at 10.40pm, having had over six hours in France. No passports are required.

LMS train acceleration

THE first issue of timetables covering the Western Division of the London Midland and Scottish Railway will become effective on April 2. Principal interest attaches to the improved and accelerated train services to be introduced, particularly those providing for trains between London and Manchester in 3hr 30min, London and Liverpool in 3hr 40min and London and Birkenhead in 4hr 5min. Several other trains are accelerated to less than four hours.

50 YEARS AGO APRIL 1973

Electrification proposed in BR expansion plan

PUBLIC comment in favour of rail expansion has led the British Railways Board to put forward ambitious proposals for stabilising the BR network at roughly its present size, while investing heavily in electrification.

At a presentation on January 22 to the Minister for Transport Industries, BRB put forward investment proposals which would generate substantial extra passenger and freight business during the next 10 years, and involve electrification of more than 1200 miles of main line.

Four main inter-city routes would be electrified at 25kV/50Hz: London to Edinburgh via the East Coast Main Line; London to Leeds via Nottingham and Sheffield; London to Swansea via Bristol and Cardiff; and York to Bristol via Birmingham.

In addition, there would be further electrification on the Southern Region at 750V dc third-rail to Weymouth, Salisbury, Uckfield, East Grinstead, and from Tonbridge to Hastings.

Marylebone to Aylesbury by both routes would also be third-rail electrified to be compatible with the Metropolitan Line of London Transport.

Extensions at 25kV would bring long-distance commuter services to both Oxford and Cambridge, while Freightliners to both Harwich and Felixstowe could be electrically hauled. One result of the programme would be to eliminate diesels from London termini, simplifying the development of 'air rights' over these potentially valuable sites.



50 YEARS AGO: Midland Main Line electrification was proposed by BR in 1973, but it is only now that it is being realised, and then only as far as Market Harborough. This is a view looking north at the recently electrified Kettering on July 2, 2021.
NIGEL THOMPSON (CC BY-SA 2.0)

20 YEARS AGO APRIL 2003

Trapped passengers smash windows on stricken Eurostar

PASSENGERS trapped on a stricken Eurostar for five-and-a-half hours became so desperate after the heating, lighting and air-conditioning systems failed that they began smashing some of the windows in an effort to get fresh air or get out of the train.

The incident occurred on February 7 when a Paris-bound Class 373 suffered a broken main air-brake pipe while traversing Nine Elms Viaduct, just a few minutes after leaving Waterloo.

In order to give engineers access to the underside of the train, the third-rail power supply was switched off, but the mechanics spent so long trying to fix the problem that the auxiliary battery power ran out, leaving the passengers with no power for heat, light, air-conditioning or public address systems. By then, they had also consumed all the food and drink on board.

During the incident, other Eurostar trains were diverted via Kensington Olympia, where they reversed.

SRA wants up to 200 CTRL domestic EMUs

THE SRA has invited tenders for a large fleet of dual-voltage electric multiple units to operate 140mph Kent domestic services over the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (now called HS1).

The new trains must be able to work over classic tracks as well, and must be equipped for extensive working in tunnels. Although the final number of vehicles has not yet been determined, the authority's tender notice specifies a figure of between 150 and 200.

An all-new design is expected and companies responding to the challenge are expected to include Bombardier, Alstom, CAF, Siemens and the Japanese train-builder Hitachi, which has been trying unsuccessfully to break into the UK passenger market for some years.

RCTS
Britain's leading Railway Society

The RCTS: then and now

FOUNDED in 1928, the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society harboured ambitions from the start to produce and create permanent records of the country's railways. A publications team was quickly assembled and books like *Locomotives of the GWR* (1933) and *The Locomotives of the LNER, 1923-1937* (1937) were produced and well received.

Titles such as this touched on an enormous topic of interest to enthusiasts, historians and modellers alike, and by 1954 it became clear that the LNER volume, good as it was, barely scratched the surface of the full history of a fleet from a range of constituent companies, and the post-grouping giant itself.

The decision was taken to develop a series comprising 10 volumes to give as full a history as the society's resources could muster. The opening of the first part said: "Within these 10 volumes an attempt will be made to describe in detail the history of the 10,000 or so locomotives owned at one time or another by the LNER and the work they have done, covering the full history of all engines, including details of origin, leading dimensions, dates of construction, rebuilding and withdrawal detail variations, classification, engine diagrams and allocation and work."

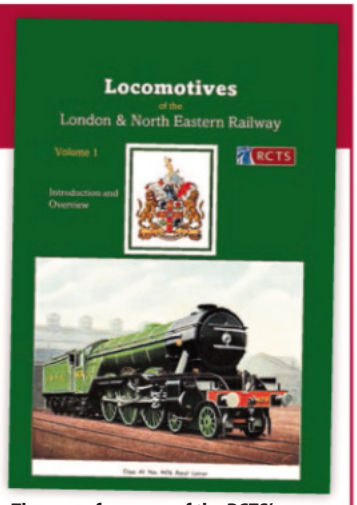
There was so much to be written and illustrated that the final product ran to no fewer than 19 volumes. So massive was the task undertaken by a large group of talented and committed volunteers that the first part was not ready until 1963, thanks to the likes of Eric Fry and Maurice Boddy, both happily still with us. Ken Cooke, chief mechanical & electrical engineer of the Eastern and North Eastern Regions of British Railways, was extremely helpful throughout, giving full access to records and other material.

Part 1 was entitled *The Preliminary Survey*, subsequent parts covering classes with common wheel arrangements, with tender and tank engines always recorded separately, then such as diesels, electrics, departmental engines, and powered railcars. No fewer than 3323 images illustrated the series. It was 1994 by the time the last volume came out, meaning that the series had taken longer than the life of the company itself!

Such an exhaustive and authoritative work naturally proved popular and is long out of print. Approaching the 2023 centenary of the LNER's formation, the RCTS decided to reissue the whole series and it has been reimagined by taking advantage of new opportunities that digital archiving now offers.

High resolution digital copies were taken of a set of original books held by the RCTS. It was decided that reprinting 19 parts was impractical. They are now combined into eight volumes and offered via a print-to-order service, enabling buyers to have a copy manufactured locally in their region of the world and delivered within days without the RCTS having to hold a stock.

In addition, the entire content can be viewed online free of charge at the RCTS digital archive: **archive.rcts.org.uk** The society is celebrating the centenary of the Grouping by making its definitive locomotive histories widely – and freely – available to new readers.



The cover from one of the RCTS's recently released LNER series.
JIM TUCKER/MATTHEW SHAW

Panorama



NIGHT *SCOTSMAN:* **Lights, reflections, shadows and steam all combine to create an effective study of 'A3' No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* as it prepares to depart from Bury Bolton Street, East Lancashire Railway, with an evening dining train on March 11.** ANDREW JEFFERY



SUNSET 'SYPHON': **With the final rays of the day providing the silhouette, Type No. 37422 trundles north at Little Fenton (near Sherburn-in-Elmet, North Yorkshire) with the 6Z21/15.52 Doncaster Up Decoy to York Holgate engineers' working on March 7.** CHRIS GEE



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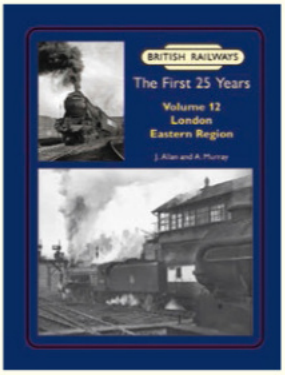


MAROONED AT TEBAY: Sandwiched between the sheep fields and the West Coast Main Line at the foot of the climb to Shap, Cumbria, Class 20 No. 20169 and '9F' No. 92219 have been in store and exposed to the elements since the end of 2020 on a Tebay industrial estate on the trackbed of the former line to Darlington via Barnard Castle – seen there on February 23. ANDREW ROGERS

WHITE OUT: A cold snap in March led to scenes like this at Doncaster on the 9th, as an unidentified DB Cargo Class 66 passes through light engine during a heavy sleet storm. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

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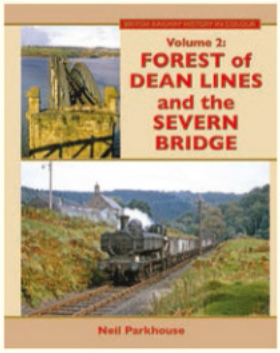
British Railways The First 25 Years – J. Allan & A. Murray
Volume 12: London Eastern Region

This volume covers the Eastern Region lines from the terminus stations at King's Cross, Liverpool Street and Marylebone out along the main lines as far New Barnet, Ilford and Neasden respectively, the Metropolitan Widened Lines between King's Cross and Moorgate and the North London Line from Hackney to Canonbury. It also includes the former Great Eastern Railway branches to North Woolwich, Chingford, Enfield Town, Ongar and Palace Gates, and the ex-Great Northern Railway branch to Alexandra Palace. We visit the three principal motive power depots serving the former Great Northern Railway lines, King's Cross 'Top Shed', Hornsey and Finsbury Park, the massive complex that was the Great Eastern's Stratford Shed and Works, and the Great Central shed at Neasden. We also take in the freight traffic around the marshalling yards of Ferme Park and Temple Mills. All three termini saw extensive commuter traffic with 0-6-2Ts of different designs employed on the services from King's Cross and Liverpool. The Great Eastern 'Jazz' was the most intensive steam-worked suburban operation in the world. The Epping to Ongar line saw ancient 2-4-2Ts operating a push-pull service until it was electrified in 1957. Electrification came to the suburban lines from Liverpool Street in several stages, beginning in 1949 and completed in 1960 when the 'Jazz' was replaced by electric units. A mix of DMUs and locomotive-hauled trains took over at King's Cross. Dieselisation of main line services on both the Great Eastern and Great Northern lines began in 1958 and was complete by the end of 1963, whereas those on the Great Central ended in 1966 with run-down ex LM&SR 4-6-0s. King's Cross saw four different Type '2' diesel classes before standardisation on the Brush design. By the late 1960s the ubiquitous Brush Type '4' had become the core express motive power, supported on the Great Eastern by the English Electric Type '3' and in second place behind the small but iconic 'Deltic' fleet on the East Coast main line.

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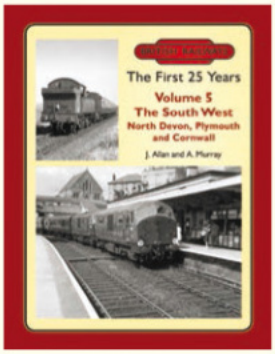
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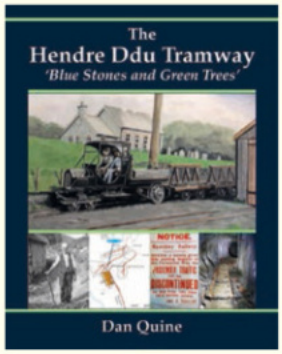
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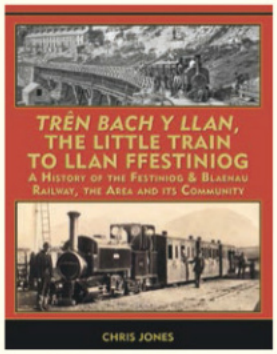
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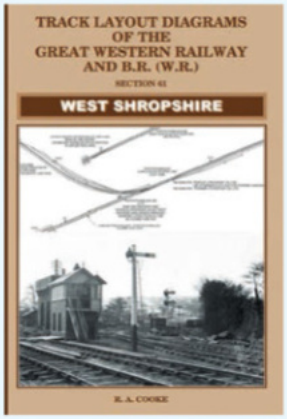
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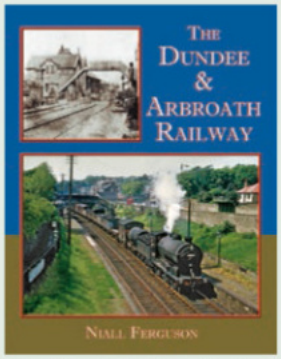


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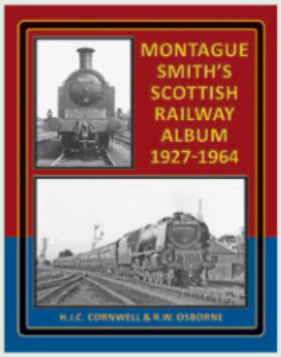




The Dundee & Arbroath Railway
Niall Ferguson

The Dundee & Arbroath Railway, which opened for traffic in 1836, was the second of no fewer than four early railways in Tayside, three of which were based in Dundee. Originally independent, it was acquired in turn by the Scottish North Eastern Railway and then the Caledonian Railway, before the opening of the Tay Bridge brought it into the joint ownership of the Caledonian Railway and the North British Railway. With the 1923 Grouping, the Dundee & Arbroath then became a joint LM&SR and L&NER line before eventually becoming part of British Railways (Scottish Region). The line remains open today as part of the East Coast Main Line between London and Aberdeen. This book is the product of over forty years of research and includes around 250 illustrations, many not previously published, with a colour section, maps and signalling diagrams. The genesis and construction of the original 5ft 6ins gauge line is described, followed by its subsequent history down to the present day.

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H.J.C. CORNWELL & R.W. OSBORNE

The late Montague Smith was a Scottish railway enthusiast who devoted much of his life to a study of the steam locomotive. His 'home territory' was in and around Glasgow and down the former Caledonian stretch of the West Coast Main Line as far as Beattock. In this book, we make our way from Glasgow Central to Symington, junction for the Peebles Branch on which 'Monty' took many photographs while holidaying in Biggar (the most important intermediate town on the branch) for the whole of August for many years. Often with a camera to hand, he took many photographs, not only of the locomotives but also of their crews and other railwaymen involved in the work of the branch. Most of the locomotives were of Caledonian Railway origin, McIntosh and Pickersgill 4-4-0s and 0-6-0s, but early LM&SR standard classes such as 'Compounds', '4F' 0-6-0s, '2P' 4-4-0s and Hughes 'Crab' class 2-6-0s also played their part, and there were also some former G&SWR Drummond 2-6-0s. However, larger and more modern engines such as parallel boiler 'Royal Scots' and 'Princess Royal' Class 'Pacifics', as well as streamlined and non streamlined 'Duchess' Class 'Pacifics', also feature in our journey from Glasgow to Symington. Day trips to Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth are also included and illustrate a mixture of former North British Railway and standard L&NER classes.

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TRACKRECORD

The Railway Magazine news digest

Because of bridge repair work between Rothley and Loughborough Central, weekends in February and March saw the Great Central Railway offer a rare chance to travel over the Mountsorrel branch with a DMU shuttle service from Leicester North. March 12 saw a two-car Class 101 alternating with single-car Derby Lightweight No. 79900, the former Test Car *Iris* being pictured at the Mountsorrel terminus, and all services also called at Nunkley Hill for visitors to the Mountsorrel and Rothley Community Heritage Centre. PAUL BICKERDYKE



P56 STEAM
'Saint' visits East Lancashire



P68 CLASSIC TRACTION
Glorious repaint completed



P80 TRACTION & STOCK
Colas Class 43 gets makeover

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SIDELINES

'No. 9' departure for Fife imminent

AT TIME of going to press, LNER 'A4' No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* was expected to be departing Bury Transport Museum after Easter for its new home at Balbuthie Open Farm near Kilconquhar, Fife. It will be the last chance to see the freshly painted Pacific in England for the foreseeable future.

Corwen terminus to officially open in June

THE Llangollen Railway's new Corwen terminus is due to formally open on June 1.

Subject to progress on the remaining construction, inspection and staff familiarisation tasks, some public trains may run in advance of this date. The station canopy was installed over January and February and the platform building is approaching completion. Working to Corwen will be under a 'one engine in steam' staff, with a recently installed groundframe for running round.

Signalling to allow trains to pass is a longer term goal. The ex-Weston Rhyn 'box is in place and looking great and is being fitted out internally, while a suitable lever frame has been sourced.

Blaenavon visitor

FURNESS No. 20 is to visit the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway. The 0-4-0 is booked to run on May 20/21, 27-29 (coal train weekend) and June 17/18 (model railway show). As part of the railway's 40th anniversary celebrations and to encourage people to see the historic loco, the line is offering free travel for children on all dates when No. 20 is operating.

Southern alliance

THE inaugural meeting for a newly formed group for heritage lines in the South of England was held on February 27 at Sheffield Park on the Bluebell Railway.

Dubbed 'The Southern Six', the group's aims promote cooperation between the lines to become a team. Due to meet every two months, the group comprises the Bluebell, Kent & East Sussex, Mid-Hants, Spa Valley, Isle of Wight and Swanage railways.

Described as a positive step forward in using the skills, communication and resources of all the railways, it will provide a strong platform for discussion and support while meeting latest demands.

Swanage Railway begins Wareham trial operation

Heritage DMUs to operate through service from Wareham to Swanage this year.

THE Swanage Railway is to operate a trial heritage diesel train service from the main line at Wareham into the heart of the Isle of Purbeck this season.

The trial service will operate on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from April 4 to September 10, with the first train departing Wareham at 11.19am and the last train leaving Swanage for Wareham at 4.20pm – giving visitors the opportunity to spend four hours in Swanage or Corfe Castle. The timetable is subject to change on special event days.

Fares for the service will also be available from main line train operating company South Western Railway (SWR), enabling passengers to add tickets for Corfe Castle and Swanage to their main line tickets.

The trains will be operated and staffed by West Coast Railways (WCR) on behalf of the Swanage Railway. The four trains a day service from Wareham will be formed of a three-car heritage Class 117 DMU, which can be boosted at peak times with the addition of a Class 121 Blubblecar, giving a total of 292 seats.

Rolling stock

Main line registered stock is required as a mile of the 11 mile journey will be on the Network Rail main line from Worgret Junction and directly into Wareham station.

Gavin Johns, chairman of the Swanage Railway Trust, said: "This trial train service is the result of working in partnership with the Government's Coastal Communities Fund, the Department of Transport, the former Purbeck District Council, Dorset Council, British Petroleum, Perenco, Network Rail and SWR.

"I would like to thank our stakeholders for their far-sighted investment of £5.5million to re-connect Swanage and Corfe Castle with the main line at Wareham, which included £1.8million from the Coastal Communities Fund so we could restore and upgrade our 1950s heritage diesel trains for running on the main line directly into Wareham station."

During the summer of 2017, the railway operated a 60 selected day trial train service from Wareham using hired-in diesel locomotives and carriages operated and staffed by WCR.

Delays

It had hoped to operate a second trial service, this time of 90 selected days, from Wareham during 2018 but this was delayed and then the pandemic hit with further delays caused its practical and economic effects.

Tickets for the trial heritage diesel service between Wareham, Corfe Castle and Swanage are available at swanagerailway.co.uk



PANNIER RELAUNCHED: On March 11, members of the Dean Forest Locomotive Group (DFLG) and Dean Forest Railway Society celebrated the return to service of the DFLG's WR '57XX' No. 9681. The group's GWR 2-6-2T No. 5541 was also in action on a mix of passenger and freight trains. Meanwhile, on March 10, WR 0-6-0PT No. 9682 was stripped down to the frames for the overhaul to commence in full. No. 9681 is seen approaching Parkend straight. The headboard reads 'Dean Forest Locomotive Group 9681 5541 9682'. OWEN HAYWARD

More visiting loco action confirmed for steam galas

■ Darmouth Steam Railway's GWR Small Prairie No. 4555 will be joining the line-up for the Severn Valley Railway's (SVR) April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala.

The SVR has also announced an additional running day on Thursday, April 13 for GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, which is visiting from Didcot Railway Centre. Operating excursion-style services hauling BR Mk 1 maroon carriages, No. 4079 will run three-round trips in advance of its star appearance at the gala.

Using a different headboard for each trip, the day loosely recreates three famous tours which took place in the 1960s – the 'Birkenhead Flyer', the 'Zulu' and the 'SLS special'.

■ The North Norfolk Railway has secured the North Tyneside Steam Railway's Bagnall No. 401 *Vulcan* as a second visiting loco for its April 14-16 Spring Steam Gala.

The former Steel Company of Wales 0-6-0ST will provide a contrast to the line's other gala visitor, Swanage Railway-based Bulleid Pacific No. 34028 *Eddystone*.

■ GWR 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* is to visit the West Somerset Railway for the line's April 28-May 1 Spring Steam Gala. It will operate alongside previously announced No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor*, which is visiting from the Severn Valley for the season – plus the homefleet, including 'Manors' No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor* and No. 7828 *Odney Manor*, '5101' Large Prairie No. 5199 and WSR Mogul No. 9351

Brake van rides will be available on the demonstration goods train with tickets offered first-come, first-served.

Visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk to pre-book tickets at a discounted advance rate and to access the Kids for a Quid offer.

■ The Great Western Society's GWR 4-6-0 No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* is to star in the Mid-Hants Railway's April 29-May 1 Spring Steam Gala. Resident performers are set to include '7F' 2-8-0 No. 53808, Urie 'S15' 4-6-0 No. 506 and BR '2MT' 2-6-2T No. 41312.

Other attractions will include behind the scene tours of Ropley workshops, driver experiences with Peckett 0-4-0ST *Kilmersdon* at Ropley yard and steam crane demonstration at Ropley.

A limited number of rides will also be available on the Goods Train in the line's SR Queen Mary brake van.

Visit https://watercressline.co.uk for details.

■ WR 0-6-0PT No. 9466 is to visit the Epping Ongar Railway for the June 23-25 steam gala.

It will be in operation alongside the resident fleet, including fellow Western locos No. 4953 Pitchford Hall and 2-6-2T No. 5521, carrying London Transport livery as No. L150.



'SCOTSMAN' AND 'SAINT' HAULAGE: The East Lancashire Railway had two high-profile steam locos in action in March. Didcot Railway Centre-based GWR 'Saint' 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* is pictured hauling the 11.48 ex-Bury at Ewood Bridge on Saturday, March 10.

Subject to availability, No. 2999 is due to operate on April 5-10 and 12-16. Making its first heritage line visit of its centenary year, National Collection 'A3' No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* is seen working the 15.00 ex-Bury on Burrs Bank on March 10.

Scotsman is booked to be at the National Railway Museum, York from April 1-23. While tickets are free, timed slots to see the iconic loco must be booked in advance online at www.railwaymuseum.org.uk.

BOTH PHOTOS: KEVIN WHITEHURST





LAST LOOK AT NENE VALLEY'S GERMAN TANK: Deutsches Reichsbahn Class 64 2-6-2T No. 64.305 began its journey 'home' to Germany on March 18 following its sale by the Nene Valley Railway (NVR) to road/rail company Integro Verkehr GmbH. Withdrawn in 1972, it was bought by a group of Severn Valley Railway members, arriving at Bridgnorth in 1974, but it proved to be too large.

Purchased by NVR supporter Richard Hurlock, it arrived at Wansford in 1977, before being sold to the NVR in 1985. Taken out of traffic in 1987, it has since been stored awaiting its turn in the overhaul queue. In 1988, the loco's air pump was loaned to Flying Scotsman Services to enable No. 4472 to haul air braked stock in Australia in 1989-90.

The new owners of the former Deutsche Bundesbahn (German Federal Railway) loco intend to return it to action. No. 64.305 is pictured at Wansford on March 8. GARETH EVANS

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Moors introduces annual pass

THE North Yorkshire Moors Railway has introduced what it calls a 'new two-tiered ticketing system' for its 2023 operating season, which will see the introduction of a 12-month annual pass.

Visitors will be able to pay £40 and visit as many times as they like, for up to 12 months, on standard timetable services only.

The NYMR will remove child and family fares and peak/off-peak pricing, replacing them with two adult fares – a headline fare for £40, valid for 12 months along the full length of the line, and a single-use shorter journeys ticket for £15. Children (aged 15 and below) will travel free at all times.

Laura Strangeway, director of corporate services at NYMR said: "We have listened to our visitors and simplified the offering with the view to providing better value for money.

"Not only will more people be able to access and use the railway, we are encouraging our visitors to Gift Aid at no extra cost to help relieve some of the pressures from our day-to-day operation."

LMS 'Patriot' parts tested

AFTER a period of strip down and assessment of the frames and components of No. 5551 *The Unknown Warrior*, completion of the first phase of the MPI (Magnetic Particle Inspection) testing required on chassis parts for quality reasons has taken place.

This is an important step for certification for the new-build 4-6-0 – around 50 components have been tested. The results are being assessed with the help of the loco's certification body, Ricardo.

Preparatory work for weld repairs on the chassis frames has begun. The middle cylinder has been refitted. The outside cylinders have been delivered back to West Shed following the modification and repair work.

The new driving wheel castings have undergone finishing and inspection work at William Cook Cast Products. Reassembly of the wheelsets is then due to commence.

A new tender tank has also been progressing. A review has confirmed that a modification to the original Fowler design will be necessary to provide sufficient water capacity to meet present-day requirements and to house main line control and air brake equipment.

DIARY

Until Apr 6, 11-28 South Devon Railway: Heritage Steam Train Experiences
March 24-26 Swanage: Railway: Spring Steam Gala
March 25-26 Churnet Valley Railway: Open Weekend and Wedding Fair
March 25-26 Ribble Steam Railway: Spring Steam Gala
March 27: North Yorkshire Moors Railway: Opening day
Apr 1-Oct 29 Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway: Daily steam
Apr 1-2 Severn Valley Railway: Open House Weekend
Apr 1-2, 4-6, 8-9, 11-13, 15-16, 22-23, 29 Spa Valley Railway: Heritage Trains
Apr 2 East Anglian Railway Museum: Steam Day
Apr 4-13 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: Great Railway Easter Hunt
Apr 5-10, 12-16 East Lancashire Railway: Ride with the Lady of Legend (2999)
Apr 6-7, 9-10 Helston Railway: Opening Weekend
Apr 6 East Lancashire Railway: Once Upon a Crime
Apr 6 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: Breakfast with Easter Bunny
Apr 7-10 Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway: Easter Steam Trains
Apr 7-10 Churnet Valley Railway: Mad Hatter's Tea Party
Apr 7-10 Epping Ongar Railway: Easter Egg Hunt
Apr 7-10 Great Central Railway: Easter Vintage Festival
Apr 7-10 Gwili Railway: 2023 opening weekend
Apr 7-10 Midland Railway Butterley: Easter Egg Trail
Apr 7-10 North Norfolk Railway: Easter Weekend Specials
Apr 8-9 Mid-Suffolk Railway: Easter Steam Up
Apr 8-10 Middleton Railway: Easter Weekend Specials
Apr 8-10 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway: Easter Weekend Running
Apr 9-10 Bodmin Railway: Easter Eggspress Trains!
Apr 9-10 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: Dinosaur Experiences
Apr 12-14 Great Central Railway: Easter Animal Fun
Apr 14 Epping Ongar Railway: Kids for a Quid
Apr 14-16 North Norfolk Railway: Spring Steam Gala
Apr 14-16 Severn Valley Railway: Spring Steam Gala
Apr 15-18 Isle of Man railways: Rush Hour on the Railways
Apr 16 East Anglian Railway Museum: Steam Day
Apr 21-23 Bluebell Railway: Branch Line Gala Weekend
Apr 22-23 Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway: Cambrian Weekend
Apr 23 Middleton Railway: Steam Running Day
Apr 29-30 South Devon Railway: Family Fun Days
Apr 29 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: A Taste of Faulty Towers
Apr 29 Middleton Railway: Teddy Bears' Specials
Apr 29-May 1 North Norfolk Railway: Dad's Army Live
Apr 29-30 Spa Valley Railway: See Bluey!
Apr 29-May 1 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: Real Ale Festival
Apr 29-May 1 Midland Railway Butterley: Victorian Train Weekend
Apr 30-May 1 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway: Trains Running
Apr 30-May 1 Helston Railway: Teddy Bears' Picnic

SIDELINES

Foxfield colliery grant

THE Foxfield Railway has been awarded £9500 by the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to improve its offer at the historic Foxfield Colliery.

The Staffordshire heritage line has been awarded funding as part of AIM's New Stories: New Audiences scheme to enable small museums to develop and broaden their offer to new and non-traditional audiences.

New displays and interpretation panels will be produced to tell the story of Foxfield Colliery and in particular the lives of women, children and animals who worked in coal mines. The railway will also create an education pack and audio-visual presentation telling the story of the colliery, as well as improving the presentation of the historic colliery buildings.

Station tenancy

CAMBRIAN Heritage Railways (CHR) has secured a tenancy for the whole of the ground floor at Oswestry station, following negotiations with Shropshire Council, which owns the historic building that was home to the headquarters of the pre-Grouping Cambrian Railways Company. This is an interim position and further negotiations are due to take place to secure the future of the building in the best interests of CHR over the coming months. The tenancy means there will be no disruption to CHR's 2023 running season, which begins on April 7. Visit cambrianrailways.com/chr/tickets/ for details.

New GM appointed

GEORGE Saville joined the Epping Ongar Railway (EOR) as general manager (GM) on February 27, on an initial interim contract. Roger Wright, EOR managing director, said: "We are delighted to have George join us at short notice, and look forward to him helping us further develop one of Essex's major leisure destinations. We would like to thank Dean Walton, our previous GM for all the hard work he has put into the railway to help us get to where we are today."

Doon Valley Railway SOS to buy site

THE Ayrshire Railway Preservation Group (ARPG) which operates the Doon Valley Railway has initiated a crowd funding campaign to save the line after the owner of many of the buildings leased by the ARPG announced an intention to sell them. ARPG must raise £250,000 by July 31, 2023 in order to purchase the gift shop, ticket office, toilets, exhibition room, volunteer rest room and store, cafe, museum and the associated grounds to these areas. By March 16, personal donations had reached £17,095. Grant funding is being pursued by the fundraising team. Visit doonvalleyrailway.co.uk for details of how you can help.

Milestone reached for Gwendraeth Valley

Revivalists of historic route forge ahead after obtaining lease from Network Rail.

THE West Wales county of Carmarthenshire is set to be home to three heritage railways in due course with the Gwendraeth Valley Railway complementing the Gwili and Llanelli & Mynyndd Mawr railways.

The revival of the surviving section of the old Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway is now underway after Network Rail granted a lease to the Gwendraeth Valley Railway Society (GVRS).

The route is distinctive for having a restricted loading gauge, necessitating low-height rolling stock – a challenge the GVRS has plans to overcome. The infrastructure is a reminder that before becoming a railway in the mid-1860s, the route was originally a canal dating back to the 1760s – hence the long flat sections, short steep gradients and low canal bridges. Motive power in the early years included a pair of Double Fairlies – a boiler from which survives after being used as a drainage pipe.

Colonel Stephens was involved with the original railway as a consultant in 1908, which saw the unofficial carriage of passengers legalised after obtaining two Light Railway Orders, in 1909 and 1911. The Colonel also supervised reconstruction and re-equipment over the years up to 1913, after which he had no further connection.

Absorbed by the GWR in 1922, the railway became part of BR in 1948. The last train ran in 1996.

Stuart Thomas, GVRS chairman, told *The RM*: "Getting the lease at the tail end of last year was a milestone – we've been working on it for 15 years.

"Our primary focus is on drainage and inspecting culverts. The route has been doing its best to turn itself back into a canal. Understanding the drainage is crucial to its future successful operation. We have made a good start.

"In the coming months, we will work on the main station sites at Pontyates and Pontyberem. They have got level crossings and we will be refurbishing the gates.

Restoration

"From a community perspective, those sites are focal points. We would like to reintroduce Colonel Stephens style stations – including wooden-framed, corrugated iron clad buildings at these locations."

The GVRS has 550 metres of shared boundary with Network Rail alongside the South Wales Main Line – fencing that is a condition of the lease. The main line connection has been removed. Due to the stock being height restricted, it has been decided to isolate from the national network.

It is also hoped to acquire the surviving corrugated extension section of the former Kidwelly goods shed – the original Brunel part having been demolished. The building could become a museum at what will ultimately be the terminus.

"We plan to introduce the UK's first velorail – but clearly, not when trains are running," explained Mr Thomas.

"Heavy engineering would not have been needed for velorail. It was originally intended to buy velorail bikes manufactured in France. Since Brexit, it has been decided it will be more cost effective and simpler to build them in-house based on off the shelf track maintenance units integrated with bicycle parts. Furthermore, Continental units are not equipped with failsafe brakes required in the UK."

It is also planned to open a visitor centre at Pontyates. A former lifeboat shed has generously been donated by the Burry Port RNLI, which will be ideal to provide covered accommodation for two Class 08 diesels at Pontyates.

Stock

Rolling stock acquired for GVRS use includes three locos which once operated on the route – Class 08s No. 08994 *Gwendraeth* and No. 08995 *Kidwelly*, along with Class 03 No. 03141.

Although not open to the public, rolling stock is mostly stored at the old coal washery site at Coedbach, east of Kidwelly.

Mr Thomas continued: "For the heritage train, we are looking at typical low height carriages – but for the core regular service we have acquired six BR Mk.1 GUVs (General Utility Vans). They are narrower and lower than a standard Mk.1.

"We plan to convert them to heritage vehicles in due course. In this railway's best tradition, they will look different. They will have a slab sided appearance which will be a nod to the Metropolitan Railway's rigid eight-wheeler carriages which Colnel Stephens brought to the line. "We have got a route that is nine miles of linear track – there are no surviving buildings – so the GUVs will initially be used as works/stores, then converted to carriages."

The only surviving original steam loco is Avonside 0-6-0ST *Pontyberem*. Stored at a private site in Barry, the boiler is in good order, while most of superstructure has been restored, including the cab, bunker and saddle tank. Slow progress is being made – the current focus being on getting the railway reopened.

The vision also includes a path for walkers and cyclists.

Mr Thomas said: "An advantage of the route is that it was not built like a traditional rail corridor – it was 100ft wide, comprising a canal basin in the middle and then two embankments either side. Generally, one of the embankments carries the railway – the track drops into the basin to get under bridges. The old basin not in railway use will provide a nine-mile wetland habitat corridor."



ANNIVERSARY YEAR: The Dartmouth Steam Railway is celebrating 50 years of operation this year on the Paignton to Kingswear line. The Dart Valley Railway now operates as the Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company. Managing director John Jones will be running a special private train this spring for invited guests. The company is aiming to contact the original employees from 1973 from the operating, maintenance and commercial departments to host them all at this very special anniversary. Carrying the appropriate Dart Valley Railway 50 headboard, GWR 2-8-0T No. 4277 is pictured climbing past Goodrington Sands with the 15.25 Paignton Queens Park to Kingswear on Tuesday, March 14. ROBERT SHERWOOD

East Lancs authorised for 60mph rolling stock tests

BUILDING on the success of Network Rail using the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) to test new laser technology to remove leaves on the line, the ELR has been granted a new licence which permits main line operators to test vehicles on its tracks at speeds of up to 60mph.

The safety certificate from the Office of Rail and Road replaces the previous limit of 25mph on the heritage network. The section of line that the licence is applicable for runs between Heywood, Bury and Summerseat, the remainder of the route remains at 25mph. The resulting commercial opportunities from operators and contractors is likely to provide a welcome boost to ELR finances.

The new safety certificate is valid until January 2028 and also permits filming at 60mph. During the Covid-19 lockdown, the railway was used to commission a new fleet of Linsinger Milling Machines. Next year, Network Rail is planning to use the ELR for the testing of new stoneblowers.

ELR head of operations, Jeff Armstrong, said: "This new licence eliminates any need to request temporary dispensations, streamlining the process of testing equipment for all."

Youngsters rally to support NVR after arson attack

TWO young Peterborough railway enthusiasts, Oliver Walker and Harry Cowley, both aged 12, have come to the aid of the Nene Valley Railway (NVR) following an arson attack on the line's Orton Mere signalbox.

Police have linked the blaze to a number of malicious fires in the Orton area of the city, overnight on March 12, which included cars and sheltered accommodation.

Left devastated by the attack on the 'box, which has rendered the structure out of use – although train services can still operate – the two friends who enjoy watching trains on the NVR now want to save the 'box. The boys, who each started web fundraising pages, had raised in excess of £10,000 by March 20. They plan to walk along the length of the track to raise cash.

Repairs are estimated to cost in the region of £20,000. Visit nvr.org.uk/ for details of how to donate.

RAIB examines platform incident

THE Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) is investigating after a passenger lost their footing and sustained what is described as 'a serious injury' while alighting from a train at Loughborough Central station on the Great Central Railway at around 11.49 hours on January 14, 2023.

The accident occurred just after the train had stopped and as the passenger was alighting from the leading door of the train's front coach. The train stopped in a position which meant that this door was adjacent to the ramped part of the platform, which is not intended for public use. The passenger lost their footing and sustained their injuries while they were stepping down from the carriage and onto the platform ramp.

RAIB will seek to identify the sequence of events which led to the accident. It will also consider the actions of those involved and anything which may have influenced them; the methods of working used when trains call at Loughborough Central, including the status of the platform train interface; and the arrangements in place to manage and control the risks associated with passengers boarding and alighting from trains on the GCR.

257 Squadron to go on tour

BULLEID Pacific No. 34072 *257 Squadron* is due to visit the Kent & East Sussex Railway from the beginning of April to the end of May. The Southern Locomotives Ltd owned 4-6-2 is then set to return to the Spa Valley for the line's June 17/18 Summer Steam Up event.

No. 34072 is then expected to run on the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) for the summer.

The ELR's own Bulleid, No. 34092 *City of Wells* is undergoing overhaul. Only minimal work is required for a return to service – including two patches to fit on the thermic syphons and the fitting of two replacement tubes that were removed for inspection. The work is due to cost £50,000.

It is hoped to have No. 34092 back in time for it to run with No. 34072 before *257 Squadron* returns south.



'Black Fives' Nos. 44871 and 45212 with the 13.05 Keighley-Oxenhope on Friday, March 10 – day two of the KWVR Winter Steam Gala. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ

'Slight gamble' pays off – and snow fails to derail Worth Valley steam spectacular

THE Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's March 9-12 steam gala attracted 4000 visitors over four days, with income up 15% on the 2022 event.

The event featured 10 locomotives, with three guest locos including LMS 'Jubilee' 4-6-0 No. 45690 *Leander* and 'Black Fives' Nos. 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier* and 44871.

Home fleet performers included: LMS 'Jubilee' No. 45596 *Bahamas*, LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212, L&Y Class 25 'Ironclad' No. 52044, BR '4MT' 4-6-0 No. 75078, LNWR 0-6-2T 'Coal Tank' No. 1054, Taff Vale '02' 0-6-2T No. 85 and BR '2MT' No. 78022.

Tom Marshall, KWVR marketing and communications coordinator, said: "We took a slight gamble putting on such a large-scale event with the cost of living challenges and our own increased costs, such as the price of coal. However, it paid off.

"Our steam gala was absolutely spectacular. Not only was the content of the event second to none, it felt like an absolute triumph in the face of adversity. The weather was very challenging, and every single last person working on the railway pulled together to give our visitors the best show possible; if ever there was a fantastic example of teamwork, this was it!"



Double 'Jubilees' climb out of Keighley with No. 45596 *Bahamas* and No. 45690 *Leander* on March 10. ROBERT FALCONER



'CASTLE' CELEBRATIONS KICK OFF: The first event to mark 100 years of GWR 'Castles' took place at Didcot Railway Centre on Saturday, March 4. Three resident members of the Western Region 4-6-0 were joined by No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and No. 7029 *Clun Castle,* which had arrived at the head of a railtour from Birmingham for Vintage Trains shareholders. No. 5043 had passed its main line trial just eight days before. In all, the railway centre welcomed 2176 visitors on site on March 4, including 300 passengers from the railtour. The 'Castle' centenary celebrations are due to continue at Tyseley on June 17/18 with a special open weekend, including main line trips. Pictured left to right at Didcot on March 4 are: No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle,* No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*, No. 5051 *Drysllwyn Castle* and No. 7029 *Clun Castle.* OWEN HAYWARD

Mid-Norfolk Railway makes urgent appeal for funds

Need for bridge and track repairs temporarily curtails public services.

THE Mid-Norfolk Railway has launched an emergency appeal, known as the 'Back on Track' emergency appeal, to help fund the restoration of Crownthorpe bridge and associated works to reopen the railway for train services.

The appeal is designed to raise £95,000 and will, together with money already committed by the railway, meet the costs of a staged reopening. Initially it is planned that trains will be run to Thuxton.

The track and beams at Crownthorpe bridge must be replaced immediately to allow running to Wymondham. Since the last six-month inspection, the rate of deterioration has accelerated to mean the bridge and associate track is unusable.

As a result of the recently announced management restructure, the MNR will also now be reorganised with a new business model implemented as a matter of urgency. The MNR said that it has become clear that like many other heritage railways, the revenue that the railway is raising does not allow it to keep pace with the deterioration of the permanent way.

Charlie Robinson, chairman of the MNR Preservation Trust, said: "Despite significant investment in the railway's infrastructure in recent years, the reality is that when the MNR started in the 1990s, it began with a railway line that had not been maintained since the 1960s.

Deterioration

"Significant progress in addressing this has previously been made, but the rate of deterioration is accelerating, and costs for long-term refurbishment have risen significantly. This means additional funding must be found just to maintain what we have. This appeal is designed to get the railway running again, as quickly as possible.



BR '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80078 is seen crossing Crownthorpe Bridge, which takes the railway over the B1135 road. IAN MCDONALD/MNR

"Every pound donated is a small step to ensuring the railway's future. I therefore appeal to everyone, be they from the region, or a rail enthusiast, or both, to give generously at this difficult time for all, to ensure the MNR has a future."

Visit www.midnorfolkrailway.co.uk for details of how to donate, and the donation packages available.

Despite previously announcing March 4 as the start of operations, some remedial work and inspections also need to be addressed. The consequence of which is that the reopening will be delayed until such time as the railway is confident that trains can be run. Initially the service will be a 12-mile round trip to Thuxton. New details of the services will be published in due course.

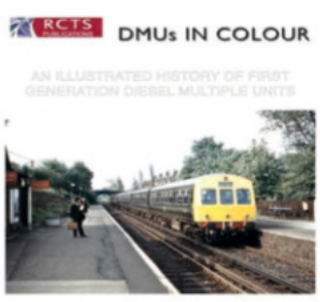
■ *This month's Heritage Wagons column has been held over to the next issue.*

RCTS Latest Book Titles



This book by the Society's late John Cowlishaw is the latest in the line of albums commemorating the photographic work of RCTS members. It was prepared in conjunction with John before his unfortunate death in early 2022 and covers his photographic journey from university life to working in the nuclear industry. His camera always accompanied him, and he recorded the railway scene wherever it crossed his path. The album is presented in landscape mode mostly with one picture per page, all in glorious colour, arranged in 20 themes from China Clay to Nuclear and from Scotland to Wrexham, where John spent most of his life. Each image is supported by informative captions with added anecdotes on the area/place recorded.

The book has 168 pages, 174 pictures, sized 300mm x 210mm and is Casebound. Priced at £19.95 plus £3.00 p/p. ISBN 978-0-9934908-8-0.



This is a comprehensively illustrated history of the first generation DMUs explaining the background behind their introduction, their workings and later modifications. Coverage is by class and the pictures show the many and varied liveries carried by the units and are accompanied by very detailed captions. The book contains 155 pictures in full cover and is a must for every DMU aficionado.

The book has 176 pages, sized 250mm x 210mm and is Casebound. Priced at £25.00 plus £3.00 p/p. ISBN 978-1-7391324-0-8



This is the first of what will be an annual publication using photographs taken by RCTS members to produce a photographic record of the railway for each year. The pictures are presented in full page, landscape format and have been chosen to provide a balance of geographical area and subject, whilst keeping to the need to select images which are both relevant and interesting and form an appropriate record of the year. The coverage with a mix of locomotives and multiple units, passenger and freight, extends from north to south and east to west on the national network of mainland UK, but excludes heritage or preserved lines.

The pictures are accompanied by informative captions describing the locomotives or units depicted, the service they were working and also highlights events during the year, such as the introduction of new trains and liveries. Arranged in date order to form a record of events over the twelve months.

The book has 164 pages,154 pictures, sized at 300mm x 210mm and is Casebound. Priced at £25.00 plus £3.00 p/p. ISBN 978-0-9934908-9-7

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SINGLE LINES

■ ANDREW Barclay 0-4-0ST *Colin Macandrew* (1219/1910) is to visit Beamish between April 1 and May 8. It has been loaned by the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway and its owner, Ryan Pope and will see regular service at the museum.

■ HUNSLET 0-6-0ST *Ring Haw* (1982/1940) is to have its chassis overhauled by the Flour Mill in the Forest of Dean, the owners have announced. The boiler will be dealt with at its home base of Weybourne, North Norfolk Railway.

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Half-term trains handled by industrial

Economical Barclay takes charge of low season Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway services

ANDREW Barclay 0-4-0ST *David* (2333/1953) hauled all trains on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway in February. This large (16in cylinder) loco is more than powerful enough in the early and late seasons for the traffic on offer, but is also very economical on coal, helping to keep costs down.

The railway has reported that its February school half-term trains were well supported with passenger numbers up roughly 10% compared to 2022.

In addition to *David,* the railway has two other operational industrials, with a further two under overhaul. Carron Ironworks No. 14 is a powerful Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T (1245/1911). Rescued from the famous Thomas Muir Scrapyard in Fife, the locomotive is a regular performer alongside former Preston Docks Bagnall 0-6-0ST *Princess* (2682/1942).

Hunslet 'Austerity' 0-6-0ST *Repulse* (3698/1950) is under overhaul at Haverthwaite. The inside of the frames has now been painted and work is proceeding on the back corners of the firebox, with stays currently being removed prior to further repairs being carried out. The locomotive was named after the Second World War battlecruiser sunk off Malaya in 1942.

Bagnall 0-6-0ST No. 403 *Victor* (2996/1951) is also receiving repairs. New tubes for the boiler have now been fitted by contractor by John Fowler & Co, while a new ashpan is being constructed. Much work has also been done to the frames around the firebox and footplate area, with much oil and coal dust being removed, which has then been thoroughly cleaned. *Victor* is expected to be completed in time for use in the summer season. This locomotive is named after the famous RAF 'V-Bomber' of the 1950s, which also took part in the Falklands war in 1982.



Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST *David* (2333/1953) climbs past Backbarrow with the 09.20 Haverthwaite-Lakeside on Thursday, February 23. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ

Henry goes home for overhaul

BARCLAY 0-4-0ST *Henry Ellison* (2217/1947) has returned to its Wirksworth base at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway after a season on hire to Cambrian Heritage Railways (CHR). The loco last steamed on December 18, after hauling CHR's Santa trains, the boiler certificate having expired.

The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association, which owns *Henry Ellison* is now appealing for funds to carry out the 10-year overhaul. Until the loco has been dismantled, the cost of repairs remains unknown, but by mid-March it was estimated to be £27,500.

Donations can be made by bank transfer – sort code 30-90-25, account number 01212020, quoting your surname and HENRY as the reference. Visit www.e-v-r-a.com or email treasurerevra@outlook.com for details. Cheques payable to Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association can be sent to: Lindsey Bowley, 164 Cole Lane, Borrowash, Derby DE72 3GP.



***Henry Ellison* awaits departure from CHR's Oswestry base on March 2.** ROB WILLIAMS/CHR

Swordfish to spend season steaming in the Colne Valley

AFTER hauling Polar Express trains at Telford Steam Railway, Andrew Barclay 0-6-0ST *Swordfish* (2138/1941) has moved to Colne Valley Railway for the season.

It will replace the railway's existing fleet, which is being repaired. The loco was given a steam test in February prior to a washout and a few minor repairs.

This locomotive, along with others in the same batch, was named after a Royal Navy S class submarine lost in the Second World War.

Colne Valley Railway has a pair of 'Austerity' 0-6-0STs on site. No. WD190 was built by Hunslet Engine Company in 1953 as works number 3790 and has been regularly used at Castle Hedingham, but now needs its 10 year overhaul.

Meanwhile, Hunslet Works No. 3800, also built in 1953, is currently under overhaul. It was originally preserved on the Kent & East Sussex Rly as No. 24 *Rolvenden* before being purchased by the Colne Valley in 2014.



EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE: Peckett R3 class 0-4-0ST *Kilmersdon* (1788/1929) was in steam at Alresford, Mid-Hants Railway on February 18. The locomotive was being used on 'Driver for a Fiver' runs in the station area as part of the railway's half-term activities relating to the theme of 'motion and movement'. Owned by the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust and previously based at Washford on the West Somerset Railway, the locomotive was overhauled at Ropley before entering service in 2022, and now makes occasional appearances on special occasions. DON BENN



FREIGHT DUTY: Stephen Middleton's Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST *Secole* hauled a train of tank wagons at the North Tyneside Railway on February 26, as part of the line's freight demonstration day. The locomotive's loan from Embsay has recently been extended. DAVE HEWITT



COMPILED BY CLIFF THOMAS

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DIARY

April
29/30 Bala Lake Railway (BLR) Holy War and Alice event
21/22 Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways (FF&WHR) 'Snowdonian' train

May
13 Snowdon Mountain Railway reopens to summit
20/21 Westonzoyland Pumping Station Steam on the levels
27 Apedale Valley Light Railway (AVLR) military trains
28-30 Fairbourne Railway steam gala

June
3/4 Great Bush Railway, Hadlow Down steam rally
17/18 Lappa Valley Railway steam on the rails
18/19 Tyseley Works open days
23-25 FF&WHR WHR opening centenary event
24 AVLR anything goes

July
1 Isle of Man Steam Railway 150th anniversary
23-30 Isle of Man Transport Festival

August
5/6 West Lancashire Light Railway summer gala
26-28 BLR steam gala
28 Westonzoyland PS railway gala

September
10 Manx Electric Railway 130th anniversary
16 AVLR steam gala
24/25 Lynton & Barnstaple Railway gala
24 West Lancashire Light Railway working engines gala

October
1 Bredgar &Wormshill Light Railway steam gala
6-8 FF&WHR Bygones weekend
14 AVLR Farewell Hudswell, Clarke

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All change, all change!

Sales and purchases as new season approaches.



The picturesque setting of the Evesham Vale Light Railway is evident in this picture. The locomotive is privately-owned Exmoor Steam Railway-built 0-4-0TT No. 312 *St. Egwin*. CLIFF THOMAS

WITH the main operating season about to get into full swing, the theme of change is very much in vogue in terms of the ownership of locomotives, carriages and even an entire railway.

Firstly, the 15in gauge Evesham Vale Light Railway (EVR) has been put up for sale by Adrian and Sandra Corke. The railway was originally set up by Jim and Helen Shackell who commenced construction in August 2001 and opened to the public on August 1, 2002. Adrian and Sandra Corke became the new operators of the mile-and-a-quarter line from January 3, 2012.

The railway is within the privately owned Evesham Country Park near Evesham, Worcestershire. It currently runs on around 170 days a year and carries some 48,000 passengers a year, generating a reported turnover of £175,000. Although professionally operated, the EVR is supported by a group of volunteers.

Operation

The asking price for the EVR as a going concern is £325,000 with the main assets being one steam and one diesel locomotive (other locos at the line are privately owned), five closed and three semi-open coaches, plus other equipment. The track and main railway buildings will be available on a minimum 10-year lease from Eagle One Ltd, the owners of the Evesham Country Park.

Meanwhile, the Richmond Light Railway (RLR) has announced the acquisition of 20hp Koppel 0-4-0WT 5745/1912. It was originally supplied to the Ministry of Works public irrigation department in the Rio Negro province of Argentina and subsequently returned to Germany where it had been on static display since 2005. It arrived at the private RLR in December 2022.

Restoration of the newly acquired Koppel will commence after the 10-year overhaul of Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Sybil* is finished and the major overhaul of Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Pixie* is completed. *Sybil* and *Pixie* are both expected to return to service this year.

Crossing the English Channel in the opposite direction, new-build 3-ton Decauville 0-4-0T *Edgar* departed from the Apedale Valley Light Railway on February 8. It was completed in 2018 by North Bay Engineering Services Ltd for John Sutton but has seen limited use.

Although Mr Sutton had intended to keep it for another year or so, an offer was received from an individual who wanted to run it in France. The purchaser wants its future home to remain confidential at present.

In a separate development, ownership of ex-WDLR Baldwin 10-12-D No. 794 (BLW44699/1917) has been transferred from the Imperial War Museum (IWM) to WHR Ltd, which operates as the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway (WHHR). The loco was already on long-term loan to WHHR and is currently approaching the latter stages of a major overhaul to return it to steam 'as' Welsh Highland Railway No. 590 (BLW45172/1916 scrapped in 1942) which is being undertaken by Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Fleet

No. 794 operated on the Western Front during the First World War, went to India postwar and returned to Britain in 1985. The IWM intended to use the loco as part of a display at its Duxford site but although some work was done to it, this plan did not reach fruition. No. 794 was placed on loan to what is now WHHR in 2003 following which fundraising efforts to restore it commenced.

Carriages are not forgotten either. It has emerged that Isle of Man Transport purchased ex-Isle of Man Steam Railway (IOMSR) bogie brake composite F37 and 1st/3rd composite F38 last year from the Vale of Rheidol Railway museum collection. Both were built by Hurst Nelson & Co Ltd in 1899 for the Manx Northern Railway.

F38 was withdrawn in 1969, F37 in 1972, with both stored (with other redundant stock) at St Johns on the (by then) closed steam line. In 1975, with the shed and contents about to be burnt down to recover the metal, the late Peter Rampton bought the carriages from the scrapman, hired a tractor and hauled the vehicles out of the shed, which was set alight that evening. The carriages subsequently remained unrestored as part of 'Collection X' in Surrey.

The return to Isle of Man Railway ownership took place last year, without publicity at the behest of the purchaser. One carriage is stored in the Isle of Man, the other has gone to Stanegate Restorations & Replicas in Haltwhistle for restoration. This company recently completed the restoration of IOMSR's 'Pairs' coach No. F.63, which returned to Douglas in early February.

Packed IoM Year of the Railways 2023 events programme in store

THE full programme for the Isle of Man's 'Year of the Railways 2023', marking the 150th anniversary of the steam line and 130th anniversary of the Manx Electric Railway (MER), has been published. The former will be specifically celebrated on July 1 while the September 7 MER anniversary will be marked on September 10.

The primary focus of the Year of the Railways will be a series of special attractions between July 23-30. These will include Dubs 0-6-0T *Caledonia* appearing at Knockaloe and out of ticket Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No. 8 *Fenella* at Peel, diesel MER car No. 34 *Maria* working passenger rides with an MER trailer, double-headed and banked trains on the steam line, cavalcades of MER, Snaefell and Douglas Bay Horse Trams, shed tours and much more.

Full details are in an event guide which can be downloaded from the viaiombusandrail.im website.

Track and stock being prepared for planned Tweeddale line

WHILE the process to secure planning permission for the planned Tweeddale Heritage Railway continues, (*RM*, December) volunteers are working on projects in preparation for the start of construction of the new 2ft gauge line.

The material for turnouts, delivered a year ago and stored at the workshop site, is being sorted and assembled onto replacement sleepers so that complete units can be placed on the new site to speed up track laying.

The basis of the line's passenger stock, delivered on January 21, comprising two ex-Bishopton Royal Ordnance Factory wagon chassis acquired from a site in Cheshire, is also receiving attention.

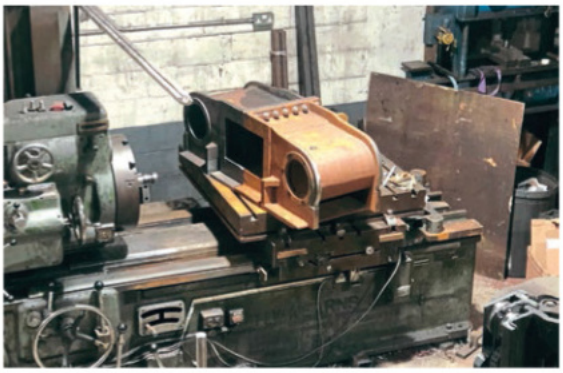
Both, originally supplied by Hudson's in 1941, require rebuilding and renovation. The longer of the pair will become a three-compartment coach, the other will be either a spacious two-compartment vehicle or provide two-and-a-half compartments. They will be run as a pair and together are expected to accommodate 33 passengers.

Monobloc cylinder for replica 1863 *Mountaineer* completed

AFTER overcoming various issues, including faulty castings, the two cylinders for 1863 Mountaineer Locomotive Ltd's replica Ffestiniog Railway George England 0-4-0T+T *Mountaineer* have now been fully machined, permanently bolted together and final machining of the common valve chest chamber faces completed. The cylinders, now formed as a monobloc, also serve as the front frame stretcher.

The cylinder bores are now being honed to final alignment and finish by a sub-contractor before returning to North Bay Railway Engineering Services for construction of the loco to continue.

The wheelsets are currently being finished with the connecting rods to be machined when the axle sets are in the frames. The goal is now to have a completed rolling chassis around May. Meanwhile, the tender is being researched and costed.



The monobloc cylinder assembly for replica Ffestiniog Railway George England 0-4-0T+T *Mountaineer* ready to be fitted to the frames of the locomotive. 1863 MOUNTAINEER LOCOMOTIVE LTD

Sutton Miniature Railway revival plans progress at Tyseley

FOLLOWING the acquisition of the Sutton Miniature Railway Collection (SMRC) by Vintage Trains Charitable Trust (*RM*, March 2022) No. 1 *Sutton Belle* has been stripped for restoration.

The damaged rear drag box and bent front buffer beam are to be replaced, following which the frames will be repainted and a start made on reassembling the bottom end to provide a rolling chassis.

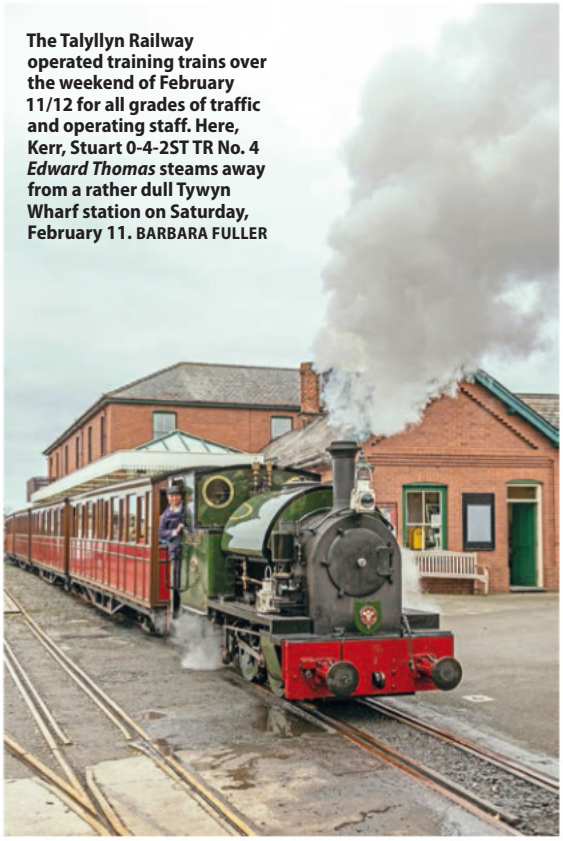
The boiler is badly corroded and drawings for a new boiler meeting modern standards have been prepared. A fundraising campaign to cover the estimated £5000 cost will shortly be launched.

Initial plans for the SMRC envisage building a 200yd-long 15in gauge line at Tyseley, refurbishing the former Dudley Zoo railcar and two carriages to enable operation of a push-pull set and purchasing covers for the refurbished vehicles. It is estimated this can be achieved for around £25,000.



Sutton Miniature Railway No. 1 *Sutton Belle* pictured several years ago while displayed at Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway prior to its acquisition by Vintage Trains Charitable Trust. CLIFF THOMAS

Other aspirations encompass returning *Sutton Belle* to steam, creating a visitor display and designing a re-creation of a battery powered Great Yarmouth two-car railcar.



The Talyllyn Railway operated training trains over the weekend of February 11/12 for all grades of traffic and operating staff. Here, Kerr, Stuart 0-4-2ST TR No. 4 *Edward Thomas* steams away from a rather dull Tywyn Wharf station on Saturday, February 11. BARBARA FULLER

New diesel locomotive boosts Hayling Light Railway fleet

ALAN Keef Ltd AK11/1984 has been donated to Hayling Light Railway by Thorpe Park Resort.

The loco was originally built as a steam outline diesel for Thorpe Park's 'Treasure Island Railway', which ran at the site during the 1980s, and was retained as a works and rescue locomotive for Thorpe Park's subsequent 'Canada Creek Railway' attraction.

Track from the Canada Creek Railway (CCR), which operated from 1989 to 2011 and was lifted in 2016, has also been given to the Hayling line. The Seven Lamb-built locos and coaches employed on the CCR are understood to have also been saved, one set having gone to the East Links Family Park in Scotland.

AK11/1984 no longer has its steam outline bodywork and requires rebuilding to return it to service. The necessary work is being undertaken away from the railway with the expectation it will be ready for service on Hayling Island later this year.

Sir Drefaldwyn set to return in June

THE return to traffic of Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's (WLLR) S F Belge 0-8-0T (ex-No. 699.01) No. 10 *Sir Drefaldwyn* is expected to coincide with WLLR's June 17/18 '60 Years of Preservation' weekend.

Sir Drefaldwyn last ran in early 2000. Following a period in storage the decision to commence overhauling it was made in late 2013, but the project encountered multiple setbacks.

The boiler has now passed hydraulic and steam examinations, with fitting boiler lagging and painting, in preparation for final assembly, now in progress. The June 17/18 event will celebrate the 60th anniversary of WLLR being preserved and 120 years since the original opening of the line.

SINGLE LINES

■ RECENTLY restored 1894-built Manx Electric Railway (MER) Trailer No. 19 (later renumbered 36) will be launched back into service on July 23, after an absence of 52 years. Its restoration was undertaken by volunteers and MER staff. For the launch event, during the MER's 130th anniversary year, it will be paired with MER Car No. 7 to re-create the 1894 opening day of the MER to Laxey.

■ BORD na Mona-built 4wDH No. LM396 is receiving a full overhaul and repaint in Ireland before going to the Isle of Man Steam Railway later this year. Loco LM399 is forming a donor for parts required in the overhaul.

■ Vale of Rheidol Railway is repainting one of its seven-coach rakes from GWR chocolate and cream into BR-era 'Blood and Custard'. Four will be completed in the revised livery by Easter, producing a mixed rake until the remaining three enter the paint shop.

■ HAIGH Hall Miniature Railway has been awarded a £2000 grant from Wigan Council's community safety fund. The money will fund improvements to the railway's yard area and foot crossings which require upgrading and fencing.

■ ISLE of Man Steam Railway driver John Elkin has died following a short illness. Widely known by Manx rail enthusiasts he was a steam driver during the final years of the original railway company, through the Lord Ailsa period and into Manx Government ownership. His career included working the last steam trains over the now closed Peel and Ramsey routes and driving No. 13 *Kissack*, hauling the 1972 Royal Train carrying Queen Elizabeth II.

■ FOLLOWING a bequest from a member, and a grant from Swale Borough Council, the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway is to have a new firebox made for Bagnall 0-6-2T *Superb*, which was withdrawn in March 2019 when a boiler inspection revealed some very thin areas in the inner firebox.

■ RAVENGLASS Railway Museum's 1926-built Muir-Hill 4W petrol/TVO (Tractor Vaporising Oil) loco *Quarryman* has gone to John Fowler Engineering at Old Hall Farm in Bouth, Cumbria, ready for a start to be made on returning it to operation. A 'Just Giving' appeal to raise £5000 to restore *Quarryman* was launched last year (*RM*, October 2022).

■ THE boiler of Fairbourne Railway's Curwen 0-6-4ST *Beddgelert* returned to the line in early February, following repairs at Ffestiniog Railway's Boston Lodge. Work performed included a new fusible plug boss, two new clack bosses, complete retubing and an initial hydraulic test. The overhaul of the chassis continues at Fairbourne.

■ The first of the two diesel locos donated to Lancashire Mining Museum at Astley Green by Specialist Plant in Wellingborough (*RM*, March) has been regauged to 2ft and run on the museum's line.

Steam Portfolio Track Record



MIRROR IMAGE: RSH 0-4-0ST *Sir Cecil A Cochrane* (7409/1948) took part in the Tanfield Railway's mixed train event on February 26. STEVEN BARKER

SUNSET SPECIAL: After a dull start on March 24, the heavens cleared and the sun shone over Kent during a 30742 charter with No. 34072 *257 Squadron,* recently relocated from the Swanage Railway to the Spa Valley Railway. The Bulleid Pacific is seen causing a stir in the last of the afternoon light at Pokehill. MARTYN TATTAM

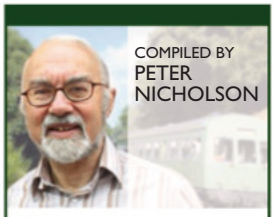




BREAKDOWN TRIP: LMS 'Black Five' No. 45212 hauls a breakdown train, which included the Bahamas Locomotive Society's 50 ton Craven Brothers breakdown crane, built in 1931. The train is captured between Keighley and Ingrow on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 during a 30742 Charters event. IAN DIXON

COMING UP WITH THE GOODS: Lancashire & Yorkshire 'A' Class 0-6-0 No. 52322 hauls four restored tank wagons on the East Lancashire Railway away from a snow covered Ramsbottom on March 10, during a 3P20 Photo Charter. STUART CHAPMAN





COMPILED BY PETER NICHOLSON

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Poole Park loco problem solved

Unable to source motive power following the non-delivery of its new loco, the solution was found by adopting what traction the railway already had on site.

FOLLOWING completion of the reconstruction of the 10¼in gauge Poole Park Railway, Dorset, it was learnt the new loco on order was no longer going to be supplied for the reopening in September 2022 (*RM* October p70). Track Systems (UK) was in liquidation and Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council (BCP) was left to make alternative arrangements.

Nationwide enquires were made without success, leaving no alternative but to use *Howard*, the steam-outline 0-6-0DH hired from the Lappa Valley Railway for construction trains. It proved suitable and has now been purchased for permanent use on all the railway's trains.

The former Wells Harbour Railway loco (Keef 74 of 2005) left Poole on February 28, going to Alan Keef's works in Herefordshire for overhaul, wheelset change and a repaint in green. It is due to be returned before the Easter holidays. A bogie from one of the two Track Systems carriages was also sent to Keef so the wheel profiles match the new loco wheels. Plans are well advanced for a third carriage to be built.

The railway carried more than 16,000 passengers from reopening, with winter operation limited to weekends and school holidays. With demand expected to increase from the Easter reopening, trains will run daily, weather permitting.



Having proved itself during construction of the railway and the first few months of passenger operation, Alan Keef 0-6-0DH *Howard* has been acquired for full-time use on the Poole Park Railway. It is seen prior to returning to its builder for a full overhaul and repaint in green. DAVID DUNN



BACK IN NORFOLK: ADAM Jeffrey's No. 4 *Norfolk Pioneer* visited the 10¼in gauge Wells & Walsingham Railway to help with half-term trains. The 2-6-0 was built there in 2011 by Tony Martin (*RM* October 2022, p70) but was never officially part of the fleet. On its return this year, from the Astbury Light Railway project (Cheshire), it ran 16 trips totalling 131 miles, including hauling a timetabled service on the W&WLR on its own for the first time. It ran on February 12 and 17-19. ADAM JEFFREY

Interesting special events in store at Rudyard

THE 10¼in gauge Leek & Rudyard Railway, Staffordshire, has a good number of events, including the following, of particular interest to enthusiasts: April 22/23, diesel gala; July 8/9, Mull gala, re-creating the long-closed Isle of Mull Railway with original locos and stock; and September 16/17, steam gala. Visit www.rlsr.org for details.



THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

OUR CELEBRATORY 50TH ANNIVERSARY EXCURSION TO THE SUNNY SEASIDE TOWN OF WEYMOUTH

SATURDAY 10 JUNE 2023

On 10 June 1973, our very own Peter Watts ran his first train, which departed Gloucester Eastgate heading for Pwllheli. 50 glorious years have since passed and we are still running charters across the country.

To celebrate the occasion, and to mark just how far we have come, we present this very special train to Weymouth with class 40 locomotive No. D345 proudly organised by Peter himself.

Starting at Burton-on-Trent, our locomotive picks up at locations through the Midlands to Cheltenham from where we head through the Golden Valley and over Sapperton to the Great Western Mainline.

With everyone on board, we soon reach Reading where we head South to Basingstoke and the Southwestern Mainline.

From here we can expect some fast running and beautiful coastal scenery where we soon arrive at the seaside resort of Weymouth (1340-1635). Here we have ample time to explore and relax.

Enjoy a walk around this beautiful seaside town, with perhaps a stroll around to the harbour and a visit to Nothe Gardens, or sample the Fish and Chips on the beach.

The excitement begins straight away on the return as our locomotive attacks the 1-50 Bincombe Bank before heading for Yeovil and onto Westbury.

After further meandering, we skirt Bristol and attack Filton bank as we begin our final run along the Midland Railway as we begin setting down at the same stations we picked up from.

We hope you'll join us to celebrate what we believe will be a fitting tribute to our first 50 years!



Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Burton-on-Trent	0640	2240
Tamworth	0655	2225
Coleshill Parkway	0715	2205
Birmingham New St.	0740	2130
Barnt Green	0810	2100
Worcestershire P'way	0840	2030
Cheltenham Spa	0910	2000
*Swindon	1000	----
**Bristol Parkway	----	1930

Estimated Timings

Fares:	Adult	Junior	Party x4
Premier Dining	£299	£259	£1176
First Class	£189	£149	£736
Standard Class	£139	£70	£536

Table for Two seats are available at a supplement of £40 per person in First Class and Premier Dining. First Class Passengers will each receive vouchers towards refreshments from the buffet car during the journey. Passengers will be able to enjoy the comfort of travelling in 1970's BR MK2 carriages.
*Please note that Swindon is an outbound pickup point only, we will not be calling at Swindon on the return journey.
**Bristol Parkway is a set down only stop on the return journey.



THE PATHFINDER MAZEY DAY SPECIAL

TRAVEL IN STYLE ON THIS VERY SPECIAL PATHFINDER EXCURSION TO THE ANNUAL MAZEY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN PENZANCE!

SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2023

No-one knows quite how long ago it was the people of Cornwall started to celebrate Midsummer (Golowan in the Cornish language), but it was noted as 'an antiquity' in 1754.

After the festival was banned on the grounds of 'health and safety' – in the 1890s(!) - it 'slept' for near a century until revival in 1991, re-established now as a leading annual event. Journeying from the Midlands, sit back and enjoy crossing the Somerset Levels to Taunton, over the Blackdown Hills and down to Exeter.

At the water's edge we run along the Exe Estuary and out onto the famed sea-wall, then inland to Newton Abbot and steeply up and down along the edge of Dartmoor to Plymouth and soon to the crossing of the River Tamar on Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge into Cornwall.

Option A: Truro (1220-1640)
There is little straight or level track right through to journey's end, but there are deep valleys and lofty viaducts amidst delightful scenery, past Liskeard to Lostwithiel and through St. Austell to Truro, where you may alight for a four hour break.

Option B: St Erth (for St. Ives) (1245-1610)
Continuing west we reach St. Erth, where we set down passengers for the branchline train (local fare around £4) to St. Ives, a small town that offers something for everyone, seaside, specialist shops, harbour and even the Tate Gallery.

Option C: Penzance (1300-1600)
Just five miles west is line's end at Penzance, where the Mazey Day festivities will be in full flow, although there should be plenty of time before the start of the main parade. For something slightly different, the bus station is adjacent to the railway station and offers local journeys to Lands End, Mousehole, Marazion (for St. Michaels Mount) and more.

This train will be hauled by a pair of recently refurbished GBRf Class 69's in a double headed formation, which will be a first for its class to work a passenger train to Penzance.





Joining Stations	Depart	Return
Tame Bridge Parkway	0545	2325
Stourbridge Jn	0625	2245
Kidderminster	0640	2230
Droitwich Spa	0655	2215
Worcester S' Hill	0710	2210
Cheltenham Spa	0740	2135
Cam & Dursley	0805	2105
Bristol Parkway	0830	2030
Bristol Temple Meads	0850	2015

Estimated Timings

Fares:	Adult	Junior	Party x4
Premier Dining	£299	£259	£1176
First Class	£185	£145	£720
Standard Class	£129	£65	£496

Table for Two seats are available at a supplement of £40 per person in First Class and Premier Dining. First Class Passengers will each receive vouchers towards refreshments from the buffet car during the journey. Passengers will be able to enjoy the comfort of travelling in 1970's BR MK2 carriages.

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SIDELINES

EATM maintenance progress

WORK has been taking place to run a main cable into the new tram depot at the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville.

Elsewhere on the Suffolk site, track maintenance and repairs were carried out during February. MPI (Magnetic Particle Inspection) testing was conducted to check for cracks on point blades and welding took place to build up some areas which had become worn.

Shipley Glen goes 'cashless'

THE Shipley Glen Tramway at Baildon in West Yorkshire has announced that, apart from in exceptional circumstances, it is only accepting card payments from visitors.

In cases where it does agree to accept cash, it will no longer be able to offer change.

It says the closure of its local bank made it difficult to continue to deal with cash.

February also saw tree surgeons on-site to clear dead and dangerous trees which were close to the track.

Parts added to No. 281

HAVING been repainted into its original livery and put on display at the North West Museum of Road Transport in St Helens (as reported last month in *The RM*), Blackpool No. 281 is to have some further items reattached.

The trolley tower and cab controller keys, which remained in Blackpool following the tram's move, have now also made the journey and will be reinstalled. The addition of these parts will mean it can be viewed in a fully-complete state.

Onto smaller jobs on 'Bluebird'

AS restoration of London County Council No. 1 'Bluebird' progresses at Crich Tramway Village, smaller, detailed jobs are being undertaken.

The police lights have been fitted at the corners of the upper deck and the bulk of the tram's wiring has been completed.

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Blackpool Tramtown vision formally announced

£800,000 secured for the first stage of transforming the town's heritage trams base into a 'nationally significant' family visitor attraction.

A FOUR-PHASE vision for the future of the Rigby Road base of Blackpool's Heritage Trams has been formally unveiled.

Tours of the 1935-built depot building, branded as Blackpool Tramtown, have proved consistently successful since they were introduced in September 2021 and, with the support of Blackpool Council and Blackpool Transport, £800,000 of funding has been secured for the first stages of an ambitious plan.

It will see the building gradually transformed into what is described as a "nationally significant, family-oriented heritage visitor attraction", centred around the collection of historic trams.

In addition to continuing to be home to the heritage fleet, the revamped building will feature the heritage trams workshop, viewing galleries, an exhibition area, a 1930s-themed cafe, a historical archive, conference and educational facilities and themed retail areas.

Blackpool Transport's head of heritage Bryan Lindop is leading the project and sees it as much more of an "adventure driven" attraction than a museum.



Architect's impressions of how the revamped Blackpool Tramtown could look. STUDIO JOHN BRIDGE LTD





Visitors

It is envisaged that the redeveloped Blackpool Tramtown could attract over half-a-million visitors a year and offer all year round local employment, as well as maintaining traditional engineering skills and training opportunities in operations, coachbuilding, maintenance and restoration.

Explaining its potential as a heritage-based business, Mr Lindop said: "It becomes an integral and crucial step on a pathway to restructuring and developing one of the most deprived areas in the country, bringing tangible benefits for all, not just to Blackpool, but to the region as a whole."

Phase one of the work, expected to be completed later this year, will see the workshop relocated into the tram shed and the first stage of reroofing. The next stage, involving replacement of the rest of the roof and major building repairs, is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Phase three will concentrate on the conservation of the building, with the addition of the new facilities forming the final part of the project, which is due to be finished as 2027 draws to a close.

In the hope of making an additional improvement to the building during the early stages of work, a campaign has been launched on the gofundme website to raise £70,000 for new purpose-built tram shed doors.



CENTRE STAGE FOR No. 78: Easter Sunday will see Wallasey No. 78 take part in what is billed as a "once in a lifetime commemoration event" at Wirral Transport Museum, celebrating 100 years of Wallasey Corporation Transport. The double-deck car, built in 1920 by Brush, was the last tram to be constructed for the Corporation. It will be part of the event, along with all surviving members of the Corporation's bus fleet. No. 78 is pictured on Shore Road, Birkenhead on October 4, 2015, during the annual Wirral Bus & Tram Show. REPTON1X (CC BY-SA 2.0)

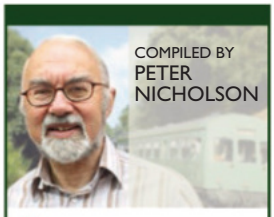
Polishing-off tasks on No. 4

BRASS fittings for Chester No. 4 have been polished ahead of being drilled and machined to prepare them for installation.

The team involved in the restoration of the city's last surviving electric tram at the former Hooton Park airfield near Ellesmere Port have made and fitted steps to the platforms at both ends of the car and are refining the fit of the concertina gates.

On the car's lower saloon, ceiling panels have been fitted in order to determine where holes need to be drilled for the light fittings and positioning of the lining out.

Progress is also being made on the longitudinal bench seats.



COMPILED BY PETER NICHOLSON

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SIDELINES

Vandals apprehended

THE West Somerset Railway had a number of vehicles damaged at Minehead station in the late afternoon of February 26. One of the front windscreens and other windows of Class 115 DMU power car No. W51859 were broken and the interior damaged. Following inspection, it is hoped this can be repaired and be ready for operation at the beginning of the season on March 18.

Coach No. W5002 had a toilet smashed and locks on some vans were broken. Fortunately, a local resident saw this happening and alerted the police who arrived in time to apprehended the three culprits.

Llangollen gains a small shunter

HUNSLET 0-4-0DM No. 2145 of 1940 arrived at the Llangollen Railway from the Tanat Valley Railway on February 20. It will be restored to working order by the railway's Suburban Group for shunting duties at Pentrefelin Carriage Works. Rated at 40bhp, it was one of Hunslet's smallest standard gauge loco designs, of which 28 were built. It was acquired for preservation in 1976 by the Dean Forest Railway from Standard Telephones & Cables of Newport, Gwent.

WSR's 'Teddy Bear' to work passenger trains

FOLLOWING its return to the West Somerset Railway from hire to the Kent & East Sussex Railway, Class 14 No. D9526 has been rostered to work the 80-mile 'blue' timetable diesel services on April 16, May 21 and June 3, 4.

'Gronk' move

CLASS 09 No. D3668 (09004) in BR blue, arrived at the Avon Valley Railway on January 28, from the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. It is set to go out on hire soon.

EARM offers unlimited diesel train rides

THE East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel & Wakes Colne, Essex is holding a number of diesel running days this season. Unlimited rides are available hauled by one of the museum's diesel locos, or in a DMU. The museum is open from 10.00 to 17.00 with rides between 10.30 and 15.00. The dates are April 5; May 31; July 26, 29; August 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19 and October 25. Visit www.earm.co.uk for more details.

Type 1 for the Dales

Embsay & Bolton Abbey enhances its diesel loco fleet with Class 20 acquisition.

THE Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Trust has purchased Class 20 No. D8110 (20110) for use on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway (E&BASR).

The English Electric Type 1 was delivered to the line on February 20, following purchase from Harry Needle Railroad Co. (HNRC). It is fully operational and is regarded as being the 'right type of loco' for the railway since it has become necessary to use diesel power in place of steam in several situations.

During the 2022 Santa season, the combined motive power hire charges (three steam and one diesel) and fuel costs were nearly £70,000. As coal prices are not expected to fall back to what they were in the foreseeable future, it is hoped to use fewer steam locos for this year's festive trains to reduce coal usage and hire fees. Restoration of Class 31 No. D5600 (31179/31435 *Newton Heath TMD*, is not expected to be completed this year so the Class 20 will be ideal for these trains.

Although the Type 1 has been financed by members' loans, the loco is 100% owned by the Trust. There will be occasions when Class 37 No. 37294 (D6994) will be out of traffic for repairs and maintenance and the Class 20 will be a great substitute and a backup in the event of failures.

No. D8110 entered preservation in 1991 with the South Devon Railway and visited many open days and heritage railways. More recently, it passed into HNRC ownership and was based on the Battlefield Line.



Class 20 No. D8110 (20110) is seen at Embsay on February 21, the day after it arrived, while undergoing a fitness to run exam. ROB MILNER/E&BASR

Last surviving Wisbech & Upwell Drewry is for sale

THE owner of Class 04 No. D2203 (11103) based on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, has put the 0-6-0DM up for sale.

This is of historic significance as it is the last surviving loco to have worked on the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway built by the Great Eastern Railway in East Anglia and closed in May 1966.

Built at Vulcan Foundry, it was one of the first four of a class of 140 Drewry locos. Nos. 11100-11103 (D2200-D2203 were for use on the tramway and in Ipswich Docks. For these locations they were fitted with 'cow catchers' and side skirts over the wheels.

Following withdrawal by BR in December 1967 No. D2203 was used by Hemel Hempstead Lightweight Concrete, Cupid Green, Hertfordshire until acquired for preservation at Embsay in February 1982.

The loco is currently not operational, having had the radiator removed for repair 2½ years ago. It is for sale 'as seen' for offers in the region of £11,000.

A 'rare' Class 47 to star at Swanage Railway gala

THE Swanage Railway's annual diesel gala and beer festival on May 12-14 promises an interesting loco attendance.

This includes what is believed to be the first ever appearance on a heritage railway of two-tone green Class 47 No. D1645/47830 *Beeching's Legacy*, courtesy of Freightliner. It is also thought it has only worked one passenger train since 2004, providing a rare opportunity for haulage.

The Class 40 Preservation Society's Class 40 No. D345/40145 will be making what is believed to be the loco's first visit to the Swanage Railway for the gala.

Also booked is Class 45 'Peak' No. 45108, owned by the Peak Locomotive Co, and visiting from the East Lancashire Railway. Other visitors are to be announced and it is hoped these will include Class 50s Nos. 50021 *Rodney* and 50026 *Indomitable*.

Two resident 'Crompton's are due to take part, Nos. D6515 (33018) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* and 33111. Visit www.swanagerailway.co.uk/events for further details.

New diesel driver experience courses feature shunters

A BRAND-NEW experience this year on the Bluebell Railway is the Class 09 'diesel footplate taster', with BR green No. D4106 (09018).

An individual, one-hour 'hands-on' driving experience with a qualified loco driver within the Horsted Keynes station area, on small shunting moves and short runs on the line, is priced at £210.

Included is a personal guided tour of the carriage & wagon workshop, hot drink and a breakfast bap or a slice of cake in the 'King George V' buffet at the station, plus a certificate on completion of the experience.

Dates are April 15, 16; May 6, 7, 13, 14; September 9, 10, and October 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22. Visit www.bluebell-railway.com for details.

Meanwhile, the Somerset & Dorset Railway at Midsomer Norton is providing the opportunity to take control of one of its two diesel locos – English Electric No. D1120 or Class 08 No. D4095 (08881) – on three days this year: April 16, Father's Day June 17 and December 27.

After a little training, the participant will be handed the controls, and under supervision of an experienced driver they will work one return trip on the line. The loco will be hauling one Mk.1 coach which will convey up to 12 people from the accompanying party.

The cost for the experience is £50 for one, and a train ride for six people. Further passengers up to a maximum of 12 are £3 each.



A rare outing for KWVR's unique diesel shunter No. D2511

THIS is the sole survivor of 10 BR Class D2/12 0-6-0DMs built by Hudswell Clarke in 1961. All were withdrawn prior to receiving TOPS classification or numbers.

Four passed into National Coal Board ownership including No. D2511 to Brodsworth Colliery, Doncaster which then entered preservation at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in October 1977.

No. D2519 was also acquired by the KWVR, from Hatfield Colliery, Stainforth in April 1982, but was scrapped in 1985.

No. D2511 is seen in Haworth yard having worked engineering trains over the KWVR on February 20. This 204hp Gardner-engined loco is usually confined to the Oxenhope carriage shed area. PICTURE: ANDREW JEFFERY



BRIDDON'S BARCLAY IS NAMED *BAGNALL*: Andrew Briddon has obtained ex-Army 0-6-0DH No. 873 (Barclay 512 of 1966) from Harry Needle's collection at Long Marston. It is now at Peak Rail, Rowsley South.

It has an interesting history following delivery to the Longmoor Military Railway (LMR) in October 1966, and was displayed on a tank transporter at the annual Army Exhibition at Aldershot. It then saw use at the LMR including display at the June 1967 open day. No. 873 left there in February 1968 destined for the British Army in Germany. While there it was named *Bagnall* after the commanding officer of 79 Railway Squadron, so becoming a Barclay named *Bagnall*. PETE BRIDDON

A WLA member is running 1013 miles in support of *Western Ranger* overhaul

THE Western Locomotive Association's new charities officer, Jon Aston, came up with an energetic way to support the 'D1013 *Western Ranger* Bogie Overhaul Appeal' – by going on a sponsored run.

Starting on December 13, which was No. D1013's 60th birthday (*RM* Nov. p79), having been released into traffic from BR's Swindon Works on this date in 1962, Jon decided to run 1013 miles before the end of the Severn Valley Railway's spring diesel gala on May 21.

Jon's interest in the 'Westerns' was rekindled following retirement, and he joined the WLA. He was voted the charity's officer at the group's AGM in November. He started running in 2006 to lose weight, and became addicted, graduating to marathon running within six months. To date, he has run at 311 organised events of marathon distance or longer, including a number of nonstop 145-mile runs from Paddington to Bristol following the old stomping grounds of his favourite locos, the 'Westerns'.

His website at www.gofundme.com/f/1013-miles-for-d1013-bogie-overhaul-appeal is kept up to date with his progress. To achieve his objective, he needs to run an average of 6½ miles a day for 159 days. Those wishing to support the appeal with donations large or small will encourage Jon to achieve his 1013-mile target.

Wickham trolley rides on the S&D at Midsomer Norton

THE Somerset & Dorset Railway at Midsomer Norton will be running its popular Wickham trolley rides again this year. These occur on Wednesdays, and a few other days, from April through to early September.

The ride covers the full length of the operating line providing excellent all-round visibility of the railway and its infrastructure installed during the last 20 years or so. This currently terminates at the infilled cutting on the approach to Chilcompton Tunnel.

Rides take place from 10.00 with the return trip being about 20 minutes. Each journey starts and finishes in Midsomer Norton station yard. Tickets are £5.50 for adults and £3 for children aged 4-16; aged 3 or under travel free.

The fully restored Type 27A Mk.III vehicle is ex-BR No. B40W (Wickham 7504 of 1956). Capacity is restricted to six in total per trip. Dates are: April 5, 12; May 31; July 26; August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and September 6. Visit www.sdjr.co.uk for details.

Ryde Pier replica trailer car construction underway

FOLLOWING the Isle of Wight Steam Railway's (IWSR) extremely popular introduction of Ryde Pier tram No. 2 (Alan Keef 98R of 2016, a complete rebuild of Baguley/Drewry 1647 of 1927), construction of a replica trailer car, No. 7, has now been started to enable the railcar to operate as a two-car unit, as it did on Ryde Pier.

The metal underframe was completed by Alan Keef Ltd, along with the power car.

The wooden frame for the body is now being built on the Isle of Wight by local boatbuilders Clare Lallow Ltd.

Glazing and painting will be finished by the IWSR's own team. The trailer car is being assembled at Havenstreet and the work in progress will be available to view this summer.

DIARY

April
14-16 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Twin Peaks diesel gala
14-16 Peak Rail Twin Peaks diesel gala
22/23 GCR diesel gala

May
6 Severn Valley Railway D1062's 60th birthday
12-14 Swanage Railway diesel gala
18-21 Severn Valley Railway spring diesel festival

June
8-10 WSR diesel gala
10/11 Middleton Railway diesel gala
9-11 North Norfolk Railway mixed traction gala
17/18 GCR 50th anniversary mixed traction gala
18/19 Tyseley Loco Works open days
23-25 Isle of Wight Steam Railway (IWSR) spring gala
23-25 KWVR diesel gala
29-July 1 East Lancashire Railway (ELR) diesel gala

July
7-9 GWSR diesel gala

August
4-6 Caledonian Railway diesel gala
4-6 Spa Valley Railway diesel gala
19/20 GCR Railways at Work gala

September
1-3 GCR diesel gala
9/10 Dean Forest Railway diesel gala
15/16 ELR diesel gala
16/17 Llangollen Railway diesel gala
22/23 WSR DEPG@50 celebrations
22-24 Mid-Norfolk Railway diesel gala
23/24 IWSR autumn gala
23/24 Swindon & Cricklade Railway mixed traction gala
29-Oct 1 Severn Valley Railway diesel bash

October
28/29 GW SR mixed traction gala

November
18/19 GCR Last Hurrah mixed traction gala

2024
July
25-28 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway 14s @ 60

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Four-day gala will mark 50 years of diesel preservation

Exciting line-up of visiting locomotives to perform alongside popular members of the home fleet at Severn Valley Railway event.







Above left: In addition to the 'firsts' among the visiting locos and stock, two SVR resident locos make their gala debut following workshop attention and repaints. 'Warship' No. D821 *Greyhound* returned to BR blue, is seen in Kidderminster Diesel Depot having missed last year's events. This was the first main line diesel preserved by a private group when moved to Didcot on May 24, 1972.
Above right: Class 33 'Crompton' No. 33108 (D6521) will be running in its new departmental yellow and grey. Left: Looking superb in the sunshine, Class 50 No. 50033 *Glorious* poses outside SVR Kidderminster Diesel Depot following a repaint, although it is not currently fully operational. This is just one of six English Electric Type 4 'Hoovers' in the care of the Fifty Fund/Class 50 Alliance based at Kidderminster.
ALL THREE PICTURES: KENNY FELSTEAD

THE Severn Valley Railway's Spring diesel festival is to celebrate half a century of main line diesels in preservation – and brings together an unrivalled collection of heritage guest and home fleet locomotives, as well as many examples of modern traction from the main line.

The first two visiting locos announced for the May 18-21 diesel gala already ensures it will be a super, not-to-be-missed event. First was Ed Stevenson's Class 58 No. 58023 *Peterborough Depot* making the inaugural appearance of a preserved member of the main line freight class in preservation (*RM* March p7).

The other heritage railway 'first' is Class 47/7 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer,* complete with a set of five former Great Anglia Mk.3 coaches and driving motor brake second (DBSO) No. 9707, all in ScotRail livery. This train is a re-creation of the Glasgow-Edinburgh push-pull shuttles of the 1980s, with one of the original Class 47 conversions (*RM* March p5). No. 47712 is courtesy of owners the Crewe Diesel Preservation Group, on long-term hire to LSL.

A Colas Class 56 has since been added to the visitor's list with further guests from heritage railways and main line operators to be secured.

Home fleet locos due to be in operation for the SVR event are expected to be Class 14 No. D9551, Class 17 No. D8568, Class 20 No. 20048, Class 31 No. 31466, Class 33 No. 33108 in new livery, Class 40 No. 40106 *Atlantic Conveyor*, Class 42 No. D821 *Greyhound* in new livery, Class 50s, and Class 52s Nos. D1015 *Western Champion* and D1062 *Western Courier*.

Visit svr.co.uk/all-events/ for further details and to book tickets.

Meanwhile, the railway continues to be the home of six Class 50s. In early February, the status of each 'Hoover' No. 50007 *Hercules* was operational and ready for main line use in GBRf livery. It continues to carry the identity of No. 50034 *Furious* on one side. No. 50031 *Hood* was non-operational with power unit issues to be addressed in 2023-25.

The repainting of No. 50033 *Glorious* has been completed, with other issues being addressed as time permits – although the loco remains non-operational.

No. 50035 *Ark Royal* was available for use on the SVR. On March 4, *Ark Royal* underwent a 'B-type' exam, which involved lifting the loco to access a traction motor requiring attention. A replacement blower was also fitted to the loco's No. 2 end.

No. 50044 *Exeter* was operational and ready for occasional main line use in BR Blue, while No. 50049 *Defiance* was operational and ready for main line use in GBRf livery.

Well-wishers can support the on-going preservation of these locomotives by purchasing shares. Application forms are available online at www.class50alliance.co.uk/downloads.htm. Donations can be made at www.fiftyfund.org.uk

DMU DEPARTURE: A pair of Class 108 DMU cars left the Wensleydale Railway (WR) on February 15, believed for the same fate, but at different locations. They are both much-travelled and long-time stored, with thoughts of restoration appearing to have been abandoned due to the availability of 'Pacers' on the WR. They are expected to be dismantled for spares parts.

Trailer DTCL No. M56274, once used at the Rutland Railway Museum (now Rocks by Rail) as hauled stock, is seen being removed from storage at Leeming Bar, en route to Wolsingham on the Weardale Railway.

DMCL No. M51572 departed soon after, destined for Rampart, Barrow Hill, for stripping of parts for Weardale's No. M52054.

The two cars were paired-up at the Stainmore Railway in 2009, but despite work on the power car it was never used and both cars were moved to Leeming Bar in 2015, where they remained in store. They were put up for sale in December 2020, attracting little interest as a potential operational set. NIGEL COCKBURN



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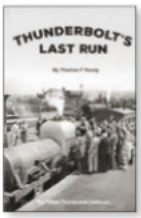
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Spring 'Goodies' from Camden

RECENT

Thunderbolt's Last Run • Young £14.98



When last seen back in 1953, or on TV screens most weeks since, the 'Titfield Thunderbolt' had triumphantly reached Mallingford to secure the licence to operate of the Titfield branch. But what happened next? That is the tale in this most enjoyable book which, after a Prologue, tells of all of the problems of the following two weeks when the 'Thunderbolt' began to suffer alarmingly, as it is asked to run the service on its own. And despite being in jail, Crump and Pearce continue to scheme to wreck the railway, and the 'Thunderbolt'. All this is in 1953, but Chapter 15 finds the Vicar and Mr. Valentine 20 years later, bringing the story up to 1973, when everyone other than Crump and Pearce are living happy lives. For more details you have to buy the book! 124 pages. Six B&W drawings. Paperback.

NEW!

OXENHOLME - through the eyes of Alec Major £11.05



Portrays the railway scene around Oxenholme, a busy Cumbrian junction station on the West Coast main line, in the heyday of BR steam from 1957 through 1961. It conveys the many fascinations of train-working, and the daily challenges and goings-on that encouraged local enthusiast Alec Mayor to keep unique and detailed records of train operation and time-keeping. Later, Paul Irving compiled them into a narrative rich with his personal insights as a Carlisle train controller. Though express passenger trains are at the centre of the story, but local services, parcels and the many freight trains take their places too. Richly illustrated with B&W and some colour photographs, the book draws the reader back to enjoy the interest and excitement of those times. Ron Herbert, who spent some years as a train and traffic controller in Preston said, "It's a superb read - reliving the railway as I remember it all those years ago. This was the real railway in action!" 52 A4 pages. Paperback.

NEW!

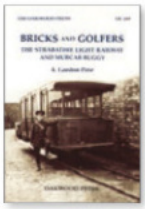
Ruston & Hornsby Locomotives Tonks • £43.95



Hugely updated and expanded 2nd Edition of Eric Tonks' second printing with corrections of the 1974 edition of the Pocket Book on Ruston & Hornsby, published by the Birmingham Locomotive Club. Between 1931 and 1968 Ruston & Hornsby built 6475 diesel locomotives, far more than any other British company, in a number of gauges up to standard gauge. The vast majority of these were for industrial use. The sheer number of photographs, plus a good number of general arrangement drawings and informative text will certainly keep readers happy! 244 very well produced pages. Around 440 colour and B&W photographs, drawings and schematics, Case Studies and a Numerical List of Locomotives. Hardbound.

NEW!

BRICKS and GOLFERS The Strathbathie Light Railway and Murcar Buggy Pirie • £18.98



This 3 foot gauge line was built in 1899 by the Seaton Brick and Tile Company to connect their brickworks at Strathbathie to Bridge of Don on the northern outskirts of Aberdeen. Motive power was an 0-4-0 tank locomotive named "Newburgh" and a passenger service was offered for workers. The Murcar Golf Club at Bridge of Don was granted running powers and operated its own railcar known as "The Murcar Buggy". When the brickworks closed in 1924, the golf club took over the southern portion of the line, and continued regular services until 1950. Largely unsung and largely unknown, this is a comprehensive overview of this little line. 63 illustrations and 128 pages. Paperback.

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This distinctly different book on the S&D passed us by when it was published a while back. The S&D finally closed on the 7th March 1966, steam worked to the end, despite the fearsome gradients as it conquered the Mendips at its northern end. This covers the line's last 4 years after it had passed to the Western Region and up to closure. A real joy from 50 years ago! 96 page large format paperback.

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Tornado suffers further delay for boiler overhaul

Inspection raises concerns prior to boiler being refitted into frames, but its small tubes will be replaced while an investigation continues.

THE return of 'A1' Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* has suffered another setback and it is likely to be the summer before the loco is back on the main line after overhaul.

Following news of the return of the loco's boiler back from the DB Meiningen works in Germany, there was anticipation of reasonable progress, however this has been dampened following a boiler inspection by British Engineering Services (BES) before it was due to be placed back in the frames.

The A1 Steam Trust (A1SLT) said BES raised concerns around the quality and installation of the small tubes in *Tornado's* boiler. At the time, it was not possible to confirm if the cause was a material or welding issue, so all parties (A1SLT, DB Meiningen and BES) have agreed that the best course of action is to replace the small tubes in parallel with investigating what has caused the concern.

In a statement, the trust said this approach would not only ensure continued quality and reliability but will be the fastest route to complete the boiler ready for installation on the frames. The trust adds that it remains committed to running the first of the 'Aberdonian' trains on July 20.

Tickets for the 'Aberdonian' trains are now on sale online at www.a1steam.com/a1-rail-tours/the-aberdonian# and dates of these trains are July 20/27/29, August 19/31 and September 7/16.

Disappointed at another setback, A1SLT engineering staff are pressing ahead to complete the overhaul as soon as possible, ahead of *Tornado's* planned May 27-June 4 visit to the North Norfolk Railway and subsequent testing of the ETCS (European Train Control System) equipment at the Rail Innovation and Development Centre (RIDC), Old Dalby, prior to the mainline return.

The retubing itself will be covered by the boiler's warranty, however as *Tornado* has been away from the main line longer than originally anticipated, there has been a big impact on the loco's earning capability.

Therefore, the trust is asking for donations which will go directly towards the wider overhaul. These can be made at www.a1steam.com/donation.



ST DAVID'S DAY TOUR: On March 1, Class 40 No. 40013 *Andania* with Class 47 No. 47805 (D1935) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* at the rear, work past Tilley, near Wem with train 1Z4, Saphos Trains' 'St David's Day Welsh Marches Express', the 06.05 Holyhead to Cardiff Central. At Hereford, LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* replaced *Andania*. ED WEAVER

New Jacobite season begins

ANOTHER season of the 'Jacobite' operation by the West Coast Railway Co was scheduled to start on April 3.

From that date, there will be a daily morning train at 10.15 from Fort William, returning from Mallaig at 14.10, and this will continue to October 27.

A second daily train, running in the afternoons, commences on May 1 and runs until September 29, departing from Fort William at 12.50 and returning from Mallaig at 17.00.

Fares for 2023 are £57 adult return, £33 child in standard class, £89 adult first class (£63 child) or there is an option of a compartment for six passengers at £385. Fares are subject to a minimum £3.75 booking fee. There may be seats available each day on a first come first served 'cash only' basis, however, these cannot be guaranteed. Further information at westcoastrailways.co.uk/jacobite

Locos are set to include 'Black Fives' No. 44871, 45212 and 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*. 'K1' No. 62005 remains under overhaul.

SIDELINES

Tour of 13 London termini

UK Railtours 'Bakers Dozen' tour on April 15, which will be hauled by Hastings Diesel DEMU No. 1001 and visit 13 London termini, has sold out. The tour begins at Liverpool Street and works anticlockwise around the capital to finish at London Bridge.

Pathfinder's Golden Anniversary special

SEATS are still available for Pathfinder Tours 'Golden Anniversary' special from Burton-on-Trent to Weymouth on June 10, via Birmingham New St, Cheltenham Spa and Swindon, which will be hauled by Class 40 No. D345. Fares start from £139 standard class.

Sell-out expected for Class 313 farewell tour

NEWS that the venerable Southern Class 313 EMUs are to be withdrawn in May has led to a farewell charity tour being organised by the Branch Line Society (BLS) to mark the end of use of this BREL York-built PEP stock.

Expected to be a sell-out tour, the 'Sussex Rambler' will operate on April 29, along the Coastway route now synonymous with the class, starting at Brighton (c0845) and ending back in the resort at around 18.30.

Using a pair of Class 313 units, the route for the day will be Preston Park, Havant, Portsmouth Harbour, Barnham, Bognor Regis Middle Siding, Littlehampton (one hour break), Worthing, Haywards Heath, Three Bridges, Lewes, Eastbourne, Hastings, Ore Up Siding, Newhaven Marine, Haywards Heath and Brighton. The route will include several sidings and a number of reversing moves.

Fares are £62.50, accompanied under 18s benefit from a £31.30 reduction. There is no surcharge for non-BLS members.

The BLS says there will be no catering facilities on board, but passengers are welcome to bring their own food and drink. Proceeds from a charity raffle will be donated to Railway Children and Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice.

Online booking is open at www.branchline.uk

Colas Class 37s haulage for Central Wales line

A RARE loco-hauled circular tour over the scenic Heart of Wales route has been announced by Pathfinder Tours for May 20.

The 'Heart of Wales Explorer' will start at Bristol Temple Meads and pick up at Bath Spa, Chippenham, Swindon, Oxford, Banbury, Leamington Spa, Warwick Parkway, Dorridge and Birmingham New Street before arriving in Shrewsbury for a lunchtime break. Traction will be a pair of Colas Rail Class 37s.

From Shrewsbury, the 'Explorer' heads south to Craven Arms, before taking the Heart of Wales line to pass over two viaducts and through six tunnels to Hendy junction, before returning via the Severn Tunnel to Bristol and the other pick-up points. There will be a photostop at some point on the Heart of Wales line.

Fares are £129 adult standard and £65 standard junior, with first class non-dining at £185 adult and £145 junior, while premier class dining seats are £299 (£259 junior) or £1176 for a party of four. Book online at www.pathfindertours.co.uk or by calling 01453 835414.

■ Tickets are still available for Pathfinders' 'Cambrian Coast Express' tour on April 21 from Bristol Temple Meads, calling at selected stations to Shrewsbury where two Network Rail Class 37s will take over to take the tour to Pwllheli. Seats start at £129 standard class.

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LMS 'Jubilee' 4-6-0 No. 45699 *Galatea* in its guise as No. 45562 *Sierra Leone* visited London Paddington on February 18, starting and finishing a Railway Touring Company 'Cotswold Venturer' tour. A few weeks later on March 4, the loco visited London Euston with the RTC's 'Chesireman' excursion, reportedly becoming the first 'Jubilee' in preservation to visit Euston.
PICTURES: THOMAS SHRIMPTON AND (INSET) PHIL MARSH

Freight locos for Norfolk 'rare track'

A TOUR around Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex where at least 10 goods line authority requests are being made is on offer with UK Railtours' (UKRT) 'Parkeston Panorama', planned for May 27.

The tour will be hauled by two GB Railfreight Class 66s (in top and tail mode for some sections) and a request has been made to GB for locos which have not worked a passenger train before.

Until the goods line authorities are confirmed or denied, the final routing cannot be confirmed but the tour will begin at Stevenage, picking up at Potters Bar, Finsbury Park and Stratford before a routing via Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Ely, Norwich, Harwich International and back to Stevenage. UKRT says its website will contain updates as the route is confirmed.

Fares for this train are £119 adult standard (£109 junior), first class non-dining £169, first class dining £279 or £1096 for a party of four.

Online booking is open at www.ukrailtours.co.uk or by phone on 01438 715050.

Torbay destination for West Coast 'Cromptons' excursion

THE English Riviera resorts of Torquay and Paignton lie at the end of a railtour from Burton-on-Trent which will be hauled by a pair of West Coast Railway Class 33s.

Bank holiday Monday, May 29, will see the operation of the 'Crompton Torbay Venturer, calling at Tamworth, Birmingham New St, Stourbridge Jct, Kidderminster, Worcester Shrub Hill, Cheltenham Spa, Cam & Dursley and Bristol Parkway on its way to Devon.

With around four hours in the Torbay area, the return working will be via Taunton, the Berks and Hants, over Bruton bank and through Castle Cary before heading through the Avon Valley through Bath to set down at the outward pick-up points.

On board will be a licensed buffet and the premier dining option includes a full English breakfast, elevenses and four course evening dinner.

Fares are £129 adult standard and £65 standard junior with a table of four £496.

First class non-dining costs £185 adult, £145 junior and £720 for a party of four; premier dining class dining seats are £299 (£259 junior) or £1176 for a party of four. Book online at www.pathfindertours.co.uk

APRIL: STEAM RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	Steam-Hauled From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
April				
3-30	Jacobite	Fort William-Mallaig-Fort William (daily, mornings)	TBC	WCRC
8	Cumbrian Fellsman	Carnforth-Carlisle-Preston	WCRC Pool	PF
8	Cotswold Explorer	Hanwell loop-Worcester Shrub Hill	LSL Pool	ST
15	Great Western Envoy	Hanwell Loop-Bristol Temple Meads	LSL Pool	ST
15	Great Britain XV	Paddington-Plymouth-Bristol TM	WCRC Pool	RTC
16	Great Britain XV	Bristol TM-Abergavenny-Holyhead	WCRC Pool	RTC
16	Shakespeare Express	Birmingham Snow Hill-Stratford-upon-Avon (twice)	7029	VT
18	Great Britain XV	Llandudno Jct-Chester-Carlisle-Edinburgh	WCRC Pool	RTC
19	Great Britain XV	Edinburgh-Forth Bridge-Aberdeen-Edinburgh	WCRC Pool	RTC
20	Great Britain XV	Edinburgh-Carlisle-Settle-Blackpool North	WCRC Pool	RTC
21	Great Britain XV	Blackpool North-Hebden Bridge-York-Scarborough	WCRC Pool	RTC
22	Great Britain XV	Scarborough-York-Doncaster-Lincoln-King's Lynn	WCRC Pool	RTC
22	Northern Belle	Carnforth-Appleby	WCRC Pool	NB
22	Cumbrian Mountaineer	Hellifield-Carlisle-Crewe	7029	VT
22		London Victoria-Winchester-London Victoria	LSL Pool	SD
23	Great Britain XV	King's Lynn-Ely-Ipswich, Felixstowe-Royston-King's Cross	WCRC Pool	RTC
26		London Victoria-Ridgmont-Chesterfield	LSL Pool	SD
29	North Wales Coast Exp	Birmingham New St-Crewe-Chester, Llandudno-B'ham	5043	VT
29	Northern Belle	Carnforth-Appleby	WCRC Pool	NB
30	Royal Duchy	Bristol Temple Meads-Plymouth	60103	RTC

Notes:
WCRC Pool: Locos from 45680/45699/46115/35018/34067
LSL Pool: Locos from 34046/45231/46100/4498/70000

APRIL: DIESEL & ELECTRIC RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
5	S&C Circular	Hereford-Appleby-Hereford	2 x LSL 47s	STATE
8	The Last Chance	Finsbury Park-Immingham-Deepcar-Finsbury Park	DBC 90/60+66	UKR
12	English Riviera Pullman	Hull-Derby-Paignton	Blue Pullman	BP
15	Baker's Dozen	Liverpool St to all London termini	Hastings 1001	UKR
19	Dorset Coast Statesman	Crewe-Rugby-Weymouth	2 x LSL 47s	STATE
21	Cambrian Coast Express	Bristol TM-Birmingham NS-Pwllheli	DB 67, NR 97/3s	PF
22	S&C Circular	Worcester Shrub Hill-Appleby- Worcester Shrub Hill	2 x LSL 47s	STATE
26	Highland Clansman Pullman	Thirsk-Berwick-Aviemore	Blue Pullman	BP
29	Spring Cornish Explorer	Dorridge-Banbury-Bath-Penzance	2 x WRC Cl 37s	PF
29		Llandudno Victorian Statesman Didcot-Kemble-Worcester-Llandudno	2 x LSL 47s	STATE

■ Industrial action may lead to the cancellation of tours – check with tour promo

BOOKING CONTACTS

BP – Blue Pullman
0800 038 5360
NB – Northern Belle
0844 8404525
PT – Pathfinder Tours
01453 835414
RTC – Railway Touring Company
01553 661500
SD – Steam Dreams
01483 209888
ST – Saphos Trains
saphostrains.com
SR – Statesman Rail
0345 310 2458
UKR – UK Railtours
01438 715050
VT – Vintage Trains
0121 708 4960
WCRC – West Coast Railways
01524 737751

NOTES

- Please note that advertised traction, routes, times and even tour dates can, and often do, change from the advertised details. Check with your tour promoter before travelling. *The Railway Magazine* cannot accept any responsibility for changes to any advertised trains.
- Note: Tours may start and finish elsewhere.

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Argentina



Coaches, wagons, locomotives: all rolling stock is now around 100 years old, and also 100 % authentic on this fantastic line!

La Trochita – tiny gauge – as the locals call their 250 mile long narrow gauge railway in southern Argentina, compared to the broad gauge line to San Carlos de Bariloche, this 750 mm gauge appears to be really small. But La Trochita is the longest preserved narrow gauge line in the world. In Buenos Aires we'll add some standard- and broad gauge steam to the tour.

La Trochita is sandwiched between the endless plains of Patagonia and the high mountains of the Andes, South America's predominating mountain range. Combining rapid weather changes between dark skies, looking like the end of the world, snow storms, hail showers and crystal clear, deep blue skies, you'll find an enormous range of impressive situations and photographic opportunities which cannot be found on any other steam railway in the world. This railway is unique in many respects, nothing compares to it.

Isle of Man: Steam Charters und Manx Electric	Apr 23rd – Apr 29th
South Africa: Two 25NC in mainline service **waiting list**	Jun 23rd – Jul 4th
Argentina: Broad gauge Steam & La Trochita	**Sep 2nd – Sep 14th**
Bosnia-Herz.: ‚Kriegsloks' in Mine & Line Service	Oct 21st – Oct 28th
UK: Welsh Narrow Gauge Explorer	Nov 1st – Nov 13th
Pakistan: Broad Gauge Steam and Semaphores	Nov 24th – Dec 5th
Pakistan: Diesel at the Bolan Pass	Dec 4th – Dec 8th
Eritrea: Mallets to Asmara & camel market in Keren	Jan 6th – Jan 17th



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SIDELINES

June opening for Newhaven link

TRANSPORT for Edinburgh chief executive George Lowder has suggested that the three-mile extension of the city's tram system to Newhaven will now open later than anticipated.

George Lowder told the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group Conference that the route would be in operation by June 21, rather than spring, as previously predicted.

Helical is preferred TfL partner

TRANSPORT for London has named Helical as the preferred investment partner for its commercial office portfolio joint venture, which includes development sites over Tube stations at Bank, Paddington and Southwark.

All three have full planning permission for sustainable developments which TfL says will "positively impact the local community".

The joint venture company will purchase leasehold interests in the sites from TfL and establish individual property companies for each of the sites, which it will then develop.

Bury line bicycle storage boost

IN a £1.2 milllion scheme, new bicycle storage facilities will be installed at tram stops on Metrolink's Bury line.

Radcliffe, Besses o' the' Barn, Prestwich, Heaton Park, Bowker Vale, Crumpsall, Abraham Moss and Queens Road will benefit from the investment.

The work includes the installation of covered stands in highly visible and accessible locations, along with lighting and CCTV. Work has already started at Radcliffe and all sites are expected to be fully upgraded by mid-May.

Tram safety lessons

NOTTINGHAM Express Transit is working with local community group The Pythian Club to give tram safety education to primary and secondary school pupils in the city.

As well as illustrating the dangers of playing around on board and close to stops and tracks, students are also receiving advice on how to call for help if needed while using the system.



Tyne & Wear Metro Class 555 No. 555003 marshalled between barrier vehicles at Tyne Yard on February 25. RailAdventure Class 43s No. 43484 and 43485 remained at the head of the consist for the final leg of its journey on the national network two days later. GRAEME PICKERING

Third time lucky for new T&W Metro delivery

After two postponements to its arrival, Nexus receives the first of the five-car Class 555s which will form Tyne & Wear system's new fleet.

THE first of the 46 Class 555 units, which are on order from Stadler to form the new Tyne & Wear Metro fleet, arrived at the network's South Gosforth depot in Newcastle early on the morning of February 28.

Delivered by rail via the Channel Tunnel, No. 555003 initially made its way from Dollands Moor to Wembley, and then via Belmont Yard in Doncaster to Tyne Yard. The train, including barrier vehicles, was stabled there along with RailAdventure Class 43 Nos. 43484 and 43485 (which had provided haulage) from the morning of February 25 until 00.12 on February 28, The consist then made the last leg of its journey on Network Rail metals, running at a maximum of 40mph to Bill Quay, between Pelaw and Hebburn, where it was transferred to the Metro system and moved to the £70 million Stadler depot, constructed to maintain the new units. Four of the current fleet of Metro-Cammell-built trains were involved in the operation.

Postponed

Originally due on Tyneside at the end of last year, delivery of the first unit was postponed in order to avoid clashing with rail network engineering work over Christmas and New Year. In January, Stadler confirmed that a "technical glitch" encountered as it was beginning its journey to the UK had prompted its return to Switzerland for attention.

Although February's movement was a case of third time lucky, No. 555003 received some unwanted attention en route to the North East, picking-up graffiti to one side, which was removed at South Gosforth.



No. 555003 shortly after arrival at Stadler's new South Gosforth depot. NEXUS

A period of testing and driver training awaits the unit. The first Class 555 is set to enter Metro service in the autumn.



CLOCKWORK (NOT SO) ORANGE: In 'Net Zero' livery, with motor car No. 132 leading, a Glasgow Subway inner circle train heading towards Govan arrives at Partick station on February 3. PAUL BIGGS

£700m Bank upgrade completed

COMPLETION of the £700 million upgrade of Bank Underground station was marked on February 27, by a visit from Mayor of London Sadiq Khan.

The final stage of the major project (launched in 2016) to increase station capacity by 40%, was the opening of a new ticket hall on Cannon Street and a new entrance giving customers easier access to the Northern line and Docklands Light Railway.

TfL estimates that improvements to the route for passengers travelling between the two, which included the construction of three new escalators, have reduced travelling time by up to nine minutes. Moving walkways and a further three escalators also provide a quicker route between Northern and Central lines.

This work was preceded by the opening of a new southbound platform and concourse in May last year, after a 17-week closure of the Northern line's Bank branch to allow the connection of the new southbound tunnel to the route and construction of a new concourse on the site of the previous southbound platform.

An earlier stage of work saw access improved to the Waterloo & City line with the opening of a new entrance, including two lifts, on Walbrook.



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Potential for rail-linked Marchwood

ASSOCIATED British Ports has agreed a deal which it hopes will help realise the "significant potential" of the rail-linked Marchwood Port on Southampton Water.

The acquisition of the port's operator Solent Gateway Ltd is aimed at delivering plans for development and job creation, as well as improving the site's facilities for serving the Ministry of Defence.

Part of the Solent Freeport, it can accommodate a range of vessels and has 158 acres of land for logistics use.

ABP chief executive Henrik Pedersen said: "It provides extra facilities and space in close proximity to the Port of Southampton, which will enable us to offer more solutions to customers and strengthen the region's place as an important export gateway."

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With Great Northern Class 717 unit No. 717009 and Class 66 No. 66077 behind them, GTR and DB Cargo teams working on the introduction of ETCS meet at GTR's Hornsey depot. DB CARGO

Getting ready for digitally-signalled ECML freight

DB Cargo learns from Govia Thameslink Railway's early experiences with ETCS.

PASSENGER operator Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), whose Great Northern services on the Northern City Line between Moorgate and Finsbury Park will start to use European Train Control System (ETCS) digital in-cab signalling later this year, is sharing its experience in preparing for the changes with DB Cargo.

As part of the ECDP (East Coast Digital Programme), which will progressively introduce the system on the East Coast Main Line between London King's Cross and Stoke Tunnel, near Grantham, DB Cargo will be the first freight operator to install ETCS on its locomotives and multiple units.

'First-in-class'

'First-in-class' fitment to Class 66 No. 66039 began in November last year at Electro-Motive Diesel's works in Doncaster and the company will subsequently also have the first examples of Classes 60, 67 and 325 to be ETCS-fitted.

GTR's Thameslink services are already signalled by ETCS between St Pancras and London Bridge.

"We are using the current platform of the ECDP and the operational and technical experience that we've gained to share across other operators in order to ensure that we have no knowledge loss across the network," explained Aaron Meakin, GTR's fleet project manager for Thameslink and Great Northern.

Opportunity

Oliver Turner, GTR's head of European Rail Traffic Management System said the company had learned a "phenomenal" amount about the implementation of ETCS and there was an opportunity to save money, time and effort for other operators by passing this on.

"GTR has shared with us the areas where things did not go so well and the areas that did go well so that gives DB Cargo an insight into the direction we should be going in and things we can avoid," added Casper Carr, DB Cargo's assistant business change manager.

"If we work in silos, no lessons are learned," he continued. "Whether it's a freight operating company, a train operating company, on track machinery, heritage or charter, we are all in this together and it's for the benefit of the UK."



DB Cargo Class 66 No. 66039 entered the Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) works in Doncaster in October 2022, for 'first in class' fitment of ETCS equipment. DB CARGO

Rail offers sustainability boost for Fox Group

LANCASHIRE-BASED haulage company Fox Group says taking over the former Leyland Motors sidings in Leyland and using them for aggregates traffic has provided an opportunity for its operations to become more efficient and environmentally sustainable.

The first loaded train to the reopened railhead from Tunstead Quarry in Derbyshire on January 9, conveyed 1800 tonnes of material for onward distribution to Fox Group's customers by lorry. Operated by Freightliner, the ongoing flow of traffic is expected to generate up to 10 trains per week.

Impact

The firm says that utilising rail, along with electric plant machinery and tipper wagons allows it to reduce carbon emissions "massively".

Reopening the sidings was the culmination of over two years of planning and preparations, working closely with Lancashire County Council. Originally laid in the 1950s in connection with the production of Centurion tanks, they continued to serve the Leyland plant until the 1990s and were redeveloped in 2016 for the temporary servicing of diesel multiple units while work took place to electrify the Blackpool route.

Right: Freightliner Class 66 No. 66509 *Josiah's Wish* with the first aggregates train to the reopened former Leyland Motors sidings, which arrived on January 9. FOX GROUP





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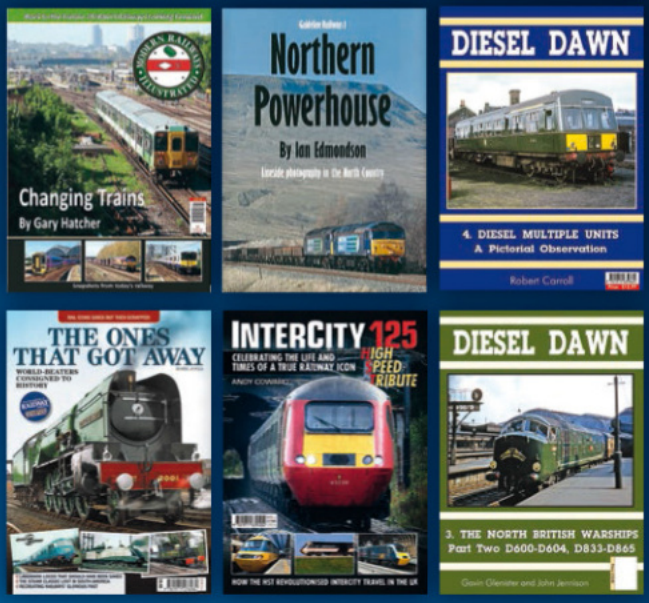
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SIDELINES

North West electrification progress

WORK on a £78m project to electrify 6½ miles of line between Wigan North Western and Lostock will require a six-day closure of the route between May 6-12. Bridge raising or replacement work has been ongoing on 17 structures, meaning local diversions.

Preparations for new Morley station

NINE days of work at the beginning of February have laid the foundations for new, longer platforms along with a track realignment at Morley station on the TransPennine Manchester-Leeds route. The next key piece of work at Morley station in June will see the old station demolished, and a new one set to open later this year.

St Erth to go step free

A NEW footbridge and lifts are to be installed at St Erth as part of the Government's Access for All programme. The new facility will make the Grade II listed station fully accessible for the first time since it was built in 1852. The current footbridge will be removed, and has been donated to the East Somerset Railway, where it will be installed at Cranmore station. Work will begin in the spring and should be completed before Christmas.

East Suffolk embankment work

NETWORK Rail has begun to stabilise and widen a mile-long embankment on the Ipswich-Lowestoft line to the north of Martlesham, where signalling equipment and signage is falling down the bank. Engineers will be working over 13 consecutive days ending on April 6.

Raging Bull rehomed in Grand Central

PLANS are being finalised to make Birmingham New Street station the new home of the 2022 Commonwealth Games' Raging Bull.

During the games, the bull was displayed in Centenary Square and is being modified to make it more robust. The sculpture was created from the machinery used in the city's manufacturing industry and the artwork is due to arrive on the concourse of New Street, within Grand Central, in the summer.

Carstairs remodelling begins

Work on important West Coast Main Line junction makes it fit for the future.

WORK has begun on a massive £164 million improvements project to remodel Carstairs Junction and get rid of the bottleneck it creates, along with the removal of a 50mph speed restriction.

The location is a key one on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) in Scotland but operationally, is life expired. The Scottish Government is funding the upgrade.

With more than 200+ services passing through the junction on a weekday the layout is no longer suited to higher traffic levels, and enabling works for the junction upgrade first began in 2020.

Engineers are installing a new power supply with the ability to switch off the overhead lines remotely in order to carry out maintenance. This will reduce the amount of time the railway is closed in future. Removing the speed restriction through track layout alterations will bring an improvement to overall journey times.

The first phase of work in a three-month programme took place between March 4-19 and resulted in no direct services to Glasgow Central and Edinburgh on the WCML through Carstairs.

Avanti West Coast ran shuttle services between Carlisle and Glasgow via Dumfries and the Glasgow & South Western route using Class 221 units. Some freight workings, such as the Daventry-Mossend 'Tesco' trains were diverted via this route too.

Carstairs has for too long been a restriction on the WCML and a simplification and upgrade of the track layout will make the area more resilient to cope with passenger and freight demands.

Phase two of the work began on March 20 and continues until April 21. It will see part of the junction re-opening, allowing some trains to run directly to Edinburgh. However, trains to and from Glasgow will be diverted via Shotts and Midcalder Junction, where the train will reverse direct on its way to or from the WCML, adding around 40 mins to journey times.



An aerial view of Carstairs Junction showing the West Coast Main Line on the left – Glasgow being to the north, London to the south. The station platforms are visible by the blue and white overbridge and the line to Edinburgh curves round to the right, while the complex on the right houses the Network Rail maintenance depot. NETWORK RAIL

A final phase of work is planned to run between April 22 and June 4 and will see most services return to normal during weekdays but with the junction fully closed at weekends. During the later phases of the project, there will be no direct services between Glasgow Central or Edinburgh and Carlisle on the West Coast main line at weekends. The extent of the work also means there will be no ScotRail services to or from Carstairs for the three-month duration of the work, services recommencing on May 30.

Oxford station expansion to get underway in April

A £161 million project to expand Oxford station to provide a new western entrance and a new platform will start in April.

In the first phase, the busy Botley Road will be closed to cars and buses from April 11 until the end of October.

This is to undertake preliminary work ahead of replacing the Botley Road bridge next year and divert the services of 11 different utility providers. During the closure, access for cyclists and pedestrian will continue.

The target is to replace the bridge over four days in August 2024 and undertake further highway improvements, including lowering of the carriageway.

This summer, between July 29 and August 6, Network Rail is planning track works and preparatory work for the new platform with rail services impacted and will publish alternative travel arrangements in late spring.

The original plan was for a 12-month closure starting in January 2023, but this was reviewed in view of the complexities involved in diverting the utilities and feedback from communities. Splitting the road closures while still delivering the railway improvements will mean most of the work will be completed during spring/summer months, creating less of an impact on school and university terms.

The project is due for completion at the end of 2024.



Artist's impression of the new Oxford station western entrance. NETWORK RAIL

RAIB investigates train hitting bridge debris

THE Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) has opened an investigation after a Class 80x GWR train hit debris from a failed wingwall which was part of a road bridge.

On February 10, the 17.34 London Paddington to Hereford was on the single line at Yarnton, between Oxford and Charlbury, travelling at around 55mph when it hit brick rubble. Although there was damage to the train, it did not derail.

Although Network Rail initially reopened the line on Sunday, February 12, it was closed again a few hours later after further movements were observed, and remained shut for a further nine days while an adjacent embankment was stabilised with steel piling and soil nailing.

The landslide had also exposed a gas main which presented an added complexity to overcome during the repairs.

RAIB's investigation will look at a number of factors, including the history of the structure including modifications taken to the wingwall and also a report of cracks in the road on the approach to the bridge prior to the failure.

A 20mph temporary speed was imposed and a watchman positioned on site until Network Rail has completed the second phase of longer-term repairs.

SW Main Line back to four tracks after Hook landslip

ALL four tracks of the South Western Main Line reopened on February 24 following round-the-clock working to repair a serious landslip caused by heavy rain.

The landslip left the down slow track suspended in mid-air and the down fast line partially eroded, seriously affecting South West Railway services to Southampton, Weymouth and Exeter.

To provide some southbound capacity during repairs, engineers connected the down fast to the up fast over a stable section of the embankment, thereby increasing the number of trains that could run between Winchfield and Hook.

A further complication was that the bank slip was in a remote location, meaning that engineers needed to build a 580 metre access road across fields to get materials and machinery to the site.

A 60 metre steel wall made up of 100 12 metre interlocking piles was driven into the ground to stabilise the embankment, before infilling.

The steel wall will also protect this section from future landslips.

Exciting plans unveiled at Leicester station

NEW images showing how the area around Leicester's landmark station will be revitalised to create an attractive and accessible gateway into the city have been released by Leicester City Council.

Having already secured £17.6million from the Government's Levelling Up Fund, a key aspect for the project is relocating its main entrance so that it opens onto Station Street and directly faces the city centre.

The city council, Network Rail and East Midlands Railway are working in partnership to bring forward these proposals. The original Station Street façade of the Grade II listed station building will also be revealed and carefully restored.

Under the plans, the existing taxi rank will be relocated from the porte cochère to a new purpose-built looped taxi rank area accessed via Fox Street. This will free up the area to be revamped as an attractive plaza for cafes, bars or retail, as has been achieved at Nottingham.

In the middle of the taxi loop will be the repositioned statue of Thomas Cook, founder of the package holiday, although there has been some discussion the statue should be given a more prominent position to greet passengers as it currently does.

Access to Station Street from London Road will cease and be replaced with a new landscaped pedestrianised open space via a crossing to Granby Street and onto the city centre.

The proposed transformation will require the demolition of the Parcel Yard pub building and the adjacent taxi office. Planning and listed building consent will be applied for, and if approved work is expected to start later this year.

City Mayor Peter Soulsby said: "Leicester's railway station is a beautiful building but is in need of a radical overhaul to help it meet the needs of a modern city the size of Leicester.

"We have been working closely with rail industry partners to develop ambitious plans to revamp and revitalise the station. It is a major project that will make a huge difference. It will help transform the area into a vibrant gateway and make a vital contribution to Leicester's future growth and prosperity."



A generated image showing how the revised entrance and pedestrian approach will look at Leicester station. The existing entrances in the porte cochère will be glazed and the released space used for shops, bars and cafes. LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

£140,000 upgrade for Pwllheli's Cambrian 'box

A COMPREHENSIVE refurbishment of Pwllheli signalbox has been completed by Network Rail at a cost of £140000.

Situated at the end of the Cambrian Coast Line from Shrewsbury, the box – or 'ground-frame' to be more precise – was constructed in 1893 for the Elan Valley Junction at Rhayader and then recommissioned for Pwllheli West sidings in 1903.

After years of service in the harsh North Wales seaside climate, work teams have meticulously refurbished the windows and the stairs leading up to the box, as well as replacing the surrounding gantry walkway, with materials much stronger than its previous iteration.

Hidden timber elements, lintels and roof tiles have also been replaced, in addition to a new paint job and guttering drainage and the removal of a wall of ivy that was damaging the exterior.

The box provides access to sidings for excursion or engineers' trains, with access to the frame being controlled by the RETB (Radio Electronic Token Block) signalling centre at Machynlleth.

PICTURES: NETWORK RAIL





Five more new stations for West Midlands?

TRANSPORT for West Midlands (TfWM) and the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) are to explore the feasibility and business cases for five additional railway stations across the region.

Following an initial study which identified 15 possible locations, this has been whittled down to five which have the strongest cases for development. These are located at Balsall Heath on the Camp Hill line, Birmingham; Coventry East (Binley), on the Coventry-Rugby line; Foleshill (Coventry-Nuneaton line); Castle Bromwich (east of Birmingham); and Tettenhall (west of Wolverhampton towards Shrewsbury).

Once complete, the business cases could be used to secure further Government funding to design and build the new stations. Delivery of some of the new stations is also linked to the completion of HS2 which will free up capacity for more local services on existing rail lines, as well as completion of the Midland Rail Hub project to increase rail network capacity into central Birmingham.

Plans for stations on the Sutton Park line have been placed on hold.



BOUNDARY MATTERS: Palisade fencing has been installed along both sides of the short freight spur which connects Ketton cement works in Rutland with the Network Rail line between Manton Jct and Peterborough. The two metre high fence replaces the previous wire and post fencing and now makes photographs on the spur virtually impossible. A spokesperson for Hanson Ketton Cement said the move was to stop trespassing on the tracks. However, after putting the new fencing up, the company has realised the visual impact and is in the process of getting the fence replaced by a deer/horse type net fence, which it says will blend much better with the landscape. The work should be completed around easter. NICK PIGOTT

Brechin selected as new home for historic bridge

A NEW home has been found for a historic footbridge removed from the rail network in Glasgow's southside as part of an ongoing electrification project.

The lattice bridge dates from 1877 and connected Darnley Road and Moray Place at Strathbungo, but it stood in the way of electrification to Barrhead.

Although Network Rail explored several options to try to keep the footbridge in Glasgow along with railway columns that once supported Susie's Store on Nithsdale Road, a suitable location could not be found.

The bridge and columns were offered via tender, and the Caledonian Railway, Brechin, was selected as recipient.



The heritage operation said it intends to use the columns to develop ramp access to Brechin station and provide much improved facilities for visitors. The footbridge will be installed as part of the general restoration and improvement work at the station. PICTURE: NETWORK RAIL

Ryde Pier set to reopen soon

SUBJECT to the avoidance of further severe weather, Network Rail says it anticipates the work to strengthen Ryde Pier will be completed in the late spring.

The 750 yard (683 metre) Victorian pier closed in October 2022 to refurbish and strengthen the structure.

However, engineers were faced with many unexpected challenges with severe weather in December and January forcing a pause on the work due to safety concerns. This meant the programme has been extended further into the spring.

In addition to the refurbishment of the pier's steelwork, platform improvements at Ryde Esplanade are planned, as is some track maintenance.

Despite the revised timescales, from April 2, the Island Line will finally begin a two trains per hour operation between Ryde Esplanade and Shanklin. Until the line along the pier reopens, a minibus provides a connection between Esplanade and Pier Head.

£4.6m refurb for Chepstow viaduct

A 170-year old viaduct spanning the River Wye at Chepstow is to be refurbished at a cost of £4.6 million.

Designed by Brunel and opening in 1852, while the majority of the structure has changed over the years, the original tubular supports are in place and its style became the basis of design for the Royal Albert Bridge over the Tamar.

To make the bridge fit for the future, engineers will undertake steelwork repairs, waterproofing, masonry repairs, as well as strengthening and re-constructing the abutments.



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SIDELINES

Class 777 introduction enters next phase

TEMPORARY changes and cancellations to some Merseyrail services on the Ormskirk, Southport and Hunts Cross routes became effective from March 6, to allow for driver training on the system's new Stadler-built Class 777 units.

From the same date, a full timetable was reinstated on the Kirkby route – the first on which the new trains entered service, the inaugural working having taken place on January 23. All diagrams to and from Kirkby are now booked for operation by Class 777s.

Manager sought for Allerton depot

NORTHERN is in the process of considering applications for the role of manager at its Allerton depot on Merseyside, which is the base for its Class 319, 323, 331 and 769 trains.

Situated close to Liverpool South Parkway station, around a quarter of the company's entire fleet of 360 units are maintained there.

The successful candidate will be responsible for a workforce of 150 people at the 12.5 acre site, which is currently undergoing modernisation.

Northern director of fleet Iain Burnett said: "We're looking for a strong, inspiring and collaborative leader with the confidence and credibility to help steer the vision we have for Allerton."

Overhauls to begin next year

ALSTOM'S depot at Polmadie in Glasgow will carry out mileage based overhauls on ScotRail's Class 334 electric multiple unit fleet from January next year.

The 40 three-car units, built by Alstom, entered service in 2001.

The £12 million contract with Eversholt Rail, which owns the sets, will cover the overhaul of pneumatic and electrical components including auto couplers, gangways, batteries, underframe air valves, toilets and cab heating, ventilation and air conditioning.

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Southern confirms May Class 313 withdrawal

Summer timetable will herald end of the line for oldest EMUs in regular main line passenger service.



One of the units already taken out of service as the Southern Class 313 fleet nears complete withdrawal, No. 313214 is pictured at Newhaven Town on February 26, 2022 with the 13.41 Brighton-Seaford working. CHRIS MILNER

SOUTHERN has confirmed that all of its Class 313 electric multiple units will be withdrawn by late May.

The oldest class of EMUs still in regular main line service, 19 Class 313/2s are allocated to the operator. Eight are currently required in traffic, but they will be replaced from the start of the summer timetable (which begins on May 21) by Class 377 and 387 'Electrostars'.

Class 377s took over three diagrams from last December's timetable change, by which time Nos. 313206/211/214/217 had been removed from service.

Introduction

The class originally consisted of 64 three-car sets, built by British Rail Engineering Ltd in York. Introduced in 1976, they were the first production version of a family of classes derived from BR's prototype PEP units. Designed (with both a pantograph for overhead AC operation and third rail shoe gear) for use on Great Northern suburban services radiating from Moorgate (where examples remained in service until 2019, succeeded by the new Siemens-built Class 717 units), they have also worked on a number of other routes. Twenty-three units were inherited by the North London Railways franchise and subsequently transferred from Silverlink to London Overground. Nineteen passed to Southern after being displaced by Class 378 'Capitalstars'.

Southern

Refurbished in 2010 and reclassified as Class 313/2 (pantographs were also removed), Southern's decision to use them on some services between Portsmouth and Brighton to improve capacity (in place of much more modern Class 377s 'Electrostars' with air conditioning and toilets) proved controversial, although they remain in use on these diagrams to date, as well as Brighton-Seaford/Lewes and services from Littlehampton to Bognor Regis, Portsmouth and Southsea.

Southern told *The RM:* "They will be replaced with more modern, reliable, and comfortable trains, which is something our passengers along the south coast have been asking for."



HYDROFLEX TESTING: Porterbook-owned 'HydroFLEX' hydrogen-powered unit No. 799201 is pictured at Worcester Shrub Hill station on February 22. As part of its programme of main line testing, it had been diagrammed to run from Long Marston to Barnt Green but only travelled as far as Shrub Hill before returning to Long Marston. Developed in partnership with the University of Birmingham, No. 799201 (formerly Class 319 No. 319382) was showcased at Glasgow Central during the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference. Stored cars from predecessor test unit No. 799001 have been sent for scrap. STEVE WIDDOWSON



COLAS MAKEOVER: Having undergone repairs and a repaint at the South Devon Railway, Colas Class 43 No. 43277 is seen sporting its Colas colours with a flash of Network Rail yellow and branding, leading No. 43251 (still in LNER livery with Colas vinyls) near Attenborough Nature Reserve in Nottinghamshire on March 2. It was named *Safety Task Force* the following day at Colas's Rugby depot. The former LNER HST power cars are among five now used by Colas for working infrastructure monitoring trains on behalf of Network Rail. STEVEN DONALD

TfW Class 769 withdrawals begin

TRANSPORT for Wales expects to complete the withdrawal of all eight of the Class 769s it has in service by early summer.

They were introduced to the Rhymney line in 2020 as a stop-gap until the commissioning of the new Class 231 units built by Stadler.

The process of handing back trains to owner Porterbrook got underway with cars from No. 769007 being moved by low-loader from Canton Brickyard Sidings in Cardiff for storage at Long Marston on February 28.

TfW has also confirmed that it plans to return all 27 Class 175 units to Angel Trains in phases over the course of the next year as the Class 197s which are due to replace them come into service.

Express backbone

Part of the Alstom 'Coradia' family of trains and built at Washwood Heath in Birmingham between 1999 and 2001, the two and three-car Class 175s have formed the backbone of TfW's express services. It is less than 18 months since a programme to refurbish the fleet was completed. Charging points, new carpets, interior fittings and reupholstered seats were among the improvements.

■ Following recent fires involving Class 175 units, which are believed to have been put down to a build-up of leaves, as well as other debris and contaminants in the engine compartments, a number of class members were temporarily taken out of service.

It is understood that trains will be returned to traffic once they have been through a programme of engine bay cleaning for the class, which was already underway.



Driving Trailer Standard Open No. 77302 from unit No. 769007 is pictured on the low-loader closest to the camera in Wellington Street, Cardiff, on February 28, bound for Long Marston. Motor Standard Open Lavatory No. 71778 is seen in the background. MARTIN TURNER

WAGON REPORT

by Steven Fredrick Lappage

NETWORK Rail's programme to repurpose its fleet of MRA side-tipper wagons continues at Loram UK's workshops in Derby. Tipping bodies, hydraulic rams and associated control gear are being removed and replaced by simple open box 'gondola' style bodywork.

Originally delivered in fixed five-wagon rakes, with bar couplers within each set, they are being equipped with conventional screw couplings and side buffers to enable single wagon operation. Now recoded JNA-Y, up to 250 wagons will be converted over a two-year period. Recent conversions moved by rail to Gascoigne Wood for storage have been Nos. 81 70 5831 001-6 to 010-7/012-3/014-9 to 016-4/ 040-7 to 064-7.

Developed by Railtrack and Thrall Europa at York, the MRAs were a modern day variant of British Rail's 'Mermaid' wagon. ABC-NACO axle Motion 3 low-track force bogies were standard and 400 wagons were built Nos. 501001-400.

There are two boxes per wagon, each able to carry 29 tonnes of fresh ballast, which could be discharged to either side of the wagon by radio control. For reasons of safety and stability, only one box per wagon could be emptied during a single operation. One wagon in each rake was fitted with a generator to supply power.

Changes to working arrangements over time led to much of the fleet being under-utilised. Some found alternative uses, including delivery of bulk ballast to local distribution centres, more commonly known as 'virtual quarries'. However, the delivery of new Wascosa financed MLA (Ealnos) box opens has ended this requirement. It is estimated that around 100 wagons will be retained as side-tippers, with the remainder converted.

MRA side-tippers deleted from stock after conversion to JNA-Y fixed body gondola opens have been Nos. 501001/011/016/ 017/019/023/030/040/041/ 050/052/ 061/071/076/077/ 079/083/090/100/ 101/ 110/112/121-123/151-153/166-171/175-177/186/ 187/189/208-210/238-243/268-270/274-276.

■ Repurposing of infrastructure stock is not new. Network Rail's fleet of Mk.1 Autoballaster wagons started life as Tiphook 90 tonne spot-hire aggregate hoppers built by Arbel Fauvet, France in 1988-89. However, they saw only intermittent use and spent long periods in store, notably at Carnforth.

In 1995 a single wagon, KPA No. 83 70 6905 048-7, was rebuilt by RFS(E) at Doncaster into a ballast hopper. Automatic discharge chutes controlled by hand-held radio based equipment were fitted. This was supplied by the Differential Steel Car Company of Ohio, USA.

After intensive testing by GT Rail Maintenance (GTRM), infrastructure operator Railtrack approved the conversion of a fleet of hoppers by Wabtec, Doncaster in 2000-01. The wagons, JJAs Nos. NR 12895-899/901-999, are formed into rakes of five, with one hopper carrying a generator to provide power for the discharge chutes and on board lighting.

■ Moved from Hoo Junction to Gascoigne Wood for storage are KWA heavy plant-carrying well wagons Nos. VTG 95611-615/617-633/635/637-639.

■ Arrivals at DB Cargo UK workshops at Stoke-on-Trent for conversion to open coil/slab carriers have been BRA's Nos. 964007/016/024/029/036/ 045 and BYA's Nos. 966021/030/ 034/055/057/060/064/065/073/ 075/077/081/083/087/105/150/ 156/157/190/194/200/215/226/ 227/236/243.

■ Air braked wagons sent for scrap have been OAA 'Squid' dropside open No. 100048, OBA 'Bass' opens Nos. 110146/ 219/239, OCA opens Nos. 11203 3/117/124/152/201/203/213/28 5, HTA bogie coal hoppers Nos. 310185/227/611/616, MHA/MPA* 'Coalfish' opens Nos. 394095*/099*/125/142/16 2*/195/218/ 231*/233*/243/29 5*/332*/339*/344*/345/357*/3 90*/391*/510/571/625/704*/76 5*, No. 396012/017/121/142.

■ Cargowaggon IVA vans previously used to carry Ford automotive components from Bridgend to Dagenham are being scrapped. Recently cut up are Nos. 23 80 2398 515-9/533-2/547-2/565-4/601-7/610-8/624-9/645-4/646-2.



New FEA-G container flat No. 81 70 4663 025-4 at Walsall on February 14. S F LAPPAGE

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Making an unusual sight on the North London Line, although one that will become regular for the next few years as the Hitachi fleet rotates though Eastleigh Works for modifications to the fatigue cracking issue, LNER 'Azuma' No. 800113 passes Camden Road station on March 1, running empty as the 5Q93/08.54 from Doncaster Carr depot to Reading (and then on to Eastleigh). IAN SINCLAIR

AVANTI WEST COAST

On Tuesday, February 14, the 9S77/13.16 from London Euston to Glasgow Central worked by an unidentified Class 221 was terminated at Preston at 16.49. The unit later ran Empty Coaching Stock (ECS) to Crewe (5K77/17.03). AWC services on the northern section WCML using single five-car Class 221 units are now not that common. Class 221 No. 221113 ran ECS from Carlisle as 5D21/12.57 to Barton-under-Needwood Depot on Wednesday, March 1.

LNER

A visit to King's Cross station on Saturday, February 4, found Class 91 No. 91130 *Lord Mayor of Newcastle* at platform 0, at the head of the 1D16/13.35 to Leeds with DVT No. 82214 on the rear of the train. On Monday, February 13, another visit was made to King's Cross when No. 91101 *Flying Scotsman* was seen at the head of the 1D19/15.03 to Leeds. In both cases, the whole train was in the new InterCity livery.

After the disruption over the weekend (see below) things were back to normal at King's Cross on Monday, February 20, when No. 91105 was seen pulling away from platform 1 at the head of the 1D17/14.03 to Leeds with DVT No. 82208 at the rear of the train. On Saturday, February 25 the 1D18/14.18 to Leeds was seen leaving from platform 0, headed by No. 91111 *For the Fallen*, in remembrance poppy livery, which did not match the new InterCity livery.

Engineering work took place at King's Cross on the weekend of February 18/19. As a result, no LNER trains ran to or from King's Cross that weekend. Services operated by Grand Central, Great Northern, Hull Trains, Lumo and Thameslink were also affected.

GWR

GWR updated its website on February 16, to announce it had completed the purchase of a number of assets from emission-free battery and hybrid trains manufacturer Vivarail, which entered administration last December. These assets cover the intellectual property, rolling stock and equipment relating to the development of high-performance battery and FastCharge technology designed to support wider introduction of battery-powered trains on the UK's rail network. GWR has also employed nine former Vivarail staff to support the trials and project development.

The deal secures the future of planned trials of the technology in a real-world environment, which GWR was supporting between West Ealing and Greenford; however, no date is given for the start of these trials. The website page is illustrated with an image of No. 230001, which is assumed to be the rolling stock acquired.

It is understood Class 165 No. 165104 has been equipped with LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) and image capture technology to provide data on the condition of infrastructure for Network Rail. On Thursday, January 19, the unit was seen arriving at platform 2 at Paddington station as empty stock 5D03 from Reading. The fitting of the LiDAR equipment does not prevent No. 165104 operating in normal service as on Monday, January 23, a short journey from Reading West was made on the unit forming the 2J32/12.22 from Basingstoke to Reading.

Services were badly affected by signalling problems near Chippenham on February 21. Trains to and from the West of England were being diverted via the single line through Melksham because of planned engineering work on the Berks & Hants route. However, failed axle counters at Thingley Junction closed the diversionary route for some hours. With the single line closed, a Mendip stone train was trapped at Bradford Junction, leaving all routes east of Westbury blocked. Worst affected was GWR's 1A81/10.55 Paignton to London Paddington. It arrived at Westbury on time at 12.47 but did not depart until nearly two hours later at 14.33. When it finally got on the move it was diverted to Bristol Temple Meads via the Avon Valley line. After terminating there it then ran to Taunton to pick up its return working as 1C85 back to Paignton at 17.11.

Meanwhile, services through Reading were disrupted for over three hours the same afternoon following an incident on Platform 14. A member of the public was reported to have fallen onto the platform from a height and died.

Class 57 Nos. 57602/03/05 all now carry reworked nameplates with their appropriate castle depicted and red-backed numberplates.

greateranglia

New Class 720 units continue to be delivered from Derby to Wembley, with No. 720122 being brought south by Class 47 No. 47749 on February 10, followed on February 25 with Class 47 No. 47727 moving No. 720124.

The Class 321/3 Renatus-upgraded EMUs continued to handle the hourly branch service from Manningtree to Harwich Town with the following noted at Harwich International: No. 321311 on February 11, No. 321328 on February 14, and No. 321322 on February 20.

Keeping track of the situation regarding the disposition of Class 379 units at Harwich Parkestone Quay (PQ) and Ilford prior to moving to Worksop for storage is proving difficult. However, on March 3 Nos. 379009+379010+379028 were observed running from Harwich PQ to Ilford. A visit to Harwich PQ on March 5 revealed Nos. 379001 and 379025 at the head of two lines of warm-stored Class 379s.

ScotRail
Scotland's Railway

The approach and arrival of the high winds associated with Storm Otto on Friday, February 17, saw Network Rail (Scotland) introduce blanket speed restrictions across most of Scotland. ScotRail introduced a special timetable on some routes until midday. Train services between Lanark and Glasgow Central were reportedly delayed by up to 15 minutes.

Movements of Class 318 units between Yoker and Brodies Kilmarnock saw Class 37 No. 37800 employed on February 27 to move No. 318252 from Brodies to Yoker prior to taking No. 318255 in the opposite direction. The Class 37 headed south the following day as the 0M60/08.19 from Kilmarnock to Derby. On arrival 28 minutes early in Lancaster, the Class 37 was held at platform 5. This was so that TPE's 1M84/09.06 Glasgow to Manchester Airport with Class 397 No. 397003, AWC's Glasgow to Euston 1M10/09.36 worked by Class 390 No. 390137 and Northern's 1Y95/10.51 Barrow in Furness to Manchester Airport with Class 195 No.195119 could call at platform 4 and then take the line south ahead of the Class 37. Straight after setting off and hot on its heels came Freightliner's Class 66 No. 66601 *The Hope Valley* with a Hardendale Quarry, Shap to Tunstead empty mineral wagon train.

The last trains passing Thankerton on Friday, March 3, before the commencement of the route blockade at Carstairs were: the 4Z49/23.15 Mossend Down Yard to Daventry IRFT hauled by Class 66 No. 66160 and on the down the 1S98/19.30 London Euston to Glasgow Central operated with No. 390153; the 4S59/20.57 Crewe Basford Hall to Coatbridge FLT hauled by No. 66514, and the 1S55/23.30 Warrington RMT to Shieldmuir RMT operated by Class 325 units.

Signalling problems around the Tebay area of the WCML in the early hours of Friday, February 17 delayed the Inverness to London Caledonian Sleeper which, pulled by Class 92 No. 92033, passed south through Lancaster 136 minutes late at 06.25.

Tyne and Wear

The first of the new Class 555 units to arrive in the country, No. 555003, came through the Channel Tunnel on February 22, behind Class 92 Nos. 92015+92042. Also in the consist were two new tampers, Nos. DR75505+DR75506. From there they were taken to Wembley by Class 66 No. 66001 on February 23. On the same day, Rail Adventure HST power cars Nos. 43465+43484 moved the unit north to Doncaster, continuing to Tyne Yard on February 25.

The next move followed on February 28, when the power cars moved the unit to Hebburn.

From here Tyne & Wear units Nos. 4086+4071+4073+4018 hauled the unit through to Gosforth depot. A second unit, No. 555004, arrived through the Tunnel on March 8.

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS

During the second week of February, TPE appeared to have replaced its Liverpool to Hull service with a Liverpool to Scarborough using Class 68s and stock on two round trips per day. On February 7, No. 68032 working the service, with No. 68028 the following day.

On Thursday, February 16, Class 397 No. 397012 ran ECS from Longsight Depot, Manchester on 5S10/08.51 to Carlisle via Crewe. Later that afternoon No. 397012 returned ECS on the same route to Longsight from Carlisle (5M32/12.14).

Hull Trains
Your local link to London

The weekend of February 18/19 saw Hull Trains services diverted into St Pancras once again due to the ECML being closed. On February 18 the workings were 1A92/08.05 Hull-London St Pancras, 1H03/12.21 London St Pancras-Hull, 1A95/14.06 Hull-London St Pancras and 1H08/18.48 London St Pancras-Hull, the latter two workings being formed by Class 802 No. 802301 *Amy Johnson*. The following day it was No. 802304 *William Wilberforce* on the 1A91/08.08 Hull-London St Pancras and 1H03/12.29 London St Pancras-Hull, and No. 802305 Humber Bridge on the 1A94/14.08 Hull-London St Pancras and 1H06/18.17 London St Pancras-Hull.

GRAND CENTRAL

The Class 180s operated by Grand Central appear not to carry their set numbers but can be identified by the carriage numbers. On Saturday, February 4, No. 180114, led by Driving Motor Second No. 50914, with No. 59914 *Kirkgate Calling* at the rear, was seen at King's Cross forming the 1N93/13.18 to Sunderland. On Monday, February 20, No. 180102, identified by Driving Cars Nos. 50902 and 59902, was seen leaving from platform 2 at King's Cross on the 1N95/14.27 to Sunderland.

TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU
TRANSPORT FOR WALES

The new Class 197 units are passing through Wolverton Works for modifications with No. 197001 being moved by Class 37 Nos. 37601+37611 on February 10. This was followed by No. 197109 arriving on February 20 behind Class 66 No. 66509, the Class 66 then taking No. 197111 back to Crewe. A further move reported was that of No. 197108 delivered from Crewe by Class 66 No. 66420 on March 8.

The 11.25 Cardiff Central to Holyhead has enjoyed a period of stability, both in terms of punctuality within a few minutes, and not being DMU substituted. Recently noted in February have been Nos. 67013 (15th), 67017 (17th), 67029 (20th) and 67015 (21st). Those on February 15 and 21 had the loco leading from Chester to Holyhead, once a rare occurrence, but now a little more common. This seems to date from the addition of workings to Manchester from South Wales, as well as to Holyhead, with integrated diagrams for the locos and stock.

February 15 saw Class 67 No. 67020 work 1W55/08.50 Cardiff to Manchester Piccadilly and the 1V42 return to Cardiff. Loco and stock looked very smart in their modified TfW livery.

West Midlands Railway

Two new units Nos. 730026+730027 were delivered from Derby to Worksop on March 8.

Chiltern railways by arriva

A visit to Marylebone station on Monday, February 6, found the 1R93/12.10, a booked Class 68 diagram, to Birmingham Moor Street formed of No. 168106. Fortunately, the substitution by a DMU of the locomotive hauled set did not indicate a permanent change and a journey from Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street on Monday, February 27 found the service headed by No. 68013 *Peter Wreford-Bush*, with DVT No. 82309 at the rear of the train. Passing Wembley Light Maintenance Depot 68010, 68014 and 68015 were all noted.

OVERGROUND

New Class 710 unit No. 710270 was top-and-tailed from Derby to Worksop by Class 37 Nos. 37884+37608 on February 23.

ThamesLink

Thameslink services have resumed at Littlehampton but terminating at London Bridge in the morning with the return starting from London Bridge. So far units observed have been No. 700127 on February 8/9, No. 700126 on February 13/14, with No. 700110 on February 17.

The 17.33 London Bridge to Littlehampton on March 1 arrived with 8-car Class 700 No. 700046 instead of a normal twelve car formation, staying the night for the 06.05 next morning service to London Bridge.

c2c

Class 720 No. 720608 was noted, from a passing Bakerloo Line train, stabled in the sidings by Willesden Traction Maintenance Depot on Monday, February 6. The sub-class destined for use with c2c is undergoing mileage accumulation runs on the WCML.

southeastern.

As the world marks a year since Ukraine was attacked, Southeastern Railway has named a Class 707 'City Beam' train No. 707001 *Spirit of Ukraine* to mark the bonds that have been formed between the Ukrainian community and people on their route and separately, the efforts of Ukrainian railways in helping their country by making sure people can travel in the most difficult of times. The ceremony took place on Friday, February 24, at platform 7, Cannon Street



Late winter snow across the country in March allowed scenes like this at Box Tunnel, Wiltshire, on March 8 as a GWR IET emerges with a Paddington to Bristol Temple Meads service. JACK BOSKETT

station. The event included a performance from the Canterbury 4 Ukraine Women's Choir singing the UK national anthem and a Ukrainian folk song.

SOUTHERN

On February 14, Class 387 No. 387227 was at Littlehampton working the 17.51 to Brighton instead of a booked Class 377/3.

A journey by a correspondent from Oxted to Eridge on Wednesday, February 15, using the 1E19/10.07 from London Bridge to Uckfield, formed of Class 171 No. 171803, provided an opportunity to check the car parks and form a view as to the number of commuters who had returned to rail. The small car park at Cowden was not full, and the larger car park at Ashurst was about half empty. The large car park beside Eridge station was almost empty, but it was noted that many cars were parked on the road in front of the station, where charges do not apply!

South Western Railway

Saturday and Sunday, February 25/26 found engineering work between New Malden and Twickenham resulting in all Kingston Loop services seeing bus replacements provided. Trains to Shepperton were diverted to run via Twickenham using the curve between Strawberry Hill Junction and Fulwell Junction, normally only used by weekday peak hour services.

A journey was made from Richmond as far as Hampton on the 2H27/11.30 from London Waterloo to Shepperton formed of Class 707 Nos. 707014+707030, returning from Hampton on the 2H34/12.20 from Shepperton to Waterloo, formed of Class 455 Nos. 455707+455906, which was taken as far as Clapham Junction.

The Department for Transport has exercised an option to extend South Western Railway's National Rail Contract for a further two years. The extension, confirmed on Friday, February 10, means the contract will run until May 25, 2025, on the existing terms.

Charter Trains

'A3' Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* together with Mk.1 support coach No. 35486 were observed passing Thankerton on Wednesday, February 22, whilst working the 5Z44/07.13 Bury (ELR) to Portobello, Edinburgh. Unusually the 'A3' ran tender-first between Bury and Carnforth. A ceremony at Edinburgh Waverley on Friday, February 24, was held to commemorate the 100th birthday for the iconic locomotive. Following the events in Edinburgh, the loco ran south as 5Z46/12.54 to Bury. En route No. 60103 stopped at Steamtown, Carnforth to be refuelled and departed from there at 20.51.

On Friday, February 24 LS's Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* pulled a rake of six ScotRail branded coaches Nos. 11082+11066+10404+12171 +12111+9707 on a 1Z11/10.02 from Crewe to Edinburgh. The following day the special continued with a number of runs between Edinburgh and Glasgow Queen Street before they went north from Glasgow to Inverness. On day three of the special, the train headed back south from Inverness to Glasgow Queen Street before a final run across to Edinburgh followed by returning south to Crewe.



The remarkable sight of HST power cars at Bank Hall station on March 3, on Merseyrail's Northern Line from Liverpool to Southport, as RailAdventure's Nos. 43468+43480 deliver new EMUs Nos. 777012+777016 from Crewe to Kirkdale depot. The working was tailed by Type 1s Nos. 20189+20142. JOHN SKIPSEY



Thanks to the efforts of loco and stock owners, the Crewe Diesel Preservation Group and operator LSL, a Class 47-powered/DBSO push-pull set returned to Scotland for the first time since May 1990, when No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and a six-coach rake worked a three-day tour from Crewe to Edinburgh, Glasgow Queen Street and Inverness on February 24-26. The stunning-looking train is pictured from the air heading north near Carstairs on the first day. NETWORK RAIL AIR OPERATIONS

DB Cargo

Observed on February 9, was Class 66 No. 66128 working 6M16 Wilton EFW Terminal to Knowsley Freight Terminal through Wakefield Kirkgate.

Scrap trains running between Cardiff and Sunderland have increased in numbers with the following, all hauled by Class 66s, reported: February 14 with No. 66077; February 16 with No. 66050; February 20 No. 66100; February 28 No. 66183 but the service only ran back as far as Tees Yard from where No. 66093 took the train back to Cardiff on March 2; and on March 7, No. 66143.

The Cardiff Tidal-Burton-Cardiff Tidal steel trains reported included February 14 with Class 66 No. 66093 in charge. A further report followed on February 24 with No. 66050 and No. 66059 on February 28.

Noted on Thursday, February 23, was Class 66 No. 66097, in rather shabby DB red livery, passing platform 14 at Reading station at the head of a 6M78 from Tytherington to Quainton Railhead.

Class 66 No. 66001, in DB red livery, was seen passing platform 3 at Clapham Junction on Saturday, February 25, working the 6O67 from Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal to Dollands Moor.

Freightliner
a Genesee & Wyoming Company

Class 66 No. 66567 was seen passing Hanwell station on Monday, February 13, at the head of the 4L36 from Wentloog to Felixstowe North Freightliner Terminal. Later the same day No. 66536 was observed passing platform 10 at Stratford on the 4M87 from Felixstowe North Freightliner Terminal to Trafford Park Freightliner Terminal.

The Mendip Rail jumbo trains continue to run with a Class 66 and a Class 59. On Monday, February 13 the 6A09 from Merehead Quarry to Acton Terminal Complex was seen passing Hanwell station double headed by Nos. 66623, in orange livery, and 59002 *Alan J Day*, in Aggregates Industries livery.

Through Stockport on February 15 was Class 66 No. 66588 working the 0O29 Crewe Basford Hall to Trafford Park light engine move while No. 66621 worked a Redcar Mineral Terminal to Pinnox Branch Esso sidings.

Class 66 No. 66601 was reported in charge of the Leyland to Tunstead service on February 16.

Consecutively numbered FL orange and black liveried Class 90s Nos. 90011+90012 hauled the 4S54/15.53 Crewe to Coatbridge service made up of just four containers on Friday, February 17.

According to Realtime Trains, on Thursday, February 23 the 4M58 from Southampton Maritime Container Terminal to Garston Freightliner Terminal was "cancelled due to a request by the train operator". However, it was seen, unusually passing platform 7, at Reading station running about an hour late, hauled by Class 66 No. 66565. On the same day No. 66506 was seen passing platform 12 at Reading station at the head of the 7C60 from Brentford Town Days to Merehead Quarry.

DRS

The 6K05/12.23 infrastructure working from Carlisle to Crewe on Wednesday, February 15, pulled by Class 66 No. 66423, was made up of yellow liveried low sided mineral wagons, with many being branded 'Wascosa'. Also, on the same day No. 66425 was noted on the regular Mossend-Blackford-Mossend diagram.

Class 68 No. 68018 worked a 5Q32 Gascoigne Wood sidings to Longsight ECS move on February 15, with No. 68033 also noted on Longsight depot.

Class 66 No. 66419 moved a rake of Mendip Hopper wagons from Crewe Basford Hall to Gascoigne Wood on February 16, for storage.

Thursday, February 23 found a 6K05/12.40 Carlisle to Crewe infrastructure train of yellow low-sided trucks hauled by Class 88 No. 88006 *Daring* with Freightliner Class 66 No. 66413 *Lest We Forget* coupled behind the Class 88.

On Monday, February 27, silver liveried but unbranded Class 68 No. 68012 pulled a train of low-sided mineral wagons on a 6K06/11.40 from Shap to Crewe. Two days later 6K06 ran again with Class 66 No. 66031 pulling four yellow high-sided mineral wagons and was seen passing though Lancaster 181 minutes early at 12.03.



A busy scene on the western approach to Leeds on February 24 with four operators in one shot. From the left are: TPE's No. 802211 (9E11/11.24 Liverpool Lime Street-Newcastle); CrossCountry's No. 220004 (1V58/10.03 Edinburgh to Penzance); LNER's Nos. 801106+801109 (1D11/11.03 King's Cross to Leeds); and Northern's No. 333012 (2H39/12.17 Skipton to Leeds). GEOFF GRIFFITHS

On Friday, March 3, Class 68 No. 68023 working the 0N09/14.20 Mossend Loco Holding Sidings to Carlisle was observed passing Thankerton.

GB Railfreight

Class 66 No. 66712 *Peterborough Power Signalbox* was seen passing platform 4 at Willesden Junction, on Monday, February 6, running light engine as the 0L37 from Hoo Junction to Whitemoor Yard.

The current weekly Harwich Refinery to North Walsham condensate tanks diagram and its return diagrams 6P41 and 6A32 respectively was undertaken on February 8/9 by No. 66740 *Sarah*, on February 15/16 by No. 66735 *Peterborough United* and on February 22/23 by No. 66767 *King's Cross PSB 1971-2021*. The latter outing had an unusual aspect to it because the northern curve of the Manningtree triangle that allows access from the Harwich branch line onto the northern down line towards Ipswich had incurred a fault and was 'blocked' by Network Rail. This necessitated a 10 mile detour through Manningtree station to the Colchester Goods Loop so that the locomotive could run round the consist and take the down line to Norwich and its North Walsham destination on February 22, and take the Harwich branch line at Manningtree South Junction on its return the following day. Later that evening, No. 66767 en route to Peterborough as 0E06 saw it enter Manningtree station to access the down line towards Ipswich, although by the following morning the northern curve was operational again.

Stopover intermodals into Harwich Parkeston Quay yard on February 11 were in the hands of Nos. 66722 *Sir Edward Watkin* and 66755 *Tony Berkeley OBE RFG Chairman 1997-2018* running as 4L03 and 4L55 respectively with both originating from Doncaster i-Port; on February 18, by Nos. 66777 *Annette* and 66755 again with the same diagrams.

Their departures to Felixstowe port on the Monday saw the later arrival leaving first as 4R03 at roughly 09.30 and the second leaving later under a new diagram 4Y66 at around 11.00.

Observed on February 9 was Class 66 No. 66767 working 6J56 Cemex Peak Forest to Hope Street through Manchester Victoria.

With GBRf's Class 69 locomotives currently indisposed, the 4Y19 from Mountfield Sidings to Southampton Western Docks has reverted to regular Class 66 haulage. On Thursday, February 9, the service was seen passing St Margarets station behind No. 66772 *Maria*.

The 6M54/12.05 Ferme Park-Bardon Hill empty stone train on February 10 was unusually top-and-tailed by Class 66 Nos. 66724 *Drax Power Station* and 66796 *The Green Progressor*. Class 66 No. 66794 had charge of the Isle of Grain to Sinfin tanks on February 10.

The Doncaster-Llandudno-Bescot slate train was reported on February 13, hauled by Class 66 No. 66784. It was reported again on February 27 with No. 66718 in charge.

GBRf Class 66 No. 66766 ran light on 0M69/06.59 Tuesday, February 14, from Carlisle to Bescot. Observed through Stockport on February 15, Class 66 No. 66748 worked the 4M18/03.10 Felixstowe to Trafford Park freightliner.

Class 60 No. 60021 powered 6E09 Liverpool Biomass to Drax through Stockport on February 15.

Following CET (Controlled Emission Toilet) fitment at St Leonards Depot, the 4-TC set formed of Nos. 76297+70823+71163+76324 was top-and-tailed by Class 73 Nos. 73109 and 73213 on February 16, being moved from St Leonards to Eastleigh via Brighton and Preston Park for turn round purposes.

Class 60 No. 60021 was observed stabled at Tuebrook along with Class 69 No. 69006 on February 16.

Blue and orange liveried Class 66 No. 66720 branded as Wascosa ran light on Friday, February 17 from Bescot (0Z57/08.58) to Tebay. With the WCML being closed between Lancaster and Wigan for the next two days No. 66720 remained at Tebay and worked south from to Hams Hall in the early hours of Monday, February 20. Later that day No. 66710 worked the 4S57/11.44 Hams Hall to Mossend service comprising of just nine containers.

Class 66 No. 66729 worked a rake of empty wagons from West Ruislip to Isle of Grain on February 20m to be loaded with concrete tunnel segments.

MoD traffic reported included Class 66 No. 66741 working a Kineton-Carlisle-Kineton diagram on February 20. Two days later it worked from Kineton to Marchwood and then through to Bicester.

With GBRf now working the EMR scrap trains, reports included No. 66788 on a Liverpool-Kingsbury-Liverpool diagram on February 20, followed on February 22 and 24 with a Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool turn.

The same loco worked again on March 4, running from Liverpool to Small Heath, going forward the next day behind No. 66797 to Swindon and back to Liverpool. The same Class 66 was in use again on March 8 working another Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram.

An interesting working on Tuesday, February 21 saw Class 66 No. 66734 run light engine from Bescot to Clitheroe before working the Hanson Clitheroe to Avonmouth cement train the following day. This is the second locomotive to carry this number following the withdrawal of the first No. 66734 that was derailed in Scotland some years ago.

Class 47 No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle* towed Class 92 No. 92010 north from Wembley to Loughborough Falcon Works on February 22. It was seen en route passing Glendon.

Class 66 No. 66778 *Cambois Depot 25 Years* was seen coming to a stop by platform 13 at Reading station on Thursday, February 23, when hauling train 6B77 from Colnbrook Lafarge to Avonmouth West Wharf.

COLAS RAIL

Colas Rail Tamper No. DR73942 was moved on Friday, February 10 from Guide Bridge (6J87/09.32) to Carlisle High Wapping Sidings and later on Tuesday, February 14, No. DR73942 was stabled just north of Preston Station in Dock Street Sidings. On Monday, February 13, No. DR73909 *Saturn* was moved as 6J72/10.38 from Crewe to Maryport via Carlisle and later on Friday, February 17, DR73909 was moved as 6J72/08.29 from Millom to Preston.

The 6J37 Carlisle to Chirk loaded log train is usually a Colas Rail Class 70 working with No. 70809 being used for much of early February. However, on Friday, February 17 this train (dep Carlisle 14.25) was double-headed by Colas Rail Class 56s Nos. 56090+56094. Double headed Class 56s, even if only one loco was working, are not commonly seen on this part of the WCML.

The same pairing of Class 56 Nos. 56090+56094 ran on Wednesday, February 22 on the 6M37/16.35 Ravenstruther to Carlisle, observed passing Thankerton.

Operations Track Record

WEST COAST RAILWAYS
THE UK'S LEADING SPECIAL TRAINS OPERATOR

With engineering work taking place at King's Cross over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday February 18/19, one alternative route for passengers travelling up the East Coast from London was from Liverpool Street to Peterborough via Cambridge. To provide extra capacity on the route West Coast Railways operated two return trips between Liverpool Street and Peterborough each day.

It is not that long ago Brush Type 4s were regularly seen at Liverpool Street on the Norwich service, so it was almost like the good old days.

On Saturday, February 18, the 1Z61/12.36 departure from Peterborough was seen arriving at Liverpool Street behind Class 47 No. 47815 *Great Western*, in BR green livery with No. 47813, in maroon livery, at the rear of the train which then headed the 1Z62/15.22 departure to Peterborough.

Acquiring a ticket for a run on Sunday proved challenging as an enquiry at the Liverpool Street ticket office found the staff had been told not to sell tickets to Peterborough, but fortunately they were available from the ticket vending machines.

Armed with an appropriate ticket, a journey was then made on the 1Z80/10.30 departure from Liverpool Street to Peterborough, top-and-tailed by Nos. 47813, with 47815 at the rear.

Train 1Z80 was advertised as nonstop to Peterborough but was scheduled to stop in Broxbourne down passenger loop for pathing. Having crawled along the down slow approaching Cambridge, another stop was made on the through line at Cambridge station, which is rare track for a passenger train.

Cross Country 1N53/11.27 from Stansted Airport to Nuneaton, formed of Class 170 No. 170101, and Great Northern 1T24/11.45 from Royston to King's Lynn, both passed before 1Z80 was allowed to proceed.

At Peterborough, the service came to a halt at platform 4, where across the platform LNER Azuma No. 801217 was already waiting by platform 5 to form the 1S18/13.42 to Edinburgh on which passengers arriving at Peterborough from Liverpool Street could continue their journeys northwards. However, it was not clear whether anyone actually made this connection.

The Azuma had arrived as the 1E09/09.30 departure from Edinburgh to Peterborough, from which passengers could change to the return working of the Brush Type 4s, the 1Z81/13.30 from Peterborough to London Liverpool Street, now headed by No. 47815 with 47813 at the rear.

The return working was also advertised as nonstop, but included a scheduled stop by platform 7 at Cambridge station. The doors were not released. There was also a signal stop to the south of Sawbridgeworth station, which it has been suggested was a result of a trespass incident involving a photographer.

The Brush Type 4s were seen for a final time on Sunday, February 19, passing Hackney Downs station on the 1Z82/16.30 from Liverpool Street to Peterborough, now with 47813 leading and 47815 at the rear. On Monday, February 20, the Class 47s returned to Carnforth running light (0Z83) to arrive at 17.49.

Class 57 No. 57313+Class 47 No. 47815 top-and-tailed an ECS rake of Northern Belle carriages on 5Z34/12.52 from Carnforth to Burton Wetmore Sidings on Thursday, February 23.

DC Rail

Class 60 No. 60055 *Thomas Barnardo*, in grey livery, was seen passing Nunhead station on Monday, February 13, at the head of the 6Z71 from Grain Foster Yeoman to Willesden DC Rail Sidings. The Class 66 was in use again on March 2, on a Willesden-Chessington South-Willesden stone train.

H+H

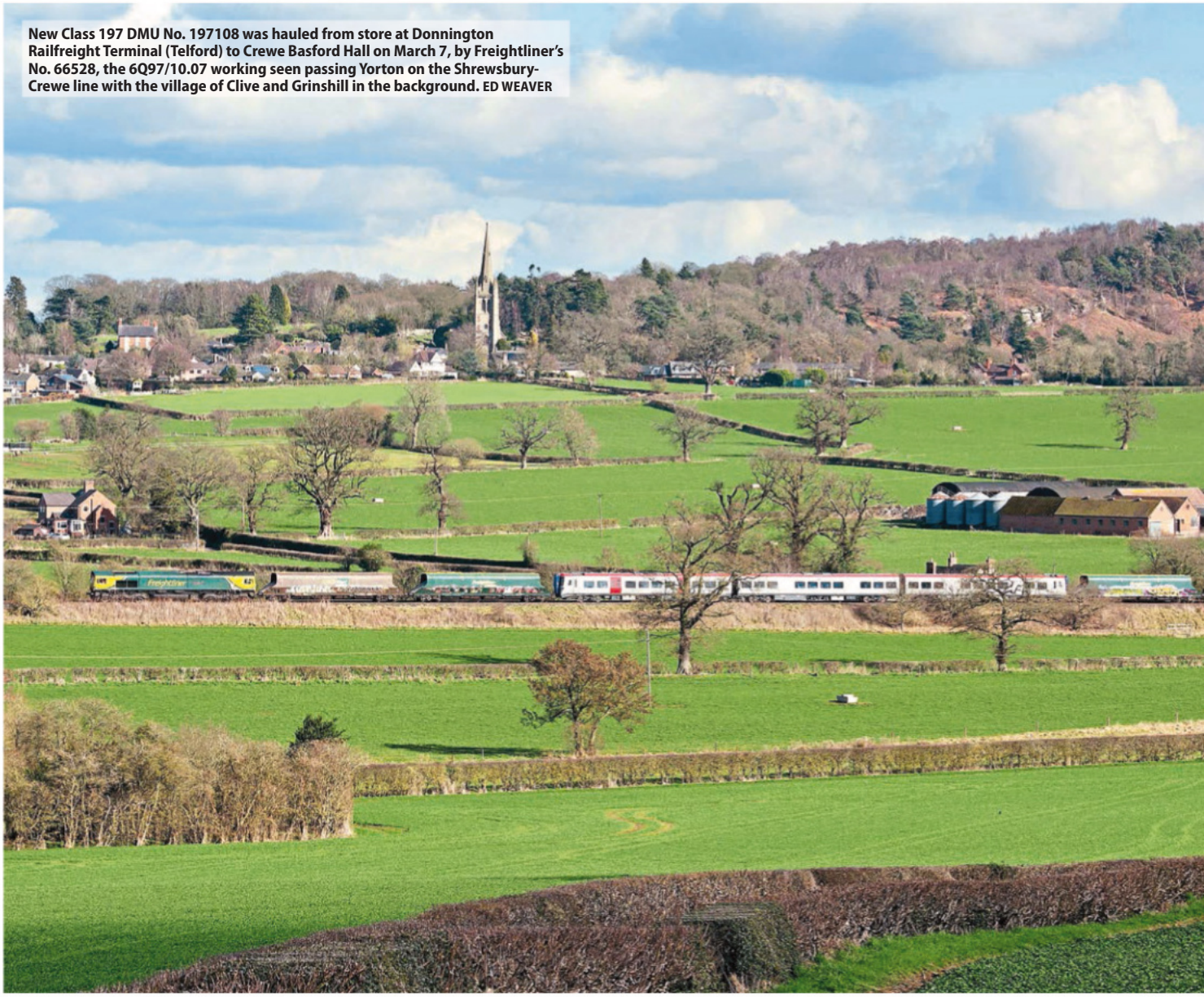
Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer* was out and about on March 6, running light engine on a 0Z51 from Knottingley to Gascoigne Wood via Wakefield, Normanton, Castleford and York. The following day it hauled a rake of ECS from Gascoigne Wood to East Bolden and back.

Locomotive Services Ltd

LSL's retro two tone green liveried Class 47 No. D1824 (47810) ran light on Thursday, February 23 as 0Z37/08.55 from Crewe to Edinburgh, being observed through Lancaster at 11.23.

Sims Metals, Newport

Stock continues to arrive on a regular basis with the following being reported. Class 508 No. 508123 was delivered from Birkenhead by Class 37 No. 37884 on February 13. On the same day Class 321 No. 321426 arrived from store at Worksop, being brought south by No. 37800. Class 37 No. 37884 was in use again on February 15 moving Class 317 Nos. 317885+317341 from Ely. Class 91 Nos. 91118+91116+91121 made their final journey on February 20 being moved from Doncaster by Class 37 No. 37510. Two further Class 317s,



New Class 197 DMU No. 197108 was hauled from store at Donnington Railfreight Terminal (Telford) to Crewe Basford Hall on March 7, by Freightliner's No. 66528, the 6Q97/10.07 working seen passing Yorton on the Shrewsbury-Crewe line with the village of Clive and Grinshill in the background. ED WEAVER

Nos. 317339+317340, arrived on February 22 hauled by No. 37884, the same loco returning again on March 1 with further Class 317s Nos. 317507+317510.

Two unidentified vehicles from hydrogen test unit No. 799001 were reported arriving by road on March 3, joining the other two vehicles from the unit already in the yard. The following week on March 8, No. 37800 delivered Nos. 317508+317343, also from Ely.

LORAM

On a visit to King's Cross during the evening of February 6, the New Measurement Train, formed of Nos. 43272+977984+975814+977993+977994+975984+43290 was seen arriving at platform 8 as the 1Q19 from Tees Yard. After only a few minutes it returned northwards as 1Q20 to Derby R.T.C. The New Measurement Train returned to King's Cross on Monday, February 20, running as 1Q04 from Darlington. It was first seen emerging from Gasworks Tunnel with power car No. 43290 leading. The train stopped by platform 1, and after a few minutes headed back northbound as 1Q05 to Cambridge, now headed by No. 43272.





This rake of 11 four-wheel VTG tank wagons has been acquired for preservation at the Dean Forest Railway, and were taken there from store at Gascoigne Wood (North Yorkshire) on March 7 by Large Logo Type 3 No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaedhealach* – the 6Z42/09.45 departure seen approaching Tredington Crossing (between Cheltenham and Ashchurch) on its way to Lydney. WAYNE FINCH

Observed on February 9 was a Robel Type 69.70 Mobile Maintenance Train stabled at Wakefield Kirkgate.

Class 37 Nos. 37254 and 37610 top-and-tailed the 10.47 Eastleigh, Portsmouth, Littlehampton, Portsmouth, Southampton, Basingstoke, London Waterloo and Eastleigh Network Rail test train on February 14.

In connection with a Network Rail exercise, Class 321 No. 321402 was moved north from Gascoigne Wood to Millerhill by Class 37 No. 37800 on February 16.

A visit to London Victoria on Saturday, February 25 found a Network Rail train at platform 8 having arrived as the 1Q69 from Tonbridge West Yard to Derby R.T.C. The train was headed by GBRf Class 73 No. 73963 *Janice* and consisted of Laboratory coach No. 977974, Radio Survey Test Vehicle No. 977997, Brake force runner No. 72639, Radio Survey coach No. 9481 with GBRf No. 73964 *Jeanette* at the rear.

On Monday, February 27, Track Assessment Unit No. 950001 was noted, from a passing train, in the sidings at Fenny Compton South Junction working as the 2Q08 from Reading Triangle Sidings to Reading Triangle Sidings via Didcot, Oxford and Kineton MoD.

Colas Rail's Class 43 Nos. 43272+43290 again top-and-tailed the New Measurement Train on Tuesday, February 28 as 1Q26/06.15 from Derby via Shap to Edinburgh's Slateford Depot. On the following day this same formation ran south to Crewe from Slateford as 1Q26/07.59.

Class 73 Nos. 73201 *Broadlands* and 73213 *Rhodalyn* visited Littlehampton on March 1 on a Snow and Ice Treatment Train staying in Littlehampton for an hour for the crew's meal break. In the evening, GPV Nos. DR98927+DR98977 also visited Littlehampton working the Horsham-Horsham via Littlehampton, Bognor Regis and other areas of Sussex, also on Snow and Ice Treatment duties.

It is reported Network Rail is seeking to obtain a new-build fleet of 27 wagons for carrying autumn railhead treatment modules. They would need to be inter-operable with the current fleet of 50 FEA-F wagons.

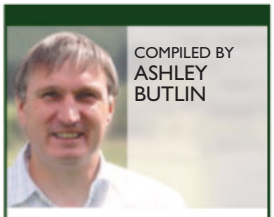
Our thanks

THE Railway Magazine's thanks for information go to: Paul Atkinson, Peter Boyce, Gene Collins, Mike Cooper, Kevin Driscoll, Martin James, Barry Knock, Sean Morris, Bob Morrison, Roger Phillips, Mark Reynolds, Craig Wellum and Chris West.



Network Rail Type 3 No. 97303 *Dave Berry* spits flames at Carlisle on March 10 as it is restarted after being stabled for four cold days. It would later lead the NR train to Manchester Oxford Road. AIDAN FORT

Stock Update Track Record



COMPILED BY ASHLEY BUTLIN

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.



Two vehicles from Transport for Wales Class 769 bi-mode unit No. 769007 left Canton Brickyard Sidings, Cardiff for storage at Long Marston, Warwickshire on February 28. DTSO No. 77302 is seen here making its way along Albert Street on the back of an Allelys low-loader. MSOL No. 71778 was just up in front on another low-loader. Both PMSO No. 62897 and DTSO No. 77303 made the same journey the following day. This is the first Class 769 to leave Canton for storage since the introduction of Class 231s into service on the Valleys network. MARTIN TURNER

LOCOMOTIVES

Allocations
66151 WQ/WQAA-TO/WBAE
66307 newly registered RR/GBLT
66308 newly registered RR/GBLT
90019 CE/WEDC-WQ/WQAA
90020 CE/WEDC-WQ/WQAA
90024 CE/WEAC-WQ/WQAA
90029 CE/WEDC-WQ/WQAA
90034 CE/WEDC-WQ/WQAA
90036 CE/WEDC-WQ/WQAA

Named
2991 *Bruce*
43277 *Safety Task Force*

Renumbered
07007-2991
77502-66307
77503-66308

Preserved
Bo'ness: 91131

Stored/stopped locations
Crewe ETD:
90019/20/24/29/34/36
Laira: 43005/41

Operational
66151

Disposals
Alizay, France: Cut date: March: 58033

MULTIPLE UNITS

Allocations
197044 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
317337/38/39/40/43 sent for disposal
317507/08/10 sent for disposal
321444 sent for disposal
398006 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
555003/04 newly delivered GF/PGXX
701002 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
720124/26 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ
730026/27/28/29 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
756103 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ

Liveries
SWR: 450065/74/94/97, 450126

Named
444023 *The Alex Wardle Foundation*

Formations
180110: 50910+54910+55910+56910+59910

Now in passenger traffic
196004/05
197017
231003/05
720122
720583
777008/13

Stored/stopped locations
Chester: 175007/08/09, 175103/04/08
Crewe: 175101/07
Crewe LNWR: 197044, 197104
Crewe South Yard: 197014
Derby: 710374
Donnington RFT: 196114
Eastleigh Works: 313202/14/17, 701040
Gosforth: 555003/04
Holyhead: 175004/05/10, 175102/05/06/09/10/13/14/15
Hove: 313203/08
Ilford: 379009/10/17/21/26/28
Kirkdale: 777005/12/14/16
Landore: 175002
Longsight: 175111
Long Marston: 769003/07
Old Dalby: 730007, 805001
Oxley: 730008
Soho: 730011/12
Wembley: 321313/16/23/27
Wolverton: 197108
Worksop: 701002, 710270, 730026/27/28/29.

Disposals
Booth Roe Metals, Rotherham: Arrival dates: February 20: 71986 (321444); February 21: 78126, 78275 (321444); February 23: 63100 (321444); February 24: 63125 (321431).

Sims Metals, Newport: arrival dates: February 22: 317339/40; March 1: 317507/10; March 8: 317343, 317508; March 15: 317337/38; March 20: 507019, 508122.



Class 313 EMUs Nos. 313202, 313214 and 312217 were hauled by Class 37 No. 37800 from Brighton Lovers Walk T&RSMD to Eastleigh Arlington as working the 5Q86/10.24 on Friday, March 10. This working represented the first withdrawal movement of Southern Class 313 units from main line service – the class is due to be eliminated from the network by May 2023. The units are seen making their way towards the Works, while DB Class 66 No. 66050 sits in the loco holding sidings awaiting weekend engineering duties at Fareham. STEVE STUBBS

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Liveries
Chocolate & Cream: 1651
LNER InterCity: 10333, 11284, 11312, 11412, 12212, 12330, 12404/26/31, 82212

For sale
11018/48/74, 12078/92, 12122/33/38

Disposals
Ron Hull at Carnforth: Cut dates: January: 5569, 94406. February: 1655/63, 2110, 5737. March: 4997, 6050, 6175, 13323, 34525, 80212, 92159, 94332, 96135, 977095.

STOCK CHANGES CORRECT AS OF MARCH 20, 2023.



COMPILED BY HASSARD STACPOOLE

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Report criticises rail operator after track maintenance incident

Investigation finds near derailment at Curragh was the result of 'blatant disregard' for the rule book.

AN investigation has concluded "blatant disregard for the Iarnród Éireann rule book" led to a near derailment of a train on the Dublin-Cork line near Curragh on August 27, 2021.

The report by the Railway Accident Investigation Unit (RAIU) detailed how an empty Mk.IV set led by Generator Car No. 4003 avoided being derailed after striking a clamp being used to replace a section of defective rail, that had been placed by a work crew who had not received clearance to start work.

The report also revealed staff attempted to conceal the severity of what happened, while the RAIU said the level of supervision at the time of the accident was "not appropriate."

The empty unscheduled train from Limerick Junction to Heuston struck a clamp being used to replace a nine-metre section of defective rail shortly after midnight on August 27, 2021, between Newbridge and Kildare near the former Curragh station.

The driver reported he had struck something on the track, while also noting that a number of staff had to move off the line as the train approached them.

Potential derailment

"Under slightly different circumstances, the events may have led to a serious accident due to the potential of a derailment as a result of equipment being clamped to the rail," the RAIU said.

Although nobody was physically injured, some staff reported that they suffered shock. Significant damage was caused to a small section of rail, as well as a wheel on the control car and clamp.

The investigation said measures used to prevent access by unauthorised trains into a "T3 possession", had not been authorised before work had begun. And the engineering supervisor erroneously thought that the last train had passed through the worksite.

It also revealed none of the IÉ staff rostered to work on the night of the accident were competent to carry out the work to replace the track, while equipment required for the work had been left near the worksite at the end of the previous night in contravention of instructions from IÉ.

The RAIU said several parties directly and indirectly involved in the accident were evasive in their evidence.

It noted an internal investigation carried out by IÉ had reported that its progress had been hampered by "a lack of candour", with some individuals providing "misleading statements" and "untruths" and it became apparent that the incident was far more serious than was first reported.

Report delayed

The RAIU said IÉ staff had initially "downplayed" the incident and inferred that the train had struck a small bolt rather than a piece of equipment that had been clamped to the rail.

The RAIU said it had not been possible to publish its own report into the accident within the required 12 months because of late and wrong information being provided.

It concluded the supervisor had not followed "robust" principles and instructions about a T3 possession before allowing staff to access the track, as well as failing to position marker boards, as required, prior to starting work.

"Had the instructions been followed, the accident would not have occurred," it added.

The RAIU said there was an element of "authority gradient" within IÉ, where staff do not feel empowered to challenge the suggestion of a superior to behave in an unsafe manner.

It noted some workers were refused their request to be stood down on the night after the accident as they were badly shaken by the near-miss, while an inspector had not felt able to challenge a supervisor who had stated that testing for drugs and alcohol in the case were not required.

Following the incident, five IÉ staff were suspended with some subsequently disciplined and sanctioned.

Tender issued for Midleton track doubling scheme

IARNRÓD Éireann (IÉ) has issued a tender notice for bids for doubling of the single track line between Glounthane and Midleton.

The project involves laying a second railway line along the 10km route, the provision of a new sidings/turn back facility at Midleton station, as well as other works relating to track layouts, cable containment routes, and signalling upgrades and alterations.

The tender notice closes on May 31, with construction expected to begin later this year. Funded by the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility, under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the project forms part of the NTA's Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) to transform suburban rail services in Cork.

It is expected that the work will take 30 months to complete, being finished by August 2026.



Nos. 2611+2611 depart Midleton with the 15.45 to Cork Kent on March 13. It is hoped that construction will start later this year to double the line from here to Glounthane, where it meets the Cork to Cobh line. The upgrade of the line will also see several new stations built. The line reopened for commuter traffic from Midleton to Cork in July 2009 after being closed to passenger traffic in 1963. HASSARD STACPOOLE



TRACK MACHINE ON TEST: Trial runs have stated with the new Geismar Track Recording Vehicle No. 701 delivered in 2020. Operated by Rhomberg Sersa on behalf of Iarnród Éireann (IÉ), it will carry out inspection of the network for potential defects. On one of its first trial runs, it visited Sligo on February 15. NOEL ENRIGHT

Green light for DART+ South West

THE Irish cabinet has approved Iarnród Éireann's DART+ South West rail project to enter the planning stage, which includes electrifying the Dublin to Cork line as far as Hazelhatch & Celbridge. The planning application to electrify 20 km of rail infrastructure was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on 22 March.

The plan will see the DART network extended from Dublin Connolly to Hazelhatch and Celbridge via Islandbridge, Park West and Cherry Orchard, Clondalkin and Adamstown – and includes the electrification of the route through Drumcondra and the Phoenix Park tunnel (which saw regular passenger services reintroduced on November 21, 2016) and into Heuston station.

The project will see construction of a new station, Heuston West, at Islandbridge, and the quadrupling of rail track between Park West and Heuston.

Subject to planning permission and final funding arrangements, construction works for DART + South West could start in 2025, with delivery of the infrastructure by the end of the decade.

Services along the route are expected to at least double in frequency, with up to 11 trains each way per hour at peak times, operated by the new Alstom DART fleet which is under construction in Poland. The Department of Transport said the number of passengers using the route would quadruple from 5000 at present to 20,000.

IÉ CEO, Jim Meade said: "We welcome this decision from the Government, which shows clear progress in the roll-out of the ambitious DART+ Programme.

"DART+ South West will have a beneficial impact on the quality of the service that we can provide on the Kildare rail line, increasing frequency, reliability and comfort for our passengers."



COMPILED BY KEITH FENDER

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

Philippines North-South expansion

THE Philippines government has awarded Japanese firm Mitsubishi a $1.9 billion contract to build extensions on both ends of the new 38km Manila North-South Commuter Railway which is currently under construction and due to open in 2025.

The two new extensions will add 51km to the north of the first phase terminus at Malolos to serve Clark International Airport, and 55km to the south of the first phase from Tutuban to Calamba. Due to open in 2029, both will be built by a consortium including French companies Colas and Alstom.

Tramway for Mostaganem

A BRAND new 14km long, two line light rail system opened in the Algerian coastal city of Mostaganem on February 18. Alstom has supplied it with 25 seven section Alstom Citadis 402 trams built in France.

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Mallet back in 'Chessie' livery for limited time

Fully restored last Baldwin steam locomotive built for US service temporarily carries colour scheme of its original operator.

RESTORED 64 years after being withdrawn, former Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) 2-6-6-2 Mallet Number No. 1309 has been in use on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad at Cumberland, Maryland around 200km west of Washington DC since late 2021.

The loco was the last steam loco built by Baldwin for use in the USA.

With works number 74278, it left the factory in Philadelphia in November 1949. The C&O bought 10 of the 2-6-6-2 locos (numbered 1300-1309) as an effective stop-gap as contemporary diesels were not powerful enough for the heavy coal trains on the company's Appalachian lines.

However, even when new the C&O did not plan to keep the locos too long, assuming correctly that diesel technology would move on quickly and the loco was withdrawn when just seven years old.

Survival

Unlike most of its sister locos, also withdrawn in the 1950s, No. 1309 survived and in 1972 was bought by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum in Baltimore. Its restoration at the Western Maryland Scenic began in 2013 with the loco finally able to move under its own steam by mid-2020, when the railway was closed to the public all year thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In early 2023 for a few days the loco was restored to its authentic Chesapeake and Ohio (or Chessie) livery, which may never happen again as normally it carries the livery of its owning railway. During the first two weeks of February, the loco ran demonstration freights for photographers between Cumberland and Frostburg.

Operation

The Western Maryland Scenic Railroad uses the loco during the year for some, but not all of its trains; the website; www.wmsr.com makes clear which ones are steam and which are diesel.

To help recover some of the $3 million+ spent restoring the loco over nearly a decade, you can even drive No. 1309 on certain dates; the donation required to do this is $1309!



C&O No. 1309 rounds the famous 'Helmstetter's Curve' (named after the family which owns the farm it passes through) on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad with a demonstration freight on February 2. This location was famous in the 1950s as one of the last places to see massive steam-hauled freights. Since the 1980s it has not seen main line trains but is now part of the heritage rail operation. AD VAN STEN

New Stadler-built trains for Mont Blanc tramway

THE highest railway in France, the metre gauge Strub rack equipped Tramway du Mont-Blanc or TMB has a new fleet of trains. The four new Stadler built two-car EMUs will replace the original fleet of three EMUs plus trailers that have operated the line since electrification at 11kV AC in 1956. The new trains are like the previous ones named, not numbered, after the daughters of the founder of the original operating company.



The new TMB EMUs carry the names *Marie*, *Jeanne* and *Anne*, as used to identify the previous trains and as before they carry a variety of liveries. As a fourth train has been added to the fleet it has a new name as *Marguerite*. This fourth, and last to be delivered, train also has a unique white and red livery promoting the French Haute-Savoie Department, seen in this picture on a street running section in Saint-Gervais on January 9. MIKE POTTS



Three of the Stadler built Class 5000 bi-mode tram-trains at Dénia on January 29 with left to right Nos. 5006, 5003 and 5005 visible. IAN HUTTON



Trambahía Tram-train 1007 alongside RENFE EMU 449519 at Cádiz on January 26, 2023. KEITH FENDER

Tram-trains enter service in Spain on two different gauges

TRAM-TRAIN light rail vehicles built by Stadler, in nearby Valencia, began working on the Alicante to Dénia metre gauge line in Spain on January 16.

The line had been shut north of Calp for rebuilding for several years and the tram-trains will replace older DMUs that worked between Dénia and Benidorm.

However, while the line has reopened, through Alicante to Dénia services are currently not possible as a modern new viaduct is being built suitable for use by the tram-trains (which are heavier than the DMUs they replace).

This viaduct will replace the current Quisi Viaduct near Benissa, enabling through Dénia to Benidorm/Alicante services. In the interim, Dénia to Teulada is worked by the new bi-mode tram-trains, while Teulada to Benidorm uses the remaining refurbished 1966 built MAN-built DMUs.

At Dénia the new track layout makes provision for a future tramway through the town centre as part of plans to rebuild the line north to Gandía; this closed in 1974.

The Valencia regional government has assigned €250 million for this new project which could be complete by 2029.

Bay tram

In south-west Spain a different type of tram-train started operating on October 26 serving Cádiz, partly using the national 'Iberian' 1668mm gauge network which is the first time a tram-train in Spain has shared main line tracks with freight and passenger services.

The Trambahía (Bay tram) tram-train route is 24km long which comprises a new 14km light rail route east of the city which joins the Seville-Cádiz main line at Río Arillo.

The area served by the new route has a population of around 235,000 people; passenger numbers are forecast at 3 million annually by 2026.

Trambahía Services are operated by national rail operator RENFE using 10 three-section dual voltage tram-train light rail vehicles supplied by CAF which then run to Cádiz on the main line, shared with passenger and freight trains.

The 10 year operating contract is worth €55.8 million in revenue to RENFE. The light rail section of the route uses 750V DC traction current, while on the main line 3kV DC is used.

Mammoth 10-day charter in Australia

A SCHOOL trip with a difference took 86 lucky students plus 10 support staff for a 3,100km journey by charter train around the Australian state of Victoria over 10 days in December.

Run by Victoria-based heritage rail operator and preservation group 707 Operations, the train used three diesel locos and for its initial departure from Melbourne had steam as well!

The aim of the trip was to take the Melbourne Grammar School's 86-strong symphony orchestra to multiple places in the state where they performed 10 concerts, including one literally trackside on the station platform at Maryborough. Normally the school orchestra travels internationally but the Covid-19 pandemic and limited availability for international flights led to the school trying something different.

Scale

707 Operations runs a series of public charters every year, some of which operate overnight using its sleeping car fleet. The Grammar School charter consist was 13 carriages totalling 584 tonnes. It included a power van, a storage van for the instruments, seven sleeping carriages, two club carriages, a day coach and a kitchen/ dining car.

Details of all 707 Operations public trips can be found at www.slowrailjourneys.com.au – some of which include unusual routes and locos.

■ To mark the resumption of 'normal' tourism following the pandemic, 707 Operations has offered *The Railway Magazine* readers a limited time – until May 31 – special discount of 10% discount using the promotion code RAILWAYMAG2023 at checkout. Email contact@707operations.com.au if you encounter any difficulty booking.



Ex-Victorian Railways steam and diesel locomotives with the school special train prior to leaving Melbourne on December 9. North British built Pacific (26997/1951) No. R 707 *City of Melbourne* leads EMD engined diesels Nos. A 66, S 306 and N 471. MATT LUCAS



LG loco ER20 023 seen at Kėdainiai working Train 15, the 07.30 Vilnius - Klaipėda on February 26. CHARLES HINTON

Siemens diesels gain passenger work in Lithuania

LITHUANIAN rail passenger operator LTG Link is using previously freight-only Siemens 'Eurorunner' six axle Class ER20 diesel locos to work passenger trains between Vilnius and Klaipėda.

However, the line is being electrified and few trains are running at all with most services currently DMUs. Loco hauled trains are currently limited to Sundays only, when train 15 – the 07.30 from Vilnius – and train 18 – the 12.45 from Klaipeda – are worked by a loco and former Soviet Railways coaches. It is likely a Fridays-only loco-hauled train pair will also operate from later in 2023.

LTG Link started using the ER20 diesel locos, owned by parent company state railway Lietuvos Geležinkeliai, in mid-2021 due to the loss of potash freight traffic from Belarus which initially was taken over by competitor rail freight operator Gargzu Gelezinkelis and has since ceased altogether following Belarus aiding the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

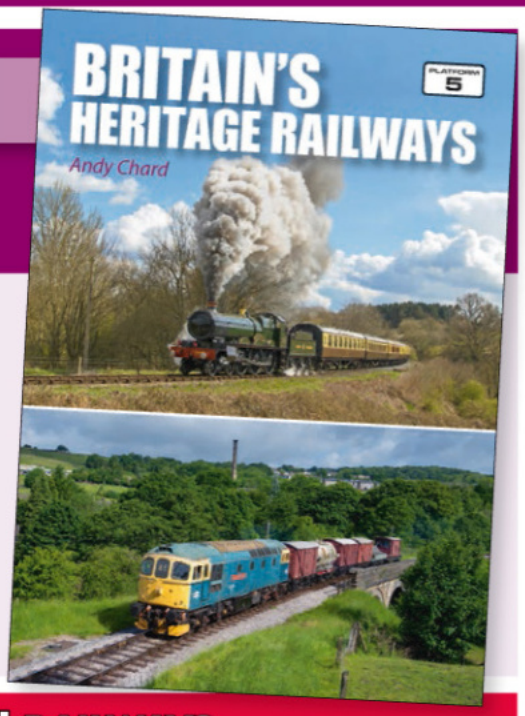
Previously the few loco-hauled passenger trains in Lithuania used Class TEP70BS locos built in Russia, but the Siemens 'Eurorunner' locos built in Munich, Germany 2007-2010 use less fuel so have replaced them.

The ER20 locos are also being used by LG to haul the Russian 'corridor' trains that serve the Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad; these trains, which pass through Lithuania on their way from Russia / Belarus to Kaliningrad, continue to operate despite EU sanctions but are restricted to use only to and from Russia.

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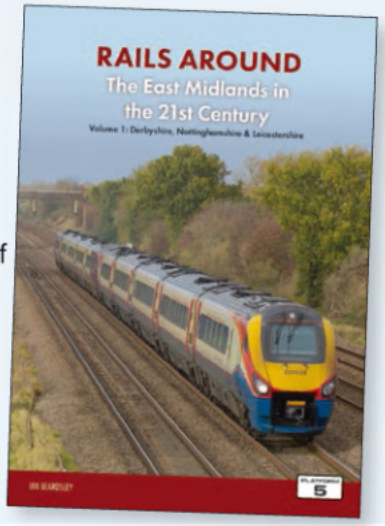
RAILS AROUND

The East Midlands in the 21st Century

Volume 1: Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire & Leicestershire

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FLYING SCOTSMAN 100TH ANNIVERSARY



DVD/Streaming

TV Presenter Sir Tony Robinson narrates this documentary about the first 100 years of celebrity steam loco No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman*, which is now part of the National Collection.

The loco's up and down history is generally well known, but here in video form are accounts of some of the key moments – from its entry into service with the LNER in 1923 and then acquiring its celebrity status and name, through the highs and lows of its three preservation-era private owners, and the trips abroad to North America and Australia, to finally being saved for the nation by the NRM.

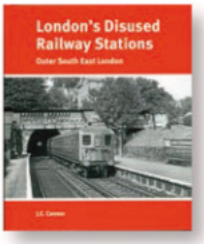
There are many great clips of the locomotive in action throughout its career, plus archive interviews with former owners Alan Pegler, Bill McAlpine and Tony Marchington, and words from those tasked with keeping it going on the main line today.

Tony Robinson makes for an engaging narrator and, apart from a few very minor niggles at the start that seem to confuse the loco with the train of the same name – plus occasional use of the definite article ('the') as part of the loco's name – this is a very good piece of work and an ideal backgrounder to the loco's centenary celebrations. **PB**

Published by Reel 2 Reel Films
Available to buy or stream through platforms such as www.amazon.co.uk
55 minutes, £4.49 streaming/£7.99 DVD

London's Disused Railway Stations Outer South East London

By J E Connor



THIS substantial book is a very useful and informative production from Capital Transport. J E Conner has assembled an excellent collection of mainly monochrome images to illustrate the sad fate of many of London's numerous suburban stations on the Southern Railway network. The introduction, linking text and image captioning are first rate and very detailed. Reference maps also feature along with other illustrations such as tickets and scenic engravings going back as far as 1845.

The book is organised into three sections covering the major constituent companies of the Southern Railway – namely the LBSCR, LCDR and SER. Eighteen Stations are featured.

A highlight of the book is the intriguing coverage of the branch line to Upper Sydenham and the magnificent Crystal Palace High Level Station – built to handle the huge number of visitors arriving at the Crystal Palace in the Victorian era, and surviving until 1954.

The short-lived LBSCR branch from East Croydon Station to the substantial Croydon Central Station lasted until 1890, but was subsequently redeveloped as the Town Hall complex, and later the remainder of the site was used as part of the impressive Fairfield Halls.

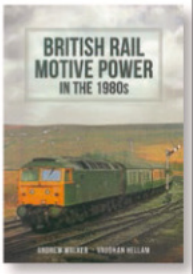
Nowadays no trace of this short branch remains save a commemorative plaque.

This is a valuable addition to the enthusiasts' railway history reference library and of great interest to those with a penchant for London's complex rail network story. **RSS**

Published by Capital Transport
www.capitaltransport.com
160 pages, hardback. £30.00

British Rail Motive Power in the 1980s

By Andrew Walker and Vaughan Hellam



THE 1980s were years of momentous change on Britain's railways. At the dawn of the decade it was still possible to travel on a Sundays-only St Pancras-Manchester Piccadilly train via the Woodhead route, or catch a 'Deltic'-hauled express from York to King's Cross.

However, over the following 10 years, various familiar sights would disappear – the Woodhead route closed, the 'Deltics' were withdrawn and 'Sprinterisation' changed the way passenger trains operated forever.

This 96-page book from Amberley covers the entire decade using a mixture of black and white and colour images, which really do take the reader back to these times on the railway. The images are taken mainly at stations, but show the character of the time, and remind the reader of what was the 'mundane' at that point: Class 47s arriving at Exeter St David's, a Class 31 with blue and grey rolling stock, first generation multiple units as far as the eye can see at Manchester Piccadilly, and a Class 40 at Guide Bridge – all something we would long to see today. Recommended. **RC**

Published by Amberley
www.amberley-books.com
96 pages, softback. £15.99

DIE JZ IN DEN 80ER JAHREN [THE JZ IN THE 1980s] EISENBAHNFASZINATION IN NORD-SLOWENIAN [RAILWAYS OF NORTHERN SLOVENIA]



By Michael A Grandits / Otto Leiss

THESE two books published by Austrian publisher RMG focus on the former Yugoslavia, somewhere that has become very popular with British visitors in recent decades, with railway enthusiasts seeking out EMD-design diesels that even now still work a handful of passenger trains.

The first book covers the entire former Yugoslav Railways (JZ) in the 1980s, when tourist visits – especially to coastal areas and Slovenia – were becoming common for western visitors, and before the series of wars in the 1990s that followed the break up of Yugoslavia.

The book begins with a summary listing of the JZ fleet and then has a series of colour pictures of various locomotive types – including steam, which was still in mostly industrial use in several places in the mid-1980s (and, rather amazingly, still is today in Bosnia). The second half of the book is black and white pictures covering everything from locomotives to track maintenance machines.

The second book covers the north of Slovenia in the present day. Most of the high-quality colour pictures were taken in the period 2014-2018 and, although the older DMUs depicted have mostly been replaced by new Stadler DEMUs since then, little else in the pictures has changed.

The book covers two of the country's main non-electrified lines: the former 'Transalpina' international mainline from Jesenice to Nova Gorica, with multiple pictures and details of the 'Autovlak' car carrying train that runs daily, normally powered by EMD-design diesel locos. The other line covered in detail is the line along the Drava valley from Maribor to Bleiburg in Austria, with multiple high-quality colour pictures.

Both books are largely pictorial without any lengthy text. The text and captions are in German but many readers, with an interest in railways in the area, will be able to work out what is shown even if they are not German readers. Recommended to anyone interested in the railways of Slovenia or the former Yugoslavia. **KF**

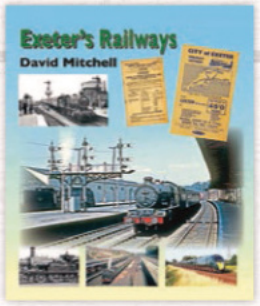
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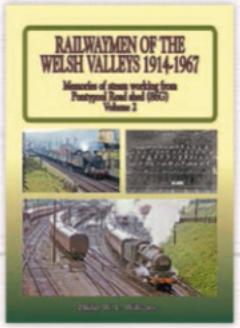
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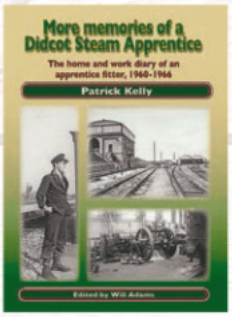
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- April 30th - Railway Art Exhibition and Bank Holiday Steam Up
- May 7th & 8th - Coronation Steam Up
- May 28th & 29th - Middy in the 1940s
- June 4th - 'Centro Miglia' Classic Cars and Steam Railway Day
- June11th - Steam Railway Day
- June 18th - Ex-Military Land Rovers and Steam Railway Day
- June 25th - East Anglian Practical Classics and Steam Railway Day

For full 2023 programme details visit www.mslr.org.uk or call 01449 766874/766899
Brockford Station, Wetheringsett, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5PW

3

RIVER ESK'S 100th BIRTHDAY GALA

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MAY BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND
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ravenglass-railway.co.uk

4

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ROMNEY, HYTHE & DYMCHURCH RAILWAY

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5



6



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7



RAILWAY OPENS - SATURDAY 1ST APRIL 2023
Diesel Saturday - Steam Sunday
Regular train services commence 10.30am
Railway Station and Museum opens from 10am
Refreshments available. The railway is fully accessible

SPECIAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR INCLUDING:
90+ Years of the Diesel 10th & 11th June • Model Rly Exhibition 8th & 9th July
• Gala 23rd & 24th September • Santa in December
Please check website for full details **www.middletonrailway.org.uk**

8

BRESSINGHAM

Heritage Steam Gala

29th April - 1st May

For more information visit
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9

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Places to visit this spring

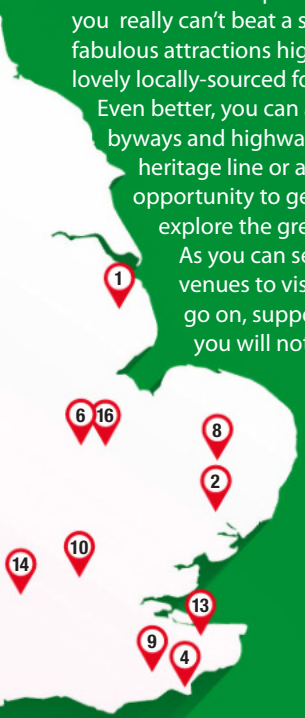
After a very strange few years for heritage railways and their supporters and volunteers, at long last we are able to look forward to a spring season full of hope and events for all the family – ranging from the die-hard enthusiasts to those simply in need of a great day out.

We're sure you will have your favourite heritage line, museum or attraction to visit, but if you are looking for somewhere a bit special, a part of the country you may not have been to for a while, or an attraction on your doorstep you'd forgotten all about, then take a look at our map and the adverts on these pages to gain some inspiration.

All the venues and businesses here provide a memorable day out or help with that essential short break that often combines inspiration, entertainment and education... you really can't beat a super day out with the family at one of the fabulous attractions highlighted on these pages... and maybe some lovely locally-sourced food and hospitality too!

Even better, you can always find some interesting byways and highways to and from any museum, heritage line or attraction, so it's a great opportunity to get off those motorways and explore the great British countryside.

As you can see from the map here, there are venues to visit around Britain, so go on, support these great British attractions... you will not be disappointed!



10
VISIT ST ALBANS SOUTH SIGNAL BOX!
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11
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Exbury
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12
GWR
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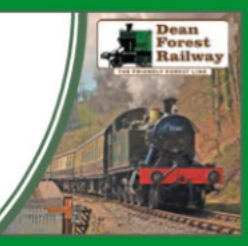


13
We've been shortlisted...
Heritage Railway Awards
Coiley Award
Trains every Sunday and Bank Holiday Good Friday to 1st October
St Ingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
www.sklr.net

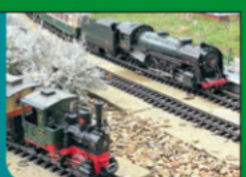


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15
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17
RIBBLE STEAM
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With Ribble Steam Railway's fascinating working and static exhibits, the museum is a proud reminder of what makes Preston and Lancashire the vibrant place it is today.
Discover the history of Preston's Docks and the stories of the first electric trains, then hop aboard a steam train and travel the railway's 1¼ mile dock and riverside line. Uncover a hidden part of the city as the line passes Preston Marina and ventures over its impressive swing bridge.
Job Opportunities
Hop aboard a Steam Train and discover the history of Preston's Docks and Railway...
See our website for 2023 events



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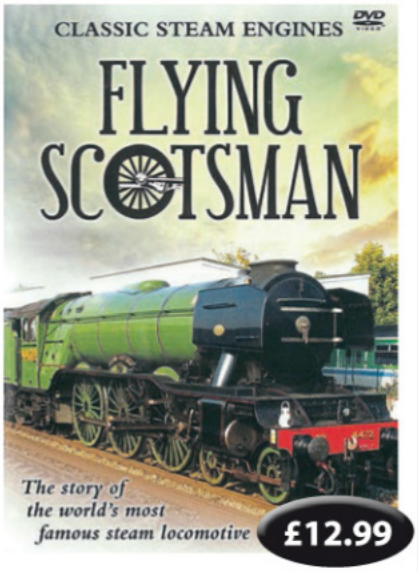
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The story of the world's most famous steam locomotive.

The Flying Scotsman is known as the most famous steam locomotive in the world.

There are few people who have not heard of this magnificent machine, but far fewer know the complicated story of how Flying Scotsman became a National Treasure.

Illustrated by evocative footage of the engine working on the British railway network in various guises, this programme traces the story from the time when the locomotive returned from Australia after achieving its most recent record - the world's longest non-stop run behind steam - up to its acquisition by the nation and the National Railway Museum at York.

In this programme we see Flying Scotsman with single and double-chimney fittings, German smoke deflectors and LNER Apple Green and British Railways Brunswick Green liveries, working from Carnforth in the North to Salisbury in the South, as well as on the Ride the Legend excursions to Scarborough.

The Transport Treasury

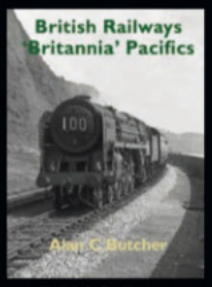
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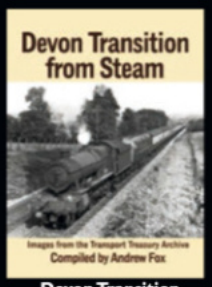
Railway Times Issue 1

Railway Times is the new twice-yearly journal covering the changes and events on British Railways year by year starting from 1948. 1948 was a year of upheaval. Public ownership meaning four very different organisations had to begin to be welded into one corporate entity. This meant the start of a standardised policy stretching from Cornwall to Scotland and all places between. It was a fascinating year and one which is explored in this new title.

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Modelling diary

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15/16 Nottingham Model Railway Society *www.nottingham-modelrailway.org.uk*
15/16 Scarborough Model Railway Exhibition *www.sdrmweb.co.uk*
15/16 Wimborne Model Railway Society www.wimrail.org.uk
29/30 Blackpool Model Tramway Exhibition *www.themodeltramshop.com*
29/30 Syston
29/30 /May 1 Wensleydale Railway Model Railway Show *www.wensleydale-railway.co.uk*

MAY
13/14 May Immingham Model Railway Show – www.imminghammuseum.org

■ *If you have a model event coming up, please contact Craig on* **camess@mortons.co.uk** *to advertise or list.*



This version of No. 4472 is how it went to the USA in the late 1960s, with double tender, cowcatcher, headlight and bell.

Flying Scotsman centenary products

Hornby celebrates 100 years of the world's most famous locomotive.

THE world famous *Flying Scotsman* turned 100 on February 24, 2023. Synonymous with the golden age of rail travel, the locomotive is renowned as a feat of design and engineering, and it was named in 1924 after the daily 10am London to Edinburgh rail service.

In 1927, Hornby first introduced an '0' gauge tinplate model carrying the name *Flying Scotsman,* then in 1969 a '00' model of the locomotive was introduced. Since then there have been almost 50 variants produced, and it remains one of Hornby's most popular model locomotives.

A special, limited edition *Flying Scotsman* centenary locomotive has been released, presented in a bespoke box and including a medallion featuring *Flying Scotsman's* centenary logo, operator, running number and year, as well as a numbered commemorative certificate.



Right: One of Hornby's *Flying Scotsman* centenary products, this one featuring the loco as LNER No. 4472.

■ To view the full centenary collection, please visit the website at **uk.hornby.com/catalogue/flying-scotsman-centenary**

Model Rail Scotland attracts more visitors year-on-year

WITH new announcements from Cavalex and Accurascale, there was a buzz around all the new models in the planning at Model Rail Scotland in Glasgow on February 24-26.

Visitor numbers increased compared to the previous year, when the end of lockdown meant a few were still unsure about venturing out. The move to e-ticketing also allowed for visitors to purchase a ticket and enter the event more easily, reducing the queues for the ticket desks.

Exhibition manager Ian Porteous said: "Planning and organising the 2023 exhibition has been a real pleasure, and the feedback received from visitors and exhibitors shows our efforts have certainly paid off as everyone was happy to be back at our exhibition."



Right: Cavalex's new Class 60 has been designed from scratch based on original works drawings from Wabtec. Cavalex

Below: Crowds at Model Rail Scotland in Glasgow. ScotRail



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Diesel locos



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4D-005-001 Class 59/1 59103 "Village of Mells" in ARC .£147.22



4D-022-020 Class 68 68018 "Vigilant" in DRS compass blue £146.88



4D-022-021 Class 68 68027 "Splendid" in TransPennine Express £135.99

Heljan - Diesel locos



3368 Class 33/1 33101 in BR blue white cab surrounds .£178.46

Hornby - Steam locos



R30232 Liverpool and Manchester Centenary (1930) Pack With 0-4-2 "Lion" and Three Coaches £215.99



R3987 Class 9F 2-10-0 92194 in BR Black Late Crest £228



R3991 Class A3 4-6-2 60103 "Flying Scotsman" in BR green early emblem £252

Diesel locos

NEW



R30151 Class 66/7 66796 "The Green Progressor" in GB Railfreight HS2 green and blue NEW £87.29

NEW



R30152 Class 66/7 66793 in Railfreight Construction triple grey GB Railfreight markings NEW £87.29

NEW



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R3569 Class 71 E5005 in BR blue (RRP £206.99)BARGAIN ..£89

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R3827 Class 800 IEP five car pack 800104 'Celebrating Scotland' in LNER 'Azuma' £400

Train sets - analogue



R1255M Flying Scotsman - starter train set..... £198



R1283M Royal Scot trainset in Hornby-Dublo style packaging LMS coronation loco, two coaches, and oval of track £387

N Gauge

Dapol - Steam locos



2S-008-014 Class A4 4-6-2 60009 "Union of South Africa" in BR green early emblem £146.84



2S-017-007 Class 7MT 4-6-2 'Britannia' 70050 "Firth of Clyde" in BR green early emblem..... £133.07
2S-017-008 Class 7MT 4-6-2 'Britannia' 70051 "Firth of Forth" in BR green late crest..... £133.07

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O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

Dapol - Steam locos

BARGAIN



7S-010-016 Class A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T 672 "Fenchurch" in LBSCR marsh brown (RRP £251.51)...BARGAIN. £185.50

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7S-010-019 Class A1X 'Terrier' 0-6-0T B653 in SR olive green NEW £213.78

NEW



7S-010-020 Class A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T 55 "Stepney" in LBSCR improved engine green NEW £213.78
7S-010-020S Class A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T 55 "Stepney" in LBSCR improved engine green - Digital sound fitted NEW £330.48
7S-010-021 Class A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0T 71 "Wapping" in LBSCR improved engine green NEW..... £213.78

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7D-011-001 Streamlined Railcar 12 in GWR lined chocolate and cream monogram NEW..... £321.30
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NEW



7D-011-004 Streamlined Railcar W11 in BR lined chocolate and cream NEW £321.30

NEW



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NEW



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NEW



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Wagons



7F-048-009 HAA MGR coal hopper BR freight brown cradle - 350816 ..... £55.04

Hattons Originals - Coaches

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H7-TC115-001 Gresley Teak coach Diagram 115 Corridor Third unnumbered in LNER Teak (RRP £249)BARGAIN £130

Heljan - Diesel locos

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2059 Class 03 shunter in Industrial dark blue (RRP £419).....BARGAIN. ...£225



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4863 Class 47 in Railfreight 'Sector' triple grey - unnumbered (RRP £729) .....BARGAIN. .£495

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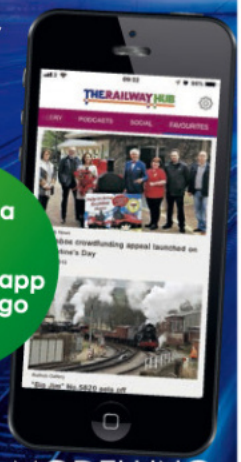
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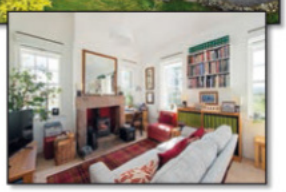
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Prize crossword

■ Puzzle compiled by WILL ADAMS

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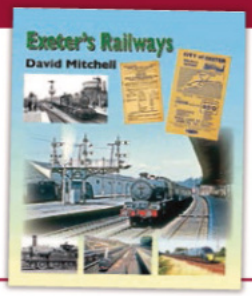
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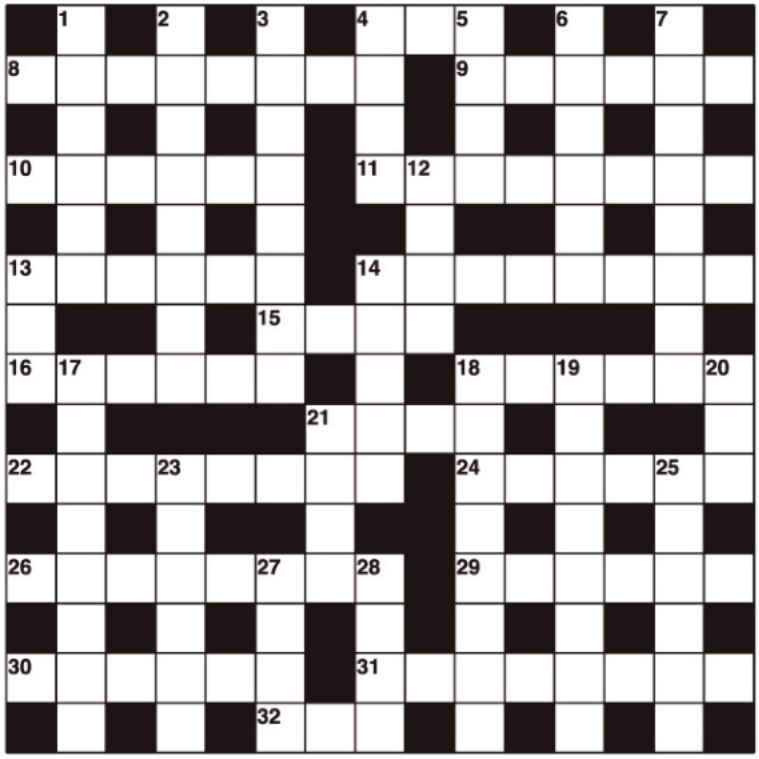
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Across

4 Doctor who gave his surname to a Bristol junction (3)
8 Monorail system used by the Listowel & Ballybunion Railway (8)
9 First name of the creator of 1 down and 30 across (6)
10 'Britannia' No. 70015 (6)
11 Penultimate station on the Tattenham Corner branch (8)
13 ___ Junction, for the Liverpool and Manchester lines south of Runcorn (6)
14 'A1' No. 60139 (3,5)
15 Initials of the heritage railway based at Pickering (1,1,1,1)
16 Station on the Tees Valley line to Saltburn (6)
18 *The Red* ____, Class 91 No. 91004 (6)
21 Red ___, former BR parcels service, 1963-99 (4)
22 'West Country' No. 34099 (8)
24 Composer commemorated by Class 92 No. 92016 (6)
26 WCML tunnels north of Leighton Buzzard (8)
29 John ___, GN&LNWR Joint line station south of Melton Mowbray (6)
30 Surname of the sleuth who investigated the *Murder on the Orient Express* (6)
31 *Duke of* ___, 'A2/1' No. 60508 (8)
32 Station near Hastings (3)



Down

1 Surname of the sleuth who investigated the *4.50 from Paddington* (6)
2 Former GER Norfolk station and swing bridge (2,6)
3 M&SWJR station north of Savernake (8)
4 Highest operational main-line station in England (4)
5 Group of goods sidings, perhaps (4)
6 'Jubilee' No. 45587 (6)
7 *William* ___, new name for the LNER's former *Great Snipe* (8)
12 Station near Caerphilly, and former North Wales main line station (4)
13 Station between Crewe and Shrewsbury (3)
14 *Captain Bill* ___ RNR, preserved Class 33/1 No. 33109 (5)
17 'Deltic' No. D9009 (8)
18 Station between Dundee and Montrose (8)
19 Cambrian station between Builth Road and Llanidloes (8)
20 Initials of the railway society named in honour of George and Robert (1,1,1)
21 A railway company's locomotive stock, originally referring to horses (4)
23 'Jubilee' No. 45586 (6)
25 ___ Trail, Peak District walking route using the former MR line (6)
27 '___ train', loco and carriages capable of being driven from both ends (4)
28 'Jubilee' No. 45572 (4)

April crossword entry form

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel Email

Send completed form (photocopies are accepted) to: April Crossword Quiz, The Railway Magazine, Mortons Media Group Ltd, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle LN9 6JR. Open to UK entrants only. Winners will be announced in the June 2023 issue. The winners will be the senders of the first all-correct solutions opened in our office. **You can email entries to RMcomp@mortons.co.uk Please list the answers to the clues for across, then down.** There are no cash alternatives available. The winners will be the first names drawn at random from the people who answered correctly. Terms and conditions apply. To view the privacy policy of MMG Ltd (publisher of *The Railway Magazine*) please visit www.mortons.co.uk/privacy

Solution to the February issue

Across: 1 Sir Keith 5 Primed 9 Thatcham 10 Scawby 12 Park 13 Turbine 17 Llangollen 19 Gnu 21 Cop 22 Caledonian 24 Wressle 25 Watt 28 Tavern 30 Falahill 31 Henry V 32 Sea Eagle

Down: 1 Sets 2 Road 3 Exchange 4 Track 6 Record 7 Mow 8 Day returns 11 Steele 14 Inglis 15 Black Watch 16 Magpie 18 Leader 20 Moat Lane 23 Osprey 25 Whale 26 King 27 Alne 29 Van

February winner: Graham Lomax, Bury

Runners-up: Michael Fitchett, Chaddesden; Keri Moreman, Evesham.

The closing date for this month's crossword is Friday, May 5, 2023.

The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. No employee (including the immediate families) of Mortons Media Ltd or any subsidiary company, and The Nostalgia Collection or any subsidiary company, or any company associated with the production of *The Railway Magazine*, may enter this competition. No purchase necessary. No cash alternatives are offered and prizes are not transferable. Responsibility cannot be accepted for delayed, lost or damaged entry forms.

Where is it? Our pictorial quiz, for fun only



LAST month's rails through the trees (right), were photographed by Stewart Lanham in May 2022 and are part of the former branch from Alves to Burghead and Hopeman in Moray, Scotland – this section running through the Roseisle Forest.

For this month, do you know where this bufferstop (left) is? A clue is that it is at the end of an open passenger line at a location where two pre-Grouping companies once met end-on.



Next month The May issue will be on sale on Wednesday May 3, 2023. Thank you for choosing *The Railway Magazine*

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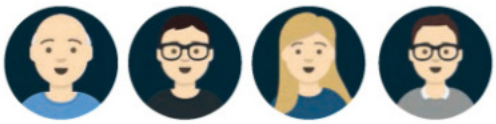
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NEW RELEASE

AT LAST!

Part One of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Driver's eye view.

**For the first time ever, a Driver's eye view of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway.
This famous Indian 2 foot gauge line runs for 55 miles from New Jalpaiguri in West Bengal up to Darjeeling in the foothills of the Himalayas.**

Filmed in two parts, now at last we have been able to complete part one from New Jalpaiguri to Tindharia, roughly half way. Part one's filming was cut short by the pandemic.

PART ONE now available:



Although the DHR begins at New Jalpaiguri Junction, steam is very rarely seen there nowadays, so in order to see the whole line, our journey begins on board an NDM 6 diesel loco, which takes us over the first 5 miles to Siliguri Junction alongside India's main line broad gauge track. The narrow gauge crosses the broad gauge on the level and later on is even interlaced to share the single track viaduct over the Mahanada river. At Siliguri Junction, an iconic 'B' class steam engine takes over, hauling our train for the next half hour past the typical hustle and bustle of the busy markets, shops and businesses along the Hill Cart Road.

Following the first signs of the ubiquitous tea plantations, we arrive at our first intermediate stop at Sukna, where we witness the single line token being handed over. Our diminutive 0-4-0 saddle tank takes on much-needed water here, as we leave the plains and head for the hills. Almost immediately, the road traffic seems to vanish as we begin the almost relentless climb over gradients as steep as 1 in 18 into the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains! The line follows the Hill Cart Road most of the way, and our train crosses it dozens of times to ease the gradient or lessen the radius of a curve. In many places, check rails are essential as we run perilously close to the very edge of the hills and squeeze over the narrowest of precipices. This section of our journey includes three 'Z' reverses and the Chunbhati loop, all of which were necessary to further ease the punishing gradients. Part one is available to download now and on DVD and Blu-ray mid-April. Orders are being taken online, by post or by phone. Downloads cost £20 in SD and £24 in HD. DVD is £25 and Blu-ray £30. Narration is by Jonathan Kydd*. Running time 154 minutes.





We managed to complete the second half of the journey from Tindharia to Darjeeling in 2020 and of course this is still available.

Starting roughly at the half way point of the DHR, the climb continues through the rugged mountain terrain and around the loop at Agony Point (so-named due to the affect on passengers riding the severest curve on the line coupled with frighteningly sheer drops). We encounter three more 'Z' reverses, before entering the outskirts of Kurseong with its dead-end terminus.

Here another steam engine takes climbing all the way to the 7,400 foot summit of the line at Ghum. After taking on yet more water, our train descends for the final few miles around the famous and much photographed Batasialoop and through the built up streets all the way to the end of the line at Darjeeling.



If you haven't already had part two, buying both parts together you qualify for our normal 10% quantity discount. Remember, as always we offer a no quibble money back guarantee.





*commentary on/off button on DVD & Blu-ray discs.

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