

Coronation Troop Trains
Railways support the King's big day

Cornish *Scotsman*!
'A3' christens St Blazey turntable



The RAILWAY Magazine

BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING RAIL TITLE

June 2023

What went wrong for TPE?

. . . as TransPennine Express goes under Government control



FAREWELL 'MR RAILTOUR'
Pathfinder boss steps down after 50 years in charge



ROTHER VALLEY REVIVAL
Kent & East Sussex Railway to get main line connection



A BRIGG TOO FAR
Town loses Saturday-only service in Northern cuts



The Dorset Coast Express

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We are offering a number of attractive summer day trips from London to Weymouth by steam train. These trains provide plenty of opportunity to visit the beautiful Dorset coast and relive the 'golden age' of steam. Passengers have the option of spending time at the celebrated seaside resorts of either Bournemouth or Weymouth, where both have fine sandy beaches. Each train will be hauled by a steam locomotive that was built for express passenger train work.

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Saturday 15th July

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Sunday 16th July

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The go-ahead has been given to join up the Rother Valley Railway with the Kent & East Sussex Railway, including new level crossings over the A21 and here on the B2244 (Junction Road), seen looking south-west on December 21, 2020.
TREVOR EDWARD STREETER (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Hard work pays off



TRAIN OF THOUGHT
Editor's Comment

IT was a decision eagerly awaited by the heritage rail movement and, thankfully, one that went the right way. I am talking about the award of a Transport and Works Act Order to rebuild the missing section of line between Bodiam and Robertsbridge, linking the Kent & East Sussex Railway with the Rother Valley Railway and thus effectively giving the KESR a main line interchange for the first time since the line was closed by British Railways in 1961.

The significance of this decision cannot be overstated, not least because it includes new level crossings over the A21 and B2244 roads, but it was found that traffic would not be unduly impacted by the railway.

Much work by supporters and campaigners had gone into making the best possible application for the order, "gold-plated" being one description, and so it would have been a bitter blow to the whole heritage movement had it not succeeded, because that would have made any other future rail reopening schemes seem that much harder to obtain.

Granting of the Order is also a reflection of the detailed work that went into the application, which was begun five years ago in April 2018 – a considerable length of time, even taking into account the pandemic, and a lesson, perhaps, to those working on other new heritage rail schemes. See page 58 for full details.

An unmissable 'Deltic' day out!

WE HAVE a fascinating interview this month with Pathfinder boss Peter Watts, who is stepping down after 50 years in charge and more than 1100 tours – an incredible achievement.

The Railway Magazine has teamed up with Pathfinder to run the 'Tees-Tyne Commemorative' on September 27, marking the 75th anniversary of the 'Tees-Tyne Pullman'. Members of *The RM* team will be on board – but, more importantly, it promises to be a superb day of 'Deltic' haulage along the East Coast Main Line from King's Cross to Newcastle.

Tickets are available via the website at www.pathfindertours.co.uk or by calling 01453 834477. It'd be great to see you there while also raising money for good causes!

PAUL BICKERDYKE, Editor

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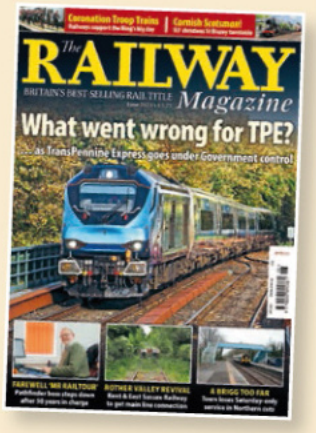
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A farewell tour for the Southern Class 313 EMUs operated on April 29 using Nos. 313213 and 313201. STEVE STUBBS

On the cover

MAIN IMAGE: TransPennine Express is now under Government control after months of poor service. On November 12, 2022 loco No. 68030 *Black Douglas* heads a 'Nova 3' Mk.5 set into York with a 5Q32/11.27 empty stock working from Malton to Manchester Longsight. GEOFF GRIFFITHS



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'Pug' No. 11243 and 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* at Bluebell Railway's Branch Line Weekend on April 23. DAVE BOWLES



Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST *Lord Granby* pictured at its new home following arrival on April 29. JAMES WAITE



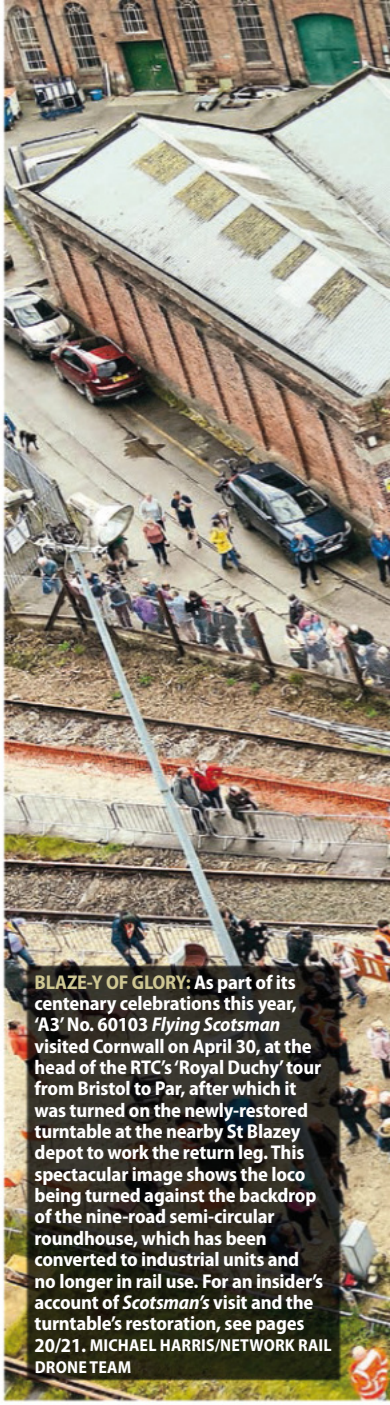
Class 17 'Clayton' No. D8568 was the star guest at Great Central Railway's April diesel gala. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

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Inside Toddington signalbox on May 12. JACK BOSKETT



BLAZE-Y OF GLORY: As part of its centenary celebrations this year, 'A3' No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* visited Cornwall on April 30, at the head of the RTC's 'Royal Duchy' tour from Bristol to Par, after which it was turned on the newly-restored turntable at the nearby St Blazey depot to work the return leg. This spectacular image shows the loco being turned against the backdrop of the nine-road semi-circular roundhouse, which has been converted to industrial units and no longer in rail use. For an insider's account of *Scotsman's* visit and the turntable's restoration, see pages 20/21. MICHAEL HARRIS/NETWORK RAIL DRONE TEAM

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New LU 'Inspiro' Tube trains to be tested in Germany

Siemens has installed Tube-style fourth-rail electrification to its Wildenrath test track loops.

By Keith Fender

ALTHOUGH later trains in the order of 94 nine-car 'Inspiro' trains for London Underground's Piccadilly Line will be assembled at Siemens' new factory in Goole, the company is building the first units in Vienna, and testing them in Germany at the Wildenrath test centre.

The first 'Inspiro' is expected to arrive at Wildenrath in July for static testing, with dynamic tests planned to begin towards the end of this year. To make this possible, Siemens has electrified both test rings at Wildenrath with London-style fourth-rail electrification.

The smaller 2.5km dual (1000/1435mm) gauge test ring and adjacent tracks were previously equipped with side-contact third-rail to test new trains delivered to Berlin in recent years. This remains in place and new third/fourth-rail London Underground electrification has also been fitted using aluminium conductor rails.

The large 6.1km standard-gauge test ring was previously electrified with third-rail to test 'Desiro' EMUs delivered to South West Trains, so here only new fourth-rail conductors have had to be installed between the running lines.



Right: The fourth-rail electrification on Wildenrath's small test ring can be seen in this shot of Siemens' hydrogen prototype (Mireo Plus H) No. 563101 taken on April 26. KEITH FENDER

EWR announces preferred Bedford-Cambridge route

EAST West Rail has announced the preferred route for the third-phase of the £5 billion project between Bedford and Cambridge.

The line will run north out of Bedford Midland to cross the East Coast Main Line at Tempsford (between Sandy and St Neots), continuing on to Cambourne and then joining the existing line from Hitchin near Foxton to enter Cambridge from the south.

EWR plans to rebuild the 'Varsity Line' (closed January 1, 1968) between Oxford and Cambridge, in three phases: the first, which is well-advanced, involves rebuilding and relaying the former mothballed section between Bicester and Bletchley/Milton Keynes; the second will be an upgrade of the existing line between Bletchley and Bedford Midland; while the third, and most expensive, would be a mostly new route from Bedford to Cambridge.

The company said Bedford St Johns would be unable to accommodate the proposed train services and has proposed relocating the station closer to Bedford Hospital. It also said the number of homes it would need to buy to build the line north of Bedford has been reduced from 97 to 65.



A map of the preferred EWR route between Bedford and Cambridge.





BR-ERA UNITS BOW OUT: April 29 saw farewell tours run for two classes of British Rail-built EMUs, Class 313 (which date back to 1976/7) and Class 321 (built 1988-91). Southern was the last operator of the '313s', with its farewell tour seeing Nos. 313201+313213 visit various South Coast locations between Portsmouth to Hastings (and pictured at Havant). Great Anglia was the last passenger operator of '321s', with its tour formed of Nos. 321307+321314 pictured at Harwich Town during its tour of Anglia. A converted '321' is still in parcels use with Swift Express, while various other '321s' were converted to '320s' in the mid-2010s for use in Scotland. STEVE STUBBS / MIKE COOPER



WHR BALDWIN RIDES AGAIN: Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's Baldwin 4-6-0T No. 590 (794) has returned to action following restoration at the Vale of Rheidol Railway's Aberstwyth workshop. The loco is to be among the stars of the June 23-25 Welsh Highland Railway centenary celebrations, re-creating scenes from the original WHR operation and showcasing the history of this iconic line right through to the tourist trains which operate today. Jointly organised by the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways and the WHHR, along with their supporting societies, full details of the event are available at www.festrail.co.uk. The newly-arrived No. 590 is pictured on test at Porthmadog on May 23. CHRIS PARRY/FFWHR



SIDE-BY-SIDE STEAM: Taken during this year's Steamfest Festival held at Maitland, New South Wales, on April 29/30, the scene depicts 'The Great Race' being run between Newcastle and Maitland at East Maitland on the second day – with (from left) Australian-built No. 3801, American-built No. 5917, British-built No. 6029 and British-built (former broad gauge) Victorian Railway No. R766. A Gipsy Moth bi-plane was also involved. RUSSELL BUTTERWORTH

First coach arrives at Welsh test track

Former Talgo high-speed coach moves from Barrow Hill to South Wales.

By Gareth Evans

THE Talgo high-speed carriage that arrived for display at Barrow Hill Roundhouse in January 2020 has been donated by the Spanish train manufacturer to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) test track, which is under construction at Onllwyn in South Wales.

Talgo bid for the classic-compatible order for HS2 trains and was interested in other potential UK deals as well as export opportunities. However, the HS2 contract was awarded to a joint venture between Hitachi and Alstom, and Companies House records show that Talgo UK Limited, which had its registered office address at Barrow Hill Roundhouse, was dissolved on November 9, 2021.

The sleeper vehicle now at GCRE had previously been used on overnight Paris-Madrid trains, with other coaches from those services being converted into Very High Speed Train vehicles for use in Spain.

GCRE was established in 2021 with an initial commitment of £50 million from the Welsh Government. The UK Government is supporting the project with funding for research and development along with capital funding of £20 million. GCRE recently launched a major public procurement to attract £330 million of private investment for the project.



The Talgo carriage arrived at the GCRE site on April 14. GCRE

Former mine site

Spanning the former Nant Helen opencast site and Onllwyn Washery in South Wales, GCRE says it will be the UK's first net zero railway. The facility will include two 25kV electrified test loops, one a 6.9km high-speed rolling stock track and the other a 4km, 60kph infrastructure test track.

In early May, it was announced that Transport for Wales (TfW) and GCRE Limited had signed heads of terms for TfW to become a major commercial client of the facility.

As part of the GCRE membership model, companies can take guaranteed testing and research time at the site when it opens, according to their needs. TfW is reportedly intending to become a 'Premium' client of the facility, due to be completed in 2025. The collaboration will see GCRE support Transport for Wales with its rail testing, innovation and research and development. The deal also paves the way for TfW to use other GCRE services, including storage, training and product approvals in future as these are developed.

■ Last autumn, GCRE acquired the three remaining five-car ex-Heathrow Connect Class 360/2s, Nos. 360201-203, which are stored at Bicester. The units are expected to move to South Wales in due course.

A1ST moves into new home

THE relocation of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust from Hopetown Works to the nearby brand-new, purpose-built works within the Darlington Railway Heritage Quarter got underway in late May.

Owned by Darlington Borough Council, the new £4.5 million two-road building will provide many of the facilities required for constructing and operating the A1SLT's locomotives, including a main line rail connection and inspection pits.

Following a detailed site visit by Network Rail, DBC and A1SLT personnel, a clear preferred layout has now been finalised for the trust's new home. The plan will allow a full-length charter train to arrive into the site without being split. Expenditure has also been reduced by only using one span of the bridge over nearby Otley Terrace, while major signal cable movements have been avoided.

Almost all of the plain line for the track has been sourced. Point work and other requirements are also due for delivery later this year before track work commences in the autumn.

■ Meanwhile, replacement small tubes have now all been fitted to *Tornado's* boiler. While some work remains outstanding, the boiler is expected to be sent to Locomotive Maintenance Services, Loughborough, to rejoin the rest of the locomotive soon. Visit www.a1steam.com for details of how you can help.



Inside the new Darlington Locomotive Works on May 25. New-build 'P2' No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* is seen on the left, while its tender can be seen in the distance behind the boiler for 'A1' No. 60163 *Tornado*. ALSLT

SIDELINES

No new Piccadilly platforms

NETWORK Rail's long-proposed plans for the construction of two new platforms at Manchester Piccadilly station have been withdrawn.

The Department for Transport says it has asked the Manchester Task Force (a cross-industry group, including NR, train operators, Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for the North) to "consider alternative options to better serve passengers and support the £26 million already injected to improve services at Manchester Piccadilly, Airport and Oxford Road stations."

Confirmation came in an announcement of £72 million of DfT funding for rail improvements, including a third platform and turnbacks for Salford Crescent station and additional platform entrances and exits for passengers at Manchester Victoria.

The Government claims it will reduce delays, bottlenecks and overcrowding, but Northern Powerhouse Partnership chief executive Henri Murison said it fell short of delivering measures which should already have been in place and that the Piccadilly platform proposal had been dropped "without equivalent commitments".

Backlog of structural examinations 'must be cleared'

OFFICE of Rail and Road chief executive John Larkinson has written to his Network Rail counterpart Andrew Haines, saying that NR must clear its backlog of examinations on structures including bridges, tunnels and culverts.

The ORR started to escalate concerns about non-compliance with examinations in 2021. The letter states that progress "has not been good enough and, in some cases, compliance rates have deteriorated".

It highlights the potential for faults which go undetected or not fully-assessed to present safety issues and a need for speed restrictions, having an impact on train service reliability.

The ORR said NR did not have robust plans in place across all of its regions to achieve a reasonable level of compliance with its own new standard, intended to be effective from September. NR has agreed to submit a plan for resolving issues to the ORR by the end of June.

Name dropped in Eurotunnel rebrand

AS part of rebranding announced on May 12, the 'Eurotunnel' name has been dropped from passenger and freight shuttle services through the Channel Tunnel.

Eurotunnel Le Shuttle services are now known as LeShuttle, with no space between 'Le' and 'Shuttle'. Operator GetLink says the new logo is a visual representation of the LeShuttle proposition: Simplicity, Speed and Care, as well as a reference to the tunnel infrastructure.

SIDELINES

First Avanti Class 807 EMU goes main line

HITACHI-BUILT EMU No. 807002 became the first of its class to start main line testing when it ran two round trips between Darlington and Doncaster on May 15/16, it being hauled from the Newton Aycliffe factory to Darlington by 'Grid' No. 56098.

The fleet of 10 seven-car '807s' are destined for use with Avanti on the West Coast Main Line which, along with 13 Class 805 bi-modes, will replace the operator's fleet of 20 Class 221 'Voyagers'.

Full peak timetable on Elizabeth Line

FROM the May timetable change, peak time services on the Elizabeth Line between Paddington and Whitechapel increased to up to 24 trains per hour (tph) – a train roughly every two-and-a-half minutes.

Previously 22 tph, the addition of two more peak trains (with 16 tph off-peak between the same locations) was the final stage in the delivery of the Elizabeth Line project and came two days before the first anniversary of its opening.

There are more peak time services between Liverpool Street and Gidea Park and, at the route's western end, from Reading, where some paths previously operated by Great Western Railway are now used by limited-stop Elizabeth Line trains.

Green Park opens

THE new £250 million station at Reading Green Park, on the line to Basingstoke, opened for business on May 27. It features two 150-metre-long platforms with a half-hourly service in both directions throughout the day.

The station serves a growing business and residential area of south Reading, and is close to the town's football stadium. It is the first of three new stations planned for the Great Western Railway network this year, along with Portway Park & Ride in Bristol and Marsh Barton in Exeter.

Unique NER coach

NORTH Eastern Railway-designed, but LNER-built, Open Third coach No. 945 has been repainted into NER crimson livery at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. It was one of two constructed by the LNER with post-Grouping modifications such as Pullman gangways, buckeye couplers and vacuum brakes, and did not have the body end windows that were a feature of the earlier NER-built examples.

It was acquired by the North Eastern Railway Coach Group in 1973 and moved to the embryonic NYMR by rail, ownership then passing to the LNER Coach Association. Some work needs to be completed for its centenary year, with further information on the group's website at www.lnerca.org.



A SEPTUPLE HEADER! The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Gala weekend on May 13/14 ended with this incredible train formed of seven locos and 22 coaches running nonstop from New Romney to Dungeness – seen on the return with *River Esk* (visiting from the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway) leading RHDR locos No. 1 *Green Goddess*, No. 2 *Northern Chief*, No. 3 *Southern Maid*, No. 5 *Hercules*, No. 6 *Samson* and No. 10 *Doctor Syn*. CHRIS KENNEDY

Irish steam breaks new ground

The multi-day 'Emerald Isle Explorer' took Q Class No. 131 to Galway, Limerick and Waterford for the first time ever.

By Hassard Stacpoole

OVER an eight-day period in early May, the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland operated almost 750 miles of steam haulage around the Iarnród Éireann network for Steam Dreams – the 'Emerald Isle Explorer'.

This was the first Steam Dreams tour in Ireland since September 2019, and thus the first with new owners Locomotive Services, and was notable that it saw two former Great Northern Railway 4-4-0s working the same tour for the first time since 2001. It also marked several firsts for Q Class No. 131, which had never operated to Galway, Limerick or Waterford in service or preservation.

Starting on May 4 at Dublin Heuston, V Class No. 85 *Merlin* worked the 09.15 Heuston-Galway with seven Cravens coaches and a van as far as Portarlington, swapping there with No. 131 to take the tour on to Galway.

Departing from the pocket loop in Portarlington at 10.50, the train called at Athlone before arriving in Galway at 16.40. In the meantime, No. 85 worked light engine to Limerick.



Left: V Class 4-4-0 No. 85 *Merlin* passes Rathcoole (County Cork) heading for Mallow and Cork with the 09.00 'Emerald Isle Explorer' from Killarney on May 9. The train had been shortened by two coaches for the stiff climb out of Cork on the return leg. ALISTAIR CAMPBELL

West Corridor debut

On May 6, No. 131 made its debut on the West Rail Corridor with 08.50 Galway-Limerick via Athenry. At Limerick, No. 85 took over tender first for the 13.55 Limerick-Killarney departure, stopping at Mallow for water. The next day saw a short working with No. 85 to Tralee and back from Killarney.

May 8 saw No. 85 on the 09.05 Killarney-Cork with a shortened train of five cravens and van, stopping at Mallow to run around and take water. The train was serviced at Cork before heading back to Killarney, again with a water stop at Mallow.

The next day the train departed at 08.40 for Waterford via Mallow and Limerick Junction, where No. 85 was exchanged for No. 131. After being held by the regulator at Limerick Junction, the train proceeded to Waterford and arrived 25 minutes late at 14.10. Here GM No. 076 took the tour on to Muine Bheag, where passengers alighted with the train going empty stock to Carlow for stabling, while No. 131 went to Kilkenny light engine.

Meanwhile, No. 85 ran back light engine from Limerick Junction to Dublin Connolly shed, where it was found to be leaking water and so not sent light to Wexford as planned.

On May 10, after an empty stock working from Carlow to pick up passengers at Muine Bheag, No. 131 (having run light engine from Kilkenny) took the tour to Kildare, where No. 076 took over for the leg to Wexford via Dublin Connolly, arriving at 15.45. No. 131 returned to Connolly light engine for servicing before heading for Wexford to work the final leg, replacing No. 85.

The last day of the tour was May 11, when No. 131 brought the empty stock from Wexford to Rosslare Strand, then returned to Wexford and departed at 10.38 back to Connolly.



A POIGNANT MOMENT: May 14 saw the final day of operation at the late Adrian Shooter's 2ft gauge Beeches Light Railway (at Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire), when Darjeeling Himalayan Railway 0-4-0ST No. 19B was run for the benefit of the cataloguers for the June 21 auction of his railway collection. Members of the volunteer support crew placed a wreath for Mr Shooter on the smokebox of No. 19B for this final BLR steaming. The Darjeeling Tank Trust is bidding to secure No. 19B for preservation at Statfold Barn, its appeal for support being boosted on May 23, by a £40,000 donation from the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society. See www.darjeelingtank.org.uk for more details. JEREMY DAVEY/DTT

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RAIB says no urgent safety notifications were issued in 2022

THE Rail Accident Investigation Branch's annual report indicates that 461 incidents were advised in 2022, of which 22 were of a severity that required a detailed on-site examination to establish cause and identify future mitigations. None of the events resulted in the issue of a statutory notice preventing operations.

A summary of statistics over five years shows there have been 17 main line derailments, with freight recording 10 and passenger trains seven. There were 17 collisions that involved eight between trains and nine with obstruction to the track.

Potential weakness

The management of extreme weather conditions has become a higher safety priority and the RAIB found that more blanket emergency speed restrictions and closures are being applied in response to forecasts of extreme heat and storms.

A potential weakness in the system is the manner in which changes to line speed are advised to traincrew, which at present is confined to notices at signing on points. As a result, cases of over-speeding have occurred because of a lack of knowledge of the imposition of a blanket restriction.

Rail adhesion issues also required greater attention, which in turn related to the control of lineside vegetation – the characteristics of which have been altered by climate change. The illustrative event occurred on the approach to Salisbury station in 2021, where a train overran a stop signal as it could not be controlled and collided with another where routes converged.

Trap & drag

Attention continues to be needed to the 'trap and drag' events that occur at stations platforms and – like other incidents such as SPADS, where trains proceed without having movement authority – careful management is needed to prevent drivers becoming distracted or suffering from fatigue.

TPE nationalised

By 'Industry Update'

THE National Rail Contract held by FirstGroup for operating TransPennine Express services was not renewed when it expired on May 28, and from that date services are being provided by the Department for Transport 'operator of last resort' trading as TransPennine Trains.

The decision follows a prolonged period of service unreliability, with cancellations amounting to 17% of the timetable in March this year.

It is a disappointing end for one of the most successful franchises, which was formed in 2004 when the original Northern Spirit (Regional Railways North East) and First North Western (Regional Railways North West) contracts were remapped to create the Northern and TransPennine Express contracts.

This was the result of the Strategic Rail Authority identifying there was an unrealised potential for inter-urban express services between the main population centres in Northern England; a theme that was to be developed with the more ambitious Northern Powerhouse Rail proposal that included the construction of new high speed lines.

Network established

The initial TPE franchise was awarded to a consortium made up of FirstGroup and Keolis (the commercial arm of French state operator SNCF) and commenced on February 1, 2004. The delivery plan for the contract included replacement rolling stock to improve the journey experience, resulting in the introduction of 51 three-car Class 185 diesel units built by Siemens, which entered service in 2006.

The new DMUs improved operational performance, as each vehicle had a 750hp traction package that provided a very high power-to-weight ratio to improve timings over the severe gradients on the routes used. The interior design was notable, as the layout provided comfortable seating with an on board catering service.

There was a change to franchise boundaries in November 2007, when the services provided by Virgin CrossCountry between the North West and Scotland were transferred to TPE. With the installation of overhead wiring, throughout electric working was possible between Manchester Airport and Edinburgh, and 10 four-car Class 350/4 units were put into traffic for the diagrams in 2014.

The TPE contract was retendered in 2014 after 10 years that had seen substantial growth, with passenger numbers rising from 13.5 to 25.2 million. The new franchise was again awarded to FirstGroup, although this time acting as a single entity without the involvement of Keolis. There was some change to network geography too, with routes to Blackpool North, Barrow-in-Furness and Windermere being transferred to the Northern franchise.

The delivery plan again had a significant focus on rolling stock, with a need to increase capacity and also release the Class 350/4 units, which had only been used by TPE as a short-term measure before transfer to West Midlands Trains.

Enter the 'Novas'

The new franchise started on April 1, 2016 and a new rolling stock plan was initiated. 'Nova 1' addressed the ambition to improve journey times and reflect what the Northern Powerhouse Rail proposals would require, with 19 five-car bi-mode Class 802/2 Hitachi-built trains chosen. 'Nova 2' EMUs were needed for services between the North West and Scotland, for which 12 five-car Class 397s were ordered from CAF.

> "Intervention from the DfT prevented the normal industry processes of providing incentives for staff to train on the new equipment"

The routes to Scarborough, Hull and Cleethorpes were not part of any immediate plan for electrification, which justified keeping the Class 185 DMU fleet. But given growth trends, a decision was made that 'Nova 3' locomotive-hauled trains would be provided for the route to Scarborough, with 13 Mk.5A sets ordered from CAF.

There was no suggestion that these plans were unrealistic, but service development came to a stop at the end of March 2020 at the start of the Covid pandemic, when the Government introduced travel restrictions and operational conditions that prevented the recruitment and training of staff.

The franchise contract was immediately terminated and an Emergency Measures Agreement put in place (later to be styled as a National Rail Contract), which removed commercial decision making and specified the service to be provided and the cost that could be incurred by the operator.

This happened in the middle of the driver recruitment and training programme required to operate the new rolling stock. Worse followed, as the enormous gap between revenue and cost brought intervention from the DfT that prevented the normal industry processes of providing incentives for staff to train on the new equipment.

The end result was a lengthy ban on recruitment and traincrew overtime working that destroyed the delivery plan for the new rolling stock, of which some elements continue to be stored.

Post-pandemic issues

The return of passengers as travel restrictions eased found TPE in a situation where there was a large backlog in recruitment and training, limiting the number of services it could operate. It is fair to say that there was little co-operation from the staff who continued to refuse overtime working, which rightly or wrongly is an unavoidable part of providing a reliable service.

There is an opinion among Government MPs that what has happened is simply giving in to pressure from the trade unions to return train operating companies to public ownership. The DfT has said a competition will be held to select an alternative private sector operator, but no timescales have been indicated, which suggests there is no immediate intention to offer an Invitation to Tender.



Left: Outgoing TPE boss Matt Golton takes a shot of No. 185139 at Manchester Piccadilly on May 27, after arriving with the 23.41 from Manchester Airport. This had been the final TPE departure under FirstGroup control (but not the last arrival) before the contract ended and services came under Government control. TONY MILES



Adverse weather is expected to have an increasing impact on our railways, hence more work is needed like the now-completed sea wall works around Dawlish station, seen from above in February. NR

Network Rail publishes business plan for the five years to 2029

THE Strategic Business Plan (SBP) outlining activity to be undertaken by Network Rail for Control Period 7 – covering the five years between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2029 – was published on May 19.

It reflects a £44 billion budget agreed with the Government for expenditure in England and Wales, and includes £37.5 billion to pay for operations, maintenance, and renewals (OMR).

A separate settlement of £4 billion has been agreed for Scotland, for which the SBP will be published in due course. Unlike the previous Control Period 6, no separate funding has been identified for investment in capacity enhancement and there is no specific budget for electrification.

In addition to the OMR expenditure, there is an expectation that the cost of electricity for traction purposes will be £4.06 billion, which is an increase of 54% when compared to that incurred in the current five-year control period.

Track access charges for passenger operators holding National Rail Contracts is expected to be £7.18 billion, with station and depot access charges amounting to £3.02 billion. The open access passenger freight and charter operators will contribute a further £460 million for track usage.

Rising electricity bill

The electricity cost is treated as a charge through to the train operators based on the regulatory EC4T tariff. Property income is £1.73 billion. After fine tuning and adjustments for costs such as the installation of ECTS (in-cab signalling), the Government grant required is £27.7 billion.

With regard to performance, NR believes that providing a reliable and punctual train service is likely to become more difficult in CP7, as there are more challenges and uncertainty about changing patterns of demand, with many passenger train operators facing financial pressures. The plan assumes that although passenger numbers will increase, timetable provision will remain at 88% of pre-Covid levels.

Within that total, it is recognised that train service levels are likely to fluctuate as a result of variable demand, but it is expected that rail freight growth will average 7.5% per annum.

Asset reliability is a big part of delivering punctual train services, as infrastructure faults cause 25% of delays. NR says it has to be recognised that many structures, buildings, and earthworks were constructed as the railway was built between 1850 and 1920 – and with available funds, these assets are ageing more quickly than they can be renewed, so a larger proportion of the core infrastructure is nearing the end of its usable life.

To tackle these performance pressures, there will be targeted investment to protect asset reliability and resilience particularly, as there has been a 50% increase in the impact of weather events over the past five years.

£1 billion is to be spent to improve the condition of earthworks and drainage assets judged to be compromised by changing weather patterns. The forecast is that the number of days when train services are interrupted by adverse weather events will increase by 5-10% in CP7.

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Brian photographing at London Bridge in June 2007. RICHARD TUPLIN

Left: Brian's first published photograph was of Bulleid 0-6-0 diesel No. 11001 shunting at Norwood Junction on June 23, 1951, which was used in the October 1951 issue of *The Railway Magazine*.

Obituary: Brian Morrison 1930-2023

By Richard Tuplin

PROLIFIC railway photographer and author Brian Morrison passed away peacefully on April 30, aged 93.

Born on March 7, 1930, he was brought up in South London and his interest in railways started as a child. After falling out with a school prefect, he switched from school dinners to sandwiches, and joined classmates in cycling to a nearby field in Chislehurst to eat them while watching passing trains. This was 1942, the year the that first Ian Allan ABC was published.

After three years of National Service, during which he met his future wife Janet, Brian used some of his 'demob' money to buy his first camera, an Agfa Isolette, on his 21st birthday. He took his first photo that day of a 'B1' at Liverpool Street, and later that year had his first photo published in *The Railway Magazine* of Bulleid 0-6-0 diesel No. 11001 (see above).

A family man

A career in the insurance industry followed, while Brian and Janet married in 1952 and had one daughter, Sue. They lived in Blackfen, South East London, until 1971 then moved the short distance to Sidcup.

Brian was keen on sport, in particular 10-pin bowling and Arsenal football club, but railway photography was his primary hobby, building up a collection of negatives, slides and prints from 1951-2014, apart from what he called the 'Morrison Gap' in the 1960s, when work and family life left little time for photography. Nevertheless, his collection totals more than 200,000 images, many taken in the 1950s-1970s, when he enjoyed the privilege of an official railway-issued lineside pass. He also took portrait photos for use in the Ian Allan ABC books, and it is thought he managed to get at least one shot of every loco class active in the 1950s.

Recognition

Brian wrote more than 50 books – most notably his *Power of the A4s*, which was reprinted seven times – and kept detailed records of when and in which publications his images were used, which included all of the major railway titles. In 2002, Virgin Trains named No. 47847 *Railway World Magazine / Brian Morrison* and then Brian went on to help establish digital magazine *Railway Herald*.

In his later years, mobility issues restricted him to the ground floor of his house and took him away from his computer, but his images are now in the care of *Railway Herald* for use in books and magazines as required.

Janet sadly passed away in 2003, but Brian is survived by Sue, two grandchildren Duncan and Victoria, and two great-granddaughters Alexis and Nicole.



Railways in Parliament

by Jon Longman

Maintenance drones

EASINGTON MP Grahame Morris asked what steps the Office of Rail and Road has taken to assess the safety of Network Rail's Modernising Maintenance programme.

Transport Minister Hugh Merriman replied: "The Office of Rail and Road is monitoring Network Rail's workforce modernisation plans to ensure that it is not compromising on efficient and safe delivery. The ORR attends the Network Rail Safety Validation panel that is working through the management of the change process that NR is following.

"NR continues to explore technological solutions that could be deployed to conduct maintenance more safely and efficiently. A good example of this is the adoption of drones which are already being used to supplement standard maintenance and inspection activities with various use cases identified including structures, track and overhead line equipment."

Coal licensing

LIFE peer Lord Faulkner of Worcester wanted to know what are the existing licensing arrangements in relation to the domestic demand for coal in heritage railways.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero Minister Lord Callanan replied: "The Coal Authority is the licensor for coal extraction in the UK. Businesses seeking to develop a coal operation require a coal exploration licence from the Coal Authority, as well as planning permission and other consents, before a mine can become operational.

"Potential coal extraction projects seeking to supply industries such as heritage rail would need to satisfy the 'tests' to issuing a licence under the 1994 Coal Industry Act. These include financial viability, practical experience, and relevant permissions (such as planning)."

Office closures

MR MORRIS then asked if the Department for Transport will require Train Operating Companies to undertake and publish an Equality Impact Assessment for areas where they propose to close ticket offices.

Mr Merriman said: "To propose any changes to the opening hours, or the closure of ticket offices, train operating companies must follow the process set out in the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement. Under the TSA, when proposing major changes to ticket office opening hours (including closures), operators are required to take into account the adequacy of the proposed alternatives in relation to the needs of passengers who are disabled; and to include this in the notice of the proposal sent to other operators and passenger groups.

"We would also expect operators to consider other equality related needs and make this clear in their consultation. The Secretary of State is only involved in the TSA process if an objection is made by a passenger group such as Transport Focus during the consultation which cannot be resolved.

"When a ticket office is under the remit of a devolved administration, the Secretary of State would normally appoint the relevant devolved authority to make any required decision on his behalf. If called upon to make a determination on a specific ticket office proposal, the Secretary of State will follow the TSA process, the Ticket Office Guidance and comply with his own Public Sector Equality Duty by taking equality implications into account."

Contaminated fuel

LIFE Peer Lord Patten wanted to know what assessment the DfT has made of whether a shortage of diesel fuel was the reason for South Western Railways ceasing to provide a full West of England service from Exeter into London Waterloo in the week ending April 28.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere of Norbiton replied: "Department Officials worked closely and extensively with South Western Railway to understand the root cause, solution and timelines for returning to the full timetable.

"It was determined that the cause was contaminated bio fuel in the storage tanks at Salisbury depot. SWR has hired an independent investigator to find out how and why this occurred which will take a few weeks to conclude.

SWR returned to its normal timetable from April 28, which included direct services between Exeter and London Waterloo. Some Exeter to Waterloo services and services between Salisbury and Southampton returned earlier.

"The cost to the regional economy was minimised as passengers had the option to travel via Salisbury and Basingstoke or to change tickets to another operator on a similar route."

Dawlish flooding

LORD Berkeley asked the DfT what the scope and cost are of Phases 4 and 5 of the works to protect the Dawlish area line from flooding.

Baroness Vere replied: "I can confirm that NR has delivered the first two phases of the South West Rail Resilience Programme to provide protection to the railway at Dawlish from coastal flooding.

"Subsequent phases of the programme relate to cliff protection measures. The third phase is currently in delivery, and a fourth phase covering the railway between Dawlish and Holcombe has funding of £32 million and will shortly commence.

"The fifth and final phase of the programme will address the mile-long section of the railway between Teignmouth and Parson's Tunnel. Network Rail is developing a detailed scope, cost and a risk-based delivery proposal."

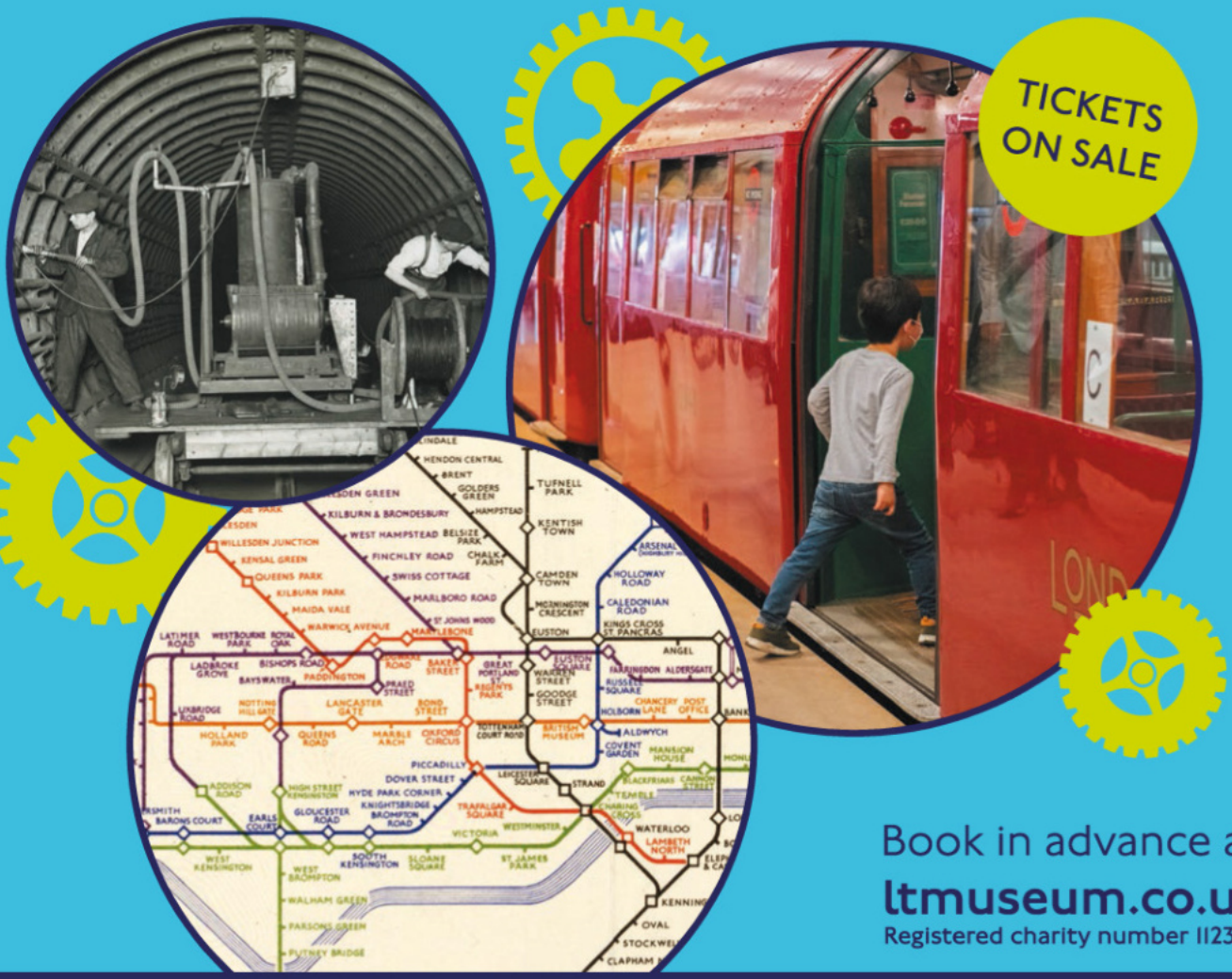
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10 MINUTES 10 QUESTIONS

This month **Steven Knight** meets UKRL's managing director Mark Winter.

MARK Winter was a later-comer to the railway industry, having completed a law degree and then qualifying as a barrister. He then switched track to work in finance, and has held some very senior positions, including senior treasurer for Royal Bank of Scotland, Ulster Bank and Barclays Bank, and also head of funding and capital markets at Bradford and Bingley.

Along with fellow directors and shareholders, he invested in UK Rail Leasing (UKRL), which was established in 2013, having spotted the potential of the business. He now holds the position of managing director of UKRL and is fully focused on developing the businesses.

Although not a career railwayman, Mark's enthusiasm has seen him lead the transformation of the business from one that was purchasing locomotives and associated railway vehicles and then leasing them to train operating companies in the UK and abroad, into the significant operation it is today.

The company is based at the former traction maintenance depot in Leicester, having initially taken on the lease of the then disused site from DB Schenker but acquiring the freehold in 2018. Under Mark's leadership, the company is looking to expand and be at the forefront of providing engineering services and support to the rail sector.

Q. What was your first-ever job?
My first job was as a lawyer for an Iranian Bank in 1986, after graduating as a barrister. From there I joined Hill Samuel Bank, and then Barclays in structured finance supporting the execution of transactions. It was at Barclays that I morphed into banking, leaving behind the law. I had a number of finance roles ending up as group treasurer of Ulster Bank, part of the RBS group, during the banking crisis of 2008.

Q. Were you interested in trains before you joined the rail industry?
No, I had no real interest in the railway or trains prior to me setting up UKRL in September 2013.

Q. What attracted you to your final industry role?
I was approached by a friend of mine, well known locomotive preservationist Edward Stevenson, to set up a company to buy redundant Class 56s that were about to be scrapped. The plan was to return them to service and lease them out to freight operators.
We found ourselves a depot in Leicester and I formally left banking and took on the role of managing director to develop the business, despite knowing very little about the railway.

Q. What has been your biggest achievement?
Apart from growing the company to what it is today, providing livelihoods for a number of people, I would count the setting up of a proper four-year apprentice programme, where we have up to four apprentices at any one time. Through this scheme we are able to develop young people to give them the engineering skills for a career in the railway industry.

Q. …and the low point of your railway career?
Struggling with cash flow in the early years to enable us to keep paying our staff and our suppliers, along with trying to forge our way into what is a very restrictive market.

Q. If you were transport secretary for a day, what would you do to support or change the industry?
I would provide greater investment in supporting the growth of the rail freight market, particularly around electrification, which we are told is essential for the economy and the journey to net zero.

Q. How do you relax away from work?
I enjoy playing golf and walking with my family.

Q. What is your view on the current state of the railway industry?
The industry is confused about what it is challenged to deliver.



UKRL's managing director Mark Winter.

Q. …and where do you see the industry in 2050?
It will be an industry that is providing a modern, efficient and green freight transportation system that contributes to tackling climate change by taking the transportation of goods off the roads.

Q. Finally, is there something about you that you can share with us that our readers are unlikely to know?
I'm a semi-professional poker player.

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Follow the 1940s route of the Darjeeling Mail between Darjeeling and Kolkata. You will cross the Indo-Bangladeshi border twice by rail, including the recently opened crossing point at Haldibari. Plenty of steam on the DHR, plus a ride down the spine of Bangladesh, a visit to Dhaka and a night on a houseboat in the rich wildlife area of the Sunderbans. Finally, not forgetting a ride on the Kolkata trams.

Indian Magic: 10 to 26 January 2024 (Prices from £4,395)
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Rails on all Gauges: 26 February to 14 March 2024 (Prices from £4,150)
This combines our very successful programme on the Kalka-Shimla and Kangra Valley Railways in the Himalayan north-west and a visit to Amritsar with a new area to us: Central Rajasthan. Here, we will find one of the rare survivors of India's once-extensive metre-gauge rail network, and will ride down Kamblighat, a steep line amidst the spectacular mountain scenery of the Aravali mountains. Plus time in Udaipur, where the city's Lake Palace featured in James Bond's film 'Octopussy'.

Still in planning!

In February, we are developing another tour in Southern India – "Coffee, silk and Tipu Sultan".
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SIDELINES

Sinkhole investigation

AN investigation was launched last month after a sinkhole appeared near Little Missenden in Buckinghamshire, on land above HS2's Chiltern tunnel. HS2 Ltd said that the hole, which was reported on May 13, was likely to be linked to "pre-existing ground conditions" and that there was no risk to the public.

The Environment Agency said it was carrying out enquiries to understand whether it had resulted in any pollution.

Piling rig 'world first'

A PILING rig with a dual-fuelling system has been used to install four 30-metre deep piles on one of HS2's London construction sites, in what is claimed to be a "world first".

The rig was converted to use a mix of hydrogen and either conventional diesel or hydro-treated vegetable oil, resulting in lower carbon emissions and a 36% reduction in the use of conventional fuel.

Earthworks jobs boost

FOLLOWING free training programmes, more than 60 people have so far secured employment with the Aylesbury-based contractor carrying out earthmoving along an 18-mile stretch of the HS2 route.

Blackwell Earthmoving Ltd will undertake the task between Calvert South and the North Chilterns, equating to around 12 million cubic metres of earthworks over the next three years.

Events for contractors

EVENTS have been organised on July 10/11 at Manchester's Midland Hotel for prospective HS2 contractors. The first will focus on stations and civils work and the second on contracts linked to the manufacturing of trains.

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Material moved by rail target smashed early

Goal of 10 million tonnes reached in just over two years, some seven years earlier than planned.

RAIL has been used to move more than 10 million tonnes of material to and from HS2 construction sites so far, meeting a target originally anticipated to be achieved in 2030.

Working in partnership with Network Rail, freight operating companies and materials suppliers, it has taken just over two years to reach such a significant volume. HS2 Ltd now predicts that construction of Phase One of the high speed line will now account for a total of 20 million tonnes of aggregate being moved by rail, removing the need for an estimated three million lorry journeys.

The achievement was celebrated at a gathering at Tarmac's Tunstead Quarry, near Buxton, involving freight operators, suppliers and other rail-related businesses.



Holding the commemorative headboard at Tunstead Quarry on May 11 are High Peak MP Robert Largan (left) and enthusiast Jermaine Allen (who in 2021 named No. 66796, the loco in the background, *The Green Progressor*). To their right is HS2 Ltd's Andrew Graham, and they are joined by representatives from the project, freight companies, railway businesses and suppliers. HS2

'Vital role'

David Speight, HS2 Ltd's delivery director for main works civils on Phase One, said that its 'Materials By Rail' programme played a "vital role" in plans to cut carbon emissions across the project with the aim of delivering by rail where possible.

HS2 Ltd says it has worked alongside Network Rail "for a number of years" to ensure capacity is available for contractors to make their movements by rail rather than road.

"Reducing carbon emissions is a key priority for Network Rail and we will continue to work closely with HS2 and our industry partners to maximise further transportation of construction materials by rail," added NR's North West and Central regional freight manager Chris Bennett-Poynter.

Old Oak station box takes shape

THE underground section of Old Oak Common's HS2 station in London is taking shape.

At the western end of the 850 metre (930 yard) structure, known as the station box, the first base-slab concrete pour has been completed. Running lines and six platforms for HS2 services will be constructed at this level.

Permanent works for the station box began in June 2021. Piling and the installation of diaphragm wall panels were completed in March this year. To create the west box, joint venture contractor Balfour Beatty Vinci SYSTRA removed around 80,000 cubic metres of spoil, which was removed from the site by conveyor for reuse in construction.

Once completed, it will be handed over to tunnelling teams for work on the link between it and the Victoria Road Crossover Box, with breakthrough expected late next year.

At ground level, construction of four platforms for Great Western Main Line services and four for Elizabeth line services is due to begin later this year.



Twenty metres (66 feet) below ground, the first pour of concrete has taken place for the base slab at the western end of the station box. When completed, Old Oak Common station will have six platforms at this level for HS2 services. HS2



VIADUCT APPROVED: Buckinghamshire Council has given design approval for the 345 metre-long (377 yard) Small Dean Viaduct, which will take HS2 across the A413 road and the London Marylebone to Aylesbury route. The structure, which will be just six metres (20 feet) above road level, will be made from weathering steel girders and supported by five 'Y'-shaped piers. A pale concrete parapet and noise barrier, running along the top of the viaduct is designed to throw the steel into shadow, giving it a lighter and thinner appearance. The 'double composite' principle to be used in its construction involves sandwiching two steel girders between two layers of reinforced concrete to give a strong but lightweight span with a lower carbon footprint than conventional methods. HS2

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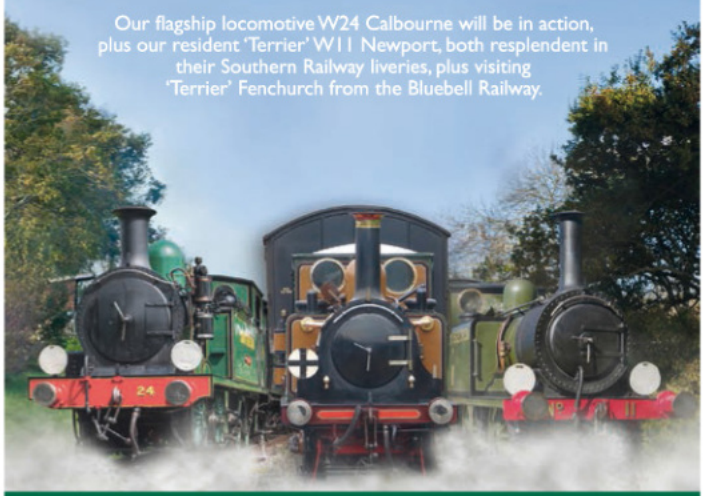
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CORONATION DAY SPECIALS

West Coast Railways train guard Phil Marsh shares his experience of 'Project Golden Orb', the special operation taking troops to and from the King's Coronation.



The logo for the Coronation of King Charles III on May 6.

THE Coronation, according to Network Rail, saw the largest number of armed forces personnel moved by train since Winston Churchill's funeral in 1965 and the first troop trains since the Falklands War in 1982.

In an operation codenamed 'Project Golden Orb', around 5000 Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and Commonwealth forces personnel were taken to and from Waterloo station on nine special trains.

South Western Railway operated seven trains formed of EMU stock from Portsmouth, Farnborough, Aldershot, Camberley and Windsor; and there were two loco-hauled services operated by West Coast Railways from Tring.

Trains were used as it would have needed around 100 road coaches to move the 5000 personnel and, even if available, there was no suitable place to park them in central London. Even the military guards' colourful marching band travelled by train, so there was not a lot of space for their Bearskin caps and musical instruments, but more so than on road coaches.

WCR operations

WCR traincrew were contacted in mid-April seeking availability for unspecified special duties in the first week in May, and were advised that confidentiality was key with this operation. Given that the security services would also be involved, no further details were offered apart from the date, where and what time to report for duty.



Final adjustments to uniforms on one of the trains to Waterloo.



WCR Nos. 47826 and 47812 on the blocks at Waterloo during the troop train rehearsal on May 2. PHIL MARSH



Members of the British and various overseas armed forces wait for their train to Waterloo (with No. 450044 leading) at Farnborough. ALL PHOTOS BY JACK BOSKETT ON MAY 6 UNLESS STATED



Forces personnel disembark at Waterloo and prepare to march to central London. NETWORK RAIL



Troops leave Waterloo station and head for Westminster.

When the Special Traffic Notices were issued, the role became clear as the two WCR specials were to each convey around 400 RAF personnel to Waterloo. The loco-hauled specials were a partnership between Nemesis Rail, Riviera Trains (which provided two rakes of eight Mk.2s), WCR and NR.

Overnight rehearsal trains on May 2 saw the loco-hauled stock run empty from Nemesis at Burton-on-Trent to Milton Keynes to collect NR staff, then the RAF personnel joined at Tring – arriving into Waterloo in the late evening and returning to their bases as dawn broke on May 3. The rehearsal trains were not uploaded to railway computer systems for security reasons, the same secrecy as used for Royal Train movements.

The procedure was repeated four days later for the actual Coronation, except that the military personnel had to be at Waterloo by around 07.00, departing afterwards from 15.30 onwards.

Given the WCR services were inter-regional, running between Milton Keynes and Waterloo, they were allocated appropriate headcodes: 1O01 (Nos. 47813/47826) and 1O02 (Nos. 47812/47815) on the outward, leaving Waterloo as the 5M01 and 5M02 to Wembley – although a minor fault on Class 47 No. 47812 meant that 5M02 ran as 5Z02 to ▶





Above: Guardsmen march under the famous clock at Waterloo. HASSARD STACPOOLE

Left: After the event, and with rain now coming down, forces personnel have returned to Waterloo and prepare to board their train back to base (No. 450056 is behind). All are carrying their well-earned souvenir food boxes. PHIL MARSH

Below: RAF personnel relax on their way back to Tring on board the 15.35 loco-hauled train from Waterloo. PHIL MARSH





RAF personnel disembark from the 15.35 ex-Waterloo at Tring. PHIL MARSH



Right: Guard Phil Marsh explains to the BTP exactly how his train will get to Tring from Waterloo.



Troops tuck in to their food boxes while heading back to Farnborough. Note the 'Golden Orb' display, the name for the troop train operation.



A fantastic mix of uniforms as personnel detrain at Farnborough.

Southall instead, where the errant '47' was replaced by classmate No. 47802. For the return legs, inbound workings were the 5Z04 and 5O04 from Southall and Wembley, then the 1M03 and 1M04 to Tring.

Security was tight on the loco-hauled trains, with sniffer dogs and monitoring drones before departure on their respective journeys.

The SWR-operated military trains carried representatives from around the world in resplendent uniforms, including a marching band with various large instruments, but there was also special Coronation-branded food boxes for after the event! ■

THE RAILWAYS CELEBRATE

MANY main line, heritage, narrow gauge and miniature operators all helped mark the King's Coronation with various events.

Southeastern, for example, decorated stations with bunting for the expected crowds that would travel to London by train for the event – while a knitted version of the King, created by the Battle Yarn Bombers working with 1066 Community Rail Partnership, was on display at various SE stations.

Both GWR and LNER launched named trains to mark the King's reign, the 08.48 Paddington to Swansea becoming the 'Flying Carolean' (see also page 91) and the 11.00 King's Cross to Edinburgh the 'Carolean Express'.

A special announcement was recorded by King Charles III and Queen Camilla to welcome rail passengers at all main line and London Underground stations over the Coronation weekend, which included the King telling passengers to 'Mind the gap'.

Meanwhile heritage lines, such as the Dartmouth Steam Railway, ran services with celebratory headboards; while others, like the Abbey Pumping Station Museum narrow gauge line (Leicester) and the Elham Valley Line Trust miniature line (Folkestone) held Coronation-themed events.



Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Leonard* (No. 2087 of 1919) is prepared for celebrations at the Abbey Pumping Station Museum on May 8. BRIAN GILLESPIE



Flags were out at the Elham Valley Line Trust on May 7. DAVID F GILBERT



The knitted King, made by the Battle Yarn Bombers, on display at Battle station. SOUTHEASTERN



'Small Prairie' No. 4555 at Paignton Queens Park, Dartmouth Steam Railway, with a Coronation Day headboard on May 7. D W V HUNT

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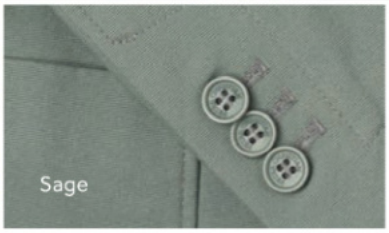
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After a successful visit to the turntable at St Blazey, No. 60103 heads the return working of the RTC's 'Royal Duchy' railtour – the 1Z47/18.06 Par to Bristol – at Restormel, to the north of Lostwithiel, on April 30. BERNARD MILLS

Scotsman goes West

Network Rail's Craig Munday gives an insider's account of *Flying Scotsman's* recent visit to Cornwall, and the restored turntable at St Blazey.

APRIL 30 saw the magnificent sight of ex-LNER/BR 'A3' No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* penetrating deep into former GWR territory when it reached Par, Cornwall, at the head of the 'The Royal Duchy' railtour from Bristol and then became the first steam loco to be turned on the newly-restored turntable at St Blazey depot.

Many of the spectators that day would have been unaware of the intense challenges that had to be dealt with ahead of the tour in a relatively short timescale. I was involved in the initial discussions in late summer 2022 after being approached by one of Network Rail chairman Lord Hendy's team regarding the work by M Power Kernow, led by Duncan Mitchell, to restore St Blazey's turntable to full working order. The plan was to turn No. 60103 there in April 2023 rather than on the Plymouth triangle.

Duncan Mitchell and Barrow Hill boss Mervyn Allcock were spearheading the project. Duncan comes from a marine engineering background but his main focus now is the expansion of the complex at St Blazey for training young apprentices, while Mervyn oversaw the rail industry side of the project. Both have an affable, can-do and no-nonsense attitude, which became infectious among all who came into contact with them in the ensuing months.

Massive undertaking

I took a sharp intake of breath and mentioned that this was a massive undertaking, particularly as the clock was ticking to the end-of-April deadline. The lines into St Blazey are owned and maintained by Network Rail, while the lines from the signal at the depot and onward to the turntable are operated and maintained by DB Cargo. I was aware that the point work from the fruit shop (at the Par harbour end of the complex) towards the turntable had not been used in years, and that would be a formidable challenge for the team.

I subsequently had to take a step back from daily involvement in the project for a number of reasons, the main one being that the shift work with my NR day job was holding up progress, but I also felt it was vital that NR had professional project input, an area outside my expertise. However, I remained as a local facilitator and was involved with meetings when shifts and time allowed.

The NR 'cavalry' arrived complete with project specialists Jason Pankhurst and Dan Parkes, while senior management including Chris Fuoco and the local operations team were consulted, and then the ideas and money started to flow to fettle up the surrounding infrastructure.

Work begins

By November 2022, a fund had been secured by M Power Kernow to start the heavy work on the project, for which a considerable amount was donated by The Railway Heritage Trust, Historic England and a private individual donation. The turntable was stripped into component pieces early in 2023 and the deck separated from the carriages. The carriages were sent away to local specialists for heavy metal work, while the on-site team concentrated on the turntable deck, exposing areas not seen for many years.

In March, Ground Control cleared the Wall Road Sidings of vegetation over a series of four day shifts by qualified arborists on volunteer days, while the section of track linking the Newquay branch to the turntable was heavily refurbished over a four-week period



Above: Reflecting on their part in a job well done are (from left) Martin Duff, Craig Munday and Katie Munday, with No. 60103 in the background.



Right: *Flying Scotsman* is hand-cranked around the turntable at St Blazey on April 30. CRAIG MUNDAY



No. 60103 and support coach prepare to reattach to the tour stock at Par for the return leg of the RTC's 'Royal Duchy' tour back to Bristol on April 30. CRAIG MUNDAY



***Flying Scotsman* crosses the Royal Albert Bridge to enter Cornwall at Saltash on April 30 with the outbound leg of the 'Royal Duchy', the 1Z45/09.07 Bristol Temple Meads-Par. JOSHUA MCMILLAN**



The last time the turntable was used was on July 22, 2018, when 'Black Five' No. 44871 also worked in from Bristol on an RTC 'Royal Duchy' tour. CRAIG MUNDAY





Above: The refurbished turntable was tested ahead of *Scotsman's* visit by DBC's No. 66131 on April 22. JIMMY JAMES

Left: How the St Blazey turntable looked in 1987, with a Class 47 and at least four '37s' present. The semi-circular roundhouse buildings out of shot on the right were still rail-connected, but have since been fenced off for non-rail use. CRAIG MUNDAY

to make it fit for the weight of *Flying Scotsman*. This work was undertaken by Construction Services' Exeter, Par and Plymouth teams, with significant support from Quattro, GPX Welding & Coyles. Significant costs were saved by staff utilising volunteer days and using serviceable materials from other renewals.

Operations and security

The turntable is effectively annexed from the main network, and senior DB Cargo managers were instrumental in allowing the tracks and pointwork around the area to receive some heavy maintenance by the NR team. Reopening the depot to charters and locomotives of other users brings an outside risk to DBC's infrastructure, but the company played its part and generously allowed CDA wagons and locomotive No. 66131 to be used for load tests on the turntable once it was reassembled in early April. DBC also played a lead part in the security arrangements on site during the weekend of *Scotsman's* visit.

In the final weeks prior to the visit, it became the turn of the operations and security team to plan the visit of the famous locomotive into the county from Bristol. Katie Munday led the security arrangements, whilst Martin Duff dealt with the operational issues. Meetings and potential timings gave a real excitement that the visit was really going to happen.

The timings were kept from the general public due to potential security issues, but appeared on Trust and Realtime Trains the day before the tour, which was run by the Railway Touring Company with West Coast Railways as operator.

Many thousands of people lined the route and I was delighted to be travelling with the train from Exeter St David's to St Blazey and return. As I joined the locomotive at Par for the short hop around to the turntable, I reflected on the huge achievement made by so many companies and individuals to bring this to life. Many had given their free and volunteer time to see this succeed.

With less than six months from concept to delivery, it was fine testament to what can be achieved with the right people and a common aim. Thanks also to Dan Parkes and Jason Pankhurst for their assistance with this article. ■

A BRIGG TOO FAR (AND OTHER NORTHERN CUTS)

The removal of services from Northern's summer timetable has left some rural journeys impossible and others increasingly difficult to make by train. Graeme Pickering investigates the changes and scope for their reversal.

ANYONE reading through train operator Northern's announcement of its May timetable changes could be forgiven for wondering what the fuss was about.

Its claim that the "overwhelming majority of services" would be unaltered with a "small number of changes to specific lines" is indeed correct. What is more difficult to grasp without additional context is that some of these changes are sufficient to mean the train is no longer an option for certain journeys.

Rail is now out of the question for Whitby and Esk Valley residents needing to reach Middlesbrough before 10.15 on a morning as the 06.30 from Whitby, introduced less than four years ago, was withdrawn with effect from the new timetable. The reason given by Northern was low patronage. It says removal of the service has allowed it to add another unit to trains during the middle of the day, increasing capacity from two to four cars.

Especially in the current climate, with the Department for Transport demanding efficiencies from operators, there is logic to Northern's argument for transferring resources from what it describes as a "near empty" service to ones which have been "very well used, particularly over the summer and early autumn months". But what about the aim of making it viable for commuters and students to use the train, not to mention people travelling to the rail-served James Cook University Hospital for early appointments?

These arguments were at the centre of a long campaign by local community rail partnership the Esk Valley Railway Development Company (EVRDC) to resurrect an early train (withdrawn by British Rail in 1991) which succeeded in making it a commitment in the 2016 Northern franchise document.

EVRDC chairman Alan Williams says that failure to attract passengers lies squarely with Northern, who, he says, ignored EVRDC concerns from the outset by introducing it almost an hour earlier than specified. He points to a lack of promotion, two periods of withdrawal during the Covid-19 pandemic (the line's only train of use to 'essential workers') and regular cancellations making it unreliable.

> "Have we really learned anything in the 60 years since the Beeching recommendations?"

Network backwater

The three return 'Saturdays only' services between Sheffield and Cleethorpes, which travelled via Gainsborough Central and Brigg are another casualty of the May timetable change, replaced by one train per day in either direction, running on Mondays to Fridays only. Saturday trains were only reinstated on January 14 this year, after a 54 week suspension, which Northern put down to Covid-related staff shortages. Absences were also said to have had an impact on the ability to train new drivers and retain route knowledge.

Despite being a through route, the Brigg line has been a backwater of the passenger network since October 1993 when it lost its weekday passenger service and the 'Saturdays only' trains began. Their replacement with a single return working on Mondays-Fridays (departing Sheffield at 09.54 and Cleethorpes at 13.20) is regarded as anything but an improvement by the Independent Brigg Line Rail Group (IBLRG). The train no longer calls at Darnall, Woodhouse, Kiveton Bridge, Kiveton Park, Shireoaks or Habrough in either direction and, as one round weekday trip replaces the previous three which ran on Saturdays, means time is more limited for travellers at their destination.

The IBLRG, a volunteer organisation which worked for years to raise the profile of the Saturday service to bring visitors to Kirton-in-Lindsey and Brigg through efforts including printing its own posters and timetables, told *The RM*: "The new timetable will completely wipe out footfall built up over a number of years."

Running from June 24-September 2, North Notts & Lincolnshire Community Rail Partnership, in association with the Community Rail Network and Stagecoach, has organised a limited-stop Saturday bus service which will operate between Gainsborough



Northern has cut the early morning train from Whitby, stating that resources would be better used on services later in the day. However, evening Monday-Saturday trains at 19.42 and 22.23 remain. The last on a Sunday, the 18.34 to Darlington – seen on October 30, 2022 formed of No. 156472 – is also retained in the new summer timetable. CHRIS MILNER



No. 158759 stands on the blocks at Blackpool North on Sunday, August 7, 2022 after arriving with 1M76 DalesRail service from Carlisle, which is not running this year due to problems with resourcing. PHIL WALLIS



Two-car No. 150211 arrives at Brigg on Saturday, April 1, with the 15.54 Sheffield to Cleethorpes, the last of that day's three round trips to the coast, although the middle one did not run and such cancellations have been frequent. The footbridge was built in 2016 to replace one from the Great Central Railway era. PAUL BICKERDYKE

Lea Road station and Cleethorpes, timed to connect with the 08.33 arrival from Sheffield and the 16.38 return train, but this bus will not serve Brigg. NNLCRP expects most passengers to originate at Worksop, Retford and Gainsborough and says routing the bus via Brigg would extend the journey when the objective is to give passengers as much time as possible in Cleethorpes.

The Monday-Friday return service via Brigg is also the only train which now serves Gainsborough Central. Its hourly Monday-Saturday service to and from Sheffield, launched four years ago, was curtailed after just eight months as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

DalesRail trains cut

For almost 50 years, summer DalesRail services have provided a popular connection and alternative to the car for walkers wanting to explore some of the more remote parts of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria, most recently running on a Sunday between Blackpool and Carlisle, via Clitheroe and Hellifield. But there will be no DalesRail trains this year.

Richard Watts, who chairs Community Rail Lancashire and has coordinated DalesRail for over 20 years, says it is "disappointing, but a pragmatic outcome."

He adds: "For the last two years, probably about a third of the services haven't operated. We have a good relationship with Northern. We know when they're not going to happen. We put information out about it, but nonetheless it knocks people's confidence about the service. It means you can't plan to say: 'Ah yes, I'm going on that Sunday' because we don't actually know if that Sunday would operate."

Northern says the cancellations centre around Sunday being outside the working week for the majority of its traincrew in its West and Central regions, meaning operation of DalesRail (along with all other Sunday services) relies on sufficient staff being available to undertake extra shifts. Given the circumstances, it says it decided to prioritise "providing a reliable service for our customers on routes which are in operation seven days a week".

Options are being evaluated for the return of DalesRail next year, which Mr Watts says is likely to involve a switch to Saturday to avoid staff availability problems and may require some additional Department for Transport subsidy.

Regarding the Whitby service, Northern told *The RM* that it is looking to retime it to one hour later and will not reintroduce it until this is possible. It added that this is reliant on infrastructure changes due to be carried out next summer. It gave no indication regarding future plans for Brigg line services, but said the new provision ensured a "more and robust" timetable overall.

Costs versus service

Since the Government stepped-in with additional subsidies during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department for Transport and the Rail Delivery Group have talked of a need for the railway to be more financially sustainable and the reduction of the "burden" on taxpayers (a term used by both Transport Secretary Mark Harper and the RDG during the current industrial dispute).

While this remains the focus, those involved in developing local rail links will most probably exercise even more caution than usual regarding the possibilities for realising their future plans.

But if, in the midst of a climate crisis where decarbonisation has become an everyday word, we become conditioned to lowering our expectations of the railway (especially when it comes to serving rural areas where there are few, if any, ways of making the same journey by alternative public transport), have we really learnt anything in the 60 years since the Beeching recommendations? ■

NORTHERN CHANGES ELSEWHERE

IN addition to changes to the Whitby and Brigg lines and the decision not to operate DalesRail this year, buses have replaced the direct peak-time services that ran between Huddersfield, Wakefield and Castleford, while trains from Ilkley and Skipton to Bradford Forster Square have been reduced from two to one per hour off-peak.

Fortunately, it is not all about reductions. On Sundays, an hourly direct service between Leeds and Chester via Manchester Victoria has been introduced on the Calder Valley line to give an alternative to travellers during upgrading work of the main trans-Pennine route via Marsden. Also, passengers in the North East are promised an additional semi-fast service between Middlesbrough and Newcastle via the Durham Coast route after work to reinstate the second through platform at Hartlepool has been completed this summer.

Giving you great ideas for a special getaway...

Our recent *Railway Magazine* survey told us how so many of our readers not only love their hobby, but that they also have interests far wider than 'just' the railways scene and wanted ideas on themed getaways. So, in the first of a series of advertising specials, here are some adverts from businesses keen to give you just a few great ideas which could get you out and about, perhaps even to get your toes tapping to some faves from yesteryear in the charts.

For starters take a look at these great ideas... with themes which many rail enthusiasts also enjoy. Classic vehicles and their enthusiasts often have so much in common with those keen on the rail sector, and when there are wartime themes, or special transport attractions, then it's the best of both worlds.

These can also be great family days, as so many of our readers have children and grandchildren to entertain... what better than to enthuse them early!

And it isn't just in the UK. There are plenty of tours to abroad, so keep reading *The Railway Magazine* to find your perfect break... and mention us when you book.







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Midland Transitions

FROM 'SPINNERS' TO 'BRITANNIAS'





In the first of three occasional articles looking at different eras of traction on the Midland Main Line route, John Heaton FCILT examines steam age performance through to the 1960s.

SAMUEL Waite Johnson designed exceedingly handsome locomotives. Some aesthetes would even claim his 4-2-2 'Spinners', with their 7ft 9½in driving wheel diameter, had the most pleasing appearance of any locomotive, worldwide. The nickname derived from the resemblance of their speeding huge 'drivers' to Sleeping Beauty-type spinning wheels.

Born in 1831, Johnson was educated at Leeds Grammar School before becoming a pupil at locomotive manufacturer R B Wilson & Co, where he worked as a draughtsman under David Joy. He assisted on the production of 'Jenny Lind' locomotives, of which 24 went to the Midland Railway, where he was eventually appointed chief mechanical engineer in 1873. Such a position in one of the top four Victorian railway companies commanded a salary rising to £3500 per annum, some £410,000 in current terms, so it was small wonder he chose to remain in this post for 31 years.

Locomotive design is a function of the engineer's creativity, availability of funds and commercial policy of the company. Unlike some railways, the Midland had a clear focus on its core business, which was built around the manufacturing cities of the East Midlands: Leicester, Nottingham and Derby – extending to Sheffield, where railway geography had best placed the Midland to provide the prime London service. Leeds, Bradford and Manchester traffic was harder won, principally relying on trade generated from the Midland's own provincial cities. The extension over the hills and far away to Carlisle and Scotland towards the end of the railway construction era was arguably less an aspiration, more an aberration.

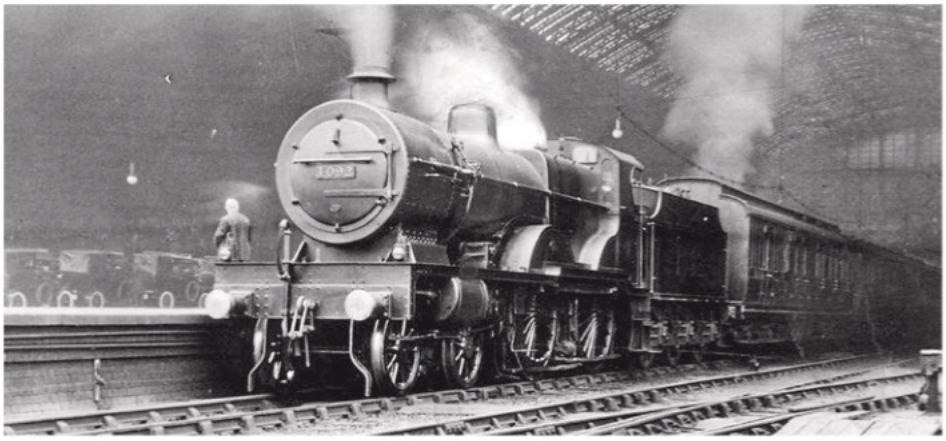
To serve its core traffic, the corporate mantra was 'fast, frequent and featherweight', and there was no need for gargantuan locomotives for this work. If such a fleet had been produced, it would have wasted capital and running expenses on unsuitable duties. When longer-distance traffic demanded greater capacity, a second locomotive could be purloined from other work, or a relief train could be commandeered.

It was during S W Johnson's regime that



One of Johnson's 4-2-2 'Spinners', in this case 2601 Class No. 688, is seen in the Edwardian era with a characteristically 'light' (compared to other companies) express working.





Above: 1925-built Fowler Compound No. 1092 waits to depart St Pancras in the 1920s with the down 'Thames-Clyde Express'. Note the taxis in the background with their white walled tyres. C HAMILTON ELLIS

Left: Ex-LMS Fowler Compound No. 40935 is captured in the BR era at Sheffield Midland in the early 1950s. This was one of five such compounds built in 1932, it lasting in service until April 1958 and scrapped almost straight away. W PHILIP CONOLLY

the pale green locomotive livery was altered to crimson, which engineer and author Ernest L Ahrons less flatteringly termed 'brick red'. Mr Johnson concentrated on early standardisation of parts and small job lots of locomotive production, with constant adaptation rather than revolution. The result was a fleet that was perhaps effete in appearance compared to, say, the workmanlike London & North Western neighbour, but could his locos run?

Charles Rous-Marten certainly thought so, as he described in an early edition of Practice & Performance (*The RM* December 1902), where he relates two instances in detail. No. 2604, the last iteration of Johnson's 4-2-2s from 1900 had gigantic 7ft 9½in diameter driving wheels and a 180lb boiler pressure compared to the mere 7ft 9in and 170lb of 1896-99 Johnson 4-2-2 survivor No. 673 in the National Collection. No. 2604 took 140tons the 99.1 miles to Leicester in 109min 24sec, including four signal checks (two of which were shown as 10mph) and a 2½min dead stand, estimated, perhaps even conservatively, as 10min of delay.

There had been a 21-year gap in the production of Midland Railway 'Singles' from 1866 until Mr Johnson's first 4-2-2 had emerged from Derby Works, the initially sceptical Midland drivers quickly taking to the provision of Holt steam sanders, developed by the manager of Derby Works, to extricate them from the adhesion difficulties 'Singles' sometimes suffered.

TABLE 1: MIDLAND COMPOUNDS LONDON ST PANCRAS TO LEICESTER

Loco		4-4-0 1078			4-4-0s 935+1031		
Vehicles/tare/gross tons		8/239/250			15/333/355		
Date		February 25, 1937			December 4, 1936		
Recorder		D S M Barrie			D S M Barrie		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**
0.0	St PANCRAS d	0	0 00		0	0 00	
1.5	Kentish Town	4	4 00	35	4	3 54	36
3.9	West Hampstead		7 45	41		7 25	43
6.9	Hendon	10	11 25	61	10	10 55	60
12.4	Elstree		17 22	50		16 57	49
15.2	Radlett		20 00	74		19 42	70
19.9	ST ALBANS	25	24 15	56	25	24 28	48
24.6	Harpenden		29 15	61		29 46	56
30.2	LUTON	35	34 33	68	36	35 04	69
32.8	Leagrave		36 55	61		37 26	63
37.3	Harlington		40 50	79		'easy'	67
41.8	Ampthill		44 15	75		-	
49.8	Bedford	52	50 45	72/63	54	53 10	60
53.0	Oakley		53 38	65		-	-
56.6	Sharnbrook		57 08	50/tsr20		59 50	64
59.8	Sharnbook Summit (MP59¾)	63	62 20	37/-/sigs	65	63 45	44/69
65.0	WELLINGBOROUGH	68	69 05	15/61	70	68 51	53/61
72.0	KETTERING	75	77 08	58	77	76 00	55
78.1	Desborough	83	84 08	48/74	85	82 55	50/64
82.9	MARKET HARBOROUGH	88	88 56	40	90	88 03	48
86.3	East Langton		92 45	64		91 55	64
88.9	Kibworth		95 25	51		94 38	48
91.7	Great Glen		98 05	72/sigs35		97 25	65
95.5	Wigston S Jct		102 00	-/58		101 22	-
99.1	LEICESTER a	106	106 54		109	107 23	

Mileages are those used by Mr Barrie.
Italics are suggestions by article author
Trains not identified by recorder

Midland Compounds

The second of Rous-Marten's accounts concerned 7ft driving wheel 4-4-0 Compound No. 2600 with 170tons taking 111min 29sec in wet and windy conditions. Rous-Marten describes the run as being "of steady and uniform merit throughout" reflecting credit on "the engines and their able designer… and the drivers who handled them so efficiently".

However, it was chiefly Johnson's Compounds that enabled his successor to reach the zenith of Midland Railway locomotive construction, leaving 'Derby' well placed to dominate the loco department of the post-grouping London, Midland & Scottish Railway. The Johnson engines worked on the double-regulator version developed by William Smith, chief draughtsman of the North Eastern Railway, with whom Johnson was acquainted. The concept was markedly different from that of contemporary F W Webb over on the LNWR, whose Compounds were sluggish on starting and were said to be capable of having driving wheels working in different directions in certain conditions.

When Johnson gave way to Richard Mountford Deeley, further developments occurred whereby the Compounds started under simple conditions, changing progressively through five positions until full compound working was reached with the regulator fully opened at position 6.

C J Allen relates (*The RM* April 1912) how the Deeley compounds were the masters of the 10.00 from St Pancras. With loads of 195-220tons, the 30.25 miles to Luton (of which 19 miles were against gradients of 1-in-160/200) were covered in a range varying from 34min 5sec to 35min 20sec. The tough 1-in-119 for three miles to Sharnbrook summit at MP59¾ would bring speed down to no lower than 40-45mph before some easy downhill running.

Schedules were not so tight as to demand high top speeds down the 1-in-200 from Flitwick to Elstow (MP40-47) but the intrepid Midland crews, with far from commodious cabs, were prepared to demand 90mph running if late and Johnson's 'engines' (as the Midland was wont to refer to their locos) were not reluctant to respond. C J Allen refers ▶

TABLE 2: STANIER 4-6-0S. LONDON ST PANCRAS TO LEICESTER

Loco		Jubilee 45575			Royal Scot 4-6-0 46166		
Vehicles/tare/gross tons		10/331/362			9/296/315		
Train		2.25pm St P-Manchester C			1.55pm St P-Man L Rd		
Date		November 5, 1960			April 9, 1960		
Recorder		E Patten			D Twibell		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**
0.00	St PANCRAS d	0	0 00		0	0 00	
1.55	Kentish Town		4 09	34	4	4 08	33
3.55	Finchley Rd	6½	7 10	43/58		7 22	40/tsr27
6.95	Hendon	10½	11 23	54/57	12	12 55	54/57
9.35	Mill Hill		13 52	56		15 31	49
12.40	Elstree		17 13	56		19 27	45
15.20	Radlett		19 39	78		22 18	64/66
19.85	ST ALBANS	23	23 23	69	25	26 38	59
21.25	Sandridge		24 33	68		28 02	59
24.60	Harpenden		27 31	74/78		31 10	71/69/77
27.25	Chiltern Green		29 37	75		33 17	74/70
30.25	LUTON	32	32 02	76	35	35 42	77/72
32.75	Leagrave		34 08	71		37 43	73
34.00	MP 34		35 13	70		38 44	74
37.25	Harlington		37 43	82		41 08	86
40.20	Flitwick		39 50	83		43 06	91
41.75	Ampthill		41 01	71		44 08	88/89/ease
43.75	Millbrook		43 22	43/64		45 30	84/81
47.30	Elstow		46 53	63		48 02	86/80
49.85	Bedford N Jct	47	49 18	65/66	52	49 55	85
53.00	Oakley		52 14	63/69	55	52 12	75
56.70	Sharnbrook		55 32	63		55 17	66
59.75	Sharnbook Summit (MP59¾)	56	58 49	54	62	58 28	53
62.70	Irchester	[4]	61 18	78/sigs10		61 02	73
65.05	WELLINGBOROUGH	64½	65 16	32	67	63 07	62
68.25	Finedon		69 09	61		66 03	65
72.00	KETTERING	70½	72 41	65	74	69 45	56/45
75.60	Glendon & R		76 10	63		74 03	50
78.50	Desborough N	77	79 03	57/66	81	77 55	42/67/sigs7
82.95	MARKET HARBOROUGH	81½	83 09	58	86	84 28	33
86.35	East Langton		86 23	70		88 23	64
89.75	Kibworth N	88	89 23	61		91 45	59
91.55	Great Glen		90 57	71/76		93 23	71/69/75
95.90	Wigston N Jct	94	95 46	sigs27		97 09	53/64
97.95	Knighton S Jct		98 22	56		-	
99.10	LEICESTER a	98	100 27		103	101 19	

Mileages are those used by Mr Patten.
Italics are suggestions by article author
[4]= minutes recovery time

½mph speeds rounded up

"It has been suggested that the longevity of Midland locomotives stemmed from light loads on slack schedules over easy gradients. The first allegation is true, the second disputable and the latter unsupportable"



'Jubilee' No. 45626 *Seychelles* passes Kegworth (Leicestershire) in September 1949, with the 9.20am Glasgow St Enoch to St Pancras 'Thames-Clyde Express'. AT TAYLOR



to this stretch as the 'galloping ground', even though punctual trains often indulged in no more than a canter.

It has been suggested that the longevity of Midland locomotives stemmed from light loads on slack schedules over easy gradients. The first allegation is true, the second disputable and the latter unsupportable. The 10.00 from St Pancras had to contend with a 30min timing for the 27 miles from Kettering to Leicester, including the crawl into the platforms there, and the climb of 1-in-111/167 to Kibworth.

C J Allen tabulated eight runs with the 10.00, of which the fastest completed the 99.1 miles in 102m15s, including a temporary speed restriction (TSR) at Harpenden, making Deeley Compound No. 1039's net figure an exact 100min. Admittedly its load was a mere 155tons and the 21m50s for the 20 miles to St Albans had probably been a special effort to compensate for an imminent TSR.

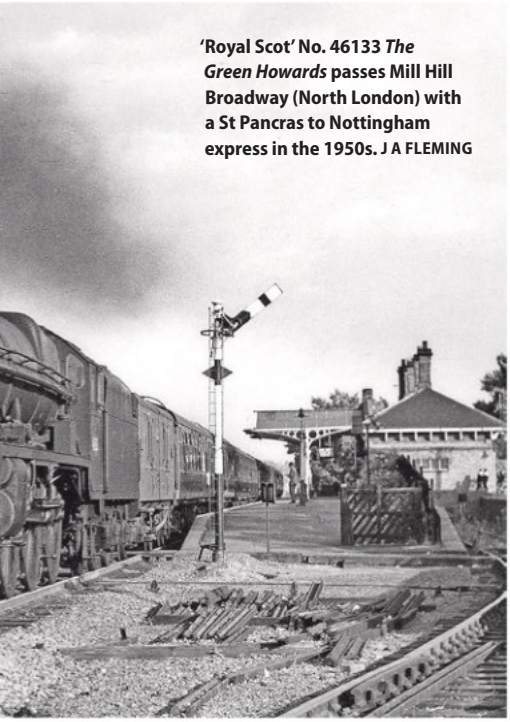
I have not reproduced the tables of the trains to which I have so far referred as they are available via the admirable *RM* Archive or back numbers. However, Table 1 shows another fine Compound run timed by D S M Barrie in 1937 which, I believe, has hitherto remained unpublished.

No. 1078 with eight vehicles, 239tons tare, 250tons gross, had a load more than 50% heavier than No. 1039, with no imperative to rush out to St Albans, yet its time of 24m15s still beat the 25min schedule. The maximum speed was 79mph at Harlington running easily down to Bedford.

In command

The Compound's driver was clearly in command of the situation, even with a 20mph TSR at the foot of Sharnbrook bank. A speed of 45mph unchecked might otherwise have been expected at the summit, but No. 1078 still managed 37mph and remained 40sec ahead of schedule (see Table 1).

A 15mph signal delay at Wellingborough was not within the calculations so, despite an excellent 51mph minimum at Kibworth, the train was 54sec late at Leicester on the 106min



'Royal Scot' No. 46133 *The Green Howards* passes Mill Hill Broadway (North London) with a St Pancras to Nottingham express in the 1950s. J A FLEMING

schedule, which was a working time subterfuge for these advertised 1¾hr trains. However, the net time of 102min is certainly comparable with No. 1039's 100min dash.

The Compounds were rated under the British Railways power system as 4P, so readers are probably not surprised that the 5XP (later 6P5F) 'Jubilees' were considered sufficient for the Midland route's pre-Second World War express work. There are many examples of the prowess of these named Stanier 4-6-0s on the route over the 25 years or so that they were the staple motive power.

A 'Jubilee' run

Career railwayman and Derby native Ted Patten has recently donated his collection of logs to the Railway Performance Society (RPS) archive. Fireworks were to be the order of the day with the 2.25pm St Pancras to Manchester as far as Derby on November 5, 1960 behind 'Jubilee' No. 45575 *Madras*, which is believed to have been a specially-cultivated Pullman standby engine at the time. The load was heavier than normal with 10 heavily-laden vehicles, 331tons tare, around 362tons gross, but there was no assistance used other than a probable shove out of the platform by the inwards empty stock loco.

Schedules to Hendon are historically sharp, in this case 10½min, and *Madras* lost a minute, slightly checked down from 58mph to a 50mph TSR. Speed recovered to 78mph at Radlett and St Albans was passed at 69mph before 78mph was reattained approaching Chiltern Green.

The train hurried through Luton at 76mph in 32m02s against the tight 32min booking. Trafford Park driver Quest and fireman Cox seemed to be out to prove a point (see Table 2). Speed was shaping up nicely for the Flitwick furlongs with 83mph, but there was to be another TSR, this time at the splendidly named Houghton Conquest signalbox.

Trying to build up speed for the climb to Sharnbook, 69mph was attained just after Oakley and the 6P loco carried the summit at an excellent 54mph, but 3min late. There is always an almost tangible sense of joy to be had racing down the 1-in-120 towards Irchester, where 78mph was again reached, but 4min recovery time was offset by a 10mph check approaching Wellingborough.

Even after these delays, the 72 miles to Kettering had taken only 72½min, but the schedule was 70½min. The sharp 30min timing hence to Leicester in Victorian times had become 27½min for these 27 miles, including the climb to Desborough and Kibworth summits, where the minimum speeds were 57 and 61mph respectively.

Driver Quest appears to have taken liberties with the 50mph Market Harborough restriction to reach 76mph approaching Wigston where, as so often occurs even nowadays, there was a signal check – on this occasion to 27mph. Our crew rallied *Madras* to 56mph at Knighton South, reaching

TABLE 3: 'BRITANNIA' PACIFIC LONDON ST PANCRAS TO LEICESTER

Loco	Britannia 70021
Vehicles/tare/gross tons	9/302/320
Train	2.25pm St P-Manchester C
Date	August 20, 1959
Crew (Depot)	Driver F Stokes, Fireman Gerrard (Trafford Park)
Recorder	R I Nelson

Miles	Timing Point	Sch	M S	M P H	BP	SCP	Regulator	Cut-off
0.0	St PANCRAS d	0	0 00	1½L	250	110	1st valve	55
					250	240	Full	25
1.5	Kentish Town	4	4 09	36½	247	230	½main	25
3.5	Finchley Rd		7 06	42¼	250	240	Full	28
5.1	Cricklewood		9 07	53½	250	240	Full	19
7.0	Hendon	10½	10 53	67	245	235	Full	17
9.3	Mill Hill		13 01	63¼	247	237	Full	17
12.4	Elstree		16 01	59	250	225	3/8th main	17
15.2	Radlett		18 24	80¼	248	223	3/8th main	17
				81¾	250	240	Full	17
18.1	Napsbury		20 33	75½	245	235	Full	19
19.9	ST ALBANS	23	22 01	69	240	230	Full	19
21.3	Sandridge		23 14	68¼	225	205	½ main	15
24.6	Harpenden		26 04	75	215	195	½ main	15
25.3	Harpenden Jct		26 38	72½	207	187	½ main	15
27.3	Chiltern Green		28 13	77¼	210	190	½ main	15
28.2	MP 28¼		28 58	72¾	200	180	½main	15
30.2	LUTON	33	30 36	75½	190	180	Full	18
32.8	Leagrave		32 42	71¼	180	155	¼ main	15
				77	190	125	1st valve	15
37.3	Harlington		36 14	81½	170	0	Shut	30
40.2	Flitwick		38 26	77¾	185	155	¼ main	15
41.8	Ampthill*		39 37	79½	200	170	¼ main	15
				84	205	0	Shut	40
43.9	Millbrook		41 10	82¼	240	120	1st valve	15
47.3	Elstow		43 41	81	230	200	¼ main	15
				80¾	233	155	1st valve	15
49.9	Bedford N Jct	49	45 35	83	220	200	½ main	15
51.6	Oakley Jct		46 51	76¾	235	0	Shut	40
		sig stop	49.34-50.43			240	200	1st valve 54
53.0	Oakley	52	51 46	-/59	240	230	Full	47
56.7	Sharnbrook		56 27	56	240	230	Full	26
57.7	MP 57¾		57 32	54¾	250	240	Full	29
58.7	MP 58¾		58 38	53½	250	240	Full	34
59.7	Sharnbook Summit (MP59¾)		58½	59 46	53¼	240	70	1st valve 15
				68	233	0	Shut	45
62.7	Irchester		62 22	73½	240	0	Shut	45
			sigs	10	240	205	1st valve	35
65.1	WELLINGBOROUGH	63½	65 41	15	235	225	Full	38
68.2	Finedon		70 16	61¾	235	225	Full	22
70.7	Kettering Jct		72 30	69	225	0	Shut	35
			sigs	57	230	220	Full	31
72.0	KETTERING	70	73 46	64½	245	235	Full	25
74.6	Glendon S Jct*		76 07	61¼	225	215	Full	25
75.7	Glendon & R		77 04	68	230	220	Full	25
78.1	Desborough		79 25	61½	240	230	Full	25
78.5	Desborough N		79 48	61	240	110	1st valve	15
				-	240	0	Shut	25
80.4	Braybrook		81 29	72½/74	233	0	Shut	25
82.9	MARKET HARBOROUGH	82	84 01	45	228	218	Full	27/22
86.3	East Langton		87 15	73	240	230	Full	24
88.9	Kibworth		89 24	66¼	245	235	Full	25
89.7	Kibworth N		90 08	66	250	200	1st valve	15
91.6	Great Glen		91 38	79	235	120	1st valve	15
				80¾	250	0	Shut	45
95.4	Wigston Magna		94 36	40	245	235	Full	23
				58¼	250	0	Shut	63
99.1	LEICESTER a	99	99 44					

Mileages are those used by Mr Nelson BP=Boiler Pressure. SCP= Steam chest pressure
*Ampthill time of 39m39s and Glendon S 76m17s fit the averages better
Slightly abridged for publication



BR Class 7P 'Britannia' No. 70052 *Firth of Tay* stands under the trainshed at St Pancras after arrival with a special on April 24, 1965. G M CASHMORE

TABLE 4: STANIER 4-6-0 DOUBLE-HEADERS LONDON ST PANCRAS TO LEICESTER

Loco		'Black Five' 44944+Jubilee 45675			'Black Fives' 45253/45279		
Vehicles/tare/gross tons		12/401/420			10/331/-		
Train		10.00 St P-Glasgow St E			2.25pm St P- Man C		
Date		March 16, 1956			July 10 1958		
Recorder		H G Ellison			G J Aston		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**
0.0	St PANCRAS d	0	0 00		0	0 00	
1.2	MP 1¼		sig stop 4.14-4.58				
1.5	Kentish Town	4	6 33		4	3 35	43
3.5	Finchley Rd		10 38	35		6 21	44/64
7.0	Hendon	11	14 47	62	10½	10 16	61/63
9.3	Mill Hill		17 25	50		12 36	57
12.4	Elstree		21 22	47		16 46	tsr19
15.2	Radlett		23 50	81/tsr30		21 00	64/66
19.9	ST ALBANS	28	28 02	-	23	25 31	57
21.3	Sandridge		30 17	42		26 59	58
24.6	Harpenden		33 47	69/76		30 08	70/69
27.3	Chiltern Green		35 59	72		32 19	76/70
30.2	LUTON	38	38 19	81	33	34 46	77
32.7	Leagrave		40 16	75		36 48	73
37.3	Harlington		43 44	84		40 17	82
40.2	Flitwick		45 46	88		42 23	85
41.8	Ampthill		46 52	85		43 32	81
43.8	Millbrook		48 13	90		44 57	84
47.3	Elstow		50 42	84		47 25	87
49.9	Bedford N Jct	55	52 36	80	49	49 14	83/sigs52
53.0	Oakley	58	55 17	-/tsr30/60	52	51 56	55/66
56.6	Sharnbrook		59 45	58		55 34	59/sigs
58.1	Souldrop		61 23	54		57 20	41/35
59.7	Sharnbook Summit (MP59¾)	65	63 13	52	58½	59 57	37
62.7	Irchester		65 45	75		62 49	72
65.1	WELLINGBOROUGH	70	67 47	64	63½	64 56	60
68.2	Finedon		70 40	73		67 46	71
72.0	KETTERING	77	73 52	67/tsr25	70	71 01	66
75.6	Glendon & R		78 16	43		74 40	38/tsr28
78.5	Desborough N	85	82 02	47	77	79 24	48
80.4	Braybrook		84 01	70/sigs25		81 09	70/72
82.9	MARKET HARBOROUGH	90	87 44	-/sigs35	82	83 19	59
86.3	East Langton		92 59	51/54		86 21	72
89.7	Kibworth N		96 51	51		89 30	61
91.6	Great Glen		98 33	70		91 03	74
93.9	Kilby Bridge		100 26	76/sigs35		92 51	77
95.9	Wigston N Jct		103 03	-		94 39	56
97.9	Knighton S Jct		105 25	53/sigs		96 33	67
99.1	LEICESTER a	108	107 32		99	98 17	

Mileages are those used by Mr Ellison
½mph speeds rounded up

Leicester in 100m27s against the 98min schedule for the 99.1miles. I calculate the net time to have been only 94min. Leicester to Derby is beyond our remit, but the schedule was 33min gross, 29min net, and No. 45575 took just 29m48s for the 29.35miles, arriving on time.

Cascaded 'Scots'

Redundant 'Royal Scots' were drafted onto the St Pancras route from 1960, but their role was only that of stopgap before the diesel-powered Type 4 'Peaks' arrived. However, there are 20 'Scot' down nonstop runs to Leicester in the RPS archive. One eye-catching example was recorded by Doug Twibell with the Saturday afternoon 1.55pm to Manchester London Road (not Central) on April 9, 1960. Longsight's No. 46166 *London Rifle Brigade* had only nine vehicles compared to No. 45575's ten, and its sights were aimed at a less demanding schedule of 103min.

As so often with good runs, delays that needed recouping were suffered early in the journey. On this occasion it was a TSR to 27mph as early as West Hampstead. It seems something ahead was making poor progress away from the slack, as No. 46166 made faltering progress to Elstree, where it was over 2min behind *Madras*. Now it was time for some real 7P work (see Table 2).

Luton was passed 2½min late at 77mph, speed falling to only 72mph on the 1-in-176 to Sandridge. The 'Royal Scot' now showed its paces: 81mph at Sundon, 86mph Harlington. Not so much a gallop, I suppose, as a military charge as this was the Rifle Brigade not the Light Brigade. The 'Royal Scot' touched 91mph at Flitwick, easing to 81mph before recording 85½mph at Elstow, scarcely less round the Bedford avoiding line, 66mph at Sharnbrook and 53mph over the summit.

Perhaps *London Rifle Brigade* had run short of ammunition after this volley, because its next effort at hill climbing rendered only 42mph at Desborough North, no more than a Compound's standard, but perhaps there had been early indications of potential delay as there were then heavy checks through Market Harborough with a minimum of 7mph. Undaunted, 74½mph passing Great Glen was higher than normal and a final flourish to 63½mph at Knighton South Junction brought the Manchester express into Leicester just 101m19s from St Pancras, perhaps 95min net, and 1½min early.

'Brits' arrive

In 1959, the Stanier 4-6-0s were supplemented by BR Standard 'Britannia' 4-6-2s, displaced by creeping dieselisation. They were classified no higher than a 'Royal Scot' at 7P and did not quite match them in tractive effort, but generally enthusiastic Kentish Town and Trafford Park crews recorded some excellent performances.

A legendary run described in C J Allen's book 'British Pacific Locomotives' was completed by No. 70032 *Tennyson* nonstop from London to Leicester with 297tons tare, 320tons gross, in 95m40s; remarkable enough in itself, but the net figure of 89½min was astounding at the time. *Tennyson's* gross and net average speeds were 62.2 and 66.4mph. The former Poet Laureate's eponymous engine was already 5min late at Hendon after only seven miles. Down the 1-in-200 after Flitwick,

recorder N E Rimes timed driver Richards and fireman Simpkins at 99mph. Top speeds claimed for 'Britannias', 'Scots' and 'Jubilees' on this route appear to be 101, 100 and 97½mph respectively – but not indisputably.

In a second log in C J Allen's book, there is a log of No. 70021 *Morning Star* timed by the redoubtable R I Nelson from the footplate. His collection has been donated to the RPS archive, giving the opportunity to reprint it here with full details of the settings used by Trafford Park driver Stokes. Mr Nelson calculates the net time of the 99m44s run to have been 90¾min. Water consumption was 3350gallons with an average water feed rate of 20,200lb/hr. He says time was gained to offset an expected relaying slack at Wellingborough, but this resulted in catching up the 2.15pm from St Pancras, after which "the engine had to take some terrific punishment" from "a determined crew" making it "a memorable occasion." See Table 3.

Not all Britannia runs had the drama of these two runs. Ted Patten had a more routine trip with No. 70044 *Earl Haig* on April 15, 1961 with the 5.05pm St Pancras to Bradford Forster Square hauling a standard nine-coach load. There were no histrionics in reaching 79mph at Flitwick, after a couple of minor delays, to pass Wellingborough 2min early following 4min recovery time. The speeds at the summits of Sharnbrook, Desborough North and Kibworth were only 47, 45 and 44mph respectively but nothing more was necessary with 5min further allowances to come on the 108min schedule. Two more signalling delays were inevitable before Leicester was reached in 107min 21sec, 11sec late after a 50sec late start.





Above: LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45279 heads a down special between Glaston and Wing Tunnels (Rutland) on August 2, 1954. P H WELLS

Right: An example of double-heading on the Midland in the late 1950s has 'Black Five' No. 45267 piloting an unidentified 'Jubilee' through Melton Mowbray Town with a Bradford Forster Square to St Pancras express on February 26, 1958. A F TAYLOR

Double-heading

Considering the Midland Railway's reputation for double-heading, the RPS archive does not contain very many illustrations. One notable example was timed by Mr H G Ellison in March 1956 with the classic combination of a 'Black Five' piloting a 'Jubilee', in this case Nos. 44944 and Holbeck train engine No. 45675 *Hardy*, which was to be one of the last four survivors of the 193-strong class.

On this occasion, the 10.00 St Pancras to Glasgow St Enoch 'Thames-Clyde Express' had a 12-coach load of 401tons tare/420 tons gross, so there was no question whether or not assistance was justified. True to form, there was a delay in the early stages of the run, in this case a 38sec dead stand by MP1¼ and a 30mph TSR followed at MP19. The response was a maximum speed of 90mph on the galloping ground. Mr Ellison calculates a combined equivalent drawbar horsepower of 2335 on Sharnbrook, where the minimum speed was 52mph. More checks were in store – a TSR to 25mph at Kettering and three more signal delays. Nevertheless, the Stanier duo wheeled the 'Scotch' express into Leicester in 107min 32sec, ½min early after 12¾min delay (see Table 4).

In the summer of 1958, G J Aston enjoyed what was probably the epitome of London Midland double-headers with 'Black Five' Nos. 45253+45279 on the 14.25 St Pancras-Manchester Central (Table 4). The load only just qualified for help at 10-coaches/331tons tare and the empty stock's 2-6-2T No. 40100 contributed to the pair's farewell. This time the early delay was a 20mph TSR at Elstree, which cost 3min. The maximum speed was 86½mph at Houghton Conquest, but there was clearly some problem ahead on Sharnbrook bank with adverse 'distants' causing a 35mph minimum after Souldrop. A TSR at Desborough precluded comparison with the effort on the 1-in-136 there, but 61mph at Kibworth North was in a different class. Arrival at Leicester was ½min early on the 99min timing in 98m17s gross, 91¼min net.

The RPS archive also contains a true taste of Midland express double-headed running with Compound 4-4-0 Nos. 935 and 1031 in December 1936 timed by D S M Barrie. The combination showed the gradual development of a successful design, as the train engine was a Deeley development of Johnson's design and pilot No. 935 was a Fowler loco with 6ft 9in driving wheels and other refinements. This pairing took 107min 23sec from St Pancras to Leicester a on a 109min schedule with 15 vehicles weighing 333tons tare, 355tons gross. Key figures were an overall maximum speed of 70mph, 44mph at Sharnbrook, 50mph Desborough North, 48mph Kibworth with a maximum on the galloping ground simply described as 'easy' (probably a smidgeon over 65mph) by this punctual train with motive power more than equal to the task (Table 1).

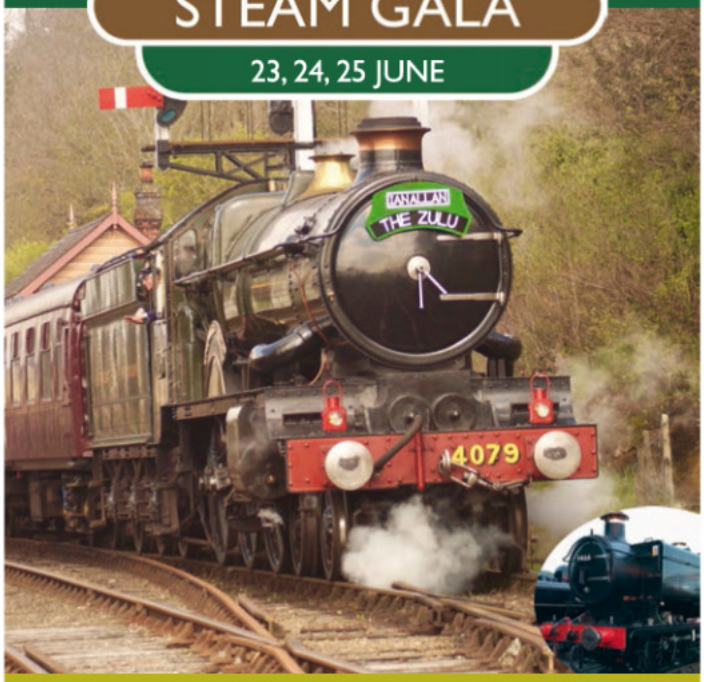
Final steam

For right or wrong, by the summer of 1960 there was dramatic evidence the steam age had run its course with the entry into service of the Blue Pullman units. Pairs of Co-Bo diesels (later Class 28) were infiltrating crack expresses, as if to prove the small engine policy lived on. But these were to be mere distractions because the Sulzer 'Peaks' were rolling off the production line; locos that were to dominate the route for the next 25 years.

Discounting railtours, the last nonstop St Pancras-Leicester steam entry in the RPS archive was a 1963 Christmas Eve relief train hauled by No. 45561 *Saskatchewan*, timed by Doug Twibell, which took 168m59s. The stock was late into the platform, there were long signal stops including one for 'no light in signal' and 11 unscheduled minutes were spent taking water at Kettering. Train heating was imperceptible. On arriving at Leicester, the 'Jubilee' was declared a failure and 1250hp Birmingham RC&W No. D5412 (later Class 27 Nos. 27124/27206) took charge, arriving Sheffield 82min late. Happy Christmas everyone.

This was no way to draw a veil across the age of steam on the Midland Railway's main line in general or the blue riband St Pancras-Leicester run in particular, so it was fortunate that an LCGB special was arranged for June 6, 1964. With at least six experienced train timers on board, 'Jubilee' No. 45721 *Impregnable* set the record straight with a run of 100min net on a 105½min schedule, a 6min signal delay approaching Leicester failing to spoil Kentish Town driver Ruddock's run, which had flown through Flitwick at 89mph and managed minima of 55, 49 and 52mph at the three summits with nine coaches, 316tons tare, 340tons gross. But how much, if any, of an improvement was this on Samuel Waite Johnson's 'Single' No. 2604 back at the turn of the century? ■

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50 years of Pathfinder

Chris Milner speaks to Pathfinder Railtours' Peter Watts who, after 50 years and more than 1100 tours, has decided it is time to step back from planning and running charter trains.



Peter Watts at his desk at Pathfinder's headquarters in March 2022. PHOTOS BY JACK BOSKETT UNLESS STATED

A PHRASE often said in hindsight is: "If I knew then what I know now, I may not have bothered." And that could apply when looking at how the railtour and charter train industry – and its customers – have changed since the 1970s.

At a time when the majority of excursions were run by British Rail, often under the day excursion or Merrymaker banner, a handful of special trains were run by groups affiliated to specific steam locos (A4 Locomotive Society, 6000 Locomotive Association) or heritage groups such as the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society and Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society. A few tours were also run by dedicated enthusiast organisations, such as the Locomotive Club of Great Britain jointly with the RCTS.

At the time Peter Watts ran his first railtour, he was working in the Gloucester warehouse of a well known ice cream company. But in his spare time he was part of a group located in the South West and South Wales who were fundraising for the Welsh Highland Railway (1964) Company, so the proceeds could be used to build carriages. With Peter's friend Tony Fielding, they hit upon the idea of chartering a train from BR to run their own 'Merrymaker' style trip. It was a bold and ambitious move.

The first tour

After some back-and-forth with BR, the 'Snowdonian' was planned for June 10, 1973 from Gloucester Eastgate to Pwllheli via Toddington, Honeybourne and Worcester Shrub Hill.

The tour, described by Peter as a 'do it yourself' type, was a sellout – 514 seats in 11



Profits from 'The Western Finale' on February 12, 1977, financed the creation of F&W Railtours, the sell-out tour being hauled by No. D1023 *Western Fusilier* from Exeter to York, where the loco offered cab visits to the crowd of enthusiasts. JOHN VAUGHAN



The first tour organised by Peter Watts and his F&W co-founder Tony Fielding was the 'Snowdonian' on June 10, 1973 – seen waiting to depart Gloucester Eastgate behind Class 47 No. 1644 (No. 47060). Type 2s Nos. 24079+24087 took over at Birmingham New Street for the run to Pwllheli. NORMAN PREEDY

carriages hauled by Brush Type 4 No. 1644 (later No. 47060) carrying a home-made headboard. The Brush was replaced at New St by a pair of BR Sulzer Type 2s, Nos. 24079 and 24087, which were worked hard over the Cambrian route to Pwllheli.

Keeping overheads to a minimum, an on board buffet was set up in the brake van – although the use of a portable stove powered by a gas cylinder for hot drinks did result in a melted floor!

Buoyed by the success of this train, Peter and Tony embarked on a second tour the same year, which on September 30 went from Gloucester to Torbay. The Torbay train and one to North Wales were to set a pattern for future fundraising trips, although the 1976 tours were not quite as successful as others and lost money.

F&W is born

For 1977, Peter and Tony planned to run three tours, one of which they knew would be very popular, and so took the decision to run it under their own auspices. The tour, the 'Western Finale' with No. D1023 *Western Fusilier*, ran on February 12, 1977 from Exeter to York and, as expected, it was a sell-out. The proceeds formed the nucleus of finance that was used to create F&W Railtours – the forerunner of Pathfinder.

Peter says creating F&W was a necessary and inevitable move, particularly because the WHR '64 company was a charity, and charity money should not be put at risk on the financial viability of railtours.

It was this 'Finale' tour which had the misfortune to hit a herd of cows at Charfield (between Bristol and Gloucester) causing an hour's delay and a damaged brake pipe. Because of the delay, the plan was for another loco to provide assistance to Gloucester, where the 'Western' would be replaced with a Class 46 to York. So as to have 'Western' haulage on the way home, the proposal was to take No. D1012 *Western Firebrand* off the Plymouth to Old Oak Common vans at Westbury and send the loco light engine all the way to York for the return leg.

However, the day was famously saved by a 10 pence coin which was used to seal a damaged air pipe! In an amazing turn of fortune, the coin was reduced to the required diameter by a man living in a bungalow next to the railway who just happened to have a lathe in his shed. This temporary repair held all the way back to Laira depot.

> "The use of a portable stove powered by a gas cylinder for hot drinks did result in a melted floor!"

By 1979 Tony, who was a railway employee, left the industry and also F&W to work with historic and vintage vehicles, leaving Peter to go solo, albeit with some very supportive friends.

As the number of excursions in the early 1980s increased substantially from the two or three per year, Peter was carrying all the liability of F&W on his shoulders, so was advised to form a limited company to provide the necessary protection for his family and their home. So from 1987 the company became F&W Railtours Limited trading as Pathfinder Tours. Last year a subtle name change saw the company marketing its trains as Pathfinder Railtours.

For a while, Pathfinder ran a small number of excursions in Ireland and it was one of these that led to the formation of the Irish Traction Group. Subsequent tours run by Pathfinder to the Emerald Isle were handed to the group with its good local knowledge and contacts with CIE.

Peter admitted that because he was busy with UK tours, he felt a step into Europe was far too time consuming, plus it needed people with specialist knowledge and contacts within the various European railway organisations.

In running the business, Peter had enough to deal with in the monolith that was British Rail at the time it was under a divisional structure, and there was some heavy resistance in some quarters to running charter trains – particularly some divisions of the Eastern Region. This was in contrast to the Stoke area, where one manager was far more commercially-minded and helped with a number of tours – as did the Watford area out of Euston by using sets of carriages for the Northampton 'Cobbler' trains that were used for commuter traffic on weekdays but surplus at weekends. Peter says that the Plymouth area was similarly helpful with spare sets for weekend charters.

Sectorisation boost

As sectorisation of BR progressed in the 1980s, the spare sets previously used for charters were withdrawn as the railway became more cost conscious, and led to Pathfinder changing the start destinations to match stock availability.

A bonus of Sectorisation was that some parts of Regional Railways (originally Provincial) had locomotives, drivers and rolling stock for hire – even if it was Standard Class and only five carriages. While it may have created a little competition and some internal friction between BR sectors, as a result Peter

got offered trains at very competitive prices for trains that would originate in the Midlands or South Wales.

"It had its place, as we were able to get to Newquay at a sensible price," explained Peter. "The set was already paid for during the week, so we could operate in the margins, but was eventually stopped through internal pressure."

Special Trains Unit

When hiring trains at bargain basement prices was no longer an option, Pathfinder worked with David Ward and the Special Trains Unit (STU), which was part of the InterCity brand. Peter says David was a dominant figure who understood the market, and with whom he had a good working relationship, allowing Pathfinder to price its own trains using a matrix.

"We worked our own prices out based on mileage, resources used and so on," said Peter. "It worked for a while, and then David gave us the chance to include Premier Dining, which we started from Swindon using a spare carriage set from Old Oak, building up business in and around Bath, Bristol Parkway and Cheltenham, a Cotswold triangle pick-up pattern of dining-only trains.

"David was also very supportive to get the ball rolling and we ran dining-only trains for a considerable time and rode on the back of the success of the STU's own dining trains to other destinations.

"It was a partnership which took us into the early 1990s, but Privatisation was looming. We were lucky, I suppose, that charters went as an entity from BR control to Sir William McAlpine and Pete Waterman, who had bought the STU from BR".

I asked Peter whether, in his view, looking at the two eras of BR and Privatisation, they had been equally difficult or just different?

"Whichever period you look at, there are always difficulties and challenges. Sometimes it can be the safety aspects, such as on branch lines where you can't do this or that, or the region brings out a policy of nothing at all over freight lines. The Midland had a similar policy, but the West was always pro, which was down to an individual who had influence. Without them, a lot would not have been done. Same for the Southern really. Scotland was simply hit and miss and could very much depend on moods on the day.

"Since 2020, the railtour market has been particularly badly hit by external factors"

"That was the challenge of BR corporately, how the different elements were reached. One month a line would be okay, another month we'd have a problem. When BR moved to Sectorisation, David Ward batted our corner for us with the other internal BR businesses and did achieve some notable successes.

"It's worth mentioning that we also got into steam charters back in 1978. Bernard Staite helped us out, invited us to his Lichfield office to work with him and promote a tour from Paddington to Chester hauled by No. 6960 *Raveningham Hall*. We ran quite a few steam excursions then. I've always believed in working with people, not against them.

"Under Privatisation, around 1997, we switched from using Rail Charter Services stock (which was managed by Bernard) to Riviera Trains, our first use of the chocolate and cream Mk.1s being on January 4 that year. Since then we've worked almost exclusively with Riviera until we hit a wall in 2005 due to the guard's strike.

Peter continues: "We had to cancel a significant number of trains and refund customers, which put us under great financial pressure. Coupled with which there was a knock-on effect of being a sole director, and no other income streams, the lack of ongoing cashflow threatened the future viability of the business.

"Because we'd been working closely with Barry Cordell and Charles Paget from Riviera Trains for many years, they offered to buy the assets of the original F&W/Pathfinder company. This led to the closure of F&W and in its place, the creation of Pathfinder Tours (2006) Ltd, at which point I became an employee rather than a director.

"I've retained the autonomy I had at F&W to plan and organise tours. But by 2016, with old age approaching, I explained to Barry we needed some new blood to take the company forward. It's not the kind of position you can recruit for off the streets, it's very specialised and needs a lot specific knowledge, both geographic and of railway operations. Over a period of time, my working hours have reduced from four days in the office, with one out with the trains at weekends, to three to two days while at the same time getting rid of non-planning type work.

"My eldest daughter, Hannah, has also been involved with the business and has done a lot for Pathfinder over more than 10 years, taking responsibility but also stewarding on trains at weekends while simultaneously trying to build her own career with a train operator."

Regulations and planning

One aspect of post-Privatisation to affect every promoter is regulatory changes, such as secondary door locking and bars on drop-down windows. Here there has been a focus, and rightly, after two passengers recently lost their lives on normal service trains because they had their heads out of the window. One was hit by an overhanging tree, the other by a lineside structure, so now vestibules are monitored by stewards which has added an additional challenge. The stewards also monitor passenger behaviour and have no qualms about removing unruly customers from trains.

Before any tour can run, you need an idea of where you want to start and pick-up, and have an end destination allowing passengers a



More exotic traction and routes were on offer on February 12, 2000 when No. 58025 took part in the 'Dukeries Collier' tour from Swindon to Nottinghamshire – the 'Bone' seen leading the tour at Thoresby Colliery Junction (top-and-tailed by an out of view No. 60049). FERNDALE MEDIA



reasonable time for off-train activities. Some tours stem from passenger suggestions and conversations, others are based on Peter's gut feeling of what is likely to appeal to passengers, including traction over specific routes. It also helps to be prepared for when new lines may be opening, or for freight lines likely to become unavailable in the future – "having your finger on the pulse", as Peter describes it.

At a meeting last September, the Pathfinder/Riviera team drew up outline plans for 2023 tours. But as the winter months progressed, it became apparent that some couldn't happen because a particular heritage locomotive would not be available, or the proposed route would be closed due to an extensive engineering block.

Indeed, the recent closure of Nuneham Viaduct has led to some changes as some trains were planned to be an Eastleigh or Swindon start, picking up along the Thames Valley corridor through Oxford and Banbury. The upshot is that you find your exciting plans torn apart because of circumstances beyond your control, and you have to start the process again.

"We've always tried to support and use heritage locos, because (a) the passengers like them, and (b) it supports the owning groups," says Peter. "That's a policy which will continue."

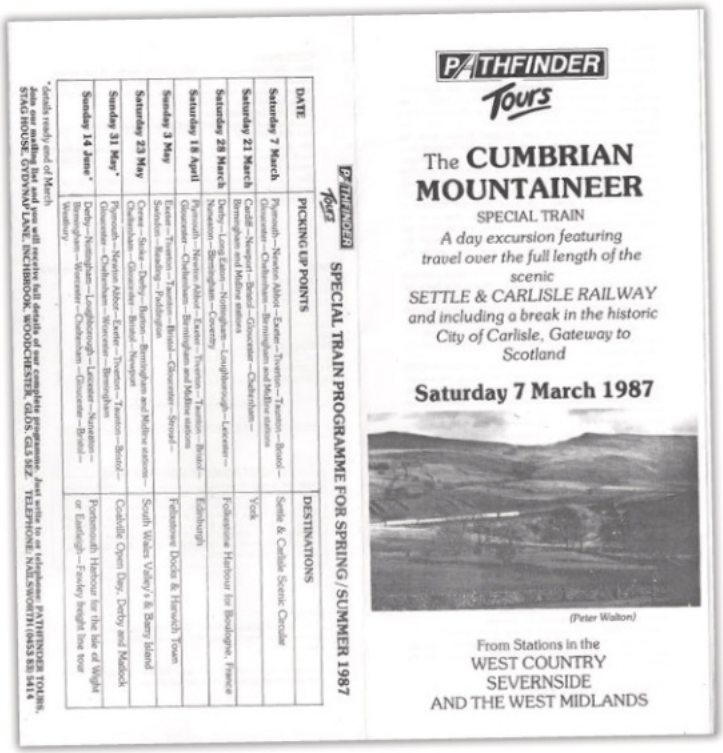
Even though some Pathfinder trains are repeats, the same planning process detailed below has to be followed:

Once a tour has an outline, one of the Pathfinder team, usually Richard Szwejkowski, will undertake a 'rules of the route' check. This is where line closures for engineering possessions can impact the train plan.

Next would be a 'rules of the plan' check, which relates to timetable planning, gauging, routes and junctions, train lengths (number and type of vehicles), locomotive and stock route availability, speeds, operational constraints, sectional running times and any empty stock movements and loco run rounds required. In essence, a thorough check to ensure the idea is achievable before submitting details of the train. Goods line authority requests would also be assessed, as they can take time for the approvals and are, in any case, becoming more difficult to obtain.

Next there would be a resources check with the chosen train operator before they submit the plan (called 'a bid') to Network Rail for planning and validation, and final sign off.

As an example, *The Railway Magazine's* 'Tees-Tyne Commemorative' charity charter train planned for September 27 saw the outline spec submitted to train operator West Coast Railways on March 8, more than six months before the tour. This allows time for consultation with other train operators sharing the route, and negotiation time should there be objections, before advising the customer of the proposed timing and that they are acceptable.


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Saturday 28 March	Derby–Long Eaton–Nottingham–Loughborough–Leicester–Nuneaton–Wolverhampton–Coventry	Folkestone Harbour for Boulogne, France
Saturday 18 April	Gloucester–Cheltenham–Birmingham and Midland stations	Edinburgh
Sunday 3 May	Kidderminster–Taunton–Bristol–Gloucester–Stroud–Swindon–Reading–Paddington	Folkestone Docks & Harwich Town
Saturday 23 May	Crewe–Stoke–Derby–Burton–Birmingham and Midland stations–Cheltenham–Gloucester–Bristol–Newport	South Wales Valley's & Barry Island
Sunday 31 May*	Plymouth–Newton Abbot–Exeter–Taunton–Bristol–Gloucester–Cheltenham–Worcester–Birmingham	Cotswolds Open Day, Derby and Matlock
Sunday 14 June*	Derby–Nottingham–Loughborough–Leicester–Nuneaton–Birmingham–Worcester–Cheltenham–Gloucester–Bristol–Westbury	Portsmouth Harbour for the Isle of Wight or Eastleigh–Fawley freight line tour

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Above: The early tours were aimed at enthusiasts, offering rare traction and unusual routes. Here Nos. 20169+20184 are seen at Meldon Quarry on July 8, 1984, with the 'Devonshire Dart' tour from Bristol, which also visited Bere Alston and Plymouth Friary. FERNDALE MEDIA

Left: With the departure of Tony Fielding, Peter renamed the company Pathfinder Tours in 1987 – this leaflet for the 'Cumbrian Mountaineer' that year advertising eight tours in the first six months.

Traction providers

As a tour promoter, Pathfinder channels its bids through a number of authorised train operators that hold the safety case for the traction being used. These are DB Cargo, GB Railfreight and, more recently, West Coast Railway Company. Direct Rail Services (DRS) has decided to undertake no more charters and instead focus on its core business of freight and nuclear traffic.

Choice of train operator will depend on certain factors. DB Cargo is a primary choice because of extensive route knowledge, greater loco choices and crewing options, while GBRf is used seasonally, from May to September. Use of West Coast Railways tends be for steam charters, most heritage traction or if specific locos classes – such as Class 33s – are required.





Above: Steam has always been part of the F&W/Pathfinder mix, such as here on August 28, 2010 when 'King' No. 6024 *King Edward VI* headed the 'The Bristolian' from Bristol Temple Meads to Paddington, seen east of Didcot Parkway.

Right: Full dining has been part of the Pathfinder offering since the 1990s – here Peter's daughter Katie Tubb serves passengers on a recent tour.



Classic traction continues to attract passengers, and here 'Deltic' No. D9009 (55009) *Alycidon* eases for a pick-up at Ashchurch (Gloucestershire) on its way to Penzance with the 'Mazey Day Cornishman' from Tame Bridge Parkway to Penzance on June 29, 2013.

Although West Coast has only recently become a traction provider, a great working relationship has quickly developed.

Every tour will be carefully costed. There is the cost of the rolling stock hire, locomotive and crew hire, fuel, track access charges, stabling and tanking costs which all impact on the price of a ticket.

Since 2020, the railtour market has been particularly badly hit by external factors. First there was the pandemic, when from March to early July tours were cancelled due to lockdown and the need to isolate, resulting in no income. Large scale cancellations and postponements continued until spring 2021, but as confidence started to increase, February 2022 saw the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

This world event has resulted in all manner of price rises, from the cost of red diesel to crewing costs, raw foodstuffs for the restaurant and buffet cars, and even track access charges too have all become part of the ongoing cost spiral.

Inevitably, ticket prices have risen and wafer-thin margins have been sliced even thinner. With passengers' disposable income under greater pressure than ever before, some advertised tours have not proved as popular as Pathfinder expected and were cancelled – a situation felt by every railtour promoter. Peter says, contrary to what people think, the company is not making a mint, just doing what's necessary to survive.

New blood

In the Pathfinder office, Peter has an incredible archive of all his previous tours, folder upon folder containing background planning notes, timings, promotional material and photos of his trains willingly donated by lineside photographers.

During the height of the pandemic, Peter worked from home, outlining tour plans ready for a resumption of normality, redating tours impacted by the lockdowns, and just generally keeping the business ticking over. This was followed by a hectic period in 2022 catching up with trains that had been put on a back burner.

Even so, the level of commitment to the business at a time Peter wanted to wind down had become relentless and so, as part of the preparation to replace Peter, an internal reshuffle took place, which had mixed results.

To boost activities in marketing and social media circles, the company recruited well known railway photographer Jack Boskett in June 2021 on a freelance basis to replace someone who was retiring. Then in the autumn of 2022, after extensive research and interviewing, Will Stevenson (formerly of Vintage Trains) came on board to be trained by Peter as the new operations manager. Will has been tasked to take on the planning of future tours, which will release Peter to enjoy his other interests, such as walking, canal boating and watching Forest Green Rovers FC.

In the Pathfinder HQ near Stroud, there's a team of six to handle enquiries. Most bookings (65%) are online via www.pathfindertours.co.uk, with around 35% of passengers still preferring to call and book by phone and the remaining 5% opting to book by post. The team also sends out the final timings and tickets and, with running 20 plus tours a year (one year it was 40 tours), it can get quite frantic.

Use of the internet to book in real time has streamlined the process immensely and is

a world away from the tear-off booking forms on the bottom of the company's A4 flyers distributed in the early years and sack loads of mail.

As you would expect after 50 years of railtours, Pathfinder has a loyal and dedicated following, with more than 20,000 customers on its mailing list. It also has a number of passengers who travel on every train. On board, there is a great atmosphere and camaraderie between Pathfinder's volunteer stewards and its passengers, with many on first name terms.

Pathfinder Railtours also raises money for charity. Since 2011, the Guide Dogs for the Blind has been one of Pathfinder's main supporting charities, with more than £100,000 raised.

Not every tour has gone to plan, and some have been memorable for all the wrong reasons. In 2017 a Scottish land cruise was delayed leaving Fort William by eight hours because of a line blockage, the origin station of Exeter not being reached until the following morning.

On another tour, Peter got left behind at Morecambe and got a lift on the light engine released after the departure. It is not the first occasion he missed the train either, incidents at Carlisle and Fort William saw him left behind.

Back in the 1970s and 80s, tours were reliant on locomotives with steam heating boilers for train heat, but on January 27, 1979 – during the 'Big Freeze' of that year – the 'East Anglian tour from Worcester to Lowestoft never made it to its destination because of several sets of frozen points. Additionally, loco No. 40052 was suffering from a frozen boiler after a loco change at Birmingham New St. It needed No. 46023 to be added at Gloucester to provide train heat, before the 'Peak' was replaced by a solitary Class 31, which managed (or should that be struggled?) to haul 11 carriages from Stratford (London) to Stowmarket, where the tour was turned back. Luckily, British Rail agreed to a free rerun of the tour in the September of that year.



One of Peter's favourite locos is the Diesel Traction Group's No. D1015 *Western Champion*, which on June 28, 2014 hauled 'The Mazey Day Cornishman' from Tame Bridge Parkway to Penzance and is pictured at the Cornish terminus being admired by passengers and other enthusiasts.

Having taken trains to most places, I asked Peter what was still on his bucket list to achieve. "There's some freight lines I've still not got a passenger train over. I'd also like to get a tour to Cromer and Sheringham, but would like to get a pair of Class 50s to Aberdeen and Inverness."

After running more than 1100 trains in a business which has faced a whole gambit of problems with many highs, and luckily not so many lows, Peter is proud that Pathfinder has always been reactive to change, ready to embrace and adapt to meet any business and market challenges head-on, and will continue to do so – forging ahead with new ideas, new tours, using a whole range of traction to satisfy the day tripper and ardent enthusiast. ■

DB Cargo is one of the main traction providers, but West Coast Railways is used for unusual traction – such as this pair of Class 33s Nos. 33025 and 33029 on August 6, 2022, working the 'Dorset Coast Explorer' from Burton-on-Trent to Weymouth, again seen passing Northway (near Ashchurch).



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Saturday
16th September

The glorious scenery of Devon is the backdrop as we visit the charming seaside towns of Torquay and Paignton.

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Ropley's other railway

Raymond Briscall tells the story of the 10¼in gauge Ropley Miniature Railway, which runs alongside the 'Watercress Line' in Hampshire.

THE original 10¼in gauge miniature railway opened at Ropley station on the Mid-Hants Railway in 2006. It was east of the station in what is now the top car park, off Bighton Hill, and was approximately 160 yards long with a single-platform station called Ropley High Level. On leaving the station, there was a curved approach to a 1-in-34 incline up to a two-road yard and container, in which the stock was located.

In March 2009, however, the operator withdrew from running the railway. Members of the current group of volunteers (the Mid-Hants Miniature Railway Group) were pleasantly surprised when approached by the then managing director of the 'Watercress Line', Colin Chambers, who invited them to take over the responsibility of running the line.

"You have two problems," said Colin, "no loco and no carriages!" With just two weeks to go before the Easter 2009 Day Out With Thomas (DOWT) event, some hectic telephone calls resulted in the hire of a Curwen-designed and built 'Western' class diesel-hydraulic-type loco and two bogie coaches. And with these our first ever Miniature Railway DOWT event was run. It was a steep learning curve for all, but it went very well and certainly left us eager to continue.

The volunteers formed the Mid-Hants Miniature Railway Group, who continue to run the present line, which is now on a different site and now known as the Ropley Miniature Railway (RMR).

Above: 'Class 47' Co-Co diesel-hydraulic *Jerry Lee* takes a service from Ropley High Level past American-outline petrol-hydraulic loco *Nevada* in the yard on June 6, 2021. ALL PHOTOS BY RAYMOND BRISCALL UNLESS STATED
Below: American-outline diesel-electric loco *Patricia* passes the 'Tinkerbell'-type loco and *Nevada* on June 11, 2011, on the old line, which was lifted at the end of the 2012 operating season.



More stock acquired

After the 2009 event, we found ourselves once again without any stock. Luckily, a loco owner was short of storage space and a deal was struck that saw his American-outline, petrol-hydraulic loco *Nevada* stored at Ropley in return for its free use at weekends, but with daily hire fees when used at events.

Three of our members subsequently purchased the loco, which is based on a General Motors EMD GP7 Class and built by Bimpson of Maghull in 1996. It arrived painted dark green with wasp stripes at one end. The engine had been changed to a Honda GX390 petrol engine with transmission via an Eaton 7 hydrostatic pump.

The loco was repainted into a pale, supposedly LSWR green, which did not really do it justice and so it was repainted in July 2015 into Oxford Blue, but retaining the



The new (current) line is seen under construction on May 12, 2014.



0-4-0 diesel-hydrostatic loco *Ajax* leaves Ropley High Level behind on a sunny June 3, 2021. ALASDAIR REID



American-outline loco *Patricia* arrives at Ropley High Level station on August 9, 2016.

wasp stripes, which looks much better. Electric start and switchable head and tail-lights have been added.

Two members then built a pair of bogie coaches named *James* and *Victoria*, after the children of one of them. These were available for use at the next Thomas event in August 2009.

The following month, another member acquired a further American-outline diesel-electric loco from the Weymouth Bay Miniature Railway. It has a distinctive nose-end and was loosely based on a General Motors EMD F7 class in maroon livery. This was in very poor condition overall, with its nose badly damaged. It was not operational as the starter motor had been removed, making the purchase something of a gamble, as the owner had not been able to demonstrate it running.

However, the gamble paid off handsomely as we had the loco running again within a day. Over the coming months, the starter and auxiliary circuits were rewired and the nose was rebuilt and refitted. It ran for some time with its nose in primer and the rest of the body in a tired maroon livery. The new owner named it *Patricia* and it has proved to be a powerful and popular loco over the years.

Today, it is resplendent in a dark green livery with speed whiskers. We understand it was one of a batch of six similar locos built by Roger Hunt in the late 1950s or early 60s. *Patricia* is now powered by a two-cylinder Lister engine coupled to a 110V generator that powers the traction motor to drive both axles on the rear bogie.

Another big setback

Disaster befell the railway in February 2010 when the previous operator decided to remove all his aluminium track that had been left in situ. So, in the reverse of when we took over, we now had two locos and two carriages, but nothing to run them on!

The then MHR operations manager Bob Deeth told us we would not be running for Easter as he could not see us even assembling sufficient track panels, let alone relaying them. We said: "We shall see!".

New steel rails, sleepers and fittings were procured and within two weekends we assembled about 20 six-metre long track panels. We relaid the entire line and were undertaking test running two weeks before the Easter 2010 Thomas event. We had no points, and so the track had to be slewed to access the container. However, we did manage to run a service using both locos double-heading. By the time of the August event, we had manufactured and laid two points in the yard.

Another major setback occurred at the end of the 2012 operating season. Our track was lifted to make way for the new top car park and installation of the former King's Cross Handyside (Harry Potter) footbridge. We remained in limbo for two years until we were provided with a leased 10m-wide strip of land to the west of Ropley station.

New line constructed

Earthworks for the new line commenced in May 2014. Within just 11 months, we had transferred our container and stock to the summit of the new site, built the yard there, and laid track back towards Ropley where we built the new Ropley High Level station.

The land was not ideal, being largely clay-based and so rock-hard when dry and a quagmire when wet. Two drainage ditches had to be dug at the lowest point of the new line to prevent flooding. Also, the nature of the ground meant the trackbed had to be excavated to form a trench 30in wide by 9in deep. This was covered with a semi-permeable Geotek membrane into which was placed 6in of crushed concrete and then 3in of ballast. Track panels were then laid on top and ballasted. It was a labour-intensive effort and we are indebted to Ben Spraggon, who did much of the trench work with his mini digger, ably assisted by Brian Lawes, who removed the spoil using his dumper.

We ran our first public services at the new site during the 2015 Easter Thomas event. We only just made it, but it was a proud moment indeed. Services were handled by both *Patricia* and *Nevada* in top-and-tail mode.

In November 2015, we agreed to purchase redundant coaches from the Ferry Meadows Miniature Railway at Peterborough. These were formed as two three-car articulated sets, but were in a very poor state. Sufficient frames and bogies were salvaged to make one good three-car set. The original glass fibre bodies were too wide for our line and so new ones were made using timber framing with plywood sides, ends and seats.

An extension to the line was started in 2016 and completed in various stages until



Visiting from the Hastings Miniature Railway on June 25, 2022 was Bassett-Lowke-type No. 6100 *Royal Scot* (George Milligen c1971), seen being prepped alongside the yard. ALASDAIR REID



Steam outline Bo-Bo diesel-hydraulic *Hasty* hauls two coaches on April 18, 2022.



Above: Ex-Paignton Zoo Bo-Bo 'Peak' climbs towards the yard on January 21, 2022.



Right: Visiting from the Eastleigh Lakeside Steam Railway on July 4, 2021 was 1933-built Bullock 4-6-2 *The Empress,* seen arriving at Ropley High Level.

doubling the length. The track has now reached the boundary of the leased land and forms the current western limit of operations. More buildings have gradually been acquired, including a mess room shed (which means we can brew under cover at last), a second 40ft container as our carriage shed, and a station building. This is based on a log cabin, with added shark's teeth fascia, which is the centre point of our remodelled station.

The increased infrastructure and extra buildings have been made possible due to the kind funding by the standard gauge Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society.

Other locos and stock

In addition to the regular working locos as described above, *Nevada* and *Patricia*, and the three-car articulated coach set, further items of stock have gradually been added to the collection, including a 'Tinkerbell'-type 2-4-4T steam loco, acquired as a part-built project. The front pony truck and rear bogie have been refurbished and painted, while the original marine boiler and cylinders have been sold and replacements obtained. This is a privately-built copy of Moors Valley Railway No. 8 *Lynton*, after that loco was rebuilt and regauged from 7¼in gauge. The 'new' loco was collected from Ropley by Adam Jeffrey in October 2022 for completion on behalf of the RMR.

Hefty is a Bo-Bo battery-electric loco, kindly funded by the preservation society; *Ajax* is an 0-4-0 diesel-hydrostatic loco, acquired by a group member; *Hasty* is a Bo-Bo diesel-hydraulic (DH) steam-outline loco, acquired by a group member from Hastings Miniature Railway; and *Jerry Lee* is a Co-Co DH based on a Class 47 that was initially on loan from Hastings Miniature Railway but since bought by a group member.

An American-outline Bo-Bo DH is based on a General Motors EMD F40PH Class diesel-electric. It is currently under construction by a group member and has the diesel engine and hydraulic transmission from a sit-on lawn mower. Powered testing of the chassis has been undertaken.

An ex-Paignton Zoo Bo-Bo BE is loosely based on a BR 'Peak' diesel-electric loco, but with a cab at one end only. It does run and needs some restoration before it can be used on passenger services. (For its long and complex history, following completion in 1939 by G&S Light Engineering, see *RM* April 2022, p68). A part-built Class 47 Co-Co DE has been donated to the railway. It needs a lot more work to be completed before becoming operational.

On long-term loan is a four-wheel inspection trolley with a Suffolk Punch petrol engine and centrifugal clutch/belt drive transmission. Two coaches have been donated and are currently undergoing refurbishment, and there are various wagons on the line, built on spare wheel sets and bogies.

Visiting steam

A number of distinguished locos have visited the railway for special occasions. Ian Arnott kindly brought his LMS 4-6-0 No. 6100 *Royal Scot* from the private Ingfield Light Railway, West Sussex, on two occasions: first in October 2016 to coincide with a visit to the MHR by the full-size version, and then again in September 2019. Ingfield also supplied its Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway GWR 0-6-0T No. 2165 in October 2018.

The RMR held its own steam gala in 2021 with two visiting steam engines, *The Empress* (Bullock 4-6-2 of 1933) from the Eastleigh Lakeside Steam Railway and 0-4-2T+T *Edmund Hannay* (David King 1972) from the Hastings Miniature Railway.

For the June 25/26, 2022 annual steam gala there was *The Monarch* (Bullock 4-6-2 of 1932) from Eastleigh and Bassett-Lowke-type No. 6100 *Royal Scot* (George Milligen c1971), newly acquired by the Hastings line. This was its first operation by the new owners, to test its performance on our steeply graded line.

The 'Watercress Line' ran its first full-sized illuminated steam-hauled trains during the 2020 Christmas festive period, but Santa specials were not run that year. Instead, our 10¼in gauge line was invited to provide rides for visitors coming to see Santa in the static coaches at Ropley. This was the first time our trains had run during the winter, but it was pleasing to see these services very well patronised. It was also noted that many visitors stayed on to see the evening steam illuminations. So, not to be outdone, for the 2021 Christmas festive season lights were added to the miniature railway carriages.

Personnel and future

The miniature railway at Ropley is run entirely by 'Watercress Line' volunteers. The group is relatively autonomous, but has a close association with the 'big' railway, and is operated for their galas and special events. The age range of the volunteers is wide with a good, regular inflow of young members to the group.

The current site is leased land, but the adjacent field is owned by the 'Watercress Line' and it is hoped to gain planning permission to enable work to commence on extending the miniature railway to form a balloon loop. The plans include a second station, a picnic area and a nature trail.

As part of the present station remodelling, the aim is to include a run-round loop and a turntable with loco-stabling spurs. As always, this will take time and money. But with goodwill and a following wind it is hoped to achieve these extensions and improvements within the next three to four years. So, the future for the RMR looks bright and exciting. ■

■ *The Ropley Miniature Railway is located at Ropley station on the Mid-Hants 'Watercress Line'. It is in operation every Saturday and several Sundays until the end of the season in November. Miniature railway train rides are free during MHR special events. See the website at www.watercressline.co.uk or telephone 01962 733810.*

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Southern withdrew the final Class 313s from passenger service on May 19, but back on February 26, 2022, No. 313214 was seen at Newhaven Town with the 13.41 Brighton-Seaford. Chris Milner

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Well-travelled 'Pugs'

I HAVE only just seen the letter on page 60 of the July 2022 *Railway Magazine* from Martin Sims entitled Southern 'Pug'. The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Trust, of which I am a Trustee and members' magazine editor, own both preserved 'Pugs' Nos. 51218 and LMS 11243.

Martin Sims wonders if No. 11257, sold to contractors in 1938 for use at Dartford, was the furthest south an L&Y engine had ventured. Our own No. 11243 certainly went further south, being used on the construction of new docks at Southampton, where it was named *Bassett*.

'Pugs' were quite elusive engines and we do not have any photographs of No. 11257, or indeed several others whilst in L&YR, LMS or BR service, and so are always anxious to expand our knowledge if anyone can help.

Robin Higgins
By email

National Parks and railways

I SHOULD like to comment on the way in which the National Park authorities for both Snowdonia and Exmoor have refused planning applications for heritage railways (the Bala Lake Railway and the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway respectively).

It seems that National Park authorities automatically set themselves in opposition to heritage railways, as one recalls the way in which the South Devon Railway received similar treatment from the Dartmoor National Park Authority over its proposal to reinstate the line through to Ashburton.

The law needs to be changed so that a National Park authority ceases to be the statutory planning authority, with this function being handed back to the relevant local authority.

John Humphrey
Sevenoaks

I READ with interest the reports in recent issues about the problems affecting heritage railways, most notably the Severn Valley and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire railways, along with the difficult situations that the Llangollen and West Somerset Railways have experienced in recent years. I sincerely hope all challenges can be overcome.

One thing that has occurred to me is it's time to lobby for legalisation similar to that the National Trust and English Heritage have to protect their buildings against being demolished, to give protection against any heritage railways being torn up or any locomotives or rolling stock being scrapped. This could be extended beyond railways to cover any form of heritage transport or machinery, so whatever happens the future of historic items is secure.

David Collins
New Romney

Is Old Oak so bad for HS2?

I READ with interest the letters in the May edition on the subject of terminating the High Speed 2 line at Old Oak Common and the comments made by both writers about the value of ending the line at Euston.

Despite what Mr Day writes, in my opinion terminating the line at Old Oak Common makes a lot of sense because what neither of the writers touched on was the link with the Elizabeth Line. This line will give people fast connexions to the West End, the City, and east London, including Canary Wharf/Docklands. Travellers to Europe could also join the Eurostar Services at Stratford International, again using the Elizabeth Line. This would make much more sense than forcing people to leave the train at Euston and make their way to the Northern or Victoria Lines, walk to Euston Square or take a taxi.

For me, the real advantage of Old Oak Common is as a hub for onward connections. As well as the Elizabeth Line, it could also connect with trains to Heathrow Airport, the western suburbs of London, Reading, the South West and South Wales.

Who knows, HS2 could take over the platforms at Paddington currently occupied by the Hammersmith and City Line if that line, instead of coming back to the surface at Royal Oak, continued underground to Edgeware Road. However that's another story!

Christopher Clark
By email

Railways are shooting themselves in the foot

AS A consultant in sustainable engineering for the past quarter century (including in the rail industry), as well as a lifelong railway enthusiast, I have long promoted Britain's railways as the most sustainable way to travel but I have finally lost patience with the industry.

Pre-pandemic, I used to travel a great deal by train (particularly Glasgow-London) but my need to travel long distances is much less nowadays as, like many other people, I can be much more effective by using Zoom, Teams, etc and not waste so much time in travelling.

However, in March this year, I was invited to speak at three separate conferences in London and each time had to travel by air, which I dislike for many reasons, because I could have no confidence that the railways could get me there and back. I had to use Heathrow so that I could at least travel into London by Underground, but still managed to get involved with a Tube strike on one trip.

Furthermore, the railways' claims to be the most sustainable form of travel are of dubious validity; the data is highly dependent on assumptions around ridership, which is obviously much lower post-pandemic and likely to stay that way. On my local line from Kilmarnock to Glasgow, which invariably uses Class 156 dirty diesels, Trainline assures me that I will save 70% on emissions compared to using my car, despite the often very low ridership of the trains; this is improbable, given that I drive an electric vehicle, which is mostly charged ▶

STAR LETTER

Paddington returns

I FIRST travelled to London from my home in Australia in November 1975 as a 22-year-old and stayed at the London Walkabout Club at Lancaster Gate. I was always a train enthusiast and had joined the New South Wales Rail Transport Museum in 1974.

Lancaster Gate is quite close to Paddington, and it was there that I purchased a copy of *The Railway Magazine* at the WHSmith outlet. I enjoyed the magazine and have read it ever since.

Every few years, my wife and I come back to London and we stay at the Corus Hotel at Lancaster Gate – only a few yards from where the Walkabout was located! We recently visited in late April and were there for all of the buzz in the-lead up to His Majesty's coronation.

Even though I have a subscription, I always purchase the latest edition of *The RM* at the WHSmith outlet at Paddington in case there is anything I should do or see whilst in the United Kingdom. I am so glad I did, because the April edition had an article about the Swanage Railway running its new DMU service through to Wareham on certain days. I realised I would still be in London on Tuesday, May 2 and therefore caught a SWR train to Wareham and the connecting DMU service to Swanage.

I had a great day out and it was all thanks to *The RM*. Thank you for a lifetime of good reading and keep up the good work.

Alan Sewell
By email

PUTTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT (APR/MAY)

■ ON p35 of the April issue about Saudi Arabia, the picture of three locos with a doublestack container train should have been captioned: Three locos of three different EMD types head a double-stack container train for Riyadh Dry Port awaiting departure from Dammam Yard on November 19, 2022. Locos are SDL38 No. 2034, GT46ACS No. 4315 and older SDL50 No. 3533. The photo was taken by Iain Scotchman

■ A SMALL correction to your item on the reconfiguration of the APT-E at Shildon last month. Both Trailer Cars were positioned the wrong way round when the train was moved from York in 2004. Because their end connections are 'gendered', it has been impossible for the public to move between the cars since then. In theory, this should now be possible between PC2 and TC2, although current NRM policies prevent the public from entering any part of the train.

Kit Spackman, Lydney

EDITOR'S NOTE

Publication of a letter does not imply that the editor or staff of *The Railway Magazine* necessarily agree with its contents.



Florida Keys railway

FOLLOWING the article in the March issue on the Florida East Coast Railway, readers may be interested in this photograph taken by R H Greaves at Christmas 1915, on his journey to Havana, Cuba from Key West. The scans come from photographs from R H Greaves' archive, which I have. This one shows the Marl dredged from the sea that was used as ballast along the railway.

CW JAGGER, BY EMAIL

Readers' Platform

Send your letters to: *The Railway Magazine*, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR. email: railway@mortons.co.uk
NB. Publication of a letter does not imply that the Editor or staff of *The Railway Magazine* necessarily agree with its contents.

from our own photo-voltaic panels! My car also takes me door-to-door, in greater comfort than the train and is considerably cheaper; why would I want to use the unreliable, expensive, shabby trains? After a lifetime of rail travel, I have now largely given it up.

Eurlng Prof Ian M Arbon CEng, CEnv Stewarton

Beeching the cycling champ!

IT IS now possible to cycle from Frome to Bristol – a ride of about 30 miles – with only minimal recourse to public roads. The cycle route takes in three separate bits of railway track, all built originally by different companies.

The Frome to Radstock section follows the old GWR line, the section from Radstock to Bath predominantly follows the Somerset and Dorset trackbed, and the route from Bath to Bristol follows the Midland line.

There is surely an argument to be made for saying that no one has done more to promote leisure cycling in this country than Dr Beeching…

Chris Horseman

EDITOR'S NOTE

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Was this the last passenger train to call at Sheffield Victoria?

THE 'Last Chance' railtour to Stocksbridge Works, South Yorkshire, on April 8 (*RM* May) stopped briefly at the only remaining platform at the closed Sheffield Victoria station (what was platform 5, on the northern/up side of the station), where the driver of No. 60015 got out to take a photograph. With traffic to the steelworks now thought to be finished, and the future of this section of the former Great Central main line to Manchester via Woodhead therefore in doubt, could this have been the last passenger train to 'call' at Victoria? (Photo by I S Mitchell)

Mel Thorley Stockport

MEETINGS

COMPILED BY JON LONGMAN

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

Railway Correspondence & Travel Society. RCTS Library, Leatherhead Station Approach, Leatherhead. 11.00. Archive and Library Open Day

THURSDAY, JUNE 8

Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'Rusty Buffers' Tinsley Footplate Memories': Philip Benham. Further details on www.penninerailwaysociety.com.

Continental Railway Society. St Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ. 19.15. 'Two weeks in Indonesia in 1979' and 'Congo from Zambia, 1970': David Thornber.

South East Essex Railway Society. Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 19.30. Test Track Night.

FRIDAY, JUNE 9

SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. 'Rambling Railwayman's Recollections': Geoff Burch.

MONDAY, JUNE 12

Oxfordshire Railway Society. Kidlington Baptist Church, High St, Kidlington, OX5 2DS.19.00. 'The Cholsey & Wallingford Railway': Dr Tony Stead.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex branch). Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick BN42 4TE. 19.30. 'More Steam In Action': Derek Osborne.

TUESDAY, JUNE 13

LCGB (North London branch). Parish Room, St Michael's Church, Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HE. 14.00. 'A Selection of Photographs from my foreign tours': Charles Firminger.

Pewsey Vale Railway Society. Woodborough Social Club SN9 5PL. 14.45. 'Bulleid's Tavern Cars' Anthony Clare.

The 8E Railway Association (Northwich branch). The Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich CW9 5RB. 19.45. www.8erailwayassociation.org.uk

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14

Locomotive Club of Great Britain) (LCGB) (Dorking branch). Friends Meeting House, Butter Hill, South Street, Dorking RH4 2LE. 19.30. 'Luton to London: More pictures from the Peter Bland and Bryan Cross Collections': Peter Jones.

Sutton Coldfield Railway Society. St James' Church Centre, 59 Mere Green Road, Sutton Coldfield B75 5BW. 19.30. 'A Further English Ramble': Robin Mathams.

THURSDAY, JUNE 15

Marlow & District Railway Society. Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End SL8 5SX or on Zoom. 19.30. Members free, non-members £3. '150 Years of the Marlow Donkey', Mike Walker. Visit www.mdrs.org.uk

Lutterworth Railway Society. Lutterworth Bowls Club, off Coventry Road, Lutterworth LE15 4RB. 19.30. 'Industrial Railways': Mike Lee.

RCTS (West Riding branch). Saltaire Methodist Chapel, Saltaire Road, Shipley BD18 3HJ. 19.30. 'Sheffield to Scarborough by Steam': Roger Hepworth.

Monmouthshire Railway Society. Lysaght Institute, Orb Drive, Newport NP19 0RA. 19.00. 'The Western Valley: Newport to Risca': Ray Viney.

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

LCGB (Central London branch). Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA. 18.30. 'Railway Days from Perth to Dundee': Dick Crane.

Great Western Society (Taunton group). Village Hall, Stoke St Mary, Taunton, Somerset TA3 5BY. 19.30. 'Journey to Wales': Francis Lewis.

South East Essex Railway Society. Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. Visit to Barnards Farm Railway, West Horndon.

SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. 'More Holidays by Rail in the UK': Peter Latham.

MONDAY, JUNE 19

RCTS (South Essex branch). Shenfield Parish Hall, 60 Hutton Road, Shenfield CM15 8BL. 19.30. 'The Lost Railways of Essex': Tony Crosby.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

Leicester Railway Society. Braunstone Civic Centre, 209 Kingsway, Leicester LE3 2PP. 14.00. 'The History of the Trent Valley Railway (the section of the WCML between Rugby and Stafford)': Robin Mathams and Dave Barrett.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21

Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'Keith the Farmer – Part 4'. Further details on www.penninerailwaysociety.com.

Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group. The No.1, Station Approach, Cleethorpes DN35 8AX. 19.30. 'Steam from Peterborough to York': Chris Nettleton.

RCTS (Thames Valley branch). Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN. 16.30-20.00. Observation evening at Eastleigh station.

Sutton Coldfield Railway Society. St James' Church Centre, 59 Mere Green Road, Sutton Coldfield, B75 5BW. 7.45. 'Moving Coal – Railways Within the Coal Industry': The Archive and Restoration Trust.

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. 'GCR Unification Project': Tom Ingall.

MONDAY, JUNE 26

LCGB (Brighton branch). Brighton Model Railway Club Room, London Road Station, Shaftesbury Place, Brighton BN1 4QS. 19.30. 'A Potpourri of Railway Films': Derek Osborne.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28

Bradford Railway Circle. Bradford Mechanics' Institute Library, 76 Kirkgate, Bradford BD1 1SZ. 14.00. 'WCML Part 3: Preston to Glasgow': Steve Armitage.

Sutton Coldfield Railway Society. St James' Church Centre, 59 Mere Green Road, Sutton Coldfield, B75 5BW. 7.30. Film show to include the Darjeeling Railway: Jim Steptoe.

THURSDAY, JUNE 29

Stevenage Locomotive Society. Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, Stevenage. 19.30. 'Tracks of My Years – Part 1: Travels with a Camera': Kevin Wilkins.

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

Railway Club of the New Forest. On Zoom. 19.30. 'The Bluebell Railway': Tony Storey. www.railwayclubofthenewforest.org.

SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. 'Filming Exploits on the Mid-Hants Railway': Will Stratford.

MONDAY, JULY 3

Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society (Croydon group). St Mary Magdalene and St Martin's Church, Canning Road, East Croydon CR0 6QD. Annual meeting and BTF films.

Peak Rail Association (Sheffield branch). Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP.19.30. 'North Eastern Steam': John Hunt.

TUESDAY, JULY 4

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts' Society. Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. 19.30. 'Funeral Trains': Nicholas Wheatley.

LCGB (Bedford branch). St John's Church Hall, St John's Street, Bedford MK42 0DL. 'British Rail: A New History': Christian Wolmar.

The Enfield Transport Circle. Enfield Drill Hall Sports Club, 1 Old Park Avenue, Enfield EN2 6PJ. 20.00. 'Celebrating the History of Smallford Station': Jeff Lewis.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5

Pennine Railway Society. Doncaster Town Fields Sports Club, Bennethorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA. 19.30. 'After 8 and A, we now have': . Further details on www.penninerailwaysociety.com.

Eastwood Vintage Trains ('The Tin Men'). St Laurence Church Hall, Eastwood SS2 6UH. 19.00. Club meeting.

THURSDAY, JULY 6

Railway Correspondence & Travel Society (RCTS) (Milton Keynes branch). The Quadrant (Network Rail building), Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1EN. 19.30. '92 Squadron from rust to renaissance': Stephen Gay.

FRIDAY, JULY 7

SWRS. The Manor, Slough station. 19.30. 'My Trip to Japan': Chris Zaremba.

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classicmagazines.co.uk/rmarchive

FROM *THE RAILWAY MAGAZINE* ARCHIVES

100 YEARS AGO JUNE 1923

New LNER stock

ORDERS have been placed by the London and North Eastern Railway for locomotives and rolling-stock at the company's workshops and with private builders.

■ **Locomotives:** Gorton, ten 4-6-0 express goods tender engines; Stratford, ten 0-6-0 shunting engines, ten 0-6-2 suburban tank engines; Doncaster, fifteen 2-8-0 three-cylinder coal engines, ten 0-6-0 shunting tank engines; Cowlairs, twenty 0-6-2 goods tank engines and Darlington three 4-6-2 express passenger engines; total 78 locomotives.

■ **Carriages:** York, 99 bogie vestibule and non-vestibule vehicles, 30 suburban carriages; Stratford, 44 suburban carriages; Doncaster, 64 suburban carriages; Dukinfield, 23 suburban carriages, 3 bogie vans, 9 carriage trucks; total 272 vehicles.

■ **Sleeping cars:** Doncaster, two twin-sleeping cars; York, six single sleeping cars.

■ **Wagons:** Darlington, 4000 12-ton open goods wagons, 255 cattle wagons, 250 fish wagons, 60 refrigerator wagons, 2500 hopper wagons, 75 brake vans; Doncaster, 1000 12-ton open goods wagons, 40 brake vans; Dukinfield,750 12-ton open goods wagons, 750 12-ton mineral wagons, 20 well-glass wagons, 24 brake vans; Inverurie, 200 12-ton open goods wagons, 200 covered goods wagons, 30 brake vans; Cowlairs, 200 12-ton mineral wagons, 25 brake vans; total 10635wagons.



50 YEARS AGO: Met-Camm's 1973 mock-up for the future of urban rail vehicles, looking a lot like the Tyne & Wear units the company built later that decade.

50 YEARS AGO JUNE 1973

Articulated design launched for future urban transit

A NEW design of 'rapid transit' vehicle is being developed by Metro-Cammell Limited, of Birmingham, as a proposal for urban systems in Tyneside and other cities.

A full-size mock-up was on show at the 'Moving People in Cities' Exhibition and Conference at the Transport & Road Research Laboratory, Crowthorne, Berkshire in April. The electric car is articulated and consists of a pair of bodies carried on three four-wheel bogies; overall length is about 92ft, with a driving cab at each end, and cars can be coupled to form trains of varied lengths.

Lightweight body structure incorporates both steel and aluminium. Access is by four sets of power-operated doors on each side. Seating is arranged transversely for 84 passengers. The train is designed for a maximum speed of 50mph and could be adapted to any electric power system.

Windsor branch trial

AFTER a gap of six years, British Rail's Western Region plans to restore the off-season Sunday passenger service on the Slough-Windsor branch if experiments show sufficient demand. Extra receipts were encouraging when the summer Sunday service was extended until November 29 in 1972, and this year it began a month earlier, on March 4.

20 YEARS AGO JUNE 2003

Bombardier wins £3.4bn Tube contract for Derby

CONTRACTS worth £3.4bn for the supply of rolling stock, signalling and maintenance as part of the modernisation of the London Underground network have been awarded to Bombardier Transportation.

Bombardier will build 1738 Underground vehicles at its Derby Litchurch Lane plant between 2008 to 2015 and also provide maintenance for the vehicles.

The Victoria Line will get a fleet of 47 eight-car trains, while 190 six, seven and eight-car units will be built for the sub-surface Metropolitan, Circle, Hammersmith & City and District lines to replace and enhance the existing fleet.

Although of different loading gauges, all the new trains will feature the same basic 'generic' design to provide cost advantages in production and spare parts procurement.

Paddington resignalled

NEW signals were installed on the approach to London Paddington over Easter, providing simpler, single-lens heads with extremely large identification numbers as part of an attempt to prevent the type of driver confusion that caused the Ladbroke Grove tragedy of 1999.

The engineering possession overran by more than eight hours on April 22, forcing morning trains to terminate at Reading or Ealing Broadway. The cause of the overrun was high winds, which prevented cranes lowering the gantries into position on schedule.

RCTS
Britain's leading Railway Society

The RCTS: then and now

CLASS 313 EMUs have been featured frequently in the pages of both *The Railway Magazine* and *The Railway Observer* since their introduction to service in 1976. They had their genesis in the 4-PEP (Class 445) and 2-PEP (Class 446) suburban EMUs, the prototypes of which entered service in 1971. However, there were no production models.

The '313s' were British Rail's first dual-voltage EMUs, having both a pantograph for 25kV overhead AC lines and contact shoes for 750V DC third-rail systems. This gave them a huge degree of operational flexibility in comparison with older EMUs.

They were ordered in conjunction with electrification of the Great Northern route from King's Cross to Royston via the East Coast Main Line and the Hertford Loop. They were specifically intended for inner suburban services, with Standard Class seating only, therefore comfort was not a priority and the units quickly became unpopular with passengers.

They were also used on the former London Transport Northern Line branch from Finsbury Park to Moorgate using a 750V DC third-rail system, the restrictive tunnels on this route meaning the units were built to a smaller loading gauge.

The sliding doors were initially opened by passengers once the guard had activated the master door release. However, passengers quickly discovered that if they gave the door handles a hard tug, the doors would open before the master door release was activated by the guard. This would often result in doors being opened before the train had come to a stop and therefore the door handles were quite rapidly replaced by push buttons.

1988 brought a transfer of units to what became Silverlink (and then later London Overground). This saw them being used on the North and West London lines, the Watford DC lines, and the St Albans Abbey branch from Watford Junction. The '313s' worked these services for more than 20 years, the last units being used by London Overground in 2010.



No. 313220 stands at Bognor Regis on October 15, 2020 while working a Portsmouth Harbour to Brighton stopping service. MARK KELLY/RCTS

The '313s' also continued to work on Great Northern lines, despite passing through the hands of several different operators. Firstly West Anglia Great Northern had responsibility for them, followed by Thameslink Great Northern, then First Capital Connect. They were then transferred to Great Northern in 2014. The final scheduled Great Northern Class 313 service ran on September 30, 2019.

But who would have predicted back in 1976 that the final sphere of operation for the Class 313s would have been the former Southern Region. Since 2010, the units have worked services from Brighton to Seaford, Brighton to Portsmouth Harbour, and the Littlehampton to Bognor Regis shuttle.

On April 29, the Branch Line Society ran a commemorative special around lines in Sussex and Hampshire, and the use of the Class 313s was expected to finish for good with the end of the winter timetable on May 20.

For information on the Society visit www.rcts.org.uk

Panorama





SPRING GREENS: Bursting out of the tree cover and into the sunshine at Causey Arch, Tanfield Railway, on May 1, is Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns-built 'Austerity' No. 49 (works No. 7098 of 1943), which began life in War Department service before being transferred to the National Coal Board. The train is heading for Andrews House. DAVE HEWITT

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S&C 'ED': This is the 'other' S&C, the Swindon & Cricklade Railway, where preserved electro-diesel No. E6003 (73006) *Sir Herbert Walker* is seen running round its train at Hayes Knoll on May 13. The loco had previously taken part in the line's diesel gala on April 15/16, which saw four other diesels in use: Class 03s Nos. 03022 and D2152 (03152); ex-BR Ruston & Hornsby departmental 0-6-0DE No. 97251 (PWM651); and 0-4-0DH Fowler No. 4220031. Class 08 No. D3261 did not appear due to minor faults. AC railbus No. W79978, with a few seats installed, ran unadvertised trips in the yard at Hayes Knoll and up to South Meadow Lane on the new extension to Cricklade. ROB BATTY



THROUGH THE SQUARE WINDOW: The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway held its annual Cotswold Festival of Steam Gala on May12-14, which saw eight locos in steam including five visitors. This shot on the first day is from inside the signalbox at Toddington as 'Modified Hall' No. 7903 *Foremarke Hall* (running as scrapped classmate No. 6999 *Capel Dewi Hall*) approaches tender-to-tender with 'Castle' No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*. JACK BOSKETT



LITTLE & LARGE: Severn Valley Railway-based 'Warship' No. D821 *Greyhound* meets a miniature version of itself running on the 7¼in gauge Coalyard Miniature Railway at Kidderminster station on May 6. No. D821 is celebrating 50 years of preservation this year, it being the first large main line diesel to be preserved by a private group (which later became the Diesel Traction Group) in May 1973. STEVE WIDDOWSON

www.porterbrook.co.uk

Panorama



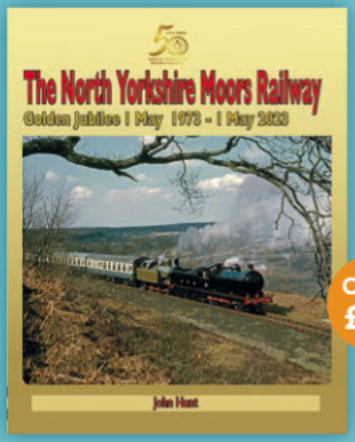
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YORK FROM ABOVE: A bird's eye view of York station from the north end looking south on April 29, as DRS's No. 68030 *Black Douglas* waits to depart York with the TransPennine Express 1U39/11.03 to Scarborough. The yellow brick building to the left of the trainshed is now The Principal hotel, but it was built by the North Eastern Railway as the Royal Station Hotel in 1878, later passing into LNER ownership, then nationalised under the British Transport Hotels brand before being sold off to private owners in 1983. Beyond the hotel can be glimpsed the city walls, and beyond them modern buildings on the site of York's original terminus station. The yellow brick building in the foreground on Leeman Road was opened by the NER in 1912 as offices and stores for its railway hotels business, York being the headquarters of its hotels department. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

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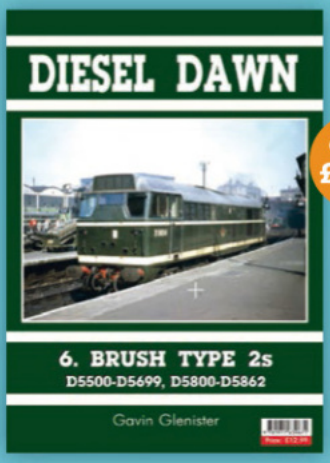


ONLY £40

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway Golden Jubilee

by John Hunt

Taking a pictorial journey along the entire original route from Whitby through to Pickering, this book allows the reader to compare the railway of old and the desolation of the early closure period with today's vibrant heritage line.

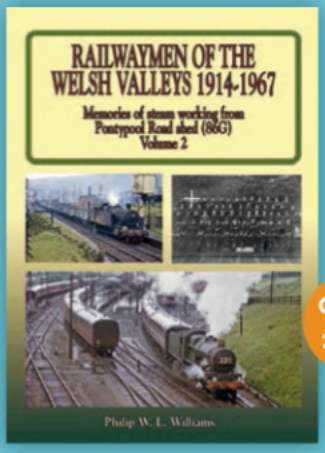


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Diesel Dawn 6

by Gavin Glenister

No.6 in the Diesel Dawn series, describing the 263 locomotives built by the firm Brush Ltd of Loughborough from 1957.



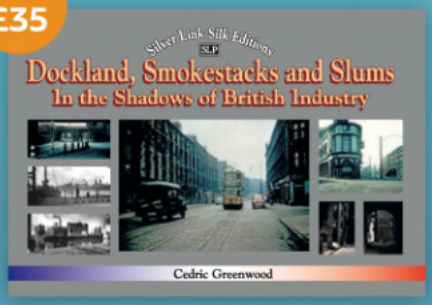
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Railwaymen of the Welsh Valleys Vol.2

by Philip W.L. Williams

The second volume chronicling the lives and times of railwaymen working in and around Pontypool Road loco shed.

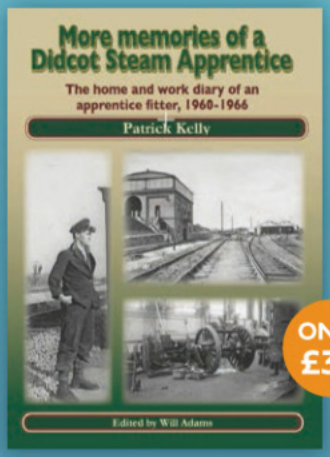
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This book provides a photographic study of the 19th and early 20th century British industrial scene from its recovery following the Second World War to its decline in the mid-1980s.



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TRACKRECORD

The Railway Magazine news digest



A busy scene at the charming Chinnor station on April 30, as Type 3 No. 37227 has just arrived from Princes Risborough with a short train formed of a Mk.1 BSK and Class 121 'Bubble Car' No. 55024. PAUL BICKERDYKE



P65 INDUSTRIAL
Stanley returns home



P84 NETWORK
Liverpool Street revamp plan



P104 WORLD
Argentinian veteran diesels

ALSO INSIDE:

P58 STEAM
P66 NARROW GAUGE
P69 MINIATURE
P74 HERITAGE TRAMS
P77 CLASSIC TRACTION
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P90 TRACTION & STOCK
P96 OPERATIONS
P103 IRISH



COMPILED BY GARETH EVANS

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

SIDELINES

'Q6' cylinder failure

NORTH East Locomotive Preservation Group-owned 'Q6' 0-8-0 No. 63395 has been taken out of traffic at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. On May 16, the right-hand cylinder suffered a failure while working a train out of Grosmont. In a statement, the owning group said: "The failure is being investigated and it is too early to suggest the cause. The locomotive had passed all routine examinations and has been working well in the early part of the NYMR season, having run over 2000 miles."

Equality guidance

THE Heritage Railway Association (HRA) has published the first parts of its guidance on equality. Produced by the trade body's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the first release covers no less than 20 documents, ranging from checklists and templates to case studies and lengthy guidance notes. The guidance notes cover topics such as inclusivity in recruitment, bullying and harassment and working with the Equality Act, alongside specific advice on ensuring an organisation is welcoming to people with autism and visible or non-visible disabilities both as visitors and volunteers. The documents have all been made available on the members' section of the HRA website.

Premium dining

THE Severn Valley Railway has teamed up with Bewdley-based Paisley Flour Catering, a local luxury catering business, to launch a range of premium on-train dining experiences. Diners will travel in first class luxury, as they're served locally-sourced and seasonally inspired dishes. Experiences include Sunday lunches, afternoon teas, wedding breakfasts, private dining in a luxury observation saloon, ploughman's lunches and murder mystery evenings on selected dates until October.



Go-ahead for Rother Valley Railway revival

Transport & Works Act Order granted, including compulsory purchase powers.

THE reinstatement as a heritage railway of the missing rail link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge Junction, a station on the Tonbridge to Hastings main line, has been given the go-ahead following the granting of a Transport & Works Act Order (TWAO).

The order was applied for by Rother Valley Railway Limited (RVR), working in partnership with the Kent & East Sussex Railway which operates the existing heritage line between Tenterden and Bodiam.

Planning permission was granted on March 22, 2017. The Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order was applied for on April 19, 2018. The public inquiry relating to the TWAO was held between July 6 and August 4, 2021 – plus September 2/3, 2021. The order was granted on May 9, 2023.

The anticipated cost of the Order scheme is £5.3 million which RVR confirms will be funded by the Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust through donations, with no call on the public purse. This is how the railway has been constructed to date from Bodiam to the former site of Junction Road Halt and between Robertsbridge station and Northbridge Street, including the construction of the station at Robertsbridge via two major benefactors who have additionally committed to provide grant funding for the outstanding works.

Although the decision letter refers to the decision of 'the Secretary of State', the decision was taken by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Baroness Vere. By law, decisions must be issued in the name of the Secretary of State. It should be noted that Huw Merriman was not involved in the decision on this application because of a conflict of interest following previous statements made on this case.



This buffer stop is set to be consigned to the history books in the near future. Formerly the site of Junction Road Halt, it marks the end of the current head of steel from Tenterden. Owned by the Rother Valley Railway, the 0.8 miles (1.31km) of track from Bodiam has undergone several months of clearance, fencing and trackwork. Beyond is the B2244 road at Udiam where a level crossing is to be reinstated. ROBIN COOMBES/KESR

Powers

The TWAO also authorises the acquisition of land and rights over land and the temporary use of land in connection with the railway in case it is not possible to acquire the necessary interests by agreement. The current owners of Moat Farm and Parsonage Farm were strongly opposed to the Order.

The Secretary of State agreed with the inspector's overall conclusion that there is a compelling case in the public interest for conferring on RVR compulsory purchase powers to obtain the relevant sections of trackbed. The adverse impacts would be sufficiently limited to be outweighed by the benefits likely to result from the Order scheme, the most significant of which would be its likely contributions to the economy and the facilitation of sustainable tourism.

A key issue with the project was the introduction of level crossings on the A21, Northbridge Street and Junction Road. At the close of the inquiry, RVR's Departure from Standards Application to National Highways had not been approved which the inspector noted would be a significant impediment to the Order scheme. Since the close of the inquiry, this has now been approved and National Highways has withdrawn its objection and given its consent for access to the A21 under section 175B of the Highways Act 1980.

The impact on traffic on the main London to Hastings road was found to be acceptable and there remains no confirmed plans yet for dualling the A21 at this location.

The policy of the Office for Rail and Road (ORR) is that new level crossings should only be considered appropriate if there is no reasonably practical alternative or if the alternative costs are grossly disproportionate when weighed against the railway safety benefits. ORR concluded that in relation to railway safety and costs of potential alternatives its policy tests are met – and the three proposed level crossings are tolerably safe with no practicable alternatives.

Like the inspector, the Secretary of State concluded that the overall effect in terms of flood risk, air quality, water and waste discharge and noise of the Order scheme would have a negligible impact on air quality and noise – and it would not weigh either for or against the Order scheme.

RVR's air quality assessment indicated that the background pollutant concentrations in the vicinity of the rail corridor are well below the national air quality objectives and found that the air quality effects as a result of the construction and operational phases of the scheme would be unlikely to be significant. The likely air quality impacts – Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and particulates (PM10) – associated with the proposed engine shed at Robertsbridge and each of the three proposed level crossings at sensitive receptors were also judged to be negligible.

Approach

RVR's Environmental Statement (ES) included an assessment of the potential impacts of the Order scheme on ecology and biodiversity. The Secretary of State noted that RVR was denied access to the 3.4km route to undertake ecological survey work by the landowners and as such the ES did not include site surveys within the Order scheme. The ecological impact and mitigation of the scheme has been based on a desk-based assessment, observations made from public footpaths/roads and professional judgement to determine the likelihood of habitats and species being present on the site. Legally protected species which could logically be present have been scoped in as opposed to scoped out.

The precautionary approach taken by RVR and the proposed mitigation was determined as being appropriate by the local planning authority, and neither Natural England nor the Environment Agency raised an objection in principle to this approach.

Reacting to the granting of the TWAO, Mike Hart OBE, trustee, Rother Valley Railway Ltd said: "The decision is warmly welcomed by RVR and our colleagues at Kent & East Sussex Railway (K&ESR). We are looking forward to working with everyone to bring the new railway to fruition.

"Work will start at the earliest opportunity to carry out the land and ecological surveys. Substantive physical works are unlikely to start before next year. Once the reconnection is complete, visitors from all over the country will be able to come to Robertsbridge by mainline railway before boarding a K&ESR heritage train to visit Bodiam Castle, Tenterden Town and other local attractions.

"We look forward to working with others to get the job done and the reopening of the K&ESR through to Robertsbridge Junction station."

■ The TWAO documents, including application, decision and report can be read at www.gov.uk/government/publications/bodiam-to-robertsbridge-junction-order-transport-and-works-act-order.



'3F' BACK IN ACTION: LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47298 has entered service at the East Lancashire Railway following several mechanical issues, and appears to be settling down nicely. The '3F' is pictured departing Rawtenstall with the 11.08h service to Heywood on May 14. Meanwhile, minor boiler and mechanical repairs are progressing on SR Bulleid Pacific No. 34092 *City of Wells*. Good progress is also being made on rebuilding the frames of 'Jinty' No. 47324. BRIAN DOBBS

WR line-up for Ongar gala

THE Epping Ongar Railway's June 23-25 steam gala is to have a Western Region flavour, featuring two visiting locos. Didcot Railway Centre-based GWR 'Castle' No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* is rostered for all three days of the event, alongside Jonathan Jones-Pratt's West Somerset Railway-based WR 0-6-0PT No. 9466.

The pair will supplement resident GWR 'Hall' No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall* and GWR 'Prairie' No. L150 (5521), plus Hawthorn Leslie 0-6-0ST *Isabel* (3437/1919). Visit www.eorailway.co.uk for details.

Full steam ahead for reassembly of 'T3'

THE return to steam of LSWR 'T3' 4-4-0 No. 563 by the Swanage Railway Trust has taken two major steps forward in recent weeks.

The tender tank arrived at the Swanage Railway's Herston Works on May 3. Parts of the tank have been refurbished and the well section of the tank has been replaced. Coal rails have also been fitted back to the tender for the first time since the 1960 cosmetic restoration at Eastleigh, when No. 563 was last seen in its Drummond livery. With wheelsets also now back, the tender overhaul continues to make excellent progress.

With the tender frames already painted, the tender body will now undergo similar treatment, plus the application of LSWR lettering.

Also in the first week of May, following the successful hydraulic and steam test, the boiler was fitted back into the frames at the Flour Mill workshop in the Forest of Dean. The stovepipe chimney, cab roof and cladding have since been refitted, with further components to follow on the engine as the boiler will now remain in place.

By mid-May, £40,000 remained to be raised to complete the overhaul. Visit 563locomotivegroup.co.uk for details of how you can help.



Whetting appetites, the return of No. 563 edges closer. SRT

Government believes new young volunteers' bill is 'unnecessary'

HRA President Lord Faulkner, has continued to lead through Parliament his Private Members Bill to ensure that the provisions of the 'Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 1920' do not apply to young volunteers on heritage railways. The bill passed its third reading in the House of Lords on April 21 and will now pass to the Commons.

In the April 21 debate, the Government did not support the bill. Viscount Younger of Leckie, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions said: "The bill seeks to allow children to gain valuable experiences volunteering on heritage railways and tramways, and the Government supports this aim. However, we believe that the current legislative framework does just that. Nothing would be gained from a change to legislation when other, simpler and more effective options are available – in particular, working with the regulators to explore the types of activities and tasks that are proportionate for young volunteers.

"At Second Reading, Lord Faulkner remained concerned about what would happen should something go wrong with a young person working as a volunteer, and he wanted stronger guarantees in relation to the 1920 Act. I want to reassure him that if such an incident occurred, both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) have confirmed that there would be a full investigation, taking account of the risks that the young person was exposed to and how they were controlled. The existing framework is fair and effective, which is why, unfortunately, the Government opposes the bill."

Accepting assurances from the ORR and HSE that there is no intention to use the 1920 Act to prosecute in the case of young people on heritage railways, Lord Faulkner said: "The point that needs to be considered is what happens if something goes wrong that forces them to take a different view and may cause the provisions of that Act to apply.

"That is the view of the former legal adviser to the Department for Transport, Geoffrey Claydon CB, who said: 'The Government are relying on the fact that HSE and ORR have said that they would not prosecute for any infringement of the 1920 Act in relation to young persons. However, this ignores the possibility of private prosecutions, prosecutions by local authorities and insurers refusing to meet any claims on the basis that the law has not been followed.'

"My bill removes that element of doubt."

Cotswold steam gala delight

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway's (GWSR) May 12-14 Cotswold Festival of Steam gala featured four visiting locos. Great Western Society's 'Castle' No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle*, Swanage Railway-based 'U' 2-6-0 No. 31806, Great Central Railway resident BR '2MT' 2-6-0 No. 78019 and 'Pug' 0-4-0ST No. 11243 from the East Lancashire Railway, supplemented the home fleet, plus BR '4MT' No. 75014 which has recently been on hire from Dartmouth Steam Railway.

"In many ways, the loco which stole the show was the 'Pug'," GWSR spokesman Ian Crowder told *The RM*.

"It was cute and very powerful. It hauled a three-coach train each day, full and standing. It also worked a goods train between Winchcome and Toddington – the brake van rides proved very popular. It was the largest goods train we have operated for some time. We are on the way to having both a BR and a GWR goods rake."

Over the three days, 3600 passengers were carried, providing a useful contribution in terms of revenue at a time of increased costs.

While No. 78019 is due to remain on hire for the rest of the season, the other visiting locos have since returned home.



Lancashire & Yorkshire 'Pug' No. 11243 rounding Chicken Curve with the 12.58 Winchcombe to Toddington demonstration goods train on May 14. WAYNE FINCH

SIDELINES

'01' to visit 75F

SECR 0-6-0 'O1' No. 65 is to visit the Spa Valley Railway in mid and late June from the Bluebell Railway. At Tunbridge Wells West shed (75F) it is due to operate alongside Caledonian Railway 0-6-0 No. 828, Hunslet 'Austerity' 0-6-0 No. 2890 'Douglas' and SR Bulleid Pacific No. 34072 *257 Squadron* during the June 17-18 Summer Steam Up event. No. 65 is also booked to be in action at the June 24/25 Victorian Steam Weekend alongside No. 828 on a special timetable featuring both Victorian locomotives. This is only the second time in preservation No. 65 has visited another heritage railway.

Extra special Tube tours now available

LONDON Transport Museum has launched special afternoon tea and evening tour and cocktail packages for two Hidden London tours this summer. On Friday and Saturday evenings, Down Street visitors will enjoy specially designed Winston Churchill-inspired cocktails and nibbles at the Flemings Mayfair, while on Friday and Sunday afternoons, Charing Cross guests will enjoy a classic, quintessentially British afternoon tea at The Clermont.

Hidden London tours are exclusive guided tours of London's Underground network that take guests to disused stations, 'ghost' platforms and other areas closed to the public to explore the city's history. The packaged tours of Down Street and Charing Cross will run all summer at the weekends from July 7 to September 24. Visit www.ltmuseum.co.uk for details.

Rowley line gets attention

A PROGRAMME of work is being developed at Beamish, The Living Museum of the North, for operations to be reactivated on the standard gauge line at Rowley station next year. Repairs to the chimney and repainting of the ventilator on the NER station building have been completed. The Permanent Way team has been working on the curved section of the running line behind the town to create a consistent and less dramatic cant in this area. Some sleepers are also earmarked for replacement during this phase of work and new ballast is being introduced to improve the shoulder at the edge of the sleepers.

West Somerset gala declared a success

Further boost as supporters raise £50,000 to repair landslip in under six weeks.

THE general manager of the West Somerset Railway (WSR) has described the line's April 28-May 1 Spring Steam Spectacular gala as "a huge success."

Among the attractions at the event was a fully-fitted goods trains, comprising eight wagons in pre-Nationalistion liveries. For first time in a long while at the WSR, passengers were carried in brake vans.

No. 7822 *Foxcote Manor* was unavailable but was on display instead. In mid-May, the engine moved to Tyseley Locomotive Works for attention to its firebox laps.

The planned attendance of No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall* could not go ahead as the 4-6-0 was required at the Epping Ongar Railway to cover steam diagrams. The WSR's call for help to fill the gap on the roster was answered by the Severn Valley Railway (SVR), which made available SR 'West Country' Pacific *Taw Valley*, running in its recently applied Wartime Black livery running as No. 21C127.

With repair works completed on Jonathan Jones Pratt's WR 0-6-0PT No. 9466, the '94XX' made its first public steamings for over 18 months.

Other performers included No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*, visiting from Didcot Railway Centre; No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor*, which as previously reported in on hire to the WSR for the season from SVR-based Erlestoke Manor Fund; and residents No.7828 *Odney Manor*; No. 9351 and No. 5199.

Kerry Noble, WSR general manager told *The RM* in early May: "The gala was a huge success – we had lots of very happy visitors. The timetable worked well and trains on the whole kept to time. Visiting engines *Taw Valley* and *Lady of Legend* proved popular, along with the first time running for our latest home fleet locos, *Erlestoke Manor* and No. 9466. The introduction of evening photoshoot sessions at Minehead also proved popular."

In terms of numbers, she said: "These figures are not yet final confirmed but we welcomed 3120 visitors and generated £100,548 in income over the four days."

She added: "Due to the non-arrival of two coal deliveries ordered well in advance of the event, we ran short of coal. Fortunately, our friends at the South Devon Railway, East Somerset and Lynton & Barnstaple railways were all able to support us which enabled us to get through the situation. This shows the great collaboration within the heritage railway industry, which we are proud to be part of."

Appeal

In less than six weeks the West Somerset Railway Association, one of the line's supporting charities, has met its target of raising £50,000 to repair a landslip near Bishops Lydeard. As reported in *The RM* at the time, a section of embankment on the West Somerset Railway (WSR) was damaged overnight on December 19 near Tribble Bridge at Combe Florey after heavy rain resulted in water and soil flowing onto the railway and the A358 Minehead to Taunton main road.

Geoff Garfield, WSRA chairman said: "We are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributed to this appeal. This money will make it possible for the WSR to complete the recovery from the Combe Florey landslip. To reach this figure so quickly, even with match funding from the charity and government gift aid, is a real landmark, especially given the cost-of-living crisis."

Trains are running along the whole length of the railway, although under restrictions. Monitoring devices have been installed in the embankment to establish that there is no further slippage.

"The next task is to build the retaining wall, which will prevent any further mud reaching the track or the properties of our neighbours," explained Peter Chilcott, WSR's head of infrastructure.

"It is hoped that the work can be undertaken while trains are running, but this is subject to a number of factors which have yet to be reviewed in detail. Funds for this come from our insurance claim. Next winter, we plan to remove the track panels where the ballast has been contaminated with mud. The ballast will be replaced and new track laid, so the section will be better than it was before the landslip. This work will be funded from the landslip appeal, and we can now plan this in detail, knowing the money is there."



The Great Western Society's 'Saint' No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* was given a run out on the afternoon of Sunday, April 23, piloting train engine 2-6-0 No. 9351 on the 14.40 from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead service and 16.30 return from Minehead. This provided the unusual spectacle of two 'new-build' GWR types double-heading, No. 9351 having been converted from '5101' 2-6-2T No. 5193 at Minehead in 2004, while No. 2999 was built largely using parts from GWR 'Hall' No. 4942 *Maindy Hall* and completed at Didcot in 2018. The pairing is seen climbing away from Williton towards Stogumber at Castle Hill, with the 4.30pm Minehead to Bishops Lydeard. RUSSELL AYRE

Lock solution agreed for GWR carriage fleet at Severn Valley Railway

A WAY forward has been agreed to ensure the continued safe operation of the GWR carriage fleet on the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) following concerns over the operation of the door mechanisms.

The GW (SVR) A, which owns many members of the historic fleet, has developed a modification that will prevent the door handle from remaining in the vertical position and therefore stop the door from being closed but unsecured.

A new lock tongue will need to be manufactured and a minor modification to the lock case on each door, which is expected to be relatively easy and cheap to implement. The appearance will be unchanged – the existing lock bodies, handles, springs, striking plates will be retained.

The alternatives of modifying the doors to use 'slam' locks or fitting new would involve modifying all doors and posts, which would be costly and take a long time to implement.

Detailed costings and plans to replace 140+ lock tongues are now being drawn up. Before the vehicles are reintroduced to traffic, operational staff will need training and familiarisation. It is hoped that this could be completed by the start of the 2024 operating season.



POPULAR PERFORMERS: **Paul Churchman, who chairs both the Bluebell Railway plc and Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, has hailed the line's April 21-23 Branch Line Weekend as "probably the most successful one we have ever done" – adding: "It certainly was in terms of revenue across all areas of the railway." The gala featured three visiting locos – Mike Hart's Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Hastings* and a pair of East Lancs-based Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway locos, 'Pug' 0-4-0ST No. 11243, owned by the LYR Trust, and Andy Both's 'A' 0-6-0 No. 52322. No. 11243 is pictured leading 'Terrier' No. 72 *Fenchurch* at Three Arch Bridge on April 23.** DAVE BOWLES

Heightened awareness of falls from industry regulator

THE Office of Rail and Road (ORR), the industry regulator, says it will be carrying out inspections at heritage lines focused on working at height, following a number of incidents.

Simon Barber, principal inspector of heritage railways at ORR said: "During the past year, there have been nine incidents reported to us involving a volunteer or worker suffering a serious injury, like broken bones, because of a fall from height. These incidents usually happen away from the track, in a workshop or yard when maintaining or refurbishing a vehicle or preparing a locomotive for use.

"We are concerned about how regularly these incidents are happening and consequently we will solely be doing specific inspections on working at height at heritage railways this year."

Another issue he describes as "prevalent in heritage railways" concerns vehicle runaways.

"We have received seven reports of vehicle runaways – where a rail vehicle moves unintentionally due to not being sufficiently secured – in the past year, of which two have resulted in enforcement action," he said.

"Unfortunately, human error is often a common factor here. It is imperative that those working in the sector – whether employees or volunteers – are fully competent in carrying out their tasks."

In its newly released 2023/24 business plan, ORR says that in quarter 4 it will develop and deliver face-to-face workshops to drive improvements in SMS (Safety Management System) capability across the heritage sector.

"ORR is passionate about promoting the Risk Management Maturity Model (RM3), a tool we developed in collaboration with the rail industry to encourage organisations to identify how they can achieve health and safety excellence," explained Mr Barber. "We have designed a specific topic set for use by heritage railways that is proportionate to their operations.

"RM3 is helpful in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of safety management within a railway, and further areas for improvement. In collaboration with the Heritage Railway Association, our team recently delivered a series of workshops to encourage wider use of the tool within the sector."



HALF A CENTURY OF SERVICE: **The North Yorkshire Moors Railway (NYMR) celebrated its 50th anniversary on May 1 by re-creating the first official passenger service using the same two locomotives it did in 1973, and three of its original service volunteers. Chris Cubitt and Terry Newman were back as footplate crew, while John Bruce operated the signalbox on the 13.30 departure from Grosmont station, replicating their roles on the same day, 50 years later with the same locomotives – 'J27' 0-6-0 No. 65894 and Lambton 0-6-2T No. 29 (pictured arriving at Pickering). Another long-standing volunteer, John Hunt, was on hand signing copies of his latest book North Yorkshire Moors Railway Golden Jubilee (*RM* May), which is available direct from www.mortonsbooks.co.uk or by calling 01507 529529.** CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NYMR

DIARY

June 9-11 North Norfolk Railway: Mixed Traction Gala
June 10/11 Bluebell Railway: Bluebell On Parade
June 11 Epping Ongar Railway: Cocomelon
June 11 Gloucester Warwickshire Stream Railway: 1960s Green livery
June 13, 27, July 4, 11, 18, 21, 25, 28 Bodmin Railway: Murder Mystery Trains
June 16-18 Gloucester Warwickshire Stream Railway: Real Ale
June 17/18 East Lancashire Railway: Bluey
June 17/18 Great Central Railway: 50th Anniversary weekend
June 17/18 Spa Valley Railway: Summer Steam Up!
June 18 Epping Ongar Railway: Classic Cars
June 18 Helston Railway: Fathers' Day Specials
June 18 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway: Father's Day trains
June 18 Mid-Norfolk Railway: Vintage Fair
June 18 Mid-Suffolk Railway: Steam Railway & Ex-Military Land Rover Association
June 23-25 Epping Ongar Railway: Steam Gala
June 23-25 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: Spring Gala
June 23-25 Swanage Railway: Roads to Rail Steam Rally
June 24 Epping Ongar Railway: Evening Real Ale Trains
June 24/25 Severn Valley Railway: Stepping Back to the 1940s
June 25 Great Central Railway: Swapmeet
June 25 Mid-Suffolk Railway: Steam Railway & East Anglian Practical Classics
July 1 Isle of Man Steam Railway: 150th anniversary celebrations
July 1 Middleton Railway: Leeds Steampunk Market
July 1/2 Bluebell Railway: Model Railway Weekend
July 1/2 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: The 1940s Experience
July 1/2 North Norfolk Railway: Vintage Transport Weekend
July 1/2 Severn Valley Railway: Stepping Back to the 1940s
July 1/2 Strathspey Railway: Steam Fair
July 2 East Anglian Railway Museum: Steam Day
July 2 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway: Train Running Day
July 3-9 North Norfolk Railway: Tornado Steams In
July 8-9 Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: Large Scale Model Exhibition
July 8-9 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: Young Engineers Days
July 8/9 Middleton Railway: Model Railway Exhibition
July 15 Isle of Wight Steam Railway: Real Ale Train
July 15/16 Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway: Days Out With Thomas
July 16 Helston Railway: Railway Dogs Fun Day
July 16 Lincolnshire Wolds Railway: Vintage Engines & Vehicles

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The end of Welsh steam coal?

The Heritage Railway Association says rejection of Ffos-y-Fran opencast steam coal mine planning application "is likely to have dire longer-term consequences."

THE future of Welsh steam coal is now in doubt after an application to extend the life of the Ffos-y-Fran opencast mine near Merthyr Tydfil until March 31, 2024 was turned down by members of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's planning committee on April 26.

Mine operator Merthyr (South Wales) Ltd argued that permitting mining to continue would allow for the remaining 240,000 tonnes of coal to be extracted with the main market being Tata Steel at Port Talbot but that it is also used by a variety of smaller markets, including heritage railways. The majority (95%) of the mine's output is transported by rail from Cwmbargoed Disposal Point.

However, planning officers said the application failed to clearly demonstrate that the extraction of coal is needed to support industrial non-energy generating uses, that extraction is required in the context of decarbonisation and climate change emission reduction, to ensure the safe winding-down of mining operations or site remediation or that the extraction contributes to Welsh prosperity and a globally responsible Wales. They also said it fails to provide an adequate contribution towards the restoration, aftercare and after-use of the site, to the detriment of the surrounding environment.

Direction

A Welsh Government spokesman said: "Welsh ministers have issued a direction to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. Unless authorised by the Welsh ministers, the direction prevents the council from granting permission for the current application to extend the period of time coaling is allowed on the Ffos y Fran site.

"We want to bring a managed end to the extraction and use of coal. We are in a climate and nature emergency and the response must be swift and serious, so we can pass on a Wales we are proud of to future generations."

It is understood the mine operator is now proposing to submit a hybrid application in autumn 2023, seeking permission for an alternate restoration landform and subsequent after uses.

Ffos-Y-Fran is the only UK mine producing the high-quality, low emission steam coal that a number of British industries depend upon – including around 150 heritage railways throughout the country.

Trade body the Heritage Railway Association (HRA) said it is aware of British coal users being forced to import from as far afield as Columbia, with all of the increased emissions involved in ship transport over thousands of miles.

HRA chief executive, Steve Oates, said: "On the face of it, I'm sure many people do believe that ending coal mining at Ffos-Y-Fran is good for the environment, but the reality is that overall emissions are almost certainly going to increase as a result of the closure.

"Coal in the UK is chiefly used by a relatively small but important number of sectors and the volumes involved are pretty small – but the impact of having to import from thousands of miles away is huge.

Reaction

"The whole of Britain's heritage railways use around 30,000 tonnes of coal a year, equivalent to what a single coal-fired power station would have used in a week. Alternative fuels for heritage steam locomotives are being researched and developed, but at present none can completely replace the need for coal.

"We think that this is a very short-sighted decision, which is likely to have dire longer-term consequences. We await a decision from the mine owners as to whether they will appeal or take the issue to the Welsh Government."

Aside from the environmental concerns about importing coal over huge distances, there are also concerns about supply security. When the Ffos-Y-Fran mine was temporarily closed by an equipment failure around 18-months ago, heritage railways were forced to drastically reduce their services and the HRA understands that other sectors faced similar challenges.

The HRA said it has actively engaged with a number of stakeholders in an effort to help get across the importance of good quality, low emission steam coal like that mined at Ffos-Y-Fran to the future of heritage rail and broaden understanding of the issues. It has also visited the mine and has met with local politicians to discuss the situation on a number of occasions.

"We know that many in the Welsh Government understand just how pivotal supply of coal is to the heritage rail sector," added Mr Oates. "I hope that the strategic value of this mine will mean the bigger picture can be properly considered before it's too late."



BOILER DELIVERED: Having been completed, tested and painted by North Bay Engineering Services in Darlington, the boiler for new-build NER 'K' 0-4-0T No. 559 arrived at Beamish, The Living Museum of the North on April 26. It has been placed onto a flat wagon in the Colliery where it will reside until required for the appropriate step in the project. The design work for the crank axle is complete and this will be ordered shortly, with the cylinder block being the next large chunk that will follow this. Meanwhile, the boiler for Stephen Lewin 0-4-0ST No. 18 (638/1877) has been returned to its frames and the locomotive moved back to the colliery for storage, pending any progress on its overhaul, plans for which will be prepared later in the year. BEAMISH



'CASTLE' ON TOUR: Visiting from Didcot Railway Centre, No. 4079 *Pendennis Castle* was the headline performer at the Mid-Hants Railway's April 29-May 1 Spring Gala. The GWR 4-6-0 is seen on the first day of the gala hauling the 09.50 Alresford to Alton service, waiting for a down train to pass, at Medstead & Four Marks station. Other performers at the gala included '7F' 2-8-0 No. 53808, 'Urie S15' 4-6-0 No. 506 and BR '2MT' 2-6-2T No. 41312 – and Peckett 0-4-0ST *Kilmersdon* (1788/1929) was in steam in Ropley yard. JEREMY DE SOUZA

Lottery grant paves way for Stockton & Darlington celebrations

THE Stainmore Railway Company at Kirkby Stephen East (KSE) and the Locomotive Conservation & Learning Trust (LCLT) have been jointly awarded £213,108 by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for a project entitled 'West Side Story – the forgotten history of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) in Cumberland, Westmorland & Furness'.

With the value of volunteer work and donated materials, the project is said to be worth approximately £700,000. It will run concurrently until the end of 2026 with the 'Cumbrian Victorian Locomotive Experience', the NLHF backed scheme to restore 'J21' 0-6-0 No. 65033 and create an interpretation suite at KSE.

For the bicentenary of opening in 2025, this new project aims to tell the story of the S&DR west of the Pennines. Key features include restoration of the original 1861 S&DR signalbox to full operational order – once complete, this will also be used as a training facility for volunteers/staff from other heritage railways in conjunction with the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers.

A major steam gala is planned to be held over the August bank holiday weekend 2025 to celebrate the bicentenary. It is hoped to have three NER designed locos, all in NER livery in steam together hauling S&DR, NER and LNER rolling stock.

Community engagement elements include the production of an S&DR Rail Trail for KSE involving five primary schools from throughout the S&DR area – plus an expansion of the current community work to involve individuals living with dementia and youngsters with autism.

HERITAGE WAGONS TRACK RECORD — Compiled by Gareth Evans

Transforming wrecks

Assembly of pre-Grouping coal train underway at Chasewater Railway.

A TEAM of volunteers at the Chasewater Railway (CR) is reconstructing old wagons that could easily be written off as unrestorable, into vehicles reminiscent of those which once served collieries in the line's locality, with the aim of creating a pre-Grouping coal train.

Known as The Wooden Bodied Wagon Gang, the group's four members began their efforts in 2022 when Bill Owen, the leader, purchased an ex-Chatham dockyard wagon chassis from Mark Seeley, CR chairman, which had been stored at Chasewater Heaths.

"We cleaned it up and turned it into a four-plank open liveried as Conduit Colliery, Norton Canes, Cannock," explained Mr Owen. "Mark then asked if we could do any more. I had another ex-Chatham chassis at Great Central Railway – Nottingham, which I donated to the CR. It took us 17 days to transform it into a Cannock & Rugeley Colliery five-plank open.

"In between those wagons, we worked on an old four-wheeled milk tanker chassis built by Buchanans in Scotland. We turned it into a four-plank open as Coppice Collieries, Heath Hays, Cannock. The railway also had an old eight-plank open, which we have restored as a Littleton Collieries Limited wagon."

A fifth wagon is waiting for its chassis to be lifted from an isolated section of track onto main CR metals. This will become a five-plank open, liveried as William Harrison of Brownhills.

Mr Owen added: "We also plan to restore the last remaining Cannock & Wolverhampton Railway brake van. It has been stored at the back of the loco shed for some time – it's in a poor state. We have assessed it – we do not believe it is as bad as feared. We have had a quote for timber for a new outer frame, the inner frame is fine. Surprisingly, the van is still watertight. All iron work is good condition too. However, it will still require a full dismantling and rebuild."

It is hoped to operate a pre-Grouping coal train at the railway's next Coal Train Day in October. If all goes to plan, all five wagons will be ready by then.

The team's efforts were recognised nationally at the recent 2023 Heritage Railway Association awards ceremony, when the group was a runner-up for the Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation.



The Conduit Colliery wagon. ALL: BILL OWEN/CR



The eight-plank Littleton Collieries Limited wagon.



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Stanley returns home

Barclay loco is back on the Tanfield Railway where it worked when in industrial service.

ANDREW Barclay 0-4-0ST *Stanley* (1659/1920), one of only a handful of surviving locomotives known to have worked on parts of the current Tanfield Railway before preservation, has returned to the line.

Stanley was built for East Tanfield colliery, now the southern terminus of the railway, in 1920. Over a century after it was originally delivered, *Stanley* returned to the same spot on April 17, as it heads towards a return to traffic.

Apart from occasional trips away for repair, the locomotive stayed at East Tanfield colliery until July 1954, when the 14in cylindered machine was transferred to Marley Hill engine shed on the Bowes line – the same shed that now forms the base of the Tanfield Railway. Here it eventually became Area No. 32, serving the shed until May 1968 when it moved to work other sections of the Bowes system.

The locomotive was eventually preserved in July 1973 and returned to Marley Hill, but only steamed until the late 1970s before being laid aside. Overhaul was started in the late 1990s, but *Stanley* left Marley Hill for a private workshop in Derbyshire during 2011.

Much restoration work has already been completed and the locomotive has a full boiler certificate. It is hoped that *Stanley* will make its full public debut at the Tanfield's 'Legends of Industry' gala weekend on June 16-18, along with a visiting locomotive.

Stanley joins Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns (RSH) 'Austerity' 0-6-0ST No. 49 (7093/1943), Andrew Barclay 0-6-0ST *Horden* (1015/1904), RSH 0-4-0ST *Sir Cecil A Cochrane* (7409/1948) and Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST No. 2 (2859/1911) – all of which are due to be working trains during the 2023 season.

Robert Stephenson 0-6-0T *Twizell* (2730/1891) is currently being overhauled, the boiler being repaired at Israel Newton in order that it can be returned to service in 2025 for the Tanfield Railway's 300th anniversary.



Having last operated in 1978, Stanley was tested on the Tanfield Railway on April 30. TANFIELD RAILWAY



VINTAGE CHARM: Avonside 0-6-0ST *Cranford* (1919/1924) is currently on loan to the Midland Railway – Butterley (MRB). Normally based at the Scunthorpe Steel works base of the Appleby-Frodingham Railway Preservation Society, the locomotive is seen at the head of the MRB's vintage train in the Golden Valley on May 1. The train is passing the site of Grumblethorpe village where there used to be a colliery. ALAN WEAVER



***Sir Berkeley* hauls a train for Middleton Park on April 15.** TOM MARSHALL

Sir Berkeley relaunched at Middleton Railway

Veteran Manning Wardle L Class 0-6-0ST *Sir Berkeley* (1210/1890) was relaunched into service on the Middleton Railway on Saturday, April 15 (Headline News, *RM* May).

The locomotive was initially privately purchased by Roger Crombleholme and based on the KWVR, but was later acquired by the Vintage Carriages Trust (VCT), which placed it on long-term loan to Middleton in the late 1990s.

Although built quite late in the Victorian era, the locomotive has many design features from Manning Wardle's predecessor, E B Wilson, such as its double bossed wheels, bunker flare and most noticeably its brass safety valve cover. It is also currently the only working example of a Victorian contractor's locomotive and for this reason has been painted into a representation of its original Logan & Hemingway livery to act as a memorial to all those who worked on building our railway network.

VCT chairman Trevor England thanked Middleton Railway volunteers for their work in restoring the locomotive before Anthony Coulls, senior curator at the National Railway Museum, highlighted the use of such locomotives in the building of Britain's railway network before officially launching the engine into traffic. *Sir Berkeley* then hauled a train to Middleton Park and return, before working trains alongside Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Brookes No. 1* (2387/1941).

'*Sir B*' will now take its place alongside *Brookes No. 1* and Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST *Swanscombe No. 6* (3860/1935) and Sentinel 0-4-0VBT No. 68153 (8837/1933) as part of the working fleet, in addition to being available for hire to other organisations from 2024.



GREEN SCENE AT GROOMBRIDGE: Hunslet 16in 0-6-0ST *Beatrice* (2705/1945) made a brief visit to the Spa Valley Railway from its home base of Embsay in early April, to cover for an unexpected shortage in the Kent line's resident steam fleet. *Beatrice* operated for a week from April 5, before returning home to Yorkshire. With Class 31/4 No. 31430 *Sister Dora* attached to the rear, the train is at Groombridge station on April 8. CHRIS LIVINGS



COMPILED BY CLIFF THOMAS

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SINGLE LINES

■ FFESTINIOG & Welsh Highland Railway has secured planning permission from Snowdonia National Park planning authority to construct a station building at Welsh Highland Railway's Beddgelert station. The planned structure is a revision of the building originally approved a decade ago, but never developed beyond its foundations.

■ THE first of the new passenger carriages for the Quarry Bottom Railway at Mountsorrel & Rothley Community Heritage Centre was delivered on April 15. By the time this *RM* is published, two more should have arrived and operation of passenger rides commenced on the 2ft gauge line. As previously reported (*The RM*, September 2022) the vehicles are designed in the style of Penrhyn Quarry Railway workmen's carriages.

■ TEIFI Valley Railway (TVR) is naming its carriage and engine shed The John Eden Shed, as a mark of respect following the death of John Eden, who was one of the people involved in originally building the railway, constructed the line's carriages and was a TVR trustee for many years. John was also an active supporter of the WHR(1964) Company, now operating as the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway.

■ HAMPTON & Kempton Waterworks Railway celebrated its 10th anniversary over May 20/21 with a gala featuring a visit by London Museum of Water & Steam's new-build 0-4-0ST 'Wren' *Thomas Wicksteed*, which steamed at the Hampton line when it opened a decade ago.

■ FOLLOWING additional work related to the boiler after having failed its official test last year after its 10-year overhaul (*RM*, November 2022), Devon Railway Centre's O&K 20hp 0-4-0WT (5744/1912) *Rebecca* passed a new test on May 1 and returned to service over the May 6-8 coronation weekend.

■ BRESSINGHAM'S April 29-May 1 steam gala featured visits by Statfold Barn Railway's Avonside 0-4-0T *Marchlyn* (2067/1933) and Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Jack Lane* to the 2ft gauge Fen Railway.

■ STATFOLD Barn Railway's Greenwood & Batley 4wBRE 420253/1970 has been fitted with a cab, giving it a significantly revised appearance. It is understood the loco will be employed to operate a future push-pull set.

Locos on the move

Three steam locomotives relocate to new homes.



Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST *Lord Granby* pictured at its new home following arrival on April 29. Although one original works plate survives, replicas have been fitted to *Lord Granby*. The original nameplate was only temporarily positioned for pictures. The newly completed building housing the loco is noted as Eastwell railway museum in an application for planning permission for the development of the old farmyard to provide new housing. JAMES WAITE

WITH the main operating season now in full swing, a trio of steam locomotives have taken up residence at different heritage railway venues – including one which has moved to Eastern Europe.

Firstly, with cosmetic restoration of ex-Eastwell Iron Ore Company 3ft gauge Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST *Lord Granby* completed, on April 29 Eastwell History Group moved the loco about two miles from its Stathern Lodge workshop to a purpose-built shed at Crossways Farm, Eastwell. This building, intended to become an Eastwell railway museum, is on the edge of the village a short distance from the winding house at the top of the incline which was a notable feature of the old Eastwell rail system.

The project commenced in 2013 when *Lord Granby* left Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills, to which it had been gifted in 1961, to enter the care of Eastwell History Group on a 20-year loan. The extensive cosmetic restoration has been undertaken by volunteers.

Wales

Bagnall 4-4-0T *Sinembe* (2287/1926) arrived at the Teifi Valley Railway (TVR) on April 4, on loan for an initial five years. The loco has been pressure tested but does not have a steam test certificate so is not expected to be operational imminently. *Sinembe* is one of three similar, but not identical, Bagnall 4-4-0Ts imported from Natal, South Africa by Graeme Walton-Binns in the 1990s.

Charles Whytock (2819/1946) was sold in April 2014 following restoration and went to the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway where it ran during 2015-2016 before withdrawal in need of extensive boiler work. It was subsequently sold to other L&BR supporters and remains at Woody Bay, out of service. Restoration of *A. Boulle* (2627/1940) was completed around 2017 to the stage that the boiler was hydraulically tested (but never steamed) and subsequently advertised for sale in 2020 but is thought to still be stored at its owner's restoration base in Middlesbrough.

Following restoration of *Sinembe* it was understood that the loco could be moved to a heritage line for display (*RM*, March 2020) with Teifi Valley Railway a likely destination.

The TVR has been without operational steam since the boiler ticket of Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Alan George* expired at the end of November 2017. *Alan George* is presently away from Henllan undergoing overhaul and expected to return to operation in 2024. The overhaul of Kerr, Stuart 0-6-2T *Sgt Murphy*, which last steamed in July 2013, is edging towards completion although a fair amount of work still needs to be completed before it returns to traffic.

Czechia

Schwartzkopf 0-4-0WT *Bronhilde* has gone to a new home in Czechia (Czech Republic) following its sale by Jeremy Martin. The loco was built in 1927 to work at the Hamburg Copper works in Germany. Allan Bloom brought it to Britain in 1976 to run at Bressingham and in 1979 it was purchased by the late Bill Best and became the first steam locomotive at his Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway (B&WLR) in Kent. Following Bill's death in April 2020, his son, Bill Best Jnr, found it necessary to reduce the B&WLR collection, with *Bronhilde* being sold to join Jeremy Martin's loco collection at his private Richmond Light Railway (*RM*, April 2021).

Following an inspection of *Bronhilde* in September 2022, The Barbora Society, which operates the Solvayovy lomy open-air museum in Czechia, launched a successful fundraising appeal to buy the loco. On arrival it was test steamed and made its public debut on the two-kilometre line at the open-air museum dedicated to quarries and mining over April 29-May 1. It is the first operational steam loco at the museum, which appears to have hitherto run diesel locos. The museum also has a significant collection of locos and other mechanical equipment.

Kent-based pair visit Porthmadog

BREDGAR & Wormshill Light Railway's O&K 0-4-0WT *Eigiau* and Richmond Light Railway's Arn Jung 3175/1921 0-4-0WT *Jenny* made a brief visit to the Ffestiniog Railway at the end of April, centred on the Ffestiniog Railway Society's AGM weekend over the April 29-May 1 Bank Holiday.

Prior to the weekend both visitors from Kent made trips over the main line to Blaenau Ffestiniog.

During the weekend a number of special operations were laid on for FR Society members.



Hunslet 0-4-0ST *Britomart* and England 0-4-0STT *Welsh Pony* prepare to leave Porthmadog Harbour station with a 'Woodland Wanderer' service to Tan y Bwlch on April 29, while (left), Richmond Light Railway's visiting Arn Jung 3175/1921 0-4-0WT *Jenny* shunts wagons of coal. PETER JOHNSON

David Lloyd George being reassembled

THE boiler from Ffestiniog Railway's (FR) Double-Fairlie *David Lloyd George*, sent to Israel Newton's Matlock works in December, has returned to Boston Lodge following its (early) 10-year overhaul. Work undertaken included replacing a section of the top of the crown plate, restaying most of the firebox (an area which had been causing trouble) using a new welded stay design, fitting new fusible plug bosses and fitting new tubes.

The boiler was steam tested on May 2, and is back in the cradle with reassembly of the loco in progress. The power bogies, which are relatively new having been built around 2014, are in good order having been cleaned and checked. The superstructure will not require full repainting – some touching up and a new coat of varnish will suffice.



PACIFIC POWER: Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Davey Paxman 4-6-2 No. 1 *Green Goddess* leaves Dungeness with the 13.30 train to Hythe on May 1, amid a background scene dominated by Dungeness 'Old Lighthouse' (built in 1904 and actually the fourth at this location), Dungeness A & B Nuclear Power Stations and RH&DR's Dungeness station. The railway ran an all-steam service over the three days of the bank holiday weekend, with four locos in operation each day. TONY PAGE

R&ER marks *River Esk's* centenary – aided by Romney

RAVENGLASS & Eskdale Railway (R&ER) celebrated the 100th anniversary of Davey Paxman 2-8-2 *River Esk* being delivered to the 15in gauge line, with an April 29-May 1 gala weekend.

The star guest had been billed as Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's (RH&DR) Davey Paxman 4-8-2 No. 6 *Samson*, however tests following its arrival revealed issues with some of R&ER's turnouts.

RH&DR pulled out all the stops and dispatched its Davey Paxman 4-6-2 No. 2 *Northern Chief* to Ravenglass to save the day. With slightly different dimensions and less driving wheels, tests of *Northern Chief* confirmed it was fine to participate in the gala. The unplanned outcome was the presence of three RH&DR locos at Ravenglass during the event; *Northern Chief* in operation, *Samson* on display while out of ticket Davey Paxman 4-6-2 No. 7 *Typhoon* was already in Ravenglass Railway Museum pending John Fowler Engineering commencing its overhaul.



Another significant gala attraction was R&ER's 2-6-2 *Northern Rock* returning to service after two years undergoing overhaul.

A double Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway landmark as Davey Paxman 2-8-2 *River Esk*, celebrating its 100th birthday, pilots 2-6-2 *Northern Rock*, back in service after a two-year absence, leave Gilbert's Cutting on their way back to Ravenglass on April 29. MATT DITCH

Visiting carriage to re-create early preservation trains

WELSHPOOL & Llanfair Light Railway's (W&LLR) June 17/18 '60 Years of Preservation' weekend will not only feature the return to service for the first time since early 2000 of S F Belge 0-8-0T (ex-No. 699.01) No. 10 *Sir Drefaldwyn* (*RM*, April) but a visiting coach from the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway (SKLR).

The weekend forms a 'double diamond' celebration, the 60th anniversary of the April 6, 1963 reopening of the W&LLR as a heritage railway run by volunteers and, another 60 years (and two days) earlier, the April 4, 1903 original opening of the railway.

With the W&LLR's original carriages having been scrapped in the 1930s following the withdrawal of passenger services, the preservation company acquired a set of very basic 'toastrack' carriages in 1961 from the Navy's Upnor & Lodge Hill Railway in Kent. These vehicles served the W&LLR until better vehicles became available, following which they returned to Kent having been sold to the SKLR.

One of these vehicles will return to Mid-Wales to re-create the appearance of the W&LLR's earliest preservation years.

The weekend will also feature re-enactments of events in the railway's history, including the cutting of the first sod ceremony and the chairman's speech on reopening of the line.

SIDELINES

'CAT Carriage' leaves Corris for new home

A SMALL carriage which has not seen use for many years left the Corris Railway (CR) in early April, destined for the Ashton Packet Boat Company, Manchester, which has a short industrial narrow gauge line which hosts periodic railway enthusiast days in aid of charity.

The carriage was originally used at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in the Dulas Valley, near the Corris Railway, which used to have an internal narrow gauge line. In 1974 the late Duke of Edinburgh rode in the vehicle when he visited the then newly established CAT site. When the carriage became surplus to requirements it was donated to the Corris, where it became known as the 'CAT Carriage'.

Meanwhile, at Maespoeth Junction, CR volunteers have been improving the inspection pit and surrounding floor in the 1883-built loco shed, in preparation for the arrival of new-build Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 later this year. When it joins CR's 2005-built near-replica Kerr, Stuart 'Tattoo' class 0-4-2ST No. 7 this will be the first time since 1948 that two steam locomotives have been resident in the shed. The machinery layout in the shed has also been rationalised.

Appeal to return Telford steam tram to operation

TELFORD Steam Railway (TSR) has launched a £25,000 Go Fund Me appeal aimed at returning its 2ft gauge steam tram and accompanying 16-seat coach to operation. The vertical boilered steam tram was built around 1977 by Alan Keef Ltd for the Telford Development Corporation, and arrived at the TSR's Spring Village base in the mid-1980s where it runs on a circle of track as an additional attraction to TSR's standard gauge line.

The boiler was condemned in 2019 and requires replacement at a cost of £20,000 while £5000 is needed to refurbish the coach.

Carriage correction

IN relation to the two bogie carriages pictured at Statfold Barn Railway (SBR) in May's *The RM*, and described as newly constructed, while new to Statfold they are actually vehicles purchased from the South Tynedale Railway and modified at Statfold for SBR use. The pair entered SBR service during an early April model railway event.

The framework for the carriage reported as being under construction is to the same profile as the bodies built by Severn-Lamb in 2012/13 which entered service as SBR carriages Nos. 1-4.

Planet ready for action

FOLLOWING completion of its restoration, Jason Keswick's Y-type Hibberd 'Planet' 4wP 1830/1933 returned to operation at Westonzoyland Pumping Station Museum on May 1.

DIARY

June
17-18 Amerton Railway steam gala
17-18 Lappa Valley Railway steam on the rails
17-18 Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 60 years of preservation
18-19 Tyseley Works open days (Sutton MR)
21 Beeches Light Railway dispersal sale
21 Halesworth to Southwold NGR, Blythburgh station open day
23-25 F&WHR WHR opening centenary event
24 AVLR anything goes

July
1 TR Anything goes
1 Isle of Man Steam Railway 150th anniversary
22-23 Amberley Museum rail gala
23-30 Isle of Man Transport Festival

August
5-6 West Lancashire Light Railway summer gala
12-13 Volks Electric Railway 140th anniversary event
26-28 BLR steam gala
28 Westonzoyland Light Railway gala

SINGLE LINES

■ CORNWALL'S Poldark Tin Mine site has plans to extend the narrow gauge mine railway utilising a lengthy section of track installed some 50 years ago. Adding around three quarters of a mile to the existing line will produce about one and a half miles of railway in all. The intention is to assist movement of materials around the site and into the mine rather than public use, although operation of demonstration trains is envisaged.

■ MOSELEY Railway Trust used 48hp Ruston 198297/1940 *Vulcan* to pull passenger trains for the first time at Apedale Valley Light Railway during the line's May 27-29 Military Trains event. The loco last hauled passengers at its previous Abbey Light Railway home, which closed in 2012. With its air braking system now updated the loco will now see regular use working passenger trains at Apedale.

■ RAVENGLASS & Eskdale Railway Company and the line's Preservation Society celebrated Trevor Stockton's 50 years as an employee of the 15in gauge line on April 16 with appropriate presentations. The society has invited Trevor to become a Vice-President in recognition of his years of dedication and support to the railway, society and volunteers.

■ ISLE of Man Steam Railway Association volunteers have installed new interpretive signs next to the major exhibits in the railway museum at Port Erin station. Royal Saloon No. F.36 has been returned to display in the museum hall following remedial work on the interior tracks but for the time being it has not proven possible to display restored privately owned six-wheel Manx Northern Railway carriage No. 6 in the building.

Ex-Fairbourne pair star at Perrygrove gala

Popular visiting 15in gauge locos star alongside homefleet.



Steam action at Perrygrove Railway's Rookwood station on May 1 as Keef 2-6-2T *Lydia* arrives with a down train and the token is handed over to visiting ex-Fairbourne pair *Count Louis* and *Siân* double-heading a passenger service up the line to Oakiron station. CLIFF THOMAS

SIÂN Project Group's 2-4-2 *Siân* (Guest Engineering 18/1963) made a rare appearance away from its Kirklees Light Railway base to appear at Perrygrove Railway's April 29-May 1 steam gala. *Siân* was joined by privately owned Bassett-Lowke 4-4-2 'Little Giant' *Count Louis*. Both historic locos ran at the Fairbourne Railway in its 15in gauge days and were first time visitors to Perrygrove.

The ex-Fairbourne pair joined resident steam locos Exmoor 0-6-0T *Spirit of Adventure*, Exmoor 0-6-2T *Anne*, 2008-built Keef 2-6-2T *Lydia* and privately owned 'Baldwin' 0-4-0 tender loco *Soony* (freshly overhauled and sporting a new green livery) along with Perrygrove's 1986 Hunslet 4wDH *Jubilee* to provide constant action with passenger services and demonstration freight operations.

In advance of the gala, on April 28 Perrygrove Railway's new 0-6-0ST was unveiled and its name revealed to be *Mr Hallworth*. However, the loco was not sufficiently complete to be steamed. It was displayed beside the main station during the gala weekend following which it returned to North Bay Railway Engineering Services in Darlington where about 10 weeks more work is expected to see it finished and ready for operation.

The loco is named in memory of the late Tony Hallworth who died in August 2019 (Tribute, *RM*, September 2019) who was a veteran of Wadebridge shed (72F) and holds legendary status among Bodmin & Wenford Railway volunteers, whose numbers included Perrygrove Railway's managing director, David Nelson.



Right: Perrygrove Railway's new 0-6-0ST *Mr Hallworth* displayed at its new home on May 1, albeit not yet sufficiently complete to enter service. CLIFF THOMAS

Cab and tender tank mocked up for Chinese C2 locomotive preparatory to gauging test

THE major restoration of the C2 class 0-8-0 tender locomotive, which has including regauging from 762mm gauge (approx. 2ft 6in), by the Ffestiniog Railway-based C2 Project group, has reached the stage of producing wooden mock-ups of the cab and tender body.

The tender tank mock-up will assist checking of both rearward visibility from the footplate and its appearance, major changes having been made to the tender frames and the new cab being four inches lower than the original to meet the Ffestiniog Railway's (FR) loading gauge. Following completion of some relatively minor, but important, tasks a (towed) test run will be made over the FR to check clearances and footplate visibility.



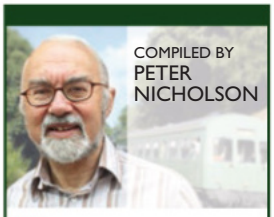
The locomotive was purchased in late 2006 and imported from China at the beginning of 2007. Rebuilding is being undertaken in a dedicated shed at Boston Lodge.

C2 Project group's 0-8-0 locomotive pictured on April 28 showing the old boiler, which will be replaced, in position together with the wooden mock up cab and tender sides. PETER JOHNSON

SKLR launches *Superb* boiler appeal

SITTINGBOURNE & Kemsley Light Railway's (SKLR) next locomotive priority is to return Bagnall 0-6-2T *Superb* to operation. The loco needs boiler work, hence the appeal launched to raise money being entitled 'Let's put the B back in Superb.' With the cost of a new firebox covered by a bequest and a grant from Swale Borough Council (*RM*, April) some £25,000 is needed to replace the stays and boiler tubes together with any other boiler repairs found to be required.

Returning *Superb* to service is urgent since the boiler ticket for Kerr Stuart Brazil class 0-4-2ST *Melior* expires in spring 2024. This would only leave recently overhauled Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST Brazil class *Premier* in traffic and SKLR needs to have two locos available to steam.



COMPILED BY PETER NICHOLSON

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

SINGLE LINES

■ THE Portable Railway Club (*RM* Sept p76) is providing rides on 5in and 7¼in gauge railways in the car park and yard of Abbot's Model Engineering (AME), Telford on July 8/9. Locos will be steam, petrol and electric.

Admission is £4 adults and children £2 with all rides free and including tours of the AME factory. Open 10.30-16.30 with refreshments available. Visit www.miniaturerailwayworkshop.com for details.

■ LITTLEHAMPTON Miniature Railway is to hold its 75th anniversary gala on June 24/25. Visit: Littlehampton miniaturerailway.com for details.

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Several 'firsts' for Ruislip Lido Railway gala

London line hosts two-day gala featuring a visiting steam loco.



Visiting the Ruislip Lido Railway on May 13/14 was Exmoor Steam Railway 2-6-2T *Christopher* from the Littlehampton Miniature Railway. It is seen on May 14 passing Haste Hill, RLR. ANDREW WEBB

THE Ruislip Lido Railway (RLR) at Ruislip, Hillingdon, London, is Britain's longest 12in gauge railway, at 1¼ miles, with a balloon loop.

A busy gala on May 13/14 saw 2-6-2T *Christopher* visiting RLR from the Littlehampton Miniature Railway, West Sussex for the first time. Built by Exmoor Steam Railway (191 of 26/10/1991) as *Lorna Doone* it has since resided on several railways, been rebuilt and regauged – and the wheel arrangement changed on numerous occasions (*RM* October 2021, p76). Over the years this loco has been gauges 12¼, 10¼ and 12¼in again; an 0-6-0T, 0-6-2T and 2-6-2T, and allocated ESR builder's Nos. 191, 191RB and 310.

Also in operation over the weekend was the sole resident RLR steam loco, Hunslet-style 2-4-0ST+T No. 6 *Mad Bess* (RLR/R. Weaver 1986-1998). It had returned to traffic on April 30 after a lengthy overhaul.

The two steam locos, plus one of the RLR's big diesels, worked a three-train service.

Another first was visitors over 14 being able to drive a diesel under supervision for 750m along the line to Wellington Junction and back.

All other diesel locos were on static display as were track maintenance vehicles, with details of what they do.



Named train launched at Trago Mills steam gala

THE 10¼in gauge Bickington Steam Railway at Trago Mills, Devon, held a steam event on May 13/14, featuring the resident fleet of locomotives.

A named train, 'The Tragonian', complete with GWR-style headboard proudly displayed by 2-6-0 *Alice* (Simkins & Vere 1984) approaches Colossus View level crossing on May 14. Also in operation was 2-6-2 No. 24 (Sandy River) (Coleby Simkins/Alcock & Vere 1991). David Curwen-built 4-4-2 No. 750 *Blanche of Lancaster* of 1948, said to have 'not been seen for 25 years', was on static display at Riverside station. Picture: BERNARD MILLS

BULGARIA September 2023



The "Classic Traction" tour - September 30th - October 6th

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* Multiple depot visits
* Visit to the extensive Maritza Iztok mining complex, with its industrial diesel and electric locomotives
* Runs by service train over the scenic Rhodope mountains line, with Henschel diesels first built c. 1965
* Historic tram tours in Sofia with depot visits * Half-board hotel acc.

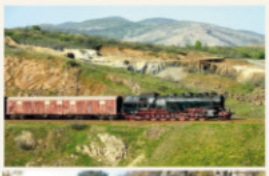






The "Steam Tour" - September 29th - October 6th

* Photo charters on some of Bulgaria's most scenic non-electrified lines, using carriages from King Boris's Royal Train * Depot visits *Locos. 01.23 (2-8-2); 03.12 (4-8-.2) and 46.03 (2-12-4T "Mother Bear" Photo charter Sofia-Bankya with newly-restored G7 0-8-0 26.26
* Charter over the 76cm scenic Rhodope Mountains line with 2-8-2T 609.[76]
* Historic tram tours in Sofia with depot visits * Half-board hotel acc.









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OO Gauge (1:76 Scale)

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4D-005-002D Class 59/2 59206 "John F Yeoman" in DB Schenker - Digital Fitted (RRP £206.73) ..... BARGAIN . . £159.95
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R3991 Class A3 4-6-2 60103 "Flying Scotsman" in BR green early emblem (RRP £252.99)... BARGAIN.... £202



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Diesel locos



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R40008 ex-Mk1 SK Ballast Cleaner Train Staff Coach DB 975804 in BR departmental olive green (RRP £42.49) ..... BARGAIN £19



R40020 Mk1 BCK brake composite corridor in Intercity white roof - 21274 (RRP £42.49) ..... BARGAIN..... £19



R40214 Mk1 BSK research vehicle "Test Coach Mercury" in BR research department red and blue - RDB975280 NEW ... £40.49



R40247A Mk3 TS trailer standard in East Coast - 42192 (RRP £44.99) ..... BARGAIN.. £34.50
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R4879A Collett 57' 'Bow ended' non-corridor composite (Right-hand) W6242W in BR crimson (RRP £59.49) BARGAIN..... £25



R4880A Collett 57' 'Bow ended' non-corridor brake third (Left-hand) W4949W in BR crimson (RRP £59.49) BARGAIN..... £25



R4945A Mk2F BSO brake standard open 9523 in Virgin Trains red and black (RRP £42.49) ... BARGAIN..... £19



R4974 Mk1 RB restaurant buffet IC1667 in Intercity Executive (RRP £42.49) ..... BARGAIN..... £19
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N Gauge

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2S-016-010D Class M7 0-4-4T 30673 in BR lined black early emblem - Digital fitted NEW £124.36
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2S-016-012D Class M7 0-4-4T 35 in London & South Western Railway lined green - Digital fitted NEW . £124.36

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O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

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Steam Portfolio Track Record



'MICKEY MOUSE' IN THE HIGHLANDS: BR '2MT' 2-6-0 No. 46512 heads south of Boat of Garten at Kinchurdy on the Strathspey Railway with an Andrew Fowler and Jonathon Gourlay charter on April 25. ROBERT FALCONER

SOUTHERN COMBINATION ON THE WESTERN REGION: A double-headed Southern Region combination of Swanage Railway-based 'U' 2-6-0 No. 31806 leading resident Bulleid Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co.* attracts attention at Gotherington on May 12 during the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway's Cotswold Festival of Steam 2023. JACK BOSKETT



Steam Portfolio Track Record



WESTERN TERMINUS: In a timeless scene, 'Manor' 4-6-0s No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* and No. 7828 *Odney Manor* stand at Minehead station on the evening of April 30, during a photo event organised by the West Somerset Railway. Mogul No. 9351 is seen on shed. DON BISHOP



SEASIDE SPECIAL: Didcot Railway Centre's 'Saint' 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend,* and Jonathan Jones-Pratt's WR 0-6-0PT No. 9466, approach Doniford bridge with the 11.40 from Minehead on May 1, during the West Somerset Railway's Spring Steam Spectacular gala. NICK GILLIAM





CUMBRIA IN YORKSHIRE: Hunslet 'Austerity' 0-6-0ST *Cumbria* (3794/1953) was in charge of a mid-afternoon freight from Bolton Abbey to Bow Bridge on Sunday, May 7 – the first day of the railway's Spring Mixed Traction Gala, held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of trains returning to Bolton Abbey. The Furness Railway Trust-owned locomotive is seen at Stoneacre Loop. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ



SPRING SCENE: Buckinghamshire Railway Centre-based WR 'Modified Hall' No. 6989 *Wightwick Hall* was the subject of a Jon Bowers charter at the Bluebell Railway on April 17. The ambience is aided by the glorious weather, the restored Permanent Way hut and the well maintained lineside helping the wildflowers to flourish. The 4-6-0 is pictured at Horsted House Bridge. DAVE BOWLES

Heritage Trams Track Record



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Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.



Birkenhead Corporation Tram No. 20 stands at the Woodside terminus of the Wirral Heritage Tramway on October 4, 2009. As part of plans to combine tickets for local attractions, it is hoped visitors will travel from the Battle of the Atlantic Centre being built here to the Wirral Transport Museum by tram. IAN ROBERTS (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Community company to run Wirral Transport Museum – but volunteers will still play a part

Council report claims change in operator has potential to create a 'compelling visitor attraction'.

A REPORT to Wirral Council's Tourism, Communities, Leisure & Culture Committee says that transferring operation of the Wirral Transport Museum in Birkenhead to a community interest company could lead to a "compelling visitor attraction" welcoming up to 40,000 visitors a year.

The council has approved proposals for local not-for-profit firm Big Heritage (BH), which is already responsible for historical sites and museums, including the Western Approaches World War 2 underground control centre in Liverpool and Deva Roman Discovery Centre in Chester, to take on a 25-year lease. It is, however, envisaged the infrastructure of the heritage tramway, which runs from the museum for just over half a mile to Woodside, will remain under the council's control in the short term, with BH expected to take this over within a 10-year period, subject to the Transport Secretary's approval. This is intended to give BH an opportunity to recruit and train sufficient staff for the tramway to operate on multiple days of the week.

More visitors needed

The report states the museum and tramway cost the council £85,000 to run last year. Outside school and bank holidays, opening hours have been limited to Saturday and Sunday afternoons, which the council says has in-turn restricted footfall to around 6,000 people a year.

Members of the Merseyside Tramway Preservation Society (MTPS) currently look after its day-to-day operation, but there is concern that a declining volunteer base, combined with the council's inability to offer anything but a very limited staffing resource could make this arrangement unsustainable in the longer term.

MTPS supports Wirral Council's negotiations with BH. Society members will retain their current access rights to the site and BH expects to work with it and grow its membership. All year round opening is planned, but BH has told the council it does not expect that volunteers will have to commit more time to manage this.

First steps

It is predicted that offering tickets also giving access to other local attractions, including the Battle of the Atlantic Centre (currently under construction next to the tramway's Woodside terminus) could help achieve an ambitious target of 35,000-40,000 visitors annually within the first two years of operation.

The immediate priority, however, is the reopening of the museum and tramway following temporary closure since mid-April for maintenance work following a scheduled inspection by the Office of Rail & Road.

Tram services were temporarily suspended in late 2021 and since their resumption in February last year, due to track condition have only run as far as Shore Road.

David Armstrong, assistant chief executive of Wirral Council, said: "Work has already started resolving the issues raised and will continue in cooperation with the ORR."

The RM asked Wirral Council for clarification regarding how long the museum building and tramway are expected to be closed to the public but was still awaiting a response as this issue went to press.

Beamish tramway anniversary setback

CHALLENGES with tram availability and workshop capacity led to plans to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Beamish Museum tramway being scaled down.

Instead, an event entitled 'Fares Please!' was held on the weekend of May 6/7, including both trams and buses.

It had originally been hoped that Gateshead No. 10, which inaugurated the tramway at the County Durham visitor attraction, would be back in service in time to mark the system's half century, but its extensive overhaul is now not expected to be completed until spring next year at the earliest.

Paul Jarman, assistant director of design, transport and industry at Beamish said: "This is disappointing, but we remain committed to maintaining the full scope of work for this project."

He added that "a number of challenges" had an impact, including the temporary closure of the workshop for upgrading work, several staff leaving for other roles and breakdowns that required urgent action.

A recurrence of recent motor problems on Sheffield No. 264 saw tram availability reduced to four cars for the weekend of the event. The museum had also envisaged having a visiting tram to join the celebrations but was unable to pursue this plan either.



With its destination blind reading 'Pleasure Beach', Blackpool 'Marton Box' car No. 31 is seen in the High Street at Beamish Museum on April 2. BARRIE WOODS



CORONATION CELEBRATION: Blackpool Transport worked in partnership with the town's Tourism Business Improvement District and Visit Blackpool to organise a parade of heritage trams, starting and ending at the Pleasure Beach on May 7, in celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III. Blackpool 'Balloon' car No. 700 is seen at the rear of the parade. 'Open Boat' Nos. 227 and 600 were followed in the procession by Railcoach Nos. 621 and 680, Bolton No. 66, The Western Train, Trawler, HMS Blackpool, 'Balloon' No. 717 and 'Millennium' car No. 707. GARY MITCHELL

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- ★ Vintage tram charter Rostock
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- ★ Steam through the Dordogne on the 'Truffadou' Truffle Train
- ★ Explore the delightful medieval core of Mirepoix
- ★ Taste Blanquette de Limoux sparkling wine
- ★ Visit the charming towns of Foix and Ax-lesThermes
- ★ Trundle past mysterious Cathare Castles on the 'Train Rouge'
- ★ Visit the perfect medieval walled city of Carcassonne
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- ★ Explore the whole of the 'Petit Train Jaune' line
- ★ Relax in the Mediterranean resort of Argelessur-Mer
- ★ Visit enchanting Collioure

Austrian Steam Adventure

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DEPARTS: Tuesday 3 October 2023



- ★ Private standard gauge steam photo charter to Ampflwang including run-pasts
- ★ View over 100 items of vintage steam, diesel and electric locos rolling stock at ÖGEG Ampflwang.
- ★ Steam along the rural 18Kms Ybbstalbahn line to Lunz am See.
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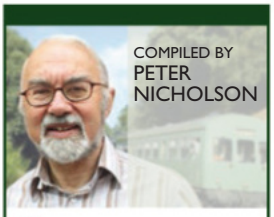
21 January	The Costa del Alco
6 February	Himalayan Railway Adventure
5 March	Let's Clear Cambodia
10 March	Historic South-West Spain
16 March	Springtime in Sicily
16 March	The Old Patagonian Express
1 April	Railways of New Zealand 2023 (Enthusiasts)
6 April	Rail and Ancient Wonders of Mexico
15 April	Vintage Loire Valley
29 April	Italian Vintage
4 May	Railway Ramble - Vale do Vouga
6 May	Rails and Lakes of the Dolomites
26 May	The Reagan Reunion
2 June	Portmeirion and the Railways of Snowdonia
8 June	Vintage Central Portugal
8 June	Classic Belgium
9 June	Central Wales - Trains, Ales and Gardens
10 June	Gorgeous Georgia
15 June	Douro - Rail, River and Wine
20 June	Hidden Slovenia
20 June	Classic Bulgaria and the Lavender Festival
29 June	Southern France and the Pyrenees
5 July	By Train to the Midnight Sun
7 July	Vintage Slovakia and Into Poland
21 August	Rail and Natural Wonders of Alaska
29 August	Rail Wonders of Sardinia, Pisa and Corsica
1 September	Vintage Slovenia
7 September	Anne's Scotland
14 September	Dresden and the Harz Mountains
15 September	Classic Baltics
16 September	The Southern Sweden Explorer
21 September	Vintage Port 44
1 October	Rail Wonders of Sardinia, Pisa and Corsica
8 October	Classic Montenegro and Serbia
11 October	Trains and Treasures of the Western States
12 October	The Railways Around Bilbao
15 October	Last Chance - Branchlines of Japan
5 November	Portugal - Enthusiast Weekend

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SIDELINES

SVR 'Western' celebrates 60th birthday on coronation day

THE 60th anniversary of the Western Locomotive Association's Class 52 No. D1062 *Western Courier* was celebrated on the Severn Valley Railway on the King's coronation weekend, May 6/7, with two round trips Kidderminster-Bridgnorth each day. The next operating dates for this loco are on June 8 and 18.

Small engines to star at East Lancs gala

THE East Lancashire Railway is bringing out its smaller locos for a gala on June 10/11. The proposed line-up of steam and diesel locos includes Class 03 No. D2062 (03062), Class 08s Nos. 08479 and 08164 (if fit), Class 09 No. 09024, Class 14 No. D9531 and 0-6-0DE MSC 3002 *Arundel Castle* (Hudswell, Clarke D1076 of 1959).

Two visitors for North Norfolk gala

CREWE Diesel Group/LSL Class 47/7 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and Ecclesbourne Valley Railway-based Class 14 No. D9537 will be attending the North Norfolk Railway's June 9-11 mixed traction gala.

Class 76 cab moved to a new home

THE cab from Class 76 No. 26048 *Hector* (later TOPS Nos. 76048 and 76039) has been moved to the South Yorkshire Transport Museum, the former Sheffield Bus Museum at 9 Waddington Way, Aldwarke, Rotherham S65 3SH. It was previously on display at the Manchester Science and Industry Museum.

ELR gala visitors

THE East Lancs Railway has announced SRPS-owned Class 26 No. 26038 *Tom Clift 1954-2012* and Class 37 No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* are guest locos for the June 29–July 1 diesel gala.

Statfold Barn receives a standard gauge loco

HISTORIC 0-4-0 petrol loco, Baguley 800 of 1920, moved to Statfold Barn from Tyseley Locomotive Works on February 21.

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The star guest at GCR's April diesel gala was Severn Valley Railway-based Class 17 'Clayton' No. D8568. The unique survivor passes Woodthorpe with 2D22, the 13.34 Rothley Brook to Loughborough on April 22. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

Great Central diesel gala draws the crowds

While many heritage railways are concerned by a serious downturn in the number of general public visitors, a well-organised gala with interesting motive power still attracts large numbers of enthusiast supporters.

THOUSANDS of diesel fans packed the trains at the Great Central Railway (GCR) for its April 22/23 diesel gala. Vintage diesels took centre stage while steam power was side-lined for the weekend.

"Diesel locos have their own generation of fans," said GCR general manager Malcolm Holmes. "These machines represent a time when lots of different ideas for modernising Britain's railways were being tried out. Some went on to have long careers, others were retired quickly!"

Among the latter, which did not make the grade, was the Class 17 Bo-BoDE of which 117 were built by Clayton Equipment Co 1962-65. The sole-survivor, No. D8568, visiting courtesy of the Diesel Traction Group, Severn Valley Railway, was the star guest. The 'Claytons' had a distinctive centre driving cab, with low bonnets covering the two Paxman 6ZHXL engines, in front and behind. However, they were not a success and all but one was scrapped. This was its first visit to the GCR and turned heads showing 'what might have been'. The survivor has received internal attention and modifications over the years resulting in a much more reliable loco than in BR days.

This gala was perhaps evidence that having a few carefully selected locos in action can make for a successful event, and that simply bringing in large quantities of motive power is not necessarily the most profitable exercise.

The GCR celebrates 50 years of running heritage steam and diesel trains on June 17/18, with a special gala including a 50-wagon freight train.



GCR resident NSE-liveried Class 50 No. 50017 *Royal Oak* is seen at Quorn heading 2A36, the 15.30 Loughborough to Leicester at the GCR diesel gala on April 22. The 'Hoover' was making a welcome return to traffic following a period out of action due to repairs. Here it replaced the booked 'Peak' No. D123 (45125) which had suffered a fault earlier in the day, the Class 50 having been rostered for the next train. TOM MCATEE

More HST power cars saved

WITH time running out on main line operation of InterCity High Speed Trains (HSTs), although First GWR has now said it will be keeping a few in service until December 2024, many further power cars and carriages are being secured for preservation.

Colne Valley Railway-based 125 Heritage took delivery of No. 43023 from storage at Ely on May 2, followed by No. 43165 on May 5. In between these two, on May 3, No. 43025 went from Ely to the 125 Group at the Nottingham Heritage Railway, Ruddington.

The acquisition of ex-Great Western power car No. 43025 has been possible thanks to a donation from 125 Group member Alex Carpenter. It complements the group's fleet nicely, being a 'career' Western Region car. It worked in the West continuously from introduction until withdrawal in 2019. Although stored for more than four years, it is in remarkably good condition, but will still take some time to return to working order. It will become part of the group's main line registered fleet for the operation of passenger tours.



The 125 Group's recently acquired HST power car No. 43025 on May 8, a few days after delivery to Ruddington, Nottingham Heritage Railway. STEVE DONALD

DIARY

June
8-10 WSR diesel gala
9/10 Avon Valley Railway beer bash diesel days
9-11 North Norfolk Railway mixed traction gala
10/11 East Lancashire Railway small engines gala
10/11 Middleton Railway diesel gala
11 GWSR Swinging 60s
17/18 GCR 50th anniversary mixed traction gala
17/18 MR-B DMU 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
8/9 S&DR at Midsomer Norton Wickham gala
8/9 West Somerset Railway 1960s weekend
14-16 Mid-Hants Railway 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
2/3 Heritage Shunters Trust, Peak Rail BR blue gala
9/10 Dean Forest Railway diesel gala
15/16 ELR diesel gala
16/17 Llangollen Railway diesel gala
22/23 Epping Ongar 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
8 Colne Valley Railway diesel gala
28/29 GW SR mixed traction gala

November
18/19 GCR Last Hurrah mixed traction gala

GWSR appreciates the value of its diesel fleet

Cotswold line offers a variety of heritage diesel operations this season.

THE Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway (GWSR) has several interesting diesel events planned this season. These kicked off with a 'double-up of diesel power' on selected Sundays, starting on May 7. Future occasions are on September 3 with Class 47s Nos. 47105 and 47376 and Class 37s Nos. D6948 (37248) and 37215 on August 6. The sister locos will run double headed and top-and tailed throughout the day.

The GWSR has a mixed traction event on June 11, the 'Swinging Sixties', the theme of which for steam and diesel participants is BR green. Class 37 No. D6948 (37248) will be in operation along with a Class 117 DMU and steam loco No. 7903 *Foremark Hall*.

The main diesel event

The Cotswold line's annual diesel gala takes place on July 7-9. The varied home diesel fleet will be joined by a visiting 'Rat' – Class 25 No. D7659 (7659/25309/25909), courtesy of Peak Rail and the Waterman Railway Heritage Trust. The Sulzer Type 2 was fortunate to visit the line between 1996 & 1997

Subject to availability, the line-up is due to include Class 20 No. 20137; Class 24 No. 5081 (24081); Class 45 No. 45149 and Class 117 DMU No. L425.

Up to 10 trains are due to run each day between Broadway and Cheltenham Racecourse, with additional trains between Toddington and Cheltenham Racecourse.

A full 28-mile round trip is available on most services with passing loops at Toddington and Winchcombe, permitting an all-day 45-minute service.

Toddington diesel shed will be open to visitors, where Class 26 No. D5343 (26043) and Class 20 No. 20228 can be seen undergoing overhaul. The carriage & wagon workshops at Winchcombe will also be open to the public.

Tickets for the summer diesel gala are available online at www.gwsr.com.



WENSLEYDALE 'PACER' ENTERS SERVICE: In a timeless scene, Class 143 'Pacer' No. 143623 is pictured near Crakehall working the 12.30 Leeming Bar to Leyburn service on May 3, having entered service the previous weekend. The former Tyne & Wear unit has been repainted in Regional Railways livery. It was acquired by the Wensleydale Railway in 2021 so the railway could complete the set of Class 142, 143 and 144 'Pacers'. NIGEL COCKBURN



BRCW 'Type 2' VISITOR: Trainload Coal-liveried Class 26 No. 26007 (D5300) is on a season-long visit to the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. It was used during the April 14-16 'Twin Peaks' diesel gala, held in collaboration with Peak Rail. The Barrow Hill-based Type 2 is seen at Duffield Meadows with 2S28, the 16.59 Wirksworth to Duffield Holloway Road, on April 15. IAN DIXON



'TYPE 3' SHOWS OFF ITS NEW LIVERY: Class 37 No. 37109 made its much anticipated return to traffic on the East Lancashire Railway on May 13/14. This followed bodywork repairs and a repaint in Railfreight Metals Sector livery, completed earlier this year. It is seen near Ramsbottom on May 13 and is next rostered on June 18. ROBERT FALCONER

Well attended Swindon & Cricklade diesel gala

THE Swindon & Cricklade Railway's April 15/16 gala offered an intensive diesel-only operation carrying a healthy number of visitors. Five locos were in use: 'ED' Class 73 No. E6003 *Sir Herbert Walker*, Class 03s Nos. 03022 and D2152 (03152), ex-BR Ruston & Hornsby departmental 0-6-0DE No. 97251 (PWM651), and 0-4-0DH Fowler 4220031. Class 08 No. D3261 did not appear due to minor faults.

AC railbus No. W79978, with a few seats installed, ran unadvertised trips in the yard at Hayes Knoll and up to South Meadow Lane on the new extension towards Cricklade.



Ruston & Hornsby 394009 with proud owner Ollie Simons, on arrival at the Colne Valley Railway from the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway on May 3. OLLIE SIMONS

More Colne Valley Railway fleet additions

THE Colne Valley Railway in Essex has received a number of powered rail vehicles this year. In addition to a pair of HST power cars in May (see separate item), there was Class 03 No. D2046 from the Plym Valley Railway in March (*RM* May p79), and much-travelled Wickham trolley Type 27 Mark III, 8087 of 1958, on January 27. This followed restoration by its owner at his home in Lakenheath, Suffolk.

Two more diesel shunters are now at Castle Hedingham. First was Class 08 No. 08706 (D3873) on April 24, from the Battlefield Line. Next was Ruston & Hornsby 394009 of 1955, an 88DS 4WDM, as mentioned for sale from the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway (*RM* May p78). It is now owned by Ollie Simons (YouTuber 'Wardle Road'), the CVR's head of wagons. He has been restoring his BR brake van (*RM*, Heritage Wagons, September 2022) and this is his first venture into locos.

New to the North Western Gas Board, Warrington Gasworks, the 88DS worked there for more than 20 years until purchased in 1976 by the IRSG (Industrial Rolling Stock Group) for the Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Trust at Embsay

Diesel Saturdays at Caledonian Railway

THE Caledonian Railway at Brechin is running a diesel service on the following dates: July 8, 15 and 29, and August 12, 19 and 26. Trains will be hauled by locos drawn from the main line loco fleet departing Brechin at 11.00, 12.20, 13.40, 15.00 and 16.15 (no return). Trains depart Bridge of Dun at 10.15, 11.35, 12.55, 14.15 and 15.35.

A diesel gala is set for August 4-6, but the only details available are the fares. Note, public access is not allowed at any time to loco sheds and areas, workshops or on to the track/lineside. All visitors must remain on the platforms and other specified public access areas at all times. Visit www.caledonianrailway.com for details.



DIESEL HAULAGE: The Bodmin & Wenford Railway is running a number of diesel days on selected Saturdays this season. In use will be Class 47 No. 47306 (D1787) *The Sapper* in Railfreight Distribution triple grey livery and Class 50 No. 50042 (D442) *Triumph* in BR large-logo blue with black roof. The first day, advertised at short notice, was April 22, with further dates being June 10, 24; July 15, 29; September 16, 23, and October 28. Visit www.bodminrailway.co.uk for fares and booking details. Class 47/3 No. 47306 *The Sapper* worked the first B&WR diesel day of the year on April 22, and is seen departing Bodmin General with the 14.50 to Bodmin Parkway. KEITH FENDER

'Deltic' and 'Hoover' added to West Somerset summer diesel event

THE West Somerset Railway's June 8-10 'Diesel Festival' is set to be a major event in the diesel gala calendar, with at least five visitors complementing six home fleet locos, plus a DMU in operation over the three-days.

All visiting locos for the event have now been announced. These are the Deltic Preservation Society's Class 55 No. 55009 *Alycidon*, Hanson & Hall/Rail Adventure Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer*, Waterman Railway Heritage Trust's Class 25 No. D7659 from Peak Rail, Devon Diesel Traction's Class 33 No. 33002 *Sea King* from the South Devon Railway and Class 14 'Teddy Bear' No. D9551 from the Severn Valley Railway, which is now in BR green.

The 'Deltic' will be working two round trips each day and it is hoped cab visits during the layovers will be possible.

The Class 50 is the only air-braked member of the class in preservation so will be operating with one of the three Class 33s or the Class 25, acting as translator throughout the event.

The resident locos running will be 'Crompton's, Nos. D6566 (33048) newly repainted BR green again, and D6575 (33057), Class 14 'Teddy Bear' No. D9526 back in action following its extended stay on the KESR, Class 35 'Hymeks' Nos. D7017 and D7018, Class 09 No. D4107 (09019) on Bishops Lydeard-Norton Fitzwarren shuttles on Saturday only, and the Class 115 DMU.

Visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk for details.

Long-lost Ruston & Hornsby shunter discovered and rescued

A 48DS-type 4wDM not recorded as existing in any of the usual lists of surviving locos, has been rescued from Redden's scrapyard, Wellingborough, by Lawrie Rose.

This is Ruston & Hornsby 393303 delivered to Wagon Repairs Ltd, Branston Works, Burton-on-Trent on January 20, 1956. It has lingered in the scrapyard for many years and generally believed to have been scrapped in fairly recent times.

It was initially purchased by Lawrie to recover its wheel sets for his other similar loco, the fully restored 294266, the former Bill McAlpine loco now based on the Mid-Suffolk Railway. This needs replacement tyres fitted and this was believed to be the most cost-effective way.

However, on inspection, 393303 was found to be substantially complete, so the plan is for it to be restored. Work started immediately, but with the wheels transferred to the other loco.

Fundraising has been exceptionally successful, the initial target of £4000 for purchase and transport was raised within a few hours of launch. People from all around the world contributed and there is now money available and a huge number of people wishing to become involved, making it a community project.

For many this will be their first time volunteering, which is most exciting. It is also very rewarding to be bringing back a 'lost engine' to the forefront.

New colours for HST power car No. 43159

EVER since the 125 Group acquired the speed-record-breaking HST power car No. 43159 from Porterbrook in early 2022, it has been in desperate need of cosmetic attention.

Paintwork was faded, while the van roof had leaked for some time, causing damage to the interior, bodysides and the back-end corners. All needed rectification before another winter, when freezing weather would cause further damage.

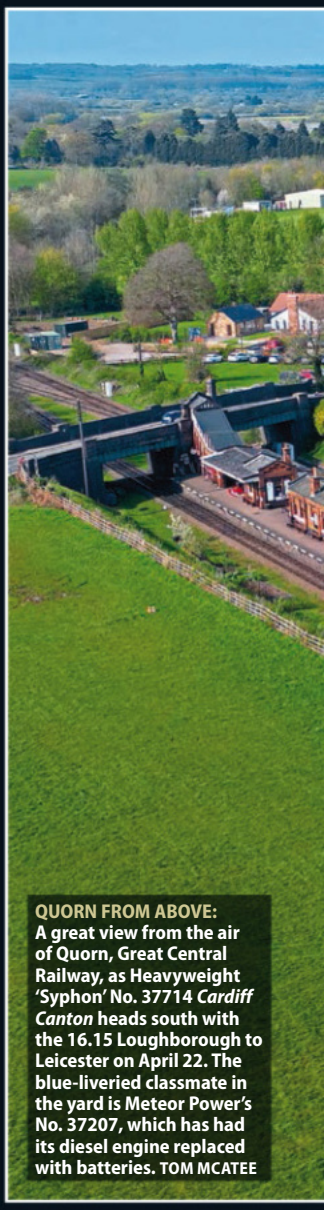
Combined with the need to address these issues and with May 2023 being the 20th anniversary since commencement of Midland Mainline's 'Project RIO' services from St Pancras to Manchester Piccadilly, it was decided to apply MML's Ocean Blue livery, which No. 43159 carried as a RIO power car.

The intention is that Executive livery, as carried during its speed record run, will make a return eventually, but now is not the time. It had been hoped to complete the re-livery over the Easter period, but there were various delays, including more time required on the van roof. It is hoped it will feature at an HST running day at the Midland Railway-Butterley in June.

Classic Traction Portfolio



DALES TRACTOR: No. 37294 heads away from Stoneacre loop, Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway, on May 7, with a mid-afternoon service from Bolton Abbey to Bow Bridge during the line's Spring Mixed Traction Gala, held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of trains running to Bolton Abbey. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ



QUORN FROM ABOVE: A great view from the air of Quorn, Great Central Railway, as Heavyweight 'Syphon' No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* heads south with the 16.15 Loughborough to Leicester on April 22. The blue-liveried classmate in the yard is Meteor Power's No. 37207, which has had its diesel engine replaced with batteries. TOM MCATEE



OLD AND NEW GWR: One of the many visitors to the Severn Valley Railway's Spring Diesel Gala on May 18-21 was a GWR 'Castle Class' HST set (with power cars Nos. 43186/43188), seen at Arley on May 19, with the 10.00 from Kidderminster. Other visiting locos included Nos. 20048, 20189, 31270, 37263, 43465/43484, 47712, 56051, 57307, 60062, and 88004. STEVE WIDDOWSON



SPRING IRIS: Newly arrived at the Plym Valley Railway from the Barry Tourist Railway is former departmental Class 101 DMU Iris II/Lab 19 (Nos. 50222+50338), seen departing Marsh Mills amongst the bluebells with a crew training run on May 12. BERNARD MILLS



SWANAGE STAR: One of the main attractions at the Swanage Gala on May 12-14 was the return to traffic of 'Hoover' No. 50021 *Rodney*, which has been undergoing a superb restoration by Paul Spracklen and his team at Eastleigh Works since 2014. The Large Logo Type 4 is pictured leaving Harmans Cross on the middle day with the 10.32 River Frome to Swanage. Visiting 'Whistler' No. 40145 was at rear, with other locos taking part being Nos. D8568, 33012, 33111, 45108, 47830, 73107 and 73201. **PAUL BIGGS**



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CHRIS
MILNER

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

Three new BLS tours

Good causes to benefit as enthusiasts enjoy unusual traction and routes.

THREE new railtours running in a two-week period have been announced by the Branch Line Society (BLS).

The first offering is the 'Sevington Shoeboxes' on June 11, an unusual loco-hauled one-way excursion, raising funds for Alzheimer's Society, as part of GB Railfreight's 2023 fund-raising programme.

With a leisurely start from Tonbridge at 10.45, the train will run via Paddock Wood for another pick-up at Ashford International before running forward to the Sevington loop and reversing to take the through line at Maidstone East and via Swanley and Kent House to Clapham Junction where another pick-up is made.

Next, the train makes an anti-clockwise circuit of west and north London to access the East Coast Main Line, running north to Peterborough (set down) and then via Grantham to Nottingham where the tour terminates.

Rolling stock is Mk.2 coaching stock with a pair of Class 73s to Wembley (Nos. 73202 and 73212 have been requested) and a GBRf Class 66 or 69 from Wembley to Nottingham.

The fares are all first-class non-dining at £65 or £90 if at a guaranteed table for two. Fares for accompanied under 18s have a £32.50 reduction applied, and there is no surcharge for non-BLS members. A buffet car will serve a wide range of hot and cold drinks, snacks and light refreshments, and a charity raffle will see all proceeds donated to Alzheimer's Society. Passengers make their own way back to their start points.

Seaside trip

The second BLS tour is on June 24, the 'Jolly Vacman', running from Derby to Skegness and which will be operated by Rail Adventure and feature Class 37 No. 37418 and Class 50 No. 50008 *Thunderer* operating in top 'n tail mode with air-conditioned Mk.3 coaching stock. The Class 50 is expected to lead from Derby (07.52) on the outbound journey. After Derby, the pick-up points are Long Eaton, Nottingham, Sleaford and Boston, arriving in Skegness at around 10.30.

Here, passengers have the option of spending time in the resort or remaining on the train to enjoy a further excursion, running via Lincoln (both platforms 3 and 5), then via the Sleaford avoiding line to Peterborough East Jct, and returning to Skegness at around 16.25.

With the day trippers back on board, the 'Jolly Vacman' is routed via Sleaford, Lincoln, Newark Northgate, the Calypole loop, reversing at Grantham to take the train back to Nottingham and Derby.

Fares are £109 standard class, £159 first class non-dining or £184 first class non-dining, at a guaranteed table for two. There is no surcharge for not being a Branch Line Society member on this fixture and accompanied under 18s benefit from a £54.50 reduction across all fares. The on-train charity raffle proceeds will be donated to the Railway Children.

The final tour offering for June is the following day, June 25, with the 'Eyre Valley Explorer' running from Derby to Oxenhope on the Worth Valley Railway, taking passengers to the annual diesel gala. The visit takes place on the final day of the Worth Valley's three-day event, and rover tickets will be on sale on the train. Locos for the gala line-up include Class 26 No. 26038, Class 14 No. D9520 and a pair of Rail Adventure HST power cars, plus the home diesel fleet.

Gala outing

Using the stock and locos from the previous day's charter, and again in top-and-tail formation, the 'Eyre Valley Explorer' will call at Long Eaton, Alfreton, Chesterfield, Sheffield, Doncaster, Leeds and Bradford Forster Square before traversing the main line connection to the Worth Valley at Keighley at around 11.40. Return of the excursion is at approx. 18.20 from Keighley, routed via Pontefract Monkhill and Beighton Jct with an estimated arrival back in Derby at 22.30.

Fares are £50 standard class, £75 first class non-dining or £100 first class non-dining, at a guaranteed table for two. There is no surcharge for not being a BLS member on this fixture and accompanied under 18s benefit from a £25 reduction across all fares. The on-train charity raffle proceeds will again be donated to the Railway Children.

Bookings can be made online at branchline.uk.



STEAM ON THE WCML: SR 'Merchant Navy' No. 35018 *British India Line* on the climb at Lambrigg Head with The Railway Touring Company's 06.54 London Euston-Appleby 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' on May 13. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ

Award-winning Class 47/7 in demand

THE Crewe Diesel Preservation Group's ex-Scotrail Classs 47 and Locomotive Services Group-owned Mk.3 push-pull set is due for another outing, reprising its first outing to Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness. Restoration and return of the loco and stock to the main line won the group the *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award in March.

On Friday, August 4, No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* will depart from Crewe (c10.00) and call at Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston and Carlisle before continuing to Edinburgh Waverley where an overnight break is planned.

The next morning as part of a two-day tour, the train will depart from Edinburgh at 0900 for Glasgow Queen Street before heading via Stirling and Perth over the Highland Main Line to Inverness for a second overnight halt.

Itinerary

Returning south on August 6, the route is via Elgin, Aberdeen and then over both the Tay and Forth Bridges to Glasgow Queen Street, then across to Edinburgh and finally back to Crewe, setting down at pick-up stations on the outward route.

The Friday outward and Sunday return are priced separately from the two-day excursion to Inverness, allowing passengers the option of a weekend in Edinburgh or the full three-day tour by purchasing tickets for all days of the tour. For the Crewe-Edinburgh-Crewe legs, the cost is £50 standard and £75 first class.

The two-day tour fares on August 5/6 are standard class at £119 and first class £199.

Book online at inter-city.co.uk or call 0800 038 5364.

Latest round of industrial action impacts railtours

HOPES of 'Deltic' No. D9009 *Alycidon* returning to the mainline on May 13, were hit by industrial action by RMT union members, leading to the UK Railtours 'Coronation Deltic' trip from King's Cross to Scarborough being redated to August 19. As a result of the change, the operator's website indicated a limited number of seats were still available.

Also planned for May 13, but postponed, was Vintage Trains' 'Castle Centenarian' with Nos. 7029 *Clun Castle* and 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* working from Birmingham via Shrewsbury and the Welsh Marches and then back to Birmingham. As well the strike impact, the original route of this tour has been impacted by the failure of Nuneham Viaduct (see *RM* May), and a replacement tour with a different route has been planned for June 10.

The new route for this double-headed working, which will mark the centenary of the 'Castle' class, is Birmingham New St, Shrewsbury avoiding curve, Hereford, Maindee North to East curve, Gloucester, Lickey inclined unassisted and New St.

A further change to the Vintage Trains schedule comes on June 24, when instead of Cardiff being the destination for the 'Red Dragon' from Birmingham Moor Street, the new destination is Minehead. The tour will be diesel hauled between Banbury and Tyseley each way, with No. 5043 booked to work the train via Worcester and Cheltenham.



'RARE' ROUTE FOR RAILTOURS: What is expected to be the only loco-hauled charter over the Cambrian Coast line this year occurred on April 21, when Network Rail No. 97302 *Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways/Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog ac Eryri* led Colas Rail No. 37254 over the Barmouth viaduct with a Pathfinder Tours special from Bristol Temple Meads. Because the Colas loco is not fitted with ERTMS equipment, the locos needed a double shunt at Pwllheli to ensure No. 97302 was leading. CHRIS MILNER

JUNE: STEAM RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	Steam-Hauled From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
June				
1-30	Jacobite	Fort William-Mallaig-Fort William (daily, mornings)	44871/45407/45212	WCRC
3	English Riviera Express	Taunton-Exeter-Kingswear	LSL Pool	ST
7	S&C Fellsman	Chester-Hellifield-Carlisle-Chester	LSL Pool	ST
7	Cardiff Express	Paddington-Cardiff-Paddington	60103	RTC
10	Tynesider	York-Newcastle-York WCRC Pool	RTC	
10	Cheshireman	Euston-Northampton-Chester	60103	RTC
10	Castle Centenary	B'ham NS-Wolverhampton-Hereford-Gloucester-B'ham NS	5043+7029	VT
14	Welsh Marches Express	Bristol TM-Hereford-Shrewsbury	LSL Pool	ST
17	Portsmouth Flyer	Victoria-Chertsey-Portsmouth Hbr-Fareham-Victoria	60103	RTC
18	Shakespeare Express	B'ham-Snow Hill-Stratford-upon-Avon	5043 or 7029	VT
21	Salisbury Flyer	Paddington-Westbury-Salisbury-Romsey-Paddington	60103	RTC
24	Great Yarmouth Flyer	King's Cross-Cambridge-Norwich, Yarmouth-Ely-King's Cross	60103	RTC
24	English Riviera Express	Taunton-Exeter-Kingswear	LSL Pool	ST
24	Whistling Ghost to Minehead	Tyseley-Droitwich-Bristol-Bishops Lydeard	7029	VT

Notes:

WCRC Pool: Locos from 45690/45699/46115/35018/34067

LSL Pool: Locos from 34046/45231/46100/4498/70000

JUNE: DIESEL & ELECTRIC RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
June				
10	Pathfinder Golden Anniversary	Burton-Cheltenham-Reading-Weymouth	40145	PF
10	S&C Pullman	Gerrards Cross-Solihull-Carlisle	LSL Blue Pullman HST	MP
14	Lochaber Pullman	Lancaster-Carluke-Fort William-Lancaster	LSL Blue Pullman HST	MP
17	Magic Carpet	Waterloo-Woking-Axminster-Exeter	2 x GBRf Cl 73s	UKR
21	English Riviera Pullman	Chester-Wolverhampton-Paignton	LSL Blue Pullman HST	MP
24	Mazey Day Special	Tame Bridge P'way-Kidderminster-Bristol TM-Penzance	2 x GBRf Cl 69s	PF
July				
1	Chessy Ned	Waterloo-Tattenham Corner-Windsor-Chessington-W'loo	2 x GBRf Cl 73s + 66	UKR
1	N Wales Coastal Pullman	Basingstoke-Watford Junction-Llandudno	LSL Blue Pullman HST	MP
3	Yorkshire Coast Pullman	Maidenhead-Stroud-Scarborough	LSL Blue Pullman	MP
6	S&C Statesman	Cardiff-Crewe-Carlisle	2 x LSL 47s	STATE
6	Northern Belle	Derby-Doncaster-Edinburgh	WCRC 47/57	NB
11	Northern Belle	Darlington-Edinburgh-Dundee	WCRC 47/57	NB
12	Northern Belle	Darlington-Newcastle luncheon circular	WCRC 47/57	NB
13	Coronation Deltic	King's Cross-York-Scarborough	D9009	UKR
13	N Wales Coastal Pullman	St Albans-Oakham-Leicester-Llandudno	LSL Blue Pullman	MP
18	Northern Belle	Crewe-Liverpool-Edinburgh	WCRC 47/57	NB
19	Northern Belle	Crewe-Warrington-Liverpool luncheon circular	WCRC 47/57	NB
20	Dorset Coast Statesman	Whitchurch-Telford-B'Ham NS-Weymouth	2 x LSL 47s	STATE
20	Barrow Hill/Chatsworth	Finsbury Park-Grantham-Chesterfield	GBRf Class 69	UKR
20	Northern Belle	Manchester Vic-Preston-Edinburgh	WCRC 47/57	NB
24	Ben Nevis & Lochaber Pullman	Morpeth-Berwick-Edinburgh-Fort William	LSL Blue Pullman	MP
26	Northern Belle	Manchester Victoria-London Victoria	WCRC 47/57	NB
27	Retro Devon Belle II	Huddersfield-Stockport-Crewe-Paignton	50008	RET
27	Parkeston Panorama	Stevenage-Potters Bar-Colchester-Harwich	GBRf 66s	UKR
29	Crompton Torbay Venturer	Burton-B'ham NS-Worcester SH-Paignton	2 x WCRC Cl 33	PF

■ Tours listed may be subject to cancellation due to industrial action – check with tour promoter.

Sunset steam specials on offer

EVENING steam excursions of just over three hours around Surrey are being promoted by Steam Dreams on Tuesdays from June 22 to August 29.

Passengers can opt for three options of seating – Pullman style dining with champagne and a three-course meal cooked using locally produced produce; first class with sparkling wine and a savoury snack box; or premium standard class where passengers can bring their own food or opt for refreshments from the buffet with complimentary tea and coffee.

Using 'B1' No. 61306 *Mayflower* or BR '7MT' No. 70000 *Britannia*, departure from London Victoria is at 18.15, returning at 21.45 after travelling through Guildford, Dorking and Reigate.

Fares per person start from £155 in Pullman style dining, £119 in first class and £69 in premium standard. To book, call 01483 209888 or visit www.sunsetsteamexpress.co.uk.

UKR's 4TC tours fully booked

TWO railtours promoted by UK Railtours using London Transport's red 4TC (Class 438) set have sold out. The excursions are the 'Chessy Ned' on July 1, featuring a GBRf Class 66 and a pair of Class 73/1s, and the 'Newhaven Nonsense' on July 22 when the 71A Loco Group's No. 33012 and pair of GBRf '73/1s' will work from London Victoria to Ashford, Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton.

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PT – Pathfinder Tours
01453 835414
RET – Retro Railtours
0161 3309055
RTC – Railway Touring Company
01553 661500
SD – Steam Dreams
01483 209888
SR – Statesman Rail
0345 3102458
ST – Saphos Trains
saphostrains.com
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.



COMPILED BY CHRIS MILNER

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

SIDELINES

New bridge opens

A TEMPORARY road bridge spanning the River Leven in Fife, was opened to traffic on May 5. The structure is expected to carry 18,000 vehicle movements per day and will allow Network Rail to demolish the A955 Bawbee bridge which is weight-restricted, 75 years old and suffering from significant deterioration due to chlorine contamination and corrosion. Spanning the Leven station site, a decision made was to replace the bridge as part of the Levenmouth rail link construction, minimising future disruption. The work is being funded by Fife Council and is being delivered on its behalf by Network Rail.

Further problems on South West main line

HAVING suffered from a major landslip at Winchfield earlier this year, the South Western Main Line between Basingstoke and Southampton had another slip, this time at Wallers Ash on May 10. Network Rail reopened one of the two tracks in the afternoon. Some trains were routed via Romsey, others via Havant.

Finsbury step-free

THE completion of two new lifts to serve platforms 3/4 and 7/8 at Finsbury Park railway station now mean the station is step-free, concluding a project which began in 2021. CCTV, lighting and signage has been upgraded too.

EMR improvements

THE May timetable change has seen East Midland Railway reintroduce six weekday and eight Saturday services between Lincoln and Leicester. EMR has brought back daily direct services between Matlock and Nottingham, with an amended off-peak pattern to call at Attenborough and Spondon on alternate hours.

Six-day closure of Wigan-Bolton ends

REBUILDING of a bridge between Lostock Junction and Wigan North Western necessitated a six-day closure of the rail line during May. The 6½ mile route is being electrified as part of a £78m investment, however, Ladies Lane bridge in Hindley has to be upgraded to allow the overhead line equipment to fit with gauge on the line below. A temporary bridge was built for cyclists and pedestrians.

Plan for office block on top of Liverpool Street moves forward

If approved, scheme to modernise historic London terminal could be complete by 2029.

A CONTROVERSIAL £1.5bn proposal to redevelop London Liverpool Street station with a new hotel and 109 metre high office block over part of the site has gone forward to a formal planning application. The plans were first revealed last November.

Network Rail, Elizabeth line operator MTR, together with property design specialist Sellar (who were involved with the Shard and Paddington Square projects) have jointly applied for planning consent for a regeneration and upgrade of Liverpool Street station.

As well as the hotel and office block situated in two towers above the station – one 15 storeys high, the other up to 21 with a rooftop cafe and swimming pool – there is a proposal valued at £450m to address capacity and overcrowding problems and improve access for disabled passengers. These upgrades are to be funded privately as part of the overall project.

Around the station and Hope Square, a new public space of 1.5 hectares would be created, and the neo-Victorian building used by McDonalds fronting on to Liverpool Street will be demolished. While the project would ensure the station's heritage features would be protected, and in some cases restored, the proposal envisages changes to the concourse to enable the Victorian train shed – which will remain unaffected – to be more visible to passengers.

Despite the proposals, the project has been publicly opposed by several celebrities – Stephen Fry, Tracey Emin and Griff Rhys Jones – and also groups who have spoken out against the plans. Historic England has condemned the development as 'oversized and insensitive'.

In fact, when the scheme was announced, Historic England upgraded the listing of the Grade II* listed hotel and also included buildings from the station's 1990s redevelopment, but excluded a number of internal structures and features dating from 1985. There is also concern the development would impact views of St Paul's Cathedral and other historic City of London landmarks.

Reaction

Duncan Wilson, chief executive of Historic England, said: "Liverpool Street station is one of London's great Victorian stations, with a distinctive and special character. While we recognise the need for upgrades so that it can better serve the millions of people that pass through its doors, these oversized and insensitive proposals are not the best solution to the site's issues.

"We believe that this scheme is fundamentally misconceived and misses the opportunity to unlock real public benefits while also enhancing the station's heritage. We continue to hope that collaboration with Network Rail and developers Sellar can achieve a better outcome for this special place."



The designs for the exterior of Liverpool St with the office and hotel block, and the interior showing the train shed structure which will not be built over. SELLAR/HERZOG & DE MEURON



Network Rail group property director Robin Dobson said: "Our plans for Liverpool Street will create a new transport hub and a seven-days-a-week retail and cultural destination in its own right.

"This comprehensive plan will ensure the redevelopment is accessible to all, forward-looking and meet the City of London's needs. Liverpool Street station will stand as one of the great stations, fit for the 21st century.

"The current experience designed in the 1980s falls very short and needs to change. Our vision will guarantee that sustainable travel and an exceptional experience becomes the reality for future generations."

The City of London Corporation's decision on the application is due next year, and if plans are approved, work on the development could begin in the second half of 2024, with completion in 2029.

Waterloo roof to benefit from major renovation work

A TWO-year project to replace the glazing at Waterloo station and repair some of the support structures has got underway.

The 100-year-old roof suffers from leaks, and to effect repairs, a scaffolding deck under the main roof has been installed. Temporary staircases will be in use during the work, due to conclude in April 2025.

Around 10,000 new glazed panels will be installed across 12,000 square metres of roof, and the panels will be made from a polycarbonate material which is around 50% lighter in weight, reducing stress on the structure and future proofing it for decades to come.

With the station celebrating its centenary this summer, a range of other work to improve the overall customer experience at the station are also being carried out, with improvements to the station's retail offering which will see new brands and food outlets opening, as well as giving some existing shops a makeover.

Additional sustainable wooden seats are being installed, and earlier this year work to refurbish the toilets began and will include a gender-neutral facility as well as more female facilities and extra baby changing areas.



Approximately 10,000 new glazed panels will be installed on the roof of Waterloo station. NETWORK RAIL

Sign language travel information is rolled out

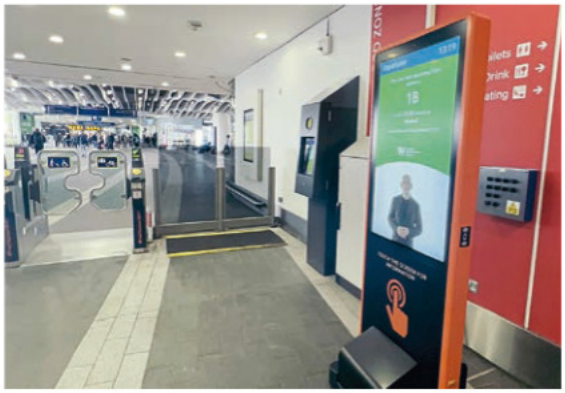
FOLLOWING a trial of touchscreen displays at London Euston station in 2021, a total of eight major stations have British Sign Language travel announcement screens.

From the start of April, touchscreens have gone live for deaf passengers at eight Network Rail-managed stations, showing signed travel information for travellers.

The terminals are located at Liverpool Lime Street, Manchester Piccadilly and Birmingham New Street, Leeds Reading, London Euston, London Paddington and Bristol Temple Meads. A further two screens were to be installed during May at King's Cross and Liverpool Street stations.

The large colourful display shows departure information with someone signing the information displayed. Sign Language interpreters have created a library of standard messaging as part of the screen software which can be seen instantly.

Another plus point is that a team of interpreters are on standby to make bespoke signed information as situations evolve or during periods of unexpected disruption. Within an hour, messaging can be turned into British Sign Language and the videos uploaded directly to the screens using 4G technology.



The touchscreen display which conveys travel information in words and sign language to passengers with hearing difficulties. NETWORK RAIL

June reopening for Ryde Pier Head station

RESTORATION and repair work on Ryde's famous pier is close to conclusion, and Network Rail says the line between Ryde Pier Head and Ryde Esplanade will open no later than June 10, just in time for the start of the summer holidays and the Isle of Wight Festival.

The line along the 143-year-old pier closed in October 2022 for a programme of steelwork strengthening and track renewals, and engineers have been in the final stages of reinstating 172 metres of track and 280 sleepers following the repairs and painting of the steelwork.

During the work, the engineering teams have braved the elements however, the challenges of working in a marine environment including high tides and severe weather conditions throughout December and January, meant work had to be temporarily paused for safety reasons, extending the timeline into the spring.

Follow-up work is planned for October when travel is reduced, which will see a further 396 metres of new track and 660 sleepers laid, along with realigning the track. Signalling equipment will also be renewed during this planned closure.



Work taking place on the steel structure of Ryde Pier Head station. NETWORK RAIL



BRIDGE UPGRADE: Work to repair and restore the 154-year-old Barmouth Bridge will continue this autumn and winter, when a further number of metal sections of the structure will be refurbished, and new track will be laid at the Barmouth toll house (northern) end of the viaduct. This work will take place from September 2 to December 3, and during that time, the adjacent public footpath will be closed. This view, on April 21, shows restoration work on the supporting piers of the former swing bridge section which dates from 1902 and was last used in 1987. It is at this point the current of the Afon Mawddach estuary into the Irish Sea is fast flowing. CHRIS MILNER

Track upgraded in 16-day Midland Main Line closure

A 16-day closure of a key part of the Midland Main Line and Derwent Valley route from May 27 to June 11, has seen the replacement of track in two tunnels – Milford between Duffield and Belper, and Clay Cross tunnel, south of Chesterfield. The closure also meant Matlock was without a train service, with a rail replacement service operating.

In Clay Cross tunnel, as well as new sleepers and ballast, specially coated rails were installed under the 10 tunnel air shafts to make them more resilient during poor weather conditions. The 855-yard Milford tunnel had both tracks and ballast replaced.

During the two-week possession, the work was supported by 52 engineering trains, a number of them delivering the 16,000 tons of ballast to the site.

Closure saw all CrossCountry workings, an amended East Midlands Railway service and freight traffic all diverted via the Erewash Valley route. In the weeks leading up to the work, CrossCountry had been using two HST power cars coupled together on route learning duties between Derby and Sheffield via Toton.

E-ticket battery warning issued

EAST Midlands Railway has issued a warning to passengers to ensure they have sufficient phone battery power to allow the presentation of e-ticket and railcards. The operator adds that gate line staff have access to phone chargers and could ask passengers to charge their devices to prove a fare has been paid.

EMR says its revenue protection teams and train conductors have no means of distinguishing between genuine passengers and those deliberately attempting to fare evade, and in such circumstances will have no option but to issue a penalty fare, which has recently increased to £100.

In a further bid to tackle fare evasion, EMR's introduction of new digital season tickets will make it harder for fare evaders to screenshot and fraudulently share tickets. EMR says the new 's-tickets' stored on passengers' mobile phones are updated throughout the day, so cannot be transferred between devices. Passengers must also upload a profile photo which displays alongside the barcode within the app and forms part of the ticket inspection.

Lichfield Trent Valley platform replacement

NETWORK Rail has confirmed that the high-level platform 3 at Lichfield Trent Valley station will be replaced in a process taking six months.

Late last year a structural fault was discovered on the platform spanning the West Coast Main Line, making it unsafe and forcing closure for temporary repairs.

Initial work to remove platform 3 has been scheduled to coincide with an already-planned closure of the West Coast Main Line (WCML) in July 2023. However, the new platform will not be installed during the next planned closure of the WCML at Christmas 2023, which means Cross-City line services will terminate at Lichfield City from July 2023 until January 2024, with a rail replacement bus shuttle operating to and from Lichfield Trent Valley.

Step-free access will be maintained between platforms 1 and 2 at Lichfield Trent Valley using a temporary footbridge.

£1.2m spend on Glasgow Central project

A TEN-week project, which began in March, has been ongoing at Glasgow Central to replace the tracks and other work alongside platform one.

After lifting the track, teams of engineers have also removed the concrete slab track and wooden sleepers at the southern end of the platform and installed new chairs and rails. Within the project's scope, signalling cables will be renewed, the buffers checked and cleaned and improved tactile paving installed on the platform face.

The work has been running in parallel as the major track layout changes at Carstairs to keep disruption to a minimum.



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Healthcare centres launched

HEALTH and well-being centres have been opened at GB Railfreight's London and Doncaster offices.

They are equipped with technology to check hearing, vision and blood pressure and can also complete electrocardiograms (ECGs).

The centres will perform check-ups for the company's frontline staff and office teams undergoing personal track safety training.

Freightliner opens training academy

FREIGHTLINER'S new Operational Training Academy in Ipswich will prepare drivers for the use of European Train Control System (ETCS) digital in-cab signalling, which will be gradually introduced by the end of the decade on the East Coast Main Line between London King's Cross and Stoke Tunnel, near Grantham, as part of the East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP).

As it becomes more widely introduced, ETCS, which enables drivers to receive live information regarding speed and braking (with the safeguard of automatic train protection), should enable operators to run longer, heavier and faster freight trains on the UK network.

Funded as part of the £1 billion ECDP, the academy contains three classrooms, learning spaces and driving simulators. It is about to host its first trainee drivers who are based in the town.

Work on fitting the digital technology to the first of Freightliner's Class 66s is due to begin this autumn.

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An artist's impression of the south east road entrance to the proposed Hinckley terminal. TRITAX SYMMETRY

Planning Inspectorate accepts Hinckley application

Resubmitted plans for National Rail Freight Interchange in Leicestershire will go forward to assessment and examination stages.

AN application to build a new rail freight terminal on a 662-acre site between the Leicester-Birmingham railway line and the M69 motorway close to the village of Elmesthorpe, near Hinckley in Leicestershire, has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate.

Tritax Symmetry withdrew its initial submission in February after being told by the Inspectorate that it failed to provide the required technical report. Its acceptance of the updated documents means that the proposals will now be assessed and stakeholders, including the public, will be asked for their views. A six-month examination of the plans, which include up to 850,000 square metres of warehouse and ancillary space, is expected to begin later this year.

Tritax says it could create over 8000 jobs and there would be the potential to operate 16 trains a day, up to 775 metres long, each removing the need for 76 lorry journeys.

Concerns

However, concerns have been raised over the potential impact on the surrounding countryside, as well as the effects on air quality and traffic congestion (including extra 'barrier down' time at Narborough Level Crossing).

The developer adds that provision has been made for £70 million of improvements to manage traffic flow, including new slips on the M69 and a link road connecting it to the B4669/A47 Leicester Road.

Blaby District Council's planning & strategic growth group manager Cat Hartley said it was "disappointed" at the acceptance of the application and would present its views as the process continues.

The scheme is deemed to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and therefore outside the scope of local decision-making. After considering evidence, the Planning Inspectorate will make a recommendation to the Transport Secretary, who is expected to announce an outcome early next year.

■ Plans for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange on land east of the former Royal Air Force base at Upper Heyford, which would be linked to the Chiltern Main Line, north of Bicester, have been put on hold due to the complexity of highways infrastructure work and other measures expected to be required as part of the development.

Oxfordshire Railfreight Ltd says a "thorough review" is needed before progressing with the proposals, which would involve the construction of a bypass and two new link roads, as well as improvements to Junction 10 of the M40.



TEESSIDE TANKS: In April, Colas Rail Freight began operating a diagram carrying bitumen between Haverton Hill on Teesside and Preston Docks. Class 70 No. 70809 is seen heading through York station in charge of the empty return working of VTG-owned tankers between Ribble Rail sidings and Haverton Hill on April 25. MIKE PINDER

First phase of terminal upgrade completed

THE initial phase of a £17.5 million project at the Port of Southampton to create greater capacity for moving containers by rail has been completed and handed over to operator Solent Stevedores.

Work, including the laying of fibre reinforced concrete, has taken place on a 5.5 acre site to prepare it for the storage of intermodal containers, which can be stacked seven high.

The next stages will see a further 6.5 acres of space connected to the existing rail terminal and track works completed.

Handling of laden and empty containers and container storage, maintenance and repair facilities will all be linked to the rail facility.

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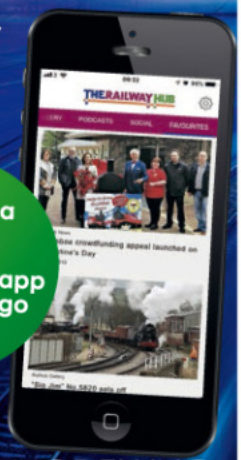


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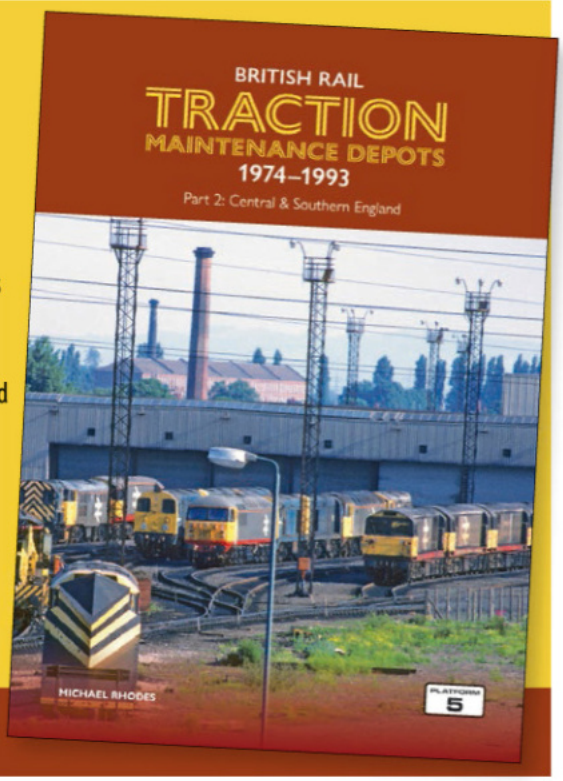
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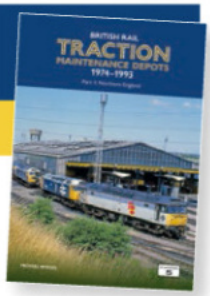


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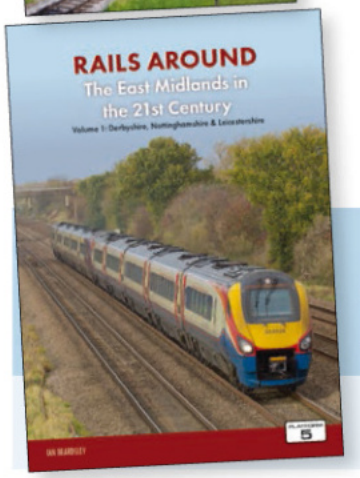
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SIDELINES

Man jailed for attacking travel officer

NOTTINGHAM Trams Ltd, which operates Nottingham Express Transit, has welcomed a 26-week custodial sentence given to a man who was found guilty of assaulting one of its staff.

The city's Magistrates' Court heard that Salmou Njie began shouting at a tram driver at the Forest Recreation Ground stop on Boxing Day last year and was challenged about his behaviour by travel officers.

He became aggressive and kicked one of the officers on the back of the knee and tried to grab her around the neck before running off.

"Fortunately, nobody was seriously hurt during this incident, but assaults of any kind can have a lasting impact on the well-being of the victim," said Nottingham Trams Ltd managing director Chris Wright.

DLR timetable changes

FROM May 15, further timetable changes were made to Docklands Light Railway services, giving more frequent trains.

The peak service period has been extended by half an hour in the morning and evening. Direct Stratford-Lewisham services have been introduced during the evening peak for the first time. Between Canning Town and Beckton, Monday to Saturday evening train frequencies have been doubled, as have those for Saturday evening services between Stratford and Canary Wharf.

Kentish Town temporary closure

KENTISH Town Tube station could be closed for up to a year from June 26, while work takes place on improvements including the replacement of its two ageing escalators, which Transport for London says have become the least reliable on the London Underground network.

The station will be deep cleaned and repainted and its redundant ticket office removed and ticket barriers realigned.

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Getting out and onto the Metro network

Class 555 makes first test journeys under its own power on the Tyne & Wear system.



Class 555 No. 555003 at Four Lane Ends station, during its first test trip on the Tyne & Wear Metro network, early on the morning of May 10. NEXUS

IN the early hours of May 10, Stadler-built Class 555, No. 555003, became the first of the class to venture out onto the Tyne & Wear Metro system on test.

It followed weeks of static trials and movements of the unit (also the first of the five-car trains to be delivered from Switzerland in February) under its own power at South Gosforth depot.

Cathy Massarella, major projects director for Metro operator Nexus, said that No. 555003 had "performed really well" on its test trip between South Gosforth and Monkseaton.

"It was a proud moment for us to see the train leave the depot at Gosforth and join the main line," she added. "There were no glitches to report."

Further test runs will take place on different parts of the network in preparation for the initial train's introduction into service towards the end of the year. A total of 46 units will replace the existing fleet of Class 599 'Metrocars', constructed by Metro-Cammell in Birmingham, which have operated services since the system opened.

Reliability

Worsening reliability of the Class 599s, which led in March to the temporary removal of additional peak time trains between Pelaw and Monkseaton, prompted the serving of a formal improvement notice to Stadler, which is responsible for maintenance of both the new and current vehicles.

Nexus says it recognises the "ongoing challenge to keep the 43-year-old Metro train fleet going". It hopes to have sufficient trains available to restart some extra peak time trains this summer.

Stadler pointed to logistical challenges involved in continuing to service the old trains while transferring operations from the old sheds at South Gosforth to the new adjacent £70 million depot, as well as difficulties in sourcing parts, but told *The RM* a "raft of measures" was being reviewed.

In addition to its contractual obligations to maintain the Class 599s, it has commissioned Diamond Rail Services to carry out deep cleaning and repairs to their interiors. Floors will be cleaned and resealed, grab poles polished, and damaged and worn seats replaced. Repainting of interior panels and window sills is also planned.



DAYTIME TESTING: Following a month of successful overnight trial movements on the three-mile Newhaven extension, Edinburgh Trams began daylight driver training from April 19, and CAF 'Urbos' tram No. 271 is seen on the city's Constitution Street on that day. On May 25, Edinburgh Trams announced that public services to Newhaven would begin on June 7. CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Lobbying for Metrolink to Leigh

WIGAN Council has approved a motion requesting that Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) bring forward an option and business case for Leigh to be served by Metrolink.

Proposing the motion, Coun Dane Anderton said that bringing a tram route into the town would improve connectivity but needed "a coordinated effort" between the council and stakeholders.

The meeting of the full council heard that public transport links between the town and Manchester have suffered since the reduction of services on the Leigh Guided Busway.

Coun Keith Cunliffe said that a "really ambitious project" to modernise public transport, including Metrolink and rail services for the west of the borough needed to be demanded from TfGM and GMCA.

Coun Kevin Anderson added it was important that areas on the edges of Greater Manchester had "their fair share" of transport investment.



COMPILED BY GRAEME PICKERING

Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.

SIDELINES

ORR acts after Class 175 fires

FOLLOWING three fires on Class 175 units in the space of a month earlier this year, the Office of Rail & Road (ORR) has served an improvement notice to Transport for Wales.

The ORR has ordered TfW to review arrangements at Chester depot. Measures required include carrying out a "suitable and sufficient" risk assessment for Class 175 maintenance and having a plan for ensuring maintenance staff at all levels are provided with enough information to understand what is expected of them when carrying out tasks on vehicles.

It also expects plans to be produced for supervision, allocation of resources and management of contractors.

Investigation into SWR fuel issue

SOUTH Western Railway reinstated its full timetable for diesel multiple unit-operated services in the West of England from May 28, after a return to normal performance levels following fuel issues.

An investigation into the cause is continuing, but fuel filters on a number of train engine systems became blocked, having an impact on acceleration and top speed.

All the affected trains received attention to rectify the problem at Salisbury depot and fuel storage tanks there were deep cleaned and refilled with a fresh supply of fuel.

Loram gets NR contract extension

LORAM has secured a three-year extension to its contract to provide maintenance support for Network Rail's Infrastructure Monitoring Fleet.

The fleet consists of 65 dedicated vehicles, equipped for measurement and analysis of track and structures.

As part of the new deal, Loram will assist Network Rail (NR) with its plans regarding the next generation of infrastructure monitoring technology.

The NR work supports 40 jobs at the Derby-based contractor.

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Hitachi contract renewed for 'West of England' Class 802s

Company's maintenance partnership with GWR and Eversholt Rail extended for five years in deal worth over £300million.

HITACHI Rail will remain responsible for maintenance of the 36-strong fleet of Class 802 Intercity Express Trains, which it built for Great Western Railway's West of England services, until 2028.

The manufacturer says the contract extension, valued at over £300million, will help support over 500 depot jobs in the region, as well as the UK supply chain.

Laira depot in Plymouth will handle the majority of work on the Class 802s.

Reliability of the sets has improved by 94% since their introduction in 2018, the best recorded period of performance so far being Summer 2022 when 28,357 miles per technical incident was achieved.

Hitachi said it plans to continue its investment in digital technology such as onboard monitoring of bogie and wheelset conditions.



Hitachi Intercity Express Trains and a 'Castle Class' HST set at Plymouth Laira depot on March 18 this year. CRAIG MUNDAY

GWR takes ownership of former Vivarail D78 stock

OWNERSHIP of 67 former London Underground D78 vehicles, stored at Long Marston in Warwickshire, has transferred to Great Western Railway as part of its purchase of assets from the collapsed firm Vivarail.

The company, which went into administration last December, originally purchased 226 of the former Tube cars to use their bodyshells and bogies in its D-Train project, which resulted in production of the Class 230 and Class 484 units.

As reported in March's *The RM*, GWR agreed a deal with administrators, enabling it to proceed with previously agreed plans for in-service trials of pioneering battery-electric unit No. 230001, using the 'Fast Charge' system, patented by Vivarail. This utilises a short section of conductor rail to recharge the batteries in as little as 10 minutes, giving it a potential range of over 60 miles. It will initially be installed at West Ealing and trialled using No. 230001 on the Greenford branch.

GWR also bought intellectual property relating to 'Fast Charge' and has employed nine former Vivarail staff. It has indicated it intends to support the wider introduction of battery-powered trains on the national network.

Following the completion of testing of No. 230001 and the charging system at Bletchley depot, the unit will itself be based at Long Marston for its next phase of trials. Now the location for Porterbrook's Rail Innovation Centre, this is where Vivarail produced and tested units prior to its relocation to Southam.



TYNESIDE HERBICIDE: Following withdrawal from traffic earlier this year for modifications to reduce vibrations, interior noise and improve reliability and cab comfort, GB Railfreight Class 69s (converted from Class 56s) have started to reappear in service on the network, one recent duty being to take charge of Smart Weed System (SWS) weedkilling trains. During the first fortnight of May, Nos. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* and 69005 *Eastleigh* covered a number of locations on the eastern side of England. Diagrams included a circuit from Doncaster, via Peterborough, Gainsborough and Lincoln and, in the North East on May 9, a working which started and ended at the coal terminal at Tyne Dock. It ran in both directions over the Blyth and Tyne route, reaching North Blyth and Morpeth. The locos are pictured restarting from Pelaw Goods Loops, Gateshead, on their return eastwards to Tyne Dock. Although new territory for the '69s', the whole route taken was familiar ground for the Class 56s in the days of coal mining in Northumberland and County Durham. GRAEME PICKERING



In addition to the Avanti West Coast order, Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe plant is also working on completion of 33 five-car Class 810 'Aurora' bi-mode units for East Midlands Railway. Pictured on May 3, No. 810001 has not yet been fitted out internally, but will be used for testing. Its front end appearance is one of several differences to other '800 series' units. Destined for Avanti, Class 807 No. 807002 is seen in the background and No. 805002 immediately behind the 'Aurora' unit. JAMES GARTHWAITE

Positive findings from Class 805 tests

MAIN line trials of the first two bi-mode Class 805s to be completed by Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe for Avanti West Coast have revealed much more rapid acceleration and braking capabilities than had been expected, which the operator believes could be a positive benefit in the future.

Testing of Nos. 805001 and 805003 was temporarily paused to allow their return to Network Rail's Melton Rail Innovation & Development Centre for engine software upgrades. No. 805001, the first to receive these, returned to nighttime testing from Oxley depot to Glasgow and Euston.

Avanti anticipates their acceptance in the next few months, following which, driver and crew training will commence.

It is hoped that the first units will enter traffic towards the end of year. Diagrams for the class are earmarked to include Blackpool North workings. Although their test runs have already taken them on the full length of the West Coast Main Line, it is expected that, along with their Class 807 electric counterparts also on order from Hitachi (which form the rest of the complement of trains to replace the current 'Voyager' diesel units), they will not normally be used on workings north of Preston.



RETROFITTING ETCS: Class 387/1 No. 387101 has become the first unit of 29 in the subclass allocated to Great Northern to be fitted with European Train Control System (ETCS) equipment for digital in-cab signalling. The driver's desk has been reconfigured to accommodate display screens for the system, which is to be progressively introduced on the East Coast Main Line between London King's Cross and Stoke Tunnel as part of the East Coast Digital Programme. Static and dynamic testing will take place as part of the approvals process for the modifications. GTR

MARKING THE CORONATION



NOVA NAMED IN SCOTLAND: TransPennine Express Class 802 'Nova 1' unit, No. 802215 was named *Palace of Holyroodhouse* at Edinburgh Waverley on May 4. The name of the King's official residence in the city was once carried by Class 91, No. 91030 (now 91130). It was unveiled by TPE's head of regional development Graham Meiklejohn and Transport Scotland's head of rail projects Damian Briody, accompanied by piper Sandy Mutch. TPE



ROYAL EMBLEM UNVEILED: Great Western Railway reflected the crowning of King Charles with its 08.48 London Paddington to Swansea becoming 'The Flying Carolean'. An English version of the Coronation logo was applied at Paddington to Class 802 No. 802103, which worked in the augural service on May 5, with the Welsh version (pictured) unveiled on arrival at Swansea. GWR



ON SONG FOR EUROPE: London Northwestern Railway Class 350 EMU No. 350104 is pictured at Liverpool Lime Street in a special livery to mark the city's hosting of this year's Eurovision Song Contest, which took place on May 13. Merseyrail Class 777 No. 777013 was also given a full makeover in 'Eurovision' colours, while TransPennine Express No. 397011 received additional cabside branding related to the event. LNR

Long Marston investment

ROLLING stock leasing company Porterbrook has invested £3 million in the creation of an Asset Management Facility (AMF) at its Long Marston Rail Innovation Centre.

As part of the transformation of the site, which the company acquired in 2021, disused sheds have been repaired and converted to accommodate rolling stock maintenance and modification work.

Three pitted roads with lighting have been installed, capable of accommodating six-car multiple units. The AMF can be used for inspections, testing, commissioning and customer acceptance, as well as on-train and underframe work.

Fuelling and servicing facility upgrade at Barrow-in-Furness

New facilities pave way for operation of six-car Northern trains to and from Manchester Airport.

IMPROVEMENTS have been completed to facilities at Barrow-in-Furness light maintenance depot which play an essential role in the introduction of six-car services (using pairs of Class 195 trains) between the Cumbrian town and Manchester Airport.

A new 75 metre-long servicing road allows three diesel multiple unit cars to be serviced and refuelled simultaneously. Previously, only one car could be handled at a time. The new facilities also have a steel canopy, providing shelter to staff, as well as housing equipment including the fuel pumps. Energy efficient lighting has been installed.

"The new facilities have meant that trains are able to be serviced faster, keeping them out in service for our customers – improving reliability for the region and beyond," said Northern's regional director Chris Jackson.

RTS Infrastructure Services carried out the improvements to a tight timescale.

RTS managing director Chris Reid added that the project demonstrated the ability to carry out large scale enhancements while minimising the impact on depot operations.



Northern three-car Class 195 No. 195119 on the new servicing road at Barrow-in-Furness light maintenance depot. NORTHERN

WAGON REPORT

by Steven Fredrick Lappage

BALFOUR Beatty Rail Plant (BBRP), based at Hither Green, operates a pair of New Track Construction (NTC) machines built in America during 2004 by Harsco Track Technologies, Nos. 6100944/954. These are full possession-only sets and are coupled to YJA-F self-powered wagons Nos. DR 78701/702, delivered by Harsco to design code YJ025A. Tare weight is 72 tonnes. In recent months the machines have been employed on East West Rail tracklaying.

Most of the NTC machinery is, however, modular and mounts on standard FEA intermodal flats supplied by Polish builder Wagony-Swidnica. For example, the sleeper handling gantries carried on FEAs Nos. 640571/575 (design code FE 004G) transfer new steel or concrete sleepers to truss beams that drop them to the track; the truss beams being carried by FEAs Nos. 640572/576 (design code FE 004C). Once lowered to the trackbed, the sleepers are aligned and spaced, then clipped to the new rail which is pre-delivered. Up to 12 sleepers a minute can be installed, which is equivalent of around 1200 yards of track per possession.

Balfour Beatty has its own fleet of twin-set sleeper wagons, FEAs Nos. 640501-514 (design code FE 004B). However, the NTCs can also work in conjunction with Network Rail's own fleet of KRA sleeper carriers, Nos. NR 97101-132, which were built in 1999-2000 by RFS(E) at Doncaster to design code KR 001A.

Gart Renewals operated a third NTC machine (No. 6100930), although this is no longer active in the UK. Unlike the BBRP sets, this was powered on-site by a bulldozer. It also worked alongside the KRA fleet.

The KRAs were originally Nos. JARV 97101-132 and built to operate with a fourth Harsco machine, Jarvis Fastline P811S track renewal train No. 6190669, delivered in 1999. This machine was 80 metres long and weighed more than 240 tonnes. On TOPS, it was identified as No. DR78901 and consisted of power/fastener, handling, beam and clipping wagons.

It was subsequently replaced by newer Swiss-built Matisa P95UK track renewal trains owned by Network Rail.



Truss Beam Carrier FEA No. 640572 at Monument Lane, Birmingham, on March 15. S F LAPPAGE



Also in the train at Monument Lane on March 15, was KRA Sleeper Carrier No. NR97101. S F LAPPAGE

■ MORE JNA-Y conversions completed by Loram UK at Derby have been Nos. 81705831065-4 to 089-4. Gross weight is 90.0 tonnes and tare 28.0 tonnes; minimum operating radius is 60 metres. Extra MRA side tippers delivered to the RTC site for rebuilding have been Nos. 501008/037/ 039/068/097/ 099/139/140/143/229-231/235-237.

■ VTG RAIL UK has placed further orders for JNA-T box wagons with Greenbrier Europe. They are replacing 35-year-old JYA opens of Orenstein and Koppel heritage on Mendip Rail services. The latest arrivals from Romania have been Nos. 81 70 5932 641-0 to 696-4. Consequently, the older wagons are being retired from traffic and stored, Nos. OK 3268/269/273/ 274/276/260/281/ 285/286/ 290-292/295/301/ 304/305/ 308/ 311/313/314/ 319/321-323. Additionally, another batch of JNA-X modified wagons for Porterbrook Leasing/GB Railfreight traffic have been delivered, Nos.81 70 5932 782-2 to 806-9.

■ DB CARGO wagons sent to scrapyards have been OCA opens Nos. 112001/006/ 022/089/146/337/367; MFA opens Nos. 391462/591; MHA/MPA* 'Coalfish' spoil carriers Nos. 394119*/198/203* /211*/2238/234/258*/280*/32 2*/367*/383*/557*/606/680/6 82*; MTA open No. 395211; MHA spoil carriers Nos. 396098/099/101/105; SPA steel carrier No. 460335; YLA 'Mullet' railflat No. DC 967620.



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Stock Update Track Record



COMPILED BY ASHLEY BUTLIN

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A drone shot of the stored trains at Papworth Sidings, Ely, on May 4 includes 15 HST power cars, 12 Class 465 and two Class 317 EMUs, and 13 Mk.3 coaches. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

LOCOMOTIVES

Allocations
31270 re-registered HQ/MBDL
37069 XWSS-XSDP
37402 XWSS-XSDP
37423 XWSS-XSDP
37424 XWSS-XHSO
43046 SBXL-LSLO
43047 SBXL-LSLO
43049 SBXL-LSLO
43055 SBXL-LSLO
43058 SBXL-LSLO
43059 SBXL-LSLO
43083 SBXL-LSLO
57002 XHSO-XWSS
57301 XWSS-XSDP
57303 XWSS-XSDP
57305 XHAC-XSDP
57306 XWSS-XSDP
57310 XHSO-XWSS-XSDP
60004 re-registered WQ/WQCA
60014 re-registered WQ/WQCA
60018 re-registered WQ/WQCA
60020 TO/WCBT-WQ/WQBA
60060 re-registered WQ/WQCA-HQ/DCRS
60065 TO/WCAT-WQ/WQBA
60100 WQAA-WQBA
66018 TO/WBAE-WQ/WQBA
66230 WQBA-WQCA
66309 newly registered RR/GBLT
66552 FD/DHLT-LD/DFIM
67001 CE/WAAC-WQ/WQBA
90035 WQ/WQBA-CE/WEAC

Liveries
Blue: 20168
DB Cargo red: 66168/90
Midland Mainline Project Rio: 43159
+ Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games: 37611

Named
08703 *Steve Blick (Concrete Bob) ShunterSpot*
37611 *Denise*
43184 *Laira Diesel Depot CrossCountry*
66718 *Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill of Imber in the County of Wiltshire*

Names removed
37409 *Lord Hinton*
37611 *Pegasus*
73202 *Graham Stenning*

Renumbered: 77501-66309

Preserved
Private at the Colne Valley Rly: 08706
125 Group at Ruddington: 43025
125 Heritage at Colne Valley: 43023, 43165

Stored/stopped locations
Crewe ETD: 67001
Crewe Gresty Bridge: 37402, 57310
Laira: 43088, 43158/70
Longport: 60014
Loughborough: 60018
Peak Rail: 97301
Stowmarket: 57002
Toton: 60020/65, 66018

Operational
37424

Disposals
Alizay, France: Cut dates: March: 58007/35; April: 58005/09/10/18/21/36/39/46
EMR Attercliffe: Arrival dates: May 9: 08602; May 11: 08802



Freightliner owns all but one of the 15-strong Class 59 fleet (GBRf has No. 59003), and second-built (in 1985) No. 59002 *Alan J Day* was at the company's Leeds Midland Road depot at the end of May for repairs, it being pictured looking slightly odd on two-axle accommodation bogies on May 28. PAUL BICKERDYKE

MULTIPLE UNITS

Allocations
156405/10 DY/EMHQ-HT/EDHQ
156406/08/09/11/16/17 DY/EMHQ-NH/EDHQ
156407 DY/EMHQ-HQ/SBXH
170202 CF/HLHQ-DY/EMHQ
170501/05/06/07 TS/EJHQ-DY/EMHQ
197048/49 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
317502/04/11 sent for disposal
387172-74 RG/EFHQ-HE/ETHQ
398009 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
720130/31 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ
730034/35/36/38 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
756003/06/07 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
756101/02/04 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
807002 newly delivered HQ/EFHQ

Liveries
EMR purple: 170202
Eurovision branding: 777013
Eurovision: 350104
GMPTE: 142007
Northern: 156411
SWR: 444022
Welcome to Liverpool + Rainbow: 397011

Named
801228 *Century*
802103 *Flying Carolean* + Charles III Coronation logo
802215 *Palace of Holyroodhouse*

Names removed
150233 *Peter West OBE*

Renumbered
170922-170422
170923-170423

Formations
158748: 52748+57748
158768: 52768+57768
158771: 52771+57771
158956/57 disbanded

Now in passenger traffic
158748/68/71
196003/08/10
777004/12/14

Stored/stopped locations
Barrow Hill: 170501
Bletchley: 730007
Brighton: 313204/07/16/20
Camden: 730008/09/12
Cardiff: 756003/06/07, 756101/02/04, 769006/08, 769421/45
Chester: 175008, 175101
Crewe LNWR: 197046/49
Eastleigh: 701027
Eastleigh Works: 313201/06/08/12
Litchurch Lane: 720130
Long Marston: 701013/18/50/52, 769452, 769927
Loughborough: 730010
Hove: 313203/05/09-11/13/15/19
Oxley: 730027/34/35/36/38
Taff Wells: 398009
Walton Old Junc.: 321308/20/26
Wembley: 321309/10/18/28, 701508/10, 730023/25
Worksop: 379001/03/04/06-08/10-15/17-19/21-26/28, 701010

Disposals
C.F.Booth, Rotherham: Cut date: April 24: 78126 (321444)
EMR Kingsbury: Arrival dates: April 28: 317502/04; May 19: 317511
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival date: May 29: 507008/27

HAULED COACHING STOCK

Allocations
11070 SBXH-LSCO
40106 SBXH-LSCO
40801/02/04/08 SBXH-LSCO
41117/49/69/76/82/83/87 SBXH-LSCO
42100 SBXH-LSCO
42220 SBXH-LSCO
42319 SBXH-LSCO
42583 SBXH-LSCO
44047/78/81 SBXH-LSCO
46006/12/14 SBXH-LSCO

Liveries
Network Rail Yellow: 5971

Named
82139 *My Lovely Horse*

Sold
Eastern Rail Services: 5810, 9705, 11018/48/74, 12078/92, 12122/33/38

Preserved
Maam Cross, Connemara: 10598

Stored/stopped locations
Great Yarmouth: 5810, 9705, 11018/48/74, 12078/92, 12122/33/38

Disposals
C.F.Booth, Rotherham: Arrival date: April 26: 975875, 977087

STOCK CHANGES CORRECT AS OF MAY 20, 2023.

Stock Update Portfolio Track Record





ADIEU LES 'BONES': Here is a sight expected for a number of years, but which is still a sad one to actually see happen, as cutting up begins of the Class 58s stored at Alizay in Normandy, France. The fleet of 50 'Bones' were the last diesel locos to be built at Doncaster Works, entering service between the end of 1982 and the start of 1987. By 2002, however, they had all been withdrawn by EWS – but a new life abroad followed for many, helping to build high-speed lines in Spain and France (along with various Class 37s and 56s). When the French work ended in 2010, 23 Class 58s were stored at Alizay. This view on May 2 shows No. 58034 in the process of being dismantled, with the photographer noting that Nos. 58001/013/026/032/040 plus several other unidentified locos were also present. A number of cabs from already-dismantled '58s' can also be seen. DEAN PARSONS

Operations Track Record



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AVANTI WEST COAST

On April 14 unbranded AWC Class 805 No. 805001 ran ECS (Empty Coaching Stock) from Oxley, Wolverhampton as the 5Q80/21.17 to Carlisle and back overnight. On Friday, April 15 the Class 805 unit called briefly at Platform 3 at Lancaster at 23.08 before continuing northwards. In daylight on Monday, April 17, No. 805001 ran ECS on the 5Q87/08.07 from Oxley to Carlisle and back as 5Q88/10.51. On both occasions, when seen passing Lancaster, No. 805001 had a raised pantograph. Just over a week later on Tuesday, April 25, it ran from Oxley, Wolverhampton as the 5Q90/18.43 to Glasgow Central and returned overnight as 5Q91/23.12.

A Milton Keynes to Lancaster service was diagrammed through Bolton and Chorley on Sunday, April 30, formed of Class 390 No. 390128.

LNER

The operational Class 91s continue to attract much attention from enthusiasts. A visit to King's Cross on Saturday, April 1, found No. 91110 *Battle of Britain Memorial Flight*, in Lest We Forget livery, at the head of the 1N87/15.06 departure to York. No. 91110's celebrity livery most definitely did not match the colours of the LNER InterCity train. DVT No. 82212 was noted at the rear of the train. A little later, the 1A30/12.45 from Leeds, was noted arriving with DVT No. 82223 at the front and Class 91 No. 91127 at the rear. The formation was then seen leaving as empty stock train 5Y30 to Ferme Park.

The 1D19/15.03 departure to Leeds, diagrammed to be worked by a Class 91, was cancelled. According to Realtime Trains 'This service was cancelled due to a problem at the depot.'

A visit to Leeds to sample Class 91 haulage on April 19 found No. 91114 on the 11.15 to King's Cross and No. 91101 on the 13.15. The 10.03 King's Cross to Leeds had No. 91109, but its return at 12.45 was cancelled because of a fault on the train. Passengers were directed to the 13.15 departure.

On Friday, April 21, the message 'Significant delays are being experienced on the East Coast Main Line due to a police incident' was repeated many times during a visit to King's Cross station. The Realtime Trains website gave a blunter reason for the train cancellations, which were 'due to a person hit by a train'. The 1A26/11.15 from Leeds due at 13.29, was noted arriving 30 minutes late into platform 0, with DVT No. 82208 at the front and Class 91 No. 91127 at the rear. The same set was then seen forming the 1D17/14.03 departure to Leeds, which left more than 20 minutes late. The 11.45 from Leeds was noted arriving into platform 7 about 10 minutes late, headed by DVT No. 82223 with No. 91101 *Flying Scotsman* at the rear.

From May 6 the 1S13/11.00 from London King's Cross to Edinburgh, is named 'The Carolean Express' to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III, although it is unlikely to be formed of anything other than a standard Azuma.

GWR

Class 769 No. 769949 and two other, unidentified, members of the same class were noted, from a passing train, in the sidings at Reading Traincare Depot on Saturday, April 29.

greateranglia

More of the Class 379 units have departed from Ilford and Harwich Parkeston Quay (PQ) yard for further storage at Worksop. Firstly, Nos. 379016+379002 were moved from Ilford to Worksop by Class 37 No. 37608 on April 19. On April 24, Rail Operations Group (ROG) Class 37 No. 37884 took Nos. 379003+379014 from Ilford to Worksop. In preparation for their move north, on April 25 Nos. 379028+379018 ran from Harwich to Ilford. The next move from Ilford followed on April 28 when Class 37 No. 37608 conveyed Nos. 379023+379021 north to Worksop.

No. 37611 was used on May 2 to move Nos. 379012+379024 while Nos. 379011+379001 followed on May 4 also hauled by Class 37 No. 37611, while on the following day Nos. 379006+379025 ran from Harwich PQ to Ilford. No. 37611 was in use again on May 9 to take Nos. 379018+379028 to Worksop. Three days later the same Class 37 took Nos. 379008+379022 to Worksop, followed by Nos. 379013+379015 on May 15. This left just six of the class at Ilford Nos. 379006/07/10/17/25/26 to be moved.

Class 720s are the traction mainly used on the Harwich branch since withdrawal of the Class 321s, with the following noted at Harwich International: 720117 (April 13); 720518 (April 14); 720118 (April 18); 720507 (April 19-21); 720111 (April 26); 720570 (April 28); 720550 (May 2); 720508 (May 3); and 720118 (May 4). It was interesting that on Saturday, April 15 Stadler Class 755/4 No. 755422 was handed the task.

Saturday, April 29 saw Greater Anglia Charity 321 Farewell Tour work from Liverpool Street to Stowmarket, taking in all the various branches that the Class frequented and was noted arriving at Harwich Town with Nos. 321314+321307.

ScotRail
Scotland's Railway

Movements reported of Class 318 units between Yoker and Brodies, Kilmarnock, included No. 318261 being moved back to Yoker behind Class 37 No. 37800 on April 26. Next, No. 318255 was returned to Yoker by No. 37884 on May 10 before its place was taken at Kilmarnock by No. 318256 on the same day.

crosscountry

With CrossCountry High Speed Trains expected to be withdrawn during the year it makes sense to make as many journeys as possible with them now. Consequently, on Friday, April 14 a correspondent made a journey between Derby and Sheffield on the 1S51/12.27 from Plymouth to Edinburgh, headed by No. 43321 with 43378 at the rear of the train.

CrossCountry trains normally do not serve Didcot Parkway, instead taking the avoiding line.

With the problems with Nuneham Viaduct closed for essential repairs, passengers were transferring between trains and bus substitutes at Didcot Parkway.

On Saturday, April 29, in addition to the service changes because of Nuneham Viaduct, the South Western Main Line was closed between Basingstoke and Winchester, meaning CrossCountry services to and from Bournemouth ran via Guildford.

To sample these unusual routings a journey was made by a correspondent from Didcot Parkway to Guildford on the 1O16/14.25 from Didcot Parkway to Bournemouth formed of Voyager No. 220009.





Above: Avanti West Coast hired in an LSL Mk.3 set to help cope with demand after the Eurovision Song Contest was held in Liverpool in mid-May. The day after the final, May 14, DVT No. 82139 leads 1Z90 Liverpool Lime Street to Euston at Liverpool South Parkway with veteran electric No. 86101 powering at the rear. The train returned empty from London as the 5Z91 to Crewe. BRAD JOYCE

Left: LSL's Midland Pullman, with power cars Nos. 43055/43046, stands at Scarborough on May 3 having arrived with the 1Z43/06.21 'Yorkshire Coast Pullman' from Maidenhead. GEOFF GRIFFITHS



Right: Large logo 'Syphon' No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaedhealach* poses with inspection saloon No. 975025 *Caroline* at Deepcar on May 3. This former stub of the Great Central Main Line between Sheffield and Manchester via Woodhead remained open to serve the steel works at Stocksbridge, but that traffic has now finished and there are proposals to turn the route into an extension of Sheffield tram/tram-train network. CHRIS GEE

From Didcot the train ran on to the relief line before stopping by platform 15 at Reading. Leaving Reading the train took the up relief then ran below the Great Western Main Line on the Reading Low Level line in the dive-under before joining the line towards Wokingham and Guildford.

Not all CrossCountry trains were using the dive-under at Reading and to sample one of these a journey was then made between Reading and Guildford on the 1O20/16.26 from Didcot Parkway to Bournemouth, formed of Voyager No. 220005. This stopped at platform 7 at Reading and left on the down main before taking the spur line to join the line towards Wokingham and Guildford.

An interesting observation by a correspondent on May 10 passing Chandler's Ford station at 09.38, was a Cross Country Voyager. These trains are not routinely routed this way and was travelling at speed so unable to see the number.

A subsequent look at Realtime Time trains did not show anything at Chandler's Ford, other than the usual service trains.

However, a look at Eastleigh showed the 07.25 from Didcot to Bournemouth, formed of Voyager No. 220032, using the usual route to Basingstoke but then no report after Worting Junction until Eastleigh East Junction at 09.41, running 68 minutes late.

Clearly it had been diverted and lost time as a result. The log on Realtime Trains shows the train as terminating at Southampton Central and not proceeding to Bournemouth due to track problems. Further looking shows the unit as leaving Southampton Central heading north at 10.16 with no report between Eastleigh and Worting Junction, where it was 29 min late.

It also shows several SW trains from Waterloo for places beyond Winchester cancelled to Winchester and starting there, although further looking indicates other trains running to Woking and then no report until St Denys, so presumably diverted.

northern

The Sunday only 2C54-2C56 diagram Barrow in Furness-Millom-Barrow was worked by 195120 on May 7.

This is the only scheduled working of a Class 195 north of Barrow on the Cumbrian Coast. Others observed on the working have been Nos. 195112/17/18/30.

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS

The 09.35 Manchester Piccadilly to Scarborough on April 19 was propelled by Class 68 No. 68025 *Superb*. On the same day the 13.03 Hull to Liverpool Lime Street, formed of Class 185 No. 185125 was terminated at Manchester Victoria as there was no driver to take it forward.

GC GRAND CENTRAL

The assorted Class 180 vehicles formed as set No. 180103 returned north from Ilford to Wembley on April 20, hauled by Class 37 No. 37884 where No. 37611 was added and the pair took the unit on to Crofton.

TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU TRANSPORT FOR WALES

It is reported on April 3 TfW introduced the first battery-diesel hybrid trains on the Borderlands Line. The first working was on the 2F50/07.32 departure from Wrexham Central to Bidston formed with unit No. 230010.

The five TfW sets, numbered 230006 to 230010, are the first Class 230 variants to have open gangways, and the internal specification is of higher quality than the similar trains supplied for West Midlands Trains and South Western Railway's Island Line.

The decision to purchase outright the five three-car multiple-units from Vivarail prior to the supplier's collapse proved to be a wise one, as it ensured that they could still enter service.

Observation of the 11.25 Cardiff to Holyhead at Prestatyn in the last week of April was not encouraging. On April 24 it started at Chester, comprising Class 153 Nos. 153303+153921.

The following day it ran throughout, with nothing better than Class 150 No. 150281. On April 26 it was due to start from Chester again, but that was cancelled after a person was sadly hit by an earlier train. On April 27, there was success at last, with Class 67 No. 67012 on Mk.4 stock as booked.

West Midlands Railway

Movements of the Class 730 units continue apace with No. 730024 being moved from Derby to Oxley on April 13, being hauled by ROG Class 37 No. 37608 *Andromeda*. On April 28, ROG Class 37 No. 37884 moved No. 730010 from Oxley to Loughborough, returning with No. 730001 to Oxley. New No. 730035 was delivered from Derby to Oxley by Class 37 No. 37884 on May 12, followed by No. 730036 behind No. 37510 on May 18.

Chiltern railways by arriva

On Saturday, April 8, Class 68 No. 68010 *Oxford Flyer* was seen passing through South Ruislip at the head of the 1R44/16.00 departure from London Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street.

On the same day Wembley Light Maintenance Depot was viewed from a passing train. Nos. 68011 and 68014 were both noted, the latter now in its blue and green livery commemorating that it is now fuelled by recycled vegetable oil.

Wembley Light Maintenance Depot was again viewed from passing trains on Sunday, April 30. In the morning Nos. 68010, 68014 in blue/green livery and 68015 were all noted. Later in the day Nos. 68014 and 68015 were still present but No. 68010 had left.

Operations Track Record

EMR

With the Class 180 expected to be withdrawn by East Midlands Railway, more interest is attached to their workings. On Friday, April 14, No. 180113 was noted heading north from Derby station working the 1F56/18.18 to Sheffield. This train should have originated at St Pancras International, but according to Realtime Trains 'was cancelled between St Pancras International and Derby due to a planning error.'

OVERGROUND

The Gospel Oak to Barking Line (GOBLIN) was closed for engineering work on Saturday, April 1, except for a half-hourly shuttle between Woodgrange Park and Barking Riverside. These trains terminated by platform 1 at Woodgrange Park, normally used for northbound trains, and returned to the south from the same platform, using the crossover to the south of the station to access the down line.

To sample this working a journey was made as far as Barking on the 2J57/13.45 from Woodgrange Park to Barking Riverside formed of Class 710 No. 710262.

ThamesLink

Govia Thameslink Railway has issued a prior information notice seeking between 21 and 30 four-car 25 kV 50 Hz 160 km/h through-gangwayed EMUs with air-conditioning and toilets for use on existing and/or additional Great Northern services from May 2024. This raises speculation that this could be the first step towards the return to service of the currently off-lease Akiem owned Class 379 Electrostars.

southeastern

On Easter Sunday, April 9, South Eastern services were impacted by engineering works. The Hastings service was unable to start from Charing Cross station, which was closed, and instead used Cannon Street. From Tunbridge Wells, bus substitutes ran in place of trains. With the line through Hither Green closed, trains had to take an unusual route through Beckenham Junction.

A journey was made by a correspondent as far as Orpington on the 1Y29/14.05 from London Cannon Street to Tunbridge Wells formed of Nos. 375804+375603. Having left London Bridge, the service ran on the down North Kent past St Johns and platform 2 at Lewisham. From Lewisham the train continued on the down Mid Kent through Catford Bridge before taking the seldom used curve from New Beckenham to Beckenham Junction. After Shortlands it continued on the down Chatham fast to Bickley Junction where it took the curve south of Chislehurst to join the down fast at Petts Wood Junction, which was used to Orpington.

The return journey to London Bridge was made on the 1Y81/14.40 from Tunbridge Wells to London Cannon Street, formed of Nos. 465182+465179. This again ran through Beckenham Junction, New Beckenham and Lewisham.

SOUTHERN

Class 377/7 No. 377701 was noted passing Gatwick Airport on May 10, working a London Victoria to Eastbourne service instead of the booked Class 377/4. It reportedly remained on that diagram working for the rest of the day.

South Western Railway

Engineering works on Saturday, April 8, resulted in several trains being retimed. A journey was made by a correspondent as far as Richmond on the 2U53/17.33 departure from London Waterloo to Hounslow formed of Nos. 450044+450017. Having called at platform 6 at Clapham Junction, the service used the crossover to the west of the station to run on the down fast and stopped at platform 3 at Putney. Approaching Barnes, the crossover was used to take the train back to the down slow so that the 2O51/17.30 from London Waterloo to London Waterloo via the Kingston Loop, and which was stood by platform 3, could be passed. His train arrived at Richmond four minutes late.

The new Class 701 units continue to be placed in store away from SWR with the following moves being reported: No. 701025 being taken by GBRf Class 47 No. 47749 from Eastleigh to Long Marston on April 13, followed by No. 701051 on the same diagram also with No. 47749 on April 19, and No. 701034 the next day. The Class 47 then took No. 701050 on April 27 and No. 701052 on April 28.

A change on May 3 had No. 47727 convey No. 701027 to Long Marston and No. 701018 the next day, with the Class 47 then taking No. 701010 from Eastleigh to Worksop on May 11 and No. 701013 on May 16.

On Wednesday, April 19, Nos. 450023+450030, both in South Western Railway's new livery, were seen at Barnes forming the 2R41/15.15 from London Waterloo to London Waterloo, via Richmond and Hounslow. Sadly, two carriages of No. 450030 had been the victims of a graffiti attack.

'Green' fuels have reportedly been blamed for almost cutting Salisbury and Exeter off from rail services to London Waterloo. South Western Railway has been forced to run a reduced timetable after biofuels used to cut carbon emissions clogged up train engines' fuel filters in its fleet of Class 159 units. Many diesel-powered trains have been run on biofuels as part of a push towards net zero in recent years.

Biodiesel is a renewable, biodegradable fuel manufactured domestically from vegetable oils, animal fats, or recycled restaurant grease. However, it is understood that engines were blocked by algae, which forms 'organic growths' in train fuel tanks. The algae forms if biofuel sits unused for a period of time and is not treated with chemical additives.

Charter Trains

The British Pullmans made an appearance on the Midland Main Line on April 12, when Royal Class 67 No. 67005 *Queen's Messenger*+Pullman Class 67 No. 67024 top-and-tailed the 1E02/08.46 London Victoria to Chesterfield and 1O07/17.11 return, for a visit to Chatsworth House.

Railway Touring Company's 'The



A Colas-powered HST test train visited Workington on May 9, power car No. 43251 seen at the rear of the Derby RTC to Carlisle on the approach to the town's station. DAVID JENNER

Great Britain XV' suffered from late running through Prestatyn. On day 2, April 16, the leg was Bristol to Llandudno Junction via Holyhead. The shadowing diesel, Class 47 No. 47802, passed at 16.39 (36 late), and the train itself with 'Jubilee' No. 45596 *Bahamas* passed at 16.47 (29 late). Day 3 was a rest day, resuming on day 4, April 18, to run from Llandudno Junction to Edinburgh.

The same locos were involved, No. 45596 passing Prestatyn with the tour at 10.31 (22 late), and No. 47802 shadowing at 10.36, on time. When seen passing through Lancaster at 13.12, this service (1Z20) was then followed four minutes later by WCR's maroon Class 47 No. 47802 which had run light from Llandudno Junction (0Z20/10.05) which followed to Carlisle.

At Carnforth, 'Royal Scot' No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* took over for the run to Edinburgh but failed at Lockerbie with a hot-box on the tender. After a 145 minute delay, the Class 47 took the service through to Edinburgh.

The next report of the tour was on April 21 when it arrived at Blackpool with the Lancashire leg at 19.26 on Thursday, April 21, the ECS (5Z35) along with 'Jubilee' No. 45690 *Leander* was pulled back to Preston by WCR Class 37 No. 37516. From Preston No. 45690 pulled the ECS with No. 37516 on the rear to Carnforth. On the following day, the tour's coaching stock was moved from Carnforth (5Z36/06.50) to Preston double-headed by Nos. 45690 + 45699 *Galatea* (running as No. 45562 *Alberta*) with WCR Class 47 No. 47802 on the rear.

From Preston 5Z36 was pulled to Blackpool by the Class 47 with the two steam locos on the rear. However, later that day, No. 45699 returned to Carnforth (5Z55) from Preston dep 11.06. After being held in Barton and then Outbeck Loops, No. 45699 was seen passing very slowly through Lancaster at 13.44 running tender-first pulling a single support coach.

The annual Victorian weekend at Llandudno was catered for by specials to the resort on April 29. 'The Llandudno Victorian Statesman', from Didcot Parkway, passed Prestatyn at 11.34 behind Class 47 Nos. D1924 (47810) and 47593, followed at 12.15 by Vintage Trains' 'North Wales Coast Express' from Birmingham New Street behind Class 47 No. 47773, trailed by WR 'Castle' No. 7029 *Clun Castle*. The steam loco had led to Chester, where the whole train was turned on the triangle just west of the station. This enabled *Clun Castle* to lead on the return journey.

Having arrived in Carlisle at 14.24 on Saturday, May 6, after a 298-mile journey via Settle from Cardiff (1Z34/06.15) LSL's Class 47s Nos. 47593+D1935 (47805) later set off at 16.15 (1Z35) top-and-tailing a rake of Pullman liveried coaches on a 332-mile journey back to Cardiff. This returning journey ran initially along the Cumbrian coast line via Whitehaven to Carnforth then headed south via Crewe and Hereford to arrive back in Cardiff at 23.42.

DB Cargo

On Tuesday, April 4, the 6Y55 from Angerstein Wharf to Woking Down Yard was seen approaching Brentford powered by Class 66 No. 66005 *Maritime Intermodal One*, in Maritime blue livery, but also carrying a large DB logo, which looked somewhat out of place.

One of the few freights running on Good Friday, April 7, the 6X11 from Toton North Yard to Dollands Moor Sidings carrying new Toyotas for export, was seen between Barnes and Putney behind DB red-liveried Class 66 No. 66105.

A visit to London Victoria on Good Friday, April 7 found that Pullman train 1Y41 from Gillingham had just arrived at platform 2 top-and-tailed by Class 67 Nos. 67005 *Queen's Messenger* and 67024, in Pullman livery.

Reports of the Cardiff Tidal-Sunderland-Cardiff Tidal scrap trains, all hauled by Class 66s, included No. 66066 on April 13, followed on April 27 when No. 66089 ran back as far as Tees Yard where No. 66088 came on to return the loaded rake to Cardiff. When observed on May 4, No. 66161 worked throughout. A variation on May 16 found No. 66119 taking the empties from Cardiff to Tees Yard where No. 66075 took over through to Sunderland and back to Cardiff.

The following movement was observed on April 18 when Class 66 No. 66161 still in EWS colours, worked the 6K27/14.43 Carlisle New Yard to Crewe Basford Hall departmental, passing Greenholme at 15.40.

Various moves of Class 325 units have been reported including No. 325001 being towed from Crewe ETD to Marcroft, Stoke by Class 67 No. 67008 on April 25. The same Class 67 was in use again on April 29 to move No. 325004 from Crewe ETD to Toton for tyre turning. Completed by May 2, the Class 67 brought No. 325003 to Toton, then taking No. 325004 back to Crewe.

A visitor to Reading on April 26, saw Class 66 No. 66148 *Maritime Intermodal Seven* work through Platform 15 with the 4V39/13.30 Didcot T.C.-Morris Cowley Oxford with a consist of covered car-flats having to work a circuitous route via South Ruislip, Gerrards Cross and High Wycombe onto the Chiltern Railways route to Oxford, rather than via the normal short haul but now temporarily closed direct Didcot-Oxford route over the Nuneham Viaduct.

Class 67 No. 67007 in its Queen Elizabeth 2 Platinum Jubilee purple livery, besides working 1Z90 King's Cross to Edinburgh tour on May 1, had worked for a couple of weeks either side of that on 0Z33/0Z34 diagram from



'Gronk' No. 08870 is seen on shunting duties at Eastern Rail Services's base at Great Yarmouth Carriage Sidings on April 29. It is moving Mk.1 coach No. 35292 and EMU No. 321434. MATTHEW GREAVES



A Class 56 – at Newtown on the Cambrian main line! Normally only units and locos fitted with ERTMS signalling can run on this route, but closure under a T3 possession on May 10 allowed other traction to venture west of Shrewsbury – including No. 56090 (pictured), 56105 and 66850. MIKE BROOM

Peterborough to Ipswich, via the North London line, on route-learner operations. The one on April 27 was aborted at Stratford (London) because of major signalling issues caused by vandals removing cables at Harold Wood, an issue that caused widespread delays on Greater Anglia services during the morning and early afternoon.

Class 66 No. 66056 worked the Neasden to Newhaven on May 10, but failed near Lewes. Class 37 No 37254 came to the rescue as it was in the area on a route familiarisation trip. The Class 37 assisted to Newhaven where it arrived 216 minutes late. The Class 37 was detached at Newhaven after No. 66056 got some strength back and continued under its own power.

Freightliner

Class 90 Nos. 90045+90047 double-headed a set of empty container flats on Tuesday, April 25, from Crewe on the 4S52/07.51 to Mossend.

On Tuesday, April 25, Class 66 No. 66414, in Powerhaul livery, was seen, from Acton Main Line station, shunting some Foster Yeoman wagons in the adjacent yard.

DRS

The following movements were observed on April 18: Class 88 No. 88005 *Minerva* worked the 4S43/06.25 Daventry DRS (Tesco) to Mossend Euroterminal seen passing Plumpton Head at 10.16; Class 66 No. 66425 *Nigel J Kirchstein 1957-2021* worked the 4M27/05.40 Mossend Down Yard to Daventry (diverted via Dumfries), observed passing Kitchen Hill south of Plumpton Head at 11.11; a further working saw Class 68 No. 68006 *Pride of the North* on the 6K06/11.40 Shap Summit Quarry to Crewe Basford Hall aggregates, passing Greenholme north of Tebay at 12.42; Class 66 No. 66031 worked the 6K05/12.32 Carlisle New Yard to Crewe Basford Hall departmental, also passing Greenholme at 13.43; and finally, also passing Greenholme was Class 66 No. 66431 working the 4S44/11.57 Daventry to Mossend Down Yard intermodal at 16.29.

Class 68s Nos. 68005 *Defiant*+68016 *Fearless* pulled a single flask container on Thursday, April 20, from Sellafield on the 6K74/16.42 to Crewe via Carlisle. Further flask workings included Class 68 Nos. 68017 *Hornet* and 68002 *Intrepid* on a 6C53 Crewe Coal sidings to Sellafield with one PFA and three FNA-Ds on April 28.

On May 4, Class 68 Nos. 68018 *Vigilant* and 68009 *Titan* took all six KXA-C wagons and seven PFAs as spacers on 7X23 Sellafield to Barrow Marine Terminal, returning light engine as 0C24.

Moves on May 9 included Class 68 Nos. 68003 *Astute* and 68004 *Rapid* running as 0C23 light engine from Sellafield to Barrow Marine Terminal, returning to Sellafield from Barrow M.T. as 7X24 with two loaded KXA-Cs and one empty plus spacer PFAs. On the same day, Class 68 Nos. 68016 *Fearless* and 68001 *Evolution* top and tailed the Sellafield-Heysham Power Station-Sellafield.

Two days later, Nos. 68005 Defiant and 68002 Intrepid worked the 7X23 Sellafield to Barrow M.T. with three KXA-Cs, two loaded with adaptor frames, returning later to Sellafield with five loaded KXA-Cs and PFA spacers. On the same day, consecutively numbered Class 68 Nos. 68003 *Astute* + 68004 *Rapid* pulled three white FNA

flasks from Sellafield on a 6K74/16.58 to Crewe.

On Monday, May 8, the 4S44/12.05 Daventry to Mossend container service was hauled by Class 68 No. 68018 *Vigilant,* coupled in front of Class 88 No. 88006 *Juno* which had a raised pantograph.

GB Railfreight

The 6Y42 from Hoo Junction Up Yard to Eastleigh East Yard was seen approaching Brentford on Monday, April 3, behind Class 66 No. 66712 *Peterborough Power Signalbox*. The following day, Tuesday, April 4, No. 66712 was seen again, this time between Barnes and Putney, heading the 6Y48 from Eastleigh East Yard to Hoo Junction Up Yard. Also observed between Barnes and Putney was Class 66 No. 66789 *British Rail 1948-1997*, looking good in work-worn BR blue livery with large logo seen working the 6O60 from Bow Depot to Tonbridge West Yard.

On the same day, the 4Y19 from Mountfield Sidings to Southampton Western Docks was brought to a signal halt at Barnes station. The locomotive, No. 66728, had lost a nameplate in what appears to have been a sideswipe incident.

A diverted working brought interest to the Midland Main and South Leicestershire lines when ex-DRS Class 66 No. 66305 worked a trainload of IZA ferry cargowaggons conveying bottled water as the 6M45/06.43 Dollands Moor-Daventry and 6O67/16.43 return on April 7, and 6M45/06.48 Dollands Moor-Daventry and 6O69/15.50 return on April 8.

After Class 66 No. 66730 Whitemoor left Harwich PQ yard over the weekend of April 9/10 bound for Peterborough, Nos. 66782 and 66748 *West Burton 50* worked over from Peterborough early morning on April 11 on the 0L41 to the Essex port, with the former taking over Intermodal 4R43 to Felixstowe because No. 66705 *Golden Jubilee* had been seconded from its Intermodal overnight to move tanks from the Harwich Refinery and create 6P40 to leave for North Walsham at 04.30, while No. 66748 took over from No. 66730 on 4Y66 Intermodal to Felixstowe at 11.03.

No. 66705 worked back to Harwich Refinery on 6A33 and arrived roughly 60 minutes early. It then worked another shift to the Norfolk depository of condensate gas on April 12 and brought the normal diagram 6A32 back the following day before heading back to Peterborough as 0E06 later that same evening.

The following week on April 19, No. 66304 worked the mid-morning 6P41 to North Walsham but after an overnight stay there, instead of bringing the loaded consist back, possibly because of not enough condensate to load, it headed off to Peterborough on 0A34 via Norwich and Ely. It was not until April 27 that No. 66714 *Cromer Lifeboat* worked 0A34 from Peterborough to North Walsham via Stowmarket that the loaded tanks returned to the Harwich Refinery on the normal 6A32 before departing in the evening back to Peterborough MPD.

On Bank Holiday May 1, No. 66701 moved from Ipswich Reception as 0P41 to stand all day in field sidings at Harwich PQ yard before an early start as 6P40 at 04.30 to North Walsham, returning with a loaded consist on the same day at 16.00. It followed it up with an empty tanks movement on May 3, with an overnight stay at North Walsham before coming back the next day and leaving for Peterborough MPD after shunting the loaded tanks into the Refinery confines.

On Thursday, April 13, the 5D69 from Derby Litchurch Lane to Leicester LIP was seen leaving from platform 3 at Derby. The train was headed by Class 50 No. 50007 *Hercules* purporting to be No. 50034 *Furious* (on one side of the loco), with Class 56 No. 56098 at the rear, and was formed of barrier vehicles ADB975974 *Paschar*, ADB975978 *Perpetiel*, 6376 and 6377.

MoD traffic reported included Class 66 No. 66704 on a Marchwood to Kineton move on April 13, followed on April 17 when No. 66712 worked a Marchwood to Southampton Docks. The same loco was used again on April 21, again on a Marchwood-Kineton move. The next reported move was on May 4, with No. 66792 on a Kineton-Marchwood diagram followed by Class 66 No. 66730 pulled an MoD train of three containers on a 6G64/20.28 from Carlisle south to Kineton MoD depot on Wednesday, May 10. Yet another change of power followed on May 15 with No. 66779 on another Marchwood-Kineton-Longtown move, returning to Kineton the next day.

Scrap metal trains continue on a regular basis, all in the hands of Class 66s. On April 14 No. 66713 was reported on the regular Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram. On April 17 No. 66763 was reported on a Small Heath-Saltley-Liverpool move. The same loco worked a Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram on April 19. Two days later it powered a Liverpool-Attercliffe-Liverpool diagram, followed by a Liverpool to Saltley and return on April 24.

On April 26 it was out again on the Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram followed by a Liverpool-Attercliffe-Liverpool diagram on April 28. On May 1, No. 66703 worked a Liverpool-Saltley-Liverpool diagram, then two days later the Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram.

BR Large Logo Blue-liveried Class 56 No. 56098 towed Caledonian Sleeper Class 92 No. 92038 south as the 0Z92/10.08 Loughborough Brush-Wembley Intercity Depot light engine move on April 14.

Weekend Intermodal traffic in Harwich PQ yard on April 15 saw Class 66 No. 66737 *Lesia* on 4L03 and No. 66795 on 4L28, both originating from Doncaster i-Port, arriving an hour apart, before moving out on April 17 with 4Y66and 4R43 round to Felixstowe Port. A week later on April 22 it was No. 66305 on 4L42 and No. 66769 *LMA League Managers Association/ Paul Taylor Our Inspiration*, again from Doncaster, leaving on April 24 with 4R43 and 4Y66 respectively.

May Bank Holiday weekend saw the arrival of Nos. 66769 (4L03) and 66732 *GBRf the First Decade 1999-2009 John Smith – MD* (4L28) and the following Coronation weekend brought Nos. 66769 (4L03) again and 66722 *Sir Edward Watkin* (4L28) for a prolonged stay and a Tuesday morning getaway round to Felixstowe port.

A further ex-DRS Class 66 made an appearance through Market Harborough on April 17 when No. 66303 worked the 6Z58 08.38 Wellingborough to Llandudno Junction.

English Electric classic traction replacing General Motors power will always bring a smile to the face, so it was very pleasing to see ED Class 73 Nos. 73213 *Rhodalyn* and 73109 *Battle of Britain* on Tuesday, April 18, between Barnes and Putney, at the head of the 6Y48 from Eastleigh East Yard to Hoo Junction Up Yard. The train was formed of JJA Bogie Autoballaster Hoppers and JNA Bogie Open wagons, all loaded with ballast.

The electro-diesel twins were out again the following day, Wednesday, April 19, when they were seen passing Barnes station at the head of the 6Y42 from Hoo Junction Up Yard to Eastleigh East Yard. The train was formed of a pair of FEA Bogie Container Flats, followed by a YEA 'Perch/Porpoise' Bogie Long-Welded Rail Carrier and a string of JZA Bogie Long-Welded Rail Wagons, all of which were empty.

A new traffic flow on April 20 saw Class 66 No. 66755 move a steel train from Trostre to Dawsons, Middlesbrough.

Freight traffic passing Thankerton recommenced on April 24 (other than ballasts in connection with the Carstairs job) when observed the 6L35/17.34 Mossend Down Yard to Dagenham (empty car train) in the hands of No. 66725.



A very 'Southern' scene at Worting Junction, west of Basingstoke, on May 3, as GBRf 'Shoeboxes' Nos. 73213 *Rhodalyn*+73136 *Mhairi* head the 6Y48 Eastleigh to Hoo Junction engineering train. Class 73s are no longer common on this working, but it is understood they were helping fill a temporary shortage of traction at GBRf caused by the Class 69 fleet being stood down. STEPHEN STUBBS



Not often seen on these pages are the industrial locos in use at Tata Steel's plant in Port Talbot, South Wales – but the 1955-built Brush Bagnall Bo-Bo diesel-electric No. 903 (works number 3065) is seen on May 17 in Margam Knuckle Yard as it prepares to take a rake of wagons into the steel works for loading. STUART WARR

After a break of several months, the 4S57/10.58 Hams Hall to Mossend returned on Monday, April 24 with Class 66 No. 66753 pulling an almost fully loaded container train. However, on the following day the same 4S57 working, pulled by the same GBRf Class 66, did not convey a single container.

Class 60 No. 60014 was moved by road from Toton to EMD Longport on April 26 for assessment with a view to a possible re-engineering.

On Saturday, May 6, the 6K22/15.20 Carlisle New Yard to Abington (for the Carstairs work area) was observed passing Thankerton with Class 66 No. 66745 providing the motive power.

Class 66 Nos. 66711+66774 ran as a light engine duo on Sunday, May 7, from Carlisle (6X69/19.41) to Bescot.

Class 66s continue to be seen at Newhaven. No. 66778 *Cambois Depot 25 years* was noted on May 10 and 11. Also present on May 11 was No 66784 *Keighley & Worth Valley Railway 50th anniversary 1968-2018*.

COLAS RAIL

Observed working the Carlisle to Chirk log train on April 17, were Class 56 Nos. 56049+56113, usually diagrammed for Class 70 haulage. The same pair were again on the diagram the next day being observed passing Greenholme north of Tebay. Also working through Carlisle on April 18 was Class 70 No. 70813 running light as the 0Z30/09.48 Carlisle New Yard to Rugby D.E.D.. A second Class 70, No. 70814, worked the 6K30/13.42 Carlisle New Yard to Longport Land Recovery with a train of recovered ballast. The Aberystwyth to Chirk loaded log train on April 28 was hauled by Class 97 No. 97302+Class 37 No. 37254.

Colas Rail Tamper No. DR73909 *Saturn* was moved on Sunday, April 23 from Preston (6J72/10.33) to Carlisle.

On Monday, April 24 Class 56 Nos. 56049 and 56113 were observed passing Thankerton double heading the 6S37/05.44 Carlisle New Yard to Cloburn Quarry loading point at Ravenstruther.

An unusual move on May 2 found power car No. 43272 run solo from Derby to Laira.

Colas Rail Class 66 No. 66849 *Wylam Dilly* pulled six Network Rail HQAF mineral wagons on Thursday, May 4, on a 6C96/16.53 from Crewe to Silecroft on the Cumbrian Coast.

Colas Rail Class 70 No. 70816 coupled in front of Class 56 No. 56113 ran as a light engine combination on Tuesday, May 9 on a 0F55/10.49 from Carlisle to Rugby.

With no WCML passenger trains running on Friday, May 11, the 6M38/10.01 Ravenstruther to Longport train of Land Recovery mineral wagons, pulled by Class 70 No. 70806, was observed passing through Lancaster at 13.45 running 130 minutes early.

DC Rail

Looking smart in grey livery, Class 56 No. 56091 was seen on Tuesday, April 25, from Acton Main Line station when working train 4Z44 from Wembley Receptions 1-7 to Acton Yard.

Class 60 No. 60055, in grey livery, was noted, from a passing train, in the sidings at West Drayton on Saturday, April 29.

Rail Operations Group

ROG has announced testing of the first Class 93 tri-mode locomotive has commenced at Stadler's test facility in Valencia.

WEST COAST RAILWAYS
THE UK'S LEADING SPECIAL TRAINS OPERATOR

Maroon Class 47 No. 47802 plus in steam 'Black Five' No. 44932 double-headed an ECS rake as 5M43 from Southall to Carnforth on Monday, April 24. Although it was 107 minutes late on leaving Southall, this working was only six minutes late on arrival in Carnforth.

WCR Class 57s Nos. 57313+57314 top-and-tailed an ECS rake of Northern Belle coaches on Friday, May 5 on a 5Z79/12.52 from Carnforth to Burton Wetmore Sidings.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (K&WVR)-based 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45212 was seen passing through Carlisle light engine, unusually without a support coach, en route from Carnforth to Fort William on May 8. The previous day it had run light tender first, from Haworth, K&WVR to the West Coast Railways depot at Carnforth.



Left: There was a Highland 'Hoover' on May 4, when No. 50050 *Fearless* was sent to Inverness Millburn Yard to collect Type 3 No. 37116, which had failed at Helmsdale on a test train working. The two locos are pictured getting under way at Raigmore with the 0Z11/14.25 to York North Yard. GRAEME ELGAR

Locomotive Services Ltd

On Friday, April 21, an empty stock train 5Z54, from Crewe Holding Sidings to King's Cross, was noted from a passing train, stabled by the Emirates Stadium at Holloway South Junction. The train was headed by No. 90001 *Royal Scot* with Class 55 No. D9000 (55022) *Royal Scots Grey* at the rear of the train. A little later, the same train was seen by platform 3 at King's Cross, now forming the 1Z55/13.15 to Edinburgh, with No. D9000 at the front and No. 90001 at the rear.

On Friday, May 12, the only WCML scheduled passenger working from London Euston was the 1Z70/07.30 to Carlisle. This was formed of five ScotRail coaches, plus two maroon and cream Mk.1 coaches pulled by green liveried Class 55 'Deltic' No. D9000 with Inter-City Swallow liveried Class 87 No. 87002 *Royal Sovereign* on the rear with pantograph down. This same train and loco formation returned ECS from Carlisle (5Z21/12.03) to Crewe led by the Class 87.

EMR Kingsbury

The yard has been taking Class 317 units for scrap from store at Ely. On April 19 Nos. 317884+317886 were delivered by Class 37 No. 37800, followed on April 28 when the Class 37 delivered Nos. 317502+317504.

LORAM

Observed on Friday, April 14 was the 5Z14 from Derby R.T.C. to Derby R.T.C. via Chesterfield passing platform 3 at Derby. The train was top-and-tailed by Class 37 No. 37612 and Colas HST power car No. 43272.

On Monday, April 17, Network Rail Tamper No. DR73118 ran on a 6U52/10.34 from Walsall north to Morecambe South Junction. After being turned on the triangle of tracks there, No. DR73118 headed back south (14.53) to Crewe.

A visit to Liverpool Street station on Tuesday, April 25 found test train 1Q95 from Ferme Park Reception to Ripple Lane West Sorting Sidings, via Shoeburyness, at platform 6. On departure from Liverpool Street, the train formed of Class 37 No. 37099 + Radio Survey coach No. 977868 + Overhead Line Inspection coach No. 977983 + Special vehicle No. 5981 + Generator No. 6264 + No. 37612.

A new Rail Milling Machine Nos. DR79102+DR79103 arrived at Harwich Parkeston Quay yard on May 4 on a 6Q01 from Paddock Wood Keyland Sidings. On subsequent overnight runs it had trips down the Clacton and Felixstowe branch lines before returning for daytime servicing.

Network Rail's Rail Grinder No. DR79262 *Chris Gibb* was moved on Friday, May 5, on a 6U02/09.08 from Crewe to Carlisle High Wapping Sidings, being observed through Lancaster at 11.32.

Network Rail's Class 950 Track Recording DMU No. 950001 was moved on Saturday, May 6, from Derby (2Q08/14.14) to Carlisle. On May 13, it hit a stag near Garelochhead where its move to Slateford was terminated and the unit placed in the sidings.

Our thanks

THE Railway Magazine's thanks for information go to: Jonathan Allen, Paul Atkinson, Gene Collins, Mike Cooper, Michael Denholm, Kevin Driscoll, David Gurr, Barry Knock, Sean Morris, Mark Reynolds, Kev Smith, Craig Wellum and Chris West.

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Preferred options outlined in consultation for DART+ Coastal North extension

Package of improvements set to deliver capacity enhancements on key rail route into Dublin city centre from Malahide and Drogheda.

IARNRÓD Éireann commenced a second round of public consultation for DART+ Coastal North on May 9, outlining the preferred option which will see the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) network extended by 37km from Malahide to Drogheda.

The scheme aims to deliver an increased and improved electrified network with additional passenger capacity, which will see the number of trains from Drogheda to Dublin city centre increase from 11 to 24 per hour, with a capacity uplift for commuters from 12,500 to 26,600. There would also be a 50% increase in service and capacity from Malahide to Dublin city centre through an increase from 20 to 30 trains.

The second round preferred option includes:

Reconfiguration of the existing track layout and associated infrastructure at Drogheda, Malahide, Clongriffin and Howth Junction & Donaghmede Stations including the provision of additional track and turnback facilities

- Infrastructure that will enable the operation of both a DART shuttle service on the Howth Branch, at such time that future passenger demand warrants its use, and/or the continued operation of a direct through service to/from Dublin city centre
- Significant enhancements for Howth Junction & Donaghmede Station, in response to customer feedback from the first round of consultation, to provide a more accessible, user friendly and customer focused station for all rail users
- Construction of a new platform at Drogheda
- Undertaking upgrades to existing signalling, telecoms and power supplies to support the planned increase in train services, including the introduction of eight new electrical substations at key locations alongside the line
- Bridge improvements/ modifications as required, modifications to existing depots at Drogheda and Fairview to support the new train fleet.

Commenting on the consultation, Transport Minister, Eamon Ryan TD said: "The positive public response to the first round of consultation on DART+ Coastal North showed that the people living in north County Dublin, Meath and Louth want to be able to travel by fast, frequent and low-carbon public transport. Battery-electric trains will be serving this demand from 2025 and the future rollout of DART+ Coastal North will further enhance rail transport options along the Northern Line."

The second round of public consultation on the DART+ Coastal North 'Preferred Option' is open until June 23.

Funding go-ahead for Derry Phase 3

Northern Ireland's Department for Infrastructure confirmed on May 15 that funding has been awarded for Phase 3 of track upgrades between Derry and Coleraine. The project will deliver the renewal of 20 miles of track between Eglinton and Castlerock and includes the replacement of sleepers and new ballast.

Translink is currently undertaking procurement exercises for suppliers required for project delivery – and the feasibility study is ongoing for the infrastructure required to provide a half-hourly service between Coleraine and Derry.



At the beginning of May, three carriages were delivered to Maam Cross for the Connemara Railway. Ex-Caledonian Sleeper Mk.3 No. 10598, CIÉ 1956-built brake standard No. 1916, and diner No. 2421. In the foreground is the temporary 3ft gauge pop up railway with Deutz No. LM194 with its train. JIM DEEGAN

Maam Cross gets first operational carriages

THE Connemara Railway project at Maam Cross took delivery of several carriages in early May. On May 1, former Caledonian Sleeper M.3 sleeping car No. 10598, built at Derby in 1983 and withdrawn in October 2019, was the first item to arrive, regauged using former DART EMU bogies. It had been bought from West Coast Railways in Carnforth and transported by RSS Logistics. The coach will provide accommodation on site for volunteers.

Subsequently, two carriages in operational condition were delivered from Inchicore Works, having been acquired from the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland, where they were stored.

Both carriages were constructed at Inchicore works and date from 1956, No. 1916 – a CIÉ-built brake standard arrived on May 3, and diner No. 2421, one of a batch of four catering vehicles (2419-22) the next day. Before delivery, both coaches were repainted into the CIÉ Black and Tan livery in the Iarnród Éireann paint shop at Inchicore works.

Jim Deegan of the Connemara Railway project said: "The delivery of these carriages marks a significant milestone in the project, as we will have the ability soon to introduce train rides and provide catering on site when we are ready.

"We are very grateful to IÉ chief mechanical engineer Peter Smyth and John Gray of Inchicore Works to allow the wonderful paint shop team to return the carriages to their best-known livery.

"The project hopes to acquire an operational loco soon."

A tale of two railtours

ENTHUSIASTS enjoyed the opportunity to experience unusual track and rolling stock combinations in April, thanks to two different railtour operators.

On April 15, Táilte Tours ran the 'Suir Lee Knot' railtour from Cork to Waterford via Limerick Junction and Clonmel, with two IR two-car 2600 Class DMUs Nos. 2608/07+2614/17 over the Limerick Junction to Waterford branch, a route otherwise exclusively worked by InterCity Railcars. Departure from Cork was from platform 3 and via the Up loop which avoids the station.

Other unusual track included the loops at Tipperary, Clonmel and Charleville. Over 120 passengers travelled and the tour included a stop at Carrick on Suir to visit the Irish Traction Group base where 1956-built C Class No. 226 was on display and is being restored to working order.

On April 22, the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland operated a sold out 'Sligo Leitrim' with almost 300 passengers on board and saw the first IÉ 201 Class operate to Sligo on a passenger service. Departing Dublin Connolly, the train consisted of six Cravens coaches and a van and was initially hauled by Belmond-liveried No. 216 to M3 Parkway.

GM 071 Class No. 075, which earlier ran light to M3 Parkway, returned the train via Drumcondra to Connolly. No. 216 then took the train from Connolly to Sligo which featured stops at selected stations. An extended stop was made at Dromod, giving an opportunity to visit the 3ft gauge Cavan & Leitrim Railway and museum.

No. 216 hauled the railtour back from Sligo to Dublin Grand Canal Dock with stops again being made at intermediate stations. Another highlight was that the route to Grand Canal Dock included the short but steeply graded Newcomen Junction-Connolly link line.



IÉ Class 2600 DMU, comprising Nos. 2617+2614+2608+2607 is seen on Carrick on Suir where the 10.00 Cork to Waterford 'Suir Lee Knot' railtour paused for a photostop and visit to the Irish Traction Group restoration base.



Belmond liveried IÉ 201 Class No. 216 at the buffer stops at Sligo on April 22, marking the first 201 Class hauled passenger train to Sligo with the RPSI's 'Sligo Leitrim' tour. This was in fact No. 216's second visit to Sligo, having previously visited in 1996 when it was hauled around the network dead by a GM 141 Class on a trial. BOTH: NEIL DINEEN



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Argentinian veteran diesels still going strong

Large fleet including Alco and EMD locomotives built in the 1950s and 60s continue to operate on national rail network.



Left: Built at Schenectady, New York in June 1958, Alco RSD16 No. 8272 is in service with private freight company Nuevo Central Argentino (NCA) and is seen at the yard at Retiro in central Buenos Aires on March 12, 2023. NCA will lose its concession in June 2024, meaning the loco fleet will pass to national operator Trenes Argentinos Cargas. KEITH FENDER

ARGENTINA'S railways continue to use diesel locos supplied by North American builders in the late 1950s/early 1960s, plus others constructed in Spain in the 1960s. More modern Chinese-built locos and electrification have replaced many old diesel locos working commuter rail services around Buenos Aires in the last decade. While the number of routes and services operated by 1950s/60s vintage diesels has reduced considerably, there are still more than almost anywhere else in the world.

Following electrification of the 'Roca' routes from the city's Plaza Constitución station in 2017, the older diesel locos have migrated to services in the city's suburbs. The older EMD and Alco design passenger diesel locos are mostly based at Haedo depot, on the Sarmiento Line from Once station, and as a result are found working outer suburban routes normally connected to electrified routes into the city centre on routes such as Merlo – Lobos, Moreno – Mercedes and Villa Ballester – Zárate, all west of the city centre.

Late 1950s/early 1960s EMD built G12 / GR12 locos and Alco RSD35 / RSD39 types built in Canada and Spain in 1963 and 1965 respectively can be found on these services alongside more modern EMD G22/GT22 locos built in the 1970s-90s and a handful of ex-RENFE Class 319 diesel locos bought second-hand from Spain. The ex-Portuguese, English Electric-engined, Class 1400 design no longer has any mainline work although one or two remain as depot shunters.

Diesel hauled services at the southern end of the 'Roca' system such as from Ezeiza – Canuelas – Monte are mostly in the hands of 1990s-built EMD GT22 locos. The Belgrano Norte metre gauge route from Retiro Belgrano station is entirely loco hauled currently, using 1970s/80s built G22 EMD locos, after DMUs previously used in recent years have been transferred elsewhere.

The 1957-59 built Alco RSD16 design replaced on passenger work since 2012 by modern Chinese built locos remains in use with freight operators and a few have been retained as depot shunters too. The slightly more modern Alco RSD35 model, 110 of which were delivered from MLW in Montreal, Canada to Ferrocarriles Argentinos in 1963, remain in use with rail freight operators, and are still sometimes used for passenger services too.

Private operators

The Argentinian government announced in April it will temporarily extend, for 18 months, the privately owned passenger concessions for the standard gauge third rail electrified Urquiza and metre gauge unelectrified Belgrano Norte lines, which operate from Federico Lacroze and Retiro Belgrano stations in Buenos Aires respectively. The government says it intends to tender operation of both lines.

Ferrovías which has operated the Belgrano Norte line since 1994 has achieved high levels of punctuality and reliability when compared to other commuter rail services in the region but despite this its request for a 10-year concession in 2018 was rejected by the government.

Metrovías formerly also operated the Buenos Aires 'Subte' metro system which is now operated by the Emova joint venture, partly owned by the Roggio Group which owns Metrovías.

The government signed agreements with Chinese companies in January 2022 to modernise both lines within the next decade. The Belgrano Norte route will be electrified with new rolling stock in conjunction with China Railway International Group whilst new EMUs will be introduced on the Urquiza route in conjunction with CRRC subsidiary CRRC Quindao Sifang.





Above: State owned freight operator Trenes Argentinos Cargas is also currently leasing Ferrovías' several EMD G22 diesel locos to work alongside the existing Ferrovías pool of 21 similar locos. Trenes Argentinos No. 7746 seen arriving at Carapachay with a train to Retiro Belgrano on March 23, 2023. KEITH FENDER

Left: Now 66 years old and still in daily use – built in La Grange (Chicago) in February 1957 (as Ferrocarriles Argentinos No. 4515), EMD G12 No. A614 is seen in the new Trenes Argentinos corporate livery at Moreno in the western suburbs with a train to Mercedes on March 24, 2023. KEITH FENDER

Hydrogen fuel cell future for Indian narrow gauge lines?

IN February the Indian government announced plans to introduce hydrogen fuel cell-powered trains to replace diesel.

Whilst a pilot project to convert an existing broad gauge DEMU to hydrogen has been announced, to be used on the Jind-Sonipat line operated by Indian Railways-owned Northern Railway, north east of Delhi, the bigger order planned by the government is for 35 hydrogen-powered trains to be used on India's famous narrow gauge 'heritage' railways.

A prototype seven-car hydrogen-powered multiple unit will be trialled on the Kalka – Shimla 2ft 6ins (762mm) gauge line this year and three hydrogen refuelling stations will be established at Shimla, Barog and Kalka stations.

Hydrogen train technology for Indian Railways is being developed by Hyderabad-based company Medha Servo using hydrogen fuel cells bought from Canadian firm Ballard (which also supplies fuels cells to both Siemens and Stadler in Europe).

The planned "Hydrogen for Heritage" order for 35 trains is being tendered with several international manufacturers reportedly interested. The Indian government has set a budget of around £8 million per train, which is substantially cheaper than any hydrogen train currently available in Europe.

The lines the new trains may be used on include the well-known Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, Nilgiri Mountain Railway (metre gauge and rack equipped), Kalka Shimla Railway, Matheran Hill Railway and Kangra Valley – plus the more recently designated heritage lines, namely the 762mm gauge Bilmora - Waghai line, north of Mumbai and the metre gauge Marwar - Devgarh Madriya line in Rajasthan.



Left: To be replaced by Hydrogen trains? Most services on the Kalka – Shimla line are currently worked by Class ZDM3 locos dating from the 1970s/80s but rebuilt around 15 years ago, although older locos, railcars and one steam loco remain in the fleet. ZDM3 No. 708 is seen arriving at Shimla on December 2, 2014. KEITH FENDER

Kiwi Rail DL Class complete

THE fifth batch of Chinese-built Class DL diesel locos for KiwRail arrived in New Zealand on March 27, 2023, and the locomotives were transferred as one train to Te Rapa from Mount Maunganui for commissioning on April 2, hauled by one of their classmates.

These 10 locomotives are the last of the DL order and this last batch was ordered in mid-2020 but delivery was delayed due to Covid-19. Like the earlier locos they were built by Chinese firm CRRC at its Dalian works and are equipped with MTU 20V 4000R43 engines. KiwiRail now has 73 DLs, all operating on the North Island.



With No. 9728 at the rear, the convoy of new Class DL locos hauled by No. 9671 (comprising Nos. 9705, 9694, 9786, 9711, 9740, 9792, 9763, 9734, 9757 and 9728) pass Frankton on April 2. ROBERT SWEET

Polish 'Gagarin' works tour

POLISH railtour operator Turkol offered a rare chance to see a PKP Cargo Class ST44 diesel loco on a passenger train in April. The tour included a round trip from Ełk to Orzysz in north-eastern Poland hauled by No. ST44 1271.

Nicknamed 'Gagarins' by Polish railwaymen after Soviet Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space – as they were made in the then Soviet Union – Polish state railways or PKP were one of the biggest users of the Soviet-made M62 design known in Poland as Class ST44. The design was based directly on the M62 design built initially for Hungary and then in huge numbers for Soviet Railways in single, double and even triple unit formats.

The PKP ST44 fleet was delivered from Voroshilovgrad diesel locomotive works in what is now Luhansk in Ukraine between 1965 and 1988. In total, 1194 locos were delivered (68 of which were broad gauge for use on the 1520mm gauge LHS line from Silesia to Ukraine). After Poland replaced its communist government and started to adapt its economy, the fuel hungry Class ST44 locos rapidly lost favour and many were stored. Whilst the majority have been withdrawn, they remain in service with several freight operators, mostly rebuilt with new or alternative second-hand engines to improve fuel economy.

The tour engine No. ST44 1271 was built as No. ST44 1108 in 1988 and is one of 76 standard gauge PKP Cargo examples rebuilt with Russian made Kolomna 12ChN26/26 engines since 2007. It was modernised with the new engine in early 2021 at the Pesa works in Bydgoszcz.



No. ST44 1271 at Ełk on April 15 with the Turkol special train to Orzysz. ANDY DAVIS

SIDELINES

Quito Metro opens

PASSENGER services began on the first metro line in Ecuador's Capital city Quito on May 2. Whilst the 22km, 15 station line was officially opened in December 2022, after a decade of construction, problems with its QR Code ticketing system had delayed full public services. CAF has supplied 18x6 car EMUs from its Besain factory in Spain to operate services.

200km/h EMUs for Czech Regiojet

OPEN access company Regiojet has won a 15-year contract from the Czech government to operate fast services from Prague to Havlíčkův Brod to Jihlava/Brno. The contract begins in December 2026 replacing Czech Railways (ČD) and will be operated by a fleet of 18 new 200kph EMUs to be built by Polish manufacturer Pesa Bydgoszcz.

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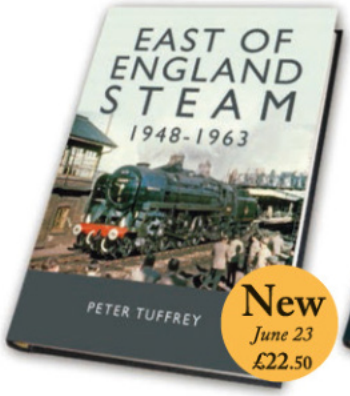
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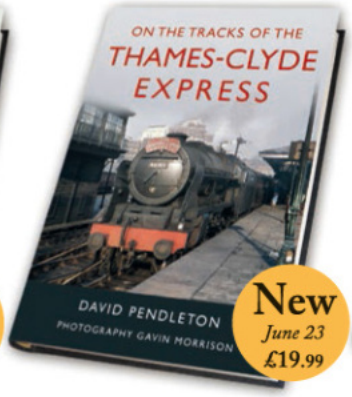


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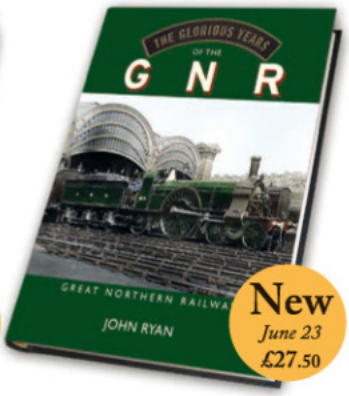
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Photography by Gavin Morrison
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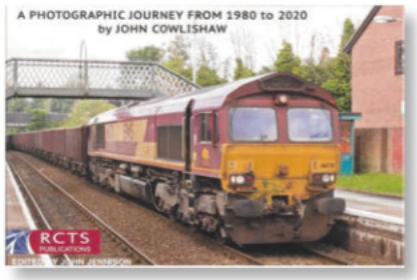


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by John Ryan
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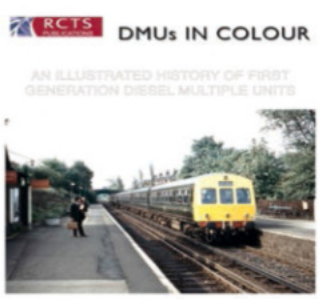
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RCTS Latest Book Titles



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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SIGNALLING CENTRES IN THE NORTH EAST: 2A LEEDS

By Richard Pulleyn

AS THE latest in the 'Signalling Centres' series, this is the first of two parts covering the complex history of railways and signalling around Leeds.

The city was served not only by the North Eastern Railway but also by the Midland, GNR/L&Y and LNWR companies. This volume focuses on the former NER line east of Garforth and the Leeds Northern route to Bramhope tunnel. It also includes a detailed history of Leeds City station from earliest times, through successive expansion schemes to the present day.

The author has drawn on extensive research over many years using primary sources wherever possible and is supported by many well known photographers and railwaymen, who have shared their memories of the Leeds area. The book has extensive maps and diagrams, many of which have been especially drawn.

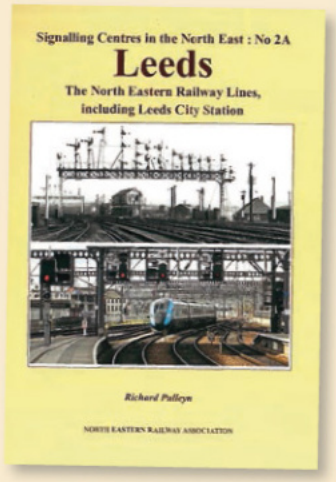
This is a fascinating publication as it not only shows the signalling involved in the area, but also the changes in layout over the years in central Leeds, where services are now centred on the modern Leeds station in use today.

The variety of photographs enhance the book showing the many signalboxes, both large and small that were an essential part of our railways. The box track diagrams are particularly interesting and an excellent resource for modellers planning a scale layout.

This is a specialised addition to the railway press and is an excellent example of what the smaller publishers are producing. The paper and print quality are both of good quality.

Highly recommended for anyone interested in signalling and/or the railways around Leeds both historically and present day. **AB**

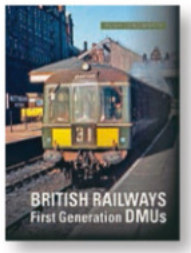
Published by North Eastern Railway Association



ner.org.uk
152 pages, softback. £20.00

British Railways First Generation DMUs

By Hugh Longworth



THIS is an updated and expanded version of the reference work that lists details of British Rail's First Generation diesel units introduced from the 1950s onwards.

It covers the more than 4000 vehicles built by BR and private firms, with details about their construction, technical specifications, entry into service, formation, allocations, withdrawal and final fate.

There are seven main parts to the book, with one of the sections being a full listing of individual coaches – although other useful sections include external and internal unit drawings, where vehicles were allocated through the decades, set numbers/formations, and much more. A large number of photographs are included to break up the data listings, and this version includes a selection of colour images for the first time.

Overall this is a very useful work of reference for anyone interested in early BR units in particular or diesels in general. **PB**

Published by Crecy
www.crecy.co.uk
04 pages, hardback. £35

LNER Steam in the 1930s The George Barlow Collection

Compiled by Brian J Dickson

READERS of *The RM* often wish for a time machine to enable them to visit railways before they were born. In my case, I'd choose to travel to my native East Midlands in the 1930s – but the desire to do so is not so great now, thanks to this book.



It's rare to find a 'new' and relatively untapped source of photos this deep into the 21st century, so George Barlow's images from the 1933-38 period make a refreshing change from repetitive BR era offerings.

Born in Nottingham in 1916, he was a rail enthusiast who turned his hobby into a career, working as an engine driver on various military railways before settling down as a full-time driver on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch line in 1947 and staying there until 1982 when he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the RH&DR.

George bought his first camera when he was a teenager and began recording scenes around his home city, not only at Victoria and nearby stations such as Newark but at the LMS station, where he often went to capture the graceful Midland & Great Northern Joint 4-4-0s that worked in from East Anglia. (He must also have had a lineside pass for some of the main line shots are taken very close to the track!)

There are a few images from further afield, such as Doncaster, Sheffield, King's Cross and Scotland, but the great majority of the 75 plates in the book were exposed in the Nottinghamshire area. Their quality is good and sharp, even for moving trains, and any initial bewilderment at a seemingly illogical sequence of locations soon disappears once it's realised they've all been placed in date order.

At £13.50, this is good value for a time machine! **NP**

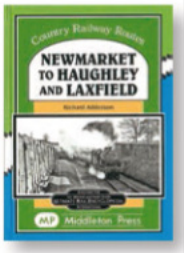
Published by Totem Publishing
www.TTpublishing.co.uk
80 pages, hardback. £13.50

Newmarket to Haughley and Laxfield

By Richard Adderson

ANOTHER excellent volume from the Middleton Press series that is gradually covering the whole of the railway network. Written by East Anglian expert Richard Adderson, *Newmarket to Haughley and Laxford* follows the normal layout of the series.

A detailed history introduces the reader to these two lines, the former still in use today, although the Laxford branch closed back in 1952. Whilst most of that rural line was quickly reabsorbed into the surrounding farmland, a small residual section was discovered at Brockford station in 1990 and is now a thriving light rail preservation site (the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway) reminiscent of the line over 70 years ago, complete with original station buildings acquired from local gardens where they had served as sheds and even a pig barn since closure of the line.



Passengers can still experience travelling between Newmarket and Haughley as Greater Anglia run regular trains over the route between Cambridge and Ipswich. Alongside the historic photographs it is good to see a selection of modern views showing just how much the railway scene has changed over the years.

Accompanied by detailed maps, a selection of train tickets, historical timetables and highly informative captions, this is an excellent addition to this popular series. Highly recommended. **AB**

Published by Middleton Press
www.middletonpress.co.uk
96 pages, hardback. £18.95

Britain's Heritage Railways

By Andy Chard



THIS third edition offers 192 pages of useful information for visiting Britain's 100+ preserved railways.

Lines are listed by region, with data for each including stocklists, mileage, and a brief history of the route. Sections are colour-coded with contact details, opening times and other useful information. Type, number carried, name and builder information is included for locos and wagons, but wagons and coaches are not listed.

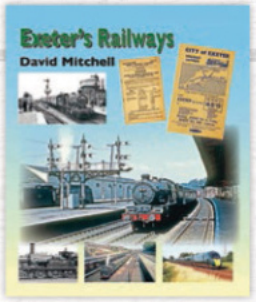
There are also details of attractions and planned special events, and the data is backed up with a nice selection of steam and diesel images. **PB**

Published by Platform 5
www.platform5.com
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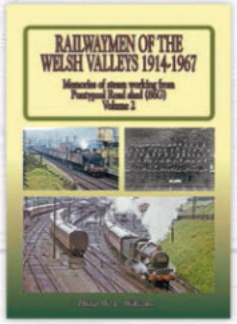
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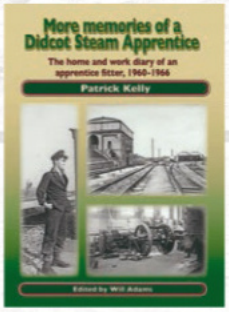
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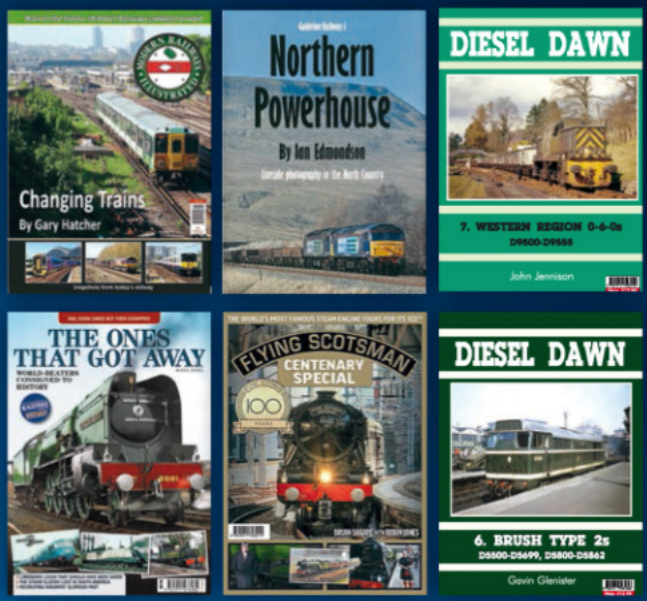
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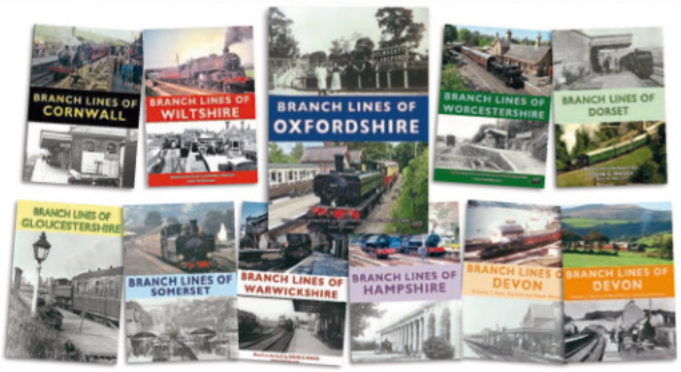
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Prize crossword

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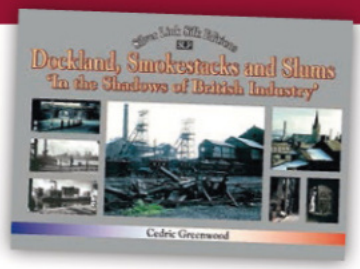
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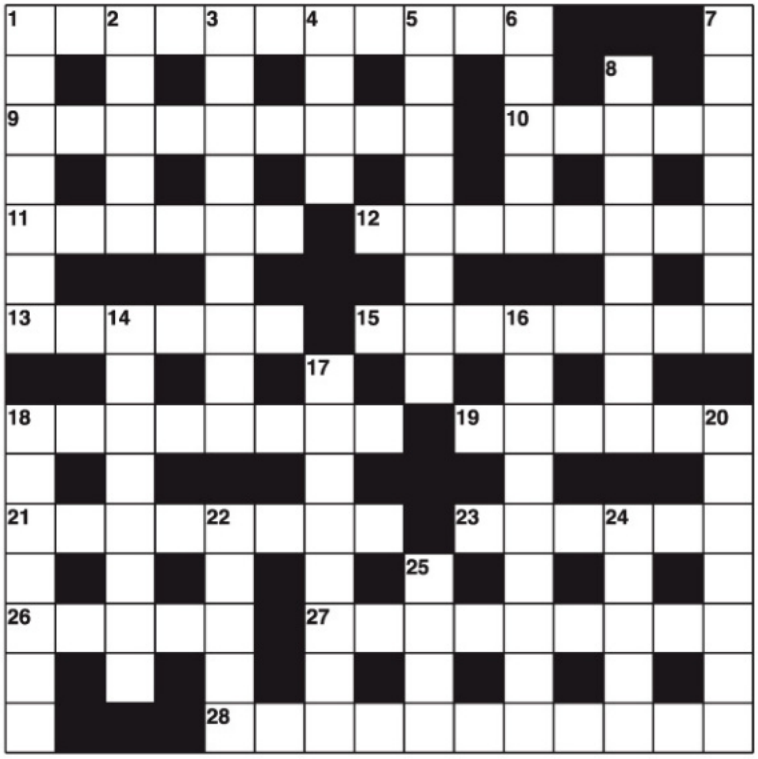
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Across

1 Class 50 No. 50001 (11)
9 Scottish steam shed 60A (9)
10 Word following Arnos and Ladbroke in London Underground station names (5)
11 'Peak' No. D10, and Class 60 No. 60094 (6)
12 London Underground station, scene of a serious accident in 1975 (8)
13 Class number of 50 electrics built by BREL at Crewe, 1987-90 (6)
15 Seaside terminus of a line from Boston (8)
18 Name given to a Class 150 DMU (8)
19 British ___, works formerly rail-connected at Rushcliffe Halt, now on the GCR (Nottingham) heritage line (6)
21 Austrian composer commemorated by Class 92 No. 92007 (8)
23 Seaside resort served by Norfolk's 'Bittern Line' (6)
26 *Merddin* ___, Ffestiniog Railway 'Double Fairlie' No. 10 (5)
27 ___ *Grange*, first of that class of GWR 4-6-0s (9)
28 ___ Junction, Trent, named from the nearby wagon tarpaulin depot (5,5)

Down

1 Summit and tunnel south-west of Newton Abbot (7)
2 No. D1061, *Western* ___ (5)
3 Closed station near Bescot to be reopened by the West Midlands Rail Executive (9)
4 First name of 'Britannia' No. 70010, and surname of Class 60 No. 60047 (4)
5 Tunnels just outside King's Cross (8)
6 Class 50 No. 50028 (5)
7 German company that built Eurostar's e320 units (7)
8 Name given to Bombardier Class 220 units (8)
14 Headquarters of the Dean Forest Railway (8)
16 Midland Railway General Manager 1906-18, and LMS Chairman 1924-27 (3,6)
17 ___ Railway, Stanhope-Wolsingham-Bishop Auckland heritage line (8)
18 Seven ___, London Overground and Victoria Line station (7)
20 *The Royal* ___, 'Peak' No. D70/45048 (7)
22 Unpopular railway substitute vehicles! (5)
24 '___ train', alternative name for an 'auto-train' (5)
25 Mechanism whereby two adjacent signalboxes control a single signal arm (4)

June crossword entry form

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel Email

Send completed form (photocopies are accepted) to: June 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 August 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 April issue.

Across: 4 Day 8 Lartigue 9 Agatha 10 Apollo 11 Tadworth 13 Weaver 14 Sea Eagle 15 NYMR 16 Marske 18 Arrows 21 Star 22 Lynmouth 24 Brahms 26 Linslade 29 O'Gaunt 30 Poirot 31 Rothesay 32 Ore

Down: 1 Marple 2 St Olaves 3 Ogbourne 4 Dent 5 Yard 6 Baroda 7 Whitelaw 12 Aber 13 Wem 14 Smith 17 Alycidon 18 Arbroath 19 Rhayader 20 SLS 21 Stud 23 Mysore 25 Monsal 27 Auto 28 Eire

April winner: Keith Randell, Norwich.

Runners-up: John Chapman, Hythe; Rob Whelan, Rainford

The closing date for this month's crossword is Friday, July 7, 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 shot (right, taken by Jerry Hockett on November 6, 2022) shows two GBRf Class 66s top-and tailing a ballast train in the small yard at the south end of Ardgay station, which is more than 50 miles north of Inverness on the Far North Line.

For this month, do you know where this narrow-gauge wagon and siding (left) can be found?



Next month The July issue will be on sale on July 5, 2023. Thank you for choosing *The Railway Magazine*

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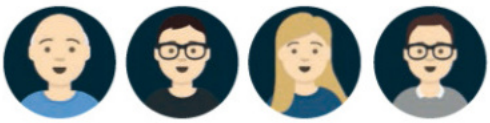
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ROUTE	VIA	YEAR	PRODUCTION TITLE	Blu-ray?
Aberdeen to Inverness	Insch	2006	Aberdeen to Inverness	
Birkenhead North to New Brighton	Wallasey	2013	The Wirral Line	x
Blaenau Ffestiniog to Llandudno	Betws-y-Coed	1992	Ffestiniog & Conwy	
Brighton to Ashford Kent	Eastbourne	2008	East Coastway & Marshlink	
Brighton to London Victoria	East Croydon	1998	Connex Express	
Bristol Temple Meads to Derby	Birmingham New St	2005	Lickey Voyager	
Caernarfon to Porthmadog	Beddgelert	2014	The Welsh Highland Railway	x
Carlisle to Newcastle	Hexham	2018	The Tyne Valley Line	x
Carnforth to Maryport	Barrow in Furness	1997	The Cumbrian Coast	
Chester to Liverpool Central	Birkenhead	2013	The Wirral Line	x
Crewe to Holyhead	Llandudno Junction	2016	North Wales Coast	x
Dingwall to Wick and Thurso	Helmsdale	1991	The Far North	
Edinburgh Waverley to Aberdeen	Dundee	1996	The Northern Lights	
Edinburgh Waverley to Glasgow Central	Shotts	2019	Edinburgh & Glasgow	x
Euston to Manchester Piccadilly	Stoke on Trent	2019	Pendolino	x
Euston to Preston	Crewe	1995	The Royal Scot	
Exeter St David's to Basingstoke	Salisbury	2015	Exeter to Basingstoke	x
Exeter St David's to London Paddington	Taunton	2019	The Berks & Hants	x
Exeter St David's to Saltash	Plymouth	1986	HST West/Far West	
Exmouth to Barnstaple	Exeter St David's	2017	Devon Branches Exmouth	x
Falmouth to Truro	Penryn	1991	Cornish Branches	
Fenchurch St to Grays	Upminster	2009	C2C	
Fort William to Mallaig	Glenfinnan	2015	The Jacobite	x
Glasgow Queen St to Edinburgh Waverley	Falkirk High	2019	Edinburgh & Glasgow	x
Glasgow Queen St to Fort William	Crianlarich	1993	The West Highland Line	
Great Yarmouth to Brundall	Acle	1998	Norfolk Branches	
Hastings to London Charing Cross	Tunbridge Wells	1988	1066DC	
Hooton to Ellesmere Port	Little Sutton	2013	The Wirral Line	x
Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh	Dingwall	1987	SkyeTrain	
Kings Cross to York	Peterborough	1999	The Flying Scotsman	
Lewes to Seaford	Newhaven	2008	East Coastway & Marshlink	
Liskeard to Looe	Coombe Junction	1991	Cornish Branches	
Liverpool Central to West Kirby	Birkenhead	2013	The Wirral Line	x
Lostwithiel to Fowey	Golant	1991	Cornish Branches	
Machynlleth to Barmouth	Aberdovey	1988	The Cambrian Coast	
Maidenhead to Marlow	Bourne End	2015	Thames Branches	x
Manchester Airport to Liverpool Lime St	Manchester Piccadilly	2010	Liverpool & Manchester	x
Manchester Piccadilly to Cleethorpes	The Hope Valley	2016	Manchester to Cleethorpes	x
Manchester Piccadilly to York	Leeds	2000	Transpenninexpress	
Marylebone to Birmingham Moor St	High Wycombe	2018	Chiltern Mainline	x
Newport Gwent to Crewe	Hereford	2012	The Welsh Marches	x
Newton Abbot to Paignton	Torquay	2017	Devon Branches Gunnislake	x
Norwich to London Liverpool St	Ipswich	1997	InterCity Norwich	
Norwich to Lowestoft	Reedham	1998	Norfolk Branches	
Norwich to Sheringham	Cromer	1998	Norfolk Branches	
Nottingham to Skegness	Grantham	2017	Nottingham to Skegness	x
Oxford to Hereford	Worcester Shrub Hill	2013	Cotswolds & Malverns Line	x
Paddington to Exeter St David's	Bristol Temple Meads	1993	HST Great West	
Paddington to Greenford	Ealing Broadway	2015	Thames Branches	x
Penzance to Exeter St David's	Truro	2022	Penzance to Exeter	x
Perth to Inverness	Aviemore	2002	The Highland Main Line	
Plymouth to Gunnislake	Bere Alston	2017	Devon Branches Gunnislake	x
Porthmadog to Blaenau Ffestiniog	Minffordd	1992	Ffestiniog & Conwy	
Preston to Glasgow Central	Carlisle	1996	The Royal Scot	
Ramsgate to London Victoria	Margate	2007	The Kent Coast	
Reading to Waterloo	Staines	2013	Reading to Waterloo	x
Redditch to Lichfield	Birmingham New St	1995	Cross City	
Reedham to Gt Yarmouth	Berney Arms	1998	Norfolk Branches	
Richmond to North Woolwich	Stratford	2006	The North London Line	
Saltash to Penzance	Truro	1990	HST Far West	
Shanklin to Ryde Pierhead	Sandown	2011	The Isle of Wight	x
Shoeburyness to Southend	Thorpe Bay	2009	C2C	
Skipton to Carlisle	Settle	2002	Settle and Carlisle	
Slough to Windsor		2015	Thames Branches	x
Smallbrook Junction to Wootton	Haven Street	2011	The isle of Wight	x
Southend to London Fenchurch St	Tilbury	2009	C2C	
St Erth to St Ives	Carbis Bay	1991	Cornish Branches	
St Pancras to Sheffield	Leicester	2000	Midland Mainline	
Stranraer to Glasgow Central	Ayr	2012	Ayrline	x
Swansea to Shrewsbury	Llandrindod Wells	1994	The Heart of Wales Line	
Swindon to Fishguard	Cardiff	2002	The Down Fishguard	
Swindon to Gloucester	Kemble	2006	The Golden Valley	
Twyford to Henley	Wargrave	2015	Thames Branches	x
Uckfield to East Croydon	Oxted	2003	The Uckfield Thumper	
Weymouth to Bristol Temple Meads	Westbury	2012	Weymouth to Bristol	x
Weymouth to London Waterloo	Southampton	1994	Wessex	
York to Edinburgh Waverley	Newcastle	2000	The Flying Scotsman	

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