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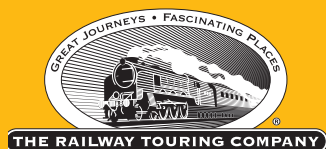
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A good decision for Britain

The Government's decision to proceed with HS2 in full has been widely welcomed by business across the UK, but especially in the Midlands and the north. Meanwhile its opponents have voiced concerns, some valid and some not, especially those on environmental grounds. Worries about the financial cost were addressed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson when he made the announcement in the House of Commons as he also said a review of the costs of Phase 2 to Manchester and Leeds will be looked at to see if savings can be made. I would suggest he doesn't laden contractors with the same risk factors that have increased the cost of Phase 1 to Birmingham by around 30%. It's a national infrastructure project, so the risk should lie with the Government. For Phase 1 the contractors have over-engineered considerably to reduce any risks of infrastructure failures they could be liable for, hence the rise in price.

The national media once again trotted out the same anti-HS2 rhetoric and the Green Party and the Woodland Trust stoked the flames with some quite ridiculous arguments. I'm mystified by the Green Party as it says it is pro rail. Rail is the greenest form of mass transit and HS2 trains will produce fewer harmful emissions than domestic flights or road transport. 'Classic compatible' HS2 trains will connect Glasgow and Edinburgh with London in around three hours and will attract considerable Anglo-Scottish traffic from the airlines, reducing the need for domestic flights.

Concerns about the destruction of woodland are not to be taken lightly. However, the Woodland Trust's own figures state that the 12-14 miles of the new Thames road crossing will cost 54ha of woodland, while the 345 miles of HS2 track will see 58ha lost, but HS2 is the bad guy? This also fails to take into account that HS2 will plant seven million new trees, resulting in 650ha of new woodland for Phase 1 alone. However, it will take several years to achieve full biodiversity.

The media also persisted in stating or suggesting the cost of the project could be up to £106bn, despite the official figure remaining at £88bn. This is wrong because

the design of Phase 2 is yet to be completed, so it's impossible to estimate the final figure. However, with the Government looking at ways to reduce the cost of Phase 2 the final amount could be rather different.

An argument that certainly needs addressing is that the old Great Central route can be used, because 'most of it is intact' according to some commentators – really? Apart from the fact that the GC route never served Birmingham, Leeds or Manchester, a great deal of it has actually disappeared beneath new housing, industrial estates and roads. Not to mention the dozens of bridges and viaducts that have been flattened. And what about Nottingham, where the former GC passed over the Midland station and through the centre of the city. Nottingham's trams now use the same alignment, while the rest has been built on. I've also seen people describe the GC as a 'high speed' route! It was when it was built more than a century ago, but that was when 70-80mph was considered high speed. Its curves are not designed for HS2 speeds and even using modern techniques you'd be lucky to manage 115mph at most.

Another old cherry favoured by many suggests upgrading existing lines instead. That would achieve nothing. It would involve adding two more tracks to the West Coast, Midland and East Coast main lines, and even then wouldn't give the speed or the capacity of HS2. Using modern signalling it will be possible to run up to 18 trains per hour along HS2 at up to 225mph. This means you move more people over a given period than running the same number of trains at, say, 125mph. Following the existing alignments of comparatively slow Victorian era railways will not provide that speed or capacity.

But then there is the disruption and cost. Can you imagine the absolute chaos for existing rail passengers while all of this takes place? It would require years of weekend possessions, probably months of complete closures of each route, thus causing more misery for passengers. And what about all the villages, towns and cities the three north-south arteries pass through? All of these have been established along the existing railway

boundaries for decades and in almost all cases are built up to that boundary. Such an idea would involve demolishing thousands of homes, hundreds of businesses, bridges, roads and much more – the cost of compulsory purchase and compensation would be astronomical, let alone the cost of the new infrastructure, leading to a bill considerably more than HS2.

On the other hand HS2 offers the chance to build a high capacity, ultra-high speed, twin track route mostly through open countryside with little disruption to anyone. It will also mean you get additional capacity on those existing routes at no extra cost. For example, there are currently 47 Avanti West Coast trains per day between London and Manchester. With the majority of those passengers using HS2, space will be freed up for more semi-fast and stopping services along the southern half of the WCML, which will particularly benefit commuters. The same will apply on all three north-south routes, and it also means more paths for freight.

The supporting industries will also benefit hugely from HS2 during the construction phase. As has been seen in Europe and beyond, high speed rail is a magnet for regional investment in a wide range of industries. On that point many people rave on about Europe's high speed networks, including those in France, Germany and Spain, but for some reason they are a bad idea in the UK... why? By integrating HS2 with the Northern Powerhouse Rail project the potential is massive.

This will be the largest investment in Britain's railways since Victorian times when they were first built. With a sound business case, the potential to create thousands of jobs, add huge capacity, improve connectivity to/from and across the north and benefit passengers over a wide part of the UK, I for one am glad it's finally got the go-ahead.



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Stephen Roberts takes a trip through picturesque Worcestershire and Gloucestershire and examines the history of each stop on the route.



72 Great Malvern to Gloucester

ABOVE: LNER's Class 91 91119 Bounds Green Intercity Depot looking splendid in its Swallow InterCity livery storms north at Burn on January 15 with the 1S18 1300 King's Cross to Edinburgh service. (Paul Biggs)

FRONT COVER: Avanti West Coast Pendolino Class 390 390049 passes Docker, WCML on 18.1.20 with 1M12 1140 Glasgow Central to London Euston service. Classic compatible HS2 trains will absorb most of this traffic. (Paul Biggs)



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HS2 to be built in full, says PM

TEN YEARS after HS2 was first given the go ahead, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has given his backing for the line to be built in full to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester. He told the House of Commons on February 11 that worries over costs had not detracted from the basic value and importance of the high speed line and pledged to 'get HS2 done'. At the same time the Government published Douglas Oakervee's HS2 review, which recommended the Government recommit to the full Y-shaped network.

The 130-page Oakervee report makes it very clear that building Phase 1 or Phase 2 of HS2 without the other makes little sense, building HS2 from north to south is impractical, and making any significant changes to Phase 1 would add years of delay because the existing legislation would have to be amended. Not only that, cancelling the entire project would cost at least £8.5bn, including funds already spent, and would cause major damage to the construction industry and the Government's reputation.

None of the alternatives suggested would provide the level of capacity increase offered by HS2 and widening the existing West Coast, Midland and East Coast main lines would not offer the speed and capacity uplift, but would cause enormous upheaval to passengers for decades and be prohibitively expensive.

With the go-ahead now given, construction can commence in earnest this year, with work on Phase 1 to ramp up from April. Mr Johnson added: "If we start now, services could be running by the end of the decade, so today the Cabinet has given high-speed rail the green signal. We are going to get this done, and to ensure that we do so without further blow-outs on either cost or schedule, we are today taking decisive action to restore discipline to the programme. The review recently conducted by Douglas Oakervee leaves no doubt of the clinching case for high-speed rail: a vast increase in capacity, with hundreds of thousands of extra seats, making it much easier for travellers to move up and down our long, narrow country."

The Government's Infrastructure and Projects Authority believes the Phase 1 can be completed at a projected cost of £35bn to £45bn at today's prices. The opening of the Phase 1 route from London to Birmingham, and Phase 2a, from Birmingham to Crewe, is now



The UK Government has committed itself to building the entire HS2 network. It will not only benefit the North and Midlands, but also passengers travelling to and from Scotland and the North East and many further south by freeing up capacity on existing routes. (HS2 Ltd)

expected to be between 2028 and 2031, with Phase 2 to Leeds and Manchester by 2040 at the latest, although the Prime Minister would prefer 2035.

Although Oakervee's report supports the Y-shaped network north to Leeds and Manchester, it suggests the Government scraps the Handsacre connection to the West Coast Main Line, which would permit HS2 trains to continue to Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and Macclesfield. Instead, he argues it is not required now that Phase 2a to Crewe is to be built at the same time as Phase 1, and it would be more cost effective to increase WCML frequencies to those stations.

Mr Johnson was also critical of the project's handling by the Government-owned delivery

agency HS2 Ltd. He made it clear he considered it to be at fault for delays, cost rises and other issues. However, he did recognise that its performance had improved under the leadership of its current chairman Allan Cook, who took up the post in late 2018.

Oakervee has also questioned the approach to the redevelopment of Euston Station in London, which he finds unsatisfactory. A comprehensive scheme to build the HS2 station and redevelop the existing station and area has yet to be established, meaning HS2 Ltd has only focussed on the HS2 platforms next to the existing facility. If a site-wide plan can be agreed by all parties involved then some form of government funding will be required to continue the project. A frequency reduction

from 18 to 14 trains per hour would allow for a simplification of the approach to the HS2 platforms, including eliminating a costly dive-under. However, that could limit future growth.

The design of the HS2 station could still change. Currently it is expected to have 11 400m-long platforms, a new concourse and improved connections to Euston and Euston Square Underground stations. However, the Oakervee report says: "HS2 Ltd and the DfT, together with Lendlease and Network Rail, have been exploring options for amending the design of Euston station to potentially reduce the size and number of platforms and encourage a single build."

Oakervee also recommends a review of Phase 2 to be completed by the summer before a bill to construct the Leeds and Manchester routes is put before Parliament. HS2 Ltd is expected to pass over delivery of this part of the project to a different agency that could handle all large rail projects in the north of England, including Northern Powerhouse Rail. The Prime Minister and Transport Secretary Grant Shapps have indicated Phase 2b will be rebranded as a standalone scheme – High Speed North. The legislation for Phase 2 has yet to be finalised and the chance is there to reduce costs where possible, including by upgrading sections of existing track rather than relying entirely on new build.

The Government has also denied reports it is in discussion with the China Railway Construction Corporation about an offer made to build HS2 more cheaply and in five years. The report featured in *Building* magazine and claims the maximum speed could be raised to 420km/h from the currently planned 320km/h, yet cost nearer to the original \$56bn figure. The CRCC letter states: "We are happy to work with HS2 and, if necessary, the British government, to find a way to make this work. The advantages are, in our opinion, too great to dismiss on the basis that there are obstacles to overcome."

However, with Phase 1 legislation in place and work under way, the chance of this happening is highly remote even if the Government were to consider it. The CRCC has been instrumental in building 25,000km of high speed lines in China, so it certainly has the experience required, but whether it could do the same in the UK under much heavier regulation and oversight is another matter.

Arriva stripped of Northern franchise



The refurbishment project for the entire Northern fleet, 268 trains except for the Pacers, is well on the way to completion. It has safeguarded 180 jobs and created 105 more. The OLR will now complete the programme, having assumed control of the franchise on March 1. (Northern)

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to place the Northern franchise with the Department for Transport's Operator of Last Resort from March 1. The move had been expected after Transport Secretary Grant Shapps had previously said the franchise was no longer financially sustainable, and would either go to the OLR or a short-term management contract with Arriva. The latter's nine-year franchise began April 1, 2016.

Mr Shapps made several promises to Northern passengers, such as removing Pacers by the summer, something that Northern has already begun, and the introduction of more electric trains, something that was already announced (Class 323s). He also promised a deep clean of all trains and a review of cleaning patterns, despite the fact that most of the existing fleet has

just been internally refurbished. He wants the OLR to work with ASLEF to build on an agreement to improve Sunday services, but made no reference to Northern having already negotiated the deal with the union. He did announce that 30 more stations would receive platform extensions to allow longer trains to be used; 30 have recently been completed. By mid-February Northern had 75 of its new CAF built units in service, while only six Class 142s remained in use.

Responding to the loss of the franchise, Chris Burchell, Arriva's MD for UK Trains said: "We had a clear vision for the Northern franchise that would better connect the cities of the North with more frequent, reliable and modern services and unlock economic growth. It was clear, however, that, largely because of external factors, the franchise

plan had become undeliverable. A new plan is needed that will secure the future for Northern train services. As such, we understand Government's decision today."

The OLR is being led by Robin Gisby and Richard George, and they have been tasked with working up a plan for the first 100 days to make improvements to operational management, rostering patterns and customer experience. A new North West Recovery Task Force, co-ordinated by Network Rail, is to provide recommendations on how to increase capacity and performance in the short, medium and longer terms. Among the most challenging requirements is the need to collaborate with Network Rail to come up with a comprehensive masterplan to deal with congestion around Manchester, including the

Castlefield corridor, at junctions and other interactions across the wider Northern network.

In the short term, passengers might have to deal with a temporary reduction in the number of trains using the Castlefield corridor in order for reliability to be improved. Network Rail said in September last year that to improve resilience only 13 trains an hour in each direction can be reliably run without major infrastructure improvements. At present the figure is 15 trains per hour, including two Manchester Airport services that used to reverse at Piccadilly up to May 2018 but were re-routed via Victoria, the Ordsall Curve and the Castlefield corridor. Returning these two services to the previous pattern would immediately ease the problem and is the most likely solution.

MERSEYRAIL TOOK delivery of the first of its 52 Stadler Class 777 units at Kirkdale Depot in the early hours of January 16. The unit, 777003, is the first fully complete example, since 777001/002 are equipped with temporary panels in place of the end emergency evacuation doors while they undergo testing at Siemens' Wildenrath facility. 777004 is due to replace 777001, enabling it to go back to the factory for interior fitment and then delivery to the UK.

The operator had been expecting its first trains to be delivered in mid-2019, with the first entering passenger service in the spring of 2020. However, the first set is around four months behind schedule and the original plan for passenger service in May 2020 has been revised to later in the year. All 52 units should be in service by 2021. The 52 four-car trains will replace the Class 507 and 508 fleets and the £700m deal includes a contract for light and heavy maintenance of the units throughout their 35-year life cycle at the new depot at Kirkdale.

There is an option to acquire a further 60 units if the Merseyrail network is expanded to destinations including Helsby, Skelmersdale or Wrexham. These might not involve expansion of the third rail supply and the 777s have dual-voltage capability and can use the 25kV AC overhead wires if available. Options also exist to use battery power and it is anticipated that one set in the initial tranche will be fitted with such equipment for the system to be evaluated. Space is available beneath one vehicle to accommodate a five tonne battery, which will keep the axle loads within specification. The battery can be charged by the braking system. The fleet will also be fitted with small batteries to permit independent movement around workshop and maintenance facilities.



First Class 777 arrives on Merseyside

Class 91s to test Midland overhead

THE RAIL Operations Group has leased two Class 91s, 91122 and 91128, from Eversholt Rail and is to use them to test the recently electrified Bedford-Corby route. Testing is due to start in late March and will employ a new electrification test train. The pair will top and tail the former 'Pretendolino' rake of Mk 3 coaches, which are being fitted with on-board test equipment supplied by Data Acquisition & Testing Services Ltd (DATS). Both Class 91s will be fitted with modified pantographs and a third electric loco can be included if needed.

East Midlands Railway is expected to introduce electric services on the route in December using ex-Greater Anglia Class 360 EMU.



ROG's 57312, with ex-LNER Class 91s 91122 and 91128, arrives at Leicester LIP on February 1. The working was the 5Q59 1129 from Bounds Green T&RSMD to Leicester LIP. (Martin Turner)



The first Stadler Class 777 EMU for Merseyrail, 777003, stands inside Kirkdale Depot on January 28. (Russell Wykes)

Greener trains planned for Northern



Northern Class 195/1 195101 powers away from Windermere at Black Moss on a frosty February 7 with the 1U80 0956 Windermere to Manchester Airport service. These trains could potentially be replaced by battery-supplemented Class 331 EMUs. (Paul Biggs)

THE ARRIVA Northern franchise has submitted plans to the Department for Transport to introduce hydrogen trains on Teesside and Class 331s equipped with batteries on the Windermere branch. The business cases for both proposals have been submitted to DfT's Rail Investment Board for approval.

Northern collaborated with Alstom and Eversholt Rail that are developing a hydrogen conversion of Class 321 EMUs named 'Breeze'. If approved, the modifications would take place at Alstom's Widnes plant, where the units would be reduced to three cars, with some space within the passenger saloons used to house the equipment to provide hydrogen power. Northern has also submitted planning documents for the preferred maintenance site and fuelling facility, believed to be at Lackenby. Northern believes the routes radiating from Middlesbrough to Nunthorpe, Bishop Auckland and

Saltburn are ideal for the hydrogen trains. A fleet of up to a dozen Breeze units is planned, with the chance they could also be used to Whitby and on the Durham Coast line to Newcastle. The first train could be ready for testing in June 2021, dependent on the relevant infrastructure being in place.

For the battery Class 331s, a fourth coach would be needed for insertion into three-car units, while batteries would also be added to the existing trailer vehicle. The battery-equipped units would be used on Manchester to Windermere services which, apart from the Windermere branch itself, run entirely under the wires yet using Class 195 DMUs. Electrification of the branch was cancelled in 2017.

Battery power is expected to last for a single return trip without recharging, but as most diagrams currently involve two trips, a rapid recharge facility would be required at either Windermere or in the platform at Oxenholme.

Llangollen makes £150k urgent appeal in cash crisis

THE LLANGOLLEN Railway has issued a cash-call to shareholders and Trust members to raise £150,000 to satisfy creditors so it can continue trading. The appeal comes after a 'substantial donation' was made to the railway to avoid it having to enter a Company Voluntary Arrangement, a legal agreement with creditors by an insolvent company to pay off debts over a period of time.

Among the LR's debtors is the Trust, which owes it £90,000. The Trust's appeal aims to raise this sum, plus a further £35,000 to provide the PLC with some working finance.

The Trust is attempting to raise funds by selling its two locos, Kitson 0-6-0ST 5459 *Austin 1*, and Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T 1731 *Jennifer*.

The PLC's accounts for the year ending December 31, 2019 are not yet available, but those for 2018 are poor. Turnover fell by 10% to £1.9m, with its gross profit down by 22% to £608,511. After expenses the PLC's loss rose by 380% to £340,680.

Llangollen Railway PLC General Manager and Trust Chairman, Elizabeth McGuinness, said: "The PLC engineering department has had two difficult trading years. The Board is confident that the

company is solvent on a balance-sheet basis, in that the assets are greater than the liabilities. We have some very positive things on the horizon, one of which is the opening of our new Corwen station later this year."

For the first time in 25 years, Llangollen's first loco, *Austin 1*, will be joined by former resident GWR 7822 *Foxcote Manor* for a 'Back to the 90s' one-day event on March 7. In the evening, the Manor will be used on a nine-coach set, recreating the 'Cambrian Coast Express', with two non-stop trips to Carrog from Llangollen at 1830 and 2015.

IET inter-car cable solution

THE OFFICE of Rail and Road has agreed a solution to the inter-vehicle connector problem it had identified on Hitachi's new IET fleets now in service with GWR, LNER, Hull Trains and TransPennine Express. The ORR's concern was the existing three levels of cabling could be used as a 'ladder' to access the roof. The solution is to make the cables longer to allow them to be routed at only high and low level, removing the centre 'step'. Additional signage will also be applied to discourage climbing. A sensible timetable has been agreed for the modifications, with Hitachi and the operators to undertake the work during planned maintenance rather than requiring trains to be taken out of service specially.

LNER to keep some Class 91s/Mk 4s

LONDON NORTH Eastern Railway has announced it is to retain the use of some of its Class 91/Mk 4 InterCity 225 electric sets beyond the planned June withdrawal date. The reason is it will not have sufficient Azumas for its proposed December 2021 timetable change. This plans to increase the number of trains the railway runs, for example because of the new Middlesbrough-King's Cross services.

The operator currently has 45 of the 65 Azumas accepted from the manufacturer, but is planning to order up to eight more nine-car bi-mode units to provide the necessary capacity and give more flexibility if services are diverted away from electrified lines. To meet with the required regulations LNER will have to tender for the new trains, even though Hitachi produces the Azuma and so, for fleet commonality, is almost

certain to win the contract. This adds some uncertainty as to when the new trains will be delivered. Therefore, retaining the IC225s will add resilience to the fleet and provide spare capacity to allow for maintenance and any disruption once the new timetable starts. Details of how many sets are involved have yet to be confirmed; but, given the new order, it is likely to be at least eight. The added bonus is that from July this year LNER will have some spare capacity to cover for failures and delays. This will also help to cover for Azumas as they receive additional luggage rack modifications.

So far LNER has withdrawn seven Class 91s, with 91122/128/132 being the latest at the end of January after 91103/108/117/120 were taken out of traffic in 2019. 91104 was to be withdrawn but has been reprieved.

Initial funding to reverse Beeching cuts

THE GOVERNMENT has launched an initial £500m fund to begin restoring rail lines that were closed as a result of the 1963 Beeching Report. Transport Secretary Grant Shapps visited Fleetwood in February to announce £21.9m for two lines and a New Stations Fund. The new fund was announced in the Conservative Party's election manifesto and is designed to reconnect communities and boost local economies.

The first two lines to benefit will be the Ashington-Blyth-Tyne Line in Northumberland, and the Fleetwood line in Lancashire. The money will go towards developing the proposals and the business and social cases; additional funds will be required to complete the work. Other communities will be able to apply for the remainder of the £500m towards developing their own schemes. The

announcement came at the same time as the Government revealed a pledge to invest around £4bn in buses, trams and more trains across the UK.

While the cuts introduced by the Beeching Report made financial sense at the time, 50-60 years on they can be viewed as short-sighted in many cases, as the population has increased and what were small villages and communities have grown to medium-sized or even large towns. A revitalised rail connection to the national network could reduce road congestion and encourage inward investment in several areas.

Speaking to the BBC Mr Shapps said that the Fleetwood and Ashington lines were "just the start". He continued: "We want to see this whole country linked up with railways, or light railways where appropriate."

Goathland Bridge replaced

THE NORTH Yorkshire Moors Railway has achieved the much anticipated replacement of Bridge 27 at Goathland Station. The original structure was badly corroded and replacement was identified as the only option a few years ago. Carrying the 180-year-old railway over the Eller Beck at Goathland, the 20m Bridge 27 is best recognised as the iconic track leading to Hogsmeade Station, where the young wizards embarked for Hogwarts in the film *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*.

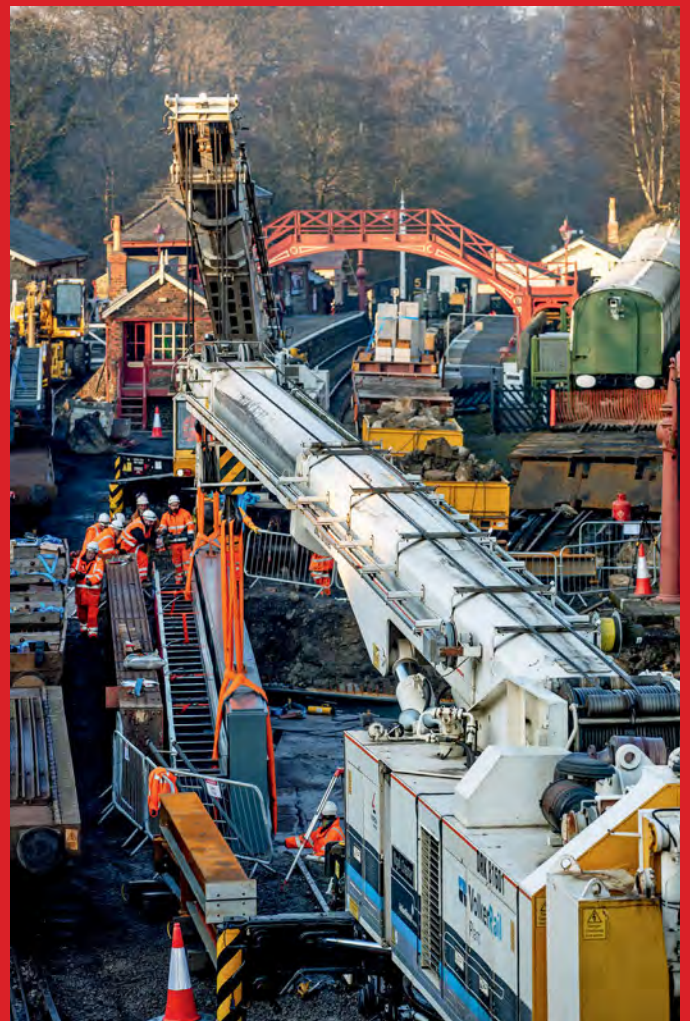
Cleveland Bridge UK has worked closely with the NYMR, and in addition to the design, fabrication and installation of the new 84-tonne, single span structure it was involved in the dismantling of the old bridge, earthworks, and pre-casting of concrete elements as well as the in-situ casting of its new deck.

Chris Price, NYMR General Manager, said: "This investment in the future of our railway paves the way for future generations to enjoy our vibrant rail history. Cleveland Bridge UK has been a pleasure to work with on this project and their intrinsic involvement builds on the trust and professional partnership that we can hope to continue for many years to come."

Transportation of the components

involved six loads via road from Cleveland Bridge's factory to AV Dawson's freight facility in Middlesbrough, where they were transferred to rail and on to Goathland. The bridge replacement is part of the £10m Yorkshire's Magnificent Journey project, which aims to secure the long-term future of the popular railway. It will involve other infrastructure improvements to enable the line to continue running, including the replacement of two further bridges. The project also focuses on improving access to the railway for those with disabilities and young children, providing new opportunities for apprentices, and new education and volunteering facilities.

NYMR's ambitious project has been made possible by grants from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Rural Payments Agency, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the generosity of supporters. With a combination of donations and grants the charity has raised 90% of the funds to deliver the YMJ project. However, the railway still needs to raise an additional £1m over the next three years and is appealing for further support to achieve that target. For further information and to donate, please visit www.nymr.co.uk/YMJ.



Cranes do the heavy lifting as the bridge girders are moved into place at Goathland on January 20. (NYMR)



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Stadler secures Tyne and Wear Metro contract



An artist's impression of the new five-car Stadler units ordered by Nexus for the Tyne and Wear Metro. (Nexus)

SWISS MANUFACTURER Stadler has secured the £362m contract to supply 42 five-car trains and new depot facilities for the Nexus Tyne and Wear Metro. The Department for Transport will provide £337m towards funding the project, which also includes a depot at Howdon as well as new facilities at south Gosforth. Deliveries will begin in

2021 and be completed in 2024. Stadler, which competed with CAF and Hitachi for the deal, is to use 30 UK suppliers to produce the trains. It will also maintain the new trains for up to 35 years, which will bring the total value of the contract to £700m.

There is an option for a further four trains, provided that Nexus

can secure Government funds to convert some freight lines to passenger use to increase the network around the Newcastle area.

The Stadler units are expected to use 30% less electricity than the current fleet and Nexus claims they will be "15 times" more reliable. The interior will feature wide

gangways, air conditioning, heated floors, Wi-Fi, charging points, Passenger Information displays and digital CCTV, and there will be four wheelchair spaces per train and a retractable step at each door.

The award is the third for Stadler in recent years, following on from deals with Merseyrail and the Glasgow Subway.

Better news for TPE



TransPennine Express Nova 2 Class 397 397003 passes Docker on February 3 with the 1538 0807 Manchester Airport to Edinburgh service. More of TPE's Nova fleets are now in service. (Paul Biggs)

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS is expecting to have introduced a significant number of its new Nova fleets by the end of March. As well as delays occasioned by crew training, none of the new trains were accepted by the operator between mid-December and mid-February. A great deal of the delay was down to modification work on CAF sets following delivery. The Class 397 Nova 2 EMUs require a fleet-wide windscreen replacement after at least five of them have experienced cracks, and an improved fitting method is now being used.

Since early February 11 daily diagrams have been in the hands of Class 802 Nova 1 bi-mode units, allowing more Liverpool to Newcastle services to be extended through to Edinburgh. From 17 February this was due to step up to 13 diagrams, with 16 of 19 sets in daily service from the end of March.

Meanwhile, after a long period with only two Nova 2 units in service, TPE added a third from 17 February ahead of a further increase to five from March 9. West Midlands Trains is eager to receive the remaining six Class 350/4 EMUs from TPE and

these are expected to arrive by the end of March, with Nova 2 diagrams increasing to eight sets. The final increase to ten daily diagrams is not anticipated until the May timetable change. Up to then Class 185s are being used on some Liverpool to Glasgow trains. The use of Nova 3s (Class 68/Mk 5a) is to remain at four daily diagrams for some weeks while driver training concentrates on the Nova 1 units.

However, the increase in its fleet has allowed TPE to run more six-car Class 185 formations to alleviate overcrowding.

Concerns after Italian high speed derailment

TWO CREW were killed when an Italian Frecciarossa 1000 high speed train derailed near Lodi at 0534 on February 6. The train was travelling from Milan to the southern Italian city of Salerno. Other services on the Milan-Bologna high-speed route were suspended or diverted onto conventional lines. Although the train derailed at speed, only the leading two vehicles overturned, with the rest remaining upright. The incident happened as the train passed over a set of points and reports have suggested that a point actuator with reverse wiring was discovered, leading to suspicion that that was the cause.

The line uses ECTS Level 2 signalling and an important part of the investigation will be finding out why it reported the route was set correctly; when a set of points was not.

Eastleigh derailment



The Freightliner-operated 4005 Birch Coppice to Southampton intermodal working derailed at Eastleigh on January 28, causing considerable damage to the trackwork. SWR services were severely disrupted for six days while the six derailed loaded container flats were removed and temporary plain track was laid. Track spread has been identified as the cause. New points have to be produced and reinstalled, so disruption was expected to last into March. (Carl Watson)

Testing and training begins for Tfw Mk 4s



Leased from DB Cargo, Tfw-liveried 67025 passes Rhyl on January 28 with the 3Z67 test run. (Tim Rogers)

TRANSPORT FOR Wales began testing its Mk 4 coaches on January 28 when a four-coach set plus Driving Van Trailer began a series of training runs on the North Wales line. Powered by Tfw-liveried 67025, the workings began with a 3Z67 0949 Crewe Carriage Sidings-Holyhead, after which the return journey visited Llandudno before heading to Crewe. The trial employed the second set of modified Mk 4 coaches, which departed Arriva Traincare's Eastleigh depot earlier

in the month and was formed of 12219, 12447, 10328, 11324 and 82229. As before, only the DVT has received the Transport for Wales' grey and red livery, with the passenger coaches retaining their Virgin/LNER colours but with new brandings. On January 29, the set again visited Holyhead, while Manchester was reached the next day with a trip to Longsight. Meanwhile, January 31 saw 67008 and the first set of Tfw Mk 4s (12225, 12454, 10325, 11323 and 82226) arrive at Holyhead with

training trips getting under way in early February.

The initial run also visited the Llandudno branch, as the coaches are likely to replace the Mk 3 set used on the Manchester to North Wales diagram, which includes an evening trip to Llandudno. DB Cargo Class 67s have been adapted for push-pull working with the Mk 4 stock. No date for service entry has been released, but they are expected to be used for the Cardiff to Holyhead service from the May timetable.

IN BRIEF

➔ Eurostar is to start running direct services from Amsterdam to the UK on April 30. Direct trains have run in the opposite direction since 2018, but new passport control facilities were required in Amsterdam and Rotterdam before the same was possible in the London-bound direction. Tickets for the new service became available on February 11. To start with, two daily trains will run direct, eventually increasing to four.

➔ In an attempt to simplify its activities, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority is to streamline its transport and logistics portfolio by merging Direct Rail Services with its other arms – International Nuclear Services (INS) and the INS subsidiary Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd (PNTL).

➔ An LNER Azuma travelled to Huddersfield during a training run on February 17 as a prelude to the operator introducing a new service from the town to King's Cross on May 18. The new train will depart Huddersfield at 0550, with the return leaving London at 1803 and splitting at Leeds to form the 2032 Leeds to Huddersfield, meaning it will be a Class 800/2 bi-mode.

➔ Porterbrook has agreed a 15-year lease of the Quinton Rail Technology Centre at Long Marston in Warwickshire. The deal comes into effect at the end of Q2 in 2021. The facility covers 135 acres and includes 12 miles of sidings and a two-mile test track loop. The agreement ensures the site will remain at the forefront of UK rail development and innovation.

➔ Network Rail's public consultation on its plans to change the Devon Sea Wall between Teignmouth and Parson's Tunnel came to an end on March 1. The plan is required due to the poor condition of the cliffs and the risk of rock fall on to the track. The wall is to be moved further out into the sea to allow the track to be moved away from the cliffs. A wider path and a fully accessible footbridge will be included.

➔ West Midlands Trains is planning to build a depot for its new fleet of Bombardier Class 730 Aventras on the site of the Bescot yard and maintenance depot, creating up to 100 jobs in the area. WMT's original plan was for a facility at Duddeston, but this met with opposition. WMT has 81 Class 730s on order, with 36 three-car units for the Cross City line in Birmingham and 45 five-car units for long-distance and outer-suburban services.

Turbo to Brighton

In the small hours of January 22 GWR ran a special gauging train along the Coastway West route utilising Class 166 Turbo 166211. The operator plans to use Turbos on its Great Malvern/Cardiff/Bristol to Brighton services. The train stopped at various stations to test train-to-platform clearances and is seen here at Platform 1 at Worthing in West Sussex. (John Vaughan)

New Wigan Depot opens



Northern two-car Class 195 195022 stands at the fuelling point at the recently opened Wigan Springs Branch Depot. (Northern)

THE NEW £46m Northern depot at Wigan Springs Branch was officially opened on February 7, although trains have been using it since December. It has four roads; and is beside the existing freight yard at Ince-in-Makerfield. It can accommodate up to 40 vehicles and will be used for train cleaning, fuelling, service and maintenance. Around 20 new jobs have been

created at the depot. Northern expects to service up to 24 EMUs and DMUs per night, including Classes 150, 156, 158, 195, 319, 331 and, from 2021, Class 323s once they have been transferred from West Midlands Trains. Three of the four roads are electrified. The depot can also replenish lubricants, sand, water and coolant, and it has a carriage washer.

First Class 196/1 delivery imminent



The first Class 196/1 four-car DMU is expected to be delivered by CAF to West Midlands Trains by the end of March. The unit is expected to be 196104, which has been completed at the firm's Newport facility and was due to start testing in February. Three other sets (196101-103) have been built in Spain, with 196101/102 currently undergoing tests at the Velim track in the Czech Republic. (Key - Philip Sherratt)

EMR introduces ex-LNER HSTs

EAST MIDLANDS Railway was due to introduce the first of the former LNER HSTs it has recently acquired to passenger service by the end of February. Six Angel Trains and three Porterbrook sets were transferred to the operator and have initially been stored, mostly at Gascoigne Wood. Two sets at a time are being modified at Neville Hill Depot before entering service with

EMR. This includes some corrosion rectification, application of EMR branding, finishing works on the Passenger Information Systems and minor modifications to the brake distributors. The latter is because they will do less high-speed running and make more frequent stops than they did when with LNER.

A second set was expected in service soon afterwards, with the

remainder to be introduced broadly in pairs until the spring. All will retain their former LNER liveries.

Meanwhile, the three 2+6 HSTs owned by Angel Trains will be retained until the end of the year, when they are to be replaced by the four Class 180s transferred from Hull Trains. Two have already arrived at Derby Etches Park Depot for inspection. They will

move to Barrow Hill for storage as the other two sets arrive. This was expected to happen in late February, and then driver training will take place from Barrow Hill, with maintenance undertaken at Etches Park. Service entry is expected to be later in the year, following performance modifications to improve reliability and staff training.



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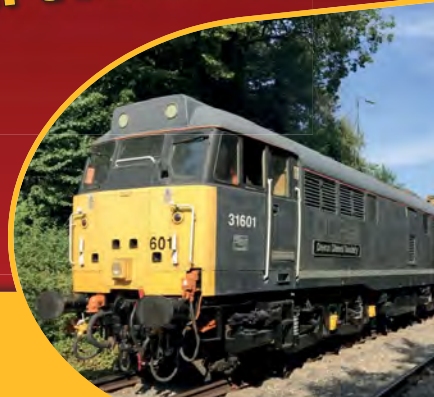
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Coaching Stock News

Mk 3 exodus from GWR

With December having brought the end of both the Hull Trains hire-ins and GWR's own 'classic' sets, there were plenty of redundant Mk 3s to remove from the operator's depots. With handback exams completed, these transfers commenced on February 3 with 43071 and 43196 moving themselves from Laira to Long Marston for store along with 41167, 42094/103 /231/302/310 and 44042/068/069. Seven days later, 57312 made the same trip with 41166 and 42095/167/176/304/563/582 and the GM was back again on the 12th to collect 40900/902/904, 41160 and 42565/570, again heading to Long Marston.

A small number of Mk 3s are being retained at GWR depots with indications that more refurbished Castle sets are under consideration to ease the burden on the operator's DMU fleet. These include the few HST trailers owned outright by GWR rather than leased, but the go-ahead is conditional on a further franchise extension being granted, with a decision due shortly. The stock includes 42005/015/016/554 and 44005, which were moved from Laira to St Philip's Marsh by 43009 and 43010 on February 12, along with 42087/566/580 and 44100 stabled at Penzance.

Much fun was had with the temporary three-coach Castle set GW93 during late January and early February with first 48106 and then 49107 being returned to their correct sets of GW02 and GW07 respectively. In their place came nominal spares 48131 and 49112, of which 48131 was renumbered as 48130 around February 9.

ScotRail latest

Two more refurbished HST sets have emerged from Wabtec,

January 29 seeing 43143 and 43161 head for Haymarket with HA16, this being formed of 40626 (ex-41012), 42281, 42072 and 42350. Two weeks later on February 11, 43183 and 43175 took charge of the 5501 1503 Doncaster-Haymarket with HA15, which comprised 40609 (formerly 41020), 42253, 42107 and 42257. Notably, 42257 and 42350 are the first of the Mk 3s refurbished at Kilmarnock to be released into service with another, 42143, moved by road to Doncaster in mid-February to await its set.

Of the remaining unrefurbished sets, HA02 is no more, with 43143 and 43026 taking it south from Haymarket to Ely Papworth on February 4. While 42032 and 44039 were left in East Anglia, the power cars then returned to Doncaster with 41144 and 42295 to join the refurbishment queue. A similar Ely-Doncaster move on February 18 involved further Mk 3s for modernisation, with 57312 hauling 42012, 42245 and 42558 north along with an unidentified TF. At Haymarket, HA01 has regained TGS 44029 in place of 44032 following graffiti removal.

New role for Motorail vans

Four of the former First Great Western NVA Motorail vans have been acquired by Meridian Generic Rail Limited (MGRL) and are now undergoing conversion into barrier coaches. Previously owned by Colas, 96602/03/05/07 have been retrieved from store at Barry and Cardiff Canton and taken to a workshop in Foston, Derbyshire for overhaul. The work includes fitting height-adjustable Dellner couplings as well as modifying and certifying the vehicles to run through the Channel Tunnel and across Europe as MGRL is heavily involved in

vehicle testing at the Velim test track in the Czech Republic. The internal space will be used to carry equipment needed for this work with the fold-down sides helping with loading.

ERS receives more stock

January 28 saw Eastern Rail Services take delivery of the remainder of its former Caledonian Sleeper vehicles. Powered by 47593, the 5Z77 transfer from Crewe to the Weardale Railway included 6702, 9804 and 10699 along with newly acquired Mk 3a buffets 10212 and 10229. Also in the diverse consist were 10531 and 10689 bound for preservation elsewhere and DBSO 9711 (see preserved coaches on p25 for more details) along with generator coach 6311, which 47593 took onwards to Tyne Yard to collect the HST trailers detailed above.

Meanwhile, ERS' fifth Mk 2e BUO hired to Network Rail, 9810, was in traffic by the end of January following the fitting of through cabling. On the 30th, it was part of the ultrasonic test formation working the 3Q02 2345 Tyseley-Derby RTC via Banbury with 37219 for power and 96608, 6262, 999605 and 9702 for company.

Chiltern DVTs to Bristol

A new programme is under way at Bristol Barton Hill of underframe overhauls on the Chiltern Railways Mk 3b DVTs. Beginning on January 25, 82309 was collected from Wembley by 60055 for the journey west before it returned to London behind 60046 on February 1. In turn, 82305 headed for Bristol the same day and it was back home just six days later when 60046 powered the 5Z20 1009 Bristol Barton Hill-Wembley. The grey 'Tug' took 82302

to Barton Hill on February 8 and this was still there a week later. As part of the work, the DVTs are receiving large 'Chiltern Railways by Arriva' brandings on their body sides.

More sleepers for GWR

The two ex-Caledonian Sleeper Mk 3s earmarked for GWR were collected from Wembley on January 22 with 50007 and 50049 providing the motive power in top and tail formation. 10551 and 10553 were taken to Laira to await developments as their refurbishment as additional 'Night Riviera' stock again depends on the award of the franchise extension. The move also included 10706, which currently has no taker, and this was forwarded to Long Marston for further storage the next day by the two 'Hoovers'.

DRS Mk 2s to Scotland

The last Mk 2f coaches to make up the Anglia 'short set' have been redeployed to Scotland, with a view to eliminating more of the hired-in Riviera Trains stock from the Fife Circle sets. Following exams at Loram, 5937 and 9521 were taken north from Derby to Motherwell TMD on January 28 sandwiched between 68009 and 68001. An identical move on February 12 involved 68018 and 68017 with just 5919 in between.

TransPennine update

With four Mk 5 diagrams now in use sets TP04/06-09/11-13 have all been recorded in passenger service. On January 30, Freightliner deployed 47830 to work the 5K47 1348 MoD Longtown-Crewe Carriage Sidings, this extracting TP03 (11503, 12709-11, 12803) from store to begin the commissioning process. Meanwhile, the spare Mk 5 DBSO, 12814, has surfaced after several months languishing in Portbury Docks. Collected by Allelys around January 23, it is understood to have gone for store at the Anglesey Aluminium plant outside Holyhead.

Overdue disposals

Having languished at Long Marston for many years, Mk 2d RMBF 6722 was finally sent for scrap on January 23. Still carrying the long obsolete First Great Western green and gold livery, it was delivered to Booth's Rotherham yard the next day. Equally notable was the demise of Mk 1 GUV 93975 at Ipswich Upper Yard on January 29. Otherwise known as internal user 042154, it was scrapped on site after more than 30 years in situ.



Rail Operations Group's Class 57 57312 passes Flax Bourton on February 10 with the 5D94 ECS from Laira to Long Marston, conveying Mk 3s for storage. (Stuart Kirkby)

Loco/Stock Names

Named

Number	Name	Where	Date
43042	<i>Tregenna Castle</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
43098	<i>Walton Castle</i>	Laira Depot	02/20
43122	<i>Dunster Castle</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
43158	<i>Kingswear Castle</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
60029	<i>Ben Nevis</i>	Toton Depot	02/20
158864	<i>ELR 50 Visit Lincolnshire in 2020</i>	Skegness station	23/01/20
378232	<i>Jeff Langston</i>	Ilford Depot	12/19

De-named

Number	Name	Where	Date
08629	<i>Wolverton</i>	Wolverton Works	-
08649	<i>Bradwell</i>	Wolverton Works	-
43156	<i>Dartington International Summer School</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
43160	<i>Sir Moir Lockhead OBE</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
43162	<i>Exeter Panel Signal Box 21st Anniversary 2009</i>	Laira Depot	01/20
158910	<i>William Wilberforce</i>	Arriva Traincare, Crewe	12/19
221109	<i>Marco Polo</i>	Central Rivers Depot	12/19

LSL expands its Class 37 fleet



D6817 (37521) arrives at Crewe from Chester as the 0Z42 test run on February 12, with 37667 along for company. It's been some time since two green Growlers have appeared on the main line. (Andy Kaye)

LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES Ltd has increased its Class 37 fleet recently with the addition of former Colas 37521 and D05 Preservation's 37688. 37521 has been returned to its original BR green livery and performed a test run from Crewe on February 12. The following day the loco was dispatched to the Severn Valley Railway to collect 37688 and return it to Crewe. The latter loco is on long-term hire for use on the main line.

West Coast Railways secure 86401

UNTIL RECENTLY used by Caledonian Sleeper for ECS moves of Mk 3 sleepers, Class 86/4 86401 became redundant once the new Mk 5 coaches were introduced. It has been acquired by West Coast Railways and moved north to Carnforth on February 14. It is likely to lose its Caledonian teal blue scheme and will quite possibly appear in WCR maroon. It is understood that WCR will continue to use 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan*, but the additional AC loco will provide it with an extra resource.



Striking Black GC 90

The first Class 90 for use on the new Grand Central Blackpool to Euston services emerged from the Toton paint shop on February 18. It was towed by DB Cargo 66163 to Crewe the same day as the 0Z69 1520 departure from Toton and is seen passing Barrow-upon-Trent. (Steve Donald)

First HST set scrapped

ROG Class 57 57312 leads the 5Q76 Tyne Yard to Newport Docks ECS through Gloucester on January 23 with HST Mk 3 set NL65 heading to Newport for scrapping.
(Luke Parsons)



AS PLANNED, NL65 became the first full HST to be sent for scrap on January 23, previous disposals having been limited to accident damaged sets or redundant individual trailers. With 57312

in charge, the 5Q76 0529 Tyne Yard-Sims Metals, Newport Docks was formed of 40805, 41068/112, 42194/225/227 and 44027, although 42229 did not make the trip and remains in Tyne Yard. Notably, the

barrier coaches were the rarely used pair of 6394 and 6395. By the end of February, the set had been demolished. Another departure from Tyne Yard on January 29 saw 47593 remove TFs

41062 and 41154 with generator van 6311 employed as a barrier coach. Previously part of EC64, the two trailers were taken to Crewe and are expected to form part of Locomotive Services' HST set in due course.

Unit Focus

Class 142

28/1 - 142049+142009 5Z43 0729 Gascoigne Wood-EMR, Kingsbury.
15/2 - 142043+142036+142061+142011 3Z01 0910 Newton Heath-Heaton, for warm store.
16/2 - 142041+142035+142055+142047 3Z01 0913 Newton Heath-Heaton, for warm store. The transfer of these eight sets leaves just six Class 142 in use with Northern: 142004/010/023/045/058/078.

Class 153

17/1 - 153313+153326+153310 5W78 11.35 Crewe-Landore.
27/1 - 153321 0444 Crewe-Landore, four EMR sets transferring to TFW.
10/2 - 153306+153361 1020 Cardiff Canton-Long Marston, 153361 for refurbishment/PRM mods.
10/2 - 153306+153367 1800 Long Marston-Cardiff Canton, 153367 ex-refurbishment/PRM mods.

Class 156

17/1 - 156496 Heaton to Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh by road, for refurbishment/PRM mods.
24/1 - 156419 5Z56 0935 Norwich Crown Point-Derby Etches Park, transfer to EMR.
27/1 - 156416 5Z56 0935 Norwich Crown Point-Derby Etches Park, transfer to EMR.
29/1 - 156922 5Z56 1007 Derby Litchurch Lane-Landore, for roof repairs, newly renumbered from 156422 and re-liveried in EMR white/purple. 156402/407/416/418/419 also renumbered to 156902/907/916/918/919 by end of January.
3/2 - 156417 5Z56 0935 Norwich Crown Point-Derby Etches Park, final GA Class 156 to transfer to EMR, renumbered to 156917 soon afterwards.

Class 158

5/2 - 158848 5V82 0704 Heaton-Bristol Barton Hill, for refurbishment/repaint.

11/2 - 158907 5Z16 0700 Bristol Barton Hill-Neville Hill, refurbished/repainted.

Class 166

21-22/1 - 166211 3Z87 2309 Portsmouth Harbour-Brighton, 3Z88 0310 Brighton-Fratton Carriage Sidings - Class 166 gauging run to Brighton ahead of replacing Class 158s.

Class 170

4/2 - 170271 1007 Ilford-Tyseley, final GA Class 170 to transfer to TFW via an exam at Tyseley.
18/2 - 170271 5W78 1243 Tyseley-Cardiff Canton.

Class 195

January - 195023 delivered to Edge Hill by road from CAF, Newport, 195024 followed in early February.
10/2 - 195021 Edge Hill to CAF. Newport by road, for repairs to damage caused by low speed derailment at Edge Hill.

Class 314

20-22/1 - DMS cars from 314202 (64585/86) and 314205 (64591/92) moved by road from Shields to JR Adam & Sons, Glasgow for scrapping, disposed of the same week. TS cars 71451 and 71454 by road to Long Marston.

10-12/2 - DMS cars from 314210 (64601/02) and 314216 (64613/14) moved by road from Shields to JR Adam & Sons, Glasgow for scrapping, disposed of the same week. TS cars 71459 and 71465 by road to Long Marston. 314204 at Eastleigh Works and 314209 at Shields now the only remaining complete Class 314s.

Class 317

6/2 - 57301+317508 5Q80 0903 Kilmarnock Bonnyton (Brodie Rail)-Wembley Yard, ex-PRM mods.
7/2 - 57301+317508 5Q52 0653 Wembley Yard-Ilford.

Class 319

23/1 - 37884+319440 5Q70 1323 Reading



Northern Class 142s 142043, 036, 061 and 011 run into Manchester Victoria while forming the 3Z01 0910 Newton Heath to Heaton on February 15. The sets were going into store at the Newcastle Facility. (James Griffiths)

Traincare-Wolverton, for overhaul then to go to Brush for 'Flex' conversion.
w/c 3/2 - 319010 Long Marston to Wolverton by road.
w/c 10/2 - 319421 Wolverton to Brush, Loughborough by road.

Class 321

31/1 - spare trailer 71963 (once in 321415 before Class 320/4 conversion) moved by road from Long Marston to CF Booth, Rotherham for scrapping.

Class 323

1/2 - 323239 0949 Wolverton-Allerton, refurbished.
1/2 - 323228 1437 Allerton-Wolverton, for refurbishment.
15/2 - 323236 1252 Wolverton-Allerton, refurbished.
15/2 - 323230 1613 Allerton-Wolverton, for refurbishment.

Class 331

January - 331026 delivered to Edge Hill by road from Portbury Docks, 331027 followed on February 7.

Class 333

15/2 - 37608+333006+37884 5Q17 0950 Holbeck-Neville Hill, refurbished.
15/2 - 37884+333005+37608 5Q18 1338 Neville Hill-Holbeck, for refurbishment.

Class 345

24/1 - 37608+345058 5Q58 1105 Worksop-Old Dalby.
30/1 - 37608+345058 5Q26 0927 Old Dalby-Worksop.
4/2 - 37608+345002 5Q58 0942 Derby Litchurch Lane-Old Dalby, extended to nine cars.
7/2 - 37608+345018 5Q26 1031 Old Dalby-Worksop.
10/2 - 47813+345001+37608 5Q73 0411 Derby Litchurch Lane-Old Oak Common.
13/2 - 37608+345018 5Q52 1525 Worksop-Ilford, still a nine-car set.
17/2 - 37608+345023 5Q58 1458 Worksop-Old Dalby.
18/2 - 37608+345058 5Q58 1023 Worksop Down Yard-Old Oak Common.

Class 350

January - 350402/08/09 all re-liveried in LNR colours at Ardwick, 350409 last to be done, but remain in service with TransPennine Express. As a result the Class 350/1 internal refurbishment and corrosion repair programmes have been suspended to increase fleet availability until the remaining six Class 350/4s transfer to LNR.

Class 378

January - 378232 released for a second

Blackpool Mk 4s moved

WITH GRAND Central due to commence its new Blackpool to Euston services from the May timetable change, February brought a notable increase in preparations. On the 3rd, two reformed sets of Mk 4s were collected from Worksop by 66756 and hauled to Alstom's Widnes facility to undergo refurbishment, these being 12222, 12461, 12323, 10330, 11321, 82227 and 12224, 12477, 12326, 10321, 11320, 82200. The first six coaches were all previously in set BN21, which had only arrived at Worksop from Bounds Green a week earlier on January 27 behind 66755; the remaining vehicles, 11244, 11421, 12441 and 12476, are now stored.

February 4 brought another departure from Worksop with 66763 moving 12204, 12462, 12317, 10317, 11329 and 82231 to Crewe Carriage Sidings. By mid-February this rake was in use as a static training set, with 90019 attached, as was the fourth Grand Central set at Alstom's Wembley depot, 90020 being noted



Two rakes of former LNER Mark 4s, together with DVTs, moved from storage at Worksop to Alstom's Widnes Transport Tech facility on February 3 for use by Grand Central on its new Blackpool North-London Euston service. The 5Z19 working passes through Brighouse behind GBRF 66756 Royal Corps of Signals, with DVT 82200 bringing up the rear. (Russell Wykes)

coupled to 12227, 12471, 12321, 10319, 11327 and 82228.

Another rake that has worked for the last time with LNER is BN22, with BR green-liveried GBRF 66779 powering the 5Z91 0926 Bounds Green-Worksop on February 17 with 12210, 12452, 12460, 12473, 12316, 10301,

11291, 11322, 11422 and 82230. Back on January 28, 57305 departed Worksop for Doncaster West Yard with a mixed assortment of 10329, 11330, 11999, 12216, 12331, 12439/40/49/63 and 82203, while the month also saw 12472 and 12534 leave Worksop by road bound for Long Marston.

time from Ilford, now with its fifth car (38432) also refurbished, repainted and reformed in the set. Back in service by end of the month.

Class 387

31/1 - 57306+387141+387130 5Q78 0852 Reading Traincare-Ilford, 387141 for Heathrow Express mods and repaint, 387130 for further attention.
31/1 - 57306+387134+387139 5Q38 1330 Ilford-Reading Traincare, ex-Heathrow Express modifications, full internal refurbishment and repaint.

Class 399

20/1 - 399204 returned to service on Sheffield tram/train services following the completion of repair and recommissioning work at Nunery Square, it remaining incorrectly formed as 999004, 999104, 999202. The set had been out of service since October 25, 2018, after being hit by a lorry. January 20 also saw a full tram-train service restored to Rotherham Parkgate, it having run at a reduced frequency since mid-November due to the Class 399s requiring mods.

Class 442

7/2 - 57305+47815+442415 5Q77 0703 Eastleigh Works-Wolverton for re-traction work, now moved from Eastleigh.

Class 465

31/1-1/2 - 66742+465904 5Q88 2133 Wabtec, Doncaster-Slade Green.

Class 466

1/2 - 66742+466023+466032 5Q89 1130 Slade Green-Wabtec, Doncaster.
14-15/2 - 66724+466032 2133 5Q88 Wabtec Doncaster-Slade Green.
15/2 - 66724+466034 5Q89 1130 Slade Green-Wabtec, Doncaster.

Class 710

23/1 - 57305+710117+37608 5Q72 0927

Old Dalby-Willesden TMD.

28/1 - 57305+710273+37608 5Q26 1024 Derby Litchurch Lane-Worksop, delivery.
30/1 - 37884+710104+57305 5Q27 1024 Derby Litchurch Lane-Worksop, delivery.
3/2 - 37608+710124+57305 5Q58 1122 Worksop-Old Dalby.
11/2 - 37608+710272+57305 5Q58 1122 Worksop-Old Dalby.
11/2 - 37608+710129+57305 5Q72 1555 Old Dalby-Willesden TMD.
13/2 - 57305+710128+37608 5Q26 0952 Old Dalby-Worksop.

Class 720

31/1 - 47727+720513+47749 6Z26 1141 Derby Litchurch Lane-Old Dalby.
12/2 - 47727+720506+47749 5Q20 1708 Derby Litchurch Lane-Ferme Park.
13/2 - 47727+720506+47749 5Q21 1953 Ferme Park-Ilford.
17/2 - 47727+720503+47749 5Q10 0955 Old Dalby-Worksop.
18/2 - 47749+720519+47727 5Q11 0949 Derby Litchurch Lane-Worksop.
February - 720522 moved by road from Derby Litchurch Lane to Worksop for store.

Class 745

24/1 - second Class 745/0 diagram introduced, 745010 debuting on 1P15 0740 Norwich-Liverpool Street.
28/1 - 745010 on 1P15 0740 Norwich-Liverpool Street failed at Forest Gate Junction around 0830. Passengers eventually detrained onto an eight-car Class 321 around 1430.
30/1 - 66001+745108 5Q99 0343 Ripple Lane-Norwich Crown Point.
13/2 - 66002+745109 5L99 0343 Ripple Lane-Norwich Crown Point.

Class 769

28/1 - 57301+57312+769458+37884 5N36 Crewe South Yard-Allerton.
10/2 - 769442 3Z01 1016 Allerton-Wigan Springs Branch, joining 769450 for driver training and coupling trials.
13/2 - 769442 3Z51 1008 Wigan Springs

Branch-Wigan Springs Branch via Southport.

Class 801

27/1 - 66742+801225 5X98 0745 Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh-Acton Main Line, 5Q98 1303 Acton Main Line-Doncaster Carr.
30-31/1 - 66702+801223 5Q50 2012 Merchant Park-Acton Main Line-Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh, terminated at Kennet Bridge Loop (Reading) due to the Freightliner derailment at Eastleigh and diversionary routes not being cleared for IETs, 5Q50 1200 Kennet Bridge Loop-Ferme Park.
6/2 - 66771+801226 5Q50 2012 Merchant Park-Doncaster, delivery run, was to run to Eastleigh but terminated short.
13-14/2 - 66757+801227 5Q50 2012 Merchant Park-Acton Main Line, 5X50 0213 Acton Main Line-Eastleigh Works.

Class 802

21/1 - 802205 5Q97 0515 Heaton-Newark Northgate, 5Q99 0904 Newark Northgate-Acton Main Line, 5X99 1234 Acton Main Line-Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh, for vinyl application.
22/1 - 802207 5X98 0708 Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh-Acton Main Line, 5Q98 1258 Acton Main Line-Doncaster Carr, now in TPE livery.
24/1 - 802204+801222 5X98 0711 Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh-Acton Main Line, 5Q98 1257 Acton Main Line-Doncaster Carr.
3/2 - major increase in TPE Class 802 diagrams with 11 sets in traffic, 802201/02/03/06/07/09/10/11/13/15/19.
5/2 - 802304+802205 5X98 0710 Arriva Traincare, Eastleigh-Acton Main Line, 5Q98 1256 Acton Main Line-Doncaster, 5Q67 1838 Doncaster-Heaton, 802205 now in TPE livery.
10/2 - 802216 9M04 0606 Newcastle-Liverpool Lime Street, last TPE Class 802 to enter passenger service.
12/2 - 802304 5Q97 0808 Heaton-King's Cross, 5Q98 1213 return, test run for latest Hull Trains unit.

IN BRIEF

➔ Former DB Cargo Class 60s 60050 and 60086 have become the first examples to be preserved. 60086 arrived at the Wensleydale Railway on February 10 and was closely followed by 60050 which arrived the next day. Appropriately 60086 hauled the last limestone train on the line in 1992.

➔ It has been confirmed that eight of the 12 Class 58s stored in Spain have been scrapped, with 58031 the last to succumb on February 8 at Manforte Del Cid. The eight Class 58s stored at there were all from the nine sold to Transfesa during October 2011, namely 58015, 58020, 58024, 58029, 58030, 58031, 58043 and 58047.

➔ On January 23 50008 suffered a loss of power while working a Rossington to Chaddesden Sidings empty spoil train, resulting in it needing rescuing. Subsequent investigation identified a generator fault which will see the locomotive out of traffic for a few weeks whilst it is being repaired.

➔ It has been announced by GWR that the two original Class 150/0s, 150001 and 150002, the only two of the class built as three-car units by BREL in 1984, will be transferred during March to Northern. They are reportedly to be used on the Penistone route along with two further Class 150s increased to three coaches by splitting 150209 and using the two vehicles.

➔ Freightliner has sanctioned repairs to Class 70 70009, which has been stored at Leeds Midland Road since January 2017. It was moved from the line of stored Class 70s on February 14, leaving 70013, 70017, 70018 and 70019 still out of use.

➔ Class 37 use on the Cardiff and Rhymney line was expected to come to an end on February 24 as Transport for Wales now has sufficient PRM modified Class 153s to cover the service. Following modifications 153325 and 153333 arrived back at Cardiff Canton on February 13. The use of the 37s had been expected to last into March.

➔ It has been revealed that the 33 five-car Hitachi bi-mode units ordered by East Midlands Railway are to be designated as Class 810s.

Wagon News

More 'Ecofrets' ordered

VTG Rail has placed an order for 84 new FWA 'Ecofret2' container wagons with WH Davis, these all being triple-element versions. Announced on January 23, indications are that the whole fleet is destined for use with GB Railfreight and includes the 32 wagons confirmed earlier in the month. This version of the innovative design will feature new track-friendly bogies and additional container mounting points to allow all sections to carry either one 40ft or two 20ft containers. They will also feature GPS equipment to enable customers to track their consignments in real time. Meanwhile, VTG has announced that it will be leasing a total of 100 JNA-T box wagons to Cappagh, which will be used on DCRail's expanding network of aggregates services. These include the examples already in use with the remainder due for delivery in the coming months.

Dollands Moor arrivals

The latest batch of JNA-T wagons arrived at Dollands Moor in the early hours of February 18, bringing another new look for the bogie aggregate boxes. Consisting of 81 70 5500 804 to 828, all are finished in a dark red livery with large yellow Touax branding and are destined for use with Mendip

Rail on services out of Merehead and Westbury. A few days earlier, the fourth new Plasser & Theurer Unimat 09-4x4/4S dynamic tamper for Colas Rail also arrived through the Channel Tunnel, DR75011 being moved to Acton Yard behind 66002 and 66206 late on February 17 for onward transfer to Plasser's West Ealing works for commissioning.

Long Marston fills up

Two moves on January 21 saw hoppers exchanged for box wagons as 66773 arrived at Long Marston from March with redundant IIA coal hoppers in the form of 37 70 6955 222/34/43/4 6/47/49/50/53/54/56/60/61/63/69/78. GB Railfreight's 'pride' GM then returned to East Anglia with numerous JNAs in tow, namely 81 70 5500 604-06/10/12-33. The first half of February saw three more lengthy trains of aggregates wagons arrive at Long Marston for store. First in on February 5 was 66747 with the 6Z84 0744 departure from March hauling JNAs VTG3256, VT G3403/29/32/46/68/81/85/86/8 8/96 and VTG3504/06/10/16/18. Five days later, it was 66748's turn to visit, working a 6V85 0830 Coalville Mantle Lane-Long Marston with 24 of the former Bardon JGA bogie hoppers, BHQ17101/02/04-07/09-19/21-26/28. Finally, DCR's 56091

arrived from Chaddesden Sidings, Derby, on February 18 with recently built JNA-Ts for temporary store, these being 81 70 5500 634-653.

Davis out-shops hoppers

After a quiet couple of months, rail activity resumed at WH Davis' Shirebrook workshops on January 28 with 66709 arriving from Doncaster with more IIA hoppers for shortening – 37 70 6955 244/51/52/55/58/59/70/75/76. The GM then departed with 21 hoppers fresh from this process, it first heading to Coalville Mantle Lane to deposit 37 70 6955 205/07/14/17/21/90-99 and 300-04. Re-coded as HYA, these 20 wagons have only received patch-painting on the body-sides, and in some cases none at all, along with VTG logos, leaving the remainder of the superstructure in the previously unpainted steel with very visible weld lines. In contrast, the other HYA in the train, 371113, was fully painted in Cemex colours and it was taken onwards to Doncaster Decoy by 66709. On February 5, it was 70002's turn to visit Shirebrook, it bringing ten Freightliner HHA hoppers in from York to join those already on site for shortening; the 6E76 working consisting of 370273/277, 370303/369/373/379/398 and 370402/404/412.

Eastleigh developments

At Eastleigh Works, recent weeks have seen the final JSA steel carrier conversions completed, VTG4033/42/44/51/54/57 having lost their hoods and ends amongst other alterations, with general maintenance also carried out such as bogie overhauls. Also on site for heavy maintenance is one of Network Rail's Matisa P95 track renewal trains, DR78801/11/21/31 receiving attention from the builder as is support wagon YSA DB979121. During January, the overhaul of French-registered four-element car carrier 23 87 4376 012-2 was completed. It is now wearing a new grey livery and 'Groupe CAT' brandings, while redundant Touax-owned TIA tankers 33 70 7899 050-0 and 058-3 were scrapped on site by Raxstar.

Latest disposals

Booth's received its latest consignment of redundant DB Cargo wagons on February 14, 60059 arriving at Rotherham from Tinsley Yard with BMA steel carrier 965038, SEA/SPA opens 460281/293/345/619/738/863 and ZCA ballast wagons DC210187 and DC460854. Meanwhile, a week earlier HTA coal hoppers 310019 /033/048/144/166/182/189/275 /657/819/825 were delivered to Newport Docks for scrapping by Sims Metals.

Stored		
57303	XHSS	DRS, Carlisle Kingmoor
66119	WQAA	DBC, Toton
66144	WQAA	DBC, Toton
Stored then reinstated		
None		
Transfers		
08891	DHLT	Nemesis Rail, Burton – LH Group Services, Barton under Needwood
60050	WQDA	DBC, Toton – Wensleydale Railway
60086	WQDA	DBC, Toton – Wensleydale Railway
Reinstated then returned to store		
None		
Reinstated		
37425	XHAC	(Loram, Derby RTC)
37510	GROG	(UKRL, Leicester)
43071	EFPC	(active)
43086	EFPC	(active)
Disposals		
58015		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)

58020		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58024		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58029		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58030		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58031		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58043		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
58047		Unknown at Monforte Del Cid (Spain)
60006	WQDA	Ron Hull Group at DBC, Toton
86229	EPEX	Sandbach
Pool Codes		
DHLT	Freightliner Locomotives Stored/Unspecified	
EFPC	GWR HST Power Cars	
GROG	Rail Operations Group Locomotives	
WQDA	DB Cargo Stored Locomotives (Group 4)	
XHAC	DRS Locomotives ETS Equipped	

Shunter News

Freightliner

The protracted overhaul and reinstatement of 08891 moved a step closer early in February with the shunter being returned to LH Group Services at Barton-under-Needwood. Previously located a few miles away at Burton Wetmore, 08891 has received new wheelsets in recent months at the Nemesis Rail depot along with other work, such as cleaning and painting of the engine compartment. However, it still awaits the fitting of an overhauled power unit and other major components, such as the radiator.

HNRC

Bombardier has sold its final two Class 08s to HNRC, 08602 and 08682 having lain out of use at Derby Litchurch Lane since 2018 and 2017 respectively. This follows the sale of 08846 to RSS last year after a similar lengthy period of

inactivity. All shunting at the works is now performed by Zephyr road/rail machines.

Railway Support Services

The last day of January brought an exchange of shunters at Bounds Green, with BR green-liveried 08927 bringing a splash of colour to the North London depot as it arrived from Wishaw. This allowed 08441 to make the return trip to the Midlands for maintenance. It was a similar story on February 5 as 08738 arrived at Felixstowe from Eastleigh to displace 08939, the latter duly reaching Wishaw the following day.

Wabtec

Daventry pilot 08571 briefly departed the busy Northamptonshire intermodal hub around January 30 for attention at LH Group Services, but it was back at work a few days later.

LiveryChanges



Locos

BR green: 37521
 DCR Grey: 60029
 Grand Central: 90026
 Regional Railways: 37425

Units

EMR Regional purple/white: 156918/22
 Heathrow Express: 387134/39
 Hull Trains: 802304
 London Northwestern: 350402/08/09
 London Overground Revised: 378211
 Northern: 150218/24, 158903/07/10, 323236/39, 333006
 South Western Railway: 444029
 TransPennine Express: 802205/07
 Transport for Wales: 153367

Coaches

ScotRail InterCity: 40609/26, 42072, 42107/143, 42253/81
 Transport for Wales: 82229

Resplendent in Regional Railways livery, Class 37/4 37425 stands at Loram's Derby facility on February 4. (Paul Hadfield)

TWO CLASS 37s grab the headlines this month with the repainting of 37521 into BR green at Locomotive Services' Crewe depot while 37425 has finally emerged from Loram's Derby workshops with the long-rumoured Regional Railways retro

look applied. At Toton, 90026 has become the first Class 90 in Grand Central colours for the new Blackpool-Euston services with several others to follow. The new white and purple EMR Regional vinyls have spread to

a further pair of renumbered ex Greater Anglia Class 156s while the original turquoise and cream Arriva Trains Wales livery is no more on the Class 153s following the refurbishment of 153367 at Long Marston.

Pool Changes - January 2020

Loco	Depot	Pool
Class 20		
20304	KM	XHSS-XHHP
20308	KM	XHSS-XHHP
20309	KM	XHSS-XHHP
20312	KM	XHSS-XHHP
Class 37		
37425	KM	XHSS-XHAC
37510	LR	SROG-GROG
37521	BH-CD	COTS-LSLO
37602	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37603	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37604	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37605	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37606	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37609	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37703	KM	XHSS-XHHP
37714	KM	XHSS-De-registered
Class 43		
43061	EC-HQ	IECP-SBXL

43063	LA-HQ	EFPC-SBXL
43071	LA-HQ	EFPC-SBXL
43086	LA-HQ	EFPC-SBXL
43161	LA-HQ	EFPC-SBXL
43180	LA-HQ	EFPC-SBXL
43251	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43257	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43272	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43274	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43277	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43290	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43299	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
43302	EC-NL	IECP-EMPC
Class 47		
47712	CQ	MBDL-LSLO
Class 57		
57004	KM	XHSS-XHAC
57008	KM	XHSS-XHHP
57009	KM	XHSS-XHHP
57010	KM	XHSS-XHHP
57012	KM	XHSS-XHHP

57303	KM	XHAC-XHSS
Class 60		
60006	TO	WQDA-De-registered
60029	TO	WQAA-HTLX
60081	TO	WQDA-De-registered
Class 66		
66055	TO	WBAR-WBLT
Class 67		
67012	CE	WAAC-WAWC
	CE	WAWC-WAAC
67013	CE	WAWC-WAAC
67020	CE	WAAC-WAWC
Class 70		
70016	FD	DHLT-DFGI
Class 86		
86610	FE	DFNC-DHLT
Class 90		
90021	CE	WQBA-WQAA
90026	CE	WQBA-WEDC

Unit Deliveries

Class	Number	Operator
195/0	195023	Northern
195/0	195024	Northern
331/0	331026	Northern
331/0	331027	Northern
710/1	710104	TfL
710/2	710273	TfL
720/5	720503	GA
720/5	720506	GA
720/5	720513	GA
720/5	720519	GA
720/5	720522	GA
745/1	745108	GA
745/1	745109	GA
801/2	801223	LNER
801/2	801225	LNER
801/2	801226	LNER
801/2	801227	LNER

PRESERVED SHUNTER NEWS

Simon Bendall & Pip Dunn

News Writers



■ Postponed from last year, The Andrew Wilson (Brillo) Memorial Charter is now set to take place on April 25. Organised by the Branch Line Society, the plans for the event remain unchanged and will see 08888 traverse much of the Kent & East Sussex Railway on what is believed to be its first-ever passenger working. As an added attraction, Class 14 D9504 is expected to assist where reversals are required. Tickets are now available via the BLS website www.branchline.uk/home. To complement the event, the East Kent Railway has announced that

HNRC-owned 08502 and 08676 will be used to top and tail passenger services for an hour between 1700 and 1800. The late afternoon running is designed to allow tour participants to make their way from the K&ESR.

■ The new owner of the former Wolverton Works pilots 08629 and 08649 has been revealed as Meteor Power. While the latter was transferred to the company's Silverstone premises on January 8 for engine repairs, 08629 was delivered to the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway on February 14, where it is now on

hire for the foreseeable future. The move sees it join up with previous Wolverton shunter 08011 *Haversham* as well as recently repainted 08825. The newcomer will be in action at the railway's diesel gala on March 27-29, where it will double-head a service to Princes Risborough with its Network SouthEast-liveried sister and, subject to confirmation, undertake brake van rides on the lines alongside the Chiltern Railways station.

■ Now carrying BR blue following recent attention at Ruddington, 08114 has received the name of *Gotham*, this being applied in the style of the fondly remembered

unofficial Tinsley painted names.

■ Class 03 03170 at North Weald, which has spent several years in BR blue, has been rubbed down and painted in primer ready for a full repaint into British Railways green.

■ Work continued on Class 04 D2302 at Moreton-on-Lugg with the reassembling of the left-hand cab door on January 26. Attention has also turned to looking at what work is required on the right-hand door, and some of the pipework just behind the buffer beam. The loco's bonnet side doors have begun to receive green undercoat on the outside, before attention turns to the insides.

Newhaven Marine finally closes - officially



Newhaven Marine station closed on September 12, 2014, eight years after boat trains had ceased, but technically it is still open. The girders were rendered unsafe and all were later demolished. Although disused, it is only now, in 2020, that Network Rail has informed the Department for Transport that it proposes to formally close the station, subject to the Office of Rail and Road's approval. (John Vaughan)

4-CIG moves to Burton upon Trent

A FORMER Southern Region EMU, which has largely remained out of the public eye since it was preserved, has recently been moved to Nemesis Rail at Burton upon Trent where it is to be restored and prepared for possible use as a gala visitor or exhibit. Class 421 4-CIG unit 1753 has lately been housed at the private Finmere Station site in Oxfordshire, but has had to be moved due to the site being compulsorily acquired for HS2. The coaches moved by road on January 15, along with 4-BIG buffet car 69339, which has now been placed into the set, bringing it up to a non-standard five cars. The owner, the Network SouthEast Railway Society, has obtained a price for the unit to be refurbished and repainted in

NSE colours, after which it is planned for it to be available for visits via the main line to various other heritage railways or sites.

1753 was preserved in 2004 and was originally based at Ellough Airfield near Beccles in Suffolk where it was stored under tarpaulins. It moved to Finmere in 2015 and since then has been returned to operational condition, often making short runs on a demonstration line hauled by a Class 73 Electro-diesel. The buffet car reached Finmere following periods at the Electric Railway Museum in Coventry, since closed, and the Great Central Railway at Loughborough. Unlike the CIG unit, which is in Connex livery, it is currently painted in British Railways green.

Bulleid six-pack

FOR THE first time in preservation six historic Bulleid carriages will run together in March. The event is due to take place at the Mid-Hants Railway 'Watercress Line' on March 14/15. Two of the vintage carriages belong to Mid-Hants Railway and will be joined by four more brought in for the occasion from the Bluebell Railway. It will also be the first trip out for one of the two vehicles following an extensive overhaul. Providing motive power for the train will be SR Schools Class 30925

Cheltenham and S15 30506.

The vehicles, designed by Oliver Vaughan Snell Bulleid CBE (1882-1970), represent the transition from the wooden bodied carriages to the all-steel Mk 1 built by British Railways, which first appeared in the 1950s. These coaches were aesthetically advanced for the immediate post-World War Two era, featuring large picture windows, which made them particularly popular with holidaymakers in the heyday of UK-based holidays in the 1950s.



Freshly restored Bulleid Open Third 1456 basks in the winter sun on February 6. (Mid-Hants Railway)

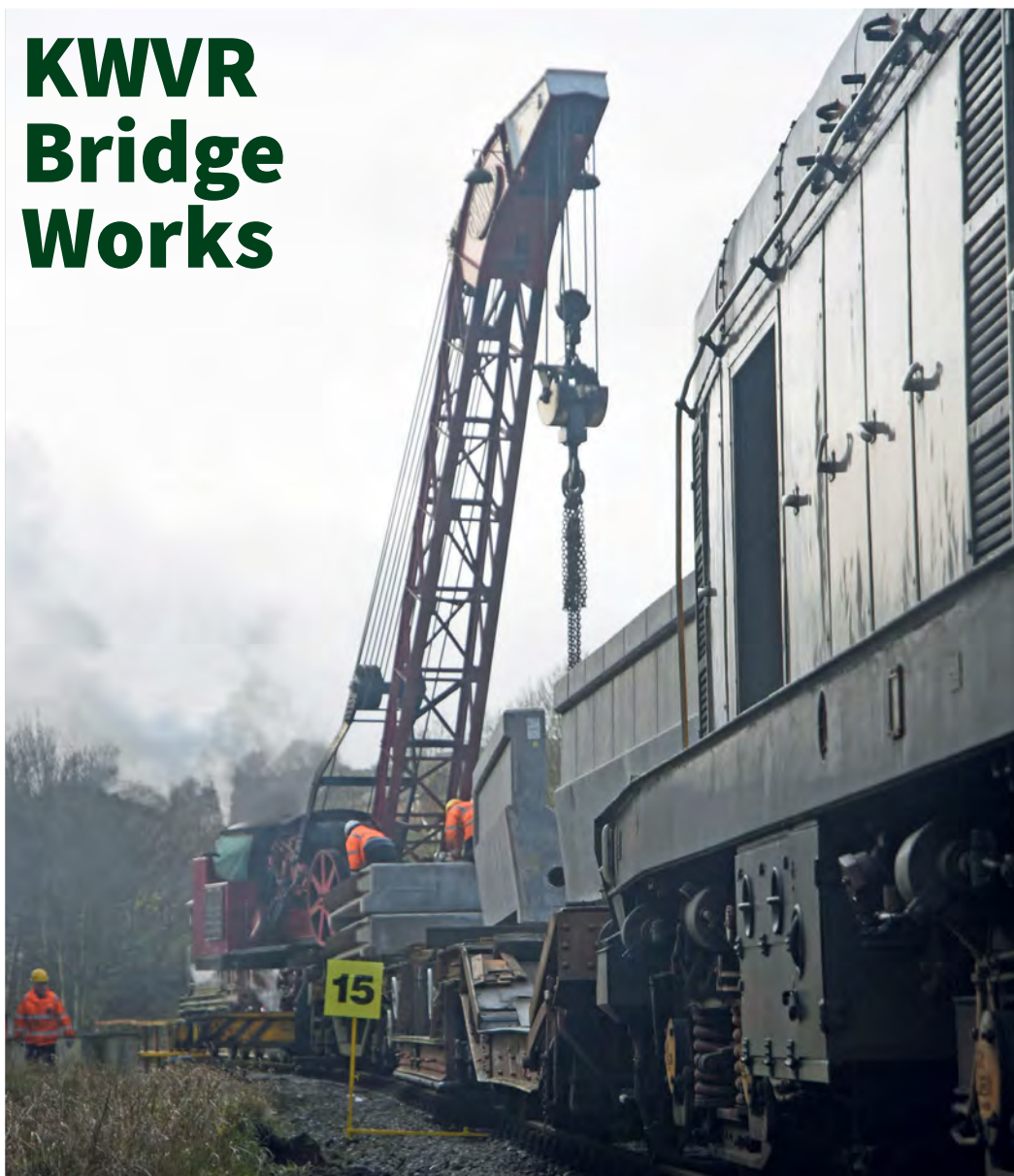
DMUs offered for sale

TWO HERITAGE multiple unit vehicles have been placed on the market by the Lavender Line in East Sussex, after being deemed as surplus to requirements. Class 108 Driving Trailer 56279 has been in preservation for 26 years but has never run as part of a DMU set. It was originally based at the Barry Island Railway where it was used as a loco-hauled vehicle, but was transferred to the Lavender Line in 2009 where it regained its original green livery. It remained in use as a loco-hauled vehicle, with many of the cab controls and fittings removed, but has recently seen little use and has therefore been offered for disposal.

Also being sold is 1970-built 4-BIG EMU buffet car 69333, which is heavily modified in that it does not have its original running gear but is instead mounted on a pair of Commonwealth coach bogies. It has also had conventional buckeye couplers fitted, along with buffers, and is vacuum through piped to enable it to work with vacuum-braked coaching stock.

It has seen use at Isfield both as hauled stock and as a static buffet, but is currently in a run-down state. It is a condition of sale that both vehicles are removed from the railway within two months of finding a new owner.

KWVR Bridge Works



The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway is replacing a life-expired Bridge 11 across the River Worth between Ingrow and Damems. A replacement bridge arrived in eight parts, delivered to Ingrow Station and tripped by rail to the work site with the aid of a hired-in road crane and the steam-powered Cravens breakdown crane belonging to the Bahamas Locomotive Society. Bridge elements are unloaded at the work site on January 29, the engineer's train powered by Class 20 20031 and Class 37/0 37075. (Ben Bucki)

NEW MOVES AND CHANGES



Alistair Grieve
News Writer

■ The Northampton & Lamport Railway held a Winter Mixed Traffic Gala over the weekend of February 8/9 featuring both 31289 and 47205 on passenger and freight trains. With the coming of Storm 'Ciara' the days couldn't have been more different, the Saturday being nice and sunny and the Sunday defined by high winds and torrential rain.

■ Following completion of its overhaul on 47306, the Bodmin & Wenford Railway has defined 33110 as surplus to requirements and put it up for sale. With the

47 joining 50042 and 37142 as the operational fleet, there is no longer a role for the 33. While in need of an overhaul the Crompton is operational, last working some of the railway's recent Santa Specials.

■ Not content with taking on 37688, Locomotive Services Limited has also taken on loan 47712 from the Crewe Heritage Centre. The Class 47/7 made the short distance move to Crewe DMD in early February. Like 37688, a return to the main line beckons.

■ The East Lancashire Railway's Feb 7-8 diesel gala was two locos down before it started on February 7 as both 37109 and 56006 had to be withdrawn from the line-up due to electrical issues. 47765 then had

to be withdrawn from the roster for the 8th due to a broken brake linkage sustained the previous day. This was replaced that day, but not in time for the loco to take part in the gala. Although being three locos down might cause a major traction shortage for most railways, such is the size of the ELR's fleet there was still plenty to go round, with Class 14 D9531, Class 24 D5054, Hymek D7029, Warship D832, 33109, 45108, Class 47 D1501 and 50015 *Valiant* all taking part.

■ A year later than planned, Class 44 D4 is finally going out on the road and will be attending both the Swanage Railway's April 26-28 diesel gala and then the Severn Valley Railway's 14-17 May event.

D4 was one of the guests at the SVR's first Diesel Gala back in 1987 so it will be a welcome return.

■ Deltic 55019 *Royal Highland Fusilier* is going on a bit of a heritage railway tour this year. Following on from the previously announced galas, it has now been added to the line-up for the Swanage Railway's April 24-26 event. The full dates for its visits are Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway 27-29 March, Swanage Railway 26-28 April, Severn Valley Railway 14-17 May, and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway from July to September, which includes both its July 24-26 and September 26-27 events. This will be the first-ever visit of a Deltic to the GWR.

MULTIPLE UNIT NOTES



Evan Green Hughes
News & Feature Writer

■ One of the most sought-after surviving first-generation DMUs is to make its first gala appearance at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway's 'Multiple Memories' event on March 14/15. Class 121 Bubble Car 55034 was one of the final two units retained for working the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough service, lasting until 2017; after which it was sold to Locomotive Services Ltd of Crewe and stored away from public view. The unit will be taken by road to Wirksworth and will be the centrepiece of the gala, which will also feature members of the large resident DMU fleet, including examples of Classes 101/108/119/121/122 and Derby Lightweight. Units will work singly and in multiple on an intensive timetable, with the events supported by sales stalls and other attractions.

■ The first of two Class 127 DMU cars that are due to move from the Great Central Railway to the Helston Railway made the journey on January 17. Class 127 Driving

Motor Brake 51616 immediately made the headlines in the local press when the transporter carrying it became stuck in mud at Helston, blocking a local road for some time. The two-car unit is intended to enter service initially as single vehicles in loco-hauled form, replacing the current arrangement by which a brake van is used as a push-pull control vehicle. Eventually it is hoped that it will be able to run as a self-propelled DMU and replace the current diesel shunter/brake van layout of non-steam days.

51616 and its partner 51622 have been at the Great Central since 1984 and were originally maintained by a group of ex-Cricklewood drivers. However, in recent years they have fallen out of use, last running in 2013. They were then sold to Grinsty Rail, which arranged for the further sale to Helston.

■ Class 423 EMU Driving Trailer 76528 has been taken from Barrow Hill for scrapping, following component recovery for the Brighton Belle project. The coach, which was part of 4-VOP unit 3918, had been at the site since 2013. It survived longer than its classmates due to its use as a tractor unit for

hauling new Class 375s at Ashford Works, and it was originally part of unit 7753.

■ Another Eurostar car has survived into preservation. Record-breaking Class 373 power car 3374 *Entente Cordiale* is to be placed on a plinth at Temple Mills Depot in Stratford in homage to the class, which monopolised cross-Channel services from the opening of the Channel Tunnel until recently. The car is one of two that hold the UK speed record of 208mph, which was achieved on HS1 on July 30, 2003.

■ Meanwhile, Class 373 power car 3304 and its adjacent vehicle have been delivered to the Locomotive Services museum at Margate following repainting and refurbishment. The coaches had been dumped in France after withdrawal but have now been restored to full Eurostar livery. The set was one of those briefly used on the East Coast Main Line by GNER around 15 years ago.

■ Volunteers at the Cambrian Railway site at Llyncllys have been spending the winter painting the inside of the cab of Class 101 Driving Motor Brake 51205, which is currently being prepared for a return to service. The unit has

been on the isolated site since 2005 but has had several periods in service during that time.

■ Class 117 centre car 59522 has been stripped for parts at the Great Central Railway – Nottingham and is to be scrapped on site. Preserved in 1994 at the Battlefield Line, the coach moved to Chasewater ten years later and then on to Ruddington in 2018. It has never seen preservation service and is in a dilapidated condition.

■ At the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway work is continuing on the restoration of Class 108 Driving Motor Composite 50928, which has been out of use for some years. The internal roof panelling in the front saloon has now been removed, as have the lighting and other fittings, including the seats. New material will eventually be fitted.

■ The team restoring Gloucester-built Class 100 Driving Trailer 56097 at the Midland Railway – Butterley, has begun to install the insulation in the cab and First Class area. Some of the cab controls have now been wired in and new jumper boxes are ready for fitting, while in the saloon the woodwork for the luggage rack supports and adjacent decorative panels has been completed.

First ELR gala of the year



The East Lancashire Railway held its Winter Diesel Gala on February 7/8. On the first day Class 14 D9531 leads Class 33/1 33109 across Roch Viaduct while powering the 1006 Rawtenstall to Heywood service. (Tom McAtee)

Dartmoor Railway Folds



The scene at Meldon Quarry, Dartmoor Railway on November 15, 2019. A collection of ex-Southern Region EMU and DEMU unit stock, along with some hauled stock now face an uncertain future after the railway went into administration on February 7. (Stephen Ginn)

THE DARTMOOR Railway Community Interest Company, which runs the Dartmoor Railway in Devon, went into administration on February 7. In January it was announced that the Dartmoor Railway and the Weardale Railway had been put up for sale by their

owner, Iowa Pacific Holdings of Chicago, USA. Currently there is no further news regarding any possible future for the Dartmoor line or the volunteers who run it. There is a considerable amount of rolling stock at the line, including SR EMU/DEMU coaches, as well as

several locomotives.

The Dartmoor Railway runs for 15 and a half miles between Crediton and the former Coleford Junction, from where it continues through Sampford Courtenay, Okehampton and Meldon. The stretch between Crediton and

Coleford Junction is owned by Network Rail, while Aggregate Industries owns the route to Meldon.

Meanwhile it is better news further north as a potential buyer is believed to have been found for the Weardale Railway.

PRESERVED ROLLING STOCK



Simon Bendall
News Writer

■ Two more ex-Caledonian Sleeper Mk 3s have found a new life in preservation: 10531 and 10689. Both initially arrived at the Weardale Railway on January 28 as part of an Eastern Rail Services stock transfer from Wembley via a stopover at Crewe, before completing their journeys by road in February. First away was 10689, which arrived at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway on February 10 for use as a volunteer accommodation coach. This is intended to replace incumbent 10591 in this role and has been selected as it features disabled accommodation. However, first it requires numerous missing components to be replaced and modifications made for static use, such as an air supply. It is

expected to be stored at Levisham until this work can be undertaken. Meanwhile, 10531 departed Wolsingham for the Wensleydale Railway on February 19 for a similar role. One Mk 3 sleeper that will soon be no more is 10535, which is due to be scrapped at Bo'ness, as it stands in the way of an expansion of the steam shed.

■ Another coach to be included in the stock transfer from Crewe to the Weardale Railway on January 28 was Mk 2f DBSO 9711, belonging to the Crewe Diesel Preservation Group. Still in unrestored ex-Anglia Railways condition, the vehicle is due to receive bodywork repairs during its stay at Wolsingham and will eventually see use with newly acquired Mk 3a coaches 11007 and 12011 and the group's Class 47/7 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*.

■ The Churnet Valley Railway has expanded its Mk 1 fleet with

the arrival of TSO 3809 and SO 4366 from the Midland Railway – Butterley on February 7. These have been acquired for the line by its supporting charity, the North Staffordshire Railway Company, with an eye on the future expansion of passenger services to Leek, which will require additional stock. Both are in need of extensive restoration, with work due to begin on 3809 in the spring and 4366 following later, to become an additional dining coach. The NSRC has launched an appeal to help fund the restoration costs as well as the acquisition of additional coaches.

■ Another of the North Yorkshire Moors' Mk 1 coaches has temporarily left the line for Barrow Hill: micro-buffet rebuild 4597 joining TSO 5001 at the Rampart Engineering workshops during early January. Like its sister, 4597

will receive door, vestibule, toilet and seating alterations to create an accessible area.

■ At Eastleigh Works, Arlington Fleet Services had largely completed the bodywork repairs on Mk 1 RU 1987 by the end of January, with much reskinning in evidence. Work is now underway on the interior rewiring and refurbishment of the doors, with the future Pullman kitchen car expected back at the Kent & East Sussex Railway during the spring for interior refitting.

■ Two of the Mk 2 FK coaches converted into budget holiday accommodation for use at Sleeperzzz in Rogart, Sutherland, departed the Far North station during the first week of February. Taken south to the Strathspey Railway 13470 and 13479 have been acquired for their bogies, with a decision due on the bodies future.

DIESEL DAYS AND GALAS



Alistair Grieve
News Writer

■ The Nene Valley Railway is holding an event over the weekend of March 7/8 to commemorate the last pannier tank being built at Swindon Works 70 years ago. These were replaced by the Class 14s and so, as part of the event, both the railway's Teddy Bears, D9520 and D9529, will be in service alongside the steam locos.

■ A visit from 31128 has recently been announced for the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway's March 27-29 Diesel Gala. This now gives a line-up of guest locos 31128, 33210, 55019, 27227, Class 31 97205, 08629, 08825 and departmental shunter 97808, the latter two giving brake van rides at Princes Risborough.

■ After 29 years away, the Rail Riders club will be returning in 2020. This iconic British Rail fan club is for avid rail enthusiasts and is back after nearly 30 years, revived by railway accessory supplier, Bufferbeam. The company has been selling merchandise with the classic club logo on for more than a year and the feedback inspired the plan to bring the club back. To celebrate the relaunch an official event is being held at the Midland Railway, - Butterley on March 21 that will feature 47401 and visiting DB Cargo 66175. Rail Riders members tickets will be £5 and non-members £8. Tickets will be sold on the day at Butterley Station. The event starts at 1000 and a 'big surprise' is planned, too.

■ April kicks off on the 4/5 with the Mid-Norfolk Railway's diesel gala, featuring the first runs in preservation of 37240, now in Transrail Grey, since it has been

in the ownership of Neil Boden, plus Class 50 D400 *Fearless*, also courtesy of Neil Boden. A visitor from DRS is also expected, plus the possibility of another visitor and engines from the home fleet, all of which will be announced closer to the date. The same weekend, the Nene Valley Railway is holding a mixed traffic event, with Peak 45041, one of the Class 14s and Sentinel 0-6-0 DL83 all due to take part. Also in action will be the departmental Plasser TASC (Track and Service Car) DR98500, which will be providing trips along the Fletton branch for a £5 supplement.

■ April 18-19 will see the Epping Ongar Railway's first diesel gala of the year, which should feature visiting locos; yet to be confirmed, plus the possible return to traffic of 45132 (subject to generator repairs). The home fleet will provide Class 20 D8001, 31438, Class 37 D6729 and 47635. As usual it will be supplying a three-train intensive service throughout the weekend, with late real ale trains on Saturday. All trains will be running in conjunction with the fleet of Heritage buses, which will be commuting between Ongar, North Weald, Epping Underground and Shenfield National Rail stations.

■ Due to the early May Bank Holiday now taking place on the 8th, the Swanage Railway's 2020 gala has been moved from its traditional position in May to the weekend of April 24-26. So far announced have been Peak D4 and 55019, which will join resident Class 33s D6515 and 33111, with news of more guests to follow. The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway is also holding its spring gala the same weekend, and this year it will feature Class 24 D5054 from the

East Lancashire Railway joining Class 14 D9531, 31601 and 33103. The 24 will also be out on May 9/10 for the bank holiday trains, while 33103 will be in action during the Easter weekend of April 10-13 working one train each day.

■ April 25/26 has more of a northern theme, with both the Ribble Steam Railway and Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway holding events. The RSR is running its annual spring diesel gala, which will feature its fleet of shunters, industrial and ex-BR, and with the possibility of a main line guest. The Embsay & Bolton Abbey line is running a mixed traffic weekend, which should see the return after five years of Class 31 D5600, dependent on the completion of much needed engine and body work.

■ The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway commences its diesel running on March 22 with the purple timetable, which has a diesel to handle the 1510 Broadway-Cheltenham Race Course and 1625 CRC-Toddington. The first train will be Class 37 D6948 and then, on April 4, Class 24 D5081, on 7-10 D6948, on 14-19 47376, on 21-23 5081, and on 28-30 45149. On Sunday April 19 the Green Timetable will be used, which means a diesel out all day commencing with the 1100 Toddington-CRC and finishing with the 1630 Broadway-Toddington. Class 24 D5081 should be in charge for this.

■ The Severn Valley Railway Diesel diagrams commence in April with 40106 doing the honours throughout the month. The dates are the 4/5, 11-13 and 25, and as in previous years two round trips will be on offer, with the 0945 and 1345 departures from Kidderminster being diesel hauled.

■ The North Norfolk Railway's diesel diagram returns on April 24 with the Yellow timetable giving four return trips, starting with the 0955 from Sheringham. The first allocations for April and May are planned as follows: April 24/25 Class 37 D6732, May 1/2 Class 31 D5631 (subject to completion of repairs), May 15/16 20227, May 22 D6732. On the 23rd the Red timetable will be in use so only the 1620 and 1740 from Sheringham will be diesel hauled, with D6732 down to work those.

■ Mention should also be made of the Weardale Railway, which is hoping to have a diesel gala over the weekend of April 17-19. While planning still continues, the sale of the line by BARS to an as yet unknown buyer does mean that it is still up in the air pending the outcome of the negotiations. Hopefully things will be resolved satisfactorily and we will be able to provide details in the next issue of *RI*. While the future of the Weardale Railway seems more secure than the Dartmoor Railway, which was also put up for sale by BARS but failed to find a buyer and has been placed into administration, it has not escaped the fallout. Its website and social media feeds were based in Okehampton and, as that has been closed, so the Weardale pages have not been updated. Again, it is hoped a solution will be found and the Weardale Railway will be able to advertise its railway and services (including galas) again.

■ Courtesy of Pete Waterman, Class 25 D7659 will be heading to East Anglia in June to take part in the North Norfolk Railway's June 12-14 mixed traffic gala. A DRS visitor has also been announced but it has not yet been specified what it will be.

Pacer Preservation hot's up

SEVERAL MORE Class 142 'Pacer' units have passed into preservation, with many railways taking advantage of the opportunity to purchase a working DMU at a knock-down price. The half-mile long Rushden, Higham and Wellingborough Railway has taken 142084 and 142091, with the units arriving on site by road in late January. This pair is the first to be preserved with the Arriva style of refurbished interior, which features 2x2 seating and amended lighting as well as other detail differences. They are the fifth and sixth of their type to escape the scrapman. The railway is also

home to Class 121 55029, though this has yet to run in service as it is being converted back to passenger-carrying condition from its current departmental state.

On February 10, 142028 and 142060 travelled under their own power from storage at Worksop to their new home at the Wensleydale Railway in North Yorkshire, moving from the line's main line connection at Northallerton to their new base at Leeming Bar. The pair is intended to enable the railway to extend its community activities and also provide some backup for the current first-generation fleet,

which has reliability issues. The units were used in service within days of their arrival.

Also moving from Worksop, but this time by road to the Waverley Route Heritage Association's site at Whitrope in the Borders, are 142019 and 142020, where they will join demonstrator unit RB004, which was closely based on the Class 141 design. They are to be used there to extend services on the mile-long line. Meanwhile, a third unit has also been taken to the Chasewater Railway where it joins 142029-030, which have already been secured for preservation. However, 142027 is regarded as a spares donor and

is already being broken up for parts to keep the two active units in service.

It is believed that several other 'Pacers' may also reach preservation sites over the next few months, making the Class 142 one of the most numerous DMUs in the heritage sector.

Elsewhere three community projects have been successful in acquiring a Pacer as part of a government-run competition. The Class 144 vehicles will go to Airdale NHS Trust, Platform 1, a male mental health charity, and Fagley Primary School in Bradford for use as a science laboratory.

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What's happen



D9551 - Bridgnorth: The Severn Valley Class 14 Group is working hard with regular working parties; to keep its Class 14 in tip-top shape for the 2020 season. The connecting rods have been removed and sent away for overhaul at Riley & Son (E) in Bury. While they are away, work is being concentrated on the jobs that can be completed while the rods are off. These include refitting the turbo, exhausters, batteries, some rewiring work and also the other half of the cab floor, which is rather tired and will need replacing.

A working party on February 2 took advantage of the good weather and refitted the turbo, including the pipework that runs through the bracket. The main roof section and the doors have also been reinstalled. The pleasant job of removing the two sand traps, which by the look of them have been on forever, has also been undertaken by the volunteer group. It was possible to free all but one nut, so the team had to resort to removing some of the doors to access it. Another working party was held on February 9, which saw the

final sections of the old cab floor removed, the needle-gunning of the floor and application of a coat of primer. The first corner was painted in black topcoat, making it look brand new again, as well as the other side being primed. A start was also made on cleaning around the wheels and frames as well as priming some of the framework.

25235 - Bo'ness: A lot of progress has been made on the lengthy overhaul of the Class 25 at Bo'ness, which on February 2 was lowered back onto its refurbished bogies.

This is the first time for six years that it has been sitting on its own wheelsets rather than residing on accommodation bogies. There are lot of jobs ahead for the restoration team and more fundraising is required to push this project on through the next stages. If you are interested in joining the small band of regular volunteers, then get in touch via Facebook.

27001 - Bo'ness: Another Sulzer-powered Type 2 at Bo'ness has been stopped for repairs, although this one is of the BRCW

ning to...

Our monthly round up of preservation projects around the country, compiled by **Pip Dunn**.



The Wensleydale Railway infrastructure team dropped some ballast along a section of the track just east of Spennithorne on January 27. Class 37/0 37250, which returned to traffic recently, was used to work the engineer's train, seen here near Spennithorne station en route to Redmire to collect more ballast and drop off five coaches at Leyburn. (Nigel Cockburn)

variety, the first-built Class 27. Recent work has seen the turbo removed ready for overhaul. A lot of preparation by volunteers has been undertaken as they push on with the job of preparing the generator for removal and getting the intercooler and turbo out, along with the bolts between the generator and engine block. The generator can then be lifted out in readiness for repairs.

D5600 – Bolton Abbey: A loco about which there has been very little news, and which

hasn't worked for several years, is the Class 31/4 based at the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway. However, there are some developments on returning D5600 (31435) to traffic after it was removed from the stored line up. Over the weekend of February 8/9, progress was made on bodywork repairs, removing the windows and sanding down the sides. There are a few volunteers working on the loco, so if you want to get involved drop them a line. The hope is to run it during the line's mixed traffic gala on April 25/26. The railway is also home to 31119 and 47004, neither of which have worked in recent years.

D5830 – Ruddington: The Type 1 Locomotive Company, which owns the Ochre 31, has reached agreement with the Great Central Railway PLC and Great Central Railway – Nottingham Ltd for the Brush Type 2 to remain at Ruddington on long-term loan for the foreseeable future. Loughborough will remain as the loco's official home base, but with more work on offer at Ruddington

and the demand for an ETH-fitted loco, the T1LC has agreed with all parties that it will stay put for now. This decision was ratified by shareholders some months ago.

D6575 – Williton: One of two Class 33s based at the West Somerset Railway, the ex-33057 has been treated to a full repaint into British Railways green, with the work finished in late January.

37215 – Toddington: The BR blue Class 37 has been stopped at the shed at Toddington on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway for some routine maintenance. Following a heavy clean by volunteers, its bogies are now fitted with new traction motor carbon brushes.

6975 – Paignton: Another BR blue EE Type 3, the former 37275, has been undergoing a lot of work over the closed season at the Dartmouth Steam Railway. In addition to bodywork repairs, the loco has benefitted from load banking and being set up correctly to make it run more sweetly.

40118 – Tyseley: In late January, the fourth and final turbo joined the pile of completed items waiting for a crane. The 16SVT Society has two turbos, the auxiliary generator and the main generator to reassemble, and is waiting for a crane that it will book as soon as the turntable at Tyseley is back in service following its overhaul. In the meantime, the group has undertaken the final internal examination of turbo No 4 to check for any foreign bodies that could cause problems in the future. The air filters for the free end have been cleaned, but the group is currently trying to source the correct wetting oil for the filters, which is proving tricky to do, although it hopes to find some soon. Failing that, it could modify the filters to dry ones. On the next job, the group was about to start work on the engine room windows when the key snapped in the lock! However it did mean the lock got a quick overhaul and oil! On February 9, more work was going on to get ready for the return of the final turbos. The brackets on which the generator end turbos ➔



Bodywork repairs are continuing on Class 52 D1048 *Western Lady* at Swanwick on February 2. (Bill Pizer)

Class 52s D1013 *Western Ranger* and D1015 *Western Champion*, accompanied by one of 15's Maybach MD655 power units, under repair at Kidderminster Diesel Depot on December 28, 2019. (Steve Hampton)



fit, need to be bolted into place, but this is after the area has been made paint and dirt free. There are also various pipes and brackets to be replaced, and this is under way. One of the brackets for the governor heat shield is missing, so a new one will be fabricated. The free end turbo filters are being prepared for reinstallation, with the retaining bolts being cleaned and new springs ordered. New washers have also been fitted. Finally, the bodyside in the area by the free end turbos on the 'A'-bank is being stripped and cleaned, completing that area (the bodyside window has been removed and replaced). The next job on the agenda is unbolting the roof ready for its removal in a few weeks for turbo and generator reassembly.

45105 – Barrow Hill: Late January saw more activity on returning the Class 45/1 to traffic for the first time in more than 33 years. Plenty of progress has been made by Pioneer Diesels, including stripping paint and cleaning up more cab and nose end fittings, then spraying them with primer ready for their undercoat, top coats, and eventual fitting back on the loco. Elsewhere, the welding team has been cracking on with the bodyside panelling, while the

nose end skin has been cut off ready for cleaning up and some new skin fabricated. Volunteers have been fitting the new gauge box, gauges, pipes and switches, as well as painting the terminal box in anti-tracking paint.

46010 – Ruddington: Work on the Class 46 has been ongoing, with the generator being lifted out and sent away for refurbishment.

47077 – Williton: The repaint of *North Star* into BR blue and a change of identity from D1661 to 47077, has been completed at Williton. The loco has had its ETH capability isolated as it is not able to heat any coaches at the West Somerset Railway but the cabling has not been removed, so it could be reinstated should the loco ever move somewhere that requires an ETH-fitted loco.

50021 – Arlington Fleet Services Eastleigh Works: On February 1 another great working party session concluded various more jobs necessary for the return of the Class 50 to running for the first time in more than two decades. Volunteers have made two good 'scissor lifts' for the droplight windows in No 1 end cab out of three spares, and have fitted them.

The work has also included making new fixing brackets. Others in the team have finished connecting up all the pipes to the header tank, including modifying one of the float gauges to fit the new tank. This needed shortening slightly as it was no longer fitted. The first of the engine room windows was also installed.

D1062 – Kidderminster: *Western Courier* was taken out of traffic in late summer of 2019 when it was noticed that the driver's side axle box on B bogie had tilted. Upon lifting the loco and subsequent investigation, it was discovered the driver's side equalising beam pivot had worn to a point at which the bush had almost disintegrated, thus taking the centre spring out of alignment and pulling over the axle box.

As the 2020 season approaches, work is under way to correct the issue and get D1062 running again as quickly as possible. It was first planned to move the Class 52 onto one of the inspection pit lanes at Kidderminster Depot so that new torque reaction rubbers could be fitted. This was due to happen on February 15. The necessary modifications would then be made to the equalising beam, and new bushes fitted, ahead of lifting on

February 29 for the removal of the affected bogie.

With the bogie removed the cardan shaft has to be sent away for rectification work and modification, before the bogie can be re-assembled and returned. Afterwards, all de-winterisation will take place and a full B-exam will be conducted; ahead of a return to service.

D1013 – Kidderminster: Work is continuing on *Western Ranger*, which was taken out of service ten years ago for a long-term overhaul. This is progressing well, and there are hopes of a return to traffic in the near future. With this in mind, the ambition is to start one of the Maybach engines later this year, evidence of the progress that is being made.

73140 – Tunbridge Wells West: The control air PRV has been changed and set up to 70psi. The electro diesel was suffering from a starting fault – after the auxiliary generator kicked in, the engine stopped around the time the charging current should have dropped back to 30A. This was resolved after the main reservoir safety valve, which had been seizing, was freed. Once tested, it was then working fine.



10000 at Luton in Feb 1948. Copyright Luton News with permission, courtesy of David Ainsbury

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Super Power storms CVR



Thornbury Castle arrives at the GCR

YET-TO-BE-RESTORED GWR 4-6-0 7027 *Thornbury Castle* has been sold to an unnamed purchaser, described as a "significant supporter" of the Great Central Railway, three months after owner Jonathan Jones-Pratt offered it for sale. The earliest unrestored loco to leave Barry Scrapyard (1972), its restoration is expected to cost £1m.

On February 10 the Castle arrived at Quorn & Woodhouse, Great Central Railway, from Williton, West Somerset Railway. After careful greasing it then undertook its longest rail journey since 1964, moving the two miles to Loughborough for an extensive restoration led by GCR

Chief Engineer, Craig Stinchcombe. It will then work on the GCR for all its ten year 'ticket' and will not be going onto the main line. Of the eight Castles in preservation only one, 7029 *Clun Castle*, is currently in steam.

One of the later Castles, 7027 was built in 1949 and withdrawn in 1963. It was bought 1972 by Tyseley, initially as a source of spares for; *Clun Castle*, but then it became a restoration target. This plan failed and so 7027 was sold to Pete Waterman in 1994 and moved to Crewe. It then went to Peak Rail in 2016, from where it was sold to Mr Jones-Pratt in July of that year.



The largest part of the heavily stripped 7027 arrived at the Great Central Railway by road on February 10. Despite appearances, 7027 comes with many parts. (Phillip Thorpe)

Union is fighting fit again



After a series of failures due to hot tender axleboxes and repairs, A4 60009 *Union of South Africa* performed a loaded test run. Looking authentically grubby, evoking memories of the three-hour Aberdeen expresses of the 1960s, it nears Arkholme with its test run from Carnforth on February 4. (David Price)

The first time since the 1940s that three USA S160s have worked trains together took place at the Churnet Valley Railway on February 1/2 when it re-staged its 'Super Power Weekend', that had to be aborted last October due to a line washout. Trio 2253, 6046 and 5197 pass Hill's Wood with the final train of the weekend. (Dave Gibson)



'Old Friends Reuniting' at SDR gala after 47 years



Mel Holley
News Writer

NEWLY OVERHAULED GWR Small Prairie 4555 returns to the South Devon Railway for one weekend only on March 14/15. It is also the first trip of 4555 away from its Torbay base since it arrived there in 1973. The gala will be the first time in 47 years that the three original Dart Valley locos have steamed together.

The loan of the former Dart Valley Railway favourite by the Dartmouth Steam Railway will see 4555 return for that weekend only to the railway it ran on when first preserved, before it heads to the East Somerset Railway (see story elsewhere) on a two-year loan. During the gala 4555, which will be hauling its first passenger trains in 14 years, will be reunited with other old DVR friends,

GWR Panniers 6412 and 1369, plus GWR Prairie 5542. The event also sees 1369 making its formal return to traffic after a two-year overhaul, sporting a new GWR livery.

There will be an intensive service, including auto push-pull and goods trains. The event is particularly poignant as 4555 worked on the Totnes-Ashburton branch in BR days. Bought in 1965 by the Dart Valley Railway, it was the first loco to arrive on the newly preserved line and hauled the official re-opening train with Dr Richard Beeching aboard in 1969. In 1973, 4555 was transferred to the then newly purchased Paignton & Dartmouth Railway and hasn't worked on any other heritage line since.

'Lanky tank' to headline at Bury

NEWLY OUTSHOPPED in BR plain black as 51456, Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 0-6-0ST will be the star at the East Lancashire Railway's March 6-8 Gala. It will be the first passenger run of the 138-year-old 23 Class since 1982, after a lengthy overhaul. Achieving fame by starring at the 1981 Rocket 150 cavalcade, it briefly wore 51456 in 1968 when being moved by BR from Parsonage Colliery, Leigh, to

its first preservation home at Yates Duxbury paper mill, Heap Bridge, near Bury. Withdrawn in 1937, it continued in work thanks to being sold into colliery service, making it a unique survivor.

Appropriately, it will work alongside L&Y Class A 0-6-0 52322. Other locos in steam at the gala are confirmed as Hunslet 2890 0-6-0ST, SR 34092 *City of Wells*, LMS Class 5 44871 and BR 4MT 2-6-4T 80097.

SVR achieves record loco availability

YEARS OF hard work are paying-off at the Severn Valley Railway, which has just achieved its highest service reliability rating in 2019. More than 99% of steam services were hauled by a steam loco – up from 96% in 2016. At the start of each week the SVR puts details of allocated locos on its website. Those that actually worked jumped from 78% in 2016 to 96.7% in 2019, the highest figure to date.

Engineering Services Manager Neil Taylor, who started at the SVR in 2016, said: "These are pretty good figures for any heritage railway and better than the

national network. Considering we use locos often more than 100 years old, that's an impressive achievement. Reliability is key if we want to remain a leading attraction; just one disappointing visit can put people off for life. I've seen the utter disappointment of visitors when a steam loco fails. We're doing everything we can to deliver the experience we promise."

Changes since 2016 include having separate maintenance and overhaul teams, resulting in an effective maintenance regime and keeping the locos in good condition.

Across the 'flats'

Clwyd estuary at Rhyl, en route from Crewe to Holyhead, Black Five 4-6-0 45231 heads a Saphos excursion originating from Leicester on February 1. A points failure at Valley meant the loco couldn't be turned, so the train headed home diesel-hauled. (Brian Dobbs)





Just three in action

During January and February only three railways ran every weekend, the East Lancs, Great Central and Keighley & Worth Valley Railways. Newly repainted in BR lined green BR 2MT 78022 heads through Damens on a frosty January 19, with a mid-morning train from Keighley. Although 78022 never carried green in BR days, a number of WR 2MTs did. (Ben Bucki)

Hagley Hall boiler repairs advanced

THE MAJOR overhaul of GWR 4-6-0 4930 *Hagley Hall*, out of traffic for 33 years, has reached an important milestone with boiler repairs almost complete. The extensive work at Northern Steam Engineering's Stockton workshops is now very advanced and the rejuvenated boiler is on course to be delivered to Bridgnorth in the spring. The work has included new tubeplates, firebox and stays.

Funding of the six-year, £400,000 overhaul of the 90-year-old Severn Valley Railway-owned Hall has been undertaken since 1990 by the Friends of Locomotive 4930 *Hagley Hall*. It is supported by a lottery grant, which has helped towards the cost, including new cylinders and tender tank. At Bridgnorth Works, the four valve liners were fitted in January using liquid nitrogen to deep-freeze the components. A trial fitting of the cab sides is also taking place, and the loco is set for a return to steam later this year, as predicted in 2017. For more details visit www.4930hagleyhall.org.uk

A crowd pleaser for the SVR



The Severn Valley Railway is the first railway to host new-build 4-6-0 Saint 2999 *Lady of Legend*, launched at Didcot last autumn. (DRC/Charlie Jackson)

THE SEVERN Valley Railway has revealed the debut appearance of GWR Saint 2999 *Lady of Legend* at its season-opening Spring Steam Gala. It is the first of four guest locos to be announced for the extended four-day event on April 16-19. The SVR is to be the first

railway to welcome the much-anticipated new-build following its completion last year at Didcot Railway Centre.

In its new April slot the popular event will be using all four visiting locos on services alongside its home fleet. An intensive

timetable, including double-headed full-line services, goods trains and local services, will be running, with services continuing into the evenings on the Friday and Saturday. Some more surprises are planned, which will be announced shortly.

East Somerset gala line-up hits five

THE EAST Somerset Railway has confirmed that newly overhauled Small Prairie 2-6-2T 4555 will be the star of its March 21/22 Spring Steam Gala. It returns to Cranmore for the first time since 1959 when it was reallocated away from the nearby Westbury MPD. On loan for two years from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, it joins DSR-based GWR 2-8-0T 5239, making its first visit away from its home line since its arrival there in 1976.

Further GWR flavour will be added by 0-6-2T 5637, which will be making its final appearance on the line before its boiler certificate expires days later. It

then leaves for the Swindon & Cricklade Railway where its third preservation-era overhaul will be carried out. Completing the line-up will be home-based LMS 2-6-0 46447 and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST 1719 *Lady Nam*, the latter on 'Driver for a Tenner' duties.

The shed and workshop will be open, with newly acquired GWR Large Prairie 2-6-2T 4110, which arrived from the West Somerset Railway in late 2019 in ex-Barry scrapyard condition, now being restored. Four passenger and three freight trains will run each day, with passengers carried in the brake van (first come, first served).

Norfolk promises 'steam extravaganza'

A PAIR of Great Western interlopers, deep into 'foreign' country, will add a different twist to what the North Norfolk Railway describes as its 'first steam extravaganza of 2020'. Guest locomotives GWR 28xx 2-8-0 2857 from the Severn Valley Railway and GWR 42xx 2-8-0T 4270 from the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway will be the star attractions at the March 27-29 event.

There will be an intensive timetable, demonstration goods trains, and the BR Suburban set and the LNER Quad-

Art set making a rare appearance at a steam gala, as well as evening trains on Saturday with its bar car. Trains will start at 0827 from Sheringham each day and at 0830 from Holt. The last round trip from Sheringham will be at 1820 on Friday and Saturday and at 1627 on Sunday. The North Norfolkman dining carriages will be used on selected trains, serving breakfasts and snacks. Following the success of last year's Autumn Steam Gala the NNR will again be offering its 'Kids for a Quid' tickets.

45025 reunited with its boiler



Adding to last month's item on Black 5 45025 at the Strathspey Railway (see *RI* March, p34), the loco was reunited with its boiler in mid-February. A point of interest for wagon aficionados is that the boiler was first placed on Weltrol wagon DB998026 to enable a boiler test to be carried out, hence the pile of ash in the bottom of the ashpan. (Gordon Kirkby)

Watercress Line wows guests with *Flying Scotsman*

The launch ceremony is hosted by MHR patron Alan Titchmarsh, who is also a Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire. (MHR/Alton Digital Images)



THE WATERCRESS Line was buzzing with excitement on February 14 as Gresley A3 60103 *Flying Scotsman* arrived at Alresford Station to officially kick off its three-week visit to the Mid-Hants Railway and mark the reopening of Alton Station following the replacement of Whitedown Lane Bridge.

Making its first visit to the MHR, it was due to work trains until March 8, with all services being sold out within days of being advertised. MHR Director Simon Baggott said: "It's been a long time in the

planning but we are delighted to welcome *Flying Scotsman*. It was a landmark moment as she travelled across the new Whitedown Lane Bridge, surrounded by detonators and 300 children waving flags, before arriving into Alton Station and breaking a banner to officially reopen the line."

Meanwhile the Mid-Norfolk Railway has confirmed that it will be hosting 60103 in the autumn, as the high-point of its 25th anniversary celebrations. Dates and further details are to be announced.

Mystery guest for Worth Valley

WITH SEVEN locos from the home fleet to draw on, the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's March 6-8 Spring Steam Gala looks likely to spring a surprise visiting guest engine. Less than three weeks ahead of the event, as this issue closed for press, the KWVR was remaining tight-lipped about what might be arriving, only saying: "Details are still being finalised and will be announced in due course."

What is known is that the now rare spectacle of a steam crane in action will be had with the Grafton crane in use at Oakworth Yard on Saturday and Sunday. The railway confirms that "a selection from the home fleet" will be in action, with the operating department having the choice of LMS 2MT 2-6-2T 41241, BR 2MT 2-6-0 78022, USATC S160 2-8-0 'Big Jim' 5820, LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 45596 *Bahamas*, LMS Black 5 4-6-0 45212, MR 0-6-0 4F 43924 and Taff Vale 0-6-2T 85.

Pitchford Hall in unusual setting

Newly overhauled 4953 *Pitchford Hall* makes an unusual sight working northbound on the Great Central Railway on February 4. With a matching rake of crimson/cream stock, it crosses Swithland reservoir in early morning sun. (Don Bishop)



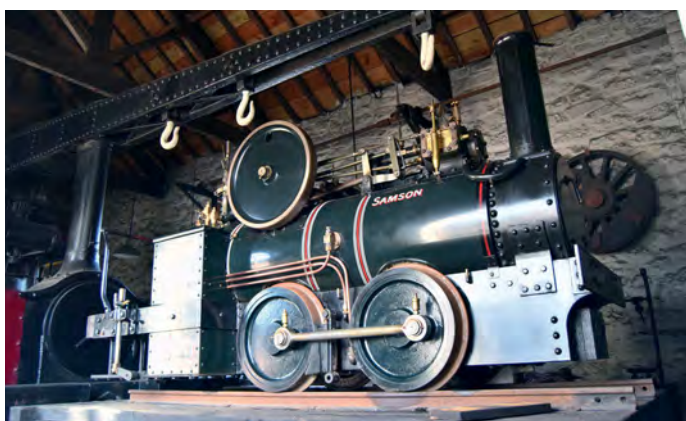
STEAM EVENTS DIARY

Heritage Railway Events		
Date	Railway	Event
March		
6-8	Spring Steam Gala	ELR
6-8	Steam Gala	KWVR
7	Back to the '90s	LR
7-8	Swindon 70	NVR
14-15	Spring Steam Gala	EAR
21	RSH 7151 Day	AVR
21	Rushden's 50s Day	RTM
21	Enthusiast Day	SBR
21-22	Steam Gala	ESR
27-29	Spring Steam Gala	NNR
28-29	Goods Galore Gala	GCR
28-29	Spring Steam Gala	RSR
April		
3-5	Branch Line Weekend	BR
5	Heritage Train Day	IoW

Heritage Railways

AVR	Avon Valley Railway	0117 9325538	www.avonvalleyrailway.org
BR	Bluebell Railway	01825 720800	www.bluebell-railway.co.uk
EAR	East Anglian Railway Museum	01206 242524	www.earm.co.uk
ELR	East Lancashire Railway	0333 3202830	www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk
ESR	East Somerset Railway	01749 880417	www.eastsomersetrailway.com
GCR	Great Central Railway	01509 632323	www.gcrailway.co.uk
IoW	Isle of Wight Steam Railway	01983 882204	www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk
KWVR	Keighley & Worth Valley Railway	01535 645214	www.kwvr.co.uk
LR	Llangollen Railway	01978 860979	www.llangollen-railway.co.uk
NNR	North Norfolk Railway	01263 820800	www.nnrail.co.uk
NVR	Nene Valley Railway	01780 784444	www.nvr.org.uk
RSR	Ribble Steam Railway	01772 728800	www.ribblesteam.org.uk
RTM	Rushden Transport Museum	0300 3023150	www.rhts.co.uk
SCR	Swindon & Cricklade Railway	01793 771615	www.swindon-cricklade-railway.org
SBR	Statfold Barn Railway	01827 830389	www.statfoldbarnrailway.co.uk

Samson being modified



Replica Stephen Lewin 0-4-0WT *Samson* has been moved inside the colliery engine shed at Beamish for modifications, including the finishing of the lining and fitting a new heavier front buffer beam to aid traction. (Matt Ditch)

IN BRIEF

➔ A pair of visiting tank engines will add extra spice to a varied home fleet line up for the Bluebell Railway's April 3-5 Branch Line Weekend. From the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway the 121-year-old Taff Vale 0-6-2T 85 is making its furthest ever journey south. It will be joined by its 'modern' equivalent, LMS 2-6-2T 41312 from the Mid-Hants Railway. Other locomotives in steam over the weekend will be SECR H 0-4-4T 263, SECR O1 0-6-0 65, SECR p 0-6-0T 178, SR 0-6-0 Q 30541 and BR 2-6-4T 4MT 80151.

➔ A remarkable gathering of three GWR 56xx 0-6-2Ts, with at least two in steam, will take place at the Swindon & Cricklade Railway's March 28/29 gala. For its last steaming before its boiler certificate expires in April, former resident 5637 returns from the East Somerset Railway. It joins 5619, currently on loan from the Telford Steam Railway, and 6695, which arrived from its former home at the West Somerset Railway in December. Subject to completion of its overhaul, 6695 might also be in steam.

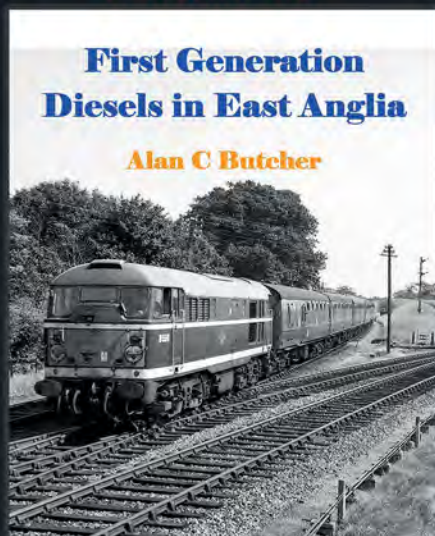


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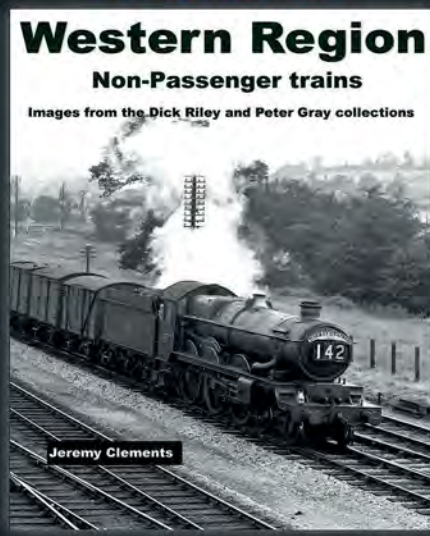
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The Wherry Lines have, in recent years, been viewed as a sleepy backwater of the UK railway system, with archaic rolling stock and semaphore signalling dating back to the Victorian era, but not anymore. With the introduction of modern trains in the form of smooth-riding Abellio Greater Anglia Stadler Class 755 bi-mode units and the completion of Network Rail's £68 million Norwich, Yarmouth and Lowestoft re-signalling scheme, they will finally form part of a network fit for the 21st century.

The renewal programme saw the closure of seven heritage mechanical signal boxes at Brundall Junction, Acle, Yarmouth Vauxhall, Cantley, Reedham Junction (this closed during a 2019 phase of re-signalling works, on March 22), Oulton Broad North Station and Lowestoft, and the gate boxes at Lingwood Station Lane, Chapel Lane and Strumpshaw. Remote signalling control (using solid state interlocking) of the 46.5 mile network of Wherry Lines has transferred to two workstations at the Railway Operating Centre (ROC) at Colchester.

Level crossings at Brundall, Cantley, Lingwood Chapel Road, Lingwood Station Road, Oulton Broad North and Strumpshaw have been upgraded to full barrier crossings with CCTV supervision. The Wherry Lines' predominantly semaphore signalling has been replaced by 66 LED signals, and electric switches have replaced mechanical points. Axle counters now determine if trains entering and leaving track sections are complete. The existing signal boxes at Oulton Broad Swing Bridge, Somerleyton Swing Bridge and Reedham Swing Bridge have been retained under the scheme, albeit with some modifications to detection systems. They will obtain prior signal release from the ROC to allow Network Rail staff to open them to enable the passage of river craft along Oulton Broad and the Rivers Waveney and Yare respectively. All have busy traffic during the summer months.

A notable victim of the semaphore signals cull was the distinctive down home co-acting signal on the approach to Cantley station, which leaves just two of such signal

posts on the national network, at Helsby and Greenloaning. Additionally, the new home semaphore signal at Oulton Broad North station, re-sited on November 28, 2016 from the level crossing to the platform to reduce extended barrier down time and ease local traffic congestion, has been removed. Network Rail also took the opportunity to bring forward other infrastructure works from Control Period 6 (2019-2024) into the extended possession to reduce future line closures. These include a full bridge replacement at Postwick and track renewals at Lowestoft, Acle and Hanningham. Victoria Road level crossing on the East Suffolk line near to Oulton Broad South station was also upgraded as part of the project.

There has been much interest from railway heritage groups in re-using some of the heritage semaphore signalling equipment, which has dominated the Wherry Lines for the last 135 years, and Network Rail is working with interested parties to find new homes for equipment no longer required by them.

DRS Class 37 37605 passes Acle signal box with a Rail Head Treatment Train on October 2, 2018. The station's passing loop is seen in the foreground. (All photos author)

Semaphore sunset on the Wherry Lines

The end of a marathon 23-day engineering possession in February saw signalling along the Wherry Lines between Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft completely transformed by a modern, digitally -enabled signalling system. **Richard Horner** reports on this change and the mechanical signal boxes that went before.



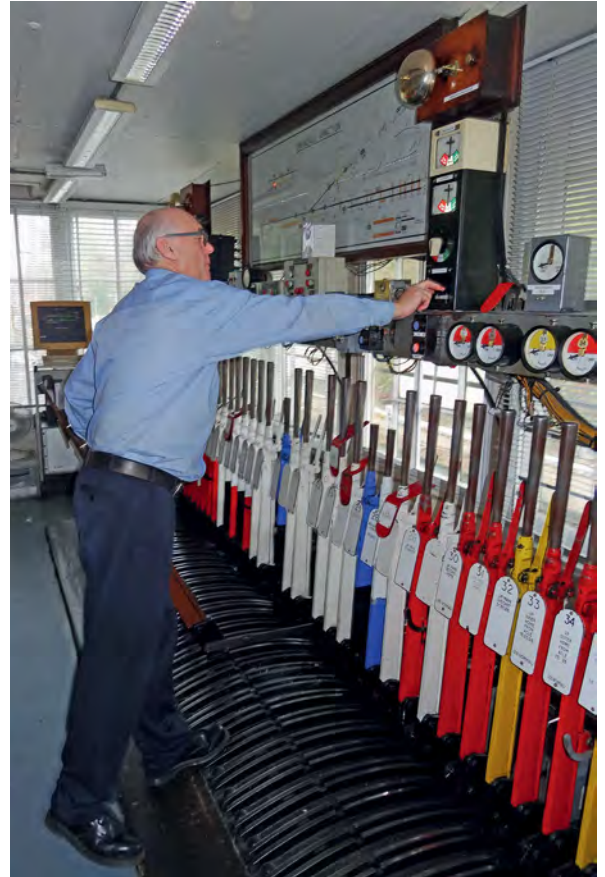


Brundall Junction marked the divergence of the direct single line to Great Yarmouth via Acle and the twin Lowestoft lines. The GER Type 3 box, built in 1883, was an unusual design with ornate barge boards and incised wooden panelling designed to resemble cut stone. Also, the windows featured a multi-pane design found only on the GER.

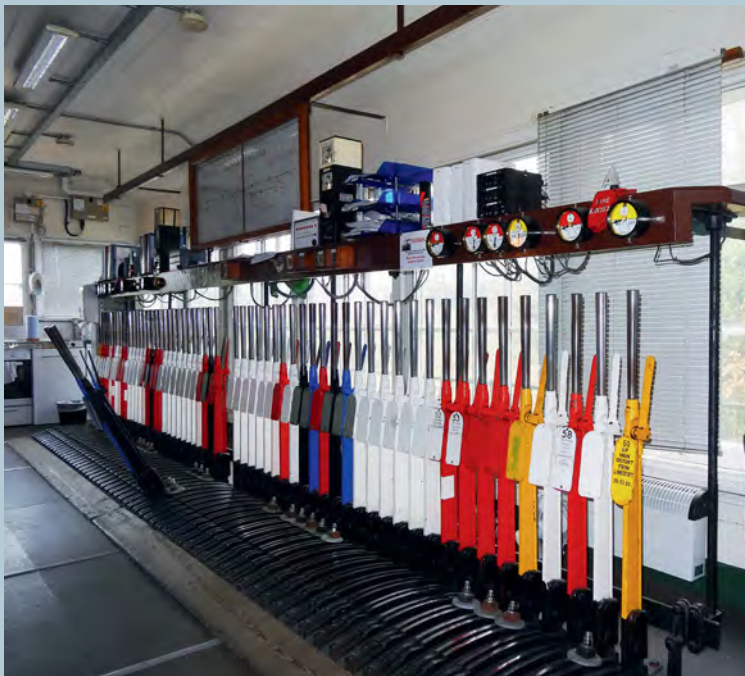
Brundall Junction

Brundall Junction was the most original Great Eastern Railway (GER) Type 3 signal box in use on the national network. Built in 1883 by the GER and Stevens & Co, externally it had wooden panelling incised to resemble stone blocks, with wooden windows formed of a central pane surrounded by six light glazing bars, plus decorative barge boards and distinctive terracotta cockscomb roof ridge tiles and finials. In 1927, a new 35-lever frame stamped 'London and Carlisle L&NER' was installed. Latterly, it worked absolute block to Reedham Swing Bridge and single line tokenless block to Acle.

The signaller worked closely with the level crossing keeper at nearby Brundall station, as it was not possible to signal a train through the section until the keeper had locked the gates with keys. Bell signals passed between the two to confirm this. It is hoped that the Grade II-listed box can be relocated to the Mid-Norfolk Railway, subject to planning consent.



Network Rail Signaller Bob Norman, seen on December 18, 2019, had worked on the railway for 53 years and been resident signaller at Brundall Junction for an astonishing 40 years, during which time he had seen tremendous changes on the Wherry Lines. He retired when the box was decommissioned in February.



A view of the 60-lever McKenzie & Holland frame at Reedham Junction signal box on its last day of use, March 22, 2019.

Reedham Junction

Reedham Junction signal box, built in 1904 when the Lowestoft lines were doubled, was decommissioned on March 22, 2019 in advance of the other Wherry Lines box closures. It was sited at the divergence of the Lowestoft lines and the single line to Great Yarmouth via Berney Arms. The 60-lever all-wooden box was removed during the 2020 possession, but will be reconstructed and restored on the North Norfolk Railway at Holt, where it will form part of a hands-on railway signalling simulator that visitors can use.

Acle

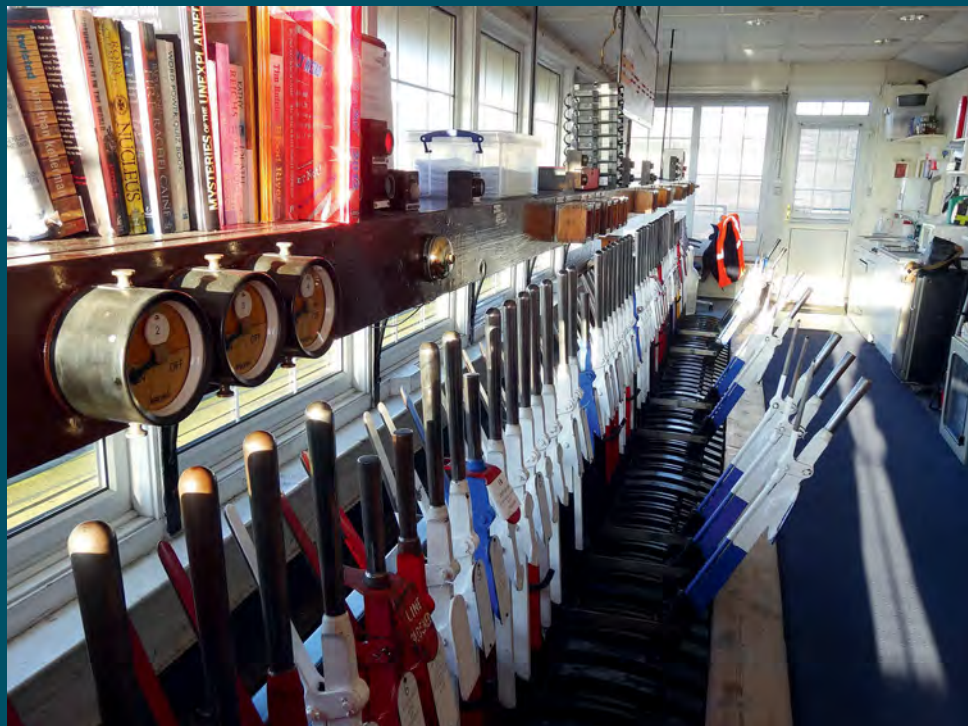
A small GER Type 3 20-lever box built in 1883 with a Saxby & Farmer frame, is situated on the platform at Acle station. This box worked tokenless block to Yarmouth Vauxhall and Reedham Swing Bridge signal boxes. Originally it had the same distinctive GER-style windows as the Brundall box, but these were later removed in favour of uPVC frames. Acle station has a passing loop on the single line section. A private buyer has expressed interest in acquiring the box.



The 20-lever Saxby & Farmer frame is seen in this interior view of Acle signal box on October 2, 2018. The illuminated signal diagram above the frame clearly shows the station passing loop and single line sections.

Yarmouth Vauxhall

Yarmouth Vauxhall signal box was the only survivor of a GER Type 4 signal box with a Saxby & Farmer frame. It was built in brick in 1884 (when the station was expanded) and supported a large, well-lit, wooden operating floor with a 63-lever frame. It had distinctive ornate cast iron supports to the walkway surround. The box used to oversee four platforms at Yarmouth Vauxhall (later Great Yarmouth) station and extensive sidings which, until the 1980s, catered for holiday excursions from across the UK as well as goods traffic to and from the port. The station platforms were reduced to three in 2017. It worked tokenless block to Acle and Reedham Junction via Berney Arms.



The generous space within Yarmouth Vauxhall signal box is shown to good effect in this shot of the block shelf and lever frame on the morning of December 18, 2019. The Saxby & Farmer frame had 63 levers in total.

Oulton Broad North Station

Oulton Broad North Station signal box was built in 1901 and situated close to the junction of the Lowestoft and East Suffolk lines. It was fitted with a 35-lever McKenzie & Holland frame. The frame was extended in 1928 when Oulton Broad Junction box was abolished and signalling of the East Suffolk lines transferred over. In 1985, the now-single East Suffolk line switched to a Radio Electronic Tokenless Block system and the box was equipped with a radio mast at the gable end to facilitate communication. By 2012 the system was obsolete and was changed to track circuit block. The level crossing it oversaw has heavy road traffic that causes congestion when the barriers are down.



Oulton Broad North Station signal box on December 18, 2019. It was built in 1901 to a standard GER Type 7 design. The aerial on the gable end of the box is a reminder of the now defunct Radio Electronic Tokenless Block system formerly used on the East Suffolk line.

Before it was reduced to a gate box in March 2019, Cantley signal box used to signal departing eastbound trains away from Cantley station with impressive tall home starter signal C20, subsequently removed. The 1416 departure to Great Yarmouth, formed by GA two-car DMU 170270, since transferred to Transport for Wales, passes the signal on October 2, 2018.



An interior view of diminutive Cantley signal box, taken on December 18, 2019. The 22-lever Saxby & Farmer frame is original. Note that the gate keys have to be locked into the wicket lever 6. The up and down BR domino block instruments on the block shelf were plated over to prevent use when Cantley was reduced to a gate box in March 2019.



Cantley

Cantley level crossing box, on the Brundall Junction to Lowestoft line, was a small wooden GER Type 7 box dating from 1887, with a Saxby & Farmer 22-lever frame. It oversaw the busy road crossing by Cantley station. This handles a significant amount of lorry traffic, including incoming sugar beet and outgoing refined sugar products from the British Sugar factory complex nearby, ironically served by a direct rail connection until 1988.

Until March 22, 2019 the box was an absolute block post between Brundall and Reedham Junction, but with the decommissioning of Reedham Junction box it became a simplified gate box with its home starting signals at Cantley station removed and its BR domino block instruments plated over. It was set for demolition to allow installation of new crossing equipment.



Lowestoft

Lowestoft signal box was the most easterly in the UK and the only surviving GER Type 6 box. It was built in 1885, and in 1905 a 61-lever McKenzie & Holland Duplex frame was installed. Around 37 levers were in use to the end. The wooden structure was reinforced with a windowless brick surround to the locking room floor during World War Two when East Coast ports were heavily bombed.

Extensive sidings surrounded the box, but since the demise in recent years of regular seaside rail excursions, fish and offshore oil and gas freight traffic it has seen very little use. Unusually, Lowestoft box had its own prefix bell codes to indicate to the signaller at Oulton Broad North Station whether departing trains were Norwich- or Ipswich-bound.



An interior view of the large operating floor of Lowestoft signal box on December 18, 2019. Most of its 61 levers were still in use when the box was decommissioned. The brass foot press studs were used to release points and facing point levers electrically.



An external view of Lowestoft signal box on December 18, 2019. Note the extensive point rodding and signal wires exiting the base of the box.

English Electric Type
5 Deltic D9005 *The
Prince of Wales's Own
Regiment of Yorkshire*
arrives on shed at
Holbeck for servicing
on August 15, 1967.
(All photos Gavin
Morrison)

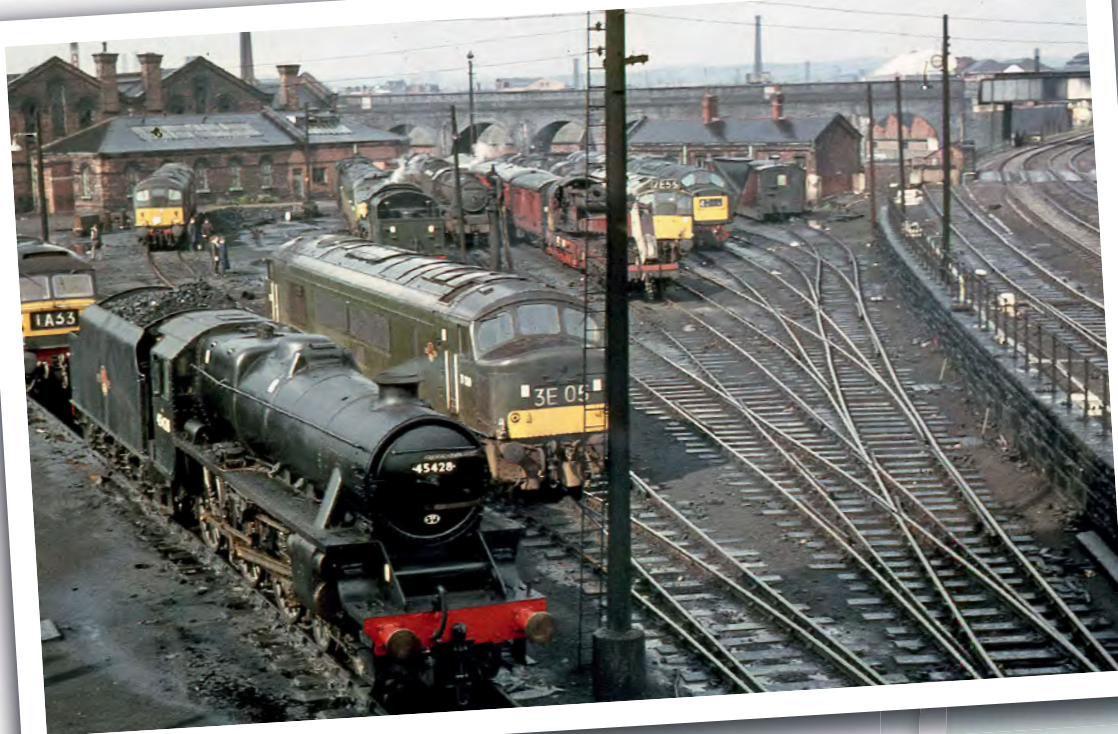


British Railways' Western and Eastern Regions were the most proactive in their new-build diesel depot provision but, when it came to Holbeck, the ER was seemingly content to make do with the former Midland Railway workshop facilities, which once adjoined two large roundhouses. This feature takes a look at the MR origins of Holbeck and how it became firmly ensconced behind the iron curtain of the ER as a supplier of diesel traction for everything from local shunt and trip duties to freightliners and expresses passenger services. ➔

Leeds Holbeck

This once vital Eastern Region Depot could be considered a cuckoo in the nest, as it was formerly a Midland Railway facility. **Alex Fisher** looks back at its fascinating history.





ABOVE: September 30, 1967 and the final day of steam at Holbeck, with Black 5 45428 in the foreground and 44884 along with Jubilee 45593 behind. Examples of what under TOPS became Classes 24, 25, 40, 45 and 47 all appear in BR green to add to the atmosphere.

The North Midland Railway reached Leeds with its line from Derby via Rotherham Masborough in 1840 and when the company merged with the Birmingham and Derby Junction and Midland Counties Railways in 1844, it became the Midland Railway. The MR opened two 'square' roundhouses and an adjacent Engine Repair Works on May 9, 1868 and the buildings rightly rejoiced in that oft quoted moniker of 'cathedrals of steam' as the home to engines such as BR Standard Britannias, Claughtons, Gresley A3s, Stanier Jubilees, un-rebuilt Patriots and rebuilt Royal Scots.

Holbeck's first allocated diesels were five LMS diesel shunters, from 1934 through to 1939. With the nationalisation of the railways in 1948 the depot retained its Midland connection through being part of the London Midland Region. It also retained its MR shed code of 20A through to 1957 when the boundary changes meant it became part of the North Eastern Region as 55A, later becoming HO under TOPS. It didn't regain a diesel shunter until two decades later when brand new Hunslet Engineering Co (later Class 05) D2596 arrived on February 15, 1960. It was sent to Ardsley and replaced by new D2597 in June of the same year, only for the two to pair up at Ardsley the following month.

Peak performance

With the LMR still regarding the former Midland route to St Pancras via Sheffield, Derby and Leicester as one of the main links to the capital for the city of Leeds, Holbeck was high on the priority list for receiving new diesels. BR/Sulzer Peak (Class 45) D14 was new to Derby on November 24, 1960 but was reallocated to Holbeck in the week ending December 24. It was joined by D11 and D12 on loan from Derby in February 1961, along with English Electric Type 4 (Class 40) D302, which had been loaned from Crewe North to nearby Leeds Neville Hill in January 1961. The locos were put on crew training trips from Neville Hill, with out and back turns to Appleby West, while

other workings included a Stourton to Lancaster van train. Peaks D15 and D16 were added in February 1961 and they were also used on crew training trips.

In that early 1960s period steam was still in use in the Midlands, and its smoke was not compatible with the intricacies of diesel locos. Thus, if they were to be maintained in peak performance they needed to be kept away from the soot and filth of the various steam locos that inhabited the roundhouses. The diesels were therefore sent to Neville Hill while Holbeck underwent a two-stage conversion into a diesel depot.

Stage 1 was part of a plan to provide facilities for 60 diesels that would eventually double to 120. As Holbeck was still a working steam shed, Stage 1's work had to be sympathetic to those needs, but thankfully No 1 and No 2 machine shops were separate from the former MR roundhouses, so converting them into a diesel servicing depot had little impact on normal running. Concrete and glazing at a low level replaced the building's high-pitched roofs, and new approach roads were laid. One line led to No 1 shop and two ran into No 2. Inside the depot the machines associated with steam were moved in order to create three 200ft roads. Each one had pits and elevated rails standing on steel supports 2ft 6in above the floor level. Running alongside them were raised concrete platforms that gave level access to the footplate of each loco. For the lifting of heavy engine parts, a seven-ton overhead electric travelling crane was added, along with a wheel lathe and two 1,500-gallon storage tanks for engine sump oil.

Rail tankers or barrels replenished the storage tanks, with fresh oil piped to sump oil changing berths as the waste oil was drawn from the engine sumps by a mobile pump. This was piped directly to a 10,000-gallon capacity storage tank for use in the depot's central heating system. A concrete fuelling apron and canopy were added, along with three 25,000-gallon fuel tanks. To the north end of the shed a new lean-to building was constructed containing facilities for cleaning and re-oiling engine parts and air filters, while another room looked after battery charging. Stage 1 was completed in early 1963, resulting in a very useful base to serviced and maintain diesels free from the soot, grime and filth of the active steam shed.



The LMR was eager to dieselise its Midland Main Line expresses and so 19 Peaks were allocated to Holbeck in December 1962. The locos worked some intense cyclical diagrams, with Holbeck's Diagram No 7, for example, taking a Peak light engine to Leeds City to work an express service to London St Pancras. It would fuel at Cambridge Street depot before taking a train to Derby, a parcels train back to London St Pancras, and an express to Manchester Central, followed by one back to Derby and then Leeds City. From there it returned to Holbeck on the fourth day of the diagram. From February 1963, other turns took them three days a week from Leeds to Scarborough. Other diesels employed included Brush Type 4s for Leeds to King's Cross. These were working in lieu of Deltics as the latter were given their pre-summer service works overhaul. D1570 (47017) was at Holbeck on April 6, 1964 for crew-training purposes; the first of the type to be allocated there.



Holbeck's workings in the early 1960s included services to Bristol, Carlisle, Glasgow and London St Pancras. However, alterations to diagrams saw the Bristol workings cut back to Birmingham, along with the loss of the Glasgow and St Pancras services. Compensation came with work taken on from Copley Hill shed, which closed in 1964. This provided routes to King's Cross and many former Great Northern branch lines in the Leeds area. The closure of Farnley Junction Shed in November 1966 also took Holbeck men west to Manchester, Liverpool, Stockport and some former LNWR branch lines. Stourton closed in 1968 and this added more freight work as well as trips to Morecambe.

As Jubilee Class 45562 *Alberta* left the shed for the final time, Holbeck closed to steam on September 30, 1967. With its departure Stage 2 could be enacted, involving the demolition of the roundhouses and the concrete coaling tower, which went in 1970, and the erection of a washing plant. Diesels continued to stable around the former turntable rounds for some time and the site presented a forlorn picture as the rubble and detritus of the former steam shed lay strewn around those dirty and seemingly unkempt locos. But what would we give to see such sites again? Holbeck's fleet stood at 84 locos in October 1971 and included two Class 03s, nine Class 08s, 21 Class 25s, ten Class 31s, 12 Class 47s, 25 Class 45s and five Class 46s.

At the time the depot had roads numbered 1 to 17, which were divided into 'sides'. Roads 1 to 5 were classed as 'two side' and 6 to 17 as 'one side'. Roads 1 to 5 lay adjacent the running lines and had a road that bypassed the washer, the washer road itself and two fuel roads. Road 13 was known as the 'scratching shed', which was a small, low slung structure that provided cover for the men working on de-greasing loco bogies. Roads 14 and 15 went into the former No 2 shop, while 16 was a short dead end and 17 ran into the former No 1 shop.

Holbeck's haunts

As a hangover from steam days, most sheds had men to move engines around the yard, either for disposal or prepping prior to departure. There were 'book-on' times for four pairs of men at 0600, 1200, 1400, 1500, 2000 and 2200. The men who worked these turns were often known as 'green carded', which was a term derived from the green coloured cards attached to wagons that were fit to make one further journey only before repair, as opposed to a 'red carded' vehicle that was unfit to move. Green carded men were those who had to be confined to the depot, or even a specific point close by, due to their medical conditions, such as high blood pressure or hearing loss, or those simply awaiting medical results before returning to the main line. Accompanying the drivers were secondmen, who often took the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in loco handling.

At a large shed such as Holbeck there were crews booking on at all times across the day and thus it was prudent to ensure that there were 'relief men' ready. They sat spare but expected to be called upon to work a service if the booked crew 'knocked sick'. To 'knock sick' was a term that dated back to the steam era when young lads, or even ladies, would go to a footplateman's house and knock on the door or window to rouse them. If they were unable to attend work, the 'caller up', as they were known, would record them as having 'knocked sick'. The relief book-on times at Holbeck were at 0005, 0100, 0230, 0400, 0515, 1000, 1330, 1500, 1655, 2000, 2145, 2300 and 2355.

Depots such as Holbeck oozed atmosphere from a bygone era. They were a visual reminder of the days when there was a huge blackboard upon which the trains of that day and the following one were chalked up under the headings of Ordinary Passenger, Special Passenger, Ordinary Freight and Special Freight. Although the 'Thames Clyde Express' no longer made it onto the board, even in the early 1980s Holbeck was still an archetypal mixed traffic depot with a wide range of freight and passenger trains on its roster.

LEFT: CBR/Sulzer Types 4s D30 and D55, in early BR blue, frame a green English Electric Type 3 at Holbeck on March 18, 1967.

BELOW: Immaculate in its new RES red livery, Class 47/7 47704 stands in the yard, with 47/4 47500 in faded GWR green to the left. Other liveries can be spotted in this image taken on December 6, 1991.



Leeds Holbeck Allocation, December 1, 1974

Class 08	D3240/295/6/454/568/652-6/8/934
Class 31	D5537/41/81/4/607/56/69/801/56, 31111
Class 45	D12-7/9-21/3-7/9/30/1/3/6/7/8/42/4/5/8/9/50/3/8/60/9/70/6/89/101/8/112/5/9/37, 45007
Class 47	D1106/9/10/577/8/80/1/620, 47052/425

The local colliery turns included trips K51 to K55 for Water Haigh, Savile, Newmarket, Glasshoughton, Dearne, Grimethorpe, Houghton, Waterloo, etc, with coal for Healey Mills. With bonus payments to be earned, crews could often make three or four trips between the collieries and Healey Mills in one shift.

Other services included K56, light engine to Healey Mills to take a load to Hunslet Down Yard, a service to Bradford Valley Yard and passenger back to Leeds City. K57 was light engine from Holbeck to Hunslet to collect empties, and then ran to Waterloo or Newmarket colliery near Wakefield to load for Healey Mills or one of the local power stations. The K58 diagram (a trip freight) would run light engine to Bradford Valley Yard to pick up empty and loaded wagons, then on to Hunslet to leave the empties and pick up more loads to take to either Healey Mills or Tinsley. K59 was light to Healey Mills to take a train to Hunslet, then either back to Holbeck or to Healey Mills or Tinsley. These trips typically were diagrammed for a Class 31. K59 also produced Classes 25s, 45s or 47s.

K60, K61 and K62 were local parcel diagrams between Holbeck and Leeds Whitehall, Hunslet, Stourton, and Farnley for the Dunlop factory. Being within a ten-mile radius of Holbeck, they usually employed a Class 08 shunter, although the occasional Class 25 or Class 31 were also noted. K64 was the only tripper that required a brake van from Holbeck Shed. It ran with a Class 31 or Type 4, either a Class 45 or 47, with fuel tanks for Holbeck or Neville Hill. Other notable freight workings included the 4V28 Wakefield to Morris Cowley Cartic and the Rylstone stone trains. The trains would be loaded by Skipton men, then Holbeck men took them forward and

returned them to Marsh Lane or Hunslet Up Yard where they were relieved by Neville Hill men who took the locos to Holbeck for fuelling. These workings often brought 30 to 40 locos on shed, many of which were worked by crews from 'foreign' sheds, such as Healey Mills, Bradford Hammerton Street and Rotherham Masborough.

Class 1 Passenger Workings were a staple of Holbeck's work and included such diagrams as the 0500 1V62 Leeds to Cardiff as far as Birmingham New Street from where they would work the 0700 1E10 Bristol Temple Meads to Leeds, usually with a Class 47. They would then go light engine to Neville Hill, and empty stock as 5V92 to Leeds City, and depart as the 1V92 1237 Leeds to Cardiff as far as Derby. The 1E27 0955 Weymouth to Leeds would be brought back and the empty stock taken to Neville Hill before running light engine back to Holbeck, arriving 1833 usually with a Class 45/0 or Class 46 but occasionally a Class 47. A range of other services were also worked with final destinations at Birmingham, Bradford Forster Square, Bristol Temple Meads, Carlisle, Derby, Doncaster, Hull, King's Cross, St Pancras, Manchester, Plymouth, Sheffield and Weymouth.

Postal, parcels and empty stock workings also formed an important part of Holbeck's workload, with services such as 5L00, which was a curious catch-all empty stock train that entailed working empty parcels vans from Leeds station and empty sleeping coaches from Bradford Exchange that had worked down to Bradford on the ex-2300 from King's Cross. The stock was taken to Neville Hill for cleaning and servicing.

Past its peak

Plans to close Holbeck as a train crew depot began in 1979 with the introduction

BELOW: Celebrity Class 25 D7672 (25912) *Tamworth Castle* stands inside the servicing shed on March 29, 1991. It was used as a training aid for BR apprentices and returned to the main line on February 19, 1990 for a brief period hauling passenger and charter services. It is now preserved at the Churnet Valley Railway.



of HSTs to the Leeds to King's Cross route. With servicing of the HSTs carried out at Neville Hill, crews didn't have a light engine to use as a taxi and thus they'd have to take charge of the trains directly from Leeds station. The unions opposed the move and it wasn't until early 1986 that it finally went through. From April 14, 1986 the train crew signing-on point was transferred to Leeds station, and; while the depot continued as a loco stabling point this effectively ended Holbeck's time as former top link shed. To commemorate the occasion, retired Holbeck driver, Mr Fred Watmough, unveiled the nameplate *Holbeck* on Gateshead's 47425 on April 15, 1986. The depot was then devoid of an allocation and the Class 08s that were laid over on shed were all transferred to Neville Hill.



With Leeds Neville Hill holding the position of the city's premier provider of passenger stock, Holbeck was taken on by Railfreight under the BR's Sectorisation programme in 1987 and a few Class 08s were out-based there. Class 31s, 45s and 47s remained the usual visitors on local trip freights and Freightliners.

Tinsley's last Peak (45106) had been retained by the InterCity special trains unit, which saw some commercial value in the loco. It paid its last visit to Holbeck on January 21, 1989, which brought to an end the depot's association with the Type 4s that had been close to ever-present for just short of three decades. That loco was a favourite with charter train operators, in between working occasional trips to St Pancras, but all that ended on the 0712 Derby to St Pancras run when it failed at Wellingborough on February 3, 1989, was rescued by 97472 (47472) but caught fire near Hendon. The resultant damage led to its withdrawal on February 20.

During the 1990s the East Coast Main Line services were dominated by the HST and,

after electrification, Class 91s. Freight had fallen drastically with the closure of many of West and South Yorkshire's collieries, which meant Holbeck had outlived its usefulness.

The depot still had ten Class 08s allocated to it in November 1989, but they were all transferred away in February 1990. With no fleet of its own, Holbeck became a mere fuel and inspection point, which was seeing fewer locos with each passing month. The odd Class 60 made it on shed, but these visits were rare, and where 30 diesel locos would once have resided, October 19, 1992 found Holbeck playing host to only 31404 alongside withdrawn 47448/515/85. Some reports put the closure of the depot as October 1993, while others say that it was never officially closed but merely lapsed into disuse. The tracks to the old workshop area were lifted and the ground concreted over. At that point it looked like Holbeck was finished for good.

Fortunately, a revitalised Holbeck was returned to use as a stabling point for DMUs and sometimes up to a dozen units were to be found there on a Sunday. Even the odd loco made use of its fuelling facilities

as the depot proved its usefulness once again for the city of Leeds. A new two-road building was erected near to where the former loco washer had stood and this is now run by RTS Infrastructure. Today the depot offers continuous support and facilities and provides fuelling and painting, 1.5km of stabling roads, and carriage and underframe washers. It describes itself as a heavy engineering facility suited to even the most complex of overhauls, and is being used by the likes of AmeyColas, Babcock Rail, Balfour Beatty, Colas Rail, Network Rail and Northern.

Finally, while no longer seeing locos, Waldeck was appointed as lead designer in the construction of a new two-storey office and storage building at Network Rail's existing Maintenance Delivery Unit in Holbeck. The scheme also included work to retrofit the 60m by 29m former works section of Holbeck shed into new office accommodation and stores. Thus, while perhaps no longer being the peak performer it once was, Holbeck certainly has a bright, happy and long future ahead of it. **RI**

BELOW: Almost certainly one, if not the only, time a passenger train has ventured into the depot occurred on March 6, 2016 when a Branch Line Society tour formed of Class 142 Pacers 142001 and 142004 visited. The new two-road building is evident and has most recently been used to refurbish Northern Class 333 EMUs.

Cawoods

Coal to Ireland



The march of containerisation reached the coal industry in the mid-1980s with improved handling methods introduced alongside new wagons to allow services to be modernised.

One of the principal supporters of this development was Cawoods, which shipped coal from South Wales and the East Coast to Ireland via Merseyside for a decade, as **Simon Bendall** recounts.

As the 1980s progressed, British Rail had its sights firmly set on modernising the remaining freight traffic that still relied on unfitted or vacuum-braked wagons and traditional manual handling. Falling in this category was much of the domestic coal market, particularly in South Wales, where the elderly and inefficient 16-ton and 21-ton mineral wagons still dominated services.

While the modern air-braked HBA/HEA coal hoppers were readily available, many coal depots lacked the ability to unload them and were unable or unwilling to invest in the necessary facilities to do so. As a result, the mid-1980s saw such depots close in their hundreds as road competition won out, while the demand for household coal continued to plummet as central heating became more widespread.

In some areas there was still sufficient demand to make modernisation worthwhile and the answer lay with containerisation. Thus, from 1983, BR converted an initial 170 of its unsuccessful SAA two-axle steel carriers into container wagons by removing the floor and bolsters and fitting container clamps. Re-coded as FPA, each modified wagon could carry a 30ft coal container; a further 51 examples followed later in the decade, some of these using the underframes of de-bodied VCA vans.

Distinctive boxes

The biggest exponent of containerised coal was Cawoods, which saw the potential to revolutionise export flows to Ireland. Traditionally this traffic from the South Wales collieries had been shipped via Swansea Docks with only short-distance rail moves. With the need for the fossil fuel to be handled at least four times during the trip, it was slow and inefficient, with the coal lumps prone to breaking apart during the journey, thereby reducing quality.

During 1986 considerable investment by Cawoods saw a container terminal opened at Ellesmere Port on the south side of the River Mersey. This was connected to the BR network via a branch of the Manchester Ship Canal railway and enabled Freightliner traffic to be shipped across the Irish Sea. The same facility was also eminently suitable to handle containerised coal. Cawoods duly reached agreement with BR for the export traffic from South Wales to be re-routed to Merseyside.

A new wagon fleet was also required for the recast services. Cawoods placed an order with Standard Wagon for the construction of 108 two-axle container flats at its Heywood workshops. With the containers being to standard ISO dimensions of 20ft in length and 8ft tall, the wagons were required to have a low deck height so they could fit under existing colliery loading facilities. Numbered CAWD92703-810, deliveries of the PFAs commenced in December 1986, with a daily service soon running to Ellesmere Port from the Phurnacite plant at Abercwmboi or the Coedbach and Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen washeries of British Coal. On arrival at the Merseyside terminal, each container for shipping to Ireland would be unloaded from the wagons by an overhead crane, with a returning empty taking its place. As such, it was comparatively rare to see the PFAs running empty. ➔

The Cawoods workings from South Wales were firmly in the hands of Canton-based Class 37s during the British Rail era, with a refurbished example typically rostered for the duty, although a Class 37/0 was not unknown. On April 16, 1991, 37797 is seen traversing Sutton Bridge Junction, Shrewsbury, with the 6V07 0745 Ellesmere Port-Onllwyn empties. (Antony Guppy)

RIGHT: For the workings from Northumberland and Humberside, it was Class 56s that dominated proceedings during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Still looking good in its BR large logo colours, 56116 powers through Winwick Junction on November 6, 1988 as it heads for Manchester and the Pennines with an empty working from Ellesmere Port to Lynemouth Colliery. (Terry Eyres)

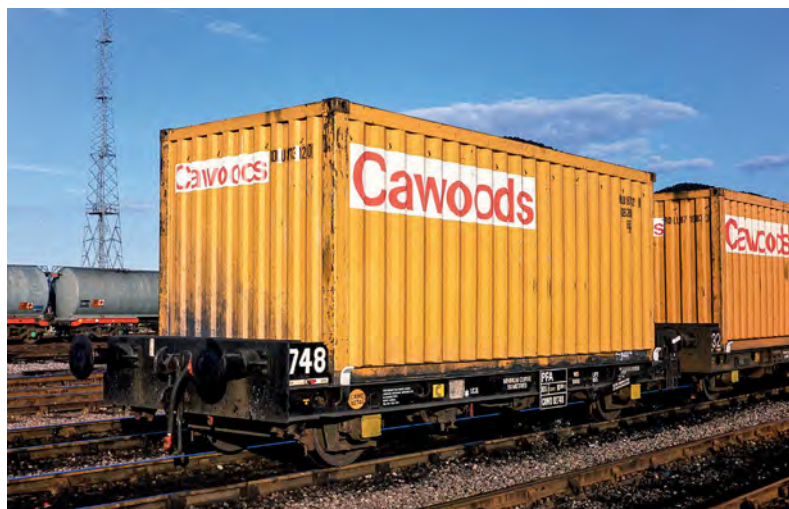


RIGHT: CAWD92748 is entirely typical of the Cawoods PFAs and stands at Immingham in October 1990. Due to the low height of the deck, the wheels passed through the frame and protruded slightly above it, meaning the containers required recesses in their base to give the necessary clearance. (David Ratcliffe)

Eastern expansion

During 1987, Cawoods expanded its activities across the Pennines with coal sourced from both Lynemouth Colliery in Northumberland and the Firegold Phurnacite plant at Immingham, with trains loading to around 36-38 wagons. With traffic levels buoyant, a further 64 PFAs were ordered from Standard Wagon that year, with the delivery of CAWD92811-74 allowing up to ten trains per week to run from 1988. New coal sources were also secured with workings from the collieries at Tower, Littleton, Daw Mill and Maltby amongst others, after which a period of stability set in for four years.

From the autumn of 1992 the Cawoods traffic switched to using Seaforth Docks on the opposite side of the Mersey after the terminal at Ellesmere Port was closed, it having become uneconomic to run



RIGHT: One end of each Cawoods container featured a door to assist with unloading. The external cleanliness could vary considerably. During October 1990, CAWD92750 is awaiting departure to Ellesmere Port, having recently been loaded at the Firegold Phurnacite plant at Immingham. (David Ratcliffe)



following the withdrawal of Freightliner services. Inevitably, demand for household coal in Ireland began to decline which, coupled with the decimation of the UK's coal industry, saw the Cawoods services greatly reduced by the mid-1990s.

During 1995 the company was put up for sale. It passed to the ownership of RJB Mining, which began a process of removing the Cawoods logos from the containers in 1996 followed by a sporadic programme of repainting them in a new RJB blue livery. Over half of the PFA wagon fleet was also sold off to British Gypsum and British Fuels, with the remainder continuing to transport coal to Seaforth at a much reduced frequency. This continued until 2004, when the traffic ceased for good, having originated from Gascoigne Wood, Clipstone, Welbeck and Daw Mill in the preceding years. **RI**



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Grid on the Cawoods

With Accurascale recently releasing the PFA container flats in OO gauge, **Simon Bendall** describes a few simple enhancements for the Cawoods examples and how to provide some suitable motive power for a service across the Pennines.

MAIN IMAGE: Recalling the days of Cawoods traffic crossing the north of England, a detailed, repainted and weathered 56124 **Blue Circle Cement** looks the part atop a rake of Cawoods PFAs, the wagons being an excellent new release from Accurascale. (All photos author)

Accurascale's rapid expansion into the UK market delivered another winning release during January with the appearance of the Standard Wagon-built PFA container flats. The OO gauge models were released in four different forms, including with British Fuels coal carriers, British Gypsum boxes or DRS-era low level radioactive waste containers. While the latter in particular have proved incredibly popular, it is arguably the striking yellow Cawoods models that are the highlight.

In keeping with the manufacturer's now well-established policy, 12 different Cawoods PFAs have been released, split across four triple-packs. With each having

an individual running number, this offers a quick and easy way to assemble a decent length train without the need to resort to renumbering. Each wagon is supplied ready to go, even with the bufferbeam air pipes in place, but for those looking to personalise the models; there are a few enhancements that can be done.

If you prefer couplings of a more realistic appearance, the supplied tension locks and associated close-coupling mechanisms can be removed easily. The mounting points for these are above the axles and they can simply be taken away by levering up the keeper plate and pulling out the assembly. At the same time, the moulded coupling

hook on each bufferbeam can be cut off flush with the surface. Two 0.5mm holes can then be drilled, one above the other, to create a slot for a replacement etched hook that is then glued in place. With the PFAs featuring Instanter couplings, those from the Smiths range are recommended as they offer a decent trade-off between appearance and usability. One thing to watch out for when drilling the holes for the hook is that the drill bit will invariably cut into the mounting peg for the cosmetic coupling spring moulding on the reverse of the bufferbeam. If that part comes loose, though, it can be simply superglued back into place.





Adding a load

The main enhancement that can be made to the PFAs is to add a coal load to the containers. Rather than fill them full, a false floor with supporting legs can be made up from 1mm thick black plasticard. As the containers feature corner strengthening plates that restrict the opening, this floor cannot simply be dropped inside. Instead, it should be made in two parts, one half having rounded corners to its supports. This allows the first section to be put in place and the second to then be tilted to slide in next to it while clearing the corner plates.

An extra piece of plasticard glued down the centre section of both parts of the false floor creates a raised section to assist with building up a hump for the load. Real coal can be used, suitably broken up and glued in place using diluted PVA adhesive, as marketed for securing ballast. An initial layer of coal should be



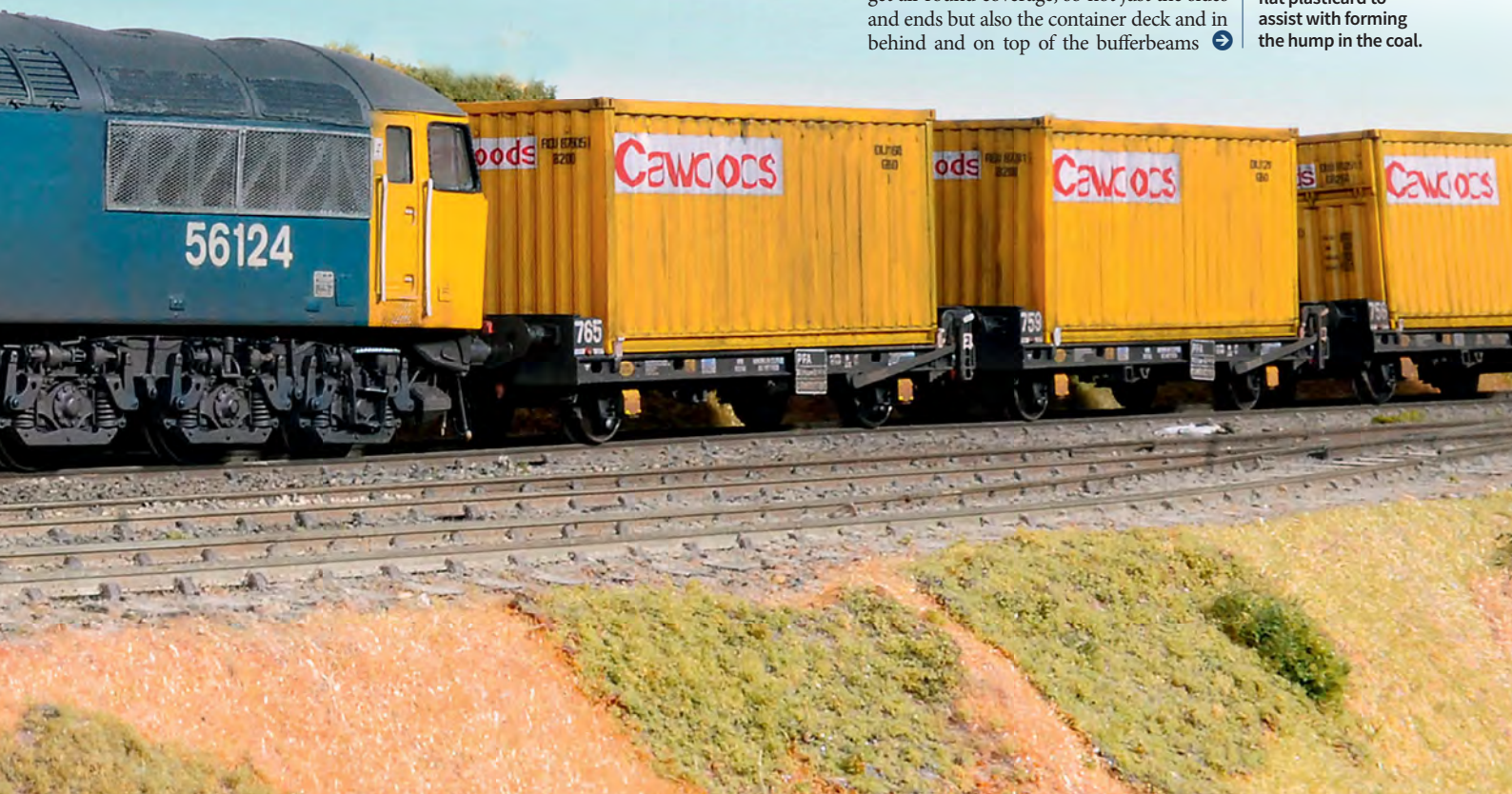
put in place and allowed to dry before a second application is made to create the hump. The two parts of the floor are then positioned inside the container and a thin final layer of coal applied to hide the joint.

Weathering

The last job on the models is to add weathering to both the wagons and containers, taking the PFAs first. As there is little in the way of superstructure, these can be simply air-brushed with a thinned mix of Railmatch track colour. The key here is to get all-round coverage, so not just the sides and ends but also the container deck and in behind and on top of the bufferbeams →

ABOVE: An interesting comparison between a detailed PFA on the left and an out-of-the-box example on the right. The weathering and load really help to bring the model to life. The removal of the unsightly tension lock couplings also makes a noticeable difference.

ABOVE LEFT: The plastic formers for the coal load are illustrated in two stages, those at the front showing the basic structure, while the rear pair has received the additional piece of flat plasticard to assist with forming the hump in the coal.





ABOVE: The current generation Hornby Class 56 is a decent model out of the box but suffers from some chunky details, while the bizarre omission of the bodyside lifting point covers is an irritation that remains uncorrected. Still, the etched parts offered by Shawplan deal with all of these issues with a bit of time and patience.

RIGHT: A finished two-part coal load has received a coating of real coal and is ready to be placed inside a container. Once in place, further coal can be added to cover the joint as well as around the edges, as required, to ensure a realistic look.



are coated. If desired, or if areas are missed, a similar thinned wash can be applied with a paintbrush, this being particularly good for toning down colourful components such as axlebox covers and brake pipe cocks.

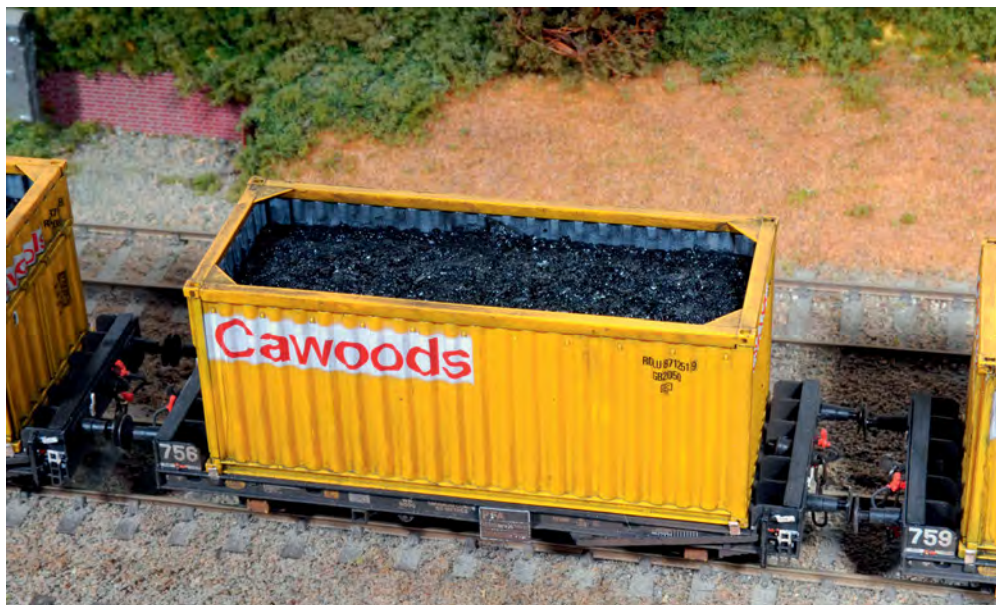
With the containers being a particularly bright yellow, these very much need weathering to reduce their plastic appearance to something more subtle. The approach taken here is to add thinned washes of black Humbrol enamel to represent coal dust and apply it using various paintbrush sizes. It is best to start with the internal grey, which naturally got particularly dirty, before working around the top edges and corner strengthening plates. Each side and end is tackled in turn, generally using a 6mm wide, or so, flat brush and remembering to work from top to bottom wherever possible to mirror the effects of rainwater. The trick is to blend the brush strokes together on each surface so they look even, which can mean a bit of trial and error on occasion. Once completed, the containers are left to dry before being partnered with their wagons, ready for use.



Upgrading a Grid

With the aim of portraying a Cawoods working from Lynemouth Colliery in Northumberland in the late 1980s, I selected a suitable north-east Class 56 to be modelled, the chosen subject being 56124 *Blue Circle Cement* in BR large logo blue. With the Type 5s looking particularly good in this livery, it also gave an opportunity to apply a reasonably heavy coat of weathering.

Using the current Hornby Class 56 as the basis, it was upgraded with the full suite of Extreme Etchings parts offered by Shawplan. These can be employed as required, but the bodyside lifting point covers, replacement roof fan grilles and cab front air horn grilles are a must to correct deficiencies on the Hornby model. Also, with 56124 being a late-build example, the ventilation grille on the secondman's cabsides also had to be added. The bodyside radiator grilles and the cantrail grilles above can be replaced if desired, as undertaken here, but it is more of an optional job.



ABOVE: With weathering applied to both the wagon and container, along with a coal load in place, CAWD92756 is ready to enter service on a layout.



LEFT: While the PFAs were not often seen in Cawoods traffic without the containers in place, it is worth weathering the whole of the deck to give a uniform look, plus it gives the option of running the odd empty wagon, if desired, for when this did happen.

All were fitted by removing any raised detail left over from the Hornby parts and ensuring a good fit before fixing into position with superglue, this being carefully applied with a cocktail stick. Great care must be taken with the bodyside and cantrail grilles to ensure the thin mesh is not damaged during handling, or clogged up with glue. Additionally, the supporting framework behind the main grilles can be rebuilt from plasticard to improve its appearance.

Livery transformation

The factory-applied livery, in this case Railfreight triple grey, can be prepared for repainting by employing very fine wet and dry paper, used wet, to sand away all the printed numbers and logos. The joint between the bodyside greys should also be sanded down to prevent it showing through the new paint. The bodyside is then washed in warm water with the aid of a toothbrush and, once dry, given a coat of Halfords grey primer to show up any imperfections.

Railmatch acrylics were used throughout, the warning yellow going on first, after a preceding coat of matt white to give it a good base. This was followed by BR blue and diesel roof grey. I picked out the black cab window surrounds by hand, working outwards from the window apertures and taking time to get a clean line all around. The rail grey mesh and framework of the bodyside grilles was applied in the same manner.

With the body gloss varnished, I applied transfers from the Fox range and sealed them with satin varnish. The model was then re-assembled. The attractive nameplates are from Shawplan and were fixed in place with a sparing amount of superglue. Weathering was done by spraying track colour on to the underframe and lower bodysides but then wiping most of it off with a cotton bud soaked in thinners before reapplying 'fresh dirt' with the airbrush. The same was done on the roof. Finally, black streaks were added down the bodysides to represent 'washed down' dirt from the roof panels, and in appropriate places on the underframe as well. **RI**

BELOW: The bodyside radiator grille and surrounding frame to be finished in Rail grey, which was a trademark of the 'Grids' painted in BR large logo blue by the Cheshire works.



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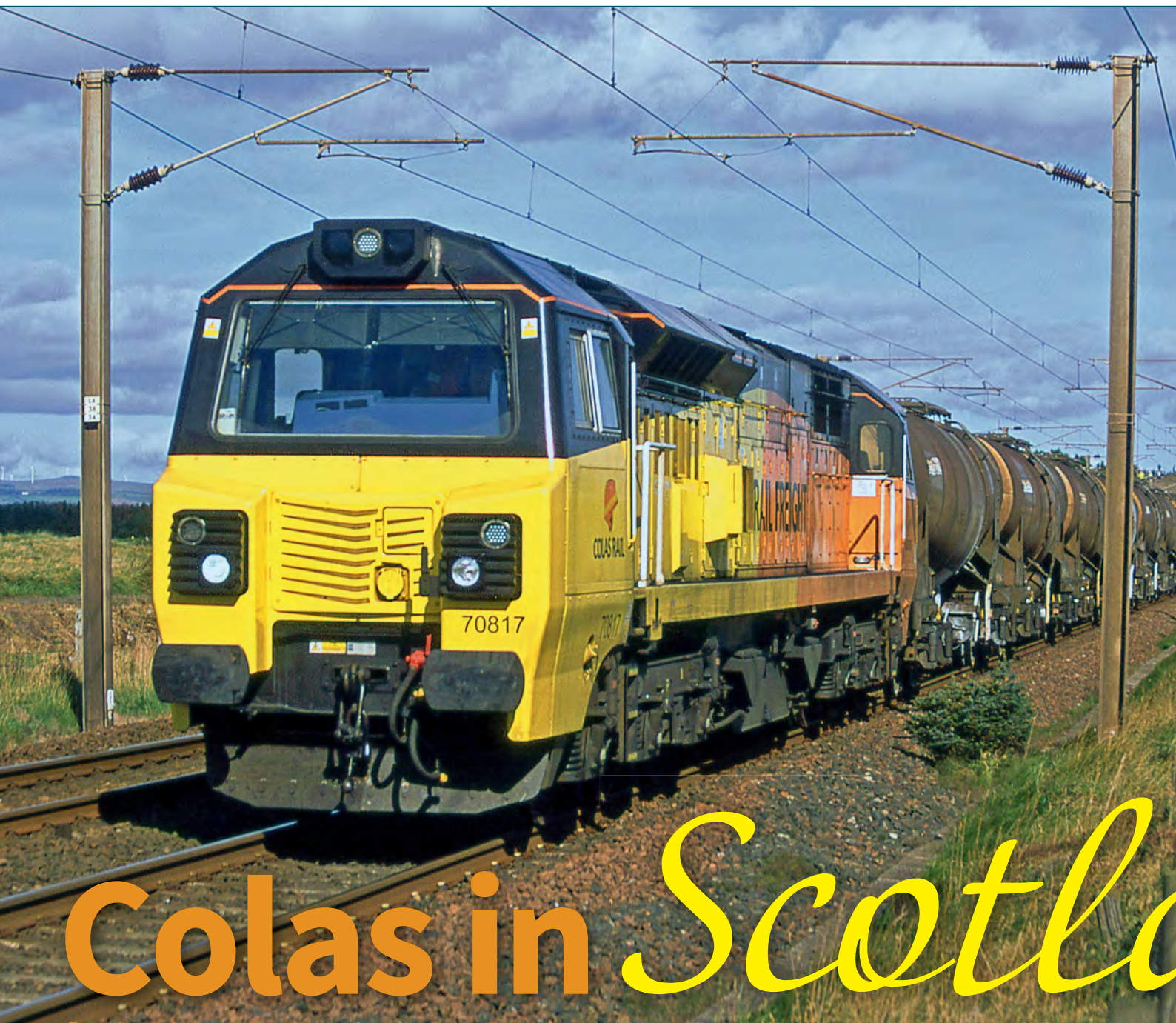
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Colas Rail is now a well-established freight operator north of the border, with its distinct orange and yellow locos working a variety of trains over the network. **Stuart Fowler** presents a rather colourful selection of Colas locos in action during the past few years.

To supplement its own Class 37s, Colas hired other examples. One of these was refurbished 37025 from the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway in large logo livery. In a fortunate patch of sunshine, the loco passes between Kirkconnel and Sanquhar on the GSW line between Kilmarnock and Dumfries on October 25, 2017 with the 1Q18 0618 Carlisle to Mossend test train.



A recent contract award for Colas in Scotland is the calcium carbonate trains from Aberdeen to the Irvine Caledonian Paper mill. Class 70 70817 looks rather purposeful while working the loaded 6B38 0428 Aberdeen to Irvine on September 7, 2019 as it passes Gailles near Irvine.

Colas has since passed its Class 47s on, but while still in its ownership 47739 was used to power a railtour over the West Highland line on May 1, 2017 and approaches Arrochar and Tarbet with the 1271 0441 Newcastle to Fort William.



Grids make up a good proportion of the Colas fleet. 56302 rumbles past the former Ayr Depot on September 19, 2017 with the 6R46 0632 Grangemouth to Prestwick Airport aviation fuel train.



and



LEFT: Colas has several Class 37s in its fleet, used generally for Network Rail infrastructure monitoring trains. On July 5, 2018 37421 approaches Irvine with the 1Q18 1432 Mossend to Mossend working, which includes test coach *Mentor*, with its pantograph at almost full stretch checking the OLE. This particular working runs monthly and includes runs over the major routes in Scotland. DRS now provides the traction for the train, though still powered by Class 37s.

RIGHT: During its short career with Colas the Class 60 formed the backbone of freight haulage in Scotland prior to being displaced by Class 70s. 60021 rolls through Falkirk Grahamston on June 28, 2018 with the daily empty 6S36 0830 Dalston to Grangemouth tanks.

BOTTOM: The Class 70 at present is the company's main form of motive power north of the border, working fuel, calcium carbonate and cement trains. 70802 has a very mixed cement train in tow on August 26, 2019 as it passes near Fordoun south of Stonehaven while powering the loaded 6A65 0555 Oxwellmains to Aberdeen cement train.



ABOVE: Colas uses two Class 67s that are predominantly used on Network Rail IM trains. 67023, with 67027 on the rear, departs Glasgow Central with the monthly 1Q18 Derby to Edinburgh IM train.



ABOVE: A more mundane task fell to 60076 on March 24, 2018 when it was diagrammed to work a Larkfield Junction to Carlisle Yard engineer's trains consisting of loaded track panels, here traversing the section between Abington and Crawford on the West Coast Main Line.

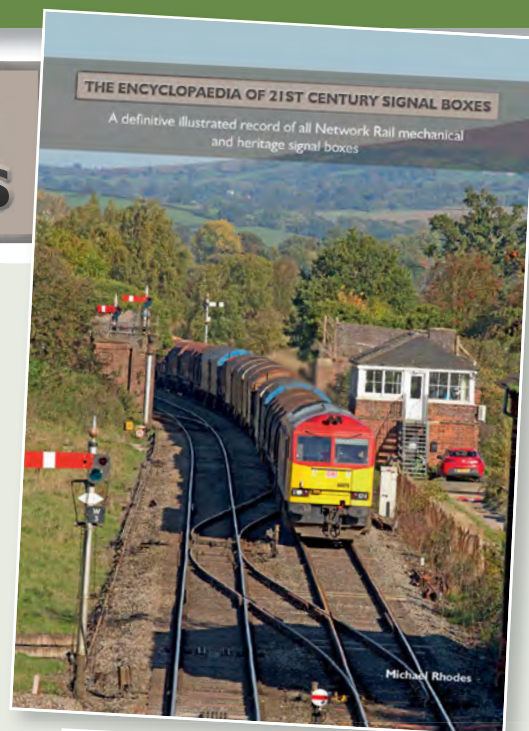




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Pip Dunn

News Writer

When 73107 *Tracy* and 73141 *Charlotte* arrived at Paddington late into the evening of September 23, 2018 on the final leg of GB Railfreight's four-day GBRf 2018 charity fundraising charter, the question asked was, "will there be another trip like it?"

At the time, organisers Paul Taylor, Dale Williams and Ian Grey were reluctant to commit to anything. However, they knew things others didn't. There certainly wasn't going to be a GBRf19, but they also said "never say never" to the prospect of another mammoth charter of this kind happening again.

GBRf18 raised more than £145,000 for good causes – Headway and Macmillan Cancer Support. Late in 2018 a much-admired GBRf colleague, Des O'Brien, passed away at relatively short notice having suffered an aggressive stomach cancer. Des was not only a big personality within the Control Office at GBRf, but a huge supporter of the Charity Trains and he and his wife Sue regularly helped out on many of them, so nominating a cancer charity was most appropriate. As well as supporting charity, the event generated unquantifiable good PR for GB Railfreight, while delivering great days out for everyone on board. So it's understandable why another such train would be a winner. But not long after GBRf18, Dale departed the GBRf team to move abroad, while Paul had some health issues of his own to overcome. Even Ian had to endure the challenge that is moving house! Also, there was the need, and desire, not to do too much of a good thing, and a GBRf charity charter of that magnitude is not something you can really do every year. Every couple of years is a good timescale, it allows the organisers to keep things fresh, and also to plan a great trip that will appeal to the public.

RIGHT: The DRS Class 20 Farewell tour passes Pannal on January 18. The potential for Class 20s on charter might have diminished, but the GBRf2020 charity railtour planned for September could offer up a lot of traction options. (Keith Dungeate)

So, after a few challenges, GBRf20 is on and set for September 24-27. The exact plan, itinerary and traction are still being finalised, so there's nothing I can tell you in print this time round, but rest assured, it will be good. This time the organising committee is making the train an even more personal affair as it is raising money for Prostate Cancer UK, and with good reason. In June of 2019, Paul Taylor was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Paul got married in July after which he commenced a heavy programme of chemotherapy. As of February 2020 Paul has concluded his treatment, to which he has responded well, and the outlook looks positive for many years of normal life. Despite the gruelling treatment, Paul has continued to work whenever he can, and it was during the numerous hospital visits and time away from the office that thoughts turned to another charity operation. Accordingly, GBRf staff have chosen Prostate Cancer UK, making this year's event even more relevant to those involved.

The train is expected to follow a similar format to both the GBRf15 and GBRf18 trains, with four days of running and



an overnight on the Friday night. The organising committee has an outline plan that is being checked on some of the finer details. The full itinerary is expected to be announced in March as various pieces of the jigsaw click into place. Bookings will open in early April, with the release date announced in advance. You can follow progress on gbfcharityrailtours.co.uk, or the GBRf Charity Railtours Facebook Page.

As I say, there are a lot of plates spinning in organising this mammoth trip, but it will include a selection of GBRf traction, so expect anything from the home fleet – Class 66s, 73s, 92s, 60s, and, for fans of older locos, there's every chance 47s and 50s may be used. It's possibly a bit too soon for a Class 69 to appear!

Destinations... well as usual a good geographical spread will apply, but the full routing is still being planned. Expect some bits of rare track, some places that infrequently enjoy loco-hauled trains these days, and some decent main line running. As before, day tickets and all trip four-day tickets for First and Standard Class will be available.

What can we expect in 2020?

It's never easy to predict what may or may not happen regarding charters in the year ahead, but sometimes it's worth a go! Following the DRS Farewell Class 20 tour, and the end of the locos' use by GBRf, main line Class 20 charter activity is expected to be limited. However, so long as Type 1s remain main line registered, and Michael Owen has 20007/142/189/205 in his fleet and available for spot hire, there's always a chance. That said, a plan for a possible May 25 trip to Skegness has already fallen by the wayside.

As regards Class 31s, with just 31128 main line registered, options are equally slim. However, on the plus side, the loco is in traffic and regularly used by WCR, and appeared on a couple of BLS trips in 2019; I wouldn't be surprised if the same happens this year. In a similar vein, main line Class 33s are thin on the ground, although the fact there are at least three, sometimes four, that could be used does at least mean a pair of BRCW Type 3s is possible and that has proved to be the case of late. Already March 7-9 is in the diary with the BLS for some Crompton



there is no set date for when the loco will be back. It may happen in 2020, but that depends on various repairs and some heritage line running first.

Don't expect any main line Deltic activity either. 55022 and D9009 are both out of action, while 55002 is now stuffed and mounted (and one engine only as well). Of those, D9009 is on the road to recovery, but these things take time, so if I were a betting man I'd say 2020 is unlikely to see a Class 55 on the main line. I could be wrong, of course...

Class 56 charters are planned for March 13-15 with the BLS using a Colas loco and there's every chance other Colas 56s could appear on a charter during the year as well, and don't forget the DC Rail. The likelihood of a Class 59 appearing on a train are limited unless GBRf's 59003 is used, now that the rest of the fleet is with Freightliner. With Class 60s, the active fleet is slowly creeping up again and it's possible some of DB Cargo's locos will appear. I'd venture to guess a GBRf example will do so in September, and who knows about DC Rail's new beasts? They are bound to be in demand – but can they be spared?

There's nothing exciting to say about Class 57s, 66s, 68s, 88s or 90s, which leaves 73s – GBRf still has several and they will no doubt appear on something during the year. The same applies to Class 92s; they can still be a charter train draw so expect some to be used from time to time at the request of promoters.

Senior management leave Vintage

There has been a major shake-up of the senior management at new Train Operating Company Vintage Trains Ltd after Managing Director Cath Bellamy, Chairman Adrian Shooter and Operations Manager Ian Lake all left in January. VTL has said Adrian Shooter has "retired from the business", and has strenuously denied speculation that suggested Ms Bellamy was "sacked after a strained relationship with Tyseley Loco Works". Denis Chick, press spokesman for VTL, said she left of her own accord and that both "were always only expecting to be with the company for a short initial setting up period".

In a statement, VTL said: "Adrian's significant experience of rail operations at senior executive level was fundamental in enabling VTL to be granted operating licences for both charter and non-passenger trains from the Office of Rail & Road, following the establishment of safe procedures, enabling express steam trains to run safely over Britain's main lines."

It added that Cath Bellamy "will also step down. Cath is a life-long railway professional and established the core structure of VTL, delivering its first year of activity, now underpinned by the recent award of a five-year safety certificate and a five-year track access contract."

Mr Chick told *RI* that: "Cath and Adrian came on board to bring their expertise to help us set up as a TOC. It was a cost to hire them, of course, and we always knew they would not be here forever. We never expected to have them [on the payroll] for any more than two years, but now was ➔

action, and I reckon other trip(s) could be in the offing later in the year. And there's every chance WCR could use one or two of its 33s on the 'Scarborough Spa Express' again this year.

It used to be that there was a Class 37 tour pretty much every weekend, but that's no longer the case, although the end of main line service train use, first in Cumbria and then in Anglia, plus the use on the Rhymney line drawing to a close, means it's inevitable the demand for 37s on charters will increase. The good news is DRS still has 16 in its fleet, including 37425 that has just remerged in Regional Railways colours after its light overhaul at Derby. The WCR and Colas fleets currently total eight operational examples each, while Europhoenix has six, LSL has three, and other spot hire companies have the odd one here and there. WCR's 'SSE' and 'Fellsman' trains often enjoy pairs of 37s for the legs that are not steam-hauled, plus they appear regularly on other charters with a mass of promoters. There may not be quite so many as in previous years, but 37 fans should never struggle to get a fix, especially in the summer.

It's a different story for Class 40 followers, with both main line examples, D213 *Andania* and 40145, currently out of traffic undergoing heavy repairs. When they will be back in traffic remains to be seen, but the first few trains back will be popular.

Class 47 fans never have especially lean periods so far as main line activity is concerned, as the locos work many WCR and Saphos Trains charters throughout the year. The GBRf and ROG examples are used less frequently, but there's every chance they, especially the GBRf trio, will see some use in 2020. Vintage Trains' 47773 also enjoys some runs on the non-steam legs of that promoter/TOC's trains. The pattern for Class 50s looks to be similar to last year, with several long distance days out every two or three months for the GBRf duo 50007 *Hercules* and 50049 *Defiance*. Whether 50044 *Exeter* joins them is an unknown. And could 50008 *Thunderer* also get an outing or two?

The big event for 2020 could, and I stress could, be the welcome return of D1015 *Western Champion*. But don't get your hopes up too high just yet, because

BELOW RIGHT:
Earlier in the DRS Class 20 Farewell tour Class 57/0s 57002 and 57003 pass Clay Cross on January 18 with the opening leg from Bristol Temple Meads to York, where the 20s took over. (Robert Falconer)

Steam Charter Train Diary									
Date	Route	Promoter	Operator	Traction	Promoters				
March					BLS	Branch Line Society	07785 112044	www.branchline.uk	
7	Ealing Broadway-York	RTC	WCR	60009/ 46233	NT	Nenta Traintours	01692 406152	www.nentatraintrains.co.uk	
7	Crewe-York	ST	LSL	70000	PF	Pathfinder Tours	01453 835414	www.pathfindertours.co.uk	
11	Carnforth-Shrewsbury	WCR	WCR	WCR pool	RR	Retro Railtours	0161 3309055	www.retrorailtours.co.uk	
12	Clapham Jct-Bath	SD	WCR	61306	RTC	Railway Touring Company	01553 661500	www.railwaytouring.net	
14	Carlisle-Carnforth	RTC	WCR	WCR pool	SD	Steam Dreams	01483 209888	www.steamdreams.co.uk	
21	Euston-Chester	RTC	WCR	6233	SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society	01698 263814	www.srps.org.uk	
21	York-Edinburgh	RTC	WCR	60163	SR	Statesman Rail	0345 3102458	www.statesmanrail.com	
22	Liverpool-Hellifield	ST	LSL	LSL pool	UKR	UK Railtours	01438 715050	www.ukrailtours.com	
22	Victoria-Fareham	SD	WCR	61306	VT	Vintage Trains	0121 7084960	www.vintagetrains.co.uk	
27	Victoria-Shalford	BEL	DBC	35028	WCR	West Coast Railways	0333 9966720	www.westcoastrailways.co.uk	
28	Carnforth-Redmire	RTC	WCR	WCR pool	Operators/stock providers				
28	Carnforth-Carlisle	RTC	WCR	WCR pool	DBC	DB Cargo			
April					DRS	Direct Rail Services			
1	Hellifield-Carlisle	WCR	WCR	WCR pool	GBRf	GB Railfreight			
4	York-Carlisle	A1	DBC	60163	LSL	Locomotive Services Limited			
4	Carnforth-Carlisle	WCR	WCR	WCR pool	ROG	Rail Operations Group			
4	Carnforth-Blackpool	RTC	WCR	WCR pool	VT	Vintage Trains			
					WCR	West Coast Railways			

Modern Traction Diary					
Date	Route	Promoter	Operator	Traction	
March					
7	Swindon-Manchester	PF	DBC	66x2	
7	Lancaster-Paddington+	BLS	WCR	33	
8	Waterloo-Crediton	BL	WCR	33x2	
9	Paddington-Lancaster+	BLS	WCR	33	
13	Carnforth-Doncaster+	BLS	WCR	47, 56	
14	Doncaster-Drax	BLS	WCR	47, 56, 70/8	
14	Cleethorpes-Liverpool	WCR	WCR	47/57	
15	Doncaster-Carnforth+	BLS	WCR	47, 56	
21	Peterborough-Worcester	UKR	DBC	67	
21	Eastleigh-Crewe	PF	DRS	37x2, 57x2, 66, 68, 88	
28	Paddington-Aberthaw	UKR	DBC	66x2	
April					
3	King's Cross-Dumbarton	UKR	DBC	66, 90	
4	Dumbarton-Oban	UKR	DBC	66	
4	Hull-Carlisle	WCR	WCR	47/57	
5	Dumbarton-Stonhaven	UKR	DBC	66	
6	Dumbarton-King's Cross	UKR	DBC	66, 90	
7	Doncaster-Winchester	WCR	WCR	47/57	
8	Scarborough-Stratford-upon-Avon	WCR	WCR	47/57	
10	Eastleigh-Fort William	PF	DRS	37x2	
11	Fort William-Mallaig	PF	DRS	37x2	
12	Fort William-Oban	PF	DRS	37x2	
13	Fort William-Eastleigh	PF	DRS	37x2	
18	Birmingham NS-Stranraer	PF	GBRf	50007/049	
22	Carnforth-Stratford-upon-Avon	WCR	WCR	47/57	
25	Derby-Dungeness	UKR	DBC	66x2	
28	York-Carlisle*	WCR	WCR	tba	
* Diesel-hauled leg of a steam charter					
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the right time to take the cost out [of hiring them].”

Michael Whitehouse, Chairman of the Vintage Trains Community Benefit Society, has assumed the position of Chairman of VTL. David Keay assumes board responsibility for safety & operations. Alastair Meanley becomes General Manager of both VTL and its sister business, Tyseley Locomotive Works, and Ian Bertram takes up a consultancy appointment as safety consultant, replacing Ian Lake who is taking up alternative employment in Eire where he now lives. Michael Gilbert remains the board member responsible for finance and Robin Coombes is company secretary.

Of the departing staff Michael Whitehouse said: “They are leaving with our good wishes as they pursue their interests elsewhere. We would like to place on record our sincere gratitude for their work. We will now take Vintage Trains into the next phase of its development. We strongly believe in steam running on the main line and intend to build on the

legacy with community engagement and local partnerships.”

Mr Chick said it was hoped the VTL would run at least the same number of trains in 2020 as it did in 2019, including the ‘Shakespeare Express’ and ‘Polar Express’ and that it will still “potentially carry on with ad hoc work”, such as providing drivers and route conductors. He added the company was “reshaping” and that more details on this will be announced very soon.

New train from UKR

UK Railtours has added the ‘Derbyshire Rose’ day excursion to its programme for June 13. The train will start at King’s Cross and run via Peterborough before heading west towards the East Midlands and an ultimate destination of Chesterfield. There will be a number of off-train options including visits to the National Tramway Museum at Crich, Chatsworth House and Gardens, the Royal Horticultural Society’s Chatsworth Flower Show, or just having an extended break in Chesterfield. **RI**

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hauling a rake of coal hoppers around Kent; BR blue 20096 & 20107 working DCR's Basford Hall-Longport spoil; Colas Rail's 37057 hauling a rail train from Kerton to Crewe; Freightliner's 70015 on hire to Colas working the Dalston tanks; 67021 & 67024 delivering a rake of new GBRf wagons to Wembley; 66711 on an engineers train on the Exmouth branch; 66199 hauling the very last train out of the closed Cottam Power Station; 50008 Thunderer working its first railtour in nearly 30 years; LSL's 47593 rescuing GBRf's 47739; ROG locos hauling redundant Class 313 and 315 units to the scrapyard; 57305 towing a defective CrossCountry Voyager DMU; 31128 ventures to Eastleigh...and extensive coverage of LNER's spectacular four-day farewell to the Inter-City 125 High Speed Train featuring a complete retro-liveried set!

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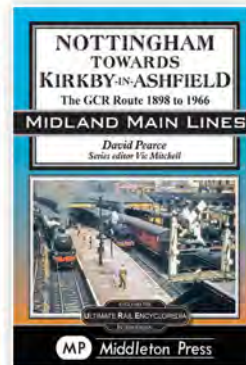
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January 21

37401+90008 0Z90 1000 Crewe Electric-Norwich Crown Point.
47593 0Z86 0840 Fort William-Mallaig, 0Z87 1134 return, route learner.
68002 tnt 68017 6L68 0301 Willesden Brent-Southminster, 6M75 2344 Southminster-Crewe Coal Sidings.
73202 0Z73 1110 St Leonards-Stewarts Lane via Haywards Heath.
97303 6K38 1005 Basford Hall-Longport with JNA/MLA ballast wagons.

January 22

47593 0Z88 0910 Fort William-Crewe Holding Sidings.
68001 6D95 1441 Bescot-Toton.
88006+68034 6M23 1217 Hunterston-Sellafield.

January 23

37518+37685 0Z37 1200 Carnforth-Joppa Straight, 37518 solo 0Z38 1630 Joppa Straight-Inverness.
68007+37419+37403+66427 0S69 0744 Kingmoor-Motherwell.

January 24

37402 5Z37 1005 Norwich Crown Point-Neville Hill with three Greater Anglia Mk 3s for maintenance, 5L38 1522 return with two Mk 3s.
68009 6D95 1441 Bescot-Toton.
73970 0Z73 2045 Brush Loughborough-Doncaster Decoy.

January 25

37419 tnt 37259 1Q77 1334 Mossend-Inverness PLPR infrastructure monitoring train via Cumbernauld, Aviemore, Elgin, Aberdeen, Elgin.
37518 0Z39 0930 Inverness-Georgemas Junction, 6U35 1745 Georgemas Junction-Inverness with a tamper.
67002 tnt 67013 1Z72 0810 Euston-York 'The Robert Burns', 1Z74 1630 return.
73970 0Z73 0610 Doncaster Decoy-Craighentenny.

January 26

37259 tnt 37419 1Q78 1312 Inverness-Inverness PLPR infrastructure monitoring train via Kyle of Lochalsh.

January 27

66847 tnt 66849 6C40 1824 Westbury-Gunnislake.
70008 6V04 0806 Grain-Colnbrook, Class 70s now seeing increased use on the aviation fuel tanks.

January 28

31128+86259 0Z31 1120 Burton Wetmore-Lichfield Trent Valley CE Sidings, 0Z32 1329 Lichfield Trent Valley CE Sidings-Rugby Carriage Sidings, 31128 0Z34 1439 Rugby Carriage Sidings-Burton Wetmore.
37518 0Z37 0930 Rutherglen CE Sidings-Joppa Straight.
66721+73966 1S25 0419 Edinburgh-Inverness.
66849 tnt 66847 6C40 0400 Gunnislake-Westbury.
70008 6O04 2202 Colnbrook-Grain.

January 29

47739+47727+47749 0Z47 0922 Leicester LIP-Doncaster Decoy, 0Z48 1247 return.
47813 5M59 1230 Toton-Leicester LIP with translators 6378 and 6379.
57301 5L46 0730 Leicester LIP-Ely Papworth with HST barrier 6338.
60046 6Z49 0655 Carlisle Yard-Willesden DCR Sidings with YIA HOBC wagons 85 9352 057-5 and 85 9352 058-3.
88004+68003 6M23 1217 Hunterston-Sellafield.



January 30

37116 3Z01 1003 Derby RTC-Westbury ultrasonic test train via Cheltenham and Bristol.
37401+37402 7Z81 1009 Norwich Carriage Sidings-Norwich Carriage Sidings via Lowestoft, snowplough test run.
37510 tnt 47813 5E68 1412 Leicester LIP-Barrow Hill with translators, 5M59 1625 return – test run for 37510 following overhaul.
56090 6X40 0504 Kilwinning Up Goods Loop-Millerhill, Railvac.
56105 6S31 0512 Doncaster Decoy-Millerhill.
57301+43320 5E17 1334 Ely Papworth-Neville Hill.
73967 0Z72 1000 Brush Loughborough-Doncaster Decoy, 0Z73 2145 Doncaster Decoy-Craighentenny.

January 31

37401 6Z59 1000 Stowmarket Down Goods Loop-Plasser, West Ealing with ballast regulator DR77905.
47802+33209 0M51 0948 Carnforth-Carnforth via Hellifield.

February 1

47805 tnt 47810 1Z22 0717 Leicester-Holyhead, Black 5 45231 tnt 47810 from Crewe, points failure at Valley meant 45231 could not be turned, resulting in 47810 working 1Z23 1550 Holyhead-Leicester back to Crewe solo where 47805 was added to the rear. 45231 and its support coach returned to Crewe tender first during the same day.
57312 0E53 0715 Leicester LIP-Bounds Green, 57312+91128+91122 5Q59 1129 Bounds Green-Leicester LIP via Oakham, 57312+91128+57301 5Q60 1539 Leicester LIP-Leicester LIP via Loughborough & Melton Mowbray Up Loop,

turning move for 91128.

68012+37401 0K69 0935 Wembley LMD-Gresty Bridge, 37401 added at Willesden Brent.
73967+73968 1A25 0439 Edinburgh-Aberdeen, double-headed as test run for 73967.
92020 1M16 2045 (Fri) Inverness-Euston, failed at Lamington around 0230, eventually rescued by 92023, Abington 0827, 364 minutes late, and reached Euston at 1422, a whopping 395 minutes late.

February 2

67021 tnt 67024 1Z32 1002 Victoria-Ashford British Pullman, 1201 Ashford-Victoria, 1502 Victoria-Ashford, 1701 Ashford-Victoria.
92043 3Z15 0945 Polmadie-Wembley Depot with eight Mk 5s.

February 3

60028 6Z20 1546 Chaddesden-Carlisle Kingmoor Virtual Quarry, first day in traffic after overhaul.
66787 Eastleigh Works-Eastleigh Yard with Class 117 cars 51392, 51388, 59486, 51356, vehicles then by road to Swanage.
92028+92014 1M11 2315 (Sun) Glasgow Central-Euston, lost 219 minutes at Carstairs after the 1C11 2315 Edinburgh to Carstairs portion of the Loeland sleeper failed at Haymarket. It eventually arrived at Euston at 1149, 287 late.

February 4

56078+50050 0Z78 1353 Nottingham Eastcroft-Nottingham Eastcroft via Allington Junction.
60028 6Z60 2210 Carlisle Kingmoor Virtual Quarry-Willesden DCR Sidings.
70807 6C40 0410 Penzance-Westbury, 6C41 1623 Westbury-Lostwithiel via Penzance.



A colourful sight at Burton-upon-Trent on January 24 as two GBRf Class 66s, 66783 *The Flying Dustman* and 66770 lead DB Cargo's 66090 *Maritime Intermodal Six* on a Bescot to Toton engineer's move. (Nick Green)

February 5

37116 3Q40 2110 Mossend-Inverness ultrasonic test train via Aviemore.
37401 0Z37 0910 Gresty Bridge-Norwich Crown Point.
43187+43122 0E23 0855 Laira-Wabtec, Doncaster.
60028 6Z61 1806 Willesden DCR Sidings-Carlisle Kingmoor Virtual Quarry.
68002+68017+68003+88004 6K74 1649 Sellafeld-Crewe Coal Sidings.
70005 6X50 1513 Toton-Crewe Basford Hall, Railvac.

February 6

47813 1Z99 Leicester LIP-Luton to rescue a disabled Class 700 after OHL issue, Harrowden Junction 1118. Not required in the end after repairs made and it returned to Leicester as 0Z47 in mid-afternoon.
57305 5086 0821 Castle Donnington EMDC-Eastleigh Works with Arlington translators.
60028 6Z28 2147 Carlisle Kingmoor Virtual Quarry-Willesden DCR Sidings.
60046 0Z60 1426 Willesden DCR Sidings-Bristol Barton Hill.
68003+88004 6V73 0433 Crewe Coal Sidings-Berkeley, 1628 return.

February 7

60028 6Z61 1924 Willesden DCR Sidings-Chaddesden via Lincoln.

February 8

33207 0Z33 1255 Southall-Rugby.
37685 0Z37 1205 Larbert Junction-Inverness.
47854+37668+37516+37706+47245 0Z47 1400 Carnforth-Carlisle, 47854+37668 0Z48 1630

Carlisle-Mossend, all seven West Coast locos deployed for storm standby/route proving.

February 10

43156+43162 0E23 0943 Laira-Wabtec, Doncaster, for Castle traction interlock mods and repaint.
47749+47727 0Z20 0835 Leicester LIP-Old Oak Common, 0Z21 1528 return.

February 11

67028 with 91113 on rear 5A20 1208 Doncaster-Bounds Green.
66736 6S45 0625 North Blyth-Fort William Alcan came to a stand near Corrour, 73966 taken off cancelled 1B01 at Fort William to assist, it needing Network Rail ground staff assistance to get through snowdrift at Corrour, 73 eventually took seven PCAs to Bridge of Orchy, 66 and 17 PCAs recessed at Rannoch.

February 12

37219 3Q53 2009 Bristol High Level Siding-Exeter Riverside ultrasonic/structure gauging test train via Portbury and Paignton.
37401 0Z01 0935 Norwich Crown Point-Neville Hill, 5L38 1512 Neville Hill-Norwich Crown Point with three Greater Anglia Mk 3s off maintenance.
37521+37667 0Z41 0917 Crewe Holding Sidings-Chester, 0Z42 1110 Chester-Crewe Holding Sidings, 0Z43 1301 Crewe Holding Sidings-Chester, 0Z44 1140 Chester-Crewe Holding Sidings – test runs for 37521.
37668+66736 6S45 1430 Rannoch-Fort William Alcan.
47813 5L47 1436 Leicester LIP-Ely Papworth with two barrier coaches.
47830 4Z47 1037 Basford Hall-Northampton Up

Reception, 4Z48 1339 return, training runs with empty intermodal flats.
67021 tnt 67024 1V80 0946 Victoria-Bath British Pullman, 1092 1555 return.
97303 6J89 1422 Shrewsbury Coleham-Welshpool with tamper DR73907.

February 13

37219 3Q63 2251 Exeter Riverside-Exeter Riverside ultrasonic/structure gauging test train via Barnstaple and Exmouth.
37521 0Z37 0900 Crewe Holding Sidings-Kidderminster SVR, 37521+37688 0Z38 1337 Kidderminster SVR-Crewe.
47830 4Z47 1037 Basford Hall-Northampton Up Reception, 4Z48 1339 return, training runs with empty intermodal flats.
60028 6Z60 0840 Rossington Loading Point-Roxby Gullet, 6Z61 1540 Roxby Gullet-Willesden.
66713 0S45 1713 Millerhill-Bridge of Orchy, 6S45 2200 Bridge of Orchy-Fort William Alcan.
70805 6X20 1015 Westbury-St Blazey, Railvac and ballast wagons.

February 14

43088+43160 0E23 0855 Laira-Wabtec, Doncaster, for Castle traction interlock mods and repaint.
47813 5M59 0809 Ely Papworth-Leicester LIP with HST barriers.
57312 2Z01 1026 Tyseley Light Maintenance Depot-Round Oak via New Street, Smethwick Junction, Cradley Heath, Stourbridge Junction with inspection saloon 6320, 2Z02 1324 return via Stourbridge Junction, Smethwick Junction, Snow Hill.
57314 tnt 57601 1Z11 1242 Chesterfield-Grantham Northern Belle via Derby and Nottingham, 1Z12 1453 Grantham-Nottingham via Newark, Saxilby, Shireoaks, Sheffield, Derby.
60055 6Z23 1511 Leicester Humberstone Road-Chaddesden.
86401 0M43 1115 Wembley-Carnforth, transfer to West Coast Railways ownership.
97303 6J89 0812 Welshpool-Port Talbot Up Sidings via Hereford with tamper DR73907.

February 15

56049 tnt 56113 6K35 2220 Millerhill-Glasgow Queen Street Low Level, long welded rail train.
56090 6C82 0721 Doncaster Up Decoy-Whitby, autoballasters.
57314 tnt 57601 1Z10 1206 Coventry-Chester Northern Belle via Birmingham International, Perry Barr, Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, Wrexham General, 1Z11 1441 Chester-Birmingham International via Crewe, Walsall, Water Orton, Nuneaton, Coventry.

February 16

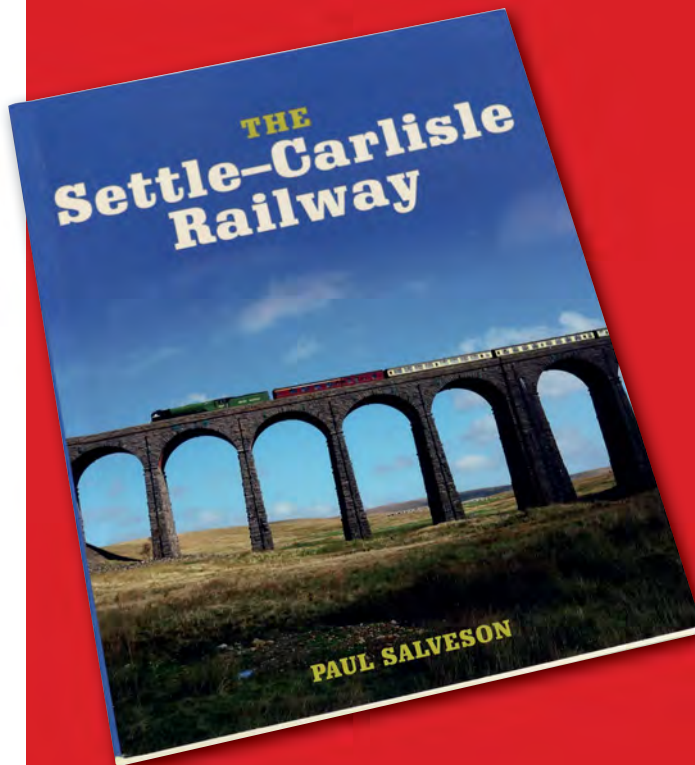
56113 tnt 56049 6K35 0735 Drumry-Millerhill via Falkirk High.
57314 tnt 57601 1Z30 1143 Crewe-Denton Northern Belle via Chester, Helsby, Warrington Bank Quay, Eccles, Manchester Victoria (37516 added to rear after issues with 57601), Huddersfield, Stalybridge, 1Z31 1515 Denton-Manchester Victoria via Stockport, Crewe, Chester, Helsby, Warrington Bank Quay, Eccles.

February 17

37401 5Z55 0935 Norwich Crown Point-Neville Hill with two Greater Anglia Mk 3s for maintenance, 0Z55 1521 return.
70805 6C21 1230 Truro-Westbury, sleeper delivery train.
86604+86639+86605+86614 4L89 0718 Basford Hall-Felixstowe North, train carrying just one container.

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

The Settle-Carlisle Railway



AUTHOR: Paul Salvesson
PUBLISHER: Crowood Press
ISBN: 978 1 787500 637 1
PRICE: £24.00
WEB: www.crowood.com

IN TERMS of spectacular railways the Settle to Carlisle route ranks as one of the best in the world. The superb scenery alone makes a trip along it worthwhile. For railwaymen it has always been a testing piece of permanent way, especially for drivers and firemen in the days of steam but also for diesel drivers, notably in snowy conditions when it was possible to be completely snowed in.

However, the story behind the line is equally fascinating as it has always fostered controversy. The reality is that probably it should never have been built. Its existence only arose due to a political dispute between two of the largest and most powerful railway companies in the 1860s. Building it through wild and inhospitable terrain was a monumental task and many

tragic accidents befell those who built, worked and travelled the line. It survived the Beeching cuts of the 1960s and once again survived a closure threat in the 1980s. Today it is still a vital route and has a brighter future; thanks to considerable investment in its complex infrastructure, notably the Ribbleshead Viaduct.

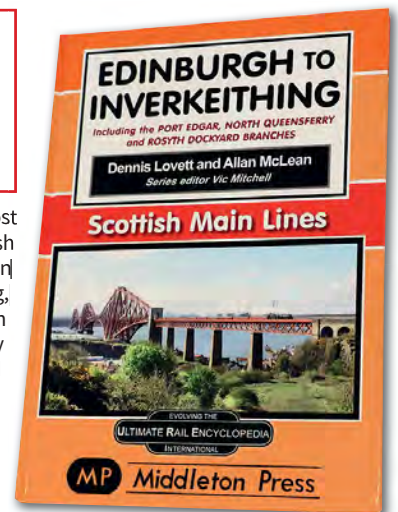
The book's author offers a unique perspective. He's believed to be the first person to write about the line who actually worked on it. He was a Blackburn Guard during the 1970s and regularly worked freights along the route. He has done a simply superb job of recounting the line's history and the trains that ran along it, paying tribute to those who lost their lives building it and in subsequent accidents and, of course, to the many campaigners who fought to keep the line open during the 1980s. The work is superbly illustrated with wide range of photos and is a most enthralling read – highly recommended. (MN)

Scottish Main Lines – Edinburgh to Inverkeithing

AUTHORS: Dennis Lovett and Allan McLean
PUBLISHER: Middleton Press
ISBN: 978 1 910356 42 5
PRICE: £18.95
WEB: www.middletonpress.co.uk

THIS BOOK covers one of the most important parts of the Scottish rail network, the routes between Edinburgh and Inverkeithing, either by today's route between Saughton Junction and Dalmeny or by the original line via Ratho and Kirkliston. The work also examines the Port Edgar, North Queensferry and Rosyth Dockyard branches.

The journey begins at Edinburgh Waverley and includes some simply fantastic period images of the vast station through the decades. Heading west through Princes Street Gardens to Haymarket and its famous depot, the next significant point is Saughton Junction, where the two routes diverge. The first route covered is the one via Ratho, much of which is now the main line between Edinburgh and Glasgow. At Ratho the old line diverged to the north for Kirkliston and eventually Dalmeny, but was finally closed to freight traffic in the 1960s.



After examining the route and the lines to Port Edgar, North Queensferry and Rosyth Dockyard, the book turns its attention to the direct road from Saughton Junction to Dalmeny. There is also a chapter about the Forth Bridge, which adds to the flavour and mass of information provided. Along with the superb photos, maps, track diagrams and the like, the book is an excellent reference to this fascinating part of Scotland's railways. (MN)

Kidderminster Diesel Depot

AUTHOR: Jonathan Webb
PUBLISHER: Chime Whistle Publishing
ISBN: 978 1 9161716 1 9
PRICE: £28.00
WEB: www.chimewhistle.co.uk

PHOTOJOURNALIST

JONATHAN Webb worked with the Severn Valley Railway for three years documenting the wide variety of work carried out at the railway's Kidderminster Diesel Depot and the volunteers working there. The splendid access he was afforded allowed him to gather some remarkable behind-the-scenes images as the various volunteers laboured to repair and restore the many diesels based at the railway. Everything from fitness-to-run exams to full restorations, such as the amazing job done on Class 50 50033 *Glorious*, are among the many subjects included.

Before the depot was built in 2016 work on diesels had to be performed in the open air, whatever the weather. As a result of its opening, the depot has enabled much faster progress to be made on several



projects, as well as providing vastly improved working conditions. The facility has earned the nickname 'the Old Oak Common of preservation', which is not surprising as it does resemble the interior of that once proud loco facility and, of course, many of the locos it looks after are former WR types.

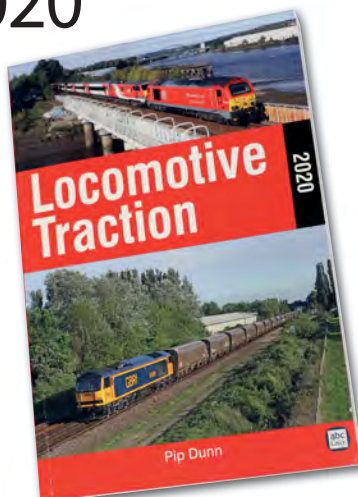
The book is an A4, hardback book, with 300 pages and approximately 300 colour photographs. These are not just of the building and locos but include dozens showing the volunteers hard at work as they go about maintaining and restoring these fine beasts. A donation to the depot is being made for every copy sold – and I highly recommend you purchase a copy. (MN)

Locomotive Traction 2020

AUTHOR: Pip Dunn
PUBLISHER: Crécy Publishing
ISBN: 978 1 91080 963 1
PRICE: £6.95
WEB: www.crecy.co.uk

THIS IS the third edition of this book, which first appeared in 2018 and is designed to present every diesel and electric loco that has run on Britain's rail network. It is updated to October 2019 to include the many changes to the UK loco fleet during the past 12 months. It retains an easy-to-understand format, with entries arranged by class rather than operator in four main sections – main line, spot hire/exported, preserved and disposed of. Because locos often change ownership, this approach prevents confusion when looking for something that might still be entered under its former operator/owner.

Each main line class is accompanied by an introductory specification table, followed by the class and sub classes in numerical order. TOPS and original numbers (where applicable) are shown, along with pool codes, owner,



livery, allocated depot and names. A comprehensive section at the back of the book lists all disposed of diesel and electric locos to have run in the UK, and not surprisingly it's quite large. Explanations of the various pool codes, owners and depots are also listed.

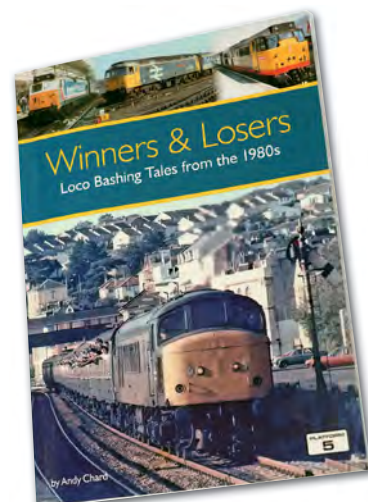
The simple-to-read layout makes the book one of the easiest publications of its type to understand and navigate. It is highly suited to enthusiasts young and old, and is easily recommended. (MN)

Winners & Losers

AUTHOR: Andy Chard
PUBLISHER: Platform 5
ISBN: 978 1 909431 75 1
PRICE: £17.95
WEB: www.platform5.com

I OFTEN remember the first time I saw a train full of 'bashers'. It was the early 1980s at Birmingham New Street as a pair of Class 25s ran in with a summer seaside service – with people 'bellowing' everywhere. In modern terminology I imagine my reaction would have been WT... However, while I didn't take up the hobby as seriously as others, I could certainly enjoy the thrill of some rare haulage.

We published a preview of this book, written by the author, in the December 2019 issue, but the work certainly warrants a full review. Arguably the most vital features covered in the book are the introduction, which explains the rationale of bashing in fully understandable terms, and the excellent appendices explaining the terminology, loco nicknames and much more. The term 'normals', used to refer to regular passengers, is almost an admission that by definition bashers aren't normal –



I'll leave the reader to make up their own mind on that one!

Joking apart, the author has done a splendid job of explaining bashing, and the various chapters illustrate many of his personal experiences, including the winning and losing, when you either made a gain by riding behind a required loco, or a loss when you missed a haulage that you needed. Very well written and extremely informative, this is a book that amuses and educates; definitely one for the bookshelf. (MN)

Sixties Diesel & Electric Days remembered VI

AUTHOR: Kevin Derrick
PUBLISHER: Strathwood
ISBN: 978 1 913390 02 0
PRICE: £34.95
WEB: www.strathwood.co.uk

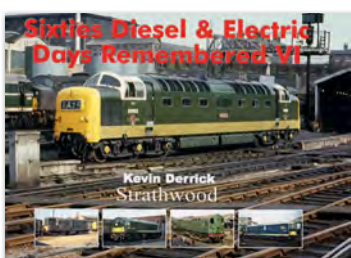
THIS IS the sixth volume in this series looking back at diesel and electric locos in the 1960s and it follows the same format as the previous five volumes – 160 pages, all in colour, with landscape images of a mix of loco and multiple unit classes. There are eight main chapters in this edition, the first concentrating on the short-lived Class 28 Co-Bo Type 2s. Here Strathwood has done well to get some images that have not been published before, although, understandably, some have.

The popular and long-closed Woodhead route also gets its own chapter, and again there are some impressive, previously unpublished, images. The photos of 26030 at Torside in 1960 and 26016 at Dunford Bridge in 1967 are especially tasty.

There are sections on BR blue; (which only came into prominence at the end of the decade), under

the wires, the Western Region that contains an absolute peach of a shot of Class 22 D6348 at Boscarne Junction, brand new locos/units, the North Eastern Region, and the Southern Region, with a rare shot of a Class 27 at Feltham.

Overall there is plenty of new material here for readers to enjoy. Each image is supported by a brief caption although sadly, as is always the case with Strathwood books, these are a missed opportunity as they could be so much better and more informative. Nevertheless this series, and the associated Seventies Days volume, is building up into an impressive collection. While they are a little pricey at just under £35 each, when all's said and done the product is pretty good. (PD)

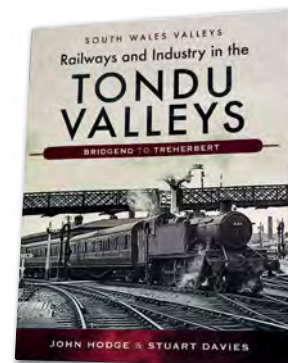


Railways and Industry in the Tondy Valleys – Bridgend to Treherbert

AUTHOR: John Hodge, Stuart Davies
PUBLISHER: Pen & Sword
ISBN: 978 1 526727 25 1
PRICE: £30.00
WEB: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

THROUGH THE book's chapters the authors tell the story of a fascinating network of lines in the south Wales valleys. The scene is set with a history of the industrial development of the Tondy Valleys, including the succession of great industrialists who led the way in the area. Next up is a chapter on the position of the Tondy Valleys in the South Wales Coalfield, accompanied by colliery and colliery company details. Passenger services are covered in Chapter 4, followed by the ever present coal traffic in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 details the only steam depot in the Tondy Valley area, which was responsible for all the required traction. Next under the spotlight is the Llynfi Valley, following the line from Bridgend through Tondy and on to Cymmer Afan and the original



terminus at Abergwynfi, before continuing from Blaengwynfi through the Rhondda Tunnel to Treherbert. Although passenger services ceased in 1970, a renaissance later took place with the introduction of trains between Maesteg and Cardiff in 1992.

There is a wealth of information both in the text and in the appendices at the rear, including loco allocation details. This, along with some quite stunning black and white photographs of a long lost era, make this work one of the best ever produced on railways and mining in South Wales. (MN)



ANDREW WATTS
NEWS WRITER

GW RAILWAYANA Auctions will hold its next auction event at Pershore High School, Station Road, Pershore, Worcs, WR10 2BX on March 14. Please note the start time of the auction has been brought forward to 0945. Alongside some impressive steam name plates is one from Class 52 *Western Chieftain*, something of a rarity.

Steam nameplates: *Saint Stephen* (2929), *Dartmouth Castle* (4088), *Rood Ashton Hall* (4965), *Burmington Grange* (6829), *Holker Hall* (6911), *West Country Class-Barnstaple with badge and scroll* (34005), *Merchant Navy Class-Nederland Line* (35014) and *Nelson* (45664).

Steam nameplate badges: *Battle of Britain Class-Lord Beaverbrook* (34054) and *Battle of Britain Class-46 Squadron* (34074).

GWR cabside number plates (brass unless stated): GWR 35 (CI), GWR 224 (CI), GWR 349 (CI), GWR 1205 (CI), GWR 3015, 3404, 4008, 4076, 4088 (*Dartmouth Castle*), 5193 (CI), 5666 (CI), 5673 (CI), 6017, 6136 (CI), 6360 (CI), 6911 and 9793 (CI).

Diesel and electric nameplates: *Warship Class-Cockade* (D810), *Strathclyde* (47818), *Western Chieftain* with number plate (D1057), *Ratcliffe Power Station* (58041) and *Super-Voyager-Leif Erikson* (221139).

Electric cabside number plates: E3103 and E3173.

Diesel works plates: Built Swindon 1960 (03xxx), Drewry RSH No 2680 1960 (D2299), Built Darlington 1956 (08173), Built Crewe 1958 (08476), Built Horwich 1958 (08484 *Captain Nathaniel Darell*), Built Crewe 1960

Future Events



Class 52 1057 *Western Chieftain* approaches Newton Abbot with clay tanks bound for St. Blazey on March 14, 1972. One of the locos nameplates is up for auction on March 14. (Rail Photoprints)

(08719), BTH Rugby No 1134 1959 (D8236), Beyer Peacock Gorton No 8017 1964 (D8600), English Electric RSH No 2962/8214 1961 (20056), NBL GEC No 27848 1959 (D6118), English Electric Vulcan No 3034/D696 1962 (37042), English Electric Vulcan No 2784/D499 1960 (40062), English Electric Vulcan No 3088/D638 1961 (40142), Brush Sulzer No 512 1964 (47148), BREL Doncaster 1982 (561xx) and BREL Crewe 1984 (56130 *Wardley Opencast*).

Diesel and Electric emblems: BR large double arrow (37xxx), Intercity swallow left hand facing (43xxx), Lion over wheel (85xxx), E3 and double arrow (85xxx) mounted together, Intercity swallow right hand facing (91011 *Terence Cuneo*), Intercity swallow left hand facing (91025 *BBC Radio 1 FM*) and BR large double arrow (92xxx).

Headboard: Royal Scot.

LMS Hawkseyes: Melton Mowbray and Tilton.

SR Targets: Kew Bridge, Kew Gardens and Lewes.

Totems:

BR (E) Blue: Derby Road and Diss.
BR (M) Maroon: Barnt Green, Bury Bolton Street, Market Harborough, Northampton Castle, Radlett, St. Albans City and Willesden Junction.

BR (S) Green: Albany Park, Balcombe, Blackheath, Charing Cross, Erith, Ewell East, Falconwood, Grove Park, Lewisham, Sittingbourne & Milton Regis, Shoreham, Sidcup and Westcombe Park and West Croydon.

BR (Sc) Light Blue: Croy, Dalmeny, Fort William and Rothes.

BR (W) Chocolate & Cream: Hagley, Handsworth & Smethwick, Lapworth, Newton Abbot, Pontypridd, Ruabon, Tilehurst and Treforest.

Great Gable

THE NEXT Great Northern Railwayana Auction will take place on March 28 at Poynton Leisure Centre, Yew Tree Lane, Poynton, SK12 1PU. Notable is a name plate from Class 60 60006 *Great Gable* – the first of its class to be scrapped in January of this year.

Steam nameplates: *Albert Hall* (4983), *Keppel* (45673) and *Renown* (45713),

GWR cabside number plate: 6973.

Diesel and Electric nameplates: *Skiddaw* (60005), *Great Gable* (60006), *Ben Nevis* (60029), and *Sir Richard Arkwright* (87026).

Diesel works plates: Brush Electrical Machines No 913 1989 (60011 *Cader Idris*), Brush Electrical Machines No 946 1990 (60044 *Ailsa Craig*) and Brush Traction No 980 1991 (60078 *Stac Pollaidh*).

Diesel and Electric emblems: BR large double arrow and Intercity swallow right hand facing.

SR Targets: Bickley, Blackfriars, Tulse Hill and Vauxhall.

Totems:

BR (M) Maroon: Bramhall.

BR (S) Green: Hackbridge and Three Bridges

Jubilee Bahamas nameplate expected to star

GREAT CENTRAL Auctions will hold its next auction on March 7 at The Royal Showground, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2LZ. Expected to attract particular attention is the original nameplate from LMS Jubilee 45596 *Bahamas*, which is of course now main line certified and running with replica plates.

Steam nameplates: *City of Winchester* (3441/3718), *Chirk Castle* (5025), *North Aston Hall* (7917), *Battle of Britain Class-Anti Aircraft Command*, with badge (34049), *Bahamas* (45596), *Caernarvon* (45515), *Armada* (45679) and *Clan Mackintosh* (72007).

Steam Nameplate scroll: West Country Class.

GWR cabside number plates (Brass unless stated): 4264, 5960 (*Saint Edmund Hall*), 6374 (CI), 6627 (CI), 6663, 6835 (*Eastham Grange*), 6969 (*Wraysbury Hall*), 7317 (CI), 8105 (CI), 8489, 9610 (CI), 9707 (CI) and 9753 (CI).

Diesel and Electric nameplates: *Sir William Arrol* (37210/693), *The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)* (45049), *Kent Youth Music* (73136), *Sir Henry Johnson* (86227), *Cheriton* (319008), *The Surrey Hills* (319013/001) and *London* (319215).

Diesel number plate: 31430 cabside number plate and matching *Sister Dora* plate.

Diesel works plate: English Electric Vulcan No 3072/D622 1960 (40126).

Diesel depot plaques: Thornaby-Kingfisher (37521) and Tinsley-Yorkshire Rose (47307).

Headboard: C.T.A.C. Scottish Tours Express.

LMS Hawkseyes: Low Gill and Prees.

SR Targets: Exeter Central, Faversham, Fleet, Plymstock, Robertsbridge and Tisbury.

Totems:

BR (E) Blue: Kilnhurst West, Shepreth and Welwyn North.

BR (M) Maroon: Alderley Edge,

Barrow on Soar, Blythe Bridge, Edge Hill, Hawarden Bridge, Kibworth, Meir, Sileby, Stone and Uttoxeter.

BR (NE) Tangerine: Cross Gates and Harrogate.

BR (S) Green: Blackwater, Bournemouth West, Kenley, Littlehampton, Margate, Okehampton, Petts Wood and Plumstead.

BR (Sc) Light Blue: Abbeyhill, Cleghorn, Dalbeattie, Dalmally, Dingwall, Eskbank and Dalkeith, Garelochhead, Greenock West, Kinross Junction, Maryhill Central, Nairn and Stow.

BR (W) Chocolate & Cream: Bedminster, Blackwell, Bromsgrove, Exeter St. David's, Trowbridge and West Ealing.

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Great Malvern to Gloucester

Stephen Roberts enjoys a jaunt between Great Malvern and Gloucester via Worcester, examining the history of the stations along the route.

GWR Class 158 158952 stands at Great Malvern's Platform 1 prior to forming the 1048 to Brighton on October 4, 2019. (All photos author)

In true Portillo-esque fashion, I'll be lumping a couple of routes together in this trip. Firstly, a section of the Cotswold Line (or more accurately the Cotswold & Malvern Line), between Worcester and Malvern, and then the section that takes you from Gloucester to Worcester as a part of what was the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway. Worcester is the city of my birth and in this article forms the hub of the two sections, with its two existing stations soon to be augmented by the Worcestershire Parkway interchange.

A Bit of History

The Birmingham and Gloucester Railway dates back to 1840, although its earliest manifestation bypassed Worcester. When Worcester Shrub Hill station opened in October 1850 it became possible to run trains into the city off the Birmingham-Gloucester route. Shrub Hill, the largest of the city's two stations, also became a stop on the Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Railway, the antecedent of today's Cotswold Line, although it would start life as a terminus. The extension of this, on to Great Malvern, was not completed until 1860. The Worcester & Hereford Railway's part of this line, which was constructed last, opened as far as Malvern Link in July 1859. The W&H would later become part of the Great Western Railway.

Great Malvern

Railway stations can be romantic places where we meet, greet and say farewell, so beginning this description at Great Malvern, which has to be one of the most romantic of the area's stations, is apt. It is all very *Brief Encounter*, for anyone who has seen the movie, especially in the days when those assignments were partly obscured by the trademark emissions of a steam train. We may not have the steam at Great Malvern today, but we have everything else. Great Malvern is a stop on the Cotswolds and Malvern Line, albeit the former's Hills have been left far behind by then, as the picturesque rail journey between Oxford and Hereford approaches its conclusion. ➔





RIGHT: The entrance to Lady Foley's Tea Room and the romantic clock at Great Malvern.

The Grade II listed, local ragstone, romantic French-Gothic station, built in 1862, befits a place that was once a fashionable 'prim and proper' Victorian spa. This treasure replaced a temporary station of 1860, built when the mile from Malvern Link was completed in the May. As soon as you step onto the platform you feel as if you have been swept back in time to a more genteel age when top-hatted gents alighted from carriages and then held the gloved hand of a lady as she demurely stepped down in her finery. I must try that with 'Mrs Steve' sometime.

Thankfully, most of the original structure at Great Malvern remains, including ornate pillars with various horticultural capitals supporting extensive, deep, staggered canopies, held up by elaborate cast-iron girders. In the capitals we admire the work of Scottish-born sculptor William Forsyth (c1833-1915). The 'pièce de résistance' is 'Lady Foley's Tea Room', which opened in 1984 and commemorates the local lady who owned much of the land thereabouts and was therefore a crucial sponsor of the railway. The tea room was originally her private waiting room; mixing with the 'hoi polloi' clearly being a 'no-no' for her. She would probably be appalled to see her inferiors 'tucking in' these days, in what was once part of her personal fiefdom. As if having a private waiting room at Great Malvern wasn't enough, Lady Foley also had her own station at Stoke Edith (1861-1965), close to the family seat, which she used when travelling to Hereford. That station was handily on the other side of the Colwall Tunnel, which meant Lady Foley, who had a morbid dislike of tunnels, could avoid its length. Bless.

Looking from the southern end of Platform 1, in the Worcester direction, you can see the massive edifice of the former Imperial Hotel, now part of Malvern St James Girls' School. The bulk of the stationmaster's house 'Rowallan', which is now flats, is in front, plus a trio of bridges



over the railway. There is also a corrugated iron tunnel called the 'Worm', that allowed First Class patrons to alight on Platform 2 and head straight into the hotel without getting wet if it was raining. The Worm is also Grade II listed and is believed to be the only structure of its kind in the country. The Friends of Malvern Railway have been instrumental in improving the Worm and have also been busy doing gardening work at Malvern Link.

There used to be a branch running from here to Upton-upon-Severn, Tewkesbury and Ashchurch (closed 1951), so there was a bay platform along the eastern side of Platform 2, the site of which is now a car park. There was also a goods bay at the southern end of Platform 1. Finally, there was a turntable that allowed goods vans, for example; coal trucks, to be backed up from trains arriving at Platform 2 straight into the

basement of the Imperial, which had a large, yet discreet, wooden door for that purpose and, presumably, voracious boilers.

As I have discovered, the outside of the station, which is a downhill hike from the town centre, is a delight, too. It is a deliciously haphazard collection of gables and chimneys. It may be cars that are parked outside now, rather than horses and carriages, but this is not too detrimental. There are highly decorated, reinstated lighting columns around the 'cab road' that also serve to offset those intrusive motor vehicles. There is an interesting little trough on the main station entrance side, near Platform 1, tastefully planted today; but a reminder of Malvern's spa pretensions. The MSPCA (Malvern Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) drinking fountain, was a Malvern spring water spout and is well-dressed each year.

In the ticket office/waiting room there is a blue plaque recording that 150 years of continual operation at the station was achieved in May 2010, with the present station buildings that opened in 1862. The architect was Edmund Wallace Elmslie (1818-1889). There is another plaque, which offers a different opening date of 1863, but also handily confirms that the station was restored in 1987-88.

Of course, no visit to the station would be complete without frequenting Lady Foley's Tea Room. There you can enjoy the ambience of a refreshment room from an earlier era there are even pictures from *Brief Encounter* hanging on the walls to get you in the mood. I like the 'Great Malvern' totem signs, old and new. One of them is an original GWR, the other a special one commemorating 'Great Malvern 150'. There are also tables and chairs on the platform outside if you fancy observing trains and engaging in the traditional British pastime of people watching. At one point, these atmospheric tea rooms were threatened with closure, but thankfully they were saved and now operate from 0900 to 1800, Monday to Saturday.

If you forget your timepiece, there is a handy traditional station clock adjacent to the entrance into Lady Foley's. That

BELOW: Great Malvern station viewed from the southern end of Platform 1.





clock also looks very *Brief Encounter* and it is symbolic. When you're waiting for a loved one to arrive, time drags; when you're about to part from the same person, time flies.

Malvern Link

Malvern Link was the preferred disgorging place for the 'riff-raff' in Malvern, Lady Foley doing everything in her considerable power to keep them away from Great Malvern where she might have had the misfortune to bump into them. This class segregation extended to works outings and, indeed, any outcasts hailing from industrial areas. It even stretched to First Class passengers from Stratford-upon-Avon if they had the audacity to arrive on an excursion. I'm surprised the locals didn't carry nosegays to ward off the stench.

There used to be a third station, Malvern Wells, which was open from May 1860 to April 1965. It was situated before the line vanished into the darkness of the Colwall Tunnel. There was also a fourth station, on the branch, at Hanley Road. Colwall Tunnel, which burrows through the Malvern Hills, has its own interesting history. The original excavation of 1,567 yards was back-breaking, with progress sometimes being as slow as six inches per day. When finished, it was prone to rock falls, so it was replaced by today's 1,586-yard tunnel in 1926. The abandoned tunnel assisted the war effort in World War Two when it became a torpedo and bomb store and distribution centre.

Great Malvern is probably one of the few stations in the country where many of the visitors don't come to catch a train. There are plenty who just want to take a look.

There are trains, of course – to Hereford in one direction and Worcester in the other. Some Worcester-bound trains continue to Birmingham, others head the other way towards Oxford and London. There are also trains to Gloucester and Bristol, many of which continue all the way to Weymouth on the south coast, a lovely cross-country ramble uniting a provincial spa with a seaside resort.

The road to Worcester

The six miles between Malvern Link and Henwick opened in July 1859, the extension on to Great Malvern being achieved by May 1860. Most of Malvern Link's original buildings on the down, or eastern side, were demolished in the 1960s, having fallen into a poor state of repair; only the station house has survived. Station improvements were carried out in 2014. The main building, with ticket sales and waiting room, is on the Hereford-bound Platform 1, and there is another smart waiting room on Platform 2. There's a covered footbridge connecting the platforms and road bridges at each end of the station.

As you approach Worcester it's possible to see both ahead, to the cathedral, and back to the Malverns, although the best view of the cathedral comes later, just before Foregate Street; when the line crosses the Severn. The city is steeped in history, including being the final resting place of King John in 1216, and the site of an English Civil War battle in 1651. It was this battle that led to the defeated Charles II hiding up an oak tree and fleeing the country. Worcester was the first city to declare for the King and the last to surrender, which earned it its epithet as the Loyal or Faithful City.

Worcester Foregate Street station, built in 1860, is about three-quarters of a mile (61 chains) before Worcester Shrub Hill and, of the two, is the more central to the town. It's actually a fairly gentle walk to the magnificent cathedral where King John ➔

LEFT: The unusual 'Worm' at Great Malvern.

BELOW: The 1142 West Midlands Railway service to Hereford, formed by Class 170 170634, waits to depart from Malvern Link's Platform 1 on October 3, 2019.



RIGHT: At Worcester Foregate Street the 1303 GWR service to Weymouth via Bristol Temple Meads prepares to leave Platform 1 on October 3, 2019.



1850 station was a terminus for services from Birmingham. The current through-station designed by Scotsman Edward Wilson (1820-77) replaced it in 1865. It is a GWR edifice, formerly joint with the LMS. It has three platforms, although '3' is a short stub on part of the back line and rarely used. Platforms 1 and 2 are the through platforms with Platform 1 (Down) mostly for destinations north and west (Birmingham, Hereford), and Platform 2 (Up) mostly hosting London-bound trains, although this pattern is not strict. There used to be a Down bay but this is now a car park, and there is still one centre siding, or stabling facility.

The main building is on Platform 1, with its ticket office, Café Loco and toilets. It has some merit, with a pleasing view from the approach road where there is a substantial fringed canopy inviting the traveller into the booking hall. A footbridge takes passengers across to the island Platform, 2 and 3. There's also a Grade II* listed waiting room on Platform 2, dating from around 1880, which was restored in 2015 after a ten-year project. The iron frame was cast at the Vulcan Iron Works in Worcester, with period tiles courtesy of Maw & Co of Broseley, Shropshire, originally a Worcester company. This ornate structure looks somewhat marooned today; an architectural gem promenading in a station that has seen better days. The fact that Birmingham-Bristol trains can use a 'Worcester avoiding line' hasn't helped, with resulting gaps in the schedule.

From Shrub Hill trains can be caught north to Birmingham and beyond, south-east to Oxford and thence to London, south to Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol, and south-west to Malvern and Hereford. Departures west to Bromyard and Leominster are long gone, as the Leominster-Bromyard section closed as long ago as 1952, and the Bromyard-Bransford Road Jn followed in 1964. At Bransford Road the line joined the Worcester-Hereford route. A walk to the southern end of Platforms 2 and 3 is worthwhile for a view of Shrub Hill signal box that controls all station movements. It is not the original but it dates from 1935. A large brick structure visible beyond is the former Midland goods shed, still in situ, although all the lines



ABOVE: The Grade II listed waiting room on Worcester Shrub Hill's Platform 2.

lies buried, along the city's most important thoroughfare. The station sits atop a viaduct and today's facility is a replacement dating from 1909. It includes coloured crests, one of which is for the GWR. Foregate Street is a puzzling conundrum, with platforms for Droitwich and Hereford rather than the usual Up and Down. 1971 was the year of rationalisation at Worcester, with the double track through Foregate Street and over the bridge being replaced with two bi-directional single lines. There's a Café Loco and toilets on Platform 2, just before the bridge, with a subway and lift connecting the two platforms, and waiting rooms on both.

The station's origins date back to the planning of the Worcester-Hereford route to fulfil the need to serve as much of the area in between as possible, rather than just linking the two cities. To take this further and to serve other destinations it was decided that Worcester would get this second station, in

RIGHT: A busy shot at Worcester Foregate Street on September 1, 2016 with 43015 waiting at Platform 1 with a southbound service; note the Café Loco to the left.





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ABOVE: GWR Class 158 158961 stands at Ashchurch's Platform 2 on December 5, 2018, forming the 1524 service to Gloucester.

BELOW: A view of the track layout at Worcester Shrub Hill as viewed from the station footbridge.

to it have been lifted. At the southern end of Platform 1 there are disused parcels bays, once used by mail trains.

A meander to the northern end of Platform 2 offers a good view of Shrub Hill Jn, where the Hereford and Birmingham lines diverge; and some interesting semaphore signals can still be seen. Shrub Hill was extensive once, with Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Works, goods and passenger engine sheds, plus goods avoiding lines all there. The former OWW Works, later to become GWR carriage and wagon works, were sited on one side of the line towards Droitwich, while the main engine shed (now gone) was on the other. The extensive GWR yard is still to the east of Platform 3, where its goods shed is in reasonable nick, although the apertures once connecting the interior with the railway have been bricked up. Those

goods yard sidings seem rarely used today, a haunting, weed-strewn reminder of a time when freight used the system.

From inside the triangle created by the Hereford-Birmingham spur, a siding ran across the Shrub Hill-Foregate Street line, past the Great Western Hotel to the old Worcester Vinegar Works of Hill Evans & Co, an example of road traffic controlled by railway signals. This intriguing half-mile line, the so-called 'Vinegar branch' or 'Lowesmoor Tramway', ran between those two engine sheds, meandering towards the city centre and the Vinegar Works.

There are changes afoot at Worcester, with a Worcestershire Parkway station now being built four miles shy of the city, where the Cotswold Line crosses the Bristol to Birmingham line. The new station will be split-level, enabling transfer between the

two routes. It was scheduled to open to passengers in late 2019, but this has been delayed.

South to Gloucester

Ashchurch for Tewkesbury was originally called just Ashchurch between 1840 and 1971, re-opening under its new name in 1997. It's a two-platform affair with modest bus shelters and a connecting footbridge. In its heyday it was a busy station, as it was a junction first for a line to Tewkesbury, Upton-upon-Severn and Malvern, the whole of which had closed by 1961, and then for the Evesham line, which lost its Ashchurch to Evesham section in 1963. Today, there's a day nursery and community garden adjacent to Platform 1. I hope the toddlers appreciate how lucky they are, being schooled so close to a station.

Cheltenham Spa, around one mile from the town centre, was built in 1840 and was originally named Cheltenham Lansdown after a mansion the station builders commandeered. It received the name change and the distinction of 'Spa' in its title in 1925. The town name, on the other hand, does not officially contain Spa, even though it is one of Europe's finest spa towns that came to prominence when a mineral spring was discovered there in 1715. The station has two platforms on a curve. The main station building, including ticket office, is on Platform 1, where there are also toilets, a waiting room and a Pumpkin café/shop. There is another waiting room on Platform 2. I was pleased to note a plaque on Platform 1 commemorating the founding of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society (RCTS) in Cheltenham in 1928.

The original noble mansion building was brutalised by British Railways in the 1950s when an exterior colonnade was removed.





The two-platform station gets busy on race days, although Cheltenham Racecourse, on the heritage Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, is nearer the course, as the name suggests. The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway offers a round trip of 28 miles between Cheltenham and Broadway and through spectacular Cotswolds scenery, using part of what was once a GWR main line between Cheltenham and Birmingham via Stratford-upon-Avon.

Gloucester

We arrive at the cathedral city of Gloucester, a seaport, made so courtesy of the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal. It is another historic place: it was while he was in Gloucester that William the Conqueror decided to undertake his Domesday survey. Edward II, that unfortunate monarch who had an altercation with a red-hot poker in nearby Berkeley Castle, is buried in the cathedral, some grand views of which can be had from the train. The city was also besieged during the English Civil War, in 1643, and the Sunday School movement was later founded there by Robert Raikes.

Trains heading on to Cheltenham will reverse at Gloucester, as the main line skirts the station. Gloucester station is full of fascination as it lays claim to Britain's longest platform, all 1,977 feet 4 inches of it (no, I didn't measure it). This was due to the change of gauge imposed here – from the standard gauge of 1840 to the broad gauge that arrived in 1844, and all the tomfoolery that caused at the exchange station. Mr Brunel has many monuments to his genius, but this one could be considered a totem to his sheer bloody-mindedness. One literary luminary who witnessed the mayhem in Gloucester was William Makepeace Thackeray, author of *Vanity Fair*, and he

subsequently took the mickey out of it in print. Apparently, it was considered a good day out to go and watch the organised chaos.

Gloucester has four platforms. The main modernist station building with its ticket office, toilets and Pumpkin café/shop is adjacent to Platform 2, with Platform 1 a distant extension of this, while 3 is a bay off 2. A covered footbridge leads across to Platform 4, which has a waiting room. A plaque records that station improvements were officially opened in May 2013. Down the approach road lies the still impressive Station Hotel.

Gloucester is another busy place, so it conjures lots of different motive power. During a trio of fairly brief stays in September 2018, I clocked the Class 43 HST, plus 150, 158, 165, 166, 170, 221

and 800 classes. Although the route I'd chosen was GWR, it's also possible to travel between Gloucester and Malvern using a combination of CrossCountry and West Midlands Railway services via Birmingham. When you arrive at Gloucester, there are also plenty of Transport for Wales services at that station, and I once spotted a solitary South Western Railway service in the shape of 158888 heading for Cheltenham Spa.

A personal return journey

In order to make an early start, I stayed just outside Gloucester overnight. I'd decided to catch the 0938 from Gloucester to Great Malvern. After a breakfast of sarnie and coffee in the Pumpkin on Platform 2, departure was from Platform 1, which is further along the same platform but ➔

ABOVE: CrossCountry Voyager 220033 calls at Cheltenham Spa on December 5, 2018 with the 1441 to Manchester Piccadilly.



LEFT: The Gloucester Warwickshire Railway station at Cheltenham Race Course offers a mixture of steam and diesel trains through to Broadway.



TOP: South Western Railway Class 158 158888 waits to depart Gloucester (Platform 4) on September 11, 2018 with the 1233 to Cheltenham Spa. Note the length of Platforms 1 and 2 to the right.

ABOVE: On Cheltenham's Platform 1 this plaque commemorates the founding of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society (RCTS) in the town in 1928.

a healthy yomp so it pays to allow a bit of time. My train was a three-coach 158 GWR set formed by 158952. It arrived from Westbury with a three-minute turnaround. The driver headed up to the other end to take us out of the same end of the station it had arrived from, without troubling its principal parts. We quickly scurried over the Horton Road Level Crossing and were in open country before you could say M5, which we crossed over.

As we came into Cheltenham's Platform 2, I spotted the mural on Platform 1 proclaiming that the town is 'the home of jump racing'. At Ashchurch for Tewkesbury we speared in on Platform 1, the school side. The Tewkesbury area is a blend of the very old and the very new. It was the site of a War of the Roses battle in 1471, and there is a QinetiQ satellite communications facility on part of former RAF Defford, north of the town. As we left Ashchurch I was interested to spot what I believe was one of its satellite dishes on the left (facing forward). At Norton we bore left towards Shrub Hill and there was a view of the new split-level Worcestershire Parkway station on the right. Shortly after, the Cotswold line joined from the right. A massive housing development, Taylor Wimpey's 'Woodland Edge', appeared on the right before we passed the Shrub Hill signal box and sidled into the station's main Platform 1. On departure you bear left, while the route to Droitwich heads off right.

One of the most spectacular sections of the journey followed as we curved round

to the city's other station at Foregate Street. There are splendid views of the cathedral on the left, before arrival at Foregate Street where a majority of the Worcester passengers alight. We then headed out, across the bridge over Foregate Street, taking in Worcester Racecourse on the right and then crossing the Severn. At this point you get an even better view of the cathedral than coming the other way, a classic one that includes the river. I clocked Newland East box and crossing shortly before we arrived at Malvern Link's Platform 1. Our approach was marked by splendid views of the hills. As we moved on to Malvern's other, more prestigious, station at Great Malvern, the hills kept us company to our right and there was also a good view of Great Malvern Priory.

I had a quick turnaround when I arrived at Platform 2, as I was catching the next train back from Platform 1. Madness, I know, as Great Malvern is a place to idle away a while. However, I knew there was rain forecast and I'd been there a few times before so I wanted to begin my journey back. Apart from Lady Foley's Tea Room, Malvern & District Age UK has an office on Platform 1, with some books for sale. There used to be a charity book shop, Read & Ride, on Platform 2 but that has

gone, so this shop compensates for the loss of books on the other side. As another train sidled to a halt in Platform 1 and the carriage doors opened, I looked up from my coffee and witnessed a gentleman step forward from the rear of the platform and embrace a young lady who'd just emerged from one of the carriages. I permitted myself a smile and tried not to stare. See what I meant at the beginning of this article? Great Malvern, *Brief Encounter*, romance, arrivals and departures, farewells and estrangements, homecomings and reconciliations. It's all there.

My next train was courtesy of 158592 again, this time the 1048 all the way to Brighton via Bristol Temple Meads. Seat reservations are recommended on this service and I noticed plenty of the telltale cards inserted in slots atop the seats, but I managed to find myself a non-reserved one facing forward for the trip back to Gloucester. As we slipped out of Platform 1, there was a good view of the 'Worm' snaking up towards the old hotel. We were quickly back at Malvern Link's Platform 2. On the return trip I spotted Henwick box and crossing, not long before we traversed the Severn again at Worcester and passed The Hive, a modernistic golden-clad building belonging to the University of Worcester that's apparently Europe's first joint university and public library. We were then back in Foregate Street's Platform 1, which illustrates the bi-directional nature of this station, and shortly after we were once more at Shrub Hill, also in Platform 1. I noticed that the station's doors had been renovated since my last visit and were looking tidy in grey and orange.

There was a five-minute delay at the junction at Norton before we were able to continue on our way. During that time I saw a train shoot across the front of us as it headed from Cheltenham, through the site of Worcestershire Parkway, and on towards Brum. Not unsurprisingly, we arrived at Ashchurch's Platform 2 five minutes late and then pulled in at Cheltenham's Platform 1, beaten out of the station by a Class 143 Maesteg train, which was at Platform 2. The approach to Gloucester was illuminated by cracking views of another cathedral, albeit shrouded in the mist that was bringing rain. We arrived at Platform 2, just a jog up from Platform 1 where I'd boarded earlier. **RI**



RIGHT: The Station Hotel at Gloucester.

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