Railway Herald

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The weekly railway enthusiast's magazine

Railway Herald

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14th March 2011

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BREAKING NEWS: Spa Valley reaches Eridge

The Spa Valley Railway made history on 9th March when the first train in 13 years ran from Tunbridge Wells West to Eridge. Class 37/0 No. 37254 and Class 101 DTSL No. 56408 worked a test train in conjunction with Network Rail (NR) and Southern as part of the clearance procedure in connection with the ground-breaking Spa Valley/NR/Southern infrastructure sharing agreement. The heritage railway will utilise one line of the former double track between Birchden Junction and Eridge, a distance of one mile, with Eridge becoming a shared station with Southern. Subject to final approval, public services to Eridge are due to start from 25th March.

▲ **The historic 09.20 Tunbridge Wells West to Eridge is seen on arrival at its destination. David Staines**

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Intercity Express to go ahead
The procurement process for the long-awaited Intercity Express project, which will replace the HST fleet, has recommenced.
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10-year agreement for WCML
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Wensleydale Railway buys four Mk1 coaches to support loco-hauled services, update on the repair work being carried out to *Tornado*, and details of the Churnet Valley Railway's latest share issue.

Front Cover Caption:

Overhauled Class 33 No. D6515 stands in one of the shops at Eastleigh Works on 20th February. The excellent repaint, together with some replating and shot blasting, was undertaken by Arlington Fleet Services on behalf of the locomotive owners, the 71A Locomotive Group. It is understood that the loco will be main line certified, and as such will be an even more valued addition to the fleet at Swanage. Ron Cover

Intercity Express goes forward with mixed fleet to be built in County Durham

After a protracted period while a review of the Intercity Express Programme (IEP) was undertaken, the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond, has announced that the IEP procurement is to be resumed with Agility Trains.

The announcement takes forward the lower cost proposal that was submitted last year by Agility Trains and provides the required service through a mixed IEP fleet, with some all electric trains, and some being a combination of electric and diesel power, allowing them to operate 'off the wires'.

In February 2009, the Intercity Express Programme (IEP) introduced by the Labour Government identified Agility Trains, a consortium of Hitachi Rail (Europe) Ltd and John Laing Plc, as the preferred bidder to provide a new fleet of InterCity trains. Subsequently, the process was put on hold and a review of the procurement by Sir Andrew Foster was introduced. In summer last year, recognising the impact of the current Government's plans for high-speed rail to Leeds and Manchester, Agility Trains put forward an alternative proposal, which retained the more modern Class 91s and Mk4 coaching stock on the East Coast Main Line.

In total, there will be over 11,000 more peak time seats each day on the Great Western Main Line and East Coast Main Line post IEP, compared to today. Hitachi has confirmed that it plans to locate its new European train manufacturing and assembly centre at Newton Aycliffe in County Durham, an investment that is expected to create at least 500 permanent jobs, as well as hundreds of temporary construction jobs. Thousands more job opportunities will also be created in the manufacturing and service supply chains.

▼ **The new IEP design, the preferred option for the ECML and GWML. Agility Trains**

▲ **DRS Class 47/7 No. 47712** *Pride of Carlisle* **approaches Norton Junction, working from Daventry to Long Marston, with a rake of 26 wagons for storage on 28th February. Stephen Tucker**

Electrification for Cardiff and the Valleys, but not Swansea

The issue of the electrification of the Great Western Main Line from London to Didcot, Oxford and Newbury over the next six years left unanswered the aspirations of rail users further west for the extension of electrification to Bristol and into Wales.

It has now been concluded by the Government that there is a case for extending electrification westwards as far as Cardiff, and Network Rail will now add this major extension to its electrification programme. These measures will deliver a London to Cardiff journey time of 1 hour and 42 minutes and will reduce the London to Bristol journey time by 22 minutes. However, no viable business case could be put forward for extending the electrification onto Swansea - primarily because passenger usage could not support an increase in service frequency and the geography of the line would provide no significant speed increases to services through electric traction.

Consideration is also being given to the electrification of the key Welsh Valley Lines north of Cardiff, via Pontypridd and Caerphilly to Treherbert, Aberdare, Merthyr Tydfil, Coryton and Rhymney, as well as the lines to Penarth and Barry Island to the west. The Government and the Welsh Assembly are to develop a full business case for this project in the next rail investment control period beginning in 2014.

ORR approves 10-year track access for WCML, but declines 'open-access' operators services

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has confirmed that it will approve track access rights for the new InterCity West Coast franchise, paving the way for improved services to passengers and more efficient use of capacity.

Following an extensive review of proposals for services on the West Coast Main Line, the regulator will approve a 10-year track access contract for the new franchise, allowing existing West Coast services to continue, but with more flexible access rights than those currently in place. The franchisee will be able to make service changes more easily, taking forward new ideas to improve passenger services, providing greater value for money.

However, in a move that flies in the face of an 'open-access' railway, the ORR has not given the go-ahead for new services by 'open access' operators. In an industry where many feel that it should be down to the individual operators to serve the passenger in the way that they feel works best, this latest move has resulted in disappointment, expense and frustration. The ORR says that its approach does leave the door open for such services, but a press statement continued to add the proviso that such services would only be considered "provided they are not simply taking revenue away from the franchisee".

ORR Chief Executive, Bill Emery, said: "Our WCML track access conclusions pave the way for the new franchisee on the route to introduce improved services for passengers and to make more efficient use of capacity. It also leaves the way open for the introduction of limited competition from new operators on the route, to complement the franchised services, and protects the interests of freight operators."

Grand Central Railway was one of those affected by the ORR's decision. The company wants to introduce a North Western service that would have used existing capacity and rolling stock to introduce regular daily operations from May this year, linking Blackpool North, Poulton-le-Fylde, Kirkham & Wesham, Preston, Hartford, Lichfield Trent Valley, Tamworth, Nuneaton, and Milton Keynes with London Euston. The company said it was "surprised and disappointed" by the announcement, adding that its timetable for the proposed new service was robust and written by the industry expert who drew up the current West Coast timetable while at Network Rail. The company added that it had proposed introducing the Blackpool to London service from May, when the monopoly or "Moderation of Competition" granted to the current Virgin West Coast franchise comes to an end. However, as the ORR states that a WCML timetable "recast cannot sensibly be introduced before December 2013", Grand Central's view is that "this represents a defacto twenty-month extension to the current Moderation of Competition rules on the route. This decision effectively extends the current monopoly until at least the end of 2013".

The ORR says that it has refused Grand Central's application to run services from London Euston to Blackpool, as its proposals "on the basis of the information provided, failed its not primarily abstractive test (the services as proposed would take business and revenue away from existing operators without adequate offsetting benefits)". It added that it would be discussing with Grand Central how any revised application can be taken forward.

Grand Central was not the only operator whose proposals were declined. The ORR has also refused the application by Alliance Rail Holdings to operate services between London Euston and Leeds/ Bradford Interchange/Blackpool and Carlisle, saying that the application was not completed fully and did not provide sufficient information and data by the deadline for it to be considered. It is understood that Alliance subsequently submitted a detailed submission in support of its application, but that the ORR were unable to consult on it for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

The Regulator has also instructed Network Rail to work with the rail industry and the new WCML franchisee to develop plans for a revised WCML timetable to be implemented in stages from December 2013. The new West Coast franchisee will also have the right to extend some existing hourly Lancaster services onto Glasgow, but the proposed addition of 10 North West services was not agreed until further timetabling work has been completed. London Midland has received approval for additional services between London Euston and Northampton, subject to a satisfactory timetabling solution being found, but has been refused permission to extend a number of its services to Liverpool, as these would impact on the core WCML.

Its an old chestnut, and one that has political and financial motivation, but if the main franchise operators are unable to provide services in a true competing arena without the protection from 'open access' operators, given by the ORR, does this mean that they are not serving the passengers interests in the best way?

◀ Be it to protect revenue of a franchise or minimise the competition, one role of the ORR is to vet 'open access' proposals to ensure that they do not take business and revenue away from existing operators without, what the regulator describes as "adequate offsetting benefits". The industry is far from being a fair playing field though, as the same rules (perhaps not unsurprisingly) do not apply in reverse. When the now withdrawn Wrexham & Shropshire service commenced, the Regulator had no issues with Virgin Trains potentially taking business and revenue away from an open-access operator. Class 221 No. 221103 *Christopher Columbus* **stands at Wrexham on 14th December 2009, prior to departure of Virgin's first Wrexham to London, via Chester service. Tony Miles**

UK News In Brief

■ Associated British Ports has received consent to extend part of the Port of Southampton, giving a quay of 500 metres in length, capable of handling the largest container vessels. The work will cost around £80 million and will begin next year, with completion in 2013.

■ The Castle Hill Railway Company at Bridgnorth, which includes the historic Cliff Railway, has been put up for sale. The asking price has been set at between £700,000 and £800,000 and includes a guesthouse, tearoom and flat. The cliff railway links the high and low towns of Bridgnorth and operates seven days a week.

■ The old Friar Gate Goods Yard site in Derby could be redeveloped after developers agreed £50 million to build a supermarket, offices, shops and a 150 homes on the site. The engine shed and bonded warehouse, built in 1878 by the Great Northern Railway, will survive, with the developers spending £10 million to restore them. The ground floor of the warehouse will become a small shopping mall and part of the supermarket.

■ A new edition of postcards with spectacular views of the West Highland Lines has been produced for free distribution on ScotRail trains that serve the award-winning routes. They follow the first series in 2009, and again are co-funded by Friends of the West Highland Lines and the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership in Scotland. The latest photographs feature a Fort William-bound Caledonian Sleeper train leaving Rannoch on the climb to Corrour Summit, a Mallaig-Glasgow service crossing Glenfinnan Viaduct, a Glasgow-Oban/Mallaig service above Arrochar, and an Oban-Glasgow train west of Taynuilt. All were taken by Norman McNab, an avid mountaineer and member of the Scottish Photographic Circle.

■ GB Railfreight (GBRf) has signed a contract with Wabtec Rail to move First ScotRail's fleet of 22 Class 320 EMUs under their own power from Shields Road Depot in Glasgow to Wabtec's Doncaster works. The contract runs until mid-2013.

■ Network Rail has awarded the contract for track work associated with the upgrade of Reading station and the surrounding railway to Carillion. Worth in the region of £20 million, the project will run until completion in 2016 and will see 28km of new track and 92 points units installed. During 2011, trackwork will focus on the Southern lines used by SWT services to London Waterloo. The track layout will be amended to serve the new southern platform, which will be brought into service over Christmas 2011.

Metro and Light Rail News

East London Line extension opens three months early

The rail link that will allow passengers to move swiftly between North London, the City, Docklands and the south of the Capital was opened three months ahead of schedule on 28th February.

The 2.1km link between Highbury & Islington, on London Overground's Richmond to Stratford Line, and Dalston Junction, on its East London Line, means that passengers using Victoria Line Tube services or National Rail services stopping at Highbury & Islington can now use London Overground trains to reach the north, east or south of the Capital. The extension from Dalston Junction is a part of what is being called a rail version of the M25 Motorway around the capital, as when complete it will be an orbital rail link that will make it possible for people to travel easily from one side of London to another.

The link and the recently opened East London route are expected to have 33 million passengers this year and will be served by London Overground's fleet of 20 air-conditioned and walk- through Class 378 Capitalstar EMUs. For the second month in a row London Overground has topped the nation's rail league tables for punctuality with 96.4% of its trains arriving on time in January.

▼ **Class 378/1 No. 378145 arrives at Canonbury on the opening day of the new extension, with a service from Crystal Palace to Highbury & Islington. Richard Tuplin**

Public consultation commences over new high-speed rail network linking London with the north

Transport Secretary, Philip Hammond, has started a public consultation on the Government's proposals for a new high-speed rail network, one of the biggest such consultations ever undertaken.

It is maintained that Britain's economic map would be redrawn, jobs created, prosperity spread and the way businesses work and compete would be transformed with a new 'Y' shaped network, linking London, the West Midlands, Manchester and Leeds, with stations in South Yorkshire and the East Midlands, with links to existing lines, enabling through-running of services to other cities. It is said that the scheme would deliver around £44 billion of benefits and cut journey times between London and other major cities by as much as an hour. Such a network would offer a better-connected Britain, bringing Birmingham within 49 minutes of London, and Manchester and Leeds within 80 minutes or less. Birmingham and Manchester would be less than 50 minutes apart and Leeds and Birmingham just over an hour. Travel from London to Scotland's major cities would take around 3 hours 30 minutes.

Running 14 or more trains per hour, each with up to 1,100 seats and offering much higher levels of reliability than the existing network, high speed rail could shift as many as 6 million air trips and 9 million road trips a year on to rail.

Mr Hammond said: "High-speed rail offers us a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the way we travel in the 21st century and would help us build a modern economy fit for the future. Countries across Europe and Asia are already pressing ahead with ambitious plans for high-speed rail, while some of our key rail arteries are getting ever closer to capacity. We cannot afford to be left behind".

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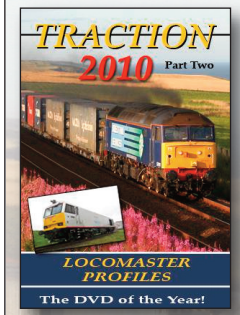
TRACTION 2010

PART 2: July-December



Programme number 31 in the Traction series covers the second half of 2010. Reviewing the current modern traction scene, it is packed full of strange workings, fleet developments and railtours plus highlights from the world of preservation. Included in this 100-minute DVD are....

59206 on the Westerleigh tanks, Freightliner's 90045 working for Virgin, 67006 on the Dowlow trip, 33207 ventures to Whitby, 37603 + 37604 hauling a rake of Fastline coal hoppers, 57001 leaving Loughborough, 08483 arriving at Paddington with the stock of the Penzance sleepers, DRS 37s on the new Airdrie to Bathgate line, Euro Cargo Class 66s return to the UK for RHTT duties, 47739 hauls the first timber train out of Ribblehead, 57604 on FGW's Bristol-Weymouth service, 66845 hauling a new Italian-built Pendolino from Dollands Moor to Edge Hill, 73138 on test train duties, 56097 on the East Leake gypsum containers, 60059 works the empty stock of the Glasgow sleepers, 73141 ventures to Ardingly, 86101 & 87002 visit Cambridge and Enfield Town on a test train, Mendip Rail 59s on infrastructure work, the return of the Georgemas Junction pipes, 60099 receives Tata Steel livery, FGW HST diversions, 47500 returns to traffic, Grand Central's Paxman Valenta HST farewell, 55022 on a GBRf staff special to Scarborough, D1015 conquering Ais Gill summit, 47580 hauling an 8-loco convoy of heritage locos, 73207 back on the main line for GBRf, D9009 high speed wagon-testing on the GCR, 25059 at work on the Caldon Low branch.....***and so much more!***

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▼ Freightliner Powerhaul-liveried Class 90 No. 90045 passes South Kenton on 24th February, propelling the 08.50 Virgin Trains' service from Birmingham New Street to London Euston, led by Mk3 DVT No. 82126. Virgin has recently renewed its contract with Freightliner for the provision of a Class 90. Under the terms of the agreement, a locomotive will be provided each Friday to operate as booked with the Mk3 set, on the late-afternoon London to Crewe service, although short-notice requests, if the TOC has a requirement to push the loco-hauled set into traffic on other days, are also included in the agreement. Brian Morrison

National Express open new driver simulator for '379s'

The Rt. Hon Theresa Villiers MP, Minister of State for Transport, visited National Express East Anglia's training academy on 10th March to officially open the company's new £1 million train driving simulator.

NXEA employs 800 drivers and this latest simulator, built by Krauss Maffel Wegmann, increases the number of driving simulators based at the training academy to three. This latest simulator will assist in the training and development of the 300 NXEA drivers who currently operate services on the West Anglia route.

▼ **Chris Milner, Deputy Editor at** *The Railway Magazine*, **takes a turn on the new Class 379 simulator, during a press preview on 10th March. Statistics of his driving were not released! Jack Boskett**

Wabtec Rail buys Brush Traction

Wabtec Rail has acquired the Brush Traction Group, including the Brush Traction facilities at Loughborough and Brush Barclay at Kilmarnock.

The Brush name has been synonymous with quality engineering and the supply of railway equipment since 1865, and the company has produced many types of locomotive, including the Class 47s, and propulsion systems for passenger-carrying vehicles worldwide.

The addition of the Brush Traction expertise in main line locomotives, power units, traction motors and electrical control systems complements Wabtec's expertise in passenger rolling stock maintenance and refurbishment, freight wagon maintenance and wheelset, bogies, brake equipment and HVAC overhauls. By combining these areas of expertise the new Wabtec Rail Group of companies can offer rolling stock owners and train operators a range of services that covers all aspects of rolling stock maintenance, overhaul and refurbishment.

In addition, the acquisition of the facility at Kilmarnock will broaden the nationwide coverage of Wabtec Rail by providing a base to better support the trains operating in Scotland and Northern England. To reflect the new ownership, Brush Traction at Loughborough will be known as 'Brush Traction – Part of the Wabtec Rail Group', with the Brush Barclay Kilmarnock Works becoming 'Wabtec Rail Scotland'.

Airdrie-Bathgate rail link officially opened

Scottish Transport Minister, Keith Brown, officially opened the new £300 million Airdrie-Bathgate rail link on 8th March.

Trains have been operating on the new line since 12th December last year, but the opening of the three new stations was delayed due to the prolonged severe weather. With snow and ice covering the stations throughout December, construction of access roads and other facilities at Armadale, Caldercruix and Drumgelloch had to be suspended until early this year.

The three stations opened to the public in phases during February and March and all stations on the route are now operational. From 7th March, there are now two trains an hour on weekdays, Saturdays and Sunday afternoons, with an hourly service on Sunday mornings and evenings. Current service levels remain between Bathgate and Edinburgh Waverley. The service frequency will increase between Glasgow Queen Street (Low Level) and Edinburgh in a few months, with trains every 15 minutes being introduced. The four trains an hour frequency will apply Mondays to Saturdays from early morning until 19.00, and then revert to half-hourly. The increase in services from 7th March followed the introduction of more new Class 380 Desiros on routes in Ayrshire and Inverclyde, allowing a cascade of rolling stock to the new link.

The project has involved 15 miles of new track built to connect communities in West Lothian and North Lanarkshire, Bathgate and Drumgelloch stations have been rebuilt, and Livingston North and Uphall stations have been upgraded.

The route is the longest new passenger line in Scotland for over a century. The original railway between Airdrie and Bathgate closed to passenger trains in 1957 and to freight services in 1982.

▼ **On a sunny February afternoon, Class 350/1 No. 350126 glides through the Cheshire countryside as it passes Chorlton on 24th February. Frank Richards**

▲ On 1st March, the 16.15 Cardiff Central to Holyhead service passes the high-rise buildings on the eastern outskirts of the capital of Wales, as it starts its northbound journey. Stuart Warr

Extra North to South Wales service to commence in May

The Welsh Assembly Government has announced that a new express service between north and south Wales will start in May, and following the demise of the Wrexham, Shropshire & Marylebone trains will include Wrexham in its itinerary.

The extra service will complement the current 'Y Gerallt Gymro', the 'One Wales Express' from Holyhead to Cardiff that the Assembly funded in 2008. It will run from Monday to Friday, departing Holyhead at 07.51 and arriving in Cardiff at 12.08. The return journey will leave Cardiff at 18.18 and arrive back in Holyhead at 22.34. The train will stop at Wrexham in both directions. The morning service will call at Holyhead, Bangor, Llandudno Junction, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Chester, Wrexham, Ruabon, Chirk, Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Newport and Cardiff, and the evening return will call at Newport, Abergavenny, Hereford, Shrewsbury, Gobowen, Ruabon, Wrexham, Chester, Rhyl, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno Junction, Bangor and Holyhead.

In order for the second express to be able to call at Wrexham General in the morning, Arriva Trains Wales has been asked to re-route the 07.15 Holyhead – Birmingham International service to travel via Crewe instead of Wrexham, as otherwise it would not be possible for the new service to call at Wrexham due to the infrastructure constraints of the single track between Wrexham and Chester. This means that the 07.15 Holyhead – Birmingham International service can no longer call at Ruabon, Chirk and Gobowen, but the new train will call at these stations in order to avoid what would otherwise be a two-hour gap in the mornings. Passengers for Birmingham joining from these stations will be able to complete their journey by changing and connecting with the 07.15 Holyhead – Birmingham at Shrewsbury.

The new Holyhead-Cardiff service will be temporarily formed of a Class 175 Coradia and will include a trolley service with hot food, but from December, it will be replaced by a Class 67 and Mk3 stock, including a First Class carriage and dining facilities. The Assembly Government is investing £620,000 to run the service until December, when there will be a new contract for the Class 67 locomotives. The Assembly is also funding a substantial refurbishment before the loco-hauled stock is brought into service.

Station Improvements Round-Up

Following the comment in the last issue, Transport Scotland has announced that many stations north of the border are to be repainted this year in the new 'ScotRail, Scotland's Railway' unified livery.

In addition, new waiting shelters will be installed at Carluke and new accessible public toilets will be provided at Hamilton West and Barrhead. Station entrance clocks are also to be installed at Airdrie, Ardrossan South Beach, Drumgelloch, Largs, West Kilbride and Whifflet, a new waiting shelter constructed at Lochwinnoch and a public telephone provided at Greenock West. The stations that are to be given the new ScotRail look this year are Ardrossan Harbour, Ardrossan South Beach, Ardrossan Town, Barassie, Bogston, Burnside, Cartsdyke, Dalry, Fairlie, Fort Matilda, Glengarnock, Greenock Central, Greenock West, Hawkhead, Howwood, Gilmour Street, IBM Halt, Johnstone, Kilwinning, Kirkwood, Largs, Lochwinnoch, Milliken Park, Motherwell, Neilston, Newton-on-Ayr, Paisley, Paisley Canal, Patterton, Prestwick Town, Saltcoats, Troon, West Kilbride, Wishaw, Whifflet, Williamwood, Whitecraigs and Woodhall.

Three new lifts linked by a new footbridge are now in operation at Hooton, meaning that all four platforms are accessible to all. The work was funded by the Department for Transport through its 'Access for All' programme, and has cost around £4 million. Work has also started at Nottingham station on a new 950-space car park as the first stage of a major revamp of the station, that will bring a new concourse and better access with future extensions to the city's light rail system.

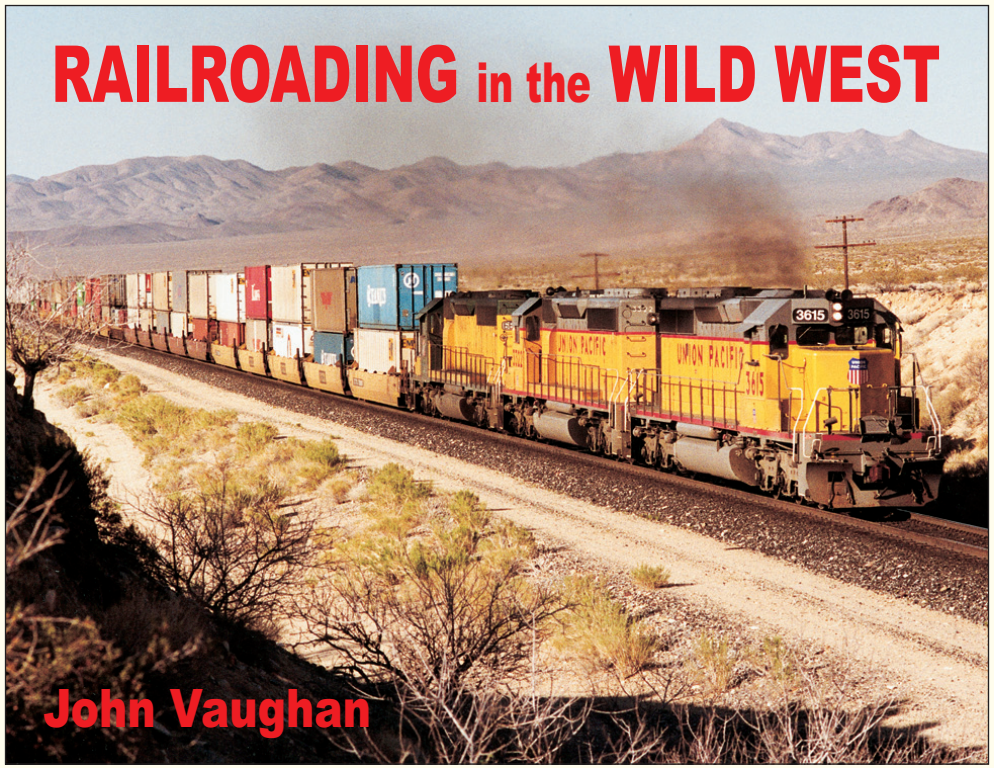
Croydon council has signed a funding agreement with Network Rail to deliver a new entrance to East Croydon station, and a footbridge to connect the station to the town centre. The plans will be funded in part by a £10 million investment from the council.

A joint venture of Colas Rail and Morgan Sindall has won an £18 million contract to lengthen platforms in Kent and Sussex, which will allow longer services to operate on key commuter routes in the South East.

Merseyrail disruption for viaduct strengthening

Services between Chester, Ellesmere Port and Rock Ferry returned to normal on 28th February, following a week of intensive work activity.

The largest piece of work was the strengthening of Mollington Viaduct, on the outskirts of Chester, where the line spans the Shropshire Union Canal, at a cost of around £800,000. The tracks, sleepers and stone foundations were taken up to expose the deck of the viaduct, before a pre-cast concrete 'saddle' was positioned prior to the entire deck being waterproofed and a new drainage system installed. While the line was closed to trains, the footbridge at Capenhurst was completely refurbished and repairs were carried out to Spittal Road bridge.



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Wireless internet access rolled out on EMT

Passengers using East Midlands Trains main line services now have access to the Internet while they travel, a new on-board Wi-Fi service having been introduced on all of the company's trains to and from London.

The Wi-Fi has been fitted on all 27 Meridians and the 11 HSTs. The service offers passengers easy access to the Internet, whether for work or leisure purposes. First Class passengers benefit from complimentary access, while those in Standard Class pay a small charge, using a credit or debit card, through the online secure payment page.

Complimentary Wi-Fi access is also provided in the First Class lounges at Sheffield, Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and London St Pancras and the Business Lounge at East Midlands Parkway.

Loading of aggregate services at Peak Forest was disrupted on 10th/11th March after several vehicles were derailed in the Cemex sidings at Dove Holes, while being shunted by Class 60 No. 60045.

▲ ◀ Class 66/0 No. 66141 shunts some of the re-railed wagons on 11th March, while the re-railing team attends to the final vehicle. **Geoffrey Arnold**

◀ Two generators of high-speed motive power are pictured, as a suitably-decorated Class 55 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* stands at the stops at London Euston on 4th March, having arrived from Preston with a positioning working for a London King's Cross to Edinburgh charter the following day. **Chris Dixon**

◀▼ Freightliner Class 66/5 No. 66524 powers through Swinton on 24th February, having rescued DBS Class 66/0 No. 66168, which had failed in the Mexborough area, while working the 12.09 Hull Hedon Road Sidings to Masborough Steel Terminal working. The two locos providing a colourful, and unusual sight on today's railway. **Christopher Saxby**

▼ On 3rd March, Euro-modified Class 66/0 No. 66029 passes Millbrook on the Midland Main line working the 11.03 St Pancras-Toton cement empties. This train was nearly two hours late at this point. **Lorenzo D' Aniello**

▶ An unusual sight as Class 67 No. 67017 *Arrow*, together with four East Coast Mk4 coaches, plus Mk4 DVT No. 82211 on the rear, approach Rectory Junction Signal Box on 6th March with a Bounds Green to Brush Traction, Loughborough, stock movement. **John Illingworth**

▶▼ BR blue Class 08 No. 08925 is a another 'pilot' to appear at Cardiff Celsa Works since GBRf took over rail operations there. The former EWS loco arrived at Cardiff from LH Group at Barton-under-Needwood on 28th February, and is seen the following day. The white cab roof dates back to its time as Preston station pilot. **Phil Trotter**

▼ With the DRS Class 66/4s presumably having been hired by DB Schenker for engineering working, Nos. 66425 and 66420 lead DBS Class 66/0 No. 66008 through Chorlton en route to Bescot on 28th February. The two '66/4s' later worked a Bescot to Watford Junction engineers service, with No. 66008 heading to Hams Hall to power an intermodal service to Dollands Moor. **Frank Richards**

UK Steam & Modern Traction Railtour Listings

19th March 2011			
UK Railtours	tbc	London Euston-Crewe-Chester-Llandudno Junction-Bangor & return	
Railway Touring Co.	70000	London Liverpool Street-Norwich-Holt	**Postponed**
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 59/2	Eastleigh-Westbury-Bristol Parkway-Cardiff-Chepstow-Gloucester-Eastleigh	
VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Staines-Woking-Guildford-East Croydon-London Victoria	
Railway Touring Co.	34067	Three Bridges-Hove-Fareham-Eastleigh-Westbury-Bath Spa-Bristol TM & return	
23rd March 2011			
Compass Tours	2xWCRC 47	Rugby-Tamworth-Crewe-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle--Workington-Carnforth-Rugby	
25th March 2011			
Rail-Blue Charters	31454+31601	Leicester-Langley Mill-Sheffield-Barnsley-York-Battersby-Grosmont-Whitby & rtn	
Compass Tours	2xWCRC 47	Hereford-Shrewsbury-Crewe-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle-Maryport-Carnforth-Hereford	
26th March 2011			
Railway Touring Co.	70013	London LS-Norwich-(Cromer)-Holt(-Cromer)-Norwich-Ipswich-Liverpool Street	
UK Railtours	tbc	London Euston-Crewe-Chester-Llandudno Junction-Bangor & return	
Vintage Trains	6201	(Tyseley Warwick Road-Crewe)-Shap-Carlisle-S&C-Bolton-Crewe and return	
Spitfire Railtours	2xWCRC 37	Weston super Mare-Cheltenham Spa-Manchester Victoria-Chester & return	
Spitfire Railtours	2xWCRC 37	Manchester Victoria-Chester-Rhyl-Llandudno Junction-Bangor-Holyhead & return	
Hastings Diesels Ltd	Hastings 1001	Hastings-Tonbridge-Hitchin-Ely-Dereham-Wymondham-Ely-Stratford-Clapham Jct\ & return as outwards	
27th March 2011			
Steam Dreams	70000	London Victoria-Bristol Temple Meads & return	**Postponed**
30th March 2011			
Rail-Blue Charters	DBS 67	Watford Jct-Northampton-Nuneaton-Telford Central-Craven Arms-Llandrindod Wells-Cardiff-Newport-Reading-Watford Jct-Tring-Northampton-Rugby-Nuneaton	
Railway Touring Co.	34067	London Victoria-Swanley-Maidstone East-Hastings-Battle-Tunbridge Wells-Otford-Swanley-Bromley South-London Victoria	
31st March 2011			
Steam Dreams	70013	Aylesbury-West Hampstead-Royston-Norwich & return	**Postponed**
1st April 2011			
VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Virginia Water-Woking-Shalford-Redhill-London Victoria	
Spitfire Railtours	2xWCRC 37	London Paddington-Reading-Southampton Central-Lymington Pier-Eastleigh-Reading-Twyford-Henley on Thames-Bourne End-Slough-Windsor & Eton Central-Slough-Acton Canal Wharf Jct-St. Albans Abbey-Watford Junction-London Euston	
2nd April 2011			
Statesman Rail	tbc	Milton Keynes-NorthamptonCrewe-Blackburn-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle & return	
UK Railtours	tbc	Stevenage-Watford Jct-Stoke on Trent-Crewe-Altrincham-New Mills South Jct-Hope Valley-Toton-Loughborough-Peterborough-Stevenage-Finsbury Park	
Railway Touring Co.	70000	Cleethorpes-Liverpool Lime Street and return	**Cancelled**
Vintage Trains	4965 & 5043	Tyseley Warwick Road-Worcester SH-Kemble-Swindon-Didcot Parkway & return	
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 60 & DBS 66	Bristol TM-Cheltenham Spa-Coleshill Parkway-Toton Centre-Lincoln-Cleethorpes-Immingham Dock Tramway-Scunthorpe-Sheffield-Derby & return as outwards	
Spitfire Railtours	2xWCRC 37	London Euston-Clapham Jct-Selhurst-East Croydon-Caterham-Crystal Palace-Guildford-Motspur Park-London Waterloo-Redhill-Littlehampton-Ealing Broadway	

Not all pick up/set down points are shown. Check with the operator before travelling any distance.

BLACK Charters expected to operate as booked. **RED** Tours cancelled by the operator

GREEN Tours postponed to a future date by the operator **BLUE** Provisional excursion

(Locations) in brackets on a steam tour listing indicates a diesel or electric-hauled section.

The Week Ahead

by John Whitehouse

The formal opening of what may be regarded as one of the world's greatest railway journey's, the Welsh Highland Railway (WHR) from Caernarfon to Porthmadog, where it makes a connection with another of the 'Great Little Trains of Wales', the Ffestiniog Railway, takes place this year.

Each railway is spectacular in its own right, but the chance to travel throughout from Caernarfon to Blaenau Ffestiniog, the western terminus of the Ffestiniog, will unquestionably be the highlight of 2011. The demand for such a journey has been well proven by UK Railtours, as its 19th March working from London Euston to Llandudno Junction and Bangor illustrated by selling out in a matter of days, as has also the hastily arranged relief on 26th March. The reason why the trains have been so popular is simple, they offer a through journey over the entire length of both lines. On the day, half of the passengers will travel north from Blaenau Ffestiniog and the other half south from Caernarfon, with the two trains expected to cross at Beddgelert.

Pathfinder will also be heading for Wales, as the feature of its 'Heart of Wales Rambler' excursion is a visit to the Central Wales Line that includes a break at Llandrindod Wells. The tour also offers a rare chance to travel behind a DBS Class 59/2 locomotive, which is booked for the train throughout. It originates at Eastleigh and heads north via Salisbury, Westbury, Bath, Cheltenham Spa and Wolverhampton, while the return works over the Swansea District Line to Newport, and then along the Severn Estuary to Gloucester, where it rejoins its outward route.

Two steam tours conclude this week's activities, with the Railway Touring Company heading for Bath Spa and Bristol Temple Meads from Three Bridges and Coastway line stations with Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere*. The previous attempt at this itinerary just before Christmas came to grief when 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 44932 failed on the outward ECS working. Finally, it is pleasing to note that Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* has effortlessly resumed VSOE British Pullman workings without any hint of the injector problems that beset the locomotive in the latter half of 2010. It is again booked around the Surrey Hills circuit with a luncheon train from London Victoria via Guildford and East Croydon, which will be its sixth working of this year.

▼ LMS 'Black 5' No. 44932 heads through Clapham Junction on 1st March, with the 'St David's Day Cathedrals Express' to Cardiff from London Victoria. A pair of Class 458s await clearance of the route before heading to London Waterloo. Ian Docwra

Stern challenge on the Chiltern's awaits *Britannia* on St George's Day

What could be better on St George's Day but to commemorate England's patron saint with a trip from London Victoria to Stratford-upon-Avon, birthplace of one William Shakespeare, considered by many to be the nation's (and some say, the world's) greatest playwright, and all this behind the most appropriately named locomotive, No. 70000 ***Britannia*****.**

You can almost hear the strains of 'Jerusalem' echoing around Victoria's fine roof prior to departure of Steam Dreams 'Cathedrals Express', but from High Wycombe the score will be of a completely different beat. Why? Because the train is now booked to stop at High Wycombe, meaning that *Britannia* will not get a run at Saunderton Bank, which peaks at 1-in-100 at the summit, a few miles to the south of Princes Risborough, presenting a stern challenge to the locomotive and crew. Continuing the musical reference, if it is to be William Blake's 'Jerusalem' at Victoria, then at Saunderton Summit it can only be Slade's rock and roll anthem, 'Cum on and Feel the Noize'!

However, before any assault on Saunderton can be contemplated, there is the important matter of gaining a main line certificate, of which part one, a light engine working between Crewe and Chester is reported to be booked for 14th March, followed by a loaded run from Crewe to Bristol on 16th March, which reports indicate will be undertaken along the North & West route via Chester, Wrexham, Shrewsbury and Hereford, before the loco continues to Bishops Lydeard.

If all goes well, *Britannia* will take part in the West Somerset Railway's Spring Steam Gala scheduled for the last two weekends of this month before heading to London to be in position for a maiden main line return for Steam Dreams from Oxford to Canterbury on 7th April.

Deltic to Wick, Thurso and now Kyle!

It seems that the Scottish Railway Preservation Society's mission for the year is to take a 'Deltic' to the farthest parts of the Scottish rail network.

Not content with arranging for 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* to visit Wick and Thurso on 17th/18th June, the SRPS has also arranged a working to visit Kyle of Lochalsh. This is scheduled for 28th May and utilises No. 55022 throughout from North Berwick, via Edinburgh Waverley, the Forth Bridge and Ladybank to Perth, prior to what will hopefully be, a stirring run over the Highland main line to Inverness. The tour also sets down at Plockton.

Two weeks earlier, on 14th May, Fort William is the destination on a working, which repositions LNER K4 class Mogul No. 61994 *The Great Marquess* and LMS 'Black 5' No. 45231 *Sherwood Forester* back at Fort William following the planned exploits of Steam Dreams 'Cathedrals Explorer' earlier that week. The train is steam-hauled throughout from Polmont, Falkirk High, Westerton, Dumbarton and Helensburgh Upper to Fort William, returning diesel-hauled.

Now a regular feature of the August programme, the popular 'Forth Circle' morning and afternoon trains are again scheduled for 21st August with No. 45231 *Sherwood Forester* the nominated motive power. Each working will follow the usual pattern, the morning train being from Linlithgow, with Dalmeny and Inverkeithing being the pick-up options for the afternoon charter. The route is around the Fife Circle through Kirkcaldy to Cowdenbeath, via Thornton Junctions, and onwards to Dunfermline Town and Alloa to Stirling before returning by way of Larbert and Polmont.

Ups & Downs

■ The Office of Rail Regulation has commenced a consultation period with operators over proposals to allow train operators to operate Mk1 coaches on the National Network without barrier vehicles, and with passengers permitted to travel in leading vehicles. Presently, the exemption to allow Mk1 stock to be used on the National Network specifies that a barrier vehicle must be located between the locomotive and the rolling stock, with the barrier vehicle being a Mk2 or Mk3 coach. Most exemptions also prohibit passengers from travelling in the leading vehicles. The consultation ends in mid-April.

▼ **Hauling the return leg of the 'Buxton Spa Express', LMS 'Black 5' No. 44871 & LMS 'Jubilee' No. 5690** ***Leander*** **are seen at Peak Forest bound for Lancaster, via Manchester, on 26th February. Frank Richards**

Steam Dreams adds a 'spark' to Carlisle excursion

Steam Dreams' 'Cathedrals Express' on Thursday 19th May will now have a little more spice, as it will also celebrate two generations of West Coast traction super power.

This is because in addition to having 'Royal Scot' 4-6-0 No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* from Preston and Carlisle both ways, outwards via Shap and returning over the Settle & Carlisle, the southern leg between London Euston and Preston will be in the hands of later classic traction in the shape of Les Ross's preserved Class 86/2 No. 86259. It also conveniently accelerates the journey time on the non-steam southern legs of the charter, as the Class 86/2 can easily out-perform the acceleration and top-speed capabilities of a Class 47/8.

For Steam Dreams, this is also a first, as the company has never used AC Electric traction before, although No. 86259 has been used in this role previously on other charters. It is understood that the Class 86/2 is now to be positioned at Willesden, which puts it in a better position for picking up work, as well as being stationed beneath the wires, which of course it was not while at Tyseley. This will ensure that the locomotive is kept 'warm'.

▲ **DCR-liveried Class 31/6 No. 31601 and Mainline-liveried Class 31/4 No. 31454 power over the viaduct at Chapeltown, near Sheffield, with Rail-Blue Charters' unusually-titled 'Fenland Circular' excursion from Lincoln to Carlisle on 2nd March, which was running around 40 minutes late at this point.**
Christopher Saxby

◀ **On 7th March, 'Royal'-liveried Class 67 No. 67006** *Royal Sovereign* **heads north through Chelmscote with BR Standard 8P Pacific No. 71000** *Duke of Gloucester* **and a support coach in tow, while working from Hither Green Depot to the East Lancashire Railway at Castleton.**
Lorenzo D' Aniello

▲ Although relegated to the slow line, Class 55 No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* makes an impressive sight as it glides through Tamworth, heading a Preston to London Euston positioning special on 4th March. **Paul Braybrook**

▲ After clocking-up over 1,000 miles, No. 55022 heads north through Slindon, along the West Coast Main Line, on the final leg of its weekend operations, the positioning charter from London Euston to Preston on 6th March. **Frank Richards**

▼ Traversing a section of the East Coast route that it has operated over thousands of times before, No. 55022 powers north through Hensall, between Doncaster and York, on 5th March. **Richard Tuplin**

Wensleydale acquires additional Mk1 coaches

The Wensleydale Railway Association (WRA) has completed the acquisition of four 1950s-built Mk1 vehicles.

Three have been purchased outright and the other secured on a long-term hire/restoration agreement. The coaches are Restaurant Miniature Buffet (RMB) No. 1879, latterly stored at Weardale Railway, Brake Standard Corridor (BSK) No. 35304, with four 2nd Class compartments, hired from the Locomotive Owners' Group (Scotland), Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, and two Standard Corridors (SK) Nos. 18837 and 19013, with eight 2nd Class compartments. The latter two were previously mainline Nos. 99717 and 99713 and have been purchased from West Coast Railways, Carnforth, having previously been part of the Pilkington set. Extensive restoration on all four is now underway, with the intention of having three in traffic this summer.

The vehicles will strengthen the home fleet by providing extra capacity and appropriate heritage vehicles for services. The project represents an investment by the Railway of over £40,000, and donations to support the work will be most welcome and should be sent to Mk1 Coach Appeal, WRA Ltd, Leeming Bar Station, Leases Road, Leeming Bar, Northallerton DL7 9AR.

The WRA has also allocated funds for the rebuilding and repair of the wooden bodywork on the 'Shark' ballast plough owned by the Association. This vehicle dates from the late 1950s and has had extensive use both on the Weardale Railway and in its previous main line career. Local craftsmen have been employed to restore the body to a high standard using traditional materials and techniques, and this work has now started and will represent an investment of almost £10,000, in the long-term future of the historic vehicle.

Some progress was made on upgrading of the sector of the line from Leeming Bar to the East Coast Main Line at Castle Hills Junction last year to make it suitable for use by passenger trains. Previously, the stretch was largely used for stock and freight movements. The WRA has now agreed to fund the £10,000 cost of materials to complete the work to Castle Hills Junction to enable occasional passenger trains to traverse, and visitors to see, the section. Charter trains will also be able to access the line and increase visitor numbers to towns along the route. The work should be completed for the 2012 season.

Snow Hill's 'Platform 7' sign and *Lusitania* nameplate to be auctioned at Crewe event

Crewe Heritage Centre will be hosting another of its successful Railwayana Auctions on 26th March.

As before, the auction will feature a host of lots for all pockets from the steam era through to modern traction. One of the star items is an 'Engineers' Drafting Set' given to Thomas Wilson by his good friend George Stephenson (with provenance) who met while at University.

Another star lot is a nameplate from Class 40 No. 40025 *Lusitania* in stunning ex-loco condition. Other lots include 'The Manxman' headboard and the famous Great Western Railway cast iron 'Platform 7' sign from Birmingham Snow Hill station, the platform from where the named expresses of the day departed. Throughout the auction day, all of the heritage centre's attractions will be open, John Cameron's 'K4' Mogul No. 61994 *The Great Marquess* will be in steam, and a free shuttle bus will operate between Crewe station and the centre. See the Crewe Heritage Centre website for details or phone 01948 665570 for a free catalogue and any additional information.

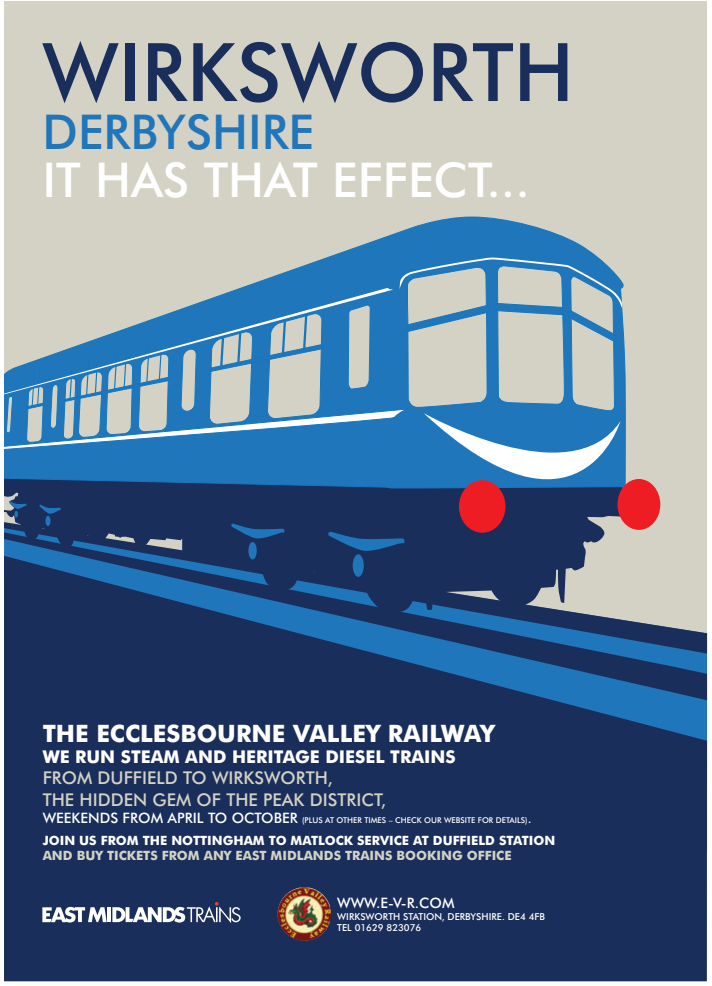
Turning back time at Tanfield

▶ **Nicely framed by the semaphore signal, Beamish Museum's 0-6-0T *Twizell*, on long-term loan to the Tanfield Railway, heads away from Andrews House station with the last train of the day on 6th March, formed of a rake of restored vintage coaches.**
David Hewitt

Preservation News In Brief

■ NELPG's LNER 'J72' 0-6-0T No. 69023 will be moving from the North Norfolk Railway to visit the Colne Valley Railway from 20th March until 25th April. Steam services operate on Sundays, and also on 13th & 20th April, plus the 'Vintage Vehicle' weekend of 9th/10th April.

■ A rare chance to see behind the scenes will be possible at Swanage on 19th/20th March, as its special weekend will enable visitors to visit the locomotive shed and a working signal box, view carriage restoration, enjoy brakevan rides and visit the locomotive works at Herston.



Travel and photo opportunites on joint WHR/FR charter event

Late last year we paid tribute to the enviable record of Bob Branch's organising charters with a difference, and because he reckoned he had done as much as he could that it was time for a rest.

Well, that rest has lasted about three months, and the lure of trains in Snowdonia has been irresistible. So, what has the 'Come-Back Kid' got lined up this time? The title says everything ...'The Num Bum Weekender' is all about enjoying the delights of the Welsh Highland (WHR) and Ffestiniog Railways (FR) by very special trains that cover the entire WHR & FR systems not just once, but twice!

It has already been mentioned in the railtour preview for this issue that the combined WHR and FR systems offer possibly one of the great railway journey opportunities in the world, and Bob now plans to open up both systems over the weekend of 12th/13th November, featuring vintage locomotives and coaching stock.

This will be no ordinary photo charter, as the object is also to travel over the full length of the combined WHR & FR systems during the weekend, as well as stopping off at well chosen locations for photographic opportunities. While there will be less time spent on the lineside for photographs than in a normal charter, this will be complemented by being able to enjoy the totally stunning journey on both lines, with a through working between Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog and back, twice.

The outline plan is to have *Palmerston* and *Taliesin* paired with the Ffestiniog 'Plum and Spilt Milk' vintage set on 12th November from Porthmadog to Caernarfon, and then back to Porthmadog and onwards for a return working to Blaenau Ffestiniog. Next day it is planned for *Merddin Emrys* to be paired with the WHR green vintage set, which will run initially to Blaenau Ffestiniog, and then through to Caernarfon. Reserve locomotives will be *Linda* and *Blanche*.

All this classic action can be yours for £120 for the weekend, or £60 per day. Because of the capacity of the vintage rolling stock, places will be limited. Priority will be given to people booking both days, and for good measure wives and partners get to join in free of charge. This promises to be a memorable weekend of rail travel and photography at its very best. For more information, or to secure your place (cheques payable to Ffestiniog Railway), write to Bob Branch, 219 Ainsworth Road, Bury, Lancs BL8 2SQ enclosing a stamped self addressed envelope.

Avon Valley aims to attract volunteers

The Avon Valley Railway is holding its annual Volunteer Open Day on Sunday 10th April at Bitton station.

The event will give members of the public the chance to go behind the scenes and see how the Railway is run and learn how they can get involved in running it themselves. Throughout the day representatives from many of the Railway's departments will be available to talk to prospective volunteers, offer guided tours and explain a bit more about the history of the line. Alongside this event, a £10 Driver Experience session will be offered, which will allow participants to drive a steam engine for a short distance within Bitton station.

Readers with enquiries about the day should email newseditor@avonvalleyrailway.org or telephone 07964 324543.

▼ **GWR Large Prairie No. 5199, currently on hire to the Churnet Valley Railway, made its first traversal of the branch to Cauldon Lowe over 26th/27th February, in the process, becoming the first known visit to the branch of a GWR loco. On 27th February, No. 5199 storms through Ipstones with the 12.15 Kingsley & Froghall to Cauldon Lowe service. Fred Kerr**

Tornado Update

Good progress is being made with work on the boiler of *Tornado* at DB Meiningen, and it is reported that all replacement stays are now in place with more than half welded into position.

In the firebox the replacement side platework has been drilled and fitted, and most of the associated welding is also now complete. Attention is currently being concentrated on the four foundation ring corners where replacements are being made and fitted. A hydraulic test will follow.

Meanwhile at York, the winter maintenance is on schedule and due to be completed by the end of March in time for the return of the boiler from Germany. The repaint into BR-Brunswick green is also making progress, with the tender complete and attention now centred on the wheels, frames, cab and boiler cladding. As much of this work is unskilled, the Trust is appealing for volunteers to help out. Contact chris.walker@a1steam.com if you think you have the required enthusiasm and time!

Running parallel with repairs to the locomotive is the work underway on the Trust's new support coach at Darlington Locomotive Works. Progress has been slow due to priority being given to the locomotive's maintenance, but a small team of volunteers and contractors are ensuring that the project keeps moving forward. Current focus is on internal fittings, including under-seat heaters.

Looking forward, after the boiler has been reunited with the frames, there will be a steam test followed by rapid reassembly of the locomotive. A light engine and loaded test run will follow in May, and a main line return, sporting its new Brunswick green livery, is scheduled for 26th May at the head of Steam Dreams' London to Bath and Bristol 'Cathedrals Express'.

▲ **GWR 'Manor' Class No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* catches the last of the evening light at Castle Hill just outside Williton during a Steam Recreations photo charter on 9th March. This was the first photographic charter to be held on the West Somerset Railway for a number of years. Stuart Chapman**

▼ **BR blue-liveried Class 20 No. 20087, with Class 33/1 No. 33109 on the rear, provides the motive power for a Rawtenstall - Heywood service, as the train passes Heap Bridge during the East Lancashire Railway's Spring Diesel Gala on 6th March. Paul Manley**

Prairie for Spa Valley

Bill Parker's Prairie No. 5521 is to continue its wanderings with a two-month visit to the Spa Valley Railway.

The locomotive, which has previously seen service in a ground-breaking visit to Poland and neighbouring countries, is booked to arrive at the line by the end of March. The Spa Valley reopens on 27th/28th March after its winter break, but it is not certain whether No. 5521 will be in place to take part in the opening weekend. A steam gala is booked for 16th/17th April, followed by a diesel gala on 23rd April.

The main attention of the Spa Valley is focused on the extension from Birchden to Eridge, which involves the heritage line running parallel with the main line for about one mile and into the old 'down' bay platform at Eridge station. The present situation is that the lease for the running line was completed with Network Rail last August, and arrangements of shared station access with the local TOC, the Southern Railway, are progressing.

This reopening will be one of the major highlights of the year, and further details will be published as soon as they are known.

CVR share issue

The Churnet Valley Railway's fourth new share issue is due to be introduced on 30th March, with the aim of providing funds to purchase shares in Moorland & City Railway.

This will provide the capital for the MCR to complete the reinstatement of the line from Leekbrook Junction to Stoke-on-Trent, as well as funding the provision of a new tea room at Cheddleton. The event will feature two return workings between Kingsley & Froghall and Cauldon Lowe with a return fare of £10, although those purchasing shares will travel free. Departures from Kingsley & Froghall will be at 10.30 and 13.00.

2011 operating seasons get off to a good start with several gala events

A busy weekend of galas approaches with several heritage lines putting on an early season show.

The round up starts at Shakerstone, where the Battlefield Line has two Great Western visitors, Prairie No. 5542 and 2800 class heavy freight 2-8-0 No. 3803, to enliven proceedings. Trains leave Shakerstone from 10.00, and at 70-minute intervals thereafter until 17.00.

Moving further east, and the Mid-Norfolk Railway has a three-day diesel gala, with Class 20 No. D8069, Class 31/4 No. 31438, Class 37/0s Nos. 37003 and 37219, Class 47/4 No. 47580, Class 50 No. 50019, and Class 73/2 No. 73210 likely to feature. An intensive timetable will be in force between Dereham and Wymondham Abbey, with services on Friday and Sunday commencing at 08.30 from Dereham, and from 08.00 on Saturday, with hourly departures through to around 17.00 on each day. Departures from Wymondham Abbey are timed one hour later than Dereham. A 'Beerex' is also likely to run on Saturday evening.

The Chasewater Railway will have a good selection of industrial locomotives in action for its gala on Saturday and Sunday, including RSH 0-6-0T *Meadfoot No. 2*, Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2648 *Linda*, Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST *Asbestos*, and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0STs Nos. 1964 and 1223 *Colin McAndrew* together with ex-BR Shunter No. 3429. A special timetable will operate, which will include passenger workings, brake van rides and a demonstration coal train.

The coming weekend will witness the first of a double-header on the West Somerset Railway, with its 'Spring Steam Gala' operating on 19th/20th March as well as the following 25th-27th March. Star turn will be the appearance of No. 70000 *Britannia*, which will be working down to Minehead from Crewe as part of its main line test run, along with 'King Arthur' No. 30777 *Sir Lamiel* and 'Manor' No. 7802 *Erlestoke Manor*, 2800 class 2-8-0 No. 2807 and 6400 class 0-6-0PT No. 6430, together with the home fleet. The sheds and workshops at Williton and Minehead will be open for inspection and the Minehead turntable will see frequent use in turning locomotives throughout the gala.

The much-maligned DMU is the feature of a special day commemorating their sterling work for British Railways at the East Lancashire Railway on 19th March. Examples of Classes 101, 108 and 122 are expected to take part, and this will be the last opportunity to see the Class 108 set, currently with No. 51562 (which was the 1,000th DMU vehicle built by BR at Derby in November 1959) in BR-blue and No. 51922 in faded early BR-green, as the latter is due to go into the paint shop soon to have a coat of BR-blue applied.

◀ **South Eastern & Chatham Railway P Class 0-6-0T No. 178 catches the early morning light with a goods train at Rock Cutting on the Bluebell Railway during a Jon Bowers Photo Charter on 8th March.**
Stuart Chapman

Strathspey complete 46512

The Strathspey Railway has announced that the overhaul of Ivatt 2MT Mogul No. 46512 has been completed and that the locomotive was rolled out at Aviemore Yard on 11th March.

The overhaul of No. 46512 follows the return to steam of Caledonian Railway 0-6-0 No. 828 last year, and has been undertaken internally, under the auspices of the Shed Foreman at Aviemore, Colin Vaughan, with financial assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Things could have been very different for No. 46512, which was withdrawn in 1967 and sent to Woodham's scrapyard in South Wales. Fortunately, in March 1973, the recently established Strathspey Railway Company was looking for suitable locos for its Aviemore to Boat of Garten line, and this one was purchased and stored initially at the Severn Valley Railway, where restoration began before being moved to Aviemore in 1982. Founding Director, Eric Cooper, was particularly responsible for its acquisition and return to service in Aviemore.

After full restoration and appropriate naming as *E V Cooper Engineer*, the locomotive ran on the Strathspey line from 2000 until 2005 when boiler tube and bearing problems prompted its withdrawal. Since then it has awaited funding for a further restoration. The work cost a total of £142,800 with the Heritage Lottery Fund contributing £50,000. The railway also adds that it is grateful for private financial contributions as well as help from several local engineering firms and Inverness College.

Elsewhere on the railway, work has started on the overhaul of LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 5025, with the boiler having been lifted in early March, prior to quotes for the boiler repair work being obtained.

The Restoration Scene

▲ Slowly but surely the component parts of SR 'West Country' Class Pacific No. 34039 *Boscastle* are coming back together inside the shed at Loughborough on the Great Central Railway. This was the view on 26th February. **Kev Gregory**

▲▶ Owned by the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust, LNER 'B1' 4-6-0 No. 61264 is pictured undergoing restoration at Barrow Hill on 5th March. The boiler is currently having major work completed at the LNWR workshops in Crewe. **Mark Baldwin**

▶ With its overhaul showing signs of nearing completion, and with part of its air smoothed casing fitted, SR 'West Country' Pacific No. 34092 *City Of Wells* will be a welcome addition to the KWVR fleet following its return to steam. It is pictured in Haworth Yard on 9th March. **James Rawnsley**

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Class 66/5 No. 66543 passes examples of Classes 185, 323, 390 and 175 at Manchester Piccadilly on 24th February, while working 'light engine' from Crewe Basford Hall to Manchester Trafford Park. **Robert Jefferys**

On transfer to the Great Eastern, after maintenance at Crewe, Class 90 No. 90039 draws the Garston to Dagenham automotive service through Hale on 9th March, with Class 92 No. 92009 *Elgar* 'dead in tow'. **Fred Kerr**

An unidentified Arriva Trains Wales Class 153 unit climbs away from Glanffrwd, on the Central Wales line, forming the 08.09 Cardiff Central to Shrewsbury service on a frosty 4th March. **Phil Trotter**

▲ Class 66/4 No. 66402 passes Levington, nears its destination, while hauling a Hams Hall to Felixstowe Docks service. This is one of five former DRS Class 66s (Nos. 66401-66405) working for GBRf which are now receiving company colours and being renumbered as '66/7s' Nos. 66733-66737. **Jonathan Kirkham**

▲ Class 66/7 No. 66724 *Drax Power Station* has charge of a unit move, conveying Class 465/9 No. 465921 past Springhead Junction en route from Slade Green to Wabtec Rail, Doncaster, on 12th March. **Lewis Smith**

▼ Class 92 No. 92032, previously named *Cesar Franck*, stands in the works yard at Brush Traction, showing off its new GBRf Europorte livery on 10th March. **Stuart West**

After a week of training runs on the Highland Main Line, DRS Class 47/4 No. 47802 *Pride of Cumbria* **and Class 47/7 No. 47712** *Pride of Carlisle* **arrive at Stirling with a Perth to Crewe Holding Sidings ECS working on 11th March. Alasdair Eadington**

Freightliner Class 86/6s Nos. 86621 and 86639 are overtaken by a southbound 'Pendolino' as they pass through Tamworth on 4th March, while working Crewe Basford Hall to Felixstowe containers. **Paul Braybrook**

DB Schenker's 'Europeanised' Class 66/0 No. 66191 heads through Stratford on 25th February, with the Bow to Heck empty Plasmor wagons. **Stuart Chapman**

14th March 2011

Driffield & East Yorkshire Rly Society
The Sidings, Middle Street South, Driffield, YO25 6PX. 'Five Decades of Photographing Trains' by John Whiteley. Starts 19.30. £2 donation requested. Contact the Secretary on 01377 254068 for further details.

Lincoln Railway Society
St Hugh's Church Hall, Harewood Crescent, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8JG. 'Railways in the East Midlands(1948-1980)' by David Ford. Meeting commences at 20.00. Entrance £3. Contact Publicity Member on 01522-705365.

Severn Valley Railway (Wolverhampton)
Old Wulfrunians Club, 253A Castlecroft Road, Wolverhampton WV3 8NA. 'History of the LNWR' by Ted Talbot. Starts 19.30. Admission £2.50. Contact Alan Davies on 01902 758882.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex)
Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. 'Update on The Brighton Atlantic Project; by David Jones. Meeting commences at 19.30. Donation of £2 requested. Contact the Secretary, Bruce Cakebread on 01273 462094 for further details.

York Railway Circle
Archbishop Holgate's School, Hull Road, York YO10 5ZA 'Now and Then' by Ken Horan. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Robin Patrick on 01904 412232 for further details.

17th March 2011

Ffestiniog Railway Society (White Rose)
Oxford Place Methodist Centre, Oxford Place, Leeds LS1 3AX. AGM/FRS Society Chairman Howard Wilson. Meeting starts 19.30. £2 donation. Contact the Secretary on 01904 331973 for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Nth West)
St David's Social Centre, 249 Wargrave Road, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 8EW. '45 Years of Railway Photography' by Les Nixon. Starts 19.30. £2 donation suggested. Contact the Secretary, Neville Bond on 01925 226473 for further details.

Marlow & District Railway Society
Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End, SL8 5SX. 'The Final Years of UK Steam' by Peter Groom. Meeting commences at 20.00. Admission £3.

Monmouthshire Rly Society
Room A10, UWCN City Campus, Usk Way, Newport, S.Wales NP20 2BP. 'Out & About in the Last 12 Months' by Hugh Gould. Starts 19.15. Admission £3 non-members.

18th March 2011

Great Western Society (Taunton)
Village Hall, Stoke St Mary, Nr Taunton TA3 5DE. 'UK Steam 1981-2010' by Hugh Ballantyne. Starts 19.30. All welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01823 334188.

19th March 2011

Great Western Society (South West)
Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay. 'A Peter Gray Evening'. Starts 18.30. All welcome. Contact 01803 336329 for details.

Irwell Vale Rly Photographers
Irwell Vale Village Church, Irwell Vale, Rossendale. 'Hellifield Part II' by Barry Atkinson. Starts 19.30. Admission £3. Contact Mike Taylor on 01282 436653 for further details.

Midland Rly Society
Derby Industrial Museum. '… and the Dominions beyond the Seas: the Midland's Irish strategies and its Vice-Royalty in Ulster' by David Pearson. Starts 13.30. Contact 01462 451090 for further details.

21st March 2011

GCR Society (Spinkhill)
The Angel Hote 26 College Road, Spinkhill, Sheffield S21 3YB. 'Digging out the Old Negatives' by Ken Horan. Starts 19.30. Contact Frank Greaves on 01909 473927 for further details.

Plymouth Rly Circle
St Edward's Church Hall, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4PG. 'North Cornwall Railways from Exeter to the Atlantic Ocean' by Bernard Mills. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission Members £1, Visitors £2.

24th March 2011

Stevenage Loco Society
The Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, London Road, Stevenage SG1 1XN. 'Diversions - Modern Traction' by Kim Fulbrook. Starts 19.45. Admission £2. Contact 07803 046076 for further details.

25th March 2011

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesent DA12 1BB. 'The Routermaster Bus - Gravesend Area' by George Marcar. Starts 19.45. Contact Bob Poole on 01474 326232.

Great Western Society (North West)
St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford, Warrington WA4 1DN. 'Visitor from Didcot - Laurence Waters'. Starts 19.30. All welcome.

Scarborough Rly Society
Scarborough Library, Vernon Rd, '60s Scenes Rediscovered' by Geoff Boyes. Meeting starts 19.45.

Shropshire Rly Society
The Gateway, Chester Street, Shrewsbury. 'Chiltern Rail and Its Future' by Adrian Shooter. Starts 19.30. £3 Donation. Contact 01743 243295 for details

31st March 2011

NYMR (York)
New Earswick Sports & Social Club, White Rose Avenue, York YO32 4AG. 'Steam On and Off the Rails' by David Warren. Starts 19.30. Contact B. Blundell on 01904 764648.

Stevenage Loco Society
The Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, London Road, Stevenage SG1 1XN. 'Steam Photography at its Best' by John Leszczynski. Starts 19.45. Admission £2. Contact 07803 046076 for details.

4th April 2011

North Yorkshire Moors Railway (Northallerton)
Northallerton Town Cricket Club, Farndale Avenue, Northallerton. 'Streamlined Trains' by Chris Nettleton. Starts 19.30. Admission £1.50. Contact Ian McInnes on 01642 767233 for further details.

Warwickshire Rly Society
The Lamp Tavern, Barford Street, Highgate, Birmingham. 'French Steam in the Sixties' by Hugh Ballatyne. Starts 19.30. Contact Don Taggart on 01746 710676 for details

5th April 2011

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesent DA12 1BB. 'Gravesham & District Railways' by Bob Poole. Starts 19.45. Contact Bob Poole on 01474 326232 for details.

Locomotive & Carriage Institution
55 Broadway, London. '25 Years of the Spa Valley Railway' by Brian Halford. Starts 18.00. Contact Stuart Smith at smithstuart@btinternet.com.

North East Essex Railway Association
1st Floor, The Community Centre, The Triangle Centre, Frinton-on-Sea. 'North Wales Narrow Gauge' by Tony Baxter. Meeting commences 19.45. Admission £1.50. Contact Roger Harvey on 01255 677165.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'A Railway Miscellany' by Martyn Davies. Starts 19.30. Admission £2. Contact John Goodrich on 02380 670028 for details.

Weston super Mare Railway Society
Function Room, Conservative Club, Alexandra Parade, Weston super Mare. 'A Colour-Rail Journey' by Paul Chancellor. Starts 20.00. Contact Lionel Jones on 01934 628289 for further details.

7th April 2011

RCTS (Milton Keynes)
The Crown, Market Square, Stony Stratford MK11 1BE. '30 Years of BR Traction 1981-2010' by Hugh Ballantyne. Meeting starts 19.30.

8th April 2011

Altrincham Electric Rly Preservation Society
Altrincham Methodist Church Hall, Barington Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA1 1HF. 'Tornado ' A Steam Loco for the 21st Century' by Graham Nicholas. Starts 19.30. Admission £3. Contact Andrew Macfarlane on 0161 928 9394.

Great Western Society (Swindon)
Lawn Community Centre, Guildford Avenue, off Windsor Road, Lawn, Swindon SN3 1JE. 'Aspects of the G.W.R., Part 2' by Peter Lugg. Starts 19.30. Visitors welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01793 495976.

Should your society information be listed on this page?

If so, then please email the details to the editor, remembering to include the date, starting time and location, together with details of the event, speaker and entrance charges if applicable. It is not necessary, but helpful to people, if you can also include a contact name and phone number/email address that can be published.

Railway Herald reserves the right to edit details entered in this section, which may also be displayed on our online events diary. The information is believed to be correct at the time of publication.

Web Links

Links to the various society websites can be found by clicking here. Is yours missing? Send the details to the editor.

▼ **A wider array of loco classes than Barrow Hill ever saw in British Rail days! From left to right, Class 37/0 No. 37057, Class 26/0 No. 26007, Class 83 No. E3035, Class 85 No. 85101, Class 81 No. 81002, Class 37/0 No. 37275 and Class 33/1 No. 33108 stand around the turntable on 5th March. Mark Baldwin**

Scarborough Rly Society
Scarborough Library, Vernon Road, Scarborough. 'Films from the Archives of the National Railway Museum, York' by Lynn Parick & Chris Hogg. Meeting starts at 19.45.

Shropshire Rly Society
The Gateway, Chester Street, Shrewsbury. 'Sheds Part 7' by Chris Banks. Meeting starts 19.30. £3 Donation. Contact 01743 243295 for further details.

9th April 2011
Bournemouth Rly Club
Winton Community Centre, All Purpose Room, Heron Court Road, Winton, Bournemouth BH9 1DE 'European Extremes - From Finland to Portugal 1959 to 2010' by Alan Trickett. Starts 14.30. £2 donation. Contact 01202 742099 for details.

Midland Rly Society
Edale Room, Hallmark (previously Midland Hotel), Derby. 'AGM'. Starts 11.00. Contact the Secretary on 01482 451090.

11th April 2011
Lincoln Railway Society
St Hugh's Church Hall, Harewood Crescent, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8JG. 'All Change at Grantham' by John Clayton. Starts 20.00, £3 entrance. Contact 01522-705365 for further details.

Severn Valley Railway (Wolverhampton)
Old Wulfrunians Club, 253A Castlecroft Road, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton WV3 8NA. 'Moving the Coal' by Terry McCarthy. Starts 19.30. Contact Alan Davies on 01902 758882 for details.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex)
Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. 'More Photographs from the Camera of the Late J.J.Smith of Eastbourne' by Tony Hillman. Starts 19.30. Contact Bruce Cakebread on 01273 462094 for details.

York Railway Circle
Archbishop Holgate's School, Hull Road, York YO10 5ZA. 'Ten Years 1999 - 2009' by Anthony Hicks. Starts 19.30. Contact Robin Patrick on 01904 412232 or at locopatrick@aol.com for further details.

12th April 2011
8E Railway Association
The Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich, CW9 5RB. 'Steam in the 60s' by Edgar Richards. Meeting starts at 19.45. Contact Paul Tench on 07790 486735 for fruther details

Great Western Society (Bristol)
BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol BS34 7RG. 'The Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Light Railway' by Paul Gregory. Starts 19.45. Visitors welcome. Contact 01454 324230 for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North London)
2 Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, London N22. 'Kiwi and Kangaroo Rail - visits to New Zealand and Australia 1995 - 2005. by Brian Manktelow. Starts 19.00. Contact Tony Stratford at stratford_tony@hotmail.com.

Monmouthshire Railway Society
Room A10, UWCN City Campus, Usk Way, Newport, S.Wales NP20 2BP. 'An Evening of Stills & DVD Video, J.Clemmens Collection' by Mike Clemmens. Starts 19.15. Admission £3 non-members.

13th April 2011
Permanent Way Institution (Birmingham)
The Gateway Centre, Shrewsbury. 'Section AGM'. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Jon Wells on 07714 064898 or at jwells@carillionpic.com for further details.

Swiss Railways Society (London)
The Model Railway Club, Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9AT. 'Branch AGM and Supporting Programme'. Starts 19.00. £2 Donation. Contact Ron Dawes on 020 8660 3532 for further details.

14th April 2011
Bath Railway Society
Bath Green Park Station Meeting Room, Bath. 'Yeovil to Oxford... Proposal' by Tim Pearce. Starts 19.30. Contact Kevin Plummer (evenings) on 01225 312564 for further details.

Continental Rly Circle
St Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ. 'Cuba Revisited' by Lawrence Marshall. Starts 19.15. Admission £2. Contact Adrian Palmer on 01932 850624 for further details.

Ffestiniog Railway Society (White Rose)
Oxford Place Methodist Centre, Oxford Place, Leeds LS1 3AX. TBA. Starts 19.30. £2 donation. Contact the Secretary on 01904 331973 for further details.

Locomotive Club of Gt. Britain (St Albans)
United Reform Church, Watford Road, Chiswell Green, Nr St Albans. 'Westwards from Dover; Looking for Steam in 1960' by Peter Groom. Starts 19.30. £2 Donation.

15th April 2011
Great Western Society (Taunton)
Village Hall, Stoke St Mary, nr Taunton TA3 5DE. 'Fun with Southern Steam in the 1960s' by Malcolm Garner. Start 19.30. Visitors welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01823 334188 for further details.

16th April 2011
Great Western Society (South West)
Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay. 'Archive Cine Film' by Paul Dibbens. Starts 18.30. Visitors welcome. Contact 01803 336329 for further details.

18th April 2011
NYMR (York)
New Earswick Sports & Social Club, White Rose Avenue, York YO32 4AG. 'The Derwent Valley Rly' by J. Stockwell. Starts 19.30. Contact B. Blundell on 01904 764648 for details

21st April 2011
Locomotive Club of Gt Britain (North West)
St David's Social Centre, 249 Wargrave Road, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 8EW. 'Industrials in the Age of Steam' by John Sloane. Starts 19.30. £2 donation. Contact Neville Bond on 01925 226473 for further details.

Marlow & District Railway Society
Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End, SL8 5SX. 'A Tour of South America' by Ron White. Starts 20.00. Admission £3.

22nd April 2011
Shropshire Rly Society
The Gateway, Chester Street, Shrewsbury. 'Society AGM'. Starts 19.30. £3 Donation. Contact the General Secretary on 01743 243295.

28th April 2011
Stevenage Locomotive Society
The Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, London Road, Stevenage SG1 1XN. 'The Peter Bland Collection Part 1' by Bryan Cross. Starts 19.45. Admission £2. Contact Alan Pitt on 07803 046076 for further details.

29th April 2011
Scarborough Railway Society
Scarborough Library, Vernon Road, Scarborough. 'Talk by a Well Known Engine Driver on the NYMR and elsewhere' by Chris Cubitt. Meeting commences at 19.45.

30th April 2011
Bournemouth Railway Club
Winton Methodist Community Centre, All Purpose Room, Junction Alma Road & Heron Court Road, Winton, Bournemouth BH9 1DE 'Built by Bulleid - Part 2' by Club Members. Starts 19.30. £2 donation. Contact Martyn Thresh on 01202 742099 for further details.

2nd May 2011
North Yorkshire Moors Railway (Northallerton)
Northallerton Town Cricket Club, Farndale Avenue, Northallerton. Members' Evening & End of Season Social. Starts 19.30. Admission £1.50. Contact Ian McInnes on 01642 767233 for further details.

3rd May 2011
Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesent DA12 1BB. 'Bring a Thing 2011' Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Bob Poole on 01474 326232 for details.

Locomotive & Carriage Institution
55 Broadway, London. 'The Royal Train - An Illustrated Presentation' by Michael Foster. Starts 18.00. Contact Stuart Smith at smithstuart@btinternet.com for further details.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'The Isle of Man' by Keith Burbidge. Starts 19.30. Admission £2. Contact John Goodrich on 02380 670028 for details.

Weston super Mare Railway Society
Function Room, Conservative Club, Alexandra Parade, Weston super Mare. 'Steam on Road and Rail' by Malcolm Ranieri. Starts 20.00. Contact Lionel Jones on 01934 628289 for further details.

5th May 2011
RCTS (Milton Keynes)
The Crown, Market Square, Stony Stratford MK11 1BE. 'Euston to Bletchley in Steam & Early Diesel Days' by Ron White. Starts 19.30.

Back Issues

All back issues are available on our website, 24 hours a day - visit **www.railwayherald.com** and click on 'Magazine'.

Rear Cover Caption

DCR-liveried Class 31/6 No. 31601 and Class 31/4 No. 31454 head north along the Settle & Carlisle line as they pass Waitby Common, near Kirkby Stephen, with Rail-Blue Charters' excursion from Lincoln. Anthony Roberts

Magazine Information

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