Railway Herald

Issue 300 1st February 2012

In this issue...

22 Britannia works the 'Royal' Train

36 The Decision Makers : John Smith, GBRailfreight

Richard Tuplin

News Headlines

11 GB Railfreight marks green commitment at Drax Power Station

14 Fleet mechnical and reliability upgrade for all 14 Class 180 DMUs

25 Main frames for new 4700 Class to be cut this month

Regular Columns

4 From the Editor's Desk
An opinion piece from the editor, focusing on today's railway scene.

15 Light Rail & Metro
The latest news from the light rail systems around the country, together with information on the various metro systems.

18 Railtour Listings
An overview of all known steam and diesel-hauled charter and excursion trains throughout the UK for the coming weeks.

22 Preservation World
An exciting round-up on news and information from the heritage world, including a run-down of forthcoming events.

39 World News
The latest world news from railways around the globe.

50 Reader Comment
The opportunity to have your say, or to ask the question that you want answering.

51 Society Diary
Full round up of forthcoming talks, slideshows and society events.

Front Cover:

TOP: Freightliner Class 70 No. 70016 passes under Warrington Bank Quay station while working empty coal hoppers from Fiddlers Ferry Power Station to Hunterston on 26th January. **Geraint Jones**

BOTTOM LEFT: One of the newest locomotives to enter traffic in Belgium, SNCB No.1801 arrives at Brussels Nord with the 08:12 Eupen to Ostend service. **Barry Adams**

BOTTOM RIGHT: LMS Stanier 'Black 5' 4-6-0s Nos. 44871 and 45407 pass Birkett Common with the return leg of the 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' on 28th January. **Richard Whiteley**

Railway Herald

Issue 300 1st February 2012

Editor
Richard Tuplin

Contributing Editor
Brian Morrison

Railtour Editor
John Whitehouse

World News Editor
Keith Fender

Narrow Gauge News Editor
David Lloyd-Jones

Heritage News Correspondant
Fred Kerr

News Researcher
Bill Turvill

Editorial Office
Phone: (UK) (01904) 500175 (09.30-17.30)
(US) (347) 708 1797 (08.00-17.00 EST)
Email: editor@railwayherald.com
Address: Railway Herald Magazine, PO Box 252, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire. United Kingdom. DN17 2WY
Online: www.railwayherald.com

Railway Herald is published weekly. The editorial team can be contacted at firstname.surname@railwayherald.com, or by contacting the editorial office.

Advertising
Please visit our dedicated web section at www.railwayherald.com/advertising, email advertising@railwayherald.com, or contact David Smith on 01775 767184 or Matt Tipton on 01780 484634.

Editorial Contributions
Accepted photographs remain the copyright property of the photographer. We reserve the right to hold for future use any image or article submitted. All material is sent at the contributor's risk and neither Railway Herald, the Editor or Railway Herald Limited can be held responsible for loss or damage howsoever caused. The opinions expressed in Railway Herald are not necessarily those of the Editor or staff.

No part of this magazine should be reproduced, sold or hired in any way without the prior written consent of the publisher. However, ilt is permitted to print a copy of the magazine for the purchasers' personal use.

Railway Herald Subscriptions
You can access your subscription account online through our website, 24 hours a day - 7 days a week by visiting www.railwayherald.com/myaccount

You can use the My Account section to view your account status, change your address, renew your subscription, and also to contact the editorial team.

Subscriptions to Railway Herald can be obtained online 24 hours a day, by visiting www.railwayherald.com/subscribe.

If you have any queries that specifically relate to your subscription, please email subscriptions@railwayherald.com or phone +44 (0) 1904 500175 (0900-1700 UK), or from the US call (347) 708 1797 (0800-1700 EST/ 0600-1400 PST).

A one-year (48 issue) subscription rate is £18 (UK). Payments can made online using any major credit/debit card, Paypal or Google Checkout.

Letters to the Editor
We welcome comments, please send them to letters@railwayherald.com. Due to the high volume received we cannot respond to each letter. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

Back Issues
All editions of Railway Herald prior to Issue 300 are available to download free of charge in PDF format from our website at www.railwayherald.com/backissues. From Issue 300 onwards, they can be purchased through the same website.

Railway Herald is published by **Railway Herald Limited**, in association with Ian Allan Publishing Limited.
© Copyright Railway Herald Limited 2012.

All rights reserved. Railway Herald magazine is also responsible (except where otherwise stated) for the operation of the railwayherald.com website. Produced within the United Kingdom.

ISSN 1751-8091

Welcome to the new look

A new era for the magazine has arrived!

It is with great pleasure and much pride that I welcome readers to Issue 300, the first of our new expanded look.

For myself, this is the conclusion of a two-year project to update the magazine and the technology behind it, as well as expanding the content and bringing railway publishing truly into the 21st century.

To provide the additional coverage, we have increased the Editorial Team. The previous team members of Brian Morrison and John Whitehouse are still with us, and joining them are Keith Fender, Fred Kerr, David Lloyd-Jones and Daniel Wilson, to report on even more news from around the railway scene, both at home and abroad.

For a long-time I have personally had a wish to bring moving images to the magazine page, but while the technology to do this existed, it was not a feasible option for the company behind the magazine, for a variety of reasons. With our new 'digital edition' format, that is no longer the case, and this issue sees the start of what I believe, is a revolution in railway publishing, with text, still imagery and video content being combined on the page, certainly for the first time in a UK railway publication. We are interested to hear readers' views on what they think to it. We have established a team of cameramen around the country, and indeed the world, to provide quality video footage, and some news reports will also be video-based. There is no special software needed, it just works.

Why are things changing?

A number of readers may ask why are we changing the status quo? Over the course of the past seven years, Railway Herald has evolved essentially from a newsletter update, produced as a hobby, to a respected weekly magazine that is now a full time job for two people, and part-time for two more. Many people do not realise the immense amount of work, time and effort that goes into the production of the title, and we were rapidly approaching the stage where it could not continue.

All businesses need to cover their costs and make a profit to survive, Railway Herald is no different, although in this case, any profit will allow us to continue to build a bigger and better magazine, and move with the times. While we are grateful to our advertisers, without whom Railway Herald would not, and could not, have continued this long, it was obvious that a bigger business plan was needed in order for the title to continue - hence the changes that have come about. Although we hope that readers will see that the introduction of subscriptions has brought with it a better magazine, with a wide scope of topics, more news and a bigger area of coverage.

Many readers have previously expressed a comment that they look forward to, and enjoy, the magazine every week ... to all readers, this really is the time to make your voice heard and subscribe.

Subscriptions

The biggest change that is coming at the end of the month relates to Railway Herald becoming a subscription-based magazine. We know there will be numerous arguments for and against this move, but after seven years it was a vital decision, and one that was taken with much caution. However, I do believe that at just 36p per issue for UK readers, our 12-month subscription option offers superb value for money. In addition, all subscriptions will provide access to our new online news service, and the website will continue to grow into an increasing source of information on a variety of aspects and topics. We have a number of exciting plans for 2012, much of which has been made possible by the changes that have taken place with the magazine. So, to provide you with a good insight into the new look, the new style and indeed, the new magazine, the first four issues are available free of charge. From Issue 304 on 29th February, the subscription service will start. Readers can subscribe online at any time, for either one, three, six or twelve months, and any subscriptions purchased before 29th February will automatically start from Issue 304.

The subscription system does not affect the **Imaging Centre** on the website, which will remain free of charge to view and to upload images to. We have no intention of charging for this service, and are encouraged that over two million images a month are currently being looked at. The Railtour Listings on the website will also stay free of charge. The paid section of the website, which is automatically included with all subscriptions, will expand over the coming months, to include new indepth sections, and exclusive video content.

For contributors there is a further change as *Railway Herald* will commence paying reproduction fees for the photographs and video content used in the magazine from 29th February. While the fees will be set at a lower than ideal level to start with, it does mark a turning point in the history of the title. We need to prove the business plan, from which point onwards we can build on the title, although we are committed to paying for images.

The new Readers Comment page towards the rear of the magazine, also provides the opportunity for readers to express their views and opinions on the issues of the day, be it High Speed 2, or exemplary customer service - we will choose a selection of emails from those recieved each week to appear in the column.

From 1st February *Railway Herald* is produced as a Joint Venture with Ian Allan Publishing, a move that will provide support and assistance to continue improving the magazine.

We hope that readers will like the new magazine, and the revised format. I personally believe that the title feels much more like a traditional magazine, but in a modern way, and having jumped from the average 24 pages up to between 40 and 48 per issue, provides double the content. It is an exciting time for railway publishing, and for Railway Herald in particular, and we hope that you will choose to remain a valued reader and join us on the new phase of Railway Herald development.

Richard Tuplin

Richard Tuplin, Editor

Below: DRS Class 20/3s Nos. 20301 and 20305, with classmates Nos. 20302 and 20304 on the rear, pass the site of the demolished Drakelow Power Station on 27th January, while working a new rake of 'S' stock to Amersham for delivery to London Underground. *Stuart Hillis*

NEW RELEASES

LOCO REVIEW - 2012 Edition

"Simply the best - it just gets better and better ...."

- 300 high quality colour images AND lots of stunning full page photos
- contributions from the UK's leading photographers
- printed on high quality art paper / expansive and informative captions

Here's a sneak preview of what's inside:

Class 60 Journal : Plenty of great 'Tug' action including new celebrity No.60007, plus Nos.010, 011, 013, 015, 019, 039, 040, 049, 071, 074, 084, 096 and 'Tata Steel' No.60099.

Class 37 Turns : Loads of DRS 37s in action on a variety of trains, diverted flasks and on-hire to DBS. Plus, heritage 'tractors' and some '97/3s' too.

"This book is magnificent from start to finish .... there is nothing to fault this book on."
Railways Illustrated (February 2012)

Freight Flows / Loco Gallery : ***lots of exciting action including ....***

Deltic 'R.S.G' - Makes the national news headlines working GBRf Alumina trips between North Blyth and Lynemouth, plus an outing on 6E45 over the West Highland Line!

Weardale Coal - Colas Rail break into the coal market working coal trains over the private Weardale Railway from Wolsingham to Scunthorpe steelworks and Ratcliffe p.s.

Rock Armour - Freight returns to the West Somerset Railway with DBS and Mendip Rail Class 59s bringing boulders to Minehead to strenghten sea defences.

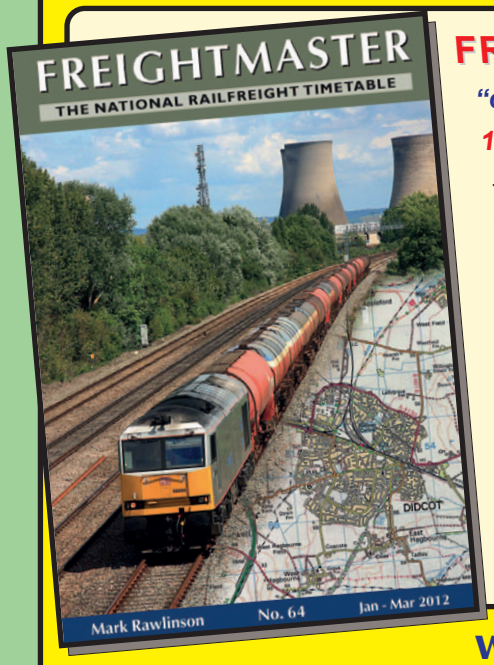
Yorkshire RHTTs - Six different 'heritage' Class 20s working the York-based RHTT.

Plus lots more, steam too, and some absolutely stunning photographic delights!

NOSTALGIA .... 50 pages devoted to great action from the archives with 'guest' photographers dipping into their collections to celebrate important landmarks for:

'Deltics'	'Hymeks'	Class 46s	GM Class 59/0s
BRCW Class 27s	Network South East	'Speedlink'	Woodhead Line

£18.95 **224 pages**



FREIGHTMASTER : No.64, January to March 2012

"completely updated following the latest WTT timetable change"

160 pages to bring you details of:

- timings of freight services and which day(s) they run
- the busiest times and days to visit particular locations
- the busiest places to see particular locomotives
- the best places to see particular types of train / wagons

76 Location Timetables ***(07:00 - 23:00hrs)***

Special Feature ****DIDCOT****

15 pages of colour images and Ordnance Survey map extracts to illustrate the freight scene in and around Didcot.

£14.95

Special Offer

Both Books
£32
(Freightmaster and Loco Review) inclusive of postage & packaging

www.freightmasterpublishing.co.uk

Freightmaster Publishing, PO Box 2986, BRISTOL, BS2 2BQ

Credit / Debit Card Hotline : 01179 - 548204 Mon to Fri (9am - 5pm)

Why subscribe to Railway Herald?

Subscriptions to Railway Herald will provide access to the new-style weekly magazine from 29th February onwards.

By subscribing you are getting access to:

- ✓ The bigger 'Railway Herald' magazine EVERY Wednesday - Britain's only weekly digital railway title
- ✓ Access to the latest news from around the UK, both in the magazine and through the online news pages
- ✓ 'Access All Areas' of the website, including forthcoming sections that will take an in-depth look at key ongoing news stories.**
- ✓ Exclusive video content both on the website and within the pages of the magazine.***
- ✓ Enhanced facilities to upload and share photographs on the Imaging Centre**

All of this from only 38p per week

What are the options for subscribing to Railway Herald?
A yearly subscription for only **£18*,** which covers the 48 issues published in each Calendar year, provides the best value, with each issue costing only 38p!

Readers can also choose to subscribe for a short period, with subscriptions for one, three and six months available on our website - plus, if you decide not to subscribe you can always obtain individual issues - priced at 99p each. The same applies to all back issues from Issue 300 onwards.

* - price includes UK VAT at 20%. Readers outside the EU will automatically have the VAT removed.
** - Includes areas online that are not currently available, and will launch in the coming months.
*** - Not all video content is exclusive, some may be available through other sources.

Discover
the new magazine

FREE FOR FOUR WEEKS

Subscriptions start 29th February

Because the new magazine brings with it a significant number of changes, a larger editorial team, better news content, and new columns, we want readers to explore the title over the coming weeks, so both the magazine and the website is open-access, and free until late February!

Subscriptions can be purchased at any time - and any purchased during the free trial period will automatically commence from 29th February.

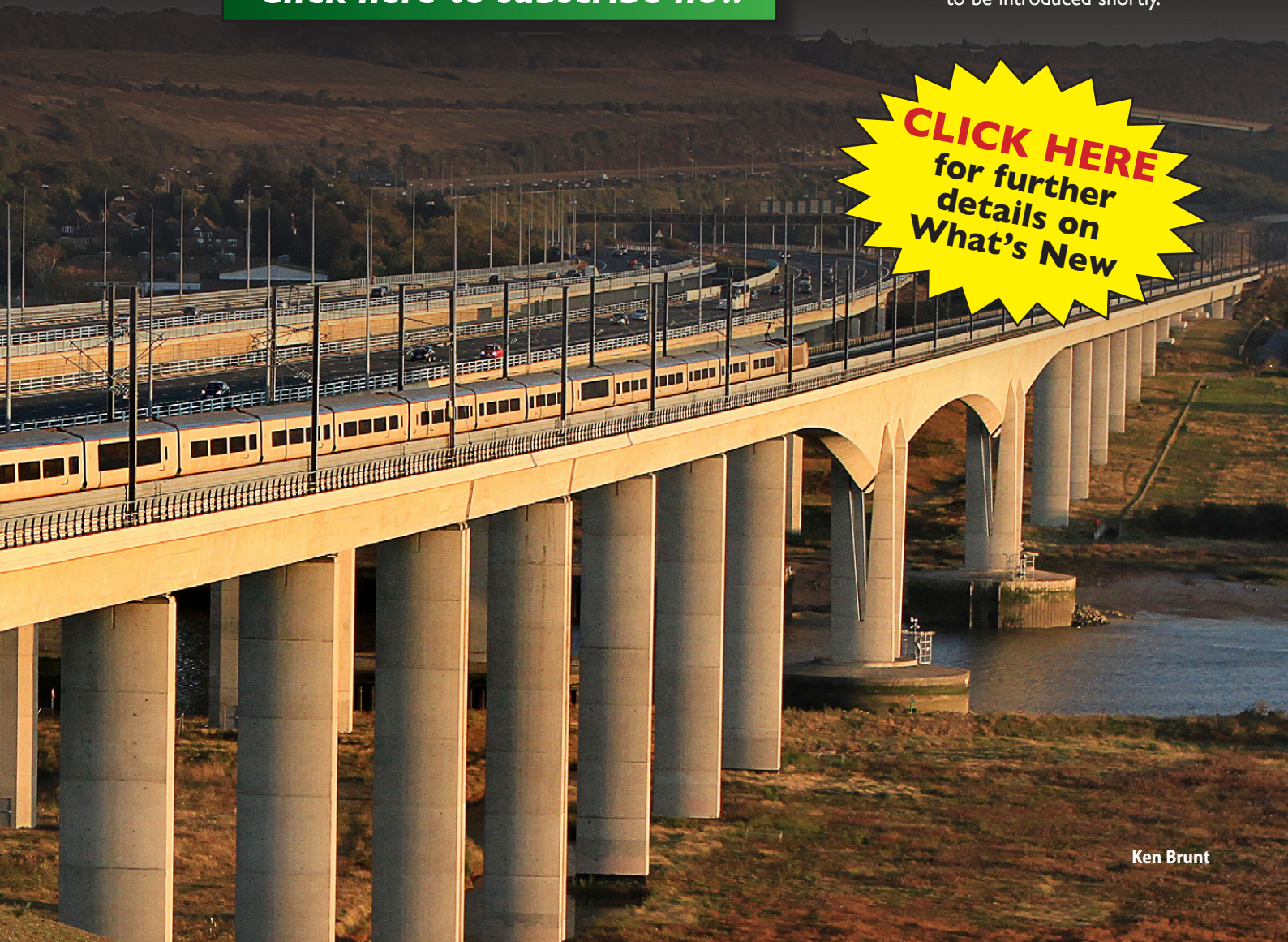
PLUS! Purchase an annual subscription before 29th February and you will receive 13 months for the price of 12!

Click here to subscribe now

Imaging Centre

Railway Herald's popular Imaging Centre will remain free to view for all, and if you want to join the hundreds of other photographers that use the site to share their imagery, you can even upload your images free of charge, by signing up for a **FREE** account.

The free accounts do not provide access to the magazine. Paid subscribers that use the Imaging Centre will benefit from new features to be introduced shortly.



Ken Brunt

Exported A4s will return to UK this autumn

The National Railway Museum has confirmed that after extensive talks, a formal agreement has been reached to temporarily repatriate two LNER 'A4' Gresley Pacific locomotives.

The National Railroad Museum, Green Bay, Wisconsin, will release No. 60008 *Dwight D Eisenhower* and Exporail, the Canadian National Railway Museum in Montreal, has agreed to release No. 60010 *Dominion of Canada*. Both locomotives will be loaned to York Museum for a two-year period.

The move will allow all six remaining 'A4' Pacifics to be lined-up for the first time since the end of steam, with the visitors also playing a key role in celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the run by Mallard down Stoke Bank on 3rd July 1938, when it set the world record for steam traction of 126mph, which still exists today.

Steve Davies, Director of the National Railway Museum, said: "I am delighted that the two museums involved have shared in the National Railway Museum's vision to make this happen, and I have no doubt that what is being planned will be beneficial to all parties".

Dominion of Canada and *Dwight D Eisenhower* will be the central feature of a series of events being planned to mark this historic anniversary, and discussions with the owners of the privately-owned UK-based 'A4s' are being conducted in order to generate a number of line-up opportunities involving all six 'A4s' at a number of locations, of which York will be the principal venue.

The movement of the locomotives is presently being planned with the intention of drawing on direct industry sponsorship for much of the activity involved. And it is hoped that both will be moved this coming autumn.

Details of an appeal for cash to support the project will be circulated separately if this is deemed desirable and/or necessary.

Steve Davies added: "We hope that the entire UK railway enthusiast community will appreciate and applaud the ambition involved in taking forward this project, pay tribute to the willingness of the owners of these locomotives to be equal partners in this venture, and of course visit this never-to-be-repeated series of events in 2013".

Below: 'A4' Pacific No. 60008 *Dwight D. Eisenhower* **leaves Welwyn North tunnel on 17th April 1954, rostered well below its capabilities with a King's Cross-bound semi-fast service from Peterborough.** *Brian Morrison*

Below: Hauling an express parcels for King's Cross, 'A4' Pacific No. 60010 *Dominion of Canada* **passes through Potters Bar cutting on 28th September 1952, prior to the track being widened.** *Brian Morrison*

Australian steel maker moves traffic from ship to rail

Australian steel maker BlueScope Steel is to sell its iconic ship, the *Iron Monarch* **after reaching a deal with rail operator Pacific National to transport hot-rolled coil from Port Kembla, New South Wales, to Western Port, Victoria by rail.**

The agreement will result in BlueScope moving some 650,000 tonnes of hot-rolled coil annually from later this year.

While the Maritime Union of Australia Southern NSW Branch Secretary, Garry Keane, says the move, announced late January, was a "real kick in the guts" for maritime workers, the decision follows closure of Western Port's hot strip mill as part of a BlueScope restructure.

It is understood that the compelling option to move all hot-rolled coil from Port Kembla to Western Port by rail, included savings of around A$1million per month over the current cost and also improved material handling efficiencies.

While the 30-year-old *Iron Monarch* had a A$17 million facelift last year, a BlueScope spokesman said the ship was fitted out to carry slab steel and would require costly modifications to accommodate hot-rolled coil.

Right: GE-powered Pacific National NR-class Nos. NR71, NR62, NR80 and NR45 exert their combined 16,100hp on the rising 1-in-99 grade as they power a steel products train away from Goulburn in New South Wales on 23rd January. *Leon Oberg*

Mallard and GNR 'Atlantic' for 'Fab4'

It has been confirmed that the 'Fab 4' event at Barrow Hill, to be held on 13th-15th April will now be joined by three extra East Coast exhibits.

The National Railway Museum has confirmed that LNER 'A4' Pacific No. 4468 *Mallard*, LNER 'V2' 2-6-2 No. 4771 *Green Arrow* and GNR 'C1' Atlantic No. 251 will all be present at the event.

The additional attractions, takes the proposed line-up to 17 locomotives in total, the stars of which will be the first A1, A2, A3, A4 line-up in preservation history, with 'A1' No. 60163 *Tornado*, 'A2' No. 60532 *Blue Peter*, 'A3' No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* and 'A4' No. 4492 *Dominion of New Zealand*.

Steve Davies added, "It is widely known that the NRM is absolutely committed to 4472 *Flying Scotsman's* appearance at the 'Fab Four' event. This is a gathering, which in many respects has provided the NRM with the ultimate incentive to have the world's most famous steam locomotive completed in accordance with the revised restoration schedule. We look forward to the A3 taking its rightful place in this classic locomotive line up in the company of *Mallard*, V2 *Green Arrow* and the GNR large-boilered Atlantic No. 251, which will be present at Barrow Hill en route to its new home at York".

The NRM has confirmed that *Flying Scotsman* will be appearing in its LNER wartime black livery at Barrow Hill, before returning to Bury for final fitting of components and commissioning.

Several of the locomotives at the Gala will take it in turn to work passenger trains and there will be numerous opportunities to see the stars of the show lined up in the shed yard to recreate that 'Top Shed' feel or the Atlantic No. 251 turning on the Roundhouse turntable. Main line-registered 'Royal' Class 47 No. *47798 Prince William* will undertake the movement of *Mallard, Green Arrow* and 251 from York to Barrow Hill and back.

Advance tickets are now on sale through the Roundhouse ticket agent, The Ticket Factory, and can be purchased online at www.theticketfactory.com or by telephone on 0844 581 4939, although readers should note that tickets are available from Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

Advance tickets offer a saving on the 'on-the-day' price, and start from £17 for Adults, and £14 for Senior Citizens, with family tickets starting at £41. The organisers have stated that should advance tickets reach pre-determined levels, then on the day gate admission may be restricted or withdrawn.

'Fab 4' Loco Line-up

'C1'	No. 251	
'11F'	No. 506	*Butler-Henderson*
'Y7'	No. 1310	
'1F'	No. 1708	
'N2'	No. 1744	
'A4'	No. 4468	*Mallard*
'V2'	No. 4471	*Green Arrow*
'A3'	No. 4472	*Flying Scotsman*
'A4'	No. 4492	*Dominion of New Zealand*
'J17'	No. 8217	
'5MT'	No. 45110	
'A1'	No. 60163	*Tornado*
'A2'	No. 60532	*Blue Peter*
'B1'	No. 61264	
'J72'	No. 69023	

Plus Industrial Tanks:

Peckett	No. 2000
Hawthorn Leslie	*Henry*

Tangmere heads north to Carnforth

Below: SR 'Battle of Britain' Pacific No 34067 *Tangmere* passes Rugby on 26th January on a Southall to WCRC Carnforth 'light engine' working, bringing the locomotive back north for its winter maintenance. The next main line working for the loco is on 11th March from London to Bristol. *Chris Horkley*

Pathfinder release 2012 charter programme

There are several interesting new tours from Pathfinder, which has announced new dates.

The new charters will be reviewed in detail next issue, but a sample of what is on offer includes *Britannia* and *Duke of Gloucester* double-heading between Bristol Temple Meads and Plymouth, an 'A4' west from Hexham, DRS Class 37s to Moorswater and Heathfield and DRS Class 20s into Southampton Docks and around the Eastleigh Depot Loop.

Cheshire Cat Railtours (CCR), which operate under the same umbrella as Pathfinder, has also announced a programme operating from April to December, with visits planned to Edinburgh, Bath and Salisbury, together with itineraries such as the Settle & Carlisle, Cumbrian Coast and Central Wales lines.

Weymouth Turntable?

Network Rail has confirmed that West Coast Railway Company has plans to install a turntable at Weymouth.

RH understands WCRC already has a suitable turntable and the proposal is to install it at Jersey Sidings.

An initial meeting has been held between Network Rail, WCRC, SWT and the local councils and no immediate issues have arisen. NR says further details and timescales are awaited from WCRC.

What is NewsXtra?

The new NewsXtra column aims to bring the very latest railway news to readers.

So those stories that may have arrived right on our press deadline and would previously have been held until the following week, can now be found here!

NEWSDESK

Light Rail & Metro	15
Irish View	17
Railtour News	18
Preservation World	22
World News	44

Passengers do not feel rail travel offers value for money

The latest National Passenger Survey, conducted by Passenger Focus in autumn last year, shows that while overall satisfaction remains high, the general feeling among passengers is that rail travel does not represent good value for money.

Of the 27,960 passengers surveyed, only 46% thought that the price of their ticket represented good value, a decline since the 49% 12-months earlier. This however, is the only key statistic that is on the negative side. Overall satisfaction with the journey remained stable at 84%, while the overall satisfaction on individual TOCs varied between 77% and 95%, the worst performing operators being National Express East Anglia (77%) and First Captal Connect (80%), while the highest were open-access operators Grand Central (95%) and Heathrow Express (93%).

Responding to the survey, Michael Roberts, Chief Executive of the Association of Train Operating Companies, said: "Overall customer satisfaction remains at a record high level, though the survey results by route show that while there has been progress in many areas, there is no room for complacency.

We recognise that value for money scores remain lower than others and the whole industry needs to focus on tackling costs as well as improving services".

While acknowledging that there are still improvements to make, SouthEastern achieved 83% satisfaction among its passengers, the highest figure ever by any operator of the South Eastern network.

The figures from both franchised and open-access operators continue to prove that the industry still has much work to do in how it deals with delays. While a number of factors contribute towards the answer to this question, including the number of passengers sampled, and potentially the indivdual passengers mood on the day, on average of only 38% of are satisfied with how delays are handled. Grand Central again tops the list as the best at dealing with operational problems with a 69% satisfaction rating, while ScotRail (34%), First Capital Connect (33%), and National Express East Anglia (32%) all score the lowest. It is interesting to note that the biggest change in customer option is London Overground, which improved by 15% year-on-year, while Chiltern sustained the biggest drop of 12% since Autumn 2010.

Above: **South West Trains, operating out of London Waterloo, scored 84% overall satisfaction, but the company is only marginally above average at 41% when it comes to dealing with delays.** *Brian Morrison*

The full Autumn 2011 survey report can be downloaded by clicking here.

Class 73/1 No. 73119 *Borough of Eastleigh* **is pictured alongside GB Railfreight Class 73/2 No. 73206** *Lisa* **at St. Leonards on 25th January. The former locomotive had been moved outside the shed following its repaint.** *Andy Armitage*

Fare & Timetable details available from Google Maps

Google maps now has rail travel information from the ticketing website thetrainline.com to provide travellers with route and timetable information covering over 2,500 stations and 170,000 journeys nationwide.

There is also an option to buy tickets when researching travel options. The system allows for departure and arrival times to be available, as well as the time that the journey will take and the train operating company running the service.

GBRailfreight marks green commitment at Drax

On 18th January, GB Railfreight and Drax Power Limited marked the partnership in delivering renewable energy with a naming ceremony.

GBRf is currently the only UK railfreight company to move biomass, having moved 500,000 tonnes since the start of freight trials began. As part of these trials, GBRf and leasing company VTG worked together to modify a number of coal wagons with hydraulically-operated top doors to keep the biomass dry in transit. The trial resulted in a contract to move biomass from Tyne Dock to Drax.

Biomass is a 'green' energy source, meaning that when burnt it does not give off the emissions that coal does, resulting in the more environmentally friendly production of power. Drax Power Station is now the largest single source of renewable power in the UK. Its co-firing facility, the biggest in the world, already gives the station the capability to produce 12.5% of its power output from renewable sources and reduce emissions of carbon dioxide.

To mark the successful partnership between the two organisations, GBRf Class 66/7 No. 66734 was named *The Eco Express* by Sophie English in a ceremony at the National Railway Museum, York. The name, which was the winner of a children's competition at the Great Yorkshire Show, was submitted by Sophie because she said she liked the sound of eco for environment and express for train!

VIDEO SHOT: GBRf MD, John Smith, and Drax Power Station MD, Dorothy Thompson, join Sophie English to name Class 66/7 No. 66734 *The Eco Express* **at the National Railway Museum in York on 18th January.**

WCML franchise bidding underway

The Department for Transport says that 28,000 extra sets will be available on the West Coast Main Line from the new franchise, thanks to a new flexible agreement that will allow more services to be scheduled around busy periods.

Four shortlisted companies have been provided with the Invitation to Tender document, these being Abellio, First Group, Keolis/SNCF and Virgin.

The new West Coast Main Line InterCity franchise will run from December this year to March 2026, when the current Virgin Trains' franchise expires, with an option for the DfT to extend it for up to 20 months. The expiry date for the new franchise is specifically geared around the proposed opening for the first phase of HS2. The new WCML operator should be announced in August.

The flexible franchise agreement gives bidders the elasticity to vary timetables on individual days of the week to cater for changes in demand, enabling the future operator to provide better services for passengers, while protecting existing services by specifying a minimum number of stops at each station. In addition, a long franchise of up to 15 years for the WCML is intended to encourage the new operator to invest in improvements at stations and bring down excessive costs.

Is Oxford the next major bottleneck on the Thames Valley route?

According to Oxfordshire County Council, the completion of the redevelopment of Reading will make Oxford station a major constraint on the rail network.

In its 'Oxfordshire Rail Strategy & Delivery Plan', which has been released for consultation, the council says there is a commitment to redevelop Oxford Station by 2018, and work is underway to agree a masterplan to increase passenger and freight capacity, which is linked to the industry's plans for electrification and resignalling. This follows the work completed four years ago on two goods loops to the north of the station, which provided an increase in the operating flexibility of the station.

One of the options for Oxford station includes the demolition of many of the existing station buildings and the construction of four through platforms.

Below: First Great Western Class 165/1 No. 165114 stands at Oxford awaiting departure with an London Paddington service. *Ron Cover*

Above: **GB Railfreight operated the first of two trial trains from Harwich Parkeston Quay to Holybourne, near Alton, on 23rd January. Class 66/7 No. 66710** *Phil Packer BRIT* **worked the discharged wagons northwards overnight on 20th/21st January, before returning with the loaded train, pictured at Virginia Water.** *Ken Brunt*

Invensys Rail wins Glasgow Resignalling Project

Invensys Rail has been awarded a £35 million contract by Network Rail for the Glasgow South Suburban Resignalling (GSSR).

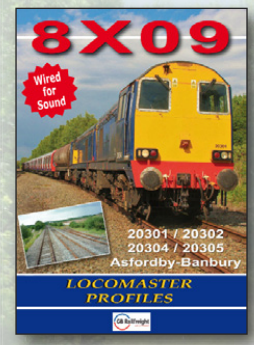
The GSSR area includes Cathcart Signal Box area, the East Kilbride branch lines and the Barrhead lines up to the limit of control from West Scotland Signalling Centre. As such, the area to be resignalled includes both electrified and non-electrified branch and commuter lines.

Invensys Rail will handle the design, manufacture, installation and testing of the signalling scheme, which will involve 45 kilometres of new cable route as well as demolition of the Cathcart Signal Box.

The main signalling installation phase is scheduled to begin in March with works then continuing up to the final commissioning in April 2013.

The latest WIRED FOR SOUND cab-ride DVD

8X09 4 x Class 20 : Asfordby-Banbury



Travel on board a train with a difference - GB Railfreight's 8X09 Asfordby to Neasden, conveying brand new S Stock for London Underground's Metropolitan Line. The four Class 20s on the train have been specially WIRED FOR SOUND to capture their 1000hp English Electric engines hard at work. Due to numerous operating restrictions, the 8X09 has to travel from Leicestershire to London the long way round. Which is just as well as it is a far more interesting route!

The first stage of the journey is along the short branch from the Asfordby test centre to Melton Mowbray. After reversing in the loop, the train then heads to Syston Junction for a spirited run along the Midland Main Line to Leicester. South of there, the 8X09 reverses again – this time onto the 30-mile 'freight only' Leicester & Burton Line via Coalville. This is a fascinating route famous for its mining subsidence and the climb up Desford bank has the Class 20s at full bore. At Branston Junction the 8X09 joins the Derby to Birmingham main line before taking the slow line from Kingsbury Junction to Whitacre Junction. The journey across the West Midlands is via Water Orton, Washwood Heath, Tyseley and a pathing stop in Dorridge Loop. After that it continues to Leamington Spa from where the Class 20s power their way uphill for the following 14 miles through Harbury cutting to Fenny Compton. As night falls, we leave the train at Banbury and the programme concludes with a series of atmospheric lineside shots as the train passes through various stations on the last leg of its journey to Neasden.

Click below to view a 60 second sample

With a running time of 3 hours 15 minutes, 8X09 is available now on DVD priced at £19.95 (post free) from the address below. Alternatively you can pay by credit or debit card by calling us on our

CREDIT CARD HOTLINE on 01753 545888.

LOCOMASTER PROFILES
Freepost SL2253, Langley, Slough, SL3 6BP
visit our website at www.locomaster.co.uk visit our website at www.locomaster.co.uk

Above: Work is continuing on the East London Line (ELL) extension that will link the current East London Line from Surrey Quays to the South London Line at Peckham Rye, allowing ELL services to operate through from Highbury & Islington to Clapham Junction. The introduction of this service, which is on target to start from the December 2012 timetable change, will result in the London Bridge to London Victoria service being withdrawn. This was the scene at Silwood on 26th January, where the new extension dives under the ELL route from Surrey Quays to New Cross and New Cross Gate. *Bill Turvill*

Is Network Rail turning back the clock?

Network Rail has announced plans to form alliances with a number of TOCs in an effort to work closer with operators and provide a better service to passengers.

Alliance framework agreements have so far been made, or are about to be made, with Abellio Greater Anglia, c2c, ScotRail, Northern and Southeastern. Discussions continue with all other operators on how they can work more closely together, and these may lead to further alliance agreements. Quite what form such an alliance will take is not yet known, given that in most cases the TOC concerned and Network Rail already share a common control centre, and it has been made clear that employees will continue to have the same employer.

A better service to passengers and improved planning of engineering work are two of the stated aims of the alliances, but the infrastructure operator says streamlined decision making and lower costs are at the heart of the proposal.

In a move that is a logical progression of the joint control centres, a so-called 'deep' alliance is being taken forward in the south with Network Rail's Wessex Route and South West Trains. While the plans are still developing, Network Rail says it may lead to the establishment of a single, senior joint management team formed to look after both train and track on the Wessex route operating out of Waterloo, giving a much more integrated way of working, and one that could be seen as privatisation coming full circle - surely the operation of trains and infrastructure by one management has been done before?! This potential alliance is being discussed at the present time with the various stakeholders.

From a funding viewpoint, the company says it is fundamental that both parties in any alliance retain their existing accountabilities and Network Rail will remain focused on delivering its obligations to all parties, protecting the interest of all customers while maintaining the seamless operation of the whole network.

Station Improvements round-up

With an investment of £2.2 million as part of the National Stations Improvement Programme, the new upgraded Marks Tey station building was officially opened on 27th January.

The facilities now include a new station building situated adjacent to the station forecourt, comprising ticket office, customer toilets and a new retail facility, together with a new access ramp and stairs to the London-bound platform, which has been widened and new waiting shelters installed. On the Colchester-bound platform that allows an interchange with Sudbury line services, improvements to the station building include upgraded customer toilets and waiting room, and a redesigned station forecourt that provides a drop-off and pick-up area, as well as improved cycle and motor cycle parking.

Elsewhere in East Anglia, the upgraded station facilities at Bury St Edmunds were opened on 20th January after a £150,000 upgrade under the 'Access for All' scheme. The booking hall area has been improved with better lighting and access, new customer information screens installed, and the staircases giving access to platforms have been brought in line with DDA requirements.

The opening officially marked the formation of 'The Friends of Bury St. Edmunds Station' a new community group that will operate under NXEA's Station Adoption scheme.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The Scottish Government has announcement that it is to cut the funding for Freight Facilities Grants by over 60%. The Freight Transport Association (FTA) said it was concerned that the amount now available would not match the demand from companies looking to switch to more environmentally friendly transport modes.

■ Transport Minister and Liberal Democrat MP, Norman Baker, has said that the reinstatement of the Lewes-Uckfield line makes good railway sense, especially if the Uckfield line is redoubled and electrified. Mr Baker, while commenting to the Wealden Line Campaign, also said that he felt East Sussex County Council presented one of the biggest obstacles, adding that, "I have not entirely given up my aspiration to be present for the day this finally happens".

■ From 4th-19th February London Midland customers can take advantage of 'Go-Anywhere' unlimited travel on any of London Midland's trains across the whole London Midland network. For just £15 (£5 for children) customers can buy a day's unlimited off-peak travel. Adults with railcards only pay £9.90. For an additional £10, customers can upgrade to first class. Simply download a special voucher from the London Midland website, or apply by phone on 08451 28 00 89. Vouchers can then be exchanged for a ticket at any ticket office on the LM network.

■ South West Trains is offering passengers the opportunity to travel from Petersfield to any destination on its network on 4th February for the bargain price of just £10 return, as the train operator brings its successful 'Rainbow Day' initiative to town. Petersfield station, which has been chosen as the location for South West Trains third 'Rainbow Day', has recently benefitted from a major refurbishment, with a brand new booking hall, new toilets and other facilities to offer a completely refreshed look to welcome passengers.

ROLLING STOCK NEWS IN BRIEF

■ GB Railfreight Class 66/7 No. 66746, which although debranded, has been operating in the colours of Colas Rail since its transfer several months ago, has been repainted at Eastleigh Works into the latest GBRf colours. Also seeing a paintbrush is DRS Class 47/4 No. 47853 which has lost its XP64 livery, although *Railway Herald* understands that the locomotive will retain its *RAIL Express* nameplates.

■ Work has started on the internal refurbishment of the five Class 180's, Nos. 180102, 180103, 180104, 180106 and 180108, destined for First Great Western. The first unit to arrive at Kilmarnock is No. 180103, which is in various stages of completion with the first coach in the paint facility. Also work is underway on the conversion of the FGW Buffet cars into high density Standard Class coaches with 15 to be converted, all of which will be re-numbered, the first coach is expected for release in May.

■ Class 70s Nos. 70010 and 70018, the former being out of traffic, while the latter is still to complete its commissioning, have been moved from Leeds Midland Road to the Freightliner workshop at York, located within the buildings previously occupied by Fastline.

■ Freightliner HeavyHaul used two Class 66/5 locomotives from its Intermodal division, Nos. 66589 and 66590, on overnight engineering work over the weekend of 21st/22nd January.

■ East Coast has been using a Class 67 on driver route learning duties over the past week, working north from Bounds Green to Peterborough, via Hertford North, Royston, Cambridge and March, and returning via the same route, in preparation for forthcoming diversions.

■ DB Schenker Class 60 No. 60024 failed while employed on weekend engineering duties on 28th January, which resulted in it being towed back to Toton for repairs.

Above: **First Hull Trains Class 180 No. 180113 accelerates away from the capital as it passes Harringay with a London King's Cross to Hull service.** *Richard Tuplin*

Fleet wide mechnical upgrade for '180s'

A major mechanical and electrical modification and reliability improvement project has commenced on the Class 180 DMU fleet.

It is understood that all 14 Class 180s will go through Brush Traction at Loughborough for the modification work to take place, meaning that the entire fleet, regardless of operator, will be brought up to the same operational standard.

Work, which is costing £5 million, will include improvements to the provision of on-board heating and air conditioning, the fitting of new bogies to improve ride quality, and enhancements to ensure that electrical supplies are constantly maintained within the passenger areas of the train. The programme involves 15 'mini-projects' on each unit with the work taking around three weeks per train and the whole programme should be completed by early summer 2012.

Grand Central has an 'off-lease' unit on temporary loan from Angel Trains to cover while its sets progress through the programme, and the first unit from First Hull Trains has already started the programme at Loughborough and to allow the operator to deliver its service commitments, Class 180 No. 180101 has been hired from Grand Central to provide cover.

The remaining 'off-lease' units, which will transfer to First Great Western, will progress through the modification programme in line with the planned overhaul work on the interiors that is now being undertaken by Wabtec Rail at Kilmarnock.

Below: **The latest Class 92 to be repainted, No. 92015 is pictured in the yard at Toton on 25th January, prior to its transfer to Crewe the following day, from where it worked to Carlisle, before taking over a Daventry to Grangemouth Intermodal service on 27th January.** *Craig Adamson*

Central Line goes Digital

In preparation for the switchover from analogue to digital for London's terrestrial TV service, one of the Central Line's 1992 tube trains has been rebranded.

The promotional livery, which is displayed on the interior as well as the exterior, promotes the change over and the switch off of the London-area analogue signals in April.

The promotional set is pictured at Theydon Bois, near Epping.
Kim Rennie

Nottingham tram work

Construction work on the next phase of the Nottingham Light Rail system has commenced, with work to clear vegetation and trees from the proposed route.

Part of this work will include clearing the former Great Central Railway embankment in Wilford ahead of it being removed totally later this year. The next phase of tram works will involve moving utility services so they are out of the way of the line. These are expected to start in mid-February.

Lines two and three of Nottingham's tram network will also take in Beeston and Chilwell and are expected to be completed and in use by late 2014.

New three-car route on Docklands

From 30th January longer and more frequent trains are working on the Docklands Light Railway.

Three-car trains are operating on the Bank to Woolwich route, providing the capacity to carry an extra 1,500 passengers per hour in the morning peak. The move will result in all weekdays workings on the route upgraded to three-car trains, with two-car trains scheduled at the weekend.

Elsewhere, services will be more frequent across the entire DLR network during the evening peak. On the Bank to Woolwich branch trains will run every eight minutes rather than every nine minutes. The same frequency improvement will be seen between Tower Gateway and Beckton and between Stratford International and Woolwich Arsenal. On the Bank to Lewisham route, frequency will increase from one train every four-and-a-half minutes to one every four minutes.

The changes in frequency means that Docklands will be able to carry an extra 4,000 passengers an hour, equivilant to an extra 12,000 in total during the evening peak period.

Above: **The new trackwork now being relayed at the south end of the Eastleigh Works site.** *Arlington Fleet Services*

Arlington development brings £100,000 investment

Following on from the announcement that Knights Rail Services, has obtained a further five year lease on the site at Eastleigh, is the news that Arlington Fleet Services is also investing in the works.

While the company leases part of Eastleigh Works from Knights Rail services, other sections are leased directly from the owners, St. Modwin. To provide extra facilities and room for expansion of the business, Arlington is investing over £100,000 in the installation of new trackwork at the south end of the site, which in effect, replaces the traversers that were removed when Alstom closed the plant. This will provide access to six covered roads within the complex that have been isolated in recent years, and is being introduced thanks to an agreement with St Modwin to provide a long headshunt at the south end of the site.

Elsewhere, Arlington's two new 30-ton overhead cranes are being installed in the workshops, replacing those that were removed and sold by Alstom.

■ It should be noted that in the last issue we stated that Knights Rail Services were responsible for funding the new trackwork, when we should have stated Arlington Fleet Services, our apologises to both companies for the mistake although both organisations have made it clear that the investment benefits the whole site and further cements their working relationships.

DVD VIDEO

NEW

Running Time: Approx 90 mins
£19.95 post free

Looking Forward & Looking Back . . .

THE VISIONS RAIL GUIDE 2012

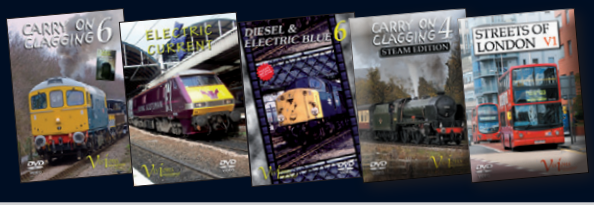
The Visions Rail Guide 2012 is both a review of of 2011 and a guide to what to look for in 2012 - Olympics year. Here's the menu:

Passenger franchises - The recent changes and those about to change. **New liveries** - DBS get out the paint brush as well as GBRf and East Coast. **New EMUs in service** - The 379s & 380s.. **Freight workings** - the new, the old and the finished (and the Deltic again). **Class 60s** - resurrected at last - we feature those that have gone and those that came back. **Class 66s** - moves between operators and the comings and goings to and from mainlaind Europe. **More Class 70s**. **50044 and 33012** back on the main line . . . and the other 'mature' traction still pounding the network. **Extra features** - Infrastructure work, Thrash & Clag, and some of the things that never change.

They all make up the current diverse railway scene and they all appear in VRG 2012 - the indispensible review/guide in a glorious multitude of colours!

Rail Guide 2012 features: ***22 different loco classes:*** 09, 20, 31, 33 ,37, 43, 47, 50, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 66, 67, 70, 73, 86, 87, 90, 91 and 92 - ***39 different multiple unit classes:*** 139, 142, 144, 150, 153, 156, 158, 159, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 221, 222, 315, 318, 321, 333, 334, 350, 357, 360, 365, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 390, 395, 442, 444, 450, 455, 460, 465, 466, 507.

Now that's variety.



OUR LATEST DVDS

Click on this advert to go direct to our website.

Visions International Entertainment Ltd

HOW TO ORDER

by post (cheques to Visions International):
22 The Chase, Boreham, Essex CM3 3DY
by credit/debit card via the phone:
01245 465974
or on the web:
www.visionsinternational.biz

Check our website for details of over 85 Books & DVDs

Irish Rail clears main line for 9'6" container traffic

The main rail route between the Port of Dublin and Kildare has now been cleared for the carriage of 9'6" 'hicube' containers on standard wagons, allowing an increase in possible payloads on trains.

Until now the weekday intermodal services operated for International Warehousing & Transport (IWT) have needed to use low floor 'pocket wagons' to convey 9'6" containers between the new Port of Dublin siding complex and Mayo in the North West of the country, as a result of gauge clearance issues.

The ability to use the standard wagons further increases both the flexibility and the viability of using rail.

Stephen Aherne, Iarnród Éireann's Freight Manager is looking to extend the work already undertaken to achieve gauge clearance for the larger containers on the route between Portarlington and Cork (North Esk).

Iarnród Éireann also operates trains with 9'6" containers between Waterford Port and Mayo, via Kildare, for DFDS.

Above: GM 071 Class No. 076 approaches Geashill with the 08:15 Ballina to North Wall IWT intermodal service on 24th January, conveying 9'6" 'hicube' containers on the second and fifth wagons. *Neil Dinnen*

Heritage diesels move to Cultra transport museum

In the early hours of 22nd January, two preserved diesel locomotives were moved to the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum in Cultra.

The two preserved locomotives, 1950 built Sulzer No. B113, that operated on Irish Rail, and Northern Ireland Railways 1970-built Hunslet No. 102, were 'topped and tailed' by NIR's 111 Class Nos. 111 & 113.

Throughout the years the Sulzer became the first diesel locomotive to be used in Ireland. Originally numbered 1100 & 1101, the two locos were subsequently renumbered to B113 & B114. In 1971, No. B114 ran away due to a brake fault and both locomotives were stopped for brake modifications. No. B113 returned for a few months at the end of 1974 but then was withdrawn while No. B114 didn't return. Until May last year, No. B113 was preserved by Irish Rail in Inchicore Works, prior to being handed over to the UFTM for display.

NIR's Hunslet No. 102 named 'Falcon' first entered service with NIR in 1970. Working the Belfast/Dublin express trains and various other trains throughout the network. The three strong Hunslet fleet, Nos. 101-103, continued in service until the late '80s' when they were replaced by the 111 Class locomotives. Nos. 101 & 103 were withdrawn by 1993 with No. 101 being preserved by the RPSI and No. 103 being scrapped. However, No. 102 continued in traffic until 24th April 2002, mainly based in the Belfast area on local freight duties to Adelaide.

In 2005, No. 102 was taken by rail to the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland yard in Whitehead for preservation where it was later handed to the UFTM, again for display.

Both B113 & 102 are now on display at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum which has a frequent rail service on the Bangor Line to the nearby station Cultra with a five-minute walk to the museum.

Below: With NIR No. 113 and 111 sandwiching Nos. B113 and 102, the 00:15 Whitehead to Cultra transfer movement leaves Whitehead RPSI Yard on 22nd January. *Chris Playfair*

Above: UK Railtours 'The Concrete Cow' charter ventured deep into the works of Wolverton Railcare on 28th January. The train, 'topped and tailed' by Class 66/0s Nos. 66213 and 66200, passes the old works site where the buildings on the right have been converted into a mix of office and residencial areas. The tour is about to ascend Haversham Bank, the original West Coast route, before heading to Bletchley. *Chris George*

Encouraging line-up of diesel-hauled trips from Compass

With the 2012 programme of charters having been released by Compass Tours, the operator has a number of highlights in its diesel-hauled programme.

As previously mentioned, Compass has in the past been creative in designing new itineraries; last year there were a number of workings to Dundee, which included both Forth and Tay Bridges, as well as using different route options for variety, while previously the operator was the first to combine both the S&C and Cumbrian Coast into a standard working.

Indeed, it is the latter combination that gets the 2012 season underway with 'The Cumbrian Mountains and Fells Explorer' on Wednesday 21st March from Codsall and stations via Shrewsbury, Wrexham General and Chester. Two days later, and the route with 'The Trent Lakelander' working is retraced from Rugby, and picks up via Coventry, Nuneaton and the Trent Valley, through to Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe. A third train is scheduled for Friday 20th April, which originates at Kidderminster, and winds around the north of Birmingham and then takes the Cannock Chase line to reach the Trent Valley at Rugeley.

Scotland also benefits from Compass patronage, with no less than five departures commencing on Friday 30th March with 'The Clyde Moorlander' to York, via the S&C, from Helensburgh Upper, which works around Glasgow to Carstairs and then south over Beattock. This is followed by a departure from Wemyss Bay on Thursday 3rd May with the 'Nevis and Glenfinnan Highlander' to Fort William and Mallaig, which works around the eastern side of Glasgow to reach the West Highland line at Helensburgh Upper. Oban, with 'The Oban & Lorn Highlander', is next on the list on Wednesday 6th June from Ayr and stations via Paisley Gilmour Street to Motherwell. Sunday 17th June is a special day for Dad's everywhere, and Compass mark the occasion with 'The Fathers Day Highland Mountain Explorer' that offers either Inverness or Kyle of Lochalsh from Edinburgh Waverley and stations via Larbert to Stirling and Perth, before heading north over the Highland main line. The fifth departure looks like being a long day out, as the 'Heart of Wales Scenic Rambler' is from Dumfries and stations, via Gretna Green and Carlisle, to Llandrindod Wells and Cardiff.

Wales, too, features strongly with tours heading for the Principality. The Central Wales and Conwy Valley routes are popular with two visits each. The former has tours from Huddersfield, picking up along the Calder Valley on Wednesday 28th March, and later on Friday 11th May from Dumfries (see above). Both tours make a brief stop at Llandrindod Wells, prior to continuing to Cardiff.

The 'Snowdon Mountaineer' operates on 25th May from Carnforth, via Liverpool Lime Street, with the destination being Betws-y-Coed and Blaenau Ffestiniog, and is followed on 30th June by 'The Snowdon Mountain Ranger', which commences the day at Skipton, and picks up along the Aire Valley and selected stations through to Knutsford.

The Sussex and Dorset coast will also have Compass trains this year as well as Cornwall. An option to enjoy the delights of Hastings, Eastbourne or Brighton is on offer with the 'Sussex Coast Express' on Wednesday 23rd May, which sets out from Hooton, and picks up via Chester, Crewe and the Trent Valley, while 'The Dorset Coast Express' on Friday 8th June heads for Brockenhurst, Bournemouth or Weymouth from Holyhead, picking up along the North Wales coast. Finally, Ely is the destination for 'The Fenland Cathedrals Express' on Wednesday 4th July, which originates at Blackpool North, and picks up at stations via Crewe to Walsall.

As always, the joy of Compass itineraries is the use of smaller stations, which normally only see commuter or infrequent passengers services. It is good to see names like Bloxwich, Denton, Prescott, Knutsford, Kilwinning, Port Glasgow, Rowley Regis, Gobowen and the like featuring as pick-up points on its charters. 'Leaving from a station near you' has been the Compass ethic, and long may it continue.

■ The extensive steam programme due to be operated by Compass Tours during the summer was reviewed in Issue 299.

Forthcoming Charter Workings

The details shown in the following table were believed to be correct at the time of going to press. Not all pick-up and set-down points are shown, please contact the tour operator concerned for fare and ticket information.

Saturday 4th February 2012		
Railway Touring Co.	86259	London Euston-Watford Jn-Northampton-Crewe-Preston
	45305 / 70013	Preston-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Penrith-Shap-Lancaster-Preston
	86259	Preston-Crewe-Northampton-Watford Jnc-London Euston
Spitfire Railtours	2xDRS 37	Birmingham Intl-Crewe-Motherwell-Dumbarton-Crianlarich-Rannoch-Fort William
Sunday 5th February 2012		
Spitfire Railtours	2xDRS 37	Fort William-Crianlarich-Dumbarton-Motherwell-Carlisle-Stafford-Birmingham Intl
Saturday 11th February 2012		
Railway Touring Co.	86259	London Euston-Watford Jn-Northampton-Crewe-Preston
	70013 / 45305	Preston-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Penrith-Shap-Lancaster-Preston
	86259	Preston-Crewe-Northampton-Watford Jnc-London Euston
Sunday 12th February 2012		
Steam Dreams	6024	London Paddington-Reading-Newbury-Westbury-Trowbridge-Bath Spa-Bristol TM & return
Vintage Trains	4965	Tyseley WR-Nuneaton-Leicester-Loughborough-Castle Donnington-Tamworth HL-Tyseley WR
Friday 17th February 2012		
VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Staines-Virginia Water-Guildford-Shalford-Redhill-East Croydon-London Victoria
Saturday 18th February 2012		
Railway Touring Co.	86259	London Euston-Watford Jn-Northampton-Crewe-Preston
	45305 / 70013	Preston-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Penrith-Shap-Lancaster-Preston
	86259	Preston-Crewe-Northampton-Watford Jnc-London Euston
Saturday 25th February 2012		
Pathfinder Tours	2xDBS 66	Tame Bridge Parkway-Derby-Church Fenton-Durham-Pelaw Jn-Jarrow(to NR limit)-Ferryside-Billingham Jn-Seal Sands (NR limit)-Eaglescliffe-Thirsk-York & return
Railway Touring Co.	86259	London Euston-Watford Jn-Northampton-Crewe-Preston
	45305 / 70013	Preston-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Penrith-Shap-Lancaster-Preston
	86259	Preston-Crewe-Northampton-Watford Jnc-London Euston
Steam Dreams	DBS 67	London Paddington-Reading-Didcot Parkway- Swindon-Severn Tunnel-Abergavenny-Hereford
	6024	Hereford-Abergaveny-Severn Tunnel-Swindon-Oxford-Leamington Spa-Solihull-Birmingham SH
CANCELLED	60163	Birmingham SH-Solihull-Oxford-Didcot Parkway-Reading-London Paddington
Thursday 1st March 2012		
Steam Dreams	6024	London Paddington-Maidenhead-Reading-Cardiff & return
Saturday 3rd March 2012		
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 67	Birmingham Intl-Stourbridge Jn-Kidderminster-Cheltenham Spa-Bristol Parkway-Bristol TM-
	6024	Bristol TM-Swindon-Reading-London Paddington-Reading-Swindon-Bristol TM
	DBS 67	Bristol TM-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Worcester Shrub Hill-Kidderminster-Birmingham Intl

Please mention** Railway Herald **when speaking to train operators, and remember charter operators need your support

Railtour Spotlight *by John Whitehouse*

Variety is on offer this week, with steam gracing the Northern Fells and diesels growling over the West Highland line.

The steam offering is the first of what could well be a highly successful series of four trains, operating on successive Saturdays from London Euston to Carlisle.

Railway Touring Company is the sponsor, and it is understood that the last two trains that are due to run on 18th and 25th February are already fully booked. The short season of 'Cumbrian Mountain Expresses' will get underway on this coming Saturday, 4th February, when Class 86/2 No. 86259 *Les Ross*, named after its owner, is booked to glide out of Euston to take the train to Preston, where steam in the shape of either 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45305 or 'Britannia' Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*, most likely the former on this occasion, will be waiting to head the train north over Shap to Carlisle. Then, after a break, the train will return south by way of the Settle & Carlisle line to Preston, via Blackburn, where the '86' will be waiting to take the train back to London. The use of AC traction on the southern leg is necessary to path the train between the competing Virgin and London Midland services, as the Class 86/2 has the speed profile to meet the demanding point to point times on the southern leg of the trip. The use of this particular locomotive is also a result of being dual-braked.

Meanwhile, Spitfire Railtours will be opening its 2012 account on the same day, 4th February, with a weekend working from Birmingham International through to Fort William, which is booked for a pair of DRS Class 37s throughout. It, too, is booked to work north over Shap to Carlisle, and then onwards over Beattock, before winding around the eastern suburbs of Glasgow, via Coatbridge, to reach the West Highland line at Helensburgh Upper. After an overnight stop at Fort William, the train returns next day as outward. It was planned for the tour to take in a journey from Crianlarich to Oban as part of the itinerary, but this will now not take place. Operational reasons would seem to be the reason.

A full round-up of all known forthcoming charter and excursion trains can be found on our website at www.railwayherald.com/railtours

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The popularity of The Railway Touring Company's 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Expresses' is confirmed with the announcement of an additional date of 31st March. The format will be the same, with AC Electric haulage between London Euston and Preston, and steam haulage by either Nos. 45305 or 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* north to Carlisle, over Shap and returning by way of the S&C.

■ In connection with Railway Touring Company's 'Royal Wessex' working with No. 34067 from London Waterloo to Exeter on 30th June, it was incorrectly stated last week that there is no facility to turn a steam locomotive at Westbury. This was, of course, totally wrong, as there is the chord to the north of the station running from the Great Western main line at Heywood Road Junction, which connects with the line to Bath at Hawkridge Junction and would permit such a manoeuvre. Apologies for the error.

■ A new operator, Charity Railtours, which has been planning a tour from Eastleigh to East Anglia with intended visits to Felixstowe Docks, Ipswich Griffin Wharf and Parkeston Quay Carriage Sidings, has been forced to postpone the tour due to engineering works that have blocked the proposed route. The tour, entitled 'The Great Eastern Freighter' was originally booked to run on Sunday 10th June, and the organisers are now looking to see if the train can be pathed to operate on a Saturday to avoid the overwhelming number of engineering work that is blocking its proposed route. However, it is understood that access to the Port of Felixstowe on anything other than a Sunday may be a problem. The train was being operated in support of the Alzheimer's Society. The operator has extended its thanks to the Port Of Felixstowe for the initial approval and agreement to operate the train and comments that the Port has been extremely generous with its support.

Could it be new dreams ahead for Steam Dreams?

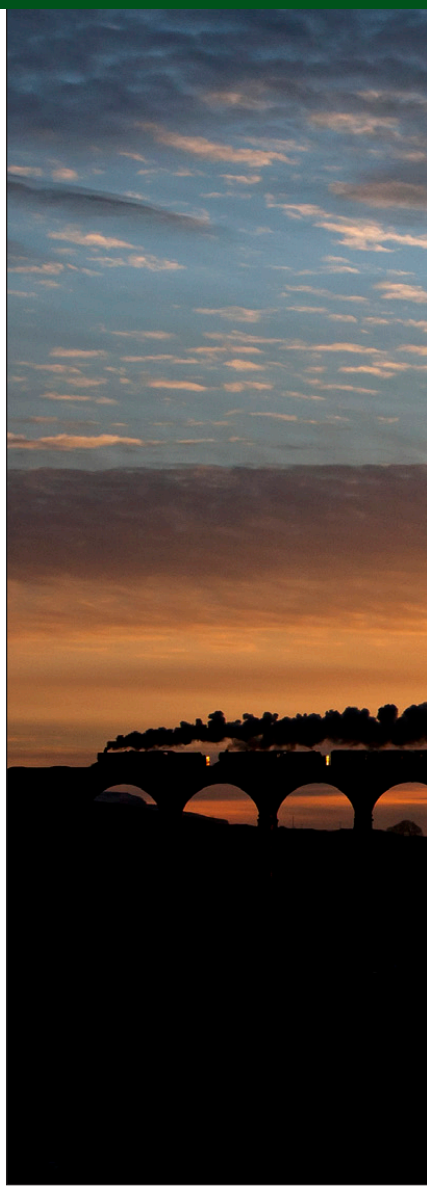
It is understood that Steam Dreams will be operating a non-steam working in October, which will be heading for Blackpool and it's famous illuminations.

The train will set out from stations in Surrey, with the exact pick-up points to be confirmed in due course. The 'Blackpool Lights', as they are affectionately known, are a major attraction for people living in the Midlands and north of the country, and this train will present the opportunity for those in the South East to savour the 'Golden Mile' and world class rides on the funfair, as well as the illuminations. The proposed date is 27th October.

Elsewhere of interest, is a report that a 48-seat Mk1 SO is currently undergoing restoration to main line condition at the LNWR Works in Crewe, which is believed to be for Steam Dreams. It will be used for premier dining passengers, and the implication is that more may well follow.

Commercial and operational issues are responsible for the postponement of Steam Dreams' planned weekend working from London Euston to Perth in September. It is understood that the operator plans to operate the train in 2013, but at this stage it is not possible to establish how, if at all, the operation will vary from that planned this year.

The twin highlights were No. 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland* working through to Perth and No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* heading a return working between Stirling and Aberdeen.



Double 5s over Ribblehead

Right: The lack of main line charter services during January brings the opportunity for a second view of LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0s No. 44871 and 45407 on the 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' excursion. Here, the duo are pictured in fine form, against the background of a setting sun, crossing Ribblehead Viaduct on 28th January. *Mike Taylor*

A 'Castle' over the Forth and 'Lizzie' on the Lickey from Vintage Trains in 2012

Details of a new Vintage Trains (VT) charter train programme are always something to be looked forward to, as invariably there is the satisfaction of having the services of either No. 4965 *Rood Ashton Hall* **or No. 5043** *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* **to enjoy throughout combined with itineraries worthy of these Swindon machines.**

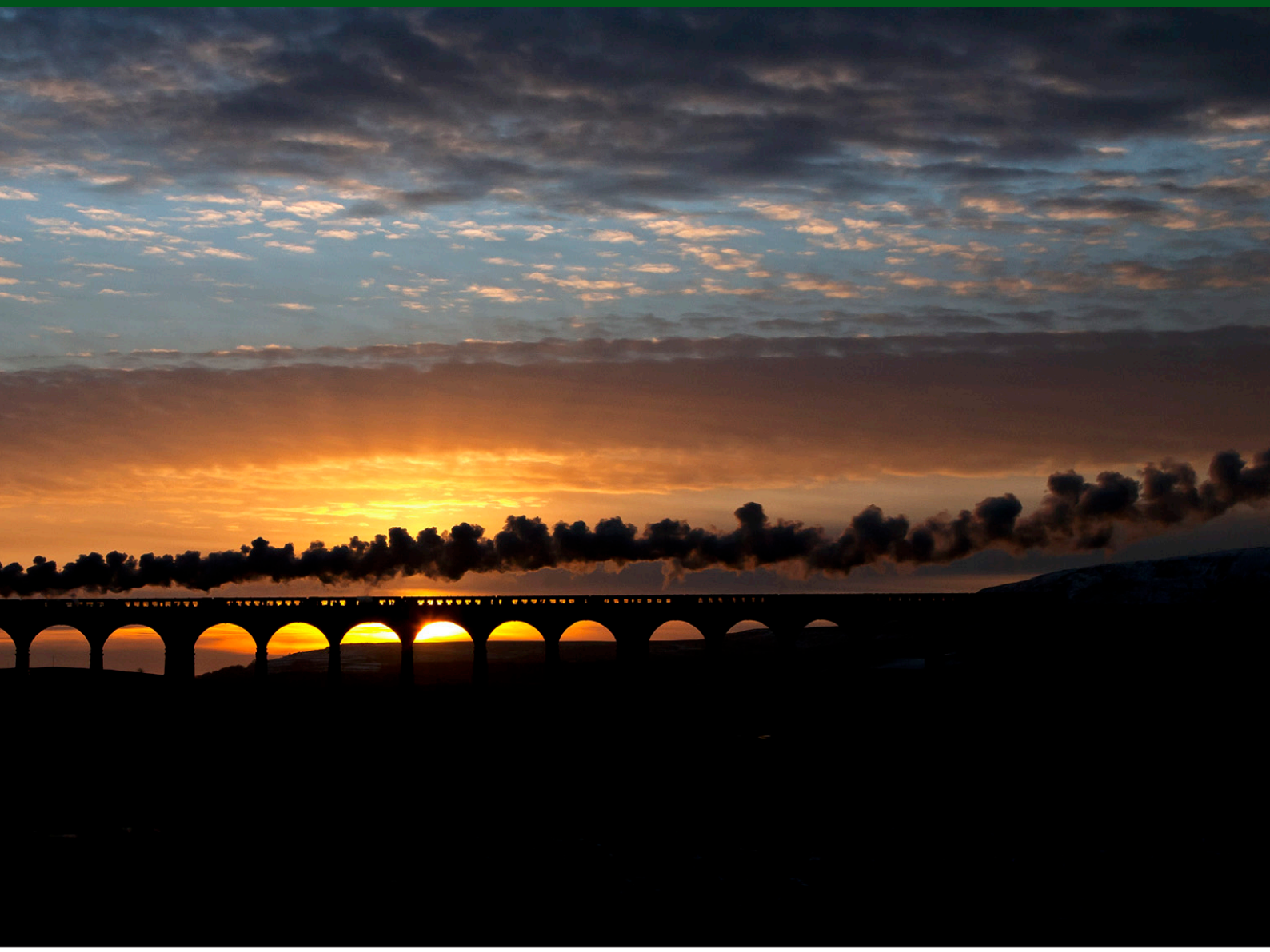
However, for the forthcoming 2012 programme, there is the additional spice of two locomotives which, due their designer, are not quite products of Swindon, but of Crewe, but still with an undeniable Swindon pedigree. We are, of course, referring to Stanier Pacifics Nos. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* and 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland*. And that is not all, as those determined Tyseley Pannier Tanks will also be in evidence.

This review begins with No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*, if for no other reason than the Lady after whom it is named, prior to becoming Queen, will be celebrating her Diamond Jubilee in June.

There is, however, the small matter of obtaining an extension to the locomotive's boiler certificate, work on which is currently underway. Presently, there are five workings lined up for No. 6201, the first being the previously announced double-header with No. 5043 over both Shap and Ais Gill on 12th March, where the steam section will now commence northbound at Carnforth instead of Crewe. Tyseley's Class 47/7 No. 47773 should deal with the non-steam sections, which is likely to include dragging the 'Castle' and 'Princess' through Birmingham New Street on the return.

Two weeks later, and 'Lizzie' will be heading for Bristol Temple Meads from Solihull, prior to another assault on the Lickey Incline during the return, when Tyseley's Panniers Nos. L74 (7752) and 9600 will be providing rear-end assistance from Bromsgrove through to Saltley, where after a reversal, the pair of Panniers will head the train over the final few miles back to Solihull (with no doubt No. 6201 then heading the ECS back to Tyseley).

'The Red Rose' follows on 21st April, which pits the LMS Pacific against both Standedge and Copy Pit on a circular route from Tyseley that works outwards via Crewe and Stockport, and back through



Blackburn and Wigan North Western.

A poignant working follows on 3rd June, at the head of VT's 'Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant' from Solihull to Kensington Olympia, where passengers will be able to make their way to the River Thames to view the historic parade of boats and barges, including one conveying HM The Queen, celebrating her Diamond Jubilee. This year also marks the 175th anniversary of the opening of the Grand Junction Railway, which ran from Earlstown, on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, to Birmingham, and on 7th July No. 6201 will be heading a commemorative special from Birmingham New Street to Liverpool Lime Street, following the Grand Junction route throughout. This train will start the day at Tyseley Warwick Road and work diesel-hauled to New Street, where it will reverse, with steam forward.

Towards the end of June, No. 6201 will be joined by Stanier 'Coronation' No. 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland*, initially for both to feature in the annual Tyseley Open Weekend, booked for 23rd and 24th June. As well as starring at the event, No. 46233 is also booked to work a charter for Vintage Trains, from Tyseley Warwick Road through to York and Scarborough on 30th June, although *Duchess of Sutherland* will leave the train at Derby on the return, to work directly back to its home base at Swanwick Junction, while the 'Scarborough Flyer' will head back to Tyseley diesel-hauled.

There can be no greater contrast that of a Stanier Pacific and a Pannier Tank, but each enjoy great popularity, which in the case of the latter was evidenced by the sell-out tour around the East Midlands last November. A repeat of that tour is now booked for 14th April from Tyseley Warwick Road through to Leicester, with the route beyond still to be confirmed, again featuring Nos. L94 (7752) and 9600 throughout.

To complete the company's spring programme there are the trains featuring the 'home fleet', namely *Rood Ashton Hall* or *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*; and as a bonus both can be enjoyed in tandem on 5th May, when they are booked to work throughout from Tyseley to Llandudno, for a visit to the town's 'Victorian Fayre'.

A week earlier on 28th April, No. 5043 will be visiting Plymouth from Bristol Temple Meads on a train celebrating the old Wolverhampton to Penzance working, 'The Cornishman', which is to be diesel-hauled from Tyseley and picks up at Birmingham Snow Hill and Smethwick Galton Bridge.

York, and Railfest 2012, will provide an opportunity for *Rood Ashton Hall* to stretch its legs on 9th June, while later, on 18th August, *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* will again head for Llandudno Junction on a tour that offers an additional diesel-hauled option to Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The traditional 'Shakespeare Express' will again operate each Sunday between 1st July and 9th September, the traction for which will be announced nearer the time.

Not to be forgotten is the groundbreaking Scottish weekend booked for 26th-28th May, which will be the first time a Great Western 'Castle' has visited Scotland! On 26th May, No. 5043 will power over the border en route to Edinburgh Waverley, while next day it will also become the first of its class to cross the Forth Bridge on the stand alone luncheon working around the Fife and Clackmannan Circle.

All in all, another vintage programme from Vintage Trains!

Above: **On a damp and less than perfect morning, the pioneer BR 'Britannia' Pacific No. 70000** *Britannia* **powers through Goose Hill, between Wakefield and Normanton, on 24th January, with the Royal Train ECS bound for Milford Sidings, shortly after the locomotive was renamed by HRH The Prince of Wales.** *Geoff Griffiths*

Britannia renamed at Wakefield by royal appointment

The unlikely setting of Wakefield Kirkgate held the limelight on 24th January, when BR 'Britannia' 7P Pacific No. 70000 visited to be renamed.

This was no ordinary renaming however, and no ordinary visit. The locomotive arrived shortly after 10.00 at the helm of the Royal Train, which it had worked from Preston, via Blackburn and Copy Pit, with HRH The Prince of Wales on board.

On this occasion, Prince Charles did not partake of a footplate ride, but even the wet weather could not dampen the Prince's enthusiasm for once again being around steam. After leaving the train, His Royal Highness was escorted to the locomotive by owner Jeremy Hosking, and previous owner, Pete Waterman, where he was introduced to the footplate crew and several individuals that had assisted with the restoration and maintenance of No. 70000.

After a short speech by Mr Hosking, Prince Charles was invited to rename the locomotive *Britannia*, in front of the media and invited guests.

Britannia was restored over a five-year period at LNWR Heritage Railway Company workshops in Crewe, returning to the main line in BR unlined black livery last year. Now repainted into BR lined green colours, the locomotive also has the addition of a white cab roof. This is a result of one of the engine's first duties after construction, when it was used to haul King George VI's funeral train from King's Lynn to London in 1952.

Completed at Crewe Works, No. 70000 was originally named by the then Minister for Transport, Alfred Barnes, on 30th January 1951, at London Marylebone station, and spent its entire working life of 15 years allocated to Norwich Thorpe shed, used on the expresses to and from Liverpool Street.

Above: **In dismal weather conditions of pouring rain and poor light No. 70000** *Britannia* **approaches Brighouse on the Calder Valley line with the Royal Train, which was steam-hauled from Preston, over Copy Pit to Wakefield Kirkgate.** *Robin Patrick*

Below: **Having been introduced to the train crew and some of the team members who were involved in the restoration, HRH Prince Charles admires the locomotive, which he subsequently described as a "jolly good engine", with owner Jermey Hosking.** *Richard Tuplin*

Below: **The renaming of the locomotive could well have been the highlight of the visit to West Yorkshire for Prince Charles. After a short speech from Jeremy Hosking (right), the Prince removed a Union Flag from the smoke deflector to reveal the nameplate.** *Richard Tuplin*

Transport events safe at Beamish Museum

Beamish Museum, in County Durham, has announced plans to build on its transport themed events of previous years.

The move comes as a result of the support that the event has experienced, with over 10,000 visitors regularly being seen on the special weekends.

The coming summer period will have two events, each taking place over a four-day period. The first is the 'Great North Steam Fair' held from 12th-15th April. This is followed over the 30th August to 2nd September weekend by the popular 'Power from the Past' event.

Each of the weekends will feature visiting locomotives, trams, traction engines, cars, buses, motorcycles and other forms of transport, with the non-rail vehicles making the most of the two miles of internal roads at the Museum.

For the 'Great North Steam Fair' a number of visiting attractions will be at work around the 400-acre site, with visiting Birkenhead tram No.20 on the tramway and two visiting railway locomotives, at work at Rowley Station and on the Colliery Railway. The actual identities of these are still to be confirmed.

A working narrow gauge railway will also feature (in a different location to previous events) and for which the De Winton vertical boilered 0-4-0VBGT *Chaloner* has so far been confirmed.

The museum's Transport Curator, Paul Jarman, says that the exhibits invited are chosen for their quality and interest, and a number will feature in a public photo session on the Saturday evening of the event.

In other news from the Museum, it has been confirmed that the first weekend of each month will feature additional transport exhibits operating, in addition to the usual level of activity. This will include operation of the colliery railway, use of cars and rare cycles from the collection and numerous visiting/resident traction engines and road vehicles.

Calbourne confirmed for Bodmin & Wenford gala

The Bodmin & Wenford Railway has confirm that a veteran of the London & South Western Railway will take pride of place at the line's Spring Gala.

For the first time since 1925, L&SWR '02' Class 0-4-4T No. W24 *Calbourne* is to leave the Isle of Wight for a short visit to Cornwall to work alongside 'T9' Class 4-4-0 No. 30120 and Beattie 2-4-0WT No. 30587 at the event, creating a unique ex-LSWR line-up

Calbourne is now the only surviving member of the once-strong Adams '02' Class, and was the first locomotive acquired for preservation by the embryonic Isle of Wight Steam Railway in 1967. Built by the LSWR at its Nine Elms Works in London in 1891, it was originally numbered LSWR No. 209, and spent its early years working out of Fratton and Exeter sheds, before being passed into Southern Railway ownership in 1923.

On 26th April 1925, No. 209 was shipped to the Isle of Wight as part of a major modernisation of the island's railway system. In 1967 the Wight Locomotive Society acquired No. W24 from British Railways, where it has been based and the 'flagship' of their fleet for over forty years.

Members of the LSWR '02' Class were once a regular sight working local passenger services between Padstow and Bodmin North, over the original Bodmin & Wadebridge line, and were even seen on the GWR branch at Bodmin General and Bodmin Road, and so its appearance at the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in April is highly appropriate and will no doubt bring back many happy memories.

The Bodmin & Wenford Railway's Spring Steam Spectacular takes place between 20th-22nd April, and will see other members of the resident fleet also in action.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The boiler of USATC 'S160' 2-8-0 No. 6046 successfully passed its hydraulic test in the workshops at Cheddleton, on the Churnet Valley Railway, on 23rd January. The boiler was tested at 340psi which allows it to run at 225psi instead of the more common 200psi, which the boiler of classmate No. 5197, also based on the CVR, is set to.

■ Freight trains shunting demonstrations will be the highlight of the day at the Tanfield Railway on 12th February. Freight demonstrations start at 10:15, with passenger services operating from 11:00. Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST Renishaw Ironworks No. 6 and Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns 0-4-0ST *Sir Cecil A. Cochrane* are likely to be providing the motive power. Shunting demonstrations will also be taking place in Marley Hill shed yard, with Armstrong Whitworth diesel electric No. 2.

■ The Mid-Norfolk Railway will have a distinct English Electric feel for its Spring Diesel Gala, which is booked to operate from Friday 30th March through to Sunday 1st April. Confirmed visitors will be 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* and Type 4 Class 40 No. D335, which will join the home fleet that includes Type 1 Class 20 No. D8069, Class 37 No. 37003, Class 50 No. 50019 *Ramilles* and Class 73/2 No. 73210, together with Class 31 No. 31235, which was re-engined from Mirrlees to English Electric early in its career. Also joining the fray will be Class 47/4s Nos.47580 & 47596. Full details of the three-day gala, which is in addition to the MNR's Mixed Traffic Weekend booked for 18th & 19th February, are expected soon.

■ The Mid-Hants Railway has announced that LSWR 0-4-4T No. 53 will be visiting for the line's 'Great Spring Steam Gala' from 23rd-25th March. Before this, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* will be in action on the railway on 18th/19th February.

Above: Progress is being made on the extension of the Llangollen Railway from Carrog to Corwen, as seen in this view of the works train standing on the newly laid track. Leading the consist, which includes a 12-ton crane, is the railway's resident ex-ICI diesel shunter *Davy*. This is the furthest west on the railway any locomotive has ventured since the route closed in 1968! *George Jones*

Track laying progresses at Llangollen

On the Llangollen Railway's extension, track laying progress towards Corwen, since Christmas, has resulted in the railhead being extended 680 metres westwards at Carrog.

The volunteer track-laying gang has been installing an average of seven to eight track panels per weekend, mainly as a result of the mild weather experienced during January.

Culvert 25F is currently the location of the railhead, and the trackbed beyond has been cleared and levelled by a contractor with base infill and top level of ballast to underbridge 26, near the former Penarth slate siding. The current target is for tracklaying to reach Bonwm works site by the end of March.

A nine-day track laying exercise is planned for the half-term week between 11th and 19th February, when resources can be dedicated to the task of pushing forward. Ballasting and tamping the track has still to be undertaken to make the extension available for planned shuttle inspection excursions as part of the 'Steam, Steel & Stars III' gala, which takes place from 21st April.

Meanwhile, work is also taking place with vegetation clearance and fencing on the route west of the current railhead.

Middleton celebrates 200th anniversary

On 23rd/24th June, the Middleton Railway will be celebrating an important anniversary with what will now be the biggest and most historic gathering of locomotives ever seen on the line.

On the same day 200 years ago, the first commercially successful steam locomotives designed and built by John Blenkinsop and Matthew Murray started work hauling coal from the colliery into Leeds. Since then, steam locomotives have played an important part in the history of the Middleton Railway.

To celebrate the anniversary, the railway has announced two further visiting locomotives for its '200 Years of Steam Gala' on 23rd/24th June, making it the biggest event in its history. To accompany the already announced visit of *Steam Elephant* from Beamish, the line has secured the oldest working standard gauge locomotive, which will run on the world's oldest working steam railway. Furness No.20, built in 1863 by Sharp Stewart & Co will be the first tender locomotive to visit the railway in preservation, and will join the railway's fleet of home based engines running an intensive service of passenger and freight trains.

The organisers are also pleased to announce that the Vintage Carriage Trust's locomotive *Bellerophon* will also be visiting the event. This locomotive, built in 1874, will allow the Middleton Railway to operate five locomotives over one hundred years old, along with a replica locomotive, celebrating a design of nearly 200 years of age. Others in traffic will include all the available home fleet, featuring the first gala appearance of the NER H Class No. 1310, along with the two resident Manning Wardles, *Matthew Murray* and *Sir Berkeley*.

The Engine House Museum will also be filled with steam, with three live steam layouts in operation, the aim being to have 200 live steam models in operation over the weekend to celebrate the 200 years since steam operation began.

As is normal with Middleton galas, there will be a display of traction engines and other steam vehicles on display in the car park, along with other transport related stands and displays, and for those who like ale, the Leeds Brewery Company will be providing some if it's famous beers on site. For further details on the event, click here.

Main frames for new 4700 Class to be cut this month

With pledges of more than £50,000 already received for the Great Western Society's project to build a new example of Churchward's magnificent 4700 class loco, physical work has now started.

The first major task has been the careful dismantling of GWR Prairie No. 4115, the major donor locomotive for No. 4709. This has been carried out at the Llangollen Railway, where a large number of common parts have been retrieved not only for No. 4709, but also for other future projects. The tanks, cab and bunker have been set aside for further use, while the boiler, which did not form part of the items donated to the GWS, has been despatched to L&NWR at Crewe.

With pony truck assembly removed, which has allowed the wheel sets to be dropped out, the extension frames and cylinder sub assembly have been dismantled and have revealed that a large percentage of the structure common to the 4700 class is not only available but is in much better condition than expected.

A full assessment on the condition of removed components is now underway. The mainframes have now been ordered and it is expected that they will be cut in February. When they are delivered to Llangollen they will be aligned with the un-refurbished extension frames from No. 4115, thus providing the first glimpse of the impressive size of No. 4709.

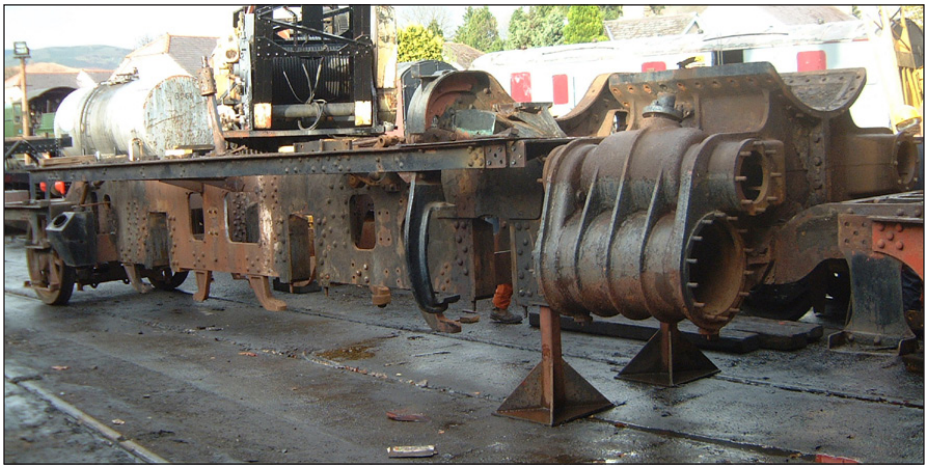
The availability of original GWR parts and the consequent cost saving should enable the 31-foot mainframes to be assembled relatively quickly. In due course the three existing 5ft 8in driving wheel sets from No. 4115 will be refurbished, to be joined later by a new, fourth driving wheel set. A pattern maker has been identified, and discussions have taken place with a foundry to undertake the castings.

Two other donor locomotives, No. 5227 and No. 2861, will also yield parts. In particular the axles, axle boxes and horn guides from the former, which were common between the 4700 and 5205 classes, while the cylinder block from No. 2861, with outside steam pipes, is identical to that of the '4700'.

Elsewhere, at Didcot, a team has already started work on the restoration of the 4,000-gallon tender. The group would be pleased to hear from anyone wishing to join and help either team, and the Project Engineering Manager, Paul Carpenter, can be contacted by email.

The first stage (the rolling chassis and restoration of the tender) is expected to cost in the region of £200,000 and all donations are welcome, whether they are one-off or regular monthly contributions.

Below: After the first phase of dismantling, the frames and cylinders of No. 4115 have been separated from the rest of the locomotive. The front extension frames, motion brackets, the vacuum brake cylinder and reservoir, among other things, will be used for No. 4709. *4709 Project*



STEAM TRAINS EVERY WINTER WEEKEND • TRAINS RUN ALL WEEK - Monday 13th - Friday 17th February 2012 (February Half Term) • A GREAT DAY OUT FOR ALL THE FAMILY... SO MORE THAN JUST A TRAIN RIDE.

Boiler almost ready to be returned to *Cheltenham*

Volunteers from the Mid-Hants Railway are eagerly working behind-the-scenes at Eastleigh Works to return SR 'Schools' 4-4-0 No. 925 *Cheltenham* to steam.

The locomotive, part of the National Collection, has been undergoing a full overhaul to working order, with the possibility of a main line return as well.

The work is proceeding, with the boiler expected to be returned to the frames within days. *Cheltenham* is expected to be one of the exhibits at the NRM's Railfest event from 2nd-10th June.

Top: The 'Schools' boiler is on temporary stands next to the chassis of No. 925 *Cheltenham* on 27th January. **Above:** The Mid-Hants Railway's 'Merchant Navy' No. 35005 awaits overhaul at Eastleigh. *Both: Ron Cover*

'CanPac' Appeal

Eastleigh Works is also presently home to another MHR locomotive, SR 'Merchant Navy' Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific*. Out of boiler certificate and awaiting a full overhaul, the railway has now launched an appeal to raise the funds for the work.

LNWR Heritage at Crewe has told the railway that it is happy to work on the boiler as funds permit, and initial investigations reveal that the chassis is in relatively good condition and could be worked on as available labour allows. Donations can be sent to MHRPS CanPac Appeal, c/o John Trigg, The Railway Station, Alresford, SO24 9JG.

Black 5 for Battlefield

The Battlefield Line will host its Spring Steam Gala on 17th/18th March.

Following on from the Great Western duo on the line last year, GWR 2800 class 2-8-0 No. 3803 will be joined by LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45379 from the Mid-Hants Railway. Adding to the line-up will be the resident Peckett 0-6-0ST *Sir Gomer* and Aveling Porter 2-2-0WT *Blue Circle*.

As well as a regular passenger service, a freight train will be in operation each day, and the railway says that a limited number of footplate rides will be available at £35 for a single journey or £60 for a return, when booked in advance.

Bogie offer for Baby Deltic Project withdrawn

The project to recreate a Baby Deltic has been hit with both good and bad news in recent days.

The Baby Deltic Project has been advised that the offer of Class 20 bogies has been withdrawn, which has resulted in the Deltic Preservation Society (DPS) advising that it cannot keep an immobile locomotive within its depot at Barrow Hill.

The project is geared to the modification of Class 37/3 No. 37372, by shortening the nose-end and the body centre section, after which the recreation was to have begun with the installation of a Napier 'Deltic' T9-29 engine kindly supplied by the NRM, with Class 20 bogies which had been offered to the Group in its early days.

Although the news is a blow to the project, it is not expected to have any impact on the timescales, and discussions have already begun with other Class 20 owners regarding either leasing or purchasing an alternative pair of bogies.

The more serious problem is the inability to remain within the DPS shed at Barrow Hill, forcing the 'Baby Deltic Project' to find an alternative accommodation for No. D5910, as the locomotive will become. This problem has now been alleviated in the short term following the agreeing of terms with Rampart Carriage and Wagon Services (RC&WS) to undertake the modification work, comprising shortening of the nose-ends and body centre-section, which had previously been designated for the BDP membership to complete. The work will be undertaken within the new RC&WS workshop at Barrow Hill. This will result in the modified bodyshell being placed onto accommodation bogies, which are being loaned by the 5BEL Trust, and moved into store at Barrow Hill where BDP members will undertake further conversion work.

On behalf of the project, Simon Hartshorne has acknowledged the support of the Transport Trust, which has provided a loan towards the cost of the work being done by RC&WS and to the 5BEL Trust for the loan of the bogies, which have been gratefully received by the BDP in its hour of need.

Above: The current state of the Chicken Curve embankment, just north of Winchcombe station on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. Work to rectify the collapse will commence shortly. *Jack Boskett/GWSR*

Appeal launched for final £170,000 to relink Gloucestershire Warwickshire line

As the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway approaches the next stage of work to reconnect its severed sections of operational line, it is appealing for help to complete the fund-raising necessary for the repairs.

In a project costing £670,000, work is about to commence to repair the collapsed embankment just north of Winchcombe station, but the railway still needs at least £170,000 more to complete the task.

The work will involve digging out a substantial part of the failed earthworks and rebuilding with new material. Other parts of the embankment will be stabilised using high-tech solutions such as 'soil nails', which extend through the embankment into the ground beneath, holding the embankment in place. The project also includes substantial drainage works.

The collapse, which happened at the beginning of January 2011, severed the railway in two, and came on the back of a similar embankment failure at Gotherington, work on which was completed in March 2011. The two problems added to heavy snow and sub-zero temperatures in December 2010, hit the line hard. Malcolm Temple, the GWSR Plc Chairman, says: "The combination of these three serious setbacks placed considerable financial strain on the railway". The work is expected to take approximately four months to complete, after which new track will be laid to reconnect the severed sections of the line.

State-of-the-art geological surveying has been used to assess the ground and obtain the best and most cost-effective repair solution. The surveys showed that the embankment is built of a poor mixture of clay and other materials and was constructed over boggy and unstable land. It is known that the structure caused problems for the Great Western Railway in the 1920s, and further movement resulted in the derailment of a freight train in 1976.

It is hoped that once the repair is finished, the railway can refocus on extending the line northwards from Laverton to Broadway, and eventually to Honeybourne.

The railway welcomes donations, which if made through the charitable GWR Trust attract Gift Aid, and investment in shares. Full information is available on the GWSR website, as is the ability to donate online.

Share ownership brings voting and travel privileges and every investment of £1,000 or over qualifies shareholders for the '300 Club'. Benefits include a 'Golden Pass' providing free lifetime travel on the railway.

Steam on new M&CR extension to in weeks

Moorland & City Railways will commence working on restoration of the line between Leekbrook and Endon in the coming weeks.

Volunteers working on behalf of the Churnet Valley Railway will carry out repairs on the four-mile stretch of track, supported by contractors, in the hope that the first steam workings will reach Endon by late spring.

It is understood that there are no major problems with the various lineside structures on the route, but a significant number of sleepers require renewing.

With the share total now standing at just over £330,000, the Railway is extending its share issue into 2012 in a bid to reach its £450,000 target and provide sufficient funds for the expansion towards Stoke-on-Trent.

Vintage rides at Keighley

The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway has announced that its popular Vintage Train will be operational again this summer.

The train, which includes a number of wooden-bodied coaches, is likely to be hauled by Lancashire & Yorkshire 0-6-0 No. 957, on 24th June, then 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th July.

Normal fares apply, and the train departs Oxenhope at 11:45, 13:15, 14:45 and 16:15, returing from Keighley 45 minutes later.

King Edward II on target for March return to steam

Work is continuing apace to rectify the snags encountered with recently restored 'King' 4-6-0 No. 6023 *King Edward II* **while undergoing running-in workings on the Mid-Norfolk Railway last year.**

The reported division of opinions as to how damage to the firebox was caused seems to have now passed on, and the owning society report that the contract to complete the repair is expected to be completed by mid-March.

A further problem was damage that was inflicted on the oil filler pipe on the middle left-hand driving wheel axle-box underkeep, which is essentially a large oil bath that was damaged when the filler rotated in its retaining thread and was struck by the driving wheel spokes. The problem was spotted before any lasting damage was caused, but rectification required dropping the driving wheel to gain access to the very restricted space where the underkeep is located between the wheel and the locomotive's frames.

As the problem of reaching this filler pipe is a known issue with four-cylinder engines, it has been decided to replace all six to a pattern designed for and fitted to classmate No. 6024 *King Edward I*.

Successful steam gala event for Great Central

Above: LNER '04' 2-8-0 No. 63601 heads an rake of 16-ton mineral wagons towards Rothley at Woodthorpe during the GCRs 'The Big One' winter steam gala on 28th January. *M Dean*

Below: In full sun, BR 'Britannia' Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* heads through Woodthorpe on 27th January with the 12:15 Loughborough to Leicester North service. *Kev Gregory*

The Great Central Railway held a highly successful 'The Big One' steam gala weekend on 27th-29th January.

The event featured the gala debut of Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46521, after an extensive overhaul, while also providing an attraction was the visiting Southern Railway 'M7' 0-4-4T No. 53 from Swanage.

Other locomotives in action across the weekend were SR 'N15' 4-6-0 No. 30777 *Sir Lamiel*, BR Standard 7P Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*, GWR 'Hall' No. 4953 *Pitchford Hall*, LNER '04' 2-8-0 No. 63601 and BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019.

Patronage over the weekend was very high, with a mixture of passenger and freight workings in operation, alongside turntable demonstratios at Quorn.

Above: **Newly restored Ivatt Class 2MT No. 46521, in unlined BR black livery, leads BR Standard Class 2MT No. 78019 into Quorn & Woodhouse on 28th January.** *Neil Walkling*

Above Right: **A turntable demonstration at Quorn and Woodhouse finds Drummond-designed 'M7' Class 0-4-4T No. 53 being turned on 27th January.** *Kev Gregory*

VIDEO SHOT: **Action from across the railway on the second day of the gala weekend, 28th January.** *George Tuplin*

Exposure

A selection of the best photography from across the country

Colourful Southampton

Above: Still carrying its Parcels livery, Class 08 No. 08873 is pictured stabled at Southampton Maritime on 23rd January, in the company of stored classmate No. 08575, and Class 66/5 No. 66504 and Class 66/6 No. 66618. *Mark Baldwin*

Below: On 26th January, Class 66/4 No. 66420, now operated by Freightliner, passes Southampton with the 09:32 Southampton to Ditton intermodal service. *Brian Garrett*

Moving the coal

Above: **With its distinctive circular** *Locomotive & Carriage Institution Centenary 1911-2011* **nameplates clearly visible, Class 66/7 No. 66716 curves out of Eggborough Power Station at Whitley Bridge Junction with coal empties for Immingham on 16th January.** *Robin Patrick*

Below: **Class 70 'Powerhaul' No. 70014 speeds through Stafford on a northbound coal working from Ironbridge Power Station on 25th January, bound for Liverpool Bulk Terminal.** *Frank Richards*

Variety for the engineers

Above: Colas Rail Class 47/7s Nos. 47727 *Rebecca* and 47749 *Demelza* (out of sight) 'top and tail' a rake of five HQA autoballaster wagons through Worcester Shrub Hill on 29th January, en route from Bescot to Evesham. *Bruce Strong*

Right: Class 66/0 No. 66168 has charge of a discharged autoballaster working from Sandy on 22nd January, as it approaches journey's end at Whitemoor Yard in March. *Kev Gregory*

Below: A possession to relay the 'down' line at Claydon on the Great Eastern Main Line on 22nd January, unusually resulted the use of six DRS locomotives. Here, Class 37/6s Nos. 37612 and 37610 are seen in the possession at Darmsden, on a train of spoil, having arrived as the 17:35 March Whitemoor to Ipswich East Suffolk Junction working, the previous evening. *John Day*

66168
10

DIRECT RA
SERVICES

In The News

Left: DRS Class 47/4 No. 47810 *Peter Bath MBE 1927-2006* **awaits departure time from Sellafield with the 16:48 'workers train' service to Carlisle on 27th January. The '47' was deputising for the more usual Class 37/4 No. 37423** *Spirit of the Lakes* **which was removed from the train to assist a failed classmate on the Heysham flasks. Reports suggest that the initial three-weeks of the trial have been encouraging.** *Michael Dalgleish*

Left: A shortage of CrossCountry HST Class 43 powercars on the 25th January, led to East Midlands Trains-operated No. 43052 being hired to work with CrossCountry's own No. 43285 on the 06:00 Leeds to Plymouth service. The EMT powercar on the rear, was recorded entering Coryton Tunnel on the Dawlish Sea Wall. This was the first ever visit of an EMT liveried powercar to Devon. The set returned north on the 12:23 Plymouth to Glasgow, and the powercar remained on hire for a further two days. *Nathan Williamson*

Below: On a day of heavy showers, Class 59/2s Nos. 59206 *John F. Yeoman Rail Pioneer* **and 59201** *Vale of York* **provide super-power haulage for a moderate load of stone as they pass the recently restored railings near Hungerford station on 26th January.** *Tony Bartlett*

The things you see on the railway ....

Above: On 24th January, operational problems with Class 57/6 No. 57602 *Restormel Castle* resulted in the northbound 'Night Riviera' sleeper being piloted to Newton Abbot. The unusual sight of FGW Class 43 powercars Nos. 43135 and 43141 piloting the sleeper, is pictured on arrival at Newton Abbot, where they were detached and returned to Plymouth Laira. The train went forward with the '57' in charge. *Stacey Thew*

Below: The first run of Network Rail's new snow train took place on 28th January, when Class 57/3s Nos. 57306 (leading) and 57312 worked a return trip from Tonbridge West Yard to Ashford International. Here, the train is pictured departing Tonbridge on the outward working. *Pat Seale*

The Decision Makers

John Smith GBRf

Above: GBRf Managing Director, John Smith. *Jack Boskett*

GB Railfreight Managing Director, John Smith, talks exclusively to *Railway Herald* about the success of the company so far and the future for rail freight in the UK.

In the past 13 years, the UK rail network has continually evolved, with traffic changing operators, new routes opening up to taller intermodal containers, and the continued prospect for enhanced international services.

GBRailfreight was created in 1999 as part of the GB Group, which at the time operated the East Anglia passenger franchise, Anglia Railways. The incentive for the start-up was partly the realisation that there was new-to-rail business to be won, and the management team could see better, more efficient ways of serving the customer and providing a high quality service at the same time.

John Smith credits one of the key reasons that the company has been successful is down to having very good people working across the operation. The UK Rail Freight market is worth between £700-800 million per year, of which GBRf handles around 11%, but he sees that there is still a long way to go, and much opportunity for the business. His view is that the line-up of several freight hauliers is a positive for the market place, adding choice, competition and competitive pricing.

Building on success

The success that GBRf has enjoyed has been hard won – in 13 years the company has grown from a start-up operation to one that handles around £82 million worth of business every year, and the turning points that have given that success have been numerous.

John Smith describes the winning of the first contract as a major hurdle, as at the time GBRf was the only freight haulier bidding for a contract that not only hadn't run a freight train, but also didn't have any locomotives to operate one! From the start, the first contract had to be with a customer that was willing to support the company raising finance to purchase the locomotives, which at £2 million each was no small feat. Several opportunities came along at the right time, and the first customer turned out to Railtrack. At the time, the infrastructure owner was a blue-chip company and had the means and the incentive to encourage choice in its supply chain.

Having won one of the Railtrack contracts to haul infrastructure maintenance trains, the work started to procure locomotives, and more importantly to establish a staff that was loyal, dedicated and upbeat about the new operation. Indeed, John credits a significant part of the success of the

Left: One of the latest additions to the GBRf locomotive fleet, Class 66/7 No. 66737 *Lesia*, named after John Smith's wife, is pictured at the helm of a Hams Hall to Felixstowe intermodal service at Clickett Hill, on the Felixstowe Docks branch, on 19th May 2011. The locomotive was previously operated by DRS as Class 66/4 No. 66405. *Antony Guppy*

company to the dedication of its staff and especially the train crews. "One of the smaller hurdles that we overcame" he says, "was persuading a train driver to resign from his existing company that he had been with for 20 or 30 years, to come and work for a company that had no locomotives, driving freight trains around the country for a business that had never existed before! There were some very brave people, particularly on the operations side. I'm very proud of everyone that works here, but I'm particularly proud of those that took that step in the first place".

Building the business from that initial contract was then a key requirement, and as the new operator on the scene, establishing relationships with clients, especially in the intermodal sector, which was heavily monopolised by Freightliner at the time, was a significant challenge. Financially, customers within this market pay per intermodal container, and to establish a new service, which had the potential to run empty, and generate a loss for the business, was a huge risk. The relationship with Medite Shipping Company (MSC) was hugely important to gaining a foothold in that market.

The one advantage to GB Railfreight has been its ability to look outside the box, and this was particularly evident in the winning of the contract with Metronet to handle the haulage of materials related to the London Underground Ltd (LUL) renewal projects. This was the first time that GBRf had put capital into a project, and where money was borrowed and invested in the facility at Wellingborough, a move that drew criticism from the industry, as nobody thought that building a depot at Wellingborough could possibly beat competitors that had land and facilities in the London area. However, GBRf proved the industry wrong, and the operation has worked very well, both under Metronet and subsequently under LUL.

A bigger enterprise

During its life, GB Railfreight has had three owners, being created by GB Group, which was then purchased by First Group, when the latter organisation was attempting to acquire the East Anglia passenger franchise, which at the time was operated by GB Group under the name of Anglia Railways. While the company was allowed to grow and expand under First Group, John Smith describes the sale of the company to Eurotunnel as a defining moment and one that will give the organisation room to breath, expand and invest in the coming years.

"Eurotunnel purchased the company because GBRailfreight is strategically important to what it does, and consequently it has strategic plans for the business and for the UK in general," says John. The advantage is that GBRf is engrained into the freight plans for Europorte Group, which also owns and operates Europorte Channel and Europorte France.

Without doubt, Eurotunnel (ET) has a greater ability to invest in the types of businesses that GBRf is involved in, itself a substantial change to the situation under First Group, whose core business was bus and coach operations and passenger franchises, not rail freight. As John comments: "Eurotunnel's interest in developing the business and ensuring that stable environment has already been reflected in many ways, such as the outright purchase of the last 10 Class 66s to be added to the fleet. The Channel Tunnel is a hugely important strategic link into the UK, and because of the debt and the problems of the debt, ET has always been seen as a problem for the UK, rather than an asset". When asked how that asset can be better used, and what plans, if any, GBRf has to make use of it, John says: "In all the debate around Europe at the moment, it is true that 40% of the UK's trade is with mainland Europe, so the importance of the tunnel needs to be understood along with what it can deliver on a day to day basis". Because of the debt, which has mostly been refinanced, the whole operation has been put on a stable footing, and this has allowed Eurotunnel to look at other opportunities, and the key one in buying GBRf was the influence and knowledge that the company had of the UK rail and freight markets".

Where international services are concerned, in the short term, a new train from Spain commenced in early December for TESCO, contracted through the supermarket chain's logistics operator Stobart, which was a flow that has previously operated under another operator. John comments that there are a number of opportunities to incrementally grow freight traffic through the tunnel, but that tunnel traffic is driven by quality of service and costs.

Since the opening of the Channel

Left: Part of the GBRf site at Wellingborough, soon after its initial opening on 12th June 2007. The wagons form one of the Metronet 'slinger' sets that are used to convey rails or sleepers to worksites on the London Underground system. In this view, looking northwards, the set is pictured with its hoist arms extended prior to being loaded. The development of Wellingborough was critical to GBRf being awarded the Metronet contract. *Richard Tuplin*

Above: GBRf/Metronet-liveried Class 66/7 No. 66720 *Metronet Pathfinder* heads through Homedowns Crossing, near Ashchurch, working a Beeston-Cardiff Tidal loaded scrap service on the 2nd May 2011. ***Jack Boskett***

Tunnel, competition to win international freight traffic has been minimal, if not non-existent. Only EWS and subsequently DB Schenker had operational Class 92s, with the result that if the market was not happy with the deal being offered, the only alternative was to turn to other forms of transit, be it road, sea or air. Eurotunnel, through its subsidiary, Europorte Channel, has introduced an element of competition into the market place with the purchase of the 15 stored Class 92s, which had lain idle for many years. This means that Europort Channel can now offer a 'hook and haul' service to any freight operator in the UK or France to transit trains through the tunnel. As John describes, any operator or customer can now deliver a freight train to the tunnel, and Europort Channel will haul the train through the tunnel at an end cost of around €600.

But for GBRf this 'open-access' style agreement can provide other dividends. Not only can the company look to expand its operators and investigate markets that previously would have needed DBS to haul the train through the tunnel, but it also allows cost-savings and better efficiency of operations to be developed. As an example, he says that in the not-too-distant future, a Europort Channel driver will be trained to take the train all the way through to Barking or Daventry for example, or the GBRf driver will be able to be trained on operations through the tunnel. Either scenario avoids the need to call at Dollands Moor Yard, which provides a saving of around three hours on the transit time.

While having a 'hook-and-haul' style operation through the tunnel that is open to all operators, not just GBRf, is a major step forward, there are bigger problems that start once the train arrives in France. The start of the new TESCO service from Spain meant that the company had to deliver the train on time, an important aspect for two reasons; firstly the customer needed to see a high quality reliable service that delivered on its promises, and secondly, it was conveying fruit and vegetables and had a Day A collection for Day B delivery. The European handling of the service is sub-contracted to CargoNet, a subsidiary of SNCF that controls trains across borders as far as the Tunnel yard at Frethun. There were some problems on the first train, which resulted in an operating delay of around three hours and evolved into a situation where Europort Channel was liaising with SNCF train crew depots throughout France to ensure, where possible, that the train had no further problems en route.

It is acknowledged that such a service is thwart with problems. "Getting through France is problematic" says John, "and we cannot micro-manage French Railways in terms of its delivery of freight trains. So we need to break the back of poor service that is delivered in France for freight traffic". There are a number of outcomes to resolving that poor service, one of which maybe Europorte France, which is the French freight arm of what was previously Veolia Cargo, now owned by Europorte Group, but that organisation is embryonic, and in early days the drivers are not yet in the right places for example. But ultimately, it is the hope that Eurotunnel's own operators, GBRf, Europorte Channel and Europorte France, can be used to operate and deliver a quality trans-European service.

Problems are likely to still ensue however, as the difficulty is that RFF, a subsidiary of SNCF, still owns the infrastructure, and until Europe gets its mind around separating the two, that is always going to be a difficulty. Short term, there are options to enhance traffic in a small way. Looking ahead to the medium term, Europorte France will expand and grow, and the three organisations will work together under the Eurotunnel umbrella, although as John says, the problems surrounding RFF, the French equivalent to Network Rail, will continue to cause problems.

The longer-term view provides some interesting opportunities, and John comments that investment infrastructure on both sides of the Channel is a necessity to support the efficient transit. One of his long-term goals is the ability to get Piggyback lorries transiting along HS1, the only Euro gauge route in the UK at present, to a bespoke terminal in the London or Midlands area, but that brings with it its own difficulties, and also involves looking 10-15 years ahead.

It is important to understand that the Tunnel is only one element of what EuroTunnel can do in the UK. Certainly, the company needs to encourage the increase of operations through its own infrastructure, and that is centred around increasing services, not just by GBRf or DB Schenker, but by all freight operators, now that Europorte Channel provides a 'hook and haul' facility.

For John Smith, the moves to get Europorte Channel's Class 92s passed for operations on High Speed 1 are a key business requirement. The ability to utilise HS1 for freight workings into the London area, and specifically Barking, saves around two to three hours on the transit time, so it improves the efficiency of the service, especially if the train crew are operating throughout from Frethun without an intermediate stop. There are good relationships with the operating company behind HS1 and John believes that even though Eurotunnel did try, unsuccessfully, to purchase it, the sale of the high speed route has brought a breath of fresh air to operations.

Since the purchase by Eurotunnel, the possibility of GBRf spreading its name or creating new business divisions in Europe is unlikely. Both EWS (now DB Schenker) and Freightliner have developed

operations in Poland, with the former also creating the successful Euro Cargo Rail operation in France, but it is a route that GBRf as an individual business division of Eurotunnel is unlikely to go down as the need to undertake such a move has diminished since its latest sale. The Eurotunnel portfolio does include the previously mentioned Europorte France, which could expand its operations to travel further than France, for example transiting into Germany is a high possibility, although that is looking into the medium to long-term future. But the role of GBRf in the group is how it can handle the British elements of a bigger European company, that is Eurotunnel and its subsidiaries.

Above: A spotless and rather bright Class 66/7 No. 66732 *GBRf The First Decade 1999-2009 John Smith* - MD climbs Belstead Bank, south of Ipswich, at the head of a Felixstowe to Hams Hall intermodal service on 10th August, comprised almost entirely of Mediterranean Shipping Company containers. When GBRf started operations from Felixstowe, there were 13 trains each day from the Port – today there are 29. ***Antony Guppy***

Staying close to home

Throughout the last 13 years, rail traffic in a number of areas has grown, and GBRf has been responsible for introducing a number of flows that are new to the traffic. The intermodal market is one of these that has grown significantly – when GBRf started, Felixstowe had 13 trains in and out per day, that figure is now 29.

One of the company's aims is to incrementally grow traffic, especially where intermodal traffic is concerned. "We have never had the network capability of other operators, such as Freightliner," says John, "which inherited not only the network and variety of routes, but also several terminals following privatisation". This was one prime reasons for introducing the new flow to Manchester Trafford Park during 2011. It offered customers more than one destination, and provided a route that could be served, relatively easily out of Felixstowe. He sees this as a positive move, as it has expanded the number of private sector terminals, and introduced additional competition into the North West market. He continued: "Freightliner had a degree of control over the intermodal market, as previously the majority of both inland and port terminals were either Freightliner owned or leased. Felixstowe has broken that monopoly by allowing both GBRf and DB Schenker to operate out of there, which has driven the market onwards".

'Open access' to other operators' terminals has been a thorny issue since the advent of privatisation. The competitive rules in the market place mean that operators must make all efforts to accommodate other Freight Operating Companies (FOCs) at terminals where possible, although obviously from a business point of view it could be seen as welcoming in a competitor to take business away. This issue has long plagued operators, especially in the intermodal field, where British Rail's Freightliner division owned and operated the terminals, a situation that continued with Freightliner Intermodal post-privatisation.

There are a number of efforts underway to try and resolve the issue of third party operators on other operators' terminals. John Smith sees this as one of the key elements that prevent competition in the market, and in some cases could prevent him from being able to compete effectively, because unlike some other operators, GBRf does not have redundant derelict sites that can be recommissioned. The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) accepts that difficulties can arise, and terminals fall into two categories, those that are covered by the Railways Act, which operate under normal track-access procedures, and those that are outside the said act that now have open access procedures following EU directives.

The case of the latter terminals, which include Southampton, where operators and terminal owners are unable to reach an amicable agreement, the ORR becomes an appeal body with set procedures in place to mediate between the parties – although such situations are infrequent, and have only been used on one previous occasion to resolve a situation between the Port of Felixstowe and DB Schenker.

"The mechanics of how things work at the point a dispute does take place are still ineffectual" says John. Southampton and access with Freightliner is a classic example. "We've never put up at Southampton, so in all fairness there are some people saying stop complaining, put up or shut up". This is a fair point that he has no issue with, but while Southampton has been an ongoing problem, it has never been a high priority for GBRf, although that is beginning to change as the intermodal market is starting to grow again. However, although John declined

Left: The Trafford Park Industrial Railway in Manchester has seen a revival over the past twelve months, firstly with GBRfs short-lived Interhub GB service, and subsequently with the more successful operation to Felixstowe. On 7th December last, Class 09 No. 09009 draws its train out of Barton Dock towards the exchange sidings at Trafford Park, from where a Class 66 locomotive will take the train to Felixstowe. Two Classs 09s (the other being No. 09002) have been refurbished for GBRf by LH Services. ***Hugh Ballantyne***

Above: EuroPorte 2-branded Class 92 No 92032 *Cesar Franck* passes through Kensington Olympia, with a circular driver-training service from Dollands Moor. The train, which was comprised of MRA side tipping wagons, operated to Wembley before returning south. Since the purchase of GBRf by Europorte Group, it is the ambition that GBRf and/or Europorte drivers will be able to operate throughout from Frethan Yard in France to North London, cutting out the need to call at Dollands Moor yard and reducing the transit time. ***Brian Morrison***

to comment, the point could also be made that the one reason GBRf hasn't 'put up' at Southampton is that the problems that are known to exist in these situations could mean a lack of progress, wasted time and an outcome that is little different to how the problem is perceived.

The ORR is currently carrying out a Freight Market study to identify the market needs, and the subject of operator access to freight terminals is one of those areas under the microscope. John acknowledges that the issue has progressed and is a lot better than it was, "some of how it's managed and regulated needs further work, as not all of it is managed by the regulator, but it is a slow progression that will get better over time" he adds. Investment in the operator-owned terminals is starting to appear to cater for expanding business, but one of the reasons such investment is slow is the capacity it would provide for outside FOCs to make the business case to operate from a terminal.

For the third party operators such as Trafford Park and Hams Hall, their raison d'être is to create a facility with the highest possible turnover that provides the best possible return on investment. This means the highest volume of trade passing through the terminal, and expanding the site when needed to accommodate more trains and additional operators. In this respect, John sees private terminals as being more receptive to building traffic flows and increasing trade, "if you're the operator and infrastructure owner, the same incentive isn't there to put capacity into the market, which could dilute your return on that investment".

Elsewhere, John is focused on winning new business, and the market has, in his view, a range of opportunities to bring new freight traffic onto rail. He talks of a new petroleum contract with Greenergy that commenced in late 2011 between North East Lincolnshire and South Wales. "This is with a company that has never had petroleum on rail before, which effectively means that we dip into their logistics model and look at how they convey their product around the country. In this case the company deliver around 30% of all fuel delivered to petrol stations, so we look at what value rail can add – obviously we cannot deliver to a petrol station, but we can handle the trunk haul to a storage facility in a certain geographic area". The initial service consists of 22 wagons operating twice a week from Immingham to Queen Alexandra Dock at Cardiff, but the aim is to expand the operation across the country in the future.

Looking at how rail can be integrated and what value freight can add has been key to getting customers onboard, a prime example of this being winning of the Royal Mail contract after the organisation had pulled out of rail-based mail movements – GBRf was credited with bringing postal services back to rail, and despite the contract now passing to a competing operator, in this case DB Schenker, it is still seen as being one of the successes of the company.

Growth Areas

Part of the growth of any company is to look at new markets, new areas where the expertise of its staff can be utilised, and GBRf has been making moves in this direction over the past 12 months, with vertical integration into customers' logistics markets now taking place, and underlying all of this are the relationships with customers and making big steps with big customers.

Celsa Works in Cardiff was the first such example of this, whereby GBRf is now operating the internal movements at the customers premises together with loading/unloading procedures. John sees this as a key area where his company can add value and drive the efficiency and productivity of the terminals, because the risk is all with GBRf if the train leaves late, so it is in the company's own interest to make sure the departures are on time.

A second example is the latest contract with SSI at Lackenby, where steel was one market in which the company was not highly represented. There were some smaller scrap metal flows operating, together with the internal movements contract at Celsa, but it has been a strategic goal to gain more steel traffic, and the SSI contract was key to that aim.

In terms of performance and access to the network, the company is liable for performance penalties if its trains are offered onto the network late. "Ultimately, Network Rail could tell us to get lost – they don't because they are a good supplier to us and they let us run, but we have to be accountable for any delay we cause, so it is hugely important to us that we leave at the right time", John says as he explains that freight services must have the ability to be flexible, it being a basic requirement of operating a good service to the customer. But, while the need to fit in with other trains and other operators

on the network is understood, all parties involved need to appreciate that a degree of flexibility needs to exist. "When dealing with the loading, unloading and train preparation, the process can be managed better if the train operator is in full control, as it provides more flexibility and efficiency as to how things work, and we can affect things as to why trains may be being offered late".

John acknowledges that such operations are not feasible everywhere, but he believes that there are significant opportunities, especially in areas where part of the problem is the complexity of the number of people and individual organisations involved in loading, unloading, maintenance, and moving products.

Not all of the company's forward thinking has been successful however, and during the interview we touched on the Interhub operation, which was an attempt by the company to look at the internal UK market for individual intermodal boxes. "The tested for the service was Barking to Trafford Park at Manchester. There was evidence from Third Party Logistics Providers that the necessary volumes were possible, although most of what was promised failed to materialise. Intermodal services need to convey 60-70% of capacity to break even, and this failed to deliver, and we ceased the service".

There are a number of avenues that can affect the viability of rail in this market place, such as the volume of traffic that can be moved, the variety of end destinations, the additional time to unload at the terminal and then travel between the terminal and the destination, and several of these actually make rail unviable, in which case, unless one can offer a real benefit to price, it doesn't work. John says he "still remains hugely sceptical that such traffic can work, and unless a key customer or third party logistics business will take a trainload risk, there will be little more, if any, internal UK logistics traffic coming off road onto rail. The Government has got to get its mind around that. The bulk traffic works, but if it is about curtain-sided intermodal types of carriage, then I think the economics are a long way off and to a certain extent it does not work".

As the MD of one of the key railfreight companies, John says he is, unsurprisingly, far from happy with the 11% of the UK market that GBRf operates, although the company is on target in relation to the growth plan on which it was sold to Eurotunnel.

Motive Power

Growing business brings a need for additional motive power and wagons, and the company is committed to secure assets for the long term. However, from a business viewpoint such a commitment is not as easy as it would first seem; the price of wagons has doubled in the past two to three years, and additional regulations on locomotive manufacturers are making life increasingly difficult. John admits that locomotives are a problem, "because the European Union is applying rules that effectively stop the ability of any manufacturer to build a locomotive for the UK market. The Class 70 is only 3A compliant on emissions regulations, it does not meet the standards to have the 3B compliance that is required, so any purchase of those has to be undertaken in the immediate future. Class 66 suffers from the same problems, and also doesn't comply with the latest crash worthiness requirements".

John is quite determined that the level of investment needed to comply with the new standards and regulation is now such, that the 'green' agenda is no longer affordable to UK operators. He comments: "We are destroying our industry. We have to stop the bureaucrats driving us towards standards and demands that we cannot afford – and it's a problem for the entire industry. GB Railfreight has a requirement for a further 10-20 locomotives within the next 18-24 months, so we are OK for the moment. We have sub-leased some kit to other operators, which is evidence of the mature relationship that exists between a number of operators, where various equipment is leased at varying times, which also provides capacity for our own growth, and the equipment itself is always leased on deals where they can be called back at relatively short notice if necessary. The current float will see us through to the end of 2012 – depending on business that is gained or lost".

Various options exist for expanding the fleet from 2013, including further Class 66s, assuming that derogation can be obtained. Alternatively Class 70s may be an option, or European designs such as the Vossloh locomotives that DRS are investing in. The main complaint is where the kit comes from after that. Other operators that have spare capacity are shipping the locomotives overseas to support European operations, rather than handing them back to the leasing companies, with the result that no secondary lease market now exists. After 2008, such a market did exist for around

Below: On 6th July 2007, a trio of GBRf Class 67s are lined-up at Wellingborough, two of which were then showing off the latest First GBRf colour scheme. From left to right, Class 66/7s Nos. 66725, 66711 and 66726 await their next duties. *Richard Tuplin*

Above: One of the major markets that GBRf has firmly established itself in, is the movement of coal to the power stations, especially in the North East. Here, Class 66/7 No. 66712 *Peterborough Power Signal Box* slowly edges its train through the discharge house at Drax Power Station, having arrived from Tyne Dock. More recently, GBRf has become the first UK railfreight company to move biomass by rail, a market that other operators are now looking to establish a foothold in. *Richard Tuplin*

12 months, but John Smith doesn't see any more Class 66s being handed back to lessors. When asked about the possibilities of acquiring older locomotives as a fall back, he comments that its always an option, but an expensive one, as the traction is inefficient, and in almost all cases would require significant re-engineering. There are some areas where there is viable alternative he confirms, but on the whole it is not a road the company wants to go down.

One of the options mentioned by John is the General Electric Class 70s that Freightliner operates. The type can offer increased lengths of trains and a better fuel consumption, but such improvements do not justify the additional cost of a Class 70, which is rumoured within the industry to be around £1 million more than a '66'. From a business perspective, whatever the extra cost of the locomotive actually is, it needs to deliver that amount of benefit back into the business, and this is one area that a number of people in the industry are currently doubting. The headline selling point of the '70s' is that the design provides the traction to haul longer, heavier trains in a more efficient and economic way, which in principal works well as the more wagons that can be added to existing services, the more profitable those services become – but as John Smith explains, the problem is not always in the haulage capability, the '70s' don't offer much to the coal market for example – "yes they can haul longer trains, but the loops at the power stations cannot accommodate any more than 24 wagons, which a '66' can achieve". The '70s' are also innovative with a brand new power unit that hasn't been used in a rail environment before, and that itself causes concerns for operators as it has no proven reliability, and history has shown that any power unit that has not been used on a locomotive before has had problems.

John openly admits that his ideal solution would be to continue building Class 66s, while he accepts that some modifications would be needed to the design, such as better sound-proofing and air-conditioning, the design is one that quiet happily works out of the box and within reason, works through any demands put on it. From a business perspective, the case for continuing to order Class 66s also makes sense as there is no driver or fitter training necessary, the maintenance teams know the fleet well, and things such as the spares pool are all compatible. So there are problems to overcome, but the '66s' are the modern day go anywhere, do anything traction and for the small number of routes where '66s' can't go, the company has its Class 73 fleet. This brings us onto the subject of re-engineering the 50-year-old fleet of Electro-Diesels.

GBRf has utilised the '73s' for several years on its infrastructure maintenance contracts with Network Rail, but admits that the fleet has only been subject to the standard of maintenance to see the locos through until 2013, which is when the contracts with Network Rail are due to be re-let.

After this point, the future of the '73s' very much hangs in the balance. While it is quite clear from the conversation that in the event that the Network Rail contract is not won at that point, the likelihood is that the 'ED' fleet would be disposed of. But on the assumption the contract is renewed, what is the position? John says: "The fleet could be re-engineered to offer kit that still provides third-rail flexibility, as well as the diesel engine, the result being that a pair could become equivalent in haulage capacity to a Class 66, with a life expectancy of another 10-20 years, but any re-engineering is an expensive process, and one for which the business case will need to be very specific". A decision is likely to be made in the short term after consultation with a number of companies that are likely to be bidding for such work if the decision to go-ahead with a rebuild is taken.

Conclusion

Overall the future looks bright for GB Railfreight, and there is no reason to doubt that the direction taken by John Smith over the past 13 years will carry the company forward into the future. With strong aspirations to grow the company's market share, the one thing for sure is that the GBRf of the future will be a bigger competitor, capable of handling everything from the train loading and terminal shunting, through to haulage across the UK and to international services.

With the recession and the difficulties in the economic climate, it is pleasing to note John Smith's comment that GB Railfreight was sold with a growth plan, and that two years down the line it is on target with that plan.

The development of the business as part of Eurotunnel will be significant and interesting to watch and see how the operations and portfolio develops. Europe has possibly never been more in the limelight, not only in terms of business opportunities, but also with regard to the effects that modern day European legislation is having on operations on this side of the Channel.

Our thanks to John Smith for his time and assistance in the preparation of this article.

Delivering the goods

- Innovation
- Customer Service
- Reliability

The Wheels of Industry

Mike Higgins
Business development manager
GB Railfreight
15 – 25 Artillery Lane
London, E1 7HA
Tel: 020 7983 5124
mike.higgins@gbrailfreight.com

www.gbrailfreight.com

GB Railfreight
PART OF EUROPORTE

France

Above: The Trans-European Express from Paris to Moscow passes Remilly, France, with DB Class 181 dual voltage electric loco No. 181209 on 17th January. The train is worked by an (SNCF) BB15000 or BB26000 from Paris to Metz, from where a German locomotive takes over for the short cross-border journey to Saarbrücken. *Christophe Lauer*

Trans-European Express starts operation to Moscow

Russian Railways (RZD) is now operating direct sleeper trains between Moscow and Paris called the Trans-European Express.

The service started on 14th December last year and runs three times a week each way; this will increase to five times a week from 31st May to 6th October.

Russian sleeping cars were a familiar sight in both Paris and Ostend from the 1960s, attached to international overnight trains; the Ostend services ended first, and the last through sleepers from Moscow to Paris were removed in 1994.

Russian Railways is investing in international links and restarted through sleepers to Paris in 2007, attached to a train from Berlin, and introduced a weekly Nice to Moscow sleeper service in September 2010.

The Paris to Moscow train is worked by at least seven different locos during its 3,177km journey, three of them in Germany! The eastbound train leaves Paris Est at 08:28 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays every week (with Monday and Thursday departures in summer as well) and is routed via Metz, Saarbrücken, Fulda, Wolfsburg, Berlin, Rzepin, Warsaw and Brest (Belarus), where the train is changed from 1,435mm bogies to 1,520mm ones, arriving in Moscow shortly before midnight on the second day. RZD provides all the sleeping cars, which are modern air-conditioned vehicles. Polish Railways long distance TOC PKP Intercity provides a restaurant car as far as the Belarus border, where a 1520mm gauge Russian one is added instead.

3,000 MILES OF RUSSIAN STEAM!

THE BEST STEAM TOUR OF 2012!

14-27 OCTOBER 2012

DEDICATED PRIVATE TRAIN

Steam Loco Classes: Er, SO17, P36, 2xL, LV and Su. Double headed L class Moscow to Rostov and return.
Route: Moscow - Bologoye - Ostashkov - Torzhok - Ryazan - Voronezh - Rossoch - Rostov - Salsk - Kavakazskaya - Kislovodsk - Mineralyne Vody - Dzheguta - Rostov - Moscow.
Steam traction throughout the tour. Own private train, including comfortable sleeping cars, 2 restaurant cars, kitchen, bar and shower cars. Photo stops throughout. Sightseeing by bus with local guide at loco service stops for those not wishing to photo locomotives. Full board throughout the trip Moscow back to Moscow on train (excludes alcoholic drinks), including one night hotel before and after the tour on B&B basis, and airport transfers.
Price, excluding flights and visas: £5995 per person (supplement for single compartments)

For details, please contact Jim Colley at:

EAST EUROPE RAILTOURS LTD
Birchwood, Shatterford, Bewdley, Worcs, DY12 1TP, UK.
Tel:+44(0)1299 861529 Fax:+44(0)1299 861058
E-mail: enquiries@eerailtours.eu

China

500km/h high speed train unveiled

China South Locomotive & Rolling Stock (CSR) has built a new 500km/h demonstrator high-speed train.

The six-coach EMU is based on the CRH380A high-speed train already in service on Chinese high-speed lines (at up to 350km/h) as both eight and 16 coach trains. Unlike the regular passenger version, the test train has a new aerodynamic design and a massive 22,800kW of available power, compared with 9,600kW for the CRH380A eight-coach train.

CSR and the Chinese Government hope the new test train will enable Chinese manufacturers to demonstrate their technology to future potential export customers.

Germany

Vossloh loco order

German chemical manufacturer and major rail freight user BASF has ordered 22 new diesel locomotives from Vossloh.

The order comprises six larger Bo-Bo diesel electric locos; four 1,200 kW DE12 and two 1,800kW DE18 plus 16 type G6 three-axle 671 kW diesel-hydraulics. The overall contract value, including maintenance, is around €40 million. The locos will be used at BASF's German plants in Ludwigshafen and Schwarzheide (Brandenburg) and in Antwerp, Belgium

Germany

Above: PKP in Germany. Polish 'Taurus' No. 370010 arriving at Berlin Hbf on with train EC46, the 06:28 international service from Warsaw East. *Keith Fender*

DB Schenker 'Taurus' freight locos transfer to regional passenger divison

German Railways (DB) regional subsidiary DB Regio has purchased all 25 Class 182 locomotives, built by Siemens to its Eurosprinter ES64 U2 'Taurus' design in 2001, from fellow company DB Schenker, and is now using them on regional passenger services in eastern Germany.

Since 11th December last year, the fleet has been used on the Berlin Brandenburg Regional Express line RE2 (Cottbus - Wismar) plus Dresden S-Bahn line 1 (Meissen - Schöna). Elsewhere the locos are also being used instead of Class 442 Talent 2 EMUs, which still await safety approval for general usage.

The DB Class 182s are not the only Siemens Eurosprinter locos working passenger trains around Berlin, as Polish long distance operator PKP Intercity has 10 Siemens ES64 U4 (quad- voltage equipped) locomotives designated as Class 370. These have been working all Warsaw-Berlin Eurocity trains since July 2010.

In addition DB's long distance train operating company, DB Fernverkehr, has several Class 182 locos on hire from leasing company MRCE, two of which also appear in Berlin daily.

Sweden

Hector Rail wins steel coil contract with DB Schenker

Hector Rail is working with DB Schenker to move steel traffic through Sweden.

Swedish steel manufacture SSAB has awarded a contract to DB Schenker (DBS) to transport steel coil traffic to customers throughout Germany, and DBS has sub-contracted the Swedish element of the work to Hector Rail. The three-year contract, which commenced on 5th January, will involve operating three trains a week from the production facillity in Borlänge to the Port of Trelleborg, with the Hector Rail also handling the loading of wagons onto the rail ferry. The contract provides the ability to increase the number of trains, as required.

Hector Rail has established a method of shunting within the port at Trelleborg so that it can easily handle the loading and offloading of wagons to and from the ferry which connects with Mukran/ Sassnitz, or occasionally, Rostock, on the German coast.

Below: One of Hector Rail's two Siemens-built quad-voltage Class 441 electrics, No. 441001, heads the first train of steel coil from the works at Borlänge to the train ferry at Trelleborg on 5th January. *Hector Rail*

Italy

NTV shows off new Alstom AGV units

New Italian open-access private high-speed operator Nuovo Trasporto Viaggiatori (NTV), which means New Passenger Transport in Italian, introduced its new trains in mid-December.

NTV is the world's first 'start-up' privately owned high-speed operator, and was created in 2006 by several leading Italian private businessmen. Since 2006, NTV has been planning its launch - finding partners (French Railways SNCF is a minority shareholder), recruiting staff and suppliers.

NTV will be the first operator to use Alstom's new 360km/h AGV high-speed train, which is the first distributed power articulated high speed train in the world. AGV is a French acronym - Automotrice à Grande Vitesse - or high-speed multiple unit in English.

The 25 NTV-operated AGVs are designated Class 575 in Italy, and all are based at the brand new purpose-built depot in Nola, near Naples. Collectively, the trains represent a £873 million investment. The company is expected to commence its services on the Turin-Milan-Rome-Naples high-speed network from March.

Below: The 25 AGV trains are based at Nola, near Naples. NTV also has two Vossloh-built G2000 locos on lease to move empty AGV trains. Ferrovie Emilia Romagna G2000 No. 200023 is seen next to AGV set No. 575022 at Nola on 13th December. *Keith Fender*

Canada

Below: General Electric ES44AC No. 8744 and General Motors SD90MAC No. 9100 double-head a southbound manifest service into a snow covered Thunder Bay, Ontario, on 19th January, under a cloudless sky and in temperatures of below -30 degrees! *Bill Salton*

Welcome to World News!

These World News pages within Railway Herald will appear every fortnight, compiled by our new World News Editor, Keith Fender.

But, *Railway Herald* needs correspondants and informed sources around the world that can provide news stories, or imagery from around the globe. It may be that you can assist us photographically or with written news. If your interested and would like to know more, contact the Editor for further details.

Germany

DB opens new depot

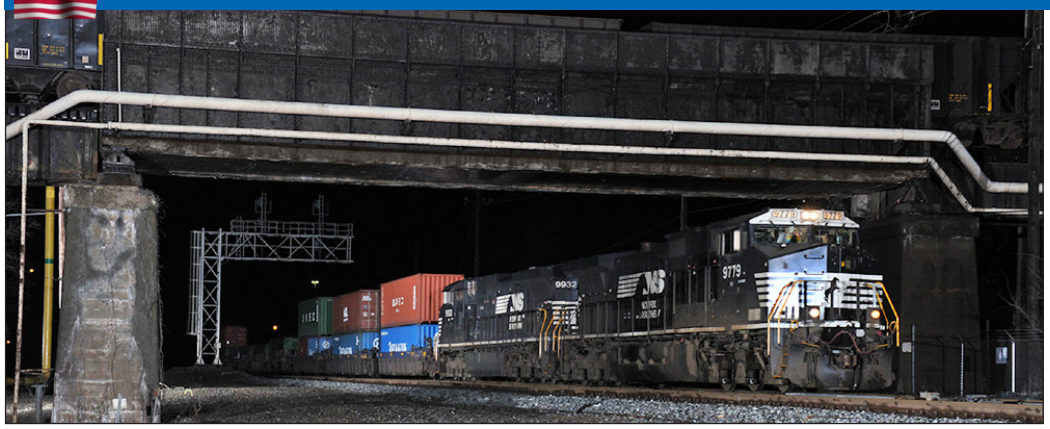
German Railways (DB) opened a new ICE high-speed train maintenance depot in Frankfurt am Main at the existing Griesheim depot in December last.

The three-track depot building, costing €40 million, has one road equipped to enable an entire ICE3 series train to be lifting allowing bogie exchange and repairs to be undertaken quickly.

Frankfurt Griesheim specialises in maintenance of the multi-voltage ICE3M Class 406 trains, and is equipped with test facilities for all the major EU voltages and signalling systems that are used by the trains. The new Velaro-D Class 407, which will be used on services to London from 2015, will also be based there, as will some of the new ICx high-speed trains from 2017 onwards.

Regional/Suburban subsidiary DB Regio also opened a new depot in late 2011 at Nuremberg-Gostenhof in Nuremberg, which will be the base for the new fleet of Class 442 Talent2 EMUs being delivered for Nuremberg S-Bahn services, and when completed this year will also be responsible for DMU and coaching stock maintenance. The depot that has been under construction since 2009, will cost €66 million and will replace several other facilities in the Nuremberg area.

United States



Above: The first double-stack intermodal train to operate between Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio, powered by GE Dash9-40CW Nos. 9779 and 9932, crosses under a bridge near Middletown, Ohio, where the track was lowered to allow trains carrying containers stacked two-high to use the route, which connects to Norfolk Southern's Heartland Corridor. *Norfolk Southern*

New link means more double-stack access

Norfolk Southern has cleared the way for more double-stack intermodal trains to use its Heartland Corridor, after it opened an improved double-stack line between Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Heartland Connector will reduce transit times by one to two days and increase service reliability for double-stack freight travelling to and from the Port of Virginia and Cincinnati and Detroit. The improvements will also provide Norfolk Southern with the potential to connect Ohio Valley markets to other major East Coast container ports.

The project included raising clearances at five locations along the 124-mile route between Cincinnati and Columbus and adding tracks at Norfolk Southern's Rickenbacker Intermodal Terminal near Columbus. Prior to the upgrades, double-stack intermodal trains leaving the Port of Virginia for Cincinnati and Detroit followed longer routes through Tennessee or Pennsylvania. Now, double-stack trains bound for Detroit use a route that is 212 miles shorter, and trains travelling to Cincinnati travel 69 fewer miles and save up to two days transit time. Financial support for the $6.1 million project included $3.6 million from the federal government combined with matching contributions from Norfolk Southern and the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Council of Governments.

VIDEO SHOT: One of Union Pacific's heritage liveried locomotives, SD70ACe No. 1982 is seen at the helm of a North Platte, Nebraska, to Elkhart, Indiana, manifest freight, with SD70M No. 3816. This particular working, which included SD70M No. 4585 and SD9043AC No. 8113 as mid-train helpers, was 11,300ft long. *Bill Meier*

North Platte yard to be expanded

Union Pacific (UP) has announced $1 billion of investment in the State of Nebraska, where the railroad is based, over the coming years.

The largest marshalling and classification yard in the world at North Platte is to be expanded with additional tracks and new technology. The yard currently covers 2,850 acres and is over eight miles in length!

Most of the planned investment will be in track capacity on the UP main line through the State, with both additional tracks and better technology being introduced to improve productivity.

New Multi-level coaches for Maryland

Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), ordered 54 MultiLevel commuter rail vehicles from Bombardier in the USA in late 2011.

The order, worth approximately $154 million,will see new passenger carriages introduced on the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Brunswick, Camden and Penn Lines. The vehicles will both replace older cars plus expand the MARC fleet. Deliveries will take place between May and December next year.

A total of 329 similar MultiLevel commuter rail vehicles have been ordered by New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ Transit), with another 100 on order, and Canadian Agence Metropolitaine de Transport in Montreal is also to have 160 vehicles.

New Amtrak Virginia service on target to start by 31st December

The new Amtrak Virginia service to and from Norfolk will begin by the end of the year, 10 months earlier than originally projected.

The Commonwealth's Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, freight operators CSX and Norfolk Southern, and the City of Norfolk have been working to make the necessary upgrades for the service, which will bring intercity passenger operations to Norfolk for the first time since 1977, and will operate to Richmond, Washington, D.C. and as Boston.

The Norfolk train marks the third service expansion launched under the Amtrak Virginia partnership, which has introduced services to Richmond and Lynchburg since October 2009. Virginia is the 15th state to partner with Amtrak for intercity passenger rail service.

Australia

Named trains reduce services

Australian luxury passenger train operator Great Southern Railroad has announced the scaling back of some services in 2012.

A spokesperson said the iconic 'The Ghan' will run just one service a week between Adelaide and Darwin until May when it resumes two services weekly until August, one service September to November and just one return trip a fortnight throughout December and January 2013.

The equally well-appointed 'Indian Pacific' that plies the Sydney-Adelaide-Perth route will maintain two services per week during February, one service March to August, two in September and October, one during November dropping away to one a fortnight throughout December and January 2013.

Additional carriages would be added to the trains to meet the demand for capacity.

New 4,300hp diesel locos for Darwin freight

Genesee & Wyoming Australia is taking delivery of its first new-build locomotives, which will be used for freight primarily on the Adelaide to Darwin line.

The new GWA class locomotives have been built by Downer EDI Rail in Cardiff, New South Wales.

The seven new locos designated GT46C ACe are equipped with an EMD 16-710 G3C-ES 4,300hp diesel engine and radial steer bogies. Similar locos have been delivered previously for Australian operators Specialized Container Transport, Pacific National and Queensland National.

Australian Alcos still in action in 2012

Despite the proliferation of powerful modern GE and GM-powered locomotive types in New South Wales, hard working examples of the Alco DL500 'World Locomotive' continue to tantalise Australian rail enthusiasts in two states.

Appearing from almost the dawn of Australian dieselisation, the earliest 'down under' DL500s were delivered to the South Australian Railways from 1955 as the 930-class with a single cab. From 1957, the Australian Alco licence holder A. E. Goodwin, was able to offer a bi-directional version for additional 930-class orders and for the NSW Government Railways as its 44-class.

Despite their age, many of the surviving NSW 19 units continue to haul mainline metropolitan transfer freight and infrastructure trains with operators such as Independent Railways of Australia and P&O Transport Australia (POTA). At least two enjoy regular high-speed mainline outings at the head of long distance charter trains while another two, which are owned by enthusiasts, frequently see mainline service hauling an official track test train.

VIDEO SHOT: Operated by Southern Shorthaul Railroad, but recently sold to P&O Trans Australia, 1952-built Alcos Nos. B65 and B61 climb through Murrobo,in the central western district of New South Wales, with rail carrying wagons en route from Parkes to Bathurst. *Bevan Wall*

Spawned by the USA Alco FA-1, the DL500 was launched in 1953 and four of the 37 delivered to South Australia have survived, mostly as museum pieces. No. 961 is the commercially working exception for it is owned by Chicago Freight Car Leasing Australia.

For the record, a total of 369 DL500 locomotives were built between May 1953 and December 1967.

Below: Preserved Alco No. 4403 is paired with Alco type DL531 No. 4807 on 31st December, nearing Goulburn in southern NSW, hauling a trainload of Canberra partygoers en route to Sydney for New Year's Eve fireworks celebrations. *Leon Oberg*

Could you be a world correspondent?

Railway Herald is keen to hear from any reader who may be interested in becoming a correspondent for the magazine, for their part of the world - be that photographically or in a written format. Click here, for further details

Germany

Winter steam in the Harz Mountains

Steam in the Harz Mountains of Germany can provide spectacular images at the best of times, but none more so than during the winter.

During a recent visit to the area in mid-December, with plenty of snow on the ground, *Railway Herald* contributor, John Day, captured two of the line's locomotives in action.

Above: 1918-built Mallett No. 995906 climbs through Sorge on 8th December, with the 08:30 Wernigerode to Eisfeder Talmuhle charter working.

Right: Built in 1918 by Henschel Company No. 996101 performs a run past on the outskirts of Drei Annen Hohne in the Harz Mountains while working the 13:25 Wernigerode to Brocken charter on 6th December. The snow became heavier as the afternoon progressed and by the time Brocken was reached there was no visibility whatsoever. *Both: John Day*

Railway Herald welcomes correspondence and comment from readers, whether it is on memories from the rail scene of years gone by, or a comment on the current rail industry, UK or overseas. We welcome the input from readers, either by letter to the editorial address or by email to the Editor. If you have something to say - tell us!

70017 First Working

Dear Editor,
I need to point out a slight error with your caption on page 6 of Issue 229. The first revenue earning service for Class 70 No. 70017 was in fact 4M24 00:46 Leeds to Basford Hall on 19th January. It then ran light to Ditton for the service pictured. If you wish to print this correction, can you also advise people about the GEGen group which actively follows the Class 70 fleet.
Marcus Dawson,
by email

Apple iOS Newsstand

Dear Editor,
I was wondering if you had thought about producing the magazine as a newsstand subscription for the iPad. I really enjoy reading your magazine on my iPad.

Do you have any plans or is it very unlikely this would take place?
Andrew Hajewskyj
by Email

Ed. - As of this issue the magazine should be a lot easier to read on a mobile device, be that an Apple iPad, a iPhone, an Android phone or Blackberry, there is a native HTML5 version, which means that the aspects of the device, such as swiping pages on iPad, do work. Apple Newsstand is an attractive and very good idea, and one thats on the cards, but brings its own issues that need to be resolved first. However, if enough people want it, we'll do it!

Britannia on the Royal Train

Dear Editor,
I note from our local paper that *Britannia* was used to work the Royal Train on 24th January from Preston, over Copy Pit to Wakefield Kirkgate.

This set me wondering when the last time a 'Brit' would have worked such a train? I do not recall that they were regular performers on Royal workings, as the Eastern Region generally used 'A4s', the LMS used the Stanier Pacifics and the Southern used one of its 'T9s'. I recall the 'Britannias' were used on the Norwich to London trains and given the proximity of Sandringham to Norwich wondered if this may have given rise to such a working at any time? It may be a question that one of your readers will be able to answer?
Fred Milton,
by email

Ed. - As mentioned in our article on the Royal Train working, Britannia *did work the funeral train of King George VI from King's Lynn to London King's Cross in 1952, but our limited research suggests there was a further working around 1958 when No. 70039* Sir Christopher Wren *worked the Royal Train, but the route is unknown. Does any reader know any more details, or a later example?*

Turning Steam at Westbury

Dear Editor,
The item on Page 12 of the Railtours section in your last issue, referring to a lack of turning facility at Westbury is incorrect, as you have overlooked the existence of the triangle!
Garath Ponsonby,
by email

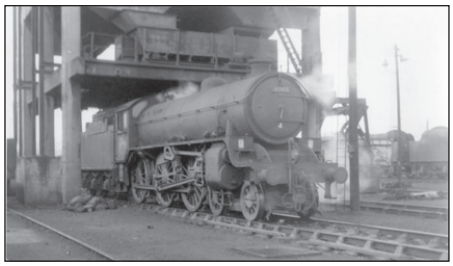
Ed. - Garath, thanks for pointing this out. We have corrected the story in the News Briefs column on the railtours page.

B1 at an unknown location

Dear Editor,
A friend of mine recently rescued a box of old railway photographs, as he knows I enjoy anything railway related. They appear to be taken all across the country during the 1950s and 1960s.

Attached is one such photograph that I thought you may find interesting. It depicts a 'B1' class locomotive, No. 61140. The location of the image is not known but is was taken 1954.
John Graham
by email

Ed. - We have reproduced the image supplied by Mr Graham below - can any reader identify the location?



Did you Know?

SPAD Indicators

In the first of our new 'Did you know?' column, we look at the function and role played by SPAD Indicators.

SPAD, stands for Signal Passed At Danger, and the consequences when this happens can have serious repercussions.

The railway network is now equipped with a number of SPAD indicators, these are three aspect style structures located at strategic points, around 100 yards beyond the signal to which they refer.

The indicators were introduced following a number of high profile accidents where a signal was passed at danger - the first being installed at Meadowhall, near Sheffield, in the mid-1990s.

All signalling is interlocked with the track circuits, and should a train pass a signal at danger, the track circuit in advance of the signal will activate, automatically enabling the SPAD indicator, which provides a visual warning to the driver.

SPAD indicators are usually sited in places that have experienced a high number of SPAD events, the exits of major stations, the approach to major junctions, or on single line sections around the exit from passing loops, although they are installed as required, and do not follow specific guidelines.

On activation, the signal, which is easily distinguished by the bright blue background to the signal head, will show a flashing red aspect on the the top and bottom aspects, with some of the more modern installations also flashing the word 'STOP' in the centre position.

Above: Class 444 No. 444010 departs from Southampton Central on 4th July, passing a pair of SPAD indicators. *Paul Bigland*

Our thanks to Graham Goswell for his assistance with this feature.

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.

For authorised representatives of societies, we can also provide access to our online system, allowing society secretary's to update the information online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please contact the editor on 01904 500175 for further details and to setup your access to the system.

BACK COVER CAPTION:
Having discharged its load at Longannet Power Station, Freightliner-operated Class 66/4 No. 66413 leaves the Forth Bridge on 27th January, en route to Leith South for reloading. *Ian Lothian*

1st February 2012

Burton Railway Society
Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent DE14 3BG. 'Preserved Steam on Video' (A Review of 2011) by Karl Jauncey & Dave Richards. Starts 19.30. £2 Admission. Contact Mark Ratcliffe on 01283 221537 for further details

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Hayes Village Hall, Hayes Street, Hayes, Bromley. 'Two Inches Over and Two Inches Under, a Presentation on Mountain Railways' by Ray Schofield. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 0208 289 9935 for further details.

Warwickshire Railway Society
Lamp Tavern P.H., Barford Street, Highgate, Birmingham B5 6AH. 'Steam in Scotland from 1959 Onward to Present Day' by Roger Johnston. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Don Taggart on 01746 710676 for further details.

2nd February 2012

Great Central Railway (Sheffield)
The Harlequin, 108 Nursery Street, Sheffield S3 8GG. 'J.G.Robinson and Other Locomotive Artists - Part2' by Ken Grainger. Starts 19.30. Contact Ken Grainger on 0114 254 0275 for further details.

RCTS (Milton Keynes)
The Crown, Market Square, Stony Stratford. 'Strictly Freight Only Part 3' by Brian Ringer. Starts 19.30.

Scottish Railway Preservation Society (Edinburgh)
Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. 'Railway Tales' by John Evans. Starts 19.30. Contact Dr Peter Howell on 0131 334 5232 for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
St John's Ambulance Centre, Sandes Avenue, Kendal LA9 4LL. 'Members' Evening'. Meeting commences at 19.15. Contact the Secretary on 01539 720706 for further information.

3rd February 2012

Cambridge Railway Circle
Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road, Cambridge CB4 2LD. '1,000 Eggs on a Bicycle' by Colin Boocock. Starts 19.30.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (Birmingham)
St Laurence Pastoral Centre, Church Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2LX. 'Nostalgia of Steam on 16mm Cine' by Chris Pratt. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact David French on 07791 770595 for further details.

RCTS (Bristol)
St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Filton. 'Steaming through Gloucestershire' by Ian Thomas. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Carnforth)
County Hotel, Lancaster Road, Carnforth. 'Challenges of Timetable Planning' by David Langton. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Settlement Centre, Union Street, Middlesbrough TS1 5NQ. 'NYMR 175 and Onwards' by Phillip Benham. Starts 19.00. Contact 01642 313451 for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. 'Tyneside Electrics Part 3' by Bill Donald. Starts 19.00. Contact 01434 688946 for further details.

6th February 2012

North Yorkshire Moors Rly (Northallerton)
Northallerton Town Cricket Club, Farndale Avenue, Northallerton. 'Railway Heraldry' by Steve Frost. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission £1.50. Contact the Group Secretary, Ian McInnes on 01642 767233 for further details

Plymouth Rly Circle
St Edward's Church Hall, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4PG. 'The Great Way Round' by Terry Nichols.Starts 19.30. Visitors welcome. Admission £2.

RCTS (Ashford)
The Elwick Club, Church Road, Ashford. 'Welsh Highland Railway' by Andy Savage. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary at southeast@rcts.org.uk for details.

RCTS (Birmingham)
Christ Church Community Hall, Burney, Ward End. 'American Wanderings' by Gordon Davies. Meeting commences at 14.00.

RCTS (Northampton)
St. Crispin Social Club, Berrywood Road, Duston. '170 Years of the Royal Train' by Chris Hillyard. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stafford Rly Society
St Leonards Social Club, Stafford. 'A Tribute to Roger Siviter ARPS 1936-2011' by Hugh Ballantyne. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01785 840622 for details.

7th February 2012

Locomotive Club of Gt. Britain (Bedford)
The St John's Church Hall,St John's Street, Bedford MK42 0DL. 'Trains that Passed Roade Junction and Around Northamptonshire' by Robin Patrick. Starts 19.30. £2 Admission. Contact B.Cross on 01525 750149 for further details.

Monmouthshire Railway Society
Room A10 UWCN City Campus, Usk Way, Newport NP20 2BP 'BR Steam in the 1960s' by Derek Brixey. Starts 19.15. £3 Admission.

North East Essex Railway Association
Frinton Community Centre, The Triangle, Frinton. 'Railway Planning for the Olympics' by Dave Hepper. Start tbc.

RCTS (Watford)
St. Thomas's United Reformed Church, Langley Road, Watford. 'Picture Postcard Railway Rambles' by Stephen Gay. Starts 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire) /LRTA
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'Railways of the East Midlands' by Steve Bigley. Starts 19.30. Admission £2. Contact the Secretary, John Goodrich on 02380 670028 for further details.

Telford Rly Society
John Maddock's Sports & Social Club, off Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford TF2 6 BU. 'Review of 2011' by D.Shuker & J.Powell. Starts 19.45. Admission £3.

Weston super Mare Railway Society
Function Room, Weston super Mare Conservative Club, Alexandra Parade, Weston super Mare, BS23 1QX. 'Limbering up in Paris and One Day in Paris' by Ian Chancellor and ' Main Line Steam in Germany and England' by Peter Doudney. Starts 20.00. Visitors welcome. £1 admission. Contact the Chairman on 01934 628289 for details.

8th February 2012

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote Street Club, Ne Road, Basingstoke RG21 7NG. 'Signal Boxes, People & Trains on the Berks & Hants Line' by David Canning. Starts 20.00. All welcome. Contact 01256 819401 for further details.

Bradford Railway Circle
The Centre, Heaton Baptist Church, Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX. 'Narrow Gauge Niceties' by Robin Patrick. Starts 19.30.

Continental Railway Circle (London and the Home Counties)
St. Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ. 'Steam in India' by Geoff Warren. Starts 19.15. £2 Admission £2. Contact Adrian Palmer on 01932 850624 for further details.

Oxfordshire Railway Society
Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Oxford OX2 9LD. 'AGM & Members' Short Talks. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Cardiff)
Old Church Rooms, Radyr. 'Out and About in the Last 24 Months' by Hugh Gould. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Hitchin)
Hitchin Christian Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin. 'Stop Look and Listen' by David Cole. Starts 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Y.M.C.A., Bridge Street, Guildford, GU1 4SB. 'Members' Evening'. Starts 19.30. Contact 01372 379216.

Swiss Railways Society (London)
The Model Railway Club, Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9AT. '1991' by Nick Freezer. Starts 19.00. £3 donation. Contact Ron Dawes on 020 8660 3532 for further details.

9th February 2012

Bath Railway Society
Bath Green Park Station Meeting Room, Bath. 'GWR Miscellany (and a Few Accidents)' by Rev. Canon Brian Arman. Starts 19.30. All Welcome. Visitors £2. Contact Kevin Plummer (Evenings) on 01225 312564 for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (St Albans)
United Reform Church, Watford Road, Chiswell Green, St Albans. 'Thomas Brassey: Supreme Railway Builder' by Dr David Brooke. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01442 251540 (after 18.00) for details.

RCTS (Newcastle)
The Brunswick Methodist Hall, Newcastle. 'Out and About in the Past Year' by Hugh Gould. Starts 19.30. Contact jimbrick@fsmail.net for further details.

10th February 2012

Altrincham Electric Railway Preservation Society
Altrincham Methodist Church Hall, Barrinton Road, Altrincham, WA14 1HF. 'Great Western Railway Lines in South & Mid-Wales' by Tony Icke. Starts 19.30. Contact Andrew Macfarlane on 0161 928 9394 for further details.

GCR Leicester Area Group
St Bartholomews Church Hall, Church Lane, Quorn. 'The Last Days of B.R.Steam' by Derek Huntriss. Starts 19.30. Contact John Calton on 07714 546163 for details.

Great Western Society (Swindon)
Lawn Community Centre, Guildford Avenue, off Windsor Road, Lawn, Swindon, SN3 1JE. AGM & 'Quiz' by Joe Turner. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01793 495976 for further details.

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury. '2011 Show' by Karl Jauncey and Dave Richards. Meeting commences at 19.30

11th February 2012

Bournemouth Railway Club
Winton Methodist Community Centre, All Purpose Room, Junction Alma Road/Heron Court Road, Winton, Bournemouth BH9 1DE. 'A Look at the Local Changing Traffic Scene since the last year of Southern Steam' by Roger Smith. Starts 14.30. Visitors welcome. £2 Admission. Contact the Chairman on 01202 742099 for details.

Irwell Vale Railway Photographers
Irwell Vale Village Church, Irwell Vale, Rossendale. 'Kenneth Oldham's 16mm Steam in 1960's on DVD' by Barry Atkinson. Starts 19.30. Donation £3. Contact Mike Taylor on 01282 436653.

RCTS (Edinburgh)
Quakers Meeting House, 7 Victoria Street, Edinburgh. 'The Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway' by Andrew Thompson. Meeting commences at 14.30. Contact the Secretary at evenwilliams@talktalk.net for further details.

RCTS (Exeter)
Conference Room, Great Western Hotel, Exeter. 'Almost 50 Years of Railway Photography' by Geoff Lendon. Meeting starts at 19.00.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Kidderminster Railway Museum, adjoining SVR station, Kidderminster DY10 1QX. 'AGM'. Starts 14.00. Contact the Secretary on 01242 582152 for details.

13th February 2012

Driffield & East Yorkshire Rly Society
The Sidings, Middle Street South, Driffield YO25 6PX. 'Steam, Diesels and Electrics in the York Area 1978-2009' & Society AGM. Starts 19.30. £2 Donation. Visitors welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01377 254068 for further details.

RCTS (East Croydon)
Small Hall, East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, East Croydon. 'The Role of London Travelwatch' by Tim Bellenger. Starts 19.30

RCTS (Ipswich)
Bridge Ward Social Club, 68 Austin Street, Ipswich. 'A Ride with the Guard with a Difference' by John Manning. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Sheffield)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield. 'The National Railway Collection - An Overview' by Anthony Coulis. Meeting commences at 19.30.

66413