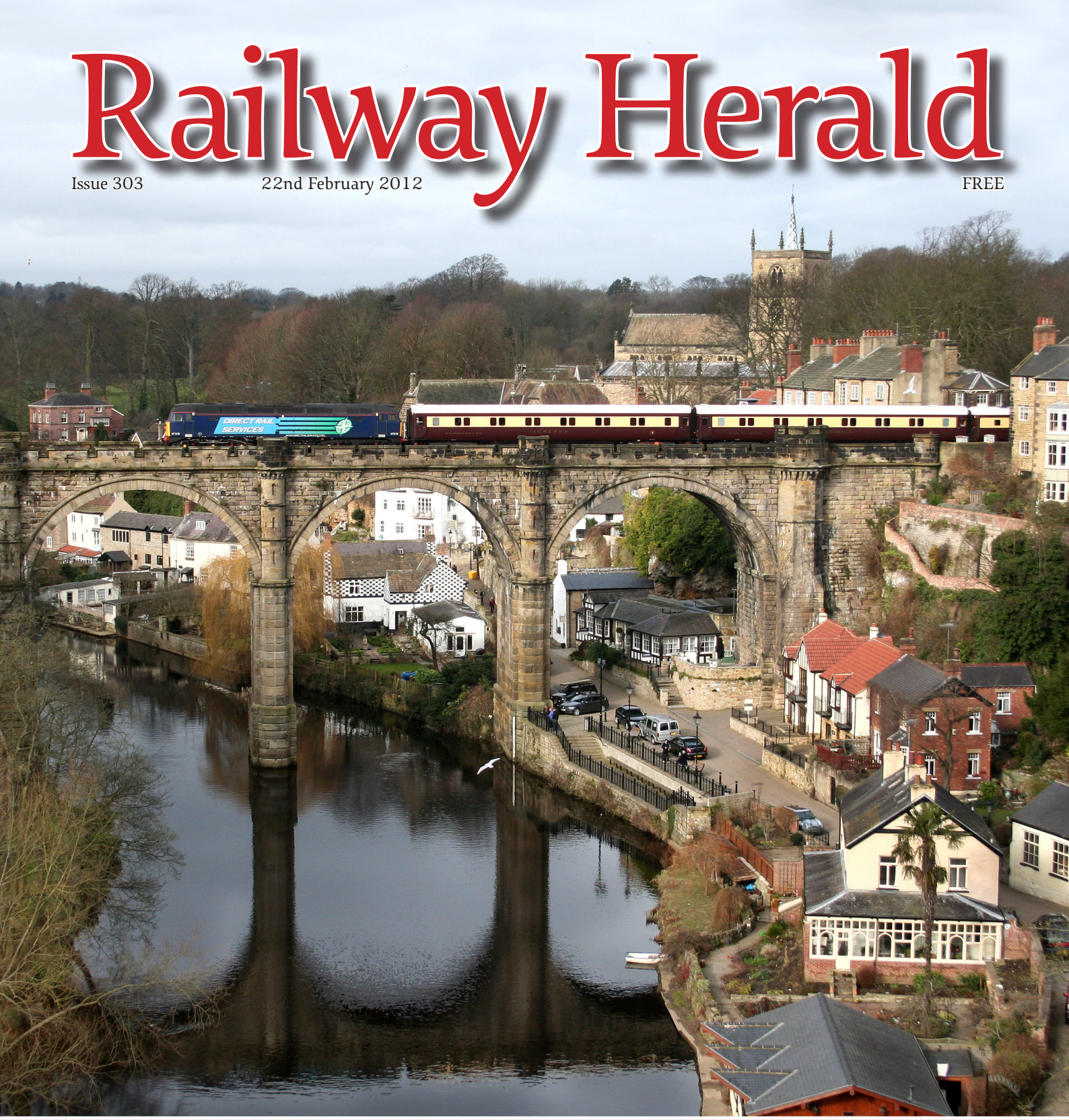
Railway Herald

Issue 303 22nd February 2012 FREE



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TOP: DRS Class 47/4 No. 47818 brings up the rear of the Northern Belle as it crosses Knaresborough Viaduct with the ECS for a Valentine's Lunch excursion on 16th February. **Stephen Bellamy**

BOTTOM LEFT: Parry People Mover Class 139 No. 139001 stands at Stourbridge Town, awaiting departure back along the short branch to Stourbridge Junction. **John Whitehouse**

BOTTOM RIGHT: Barton Aggregates-liveried Class 66/6 No.66623 *Bill Bolsover* pilots Class 66/5 No. 66529 through Kirkby Stephen with a coal working from Killoch to Leeds Hunslet on 18th February. **Mick Langton**

Railway Herald

Issue 303 — 22nd February 2012

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

Back Issues
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Railway Herald is published by **Railway Herald Limited**, in association with Ian Allan Publishing Limited.

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ISSN 1751-8091

Are we really encouraging the use of rail?

As the use of the rail network is continuing to grow, in some cases at staggering rates, it Is no wonder that little is done to promote the various rover tickets that are available across the country.

Rovers, or Rangers in some areas, provide unlimited travel for either a day, or a specific period such as 3 days in 7 or 4 days in 10, within a specific boundary. Given the rising cost of fuel when travelling by road, many tickets now provide even better value for money than previously.

A full round-up of all rover tickets can be found on the National Railway Enquiries website, but even then it is rather buried and the casual member of the public would be unlikely to know that they needed to look under the various ticket types, and even then the presentation is rather overwhelming and is reliant on the purchaser knowing exactly what he or she is looking for.

However, full marks do have to be given to National Rail Enquiries for providing a comprehensive list that does include those tickets promoted by the various Integrated Passenger Authorities. West Yorkshire for example, provides two types of rail and bus 'Day Rover' tickets, one for adults and one for families, which is valid for two adults and up to three children, and provides coverage throughout West Yorkshire.

The problem with all such things is that information is not consistent. When requesting prices for a Micklefield to Leeds season ticket for example, the prices are split, as you would expect, into seven days, one, three, six and 12 months. All fine in itself, and this tells potential purchasers that a one-month season ticket valid on rail only between the two stations is £87.20 - but not does it tell you that for £95 for the same month, you could purchase a MetroCard Monthly Season ticket, which not only provides travel throughout the whole of the West Yorkshire area bordered by Crossflats, Bradford, Mirfield, Sandal & Agbrigg, Knottingley and Horsforth, but also includes virtually unlimited bus travel within the same area!

So the unknowing commuter whose office lies someway from Leeds station, is potentially purchasing a rail season ticket then an add-on bus ticket, which for a month would be significantly more expensive than the £7.80 difference in the ticket.

Significant progress has been made recently in explaining the various ticketing structures, but when such scenarios arise it is hardly surprising that rail's reputation for being expensive and difficult to navigate to the most cost effective tickets takes a hit.

Subscriptions

Just a reminder to all readers that *Railway Herald* will only be available on subscription from next week.

Additional news and information sections will be introduced to the website in the coming months, which will automatically be available to all subscribers.

Richard Tuplin

Richard Tuplin, Editor

Below: Recreating a scene that could be somewhere in the South West during the 1980s, Class 50 No. 50019 *Ramillies* passes over the level crossing at Thuxton with a rake of ballast hoppers from Wymondham during the Mid Norfolk Railway's 'Mixed Traffic Weekend' on 18th February. *Andy Marrison*

Dont miss the March issue of *Modern Railways*!

On sale February 24th

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*** - Not all video content is exclusive, some may be available through other sources.

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the new magazine

FINAL FREE WEEK!
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 now - and all will automatically commence from 29th February.

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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 account **does not** provide access to the magazine. Paid subscribers that use the Imaging Centre will benefit from new features to be introduced shortly.

CLICK HERE for further details on What's New

Photo: Ken Brunt

RTC advises changes to 'Lincolnshire Poacher' and 'GB5'

The Railway Touring Company has confirmed that next weekend's 'Lincolnshire Poacher' from London King's Cross to Cleethorpes, which is booked for haulage by 'Britannia' Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*, **will not visit New Holland Town as originally intended.**

Due to a lack of turning facilities at Cleethorpes, the usual plan is to diesel-haul the return as far as the Ulceby triangle to turn the train, enabling steam traction to lead thereon. It looks as if this manoeuvre will again take place, as timing issues are understood to have precluded travelling further down the branch to New Holland Town.

Elsewhere, there are further changes to RTC's 'Great Britain V' rosters. A bridge clearance issue on the Stranraer line has meant that No. 70013 will now not be able to be used on that part of the tour on 25th April. Instead, the train will be 'Black 5' hauled, featuring Nos. 45305 and 45407. Meanwhile, *Oliver Cromwell* will now get an extra working in addition to the Prestonto Bristol Temple Meads leg on 27th April, as due to West Country Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* not being available, the 'Britannia' will double-head with No. 34067 Tangmere from Bristol to Penzance the following day. The return will be diesel-hauled to Bristol Temple Meads ahead of the final leg back to London Paddington on 29th April, which is now booked for No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* and 4936 *Kinlet Hall*. However, it is further understood that No. 5029 requires attention to a tyre, which may put its involvement in doubt. The Battle of Britain and 'Britannia' combination will also work RTC's 'The Royal Duchy' from Penzance to Westbury on 5th May.

First Class 180 returns from Kilmarnock

Below: The first Class 180 to be internally refurbished at Wabtec Rail, Kilmarnock, returned south on 21st February. Six of the class are to return to their roots, transferring back to First Great Western. Here, No. 180103, complete in First Great Western livery, heads south along the East Coast Main Line at Hensall, north of Doncaster, en route from Kilmarnock to Old Oak Common. *George Tuplin*

VIDEO FOOTAGE

New study supports proposed Northern Hub

According to a new study, Yorkshire could miss out on huge benefits unless the Government funds the £560 million Northern Hub programme for delivery between 2014 and 2019

Commissioned jointly by Metro, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and Leeds City Region, the Yorkshire Rail Network Study highlights that up to £12 billion of vital economic benefits that could be unlocked through measures to improve Yorkshire's rail connectivity. These benefits would result from quicker journeys and improved business links, better commuter services, and more capacity for freight.

Metro Chairman, Councillor James Lewis, said: "Our study provides backing for rail network improvements that would contribute to Yorkshire's economic growth, and we want to work with the Department for Transport and the rail industry to develop a comprehensive long term investment plan for the Leeds/Sheffield areas so that the maximum economic benefits are realised".

If the decision is made to back the report over the next two weeks, the West and South Yorkshire ITAs will be making it clear that they want full consideration given to its contents by Network Rail, as it plans projects and spending for its next-five-year programme of work, starting in 2014.

South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority Chairman, Councillor Mick Jameson, said: "The report before the ITA suggests that faster trains between Sheffield and Leeds are badly needed and these will require investment at both Leeds and Sheffield stations. We need to change the platform layouts and make them longer to enable both passenger and freight growth. Major signalling works are already planned at Sheffield station in the next few years, so this presents an ideal opportunity. Alongside the track and signalling improvements, we also want to see investment in train stock as well."

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ It is understood that tests are to be carried out this week at Dollands Moor involving a Hitachi Class 395. The work is intended to confirm that the Eurotunnel Krupp diesels could be sent to rescue a '395' if a failure occurs.

■ For those travellers who must be connected to the world wide web at every opportunity, First Great Western is making it even easier! During March, in association with The Cloud, the company is to install free WiFi access on platforms, concourses and waiting rooms at 13 stations, including Oxford, Ealing Broadway and Maidenhead. In addition, stations that already have WiFi facilities are to be revamped and updated.

■ Network Rail is to equip hundreds of its road-rail vehicles with £5 million worth of additional disc brakes. The announcement comes on the eighth anniversary of a rail accident in Cumbria in which a runaway wagon caused the deaths of four workers.

■ Passengers with any West Yorkshire Adult Bus-only MetroCard, StudentPlus MetroCard or Bus & Rail MetroCard can take a day return on the Settle & Carlisle, or Lancaster-Morecambe lines from Leeds or Bradford Foster Square, or any Aire Valley line station from Skipton for just £9. The offer is valid until 23rd March.

New Powerhaul locomotives move to Freightliner's York workshops

Above: The last two members of the current order for Class 70s were delivered to Liverpool Docks on 17th February, aboard the ship *Atlantic Companion*. **Having been railed within the docks complex at Seaforth, the two '70s' were 'topped and tailed' by Class 66s No. 66556 and 66954, to Crewe Basford Hall during the late afternoon of 18th February. The convoy is pictured leaving the docks at Bootle.** *Fred Kerr*

Below: Having made their way to Leeds Stourton in the consist of an intermodal service from Crewe, Class 66 No. 66531 leads classmate No. 66412, along with Class 70s Nos. 70003, 70020 and 70019 away from Leeds Hunslet, bound for York on 20th February. *Glyn Fuller*

Subscription payments to Railway Herald

We are currently working on providing an online payment system, separate to Paypal, and we hope to have this available shortly.

In the interim period, any readers who would like to pay using a credit or debit card may do this **over the phone** by calling the Editorial Office on 01904 500175 between 09.30 and 17.30 on weekdays. If you are already a member of the website, please quote your registered email address and/or username when calling.

If you have not registered online, then please visit http://www.railwayherald.com/signup, where you will be able to create a free account, prior to calling. We can then upgrade your account as necessary.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Scottish Transport Minister, Keith Brown, visited Millerhill and Galashiels on 21st February to see some of the preparatory work for the Borders Railway project. The line will have rail services return to Midlothian and the Borders for the first time in 40 years, as well as creating hundreds of jobs for the area. Initial work for the railway in the area is being undertaken at the same time as the Galashiels Inner Relief Road in order to minimise disturbance in the town when the main railway construction works begin.

■ Network Rail Infrastructure Limited has announced that it intends to sell its subsidiary, Network Rail (NDS-Plant) Limited. The subsidiary was set up in November 2011 following Network Rail's purchase of the rail division of Hydrex Equipment (UK) Ltd from its administrators, KPMG. The purchase, which was approved by the Office for Rail Regulation, included the transfer of employment of all rail division staff and ownership of over 300 road rail vehicles (RRVs). Hydrex was the largest provider of RRVs to the rail industry and a key supplier to Network Rail and its infrastructure contractors. The company's purchase of Hydrex brought to an end an extended period of uncertainty for employees, customers and suppliers, while providing continuity of business for the supply of heavy plant to the industry.

■ The North Yorkshire Moors Railway, which operates from Pickering to Grosmont, will make an appearance in the Great British Countryside, a new four-part BBC1 series at 20:00 on Thursday. Two of the line's volunteers, Stephen Hogg and Gerry Skelton will appear in the hour-long episode that this week focuses on Yorkshire, as Hugh Dennis and Julia Bradbury explore the Great British Countryside.

NEWSDESK

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Above: The completed Platform 8 and footbridge at Cambridge are pictured on 9th December. In the opposite platform is Class 170/1 Turbostar No. 170114, departing as the 13:08 CrossCountry service from Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport. From 2015, Cambridge will gain a second station on the outskirts of the city at Chesterton Sidings. *Brian Morrison*

Cambridge gets green light for second city station

The green light has been given to move long-held plans for a new rail station in Cambridge from concept to reality by the County Council.

The station, to be called Cambridge Science Park, will be built on the Chesterton Sidings site to the north of Cambridge, to plans that have been developed between the County Council and its partners on the basis that the station could be provided commercially and paid for from rail ticket revenues. To allow early delivery, initial capital funding for the station will be provided by the Council and then recouped from the train operating companies over a number of years.

The Minister for Transport, Theresa Villiers MP, has confirmed in a letter to Cambridge Council Leader, Nick Clarke, that as long as the station continues to have a positive business case and generates enough revenue to repay its cost, then it will be included in the next rail franchises that operate on the London, Cambridge, Ely, Kings Lynn line.

The work undertaken by the County Council shows that the business case for the station is very strong and should help to ensure that the County Council can secure its capital investment and allow for the development of the station proposals to proceed. Investment for the station forms part of the County's recent budget proposals that will enable early delivery of the station. Construction on the site is planned to start in early 2014, with an opening date planned in late 2015.

The station will have three platforms, and will be served by at least four hourly southbound trains to Cambridge and London and three hourly northbound trains to Ely, Kings Lynn and Norwich) The Busway will be extended into the site, providing an interchange for frequent onward services to St Ives and Huntingdon, and for local bus services.

It is considered that the new station at Cambridge Science will bring significant benefits for local residents in north Cambridge and to the wider community, as around 80% of vehicles currently using Cambridge station emanate from north of the city, and it is hoped that the new station will intercept these journeys and help to reduce congestion in and around the city centre.

Dave Ward, Network Rail Route Managing Director, said: "Demand for rail travel in and around Cambridge continues to grow, and our ongoing investment in the area is designed to cater for that growth. The news today that Chesterton Station is another step closer to reality is great news".

The details from Theresa Villiers confirmed that subject to the final agreement of a number of technical points, the station will be included as a timetable commitment in the new rail franchises for Thameslink and Greater Anglia services. The initial off-peak hourly service pattern that is planned is one train calling per hour in each direction on the King's Lynn and Ely to London King's Cross routes, Norwich to Cambridge, and also on the Cambridge Science Park to London Liverpool Street route, the latter presumably a result of extending one train an hour from Cambridge to the new northern city station. The County Council says that it is likely that CrossCountry's Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport services will also serve Cambridge Science Park, while timetabling work has indicated that the service level at the station can be provided without significant impacts on services at Waterbeach.

ECML diversions via Gainsborough

Above: **Class 43/2 powercars No. 43314 and 43257 (on the rear) power through Beckingham, on the Doncaster to Gainsborough Trent Junction line, with the diverted 07:55 Inverness-London King`s Cross service on 18th February. The normal ECML route was closed as a result of engineering work around Tuxford.** *Steven Craig*

Penalty fares rise to £80 on TfL systems

Transport for London (TfL) has increased the penalty charge for non-payment of fares on its services from £50 to £80 as part of its ongoing commitment to deter and further reduce fare evasion on London's transport network.

The increase in penalties came into effect from 19th February, and covers all of TfL's services in the Capital, including London Underground, London Overground, London Buses, Docklands Light Railway and London Tramlink.

Passengers are required to pay the correct fare for their journey, and failure to do so could lead to a penalty or even prosecution, resulting in a criminal record and a fine of up to £1,000. It is expected that this rise will increase the deterrent effect of the penalty charge, which is part of TfL's ongoing drive to combat fare evasion. Fare evasion across all modes of transport is estimated to have cost TfL around £63 million last year, and it is committed to protecting public money through detecting and investigating suspected fare evasion. The new £80 penalty will be reduced to £40 if paid within 21 days.

London Orbital nearly there

The first step towards completion of the orbital London Overground network has been completed with the last rail being put in place.

The new extension across South London will complete the network, providing a brand new link between Surrey Quays and Clapham Junction. Over 50 new jobs will be created in the running of the new service, in addition to the 1,000 that have been employed in designing and building the new link.

Once complete, the route will have four trains an hour calling at all stations between Dalston Junction and Surrey Quays, then Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye, Denmark Hill, Clapham High Street and Wandsworth Road, before terminating at Clapham Junction.

From there, London Overground services then run north to Willesden Junction and beyond. The next phase of the project will be electrification, followed by testing. The extension is expected to open to passenger services from the December timetable change.

Below: **A typical day at the privately operated St Leonards Depot is seen on 14th February. From left to right are Class 73/1 No. 73119** *Borough of Eastleigh*, **Class 171/7 No. 171722, Class 73/2 No. 73201** *Broadlands* **and Class 66/7 No. 66730** *Whitemoor*. *Andy Armitage*

Above: **In beautiful winter sunshine, DRS Class 37/5s Nos. 37667 and 37688 head alongside River Don at Fintray between Dyce and Inverurie with a Network Rail 'snow train' working from Dundee to Inverness on 18th February.** *Dave Purser*

Passengers get their say on new franchise

Rail passengers and other interested groups in Essex are being asked for their views on how train services could be improved.

A 12-week consultation period will give interested parties the opportunity to say what changes and improvements they would like to see delivered by the new 15-year Essex Thameside franchise, which will be renewed in May 2013.

The consultation details what could be expected of the new operator, including rolling out smart ticketing technology, improving stations and looking at the possibility of differentiating between 'metro style' – high frequency, high capacity - services near London and 'suburban' services for the longer-distance journeys into Essex.

Cooling the Tube for summer

Work has begun to install air-cooling units to lower the temperature on platforms at two of London Underground's key stations.

Plans to lower the temperature on the stations comes about with the installation of a new 'air handling' technology, being part of an ongoing programme of work to 'Cool the Tube'.

At Green Park station, borehole cooling technology will be used, LUL having already successfully drilled wells to source natural cool water from deep below Green Park, and will now install air-cooling units that will use the water to lower the temperature at both the Victoria and Piccadilly line platforms.

At Oxford Circus station, air-cooling units in the ticket hall, will be extended onto the Bakerloo, Central and Victoria line platforms. These units will use cool air provided by chiller units that will be installed on top of a building owned by Transport for London, which is adjacent to the station.

The work is due for completion this coming summer

This well detailed book covers the history, development and decline of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Company's system in and around Preston.

The work begins with an account of the early railways and then focuses on specific locations, all of which have either long since disappeared or have been whittled down beyond recognition.

There are nostalgic reflections on such places as Butler Street station and goods yard; the stables at East Cliff; the jointly-owned Park Hotel; the triangle of junctions at Whitehouse; Todd Lane Junction and station; the complex at Lostock Hall, with a large section given over to the famous engine shed.

The work terminates with a chapter on Bamber Bridge, Gregson Lane and Hoghton. There is also a chapter on the former West Lancashire section from Fishergate Hill to Southport, and another on the gas works at Lostock Hall, which was served by the railway and had an engine of its own.

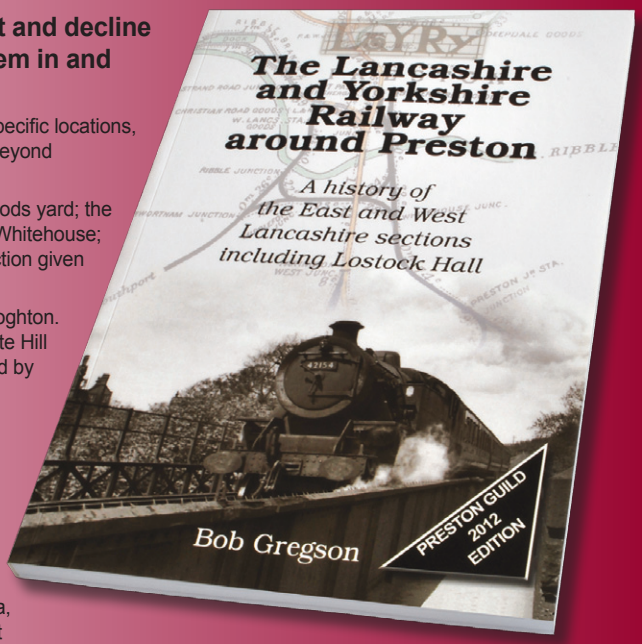
The text is well illustrated with many evocative and remarkable photographs, drawings and ephemera, most of which have never been published before. The author has included the human element wherever possible, in the form of personal accounts from men and women who worked in the Preston and Lostock Hall areas in the unforgettable days of steam, all painstakingly recorded and compiled over a period of 15 years.

We believe this is certainly the most informative work of its kind to be written on the former East and West Lancashire Railway sections in the Preston area, and as so much intense and meticulous research has gone into its creation, it will prove to be a valuable reference book for the railway enthusiast, modeller and historian alike.

Originally published in December 2011, the first print run was sold out by the end of that month. A second print run is now available with additional photographs.

This is the first of two books covering the history of the rail network around Preston with the second book **'The London and North Western Railway around Preston'**, to be published in the early summer of 2012.

Softback, A4, 184 pages with 277 images. Printed black throughout.



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Above: **Displaying the latest Arriva Trains Wales livery, Class 158 No. 158824 arrives at Bangor with a Holyhead to Birmingham International service on 21st February. This unit is the latest to undergo refurbishment at LNWR Crewe.** *Geraint Jones*

Llandudno refurbishment project delayed by funding issues

Plans to transform Llandudno station into a new bright, secure transport interchange have been delayed as a result of funding issues.

Following funding and legal setbacks, the work that was due for completion in spring next year has been delayed until the summer. As a result the financial resources for the project have yet to be agreed and a date for the start of work is not yet known.

The proposal by Network Rail, North Wales Joint Transport Board, Conwy County Borough Council, Arriva Trains Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government, will see a refurbished concourse, with glazed panels providing a bright, warm and secure waiting area. In addition, the station will be turned into a transport interchange with a bigger 128-space car park introduced and extra cycle storage, bus stops and a new taxi drop-off point created.

The project is part of on-going plans by Arriva Trains Wales to improve its trains and facilities, and provide modern, pleasant surroundings for passengers. This also includes the upgrade and refurbishment of its extensively used Class 158 fleet by the Arriva-owned LNWR workshops at Crewe.

London-Shrewsbury link back on track?

Local campaigners in the Shropshire area are hoping that direct rail services between Shrewsbury and London may be back on the agenda.

Local MPs and campaign groups are requesting meetings with the four 'preferred bidders' (First Group, Virgin Trains, Abellio and Keolis) that are aiming to be chosen to run the West Coast Main Line franchise from December this year, in the hope that part of the new franchise bids will include restoring the direct link for the Shropshire town. First Group has already said that it is interested in discussing options with the local Strategic Rail Group.

Shropshire Council leaders and MPs say they have made a 'strong case' for a morning and evening service to the Capital, between London and Chester, stopping at Shrewsbury, Telford and Gobowen.

Shrewsbury lost its direct rail service when the through Aberystwyth to London Euston service was withdrawn, although this returned for a short period while the open-access operator, Wrexham & Shropshire, provided several services a day between Wrexham and London Marylebone, which operated via Shrewsbury. Subsequent to the start up of this service was the introduction of a one-per-day Virgin Trains working from London Euston to Wrexham, via Chester, which still operates.

Do you have or know of a news story for *Railway Herald***?**

If so, then call us on 01904 500175, or email the Editor.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ In addition to Larbert station in Stirlingshire, three ScotRail stations in Fife have now started to generate their own solar power for the first time ever, a total of 48 solar panels having been installed on the roofs of Dunfermline, Town, Kirkcaldy and Leuchars. They will produce 3,300kWh of electricity at each site annually, the panels helping to directly power lighting, heating and information signs by capturing the sun's energy.

■ According to official rail industry figures just released, c2c has once again set a new UK punctuality record for a franchised train operator. The figures show that c2c achieved a record breaking 96.9% of its Public Performance Measure train service performance over the past 12 months up to 4th February 2012. In doing so it broke its own UK record for the highest annual punctuality by a franchised train operator (96.7%) that it achieved in 2010. And as a 'double whammy' the TOC again topped the latest four-week period figures with 97.4% of trains on time.

■ A new information panel has been installed at Linlithgow station to commemorate its claim to be the first ever station in the world to have been photographed. The picture was taken in 1845 by David Octavius Hill, who pioneered many aspects of the art form in collaboration with the engineer and photographer Robert Adamson. It is believed that Hill took the photograph of Linlithgow three years after it opened. Now, almost 170 years later, the image remains recognisable, with St Michael's Parish Church clearly prominent. It is reproduced in the new Linlithgow Heritage Trail information panel.

Green light for Midland Metro extension

It has been confirmed that Centro can begin construction of the extension to its Midland Metro system from Snow Hill station through the city centre to New Street station.

The £128 million scheme, which also provides a new replacement fleet of trams for the entire network, is being funded in part by £75.4 million from the Department for Transport.

The scheme is being led by Centro, in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the Black Country district authorities.

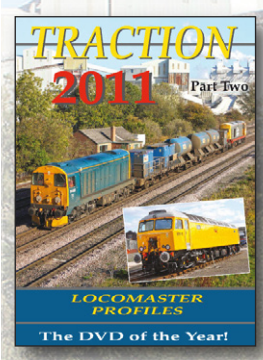
The first new tram is scheduled to come into service on the existing line in February 2014, and an enlarged Wednesbury Depot will be available in August 2013. The complete city centre extension with the full new tram fleet is scheduled to be in service from March 2015.

GBRf biomass operation expands to Bristol

Above: GBRf, currently the only railfreight operator to be involved in the movement of biomass, has commenced operation of a new service between Portbury Dock and Drax Power Station. Here, one of the trains leaves the confines of Wickwar Tunnel in South Gloucestershire on 20th February, with motive power supplied by two Class 66/7s, Nos. 66709 *Joseph Arnold Davies* **and 66715** *Valour*, **while working from Doncaster to Portbury Dock with empty hoppers.** *Edward Gleed*

The latest addition to the TRACTION DVD series

TRACTION 2011 - Part 2 July-December



The highly acclaimed Traction series is now in its 17th year and programme number 33 is packed full of newsworthy workings, fleet developments and new freight flows. Add to that a selection of notable railtours and selected highlights from the world of preservation and you have a programme that is guaranteed to keep you on the edge of your seat! Among the many items featured in this DVD are…..

56311 working a Grimsby Docks to Cardiff Tidal scrap train, Royal loco 67006 on the Edinburgh bins, 47500 moving track machinery from Nottingham to Hitchin, 67030 rescuing 'Super Tug' 60007 on the St Pancras-Ketton cement, Colas 47s taking stored Class 92s from Crewe to Dollands Moor, 66847 working the first timber train on the re-opened Heathfield branch, Arriva-liveried 67003 on the Sinfin tanks, 37601 & 37611 working the Didcot-Bicester MoD trip, 20096 & 20227 on a Doncaster-Toton DBS engineers train, 57306 rescuing GBRf's Daventry to Dollands Moor intermodal, 50044 & the Virgin Mark 3 set on a Euston-Holyhead charter, Crompton D6515 working NYMR Grosmont-Whitby shuttles, a 5-loco Deltic convoy from Shildon to Bury, 37607 & 37608 on the Southampton Docks Boat Train, 57310 performing 2 MPV rescues in 2 days, triple-headed Class 50s at Bury, 67002 piloting *Tornado* on Victoria-Weymouth charter, 59001 & 59101 visit the Mid-Norfolk Railway.....and extensive coverage of the autumn RHTT's with loco classes 20/37/57/66/67 and 97.

Click below to view a trailer for the programme

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Tramlink derailment brings delays to Croydon system

London Tramlink services were severely disrupted on 17th February when one of the trams derailed in the town centre.

The incident happened just after 06:30 outside East Croydon station as the vehicle was arriving from the eastern section of the route.

Services were suspended for the rest of the day and the Rail Accident Investigation Bureau are investigating the incident, the cause of which has not been confirmed.

Right: London Tramlink No. 2538 is pictured after having been winched back towards the running lines. The cause of the incident is not yet known, but the vehicle ended up at an acute angle, blocking all lines. *Graham Lightfoot*

First refurbished Tyne & Wear Metro sets in action

The first train of refurbished Tyne and Wear Metrocars entered service on 15th February, at 05:40, working from Sunderland to Newcastle International Airport.

The first modernised train, made up of two refurbished Metrocar sets, has a completely new interior and sleek metallic grey and black colour scheme.

The train, made up of Metrocars Nos. 4041 Harry Cowans and 4072, is the first of Metro's fleet of 90 trains to be refurbished as part of the £385 million 'Metro: all change' modernisation programme being delivered by Nexus.

The interior of the train has been redesigned, with new seating, lighting and flooring, giving a cleaner, brighter and more modern appearance. The new layout also allows for improved wheelchair access.

The new colour scheme still incorporates the iconic bright yellow brand colour of the Tyne and Wear Metro, but will replace the current 'red, green or blue' Metro train liveries that date back to the mid-1990s.

DBTW, which operates trains and stations on behalf of Nexus, is delivering, as part of its contract, the 'three-quarter life' refurbishment, which is being carried out by Wabtec Rail at Doncaster. There are currently two additional units at Wabtec undergoing refurbishment.

However, the work is taking longer than planned and the project is three months behind at this stage. A Nexus spokesman said: "The Metro fleet's three-quarter life refurbishment project has fallen a few months behind schedule, mainly because the trains are requiring a greater degree of work than was anticipated in order to remedy corrosion".

Left: Metrocars Nos. 4041 *Harry Cowans* **and 4072 call at South Gosforth on 15th February, with a service from the Airport to Sunderland.** *Nexus*

Blackfriars Underground reopens after 35 months

Blackfriars Tube station in Central London has reopened, restoring a vital transport interchange for First Capital Connect passengers using the Bedford to Brighton, Wimbledon and Sutton Thameslink routes, and enabling direct access to the District and Circle Lines with lifts and escalators from street level to wider platforms on the Tube below.

The London Underground station closed in March 2009 to make space for the redevelopment of the Blackfriars station complex as part of the Thameslink Programme. The overall station complex has been designed to cope with a huge increase in passengers, which will be using Thameslink route trains when they begin running at up to 24 trains per hour from 2018.

The above ground station now has platforms long enough for FCC's new 12-carriage trains. The platforms span the River Thames, linking to a new entrance on the South Bank that is proving very popular.

Access is through a new steel and glass street level ticket hall on the North Bank of the River Thames, which doubles up as the main entrance and exit for First Capital Connect and Southeastern services. A new National Rail ticket hall will open later this year along with two further new platforms. Completion of the whole Blackfriars redevelopment will be in time for the Olympics.

Above: The new entrance to the LUL station at Blackfriars. The whole complex, including the new South Bank entrance, will accommodate more than 40,000 passengers every day, a 60% increase in footfall.

Right: The bright and airy new platforms for the District and Circle Lines, with a set of District Line D stock present.

Below Left: The large uncluttered concourse with gate lines leading to the Underground line platforms.

Below Right: Following the reconstruction, the entire station has a fresh look about it, with plenty of space to accommodate the thousands of passengers that will use it every day. *All: Kim Rennie*

450 Class farewell

450 Class DEMU No. 455 was provided for the '450 Class Farewell' tour on 18th February visiting Dundalk, Bangor and the closed Antrim-Lisburn line.

The train, unusually, stopped at two long closed stations, Crumlin and Ballinderry.

Right: No. 455 pauses at Ballinderry while working the 13:30 Antrim to Bangor leg of the tour. The station here has not seen this number of people for years! *Chris Playfair*

Northern Ireland's 80 Class DEMUs are cut for final journey

The withdrawn 80 Class DEMUs are now starting to be cut up in preparation for scrapping.

The remaining units are being cut in half at Ballymena, in order to be moved by road to a local scrapyard.

The only '80s' saved so far are vehicle Nos. 94, 752 and 97, which form the Sandite train, plus Nos. 69 & 90, all of which are stored at Portadown, and No. 749 stored at York Road. Vehicle No. 89 also remains at Ballymena, following legislation which requires it to be kept for 10 years from 2004, after being involved in an accident during which a guard lost his life.

Above: The end of the line, as the two halves of vehicle No. 754 await final cutting in Thomas Hamill's Scrapyard, near Ballymena. *Chris Playfair*

Below: Each week a regular movement occurs between the wagon works at Limerick and the wheel shop at Dublin Inchicore, to transfer life-expired wheel sets from Limerick and convey new wheel sets back. Here, 071 Class No. 073 passes Rosskelton with the weekly 'wheels transfer' from Inchicore to Limerick, which also conveyed several wagons requiring overhaul or heavy maintenance, including two LP flats, two permanent-way flats, a loaded wheel wagon, an empty wheel wagon and a Tara Mines wagon! *Neil Dinnen*

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Outline details have emerged of a steam-hauled Pathfinder working to London Victoria on 3rd June in conjunction with HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, which on that day will see the pageant along the River Thames. The train starts at Poole, and picks up at Bournemouth, Brockenhurst and Southampton Central. The route and traction remain to be confirmed.

■ A limited number of seats remain on Hastings Diesels' redated 'Thames-Tidal' tour on 31st March.

Above: Class 86/2 No. 86259 *Les Ross* **passes Shallford, south of Norton Bridge, on the 'Down Fast' with the London Euston to Preston leg of Railway Touring Company's the 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' on 11th February.** *Geoffrey Dingle*

SRPS annnounces Gourock, Keighley and Oban trips

The Scottish Railway Preservation Society has added a further three charters to its 2012 programme.

The line-up commences with an opportunity on 1st September to take the ferry from Gourock to Dunoon for a short visit. The train, which starts at Inverurie and picks up at Dyce, Aberdeen and stations via Dundee to Leuchars for St Andrews, also has the added attraction of taking in both the Tay and Forth bridges en route.

This is followed by a mid-week visit to either Keighley (for the K&WVR), Leeds, York or Scarborough on 12th September, from Ayr and Glasgow & South Western stations, via Dumfries. Again there is an added attraction, as the tour also includes the Settle & Carlisle in its itinerary. Finally, Oban is the destination on 22nd September, from Dundee, Perth and Fife Coast stations, together with Dalmeny and Linlithgow, after traversing the Forth Bridge. Further tours in 2012 are still to be announced from SRPS.

Meanwhile, North Eastern Railtours, which uses SRPS coaching stock, has also announced two workings, commencing on 7th May to Oban, from Newcastle Central, Cramlington, Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick-upon-Tweed. The same pick-up points, but in reverse, are the keynote of its charter to Stratford-upon-Avon on 23rd June, which also calls at Durham and Darlington. More details of these tours can be obtained by telephoning 0191 252 3774. Both the SRPS and North East Railtours will be using West Coast Railway Company traction.

Below: Working the third in a series of 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' excursions through February, LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0s Nos. 44932 and 45305 pass Shap Wells on the 18th February. *Ian Cawthorne*

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 25th February 2012

Pathfinder Tours	DBS 66	Tame Bridge Parkway-Derby-Church Fenton-Durham-Tyne Yard
	2xDBS 66	Tyne Yard-Jarrow(to NR limit)-Ferryside-Billingham Jn-Seal Sands (NR limit)-Billingham Jn
	DBS 66	Billingham Jn-Eaglescliffe-York-Church Fenton-Derby-Tame Bridge Parkway
Railway Touring Co.	86259	London Euston-Watford Jn-Northampton-Crewe-Preston
	45305 & 44932	Preston-Lancaster-Shap-Penrith-Carlisle-S&C-Blackburn-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
UK Railtours	To be confirmed	London Euston-Blackburn-S&C-Currock Junction-Ravenglass-Carnforth-Crewe-London Euston

Thursday 1st March 2012

Steam Dreams	6024	London Paddington-Maidenhead-Reading-Cardiff & return
VSOE	2xDRS 47	Cardiff Central-Swansea Loop West-Kidwelly-Clarbeston Road-Bridgend-Barry-Cardiff Central

Friday 2nd March 2012

VSOE (Northern Belle)	2xDRS 47	Cardiff Central-Swansea-Llanelli-Carmarthen-Fishguard Harbour and 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
Railway Touring Co.	70013	London King's Cross-Retford-Whisker Hill Jn-Worksop-Dinnington Jn-Scunthorpe-Cleethorpes
	WCRC 47	Cleethorpes-Grimsby-Ulceby-New Holland
	70013	New Holland-Ulceby-Barnetby-Market Rasen-Lincoln-Newark Northgate-Grantham-Peterborough
	2xWCRC 47	Peterborough-Huntingdon-Potters Bar-London King's Cross
Statesman Rail	2xWCRC 47	Hereford-Craven Arms-Whitchurch-Crewe-Carlisle-Beattock-Crianlarich-Rannoch-Fort William
UK Railtours	DBS 67	London King's Cross-Potters Bar-Peterborough- York
	70000	York-Leeds-Skipton-S&C-Carlisle
	DBS 67	Carlisle-Hexham-Durham-York -Peterborough & return as outwards
VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Staines-Virginia Water-Guildford-Shalford-Redhill-East Croydon-London Victoria
VSOE (Northern Belle)	2xDRS 47	Bristol TM-Bath Spa-Swindon-Didcot Parkway-Reading-Kensington Olympia and return

Sunday 4th March 2012

Statesman Rail	To be confirmed	Fort William- Rannoch-Crianlarich-Carstairs-Carlisle-Lancaster-Crewe-Shrewsbury-Hereford
VSOE (Northern Belle)	2xDRS 47	Birmingham Intl-Cheltenham Spa-Lydney-Abergavenny-Shrewsbury Abbey Foregate Jn-Birmingham Intl

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

Railtour Spotlight *by John Whitehouse*

Pathfinder and UK Railtours are in the spotlight this week, with charters to the North West or the North East of England.

Starting in the North East, the Seal Sands branch served the producers of some of the most hazardous chemicals in the country, the most dangerous being hydrocyanic acid, which was transported to nearby Haverton Hill by rail, the train being well known for its pressurised tanks sandwiched between protecting barrier wagons.

The branch itself has long been a sought after stretch of track for rail charters, and with the decline of chemical production, UK Railtours finally made the breakthrough last year with its 'Tees-Goblin' tour. Now, Pathfinder is visiting the branch with its 'Tyne-Tees Rambler' excursion. The branch itself is accessed from the Durham Coast line at Billingham Junction, and the train will be required to reverse three times during its visit - firstly at Seal Sands Branch Junction on both the outward and return legs, and secondly at Seal Sands loop at the head of the branch. Earlier, after a stop at Tyne Yard Staging Sidings to attach an assisting locomotive at the rear, the train is due to visit the Jarrow branch, which will be reached via King Edward Bridge South, Greenfield, Park Lane and Pelaw Junctions. It will then retrace its route back via Tyne Yard to Durham, before diverting off the East Coast Main Line at Ferryhill South Junction to take in Seal Sands by way of Norton West and East Junctions.

The route back to York is via Eaglescliffe and Yarm, then onwards along the ECML to Doncaster, to rejoin the outward route at Sheffield, via Mexborough. The train originates at Tame Bridge Parkway, and picks up at Birmingham New Street, Tamworth, Burton-upon-Trent, Derby, Chesterfield, Sheffield and York, via Swinton and Church Fenton. Traction will be a DBS Class 66 throughout, with an additional member of the class utilised for the reversals at Jarrow and Seal Sands.

If the panoramic qualities of Jarrow or Seal Sands are not to your taste, then perhaps the Settle & Carlisle and Cumbrian Coast will be. UK Railtours will be heading that way with its 'Grand Cumbrian Panorama', also on 25th February. Use of the West Coast Main Line from London Euston, picking up at Watford Junction, Milton Keynes Central and Rugby, will enable a fast run through to Farington Junction, south of Preston, where the charter will diverge to take the line through Blackburn to Hellifield for the climb to Ais Gill, and then onwards to the outskirts of Carlisle. Instead of heading into Carlisle, it will then skirt around the Border City, and head for the Cumbrian Coast line by way of Currock Junction. After Maryport, the line follows the Irish Sea coast virtually throughout the journey, before heading inland to avoid Barrow-in-Furness by taking the short cut-off line between Park South and Dalton Junctions.

With the delights of Ulverston, Grange-over-Sands and Arnside Viaduct all but a memory, the charter regains the WCML at Carnforth for the return to London Euston. Traction should be a DBS Class 67, although a pair is equally likely.

Steam Dreams to create its own 'Cathedrals Express' set

Steam Dreams inaugural working for 2012 struggled, to say the least, against a catalogue of problems, all outside of its control, resulting in an arrival back into London Paddington station at 23.55hrs, a few minutes short of being 3½ hours late.

None of the delay was attributable to the train engine, No. 6024 *King Edward I,* which *RH* understands performed well throughout, except for some steaming problems over the last few miles following a 30 minute delay at Slough, as a result of all the running lines being closed following a incident involving a member of the public and Thames Valley Police. This was the final straw for the tour that had been dogged by a signals failure at Swindon on the outward leg, and a points failure at Newbury on the return.

To compound matters, the coaching stock consisting of the West Coast 'Green Set' encountered problems with the steam-heating system throughout the tour, which led to Steam Dreams supplying blankets to passengers in the coaches affected. The problems with the stock were no doubt associated with the recent spell of bad weather which had the intensity to freeze internal pipework, and for the lack of opportunity of being able to pre-heat the coaches prior to departure. This meant that the temperature in certain areas of the train was always fighting a losing battle against the cold, a situation probably not helped by the customary number of open end vestibule droplights throughout the consist which would have done little to ease the problem. Other reports indicate that the previous day's 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' for The Railway Touring Company also sustained similar problems. It is additionally reported that not all coaches had working heating which cannot be acceptable if winter railtouring is to be a success.

Primarily, coaching stock for main line charters is supplied by either West Coast or Riviera, but with DRS having acquired the ex-Cargo-D Mk 2 set, there is now the possibility of a new rolling stock provider in the market. It is interesting that some operators are looking to source their own set of coaches. The need is driven by the passengers, who have high expectations for the quality of their 'tour experience', which is probably more influenced by the quality of the coaching stock and dining than what is pulling the train. This expectation is particularly high on the agenda of the general, non-enthusiast, public who are more likely to decide whether to travel again, based on the experience of the train and its internal surroundings, especially if they are paying the best part of £400 for the experience. So it is no surprise that the tour companies are looking at this key area, with Steam Dreams now joining Statesman in looking to operate their own set of coaches.

We reported recently that Steam Dreams has a Mk1 SO currently undergoing overhaul at LNWR in Crewe, and its latest newsletter has confirmed that 'within the next 12 months the company will be putting together its very own Cathedrals Express set of coaches. It will be 'the finest rake of traditional charter coaches on the network', the announcement adds, which sets a high benchmark indeed. *RH* understands that the set will consist of Mk1 vehicles which have been acquired from a number of sources including, it is suggested,both ex-mainline and heritage vehicles. Furthermore, Steam Dreams are thought to have acquired the use of the Scottish Railway Preservation Society's maroon Mk 1 set for some of its early season trains.

In a separate development, the company has also announced a new 'concept' in standard class travel - Premium Standard, in which passengers will be served complimentary tea or coffee at their seats, and will also be able to place orders for a new range of hot and cold snacks to be served at their table throughout the day. Each table will also have linen table cloths, all of which is no doubt a move that is calculated to further impress the female passengers travelling - those who are likely to have the final decision on whether the experience is one they wish to repeat! This decision has been made following the success of Steam Dream's 'Super Standard' class introduced last year, and also most reflects the needs of the majority of their passengers, who in the main, do not regard being close to the 'power' as a prime consideration, a situation that is not, it must be added, exclusive to Steam Dreams.

The operator has also introduced a members club for regular travellers which offers a £10 discount on travel and priority in being seated near the locomotive.

Below: GWR 'King' No. 6024 *King Edward I* **drifts past Woolhampton on 10th February, heading towards Southall, prior to its Steam Dreams working. Class 165/1 No. 165131 passes with a local service for Newbury.** *Ian Hall*

UK Railtours heads for the Black Country and Harrogate

The recently announced tours from UK Railtours were mentioned in this column last week; the company has now announced details of two further day excursions, each of which features a new destination.

The first heads for the West Midlands, and more particularly that part of the region affectionately (or otherwise) known as the Black Country. The name is attributed by many to the concentration of blast furnaces in a small area surrounding Dudley, which during the 19th Century produced a large amount of smoke and soot that darkened both the land and atmosphere, obviously with no concerns about global warming! However, the name is derived from something much more basic, but still linked to the rapid growth of heavy industry in the area - the presence of a coal seam running very close to the surface, which led to dark and black coloured soil, giving rise to the localities name. This seam was ruthlessly exploited by the early iron and steel producers.

The rich history of the region is now celebrated in the Black Country Museum, based in Dudley, which is one of the region's principal tourist attractions and is regarded as being on a par with Beamish (another favourite UKR destination). Will the Black Country Museum become another of its regular destinations? That remains to be seen, and will no doubt be dependent on a well-filled East Midlands Trains HST which is booked to depart from London St Pancras International on 14th July for Stourbridge Junction, where passengers will be transferred by road to the nearby Museum. The train will also call at Luton Airport Parkway and Bedford, and travel via Leicester, Nuneaton and Birmingham.

The other new tour is to Harrogate, booked for 25th August, and builds upon the success of its visit to Buxton last year, which included a matinee performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Pirates of Penzance' in the Spa Town's theatre. Harrogate, of course, is another Spa Town that also boasts a lively theatre. One of the options with this tour is to enjoy a matinee performance of another Gilbert and Sullivan opera, 'HMS Pinafore', at the Royal Hall, which is described as a 'stunning Edwardian theatre, built in 1903'. Harrogate, of course, has much more to offer, and this will no doubt be a popular train that originates at Reading, and picks up at Slough, Ealing Broadway, Finsbury Park, Potters Bar and Stevenage, before heading north over the East Coast Main Line.

Below: DB Schenker Class 67s Nos. 67025 *Western Star* **and 67026 head north with UK Railtours' 'Snowdonia Panorama' charter on 18th February, as the pair approach Lichfield on the WCML Trent Valley route.** *John Whitehouse*

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

LNER 'B12' to return to steam at NNR March gala

The North Norfolk Railway will be marking the start of its season this year with a steam gala in early March, which will also see the return to steam of LNER B12 No. 8572.

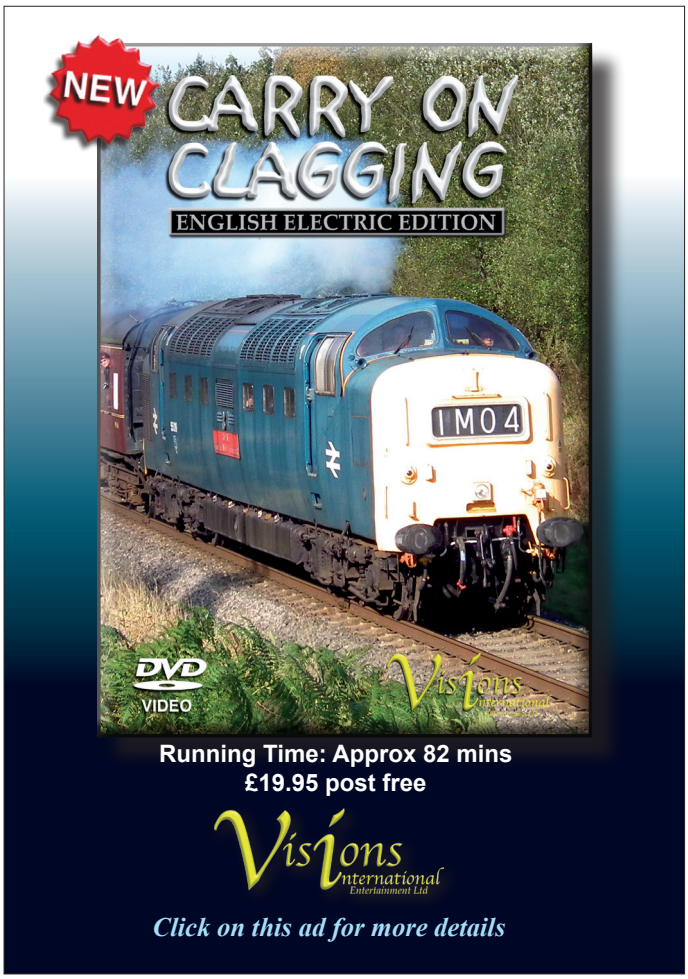
The event takes place on 9th-11th March and alongside the first gala appearance of 'B12' No. 8572 since overhaul, will be LMS 'Black 5' No. 45337 from the East Lancashire Railway, GWR 'Hall' No. 4936 *Kinlet Hall*, BR '9F' No. 92203 *Black Prince* and GWR 5600 Class No. 5619.

The 1928-built 'B12' once hauled the London to Harwich boat trains and its recently concluded £300,000 overhaul has been financed by its owners, the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society. The Society also owns East Anglian J15 0-6-0 No.7654, which will be celebrating its centenary this year, and appearing in the later livery of the London & North Eastern Railway Company during the gala.

The railway says its unique 'Quad-Art' set will be in operation, as well a short goods formation, which will feature several newly refurbished vehicles.

Above: **The North Norfolk Railway's Railbus No. E79960 arrives at Sheringham with the 12:00 service from Holt on 16th February.** *John Day*

Hop-on, hop-off Rover tickets provide the freedom of the line for the day and are priced at £16 adult, £10 child 5 – 15 (under 5s go free) and £15 senior citizen. There is also a Family Rover available at £45, covering two adults and two children, or three adults and one child.



Pontypool & Blaenavon cancels diesel gala event

The Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway has announced that its planned Diesel Gala weekend for 21st/22nd April has been cancelled.

The railway's next enthusiast event is scheduled for 29th April when the railway will be commemorating the last passenger train to Blaenavon Low Level.

Ecclesbourne Valley plans 2012 diesel weekend

The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (EVR) will be holding its first event of 2012 on the 17th/18th March, which will be a diesel weekend featuring resident locomotives Type 1 (Class 20) No. D8001 and Class 33/0 No. 33035.

The two diesels will be engaged in working both mainline trains between Wirksworth and Duffield and services on the highly graded branch from Wirksworth to Ravenstor, which boasts an incline of 1-in-27.

Trains will leave Wirksworth at 10:20hrs, and then at two hourly intervals through to the last departure at 16:20, and returning from Duffield at 11:10 and then every two hours until 17:10. Departures for Ravenstor from Wirksworth will be at 09:55, 10:25 and then every half hour at xx:55 and xx:25 until 16:55 (13:25 excepted).

Advanced Day Rovers can be purchased on line, full details of which, other attractions and locomotive diagrams for the weekend can be found at www.e-v-r.com.

Churnet Valley gala down to two locomotives after 'Black 5' is withdrawn with boiler issues

The Churnet Valley Railway has announced that Black 5 No. 44767 *George Stephenson* **will not be available for its gala this coming weekend.**

In a statement issued by the CVR it says that 'following a routine washout examination, a defect in a weld repair has been discovered. It is not possible given the access restrictions to carry out a repair within a short period of time'.

It is added that in view of the locomotive owners wish to re-register No. 44767 for main line use, for which additional boiler work will be required, it has been decided to stop the locomotive with immediate effect. This will be a great disappointment to many, especially as the overhaul of its 'USA' Class S160 No. 6046 will not be completed in time, meaning that the gala will now proceed with just two locomotives, visiting 'Black 5' No. 45379 and 'Prairie' No. 5199.

However, *RH* understands that the run-round loop at Cauldon Lowe is now complete, with the final paperwork now being signed off, which will mean, for the first time in preservation, trains to Cauldon Lowe will be operating with just one locomotive, instead of the previously required 'topped and tailed' operation.

Surveying for new Barry turntable begins

Work has started at the Barry Rail Centre for a project that will see the installation of a new locomotive turntable.

The turntable project team is headed up by Chartered Civil Engineers John Buxton, the Managing Director of the Barry Rail Centre, and Rick Auger, both of whom played key roles in the installation of the turntable at Minehead on the West Somerset Railway. The turntable there has become a focal point for visitors to Minehead and the plan is to emulate this at Barry.

John Buxton said "We are delighted to have begun the process of installing this 1938-built turntable that was originally installed at Bricklayers Arms depot in South London. Once it is in place, we will be able to offer servicing and turning facilities for steam-hauled charter trains from London, the Midlands and Bristol, which have the potential to bring up to 600 tourists to Barry in each train".

The turntable, constructed by Cowans Sheldon, was originally saved by the Mid-Hants Railway in the 1970's, but was never installed on the line as no suitable site could be found. Cambrian acquired the turntable last year.

The survey work undertaken has identified that a site at the rear of Barry Rail Centre's New Works Building is most suitable. The location is situated conveniently close to Barry Rail Centre's main line connection, and the scheme is now being developed to a detailed design stage. It is hoped that the turntable will be operational in 2014.

Tanfield Railway half-term steam action

Below: In common with a number of the heritage steam railways, the Tanfield Railway operated steam services during the February half-term week, following which, and as a result of engineering work, services on the line have now suspended between 20th February and 17th March. On the final day of operations, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST *Renishaw Ironworks No. 6*, **built in November 1919, departs from Andrews House on 19th February. Delivered new to the Appleby Iron Co. Ltd, at Scunthorpe, the loco finished its working life at Crosby Mines, north of Scunthorpe in 1969.** *Ian Britton*

VIDEO FOOTAGE

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The Bury Hydraulic Group and the Class 15 Preservation Society have released news that Class 14 No. D9531, with resident Class 03 No. D2062 attached for insurance purposes, successfully undertook running and braking trials on 11th February. The loco was returned to Buckley Wells for completion of several outstanding jobs and a repaint in preparation for the Diesel Gala being held over the weekend of 3rd/4th March. The two groups are hopeful of having No. D9531 ready for its first day of service since withdrawal in 1997 for a major overhaul, and have given grateful thanks to all those whose efforts have garnered the success to date.

■ Class 37 No. 37075, previously owned by the North Staffs Diesel Group on the Churnet Valley Railway, has been sold to a group of enthusiasts based on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (KWVR) to where it will be moved, once the sale is concluded and the necessary transport arranged. Agreement has been reached with the railway for the locomotive to move to the KWVR.

■ The Bury Hydraulic Group (BHG) has advised that Hymek Class 35 No. D7076 has been withdrawn from traffic following difficulties with providing steam heat, and its diagrammed duties during April will be covered by Class 40 No. D335. The Group notes that the work required to return Class 14 No. D9531 to service this year leaves it short of resources, hence work on repairs to the 'Hymek' will not start until September.

■ The Midland & Great Northern Society (M&GNS), owners of Class 31 No. 31207, which is based on the North Norfolk Railway, have outshopped the loco in its original external appearance with its D5631 number.

Successful steam gala for Ribble Steam Railway

Above: **The centrepiece of the Ribble Steam Railway gala weekend over 18th/19th February, was Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20, which has recently moved to the line as its new base. On 19th February, it was paired with Barclay 0-4-0ST** *John Howe* **on a Strand Road to Riversway shuttle operated in 'top and tail' mode with Hunslet 0-6-0ST** *Walkden* **at the rear of the consist.** *Fred Kerr*

Below: **Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST** *John Howe* **storms alongside the River Ribble on 18th February. This locomotive was originally built in 1908 for use on a short private branch from a plaster works to Howes Sidings on the Settle & Carlisle line.** *Andrew Fowler*

Mixed Traffic in Norfolk

Above: Class 37/0 No.37003 works the 12:15 Dereham to Wymondham Abbey demonstration freight during the Mid-Norfolk Railway's 'Mixed Traffic Event' on 19th February. *John Day*

Right: Silver-roofed Class 47 No. 47596 passes Danemoor with the 11:30 Dereham to Wymondham service on the same day.

Right: Class 31/1 No. 31235 hauls Class 47/4 No. 47580 *County of Essex* past Rashes Green, Dereham, on 19th February, with the first service of the event, the 09:30 Dereham to Wymondham Abbey Service. The '31' only piloted the train to Thuxton, where the '47' carried on solo to Wymondham and the '31' returned to Dereham with the token. *Both: Colin Makcrow*

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Douglas Corporation, which owns and operates the unique 3ft horse-drawn tramway have reported a 5% increase in traffic in 2011, carrying 56,536 passengers. A further 460 travelled on the Santa trams leading up to the Christmas festivities. Despite recent calls to close the loss-making system, the horses will be back this summer as usual, trotting up and down the two-mile long promenade.

■ Lovers of all ages packed the Isle of Man Railway's (IMR) steam hauled lunchtime Valentines love train to Castletown and back on 14th February. Passengers were treated to an on-board hot and cold buffet and a glass of champagne at their seats served by a waiter. The train departed Douglas at 12:13 and after a short turnaround for the locomotive to take on water at Castletown, returned to the capital at 13:02. The 'love train' consisting of the four coach bar set was hauled by IMR Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No. 13 *Kissack*, now sporting a brass safety valve cover, which it has not carried since its 1971 rebuild and the brand new snowplough ready for the winter photography event on 25th February.

■ For the first time in three years, both of the 19in gauge Great Laxey Mine Railway engines will be in steam together on the railway this summer. Replica Stephen Lewin 0-4-0 engines *Ant* and *Bee* have both been the subject of boiler overhauls in the past twelve months, following the failure of *Ant's* boiler during 2009, and the expiry of *Bee's* boiler certificate in 2011. The GLMR will operate in 2012 from Easter Saturday until the end of September, every Saturday and Bank Holiday and also on every Sunday during August.

■ The IoM Steam Railway will be holding a Winter Photography event on 25th February, followed by its Rush Hour on the Railways event on 7th-9th April.

Appeal launched to overhaul *Sea Lion*

The 2ft gauge Groudle Glen Railway is appealing for help to rebuild one of the line's original steam locomotives, Bagnall built 2-4-0T *Sea Lion* of 1896.

An estimated £20,000 plus is required for major attention to its boiler, motion and a full repaint. The engine has been stripped down and left the Glen on 23rd January for the nearby workshops of the Isle of Man Railway in Douglas, which is allowing its facilities to be used for the rebuild.

Sea Lion and the younger *Polar Bear*, which is now resident at the Amberley Museum, are the line's original steam locomotives. A second engine also left the Glen that day for pastures new. For the last two years *James* has been stationed outside the Lhen Coan station shop, charging youngsters 50 pence for a short ride back and forth along the platform. If you would like to help the Groudle Glen Railway rebuild *Sea Lion*, the Railway can be contacted via its website.

Below: 1896-built *Sea Lion* runs round its train at Lhen Coan. The locomotive is now in the Isle of Man Steam Railway workshops at Douglas for overhaul. *David Lloyd-Jones*

Additional investment for Snaefell

The second phase of the Isle of Man Government's £3 million track investment programme on the 3'-6" gauge Snaefell Mountain Railway (SMR) has been progressing well during the off season period with all work set to be completed in time for the railway to reopen on 4th April for the 2012 season.

This work, which was started last winter, has seen both the SMR's central Fell rail and the track replaced along with the improvement of the drainage below the track. Contractor Colas (Isle of Man) Ltd has been working through all weathers to ensure the safety critical work was completed in time with only one day lost due to high winds. The scheme should help ensure the future of the (SMR) for the foreseeable future. This unique five mile long Victorian mountain tramway to the summit of Snaefell mountain at 2034ft, opened in 1895, has seen an 11,000 increase in passenger numbers over the past two years with 49,000 passengers being carried in 2011 (compared to 38,000 as recently as 2009).

No snow for new IoM snowplough!

For the first time since the 1960s, an Isle of Man Railway steam locomotive will carry a snowplough, which has been specially fabricated from new using an old one as a pattern.

1910-built Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No.13 *Kissack* will carry the new front snowplough during the railway's Winter Photography event on 25th February. However, with the Island's fairly mild winters, the chance of snow for the event is unlikely.

Back in the days when the Isle of Man Railway's three lines were open to Peel, Ramsey and Port Erin, a number of the locomotives were fitted with snowploughs for the winter just in case. There are now calls for a new big plough to be reconstructed for the ex-Manx Northern Railway 1885 Dubs 0-6-0T *Caledonia*, which will hopefully be back in steam this year after major overhaul. *Caledonia* was held for many years in strategic reserve by the railway just in case it was required to smash through deep snow drifts with the big plough, although it did see occasional outings on heavy goods trains as well.

Exposure

A selection of the best photography from across the country

Exposure

A selection of the best photography from across the country

Above: Forming the 12:40 London Midland service from Hereford to Birmingham New Street, two-car Class 170/5 No. 170514 passes the semaphore signals guarding the exit from Worcester Foregate Street on 16th February. The controlling box for the signal pictured is actually Henwick, hence the HK on the description plate. *Steve Boley*

Icy welcome for '4F'

Above: **With the temperature in Mytholmes Tunnel on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway so cold, the dripping water has formed iciles around the tunnel mouth. During the recent steam gala weekend, LMS 4F 0-6-0 No. 43924 charges uphill with a Keighley to Oxenhope service.** *Paul Braybrook*

Double units?

Above: A leaking gutter has provided the means to capture this reflection shot of an unidentified Class 442 as it speeds south through Thornton Heath station on 17th February. Note that the painted yellow platform edge warning line lies under the surface of the water and continues into the distance.

Below: Siemens-built South West Trains Desiro EMUs parellel each other at Woking on 17th February, with Class 450/1 No. 450113 on the right heading an the 13:23 London Waterloo to Alton working, and Class 444/0 No. 444010, on the left, arriving with the 13:35 Waterloo to Weymouth service. *Both: Ian Docwra*

Electro-Diesels venture into the North West!

Above: Class 73/1 No. 73107 *Redhill 1844-1994* **is pictured in 'top and tail' mode with Network Rail-liveried classmate No. 73138, as the train passes through Warrington Bank Quay en route from Wigan TMD to Derby RTC on 15th February.** *Geraint Jones*

Below: The pair of Class 73/1 locomotives currently replacing the normal Network Rail Department Class 150 unit, arrived at Southport on 14th February, as part of a North West England tour. After a late departure from Springs Branch, Class 73/1 No. 73107 *Redhill 1844-1994* **awaits departure time to lead the ensemble back to Wigan with classmate No. 73138 on the rear.** *Fred Kerr*

Wandering through Cumbria

Above: Class 158/0 No. 158797 arrives at Appleby on 13th February with the 10:49 Leeds to Carlisle service, working in tandem with Class 158/9 No. 158906. On the right, GWR 'Hall' 4-6-0 No. 4979 *Wootton Hall* is owned by the Furness Railway Trust and awaits restoration within the grounds of the Appleby Heritage Centre. *J. McKever*

Below: Presenting a uniform look, and showing the Northern Rail branding quite clearly, this pairing of Classes 158 and 153 cross Garsdale Viaduct forming the 13:15 Leeds to Carlisle service on 19th February. *Mark Fielding*

Stourbridge Branch Revival

The short Stourbridge Town branch in the West Midlands is unique for several reasons. John Whitehouse explores the background and the future for this innovative operation.

'It's not a proper train, people won't want to use it' was the reported claim of one of the objectors to the introduction of a 'light rail' vehicle in replacement to the' heavy rail' Class 153 single car unit on the short but heavily graded branch from Stourbridge Junction to Stourbridge Town.

The issue at stake was the proposed introduction of a Parry People Mover (PPM) vehicle (later known as Class 139) as part of a project to revolutionise the operation of what is believed to be the shortest operational branch line in the world. While only 0.8 mile (1.3km) in length, the branch, which dates back to 1879, has a sharp gradient from the Junction station down the line that has been the cause of several incidents over the years. The current station dates back to 1994, when the branch was reduced in length by roughly 70 yards to enable a bus station to be constructed on the site of the old (and quite grand) ex- Great Western station that survived through to 1979.

PPM had been developing a light rail unit for several years, and encountered its fair share of false dawns and much resistance along the way from within the railway establishment, which was only overcome by its tenacity in overcoming objections and obtaining the necessary derogations, so that eventually it could operate on the National Network.

The Stourbridge Town branch had already been identified as the ideal testing ground due to its short length and challenging grade, and it had one other significant advantage in that it had not operated a Sunday service since 1915. Even then things were not straight forward, as the bufferstops at Stourbridge Town had to be adjusted to allow for the weight disparity between the PPM and a Class 153 DMU, which was then the staple traction on the line.

Approval from Network Rail, the Rail Regulator and HMRI for the people mover, now designated 'PM50' and carrying a national network number of 999 900, was received in November 2005, and an experimental Sunday service commenced on 11th December that year, which was to operate through to 18th December 2006. It was acclaimed a great success, to the extent that the local transport authority thought it necessary that PPM operations should be included in the tendering process for the West Midlands rail franchise, which was shortly due for renewal.

Winning Formula

In fact, of the three short listed candidates, only Govia (London Midland) included PPM operations on

Below: The depot at Stourbridge Junction is more reminiscent of a car garage, both in looks and equipment, such is the nature of the Parry People Mover operation. But despite looks, the operation is cost effective and reliable. *John Whitehouse*

the Stourbridge Town branch as part of its tender, and by good fortune it was announced in June 2007 that it was to replace Central Trains as the new franchise holder for the West Midlands network. And light rail operations to Stourbridge Town were confirmed. The order for two new lightweight units from PPM was confirmed in December 2007 by Porterbrook, with the commencement of light rail operations to Stourbridge Town scheduled for December 2008.

Porterbrook leased the units to the company that is sub-contracted by London Midland to operate the branch line services, Pre-Metro Operations Limited (PMOL). Under the contract PMOL is paid a fee to operate the service, and in turn employs the staff (drivers, guards, conductors and maintenance personnel) to deliver the service, with all revenue passing to London Midland (LM). The seamless nature of the operation is perhaps best borne out by the fact that all PMOL staff wear London Midland uniforms.

It is understood that PMOL makes a small financial profit from the arrangement as well as receiving the positive publicity that the branch line service generates. Meanwhile, LM receives the benefit of being able to provide the service under its franchise agreement, as well as enjoying considerable savings on operating costs. Also the increased patronage is adding to its income stream (see later) and it has the use of a Class 153 to strengthen other services.

However, gaining a passenger licence for the new units took longer than anticipated, and a bus replacement service was instigated for the branch following the planned withdrawal of the Class 153 services on 17th December 2008. In fact, London Midland was forced to reinstate Class 153 services in March 2009, following a public outcry until the Class 139s were finally able to take over some six-months later than planned.

If the introduction of the Class 139s on the Stourbridge Town branch were problematical, although not necessarily as a result of issues with the units themselves, then the ongoing operations have illustrated beyond all doubt the effectiveness of the technology, and more importantly, its reliability. The concept has been embraced by the passengers, London Midland is looking at a significant reduction in operating costs and PPM has a unit that is achieving 99.7% reliability on what is the most intensively worked branch line in the country.

Actually, the Class 139s win hands down - their carbon dioxide output is just a quarter of that emitted by a Class 153, they offer 720 single passenger journeys per hour compared to 640 by a '153', which is achieved by being able to undertake more round trips in that period. In addition, due to the mode of operation they offer London Midland a 60% cost saving against heavy rail usage. It should also be noted that use of '139s' releases the Class 153, which is over-engineered for Stourbridge Town branch line services, to be used on services for which its specification can be better utilised, especially in terms of speed.

And what of that initial objection that the new trains would not appeal to passengers? Well, in the four-week period up to 10th December 2011, there was a record 43,200 passenger journeys recorded on the branch, with total ridership since taking over now in excess of one million, effectively doubling the usage of the branch from the days of the Class 153.

Another key factor in future passenger growth, which will have ramifications beyond just the branch line, will be the re-opening of Stourbridge Bus Station later this year. As mentioned earlier, the redeveloped bus station is located on land adjacent to the branch line terminus, and will be served by no less than 28 separate bus services, which will inevitably lead to more people using the train to reach the main line at Stourbridge Junction for onward connections.

Operating the branch

The main reason for the success of the branch conversion to light rail can be clearly established by looking at the timetable. As well as being the shortest branch line in the UK, it is also the most intensively operated, with 108 return journeys being made each weekday with the first departure from Stourbridge Junction at 05:48 through to the final working back from Stourbridge Town at 23:59. It is, in fact, the nearest thing on the National

Below: The bright and spacious interior of the two Class 139s have encouraged passenger usage, with comfort, ease-of-access and passenger security, to the point where journey numbers on the branch are increasing. *John Whitehouse*

Above: National Network classified '139s', the Parry People Movers have proven the technology and the two units to be reliable and a good way of lowering costs. The two '139s' employed have a reliability of 99.7%. *John Whitehouse*

Network to a 'turn up and go' service, as there are departures every 10 minutes from each station with just a three-minute journey time each way. In this way passengers do not have to think about the timetable, because if they have just missed one working they know another will be along in a few minutes.

Also, riding in a Class 139 is a pleasant experience, as the unit can accommodate 25 seated passengers and a further maximum of 35 standing. The interior of the cabin is bright, and the arrangement of the seating facing inwards on one side and directional on the other creates a feeling of space. There is a driving position at each end, which is segregated from the passenger area by a partition behind the driver but preserving the forward view for the passengers. The unit is built around a stainless steel frame, weighs just 12 tonnes and has a maximum speed of 40mph. The only downside is that the ride can be a bit bumpy, which is actually as much to do with the state of the track as the riding capabilities of the Class 139s.

The weight saving is in the main due to its innovative traction supply based on flywheel technology, which stores kinetic energy that is then used to power the vehicle. The flywheel stores captured brake energy, which is particularly relevant on the steeply graded branch line, which is then used to power the unit by way of a connecting differential and drive shaft. As this is the primary source of energy for propulsion, only a small traditional diesel engine is then required to meet other demands, including the initial start-up process. The Class 139 utilises a 2.3 litre Ford automotive engine powered by liquid petroleum gas.

Maintenance is undertaken on site, as there is a small facility situated at the Kidderminster end of Platform 1 at Stourbridge Junction, which also provides secure and covered accommodation for the two units when not in service. Because of their lightweight construction heavy lifting equipment is not required, and the maintenance facility is probably more reminiscent of an automotive rather than a railway workshop.

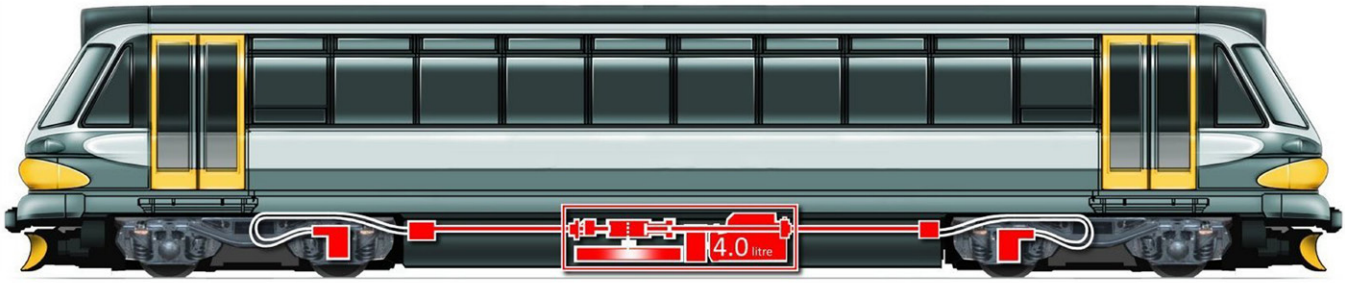
The Future

As it now enters its third year of operation, the future of light rail on the Stourbridge Town branch looks to be secure, with the Class 139s and PMOL providing an effective, efficient, eco-friendly and financially viable service that far outstrips anything that the previous heavy rail system could offer. With passenger numbers increasing, especially with the prospect of the new bus terminal next to Stourbridge Town coming on stream later this year, it could well be that capacity will become the next issue that will need addressing.

However, John Parry, Chairman of Parry Associates, the holding company of the PPM concern, has expressed some concern at the "tardiness of the market in picking up opportunities revealed by the success of the Stourbridge service", especially as it puts its highly talented transport team under threat. However, his confidence has been justified, as in the latter part of last year two important developments occurred that will likely have a profound effect on his business, and the local transport infrastructure. This is because Parry Associates is leading a project to reopen part of the old South Staffordshire Railway (SSR) line for passenger use, based on light rail technology. Presently the SSR line remains open from Stourbridge Junction to Round Oak Steel Terminal for freight traffic, while the remainder, via Dudley and Wednesbury to Peck Junction, near Walsall, was closed in March 1993. The section still in use consists of double-track maintained to a standard to accommodate heavy steel trains.

The plan is to reinstate the passenger service under open access rules, which would be operated by a new, larger, and stronger PPM, carrying up to 120 passengers, but retaining the operating and eco-friendly features of the Class 139. The first important development was the decision of the Technology Strategy Board to back the research and development for a proposed new railcar. It is believed that the support will translate into providing roughly half of the anticipated £550,000 costs of producing a prototype, which should be unveiled later this year. While the unit is being developed primarily for use on the proposed new service to Brierley Hill (for which current plans indicate a requirement for three PPMs), it is not difficult to imagine the effect that the introduction of light rail will have with this new larger PPM onto some of the more remote and essentially self- contained branch lines

Below: Should the proposals for the South Staffordshire Railway reach fruition, the plan is to build on the success of the Class 139s with a new, bigger, PPM bogie vehicle, as this artists impression shows. *Parry Associates*



around the country. Looe, for instance, immediately springs to mind, as perhaps do Saxmundham or St Albans Abbey.

As mentioned earlier, many branch lines are operated by DMUs, which are over specified for their role. The introduction of the new PPM would both benefit the line by its reduced operating costs, and also release the incumbent DMU for use more appropriate to its capabilities. As a consequence, the new unit will be:

- Bigger, around twice the size of a Class 139.
- Quicker, with a proposed top speed of 50 mph.
- Stronger, with crashworthiness appropriate to a low speed branch or freight line.
- Lighter, adhering to the one tonne to one metre length principle of the Class 139.

A noticeable change will be the use of two bogies, adapted from existing 'Sprinter' units, to be both lighter and lower, with each bogie having one driven axle from the flywheel. Maintaining the weight specification to around 17.5 tonnes is not seen as a problem, and will be achieved by using existing technology, including the use of both the contemporary and lighter driveline components of the Parry Hybrid design.

The second important development is the award of a Regional Growth Fund grant to Parry Associates to assist with the development of re-opening the Stourbridge Junction to Brierley Hill route to passengers, the Black Country Light Rail Link (BCLRL). News that the Department of Business Innovation and Skills is making £1 million available towards the anticipated £5 million cost of the project is a tremendous boost, not only to Parry's, but also to an area where the transport infrastructure has historically been poor. Current thinking has the BCLRL service using the same tracks as the freight currently booked for two trains each day, and the significant expenditure will be for any required track alterations, signalling (there is one intermediate signal cabin at Kingswinford Junction approximately half way between Stourbridge Junction and Brierley Hill) together with new infrastructure, particularly stations. The plan for the latter would be pre-fabricated steel structures with a concrete platform that would be both cheap to build and robust in service.

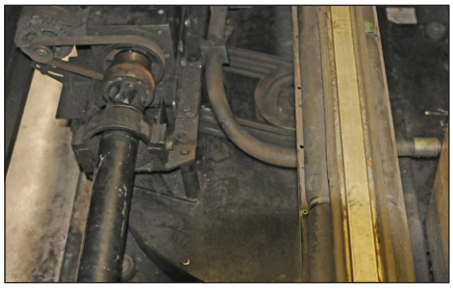
A new BCLRL would dovetail into both light and heavy rail at Stourbridge Junction, and serve an area that has seen significant residential development in recent years, as well as the Waterfront Complex at Brierley Hill and the nearby Merry Hill Shopping Centre. Looking even further into the future, the next goal would have to be reaching Dudley, the regional 'Capital'. But, the interesting consideration is where, if at all, the planned Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury through to Dudley would meet up with the BCLRL, eventually providing a possible through passenger service for the Black Country. Just looking at the current levels of road congestion that blights the area, such a link is already long overdue.

Without doubt, the 'Parry People Mover' concept with its innovative flywheel technology has revolutionised the service on the Stourbridge Town branch and the company now faces the critical progression of producing the new, bigger, stronger, faster unit, which will by virtue of being able to operate alongside heavy rail vehicles, make it a serious consideration for working other lightly-used branch lines.

With the inherent cost savings over 'heavy rail', the new 'super' PPM could equally revolutionise and energise branch lines that hitherto have been under threat. Equally, their proposals for re-opening the passenger service from Stourbridge Junction to Brierley Hill would not only bring considerable benefit to the locality, but also provide the template for the future branch line operations using PPM technology.

Our thanks to Phil Evans, Chief Executive of Pre-Metro Operations Limited for his help and support with this article.

Below: The flywheel situated under the floor of the passenger compartment.



Below: Stourbridge Junction signal box provides a reminder that although operated on light rail principals, the Stourbridge Town branch is part of the National Network system. Here, No. 139001 departs at the start of its three-minute journey along the 0.8-mile-long branch to Stourbridge Town. *Both: John Whitehouse*

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!

GBRf Class 92s

Dear Editor,
Towards the end of last year, *Railway Herald* reported that GBRailfreight's Class 92 fleet had been passed for operation on High Speed 1, but I have yet to see any reference to any workings that are using these locomotives on that route. I am aware that GBRf does have some services that operate from the Channel Tunnel through East London, but these appear to be routed via Kensington Olympia.Is there a problem with GBRf operating over HS1 or is it purely down to cost?

Howard Cardon
by Email

Ed. We did indeed report that the GBRf fleet had, like the DB Schenker fleet, been passed for operation over HS1, based on details supplied by the operator. Having spoken with GBRf Managing Director, John Smith, it appears that is not quite the case. GBRf was still working through the procedures to get the Europorte Class 92s passed for the High Speed route, and the information released to the press late last year should have said that the necessary equipment has now been fitted, and that further tests are required. The company want to use the fleet on through workings from Cheriton Yard in France to Ripple Lane, which will remove several hours from the journey. GBRf tell us that the certification procedure is now complete, and that No. 92010 has indeed worked along HS1 'light engine', so the use of the route by the company for revenue earning traffic should not be far away.

Movement at Radlett?

Dear Editor,
Regarding your recent report, I am a little suprised at the mention of Radlett as the site of a freight terminal. This was rejected by the Goverment after a public enquiry. However I understand a judge may have sent it back to the Minister, but there has not been any further news since.

The local area, St Albans Council and local MP's are I believe still fully against the site.

Brian Hall,
by email

Ed. - Brian, yes you are correct in your line of thought the application has been referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, who has stated that a decision on the appeal should be made on 5th April this year. However, the information in our news story came from DB Schenker, who have reached an agreement with the developers SEGRO to be the preferred operators for the terminal, should the construction go ahead.

Wellington Horse Boxes!

Dear Editor,
The three vehicles leading the illustrated express in Brian Morrison's 'Turning the Clock Back' article on Wellington, are not luggage vans, but something historically far more interesting. They are in fact horse boxes, which, when coded XP, could be sent, by agreement and with a special tariff, on express passenger trains.

The vehicles had to have vacuum brakes and train heating pipes but were still four-wheelers. There was a large section for the horse, the big stable-door is clearly visible, and a small communicating compartment for the groom. The beginning and end of the ride was often at country stations, on the loading bank in the yard, so locals, station pilots and shunting were also involved. Horse-box specials were, of course, often run for race meetings.

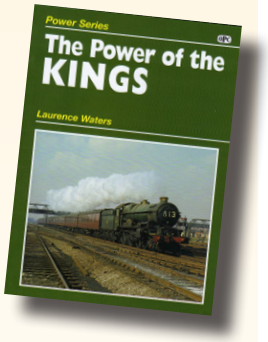
Bryan Stone FCILT, Switzerland
by email

Ed. - Brian thank you for pointing this out. Thanks also go to the 14 other readers who contacted us about this! Brian Morrison responds "it had never occurred to me that the vans were not luggage vans, and I wonder where they would have been destined for in the consist of a Birkenhead to Bournemouth express?"

Reviews

The Power of the Kings

by Laurence Waters - £19.99
Oxford Publishing Company - 112 pages Hardback
ISBN 978 0 86093 627 5



Despite being introduced over 30 years ago in 1978, the Oxford Publishing Company (now part of Ian Allan Publishing) still continues to publish the 'Power of' series, with a recent volume being dedicated to the Great Western 'King' class.

These locomotives were considered the most powerful 4-6-0 in the world, and in a 14-page introduction the author describes their genesis and the necessary track upgrades required that resulted in the class being restricted to specific routes and thereby allocated to a small number of depots. The author gives a brief, but clear, description of the class, including variations in livery, logo and mechanical portions, before passing to the photographs, where each loco is given its own section. These parts also provide historic details of date to traffic, date double-chimney fitted, allocation history, withdrawal date, mileage at withdrawal and final disposal.

Unlike earlier volumes where the authors provided many of the photographs from their own collections, Laurence Waters has no photography credits within this volume, but has garnered his images from a wide selection of sources. He has managed to collect over 200 photographs and found sufficient variety to clearly show most, if not all, the variants that he describes in the text section of the book, while showing scenes from the routes where the loco's were at work.

Each of the restricted routes, Paddington - Bristol - Plymouth, Paddington - Cardiff, Paddington - Berks & Hants - Plymouth and Paddington - Wolverhampton (later Shrewsbury), appear in the collection of images, but nearly half of the selected images are shed scenes where the opportunity has been taken to point out some of the detail, described in the introduction.

In that sense the author has provided a comprehensive history of the class, and Laurence Waters has previously published volumes on both 'Counties' and 'Granges' within the 'Power' series, and this volume confirms his interest in, and knowledge of, the locomotives of the GWR, but in the reviewer's opinion, the choice of photos is less supportive of the 'Power' theme, 'A Tribute to the Kings' may have been a more descriptive title.

This may not be entirely the fault of the author as he can only select from the images offered to him, and therefore, I would not seek to be too critical of the choices made. On the other hand the volume does provide a succinct history of the class and the photographs do show many variants that many readers may not have realised existed in their running days.

Despite reservations regarding the photographic content, it is a volume that I could recommend to any GWR enthusiast and would recommend to anyone who wanted to find out what made the 'Kings' the star of the GWR loco fleet. **FK**

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:
DBS Class 66/0 No. 66102 passes Shalford Junction, near Guildford, with 11:30 Winchester to Eastleigh infrastructure working.
Conner Nolan

22nd February 2012

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote Street Club, New Road, Basingstoke RG21 7NG. 'Images of Chinese Steam' by Terry Nicholls. Starts 20.00. All welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01256 819401 for further details.

Bradford Rly Circle
The Centre, Heaton Baptist Church, Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX. 'Reedy's Rambles Part One' by Gordon Reed. Starts 19.30

RCTS (Chichester)
Council Meeting Room 2, County Hall, West Street, Chichester. 'The Railway Environment (Bridges, Stations, Signal Boxes & Signalling)' by Stephen Bigley. Starts 19.30.

23rd February 2012

Permanent Way Institution (Sheffield and Doncaster)
Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield. 'The Challenge of the South East' by Bob Hazell. Starts 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Vivek Vilay on 07763 724259.

Permanent Way Institution (South & West Wales)
Queens Hotel, 19 Bridge Street, Newport. 'Isle of Man Railways' by Jeremy Reece. Starts 18.00. Contact James Hepburn on 07919 307726 or at james.hepburn2@networkrail.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Peterborough)
St Luke's Church, Mayors Walk, Peterborough. 'From Rookie Journalist to Grumpy Old Man' by David Percival. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Preston)
Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Road, Preston. 'Railways around Preston' by Mike Norris. Starts 19.30.

Stevenage Locomotive Society
The Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, London Road, Stevenage SG1 1XN. 'More Byways Adventures' by Dave Soggee. Meeting starts at 19.45. All welcome. £2 admission. Contact the Treasurer on 07803 046076 for further details.

24th February 2012

Great Central Railway Society (London)
Keen House, 4 Calshott Street, King's Cross, London N1 9DA. 'Merseyrail' by Richard Crane. Starts 18.30. Contact Richard Butler on 01525 372487 or 0207 620 5399 for further details.

Great Western Society (North West)
St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford, Warrington, WA4 1DN. AGM & "Members' Quiz'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Great Western Society (Oxford)
Pauling Human Sciences Centre, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6QS. AGM. Starts 19.30.

Shropshire Rly Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury. 'Paul Riley Commemorative Show Part 1' by Tony Bowles. Starts 19.30

25th February 2012

Bournemouth Railway Club
Winton Methodist Community Centre, All Purpose Room, Junction Alma Road/Heron Court Road, Winton, Bournemouth BH9 1DE. 'A Mix of Member's and Commercial Films'. Starts 14.30. All welcome. Admission £2. Contact the Chairman on 01202 742099 for further details.

27th February 2012

RCTS (Brighton)
Brighton Railway Model Club Room, London Road Station, Shaftesbury Place, Brighton. '50 Years of Colour Slides' by Mike Hudson. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Maidenhead)
Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green. 'Narrow Gauge Notebook' by Bob Shaddick. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Sheffield)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield. 'Rhapsody in Blue' by Ken Grainger. Starts 19.30.

28th February 2012

RCTS (Nottingham)
Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham. 'A Pennine Journey (Attercliffe - Accrington)' by Stephen Gay. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Welwyn Garden City)
The Methodist Church, Junction of Ludwick Way and Colegreen Lane, Welwyn Garden City. Central Wales Railway - Part 1)' by Cyril Crawley. Meeting commences at 14.00.

RCTS (Woking)
The United Reform Church, White Rose Lane, Woking. 'Privatisation - The First 20 Years (or almost)' by Christian Wolmar. Starts 19.00

RCTS (Reading)
Church House, Caversham. 'Reading Transport Group Quiz (away)' followed by ' The Last Years of the Class 52 Westerns' by John Hubbard. Starts 19.30.

29th February 2012

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Education Room, Discovery Museum, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne. 'Thomas Eliot Harrison (1808 - 1888)' by Bill Fawcett. Starts 14.00. Contact the Secretary on 01434 688946.

1st March 2012

Great Central Railway Society (Sheffield)
The Harlequin, 108 Nursery Street, Sheffield S3 8GG. 'Preserved Steam on Video' by Chris Jones. Starts 19.30. Contact Ken Grainger on 01142 540275 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Milton Keynes)
Room 3.5, Third Floor, Network Rail Station Offices, Milton Keynes. 'DLR Developments' by Martin Collett. And AGM.Starts 17.00. Contact the Secretary, Kevin Thurlow on 07802 890299.

Permanent Way Institution (York)
Marriott Room, York Central Library, Library Square, York. 'On Track Machines' by Craig Goldie. Starts 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Ken Aiston on 07787 512227 for further details.

RCTS (Milton Keynes)
The Crown, Market Square, Stony Stratford. 'It is Grim up North by Steve Batty. Starts 19.30.

Scottish Railway Preservation Society (Edinburgh)
Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. 'Scotland's Railways Caught on Film' by Keith Jones. 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. 'On Narro Gauge Tracks' by Tom Heavyside. Meeting commences at 19.15. Contact the Secretary on 01539 720706 for further information.

2nd March 2012

Cambridge Railway Circle Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road, Cambridge CB4 2LD. 'Freight on Rail' by Lord Tony Berkeley. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact David French on 07791 770595 for further details.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (Birmingham)
St Laurence Pastoral Centre, Church Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2LX. 'The Railways of Singapore' by Gerry Nichols. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS(Bristol)
St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Filton. 'Branch AGM & Slide/Digital Competition'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Carnforth)
County Hotel, Lancaster Road, Carnforth. 'The Stainmore Line' by David Tyreman. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Loco Society
The Settlement Centre, Union Street, Middlesbrough TS1 5NQ. 'Centre AGM & Members' Evening'. Starts 19.00. Contact the Secretary on 01642 313451 for details.

Stephenson Loco Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. 'Kingman Canyon - USA Railroading in Arizona' by David Fraser. Starts 19.00. Contact 01434 688946 for further details.

5th March 2012

North Yorkshire Moors Railway (Northallerton)
Northallerton Town Cricket Club, Farndale Avenue, Northallerton. 'John Lockwood Archive (The Phil Daley Collection' by Steve Armitage. Starts 19.30. Admission £1.50. Contact Ian McInnes on 01642 767233 for further details

Plymouth Rly Circle
St Edward's Church Hall, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4PG. 'ABC of Swiss Railways Part 2' by Michael Farr. Starts 19.30. Visitors welcome. Admission £2.

RCTS (Ashford)
The Elwick Club, Church Road, Ashford. 'Copyright BR' by John Goss. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary at southeast@rcts.org.uk for details.

RCTS (Birmingham)
Christ Church Community Hall, Burney, Ward End. 'The Stonebridge Railway - A Lond Lost Line' by Roger Waring. Starts 14.00.

RCTS (Northampton)
St. Crispin Social Club, Berrywood Road, Duston. 'A Review of Locomotives Entering the Service of BR in 1948' by Brian Benford. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stafford Railway Society (Joint with Continental Rly Circle)
St Leonards Social Club, Stafford. 'A Magical Swiss Train Journey' by Rob Morrey. Starts 19.30. All welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01785 840622 for further details

Weston super Mare Railway Society
Function Room, Weston super Mare Conservative Club, Alexandra Parade, Weston super Mare, BS23 1QX 'Steam in the Landscape' by Mike Tyack. Starts 20.00. All welcome. £1 admission. Contact 01934 628289 for further details.

6th March 2012

MHR Preservation Society (SW London)
Surbiton YMCA, 49 Victoria Road, Surbiton KT6 4NG. 'More of Matt Allen's Photographs'. Starts 19.30. All welcome. Admission £2. Contact Stuart Saunders on 020 8979 6484 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Darlington & North East)
Railway Athletic Clubm Brinkburn Road, Darlington DL3 9LF. 'The Tyne and Wear Metro'. Contact the Secretary, Walter Clark on 07866 268637 or at thomas.clarke@networkrail.co.uk for details.

Permanent Way Institution (Wessex)
The Rose and Crown, Columbo Street, Waterloo, London. 'Stafford and Norton Bridge Remodelling' by David Lawrence. Starts 18.00. Contact Richard Workman on 01428 645771 or at richardworkman5@tiscali.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Watford)
ST.Thomas United Reformed Church, Langley Road, Watford. 'Branch AGM followed by Members' Slides' Starts 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire) /LRTA
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. '2010 Balkan Trip (Sarajevo, Osljek,Zagreb and Belgrade)' by John Laker and Keith Spillett. Starts 19.30. Admission £2. Contact John Goodrich on 02380 670028 for further details.

Telford Rly Society
John Maddock's Sports & Social Club, off Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford TF2 6BU. 'Steam on the Main Line 2011' by K.Jauncey. Starts 19.45. Admission £3.

7th March 2012

Bradford Rly Circle
The Centre, Heaton Baptist Church, Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX. 'Favourite Lines Part 12 - York to Hull the Long Way Round' plus 'Tractos Galore' by Victor Lee. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Burton Rly Society
Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent DE14 3BG. 'Decades of Steam' by Roger Jones. Starts 19.30. Admission £2. Contact Mark Ratcliffe on 01283 221537 for further details

Mid Hants Railway Society (Woking & Guildford)
St. Nicholas Church Hall, High Street, Guildford. 'AGM & Mid-Hants Developments' by Colin Chambers. Starts 20.00. All welcome. Admission £2.50. Contact David Pegg on 01483 834062 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Edinburgh)
The Scots Guards Club, 2 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh. 'Gautrain - Transforming Travel in South Africa' by Jim Watson. Starts 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Alan Morrison on 07834 507497 or at alan.morrison@atkinsglobal.com for further information.

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