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The Railway Herald

19 January 2007 Issue 69

The complimentary UK railway journal for the railway enthusiast

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The Railway Herald
Issue 69

Front Cover

Class 66/0 No. 66102 heads south at Abbotswood Junction on 10 January with a rake of empty coal hoppers from Washwood Heath to Portbury. The wagons would have been discharged at Ironbridge Power Station. *Dave Pagett*

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Submissions

We welcome submissions from all readers, especially digital photographs. Pictures should be sent to the editor at editor@railwayherald.com

Good quality scans of colour slides and prints are also acceptable. Currently there is no financial payment made for photographs published in *Railway Herald*. Where possible we always try to use news photographs taken within the production week of the publication date.

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National Rail Timetable

The entire UK National Rail Timetable is now available as a PDF download from the Network Rail website.

Produced in the same fashion as the printed version and ordered by table number, the current timetable is available by clicking here.

The railway by-laws and information for enthusiasts are also available online from the Network Rail website, by clicking here.

New livery GBRf 'Bluebirds' take to the rails

Following a test run from Wembley to Bletchley and back to Old Oak Common on 12 January, Class 66/7s Nos. 66726 and 66727 were dispatched to Derby for a First Great Western stock move. No. 66727 leads two barrier vehicles and classmate No. 66726 through Hatton (above) on the 07.00 Old Oak Common - Derby Litchurch Lane working. The two locos returned south to Plymouth Laira the same afternoon, No. 66726 noted during a pause at Didcot Parkway (below). *Peter Tandy / Paul Eccles*

Awaiting the call for service . . .

ABOVE: A rather unusual view of Class 92s Nos. 92041 and 92042 side-by-side and perfectly positioned at Warrington. Are the '92s' the only locos left with the BR double-arrow symbols still attached? *Mark Ainsworth*

High winds and rain brings chaos to UK rail system

Travel conditions on the UK's railway network sustained major problems on 18 January, as most parts of England and Wales were battered by very strong winds, and Scotland also had some snow showers.

A 50mph precautionary speed restriction was imposed across the majority of the country by Network Rail to allow drivers sufficient time to react to any obstructions, such as trees on the line. Some of these speed limits were removed during the afternoon, following an information update from the Met Office. However, restrictions remained in place throughout much of north-west England.

As a result of the speed restriction, Chiltern Railways' services between London Marylebone and Birmingham Snow Hill were cut to hourly, while a shuttle service from Leamington Spa to Stratford-upon-Avon replaced the direct Stratford to London services.

High winds were not the only problem that railways had to tackle however, as flooding in many areas brought about widespread disruption. In North Wales, the Llandudno Junction-Blaenau Ffestiniog line was closed due to water levels, while in the South Wales Valleys the route between Aberdare and Abercynon North was closed until lunchtime for the same reason. Services between Machynlleth and Aberdovey were replaced by road coaches between Caersws and Aberdovey, again through flooding and further problems were caused in the Shrewsbury area when Class 158s Nos. 158833 and 158840 derailed at Sutton Bridge Junction after hitting a tree, while working the 11.32 Aberystwyth to Birmingham New Street service.

In Gloucestershire trains were at a standstill for about an hour near Yate due to flooding between Cheltenham and Bristol Parkway.

In Yorkshire, flooding closed the lines between Skipton and Hellifield and Guiseley and Ilkley all day and at Hebden Bridge until 10.00. With services throughout Yorkshire affected, together with the near total suspension of local services out of Manchester Piccadilly, Northern Rail was advising passengers not to travel, as they could not guarantee to get people to their final destinations.

On the WCML, flooding at Norton Bridge, overhead line problems at Macclesfield, and plastic sheeting on the overheads at Warrington Bank Quay all contributed towards the chaos when overhead line damage caused all Virgin West Coast services to be cancelled until 14.00, following which trains were severely disrupted and all long-distance inter-regional services to Scotland were cancelled. Virgin Trains website at 17.00 was recommending customers not to attempt to travel, saying that, "We are working with Network Rail to try to resume some West Coast services, but we cannot guarantee resumption today. Any resumption of service today will be minimal."

Midland Mainline was another operator to abandon its advertised timetable, operating London - Derby services on the hour and London-Nottingham services at half-past the hour, with a connecting shuttle between Derby and Sheffield. The Chesterfield area suffered minor flooding but this did not seriously affect services.

ABOVE: One of the few occasions that a Class 67 can be seen working one of the key traffic types that the class was built for, albeit always an empty train, is the return empty vans from Aberdeen to Motherwell from the overnight Walsall-Aberdeen. On 18 January, the train approaches Plean Junction, south of Stirling, in a snow storm with 67007 in charge. *Peter Kellett*

The ECML fared no better, with all lines being blocked for a period after the winds caused damage to the station buildings at Huntingdon, while fallen trees closed all lines for a time at Welwyn Garden City. When able, GNER resorted to running two trains an hour at xx00 and xx30 between London and Newcastle with the on-the-hour service extending through to Edinburgh. Wakefield and Leeds passengers were required to change to a shuttle service at Doncaster, which was connecting with the above trains. The early part of the morning saw a blanket 80mph restriction in force, although this was reduced to 50mph from 10.00. First Capital Connect cancelled all services between King's Cross/Moorgate and Stevenage, Peterborough and Cambridge due to the problems. At Biggleswade the roof blew off the station, landing on the track and again bringing the overheads down on all four lines. A northbound GNER service from King's Cross to Edinburgh was declared a failure at Shaftholme Junction, just north of Doncaster, after the overhead catenary became entangled in the locomotive pantograph, requiring attendance from the Doncaster 'Thunderbird'.

First Great Western (FGW) operated a restricted timetable with much extended journey times. All South Wales, Bristol Temple Meads and West Country services were reduced to hourly, with trains between London and Swansea or Plymouth expected to take around five hours. By 16.00, FGW was advising passengers not to travel unless absolutely necessary.

Station buildings were damaged at Flint and at New Cross Gate in London and in addition, high winds caused damage to a level crossing barrier between Worthing and Hove until mid-morning. The worst of the problems however, were trees on the line across the entire country and to make matters worse, in Essex, c2c services between Grays and Barking were diverted via Upminster for over an hour after plastic sheeting blew onto the overhead wires. 'one' railway operated a reduced service with hourly trains between Liverpool Street and Norwich in both directions.

Central Trains terminated all services to and from Cardiff Central at Newport, while Stansted Airport trains were terminating at and starting from Cambridge.

Major problems were encountered on First Capital Connect, with the company advising passengers not to travel due to the severe disruption and the temporary timetable that was in operation.

The Merseyrail network suffered major problems with all 'Northern Line' services being suspended as well as trains between Rock Ferry and Hooton and New Brighton to Birkenhead North.

Despite all the problems, Scotland faired better, although did see several heavy falls of snow across the central belt wich caused some delays. All overnight 'Caledonian Sleeper's services from Fort William, Aberdeen, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow to London Euston were cancelled on the evening of 18 January.

On Southeastern trains, some London Victoria to Faversham services were cancelled during the morning along with some from Charing Cross to Ashford International until mid-afternoon. In addition, services between Dover Priory and Folkestone were withdrawn due to high tides blowing onto the railway. On Southern and Silverlink, services between Willesden and Clapham Junction were disrupted due to signalling problems at Kensington Olympia, and trains between London Bridge and Beckenham Junction, via Peckham Rye, were suspended to reduce congestion and delays in the area.

London Underground sub-surface lines were also part suspended with others operating with severe delays. Throughout the day, fallen trees and other debris caused disruption to most open sections of the Tube network. Speed restrictions have also been introduced on some open sections of the Tube network for safety reasons.

The Bakerloo line was suspended between Willesden Junction and Harrow & Wealdstone, and the Central Line was suspended between Woodford and Loughton/Hainault due to obstructions on the track, while the Metropolitan, Northern and Piccadilly lines were all suspended in part for the same reason. Signalling failures have caused disruption on the Circle line (clockwise) and the Hammersmith & City at Monument and the District line at Monument and Acton Town. Disruption was also experienced on the Docklands Light Railway and on Croydon Tramlink.

Farewell to the 'Wessex Electrics' . . . . well not quite!

After a working life of just 19 years, the majority of the Class 442 'Wessex Electrics' EMUs were placed into store during mid-January.

Their duties have been taken over by cascaded Class 444 and 450 'Desiro' units. The end for the '442s' should have come on 13 January. However, a requirement resulted in around eight units expected to be retained until the end of the current lease agreement in early February to be used on an 'as required' basis.

The final train should have been the 18.35 Waterloo to Weymouth on 13 January, which was formed of Nos. (44)2407 *Thomas Hardy* and (44)2417 *Woking Homes* as far as Bournemouth, where the leading unit No. (44)2407 detached and worked through to Weymouth before forming the 23.10 service back to Bournemouth.

There remains no official word on the future for the class.

ABOVE: The 09.20 Fratton to London Waterloo semi-fast service, approaches Farncombe, near Guildford, on 13 January, with Class 442 No. (44)2405 leading and (44)2411 on the rear. On the left is Class 444 No. 444020 on a local train to Haslemere. The building work in the foreground is to lengthen the up platform to take 12-coach trains rather than the present eight. *Graham Sparks*

LEFT: Class 442 No. (44)2407 is pictured shortly after arrival at Bournemouth with the 23.10 service from Weymouth in the early hours of 14 January.

BELOW: Even the platform display at Weymouth proclaimed the event, and also displayed the unit number! *Both: Neil Walking*

BELOW: Following its arrival for secure storage, with classmate No. (44)2406, No. (44)2404 stands in Eastleigh Works yard shortly after arrival on 15 January surrounded by a number of stored Class 158 DMUs. It is understood that the SWT stickers were removed from the units prior to moving into store. *Ian Parish*

Mendip Rail chooses GBRf

GB Railfreight (GBRf) has won a contract with Mendip Rail to move re-cycled ballast from Acton to the aggregates facility at Parkeston, operated by Yeoman.

Under the agreement, GBRf will operate eight trains made up of JNA big-box wagons to transport a total of 10,000 tons. Following delivery by GBRf, the re-cycled material will be used in the construction industry.

The majority of Mendip Rail traffic is operated by EWS.

Bedford-Bletchley line to close temporarily

The whole of Silverlink County's Bletchley to Bedford to line is scheduled to close to traffic for one week after the last train on 10 February.

During this period, Network Rail is to undertake trackwork to eliminate a number of temporary speed restrictions, some as low as 20mph, allowing trains to reach the maximum line speed of 60mph for most of the journey.

The work is said to be very intensive and will require a second period of closure from 28 May to 1 June to ensure that six of the current 11 speed restrictions are also lifted.

The new rail being laid has a 20-year plus life expectancy, giving a sound basis for the future. Buses will be provided during the closures.

There are also to be major changes to Silverlink County services over the Easter weekend while Network Rail carry out further major trackwork replacement.

There will be a Saturday service between Euston and Northampton on Good Friday and Easter Monday, but the route will be closed between Hemel Hempstead and Northampton on Saturday and Sunday 8/9 April.

On these two dates there will be a special train service between Euston and Hemel Hempstead with connecting coach services between Hemel Hempstead and Northampton.

Journey times between London and stations north of Hemel Hempstead will, of course, be increased as a result.

News In Brief

■ Fairwater Yard in Taunton is to be the home of Class 73/1 No. 73133! The locomotive, currently on the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway, is to move to Taunton shortly and will be based in the yard for three years to take over shunting duties once the current contract finishes.

■ Wandsworth Council has given conditional approval for the plans to extend and refurbish Battersea Park station. The work is in preparation for the larger number of people that are expected to pass through the station following the redevelopment of Battersea Power Station.

■ As a result of all the weather issues, GBRf hired Class 47/4 No. 47843 *Vulcan* from Riveria Trains, to work the 16.26 Willesden - Shieldmuir mail service via Reading on 18 January. Also Class 37/4 No. 37406 worked the Edinburgh - Aberdeen sleeper on the morning of 18 January.

£5 million to be invested in South Lincolnshire railways

Network Rail reports that it is to invest £5 million on the railway in South Lincolnshire.

The project, which starts on 4 February, involves replacing old jointed track with continuous welded rail and replacing ballast and sleepers.

Central Trains will provide replacement bus services from 4 February until the morning of 17 February, calling at stations between Peterborough and Lincoln. These will be timed to connect with train services at Lincoln for onward journeys to Doncaster.

From 19 February until the morning of 24 February, buses will replace trains calling at stations between Skegness and Boston. At Boston, passengers will be able to connect with services to Sleaford, Grantham and Nottingham.

During the closures, 10,000 yards of jointed track will be replaced at Sleaford, and 3,000 yards at Seacroft and Havenhouse, near Skegness. Network Rail is also to undertake work on the Boston-Skegness route in the period up to 2010 and is currently in discussions about the exact scope of the work, how much track will be replaced and how much will be needed to be invested in the route.

In the short term, further investment is planned for the Skegness area in 2007/8, with track renewals scheduled for Wainfleet and Havenhouse.

Exciting railtours! Spring 2007

South China Steam Tour

11 - 28 April 2007

Starts and finishes Chengdu. Narrow gauge lines Shibanxi and Weiyuan. Standard gauge Jiangyou, Panzihua, Zhongyicun, Datong, Rongchang, Luzhou, plus others.

Ukraine (UZ) Diesel Enthusiast Tour

12 - 20 May 2007

Starts and finishes Kiev. Own private train. Narrow gauge diesels - Lvov, Beregovo and Vigoda - the last forestry line in Ukraine.
Broad gauge diesels - Lvov, Ternopol, Shepetovka, Grechany, Zmerinka, Tchors, Kiev. Runpasts, linesiding and depot visits.
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More engineering staff for Tube Lines & Metronet

In a drive to improve performance on London Underground, Metronet Rail is adding 550 new staff to its frontline engineering maintenance team, an increase of more than 25 %.

A main priority is for 100 signal engineering technical officers to respond to signal and track circuit failures during the day and to facilitate track and signal maintenance at night, the remainder being employed on train, track and station maintenance.

Tube Lines is to strengthen its Stratford-based training team to boost the way employees learn, especially about safety, and also aims to address skills shortages in the rail industry and broaden the range of safety and technical skills training offered to employees.

The company is also inviting 'expressions of interest' from manufacturers for supplying new trains for the Piccadilly Line. Under its Public Private Partnership (PPP) contract, Tube Lines is committed to introducing a new rolling stock fleet by 2014 to replace the existing 1973 Stock trains, and has the same deadline to install a new signalling system and increase overall capacity of the line by 20%. Requesting 'expressions of interest' from manufacturers is the first stage of the procurement process leading to selection and a contract being awarded, hopefully during 2008.

A big clean begins on 'one' railway following £500,000 investment

A programme of additional train cleaning costing £500,000 in materials, equipment and employees by 'one' railway will result in passengers seeing an improved on-board environment on rolling stock over the coming months.

The company is recruiting an additional 26 employees to improve the interior condition of its trains, increasing both the frequency and standard of cleaning for the entire fleet.

The new programme includes heavy steam cleaning of trains based in Norwich and the use of a steam cleaning truck to heavy clean carpets and seats in the Class 321 units that operate from London Liverpool Street.

Additional heavy cleaning is also scheduled to take place at Cambridge, Chingford, Clacton and Gidea Park, and additionally, on-train conductors are being encouraged to take more notice of the cleanliness of their trains by regularly removing litter as they pass through the coaches.

RIGHT: Class 60 No. 60019 heads through Freshford in the Avon Valley with the 11.17 Hayes-East Usk stone train, comprising 'Gunnel' wagons. The service had been diverted due to engineering work on the Swindon route. The new EWS bogie stone hoppers now being built are to replace this wagon type on some flows. *Mark Few*

DVD VIDEO

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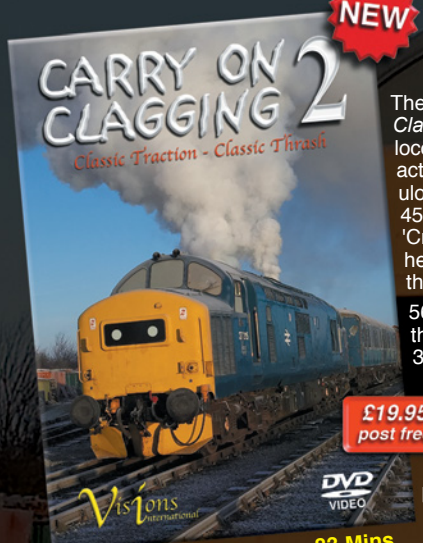

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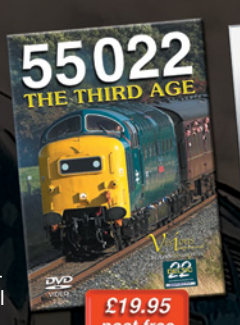

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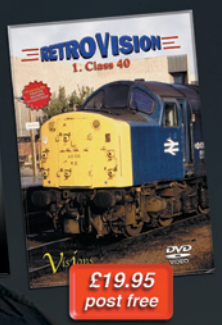

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ABOVE: Following the press rollout at Derby Litchurch Lane on 21 December, FGW showed off its refurbished HST to the public on 17 January by placing it on display at Plymouth, Bristol and Paddington. No. 43125 leads the train away from Bristol through Filton past Narroways Junction. *Chris Perkins*

£600 million investment for Tyne & Wear Metro?

The Business Case for the £600 million reinvigoration of the Tyne and Wear Metro is set to be approved by the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) on 23 January.

The proposals form the largest transport project in the North East for almost 30 years and after PTA approval will be taken direct to the Government.

The project involves complete modernisation of Metro over the next 20 years including stations, trains and infrastructure. Investment in what was the UK's first modern light rail system, now over 25 years old, is said to be vital to support economic growth of the region, reduce congestion and tackle climate change in North East England.

Kemble landslip stablisation work

ABOVE: Work started on 16 January to stabilise the bankside at Kemble, just south of the tunnel, after a landslip had closed the route. *Ken Brunt*

Oyster cards for Silverlink Metro

Silverlink Metro has been working closely with Transport for London (TfL) to make all of its stations within the London Travelcard area Oyster card compatible, and aims to achieve this well before TfL assumes responsibility for the route in November.

At the same time, a new ticket issuing system called 'FasTIS+' is being installed at the company's station booking offices. The new equipment is PC based and has the facility to issue Oyster cards much quicker than the present system. The first station to have the facility was Gunnersbury on 16 January.

c2c also offers the full Oyster range of services at stations between Fenchurch Street and Upminster and has done so since January 2005. It has also agreed with TfL to extend Oyster pre-pay to Dagenham Dock and Rainham stations as soon as TfL is able to provide the necessary equipment.

Meanwhile, discussions with TfL to extend this beyond the Greater London area boundary to Grays, via both Purfleet and Ockendon, are well advanced.

Six stations achieve Park Mark®

Six Network Rail major stations have been given the Park Mark® Safer Parking award.

The stations involved are Edinburgh Waverley, Glasgow Central, King's Cross, Leeds, Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Piccadilly, all of which are said to be up to the mark for safe and secure parking. The Park Mark® Safer Parking award is an initiative from the Association of Chief Police Officers aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities.

Silverlink has secured 99 more parking spaces for passengers using Tring station, following agreement with Dacorum Borough Council, which has given permission for the temporary car park to remain open until the new decked-car park is ready in the autumn. The facility opened on 17 January, has good lighting and is covered by CCTV.

ABOVE: One of the few steam-hauled charter services to operate in early January was a VSOE luncheon tour from London Victoria to Shalford on 12 January. The train is pictured departing from the London terminus behind Bulleid-designed Battle of Britiain No. 34067 *Tangmere*. VSOE steam services throughout 2007 are expected to be operated by either *Tangmere* of Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* *Iain C. Scotchman*

Railtour Listings ■ Railtour Listings ■ Railtour Listings ■ Railtour Listings ■ Railtour Listings

The following table details the latest information available on steam, diesel and electric railtours for the forthcoming two weeks from the date of publication. News from railtour operators is always welcome. Please contact editor@railwayherald.com. **Information is understood to be correct at the time of going to press.** *With our Christmas break, our weekly railtour listings have been extended to provide details for the next four weeks.*

Date	Operator	Traction	Route
20 Jan	Hertfordshire	2xFMR Cl 31	'The Lancashire Witch' Birmingham NS-Burton upon Trent-Derby-Chesterfield-Sheffield-Wakefield Kirkgate-Hebdon Bridge-Copy Pit-Preston (break)-Manchester Victoria-Stalybridge-Standedge and return
20 Jan	Past Time Rail	45407	(Milton Keynes-Northampton-Rugby-Bham Int-Bham New St-Crewe)-Manchester Victoria-Huddersfield-Halifax-(Bradford Interchange (rev)-Leeds)-Hebdon Bridge-Accrington-Manchester Victoria (and return)
20 Jan	Pathfinder Tours	2xEWS Cl 37	London Paddington-Ardingley-London Victoria (rev)-London Blackfriars (rev)-Orpington Bay Platforms (rev)- London Cannon Street (rev)- London Bridge Low Level (rev)- London Waterloo (rev)-London St. Pancras
20 Jan	VSOE	34067	London Victoria-Southampton Eastern Dock-London Victoria
26 Jan	VSOE	EWS Class 67	London Victoria Luncheon Circular
27 Jan	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xFMR 47	London Victoria-Maidstone-Ashford-Rye-Hastings-Battle-Tonbridge-Redhill-London Victoria (Robert Burns Luncheon Train)
27 Jan	Hertfordshire	45112	'The Tubular Belle': York-Sheffield-Chesterfield-Derby-Uttoxeter-Crewe-Llandudno Junction-Bangor-Holyhead (break/rev)-and return
27 Jan	RTC	34067	'Kent Coast Express': London Victoria-Brixton-Bromley South-Chatham-Faversham-Margate-Ramsgate-Dover-Folkestone Harbour (rev)-(Folkestone Harbour-Hastings-Eastbourne)(rev) Eastbourne-Gatwick-London Victoria
27 Jan	VSOE	EWS Class 67	London Victoria Circular Trip
28 Jan	VSOE	EWS Class 67	London Victoria Circular Trip
31 Jan	VSOE	EWS Class 67	London Victoria-Bath-London Victoria
02 Feb	VSOE	EWS Class 67	London Victoria Circular Trip
03 Feb	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xFMR 47	London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Peterborough-Buxton and return
03 Feb	Railtourer	48151	(Skegness-Wainfleet-Boston-Sleaford-Metheringham-Lincoln-Gainsborough Lea Road)-Doncaster-Church Fenton-York (break/rev)-Doncaster-(and return)
07 Feb	VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Bath-London Victoria
09 Feb	Pathfinder Tours	50031&50049	Swansea-Neath-Port Talbot-Bridgend-Cardiff Central-Newport-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Birmingham NS-Stafford-Crewe-Preston-Perth-Dundee-Aberdeen
09 Feb	Pathfinder Tours	EWS Class 67	Swansea-Edinburgh (in association with Arriva Trains Wales)
10 Feb	Past Time Rail	6201	(London Euston-B'ham International)-Bescot-Crewe-Liverpool Lime St. and return
10 Feb	Pathfinder Tours	50031&50049	Aberdeen-Elgin-Inverness (break/rev)-Elgin-Aberdeen

Key to tour listings:

BLACK	Charters expected to operate as booked.	**RED**	Tours cancelled by the operator
GREEN	Tours postponed to a future date by the operator	**WCRC**	Operated by West Coast Railway Company Traction
BP	Blue Pullman service	**ICMM**	InterCity Merrymaker

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

PLEASE NOTE: Not all pick up/set down points are shown. Please check with the operator before travelling any distance.

The Week Ahead

Trans-Pennine charters are the feature for 20 January, with Past Time leading the way with 'Black 5' No. 45407 from Manchester Victoria across the Standedge route to Huddersfield.

The tour heads to Bradford Interchange via Halifax. After a diesel-hauled section to Leeds, the '5MT' takes over the return leg to Manchester Victoria via Copy Pit and Blackburn.

Prior to FM Rail entering administration, InterCity Merrymaker had a trip planned for 20 January. Now showing under Hertfordshire, the train features a pair of FM Class 31s from Birmingham New Street via Derby and Sheffield before proceeding to the Calder Valley via Wakefield Kirkgate. Copy Pit is also in the itinerary, before the tour takes a scheduled break at Preston. The return is via Manchester Victoria and the Standedge route.

Pathfinder seem to have hit a sucess with the 'Buffer Puffer' trains as all three are selling well, with the 20 January long sold-out. This is the original, which takes a wide sweep around London, with a re-run scheduled for 31 March. With 'top and tail' EWS Class 37s for traction the tour takes in a number of London terminals and routes. Pathfinders' McBuffer Puffer' around Glasgow on 10 February is the third such train.

VSOE has a steam-hauled working from London Victoria to Southampton Eastern Docks on 20 January, with No. 34067 *Tangmere* the likely traction.

ABOVE: Class 31 No. 31190 returned to the national network shortly after the New Year, now re-adorned with its headlight and electric warning stickers. The locomotive was in action on a route learning tour of the south-west London suburbs and Surrey on 17 January and is pictured here, in ex-works condition, snaking across the brand new crossing at Weybridge on the former LSWR mainline heading for Staines, as Class 455 No. (45)5750 leads the 12.20 London Waterloo to Woking stopping service. *Chris Nevard*

BELOW: The continued absence of the Network Rail's New Measurement Train HST from the 05.45 Manchester - Glasgow Central test run gave ex-FM Rail operated Class 31/1s Nos. 31128 and 31106 the opportunity to work on 17 January. The pair head north past the opencast coal loading facility at Ravenstruther. *Peter Kellett*

ABOVE: On 13 January, Class 47/4 No. 47832 *Driver Tom Clarke O.B.E.* passes the Old Pumping Station at Crofton working the first 'Blue Pullman' trip under Victa Westlink, from Euston to Shrewsbury via the Berks & Hants (due to engineering work taking place between Swindon and Bristol). The loco worked the train throughout due to the failure of No. 47703. *Brian Garrett*

BELOW: Victa Westlink, which is currently managing the operations division of what was previously the FM Rail business, hired two of Riveria Trains Class 47/4 locomotives on 17/18 January to work a trial flow of containers from Purfleet in Essex to Grangemouth. The locomotives concerned, Nos. 47815 *Great Western* and No. 47853 *Rail Express* worked north during the evening of 17 January arriving in Scotland the following morning, returning south on 18 January. In the attrocious weather conditions experienced that day, the pair pass Lowgill, while working the Grangemouth - Purfleet leg. *Terry O' Conner*

The final days of the 'Wessex Electrics'

ABOVE: Class 442 'Wessex Electrics' Nos. (44)2405 and (44)2411 depart from Havant forming the 09.20 Fratton-Waterloo service on 13 January. With the ongoing resignalling work, the 'down' line has been realigned, with the 'down through' removed and the level crossing closed while track realignment takes place.

LEFT: A view the other way at Havant, again with the Nos. (44)2405 and (44)2411, nearest to the camera, as the pair pass over the realigned junction.

BELOW: Nos. (44)2407 and (44)2417 speed south near Winchfield with the 11.35 Waterloo-Weymouth on 13 January. This pair replaced Nos. (44)2411 and (44)2405 after the leading unit, (44)2411, developed a motor bogie bearing fault. *All: Chris Wilson*

TURNING THE CLOCK BACK

Wellington, Shropshire, on 30 August 1952

Brian Morrison takes readers back to the age of steam and the summer of 1952 with a visit to the Shropshire town of Wellington and its wide array of traffic and motive power.

Traffic currently operating through Wellington is very sparse compared with that of over 50 years ago when these photographs were taken. Scheduled freight today is little or none and the passenger services are mainly in the hands of Class 158s and Class 170 Turbostars. On 30 August 1952, I photographed 34 trains in just a few hours at lineside.

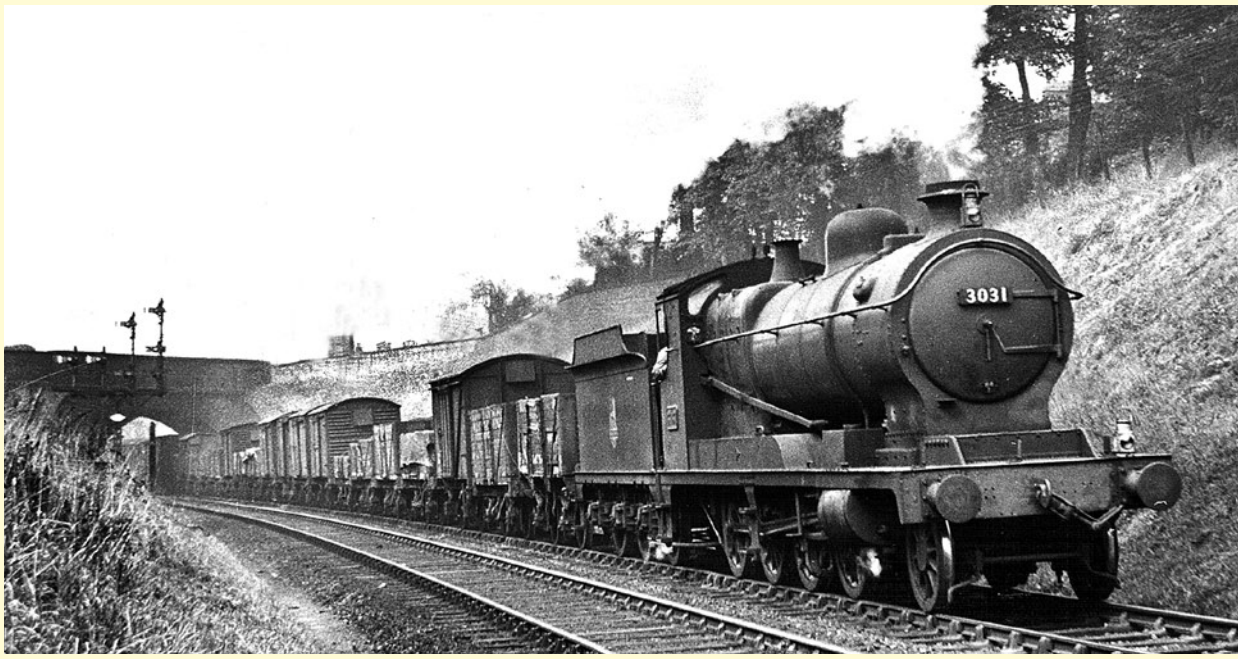
Not only did these range from the titled 'Cambrian Coast Express' to the two-coach branch line service to Much Wenlock, but remarkably involved no less than 20 different classes of locomotive, ranging from a 'Castle', a 'County', a 'Star', three 'Manors' and three 'Halls' to an R.O.D., two '5700s', two '5600s', four '5100s', five '4300s', a '2800', and a '2251' – and that was only the ex-GWR types! Also passing were a 'Jubilee', two 7F G2 0-8-0s, a 4MT 2-6-4T and a 2P 4-4-0. These examples show only some of the Western Region workings. Possibly a selection of Midland Region trains from the day may follow in the future.

ABOVE: With seven assorted vans and coaches making up a parcels working for the London area, Didcot (81E)-based 'Hall' class 4-6-0 No 5935 Norton Hall catches a brief period of sunshine as it passes through Wellington.

LEFT: 5700 class 0-6-0PT No 5712 steams away from Wellington, where it was based (84E), hauling the two-coach 11.20 service to Much Wenlock. The branch closed for passenger services in 1962. *All: Brian Morrison*

RIGHT: 'Manor' class 4-6-0 No 7818 *Granville Manor* passes Wellington signalbox, hauling the down 'Cambrian Coast Express' for Aberystwyth.

MIDDLE: A R.O.D (Railway Operating Division - Royal Engineers) 2-8-0 No 3031 passes through Wellington, hauling a mixed southbound freight. These locomotives were a 1911 Great Central Railway design by J.G. Robinson that became LNER Class O4. In 1917, a batch was built for the Army during World War I. At the end of hostilities, they were taken into GWR stock and subsequently fitted with GWR boiler mountings and other details.



RIGHT: Croes Newydd (84J)-allocated Class 2800 2-8-0 No 2878 passes through the cutting east of Wellington station, heading back to Wales with a train consisting mainly of empty wooded-sided coal wagons..
All: Brian Morrison

On a day when most of the country was being battered with severe gales and torrential rain, the scene in the central belt of Scotland was one of heavy snowfall. This brought delays and disruption to some train services and a few cancellations. Heading through the snow, Class 170/4 No.170409 draws into Polmont station forming the 10.45 Glasgow Queen Street to Edinburgh Waverley service on 18 January. *Jim Binnie*