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The Railway Herald

23 February 2007 Issue 73

The complimentary UK railway journal for the railway enthusiast

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The Railway Herald
Issue 73

Front Cover

Merchant Navy Class Bullied Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* powers past Watery Lane, near the M25 on the outskirts of Chertsey, with a London Victoria to Eastleigh VSOE on 17 February. *Chris Nevard*

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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.

TOP: **Class 47/7 No. 47703 *Hermes* stands at Newport on 16 February while hauling MTU-fitted powercars Nos. 43098 and 43165 on from Swansea Landore to Laira.** *Gary Sparks*

ABOVE: **In superb winter sunshine, Class 66/5 No. 66565 powers the Earles Sidings-Seaham cement tanks through Dawdon on the Durham Coast Line.** *Ken Short*

BELOW: **Despite the Metronet Class 66/7s being dedicated to engineering work when not required on Metronet duties, the locomotives can and do see use on GBRailfreight's other scheduled freight services. The first appearance of a Class 66/7 working in Scotland occurred on 20 February, when No. 66720 *Metronet Pathfinder* was provided for the Harwich - Aberdeen 'Mud Oil' train. The working is pictured between Larbert and Stirling approaching the former Plean Junction.** *Peter Kellett.*

Short list of four for new East Coast franchise

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced on 20 February that four parties have been shortlisted as qualified Bidders for the Intercity East Coast (ICEC) franchise, currently operated on a temporary basis by GNER.

The bidders are Arriva Trains East Coast Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Arriva Trains Limited, the ultimate parent company being Arriva plc, First London, Scottish and North East Railways Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of First Rail Holdings Ltd, the ultimate parent company being FirstGroup plc, inter-city railways limited, a 50/50 joint venture between Stagecoach Group plc and the Virgin Group of Companies and NXEC Trains Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of National Express Group plc

The DfT issued an advertisement in December 2006 inviting Expressions of Interest in the franchise. The short listed bidders will now be asked to bid against a specification based on DfT proposals and the responses to a recent public consultation that closed on 15 February.

The winner of the East Coast franchise will be announced in the summer, and it is anticipated that the new ICEC franchise will be in place in late autumn.

The term of the new franchise is a maximum of seven years and five months, the last 17 months being dependent upon the franchisee achieving performance targets.

ABOVE: On 14 February, DRS Class 66/4 No. 66408 leads Class 47 No. 47501 and Class 20/3s Nos. 20315 and 20307 past Brock on the West Coast Main Line. *Mark Bearton*

BELOW: In connection with track relaying work taking place on the Cambrian line to Pwhelli, Class 66 No. 66102 awaits permission to proceed from Machynlleth onto the Cambrian Coast line on 20 February. *Dylan Williams*.

Help for hard of hearing passengers

'one' railway has fitted hearing loops in its mini-ticket offices at Wymondham and North Walsham stations in order to improve services for passengers who are hard of hearing.

Wymondham was un-staffed for many years but is now a thriving station on the Norwich to Cambridge line. Likewise, North Walsham is part of the award-winning Bittern Line that connects Norwich with North Norfolk. It is now the busiest intermediate station on the route and now has a staffed ticket office. 'one' is considering the introduction of similar schemes at other local stations to improve customer service, this being a move to reverse a trend begun in the 1960s when many such stations were de-staffed.

METRO & TRAMWAY NEWS ■ METRO & TRAMWAY NEWS ■ METRO & TRAMWAY NEWS ■ METRO & TRAMWAY NEWS ■

Metronet takes over Old Dalby

Metronet Rail has committed £7 million to take control of the entire 21 kilometre length of the dedicated test track at Old Dalby in order to test the next generation of air-conditioned Underground stock.

The trains are due to begin entering service on the Metropolitan line from 2009 and work being planned will see at least four kilometres of the line electrified with Underground-compatible third and fourth rail.

Testing the new trains on the Underground system itself would have brought risks of breakdowns holding up the start of traffic the next morning, causing delays.

The site, at Asfordby on the southern outskirts of Nottingham, is owned by British Rail Board (Residuary) and was controversially mothballed in 2005 following successful testing of the Virgin Pendolino trains.

The line was closed as a through route as part of the Beeching Axe in late 1968 and then resurrected by the Research Division of British Rail to test the gas turbine-powered Advanced Passenger Train, its curves, cuttings and tunnels being considered as an ideal test route.

Most memorably, the track was used in 1984 for the nuclear flask crash test in which a Class 44 'Peak' was driven at speed into a nuclear container to prove its integrity to a doubting public.

Metrolink invests in refurbished network

Manchester Metrolink is investing over £100 million on improvements to the existing network over the next few years, including replacing worn-out track, new ticket machines, stop upgrades and the introduction of eight new trams during 2009.

The track on the Bury and Altrincham lines is more than 50 years old in some places and is rapidly approaching the end of its natural life. It is also making the Metrolink service unreliable as the trams need frequent repairs due to wear and tear. Some 20 miles of track will be replaced during the coming summer and work on the Bury line is due to begin in May for completion by the end of September. Work on the Altrincham line is scheduled to start in July and to be finished by the end of August. The track will be replaced in sections so that as much of the network can remain open as possible.

EWS is providing two cut-down cab Class 08/9s for the work which will take place on the Bury-Manchester line.

Airwave contract for the Underground

A £115 million contract for equipping the Underground rail network with the Airwave radio system has been signed.

Airwave is used by both the police and the emergency services and is be installed alongside London Underground's new Connect digital radio system. It is planned that both Airwave and Connect will be operational on all Tube lines in 2008. This will mean that the police will have Airwave radio coverage at all 125 below ground stations.

LU's Connect digital radio is currently live on the Circle, District, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan and East London lines and Airwave is scheduled to go live on the East London Line in April.

ABOVE: Large logo-liveried Class 47/4 No. 47847 passes Park Junction at Coventry with the 09.00 Crewe to Kineton stock move, conveying 14 Mk2 vehicles. The train is pictured coming off the double track section at Park Junction and heading towards Leamington on the current single line (the former 'down' line) with the new 'up' line in evidence on the right, awaiting connection. *Ron Kosys*

Work progresses on re-doubling of Coventry cross-country route

Due to the increasing traffic levels on the cross-country route between Coventry and Leamington Spa, part of the single track route is being returned to two track formation.

A new 'up' line is being laid between Park Junction and Gibbet Hill (almost two miles from Coventry) to increase line capacity. This work is being carried out in conjuction with the Coventry area resignalling scheme.

However, due to delays with the resignalling when the branch was closed last August for three weeks for the relaying to be carried out, the work was not completed and the new 'up' line remains in place, but unconnected at both ends.

This state of affairs is due to end during a further closure over Easter 2007, when all of the work will be completed.

Park Junction will disappeaer and be replaced by straight track, while new pointwork will be constructed at Gibbet Hill where the branch will continue as a single line towards Kenilworth and Leamington.

Park Junction itself was created in the late 1960s when the Coventry to Leamington branch was singled, leaving just a passing loop at Kenilworth, and is the point at which the double track out of Coventry towards Leamington returns to a single line.

Depot upgrades for Ashford and Ramsgate

Contracts worth £13 million from the Department for Transport to assist in the redevelopment of Ashford and Ramsgate Depots have been won by Emcor Infrastructure & Rail services.

The company will build the electrical and mechanical systems at both sites as well as install telecommunications and security systems.

A completely new depot at Ashford on the site of unused permanent way sidings will be the facility for the Hitachi built Class 395 'Javelin' trains, which will operate the domestic services on High Speed 1, where the first unit is scheduled to arrive in August this year, see separate story.

The Ramsgate Depot upgrade is to improve the existing facilities for maintaining the Class 375 Electrostar fleet.

Railtex London event success at ExCeL centre

The first Railtex event to be held at the ExCel centre in East London on 20-22 February was a resounding success.

The organisers of Railtex 07 consider the show to be the best of the seven exhibitions held to date with thousands in attendance each day.

Railtex 07 had 465 exhibitors from 17 countries in the massive hall and as always showcased the latest rail technology.

RIGHT: Alongside the key manufacturers of Bombardier and Siemens, the Hunslet Engine Company proudly displayed their latest product, an 0-4-0ST two-foot gauge tank named *Jack Lane*. *Brian Morrison*

Skiers take advantage of Eurostar

Eurostar reports that it is enjoying a bumper ski season as increasing numbers of travellers use its services to reach the French Alps.

Tickets for the twice weekly direct ski services went on sale in July last year and since then more than 33,000 skiers have booked to travel, an increase of 43% compared with the same period in the 2005-2006 season. The two ski services run overnight on Fridays, arriving early Saturday morning and gain an extra two days on the slopes, or alternatively those preferring the scenic day service leave Waterloo International on Saturday morning and arrive at their destination early evening.

Standard class returns start from £179 and Leisure Select from £269. The trains run until 14 April.

EWS operate scrap trial from Brierley Hill

EWS ran a trial working of containerised scrap from Brierley Hill to Southampton Western Docks on 14 February using a rake of FCAs worked in from Scunthorpe earlier in the morning.

Class 66/0 No. 66187 was provided as motive power for the train, which is understood to have been a successful trial. The full consist comprised 18 FCAs and the journey south was routed via Worcester, Stroud, Swindon and Didcot.

ABOVE: **Class 66/0 No. 66187 is seen easing the front portion of the loaded train out of the Black Country scrap terminal in order to set back and couple to the remaining wagons prior to departure.** *Don Gatehouse*

Hitachi and SNCF join forces

At the Railtex exhibition on 21 February, an agreement was signed at the Hitachi Europe stand between Hitachi and SNCF International for consultancy services on the CTRL-DS project.

The agreement is for the integration and validation of the TVM on-board signalling equipment on the Class 395 'Javelin' units and is the first time that the two companies have joined forces.

The first two Class 395s have now been built and have been tested by Hitachi in Japan. They are due to arrive through Southampton Docks in August, before being transferred, likely to be under the cover of darkness, to the new Hitachi depot at Ashford.

A 'dynamic' new livery will be unveiled on the 'Javelin' EMUs during August.

£6,000

£11,000

£6,000

£100

£14,200

£110

£1,500

£460

£2,000

£1,600

£370

£200

£500

£520

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ABOVE: **The unique Medite-liveried Class 66/7 No. 66709 passes Banbury North on 20 February with the 10.30 Kineton - Eastleigh move conveying eight Mk2 coaches.** Ken Brunt

Network Rail investigates improvements for Cotswold Line

Following a series of meetings with stakeholders and regional MPs this week, Network Rail has announced that it is to investigate the options for improving train services on the Cotswold Line between Oxford and Worcester.

A feasibility study will examine options for improving train performance and allowing an hourly service along the route. Large sections of track were singled in the 1970s and today only 11 miles of double track remain on the 51 mile route.

The route is single track for the 14 miles between Wolvercot Junction (Oxon) and Ascott-under-Wychwood and the 26 miles between Moreton-in-Marsh and Norton Junction (Worcs). The sole surviving double track section being the 11 miles between Ascott-under-Wychwood to Moreton-in-Marsh.

The feasibility study will examine:

- Possibilities of redoubling some or all of the three single line sections of track between Oxford and Worcester.
- Line speed improvements to reduce journey times and allow a more flexible timetable for passengers.
- Implications for stations - for example requirements for new platforms, footbridges and DDA compliance.
- Signalling improvements necessary to support the redoubling options.
- The capability of the route to handle rail freight.

Robbie Burns, Network Rail's Route Director said: "Network Rail is committed to growing the railway in Britain, and we are well aware of the aspirations of passengers and stakeholders along the Cotswold Route. This study is important and will provide us with the necessary detail to make informed decisions on what options are possible, and affordable."

The study, which is being funded by Network Rail and is expected to cost around £150,000, is expected to report in Autumn this year. Any final decision on what improvements will be implemented will be based up on the cost, deliverability and value for money of each option.

Implementation of the recommendations would be delivered by 2010, subject to securing the necessary funding.

BELOW: **Southern-liveried Class 455/8 No. 455808 is pictured at Kensington Olympia on 18 February, awaiting departure time as the 15.18 Kensington Olympia-Clapham Junction service. The line north from Olympia was blocked to electric traction and as a result Silverlink was unable to operate its own service, Southern providing a half-hourly service to compensate. On any occasions that this happens, a Class 455 is normally the booked traction, as the units provide a quicker turn-round than the Class 377 'Electrostars'.** *Richard Owen*

News In Brief

- Ilford is the latest station to be brightened up as part of a £450,000 investment programme for 'one' commuter stations in London. Passengers will notice much improved lighting overall and new 'one' signage both inside and out.

- Atos Origin, an international IT services company, has been awarded a new contract by GNER to develop, implement and support an internet retailing system for rail tickets. There are already a significant number of advanced purchase sales made through the net, and the goal now is to further move the walk-up, tele-sales and corporate customers from traditional ticket purchase methods to a web-based system, yielding significant economies for train operators such as GNER. The service will be launched later this year and is designed to be simple and transparent to use.

- The £14 million project by Network Rail to restore Leven Viaduct in south Cumbria has won the Merit Award for Engineering Excellence in the Institution of Civil Engineers North West Region, beating off stiff competition from among other completed schemes such as Liverpool South Parkway station and the M60 junctions 5 to 8 widening scheme. Particular reference was made of how an innovative track and gantry system was erected on the 49-span viaduct over the Leven Estuary to lift out the old viaduct deck and bring in the new steel deck units. This halved the time originally envisaged for the project, which, of course, was delivered on time and within budget. The Merit Award recognises and encourages excellence and innovative concepts in Civil Engineering practice within the ICE North West Region.

ABOVE: GB Railfreight Electro-Diesels Nos. 73209 *Alison*, 73205 *Jeanette*, 73204 *Janice* & BR blue-liveried No. 73208 *Kirsten* power past Prune Hill level crossing between Virginia Water and Egham, on 19 February, with an Eastleigh to Hoo Junction light engine move, after weekend engineering work. *Chris Nevard*

News In Brief

■ First Great Western is offering a £5,000 reward after what is believed to be a large brick smashed through the driver's cab window of the 19.15 Paddington-Swansea HST at Taplow on 8 February. The incident occurred around 19.45 when the object was thrown from the station overbridge. It smashed through the driver's window, showering him with glass. Although luckily he uninjured, the driver was unable to continue the journey and was relieved at Maidenhead. The train was taken out of service and moved to Old Oak Common. Passengers were detrained at Maidenhead and caught the next available service some 15 minutes later.

■ Network Rail has announced that it has now lifted the ban it had placed on Carillion Rail in August last year from tendering for new rail projects, the ban having been imposed because of concerns of a deteriorating workforce safety record. Carillion and Network Rail have since worked together to introduce an action plan of remedial measures, allowing the company to again bid for new tenders.

Nameplate auction

Following the success of its first nameplates auction in November last year, Freightliner has announced that a second round of nameplate sales from decommissioned locomotives has now begun.

The plates are *The London School of Economics, The Industrial Society, Johnson Stevens Agencies* and *Aldaniti*. The auctions will run for two months with bidding closing on 1 May.

Readers interested may table their offers in the form of a sealed bid on Freightliner's website on: www.freightliner.co.uk/merchandise/auction/auction.asp - click here

Wi-Fi completed

GNER has completed the installation of wireless internet on its entire train fleet.

All 41 of GNER's electric and HST trains now have Wi-Fi on board, offering passengers the ability to surf the internet along the whole ECML.

The news means GNER now operates the world's biggest fleet of wireless internet equipped train carriages, and Britain's first all Wi-Fi train fleet.

Coming soon - the latest DVD addition to the 'Traction' series…

NEW

TRACTION 2006 - Part 2

Programme number 23 in the highly-acclaimed TRACTION series is once again packed with an astonishing assortment of locomotive workings as well as featuring all the major developments in the current motive power scene. Here's what's in store in what's guaranteed to be another action-packed addition to the series…

FREIGHT TRAFFIC & TRACTION: Double-headed Class 56s on Fastline's Doncaster-Grain containers, 87 012's last main line working, 37 405 on the Healey Mills-Clitheroe coal, 47 145 hauling a rake of 60 PGA wagons, triple-headed Class 31s on the FM Rail coal trial from Daw Mill to Rugeley power station, 60 038 makes a rare visit to Aberdeen, 87 022 working GBRf's Hams Hall-Felixstowe intermodal, 37 406 works the Sinfin tanks, 47 815 + 47 769 hauling the Trafford Park-Southampton Freightliner, 37 406 with a rake of HTA coal hoppers, 37 248 working the diverted Willesden-Shieldmuir mail, re-painted Riviera Class 47s on hire to DRS for nuclear flask traffic.

PASSENGER TRACTION, RAILTOURS & SPECIALS: Class 37s bow out on Scotrail's West Highland sleepers…and then make a swift return, Class 87's return on Virgin West Coast services, 47 828 and 47 714 on the Penzance sleepers, 37 410 working the last weekday loco-hauled Rhymney-Cardiff commuter train, Virgin's 57 313 rescuing a failed FGW HST at Exeter, Class 50s on Arriva service trains to Fishguard and Llandindrod Wells, 2 HST power cars 'back-to-back' hauling a complete HST set, Arriva's 'bubble car' DMU on the Cardiff Bay branch, 40 145 breasting Dainton summit, 55 022 *Royal Scots Grey* on its test run and two charter trains, 33 025 + 33 029 on the Cambrian returning from Aberystwyth, 37 248 deputising for steam in the Esk Valley, the return of D1015 *Western Champion* in maroon livery.

THERE'S ALSO: 20 096 + 20 905 on a 'one' Anglia stock move to Norwich, DRS' 37 029 on the Royal Scotsman, 60 019 hauling four Class 86s away from Immingham, Class 31s on the vintage 'Queen of Scots' to Royal Ascot, DRS Class 20s star in the autumn leaf-fall season, 50 012 *Benbow* towing Arriva's 'bubble car' DMU from Crewe to Cardiff, two GBRf Class 73's sandwiched between two snowploughs, French returnee 20 228 in CFD livery working at Barry Island, the return to traffic of 33 116 at the GCR, 37 905 on Dartmoor and 47 004 at Embsay.

Like its predecessors in this series, this action-packed programme will have a variety of locomotive classes to suit all tastes - accompanied by a lively and informative commentary from David Maxey. TRACTION 2006 - Part 2 will be released on DVD at the end of February priced at £19.95. To order your copy, either call our Credit Card Hotline on 01753 545888 or send a cheque or postal order to the address below:

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Network Rail's High Output Track Renewal System

Special Report and Photographs by Chris Perkins

Taunton Fairwater Yard has become the West of England High Output Operations Base for Network Rail.

The site has been redeveloped at a cost of £31.7 million from disused sidings originally laid during World War II.

Work began in January 2006 and the base became fully operational in January 2007. A total of 4,750 metres of track were replaced and 14 sets of points installed, most of which came from the High Output test site at Margam.

All buildings on the site are of modular construction and the whole operation can be moved if needed to a new operations base in the future.

Taunton is the current home of the High Output Track Renewal System (HOTRS) which comprises 4 units; the High Output Ballast Cleaner (HOBC) was built by Plasser & Theurer of Austria and is half-a-mile long, weighs 3,000 tonnes, generates 1,000 tonnes of spoil per shift and requires 26 engineers to operate the systems.

The High Output Track Renewal Train (HOTRT) can also be up to half-a-mile in length, depending upon the configuration. The HOTRT also weighs 3,000 tonnes but requires up to 35 engineers to operate the onboard systems. The main operating plant was built by Matisa of Switzerland and the specialised wagons by W.H. Davis of Mansfield, UK.

TOP: A general view of the west end of Taunton Fairwater Yard, with the Ballast Cleaner (HOBC) on the left, the Track Relaying Train (HOTRT) in the center and the Ballast Regulator on the right.

ABOVE RIGHT: Part of the HOBC is the spoil collection area, where used ballast from the trackbed is graded before bring transferred into the overhead conveyor belt for movement to one of the wagons, or it is cleaned and returned to the track.

RIGHT: The tamping operators postion on the Plasser & Theurer Combined Tamper & Dynamic Track Stabiliser, No. DR73114. The control position is located low down, so that the operator has a clear and uninterrupted view of what is happening at the 'sharp end' of the machine.

ABOVE: The main plant end of the Track Replacement Train (HOTRT). When in operation it always works from the left to the right.
BELOW: The main operator's console at the 'A' end of Plasser & Theurer Combined Tamper & Dynamic Track Stabiliser No. DR73114.

A combined Tamper & Dynamic Track Stabiliser together with a Ballast Regulator, both built by Plasser & Theurer, complete the equipment line up.

The HOTRS continuously exchanges rails and sleepers as part of a production line process and up to 500-metres of track can be replaced each night. This allows for work to be undertaken in short possessions reducing the need to close the railway for long lengths of time, reducing the impact on passengers.

Typically the HOBC & HOTRT spend approximately two hours working in the possession, the rest of the time being a 24-hour cycle spent travelling to and from the work site, replenishing materials and maintaining equipment back at base.

The equipment was specially designed by Network Rail for use in UK conditions and a contract to operate and maintain the system has been let to First Swietelsky. The HOTRS was recognised at the National Rail Awards 2006 as the winner of the 'Innovation of the Year' award

The West of England mainlines have been identified as a national priority for the High Output System for at least the next three years on the Swindon–Bristol, Bristol–Exeter and Reading–Taunton routes.

This will be the greatest concentration of track renewal on the Western Region since the upgrade for HSTs and 125mph running in the 1970s.

Following completion of the West of England project, the work will transfer to the Bristol–Birmingham Cross Country route.

As part of the project, Network Rail is working closely with the West Somerset Railway; spoil from the HOBC is taken daily to a work site at Norton Fitzwarren where it is being used as 'fill' to construct a turning triangle for the West Somerset Railway's locomotives and stock. The ability to take the HOBC onto West Somerset metals has avoided hundreds of lorry movements on local roads.

Proof that not everything is the latest high technology, Cambrian Transport Ltd have provided the yard shunting locomotive at Taunton Fairwater in the shape of preserved Class 73 Electro-Diesel No. 73133, as illustrated in our last issue.

News In Brief

■ On 18 February, Virgin Trains used Class 57/3 No. 57312 to drag Class 221 'Super Voyager' No. 221109 on the 11.25 Plymouth - Plymouth crew training trip.

■ Having been removed from storage at Immingham several weeks ago, Class 86/2s Nos. 86218 and 86232, both still carrying faded Anglia Railways colours, were moved from Carlisle Kingmoor to Glasgow Works on 22 February.

■ West Coast Railway Company's Class 47/4 No. 47826 was used to haul ex-FM Rail Class 47s Nos. 47145 and 47712 from Clapham Junction and No. 47709 from East Ham to Carnforth on 21 February. WCRC advises that the locomotives are to be stored at Carnforth.

TOP LEFT: One of what is believed to be only three surviving Class 20s still wearing RFS grey livery, following the exploits of several members of the class on construction trains in the Channel Tunnel, is pictured in a scrapyard at Kingsbury. RFS No. 2019, ex-BR No. 20145, looking in a very derelict condition awaits its fate on 17 February. *Brian Garrett*

MIDDLE LEFT: The West Somerset Railway will shortly take delivery of a recently obtained Mk3 Buffet car. The vehicle No. 10205, which has been donated by Portebrook Leasing, has been repainted into brown and cream colours at Alstom's Oxley depot. The coach will be in-use for the Spring Steam Gala at Minehead station on 17/18 and 22-25 March. *Paul Conibeare/WSR*

MIDDLE LEFT INSET: The West Somerset Railway logo on the coach side. GWOT

LEFT: Network Rail's recently obtained multi-purpose stoneblower No. 80302 is currently visiting the Severn Valley Railway, seen here stabled at Highley. The machine, built by Harsco Track Technologies, is a stoneblower for dealing with switch and crossing areas. Trials have also seen No. 80302 in use on the East Lancashire Railway. *Neil Walking*

English Electric for SRPS tour line-up

Class 40 No. 40145 and 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* feature heavily in the Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) 2007 railtour programme, which gets under way in May with tours to the West Highland destinations of Fort William and Mallaig from Glenrothes on 5 May and Plockton and Kyle of Lochalsh from North Berwick on 26 May.

Both these tours feature as yet unspecified traction. However, in June SRPS have two tours with English Electric power, commencing on 9 June with No. 40145 from Darlington via the Tyne Valley to Ayr and Stranraer. This is followed by an overnight run from Linlithgow to Inverness on 22 June and a day in the Far North visiting both Wick and Thurso on 23 June. Motive power will be No. 40145 and No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* double-heading to Inverness and then top and tailing beyond.

On 25 August the East Lancashire based No. 40145 has charge of a Carlisle-Fort William outing followed by the same locomotive covering a circular tour from Linlithgow on 22 September, outwards via the Highland mainline to Inverness, then across to Aberdeen and back along the east coast via Dundee taking in both the Tay and Forth Bridges for good measure. Sandwiched between these tours is an 8 September outing to Plockton and Kyle of Lochalsh from Ayr with as yet unspecified traction.

The SRPS's remaining two tours feature No. 55022, commencing on 6 October to Oban from Dundee, again using both Tay and Forth Bridges.

Finally, on 7 December the company head south of the border to Lincoln, for the Christmas Market, from Linlithgow picking up at key stations through to Durham. For many, a 'Deltic' back on the East Coast will have as much (if not more) attraction than the market!

ABOVE: Class 47s are not a regular sight at London Fenchurch Street! On 20 February, Class 47/4 No. 47853 *RAIL Express* is pictured at the London terminus in 'top and tail' mode with No. 47839 on the 19.13 charter to Southend for the 'Railfreight Groups Conference'. *John Waddington*

K1 in the North-East

The North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Society (NELPG) plan to run a special train on 19 May to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 'SLS Three Dales' tour which ran on 20 May 1967.

The tour will commence at Newcastle and proceed diesel-hauled to Battersby, where 'K1' No. 62005 will take over to run back to Middlesborough. The train will then reverse with the diesel leading via Redcar to Crag Hall, where another reversal takes place for a steam trip to Seal Sands via Redcar, Stockton and Billingham. Bishop Auckland is the next destination, diesel hauled, travelling via Eaglescliffe.

At Bishop Auckland, No. 62005 again takes over for the run via Darlington and the ECML to Redmire via Northallerton and Leyburn. The day is completed with the run back to Newcastle Central diesel-hauled. The train is limited to 9-coaches with all seats at £45. For more details go to www.nelpg.org.uk.

The Week Ahead

Prior to the weekend, two significant tours are booked to operate on 1 March.

Most appropriately for St. David's Day, Past Time has Didcot-based 'Castle' No. 5051 *Earl Bathurst* operating out of Swansea for a run up the South Wales mainline, picking up at key stations to Cardiff and Newport prior to a run to London Paddington via Swindon. The return is now diesel-hauled throughout.

The same day, Hertfordshire has a novel luncheon excursion from London Cannon Street to London Victoria, entitled 'The London Bridges Lunch'. The exercise is to cross the River Thames as many times as possible in an afternoon. The route is via Woolwich, Erith, Crayford, Bexley, Lewisham, Clapham Junction, Tooting and Wimbledon. The train then heads for the Kingston and Richmond bridges to get back to Clapham Junction. The route back to Victoria is circuitous, using Chelsea, Barnes and Grosvenor bridges.

Moving to the weekend, there are two more classic tours to enjoy featuring heritage traction. The Class 40 Preservation Society's Class 40 No. 40145 leads the way for Pathfinder heading its 'Welsh Central Liner II' from Crewe, via Stoke-on-Trent and Derby to Birmingham before heading for South Wales and the Central Wales Line for a break at Llandrindrod Wells. The return runs via Shrewsbury's Abbey Foregate curve and Telford to Birmingham New Street and back to Crewe as per the outward routing.

Railway Touring Company head east, starting diesel-hauled from King's Cross to Peterborough, where the NRM's ex-LNER Class V2 No. 4771 *Green Arrow* attaches to run via Grantham and Newark before diverging from the ECML for Lincoln and a break at Market Rasen.

The train then continues via Barnetby to gain access to the Immingham loop at Ulceby. The mainline is regained at Marsh Junction to continue, again via Barnetby and Gainsborough Central and the old Great Central route to Sheffield. The train is routed via Rotherham Central and the site of the long-closed Sheffield Victoria station and then towards the Pennines as far as Deepcar where the steam-section terminates. A diesel takes over for the return along Great Central metals to Retford on the ECML, where *Green Arrow* is detached, before the train returns to London King's Cross.

Mainline farewell for *Bradley Manor*

What could well be the last mainline appearance of an ex-Great Western 'Manor' class locomotive could take place on 28 March, when Past Time Rail operate 'The Severn Valley Wanderer', which is due to be hauled by SVR-based 'Manor' No. 7802 *Bradley Manor* from Bristol Temple Meads to Kidderminster.

Another feature is that the charter originates at Bridgnorth and picks up at Bewdley, Kidderminster and Worcester Shrub Hill on the outward leg, and will be diesel-hauled throughout to Bristol Temple Meads via Cheltenham.

On the return, it is steam-hauled from Temple Meads via the North & West Route to Hereford, where it diverges for a run through the Malvern Hills via Ledbury, Worcester Foregate Street and Droitwich to Kidderminster. A diesel will cover the last leg from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth.

The cost of fitting On-board Train Monitoring & Recording equipment is cited as the main reason for not pursuing a mainline career for the locomotive beyond 31 March, after which date such equipment is mandatory on steam traction.

Also, in recent years the locomotive has not had much mainline work, and particularly, efforts to get the 'Manor' back to its old stamping ground on the Cambrian have met with much frustration and disappointment.

As reported last week, *Bradley Manor* is due to work to Minehead on 10 March on a tour from Birmingham New Street in order to feature in the West Somerset Railway's Spring Steam Gala.

ABOVE: Having arrived with the second leg of Pathfinder Tours 'Bard 'n' Birch' charter from Bristol Temple Meads, celebrity Class 37 No. 37425 *Pride of the Valleys* makes an unusual sight at Stratford-upon-Avon station. The charter, which also employed BR green-liveried No. 37411 *Caerphilly Castle*, also visited Birch Coppice, near Tamworth, and Quainton Road, before returning to Bristol. Having worked the ECS to Didcot Yard the following day, both Type 3s then returned to Margam LIP for storage. *Peter Tandy*

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 the winter period, our weekly railtour listings have been extended to provide details for the next four weeks.

Date	Operator	Traction	Route
24 Feb	Past Time Rail	D1015	London Waterloo-Clapham Junction-Woking-Salisbury-Okehampton and return
24 Feb	RTC	71000	Manchester Victoria-Wigan-Preston-Lancaster-Carnforth-Barrow in Furness-Sellafield-Workington-Whitehaven-Carlisle (break/rev)-Shap-Carnforth and return
25 Feb	VSOE	EWS Cl.67	From London Victoria (Brunch Circular)
25 Feb	VSOE	EWS Cl.67	From London Victoria (Afternoon Tea Circular)
01 Mar	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xRiveria 47	London Cannon Street-Woolwich-Erith-Crayford-Bexley-Lewisham-Clapham Junction-Wimbledon-Kensington Olympia-Acton-Chiswick-London Victoria
01 Mar	Past Time Rail	5051	Swansea-Cardiff-London Paddington (break/rev)-Didcot Parkway-(and return)
03 Mar	Past Time Rail	6024	Bristol TM-Newport-Cardiff Central-Bridgend-Neath-Carmarthen and return
03 Mar	Pathfinder Tours	40145	Crewe-Stoke-Derby-Burton-B'ham NS-Jersey Marine-Llandrindrod Wells and return
03 Mar	RTC	4771	'The Great Central': (London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Huntingdon)-Peterborough-Lincoln-Barnetby-Immingham-Gainsborough Central-Deepcar-(and return)
03 Mar	Northern Belle	EWS Class 67	Manchester-Crewe-Birmingham International-London and return
10 Mar	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xRiveria 47	London KX-Peterborough-Doncaster-Wakefield Kirkgate-Hebdon Bridge (break)-Todmorden-Manchester Victoria-Staleybridge-Huddersfield-Wakefield & return
10 Mar	Past Time Rail	7802	(Birmingham NS-Kidderminster-Worcester Foregate Street-Ledbury)-Hereford-Bristol TM-Minehead (break)-Bishops Lydeard-(and return)
10 Mar	Pathfinder Tours	2xDRS Cl.20	Crewe-Bham New St-Nuneaton-Leicester-Peterborough-Ipswich (rev)-Leiston/Sizewell (to NR limit)-Saxmundham-Cambridge-Peterborough and return
10 Mar	RTC	71000	'The Cumbrian Coast Pullman': (Leeds-Huddersfield-Manchester Victoria-Wigan)-Preston-Sellafield-Workington-Carlisle (break/rev)-Shap-Preston-(and return)
17 Mar	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xRiveria 47	Southend Central-Basildon-Upminster-Barking-Stratford-Bath-Bristol TM and return
17 Mar	Hertfordshire	2xRiveria 47	Guildford-East Croydon-Kensington Olympia-Finsbury Park-York and return
17 Mar	Past Time Rail	6201	(Euston-Coventry-B'ham Int-Crewe)-Preston-Shap-Carlisle-Shap-Preston (and return)
17 Mar	RTC	60009	London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Peterborough-York and return
17 Mar	Vintage Trains	6024	Solihull-Dorridge-Didcot (break)-Swindon-Worcester Shrub Hill-Kidderminster-Birmingham Snow Hill-Tyseley Warwick Road
18 Mar	Heartland Rail	CR Class 47	From Gloucester (Luncheon Circular)
22 Mar	Hertfordshire (BP)	2xRiveria47	London Euston-Blackburn-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle-Shap-Crewe and return
24 Mar	Compass Tours	tbc	Carlisle-Crewe-Holyhead and return
24 Mar	Hertfordshire	2xRiveria47	Sheffield-Burton-Tamworth-Barnt Green-Minehead and return
24 Mar	RTC	60009&71000	60009:Mill Hill B'way-Bedford-Melton Mowbray-Toton-Barrow Hill-York and return

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 Railway Herald
RAILTOUR LISTINGS

Our website at www.railwayherald.com provides one of the most comprehensive listing of all known UK railtours for the rest of 2006 and throughout 2007 available on the web.

DID YOU KNOW?
That the contact details and links to the appropriate websites for all mainline railtour operators are available through our website?
Click Here!

Please remember to mention *Railway Herald* when responding to railtour companies

EWS Class 37s go walkabout!

ABOVE: With a lack of Class 37 motive power for Pathfinders 'Bard 'n' Birch' tour (see Railtour section) Nos. 37411 and 37425 were temporarily reinstated before returning to store a few days later. Prior to their move back to Margam for store, the two celebrity Class 37s are pictured on Didcot stabling point. *David Paylor*

MIDDLE: EWS-liveried Class 37/4 No. 37422 *Richard Trevithick* made a rare foray for the class into Devon on 18 February, being used to work a ballast service for an engineering possession at Totnes. The locomotive is pictured at South Brent. Once work had been completed, the locomotive worked the train back to Westbury. *Phil Bellamy*

RIGHT: Following its exploits in the West Country, No. 37422 *Richard Trevithick* returned to London, via Westbury and Eastleigh! Here the locomotive powers through Kensington Olympia with the Eastleigh Yard to Wembley 'Enterprise' service in tow. The original booked motive power, in the form of Class 67 No. 67018, is dead in tow. *James Welham*

Northampton & Lamport extension

LEFT: The Northampton & Lamport Railway (NLR) has completed its southern extension of track from the viaduct just south of Pitsford Siding to the crossing used by the local riding school and called Riding School Crossing, and is continuing to Boughton Crossing, the hard work during the closed winter months having been undertaken by Graham Peacock and railway volunteers. This will be the southern most extent of the line for the foreseeable future and once the track, complete with run-round loop and loading point is laid, plans are being formulated for both a station and signalbox on the site. The first train on the new section was powered by Class 45/1 'Peak' No. 45118, shown here on the extension with a tool van, a guardsvan and Class 56 No. 56098, the latter being one of the stars of the NLR Spring Gala. *Ian McDonald*

You choose the livery for 31270!

Peak Rail's Railfreight coal-liveried Class 31 No. 31270 is to be withdrawn for a repaint after the line's diesel weekend on 12/13 May.

In association with the loco's owner, Martin Nixon, enthusiasts are to decide the colour scheme into which No. 31270 will be repainted. The choice of livery is: green with small yellow warning panels, green with full yellow ends, BR blue, Railfreight grey, Railfreight red stripe, triple grey with Coal sector markings (as currenty carried – with plaques and cast BR arrows), Mainline Freight blue (as carried by No. 31407), Regional Railways or 'Dutch' (yellow and grey).

You can register your vote by emailing peakrail@peakrail.co.uk or andrewmcoward@aol.com or by clicking this story; please mark subject heading 31270. Alternatively write to 31270 Livery Vote, Peak Rail plc, Matlock Station, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3NA. Voting closes on 15 April.

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New shed for Loughborough?

The Great Central Railway (GCR) has been granted first refusal on the site where it hopes to construct a new motive power depot.

This marks a major step forward for the Loughborough Locomotive Works Project, to enable the former Workington shed to be rebuilt in Leicestershire. The first refusal lasts for a five-year period and is important as detailed plans can now be drawn up, visits made to the site to investigate the ground conditions and work towards obtaining planning permission and the necessary funding started.

The land in question is a former refuse tip to the east of the former Great Central Railway formation. The new shed would be located a quarter of a mile from the current building, which has served for 30 years, but is now surrounded by private housing. Having the right of refusal on the land means the project team can talk with confidence to potential funders about investing in the scheme. Already, the Railway Heritage Trust has pledged a generous £100,000 towards the building costs involved.

Meanwhile, the former Workington shed has been dismantled and components recovered and stored ready for re-use. The new shed will have eight roads capable of housing 16 locos with vastly improved engineering facilities. The railway has launched an immediate appeal for donations, and these can be sent care of the David Clarke Railway Trust to: 1 Leicester Road, Loughborough, LE11 2AE. Alternatively, there is more information on the project on website at www.llwp.org.uk or by clicking anywhere on this story.

The GCR has also announced that Britannia Pacific No 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* has been given a massive step towards re-steaming, the locomotive being re-wheeled at Loughborough during the last few days. Meanwhile, in response to a previous appeal, a manufacturer has come forward to produce 288 roof stays for the firebox and work is now continuing on the boiler. It is hoped that the locomotive will be able to return to action within a year.

BELOW: The Severn Valley Railway held a 1960s day on 17 February. Part of the workings included the pairing of the line's two and three-car Class 108 DMUs on a pair of return workings including a goods wagon! Here the DMUs await departure time with the 11.15 Kidderminster - Bridgnorth service, together with ex-SR four-wheeled parcels van no 1174. *Neil Walkling*

Traction variety for East Lancashire Railway's English Electric day

The East Lancashire Railway held a successful English Electric diesel-running day on 17 February.

The day saw a variety of English Electric-built motive power in traffic on the advertised passenger service.

In action were Class 31 No. D5600, Class 40s Nos. D335 and 40145 and Class 55 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey*. Also operating was 'Thumper' No. 1305.

The railway's next major diesel event takes place on 4-8 July. In addition to the resident locomotive fleet, several visiting engines, mainly from the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway will be at work, including Class 20 No. D8020, Class 26s Nos. D5310 and 26024, Class 37 No. 37025 and Class 52 No. D1015 *Western Champion*.

TOP: Privately owned 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* powers through Burrs Country Park with the 14.50 Bury-Rawtenstall service. On the rear was Class 31 No. D5600.

ABOVE RIGHT: Heading the 14.00 Rawtenstall-Bury, Class 31 No. D5600 passes Little Burrs.

RIGHT: Rolling through the Lancashire countryside between Ramsbottom and Bury is ex-Southern Region three-car 'Thumper' No. 1305, forming the 13.56 Ramsbottom-Bury service.
All: Warren Armstrong

ABOVE: This view of locomotive YDM-4A No. 6144 departing from Tiruthuraipundi Junction with Train No. 861, the 06.45 from Mayiladuthurai Junction, is enhanced by superb bracket signals and the iron clad signal cabin (to the left) that overlooks the main road crossing. Note the green flags held by the signalman and the second man leaning out of the cab. The guard at the rear of the train was also holding a green flag to confirm all was clear. *All: Don Gatehouse*

Conversion to broad gauge continues in south-east India

The network of metre gauge lines in India continues to shrink as the conversion to broad gauge marches forward. *Don Gatehouse* previews some of the remaining metre-gauge action

Tamil Nadu State in south-east India has witnessed a significant share of gauge conversions both completed and commenced across the Indian Railways' (IR) network in the last couple of years.

Current work in progress within Tamil Nadu represents about 27% of the route mileage under conversion across IR overall.

During 2006, Southern Railway recorded a 12% growth in passenger numbers and the conversion of metre gauge (MG) routes to broad gauge (BG) is a key investment initiative in Southern Railway's drive to modernize and upgrade the operational efficiency of its railway

RIGHT: The Cauvery Delta is the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu and is a vast lowland of green paddy fields and groves of coconut and mangrove. The remaining metre gauge line linking Mayiladuthurai with Karaikkudi, some 187km to the south, is expected to have its gauge conversion approved by the Indian Railways' Board in the forthcoming budget plan. Rail passengers are provided with two daily return services over the route and shortly after 09.00 at Tiruthuraipundi Junction, the two morning services cross on their respective journeys. On 3 February, YDM-4A locomotive No.6181 rolls in from the south with train No. 864, the 05.40 from Karaikkudi Junction.

infrastructure to cater for business growth in the 21st century.

As a consequence of the gauge conversion work, by early January the number of surviving MG lines in Tamil Nadu had dropped well into single figures, the principal surviving operational MG routes being well spread across the state.

In the north, Villupuram Junction sees daily services to both Vellore and Tambaram (Chennai). In the coastal region of the Cauvery Delta, Mayiladuthurai has daily passenger services via Tiruvarur to Karaikkudi. While further south, both Madurai, with MG lines to Podanur and Bodinayakkanur and Tirunelveli, with services to Quilon Junction, in neighbouring Kerala, each maintain a toehold on the ever shrinking MG route map.

Southern Railway authorities expect more funds for gauge conversion and doubling to be confirmed when the next Rail Budget is announced at the end of February. With its gauge conversion plans supported by budget approval, Southern Railway anticipates eliminating all MG operations within Tamil Nadu in the next two to three years.

ABOVE: The 134km metre gauge line from Villupuram Junction to Tambaram, on the southern outskirts of Chennai, runs alongside the single line broad gauge route. The metre gauge line is effectively used only for morning and evening 'commuter' services to and from Chennai. Conversion of the MG line will provide enhanced route capacity on this busy passenger corridor that links the major centres of population in Tamil Nadu State. On 8 February, metre-gauge YDM-4A locomotive No. 6150 approaches Chengalpattu Junction at the head of Train No. 849, the 05.30 Tiruvannamlai-Tambaram, via Villupuram Junction.

BELOW: Villupuram Junction has recently lost its metre gauge services to Mayiladuthurai, via Cuddalore, and is now effectively the southern terminus for services from Vellure and Tambaram. On 31 January, YDM-4A locomotive No. 6157 eases around the metre gauge locomotive servicing point as it departs with Train No. 844, the 15.55 service to Vellore Cantonment. The train will serve 16 intermediate stations along the 151km route, and subject to a punctual arrival, reach its destination in four hours 50 minutes.

Ex-Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 0-6-0 No. 957 and Taff Vale Railway 0-6-2T No. 85 approach Mytholmes on 17 February with the 14.50 Keighley - Oxenhope service during the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway Steam Gala weekend. *Kevin Truby*