Railway Herald

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Front Cover:

TOP: Class 390 'Pendolino' No. 390055 is pictured at London King's Cross prior to departing for Edinburgh Waverley with a one-off test run. **William Stubbs**

BOTTOM LEFT: Welcome sight - Southern Railway's unrebuilt 'West Country' Pacific No. 34092 *City of Wells* stands in the yard at Haworth, while undergoing the first of a series of steam tests as it approaches the end of its overhaul. **Kieran Pilsworth**

BOTTOM RIGHT: GBRailfreight Class 66/7 No 66706 *Nene Valley* has charge of the 14:45 Beeston Sims Metals to Cardiff Tidal scrap metal working, as it awaits the road on the goods line adjacent to Burton-on-Trent station on 7th March. **John Tuffs**

Railway Herald

Issue 306 — 14th March 2012

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Any chance of a standardised smartcard?

With its Rail Command paper, the Government has set out its ambitions in several areas.

Alongside dealing with the inefficiencies in the rail industry, one of the areas of interest is promoting the use of smartcard ticketing across the whole of the UK. The principle follows that of the Oyster scheme in London, which although it has its critics, has worked incredibly well. The basis of a pre-pay system of 'top-ups' for travel anywhere on the TfL network as well as regular season tickets provides a simple and easy to use method of travelling for passengers, and given its use across several modes of transport including National Rail, London Underground, DLR, Croydon Tramlink, London Buses and the river services, has quickly become an accepted part of life.

The idea of smartcard technology on National Network services is not, however, a new one, with several companies currently implementing trials or solutions, based around the Government's preferred ITSO technology standard.

In Scotland, ScotRail is currently using the technology for what it calls Intelligent Ticketing on the Edinburgh - Glasgow Queen Street, via Falkirk High route where season tickets are now available using this new form of ticketing.

In the East Midlands, Stagecoach has introduced StagecoachSmart and has installed smartcard readers at 26 stations, allowing season ticket holders to exchange their paper tickets for an electronic travel card on the Sheffield and Nottingham to London St Pancras routes, as well as local services between Mansfield Woodhouse and Nottingham.

Further trials have just been announced in Hampshire as well, where Stagecoach has extended the StagecoachSmart principle to combined rail and bus ticketing. This trial takes the smartcard innovation further, being the first multi-modal application in the UK.

The new pilot involves a small number of South West Trains' season ticket holders travelling between Basingstoke and any smartcard enabled station outside the London area. A rail season ticket and a Stagecoach South Megarider multi-journey bus ticket giving unlimited bus travel in and around the town are stored on one smartcard.

All these moves have to be positive, and can only be seen as proactive, providing the passenger with better, more flexible choices when travelling. However, while it is good that different schemes are all using the preferred ITSO technology, the downside is that each scheme is using a different card. This shouldn't cause too many issues while it is only season tickets that are being dealt with, but once the concept is proven and the smart ticketing technology is rolled out to more ticket types, if we are not careful, as an industry, it is potentially bringing a situation of needing a different type of smartcard for each operator. This, combined with systems such as the East Midlands Trains and South West Trains trials that are using the same technology is fine, but what happens if a franchise passes to a different operator?

Richard Tuplin

Richard Tuplin, Editor

Below: With painting of the Forth Bridge finally finished, the opportunity now exists to view the structure without any scaffolding obscuring the vista, and with the bridge now lit at night, this iconic landmark presents an amazing sight. *Alex Napier*

Don't miss the April issue of *Hornby Magazine*!

On sale March 9th

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Above: After arrival from Edinburgh Waverley, Virgin Trains Class 390 nine-car Pendolino No. 390055 stands in London King's Cross, shortly before 04:30 on 13th March, alongside the more normal traction, Class 91 No. 91116. *William Stubbs*

Nine-car Pendolino trial on East Coast Main Line

Prior to delivery of the new 11-car Class 390 Pendolinos from Alstom's Italian factory, it was suggested that a Class 390 might be used in passenger service by East Coast.

However, such moves were quashed when agreement was reached between Virgin Trains and the Department for Transport that would allow the four new Class 390s to enter traffic with Virgin, prior to the start of the new West Coast franchise.

Nevertheless, behind the scenes work continued within the industry as to whether a Class 390 Pendolino set would be compatible with the infrastructure on the ECML, and the conclusion of that premise was a one-off non-passenger trial of a set on 12th/13th March.

The working utilised one of the latest Class 390s to be delivered, No. 390055, running as a nine-car set, operating south from Edinburgh Waverley to London King's Cross. Virgin Trains' staff drove the train with route conductors from East Coast.

An East Coast spokesman said that the company was "now concluding the desktop study to test our findings in practice, in line with the wider strategic aims of the industry going forward".

STOP PRESS: A video clip of the '390' at York can be viewed by clicking here.

Below: Pendolino No. 390055 rolls to a stand in Platform 9 at York during the early hours of 13th March. *Richard Tuplin*

Charter operators back proposals for larger Tweedbank station

Four operators of charter trains in Scotland have backed proposals for an upgrade of the planned Tweedbank station to accommodate longer trains, bringing additional visitors to the Borders.

The Campaign for Borders Rail has lodged a submission with Scottish Borders Council, which is currently consulting on a planned new location for the station, arguing that its two platforms should be extended from the currently planned six-coach specification for standard ScotRail services to 10 or 11-coach length, allowing up to 500 passengers per train.

CBR Chair, Lorne Anton, said: "In February 2010, the Waverley Route Trust completed extensive research with the Passenger Charter Companies to establish if there was a demand for specialist tourist trains into and out of the Borders. This research established considerable demand and interest from these companies, and working on the experience learnt from other areas visited it was found that they could generate an additional £500,000 per year, to the Midlothian and Borders economies." Now CBR has secured the backing of three key promoters, SRPS Railtours, Compass Tours and The Royal Scotsman, plus charter TOC West Coast Railway, all of which operate charter trains to key Scottish destinations such as Edinburgh and the Highlands.

In its submission to Scottish Borders Council (SBC), SRPS Railtours Commercial Manager, Roger Haynes, said: "SRPS Railtours are not the only operator of special excursions which would hope that the new terminal station at Tweedbank will be designed to provide stabling, run-round and watering facilities for special trains". He continued " I request that you take into account the potential special train market when considering the plans for Tweedbank station. These trains can carry up to 500 passengers and therefore provide a boost to the tourist economy of the areas which are visited."

In 2011 around 150 tourist charter trains were operated in Scotland – the biggest number of tours being run by the luxury land cruise train the 'Royal Scotsman', which has joined SRPS in pressing SBC on the case for an upgraded Tweedbank station. The Prequalification Document for the Borders Railway issued by Transport Scotland 2009, specifically stated that, "[the railway] contractor will be encouraged and may be entitled to generate certain types of secondary revenue, including passenger charter train services to and from the Scottish Borders".

Cylinder damage halts ELR's *Gothenburg*

The East Lancashire Railway's (ELR) Manchester Ship Canal Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 32 *Gothenburg* **sustained cylinder damage while on loan to the Churnet Valley Railway (CVR) during the latter's second 'Day out with Thomas' weekend on 19th February.**

The main body of the cylinder casting between the bores and the base of the smokebox was breached, forcing the locomotive to be withdrawn from traffic.

ELR General Manager, Andy Morris, commented: "*Gothenburg* has now arrived back at Bury, and an investigation into how the damage occurred is being carried out by ourselves and the CVR. We aren't currently able to give an indication as to the full extent of the damage or a method or timescale for repairs". Whatever repair method is used, Mr. Morris advised that it will not be a quick temporary fix, as the locomotive is one of a very small number of approved 'Thomas' stars, it is a valuable source of revenue for the line and the ELR is keen that its reliability is maintained in the future.

The cylinder castings on these locomotives were treated as a consumable item when No. 32 and its classmates Nos. 31 and 67 were in service on the Manchester Ship Canal system, and were simply replaced whenever any serious wear was detected. In preservation, such an option is no longer available and the cylinders of surviving locomotives have on occasion been re-bored and lined.

Class 66/5 No. 66568 passes Swindon Works with a Bristol to Tilbury intermodal service. *Nigel Chalk*

Crossrail Tunnel work commences

The Mayor of London and the Secretary of State for Transport revealed the first two new tunnel-boring machines for Crossrail on 13th March.

Almost 40 years after the new railway was proposed, the first two of eight enormous machines, each 150 metres long and weighing 1,000 tonnes, began their journey to the Royal Oak Portal in West London, where, from next week, they will start tunnelling four miles east to Farringdon, via Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road. The machines are equivalent in size to 14 London buses end to end with enough force to lift over 2,900 London taxis!

When Crossrail opens in 2018, it will increase London's rail-based transport network capacity by 10%, support regeneration across the Capital and the South East, help to secure London's position as a world leading financial centre, and dramatically cut journey times across the city.

Over the next three years, the eight tunnel boring machines will construct a total of 13 miles of twin-bore tunnel under the Capital. The Crossrail route will pass through 37 stations and run for a total of 73 miles from Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west, to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east.

Olympic Extras for EC

East Coast has confirmed that it will operate late-night northbound services from London during the Olympics.

There will be additional services from Monday to Thursday, plus four on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. From the North there will be two early morning services Monday to Friday, with four on Saturdays and Sundays.

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Government sets out to reduce inefficiencies in rail industry, while looking to regional devolution

The Government has set out to reduce above-inflation rises in fares, expand smart ticketing technology and reduce the inefficiency of the rail network.

In a statement to the House of Commons, the Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for Transport said: "The time is right for reform. I believe we are in a good position to build on recent efficiency gains to further improve the performance of the industry – and to improve the passenger experience".

Following the value-for-money study by Sir Roy McNulty last year, which concluded that inefficiency across the railway industry is costing fare payers and taxpayers £3.5 billion-a-year, the new 'Reforming Our Railways: Putting the Customer First' Command Paper outlines how the industry will work in collaboration to reduce the £3.5 billion efficiency gap by 2019, with the savings going towards curbing fare increases, while also investing in rolling stock and better infrastructure, and lessening the industry's reliance on public subsidy.

Network Rail has welcomed the Government's command paper as a serious and comprehensive contribution to the debate about the future of the railway in this country. In particular it says that it welcomes the recognition that, while significant progress has been made both on safety and punctuality in the last decade, there is no alternative to investing constantly in greater capacity and better connectivity to meet the massive increase in passenger and freight traffic, particularly, but not exclusively, in London, where many routes are at, or approaching capacity. Hence its support for HS2. The infrastructure operator also says it agrees that in light of the improvements in performance and the growth in traffic, fundamental restructuring of the industry is unnecessary. Equally, however, it remains committed to working with the Government and the rest of the industry to improve value for money. More can be done to align the incentives of track and train and to provide flexibility for the industry to deliver improved outcomes for rail users in the most efficient way.

Above: DBS Class 66/0 No. 66119 stands at Heworth on the Network Rail line from Newcastle to Sunderland with ballast wagons, as track replacement work progresses on the westbound track on 4th March. *Allan Mckever*

Below: Northern Rail Class 155 No. 155346 approaches Smithy Bridge with the 11:37 service from Leeds to Manchester Victoria, via Bradford Interchange, on 7th March. One of the issues raised by the new Command paper, is whether the control of local rail services should be devolved to the regions, allowing decisions on services to be made at Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) level. *Dave Felton*

The Paper also calls on the Rail Delivery Group to provide leadership to the industry and to respond to the Government's strategic challenges. The Group brings together the owners of Britain's Train Operating Companies, Freight Operating Companies and Network Rail to provide leadership to Britain's rail industry, and was created in May last year, following the call from Sir Roy McNulty for the industry to demonstrate leadership.

Network Rail's Chief Executive, David Higgins, said: "Today's command paper gives us a solid platform on which to continue to carry out that task as well as to contribute, along with our partners in the Railway Delivery Group, to the debate about how we continue

to maximise performance while balancing it with our other objectives of increasing capacity, improving journey time and reducing cost. We look forward to the Government's next contribution to that debate in the high level output specification in July of this year".

Michael Roberts, Chief Executive of the Association of Train Operating Companies, commented that: "Contracts signed between rail operators and Government over the next two years will define how trains are run for the next two decades. The Government must genuinely step back from the detail, give the railways the freedom to run better services at a lower cost and resist increasing the burden of red tape. It is also high time to take a fresh look at fares and ticketing. The way that fares are regulated by the Government has remained largely unchanged since Privatisation, and often no longer reflects how people travel or buy their tickets. Smart ticketing presents a great opportunity to make things easier for passengers and to offer people a more flexible way of travelling".

The command paper also raised the issue of regional control for local rail, by requesting proposals on how this move could be taken forward. In the West Midlands, Centro believes that greater local control can result in better rail services focused on the needs of passengers. The West Midlands rail network is currently operated by London Midland under an eight-year franchise that it signed directly with the Department for Transport in November 2007. However, the announcement could pave the way for future franchises to be controlled locally, something that only two areas, London and Merseyside, currently have the ability to do.

Centro Chief Executive, Geoff Inskip, said: "We believe that having more power over rail services sitting here in the West Midlands can bring real benefits to passengers. As we have seen in Merseyside and London, rail devolution can lead to more investment, more reliable services and networks that better reflect the needs of local economies". The authority also argues that devolution offers the prospect of better integration with trams and buses, and ultimately for London-style smart and simple ticketing across all parts of the public transport network. During the consultation period Northern PTEs, together with Centro, said that they will be further developing the proposals in their respective areas as to how devolution in the North and in the West Midlands would best work in practice.

The full command paper can be downloaded by clicking here.

Above: **One of the contractors checks a capped pile, which is now ready to support the new pre-fabricated platform at Cosford. Note the two parallel rows of capped piles that have been inserted into the embankment.** *John Whitehouse*

Cosford station reopening delayed

The planned re-opening of Cosford station, situated on the Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury line, originally planned for 12th March has been put back until 16th April due to problems encountered in sinking the piles that will support the new platforms.

A total of 106 screw tipped piles have now been drilled into the embankment on which the station is situated to a depth of around six metres. However, despite test bores being undertaken as part of the initial site survey that revealed no problems, it was discovered during the piling work that concrete bases of what is believed to have been part of an earlier station lighting system had been left in the embankment at a depth of around three metres. These obstructions affected the insertion of about half of the new piles, which meant that the concrete debris needed to be removed prior to completing the piling work.

Consequently, the station rebuilding has slipped behind a schedule that was already very tight due to the work being undertaken in a four-hour window during the night when trains were not running. All the piles are now in situ, and each has been capped to form a base to support the new platforms, which are already on-site in a prefabricated form. The only retained part of the old station, which was constructed virtually entirely of wood, and opened by the Great Western Railway in 1938, are the concrete piers that supported the old waiting rooms, and which will in turn perform the same task for the new station, the only difference being that the old wooden waiting rooms will be replaced by all glazed shelters supported on a steel frame.

The station serves the RAF base at Cosford that surrounds the station as well as the nearby Aviation Museum, which is one of the principal visitor attractions in the area.

New look Peterborough on display

Computer generated artists impressions of how the new concourse will look at Peterborough station have gone on display to passengers.

The work is part of a £3 million initial upgrade that will be followed by the £43 million platform and infrastructure revamp. The work on the station concourse, which is expected to be completed by May, will result in a more attractive station frontage, as well as a larger concourse area with new train time boards, customer information area and automatic ticket machines. The second stage of the upgrade will involve creating new platforms, others extended, four new lifts installed on individual platforms and improvements made to waiting areas. New toilets will also be built on every platform, prior to completion in December next year.

Heathrow Express reveals £16 million new look

On 7th March, Heathrow Express (HEx) revealed the result of a £16 million investment, in a year where London takes centre stage with the Olympics.

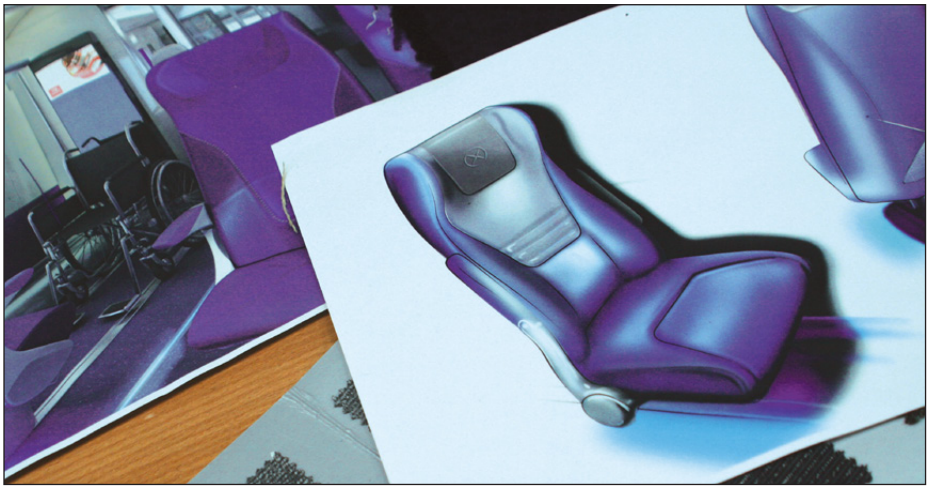
Now in its 15th year, HEx is introducing a new brand, corporate colours, staff uniforms and refurbished and higher specification rolling stock, the investment meaning that HEx will raise service standards, comfort and innovation. With partners including the leading names of Siemens, Designhouse, Interfleet, Axminster and No Uniform, the project has been steered by the senior management team at HEx, with the final stages overseen by new Managing Director, Keith Greenfield, who joined from BAA in November 2011.

The roll-out will be undertaken in stages with the introduction of the upgraded train on 26th April. The majority of the total investment has been committed to the development of the fleet, focusing on the exterior and interior of the trains with the prime objective of increasing customer satisfaction. Driving cab improvements have also been undertaken to ensure an enhanced working environment and the continuation of high safety standards. In July, the new uniforms will be introduced, and both the Airport and Paddington station ticket offices and signage will be re-branded. Technological developments including website functionality, mobile apps and other brand hardware have also been developed to make the overall experience of using Heathrow Express both streamlined and customer focused.

Heathrow Express employs 460 people, and carries an average of 16,000 passengers a day. The service is a wholly owned subsidiary of BAA, which is owned by FGP TopCo Limited, an international consortium that is led by Grupo Ferrovial. The TOC operates from approximately 05:00 until 23:30 daily, with trains running every 15 minutes. It has two stations at Heathrow, Central serving terminals 1,2,3, and Heathrow Terminal 5. From Paddington it takes 15 minutes to reach Terminals 1 & 3, 25 minutes to Terminal 4, and 21 minutes to Terminal 5

A nine-car train has a capacity of 414 seated, with an eight-car train having seats for 350. The service operates two ticket classes, Express class and First Class. The service has a 94% reliability rating, and comprises 66% business passengers and 34% leisure use.

Below: Artists impression of how the new seats on HEx will look. *Heathrow Express*



Class 56s make final journey to Kingsbury

The recent sale of Class 56 locomotives by DB Schenker has seen several locomotives moved to the scrapyard.

These included Nos. 56032 56058 and 56096 that were moved to Kingsbury, and Nos. 56018, 56060 and 56081 that have moved to Burton-on-Trent for possible re-use.

Below: Colas Rail Class 66/8 No. 66848 approaches Lea Marston on 12th March, hauling Class 56s Nos. 56081, 56060, 56090 and 56104 en route from Crewe Diesel Depot. The latter two locomotives were detached at Kingsbury, with the remaining two being taken to Burton-on-Trent for repairs. *Jack Boskett*

Caledonian Sleeper promotion

ScotRail undertook a marketing campaign on 9th March to promote the ability to board the 'Caledonian Sleeper' in Fife.

Inverkeithing station staff member Willie Cowan joined promotional team members, Kerry-Ann Quinn and Dannine Stenhouse by dressing in pyjamas, sleeping gowns and nightcaps to greet morning commuters at both Kirkcaldy and Inverkeithing stations.

They then took to the streets of both towns to distribute hundreds of leaflets about the benefits of the 'Caledonian Sleeper' service. The service operates six days a week, Monday to Friday, plus Sunday and connects Aberdeen, Inverness, Fort William, Edinburgh and Glasgow with London.

New look for upgraded Billericay station

Now operated by Greater Anglia, Billericay station was officially opened on 9th March following a £1.4 million National Stations Improvement Programme.

The improved facilities at the station include a new booking hall and ticket office, which now faces the forecourt, with an additional ticket window and adjustable-height counter for disabled passengers, new self-service ticket machines, a cash point and provision for a new retail outlet have also been provided.

Outside, the station now features an improved forecourt area with a dedicated taxi-rank, drop-off and set-down areas, better access for pedestrians, cyclists and those using local bus services from the station.

On the London-bound Platform, new waiting shelters have been provided and across the station, improved signage, lighting, CCTV and more secure fencing has been installed.

Above: The new exterior to Billericay station on opening day.

Below: The new bright, airy and spacious concourse and ticket office that is now open to the public. *Both: Antony Guppy*

Below: Class 57/0 No. 57008 leads Class 47/4 No. 47818 and Class 90 No. 90015 as the trio head south through Harrow and Wealdstone on 8th March en route to Norwich. *Stuart Chapman*

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The owner of Henry Wilson Books in Sedbergh has been looking to sell his business following his recent marriage. In a move to reduce stock he has now advised a half price sale over Easter weekend (6th-9th April) details can be found by clicking here.

■ Eurostar has reported continued growth in 2011 with sales revenues up 6% to £803 million and passenger numbers up 2% to 9.7 million year on year. In addition the leisure market is proving resilient and the £700 million fleet investment programme is on schedule. These factors have delivered a preliminary, yet unaudited, net profit for the past year of £20.8 million.

■ GBRf has ceased to use the four DRS Class 20/3s locomotives on the London Underground stock movements. The decision is purely commercial and based partly on the requirement to fit the locomotives with GSM-R, which would have made them unavailable to GBRf for a period. Instead the operator has signed a contract with 20122 Limited for the hire of four privately-owned locomotives to complete the LUL contract.

■ The Local Government and Communities Minister, Carl Sargeant, has confirmed that the Welsh Assembly has awarded £3.5 million to Conwy County Council in order to allow the redevelopment of Llandudno station to proceed. In addition to restoring the buildings, a 128-space car park will be built on the two unused platforms.

■ The Haven Gateway Partnership is offering a new incentive scheme that aims to move 30,000 freight containers off the road and onto the railway at the Port of Felixstowe, by funding smaller haulage firms 30% of their costs if they use the train. The partnership estimates that firms could receive £75 per container.

Above: Class 57/3 No. 57301 stands inside Eastleigh Works on 9th March, having been repainted into Network Rail yellow. The NR Class 57/3s are also having the 'Dellner' couplings removed. Following confirmation that Virgin Trains is to release a further three locomotives back to the leasing company, these are now confirmed as Nos. 57302, 57304 and 57309. All three will be returned to Porterbrook at the end of the month, and are expected to be taken over by DRS, although the company would not comment on the speculation. *Ron Cover*

Improvement work to take place at Redcar and Saltburn

Redcar Central and Saltburn stations are to be upgraded as part of a £650,000 investment.

Originally the work was part of a larger 'Tees Valley Metro' project that required £220 million of Government funding. However, £500,000 will now be spent at Redcar with pedestrian access, new lighting and better CCTV, plus a new access link from the station building and, what is described as a distinctive art feature.

Saltburn will gain £150,000 of investment with upgraded waiting rooms and improved facilities.

Ashford to Hastings line reopens after upgrade work

The railway between Ashford and Hastings has re-opened following a nine-week upgrade to provide more reliable journeys and take the first step towards potentially reducing journey times in the future.

The main element of the work focused on strengthening Ore tunnel, in addition to improving the drainage and repairing lining inside to prevent water seepage. To take full advantage of the track closure, Network Rail also scheduled a wide range of other works to take place at the same time to reduce further disruption in the future and allow better services for passengers in the years to come.

These included renewing the track through the tunnel and around the Ore area, a three-quarter mile of track between Rye and Winchelsea and around one mile between Ashford and Ham Street. This has resulted in old, noisy jointed track being replaced with smooth continuous rails.

Other work undertaken included refurbishment of three sets of points, replacement of rail-over-road bridges at Doleham and Three Oaks, surveys and maintenance of an embankment between Ashford and Ham Street, maintenance of 18 bridges and culverts between Ashford and Hastings, and track improvements (tamping) to enable the future line speed to be increased.

Below: East Coast's HST powercar No. 43316 along with the colourful ex-EMT Mk 3 set, passes south of Royston with the 09:05 Leeds to London King's Cross service on 11th March, which was diverted via Cambridge because of engineering works. *Gary Thomas*

Plans confirmed for London during the Olympic Games

Transport for London (TfL) and the train operating companies (TOCs) serving London have confirmed their plans to ensure that the Capital is kept moving and open for business during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

TOCs have signed up to provide thousands of extra services during the Games - running longer trains and earlier services to ensure that spectators can get to morning events, and additional late-night services to get spectators home at night.

Class 395 Javelin services will ferry an estimated 25,000 people each hour to and from St Pancras International and Stratford International, and the Tube will run around an hour later than normal during the period of the event, with extra services later in the evening and on the busiest days.

Network Rail is suspending all disruptive engineering work on rail routes serving the Games venues around London from the end of June to early September, covering both the Olympic and Paralympic periods. TfL and Network Rail are also suspending all planned weekend engineering closures on the Tube, Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and rail networks for 10 days before the start of the Olympics and until the end of the Paralympics.

These proposals are in addition to the numerous improvements that have been delivered across the various travel networks, and have included further capacity upgrades, the redevelopment of Stratford regional station and additional vehicles on DLR.

Planning is also underway to manage busy Network Rail / London Underground Interchanges such as London Bridge, London Victoria, Charing Cross and elsewhere, and a public awareness campaign urging people to plan their journeys to 'get ahead of the Games' has now been introduced.

Below: A southbound Docklands Light Railway service, formed of B07 stock, led by unit No. 150, calls at Stratford Regional, on the new low-level platforms that serve Stratford International. *Kim Rennie*

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Looking Forward & Looking Back . . .

THE VISIONS RAIL GUIDE 2012

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

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

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

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

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Above: Two of the latest Class 22000 series DMUs entered traffic with Iarnród Éireann on 5th March, Nos. 22053 and 22054 both being employed on the Heuston to Kildare commuter services, after being transferred from Laois Traincare Depot the previous day. No. 22054 is pictued at Clondalkin / Fonthill station on its first day in traffic, with the 08:35 Kildare - Heuston service. *Neil Dinnen*

Larne line rail users group highlights threat of rail cuts

On Tuesday 6th March, the Larne Line Passenger Group (LLPG) held a public meeting at Larne Leisure Centre to highlight the threat of service cuts on its local railway.

Translink's Customer Service Manager, Hilton Parr, said that the line carries 250,000 passengers per year, with a good ridership on 'peak' time trains, although the same cannot be said of the 'off-peak' services, some of which are operating with less than 15 passengers.

Hilton also commented to the passenger group about the number of offers and campaigns that Translink has provided, including a 50%-off voucher that was posted to every household within two miles of the railway. Along with that, Translink has also operated a free service known as 'Try the Train', which allowed passengers to try the new Class 4000 free of charge along the route. NIRailways plan to introduce a new timetable from July this year.

At the meeting, Ken Robinson, MLA for Newtownabbey stressed to the public that the shop-keepers and retail businesses in Larne have a vital part to play in saving the services by attracting shoppers to their town to avail themselves of the retail opportunites.

The LLPG is also currently holding a petition to introduce an additional two semi-express services from Larne to Belfast serving all stops to Carrickfergus. At present the 07:27 and 07:55 from Larne are the only two semi-express services on the inbound journey for this route.

DART driver injured as detonators explode

A DART driver sustained injuries after warning detonators exploded in his bag, while he was driving.

No passengers were injured in the incident that occurred on the 08:00 Greystones to Malahide service, although the driver needed stitches to his hand and was taken to hospital for tests on possible damage to his hearing.

Left: As reported previously in *Railway Herald*, a new service from Limerick to Dublin Heuston has been introduced, that benefits passengers on the Nenagh branch. Here three-car Class 22000 No. 22024 stands at Limerick, shortly before departure of the first 05:15 Limerick - Heuston, via Nenagh, Intercity service on 5th March. *Neil Dinnen*

Farewell to *King Edward I* as end'th approach'eth

One tour above all others grabs the spotlight this week. It is a very special tour, one for both celebration and sadness.

The reason for these mixed emotions? Simple, it is the last run of No. 6024 *King Edward I* under its current boiler ticket, following which the locomotive will be withdrawn for overhaul. The 'King' has always been one of the most popular main line performers, and during the currency of its present ticket celebrated its 80th birthday in 2010. First registered for main line operations in 1990, No. 6024 is now at the end of its third 'ticket', and no doubt looking forward to a fourth certification, which should ensure continued main line operations beyond the end of this decade.

Appropriately, its last run will be over classic 'King' territory, as although Pathfinder's 'Torbay Express' commences at Shrewsbury, the steam section starring the loco starts at Bristol Temple Meads. But instead of dashing off towards Bridgwater, the train instead initially heads east to Bath Spa, before diverging off the Great Western main line at Bathampton Junction to head south via Bradford-upon-Avon to join the West of England main line at Westbury. Then it is 'King' country all the way through to Newton Abbot, via Taunton, Exeter St Davids and the seawall at Dawlish and Teignmouth, for the final few miles to Paignton and Kingswear. The return will have the short but testing climb from Kingswear, followed by an emotional dash along the seawall for a final fling at Whiteball, before returning to Temple Meads by the direct route via Bridgwater. It is of no surprise that the tour has been fully booked for quite some time, and no doubt many will be at the lineside to say farewell, for a while, to this iconic locomotive.

There will still be a few chances to see 'KEI', as final withdrawal is likely to take place later in April. After arrival at Temple Meads on Saturday's charter, No. 6024 will proceed directly to the West Somerset Railway to star in its Spring Gala, which is booked for Saturday and Sunday 17th & 18th March, and then Thursday through to Sunday, 22nd- 25th March. Following which the 'King' is booked for a series of footplate experience courses, prior to having the fire dropped for the last time within the current ticket.

The overhaul will take place at the West Somerset Railway, although the boiler work has been contracted out to Ian Riley at Bury, and the tender will be dealt with separately. It is hoped that the work will be completed in 2-3 years, and following the change of ownership some two years ago, the Royal Scot & General Trust (RSGT) has committed £500,000 towards the overhaul, with any overrun being match funded between the RSGT and the 6024 Preservation Society.

To say the least, it could be said that the last few years have been eventful in terms of the history of No. 6024, and so it is equally pleasing to see that this great locomotive is set for a triumphant farewell, safe in the knowledge that all the necessary ingredients are in place for the overhaul to commence at a pace.

Below: On its penultimate working before withdrawal from main line activities, GWR 'King' 4-6-0 No. 6024 *King Edward I* **powers through Sonning Cutting with 'The Bristolian' charter bound for London Paddington on 3rd March.** *Ken Brunt*

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

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.

Wednesday 14th March 2012

TBC	TBC TBC	London Euston-Watford Junction-Rugby-Water Orton-Kings Norton-Bromsgrove-Cheltenham-Gloucester-Stroud-Kemble-Swindon-Reading-Acton Mail Line-London Euston

Friday 16th March 2012

TBC	TBC TBC	London Euston-Watford Junction-Rugby-Water Orton-Kings Norton-Bromsgrove-Cheltenham - Gloucester-Stroud-Kemble-Swindon-Reading-Acton Mail Line-London Euston
VSOE	2xDBS 67	London Victoria-Reading-Didcot Parkway-Swindon-Kemble-Stroud-Cheltenham Spa return
VSOE (Northern Belle)	2xDRS 47	Liverpool Lime Street-Earlestown-Manchester Victoria-Stockport-Crewe-Stafford-Sutton Park-Landor Street-Camp Hill-Kings Norton-Bromsgrove-Cheltenham Spa & return

Saturday 17th March 2012

Pathfinder Tours	DBS 67 6024 DBS 67	Shrewsbury-Church Stretton-Craven Arms-Leominster-Hereford-Abergavenny-Cwmbran-Bristol TM-Bristol TM-Bath Spa-Westbury-Taunton-Paignton-Kingswear-Newton Abbott-Bridgwater-Bristol TM-Bristol TM-Cwmbran-Abergavenny-Hereford-Leominster-Craven Arms-Church Stretton-Shrewsbury
Railway Touring Co.	2xWCRC 47 70013 2xWCRC 47	Huddersfield-Dewsbury-Leeds-York York-Durham-Newcastle upon Tyne-Berwick upon Tweed-Edinburgh Waverley Edinburgh Waverley-Berwick-Newcastle upon Tyne-Durham-York-Leeds-Dewsbury-Huddersfield
Statesman Rail	2xWCRC 47	Rugby-Birmingham New St-Stafford-Wigan NW-Carlisle-Carstairs-Crianlarich-Rannoch-Fort William
UK Railtours	To be confirmed	London King's Cross-Potters Bar-Peterborough- York-Newcastle-Berwick upon Tweed and return
VSOE	35028	London Victoria-Clapham Jn-Staines-Woking-Guildford-Shalford-Redhill-East Croydon-London Victoria

Sunday 18th March 2012

Statesman Rail	2xWCRC 47	Fort William-Crianlarich-Carstairs-Carlisle-Lancaster-Wigan NW-Stafford-Birmingham NS-Rugby

Wednesday 21st March 2012

Compass Tours	2xWCRC 47	Codsall-Wellington-Shrewsbury-Chester-Warrington BQ-Wigan NW-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Maryport-Ulverston-Carnforth-Preston-Warrington BQ-Chester-Shrewsbury-Wellington-Codsall

Friday 23rd March 2012

Compass Tours	2xWCRC 47	Rugby-Coventry-Bedworth-Tamworth-Stoke on Trent-Crewe-Wigan NW-Blackburn-S&C-Carlisle-Workington-Carnforth-Warrington BQ-Stoke on Trent-Tamworth-Bedworth-Coventry-Rugby & return

Saturday 24th March 2012

Hastings Diesels Ltd	Hastings DEMU	Hastings-London Fenchurch Street-Shoeburyness & return as outwards **POSTPONED**
Pathfinder Tours	2xDRS 37+DRS 66 DRS 66+2xDRS 37 2xDRS 37+DRS 66 DRS 66+2xDRS 37 2xDRS 37+DRS 66 DRS 66+2xDRS 37 2xDRS 37+DRS 66	Crewe-Stafford-Barnt Green-Cheltenham Spa-Bristol Parkway-Newport-Cardiff-Barry-Bridgend-Tondu-Tondu-Aberbaiden-Margam OVE-Port Talbot-Neath-Landore-Cockett-Llandeilo Jn Llandeilo Jn- Gurwen Loop-Pantyffynon-Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen- Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen-Pantyffynon-Swansea District Line-Jersey Marine Jns-Burrows Jn- Burrows Junction-Cwmgwrack branch Cwmgwrack branch-Jersey Marine South Jn Jersey Marine South Junction-Port Talbot-Leckwith Loop-Ninian Park-Cardiff-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Barnt Green-Birmingham New Street-Stafford-Crewe
Railway Touring Co.	2xWCRC 47 70013	Manchester Victoria-Bolton-Preston- Lancaster-Shap-Carlisle-Beattock-Carstairs-Edinburgh Waverley Edinburgh Waverley-Carstairs-Beattock-Carlisle-Shap-Lancaster-Preston-Bolton-Manchester Victoria
Railway Touring Co.	34067	Three Bridges-Hove-Chichester-Fareham-Eastleigh-Salisbury-Westbury-Bath Spa-Bristol TM & return
Vintage Trains	6201 6201 6201+9600 & 7752 9600+7752 & 6201	Solihull-Dorridge-Oxford-Swindon-Bath Spa-Bristol TM Bristol TM-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Bromsgrove (attach banking locomotives) Bromsgrove-Lickey Incline-Barnt Green-Kings Norton-Camp Hill-Saltley - Saltley-Tyseley-Solihull-Dorridge

Wednesday 28th March 2012

Compass Tours	2xWCRC 47	Huddersfield-Hebden Bridge-Todmorden-Rochdale-Stockport-Wilmslow -Crewe-Shrewsbury-Llandrindod Wells-Llandeilo-Pantyffynnon-Swansea District Line-Port Talbot-Cardiff Central-Newport-Abergavenny-Hereford-Shrewsbury-Crewe-Stockport-Rochdale-Hebden Bridge-Huddersfield

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

Railtour Spotlight *by John Whitehouse*

The highlight of the week has to be the final main line working by GWR 'King' No. 6024 *King Edward I* **from Bristol to Kingswear and return, see separate story.**

However, despite *King Edward I* stealing the limelight this week, there is none the less a busy weekend of charters, with the appearance of BR Standard 7MT Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* undoubtedly being the pick of the rest. The Railway Touring Company's 'Heart of Midlothian' provides a one-way charter for the 'Britannia' from York through to Edinburgh, working throughout along the East Coast Main Line. Huddersfield is the starting point, with pick-ups, diesel-hauled, also at Dewsbury, Leeds and York. Diesel-haulage continues throughout on the return, leaving *Oliver Cromwell* in Edinburgh to work south the following Saturday on RTC's 'Auld Reekie' to Manchester Victoria, via the West Coast route.

Also of note is the first train in Compass Railtours 2012 programme on Wednesday 21st March, which picks up from Codsall, via Shrewsbury, Wrexham and Chester, to visit both the Settle & Carlisle and Cumbrian Coast lines. West Coast Class 47 traction will most likely feature.

Above: GWR 'Castle' class 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* **pilots Stanier 'Princess Royal' Pacific No. 6201** *Princess Elizabeth* **through Docker on the WCML at the head of Vintage Trains' 'Shap, Settle & Carlisle' railtour on 10th March. The pair took over the train at Carnforth and worked it to the border city, however No. 5043 completed the return leg via Ais Gill summit unassisted, after No. 6201 failed at Carlisle with a hot tender axlebox.** *Andrew Fowler*

Drama on the Northern Fells for *Princess Elizabeth*

A drama at Carlisle on Saturday did not turn into a crisis when, once again, a Tyseley-based 'Castle' blitzed the Settle and Carlisle with a quite exceptional performance.

The drama arose when 'Princess Royal' No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* was declared a failure at Carlisle after having worked northbound from Carnforth over Shap in harness with 'Castle' No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. The pair had already put on a brilliant performance, including being reported as taking the summit at Shap well into the high 50's with a trailing load of 12-bogies.

However, at Carlisle a hot box on 'Lizzies' tender curtailed any further participation in the Vintage Trains charter. With No. 6201 and its support coach removed from the train, *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* set off alone, still with a heavily-laiden train behind the tender. With West Coast's Ray Churchill on the regulator and Alistair Meanley on the shovel to Hellifield from where just passed fireman Tim Allen took over, with moral support from Bob Meanley and colleague Dean Morris on the footplate, the Castle once again set to, and proved that the northern fells should not be a no-go area for Great Western locomotives.

A further issue to be factored into the equation was that the coaling and watering arrangements had been based on returning to Crewe, and then in light steam diesel-hauled back to Tyseley, as a double-header. With the 'Castle' running alone it would naturally use more coal and water than if working in tandem with No. 6201. However, good time was made to Appleby which was reached around 25 minutes early and where the tender was replenished, and the time in hand was maintained through to Hellifield where further water was taken. The concern was the long section between Hellifield and Crewe, and arrangements had also been made for a further top-up at Mill Hill from a road tanker.

However, it was the coal situation which was to decide matters, as the extra consumption meant that while there was sufficient to make Crewe, it might be a bit tight thereafter, even with the 'Castle' in just light steam behind the diesel. The decision was simple, and West Coast's Class 47 No. 47500 which was at Crewe to hook on for the return south was instead sent north to meet the train at Warrington. All in all, a memorable day; not one which was expected, but very likely everyone aboard will remember vividly, and for all the right reasons!

What of No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*? Well, the hot box received attention at Carlisle and after was considered to be in good enough shape to manage a light engine move to Carnforth for complete repair, and path for the locomotive and support vehicle was arranged, via the Settle and Carlisle. However, the state of the axle box deteriorated en-route and with the potential risk of delaying a service train, the engine and support coach working was terminated at Appleby, where it remained over the rest of the weekend.

The good news is that repairs to the offending axlebox were completed by Monday morning, and the locomotive returned to Tyseley late on Tuesday 13rd March, and will be fit to take its next booked working to Bristol, which includes an assault on the Lickey Incline with a couple of Pannier Tanks for company on 24th March.

Enthusiast market on the horizon for Cheshire Cat

News from Cheshire Cat should produce a positive grin on the faces of a few enthusiasts, as DRS traction is to feature on two of its June tours.

The big news is that a pair of DRS Class 20s are booked throughout on the working from Whitchurch to Canterbury on Saturday 16th June, and to save looking it up, the pick- up points are Wem, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford Central, Codsall, Wolverhampton, Tame Bridge Parkway, Birmingham International and Coventry. It is followed two weeks later with a pair of Class 47s, again from Direct Rail Services and providing the motive power throughout, from Cardiff Central to York and Scarborough on 30th June.

This picks up along the Welsh Marches through to Shrewsbury, and then onwards towards the Pennines via Crewe. This is an interesting development, as it appears that Cheshire Cat is also looking to gain a foothold in the enthusiast market in addition to its ambitions in cornering a useful share of the general market. The only question is - is there room for everybody?

Great Western steam over the Settle & Carlisle line

Above: GWR Castle Class No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcombe* **crosses Arten Gill Viaduct with the returning Vintage Trains 'Shap, Settle and Carlisle' railtour on 10th March.** *Nigel Capelle*

Below: Earlier in its journey, GWR 'Castle' No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcombe* **climbs the final few yards towards the summit of the Settle & Carlisle at Ais Gill on 10th March.** *John Edkins*

VIDEO FOOTAGE

"We are very much open for business" says Spitfire

'Reports of our demise are greatly exaggerated' could well be the message coming from the Taunton headquarters of Spitfire Railtours.

In fact, 'we are still very much open for business' was the firm message from Spitfire's Jo Ford while addressing various rumours concerning the company. She was candid in explaining that the family run concern has undertaken a review of its activities, especially as in the past it has run Spitfire in parallel with their own full time occupations. Now she is to take on the mantle alone as her brothers need to concentrate their attentions elsewhere.

Additionally, Jo Ford also confirmed that Spitfire will still be using the West Coast as its train operating company, and she is in discussions with them to promote a programme of up to six trains during the main part of the year, plus a further two Christmas themed workings. This is a significant reduction from the number of tours operated last year, but represents a realistic total given the changes that have taken place.

With luck, planning the first train of the year will be completed shortly and an announcement should follow soon with a view of it running 'towards the end of April'. As there are still issues to be resolved, the details of the tour remain under wraps for the time being.

Very much not under wraps is the plan for Penzance Mazey Day, which this year is booked for Saturday 23rd June. Spitfire has two tours on the day now agreed with West Coast, and it looks like being a mini English Electric gala as the two railtours heading for the Duchy are scheduled to be hauled either by a pair of Class 50s or a pair of Class 37s, while Pathfinder will also be heading that way with a 'Deltic'. The concourse of Birmingham International should be an interesting place to be around 05:00 on 23rd June, as both Spitfire's Class 50s hauled tour and Pathfinders' 'Deltic' working are booked to start the day at that station. Spitfire's second working to Penzance is with Class 37s, which starts the day at Eastleigh and is booked to work via Salisbury and Westbury through to Bristol, before heading for the West of England. While the three trains offer a lot of capacity, it must be remembered that both Pathfinder and Spitfire filled their three respective workings last year and each of the tours will again be an attractive day out to both the enthusiast and general markets alike.

Spitfire this year is late arriving at the 'railtour table', but if further offerings similar to the Mazey Day charters can be produced, then while 2012 may be quieter than previous years it can, nevertheless, be another successful one.

Below: Raising the echoes through the long closed station at Cumwhinton on the Settle & Carlisle line, BR Standard 7MT Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* heads the Carlisle-Crewe leg of the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' charter on 10th March. *Geoffrey Dingle*

Battle of Britain *Sir Keith Park* to head to Bridgnorth?

It appears likely that the future of rebuilt ex-Southern Railway Battle of Britain class Pacific No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* **will be based in the Midlands rather than the South Coast. To be more precise, if all goes to plan, it will become a regular performer on the Severn Valley Railway.**

The arrangement being negotiated would seem at first to be surprising, as the assumption would be that No. 34053 would become a Swanage Railway regular, following the completion of its restoration by the owners, Southern Locomotives Limited (SLL). However, the Swanage Railway already operates two of SLL's ex-Southern Pacific's, rebuilt West Country No. 34028 *Eddystone* and unrebuilt Battle of Britain No. 34070 *Manston*, which are considered sufficient for its requirements.

Furthermore, the prospective arrival of No. 34053 had led the railway to decide to release one of the Pacifics back to the care of SLL. From choice, because of the work already carried out on each locomotive and that the Swanage team is also familiar with the pair, the retention of *Eddystone* and *Manston* has been requested. SLL acknowledges the excellent care exercised by the Swaanage team in looking after these locomotives, and that the railway does not have a need for a third Light Pacific, and have concurred with the request.

Therefore, with the restoration of 34053 now at an advanced stage at SLL Herston Works, the question is what to do with it? Enter the Severn Valley Railway, which over the past year had experienced problems with its home fleet and had hired in BR Standard Class 9F No. 92212 from the Mid-Hants Railway and later BR Standard Class 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80072 from the Llangollen Railway. The view from Bridgnorth was that it needed to bolster the fleet for 2012 and beyond, and were looking for a suitable locomotive. In fact No. 92212 met the requirements, as it had impressed on its visit last year, but the Bluebell Railway had already laid claim to the loco. Thoughts then turned to a Light Pacific, and ultimately the deal that is now being negotiated. By virtue of the fact the deal is mentioned on SLL's website, the assumption has to be that it is a likely case of when and not if!

If all goes according to plan, *Sir Keith Park* will move directly to Bridgnorth upon completion of the restoration at Herston, and the SVR will undertake its testing, running in and commissioning, at which point it will join the SVR locomotive pool. Additionally, the SVR is understood to have agreed to replicate the planned events to celebrate the restoration of No. 34053, which includes a recommissioning ceremony and special trains operated for the SLL sponsors. It is also understood that *Sir Keith Park* will probably operate under a rolling contract, and there seems to be an expectation that it will certainly be a feature on the SVR through to 2013 or beyond.

Without doubt this appears to be a good deal all-round, the SLL having found a good home for its locomotive, which will also bring in a useful income stream from the hire fees, and the Swanage Railway will get to keep its preferred locomotives and the SVR fill an important gap in its locomotive requirements, as the Battle of Britain should serve them well at the head of the heavy eight-coach trains that operate in high season. And indeed, with the prospective return of Phil Swallow's No. 34027 *Taw Valley* next year, the SVR will be taking on a distinct Southern flavour!

Class 502 vehicles move south to Burcough Bridge

The LMS-designed Class 502 EMU was the most advanced of its time when it started work in the 1940s on the suburban lines around Liverpool.

Replacing the existing steam-hauled rolling stock, the fleet had significant improvements, such as automatic sliding doors, higher speeds and increased frequency. The last remaining '502' was saved from the scrapyard in 1980, after running its final service on Merseyrail, and in 2009 the 'Friends of the 502' group acquired it from the National Railway Museum.

The two coaches have now moved to a transport museum at Burcough Bridge. Large sections of its bodywork will be replaced, together with a full rewire, refurbishment of all the interior woodwork and seats and work on the wheels, bogies and traction motors.

Above & Right: The two coaches are pictured at their new home at Burcough Bridge where restoration will take place. *Fred Kerr*

Initial steaming brings 'WC' back to life

The long-running heavy overhaul of Bulleid 'West Country' No. 34092 *City of Wells* **has taken a step closer to completion in recent weeks as the boiler was subjected to a series of test steamings.**

The locomotive is presently based on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (KWVR), and was dragged into the yard at Haworth on 3rd March, when the fire was lit for the first time since the boiler was fitted in the frames. A maximum pressure of around 130psi was achieved during the first weekend, and the process was repeated on 11th March, gradually warming the boiler towards full working pressure in order to test the fittings. Contrary to what has been claimed elsewhere, the loco has not yet moved under its own power and is some way from doing so, as most of the pipework has yet to be fitted.

Above: **SR 'West Country' Pacific No. 34092** *City of Wells* **underwent a steam test in Haworth Yard on 4th March.** *Kieran Pilsworth*

KWVR Chairman, Kieran Pilsworth explained: "Much work is still to be done to *City of Wells* before we see it back in traffic, although we hope that this will happen in the next 12 months. The work has been carried out to full main line standard and has been overseen by renowned 'Spamcan' expert John Adams, who has been heavily involved in past overhauls of classmates *Tangmere* and *Wadebridge*. However, this does not necessarily mean that No. 34092 will be main line certified, but whatever happens it is expected to remain based at the KWVR for the foreseeable future".

Exciting gala prospects for Severn Valley

With three major steam galas and a diesel gala in prospect, 2012 certainly looks like a bumper year for the Severn Valley Railway.

Added to which is the prospect of having a celebrity visitor in the shape of Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park*, the details of which, are featured in a separate article in this issue. The Spring Gala is booked to operate from 23rd to 25th March, with the star attraction being the visit of Jeremy Hosking's Class A4, which it has been confirmed will be renamed back to its rightful *Bittern* name, and carry painted numerals 4464. It has retained the garter blue livery and wheel valences and will be diagrammed to work the SVR's ex-LNER teak coaches. Also attending will be GNR Class N2 0-6-2T No. 1744 and NER Class J72 0-6-0T No. 69023, to emphasise the LNER credentials of the gala, with ex-LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47406 providing variety. Caledonian Railway Class 812 No. 828 is scheduled to be working during the gala and the SVR is working flat out to complete a number of tasks for it to be available for the event.

An important milestone was passed on 1st February this year, which was the 150th anniversary of the opening of the line. Inconveniently, the railway was closed for engineering work on the day, and so the anniversary will be formally commemorated over the weekend of 19th/20th May, with a 'Victorian Weekend', blessed, we understand by a visit from the 'Old Queen' herself, or at least someone masquerading as HM Queen Victoria! To highlight the Victorian theme, three visitors have are scheduled to appear from that era, these being Ribble Railway-based Furness Railway 0-4-0 No. 20, and from Beamish the Head Wrightson built vertical boilered 0-4-0 'Coffee Pot' and 0-4-0ST Seaham No. 18. Furness Railway No. 20 will be used on a passenger shuttle service, while all three will be involved in a parade with 'one or two modern counterparts'. All these events will take place at Kidderminster.

Although some way off, there are also exciting developments concerning the SVR autumn gala, scheduled for 21st-23rd September, as the Railway has become the first to secure the services of Bodmin-based ex-Southern Railway Drummond Class T9 4-4-0 No. 30120. This will be a major attraction, and it is understood that the event may still take an even greater 'Southern' bias if the SVR is successful in ongoing negotiations for certain other locomotives. In any event, the Webb 'Coal Tank' is already booked, which will be appearing in LMS livery as No. 7799.

Last, but not least, there will be another three-day diesel gala this year, operating hot on the heels of the steam gala, from Thursday 4th October through to Saturday 6th October. The line-up is still being negotiated, but Chinnor-based Clayton Class 17 No. 8568 is already confirmed.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The issue of commuter services over the East Lancashire Railway has once again raised its head, and the Government is to hold talks on restoring the link with Manchester. It is acknowledged that the link is difficult to achieve from a technical point of view, and also potentially expensive, but one that could be beneficial to the local economy. Rossendale is currently the only Lancashire borough without a fully functional rail terminal.

■ The Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway is hopeful of running steam services to Skipton within the next five years. The cost of reconnecting the railway with the National Network at Embsay Junction is estimated to be between £1 million and £2 million, which includes the costs of a second platform at Bolton Abbey.

■ The East Kent Railway, based at Shepherdswell near Dover, will be holding its annual £1 event on 25th March when passengers can have a round trip of the line for just £1. The traction on the day will be the usual pairing of Class 09 No. 09025 / D4113 powering Class 416 2-EPB trainset No. 5759 and other attractions will include a miniature railway, woodland walks, model railway, station museum and the recently opened café. Details of the railway and its facilities can be found at www.eastkentrailway.co.uk.

■ The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway started its 2012 season on 10th March, and celebrated the 100th anniversary of Cheltenham Racecourse station two days later. The station was the last on the Honeybourne Line to be opened, the last to be closed and was only available for use on race days, the latter also being the reason why it had 14-coach platforms. The centenary was marked in traditional fashion with the station decorated, a ribbon-cutting and a cake!

Beamish secures another 'hidden' victorian steam locomotive as Great North Steam Fair approaches

Following the purchase of Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T *Dunrobin*, Beamish Museum has now obtained a 1901-built Manning Wardle locomotive that has not been seen in public for nearly four decades.

No.1532 was supplied by Manning Wardle to the Midland Coal Coke & Iron Company for use at Apedale Ironworks. It was a modified 'M' class, thus being referred to as a 'Special'. During the First World War it was loaned to the Ministry of Munitions, being overhauled by Manning Wardle and having a new steel firebox fitted in 1917.

In 1918 it was sold and worked for Wilson Lovatt & Sons, where it was involved in construction work for the Great Western Railway. Named *Newcastle* after Newcastle-under-Lyme, it moved in the late 1920s to East Anglia, working for the Kings Lynn Sugar Beet Factory, later assimilated into the British Sugar Corporation. In 1952 the engine joined the fleet at the well-known Wissington works, where it operated until withdrawal at Christmas 1969.

By then it had received an enclosed cab and the mandatory balloon spark arrestor that was typical of the system. In 1971 it was purchased by Gordon Wells, a Stratford shed engineman, who moved it to a private site near Heydon, Hertfordshire, in 1972. It remained on a short private railway at New Buildings farm until collected by Beamish on 7th March this year.

The Museum had been looking for a second locomotive for its NER branch line operation to act as a spare to *Dunrobin*, and the brief was for a Victorian inside cylinder tank engine of light railway appearance. There are no plans to start work on the engine until the overhaul of *Dunrobin* is completed in 2014, when the aim will be to carry out as much as possible of the mechanical side in-house in the new engineering workshops that are currently under construction.

A number of infrastructure works are currently underway on the Rowley station operating line, including construction of a new water tower, pit and, in due course, engine shed.

Elsewhere, the boiler of the Seaham Harbour Dock Company 0-4-0ST No.18 *Lewin* has been successfully steam tested and has returned to Beamish. It is expected to be placed into its completed frames imminently. Extensive work has been completed on reassembling the motion, rods and reversing linkages, but the loco has become somewhat banana shaped at Seaham, and work to straighten the frames and correct other distortion has had an impact on the alignment of all of the items that attach to them!

Above: **The 1901-built Manning Wardle is craned out of its resting place for the last four decades on the first stage of its journey.**

Left: *Newcastle* **is pictured in the colliery area after its arrival at the museum. Restoration is not expected to commence before 2014.** *Beamish Museum/Paul Jarman*

Great North Steam Fair

The list of exhibits invited to the annual Great North Steam Fair at Beamish are growing in number by the day in anticipation of the four day steam and transport extravaganza at the County Durham Museum, held from 12th-15th April.

As ever there are a wide range of items, ranging from railway locomotives to vintage motorcycles, trams to vintage cars, traction engines to buses and cycles. All items will be in operation around the 400 acre site, making the most of the four railways (including one narrow gauge line), the electric tramway, two miles of roads and numerous areas where working displays can be set up including milling, stone crushing and haulage.

On the railway side, it is hoped that the Bluebell Railway's 1877 Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0T *Baxter* will be making a popular return visit, this time operating at the NER 'Rowley' station. In turn, the regular Rowley motive power, LNER Y7 No.985, will be moving to the Colliery area to join Coffee Pot No.1 and (it is hoped) Seaham Harbour No.18.

On the new narrow gauge line De Winton *Chaloner* will work alongside another vertical boilered locomotive *Paddy*. With Seaham Harbour No.17 on static display and a Sentinel steam wagon and small vertical boilered portable engine also appearing, it is hoped to have a line up of vertical boilered steam power during the event.

Birkenhead tram No.20 will be visiting from the Birkenhead Tramway and the event will see the debut of one other tram which is coming to Beamish on a two year loan. There will be visiting traction engines, steam rollers, steam wagons, veteran and vintage cars and motorcycles, a working display of cycles (including penny farthings and boneshakers) throughout the four day event.

Visitors to the Museum benefit from the hugely successful annual pass ticket, which enables 12 months entry to Beamish for the price of one ticket – thus allowing the most to be made of further events such as the 'Power from the Past' steam and transport event on 30th August – 2nd September this year.

The North Norfolk Railway held its Spring Steam Gala over the weekend of 9th-11th March, with a wide variety of locomotives in action.

The event broke all records for the railway with more than 3,500 visitors attending over the three day event, which was described by the railway as a brilliant start to the season and way ahead of expectations.

Star attraction was the return to steam of LNER 'B12' 4-6-0 No. 8572, which returned to the railway from Ian Riley's Workshops in Bury in the days prior to the event, after undergoing a £300,000 overhaul.

Also in traffic were GWR 'Hall' No. 4936 *Kinlet Hall*, LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45337 and BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92203 *Black Prince*.

Above: The single line token is held ready for exchange as GWR 'Hall' Class 4-6-0 No. 4936 *Kinlet Hall* departs from Sheringham with the 10:14 service for Holt on 9th March. *Kev Gregory*

Middle: Freshly outshopped 'B12' No. 8572 has returned to the North Norfolk Railway, and on its first day back in service after a five-year overhaul, it is seen approaching its destination with the 13:00 Sheringham to Holt service on a members and invited guests only day. This was the second of three trips the locomotive made on 8th March, as a prelude to the following three-day gala. *John Day*

Right: BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92203 *Black Prince* shuts off steam and coasts towards the Weybourne home signal on 11th March, while waiting for clearance to pass through the station. The photographer describes this as a lucky shot as seconds before the smoke had completely obliterated the train in the stiff breeze. *Ian Williams*

East Lancs Diesel Gala

The East Lancashire Railway held a diesel gala event over the weekend of 3rd/4th March, with a range of locomotives from the home-based fleet in action.

Right: In the pouring rain, Class 47 No. D1501 powers out of Ramsbottom station with an empty coaching stock working, after operating a shuttle service from Bury on 4th March. *David Bissett*

Middle: One of the highlights of the event was the return to traffic of Class 14 'Teddybear' No. D9531. Here the locomotive, numbered as classmate No. D9556, coasts into Ramsbottom with the 10:44 shuttle from Bury on 3rd March. *Fred Kerr*

Bottom: On a dull and misty morning, Class 33 No. 33109 and Hymek No. D7076 'top and tail' the 10:25 Heywood to Rawtenstall service into Irwell Vale station during gala weekend on 3rd March. *Neil Scarlett*

Exposure

A selection of the best photography from across the country

Grid Power

Above: DCR Class 56 No. 56312 stands at Burton-on-Trent on 7th March, in its unique Railfest advertising livery that was applied to the locomotive back in December. The '56' had arrived 'light engine' from Washwood Heath and departed to York Holgate, but the train was cancelled at Barrow Hill. *Stuart Hillis*

Right: In a further move of china clay wagons for refurbishment, ex-Fastline Freight Class 56/3 No. 56302 pilots Class 47/3 No. 47375 away from Burngullow on 8th March, with the 10:00 Burngullow ECC to Burton-on-Trent Wetmore Sidings. *Chris Trerise*

Multiple Variety

Above: The quiet country location of Medge Hall on the Doncaster to Scunthorpe line is not particularly noted for its excitement. On 9th March, the 17:19 Scunthorpe to Adwick, via Doncaster, service passes the gatebox, unusually formed of a pair of Class 144 two-car DMUs, Nos. 144003 and 144005. *Richard Tuplin*

Below: Class 444 Desiro No. 444030 forms the 12:05 London Waterloo to Weymouth service as it crosses Holes Bay causeway on 1st March, the slight breeze bringing ripples to the otherwise tranquil waters. *Justin Saunders*

Sunset years for the Class 90s?

Above: While the future of the the Class 90s on the London to Norwich main line appears reasonably secure with no alternative motive power or coaching stock potentially on the horizon at the moment, could it be that the use of the class on the GEML, both on passenger and intermodal services will be looked back at, as the fleet's sunset years? The setting sun glints off the bodyside of Class 90 No. 90001 at Manningtree on 8th March, as it arrives with a service for the Capital. *Antony Guppy*

Red is the colour

The ongoing work by DB Schenker on a life-extension programme for a number of Class 60 locomotives is progressing with several members of the fleet having now been through Toton and outshopped in the latest corporate colours.

Top Right: Ex-works Class 60 No. 60036 heads a train from Tata Steel's Trostre works at Llandeilo Junction on 11th March, with Class 66/0 No. 66126 bringing up the rear. *Yarisman*

Right: Class 60 No. 60011 was provided for the Ferrybridge Power Station to Lindsey Oil Refinery empty bogie tanks on 6th March. The train is observed passing Hambleton Junction, near Selby, on the East Coast Main Line. *Neil Scarlett*

Below: For the small group of Class 60 locomotives based at Immingham for use on petroleum services, the weekend generally sees a move to Doncaster and use on engineers trains. Recently repainted No. 60091 enters Doncaster with a returning engineers train from Brough on 11th March. *David Wragg*

Every little helps!

Above: Despite the loss of the sun at just the wrong moment, DRS Class 66/4 No. 66431 provides the motive power for a lengthy 08:22 Daventry-Cardiff Wentloog 'Tescoliner' as it passes Bulwark on the outskirts of Chepstow on 8th March. *Edward Gleed*

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At the end of February, the *Railway Herald* team did not have the confidence that our back-end systems were working correctly, which resulted in us extending the trial period, to allow further time for testing and error correction - the aim is to ensure as best as we can, that the changeover to subscriptions at the end of March goes as smoothly as possible, and without problem, for subscribers.

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Photo: Ken Brunt

Times they are a-changing

Renowned railway author John Vaughan looks back over the history of the hobby

All photographs by the author unless stated

As long as there have been railways there have been railfans, railway enthusiasts and trainspotters in all of their various guises and persuasions.

Some descriptions of railfans have been accurate, reflecting one or more of the many diverse types of enthusiasm, some have been nicknames, while in more recent times some names have unfortunately been derogatory. Over the decades there have been enormous changes on the railway scene, and more gradual but nevertheless profound changes on the sociological scene, which have impacted the railway hobby.

Although this article is not a definitive history of 'railfanning' in the UK in the early days of railways, there is plenty of historical evidence of interest in the subject. Perhaps the two main Victorian events were the publication of the Railway Magazine in 1897 and the establishment of The Railway Club in 1899. Hot on the heels of the latter was the formation of the Stephenson Locomotive Society in 1909 and its pioneering preservation of the London Brighton & South Coast Railway 0-4-2 locomotive *Gladstone* in 1926/27, presently on display at the National Railway Museum at York. The acquisition of a main line locomotive was a major milestone in the long history of railway preservation, which happily continued through the last days of steam and the 'BR/Barry' years to today's attempts that range from saving main line diesel and electric locomotives and stock from the scrap heap to remarkable new builds of locomotives past. There has

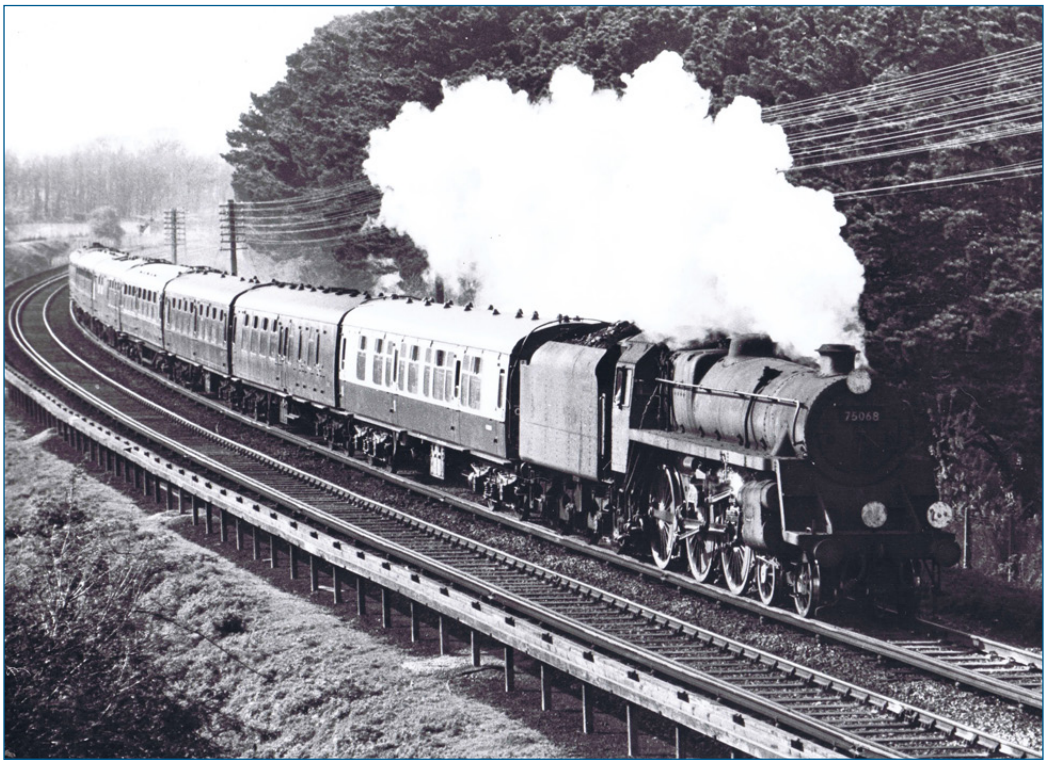
Above: **In terms of liveries the 'BR blue' era was monotonous and more than a little drab, but it lasted for two decades. Rushing through the Welsh Marches near Craven Arms is a SR Class 33 'Crompton' heading five Mark 1 coaches comprising a Cardiff to Crewe working in 1985.**

Below: **In this wonderful view from the 1930s a dozen members of a railway club of the era pose in front of Southern Railway Urie 4-6-2 tank engine No. 520, which would eventually become British Railways No. 30520. Note that everybody is wearing a tie!** *Author's Collection*

always been an interest in collecting locomotive and unit numbers, and mention should be made of spotting books that substantially pre-dated Ian Allan products, such as the 1935 publication of 'The Locomotives of the Southern Railway' (three volumes) by W G Tilling of Great Dover Street in London.

From a personal perspective it was the very end of 1953 that an interest in trainspotting developed, although like most youngsters there were indelible mental images of engines and trains before that date. There is no doubt that a significant milestone in encouraging railway enthusiasm in the mid and post World War II era was the publication, sales and marketing of a series of ABC train number listing books by Ian Allan. From the 1940s onward, books were being published by Ian Allan ranging from serious tomes and books, such as the favourite photographs of well-known railway photographers of the era, to regularly updated ABCs that culminated in the production of the much-prized 'Combined Volume'. The monthly magazine Trains Illustrated was growing in circulation and an 'Ian Allan Locospotters Club' was created, encouraging youngsters to enter the hobby by arranging special trains and visits to locosheds and railway works, and marketing various items of railway paraphernalia. Participants carried a membership card and their jackets and blazers were often festooned with a series of regional spotting badges. The standard attire for trainspotters seemed to be short trousers, long socks, schoolboy cap, long gaberdine raincoats and satchel type bags, with the evergreen ABC, notebooks and pen. Jeans, trainers and 'T'-shirts then belonged to the space age!

The number of prominent national railway clubs grew, such as the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society (RCTS), the Locomotive Club of Great Britain (LCGB) and the Railway Enthusiasts Club (REC) and scores of others at a local level, many having links to model railway and



Above: The twilight of British steam traction was a remarkable era and remains rich in nostalgia. In March 1966, Standard 5MT No. 75068 speeds through Angmering in West Sussex with the daily Plymouth to Brighton through train.

Below: On a very foggy 5th January 1953, Class 3MT 2-6-2T No. 40054 departs from London Bridge with an Ian Allan Locospotters Club Special to Stratford. Over 500 members made the cross-London excursion. *Brian Morrison*

Above: Having completed the operation an all-day special 'Ian Allan Network Day' shuttle between Shenfield and Seven Kings on 22nd November 1986, preserved Class 306 EMU No. 017 prepares to return from Seven Kings to Ilford Depot. *Brian Morrison*

engineering groups.

Ian Allan and other publishers upped the game, and there were ABC binders, deluxe binders, a Locoshed book and a Shed Directory, which retailed at 2/6d (12.5p) in 1954. A Locospotters Annual was produced to coincide with the Christmas market and priced at 5/- (25p) in 1954, you could board a Trains Illustrated Excursion from London to the Somerset & Dorset Railway in 1954 for 28/- (£1.40) or 16/- for children (80p) and a platform ticket was priced as just one old penny!

A quite substantial industry grew rapidly and whereas some monthly magazines presently brag about 30,000 plus readers, the main magazines of this era sold over 60,000 monthly, although admittedly there are now significantly more magazine titles available.

The incomplete list of railfans encompassed not only trainspotters that included coach and wagon spotters, but those interested in railway history, photography, signalling and infrastructure, modelling, train timing, operations and the commercial side, preservation and restoration, track bashers, tape recording enthusiasts, collectors of tickets, ephemera and railwayana, those interested in foreign railways, branch lines, main lines, closed lines, ramblers - the list is endless. The insatiable requirements of all of these folk needed to be satisfied as some estimated that there were up to half a million railfans in the country of one type or another. Certainly attendance at the famous once-in-a-lifetime Shildon cavalcade in 1975 was well into 'six figures' proving beyond doubt that the railway hobby was alive and kicking.

Looking back well over half a century, the environment in which most railfans operated was primitive in the extreme compared with today's scene, with very large doses of naivety. There was little money about and I can remember saving my frugal pocket money to buy Trains Illustrated each month, which consumed 1/6d (7.5p) of a very limited disposable income. A child's ticket to Brighton, which was some 11 miles from home, was afforded once or twice per month until paper round money became available.

At Brighton there was a locomotive shed and works, as well as a greater variety of trains. A standard 2-6-4T in the 80xxx series would seemingly emerge from the works about once per week, and with luck one of the lovely old Marsh 4-4-2 'Atlantics' would be on shed. Occasionally there was a visiting engine, which always caused great excitement as the word 'cop' entered the vocabulary. Although now hard to imagine, during a locospotting day trip from the Sussex Coast to Crewe Works in 1956, over 800 locomotive numbers were noted, now an almost unbelievable statistic.

A handful of railfans had small cheap plastic cameras, often taking 127 size film, while a few were fortunate in being able to borrow their father's box camera, which would be loaded with 120 or 620 film allowing a grand total of eight pictures per film. More sophisticated equipment was the property only of the better off. It was of course not possible to freeze the movement of a passing train, and shed and platform end shots were all that could be achieved. On a dull day the pictures were invariably dark because there were no adjustments that could be made to the aperture or shutter. Only those with a 'posh' camera could attempt to get a photograph published and in any event submissions would often be returned unused.

As late as the mid-1960s Railway Magazine paid no reproduction fee whatsoever, suggesting it was a privilege to have one's work published, and Ian Allan paid 7/6d (37.5p) that increased to 10/- (50p) by the end of the decade.

In the 1950s and 1960s magazines were important because of the dearth of information coming from any other source. At some locations a local signalman may have been friendly enough to answer a question as to whether a particular train was coming, but there were of course no mobile telephones (and few houses

Above: A company that took over a significant chunk of BR Railfreight was EWS, English Welsh and Scottish Railways. That American company placed large procurements with General Motors of North America for some powerful and reliable freight locomotives, such as the Class 66s. In this lovely Cornish scene from 2011, No. 66169 passes Golant beside the River Fowey with loaded CDA wagons full of china clay.

with telephones), no internet/web sites, no publicly available 'gen', no 'i-anything', although occasionally one could have a peek at the booking office copy of the local Special Traffic Notice. Consequently, when it came to special train workings it was often data published in magazines six to eight weeks in advance that the enthusiast had to rely on, leading to massive disappointments on occasions as one went to spot or photograph a special that had been cancelled weeks before.

Over the years some classic films had been produced by the British Transport Commission and Post Office, but in the 1950s media moguls realised the potential size of the railway hobby and, for example, from about 1958 until 1962 the BBC regularly screened its Railway Roundabout programme.

Other railway items appeared from time to time dealing with a specific railway subject or aspect of the hobby. In more recent years, Channel 4 had a week of railway films and of late we have had the Michael Portillo 'Great British Railway Journeys' programmes and a series featuring walks along closed railway walks, although some may debate whether it was old railways or Julia Bradbury that attracted the audiences! There have of course been large numbers of full-length feature films going back to the days of silent films that have seemingly been dedicated to railways. These range from Buster Keaton's 1926 silent film 'The General' and innumerable 'Westerns' from the USA, to British Gainsborough and Ealing comedies of the 1930s and 1950s. However, over the years the hobby has been undervalued by the media, leading to a large number of small specialised companies producing films, videos and DVDs of railway subjects.

Returning to the 1950s, there is undoubtedly a massive trade off between the simple and poorer times then prevailing and today's somewhat clinical high-tech world. Sixty years ago the railway scene had barely changed since pre-Second World War days. The stations, locomotives and rolling stock were grimy and commensurate with the world of steam. Everybody

Below: Following sectorisation came Privatisation, which included a range of train operating companies and rolling stock companies - and another round of liveries. A company with its origins in the nuclear industry was Direct Rail Services. Here Class 37 No. 37609 in DRS colours and Inspection saloon *Caroline* cross the River Arun at Ford in West Sussex during 2010.

from that generation has stories of 'bunking' running sheds and depots to secure those extra train numbers that could not be seen from public land. The worst that could happen was to be shouted at and told to leave immediately.

There were fewer 'Health and Safety' regulations as we presently know them, no high security issues, no terrorist threats and the world of 'litigation mania' had not arrived from over the pond. Very few enthusiasts had access to personal transport, except a pedal cycle, and trips or excursions to distant places over 50 miles away were few and far between and events to be savoured. A day out visiting London termini for example, was one where butterflies in the tummy would prevail in anticipation of visiting those cathedrals of steam. Nobody who experienced such events could fail to remember Gresley's Pacifics coming out of Gasworks Tunnel at King's Cross, or seeing copper capped machinery heading for the west at Paddington, the grimy LMS and Standard Southend-bound tanks leaving Fenchurch Street, the dark dungeon that was then Liverpool Street, the spinning wheels of Bulleid Pacifics at Waterloo, Stanier's beauties at a sooty Euston, or the mix of 'Compounds' and 'Jubilees' that could be 'copped' at the atmospheric St Pancras terminus. And as for visiting the back-to-back Old Oak Common and Willesden engine sheds involving a walk along the old canal, that is the stuff that memories are made of.

Gradually circumstances changed. A generation grew up, and as time went by the general level of affluence increased, leading to politicians telling the population that they 'had never had it so good'. There was some truth in that, as bicycles and mopeds were swapped for cars. For many, leisure time increased and there was more disposable income to enable travel further afield.

There were awayday excursions, merrymakers, look-and-books, mystery tours and more opportunities to travel. The old camera was changed for a 35mm model and eventually a highly prized single lens reflex camera purchased, followed by supplementary lenses.

However, arguably the greatest change in the history of British railways to impact railfans was when steam finally petered out and branch lines and stations closed in profusion. Some gave up trainspotting and photography after steam ended in 1968, but those with wider railway interests found such fundamental changes absorbing, especially when early classes of diesel locomotive started to be withdrawn.

Above: Gradually the school caps, short trousers and long mackintoshes gave way to trainers, jeans and informal tops. This 1985 group of trainspotters are seen at Torquay admiring 'Peak' No. 45128 on an up inter-regional train from Paignton

Informal fan clubs sprang-up supporting a particular class of locomotive and there was friendly banter between the groups, tantamount to club football supporters but better behaved! One cannot fail to remember the truly remarkable scenes experienced in the last days of the 'Western' Class 52 diesel hydraulics, which had developed almost 'cult' status. Such scenes were repeated to perhaps a slightly lesser degree for other classes that were becoming extinct, at least on BR metals. Radical changes in infrastructure were also taking place and, for example, photographers gravitated to the last bastions of semaphore signalling.

Although some aspects of the railway hobby have undoubtedly increased in popularity, witness the vast number of preservation sites nationwide and the large number of both steam and diesel-hauled special trains, there is no doubt that trainspotting per se has been

Below: Changes were taking place over the whole of BR in the 1980s, including the abolition of semaphore signalling at many locations. A Railfreight sector Class 31 is seen approaching Ely from the north with a crippled coach.

Above: Although locomotive hauled trains have been much thinner on the ground in recent years, there is still much to see and photograph for the vigilant observer, at least in certain parts of the UK. One of the newer freight operators is Colas Rail, and in this 2010 view at Winnick Junction, ageing ex-BR Class 47/7 No. 47739 and GM Class 66 No. 66843 are seen double heading, the Carlisle to Chirk timber train.

in serious decline for some years.

Numerous reasons have been expounded for this downturn. The trains themselves have changed dramatically, and the advent of multiple units in all their various guises, resulting in an overall loss of variety, has undoubtedly contributed to a reduction in interest. Modern infrastructure, ranging from colour light signalling, platform barriers and security palisade fencing, to remote and inaccessible depots and signalling centres, has not helped.

A vigorous approach to trespassing, terrorism and vandalism has made merely standing on a platform somewhat intimidating at certain locations. There have been massive sociological changes whereby young people are spending huge chunks of their lives on computers, playing computer games, describing in monotonous detail their every movement on facebook and twitter, and sending endless text messages. As a result the innocent hobby of trainspotting and railway enthusiasm is no longer seen by many youngsters as being a 'cool' pastime.

On a recent day trip from the Sussex coast to Crewe, albeit on a weekday, only a pair of spotters at Clapham Junction, one at Stafford and a couple at Crewe were observed, an unthinkable situation in the mid-1950s.

However, before we get despondent it may just be the activities of

Below: Eventually sectorisation was introduced across British Rail and a new range of colour schemes emerged. Although dubbed Network South East, the sector ranged geographically from Kings Lynn to Exeter! Here No. 50005 *Collingwood* leaves Honiton in Devon with a train for Waterloo in April 1989.

Below: Taking the story of railway enthusiasm into 2012, hopefully with a modicum of optimism, is this contemporary shot of No. 66174 heading the returning weekly fuel tank empties from Long Rock, near Penzance, to St Blazey past Burngullow on 1st February. While there may be fewer trainspotters these days and a shortage of trained personnel on some preserved lines, in numerical terms there are still tens of thousands of railfans in the UK. Long may a great hobby continue

railway enthusiasts that are changing. Although paper magazine circulation is down there are still about a dozen railway orientated publications with five figure circulation figures filling the news stands every month and total monthly sales still reach six figures. Although railway book print runs have almost halved during the past decade or so, scores of new railway books on every conceivable aspect of the hobby continue to appear every month. Open days and gala events are extremely well patronised and recent lineside viewers for the likes of *Tornado* have been a revelation.

In some respects new technology has benefitted the hobby, such as the advent of digital photography, whereby magazine editors can electronically receive images of railway events, news happenings or simply general scenes as they happen. From the volume of images received it would appear that lineside photography is far from dead. Web sites of a 'Fotopic' nature are springing-up everywhere and while quality varies enormously many are well worth a visit.

There are regular publications about ever changing freight train operations and 'gen' sites are spawning like frogs. Instantaneous real time data is now available to all, provided one knows where to look, and no longer is it only railway employees or those with special 'contacts' who have information about what is on the move. Of course some would argue that one of the great joys of lineside photography is not knowing what is going to come round the corner, but overall most would rather have information about likely workings. Overall railway enthusiasm thrives, although trainspotting has perhaps seen better years.

Back in 2005, the continuing story of technical evolution in the railway publishing world took a major step forward when an event with significant innovation took place, the emergence and publication of an on-line weekly magazine called *Railway Herald*. This had enormous advantages over traditionally published magazines where information could be a month or even six weeks out of date compared with data that at worst would be only a few days old.

An on-line magazine could be accessed or transmitted within a few seconds, a huge advantage in terms of the financial and ecological cost of printing, binding, marketing, selling, posting, distributing, displaying, and disposing of traditional products. The on-line publication was commensurate with the new and growing digital world, whereby interesting and newsworthy pictures could be transmitted electronically and included in the magazine sometimes only hours after they were taken.

After a short period with limited circulation *Railway Herald* gained huge momentum and by June 2005 it developed into a magazine rather than a newsletter style. *RH* rapidly gained in circulation with a growing number of 'downloads' as the magazine gradually evolved and improved. At the beginning of 2009, the entire presentation of the, by then, established on-line weekly magazine was changed when a landscape format was adopted. This format was more compatible with a typical computer monitor and also made the on-line product more distinctive. Soon many thousands people each week were reading the magazine in over 70 different countries, such was the power and accessibility of an on-line product. Now a new format and a much larger magazine has been introduced with further technical innovation such as video pictures with sound, enabling a magazine to 'come to life', an unimaginable phenomena with a paper magazine.

In almost every aspect of life, the world of the railway enthusiast has changed beyond recognition during the past 60 years, and in 1953 the notion of reading a magazine on a screen via something called a computer would have been truly inconceivable. Times are not only a changing but in terms of the evolution of *Railway Herald*, and much else, they will continue to change!

Switzerland

Fyra driver training commences

By Maarten Otto

On 1st March, NS-Hispeed, the train operator responsible for the Fyra service on behalf of High Speed Alliance, started driver training for its fleet of Ansaldo Breda built V250 high-speed EMUs.

NS Hispeed plans to introduce these late running trains in service during this year. From mid-April, Benelux (Brussels - Amsterdam) and Fyra Train Managers will receive training on the V250 trains. It is understood that they will operate only between Amsterdam and Rotterdam at first with an hourly loco-hauled Amsterdam to Breda Fyra train, providing a clock-face service between the Netherlands two biggest urban areas via Schiphol airport.

Above: **Ansaldo Breda-built V250 EMU No. 4805 standing at the disused Breda Platform 2 ready for another driver training run to Amsterdam in late February.** *Maarten Otto*

To maintain the regular interval service the V250s will only operate at the same maximum speed as the Class 186 Traxx operated Amsterdam - Breda services. Current plans by NS Hispeed foresee the total replacement of the loco-hauled stock from the December 2012 timetable change, when all Fyra services on the HSL Zuid High Speed Line will be operated by V250 EMUs, and the operational speed will be increased to reflect the new train's capabilities.

Germany

DB Schenker withdraws last Class 217 locomotives

DB Schenker has withdrawn the last Class 217 locomotive in use.

Built as Class V162 and as an ETH version of the original V160 (later Class 216), Class 217 utilised an additional diesel engine to generate power for train heating, although after tests it was decided not to build anymore but to construct the Class 218 instead, which utilised the main engine for both traction and train heat.

The last loco in service No. 217 017 was withdrawn on 19th December 2011 at Mühldorf Depot in eastern Bayern, where the Class had worked freight services for the last 15 years, passenger work ending around 1999. Class 217 has been replaced on most freight duties by ECR-liveried but DB numbered Euro 66 locos. These are numbered as Class 77 in France, but were originally numbered as Class 247 by DB, However, the German rail regulator (the EBA) has insisted they be numbered as Class 266 in common with other Euro 66s registered in Germany.

DB has left the Class 247 numbers on the locos as well, despite Class 247 being allocated to new-build Siemens Vectron DE diesel locos, although so far only prototypes have been constructed.

By early February almost all of the withdrawn Class 217 locos had left Mühldorf for storage or scrapping elsewhere.

Above: **ECR-liveried Class 66, carrying DB No. 266 449 as well as its original No. 247 049, is seen at Mühldorf Depot on 3rd February.** *Keith Fender*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russian electrics for Ukraine
Russian manufacturer Transmashholding has been awarded a contract to build 230 Type 2ES4K electric twin section freight locomotives for 3kV DC routes and 70 Type 2ES5K twin section locomotives for 25Kv AC routes by Ukrainian Railways (UZ). The new locos will be delivered from late this year until 2016.

Belgian ETCS in use
Belgian rail infrastructure manager Infrabel has commissioned the first section of ETCS equipped route on Belgium's conventional network. The 25.5km four-track line from Schaerbeek, in the north of Brussels, to Leuven started ETCS operation on 6th March. The route has been equipped with Siemens Trainguard at a cost of €11.2 million, with 554 trackside balises and 140 lineside signals. Infrabel has plans to equip the entire Belgian network with ETCS Level 1 by 2022.

Netinera to operate Rhineland diesel services
Italian Railways (Trenitalia) subsidiary Netinera (formally Arriva Deutschland) has won a 15-year contract to operate regional services on a non-electrified network radiating from Mainz in Western Germany, including services to the proposed Frankfurt Hahn airport line that is under construction. The contract starts in December 2014, and Netinera will replace the trains that DB Regio, the current operator, uses.

Russia

Above: The Desiro-Rus train is manoeuvred across the linkspan on to the ferry *MV St Petersburg* **on 2nd March.** *Keith Fender*

First Russian Desiro leaves Germany

The first of 38 five-car Desiro-Rus EMUs being built by Siemens in Krefeld has been shipped to the Russian port of Ust Luga, using the 1,520mm gauge train ferry from Sassnitz Mukran, on the Baltic coast of North East Germany.

The train is based upon the Desiro ML version in use in Germany and Belgium, and is equipped for operation on both 3kV DC and 25kV 50 Hz AC. The contract is worth €410 million and all 38 trains are due for delivery in time for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, to be held in Sochi, in southern Russia. After the Olympics the new EMUs will be used on commuter services in major Russian cities.

Transporting the finished trains from the factory in Krefeld, Western Germany, to the port at Sassnitz Mukran is complex, as in a process that will be repeated for each of the next 37 trains, the new motive power left the Siemens factory by road at night and were then transhipped to a barge in Krefeld on the River Rhine. This took them to Amsterdam, where they were put aboard a coastal ship that then took them, via the Kiel Canal, to Sassnitz.

After unloading there, the vehicles were moved by road to the 1,520mm rail freight terminal where they were coupled together again as a complete train. They will be taken from Ust Luga to the RZD Metallostroy Depot in St Petersburg for commissioning by Siemens.

Another 256 Desiro-Rus trains are on order, and these will be wholly or partly built in Russia.

Right: DB Class 218 No. 218470 provides the motive power for the 09:48 Hannover to Bad Harzburg at Goslar on 29th February. Over 400 Class 218s were constructed by four builders between 1971 and 1979, the first entering traffic in 1971. The 2184xx series are equipped for push-pull operation. *Barry Adams*

Czech Republic

Above: Skoda Class 380 No. 380 009 leaves Česká Třebová on 1st February, with the 10:17 Praha hl.n - Warszawa Wschodnia Eurocity service. *Keith Fender*

New Skoda Class 380 electrics enter passenger service

Czech Railways České dráhy (ČD) has 20 Class 380 multi voltage electric locos on order from Škoda. Long running approval problems delayed their entry into passenger service, which started in 2011.

Since the December 2011 timetable change, they now have 10 daily passenger diagrams working Eurocity and Express services eastwards from Praha to Brno, Břeclav and Bohumin among other places. Approval for operation into neighbouring Germany, Austria and Slovakia has not yet been agreed.

Germany

DB contracts win

German Railways regional services operator DB Regio has won tenders for several major contracts.

In many cases new trains will be ordered to operate the services, that in the north of Germany, cover Hamburg to Flensburg and Hamburg to Kiel Regional Express workings, and two regional express routes (RE3/RE5) from Rostock/ Stralsund / Schwedt (Oder) to Berlin/ Lutherstadt Wittenberg in the East of Germany. The latter contract will be operated using existing double-deck coaches and new single-deck EMUs. In Rhineland Pfalz, DB Regio will operate non-electrified regional services north of Mannheim. All contracts cover operations for 15-years from 2014 until 2029.

Poland

Head-on collision

A head on collision between two passenger trains on the Warszawa - Krakow CMK main line on 3rd March resulted in 16 fatalities.

A PKP Intercity Warsaw - Krakow train hauled by a EP09 electric loco collided at speed with an interregio train, en route from Przemysl to Warsaw, operated by Przewozy Regionalne using a hired PKP Cargo Co-Co Class ET22 loco, near Szczekociny to the north of Krakow.

Australia

VIDEO FOOTAGE

Excursion starts 2012 Australian steam charter season

Above: The 2012 steam season in New South Wales started over the first weekend in March with the Rail Transport Museum's annual 'Thirlmere Festival of Steam'. Two of the locomotives in steam were No. 2705, representing the 27 class built by Hunslet in 1913, and No. 3265, representing the 32 class built by Beyer Peacock in 1901. The two locos storm along the loopline between Thirlmere and Buxton in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, on a gloomy 4th March. *Bevan Wall*

United States

Norfolk Southern honours predecessor railroads in 2012

Norfolk Southern has announced that it is to honor its predecessor railroads during 2012, its 30th anniversary year, by painting 18 new locomotives in commemorative schemes that reflect the heritage of those predecessors.

Norfolk Southern was created from the consolidation of Southern Railway and Norfolk and Western Railway in 1982, and the company expanded further in 1999, when it acquired a portion of Conrail.

The heritage locomotives will represent most of the railroads that played significant roles in Norfolk Southern's history. The first units will be delivered this month, and all units are expected to be in traffic by 1st June, Norfolk Southern's 30th anniversary date.

Each paint scheme will be modified to fit contemporary locomotives while staying as true as possible to the original designs. Norfolk Southern employees in Altoona, Pa., and Chattanooga, Tenn., will paint GE ES44AC locomotives, while the EMD SD70ACe units will be painted at Progress Rail Services' facility in Muncie, Ind.

The predecessor companies to be represented are listed below, with the type of locomotive to be painted in brackets. Central of Georgia Railway (GE), Central Railroad of New Jersey (EMD), Conrail (GE), Delaware, Lackawanna and Western (EMD), Erie Railroad (EMD), Illinois Terminal Railroad (EMD), Interstate Railroad (GE), Lehigh Valley Railroad (GE), New York Central Railroad (EMD), New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad (GE), Norfolk Southern Railway (EMD), Norfolk & Western Railway (GE), Pennsylvania Railroad (GE), Reading Company (EMD), Savannah & Atlanta Railway (EMD), Southern Railway (GE), Virginian Railway (EMD), Wabash Railroad (EMD).

Elsewhere, Dynamic Fuels has signed a contract with NS to supply its 'drop-in' bio-diesel fuel, that can replace 100% of petroleum diesel in a diesel engine without engine modification, making the freight operator the first fleet user of renewable diesel in the United States.

Canada

VIA Rail crash kills three crew

VIA Rail train No. 92, the 14:06 Niagara Falls to Toronto service derailed at speed near Burlington, Ontario on 26 February 2012.

Three crew members were killed and many passengers were injured. The train headed by F40 loco No. 6444 is believed to have been going too fast leading to the derailment. Some media reports suggesting that the train was travelling at more thatn four times the expected speed.

Canada's Transportation Safety Board has started an investigation into the accident.

United States

Amtrak to control Empire Corridor

The 460-mile Empire Corridor from Niagara Falls to New York City, via Albany, is to be controlled by Amtrak, after the company reached an agreement with owner CSX Corporation.

The move still requires official approval but a $200 million upgrade investment, including a second line between Albany and Schenectady, is expected to commence early next year.

United States

Below: The Tehachapi Loop on the 70-mile Union Pacific line from Bakersfield to Mojave has long attracted railfans from across the world. Originally built in 1874, the railroad gains 77 feet on a constant 2% climb, and is notable for being one of the classic places in the world where long freights cross over themselves. While the majority of the traffic on the line is operated by Union Pacific, BNSF also has trackage rights along the route, as in this case, with this 'Z' train as it climbs through the loops. *Chris Starnes*

VIDEO FOOTAGE

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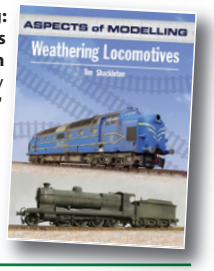

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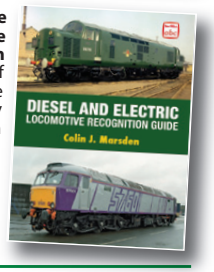

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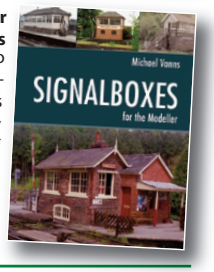

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Railway Herald welcomes correspondence and comment from readers, whether it is on memories from the rail scene of years gone by, or a comment on the current rail industry, UK or overseas. We welcome the input from readers, either by letter to the editorial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

Pendolino Insurance

Dear Editor,
There has been much made in the press of late about the requirement to keep new Class 390 Pendolino units apart so that there cannot be a crash between two new units.

The new units purportedly have a much higher value than the older batch, and the insurance companies will not underwrite this higher value loss. However, surely the crucial issue is that, if one or even two of the original units were to be written off, their replacement would cost at least as much (per vehicle) as these newer units, so their insurance value should be based on this premise.

The 'Pendolino Precedent' could be taken to ludicrous lengths, whereby the later examples of a fleet of vehicles need to be kept separate from each other – what about the second batch of Class 450s for example, or the various batches of Class 377? Will Southern be required to operate its new '377s' currently on order separately from each other?

Ian Docwra

Ed. The principles behind what initally appears to be a strange requirement are usually quite sensible. I believe the key aspect in this case is that the separate operations were a short-term issue.

While we do not have the space to go into the full complexities, a Virgin Trains spokesman told us, "it was always the intention for No. 390055 to enter service in April, however, at short notice we reached agreement to use the train earlier to allow engineers to understand the 10/11-car integration process. Our current train insurance - which runs until 31st March - assumed only one of the new trains would be in use at any one time. This insurance provides cover for damage caused to the trains, and includes damage caused by one train to another. The structure of this kind of insurance, which is underwritten by various companies/ organisations, means that it is not possible to make changes at short notice.

Given the higher value of the new trainsets, our insurers sought mitigation against any impact damage that one of the new trains may cause to the other. We have been able to manage this request through the use of these two new trains on specific diagrams, although the actual risk is miniscule and potentially billions-to-one".

Station Photography problems

Dear Editor,
A group from the Cornwall Railway Society was touring the North West, and on arriving at Blackpool North decided to take some pictures of the superb signal gantries to be found there.

But before many pictures had been taken, an irate female staff member ran all the way up the lengthy platform and told us to stop, saying that it was illegal. She said "Even the Queen would not be allowed to take photographs from the platform". The male staff at the barriers obviously concurred and had a go at us as well, as we exited the station.

Tony Wright

Ed. - Tony we have spoken to Northern about the issues you encountered at Blackpool North. The company's Media Relations Manager, Carolyn Watson, replied "We're sorry that Mr Wright and his fellow society members experienced problems at Blackpool North. As we do a lot of tanking and cleaning of units while they are in the platforms, we tend to keep this area closed to passengers until their train is ready, to minimise safety risks.

That said, we follow the National Rail Guidelines so we ask anyone wanting to take photographs at any of our stations, including Blackpool North, to let the station supervisor know when they arrive, that way we can give them a safety briefing where required and provide access to the platforms".

Did you Know?

... that Severn Junction Signal Box at Shrewsbury is the largest mechanical box in the UK?

Construction of the LNWR-designed 180-lever signal box started in 1903, being completed a year later.

It sits in the triangle of lines bordered by those from Wolverhampton and Hereford, while the third side is the link line between the two. Today, the box controls the south end of Shrewsbury station and interfaces with Abbey Foregate box on the Wolverhampton line, Sutton Bridge Junction box on the Hereford/Machynlleth route, and Crewe Junction box to the north of the station.

Severn Junction is today the largest mechanical signal box still in daily use in its original location, doing the job for which it was built. The structure, which is likely to remain in service for a further 30-40 years, is Grade II-listed, protecting its survival well into the future.

Above: Class 70 No. 70016 negotiates the layout at Shrewsbury, passing the iconic signalbox with the Monday's Only Guide Bridge to Moreton-on-Lugg working of empty bogie hoppers. *Peter Marsh*

Today the box controls a selection of manual semaphore along with a small number of colour light signals.

Those readers wanting the location of the box and the station, should click here for Google Maps.

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:
BR Standard 7MT Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* worked the Carlisle to Crewe leg of a Pathfinder Tours charter on 10th March, pictured passing the summit at Ais Gill. *Fred Kerr*

14th March 2012

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote Street Club, Ne Road, Basingstoke RG21 7NG. 'Slovenia: Steam on the Sunny Side of the Alps' by John Gulliver. Meeting commences at 20.00. Visitors welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01256 819401 for further details.

Oxfordshire Rly Society
Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Oxford OX2 9LD. 'British Railways Signalling Part " by Mike Walker. Meeting starts 19.30.

RCTS (Cardiff)
Old Church Rooms, Radyr. 'Picture Postcard Railway Ramble' by Stephen Gay. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Hitchin)
Hitchin Christian Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin. 'Baie de Somme Railway' by Michael Bunn. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Y.M.C.A., Bridge Street, Guildford, GU1 4SB. 'Steam in Turkey' by Edward Talbot. Starts 19.30. Contact 01372 379216 for info.

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

15th March 2012

Barrow Hill Engine Shed Society
The Roundhouse, Barrow Hill. 'Mainline 2011' by PSOV. Meeting commences at 19.30. £2 Admission. Contact 01246 472450 or e-mail beardspaul@aol.com for details.

Bath Railway Society
Bath Green Park Station Meeting Room, Bath. 'World War Two and Wales' by Terry McCarthy. Starts 19.30. All welcome. £2 Admission. Contact Kevin Plummer (Evenings) on 01225 312564 for details.

Ffestiniog Railway (Bristol)
BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol BS34 7RG. 'The Sustainable Railway - Phase 5' by Andy Savage. Starts 19.45. Contact the Acting Secretary, Tim Maynard on 01275 341889 for details.

Irish Railway Record Society (London)
The Exmouth Arms, 1 Starcross Street, London NW12HR. 'Remaining Irish Signal Cabins' by Angus McDougall. Starts 19.00. £3.50 Donation. Contact the Secretary at irrslondon@hotmail.com for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Nth West)
The Pied Bull, 54 High Street, Newton-le-Willows. WA12 9SH 'Pakistan and India' by Geoff Monks. Start 19.30. £2 donation. Contact the Secretary, Neville Bond on 01925 226473 for details.

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

Permanent Way Institution (Nottingham & Derby)
Aston Court Hotel, adjacent to Derby Station, Derby. 'Derailment Investigation Worldwide' by Mike McLoughin. Starts 18.30. Contact Colin Cowey on 07946 482343 or at colin.cowey@talk21.com for details.

RCTS (Darlington)
The Scout Building, Widdowfield Street, Darlington. 'Decline and Rise of Bishop Auckland Station' by Andrew Everitt. Starts 19.00.

RCTS (Shipley)
Saltaire Methodist Church, Saltaire Road, Shipley. 'Branch AGM & Members' Slides and Artefacts'. Starts 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
St John's United Reformed Church Hall, Mowbray Road, New Barnet, EN5 1RH. 'Pictures from the Society's Photographic Collection' by Keith Greenwood. Start 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 0208 368 6200 for further details.

16th March 2012

Gosport Rly Society
The Methodist Church, Stoke Road, Gosport. 'The Patriot Project' by Barney Borrowdale. Starts 20.00.

Great Western Society (Taunton)
Village Hall, Stoke St Mary, Nr Taunton TA3 5DE. 'Railways in South Wales during World War II' by Terry McCarthy. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01823 334188 for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. 'Railways & Remembrance' by Ian McInnes. Starts 19.00. Contact the Secretary on 01434 688946 for further details.

17th March 2012

Great Western Society (South West)
Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay TQ12 5LD. 'Locomotives of the S.E. & C.R.' by Terry McCarthy. Starts 18.30. Contact the Secretary on 01803 336329 for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS. 'Rhapsody in Blue - The Great Northern Railay of Ireland' by Ken Grainger. Meeting commences at 14.00. Contact the Secretary on 0161 928 2461 for further details

19th March 2012

Great Central Railway (Spinkhill)
The Angel Hotel, 26 College Road, Spinkhill, Shaffield S21 3YB. 'The GCR 567 Locomotive Project' by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor. Starts 19.30. Contact Frank Greaves on 01909 473927 for further details.

NYMR (York)
New Earswick Sports and Social Club, New Earswick,YO32 4AG. 'The DVLR Further Reflections and its Revival' by J.Stockwell. Starts 19.30. Contact Bryan Blundell on 01904 764648 for further details.

Plymouth Rly Circle
St Edward's Church Hall, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4PG. 'Northern Spanish Steam in the Early 1960s' by Peter Gray. Starts 19.30. £2 Admission.

RCTS (Chester)
The Town Crier, City Road/ Station Road, Chester. 'American Wanderings in 2010/11' by Gordon Davies. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Coventry)
Maudsley Hotel, 190 Allesley Old Road, Coventry. 'Steam in the Sixties' by Roger Norfolk. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Oxford)
West Oxford Democrats Club, 1 North Street, Osney. 'The Swindon and Cricklade Railway' by Jim Poor. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Shenfield)
Shenfield Parish Hall, 80 Hutton Road, Shenfield. 'The GBRf Story' by Paul Lemon. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Weston Favell)
Weston Favell Parish Hall, Booth Lane South, Western Favell. 'Steam in India and Pakistan' by Rodney Allen. Meeting starts at 14.00.

Stafford Rly Society (Joint with Continental Railway Circle)
St Leonards Social Club, Stafford. 'Quiz with Stafford Railway Circle'. Meeting commences at 19.30. All welcome. Contact the Secretary on 01785 840622 for further details

20th March 2012

Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society (Portsmouth)
The Railway Social Club, near Fratton Railway Station, Portsmouth. 'Railways of Switzerland' by Ted Vaughan. Satrts19.30. All welcome. £1.50 Admission. Contact David Meyer on 02392 671251 for details.

Permanent Way Institution (West Yorkshire)
The Pullman Room, The Cosmopolitan Hotel, 2 Lower Briggate, Leeds LS1 4AE. 'Viaduct and Aqueduct Construction' by Tim Ball. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Martin Wooff on 07747 160949 or at abcts@daelnet.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Cambridge)
Abbey Meadows Community Wing, Primary School, Galfrid Road, Cambridge. 'Engine Sheds in Steam Days - Part 5' by Chris Banks. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Cheltenham)
The Victory Club, Burlington House, Lypiatt Road, Cheltenham. 'A 45 Year Wander with the Camera' by David Walker. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary at paulandpauline@gearey.fslife.co.uk for details.

RCTS (Hull)
Upstairs, The Highway Public House, Willerby Road, Hull. 'A Pot Pori of Slides' by Eddie Parker. Starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary at richardh@dibroady.co.uk for further details.

21st March 2012

Bradford Rly Circle
The Centre, Heaton Baptist Church, Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX. 'Trains, Buses and Trolleys in Bradford' by Robin Lush. Starts 19.30.

Permanent Way Institution (Glasgow)
Upstairs Lounge, The Iron Horse, West Nile Street, Glasgow. 'Plant Innovations' by John Watson. Starts 17.30. Contact the Secretary, Jack Scott on 07789 765291 for further details.

RCTS (Eastleigh)/ Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society (Southampton)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road Eastleigh. 'Isle of Man' by David Mead. Starts 19.45. Contact the Secretary, Ted Vaughan on 023 8084 9533 for further details.

Thorncombe Railway Activities Club
Village Hall, Thorncombe, TA20 4NE. 'Britain's Lost Railways' by Paul Atterbury. Starts 19.30. All welcome. £3 Admission. Contact the Secretary at nicksidmouth@gmail.com for further details.

22nd March 2012

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BB. 'Friends of National Railway Museum' by George Rutter. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Bob Poole on 01474 326232 for further details.

Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society (Thames Valley)
Church House, Church Street, Caversham, Reading. 'Steamy Eruptions in Indonesia' by Tim Edmonds. Starts 19.30. All welcome. £2 Admission. Contact Rob Latham on 01628 623579 for further details.

RCTS (Ipswich)
Bridge Ward Social Club, 68 Austin Street, Ipswich. 'South African Railways from the 1960's' by Ron White. Meeting starts at 14.15.

RCTS (Newcastle)
The Brunswick Methodist Hall, Newcastle. 'Developments at the National Railway Museum' by Steve Davies MBE. Meeting starts 13.30. Contact the Secretary at jimbrick@fsmail.net for further details.

RCTS (Peterborough)
St Luke's Church, Mayors Walk, Peterborough. 'Max Baumbert - East Germany;s Notable Locomotive Engineer' by Geoff Catlin. Meeting starts 19.30.

Stevenage Locomotive Society
The Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, London Road, Stevenage SG1 1XN. 'Great Railway Photographers (RAS Collection)' by Brian Stephenson. Meeting commences at 19.45. Visitors welcome. £2 admission. Contact the Treasurer on 07803 046076 or at alan.pitt@lineone.net for further details.

23rd March 2012

Great Central Railway Society (London)
Keen House, 4 Calshott Street, King's Cross, London N1 9DA. 'New England in the Fall' by Bob Gellatly. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact Richard Butler on 01525 372489 or 0207 620 5399 for further details.

Great Western Society (North West)
St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford, Warrington WA4 1DN. 'The L. & Y. in the L.M.S. Period' by Noel Coates. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury. 'More American Wanderings - Plains Drifter' by Gordon Davies. Meeting commences at 19.30

26th March 2012

Permanent Way Institution (Ashford)
The Elwick Club, Church Road, Ashford.'The Molobezi Sawmills Railway' by Graham Roberts. And AGM. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact the Secretary, Ted Hamer on 01227 711897 or at tedwardian@gmail.com for further details.

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