

THE CORKSCREW

Newsletter of the

Wimborne Railway Society

Founded 1975



Issue 98

April 2017



34053 Sir Keith Park and 34081 82 Squadron at the Bulleid Gala. See the report by Colin Stone (who took the picture) on pages 22 and 23.



After the S&C reopening 60103 Flying Scotsman spent time on the Worth Valley and is seen here approaching Oxenhope on 9 April 2017. See article from page 4. Colin Aveyard

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Editorial

First of all many apologies for the late publication of this issue of The Corkscrew. A combination of work, holidays, Easter, and preparing a film show all conspired to eat up too much of my time. Hopefully we will be back on track with the June issue although at the time of writing there are no contributions in hand so it's likely to be a thin issue.

Following our theme this year of including spotting articles, mainly because that's all that's been submitted, we have another issue spanning both new and old with an account of my spring break up north, Colin Stone's search for class 68's and Alan Swinburne's dip in to his 1960's records.

For those of us who are spotters there is a massive amount of new investment coming, but for many of us in the south west the news that the South West Trains franchise held by Stagecoach since 1996 had been awarded to a First/MTR consortium was a bit of an eye opener. What was more surprising was that the new operator announced that they would be replacing the inner suburban fleet, all the 455's and 456's, the 458 fleet, including the recent conversions from 460's plus the yet to be introduced 707 fleet which does not meet their criteria for passenger comforts. The lack of toilets is being cited as one issue. One final surprise was the announcement that a number of Wessex Electric class 442's would be returning to operate the Waterloo to Portsmouth express workings, and the introduction of a Weymouth to Portsmouth service in 2018. All of this is going to make our area a lot more interesting.

Sit back and enjoy Corkscrew 98. Closing date for issue 99 is 25 May 2017.

Cover Picture:- The newest locomotive to adorn the cover of The Corkscrew is Class 88 bi-mode locomotive 88006. Unloaded at Workington docks on the morning of 30 March 2017, it is seen on the tail end of a seven loco convoy passing through Carlisle station at 1752 that afternoon. See article from page 4 for more details.

It all went according to plan (eventually)

by Ken Aveyard

So it's the last week of March and once again your intrepid editor is off on his jollies to the frozen north to attend the Spring Transport Fair at the Manchester Museum of Transport and meet up with brother Colin for a few days of bus and train spotting and new track bashing. Our targets for the week included Colin's last 350/4 unit from Trans Pennine, quite a few of the highest numbered Manchester trams and the second city crossing, the new curve at Todmorden, and whatever showed up at Nuneaton one day and either Carlisle or York on another. Carlisle is a long drive from Bradford for what these days is minimal freight, so York is frequently substituted for the buses and the NRM, and is generally a shorter day. Our decision did not have to be made in advance as you will read later.

Well the plan went out of the window almost immediately, as setting off at the usual 0430 on Friday 24 March, I made it as far as Ringwood whereupon the A31 across the forest was closed and a long winded diversion added about a twenty minute delay. Despite a clear run and little in the way of traffic or roadworks as I approached Adwick station I could see the 0915 for Doncaster departing. I normally manage to get the 0856 or the 0915 but resigned myself to the 30 minute wait for the 0956. This later train has the advantage of being of peak so only £1.05 return to Doncaster. Just as it was about to arrive the station supervisor commented that his screen had gone all red, and the 0956 disappeared from the screens, with the 1015 showing as delayed. It was apparent that nothing was moving so on the advice of the station man, everybody trooped off to the bus stop and a very surprised First South Yorkshire bus driver who found around 30 people waiting for him.

Anyway finally getting on Doncaster station at 1040 about an hour down, I discovered that a power cut affecting the signal box had turned off all the signals for around 45 minutes, with nothing able to move. By now however, the signals were back on line but through services were delayed by up to an hour, and at least one Kings Cross to Leeds service was terminated in platform 4 and returned from whence it came. Or it would have done had the crew not been waiting for it in Leeds, so the HST blocked the platform for nearly an hour leaving only platform 8 to cope with northbound traffic. At one point there were three trains stationary south of the station waiting for the one platform.

With the reduction of the coal traffic that used to pass through Doncaster, daytime freight can be something of a hit and miss, and some days more GBRf locos than DBS can be seen. The usual thunderbird loco was stabled in the West Yard and surprisingly this was Arriva Trains Wales liveried 67003 rather than a DBS one.

66730 headed north on a Doncaster Down Decoy to North Blyth coal working whilst 66707 followed an hour later on a similar rake. Over on the works, 08853 collected DVT 82203 from the west yard and took it on to the plant, whilst 66955 ran south light engine followed by 66554 on a northbound liner. DBS 66183 took a Railvac towards Hull and the regular WBB minerals hoppers had 66769 on the front.



66183 hauls Railvac 5 through Doncaster station on 24 March 2017. KA

Not being time critical this year I decided to catch the 1525 Leeds service back to Adwick, which was due in to Doncaster at 1509, but as time progressed there was no sign of it, and then came the ominous announcement that due to signalling problems at South Elmsall no trains could run towards Wakefield and Leeds. At that point, 90019 had arrived on a Leeds working, and the train was announced as being diverted to York instead, and passengers for Leeds and Wakefield should travel via York. Thankfully the 1538 to Adwick was still able to run so 142007 transported me back to the car for the onward drive to Bradford.

So Saturday morning and it's off to Manchester for the Spring Transport Fair at the Greater Manchester Transport Museum. My bus in to Bradford got me there a few minutes early at 0820 with ample time to catch the 0840 to Manchester. On arrival at the booking office the lady on the counter said "It's rail replacement buses from Halifax to Todmorden" so I resigned myself to not getting there for the first vintage bus to the museum. As I walked to the platforms I noticed the only train on the sign was the 0828 departure and the guard was just closing the doors, so a quick sprint up the platform saw me on board a class 155 for the short run to Halifax.

At Halifax rail replacement coaches cannot get on the forecourt as it blocks the car parking so it's a 100 yards walk across a main road and up hill to the waiting coach, a nice Bova of Blue Sky Coaches of Leeds.

We had to wait quite a while as all the passengers made their way to the coach, but eventually we set off towards Sowerby Bridge which is difficult to access in a long coach. We doubled back and switched valleys to Mytholmroyd where we paused on the main road as the station is inaccessible, and then on to Hebden Bridge where we called at the station forecourt amidst the local bus services. Finally arrival at Todmorden up the aptly named Rise Lane a steep narrow access road where half a dozen coaches were parked.



The Blue Sky Coaches Bova on arrival at Todmorden closely followed by a J&B Travel Alexander bodied Daf climbing Rise Lane. Ken Aveyard

To cope with the engineering work, the Blackpool to Halifax and Leeds trains had become Blackpool to Manchester Victoria trains running in the paths of the Bradford Manchester service but otherwise the trains from Todmorden were only the hourly circular service from Accrington and Burnley using the new Todmorden curve. Thus it was that instead of arriving in Manchester at 0940 I was waiting to catch an 0958 all stations service from Todmorden. Thankfully the local train was a double unit with 142034 atop a 150 unit and arrival in Manchester was on time at 1040.

The free bus up to the museum was a nicely restored 1983 Leyland Atlantean with Northern Counties bodywork to the GM standard design and I had a reasonable day coming back with a few photographs and models for the collection, plus a very nice Bradford bus and rail guide for 1960. Visiting buses included a brand new ADL Enviro 400 for Goodwins and a recovery vehicle converted from an East Kent AEC Regent from the same operator. Of necessity I had to shorten my visit as having lost one hour, I had to lose a second hour to get home again, so this year there was no time to spend in Manchester. I did however cop three new trams in and around Victoria although I would see them all again two days later. The return journey to Todmorden was on an all stations service to Blackpool, and local passengers commented on the nice new train they were on. I could have sworn I was on a 158!! I had a non stop run on the coach from Todmorden to Halifax and as home lies on a Halifax to Bradford bus route I baled at Halifax but then ended up losing nearly an hour in Halifax bus station as two consecutive buses were cancelled. All in all a day possibly to forget!!

Monday 27th March saw Colin and I heading for Manchester with the express targets of seeing 350402 on the Trans Pennine electric services, as many new Manchester trams as possible, and thanks to it opening the week before a ride on the new second city crossing on Metrolink.

Having researched the passing times of the Anglo-Scottish services at Oxford Road I calculated we would need to be there to see the 0719 northbound service, so we timed an arrival at Manchester Victoria where car parking was £4 for 12 hours, for the 0706 tram. We found that the single fare from Victoria to Deansgate was actually a 2-hour validity central zone ticket so in theory you could do all the various routes between them and Piccadilly for the princely sum of £1.20. On arrival at Deansgate the booking clerk didn't bat an eyelid when asked for a senior railcard single to Oxford Road, and we were on the platform in plenty of time to see 350404 go north.

We caught a local service down to Oxford Road where we had the buffet available for breakfast and waited there for the 0757 north, 0822 south, and 0925 south departures still without success. There is an hourly freight path to and from TraffordPark and both 66102 and 66194 passed through on liner trains. With the next southbound arrival due in an hour, it was possible to travel on the 0953 loco hauled north Wales service as far as Newton le Willows and return on a local service and be back on Oxford Road to see this unit work north again at 1119. As it happens we passed 350410 near the junction with the line from Preston. Our loco for the short run was 67014 in silver livery.



67014 at Manchester Oxford Road on the 0953 Holyhead service. KA

Back at Oxford Road, 66952 and 66566 passed through before the next southbound electric at 1128 brought forth 350407 and with yet another hour to kill, we had time to travel on this unit to Manchester Airport and back to Piccadilly, thus getting me a bit of new line. The 1228 arrival was 350406 so with just one hour left and two units to see it was time for a run past Ardwick depot, on the 1246 Hadfield service alighting at Ashburys. Unfortunately there were no electric units visible outside the depot so on arrival at Piccadilly again we had only the 1328 arrival which turned up as 350408. So we had seen all 9 units in use and 350402 had not made an appearance.

After that it was down on to the trams and a run round to St Peters Square where we sat and had lunch, and then went up to Deansgate where you a maximise seeing the newer trams. Another six trams were copped before we returned along the new line to Victoria. All travel after 0930 was done on the Greater Manchester Wayfarer ticket which at £6 Senior (now £8) is exceptional value for the area it covers.



Tram 3100 comes off the new line at St Peters Square. Ken Aveyard

On Tuesday we headed for our regular day out at Nuneaton arriving just in time to see 66169 head north on a Dollands Moor to Ditton steel working. Next up was the bonus of 68021 on the Crewe to Mountsorrel empty boxes, and then 57310 running light from Crewe to Old Oak Common. There is always a steady supply of freight at Nuneaton, with Freightliner, DB Schenker and GBRf prevalent, but occasionally something unusual turns up and one of the double headed class 90 workings had all over blue 90034 with 90037. Still needing a couple of GBRf 66's there is always a sense of anticipation when a known working is expected and I was not disappointed when 66753 turned up on a Stud Farm to Bescot ballast working.

The final bonus was a Carlisle to Leicester barrier coach move that saw 47815 lay over for a while on the rarely used loop next to platform 5.



Rail Operations Group 47815 at Nuneaton on 28 March 2017. K Aveyard

The only disappointment of the day was that we had hoped to find the Vivarail class 230 DMU in service on the Coventry shuttle, but the fire earlier in the year has caused the trial to be cancelled. A sudden heavy rain storm around 1700 confirmed our decision to leave earlier than normal but all in all it was a good day.

Wednesday was planned to be a short day with a combination of bus and rail action as we planned to travel on the third side of the Todmorden triangle opened in 2016. We met up in Bradford centre around 0800 for a bit of bus spotting before catching the 0940 Manchester service to Todmorden courtesy of 158845. Return tickets from Bradford to east Lancashire stations have an easement that allows travel via Todmorden or the direct route providing the journey calls at or passes through Hebden Bridge. We arrived at Todmorden at 1019 and crossed platform to await the 1028 service to Manchester via Accrington which we would take as far as Burnley Manchester Road. This was again a twin unit with 150268 leading and 142049 tagged on behind, so we opted for the 142 and were the only passengers in the rear car as we passed over the new curve in all of 20 seconds, and began the slow grind up Copy Pit. We had barely begun the climb when in the opposite direction a Colas class 60 passed us on an early running Preston to Lindsay oil train. What was annoying was that it had run early from Preston and had it been on time it would have passed through Burnley whilst we were on the station, plus Real Time Trains, showed it was held at Todmorden until right time.

Our arrival at Burnley was on time at 1046 and you have to exit the station up to the road bridge to cross to the other platform from where we took the 1112 direct service back to Halifax on 158910. Here we took a break of journey to look at some more buses after which Colin resumed his journey to Bradford and Baildon by train, and I caught a direct bus home.

Thursday had been left open as we had been watching the various web sites tracking the delivery of the latest batch of classes 68 and 88 which were heading for Workington Docks. After a false alarm that had them landed on Wednesday all things pointed to the boat docking on the morning of Thursday 30th March so the decision was made to head for Carlisle and hope for a transfer move to Kingmoor during the day. When I picked Colin up at 0700 he had checked on Real Time Trains and a light loco had run from Kingmoor to Workington in the morning path set up earlier in the week so we knew something was on.

We went straight to Kingmoor where from the nature reserve we could see 88008 and 88003 on the depot together with the newest class 68, 68025 which was moving about the yard. 37402 was sat ticking over on one of the Cumbrian coast carriage rakes. With 66417 and 66419 being the only other readable locos, we headed for the station parking up in the long stay car park alongside the viaduct from where we observed 37402 propelling its train in to the station.

We walked up to the station to find the forecourt full of replacement coaches as this was the last day before the Settle and Carlisle line reopened with the Flying Scotsman special. By the time we got to the platforms 37402 had backed in to the Cumbria coast bay platform and was about to depart south over 90 minutes late due to problems with flooding further south that had affected the northbound service. An additional loco hauled set was sat in platform 1 but it departed for Kingmoor before we could see what it was. The northbound Tesco train which it is hoped will be class 88 hauled before long came through with 68002 and 68023 on the front just as my camera batteries died.

All day a class 142 unit, 142029 was shuttling up and down the Settle and Carlisle on refresher training for train crew, and we had the usual passing of the West Coast and Cross Country passenger services, but once again despite seeing all eight of the Trans Pennine units 350402 was conspicuous by its absence.

These days there is little scheduled freight through Carlisle, but a check on Real Time Trains showed a live departure from Workington Docks to Carlisle Yard and there was much anticipation as its progress was monitored and much disappointment when 66179 turned up on the Kaolin tanks.

A surprise appearance at 1350 was 68018 running south through Platform 3 on to the West Coast main line, but it turned out to be the 1454 running an hour early. All week 88002 had been running a light engine diagram from Carlisle to Crewe returning via a reversal at Edge Hill and today was no different with an on time pass at 1535. The next possible freight was a Hunterston to Sellafeld service at just after 1600 so we crossed to platform 4 for a better photograph and were rewarded by the appearance of 66301 and 66303 on three flask wagons.



66303 with 66301 on the Hunterston to Sellafeld flasks. Ken Aveyard

Meanwhile the planned 1605 departure from Workington Docks due at 1651 had still not gone live so we had another massive gap until 1719 and the southbound working of the Royal Mail units from Shieldmuir to Warrington, which had 325004/12/13. Then in a little burst of traffic 70005 headed north on a Daventry to Coatbridge intermodal, then at 1740 southbound we had MSC liveried 66709 on coal hoppers from Greenburn to Ratcliffe.

Finally a call was heard from platform 3 that they were on their way, so firing up Real Time Trains, the convoy had indeed left Workington Docks at 1705 and was well on its way and running roughly to time. Now we had a dilemma, the special was pathed through platform 1 and standing at the end of platform 3 gives you a relatively head on angle on the approaching train, so we decided to remain on platform 4 where you get a much better angle but run the risk of being bowled by a southbound train.

The convoy was due at 1751 and there was a southbound Pendolino scheduled for 1755 so time was critical. Tracking the convoy it was down four minutes, and at 1749 the Pendolino rolled in to platform 4, with a red signal so we hoped the signalman was going to hold it but no the aspect went green straight away.

The convoy was at Currock junction and at 1751 it appeared slowly coming round the curve from the Cambrian Coast line. Here however fate dealt us a better hand, as to the annoyance of those still on platform three, the convoy came across to that line which meant we had a clear view as 66421 68026 88007 *Electra* 68027 88010 *Aurora* 88009 *Diana* and 88006 *Juno* rolled gently through the platform and accelerated away towards Kingmoor. As reported elsewhere, the two class 68's which are the first pair for Trans Pennine, were in plain blue. As we walked down the platform the Pendolino began to move and lots of happy spotters began making their way home. On Carlisle station in the whole day we had seen just 19 locos, seven of which were in the convoy and two were on the Cumbrian passenger diagrams. There was one each from DBS, Freightliner and GBRf with the remainder being DRS. A far cry from a few years ago when coal trains were running.

That was the end of our days out for the week but after returning home the following weekend, it was established that 350402 had been in works all week having the new Trans Pennine livery applied, and the following week was back in service between Manchester and Scotland. For me, cops for the week were 14 locos – one GBRf and 13 DRS plus 9 Manchester trams.

CAN YOU HELP?

As Archivist for the Maunsell Locomotive Society, I am compiling a detailed diary of the pre-preservation working lives of our 5 Maunsell designed locomotives: U Class Nos **31618** and **31638**, Q Class No **30541**, V Class No **30928** 'Stowe' and Class S15 No **30847**.

The archive diary is made up of photographs, 'spotting' notes, engine record cards, works and shed records, footplate crew diary records etc.

This appeal therefore goes out to any members of Wimborne Railway Society who might have photographed or spotted our 5 locos anywhere on the Southern at any time prior to their withdrawal from service by British Railways, or would be in possession of any Southern or BR(S) records making mention of any of the 5 locos listed above.

I would therefore be most grateful if you could spare the time to check your records for any information you may have recorded which will be both gratefully received and will certainly enrich the individual archive of each engine. The locomotives are all on the Bluebell Railway.

Please send any details to:

Mike Frackiewicz, Maunsell Locomotive Society,
13 Laburnum Crescent, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7BS Tel No: 01460
76897 E-mail: mike30847@hotmail.com

All costs will be reimbursed. Thank You

**A “SPOTTING” TALE or
HOW TO PART WITH A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF MONEY,
TRAVEL 640 MILES BY TRAIN ON TWO SEPARATE
“JOLLIES”**

JUST TO “COP” FIVE Class 68’s ..

And write the longest Article Title in the history of “THE CORKSCREW”.

By Colin Stone.

The Class 68’s are a relatively new diesel locomotive rated at 3,800 horse power and capable of attaining a speed 100 m.p.h. They were built in Spain by Vossloh and began to arrive in the UK in January 2014. At present there are 25 working in the UK employed by Direct Rail Services (DRS), Scotrail and Chiltern Trains.

Nominally based at Carlisle, Crewe and Wembley, the 68’s are elusive beasts to us Southern based Railway enthusiasts and “number grabbers”. At the time of writing this piece (14/03/17), no member of the class has yet reached Poole or the County of Dorset. The closest one has come to us poor souls is Eastleigh, and even there they are thin on the ground. It was at Eastleigh in the early hours of Saturday 15th March 2014, along with countless other enthusiasts on a late night “stake out” I saw my first 68 No 68002. It arrived from Crewe towed by Class 47 No 47805 to have a new alternator fitted in Eastleigh Works under warranty, it was returned on the 22nd towed by Class 37 No 37423. In July 2014 there was an open day at Crewe (Basford Hall) DRS depot, in conjunction with this “Pathfinder Tours” advertised a charter train from Eastleigh to Crewe. Some members of WRS elected to travel to the event on the charter train, it was advertised as the first train to be hauled by a Class 68!! Mindful of the RST “Railtour Standard Time” and the “Bull****” tour operators use to “talk up” their tours, myself and Paul Kneller decided to use ordinary services via Waterloo and Euston. It paid dividends, not only did the day cost me £5 less than WRS members, but Paul and I managed to visit the exhibition and be back on Crewe station to see the excursion arrive behind a Class 57!! Paul and I left Crewe at 15.00 and were back in our respective homes by about 19.30/20.00, the WRS contingent getting home around midnight or later!!!

But I digress, at the open day, four Class 68’s were accounted for i.e. 68004, 68006, 68007 and 68008. Throughout 2014 and 2015 several others of the Class were “knocked off”, 68003, 68005 and 68009 during two separate outings to Stafford. Also in those two years the batch of six No’s 68010-68015 allocated to Wembley for the Chiltern Train service to Birmingham and Kidderminster were easy pickings. A visit to Marylebone or a ride past Wembley depot during several cheap trips to London soon saw them in the book.

The year of 2016 was something of a nemesis for me and 68 spotting. On two separate occasions other commitments meant I was unable to get to Reading to see 68001 and 68024, nor could I get to Eastleigh to see 68016 and 68017 on an excursion. John Henderson however did manage to do so and saw all four, plus by pure fluke, he also saw No 68019 pass Taunton on the “Northern Belle”. I had made plans to see said train at Castle Cary, but “sods law” dictated the train I had intended to use from Dorchester West was cancelled that day !! I did however “cop” No 68020 at the 2016 DRS Crewe Basford Hall open day. Now we are into the current year of 2017 where at last I come to the point of this short tale. Following the debacle of 29th October 2016 and not seeing the “Northern Belle” at Castle Cary I made regular checks on the Rail Tour calendar. Eventually UK Rail Tours announced a luxury dining experience using the “Northern Belle” coaching stock which would run on a circular route out and back route from London Victoria via Oxford.

Thus Friday February 10th 2017 found Graham Clackett and me on Poole station waiting to meet Tony Stroud off a train from Dorchester. We left Poole at 09.07 aboard “Arkwright” No 444026 heading for Basingstoke where we changed into “Vomit Comet” Voyager No 221134 which duly got us into Reading at 11.06. To say it was bloody cold at Reading was an understatement, we had just over an hour to wait before our quarry appeared No 68025 was at the head of the train and No 68023 on the rear.



68025 on the Northern Belle at Reading on 10 February 2017 Colin Stone

We celebrated our “cops” with a warming cuppa and a Cornish Pasty. With not much freight to be seen, just 66955 and 59102 plus an unidentified 59, we decided on a short hop to Tilehurst. This short jaunt on unit No 165111 allowed us to pass the new Reading e.m.u. depot and see 387130, 387140 and 387144, the latter two being the days bonus “cops”.

Ironically in the 20 minute wait at Tilehurst for our return train, two freights passed hauled by 66's No's 66169 and 66599. Unit No 165127 took us back to Reading where a quick dash for the 15.07 departure saw No 165108 take us to Basingstoke, whence No 444034 returned us to Poole after a 170 mile round trip.

I mentioned Tony Stroud earlier, on a past occasion Tony had suggested a trip to Norwich to view the DRS Class 68's on hire to Abellio Greater Anglia. Sadly we let the opportunity slip in 2016, but with the knowledge No's 68016, 68021 & 68024 were in residence at Norwich we decided to give it go and travel to East Anglia. The day we chose for our "jolly" was Tuesday 21st February. On the appointed day at 07.41 Graham Clackett and I boarded No 444016 at Poole to join forces with Tony. A late arrival into Waterloo meant we had a mad dash via the Waterloo & City line to Liverpool Street where we just managed to board the 10.30 to Norwich propelled by Class 90 No 90014. The fact we just made it onto the 10.30 was probably fortuitous because as we left Colchester at slow speed we were passed by No 68024 towing Class 37 No 37405 and a single coach running at an equally slow speed for their passage of Colchester station. On arrival into Norwich we discovered that No 68024 was bound for Eastleigh works!!! Unbelievable!

IF we had been aboard the following 11.00 ex Liverpool Street we would probably have missed seeing one of our quarry ! But luckily we hadn't. Ipswich was passed next and at least five locomotives were on the stabling point :- No's 66543, 90006, 66415, 66537, 66557. Plus 66704 was noted on the "new" east/south curve at Ipswich heading for Felixstowe. On arrival into Norwich at 12.07 the other two 68's No's 68016 and 68021 were stabled alongside the station .. Three more 68's in the bag. Norwich was something of a locomotive "hot spot", we saw DRS Class 37's No's 37419 and 37423 depart "top & tail" on the 12.25 service to Great Yarmouth.



37423 on the rear of the 1225 Great Yarmouth service.

Colin Stone

Other loco's seen were 66198, 57002 and 37057 on a test train. Tony went outside onto the station forecourt and did a bit of bus spotting a-la Chris Aston and Ken Aveyard!! Graham and I celebrated our "cop" success by taking a few photographs and consuming some Upper Crust baguettes. Once the buses began to repeat Tony re-appeared, so we decided to leave Norwich on the 15.00 service hauled by 90003 and carry out plan B.

This entailed getting off the train at Stratford, East London and travelling to West Ham via the Jubilee Line. We arrived in time to see all six of the new c2c Class 387 e.m.u's, No's 387306, 387304 and 387302 passed e.c.s. at 17.25 heading for Fenchurch Street.

Three minutes later at 17.28 No's 387302, 387301 and 387305 headed out on a service to Thorpe Bay ... Job done, so back down to the Jubilee line and into to Waterloo and "our café", The Fishcoteque for Sausage, Egg and Chips followed by Cherry Pie and Ice Cream. ... Lovely stuff. Finally the 19.05 departure from Waterloo aboard No 444005 got us home to Poole and Dorchester to end a 460 mile round trip. Apart from the "cops", the journey to and from Norwich, once away from the London suburbs, was a pure delight.

Both Tony and Graham, without prompting, agreed the ride was another highlight of the day. The coaching stock was comfortable with seats and tables which lined up with the windows, from which the view was most agreeable. Sadly both days out were short in participant numbers as few of our usual group of nine could not, or did not want to do the trips, never the less the three of us had two great days out.

Was it worth it ? Well it all depends on your point of view. Financially at a combined cost of just over £80 for both outings, some would say not, but there is more to it than money. None of us are getting any younger and as the saying goes "You can't take it with you".

Being retired, I seem to be busier now than I ever was at work ! So a day out is good fun with plenty of (sometimes rude) banter to be had in good company, plus of course the thrill of the chase. With another 10 Class 68's on order, ostensibly to work Trans Pennine services, the coming years could well be interesting, not to say expensive. Oh, and what about the new Class 88 dual power locomotives?? Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer, I know the purse strings are tight, but I am writing to you about my old age pension increase

P.S. Having heard of the exploits of "Jammy s*d" Ken Aveyard in Carlisle, I think I had better give up !!

Western Travels Around 1960

By Alan Swinburne

My first recollections of travelling behind ex-GWR steam went back to a family holiday about 1958, when we stayed at Exmouth but used the ferry over to Starcross to catch a train for the short journey to Dawlish. The outgoing train was hauled by No. 1015 'County of Gloucester' and this has proved to be my only journey behind this class. As most of you know, the railway at Dawlish runs close to the beach and seawall and in steam days there was a constant flow of interesting engines to watch! In the afternoon, No.4165, one of the 5100 class Prairie tanks, was in charge of our return train. Another trip on the same holiday produced No.6814 'Enborne Grange' for the morning journey from Starcross to Torquay. Coming back from Torquay we had to change at Newton Abbot, but I was pleased to find No.6004 'King George III' at the head of the afternoon 5.04 pm train, probably working through to Paddington.



Not 1015 but County class 1014 County of Glamorgan at an unknown location with what looks like a Southern loco alongside. WRS Archive

Before I kept detailed journey notes, my first Paddington departure was behind an unspecified 'Castle' class on a Summer Saturday holiday journey to Minehead. The Castle took us as far as Taunton where it was changed for two 'Prairie' tanks to work the steeply graded Minehead branch. Coming back there was a similar arrangement with a change of locos at Taunton. Our return to Paddington was behind No.5954 'Faendre Hall'. My next trip out of Paddington was just before the suburban services were dieselised and we caught a Reading semi-fast to Slough.



Class 61XX prairie tank 6135 at Paddington on 6 June 1964 WRS C856

The engines used on these trains were 6100 class 2-6-2 'Prairie' tanks introduced by the GWR in 1931 for the Paddington local services. They were about 10 per cent more powerful than the slightly older 5100 class 2-6-2s. Our engine was No.6163 on the journey out. I remember that at the time the suburban workings from Paddington seemed to be conducted in a rather leisurely manner compared to the briskness of the trains from Waterloo and Victoria. Our only intermediate stop before Slough was at Ealing Broadway. We were impressed though by the clean exterior condition of the Kings and Castles working the expresses on the main line and most of the engines were smartly turned out. Our return at 2.48 was behind another 6100 class 'Prairie' tank No.6123; this engine kept to time with just the one stop at Ealing Broadway.

During 1959 I travelled with my father to Bristol for the day and we arrived at Paddington to catch the 11.05 'Merchant Venturer' express. This consisted of 9 coaches in attractive chocolate and cream colours headed by No.7030 'Cranbrook Castle'. The scheduled first stop was Bath Spa, allowed 107 minutes for just under 107 miles. Out to Slough all went reasonably well as we worked up to 68 mph, but we then came to a complete standstill for about three minutes near Taplow because of adverse signals. Although a brief 75 mph was reached near Twyford, more signal checks followed through Reading and onto Pangbourne. By this stage we were running nearly 7 minutes late and a slowing to 35mph through Didcot did not help time recovery.

We then made better progress at 75mph near Shrivenham and again just before Chippenham before easing to 60mph near Corsham. Our fastest running then ensued down the gradient through Box tunnel and for two miles we averaged 85 mph! We then slowed for the Bath stop reached in 113 minutes. After Bath we reached 65 mph at Keynsham and ran into Bristol Temple Meads exactly 5 minutes late. Considering the delays experienced, the Castle had performed pretty well. The return journey on the 5.27 Bristol to Paddington was less fortunate as our engine No.5085 'Evesham Abbey' failed at Swindon and had to be hastily replaced by No.6902 'Butlers Hall'. I did not record our exact arrival time at Paddington but we were somewhat late! No.5085 was one of the original Castle class engines converted from Churchward's 'Star' class by Collett and therefore an old engine by 1959.

The next journey from Paddington in late 1959/early 1960 was on the Birmingham line. The 'King' class introduced in 1927 (and modified with 4-row superheater and double chimney after the war) were in 1960 still the mainstay of the Western Region Birmingham expresses. This reflected the long trains and steep gradients encountered on the Birmingham route for which Class8 power was needed. Our journey was only as far as High Wycombe and was the first stop for the 9.00 'Inter City' train to Birmingham. Our locomotive was No.6021 'King Richard II' at the front of a 12 coach train. The first 20 miles almost as far as Beaconsfield are graded against the engine. By Denham, after a cautious start we worked up to 60mph, but then had to slow to 15mph for a PW slack at Denham Golf Course, just at the foot of 5 miles uphill. No.6024 slowly recovered to about 45mph up to the summit and then accelerated to a top speed of 70mph after Beaconsfield, before slowing for the High Wycombe stop where we alighted.

Our onward journey to Maidenhead could not have been more different as we found ourselves travelling behind 0-6-0 Pannier Tank No.9415 of the 9400 class. This class only entered service as recently as 1949 and was thus much newer than the King class engine on the Birmingham express. As many readers will know the line between High Wycombe and Bourne End no longer exists, but the continuation to Maidenhead is still operational. The journey on the 11.0 train was a very pleasant sojourn on a country line full of GWR character, with the Pannier Tank bustling along between the station stops.

The next leg of the journey from Maidenhead was a semi-fast service to Reading calling at Twyford and hauled by a 'Prairie' Tank coming down from Paddington. Once at Reading we had some lunch, walked by the Thames and then came back to the station to watch the mainly steam trains calling there or passing through. Our final run of the day was to return to Paddington on the 3.30 departure allowed 40 minutes for the 36mile trip and this arrived about 5 minutes late behind No.4095 'Harlech Castle' with a light 6 coach load. The Castle made a brisk start and reached 82mph on level track at Taplow and again through Slough.



Class 94XX pannier tank 9406 working on carriage shunting duties at Paddington station on 6 June 1964. WRS C876

The first 20 miles from the start were covered in 19¼ minutes before we had a very severe 10mph P.W. slack at West Drayton. Speed was back to 70mph again by Southall and we touched 73mph through West Ealing before easing down for the restricted approach to Paddington from Westbourne Park. Our overall time worked out at 39 minutes but showed the free running of the Castle class engines under the right conditions.

A few months later in 1960 I have a record of another journey back from Reading behind No.5023 'Brecon Castle,' but this time hauling 11 coaches on a 42 minute non-stop schedule. On this trip the best top speed of 72mph (on level track) was reached at Burnham near Slough but a severe signal check to 25mph at Southall spoiled the rest of the journey as we only recovered to 58mph by Acton. The overall time was 43½ minutes but I think the engine was being held back because of a train in front for much of the way.

I did enjoy more Western Region steam journeys in 1961 but also had my first trip behind a 'Warship' class diesel as well.

By 1962 the diesels dominated most main-line services and my last BR era steam run on Western metals was in that same year behind a 'Hall' class loco. In a future article I shall survey my experiences at that interesting transitional time.

RAILWAYS ROUNDABOUT

JANUARY :- A test train worked by Class 37 No 37175 ran down to Weymouth in the early hours of Thursday 26th passing through Poole at 00.17 and returning at 02.50. It worked with two Network Rail instrument coaches and a DVT at the other end. Following the momentous (to my mind at least) first run of the re-instated Hamworthy Stone train behind No 59201 on the 25th, a second train soon followed on Friday 27th, this time No 59101 worked the train. On the last day of the month Class 37 No 37057 and a DVT worked yet another test train from Woking to Dorchester, it passed Poole at 23.16.

FEBRUARY:- At 00.12 on the 1st No 37057 returned from Dorchester working the above mentioned test train heading for Eastleigh. As the train was running some 30 minutes late the driver “opened up” after leaving Poole and the glorious sound of an English Electric engine at “full bore” echoed over the town as it climbed Parkstone bank.

Later in the day at 07.45 the third Hamworthy Stone Train heralded a pleasant surprise when it arrived behind Class 60 No 60054. This locomotive worked “The Stone” two days later on Friday 3rd. It became the first Class 60 into Poole since sister loco’ No 60009 worked the stone train in October 2008. Two more stone trains ran in the week ending 12th, Class 59 No 59103 arrived on Wednesday 8th, followed by sister loco’ No 59204 on Friday 10th, both trains passed Poole inbound at the revised time of 07.47.

On Monday 13th the by now regular cyclical Derby-Weymouth-Eastleigh test train ran in its usual “pathway” and passed Poole at 21.03. Class 37 No 37254 was leading going down with sister engine No 37219 on the rear, which led on the return through Poole at 22.40. Unusually Overhead Line Inspection coach “MENTOR” was in the formation.

Later in the week the Hamworthy stone train ran again this time on Thursday 16th with Class 59 No 59202 and the following day (Friday 17th) with Class 60 No 60054 putting in another appearance (see above). No more such trains ran for the remainder of the month.

MARCH :- On Wednesday 1st No 60054 returned with 19 wagons loaded with stone, followed next day (Thursday 2nd) by Class 59 No 59205 with a similar load. Both trains were booked to depart Hamworthy an hour later than usual at 14.18.

At 22.50 on Friday 9th GBRf Class 66 No 66705 arrived into Poole with an engineers train bound for p.w. work between Bournemouth and Brockenhurst. After running round its train in Poole yard it left for the worksite at Midnight.

After a week without any stone trains running to Hamworthy Class 59 No 59001 arrived at 09.00 on Tuesday 14th with 18 loaded wagons, after unloading and running round at Hamworthy Goods the empties left at 13.20. The following day (15th) the stone was load 17 and was worked by No 59103. Two more Stone trains ran on Wednesday 22nd behind No 59002 and on Friday 24th with No 59202 in charge. On these occasions the trains ran in the early path arriving at 08.00, leaving as usual at 13.20. Tuesday 28th saw Bulleid No 34046 "Brauton" pass through Poole at 15.40 with its support coach in tow heading for Swanage. Class 59 No 59103 put in two appearances on the Stone on Thursday 30th March and Friday 31st.

APRIL :- Monday 3rd saw Class 66 No 66023 arrive with the first stone of the month. At the time of writing (4th) the Hamworthy Stone train is running at the following time through Poole :-
Loaded arrival 09.04, Empties return 13.18. This follows three timing changes presumably due to the service "settling in" ?

SWANAGE RAILWAY (SR) :- The winter service (orange timetable) saw trains run on Saturdays only until Saturday 4th February 2017. Mostly worked by M7 No 30053, it was expected that these workings would see the loco' through to the end of its current boiler certificate. However the good news is the M7's boiler was granted a **10 month extension until November 2017,** thus the old girl will soldier on.

During half term week (11th-19th February) services were handled by BB No 34070 "Manston". Class U No 31806 was moved to Herston Works in February to allow its motion to be "tightened" and adjusted as well as undergo other minor work. On the future release of No 31806 from Herston works there is a remote possibility of a pleasant surprise ? Watch this space !

During the last few days of February and first week of March the railway employed the services of a tamping machine, which ran the full length of the SR from River Frome to Swanage. On Saturday 10th March Standard 4 Tank No 80104 masquerading as No 80146 looking and sounding superb was back in action working service trains. It was also working on the 11th, as was M7 No 30053 which was in charge of the Wessex Belle dining train.

In readiness for the "Strictly Bulleid" gala two loco's arrived by road in the week ending 26th March, first on Wednesday 22nd March was No 34053 "Sir Keith Park". Next day it was the turn of No 34092 "City of Wells", both were towed to Swanage by Class 33 diesel No 33012. A week later on the 28th No 34046 "Brauton" arrived from Southall under its own steam over the mainline connection, arrival into Swanage was around 17.00. Finally on Wednesday 29th BB No 34081 "92 Squadron" arrived by road on a low loader.

STRICTLY BULLEID GALA :- A three day feast of Bulleid Pacifics took place over 31st March and 1st & 2nd April with an intensive timetable with all passenger trains running from Swanage through to River Frome bridge. Unfortunately on all three days the time table “slipped” with delays of around 40 minutes on Friday and Saturday day. Delays at the end of the day on Sunday saw the delays stand at 60 minutes due to a signal problem at Harmans Cross and a line side fire at Creech Bottom. With good weather over all three days the crowds flocked in bringing a record number of Gala Passengers to the railway. All loco’s ran impeccably with just a minor brake problem with No 34081 on the 2nd. The visiting locomotives returned to their home bases the following week, No 34046 (34052) departed under its own steam on Tuesday 4th April. 34081, 34053 and 34092 left by road on the 4th, 5th and 6th.

Finally all members will have heard that the National Railway Museum have “gifted” L&SWR 4-6-0 No 563 to the railway.

For some of the above information I am indebted to :- Web sites “Wrgen” and “Real Time Trains”.



34092 City of Wells during the Strictly Bulleid Gala.

Colin Stone



Northern Rail liveried class 142 pacer unit 142049 on the rear of a Manchester to Manchester via Burnley and Accrington service at Burnley Manchester Road station on 29 March 2017. Ken Aveyard



This monstrosity of a noddy train can be found giving rides around the Westfield shopping centre in Bradford. No further comments needed!! Ken Aveyard